



# Rustic Kiwiana

A one-acre valley site in rural Paraparaumu inspired the rustic design of this family home.

Words **Soraya Nicholas** Photography **Erin King & Kevin Hawkins**



**FOR YEARS, GRAHAM AND JACQUI** Nelson had lived in a picturesque valley in Paraparaumu, so when they decided to build again, they were hesitant to leave the area they knew. And when they found a slightly smaller section for sale in the rural suburb they loved, it made sense to stay close by. “We previously had three acres, and we just wanted something not quite so large,” says Graham. “This site was perfect, and it had the flatter element that we liked too.”

Their last house worked well for them, but there were elements they wanted to improve on, and some aspects they wanted to replicate. “This time around we were very particular about what we wanted,” says Jacqui. The house had to be two storey, with space for at least three bedrooms upstairs. “We didn’t want to have to worry about anyone seeing the kids rooms!”

This meant the master suite had to be located on the ground floor, along with at least two large living spaces.

The first decision the Nelsons made in relation to the project was to find their builder – Dean Billot of BK Developers. It was Dean who recommended an architectural designer to them, and they immediately made contact. “When Dean recommended Peter Davis from A.D Architecture Ltd, we immediately decided to use him. It made sense when they had already worked on so many projects together as a team,” comments Graham.

Although the Nelsons were quite specific in their wants and needs, they took Peter’s advice in terms of how to achieve the home they desired. “They knew what they expected from me, and because they had built before, they were realistic about what we could

A David Trubridge light hangs in the stairwell leading up to the kids’ bedroom, with signatures from the Treaty of Waitangi crafted from honed stainless steel by Carin Wilson from Making Marks and Leaving Traces.



Left and top right photography Kevin Hawkins

achieve,” says Peter. “Because they were clear about what they needed from the design, I was able to be very precise, and work within their budget, and deliver the house they had envisaged.”

The style of the dwelling was important to the Nelsons, and Peter worked hard to produce conceptual drawings that incorporated the design factors they wanted. His colleague, Brynn McCauley, also assisted during the design phase.

In order to empathise with the rural environment, the home was created to match the countryside. A gable was placed in the middle of the house, with corridors on each side and further gables at each end. “I would describe it as a modern take on a gabled barn,” comments Peter. The materials used to craft the home also add depth to the design.

“Originally we were going to use Cedar, but I really wanted to achieve the effect of timber greying off,” explains Jacqui. “This led us to investigating untreated Macrocarpa, which was local and sustainable.”

The house is a practical family home. The children’s bedrooms are upstairs, along with two bathrooms, and the master suite enjoys its own wing. Solar water heating, double glazing, and positioning the dwelling to face north allow it to be very energy efficient. The wood burner is clean air approved, and provides excellent heat output.



**THE SPECS**

Paraparaumu  
\$600,000 +  
325 Sq m





## Materials

**VEGE PATCH** Gravel paths provide easy access to raised beds of vegetables. The back garden is also home to a brood of eight Pekin Batam hens.

**FABRICS** Getting curtains made can be an easy and cheap way to add colour to your home, Jacqui picked up this design from [www.abfabrics.co.nz](http://www.abfabrics.co.nz) in Auckland who specialise in European fabrics at affordable prices. She then had the curtains made by Curtain Cabana in Paraparaumu.

**CAPE COD CHAIR** Look out for Cape Cod chairs this summer, they're a great piece of permanent outdoor furniture. Seen here with striped cushions from Botanique in Wellington. [www.botanique.co.nz](http://www.botanique.co.nz)



Ground floor



First floor



## Q&A

with Peter Davis

**What was your design brief?**  
The client had built previously, and they wanted to stick to the concept of a gabled barn. So my role was to take the bits they liked from their previous house, and then come up with new elements too. We started with what they liked and evolved from there.

**What makes this home unique?**  
We wanted to fulfil the idea of a rural New Zealand building, in a simple yet styled way. This definitely contrasts with the suburban type homes nearby on rural sites! Using locally milled Macrocarpa was a way to stay true to the landscape, and I designed the home to sit well on the site and to take in the outlook.

**Best features?**  
The central two storey gable, separated from the two end gables by flat roof pavilion style connections. The simplicity of materials used, and the proportions of the building too.

**Does the finished home match your original design?**  
Yes, it is very close to it. There were plenty of conceptual sketches early on, so there was little deviation to the end design.

**Were there any design constraints?**  
The section is large, so it was a blank canvas really. Creating the house for the site was important though. It was designed to be as wide as possible, to make the most of the North and West aspects for sun, and to ensure shelter from the prevailing wind.

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**"We have eight Pekin Bantam hens. They're great because they are child friendly for our young nieces and nephews, and they don't destroy the garden."**

Jacqui Nelson

**ABOVE** Jacqui and Graham sit on antique chapel chairs at their large family dining table, while one of their sons, Michael, grabs a bite in the kitchen. This area is the hub of the Nelson's busy home.

**LEFT** Open storage in the kitchen shows off a collection of cookware and allows easy access when preparing meals. As avid cooks, this is a task both Jacqui and Graham enjoy.



But the Council made it difficult for them, and in the end specified that it had to be heart Macrocarpa only. "Dean individually sorted through every piece that had already arrived, and from the first delivery had to send back at least half of the load!"

Inside the home, the Nelsons were once again quite specific in their desires. The kitchen is central to both living areas, which suits the family household. The Nelsons daughter, Lizzie, is currently studying in Otago, while the couple's identical twin boys, Michael and William, are studying closer to home.

"We like to have a busy kitchen," explains Graham. "The way it is

positioned, between the two living spaces, means that it's a real meeting place for us all. It draws us together." The kitchen is virtually identical in style to their previous one, but they did expand it to allow for a larger breakfast bar, and to accommodate a walk-in pantry.

Despite hearing horror stories about building, Graham and Jacqui could not have been more relaxed during the design and construction of their home. "It was heaps of fun, and we really have to thank our builder and architect for making it so enjoyable," says Graham. "We were very fastidious in the planning stages, but we had to enjoy it. Why build otherwise? If you can't enjoy it and have fun, there is no point in doing it." ■