



# Respecting the integrity of design

## Sue Russell

When he established Mackit Architectural Design and Construction James Mackie's vision for the practice was to always keep at the centre of how he engaged with his clients a deep respect for the integrity of the design process.

"The design process is organic in nature and I have been careful to create a process with clients right from the start that respects and reflects this.

"Some of the best projects often stem from the client not knowing what they want and allowing the design to evolve out of the process," James says.

The registered designer, Master Builder and Licenced Building Practitioner in design and carpentry is based in Greytown and the area he services extends through the Wairarapa and Wellington areas.

James works with wife Susie who, like James, has a degree in design from Massey University. Projects begin with an open book discussion with the aim for the couple to get to feel the personality of the clients, their life-style and future vision for their home.

"Once we have a brief on paper we tend to work up several designs, each quite different from the other, but all reflecting the brief.

"Often clients are quite surprised to see how differently the same vision can be interpreted."

He can't emphasise enough how important it is to really give this conceptualising process due time.

He is a member of Architectural Designers NZ, a professional organisation for Architectural Designers.

Underpinning the organisation is a passion for New Zealand design and architecture.

Membership is based on selection having fulfilled stringent standards of competency and once a member ongoing professional development to retain the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding in design and building is required. It's an organisation James is proud to belong to.

"We are vetted for a well rounded set of skills to demonstrate we are able to control all aspects of the design and construction phases, including all the documentation required by councils," says James.

Mackit Architectural Design and Construction has evolved strong working relations with a core of highly skilled contractors who James says absolutely understand the integrity of the design and the value of the spaces inside the homes they

construct.

One of the projects the company has just finished designing is a new house on a high profile site in central Wellington.

"The clients had owned the land for a number of years, and had plans previously drawn by an architect but weren't happy with the result.

"We took the time to get to know them really

well, and work through things methodically to come up with a result that is really special.

"One of the key aspects of the brief was earthquake strength and reparability – and we've been able to design a structure with the same earthquake rating as Te Papa but with relatively straight forward, conventional methods.

"We are currently selecting suppliers and sub contractors with equal care and attention – there's no point in having a great design when it isn't

followed through with an equally outstanding building process. Clients enjoy the fact that we are able to achieve both for them."

Mackit Architectural Design and Construction's projects are at the higher quality end of construction.

As James says, often the most appealing homes are very simple plans at first-glance but the detailing is outstanding and the homes relate beautifully to the land they are settled on.



**Business North, North Island**

01 Mar 2016, by Sue Russell

General News, page 47 - 539.00 cm<sup>2</sup>

Magazines Business - circulation 31,000 (Bi monthly)

ID 568456341

BRIEF ADNZ(W)

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