

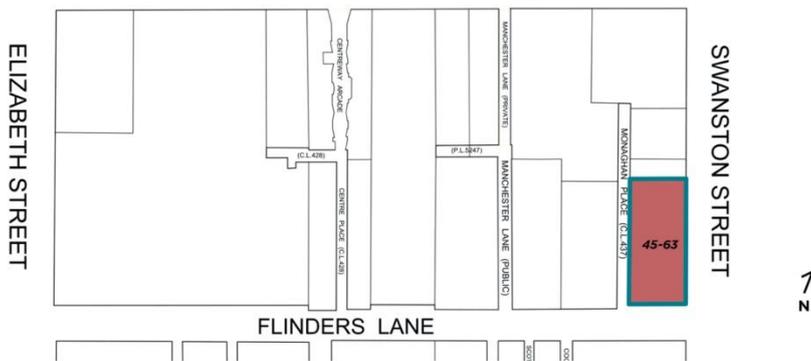
SITE NAME Former State Savings Bank of Victoria

STREET ADDRESS 45-63 Swanston Street, Melbourne

PROPERTY ID 109264



COLLINS STREET



SURVEY DATE: October 2019

SURVEY BY: GJM Heritage

HERITAGE INVENTORY No

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY HO505

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER CATEGORY Non-contributory

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Buchan, Laird & Buchan

BUILDER: Not known

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1975)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: c1974

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

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Hotel, Workshop, Retail, Merchant
1920s	Bank, Retail, Café/Restaurant, Club, Hairdresser, Merchant, Office, Workshop, Library, Medical, Caretaker
1960s	Bank, Retail, Café/Restaurant, Club, Office, Workshop/Manufacturing, Caretaker, Storage

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 multi-storey corner office building 45-63 Swanston Street was designed by architects and engineers Buchan, Laird & Buchan for the State Savings Bank of Victoria, Victoria's first established bank. The building was constructed c1974.

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 multi-storey corner office building 45-63 Swanston Street was designed by architects and engineers Buchan, Laird & Buchan for the State Savings Bank of Victoria, Victoria's first established bank.

The origins of the State Savings Bank of Victoria can be traced back to 1842 when it was founded in Melbourne as the Port Phillip Savings Bank under New South Wales' legislation. Branches of the Bank were subsequently established in other parts of the colony. Owned by the State of Victoria from 1852, from 1853 each bank branch was made a separate and independent institution with its own trustees and officers.

Between 1896 and 1912 the independent Savings Banks of Victoria merged to become a single institution, formalised by legislation in 1912. By 1929 deposits with the Bank accounted for almost two thirds of deposits across all banks in Victoria (Merrett 2008; Trove 2009).

The bank took a keen interest in social welfare and contributed to the construction of housing. In the 1920s the State Savings Bank created a housing estate in Port Melbourne, one of a number of initiatives to encourage home ownership in the early to mid-twentieth century. After World War Two the Bank began lending on overdraft to the co-operative housing societies. By June 1954 some 51 societies had received overdraft facilities from the State Savings Bank, amounting to £15.7 million. (Merrett 2008) The State Savings Bank was sold to the Commonwealth Bank in 1990 (Trove 2009).

The State Savings Bank had occupied a building on the corner of Flinders Lane, at 45-51 Swanston Street, from 1923 (*Argus*, 12 Dec 1923:18). In the early 1970s, architects and engineers Buchan, Laird & Buchan were engaged to prepare designs for a new building on the site.

Architectural drawings dated April 1971 show the Swanston Street and Flinders Lane elevations and the original design of the shopfronts, and the ground floor layout with the banking chamber and retail space (Figure 1 - Figure 3). The City of Melbourne received a building permit application for a '14 storey office building' in October 1971 (total estimated value of \$2,000,000).

Rate books indicate that 45-63 Swanston Street, owned by the State Savings Bank of Victoria, remained land in 1974, while a photograph dated 1975 and aerial photograph dated 1976 show the completed building (Figure 4 & Figure 5).

