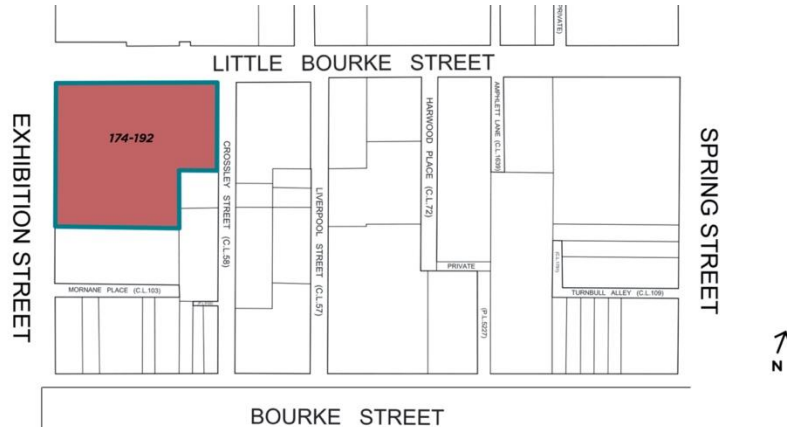


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Former Bryson Centre [also known as Hotel Melbourne, Rydges Hotel (current name)]
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	174-192 Exhibition Street, Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	103621



<b>SURVEY DATE:</b> October 2019		<b>SURVEY BY:</b> GJM Heritage	
<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	No	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	No
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
		<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	Ungraded
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa	<b>BUILDER:</b>	CDF Hooker Ltd
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Postwar Period (1945-1975)	<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>	1970-1972

## THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation focused on the postwar history of the site and did not address associations with Aboriginal people or organisations	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
POSTWAR THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
1 Shaping the urban landscape	1.8 Expressing an architectural style 1.9 Beyond the curtain wall
3 Building a commercial city	3.2 Buiness and finance
5 Living in the city centre	5.2 Hotels

## LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Café/Restaurant, Hairdresser, Office, Retail/Takeaway, Club, Workshop, Stables, Medical
1920s	Café/Restaurant, Retail/Workshop, Office, Club, Motor Garage
1960s	Retail, Merchant

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

**Extent of overlay:** To extent of property boundary

## SUMMARY

The Former Bryson Centre, located on the north-east corner of Exhibition and Little Bourke streets, was designed by architects Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa for owners, the Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP) as an investment property. The consulting engineers were W E Bassett & Partners. The building was constructed between 1970 and 1972, by builders CDF Hooker Ltd. The 23-storey building incorporated office space, a 600-seat cinema, restaurants, convention centres and a 292-room hotel, named Hotel Melbourne, which was located on the upper 13 floors of the building. The Bryson Centre was described at the time of its opening as a 'city within a city – every need is either within the hotel walls or within walking distance outside'.

## CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

The period from 1945 to 1975 was one of radical transformation for Melbourne; from the low-rise city that still reflected its colonial origins to a bustling international centre of commerce and culture. The surviving buildings from this period are evidence of the evolving economic and social conditions in Melbourne at the time and demonstrate the city's transition from its nineteenth century manufacturing origins to its current banking, office and service industry focus. These buildings reflect the increasing commercial and cultural role of Melbourne in the international context of globalisation and postwar optimism as well as a radically altered economic environment which saw an influx of foreign capital and ideas. Collectively, these buildings represent a transformative period in the life of the city; a period that is categorised by significant change, growth and evolution across all aspects of life – social, political, economic and cultural.

### Expressing an architectural style in the postwar period

Multi-storey commercial buildings made a significant contribution to postwar Melbourne, particularly from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. With the resumption of building construction in the 1950s after the hiatus of World War II, the advent of curtain wall construction – enabling the application of a non-load bearing skin to the face of a building – radically altered the appearance of the modern city commercial building.

Constructed predominantly for the financial and business sectors, there was an eagerness amongst clients to establish a dominant city presence and to project a modern, progressive and prestigious approach to commercial building design. The resulting Post-War Modernist style of multi-storey buildings, influenced particularly by steel and glass office tower design in the United States, were in stark contrast to the pre-war city buildings in central Melbourne and presented architects of the day with a completely new design challenge.

Thirty major city buildings were completed in Melbourne in four years alone from 1955 to 1958 and 22 were office buildings within, or on the fringes of, the CBD (Saunders 1959:91). Largely influenced by the American skyscraper, the earliest office buildings of the 1950s utilised innovative curtain walling, formed from continuous metal-framing filled principally with glass. The curtain wall is described by Miles Lewis as 'essentially a continuous, non-bearing skin on the face of a building' and is one of the 'leitmotifs of modernism, both in Australia and overseas' (Lewis 2012:185). The curtain walled 'glass box' aesthetic was embraced by the local architects, and many buildings followed to the extent that high-rise office buildings with curtain walling became a defining characteristic of the new buildings in the latter half of the 1950s (NTAV 2014:5-6).

