

# MODERN MANNERS

## A STRONG SCULPTURAL STATEMENT TO THE STREET

AUCKLAND  
DESIGN MANUAL  
TE PŪKA WHAKATAIRANGA | A TAMAKI MAKAUURAU

BUILDINGS + SITES // HOUSING CASE STUDY

**Brown Vujcich House**  
Herne Bay, Auckland

## OVERVIEW

A modern two storey house in the inner Auckland suburb of Herne Bay.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Brown Vujcich House is a recipient of an NZIA Award and a Resene Colour Award in 2011. This house is located on a narrow urban site in the heart of Herne Bay. Tight site controls and a sloping site resulted in a long narrow building that steps down the slope of the site. One of the main features of the house is the entry which is accessed via a bridge across a moat-style area of established planting.

The entry is glazed with translucent glass to give privacy and a beautiful soft light to the interior spaces. The brief to the architect was to design a functional family house that supports a relaxed life style, a view of the harbour and a place to house a collection of 1950-60's furniture, art and ceramics. While the design is economic in its delivery of space, it cleverly relies on the interior spaces opening to the exterior decks, terraces and views beyond.

The house makes a strong sculptural statement to the street bringing back the tradition of 19th and early 20th century housing with their strong street presence, with the street façade having greater degree of ornamentation than the other facades.



The family room and main living area opens out onto a deck with a swimming pool – north elevation of Brown Vujcich House.

# KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

HOUSING TYPE  
**DETACHED**

DENSITY  
**16 DW/HA**

ARCHITECT & DESIGN TEAM  
**PETE BOSSLEY ARCHITECTS**

YEAR COMPLETED  
**2003**

Project architects: Pete Bossley,  
Andrea Bell, Don McKenzie and  
Karen Ngan Kee

SITE AREA  
**600 M<sup>2</sup>**

Located on a narrow urban site in  
the heart of Herne Bay

The sloping site drops almost 6m  
from the street front to rear of the  
site

PARKING  
**FRONT ACCESS**

On site - open car park

PROJECT TYPE  
**TWO STOREY DETACHED  
HOUSE**

Ground floor:  
3 x double bedrooms  
2 x bathrooms  
1 x family room

First floor:  
Open plan kitchen, dining  
and living  
Visitor bedroom  
1 x bathroom  
Outdoor roof terrace and  
deck

Extra amenities:  
Pool

CLIENT/DEVELOPER  
**NOT RELEASED FOR PRIVACY**

PRICE BAND  
**HIGH- RANGE**

A high-range project would  
typically have a current build  
cost of more than \$3000  
per m<sup>2</sup>, exclusive of land  
costs, professional services  
and regulatory fees

# UNDERSTANDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

1. The house is located in a residential street, approximately 300 metres in length in the inner Auckland suburb of Herne Bay.
2. The street has undergone extensive change over the years and is of mixed character. The street consists of single and double storey buildings, original cottages and villas from the late 19th and early 20th century as well as new developments of townhouses and flats from the late 20th century. While the older houses relate well to the street a number of the newer developments do not.



The site gradually slopes down from the main street.

## GETTING IT RIGHT PLACING BUILDINGS ON SITE

1. To accommodate the sloping site which drops almost 6m from front to back, the house is set below the footpath level, which helps resolve height and height in relation to boundary controls.
2. There were a number of minor infringements, which were signed off by the neighbours.
3. The house was also placed in the middle of the site which allows generous space to the side and rear.
4. The client was quite specific about not wanting a garage or carport, to avoid a car parking structure dominating the front of the house. Parking has been provided on site, to one side of the house. This design move allows for the house form to dominate rather than car parking or garaging being the centre piece when the house is viewed from the street.



The site gradually slopes down from the main street.

