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Melbourne's Marvellous Modernism

A Comparative Analysis of Post-War
Modern Architecture in Melbourne's CBD
1955 -1975

September 2014



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[Cover image: National Mutual Centre, Wolfgang Sievers, State Library of Victoria, 1966]

Melbourne's Marvellous Modernism: A Comparative Analysis

Despite being a significant period in Melbourne's cultural and architectural history, post-war modernism is scarcely represented in the CBD on either the City of Melbourne's heritage overlay or the Victorian Heritage Register. Currently only one post-WWII building in the Hoddle grid (essentially the CBD) has a municipal heritage control. This is despite the excellent efforts of the City of Melbourne in recent Planning Amendments. It is also noteworthy that just four post-war buildings are included on the Victorian Heritage Register. It is also worth noting that there are a few post-war places included on the Victorian Heritage Register just off the City grid.

In Victoria the National Trust classified ICI House in 1985 and a specialist 20th century classification committee studied and classified buildings for a number of years in the early 2000s. In 2006 we hosted a seminar with architects about emerging heritages post-1950s. Our iPhone App *Lost, Melbourne's Lost 100* launched in 2012 includes a number of significant lost modernist buildings.

In recent years the progress towards the statutory protection of post-war architecture by local and state planning authorities in Melbourne (and in Victoria) has remained slow. In the last three years community advocacy has been ramped up with several modernist buildings nominated for the Victorian Heritage Register, and strong support by the National Trust for the considerable work undertaken by City of Melbourne. However to date only one modernist place in the CBD has been given local statutory protection and the rest remain in preservation limbo.

Marvellous Melbourne's Modernism

In (Marvellous) Melbourne, the heritage of post-war buildings is especially challenging to many parties. Modernist buildings were largely designed to stand in contrast to the low-scale, decorative Victorian and Edwardian buildings they replaced. Modernism's emergence as a heritage issue has challenged those who believe that preservation efforts in Melbourne should be directed purely towards an idealised Victorian and inter-war city. The independent planning panel C186, considering nine post-war buildings put forward by City of Melbourne, noted the view alluded to in some of the expert evidence presented to it, that the post-war period was:

"more significant for its role in destroying Melbourne's nineteenth century character rather than being important in its own right. The Panel believes, however, that while it can be viewed as a period of destruction, it should also be viewed as a period of creativity."

Whilst the losses in the 1960s and 1970s were awful, the assessment of post-war places as heritage has created an inevitable tension between the essentially (although intermittent) Victorian character of Melbourne (because most buildings are not from that period) and the year-zero, context-averse assertions of modernism.

Graeme Butler in his 2011 heritage study for the City of Melbourne said:

"In 1957 Victoria's State Building Regulations Committee decided in favour of modifying height limit laws for city buildings. The 132 foot (40 m) height limit introduced in 1916 had been exceeded by ICI House in the previous year, and it was now replaced by a system allowing greater heights in individual cases, dependent upon floorspace and light angles... The increase in height of buildings in the central city soon suggested other implications for the form of the city. The fad for open space at ground level was to sweep away the propriety of the 1930's street architecture and usher in a new era of plazas and landscaped public space."

The 1964 Planning Scheme for the central business area formalised planning controls including plot-ratios, and the plaza and setbacks resulted. The Hoddle grid had made precious little allowance for public open space. Gaps in the street wall appeared. Proprietary street architecture, built to the street line, rising up to

the old height limit of 40m, was radically and excitingly challenged. Public open space penetrated inside the boundary line, public art on buildings came down to street level, and there was a blurring of public and private domain.

City of Melbourne Amendment C186

In June 2011 the City of Melbourne proposed to expand local heritage protection to an additional 99 buildings in Melbourne's central business district, known as Amendment C186. The City has attempted to update its overall list about once every decade since the 1980s. In 2013, the Minister for Planning, the ultimate decision-maker on these matters, confirmed permanent heritage controls for 87 places out of a proposed list of 99 buildings spanning the period 1850s-1930s. The bulk of those excluded comprised all of the proposed nine post-war buildings.

The exclusion was despite the independent Planning Panel's support for the application of heritage overlays for the post-war places. The Minister for Planning refused to include the buildings, citing a need for further study. That further study, hinted to as being prepared by Heritage Victoria, has not been forthcoming. According to *The Age*, Mr Guy refused to give an opinion on the architectural styles but has previously said he did not want to see the city "awash with structures built in the 1950s". "The buildings, some of which are Brutalist architecture, will be subject to further review. Some of them are questionable in their architectural significance to the city," he said. (*The Age*, 5 June 2013).

The work of the National Trust's Built Environment Advisory Committee over the last year has culminated in this comparative study document. This document forms the baseline comparative data of potentially significant post-war places in Melbourne's CBD. In this document we have examined the nuanced architectural development of the period and arranged it by types: International Style: Curtain Wall & Metal; International Style: Curtain Wall & Masonry; Expressed Structure; Brutalism, and; Small Commercial. Modernism was a new aesthetic, but not a singular aesthetic. The introduction to each group has been prepared by Simon Reeves of Built Heritage. We cannot claim it to be an exhaustive list, in fact we hope that it will be developed as our understanding of the period continues to develop. We intend that this document will be used at future Planning Panel Hearings to support this critical issue. We acknowledge the work of the Committee, particularly Rohan Storey.

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A guide to the abbreviations used throughout the document:

VHR – listed on the Victorian Heritage Register

HP - within a Heritage Precinct as designated by the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme

HO – with an individual Heritage Overlay as designated by the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme.

City of Melb X – City of Melbourne Heritage Grading

C186 – included in City of Melbourne Amendment C186

NT – Classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

International Style: Curtain Wall & Metal

In his definitive history of building technology in Australia, Dr Miles Lewis traces the development of the modern metal-framed curtain-wall back to the late nineteenth century, in the work of Gustav Eiffel and others, prior to its more extensive use in Europe in the early twentieth century.¹ A contemporaneous (if highly atypical) example appeared in central Melbourne as early as 1924 in Walter Burley Griffin's Leonard House at 44 Elizabeth Street (Dem.1975). With a facade of glazing set within a frame of extruded metal sections, it was lauded by Donald Leslie Johnson as 'possibly the first curtain wall in the world', using the term in its strict modern sense.² However, it is generally accepted that the modern curtain wall did not emerge in Victoria until the early 1950s, in a number of outer suburban factories, and most notably the new boiler house at the APM complex in Alphington (1954).

The first curtain-walled office building proposed in central Melbourne (but not the first completed) seems to have been the new offices of the Alliance Assurance Company at 410 Collins Street. Designed by A C Leith, Bartlett & Partners, it was conceived in 1950 as a six-storey building, then revised in 1952 as a height-limit (132-feet) structure. Work proceeded slowly, with a report in early 1955 confirming that the building would have a double-skin all-glass front, with heat-resistant glazing in an aluminium frame. Due to the building's belated completion in early 1957, it lost its claim to be deemed the first true curtain-walled building built in central Melbourne. Instead, that accolade went to Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street (J A La Gerche, 1954-55), a prominently-sited ten-storey glass-fronted box that generated considerable press coverage. The floodgates were opened, and many buildings followed in a similar vein. Melbourne's first office building with curtain walling to all four sides was Chelsea House, located outside the city grid on Flemington Road, North Melbourne (Harry Ernest, 1956) was soon followed by the first CBD counterpart in Hume House at 185 Williams Street Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, 1957). The following year, the same architects completed ICI House in Albert Street, East Melbourne. This was the city's first glass-walled skyscraper in the truest sense, not merely because it was freestanding (with curtain walling to all four sides) but because it finally broke through the 132-foot height limit that had been imposed since 1916.

By this time, local architects had embraced the curtain wall aesthetic with enthusiasm, introducing bold contrasts between clear glazing and solid spandrels. Two early examples, both dating from 1956-57, were the Norwich Union Insurance offices at 53-57 Queen Street (Yuncken, Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson), which incorporated panels of opaque black glass, and the new Allan's Music Store building in Collins Street (Godfrey Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & Lobb), with metal panels in a bright gloss red.

While the expression of multi-storey office buildings as curtain-walled 'glass boxes' had been a defining characteristic of central Melbourne in the second half of the 1950s, this tendency was gradually supplanted during the following decade as architects simultaneously re-discovered the delights of applied ornament and embraced newer technologies of pre-cast concrete and reconstituted stone. Although the curtain wall tradition persisted into the 1960s, it was not quite the same as it had been. In the especially notable example of the new TAA headquarters in Franklin Street (H A & F L Norris, 1965), the old vanguard of metal-and-glass curtain walling was boldly re-interpreted with mullions of architectural bronze (in what, at the time, represented the most extensive use of that material in any building in Australia) coupled with glare-reducing bronze-tinted glazing and spandrel panels of brown and gold mosaic tiles.

