

# residential 10

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Architectural Review Australia 117



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Boyle  
Architect

**project**  
Burrige  
Read  
Residence

**photography**  
Brett  
Boardman

**review**  
Peter  
Tonkin

# NO SMALL PLAN

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A careful reconfiguration invests an existing beach house with a rich spatial complexity that belies its compact scale and awkward prior form.





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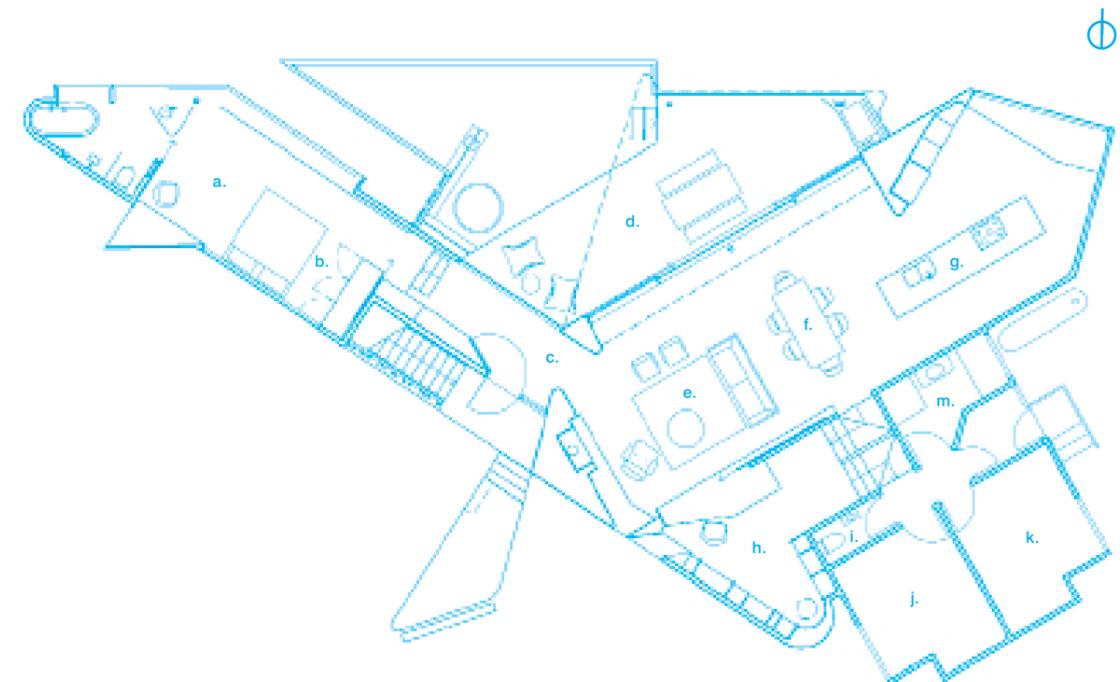
## Architect's Statement

The house is located on a northerly sloping site adjacent to the mature angophoras and spectacular rock outcrops of Bouddi National Park, overlooking Brisbane Water on the Central Coast of New South Wales. Inspired by the natural beauty of surrounding landscapes, the textural fragment is grafted to the existing building and is at once pinned to the earth and projected towards the horizon. The form has been stepped and stretched to the edges of the site to make the most of the aspect and views. The bedroom wing projects over the landscape like a cantilevered rock shelf and is supported by a twisted steel structure reminiscent of angophora branches. The exterior, which is comprised of clear finished fibre cement and random vertical timber battens, will weather and develop a patina allowing it to sit quietly within its environment. Subtle scale shifts in the battens and screens offer a sense of depth to the landscape, reminiscent of views through the tree trunks in a forest.

