

Figure 3. Photography of the subject building from 1972 reveals that few changes have been made to its exterior. (Source: Halla c1972, SLV (left); *Age* 6 November 1972:23 (right))

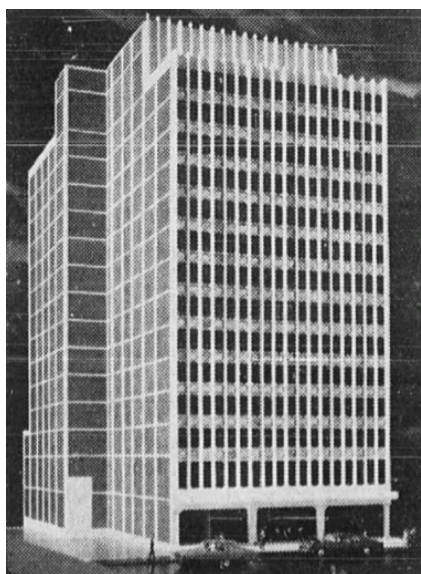


Figure 4. Rendering of 95-99 York Street, Sydney, built in 1970 using same precast concrete moulds. The secondary elevation to 168-172 Clarence Street also features same panels. The lower section of York Street façade has been since altered. (Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 July 1969:54)



Figure 5. 87 Elizabeth Street, Sydney (corner Elizabeth and King streets), built in 1969 and now substantially altered. (Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* 9 October 1969:12)

Throughout the 1970s the property changed hands often between numerous investment holding companies (CT:V8901 F556). From 1974, 221 Queen Street housed the State government Law Department's offices, including the executive government law agencies of the State Law Office, Attorney General, Crown Solicitor and Parliamentary Counsel (S&Mc 1974). In 1974, the Law

Department's Building, as it was known, was addressed as 221-223 Queen Street, and by 1980s as 221 Queen Street (*Age* 14 June 1986:179).

In 1985, 221-231 Queen Street was purchased by investment company Hextrom Pty Ltd, possibly a subsidiary of the Burns Philp Trustee Company based in Sydney, which was the firm listed on the certificate of title (*Age* 13 November 1985: 33; CT:V9666 F001). Originally a major Australian shipping line, by the 1980s Burns Philp was a multinational company in control of over 200 firms spanning 100 industries (SLQ 2009).

In late 1985, the subject building housed a number of offices of the Victorian Public Service (*Age* 7 December 1985:169). The building was refurbished in 1987, in which year 'superb office suites' were advertised for lease. This may indicate the year that the State government relinquished its offices in the building (*Age* 3 December 1987:27).

In 1989 the building was sold for \$16.25 million and was promptly strata subdivided into multiple office units across the eleven floors (*Age* 12 April 1989:27; CT:V9889 F972). Numerous investors purchased office space in the building, with various professional services firms taking up residency, including the ANZ Bank (*Age* 18 April 1990:23).

Changes to the building since its construction have been largely confined to the interior spaces, including the construction of internal partitions to a number of floors from 1980 to 1992 (BP). Building permit cards also detail 'repairs to the external façade' in 1982, though it is not known which repairs these relate to as the upper floors of the building appear to be externally intact from the time of construction. Permit documentation also records refurbishments pertaining to the ground floor shops in 1986-1992. These changes at street level have retained the original structure of the colonnade, with retail and office foyer shopfronts fitted with contemporary units (see Figure 6).

Today, the basement level of the subject building is occupied by a restaurant bar, and the ground level houses café businesses. The offices of numerous law and financial firms and professional services consultancies, including real estate agency Marvelli Town & Associates, who have tenanted offices in the building since at least 1989 and who purchased an office unit on the first floor in 1994, occupy levels 1, 2, 4-8 and 10 (*Age* 18 November 1989:256; CT:V9889 F977). Levels 3 and 9 are occupied by the Reformed Theological College and Australian Pacific College, respectively.



Figure 6. Image from a 1989 auction notice for one of the ground-level shops shows the original structure of the colonnade. (Source: *Age* 7 November 1989:33)

Fischer Group, architect

The Fischer Group of companies was a consortium of companies providing design, construction and management services. In the 1960s, Sydney Fischer formed a number of subsidiary firms including Design & Construction Consultants Pty Ltd, Fischer Constructions Pty Ltd, Hydraulic Installations Pty Ltd, Shop & Office Fitters Pty Ltd, Glass Products Pty Ltd, and Airstream Pty Ltd. As a package, the company offered the construction and fit out of numerous large-scale development projects, a large number of which occurred in Sydney.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Group carried out a number of projects for ADC Properties Pty Ltd, including the ADC Houses at 189 Kent Street, Sydney (1964), which both ADC Properties and Fischer Group used as their headquarters; 95-99 York Street, Sydney (1970); 87 Elizabeth Street, Sydney (1969); in 77 Pacific Highway, North Sydney (1969); and the subject building at 221-231 Queen Street, Melbourne (1972) (*Sydney Morning Herald* 9 October 1969:12; *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 July 1969:54).

Melocco Bros Pty Ltd, contributing designers

Based in Annandale, NSW, Melocco Bros was also associated with the other Fischer Group and ADC Properties Pty Ltd's projects including the subject building at 221-231 Queen Street.

The Italian Melocco brothers, Peter, Antonio and Galliano, were the first tradesmen to practice mosaic craft in New South Wales and introduced terrazzo to Australia. It has been estimated that about 90 per cent of the marble, scagliola and terrazzo work in Sydney between 1910 and 1965 was undertaken by the Meloccas and their studio. Galliano, who joined the family business in the 1920s after completing his education in engineering, was responsible for building up the construction and concrete aspects of the business. He introduced ready-mixed concrete to Australia in 1941 (Kevin 2005).

Taylor Thomson Whitting, consulting engineers

The engineering firm Taylor Thomson Whitting was established in Sydney in 1959 when noted structural engineer Dick Taylor (1921-2018) was joined by Jock Thomson and Alan Whitting. Operating today as TTW, the firm remains one of Australia's leading engineering consultancies. Notable commissions include the State Office Block, Sydney (1961, now demolished), the Walk Through Aviary at Taronga Zoo (1972), and more recently, The Mint, Sydney, and Bunjil Place in Narre Warren, Melbourne (Taylor Thomson Whitting 2019).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is an 11-storey commercial building in the late Post-War Modernist style. It was constructed in 1972, and designed and constructed by subsidiaries of the Fischer Group. The building is located on the western side of Queen Street between Lonsdale Street and Little Bourke Street, and also has a rear frontage to Barry Lane.

The building demonstrates the characteristics of the style, particularly through its use of free form or organic nonloadbearing precast concrete panels as its principal facade instead of the flat, aluminium framed glass curtain-wall systems that characterised the initial phase of the style, or its later derivative that used precast concrete elements but with a rectangular emphasis.

The principal facade to Queen Street comprises a nonloadbearing precast concrete panel curtain wall that is divided vertically into eight bays, separated by projecting vertical ribs that terminate in modest finials above the roof parapet. Cast into each panel are three vertically proportioned window openings with curved corners, with what appears to be frameless glazing. Also within each module, below the window at floor level, is a recessed square panel with rounded corners and a brass (possibly anodised aluminium) finish. There is a lesser vertical rib between each window module, which similarly terminates as a finial above the parapet. Other than the repetitive modest finials, the building has no formal termination or parapet at the roof level, as is typical of the style.

At street level, the main structural grid of the building is expressed as a colonnade that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules. The actual shopfronts are recessed and the curved vocabulary of the window modules to the upper levels is expressed within the street level openings with curved corners where the columns meet the linear line of the first floor precast concrete panels, emphasised by unusual corbelling cast into the soffits. Contemporary shop fronts sit within these four equal bays. Early photographs indicate that the original shop fronts may have been further recessed creating a colonnade. A bronze relief Victorian Coat of Arms is extant near the central entrance and is indicative of the building's original use as the Law Department's building. A second bronze relief, possibly depicting St George and the Dragon, is positioned internally above one of the lifts in the main lobby. The signage 'ADC Queen' seen in the 1972 photography (Figure 5) has been removed.

The southern end wall is exposed above the neighbouring building, revealing the basic precast concrete post and beam construction infilled with nonloadbearing brickwork.

The rear elevation facing Barry Lane is of nonloadbearing brickwork laid in stretcher bond with steel bands attached to the façade at the floor levels. The original pattern of fenestrations is extant with steel framed windows and louvres, with sloping brick sills.

INTEGRITY

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is highly intact with very few changes visible to original or early fabric. Above the street level, the building retains its original modular pattern of fenestration, and the materiality of the precast panels with projecting vertical ribs and finials, window openings and brass-finished recessed square panels with rounded corners. The rear and side (south end) facades of nonloadbearing face brickwork with original pattern of fenestrations are also intact.

At the street level the original structure of the colonnade that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules remains, including corbelling and curved corners where the columns meet the linear line of the first-floor precast concrete panels. The original retail and office foyer shopfronts have been fitted with contemporary shopfronts, and the setback to the alignment of the shopfronts may have been reduced. Other than these changes the building is unusually intact at street level by comparison with other examples. Overall the building is of very 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, the Post-War Modernist style enjoyed widespread popularity, particularly for high-rise commercial buildings in the City of Melbourne. 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 with an aluminium frame, while in later examples, precast concrete was used to create moulded and curved façade modules incorporating window openings while maintaining the rigid modular Bauhaus inspired aesthetic.

The following examples are comparable with the former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street, being of a similar use, scale, style and/or construction date.

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)



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 Kollé & 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 Kelle, 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)



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



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 Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is comparable to a number of central Melbourne buildings included – or recommended for inclusion – in the HO. In particular, the subject building demonstrates how some designers used the potential of precast concrete to create moulded and curved façade modules incorporating window openings while maintaining the rigid modular Bauhaus inspired aesthetic. In this respect there are not many comparative examples in central Melbourne with sufficient integrity to demonstrate these characteristics in their original condition. Comparable examples are the Royal Insurance Group building at 430-442 Collins Street (interim HO1010) and Equitable House at 335-349 Little Collins Street (recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review). These buildings all demonstrate the use of repetitive non-loadbearing precast concrete modules to achieve a three-dimensional depth to their facades, although in a much more rectilinear and much less curvaceous aesthetic. A more direct comparison would be with the former National Bank of Australasia Stock Exchange Branch building at 85-91 Queen Street (Recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), although unlike the largely intact street level of 221-231 Queen Street, the lower levels at 85-91 Queen Street have been altered. The subject building is unusually intact at street level by comparison with other examples.

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

REFERENCES

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

Age, as cited.

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PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985**Ungraded

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993**C

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

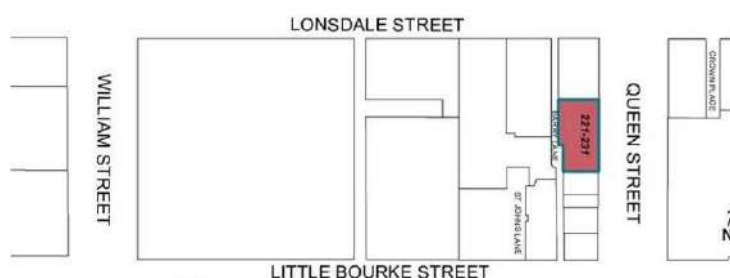
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011**Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Law
Department's Building



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street, Melbourne, designed and built by the Fischer Group of companies in 1972, 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 precast concrete curtain wall to its principal (Queen Street) façade;
- Original frameless glazing to upper level windows;
- Original street level colonnade, with corbelling and curved corners that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules, and set backs to shopfronts and entry lobby; and
- Original non-loadbearing face brick wall with fenestration pattern and windows to its rear (Barry Lane) façade.

Later alterations are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Law Department's Building, opened in 1972, is historically significant as evidence of the broadening of state government powers after World War Two, a shift that resulted in increased occupation of buildings by State government offices in the Melbourne city centre. The State

government's law offices were housed in the building from 1972 until c1987. The former Law Department's Building is historically significant as a large-scale building that demonstrates the growth in government demand after the war. (Criterion A)

Located in the financial and legal precinct in the western part of the city, the former Law Department's Building provides evidence of the significant investment made in city building by interstate interests as a form of fund investment after World War Two, in this case by Sydney firm, ACD Properties Pty Ltd. (Criterion A)

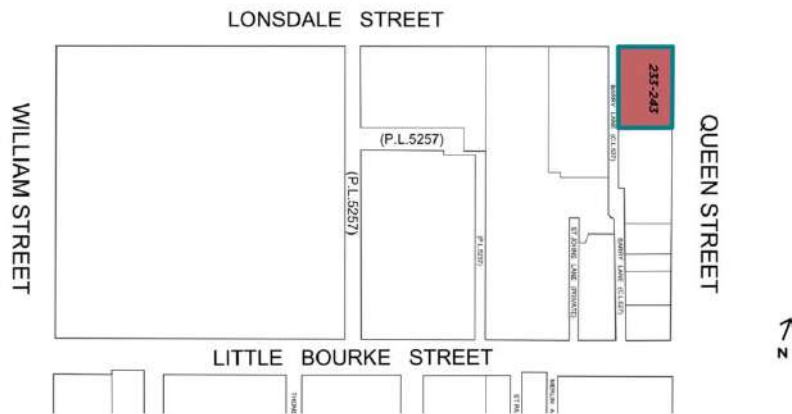
The former Law Department's Building is significant as a highly intact example of postwar commercial development in central Melbourne utilising the Post-War Modernist style that characterised the wave of development in curtain wall design during the 1960s and 1970s. These buildings represented the new 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 building exhibits key characteristics of later examples of the style, with a precast concrete curtain wall used to achieve variety of expression and flexibility of form. (Criterion D)

The former Law Department's Building is aesthetically significant for its unusual curtain wall detailing, with curved windows and elaborate brass spandrel panels (designed by architects A V Pupedis & Associates) to achieve a much more organic aesthetic. It is also notable for its unusual and highly intact street level colonnade, with corbelling and curved corners and set back shopfronts and entry lobby. (Criterion E)

Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Former State Savings Bank of Victoria [also known as Melbourne Chambers (current name)]
STREET ADDRESS	233-243 Queen Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108080



SURVEY DATE: October 2019

SURVEY BY: GJM Heritage

HERITAGE INVENTORY	No	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Heritage Place	PROPOSED CATEGORY	Significant
		FORMER GRADE	Ungraded
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb	BUILDER:	Not known
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Postwar Period (1945-1975)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1967-1968

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 1.10 Brutalism and brickwork
3 Building a commercial city	3.2 Buiness and finance

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Office, Stables, Retail, Hairdresser
1920s	Retail, Workshop, Office, Garage, Education, Workshop/Manufacturers
1960s	Retail, Health/Fitness, Bank, Office

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 office building on the south-west corner of Queen and Lonsdale streets was designed by architects and engineers, Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb to house the titles office branch of the State Savings Bank of Victoria. The building was constructed in 1967-1968.

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).

Brutalism and brickwork

Brutalism was another architectural style that emerged in commercial building design in Australia as early as 1959, when Harry Seidler used off-form concrete for an eight-storey office block in Ultimo, NSW. That same year, Melbourne architect Kevin Knight (from the office of Oakley & Parkes)

prepared plans for the International Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) Building at 380 Russell Street, Melbourne that broke new ground with its banded façade of reinforced concrete spandrels.

Based on the work of modern architecture pioneer Le Corbusier, and largely inspired by his design for the *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1952), this architectural style became widely accepted internationally. Brutalism incorporated ideas of integrity in expression of materials (especially off-form concrete), structure and function, and often gave rise to dramatic sculptural forms (VHD Hoyts Cinema Centre).

Brutalism became more widespread in central Melbourne in the 1970s. The Mid City Centre at 194-200 Bourke Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1969-70), is a notable example, with its façade of chamfered concrete volumes.

During the 1960s and 70s, face brickwork also made a return with the Houston Building at 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kolle & Associates, 1964-65), the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb, 1967-68) and the 13-storey Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street by architects Buchan, Laird & Buchan (1972) (NTAV 2014:22).

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 office building on the south-west corner of Queen and Lonsdale streets was designed by architects and engineers, Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb for the State Savings Bank of Victoria (BAP), and constructed in 1967-1968.

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 of Victoria had occupied an earlier building at 241-243 Queen Street from 1958 (*Progress*, Feb 1968:2; S&Mc), before constructing the present building. Architectural drawings dated January 1967 show the key elevation and floor plans of the new building. The plans showed the banking chamber entrance off Lonsdale Street (which had a two-storey ceiling height), and entrances to a lettable space and the lift lobby off Queen Street (Figure 1 - Figure 3). The City of Melbourne received a building permit application for the multi-storey office building in September 1967 (with an estimated total cost of £1,074,097) (BAI).

The February 1968 edition of the State Savings Bank of Victoria staff magazine *Progress* published an illustration of the building on its cover (Figure 4) and reported that the 11-storey building, that would house the bank's titles office branch (which had occupied the earlier building on the site), would be completed by the end of 1968. The article continued

... the fully air conditioned building, designed by Godfrey and Spowers, Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, under the direction of our Chief Architect, Mr R Cousland, is based on the use of steel sections from the new BHP mills at Whyalla, South Australia. The frame using this metal is lighter and more economical than has previously been possible with Australian steel.

The bank was to occupy part of the ground and first floors, with the remainder of the building available to let. This was the second multi-storey building the bank erected in the post-war period (*Progress*, Feb 1968:2).

In 1970 the second to seventh floors were occupied by the Town and Country Planning Board and seventh to tenth floors by the Valuer-General's Office (S&Mc, 1970). In 2019 the building is called Melbourne Chambers (CoMMaps).

Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, architects

Godfrey and Spowers was established in c 1901 by architects, William Scott Purves Godfrey and Henry Howard Spowers. The firm designed a large number of houses, warehouses and institutional buildings and was best known for its designs for bank buildings.

Godfrey's son, William Purves Race Godfrey, joined the practice in 1931 as a student. Spowers died the following year and Race Godfrey was made partner in c 1934. The firm was suspended in 1941 as a direct result of World War II, during which time Race Godfrey worked with the RAAF as a civilian architect in Melbourne and Sydney and his father, William Godfrey carried out commissions for air-raid shelters. Race Godfrey recommenced practice late in 1944. His father did not continue with the new firm, and retired from practice in the same year.

By the early 1950s, Race Godfrey expanded the firm to include new partners, Eric Hughes, Geoffrey Mewton and John Lobb, becoming Godfrey Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb. The expanded firm specialised in large office and institutional buildings. Notable commissions within central Melbourne included the Allans Building at 278 Collins Street (1959), the Bank of Adelaide Building, 265-69 Collins Street (1959-60), the AMP Building, 344-50 Collins Street (1966-68) and the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-43 Queen Street (1967-68). The National Mutual Building, Collins Street, Melbourne (1962-5, demolished 2015) was a key work for the firm during this period.

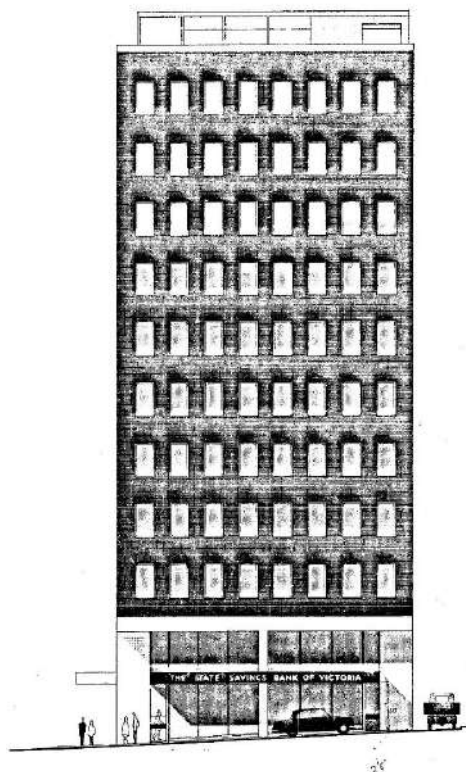


Figure 1. North elevation to Lonsdale Street. Drawing by Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, dated January 1967 (BAP).

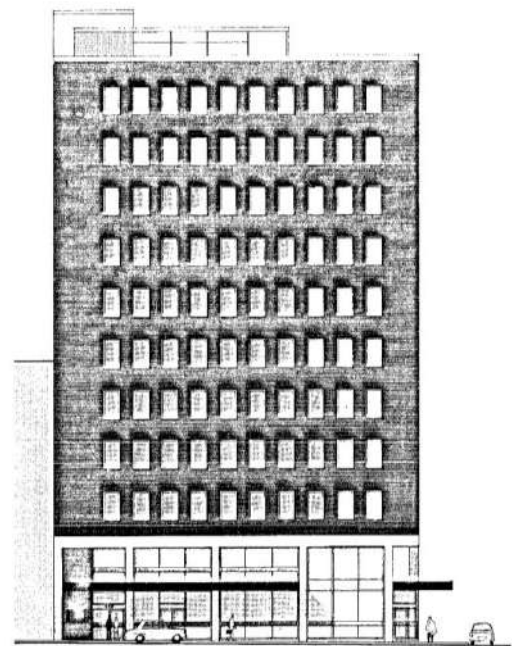


Figure 2. East elevation to Queen Street. Drawing by Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, dated January 1967 (BAP).

