

Expert Witness Statement by:
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For:

Planning Panels Victoria
Hearing

With regard to a proposal to apply site-specific heritage overlays to the former Robur Tea warehouse, 107-125 Queens Bridge Street (HO1229) and the former Castlemaine Brewery complex, 127-131 Queens Bridge Street (HO1200); and to include both the former Robur Tea warehouse and the former Castlemaine Brewery complex as contributory places within the proposed City Road industrial and warehouse Precinct (HO1214), as part of Amendment C305 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*.

Prepared for:
Sheng Le Group

Instructions received from:
Mills Oakley

2 July 2020



*Aerial view of Southbank in 1972.
Source of image: Melbourne University Archives*

PREAMBLE

The Sheng Le Group has commissioned this expert witness statement. It is in light of Amendment C305 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*. This amendment is based upon the 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' of June 2017, prepared for the City of Melbourne by Biosis Pty Ltd, which recommends that heritage controls are applied to several sites and to two precincts within the study area. The purpose of this expert witness statement is to assist Planning Panels Victoria in its hearing to assess Amendment C305 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*.

The 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' included in its recommendations that site-specific heritage overlays be applied to the former Robur warehouse, 107-125 Queens Bridge Street (HO1229) and to the former Castlemaine Brewery complex, 127-131 Queens Bridge Street (HO1200). The heritage study also recommends that the former Robur warehouse and the former Castlemaine Brewery be included as contributory places within the proposed City Road industrial and warehouse precinct (HO1214).

An approval has been granted to redevelop the site at 87-127 Queens Bridge Street (hereon referred to as the subject site). An Incorporated Document (Amendment C284) gazetted on 9 August 2018, allows the buildings at 87-105 Queens Bridge Street to be demolished, and allows for the partial demolition of buildings at 107-127 Queens Bridge Street, as part of this proposed mixed-use development. The Incorporated Document includes setbacks for new works from the portions of the existing buildings on the site that are to be retained.

I have been instructed to review a brief of materials and undertake an inspection of the site, and from a heritage perspective advise in light of the permit and Incorporated Document:

1. Whether Amendment C305, in particular HO1200, HO1229 and HO1214 are appropriate heritage controls for this site;
2. Whether all or parts of the subject site should be excluded from Amendment C305;
3. In relation to the former Robur warehouse, whether the entire parcel of land should be included within the HO1229, or whether only parts of the building be subject to the heritage overlay;
4. In relation to the former Castlemaine Brewery, whether the entire site should be included within HO1200, or only parts of that complex of buildings;
5. In relation to the City Road Industrial and Warehouse Precinct, whether the entire parcel of land at 107-127 Queens Bridge Street should be included as a contributory place within this precinct, or only parts of this site.

Amendment C258 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* includes a new grading system of heritage places within the City of Melbourne. The Panel in its review of Amendment C258 found inherent problems in the new grading system of heritage places proposed by the City of Melbourne. Instead, it has recommended that places of heritage value be either stand-alone heritage places with site-specific heritage overlays, and for places within precincts they should be graded either contributory or non-contributory (omitting the proposed 'significant' grading proposed by the City of Melbourne). The 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' has discussed both old and new grading systems in its assessments of places, and this expert witness statement also addresses the old and new grading systems in the context of Amendment C305, and the recommendations of the Panel for Amendment C258.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

I am a qualified architectural historian and heritage consultant. I have a Masters Degree in Architectural History and Conservation from the University of Melbourne. I also have a qualification in Architectural Technology from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). In 2017, I completed a program in urban design and placemaking at the Project for Public Spaces in New York.

I am a member of Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), and I adhere to its *Burra Charter* (2013). I am a member of the Pacific Heritage Reference Group of Australia ICOMOS, whose purpose is to provide advice to the President and the Executive Committee of Australia ICOMOS on cultural heritage matters in the Pacific region. Other affiliations that I have are membership of the Australian Architecture Association, and the Society of Architectural Historians of Australia and New Zealand.

I have been involved in a range of heritage projects within Australia including heritage studies, conservation management plans, and heritage assessments of development proposals of residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings. In 2010 in association with Robert Sands Architect, I prepared the conservation management plan for J H Boyd Girls High School (now the City of Melbourne's Boyd Community Hub).

