



The Cullen Feng design for the Paddington terrace. Right: The lofty ceiling maximises the feeling of space. Photos: Murray Fredericks



Stretching out in a cramped space

19th century terraces may be quaint, but accommodating 21st century living is often the real challenge.

Terraces by their very nature are narrow buildings.

With some terraces as little as 3.5 metres wide, creating a contemporary living space can be difficult.

And if there's a corridor, finding room for furniture can be a problem.

"Planning has to be extremely efficient," says architect John Cullen, a co-director of Cullen Feng Architects.

"With terraces, there is no margin for error."

Cullen Feng Architects renovated and extended a 3.5 metre-wide terrace in Paddington, Sydney.

Originally comprising two rooms at ground level and two rooms above, the small rooms and the staircase were a problem.

"The steep Victorian staircase was almost like a cliff face," says Cullen.

So too were the outmoded additions: an antiquated kitchen-laundry and bathroom.

The Paddington terrace was completely remodelled.

The front room was converted into a study and separate powder room.

The second room was demolished to make way for an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area.

The staircase, between the powder room and kitchen was widened, creating two flights rather than the original one.

To extend the living areas, a new outdoor terrace was added, while the architects were able to



manipulate the height of the ceilings.

The kitchen and living areas feature 3.5 metre-high ceilings, higher than the study.

"The spaces feel more generous with the added ceiling heights," says Cullen, who was careful not to dissect the living areas.

A stainless steel bench in the kitchen acts as one of the few divisions.

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