Amongst the first curtain walled buildings to be constructed in Melbourne was the 13-storey glass-fronted Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street (J A La Gerche 1954-56), which was built to the height limit of 132 feet (40m), and – perhaps the most influential – the free-standing ICI House, 1 Nicholson Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon 1955-58). Located on the outskirts of the Hoddle Grid, ICI House was clad on all four facades with glass curtain walling and exceeded the well-established maximum building height within the Hoddle Grid. Large numbers of similarly designed city commercial buildings followed, often displaying bold horizontal contrast between alternating rows of glazing and coloured spandrels.

### **Beyond the curtain wall**

The dominant glass box design of the late 1950s was challenged in the 1960s as the shortcomings of the fully glazed curtain wall became apparent – in particular its poor thermal performance – and new technologies became available. Advances in concrete technology, including the development of precast concrete, impacted greatly on both the appearance and structure of the commercial tower form from the 1960s onwards.

By the mid-1960s, architects were experimenting with a range of solid cladding materials for tower buildings including precast concrete, stone, reconstituted stone, tile and brick, as well as various metals for cladding, screening and detailing. A number of buildings continued to adopt true curtain wall construction; however, a different aesthetic was created by the use of solid external cladding in place of the typically glazed spandrels of the 1950s. This aesthetic is evident in a number of existing buildings in the city centre including the Guardian Building at 454-456 Collins Street (1960-61), with its stone-faced precast concrete panelled facades.

Concrete advances saw an increase in the use of reinforced column and slab construction in 1960s multi-storey building design, however concrete-encased steelwork also continued to be used. Some buildings incorporated structural elements in their main facades (for example load-bearing precast concrete panels or structural mullions) so were therefore not of true curtain wall construction. The structural nature of these facades was not necessarily apparent to the observer and the buildings continued to display the well-established repetitive characteristics of the true curtain wall façade, such as at Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street, designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker in association with Meldrum & Partners (c1968-70).

A broad range of design approaches became apparent in multi-storey commercial buildings of the 1960s and early 1970s. The horizontality of curtain walling was often balanced by the addition of vertical elements such as façade columns, strips or fins, which introduced textural patterns and visual strength to the facades of a number of buildings. Other multi-storey towers clearly expressed their structure externally with grid-like facades which clearly reflected the internal trabeated structural system. Sun screening provided additional patterning to facades, either as a repetitive decorative motif across the façade, as an expression of the window frames (such as at Royal Mail House, 253-267 Bourke Street designed by D Graeme Lumsden, 1961-63), in the form of balconies (as at the Melbourne Office of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building, 251-257 Collins Street, 1971-73), or occasionally as an entire screen attached to the exterior face of the building.

Buildings also varied with towers set within plazas or on dominant podiums. The State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street, designed by Buchan Laird & Buchan (c1974), is one example of a building constructed with a dominant podium. Buildings were sometimes set back from the street line behind public plazas – a strategy adopted to gain council approval for additional building height and evident in the Bates Smart McCutcheon designed Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building at 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-1975) – while others were built within larger plaza spaces, such as the AMP Tower & St James Building Complex (1965-69), designed by US-based firm Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM).

### **Business and finance in the postwar period**

The postwar period was one of fluctuating fortunes in the business and finance sectors. In the main however, economic confidence and financial deregulation came together to create a period of growth that would radically change the appearance of central Melbourne.

Speculative investment in Melbourne increased after the Commonwealth government lifted restrictions on share dealings in 1947, which resulted in a dramatic increase in new company registrations (Marsden 2000:44-45). Subsequently, during the 1950s, a number of national and international companies sought to assert a physical presence in the country, constructing corporate buildings in the city centre. In Melbourne, up to the mid-1960s, investment was predominantly driven by British and American companies, government bodies, large Australian corporations such as AMP and BHP, and property developers, including Lend Lease (formerly Civil and Civic) and L J Hooker Ltd. Later in the 1960s, it was also driven by private developers such as Grollo and Lustig & Moar (Marsden 2000:46-47).

The construction of large bank buildings was also prolific during the postwar period with the passing of the Banking Act 1947, which led to an increase in the number of bank branches established in Victoria. One of the most significant changes in banking in Australia at this time was the creation of the new Reserve Bank of Australia in 1959, which replaced the central bank known as the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Heritage Alliance 2008:17). Bank buildings constructed in the central city during this period included the State Savings Bank of Victoria at 233-243 Queen Street (1967-68), the Bank of Adelaide Building at 265-269 Collins Street (1959-60) and the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building at 251-257 Collins Street (1971-73).

The period between 1961 and 1963 was one of business recession, while the years between 1967 and 1969 was a time of growth due to two mineral booms. From 1967 to 1971 the construction of new office space in the city centre more than doubled that of the previous five years (City of Melbourne Strategy Plan 1974 in Clinch 2012:66-67). The property boom ended during the economic crash of the early 1970s and the 1974 oil crisis when many British institutions that had founded the commercial property industry left Australia. Government bodies and banks subsequently took over much of the building construction in the city centre (Marsden 2000:48).