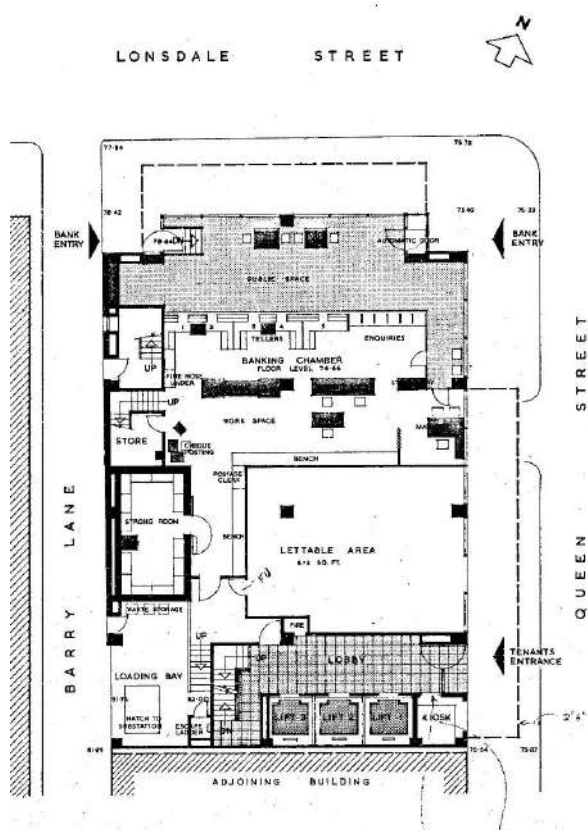


Figure 3. Ground floor plan showing the banking chamber adjacent to Lonsdale Street. Drawing by Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, dated January 1967 (BAP).

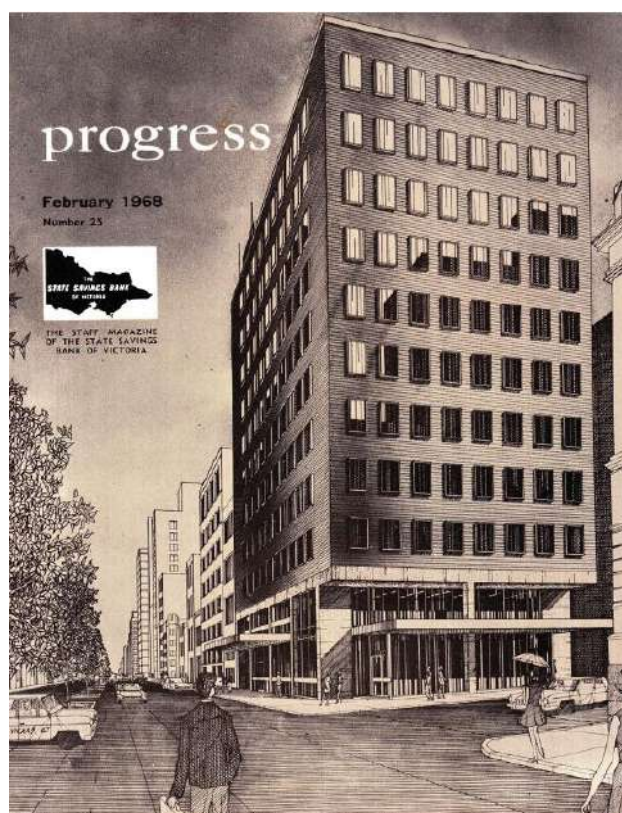


Figure 4. Illustration of the building published on the front cover of the February 1968 edition of *Progress* magazine, the staff publication for the State Savings Bank.



Figure 5. The building in 1984 (City of Melbourne Libraries online Heritage Collection, Reference no. Butler14364).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 233-243 Queen Street is a 10-storey commercial building located at the south-west corner of Queen and Lonsdale streets. The building has main frontages to Queen and Lonsdale streets and a secondary façade to Barry Lane which forms the western boundary of the site. Constructed in 1967-1968 to a design by Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb, the multi-storey building is an example of the Post-War Modernist style.

Sitting on a dominant double-height podium, the rectangular building is of concrete encased steel column and beam construction with curtain walls of manganese brickwork. The upper walls of the main east and north facades have regularly spaced, individual windows placed across the entire wall surfaces. These windows are set in fine stainless-steel-clad timber frames which project beyond the brick surface; otherwise the walls are undecorated and terminate at a crowning row of brickwork with fine rendered parapet. The secondary west façade, also of face brickwork, has a vertical strip of similarly framed windows at the north end, otherwise the wall contains rows of multi-paned, metal-framed windows.

The double-height podium extends around the two main corner facades and provides the building with a strong, contrasting base. Although re-clad, the form and much of the detailing of this podium has been retained. This includes a deep fascia and projecting canopies, which provide the composition with strong horizontal lines; the form of the Lonsdale Street entrance, with projecting bay and doorways perpendicular to the façade, and the window sets with dividing mullions and piers. Original mosaic tiles which framed windows at street level (indicated on original architect's drawings), have been replaced.

INTEGRITY

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building, including the original form and the detailing of the exterior of the building above street level, remains highly intact from its original construction in 1967-1968. This includes the form of the podium base. Works to the building at street level have altered the original design.

Overall, the building retains a 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 building at 233-243 Queen 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. Located on a corner site, the building's solid grid-like curtain wall facades of regularly spaced, frameless glazed openings set in plain dark brick facades and highly prominent, contrasting podium base, can be clearly observed from both Queen Street and Lonsdale Street. Despite re-cladding of the street-level facades, the form of the podium and the upper facades of the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building remain highly intact to its 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. These are detailed below.

State-significant places

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

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

Locally-significant places

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

Precinct Heritage Overlay



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



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



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



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

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



Scottish Amicable Building, 128-146 Queen Street

Other examples

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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

As a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building, the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building at 233-243 Queen Street clearly demonstrates an important phase in the architectural development of multi-storey office buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne. Similar to the small number of 1960s to mid 1970s buildings presently included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme – and a number of other examples identified above – the Former State Savings Bank 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 Libraries online Heritage Collection, reference nos. as cited.

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Goad, Phillip, Ed. (2003), Judging Architecture, Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Victoria).

Murphy, Guy & Bryce Raworth (2012), 'Godfrey & Spowers' in Philip Goad & Julie Willis's (Eds.)
(2012), The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture, Port Melbourne.

Progress, State Savings Bank of Victoria Staff Magazine, via StateBank of Victoria Social Networking
Site, <http://www.statebankvictoria.org/?page_id=3698>, accessed November 2019.

Sands & McDougall Directories (S&Mc).

PREVIOUS STUDIES

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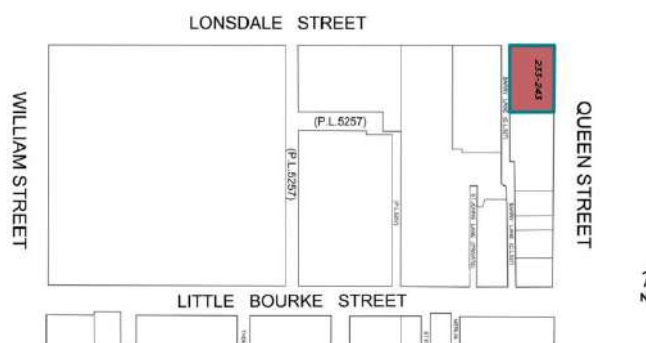
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former State Savings Bank of Victoria



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street, a multi-storey office building constructed in 1967-1968.

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 street level facades are not significant.

How it is significant?

The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria at 233-243 Queen Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1967-1968 to a design by Godfrey & Spowers Hughes, Mewton and Lobb, the Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building 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 status afforded by a dominant city presence (Criterion A).

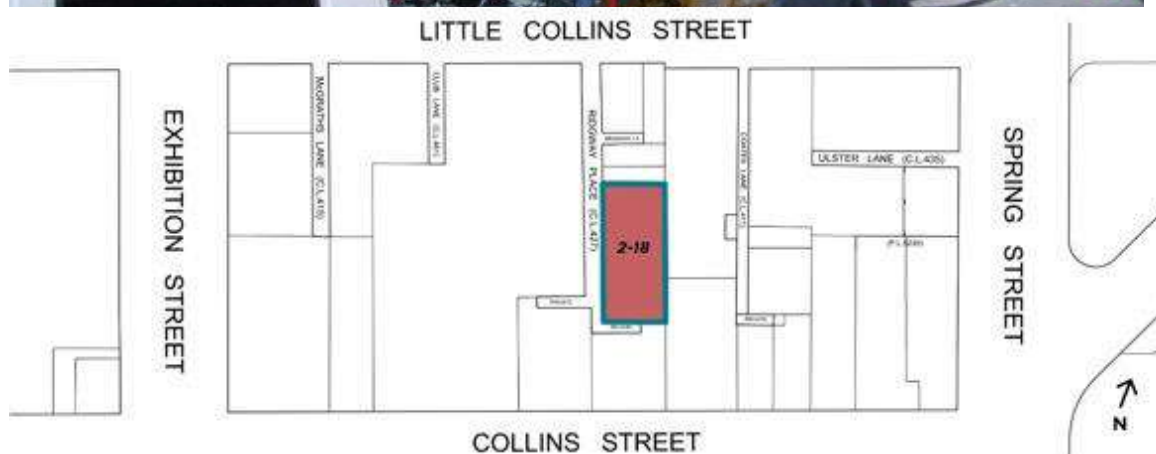
The Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The building strongly reflects the style which was popular in the 1960s to the mid 1970s, particularly in central Melbourne. Constructed as a 10-storey building, the

Former State Savings Bank of Victoria building clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a 1960s to mid 1970s structure, including solid grid-like curtain wall facades of regularly spaced, frameless glazed openings set in plain dark brick facades and a highly prominent, contrasting podium base. These demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context P/L & GJM Heritage, 2020)

SITE NAME	Lyceum Club
STREET ADDRESS	2-18 Ridgway Place, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108274



SURVEY DATE: June 2017

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY H7822-1777

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Place Type

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER GRADE D

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Ellison Harvie

BUILDER: Pollard Brothers

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1965)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1959

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
8 Enjoying the city	8.3 Entertainment and socialising

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Not able to be determined
1920s	Not able to be determined
1960s	Clubs and Unions

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

2-18 Ridgway Place was designed in 1959 by architect Ellison Harvie for the Lyceum Club, the largest and most important club for professional women in Victoria. This modernist building is characterised by its floating first floor form and aesthetic expression of structural and building elements. It sits comfortably in its compact laneway location.

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.

Entertainment and socialising in the postwar period

The retail and entertainment precincts in Melbourne, which emerged in the early 1960s, were largely protected from consolidation and redevelopment due to lower plot ratio controls and difficulty in consolidating a sufficient number of properties to achieve a legitimate tower form. The level of redevelopment in these precincts is more modest, with fine grained, smaller sized allotments along with

valued heritage fabric. During this phase, conservation of heritage buildings was not yet an intentional pursuit, but rather a residual effect of the prevailing logic of the planning system (CoM 2016:5-7).

Higher disposable income, more leisure time, and larger metropolitan populations created an increase in entertainment and tourism industries in every Australian capital city. According to Marsden, only the office and finance sector has had more impact on the physical expansion and alteration of existing places, especially in central Sydney and Melbourne. Even though increased suburbanisation from the 1950s led to the closure of entertainment venues and theatres in Melbourne's city centre, other venues opened. In 1970, for example, Hoyts Cinema Centre in Bourke Street opened the first multi-cinema complex in Australia.

Clubs have also historically been an important part of city life. The Lyceum Club for women built new premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1959 while new clubrooms for the RACV Club were built at 123 Queen Street in 1961. Such places provided patrons with a space in the city to meet, network and promote cultural activities.

SITE HISTORY

The site of 2-18 Ridgway Place was originally purchased as part of the fifth Crown Land sale in 1839, with lanes and subdivisions developed by the same year. By 1850, a building had been constructed and in 1888, the site comprised seven houses. By 1905-06 there were six two-storey houses fronting a lane. (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993).

In 1959, the Lyceum Club opened its clubrooms at 2-18 Ridgway Place.

The Lyceum Club

The following history on the Lyceum Club has been taken from the National Trust file (B6902), which in turn has been extracted from the history in Allom Lovell and Associate's 1998 management plan for the Lyceum Club.

The Lyceum Club held its first meeting in 1912 at rented premises, the Brunton Chambers, at the corner of Elizabeth and Collins streets. After six years of operation, the club's 150 members had outgrown the space, and the Lyceum moved to the fifth floor of the Auditorium Building at 167 Collins Street. With the end of World War One, and the subsequent increased involvement of women in professional and public work, membership continued to rise. The new premises soon reached capacity, resulting in the Lyceum Club needing to limit membership numbers to 450 and create a temporary waiting list.

Membership increased from 500 in 1921 to 625 in 1922. In 1925 the Lyceum Club accepted an offer from the ES&A Bank to lease an empty floor within the Stock Exchange building. The club had the opportunity to adapt the space to meet its needs, with the architects devising a system of folding doors so that the main rooms could be opened to make one large room for special occasions.

Later in 1925, the Lyceum Club's constitution was changed to allow for its incorporation under the

Companies Act of 1916. In 1928, the club's rules were altered to allow membership to increase from 800 to 1000, which it reached in the 1940s.

The Lyceum Club remained in the Stock Exchange building until 1934, when it moved to Bank House, at the corner of Collins and Queens streets. The planning of new premises at Bank House offered an opportunity to provide accommodation, with three bedrooms for guests made available on the third floor.

Membership after World War Two continued to rise and by 1947, in order to absorb the number of people on the waiting list, the Articles of Association were altered to allow membership to increase from 1000 to 1200. In 1956, the club was advised that Bank House would no longer be made available for its use. Architect member and associate in the partnership of architectural firm, Stephenson & Turner, Ellison Harvie, surveyed members regarding their wishes for future club premises. It was decided that the Lyceum Club should investigate the possibility of buying a property in the city and that members would be encouraged to take up £25 debentures.

After investigations, a block in Ridgway Place was chosen in 1957 as a potential site for the club's new premises. It was described at a special club meeting as being approximately 7000 square feet, on which six small two-storey houses stood, one of which remains today at 20 Ridgway Place. The cottages were once owned by the adjacent Melbourne Club, who used them as accommodation for its coachmen, but by the 1950s the houses were privately owned and tenanted. The Lyceum Club took up the option of the Ridgway Place site and purchased the land for £26,000 in 1957. A decision to demolish the cottages and construct a new building on the Ridgway Place site was made in May 1958.

The construction of the Lyceum Club's new building was coordinated by Ellison Harvie, with assistance from fellow architects Hilary Lewis and Jessie Madsen. The club was relocated to temporary accommodation provided by the ES&A Bank at 140 Flinders Lane.

Harvey's design for the new building included car parking, an entrance on the ground floor, dining room, kitchen and clubrooms on the first floor, with a small lounge and six bedrooms opening to a roof terrace on the second floor. The terrace and the full-length windows on the first floor overlooked the garden of the adjacent Melbourne Club. The tender for the construction of the building was awarded to Pollard Brothers for the sum of £75,857. The new building was officially opened by Lady Mayoress F W Thomas on 26 May 1959.

Over the next 10 years, various work on the building was undertaken by architects Stephenson & Turner. After Ellison Harvie retired from the practice in 1967, Stephenson & Turner continued to act as the club's regular architects. In 1972, extensive repairs were undertaken following flooding, which occurred after torrential rain in late 1971.

At the same time, the club appointed an honorary architect from its own members, Berenice Harris, who had been a director with the firm Romberg & Boyd since 1961. Harris's work over the next few years included minor works but culminated in the early 1980s when a large renovation program was implemented, including extensions, the construction of ensuite bathrooms and the installation of a lift. After Harris's retirement in the 1980s, the Lyceum Club's building and maintenance work became the responsibility of the local firm of Cunningham & Keddie. In addition to minor works over the years, the most substantial work undertaken by the firm was the fit-out of the library on the second floor, which involved the consolidation of three original bedrooms facing the sun terrace.

Other architect members of the Lyceum Club likely to have made contributions to the building over the years include Cynthea Teague, Ailsa Trundle, Lorna Phillips, Muriel Stott, Mary Turner Shaw, and Babs Delaney. Other notable local women professionals who have contributed to the building include artists Anne Montgomery (mural painting) and Bee Taplin (textiles), interior decorator Joyce Godfrey (club rooms and lounge), and landscape designer Millie Gibson.

In sum, the building was built and adapted regularly to meet the changing needs of the club and its membership. The organisation dates to 1912, and the building to 1959. The building was purpose built for the club and is its first permanent home (previous spaces were leased). Construction of the building enabled an expansion of the membership of the club and development of facilities for members. The Club's first president was Pattie Deakin, wife of the prime minister Alfred Deakin, and many of its early members were among the first female professionals in their particular fields: Dr Constance Ellis (medicine), Christian Jollie Smith (law), and Marion Mahoney Griffin (architecture). As a result of bequests and member donations, the Lyceum Club houses an important collection of furniture, artwork and reference books (National Trust 2005).

Ellison Harvie, architect

The Australian Dictionary of Biography contains this entry for Ellison Harvey:

Edythe Ellison Harvie (1902-1984), architect joined Sir Arthur Stephenson in his recently established firm in 1921 and remained there throughout her professional life.

In 1925-28 Harvie attended the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier (1925-28), where she excelled, her work being later recognised in the award of a diploma of architectural design (1938) - the first received by a woman. Registered as an architect and elected an associate (1928) of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, Harvie specialised in hospital architecture, a field in which Stephenson & Meldrum gained an international reputation. She led work on the Jessie Macpherson wing of the Queen Victoria Hospital (1928), and on designs for the St Vincent's (1933), Mercy (1934, 1937-39) and Freemasons (1935) hospitals...

Harvie was made an associate of the new partnership Stephenson & Turner in 1938 and soon placed in charge of work on the Royal Melbourne Hospital...In 1946 she was made a partner of the firm and elected a fellow of the RVIA—the first woman to gain this status. She was also a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects and, later, a life fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

A committed modernist, Harvie drew much of her inspiration from the innovative institutional work she observed during travels through the United States of America and Europe. Deploping the lack of architectural appreciation in Australia, she served on the RVIA's Board of Architectural Education (1946-56) and on the board of the University of Melbourne's faculty of architecture (1945-73).

Harvie also became an advocate for the professional development of women, urging their full participation in public life and an end to discrimination against them in employment. She continued to work on hospitals until her retirement from full-time practice in 1968, but also designed two buildings specifically serving women: The Lyceum Club (1959) and St Hilda's

College (1963), University of Melbourne. The former has an elegance typical of late 1950s modernism; the latter, in spare, pale brick, is tempered with modest references to the traditions of collegial gothic...

Ellison Harvie was president (1963-65) of the Lyceum Club and a foundation member (1948) and honorary treasurer of the Melbourne Soroptomist Club...She died at East Melbourne on 27 September 1984 and was buried in Boroondara cemetery, Kew (Edquist 2007).

The Lyceum Club was one of only two commissions Harvie accepted outside the Stephenson & Turner office (National Trust 2005).

Stephenson & Turner, architects

The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture contains the following information about Stephenson & Turner:

At its peak, Stephenson & Turner was Australia's largest architecture firm, with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle, New Zealand and Hong Kong. It was formed in 1921 by A. G. Stephenson and Percy Meldrum as Stephenson & Meldrum, after both had returned to Australia after WWI, having met at London's Architectural Association. The firm had relatively modest beginnings, with a range of projects and clients, including the State Savings Bank of Victoria (Its chairman, Sir William McBeath, had encouraged Stephenson to return to Melbourne to set up a practice.) The firm's first hospital client, the Melbourne Children's Hospital in 1925, and a proposed reform to the hospital system, prompted Stephenson to imagine a new direction for his fledgling firm and he audaciously borrowed money to take an extensive overseas trip in 1926-27 to the United States and Canada to gather intelligence and experience with a view to becoming a firm specialising in hospitals...

The firm established a Sydney office in 1934 led by Donald Keith Turner, and were known in NSW from 1935 as Stephenson, Meldrum & Turner, taking on several large hospital projects including Gloucester House at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney (1936) ... Meldrum was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with Stephenson's interest in taking on more hospital work...The result was a very rapid and acrimonious split in the partnership...

