

RENTAL UPGRADE WITH PAINT

Rich Visick's Resene colour transformation improved both the value and yield of his rental, writes **Diana Clement**.



Formerly hidden by ugly imitation brick, the existing weatherboards in this Thames rental have been freshened up with Resene Sonyx 101 in the Norwester shade.

RENOVATION



Renovations always cost more than budgeted, don't they? Not Richard Visick's renovation of the "Gold Miner's Cottage" in Thames. Visick's exterior renovation was judged runner-up in the NZPIF/Resene Renovation of the Year Award late last year.

Visick bought the Thames property in June 2014 for \$175,000 and renovated the interior before it was tenanted. An exterior renovation was always on the cards and Visick made the decision in late 2016 to begin the project in 2017. The outcome exceeded initial expectations, which encouraged the Thames property investor to enter it in the competition.

Previous owners had "updated" the Karaka Road property in a fashion that was now long out of style. The exterior was a mix of rather sad imitation brick cladding over weatherboards and a metal tile roof fitted over corrugated iron, says Visick. Such a look depressed the value of the home and wasn't the best style for attracting good tenants.

Visick didn't even realise that the house was a former gold miner's cottage until a builder's report revealed this fact. "It had been added on to over the years and there was still the original roofline in the attic," he says.

Renovating the exterior was always in the long-term plan. "I never liked the imitation brick cladding," says Visick. "So, I always wanted to one day get it back to its original look."

To get the project rolling Visick sold an underperforming rental and decided to use some of the funds to renovate the cottage. He approached the existing tenant to talk about the work. "With rentals hard to come by, the tenant decided to stay and was happy for us to work around her," he says.

Securing a builder proved problematic for this project because no-one was keen on the prospect of what the imitation brick was made of and what might lie under the cladding. "We talked to several builders about the project but none [were] keen to do it as there was no telling what was under the imitation brick cladding," says Visick.



Some of the local builders asked to quote were concerned that the cladding dated back to an era when asbestos was commonly used. Visick's budget had contingency for this, but the builders still didn't want to touch the job. Eventually builder Kevin Miller came out of retirement and took the job on.

Visick sent a piece of the cladding away to Wellington for testing. He also arranged for a specialist asbestos removal firm from Hamilton to test the cladding and to give two quotes for removal of asbestos or non-asbestos cladding.

Both sets of tests came back negative and Visick decided that he had the necessary skills to remove the cladding himself without need of a specialist and a \$10,000 bill. The old imitation bricks were removed relatively easily and disposed of cheaply at the local dump.

The next piece of good news was that the old weatherboards were still beneath the cladding, which meant Visick didn't need council consent to change the cladding type.

Visick and Miller worked together to identify and remove the rotten weatherboards and refitted 300m of 220mm boards bought from ITM in Kopu. "They were the closest we could find to the originals," Visick says. The surviving original boards were then steam cleaned.

Because the cladding had been attached to vertical battens, nailed into the original weatherboards, the good boards were riddled with nail holes, which Visick had to fill painstakingly. "I spent about a month filling and rubbing down then completely undercoated the [entire] house with Resene Quick Dry Primer, re-sanded and picked a colour for the top coat and trim."

The former blacksmith now works part time in a local scrapyards. This gives him the opportunity to work on his rental properties.

Colours aren't Visick's thing so he sought the advice of Chelsea Mudford at the Resene ColorShop in Thames and eventually took away around 15 test



The red roof is still to be updated potentially using Zincolume.