

PROJECT TIMBER

2026

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Cedar by the Sea

Above Muriwai Beach, Architecture27 and Best Nest Building Company have shaped a cedar-lined home around memory, material and view, right down to a bay window angled toward the owner's family home in Leigh.



PREMIUM ARCHITECTURAL
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The window facing home

On the upper level of a new home above Muriwai Beach, a bay window sits at a unique angle to every other opening in the house. During the design process there was an interest in searching for a way to create a deeper connection to the family home. The bay window points directly towards Leigh, on the opposite coast, where the owner's family home stands. He can't see the house from here. That was never the point. But when he looks out that window, there is a connection to his mum and his family home.

Discussions like that run right through this project. This is a custom home in the fullest sense: purpose-built for its owner, who set the canvas and then trusted his team. The design team describes the client as someone who makes clear decisions, values exploration with meaning and is a tad risky. The client was a joy to work with, from the first sketch handover to the completed house. Without that attitude, they note, little else would follow.





A brief written in timber

The family home in Leigh is a house with, in the design team's words, "basically a lot of wood": knotty, light Douglas fir, hit-and-miss sarking, skillion roofs, exposed beams and tongue-and-groove ceilings. The brief for Muriwai asked for something modern yet nostalgic for the classic Kiwi bach: low maintenance, planned to capture the expansive views, and carrying a deliberate nod to Leigh in its material selection.

That nod became the material blueprint for the whole house. JSC's Rustic Cedar, (also known as STK Cedar), was specially ordered for this project, was chosen as a close visual companion to the Douglas fir of the Leigh family home: knotty, warm and light. The same timber was selected to run across all aspects of the house, from the rainscreen, ceilings and soffits, to the sliding screens; so the house reads as one continuous material inside and out. The knots are not a compromise here. They are the whole idea.



Making space

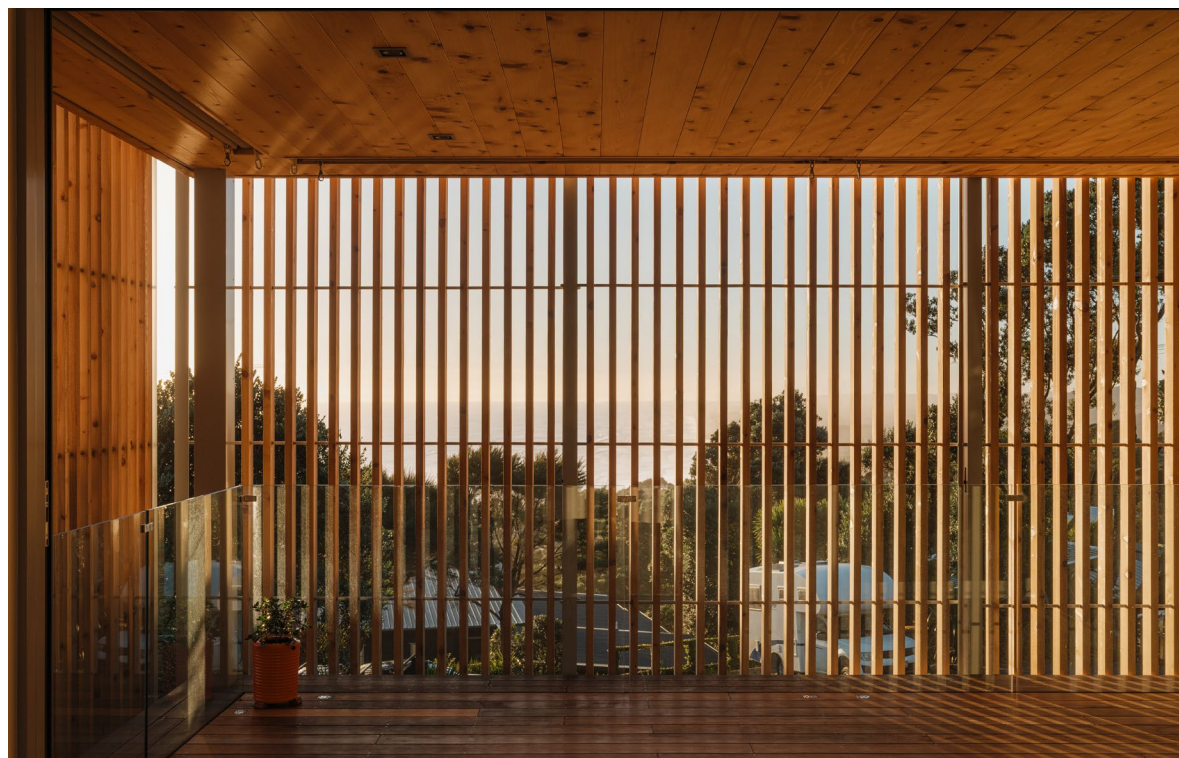
The section is long and narrow, with bush to the north and the sea view running south over Muriwai Beach. It also came with fixed onsite wastewater field parameters and stormwater restrictions. These became some of the early design challenges shaping the form of the house.

