

RETRO-FITTING YOUR HOME

Retro-fitting can improve every home. Even older buildings can benefit from alterations and improvements to create a better living environment.

Designs for the retro-fitting of buildings are individual for each owner and each property. A change of ownership is often an opportunity to renovate the building to suit the lifestyle of its new inhabitants.

Retro-fitting should be an holistic approach to upgrading a dwelling. The main elements are:

1. climate
2. energy efficiency
3. improved comfort
4. waste reduction
5. healthier homes

Most retro-fitting ideas are affordable measures which can be done in stages, but are also part of a total concept for better living.

CLIMATE looks at the local environment, site conditions, access to sun and wind, integration of gardens, and other external influences (eg. neighbours, noise).

ENERGY EFFICIENCY looks at the best use of the northerly aspect, insulation, ventilation, zoning of areas, mass materials, solar energy. Reduced costs of heating and cooling are a direct and measurable benefit.

WASTE REDUCTION applies to reducing wasted space, stormwater usage, re-used materials, reduced maintenance, low operating costs, reduced consumption of other resources.

COMFORT is relative to each individual, but some common internal improvements are... pleasant rest areas, efficient work areas, natural lighting, even temperatures, air-flow control, improved access, safety and health aspects.

A range of affordable and practical retro-fitting options are available to most home owners, but some consultation time is required by the designer to assess the site and the owners' needs.

An advisory service in retro-fitting homes is available to interested people. For further information phone building consultant **Jack Metcalf** on **(08) 8261 9049**, website – www.jmetcalf.net