





Heritage Impact Statement

Alterations and additions to Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club
Kooloora Avenue, Freshwater

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EHC2020/0117

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared at the request of Northern Beaches Council to establish the cultural heritage significance of the subject site and to then assess the potential heritage impacts against those assessed heritage values and significance. It is intended that this report will then accompany a Development Application to Northern Beaches Council.

Situated within the Northern Beaches Council local government area and in the locality of Freshwater, which is 17 kilometres northeast of Sydney city, the site is located at the eastern end of Kooloora Avenue being positioned at the interface to Freshwater Beach. The site is commonly known as the 'Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club'.

Freshwater SLSC is a two-storey building which is defined by two distinct phases: the original 1934 building which sits at the eastern beach-side, and the c1987 additions which sit at the western side fronting the adjoining public reserve. Freshwater SLSC is set within a coastal landscaped setting, comprising of Freshwater Beach to the eastern side and the public grassed reserve to the western side and wrapping around to both side elevations.

The site is presently identified as an item of local heritage significance, which is listed under Schedule 5 of *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*. However, the existing heritage listing is informed by a primitive assessment of significance. This Heritage Impact Statement has re-assessed the heritage values and cultural significance of the site and found that the Freshwater SLSC is of historical, association, aesthetic, social, and representative significance at a local level and subsequently, a more comprehensive Statement of Cultural Significance has been developed.

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to consider the potential heritage impacts resulting from the proposed development, which involves the minor alterations and additions to the existing building. All works are limited to the 1987 additions and do not involve any physical changes or material affectation to significant fabric comprising the 1934 building.

The proposal has been assessed with regards to the identified heritage values and available physical and documentary evidence, including a visual inspection of the site and statutory planning requirements. In applying the evaluation criteria for assessing the likely impact of a proposed development on the heritage significance of listed items of heritage significance or heritage conservation areas (as published by the Heritage Council of NSW), subject to the recommendations in Section 11.2 of the report, the proposal is considered to have an entirely acceptable heritage impact.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Edwards Heritage Consultants acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and we recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

2.2 Context of the report

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared at the request of Northern Beaches Council to assess the potential heritage impacts and to accompany a Development Application to Northern Beaches Council, which seeks approval for alterations and additions to the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club at Kooloora Avenue, Freshwater.

The report considers:

1. An assessment of the property to further establish its cultural heritage significance with the formulation of a revised and updated Statement of Significance.
2. What impact the proposed works will have on the identified heritage significance;
3. What measures are proposed to mitigate negative impacts;
4. Why more sympathetic solutions are not viable;
5. Recommendations to mitigate heritage impacts.

2.3 Methodology

This report has been prepared in accordance with the general methodology and guidelines set out in the Heritage Council of NSW publication *Statements of Heritage Impact* as contained in the *NSW Heritage Manual*.

The overarching philosophy and approach to this report is guided by the conservation principles and guidelines of the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)* 2013.

This Heritage Impact Statement builds upon the previously assessed heritage values and the established Statement of Cultural Significance as per the State Heritage Inventory Database No.2610059.

The assessment criteria developed by the Heritage Council of NSW as contained in the *NSW Heritage Manual* is used to assess and further establish the cultural significance of the site.

A visual examination of the subject site has been undertaken, which is followed by a merit and significance based desktop assessment of the development proposal.

The potential, actual and / or perceived heritage impacts stemming from the development proposal have been assessed with reference to the *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*, the *Warringah Development Control Plan 2011* and the Heritage Council of NSW assessment criteria.

2.4 Authorship

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared by Michael Edwards B.Env.Plan M.Herit.Cons, M.ICOMOS, JP, Principal Heritage Consultant / Advisor and has been reviewed and endorsed by Bethany Robinson B.A M.Mus.Herit, Heritage Consultant for EHC.

Ms Robinson is a young and vibrant Heritage Consultant who is passionate about the historic built environment. Her fast-growing skills set is underpinned by her background and experience in cultural heritage management and conservation practice with various museums collections.

Mr Edwards has over 14 years extensive experience in both the town planning and heritage conservation disciplines and has held previous positions in Local and State Government. Mr Edwards has previously worked with the former Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and is currently Heritage Advisor to the City of Ryde Council, Cessnock City Council and Georges River Council.

Unless otherwise noted, all contemporary photography in this report is by EHC.

2.5 Limitations

This Heritage Impact Statement:

- Considers the site, external structures and internal rooms and spaces that were visually and physically accessible by EHC on the day of the inspection.
- Is limited to the investigation of the non-Aboriginal cultural heritage of the site. Therefore, it does not include any identification or assessment of Aboriginal significance of the place.
- Is limited to a due-diligence archaeological assessment only and does not present a detailed archaeological assessment of the site.
- Does not provide a comparative analysis of other similar comparative examples of early 20th century surf club buildings.
- Does not provide a structural assessment or advice. Subsequently, this report should be complemented by advice from a Structural Engineer with demonstrated heritage experience.
- Does not provide a detailed assessment of the provisions of the *Warringah Development Control Plan 2011*, but considers generally the development standards relating to the development of heritage items.

2.6 Terminology

The terminology used throughout this report is consistent with the NSW Heritage Manual and the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter* (2013).

A glossary of common terms used is listed in Appendix A.

2.7 Physical Evidence

A visual examination of the site and the surrounding area was undertaken on 3 September 2020. All contemporary photography used in Section 2 of this report was captured at this time, unless otherwise credited.

3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Location and Context

The site is situated within the Northern Beaches Council local government area and in the locality of Freshwater, which is 17 kilometres northeast of Sydney city.

The site comprises at least eighteen (18) allotments and is commonly known as Freshwater Reserve / Freshwater Beach / Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club.

The legal description of the allotments that form the site are as follows:

- Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 in Section 3 of Deposited Plan 7022;
- Lots 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 in Section 2 of Deposited Plan 975183;
- Lot 2797 in Deposited Plan 820312; and
- Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 909023;

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club is situated over multiple allotments, and the site more specifically involves the following allotments:

- Lots 21 and 22 in Section 2 of Deposited Plan 975183;
- Lot 2797 in Deposited Plan 820312;
- Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 909023;

The location of the specific subject site is shown outlined in red in the aerial image provided at Figures 1 and 2:



Figure 1: Aerial view of the locality.

[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]



Figure 2: Aerial view of the site. The location of the proposed works is denoted by red outline.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]

3.2 The subject site

The subject site is located at the eastern end of Kooloora Avenue, equidistantly placed between Kooloora Avenue and Moore Road, being situated within a public recreational reserve that is comprised of open grassed areas bound by Kooloora Avenue, Gore Street and Moore Road and Freshwater Beach to the east.

The site comprises Freshwater Beach and the adjoining public recreation reserve and is made up of multiple separate land titles as identified in Section 3.1 above.

3.3 Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club - Exterior

Known as the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club, the building is defined by two distinct phases: the original 1934 building which sits at the eastern beach-side, and the c1987 additions which sit at the western side fronting the adjoining public reserve.

The original 1934 building is a two-storey structure, of masonry construction with rendered external walls. The building originally had its primary elevation facing the rear, which was later obscured by the attachment of the c1987 additions. It also has a strong visual relationship to the beach side, which now reads as the more prominent elevation and public 'face' of the building.

It features a near-rectangular building footprint with an asymmetrical composition to each of its elevations and has a hipped and gabled roof form that is clad in tiles. The most distinctive feature of the building is the projecting tower on the beachside elevation, that serves as an observation tower for lifesaving purposes.

Windows are typically timber framed sashes with semicircular fanlights atop. The beachside elevation also features a first floor balcony which sits under the main roof form. The balustrade comprises a series of three diagonally arranged crosses between the pairs of simple posts. The first floor balcony aligns with a series of three boatsheds / store rooms to the ground floor which have steel roller doors. A small timber framed awning projects off the ground floor over the entry doors to both ends of the building.

The rear additions constructed in c1987, have a distinctly contrasting architectural form and language. They are of two-storeys in height, with a low-pitched roof that comprises large roof planes that span the footprint of the building, with corrugated sheet metal cladding and sporting a central roof lantern that acts as an internal lightwell and mimics the language of the observation tower. The main structure is of formed concrete, with brick infill to ground floor walls and large glazing panels to the first floor. A narrow-throated pavilion links the large scaled additions to the rear elevation of the original 1934 building.

The definitive framework for identifying architectural styles within Australia is that developed by Apperly, Irving and Reynolds in *'Identifying Australian Architecture: Style and Terms from 1788 to the Present'*. The authors provide a perceptive account of what constitutes and defines a style. Mostly concerned with 'high' or 'contrived' architectural styles, rather than the 'popular' styles or the vernacular, it is accepted that the boundaries between identified styles are not always clear-cut.

Subsequently, the terminology for a style and the framework to be applied in defining the style, comprises two parts, firstly identifying the period in which the building belongs and secondly describing the major characteristics. In this manner, the original Freshwater SLSC building displays characteristics that are attributed to the early 20th century Inter-War period and of the Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style. The c1987 additions at the rear display characteristics which are attributed to the Late 20th century Post Modern architectural style.



Figure 3: View of the Freshwater SLSC building as viewed from the beachside.



Figure 4: View from Freshwater Beach.



Figure 5: View from adjoining dune lookout.



Figure 6: View of awning detail to beachside elevation.



Figure 7: View of the beachside entry to the boatsheds.



Figure 8: View of the northern side elevation.



Figure 9: View of the roof terrace area of the 1987 additions.



Figure 10: View of the contrasting roof forms.



Figure 11: View of the ground floor courtyard entry to the c1987 additions.

3.4 Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club - Interior

Limited access was available to the interior of the original 1934 building at the time of inspection. Consequently, an inspection of the interior was limited to what was visible from the exterior and from the intervening space between the original building and the 1987 additions.

The interior of the original 1934 building evidences substantial modifications, with contemporary services and fitout. Original timber floorboards appear present.

The interior of the 1987 additions is access via a semi-enclosed courtyard at the ground floor, which acts as a narrow pavilion which joins to the original building. The interior of the additions is spacious, made possible by the architecture and structural form of the building, achieving wide spans and unobstructed

internal spaces. There is a single large room which occupies the greater floor area of the additions and a mezzanine level which comprises smaller meeting rooms, one which opens onto a rooftop terrace area that overlooks the original 1934 building.

The interior of the additions has a variety of contemporary materials, with timber floorboards to the ground floor pavilion that links to the original building. This space celebrates the original building by having a lightweight attachment to the rendered masonry form and making a feature of the original entry to the building, which retains the recessed arched entry door that bears the inscription above FRESHWATER SURF CLUB. Within this space are a number of trophies and commemorative shields, including, most significantly, the original pine longboard used at Freshwater Beach for surfing demonstrations in 1914/15 by Duke Kahanamoku.



Figure 12: View of the ground floor entrance lobby.



Figure 13: View of the ground floor large room.

