



More and more people are inquiring about environmentally friendly homes.

# Perfect for its setting

## MAYA ANDERSON

Overlooking the Peel Estuary, this new, environmentally friendly home was built into the existing bushland.

The owner engaged Econstruct to design and build the home, which has three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a study. Econstruct general manager Geoff Britton said the company worked with Barbara Cullity at Sustainable Design Solutions to achieve the best environmental outcomes for the site.

Mr Britton said the owner wanted the house to have as many green features as possible.

"The most stand-out features of the residence include the integration of the home into the natural environment, the raked ceilings, use of materials for maximum thermal capacity, and energy and water-saving features such as rain tanks, PV electricity and solar hot-water systems," he said.

Other green initiatives include insulated cavity brick walls using both standard bricks and Ecobrick construction, an Econodeck insulated roof system, windows with strategically placed louvres and Low E Glass to maximise sea breezes and reduce heat loss, highly insulated lightweight walls, deep eaves and low-energy lighting.

The upper level was designed to

## Home of the Year, Energy Efficiency Award

**Suburb:** Herron, Mandurah  
**Builder:** Econstruct  
**Phone:** 9329 9422

be a complete living area, with a focus on enabling the owners to remain in the home as they grow older.

"The kitchen, living, study and main suite cover this area, with a large balcony overlooking the Peel Estuary and smaller balcony on the west side," he said.

"With the natural slope of the ground, this level connects the front entry to the parking and driveway area by a ramp and steps."

The lower level has two bedrooms and a bathroom off a spacious, open area.

"As there is no scheme water or sewer to the property, large rainwater tanks and a self-contained sewer treatment system have been installed," Mr Britton said.

"The design allows for the movement of the sea breeze through the home to keep it cool in summer. Well-designed heat sink walls and window placement allow for maximum heating through solar gain in the winter months.

"The upper level gives a feeling

of maximum space with its high raking ceilings and glazed access to the deck areas that increase the size significantly."

Econstruct have been building environmentally friendly homes since 2002.

"We can tender work designed by architects or designers and also provide a design and construct service in which we engage our professional team of aligned designers to provide the best design solutions for a project," Mr Britton said.

"By using this process we are able to produce quality ecological construction for a healthy living environment and ensure the product selections meet the client budget before proceeding to construction."

The company builds between eight and 12 homes each year. Contract prices were generally in the \$500,000-plus category, with more and more people inquiring about environmentally friendly homes.

"We are finding the interest in this sector of the industry is growing significantly," Mr Britton said. "Increases to power and water costs will only ensure more people will be looking at how to make their homes less expensive to run in the future, so economical factors will start to influence the decisions of home builders in the future, not just environmental ones."