The plan offers a roughly boomerang-shaped layout with a covered deck contained within the hub and flanked by the living area. A projecting wing contains the entry, main bedroom and ensuite. An entry veranda has been recessed into the main façade and contains a stair connecting the car parking area beneath the bedroom to the house. The living room is constructed over the floor of the existing house, while the bedroom wing and a mezzanine study off the existing stair landing were constructed as new. The new spaces are all interconnected with subtle shifts of geometry and axis to create transparency and fluidity to the plan, which maximises the perception of space in what is a relatively modest project. Smaller scale elements and details also directly reference the landscape. For example, the concrete entry slab, the kitchen island, the internal fireplace and the projecting bay windows and vanity are seen as rock fragments; the en suite tiles as filtered sun patterns through the tree canopy; the painted colour overlay as bark patterns on the adjoining spotted gums and the recycled timber flooring has been left half-sanded like the adjoining wharf. These subtle details, crafted by a team of extremely talented local tradesmen, assist in setting the building in its place, making for a relaxed and memorable experience in the Australian holiday house tradition.

A concrete stone was cast and set within toothed brickwork at the base of the house and offered as a housewarming present to the owners as the construction was nearing completion. The relief depicts a brush turkey – a notoriously territorial native bird endemic to the area – guarding the entry to the house.

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### floor plan legend

- a. en suite
- b. master bed
- c. entry
- d. deck
- e. living
- f. dining
- g. kitchen
- h. study
- i. wc
- j.+k. bed
- m. bath

**Review:**  
 Burridge  
 Read  
 Residence

For the house, more than for any other building type, the plan is the generator of quality – the plan is the basis for its functionality, environmental performance and much of its architectural success. Situated on the New South Wales central coast, the Burridge Read Residence is a reworking of an unloved, developer-built beach house from the 1990s. It is more than just a stylish and contemporary alteration, however, and it is the plan that underlies its quality, exhibiting a sophistication of form and geometry that calls to mind wider themes in architecture. As a result, the house possesses an unusual richness of experience in a comparatively modest envelope.

The owners lived in the original house for a number of years before they commissioned David Boyle to rework it. It was originally a themed structure, with prow-shaped ends and an awkward 45-degree geometry. Its northern half, containing the usual linked living/dining/kitchen and an oddly shaped master bedroom, was demolished down to the floor structure. For economy, the southern half, containing two bedrooms and a bathroom and set a metre or so above, was

retained in its entirety, pyramid roof and meranti joinery included.

The site is rectilinear to the east and projects in a long slice to the west, with the diagonal front boundary parallel to the road. This angle, unrecognised by the original building, has been the inspiration for the new plan. An entirely new wing, long and thin, is set parallel to the front boundary and extends as far as the setbacks would allow. The angles of the original house and the northern boundary slice this form off at either end. It accommodates a new master suite and a study, as well as an entry and stairs. The former living/bedroom wing has been reconstructed to house a generous flow of living, dining, kitchen and sunroom. Together, the two wings form an open boomerang shape – facing north and trapping the sun while capturing the water views. Between the arms of the boomerang is a stepped deck, the heart of any beach house if it is properly designed and oriented, with a barbecue and a hot tub, half roofed and half open.

The new building, with a seemingly effortless expertise, transforms the original design's quasi-

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01.  
The jutting form of the bedroom wing was inspired by rocky outcrops in the nearby national park.

