

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT
16A RUSKIN ROWE AVALON



The front elevation of No. 16A Ruskin Rowe Avalon

Prepared by

RUTH DANIELL

B. Arch Hons (Syd)

42 Glenmore Road Paddington NSW 2065

tel: 9358 1923 m: 0408 649 854

rdaniell@ihug.com.au

ABN 16A1 516A5 099 265

DECEMBER 2021

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION
2.0	REQUIREMENT FOR THIS REPORT
3.0	LOCATION
4.0	METHODOLOGY
5.0	BACKGROUND HISTORY
6.0	THE HERITAGE ITEM
I 6A.0	THE PROPOSED WORKS
8.0	THE HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENTS
9.0	SUMMARY
10.0	RECOMMENDATION
11.0	REFERENCES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared by Ruth Daniell for the owners of the property to address the proposed new dwelling on the site.

2.0 REQUIREMENT FOR THIS REPORT

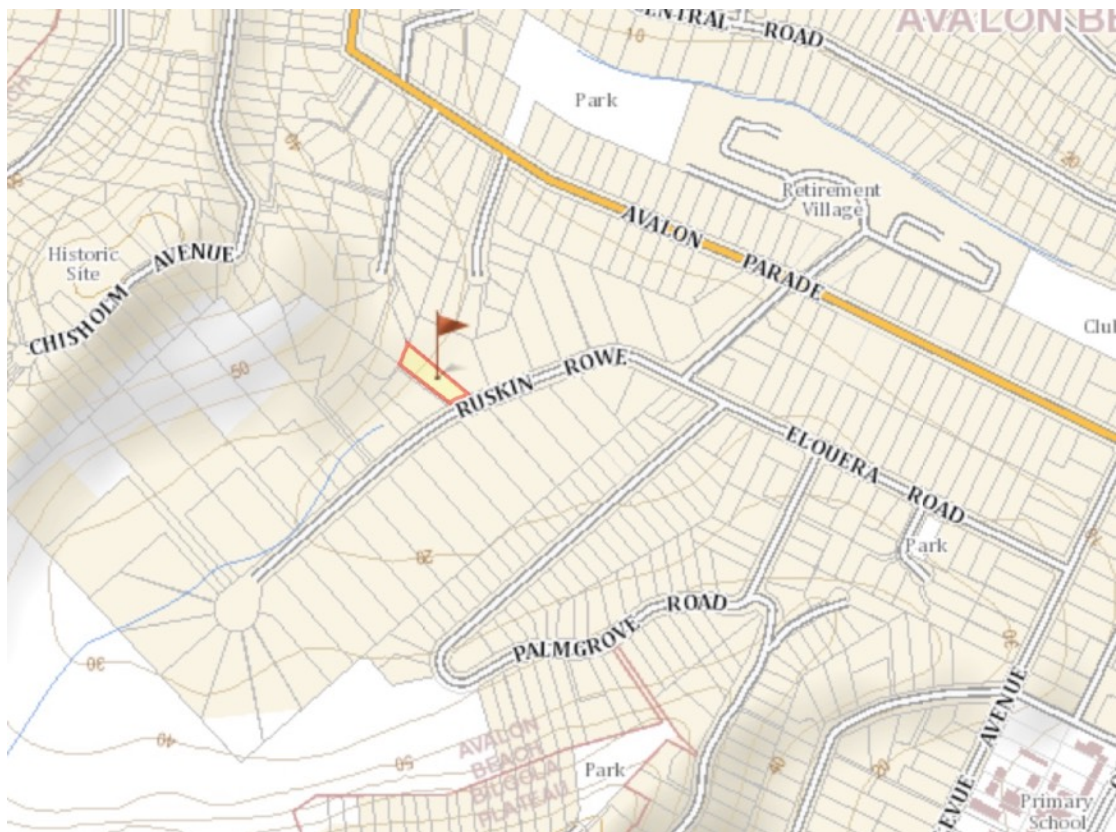
It is proposed to demolish the existing garage and make alterations and additions to the existing dwelling including a new pool and landscaping.