It was not until the early 1970s that the architects of large city buildings began to reconsider the spartan curtain walling of the previous generation as a source of design inspiration. For the first time in years, the façade of the fourteen-storey Eagle House at 473 Bourke Street (Yuncken Freeman Pty Ltd, 1971-72) was

1 Miles Lewis, *Australian Building*, Section 8.10.3.

2 D L Johnson, *The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin*, p 109.

conceived as a repetitive and entirely flat grid, with aluminium mullions expressed so clearly and deliberately that the building received the inaugural Alcoa of Australia Award for Architectural Excellence. When the building was published in *Architecture in Australia* in 1973, a manufacturer's advertisement asserted that 'today, a growing number of architects and builders are looking again at curtain walling, and it's easy to understand why'.³ It was not only noted that curtain walling gave buildings 'a clean vertical look', but also, due to technological improvements since the 1950s, offered a solution that was low maintenance and readily individualized due to the wide range of mullion profiles that had become available. Melbourne architects took this to heart, and new office buildings in the 'glass box' tradition continued to appear in the city well into the 1970s, typified by Estates House at 114 William Street (Yuncken Freeman, 1976).

3 'The growing trend to curtain walling explained', *Architecture in Australia*, August 1973, p 21.

Original Name	ICI House
Current Name	Orica House
Address	1 Nicholson Street East Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1958

Significance:

First glass-box international style 'skyscraper' in Australia; first to break old height limit and to be truly freestanding. Remarkably intact.

No awards system in Victoria at the time.

Intactness:

Lobby and gardens intact, undercroft in-filled in sympathetic style 1989. No other interiors remaining.

References:

VHR citation
National Trust Classification Report
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
1993 City of Melb Central City Heritage Review

Listings:

VHR HO786
NT – State B5765 (1986)
NT – State (2001) Fountain by Gerald Lewers
City of Melb A
Included on the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register
– of International Significance.



1958 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Gilbert Court
Current Name	100 Collins
Address	100-104 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	J A La Gerche
Completed:	1955

Significance:

Exemplar of 1960s precast concrete façade treatment of high-rise office buildings. Described by Goad as “Symbolic of the recovery in commercial building after World War Two and probably the first true 'glass box' in Australia, expressive of the new international aesthetic.”

Intactness:

Subdivided in 1987 with level four subdivided further in 2003.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

HP Collins East Precinct HO504
NT – Regional B6095 (1989)
City of Melb A



1957 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Eagle House
Current Name	
Address	43 Bourke Street Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed	1971 - 2

Significance:

Eagle House is of architectural significance as one of the finest examples of the curtain wall phase of Australian commercial architecture.

Awarded the RAIA Award of Merit 1972, and the inaugural Alcoa Australia Award for the use of aluminium in 1973.

Intactness:

The eagle sculpture was removed from the foyer during refurbishment c1999.

References:

National Trust Classification Report
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

VHR HO1807
NT – State B6262 (1991)
City of Melb A



1972 photo State Library of Victoria



2008 photo National Trust

Original Name	London Assurance House
Current Name	Law Institute of Victoria
Address	470 Bourke Street Melbourne
Architect	Bernard Evans & Partners
Completed:	1960

Significance:

Aluminium and glass curtain wall setback in a picture frame effect from its concrete casing. Black framed hopped-sash windows open from alternate mid points in the curtain wall glazing. Ground level opens to rare extant 1½ floor space. Goad notes that it “displays the scale and modulation that enabled such generously glazed buildings to fit comfortably within Melbourne’s 19th century structure while being clad in the latest building materials.”

Intactness:

Façade rare as intact to ground level, except for doors and recent part over-cladding of spandrels.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

C186
NT – Regional B6567 (2003)
City of Melb B



1959 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Coates House
Current Name	Coates Building
Address	20 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	J A La Gerche
Completed	1959

Significance:

The second building in Melbourne to have a fully glazed multi-storey commercial curtain-wall facade. It is particularly notable for its purest glass façade with full transparency including clear spandrel panels and no visible suspended ceiling, continuing beyond the parapet with simple slab edge. It is also significant as being the only known co-operatively owned and developed multi-storey commercial building in the Central Activities District.

Intactness:

Ground level shop intact, with new shop fronts.

References:

National Trust Classification Report
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

HP Collins East Precinct HO504
NT - State B6251 (1991)
City of Melb C



1960 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Estates House
Current Name	Former Qantas House
Address	114 William Street Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1976

Significance:

Rare expression of purist International Style modernism with a slick curtain wall – aluminium framing with flush large glass panes – on a free standing building.

Intactness:

Ground level setback – ‘piloti’ expression – somewhat infilled but still readable.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

C186
City of Melb C



1976 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Former TAA Headquarters
Current Name	Qantas Headquarters
Address	50 Franklin Street Melbourne
Architect	Harry Norris & Partners
Completed:	1965

Significance:

One of the most elegant high-rise office buildings to be built in Melbourne in the 1960s with its black steel structure and its early use of architectural bronze. One of the best, most prominent and most accessible examples of the post-war work of this noted Melbourne architectural firm.

Intactness:

The tower form is relatively intact with the forecourt space maintained despite alterations to the ground floor. Recent panels have covered the gold mosaic spandrels and the more recent "Qantas" signage has been removed.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

Included in City of Melb Amendment C198 (2014)



1975 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo realestate.com.au

Original Name	Norwich Union Insurance
Current Name	Sda House
Address	53-57 Queen Street Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman Brothers, Griffiths & Simpson
Completed:	1957

Significance:

A refined early curtain wall facade which successfully achieves the medium's minimalist visual character, as defined by a regular pattern of the lines across the glass pane and the spandrels of opaque glass.

Intactness:

Refurbished 2006

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb C



1958 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Canton Insurance Building
Current Name	
Address	43-51 Queen Street Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1957

Significance:

Built to height limit along with adjacent building with interesting patterned framing. Coloured spandrel panels lend a horizontal nature to the façade. Operable section to glazing.

Intactness:

Curtain wall intact. Original ground level lost.

References:

Listings:

City of Melb D



c1960 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Bank of Adelaide
Current Name	
Address	267 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	Unknown
Completed:	1961

Significance:

Late example of an asymmetrical glass curtain wall design built to height limit. Left-side stair well visually articulated by offset curtain wall to the remainder of building.

Intactness:

Ground level altered – relates to streetscape but unsympathetic to original building. Tiffany and Co. entrance modeled on New York City store entrance.

References:

1993 City of Melb Central City Heritage Review

Listings:

HP The Block Precinct HO502
City of Melb E



1960 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Allan's Music Store
Current Name	Mering House
Address	276-278 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Obb
Completed:	1957

Significance:

One of the early glass curtain walled office and retail building in the CBD built up to height limit. Slim concrete frame containing glazed curtain wall with red metal spandrel panels. One example in a collection with the Former London Assurance Building (1959), the OPSM Building (1960), and the Coate's Building (1959).

Intactness:

Refurbished and sub-divided 1997. Ground level altered. Canopy not original.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

HP The Block Precinct HO502
City of Melb C



Unknown date photo City of Melbourne

Altered

Original Name	Alliance Assurance Company
Current Name	Bendigo Bank
Address	410 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	A C Leith, Bartlett & Partners
Completed:	1957

Significance:

In contrast to Gilbert Court, Alliance Assurance was not a 'glass box' neither was it fully transparent. However with no opening sashes and no evaporative coolers suspended from the facade, it provided a slicker solution. Tile cladding to the west wall both faced and emulated the State Insurance Building opposite.

Intactness:

Façade re-clad in 1987 and ground floor altered.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb B



1959 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Demolished

Original Name	Hume House
Current Name	
Address	177-185 William Street
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1957

Significance:

Office building with curtain walling to all four sides.
Demolished.



1959 photo State Library of Victoria



1959 photo State Library of Victoria

Demolished - reconstructed

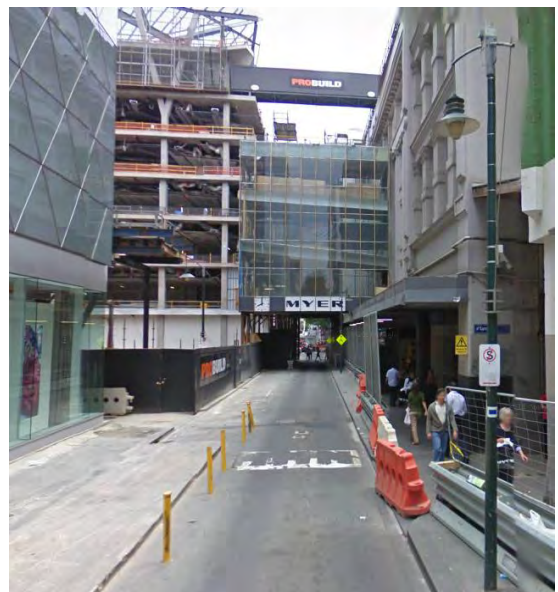
Original Name	Myer Department Store Aerial Crossover
Current Name	
Address	290 Little Bourke Street Melbourne
Architect	Tompkins, Shaw & Evans
Completed:	1963

Significance:

The Crossover was Victoria's first multi-level, public pedestrian bridge to cross a public thoroughfare to be approved by the Melbourne City Council. The bridge concept was typical of 1960s urban ideals, where it was thought that bridges and platforms were ideal ways of avoiding the 'traffic jungle' below. Reconstructed with some alterations in 2013.



