

# MORUYA RESIDENTIAL STYLE GUIDE

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For land within the suburbs of Moruya and Moruya Heads as shown on Council's Suburbs Maps.

## **Maintaining Local Residential Character - Moruya Style:**

Moruya residents have expressed a desire for controls on development to prevent loss of the unique rural character and charm of their town.

The IRIS Community Survey found that:

*“Moruya residents emphasized the importance of maintaining the character and integrity of the smaller towns in the Shire amidst future growth. Many were scathing of the effect of development on the aesthetic of Batemans Bay and were adamant that this should not happen to Moruya.”*

*“Stricter council design regulations were considered necessary to enforce architectural consistency and to preserve the ‘rural town’ character of the streetscape.”*

The township of Moruya has a diversity of character that has evolved over time. Moruya is the only inland coastal town in the Shire and has a historic rural character. This character is unique and reflects the community's sense of having a separate identity from other urban areas along the coast.

The loss of character is a concern to the community in light of unprecedented pressure for development.

Insensitive development threatens to homogenise and suburbanise Moruya, diminishing its valued special character. Insensitive and inappropriate development often results from a poor understanding of local character and a lack of consideration of the context in which the property is located.

## **How?**

Council has responded to the call for appropriate design regulations by compiling this style guide. It is intended that this style guide will be used as:

- An educational and promotional tool- to stimulate and inspire people to adopt a fresh approach to design within the township of Moruya
- A statutory support document- to illustrate and visually communicate the design elements considered appropriate for Moruya.

This guide emphasises the need to look beyond the site itself when designing a building. Architectural style is only one aspect of design that needs to be considered. There are other design issues in this plan such as number of storeys, floor space ratio, landscaped area, energy efficiency and bushfire risk, that also need to be considered. New buildings need to respect the context that surrounds the site.

The guide encourages the construction of buildings that have the following elements:

- A rural or coastal character rather than a typically “suburban” appearance.
- A lightweight construction form.
- Use a mix of building materials including lightweight cladding and sections of rendered brickwork rather than traditional suburban face brick.

- Avoid period style replicas (eg. Federation, Georgian, Tuscan styles, etc).

The photographs in the guide illustrate various design elements that could be incorporated into new buildings. The photos do not necessarily incorporate all the elements and should be viewed in this context. Their purpose is to give an indicative visual guide to the types of styles that suit the Moruya context. The vision is to establish a design theme that is identifiable with Moruya. The guide will need to be flexible and responsive to innovation and change. It aims to help achieve buildings that are affordable, attractive to consumers and facilitate a change in direction and emphasis for the design industry.

Traditional suburban style housing (using face brickwork and tiled roofs) is actively discouraged. This form of development can homogenise Moruya and results from a poor understanding of local character.

### **Working with Neighbourhood Character**

Neighbourhood character has been defined as follows:

*'Neighbourhood character is the qualitative interplay of buildings, physical infrastructure, landscape and topographic characteristics, in both private and public areas, that make one place different from another.'*

Our understandings about both 'sense of place' and local identity can be reflected in the built environment. A design-based approach to neighbourhood development presents us with an opportunity to develop solutions that are derived from the context that is unique to each place. This enables us to avoid homogeneity, and to build on existing qualities that are recognized as being of value to local people.

Context describes the setting into which a building is placed. The setting includes its site, natural environmental factors, the architectural vernacular based on regional forms and materials, and those elements that characterise the existing attributes of the neighbourhood.

Source: Trevor King Conservation Planning & Design



## **Analysis of the Moruya Township Residential character.**

The development of Moruya as a series of villages and subdivisions is reflected in the diverse building types found in almost any street. There are some areas (for example Gundry) which developed in a comparatively short time and have many buildings from a similar period, that have an obvious character.

Most streets however, will contain examples of buildings often spanning over a century.



The great majority of houses are single storeyed, with simple pitched roofs. Wall materials generally reflect the period of construction. Most common is weatherboard (either timber or fibre cement), next face brick and lastly flat fibre cement. Roof materials are similarly of their time, with corrugated steel roofs in slightly greater numbers than tile.

Moruya's place as a wealthy service centre for the 19th century gold and mineral booms is seen mostly in the older commercial buildings in the main street rather than in the housing stock, which remains relatively modest in appearance.

### **Moruya Township Early Residential Buildings**

The superb hardwoods of the South Coast were the most available building material for early houses, and the fact that many houses from the late 19th century survive is testimony to their durability.

The classic early Australian hipped roofed house was the model for much of the first housing in Moruya, often with low pitched verandahs facing the street frontage.

