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ITEM DETAILS					
Name of Item	Helsham House				
Other Name/s Former Name/s					
Item type (if known)	Built - House				
Item group (if known)	Residential House				
Item category (if known)	House				
Area, Group, or Collection Name					
Street number	8				
Street name	First Avenue				
Suburb/town	Willoughby	Postcode	2068		
Local Government Area/s	Willoughby City Council				
Property description	Lot 1, DP940444				
Location - Lat/long	Latitude		Longitude		
Location - AMG (if no street address)	Zone		Easting	Northing	
Owner					
Current use	Domestic Residential Housing				
Former Use					
Statement of significance	<p>Designed by prominent Sydney architect Peter Hall, the Helsham house is regarded as one of his finest houses and is an important work of high aesthetic values.</p> <p>Helsham House is an accomplished modernist house by an important architect. The house possesses high aesthetic values for its Miesian planning and fine detailing combined with a Sydney School palette of materials bringing a warmth and intimacy to the spaces. The unassuming facade, earthy materials, and modest scale reflects the personal values of the original clients Michael Helsham AO and Jane Helsham.</p> <p>Helsham House is a fine example of a modernist house in Willoughby. Retained by the Helsham family until 2010, the building has a <u>reasonably</u> high degree of integrity.</p>				
Level of Significance	State <input type="checkbox"/>		Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		



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DESCRIPTION					
Designer	Peter Hall				
Builder/ maker					
Physical Description	<p>No. of Storeys: Single level – originally designed as a one and two storey residence. Although originally designed as a part two storey residence when viewed from the street, the finished house was limited to a single storey for cost reasons.</p> <p>External Materials:</p> <p>Roof: Flat roof.</p> <p>Walls: The carport comprises a simple overhanging flat roof, with face brick rear wall and timber lining boards. The front courtyard is enclosed by a face brick wall. Originally the house was designed with an enclosed garage and other features that were altered at the final design stage and subsequently amended by Lewin Tzannes in a sympathetic manner.</p> <p>Special Features: The continuity of spaces is enhanced by the pine panelled timber ceilings and cork floors, and full height plywood doors. The timber clad soffit extends inside and outside. Floor to ceiling glazing with recessed framing provides the living spaces and master bedroom with a northern aspect, and seamless opening onto the courtyard and pool. Face brickwork and timber finishes add to the warmth and character of the residence. The bathrooms feature chocolate brown tiles. The site features a tennis court.</p> <p>Style: Modernist</p> <p>Form: L-shaped plan, comprising of two rectangles that slide past each other in a Miesian manner. The family living area faces north to a large court yard with pool. A bedroom is located at the rear. The other rectangle comprises a master bedroom wing opening onto a private courtyard. The L-shaped plan defines a private brick paved courtyard, with a swimming pool, and tennis court occupying the rear of the site.</p> <p>Curtilage and Landscaping: The site is a large rectangular suburban block of over 1000 m², located within a residential subdivision, predominantly developed with bungalows from the Interwar period. The footprint of the house is small occupying roughly 230 m². The tennis court, which occupies the rear of the site makes no contribution to the architectural or historic significance of the house.</p>				
Physical condition and Archaeological potential	<p>The building retains a reasonably high degree of integrity, despite some internal and external fabric deterioration commensurate to its age, materials selection and weathering. The deteriorated roof cladding, rainwater goods and areas of damaged ceilings were replaced in 2018, following storm damage.</p>				
Construction years	Start year	1980	Finish year	1982	Circa <input type="checkbox"/>
Modifications and dates	<p>In 1990, an application for alterations and additions was made to Council by MM Helsham. The work comprised a store and laundry to the rear of the carport. The kitchen was reconfigured at this time. The plans were prepared by Lewin Tzannes architects. The additions which comprised approximately 15 m² were sensitively sited and detailed, and were approved in November 1990. Construction had commenced by February 1991. Webber noted in 2012 "Fortunately, with the exception of a few minor changes which have narrowed and compromised the front entrance, the house remains in its original condition."</p>				
Recommended Management	<p>The house should be retained and conserved in the context of its on-going use as a family dwelling. Future alterations should be sensitively designed and confined to those areas of the building or site which will not adversely impact on Peter Hall's original architectural conception, irrespective of their visibility from the street.</p> <p><u>Aspects of high significance include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The geometric form, open planning and scale of the house with its interconnecting spaces and internal external relationships with the courtyards and gardens</u> • <u>The limited materials palette and consistency of materiality for various features throughout</u> 				

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	<p><u>the house</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>The flat roof with timber lined soffits and its projections beyond the external walls</u>• <u>The large areas of glazing including sliding doors and windows</u>• <u>Full height joinery, including internal doors</u> <p>• <u>Aspects of lesser significance include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>1990s kitchen, laundry and store room reconfiguration</u>• <u>Worn cork flooring in the main living areas</u>• <u>Non-original internal lighting fixtures</u>• <u>Bathroom fittings, fixtures and tiling</u>• <u>Pool fencing, later paving, timber planters, general landscaping and external lighting</u>• <u>Pool machinery and service enclosures</u>• <u>Tennis court</u>
Further comments	

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HISTORY

Historical notes

The house at 8 First Avenue was designed by Peter Hall in 1974 for Supreme Court Judge Michael Helsham and his wife Judith Jane (Vance). The Helshams had met Hall when living in North Sydney, and had admired his design for the Marion Hall Best shop. (Webber). Peter Hall is best known for his work on the Sydney Opera House following the departure of Utzon in 1968. Hall formerly had a small private practice in 1969 and following the completion of the Opera House in 1973, he turned his attention to practice. The Helsham house was designed by Hall and Bowe in 1974.

An application for a new dwelling was submitted to the Willoughby Council by Phillip Paul of Hall and Bowe Architects on behalf of Justice Helsham on 2 October 1974. Helsham was at that time residing at 11 Korangi Rd, St Ives. The courtyard wall caused some concern at Council and a landscaped setback area was required to mitigate any impact on the streetscape. The original plans included a first floor and garage, which were deleted due to cost in amended plans which were approved in February 1975.

