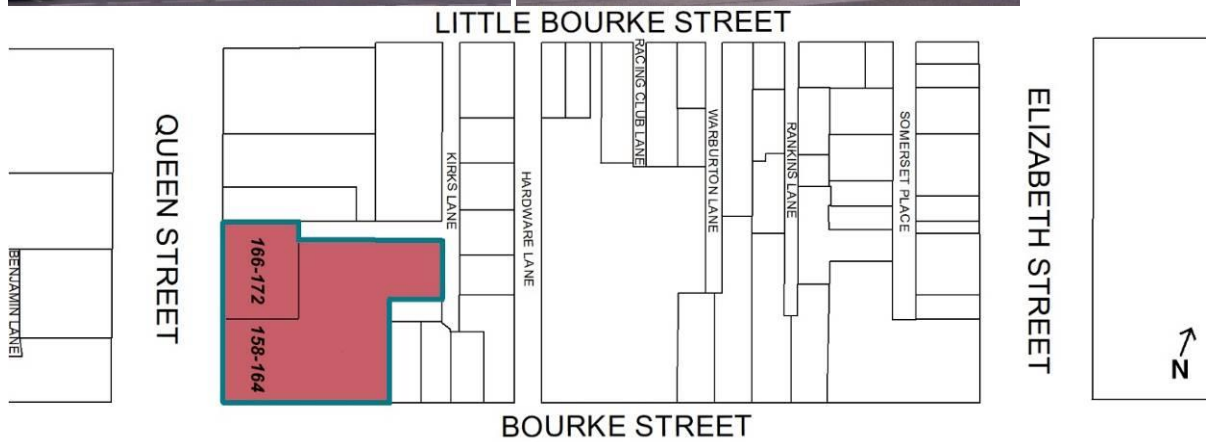


SITE NAME	Former Sleigh Buildings (H C Sleigh Building & former Sleigh Corner)
STREET ADDRESS	158-172 Queen Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108107 & 108108



SURVEY DATE:	March 2019	SURVEY BY:	Context
HERITAGE INVENTORY	N/A	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Heritage Place	PROPOSED CATEGORY	Significant
		FORMER GRADE	C
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Bates Smart & McCutcheon	BUILDER:	Hansen & Yuncken Pty Ltd (166-172)
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Postwar Period (1945-1975)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1953-1955 (166-172) 1964 (158-164)

THEMES

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
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 Business and finance

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Retail, Warehouses
1920s	Retail, Warehouses
1960s	Offices

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

The former Sleigh buildings were built for HC Sleigh Ltd, founders of Golden Fleece petrol and service stations. The first building of eight storeys, the H C Sleigh Building, was constructed in 1953-55 at 166-172 Queen Street. It was occupied by HG Sleigh Ltd from 1955-65. Requiring new premises, a larger 15-storey building was constructed in 1964 for the company on the adjoining corner site at 158-164 Queen Street, the Sleigh Corner Building (now known as Elders House). HC Sleigh remained at the 1964 building until 1981. Both buildings were designed by Bates Smart & McCutcheon in the Post-War Modernist style, which is differently expressed in the architecture of each building. 158-164 Queen Street retains its original publicly accessible plaza with sculpture 'Transformation' created by sculptor Tom Bass. Both buildings are used as offices, with 158-164 Queen Street occupied by Elders since 1983.

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).

SITE HISTORY

The subject site, part of Crown Allotment 1, Block 20, was occupied at least by 1866. By 1888, on the land today known as 158-172 Queen Street, there were seven two-storey shops along Queen Street and two two-storey buildings and a larger scale complex known as Clarke's Buildings along Bourke Street. Clarke's Buildings comprised a four-storey main building fronting Bourke Street and three three-storey warehouses at the rear. By 1910, the rear area fronting Kirks Lane was further built with two three-storey warehouses developed for the Clarke's Buildings (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993, Inventory no 466; Mahlstedt Map, section 1, no 20, 1888; section 1, no 13, 1910).

All these buildings were noted as still being present in 1925 (Mahlstedt Map Section 1, no 13, 1925).

H C Sleigh Building, 166-172 Queen Street, constructed 1953-55

Four two-storey Victorian-era shops at 166-172 Queen Street were demolished immediately before the construction of the current building (*Argus* 7 September 1955:13).

The H C Sleigh Building was built 1953-55 as an office block for H C Sleigh Ltd to a design by architects Bates Smart & McCutcheon by builders Hansen & Yuncken Pty Ltd (*Argus* 7 September 1955:13).

In anticipation of its construction, the building was described as the 'first postwar' city office block to be constructed in Melbourne by a private company (*Herald* 14 August 1953:9). Construction of the building was delayed because of the postwar shortage of building materials and a subsequent freeze on the construction of large buildings (*Herald* 14 August 1953:9).

The building at 166-172 Queen Street was initially designed to be seven storeys, with two basements for parking, when the provision of on-site parking was understood as 'the modern overseas practice'. The design allowed for the addition of a further three floors to eventually provide 10 floors above ground level, at the 40 metre (132-foot) height limit (*Herald* 14 August 1953:9). The construction was to be carried out with reinforced concrete walls with hollow block concrete floors. The façade of the subject building was to be characterised by its 'flush granite plinth and terra cotta surround' and 'projecting stone grid containing recessed aluminium windows and metal spandrels' (see Figure 1) (*Herald* 14 August 1953:9).

By 1955, the H C Sleigh Building was eventually completed as an eight-storey building (see Figure 2). The planned height-limit additions were never carried out. H C Sleigh Ltd left the premises to move into a new building on the neighbouring site erected at 158-164 Queen Street in 1964.