02.  
Kitchen – a slight twist in the plan helps to obscure services.



02



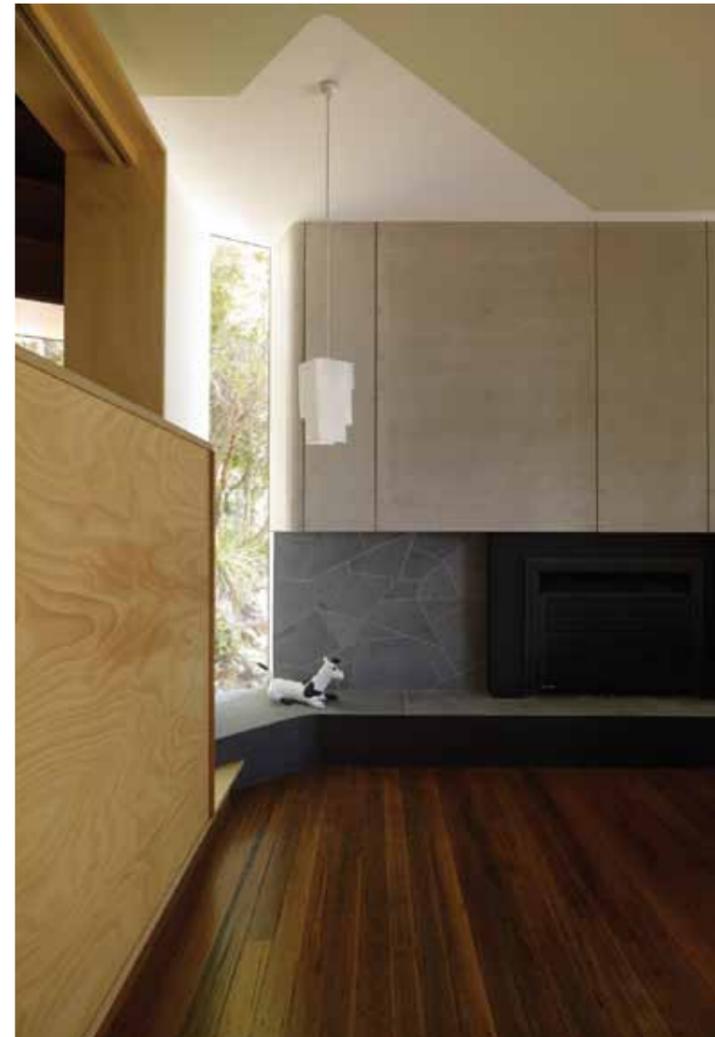
03

03.  
The living area has been constructed over the floor of the existing house.

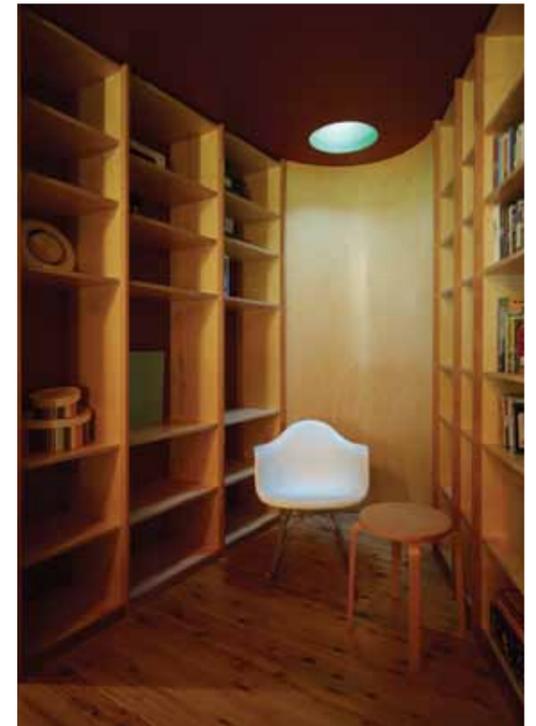
04.  
The building's rectilinear spaces are defined by smaller, softer curves.

05.  
Study – a hermetic, secluded space.

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04



05



06

This is a mature and inventive work, sitting comfortably in its setting. It creates, through modest means, an environment of relaxed delight.

symmetrical angles into a subtle and elegant play of shifting intersecting volumes, in which symmetry is suggested and at the same time denied.

The twin curved ends of the new front wing, externally similar, are developed internally in quite different ways and on different floor levels. The bathroom to the west is an open space flowing into the adjoining bedroom with a continuous window and even a continuous curtain. The elevated study to the east is a hermetic space, enveloped in timber and shelving. Slightly off-centre, the entry faces a sweep of glass to the view, but denies immediate access to the deck beyond. Instead, one must explore the spaces east or west along the northern wall.