### **Hotels**

The lack of hotel accommodation was a cause for concern in central Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s. In the lead up to the 1956 Olympic Games, it was reported that the city's hotel accommodation was not only far below international standards, but did not provide enough beds to host large numbers of tourists. Up until that time, hotels primarily focused on the provision of food and drink; there was no legal requirement to provide accommodation. To boost the number of hotel beds in the lead up to the 1956 Games, amended liquor laws were introduced that made it essential for every hotel to offer lodgings. This new law contributed to the closure and demolition of an unprecedented number of city hotels in the postwar period. Between 1951 and 1961, 23 hotels in central Melbourne closed, with only five top city hotels from Melbourne's bygone era – Scott's, Menzies', the Oriental, the Windsor and the Federal – remaining. Within a decade, all but one (the Windsor) had been demolished (Annear 2005:193).

Despite a push to provide more hotels with higher standards in time for the Olympic Games, ultimately only a handful were constructed. Hosie's Hotel (1954-56) at the corner of Elizabeth and Flinders streets, was one of the first modern hotels to be built in central Melbourne (NTAV 2014:42).

The 1960s saw the opening of Australia's first high-rise, American-style hotel. With the increasing use of faster jet planes, international travel for both luxury and business purposes became a glamorous pursuit. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, US-based hotels such as the Hilton and the Pan Am-owned Intercontinental began establishing the first international hotel chains.

The Southern Cross Hotel (now demolished) opened in 1962 as Australia's first modern hotel of the jet age – a sign that the city had established itself as an international destination (Annear 2005:186). It occupied a large site on Bourke Street in central Melbourne, formerly occupied by the grand Eastern Market. The hotel, owned by Pan American Airways, set the new standard for city hotels in Melbourne and its central plaza, shopping arcades, and ten-pin bowling alley represented a new concept of public space (Goad). The Southern Cross Hotel remained Melbourne's premier hotel into the early 1980s, famously hosting The Beatles during their 1964 tour and national events such as the Logies and the Brownlow (Brown-May 2005). The Bryson Centre, 174-192 Exhibition Street (1970-72), was one of a number of high-rise buildings planned for the eastern end of the city in the early 1970s to 'meet the tourist boom expected with the opening of the new airport at Tullamarine' (Age 1970:2). The 23-storey Bryson Centre incorporated office space, a 600-seat cinema, restaurants, convention centres and a 292-room hotel, named Hotel Melbourne, which was located on the upper 13 floors of the building. The Bryson Centre was described by the Age as a 'city within a city – every need is either within the hotel walls or within walking distance outside' (Age 1972:19).

## SITE HISTORY

The Former Bryson Centre on the north-east corner of Exhibition and Little Bourke streets was designed by architects Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa for owners, the Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP) as an investment property. The consulting engineers were W E Bassett & Partners (LV:V9047/F279; Age, 27 Nov 1972:19-20). The City of Melbourne received a building permit application for the multi-storey building in March 1970 (with a total estimated cost of \$5,070,000) (BAI). The building was constructed between 1970 and 1972, by builders CDF Hooker Ltd (Age, 27 Nov 1972:19).

Architectural drawings date stamped 1970 show the original designs of the elevations and ground floor layout of The Bryson Centre (Figure 1 - Figure 3). The building was let in part to the hotel group Noahs Ltd from July 1972, Bryson Industries Ltd from April 1973 and Town Cinema Investments Pty Ltd from October 1973 (LV:V9047/F279). Bryson Industries Ltd was the Australian distributor of Jaguar cars. In the postwar period, Bryson Industries owned showrooms and workshops in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide (Bryson).

The development was discussed in contemporary newspapers and architectural journals. *The Canberra Times* reported in June 1970 (27 Jun 1970:8) that the AMP Society had announced plans for a \$6,500,000, 23-storey building on the corner of Exhibition and Little Bourke streets, to be called the 'Bryson Centre' (*Canberra Times*, 27 Jun 1970:8). An advertisement published in June 1972 advertised that 'Motor hotel group Noahs Ltd has added the 297-room Bryson Centre Motor Hotel in Melbourne's Exhibition Street, to its rapidly growing chain.' Advertisements noted that 'Noah's Hotel Melbourne' was due to open in late 1972 (Figure 4) (*Canberra Times*, 2 Jun 1972:15; 20 Oct 1972:4).

Upon completion of the new building in late 1972, *The Age* (27 Nov 1972:19-20) featured 'The Bryson Centre' in a two-page spread. The building was 'planned as a city within a city' comprising '40,000 square feet of office space, a 600-seat cinema, restaurants, taverns and convention centres', a 292-room hotel (which started at the 10<sup>th</sup> floor) and a rooftop heated swimming pool, supposedly Melbourne's highest swimming pool at the time. A Jaguar showroom occupied the northern, low-scale section of the building. Hotel Melbourne was opened by the Victorian Premier (Figure 5 - Figure 8) (Age, 27 Nov 1972:19-20; AIA, 1972:22).