Turner and Stephenson continued as Stephenson & Turner, continuing their hospital work during WWII, and afterwards promoted a number of their associates, such as Ellison Harvie, Geoffrey Moline and John D. Fisher, to partners. Beyond their hospital work, the firm also undertook key industrial complexes, commercial office buildings, banks, town plans (including Shepparton (1946) and the Australian pavilions at the Paris Exposition (1937) and the New York World's Fair (1939-40).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Establishing its own club premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1958, the Lyceum Club, as an organisation has been highly influential in the lives of generations of Victorian women. There is a direct association between the organisation, membership and the building that has endured for nearly 60 years.

With its large influx of immigrants, Melbourne was a city that inspired and promoted literature and art, movements that were accompanied by the establishment of art and literary clubs and societies. One such club was the Lyceum Club, established in 1912:

had its origins in the Woman Writers' Club, founded ten years earlier by the three female members of the Institute of Journalists who, excluded from the institute's premises, wanted a place to meet and write. In 1912 they joined with the group of women active in philanthropic and community work, education, science and the arts who had met through the 1907 Women's Work Exhibition, and members of the Catalysts, a women's discussion group, founded in 1910. The first overseas group to affiliate with the London Lyceum, the Club was open to university graduates and women who had achieved distinction in their own right. Its purpose was evident in a series of 'circles' that allowed members to learn new skills or discuss social problems (Swain 2008).

The Lyceum Club is considered to be of social significance for its association with a community of professional women. The relevant significance indicators include:

- The community or cultural group has a deep sense of ownership/stewardship and/or connectedness to the place or object
- The place is important to this community's sense identity
- Important as a place of community service (including health, education, worship, pastoral care, communications, emergency services, museums, etc.)

It may also be important to this community as an 'Important as a place of collective socialisation'.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Lyceum Club is located at the end of the narrow laneway Ridgway Lane, which runs off Little Collins Street, towards the eastern end of the CBD. The long narrow building runs over several addresses (numbers 2-18). It faces the high masonry wall of the Melbourne Club across the laneway. Although comprised of three levels, the building fits appropriately in the laneway setting, without appearing to dominate the confined space.

The middle storey is cantilevered over the ground floor and the flat roofed profile of this level results in a low section that presents as a horizontal band running the full length of the building. In keeping with the modern aesthetic, the building has an unadorned façade, with primary aesthetic interest derived from the arrangement of structural elements, and most notably, windows. Identical bays of timber framed windows run the full length of the building, giving a distinctive pattern and rhythm to the façade. Main meeting rooms and functions areas are located on this level.

Entry to the building is from street level. The compact entry foyer has extensive glazing and a textured cream brick wall. The internal stair is visible from the entry point. A row of equally spaced concrete columns runs along the build line. The open spaces on this level are used for car parking. Metal screens between the columns are a later addition.

The contemporary garage roller doors obscuring the ground floor space and entry of the building are still used by the Lyceum Club. An upper floor and alterations to the building were completed in 2018, designed by KTA Architects. This has respected and added to the original design.



Figure 1. Aerial Photo by Wolfgang Sievers, 1976 (Source: Sievers 1976).

INTEGRITY

Extensive alterations and extensions have occurred at the upper level in 2017-18, undertaken by KTA Architects. This has succeeded in adapting the building to the changing needs of the Lyceum Club and its members. Extensive works were also undertaken in 1981 when a seminar room was added to the upper level. Currently the built form extends to the building edge in two locations on the upper floor. This alteration impacts somewhat on the reading of the middle level as a single horizontal band. However, the façade of the important middle level remains intact and the design intent of the original arrangement is still clear.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Lyceum Club as an organisation has been highly influential in the lives of generations of Victorian women. There is a direct association between the organisation, its membership and the building that has endured for nearly 60 years. The only other known women's club, the Alexandra Club is primarily a private hotel for rural and regional women and has a different mission.

The Alexandra Club, 81 Collins Street, 1934 (HO568, HO504 Collins Street East precinct)

The Alexandra Club was designed by Anketell & K Henderson in 1937. It features a neo-Georgian brick façade of five storeys. The interior retains its' 1930s design in decorative columns and coffered ceiling, concierge's cabin and lift lobby.



Figure 2. 81 Collins Street, Alexandra Club constructed 1934. (Source: CoMMaps)

As a place, the Lyceum Club compares with several other modern buildings and/or former clubs. In conceiving more modest city buildings, some architects embraced the modernist theme of apparent weightlessness, where, like the Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgway Place, the upper floor(s) projected above a recessed ground floor (National Trust 2014:73). This was also achieved in other buildings such as:

Sapphire House, 11-25 Crossley Street, 1957 (HO500 Bourke Hill Precinct)

Built 1957, Sapphire House is a two-storey brick masonry building with recessed glazing within protruding white window frames (National Trust 2014:73).



Figure 3. 11-25 Crossley Street constructed 1957. (Source: CoMMaps)

Latrobe Photographic Studios, 152 Little Lonsdale Street, 1964

Designed by architect Harry Ernest in 1964, two levels of office space (expressed externally with alternating bays of windows and wide brick piers) project over a fully-glazed ground floor level (National Trust 2014:73).



Figure 4. 152-156 Little Lonsdale Street constructed 1964. (Source: CoMMaps)

RACV Club, 111-129 Queen Street, 1959-61 (Interim HO1068)

Designed by Bates Smart & McCutcheon, the elevated masonry clad block rests on stilts above the podium as discrete and well formulated massing, the stilts or columns being visible as they pass through the podium on the south side. The tower block appears to float above the façade and when combined with the glazed podium, gives the lightness and clarity of purpose sought by modernist designers.



Figure 5. 111-129 Queen Street constructed 1959-61. (Source: CoMMaps)

Analysis

The Lyceum Club as an organisation historically and socially has few peers in Melbourne, with the Alexandra Club being the only other known private women's club in the city. Today the Lyceum Club and the Alexandra Club at 81 Collins Street both provide private clubs for women with the Lyceum catering specifically for professional women.

It is one of only two private commissions by pioneering architect Ellison Harvie, outside her role at Stephenson & Turner.

As a place, the Lyceum Club, including its recent extensions and alterations, is a representative example of hybrid modern and contemporary architecture, comprising the 1959 building and the 2018 extension.

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

REFERENCES

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

Allom Lovell 1998, Lyceum Club Management Plan,

Context Pty Ltd 2012, *Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment*, prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Edquist, Harriet, 'Harvie, Edythe Ellison (1902–1984)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/harvie-edythe-ellison-12605/text22705>, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed 4 June 2017.

Fels, M, Lavelle S, and Mider, D 1993, 'Archaeological Management Plan', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

National Trust 2005, 'Lyceum Club' citation in Victorian Heritage Database, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/65499#sthash.JI3MUMxZ.dpuf>, accessed 21 June 2017.

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National Trust file B6902 for the Lyceum Club, 2-18 Ridgway Place, Melbourne.

Swain, Shurlee 2008, 'Lyceum Club' in *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00870b.htm>, accessed 15 June 2017.

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PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985**D

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993**D

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

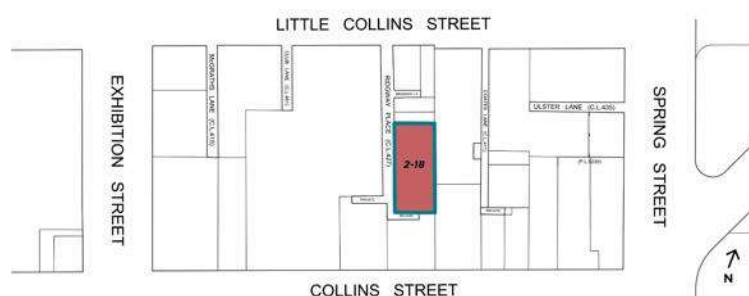
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011**Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Lyceum Club



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgeway Place, Melbourne, designed by architect Ellison Harvie and completed in 1959.

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

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's continuous use as a women's club.

How it is significant?

The Lyceum Club at 2-18 Ridgeway Place is of local historic, social and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Historically, the Lyceum Club is significant as a purpose-built club house, designed by and for women. Importantly, the 1957 building commission and all subsequent alterations and additions, have involved local women architects from the original design and construction by Ellison Harvie, to subsequent work by Hilary Lewis, Jessie Madsen, Berenice Harris, Cunningham & Keddie and KTA (Kerstin Thompson Architects). Other notable local women professionals who have contributed to the design of the building include artists Anne Montgomery (mural painting) and Bee Taplin (textiles), interior decorator Joyce Godfrey (club rooms and lounge), and landscape designer Millie Gibson. This tradition of continuous and almost exclusively female design input on the one project, over a sustained period has few precedents (National Trust 2005). (Criterion A)

Historically, the Lyceum Club is significant as the largest and most important club for professional women in Victoria. Having been formally established in Melbourne in 1912 to provide a place of retreat, meeting and discussion for professional and retired women, it is significant for its pioneering role in furthering the status of women within the professional sphere dominated by men at the time. As a result of bequests and member donations, the Lyceum Club houses an important collection of furniture, artwork and reference books (National Trust 2005). (Criterion A)

The Lyceum Club is of social significance for its strong and enduring association with the organisation and its membership. The building reflects the aspirations and needs of the organisation in providing and

sustaining a place of social congregation and intellectual exchange amongst professional women.
(Criterion G)

The Lyceum Club is significant for its association with its designer, architect Ellison Harvie. Harvie, as a member of the Club and a partner in the firm of Stephenson & Turner, was the first woman to gain a Diploma of Architectural Design from the Architectural Atelier in 1938, and the first Australian woman to be nominated as a Fellow of the RIBA in 1949. Her work at Stephenson & Turner contributed to the design of numerous major hospitals in Sydney and Melbourne, including the Royal Melbourne Hospital in 1942. (Criterion H)

The Lyceum Club is associated with many highly regarded women including the first president, Pattie Deakin and many of its early members were among the first female professionals in their particular fields including Dr Constance Ellis (medicine), Christian Jollie Smith (law), and Marion Mahoney Griffin (architecture) (National Trust 2005). (Criterion H)

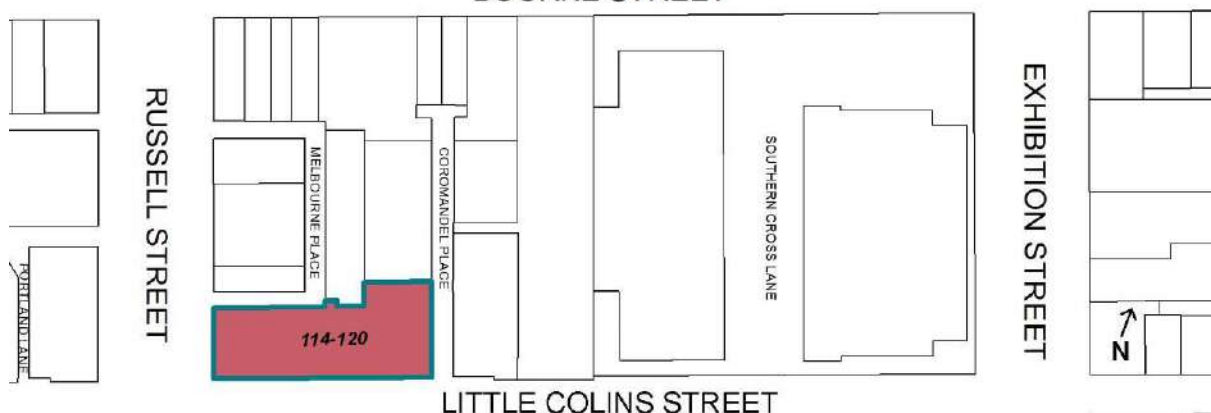
Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building [Hero Apartments (current name)]
STREET ADDRESS	114-120 Russell Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108591



BOURKE STREET

**SURVEY DATE:** October 2018**SURVEY BY:** Context**HERITAGE INVENTORY** N/A**EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY** No**PLACE TYPE** Individual Heritage Place**PROPOSED CATEGORY** Significant**FORMER GRADE** B**DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:** Commonwealth Department of Works (1948-54), Nonda Katsaildis (1999-2001)**BUILDER:** Probuild Constructions (1999-2001)**DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:** Postwar Period (1945-1975)**DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:** 1948-1954, 1999-2001

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
POST WAR THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
2 Governing, administering and policing the city	2.1 Commonwealth government

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Retail and residential
1920s	Telegraphic and telephonic
1960s	Telegraphic and Telephonic

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 Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, now Hero Apartments, at 114-120 Russell Street Melbourne, was constructed by the Commonwealth government in 1948-54 in the interwar Functionalist style to a design by the Commonwealth Department of Works.

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.

Commonwealth government

In 1948, the Commonwealth Government compulsorily acquired land on either side of Little Lonsdale Street, between Spring and Exhibition streets. The Commonwealth Centre (now demolished) was subsequently constructed on this block of land (with a street address of 11-39 La Trobe Street) over the period 1958 to the early 1960s. Its construction transformed 'the image of the Federal government in central Melbourne into that of a modern corporation' (Lewis et al 1993:223-24, 255).

As Commonwealth powers increased after World War II, Commonwealth buildings in city centres rose in number. Of particular influence was the transfer in 1942 of income tax revenue from the states to the Commonwealth and the resultant construction of buildings for the Taxation Office, including a building in Bourke Street, which opened in 1958. Marsden writes that the Commonwealth government presence, including the establishment after the war of the new Department of Housing and Construction, reinforced Melbourne's continuing pre-eminence as Australia's financial centre, at least until the 1960s.

A telephone exchange and postal hall building was constructed by the Commonwealth government at 114-120 Russell Street in the period 1948-54. In 1956 the building served as a relay station for the broadcasting of newly arrived television. In 1959, the Commonwealth Arbitration Courts opened at 450 Little Bourke Street, and in 1965 the Reserve Bank of Australia opened at 56-64 Collins Street. Telephone exchanges were also constructed by the Commonwealth Department of Works at 376-382 Flinders Lane (opened in 1957) and at 447-453 Lonsdale Street (1969).

SITE HISTORY

The subject building at 114-120 Russell Street was constructed in two distinct phases: the first between 1948-1954 when it was built as the Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building. A second phase of development, spanning 1999 to 2001, saw the exchange and postal building converted to the Hero Apartments tower (Hermes record for '114-120 Russell Street, Melbourne').

Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building: 1948-c1999

The land comprising the subject site is part of Crown Allotments 19 and 17 of Block 10, first purchased in 1837 by Anthony Hordern of Sydney, and Charles Williams of Melbourne (CoMMaps; Badman 1892 & S&Mc 1892). A row of narrow Victorian buildings ranging from one to three storeys in

height and numbered 114-120 Russell Street, and 154-136 Little Collins Street, were built between 1885 and 1890 (MMBW 1018,1895; S&Mc 1885, 1890).

In 1946, the Commonwealth Department of Public Works acquired the subject site, whose buildings it described as some of the oldest and most dilapidated in Melbourne (Commonwealth of Australia 1945-46). The Department of Public Works prepared plans for the Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building in the same year (Commonwealth of Australia 1945-46).

The Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, opened in 1954, was the first large building constructed in the city after 1940 and, according to the National Trust citation, it was the last to express the solid, masonry architectural traditions that were typical of architecture before World War Two (see Figure 1) (National Trust 2008; *Age* 15 September 1954:2). Carried to the City of Melbourne height limit of 40 metres (132 feet) and divided into nine storeys, the building was one of the tallest in the city at the time of its completion (see Figure 2) (*Age* 15 September 1954:2).



Figure 1. photograph of the Russell Street Telephone Exchange and Postal Building in 1956 (Source: Sievers 1956, SLV: accession no: H99.50/299 copyright)



Figure 2. Aerial view of the Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, Russell Street, Melbourne, Victoria 1954-60. (Source: Charles Pratt and Airspy 1954-56, SLV copyright)

Construction was slow and expensive; taking six and a half years and costing £1 million, over double the initial estimates (*Age* 15 September 1954:2). On completion of construction, the design was described as belonging to a 'past-era' and the cost to taxpayers was lamented (*Age* 15 September 1954:2).

Associated with the building was a 1600 feet telephone cable tunnel from Flinders Lane to Bourke Street (*Age* 15 September 1954:2). Bendigo miners cut the tunnel that descended 30 feet below Russell Street (see Figure 3). A Federal Parliamentary Accounts Committee inquiring into the cost of the building in 1953 found that the inflated price was in part due to changing labour conditions following the war, including a marginal increase in the basic wage; as well as the shortage of local building materials and, consequently, the increased cost of imported materials, including the cement

used in the building, imported at an increased cost of 204%, and much of the steel which was also purchased at an inflated price (*Age* 15 September 1954:2).

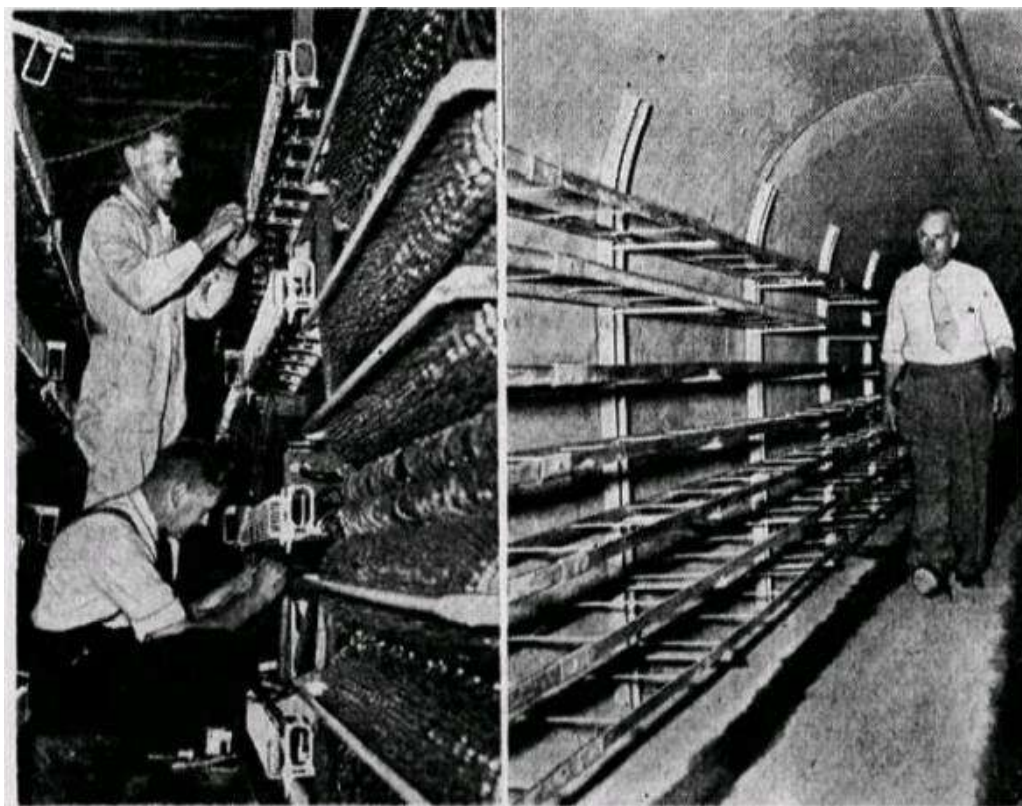


Figure 3. Photograph showing underground tunnels with telephone wires installed upon completion of the Exchange building's construction. (Source: *Age* 31 March 1954:5)

The automatic exchange was constructed to house 20,000 telephone lines (*Age* 27 March 1954:11).

Use of the Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building was distributed across the building as follows:

- The ground floor was used as a postal hall.
- The basement, first, second and third floors were fitted with automatic telephone equipment.
- The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh floors were subdivided, using terracotta block partitions, into departmental office space.
- The eighth floor comprised a cafeteria (Commonwealth of Australia 1945-46).

