



the expert

Interior design director of Vic Lake Architects, Mia Lake offers ideas on how to update an old bathroom and laundry, without losing their quirky design style.

THE PROBLEM

“We want to bring our bathroom into this century!”

WORDS **LYNNE TESTONI** PHOTOGRAPHY **NIC GOSSAGE**

the story so far

Writer and comedian David Smiedt and his content manager wife Jennie have owned their semi in Enmore, NSW, for about 12 years. They renovated the kitchen and living area when they first moved in, and now want to tackle the main bathroom and laundry/study area.

David works from home and uses the back area of the house as his study, although in recent years he has moved from a desktop computer to a laptop and now moves around the house to write. As a result, the couple no longer need such a large desk area. Jennie feels the whole back of the house could be better utilised, especially in regards to storage. She dreams of a proper linen closet to replace the outdated cupboard in the study space.

Currently the laundry is located in the main bathroom, but Jennie would like the washer/dryer to move to the back of the house, turning the rear bathroom into more of a powder room and freeing up the main bathroom for a modern renovation with a more luxurious feel.

\$80k



the family

Homeowners Jennie and David Smiedt, with their dogs Barry and Maureen.



1.
LACK OF ADEQUATE STORAGE



2.
DESK IS LARGER THAN NEEDED



3.
BATHROOM NEEDS AN UPDATE!



what the agent says...



the realtor

Michael Harris
Raine & Horne
Newtown

Located 5km southwest of the Sydney CBD and neighbouring Newtown, Enmore is an up-and-coming suburb of the Inner West. Primarily residential, there is also a commercial strip along Enmore Road, which turns off Newtown's famous King Street. This strip is known among locals as 'Eat Street', with a variety of lively (and highly rated) cafes, bars and restaurants. This popular strip has brought Enmore to life and attracts plenty of young professional couples, families and singles.

Thanks to its close proximity to the CBD, wealth of transport options (Newtown station is only five minutes away) and vibrant nightlife, this area is highly sought after. A very inclusive community, it has a diverse range of cultural and community events. Enmore is home to the TAFE NSW Design Centre, and nearby schools include St Pius' Catholic Primary School, while childcare options include Only About Children and Enmore Early Learning Centre. Enmore Theatre is a notable landmark with plenty of live music, comedy shows and theatre.

David and Jennie Smiedt purchased their home for \$530,000 in 2002, and today it would be worth around \$1.25 million. With the proposed improvements to the bathroom and relocation of the laundry, I'd suggest it would be worth closer to \$1.3 million.



THE SOLUTION

“Keep the character but make the space more cohesive”

the bathroom

The existing main bathroom has a poor layout and doubles as a laundry, which makes it even more cramped. My plan involves relocating the laundry to make way for a beautiful new space. I'll shift the door to create room for a generous double vanity – an additional expense, but it will greatly improve the room's layout. Jennie and David both want a bath, so I've proposed a back-to-wall bath – it can be installed in the corner to allow space for the shower, plus there's no cleaning required between the bath and wall. An additional wall will be needed to house the toilet cistern and new shower plumbing, and this will include a niche on one side to store shower products and toilet roll holder on the other. A double-hung window replaces the glass blocks and references the traditional aesthetic of the home. Blue-grey handmade tiles bring a contemporary edge to the walls, finished with a Carrara marble capping tile to highlight the ornate ceilings. And the generous vanity (in navy blue polyurethane for a sense of drama) with its under-counter basins provides ample storage, along with partially recessed shaving cabinets so you don't hit your head. Hand-blown glass wall sconces provide useful face-level lighting for make-up application and the like.

They are keen to keep personality in any renovation and it is great to see they are really adventurous with the surface choices and happy to look at new ideas. I love the period detailing in the French doors at the rear of the house and want to preserve some of that in any joinery or additions. Their house suits them well and it just needs some tweaking of the floor plans to make the two bathrooms and laundry into workable spaces. Moving the laundry out of the main bathroom and into the small bathroom at the rear of the house opens up a lot of opportunities, as does a fresh look at David's study area.