The interior of Hotel Melbourne was designed by Peter J Murphy, in conjunction with the architects. The public areas of the hotel were named after a historical theme which was incorporated into the design of the spaces, such as 'The Federation Tavern' (AIA, 1972:23). Artist Robin Angwin was commissioned by AMP to create a number of paintings and prints for the hotel and potter Rynne Tanton was commissioned to create works that were displayed in the foyer (Age, 27 Nov 1972:19-20).

A 1984 photo shows the building with the name 'Hotel Melbourne' at parapet level and 'Bryson Centre' above the lower floors (Figure 10). In 1985, Hospitality Holdings Ltd purchased the '24-storey Bryson Centre, which included the 300-room Noahs Hotel Melbourne and a nine-storey office and cinema centre' (Canberra Times, 24 Jul 1985:9).

Bobby McGees entertainment venue is a long-term occupant of the building, first advertising at the location in the early 1990s (Age, 13 Nov 1991:78). In the 1990s the complex was called 'The Bryson, a Rydges Hotel' (Age, 6 Jun 1993:80). The building continues to serve as Rydges Hotel in 2019.

### **Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa, architects**

Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa was established in 1971 from Leslie M Perrott & Partners, becoming Perrott Lyon Mathieson in 1976.

Leslie Marsh Perrott was born in Gippsland, Victoria and studied architecture at the Melbourne Technical College. Following a stint in New York, he established his own Melbourne-based practice in 1914 and specialised in residential design, with a particular emphasis on reinforced concrete for domestic construction.

Perrott's son, Leslie Junior joined the firm following graduation in 1951 and set about expanding the office to capitalise on the postwar boom. One of their early works was the Southern Cross Hotel, in association with the American architect Welton-Becket, which opened in 1962. They were also engaged on the Princes Gate Project (1963), which included the Gas & Fuel Buildings on Flinders Street, later demolished to make way for Federation Square (Statham 2012:537-8).

In 1971, the firm became Perrott Lyon Timlock and Kesa. Within central Melbourne, the firm designed the Bryson Centre at 174-192 Exhibition Street (1970-72), Nauru House at 80 Collins Street (1972-77), MMBW House at 120 Spencer Street (1976) and the polygonal Ansett House at 501 Swanston Street (c 1976-78). The firm was also responsible for the design of Museum underground station (now Melbourne Central) which formed part of the Melbourne City Loop rail project (Statham 2012:537-8).

