

HOUSES

THE RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE

ISSUE 70
\$11.95

**Q&A: IMAGINATIVE
PRODUCTS
FROM FLORIS
SCHOONDERBEEK**

DESIGNS TO MATCH THE ELEMENTS

SHAPES AND SPACES FOR INDOORS AND OUT

IN PROFILE: THE ELEGANT ANGLES OF BE ARCHITECTURE

OUTDOOR LIVING, BOOKS AND PRODUCTS TO ENJOY



Echoing the beach houses of the sixties and seventies, this Mornington Peninsula home embraces



its surroundings by angling for maximum exposure to the sun. **Story by Kym Westbury Photography by Mark Munro**

BEAM REACH





SHUNNING suburban stereotypes can be perilous, but in this case, the rewards are plentiful. Challenging traditional notions of street frontage orientation, this new beach house on a rectangular block in Sorrento, on the tapering end of Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, uses the sun as its compass. "The house forms a diagonal stripe across the site," architect Paul Porjazoski, of Bent Architecture, says. "Because the overall building was developed from this east-west axis, no room is denied the northern sun."

When owner Stephen Gough and his wife bought the block in 1998, the original house was part of the former Sorrento Downs clubhouse and set at the back of the block. "Bringing the new house as far forward as possible was essential," explains Stephen. "We desired a spectacular and interesting house, but also one that meshed with our intention to sell somewhere down the line."

Four bedrooms, two living spaces and an alfresco entertaining area were the bones of the brief. And the upstairs living area needed to drink in the views. "Design integrity and multiple functions of the rooms and spaces were general driving notions," Stephen adds. "There were no preconceived ideas about the design," Paul agrees. "The sun simply

dictated the form of the house. Sharp angles were generated purely by the east-west axis over the rectangular site. It's a good thing Stephen embraced the original design, because it was quite a strong, singular layout idea, and everything, including the interior, flowed from it."

Perhaps most striking and distinctive are the house's angular timber overhangs, rigidly geometric with luminous orange-brown stripes. These canted, skyward projections offer protection from the sun and rain for the windows below. "They also create a verandah-like effect in the front of the house," Paul explains, "despite the fact that there are no "posts" in the traditional sense." Grey-stained rough-sawn cypress pine at the east-west and southern outer edge, and rich spotted gum in and around the deck provide strong material contrast.

Decks are scattered around this abode with seeming abandon, but there's nothing random to it. Their different sizes and configurations lend themselves deliberately to various domestic functions which are aimed at year-round utility. The north-facing deck juts resolutely north, while the southern deck does the same for its compass direction, extending from the center of the living space to gather glimpses of Port Phillip Bay and the rooftops of Sorrento. The lower decks provide



PREVIOUS PAGES: The house is sited diagonally across the block on an east-to-west axis. This allows northern light to permeate each of the rooms and orients the house toward views of Port Phillip Bay.

THESE PAGES: Living rooms and bedrooms are organized along the north side to take advantage of the warmth of winter solar penetration. Interior materials and finishes are modest, in keeping with the beach-house style of the neighbourhood.

plenty of room for families to happily mingle on weekends. In front of the dining room, another platform provides an intimate outdoor eating area and refuge from southerly winds.

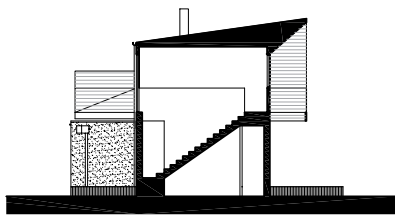
The kitchen connects the living and dining spaces, and acts as a divider between the two. Here, an outdoor living area opens up via full-width bi-fold doors onto the north deck. “We brought the decking surface into the interior of the kitchen, and continued the timber lining from above to reinforce the connection between the kitchen and the outdoor eating space,” Paul says. The position of the island bench strengthens the union, delineating the cooking area and permitting the cook to engage in the surrounding social action of the living areas without turning away from the view.

A light-reflecting neutral palette and pared back interior scheme help direct attention to the surrounding vistas. But intense, vivid hues appear in the bathrooms, where glossy vertical stripes of coloured tile appear in shades reminiscent of holiday beach chairs and canvas umbrellas. Stephen recalls the first night he stayed at the house: “I was reclining with a cold beer near the open window with an ocean-scented breeze drifting in. It was wonderful, and it’s an enduring memory.”

True to the architect’s intent, the home’s north facade is used to maximum effect. It is the arrival point for visitors, and serves as an entertainment area for both children and adults. “We wanted an informal, multi-function space where children could play and muck around,” Stephen explains. A thick plinth of deck, which Paul designed with integrated fold-away seating, creates a stage on which people gather in an informal, theatre-like setting, and the yard provides a grassy canvas on which holiday retreats play out lazily under the sun.

Paul designed the house to offer climate controlled spaces using passive technology. “The narrow upstairs space, with doors and windows on both sides, allows cross-flow ventilation and passive cooling, Paul says. “Double-glazed windows enhance natural warmth in winter.” Reverse-cycle air-conditioning and independent thermostats are installed in every room. Water from rain-water tanks feeds gardens automatically from a bore-fed system.

