

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

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

28 August 2023

The General Manager  
Northern Beaches  
PO Box 82  
Manly NSW 1655

To whom it may concern,

## **HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - BAHÁ'Í TEMPLE, 173 MONA VALE ROAD, INGLESIDE**

Urbis has been engaged by Jimbo & Co to prepare this Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) in support of proposed landscaping works to the Bahá'í Temple site located at 173 Mona Vale Road, Ingleside (subject site). The proposed works have been informed by the Engineering Report prepared by Tyrrells Building Advisory dated 30 May 2022.

This brief HIS has assessed the proposal against the relevant clauses of the *Pittwater Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014* and the Pittwater 21 Development Control Plan (DCP).

### **SITE AND SETTING**

The subject site is legally described as Lot 52 in DP 1152609. It comprises an irregular shaped lot with an approximate area of 14.4 hectares.

The site is situated on the western side of Mona Vale Road which comprises its primary access. The subject site is approximately 14km north-west of Manly and 22km north of the Sydney central business district (CBD).

The subject site largely comprises trees and vegetation separating several buildings of various sizes. This includes the domed Bahá'í temple in the south-east corner of the site near to the Mona Vale Road entry. A visitor information centre is additionally situated adjacent to the primary site entry.



Figure 1 Aerial image showing the subject site in its existing setting including close-up of relevant area.

Source: SIX Maps, August 2023



Figure 2 View to the Bahá'í Temple (domed temple building) from within the subject site showing existing landscaping and stairs.

Source: *Bahai.org.au*



Figure 3 View to the Bahá'í Temple from within the subject site showing existing landscaping and stairs.

Source: *Bahai.org.au*





Figure 4 View to the Bahá'í Temple from within the subject site showing existing landscaping and stairs.

Source: *Bahai.org.au*

## HERITAGE LISTING

The subject site is listed as an item of local heritage significance under Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the *Pittwater Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014* as 'Bahá'í House of Worship', item no. 2270338. In addition, the subject site is in proximity to other locally listed heritage items under Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the *Pittwater LEP 2014*. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 'Group of Monterey Pines (*Pinus radiata*), 169 Mona Vale Road, item no. 2270346
- 'Klerk's Garden', 1 Chiltern Road, item no. 2270339
- 'Ingleside House and curtilage, including front fence, stone gate posts, and garden plantings', 12 King Road, item no. 2270112

