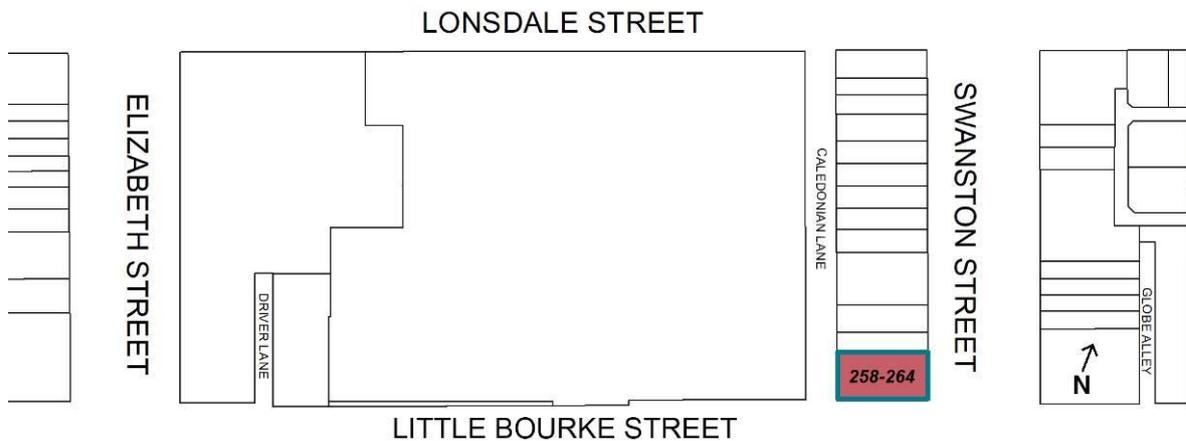


SITE NAME	Former State Savings Bank
STREET ADDRESS	258-264 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	109289



SURVEY DATE: October 2018

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY No

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Meldrum and Partners

FORMER GRADE C
BUILDER: Not known

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1975)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1961

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	Hotels and Lodgings
1920s	Hotels and Lodgings
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 State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 258-264 Little Bourke Street is a 12 storey commercial curtain wall corner building built in the Post-War Modernist style, with subtle ‘featurist’ elements. It was constructed in 1961 to a design by architects Meldrum & Partners and Robert Cousland.

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 site on which the current building stands was previously occupied by a hotel and shops (S&Mc 1915; 1960). The hotel was named the Castlemaine Club Hotel in 1895, however by 1914 it was known as the Swanston Family Hotel with Thomas Finlayson as its proprietor (MMBW Detail Plan 1015, 1895; S&Mc 1914).

The State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 258-264 Little Bourke Street was built to a design by architects Meldrum & Partners and Robert Cousland, bank architect (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). Offering 'long contracts', tenders were advertised in October 1960 for tradesmen to work on the site (*Age* 6 October 1960: 21).

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).

As commemorated on an original plaque on the building, the State Savings Bank of Victoria building opened on 27 April 1961. Sands and McDougall directories show that by 1965 the building was occupied by the State Savings Bank, as well as other company offices, including printers, manufacturers and importers, indicating that much of the building had been purposely set aside to be let out to tenants (S&Mc 1965).

Following construction, only internal alterations were made to the building, with partitions added to multiple floors in 1969 and 1981 (MBAI 40804; 5266). On the first floor, offices were altered in 1982 and new doors were installed in 1990 (MBAI 71178). The State Savings Bank of Victoria remained occupants of the subject building until 1990 when the bank was taken over by the Commonwealth Bank (Merrett 2008; Trove 2009). In 2002, the building was subdivided into 12 units, and currently contains 29 businesses, four shops and three food outlets (CoMMaps).



Figure 1. State Bank building, corner Little Bourke and Swanston streets under construction, 28 October 1960. (Source: Commercial Photographic Co 1960, SLV)

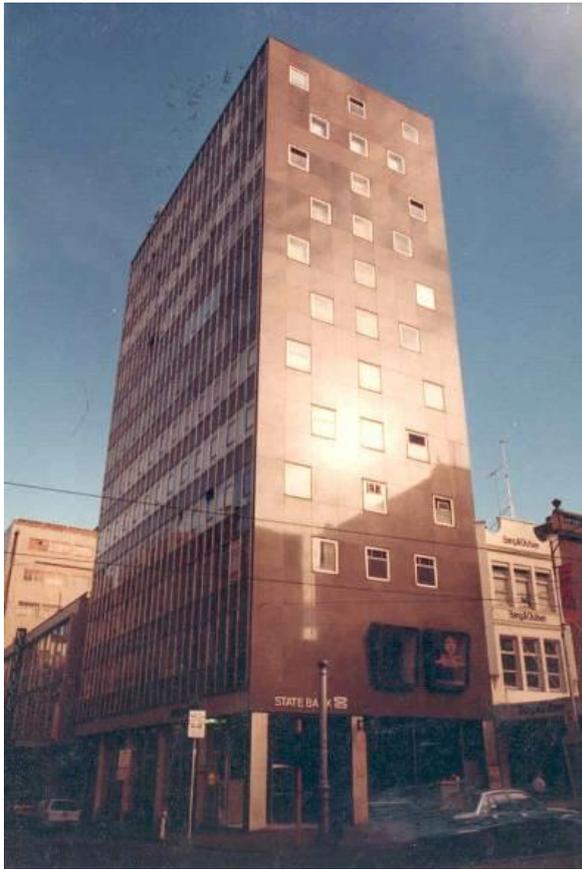


Figure 2: State Bank Building c 1985 (Source: City of Melbourne Building Identification Sheet, 1985)