I am a heritage advisor to the Alpine Shire, Latrobe City Council, and the City of Kingston. I am also a member of a panel of consultants (heritage) for the Moreland City Council, and I have undertaken heritage assessments and heritage studies for other municipalities including Port Phillip, Glenelg, Wyndham, Frankston City, Hobsons Bay and Maroondah.

I have appeared as an expert witness on heritage matters at Planning Panel Hearings for matters before the Minister for Planning, the Heritage Council of Victoria, the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal, and in other forums.

I have worked on heritage projects in New South Wales and Tasmania. I have also been involved in heritage projects in the United States of America. In California, I have worked on heritage impact assessments and cultural resources studies of districts of Los Angeles and San Francisco. In 2004, I received a grant from Austrade for the provision of heritage services to the United States.

I have written published architectural histories for the Public Record Office Victoria, the City Museum and for the *Melbourne Design Guide*. I have also been commissioned to write histories of commercial and residential buildings in Melbourne. I am the author of an online architectural history and heritage social media page. I have also been involved with architectural exhibitions, including guest curator of *The Impermanent City: the rise and fall of Melbourne's skyline* at the City Museum.

The University of Melbourne, RMIT, CAE and other educational institutions have engaged me as a tutor and lecturer in architectural history and design. I have also been retained by RMIT to assess postgraduate-level architectural theses. Educational organizations, as well as heritage groups and the media, ask me to speak, or to comment, on architectural history and heritage matters. In 2011, I was invited to speak at the California Preservation Foundation conference in Santa Monica.

METHODOLOGY

This heritage assessment is prepared with regard to the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013*, which is the standard of heritage practice in Australia.

My assessment is prepared with reference to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Practice Note 1, 'Applying the Heritage Overlay', August 2018. Within that document are the recognised HERCON criteria used for the assessment of the heritage value(s) of a place.

I have reviewed the 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' of June 2017, prepared for the City of Melbourne by Biosis Pty Ltd, of which Amendment C305 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* is based.

In terms of my assessment of the gradings of buildings within the study area, I have assessed these with regard to the recommendations of the Panel Report on the Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C258, Heritage Policies Review, dated 21 May 2019.

This assessment is based, in part, on inspections of the study area from the public realm. I have also inspected the Robur warehouse and the portion of the former Castlemaine Brewery Complex that forms the subject site.

I have reviewed a set of architectural drawings prepared by Cox Architecture Pty Ltd and Fender Katsalidis (Aust) Pty Ltd, of the development proposed for this site. This set of drawings is titled (cover page) 'Queensbridge Street. 87-127 Queensbridge Street, Southbank 3006', project No 17145, and these drawings are dated May 2018.

I have also reviewed the Incorporated Document for the redevelopment of the subject site. This is titled 'Melbourne Planning Scheme – Amendment C284, Incorporated Document, 87-127 Queens Bridge Street, Southbank, July 2018'.

During the course of preparing this expert witness statement I have undertaken research into the study area, including the subject site using primary and secondary sources. Where primary and secondary sources are relied upon in this expert witness statement I have referenced them in footnotes. Due to Covid19, there is currently restrictions preventing access to various historical repositories. Consequently, it is recommended that these are consulted once access restrictions have been removed.

The term 'the study area' is used throughout this expert witness statement, and means Southbank, and or can mean the broader Southbank and Fishermans Bend area, depending on the context the term is used.

The term 'subject site' refers to all or part of the land at 87-127 Queens Bridge Street, Southbank. For clarity, buildings on the subject site are identified either by their name eg 'former Robur warehouse' or 'former Castlemaine Brewery' and/or by their street address eg 'Robur warehouse 107-125 Queens Bridge Street'.¹ The street numbering used is based upon the architectural drawings prepared for the redevelopment of the site that is referred to in the Incorporated Document.

1

The heritage study numbers the buildings inconsistently on different tables. In Table 7, for example, the same site is listed twice (107-127 and 115-127 Queens Bridge Street) and with different gradings.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The subject site is situated within the Southbank portion of the study area, which is broadly the portion of Southbank defined by the Yarra River to the north, St Kilda Road to the east, and Dorcas Street to the south. Kings Way and the West Gate Freeway form the west boundaries of the Southbank study area.² The other portions of the study area, Fishermans Bend and South Wharf, are to the west of Southbank

The First Nation Peoples of this area, the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung, have a connection with this land that extends back thousands of years. This connection continues today.

Of the watercourses, hills, valleys and plains in the Melbourne region, it is the Yarra River that is the defining feature of this city, and one that serves as its artery. It was its abundant supply of freshwater that saw Europeans establish a settlement near the subject site on the north bank of the Yarra in 1835, and today the metropolis still obtains much of its water supply from the Yarra in the nearby ranges. It is also the Yarra's role as a waterway for shipping that has fostered the exponential growth of this city within two hundred years of its founding.

A short distance from the subject site, where Queens Bridge now spans the Yarra River, was a natural rock formation known as the *Falls*. This was a small waterfall that separated the tidal saltwater downstream, from the freshwater of the upper reaches of the Yarra River. It was at the *Falls* that John Batman, determined this would be the place for a village. The *Falls* was also the limit that smaller vessels could navigate the Yarra River upstream, and as a consequence this part of the river served as the cities first wharves. Ships berthed there for close to 100 years and used an adjacent natural pool as a turning basin to return downstream.³

Post European Settlement of the south bank of the Yarra River evolved in many ways over the last 185 years. Initially, settlement was associated with maritime and allied uses, but as shipping activity moved further downstream in the early twentieth century, Southbank took on more of a broader industrial and warehousing role. The industries were diverse, and unlike some inner suburbs of Melbourne, no one industry was particularly dominant in Southbank.

2 The true extent of Southbank is a slightly larger area and is shown on maps extending further to the southwest to Market and Ferrars Streets. Melway 2020 Edition.

3 Kristin Otto, *Yarra. A Diverting History of Melbourne's Murky River*, Melbourne 2005, p 17.

Figure 1: The diverse uses of industry in this part of Southbank is evident from this Parish Plan of the nineteenth century, which includes marble merchants (William Train), brewers (Fitzgerald & Perrins), and rope manufacturers (J Miller & A Gray). Source of image: Public Records Office, VPRS 16171 P1 Unit 1



It is this diversity of uses and activities that form Southbank's character. This is summarised by Miles Lewis in his history of Southbank, *An Industrial Seed-Bed*:

While the north side developed into a major commercial centre, the south continued its role as a heterogeneous service and industrial area. Its swampy terrain made substantial buildings at first difficult and then expensive, but its location near the city and beside the river made it attractive for industrial and warehousing activities, and later for entertainment. It was never to be a significant residential area, though there was one bold experiment in this direction. It had one relatively modest church and state school, but no major public buildings or institutions until the old Wirth's Circus site was allocated to the National Gallery in 1957.⁴

Despite its close proximity to the commercial centre of Melbourne on the north bank of the Yarra, it was not until the 1870s that Southbank developed more substantial industry. This evolution runs parallel with the city's shift from a consumption-based and service economy of the Gold Rush, to that of a production-based economy of a less transient/more settled populace. The subject site in Queens Bridge Street developed, with adjacent land in this part of Southbank after land sales of the 1880s, and forms part of this shift to a production-based economy.⁵

4 Miles Lewis, *An Industrial Seed-Bed*, volume 2 of the South Bank Architectural and Historical Study, April 1983, p 5.

5 Shown in figure 12, titled 'Land survey and alienation in the South Bank Area', in *An Industrial Seed-Bed*, volume 2, p 39.

Figure 2: An aerial view of the subject site and its environs in c1960. Adjacent sites have been cleared to its west, to construct Kings Bridge. The tower of the Castlemaine Brewery was painted at this time. Source of Photograph: State Library of Victoria Picture Collection.



SITE & ENVIRONS

The subject site at 87-127 Queens Bridge Street is a consolidation of what was previously several separate parcels of land and their buildings. The site sits towards the apex formed by the junction of Queens Bridge Street and City Road, with frontages to both of these thoroughfares.

The subject site sits within a significantly altered setting, in as far as what was its early built form character. An example of Post-war change that has occurred to the site's environs is the intrusive Kings Bridge, constructed in 1961, that extends over the junctions of Moray, Hannah and Queens Bridge streets and City Road. In more recent years, development on the north side of Queens Bridge Street, some of this part of Crown Casino, has removed all traces of pre-World War II built form including other parts of the former Castlemaine Brewery.

Much of the built form on the subject site is also of recent origin, and of no appreciable heritage value to the study area (No's 95-105 Queens Bridge Street and 200 City Road). Two other buildings (No's 87-89 and 91-93 Queens Bridge Street), are single-storey warehouse buildings that are significantly remodelled buildings that are of no appreciable heritage value.

Figure 3: Queens Bridge Street, looking northeast towards the city. The subject site, partially visible at right, sits within an urban setting significantly altered in recent decades.



Figure 4: The former Robur warehouse (William Train & Company showrooms), and the portion of the former Castlemaine Brewery, which form part of the subject site at 87-127 Queens Bridge Street.



Figure 5: The rear of a portion of the subject site, viewed from City Road.



Two buildings are on the subject site that are of nineteenth century origin. The former William Train & Company showrooms/Robur warehouse at 107-125 Queens Bridge Street was built in stages from the late nineteenth century. Train had occupied this site in earlier buildings from the 1870s,⁶ manufacturing and selling marble mantle pieces and tiles, and other building fixtures and fittings. The former showrooms of this firm built in 1887 are now heavily modified and extended, and little remains of the handsome design by its architects Frederick de Garis & Sons.⁷ At the time of its completion it was two-storey, its façade finely detailed, and capped with a pronounced parapet (see also description in the Analysis).

Soon after the building's completion, William Train & Company moved to another Southbank site, at the corner of Sturt and Dodds Streets, remaining at that site until the 1920s. The University of Melbourne Archives holds the business records of William Train & Company and further information about the company and its Queens Bridge Street premises may be contained within that collection.⁸

6 Probably on land leased, as the Parish Plan shows him purchasing his site in Queens Bridge Street in 1881. Regional Land Office parish and Township Plans, 'South Melbourne – 5 in the Parish of Melbourne South (P) extract, held by the Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 16171, P1, Unit 1.

7 Miles Lewis, 'Architectural Index', De Garis are noted as the architects of premises for William Train & Company in Moray (Queens Bridge) Street in an article in *Australasian Builder & Contractor News*, 21 January 1888.

8 Due to Covid19 restrictions University of Melbourne Archives were closed from 24 March 2020 until further notice.

Later works to the former William Train & Company building, probably completed after the building became the Robur warehouse, removed its expressive parapet and detailing. At the southwest end three additional levels were added and one additional level at the northern end. The composition of the façade of the original two-storey section has been remodelled with large circular-headed windows that leave little evidence of the original detailing. The two upper levels of the addition are not particularly well-executed in relation to the fenestration pattern on the lower levels. The addition of a stair to one side of the upper levels, which is of more recent origin, further detracts from the appearance of this building. Set back deeply from the City Road boundary, behind a car park and wall, the building presents as a utilitarian elevation faced in brick.

The two-storey building on the subject site (No 127 Queens Bridge Street) is one of two two-storey elements that flank the five-storey brick tower of the former Castlemaine Brewery. This building has also been remodelled, its ground floor arched windows replaced with horizontal headed windows, and its façade rendered. This has diminished the overall compositional effect of the three buildings. Further detracting from the character of the former Castlemaine Brewery complex is the large advertising hoarding atop the tower's mansard roof. The tower has some visibility from City Road, and with the J H Boyd Girls High School (former state school) in City Road, are distinct landmarks in this part of Southbank, as they can easily be appreciated as three dimensional forms.

Figure 6: The former Castlemaine Brewery, 127-131 Queens Bridge Street. The northern, two-storey, section (No 127) forms part of the subject site.



Figure 7: The two-storey portion of the former Castlemaine Brewery that forms part of the subject site.



Figure 8: 87-89 Queens Bridge Street, which forms part of the subject site at its north boundary.



Figure 9: 91-93
Queens Bridge
Street, which forms
part of the subject
site.



ANALYSIS

Amendments to the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* to put in place controls to protect and manage heritage places and precincts within Southbank are to be encouraged, as the conservation of places of recognised cultural significance at a local level enables the community to understand its origins and reinforce its cultural identity.

The timing of the introduction of these heritage controls, as part of Amendment C305, of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* are in many instances too little too late. Large scale development of this area in recent decades has diluted what was a relatively cohesive industrial landscape that existed up until recent decades. Elsewhere in the study area sites of social and cultural significance to Southbank have been removed. In terms of sites of cultural significance lost, these include the Glaciarium (1906), the city's first ice skating rink, the YMCA (1926), and St John's Lutheran Church (1927), all of which were in City Road.

From both heritage and urban design perspectives, much of the development of Southbank completed in recent decades is of a low-average standard. The need for a higher benchmark for development in this area was recently demonstrated with the completion of the draft of the *Central Melbourne Design Guide* prepared by the City of Melbourne. The intent of this guide, as noted in its introduction, is to "raise the bar in design quality of development outcomes in the Central City and Southbank".⁹

9 City of Melbourne, *Central Melbourne Design Guide*, Draft, November 2018, p 6.

Figure 9: This painting of Southbank of the 1980s, depicts the former industrial landscape of Southbank that existed until recent decades. Painter: Stephen Bush. Painting date: 1986-87. Source of image: National Gallery of Victoria.



The study area of Amendment C305 is broad, including, in addition to Southbank, the areas of South Wharf and Fishermans Bend. In my view the inclusion of such a large area within one study is ambitious, and it is questionable whether one study can sufficiently address what is a large and complex area.

Southbank and Fishermans Bend each have rich industrial heritage, but these are different. Southbank's industrial history has very early origins in the European settlement of Melbourne, whereas with Fishermans Bend this is less so. Large scale industrial development, which still characterises much of Fishermans Bend, began to be established more from the early-mid twentieth century, just as Southbank's industry began its demise. A case in point, discussed in the heritage study, is the food manufacturer Kraft, which shifted its plant from Southbank to Fishermans Bend in the 1950s.¹⁰

In this respect, sharing a statement of significance for these areas, as has been done in the study, in my view fails to clearly articulate the significance of Fishermans Bend, Southbank and South Wharf. Apart from all having industrial and maritime histories, it is not clear how they share a history, any more than, say, Footscray or Williamstown, which also have maritime and industrial histories. I recommend in future work to this study, consideration be given to preparing separate histories and statements of significance for Southbank, South Wharf and Fishermans Bend.

Despite a difficult task of assessing such a large area, the thematic history is relatively sound in its succinct history of the study area. The discourse about the First Nation Peoples of this land, Pre and Post-Contact, is commendable, as it is a narrative that is often omitted or glossed over in heritage studies.

10 Biosis, 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review', pp 27 and 117.

However, in discussion of precincts, and of individual places, there is detail lacking. In any further assessment of the study area, it is recommended a review is undertaken of *An Industrial Seed-Bed. Area history and development analysis* by Dr Miles Lewis, April 1983, which is a thorough and considered analysis of the historical evolution of this area, which may provide further value to both the thematic history and individual places.¹¹

Another source that is worthy of more attention in future work to the study is *Melbourne Miles. The Story of Melbourne's Roads*, 2003, written by Max Lay, which discusses at some length the history of Queens Bridge Street and City Road, two of the study area's important thoroughfares.¹² For example Lay notes the importance of the first Queens Bridge (1861) to the study area, as its intention was to stimulate development of the south bank of the Yarra.¹³

Neither Lewis or Lay are included in the study's Bibliography, and this should be addressed, as their works are footnoted in some citations.

Two existing buildings on the subject site are proposed for individual heritage overlays. These are the HO1229 former Robur warehouse (No's 107-125 Queens Bridge Street) and HO1200 the former Castlemaine Brewery (127-131 Queens Bridge Street), including a portion of the former Castlemaine Brewery on the subject site (No 127 Queens Bridge Street).

The former Robur warehouse and former Castlemaine Brewery, are also proposed for inclusion within the HO1214 City Road industrial and warehouse precinct as contributory places. One other building on this site (No 87-89 Queens Bridge Street), originally recommended to be included as a contributory place to the City Road warehouse and industrial precinct is no longer proposed for inclusion by the City of Melbourne.

Former Robur Tea Warehouse, No's 107-125 Queens Bridge Street

The Robur warehouse has been built in two main stages. The first stage, containing the ground and first floor, was built for William Train & Company in 1887. The Mannerist façade, was symmetrically composed, with a pronounced parapet above the central bay.

11 This study by Lewis is only mentioned in some footnotes of specific sites eg the citation for Eckersley & Sons, 93-103 Clarendon Street, Southbank.
12 Lay's book is briefly mentioned in a discussion on Kings Bridge.
13 Max Lay, *Melbourne Miles. The Story of Melbourne's Roads*, p 176.

The building was described by the *Weekly Times* around the time of its completion as large and handsome, its façade intricately detailed in a manner to advertise the firm's trade in marble building fittings and fixtures:

*...a striking ornament to the street and an imposing advertisement to the business carried on within. Thus the windows are of stained glass in lead work; enamelled tiles take the place of columns; marble of every hue and variety is worked into the facings; and a magnificent white mantelpiece surmounts the variegated tracery.*¹⁴

The architectural embellishment was removed from the façade when alterations and additions were undertaken to the building, when James Service & Company/Robur occupied the building in the 1890s.¹⁵ These additions removed the symmetry of the façade, adding an additional level to the northern portion of the façade, and three additional levels to the southern portion. The scalloped corner to the side and below the entablature at the south end of the three-storey addition, and the abrupt end of this three-storey addition approximately midway along the façade, indicates it had been intended to extend along the entire width of the elevation. It is not known why the works were never fully completed.

This façade in its overall composition reads as an awkward arrangement of competing Classical Revival and Romanesque Revival detailing. For this reason, the aesthetic value ascribed to the building in the statement of significance in the 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' is not accurate. In its unfinished condition, the heritage study is not correct to say it is a "well-developed architectural treatment" in tall arched fenestration in demonstrating Medieval (Romanesque Revival?) and Arts & Crafts detailing on an Edwardian (Victorian?) warehouse.

In comparative terms, the façade of the Maurice Artaud & Company building of 1911, at 71-75 City Road is a finer example of a three-storey Edwardian-era Romanesque Revival composition. In comparative terms, as a tea warehouse within Southbank, the former warehouse of Robur in Clarendon Street, itself also re-adapted for this purpose, is a finer example of this type of warehouse of this firm. The Clarendon Street tea house is included on the Victorian Heritage Register as a site of State significance.

14 *Weekly Times*, 30 July 1887, p 5.

15 William Train & Company relocated to a site in Sturt Street at the corner of Dodds Street.

Figure 10: An illustration of the William Train & Company showrooms at 107-125 Queens Bridge Street from the *Weekly Times* in 1887.

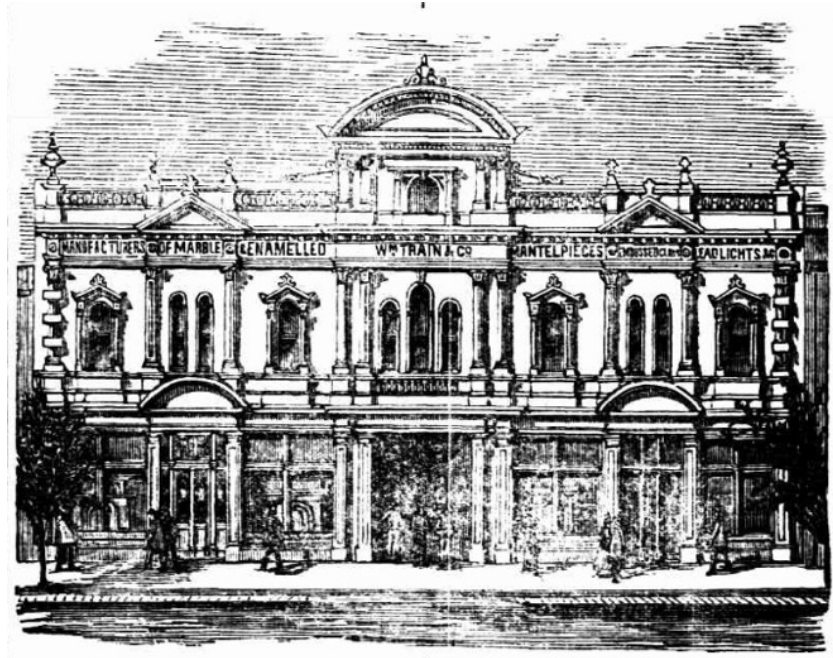


Figure 11: The former William Train & Company showrooms (Robur warehouse) at 107-125 Queens Bridge Street today.



Figure 12: The former Robur warehouse in Clarendon Street is a finer example of a warehouse building of this firm. Source of Photograph: PTC Photographic Collection, Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 12800, P3, Unit 1.



In terms of historical significance, the former Robur warehouse building is demonstrative of mercantile activity in Southbank. The uses of the building over the years are, however, more diverse, and in some ways symbolic of the diversity of industry throughout the study area.

The Robur warehouse history goes beyond the uses of James Service & Company and their tea interests, to include also pram and radio manufacturers and others. Added to this, its initial use as the showrooms and factory of William Train & Company, which, regrettably, most physical evidence of this earliest phase of development is wiped from the site. In contrast, some other buildings in Southbank have their historical associations and uses still evident in their fabric.

The rear elevation of the former Robur warehouse, albeit of early origin, is of lesser value to the significance of the City Road warehouse and industrial precinct, as are the side walls that are mostly concealed from view from the public realm by surrounding built form. The statement of significance for this precinct recognises buildings' 'street presentation' and 'public face' in their scale and character as valued elements:

The surviving buildings in the precinct are aesthetically significant for their range of late-Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war architectural treatments of commercial and industrial premises which, despite being utilitarian, still demonstrated a finely-resolved presentation to the street. This is evidence of the role that buildings' appearances had as part of a company's public face in marketing and promotion. Styles employed reflect the fashions of the time, whether classically-derived, arts and-craft-inspired or Streamlined Moderne, indicating that functional spaces were seen as contributing to the aesthetic character of the city.¹⁶

The value of the former Robur warehouse is modest historically, and its value is limited to its contribution to the City Road industrial and warehouse precinct. This heritage fabric is also that identified in the Incorporated Document for retention (the lower façade and the return walls). The setbacks for the proposed works from the retained façade are between four and six metres, and this provides a satisfactory response to the heritage fabric to be retained, as the façade can still be interpreted in its original form prior to development. The existing D-grading of the building is, I believe, correct, given its altered condition and modest historic value. A building of a D grading is defined by the City of Melbourne as

... representative of the historical, scientific, architectural or social development of the local area. They are often reasonably intact representatives of particular periods, styles or building types. In many instances alterations will be reversible. They may also be altered examples which stand within a group of similar period, style or type or a street which retains much of its original character. Where they stand in a row or street, the collective group will provide a setting which reinforces the value of the individual buildings.

The Panel Report for Amendment C258 recommends a more streamline approach to applying heritage overlays. Heritage places, it recommends, should be either stand-alone heritage places, or places of contributory value to a precinct. The Robur warehouse is in my view not of sufficient heritage value, historically and/or aesthetically, to warrant an individual heritage overlay. Rather, I am of the opinion that the inclusion of the site as a contributory place of the City Road industrial and warehouse precinct, as proposed in Amendment C305, will provide sufficient heritage management of this place.

16 Biosis Pty Ltd, 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review', p 188.

Former Castlemaine Brewery (part) 127 Queens Bridge Street

Figure 13:
Castlemaine
Brewery, 127-131
Queens Bridge
Street, c1905. The
two-storey building
at left forms part of
the development
site at 87-127
Queens Bridge
Street.



The former Castlemaine Brewery complex is a fine example of a complex of late nineteenth century brewery buildings. Its tower, in particular, is a landmark within Southbank, and the two two-storey buildings that flank it, introduce symmetry when the site is viewed from Queens Bridge Street.

Change has occurred to the buildings of the complex, but unlike the change to the Robur warehouse, this change has had little impact upon the character of this brewery complex to any appreciable level. In terms of the two-storey building on the subject site, its fenestration on its ground floor has been altered, and the façade (with the façade of No 131) rendered. Contextually, the removal of the remainder of the complex on the west (opposite) side of Queens Bridge Street, and the removal of the Castlemaine Hotel when Kings Bridge was built c1961, has diminished what was once a more extensive complex of brewery and allied buildings in this pocket of Southbank.

The grading of the site as an 'A' graded building, normally assigned to buildings of State significance, is not endorsed in any listing on the *Victorian Heritage Register* by the Heritage Council of Victoria. Nor is the existing 'B' grading and its definition consistent with this building. If applying the old grading system, by definition the building is more consistent with a C-grading, which is defined as places that:

Demonstrate the historical or social development of the local area and /or make an important aesthetic or scientific contribution. These buildings comprise a variety of styles and building types. Architecturally they are substantially intact, but where altered, it is reversible. In some instances, buildings of high individual historic, scientific or social significance may have a greater degree of alteration.

In this respect, the proposed individual heritage overlay for the Castlemaine Brewery (HO1200) is supported, as the complex goes beyond a contributory element within the City Road industrial and warehouse precinct. It is of individual heritage significance to Southbank, as a remnant of a former larger brewing complex in this pocket of the study area.

The aims of the proposed heritage overlay should be responsive to the brewery complex's recognised heritage values. These values and recognised qualities include the facades of the two-storey elements and the central brewery tower that they flank. Setbacks of new built form of four-six metres from the façade of the two-storey building on the subject site, as is currently proposed, should be a consideration in any proposed heritage controls for the former Castlemaine Brewery site. Such setbacks will allow the brewery tower to remain an element that is interpreted as a three-dimensional form, and retain its existing landmark quality in this portion of Southbank.

The Panel recommended in Amendment C258 that statements of significance play a more important part in heritage management of places. In this regard, the statement of significance prepared for the former Castlemaine Brewery should be reviewed, and reference the outcomes of the Incorporated Document applicable to one portion of the site (No 127 Queens Bridge Road). The statement of significance should also ensure it accurately describes the history, physical description and heritage values associated with this heritage place, and conservation policies for the site in any future development that I have discussed above.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective heritage controls are long overdue for Southbank, South Wharf and Fishermans Bend, and further work is encouraged to put in place controls to manage heritage sites within these areas of the City of Melbourne.

The preparation of one study for the Southbank, Fishermans Bend and South Wharf is a large undertaking, perhaps too ambitious an undertaking for a large urban area with such diversity of uses and different histories. In assessing such a large area in one study, in parts, some sites have not been assessed with the detail they probably deserve. Elsewhere, there is conflicting information and inconsistencies, that make using the study difficult. In future work, I recommend that the City of Melbourne breaks the study area up into two, if not three, separate studies for Southbank, South Wharf and Fishermans Bend.

The release of the Panel Report for Amendment C285 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* since the completion of the 'Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review' in June 2017, has resulted in many of the recommended gradings of the heritage study being inconsistent with the Panel's recommendations for protecting heritage sites and applying heritage overlays. These inconsistencies will need to be addressed in future work to the study.

Two buildings on the site that are recognised to have heritage value, are the former Robur warehouse and the former Castlemaine Brewery. In order to make proposed heritage controls responsive to the recognised heritage values of these buildings, and consistent with both the recommendations of the Panel Report of Amendment C258, and the Incorporated Document in the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* that is applicable to this site, I recommend in future work to the heritage study that the:

- Former Robur warehouse is removed from a site-specific heritage overlay (HO1229);
- Former Robur warehouse is included in the City Road industrial and warehouse precinct (HO1214) as a contributory place, to the extent of its lower façade (three-storeys) and the return walls of the lower façade (three-storeys), as demonstrated in the Incorporated Document applicable to the subject site and its proposal;
- Former Castlemaine Brewery is included within a site-specific heritage overlay (HO1200). This includes all buildings of the brewery (127-131 Queens Bridge Street), and that a revised statement of significance is prepared to clearly articulate the key characteristics of the brewery complex as a landmark element within Southbank, including the tower remaining as a freestanding element, as I have outlined in this statement, and that is demonstrated in the Incorporated Document.
- Former Castlemaine Brewery is removed from the City Road industrial and warehouse precinct (HO1214), as a contributory place.

I believe the above recommendations make the heritage controls more consistent with the approach to the assessment and application of heritage controls recommended by the Panel in Amendment C258 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*, and will provide a better way of managing these heritage places.

In its current form, I do not recommend that Amendment C305 of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* proceed. It is evident that further work needs to be done before the study is an effective tool in the management of heritage places within Southbank. I encourage the City of Melbourne to undertake this further work on this study, and adopt the recommendations that I outline in this expert witness statement.

DECLARATION

I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Barrett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Barrett
Master of Architectural
History & Conservation (Melb.)