Buchan Laird & Buchan, architects

Laird & Buchan was founded in Geelong, Victoria, in 1890 by architect, Angus Laird. Following Laird's death in 1937, the practice became Buchan, Laird & Buchan, which was a partnership between Laird's son Ewen Laird, and father and son, Thomas Johnston Buchan and (Sir) John Buchan. One of the firm's early projects was the Pilkington's Glass Factory on Melbourne Road in Geelong (1936-37), which 'became an early icon of modernism in Australia' (Willis 2012:111).

Following World War II, John Buchan set up a Melbourne office in 1946. In the postwar period, the firm expanded, becoming involved in large-scale commercial and industrial projects including the Ford administration building, Broadmeadows (1964) and significant town planning and housing projects for the Housing Commission of Victoria. In the 1960s and 1970s, the firm gained particular prominence for its designs for office buildings. Notable works from this period include Shell House at the corner of William and Bourke streets (1960, since demolished; in collaboration with Skidmore Owings & Merrill); the former Stock Exchange House, Collins Street (1968), Nubrik House, 269-75 William Street (1972) and the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 45-63 Swanston Street (c1974), all located in Melbourne.

The firm became Buchan, Laird & Bawden in 1982, and continues today as the Buchan Group, formed in 1990.

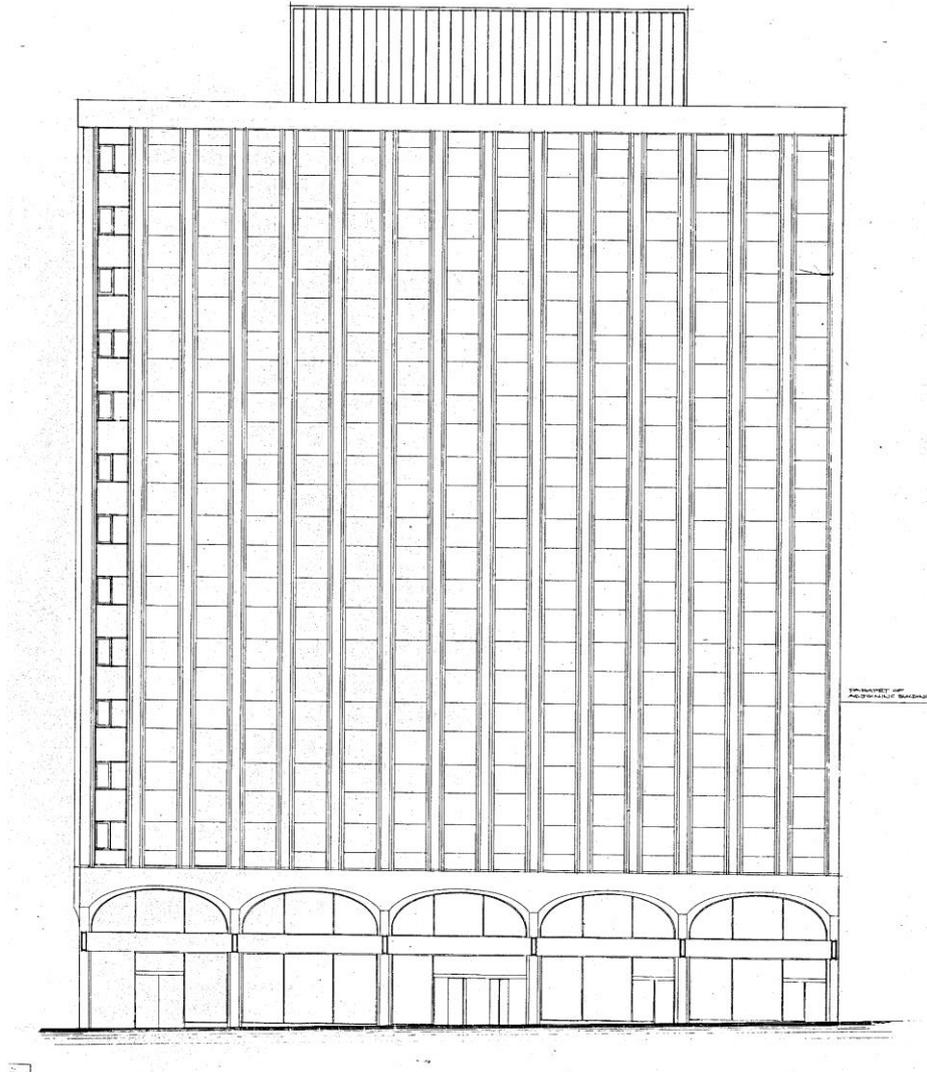


Figure 1. East elevation to Swanston Street. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).