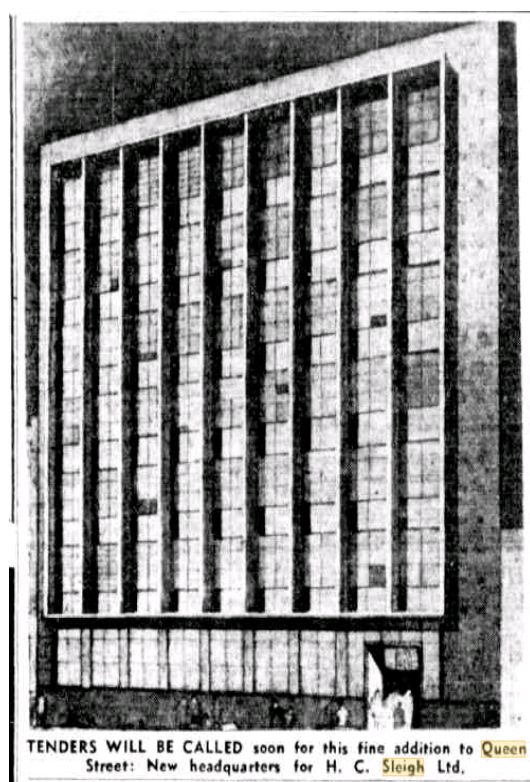


Figure 1. A drawing of the building as published in the *Herald* newspaper in 1953 before construction had begun. Note the elevation comprises seven levels. (Source: *Herald* 14 August 1953:9)



Figure 2. The building as it was soon after construction, faced in blue tiles. The building was actually constructed to be eight stories, rather than the initial seven. (Source: 'HC Sleigh and Co, 1957, NAA)

When the H C Sleigh Building was completed in 1955, the *Argus* reported on its use of innovative architecture and the scale of the undertaking:

The new H C Sleigh Building represents not only the heart and brain of an organisation which grew into something vast from the first courageous ideas of a small Melbourne businessman who set out 50 years ago as "an agent." Its official opening today marks not just the triumph of his initiative and drive. It marks also a triumph in the thinking, designing and planning by Australian architects; a triumph in building by the men who build buildings: a triumph in resolving threatening industrial quarrels before the quarrel really begins: a triumph in getting building materials to the building site on time. Everyone has "teamed up", on this job, and they have done mighty well. Outside appearance of the building is deceptive. It looks more squat than it is. Its squarish lines break down true concept of its height. First impression is of acres of glass, silvering glints of aluminium bluish tiles. The more observant of those who look at it from the street note the absence of artificial lights burning in daytime. The answer? At least three-quarters of, its eastern and western walls, are of glass, and whatever inner walls or partitions it needs are of glass, and glass has been used everywhere possible to bring in natural lighting. A similar impression is made when one enters the building because there is an air of spaciousness and of easy lighting. There is an air too, of quietness and of dignity. The ground floor embraces the shipping and main business offices which clients need to enter. Keen colours and attractive mural decorations, growing flowers, comfortable furniture, all tend to make it easier for the stranger entering the building. The upper floors accommodate the various office staffs, and the overall pattern is the same - comfort, good lighting, a variety of colouring to break monotony. Where large staffs have had to be accommodated large rooms with sound proofed ceilings have been provided. Offices for executives have been built along the side walls, but they have not been shut off from the main rooms. Their walls are low partition walls of fluted glass, and they have no doors so that an atmosphere of easy access can be encouraged. The upper floors house an excellent canteen, a theatrette with equipment to show films or to be used as a conference room. The roof will have its garden in time, and-space for recreation. It carries a two-bed roomed flat for the building's caretaker - which would be the envy of many married people - equipped with all that one would want, tastefully coloured, convenient in every way. The rooms for the managerial staff and the board and for all senior executives are a mixture of luxury, dignity and austerity. They are not elaborate, but they are comfortable and excellent.

The building was completed in what is thought to be record time for anything comparable to it in Melbourne...Planning had been wise; industrial troubles were handled quickly and easily and amicably, and because of the diversity of its activities, H C Sleigh Ltd., for whom the building was being constructed, was able to get materials on site on time for the builders. Whatever of the 325 tons of structural steel and the 140 tons of reinforcing steel could not be bought in Australia was imported. Cement and glass were readily available. There was no shortage of labour and 130 skilled and unskilled men were employed at the peak of the work. Co-operation between Sleigh's, the architects, the builders, the sub-contractors, the unions, the workmen was excellent all the way through, and the building went on to schedule... (Argus 7 September 1955:13).

When the building was constructed, the façade was clad in blue tiles (see Figure 2). These have since been removed, most likely after 1993; removal of tiles or the repainting of the building are not noted in the building permit card for the site (MBAI).

The H C Sleigh Building's primary use has been as professional offices from its opening year of 1955. H C Sleigh occupied the building from 1955 until 1964. The company then moved into a new building, also designed by architects Bates Smart & McCutcheon, which it erected next door at 158-164 Queen Street (known as 160 Queens Street) (S&Mc 1955; National Trust 2014:49). The building at 158-164 Queen Street is discussed below. The building at 166-172 Queen Street was occupied in the years that followed by various law firms, stockbrokers and shipping agents (S&Mc 1965, 1970, 1974). The Australian Guarantee Corporation and Traders Finance Corporation were both occupants of the building from at least 1965 to 1974 (S&Mc 1965, 1974).

CPA Australia was the tenant of the building by 1991 (*Age* 16 September 1991:22). The building was refurbished in 1991, and advertised for sale as CPA House in 1999 (*Age* 4 September 1999:96; CoMMaps 2019).

The building at 166-172 Queen Street is currently tenanted by 11 businesses, one shop and one food and drink outlet (CoMMaps 2019).