In 1976, Helsham was made chief judge in Equity in NSW and awarded Order of Australia. In addition to his illustrious legal career, Helsham was active in the community and was a published author. He was well known for his quirky choice of car, a Datsun 120-Y which he liked to warm up in the carport at Willoughby before driving. As Peter White noted in his obituary "he did not place great store on material possessions". The car, as with his unassuming residence, reflected his personal values. (Peter White, "War hero, judge, folkie and greenie- Michael Manifold, Helsham Chief Judge of the NSW Supreme Court, 1921-2002" Obituary, Sydney Morning Herald, December 14 2002)

In 1990, an application for alterations and additions was made to Council by MM Helsham. The work comprised a store and laundry to the rear of the carport. The plans were prepared by Lewin Tzannes architects. The additions which comprised approximately 15 m² were sensitively sited and detailed, and were approved in November 1990. Construction had commenced by February 1991. Michael Helsham died in Sydney in 2002. Jane Helsham died in 2016. The house was sold in 2017 for the first time since construction.



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APPLICATION OF CRITERIA	
Historical significance SHR criteria (a)	
Historical association significance SHR criteria (b)	Helsham House is an accomplished modernist house by an important Australian architect – Peter Hall.
Aesthetic significance SHR criteria (c)	Designed by prominent Sydney architect Peter Hall, the Helsham house is regarded as one of his best houses and is an important work of high aesthetic values. The house possesses high aesthetic values for its Miesian planning and fine detailing combined with a Sydney School palette of materials bringing a warmth and intimacy to the spaces.
Social significance SHR criteria (d)	
Technical/Research significance SHR criteria (e)	
Rarity SHR criteria (f)	
Representativeness SHR criteria (g)	
Integrity	Retained by the Helsham family until 2010, the building has a high degree of integrity.



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HERITAGE LISTINGS

Heritage listing/s	

INFORMATION SOURCES

Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.

Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
	Australian Institute of Architects	Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Philip (Peter) Webber	2012	
Book	McCartney, K	50/60/70 Iconic Australian Houses: Three Decades of Domestic Architecture	2007	
Book	Metcalf, A	Architecture in transition: The Sulman award 1932-1996	1997	
Thesis	Watson, A	Peter Hall and the Sydney Opera House: The 'Lost' years 1966-70	2015	University of Sydney
	Webber, P	Peter Hall architect: The phantom of the Opera House	2012	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	
	It is recommended that 8 First Avenue Willoughby be listed as a heritage item of local significance.

SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION

Name of study or report	Architectural Projects 1759 – Willoughby City Council Heritage Study Review	Year of study or report	August 2018
Item number in study or report			
Author of study or report	Elizabeth Gibson		
Inspected by	Jennifer Hill		
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
This form completed by	Jacqueline Mullard	Date	4.3.19



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Image caption	Helsham House by Hall – North Elevation				
Image year	2013	Image by	Modern House	Image copyright holder	





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Image caption	Helsham House by Hall – Dining and living				
Image year	2013	Image by	Modern House	Image copyright holder	





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Image caption	Helsham House by Hall – Family room				
Image year	2013	Image by	Modernaustralia.com	Image copyright holder	





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ITEM DETAILS							
Name of Item	Maley House						
Other Name/s Former Name/s							
Item type (if known)	Built - House						
Item group (if known)	Residential Buildings						
Item category (if known)	House						
Area, Group, or Collection Name							
Street number	13						
Street name	The Citadel						
Suburb/town	Castlecrag					Postcode	2068
Local Government Area/s	Willoughby City Council						
Property description	Lot 332, DP 1102256 and Lot 2, DP 389112						
Location - Lat/long	Latitude				Longitude		
Location - AMG (if no street address)	Zone		Easting		Northing		
Owner	Private						
Current use	Domestic Residential Housing Zoning: Residential						
Former Use							
Statement of significance	<p>Designed in 1971 by newly graduated architect Andre Porebski for academics Barry and Von Maley, the Maley House is an accomplished example of modernist domestic architecture. The elegantly-designed building with carefully sculpted spaces has aesthetic significance and draws upon the principles of International Modernism. Harmony with and respect for its Griffin neighbour "The Fyshwick House" were as a primary architectural considerations. -constraint.</p> <p>The building retains a high level of integrity and is a -rRepresentative modernist house in Willoughby. It is an early work of a recognised Australian architect, a leading residential design firm in Sydney. Although a very early work, the Maley house is both accomplished and highly intact. The building remains important in the body of work of the architect. The building has been recognised by the local community and the wider architectural profession since its completion in 1973.</p>						
Level of Significance	State <input type="checkbox"/>			Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			



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DESCRIPTION						
Designer	Andre Porebski and Associates					
Builder/ maker						
Physical Description	<p>No. of Storeys: Two storeys: Split level.</p> <p>External Materials: Brickwork on a concrete slab. Timber beams over openings, a Aluminium sliding doors. Steel framed external doors and windows are black.</p> <p>Roof: Metal deck flat roof with a plywood fascia and deep overhangs.</p> <p>Walls: Bagged and painted <u>Rendered</u> -brickwork, with stone retaining walls.</p> <p>Special Features: Within the cube-like structure, a raised elliptical “pod” forms a striking, elevated dining area lit by a sky light.</p> <p>Style: Modernist Domestic Architecture</p> <p>Form: The floor plans have a rectilinear core with curved walls peeling away at three points. The lower floor level has an entry foyer within a dramatic double height void, two bedrooms, a bathroom, laundry and foyer. The upper level has living dining kitchen and master bedroom and a study. The relatively compact floor plan is relieved by the full height glazing and continuity of the ceiling and floor planes to the terraces. The varying ceiling heights create a sense of compression and release.</p> <p>Curtilage and Landscaping: The site is an irregular wedge shape located on the cul de sac, and with access to Tower Reserve at the rear. The site slopes steeply to the <u>east-north</u>, and overlooks Sailors Bay. It adjoins Griffins renowned Fyshwick House at No. 15. The footprint of the house is small at roughly 12 x 13 m2.</p>					
Physical condition and Archaeological potential	The house retains a high level of integrity.					
Construction years	Start year	1971	Finish year		Circa	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modifications and dates						
Further comments						



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HISTORY

Historical notes

Soon after graduating from Architecture at the University of Sydney, Polish born architect Andre Porebski was commissioned by academics Barry and Yvonne (Yon) Maley to design a house on a steep site in Castlecrag. The site adjoined the Fishwick House designed in 1929 by Walter Burley Griffin. Porebski recalls a desire not to compete with or overshadow the celebrated neighbour and sited the house with a substantial landscape buffer. Porebski produced three schemes for the site, with the owners settling on the final version which was the most pared back, cube-like scheme of the three. (Habitus).