It’s the resolute layout, synchronized with the path of the sun, that makes this house work. The client had visualized a spectacular dwelling with notable design interest and street appeal. Stephen was granted his wish. “We catch people peeking through the gates,” he laughs. **H**

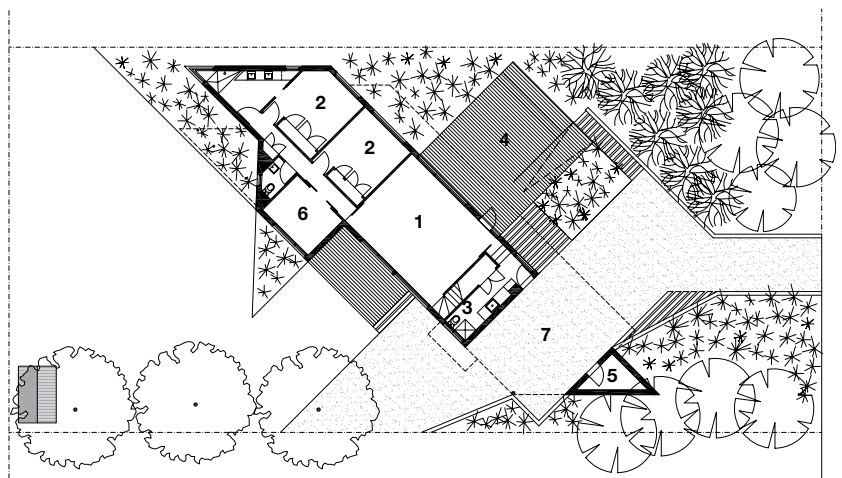


Section A



Section B

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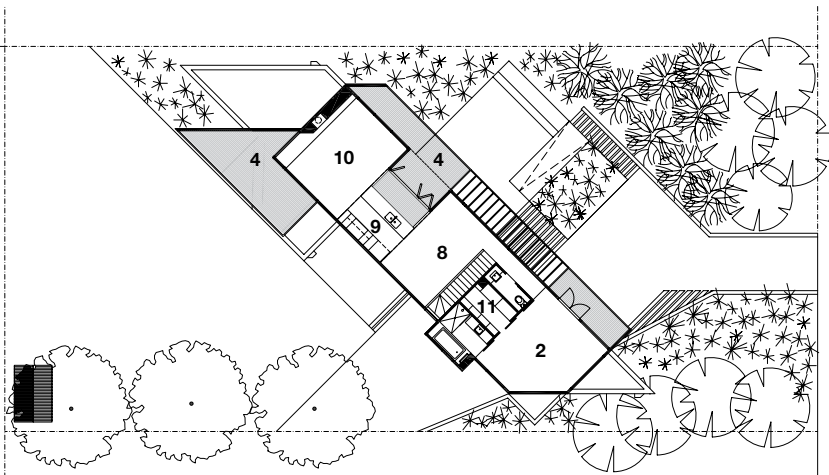
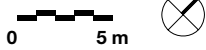


Ground level

LEFT: The vivid tiles in the bathroom are reminiscent of deck chairs and beach umbrellas. The bath, which perches beneath a cantilevered window, has become a favourite nook for the owner. RIGHT: Horizontal slot windows focus attention on groves of native trees.



- 1 Sitting
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Laundry
- 4 Deck
- 5 Store
- 6 Study
- 7 Carport
- 8 Dining
- 9 Kitchen
- 10 Living
- 11 Walk-in-robe



Upper level



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PRACTICE PROFILE
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Matt Rawlins

BUILDER
Elliot Homes

CONSULTANTS
Engineer D & A Consulting
Interiors Bent Architecture
Lighting Bent Architecture

PRODUCTS
Roofing Colorbond Custom Orb in 'Woodbound Grey' **External walls** Rough-sawn cypress pine with Aquatil finish; spotted gum with natural oil finish; sand-cement render with Abilox oxide **Internal walls** Plasterboard; spotted gum **Windows** Rylock double-glazed, thermally improved aluminium frames **Doors** Rylock aluminium external frames (sliders, bifolds, hinged doors); Gainsborough Architectural Admiral levers; Lockwood deadbolts **Flooring** Spotted gum floorboards; Godfrey Hirst Brighton carpet in 'Iron Bark' **Lighting** Beacon Lighting Astra surface-mounted pendant; Beacon Lighting Mara II Medium Drum pendants; low-voltage downlights **Kitchen** Reconstituted stone benchtops; Laminex joinery in 'Burnished Wood'; Grohe Minta single lever mixer; Clarke Epure undermount sink **Bathroom** Reconstituted stone benchtops; Laminex joinery in 'Burnished Wood'; Caroma Liano undermount basins; Caroma Liano mixer; Johnson Waringa wall tiles **Climate control** Natural ventilation; Advantage Air Gen III reverse-cycle airconditioner **External elements** Recycled sleeper retaining walls; spotted gum decks; indigenous planting

FLOOR AREA
225 m²

PROJECT COST
\$520,000

TIME SCHEDULE
Design, documentation 14 months
Construction 10 months

LEFT: Angular soffits on the facade support the deck roof, obviating the need for support posts. Spotted gum cladding is richly oiled as a nod to the vernacular sixties and seventies beach houses of Victoria's Mornington Peninsula.