

DESIGN RATIONALE

The design is a considered response to the site and program to create a unique, contemporary and energy-efficient house complementing its Kits Point neighbourhood. The building massing is broken up to maintain a neighbourly residential scale. The front landscape will be heavily planted to ensure the green character of the street is continuous.

The massing of the building is divided into three main components each with its own material characteristics expressing subtle variations of tone and texture to emphasize the play of light and shadow which is central to the design concept. The forms are simple and sculptural, and the finishes are of good quality and durable. The stair volume, in polished concrete masonry, anchors the composition. The upper volume, clad in quality glass-fibre reinforced panels, floats over the ground level which is highly glazed at the front and back. The ground level stucco walls on the side elevations are protected by a small overhang, by the volume above and neighbouring structures.

The house inverts the typical relationship of living space and bedroom with the open-plan living, kitchen and dining space situated on the upper of two floors in a piano nobile arrangement. Cut into the upper level volume are a series of slots in the walls and roof organizing and dividing the interior spaces using natural light. The east-west orientation of the site and relatively short lot (100') bring challenges and opportunities with respect to sun shading and parking that affect external relationships and appearance. The generously overhanging frame of the upper floor shades and protects the ground level and controls light and glare from the south-east and south-west.

The site is 33' x 100' long and thus somewhat shorter than a standard Vancouver lot. The building setbacks at the front and sides conform to the requirements of the RT-9 bylaw. The bylaw does not specify a rear yard setback but the building remains below the maximum building depth allowable with permission from the Director of Planning. The house is less deep than many of the neighbouring houses some of which have absorbed their garages and thus extend right to the lane.

There is a diverse range of parking strategies employed within Kits Point. For dwellings such as ours that have lanes, parking is generally provided by a garage, attached carport or internal garage below ground level accessed by ramp. Because the lots are not the typical 120' there is little space between a house and garage. A garage would shade much of the ground floor from the west and leave little in the way of back yard. For this reason, we propose to integrate the parking with the house situating it below grade and accessible by ramp. There are numerous precedents of this arrangement in Kits Point.

Given the house's location close to the sea, we have included a roof deck that will provide for some distant views towards the mountains. All deck areas will be screened from neighbours by planters and railings to ensure privacy of yard space.

The new house will employ current best practices for energy efficiency. While not going for certification, the project applies Passive House principles to achieve efficiencies. These include air tightness, continuous insulation with minimal thermal bridging, quality windows and heat recovery ventilation.

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