

Sydney Metro and Martin Place Integrated Station Development

State Significant Development
Development Application — Stage 2

Statement of Heritage Impact South Tower

CSWSMP-MAC-SMA-HE-REP-000110

Prepared for

Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Ltd

February 2019 • Issue F
Project number 16 1035

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose of the report	1
1.2	Background	2
1.3	Planning Approvals Strategy	5
1.4	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements	6
1.5	Site location and description	8
1.6	Context	10
1.7	Heritage management context	12
1.8	Report structure	14
1.9	Methodology and terminology	14
1.10	Author identification	14
1.11	Project Team	14
1.12	Documentation	15
2	Historical Background	16
2.1	Former Government Savings Bank of NSW, 50 Martin Place	19
2.2	Martin Place	21
2.3	Chifley Square	25
2.4	Richard Johnson Square	27
3	Heritage Significance	28
3.1	Introduction	28
3.2	Significance of listed heritage items	29
4	Description of the Proposal	32
4.1	Overview	32
5	Assessment of Heritage Impact	35
5.1	Introduction	35
5.2	Assessment against the approved SSD DA Stage 1 Heritage Guidelines and Consolidated Design Guidelines	36
5.3	NSW Heritage Office	41
5.4	Sydney Harbour Catchment Regional Environmental Plan (SREP) 2005	43
5.5	Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012	44
5.6	Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012	45
5.7	Conservation Management Plans	49
6	Public Art and Heritage Interpretation	50
7	Consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW	51
7.1	Background	51
7.2	Presentation 3 May 2017	52
7.3	Presentation 1 November 2017	53
7.4	Presentation 2 May 2018	55
7.5	Future consultation	57
8	Conclusions	58
APPENDIX A	HERITAGE INVENTORIES	A-1

Document/Status Register				
Issue	Date	Purpose	Written	Approved
P1	18 June 2018	Draft issue for review	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
P2	12 July 2018	Draft issue for review	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
P3	23 July 2018	Draft issue	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
P4	31 July 2018	Final draft issue for review	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
A	03 Aug 2018	Stage 2 DA issue	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
B	23 Aug 2018	For Development Application	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
C	31 Aug 2018	For Development Application	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
D	05 Feb 2019	Revised Development Application issue	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
E	15 Feb 2019	Revised Development Application issue	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
F	28 Feb 2019	Final Development Application issue	RL/GP/SJZ	GP
161035 SM+MPS Precinct Stage 2 DA - South Tower - HIS				

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the report

This report supports a State Significant Development (SSD) Development Application (DA) (SSD DA) submitted to the Minister for Planning (Minister) pursuant to Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) on behalf of Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Limited (Macquarie), who is seeking to create a world class transport and employment precinct at Martin Place, Sydney.

The SSD DA seeks approval for the detailed design and construction of the South Site Over Station Development (OSD), located above and integrated with Metro Martin Place station (part of the NSW Government's approved Sydney Metro project). The southern entrance to Metro Martin Place station and the South Site OSD above are located at 39-49 Martin Place.

This application follows:

- Approval granted by the Minister for a Concept Proposal (otherwise known as a Stage 1 SSDA) for two OSD commercial towers above the northern (North Site) and southern (South Site) entrances of Metro Martin Place station (SSD 17_8351). The approved Concept Proposal establishes building envelopes, land uses, Gross Floor Areas (GFA) and Design Guidelines with which the detailed design (otherwise known as a Stage 2 SSDA) must be consistent.
- Gazettal of site specific amendments to the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012 (Planning Proposal reference: PP_2017_SYDNE_007_00) permitting greater building height (over a portion of the South Site) and additional floor space (over both the North and South Sites).

Lodged concurrently with this SSD DA, is a Stage 1 Amending SSD DA to the Concept Proposal (Stage 1 Amending DA), which seeks approval for an amended concept for the Metro Martin Place Precinct (the Precinct), aligning the approved South Site building envelope with the new planning controls secured for the Precinct.

To ensure consistency, the Stage 1 Amending DA must be determined prior to the determination of the subject Stage 2 SSD DA for the South Site.