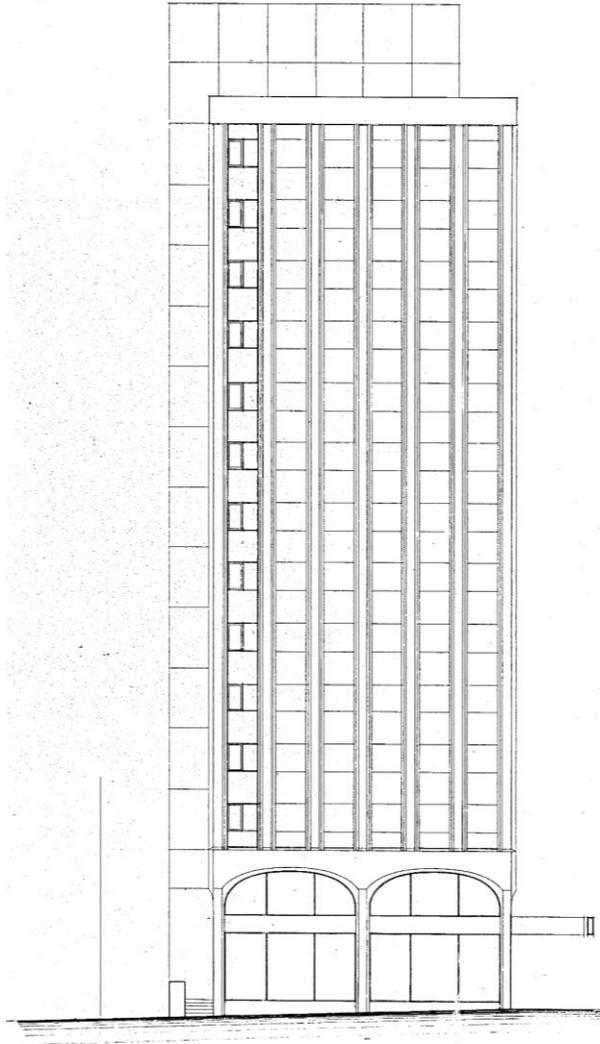


Figure 2. South elevation to Flinders Lane. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).

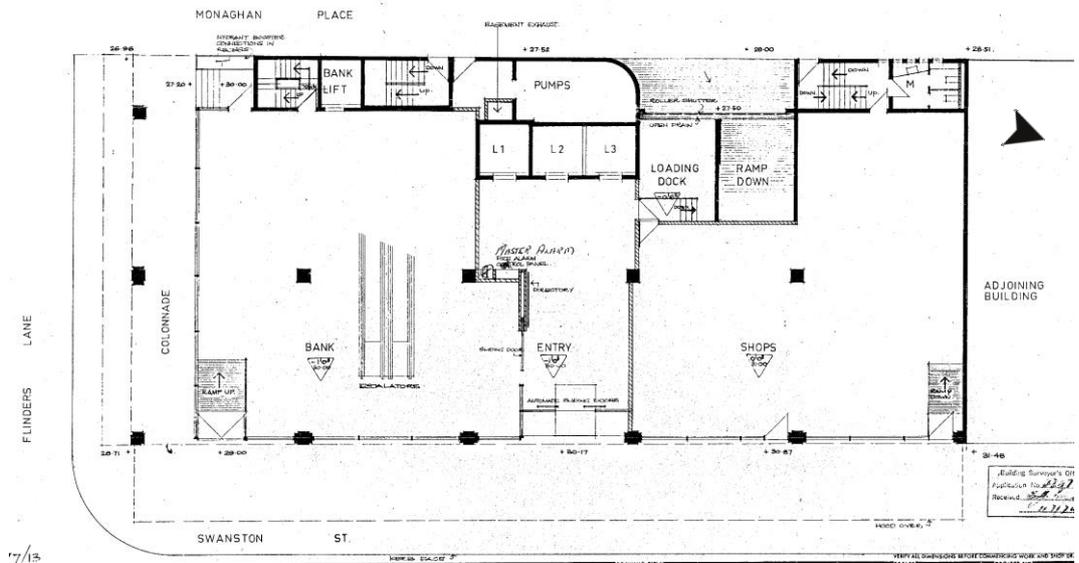


Figure 3. Ground floor plan. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).