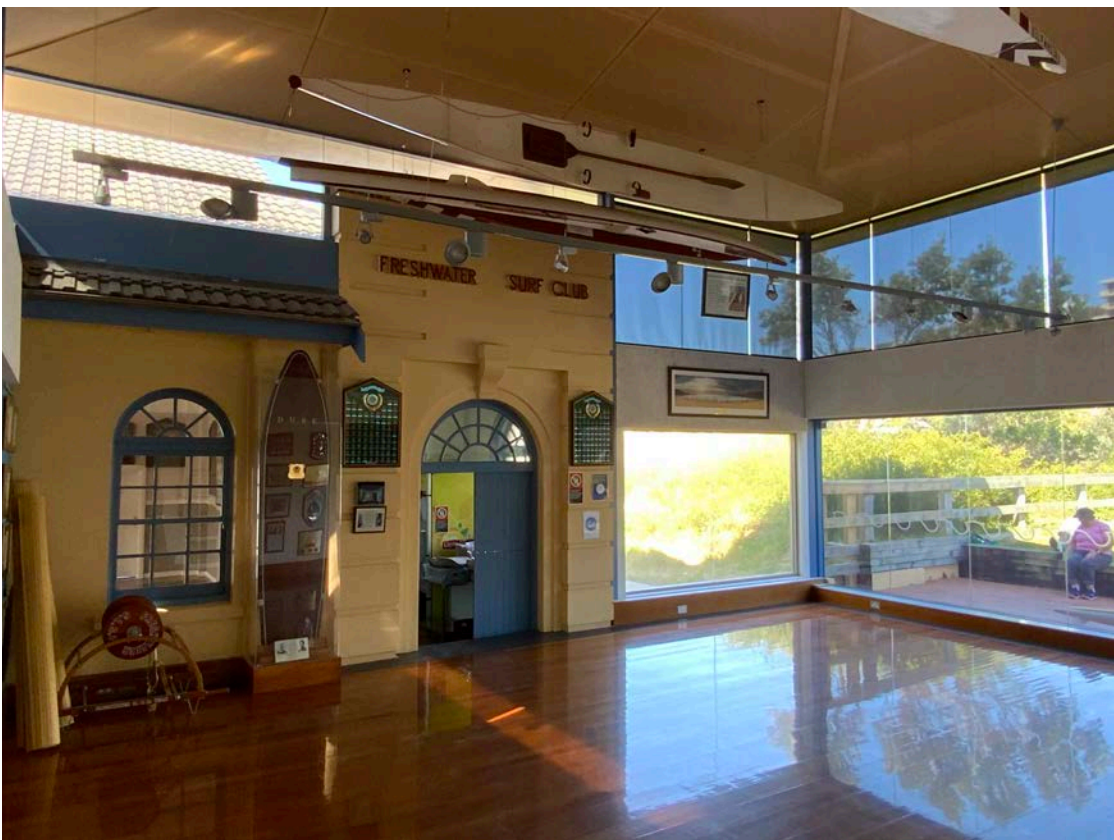


Figure 14: View of the ground floor space showing the attachment to the original 1934 building.

3.5 Landscape

Freshwater SLSC is set within a coastal landscaped setting, comprising of Freshwater Beach to the eastern side and the public grassed reserve to the western side and wrapping around to both side elevations. Much of the landscaped setting is considered managed, or contrived, having been rehabilitated in the 1970s-1990s period. Today, it presents as a pleasant landscaped setting that enhances the sensory appeal of the precinct.

The original 1934 Freshwater SLSC building has adopted a light sandy buff external colour scheme, which harmonises with the colours and hues of the beachside landscape, while the 1987 additions adopt a palette of materials and colour finishes which complement the natural earthy tones of the park. This assists in visually absorbing both buildings into their respective environments.



Figure 15: View of the 1987 additions



Figure 16: View of the adjacent monument to Duke Kahanamoku.



Figure 17: View of the original 1934 building at the beach.

3.6 Streetscape contribution

Situated at the end of both Kooloora Avenue and Moore Street, the Freshwater SLSC building sits within an open landscaped public reserve, and is the only built structure within the reserve, making it of visual prominence.

The building is considered a focal point to the public domain.

3.7 Integrity and condition

The integrity of a site, in terms of its heritage significance, can exist on a number of levels. For instance, a site may be an intact example of a particular architectural style or period and thus have a high degree of significance for its ability to illustrate that style or period.

Equally, heritage significance may arise from a lack of architectural integrity where the significance lies in an ability to illustrate an important evolution to the building or change in use.

While a detailed structural assessment is beyond the scope of this report, a non-invasive visual inspection of the exterior and interior has been undertaken, which identifies a number of structural and non-structural cosmetic changes that have been undertaken, including:

- Internal changes to the 1934 building;
- Demolition of the 1934 separate male and female amenities wings;
- Demolition of the 1960s additions to both the separate male and female amenities wings;
- Construction of two-storey additions in 1987 which attach to the rear elevation of the original 1934 building.

Overall, the changes demonstrate the evolution of the building during its time of occupation and changes in surf lifesaving techniques, demands and services, technology and the requirements of the occupants. The changes have altered the original building footprint and silhouette, mostly through the demolition of the original separate male and female amenities wings on both ends of the main building. The 1987 additions have a large and imposing scale by comparison, but have been generally sympathetically designed to have a lightweight and clearly defined attachment to the original building.

Being situated within a harsh coastal environment, the building is considered in remarkable condition and repair, though with some notable defects present.

4.0 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

4.1 Introduction

This section attempts to place Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club into the context of the broader history of the region as well as outlining the sequence of development, occupation and use of the site.

Analysing and understanding the historical context of the site is an important consideration in the assessment of cultural significance (see Section 7.0), informing the assessment of historical significance and historical associations of significance.

The history of the site is presented in a narrative form and is mainly derived from the published sources referenced throughout. The historical analysis also builds on existing extensive publication and research and assumes a prior knowledge of the Aboriginal history of the area.

4.2 First Land Grant

European exploration of the Manly peninsula first occurred in April 1788, when Governor Arthur Phillip and his exploration party arrived in what would become Manly Cove. Discovering a creek which Governor Phillip named Manly Creek, the exploration party set out to find its source. Instead, they found their path blocked by swampy scrub and so they turned coastward, following the beaches to what is now Curl Curl¹.

By the early 1810s, the Government were looking for suitable land for the Colony to expand. Surveyor James Meehan was appointed by the Government to check the area previously explored by Governor Phillip and with the specific charge of finding land suitable for grazing. Meehan's first survey of the area was undertaken in 1811, undertaking further surveys of the area over much of the next decade.



Figure 18: Extract of the Parish of Manly Cove map, showing Bruin's land grant.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, with EHC overlay, 2020]

¹ Pollon, F. 1988. 'Harbord' in *The Book of Sydney Suburbs*.

The first land grant in the area was made at the end of September 1815, when Governor Lachlan Macquarie granted 50 acres to Thomas Bruin. Bruin’s grant formed much of present-day Freshwater, including the entirety of Freshwater Beach. It is unclear whether Bruin ever resided on his land grant and whether he made any built improvements to it, other than fencing. Either way, it would have been considered a rather picturesque grant, extending from as far back as present-day Albert Street, right to the water’s edge of its own private beach. The land grant was not confirmed until almost three years later in late July 1818², coinciding with the immediate sale and transfer to D’Arcy Wentworth.

4.3 Subdivision of the Freshwater Estate

By 1845, many parts of the estate were under cultivation, despite the estate, as indeed much of the surrounding locality, remaining uninhabited.

The area had become known as ‘Freshwater’, with the name likely derived from a freshwater stream that ran between what is today known as Wyuna and Wyndora Avenues. Still under the ownership and control of the Wentworth family, in 1884, the Freshwater Estate was sold to the Manly Land Company, who surveyed the land and prepared a plan for its subdivision in December of that same year.



Figure 19: Plan showing the area of the Freshwater Estate subdivision from 1884. [Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service, with EHC overlay, 2020]

² Boyce, J. 2009. 'Pictorial History of Warringah'.

Two years later, Surveyor W M Gordon surveyed the Freshwater Estate again and renamed part of it the 'Harbord Estate' after Margaret Cecilia Harbord, the wife of Governor Lord Carrington, who held office in New South Wales from 1885 to 1890. A new Crown Plan had been prepared for the Land Titles Office at the end of April 1886, showing the locations of the newly set-out roads, including Albert Street to the northwest, Evans Street to the northeast and Moore Street to the southwest. The 'Harbord Estate' included new internal roads of Ocean View Road, Freshwater Street and Charles Street.

It is interesting to note that the subdivision plan, including the corresponding Crown Plan, includes the 'ghost' alignment of at least two unnamed roads, including one which is known today as Undercliff Road and one which connects Moore Street and Freshwater Street at the southeastern end (and in the location of the present-day Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club).

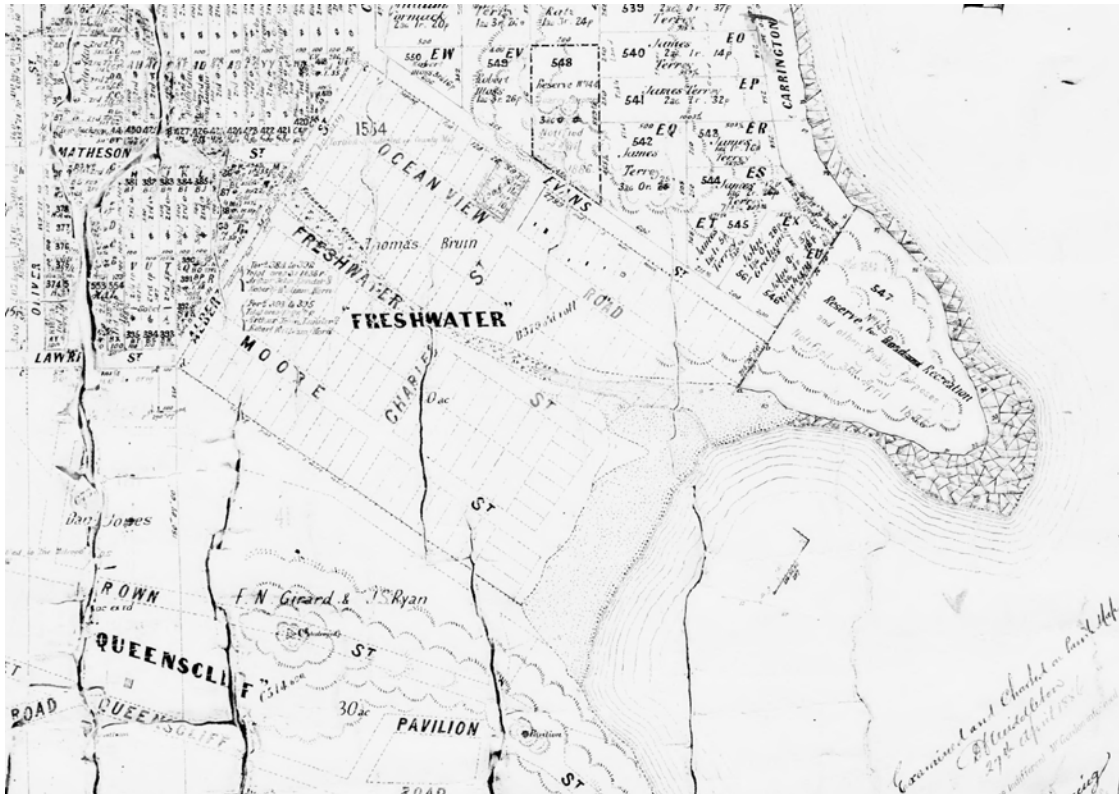


Figure 20: Extract of the Crown Plan from April 1886.

[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020. Crown Plan 871.2030]

The new allotments created in the 1886 subdivision of the 'Harbord Estate' were offered for sale from August 1886, however the economic boom of the 1880s was short lived, meaning that interest in the locality dropped off. It would not be until the early 20th century that interest would return to the area.

4.4 A Fledgling Sea-side Community

From the early 1900s, Freshwater became a popular working-men-only camp, with casual camping in no more than simple canvas tents dotted the landscape, providing rudimentary accommodation for men, mostly travelling from Sydney.

The rudimentary tents soon gave way to more substantial (yet still primitive) huts and given names like 'The Ritz' and 'Shark Bait'. Female visitors however, were only allowed on Sundays.

Following the First World War, many working-class families began holidaying at the camps, which led to the erection of further primitive huts and shops to cater for the holidaymakers. Progressively, dwellings and lodges replaced the huts of the fledgling community, many permanently establishing in the area.

