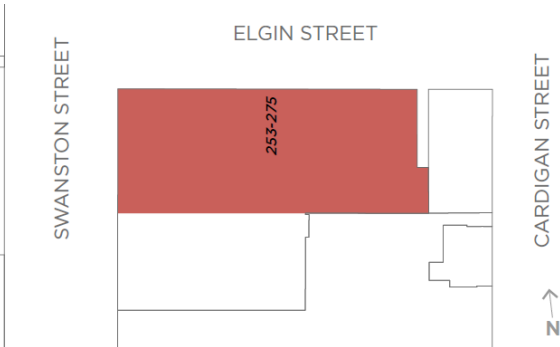


## Statement of Significance: Earth Sciences Building (McCoy Building), University of Melbourne, 253-283 Carlton (November, 2021)

<b>Heritage Place:</b>	Earth Sciences Building (McCoy Building), University of Melbourne	<b>PS ref no:</b>	HO1392
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### What is significant?

The University of Melbourne's Earth Sciences Building at 253-283 Elgin Street, Carlton, was constructed in 1975-77 and is significant.

### How is it significant?

The University of Melbourne's Earth Sciences Building at 253-283 Elgin Street, Carlton, is of local aesthetic significance.

### Why is it significant?

The University of Melbourne's Earth Sciences Building, also known as the McCoy Building after Sir Frederick McCoy the university's first Professor of Geology, is of aesthetic significance (Criterion E). It was constructed in 1975-77 to a design by architects Eggleston, Macdonald and Secomb (EMS), which was heavily influenced by Brutalism. EMS commenced their design work for the University of Melbourne with the much celebrated Beaurepaire Swimming Centre, of 1954-57, and following its success went on to design numerous buildings for the University and for other tertiary institutions in Victoria and elsewhere, over a thirty year period. The commission for the subject building also occurred at a time when the University was expanding beyond its original campus landholding, and in the context of a 1970 campus masterplan by architects Ancher Mortlock Murray and Woolley. The subject building is highly externally intact to its 1970s design, with Brutalist influences evident in the extensive use of off-form concrete, in this instance accentuated by using sandblasted timber plank formwork to highlight the grain and heighten the textural effect; in the visually arresting arrangement on the north side of the building of long concrete pedestrian ramp set within the double-height colonnaded loggia, concrete stairs at the west end, and concrete pedestrian bridge over Swanston Street which all converge on the entrance landing at second floor level; and the large mass of the building which is seen to visually rest on narrow concrete columns to Elgin Street.

Aesthetically, the subject building is on a design trajectory which was followed by EMS in the 1960s through to the 1970s, whereby they increasingly used subdued colour and concrete in their work, including earlier work for the University of Melbourne. It also follows other slightly earlier Brutalist buildings for the University, by other architects. The subject building is additionally a robust building with a powerful presence to its Elgin and Swanston streets corner, and is particularly distinguished to

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Elgin Street through the extensive use of off-form concrete, and the double-height loggia which contains the interacting concrete 'entry' elements (ramp, stairs, east end of pedestrian bridge).

### **Primary source**

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*Carlton Heritage Review (Lovell Chen, 2021)*