Figure 4. The newly completed State Savings Bank in 1975 (SLV, Wolfgang Sievers, photographer, Image H2004.49/65).

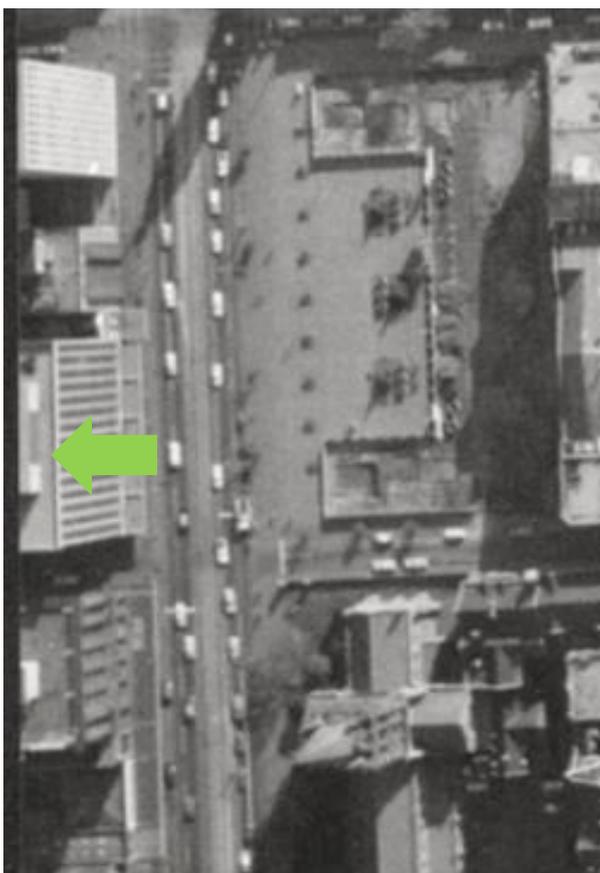


Figure 5. Detail of a 1976 aerial, showing the present State Savings Bank (SLV, Wolfgang Sievers, photographer, Image H2003.100/977).



Figure 6. The building prior to recent alterations to the ground and first floors (no date) (CoMMaps)

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street is a 13-storey commercial building located on the north-west corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Lane. The building has main frontages to both Swanston Street and Flinders Lane and a secondary frontage to Monaghan Lane, which forms the western boundary of the site and provides access to a basement carpark. Constructed in c1974 to a design by Buchan Laird & Buchan, the multi-storey building is an example of the Post-War Modernist style.

The rectangular building is of reinforced concrete column and slab construction and sits on a double-height, rendered podium base. The upper walls of the main east and south facades are grid-like with a dominant vertical accent created by precast concrete structural mullions which rise from the podium base to a plain crowning parapet. These mullions are formed from stacked angled elements with curved inner faces which frame recessed rows of paired aluminium framed windows and glass spandrels.

The double-storey rendered concrete podium base is highly distinctive with an arcaded colonnade of segmental arches to Swanston Street and Flinders Lane. Coved in profile and glazed, the arches rise above a cantilevered awning to Swanston Street and fascia to Flinders Lane. These are broad elements that mask the first-floor concrete building slab and provide a strong horizontality to the base of the building. In a similar manner, a plain parapet fascia provides a strong horizontal capping to the vertical mullions of the facades.

At street level a deep awning cantilevers over the footpath in Swanston Street and the line of this continues as a fascia to the Flinders Lane façade. This fascia has been recently reclad and shopfronts have been extended to the building line in Flinders Lane. The Swanston Street awning has

been modified to enable open café use at first floor level and a simple bracketed canopy inserted above.

INTEGRITY

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria, including the original form and the detailing of the exterior of the building above street level, remains highly intact to its original c1974 construction. Works to the building at street level have had minimal impact on the overall intactness of the place.

