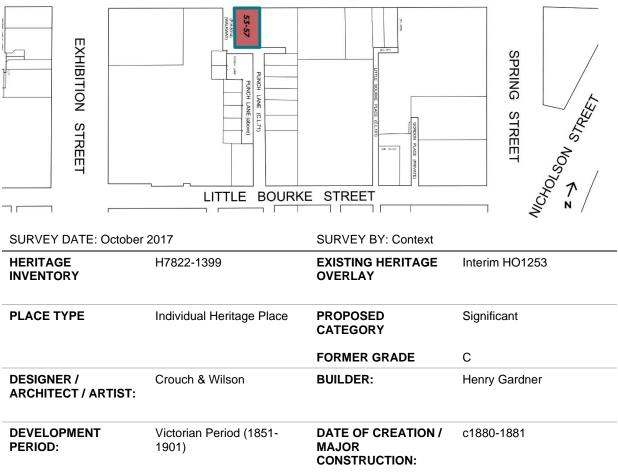
SITE NAME	Shops and residences
STREET ADDRESS	53-57 Lonsdale Street Melbourne

105672

PROPERTY ID

LONSDALE STREET





ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any 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
HISTORIC THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
13 Enjoying the City	13.6 Eating and drinking
	OTHER SUB-THEMES
5 Building a commercial city	5.4 Developing a retail centre
10 Shaping cultural life	10.3 Belonging to an ethnic or cultural group

LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
Archaeological block no: 24	Inventory no: 399
Character of Occupation: Comm	nercial, residential
Land sale details not provided.	
1866 Cox	Building on site
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Three two-storey buildings (Levy, Wallis, Davis)
1905/6 Mahlstedt	Three two-storey buildings
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAN	D USE
1890s	Retail and residential
1920s	Restaurant
1960s	Cafes

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Extent of overlay: Refer to map

SUMMARY

Originally built as a row of three two-storey shops with residences above, the building is closely associated with Italian wine bars/café/restaurants, with similar business operating from the premises continually from 1901 to 2001. John Rinaldi opened a wine shop at 55 Lonsdale Street in 1901. Most recently it was the site of Marchetti's Latin restaurant.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Building a commercial city

Developing a retail centre

Even before the early 1850s, Melbourne had established the foundational infrastructure for international trade and commerce, including retail markets, shipping agents, and industry and finance houses - the beginnings of an entrepreneurial global city (Context 2012:2).

Retailing in Melbourne gained official recognition when eight market commissioners were elected in 1841 from a roll of local voters. The commissioners established the Western Market, which became the principal place for selling fresh food, with many goods transported from Melbourne to pastoral settlements. At this time Melbourne's population was 4479, and the colony's was 20,416 (Young and Spearritt 2008). The growth of retailing was accompanied by the construction of warehouses to store goods.

Miles Lewis notes that various precincts within the city centre had emerged by the early 1840s, and that this pattern

remained little changed into the 20th century and which ... survives today – mercantile and warehousing activity near the Pool and the wharves, banking in central Collins Street, the retailing heart between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets, the medical precinct in the vicinity of Dr Richard Howitt's house in Collins Street East, and so on (cited in Context 2012:12).

Suburban retailing increased towards the end of the 1880s as greater Melbourne's population approached 280,000 and tramlines transported shoppers to suburban shops (Young and Spearritt 2008).

Shaping cultural Life

Belonging to an ethnic or cultural group

By the 1920s, Chinese, Jews, Italians, Greeks and Germans had settled in inner Melbourne in significant numbers and formed themselves into close-knit communities with a strong ethnic identity. Typically, these groups favoured poorer, low rental neighbourhoods, hence the congregation of the Chinese at the eastern end of Little Bourke Street. Over time, these ethnic communities prospered, with many Jewish businesses achieving prominence, and the Chinese becoming successful merchants and furniture-makers around Little Lonsdale and Russell Streets.

The mass immigration of Europeans during the post-war period led Melbourne to become one of the most multi-cultural cities in the world. Italians and Greeks occupied run-down Victorian workers' cottages, and rejuvenated them, often in a Mediterranean style, and established cafes and other places of business. Italians congregated in Carlton, where they transformed Lygon Street into Melbourne's Little Italy, while Greek businesses and eateries were concentrated in Lonsdale Street (Context 2012:80).