This application does not seek approval for elements of the Metro Martin Place Precinct which relate to the Sydney Metro City and Southwest project, which is subject to a separate Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) approval. These include:

- Demolition of buildings on the North Site and South Site;
- Construction of rail infrastructure, including station platforms and concourse areas;
- Ground level public domain works; and
- Station related elements in the podium of the South Tower.

INTRODUCTION

However, this application does seek approval for OSD areas in the approved Metro Martin Place station structure, above and below ground level, which are classified as SSD as they relate principally to the OSD. These components are within the Sydney Metro CSSI approved station building that will contain some OSD elements not already approved by the CSSI Approval. Those elements include the end of trip facilities, office entries, office space and retail areas, along with other office/retail plant and back of house requirements that are associated with the proposed OSD and not the rail infrastructure.

The purpose of this report is to identify and assess the potential heritage impacts associated with the proposed design of the South Tower, specifically, the heritage impacts on neighbouring heritage items, their context, settings and significant views. The report will also assess the proposed design's ability to comply with the Consolidated Design Guidelines and as proposed to be updated through the amending DA, in order to mitigate or minimise the heritage impacts of the proposal.

[The report was amended in February 2019 to include a discussion about consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW.](#)

1.2 Background

The New South Wales (NSW) Government is implementing Future Transport 2056 (formerly Sydney's Rail Future) a plan to transform and modernise Sydney's rail network so that it can grow with the city's population and meet the needs of customers in the future.

Sydney Metro is a new standalone rail network identified in Sydney's Rail Future. The Sydney Metro network consists of Sydney Metro Northwest (Stage 1) and Sydney Metro City and Southwest (Stage 2).

Stage 2 of Sydney Metro entails the construction and operation of a new metro rail line from Chatswood, under Sydney Harbour through Sydney's CBD to Sydenham and onto Bankstown through the conversion of the existing line to metro standards. The project also involves the delivery of seven (7) new metro stations, including Martin Place.

This step-change piece of public transport infrastructure once complete will have the capacity for 30 trains an hour through the CBD in each direction catering for an extra 100,000 customers per hour across the Sydney CBD rail lines.

On 9 January 2017 the Minister approved the Stage 2 (Chatswood to Sydenham) Sydney Metro application lodged by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) as a Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) project (reference SSI 15_7400). Work is well underway under this approval, including demolition of buildings at Martin Place.

The OSD development is subject to separate applications to be lodged under the relevant provisions of the EP&A Act. One approval is being sought for the South Site – this application – and one for the North Site via a separate application.

INTRODUCTION

Sydney Metro Stage 2 Approval (SSI 15_7400)

The Sydney Metro CSSI Approval approves the demolition of existing buildings at Martin Place, excavation and construction of the new station (above and below ground) along with construction of below and above ground structural and other components of the future OSD, although the fit-out and use of such areas are the subject of separate development approval processes.

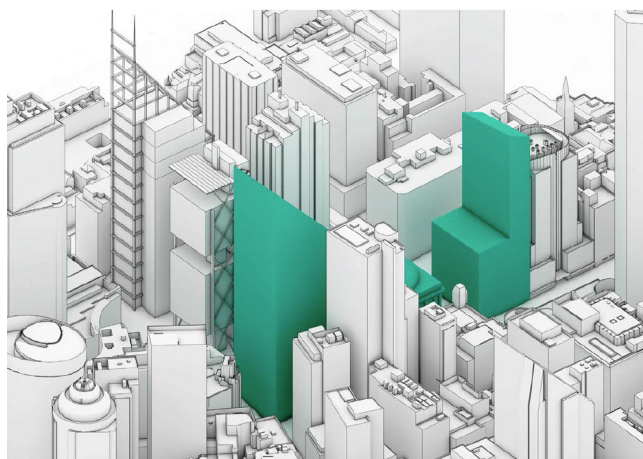
On 22 March 2018, the Minister approved Modification 3 to the Sydney Metro CSSI Approval. This enabled the inclusion of Macquarie-owned land at 50 Martin Place and 9-19 Elizabeth Street within Metro Martin Place station, and other associated changes (including retention of the opening to the existing MLC pedestrian link).

