

CASE STUDY

# Merindah Park House





## Location

Bellawongarah, NSW

## Architect

Richard Cole Architecture

## Builder

Owner-builder

## Photographer

Simon Wood

## Clients Needs

Merindah Park House is an owner built rural homestead set within lush remnant rainforest surrounded paddocks and an extensive new garden, on the Bellawongarah plateau overlooking Kangaroo Valley. The house is a place for family and friends to gather, a legacy dwelling for future generations.

The homestead takes cues from traditional rural building materials and forms. With the utilitarian clarity of a woolshed and the robust bearing of Georgian masonry outbuildings, the character of the building deliberately avoids artifice. The dwelling features a clear splayed plan opening to the north and views to the distant escarpment, a simple structural module and circulation around a central serene courtyard. The section responds to aspect.

With a raw, warm materiality and places of cave-like refuge and promontory-like prospect, the house as a container for living provides the occupants with daily experiences that resonate with the strong presence of the surrounding landscape. The farmhouse is designed as a place for family and friends to gather, the hearth a focal gathering point, the kitchen a generous central hub for the preparation of food and sharing of meals from the orchard, vegetable garden and paddocks that surround the house. The design creates a place that is the antithesis of urban, a place to be grounded.

Acacia was tasked with crafting over 70 windows and doors to frame the breathtaking bushland and serene courtyard with rustic warmth.

## Challenges

The owner-builder, an appreciator of fine woodwork and Australian hardwoods, was invested in natural materials, craftsmanship and getting the details right. This is reflected throughout the building, with grey ironbark trusses, ceiling lining boards, windows, doors and joinery blending seamlessly. Acacia and the architect had to collaborate to resolve details and ensure that the window joinery integrated with the building fabric and achieved the design intent.

There were some logistical challenges of installing the larger pieces (including an impressive 15-metre-long window) and the scarce timber with its dense, rugged nature, came with sourcing and machining complexities.

With so much of the building glazed, the windows needed to have exceptional thermal efficiency.



## Solutions

Acacia approached the process by collaborating closely with the architect and client to resolve details and by producing clear and comprehensive detailed CAD shop drawings, then making amendments according to feedback. This iterative process ensured that each intricate aspect of the vision was captured and confirmed.

Optimal thermal integrity was achieved by incorporating double glazing for the windows and doors. The team crafted these in the workshop, before disassembling the larger pieces for safe transportation. Those pieces were then reassembled on site and fitted, and lastly the glazing was completed.

With a steadfast commitment to quality, Acacia worked closely with reliable suppliers, securing an ample supply of the rare timber, despite its scarcity.

## Outcome

The love for fine woodworking and Australian hardwoods is evident in every corner of the building, with Acacia's grey ironbark windows and doors playing a crucial role in this aesthetic.

Merindah Park House was featured in Habitus magazine Issue #54, was a finalist in the 2022 Australian Timber Design Awards and shortlisted for the 2022 Houses Awards. It was also featured on The Local Project, Dwell.com and Archdaily.

The finished designs speak louder than words. Expertly crafted joinery seamlessly integrated into architectural perfection.



**“The large scale of the dwelling and demanding thermal requirements required a completely customised response, which Acacia delivered. The results speak for themselves, the high quality joinery integrates beautifully with the completed building.”**

Richard Cole – Richard Cole Architecture



Phone: (02) 4284 3502

Email: [sales@acaciajoinery.com.au](mailto:sales@acaciajoinery.com.au)

Office: 25-27 Bellambi Lane, Bellambi NSW 2518

[www.acaciajoinery.com.au](http://www.acaciajoinery.com.au)

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