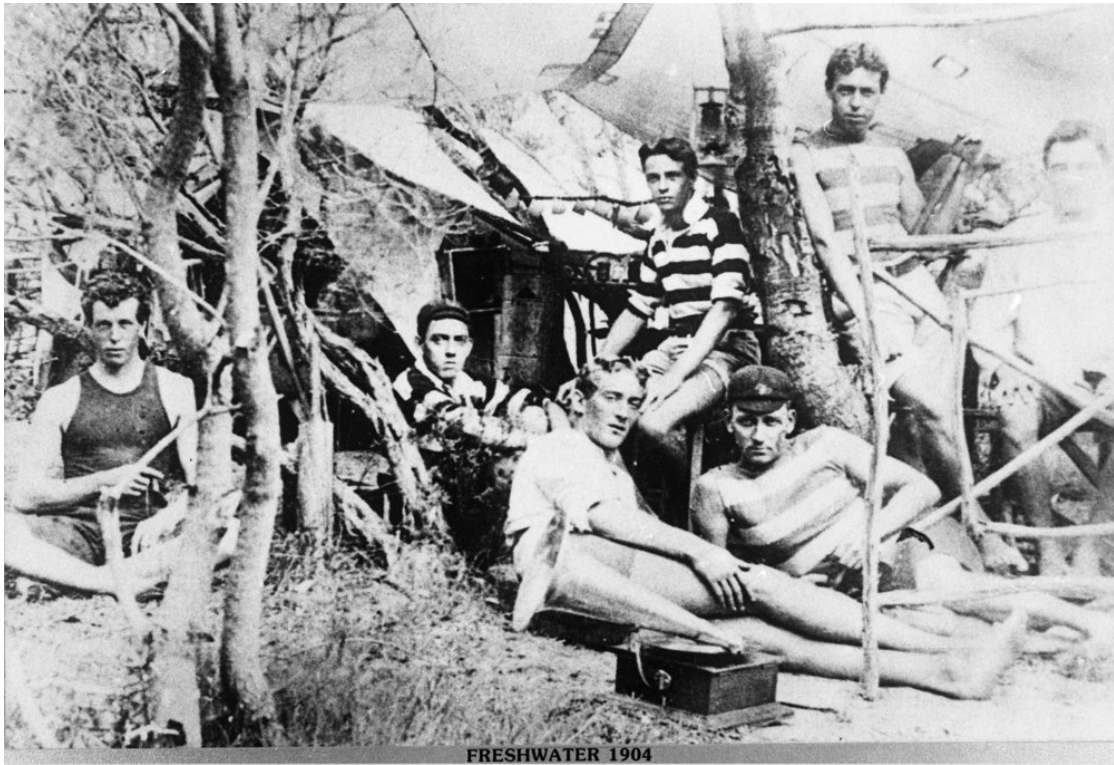


Figure 21: View of a male-only camp on the site of the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club in 1904. [Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service]

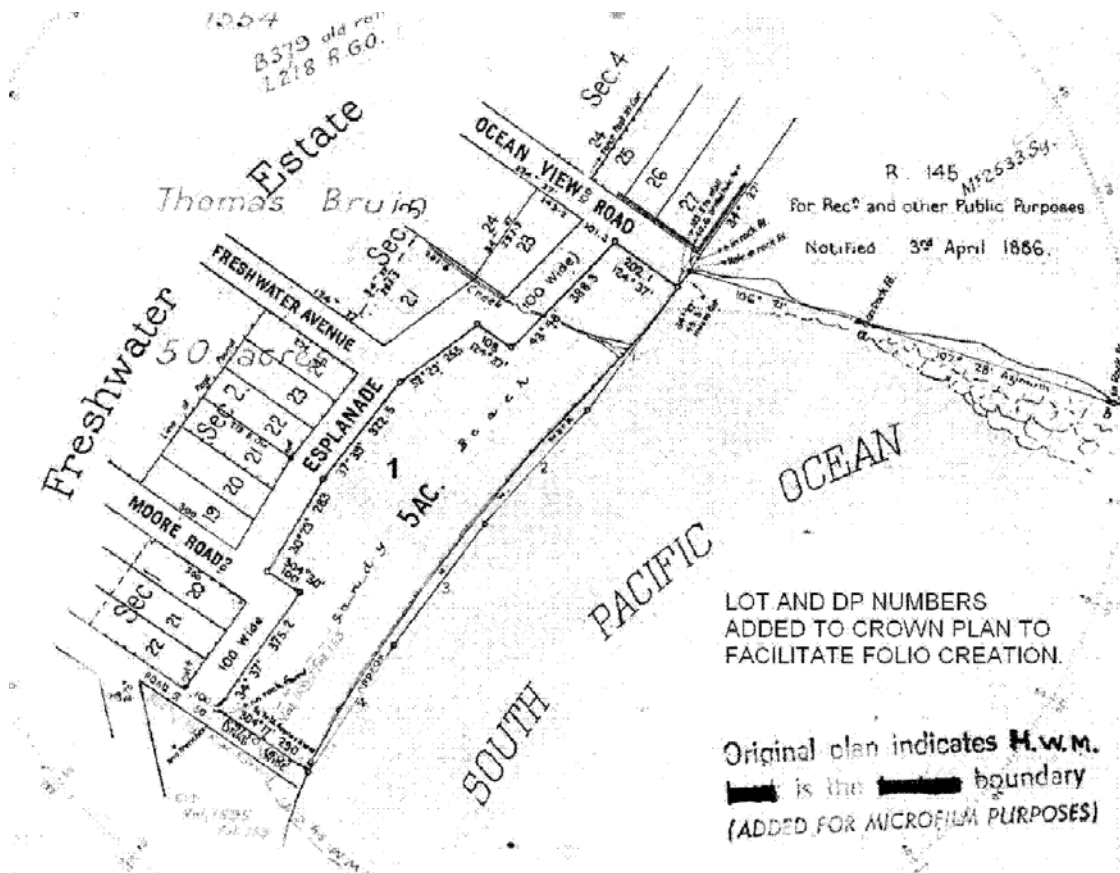


Figure 22: Plan showing the September 1909 resumption of the beach for public recreation. [Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020. Deposited Plan 909023]

Considered one of the safest of the northern beaches, in 1909, plans were afoot by then newly formed Shire of Warringah Council, for the resumption of the beach to the Crown for public recreation. Still under the ownership of the Manly Land Co. Ltd, the beach was compulsorily acquired and gazetted as public land in August 1910. A move which likely increased the frequency of holidaymakers coming to the area.

By 1912, many of the early residents who had established themselves at Freshwater however, wanted to change the image of the area from ephemeral holiday to residential, particularly because they believed that the reputation of the suburb had deteriorated because of 'people of doubtful character who frequent the place at weekends and in the summer time'³. The locality eventually became renamed as 'Harbord' in 1923, retaining the name of 'Freshwater' for the beach.

One such prominent early landowner was Robert David Lewers, who in May 1912, purchased a large number of allotments from the Freshwater Estate and subsequent smaller re-subdivisions. Lewers' combined estate included:

- Lots 12-22 on Section 1, Lots 12-19 and 27-33 of Section 2, Lots 12, 13, 19-21 33, 34 of Section 3, Lots 1-8 and 13-17 of Section 4, Lots 1-11 and 37-45 of Section 3 of the Freshwater Estate;
- Lots 5-8 of the 'Evans Subdivision' of Lots 35 and 36 of Section 3 of the Freshwater Estate;
- Lots 10, 11 and 12 of the 'Dudley Estate'.

It is tempting to consider Lewers' motives behind the purchase being one of wanting to 'control' the rate and demographic of the emerging residential community, though this can only be mere speculation.

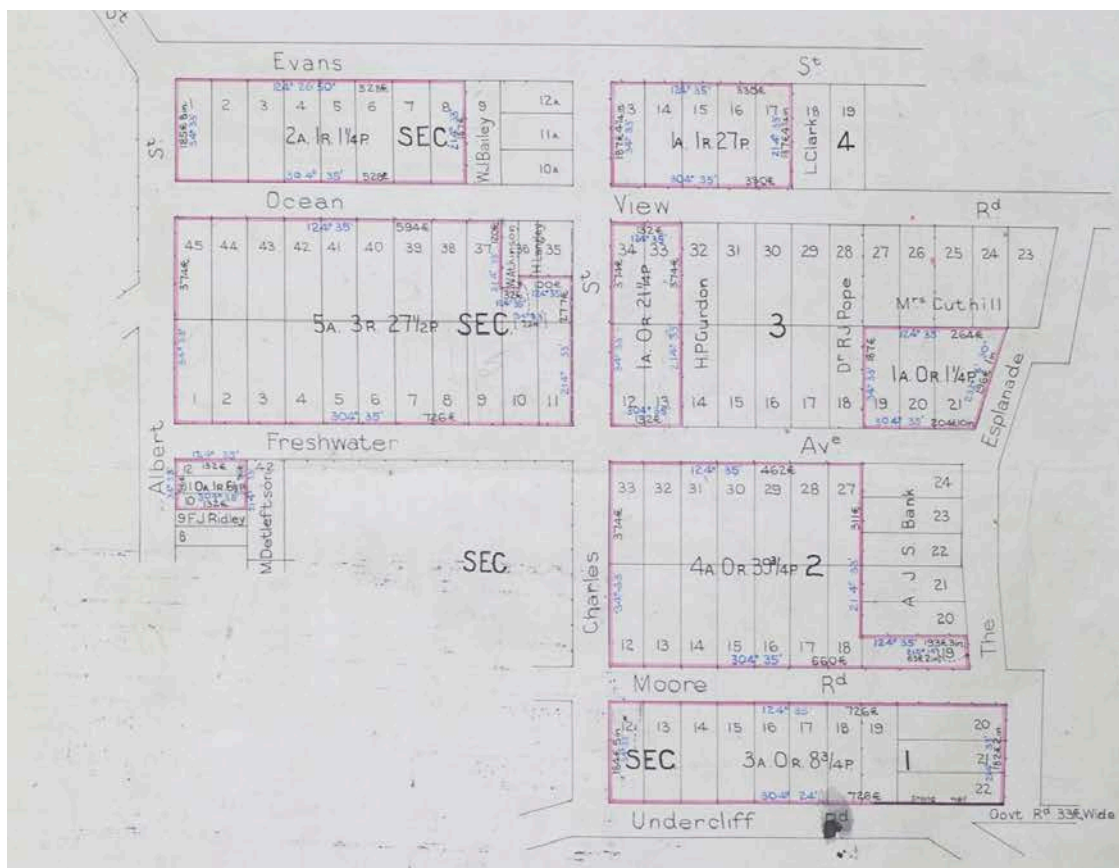


Figure 23: Plan showing the land purchased by Robert Lewers in May 1912.
 [Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020. Certificate of Title Vol.2254 Fol.209]

³ Pollon, F. 1988.

The land comprising Lewers' estate was resurveyed at the end of December 1912, which led to the registration of a new Deposited Plan (DP 7022). This re-subdivision reflected the 1909 extension and formalisation of the 'ghost' road which appeared in the 1884 Freshwater Estate subdivision.

Known as 'The Esplanade', the road would roughly follow the contour of the beach. Interestingly however, a new street had been created on the registered Deposited Plan that did not show on the Certificate of Title. 'Gore Street' as it was named, would link Undercliff Road and Freshwater Avenue between The Esplanade and Charles Street.



Figure 24: Extract of the 1912 subdivision in DP 7022.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]

4.5 A Surf Life Saving Club is formed

With land along the northern beaches being opened up for residential development in the first decade of the 20th century, the population boom soon followed. This led to increased use and popularity of beach-side excursions and sea-bathing. The only problem was that sea-bathing had been banned in areas incorporated into Council areas⁴.

Until the proclamation of Warringah Shire Council 1906, the fledgling community of Freshwater was situated in an area that had not been incorporated into a Municipal Council. As a result, the ban on daylight sea-bathing did not apply to Freshwater Beach and so many bathers from Manly and other areas descended on Freshwater Beach in large numbers, where they could swim legally and in peace.

