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Small Residence, Nambour

This family home was conceived as two pavilions embracing the steep site joined with a breeze way bridge and sheltered courtyard deck. This separation of the house into parts with mostly northern exposure, maximise its passive heating and cooling abilities, daylight exposure, cross ventilation and integration with the landscape.

Concrete block walls internally provide thermal mass for passive heating and cooling along with plywood clad aerated concrete flooring and insulated walls and roofing. Framing is local plantation softwood, with a minimum of steel members, and some recycled timber. Finishes are low VOC paints and renders, glazing tinted and low-E glass where required.

Appliances were chosen for their energy efficiency and plumbing fixtures are all triple A rated. A grey water recycling system returns recycled water to the toilet and laundry with the excess used on the garden, energy efficient lighting is used throughout along with solar hot water.

The small amount of regrowth vegetation that remained on the site was retained bar one tree returned to the new garden as mulch along with the topsoil removed for the house. The terraced permaculture garden exploits the slope to channel water where it is required and exposes the edible and native garden in the making, to maximum daylight. The gardens water requirements are further supported by a rain water tank collected from the roof.

With a modest 210m² footprint, this 4 bedroom house shows that very conventional materials and construction technology can produce a green and sustainable home.