The existing buildings and site are located in the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

The Northern Beaches Council requires a heritage report for work that occurs in Conservation Area.

3.0 LOCATION

No. 16A Ruskin Rowe is located on the southern side of Ruskin Rowe. The Real Property Description is Lot 41 DP22361.





Aerial photograph showing the site and the varied patterns of development in the context. No. 16 has a similar deep setback. The surrounding houses do not continue this pattern.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This report uses the methodology outlined in the NSW Heritage Office Manual and the Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter.

5.0 BACKGROUND HISTORY

The Pittwater and Northern Beaches area was formerly inhabited by the Garigal or Caregal people in a region known as Guringai country.

European settlement

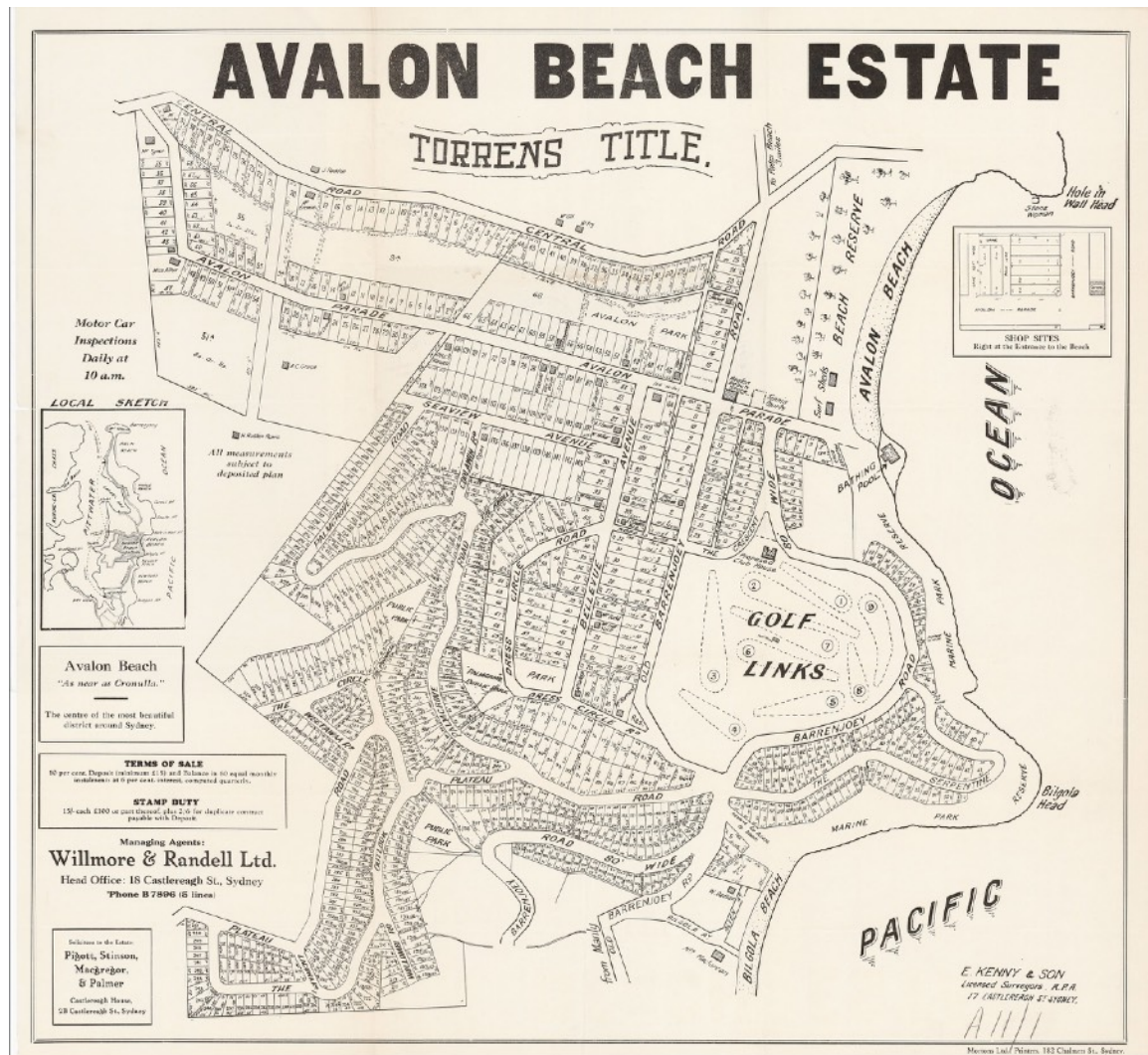
Avalon was named after the mythical Avalon, a legendary island in Celtic languages mythology. According to legends, Avalon was an earthly paradise and the final resting place of King Arthur.

