



ARAKOON

SHAUN LOCKYER ARCHITECTS

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Architecture and Interior Design by Shaun Lockyer Architects • Landscape by Conlon Group • Engineering by Westera Partners



Submerged and subservient to its surrounds, Arakoon sits responsive to the natural and lush setting it is immersed within, as planar gestures encourage an outdoor life. Referencing linear connections between climate and place, Shaun Lockyer Architects composes volumes that optimise the enviable siting of the home.

Celebrating its location in the subtropics, Arakoon sits embedded into its site, with long linear planes that open up the multiple levels to enable clear and uninterrupted access to the surrounding views. Inspired by place, Project Lead Andrew Brown and the team took influence from similar climatic responses by Brazilian modernists, as bold masonry forms come together with large spans to create clean openings. Elevated and yet nestled in amongst its immediate landscape, there is a natural sense of privacy and enclosure created by way of orientation. Shaun Lockyer, Founder and Director of Shaun Lockyer Architects, says “we want the house to celebrate what it means to live in this climate and context, and these opportunities and constraints have all heavily and directly informed the concept.”

Interwoven amongst the natural undulations of the sand dunes, Arakoon is founded on principles of sincerely engaging with its site. These foundations form and are fed from “strong connections between climate, landscape, form and the use of durable, honest materials,” says Shaun. While the home is a new build, a sensitivity to the encompassing existing context ensures a respectful insertion within the landscape. “We have

referenced the materials, dune location, climatic considerations and a desire to ‘sit’ into the site,” he says, “which ensures the outcome of the house is one that is submissive to the context, almost disappearing into the mounds and scrubs.”

The resulting structure and orientation leave little reminder of any nearby neighbours or of other occupation. By lowering the built form amongst the landscape, Shaun explains that “we wanted it to feel like being on the beach or in a tree, or similar to the cool shade of a rock canyon on the headland.” The intention was for the architecture to almost fall away and the experience of the home to offer a direct connection between human and nature. “The sheer stone-clad walls along the side boundaries, shrouded in cascading landscape, reference the canyons,” Shaun adds, “while the battened screens offer dappled light like a metaphorical tree, and the rough crazy pave stone floors that run from inside to out then reference the tactility of the headland and beach, deliberately rough underfoot.” A matched approach to lighting sees hidden, indirect and discreet lumens used throughout, encouraging these otherwise decorative and overpowering elements to then take a step back to the location.



Mediating between its own extra and introversion, elements of tension and contrast aid in balancing the weighted heft of the building amongst its natural setting. Similar to the Brazilian contemporaries, Shaun explains, “elements of the design are open, cantilevered and expansive in response to the panoramic views of the ocean and headland, while other elements are more solid, introverted and reflect the need to retreat from the sun at times.” The use of concrete as a primary structural element acts as the ideal facilitator to its environment in its unwavering anchoring, while the use of weathered timber then adds an element of the natural, expressing the patina and natural ageing process. “The selection of materials sees raw, honest, robust and non-precious elements combine,” Shaun says, “in a deliberate attempt to prioritise the experience and reference the context – we hoped to create a wonderfully relaxed aesthetic and protective feel within the home.”

The use of a robust and hardwearing materiality is crucial to the building’s endurance and long life, as a front to the incoming harsh winds and sea-beaten air. The materiality also aims to soften the linear design language, further emphasising the lack of rigidity intended for the home. “We wanted the consistent, tactile feel of the materials to talk of the place and deprogram the formality that is sometimes – inappropriately – aspired to in an upmarket home,” reflects Shaun. “We wanted the mate-

rials to be casual and robust in order to address the lifestyle of the family while honouring the place.”

While the building provides a place to feel immersed yet protected on the upper levels, the lower levels openly engage with the surrounds. “The house addressed the immediate landscape on the ground floor,” Shaun describes, “spilling out onto the dune system without barrier or defined boundary – not only expanding the experience of the site but blurring the boundary between the house and the landscape.” As a reminder of place, a tree sits centrally located within the home as an unexpected insertion that brings living vegetation right inside. It is then the traversing pathways between the home and the beach, where paths meander and facilitate a close engagement with the landscape, that “a direct and sensory relationship between the landscape and the house” is created, he adds.

Revelling in its locale, Arakoon is a celebration of place. Shaun Lockyer Architects has deeply listened to the site, observed and captured the essence of the surrounds by proposing an openly welcoming home, ensuring its owners feel encased and constantly reminded of the abounding natural beauty.