Despite Freshwater Beach being considered one of the safest of the northern beaches, it was still considered a dangerous place, particularly when sea-bathing as a leisurely and socially acceptable past time was in its infancy in the Australian culture. As a result, there were several near-drownings recorded in the early 1900s. Two 110m safety lines had been placed at the beach in 1906 after a local fundraising campaign, being replaced the following year by the local progress association⁵. The newly formed Warringah Shire Council soon erected a series of small surf sheds on the beach in which people could change and also permit the storage of rescue equipment. This also demonstrated that the ban on sea-bathing had been relaxed or removed. By 1908, it was reported that there were an estimated 3,000 people on the beach, which demonstrated that there was a need for assuring the safety of those who bathed there. It were these instances and the growth of the surf life-saving movement in Sydney that led to the need for a surf life-saving club at Freshwater.

A surf life-saving club had been formed at Manly in 1907, which was the first on the northern beaches. The exact formation date of the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club is not known, but the first mention of its existence occurred in a newspaper article of 5 December 1908, reporting that the Manly Surf Club had offered lifesaving training to members of the new club.

⁴ Morcombe, J. 'Fresh Look at Surf Club's History'. Manly Daily, 13 October 2007.

⁵ Ibid.

Among the members of the first club were many of the young men who regularly camped on private land behind the beach, but membership also attracted many from further afield, such as the first recorded President, who lived at Petersham and the first Treasurer who lived at Balmain⁶.

A fundraising concert was held at Manly for the new Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club in December 1908 and the first surf carnival was held on Australia Day 1909, attracting thousands of spectators.



Figure 25: View of the first surf carnival held at Freshwater Beach on January 26th 1909.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service, 'History Hub' Image No.64844]

The original land grant which later became the Freshwater Estate subdivision, extended from Albert Street at the rear to the mean high water mark, which meant that Freshwater Beach was still in private ownership. This presented difficulties in the erection of a clubhouse building and so by September 1909, the Government were preparing plans for the resumption of five acres of land comprising the beach and adjoining land to The Esplanade. With plans underway for the resumption of the land, the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club were given permission to build a clubhouse on the beach. The land was finally gazetted as public land for public recreation in August 1910 and by December 1910, a small timber clubhouse measuring 6m x 4m was officially opened, after £100 had been guaranteed by George Young, later Treasurer and life member of the club.

However, a State Government enquiry into lifesaving in 1911 was told that the Freshwater club's facilities were inadequate, a point clearly driven home when the clubhouse was severely damaged by big seas in 1913.

⁶ Curby, P. 2007. 'Freshie – Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club – The First 100 Years'.



Figure 26: View of Freshwater Beach and the first timber clubhouse erected in 1910. This view is c1911.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub' Image No.60547]



Figure 27: View of the first clubhouse c1913 following damage by high seas. Note much of the sand has been washed away, undermining the foundations of the building and fence.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub' Image No.42633]

The high seas in 1913 had eroded much of the sand away, exposing the foundations of the clubhouse and causing the partial collapse of the adjoining enclosing fencing. New stair access had to be introduced to the beach to compensate for the sudden difference in levels and the clubhouse was no longer conveniently placed at the same level as the beach itself.

Rather than demolish the clubhouse and build a new one in the same or differing location, the existing clubhouse was repaired and extended, with a verandah and casualty room being added in December 1914. It would not be until 1917 that a new clubhouse would be built.



Figure 28: View of the first Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club building following the additions in December 1914.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub' Image No.47601]



Figure 29: View of the extended Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club building following additions in December 1914.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub' Image No.42623]

4.6 Freshwater Beach is Introduced to Surfing

In December 1914, Hawaiian-born world sprint swimming champion Duke Kahanamoku, was touring Australia. As part of his tour, he selected timber from a Sydney firm to fashion a pine long board modelled on those used in his native Hawaii, on which he would give demonstrations to those in attendance to marvel at the spectacle⁷.

On 24 December 1914, Kahanamoku travelled to Freshwater Beach, where he gave demonstrations of surf board riding, becoming the first person to surf the clean waves beyond the break in Australian waters using this Hawaiian-style surfing technique⁸.

So popular was this demonstration, that a second spur of the moment demonstration was called for. Kahanamoku's board was delivered back to Freshwater Beach ahead of the demonstration, which took place in January 1915. It was here that Kahanamoku took a young local girl Isabel Letham on the board with him to surf the waves, with Isabel going on to become a pioneer of Australian surfing.

The significance of Kahanamoku's visit to Freshwater could not be underestimated. At the time, the take up of the 'Hawaiian-style surfing technique' would probably have been slow, particularly as Warringah Shire Council were said to have tried to discourage surfing on the basis that it was considered too dangerous⁹, but these two demonstrations would effectively mark the dawn of surfing in Australia.



Figure 30: View of Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club during the visit of Duke Kahanamoku in December 1914 and January 1915. Duke Kahanamoku can be seen standing centre.

[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub' Image No.42031]

⁷ Boyce, J. 2009.

⁸ Curby, P. 2007.

⁹ Boyce, J. 2009.

4.7 A New Clubhouse for the Modern Age

The residents' agitation in the 1920s to officially change the name of the locality from Freshwater to Harbord in an attempt to change the image of the area, eventually bore fruit and the name of the suburb – and the beach, were changed to Harbord.

The Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club however, steadfastly refused to follow suit and retained the Freshwater name, despite significant pressure to conform by Warringah Shire Council. The disagreement between the Council and the surf club over the Freshwater name however, led to a period of poor relations between the two.

By 1930, the Freshwater SLSC as it had become commonly referred, was proud of its reputation, after 20 years of operation as one of the foremost surf clubs in the Commonwealth, both in competition and in lifesaving work¹⁰. The club boasted a large membership base, and while the future looked positive for the club by the strength of its reputation and member base, the buildings were run down. This would only be made worse with the crippling effect of an economic depression leading to a shortage of funds for essential building works and maintenance as well as the ability to have permanent lifesavers on patrol.

The clubhouse was by now in a poor state of repair, despite the fact that it now had some modern conveniences, including electricity and a telephone in the 1920s period. In March 1931, the Freshwater SLSC led a deputation to Warringah Shire Council, outlining the repairs needed to the clubhouse; first by demolishing the old boatshed and then building a casualty room with a boatshed underneath.

By September 1932, it appeared that the club's requirements would be addressed, when Warringah Shire Council resolved to build a new clubhouse and dressing sheds near Moore Street. This would be conditional upon the securing of a Government loan and contributions by the Club as well. Despite the Council's resolution, nothing happened. This led to the Freshwater SLSC approaching the Council again, only to be told that the loan would only be applied for on the condition that the Freshwater SLSC would accept that a new room be added to the building for the general public as well as club members. Accepting the condition, Freshwater SLSC submitted architectural plans to the Council for a new building, costing £1,800.

The Council considered the new architectural plans and by July 1933, an application had been made by the Council to the NSW Unemployed Relief Council for a loan for the new clubhouse on 'Harbord Beach'¹¹.

Still, no action was forthcoming and so the community took matters into their own hands by adding pressure and agitation. In April 1934, a building committee was formed, consisting of various club members and representatives of many community organisations. This led to the development of new architectural plans to suit a revised proposal for the clubhouse, being designed by Architect and Freshwater SLSC member, Lindsay Scott. The plans were submitted to the Council shortly afterwards.

In August 1934, the Department of Local Government approved a loan of £2,000 for the construction of a new surf club building and by October that same year, Scott's plans had been accepted, with tenders being called for the supply of timber and bricks. Construction commenced in mid-October 1934, led by builder Fred Ansell and supported by a number of relief workers that were supplied and managed by the Council.

The foundation stone for the new Freshwater SLSC building was laid on Sunday 23 December 1934 by Councillor Thomas McPaul, who was considered one of the Club's greatest supporters¹². Two days earlier, on 21 December 1934, the area of land bound by Gore Street to the west, Kooloora Avenue (formerly

¹⁰ Curby, P. 2007.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Freshwater Avenue) to the north and Moore Street to the south, had been formally resumed and gazetted for public recreation purposes. This would be followed less than 4 years later, by the resumption of a further area of land on the northern side of Kooloora Avenue for public recreation, effectively securing the coastal precinct for the use and enjoyment of the public in perpetuity.

The new Freshwater SLSC building would be of masonry construction, with a large scaled and bold presence in the area. The building would incorporate a new boat storage area at the ground floor, with casualty room, members areas and public spaces, together with amenities.



Figure 31: Laying of the foundation stone, December 1934.
[Source: Northern Beaches Library Service. 'History Hub']

Designed in the architectural style that would later be termed 'Inter-War Mediterranean', the new clubhouse would have a rendered masonry finish, with timber sash windows and a terracotta tiled roof. The most striking feature of the building would be its tall observation tower, from which a watchful eye could be cast over beachgoers and sea-bathers.

Construction of the new Freshwater SLSC building was completed by September 1935 and an official opening ceremony was held in the early afternoon of Saturday 7th September 1935.



Figure 32: View of the newly built Freshwater SLSC as photographed by Max Dupain in 1936.
[Source: Northern Beaches Library Service. 'History Hub']

4.8 Alterations to the Freshwater SLSC

Over much of the next thirty years, little change appears to have occurred at the Freshwater SLSC.

In the early 1960s, the clubhouse was extended, when new additions were constructed to the northern and southern ends of the 1934 building, creating an enlarged building footprint to accommodate the growing and changing requirements of the Freshwater SLSC.



Figure 33: View of Freshwater SLSC and adjoining reserve in 1952.

[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub'. Image No.64166]



Figure 35: Aerial view of Freshwater SLSC in 1955.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]



Figure 34: Aerial view of Freshwater SLSC in 1966 showing the additions.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]



Figure 36: View of the public domain works and mass plantings undertaken by Warringah Shire Council during the early 1980s period. This photo depicts the reserve and Freshwater SLSC in 1985. [Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub']

Various public domain improvements and environmental rehabilitation works were undertaken by Warringah Shire Council from 1979 to 1985, with the rehabilitation of sand dunes and mass planting of native coastal species. By the mid 1980s, the Freshwater SLSC clubhouse was once again in need of modernising to cater for the changing roles of surf lifesaving as well as the increased population and demand for lifesaving services and training.

4.9 Alterations to the Freshwater SLSC...again

In 1986, a Building Application was submitted to Warringah Shire Council (BA87/132) for the alterations and additions to the Freshwater SLSC.

This would present the most ambitious development scheme to the Freshwater SLSC since its initial construction in 1934, with the internal alterations to the original 1934 building, demolition of the original 1934 male and female amenities wings together with the attached 1960s additions and construction of a new two-storey addition attaching to the rear elevation of the original building, in what would have a large and more imposing scale than the original building.

The project was certainly ambitious, but it was considered essential if the Freshwater SLSC was to appropriately function as the community geared towards the 21st century. The degradation of the natural environment was by now a serious concern, and this certainly influenced the proposed alterations and additions, for the areas that previously contained the 1934 male and female amenities wings and later 1960s additions, would be rehabilitated to sand dunes, thus truncating the built form presentation to Freshwater Beach and improving the natural amenity and environmental qualities of the area.

