

# Point Chevalier HOUSE by Architecture Smith + Scully

• AUCKLAND •

A juxtaposition of materials, coupled with bold lines, produces a visually arresting family home.

Words by Camille Khouri  
Photography by Mark Scowen

**P**oint Chevalier is now well and truly in the ranks of Auckland's 3's real estate top dogs, so it is not surprising that any site in the beachside suburb is worth building on, even if, like this one, it has an overland flow path running across it. Overland flow paths are the routes taken by stormwater on its way to streams, the stormwater network or the sea when the existing natural or man-made drainage network is overloaded.

Fascinated about gardening, but happy with a lack of lawn, the owners of this home were interested in a tropical aesthetic, where the outdoor areas are equally as important as the house itself. They also wanted their new home, which is closely surrounded by neighbouring properties, to have a high level of privacy.

The request for a tropical look was a boon for Hilary Scully and Carolyn Smith of Architecture Smith & Scully, as it meant they could address the flow path issue by creating a suspended concrete steel floor, with access around the sides of the house achieved via timber boardwalks. With tropical planting coming through from below, these boardwalks give the house a resort feel, while also allowing easy access to the all-important outdoor areas.

"By raising the floor off the ground, we brought it above the flow path, but we also had to be wary of the height-to-boundary controls in this inner-city suburb. Past the flow path in the centre of the site, the lower floor steps down to a ground-level pavilion that contains



01 For the owners of this house, maximising the site to gain a variety of living spaces was a necessity.



02 Western red cedar contrasts with the black Handiflex panels, bringing a natural warmth to the scheme.

03 The red entry door augments the black and timber palette and is a hint to what lies beyond.

the open-plan kitchen, dining and living. We were then able to use a higher stud in the pavilion," says Scully.


There are three decks surrounding this home. The east deck opens from the kitchen and soaks up the morning sun. With bamboo planting along the fence line, this area is private and serene. The front deck opens off the pavilion through stacking sliding doors, essentially doubling the size of this living space. However, it is the west deck that creates a true statement and ties the design of this house together.

Opening from both the guest bedroom and the rear of the living pavilion, a large Mondrian-style window frames the floating, black walnut staircase within. Below this, an in-built bench seat, with LED lights for after-dark atmosphere, creates an L-shaped nook.

Above, the soffit is exaggerated and flicked upwards, adding depth to the frame around the window.

The Mondrian motif is carried through to the fireplace wall in the living room, with built-in shelving of different sizes. The red-glass entry door and kitchen splashback, a direct request from the owners, also add to this aesthetic.

"The large-slab irregular concrete pavers that lead to the front door create some contrast with the driveway and also echo the boardwalk around the sides of the house. Lit from below, this pathway seems to hover above the planting.

"In terms of materials, the western red cedar is the star of this house; its warm hues are juxtaposed against the black boxes of the pavilion and garage," says Scully. 







Ground floor plan



First floor plan

- 1 Entry
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Scullery
- 4 Dining
- 5 Living
- 6 Bedroom
- 7 Bathroom/ensuite/WC
- 8 Study
- 9 Wine cellar
- 10 Laundry
- 11 Deck
- 12 Garage



04 Neutral walls provide a calming backdrop to the dramatic timber and black kitchen with its pop of red.

05 A Mondrian-style window overlooks the west-facing deck, breaking up the verticality of the cedar cladding and admitting an abundance of natural light into the home.

06 The architect devised a series of timber boardwalks to provide access around the perimeter of the house without impeding the overland flow path that runs across the property.



**Practice**  
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**Practice profile**  
Architecture Smith + Scully is an award-winning, NZIA-registered practice committed to producing buildings and environments that are a thoughtful and appropriate response to our clients' aspirations, to the context and site conditions, and, of course, to the budget.

**Project team**  
Hilary Scully, Carolyn Smith, Sasha Hendry, Craig Jansen

**Builder**  
Mark Dawson, Dawson  
Construction

**Consultants**  
**Engineer:** Thorne Dwyer Structures  
**Drainage engineer:** Brian Jones  
Engineering  
**Landscape designer:** Jane Kordina,  
Alan Gibson

**Landscape construction:**  
Blair Chicken  
**Interior and bathroom designer:**  
Kerry McCormish  
**Kitchen manufacturer:**  
Huntly Joinery

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#### Products

**External walls:** Herman Pacific western red cedar vertical weatherboards finished with Resene Wood-X oil in Goldrush; Hardiflex in Resene CoolColour Black

**Roofing:** Colorsteel Maxx

**Ceiling:** Gib finished in Resene White

**Internal walls:** Gib finished in Resene Half Merino

**Tiling:** Designa Tiles

**Flooring:** American walnut rustic from Vienna Woods; solution-dyed plush-pile carpet from Irvine

**Flooring:** rugs from Danske Mobler

**Exterior windows and doors:** APL Architectural and Metro Series from Windowmakers finished in Dulux Metropolis Coal Dust Kinetic (windows); APL Plasma from Windowmakers finished in Resene Jalapeno (front door)

**Stairs:** Solid walnut treads on steel mono stringer by Stylecraft Stairs

**Furniture:** Danske Mobler

**TV cabinet:** Custom 40mm planked walnut from The Woodsmiths

**Blinds and drapes:** Vanda NZ

**Lighting:** Lighthouse Lighting

**Audio visual and home automation:** Automation Associates

**Heating:** Esca multiroom ducted

**Artworks:** Paintings by Dean Buchanan (lounges); glass flowers wall sculpture by Lynsdey Over

**Kitchen cabinetry:** Ultraopaque

Phantom Black from Huntly Joinery

**Cabinetry hardware:** Blum; Hafele

**Benchtops:** Primeslone Ice quartz from Zealand; planked walnut from The Woodsmiths

**Sink:** Blanco Subline

**Splashback:** Backpainted glass finished with Resene Jalapeno

**Oven and dishwasher:** Asko

**Cooktop:** Whirlpool induction

**Ventilation:** Schweigen powerpack

**Refrigeration:** Sharp French door with black glass

**Lighting:** Stefano Orlati LEDs

#### Time schedule

**Design and planning:** 9 months

**Construction:** 12 months

#### Project areas

**Site size:** 600m<sup>2</sup>

**Building area:** 295m<sup>2</sup>

## Material Selector

Architect Hilary Scully on why cedar was the right choice for this project.



**What was the aesthetic value of choosing red cedar cladding for this house?**

Our clients requested a sharp, modern, contemporary design aesthetic. At sketch design stage we discussed the idea of contrasting a lower banded black box with a rich, warm vertical element. As western red cedar is available in long lengths, we were able to showcase the verticality where we wanted to accentuate the drama – namely the front entry and western deck areas.

**Were there any other options for cladding, and how did the cedar win out over these?**

We did look at other options including painted weatherboards, but the western red cedar, sourced from sustainably managed forests, offered the warmth and richness of natural timber and provided a good comparison to the black Hardiflex box.

**Were there any installation challenges?**

Not really. The cedar came in long lengths, with a good clean profile and even gauging. It was relatively easy to cut and install. Having the boards machine-coated, which is a factory-based coating system, meant they were more stable when they arrived and less easily marked on installation.