

Woolley House

Address 34 Bullecourt Avenue, Mosman, NSW, 2088

Practice Ken Woolley

Designed 1962 Completed 1962

History & Description Designed by Ken Woolley as his family residence, the house is located on a steep hillside, covered with large rocks, trees and ferns that originally looked out over Middle Harbour. The concept of the design is derived from the idea of the floors as garden terraces, most of which are covered by sections of timber roof which slope parallel to the land. A geometric discipline was imposed on the concept, the basis being a 12-foot square unit room, several of which combine to form the main central space. The main bedroom, bathroom and kitchen units open from this central space. The individual units step sideways and downwards across the slope and the roof sections follow, creating narrow rooflights which serve to make the roof float over the living areas. Each unit steps aside 4 feet (one third its width) to follow the contours of the land, and the same proportion is used to separate the units vertically. The building's external walls, and several internal walls (which create screens and balustrades which divide the flowing interior) are of clinker brick. The palate of materials is kept to a minimum and was selected to define the individual elements of the structure and its infill. Internally, the structural frame of sawn hemlock is visible. Infill panels are of oiled tallowwood. The roof is dark brown terracotta pantiles. Glass is used in larger fixed sheets or small slits clarifying the structure. (*Architecture in Australia* (December 1962) and NSW Heritage Branch online database #5001274)

Statement of Significance

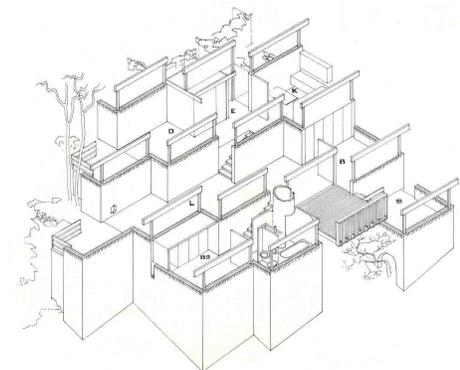
The house received the Wilkinson Award in 1962 and demonstrates Woolley's young and idealistic vision. It is an example of his early work before joining Ancher, Mortlock and Murray in 1964. For some commentators, the Woolley House is a classic example of the so-called 'Sydney School', a movement which was emerging at the time of the building's construction. It was soon discovered that it was a model that could be mass produced as it was modular, economic and honest in its use and expression of materials, in that it did not rely on covering up the construction which made economic as well as aesthetic sense. (NSW Heritage Branch online database #5001274)

Criteria Applicable

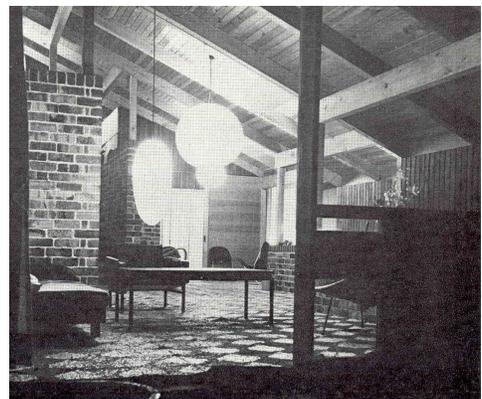
N1. Significant heritage value in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design
N2. Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics
N5. Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of significant importance in our history.



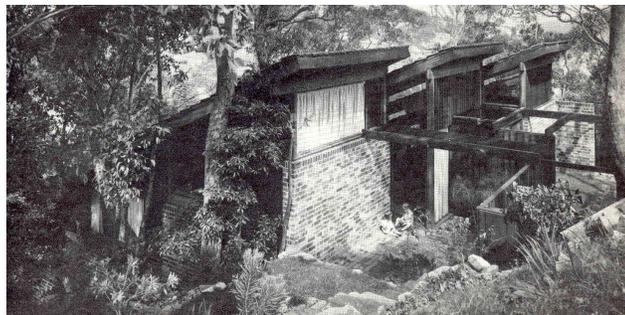
Southeast aspect (Photo: Ken Woolley from *Architectural Design* (August 1964))



Isometric diagram (Source: *Architecture in Australia* (December 1962))



Interior (Photo: David Moore from *Architecture in Australia* (December 1962))



Northwest approach (Photo: David Moore from *Architecture in Australia* (December 1962))