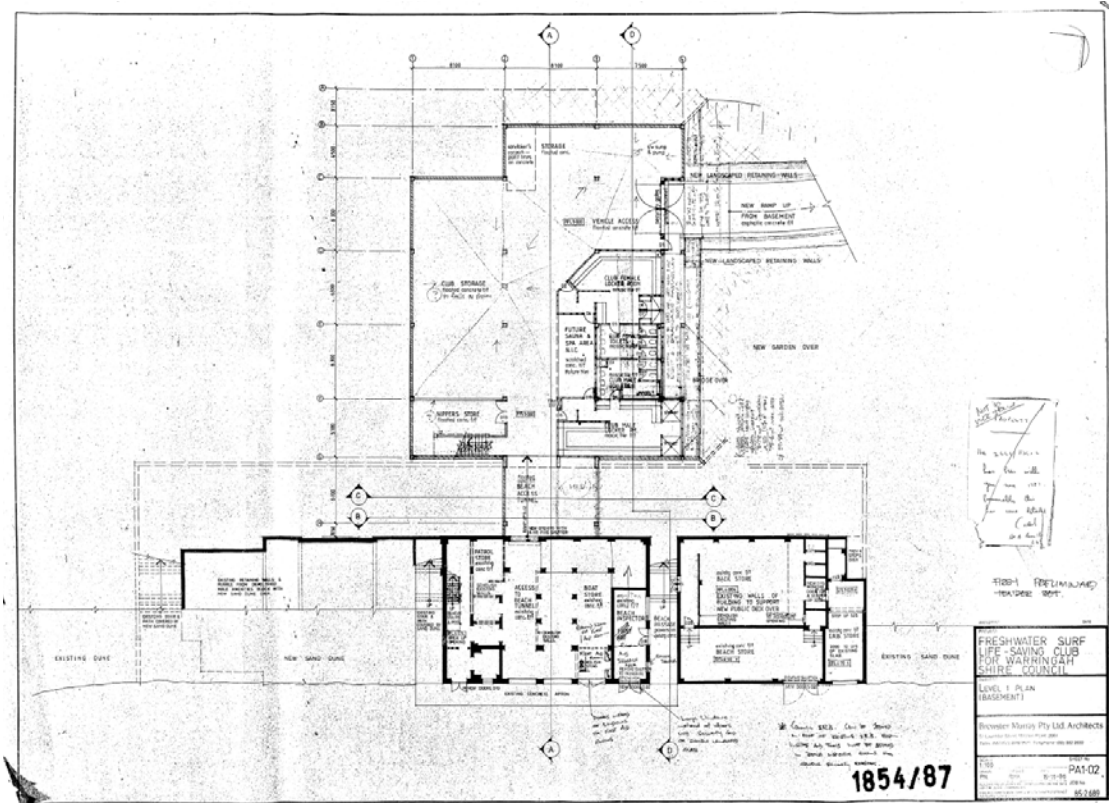


Figure 37: Plan showing the proposed additions to the Freshwater SLSC in 1987. [Source: Northern Beaches Council]

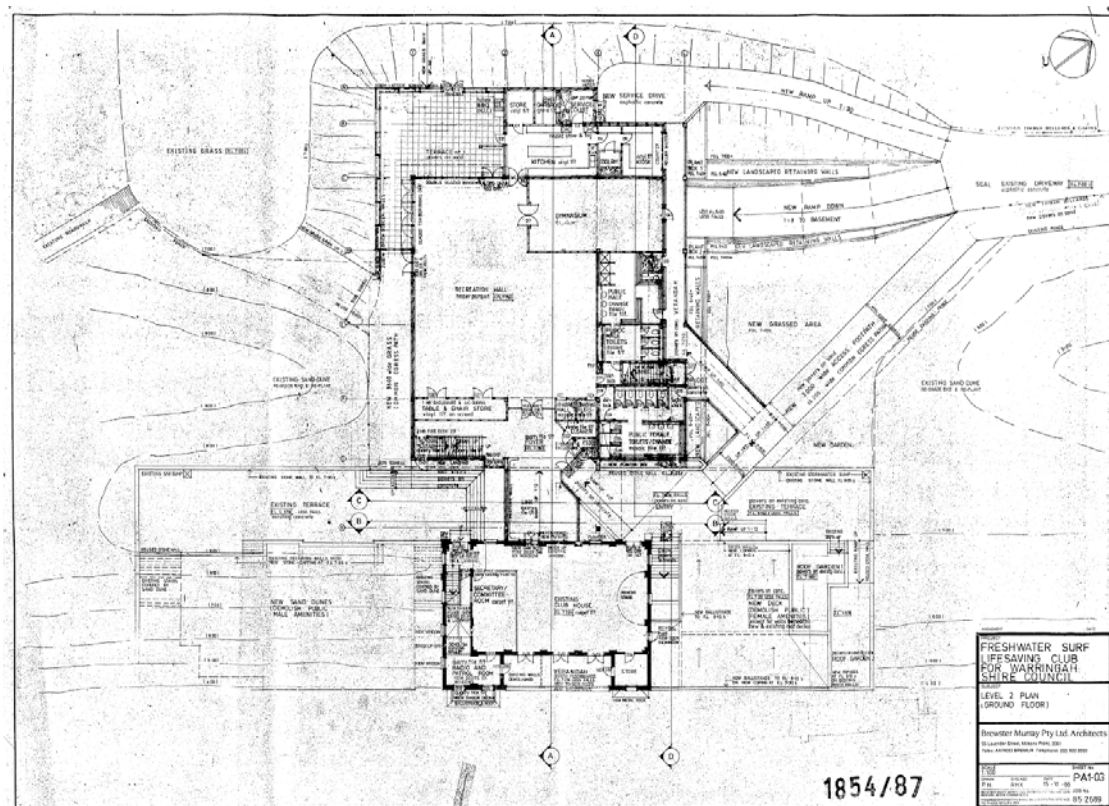


Figure 38: Plan showing the proposed additions to the Freshwater SLSC in 1987. [Source: Northern Beaches Council]

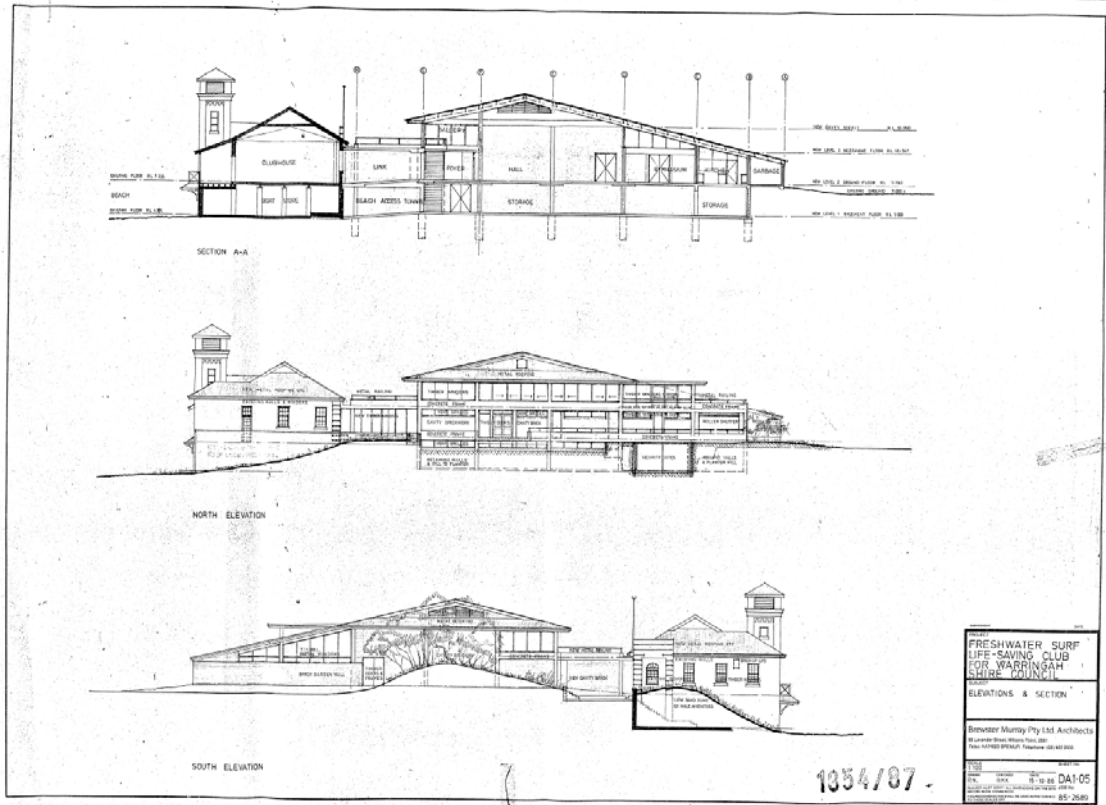


Figure 39: Plan showing the proposed additions to the Freshwater SLSC in 1987. [Source: Northern Beaches Council]

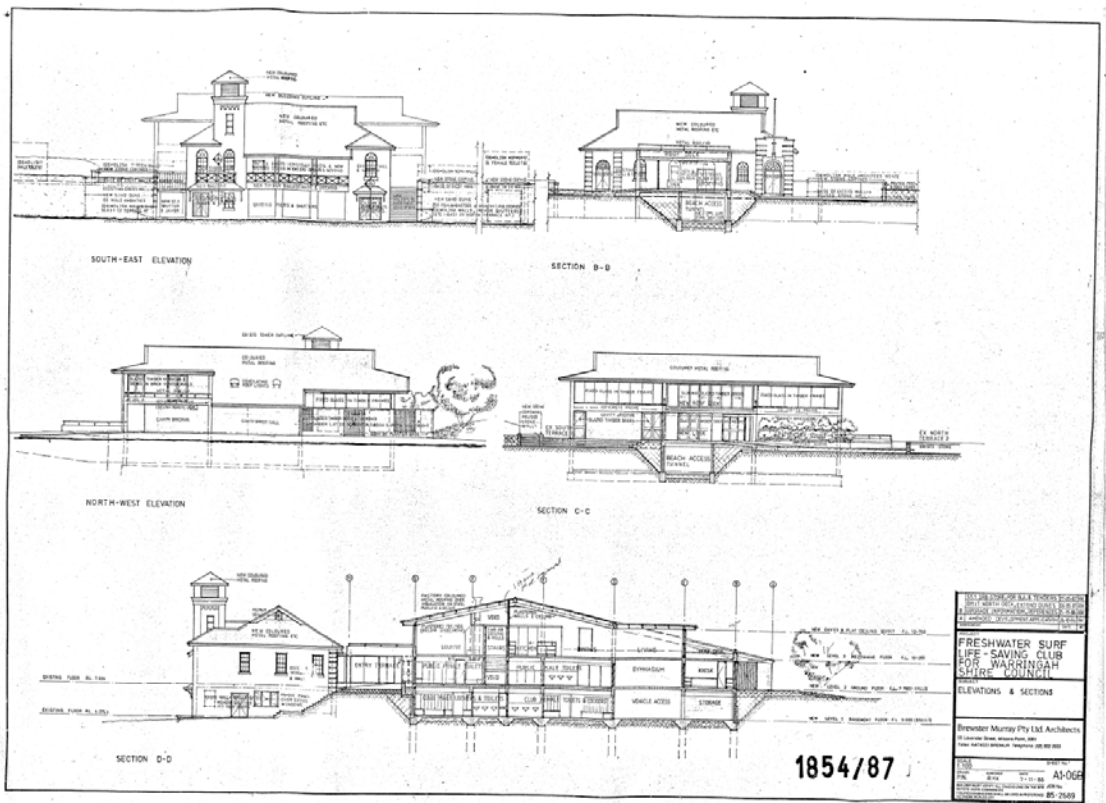


Figure 40: Plan showing the proposed additions to the Freshwater SLSC in 1987. [Source: Northern Beaches Council]

Designed by Architects Brewster Murray Pty Ltd, the Building Application was approved in 1987 and construction commenced soon afterwards. By 1991, the building works were completed, future-proofing the Freshwater SLSC for the 21st century.



Figure 41: Aerial view of Freshwater Beach and Freshwater SLSC in 1991.
[Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020]



Figure 42: View of Freshwater Beach c1990s, showing the completed additions to the Freshwater SLSC.
[Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Service. 'History Hub']

Despite the approved drawings from 1987 showing the retention and alterations to the former female amenities wing on the northern side of the original 1934 building, by 1991, that wing had also been demolished, with the dune rehabilitated.

Around the same time, a new Deposited Plan had been registered with the Land Titles Office, showing the changes to the boundaries of both the public reserve and public roads within the Freshwater Reserve precinct. Still, the alignment of the former The Esplanade (which had been created back in the 1884 subdivision of Freshwater Estate) remained, though the 1991 additions would sit over the former road reserve. This would create the subdivision pattern that remains to the present-day.