In 1971, Architect Andre Porebski of Nithsdale St Sydney submitted an application to Willoughby Council for approval to erect a new split level two story brick dwelling for owner Mr and Mrs B. Maley of Crows Nest. (Application 749/71). A permit was issued on 17 November 1971, and the final inspection was carried out on 27th June 1974. The estimated cost of construction was \$25,000. The house was photographed by Max Dupain in 1973. Porebski's design was praised by architectural writer Eva Buhrich in 1973. Porebski acknowledged the influence of Pettit and Sevitt, Ken Woolley and the houses of Harry Seidler. ~~The The Maleys original owners~~ were resident of the house from its construction until April 2013, when the property was sold.

Andre Porebski had arrived in Sydney from Poland, in 1960. He studied Architecture at Sydney University where he was influenced by artist Lloyd Rees who imbued a more refined approach to architecture. At the end of his first year at Sydney University, Porebski took a part-time position with Architects Ian McKay and Philip Cox. Midway through his studies at the age of 22 he was asked to design a house on the water's edge on Kurraba Point. After working for various architectural practices after graduation in 1970, Porebski established a practice with Brian Zulaikha, working on a variety of projects. The practice of Andre Porebski and Associates was established in 1972. One of Porebski's most significant projects at this time, was a high-rise apartment building in Sydney's Bondi Junction. Other work included designing houses for Housing Commission and housing for the Aged, and work in Pearl Beach, Turoos Heads, Oberon and Portsea (VIC).

APPLICATION OF CRITERIA	
Historical significance SHR criteria (a)	Designed in 1971 by newly graduated architect Andre Porebski for academics Barry and Von Maley, the Maley House is an accomplished example of modernist domestic architecture.
Historical association significance SHR criteria (b)	
Aesthetic significance SHR criteria (c)	The elegantly-designed building with carefully sculpted spaces has aesthetic significance and draws upon the principles of International Modernism. Harmony with and respect for its Griffin neighbour were was a primary architectural considerations. constraint.
Social significance SHR criteria (d)	The building has been recognised by the local community and the wider architectural profession since its completion in 1973.
Technical/Research significance SHR criteria (e)	
Rarity SHR criteria (f)	
Representativeness SHR criteria (g)	Representative Modernist house in Willoughby.
Integrity	The house retains a high level of integrity. It is an early work of a recognised Australian architect, a leading residential design firm in Sydney. Although a very early work, the Maley house is both accomplished and substantially unchanged, with the exception of utility rooms which were modernised during the 1990s. highly intact. The building remains important in the body of work of the architect.



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HERITAGE LISTINGS	
Heritage listing/s	

INFORMATION SOURCES				
Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.				
Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Book	Australian Architecture Association	Exploring Modern Architecture	2016	
Magazine	Crafti, S	Sculptured Spaces	2012	
Article	Gerrity, K	An early Andre Porebski Design in Castlecrag Lists for \$3.3m+	2012	
Book	Jahn, G	Sydney Architecture	1997	
Article	Porebski Architects	Classic Interiors Last Forever	2016	

RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendations	It is recommended that 13 The Citadel Castlecrag be listed as a local heritage item.

SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION			
Name of study or report	Architectural Projects 1759 – Willoughby City Council Heritage Study Review	Year of study or report	August 2018
Item number in study or report	2.9, p. 53		
Author of study or report	Elizabeth Gibson		
Inspected by	Jennifer Hill		
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
This form completed by	Jacqueline Mullard	Date	8.2.19



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Image caption	Maley House				
Image year	2012	Image by	Andre Porebski and Associates	Image copyright holder	





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Image caption	Maley House by Porebski				
Image year	1973	Image by	Max Dupain	Image copyright holder	





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ITEM DETAILS					
Name of Item	Luursema House				
Other Name/s Former Name/s					
Item type (if known)	Built - House				
Item group (if known)	Residential buildings				
Item category (if known)	House				
Area, Group, or Collection Name					
Street number	14				
Street name	The Tor Walk				
Suburb/town	Castlecrag	Postcode	2068		
Local Government Area/s	Willoughby City Council				
Property description	Lot Y, DP 417554				
Location - Lat/long	Latitude		Longitude		
Location - AMG (if no street address)	Zone		Easting	Northing	
Owner	Private				
Current use	Domestic Residential Housing				
Former Use					
Statement of significance	<p>The Luursema House has historical association with internationally significant architect Harry Seidler, one of the most important practitioners of the post-war International style <u>Mid-Century Modernism</u> in Australia, and was originally a good example of Seidler's Modernist design methodology. Seidler played a hand in the transformation of Australian architecture over more than four decades.</p> <p>The Luursema house is <u>one of a group of small 1950's budget houses designed by Seidler, that were a variation on the "Ring Plan" houses, designed to be built in stages.</u> It is also one of a number of houses designed by Seidler in the immediate post-war period for emigrant scientists, with an interest in progressive architecture. The house demonstrated advanced planning and split level configuration to deal with the difficult sloping site. The aesthetic value of the house <u>is due in part to relied upon the strong white cantilevered balcony, and</u> the exploitation of its structural system to provide dramatic spatial qualities, light and architectural form. <u>The area under the cantilever has been infilled.</u></p> <p>The Luursema House is of significance as a rare example of a substantially intact post-World War II <u>Modern Movement</u> <u>Mid-Century Modern</u> house in Willoughby NSW, which demonstrates advanced domestic construction and planning techniques. Although a relatively large number of Seidler's early houses have survived, many are known to have been subjected to alterations and additions which in some cases have obscured their early design and character.</p>				
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Significance	State <input type="checkbox"/>	Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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DESCRIPTION					
Designer	Harry Seidler				
Builder/ maker					
Physical Description	<p>No. of Storeys: Two levels.</p> <p>External Materials: The roof and floor are timber framed, with Monier grey cement face bricks, and sliding aluminium doors between timber posts.</p> <p>Roof: Long skillion roof – timber framed.</p> <p>Walls: Monier grey cement face bricks.</p> <p>Special Features: Cantelevered balcony deck (now infilled), hHorizontal Corbusian windows, wall glazing, brick construction, and fireplace. Internally, there are original timber floors with quarry tiles used as fire hearth and to the entry, and a metal fireplace with a sheet steel fire hood. A Monier grey cement face brick wall defines the timber stair. The fireplace has a sheet steel fire hood. The kitchen is separated from the dining area by a servery unit and linen cupboard, and features lino tiles and a separate entry.</p> <p>Style: Early Modernist style. Post World War II Mid-Century Modern style.</p> <p>Form: The floor plan, roughly square in configuration, provides the most compact shape. The pure form was then manipulated. The box shape is defined by a simple skillion roof with minimal manipulation.</p> <p>Curtilage and Landscaping: The site, Lot Y in DP417554, is roughly rectangular and large at over 800m². It slopes steeply to the east, and overlooks Middle Harbour. The footprint of the house is small measuring roughly 175 m². The split-level plan responding to the steep topography of the site, along with the long skillion roof, horizontal Corbusian windows, wall glazing, brick construction and fireplace are common features of Seidler's 1950s houses.</p>				
Physical condition and Archaeological potential	The house appears to be substantially intact, retaining a high level of integrity.				
Construction years	Start year		Finish year		Circa <input type="checkbox"/>
Modifications and dates	The house was extended almost immediately. The original plan anticipated this by a lightweight external wall to the living room. In 1959, an application for additions comprising three bedrooms, a bathroom, a playroom and a carport was submitted to council. Approval was granted in December 1959, Permit 945. Domain (2016) notes the house was renovated in 1990, however plans have not been located in the Willoughby Council files.				
Further comments	Attempts to arrange a site inspection were unsuccessful, and therefore the description relies on published descriptions of the building, photographs, Willoughby City Council and property files, supplemented by external photos.				