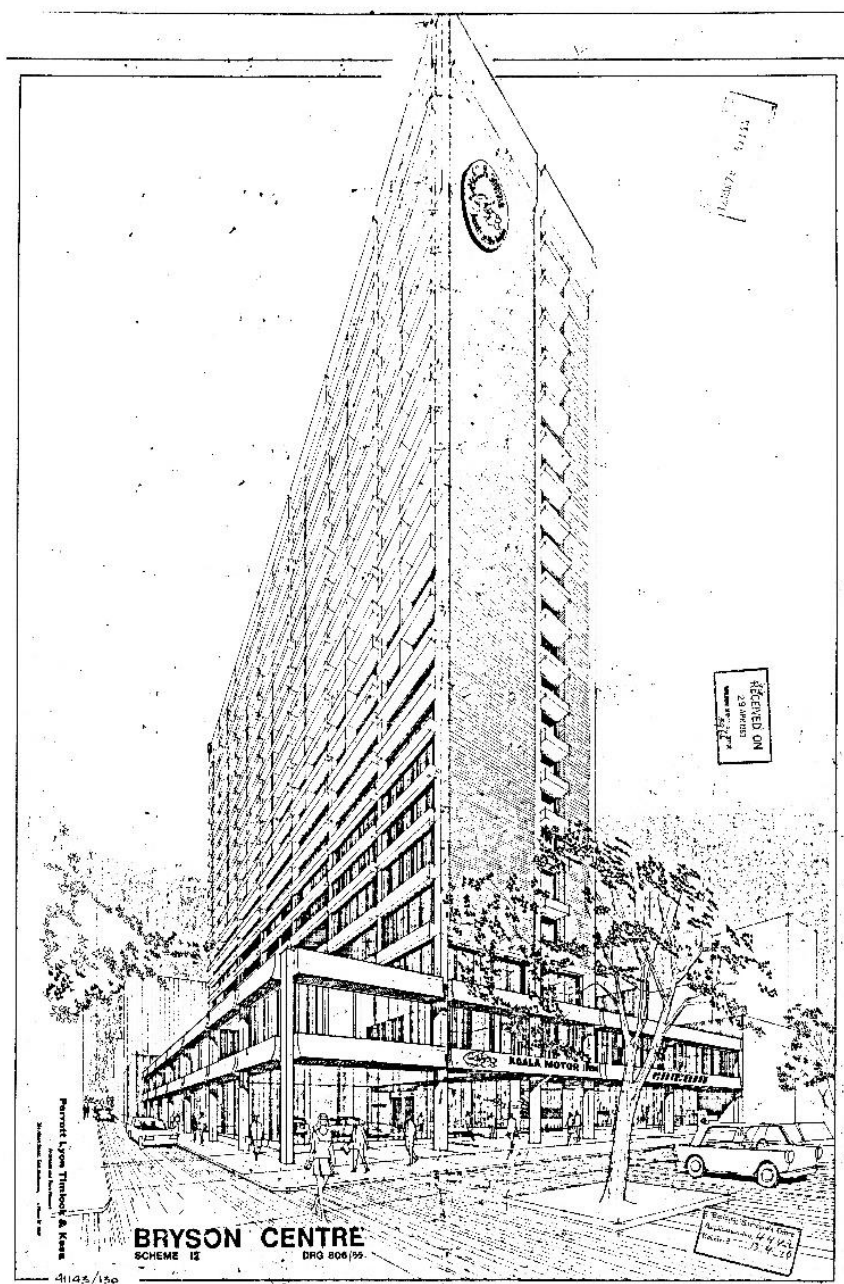


Figure 1. Architectural drawing of The Bryson Centre. Drawing by Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa, date stamped 1970 (BAP).



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Figure 3. Ground floor plan. Drawings by Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa, date stamped 1970 (BAP).



Figure 4. An illustration of the building, published in October 1972, noting that Noah's Hotel Melbourne was due to open late 1972 (*Canberra Times*, 20 Oct 1972:4).

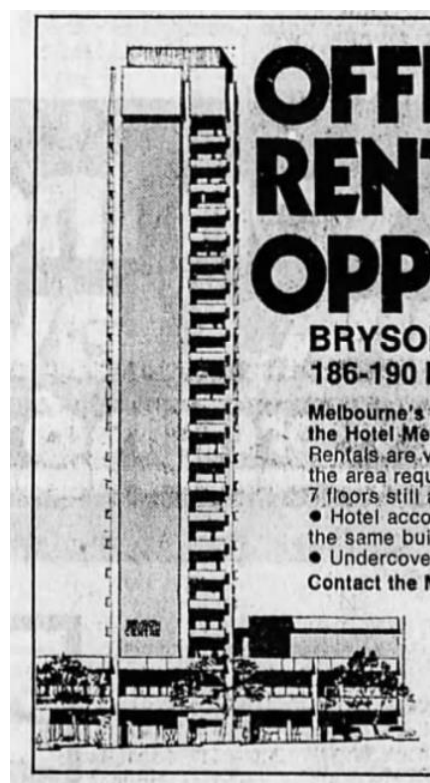


Figure 5. An illustration published in November 1972 (*Age*, 9 Nov 1972:15).

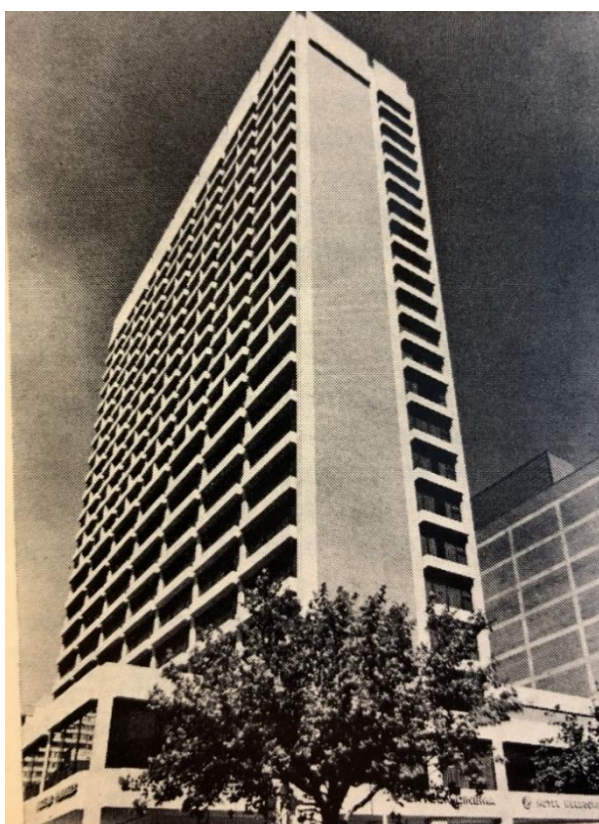


Figure 6. Photo of the newly completed hotel, published in the November/December 1972 issue of *Architecture in Australia* (AIA, Nov/Dec 1972:22).





Figure 7. An image of the newly completed building published in *The Age* in November 1972 (*Age*, 27 Nov 1972:19).

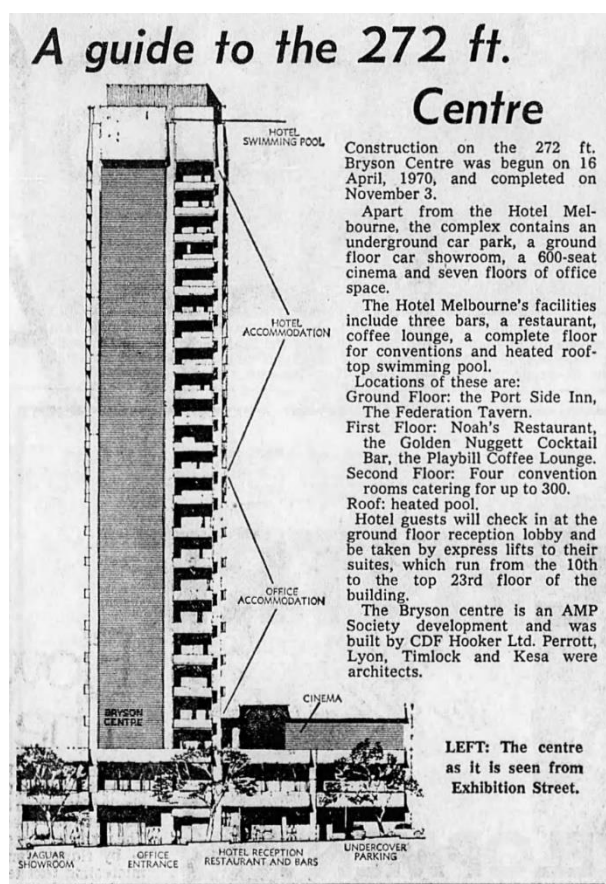


Figure 8. An explanation of the occupancies of the newly completed building, published in *The Age* in November 1972 (*Age*, 27 No 1972:19).



Figure 9. Detail of a c1975 photo showing Hotel Melbourne in the background (SLV, Wolfgang Sievers photographer, Image H2000.195/28).



Figure 10. The subject site in 1984 (City of Melbourne Libraries online Heritage Collection, reference no. Butler 13733).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The Former Bryson Centre is a 23-storey commercial building located on the south-east corner of Exhibition Street and Little Bourke Street. The building has main frontages to both streets and a secondary frontage to Crossley Street to the west. Constructed in 1970-72 to a design by Perrot Lyon Timlock & Kesa, the multi-storey building is an example of the Post-War Modernist style.

The dominant element of this building is a tall, slim central tower which sits on an expansive double-storey podium that extends to the boundaries of the site. Running in an east-west direction across the site, the tower is flanked to the north and south by the lower podium. A two-level basement carpark under the whole building is accessed from the south end of the complex in Exhibition Street.

The building is of reinforced concrete column and slab construction, with the structure clearly expressed on the external facades. The north façade of the tower and sections of the other tower facades, contain sets of glazing with projecting precast concrete spandrels and balconies which span between the structural columns, forming a strong grid-like pattern. Precast concrete elements have an exposed aggregate finish. Framed with bronze anodised aluminium frames, the window mullions and transoms are indistinct, enabling the glazing to appear as strong horizontal elements. Intermediate mullions divide the upper bays and window sets into two parts, providing a subtle contrast between the upper and lower facades of the tower. This also reflected the original dual function of the tower - the upper floors provided hotel accommodation and the lower floors were designed for office use. The building is crowned by a solid parapet, divided into bays by vertical insets which continue the line of the façade columns below, which has provided a name plate for the building. Large vertical expanses of face brickwork on the south, west and east facades contrast with the glazed areas of these facades.

The form of the two-level podium at the base of the building, with continuous glazing and broad fascias, has been retained; however the original concrete columns and fascias have been recently reclad. Sections of face brickwork (some overpainted) have been retained at the rear of the building. At ground level, the building is recessed to form a raised balcony to the main frontages to Little Bourke Street and the northern end of Exhibition Street. The main entrance to the building is located in Exhibition Street, flanked by the raised balcony and the entrance to the underground carpark at the southern extremity. A low brick façade with deep fascia is just visible behind the lower podium to the south of the central tower. This large section of the complex originally housed a cinema.

## INTEGRITY

The Former Bryson Centre, including the original form and the detailing of the exterior of the building above street level, remains highly intact to its original 1970-72 construction. Recent recladding of the structure and associated works at street level has altered the original design at this frontage.

Overall, the building retains a very high degree of architectural integrity to the Post-War Modernist style in fabric, form and detail. While the building has undergone alterations at street level, these do not diminish the ability to understand and appreciate the place as a fine example of a Post-War Modernist multi-storey building.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Former Bryson Centre at 174-192 Exhibition Street was constructed as a large multi-functional building containing office space, hotel accommodation with roof top swimming pool, cinema,



restaurants and retail space at the ground floor, however the external appearance of the place is similar to the typical multi-storey city office building of the period. It is a fine and representative example of the Post-War Modernist style and clearly demonstrates the typical characteristics of early 1960s to mid-1970s multi-storey commercial building design. Set on a double-storey podium base, the trabeated structural system of the building is clearly expressed on the grid-like external facades of the slim central tower. This is of particular note across the broad north façade where sets of glazing and projecting precast concrete spandrels and balconies span between structural columns. Despite modifications made to the building at street level, the upper facades of the Former Bryson Centre remain highly intact to their original design and can be clearly observed from Exhibition Street and Little Bourke Street.