Former Sleigh Corner, 158-164 Queen Street, constructed 1964

In the 1960s, the Victorian-era shops and all structures that formed part of the Clarke's Buildings were demolished, to make way for the second H C Sleigh building at 158-164 Queen Street (Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 13, 1948).

The building at 158-164 Queen Street was constructed as the new headquarters for H C Sleigh Ltd in 1963-64 (Figure 3), with architects Bates Smart & McCutcheon again responsible for the design (as seen in Figure 4) (National Trust 2014:49). The building at 158-164 Queen Street, referred to as Sleigh Corner, was in use by February 1964 and was officially opened by the Honourable H E Bolte, MLA, Premier of Victoria in March 1964 (National Trust 2014:38; *Age* 12 March 1964:11).



Figure 3. The subject building during construction. The sign on the scaffolding is advertising the site as the new headquarters for H C Sleigh. (Source: Sievers 1963, NLA)



Figure 4. An illustration of the H C Sleigh Ltd building after its opening in March 1964. (Source: Age 12 March 1964:11)

H C Sleigh Ltd's decision to erect an office building almost double the size of its previous location within a decade indicates the company's prosperity and growth at the time when, by 1964, the H C Sleigh Ltd group of companies operated two monthly passenger and cargo services to Hong Kong and Japan; exported goods to the value of £7,000,000 in 1963; owned 2000 Golden Fleece service stations across Australia; operated ocean tankers for transporting crude oil for refining into Golden Fleece petroleum products; owned Sleigh Exploration, which was actively engaged in the search for oil in Australia; and owned the Hardie Rubber Company and Climatedmaster Engineering Pty Ltd, which manufactured and installed heating and cooling equipment (Age 12 March 1964:11).

From 1964, the provision of a plaza space within the curtilages of new high-rise buildings became apparent in the City of Melbourne, as a result of the introduction of the site plot ratios (or floor area ratios) control that remained until 1999. A portion of the subject building incorporates a plaza, and the rear wall of the plaza that forms part of the building's original design features a sculpture by Tom Bass, named 'Transformation', installed at the same time of the building's construction in 1963-64 (see Figure 6. Showing the plaque marking the planting of trees in Queen Street by H C Sleigh and the ANZ Bank in 1959. (Source: Context 2019). (Melbourne Art Critic 2019). Bates Smart & McCutcheon collaborated with Bass in earlier projects at 43-51 Queen Street (1958) (assessed as part of this study) and Wilson Hall for the University of Melbourne (1956) (Goad 2012:73).

Reflecting the popularity of the 'Featurist' approach from the late 1950s and to the mid-1960s, the original exterior featured a combination of various ornamental features including grey-blue ceramic tiling, gold glass tiling and wall panels 'of reconstructed stone surfaced with crushed porcelain, through [sic] into relief by recessed bands of black ceramic mosaic' (*Architecture in Australia* April 1967:256; as cited in National Trust 2014:38). The original cladding has been removed, except for the rough stone surfaced wall panels.

H C Sleigh Ltd's development of the Queen Street area extended to the planting of trees in 1959 in the centre of Queen Street, in conjunction with the ANZ Bank (Figure 5). These trees have since been replaced with plane trees.

The subject building at 158-164 Queen Street also incorporates a four-storey building facing Kirks Lane, at the rear of the 1964 structure. This building appears as a four-storey car park in a 1960s map (see Figure 7). The only reference that can be found to building works on this site is a 1970 advertisement placed by builders Hansen & Yuncken for carpenters to undertake formwork at the H C Sleigh site in Kirks Lane (Age 30 July 1970:18). It is possible that the car park was reconfigured into an office building at this time. No other information could be found about the Kirks Lane building.

H C Sleigh Ltd was the main occupier of the building at 158-164 Queen Street from 1964 to 1981 (S&Mc 1965, 1974; Age 14 March 1981:84). Other long-term office tenancies included the Department of Labour and Industry (1966-1980), which used offices to house its Divisional Technical Service, its Industrial Appeals Court, and its Chief Engineer; Avon Cosmetics (1965-1970); Western Assurance Co (1970-1974); and Tubemakers of Australia (1970-1974) (S&Mc 1965, 1970, 1974).

The building was occupied by three honorary consular offices, Monaco, Finland and Belgium, between 1965 and 1974 (S&Mc 1965, 1970, 1974). Hamilton Sleigh, whose company H C Sleigh Ltd constructed the building, was the Vice-Consul of Finland in Victoria in May 1925 (*Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* 7 May 1925:761). The location of the Finnish consular office in the Sleigh Corner building between 1965 and 1974 reflects Sleigh's role (S&Mc 1965, 1970).

By 1983, the building's main occupant was rural services business, Elders Ltd (Age 23 April 1983:105). After arriving in Adelaide from Scotland in 1839 to extend his family's merchant and shipping business, Thomas Elder formed Elder, Stirling & Co in Adelaide with Edward Stirling, Robert Barr Smith, and John Taylor in 1855. When Stirling and Taylor retired in 1863, Barr Smith and Thomas Elder formed Elder Smith and Co. In 1888 Elder Smith and Co was amalgamated with its subsidiary Elder's Wool & Produce Co Ltd, established in 1882, to form Elder Smith & Co Ltd. By 1915, Elders operated branches and wool stores in all major rural areas, and by 1939, the company had offices in Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Geelong and London, as well as 38 country branches in South Australia, 25 in Western Australia, and two in New South Wales (Elders 2019).

