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WIDE OPEN SPACE Relocating to acreage gave homeowners Leanne and Rob the chance to build a country-style home in a setting where their children (pictured are daughters Eva, left, and Eleia) could enjoy a semi-rural lifestyle. “The kids have really taken to it,” says Leanne. “They’d love to get a horse and we’ve got plans to get a couple of cows.” Their timber-clad new build, painted in Dulux Antique White USA and topped with gable peaks, was orientated to capture views, winter sun and summer breezes. Rob built the home, including the impressive entry gate, which features ‘Aspen’ stacked stone from 3D Stone. >

to the COUNTRY

A FARM-STYLE SANCTUARY IN THE GOLD COAST HINTERLAND PROVIDES JOY AND SPACE FOR THIS FAMILY OF SIX – AND A WELCOME HOME FOR AN EVER-GROWING BROOD OF CHOOKS

Story & Styling KYLIE JACKES Photography JOHN DOWNS



LIVING AREA An occasional chair (top) – for similar, try Early Settler – is a coveted place for the family (pictured above, clockwise from left, Rhys, Rob, Hamish, Leanne, Eva and Eleia) to take turns enjoying, especially when the temperature drops and the fireplace roars into action. The cushions and throw from Adairs add to the warmth as does the textured ‘Sandared’ ottoman from Ikea.

Country life has always appealed to Leanne, ever since spending Easter holidays at her cousins’ working farm as a kid. “They live on a huge property in central NSW and I just loved the open spaces,” she says. Now, having carved out her own taste of rural life with husband Rob and their four children – Rhys, 13, Eleia, 12, Eva, nine, and Hamish, seven – Leanne couldn’t be happier.

“It suits us all,” she explains of the family’s tree change from the nearby suburbs of the Gold Coast. “Rob spends weekends putting about on his tractor, the girls do horse riding and there’s so much space for the kids to run around and just be kids.”

The push to move to the Gold Coast hinterland came seven years ago, when the couple realised they’d outgrown their previous home. “Our family had doubled in size, so when I saw this two-hectare block for sale I thought it was the ideal place to relocate and build a spacious forever home where we’d be content,” says Leanne.

The picturesque elevated site captured the couple’s imagination and prompted Leanne to quickly compile a hefty book of inspiration filled with pictures of charming farmhouses and classic country kitchens. The priority for Rob was a custom garage to house the beloved family caravan, with space also for a workshop.

To realise their vision, the couple engaged husband-and-wife architect team Angela and Mark Jamison of Jamison Architects, who produced a design which fulfilled all their wishes and more. “We loved it,” recalls Leanne. “It embraced the beauty and aspect of the site, and every detail was cleverly thought out to meet our needs as the kids grew.”

Designed as a long, single storey home, with a triple-gable roof and rooms opening onto shaded verandahs and pergolas, the exterior is as pretty as a picture. Inside, a soaring raked ceiling adds to the wonderful light, bright, open-plan feel, as do abundant louvres, and a wall of glass doors to the north that creates a connection to the outdoors and views.

At nearly 800 square metres, the home’s sheer size was a mammoth project for Rob to take on as owner-builder while working full time. A lot of the work was done in the evenings and on weekends, stretching the build to 18 months, and the family lived in a caravan on the block for nine months. “Living in the van meant less travelling back and forwards, and we were on site to answer questions from trades, but it did have its challenges,” says Leanne. “There were a few interesting school mornings where I’d be cooking the kids’ breakfast and the power would go out, or I’d be in the shower in the van, with my hair soaped up, and the water would be switched off. It was an adventure. We had a lot of tractor rides, fire-pit barbecues and star-gazing nights.”

While Rob was absorbed with the build, Leanne enjoyed selecting finishes that imbue a contemporary country feel. With a preference for natural materials, timber and stone floors lay the foundation for a warm palette layered with vintage finds and heirloom pieces.

Although there’s ongoing finishing touches and plenty of garden projects to keep them busy on weekends, it seems the family enjoys nothing more than tinkering about at home. “We just love being here,” says Leanne. “It’s incredibly peaceful and calm. When Rob was building the house, we really grew as a family, pulling together and working to create it, which has given all of us a deep sense of ownership and appreciation. There’s nowhere else we’d rather be.”