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HISTORY

Historical notes

The house was designed for chemical engineer Harm Jacob Luursema, born in Holland in 1930. Luursema and his Australian born wife Audrey Ann (born 1932) lived in the house for over 50 years. The house remained in the ownership of the family until 2016. Luursema was a Dutch emigrant, who shared ~~an affiliation~~ a European heritage with Seidler, ~~who was born in Austria~~ also a European emigrant. An industrial pharmacist, Luursema was involved in the construction of the house on the difficult site.

Plans were prepared in the office of Harry Seidler located in Wolseley Crescent in November 1957 and lodged with Council. Approval was granted with Permit 882. The house was finished in 1958 and was photographed by Max Dupain in November of that year. The original house was very compact, offering one bedroom with bathroom, a living room, dining room and kitchen, all within a rectangular footprint of 17 x 41 feet. A 6-foot cantilevered timber deck with timber handrail (6x2 inches) ran the length of the house. Below there was an open carparking area, with a central entry hall and laundry. A timber stair accessed the living area above.

The house was extended almost immediately. The original plan anticipated this by a lightweight external wall to the living room. In 1959, an application for additions comprising three bedrooms, a bathroom, a playroom and a carport was submitted to council. Approval was granted in December 1959, Permit 945.

The plans do not identify the architect, but identify the client as H.J. Luursema Esq. ~~Many of Seidlers' budget houses of the period were designed for a staged construction.~~ The additions doubled the size of the existing house with an extension of the mono pitch roof up the hill. The walls were matched to the original Monier grey cement brick, with corrugated asbestos cement roofing over the house and timber malthoid roof over the carport. Fenestration matched the original in proportions and comprised aluminium sliding doors, louvres and plywood door leaves.

Domain (2016) notes the house was renovated in 1990, however plans have not been located in the Willoughby Council files.



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APPLICATION OF CRITERIA	
Historical significance SHR criteria (a)	
Historical association significance SHR criteria (b)	The Luursema House has historical association with internationally significant architect Harry Seidler, one of the most important practitioners of Mid-Century Modernism the Post-war International style in Australia, and was originally a good example of Seidler's modernist design methodology. Seidler played a hand in the transformation of Australian architecture over more than four decades.
Aesthetic significance SHR criteria (c)	The Luursema house is one of a group of small 1950's budget houses designed by Seidler, that were a variation on the "Ring Plan" houses, designed to be built in stages. It The Luursema House is also one of a number of houses designed by Seidler in the immediate post war period for emigrant scientists, with an interest in progressive architecture. The house demonstrated advanced planning and split level configuration to deal with the difficult sloping site. The aesthetic value of the house is due in part to relied upon the strong white cantilevered balcony (now infilled), and the exploitation of its structural system to provide dramatic spatial qualities, light and architectural form.
Social significance SHR criteria (d)	
Technical/Research significance SHR criteria (e)	
Rarity SHR criteria (f)	The Luursema House is of significance as a rare example of a substantially intact post-World War II Mid-Century Modern Modern Movement house in Willoughby NSW, which demonstrates advanced domestic construction and planning techniques.
Representativeness SHR criteria (g)	The house is representative of the early domestic architecture of Harry Seidler. It demonstrates many of the characteristics of his residential design, including planning and organisation of spaces over two levels to exploit views and provide amenity for the occupants; and exploitation of structure to achieve open planning and spatial complexity. The representative qualities of the house are enhanced by its apparently high levels of physical integrity (based on 2016 photographs). Representative of an early modernist house in Willoughby.
Integrity	The success of the house is reflected in the fact that the original client remained in the house for over 50 years. Based on the condition and integrity as evidenced in the 2016 sale advertisements, the house appears to be substantially intact.



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HERITAGE LISTINGS

Heritage listing/s	

INFORMATION SOURCES

Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.

Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Book	Aperly, R, Irving, R & Reynolds	A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture	1989	
Book	Farrelly, E	Harry Seidler is a Modernist	1989	
Book	Frampton, K & Drew, PP	Harry Seidler: Four Decades of Architecture	1992	
Book	Jahn, G	'Harry Seidler' in Sydney Architecture	1997	
Book	Johnson, DL	'Harry Seidler: Maturity at Mid-Century' in Australian Architecture	1980	
Book	McCartney, K	Iconic Australian Houses: Three Decades of Domestic Architecture	2007	
Journal	Seidler, H	Aesthetics in Modern Architecture	1949	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	It is recommended that 14 The Tor Walk be listed as a heritage item of local significance.
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SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION

Name of study or report	Architectural Projects 1759 – Willoughby City Council Heritage Study Review	Year of study or report	August 2018
Item number in study or report			
Author of study or report	Elizabeth Gibson		
Inspected by	Jennifer Hill		
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
This form completed by	Jacqueline Mullard	Date	22.2.19



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Image caption	Luursema House by Seidler - East elevation				
Image year	2016	Image by	Realestate.com.au	Image copyright holder	





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Image caption	Luursema House by Seidler – View from balcony				
Image year	2016	Image by	Realestate.com.au	Image copyright holder	





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Image caption	Luursema House by Seidler – Living and stair				
Image year	2016	Image by	Realestate.com.au	Image copyright holder	



2.3. LUURSEMA HOUSE BY SEIDLER

Building Name

Luursema House

Address

14 The Tor Walk, Castlecrag

Designer/Architect

Harry Seidler

Year

1957-8

History

The house was designed for chemical engineer Harm Jacob Luursema, born in Holland in 1930. Luursema and his Australian born wife Audrey Ann (born 1932) lived in the house for over 50 years. The house remained in the ownership of the family until 2016.