The postal hall was fitted with an elaborate interior with an Italian Modernist influence, and featured a striped floor, metal grill work, stainless steel telephone booths and substantial pink granite stylised Doric columns (Hero Apartments 2018). Sculptors S J Hammond and G H Allan designed the low-bas relief sculpture on the western elevation of the building, fronting Russell Street and a 300kg timepiece affixed to the exterior of the building in 1954 (see Figure 4). The subject building also reputedly contained the first air-conditioned postal hall in Australia (*Age* 8 September 1955:4; VHD 2008)

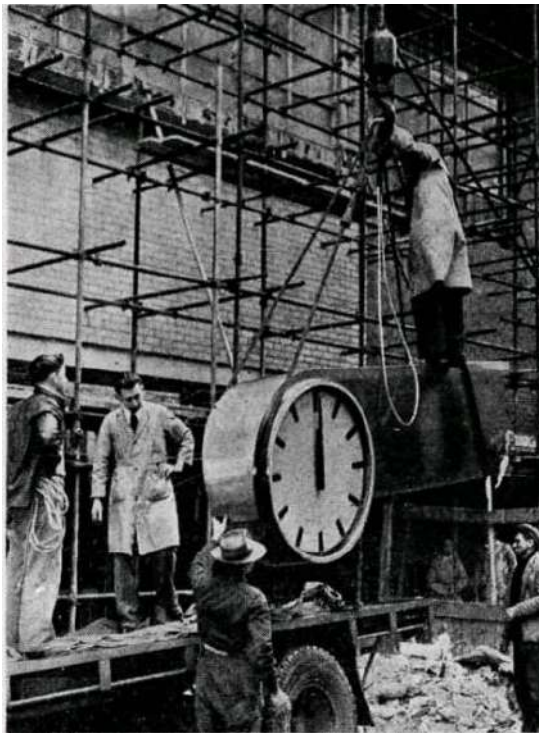


Figure 4. Extract from photograph showing the 6cwt (approximately 300kg) timepiece being installed at Russell Street Exchange building in 1954. (Source: *Age* 23 July 1954:8)

After the initial changeover in November 1953, 3000 telephone lines were progressively moved in 1954-1955 from the Central Exchange on Lonsdale Street (installed in 1911) to Russell Street (*Age* 27 March 1954:11; Commonwealth of Australia 1945-46). In 1956 the building served as a relay station for the newly arrived television services.

Constructed during a period of architectural and economic stagnation in Victoria, Miles Lewis maintains that the former Telephone Exchange and Postal Building was one of 'the last vestiges of the mannered metropolitan architecture of the 1930s' (Lewis et al 1993:224). By 1955 there were 48 major building projects either recently finished or being erected in Melbourne, including the first glass curtain walled building in the city at 100 Collins Street, which represented the strikingly different style of Modernism (*Age* 8 September 1955:4; VHD 2008).

The building continued to function as a postal building and telephone exchange until c1998, when it was offered for sale by tender (see Figure 5) (*Age* 9 May 1998:105).

From May to July 1999, the Russell Street Telephone Exchange building was used as a major exhibition venue during the first Melbourne International Biennial (*Age* 14 May 1999:48).



The sale of 114-120 Russell Street is seen as a litmus test.

Figure 5. Photograph from 1998, showing the building shortly before the sale. (Age 9 May 1998:105)

Hero Apartments: 1999-2001

Between 1999 and 2001 the building was converted into a residential tower. Nonda Katsilidis, then practising as Nation Fender Katsalidis, was the lead architect of the six-storey addition and apartment conversion. Probuild Constructions carried out the works (FK 2006). According to Fender Katsalidis, the six-storey roof top addition was designed to counterpoint the Telephone Exchange building's 1940s cubic geometry, with the addition expressed in modern vernacular, 'accentuated by a materials' palette predominated by Corten steel and galvanised iron'. The architects described the additions as a 'dramatic and richly detailed skyline sculpture [that]...celebrates the here and now, while re-validating the integrity of the site's architectural past' (FK 2006).

The tower presently contains 112 residential properties, one business, eight retail shops and four food and drink outlets (CoMMaps).

Commonwealth Department of Works, designer

The Commonwealth Department of Works was established in 1901 to look after the creation of public works in the newly federated nation. Although the agency has operated under different titles in its history – it was known as the Department of Works from 1952-73 – it is commonly referred to as the Commonwealth Department of Works (CDW) to distinguish it from state-based agencies. The Department was responsible for the design, construction, alteration and maintenance of Commonwealth buildings and other engineering works. Its offices were located in Melbourne until 1929, when they were transferred to Canberra. There was a period of intensive works carried out by the CDW during and immediately after World War Two, as the Department managed the building of essential infrastructure as well as significant postwar planning (Smith 2006). By the early 1970s, the activities of the CDW were slowly declining; its functions were transferred to the Department of Housing & Construction in 1978; then the Department of Transport and Construction in 1982 and from

1987, it was known as Australian Construction Services. The vestiges of the CDW were sold off to an engineering firm in 1997 (Willis 2012).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building at 114-120 Russell Street was originally a nine-storey building designed in the interwar Functionalist style and opened in 1954 to the 40 metre (132 foot) height limit then in force in central Melbourne. Although it was constructed after 1945, the building has a strong horizontal emphasis and other characteristics typical of the interwar Functionalist style; however, it also demonstrates a number of eclectic and innovative features that are more derivative than characteristic of the style.

The subject site is located at the corner of Russell and Little Collins Street. To the north of the property is Melbourne Place. The building has a narrow frontage to Russell Street, but is on a very deep block that extends a considerable distance along Little Collins Street to the east.

The building structure is of reinforced concrete post and slab construction. The original façades to Russell Street and Little Collins Street are constructed in light coloured non-loadbearing brickwork laid in stretcher bond. Both elevations are heavily articulated with projecting windows and other elements, and the perimeter framing for these windows is of glazed terracotta (or faience), rather than concrete or rendered brick as is usually the case. Most of the projecting window modules are in repetitive square or vertically proportioned modules rather than strong horizontal forms linking multiple window panels usually associated with the interwar Functionalist style. These more typical interwar Functionalist forms are present, but are limited to the first and second floors on both elevations, as well as the top level below the projecting roof cornice. The first floor horizontal panel on Russell Street frames an artwork in the 'Surrealist' style that has been placed over the original first floor bay of windows (refer figure 2).

In general, the windows appear to be original steel (or possibly aluminium) framed windows with some opening sashes as the building predates the widespread use of air conditioning. The building features a large and dramatic recessed entry space on the Russell Street frontage, surmounted by a lintel clad in glazed terracotta and supported on three circular columns clad in granite. Adjacent to the entry is also a bass relief sculpture attached to the wall at ground level which is a common element of a high-quality building of this period and intended to be enjoyed by the public.

Between 1999 and 2001 the building was converted to an apartment complex, including the addition of six additional storeys above the original roof and other alterations within the original structure, including the insertion of balconies, to the design of architects Nation Fender Katsalidis.

The additional storeys are primarily of metal and glass, separated from and floating above the original building with a deep undercroft. There are two large vertical fins crossing the floors of the extension on Little Collins Street, which terminate above the roof of the extension with an 'Art Deco' flourish. A number of original windows have been removed to create balconies, however this does not disrupt the rhythm of the elevation despite the glazing line being moved back. Two new vertically proportioned windows have been inserted at the third and fourth floor levels to the Russell Street façade, and are surrounded by an overscaled 'bar code' motif. Overall, the contrast between the form and detail of the original building and the additions, and the design and material quality of both, results in an interesting and complimentary architectural composition.

INTEGRITY

The original nine-storey building is largely intact with the original face brickwork, projecting steel framed windows with projecting glazed terracotta faience frames, glazed terracotta lintel to the entry supported on three granite clad circular columns and bas relief sculpture still evident.

Alterations and additions completed in 1999-2001 include the addition of six storeys above the original roof line, projecting balconies to the Little Collins Street elevation, the removal of a number of windows along Little Collins Street to create recessed balconies and the addition of two windows to the Russell Street elevation with 'bar code' decorative panel.

Although the 1999-2001 alterations and additions to the building have had some impact on the authenticity and integrity of the earlier building designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, the original building remains clearly legible as a high quality, if somewhat eclectic, example of the interwar Functionalist style and its architectural qualities have not been overwhelmed by the additional forms. Therefore, despite the alterations, overall the building is of high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

After the end of the World War Two, building activities in the central city slowly revived during the early 1950s. Structural steel and reinforced concrete framing became popular building materials in interwar period and continued to be used extensively in postwar Melbourne construction, inspired by Chicagoan architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Departing from load-bearing brick walls, these new building methods allowed windows to become larger and more prominent on facades, whilst also facilitating increased building heights.

In the 1930s and 1940s new lower scale buildings such as factories and other modern service facilities such as car showrooms often utilised the interwar Functionalist style, emphasising a modern aesthetic and characterised by its progressive image using 'streamlined' horizontal spandrels and extensive horizontal bands of glazing. However, in the period prior to and following World War Two, the style was also used for some high-rise commercial buildings, including the Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works.

The following examples are comparable with the former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, although their construction date and scale varies. The images and descriptions below are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

Batman Exchange, 376-382 Flinders Lane, 1956-57 (Recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

Designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, the Batman Exchange has an unusual asymmetrical treatment of the façade with a combination brick masonry with a glass curtain wall sections.



Figure 6. 376-382 Flinders Lane, built in 1956. (Source: Context 2018)

Lonsdale Exchange Building, 447-453 Lonsdale Street, 1969 (Recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

The Lonsdale Exchange Building at 447-453 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne was built in 1969 by P D C Construction to a design by the Commonwealth Department of Public Works. The 15-storey building, built in the Post-War Modernist and Brutalist styles, replaced an earlier telephone exchange on the site.



Figure 7. 447-453 Lonsdale Street, built in 1969.

The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building at is an example of a substantial multi-storey building designed broadly in the interwar Functionalist style, and completed during the postwar years in 1954. It has the strong horizontal emphasis of expressed façade elements and windows, and other characteristics typical of the style, but also demonstrates a number of eclectic and innovative features that are more derivative than typical of the style, making it difficult to compare with other examples.

Nevertheless, some comparison can be drawn with other examples of postwar telephone exchanges in the City of Melbourne, also designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, including the

Lonsdale Exchange Building, the former Batman Exchange (both recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), and the Telstra City West Exchange Building at 436 Little Bourke Street (HO1054). The former Batman Exchange is particularly comparable, as a high quality building from the period that shares some of the characteristics of the Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building. The two buildings share a similar scale, a façade of light coloured non-loadbearing brickwork articulated with projecting windows, two repetitive top levels, and vertically-proportioned modules rather than strong horizontal forms linking multiple window panels that is usually associated with the interwar Functionalist style. While the main glazing element for the Flinders Lane building has expanded to a large multi-level expanse of windows constructed as a curtain wall that anticipates the dominant curtain wall facades of the later Post-War Modernist style, the expressed glazed curtain wall element is framed by a projecting masonry frame that is characteristic of the interwar Functionalist style.

As a type, the three examples are representative of postwar public works and are good examples of the technical and utilitarian application of design for Commonwealth communication services. These are all refined examples of early postwar Melbourne buildings that demonstrate some key aspects of the Post-War Modernist style as well as some other styles (including Brutalist style, and the interwar Functionalist style, for the subject building), while incorporating features that express their utilitarian interior functions and a major design aesthetic. The Telstra City West Exchange Building at 436 Little Bourke Street (HO1054) is comparable as a purpose built, government designed exchange but is distinguished by its architectural style and period of construction. It is the only telephone exchange currently included in the City of Melbourne Heritage Overlay.

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
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Central City Heritage Review 1993	B
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
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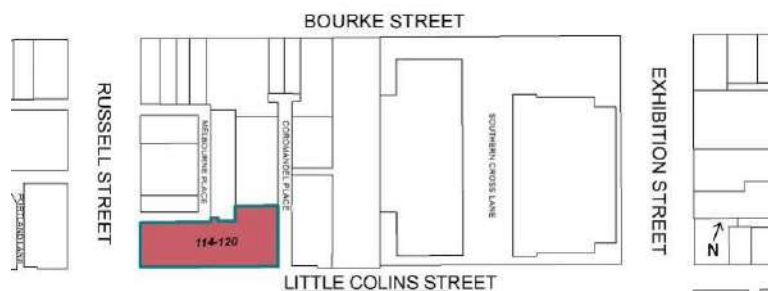
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building at 114-120 Russell Street, Melbourne, originally constructed as a nine-storey telephone exchange and postal hall in 1948-54 is significant.

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

- Original building form and scale;
- Original pattern of fenestration, including projecting glazed terracotta (faience) clad horizontal and vertical frames to window openings and horizontal bands of glazing;
- Recessed entry on the Russell Street frontage including a faience-clad lintel supported by circular columns clad in granite;
- Original steel/aluminium frame windows; and
- Bas relief sculpture to the Russell Street façade at the ground level.

Later alterations are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building at 114-120 Russell Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Russell Street Telephone Exchange and Postal Building, opened in 1954, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the broadening of Commonwealth powers after World War Two, a shift that resulted in increased construction of Commonwealth buildings in city centres including Melbourne. The former Russell Street Telephone Exchange and Postal Building is historically significant as one of the first large buildings constructed in the city after World War Two, and is the last to express the solid masonry, architectural traditions typical of the era prior to World War Two. The building also reputedly contained the first air-conditioned postal hall in Australia. (Criterion A)

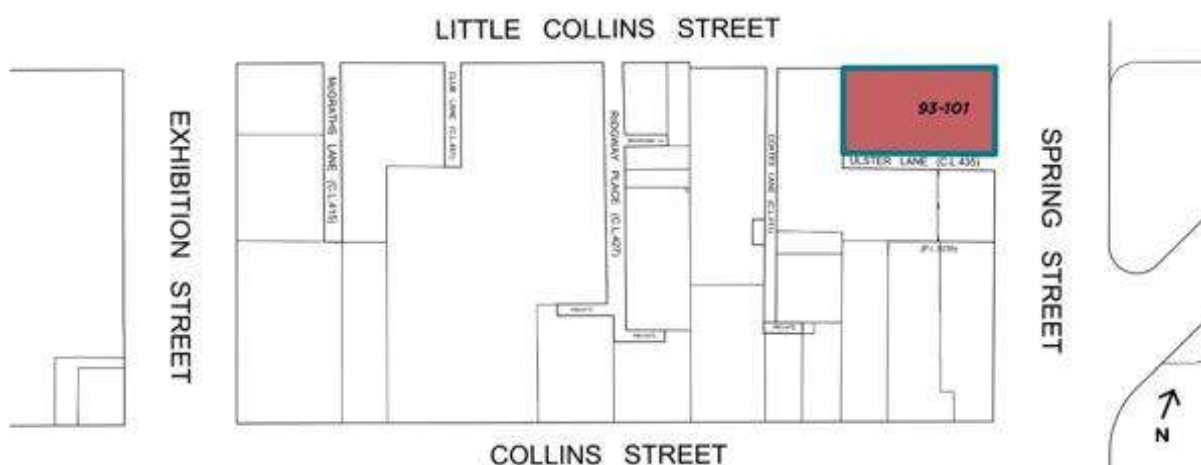
The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building is significant as a largely intact example of a substantial public building in central Melbourne built to the 40 metre (132 foot) height limit then in force. The interwar Functionalist style adopted for the building was popular during the interwar and early postwar periods, often for low rise industrial buildings, schools and institutional buildings, for its modern, progressive aesthetic. Designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, which was responsible for a number of high quality major public buildings during the period (such as the telephone exchange building at 376-382 Flinders Lane), the building demonstrates a commitment to the high-quality architectural design for major public buildings by the Commonwealth Department of Works. (Criterion D)

The former Russell Street Automatic Telephone Exchange and Postal Building has several unique features that contribute to its aesthetic significance. Although built following World War Two, the building exhibits elements of the interwar Functionalist style that are characteristic of a pre-World War Two modernist character. This includes its large and dramatic recessed entry space on the Russell Street frontage, surmounted by glazed terracotta lintel and supported on three circular granite columns adjacent to a bass relief sculpture attached to the facade. (Criterion E)

Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Treasury Gate
STREET ADDRESS	93-101 Spring Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108982



SURVEY DATE: November 2018

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY N/A

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER GRADE Ungraded

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Moore & Hammond Pty Ltd

BUILDER: Leighton Contractors Pty Ltd

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1975)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1971

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 1.10 Brutalism and brickwork
5 Living in the city centre	5.1 Housing and lodging

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Hotels and lodgings
1920s	Hotels
1960s	Car parks, retail, office, residential

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

Designed by architects Moore and Hammond in 1971, this modern residential apartment building is an early example of this building type in Melbourne. It is distinctly modernist in form and aesthetic, and suggestive of the Brutalist style in its deliberate expression of concrete and brick.

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).

Brutalism and brickwork

Brutalism was another architectural style that emerged in commercial building design in Australia as early as 1959, when Harry Seidler used off-form concrete for an eight-storey office block in Ultimo, NSW. That same year, Melbourne architect Kevin Knight (from the office of Oakley & Parkes)

prepared plans for the International Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) Building at 380 Russell Street, Melbourne that broke new ground with its banded façade of reinforced concrete spandrels.

Based on the work of modern architecture pioneer Le Corbusier, and largely inspired by his design for the *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1952), this architectural style became widely accepted internationally. Brutalism incorporated ideas of integrity in expression of materials (especially off-form concrete), structure and function, and often gave rise to dramatic sculptural forms (VHD Hoyts Cinema Centre).

Brutalism became more widespread in central Melbourne in the 1970s. The Mid City Centre at 194-200 Bourke Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1969-70), is a notable example, with its façade of chamfered concrete volumes.

During the 1960s and 70s, face brickwork also made a return with the Houston Building at 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kolle & Associates, 1964-65), the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb, 1967-68) and the 13-storey Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street by architects Buchan, Laird & Buchan (1972) (NTAV 2014:22).

Housing and lodging

The provision of accommodation has always been a major function of Australian city centres, and has included the establishment of hotels, hostels, boarding houses and serviced apartments, as well as terraces, flats and medium-density housing. Since the 1950s, the market sought by inner-city developers has moved to an almost exclusively middle- to higher-income group. New forms of accommodation from the 1950s replaced older buildings with high-cost, high-rise buildings for a restricted range of users (Marsden 2000:53).

The postwar era saw the introduction of apartments and flats in the well-established inner suburbs of South Yarra and St Kilda, spreading to Caulfield, Malvern, Camberwell, Hawthorn and Prahran. Victoria's first block of 'own-your-own' or 'OYO' flats were built in Hawthorn in 1949 and the subsequent introduction of strata title legislation by architect and Lord Mayor Bernard Evans led to the proliferation of this housing type from the early 1950s (Heritage Alliance 2008:23).

The apartment boom reached the inner city in the late 1960s, facilitated by the *Conveyancing (Strata Titles) Act* of 1961. An Australian innovation, the legislation allowed each lot or apartment to have its own title deed (Stent 2018). Many émigré architects, who were experienced in higher density living in Europe, specialised in apartment design. Viennese-born architect Kurt Popper, for example, built two blocks of residential flats in central Melbourne – Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970) (Heritage Alliance 2008:21).

Although marketed as a glamorous and convenient lifestyle, high-rise city apartment living was not popularly embraced. Exhibition Towers, an 11-storey residential building located at the north-west corner of Exhibition Street and Little Lonsdale Street, was designed and built as a residential and commercial building. Constructed in 1968-69 to a design by Kenneth McDonald & Associates, the building was an endeavour to provide 'OYO' flats in the city centre. 'High prices, high bills and Melbourne's conservative living style' contributed to difficulties in finding buyers for the units and the building was converted to the Courtesy Inn Motel in 1971 (*Age* 17 February 1971:3). It was also reported in 1971 that Park Tower was using its tenants' car spaces as a public car park and the flats were being let on short-term leases. Similarly, the two-month-old 13-15 Collins Street apartments

contemplated filling its lower four floors with shops, offices and medical practices (*Age* 17 February 1971:3, Figure 8).

In 1974, the MCC introduced a policy to encourage residents back to the city through the construction of a variety of residential typologies. However, because development was market driven, it was predominantly offices and retail spaces that were constructed in the city centre (Marsden 2000:54, 112).

SITE HISTORY

The land at 93-101 Spring Street was part of the Crown Allotment 9, Section 9, purchased by A McKillop. Located on the corner of Spring and Little Collins streets, the site was associated with hotels dating from the 1850s. The Ulster Family Hotel or Ulster Hotel was established on the site in the 1850s and was later renamed as the New Treasury Hotel in 1876 (S&Mc 1859-1876).

The New Treasury Hotel was sold in 1950 and again in 1967. An auction notice in 1967 described the site as having an investment potential suited for a maximum high-rise redevelopment (*Age* 12 August 1950:35; *Age* 18 October 1967:np). The property was sold for \$42 a square foot, approximately one third of the estimated value (*Age* 8 June 1971:19).

In 1969, the project group Treasury Gate Pty Ltd was established to develop the block at a cost of more than \$5 million (*Age* 25 October 1969:7). Treasury Gate Pty Ltd was formed by a number of local businesses including:

- J V Edgar & Co Pty Ltd, project consultants and managing agents,
- Moore & Hammond Pty Ltd, architects,
- Rider Hunt & Partners, quantity surveyors,
- W L & W L Meinhardt, structural engineers,
- Kuttner Collins & Partners, mechanical engineers,
- R Terenyi & Associates, electrical engineers,
- Leighton Contractors Ltd, building contractors, and
- Russell Kennedy & Cook, solicitors (J V Edgar & Co Pty Ltd 1969).