1963 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Demolished

Original Name	Shell House
Current Name	
Address	Corner Bourke and Williams Streets
Architect	Buchan, Laird and Buchan in association with Skidmore Owings and Merrill (USA)
Completed:	1960

Significance:



c1950 photo State Library of Victoria

International Style: Curtain Wall & Masonry

When curtain-walled office buildings first began to appear in central Melbourne from the early 1950s, some architects (such as J A Le Gerche) wholly embraced and exploited the new technology while others, almost if hedging their bets, combined curtain walling with more conventional masonry-based construction. One early instance of the latter trend was the new headquarters of the Federated Pharmaceutical Guild of Victoria, erected in St Francis Street, off Lonsdale Street (Cowper, Murphy & Associates, 1953-54; Dem). With a narrow fifty-foot frontage, the seven-storey building had a curtain wall of double-hung sash windows set into an aluminium frame. Although continuous across all six upper levels, this curtain walling did not extend the full width of the façade; instead, solid piers defining a separate vertical strip window bay to an internal stairwell. In a similar manner, the premises of Ajax Insurance Company, on a corner site at 105 Queen Street (H D Berry, 1956), had a rendered finish to both street elevations, with curtain walling enclosed within frames of vertical stone ribbing. The contemporaneous Laurens House at 414-416 Lonsdale Street (Harold Bloom, 1956), incorporated a continuous vertical bay of curtain walling that was offset by a ceramic tiled surround, with the stairwell delineated by a stack of individual windows. The new telephone exchange at 376 Flinders Lane (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1956-57) was almost *retardataire* in its amalgamation of a stark cream brick façade, evocative of pre-war government architecture, with a slightly projecting curtain-walled-bay.

Over the next few years, as curtain walling increased in popularity, Melbourne architects became more adventurous with its expression. The tendency to create lively effects by combining curtain walling with solid spandrels of coloured glass or enameled metal sheeting began to embrace masonry, typified by the premises of Atlas Assurance Company at 404-406 Collins Street (H Garnet Alsop & Associates, 1958), which represented an early use in Melbourne of marble spandrel panels in an otherwise conventionally modernist glass-and-metal curtain wall. While other designers continued to use masonry elements as a framing device to curtain walling, examples became increasingly decorative, reflecting the pervasive tendency towards 'Featurism' that was evident in much contemporary architecture of the later 1950s and early 1960s. At the new headquarters of the National Insurance Company of New Zealand, at 180 Queen Street (Buchan, Laid & Buchan, 1960), the curtain walled façade was framed by two projecting stone-clad feature walls, and screened by an ornate metal grille (since removed). The new State Savings Bank building on a corner site at 229 Swanston Street (Meldrum & Partners, 1960-61) contrasted a full-width curtain wall across one street facade with a cladding of polished stone panels on the other, pierced by a repetitive chequerboard sequence of square window openings.

When the commercial building boom in central Melbourne resumed following the Credit Crunch of the early 1960s, architects moved even further away from the curtain walled tradition of the previous decade, turning to masonry construction. As Neil Clerehan noted, 'city buildings were still framed and clad with the ubiquitous curtain walls, but now glass had been supplanted by precast concrete, with various aggregate finishes, and reconstituted stone'.⁴ This new approach was typified by Embank House at 319-325 Collins Street (1965), where the fully masonry curtain wall comprised vertical fines of polished black granite with recessed glazing and spandrel panels of pale-coloured stone. The most celebrated example of this was the new National Mutual building at 447 Collins Street (Godfrey, Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & Lobb, 1965), where the curtain walling was secondary to a façade of marble slabs that created balcony-like sunshades further enlivened by bronzed metal balustrading and gold anodized vertical strips.

4 Neil Clerehan, '1955-1970', in Philip Goad, *A Guide to Melbourne Architecture*, p 176.

Original Name	Telephone Exchange
Current Name	Telstra Corporation
Address	376-382 Flinders Lane Melbourne
Architect	Commonwealth Department of Works
Completed:	1956 - 57

Significance:

Unusual asymmetrical combination of almost pre-war modernist elements – brick masonry façade – with an offset protruding all-glass curtain wall section. Opening sections of curtain wall.

Intactness:

High.

References:

Listings:



2013 photo Alison Finch



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Atlas Assurance Company
Current Name	Praemium House
Address	404-406 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	H Garnett Alsop & Partners
Completed:	1958 & 1961

Significance:

An early example of curtain wall construction including marble spandrel panels. Interesting series of construction periods – 1961 campaign finished the building to height limit.

Intactness:

Marble cladding extremely deteriorated. Ground level altered.

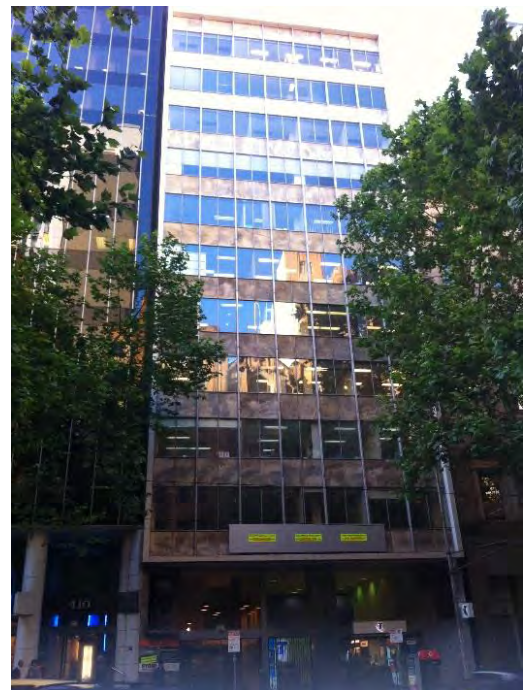
References:

Listings:

C186
City of Melb C



1961 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	State Savings Bank
Current Name	
Address	264 Little Bourke Street (229 Swanston Street) Melbourne
Architect	Meldrum & Partners
Completed:	1961

Significance:

Intact glass curtain wall and concrete slab construction with subtle 'featurist' elements. Glass curtain wall with opening windows faces Little Bourke Street while the main Swanston Street façade is clad in polished stone punctured by the modular placement of square windows determined by corner site and public status.

Included in the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.

Intactness:

Sub-divided into twelve units in 2002. Feature "TV" display windows at first floor, ground level columns form intact.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb D



1960 photo State Library of Victoria



2010 photo Rohan Storey

Original Name **Ajax Insurance Co**
Current Name
Address 105 Queen St
 Melbourne
Architect H D Berry
Completed: 1956

Significance:

Flat stone-coloured render framing central-inset curtain wall area dominated by thin vertical stone ribbing.

Intactness:

References:

Listings:

City of Melb D



Unknown photo City of Melb



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Lauren's House
Current Name	
Address	414-416 Lonsdale Street Melbourne
Architect	Harold Bloom
Completed:	1956

Significance:

Asymmetrical design with curtain wall section – with aluminium spandrel panels and operable glazing sections - surrounded by solid tiled areas. Vertical section above entry door with recessed glazing panels and tiled spandrel sections.

Intactness:

Subdivided in 1979. Ground level intact.

References:

Listings:

City of Melb D



Unknown photo City of Melb

Original Name	H. C. Sleigh House
Current Name	CPA House
Address	170 Queen Street Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1953-55

Significance:

The seven-storey building was the first height-limit office block to be erected in the Melbourne CBD since the War. It marked the start of a new era of high-rise office buildings that would completely transform the city during the following decades. Noted for its fiberglass sun shading.

Intactness:

Much altered including glazing, sun shades, ground floor and painted exterior.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

City of Melb C



1957 photo National Archives



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP)
Current Name	University City Apartments
Address	406-408 Lonsdale Street Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1958

Significance:

Unusual in its projecting boxes design over the curtain wall. Built with basement parking and ground level retail.

Intactness:

Window framing altered and ground floor lost. Subdivided into commercial units in 1995 and refurbished, converted, and subdivided into residential units in 1998.

References:

Listings:

City of Melb C



1958 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Rohan Storey

Original Name	Reserve Bank of Australia
Current Name	
Address	60 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Commonwealth Department of Works
Completed:	1965

Significance:

Extensive use of marble with an elaborate design of surfaces. Of note is Sydney Nolan's "Eureka Stockade" enamel on copper Mural, installed in the foyer (designed c1965 fabricated in London).

Intactness:

Refurbished 1993.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

HP Collins East Precinct HO504
City of Melb D



1973 photo State Library of Victoria



2010 photo City of Melb

Original Name	Palmer House
Current Name	OPSM
Address	82 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	
Completed:	1959

Significance:

Opening windows in glass curtain wall, red spandrel panels. Appears free standing.

Intactness:

High.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

HP Collins East Precinct HO504
City of Melb D



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Coles Gerrard
Current Name	Priceline Pharmacy
Address	376 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Unknown
Completed:	1958 (1961)

Significance:

5 storey rendered brick office building with a basement and ground level retail. Curtain wall with blue spandrel panels and opening window sections representative of the time.

Intactness:

Good, including verandah.

