

Melbourne Amendment C387 – Hoddle Grid Heritage Review

Evidence in Reply from Jim Gard'ner

20 August 2021

Submission number: 24	In response to: Late submission from Mr Peter Andrew Barrett
Address: 173-175 Bourke Street	Property Name: Shops

Areas of disagreement

Issue	Mr Barrett's position
Criteria A and D are met	Mr Barrett agrees with the HGHR review that Criterion A (historical significance) and Criterion D (representative significance) are met and 173-175 Bourke Street warrants inclusion on the Heritage Overlay.
Criterion H is also met	Mr Barrett is of the view that Criterion H (associative significance) is also met for the association with Thomas Welton Stanford and Anthony Hordern Snr.
	<p><u>Association with Stanford & Co. (and Thomas Welton Stanford)</u></p> <p>In my opinion the history contained within the exhibited citation accurately identifies that Stanford & Co were tenants of the property for over 50 years and I consider it appropriate that the associated Statement of Significance acknowledges this important tenant by amending the statement at Criterion A (refer to recommended amendments on the following page).</p> <p>Notwithstanding the acknowledgement of Stanford's occupation under Criterion A – as well as recognising that Stanford was a high profile but somewhat unusual figure in Melbourne's society at the time – I do not believe that the 'Basic Test' for Criterion H under the Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines is satisfied in regard to the property at 173-175 Bourke Street. Based on the information included in the citation and the further material provided by Mr Barrett, I remain of the view that the association between the place and Mr Stanford cannot be categorised as 'special' in that the place does not directly relate to the achievements of Mr Stanford (i.e. his occupation of these premises cannot be directly attributed to his role as a benefactor to Stanford University, his role as vice Consul-General of the United States in Melbourne, his notoriety as a spiritualist, or his success at selling and distributing Singer Sewing Machines) and that the relationship between the property and Mr Stanford cannot be considered 'close' or 'enduring' beyond an albeit reasonably lengthy period of occupation. I content that occupancy on its own is generally not sufficient to reach the threshold for Criterion H, but that the person (or group of persons) in question should have helped shaped the important historical or physical features of the place in some way for the association to be considered 'special'. I do not believe that is the case here.</p> <p><u>Association with Anthony Hordern Snr & Family</u></p> <p><i>Note: in relation to 25 Elizabeth Street Mr Statham provides a comprehensive and highly detailed discussion on the Hordern family retailing dynasty.</i></p> <p>The history contained within the exhibited citation accurately identifies that Anthony Hordern & family owned the building site from the fourth Crown land sales of 1839 and constructed the subject building in 1857 for retail/commercial use. This ownership and development history forms</p>

	<p>an important part of the building's historical significance as a retail and commercial premises dating from the mid-nineteenth century. This is appropriately acknowledged in the Statement of Significance for the place.</p> <p>Mr Barrett notes that the Statement of Significance incorrectly identifies that the Hordern family sold the property in 1872. The citation does – accurately – identify that the property was advertised for sale in 1872; however, it was not sold at that time. It is recommended that the Statement of Significance be amended to correct this error.</p> <p>I note that the Hordern family did not operate their own business from the premises at 173-175 Bourke Street. It was therefore an investment property for the family who were most well-known as Sydney-based retail merchants, albeit with substantial land holdings in Melbourne including this property and later, 25 Elizabeth Street.</p> <p>Criterion H requires that there be <i>a special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in [Melbourne's] history</i> in order to satisfy the criteria for associative significance. While clearly having an important historical relationship to the building, I would question whether it could be categorised as a 'special' association.</p> <p>The Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines notes the 'Basic Test' for Criterion H as:</p> <p><i>The place/object has a DIRECT ASSOCIATION with a person or group of persons who have made a strong or influential CONTRIBUTION to the course of Victoria's history.</i></p> <p>and</p> <p><i>The ASSOCIATION of the place/object to the person(s) IS EVIDENT in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources and/or oral history.</i></p> <p>and</p> <p><i>The ASSOCIATION:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>directly relates to ACHIEVEMENTS of the person(s) at, or relating to, the place/object; or</i> • <i>relates to an ENDURING and/or CLOSE INTERACTION between the person(s) and the place/object.</i> <p>While the first two stages of the basic tests are clearly satisfied, the third – which arguably goes to the 'specialness' of the association - cannot be said to be met given the lack of occupation by the Horderns (or the enterprises for which they are known) and their status as absentee landlords.</p>
Recommended changes	<p>I remain of the opinion that Criterion H is not met in relation to 173-175 Bourke Street. I do however, recommend that the articulation of Criterion A in the Statement of Significance be amended to reflect the information provided by Mr Barrett as follows:</p> <p><i>173-175 Bourke Street is historically significant as a complex of retail buildings dating from 1857, with additions in the first decades of the twentieth century that reflect key phases in the expansion of retail development in the City of Melbourne. The building complex is also historically significant for its association with the Hordern family, a well-known Australian retailing dynasty who first came to prominence as merchants and retailers in Sydney, and who owned both the corner site and the Russell Street frontages until 1872 the mid twentieth century. 173-175 Bourke Street, is also historically significant for its long occupation by Stanford & Co – exclusive retailer of Singer Sewing Machines – from the early 1860s to c1920 and Richard White's Shoe Store from the mid-1890s to the 1970s. (Criterion A)</i></p>