

Case Study

Client Name: Alison Evans

Home: Unit

Suburb: Dee Why

Background

Alison purchased the 2 bedroom unit in Dee Why as an investment property. The area was very popular with Sydney-siders. In addition, the unit was closed to everything: 5 minutes from Dee Why beach; within walking distance to the local shops and amenities.

Alison was no newcomer to renovating properties. She also has her own learner-driver business and was busy raising a family.

Client Needs

For 27 years the unit had little work or maintenance. It required a lot of work. Alison wanted a full renovation with new paintwork, carpet, new kitchen and bathroom. The renovation was intended to maximise rental returns and enhance the capital value of the property.

The lounge, which came off the kitchen, was not large enough to accommodate a dining table. As part of the renovation, Alison wanted the kitchen re-designed to accommodate an eat-in area.

Alison was looking to standardise the flooring through the unit as there were too many styles and materials. She also wanted to use neutral and whites for the paintwork to really open up the available space and promote a more modern, contemporary feel for the tenants.

Alison had a budget for the renovation and was concerned that the eat-in kitchen may cause a budget blow-out.

The Solution

The small living area had light pink walls and worn brown carpet. The window was covered with faded vertical blinds. The room was lit with a group of 3 small spotlights.



Living area - Before

As part of the renovation, the walls were repainted in white and the carpet replaced with recycled bamboo flooring.

The combination of the new flooring and white walls made the space light and airy and provided a more contemporary feel.



Living Room – After

New oyster lights replaced the old light fittings throughout the entire unit.



Kitchen – Before

After the renovation in the kitchen, the bench space on the window side was extended at right angles facing the lounge. Not only did this design accommodate Alison's requests for an eat-in kitchen, it added more storage and created a definite, cleaner line between the kitchen and the lounge.

Subtle elements were added to better utilise the space available in the kitchen: the cupboards were slightly higher than the old ones; cupboards with hinged double-doors were created for the corner areas; the double bowl sink was replaced with one and half bowls plus a drainage plate; and a new and bigger oven and cook top was installed.

New roller blinds created some privacy from the units across the road.



Kitchen - After

The new stainless steel appliances created a fresh clean look in the kitchen. The bigger oven and cook top plus the new dishwasher, would certainly maximise the rental from the unit with the new tenants.



New Stainless Steel Appliances in the Kitchen

Typical of 1970's decor the tiles in the old bathroom were patterned and dated. The walls were painted light yellow. The bottom of the vanity exposed the sink pipes and looked ugly.



View 1 of the Bathroom - Before

Following the renovation, the mirror installed was as wide as the wall. The new tiles were white and extended floor to ceiling.

The combination of both the mirror and tiles created a greater sense of space in the bathroom and a more pristine finish.

The vanity with legs enabled easier cleaning.



View 2 of the Bathroom - After

Moving onto the other side of the bathroom, the shower was opened up with the semi-frameless screen as part of the renovation.



View 2 of the Bathroom – Before

Notice the sleeker lines in the new bathroom versus old. The hidden cistern with a stylish back-to-wall pan removed the unsightly plumbing and made such a difference to the space.



View 2 of the Bathroom – After



The Old and Unsightly Plumbing behind the Toilet

The bedrooms required a new lease on life.

The carpet in the main bedroom was worn, dirty and dated.

The walls were painted yellow.

The main bedroom with glass doors opening up onto a small balcony, was framed with out-dated vertical blinds.



Main bedroom – Before

As with the rest of the unit renovation, the bamboo flooring contrasted the new white walls and created a modern contemporary feel. Skirtings were added to neaten the finish.

Double roller blinds replaced the tired and yellowed vertical blinds.



Main bedroom – Before



The New Roller Blinds in the Main Bedroom



Second Bedroom – Before



Second Bedroom – After

As part of the renovation all the door handles were renewed throughout the unit.

The Living Space Experience

Alison originally wanted manage the renovation herself and she believed it would not be large project. To manage the project, she thought about breaking down the renovation into distinct parts and renovating gradually over time e.g. start with the kitchen moving onto the bathroom and following with the painting and flooring throughout. She considered the frustrations she may encounter with managing the project herself: managing multiple tradesmen from different companies coming in and out of the unit, tradesmen not turning up in time and how to ensure that tasks were handed over properly between successive tradesmen and nothing was left unfinished.

In the end, she decided against managing the renovation project herself. She thought that with her existing commitments, it would best if she could handover the complete end to end management to someone else, minimising her involvement completely.

Why did Living Space Constructions appeal to Alison?

"Living Space Constructions offered a complete end-to-end management of my renovation project. They did everything. Having a project manager was a great idea. It removed the need for me to be involved so closely minute-by-minute."

"I was happy with the feeling I got from the initial interaction with them. They were professional, responsive and seemed like the type of people I'd like to work with. We worked through all possible issues and came up with workable solutions so we all knew what we had to deal with before the contract was even signed. This minimised any possible cost blowouts down the track."

How did the project proceed?

"I guess there's no such thing as a perfect renovation. The mains water connection in the unit could not be turned off because it was old and stiff. Living Space Constructions worked around this issue as best they could because Sydney Water could not attend the problem for several weeks."

"The site-based project manager, Mick, was good at describing what was the issue and what were the solutions. Things were solved over the phone."

The Outcome

"It was perfect to have someone do everything. All my requirements were met and I'm very happy with the outcome. I would do it again."