The first land grant in the area was 240,000 square metres (60 acres) to John Farrell in 1821 6A. In 1833 a 4.9-square-kilometre (1,200-acre) land grant was made to Australia's first Catholic priest, John Joseph Therry, by [Governor Bourke](#). A further grant of 280 acres made in 1831 6A meant that Therry's holdings covered most of the peninsula from Newport to Whale Beach. He built a church in this area but his plans

for a settlement never eventuated. Therry fought hard for the recognition of the Catholic Church in the colony. After he died, the land was left to the Jesuit order and was then sold to help finance the rebuilding of St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. In the 1920s, the area was still known as 'Priest's Flat'. Arthur J Small handled a subdivision in 1921 and chose the name Avalon. Lots were sold for £100 each and included two year's free membership in the local golf club.

Significant housing developments took place during the 1920s. The architect Alexander Stewart Jolly designed a number of houses that were built in the Avalon area in that period. Loggan Rock was a flamboyant log cabin combined with a stone tower; the combination of logs and rocks gave rise to the name. The house is heritage-listed. Careel House is a bungalow made of stone that was quarried in the area. Nowadays it is on the [Whale Beach](#) side of the boundary. It is also heritage-listed. Hy Brasil, located near [Clareville](#), was built in 1936, but was originally known as The Gem. Later it was bought by Ted Herman, son of the painter [Sali Herman](#), who changed the name, using the name of a mythical island west of Ireland. It is heritage-listed. A sandstone cottage known as Wickham, designed by [Walter Burley Griffin](#), was unfortunately demolished with council approval in 1994.

Another significant development was the creation of Ruskin Rowe in 1950. This street was designed as an estate by the architect Harry Ruskin Rowe, son of the architect [Thomas Rowe](#). Rowe created covenants to preserve the character of the estate, but they have been ignored to an extent over the years. Nevertheless, the estate is heritage-listed because of its historic significance, as well as its scientific significance in preserving the bushland environment of the area.

