

ASK THE
EXPERTS



Retirement, Avalon-style

Kathryn Welling

Does buying a heritage home make economical sense?

Leanne Pilkington, general manager, Laing + Simmons replies:

When you own a heritage-listed home you are getting a classic, just like you were buying an antique car because the design has truly stood the test of time. But there are special considerations to keep in mind.

In terms of the cost of renovations, regardless of whether a house is covered by a heritage listing or whether it is merely old and rundown, there's no doubt that fixing up an old property will put pressure on the bank balance.

Through its website Ashfield Municipal Council, which has the heritage suburb of Haberfield within its boundaries, advises people shouldn't be perturbed by a heritage listing.

"There are actually many benefits to heritage listing, not the least a possible increase in property value because new owners understand council will exercise great care to ensure that development affecting heritage places is appropriate."

DEVELOPER David Kelly had been looking for a site on the northern beaches for a little while knowing it was a strong, stable market and he wouldn't have much difficulty selling the end product.

He found a large parcel in Avalon Pde, called a family company of builders to help him and created Illuka, single-level homes for people aged over 55.

The ten-home development has just won a well-regarded housing award given to the builders, Zaarour Sleiman, for their excellence in housing. The Master Builders Award is a statewide award but now the development goes into the mix for national awards held in November.

The builders have won Master Builders awards before and Mr Kelly loves using them as they have a great eye for detail.

"We were trying to achieve quality living for active but older people," Mr Kelly said.

"This offers a level walk to the

shops and the residences offer a range of choices, we were also keen to appeal to the lock-it and leave crowd," he added.

He was also eager to hold firm to his prices. The two and three bedroom strata homes are not cheap at \$1.05 million rising to \$1.25 million but to cashed up retirees looking for a superior standard of living money is not always the first consideration.

Five of the homes have sold already. The ones on the ground floor have large courtyards for entertaining while the first floor ones have lift access from the carpark and generous pergola-shaded balconies.

Number 85-87 Avalon Pde, Avalon is a short level stroll to the beach and golf course and the single-level homes are low-maintenance with CaesarStone gas kitchens, ducted reverse-cycle airconditioning and two bedrooms plus a study or three bedrooms as well as two bathrooms. They are even fully wired for those who want to work from home.



Illuka at 85-87 Avalon Pde, Avalon offers superior senior living.

Claudio Marcolongo, of L.J. Hooker Avalon, said: "the single-level apartments with their own level lawn have been a huge success. There is nothing like Illuka on the peninsula."

He added people aged over 55 preferred single level living over townhouse arrangements.

The Illuka development is open for viewing today between 10am and 11.30am. Call 9973 2999.