

21st Century Architecture

Beach Houses

A photograph of a modern beach house. The house features large glass walls and a dark, cantilevered roof. A wide wooden deck extends from the house, with two black lounge chairs facing the ocean. The view is of a calm blue sea under a clear sky.

Stephen Crafti

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This is my fifth book dedicated to beach houses. What is it about beach houses in Australia and New Zealand that makes them so fascinating? Fundamentally, it must stem from an eagerness to escape from the city (Australia is one of the most urbanised countries in the world, with over 70 percent of the population living in cities). This escape found momentum in the 1950s, with the building of humble fibro shacks dotted along the coast.



These simple fibro shacks may not have had two separate living areas and ensuites, but there was a strong connection to the coastal elements, from the dunes to the crashing waves of the sea. Over the decades, the beach house became more sophisticated. With the price of land near the water increasing substantially, it was inevitable that more permanent homes would be built.



However, while these latest beach houses are more substantial both in size and finish than those of previous decades, there's still a strong connection to the coastal surrounds. Large picture windows have been designed to capture the sea views, as well as gnarled tea-trees. And materials such as timber have been selected to weather in the often harsh sunlight. Other homes featured in this book are made from concrete, designed to combat the often severe winds from the open sea.



While many beach houses in this book are entirely new, built from the ground up, some are homes from previous periods that have been thoughtfully extended.

A house from the 1970s is reworked as well as showing a contemporary side. Other homes have replaced the original dwelling that existed on the site. And while there's no comparison to these homes, both in style or finish, there are subtle clues in the present design as to a 'former life', and the memories this entails.



Although each beach house in this book is unique, a similar arrangement of spaces and features can be identified. Bedrooms are often located at ground level, with the upper level given over to the living areas. There is typically more natural light at the higher level, and often unimpeded views of the beach and the blue horizon. The other commonality is the larger kitchen, with generous island benches allowing the entire family to be part of meal preparation. Pantries may be smaller, and there may be fewer kitchen appliances, but meals are generally more casual. Let's be realistic, the idea of heading to the beach is equated with simply prepared meals, with the emphasis on fresh ingredients.



Building a beach house not only provides a valuable escape from the city, it also offers an opportunity for both owners and architects to experiment with more adventurous ideas.

Restrictions abound in the city—there are neighbours in close proximity and some streets are heritage-listed; not to mention all the setback requirements from local councils, ensuring overshadowing isn't an issue. While architects enjoy the freedom to design more liberally, there are still constraints which need to be addressed. And in certain enclaves along the coastline, these restrictions can be as challenging to manoeuvre as designing in a heritage-listed street in the city.



Beach houses are often equated with fragile timber homes elevated precariously on poles. However, many of the beach houses in this book are strongly anchored to the earth. One house, by Woods Bagot at Wonga Beach, is constructed of concrete block. But rather than feeling cavernous, this exceptional home is strongly connected to the surrounding courtyard gardens. But even when a beach house is constructed of timber, as is the case with Hulena Architects' house at Matarangi Beach, the timber was stained black to create a moodier presence.

People will continue to be drawn to the beach, whether they are parents holidaying with children or empty nesters dividing their time between city and coast. Spending time in both environments not only accentuates the experience in each abode but, more importantly, highlights the diversity between the two environments.

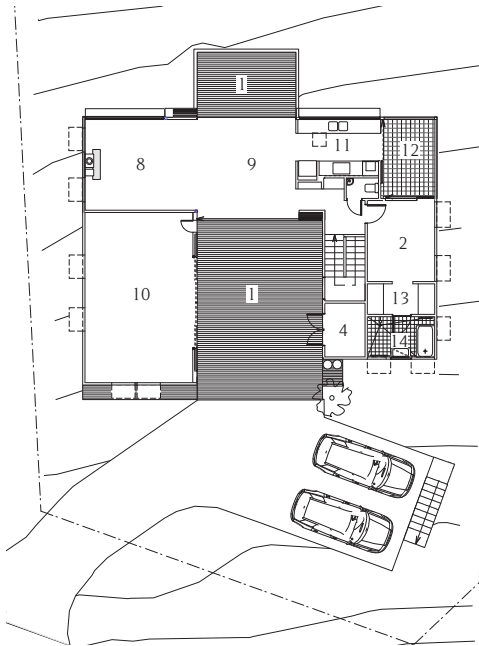


Built on a site once occupied by a tiny unsalvageable fibro shed, this rather less modest replacement house nevertheless retains the casual sensibilities of the shack, located a short walk from Kilcare Beach at **HARDYS BAY**, on the central coast of New South Wales.

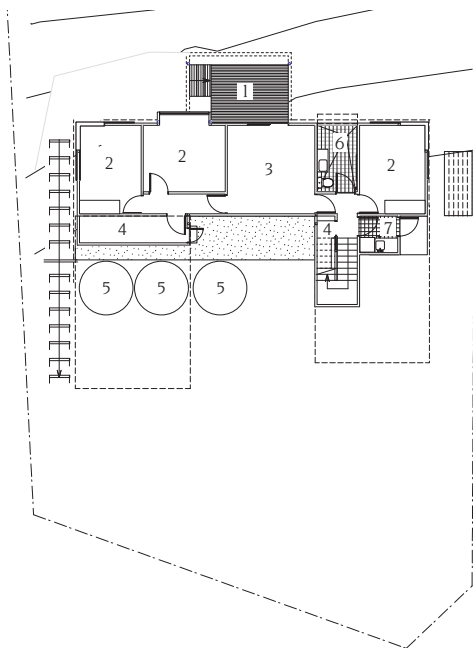


As the site falls away from the street, the two-level house appears single storey from the front.

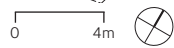
Living areas, master bedroom and ensuite are arranged on the first floor, with children's bedrooms on the level below. Given the slope of the land, all rooms, including bedrooms, enjoy views of the water and established bushland.



Ground floor



Lower ground floor



- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 Deck | 8 Living |
| 2 Bedroom | 9 Dining |
| 3 Rumpus room | 10 Games room |
| 4 Storage | 11 Kitchen |
| 5 Water tanks | 12 Screened verandah |
| 6 Bathroom | 13 Walk-in-robe |
| 7 Laundry | 14 Ensuite |





The choice of simple construction materials was in part determined by the house being located within a bushfire zone. Externally, the house features spotted gum and fibro cement sheets, with a roof constructed of Zinalume steel sheeting. Inside, polished timber floorboards are featured throughout, while the kitchen is made of laminate. A plywood ceiling over the dining area (which forms part of the open plan living areas) creates a point of difference.

SIMPSON + WILSON

designed the house to be flexible, providing generous indoor space. There's a games room on the first floor and a rumpus room below.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRETT BOARDMAN





To ensure the outdoors can be enjoyed all year round, the house features a covered verandah, and large sliding doors in the games room and dining area open up onto generous deck areas.





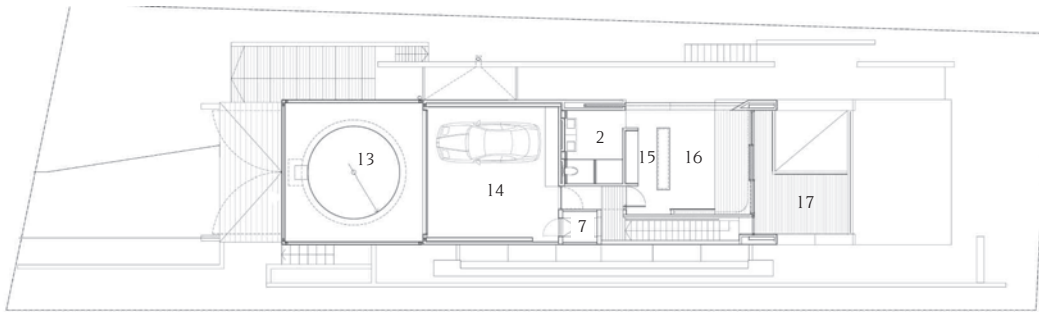


Located at **WHALE BEACH**, New South Wales, this three-level beach house occupies a site relatively narrow for a coastal property. Constructed of off-form concrete and clad in black-stained timber, the house enjoys unimpeded views of the Pacific Ocean.

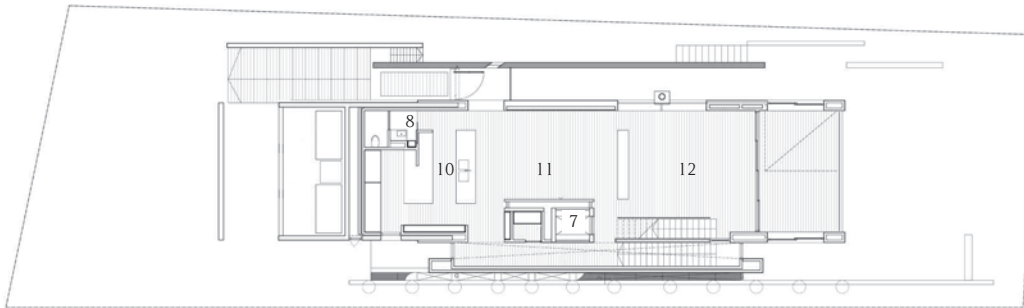


To ensure a sufficient level of natural light entered the house, **POPOVBASS ARCHITECTS** created a substantial off-form concrete wall to the north, to direct light to lower levels.

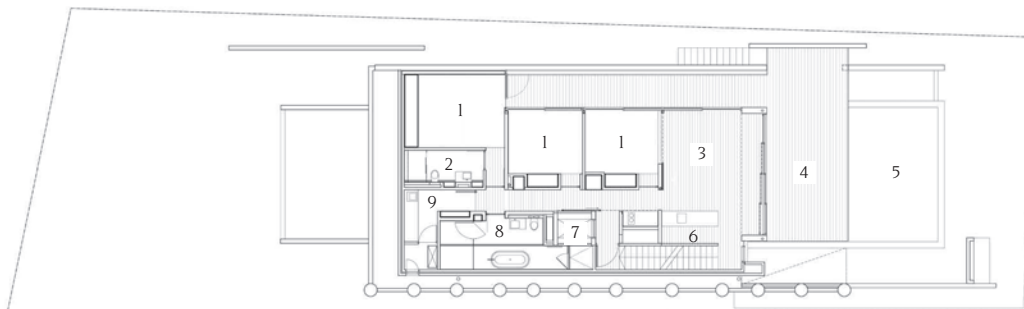
The upper level of the house, which is also the street level, comprises carport, main bedroom, ensuite and walk-in robe. Steps adjacent to the garage lead down to the entrance located at the middle level. This level is given over to the kitchen, dining and living areas, while the lowest level of the house has three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchenette and a second living area.



Upper level



Middle level



Lower level

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1 Bedroom | 10 Kitchen |
| 2 Ensuite | 11 Dining |
| 3 Living | 12 Living |
| 4 Deck | 13 Turntable |
| 5 Pool | 14 Garage |
| 6 Kitchenette | 15 Walk-in-robe |
| 7 Lift | 16 Master bedroom |
| 8 Bathroom | 17 Balcony |
| 9 Laundry | |





To celebrate its idyllic position, the two upper levels feature cantilevered off-form concrete slabs as balconies.

To further increase the natural light in the living areas, a portion of the ceiling over the terrace has been 'cut out'.



A sense of tranquility pervades the interior, with materials used sparingly. Off-form concrete is featured prominently, and the stained timber walls are expressed in the interior. The design represents a new take on the beach house concept, as there's a sense of familiarity in the materials selected, though it certainly doesn't reference the fibro shack that once stood on the site.

PHOTOGRAPHY KRAIG CARLSTROM





Sustainability and a focus on alternative energy sources are the emphasis of the design of this house located on ten acres in Victoria's picturesque **MORNINGTON PENINSULA**.



CENTRUM ARCHITECTS

used a variety of materials for the house, including Dromana stone, rendered brickwork and aluminium panels.

The gradual slope over the site allowed the creation of a three-level house, anchored by means of the stonework. The lower ground level has parking for three cars, together with a rumpus room and a staircase leading to the ground floor. On one side of this floor plate are three bedrooms and a bathroom, together with a generous terrace. On the other side of the house, separated by a central staircase within a void, are the main living areas—kitchen, meals area, dining area and formal lounge. There is also a generous covered deck with a built-in barbeque for al fresco dining.





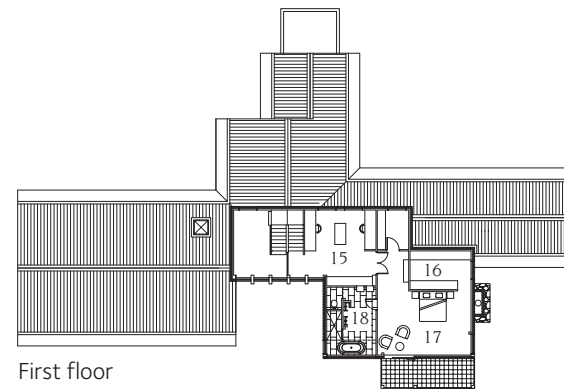
The first floor of the house is given over to the main bedroom suite, which includes bedroom, bathroom and dressing area, together with a study area.



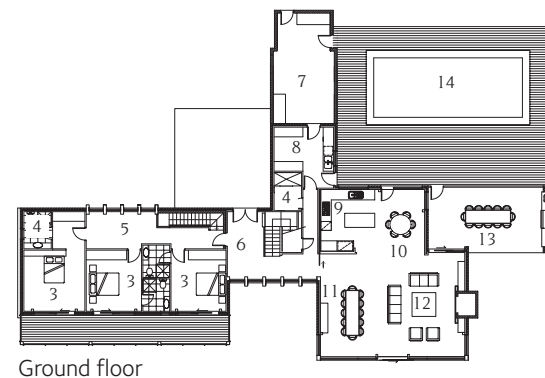


The pitched roof, unusual for a contemporary house, is ideal for solar panels and photovoltaic cells, providing an efficient source of heating for the house and swimming pool. Yet rather than design a typical pitch roof, the architects folded the roof plane to incorporate the eaves.

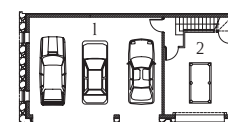
PHOTOGRAPHY ALEX BENCI
(AXIOM PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN)



First floor



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- 1 Garage
- 2 Rumpus room
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 Bathroom
- 5 Gallery
- 6 Entry
- 7 Service
- 8 Laundry
- 9 Kitchen
- 10 Meals area
- 11 Dining
- 12 Living
- 13 Al fresco
- 14 Pool
- 15 Study
- 16 Walk-in-robe
- 17 Master bedroom
- 18 Ensuite



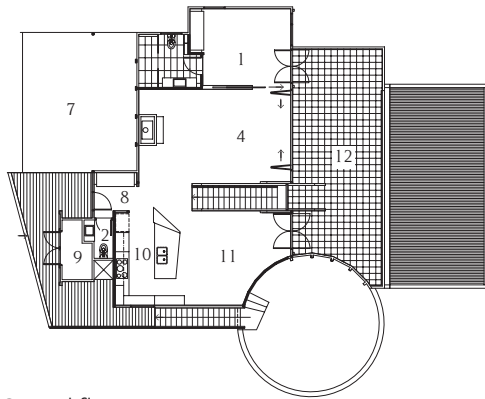




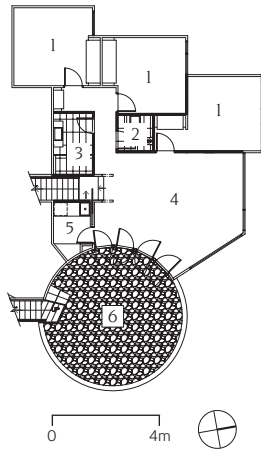
This beach house replaces a shack that formerly occupied the site near **VICTORIA'S GREAT OCEAN ROAD**.



The site falls from the street, making the two-level house appear single storey, with the lower level concealed. Constructed of a variety of materials, including a steel roof with an aluminium fascia, the house has a sense of the 1950s.



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- 1 Bedroom
- 2 WC
- 3 Bathroom
- 4 Living
- 5 Laundry
- 6 Fire pit
- 7 Carport
- 8 Entry
- 9 Storage
- 10 Kitchen
- 11 Meals area
- 12 Terrace



The top level is surrounded by timber decks, one of which is used as a carport. Another deck, complete with outdoor shower, is positioned to one side of the front entrance.

The front door opens to a large open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, leading to a generous terrace. This level also includes the main bedroom and ensuite. With Bass Strait visible in the distance, **CENTRUM ARCHITECTS** designed the house to capitalise on the ocean views. The living areas contain generous glazing, so the views can always be enjoyed from the comfort of an armchair.



On the level below are three bedrooms, together with a shared bathroom and laundry. To ensure each receives generous northern light, the three bedrooms are stepped across the site. There's also a rumpus room, which leads directly to the garden. To prevent sand from being dragged through the house after a day at the beach, an external staircase was included in the design.





The aerodynamic roof design is a response to the house's position on top of a hill, where it can get quite windy at times.

PHOTOGRAPHY AXIOM PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN





This large beach house, perched on a cliff overlooking **WESTERN PORT BAY**, Victoria, was designed as a series of expandable wings by **SALLY DRAPER ARCHITECTS**. Positioned quite close to the street, the massive timber screen walls create a bunker effect. To the north, retractable glazed walls open onto the bushland setting.

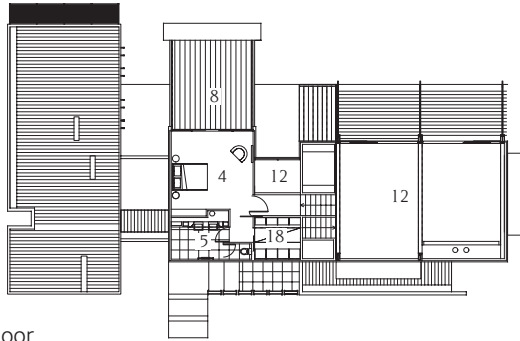


The bedroom wing contains the teenage children's and guest bedrooms. The parents' bedroom is located near the main living spaces, though half a level up, allowing the house to function as a more intimate one-bedroom retreat when there are no children or guests staying.

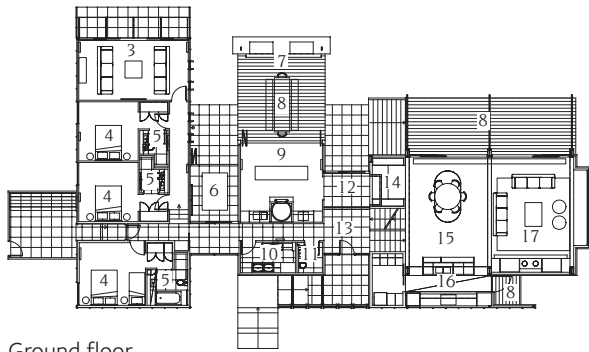




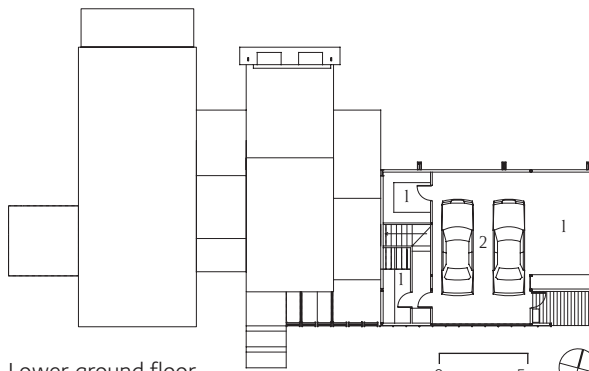
Adjacent to the lobby is the main kitchen and living area, a half-level above the entrance, featuring picturesque views of the site. The hearth is an important anchoring point in the design, providing a sense of tranquility, as well as a sense of being grounded. To add texture, timber beams are used in the ceiling and flooring. All these elements combine to encourage a more slow paced life, in contrast with city living.