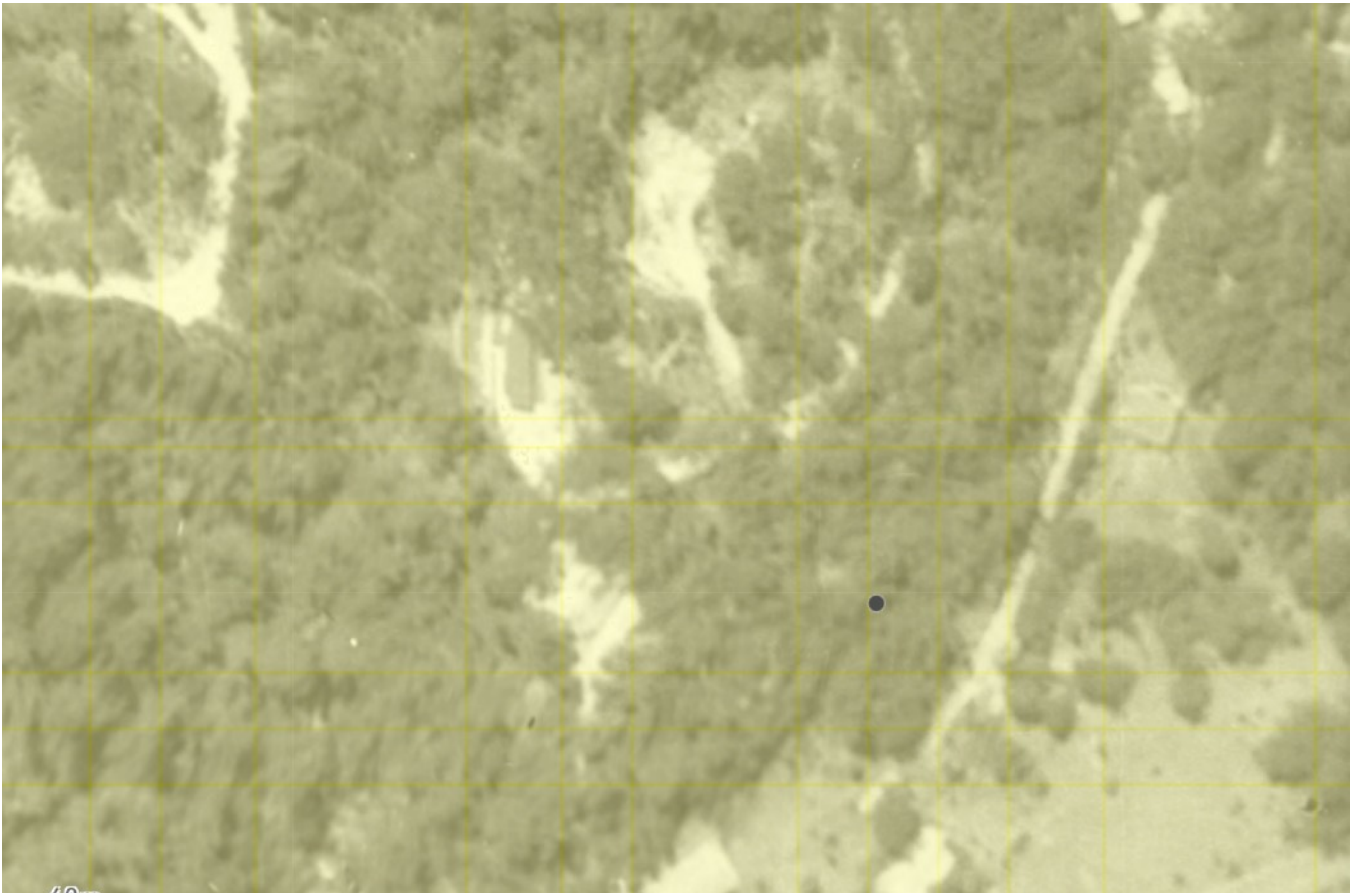


This subdivision plan shows Avalon Beach Estate Plateau Rd, Park Reserve, 1921-1926 The Ruskin Rowe subdivision which occurred in the 1950s is located to the west of the middle section of this subdivision.