ALL INTERIOR WALLS PAINTED IN DULUX WHITE ON WHITE. SOFA (OPPOSITE, BEHIND ISLAND) COCO REPUBLIC. ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION



LIVING AREA & KITCHEN All the action happens here. “We asked our architects for the raked ceiling, as we love the feeling of a light, airy space – and we also had to have a fireplace,” says Leanne. The Jindara wood fireplace from Gold Coast Fireplace & BBQ Centre, surrounded by ‘Aspen’ stacked stone from 3D Stone, catches the eye the moment you enter the space. It also provides a special spot for a sentimental tapestry titled *Miss Whilloughby*, made by Leanne’s late grandmother and gifted when she was six years old. Blackbutt floorboards from Finlayson’s show natural knots and character, to help generate the country feel, as do pendant lights from Barn Light Australia. The kitchen bench is partnered by industrial-style bar stools – for similar, try Temple & Webster. >

“MY FAVOURITE SPOT IS BY THE fireplace. WE USE IT EVERY NIGHT FROM MOTHER’S DAY TO FATHER’S DAY. IT MAKES THE HOUSE COSY” ~ LEANNE

WE LOVE...

barn doors

Large barn doors with frosted glass inserts, custom-made by Allkind Joinery & Glass, were used to separate the kitchen and pantry (these pages) and in the kids' playroom. Leanne is a big fan. "The kids always have craft projects out and the pantry isn't always neat, so these doors are the perfect solution for when we have visitors," she says. For a range of barn door options, try idealbarndoors.com.au.



BUTLER'S SERVERY A multi-use area alongside the kitchen, this is where Leanne chats with the kids while dishing out snacks, prepping dinner and supervising homework. A Zenith engineered stone benchtop from Mar Gra is teamed with a ledge where the kids can sit and plug in their laptops, or for food to be passed through when entertaining. "From the servery window, it's two steps until you're in the outdoor entertaining area, and if you don't want to see a pile of dishes, you close the pocket doors," says Leanne, who found the antique chairs online. Other great second-hand finds include a 30-year-old solid timber dining table (opposite, for similar, try Connect Furniture) and farmhouse chairs (try Stools & Chairs) repainted in Dulux Night Sky. They sit well in a timeless design that features an island topped with Super White Quartzite, also from Mar Gra, and Brodware 'Winslow' tapware. The artwork above Eleia was a gift, and Leanne's grandmother created the other work (opposite). >

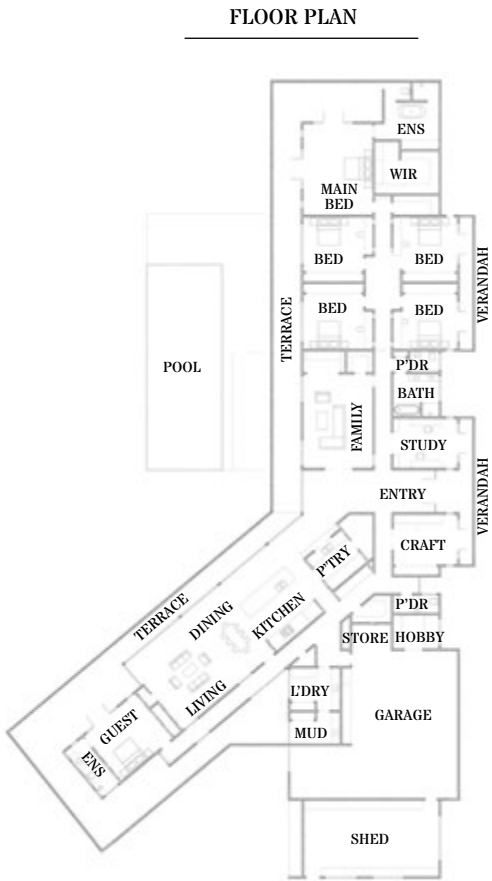


ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

“I’M A REAL BATH PERSON AND LOVED THIS ONE AS SOON AS I TRIED IT. IT’S *beautifully deep* SO YOU CAN COMPLETELY SUBMERGE” ~ LEANNE