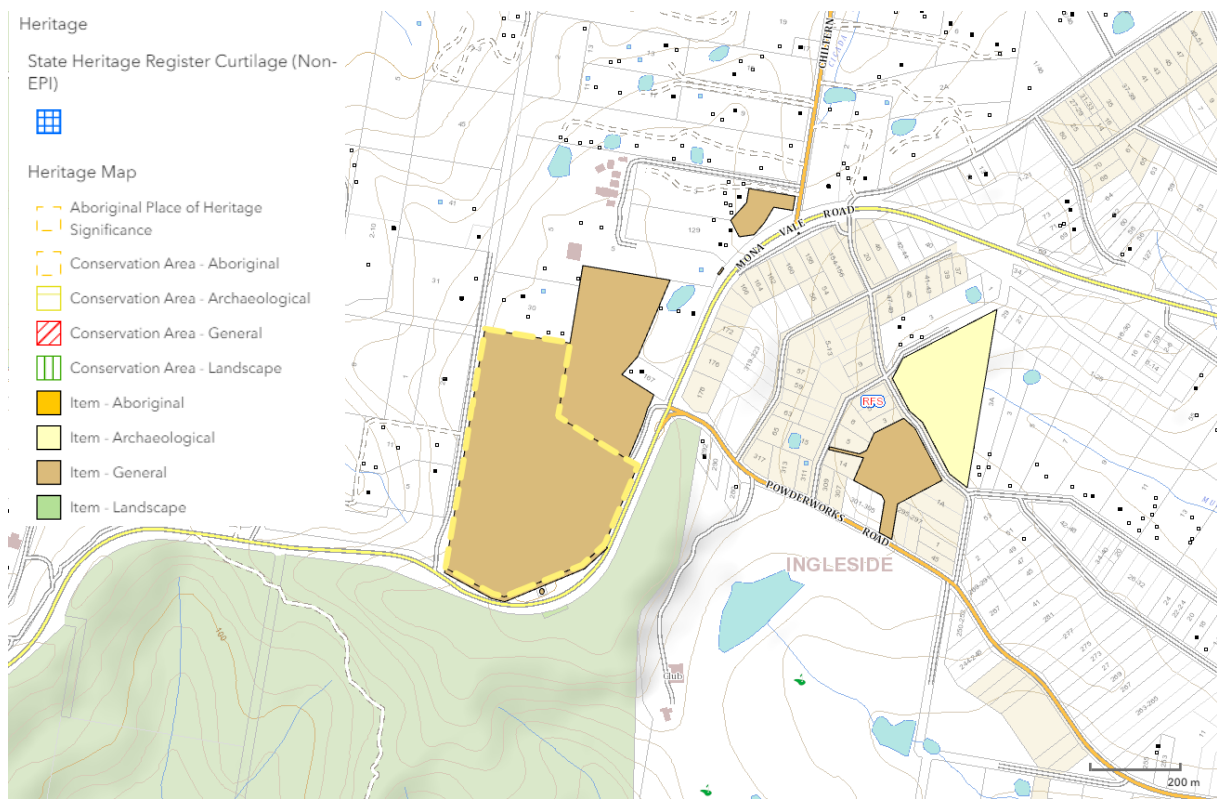


Figure 5 Extract of heritage map showing the subject site outlined in yellow.

Source: NSW Planning Portal eSpatial Viewer

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The following historical overview of the subject site has been extracted in full from the relevant State Heritage Inventory (SHI) form:<sup>1</sup>

*The Bahá'í Faith is an independent religion which began in Persia (Iran) in the mid 19th Century. The House of Worship at Ingleside is one of seven worldwide. The Bahá'í Faith was brought to Australia by Americans Clara and Hyde Dunn in 1920. This was the first Baha'i House of Worship to be completed. The present site was purchased in November 1955, for five thousand, five hundred pounds and construction commenced in April 1957. The dedication ceremony on 17 November 1961 was attended by Bahá'ís from all around the world (Bosler, 1992).*

In addition to the above, the following information related to the construction of the Bahá'í Temple has been extracted from the Bahai.org.au official website:

*Construction of the Temple began in April 1957. It took more than four years to complete and was funded by donations from Baha'ís. The architect was John Brogan of Sydney.*

*As with all Baha'i Temples, it has nine sides and nine entrances, symbolising the Baha'i belief in the unity of the human race under the one God and the essential unity of the world religions.*

*Construction techniques never before employed in Australia were used for this Temple. A helicopter placed the prefabricated lantern structure atop the completed dome, the first time such a technique was used in Australia. It attracted extensive media coverage.*

*On completion of the main structure and dome, a plate bearing an inscription in Arabic, meaning "O Glory of the All Glorious", was hoisted into position in the centre of the dome inside the auditorium...*

*Today this magnificent edifice, standing some 38 metres in height, with a diameter of around 30 metres, has become a highly visible landmark on Sydney's northern beaches.*

---

<sup>1</sup> 'Bahai House of Worship', SHI Form, NSW Government, accessed via <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2270338>



Figure 6 Historical image showing the construction of the Bahá'í Temple which began in 1957. Note: the base form of the dome prior to addition of the lantern to the top via helicopter.

Source: *Bahai.org.au*





Figure 7 Historical image showing the construction of the Bahá'í Temple building in 1957.

*Source: Ba'hai.org.au*





Figure 8 Historical image showing the placement of the lantern atop the Temple's dome via helicopter.

Source: Ba'hai.org.au

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

The following Statement of Significance for the subject site has been extracted in full from the relevant State Heritage Inventory (SHI) form:<sup>2</sup>

*The Bahá'í House of Worship was the first house of worship for the Bahá'í Faith in Australia (1961) and as a result it is deemed culturally significant at the state level. The unique design and aesthetic appeal has made the Bahá'í House of Worship architecturally significant.*

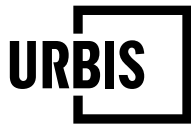
## **THE PROPOSAL**

The client is seeking to undertake new landscaping works surrounding the exterior of the Bahá'í Temple building located at the south-east corner of the subject site. In summary, the proposed works will consist of the following:

- External paving and landscaping works
- Water ingress remediation; and

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid



- DAA Access provisions as part of the new design.