After the recession during the World War Two, the company expanded through the 1964 amalgamation with Goldsbrough Mort and acquisition of businesses during the 1970s and 80s. In 1989, due to an economic downturn, Elders sold Henry Jones IXL to The J M Smucker Co, and was renamed Elders Limited (Elders 2019). In 1995, the Futuris Corporation became the new owner, and in 1997 Elders launched Australian Wool Handlers as a joint venture, a wool handling and dumping company that quickly became responsible for more than 60 per cent of the national clip (Elders 2109).

Elders still occupies the building today as its state office and operates real estate and insurance services from the building (Elders 2019).

The building is currently occupied by 29 businesses and three shops (CoMMaps).



Figure 5. 'Transformation' by Tom Bass, on the Queen Street facade of the subject building. (Source: Context 2019)



Figure 6. Showing the plaque marking the planting of trees in Queen Street by H C Sleigh and the ANZ Bank in 1959. (Source: Context 2019).

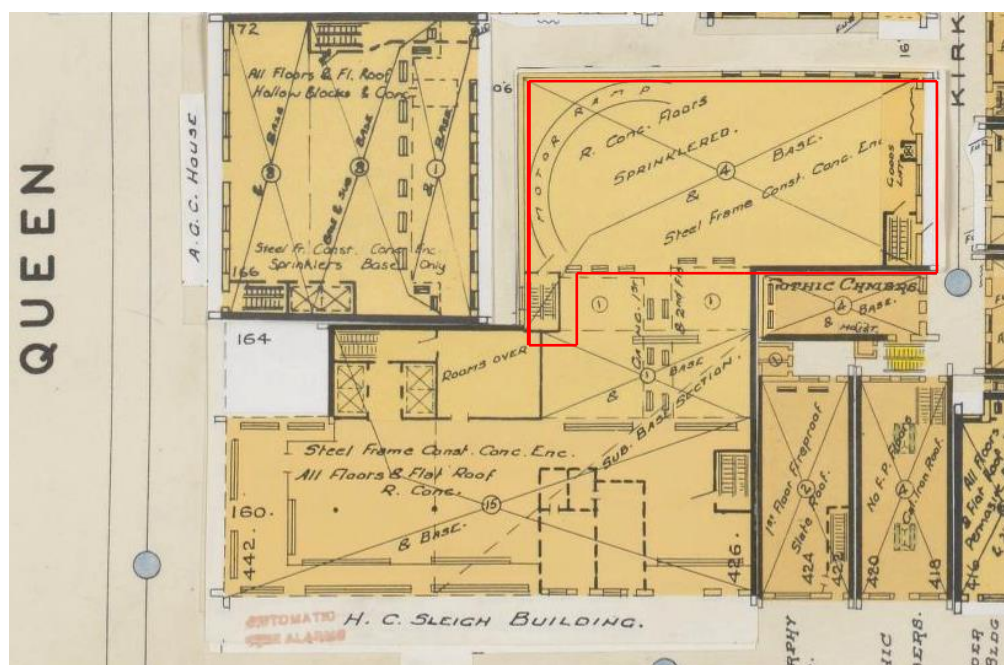


Figure 7. Showing the four-storey car park in the 1960s (outlined in red), which may have formed the structure for the four-storey building incorporated as part of 158-164 Queen Street c1970. (Source: Mahlstet Map section 1, no 13, 1948, version 6, amended 1960s)

H C Sleigh Ltd was founded by Harold Crofton Sleigh in 1895 (*Herald* 30 June 1947:11). Sleigh, an Englishman, had started work in Australia barging cargo on the Murray and Darling Rivers (Langmore 1988). In 1895, Sleigh started a partnership with John McIlwraith, and from their office in Flinders Street won a contract to supply coal to Western Australia. McIlwraith retired from partnership not long after, and Sleigh continued to develop the company, winning another contract with the Western Australian government and taking possession of two brand new ships ordered specifically for the company from Glasgow (Langmore 1988).

In 1913, the company took possession of a cargo of petrol, which the original consignee was unable to pay for. This was to take the company in a different direction, with H C Sleigh registering the

product as 'Golden Fleece'. The company experienced a rapid increase in its oil importing interests during World War One and the 1920s, by which time Sleigh had set up twenty pump stations (Langmore 1988).

The company was eventually taken over by the founder's son, (Sir) Hamilton Sleigh, who sought to expand the holdings of the company (Walsh 2002). Under Hamilton Sleigh's leadership, the company owned subsidiary shipping firms and established facilities to handle the import of petroleum (Walsh 2002). By 1947, the company had also started merchandise and pharmaceutical businesses (*Herald* 30 June 1947:11). H C Sleigh Ltd became a public company in 1947, with an authorised capital of £1,500,000 (Flotilla Australia 2019; *Herald* 30 June 1947:11).

The 1950s saw a change in the petroleum markets, which led to single-brand stations and the rise of competition between companies. H C Sleigh established outlets for Golden Fleece and the company placed a large emphasis on the design of its service stations, establishing the unique merino ram as the company's trademark (Golden Fleece 2019).

By 1981, the company had sold the petroleum department, including Golden Fleece, to Caltex (Golden Fleece 2019). In 1984, the company became Petersville Sleigh, before eventually being sold to BORAL Ltd in 1992 (Delisted Australia 2019).

Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, architects

Bates, Smart & McCutcheon (BSM) was formed when Osborn McCutcheon joined the existing firm of Bates & Smart in 1926. Bates & Smart had itself been born out of previous iterations of a firm that can be traced back to Reed & Barnes, thus making it one of the oldest and, by the 1960s, one of the largest practices in the country (Goad 2012:72).

During the 1930s, BSM had earned a reputation for designing Georgian-style residences, but also went on to win RVIA awards for their work on the AMP Building in Collins Street, Buckley & Nunn Building in Bourke Street (now David Jones), and a church in Camberwell (Goad 2012:73).