Concept Proposal (SSD 17_8351)

On 22 March 2018, the Minister approved a Concept Proposal (SSD 17_8351) relating to Metro Martin Place Precinct. The Concept Proposal establishes the planning and development framework through which to assess the detailed Stage 2 SSD DAs.

Specifically, the Concept Proposal encompassed:

- Building envelopes for OSD towers on the North Site and South Site comprising:
 - 40+ storey building on the North Site
 - 28+ storey building on the South Site
 - Concept details to integrate the North Site with the existing and retained 50 Martin Place building (the former Government Savings Bank of NSW)
- Predominantly commercial land uses on both sites, comprising office, business and retail premises
 - A maximum total GFA of 125,437m² across both sites
 - Consolidated Design Guidelines to guide the built form and design of the future development
- A framework for achieving design excellence
- Strategies for utilities and services provision, managing drainage and flooding, and achieving ecological sustainable development
- Conceptual OSD areas in the approved Martin Place Metro Station structure, above and below ground level



11 North Site and South Site Approved OSD Building Envelopes
Source: Ethos Urban

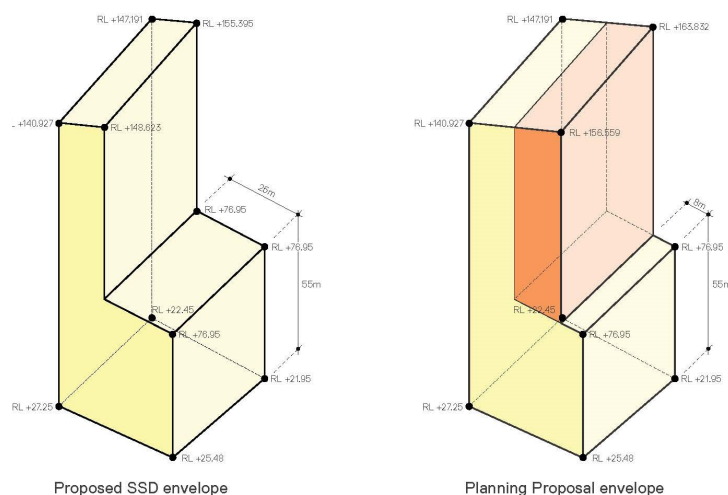
INTRODUCTION

Planning Proposal (PP_2017_SYDNE_007_00) - Amendment to Sydney LEP 2012

The Planning Proposal (PP_2017_SYDNE_007_00) sought to amend the development standards applying to the Metro Martin Place Precinct through the inclusion of a site-specific provision in the Sydney LEP 2012. This site-specific provision reduced the portion of the South Site that was subject to a 55 metre height limit from 25 metres from the boundary to Martin Place, to 8 metres, and applies the Hyde Park North Sun Access Plane to the remainder of the South Site, forming the height limit of the tower. It also permits a revised FSR of 22:1 on the South Site and 18.5:1 on the North Site. These amendments were gazetted within Sydney LEP 2012 (Amendment No. 46) on 8 June 2018 and reflect the new planning controls applying to the Precinct.

The Concept Proposal was prepared and determined prior to the site specific Sydney LEP 2012 amendment (PP_2017_SYDNE_007_00) being gazetted and was developed based on the height development standards that applied to the South Site at the time. As a result, the Concept Proposal allows for a tower on the South Site that is now inconsistent with the building envelope envisaged through the amendment to the Sydney LEP 2012. Accordingly, a Stage 1 Amending SSD DA to the Concept Proposal (Stage 1 Amending DA) has been lodged concurrently with this subject Stage 2 SSD DA, which seeks to align the approved Concept Proposal building envelope for the South Site with the revised site specific development standards applying under the Sydney LEP 2012, being increased FSR and building height. This Stage 1 Amending DA seeks to amend the planning and development framework established under the approved Concept Proposal that is used to assess this Stage 2 SSD DA. The Stage 1 Amending DA is to be assessed concurrently with, and determined prior to the subject Stage 2 SSD DA, with the amended South Site building envelope setting the broad development parameters for the South Site.