This HIS has reviewed the architectural plans prepared by Urbis as part of its assessment dated August 2023:

<b>DRAWING SCHEDULE</b>		
<b>DRG No.</b>	<b>SHEET NAME</b>	<b>REV</b>
000	COVER SHEET	2
001	GENERAL LEGEND	2
151	DEMOLITION PLAN - SHEET 1	1
152	DEMOLITION PLAN - SHEET 2	1
201	FINISHES PLAN - SHEET 1	1
202	FINISHES PLAN - SHEET 2	1
301	SETOUT PLAN - SHEET 1	1
302	SETOUT PLAN - SHEET 2	2
401	GRADING PLAN - SHEET 1	1
402	GRADING PLAN - SHEET 2	1
500	PLANTING SCHEDULE	2
501	PLANTING PLAN - SHEET 1	2
502	PLANTING PLAN - SHEET 2	1
801	SHEET 1	1
802	SHEET 2	1
901	SHEET 1	2

The following images provide an overview of the proposed works. Refer to the submitted architectural plans for further information.

## SHEET 1

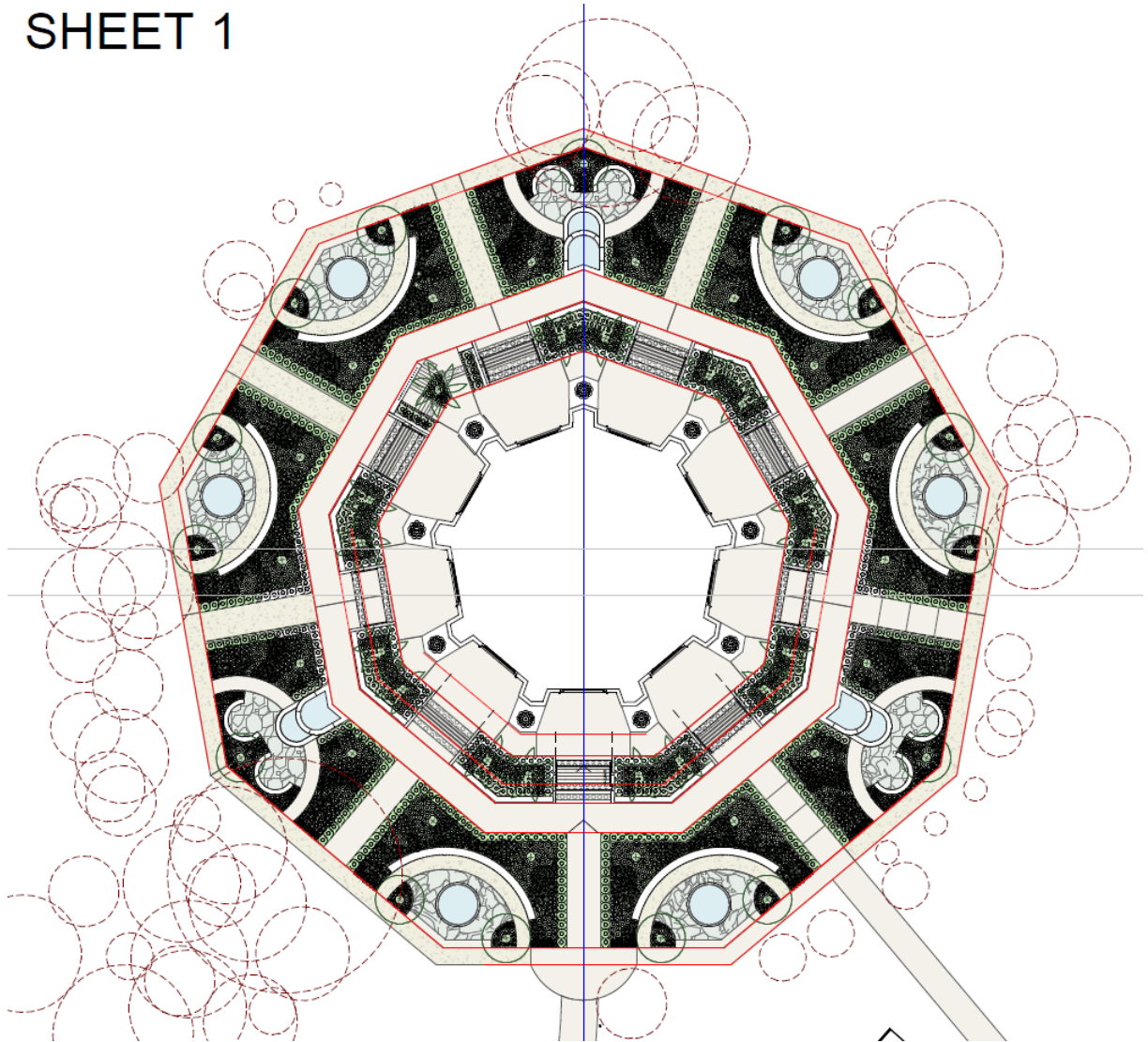


Figure 9 Overview of the scope of works and proposed new landscaping showing full extent.

Source: Urbis, August 2023



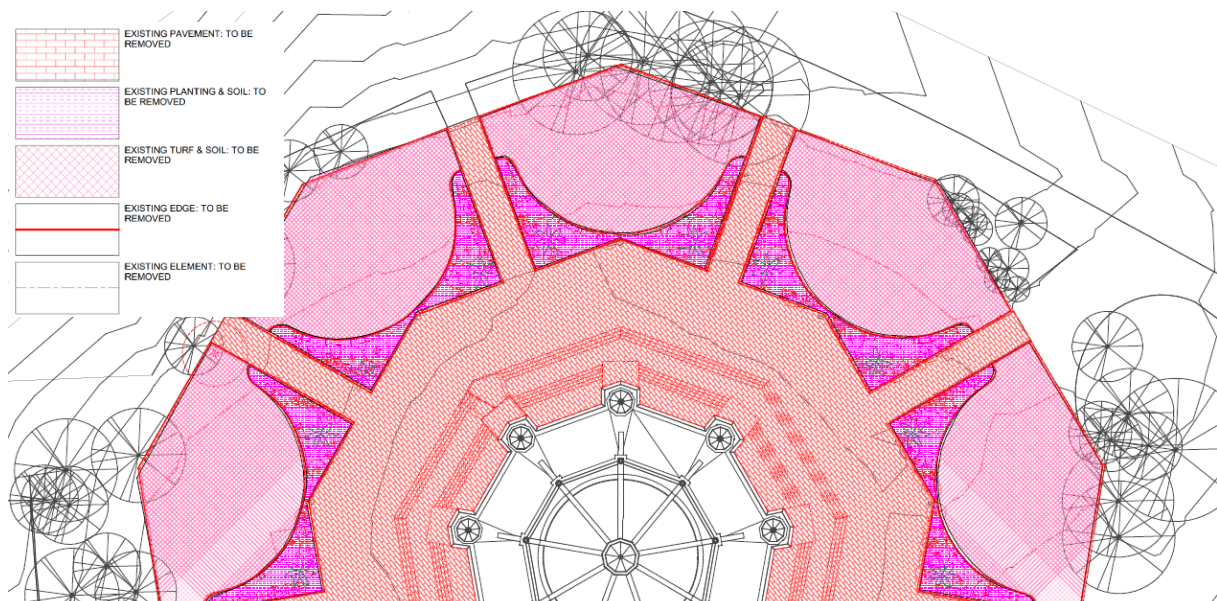


Figure 10 Demolition Plan Sheet 1.