By the 1950s, BSM had become Australia's 'expert' in high-rise office buildings (Goad 2012:73). Much of their work at this time were large structures with glass curtain walls, and in Melbourne this was exemplified by ICI House constructed in 1955, breaking the city's height limits (Goad 2012:73). This work was considered to have 'changed the skyline [of Melbourne] forever' (Goad 2012:73).

At the time, the firm also developed a reputation for their work on university and other educational facilities. They were responsible for much of the laying out of Monash University, as well as the construction of some of their original buildings, and had a hand in designing RMIT (Goad 2012:73). Commissions for schools include Yarra Valley Grammar School, Wesley College's Syndal campus, and the Peninsula Grammar School (Goad 2012:73). Their best-known piece of educational work is most likely Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne, which was built on the site of an earlier Reed & Barnes Gothic structure (Goad 2012:73). Wilson Hall features a sculpture by Tom Bass, as does 158-164 Queen Street Melbourne (also designed by BSM), showing a relationship between BSM and the sculptor.

BSM has continued to be an influential firm in the time since the construction of the subject site. Notable work by the firm includes the Crown Casino and promenade, and the Royal Children's Hospital (Goad 2012:74). BSM has also been involved in large collaborative designs in Melbourne

with international architects, such as Melbourne Central with Kisho Kurokawa, Collins Place with I M Pei, and Federation Square with Lab Architecture Studio (Goad 2012:74).

Hansen & Yuncken, builders (164-172 Queen Street)

Otto Yuncken was born in Lyndoch, South Australia in 1865 and trained as a carpenter under his German-born father. Together they built simple structures in the Barossa Valley before Otto left for Port Adelaide at the age of 18 (Carland 2009). By 1885 Yuncken had moved to Melbourne and taken up work with Clements Langford, one of the city's largest building companies. During his time with Clements Langford, Yuncken studied at the Working Men's College and attained first class in architectural drawing and carpentry (Carland 2009). After leaving Clements Langford, Yuncken partnered with Lauritz Hansen in 1918 to form Hansen & Yuncken (Hansen Yuncken 2019).

The firm was responsible for some of Melbourne's 'most memorable buildings' (Carland 2009). Earlier works include the Collingwood Football Club Grandstand (1892), the Port Authority building (1930) in Market Street (Carland 2009). The firm was responsible for renovations to Myer buildings and constructed the new spires at St. Patrick's Cathedral. The company also devised an innovative suspended scaffold to replaster the domed ceiling at the State Library of Victoria (Carland 2009).

The company still exists today as Hansen Yuncken and has built many notable structures over the past decades, including the Myponga Dam (1959), The Alfred Hospital (1969-1977) and Council House 2 for the City of Melbourne (2006) (Hansen Yuncken 2019).

Tom Bass, sculptor (158-164 Queen Street)

A portion of the subject building's wall, the rear wall of the plaza that forms part of the building's original design, features a sculpture by the sculptor Tom Bass.

Tom Bass was a prolific Australian sculptor, who completed many public and private commissions, including the 'Trial of Socrates' at Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne and another children's sculpture 'Genii' in Queen Victoria Gardens. Bass' community-focused work is featured in many prominent Australian public spaces and institutions, including schools, universities and churches, as well as government and corporate sites. In 1974, Bass established the Tom Bass Sculpture Studio School (still in operation), where he taught until his death in 2010. He was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his contribution to public art. A retrospective of Bass' work was held at the Sydney Opera House, where it was claimed that 'no artist has done more to shape the face of public art in Australia' (Brown 2010; Design and Art Australia 2011).

Bass was also responsible for the 'Children's Tree' sculpture in the forecourt of 308-336 Collins Street, Melbourne (former Colonial Mutual Life Building), which has also been assessed as part of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site 158-172 Queen Street comprises two postwar office buildings developed for H C Sleight Pty Ltd to a design by architects Bates Smart & McCutcheon.

H C Sleigh Building, 166-172 Queen Street, constructed 1953-55

The H C Sleigh Building at 166-172 Queen Street is an eight-storey commercial building in the Post-War Modernist style, designed by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon and constructed in 1953-55. Located on the eastern side of Queen Street between Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street, the building has a secondary frontage accessed off Kirks Lane at the rear.

The principal facade to Queen Street comprises a primary nonloadbearing aluminium frame curtain wall, which dominates the façade from the first to the seventh floors, over a secondary asymmetric solid form of painted render (probably over non loadbearing brickwork). The masonry form extends around the curtain wall, particularly to the south, where the wide vertical panel is punctuated by small rectangular openings (presumably to the stairwell). The narrow horizontal band immediately below the curtain wall at the first-floor level is clad with white stone, and across the top of the building is a row of seven small projecting studs and a projecting plain rectangular cornice with recessed parapet behind. A pair of flagpoles are located on the roof. The southern wall of the building returns to meet the recessed wall of the later Sleigh Corner building (1964) built next door, creating a plaza space.

The curtain wall is strongly modular, with one module of a slightly vertical proportion per floor and nine equal modules across the façade. The curtain wall section is relatively substantial. Each module is infilled with a single large pane of clear glazing.

At street level, the façade comprises a colonnade, with the main structural columns clad with white stone, and the spaces between the columns infilled with glazed shopfronts. The main entry to the building is at the southern end of the colonnade. The rear (east) elevation, accessed off Kirks Lane, comprises a regular arrangement of windows set within a masonry wall. The windows appear original and include openable sashes.