First floor



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Storage | 10 Laundry |
| 2 Garage | 11 Powder room |
| 3 Children's living | 12 Void |
| 4 Bedroom | 13 Entry |
| 5 Ensuite | 14 Study |
| 6 Spa | 15 Dining |
| 7 Fireplace/BBQ | 16 Kitchen |
| 8 Deck | 17 Living |
| 9 Food preparation/Oven | 18 Walk-in-robe |



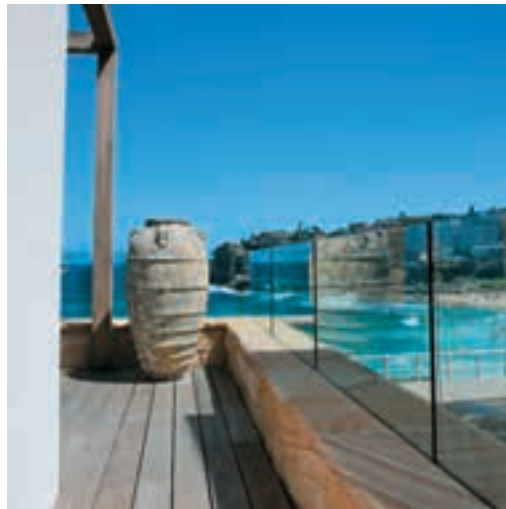
A single large picture window to the east frames sea views through the bush.

PHOTOGRAPHY TREVOR MEIN



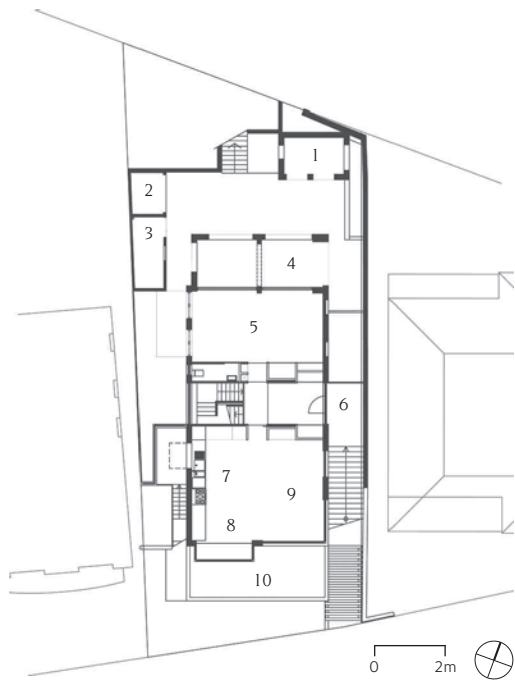


Originally a single-storey dwelling built in the 1920s, Craig Shelsher, director of **CUSTANCE ASSOCIATES** expanded this house perched on a hilltop in **BRONTE**, New South Wales, to three levels to make the most of the unparalleled Pacific Ocean views.





First floor



Ground floor

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 1 Storage | 8 Dining |
| 2 BBQ | 9 Family room |
| 3 Laundry | 10 Balcony |
| 4 Alfresco | 11 Bedroom |
| 5 Living | 12 Bathroom |
| 6 Entry | 13 Hall |
| 7 Kitchen | 14 Void |

Only a couple of the walls from the original structure remain, with new sandstone walls complementing the headland and anchoring the house to the site, which slopes ten metres from the rear to the front. The extended lower ground level now includes parking for three cars, a rumpus room, and a separate study.





As the beach house is on an exposed coastal site, taking the brunt of the southerly winds and salt air, robust materials were used. As well as the sandstone base, the walls are constructed of timber, zinc and rendered brick painted white.





A double-height space in the lobby separates the two living areas at ground level and the bedroom wings on the first floor. Hot air is drawn up and purged through highlight louvred windows during the warmer months. During winter, large timber sliding doors framing the two living areas ensure heat doesn't escape.



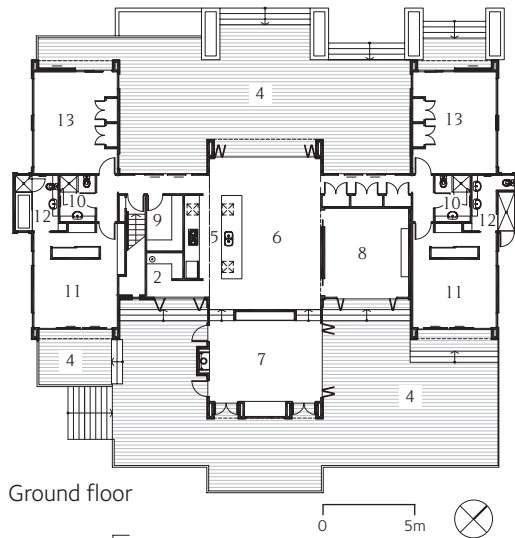
The first level contains the open-plan kitchen, dining and living areas, all leading to a generous terrace via glass doors. Framed with toughened glass balustrades, the front terrace offers spectacular views of the vast blue ocean. At the rear is a pool room, leading to a covered area with a built-in barbeque.

PHOTOGRAPHY JOSEPH SARKODIE

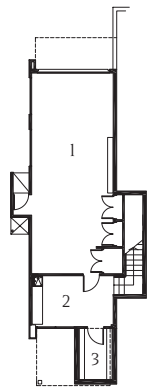




Located on **WAIHEKE ISLAND**, a short ferry trip from Auckland, and overlooking Oneroa Bay, this house enjoys panoramic views to the headlands. The design of the timber house uses the traditional boatshed as a template, evident in the three pitch roofed pavilions, each reminiscent of a boat house.



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- 1 Garage
- 2 Laundry
- 3 Wine cellar
- 4 Deck
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Dining
- 7 Formal living
- 8 Informal living
- 9 Study
- 10 Guest ensuite
- 11 Master bedroom
- 12 Master ensuite
- 13 Bunk room



The central pavilion functions as the home's social hub. With its dramatic timber-lined roof, this open-plan area leads to decks on both sides. Architect **JASON BAILEY** has created as much outdoor space as possible, as well as ensuring these areas are protected from the often inclement weather. While this living area is open plan, a level change loosely delineates the lounge from the kitchen.

The house is designed to be used by two families at the same time or independently. Two almost identical pavilions lead via links from the main living pavilion. Each pavilion contains a main bedroom suite, together with bunk rooms. If only one family is using the house, each wing can be easily partitioned.



The design also includes a second living area adjacent to the main living area, as well as a study. All rooms feature doors leading to a deck. Though designed to accommodate large groups of people, the spaces aren't overwhelming if the owners arrive on their own.





As the house is located on a ridge line, there was sufficient space to create a lower level, comprising a garage, storage area and a wine cellar.

PHOTOGRAPHY KALLAN MACLEOD



Located an hour's drive from Sydney, these beach houses at **BUNDEENA**, in the Royal National Park, initially faced opposition from the local community. Locals were keen to maintain the laidback character and scale of the area, prompting architect **TONY OWEN** to reduce the size of the development from 42 beach houses to 15.

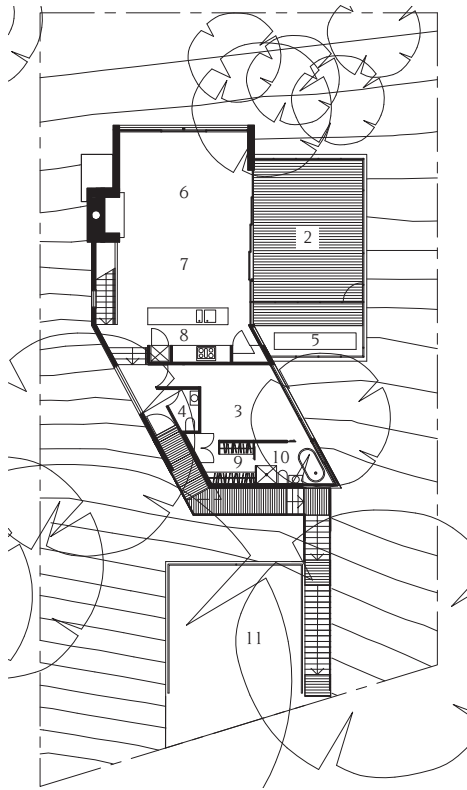


The houses lie on a 30-degree slope and overlook Port Hacking and Hasting Beach.

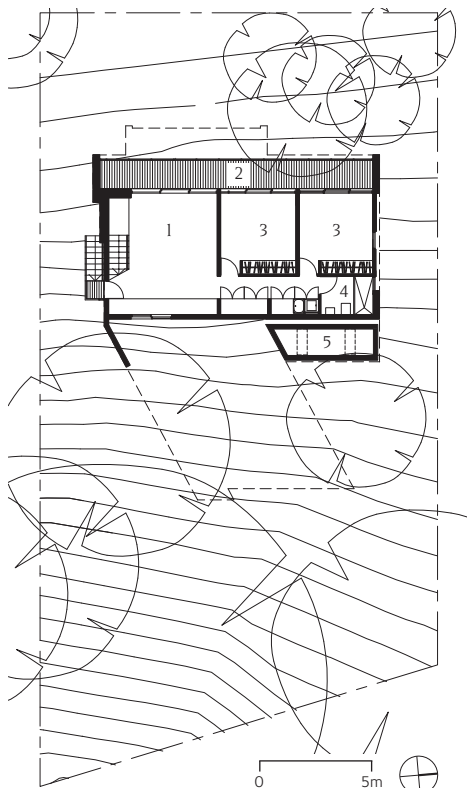
The two-storey beach houses are termed 'cross-over' houses as a result of their design.



The lower level, for example, which includes three bedrooms and a bathroom, is designed across the building envelope. In contrast, the kitchen and living areas, as well as the main bedroom on the first level, are orientated 90 degrees to the bedrooms below to maximise the northern light. This orientation on the first level also allowed for the inclusion of a large terrace adjacent to the living areas. To ensure sun protection, both levels are well screened by extruded walls and generous eaves.



First floor



Ground floor

- 1 Family room
- 2 Terrace
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 WC
- 5 Plunge pool
- 6 Living
- 7 Dining
- 8 Kitchen
- 9 Walk-in-robe
- 10 Ensuite
- 11 Carport







The upper level is conceived as a timber box for the landscape, and the lower level is a white contemporary portal form. As each house is on a steeply sloping block, steel-framed structures were used to touch the ground lightly and minimise impact. The forms cantilever dramatically over the landscape and over each other, creating a strong sculptural composition. As a result, the living areas float over the bush, and even the swimming pools are cantilevered.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRETT BOARDMAN







This contemporary-style house overlooking **BURLEIGH HEADS**, in Queensland's Gold Coast hinterland, is situated on a generous 5-acre site. Though the surroundings are quite bushy, architects **INNOVARCHI** were mindful of not dominating the site, resulting in the house's low slung form and low pitch metal sheet roof.



The house not only captures the majestic views over Burleigh Beach, but the career and interests of the owners, who are involved in the ballet industry. The design therefore features a large ballet studio at ground level, together with an art gallery, photographic studio and office.

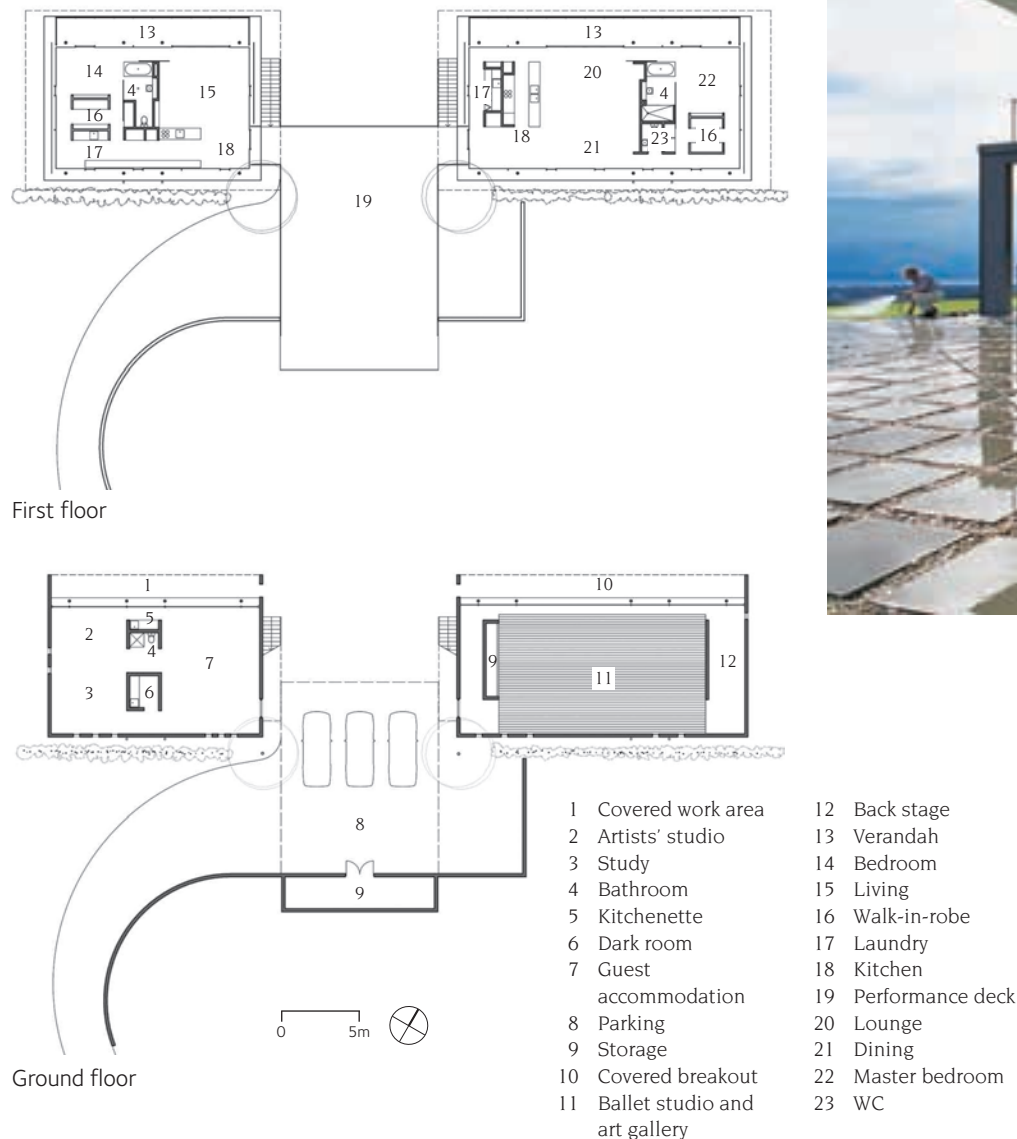


While the ground floor is single-skin blockwork on three sides (to allow privacy for dancers and providing thermal mass), the first floor of the house is completely glazed on four sides. The brief was for a fishbowl, though with private areas for dressing.





Conceived as two pavilions on the first level, both of which open to a terrace, the main pavilion comprises a large open-plan space consisting of the living area, kitchen and library. There is also the master bedroom, which includes an ensuite and walk-in-robe.



Like a traditional Queensland-style house these pavilions feature wrap-around balconies with unimpeded views of the Pacific Ocean. Generous eaves, large pivot doors and louvred glass windows are designed to capture the prevailing winds and offer protection from the summer sun.

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN LINKINS AND STEPHEN OXENBURY

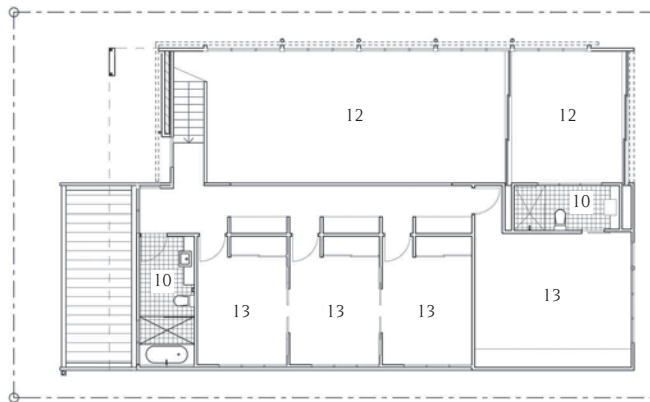
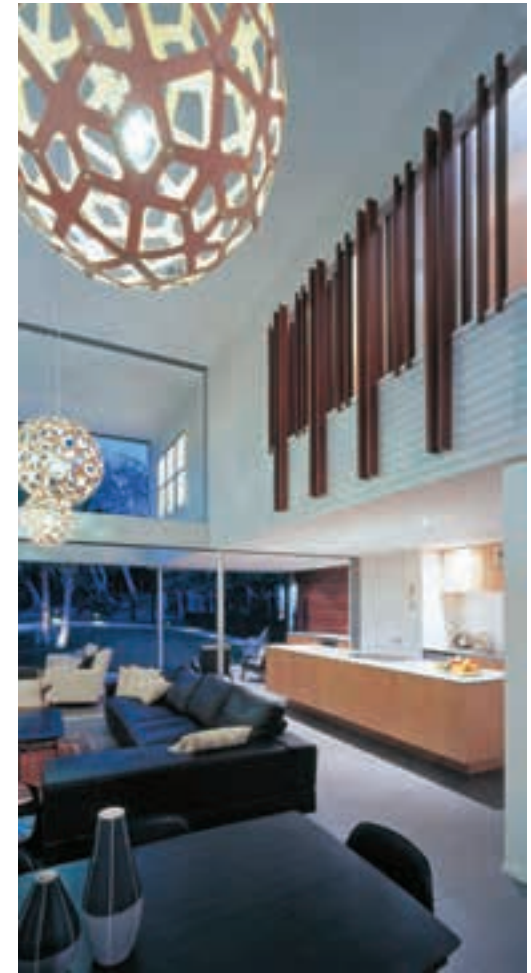


The holiday destination of **FINGAL HEAD** occupies a slither of land between Tweed River and the Pacific Ocean. On the extreme tip of New South Wales, this coastal community consists of only 300 or so houses.

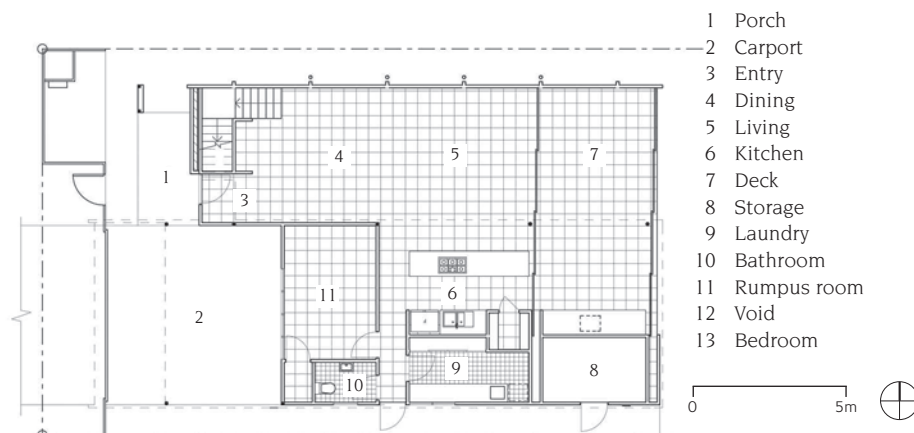


PAUL UHLMANN ARCHITECTS overcame the many site restrictions to design a two-level house that, thanks to a double-height void over the living area, seems considerably larger than its 260 square metres. The large terrace, adjacent to the living area, is treated as an additional room. Sliding glass doors frame the lounge, while mesh screens close off the terrace. Designed for security, as well as for keeping mosquitoes at bay, the two areas can be opened up entirely.





First floor



Ground floor

- 1 Porch
- 2 Carport
- 3 Entry
- 4 Dining
- 5 Living
- 6 Kitchen
- 7 Deck
- 8 Storage
- 9 Laundry
- 10 Bathroom
- 11 Rumpus room
- 12 Void
- 13 Bedroom

To extend the sense of space, the architects also designed a six-metre-long kitchen island bench clad in rock maple. The same timber was used for the joinery on the terrace, which contains a built-in barbeque.



A study and a second living area complete the ground floor. To create a sense of transparency, the timber-clad study nook is punctuated with a fish tank, through which distant views of the garden can be enjoyed.

The theme of transparency extends to the balustrade with timber battens separating the ground and first floor. When walking along this passage, one can see across the living area and through the clerestory louvred glass windows.