The original living wing has been deconstructed, with the reclad 45-degree 'prow' to the east wrapped into the kitchen space as a cosy sunroom and the formerly symmetrical western end rebuilt entirely as the fireplace.

At a much reduced scale, the overall result is like one of those ancestral English country houses, where an intact mediaeval core is 'regularised' with a symmetrical Classical pavilion across the

front, old towers and chimneys projecting above the long flat line of the new roof. Here, the new front wing is similarly low and horizontal, and the older bedroom pavilion with its tall roof sits unaltered to one side.

Another sophistication unexpected in such a small house is the way the spaces, generally rectilinear, are defined by smaller-scaled curves. Again a Classical analogy can be made – in Greek mouldings, the curved parts are always separated with a flat fillet. Here, long sweeps of wall or glass are punctuated by a projection of curved wall at key points, separating the spaces and articulating the circulation through the house. Between the entry and the living room is a projecting curved element that divides the long glass walls, recalling the ends of the new front pavilion and giving enclosure and privacy to the two spaces.

Unconventionally, the kitchen faces the 'wrong' way – in most instances where a kitchen is designed around an island bench, the cook faces the windows with a wall of cupboards behind. Here, however, the wall of cupboards and fridge has replaced one of the water-facing windows,



07

06. An expansive strip of glazing flows across the master bedroom, providing superb views.

07. Glazing from the master bedroom continues into the en suite.

08. Entry.

08



and the cook faces the rear wall. The benefit is that the often-intrusive volume of service space is hidden, and the long back wall of the space can flow seamlessly across the entire volume. This planning further heightens the drama of the views, giving a special quality to the north-east facing slot of sunroom with its generous window seat.

The new work has been carried out in a contemporary manner in timber and fibre cement, all left to weather. Internally, the sheeting is plasterboard painted in subtle curves and fields, emphasising the geometry and recalling a play of shadow across its surfaces. This device enables different colours to be used for various spaces and planes – avoiding an all-white palette. The detail is well-resolved and appropriate, giving vibrancy and richness to the often spare architecture.

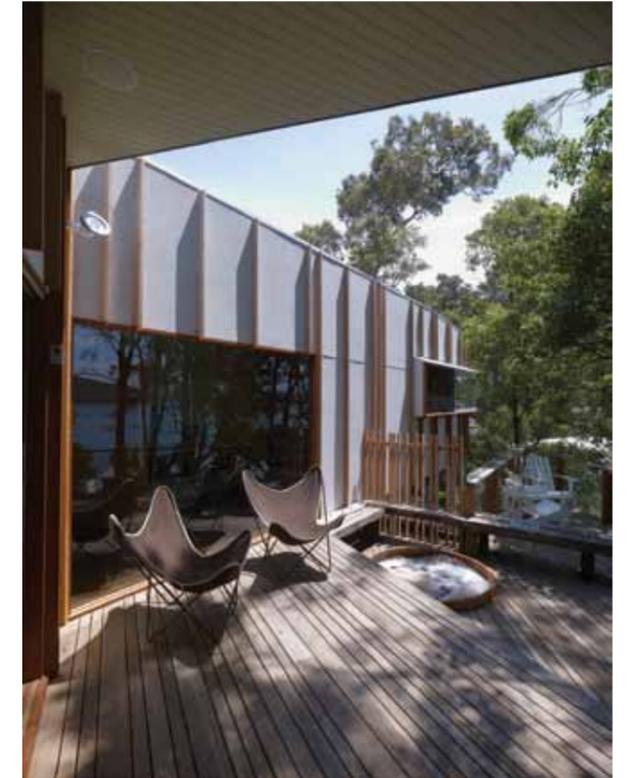
This is a mature and inventive work, sitting comfortably in its setting. It creates, through modest means, an environment of relaxed delight. **ar**

*Peter Tonkin is a director of Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects and adjunct professor of architecture at the University of Queensland.*