There are a number of buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne which were constructed in the same period and display similar characteristics to the Former Bryson Centre. These are detailed below.

#### **State-significant places**

A small number of 1960s to mid 1970s buildings in the Hoddle Grid within the City of Melbourne have been assessed as being of State-level significance and are included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). These include:

- Total House, 170-90 Russell Street (Bogle & Banfield 1964-65; VHR H2329 & HO1095)
- Former Hoyts Cinema Centre, 134-44 Bourke Street (Peter Muller 1966-69)
- Victorian Government Offices, Treasury Reserve Precinct (Yuncken Freeman 1967-68 – outside the Hoddle Grid)
- Eagle House, 473 Bourke Street (Yuncken Freeman 1971-72; VHR H1807 & HO901)
- BHP House, 130-148 William Street (Yuncken Freeman 1969-72; VHR H1699 & HO767).

#### **Locally-significant places**

As only a piece-meal evaluation of postwar buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne has previously occurred, few buildings from this period are currently included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme on a permanent basis. Those that are, are generally currently included within Heritage Precincts but are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as Individual Heritage Places, as follows:

# Precinct Heritage Overlay



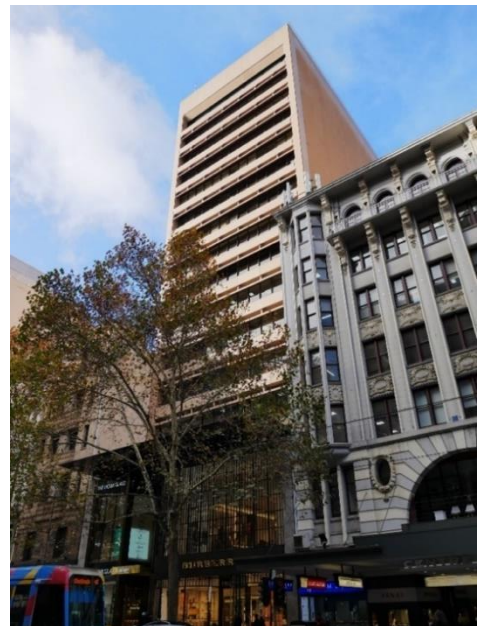
Former Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1964-66) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



Former State Savings Bank of Victoria, 45-63 Swanston Street, (Buchan Laird & Buchan, 1974) included in HO505 Flinders Gate Precinct (Non-contributory).



Wales Corner, 221-231 Collins Street (Stephenson & Turner, 1964-66) included in HO502 The Block Precinct (fronting Collins Street) & HO506 (fronting Swanston Street) Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



Former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building, 251-257 Collins Street, (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1974-73) included in HO502 The Block Precinct (fronting Collins Street) & HO506 (fronting Flinders Lane) (Non-contributory).

One individual heritage place recently included in a site-specific Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis is the Scottish Amicable Building, 128-146 Queen Street (Yuncken Freeman, 1966) (HO1213):



Scottish Amicable Building, 128-146 Queen Street

#### *Other examples*

Despite the demolition of many 1960s and 1970s multi-storey commercial buildings in the City of Melbourne, a number of fine and highly representative examples of this building type that are not currently included in the Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis have been retained with sufficient integrity to demonstrate this class of place. These buildings clearly illustrate the advancement of construction techniques from the 1960s through to the mid 1970s and demonstrate the broad range of design approaches of the period. The podiums of the majority of these places have been modified at street level. Examples include:



Former RACV Club, 111-129 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1961) (Interim HO1068)



Former Australia Pacific House, 136-144 Exhibition Street (McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, 1975-78)





Royal Insurance Group Building, 430-442 Collins Street, (Yuncken Freeman, 1965) (Interim HO1010)



Office Building, 516-520 Collins Street (architect unknown, c1974)



Former Guardian Building, 454-456 Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1960-61)



Former South British Insurance Company Ltd Building, 155-161 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1961-62)



Former State Savings Bank, 258-264 Little Bourke Street (Meldrum & Partners, 1961)



MLA Building, 308-336 Collins Street (Stephenson & Turner, 1963)



Royal Mail House, 255-267 Bourke Street (D Graeme Lumsden, 1963)



Former Sleigh Corner Building, 158-164 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1964)



The Former Houston Building, 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kolle & Associates, 1965)



AMP Tower and St James Building Complex, 527-555 Bourke Street (Skidmore Owings & Merrill in association with Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1965-69)



Former Dalgety House, 457-471 Bourke Street (Peddle Thorp & Walker, 1966-68)



Former State Saving Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb, 1967-68)





Former Legal & General House, 375-383 Collins Street (B Evans, Murphy, Berg & Hocking, 1967)



Former AMP Building, 344-350 Collins Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb, 1966-68)