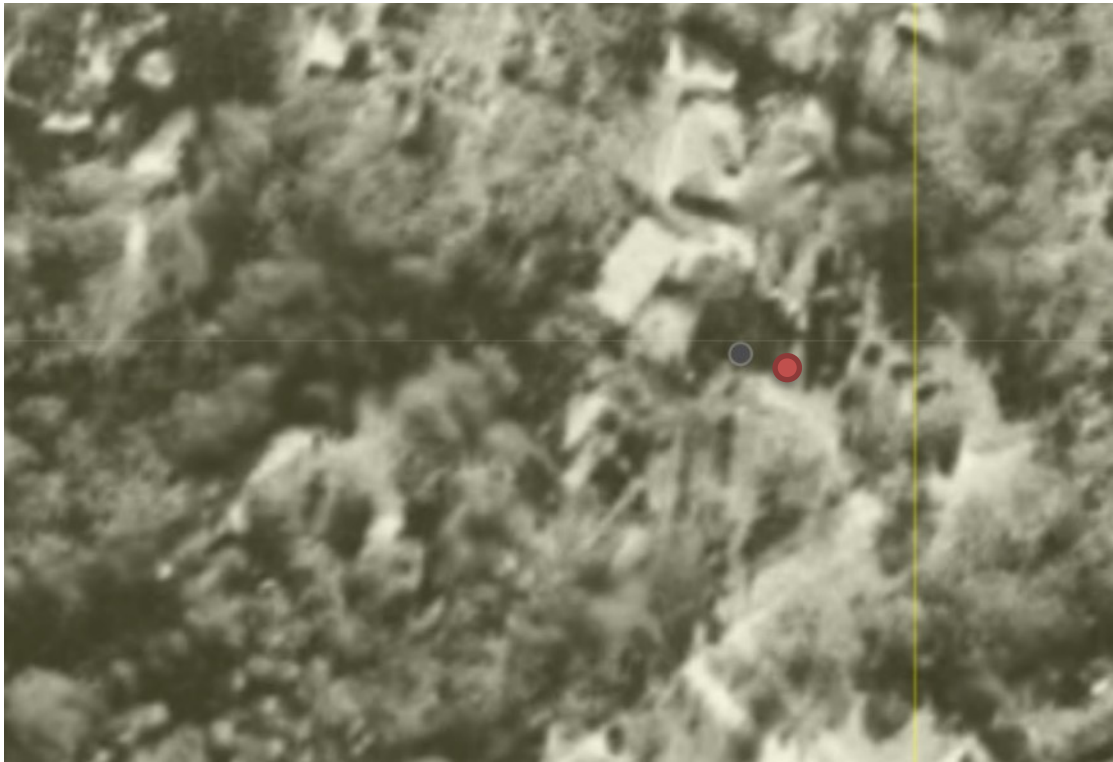
6.0 16A RUSKIN ROWE & THE RUSKIN ROWE CONSERVATION AREA

The following aerial photographs show the development on the site and in the context.

16A, due to the narrowness of the block and the street numbering is subdivision from the original allotments of No. 16.



1966 Aerial photograph showing the site and the subdivision undeveloped. Source NSW Historical Imagery.



1972 Aerial photograph showing the site and that a house has been built on the site.. Source NSW Historical Imagery.



The 1986 aerial photograph showing the site and that a house has been built on the site.. Source NSW Historical Imagery.



The 1998 aerial photograph showing the site and that a house has been built on the site.. Source NSW Historical Imagery.

Description of I 6A Ruskin Rowe

The existing house is single storey house constructed in the period between 1966 -1972. It is a contemporary style house from the period of construction. It has a simple rectangular form with a wide eave. The flat or minimally pitched roof extends over the walls with a wide eave. The windows are asymmetrically placed responding to the internal layout. The house has a light coloured palette which responds to the period of construction and its location in proximity to coastal beaches and Pittwater.

The house is shown and described in the following photographs.



The house viewed within the landscaped front setback. This photograph shows the manicured and landscaped front setback and the backdrop of bushland



View of the landscaping in the front garden.



View the adjacent garage at the front of the house.



View of the front terrace of the house. The timber framed doors are contained in a projecting bay.



View of the front of the house which features an expressed timber frame and wide eaves and exposed rafters. The landscaping incorporates dry stone walls.



View of the rear terrace, looking towards the rear of the house.



View of the boundary with No. 16 showing the boundary planting and the adjoining house.

Description of the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area

The first section of Ruskin Rowe runs southwest from Avalon Parade to Elouera Road, then continues for a short distance west before curving again to the southwest and continuing in that direction, terminating in a loop at its southern end. The original subdivision lots are arranged on either side of this central thoroughfare and are long rectangular parcels with houses set well back from the street with a mix of sweeping lawns, remnant native trees and in many cases dense landscaping. The relatively few lots subdivided since 1950 are battle axe subdivisions of some of the earlier lots.

Evaluation of Heritage Significance

The area was subdivided in 1950 by Harry Ruskin Rowe, a prominent Sydney architect of the early 20th century. His vision was to create a special subdivision, with very large size lots to enable the vegetation to dominate over the houses.