## GETTING IT RIGHT OUTDOOR SPACES

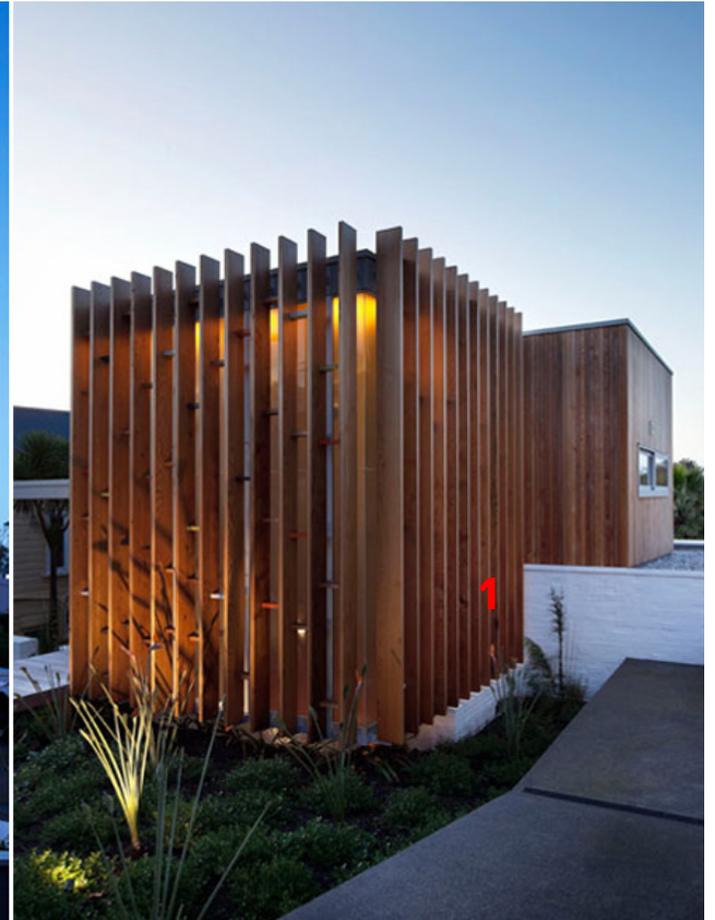
1. The main upstairs living areas flow seamlessly out to a roof top terrace with views out over the garden and to Auckland's central city skyline and harbour.
2. At the lower level, as the house steps down the site, each of the bedrooms has its own external terrace at the side of the house, fostering a cleverly designed connection between inside and out.
3. At the rear, the interior living room and family area opens out onto a terrace with a swimming pool. The terrace provides for generous storage underneath.



North - east elevation of Brown Vujcich House opens out onto a deck and outdoor swimming pool.

## GETTING IT RIGHT THE BUILDING

1. The relatively long and narrow house follows the slope of the site. Each of the two levels of the house step down from the front to the rear.



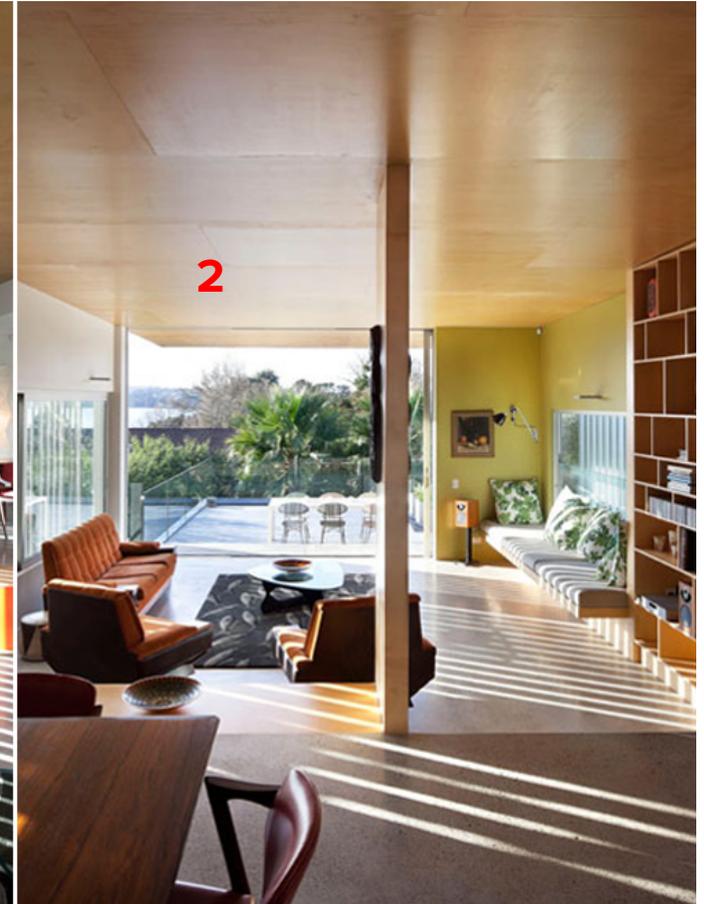
Looking towards the street from the rear side of this narrow urban site.

# GETTING IT RIGHT THE BUILDING

1. The entry into a spacious lobby behind the translucent screen is halfway between the two levels of the house. The kitchen and dining area is up half a flight of stairs.
2. The line of the ceiling gently slopes from one plane through to the exterior soffit, drawing the eye to the external view.
3. Down half a flight of stairs leads to a generous lobby at the lower level. A further set of level changes follows the site's contours and leads to the bedrooms and a family living area to the rear.



Looking towards the front entrance hallway from the living area.



Looking towards the external view and outdoor terrace deck from the hallway entrance.