Enjoying the city

Eating and drinking

Fine dining had been the preserve of the wealthy in nineteenth century Melbourne. Restaurants were few and gentlemen enjoyed good meals at their clubs. Others generally made do with the 'plain fare' served up at the city hotels. The mix of different cultural traditions in Melbourne contributed to varied culinary offerings from around the middle of the nineteenth century. One observer described Bourke Street as 'packed with foreign cafes'. Gunster's Vienna Café on 'the Block', for example, was popular in the 1870s. Vincent Fasoli opened Fasoli's restaurant at 108 Lonsdale Street c1897, the popularity of his establishment amongst Melbourne's bohemians and intelligentsia set a precedent for the flourishing café society developed by Italian communities in subsequent decades (Context 2012:98; Swinbank 1994:5).

In the 1950s and 1960s an influx of Italian World War Two migrants disseminated Italian culture in Melbourne as restaurants and pizza cafes sprung up across the inner-city area, including Pellegrini's in the city and Toto's in Carlton. The significant influence of Italian culture upon Australian culinary traditions had its roots in the nineteenth century and continues to have enduring presence and value in Melbourne today.

SITE HISTORY

The site of 53-57 Lonsdale Street, part of Crown allotment 16, Block 24 of the City of Melbourne, was first submitted for sale in 1840. James Williamson purchased the allotment, which had frontages to Lonsdale and Little Bourke streets. Punch Lane (formerly Princes Place) abuts the rear of the site (*Port Phillip Patriot and Melbourne Advertiser*, 14 September 1840: 4).

Three buildings dating from c1869-73 existed on the subject site, then numbered 214-218 Lonsdale Street (Mahlstedt Map Section 1, no 24, 1888; MMBW Detail Plan no 1014, 1895). Sands and McDougall directories indicate that between 1869 and 1873, three buildings were erected on the lot; it is probable that these buildings were primarily used for residential purposes. By 1880, the buildings at 214-218 Lonsdale Street were listed as vacant and were subsequently demolished (S&M 1869-1880).

Between 1880-1881 Henry Gardner constructed a row of three two-storey brick shop and residences to the design of Thomas Crouch and Ralph Wilson on the site. Edmund Ashley, the landowner, commissioned the new building for commercial use (MCC registration no 8624 as cited in AAI, record no 76303). Hyman Goldman, tailor (number 57); Charles Trick, furniture dealer (55); and Louis Davis, dealer (53), were the occupants of the buildings in 1884. Neither Goldman nor Davis remained at the premises for long. In 1892, Mrs J M Jacobsen ran a ladies' underclothing shop at 53 Lonsdale Street, but the following year her tenancy was replaced by that of Abraham Davis, who initially ran a ladies' underclothing business but who turned his business to drapery by 1904. The vacancy at 57 Lonsdale Street following Goldman's departure in 1892 was filled by Joseph Levy, also a tailor, who remained there until 1904. From 1884 to 1893 a Mr Frick was the occupant of 55 Lonsdale Street, recorded variously in the Sands and McDougall directories as a furniture dealer, French polisher, and repairer (S&M 1884-1904).

From 1901 to 2001 the building housed an Italian wine bar/café/restaurant. John Rinaldi was the first in what became a lineage of Italian restauranteurs here, opening a wine shop and café, Cucina Italiana, at 55 Lonsdale Street in 1901. Rinaldi was one of the earliest contributors to Melbourne's



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Italian dining culture. In 1912, Paul Zapardi replaced Rinaldi as the occupier, and expanded the wine shop to include 55-57 Lonsdale Street (S&M 1901-1912). Victor Maroco, former chef at the Savoy Melbourne, was the next tenant, who ran an Italian wine café named Café d'Italia at the site from 1914 to c1917 (*Truth* 20 June 1914:4). The wine café was subsequently run by Giuseppe Noli (1917-20) then Andrea and Lilian De Campo (1921-22) (S&M 1901-22).