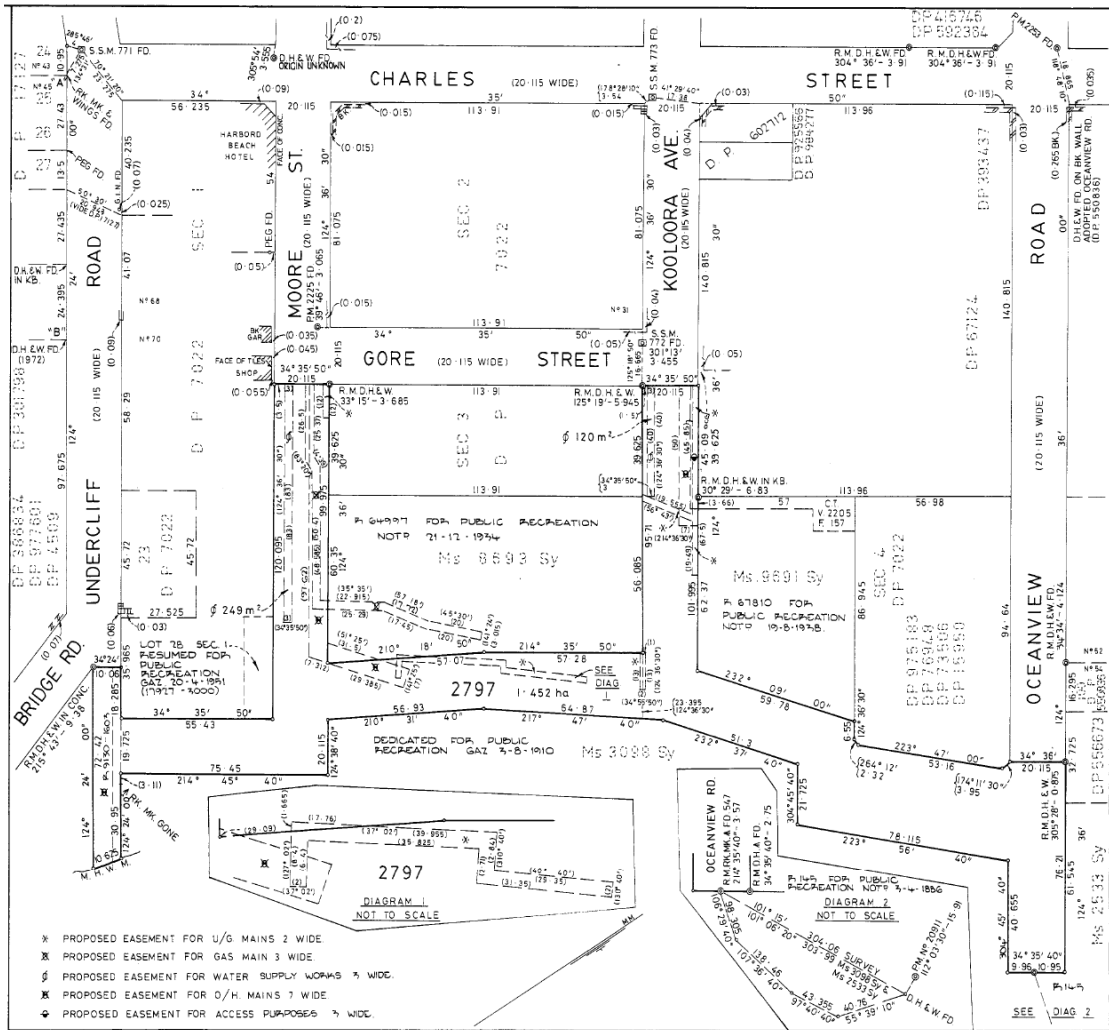


Figure 43: Plan showing the 1990 changes to the public reserve allocations and public road.
 [Source: NSW Land and Property Information, 2020. Deposited Plan 820312]

5.0 HERITAGE LISTING STATUS

5.1 Introduction

Identification of the statutory and non-statutory heritage listings applicable to the subject site is as follows:

5.2 Statutory and non-statutory heritage listings

Statutory lists

The subject site **is** identified as an item of local heritage significance ('Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club, Freshwater Beach [Item No.166]), listed under Schedule 5 of *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*.

The subject site **is not** located within a Heritage Conservation Area listed under Schedule 5 of *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*.

Non-statutory lists

The subject site **is not** identified on any non-statutory heritage lists or registers.

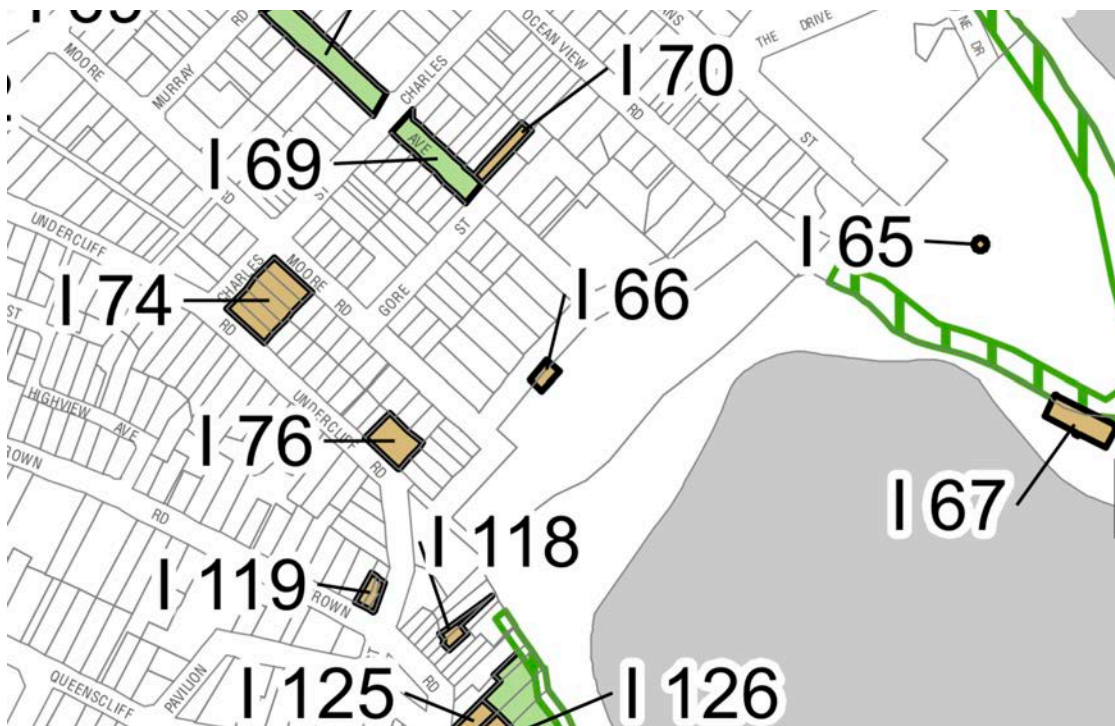


Figure 44: Map showing the heritage status of the subject site and surrounding allotments.
[Source: *Warringah LEP 2011*, Heritage Map HER_010]

5.3 Items of heritage significance within the vicinity of the site

For the purposes of this heritage impact assessment, the term 'in the vicinity' is taken to be any item or items that:

- i) Are within an approximate 100m radius of the boundaries of the subject site;
- ii) Have a physical relationship to the subject site i.e. adjoin the property boundary;
- iii) Are identified as forming a part of a group i.e. a row of terrace houses;
- iv) Have a visual relationship to and from the site; or
- v) Are a combination of any of the above.

In applying the above criteria, items of local heritage significance (listed under Schedule 5 of *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*) within the vicinity of the subject site include:

- 'Freshwater Restaurant' 80 Undercliff Road, Freshwater (Item No.I76)
- 'Freshwater Rock Pool' Freshwater Beach (Item No.I67)
- 'South Curl Curl Coastal Cliffs' South Curl Curl Beach and Freshwater Beach (Item No.C14)
- 'Queenscliff Coastal Cliffs' Southern side of Freshwater Beach to Queenscliff (Item No.C13)

There are no items of state heritage significance (listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR) under the *Heritage Act 1977*) within the vicinity of the subject site.

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6.0 EXISTING HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENTS

6.1 Existing description of the heritage item – ‘Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club’

The NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI No.2610059) provides a physical description of ‘Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club’ as follows:

‘Two storey cement rendered building on rear dunes of beach. Hipped tiled roof, with gable at top. Observation tower with hipped tiled roof. Arched & square headed openings.’

6.2 Existing Statement of Cultural Significance – ‘Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club’

The NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI No.2610059) provides a Statement of Cultural Significance of ‘Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club’ as follows:

‘A building of strong social significance which continued on from earlier clubhouses in this location. Historically evidence of the development of popular beach culture in the inter-war years. Good example of inter-war mediterranean style of architecture.’

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7.0 ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Methodology

The assessment of cultural significance follows the methodology recommended in *Assessing Heritage Significance*¹³ by using the NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria and is consistent with the guidelines as set out in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter 2013)*¹⁴.

An item or place will be considered to be of heritage significance if it meets at least one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion:	Significance theme:	Explanation:
Criterion (a)	Historical	An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
Criterion (b)	Historical association	An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
Criterion (c)	Aesthetic	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).
Criterion (d)	Social	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
Criterion (e)	Technical / Research	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
Criterion (f)	Rarity	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).
Criterion (g)	Representative	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's (or the local area's) cultural or natural places or cultural or natural environments.

It is important to note that only one of the above criteria needs to be satisfied for an item or place to have heritage significance. Furthermore, an item or place is not excluded from having heritage significance because other items with similar characteristics have already been identified or listed.

7.2 Assessment against NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria

7.2.1 Criterion (a) – Historical Significance

An item or place is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows evidence of a significant human activity. 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes. 	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is associated with a significant activity or historical phase. 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance. 	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity. 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association. 	X

¹³ NSW Heritage Branch, 2001. 'Assessing Heritage Significance'.

¹⁴ Australia ICOMOS, 2013. 'Burra Charter'.

Assessment of Significance

- The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building is of historical significance at the local level as it displays important historical evidence of the early development of the Freshwater / Harbord locality, and its growth and prospering during the early 20th century.
- The building is of historical significance as it demonstrates the evolution of the surf lifesaving movement in Australia and evidences the rise in popularity of beach recreation and culture during the early 20th century and the need for more permanent facilities.
- The building has historical significance for its continued use and occupation by the Freshwater SLSC since its construction in 1934, with the club occupying the site since at least 1908 – with a period of over 112 years continuous occupation of the site.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club satisfies this criterion in demonstrating historical significance at a local level.

7.2.2 Criterion (b) – Historical Association Significance

An item or place has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
• Shows evidence of a significant human occupation.	X	• Has incidental or unsubstantiated connects with historically important people or events.	X
• Is associated with a significant event, person or group of persons.	✓	• Provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance.	X
		• Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.	X

Assessment of Significance

- The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building is of associational significance at the local level as it demonstrates significant human occupation of the site by the Freshwater SLSC which was formed in 1908 and has had continuous occupation of the Building since its construction in 1934.
- The building demonstrates the strong associations that communities and individuals have with the beach.
- Freshwater Beach has associational significance for its association with Hawaiian surfing great Duke Kahanamoku, who visited Freshwater Beach in 1914 and again in 1915 to give demonstrations in the Hawaiian style of surfing. Kahanamoku was influential in introducing surfing to Australia, being the first person to surf the clean waves beyond the break in Australian waters. However, this association is embodied in the beach itself and the original 1910 structure which pre-dates the existing 1934 building. There is no associational significance between Duke Kahanamoku and the 1934 Freshwater SLSC building.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club satisfies this criterion in demonstrating historical associative significance at a local level.