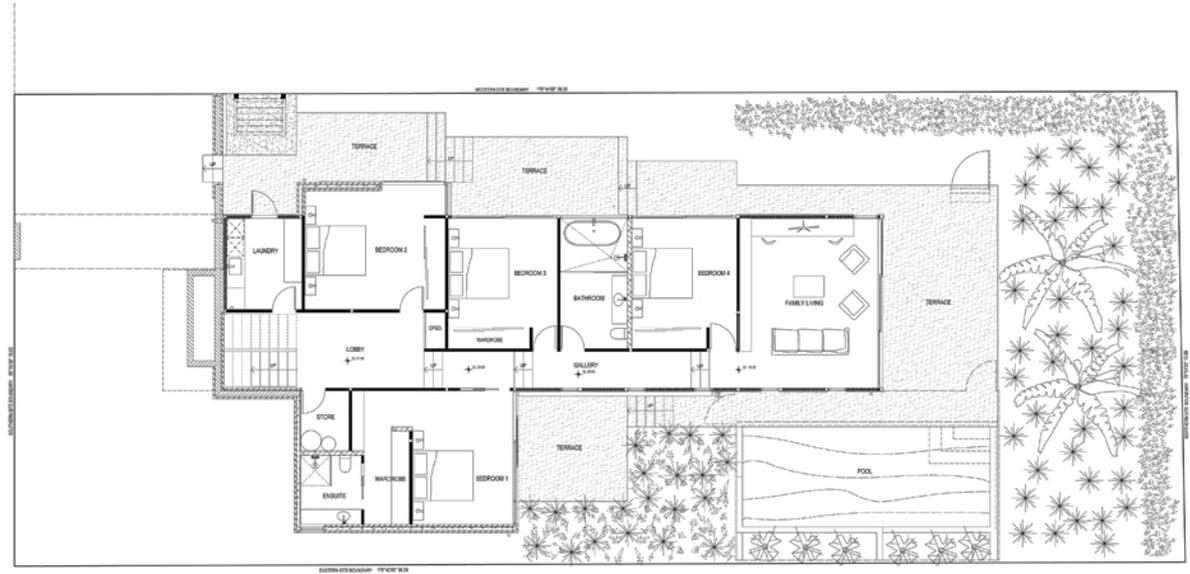
## GETTING IT RIGHT STREET TO FRONT DOOR

1. A sculptural screen is the primary element that presents the house to the street. A vertical cedar screen with intermittent horizontals painted in bright colours sits in front of a translucent glazed wall. The inspiration comes from the Modernist movement of the 1950-60's. During the day, external light and shadow from the screen plays onto the wall. At night, the interior lighting provides a jewel like effect to the street.
2. The entry from the street to the house is clearly defined. The entry approach is from the footpath onto a bridge across a moat-style area of planting. The front door sits at right angles behind the screen.



The site gradually slopes down from the main street.

# GETTING IT RIGHT Floor Plans

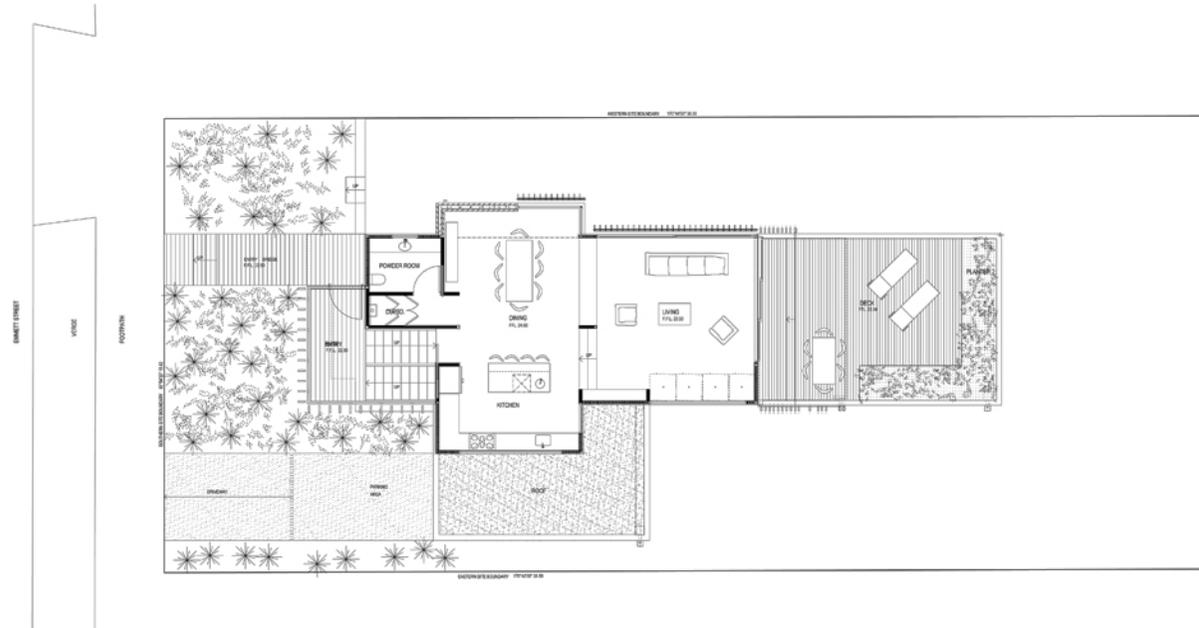


**BOSSLEY ARCHITECTS** LEVEL 0 FLOOR PLAN  
EMMETT STREET HOUSE  
HERNE BAY, AUCKLAND



Site and ground level floor plan.