To ensure that his original intent was realised, he placed a number of restrictive covenants on the 43 lots, to ensure that no more than one residential dwelling could be built on each lot. The area is relatively intact, with only five additional lots being created over 44 years.

There were a number of submarine sightings during World War II in Pittwater and barbed wire was placed along every beach except Newport. The Green Hornets of the 16th Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps camped in Warriewood Valley during this period and Mona Vale, south of La Corniche, was a camp for trainee machine gunners. Ruskin Rowe at Avalon hosted the Sundown RAAF Camp, who were trained by Nancy Bird Walton. The building was demolished to build home units after 1953 (Source: Pittwater Online News, June 19 - 25, 2011, Issue 11).

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	Ruskin Rowe is significant in the evolution and pattern of the history of New South Wales for its design principles and patterns that are still clearly legible. Ruskin Rowe is significant in the evolution and pattern of the history of New South Wales as an example of forward-thinking subdivision design in the mid-20th Century.
SHR Criteria b) [Associative significance]	The area has strong associations with Harry Ruskin Rowe, a prominent Sydney architect who subdivided the area in 1950 and after whom the subdivision and thoroughfare are named.

SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	Rowe's vision was to create a special subdivision with large lots in which vegetation would dominate over houses. This area represents the most "pure" example of the character of residential developments which were occurring in the Avalon area after WWII.
SHR Criteria e) [Research potential]	Ruskin Rowe has research potential as an example of subdivision design. It is also scientifically significant due to the low density nature of the area and the retention of a wide range of fauna, including koalas, bandicoots and native birds.
Integrity/ Intactness:	The area is relatively intact, with only five additional lots being created over 44 years.

Statement of Significance

The Ruskin Rowe Heritage Conservation Area is significant in the evolution and pattern of the history of New South Wales for its design principles and patterns that are still clearly legible.

The street is named after Harry Ruskin Rowe, a prominent Sydney architect who subdivided the area in 1950. Rowe's vision was to create a special subdivision with large lots in which vegetation would dominate over houses. This area represents the most "pure" example of the character of residential developments which were occurring in the Avalon area after WWII. Ruskin Rowe has research potential for its innovative subdivision design and is also scientifically significant due to the low density nature of the area and the retention of a wide range of fauna, including koalas, bandicoots and native birds.

Recommended management:

Management Recommendation

The area's character should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Impact Statement should be prior to any major works being undertaken on properties within the Conservation Area. Photographic Archival Recording should be undertaken before major changes in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office guidelines for Photographic Recording of Heritage Items using Film or Digital Capture (2006).

Site and Context

The following photograph shows the streetscape character of Ruskin Rowe.

View of Ruskin Rowe showing the vegetation in the deep front setbacks.



View of Ruskin Rowe looking east.



View of Ruskin Rowe looking west.



This photograph shows the streetscape in front of the subject property. The site has a band of vegetation across the front of the property and eucalypts as verge planting

8.0 THE PROPOSED WORKS

This report addresses the proposed alterations and additions shown in the DA drawings by RAMA Architects.

The proposed works demolish the existing garage and construct a small addition forward of the part of the house frontage. The addition contains a two storey section with garage on the lower level and a master bedroom, ensuite and has a deck facing the front garden. Due to the topography of the site and some excavation the height of the proposed addition is the same height as the existing roof.

A new outdoor terrace and pool are proposed on the south west side at the front. Landscaping and the re-surfacing & extension of the existing driveway are proposed.

The design of the new addition continues the architectural language of the house, including the flat roof, the wide eave, the expressed rafters and the grouped fenestration.

The materials for the addition are a combination of brickwork, timber and glass.