PHOTOGRAPHY SCOTT BURROWS
(APERTURE ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY)





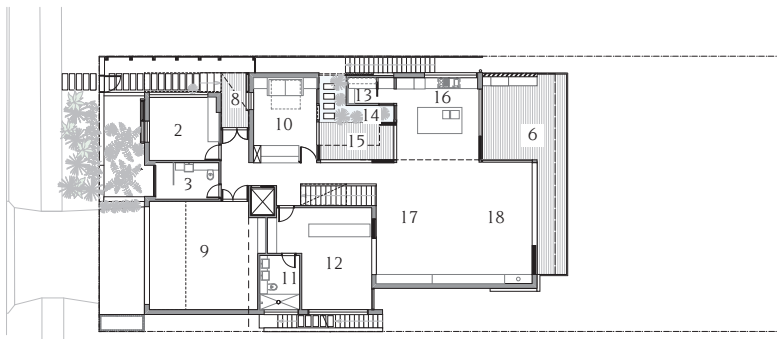


For this beach house on the south coast of New South Wales, architects **MOLNAR FREEMAN** were keen to create a modest front façade blending natural materials. It's only upon entering the house that the panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean are revealed.

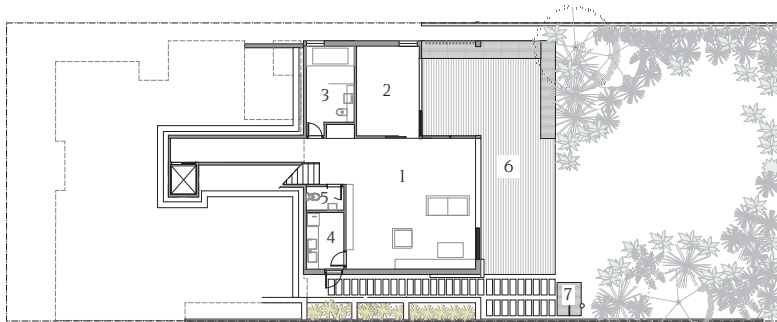


While the house is substantial in size, from the street it appears as single storey, with the lower level concealed by the three-metre fall towards the beach.

In response to the site, and the prevailing winds, the materials become lighter as one moves through the house. The rendered brick façade gives way to generous glass walls and timber cladding. Louvres made from either timber or aluminium diffuse the northern light.



Ground floor



Lower ground floor



- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Rumpus room | 10 Study |
| 2 Bedroom | 11 Ensuite |
| 3 Bathroom | 12 Master bedroom |
| 4 Laundry | 13 Pantry |
| 5 Powder room | 14 Reflection pond |
| 6 Deck | 15 Courtyard |
| 7 Outdoor shower | 16 Kitchen |
| 8 Entry | 17 Dining |
| 9 Garage | 18 Living |

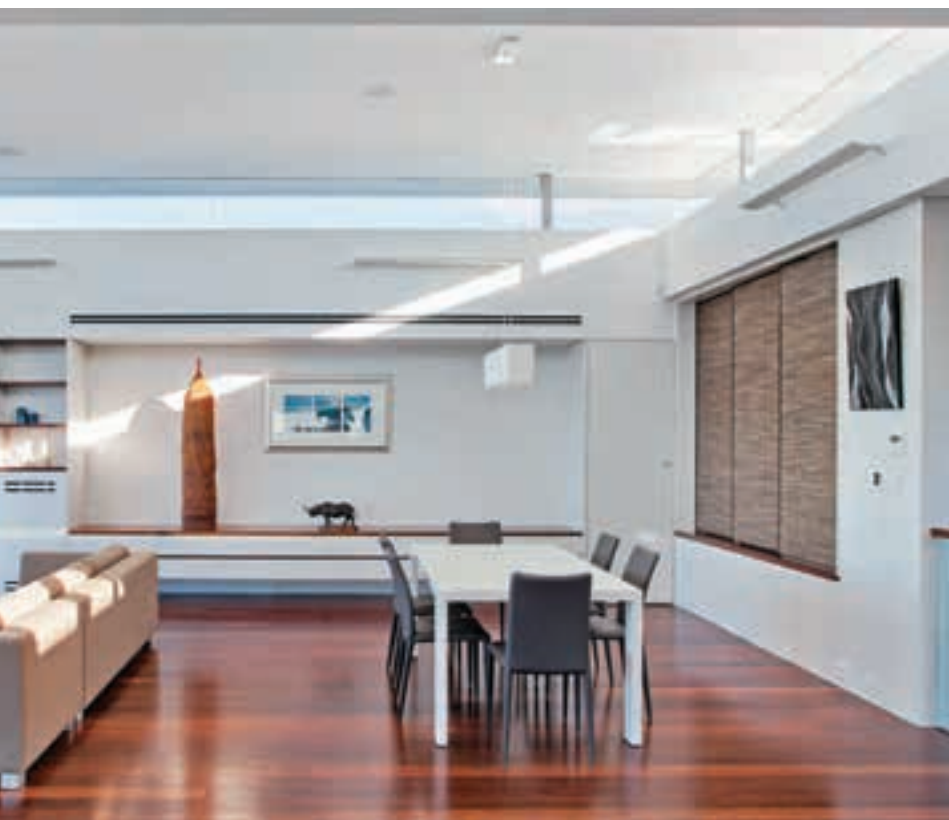




Located between the study and kitchen, the north-facing courtyard allows natural light to penetrate into the living areas. A pond creates a tranquil contrast to the crashing of the ocean waves. A large deck accessed from the living area enjoys 180-degree views of the ocean. Fully covered by a timber-lined ceiling, the deck can be used all year round.

The master bedroom and a second bedroom are at ground level, while the rest of the accommodation is on the level below. Concealed in the walls of the large rumpus room are fold-out beds that provide for guest accommodation.





Just as the house 'loosens up' towards the rear, so too does the landscaping. While the front garden is relatively formal, as one moves towards the rear of the house the garden beds become curvaceous, with an increased use of native plants.

PHOTOGRAPHY MURRAY FREDERICKS



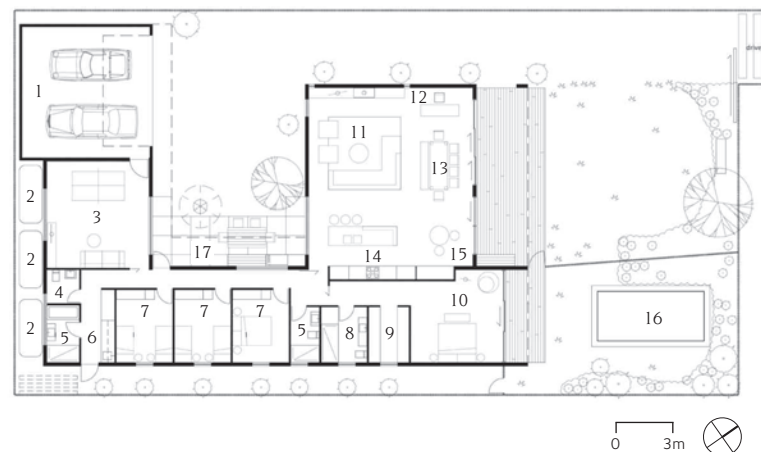


Architect Chris de Campo, of **de CAMPO ARCHITECTS**, found this vacant site at **SORRENTO**, Victoria. Cleared by a previous owner, the 1600-square-metre site was subdivided into two, with de Campo retaining the rear property. Slightly elevated towards the rear of the site, the beach house is accessed via a driveway lined with olive trees, making it extremely private and shielded from neighbours.

The insulated precast concrete walls make this robust house easy to maintain, durable and, most importantly, sustainable.



The concrete and glass house (double-glazed for thermal control) is U-shaped, designed around a courtyard. On one side of the courtyard are the kitchen and living areas, together with the main bedroom. On the other side are the children's bedrooms, including a rumpus/television room. A fourth bedroom was added to accommodate guests. A study nook, clad in timber, is adjacent to the dining area.



- 1 Garage
- 2 Water tanks
- 3 Rumpus room
- 4 WC
- 5 Bathroom
- 6 Laundry
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Ensuite
- 9 Walk-in-robe
- 10 Master bedroom
- 11 Living
- 12 Study
- 13 Dining
- 14 Kitchen
- 15 Bar
- 16 Pool
- 17 Courtyard



In keeping with the simple form of the house, materials have been used sparingly. Timber-lined ceilings complement the concrete floors, with messmate used for the living room ceiling. Timber also appears in the treatment of the eaves, ensuring a blurring between the interior and exterior.





Perhaps the most appealing feature of the house is its versatility, with the courtyard and front garden really opening up the outdoors and blending seamlessly with the interior. Large sliding doors allow for cross ventilation, with natural breezes cooling the house down without the need of an air conditioner.

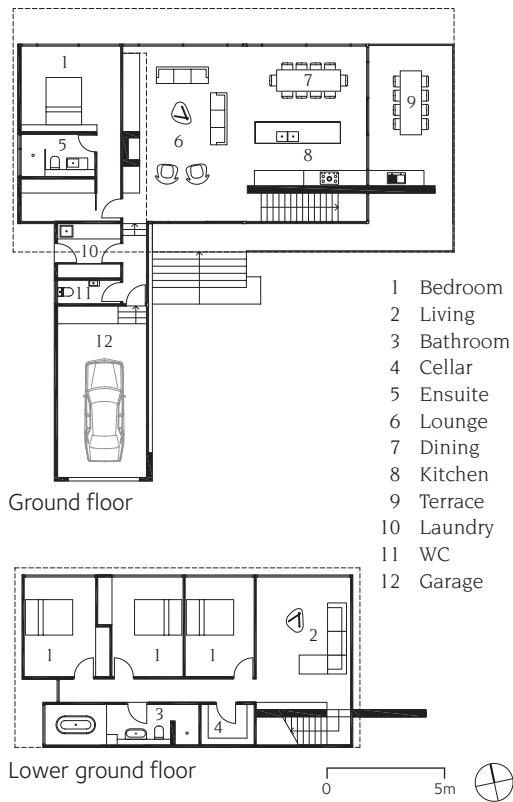
PHOTOGRAPHY TRISH HARTLEY





Constructed of steel and glass, this beach house in **KANGAROO ISLAND**, South Australia, boasts 180-degree views of Eastern Cove. While the point of arrival is fairly unspectacular scrub, the home's skillion-shaped roof embraces the water.





Past the fibro-cement garage and up the stairs, the house quickly reveals itself. One arrives directly into the open-plan kitchen and living areas. To integrate the indoors and outdoors, a sandstone spine wall extends through the glass sliding doors to the adjacent terrace. To ensure the sandstone is protected inside, toughened glass creates an additional layer as the kitchen's splashback.



Consisting of two levels, **ARCHITECTS INK** designed the house so that the lower level—which contains three bedrooms, a bathroom and rumpus room—can in the future be closed off from the completely self-contained upper level.





While the house was designed to maximise light and views, the architect saw the garage (stained chocolate brown) as a shipping container that had been washed up on the shore. Its solidity also creates a strong juxtaposition to the home's lightweight construction.



The balcony to the side of the house enjoys views of the water while being protected from the prevailing winds.

PHOTOGRAPHY SAM NOONAN





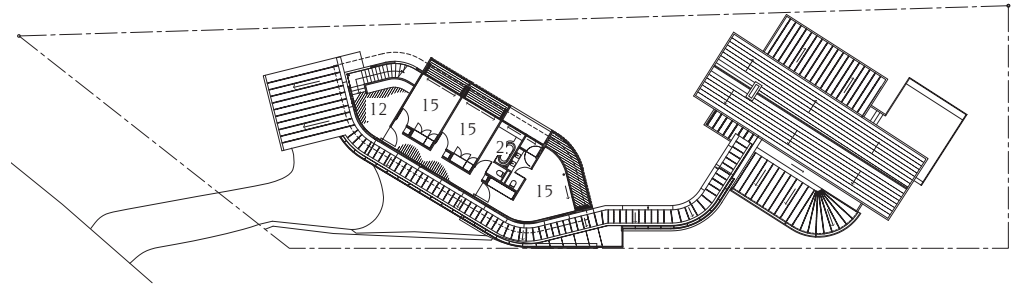


An original 1930s sandstone cottage forms part of this dwelling in **PALM BEACH**, on the central coast of New South Wales.

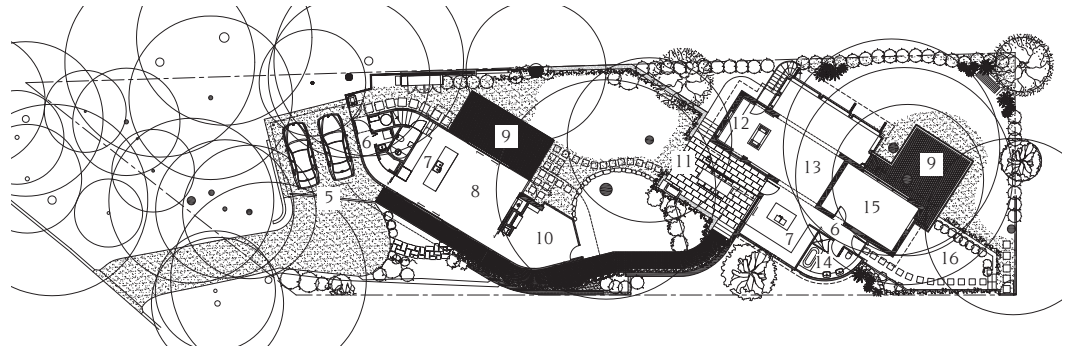
Though the interior was gutted as part of the renovation, the quality of the sandstone walls allowed **TANNER ARCHITECTS** to preserve most of the original exterior.



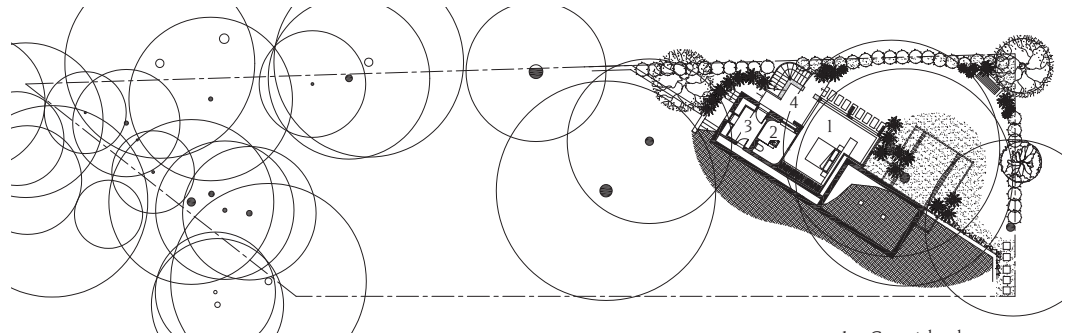
The reworked two-storey cottage features a guest bedroom, bathroom and laundry on the lower ground floor. On the ground floor are the master bedroom, bathroom and study, together with an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area. The size of the windows overlooking the Pacific Ocean in the sunroom have been extended, while new decks have been added on the northern side of the cottage.



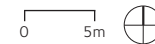
First floor



Ground floor



Lower ground floor



- 1 Guest bedroom
- 2 Ensuite
- 3 Laundry
- 4 Porch
- 5 Carport
- 6 Hall
- 7 Kitchen
- 8 Rumpus room
- 9 Deck
- 10 Family room
- 11 Courtyard
- 12 Study
- 13 Sitting room
- 14 Bathroom
- 15 Bedroom
- 16 Vegetable garden

Linking the cottage to a new two-storey pavilion is a meandering 'breezeway', featuring a crushed sandstone rendered wall and steel roof, with a gap between the wall and roof ensuring the penetration of natural light from both sides.

The new pavilion is clad in western red cedar and simply oiled, designed to turn grey as it ages and blend with the surrounding trees.



On the ground floor of the pavilion are a rumpus room and kitchen, together with a powder room and laundry. Upstairs are three bedrooms, a study and two bathrooms. To connect the inside with the outdoors, the living room wall, with its open fireplace, is rendered in a crushed sandstone render, like the breezeway wall and the original sandstone blocks in the cottage.

PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL NICHOLSON





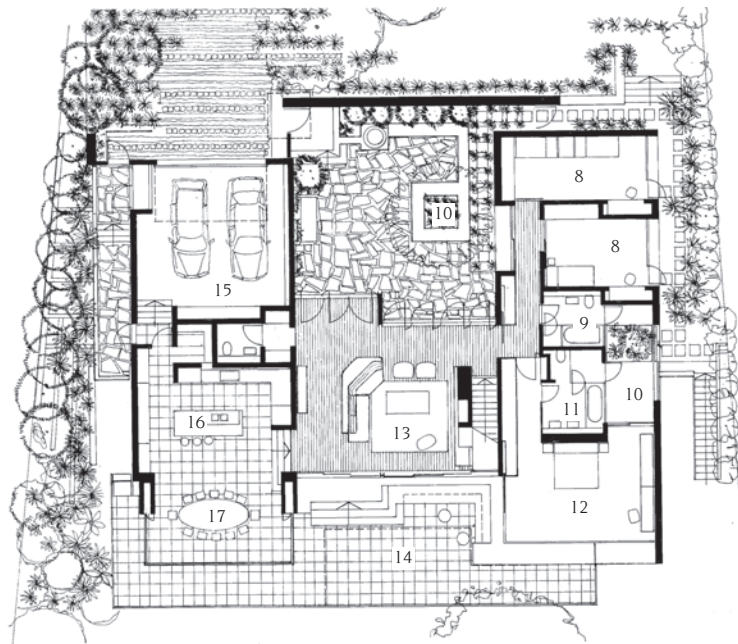
This expansive house at **PALM BEACH**, on Sydney's Northern Beaches, overlooks the Pacific Ocean, Pittwater and the headlands to the north.



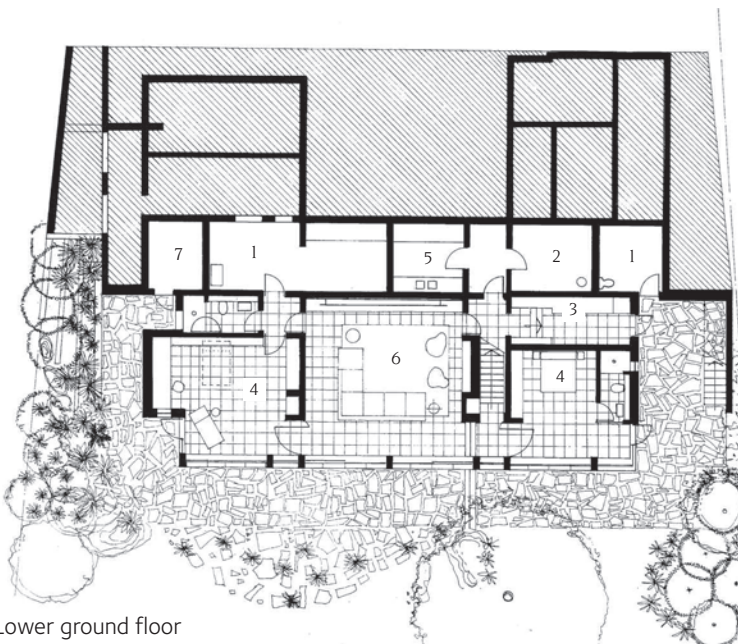
Spread over 1 300 square metres, the site drops substantially, so what is a large house appears deceptively small from the street.

A 1950s home originally occupied the site, and while architects **DESIGN KING** weren't keen on reproducing a more contemporary version of the former dwelling, there are some elements in the design that suggest a touch of the past.

Wide, generous verandahs envelope the house, blending with the inside living areas rather than functioning as separate outdoor spaces. Entry is via a central paved courtyard, lined with pivoting glass and timber doors. With immediate views over the water, the living room cascades with basalt steps and built-in banquette seating.



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Storage | 10 Courtyard |
| 2 Gym | 11 Ensuite |
| 3 Laundry | 12 Main bedroom |
| 4 Guest bedroom | 13 Living |
| 5 Dark room | 14 Terrace |
| 6 Rumpus room/Theatre | 15 Garage |
| 7 Plant room | 16 Kitchen |
| 8 Bedroom | 17 Dining |
| 9 Bathroom | |

0 4m





As well as the spacious living area, with its highlight clerestory windows, the ground level includes the open-plan kitchen, living and dining area and bedrooms.



