

Redesign is enough to make an architect walk the planks

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The much-loved, award-winning Andrew (Boy) Charlton Pool in the Domain has become the latest iconic Sydney building to be altered, to the fury of its architect, Ed Lippmann.

But he is in good company. Other architects whose work has been altered significantly, or even demolished, include the Pritzker Prize-winner Glenn Murcutt.

His early-1980s Zachary's Restaurant has been changed drastically and the natural timberwork of his museum at Kempsey has been painted, with an overscale public toilet now intruding on its appearance.

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects says buildings from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s are at risk, including work by Harry Seidler, Bruce Rickard, Ken Woolley, Michael Dysart and Peter Muller.

At the Boy Charlton Pool, says Mr Lippmann, the City Council has shown "a sad lack of ethics and commitment to design excellence" in making the changes.

The rooftop pond has been covered with decking and gravel to extend the cafe, still vacant in its second season, and a gate and extended brick security wall have been built, obscuring the building and harbour.

Mr Lippmann said yesterday that the council had ignored designs he



"A Darling Harbour-style eatery" . . . Boy Charlton Pool architect Ed Lippmann surveys the decking placed over the rooftop pond.
Photo:
Dean Sewell

had provided free for a simple structure to extend the cafe. Instead, it had chosen to "turn this unique harbourside space into a Darling Harbour-style eatery, complete with umbrellas and visual pollution". He admitted he had done the documents for the work, but only to prevent it being done by someone less

in sympathy with his building.

The extension meant the cafe would not now comply with requirements on the number of toilets. "If this is what they do to a building after one year, imagine what it'll be like in five or 10 years."

Elsewhere, Woollahra Council recently gave permission to demolish

a 1962 Muller house adjoining historic Lindesay at Darling Point, although it has been nominated for the NSW Heritage Register.

At Ku-ring-gai, the 1978 Sulman Award-winning UTS campus with its integrated landscape typical of the Sydney School, is likely to be carved up for medium-density housing,

although at the urging of Councillor Ian de Vulder, Ku-ring-gai Council has included it on its heritage list.

The institute's 20th century heritage committee says buildings, like the radically altered American Express building, are too recent to be considered heritage by most people and too old to be fashionable.