The materials, including lightweight timber cladding, the use of stone, timber framed windows and doors are suitable to the existing late 1960s house, the Pittwater area and the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

9.0 HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENTS

The heritage impact is considered in relation to:

- The Pittwater Local Environmental Plan 2014 (LEP)
- The Pittwater Development Control Plan 2014 (DCP)

9.1 The Pittwater Environmental Plan 2014 (LEP)

The LEP addresses heritage in Section 5.10. The relevant provisions are set out below:

5.10 Heritage Conservation

(1) Objectives

The objectives of this clause are as follows:

- (a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Pittwater,*
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*
- (c) to conserve archaeological sites,*
- (d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.*

(2) Requirement for consent

Development consent is required for any of the following:

- (a) demolishing or moving any of the following or altering the exterior of any of the following (including, in the case of a building, making changes to its detail, fabric, finish or appearance):*
 - (i) a heritage item,*
 - (ii) an Aboriginal object,*
 - (iii) a building, work, relic or tree within a heritage conservation area,*
- (b) altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,*
- (c) disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,*
- (d) disturbing or excavating an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,*
- (e) erecting a building on land:*
 - (i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or*
 - (ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,*
- (f) subdividing land:*
 - (i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or*
 - (ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance.*

(3) When consent not required

However, development consent under this clause is not required if:

- (a) the applicant has notified the consent authority of the proposed development and the consent authority has advised the applicant in writing before any work is carried out that it is satisfied that the proposed development:*
 - (i) is of a minor nature or is for the maintenance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place of heritage significance or archaeological site or a building, work, relic, tree or place within the heritage conservation area, and*
 - (ii) would not adversely affect the heritage significance of the heritage item, Aboriginal object, Aboriginal place, archaeological site or heritage conservation area, or*
- (b) the development is in a cemetery or burial ground and the proposed development:*
 - (i) is the creation of a new grave or monument, or excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of conserving or repairing monuments or grave markers, and*
 - (ii) would not cause disturbance to human remains, relics, Aboriginal objects in the form of grave goods, or to an Aboriginal place of heritage significance, or*
- (c) the development is limited to the removal of a tree or other vegetation that the Council is satisfied is a risk to human life or property, or*
- (d) the development is exempt development.*

(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance

The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or

area concerned. This subclause applies regardless of whether a heritage management document is prepared under subclause (5) or a heritage conservation management plan is submitted under subclause (6).

(5) Heritage assessment

The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:

- (a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or*
- (b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or*
- (c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),*

require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.

Response: The proposal requires consent by council and council must consider the impact of the proposed development on the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area. This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirement in the LEP.

9.2 The Pittwater Development Control Plan 2014 (DCP)

The relevant sections of the DCP are outlined below.

B1 Heritage Controls

B1.1 Heritage Conservation - Heritage items, heritage conservation areas and archaeological sites listed in Pittwater Local Environmental Plan 2014

No. I 6A Ruskin Rowe is located in the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area listed on Schedule 5 of the Pittwater LEP 2014.

Outcomes

- *Conservation of the environmental heritage of Pittwater in accordance with the principles contained in the Burra Charter.*
- *Enhancement of the identified heritage values and significant character of the heritage conservation areas and encourage design that responds appropriately to their character.*
- *Development that is respectful of environmental heritage, undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic to, and does not detract unnecessarily from, any identified heritage significance.*
- *Recording of identified cultural heritage throughout the development process.*

Response: The proposal has been designed with regard to these principles and sits well with the existing 1960s house and the site landscaping. It is an appropriate design for an addition in the Ruskin Rowe Heritage Conservation Area in terms of placement, scale and design.

Controls

Heritage Conservation Areas

Development applications in heritage conservation areas, involving work likely to impact the heritage significance of the conservation area, must be accompanied by a Statement of Heritage Impact, establishing and assessing how the significance of the heritage conservation area will be affected by the development.

Response: This Statement of Heritage Impact accompanies the development application.

The existing street pattern that reflects the original subdivision pattern of the estates is to be retained. Development is to respond to the established development patterns of the area as displayed by the subdivision layout, and front and side setbacks.

Response: There is no further subdivision proposed. The proposal substantially retains the existing setbacks.

Distinctive characteristics of the streetscapes including fitting into the unique topography, leafy quality and garden settings is to be retained.

Response: The mature and significant landscaping, that forms the setting for I 6A, is retained.

