

Knockdown rebuild

The brief

To build a spacious family home on their existing block and stay within budget.



**OWNERS**  
Mary and Anthony Weaver and their children, Liv, 12, Emily, 9, and Naomi, 6 (Mary, Emily and Naomi, above)

**BUILDER**  
Wincrest Homes wincrest.com.au

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New for old

Mary and Anthony Weaver loved their neighbourhood but disliked their old house. After mulling over the alternatives, they knocked down the old house and rebuilt on their block, a decision that gave the Weavers all the space they needed. Careful research, including visits to a display village to see the variety on offer, cemented their decision.



# Homework makes your home work

If you know what you want a rebuild can work the first time without regrets, writes Catherine Nikas-Boulos

Wahroonga homeowners Mary and Anthony Weaver loved their little bit of suburbia. They were surrounded by friends in a neighbourhood they had grown fond of, so the thought of moving did not appeal to them. That said, they were pushed for space, so they really had to make a decision either way.

"We wanted to move house, but didn't actually want to move, if that makes sense," Mary says. "We looked at houses for sale, but once you see something new, it's hard to buy a second-hand house."

When they decided to knock down and rebuild on their property they were determined to get it right the first time and not suffer the fate of so many people who have a list of what they would do differently the next time.

Mary says her understanding of the building industry was so basic she assumed the only way to build a house was to find an architect and hire a builder. The term "project builder" was not in her vocabulary. "I had no idea HomeWorld even existed," she says. "Making the decision to build a new house coincided with me buying an iPad, so I say this is the house that got built by an iPad."

She spent many hours online researching the builders at HomeWorld but found the choice overwhelming. It wasn't until she walked through the properties at HomeWorld in Kellyville that she felt a connection with some designs.

"I narrowed it down to five builders," she

says, "but only two got back to me straight away. I decided I wasn't going to be emotionally attached to any of the home designs that I had singled out and in the end I went with the builder who was within the ballpark figure of my budget."

**Choosing the right builder**

Mary ultimately built the Trafalgar home with Wincrest, choosing this builder because it answered all of her questions, without any pressure.

"By the end of it, we knocked out only one wall in the design, which meant we didn't get hit with extra costs. We had a budget and had to stick to it," she says. "Finding the right builder for me was like any other job. I wanted to be sensible about what would work on the block I had."

"A lot of people who go into show homes will comment on how it is furnished, instead of thinking how the design would work on the orientation of their block. Where's the light? Am I maximising my space?" Mary was also sensible about number crunching, asking the builders quoting for her job to overestimate it.

"I kept saying, 'Do not give me a purposely low quote so I can sign. I need a real overall figure I can work with.'"

Mary says Wincrest was right about the money and time it quoted and her family moved into the home within the estimated eight months.

"The best advice I could give people looking for a builder is to follow their nose



and be clear about what you want. If you're not confident or clear, then you have to wear some of the blame if you don't get what you want."

**Home sweet home**

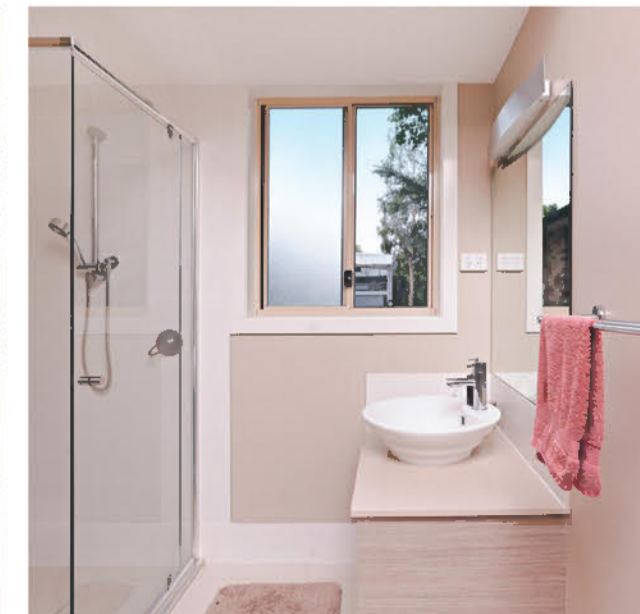
Now that she's living in the five-bedroom home, Mary loves its airiness.

The master bedroom, with ensuite and walk-in robe, is one of her favourite spaces, with good reason.

"My husband said to me when we moved in, 'This is the first bedroom we've had where I can't touch the wall from the bed'. We went from the sublime to the ridiculous."

The kitchen is another standout. Bigger than the standard Trafalgar on display, the 9m by 7m kitchen has an attached 3m deck.

"It gives us enough space to function as a family without getting in each other's way," catherine.nikas@news.com.au Pictures John Fotiadis



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