Source: Urbis, August 2023

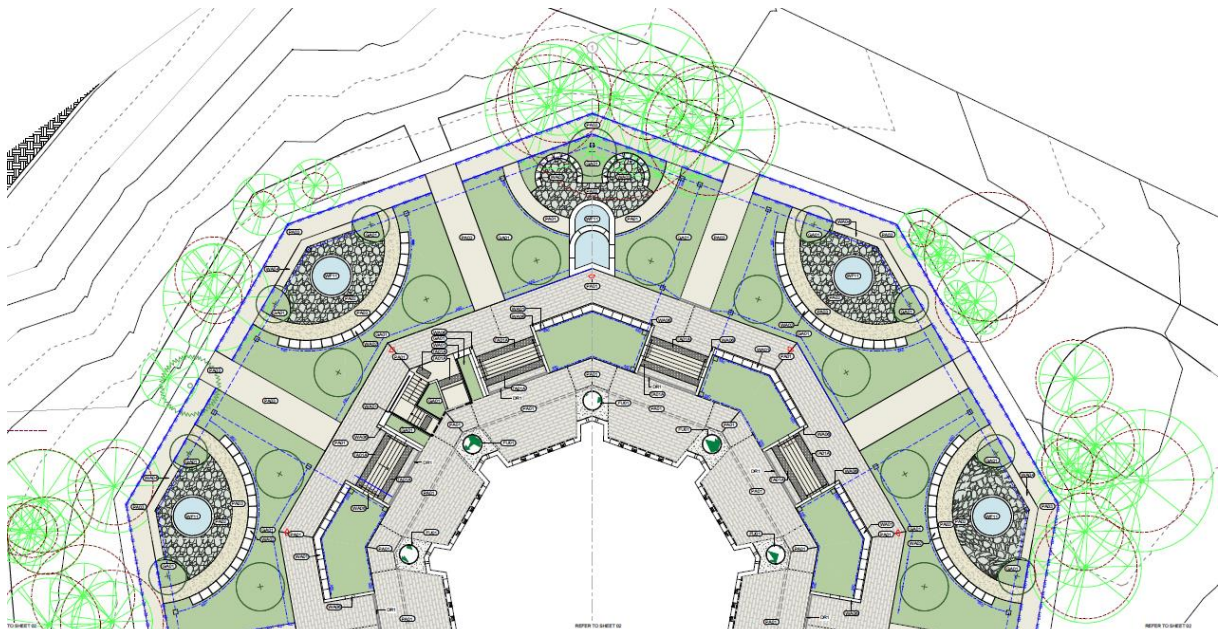


Figure 11 Proposed Finishes Plan Sheet 1. Note: All plantings, paving and water features will be new. Refer to finishes schedule for further information.

Source: Urbis, August 2023



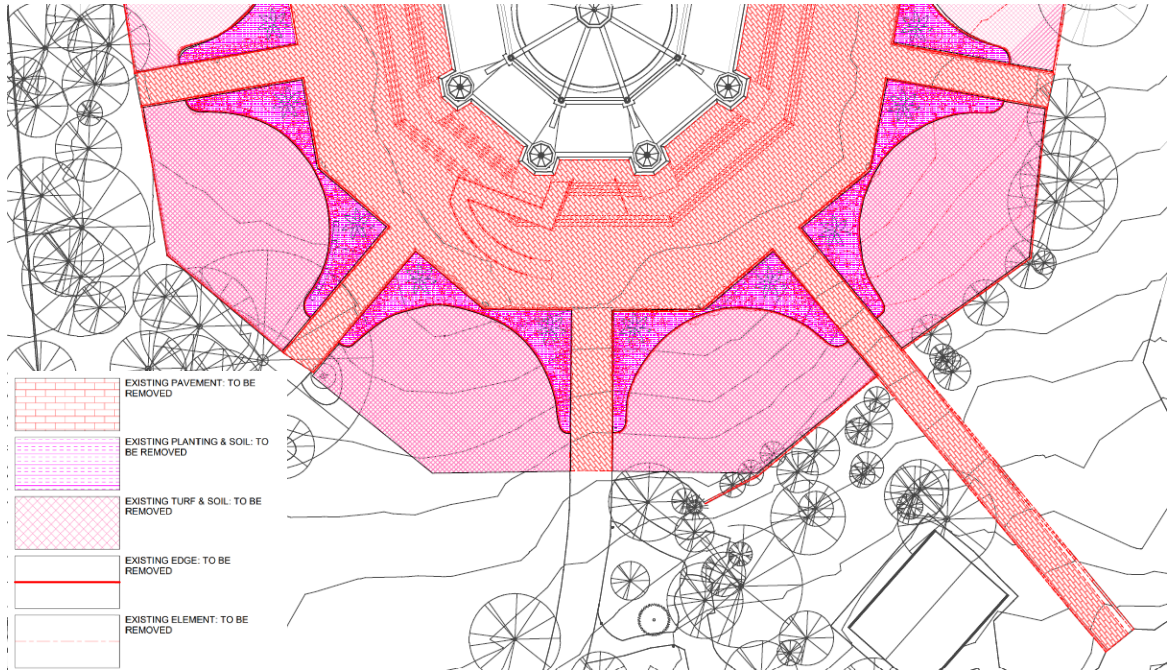


Figure 12 Demolition Plan Sheet 2.