No new intrusive changes or elements will be permitted in the heritage conservation areas, including high, visually impenetrable front fences, painting of face brick façades, removal of original detailing, or unsympathetic alterations and additions.

Response: The proposal does not include any of the above.

Development must minimise the visual impact on the surroundings, in particular the landscaped setting.

Response: The proposed addition is a small addition and occurs in an area that does not impact on significant vegetation, which contributes to the Conservation Area. The front setback is generous and visually the addition will not have a visual impact on this characteristic setback. The rear setback can be retained in its entirety.

Development in heritage conservation areas is to be carefully designed to respond to the heritage significance of the heritage conservation area, and to complement the existing character of buildings within the heritage conservation area, particularly the nearby heritage item(s) in terms of height, massing, form, bulk, setbacks, scale and detailing. Solid to void ratios of elevations are to be similar to those of nearby buildings with heritage significance.

Response: The design of the new addition continues the architectural language of the house including the flat roof, the wide eave, the expressed rafters and the group fenestration.

The materials for the addition are a combination of brickwork, timber and glass.

The materials, including lightweight timber cladding, the use of stone, timber framed windows and doors are suitable to the existing late 1960s house, the Pittwater area and the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

Where there are uniform levels or setbacks within the streetscape, development is to be consistent with the levels and setbacks of the adjoining buildings.

Response: In terms of the streetscape and in the immediate context the setbacks are varied. There is no pattern that needs to be retained in the immediate context. The deep front setback is an important type of setback in a Conservation Area. The small addition retains the appearance of the deep setback.

Development is not to obscure existing significant views to and from heritage items.

Response: The proposed development does not affect any views to and from any heritage items.

Contemporary design for new houses and for alterations and additions is acceptable and encouraged as long as it respects its context and achieves a cohesive relationship with historically and architecturally significant existing fabric.

Response: The design continues the architectural design of the late 1960s house which is a sympathetic response as the house is well designed and has architectural merit as a coastal house of its era.

The materials and finishes of new houses are to be compatible with the materials and finishes of adjoining buildings of heritage significance. They must be similar to, but should not copy, the characteristic materials, finishes, textures and colours of the buildings of heritage significance within the streetscape.

Response: There are no identified heritage buildings in the context. However as previously stated The design is not overly contemporary, nor is it historicist. Both the design and choice of materials are suitable to the location on a large block in a landscaped setting in the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

Contemporary materials may be used where their proportions, detailing and quantities are consistent with the existing and desired future character of the heritage conservation area.

Response: The materials are more traditional than contemporary. The materials match the materials of the late 1960s house and are appropriate to the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

10.0 SUMMARY

The existing house is a contributory item in the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area dating from the late 1960s. The design for the small addition continues the architectural design of the late 1960s house which is a sympathetic response as the house is well designed and has architectural merit as a coastal house of its era.

The addition maintains the modest scale of the house and the single storey appearance. The proposed colours and materials for the house continue those on the existing house. A dark colour scheme is not appropriate in this instance. Historic photographs show any light coloured houses.

The significance of the Conservation Area is the large scale subdivision pattern created by Harry Ruskin Rowe, who created covenants to preserve the character of the estate. No. 16A Ruskin Rowe retains the deep setback. The estate is heritage-listed because of its historic significance, as well as its scientific significance in preserving the bushland environment of the area. The location of the addition on an area where the landscaping is low scale and formal does not affect the bushland character of the area.

The management recommendation states that, "the area's character should be retained and conserved."

The proposal retains the deep allotment and location of houses towards the rear of the site which is part of the historic Ruskin Rowe subdivision pattern, which is part of the significance of the conservation area. The proposal retains the existing landscaping on the site which is important to the Conservation Area. The characteristic front and rear setbacks are retained which are also part of the pattern of building in the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

The proposal is not located in the vicinity of any heritage items and does not affect the views to and from a heritage item.

The proposal has an acceptable impact on the Ruskin Rowe Conservation Area.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

In light of the assessment in this report the recommendation is that the proposed works be approved.