

# IT'S SO

**DESIGNED FOR FAMILIES**

EDITED BY GARY TAKLE

**FRESHWATER  
HOUSE**





**BREWSTER  
HJORTH  
ARCHITECTS**



## FRESHWATER HOUSE

This friendly and playful design takes the image of a wooden crate tossed upon oceanside rocks to provide a sheltering cave below. Joyfully embracing the beautiful location, this is a house that reflects the robust and knockabout character of Freshwater Beach, with the special qualities of exposure and protection expressed in the headland cliffs and protected corners of the beachside site.

From the street, elegant rectangles in timber-framed glass set the tone of the design, with supporting notes of exposed concrete and copper. The effect is raw, open and inviting, suggesting that this is not simply a house, but a home; somewhere to come back to after a long day at the beach that is equal parts practical and warmly inviting. Materially, the home is designed as a simple backdrop; a quiet canvas to be coloured by the family's activities. The robust components were carefully selected and detailed to weather gracefully with only minimal regular maintenance - a central concern for such an exposed property.

Inside, layered and complex finishes are contrasted by a palette of raw materials to create a relaxed family environment. The concrete and hardwood structural elements are offset with more refined finishes, such as terrazzo, stucco and timber veneers in Oregon and Ebony, which juxtapose the translucent resin materials.

The internal organisation of the home is based around the family's desire for both privacy and togetherness. Bedrooms are discrete and separate, each with their own outlooks, while communal spaces are elevated platforms from which the family can enjoy the views without engaging in the beachside bustle. The interior represents an open ended and flexible design: as the children grow, their privacy and independence is supported by the separation and independent settings of their bedrooms.

The central level holds the internal common rooms. One such space is the large entertaining area, comprising both the living and dining rooms, with high ceilings and a glazed façade that slides back and opens directly to the beachside vistas. The kitchen and guest accommodation are grouped together on the sheltered northern side of the home, protected by sliding and adjustable screens and awnings.

The casual and relaxed appeal of this design belies the practical allocation of its spaces, as well as the careful framing of the beautiful outside views. Beachside functionality and a strong, open connection to the outdoors are balanced by carefully allocated private rooms, thus ensuring that the dwelling will remain a comfortable and flexible home, one that will age gracefully and stand the test of time.

Photography by: Mushenko Photography

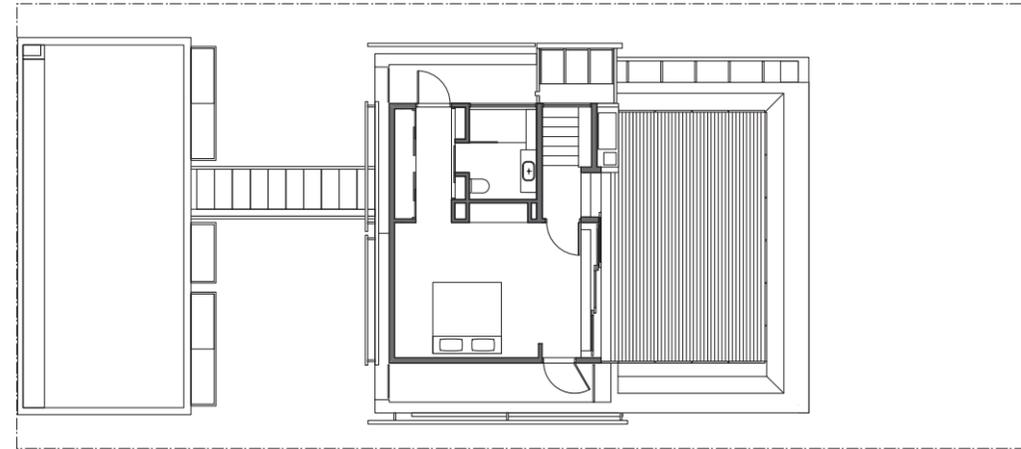


**ARCHITECT //** Ian Brewster is Principal of Sydney based Brewster Hjorth Architects. This project, Freshwater House, reflects Ian's belief that the quality of your environment is the basis for the quality of your life, aspiring to make the most of your immediate surroundings for you and your family. He aims to clarify design problems to their basic questions, and then produces a range of innovative solutions for his clients. Ian has recently been working on the Albury Art Gallery and the Eddie Mabo Library, whilst also renovating his own family terrace in the inner west Sydney suburb of Glebe.