# GETTING IT RIGHT Floor Plans

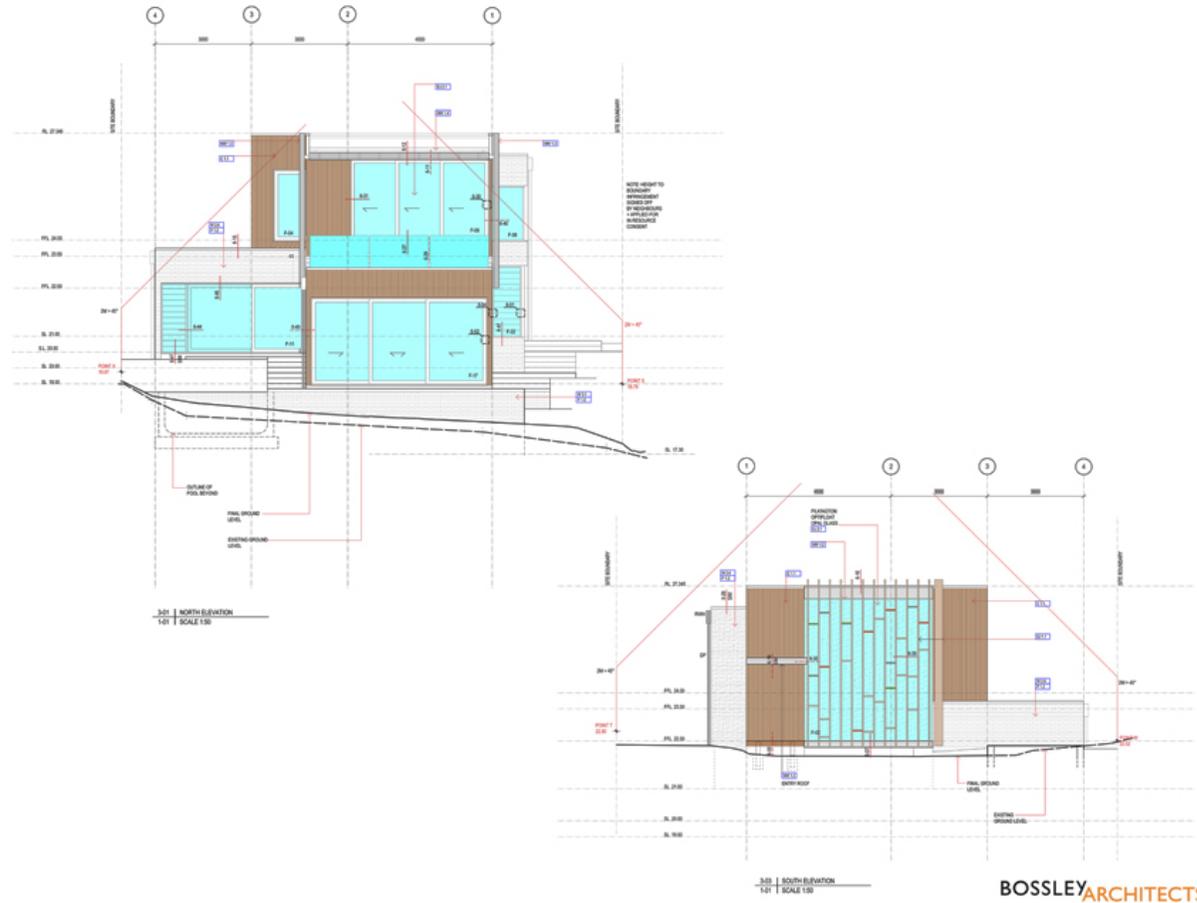


BOSSLEY ARCHITECTS LEVEL 1 FLOOR PLAN  
EMMETT STREET HOUSE  
HERNE BAY, AUCKLAND



Level 1 floor plan.

# GETTING IT RIGHT Floor Plans



Rear elevation (top left), Front and street elevation (bottom right).

# GETTING IT RIGHT Floor Plans



BOSSLEYARCHITECTS

Side elevation showing the relationship to the slope.

# AUCKLAND DESIGN MANUAL

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