

**ANGEL PLACE
LEVEL 8, 123 PITT STREET
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

URBIS.COM.AU
Urbis Pty Ltd
ABN 50 105 256 228

16 May 2023

Heritage Assessment Officer
Northern Beaches Council
PO Box 82
Manly NSW 1655

To whom it may concern,

DA 2022/2281- RFI RESPONSE - HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - PILU AT FRESHWATER

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Urbis has been engaged by Marilyn Anecchini to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) for the building known as 'Pilu at Freshwater' located at 80 Undercliff Road Freshwater (subject site). The following HIS has been prepared in response to the Request for Further Information from Northern Beaches Council dated 23 April 2023, in association with Development Application DA 2022/2281.

The site is currently occupied by a two-storey weatherboard building that was constructed in the early twentieth century during the Federation period and is currently occupied by the award-winning restaurant 'Pilu at Freshwater' which has been operating on the site since 2004. The building is identified as a local heritage item, being 'Freshwater Restaurant' under *Schedule 5* of the *Warringah Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011* (Item No. 176).

The purpose of the development application submitted to Council is to supersede the existing 40 year old consents under 1980/311 and 1983/177 which currently govern the building and are no longer fit for purpose. It also seeks approval for structures that were constructed and never formally approved including the 'Pilu Pavilion' (constructed between 1982 and 1991) and the "Wedding Ceremony Umbrella" (installed in circa-2005). The Development Application does not include any further physical works to the site.

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to assess the heritage impact of the existing two garden structures on the heritage item, as well as the heritage impact that the use of the garden area for event purposes will have on the overall heritage significance of the principal heritage building.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The subject site is located at 80 Undercliff Road, Freshwater and is legally described as Lot B Deposited Plan 329073.



Picture 1 – Location of the subject site shown highlighted.

Source: SixMaps, 2023.

3. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The subject site is occupied by a two-storey residential style weatherboard building that was constructed during the Federation period and features a multi-gabled tile roof. The site has a long history as a food and drinks premises and is currently occupied by the award-winning restaurant, 'Pilu at Freshwater' Restaurant and Kiosk.

The subject building is located within Undercliff Reserve on the foreshore of Freshwater Beach. There are no adjoining neighbouring buildings. To the south of the site is Undercliff Road which is defined by a high timber paling fence with a pedestrian entry. To the north of the site is a Council carpark. Vehicle access to the building is via a driveway from the Council carpark. To the south and west of the subject site are detached residential dwellings. The subject building is orientated to the south and east towards the reserve. There is a natural fall across the subject site from west to east.

The subject building sits on top of a timber skirt foundation and features a variety of timber details including shingles, fretwork and timber verandah balustrades. The original balcony located on the south and east of the building has been infilled by glazing. The boundary of the site is defined by a timber picket fence and hedging. The garden setting of the subject building is landscaped with a combination of hedging and paved zones that are currently utilised as outdoor spaces for the restaurant and events. A contemporary detached building is located on the northwest corner of the site which is currently operated as a kiosk.

The 'Pilu Pavilion' is located on the northeast corner of the site and the "Wedding Ceremony Umbrella" is located within the garden to the east of the primary building. They are both located within the garden setting below the level of the principal house and its verandah. The 'Pilu Pavilion' is a lightweight structure that features a low hipped roof form. Large picture windows provide protection from the elements, whilst allowing it to be read as an open marquee-like structure. The "Wedding Ceremony Umbrella" is a canvas umbrella shade structure with a central pole.



Figure 1: View towards the subject site from Undercliff Road.



Figure 2: View towards the subject site from the Undercliff Reserve.



Figure 3: View towards the subject site from the Undercliff Reserve showing the 'Pilu Pavilion' in the indicated.



Figure 4: View towards the 'Pilu Pavilion' in its garden setting.



Figure 5: View towards the subject site from the Undercliff Reserve showing the 'Pilu Pavilion' in the indicated.