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 some 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 commercial building.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street, is a fine and representative example of the Post-War Modernist style and clearly demonstrates the typical characteristics of 1960s to mid 1970s multi-storey commercial building design. The building's two grid-like walls, with the dominant verticality of precast concrete structural mullions dividing rows of aluminium-framed glazing and glass spandrels, and the highly distinctive arcaded podium base, can be clearly observed from Swanston Street and Flinders Lane. Despite some modifications made to the building at street level, the upper facades of the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria remain highly intact to their original design.

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 State Savings Bank of Victoria 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).

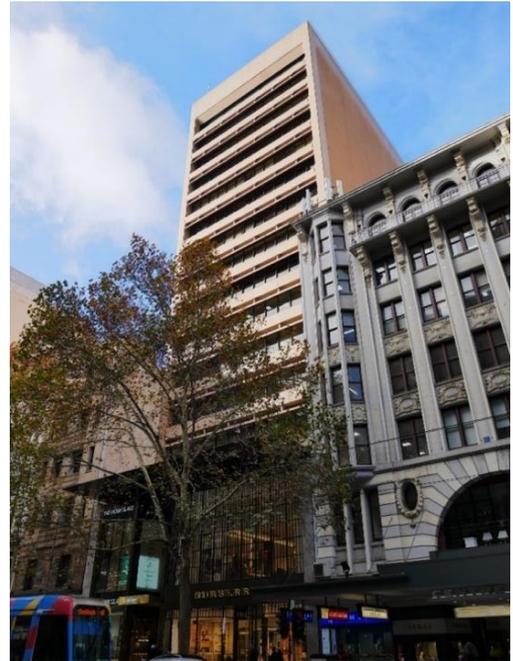
Locally-significant places

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 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).



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.

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)



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)



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

Analysis

As a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building, the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 45-63 Swanston Street 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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ | 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 43.01-4)	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*

Building Application Index (BAI), City of Melbourne.

Building Application Plans (BAP), City of Melbourne.

City of Melbourne Maps (CoMMaps), Site Photos.

City of Melbourne Rate Books (RB), Batman Ward, VPRS 5708, P9, Vol 150 (1974), entry 122.

Museum Victoria Collections, Item numbers and photographers as cited.

Sands & McDougall Directories (S&Mc).

State Library of Victoria (SLV), picture collection, images and photographers as cited.

The Argus.

Willis, Julie (2012), 'Buchan, Laird & Buchan' in Philip Goad & Julie Willis's (Eds.) (2012), *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Port Melbourne.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985** Ungraded

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993** Ungraded

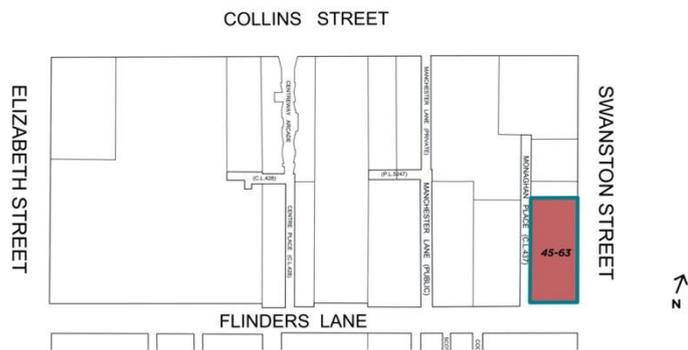
**Review of Heritage
overlay listings in the
CBD 2002** Ungraded

**Central City Heritage
Review 2011** Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former State Savings Bank of Victoria

PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria, 45-63 Swanston Street, a multi-storey commercial building constructed in c1974.

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 State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed c1974, to a design by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria 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).

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The building strongly reflects the style which was popular in the 1960s to the mid 1970s, particularly in central Melbourne. Constructed as a 13-storey structure, the

Former State Savings Bank of Victoria clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a postwar commercial building, including a heavy arcaded podium base and two grid-like walls with vertical accent, formed from dominant precast concrete structural mullions which divide rows of glazing and glass spandrels, as well as the use of materials such as precast concrete panels, aluminium window frames and opaque glass. These demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

Primary source

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