The police station in Page Street is one of the few early brick masonry houses.



Photo: Early residential buildings Page Street. Building materials were weatherboards with corrugated iron roofs.

### **SUMMARY OF OBSERVED BUILDING ELEMENTS - MORUYA TOWNSHIP**

- Generally diverse building types reflecting the period of development
- Housing stock is 'modest' with an absence of large ostentatious homes.
- Single storey homes predominate.
- Brickwork is usually limited to sub floor or at most single storey. Two storey brick houses are uncommon.
- Simple roof forms dominate. A mixture of hipped roofs and simple pitched. Older buildings have pitches of 30 degrees or more.
- Corrugated steel sheet is the most common roofing material, but roof tiles are also well represented
- Bargeboards in gabled roofs are usually plain.
- Ceiling heights between 2.7 and 3 metres in older houses easily allow the addition of verandahs.



Early residential building Page Street.



Early residential buildings Page Street- rendered construction.



1. Weatherboard house with main hipped roof and gable to street frontage. Roof pitch usually 22 degrees, ceiling height over 2.7 metres. Use of simple low pitched verandah as entry transition space and weather protection. Corrugated steel roof and protective awnings over windows.

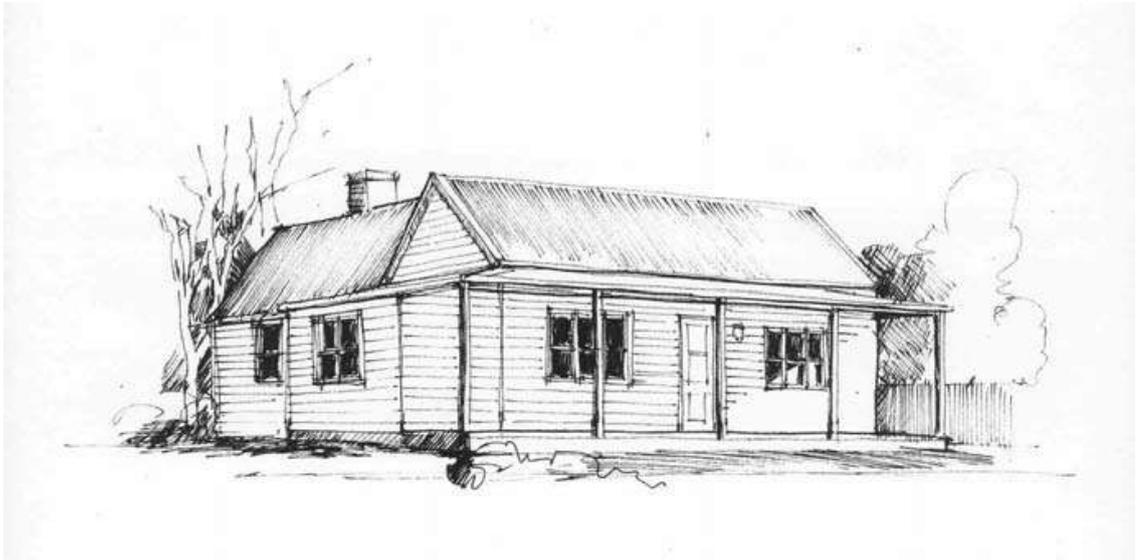


2. Classic weatherboard cottage with hipped roof and lower pitched hipped verandah to the street frontage. Vertically proportioned windows, slender hardwood posts with simple arched detailing. Corrugated steel roof. Ceiling height usually 3 metres.