7.2.3 Criterion (c) – Aesthetic Significance

An item or place is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
• Shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement.	X	• Is not a major work by an important designer or artist.	✓
• Is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement.	X	• Has lost its design or technical integrity.	X
• Is aesthetically distinctive.	✓	• Its positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark and scenic qualities have been more than temporarily degraded.	X
• Has landmark qualities.	✓	• Has only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement.	X
• Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology	X		

Assessment of Significance

- The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building is of aesthetic significance at the local level as it is an aesthetically distinctive building by virtue of its Inter-War Mediterranean style, scale and form, which sits prominently in the coastal beachside landscape.
- While the building has been previously modified through various cosmetic and structural changes, the 1934 building retains a high degree of integrity and has landmark qualities, being a visually distinctive focal point to the backdrop of Freshwater Beach and the adjoining public recreational reserve.
- The building was designed by Architect and Freshwater SLSC member, Lindsay Scott, who's works include the notable Erskineville Town Hall of the same Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style. The association to Scott however, is of dubious importance and prominence.
- The 1987 additions are considered of low aesthetic value and do not contribute to the visual distinctiveness of the building, nor its landmark qualities.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club satisfies this criterion in demonstrating aesthetic significance at a local level.

7.2.4 Criterion (d) – Social Significance

An item or place has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
• Is important for its associations with an identifiable group.	✓	• Is only important to the community for amenity reasons.	X
• Is important to a community's sense of place.	✓	• Is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative.	X

Assessment of Significance

- The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building is of social significance at the local level as it has important identifiable associations with the Freshwater SLSC, who have occupied the building since 1934 and the site since at least 1908, making it one of the longest running surf lifesaving clubs in NSW.
- The building is considered important to the community's sense of place, being a focal point in the built and natural coastal environment, providing an important social function and service to beach-goers and providing meeting spaces for a variety of community uses.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club satisfies this criterion in demonstrating social significance at a local level.

7.2.5 Criterion (e) – Technical / Research Significance

An item or place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is an important benchmark or reference site or type. 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has little archaeological or research potential. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere. 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites. 	✓

Assessment of Significance

- The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building displays a form that was specifically designed to function as a surf lifesaving club, with its placement within a beachside setting and elements such as the boat storage areas and observation tower and displays characteristics which attribute it to the Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style of the early 20th century.
- The building displays characteristics, material and construction techniques which are considered typical of the style, though having been adapted to suit the harsh coastal environment through the notable use of timber joinery for windows.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club does not satisfy this criterion in demonstrating technical / research significance.

7.2.6 Criterion (f) – Rarity

An item or place possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life, or process. 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not rare. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost. 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is numerous but under threat. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the only example of its type. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to the community 	X		

Assessment of Significance

- Surf lifesaving club buildings are synonymous with most Australian 'patrolled' beaches, with many such extant buildings in Sydney attributed to the early 20th century Inter-War period, when many were constructed as depression-era relief work and to replace many earlier primitive structures, but also at a time of increased interest and popular culture of beachside recreation.

- Built 1934, the Freshwater SLSC building displays characteristics which are attributed to the early 20th century Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style, of which there are numerous extant examples located throughout Sydney, including Newport, North Steyne, South Steyne and most notably, Bondi.
- Freshwater SLSC building is therefore not considered attributed to a style or class of building that is rare.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club does not satisfy this criterion in demonstrating significance through the item's rarity at a local level.

7.2.7 Criterion (g) - Representativeness

An item or place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's:

- Cultural or natural places; or
- Cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.).

Guidelines for Inclusion	✓/X	Guidelines for Exclusion	✓/X
• Is a fine example of its type.	✓	• Is a poor example of its type.	X
• Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items.	✓	• Does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type.	X
• Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity.	✓	• Does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type.	X
• Is a significant variation to a class of items.	X		
• Is part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type.	✓		
• Is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size.	✓		
• Is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held.	✓		

Assessment of Significance

- Built 1934, the Freshwater SLSC is a two-storey building, which displays characteristics attributed to the early 20th century Inter-War period and of the Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style. It retains many distinguishing hallmarks of the style, including the rendered masonry walls, hipped and gabled tile clad roof, vertically projecting tower (in this case, purposed as an observation post), timber framed windows with semicircular fanlights atop.
- Despite having been subjected to previous cosmetic and structural alterations, including the notable loss of the original separate male and female amenities wings on either side of the building and the 1987 two storey additions at the rear, the building retains a high degree of design integrity and is in remarkable condition given its harsh coastal environment conditions. This makes the Freshwater SLSC building of architectural interest and value at the local level.
- The original 1934 building displays a purpose built form and function as a surf lifesaving clubhouse, with its ground floor boat storage areas, members areas and observation tower, and together with its deliberate beachside placement, these attributes distinguish it as a surf lifesaving clubhouse, which is often a distinct style and class of buildings given their environment and setting but also their language and form.

Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club satisfies this criterion in demonstrating representative significance at a local level.

7.3 Summary level of significance

The following table summarises the assessed level of significance against each criterion for assessing heritage significance:

Criterion	What is the assessed level of significance?
Criterion (a) – Historical Significance	LOCAL
Criterion (b) – Historical Association Significance	LOCAL
Criterion (c) – Aesthetic Significance	LOCAL
Criterion (d) – Social Significance	LOCAL
Criterion (e) – Technical / Research Significance	Does not satisfy criterion
Criterion (f) – Rarity Significance	Does not satisfy criterion
Criterion (g) – Representativeness Significance	LOCAL
Overall assessed level of cultural significance	LOCAL

7.4 Statement of Cultural Significance

The 1934 Freshwater SLSC building is of historical significance at the local level as it displays important historical evidence of the early development of the Freshwater / Harbord locality, and its growth and prospering during the early 20th century.

It demonstrates the evolution of the surf lifesaving movement in Australia and evidences the rise in popularity of beach recreation and culture during the early 20th century and the need for more permanent facilities.

The 1934 building is of historical associational and social significance as it demonstrates significant human occupation of the site by the Freshwater SLSC which was formed in 1908 and has had continuous occupation of the Building since its construction in 1934. It also demonstrates the strong associations that communities and individuals have with the beach and is considered important to the community's sense of place, being a focal point in the built and natural coastal environment, providing an important social function and service to beach-goers and providing meeting spaces for a variety of community uses.

Designed by Architect and Freshwater SLSC member Lindsay Scott, the Freshwater SLSC building was constructed in 1934 as a purpose built surf lifesaving clubhouse with public spaces. It is a two-storey building, which displays characteristics attributed to the early 20th century Inter-War period and of the Inter-War Mediterranean architectural style and retains many distinguishing hallmarks of the style, including the rendered masonry walls, hipped and gabled tile clad roof, vertically projecting tower (in this case, purposed as an observation post), timber framed windows with semicircular fanlights atop.

The building is of aesthetic significance as it is an aesthetically distinctive building by virtue of its Inter-War Mediterranean style, scale and form, which sits prominently in the coastal beachside landscape having landmark qualities, being a visually distinctive focal point to the backdrop of Freshwater Beach and the adjoining public recreational reserve.

Despite having been subjected to previous cosmetic and structural alterations, including the notable loss of the original separate male and female amenities wings on either side of the building and the 1987 two storey additions at the rear, the building retains a high degree of design integrity and is in remarkable condition given its harsh coastal environment conditions. This makes the Freshwater SLSC building of architectural interest and value at the local level.

8.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

8.1 Plans & drawings referenced

This Heritage Impact Statement provides an assessment of the development proposal as shown on the following plans and drawings:

Drawing No:	Revision:	Title:	Dated	Prepared By:
22002.10/B	DA Issue	Cover Sheet, Location Plan, Site Plan & Site Analysis Plan	21/11/2020	Priestleys Architects
22002.11		Level 1 Basement Floor Plan		
22002.12/C		Level 2 Ground Floor Plan		
22002.13/E		Level 3 Mezzanine Floor Plan		
22002.14/C		Roof Plan		
22002.15/E		Elevations & Section		
22002		External Materials and Finishes Schedule		
NSW 200451 H2.01	DA Issue	Hydraulics Services Drawings	26/11/2020	ACOR Consultants
NSW 200451 H2.02		Hydraulics Services Drawings		
NSW 200451 H4.01		Hydraulics Services Drawings		

8.2 Description of the proposed works

The development proposal seeks the consent of Northern Beaches Council for the alterations and additions to the existing Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club. The objective of the proposal is to accommodate additional habitable floor area to improve the amenity of users and to address the changing and growing needs of the SLSC, which effectively involves the enclosure of an existing roof terrace area to create a new meeting room.

The proposed alterations and additions are relatively minor in the overall extent of change, being entirely contained within the footprint of the c1987 additions and there are no physical changes proposed to the existing 1934 Freshwater SLSC building.

At the ground floor, the existing entry doors to the 1987 additions will be removed and replaced with a pair of aluminium framed doors to improve accessibility to the ground floor. There are no other changes proposed to the existing ground floor of the building.

At the first floor, the proposed alterations and additions are concentrated to the existing open rooftop terrace, which will involve the part demolition of the existing building with the removal in part of the glazed wall between the existing mezzanine level and rooftop terrace and the construction of new partition internal walls and glazed external walls. The walls will support a shallow-pitched hipped roof which will integrate with the existing main hipped roof form of the building. The roof will be clad in profiled sheet metal.

The enclosure of the existing rooftop terrace area will create a new club office and separate meeting / training room.

The heritage impacts of the above-described proposal are considered in detail in the ensuing sections.

9.0 ASSESSMENT AGAINST STATUTORY PLANNING AND HERITAGE CONTROLS

9.1 Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011

Clause 5.10 of the *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011* establishes the statutory framework for heritage conservation and the management of heritage items, heritage conservation areas and archaeological sites (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal).

The provisions specify circumstances where development consent is and is not required, together with specifying statutory requirements and key considerations for the Consent Authority.

In assessing development proposals relating to listed items of heritage significance, or involving development on land situated within a Heritage Conservation Area, Council as the Consent Authority, must consider the impacts of the proposed works on the heritage item and / or Heritage Conservation Area (clause 5.10(4)).

The ensuing heritage impact assessment considers in detail what impact the proposed development will have on the established cultural significance and heritage values of the subject site, together with listed items of heritage significance and Heritage Conservation Areas within the vicinity of the site (as identified in Section 5.3).

9.2 Warringah Development Control Plan 2011

The *Warringah Development Control Plan 2011* ('the DCP'), contains performance-based controls that relate to the development of heritage items, development within the vicinity of a heritage item, or development within a heritage conservation area.

While there is no specific one chapter or part relating to items of cultural heritage significance, there are prescriptive development controls throughout the DCP which seek to ensure that new development is appropriately designed, contextually responsive and sympathetic to the heritage values and significance of an item or place.

The proposed development has been considered against the development guidelines of the DCP and consistency is demonstrated in the ensuing heritage impact assessment.

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10.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 Consideration of the Heritage Impact

The ensuing heritage impact assessment is based upon the Statement of Significance (refer to Section 7.4 above); available physical and documentary evidence including a visual inspection of the site and statutory planning requirements.

The Heritage Council of NSW has published a series of evaluation criteria for assessing the likely impact of a proposed development on the heritage significance of listed heritage items or heritage conservation areas¹⁵, which are listed below and considered in the ensuing statement of heritage impact.

10.2 Response to the evaluation criteria

i) *Minor Partial Demolition*

- *Is the resolution to partially demolish sympathetic to the heritage significance of the item?*

This Heritage Impact Statement has re-assessed the heritage values and significance of the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club, which demonstrates that the historical, associative, aesthetic, social and representative values of the site are embodied within the 1934 building. The 1987 additions are considered of low significance and do not directly contribute to the significance of the heritage item overall.

- *Is the demolition essential for the heritage item to function?*
- *Are important features of the item affected by the demolition (e.g. fireplaces in buildings)?*

The proposed demolition works involve the removal of an existing entry door to the ground floor of the 1987 additions and the removal of existing glazed walls and doors to the rooftop terrace of the 1987 additions.

While the 1987 additions have a physical attachment to the rear (originally 'front') elevation of the 1934 SLSC building, they adopt a distinctly differing architectural form and language to that of the 1934 building, making the additions clearly distinguishable. The 1987 additions contribute to the understanding of how the building has evolved to respond to the changing needs of the Freshwater SLSC and the community through out the 20th century, however they can be read independently of the original building. The heritage item is not dependent upon the retention, nor demolition of the 1987 additions.