References:

Listings:

City of Melb D



1958 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Embank House
Current Name	The Mark on Collins Apartments
Address	319-325 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	
Completed:	1965

Significance:

Conservative variation on the masonry curtain wall with prominent black granite vertical elements and recessed glazing and pale stone spandrel panels.

Intactness:

Sub-divided into 3 units in 1998 then into individual residential units in 2006 with a further 6 penthouses on the 12th floor in 2008.

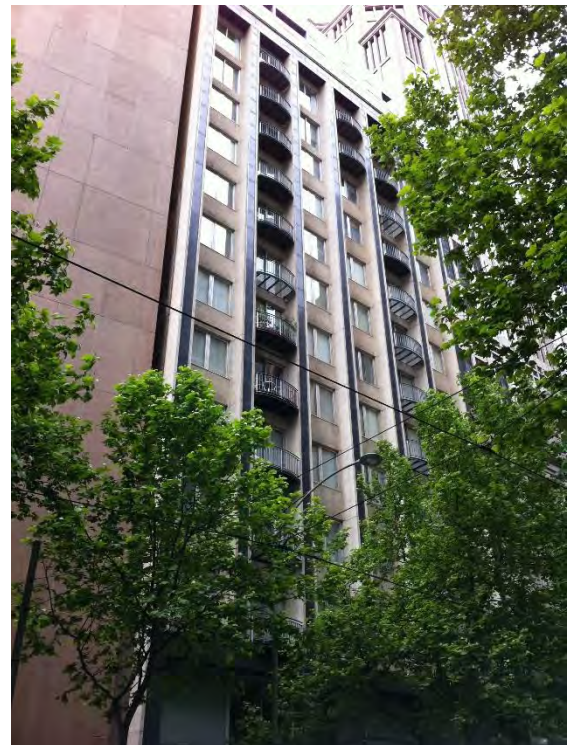
References:

Listings:

City of Melb C



Unknown photo City of Melb.



2013 photo Alison Finch

Altered

Original Name	Southern Cross Insurance
Current Name	Reed House
Address	8 Market Street, Melbourne
Architect	H Garnet Alsop
Completed:	1961-62

Significance:

Once distinguished by its use of heat absorbing glass the six upper levels were adorned with architectural sun glasses (heat absorbing screens) resulting in a complex façade incorporating a recessed curtain wall with a frame grid at the building line supporting thin metal horizontal sunshades. One side – over the entrance - clad in stone.

Intactness:

At ground level, column and framing line intact but shop entry moved and framing changed. A complete external renovation in 1986 involved removal of the distinctive shades and refinishing of the walls.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb C



1961 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Altered

Original Name	National Insurance Company of New Zealand Ltd
Current Name	
Address	180 Queen Street Melbourne
Architect	Buchan, Laird & Buchan
Completed:	1960

Significance:

Paved stonework as side wing “feature walls” remain with simple glazed curtain wall.

Intactness:

Original patterned metal screen feature wall lost as sun shading. Ground floor altered.

References:

Listings:

City of Melb D



1960 photo National Library of Australia



2013 photo Alison Finch

Demolished

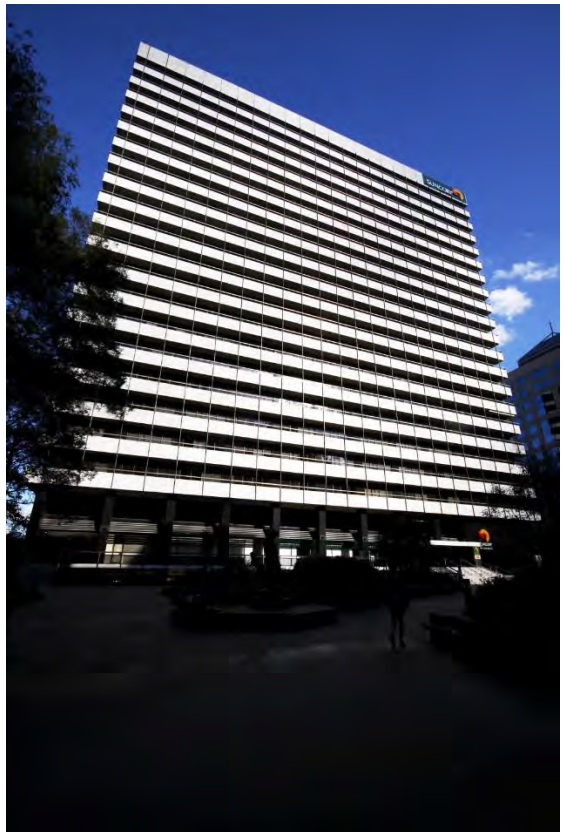
Original Name	National Mutual Plaza
Current Name	Suncorp
Address	447 Collins Street Melbourne
Architect	Godfrey Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb Grace Fraser (landscape)
Completed:	1965

Significance:

First extensive landscaped plaza open to three sides with early free standing tower. Slab building features rare 'balcony' sun-shading façade with 'luxury' finishes including marble, bronzed metal balustrading and gold anodized vertical strip highlights. Included in City of Melbourne Amendment C186 (C Grade) and part of the 9 post-war buildings not approved by the Minister for Planning. The ground level including shops and walkways remained intact prior to demolition commencing in 2014.



1966 photo State Library of Victoria



2011 photo Rohan Storey

Demolished

Original Name	New Zealand Insurance Building
Current Name	
Address	493 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1961-1964

Significance:

Winner of the Victorian Architectural Award, General Building Category in the first year of the awards 1964.



1961 photo State Library of Victoria

Expressed Structure

While the use of curtain wall construction for inner-city commercial buildings increased steadily in the second half of the 1950s, the traditional expression of solidity through masonry continued as a parallel theme. One early manifestation was the rebuilt Hosie's Hotel at the corner of Elizabeth and Flinders Streets (Mussen, Mackay & Potter, 1953-56), a building in a playful European modernist style that was clad externally with pre-cast concrete panels. Subsequent developments, however, tended to be more severe and monumental in their use of masonry, typified by Essington Lewis House at 500 Bourke Street (Meldrum & Noad, 1958-59; Dem.1970s), with its façade of dressed Stawell freestone, and the premises of the Electrolytic Zinc Company at 390 Lonsdale Street (Stephenson & Turner, 1959), which used pre-cast concrete units in a fashion that would be widely imitated over the next decade.

The chief exponent of this approach appears to have been Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, which explored the notion of expressed masonry construction in a string of well-publicised skyscrapers of the early 1960s. Their Prudential Assurance offices at 166 Queen Street (1959-60), clad with pre-cast panels of artificial red-coloured NSW granite, was lauded in the press as a building that 'breaks away from what has become known as the glass-house trend'.⁵ The same architects developed this further in subsequent city projects such as the new RACV headquarters at 123 Queen Street (1961), clad with brown brickwork, and the Guardian Assurance offices at 454-458 Collins Street (1960-61), clad with Stawell freestone in what has been described as an 'early experiment in a return to solidity'. Embracing the renewed interest in decorative effect (which Robin Boyd famously dismissed as 'Featurism'), the architects combined this with structural expression in their design for the new premises of the South British Insurance offices at 155 Queen Street (1961), where pre-cast concrete elements were arranged to create a lively abstract pattern to the façade. This more playful approach was taken to an extreme in the eye-catching design for Royal Mail House at 255 Bourke Street (D Graeme Lumsden, 1963), where the mosaic-tiled façade was enlivened even further by projecting precast concrete window surrounds that created an almost zigzag pattern. While this excessively Featurist approach had fallen from favour by the mid-1960s, the broader tendency towards ornamentation persisted amongst city office buildings. Sleigh Corner at 160 Queen Street (Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, 1964) created an elegant modernist composition through the subtle combination of grey-blue ceramic tiling, gold glass tiling and wall panels 'of reconstructed stone surfaced with crushed porcelain, through into relief by recessed bands of black ceramic mosaic'.⁶

The same period saw the emergence of a more pervasive trend, representing decisive return to the structural expression through masonry. A pioneering example was the new Scottish Amicable Insurance building at 140 Queen Street (Yuncken Freeman Pty Ltd, 1964-66), where a stark grid-like façade was created by the repeating motif of pre-cast concrete window surrounds, with the actual windows (of grey-tinted glass) set back to provide sun-shading. The same architects took this idea even further with the Victorian State Offices (1966-69), comprising three discrete buildings of different scales, united by a consistent façade expression of a loadbearing pre-cast concrete elements. The Royal Insurance Group building at 44 Collins Street, also by Yuncken Freeman (1966), used a similar approach, this time with reconstituted black granite to create a foreboding but still striking effect. During this period, conventional brickwork made a return to high-rise office design in the AMP Society building at 54-60 Market Street (Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, 1964-66), which had a brown brick façade pierced by repetitive rows of recessed windows. This would culminate in the design of Nubrik House in William Street (Buchan, Laird & Buchan, 1972), which, at thirteen storeys, became Australia's tallest building of loadbearing brick construction.

5 'Planning speeds big jobs', *Herald*, 29 January 1960, p 25.

6 'Office building for H C Sleigh Ltd', *Architecture in Australia*, April 1967, p 256.

