

# A very desirable location

► Kim Newth

Putting down roots on the coast or building a gorgeous beach holiday home is still a big dream for many, with Coromandel's Mercury Bay a particularly desirable location.

Whitianga-based architecture and design consultant Kirstin Castle, of Studio 77, says the area's appeal has provided a degree of cushioning for the local market, in that people are still choosing to build there even in the face of rising construction costs. With coastal sites increasingly impacted by climate change, she notes that coastal science is fast becoming a pivotal factor in the design of homes in coastal communities.

Local growth prospects remain positive, with further stages ahead for the Whitianga Waterways' canal development. "This has really allowed long term, gradual growth for the town. The marine focus is such a drawcard as it creates properties that have beautiful views, open spaces and functional marine amenities."

Kirstin's family roots are in Hahei, reaching back to some of the first European settlers there. This is where she began her architectural practice in 2008, four years after graduating from UNITEC with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. She has since relocated to Whitianga, as it provides a more central location for her office within Mercury Bay, where she is a leading specialist in new home architecture as well as large-scale home alterations' design.

For Kirstin, every unique client and site hold the key to delivering tailored, creative design solutions. Studio 77 offers a full range of architectural design services, from pre-design all the way through to detailed design documentation and building consents.

Kirstin works closely with clients to hone their design ideas and establish the project's look and feel, before creating floor plans, elevations and a 3D model that then provide the foundation for the final developed and detailed design phases. Having worked within the same area for more than 15 years, Kirstin has a deep understanding of regulation and consenting processes and enjoys working proactively with council staff.



Local growth prospects remain positive, with further stages ahead for the Whitianga Waterways' canal development.

**"The marine focus is such a drawcard as it creates properties that have beautiful views, open spaces and functional marine amenities."**

She has strong working relationships with local surveyors and building contractors.

Creating innovative, functional and sustainable design is Kirstin's forte and her body of work includes many beautiful coastal homes. Her love of strong cantilevered forms is prominent in such memorable projects as Canal #2 - an exquisitely balanced and graceful home - and Cooks Beach, where a cantilevered corner is a pivotal feature.

A collaborative project with client, interior designer Vikki Gorton and landscape designer Pascal Tibbets produced the impressive 'Lady Jocelyn' home. A wedge-shaped site, opening out to a canal, gave rise to a gorgeous design that steps elegantly along each side boundary.

Close to home for Kirstin was a project involving an historic homestead in Hahei, which was sold in 2018 after having been in her family for more than a century.

"I was very privileged to work with the new owners, designing alterations, new garaging and cottages.

"It was important to bring functions within this home into the 21st century while preserving the style and scale of its original design."

One of Studio 77's exciting new projects

involves bringing to completion a previously unfinished home on Buffalo Beach, in collaboration with the client, building contractor and engineers.

"The site is incredible; the house deserves to be completed and will be very loved by my amazing clients."

**RMS SURVEYORS**  
Stewart Group Limited

**THE COROMANDEL'S LEADING LAND DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**

—

**Offices in Whitianga and Whangamata**

07 865 8993  
0800 367 767  
www.rmssurveyors.co.nz

By involving us, you minimise the chances of unforeseen complications, unnecessary costs, and delayed completion of your project.

**BAYSIDE CONSTRUCTION**  
Whitianga

Caleb Jennings  
ph : 027 537 5953  
caleb@baysideconstruction.co.nz  
www.baysideconstruction.co.nz