Luursema was a Dutch emigrant, who shared a European heritage with Seidler, who was born in Austria. An industrial pharmacist, Luursema was involved in the construction of the house on the difficult site.

Plans were prepared in the office of Harry Seidler, Wolseley Crescent in November 1957 and lodged with Council. Approval was granted with Permit 882. The house was finished in 1958 and was photographed by Max Dupain in November of that year. The original house was very compact, offering one bedroom with bathroom, a living room, dining room and kitchen, all within a rectangular footprint of 17 x 41 feet. A 6-foot cantilevered timber deck with timber handrail (6x2 inches) ran the length of the house. Below there was an open carparking area, with a central entry hall and laundry. A timber stair accessed the living area above.

When built, the house's essential aesthetic was the white, visually dominating, framed floating cantilevered balcony. The white hovering cantilever over the dark void, creating a strong contrast of light and shade, is showcased in the early published photos of the house. (Seidler, H. 1963, *Harry Seidler 1955-63 : houses, buildings and projects*, Horwitz, Sydney, p.31) In 1949, Seidler wrote "*Cantilevered slabs hovering in mid-air seem to negate the fact that mass is something solid and heavy*" – "*engineering today has made possible a complete dissolution of the conventional architecture of MASS, with its earth-bound wall-bearing structural systems*". (Seidler, Harry 1949, "Painting Towards Architecture", *Architecture: journal of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects*, vol. 37 no. 4, pp.119-124.)

The house was extended almost immediately. The original plan anticipated this by a lightweight external wall to the living room. In 1959, an application for additions comprising three bedrooms, a bathroom, a playroom and a carport was submitted to council. Approval was granted in December 1959, Permit 945. The plans do not identify the architect, but identify the client as H.J. Luursema Esq. The Glass House, Chatswood another of Seidlers budget houses of the period, was also designed for a staged construction. The additions doubled the size of the existing house with an extension of the mono pitch

roof up the hill. The walls were matched to the original Monier grey cement brick, with corrugated asbestos cement roofing over the house and timber malthoid roof over the carport. Fenestration matched the original in proportions on the south elevation. The 1959 Council drawings showed aluminium sliding doors, louvres and plywood door leafs. Original presentation drawings at the State Library NSW and the 1959 drawings show one continuous ribbon window on north elevation of the second stage addition, however two windows were constructed (Polly Seidler, Submission to Willoughby Council re Luursema House heritage, 19 September 2019, p14).

Five years after its construction, Seidler published the Luursema House in his book, Harry Seidler 1955-63 : houses, buildings and projects. He outlined his approach *"Underlying every building design must be a strong overall idea, a simple clear basis of its conception... we succumb to the skilled defying of gravity... Visual opposition will give life to environment... a skillfull visual interplay between opposites: solid opposed by void" ... "Important areas should have some full glass walls – wisely orientated, fully protected and preferably recessed from the building's edge to form covered terraces". He described this visual opposition in the design of Luursema House in 1963: "the cantilevered terrace is of timber. The terrace side walls expressive of their suspended light timber construction, are painted white in contrast to the dark earth-bound brick walls". (Seidler 1963, p.30)*

Domain (2016) notes the house was renovated in 1990, however plans have not been located in the Willoughby Council files.

Description

Attempts to arrange a site inspection were unsuccessful, and therefore the following description relies on published descriptions of the building, photographs, Willoughby City Council and property files, supplemented by external site photos.

The site, Lot Y in DP417554, is roughly rectangular and large at over 800 m². It slopes steeply to the east and overlooks Middle Harbour. The footprint of the house is small measuring roughly 175 m².

The split-level plan responding to the steep topography of the site, along with the long skillion roof, horizontal Corbusian windows, wall glazing, brick construction and fireplace are common features of Seidler's 1950s houses. The floor plan, roughly square in configuration, provides the most compact shape. The pure, platonic form was then manipulated. The box shape is defined by a simple skillion roof with minimal manipulation. The roof and floor are timber framed, with Monier grey cement face bricks, and sliding aluminium doors between timber posts. The original colour scheme with red entry door and yellow kitchen door is no longer evident. The infill of the area under the cantilever which had occurred prior to 2016, undermines the primary aesthetic.

Internally, there were original timber floors with quarry tiles used as fire hearth and to the entry. A Monier grey cement face brick wall defines the timber stair. The fireplace had a sheet steel fire hood. The kitchen was separated from the dining area by a servery unit and linen cupboard, and features lino tiles and a separate entry.

A number of interior features attributed to Seidler remained in the house in 2016 (Polly Seidler, Submission to Willoughby Council re Luursema House heritage, 19 September 2019), most notably, the

original metal fireplace, which Seidler referenced in 1963 “a sculptural metal fireplace is a focal point” (Seidler 1963, p.30). A similar fireplace at Seidler’s Glass House in Chatswood, has been removed. The hovering side cabinet in the living room, also appears to be original and is attributed to Seidler. (Polly Seidler, Submission to Willoughby Council re Luursema House heritage, 19 September 2019, p.11) The kitchen was the same format as Rose Seidler House and other Seidler house designs, and the original kitchen cabinetry to the western wall, including upper cabinets with sliding doors, was extant in 2016. Original wall mounted Seidler-specified bullet head lights were also evident. (Polly Seidler, Submission to Willoughby Council re Luursema House heritage, 19 September 2019 pp12-13)

Integrity

The existing infill of the area under the cantilever is intrusive, but reversible.

The north and south elevations differ from Seidler’s original design which shows one long ribbon window and a door with louvres above to the north, and two horizontal windows to the south. (“Proposed residence Lot K”, July 1957. State Library NSW, Harry Seidler Collection. PXD 613. Tube 33.)