Otherwise, the trend for structure to be expressed through precast masonry panels continued into the later 1960s and early 1970s. Notwithstanding the necessarily standardised and repetitive nature of the construction system, there was still scope for individuality and aesthetic effect. The simple act of adding curved corners to window openings, for example, brought visual interest to such multi-storey office blocks as Gypsum House at 348-358 La Trobe Street (Bogle & Banfield & Associates, 1968), and the State Superannuation Board premises at 35 Spring Street (Frank Steen, 1972; Dem.2014).

Original Name	BHP House
Current Name	140 William
Address	140 William Street (cnr Bourke Street), Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1972

Significance:

One of the most sophisticated examples of the modern commercial office tower in Victoria.
Extremely refined and successful example of expression of steel skeleton structure.

Award of Merit from the Victorian Institute of Architects, 1973, Bronze Medal, 1975.

Intactness:

Lobby rebuilt almost matching original c1990. No original interiors remaining.

References:

VHR citation
National Trust Classification Report
1993 City of Melb Central City Heritage Review
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

VHR HO1699
NT – State B6518 (1994)
City of Melb A
Included on the RIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register



1973 photo National Library of Australia



2001 photo National Trust.

Original Name	Victorian State Offices
Current Name	
Address	1 Macarthur Street & 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1966-69

Significance:

Important as a unique modernist 'urban ensemble,' consisting of three different but related buildings, set on a plaza surrounded on each side by other significant government offices. Innovative use of precast concrete cladding used structurally to allow column free internal spaces.

Intactness:

High.

References:

VHR Citation
National Trust Classification Report
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

VHR H1526 (Treasury Precinct)
HP Treasury Reserve Precinct HO174
NT – State B7022 (2000)
Included on the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.



1967 State Library of Victoria



2006 photo National Trust.

Original Name	Hosie's Hotel
Current Name	Hosie's Building
Address	1-5 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Architect	Mussen, Mackay & Potter
Completed:	1953-1956

Significance:

Exemplar of 1960s precast concrete façade treatment of high-rise office buildings. Designed in the European Manner of De Stijl and built specifically in readiness for Melbourne's Olympic Games (one of the first modern hotels to be built in central Melbourne.)

Included on the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.

Intactness:

Refurbished, subdivided and converted in 1987 into office space and retail use.

References:

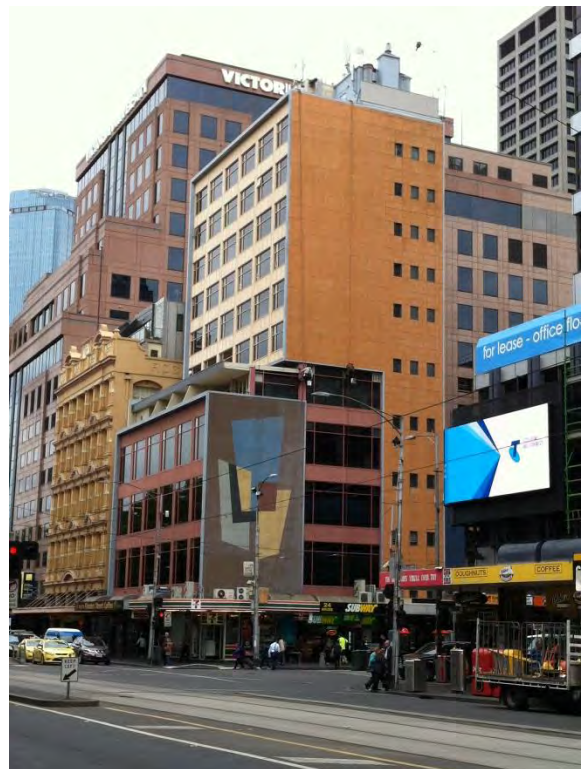
Melbourne Architecture, Philip Goad
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

HP Flinders Gate Precinct HO505
Exterior ceramic Mural by Richard Beck **VHR** H2094
HO938 Mural Only
NT – Mural Only (B6455)



1955 (under construction) photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Royal Insurance Group
Current Name	Royal Insurance Centre
Address	444 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1966

Significance:

Described by Goad as “one of Melbourne’s most elegant and early precast concrete-clad International Modern office designs.” Reconstructed black granite gives the tower its characteristic dark profile with the stone grains cast into pre-glazed concrete panels with structural ribs at the vertical joints. Setbacks at front and side give the building the sense of being freestanding.

Awarded the Victorian Architectural Medal in 1967.

Intactness:

Building refurbished 1994-1996.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

C186
NT – State B6854 (2007)
City of Melb B
Included on the RIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.



1965 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Scottish Amicable Insurance
Current Name	140 Queen Street
Address	124-146 Queen Street, Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1964-66

Significance:

One of the most innovative early examples of the use of pre-cast concrete panels for a façade – expressed as slim-line repeated rectangular window frames, with the glass and spandrel set deep into the reveal. The pre-cast frames stop above the first floor, creating a two storey effect at ground level. The recessed ground floor gives weight to the columns or pilotis. The building was an early example of the return to masonry construction using the modeling characteristics of concrete to achieve much needed sun shading which was integral to the façade.

Intactness:

Original ground level lost with contemporary canopy added.

References:

Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
 National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

NT – Regional B6570 (1999)
 City of Melb B



1965-66 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch | Rohan Storey

Original Name	Guardian Assurance
Current Name	Christie Systems
Address	454-458 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1961

Significance:

Early experiment in return to solidity, use of stone-like cladding, and 'tradition' while remaining modernist. Inset window sections with opaque black spandrel panel and glazing above

Intactness:

Ground level column form intact. Canopy added above ground floor Collins Street entrance.

References:**Listings:**

City of Melb C



1961 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	RACV
Current Name	
Address	123 Queen Street (cnr Flinders Lane), Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1961

Significance:

Notable for use of podium and setback slab block. Podium fully glazed while tower employs windows punched into brown brick wall, possibly first return to masonry as principal walling. "Renowned for "fast track" construction."

Intactness:

The building was refurbished in 2007 with the addition of retail, conversion to hotel accommodation.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

C186
City of Melb D



1961 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Royal Mail House
Current Name	
Address	255 Bourke Street (cnr Swanston Street), Melbourne
Architect	D. Graeme Lumsden
Completed:	1963

Significance:

Last surviving 'featurist' building in the CBD. Notable features include its opaque façade of 'chequer-board' patterned windows connected by attached stepped window surrounds - precast sunshades and the curvilinear concrete footpath canopy at street level.

Included on the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.

Intactness:

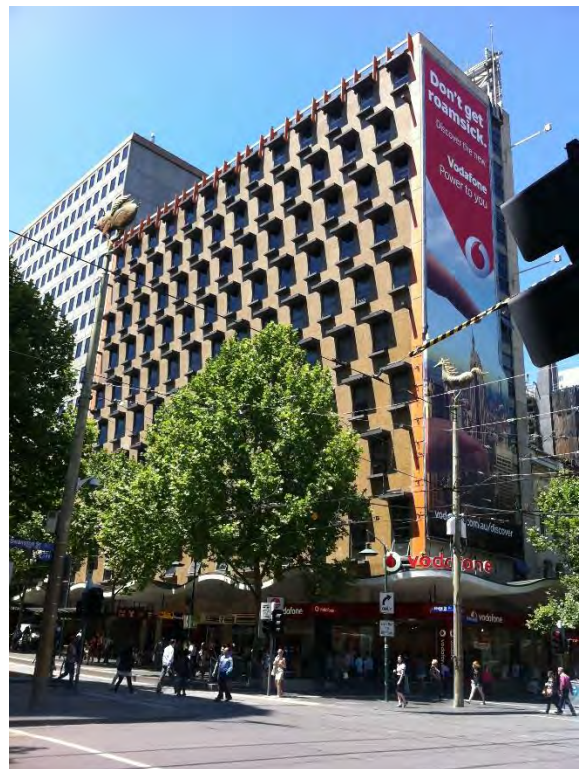
Vertical joins to stepped window surrounds mostly removed.

References:**Listings:**

City of Melb D



1967 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	South British Insurance
Current Name	
Address	155 Queen Street (cnr Bourke Street), Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1961-62

Significance:

Demonstrates the emergence of the decorative use of structural expression on the façade. Early use of precast solid elements in abstract patterns.

Intactness:

Ground level form intact, but recessed entry and pebble garden lost.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb D



1961 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Sleigh Corner (H. C. Sleigh House)
Current Name	Elders House
Address	160 Queen Street (cnr Bourke Street), Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1964

Significance:

Horizontally expressed masonry and glazed façade. Use of “decorative” precast concrete panels and some use of ‘luxury’ finish (gold tiles). A solid look while still modernist – including a separated core.

Intactness:

Intact including base and setback at ground level. Though actual ground level altered, including gold tiles removed.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb D



1964 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Colonial Mutual Life
Current Name	330 Collins Street
Address	308-334 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Stephenson & Turner
Completed:	1963

Significance:

Uses separate slab and (hidden) core design. Tallest building at completion with observation feature on top of core section. (Generally disliked building due to size, plainness, and replaced the 1893 Equitable building). Coloured detailing across facades. Setback at shopfront for “pedestrian precinct.” Tom Bass sculpture in forecourt.