J V Edgar & Co Pty Ltd was initially declared as the sole selling agency, and later partnered with Abercromby & Beatty Pty Ltd and K Gardner & Lang Pty Ltd (*Age* 7 July 1973:5).

J Edgar told the *Age* in 1971 that the project would be different from earlier city apartments, which struggled to attract local residents still reluctant to buy inner-city residences. Edgar emphasised that, while other early apartments were aimed at city workers, 93-101 Spring Street was designed as a premium apartment building targeted at a higher income bracket (*Age* 17 February 1971:12).

Designed by architects Moore & Hammond, the 28-floor block comprised 19 residential floors, four levels of office spaces, a recreation floor, ground level retail floor and three levels of underground parking areas (Figure 1). According to the pre-development building catalogue provided by J V Edgar Pty Ltd, smaller sized duplexes were part of the original plan, but were not proceeded with (J V Edgar Pty Ltd c1969:5). The building opened in May 1971 (*Age* 24 April 1971:50).

The top five residential levels were reserved for penthouses apartments, with two apartments per floor on levels 20 to 23, and a single roof penthouse on level 24. The roof penthouse was to be developed and designed to the purchaser's own requirements (J V Edgar Pty Ltd c1969:6). The penthouse apartments, featuring more windows than typical units, were designed for panoramic views over the city.



Figure 1. The development plan for 93-101 Spring Street, with floor levels coloured over the elevation plan in different shades as per proposed uses (Source: J V Edgar Pty Ltd c1969:9).

From levels 12 to 19, two different types of apartments were planned, each on either the north or south side of the building, and centred on a service core of lifts and stairs. The floor plans of the apartments varied slightly to allow good views in all directions. Some differences applied in internal organisation: both A and B type of apartments had two bedrooms, one with an en-suite and the other with a dressing room; two bathrooms and a guest powder room; den; living room; dining room; kitchen; entrance hall; and a lobby and balcony facing Spring Street. The dining, living and hall areas were separated by slide screens for more internal flexibility (J V Edgar Pty Ltd c1969:4). These plans were able to be amended as per the buyer's requests.

Overlooking the city down Little Collins Street, the fifth-floor recreation space featured a heated swimming pool, a sauna, a Cabana reception area with a bar, entertaining facilities, and a gymnasium. There were also studio apartments and one-bed caretaker flats for in-house staff (J V Edgar Pty Ltd c1969:7).

On the ground floor, the entrance to the residences and underground car park were accessed from Spring Street, while the offices were accessed from an entrance on Little Collins Street. The offices and commercial spaces were numbered 1-15 Little Collins Street.

The offices on the first to fourth floors featured simple open workspaces measuring 73.6 by 129.8 feet, surrounding a central service core of lifts, stairs and toilets.

During the development phase, the property was known as '93-101 Spring Street'. The name Treasury Gate first appeared in the newspapers from the mid-1970s, and mostly referred to the office spaces (*Age* 11 December 1975:31).

Initially priced at \$100,000, some of the apartments remained unsold for years, and subsequently the selling price of the north-facing middle-level flats dropped to around \$70,000. However, the inner-city housing market rapidly grew during the following decades. In 1988, a typical fifteenth floor apartment was expected to yield a resale price nearing \$1 million, when a higher-quality apartment of a similar size in Toorak were being sold for around \$800,000 (*Age* 12 July 1988:21).

The building at 93-101 Spring Street was home to some prestigious individuals, including Robert Holmes a Court, Australia's first billionaire, who owned the roof penthouse; Sir Rupert and Lady Kathleen Clarke, who owned an apartment on the fifteenth floor; and Sir Ian and Lady Potter, who owned a double-size and extensively terraced apartment on the lower levels (*Age* 12 July 1988:21).

Moore & Hammond, architects

Within a few years after the establishment of his sole practice in the mid-1950s, David Moore (1928-1983) elevated one of his staff, Theodore Hammond (1929-2006), into partnership. Moore & Hammond remained in practice until 1974, when each of the two partners decided to pursue sole practice (Built Heritage n.d.).

Moore & Hammond became a limited liability company in 1967, and with its expertise in the design of high-rise apartment blocks, the practice became one of Melbourne's leading exponents of this typology. Moore & Hammond designed innumerable inner suburban examples, especially in Toorak and South Yarra. The 25-storey tower at 93-101 Spring Street completed in 1971 was one of the much-publicised projects of the partnership. The partnership dissolved a few years later in early 1974 (Built Heritage n.d.).

Moore remained in practice for another decade as the head of David Moore & Company, until his sudden death in 1983. Hammond continued practice under his own name, later merging with another firm to become Theo Hammond & Partners, Grant Heath & Wood. Hammond died in 2006 (Built Heritage n.d.).

SITE DESCRIPTION

This 28-storey building was designed as a combined office and residential complex. Built in two parts, the lower section (podium) has six storeys and is built to property boundaries. It was designed to provide retail accommodation at ground level with office spaces above. The upper section is comprised of a 19-storey residential tower which is set back from both street frontages. Three levels of carparking are located below the street and a plant room remains on top of the building.

Constructed of a reinforced concrete frame, the building is distinctly modernist in its form and aesthetic, and suggestive of the brutalist style in its deliberate expression of concrete and brick.

At ground level, shop fronts are recessed behind a colonnade of squared concrete columns that are on the Little Collins Street elevation. Much of the glazing is original, with some minor modifications

evident. A glazed entry foyer for the upper level apartments fronts Spring Street. Tiled steps rise from the street to the enclosed entry porch. The distinctive wide timber handrail and ribbed metal cladding are intact. A cantilevered canopy extends over the footpath. Entry to the offices and the carpark are located on the Spring Street elevation.

Above ground level, the podium is characterised by regular vertical banding, formed of bands of brown face brickwork separated by bands of bronze aluminium framed windows set over concrete spandrels. The whole arrangement is carefully designed with brickwork set onto precast concrete ledges across the face.

A horizontal concrete band runs across the top of the podium level and functions as a balustrade to an open terrace and recreational level for the apartment tower.

The tower is characterised by horizontal bands of exposed concrete that face Spring Street and function as balustrades for the open balconies at both edges of the building. Through the centre of the building, the concrete bands are incorporated into an enclosed section for each apartment, projecting slightly below bronze aluminium window sections and brown brick pillars at each level.

On either side of the building, windows are incorporated into the brown brick façade on the upper levels. Windows correspond with the arrangement of penthouse apartments and penthouses at the top of the building, designed to provide panoramic views across the park and the city at these levels.

A squared brown brick plant room sits at the top of the building and is detailed with a simple relief brickwork pattern.

INTEGRITY

The building retains a high level of integrity. Alterations have occurred at the top penthouse apartment level where glazed panels have been inserted into the corner balcony sections. Some modifications have occurred to the shopfronts at ground level.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

There are no residential towers from the postwar period in central Melbourne on the Heritage Overlay for the City of Melbourne. A group of four residential towers is included in this study. All are relatively intact examples of a new building type that emerged in the late postwar period (late 1960s – early 1970s).

Other Post-War Modernist residential buildings in the Hoddle Grid

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



Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (Kurt Popper, 1969)
(Interim HO1263)



Exhibition Towers, 287-293 Exhibition Street (Kenneth McDonald & Associates, 1969-71)



- Apartment Building, 13-15 Collins Street (Kurt Popper, 1970) (Interim HO1265, & currently included as a Significant place in Collins East Precinct HO504)

Analysis

Like Treasury Gate, all three buildings were designed as modernist buildings with structural concrete frames supporting curtain walls of repetitive glazed elements and masonry spandrels. In each case, primary aesthetic interest is derived from the expression of structure and materials (brick, concrete, glass) and the arrangement of structural elements (windows, balconies). There is a consistency to the arrangement of levels between all four buildings with retail/commercial spaces provided at podium level.

Treasury Gate compares favourably with the other examples of residential apartment buildings. It is a highly intact example of the type demonstrating key characteristics including a modern form and

aesthetic, and provision of high-class residential accommodation in the city. The building has a number of notable features including the external detailing of the podium style base, the colonnade along Little Collins Street, the intact modernist entry foyer, and the finely detailed façade.

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	Ungraded
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Central City Heritage Review 1993	Ungraded
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
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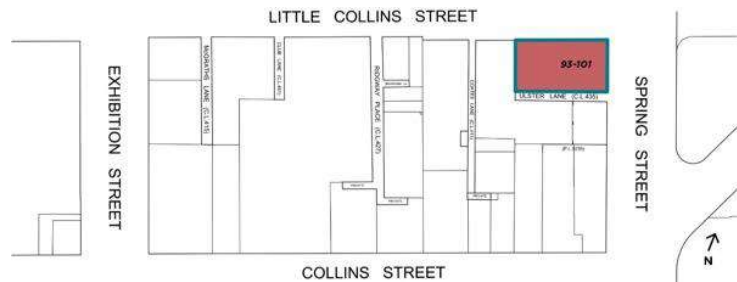
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Treasury Gate



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

Treasury Gate at 93-101 Spring Street, Melbourne, built in 1971 to a design by architectural firm Moore and Hamond Pty Ltd.

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

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design.

Later alterations are not significant.

How it is significant?

Treasury Gate at 93-101 Spring Street, Melbourne is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Treasury Gate is historically significant as one of the first wave of high-rise residential apartments constructed in the Melbourne CBD from the late 1960s, and before the introduction of a Victorian government policy in 1971 that directed where growth in Melbourne's housing supply could take place. (Criterion A)

Treasury Gate is a notable example of a new building typology that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s – the modern high-rise residential apartment building. Treasury Gate is also notable for its mixed-use typology with offices, retail and residential situated at different levels in the same building. A podium built to the property boundaries at the lower levels also accommodates a colonnade with retail spaces at

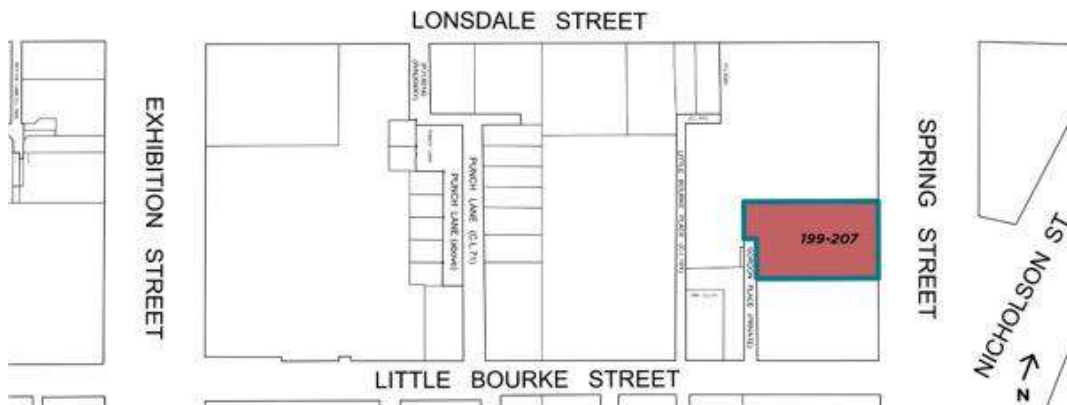
ground level, six levels of offices above, and a recessed tower section with luxury residential living. 93-101 Spring Street is also notable for its high level of integrity. (Criterion D)

Treasury Gate is aesthetically significant for its demonstration of modernism in mixed use apartment design. A notable attribute is the generous distribution of space for ground floor retail behind a colonnade on Little Collins Street. Aesthetically 93-101 Spring Street is significant for its composition and articulation of the various functions of retail, office and residential within a unifying material palette of face brickwork and concrete. Intact architectural detail extends to the distinctive wide timber handrail, ribbed metal cladding, bronze-coloured aluminium glazing frames and a cantilevered canopy. (Criterion E)

Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Park Tower
STREET ADDRESS	199-207 Spring Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	108989



SURVEY DATE:	November 2017	SURVEY BY:	Context
HERITAGE INVENTORY	N/A	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Heritage Place	PROPOSED CATEGORY	Significant
		FORMER GRADE	Ungraded
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Kurt Popper	BUILDER:	Notkin Constructions Pty Ltd
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Postwar Period (1945-1975)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1969

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 1.10 Brutalism and brickwork
5 Living in the city centre	5.1 Housing and lodging

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Not able to be determined
1920s	Factories and workshops
1960s	Residential, car parks

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

Designed by émigré architect Kurt Popper in 1969, this modern residential apartment building is an early example of this building type that emerged in Melbourne in the late 1960s/early 1970s. It is distinctly modernist in form and aesthetic, with a curtain walled façade that features an abstract arrangement of brick spandrels and masonry balconies.

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).

Overseas influences

America was the strongest overseas influence on the post-World War II architecture of Australian capitals. Australian architects often studied in American universities or visited the USA on study tours. American advances in the manufacturing of steel and concrete were also adopted in Australia. While

steel was the main material in North American skyscrapers, concrete was used more often in Australia, and often combined with high-strength steel (Marsden 2000:70-72).

Another influence on architectural design was émigré architects who arrived in Melbourne before and after World War II. The impact of postwar immigration on Australian cities can be described in three ways: the enlivening of city centres by the arrival of European and Asian immigrants into mainly Australian-born communities; the rapid increase in the size of capital cities; and the roles played by particular immigrant groups, especially in the fields of architecture, economies, politics and cultural activities (Marsden 2000:95-99). Architect Kurt Popper, who arrived in Melbourne from Vienna in 1940, developers Bruno and Rino Grollo (sons of an Italian immigrant), and Viennese immigrant Ted Lustig and his Israeli son-in-law Max Moar, have had a significant impact on Melbourne's city landscape through architecture and property development.

Émigré architects were often educated in progressive institutions where modernism was more advanced than in Australia. Their expertise and modernist designs gained recognition and were translated into the local context. Many were also involved with teaching at architectural schools and influenced the next generation of architects (Lozanovska & McKnight 2015:352-353). Examples in the city centre include the apartment buildings, Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970), both designed by Kurt Popper.

Housing and lodging

The provision of accommodation has always been a major function of Australian city centres, and has included the establishment of hotels, hostels, boarding houses and serviced apartments, as well as terraces, flats and medium-density housing. Since the 1950s, the market sought by inner-city developers has moved to an almost exclusively middle- to higher-income group. New forms of accommodation from the 1950s replaced older buildings with high-cost, high-rise buildings for a restricted range of users (Marsden 2000:53).

The postwar era saw the introduction of apartments and flats in the well-established inner suburbs of South Yarra and St Kilda, spreading to Caulfield, Malvern, Camberwell, Hawthorn and Prahran. Victoria's first block of 'own-your-own' or 'OYO' flats were built in Hawthorn in 1949 and the subsequent introduction of strata title legislation by architect and Lord Mayor Bernard Evans led to the proliferation of this housing type from the early 1950s (Heritage Alliance 2008:23).

The apartment boom reached the inner city in the late 1960s, facilitated by the *Conveyancing (Strata Titles) Act* of 1961. An Australian innovation, the legislation allowed each lot or apartment to have its own title deed (Stent 2018). Many émigré architects, who were experienced in higher density living in Europe, specialised in apartment design. Viennese-born architect Kurt Popper, for example, built two blocks of residential flats in central Melbourne – Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970) (Heritage Alliance 2008:21).

Although marketed as a glamorous and convenient lifestyle, high-rise city apartment living was not popularly embraced. Exhibition Towers, an 11-storey residential building located at the north-west corner of Exhibition Street and Little Lonsdale Street, was designed and built as a residential and commercial building. Constructed in 1968-69 to a design by Kenneth McDonald & Associates, the building was an endeavour to provide 'OYO' flats in the city centre. 'High prices, high bills and Melbourne's conservative living style' contributed to difficulties in finding buyers for the units and the building was converted to the Courtesy Inn Motel in 1971 (Age 17 February 1971:3). It was also reported in 1971 that Park Tower was using its tenants' car spaces as a public car park and the flats

were being let on short-term leases. Similarly, the two-month-old 13-15 Collins Street apartments contemplated filling its lower four floors with shops, offices and medical practices (*Age* 17 February 1971:3, Figure 8).

In 1974, the MCC introduced a policy to encourage residents back to the city through the construction of a variety of residential typologies. However, because development was market driven, it was predominantly offices and retail spaces that were constructed in the city centre (Marsden 2000:54, 112).

SITE HISTORY

The site at 199-207 Spring Street was part of the Crown Allotment 10, Section 24, purchased by D Dunbar. In 1895, four shops were present on the site, numbered 199 to 207, and in 1942, the shops housed R B Hallett, builder (no. 199), E S Wilson, sign writer (no. 201), a Chinese laundry (no. 203) and G W Rowley Pty Ltd, wire workers (no. 205-207) (MMBW Detailed Plan no 1014; S&Mc 1942). Businesses were still trading in the above premises in early 1968 (*Age* 16 February 1968:20; 17 April 1967:19).

In January 1969, a plan for a new residential tower in Spring Street was publicised. With an estimated building cost of \$2.5 million, the project group Two-O-One Pty Ltd appointed European émigré architect Kurt Popper, who specialised in apartment designs, and Notkin Constructions Pty Ltd, builders, for the construction of a 20-storey apartment block named 'Park Tower'.

While Popper had designed the six-storey 'Crossley House' (1967), which is known as the first modern residential block in Melbourne, Park Tower, as Melbourne's first high-rise strata title property, was a pioneering work (*Age* 29 January 1969:24).

The building's central heating and cooling system was ground breaking. The Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria designed an experimental gas system for Park Tower, which was widely applied to commercial and industrial buildings (*Age* 29 January 1969:24). The new system involved the Corporation in installing a 6500 feet network of insulated pipes and ducts that were used for continuous water circulation controlled by roof units. Each apartment was individually billed according to the usage recorded on a linked meter, a common feature of 'own-your-own' flats already established in the inner suburbs (*Age* 29 January 1969:24; Heritage Alliance 2008:21).

The original building design of 199-207 Spring Street incorporated 76 strata title properties including six luxury penthouses, two- to three- bedroom units, and some one-bedroom suites. Two levels of car parking for more than 60 cars were provided in the basement, with access from Little Bourke Street. Popper, included communal features such as a garden plaza with a fountain and a guest lounge that could be booked for parties on the ground floor, a spiral staircase, and a laundry room. The residents were serviced by live-in caretakers and protected by an electronic security system (*Age* 29 January 1969:24; 25 March 1983:27).

Park Tower was set back 24 feet from the road, with the two lowest levels projecting in line with neighbouring buildings (Figure 1, Figure 2) (*Age* 29 January 1969:34). A restaurant, 'Nellies', was opened on the ground floor by February 1971 (*Age* 13 February 1971:10).



Figure 1. Architect's drawing published in the *Age* in 1969 (Source: *Age* 29 January 1969:24).



Figure 2. Park Tower soon after completion (Source: Edquist 2002: 19)

Completed in 1969, Park Tower was promoted as an inner city 'town house', an idea imported from overseas countries such as the United Kingdom, with the building described as an 'ideal central dwelling for people with homes in remote areas' (*Age* 19 June 1970:22). At the time of the property release, the selling agents, Jones, Lang, Wootton & Baillieu Allard Real Estate Pty Ltd, were highly optimistic about property sales. The Park Tower apartments, however, were slow to sell in the early years, with only 25 per cent of 76 units sold within the first 13 months of opening (*Age* 29 January 1969:24; 17 February 1971:12).

By the 1980s, however Park Tower's accommodation was considered fashionable. A typical apartment unit with views overlooking Treasury Gardens to the east and Gordon House to the west was priced at \$85,000 in 1983, and was selling for \$127,500 in 1991 (*Age* 25 March 1983:27; 6 July 1991:31).

Today, Park Tower continues to accommodate residents in 77 units. It also contains one business, one shop and two food and drink outlets (CoMMaps).

SITE DESCRIPTION

This 20-storey residential building has a two-storey base/podium built to the property boundary with a 16-storey tower set back from the street and two levels of basement carparking. The building is distinctively modernist in its form and aesthetic and is a representative example of a new building type - the modern residential tower building - that occurred in Melbourne in the late 1960s/early 1970s.

At ground level, the podium has glazed shop fronts and an (altered) cantilevered flat canopy that extends over the footpath. On the first floor, an outdoor terrace sits below a curved roofline with circular skylights, and was designed as a communal entertaining space for residents. Residential apartments are located in the tower section of the building.

The building is constructed with a concrete structural frame with curtain walls to the long edges. The front façade is divided into a grid pattern determined by the intersection of vertical and horizontal bays. Seven equal vertical bays are separated by structural elements clad in brown brick. Horizontal bays respond directly to the arrangement of floor plates. Regular panels of aluminium framed

windows, and masonry spandrels and balconies sit within the vertical bands. Open balconies are integrated into the façade and arranged in an abstract pattern for visual interest. This sophisticated composition is characteristic of the work of Kurt Popper.