Early design exploration shifted spatial volumes between the main house at the front of the site to the accessory building at the rear, then, with client changes, back again. The winning move extended the upper level out over the driveway, converting roughly 25 square metres of what would have been driveway into main living space. It also produced the defined cantilever that has become the project's signature.





Best Nest Building Company gifted a custom surfboard to the homeowner which includes a piece of Rustic Cedar in the center of it.



Made for Muriwai

Muriwai's west coast weather doesn't forgive optimistic material choices. Early in the project, the team installed a sampling board on site to fix various weathering screens to. The intent was to understand the results of these products in the exposed coastal conditions. The results earned the Rustic Cedar its place, allowing the team to bring warmth and texture into the project whilst sitting nicely against the selected exposed steel and metal cladding.

Working with JSC, the team selected Rustic Cedar, a select tight knot Cedar. A grade of cedar balanced for performance, appearance and value. Installed as a rainscreen, it was the best fit over a traditional direct fixed cladding system, whilst allowing for ventilation behind the boards and protecting the underlying layers. JSC's precision machining also impressed the team. The cladding, ceilings and soffits arrived consistently profiled and ready to install, minimising preparation onsite.

“The knots are not a compromise here. They are the whole idea.”

“One bathroom takes the Charger theme further, drawing on the car’s black interior.”



The garage with a valiant heart

At the rear of the site, a purpose-built garage was designed to house four collectible Valiant Charger muscle cars. The cars became a design source in their own right, with details from their front grilles, headlights and upholstery informing the interior. Birch plywood linings, exposed structural steel, polished concrete floors and expansive glazing give the garage front and centre view of the Muriwai coast.

One bathroom takes the Charger theme further, drawing on the car’s black interior: bucket seats, black dashboard and chrome trims. Black vinyl, sourced through Jacobsen Flooring, flows seamlessly from the walls to the floors and even over the hand basins and mirror units. The edges are carefully finished with clean chrome trims, capturing the experience of sitting behind the wheel of a Valiant Charger. A mock-up MDF unit was taken to the vinyl installer and cabinetry team to prove the idea would work before manufacture began.







“This project demonstrates what can be achieved when quality design, exceptional craftsmanship and premium products come together. We’re proud to have partnered with JSC to deliver a home designed by [Architecture27](#) that is built to stand the test of time.”

— Luke, *[Best Nest Building](#)*

Open to the view

Floor-to-ceiling glazing and sliding [Rustic Cedar](#) screens let the owner fine-tune the house day by day. Fully open, the screens turn the upper lounge into a tree-top deck experience; drawn across, they provide privacy while still filtering in light through the surrounding trees. At the rear of the site, a raised platform with a spa was carefully positioned with views into a secluded pocket of bush. The plan was designed to maximise the site from front to back, with interchangeable spaces and a layout that continually reframes the views as you move through the house.





Designed by: Architecture27 - Karl Fenning | **Builder:** Best Nest Building Company | **Timber rain screen, panelling & battens:** JSC | **Photography:** David Straight

Foundations and retaining: Platform Civil | **Structural steel:** Blake Steel | **Garage cladding and roofing:** Swift Roofing | **Aluminium joinery:** Windowmakers | **Garage interior linings:** Plytech | **Polished concrete floors:** Concrete Grind and Polish | **Electrical:** Rhythm Electrics | **Plumbing and drainage:** Laser Plumbing Te Atatū | **Building materials:** ITM Hillside | **Cabinetry:** Kitchenmakers | **Moving privacy screens:** Auraa | **Engineered timber flooring:** Forté Flooring | **Flooring installation:** JB Timber Floors | **Vinyl flooring and wall linings:** Jacobsen Flooring | **Painting and staining:** PaintFX | **Landscaping:** Feature Landscapes | **Glulam beams:** Prolam | **Supporting Images:** JSC



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