When it was first constructed in 1953-55, the building was known as the H C Sleigh Building, and was notable for its '...acres of glass, silvering glints of aluminium bluish tiles' amongst other characteristics of the new modernism appearing in central Melbourne. The building was refurbished in 1991. In its original configuration, each module of the main curtain wall included an opaque horizontal lower panel, with clear glazing above divided into four equal square sashes (refer figure 2), which have now been replaced with a single large pane of clear glazing. At street level, the original configuration also included multipane window modules above a solid masonry plinth, now replaced with a colonnade and shopfronts. The painted render masonry sections of the secondary form of the building were originally clad in blue tiles, but these have been removed. Originally the building had no formal termination or parapet at the top level, as is typical of the style, so the simple cornice and other details have been added.

Former Sleigh Corner, 158-164 Queen Street, constructed 1964

The former Sleigh Corner building at 158-164 Queen Street is a 15-storey pre-cast concrete and steel curtain wall corner building, constructed in 1964. Designed by Bates Smart & McCutcheon, it has a narrow frontage to Queen Street and deeper frontage to Bourke Street. With its use of applied concrete panels over an expressed structural system, it is a fine example of the Post-War Modernist style that developed in the 1960s when the style moved away from the use of uniform glass curtain wall systems to more heavily modulated facades giving a three-dimensional quality to the buildings.

The primary façade facing Queen Street is structurally divided into two equal bays with three expressed concrete columns continuing to the ground level. Horizontally proportioned aluminium framed windows divide each bay into three equal sections. The outer section of these bays features a secondary narrow concrete column that rises vertically through the building. Applied white concrete panels sit over the dark grey spandrels and provide a design refinement to the structural grid that emphasises the horizontal. Along Queen Street, at the western end, a recessed lift shaft rises above the main height of the building. Faced in non-load bearing bagged brickwork it provides a contrasting textural element to the building's otherwise precise rectilinear form.

The secondary façade facing Bourke Street is divided into five primary structural bays with columns continuing to ground level. At first floor level the façade is divided into a regular grid pattern utilising the same pattern of applied panels and expressed secondary structure used across the primary facade. The building has no formal termination or parapet at the top level, as is typical of the style.

At ground level the original concrete peripheral columns are extant, as is the recessing of the office foyer shopfronts along both street frontages, although the original shopfronts have been replaced. This recessing of the office foyer and adjacent lift shaft provides one of the few surviving plaza elements along Queen Street which is increasingly rare within the Hoddle Grid.

A Tom Bass sculpture known as 'Transportation' was commissioned by HC Sleigh in 1963 for the plaza. It remains in its original plaza setting attached to the bagged brick wall of the lift shaft. The copper fabrication sculpture displays a winged figure standing on a boat suspended from a pulley possibly representing the shipping and cargo aspects of the business.

INTEGRITY

The H C Sleigh Building (166-172 Queen Street) has some changes visible to original fabric; however, the building retains important defining characteristics, including its original scale, built form and configuration. Above the ground and first floor levels the building retains its original modular pattern of fenestration, although within each module of the curtain wall the original multipane window sashes and opaque panel have been replaced with a single pane of clear glazing, and at street level a colonnade and shopfronts have replaced the original multipane windows. Alterations include removal of the original blue tiles which were an important aspect of the original design, and the addition of a simple cornice and parapet. Despite these changes the original form and scale of the building, and key characteristics of its architectural style and the period in which it was constructed can be appreciated.

The former Sleigh Corner building (158-164 Queen Street) is highly intact in terms of its external features. Despite the removal of original grey-blue tile cladding, the original non-loadbearing curtain wall with horizontal glazed and applied concrete panels, expressed concrete structure and non-loadbearing bagged brick lift shaft remain extant. The original recessing of the office foyer shopfronts to both street frontages and a publicly accessible plaza created adjacent to the lift shaft remain. The Tom Bass sculpture 'Transportation' also remains in its original location within the plaza. The original shopfronts have been replaced. The building's original built form and scale, some materials and key stylistic details remain clearly legible and overall the place is of very high integrity.

For their ability to express different facets of the Post-War Modernist style and city planning, overall the two buildings are of high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The 1950s saw the development of the modern multi-story office building in Melbourne, often built for insurance companies or finance companies, or for professional offices. From this time through to the 1970s and even beyond, the Post-War Modernist style enjoyed widespread popularity, particularly for high-rise commercial buildings. Reinforced concrete frames provided the structural systems, allowing the façade to be clad in a non-load bearing curtain wall. In some examples, curtain walls were typically fully glazed, while in some other examples, a greater range of materials were used to achieve variety of expression and flexibility of form. Many of these 1950s and 60s office towers featured a notable work of contemporary artwork, either within the foyer area or fixed to the outside of the building, or in some cases within a setback or public plaza.

A group of buildings built in the mid-1950s combined expansive glazed panels with solid masonry sections to achieve a distinctive aesthetic. These compare with the H C Sleigh Building and are detailed below.

State-significant places

A comparative example in the City of Melbourne which is located immediately adjacent to the Hoddle Grid is ICI House, 1-4 Nicholson Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon 1958). This place is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0786).

Locally-significant places

Precinct Heritage Overlay

As only a piece-meal evaluation of postwar buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne has previously occurred, few buildings from the early postwar period are currently included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Those constructed in the 1950s that are included in the Heritage Overlay are currently included as part of Heritage Precincts, but are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as Individual Heritage Places. These places are:



Former Gilbert Court, 100-104 Collins Street (John A La Gerche, 1954-55) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Significant place.



Former Hosie's Hotel, 1-5 Elizabeth Street & 288-290 Flinders Street (Mussen McKay & Potter, 1954-55), included in HO505 Flinders Gate Precinct as a Significant place.



Coates Building, 18-22 Collins Street (John A La Gerche, 1958-59) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Significant place.



Former Bank of Adelaide Building, 265-269 Collins Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & Lobb, 1959-60) included in HO502 The Block Precinct as a Contributory place.