Meldrum & Partners, architects

Percy Hayman Meldrum studied at Ballarat College and was articled to A A Fritsch from 1907 to 1913. Moving to London in 1914, Meldrum practiced as an aircraft designer at the War Office and established an atelier in Wells Street, London, which became a gathering place for Australian architects engaged in war service. At the end of World War One Meldrum joined the staff of the Architectural Association, where he taught A G Stephenson and Donald Turner. In 1921, he returned to Australia to join A G Stephenson as Stephenson & Meldrum. Practising as principal designer, he strongly encouraged the inclusion of murals and sculpture in the firm's projects. His work during this time included Newspaper House, at 247-249 Collins Street (1932) and Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historic Museum (1930).

Stephenson & Meldrum were also involved in the extension of the former State Savings Bank of Victoria building constructed at the corner of Bourke and Elizabeth streets (demolished c1970). Built in 1912 to designs by architects Grainger & Little, Stephenson & Meldrum designed the 1925 two-storey additions and the 1934 extensions that took the building up to the Elizabeth Street corner (Walking Melbourne).

Meldrum practiced as Meldrum & Noad between 1937 and the 1950s, during which time he won the 1942 RVIA Street Architecture Medal for the National Bank of Australasia building in Collins Street (now known as 77-89 William Street) (1938) (Willis 2012: 450).

Meldrum was joined in practice by his son, Richard John Meldrum (1928-2004), who gained a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Melbourne in 1951. The architectural practice

Meldrum & Partners was formed in 1959 and became Meldrum Burrows when Sydney-based Bill Burrows later joined the firm. (Willis 2012:450).

Meldrum Snr retired from practice in 1965. Meldrum Burrows gained particular prominence in the 1970s and 1980s and were involved in advising on strategic planning for large projects, including the Australian Embassy at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (1989) in collaboration with Daryl Jackson, and Philip Cox's Parliament House, Darwin (Willis 2012: 450).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The former State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 258-264 Little Bourke Street is a 12 storey commercial curtain wall corner building in the Post-War Modernist style, with subtle 'featurist' elements, constructed in 1961. It exhibits a prominent Bauhaus grid design aesthetic across the principal street façade (Little Bourke Street) with largely unadorned and solid end walls clad with polished stone panels on the secondary street frontages (Swanston Street and Caledonian Lane). The subject site is bound by Swanston Street to the east, Little Bourke Street to the south, Caledonian Lane to the west and a low-rise retail building to the north.

The façade to Little Bourke Street comprises an aluminium framed nonloadbearing curtain wall, with alternating vertically glazed and solid panels providing a lightweight grid across the façade. Every second glazed panel is fitted with an openable sash as the building predates the use of air conditioning. Adjacent to the entry is an original plaque commemorating the building's opening in 1961.

The frame is of natural aluminium finish and the solid panels are red in colour, aligned at the level of the floors. The other three facades are solid masonry, finished with stone-panel cladding punctured by the repetitive chequerboard sequence of square window openings. Underneath the cladding is probably off-form concrete, based on the image of the building under construction. The facades have small windows at each level, which are generally square except for the western elevation where the windows are elongated horizontally. The eastern façade to Swanston Street is clad with brown granite with square window openings. The northern façade of the building can be seen above the low-rise neighboring buildings and features four centrally placed openable square windows at each level and a stylised clockface at its eastern end. The building has no formal termination or parapet at the top level, as is typical of the style.

The original main concrete peripheral columns are expressed at ground level, although the retail and office foyer shopfront system has been replaced over time. The Swanston Street frontage features 'TV display' windows at first floor level, and has a suspended box awning over the ground floor entry lobby, which is an addition since 2010.

INTEGRITY

Overall the building is largely intact with very few changes visible to original or early fabric. The building retains its original nonloadbearing aluminium curtain wall with its alternating vertically glazed and solid panels. At street level the retail and office foyer shopfronts have been altered, and an awning added to the Swanston Street entrance. Overall, the building has very high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The 1950s saw the development of the modern multi-story office building in Melbourne, often built for insurance or finance companies, or for professional offices. Reinforced concrete frames provided the structural systems, allowing the façade to be clad in a non-load bearing curtain wall. In early examples, curtain walls were typically fully glazed, while in later examples, a greater range of materials were used to achieve variety of expression.