Intactness:

Some curtain wall cladding changed with ground level intact including columns and setback shop fronts.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb C



1967 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Electrolytic Zinc
Current Name	MIT House
Address	390 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne
Architect	Stephenson & Turner
Completed:	1959

Significance:

It was a prototype for the large number of stone and pre-cast facades to follow up until the gradual emergence of the "skin" buildings and the skin/glass-box hybrid by the re-adoption of reflective all-glass cladding. It continues an association with one of Australia's biggest mining companies.

Intactness:

Subdivided in 1990. Original louvers on western façade lost, all windows altered and ground floor lost.

References:

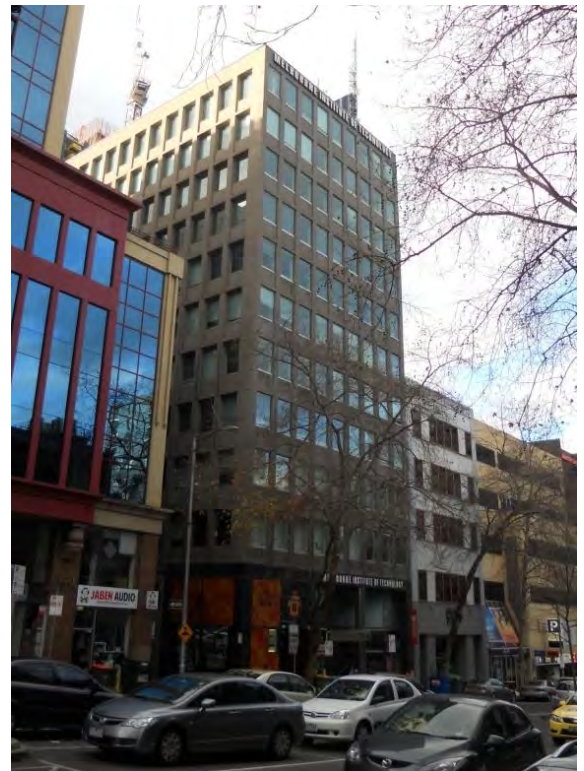
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb B



1959 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Rohan Storey

Original Name	Nubrik House
Current Name	
Address	271 William Street, Melbourne
Architect	Buchan, Laird & Buchan
Completed:	1972

Significance:

A fourteen storey concrete and brick office building with basement parking and ground level retail. Served as the HQ for a brick manufacturer and was described at the time as “Australia’s tallest structural brick building.” It was probably the first multi-storey loadbearing masonry building to be erected in the Melbourne CBD since at the least the early 20th Century.

Intactness:

A roof top apartment was added in 1997. Refurbished and subdivided into offices in 2003.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

City of Melb C

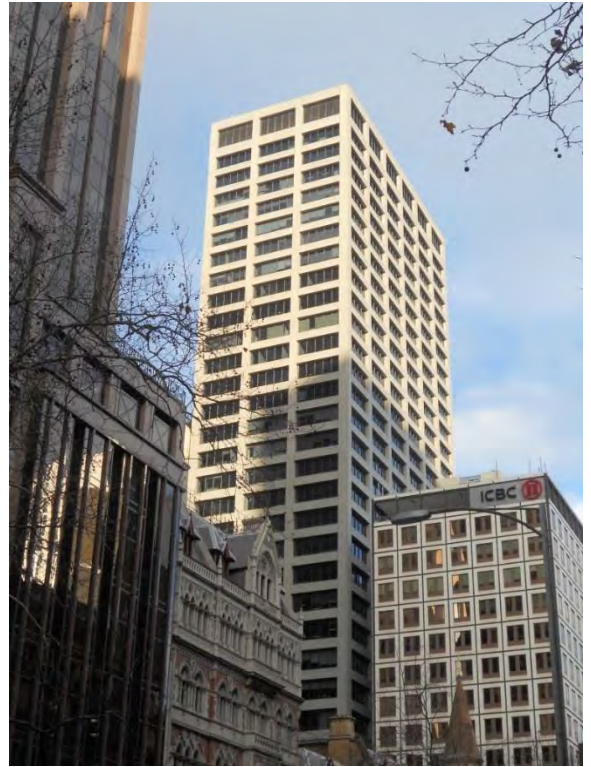


Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Commonwealth Bank
Current Name	Optus Centre
Address	367 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	
Completed:	1975

Significance:

37 storey concrete office tower including 2 ground levels and mezzanine with 2 basement levels of parking. A relentless grid. It was the tallest building in Melbourne at its completion.

Intactness:**References:****Listings:**

Unknown date photo Rohan Storey

Original Name	Christie's
Current Name	470 Collins Street
Address	460-470 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Unknown
Completed:	1970

Significance:

Distinctive façade with closely spaced vertical ribbing to front façade – with solid masonry to sides.

Intactness:

Retail infilling original plaza.

References:**Listings:**

City of Melb C



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name **15 Collins Street**
Current Name
Address 15 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect Karl Popper
Completed: 1969

Significance:

'Featurist' balcony design. Twenty-three storey apartment block is one of the most striking examples of the work of Popper (Viennese émigré) who was one of the leading designers of high-rise apartment blocks in Melbourne during the 1960s.

Intactness:

Subdivided into commercial and residential in 1971.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

HP Collins East Precinct HO504



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Altered

Original Name	State Accident & Motor Car Insurance Office
Current Name	Collins Street Tower
Address	480-490 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Mackay & Potter
Completed:	1965 & 1972

Significance:

Described as “the most architecturally pretentious of the new wave of government offices built outside of [the] traditional Spring Street domain...” Early use of expressed simple precast window mullions and solid spandrel design as a departure from the previous all glass facades. Original nine levels extended by a further nine in 1972.

Intactness:

Refurbished (subdivided into a mix of office and residential use) with the addition of top two levels in 2005. Plaza now in-filled with a three-level podium. Exterior of original painted to lose effect of closely spaced vertical ribs.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler

Listings:

City of Melb B



Unknown date photo City of Melb



2013 photo Alison Finch

Altered

Original Name	Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP)
Current Name	Oaks on Market
Address	54-60 Market Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1964-66

Significance:

Brown brick tower with repetitive recessed window and spandrel panel detail pattern. Original detailing lent horizontal emphasis to building – now lost with new vertical treatment to façade

Intactness:

Re-clad 2007 in sheet metal covering original brick. Refurbished, converted and subdivided into residential units with the addition of the top three levels in stages 2001-2005.

References:

Listings:



1968 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Altered

Original Name	Gypsum House
Current Name	Centro Apartments
Address	348-358 La Trobe Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bogle & Banfield & Associates
Completed:	1968

Significance:

Strong repetition to precast concrete façade made up of rounded-corner window panels.

Intactness:

Refurbished, subdivided and converted to apartments in 1994. Collections of vertical tubes on each side, and recessed central section of façade all alterations. Ground floor altered.

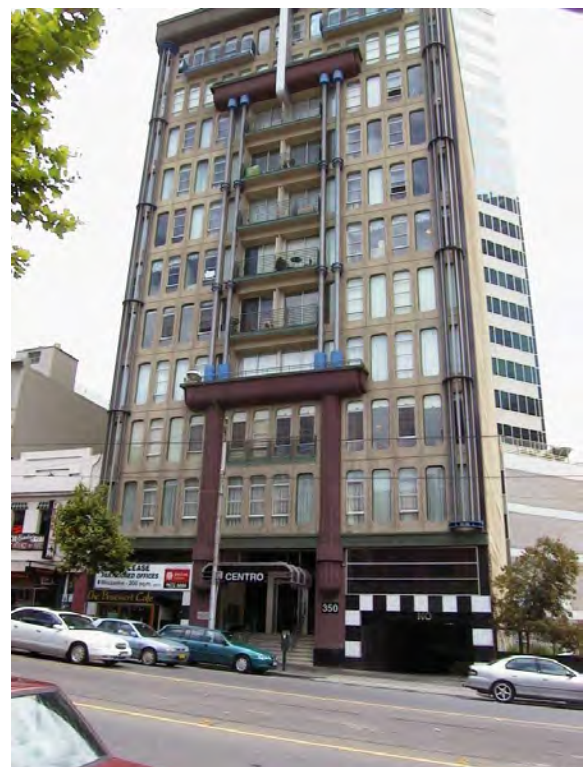
References:

Listings:

City of Melb C



1970 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Altered

Original Name	Unknown
Current Name	
Address	85 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Architect	Unknown
Completed:	1973

Significance:

Strong repetition to precast concrete façade made up of rounded-corner window panels.

Intactness:

Ground floor altered.

References:**Listings:**

Unknown date photo City of Melb

Demolished

Original Name	Prudential Assurance Offices
Current Name	150 Queen
Address	148-166 Queen Street (cnr Bourke Street), Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon
Completed:	1959-1960

Significance:

Conservative design with flush sandstone cladding. Exemplifies era. Demolished 2014.