The arrangement differs at the top three levels (which likely correspond with the penthouse apartments). Masonry spandrels run the full width of the building, with some sections glazed and others left open to form balconies. Alterations have occurred at this part of the building with some open balconies retrofitted with glazing.

The side walls of the building are clad in brown brick. The solid monumental appearance of the tall brick face is punctuated by a rendered panel down the centre of the wall. Small side windows for the building are incorporated into the rendered panel.

At the southern end of the podium, the brick edge wall extends vertically for one level and displays a metal art object.

INTEGRITY

The building retains a high level of integrity. The cantilevered flat canopy at ground level has been altered. At the top three levels, open balconies have now been enclosed with glazing.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

There are no residential towers from the post war period on the Heritage Overlay for the City of Melbourne. A group of four residential towers is included in this study. All are relatively intact examples of a new building type that emerged in the late post war period (late 1960s – early 1970s).

Other Post-War Modernist residential buildings in the Hoddle Grid

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



Apartment Building, 13-15 Collins Street (Kurt Popper, 1970) (Interim HO1265, & currently included as a Significant place in Collins East Precinct HO504)



Exhibition Towers, 287-293 Exhibition Street (Kenneth McDonald & Associates, 1969-71)



- Treasury Gate, 93-101 Spring Street (Moore & Hammond, 1971) (Interim HO1262)

Analysis

Both 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970) were designed by émigré architect Kurt Popper who was known for his apartment building designs.

Like Park Tower, all three buildings were designed as modernist buildings, with structural concrete frames supporting curtain walls of repetitive glazed elements and masonry spandrels. In each case, primary aesthetic interest is derived from the expression of structure and materials (brick, concrete, glass) and the arrangement of structural elements (windows, balconies). There is a consistency to the arrangement of levels between all four buildings with retail/commercial spaces provided at podium level and multiple floors of apartments in a tower arrangement. Both 93-101 Spring Street and 199-207 Spring Street have a common space for apartment residents located at a mid-level.

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

REFERENCES

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PREVIOUS STUDIES

Central Activities District Conservation Study 1985	Ungraded
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Central City Heritage Study Review 1993	Ungraded
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
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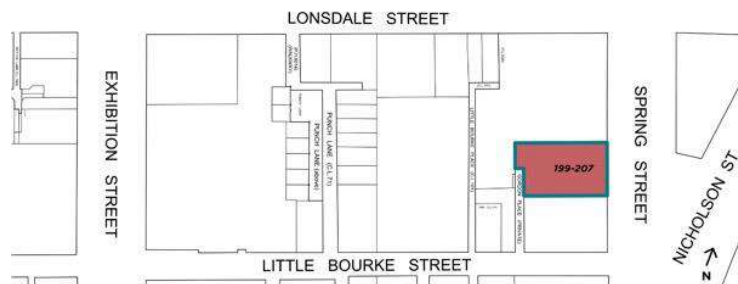
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Park Tower



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street, Melbourne, built in 1969 to a design by émigré architect Kurt Popper.

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

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design.

Later alterations are not significant.

How it is significant?

Park Tower at 199-207 Spring Street is of local historic, representative, aesthetic and technical significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Park Tower is historically significant as one of the first wave of high-rise residential apartments constructed in the Melbourne CBD from the late 1960s, and before the introduction of a Victorian government policy in 1971 that directed where growth in Melbourne's housing supply could take place. (Criterion A)

Park Tower is a notable and early example of a new building typology that emerged in the CBD in the late 1960s and early 1970s – the modern high-rise residential apartment building. The building demonstrates key characters of the type. It was constructed as a modern curtain walled building, with a podium at the lower level accommodating communal, retail and commercial spaces, and luxury

residential apartments located in a recessed tower section. The distinctive modern character of the building and the deliberate promotion of it as a base for a glamorous modern lifestyle are characteristics of the type, which contributes to the understanding of Melbourne as a modern city in the postwar period. (Criterion D)

Park Tower is aesthetically significant for its demonstration of modernism in apartment design. Attributes of the apartment block include a generous distribution of space for ground floor retail and a first-floor communal terrace with a sweeping curved roofline, above which is the 16-storey apartment tower. Aesthetic value is demonstrated by the combination of concrete structural frame combined with curtain walling to the long facades, forming a grid pattern. Within this regular grid, an abstract composition is achieved by the positioning of the open balconies that are integrated into the façade and visually contrasting with the sheer vertical side walls of brick. (Criterion E)

Park Tower is significant for the innovative central gas heating and cooling system that was installed in the building. Designed by the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria, Park Towers was the first application of the system which was expected to have widespread usage in commercial and industrial buildings. The centrally installed system featured a high air-volume, low noise level fan and heat exchanger, as well as thermostat controls for personal comfort and billing metres to allow for recording of energy usage in each apartment. (Criterion F)

Park Tower is significant for its association with émigré architect Kurt Popper who brought European ideas about living in the city to the Melbourne CBD. Popper designed a number of residential apartment buildings in Melbourne including the six-storey 'Crossley House' (1967), which is known as the first modern residential block in Melbourne. (Criterion H)

Primary source

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

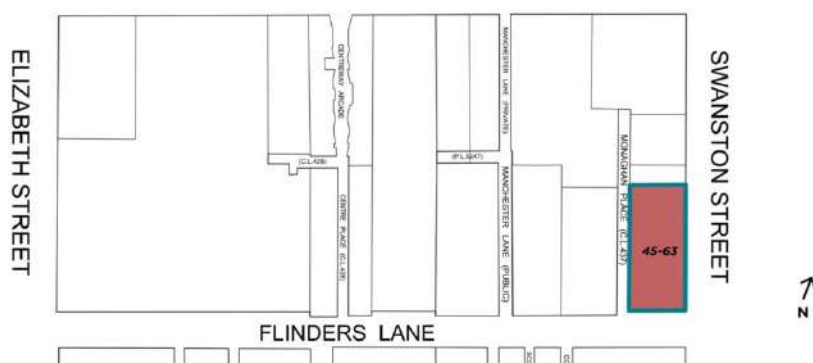
SITE NAME Former State Savings Bank of Victoria

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.

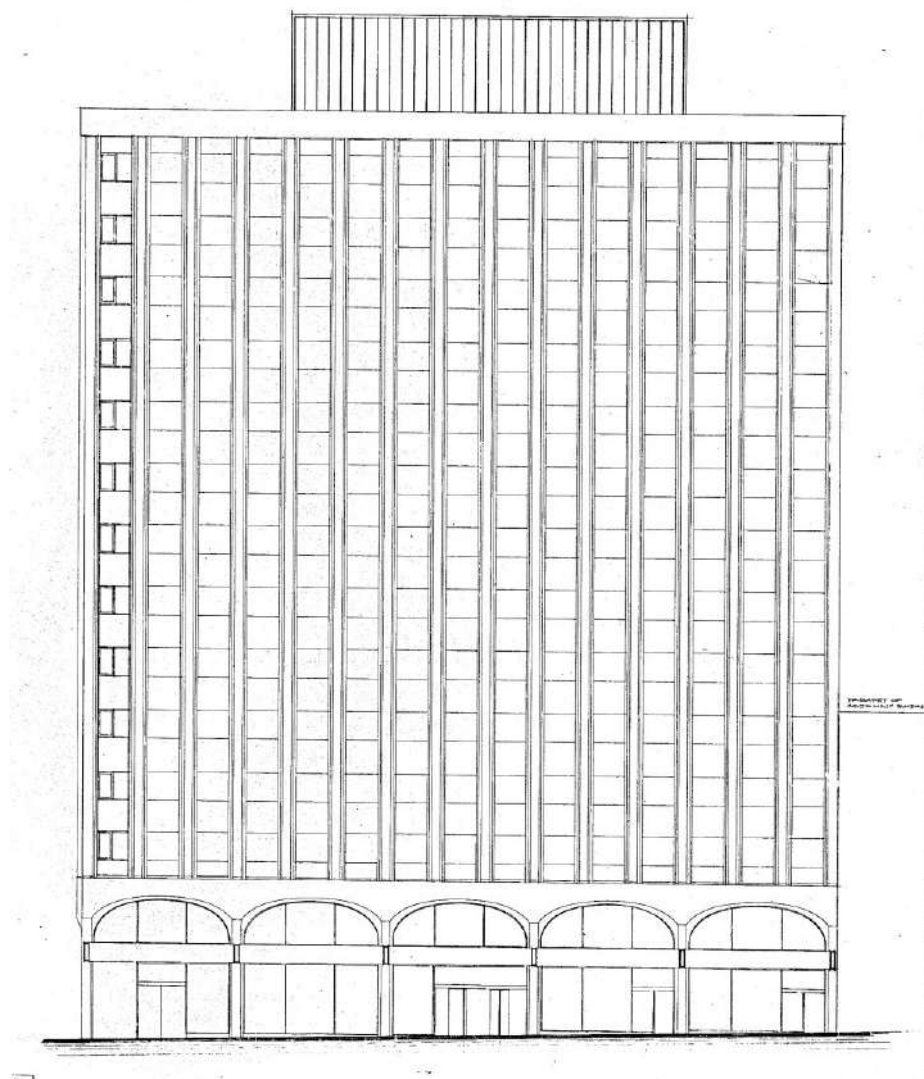


Figure 1. East elevation to Swanston Street. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).

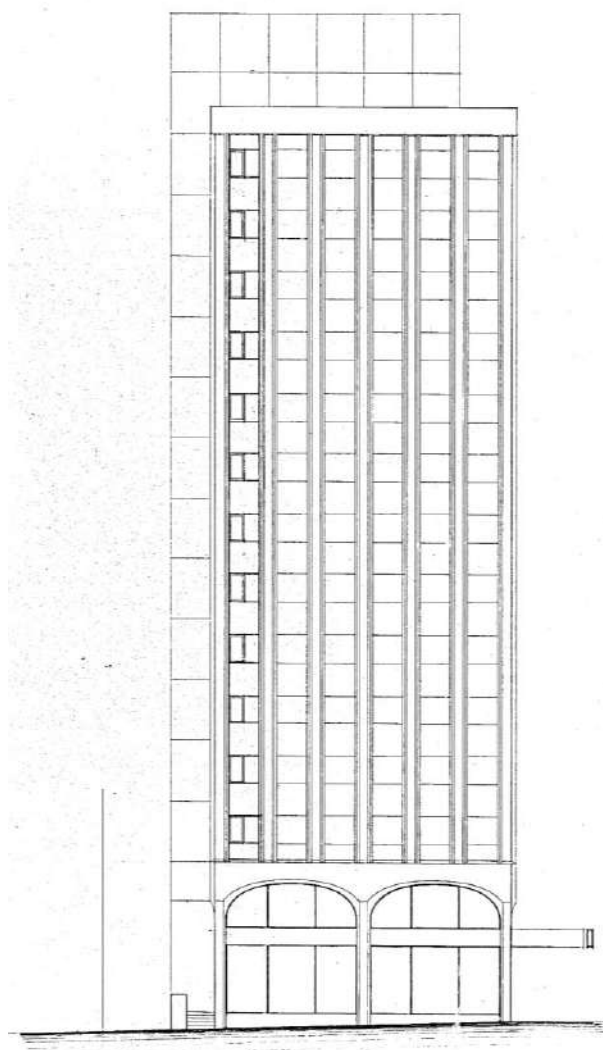


Figure 2. South elevation to Flinders Lane. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).

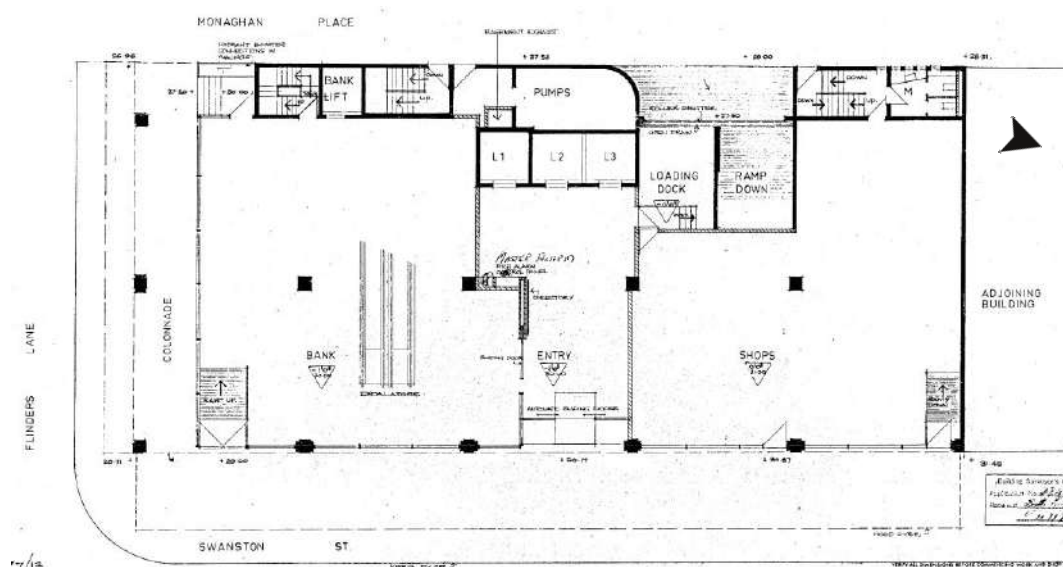


Figure 3. Ground floor plan. Drawing by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, dated April 1971 (BAP).



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

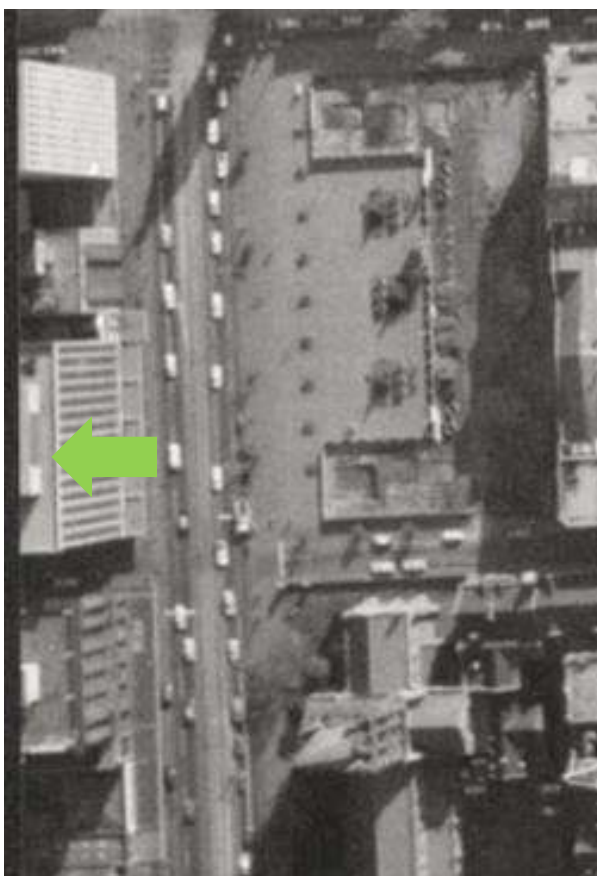


Figure 5. Detail of a 1976 aerial, showing the present State Savings Bank (SLV, Wolfgang Sievers, photographer, Image H2003.100/977).



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 Kalle, 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
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Central City Heritage Review 1993	Ungraded
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
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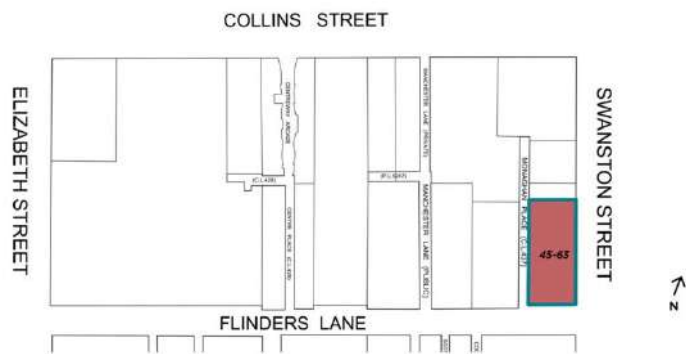
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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)

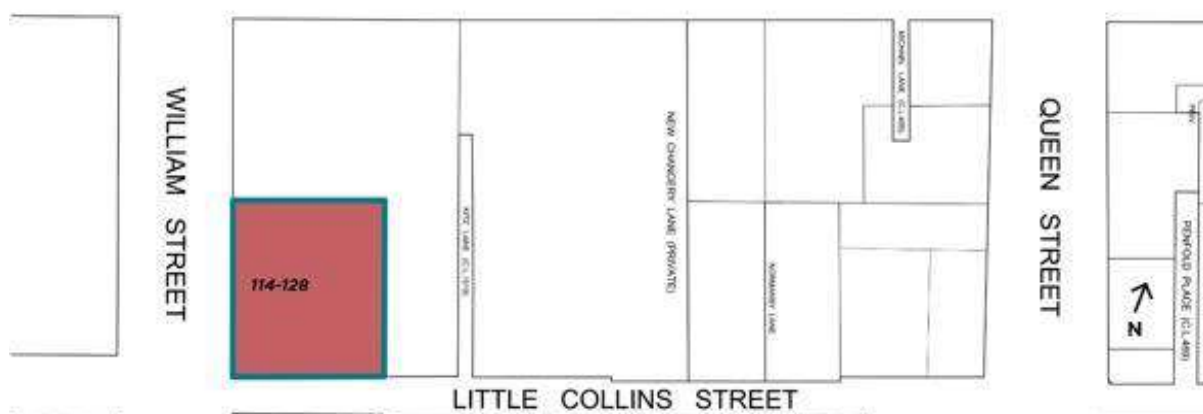
SITE NAME Former Dillingham Estates House

STREET ADDRESS 114-128 William Street, Melbourne

PROPERTY ID 110147



BOURKE STREET



SURVEY DATE: May 2017

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY NA

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY Yes – interim controls HO1180

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Yuncken Freeman

FORMER GRADE B

BUILDER: Not known

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1965)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1975-76

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	Four buildings including the Legal Club Hotel and the Union Buildings
1920s	As above
1960s	As above

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 Dillingham Estates House is a highly significant example of a late modern office tower and of the work of highly influential modernist architects Yuncken Freeman who played a major role in re-shaping the city in the 1960s and 70s.

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 Dillingham Estates House is located was amalgamated from four land parcels which were occupied by buildings throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. Buildings on the site included the Legal Club Hotel and the Union Buildings (MMBW map).

Dillingham Corporation of Australia Ltd. was a group of companies involved in building construction, engineering, dredging, ship building, mining, real estate, property development, earth moving, road building, quarrying and cattle stations. This building and the neighbouring BHP House were products of the 1960s and 1970s mineral and energy boom of the time.

New office buildings in the 'glass box' tradition continued to appear in the city well into the 1970s, typified by Dillingham Estates House at 114-128 William Street completed in 1976. As with the visually similar and highly significant Eagle Star Insurance Co. Ltd. building (1971) in Bourke Street, Yuncken Freeman Architects Pty Ltd were the designers of 114-128 William Street. The partner in charge was Barry Patten and the design architect, Llew Morgan. The building, titled then as

Dillingham Estates House, was photographed near completion in 1975 by the eminent photographer, Wolfgang Sievers.

Yuncken Freeman, architect

In the 1960s Melbourne based Yuncken Freeman was one of the largest architectural practices in Australia, with a reputation for modernism, high quality design and meticulous detailing. The firm originated in 1933 when Otto Abrecht Yuncken 1903-1951) and brothers John (1898-1962) and Tom Freeman (1904-1971) set up practice. In the 1930s the firm's work concentrated on hospital design and high-quality residential work. The commercial and corporate side of the business was built by Barry Patten (1927-2003) and John Gates (1924-1996) when they joined the firm as partners in 1951. Yuncken Freeman was the most successful and prolific architects during the 1960s and 70s, designing many award-winning office buildings in the city. These included Eagle House 473 Bourke Street, in 1971, (VHR1807, HO901) and the BHP tower, 130-148 William Street (VHR1699, HO767) and the Royal Insurance building at 430-442 Collins Street (1965). Yuncken Freeman had an unequalled national reputation for superb architectural detailing and classically simple forms that had prevailed over the architecture of their contemporaries in Melbourne and Sydney. The firm continued until the late 1980s, completing work for Melbourne University, amongst many large institutional and corporate clients (Goad & Willis eds., 2012:781-2).