There were some original Seidler components of the interior which were evident in 2016:

- the Seidler designed metal fireplace is the only one of its type
- the living room hovering cabinet is attributed to Seidler, the finish is consistent with other Seidler cabinets of that era (1957-58)
- the white-cream wall mounted bullet head lights on interior on south wall (just outside bathroom on living level) are Seidler specified and are original and are in good condition – usually other houses’ lights have had the paint scratched off.
- the remaining western side of kitchen has original Seidler-design kitchen bench and cabinet with coloured sliding door. the upper cabinet at least should be preserved

Comparative Analysis

The work dates from the early career of architect Harry Seidler.

Over a 40-year period, Seidler’s career developed from a sophisticated inspired Bauhaus aesthetic to a style more attuned to the Australian context. Seidler’s early influences were his Bauhaus teachers, predominantly Breuer for whom he also worked but also Gropius, Albers, Gidieon, Le Corbusier and Niemeyer.

This experience was tempered by his early experience in the Rose Seidler house which adapted a Breuer model which Seidler had developed for Roland Thomson. His original reason to visit Australia was to locate a site on which to build his mother’s house where most of the components were imported “Modern architecture is simple a language which finds many regional expressions in different parts of the world.”

Seidler’s buildings were well reported because they usually involved court approval, and while many have attributed the introduction of Modernism in Australia to Seidler, he acknowledged the pioneering work of Ancher, Baldwinson and Snelling before him. He had met Baldwinson through Gropius, and the Court approved Ancher’s Windy Dropdown preceded his arrival.

Seidler completed a significant collection of Bauhaus inspired houses set within natural setting as preached by Breuer and Gropius, and introduced South American motifs from Niemeyer and Burle Marx in this early period.

He shifted away from the flat roof in the 1949 design for the Ted Meller House, Castlecrag (finished in 1953) with the use of skillion or butterfly roof.

From the mid 1950’s, Seidler and Colin Griffiths (one of Seidler’s first employees) were continually developing a small “one-box” square house, ‘adapting: a compact, minimum, low-cost model that could

be manipulated to respond to the topography and solar orientation of various sites. These modest one box houses were often for immigrant clients as opposed to the wealthy clientele of the Breuer houses. Griffiths recalled that the small houses presented a constant challenge, particularly in finding the right builders and keeping within budget. They were simple brick houses with a mono-pitch, “shed” roof of corrugated “Super Six” asbestos. Usually square in configuration, they often incorporated a split level to accommodate the slope of the site. The square form was partly based on the rationale that the lowest budget was obtained through the most compact plan form, and that any attenuation of that basic form increased the wall areas and material costs. But the prevalence of the square, compact plan type in Seidler’s early work was not only governed by economy—its origins owed as much to the influence of Bauhaus aesthetic principles. Griffiths recalled how it was based on the Bauhaus idea that you began with a pure, platonic form that was then manipulated. Internal spatial variations would be investigated, and the external form played around with through modulation of the façade, puncturing voids, or pushing out or recessing various elements” Colin Griffiths, interview, 31 October 2008. (Milton Provan Cameron ‘Experiments In Modern Living: Scientists And The National Capital Private House 1925-1970’, Thesis, Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of the Built Environment , UNSW December 2009)

The Luursema house bears similarities to the Zwar house in O’Connor ACT and the Glass House in West Chatswood. The split level plan, long skillion roof, horizontal Corbusian windows, curtain wall glazing, brick construction and fireplace are common features. The Zwar house was designed by Seidler and Griffiths in 1955 for scientist John Zwar, two years before the Luursema House and the Glass House. All modest houses for clients on tight budgets, they evidence the evolution of a house type. Seidler’s 1954 Thurlow House at Blakehurst also featured a cantilever.

The Luursema house is included in *Harry Seidler 1955-63: houses, buildings and projects*, p30-32, and *Harry Seidler Houses & Interiors Vol 1* (Images 2003) page 102-103; and *Architecture for the New World the Work of Harry Seidler* by Peter Blake (1973) p256. It is noted in Seidler visual chronology at back of 1992 Frampton & Drew *Harry Seidler: four decades of architecture*, p402. Plans are at Mitchell Library.

His own house in 1966-67 was a turning point, and presented his individual manifesto indicating a response to the site. By the 1970’s his buildings exhibited greater plasticity in plan with building such as the Basser House, Castle Cove which used quadrant geometry and Hannes House in the mid 1980’s, and later in section with curved roof forms in the late 1990’s such as Meares House, Birchgrove.

Harry Seidler, one of the most important practitioners of Mid-Century Modernism Australia. Harry Seidler was born in Vienna on 25th June 1923 and educated at the Wasagymnasium, Vienna 1932-1938. He studied architecture & structural engineering at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada, 1941 - 1944. Seidler won a scholarship to do postgraduate course at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, where he studied under Walter Gropius formerly director of the Bauhaus in Germany between 1919 and 1928. Seidler gained an M. Arch in 1946, and subsequently studied under Josef Albers, another Bauhaus teacher, at Black Mountain College, Beria, North Carolina, USA, in the summer school of 1946. He became Marcel Breuer’s chief assistant in New York, between September 1946 and March 1948. He immigrated to Australia in 1948 when asked to design a house for his parents who had migrated to Australia and started private practice in Sydney, Australia, 1949. Seidler was naturalized in 1958. The house, known as the Rose Seidler House, won the Sir John Sulman Award of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1951, the first of numerous important awards including

the OBE in 1972, Companion of Order of Australia in 1987, the RAI Gold Medal in 1976 and the RIBA Gold Medal in 1996. The citation for the Gold Medal states that 'for almost 50 years, the Viennese born architect has played a vital role in Mid-Century Modern architecture.' He helped establish a truly modern architecture in Australia where he set up in practice in 1948 drawing upon the Bauhaus principles he had learned from his mentors (Walter Gropius (method), Marcel Breuer (form) and the artist Josef Albers (content)'. Seidler, has striven for good design and popular recognition of a modern architecture. His work has responded not only to regional differences and social demands but has also reflected the visual language of art and the ever-expanding wealth of technological means.

Other local houses of the period include the L Waks House at Northbridge 1949-1950, T Meller House at Castlecrag, 1949-1953, rebuilt and extended by Seidler 2002-2004, the S Glass House at Chatswood, 1957 and the Waks House II at 2 Minimbah Rd Northbridge. The Waks I and II Houses have been extensively altered. The S Glass House has also undergone substantial alterations and additions and little original fabric survives. The Monahan House Castlecrag, 1963 (demolished) and the Renault House Castlecove, 1969-1970 are also noted. The Dr Bassler House at Castlecove is a late example.