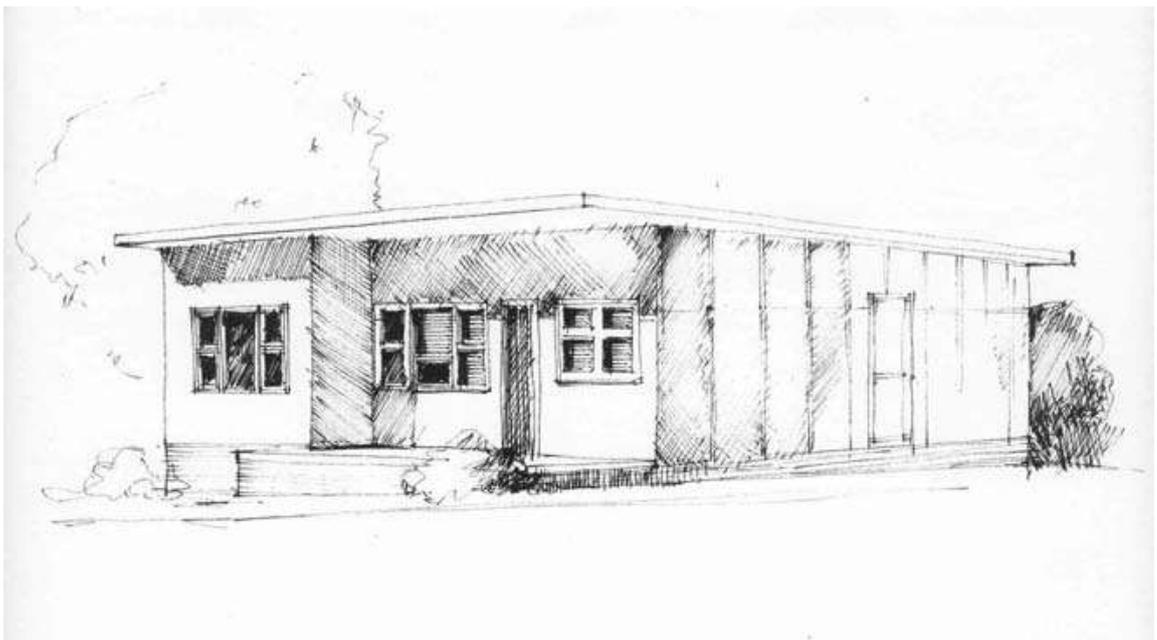


3. Gable roofed cottage with fibre cement flat sheet cladding. Wall lining sheets and cover battens are set out to match window openings. Overhanging gables give some

weather protection to end walls. Roof is extended to form a sheltering entry porch. Fibre cement roof.



4. Weatherboard gable roofed cottage with partially enclosed verandah. Typical of Gundry area. Roof pitch around 35 degrees, minimum pitch (5 degrees) verandah. Ceiling height usually 3 metres. Verandah giving sun and weather protection to windows.



5. Cottage with skillion or monopitch roof. Timber framed windows (often top hung sash type). Cladding typically fibre cement flat sheet. Roofing often deep pan metal deck. Properly proportioned eaves can make these houses relatively comfortable year round, especially if the roof slopes towards the South.

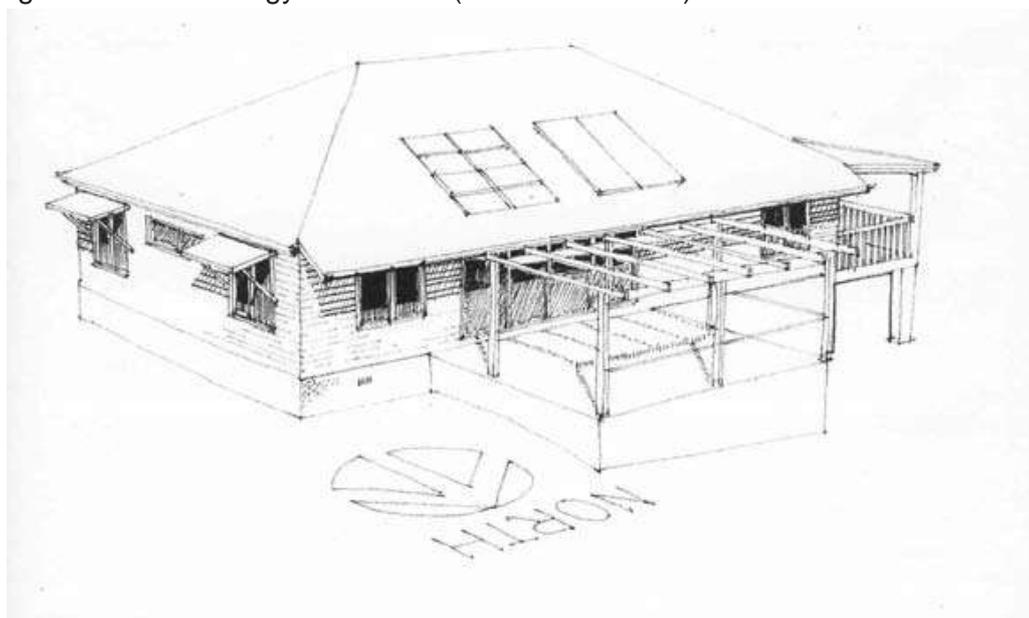
## **NEW HOUSES IN MORUYA TOWNSHIP**

The diversity in housing styles makes most generic statements of design elements difficult. New houses in existing residential streets will require an analysis of their immediate neighbourhood, demonstrating how the design has respected and enhanced the existing streetscape.