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. 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



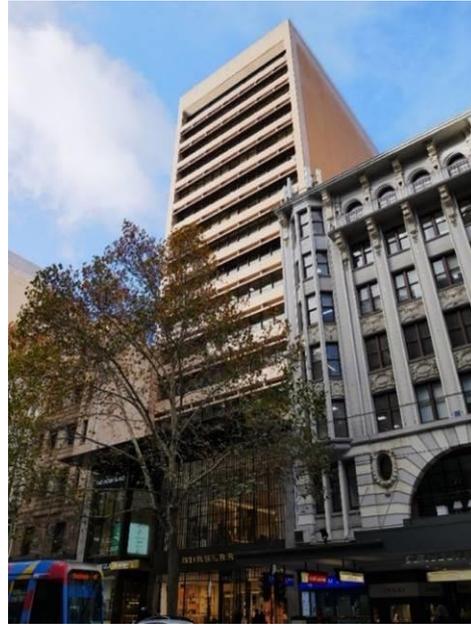
Former Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1964-66) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



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, 19741-73 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)



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



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



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



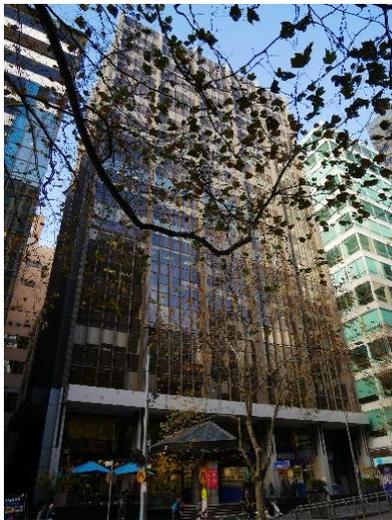
Former Sleigh Corner Building, 158-164 Queen Street
(Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1964)



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 Kollé, 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 former State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 258-264 Little Bourke Street is comparable to a number of other central Melbourne buildings either included in or proposed for inclusion in the HO. The buildings are of a similar scale, although some examples are mid-block, situated between other buildings, whereas 258-264 Little Bourke Street has frontages to three streets and demonstrates the use of masonry (probably off-form concrete) sheer walls to provide the three-dimensional frame for the curtain wall elevation. The Little Bourke Street façade 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 a lightweight aluminium curtain wall system which maximises access to daylight. Like the examples noted above, the former State Savings Bank demonstrates the vertical grid pattern that is characteristic of the style with vertically alternating clear glass and opaque panels. The building retains a high level of integrity above the ground floor, comparing favourably with other examples of the style in central Melbourne.

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
(listed as 231-235 Swanston Street)

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993** C
(listed as 231-235 Swanston Street)

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

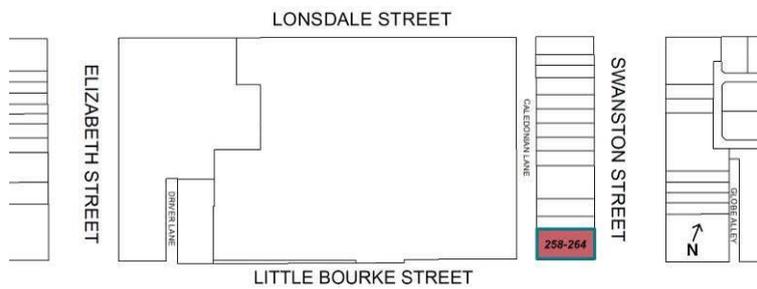
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011** Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former State Savings Bank



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The former State Savings Bank at 258-264 Little Bourke Street, completed in 1961 to a design by Meldrum & Partners and Robert Cousland, is significant.

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

- Original building form and scale;
- Original non-loadbearing curtain wall;
- Original masonry side and rear walls and windows; and
- Original commemorative plaque and clock (northern elevation).

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

How it is significant?

The former State Savings Bank at 258-264 Little Bourke Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former State Savings Bank, completed in 1961, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of Melbourne city’s postwar development and rapid growth. The modernist architecture of the postwar period played a role in the formulation of company identities, as expressions of ambition and relevance, at a time when companies opted for construction and also naming rights of new city office buildings as a form of promotion. Built for the State Savings Bank of Victoria, the building at 258-264 Little Bourke Street is historically significant as a reflection of the growth and progress of locally established banks

during the 1950s-60s, that resulted in architecturally designed company-named buildings being erected. (Criterion A)

The former State Savings Bank is significant as a highly intact example of postwar commercial development in central Melbourne, utilising the Post-War Modernist style that characterised this new wave of development. These buildings represented the new modernism in their modular, industrial Bauhaus inspired aesthetic incorporating features such as consistent access to daylight and open floor plans to meet new standards for commercial office accommodation. The former State Savings Bank demonstrates the key characteristics of the style. (Criterion D)

Designed by architects Meldrum & Partners and Robert Cousland, the building is aesthetically significant as a substantial Post-War Modernist style commercial building. It exhibits the prominent Bauhaus grid design aesthetic of the style with its lightweight aluminium framed, fine-graded modular curtain wall across the principal street façade (Little Bourke Street), with alternating clear glazed and coloured opaque glass spandrel panels superimposing a refined grid over the building. (Criterion E)

Primary source

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