08.  
The house enjoys aspects  
over nearby Brisbane Water.

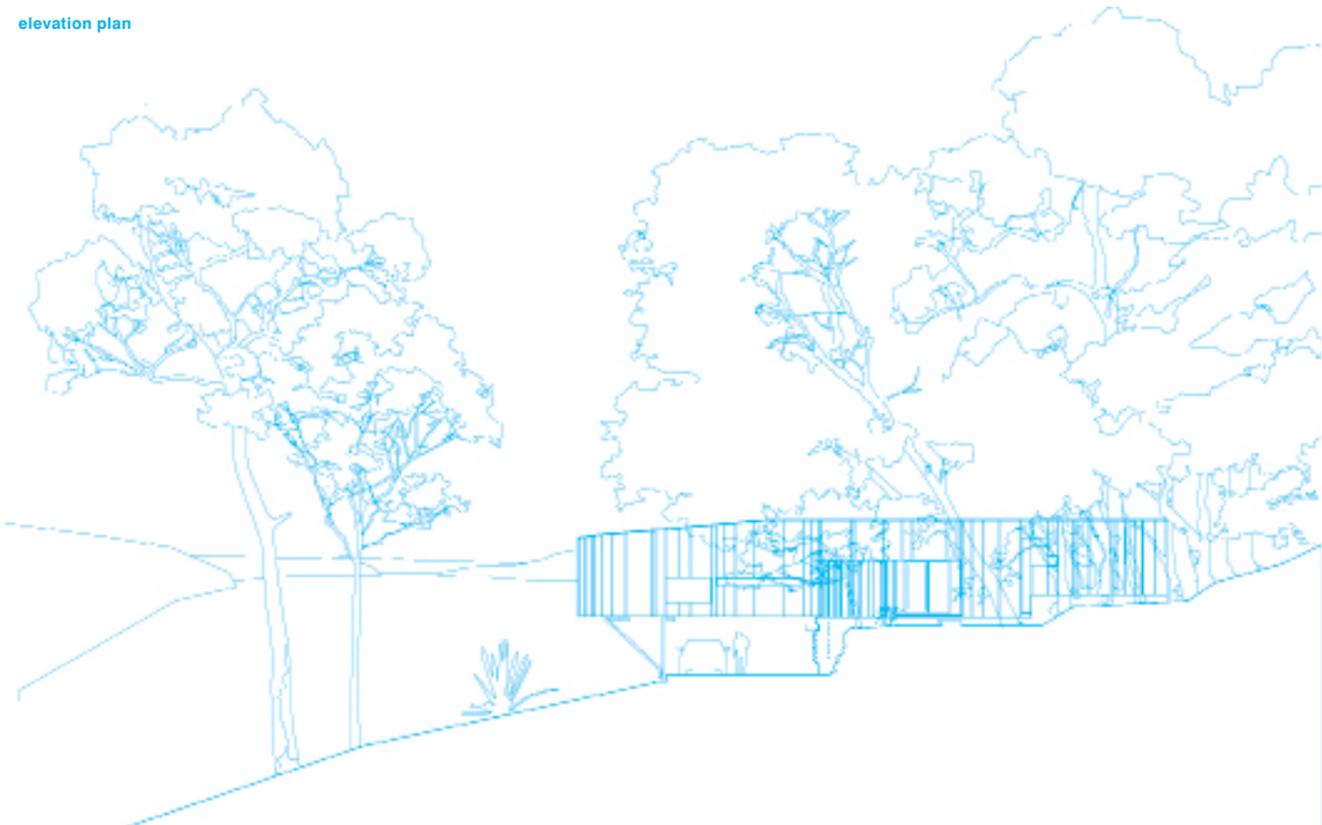
09.  
Sundeck and hot tub.



