

PIHA BACH

Daniel Marshall

(Re)generation

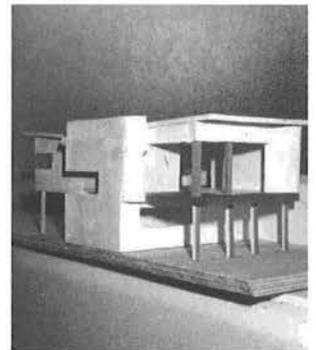
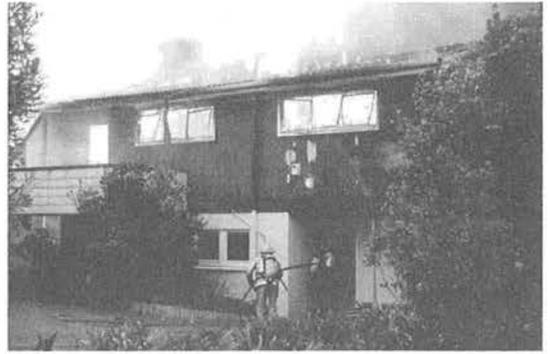
The site runs east/west between North Piha Road and the Tasman Sea. The previous bach, a two level, gabled rectangle six by 10.4 metres, was destroyed by fire in 1998. The concrete block lower level survived the fire.

The clients, an elderly couple, were dissatisfied with the volumes of the original structure. It experienced severe heat gain and did not provide exterior shelter from the extremes of the West Coast winds, rain and sun. The breathtaking outlook was marginalised by a deck that ran the entire seaward side of the house. The budget of the new was the approximately the same as the insurance payout (replacement policy) for the old (\$125,000).

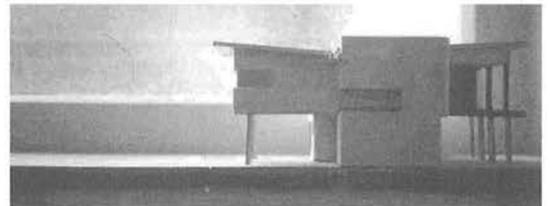
The axis of the new upper level was rotated 90 degrees from the concrete block “template.” The living areas project seaward (west), the services run north/south above the eastern concrete block wall, and the bedroom extends east towards the hills that rise steeply from North Piha Road. The “leftover” area of the original rectangle becomes a southeast facing terrace providing beach access to the upper level. The other deck on the northwest was treated as a covered adjunct to the living area. The internal stair remained in the original position, though the concrete block wall was extended slightly with a radius added.

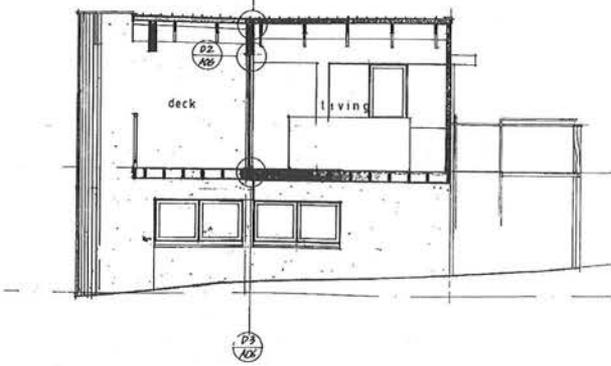
The form followed the same principle as the planning, with two monopitched roofs falling to a large internal gutter over the kitchen (service core). The structure was intently considered, with most elements designed to the edge of NZS 3604 (New Zealand’s *Modulor*), which achieved an economy of building structure whilst enhancing the structural articulation of the design. Materials were selected for economy and longevity.

The design was strongly influenced by the domestic work of Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier, the “language of modernism” being considered appropriate for the “utopic” functionality of the bach. The term “vernacular” is often championed by those who regard the modernist aesthetic as their nemesis, although I suggest that the archetypal New Zealand bach springs from a similar set of proletarian desires to that of early domestic modernism—consider Le Corbusier’s own “log cabin” as Roquebrune Cap Martin, a curious collision of the rational and the nostalgic.