Featuring glass doors that disappear into cavity walls, the dining area becomes alive when the doors are pulled back and the curtains move in the breeze.

The main bedroom, ensuite and dressing area, as well as two additional bedrooms, are located on the other side of the courtyard.



A staircase framed with a pre-aged copper wall leads to a lower level that contains two guest bedrooms linked by a central rumpus area.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRETT BOARDMAN



Framed by verdant lawns and established pine trees, the Matarangi beach house, two hours' drive south from **AUCKLAND**, is only a leisurely stroll away from the Pacific Ocean.

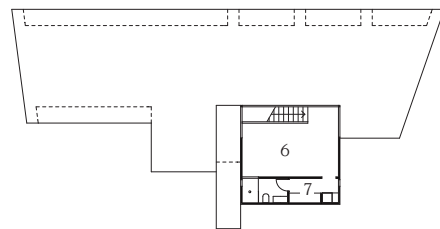


The relatively modest site feels more expansive because of its proximity to a wide promenade known locally as the 'boardwalk'.

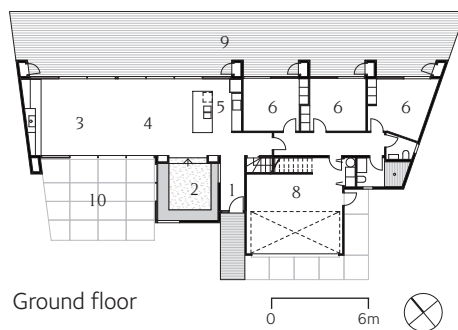




This **HULENA ARCHITECTS** design uses a limited palette of materials, including the vertical black-stained pine cladding and the concrete polished floors. The black external cladding is referenced internally with similarly clad white ceilings. The single-level house with 'lookout' tower features generous glass sliding doors and large picture windows, with the main bedroom, in the tower, having sweeping views of the ocean.



First floor



Ground floor

- 1 Entry
- 2 Snug
- 3 Living
- 4 Dining
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Bedroom
- 7 Dressing room
- 8 Garage
- 9 Deck
- 10 Courtyard

The design, like the materials used, is simple. The open-plan kitchen, dining and living areas are located across the front of the house, enjoying direct access to a large timber deck oceanside and a paved terrace and sheltered courtyard at the front. One of the most coveted areas is referred to as the 'snug', a protected nook to one side of the living room. Lined with wide banquette seating for reading, the snug is also used when there are a few extra guests staying over the night. There are also three additional bedrooms and a bathroom, with one of these bedrooms doubling as a bunk room.





One of the more unusual features of the design is the buttress walls protruding onto the deck. Stained black, these cupboards are used to store everything from furniture and umbrellas to surfboards, and provide immediate shelter and privacy to individual rooms.

Pared back and free of clutter, the view dominates.

PHOTOGRAPHY KALLAN MACLEOD



This three-level beach house is located in **MERMAID BEACH**, one of the few areas on Queensland's Gold Coast without high-rise apartment towers.



The ground level of the house features a generous open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, with the living areas benefiting from a double-height volume and boasting a dramatic double-height fireplace clad in timber veneer. A home office, guest bedroom and ensuite are also located on this level.

For al fresco dining there's a large terrace overlooking a courtyard, with the kitchen joinery extending into the terrace area to create an outdoor room.



On the first level of the house are three children's bedrooms together with a rumpus room. To create a sense of connectivity, the upper level is framed with timber battens as well as glass louvred windows. To blur the division between indoors and outdoors, the batten treatment is continued on the upstairs decks.

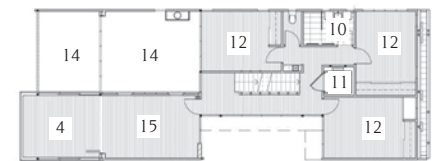
One of the most spectacular views of the ocean is from the top level, which comprises the main bedroom, ensuite and walk-in-robe. A study/retreat, together with a balcony, is also featured on this level.



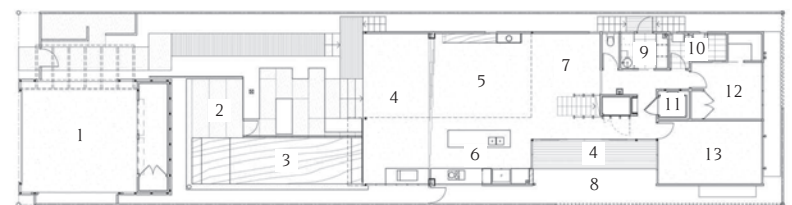
- 1 Carport
- 2 Terrace
- 3 Swimming pool
- 4 Deck
- 5 Living
- 6 Kitchen
- 7 Dining
- 8 Courtyard
- 9 Laundry
- 10 Bath
- 11 Lift
- 12 Bedroom
- 13 Study
- 14 Void
- 15 Family room
- 16 Walk-in-robe



Second floor



First floor



Ground floor







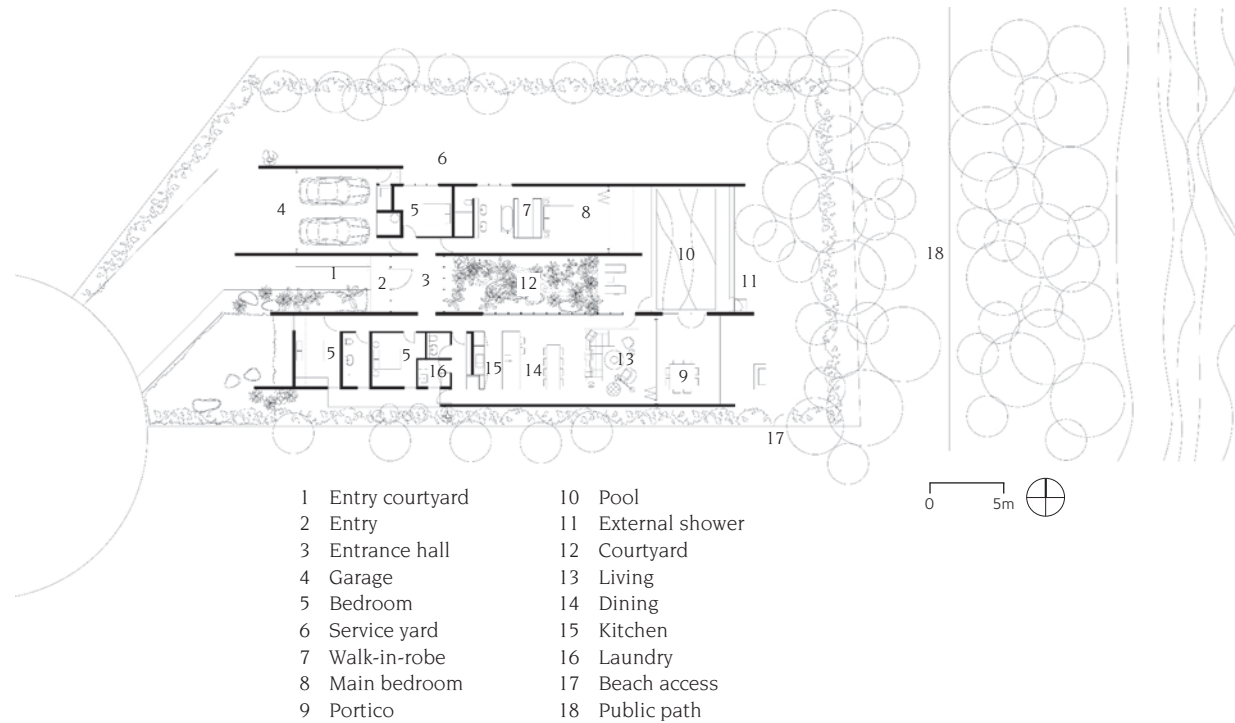
PAUL UHLMANN ARCHITECTS designed the house to feel as fluid as possible. Features such as a staircase enclosed with two tones of translucent glass also give the house a sculptural quality, and the changing light creates a different mood at different times of the day.

PHOTOGRAPHY REMCO PHOTOGRAPHY





Located in **WONGA BEACH** in North Queensland, and only a short stroll from the water, this beach house is firmly anchored to its tropical surrounds, with a much stronger presence than a typical lightweight tropical home.



Architects **WOODS BAGOT** have taken the surroundings into the core of the house, creating a sense of being in the middle of the bush. Concrete blocks extend into the landscape like trance lines, giving privacy as well as protection from the tropical sunlight. Concrete blocks also form the interior walls.





Unlike some beach houses, which endeavour to create urban-style homes on the coast, the Wonga Beach house is pared back with its refined palette. It is robust without being overloaded with finishes.

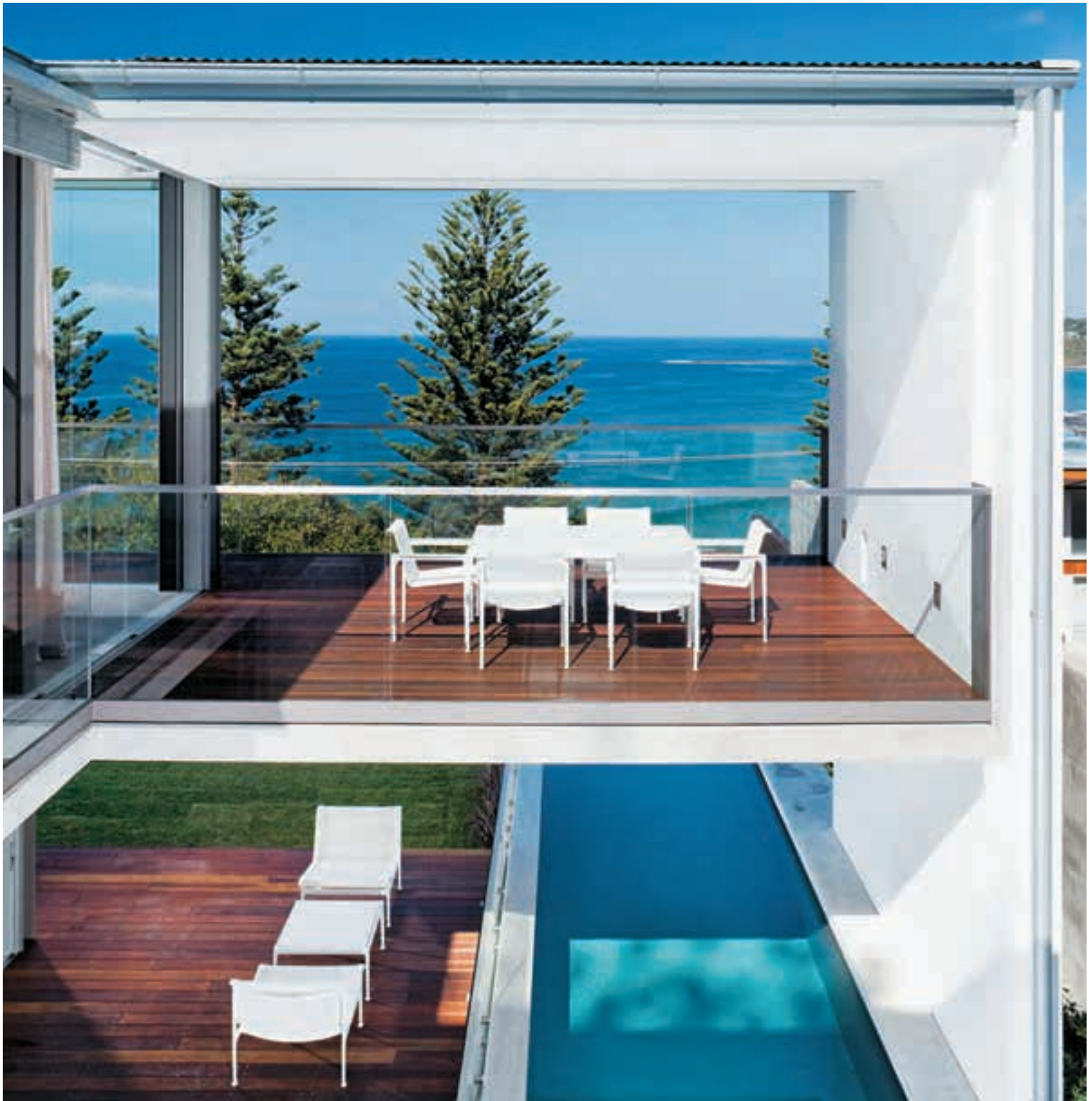
Designed to accommodate two families, the courtyard-style house has four bedrooms, with two bedrooms and accompanying bathrooms in each wing. The large open-plan kitchen, dining and living area leads to a large undercover terrace. Lapping up to the terrace is the swimming pool, which also provides an impressive vista from one of the main bedrooms.





To ensure the verdant courtyard garden can be seen from numerous vantage points in the home, there are generous glazed windows, together with floor-to-ceiling glass louvres.

PHOTOGRAPHY THOMAS BLOCH





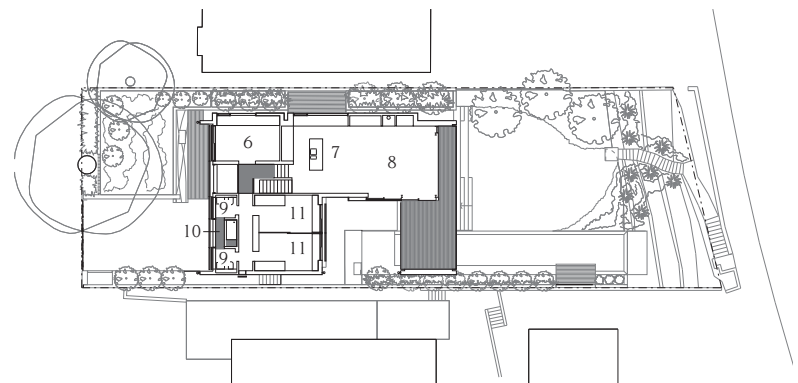
This elegant beach house by **TZANNES ASSOCIATES** is located in **SYDNEY'S NORTHERN BEACHES**, New South Wales. Overlooking the Pacific Ocean, it was designed as a permanent family home, responding to the casual way of living on the coast.



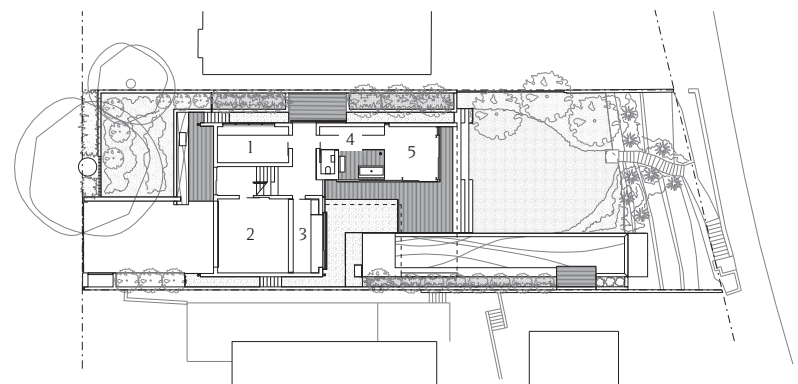


Constructed of masonry with a lightweight steel roof, the house has two distinctive façades. From the street, the house is partially shielded by external blinds. However, the elevation fronting the beach is extensively glazed by floor-to-ceiling windows and large sliding doors leading to terraces.

The ground floor contains the garage and a study, together with the main bedroom and ensuite. A feature of the back garden is the lap pool, which cleverly extends below a covered terrace. The two-storey void in the centre of the house is designed to maximise natural light.



First floor



Ground floor

0 6m

- 1 Laundry
- 2 Garage
- 3 Study
- 4 Ensuite
- 5 Master bedroom
- 6 Rumpus room
- 7 Kitchen
- 8 Dining/Living
- 9 WC
- 10 Bath
- 11 Bedroom

Additional bedrooms and the kitchen and living areas are found on the first floor. Most rooms have access to the outdoors, as well as uninterrupted views of the ocean, making for a very dramatic first impression.



To celebrate the location, a limited palette of materials has been used. Polished concrete floors and concrete stair treads are beautifully combined with spotted gum, which also appears in the joinery, such as the cupboards framing the fireplace in the main living area. The materials, like the house, appear quite simple from the outset, but the simplicity conceals a considerable degree of complexity.

PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE BACK
STEVEBACK.COM.AU

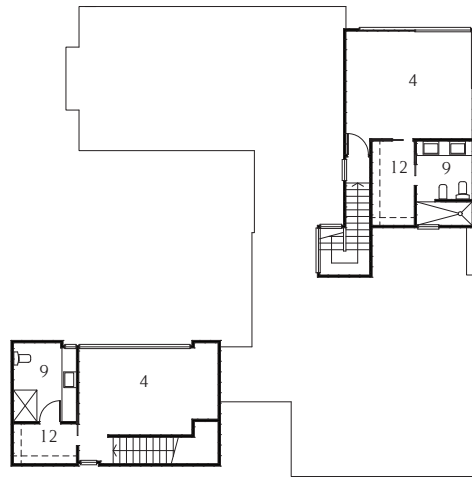




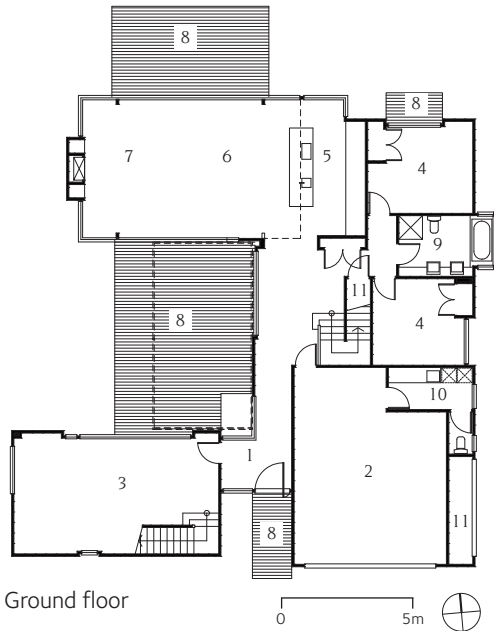


Constructed of timber and clad in black-stained cedar boards, this weekend house located on a four-kilometre stretch of beach in **OMAHA**, north of Auckland, provides a crisp outline against the blue of the ocean. Conscious of the prevailing winds, primarily coming from the north and south, **SHANAHAN ARCHITECTS** designed the two-storey house in a C-shape configuration, framing a central courtyard, to create sheltered outdoor areas.

The open-plan kitchen, living and dining areas open onto a deck with views of the water. With its V-shaped ceiling and highlight windows, this area has a distinctive pavilion feel. An automatic aluminium shade system over the deck offers protection from the sun. The architect drew on the language of the boat in the design of the house, evident in the indented roof.



First floor



Ground floor

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 Entry | 7 Living |
| 2 Garage | 8 Deck |
| 3 Rumpus room | 9 Bathroom |
| 4 Bedroom | 10 Laundry |
| 5 Kitchen | 11 Storage |
| 6 Dining | 12 Walk-in-robe |





The combination of white painted eaves and fascias, as well as window frames, was chosen to avoid a high-maintenance regime.

The ground level also includes two bedrooms and a shared bathroom, as well as a large rumpus room on the other side of the central courtyard.



Located on the first floor of the house are the main bedroom and ensuite, offering the best views in the house, together with a guest wing, only accessible via the rumpus room, creating a level of independence for guests staying at the house.