Source: Urbis, August 2023

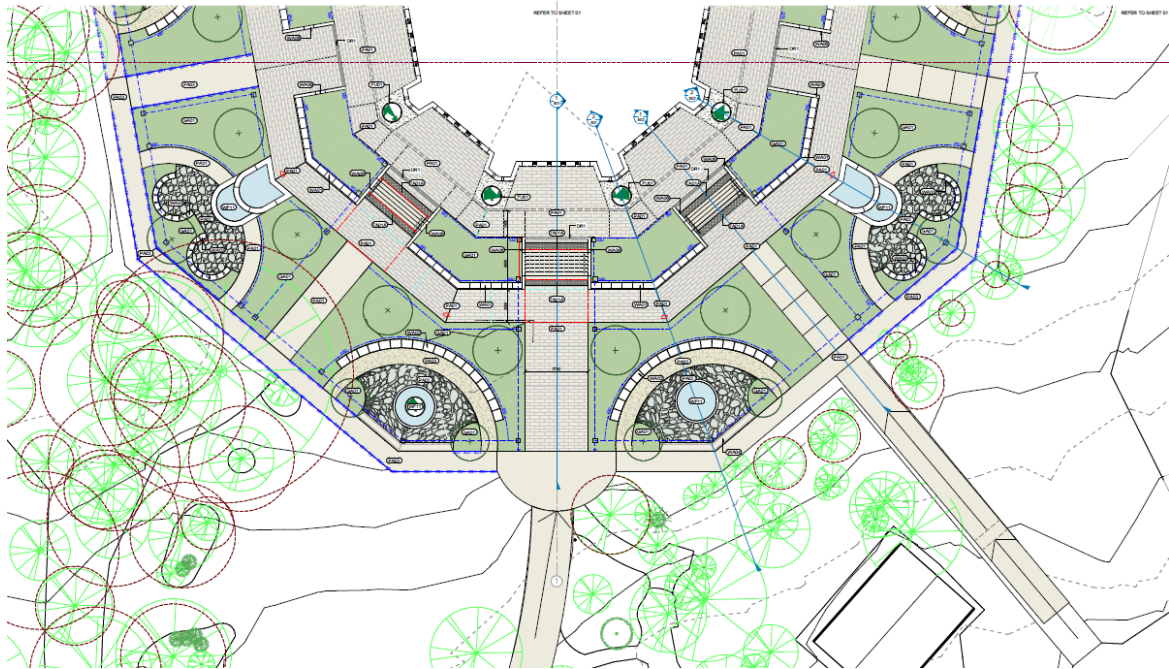


Figure 13 Proposed Finishes Plan Sheet 2. Note: All plantings, paving and water features will be new. Refer to finishes schedule for further information.

Source: Urbis, August 2023

## HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This HIS has assessed the proposal against the relevant controls of the *Pittwater Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014* and the Pittwater 21 Development Control Plan (DCP).

### Pittwater LEP 2014

This HIS has been prepared in accordance with the *Pittwater LEP 2014* as the proposal consists of works within the curtilage of a listed heritage item under Par1 1, Schedule 5.

### Pittwater 21 DCP

Table 1 Pittwater 21 Development Control Plan

Control	Discussion
<b><i>B1.1 Heritage Conservation - Heritage items, heritage conservation areas and archaeological sites listed in Pittwater Local Environmental Plan 2014</i></b>	
<i>Any development application involving work likely to impact the heritage significance of a heritage item or archaeological site is to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement, prepared by an appropriately qualified heritage professional. Guidance on preparing a Heritage Impact Statement (Statement of Heritage Impact) is available at NSW Office of Environment &amp; Heritage in the NSW Heritage Manual or superseding publication.</i>	This HIS has been prepared in accordance with this control. It has included sufficient background information regarding the site's context, heritage listing and significance to sufficiently assess the potential impact of the proposal.
<i>Alterations and additions to buildings and structures, and new development of sites containing a heritage item or archaeological site are to be designed to respect and complement the heritage significance in terms of the building envelope, proportions, materials, colours and finishes, and building alignment.</i>	The proposal relates only to new landscaping works and demolition of the existing stairs surrounding the immediate vicinity of the domed temple building within the south-east of the subject site. It is understood that the existing paving and stairs are contemporary to the construction of the domed temple building itself, however these are not of architectural interest and contribute neutrally to the overall aesthetic design of the Temple. Replacing these elements in comparable manner using with contemporary materials will not have any adverse impact on this space. Further, the works will not consist of any direct alterations or additions to the domed temple building fabric itself. The proposal will retain the existing building

Control	Discussion
	<p>proportions, envelope, building alignment and materiality of the domed structure.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the proposal will incorporate the demolition of existing pavement, plantings, turf, soil and steps leading up to the domed temple building. These elements will be demolished in all directions (360 degrees) resulting in a full redevelopment of the immediate vicinity to the domed temple building. This redevelopment will incorporate new plantings, paving, stairs fit with accessibility tactiles, and water features in keeping with the existing architectural aesthetic of the domed temple building.</p> <p>The proposed new steps, plantings, paving, etc in place of the existing will largely maintain the same overall form (see extracted plans above). The general nine-sided form of the space will be retained, divided by interspersed straight pathways and sections of plantings that provide access to a revised series of stairs with access to the temple building.</p> <p>In addition, the understood significance of the domed temple building relates to its cultural and spiritual importance to the Bahá'í community to which the proposed works will have no impact. Instead, the revised plantings, pathways, steps, accessibility access, and water features will have a complementary impact on the overall aesthetic of the temple and its immediate surroundings. Overall, the proposed works will be complementary to the temple building and have no adverse impact on its known cultural heritage significance.</p>
<p><i>Development on land containing a heritage item or archaeological site is to minimise the impact on the setting of the item or site by providing an adequate buffer zone where appropriate, and maintaining and respecting significant views to and from the heritage item or archaeological site.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new landscaping works will be undertaken to the immediate vicinity of the domed temple building but will maintain existing significant views to and from. The works will enhance the immediate context of the building by replacing existing stairs, pathways and landscaping with</p>

Control	Discussion
	contemporary upgraded materials in a similarly like for like manner.
<p><i>The materials, finishes and colours used in alterations and additions should complement the heritage item.</i></p> <p><i>Modern materials can be used if their proportions and details are harmonious within the surrounding heritage context or with the heritage item.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new materials, finishes and landscaping works have been selected to be complementary of the heritage significance of the subject site and to minimise any potential adverse impact. Paving will be of contemporary natural styles, such as sandstone, and interspersed with a combination of native and introduced plant species'. Where water features are proposed they will be of a restrained design, shallow in nature, and to a lower elevation than the base of each stairwell to allow for any overflow to drain away from the subject building.</p> <p>The proposed new stairs will also incorporate the addition of non-slip tactiles for general increased accessibility. These elements will be incorporated into new fabric and will have no impact on the significance of the Bahá'í Temple building.</p>



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposed new landscaping and access upgrade works will be complementary to the subject building and are acceptable from a heritage perspective. The works will have no direct impact on the Bahá'í Temple (domed temple) principal building fabric and will not impact on its existing form, building alignment, envelope, fabric or finishes. The works will also have no impact on existing significant views to or from Bahá'í Temple itself or the subject site. Instead, the proposal will consist of the redevelopment of landscape elements including pathways, stairs and plantings to increase accessibility and visibly revitalise the space.

In addition, the revised stair access and use of appropriate DDA / universal access design will open up the accessibility of the Bahá'í Temple in line with the evolving needs of the local community. This impact will be positive in retaining the cultural and spiritual significance of the Temple by allowing for ongoing connection to be maintained with its target audience.

Overall, the proposed works will have no adverse impact on the significance of the subject site and are acceptable from a heritage perspective. The proposal is recommended for approval. Should you have any further questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned via the below.

Kind regards,



Samara Allen  
Senior Consultant  
+61 2 8233 9980  
sallen@urbis.com.au