Former Allans Building, 276-278 Collins Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes, Mewton and Lobb with Charles N Hollinshed, 1956-57) included in HO502 The Block Precinct as a Significant place.

Other Examples

Despite the demolition of many 1950s 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 initial period of curtain wall construction in Melbourne and demonstrate similar characteristics to the subject building. The following examples are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as Individual Heritage Places as part of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review:



Lauren's House, 414-416 Lonsdale Street (Harold Bloom, 1956) (Interim HO1254).



Former Atlas Assurance Building, 404-406 Collins Street (H Garnet Alsop & Partners, 1958-61) (Interim HO1008).



Former Batman Automatic Telephone Exchange, 376 Flinders Lane (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1957).



Former AMP Building, 402-408 Lonsdale Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1956-59).



Former Ajax House, 103-105 Queen Street (HD Berry, 1956).



Former Coles and Garrard Building, 376-378 Bourke Street (Meldrum & Noad, 1957).



London Assurance House, 468-470 Bourke Street (Bernard Evans, 1960).



Canton Insurance Building, 43-51 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1957).

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 Sleigh Corner building. 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



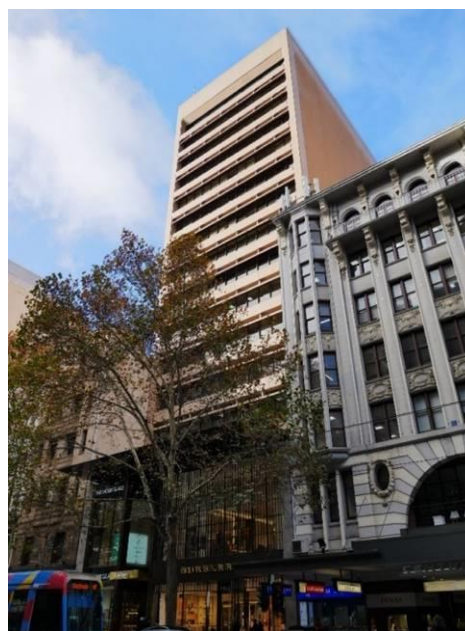
Former Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1964-66) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



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)



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



The Former Houston Building, 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kelle & 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)



Former Bryson Centre, 174-192 Exhibition Street
(Perrot Lyon Timlock & Kesa, 1970-72)



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

The H C Sleigh Building at 166-172 Queen Street is one of the earliest examples of non-loadbearing curtain wall buildings in Melbourne and contributed to a changing streetscape that included Post-War Modernist buildings alongside buildings from other eras. The building is comparable to a number of central Melbourne buildings that are included or are proposed for inclusion in the HO, including the Gilbert House at 100-104 Collins Street (significant in HO504) and Coates House at 20 Collins Street (HO504), which are noted as the first two buildings in Melbourne that adopted the fully glazed curtain wall façade.

The H C Sleigh Building is also comparable with the former Atlas Assurance Company building at 404-406 Collins Street and Laurens House at 414- 416 Lonsdale Street (all recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review). The main façades in all cases demonstrate the prominent Bauhaus grid design aesthetic of the Post-War Modernist style, based on

repetitive horizontal and vertical modules made possible by the use of a lightweight aluminium curtain wall system which maximises access to daylight.

The H C Sleigh Building is particularly comparable with Laurens House, and the former Batman Automatic Exchange at 376-382 Flinders Lane (recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), as all are examples of the early 1950s commercial buildings that utilise a major curtain wall component in conjunction with a solid masonry form, rather than the curtain wall being the sole façade element.

Designed in 1953, the H C Sleigh Building is particularly notable as a very early example of a curtain-walled office building, which predates the earliest fully glazed example, the Gilbert House, constructed in 1955.

The former Sleigh Corner building at 158-164 Queen Street is comparable to a number of other central Melbourne buildings included – or proposed for inclusion in – the HO including Royal Insurance Group Building at 430-442 Collins Street, the Victorian State Offices at 1 Macarthur Street and 1 Treasury Place (included in the VHR) and the RACV Club at 123 Queen Street.

The former Sleigh Corner building demonstrates the prominent Bauhaus grid design aesthetic of the Post-War Modernist style, based on repetitive horizontal and vertical modules made possible by the use of curtain wall systems which maximise access to daylight. In this instance it is representative of a later iteration of the style in which architects moved away from slick glass curtain wall cladding to more heavily modelled facades utilising different materials. It is distinguished by the tall lift shaft clad in bagged non-loadbearing brickwork providing a contrasting textural element to the building's otherwise precise rectilinear form.

Like other buildings of its time and type, former Sleigh Corner building incorporates a street level plaza with a notable work of art. Incorporation of a public plaza within the building setback is characteristic of the era, a result of the plot ratio regime in place between the mid-1960s and 1999. Retention of public artworks in situ is increasingly uncommon. Some inner-city sculptures dating from the 1950s and 60s classified by the National Trust Victoria have been removed from their original locations, often in association with demolition or redevelopment of the building or loss of the plaza. 'Five Low Relief Panels in Bronze' by Pasquale Marinelli (National Trust File Number B6309), at the street level façade of 108 Flinders Street, and 'Birds' by Michael Meszaros (National Trust File Number B6820) at the front set back of 350 St Kilda Road were removed and are no longer publicly accessible.

The sculptural work by Tom Bass is notable. The 'Transportation' sculpture compares in terms of artistic significance as a piece of art within its original publicly accessible location to the 'Children's Tree' sculpture at 308-336 Collins Street which has been recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review.

The former Sleigh Corner building retains a very high level of integrity above the ground floor and maintains its early foyer shopfront setbacks and garden plaza with original artwork. It compares favourably with other examples of the style in central Melbourne.

