

19/04/2022

To:  
General Manager  
Northern Beaches Council  
PO Box 82  
Manly NSW 1655 Australia

Attention: Nic England & Phil Lane  
Assessment officer Acting manager, Development Assessment

Dear Nic & Phil,

RE: HERITAGE COMMENTS ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS  
DA2021/2208 - 3 Riverview Road, Avalon



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### Background

I have been asked to provide heritage related comments about Council's raised heritage concerns (dated 14/03/2022) and the proposed mitigative amendments affecting the new tennis court, outbuilding and associated landscaping works. The existing building on the site is a heritage item.

This submission is to be read in conjunction with the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by me in June 2021, which was submitted as part of the development applications prepared by SJB Architects. This brief assessment forms an appendix to that report.

### Significance of the Place

The statement of significance in the Inventory Sheet for 3 Riverview Road, Avalon is as follows:

*Little House (Yoorami) at 3 Riverview Road, Clareville, built c1965 to a design by the architect Douglas Snelling, has historic and aesthetic significance as an early example of Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional architecture showing direct influences by Frank Lloyd Wright. Typical modernist features include: horizontal emphasis in the structure, free asymmetrical massing, flat roof, clerestory windows, timber deck, exposed structure, retention and adaptation to the natural setting and use of natural materials.*

*The residence portrays the early stages of a significant movement by Sydney architects to adapt the International style and design theory to a local, regional language.*

*The residence is an early example of Snelling's work and retains a substantial proportion of original integrity. The listing includes the interiors of the house; however detailed analysis and assessment should be undertaken at the time of any future changes to the interior in order to ascertain the relative heritage significance.*

### Proposed Development Amendments

My current comments are based on the amended plans, dated 28/03/2022. The amendments affect the following elements with heritage impacts:

- the front fence is reduced in height and its visual impact is mitigated by more landscaping;
- the arbour and pergola have been deleted;
- the extent of glazing on the ground floor of the tennis pavilion is reduced and its visual impact is further mitigated by more landscaping;
- the raised parapet of the tennis pavilion has been reduced in height; and
- the bin store has been relocated.

### Response to heritage concerns

My comments generally reflect the order of Mr Moore's paragraphs where he raised specific issues, as follows:

- ◆ **Letter box** - Contrary to Mr Moore's interpretation, the letter box is not being relocated onto public land: it is retained in its original location, where it was first erected, on public land. As I share the heritage concerns about relocation, I urge council to accept that the letter box remains in its existing location on the verge. In my opinion its present location has a historic dimension which signifies a more casual approach to boundaries recalling the time when the area was less developed and there was less need for boundaries to be defined.
- ◆ **Front fence and arbour** - The concerns about the fence and arbour were taken on board and the fence was reduced in height and vegetation screening was intensified. In my opinion these steps have reduced the impact of the front fence to an acceptable level. The arbour and pergola were deleted in response.
- ◆ **Ground floor of the tennis pavilion** - The extent of glazing was reduced in response. The increased landscaping in front of the wall further mitigates any concerns. I would also like to add in light of the observation that the overall character of the ground floor pavilion "owes little to the house proper" that as the ground floor of the tennis pavilion is clad in sandstone and forms a monolithic element it is seen as part of the site landscaping, which features a number of sandstone outcrops, and not as a building element, which could compete with the primacy of the Snelling house. I agree with Mr Moore that the house should be the dominant element on site and our strategy of proposing a landscape element clad in sandstone responds to that concern.
- ◆ **The tennis pavilion** - The tennis pavilion - in line with Mr Moore's interpretation - already features a thin roof edge and is almost completely transparent. Further mitigation was only possible by reducing the height of the parapet roof upstand which conceals the solar panels.
- ◆ **The bin store** - The bin store was removed from the entry area and relocated to a visually recessive location.

### Conclusion

The proposed amendments address council's heritage concerns and acceptably mitigate perceived adverse impacts.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zoltan Kovacs', written in a cursive style.

ZOLTAN KOVACS B. Arch (Hons)  
Architect

### **Assessment of heritage impact**

Some of the proposed amendments, which affect existing fabric - the reconfigured side entry, retention of more original fabric, the setback from the north side and reduction/realignment of wall steps - improve the visual cohesiveness of the cottage in terms of the rest of the cottage group, when seen from Stuart Street.

*A positive impact will be generated.*

Other amendments, which affect proposed fabric - reduction in overall height, the proposed gable form, the setback from the south side and reduction/repositioning of the roof terrace - also improve the visual cohesiveness of the cottage in terms of the rest of the cottage group, by proposing more sympathetic fabric and eliminating any overwhelming impact. The character of the new additions will be more consistent with past similar additions belonging to other members of the group.

*An acceptable mitigative impact will be generated.*

The proposed removal of the existing intrusive tile cladding and its replacement with corrugated steel will introduce a more appropriate material, which will also generate greater visual consistency with the rest of the group, as all the other cottage roofs are clad in corrugated steel.

*A positive impact will be generated.*

The proposed recycling of the fireplace bricks goes some way towards addressing this concern, but it also needs to be remembered that the fireplace fabric is degraded and both the original fire box and mantelpiece are lost. Retention of the masonry chimney breast serves no conservation purpose.

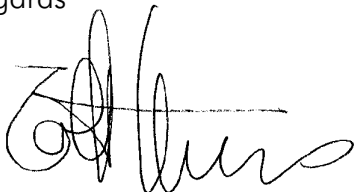
*An acceptable mitigative impact will be generated.*

### **Conclusion**

The proposed amendments address council's heritage concerns and acceptably mitigate perceived adverse impacts. The proposed amendments also generate greater visual cohesiveness, which addresses the fundamental heritage significance of the group better than before. Considering the positive impacts of this improvement, it is now possible to entertain the slight elevation of the cottage, because the changes to the setting of the group are now negligible.

***The proposed amendments generate positive conservation impacts.***

Regards



ZOLTAN KOVACS B. Arch (Hons)  
Architect