1960 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Demolished

Original Name	The Conzinc Riotinto Australia (CRA) Building
Current Name	
Address	89-101 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bernard Evans & Associates
Completed:	1959-1962

Significance:

The 26 storey skyscraper for mining conglomerate Conzinc Riotinto Australia was the tallest in Melbourne and dominated the skyline of the eastern end of the city. In 1988, after only 25 years, the building was demolished, making way for 101 Collins street, a landmark in post-modernism in Melbourne.



1973 photo State Library of Victoria

Demolished

Original Name	ACI House
Current Name	
Address	550 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Buchan, Laird & Buchan
Completed:	1968

Significance:

Winner of the Victorian Architectural Award, Urban Category 1968. Demolished.



Unknown Date photo Rohan Storey

Demolished

Original Name	Stock Exchange House
Current Name	
Address	351 Collins Street, Melbourne
Architect	Buchan, Laird & Buchan
Completed:	1969

Significance:

Winner of the Victorian Architectural Award, Urban Category 1969. Demolished.



c1960 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Demolished

Original Name	Southern Cross Hotel
Current Name	
Address	121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne
Architect	Leslie M Perrot & Partners & Welton Beckett and Associates (USA)
Completed:	1962

Significance:

Melbourne's first 'jet-set' hotel derided by the design fraternity as overly 'featurist' with its Pan-Am blue tiles and zigzag edging, it was nevertheless 'the' hotel for nearly 30 years, most famously hosting the Beatles on their 1964 tour, as well as the Brownlow and Logie Award Ceremonies. A bid for listing by Heritage Victoria and the National Trust in 1994 reportedly lost by one vote, and it was demolished in 1995.



1962 photo State Library of Victoria

Brutalism

The Brutalist style, which might loosely be characterised as a desire to achieve aesthetic effect through the deliberately frank expression of building construction, materials and technology, emerged in the 1950s in two separate but related streams influenced by the work of two leading international architects. One stream, favoured in the United Kingdom, pushed the minimalist style of Mies van der Rohe to an extreme, conceiving buildings with an industrial aesthetic of exposed frames and services with a utilitarian infill of glazing and panels. The other, which was more influential in the United States, Japan and eventually Australia, created stark forms in *beton brut* (literally, raw concrete) in the manner of Le Corbusier. Off-form concrete (ie concrete showing the imprint of the grain of timber formwork), and later concrete blocks, became the leitmotifs of the mature Brutalist style.

In Australia, the seeds of the Brutalist style appeared in commercial architectural 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 IOOF Building in Russell Street that broke new ground with its banded façade of reinforced concrete spandrels. Not long after its completion, work started on the design of Total House, also in Russell Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1963-65), which used continuous spandrels of off-form concrete in an even more expressive fashion. Both buildings were somewhat hybrid, in that the emerging Brutalist tendencies were combined with other influences. The IOOF Building was heavily informed by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, while Total House took cues from contemporary Japanese architecture. Asian, Wrightian and Brutalist influences all merged agreeably in the striking design for the Cinema Centre in Bourke Street (Peter Muller, 1966-69), a massive inverted tapering tower that remains the largest off-form concrete building in the Melbourne CBD.

However, it was not until the start of the 1970s that Brutalism, in its undiluted form, began to appear in central Melbourne. The Hoyts MidCity cinema in Bourke Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1969-70), was a notably early manifestation, with its façade of chamfered concrete volumes in the mature Brutalist manner. Over the next few years, several notable examples emerged just outside the city grid, notably the Plumbers & Gasfitters Union headquarters on Victoria Parade (Graeme Gunn, 1971), the new Eye & Ear Hospital in Gisborne Street, East Melbourne (Stephenson & Turner, 1972-73), the premises of Wes Lofts & Company in Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne (Eggleston, McDonald & Secombe, 1972) and several buildings at the University of Melbourne, notably Engineering Blocks B & D (Civil & Civic, 1972-73).

By the mid-1970s, Brutalism had become far more widely accepted, and was represented in the CBD by such striking examples at the new MMBW head office in Little Collins Street (1974) and the YMCA in Elizabeth Street (1975), both designed by Perrott, Lyon, Timlock & Kesa. The influence of Brutalism in central Melbourne persisted into the 1980s, in such examples as the World Trade Centre (Grahame Shaw, 1983), the National Australia Bank offices at the corner of Elizabeth Street and Flinders Lane (1983) and the All Seasons Hotel at 191-205 Swanston Street (1989), with its concrete walls and curving corners.

Original Name	Total House
Current Name	Total Carpark
Address	160 Russell Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bogle & Banfield
Completed:	1966

Significance:

One of the most significant examples of Brutalism in the Japanese manner where off-form concrete was employed in emphatic structural and functional expressions. Potentially the first building of its type in Australia to combine a multi-story car park and a relatively smaller office building above with a picture theatre in its basement.

Built on the former site of the Savoy Theatre.

Intactness:

Mooted for redevelopment as reported in Age 11 March 2013.

References:

CAD Study (2000) Graeme Butler
 National Trust Classification Report
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

PROV VHR (H2329)
 City of Melb B
 NT – State B7018 (2013)



1966 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo Rohan Storey

Original Name	Hoyts Cinema Centre
Current Name	140 East
Address	140 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Peter Muller
Completed:	1969

Significance:

The first multi-cinema complex in Australia, the building displays the architect's interest in architectural forms inspired directly by an interest in structural engineering. The wide eaves overhangs of the Cinema Centre are similar to Chinese timber bracketing systems resulting in an upside-down pagoda-like form. Described by Butler in 1984 as "the largest and best detailed off form concrete tower in the Central Activities District."

Intactness:

The first floor facade above the awning has been altered and the interiors were mostly demolished in c 2008 leaving only the main lobby space intact. Subdivided further in 2010.

References:

National Trust Classification Report
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
Melbourne Architecture (1999) Philip Goad

Listings:

VHR H2335
 HP Little Bourke Street Precinct HO507
 NT – State B6961 (1998)
 City of Melb B



1969 photo State Library of Victoria



2002 photo Rohan Storey

Original Name	IOOF Building
Current Name	Space Hotel
Address	380 Russell Street, Melbourne
Architect	Oakley & Parkes & Partners
Completed:	1960

Significance:

A rare design in Melbourne referencing the organic principles of Frank Lloyd Wright. Designed over a triangular plan with a banded façade of concrete and glazing with a rubble feature wall over four floors.

Intactness:

Refurbished and converted to residential accommodation in 1994. Subdivided 1999. Refurbished further in 2011 with the addition of the three top storeys. Ground level altered.

References:

National Trust Classification Report

Listings:**HO848**

NT-State B7267 (2004)

City of Melb B

Included on the RAIA Twentieth Century Buildings Register.



1963 photo State Library of Victoria



2013 photo Alison Finch

Original Name	Hoyts Midcity
Current Name	Midcity Arcade
Address	194-200 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bogle & Banfield
Completed:	1969

Significance:

Early use of chamfered Brutalist style softened by coloured render. Reach section even more expressive. Together with the Hoyts Cinema Centre, the designs are stylistically distinctive and are outstanding among the small number of new cinemas built in Victoria since World War Two.

Intactness:

The ground level altered. Recent unsympathetic signage covering twinned-beams below cantilevered verandah – which obscures original raked section.

References:

CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

C186
HP Little Bourke Street Precinct HO507
NT – File Only B6566 (c1997)
City of Melb B



Unknown date photo National Trust



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Australian Mutual Provident Society (AMP)
Current Name	AMP Square
Address	555 Bourke Street, Melbourne
Architect	Bates, Smart & McCutcheon in association with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (USA)
Completed:	1965-69



1970 photo State Library of Victoria

Significance:

The epitome of, and main influence for mannered or Brutalist tower design in commercial Melbourne. One of few Australian buildings with design input by a noted American architectural office. Rare example of a complex designed to enclose public open space. Did include the commissioned sculpture "Awakening" by Clement Meadmore (now removed).

Intactness:

St James building extensively altered and plaza partially in-filled with extensions to both St James and tower at ground level in 2012-2013. Sculpture removed.

References:

Architecture in Melbourne (1999) Philip Goad
CAD Study, (1984) Graeme Butler
 National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

NT- State B6315 (2005)
 NT – National (Sculpture "Awakening" 1969)
 City of Melb B

Original Name	YMCA
Current Name	Jasper Hotel
Address	489 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Architect	Perrott, Lyon, Timlock & Kesa
Completed:	1975

Significance:

Prominent city example of concrete Brutalist style, with off-form concrete, chamfered edges and strongly textured concrete to both the exterior and interior. Tower has deep set balconies. Only Brutalist style hotel in Melbourne.

Intactness:

Altered with rooftop addition and ground level canopy in 1996 by Millar Robertson Architects. 2006 Refurbishment to interior by Jackson Clements Burrows.

References:**Listings:**

HP Queen Victoria Market Precinct HO7
City of Melb B



Unknown date photo National Trust

Demolished

Original Name	Naval and Military Club
Current Name	
Address	Ridgeway Place, Melbourne
Architect	R S Demaine, Trundle, Russell, Armstrong & Orton
Completed:	1967

Significance:

The club had a distinctive design with evidence of Frank Lloyd Wright influences. The main floor was elevated supported on low concrete arches resting in high brown brick walls. This was probably the last private club premises erected in the CBD and was demolished in 2011.