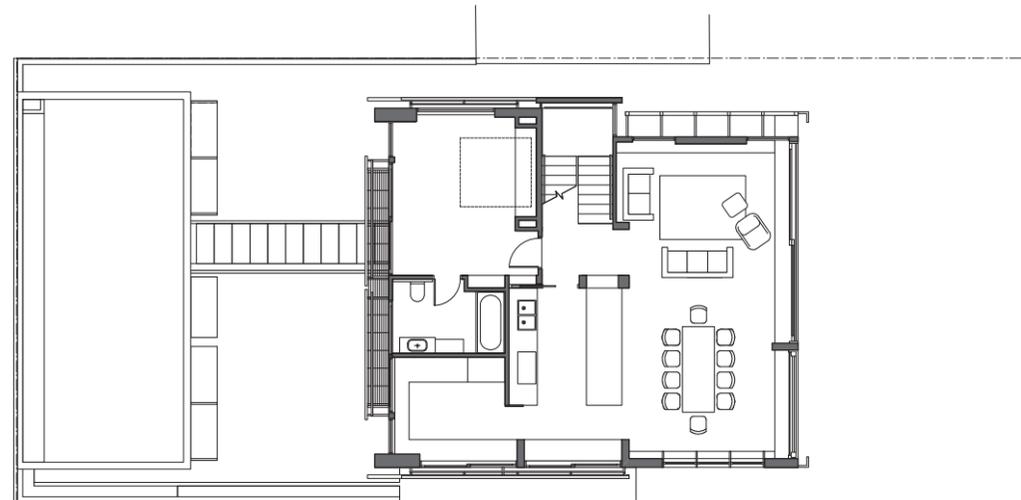
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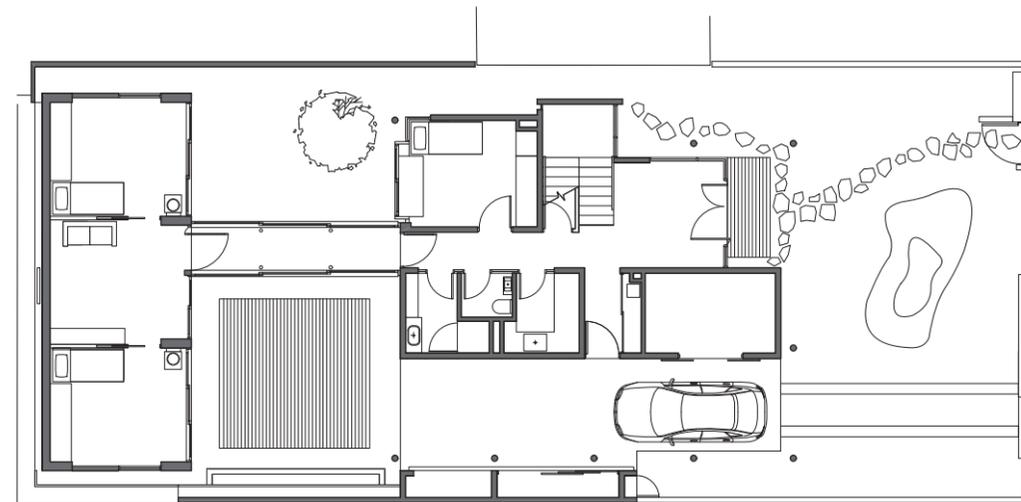
Tight and efficient planning means that all spaces serve multiple functions. These will naturally vary in their usage as the age and number of occupants change.



THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR