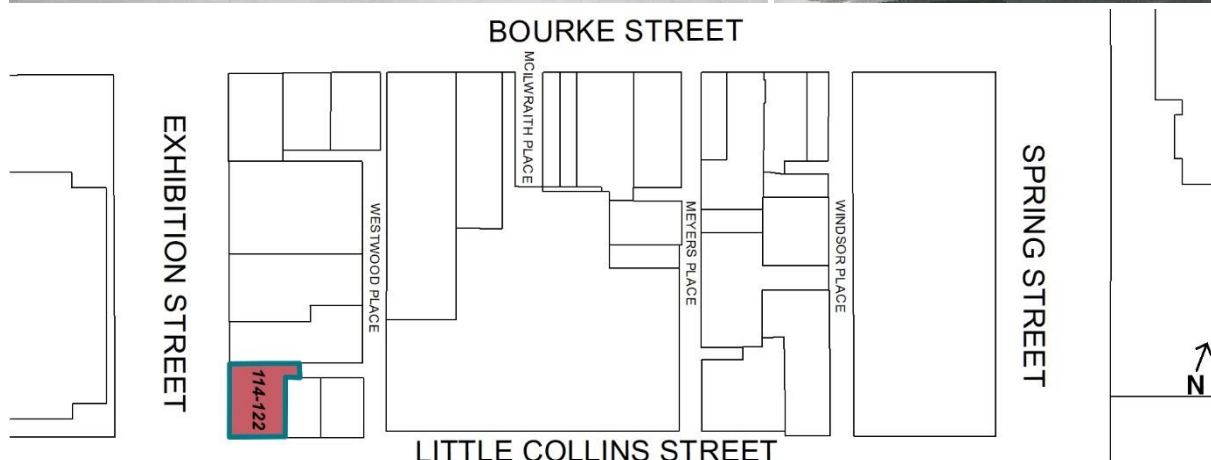


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Former Morris House
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	114-122 Exhibition Street Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	103626



SURVEY DATE: January 2018

SURVEY BY: Context

<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	H7822-1681	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	Yes – interim HO1287 (Little Collins Street Precinct)
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Not known	<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	D
		<b>BUILDER:</b>	Not known
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Interwar Period (c1919-c1940)	<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>	1924

**THEMES**

<b>ABORIGINAL THEMES</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>
8 Taking political action and overcoming disadvantage	8.5 Establishing health and welfare organisations, and legal services
<b>HISTORIC THEMES</b>	<b>DOMINANT SUB-THEMES</b>
11 Caring for the sick and destitute	11.2 Providing Welfare Services
<b>POSTWAR THEMES</b>	<b>DOMINANT SUB-THEMES</b>
2 Constructing the economy of Melbourne's city centre	2.2 Recreation, entertainment and tourism

**LAND USE**

<b>HISTORIC LANDUSE</b>	
<b>Archaeological block no:</b> 40	<b>Inventory no:</b> 681
<b>Character of Occupation:</b> Commercial	
The inventory is primarily about the Little Collins Street frontage (74 Little Collins Street). Fifth land sale 1839, Block 9 Allotment 19 purchased by P Campbell.	
1839 Williamson	
1840 Hoddle	
1866 Cox	Building on site.
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Single-storey building, R Cummins, produce merchant.
1905/6 Mahlstedt	Single-storey building, four shops.
<b>THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE</b>	
1890s	Retail
1920s	Office
1960s	Office

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommended for referral to Aboriginal Victoria for the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.

**Extent of overlay:** Refer to map

**SUMMARY**

The former Morris House at 114-122 Exhibition Street was built as offices for the Charity Organisation Society in 1924. One of the long-term occupants of the building was the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty. Until c1957 the building provided accommodation for a number of charitable, welfare and benevolent organisations. Morris House was later purchased and occupied by Australian-American Association between 1957 and 1973. The building is a representative example of interwar classicism, addressing the corner of Exhibition and Little Collins Streets.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Caring for the sick and destitute

#### *Providing Welfare Services*

The demands of a large centre of population included provisions for social welfare. Initially these services were offered by private or church-run charities. Babies' homes, orphanages and women's refuges were also established in the inner city where people's means of livelihood (especially for single women) were limited.

The hardships of the 1890s depression highlighted the need for improved welfare provisions. There was soon a high rate of unemployment in Melbourne and as a result, families suffered. Working men were often forced to queue for work on government projects.

One group concerned with Melbourne's welfare, the Charity Organisation Society (COS), was founded in 1887:

*....borrowed from its British parent both a name and founding beliefs: that poverty could be solved by reforming poor people, and that the efforts of charitable bodies lacked effective co-ordination. In order to overcome what it saw as 'indiscriminate giving', the COS offered detailed investigations of each case and a centralised record system to ensure that only 'deserving types' received aid...*

*The society enjoyed a revival in the 1920s, under new secretary S. Greig Smith, who co-ordinated regular case conferences at the new Exhibition Street headquarters, helping to pioneer 'case-work' and lay the foundations for the profession of social work. Its major function, however, was still assessing whether people who approached Melbourne's charities were 'truly' deserving. (UoM 2019)*

### Constructing the economy of Melbourne's city centre

#### *Recreation, entertainment and tourism*

Clubs have historically been part of city life. The postwar period saw social and cultural groups find opportunities to develop in the central city. While private men's clubs were generally well established in the nineteenth-century, the postwar period saw an increase in the membership of women's clubs. The Lyceum Club, established in 1912 for women graduates and other women who had distinguished themselves in art, music, literature, philanthropy or public service, built new premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1959 (Context 2012:58; Context 2018; 23-24; Swain 2008).

The Australian-American relationship has been the central issue in Australian foreign policy. Historian Kate Darian-Smith discussed Americans' presence in twentieth-century Melbourne as follows:

*Defence has been central to the Australian-American relationship. When the Great White Fleet arrived at St Kilda Pier in August 1908, the response was enthusiastic. Thousands welcomed US General Douglas MacArthur, who arrived in Melbourne on 21 March 1942, followed by 30 000 troops, garrisoned in requisitioned buildings and parks, including Camp Pell in Royal Park and Camp Murphy at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Although US military headquarters moved north in August 1942, service personnel remained in Melbourne until 1945, stimulating the economy but straining entertainment facilities. GIs described Melbourne as 'half as big as New York cemetery and twice as dead'. Relations*

were generally harmonious, with the Brownout murders a notorious but isolated exception. The first meeting of a Friendship Club in 1943 attracted 300 wives or fiancées of US servicemen, most of whom emigrated to the US after the war (Darian-Smith 2008).

The Australian American Association, which began as the Australian American Co-operative Movement in 1943, continues to promote political, business and cultural ties from its South Melbourne headquarters. An American consulate has operated since the 1930s from different locations on St Kilda Road, and has been a focus of anti-war demonstrations. While the immigrant American community has remained relatively small in Melbourne, from the early 1990s growth in recreational and educational tourism has increased the presence of Americans in the city (Darian-Smith 2008).

## SITE HISTORY

The subject site is located on Crown Allotments 19, Block 9, City of Melbourne (Fels, Lavelle and Mider 1993). Figure 1 shows the subject site in 1895, developed with a single-storey building on the corner of Exhibition and Little Collins streets, and a three-storey building at 122 Exhibition Street (Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 9, 1888; MMBW Detail Plan no 1013, 1895). Former buildings, known separately as 118, 120 and 122 Exhibition Street, continued to exist on the subject site into the 1920s. An application was made for the erection of a film store at 114-122 Exhibition Street in May 1921. The Sydney-based Exhibitors Alliance Films Limited had occupied a branch office at 122 Exhibition Street by 1922 until 1924, when the company liquidated (MBAI 3323; *Sunday Times* 3 September 1922:9; *Daily Telegraph* 16 May 1924:1).

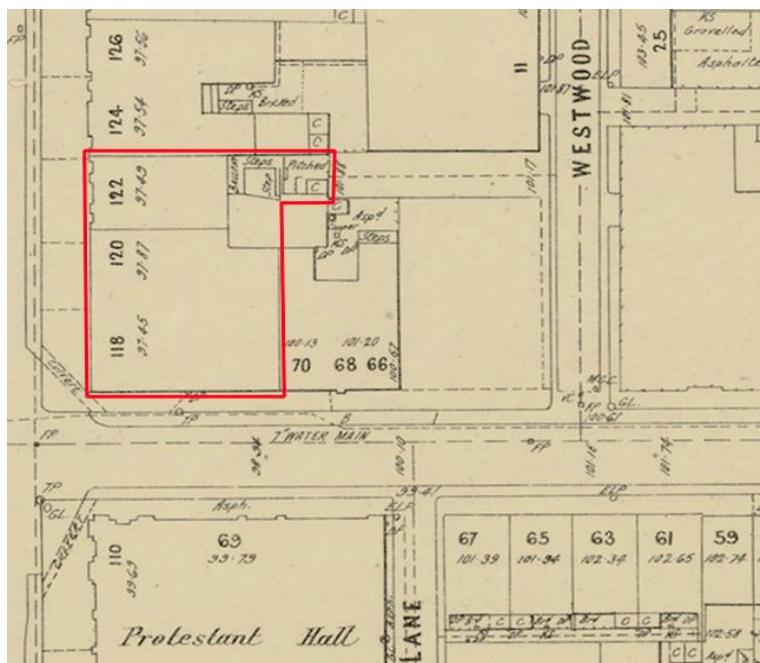


Figure 1. The subject land in 1895, outlined in red. (Source: MMBW Detail Plan no 1013, 1895)

The current building at 114-122 Exhibition Street was constructed in 1924 at a cost of £9200 (MBAI 6045). Built for the Charity Organisation Society, the foundation stone was laid by the Lord Mayor of Melbourne on 16 July 1924 (*Argus* 17 July 1924: 7). Construction was noted as to be nearing



completion 'at the end of the year' in 1924 (Age 28 August 1924: 10). The building was named Morris House (Figure 2) after Edward E Morris, professor of modern languages and literature at the University of Melbourne, and founder of the Victorian Charity Organisation Society (*Argus* 12 December 1924:12; S&Mc 1925; Mahlsted Map Section 1, no 2, 1925).

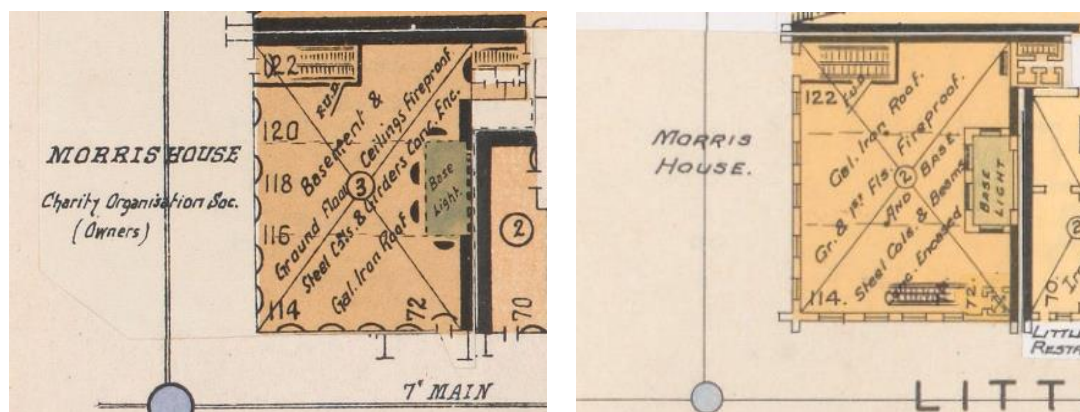


Figure 2. Mahlsted plans of the site in 1925 (left) and 1948 (right) showing the site labelled as 'Morris House'. The building appears to have had few changes in the period between. (Source: Mahlsted Map Section 1, no 2, 1925; Mahlsted Map Section 1, no 2, 1945).

In December 1924, the Charity Organisation Society (Victoria) moved into the three-storey brick building at 114-122 Exhibition Street (Figure 3, Figure 4). The Governor of Victoria, the Earl of Stradbroke, formally opened the Charity Organisation Society's rooms in December 1924 (*Herald* 10 December 1924: 7).

The Charity Organisation Society (COS) of Melbourne was established in 1887 to help co-ordinate Melbourne's charitable organisations and to foster amongst the poor the ideal of 'self-help'. The COS played a key role in the development of the social work profession in Victoria and increasingly became involved in child welfare issues. In the years following the 1890s economic depression, it expanded its casework and social work services to foster care placements of children (Commonwealth of Australia 2017). One of the founding members of the COS was Ann Fraser Bon, a leading advocate for the welfare of Aboriginal people in Victoria (Gillison 1979).

The COS revived in the 1920s, helping to pioneer 'case-work' and lay the foundations for the profession of social work. Its major function, however, was still assessing whether people who approached Melbourne's charities were 'truly' deserving (Peel 2008). In order to overcome what it saw as 'indiscriminate giving', the COS offered detailed investigations of each case and a centralised record system to ensure that only 'deserving types' received aid (Peel 2008).

In calling for subscribers in 1927, COS office holders wrote that

*During the society's last financial year nearly 4,000 cases of need in the metropolitan area were handled by a trained and sympathetic staff. During the same period the society, through its trust and relief funds, expended more than £3,200 in direct relief, and a further sum of £2,500 in various forms of service to the poor and to the community. The work of many other charitable institutions is strengthened by the co-operation of the Charity Organisation Society, and there is a definite prospect of a further increase in this cooperative activity (Argus 3 November 1927:14).*

During the 1930s depression, the COS took a leading role in the distribution of unemployment relief.

Moving into Morris House in 1924, the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (VSPCC) was one of the long-term tenants in Morris House, where it was able to access the Central Register maintained by the COS (Scott and Swain 2002:61). The institutionalisation of neglected children, known as 'child rescue' procedures, had been voluntarily set up by charitable missions and also by the colonial/state governments of Australia throughout the nineteenth century, during which time the concept of foster care was developed as the dominant form of alternative care. By the late 1890s, most states had enacted legislation to protect children. The work of 'child rescue' continued into the twentieth century and led to the nationwide 'child rescue movement', which resulted in the removal of thousands of Aboriginal children from their parents to be raised in foster families or institutions from 1920 to 1970 (Haring, Sorin and Caltabiano 2019). As a local branch of an international non-denominational organisation, VSPCC was established in 1894 to investigate and report child abuse and neglect in Victoria. VSPCC operated from Morris House into the mid-1950s, employing paid officers to perform its investigatory and prosecution work (*Weekly Times* 7 November 1951:40; Commonwealth of Australia 2017). The organisation today operates as the Children's Protection Society (Commonwealth of Australia 2017).

From the 1920s, the building also provided accommodation for a number of other organisations, including the Victorian Provident Society (S&Mc 1926); disabled soldiers' furniture factory (*Herald* 8 May 1925:13); the headquarters of the Order of the Star of the East (*Herald* 21 November 1925:15); the Association of the Ladies' Benevolent Societies (*Age* 4 March 1927:16); and the council of the Baby Health Centres' Association (*Age* 1 October 1929:9). A Citizens Advice Bureau opened in Morris House in 1951 (*Age* 3 March 1951:5).

Minnie Everett was another tenant of Morris House from 1927 until c1936, when she moved to Kurrajong House at 175 Collins Street. Everett conducted the Minnie Everett School of Stage Dancing, including singing, dancing, voice production, deportment and stage technique classes from studios at 114-122 Exhibition Street. John Maslen writes in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* that:

*Minnie Rebecca Everett (1874-1956), dancer and producer, was born on 28 June 1874 at Beaufort, Victoria... After the family moved to Melbourne, Minnie trained under Emilia Pasta, a ballet dancer from Italy. From the age of 13 Everett took casual engagements at the Alexandra Theatre, the Opera House and the Theatre Royal...*

*Having joined J C Williamson in 1888, Everett became one of the Royal Ballerinas, a permanent ballet of trained dancers who appeared with his Royal Comic Opera Company... As ballet mistress for thirty years, she created and produced dances for most of J C Williamson Ltd's productions. From the early twentieth century Everett won renown for her work not only as a ballet mistress but as a producer of comic and grand opera... For many years Everett ran her own theatrical schools in Melbourne and Sydney where she taught singing, dancing, voice production, deportment and stage technique... Although she retired in 1940, Everett continued to take a keen interest in amateur theatrics and in 1955 was coaxed into producing *The Mikado* for the Victorian Council of Adult Education (Maslen 1996).*

A change of name to the Citizens' Welfare Service (CWS) in 1946 signalled a shift in emphasis as the organisation moved towards employing professionally trained social workers who used psychological

insights in their interviewing and casework (Peel 2008). In 1947, the CWS moved to new premises in Drummond Street, Carlton, but continued to maintain an office at 120 Exhibition Street through to the early 1950s (S&Mc 1950).

Prior to the sale of the building in 1957, in 1955, the tenants at Morris House were the Citizens' Welfare Service of Victoria; Victorian Provident Aid Society; Victorian Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children; Children's Welfare Association of Victoria; Victorian Institute of Hospital Almoners; Alfred F Bridges, masseur; Medical Eye Service of Victoria; and Ophthalmic Association (S&Mc 1955).

In 1957, the site was purchased by the Australian-American Association for use by their female members as a clubhouse (*Age* 21 August 1957:9). The purchase price at the time was £36,500, and the Association aimed to form a club for their female members where they could meet and establish headquarters for their hospitality committee (*Age* 21 August 1957: 9). The Association also established a library for their members on the premises (*Age* 21 August 1957: 9). It was noted at the time that the Association had purchased the building from the Citizens' Welfare Service, which transferred its operations to a new location at the time of the sale (*Age* 21 August 1957: 9). The president of the women's group at the time was Maie Casey, later Baroness Casey, whose husband Lord Casey had become president of the association in 1946 (*Age* 13 February 1958: 1; *News* 9 May 1946: 3).

The Australian-American Association had been founded by Sir Keith Murdoch by 1941 (*Age* 6 October 1952: 2; AWM 2019). The association was concerned with building and strengthening relationships between Australia and America, and was described as 'an active force in linking the destinies of the two countries' (*Age* 6 October 1952: 2).

The Prime Minister, Robert Menzies came to Melbourne from Canberra especially for the official opening of the site as the Australian-American Centre, which was also attended by the American Ambassador to Australia (*Age* 13 February 1958: 1). The opening ceremony included a speech by Robert Menzies, where he spoke to members of the friendship and growing ties between America and Australia (*Age* 13 February 1958: 3). Luncheons with guest speakers appeared to be continued by the group at the site (*Age* 4 November 1972: 2).

The building was put up for lease in 1973, and again in 1977, when it was advertised as an 'outstanding city corner' (*Age* 25 August 1973: 56; 28 April 1977:23). The building was altered to accommodate a restaurant in 1974 at a cost of \$10,000 (MBAI 45120). By 1987, the premises were occupied by Altmann & Cherny, gem dealers, cutters and jewellers (*Age* 24 March: 24). The site was converted into a bar and restaurant in 2003 (CoMMaps).



Figure 3. Showing the northern side of Little Collins Street, including the subject building (left-hand side) at 114-122 Exhibition Street in the 1960s. (Source: Halla 1960-69, SLV)



Figure 4. Showing 114-122 Exhibition Street on the LHS in the 1960s. (Source: Halla 1960-69, SLV).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

114-122 Exhibition Street is located on the north-eastern corner of Little Collins and Exhibition Streets with entries to both frontages. It comprises a basement and two storeys above street level, and is built of concrete-encased steel framing with rendered masonry walls. Built as tenanted offices, it is designed in an interwar classical revival style that was popular for banks and other commercial premises after World War One. The rhythm of each of the two street façades is derived from the windows set between stucco pilasters that extend over the two storeys, giving the building a vertical orientation. The entrances are denoted by wider bays and a classically derived porch. The spandrels



beneath the windows and the moulded string course beneath the parapet comprise a secondary horizontal emphasis to the building's façade. 114-122 Exhibition Street is restrained in its architectural detail, however the pilasters employ moulded and recessed panels. The building features tall narrow steel framed windows with mullions and transoms forming openable sashes set within the larger windows.

## **INTEGRITY**

The overall integrity of the building is good, having undergone a number of changes with its conversion to a restaurant. A major change has been the creation of a recessed corner entry by the removal of a small length of the ground floor walls to Little Collins and Exhibition streets. This alteration creates a third entrance and changes the way in which the building addresses the corner. Other alterations include changing the ground floor windows to Exhibition Street, the addition of a first-floor balcony and a roof deck with glazed balustrade above the parapet. The Little Collins Street facade is more intact with the addition of canvas awnings.

## **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

114-122 Exhibition Street may be compared to the following examples, being of a similar use, scale, and creation date. The below images, dating from 2000s or later, and descriptions are provided by CoMMaps unless stated otherwise.

### *Welfare organisations*

Provision of social welfare services in Melbourne was predominantly offered by private or church-run charities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Other welfare-related buildings that were operational in central Melbourne in the interwar period and have since been demolished include Melbourne Ragged Boys' Home and Mission in La Trobe Street (1895–1924, demolished), Young Women's Hostel in Spring Street (1921–1984, demolished). The following HO-listed buildings are comparable to Morris House as buildings associated with welfare provision in Melbourne.

### *Mission to Seafarers, 717 Flinders Street, 1916 (VHR H1496; HO650)*

Of British origin, the first Anglican Seamen's Mission was established in Bristol in 1837. The first Australian branch was started in 1856 by Rev Kerr Johnston, and operated from a hulk in Hobson's Bay, later moving to buildings in Williamstown, Port Melbourne and then Siddeley Street. A new Anglican Mission to Seamen was designed in 1916 by architect Walter Richmond Butler, to replace the Siddeley Street premises which had been resumed by the Harbour Trust for wharf extensions. It was designed in the Spanish Mission architectural style. The building has a long association with the Missions to Seamen (now Mission to Seafarers) and the provision of welfare services and space for recreation to assist those working in the shipping trade.



Figure 5. 717 Flinders Street, built in 1916.

*Former European Hotel (later occupied by Melbourne City Mission), 280-282 Exhibition Street, 1854-1870s (HO636)*

280-282 Exhibition Street is a three-storey rendered brick hotel, built in stages and altered between 1854 and the 1870s with the rear addition from the early twentieth century (CoMMaps). In 1926, Melbourne City Mission moved into new headquarters in this building. The building included a hostel for 'friendless girls', 30 of them could be accommodated in dormitories on the third floor. The hostel was known by a number of names, including the Haven of Hope and Sister Grace's Home for Friendless Girls (Commonwealth of Australia 2017). The building is today incorporated into the 47-storey office block.



Figure 6. 280-282 Exhibition Street, 1854-1870s.

*Clubs for women*

Although not purpose built as a club, the use of 114-122 Exhibition Street from 1957 by the female members of the Australian-American Association may be compared with the Alexandra and Lyceum clubs and represents the theme of clubs and societies in the city centre.

*The Alexandra Club, 81 Collins Street, 1934 (HO568, Significant in HO504 Collins Street East precinct)*

The Alexandra Club, is an exclusive private women's club established in Melbourne in 1903 and which has operated since the 1930s from its current purpose-built home in Collins Street. There is a direct association between the premises designed in 1937, the organisation and the membership.



Figure 7. 81 Collins Street, Alexandra Club built 1934.

*The Lyceum Club, 2-18 Ridgway Place, built 1959 (Interim HO1285 – Recommended as significant within the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

The Lyceum Club, an exclusive private women's club established in Melbourne in 1912, established its own club premises in Ridgway Place, off Little Collins Street, in 1958. Membership of the Lyceum Club is open to women who are university educated and who have 'distinguished themselves in fields such as the arts, science, technology, education, community service, philanthropy and business management'. There is a direct association between the organisation, membership and the building that has endured for nearly 60 years.



Figure 8. 2-18 Ridgway Place, built in 1958. (Source: Context, 2017)

### *Interwar buildings*

The building at 114-122 Exhibition Street is an example of the interwar classical revival style in architecture. This was essentially a reaction against the excesses of the Federation era and a return to more conservative and restrained designs that reinterpreted nineteenth-century classicism. At the same time, construction technology was changing from solid masonry walls to types of framed construction led by the more widespread use of concrete and steel framing. Despite new building technology, exteriors often reflected classical architectural elements arranged with solid horizontal base, columns or pilasters, projecting cornices and decorative mouldings. Notable changes in the interwar period included the ability for windows to become larger and to be steel framed, and for

decorative elements to become more restrained and abstracted. The classical revival style was embraced equally by both commercial developers and government architects.

*482-484 Bourke Street, 1926 (Interim HO1241 – Recommended as significant within the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

482-484 Bourke Street is a four-storey commercial building designed in a classical revival style from the interwar period. 482-484 Bourke Street is constructed of reinforced concrete with a rusticated base complemented by a deep cornice and restrained use of mouldings.



Figure 9. 482-484 Bourke Street, built in 1926. (Source: Context 2018)

*Farrant's Building, 387 Little Bourke Street, 1926 (Significant in HO1205 Guildford & Hardware Laneways Precinct)*

Farrant's Building is of the interwar period, having been constructed in 1926 for saddle manufacturer Farrant's, the three-storey building comprises retail and manufacturing premises. It has two street frontages, facing both Little Bourke Street and Hardware Lane. It is a good example of interwar classical revival design.



Figure 10. 387 Little Bourke Street, constructed in 1926



*152-156 Swanston Street, 1888, remodelled in 1938 (Interim HO1295, Interim HO1289 Swanston Street South precinct – Recommended as significant and contributory to a precinct within the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

The former Bank of Australasia at 152-156 Swanston Street was remodelled from two Victorian shops by A & K Henderson in 1938-39.



Figure 11. 152-156 Swanston Street, built in 1888 and remodelled in 1938-39. (Source: Context 2017)

*219-225 Swanston Street, 1928 (VHR H0390; HO749)*

The former ES & A Bank at 219-225 Swanston Street is of architectural significance as a notable example of the classical revival. This bank is highly intact and a fine example of the style in its relatively unabstracted form.



Figure 12. 119-225 Swanston Street, built in 1928 (Source: VHD)

*442-460 Little Bourke Street, 1926 (VHR H1476; HO968)*

The Federal Court of Australia demonstrates the interwar classical style that characterised many Commonwealth buildings of that era. Its dignified conservatism was thought appropriate for major public buildings, while the reduction of ornamentation reflected modernism's rejection of unnecessary decoration.



Figure 13. Federal Court of Australia, 442-460 Little Bourke Street, built in 1926 (Source: VHD)

114-122 Exhibition Street compares well with the above examples in central Melbourne.

While not architecturally comparable, 717 Flinders Street and 280-282 Exhibition Street share a similar context and use as Morris House. Supported by the state government, Charity Organisation Society (COS) and the Victorian Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children (VSPCC) played key roles in the development of systematic approaches to the provision of welfare services in Victoria. Morris House is a unique example of a welfare-related building, as an interwar office building purpose-built for COS which was a secular non-government charity organisation.

The use of 114-122 Exhibition Street by the women's club associated with the Australian-American Association adds to an understanding of the city's history through its clubs and societies, however this association with the place is less evident than it is in the other examples, given its original purpose as an office building.

Architecturally, 114-122 Exhibition Street demonstrates a typical interwar classical revival design with the restrained features of the style. While the former Federal Court of Australia at 442-460 Little Bourke Street and the ES&A bank at 119-225 Swanston Street are exemplary examples and state-listed for this value, 387 Little Bourke Street and 482-484 Bourke Street are more comparable with 114-122 Exhibition Street for architectural style.

Apart from the creation of the recessed corner entrance, other alterations to windows are consistent with many central city buildings of this era that have experienced these changes.

## ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

✓	<b>CRITERION A</b> Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).
	<b>CRITERION B</b> Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).
	<b>CRITERION C</b> Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).
✓	<b>CRITERION D</b> Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).
	<b>CRITERION E</b> Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).
	<b>CRITERION F</b> Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)
	<b>CRITERION G</b> Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).
	<b>CRITERION H</b> Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommended for referral to Aboriginal Victoria for the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

**MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME**

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

**OTHER**

N/A



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**PREVIOUS STUDIES**

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<b>Central Activities District Conservation Study 1985</b>	Ungraded
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<b>Central City Heritage Study 1993</b>	D
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<b>Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002</b>	Ungraded
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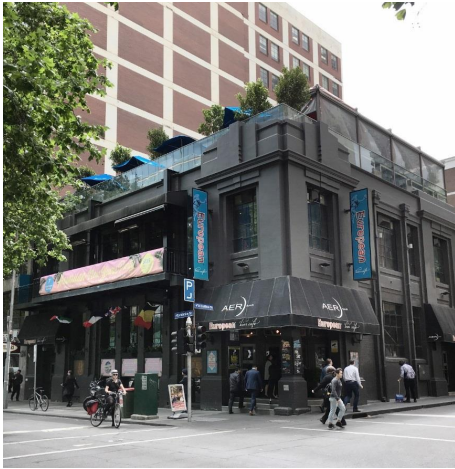
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<b>Central City Heritage Review 2011</b>	Ungraded
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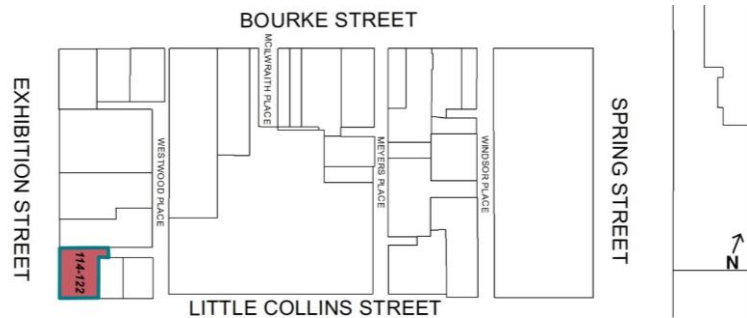
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Heritage Place:** Former Morris House



**PS ref no:** Interim HO1287



### What is significant?

Former Morris House at 114-122 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, built in 1924 for the the Charity Organisation Society (Victoria), is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- the building's original external form, materials and detailing;
- the building's high level of integrity to its original design;
- pattern and size of original fenestration;
- tall narrow steel framed windows with mullions and transoms; and
- decorative elements including the pilasters, moulded and recessed panels between pilasters, parapet with moulded string course and entrance porch.

More recent alterations and addition, including those undertaken at ground level, first-floor balcony and a roof deck with glazed balustrade, are not significant.

### How it is significant?

Former Morris House at 114-122 Exhibition Street, Melbourne is of local historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

### Why it is significant?

Morris House at 114-122 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, built in 1924, is historically significant for its association with the Charity Organisation Society (Victoria), an influential organisation established in Melbourne in 1887 as an offshoot of its British antecedent. The organisation was enduring, later becoming the Citizens Welfare Society. The Charity Organisation Society pioneered the co-ordination of charitable, religious and educational institutions and private benefactors who made significant contributions to social welfare. Its importance was in helping to pioneer 'case-work' and lay the foundations for the profession of social work and play a leading role in the distribution of unemployment



relief in the 1930s. 114-122 Exhibition Street is significant as the offices of the Charity Organisation Society from 1924 to the early 1950s. During this time it also attracted other like organisations to occupy tenancies within the building. The Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (VSPCC) was one of the long-term tenants in Morris House, moving into the building in 1924. As a local branch of an international non-denominational organisation, VSPCC was established in 1894 to investigate and report child abuse and neglect in Victoria. VSPCC operated from the building into the mid-1950s, employing paid officers to perform its investigatory and prosecution work.

The building, from its foundation in 1924 as the office of the Charity Organisation Society and the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, has historical significance on account of its long association with child welfare and the 'child rescue' movement from the mid-1920s, which would have almost certainly included the welfare of Aboriginal children. One of the founding members of the COS was Ann Fraser Bon, who was a leading advocate of Aboriginal welfare in Victoria. (Criterion A)

114-122 Exhibition Street is historically significant for its ownership and use by the Australian-American Association from 1957 to 1973, specifically as clubrooms for female members. The Association was founded by Sir Keith Murdoch in 1941 in order to strengthen cultural ties between Australia and America. It served as one of a few private clubs for women in the central city. (Criterion A)

114-122 Exhibition Street is significant as an example of the interwar classical revival style that was popular for government buildings, banks and other commercial premises built during the decades after World War One. The style is notable for its conservative and restrained design that reinterpreted nineteenth century classicism at the same time that it incorporated new construction technology. In 114-122 Exhibition Street this is evident in the scale and form, rhythm of the street façades with steel-framed decorative windows, stucco pilasters that extend over the two storeys with moulded, recessed panels, window spandrels and a moulded string course beneath the parapet. (Criterion D)

### **Primary source**

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Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)