The Molina family ran Molina's Café d'Italia at 53-57 Lonsdale Street from 1922-1951. Ernesto Molina was born in Rome c1886 and arrived in Adelaide in 1922 with his friend, and later Florentino chef, Salvatore who he worked with at the South Australia Hotel for two years before coming to Melbourne (Swinbank 1994:5). In 1918 Molina operated Café Roma on Swanston Street and before that worked as a chef at the Grand Hotel on Spring Street (now the Hotel Windsor) (*Punch*, 5 September 1918:2). He received his Australian naturalisation certificate in 1920, and two years later he replaced his predecessors, the De Campo's, as the proprietor of Café d'Italia (Ancestry 015). After tobacconist/confectioner Rachel Collins vacated 53 Lonsdale Street, Molina extended the café to 53-57 Lonsdale Street (S&M 1922). Electoral rolls show that, from 1922, Molina lived above the café at 55 Lonsdale Street with his wife, Francesca, and their three children, Yolanda, Joseph and Luciano. (AEC, 1922). The café was well patronised and served quality, home-cooked Italian cuisine; a typical meal there may have consisted of 'minestrone, followed by spaghetti, lasagne or ravioli, then a main course of perhaps cutlets Milanese etc with salad, beans and bread, finishing off with fruit and cheese' (Swinbank 1994).

Internal alterations were carried out in the 1930s, and photos from this period indicate that the exterior was repainted, and typographical signage added to the façade c1925 (Figures 1 and 2) (*Herald* 11 July 1930:14). During World War Two the café name was shortened to the more Anglicised name of Molina's Café, a result of hostility toward Italians during World War Two (COASIT, P-06454). Anglicising Italian names was not an uncommon practice: Giuseppe Codognotto, founder of the Italian Society on Little Bourke Street, also removed the word Italian from its name during World War Two (Swinbank 1994:7). Following Ernesto Molina's death in 1949, the license for the site was transferred to Joseph Molina, Ernesto's son (*Argus* 1 February 1950:9). The family operated Molina's at Lonsdale Street for a short time before closing the premises in 1951 and reopening the business as Molina's Imperial at the Imperial Hotel on Bourke Street (*Argus* 21 December 1951:4).

Italian cafes/restaurants remained at 53-55 Lonsdale Street until 2001. J Nicotra operated a restaurant at the site between 1955 and 1958, followed by Guido Cipolato (1958-64), trading as Venezia Café; David Triaca (1964-84) trading as Café Latin; and Bill and Cheryl Marchetti (1984 - 2001) trading as Marchetti's Latin restaurant (COASIT, P-06454).

Many of the proprietors of the eating establishments housed in the subject building came from families well known for their culinary expertise. David Triaca was the son of Camillo Triaca, a sculptor from Lucca, who, in 1924, purchased Café Latin with Rinaldo Massoni when it was located in Exhibition Street (Swinbank 1994:6). Triaca made an effort to educate Australians about the importance of pairing quality wine and food; his son David, and Massoni's son, Leon, also had a significant influence upon Melbourne's dining culture in their own right (Swinbank 1994:6). The Marchetti's ran the successful Café Latin at the site after Triaca. Bavarian born Bob Marchetti, who started as an apprentice at Florentino, also ran Marchetti's Tuscan Grill in Melbourne (Mietta's Restaurant Guide, 2018).

Extensive renovations were carried out at 53-57 Lonsdale Street during Marchetti's occupation of the site (1984-2001), and it appears that the windows and entry on the façade were altered at this time



and a single storey extension made to the rear of the building (Erlich 2008). The subject site presently hosts three separate eating establishments in the ground floor, two occupying the original buildings, and the third located in the new addition to the rear of the lot. The upper level now houses an office (CoMMaps).



Figure 1. Café d'Italia Restaurant, c1922. (Source: COASIT 2006)



Figure 2. Molina's Café d'Italia, c1925, showing new signage. (Source: Swinbank 1994:6)

Crouch & Wilson, architects

Thomas James Crouch (1832/3-1889) was born in Hobart and began his architectural practice under the tutelage of Alexander Dawson, an officer of the Royal Engineer's Department. Crouch was one of the first architects to be articled to a professional in Australia and he commenced practice in Tasmania in 1850. Two years later Crouch relocated to Melbourne, spending some time working on the goldfields before recommencing his practice in Melbourne in 1854. In 1858 Crouch entered a professional partnership with Ralph Wilson (? – 1886) that lasted until 1881. Together, the architects