Harry Seidler designed 32 houses in the 1950s, and of these seven have been demolished, nine have been substantially altered and a further six have been altered but are considered recoverable. Ten survive relatively intact with seven of this group heritage listed. (Polly Seidler, Submission to Willoughby Council re Luursema House heritage, 19 September 2019)

Other: - Owners information/councils

Attempts to contact the owners via mail and door knock were unsuccessful.

Assessment of Significance

The Luursema House has historical associations with internationally significant architect Harry Seidler, one of the most important practitioners of Mid-Century Modernism Australia, and was originally a good example of Seidler's modernist design methodology. Seidler played a hand in the transformation of Australian architecture over more than four decades.

Seidler had trained and worked under influential architects associated with the Bauhaus and brought a thorough understanding of European modernist methodology and aesthetics to NSW. Seidler greatly influenced Australian architecture over more than our decades and has been recognised with the numerous awards and honours he received throughout his career.

The Luursema house is one of a group of small 1950's budget houses designed by Seidler, and it is one of two of these houses known to be designed to be built in stages. It is also one of a number of houses designed by Seidler in the immediate post war period for emigrant scientists, with an interest in progressive architecture. The house demonstrated advanced planning and split level configuration to deal with the difficult sloping site. The aesthetic value of the house relied upon the strong white cantilevered balcony (now infilled), and the exploitation of its structural system to provide dramatic spatial qualities, light and architectural form.

The layout maximizes views from the house towards the harbour, while the skillion roof form and courtyard allows light to penetrate the interior. The materials used in the house- timber, face brick, aluminium framed windows, - the built in joinery and detailing are a consistent part of Seidler's

architectural repertoire at this time. The landscape setting retains natural rock features and demonstrates Seidler's philosophy that the settings for his houses be naturalistic.

The Luursema House is of significance as a rare example of a substantially intact post-World War II Mid-Century Modern house in Willoughby NSW, which demonstrates advanced domestic construction and planning techniques.

Although a relatively large number of Seidler's early houses have survived, many are known to have been subjected to alterations and additions which in some cases have obscured their early design and character.

The house is representative of the early domestic architecture of Harry Seidler. It demonstrates many of the characteristics of his residential design, including planning and organisation of spaces over two levels to exploit views and provide amenity for the occupants; and exploitation of structure to achieve open planning and spatial complexity. The representative qualities of the house are enhanced by its apparently high levels of physical integrity (based on 2016 photographs).

Representative of an early modernist house in Willoughby.

The success of the house is reflected in the fact that the original client remained in the house for over 50 years. Based on the condition and integrity as evidenced in the 2016 sale advertisements, the house appears to be substantially intact.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council provide a copy of this report to the owners for comment, and proceed with heritage listing of 14 The Tor Walk, Castlecrag a local heritage item in WLEP 2012.

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Images

FIGURE NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
2.3.1	1992	Luursema House by Seidler - Plan and section showing construction stages ©Penelope Seidler	Frampton
2.3.2	1957	Luursema House by Seidler - Upper floor plan ©Penelope Seidler	WCC, 1957
2.3.3	1957	Luursema House by Seidler - Ground floor plan ©Penelope Seidler	WCC, 1957
2.3.4	1957	Luursema House by Seidler - North elevation ©Penelope Seidler	WCC, 1957
2.3.5	1957	Luursema House by Seidler - South elevation ©Penelope Seidler	WCC, 1957
2.3.6	1959	Luursema House by Seidler - Additions, Plan and elevation	WCC, 1959
2.3.7	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - East elevation	realestate.com.au
2.3.8	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - View from balcony	realestate.com.au
2.3.9	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - Dining and stair	realestate.com.au
2.3.10	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - Living and stair	realestate.com.au
2.3.11	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - Living and bedroom wall	realestate.com.au
2.3.12	2016	Luursema House by Seidler - Media room 1959 addition	realestate.com.au

Figure no. 2.3.1 | 1992 | Luursema House by Seidler - Plan and section showing construction stages | Frampton
©Penelope Seidler