As a pair, the two buildings differently express the Post-War Modernist style, and their scale and form express changes in architecture and in city planning.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

✓	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 (158-164) Ungraded (166-172)
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Central City Heritage Review 1993	C (158-164) C (166-172)
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded (158-164 & 166-172)
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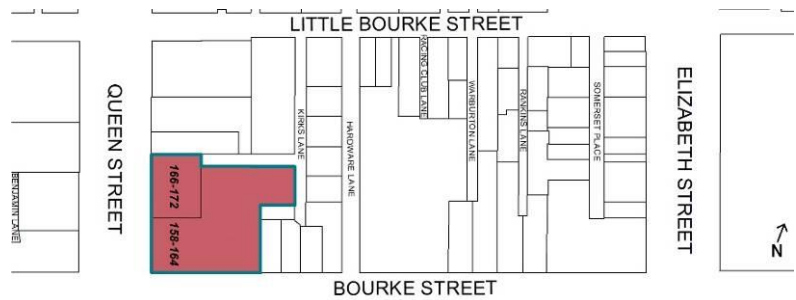
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded (158-164 & 166-172)
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Sleigh Buildings (H C Sleigh Building & former Sleigh Corner)



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The former Sleigh Corner building at 158-164 Queen Street, and the former H C Sleigh Building at 166-172 Queen Street, Melbourne, both completed to a design by Bates Smart & McCutcheon, are significant.

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

- Original building form and scale (158-164 & 166-172);
- Original asymmetric solid painted render form and nonloadbearing curtain wall to its principal (Queen Street) façade, square windows to southern end wall (166-172);

- Original masonry wall with fenestration pattern and windows to its rear (off Kirks Lane) façade (166-172),
- Original concrete peripheral columns and recessed foyer and shopfronts along both street frontages at ground level (158-164);
- Original non-loadbearing curtain wall, horizontal fenestration pattern, and applied concrete panels, expressed concrete structure and non-loadbearing bagged brick lift shaft (158-164);
- Recessed office foyer and adjacent setback lift shaft and plaza (158-164); and
- Tom Bass sculpture known as 'Transportation' (1963) in its original plaza setting (158-164).

Later alterations, particularly at street level, are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Sleigh Buildings, comprising the H C Sleigh Building at 166-172 Queen Street, and the former Sleigh Corner, at 158-164 Queen Street, are of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Sleigh Buildings are historically significant as a part of the postwar development and rapid growth of corporate architecture of the 1950s and 1960s. Located in the financial and commercial precinct of Queen Street, they reflect the expansion of large national and international companies opting for construction and naming rights of new city office buildings as a form of promotion and fund investment. The buildings were built for Australian company H C Sleigh Ltd (estab. 1895), founder of the Golden Fleece brand of petrol and service stations. H C Sleigh owned and occupied the building at 166-172 Queen Street from 1955 to 1964, before moving to their new, purpose-built premises next door at 158-164 Queen Street. The building at 166-172 Queen Street is notable as the first postwar city office block to be constructed in Melbourne for a private company. It is further significant as a very early example of a curtain-walled office building, the design of which predates the earliest fully glazed example (Gilbert House, constructed in 1955), and as an early and well-executed design in the the Post-War Modernist style by noted architectural firm of Bates, Smart & McCutcheon. (Criterion A)

Viewed together, the former Sleigh Buildings highlight the shift away from the earlier use of uniform glass curtain wall systems in the 1950s to a greater three dimensional quality, achieved during the 1960s through the use of assertive textures and precast concrete cladding panels. The two buildings also illustrate the rapid development of the Post-War Modernist style over a decade, from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, and the enthusiasm with which large corporations embraced the style to reflect their rapid growth and status. At almost twice the height of its eight-storey neighbour at 166-172 Queen Street, and incorporating a publicly accessible plaza, the 15-storey former Sleigh Corner building illustrates the mid-1960s changes in city planning associated with the lifting of the 40 metre (132 foot) height restrictions after 1958. (Criterion A)

The H C Sleigh Building at 166-172 Queen Street is representative of the earlier development of the Post-War Modernist style that prevailed prior to the 1960s abolition of the 40 metre (132 foot) height control that had been in place since 1916. The principal façade to Queen Street exhibits an

asymmetrical combination of a solid modernist form, painted but originally blue tiles, with an offset projecting curtain wall which dominates the principal façade and extends from the first to the eighth floor. The building clearly expresses the key characteristics of its style and time of construction through retention of the simple strong modularity derived from its 1953-55 design. The former Sleigh Corner building, at 158-164 Queen Street, demonstrates later developments in the Post-War Modernist style. With its use of applied concrete panels over an expressed structural system, the former Sleigh Corner is a fine example of the Post-War Modernist style of the 1960s that moved away from the use of uniform glass curtain wall systems to more heavily modulated facades giving a three-dimensional quality to the buildings. (Criterion D)

The former Sleigh Corner building is aesthetically significant as a refined and substantial example of later development in curtain wall design. Constructed in 1964 it utilises a mix of materials to create a greater modularity and three-dimensional quality to the facades. Its aesthetic significance lies in the retention of the original building form, including original entry foyer and shopfront setback to both street frontages, the plaza setback and original sculpture on the rear wall of the publicly accessible plaza. The plaza form was once a common type for buildings of this era, created in response to the site plot ratio regime between 1964 and 1999, but which is becoming increasingly rare within the Hoddle Grid. The aesthetic significance is further enhanced by retention of the original Tom Bass sculpture 'Transportation', attached to the rear wall of the plaza (lift shaft). (Criterion E)

Primary source

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