designed several notable civic and religious buildings, including the Wesleyan Chinese Mission, Victoria's largest nineteenth-century synagogue on Albert Street in East Melbourne, the Prahran Town Hall, and the Homeopathic Hospital (later Prince Henry's Hospital). Crouch and Wilson are most well known for their involvement in the Melbourne General Post Office design competition. The architects were awarded first prize for their design submission, however, the government instead adopted the design of A E Johnson, to whom they had awarded second prize. The General Post Office was subsequently built to a composited design by Johnson with elements of Crouch & Wilson's design included (Tibbits 2012:183).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The row of rendered brick shops/residences at 53-57 Lonsdale Street is comprised of three identical shops, demarcated by engaged pilasters running to the top of a simple parapet. Each pilaster has a scroll detail and other decorative markings. Ball finials were originally located on the top of each pilaster, but no longer exist. A deep moulded cornice runs the full width of the building at the base of the parapet. Each shop has a pair of segmented arched window openings with moulded architraves over and a matching cornice running between the openings, at springing point. A square grill is located over the top of each windows and a rosette detail occurs at the corners of the moulded cornice. Double hung timber windows are intact. A moulded cornice runs along the bottom of the upper façade.

At the rear of the buildings, early form and face red brick finish is still visible, with a number of brick chimney also intact. Number 53 is located on the corner of Punch Lane and has a large window to the laneway.

Alternations have occurred at ground level. Early photos (Figures Figure and 2) show a verandah with cast iron posts over the footpath, signage to the upper façade (1930s), ball finials on the tops of the pilasters over the parapet, and glazed shopfronts with low stalls and a recessed entry to one side of each shop. These features no longer exist.

During the Marchetti's occupancy of the site, the entry and windows to the façade were remodelled. The buildings now feature clear-glazed frontages to Lonsdale Street and part of Punch Lane. Two, single storey extensions have been constructed at the rear of the site and a single-storey extension has been added along the rear of the building. It is likely these additions were made when the Marchetti's refurbished the premises (CoMMaps).

INTEGRITY

The upper façade of the building remains relatively intact. Wrought iron window baskets are a recent addition. Significant alterations have occurred at street level, with no evidence of the original shopfronts remaining. New additions have been made at the rear of the site.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Within the central city area Bourke Street was once known for its 'foreign cafes', but businesses tended to congregate in Lonsdale Street and Carlton in the early decades of the twentieth century. Lonsdale Street continues with a strong Greek tradition in its dining, whereas Carlton became the home of Italian restaurants. Grossi Florentino remains as a long-standing Italian traditional restaurant at 78-84 Bourke Street.



These small, two-storey shop buildings, erected to serve as daily retail points, were once common in the central city. Some surviving shops can be found in both main and smaller streets and laneways, and while the use of upper storey residences became largely extinct, the ground floors of these examples continue to operate as commercial outlets.

The subject row of shops compares well with the following examples, drawn chiefly from the Central City Heritage Review 2011, being of a similar use, scale, location and creation date. The below images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

Selected examples of Capital City Zone shop and residences constructed around the early 1880s include:

212 Little Bourke Street, 1883 (HO695, Significant in HO507 Little Bourke Precinct)

A two-storey brick building, one of a row of three, built 1883. The building retains its simple Victorian detailing at the upper level but has been altered at ground level.



Figure 3. 212 Little Bourke Street constructed 1883.

113-117 Little Bourke Street, 1882 (HO690 113-125 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, Significant in HO507 Little Bourke Precinct)

A row of two-storey brick shops built 1882. The building retains its simple Victorian detailing at the upper level but has been altered at ground level.



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Figure 4. 113-117 Little Bourke Street constructed 1882. (Google)

73-77 Bourke Street, c1880 (HO536, Significant in HO500 Bourke Hill Precinct)

A row of three three-storey brick shops built around 1880. The building retains its Victorian detailing at the upper level but has been altered at ground level.



Figure 5. 73-77 Bourke Street constructed c1880.

Grossi Florentino, 78-84 Bourke Street, 1860, 1922 (HO537, Significant in HO500 Bourke Hill Precinct)

A two-storey brick building incorporating two former shops. 78-80 Bourke was built in 1860 and 82-84 Bourke was built in 1922. The buildings were incorporated in 1944. The building has a long association with Italian wine bar/restaurants. In 1871, a wine bar was established on the site, and in 1928 a café named Café Florentino was established. The renowned Italian restaurant Grossi Florentino has operated from the site for several decades. (http://www.grossi.com.au/history)



Figure 6. 78-84 Bourke Street constructed 1860 and 82-84 Bourke Street constructed 1922.