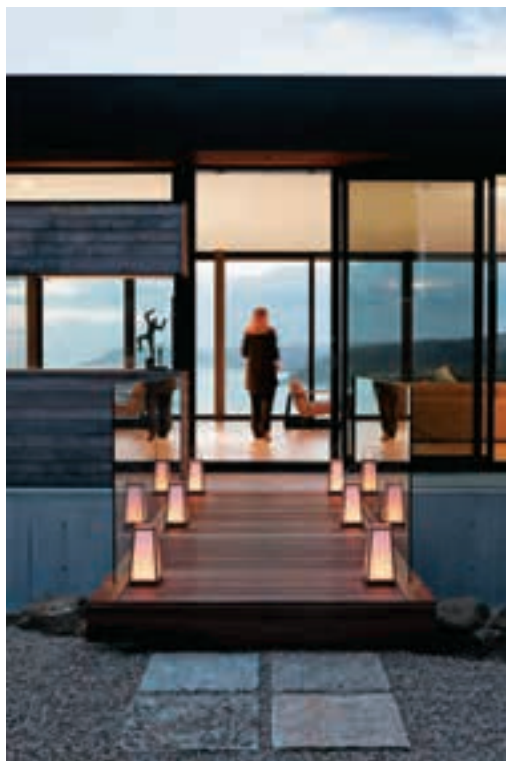
PHOTOGRAPHY KALLAN MACLEOD



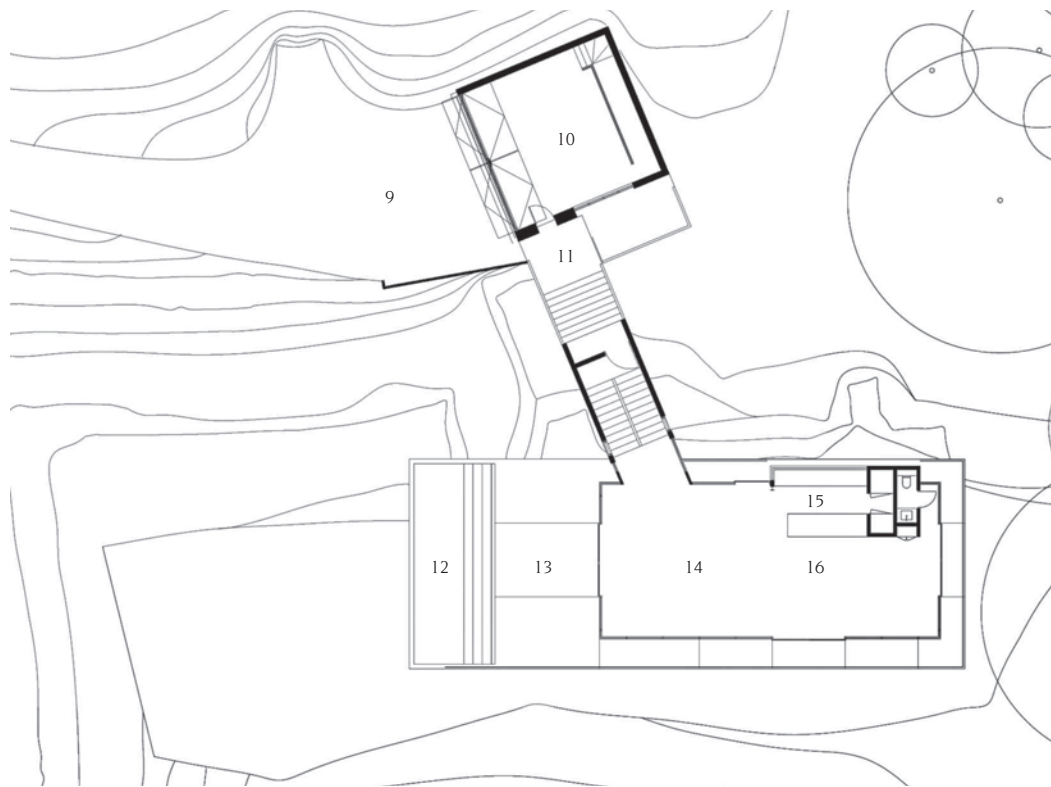




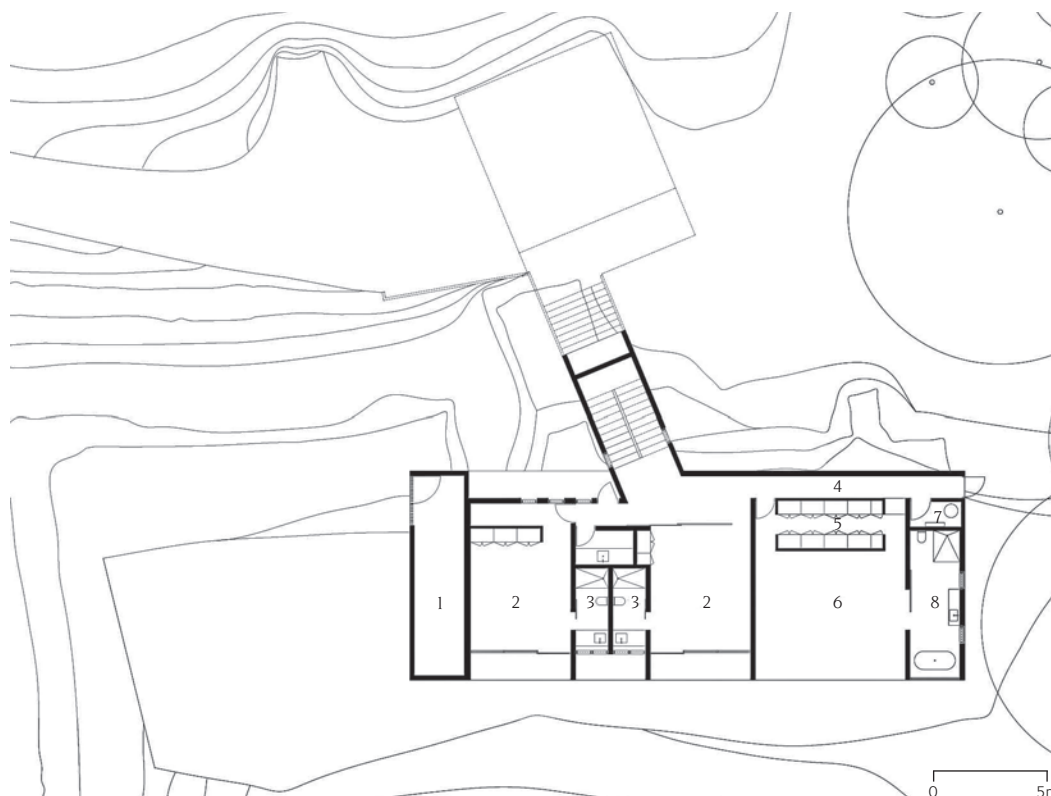
Perched on the western coast of Victoria, the enviable location of this modern beach house is blissfully out of the way of the tourist hordes.



The simply designed, yet monumental, house connects to all the elements, anchored to the ground rather than touching the earth lightly, in order to withstand the high winds and the battering the surf can inflict.



First floor



Ground floor

Architects **WOODS BAGOT** designed the house as three interconnecting forms. The lowest level is constructed of off-form concrete, with concrete walls extending to the interior. Directly above is a glazed pavilion, with large sliding glass doors leading to a terrace and swimming pool. The third element, the timber form, links the other two.

- 1 AC plant
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Bathroom
- 4 Corridor
- 5 Walk-in-robe
- 6 Master bedroom
- 7 Hot water plant
- 8 Ensuite
- 9 Driveway
- 10 Garage
- 11 Entrance
- 12 Pool
- 13 Terrace
- 14 Living
- 15 Kitchen
- 16 Dining



The kitchen, treated as a piece of furniture, is clad in spotted gum, with timber extending from the exterior to the interior. To make this area appear integral to the living areas, some of the traditional features of a kitchen are missing, such as a fridge, replaced by 'cool drawers' concealed behind the kitchen's timber joinery.

One of the most coveted rooms in the house is the main bedroom and ensuite, located at ground level. Featuring glazed walls and large sliding doors to a graveled terrace, it's closer to the crashing waves than almost every other property along the Great Ocean Road.

PHOTOGRAPHY TOM & MARY & ASSOCIATES







Though directly fronted by a beach, it is the expansive water views over the home's swimming pool and the nearby Canning River that really capture one's attention in this large home in **MOUNT PLEASANT**, Western Australia. Water surrounds the house, a feature enhanced by the wet-edge pool seeming to merge as one with the river.



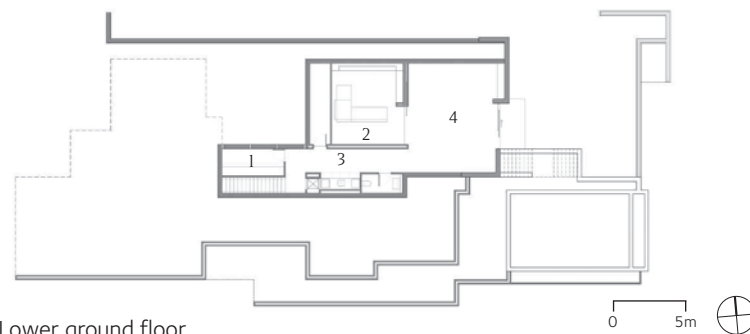
wrightfeldhusen
ARCHITECTS designed the house to maximise outdoor entertainment areas, providing generous balconies and terraces across the home's three levels. A sheltered courtyard allows for year-round entertaining. Established palm trees lend the property a touch of LA glamor.



First floor



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 Sauna | 14 Study |
| 2 Theatre | 15 Living |
| 3 Kitchenette | 16 Kitchen |
| 4 Games room | 17 Terrace |
| 5 Study/Guest room | 18 Dining |
| 6 Ensuite | 19 Pool |
| 7 Powder room | 20 Bedroom |
| 8 Entry | 21 Walk-in-robe |
| 9 Garage | 22 Bathroom |
| 10 Storage | 23 Dressing room |
| 11 Courtyard | 24 Main bedroom |
| 12 Gallery | 25 Balcony |
| 13 Laundry | |

Three bedrooms and bathrooms, together with a main bedroom suite, are found on the top floor. This suite features a separate lounge that connects to a large terrace.

The lower ground floor includes a rumpus room, a separate theatre and an entertainment room, with bar, ideal for socialising with friends. A garage, study, spacious open-plan kitchen, living and dining areas are located at ground level. The living areas appear even more substantial when the large sliding doors to the terrace are opened. To create a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor areas, travertine floors extend to the terrace.









The lower level comprises off-form concrete, anchoring the home to the site. Rendered brick is also used, together with copper cladding that will eventually show a green hue.

PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT FRITH







Set behind the windswept sandy white dunes and tussock of **OMAHA BEACH**, an hour's drive north of Auckland and a popular destination for families wanting to escape the city, this substantial part-two-storeyed beach house rises out of the harsh landscape.

The black-stained cedar cladding of varying width adds texture, while reminiscent of stacked driftwood.





Protected from the wind by a high plastered block wall, the west-facing central courtyard, complete with built-in barbeque and plunge pool, accommodates the gathering of large groups of people and serves as a sheltered outdoor room during the warmer months.



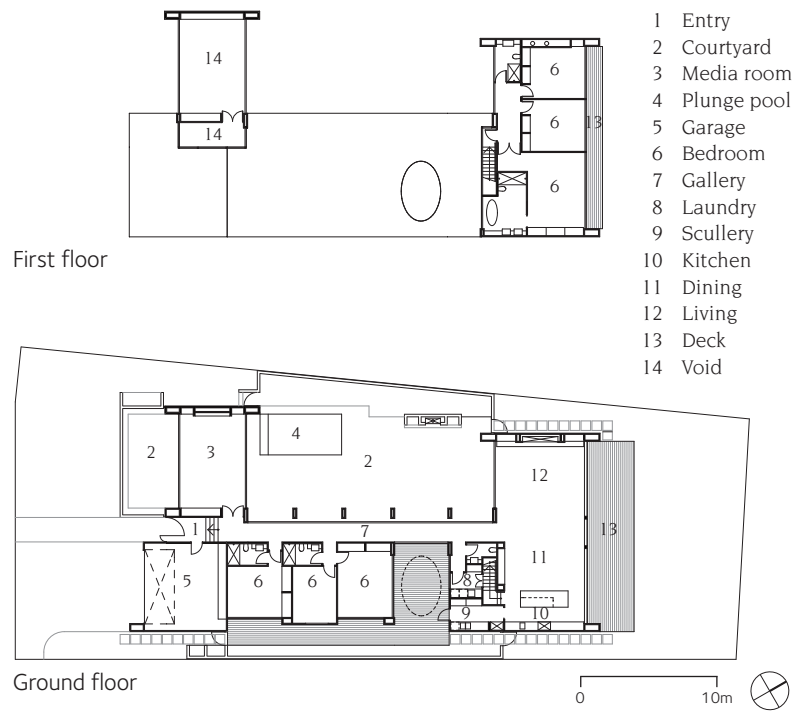
Framing the main courtyard and opening to the beach, the kitchen, dining and living area opens to a timber deck area that enjoys impressive views over the Pacific Ocean. Three guest bedrooms with ensuites are located on the ground floor, separated from the main living areas by a partially covered terrace which, open to the sky, is used like a back door, for the storage of surfboards and wetsuits. The house contains three more private family bedrooms and two bathrooms on the first floor.

HULENA ARCHITECTS

designed the house to maximise penetration of natural light as well as providing alternative exterior living area protection from various winds.

PHOTOGRAPHY KALLAN MACLEOD







Designed by **UTZ SANBY ARCHITECTS**, this house in **NEWPORT**, in Sydney's Northern Beaches, is positioned on the edge of a cliff, with dramatic views of the Pacific Ocean and the established palm trees to the rear of the sloping property.



Only a carport and a sandstone wall can be seen from street level, though once past the front door the three levels of the house unfold.

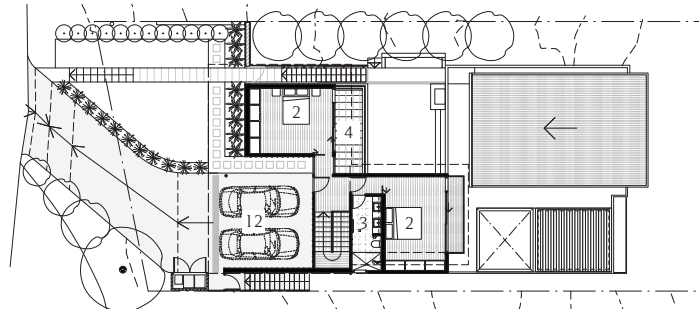




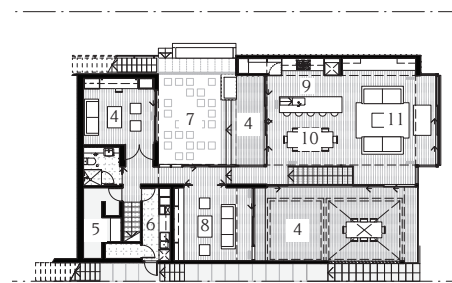
A master bedroom, guest bedroom and a bathroom are located at the top level. Clad in plywood, this level features a skillion-shaped roof to maximise the morning light. On the middle level are the main living areas, including the open-plan kitchen and a covered terrace that functions as an outdoor room. To capitalise on the cliff face position, the lounge area has been 'pushed out', integrating the terrace with the living areas. The sliding glass doors appear on the edge of the room, together with a toughened glass balustrade across the entire width of the lounge.



The adjacent terrace, framed by an aluminium louvred screen and operable roof, allows this outdoor area to be used all year round. An internal courtyard is also located on this level, with a study/home office on one side and a television/rumpus room on the other.



First floor

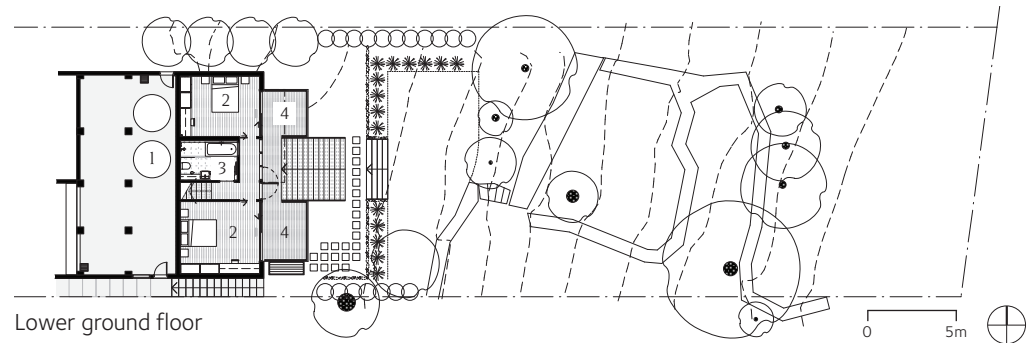


Ground floor

- 1 Water tanks
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Bathroom
- 4 Deck/Terrace
- 5 Storage
- 6 Laundry
- 7 Courtyard
- 8 TV room
- 9 Kitchen
- 10 Dining
- 11 Living
- 12 Carport

On the lowest level are two additional bedrooms, a bathroom, and a generous timber deck, linked via large sliding glass doors.

Like the three levels it traverses, the house is constructed of three different materials. The top level is essentially sandstone brick. The middle level is stained timber, while the lowest level, anchoring the house, is rendered masonry.



Lower ground floor

PHOTOGRAPHY RAY CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY

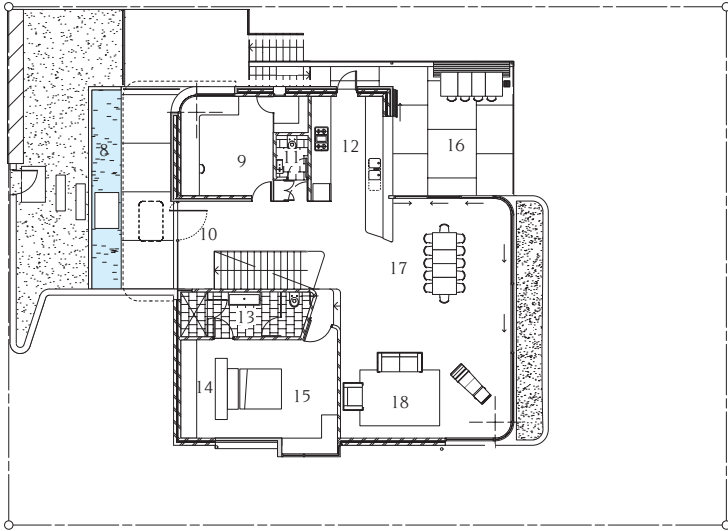




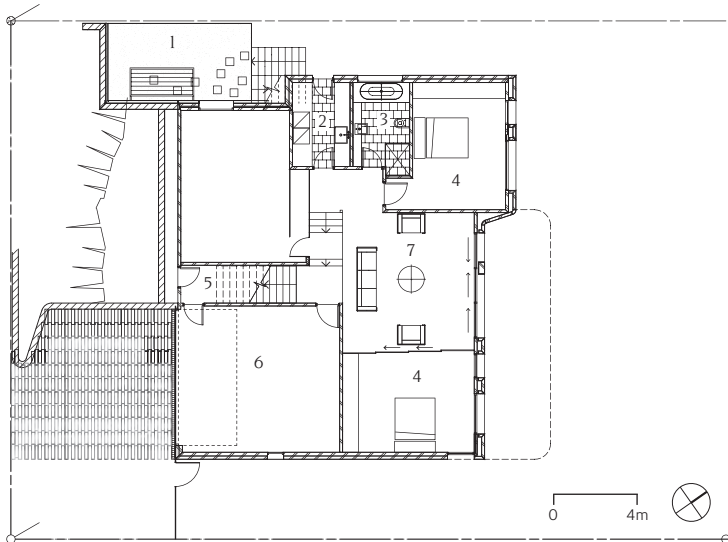




Constructed of robust materials, including concrete, stone and masonry, the curved form of this house in **LITTLE BAY**, on the New South Wales coast, gives the sense of having been eroded by sand over time, with many of the external features tapered for protection against the prevailing high winds.



Ground level



Lower ground level

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 Drying court | 10 Entry |
| 2 Laundry | 11 Powder room |
| 3 Bathroom | 12 Kitchen |
| 4 Bedroom | 13 Ensuite |
| 5 Storage/Comms | 14 Walk-in-robe |
| 6 Garage | 15 Master bedroom |
| 7 Sitting room | 16 Terrace |
| 8 Water feature | 17 Dining |
| 9 Study | 18 Living |





A garage, three bedrooms, a bathroom and laundry are placed at the lower ground level, while on the ground level are an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, and a study. The main bedroom, ensuite and walk-in-robe, cleverly integrated with the bed-head, are also located on this level. To enable enjoyment of the ocean views, architect **LUIGI ROSSELLI** designed a built-in timber seat to frame the bedroom window.