Equitable House, 335-349 Little Collins Street (unknown architect, 1968)



Former Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street (Meldrum & Partners with Peddle Thorp Walker, 1968-70)



Former Methodist Church Centre, 130-134 Little Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1966-67)



Cowan House, 457-469 Little Collins Street (E & G Kolle, 1969)





Lonsdale Exchange, 447-553 Lonsdale Street  
(Commonwealth Department of Works, 1969)



Former Dillingham Estates House, 114-128 William Street  
(Yuncken Freeman, 1976) (Interim HO1180)



Office Building, 178-188 William Street (McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, 1972-73)



Former Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building,  
359-373 Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon,  
c1972-75)



Nubrick House, 269-275 William Street (Buchan Laird & Buchan, 1972)



Former Law Department Building, 221-231 Queen Street  
(Fischer Group, 1972)



Former National Bank of Australasia Stock Exchange Branch, 85-91 Queen Street (Meldrum & Partners, 1973)



Former MLC Building, 303-317 Collins Street (Demaine, Russell, Trundle, Armstrong & Orton, c1970-1973)



Office Building, 589-603 Bourke Street (Peddle Thorp de Preu, 1973-75)

### Analysis

As a fine, highly intact and highly representative example of a Post-War Modernist style building, the Former Bryson Centre clearly demonstrates an important phase in the architectural development of multi-storey commercial buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne. Similar to a number of 1960s to mid-1970s buildings listed above, the subject building clearly demonstrates this class of place.

**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.

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 43.01-4)	No
INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

**OTHER**

N/A



## REFERENCES

Contextual History references contained within *City of Melbourne Hoddle Grid Heritage Review: Postwar Thematic Environmental History 1945-1975*

*Architecture in Australia* (AIA), November/December 1972.

Building Application Index (BAI) for the City of Melbourne.

Building Application Plans (BAP), City of Melbourne.

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Bryson, John 'Memoirs, Jack Bryson, an uneducated man', <<http://www.johnbryson.net/memoirs/jack-bryson-an-uneducated-man>>, accessed Feb 2020.

City of Melbourne Libraries online Heritage Collection, reference nos. as cited.

Clerehan, Neil, 'Vale Ronald Lyon 1920–2006' Obituary, <<https://architectureau.com/articles/obituary-15/>>, accessed November 2019.

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Statham, John (2012), 'Perrott, Leslie M' in Philip Goad & Julie Willis's (Eds.) (2012), *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Port Melbourne.

*The Age*.

*The Canberra Times* [A.C.T.]

## PREVIOUS STUDIES

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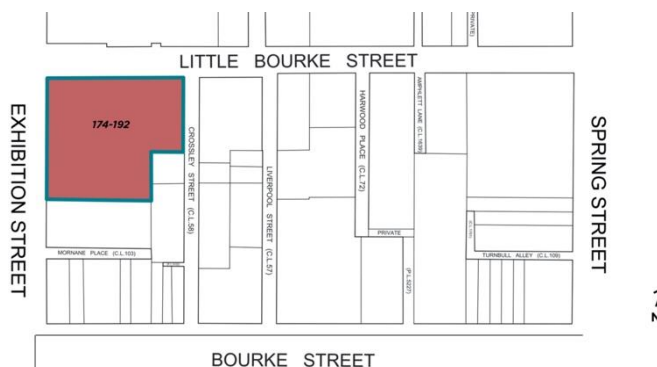
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Heritage Place:** The Former Bryson Centre



**PS ref no:** HOXXXX



### What is significant?

The Former Bryson Centre, 174-192 Exhibition Street, a multi-storey commercial building constructed in 1970-72.

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.

Later alterations made to the lower levels of the building are not significant.

### How it is significant?

The Former Bryson Centre at 174-192 Exhibition Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

### Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1970-72 to a design by Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa, the Former Bryson Centre has a clear association with the postwar building boom which transformed central Melbourne into a modern high-rise city. The design of these commercial buildings from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s – many of which were architect designed – was driven by the commercial demands and the prestige afforded by a dominant city presence (Criterion A).

Containing a range of facilities for both tourists and businesspeople, the Former Bryson Centre was described on opening in 1972 as a 'city within a city'. Together with the earlier Southern Cross Hotel, which was described in a similar manner on opening in 1962 (since demolished), and Collins Place (completed 1981), this building demonstrates the development of this multi-functional building type in central Melbourne (Criterion A).

The Former Bryson Centre is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The multi-functional building combining office space, hotel accommodation, public amenities and retail space, strongly reflects an architectural style which was popular from the 1960s through to the mid 1970s, particularly in central Melbourne, and demonstrates an innovative approach to commercial development in the 1970s. Constructed as a 23-storey structure, the Former Bryson Centre clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a later postwar commercial building, including a dominant podium base, grid-like walls which clearly express the trabeated structural system and alternating horizontal strips of glazing and solid projecting spandrels/balconies, as well as the use of materials such as precast concrete panels. These demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

**Primary source**

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

