Draft character statement March 2026 Avalon

2. Avalon Locality Description and character

Avalon is a coastal community with a vibrant village centre and a relaxed seaside character. The locality has significant environmental and heritage values, maintaining strong connections to surrounding beaches, headlands, bushland, open spaces, and waterways. Its leafy, low-rise built form sits comfortably in the natural landscape, with many homes featuring open layouts, large windows, and connected outdoor living spaces that allow dwellings to flow naturally into gardens and surrounding landscape settings.

Location and landscape

Bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the east and Pittwater to the west, Avalon offers a unique combination of beaches, bushland, and a lively village hub, making it a popular regional destination. Steep, vegetated slopes lead to valley floors near the centre and Careel Bay, while ridgelines provide expansive views of green valleys, the ocean, and across Pittwater to Scotland Island, the western foreshores communities, and Ku-ring-gai Chase. Avalon contains significant environmental assets, including heritage-listed reserves and bushland. Key sites include Avalon Beach Reserve with its Norfolk pines, North Avalon and Bangalley headlands, Careel Headland Reserve, Careel Bay Wetlands, Pittwater foreshore, Clareville Beach Reserve, Paradise Beach tidal pool, Stapleton Park, and Angophora Reserve. These areas protect core habitats and threatened ecological communities such as mangroves, littoral rainforest, and Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest. The locality also contains significant biodiversity values outside reserves, particularly in its western areas. Undeveloped land has potential for the discovery of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. The locality is exposed to bushfire, landslip, flooding, coastal hazards and tidal inundation risks.

Urban and built form

The main transport corridor is Barrenjoey Road, with a grid-like street pattern in low-lying areas around the village centre. Beyond the centre, narrow, winding, and tree-lined roads follow the steep terrain, often ending in cul-de-sacs, thereby limiting through traffic. Streetscapes are defined by deep setbacks, minimal fencing, lush mature gardens and use of vegetation to delineate boundaries.

Residential areas are dominated by detached houses on lots ranging between 600-1,600m², where waterfront homes often include jetties and boatsheds. Larger parcels are located on ridges and in the Ruskin Rowe heritage conservation area. Additional heritage items are identified near Cabarita Road, Chisholm Avenue, Hilltop Road, Palmgrove Road, Old Barrenjoey Road, Whale Beach Road Stapleton Park. Architecture varies throughout the locality, incorporating old and new, but generally subdued in materials and colours, blending into the bushland and reflecting the coastal setting.

The Avalon Beach Village high streets of Old Barrenjoey Road and Avalon Parade provide active frontages with cafés, dining, boutique retail, and services. Buildings are mostly 1-2 storeys, with some 3-storey residential flat buildings near Barrenjoey Road. The locality also contains 4 small neighbourhood centres which also include some medium density housing. The community is well-serviced by schools, childcare, aged care, and recreation facilities including Dunbar Park, Hitchcock Park, Avalon Recreation Centre and library, the Surf Life Saving Club and café, and a heritage-listed public golf course.

Desired future character

Housing in Avalon remains low-rise, with homes set among mature trees and landscaped gardens. Medium density housing is limited to areas near the village centre and Barrenjoey Road and designed to respond to flood risk. New buildings protect view corridors, avoid prominent ridgelines, and respect heritage in scale, form, and materials, especially around Ruskin Rowe, Cabarita Road, and Old Barrenjoey Road. Heritage items and conservation areas indicative of early settlement in the locality will be conserved, including the early subdivision pattern of Ruskin Rowe. Avalon Beach Village preserves its coastal, small-scale identity, with shops, cafés, and services at street level and housing or offices above. Active frontages, trees and vegetation, outdoor dining, and daylight access enhance the public domain, while new buildings complement older structures and heritage values. Streetscape upgrades incorporate water sensitive urban design to reduce stormwater run-off. Walking and cycling connections improve access to schools, beaches, and reserves. Foreshore access is maintained and enhanced. Views to Avalon Beach, Pittwater, Careel Bay, headlands and natural and heritage features are protected. Norfolk pines and native vegetation are enhanced, while bushland, rock outcrops, and waterways are conserved. Development protects water quality and estuarine habitats including mangroves, sea grasses, and intertidal flats. All new development responds to bushfire, flooding, tidal inundation, and coastal hazards while minimising environmental impacts.

Note: Site-specific controls apply in the DCP for:

- Avalon Beach village local centre see 5B.1
- Careel Bay, Pittwater see 5D.10
- Ruskin Rowe heritage conservation area see 4H.4