In an environment of largely single storey buildings, successful integration of two storey homes requires careful planning and site design. To assist in integrating new two storey dwellings into established single storey streetscapes, the following design criteria shall be applied:

- Full height two storey walls, especially at the street frontage are prohibited.
- Upper floor levels are to be recessed.
- Employ a change in wall materials at first floor level.
- Reduce the apparent height of the upper storey by limiting the use of gables at the wall line.
- The use of wide (over 600mm) eaves on the upper storey for roofs over 22 degree pitch will assist in reducing the apparent height.
- Use verandahs, awnings and lower storey roofs to reduce the building bulk.
- Restrict the use of brickwork to the ground floor.
- Where the slope of the land permits, maintaining a single storey to the street frontage is encouraged.

Many of the above strategies may also assist in compliance with building envelope as well as building comfort and energy use issues (BASIX certificate).



## **MORUYA HEADS RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER**

Although only a short drive from Moruya town centre, Moruya Heads has a distinct character, dominated by a 'coastal holiday house' aesthetic. The area is naturally subdivided by geography and partially by settlement period into several fairly distinct precincts.

The eastern-most precinct contains the original pilot station and many early buildings. Its proximity to the beach and the headland reserves have resulted in high residential demand.

Most pre WW2 buildings have been extensively renovated and extended, and often it is these additions of verandahs, decks, awnings and annexes that give the general small scale and light weight feel to the precinct. A low key 'holiday village' character predominates, although the majority of houses are now permanent residences.

There is a greater diversity of building style here than in other area, however there are common themes to most buildings:

- Limiting of brickwork to sub floor use for most buildings
- Corrugated steel the dominant roofing material
- Fibre cement sheet the dominant wall material

With most water views having a westerly aspect, deep covered decks and verandahs are common.

The original pilot station buildings provide a valuable model for new development. They are simple hipped roofed structures with 'dutch gables', sheltering eaves and lowered skillion roofs on the southern sides.

Between the older residential area and the seaside holiday parks on the Congo road is an area dominated by comparatively recent medium density development.

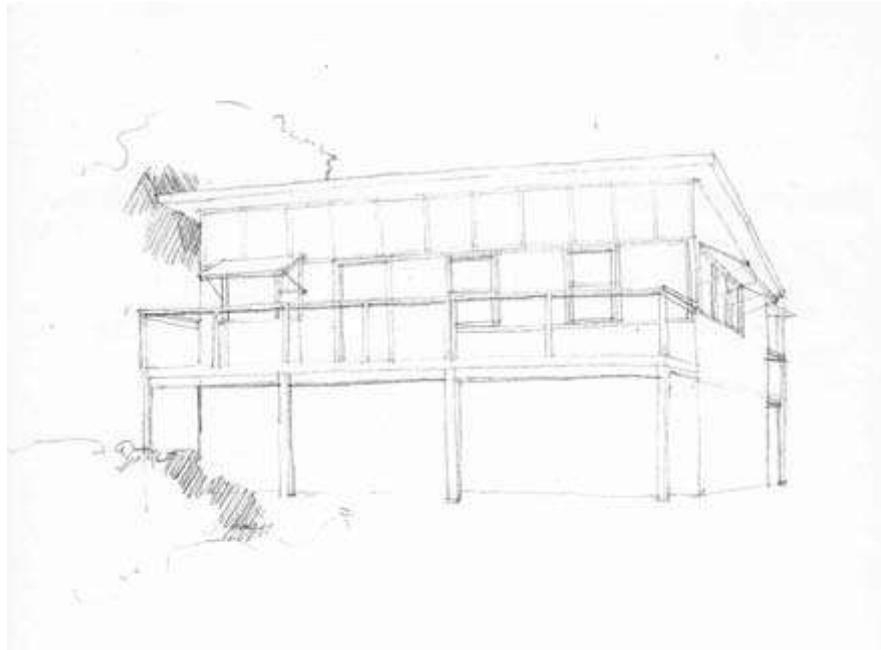
Houses fronting South Head road enjoy good northerly aspect as well as water views, and are mostly mid 20th century houses originally built as holiday cottages. Many have mono pitch or skillion roofs, usually at 5 degree pitch. The streets behind these houses were subdivided in 1970's and contain houses typical of the period, from all timber pole houses to two storey face brick.

Further west, the proportion of recent building increases. This area comprises varying lot sizes, and has the widest variety of styles and periods. Apart from some of the older areas such as above Preddy's Wharf, there is little commonality in either style or period.

