



Getting in bush mode

Modifying a popular display home design to be compatible with restful bush surroundings proved a success, **Ross Haig** reports

With its 20 identical full-height windows and matching bush poles, the modified version shown here of one of the Rural Building Company's most popular displays, the Durack, strikes a fine vertical line that would not be out of place in a forest grove.

But the commanding scale — from its 30m wide front elevation, with 1.6m wraparound verandas, to the spacious family areas where the design is flattered by cathedral ceilings and exposed beams — is equally at home in more open surrounds.

Like most householders at Chittering's Maryville Downs Estate, the owners of this property sought a design that would be compatible with the surrounds and allow the restful views of rolling countryside to be enjoyed from within.

It is the reverse side of the home that has the best aspect, and some

modifications were made to take advantage of the orientation.

The display the owners viewed had a detached carport partially aligned to the main suite. In consequence, its window space was limited, and the wall facing the view was solid.

The solution has worked well. The carport was replaced at the opposite end by a bricked garage, now part of the house and built in the same style.

The increased width, the unifying warmth of the big Midland Brick Colonial Marri range, and the extension of the Mountain Blue Colorbond roofing added to the property's handsome front elevation.

Three-metre wide windows and sliding doors to the garden were then cut into the main suite, lightening it considerably. Cantilevered cedar slatted doors provide a more textured privacy screen than conventional curtaining. Although the ensuite on

the plan was open to the bedroom, the clients chose to insert a door and to create an adjoining recess for displaying an old chest of drawers.

Fortunately, the reverse side of the recess intrudes into a walk-through dressing area, so traffic flow is not unduly compromised. Various sets of single and double jarrah-framed French doors and the selective use of polished jarrah flooring, bring an element of formality to the home.

The Durack's kitchen was upgraded and Tasmanian oak cupboards and polished granite benchtops bring a more up-market tone. However, the trademark twin Custom orb false awning windows have been retained as features, and their rusticity blends well with the more contemporary finish.

This home was entered in the 2005 HIA-ANZ Housing Awards.

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French doors and polished jarrah flooring bring an element of formality to the home.



Bush poles and wraparound verandas complement the openness of the semi-rural surroundings.



The spacious family area has a cathedral ceiling with exposed beams.



A central fireplace in the living area enhances the rustic ambience.