

CASE STUDY

Somnium at Bingie



acacia
architectural timber windows and doors



Location

Bingie, South Coast NSW

Architect

Eoghan Lewis Architects

Builder

Luke Price – Flair Homes

Photography

Matt Horspool – etchd

Clients Needs

Located on an incredible stretch of land overlooking Coila Lake and the Tasman Sea, this striking property is a hidden country retreat. The vision for Somnium at Bingie was to create a sanctuary for the clients as a holiday home, as well as a luxury retreat for guests. The house needed to comfortably accommodate up to 15 people, while achieving a pared-back aesthetic and capturing the spirit of connection to the natural environment similar to that found when camping.

For economic and environmental reasons, the team at Eoghan Lewis Architects worked with the two existing run-down structures – a brick project home and a timber barn. Retaining as much material as possible, the structures were reinvented as a family of pavilions linked by covered entrances and courtyards. A new concrete pavilion was constructed for the living area, taking advantage of the northern aspect and views of Gulaga (Mount Dromedary) and Coila Lake.

Acacia was commissioned to provide a suite of external sliding windows, doors and screens for the bedrooms and living spaces, plus a series of fixed, louvre and casement windows, all in Spotted Gum.

Challenges

The project raised several challenges which required considerable expertise, careful design and complex engineering solutions to overcome. The exposed headland location on the NSW South Coast, a site vulnerable to weather conditions and bushfires, contributed to the project's challenges.

Maximising views and creating seamless indoor/outdoor connections were key elements of the architect's design. As such, external face-sliding windows and doors were required on openings in the living area and bedrooms. As these units cannot be fully tested prior to installation, meticulous design and precision craftsmanship was essential.

Provisions for double-glazing as well as deep door frames, sashes and reveals was an additional challenge, as the required FSC approved timbers are only available in standard section sizes.

Possibly the most challenging element of the project, however, was the design of the complex sliding corner window. Free from any central vertical support structures, the room essentially becomes corner-less when the window is opened, facilitating a phenomenal unobstructed view of the landscape beyond. Achieving an adequate weather seal was difficult, yet essential, given the exposed nature of the home's location.



Solutions

Acacia's experience in delivering complex custom projects and our excellent working relationship with both the architecture and build teams, enabled solutions to the design's challenges.

Detailed CAD designs and meticulous craftsmanship ensured the external face-sliding windows and doors all functioned perfectly upon installation, and most importantly, were easy to operate despite the considerable weight of the double-glazed units.

The deep door frames, thick sashes and deep reveals required were achieved through industry leading lamination techniques and engineering solutions, providing the bespoke appearance required.

Acacia designed a unique continuous weather seal solution for the corner window unit, ensuring protection from inclement weather.

Outcome

The beautiful timber tones of the Spotted Gum windows and doors used throughout Somnium at Bingie deliver warmth to the minimal interiors. The sliding window, doors and battened screens, as well as the operable high level windows in the living area provide guests with the ability to customise natural airflow and light penetration depending on the time of day, seasonality and climatic conditions on the exposed headland site. The home is a sanctuary that nurtures its occupants and celebrates the surrounding landscape.

The project received the following accolades:

2023 AIA NSW: Residential Architecture - Houses (Alterations and Additions) – Shortlist

2023 Houses Awards - House Alterations & Additions over 200m2 – Shortlist

2023 Houses Awards - Sustainability – Shortlist



We have worked with Acacia on many projects over the last 12 years and have always found them excellent to work with. In addition to their obvious passion for timber windows and expertise with Australian hardwoods, they have become an excellent resource at the beginning of projects when ideas are developed then later on they're great to work with as solutions are found, refined, priced and implemented. They are proactive through every stage of the process, they care about details and offer an excellent service to architects and to clients."

Eoghan Lewis | Architect



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