### **Moruya Heads Early Residential Buildings**

Simple building forms characterise the remaining early buildings. Corrugated steel is the standard roofing material, with some buildings still having original weatherboard wall cladding. Roof pitches are generally around 30 degrees.





Sketch: Building style found at Moruya Heads

Weatherboard and cement sheet wall cladding and corrugated steel roofing on hardwood stud framing remained the dominant external materials until the 1970's when the first brick veneer houses appeared.

### **SUMMARY OF OBSERVED BUILDING ELEMENTS- MORUYA HEADS**

- Brickwork is usually limited to sub floor or at most single storey. Two storey brick houses are uncommon.
- Simple roof forms dominate- a mixture of gables, hipped roofs and skillions.
- The original, simple building shapes were often modified by later additions of verandahs, lean-to's and carports, leading to a light weight, informal appearance.
- Corrugated steel sheet is the most common roofing material.
- Roof pitch varies greatly, but the most common range is 22 to 35 degrees.
- Ceiling heights are generally at least 2.7 metres.

### **NEW HOUSES IN MORUYA HEADS**

#### **Scale**

The biggest issue facing a designer for a new house in an existing street is one of scale. Expectations are for larger houses than was the case 50 years ago. Given the size of many residential blocks, this often results in a two storey solution. Access to views also often drives a desire for a two storey building.

Where the slope of the land permits, maintaining a single storey to the street frontage is encouraged.

The scale of a two storey street frontage can be modified by

- Varying wall materials-for example, brickwork to the lower floor, lightweight cladding to the upper floor
- Use of verandahs, awnings over windows
- Planning the building as smaller linked 'pavilions' rather than a 'one box' design.

**Using existing design elements:** All new building work is required to pass minimum energy standards. Many of the existing elements can be used to assist in achieving these standards as well as helping to continue the perceived 'holiday cottage' appearance of Moruya Heads.

**Use of lightweight cladding:** well insulated framed walls with weatherboard, flat fibre cement sheet or corrugated steel cladding perform well in this climatic zone as well as continuing the existing coastal theme.

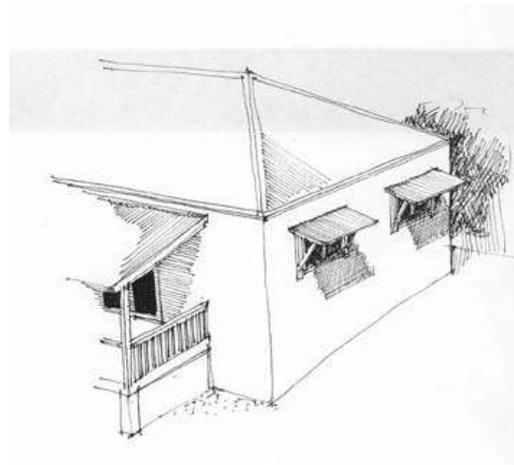
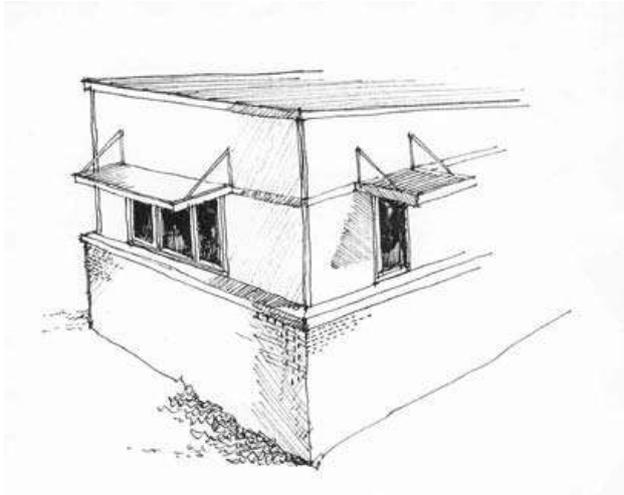


**Verandahs and covered decks:** these are especially useful on the eastern and western sides of a house, as they provide shelter and summer shading without obstructing northern solar access during winter. If located on the eastern side, they can be used to control summer cooling breezes. Verandahs can also provide weather protection on the southern side.

**Lean-to or skillion roofs:** when added to a simple roof form, they can articulate the building and reduce scale.



**Window awnings:** fixed window awnings are increasingly being used to provide precise shading. There are many examples of fixed awnings from early buildings that can be adopted or modified.



**Eaves.** Properly designed eaves can provide the correct amount of shading and protection for windows and external doors as well as being sympathetic to the coastal aesthetic.