Figure 1. Estates House in 1976. (Source: Sievers 1976, SLV H99.50/129 [copyright](#)).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The former Dillingham Estates House is set within a paved and landscaped plaza that is shared with its neighbour, BHP House. A six-level parking block to the east is in a related minimalist style while a ramp leads to basement parking under the building itself.

The former Dillingham Estates House has a central service core, thereby maximising the extent of full height glass windows on all four façades. This placement allowed full expression of the commercial glass box, however, unlike its 1950s predecessors (such as 100 Collins Street), the structure is not revealed except as implied by the modular aluminium panels. The aluminium and glass surfaces, appear visually as one gleaming plane. There is no reference to a traditional window as a framed wall opening except for the chair rail. The façade presents the impression of a structural grid rather than the transparent façade of the 1950s that reveals the structure behind.

Unlike the naturally ventilated early 1950s glass boxes, the former Dillingham Estates House employs a service chamber above the ceiling housing air-conditioning ducts. This chamber is reflected on the external elevation as horizontal bands of aluminium. Fire separation was also achieved in a novel manner allowing a greater area of glazing.

Although the former Dillingham Estates House is superficially like Eagle House at 473 Bourke Street (VHR H1807, HO901), it also has the advantage of a free-standing site that displays fully the glass and aluminium skin wrapped on a simple rectangular shaft.

INTEGRITY

The former Dillingham Estates House is largely intact and is a fine example from a distinct and valuable body of work within the postwar commercial architectural idiom. The ground floor interior has changed with minor external additions and corporate signage.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The former Dillingham Estates House belongs to a group of 1960s-70s office towers and is part of a substantial body of work undertaken by Yuncken Freeman. Their contribution to the design of commercial office buildings in Melbourne is unparalleled as they continued to define and re-define the way in which office buildings were formed and the expression of their facades. This has been recognised by numerous architectural awards won by the practice.

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 Dillingham Estates House. 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 HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



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



Wales Corner, 221-231 Collins Street (Stephenson & Turn 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)



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)



Office Building, 178-188 William Street (McIntyre
McIntyre & Partners, 1972-72)



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 Dillingham Estates House is comparable with the earlier Eagle House and BHP House. These two buildings show a culmination of architectural design work by Yuncken Freeman from their early curtain wall buildings like Norwich Union Insurance building and the concrete frames of the Royal Insurance Building and 1 Macarthur Place. BHP House stands alone amongst postwar office towers for its innovative use of steel technology externally expressed. Eagle House and the former Dillingham Estates House display a highly refined glass and aluminium curtain wall

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

REFERENCES

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

Clinch, R J 2012, 'The places we keep: the heritage studies of Victoria and outcomes for urban planners', PhD thesis, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne.

Goad, P & Willis, J (eds.) 2012, *An Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press

Marsden, Susan 2000, *Urban Heritage: the rise and postwar development of Australia's capital city centres*, Australian Council of National Trusts and Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra.

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Sievers, Wolfgang 1967, 'Estates House, 120 William Street, Melbourne and surrounds', State Library of Victoria: Wolfgang Sievers collection, accessed online June 2019.

Storey, Rohan 2008, 'Skyscrapers', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au>, accessed 12 April 2018.

The following sources and data were used for this assessment (Graeme Butler, 2011). Note that the citation prepared in 2011 did not provide in text referencing.

General sources

The following data was typically drawn from:

Historic Buildings Preservation Council reports on the Melbourne Central Business District from the 1970s

Melbourne City Council on-line i-Heritage database;

Mahlstedt fire insurance map series held in the State Library of Victoria collection and Melbourne University Archives;

Daily newspaper reports such as 'The Argus';

Australian Architecture Index (AAI), prepared by Professor Miles Lewis and others;

Melbourne City Council building application drawings and files held at Melbourne City Council and the Victorian Public Records Office.

Keith and John Reid, CBD Study Area 7 Historic Buildings Preservation Council, 1976: page 139;

Twentieth Century Architecture Register of Royal Australian Institute of Architects:

MCC Building Permit Applications: March 1973, 43622 \$6,700,000 24 storey office building (followed by many fit-out applications) 1990, 68563 refurbish ground level

State Library of Victoria

'Business Who's Who of Australia' 1974: 229

Victorian Heritage Register:

Barry Patten

Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA): Mining Booms and the Australian Economy

Other sources

Goad, P & Willis, J., 2012, *The Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press

Taylor, J 'Australian Architecture since 1960': 22

National Trust of Victoria, Australia, 2014, Melbourne's Marvellous Modernism, A Comparative Analysis of Post-War Modern Architecture in Melbourne's CBD, 1955 -1975

PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985**

C

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993**

C

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

C

**Central City Heritage
Review 2011**

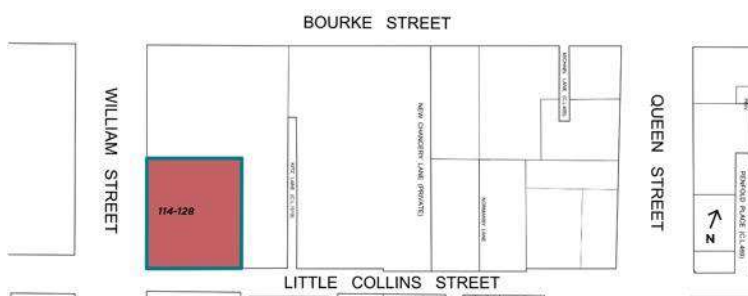
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Dillingham Estates House



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The former Dillingham Estates House, later Estates House, at 114-128 William Street, Melbourne, completed in 1976 and designed by Yuncken Freeman.

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

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design.

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

How it is significant?

The former Dillingham Estates House at 114-128 William Street is of historical, representative, aesthetic and technical significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Dillingham Estates House is historically significant for its association with the financial investment driven by the mineral and energy boom that fuelled office building in the city. It also demonstrates the lessening of the importance of British and American capital in favour of large Australian companies during the 1970s. (Criterion A)

The former Dillingham Estates House is a significant example of a late Post-War Modernist office tower and of the work of influential modernist architects Yuncken Freeman who played a significant role in re-shaping the city from the 1960s and 70s. Yuncken Freeman had an unequalled national reputation for superb architectural detailing and classically simple forms. The building is also part of a highly significant

office group located around the corner of William and Bourke Streets and including BHP House and Eagle House, that was the precursor to the former Dillingham Estates House. (Criterion D)

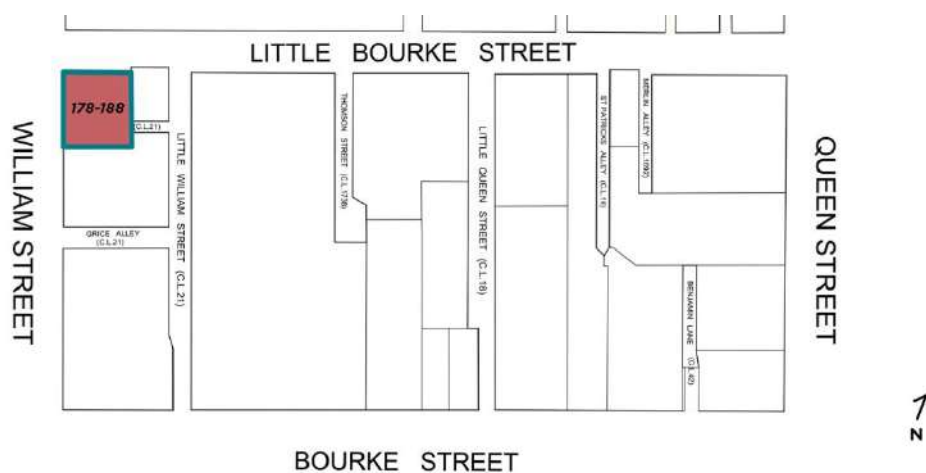
The former Dillingham Estates House is aesthetically significant for its clarity of architectural expression and the sophistication of its curtain wall with windows set in aluminium clad panels on a strict module. (Criterion E)

The former Dillingham Estates House is technically significant for its design that achieved floor to ceiling glazing and fire separation between floors, as well as the central service core that allowed the cladding of the building to be expressed on all four sides. (Criterion F)

Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Office Building [also known as Prudential Building and Douglas Menzies Chambers (current name)]
STREET ADDRESS	178-188 William Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	110144



SURVEY DATE: October 2019

SURVEY BY: GJM Heritage

HERITAGE INVENTORY No

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER GRADE D

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: McIntyre McIntyre & Partners

BUILDER: Not known

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1975)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1972-1973

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 Business and finance

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Merchant, Hotel
1920s	Merchant, Hotel
1960s	Office, Hotel

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 office building at 178-188 William Street was designed by architects McIntyre McIntyre & Partners for owners Costain Australia Ltd, an infrastructure and mining company, in what appears to have been a speculative development venture. Construction was completed in 1973. The building was sold to the Prudential Assurance Company Ltd soon after completion of construction (in 1974). The building has been regularly occupied by solicitors and barristers since 1974 and is today known as the Douglas Menzies Chambers.

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 office building at 178-188 William Street was designed by architects McIntyre McIntyre & Partners for owners Costain Australia Ltd, a multi-national infrastructure and mining company. Construction was completed in 1973 (McIntyre; BAF; CoMMaps). The City of Melbourne received a building permit application for the building in June 1972, with an estimated project cost of \$1,038,000. The site was formerly occupied by the Four Courts Hotel and Oswald Burt & Co's building (BAI; BAF).

Architectural drawings dated 1972 show the principle elevations and ground floor plan (Figure 1 - Figure 3). Annotations to the architectural drawings indicate that the north and west elevations were constructed of precast concrete units, with aluminum-framed windows (BAP).

Price & Chamberlin, solicitors and barristers, occupied part of the building in 1974 until at least the early 1980s (Age, 23 Dec 1974:15; 2 Nov 1981:2; S&Mc). In September 1974, Costain sold the property to The Prudential Assurance Company Ltd (LV:V9056/F780). The building may have been called the Prudential Building during this period (Butler 1985:24).

In 1996, the building was launched as the Douglas Menzies Chambers, owned by Barristers' Chambers Limited who purchased the property in 1992 (BCL; LV:V9056/F780). The chambers were named after Sir Douglas Menzies (1907-1974), Australian High Court Justice.

McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, architects

McIntyre McIntyre & Partners was established in 1962 as McIntyre, McIntyre & Associates following the merger of Peter and Dione McIntyre's architectural practice with that of Peter's father, Robert A McIntyre. From 1967 to 1972, the firm practiced as McIntyre, McIntyre & Partners, before changing to its current iteration, McIntyre Partnership. The amalgamation was a commercial move to gain larger commissions.

Prior to this, Peter and Dione's work involved small-scale domestic projects. Peter's work in particular focused on the interplay of function and structure, where he experimented with cantilevered and tensile structures, and the Ctesiphon arch. He gained public recognition with the commission for the Melbourne Olympic Swimming Stadium (1952-6) in collaboration with architects, Kevin Borland and John & Phyllis Murphy, and engineer Bill Irwin.

Following the McIntyre merger, the new firm designed a significant number of hotels and hospitality ventures (inherited from McIntyre Snr's practice), as well as skiing and alpine architecture. In central Melbourne, the firm completed the innovative Kings Parkade car park in Little Collins Street (1966), and commercial office buildings such as at 170 William Street (1968), 150 Lonsdale Street (1969), 178-188 William Street (1972-73) and Australia Pacific House at 136-144 Exhibition Street (1975-78). Other notable work included the adaptive reuse and conversion of the early twentieth century Henry Jones Jam Factory in Prahran into an up-market shopping centre (1974) and the design for Melbourne's Parliament Station (1973-82).

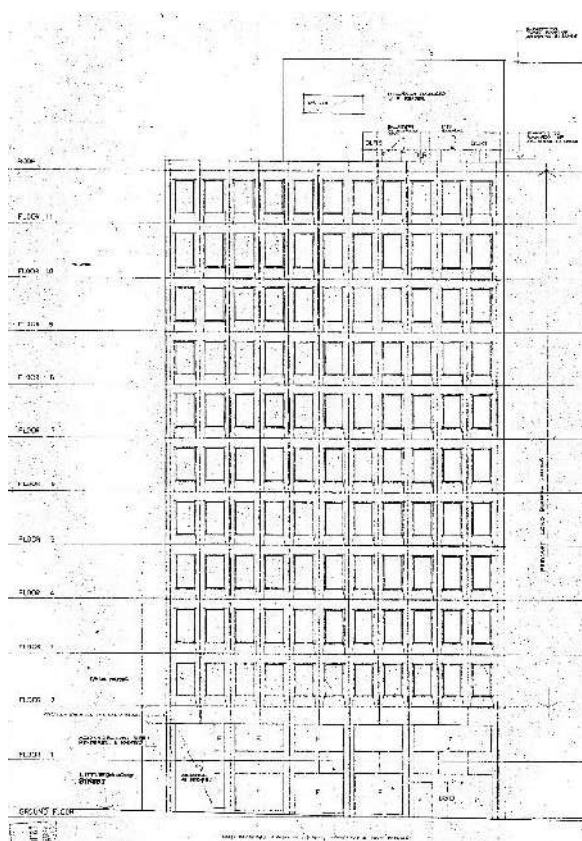


Figure 1. Architectural drawing of the west elevation, dated 1972 (BAP).

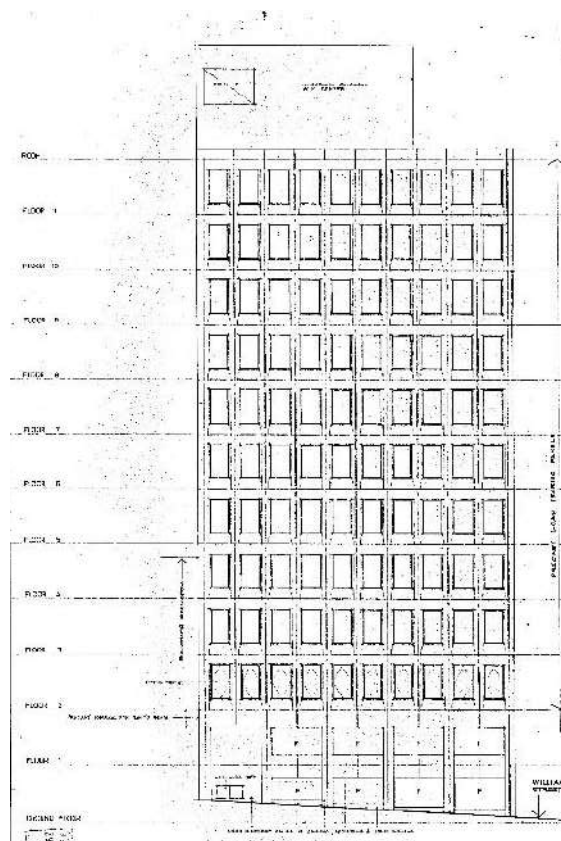


Figure 2. North elevation, drawing dated 1972 (BAP).

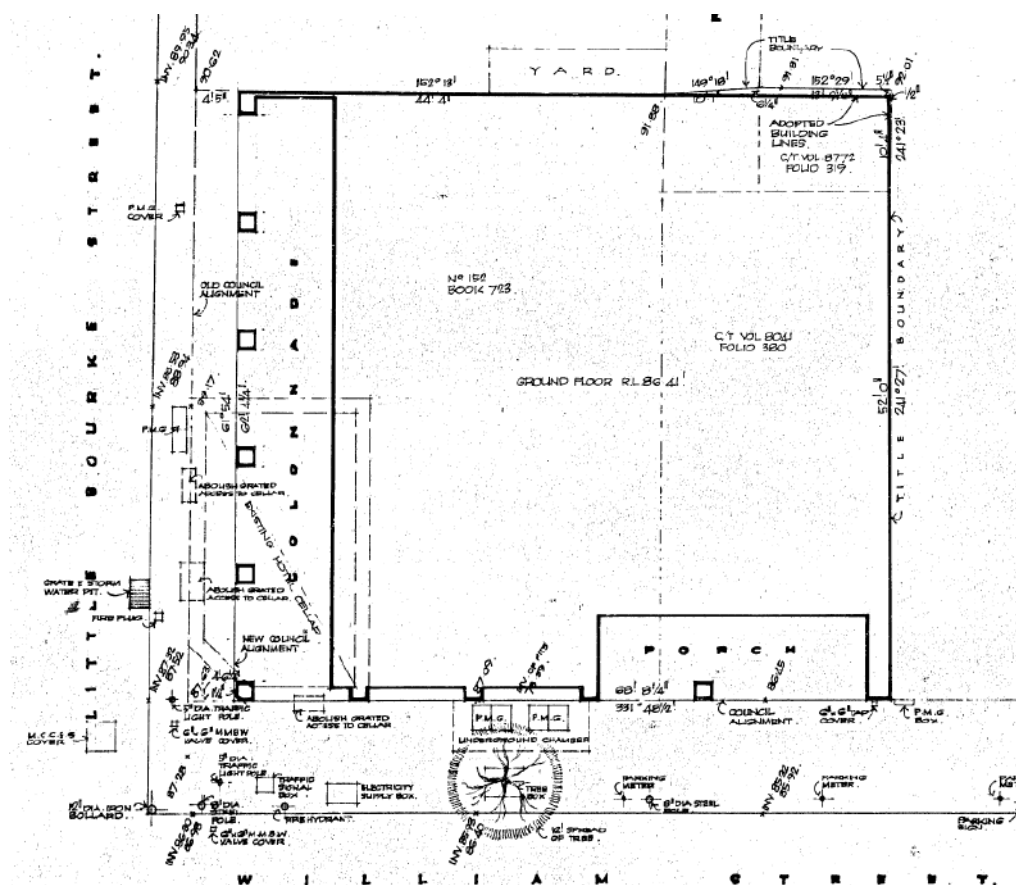


Figure 3. Site plan and ground floor plan, dated 1972 (BAP).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The office building at 178-188 William Street is an 11-storey commercial building located at the north-west corner of William Street and Little Bourke Street, with frontages to both streets. Constructed in 1972-73 to a design by architects McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, the multi-storey building is an example of the Post-War Modernist style.

Square in plan, the building is of reinforced concrete column and slab construction with hollow blockwork infill panels to the secondary south and east facades. A coloured cement render has been applied to these secondary facades. The main north and west facades are formed from precast concrete loadbearing panels, which support the concrete floor slabs from the first floor upwards. The precast panels, with sloped sills, provide a simple frame to fixed aluminium-framed windows and together these units form a highly repetitive grid-like pattern across the main facades. A plain concrete parapet crowns the building.

At street level, the north façade of the building is recessed to a depth of two bays behind a simple, double height colonnade formed from plain tall piers placed below each alternate precast panel. To the west, a southern entrance porch is similarly recessed but to a single height, with a row of office spaces across the upper level.

INTEGRITY

The office building at 178-188 William Street, including the original form and the detailing of the exterior of the building, remains very highly intact to its original 1972-73 construction.

Overall, the building retains a very high degree of architectural integrity to the Post-War Modernist style in fabric, form and detail. The building has undergone minimal external change and can be clearly understood and appreciated as a fine example of a Post-War Modernist multi-storey office building.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The office building at 178-188 William 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 building design. The building's two grid-like facades, formed from repetitive loadbearing precast concrete units with distinctive sloped sills that frame individual aluminium-framed windows across both prominent facades, can be clearly observed from William Street. The structure, including the form at street level, remains highly intact to its 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 office building at 178-188 William Street. 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)



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)

Analysis

As a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building, the building at 178-188 William 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*

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<<https://www.bcl.net.au/chamber/douglas-menzies-chambers/>>, accessed 3 July 2019.

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PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985**

D

**Central City Heritage
Review 1993**

Ungraded

**Review of Heritage
Overlay Listings in the
CBD 2002**

Ungraded

**Central City Heritage
Review 2011**

Ungraded

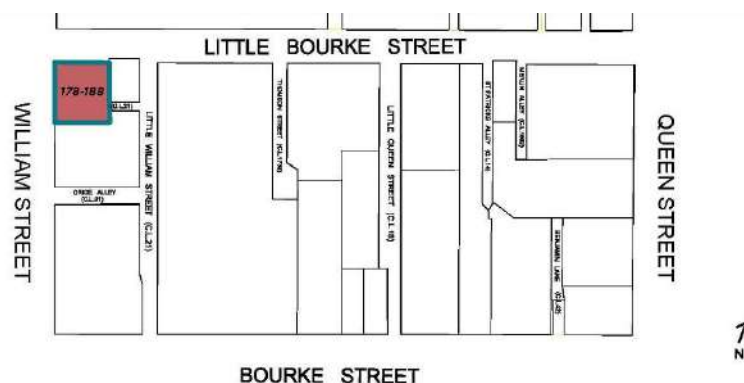
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Office Building



PS ref no:

HOXXXX



What is significant?