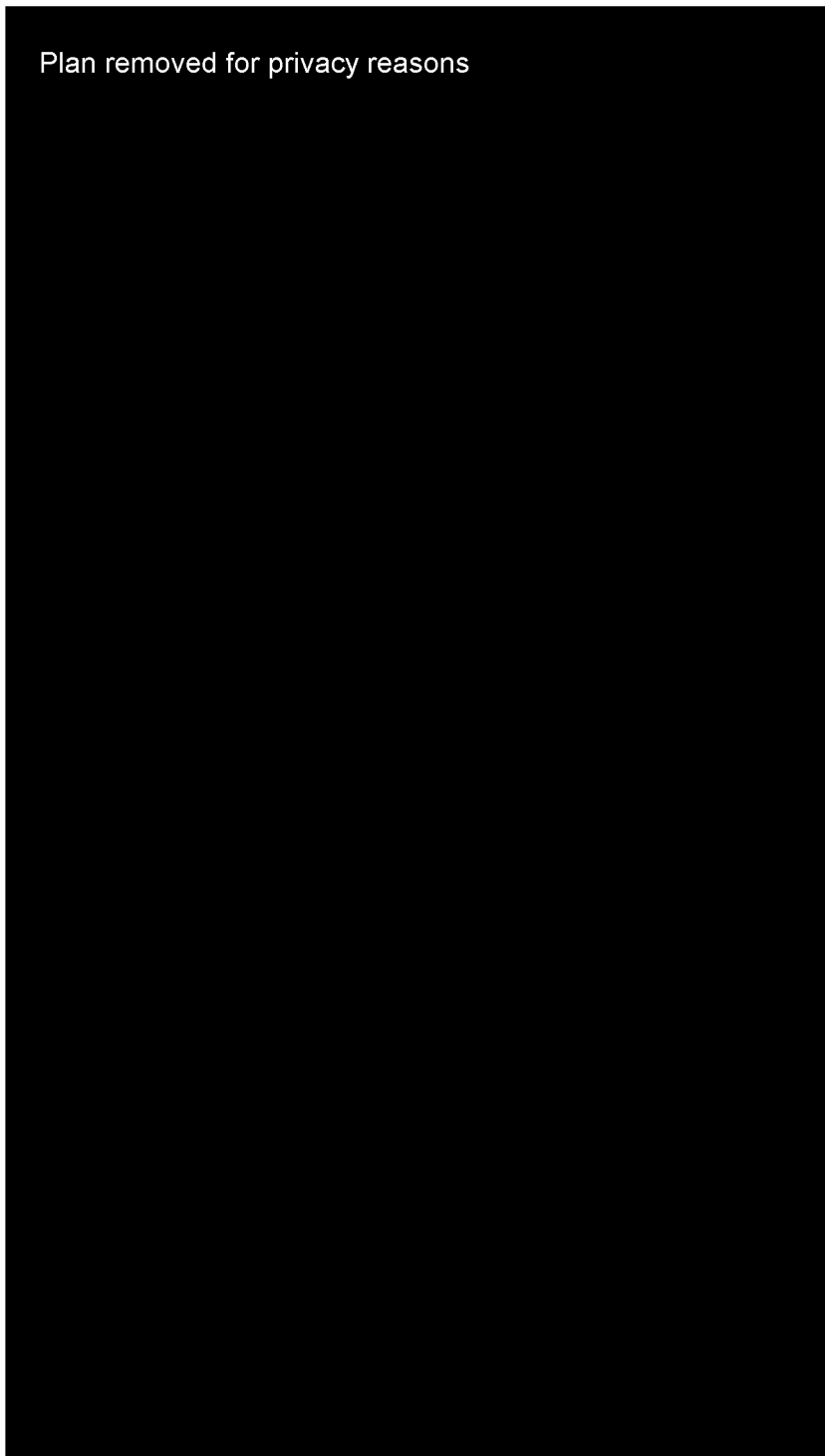


Figure no. 2.3.2 | 1957

Luursema House by Seidler - Upper floor plan
©Penelope Seidler

WCC, 1957

Plan removed for privacy reasons

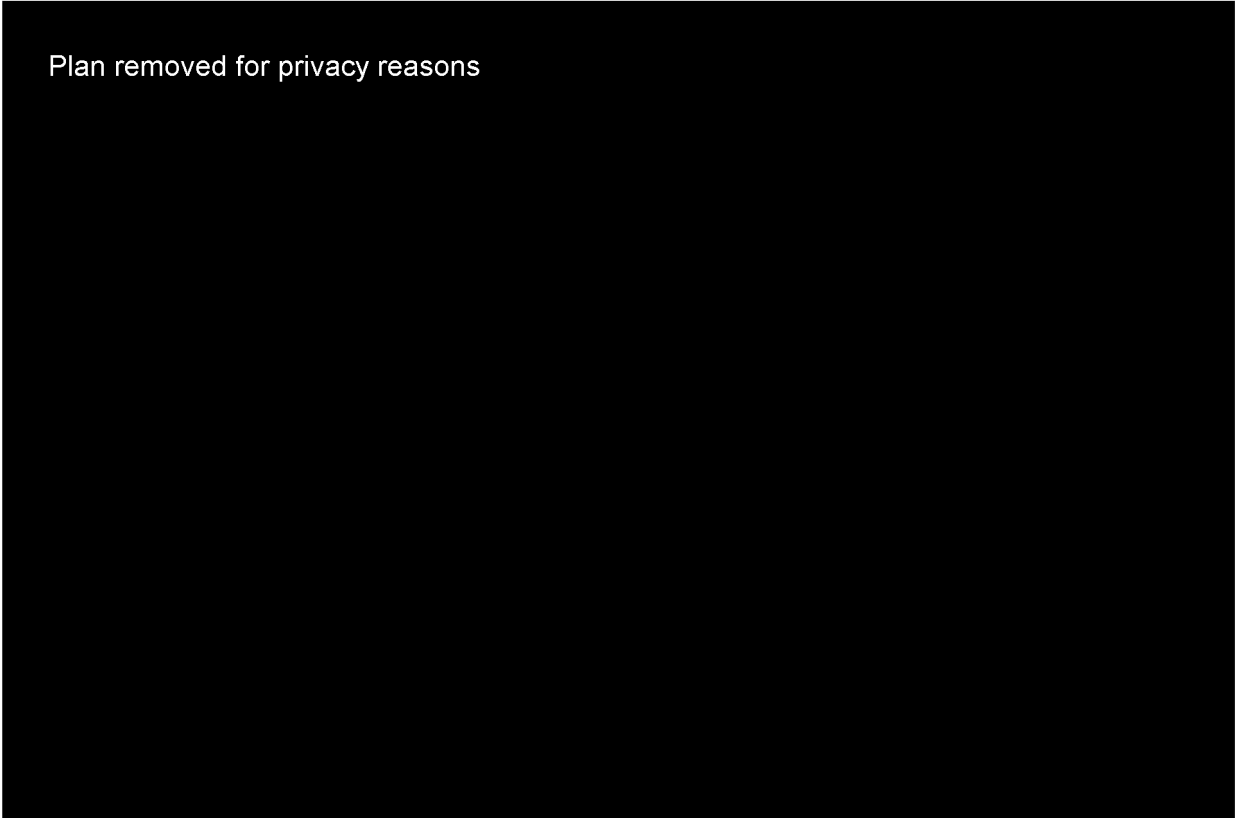


Figure no. 2.3.3 | 1957

Luursema House by Seidler - Ground floor plan
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Plan removed for privacy reasons

Plan removed for privacy reasons

Figure no. 2.3.4 | 1957

Luursema House by Seidler - North elevation
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Figure no. 2.3.5 | 1957

Luursema House by Seidler - South elevation
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WCC, 1957

Plan removed for privacy reasons

Figure no. 2.3.6 | 1959

| Luursema House Additions - Plan and elevation

| WCC, 1959

Plan removed for privacy reasons

Figure no. 2.3.7 | 2016

| Luursema House by Seidler - East elevation

| realestate.com.au



Figure no. 2.3.8 | 2016

| Luursema House by Seidler - View from balcony

| realestate.com.au



Figure no. 2.3.9 | 2016

| Luursema House by Seidler - Dining and stair

| realestate.com.au



Figure no. 2.3.10 | 2016

| Luursema House by Seidler - Living and stair

| realestate.com.au



Figure no. 2.3.11 | 2016 | Luursema House by Seidler - Living and bedroom wall | realestate.com.au



Figure no. 2.3.12 | 2016 | Luursema House by Seidler - Media room 1959 addition | realestate.com.au