The first thing on my list would be to replace the timber flooring, which is in quite bad condition. Tiling the entire area will make the space feel larger, and I have a tile in mind that's designed to mimic a sisal carpet with its warm colour and geometric diamond pattern. Inspired by the existing double doors in this space, these tiles also softly reference the period details. The second bathroom will become a laundry/powder room, with the washer and dryer stacked on top of each other and located behind one tall cabinet, which will reduce how much noise permeates into the study.

the study

The existing storage in this niche was hard to access and mismatched. In its place, I have designed built-in joinery, which provides a generous space for David to work in as well as the ample laundry storage that Jennie desires, including two tall storage cupboards that are perfect for linen. David's study zone includes a set of drawers, hidden bookshelf accessed from the side and display shelving. I will opt for a warmer colour scheme for this area, to assist in creating a calming space to work or spend time in and a contrast against the white double doors. The desk area will have an acoustic panel lining the wall, which will help with softening any noise from the tiled floor – it also doubles as a pinboard. This will then be finished in the same Carrara marble capping, to complement the powder room fittings. **LD**

the study/laundry/powder room

As this space serves multiple purposes for the couple, it's important for it to feel cohesive.

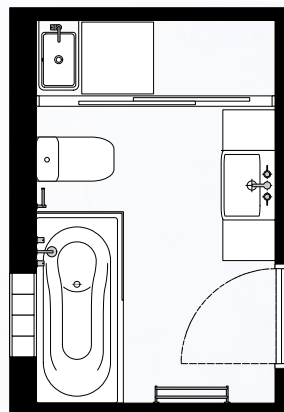
the advice

Mia's assessment

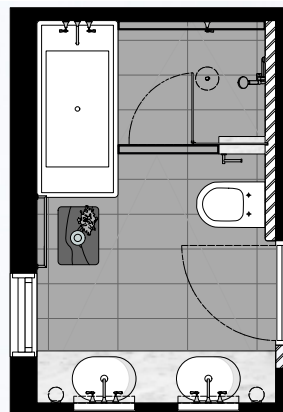
Mia Lake
Interior design director, Vic Lake Architects

Jennie and David's home is playful and quirky, with a wonderful art collection. They are keen to keep personality in any renovation and it is great to see they are

really adventurous with the surface choices and happy to look at new ideas. I love the period detailing in the French doors at the rear of the house and want to preserve some of that in any joinery or additions. Their house suits them well and it just needs some tweaking of the floor plans to make the two bathrooms and laundry into workable spaces. Moving the laundry out of the main bathroom and into the small bathroom at the rear of the house opens up a lot of opportunities, as does a fresh look at David's study area.



EXISTING BATHROOM PLAN

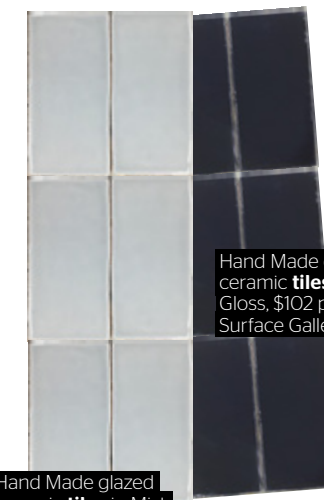


PROPOSED BATHROOM PLAN

MOODBOARD



Carpet matt tiles in Madras, \$175 per sq m, Di Lorenzo Tiles.



Hand Made glazed ceramic tiles in Navy Gloss, \$102 per sq m, Surface Gallery.

Hand Made glazed ceramic tiles in Mist Gloss, \$96 per sq m, Surface Gallery.



Olde English wall spout and taps in Chrome, \$390, Astra Walker.



Italian terrazzo 13 honed tiles, \$138 per sq m, Surface Gallery.



office scheme Mia chose deep, warm hues for David's study.



Helvetica leather office chair in Molasses, \$749, West Elm.



Chinese Workers stool in Black, \$450 for large, LuMu Interiors.

Maya #0003 rug (80cm x 140cm), \$390, Pampa.

“Jennie and David's house suits them well and just needs some tweaking of floor plans to make the bathrooms and laundry workable”

MIA LAKE, INTERIOR DESIGNER

layout update Shift the door to create room for a generous double vanity.



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