The windows in the main living area are as generous, stacking back on themselves to ensure an unimpeded view of the beach. A window box maximises the amount of glazing in the living area, making the space feel like a verandah when all the windows are pulled back.



Curves are a feature externally and internally, used for a highlight clerestory window, as well for internal walls and even the timber stairs.

The terrace roof garden, accessed by foldable steel stairs, offers impressive views of the Pacific Ocean, and also provides a 'platform' for photovoltaic cells.

PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD GLOVER





Just metres from Pittwater, this **PALM BEACH**, New South Wales house couldn't be any closer to the water's edge, occupying the footprint of the property's original two buildings, a sail loft (designed for sail making) and a 1970s home in need of a complete refurbishment.



Almost entirely rebuilt, the sail loft still retains a sense of its past life, though it now functions as an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area. A new steel roof was added, with its underside made from rough sawn plywood and painted timber. The surrounding windows are motorised, dropping to the height of the glass balustrades on warmer days and giving the space a wonderful sense of openness.

The ground floor of the main house contains a garage, a television/billiard room, and three bedrooms, each with its own ensuite.



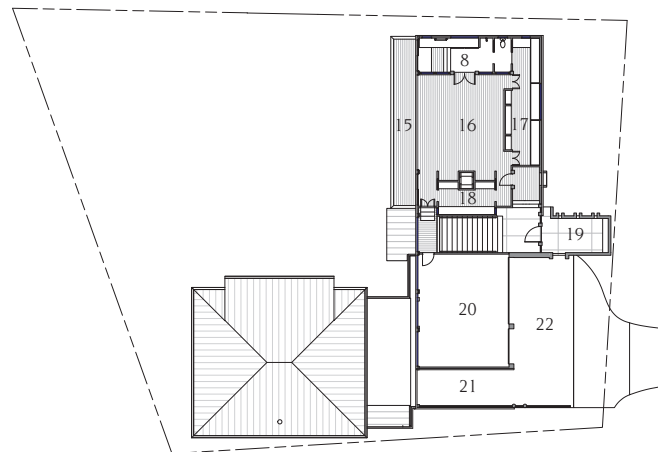
The main bedroom, walk-in-robe, ensuite and a generous verandah are located on the level above. As with the loft, architectural firm **WALTER BARDA DESIGN** used exposed timber beams and a high pitched roof in the main bedroom, with floor-to-ceiling glass doors opening entirely to ensure unimpeded views over Pittwater.



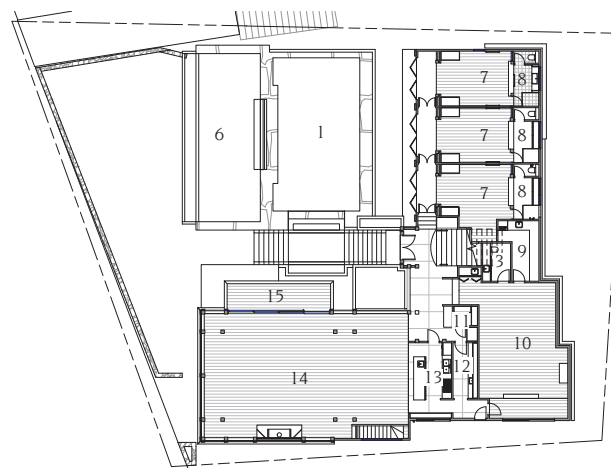


The rooms in this 'classic beach style house' are slightly oversized and the materials are quite tactile. Extensive use of timber plantation shutters take advantage of the cooling onshore breezes.

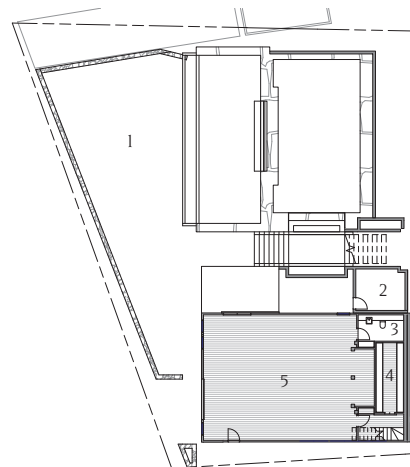
PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT MOREHEAD



Upper level

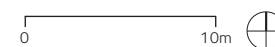


Middle level



Lower level

- 1 Lawn
- 2 Pump room
- 3 WC
- 4 Storage
- 5 Boatshed
- 6 Wet-edge pool
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Ensuite
- 9 Laundry
- 10 Billiard room
- 11 Cool room
- 12 Butler's kitchen
- 13 Kitchen
- 14 Living/Dining
- 15 Deck
- 16 Master bedroom
- 17 Walk-in-robe
- 18 Study
- 19 Entry court
- 20 Car space
- 22 Driveway



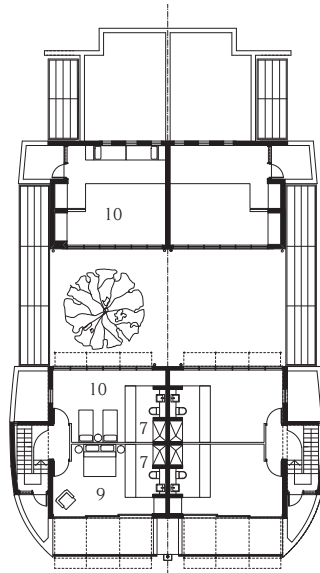




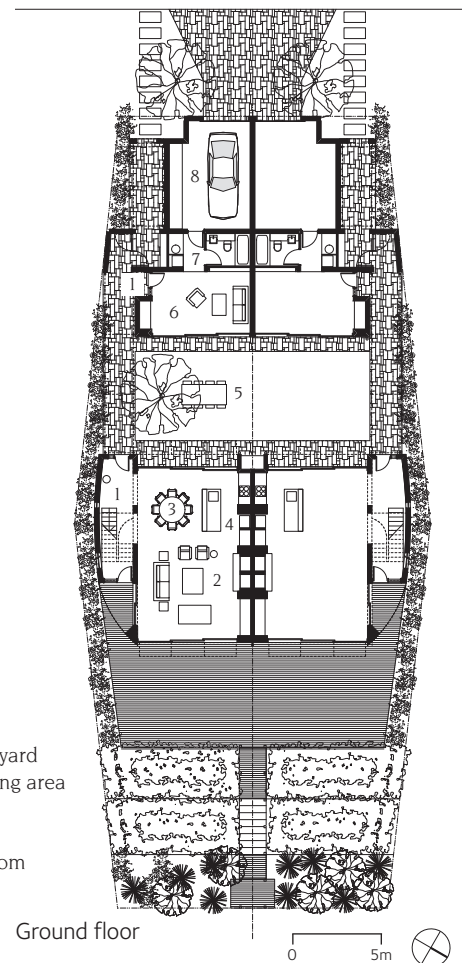


Overlooking **BROKEN BAY**, on the central coast of New South Wales, these two modest beach houses are mirror images of each other.

In keeping with the brief, architects **ANDRE POREBSKI + ASSOCIATES** located the children's wing closest to the street. Comprising a living area and adjacent bathroom, this wing also includes a mezzanine-style bedroom accessed by a ladder.



First floor



- 1 Entry
- 2 Living
- 3 Dining
- 4 Kitchen
- 5 Internal courtyard
- 6 Children's living area
- 7 Bathroom
- 8 Garage
- 9 Master bedroom
- 10 Bedroom

Ground floor

0 5m

One of the main features of the Pearl Beach houses is the shared internal courtyard, separating the children's wing from the open-plan kitchen, living and dining areas.

Protected from the wind, this outdoor area can be used during the winter months, and also creates a private outdoor living area.





To maximise cross-ventilation, large sliding doors are placed either side of the living spaces, together with highlight glass louvred windows. To ensure a continual breeze is blowing through the house, a solid wall runs between both upstairs bedrooms, with the upper section featuring timber louvres.

Like the exterior, which is fairly robust, the interior finishes include exposed concrete block walls and concrete slab with blackbutt joinery throughout. Timber also features extensively on the floors, as well as on the large timber deck orientated to the water.





On the first floor of each beach house are two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The master bedroom enjoys ocean views, while the second bedroom overlooks the internal courtyard.

PHOTOGRAPHY GILES WESTLEY AND ERIC SIERINS



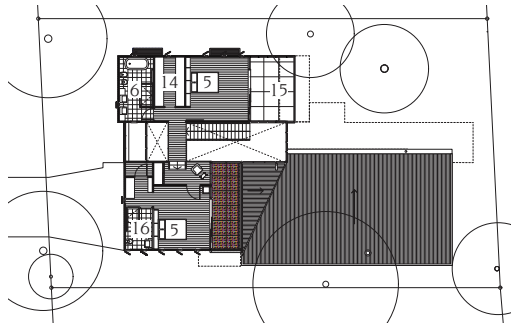




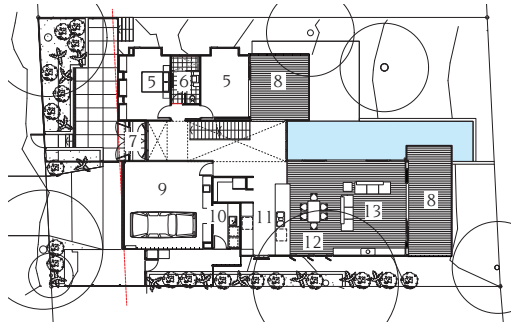
Located on a compact site at **PEREGIAN BEACH**, south of Noosa Heads in Queensland, all that separates this three-level house from the Pacific Ocean is a native reserve filled with Banksia and grasses; and the **BUD BRANNIGAN ARCHITECTS'** design makes the most of both the setting and the sub-tropical climate.

Maximising the use of outdoor space, the lounge opens on one side to a large covered verandah, accessed through sliding glass doors. To further ensure uninterrupted views from this level, other doors over the pool below can slide back entirely, the opening protected by a toughened glass balustrade.

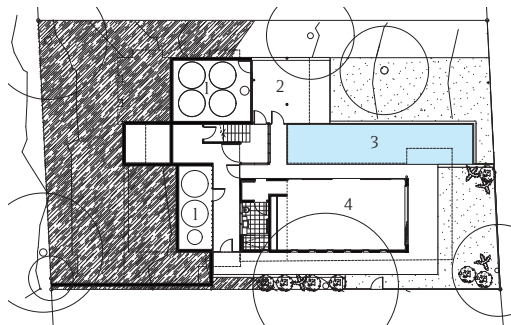




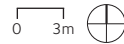
First floor



Ground floor



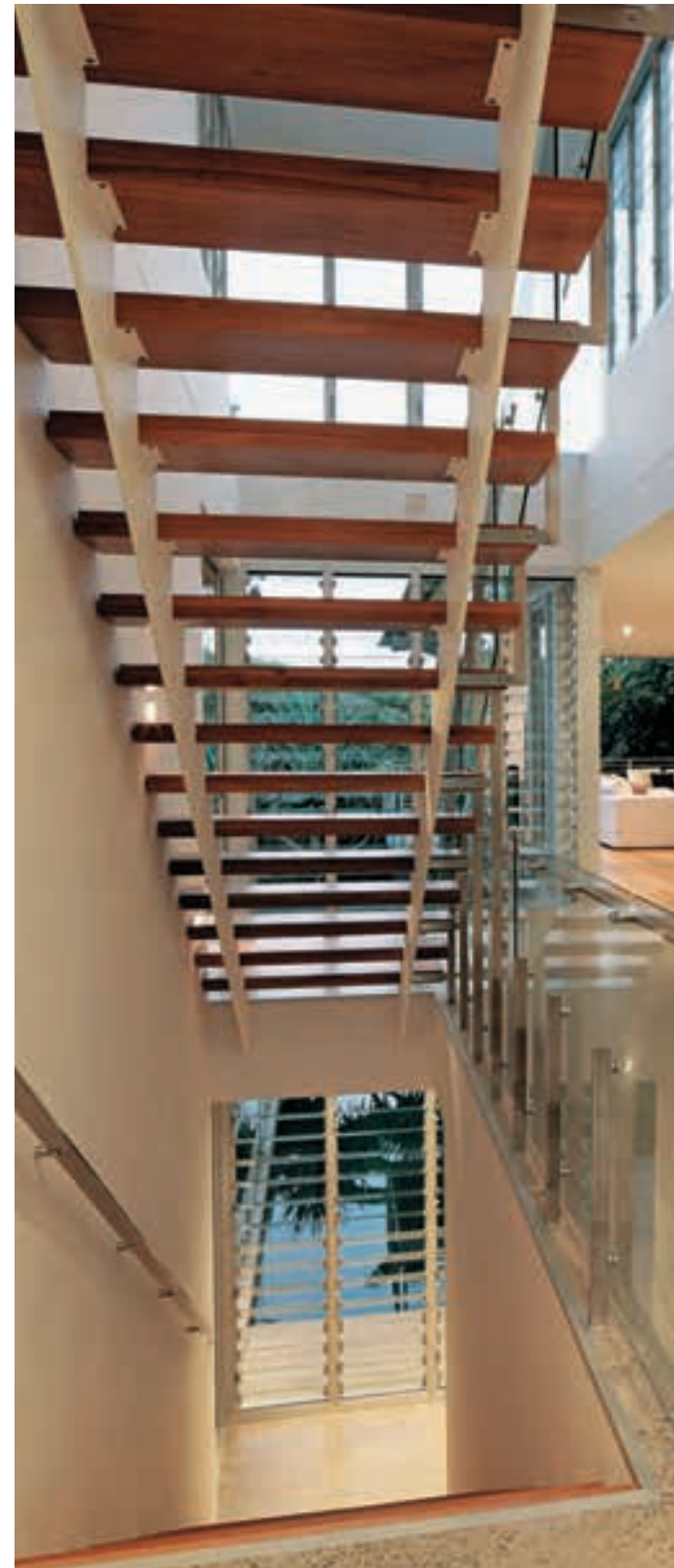
Lower ground floor



- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Water tanks | 9 Garage |
| 2 Garden terrace | 10 Laundry |
| 3 Pool | 11 Kitchen |
| 4 Pool room | 12 Dining |
| 5 Bedroom | 13 Living |
| 6 Bathroom | 14 Walk-in-robe |
| 7 Entry | 15 Deck |
| 8 Verandah | 16 Ensuite |

Pivotal to the design is a void that spans all three levels, dividing the north and south wings of the house and acting as a solar chimney, drawing in the air cooled by the lap pool at the edge of the house and pushing out warm air at the top level, aided by extensive glass louvred windows. The north-facing L-shape design also captures maximum natural light.

The main floor, at street level, includes the main living areas and kitchen, as well as two bedrooms with a shared bathroom. This level also contains the garage.





A cabana-style pool room at the lower level enjoys unimpeded views of the swimming pool.







On the top level are two additional bedrooms, including the main bedroom and ensuite. A transparent bridge separates these two bedroom wings, and assists cross ventilation.

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID SANDISON

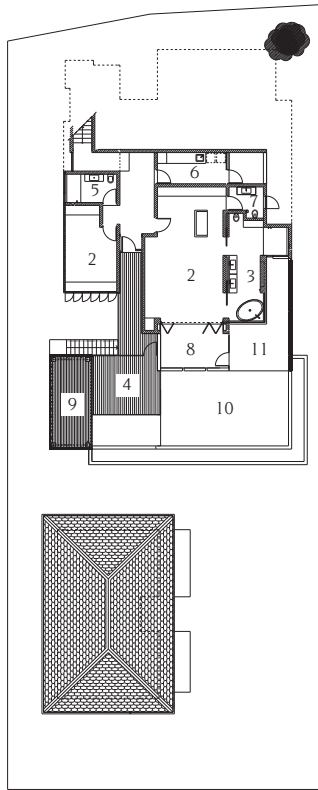


This beach house at **PORT DOUGLAS**, Queensland, is situated at the crest of a hill on one of the township's premier streets, overlooking Four Mile Beach and Black Mountain in the distance.

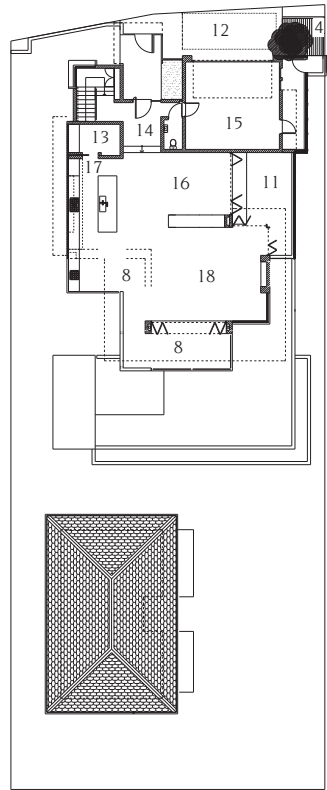


Concealed behind a hammered marble concrete wall, the house's fortress-like façade creates a sense of mystique.

However, past the front entry, one walks directly into a foyer that offers expansive views of the living areas. As the site dramatically falls away from the street, entry and the living areas are on the top level. The high front fence not only creates privacy, but allows the front door to be kept open to improve cross ventilation, so important in a tropical climate.

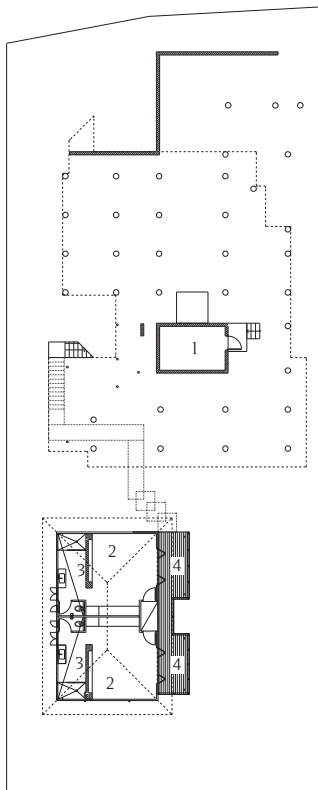


Ground floor



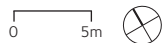
First floor

The living area's generous bifold doors, opening onto the wrap-around terrace, are diametrically opposite each other to reduce the impact of the winds mainly from the southeast.



Lower ground floor

- 1 Plant
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Ensuite
- 4 Deck
- 5 Bathroom
- 6 Laundry
- 7 WC
- 8 Terrace
- 9 Gazebo
- 10 Pool
- 11 Pond
- 12 Driveway
- 13 Pantry
- 14 Foyer
- 15 Garage
- 16 Dining
- 17 Kitchen
- 18 Living





Directly below the living areas are two bedrooms, one being the master bedroom, with accompanying ensuite and dressing area. Like the living areas, the master bedroom and bathroom enjoy views over the substantial swimming pool that extends across the site. On the lowest of the three levels is the guest suite, designed as a free-standing element in the landscape. Evocative of an Asian pavilion, this timber slatted roofed structure includes two bedrooms, each with its own ensuite.





The timeless design, by **WOLVERIDGE ARCHITECTS**, uses high quality finishes, such as limetone flooring, and is pared back to highlight the incredible view.

PHOTOGRAPHY DEREK SWALWELL





Ten metres above sea level and only 50 metres from the water, this striking house, designed by **FARNAN FINDLAY ARCHITECTS** as a permanent home, sits perched above the sand dunes, taking in spectacular ocean views.



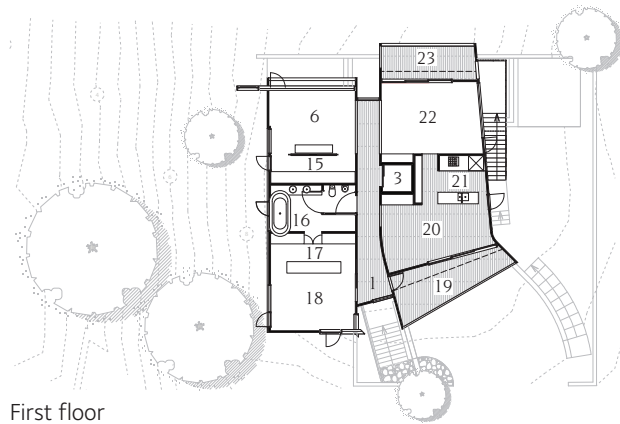
The site has both a curved and flat elevation. The flat elevation is orientated to the local township of **PORT FAIRY**, on Victoria's western coast, while the slightly curved façade takes in views of the beach and frames critical landmarks, including a lighthouse and Griffith Island.