ENSUITE Tactile surfaces abound in the sleek ensuite (right), with VJ walls defined by a Carrara marble feature strip and grey Form floor tiles from Tile And Stone Gallery. A Victoria + Albert ‘Amiata’ bath (try The English Tapware Company) and Brodware ‘Winslow’ mixer forms the central feature and is positioned to be admired from the main bedroom. The divider wall is adorned in hexagonal Carrara marble mosaics from 3D Stone and comes with a handy niche. ‘Paros’ towels in Mahogany from Aura Home offer a splash of colour that can be changed seasonally, and plantation shutters from Decor Blinds allow natural light to be adjusted as desired.

LAUNDRY The busy family laundry (below) was kept simple and classic, with Dulux White On White walls, cabinetry in Dulux Lexicon Quarter, a subway-tile splashback, a benchtop in Caesarstone Frosty Carrina and a generous Shaws ‘Classic’ farmhouse sink (try Just Bathroomware), with Brodware ‘Winslow’ tapware. To create a sense of continuity and inject warmth, Strada Quartzite floor tiles from 3D Stone were laid in a French (staggered) pattern to match the large-format version at the home’s entrance.



‘LUCA’ PENDANT LIGHT (THIS PAGE, TOP) | **EARLY SETTLER** BASKETS (THIS PAGE, LEFT) | **KMART** ILLUSTRATION | **KENZEDESIGN.COM** ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION



MAIN BEDROOM With bedrooms for the kids flowing off either side of the central hallway, Leanne and Rob claimed the prime spot at the end. A mix of linen and cushions from Adairs adds cosy layers to the bed, flanked by second-hand side tables refreshed by a coat of Dulux White On White and new handles. For similar handles, try DoUp.com.au. Above the bed, ‘Francis’ wall sconces from Interiors Online tick off bedtime reading in style, and framed photos from a European holiday add a personal touch. >

SOURCE BOOK
ARCHITECT
Jamison Architects,
(07) 5632 5365,
jamisonarchitects.com.au.
ENGINEER
Rienmac,
(07) 5349 0762, rienmac.net.
TILER
Top Floor Tiling,
(07) 5665 7317.

EXTERIOR Pergolas paved with Strada Quartzite from 3D Stone run along the north-western side of the home. “This is a great home for entertaining,” says Leanne. “The kids [including Hamish, pictured] are in the pool all summer, and in winter the outdoor area is lovely. Everyone finds their own space to relax and enjoy themselves.” The Wyandotte chooks are all fans of ‘free ranging’. “Every time the kids go to the produce store, they seem to come back with another one,” says Leanne of their brood, which has grown to 18.



INSIDE STORY
LEANNE & ROB'S HOME

WHO LIVES HERE?
Leanne, a teacher; her husband Rob, a project manager; their children, Rhys, 13, Eleia, 12, Eva, nine, and Hamish, seven; plus Matilda the border collie.

WHAT IS YOUR DECORATING STYLE?
Leanne: “Contemporary farmhouse. I love classic design and vintage style.”

WHAT PART DO YOU LOVE MOST?
“It feels as though we live in the country but we’re only 10 minutes from town. We’re surrounded by wide, open, green spaces.”

ANYTHING LEFT ON THE TO-DO LIST?
“Lots. We’ve started a small orchard and vegetable patch, but want to develop it more. We also have plans to get a couple of cows and a horse, so we’ll need to put in fencing and animal shelters.”



1. A tapestry artwork by Leanne’s grandmother and a chandelier from Beacon Lighting embellish the hallway.
2. Matilda the border collie sits by the front door painted in Dulux Mt Eden.
3. For a similar chair, try Early Settler. The custom curtains are from Spotlight.
4. A Smeg 1100mm freestanding cooker from Harvey Norman was a kitchen must.
5. The ensuite features Carrara marble for the vanity tops from Mar Gra, Victoria + Albert ‘Amiata’ basins and a mirror from Mirror Gallery.
6. Eva’s bedroom is dressed with bedlinen from Adairs and Knart, where Leanne also found the pink basket.
7. Eleia and Hamish toast marshmallows in a brick fire pit built by their dad.

ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