Figure 6: Internal view of the 'Pilu Pavilion'.

4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The subject building was originally part of the 50 acres granted to Thomas Bruin by Crown Grant on the 25 July 1818. The building was constructed in 1908 by Mr Lewers and originally known as 'Lewers Kiosk', it was used as a venue to cater afternoon tea parties, dances and other events for local residents and visitors, as well as providing weekend accommodation. In 1912, an advertisement for the building's sale described it as 'a substantial structure of rusticated weatherboard, with six apartments and wide sleeping out verandahs'. Subsequently it was purchased by Annie and Herman Loebell and later it became the property of their daughter Mrs Frances Kerr.¹ Historical land titles records document that in 1981 the building was leased to Bangkok Jewellery Pty Ltd and in 1982 it was leased to Harbord Beach Restaurant. In 2004, the fine dining restaurant 'Pilu at Freshwater' started operating on the site.

Historical aerial photographs (refer to Figure 9 to Figure 16) document the historical development of the site from 1943 to 2023. The 1943 aerial indicates that there were structures, most likely dwellings adjacent to the subject site closer to the foreshore. By 1978, these early structures had been demolished. The reserve and existing carpark to the north of the subject site was formalised by 1982, prior to this there appears to have been informal carparking adjacent to the beach foreshore. The historical aerals indicate that the 'Pilu Pavilion' structure was constructed between 1982 and 1991. The 2005 aerial photograph first indicates that the shade structure known as the 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' was first installed.

¹ NSW Heritage Inventory, "Freshwater Restaurant" (Item No. 176), <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2610064>



Figure 7 – Lewers’ Subdivision, 1910. Note that the subject site is indicated as having been constructed at this time and is named ‘The Kiosk’ and marked as the location of the Post Office.

Source: Northern Beaches Council, Library – History Hub, <<https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/50281>>



Figure 8 – Kiosk, the Restaurant Harbord, c1918.

Source: Northern Beaches Council, Library – History Hub, <<https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/16505>>

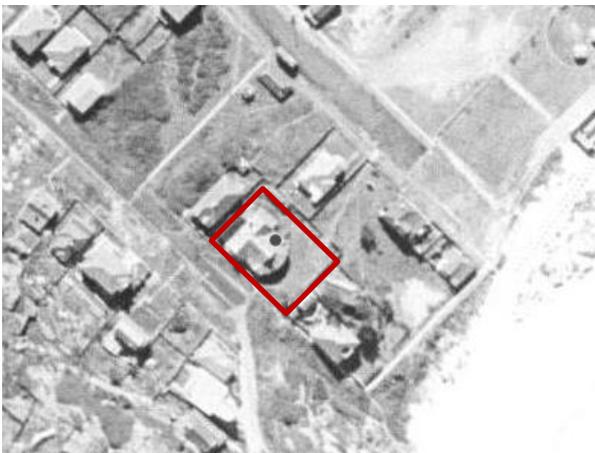


Figure 9: Aerial photograph, 1943.
Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.

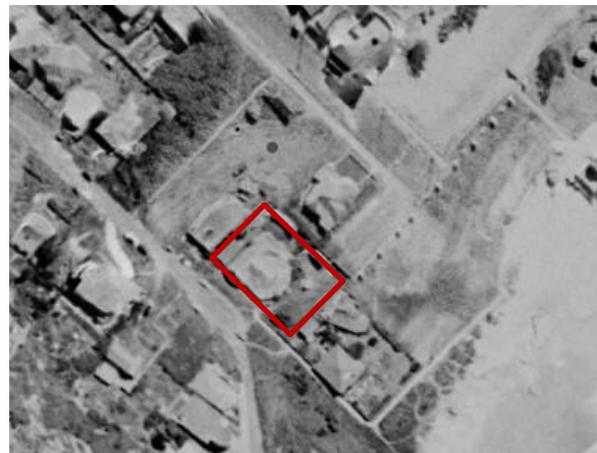


Figure 10: Aerial photograph, 1955.
Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 11: Aerial photograph, 1965.
Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 12: Aerial photograph, 1978.
Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 13: Aerial photograph, 1982.
Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 14: Aerial photograph, 1991. Note: first evidence of the 'Pilu Pavilion' being constructed on the subject site in the eastern corner of the site.

Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 15: Aerial photograph, 2005. Note: first evidence that the 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' structure had been installed.

Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.



Figure 16: Aerial photograph, 2023.

Source: NSW Spatial, Historical Imagery.

5. ESTABLISHED HERITAGE CONTEXT

The subject site is identified as a local heritage item under Part A Schedule 5 of the *Warringah Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011*, being “*Freshwater Restaurant*” (Item No. 176). The heritage record for the subject site included on the NSW State Heritage Inventory includes the following established statement of significance:

A building with great social & historical significance as an early meeting place & recreation venue for the first settlers in Freshwater. Representative of the federation style, with high integrity. Prominent local landmark located above Freshwater Beach.²



Figure 17 – Extract of heritage map with the subject site outlined in red.

Source: Warringah LEP 2011, Heritage Map – Sheet HER_010

² NSW Heritage Inventory, “Freshwater Restaurant” (Item No. 176), <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/View/Item?itemId=2610064>



6. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The following heritage assessment has been made in consideration of the *Warringah Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2011* and the guidelines outlined in the NSW Heritage 'Statements of Heritage Impact' assessment guidelines.

The two garden structures known as the 'Pilu Pavilion' and 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' have been assessed to have no adverse impact on the heritage significance of the heritage item for the reasons set out below:

- Both structures that comprise of the 'Pilu Pavilion' and 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' have been part of the Pilu at Freshwater restaurant operations for at least the last 18 years and have demonstrated that they have had no adverse heritage impact on the overall heritage significance of the main restaurant building and its understanding as an important heritage building in the locality.
- The design of the 'Pilu Pavilion' structure respects the heritage significance of the main restaurant building demonstrated in its siting, form, mass, scale and materiality.
- The 'Pilu Pavilion' is low in scale and well-integrated into its garden setting ensuring that it doesn't impact on significant views to and from the beach/reserve foreshore to the restaurant and vice versa.
- The 'Pilu Pavilion' has been designed as a lightweight structure that adopts a traditional garden marquee-like style that does not dominate or detract from the aesthetic values of the restaurant building and is sympathetic to the beach setting.
- The visual separation of the 'Pilu Pavilion' and its simple contemporary style ensures that the historic restaurant building remains clearly discernible as a representative timber weatherboard building constructed during the Federation period.
- The use of traditional, lightweight building materials and the simple hipped roof form of the 'Pilu Pavilion' is sympathetic to the traditional form and proportions of the main restaurant building, whilst remaining clearly discernible as a contemporary structure, in no way imitating the character and detail of the Federation period architectural style.
- The 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' is a lightweight shade structure that is well mannered and respects the heritage item demonstrated by its scale, form and materiality.
- Both garden structures are integral to the current operations of the restaurant, however it is noted that if they were to become obsolete for any reason, both structures are fully reversible.
- The continued use of the 'Pilu Pavilion' and 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' is sympathetic to the heritage significance of the site and will facilitate the heritage item's ongoing use as a restaurant and meeting place that contributes to the Freshwater foreshore.



7. CONCLUSION

It is assessed that the continued use of the two structures located on the site to the east of the principal restaurant building known as the 'Pilu Pavilion' and 'Wedding Ceremony Umbrella' will have no adverse impact on the significance of the identified item and will facilitate its ongoing use as a meeting place and restaurant, thereby ensuring that its contribution to the Freshwater foreshore continues.

On the basis of this assessment, it is recommended that Council view this application favourably on heritage grounds.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Zulaikha". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rebecca Zulaikha
Consultant
+61 2 8233 7611
rzulaikha@urbis.com.au