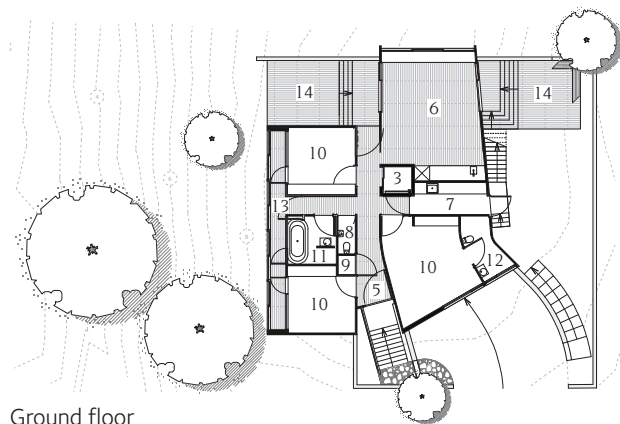
The kink in this façade also provides some protection from the southwesterly winds.

The house is organised over three levels.

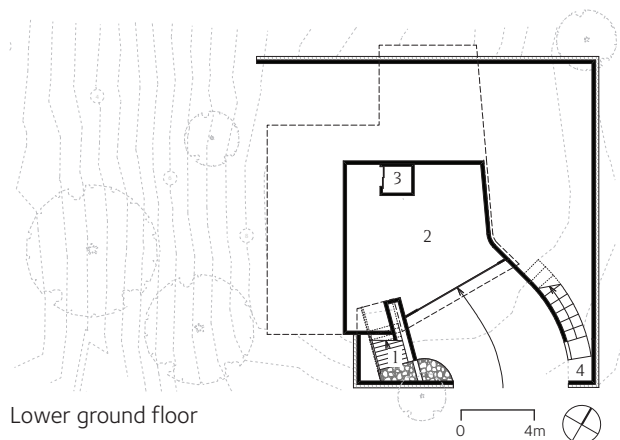
Car parking is provided at the lower ground floor, while the entry, laundry, three bedrooms and kitchenette, together with casual living areas, are found on the ground floor. With no internal staircase, a lift provides access to the first floor, which includes the main kitchen and living area together with the main bedroom and ensuite. An external staircase provides another link between the ground and first floors.



First floor



Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- 1 Entry
- 2 Garage
- 3 Lift
- 4 Secondary access
- 5 Hall
- 6 Living
- 7 Laundry
- 8 Powder room
- 9 Storage
- 10 Bedroom
- 11 Bathroom
- 12 Ensuite
- 13 Enclosed deck
- 14 Deck
- 15 Study
- 16 Master bathroom
- 17 Walk-in-robe
- 18 Master bedroom
- 19 South terrace
- 20 Dining
- 21 Kitchen
- 22 Sitting room
- 23 North terrace



While the ground floor appears relatively enclosed, particularly for a beach house, a series of timber shuttered sliding doors open up to create a verandah effect.





Clad in spotted gum, this external timber will eventually fade to a silvery grey, blending with the surrounding tea-tree and sharpening the spectacular views in the process.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRETT BOARDMAN



Overlooking the Pacific Ocean, this house on the **QUEENSLAND COAST** enjoys 180-degree water views, with the water literally lapping at the rear boundary of the property at high tide. With only a reserve separating the house from the water, the location is idyllic.

From the street, this beach house appears fairly modest in scale.



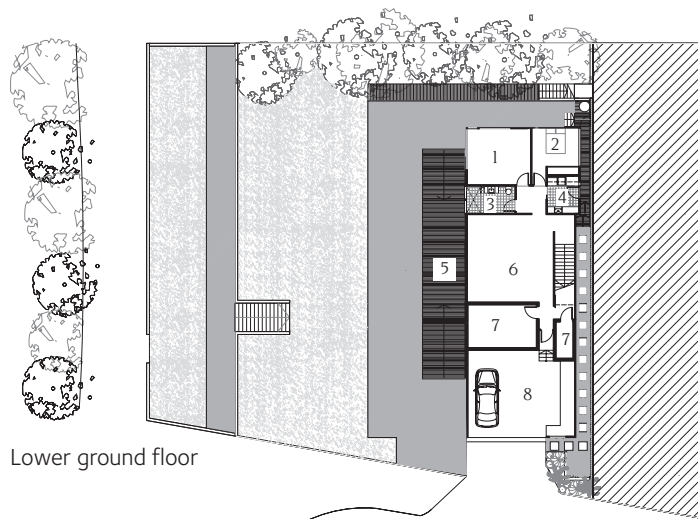
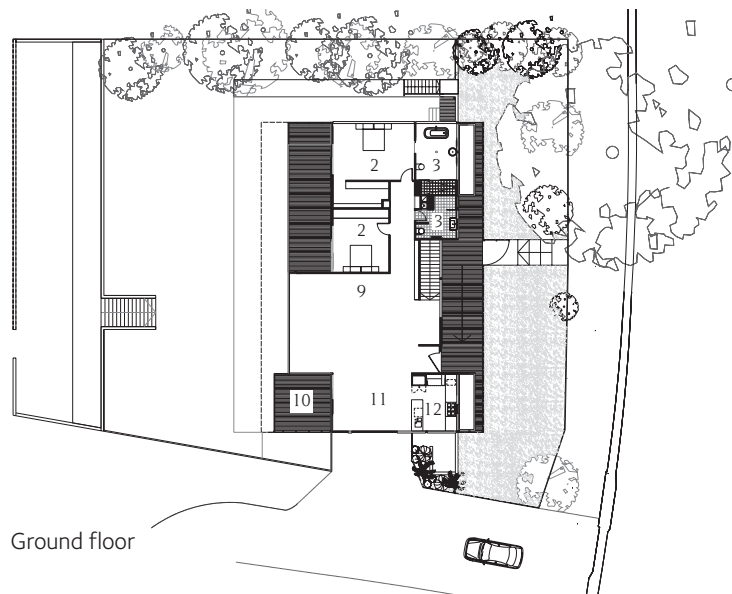
Appearing single storey due to a three-metre step concealing the lower floor, it soon unfolds to reveal a two-level home. The timber-battened façade not only allows the morning light to filter through, but also creates privacy, as well as protection from the street. This three-metre-wide area, dubbed the ‘verandah’, features a pond either end, numerous sculptures and a variety of orchids.



BUD BRANNIGAN ARCHITECTS have designed a 'simple' form, constructed of timber, steel, polycarbonate, glass and fibrous cement.

As the house is orientated to the west, receiving harsh afternoon sunlight, there are generous overhangs, including four-metre-wide eaves. Recycled timber screens on the sides of the western verandah are lined with opaque polycarbonate to provide translucent, filtered light.



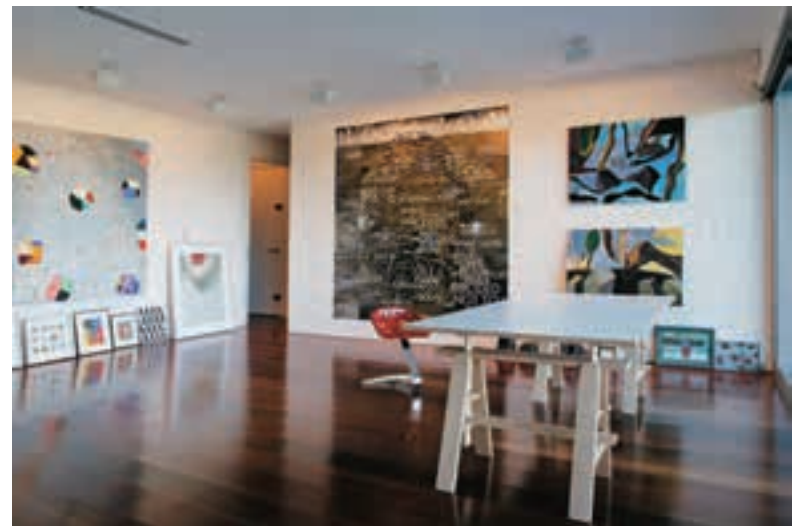
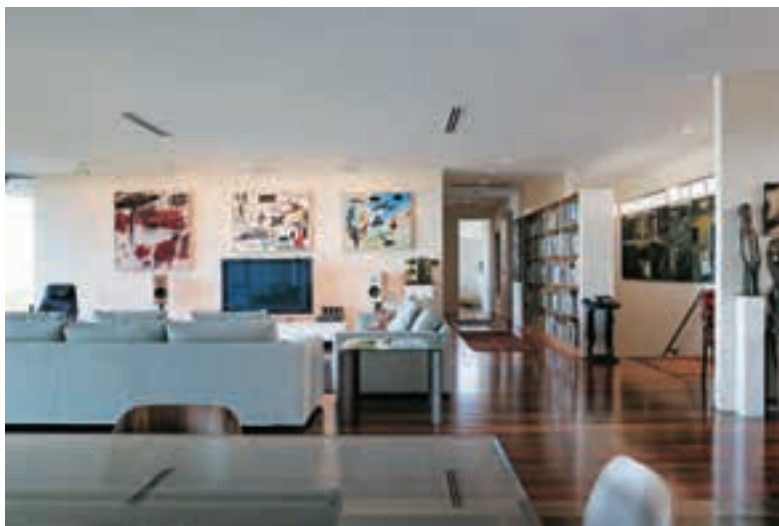


- 1 Studio
 2 Bedroom
 3 Bathroom
 4 Laundry
 5 Terrace
 6 Studio
 7 Storage
 8 Garage
 9 Living
 10 Deck
 11 Dining
 12 Kitchen

0 10m

With the house being fully screened from the street, entry access is via a frameless glass front door. A set of internal stairs leads to the lower-level studios, bedroom and storage space. The upper, street level comprises a large open living area, kitchen, dining, two bedrooms (one of which is the master bedroom) and two bathrooms. Both the living area and master bedroom access generous verandah spaces.

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID SANDISON

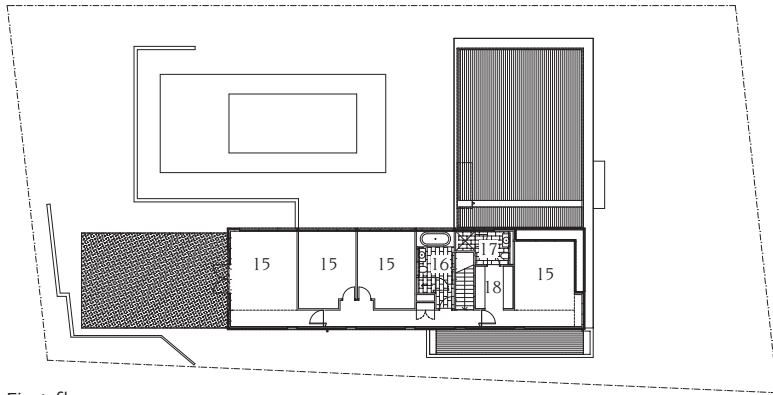




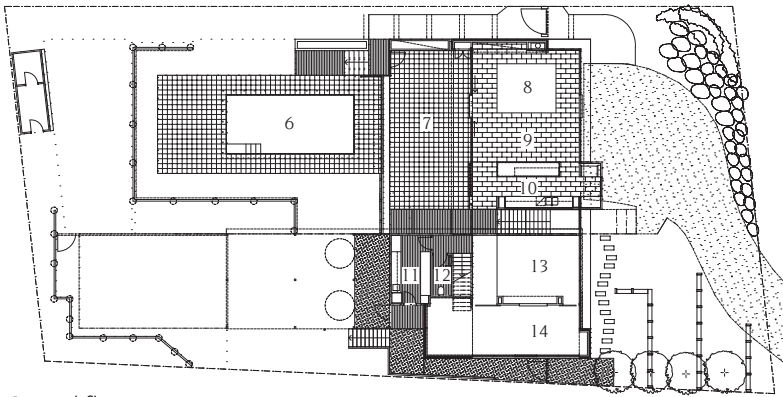
Perched on a hill overlooking the bay, the dramatic incline of the site gives this spacious beach house in **GEELONG**, Victoria, an imposing presence. Adding texture as well as animating the façade, picture windows framed with walnut-stained slatted timber offer views of the water from most rooms, while at the same time preserving privacy.



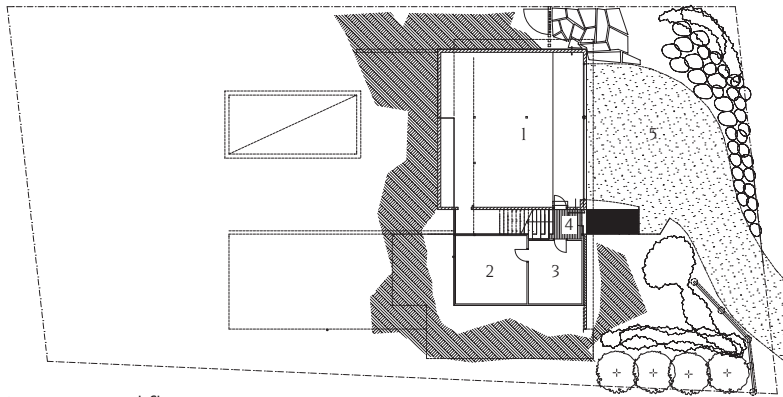
Timber oscillates between inside and out, sometimes used for internal furnishings, other times as external screens.



First floor



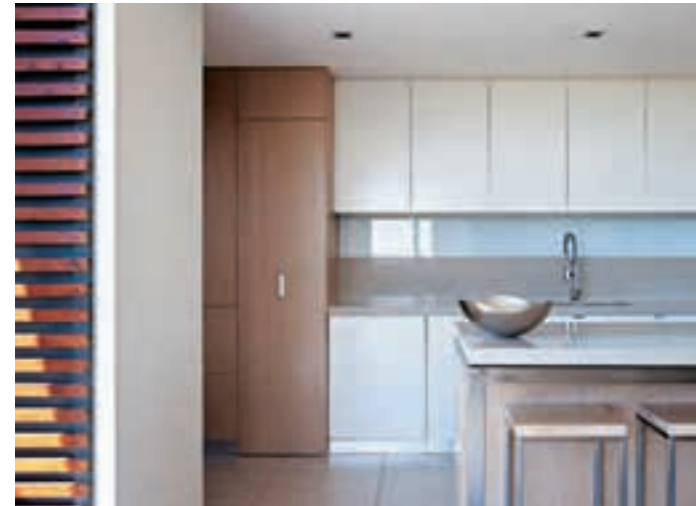
Ground floor



Lower ground floor

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| 1 Garage | 10 Kitchen |
| 2 Studio | 11 Laundry |
| 3 Storage | 12 Powder room |
| 4 Entry | 13 Lounge |
| 5 Driveway | 14 Study |
| 6 Pool | 15 Bedroom |
| 7 Deck | 16 Bathroom |
| 8 Living | 17 Ensuite |
| 9 Dining | 18 Walk-in-robe |

The upper level of the house contains four bedrooms, including the main bedroom, as well as a children's play area. Perpendicular to the bedroom wing, at ground level, is the main living wing, with its open-plan kitchen, integral to the living areas and yet set slightly apart by its lower ceiling height. With stone top and stainless steel legs, the kitchen's central island bench appears like a free-standing piece of furniture merging with the surrounding spaces. Adjacent to the living areas is a large study/studio.





The living areas link to the outdoors even though the site is steep. Accessed via large glass sliding doors, the living areas and terrace both feature the same ceramic tile. A striking stone wall made from Murray River stones and sleepers adds texture to the outdoors.

JAM ARCHITECTS sees the design as rendered boxes, with each form clearly defining the function.

PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL KAI AND RHIANNON SLATTER







Bordered by low-lying sand dunes and with few surrounding properties, the clean lines, large open spaces and stone feature wall of this beach house in **SEASCAPES**, approximately one hundred kilometres south of Perth, are inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's 'Falling Water'.



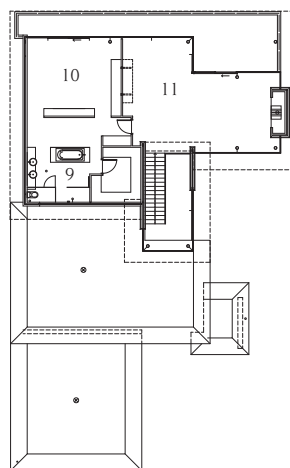
Entry to the house is via timber gates that lead to an internal courtyard, and even before crossing the threshold one has encountered water in three different forms—the pond in the courtyard, the swimming pool and the Indian Ocean in the background.



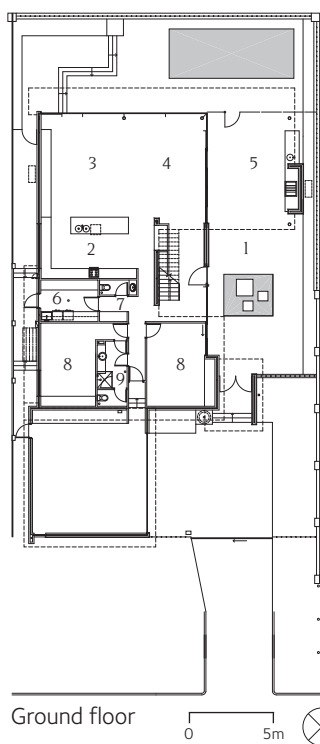


Designed by **BANHAM ARCHITECTS** to contain large fluid spaces, the ground floor features an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area. Orientated to the north to maximise light and offer protection from the often harsh southwest winds, a generous terrace leading from the living areas functions as an outdoor room, complete with a built-in barbeque and sink.





First floor



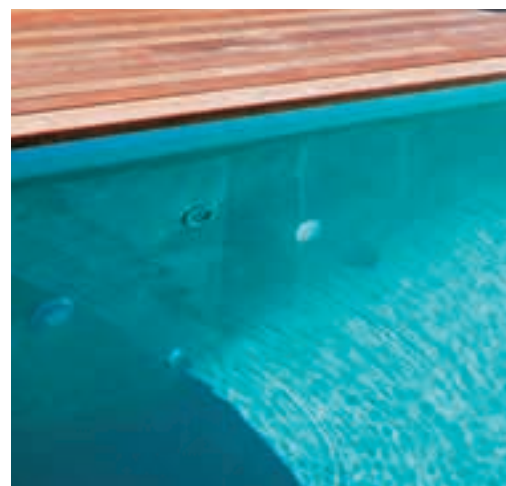
Ground floor

- 1 Entry courtyard
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Living
- 4 Dining
- 5 Terrace
- 6 Laundry
- 7 Powder room
- 8 Bedroom
- 9 Ensuite
- 10 Master bedroom
- 11 Retreat

On the first floor is a large main bedroom and spacious ensuite, separated from the bedroom by a bedhead rather than a fixed wall to ensure the magnificent view can be seen from all vantage points. Adjacent to the main bedroom is a second living area, complete with a terrace that extends the length of both areas.

As with many of Wright's houses, stone is used extensively in the Seascapes house, extending across two levels in some areas, such as the double-height void enclosing the open treaded timber staircase.

PHOTOGRAPHY ANNETTA ASHMAN
AND MICHAEL CONROY





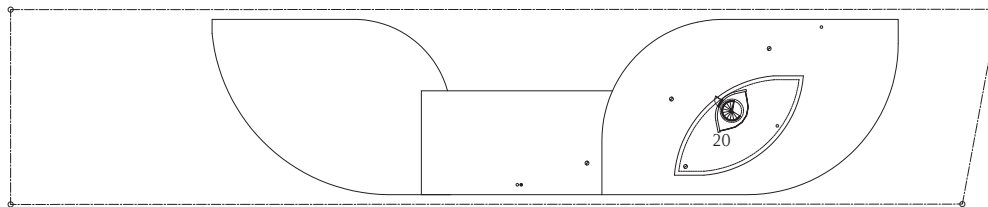


Designed by **BANHAM ARCHITECTS**, this monumental house in **TERRIGAL**, on the coast of New South Wales, enjoys direct access to the beach.