The office building at 178-188 William Street, a multi-storey office building constructed in 1972-73.

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 very high level of integrity to its original design.

How it is significant?

The office building at 178-188 William Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1972-73 to a design by McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, the office building at 178-188 William Street 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).

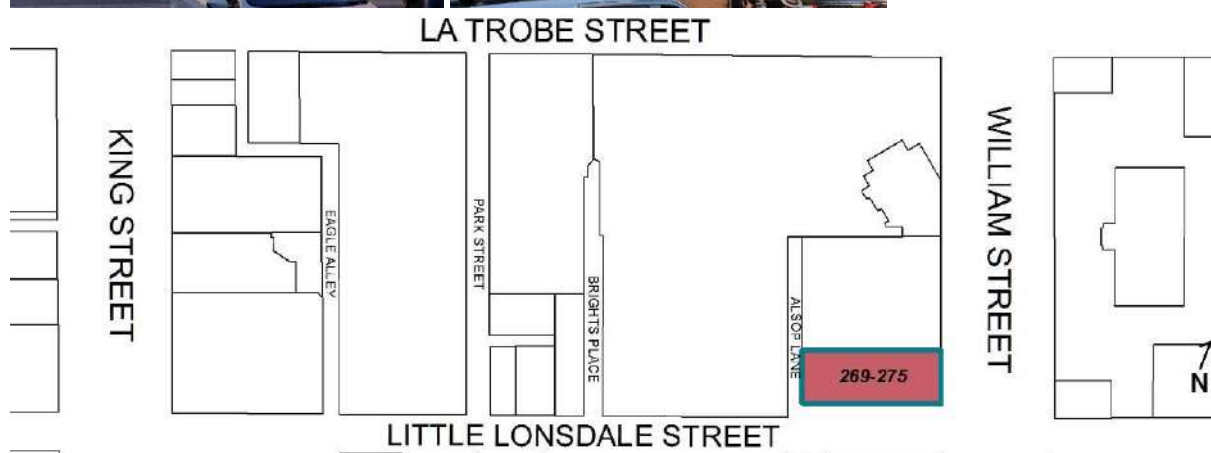
The office building at 178-188 William Street is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The building strongly reflects the style which was popular in the 1960s to the mid 1970s, particularly in central Melbourne. The 11-storey building clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a later postwar structure, including two grid-like walls of repetitive loadbearing precast concrete units, with distinctive sloped sills, which frame individual windows, as well as the use of materials such as precast concrete panels. These demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War

Modernist style. The building remains very highly intact to clearly demonstrates the principle characteristics of a Post-War Modernist commercial high-rise building (Criterion D).

Primary source

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

SITE NAME	Nubrik House
STREET ADDRESS	269-275 William Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	110107



SURVEY DATE: May 2019

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY N/A

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER GRADE Ungraded

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Buchan, Laird & Buchan

BUILDER: A V Jennings Industries Australia Ltd

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Postwar Period (1945-1975)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1972

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
POST WAR THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
1 Shaping the urban landscape	1.8 Expressing an architectural style 1.9 Beyond the curtain wall 1.10 Brutalism and brickwork
3 Building a commercial city	3.2 Business and finance

LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Residential
1920s	Residential, Manufacturing
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

Nubrik House, 269-275 William Street, was built in 1972 as a 13-storey office building. It opened in 1972 as the national headquarters for Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd. The building was named after the company's main brand, Nubrik. Brick & Pipe Industries occupied the first and second floors of the building until c1993, with other businesses occupying the offices on the remaining floors. A roof top apartment was added in 1997 making the building 14 storeys.

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).

Brutalism and brickwork

Brutalism was another architectural style that emerged in commercial building design in Australia as early as 1959, when Harry Seidler used off-form concrete for an eight-storey office block in Ultimo, NSW. That same year, Melbourne architect Kevin Knight (from the office of Oakley & Parkes)

prepared plans for the International Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) Building at 380 Russell Street, Melbourne that broke new ground with its banded façade of reinforced concrete spandrels.

Based on the work of modern architecture pioneer Le Corbusier, and largely inspired by his design for the *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1952), this architectural style became widely accepted internationally. Brutalism incorporated ideas of integrity in expression of materials (especially off-form concrete), structure and function, and often gave rise to dramatic sculptural forms (VHD Hoyts Cinema Centre).

Brutalism became more widespread in central Melbourne in the 1970s. The Mid City Centre at 194-200 Bourke Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1969-70), is a notable example, with its façade of chamfered concrete volumes.

During the 1960s and 70s, face brickwork also made a return with the Houston Building at 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kolle & Associates, 1964-65), the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb, 1967-68) and the 13-storey Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street by architects Buchan, Laird & Buchan (1972) (NTAV 2014:22).

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 at 269-275 William Street is part of Crown Allotment 10, Section 31, purchased by J Whitehill Stevens in 1939 (CoMMaps).

In 1856, the site was used as a garden. By the 1890s, the site was occupied by a two-storey residence and its yard. The Victorian period residence remained through to the late 1960s, and was used as a boarding house, a hostel and then as the Queen Victoria Hospital's nurses' home (MMBW Detail Plan no 736, 1895; Mahlstedt Map section 2, no 2a, 1910 & 1923; S&Mc 1896, 1926, 1942, 1955 & 1960; Halla 1967). By 1923, a portion of the subject land adjoining Alsop Lane had been developed with a two-storey warehouse with a frontage to Little Lonsdale Street. Known as 440-442 Little Lonsdale Street, the warehouse was occupied from the 1920s to the 1960s by various manufacturing businesses including a motor garage, an electrical instrument maker, an artificial flower manufacturer, printers and a typewriter setter (S&Mc 1926, 1955 & 1965).

In May 1971 the subject site was acquired by Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd, Victoria's biggest brick manufacturer at the time (*Age* 2 May 1970:17; *Age* 9 May 1970:20). Named after the company's main brand, Nubrik, Nubrik House was constructed at 269-275 William Street as the new national headquarters for Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd in 1971-72 to a design by Buchan, Laird & Buchan. The builder was A V Jennings Industries Australia Ltd, and the engineering consultants were Lovell, Smith & Crisp (Buchan, Laird & Buchan 1971; *Age* 6 November 1972:24). Nubrik House officially opened on 18 December 1972 (*Age* 18 December 1972:13).

Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd was formed in July 1964 after Brick Industries Ltd (established in July 1959), changed the company name (delisted n.d.). By the early 1970s, Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd was one of Australia's biggest brick manufacturers (*Age* 24 July 1974:20). In October 1989, Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd was taken over by Arnsberg Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of the Goldberg Group, and was again sold to Pioneer International in 1990 (delisted n.d.; *Age* 18 April 1990:23; *Age* 26 February 1992:19). All divisions were merged into Pioneer Building Products by 1996, which was taken over by Brickworks Ltd in 2001. The Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd main brand, 'Nubrik', survives as a brand of Austral Bricks within the Brickworks Building Products Group (Austral Bricks 2019). Its main brick pit and factory was situated in Craigieburn Road, Wollert (some 25 kilometres north of Melbourne's CBD) (Bricks in Victoria 2013).

The 13-storey brick and concrete building featured a face brick exterior to all three exposed elevations, using bricks made by the company to showcase its products. Although the National Trust states that Nubrik House was Australia's tallest building of loadbearing brick construction at that time, and that the use of loadbearing brick was uncommon in the construction of the mid- to high-rise buildings in central Melbourne in the postwar period, further research reveals that the brick pier was a non-structural veneer (NT 2014:38, 52) (see Figure 1). According to the building plans, each unit of the brick piers is a combination of structural (internal) and non-structural (external) parts. Supporting the floor-by-floor load between two floor slabs, each internal brick pier interlinked with the external non-loadbearing brick veneer, which was supported on shelf angles tied to the floor slabs. (see Figure 2 and Figure 1). Internally, reinforced concrete columns and beams were adopted to support the load (Buchan, Laird & Buchan 1971). More than 500,000 bricks were used in the construction of the subject building (*Age* 18 December 1972:13).

The internal masonry structures in the foyer and the office spaces on all levels above were exposed face brick, featuring bricks of varying colours and textures. The foyer was paved with brown tiles with

an antique finish. All bricks and tiles used were the company's own products (Age 18 December 1972:13).

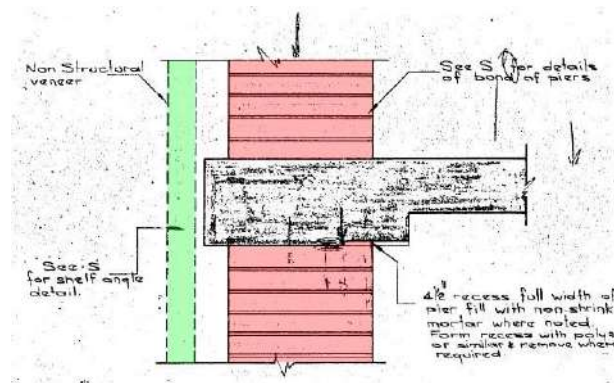


Figure 1. A vertical section showing the arrangement of the masonry and reinforced concrete slab. Shaded in red indicates the loadbearing masonry and in green indicates non-loadbearing brick veneer. The writings on the left-hand side note: 'non-structural veneer' and 'see [section] for shelf angle detail'. (Source: Buchan, Laird & Buchan 1971 [copyright](#))

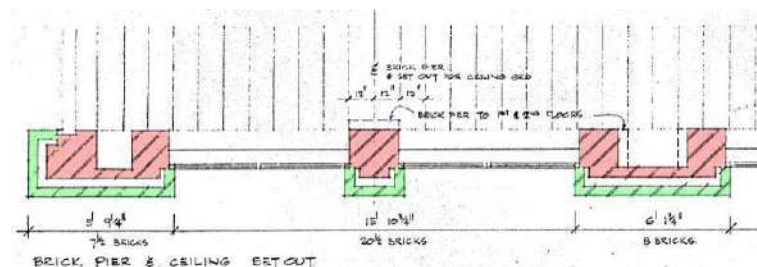


Figure 2. A horizontal section showing the pier types B (left), A (middle) and C (right). Shaded in red indicates the loadbearing masonry and in green indicates non-loadbearing brick veneer. (Source: Buchan, Laird & Buchan 1971 [copyright](#))



Figure 3. A 1972 advertisement showing the newly erected Nubrik House viewed from the southwest (left) and another 1972 photograph showing the view from southeast (right). (Source: Age 6 November 1972:24; Age 18 December 1972:13)

On the ground floor at street level, an open public area was provided near the corner of William and Little Lonsdale streets. Provided as a thoroughfare or a shortcut, it was required by a special condition to the planning permit granted by the Melbourne City Council under the *Town and Country Planning Act* 1961 (Vic). In 1974, a case was held at the Supreme Court of Victoria, when Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd sought to remove the condition so that the thoroughfare could be permanently enclosed to give entry only to users of the building. The firm claimed that the paved area was misused by drunks, derelicts and 'undesirables'. The Court, however, concluded that the use of that land was to remain dedicated to the public without compensation, and that the area could be closed to public only outside normal office hours (Morris 1975:120-122). Part of the original open area remained as a corner splay, with the lobby becoming an enclosed space, installed with automatic glazed sliding doors, and open to public during business hours.

Following the acquisition of Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd by Pioneer International in 1990, Nubrik House was sold in 1993, at which time it is believed the company vacated the building. The building was subdivided into strata titles and offered for purchase in 1994 (CT:V10215 F757-F770).

During the 1990s, the building was tenanted by various real estate agents and solicitors (*Age* 17 January 1994:20; *Age* 25 February 1995:91; *Age* 8 September 1997:24; *Age* 28 May 1998:36). A roof top apartment was added in 1997 making the building 14 storeys. The building was refurbished in 2013 (CoMMaps).

The 14-storey building with a basement currently contains one residential property, 39 businesses and ground level retails (CoMMaps).

Buchan, Laird & Buchan, architect

Buchan, Laird & Buchan designed Nubrik House, adopting extensive use of brick for the façade and interior elements, as well as incorporating structural brick piers in conjunction with the reinforced concrete structure, to promote the products of Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd.

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

After World War Two, John Buchan set up the 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, William and Bourke streets (1960, since demolished); and the former Stock Exchange House, Collins Street (1968) (Willis 2012:111).

The firm became Buchan, Laird & Bowden in 1982, and today continues as the Buchan Group, formed in 1990. The practice currently operates offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth, London, Shanghai, Dubai, Auckland and Christchurch (Willis 2012:111).

A V Jennings Industries Australia Ltd, builder

Sir Albert Victor Jennings was an early pioneer in Australia of the pre-construction sale of house and land packages. An estate agent turned house builder during the 1930s depression, with architectural student, Ed Gurney, and builder Billy Vine, he formed the A V Jennings' Construction Co (Garden 2017). Jennings started with single houses in the Melbourne suburb of Glenhuntly in 1932, then from 1933 began building the housing groups and estates with which his name is most associated (Garden 2012:366).

With the banning of construction of private houses during World War Two, the A V Jennings Construction Co undertook government construction including, from 1942, military camps around Victoria. After the war, the company built thousands of houses and undertook other works in Victoria, Tasmania and Canberra for both the state and federal governments. The company's work for the Victorian Housing Commission in 1944-49 transformed the firm into a large-scale construction enterprise (Garden 2012:366). In 1950 A V Jennings Industries (Australia) Ltd was formed as a public company with Albert Victor Jennings as its chairman and managing director (Garden 2017). The construction of private housing gathered pace in the 1950s and became the firm's principal activity. (Garden 2017).

In the 1960s, the company's notable building projects, apart from housing, include the Wrest Point Casino, Tasmania (1969-73) and the Adelaide Festival Theatre, South Australia (1970-73) (Garden 2012:366). The company portfolio grew to encompass ventures related to its core home and general construction businesses, including finance, transport, and caravans (Garden 2017). The company continues today as A V Jennings Ltd.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Designed by Buchan, Laird & Buchan and constructed in 1971-72, Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street is a 14-storey (originally 13-storey) commercial building that demonstrates aspects of the Post-War Modernist style. Located on the northwest corner of William Street and Little Lonsdale Street, the building also has a rear (western) frontage to Alsop Lane.

The principal facades to both Little Lonsdale Street and William Street consist of vertical panels of brickwork that vary in width, between which are vertical bands of aluminium framed glass, with opaque panels alternating with clear glazed windows at each floor level. Whilst the brick piers appear to be loadbearing, they are a non-structural veneer, concealing an interior structure that is an unusual composite of a reinforced concrete column and slab frame supported on its perimeter by sections of loadbearing brickwork.

The Little Lonsdale Street façade of the building is divided into five vertical modules divided by wide brick piers, with each module in turn divided into two vertical glazed panels by narrow brick piers. The southern half of the William Street façade comprises a single vertical module divided into two vertical glazed panels by narrow brick piers, as for the Little Lonsdale Street façade. The northern half of the facade comprises a sheer wall of face brickwork. The windows sashes are fixed, with some fitted with wall hung air conditioning units. The building has no formal termination at the top level which is typical of the style. The vertical panels of brickwork extend above the roof line and appear to have undergone some repair work, possibly during the 1997 construction to add the penthouse apartment.

At street level the wall has been rendered. The southern end, above street level, is divided into two modules divided by a narrow brick pier and inset with the glazed curtain wall system

At street level along Little Lonsdale Street, a solid brick base follows the fall of the site above which are four large fixed aluminium framed windows. Above each window a deep unpainted concrete lintel supports the narrow brick piers above. On William Street, the sheer wall of face brickwork extends to the street level, but has been rendered and painted.

The corner of the building above street level has a projecting cantilevered awning with a double curve (this appears to be a later addition), and a recessed entry of contemporary aluminium framed glazing. The base of the corner pier of brickwork has also been rendered and painted.

Facing Alsop Lane, the northern half of the facade comprises a sheer wall of brickwork with small louvres at some floor levels for ventilation. The southern half comprises a single vertical module divided into two vertical glazed panels by narrow brick piers supported on a deep unpainted concrete lintel, as for the Little Lonsdale Street façade. At the laneway level, a recessed roller shutter door sits below three large fixed panels of glass.

INTEGRITY

Nubrik House is highly intact with very few changes visible to original or early fabric. The building retains its original scale, form and configuration, including a strong vertical emphasis resulting from the alternating pattern of wide brick piers separated by vertical panels of glazing, unrelieved by any horizontal connectivity other than the deep reinforced concrete beams at the first-floor level.

Alterations include the addition of a corner awning, replacement of the original recessed entry with contemporary glazing, the additional penthouse level, and the rendering and painting of the base of the corner pier and northern section of wall along William Street. Overall the building has very high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

During the early 1950s, following the end of the World War Two, building activities in central Melbourne slowly revived. The Post-War Modernist style, which was accompanied by the development of the curtain wall, became popular and was the preferred style for the new wave of early high-rise commercial buildings. During the late 1960s and beyond, the style developed with a more eclectic use of materials and forms, combining expansive glazed panels with solid masonry sections to achieve a less repetitive, more distinctive and robust aesthetic.

The following examples are comparable with Nubrik House, being of a similar use, scale, style and/or construction date.

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)



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)



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



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

Built in 1971, Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street is a highly intact example of a Post-War Modernist building, that combines expansive glazed panels with solid masonry sections to achieve a less repetitive, more distinctive and robust aesthetic. While the adopted structural masonry was designed to be exposed in the interior, the exterior design of Nubrik House consciously emphasised the unconventional use of high vertical panels of brickwork to give the appearance of supporting the building, although the external brickwork was actually supported by the internal reinforced concrete frame. In this respect the building differs from many of its contemporaries that also utilised brickwork as their primary façade material. In the other examples brick is used as a nonloadbearing infill or as cladding materials where the primary structure (usually reinforced concrete) is deliberately expressed or through the spandrels.

While the primary uses differ, Nubrik House is also comparable to the residential towers Treasury Gate at 93-101 Spring Street (Interim HO1262 – recommended as individually significant in the

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), which also features high vertical panels of brickwork that appear to be the primary structural basis of the building, especially on the podium element which is similarly separated by vertical bands of aluminium framed glass alternating with lightweight opaque panels at each floor level. The building is also somewhat comparable with , 447-453 Lonsdale Street (recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), which also used brick as non-loadbearing infill but where the primary reinforced concrete structure is clearly expressed.

The subject building is distinguished by its design that consciously utilised bricks, the main product of the company, to promote this material, and in a way that visually suggests it is fulfilling a structural role.

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	Ungraded
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Central City Heritage Review 1993	Ungraded
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Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
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Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Nubrik House



PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street, Melbourne, completed in 1972 to a design by Buchan, Laird & Buchan, is significant.

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

- Original building form and scale;
- Original configuration of vertical panels of brickwork separating vertical bands of aluminium framed glass, with opaque panels alternating with clear glazed windows at each floor level, offset by sheer walls of face brickwork to the William Street and Alsoy Lane facades; and
- Original aluminium framed windows.

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

How it is significant?

Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Nubrik House, designed by Buchan, Laird & Buchan and constructed by A V Jennings Industries Australia Ltd, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of Melbourne's postwar development and rapid growth of corporate architecture of the 1950s-70s. Its development reflected 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. Nubrik House was constructed as the national headquarters for Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd, Victoria's biggest brick makers, and one of Australia's

largest brick manufacturers. The building was named after the company's main brand, Nubrik. The building is distinguished by the extensive and prominent use of brick in the building's construction to promote the products of the building's original owner, Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd. (Criterion A)

Nubrik House is significant as a highly intact example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building constructed during the postwar period that utilised a reinforced concrete frame. This framing allowed for a variety of design approaches to the non-loadbearing façades. During the late 1960s and beyond, the style developed with a more eclectic use of materials and forms, combining glazed panels with solid sections to achieve a less repetitive, more distinctive and robust aesthetic. The principal façades of Nubrik House to both Little Lonsdale Street and William Street are demonstrative of this tendency, combining glazed panels with solid masonry sections. (Criterion D)

Nubrik House is of aesthetic significance for its distinctive design that adopted robust brick piers as one of the main design elements. While the structural masonry was used internally and designed to be exposed in the interior, the exterior design of Nubrik House consciously emphasised the unconventional use of high vertical panels of brickwork to give the appearance of supporting the building, although the external brickwork was actually supported by the internal reinforced concrete frame. While the brick piers appear to be loadbearing, they are a non-structural veneer, concealing an interior structure that is an unusual composite of a reinforced concrete column and slab frame supported on its perimeter by sections of loadbearing brickwork. Designed by Buchan, Laird & Buchan for Brick & Pipe Industries Ltd, Victoria's biggest brick manufacturer at the time, the subject building is distinguished by its design solution that consciously utilised bricks, the main product of the company, to promote this material, and in a way that visually suggests it is fulfilling a structural role. (Criterion E)

Primary source

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