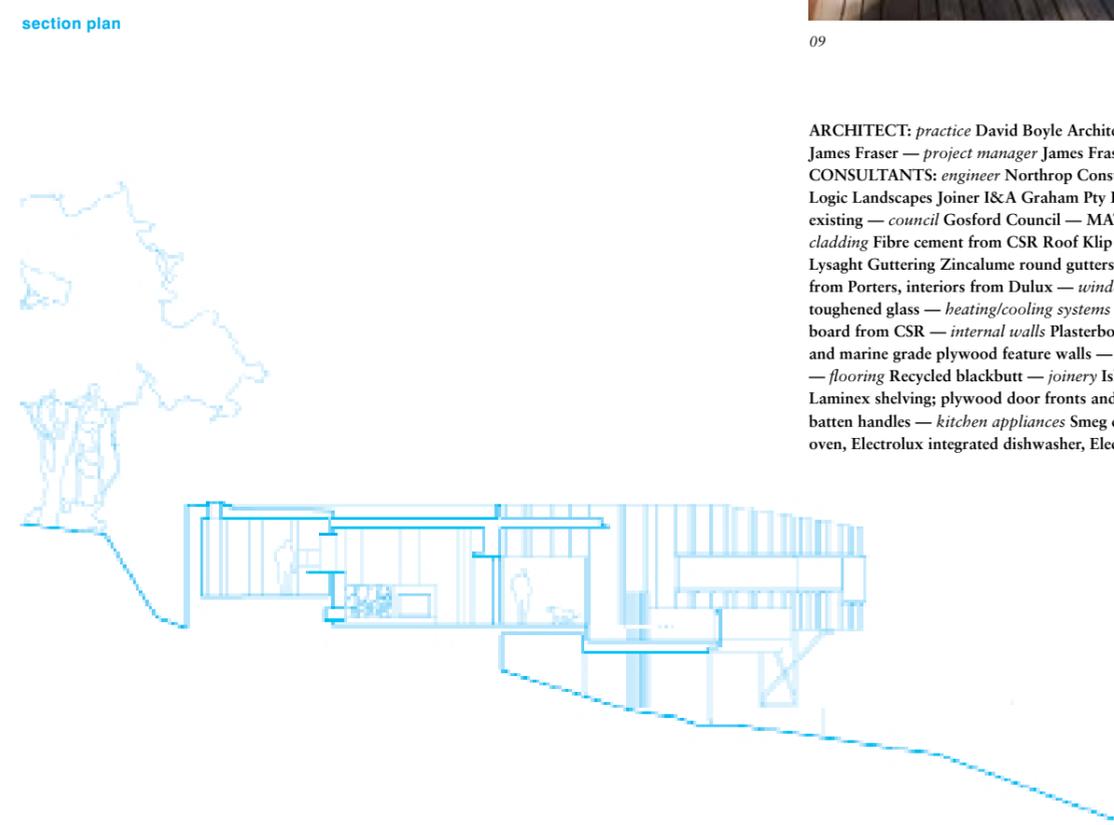
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elevation plan



section plan



ARCHITECT: *practice* David Boyle Architect — *project team* David Boyle and James Fraser — *project manager* James Fraser — BUILDER: Brad Patterson — CONSULTANTS: *engineer* Northrop Consulting Engineers — *landscape architect* Logic Landscapes Joiner I&A Graham Pty Ltd — PROJECT: size 162 m<sup>2</sup> including existing — *council* Gosford Council — MATERIALS: *walls* Timber frame — *cladding* Fibre cement from CSR Roof Klip Lok Zincalume profiled sheeting from Lysaght Guttering Zincalume round gutters from Lysaght — *paint* Clear sealer from Porters, interiors from Dulux — *windows* WRC frame — *glazing* Clear and toughened glass — *heating/cooling systems* Fireplace by Jetmaster Ceiling Plasterboard from CSR — *internal walls* Plasterboard, fibre cement, structural plywood and marine grade plywood feature walls — *lighting/light fittings* Custom uplights — *flooring* Recycled blackbutt — *joinery* Island bench: North coast hardwood, Laminex shelving; plywood door fronts and other joinery with western red cedar batten handles — *kitchen appliances* Smeg cooktop, Quasir rangehood, Electrolux oven, Electrolux integrated dishwasher, Electrolux BBQ, LG side by side fridge.