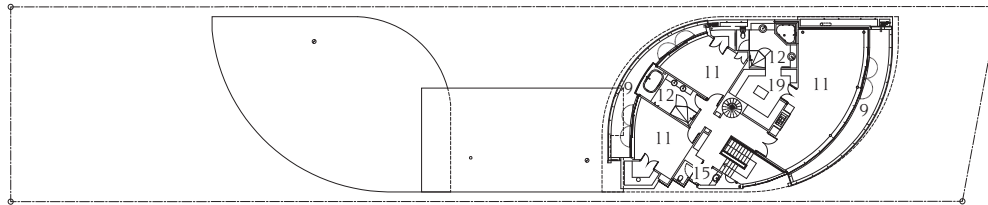


Staggered across its elongated site and extending over several levels, the house is constructed of concrete, steel and glass, tinted to reduce the amount of direct sunlight entering the home.

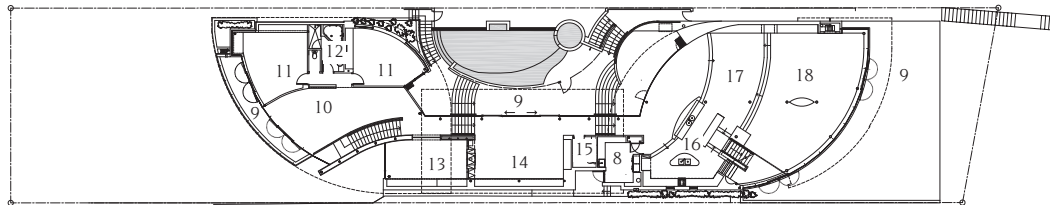
Water is a prominent theme of the design. Along with breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, the house features a swimming pool and a shallow pond with stepping stones leading to the front entrance. And the slightly curved roof forms give the house a nautical feel.



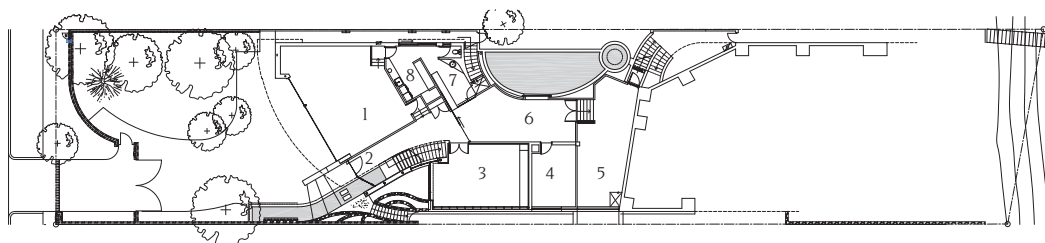
Roof



First floor



Upper ground floor



Lower ground floor

- 1 Garage
- 2 Entry
- 3 Entertainment room
- 4 Storage
- 5 Plant room
- 6 Gymnasium
- 7 Bathroom
- 8 Laundry
- 9 Balcony/Terrace
- 10 Piano room
- 11 Bedroom
- 12 Ensuite
- 13 Study
- 14 Family room
- 15 Powder room
- 16 Kitchen
- 17 Dining
- 18 Lounge
- 19 Walk-in-robe
- 20 Whale watching tower





To add texture and anchor the home to the dunes, the lobby is framed with double-height stone walls, creating a sense of transparency as one arrives. The open timber tread staircase and generous floor-to-ceiling glazing add to this sense of openness.





A home theatre and gymnasium are found on the lower level. Directly above are two bedrooms, a bathroom and a music room, an area specifically designed for guests. A half level above are the main living areas, including a kitchen and family room. Responding to council height restrictions, the architects designed a two-storey 'cell', conceived as almost a separate house, containing living areas and the master bedroom.

PHOTOGRAPHY JAMIE COBELDICK



Two kilometres outside **NOOSA**, Queensland, this house was one of the first to be built on a developing estate. Though there were no neighbouring properties when built, **PHORM ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN** were conscious of ensuring future privacy as the development began to expand. Fortunately, a nature reserve adjacent to the street provides unimpeded views of Mt. Tinbeerwah on the northwest side of the 800-square-metre property.

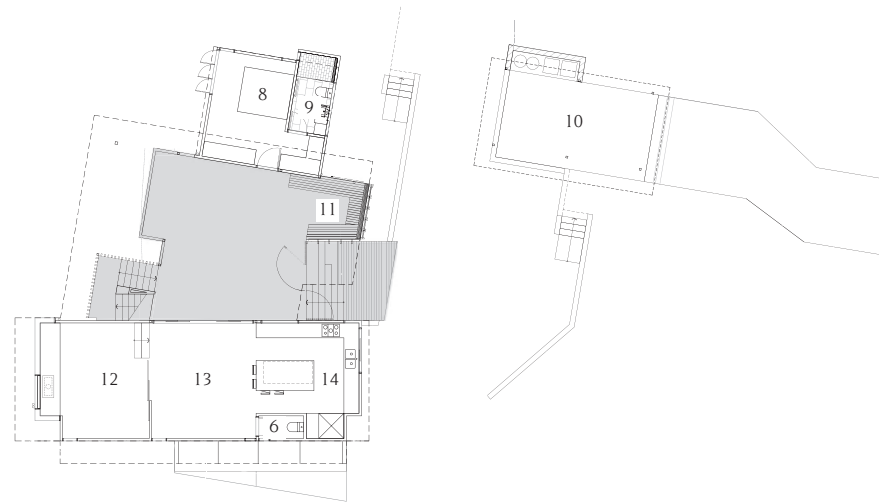


Apart from the concrete slab, necessary to anchor the house to the undulating site, lightweight materials were used for the construction, including a timber frame, fibro cement and corrugated iron. Material choice was based on a desire to evoke the sense of a beach shack, though considerably more refined.

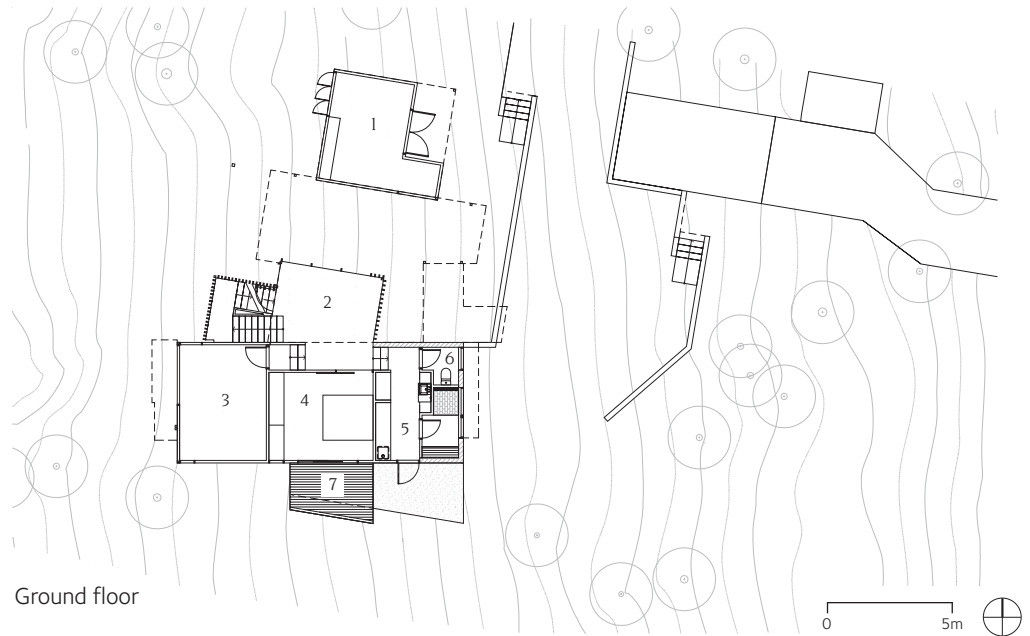


At ground level are the two children's bedrooms, together with a bathroom and laundry. As the house slopes away from the street, this lower level appears partially buried from the street. On the first floor, placed at one side of the house, are the main bedroom and ensuite. On the other side, separated by a large protected deck, are the open-plan kitchen, living and dining areas, while the lounge is delineated by a change in level.





First floor



Ground floor

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1 Storage | 8 Master bedroom |
| 2 Landing | 9 Ensuite |
| 3 Bunkhouse | 10 Carport |
| 4 Guest room | 11 Morning seat |
| 5 Laundry | 12 Living/Sleepout |
| 6 WC | 13 Dining |
| 7 Deck | 14 Kitchen |







One of the most noticeable aspects of the design is the link to the outdoors. As well as extensive glass louvred windows, large sliding doors open onto the central deck. With its ceiling clad in hoop-pine, this area serves as a second living area for most of the year.

PHOTOGRAPHY CAMERA OBSCURA





Located on **MAGNETIC ISLAND**, Queensland, this beach house has it all—a dry, rather than hot tropical climate; the Great Barrier Reef; and a terrain rarely found in the north of Australia. Dotted with large rocky outcrops and native hoop pines, the topography could easily be mistaken for Victoria’s Wilson’s Promontory.



Strict development guidelines restricted architects **ARM** to a single-storey layout. Overlooking Picnic Bay, the house is accessed by a narrow road. Elevated above the rocky outcrops, the house follows the fall of the land. While the home's distinctive form includes a classic modernist pavilion, it's considerably skewed, with two 'rock-like' forms attached. The pavilion is constructed of steel and clad in timber boards, and the two 'rocks', each containing a bedroom and ensuite, are made from cement sheeting, treated to mimic granite on the site.



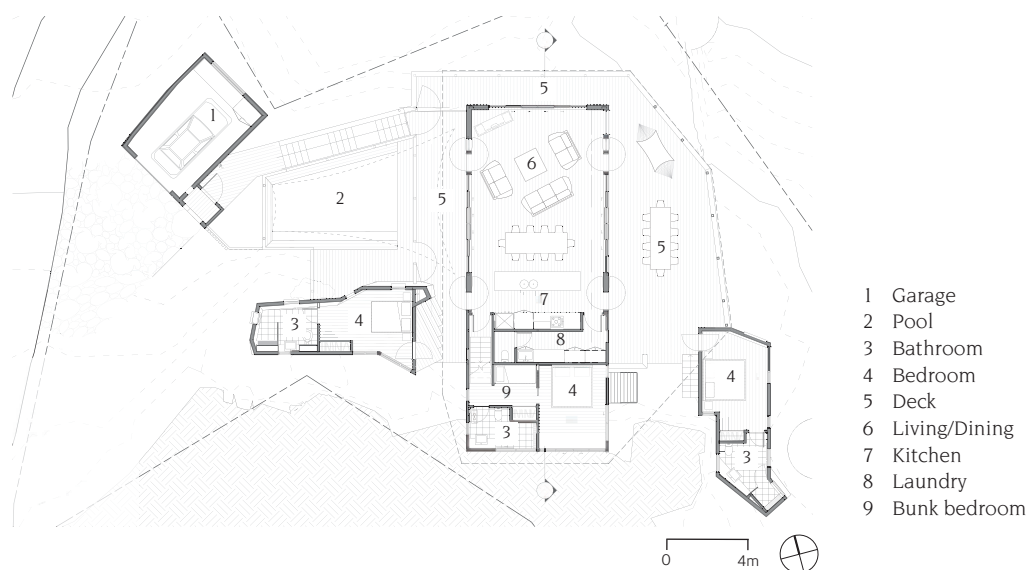
Rather than just a corridor separating the pavilion from the two pods, the architects created an open breezeway on either side.



The layout provides each of the three bedrooms with a different view—the ocean, the dramatic rock face and the elevated swimming pool. While the bedrooms are cavernous, the kitchen and open-plan living areas are transparent. Featuring a hoop pine ceiling that wraps around the walls, the living areas enjoy covered decking on three fronts. Steel roofing not only allowed the architects to create an irregular-shaped roofline, but also provided protection over the decks from the heavy rain the area can receive, enabling the outdoors to be enjoyed in all conditions.



PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREW RANKIN



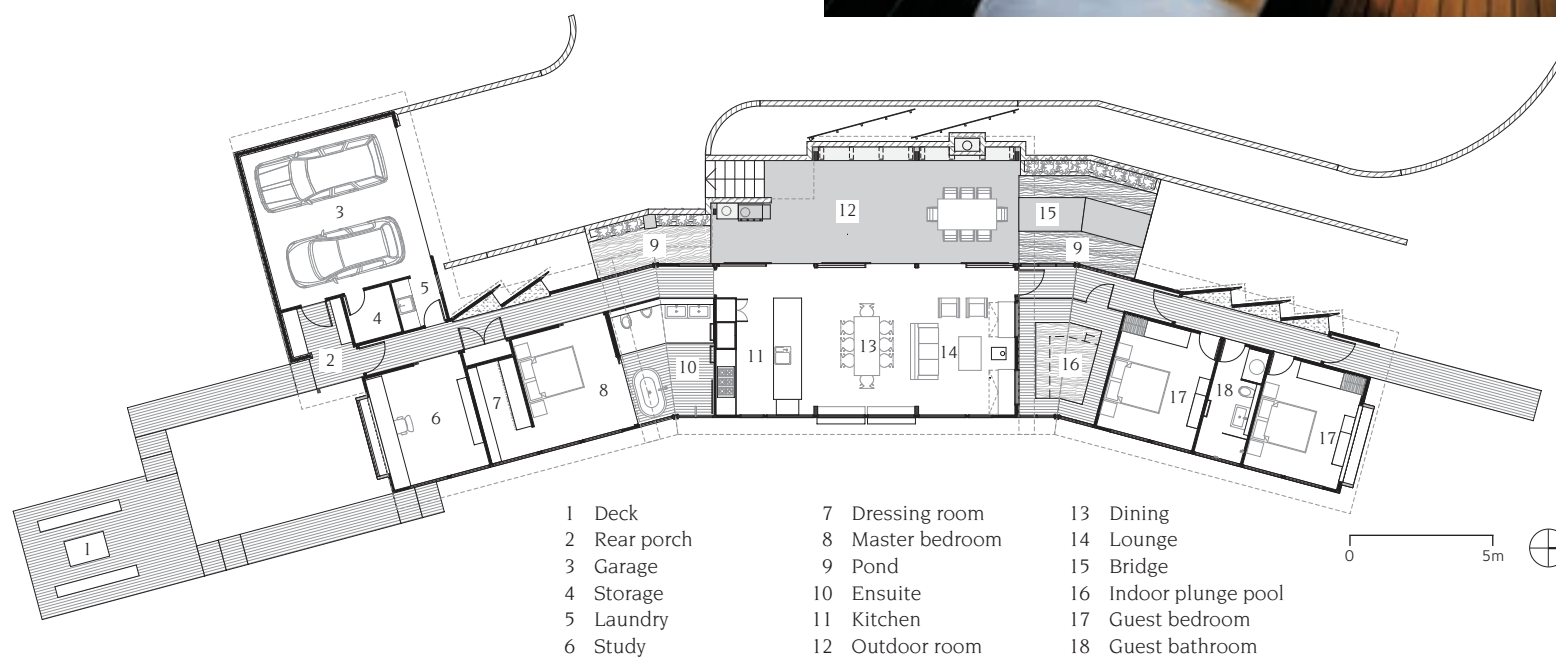




WAIHEKE ISLAND, a 30-minute boat ride from Auckland, is a popular destination for locals and those travelling from abroad. This single-storey house, designed by **STRACHAN GROUP ARCHITECTS**, is clad in cedar and stained a black–brown hue, referencing New Zealand’s strong history of black houses.



Three interlocking pavilions with steel skillion-shaped roofs allow for northern light to enter the house. The first pavilion comprises the main bedroom and ensuite, together with a separate study. The second pavilion consists of the open-plan kitchen, dining and living areas. The third pavilion includes two guest bedrooms and a shared bathroom.





Separating the pavilions are two 'wet areas'. One of these areas comprises the ensuite to the main bedroom. While this ensuite is fully enclosed, it was made to feel like the outdoors with its timber batten ceiling and polycarbonate roof, together with timber deck-like floor. This sense of the outdoors is further strengthened by the meandering corridor linking all three pavilions. Featuring timber decking floors and weather-boarded walls, there's a sense of walking through the landscape. Floor-to-ceiling glass louvred windows along this corridor heighten the outdoor experience.



Separating the living areas from the guest pavilion is a courtyard with an indoor plunge pool.



Oriented to the morning light, 'pop-out' style windows in the bedrooms as well as in the living areas create the sense of sitting on a verandah.

PHOTOGRAPHY PATRICK REYNOLDS

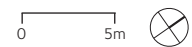
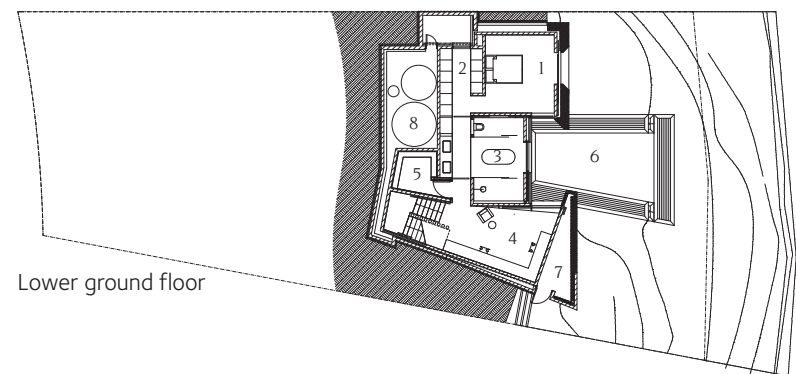
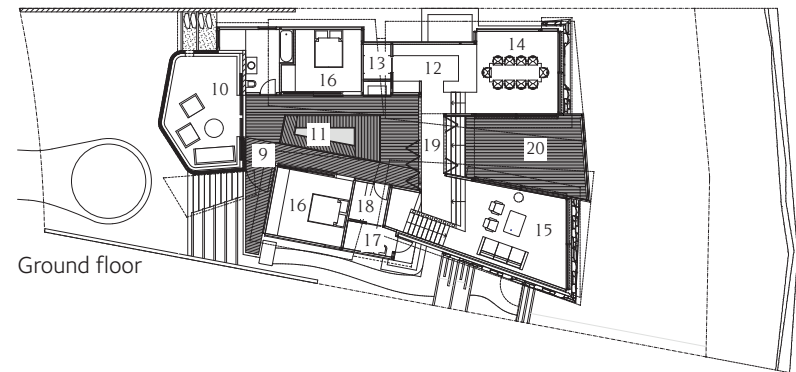


Rather than simply replicate an urban-style house on the coast, architects **CASEY BROWN** have created a home that responds to its position perched on a clifftop in **WHALE BEACH**, an hour from Sydney.



With an entrance that leads to the top level of the house, the form that first reveals itself is a curvaceous sandstone wall. Rather than being located at the rear, as with most houses, the two guest bedrooms and ensuite bathrooms are the first rooms to be seen.

The pebble garden in the centre of the courtyard creates a strong Zen feeling when the timber screens around the guest rooms are closed.



When a screen door framing the courtyard is pulled back, the view of the Pacific Ocean comes to the fore. The main kitchen and dining area are located beyond this door, with the lounge on the other side of the house, separated by the courtyard.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1 Master bedroom | 11 Courtyard |
| 2 Walk-in-robe | 12 Kitchen |
| 3 Ensuite | 13 Pantry |
| 4 Study | 14 Dining |
| 5 Cellar | 15 Living |
| 6 Pool | 16 Bedroom |
| 7 Pool plant | 17 Bathroom |
| 8 Watertank storage | 18 Laundry |
| 9 Entrance | 19 Hall |
| 10 TV room | 20 Terrace |



In contrast to the glazed first floor, the lower level is constructed of sandstone, and contains the main bedroom, ensuite and study. Continuing the Zen theme, the swimming pool 'cuts' into the deck. A staircase with sculptural balustrades formed by a series of wooden poles links the two levels and adds a different dimension to the house.



Though an extremely comfortable house, many of the features of a conventional urban house have been left behind, and one is continually reminded of the coastal location when moving through the spaces.

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