The demolition works are limited to fabric that is non-original and non-significant, whereby having a negligible impact to the heritage item.

- *If the partial demolition is a result of the condition of the fabric, is it certain that the fabric cannot be repaired?*

Demolition is not proposed on the basis of the condition of the fabric, but necessitated to achieve the proposed alterations.

Overall, the extent of demolition works are considered to be so minor that there will be no discernible change to the appearance of the building, save for the new additions which are discussed in further detail below.

¹⁵ NSW Heritage Branch, 'Heritage Impact Statements – Some questions to be answered in a Statement of Heritage Impact and Supporting Information Required'.

ii) *Alterations and Additions (Minor Additions)*

- *How is the impact of the addition on the heritage significance of the item to be minimised?*
- *Are the additions sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, proportions, design)?*
- *Will the additions tend to visually dominate the heritage item?*

The alterations and additions are for their entirety, contained within the footprint of the 1987 additions to the Freshwater SLSC, which, this Heritage Impact Statement has assessed and determined the additions to be of low significance.

In this manner, the proposed alterations and additions involve material affectation to fabric that is non-original and of low significance. All physical attachments will be limited to the 1987 fabric and there will be no material affectation to original or significant fabric comprising the 1934 building.

The new additions to enclose the existing rooftop terrace area will introduce new fabric that will increase the overall volume of the building, however because the additions sit below the finished height and within the silhouette of the existing two-storey additions, the proposed works will not increase nor change the overall silhouette and form of the building.

The additions adopt an architectural language that have similarities to the Late 20th century Post Modern form and style of the 1987 additions, incorporating a materials palette that will harmonise with the existing building.

- *Can the additional area be located within an existing structure? If not, why not?*

There is limited opportunity to accommodate the additional meeting room and club office space within the existing interior of the building, owing to the existing internal configuration of the building which is well utilised by the Freshwater SLSC and community.

The existing rooftop terrace is considered an underutilised space that is superfluous to the needs of the Freshwater SLSC, whereby this presents as the most logical placement of the additions.

Furthermore, by not concentrating the additions in this area, this places pressure on other less suitable areas of the building to accommodate the change which may otherwise necessitate the horizontal or vertical expansion of the building, having a more substantial visual impact on the heritage item.

- *Are the additions sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative positions for the additions been considered?*

The proposed alterations and additions do not involve any disturbance to the existing landform, whereby the works are unlikely to impact on any potential archaeological deposits.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

11.1 Conclusion

The property is presently identified as an item of local heritage significance, listed on Schedule 5 of the *Warringah LEP 2011*. However, the existing heritage listing is informed by a primitive assessment of cultural significance.

Subsequently, this Heritage Impact Statement has re-assessed the heritage values of the property and found that the Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club is of historical, association, aesthetic, social, and representative significance at a local level and subsequently, a more comprehensive Statement of Cultural Significance has been developed.

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to consider the heritage impacts resulting from the proposed alterations and additions to the Freshwater SLSC building, with the proposal having been assessed with regards to the re-assessed heritage values. Consideration has been given to the visual and physical impacts of the proposed development on the identified heritage values of the property.

The proposal will not result in any material affectation to significant heritage fabric and the additions are of a scale, form, language and materiality that will sit quietly against the building and within the existing overall silhouette of the 1987 additions, without visually dominating the heritage item and thus retaining visual prominence of the 1934 Freshwater SLSC building.

Subject to the recommendations below, the proposed alterations and additions to the Freshwater SLSC, is considered to have an entirely acceptable heritage impact.

11.2 Recommended mitigation measures

The following recommendations arise from the heritage impact assessment in Section 10 of this report. Adoption and implementation of the recommendations should be seen as mechanisms for addressing statutory requirements, mitigating heritage impacts and to ensure appropriate conservation and ongoing management of the heritage item.

Recommendation	Recommended management / mitigation measures
1: Impacts on memorial plaques or monuments	Where works will remove, destroy or otherwise impact on memorial plaques or monuments which are affixed to objects or other features of the site or buildings, consultation should be undertaken with any living descendants to ensure that any actions taken are dignified to the memory of the deceased.

End of Report

Appendix A

Common Terms Used

The following is a list of terms and abbreviations adopted for use in the NSW Heritage Manual (prepared by the Heritage Council of NSW), and other terms used by those involved in investigating, assessing and managing heritage, including terms used within this Heritage Impact Statement:

Aboriginal significance: An item is of Aboriginal heritage significance if it demonstrates Aboriginal history and culture. The National Parks and Wildlife Service has the primary responsibility for items of Aboriginal significance in New South Wales.

Adaptation: Modification of a heritage item to suit a proposed, compatible use.

Aesthetic significance: An item having this value is significant because it has visual or sensory appeal, landmark qualities and/or creative or technical excellence.

Archaeological assessment: A study undertaken to establish the archaeological significance (research potential) of a particular site and to propose appropriate management actions.

Archaeological feature: Any physical evidence of past human activity. Archaeological features include buildings, works, relics, structures, foundations, deposits, cultural landscapes and shipwrecks. During an archaeological excavation the term 'feature' may be used in a specific sense to refer to any item that is not a structure, a layer or an artefact (for example, a post hole).

Archaeological significance: A category of significance referring to scientific value or 'research potential' that is, the ability to yield information through investigation.

Archaeological sites: A place that contains evidence of past human activity. Below-ground archaeological sites include building foundations, occupation deposits, features and artefacts. Above-ground archaeological sites include buildings, works, industrial structures and relics that are intact or ruined.

Archaeology: The study of material evidence to discover human past. See also historical archaeology.

Artefacts: Objects produced by human activity. In historical archaeology the term usually refers to small objects contained within occupation deposits. The term may encompass food or plant remains (for example, pollen) and ecological features.

Australia ICOMOS: The national committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites.

Burra Charter: (and its guidelines). Charter adopted by Australia ICOMOS which establishes the nationally accepted principles for the conservation of places of cultural significance.

Comparative significance: In the NSW Heritage Assessment Procedure there are two

values used to compare significance: representativeness and rarity.

Compatible use: A use for a heritage item, which involves no change to its culturally significant fabric, changes which are substantially reversible or changes, which make a minimal impact.

Cultural landscapes: Those areas of the landscape, which have been significantly modified by human activity. They include rural lands such as farms, villages and mining sites, as well as country towns.

Cultural significance: A term frequently used to encompass all aspects of significance, particularly in guidelines documents such as the Burra Charter. Also one of the categories of significance listed in the Heritage Act 1977.

Curtilage: The geographical area that provides the physical context for an item, and which contributes to its heritage significance. Land title boundaries and heritage curtillages do not necessarily coincide.

Demolition: The damaging, defacing, destroying or dismantling of a heritage item or a component of a heritage conservation area, in whole or in part.

Conjectural reconstruction: Alteration of a heritage item to simulate a possible earlier state, which is not based on documentary or physical evidence. This treatment is outside the scope of the Burra Charter's conservation principles.

Conservation: All the processes of looking after an item so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may, according to circumstances, include preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.

Conservation Management Plan: (CMP) A document explaining the significance of a heritage item, including a heritage conservation area, and proposing policies to retain that significance. It can include guidelines for additional development or maintenance of the place.

Conservation policy: A proposal to conserve a heritage item arising out of the opportunities and constraints presented by the statement of heritage significance and other considerations.

Contact sites: Sites which are associated with the interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Excavation permit: A permit issued by the Heritage Council of New South Wales under

section 60 or section 140 of the Heritage Act 1977 to disturb or excavate a relic.

Façade: The elevation of a building facing the street.

Heritage Act 1977: The statutory framework for the identification and conservation of heritage in New South Wales. The Act also describes the composition and powers of the Heritage Council.

Heritage Advisor: A heritage consultant engaged by a local council, usually on a part-time basis, to give advice on heritage matters to both the council and the local community.

Heritage assessment criteria: Principles by which values for heritage significance are described and tested. See historical, aesthetic, social, technical/ research, representativeness, rarity.

Heritage conservation area: An area which has a distinctive character of heritage significance, which it is desirable to conserve.

Heritage Council: The New South Wales Government's heritage advisory body established under the Heritage Act 1977. It provides advice to the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and others on heritage issues. It is also the determining authority for section 60 applications.

Heritage fabric: All the physical material of an item, including surroundings and contents, which contribute to its heritage significance.

Heritage inventory: A list of heritage items, usually in a local environmental plan or regional environmental plan.

Heritage item: A landscape, place, building, structure, relic or other work of heritage significance.

Heritage NSW: The State Government agency of the Department and Premier and Cabinet, responsible for providing policy advice to the relevant Minister, administrative services to the Heritage Council and specialist advice to the community on heritage matters.

Heritage precinct: An area or part of an area which is of heritage significance. See also heritage conservation area.

Heritage significance: Of aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, natural or aesthetic value for past, present or future generations.

Heritage study: A conservation study of an area, usually commissioned by the local council. The study usually includes a historical context report, an inventory of heritage items

within the area and recommendations for conserving their significance.

Heritage value: Often used interchangeably with the term 'heritage significance'. There are four nature of significance values and two comparative significance values. See heritage significance, nature of significance, comparative significance.

Hierarchy of significance: Used when describing a complex heritage site where it is necessary to zone or categorise parts of the area assigning each a particular significance. A commonly used four level hierarchy is: considerable, some, little or no, intrusive (that is, reduces the significance of the item).

Industrial archaeology: The study of relics, structures and places involved with organised labour extracting, processing or producing services or commodities; for example, roads, bridges, railways, ports, wharves, shipping, agricultural sites and structures, factories, mines and processing plants.

Integrity: A heritage item is said to have integrity if its assessment and statement of significance is supported by sound research and analysis, and its fabric and curtilage are still largely intact.

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS): An international organisation linked to UNESCO that brings together people concerned with the conservation and study of places of cultural significance.

There are also national committees in sixty countries including Australia.

Level of significance: There are three management levels for heritage items in New South Wales — local, regional and state. The level is determined by the context in which the item is significant. For example, items of state

heritage significance will either be fine examples or rare state-wide or will be esteemed by a state-wide community.

Local significance: Items of heritage significance which are fine examples, or rare, at the local community level.

Moveable heritage: Heritage items not fixed to a site or place (for example, furniture, locomotives and archives).

Occupation deposits: (In archaeology.) Accumulations of cultural material that result from human activity. They are usually associated with domestic sites, for example, under-floor or yard deposits.

Post-contact: Used to refer to the study of archaeological sites and other heritage items dating after European occupation in 1788 which helps to explain the story of the relationship between Aborigines and the new settlers.

Preservation: Maintaining the fabric of an item in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

Rarity: An item having this value is significant because it represents a rare, endangered or unusual aspect of our history or cultural heritage.

Reconstruction: Returning a place as nearly as possible to a known earlier state by the introduction of new or old materials into the fabric (not to be confused with conjectural reconstruction).

Relic: The Heritage Act 1977 defines relic as: '...any deposit, object or material evidence relating to non-Aboriginal settlement which is more than fifty years old.' The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 defines a relic as: '...any deposit, object or material evidence (not

being a handicraft made for sale) relating to indigenous and non-European habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation both prior to and concurrent with the occupation of that area by persons of European extraction, and includes Aboriginal remains.'

Representativeness: Items having this value are significant because they are fine representative examples of an important class of significant items or environments.

Restoration: Returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without introducing new material.

Social significance: Items having this value are significant through their social, spiritual or cultural association with a recognisable community.

State heritage inventory: A list of heritage items of state significance developed and managed by the Heritage Division. The inventory is part of the NSW Heritage Database.

State significance: Items of heritage significance which are fine examples, or rare, at a state community level.

Statement of heritage significance: A statement, usually in prose form which summarises why a heritage item or area is of importance to present and future generations.

Technical/research significance: Items having this value are significant because of their contribution or potential contribution to an understanding of our cultural history or environment.