Unknown date photo Naval and Military Club

Small Commercial

The theme of post-war architectural development in central Melbourne is not vested solely in the skyscrapers and multi-storey office blocks built by large corporations or for speculative purposes. Smaller-scaled commercial buildings, which encapsulated branch banks, stand-alone shops or arcades and modest business or club premises for single occupants, provided their designers with unique opportunities for architectural expression that were not possible with grander multi-storey buildings.

During the 1950s, smaller-scaled city buildings tended to follow the prevailing modernist mode of their larger counterparts. The two-storey premises of James McGregor & Sons, at 518-520 Collins Street (Buchan, Laird & Buchan, 1955; Dem), and the three storey building for the Riddell Secretarial Agency at 231 Bourke Street (Ernest Fooks, 1957) each adapted conventional curtain walling, specifically in anticipation of additional floor levels being added later. While not designed for future vertical expansion, the three-storey Barlow House at 310 Queen Street (Marcus R Barlow, 1956; Dem) followed a similar vein, dividing its façade in half, with curtain walling to one side and blue ceramic tiling to the other. As curtain walling became more widespread in Melbourne towards the end the decade, it began to be used across the entire façade of smaller office buildings, typified by the three-storey head offices of Davies Coop & Company at 528 Lonsdale Street (Charles H Lacey & Associates, 1958; Dem) and the similarly-scaled Dynamics House at 15-17 Flinders Lane (Marsh, Bennie & Barry, 1959).

In conceiving more modest city buildings, some architects embraced the modernist theme of apparent weightlessness, where the upper floor(s) projected above a recessed ground floor. This was achieved to striking effect in such examples at the two-storey Sapphire House in Crossley Street (1957) and the three-storey Lyceum Club in Ridgway Place (Stephenson & Turner, 1957-58) where, in both cases, it provided appropriate human scale to their tight laneway contexts. In the contemporaneous three-storeyed Mafta House at 143-49 Franklin Street (Leith & Bartlett, 1958), the two projecting upper levels were separately articulated, each screened by a continuous bay of vertical metal louvres. This compositional approach remained in evidence well into the 1960s. A typical later example was the Latrobe Photographic Studios at 152 Little Lonsdale Street (Harry Ernest, 1964), where two levels of office space (expressed externally with alternating bays of windows and wide brick piers) projected over a fully-gazed ground floor level.

Stand-alone branch banks, often double-storey or even single storey, were a rare presence in the CBD in the post-war period. Befitting their imperative to attract attention, deliberately eye-catching forms and finishes were often employed. A branch of the ES&A Bank in Bourke Street, near Queen Street (1955; Dem) was a fairly conventional single-storey block-like structure, but enlivened with an external cladding of orange-coloured tiles and window spandrels of random-coursed Castlemaine slate. Later manifestations became even bolder, echoing a shift in bank architecture (led by Stuart McIntosh, Chief Architect of the ES&A Bank) for even more visually striking, even decorative buildings. A branch of the Commonwealth Bank in Elizabeth Street (1956) incorporated a boldly right-angled roof with tapering piers in the American-influenced Googie manner, while another ES&A outpost, located on the opposite corner of the same intersection, was designed by Chancellor & Patrick in a robust Wrightian mode, with fin-like piers and massive stone walls.

This more decorative trend is apparent in other small-scaled city buildings of the era, such as the Port Phillip Arcade on Flinders Street (J F W Ballantyne, 1961), with its facade dominated by a central mosaic tiled spandrel with eye-catching semi-figurative metal sculpture by Charles Bush. A similar building by the same architect, the Hub Arcade at 318-322 Little Collins Street (1965) illustrates the shift in architectural taste that took place over the intervening years. Moving away from the more Featurist style of the early 1960s, Ballantyne opted for a much simpler façade expression with plain ceramic tile cladding and large rectangular windows with sliding plate glass sashes. This more understated approach to the design of small commercial buildings persisted into the later 1960s and early 1970s, as seen in such examples as the three-storeyed

offices of solicitors Cohen & Cohen at 168 Russell Street (Clive Fredman, 1970), and the two-storey Stokes Building at 35 King Street (c.1970), each of which used a very basic vocabulary of vertical piers in plain brown brick. The last word in minimalist design, however, was the striking two-storey building that architectural firm Yuncken Freeman Pty Ltd built for its own use at 411-415 King Street, West Melbourne (1970), expressed in a bold Miesian manner with exposed steel framing and an infill of tinted glazing.

Original Name	Former Yuncken Freeman Pty Ltd Architectural Offices
Current Name	
Address	411-415 King Street, Melbourne
Architect	Yuncken Freeman
Completed:	1970

Significance:

One of Victoria's finest examples of the Brutalist style and notable as the designer's own office. One of the last self-designed architectural offices to be built in Melbourne until a resurgence in the late 1980s.

Intactness:**References:**

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

HO842

City of Melb B



1970 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Lyceum Club
Current Name	
Address	2-18 Ridgeway Place, Melbourne
Architect	Ellison Harvie (Stephenson & Turner)
Completed:	1957-59

Significance:

The Professional women's clubrooms are a rare example of a building with design input almost exclusively from women (including its original and subsequent architects, landscape designer, interior designer, textile designer and mural artist. A rare sole commission of Ellison Harvie, pioneer female architect and senior partner with Stephenson & Turner. Historically, the Lyceum Club is important as a possibly unique example of a purpose-built building, created by and for women.

Intactness:

Contemporary garage roller doors obscure ground floor space and entry.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

NT State B6902 (1999)
City of Melb D



2001 photo City of Melb

Original Name	Commonwealth Bank
Current Name	7-Eleven
Address	463 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Architect	Commonwealth Bank Architects
Completed:	1956

Significance:

Highly evocative of its era and an example of 'featurist' style through the bold angled roof form. Some original features (rows of projecting units) remain to exterior form.

Intactness:

Interior gutted and refitted. Entrance and ground floor altered and horizontal louvre screen added to upper windows. Original windows to west now opaque.

References:**Listings:**

C186
City of Melb C



1957 photo State Library of Victoria



2001 photo City of Melb

Original Name	Sapphire House
Current Name	
Address	11-25 Crossley Street, Melbourne
Architect	Unknown
Completed:	1957

Significance:

Two storey brick masonry building with recessed glazing within protruding white window frames. Terracotta facing on ground level.

Intactness:

Intact shop front with largely original entrance stairwell with original paneling and light fixtures.

References:**Listings:**

City of Melb D



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name	Port Phillip Arcade
Current Name	
Address	228-236 Flinders Street, Melbourne
Architect	J F W Ballantyne
Completed:	1961

Significance:

Exemplary of era, retains original mural signage to centre panel.

Intactness:

References:

Listings:

HP Flinders Gate Precinct HO505
City of Melb D



1972 photo State Library of Victoria



Unknown date photo City of Melb

Original Name **Degraves Street Underpass**

Current Name

Address Degraves & Flinders Street,
Melbourne

Architect MCC City Architect

Completed: 1955-56

Significance:

An early attempt to separate road and pedestrian traffic, the underpass is probably rare surviving evidence of post-war urban planning in line with the 1954 MMBW planning scheme.

Intactness:

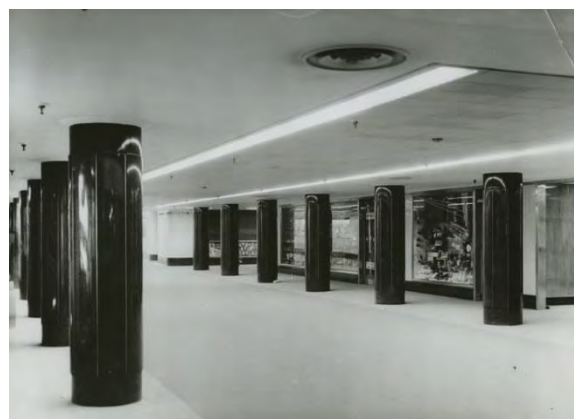
Virtually unaltered it remains notable of its era retaining pale tiled walls with contrasting black columns and its original signage, shopfronts, and display windows.

References:

Heritage Alliance Survey 2008

Listings:

HP Flinders Street Railway Complex HO649



c1978 photo State Library of Victoria

Altered

Original Name	ES&A Bank
Current Name	
Address	455 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
Architect	Chancellor & Patrick
Completed:	1960

Significance:

Excellent example of the survival in Melbourne of the organic principles and prairie school style of Frank Lloyd Wright. The monumental bluestone stone corner piers reference Walter Burley Griffin. Original design included additional floors.

Intactness:

Apartment tower additions in 2002 not to original design. Additions overlap and undermine original building. Front colonnade in-filled and roof no longer "floats." Further subdivided in 2006. Original expressed stone piers painted.

References:

Architecture in Melbourne (1999) Philip Goad
National Trust Classification Report

Listings:

C186
NT – State B6258 (1991)
City of Melb B



C1991 photo National Trust



2013 photo Alison Finch