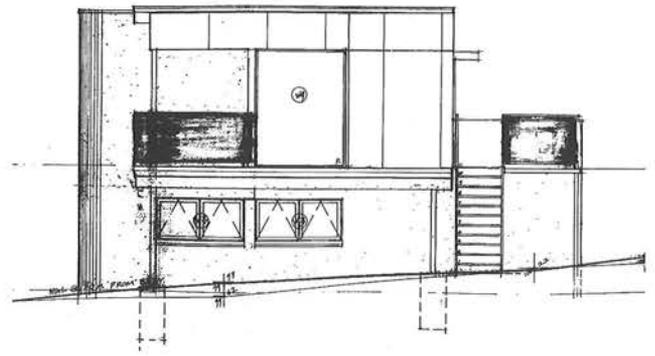


Model

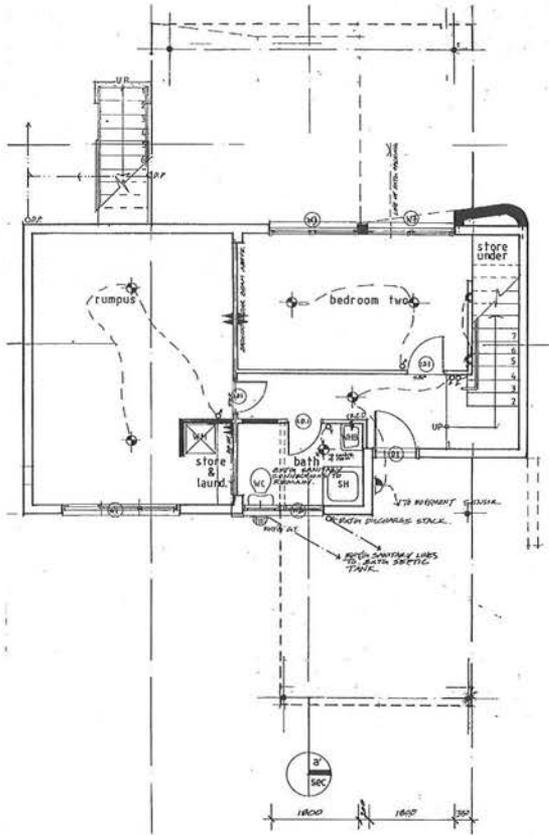




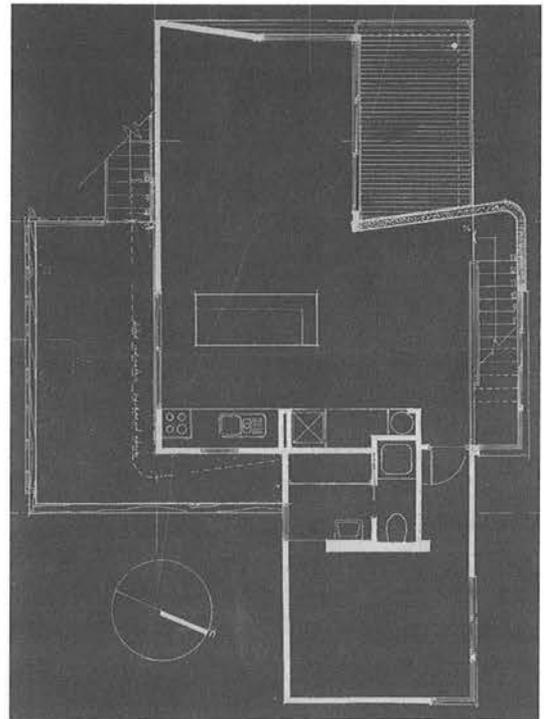
Section



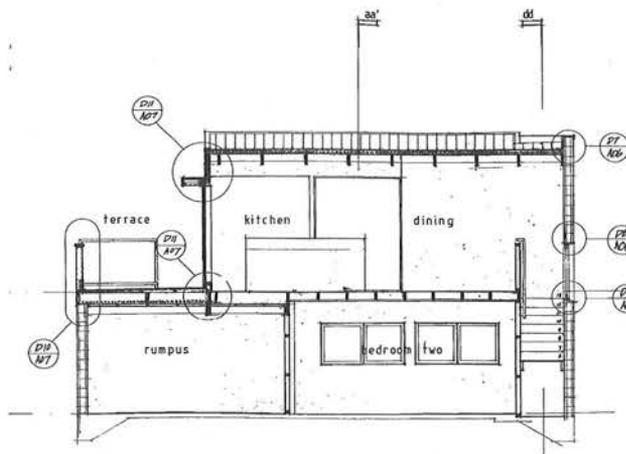
West elevation



Ground floor plan



First floor plan



Section