Historically, together with Grossi Florentino, Marchetti's Latin is a place that has continually operated as an Italian bar/restaurant/café since the late nineteenth century.

As a place 53-57 Lonsdale Street compares with the examples above as a row of shops from the early 1880s, built at a time when Melbourne was developing rapidly as a retail and commercial centre. The Victorian detailing to the upper façade of the subject building is more finely resolved than that of the first two examples and quite intact. Alterations have occurred to the shopfronts in all the examples.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

1	CRITERION A Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).
	CRITERION B Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).
	CRITERION C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).
✓	CRITERION D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).
	CRITERION E Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).
	CRITERION F Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)
	CRITERION G 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).
✓	CRITERION H 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 43.01-3)	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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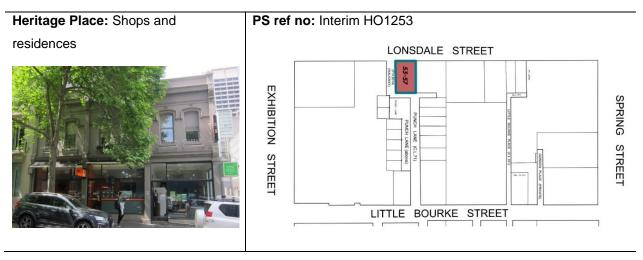


PREVIOUS STUDIES

Central Activities District Conservation Study 1985	D
Central City Heritage Study 1993	C
Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE



What is significant?

The row of shops at 53-57 Lonsdale Street, completed c1880-81.

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 buildings high level of integrity to its original design;
- Simple parapet;
- Engaged pilasters with scroll detail and decorative markings;
- Deep moulded cornice with rosettes;
- Segmented arched window openings with moulded architraves;
- Minor cornice connecting spring point of window arches;
- Original wall vents;
- Double hung timber windows;
- Minor moulded cornice at bottom of upper façade; and
- Brick chimneys.

Later alterations made to the street level façade, the wrought iron window baskets and single storey extensions at the rear of the site are not significant.

How it is significant?

53-57 Lonsdale Street is of local historic, representative and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

53-57 Lonsdale Street is historically significant for its links with Melbourne Italian restauranteur families who conducted eating houses in the building from 1901 to 2001. These families included the Rinaldis (1901-12), the Molinas (1922-51), and the Triacas (1964-84). The building is historically significant for its demonstration of the flourishing Italian café society that developed in the first decades of the twentieth century prior to Italian migrants establishing restaurants and pizza cafes in the inner-city area in the



1950s and 1960s. The influence of Italian culture upon Australian culinary traditions continues to have enduring presence and value in Melbourne today. (Criterion A)

53-57 Lonsdale Street is a fine example of a small-scaled shop and residence from the mid-late Victorian period, built at a time when Melbourne was developing rapidly as a retail and commercial centre. 53-57 Lonsdale Street is a modest example of the work of noted civic and institutional architects Crouch and Wilson, whose practice operated in Melbourne between 1854-1881. The façade of 53-57 Lonsdale street is characterised by classical Victorian-era detailing with paired segmented arched windows, pilasters, scrolls and cornice detail typical of the period. The rear facades and chimneys are largely intact and contribute to the building's integrity. (Criterion D)

53-57 Lonsdale Street is significant for its long association with Italian restaurants, restauranteurs and their clientele for nearly a century (1901-2001) as part Melbourne dining traditions, serving generations of Melbournians and reflecting the celebrated 'Italianisation' of food and wine culture during the twentieth century. It is significant for its direct and long-standing associations with several important Italian restaurateurs/families who have significantly influenced Melbourne's culinary culture, and who introduced new cuisines and dining styles to Melbourne. From 1922 to 1951 the Molina family operated Molina's Café d'Italia at the subject site, and for some time lived at the upstairs residence. David Triaca ran Café Latin at the subject site from 1964 to 1984, followed by Bill and Cheryl Marchetti trading as Marchetti's Latin from 1984-2001. (Criterion H)

Primary source

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