- 21 Relationship between the approved and proposed amended South Site building envelope.
Source: Ethos Urban



INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Proposed Development

The subject application seeks approval for the detailed design, construction and operation of the South Tower. The proposal has been designed as a fully integrated station and OSD project that intends to be built and delivered as one development, in-time for the opening of Sydney Metro City and Southwest in 2024. The application seeks consent for the following:

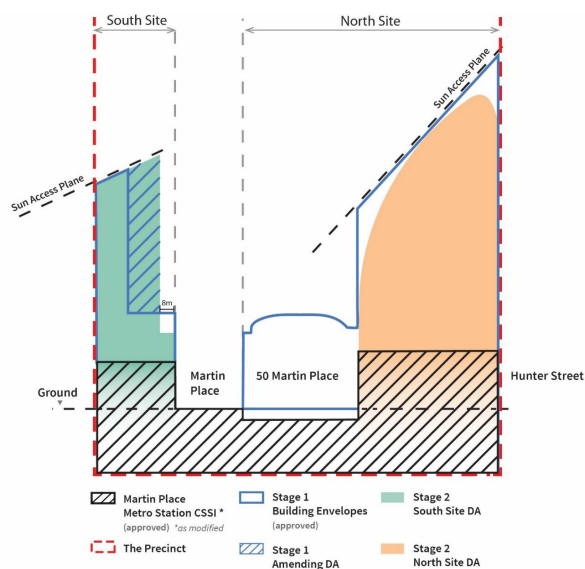
- The design, construction and operation of a new 28 storey plus rooftop plant commercial OSD tower within the approved building envelope for the South Site, including office space and retail tenancies.
- Vehicle loading and parking areas.
- Extension and augmentation of physical infrastructure / utilities as required.
- Detailed design and delivery of ‘interface areas’ within both the approved station and Concept Proposal envelope that contain OSD-exclusive elements, office entries, office space and retail areas not associated with the rail infrastructure.

1.3 Planning Approvals Strategy

The State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SEPP SRD) identifies development which is declared to be State Significant. Under Schedule 1 and Clause 19(2) of SEPP SRD, development within a railway corridor or associated with railway infrastructure that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million and involves commercial premises is declared to be State Significant Development (SSD) for the purposes of the EP&A Act.

The proposed development (involving commercial development that is both located within a rail corridor and associated with rail infrastructure) is therefore SSD.

Pursuant to Section 4.22 of the EP&A Act a Concept DA may be made setting out concept proposals for the development of a site (including setting out detailed proposals for the first stage of development), and for which detailed proposals for the site are to be the subject of subsequent DAs. This SSD DA represents a detailed proposal and follows the approval of a Concept Proposal on the site under Section 4.22 of the EP&A Act.



31 Relationship of key planning applications to the Stage 2 South Site DA.
Source: Ethos Urban

INTRODUCTION

1.4 Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements

The Department of Planning and Environment have provided Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to the applicant for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed development.

The assessment requirements which relate specifically to heritage are as follows:

The EIS shall provide:

- *include a detailed heritage impact statement (HIS) that identifies, considers and addresses any potential impact of the proposal to heritage items on the site, the site curtilage and surrounding area, including any built and landscape items, conservation areas, views and settings, and in particular, heritage items at 38-46 Martin Place, 50 Martin Place, Martin Place Railway Station, Martin Place, Chifley Square and Richard Johnston Square.*
- *address any endorsed conservation management plans for heritage items on the site and surrounding area.*
- *include a Heritage Interpretation Plan, providing opportunities for the proposal to reflect on the heritage character and significance of the site and surrounding area, including Martin Place.*

INTRODUCTION

1.5 Site location and description

The Sydney Metro and Martin Place Station Precinct (the Precinct) project relates to the following properties:

North Site

- 50 Martin Place, 9-19 Elizabeth Street, 8-12 Castlereagh Street, 5 Elizabeth Street, 7 Elizabeth Street, 55 Hunter Street.

The former Government Savings Bank at 50 Martin Place has historically been located at the street address of 50 Martin Place, until its recent occupation by Macquarie. The building will be referred to as 50 Martin Place throughout this report.

South Site

- 39-49 Martin Place.

Martin Place

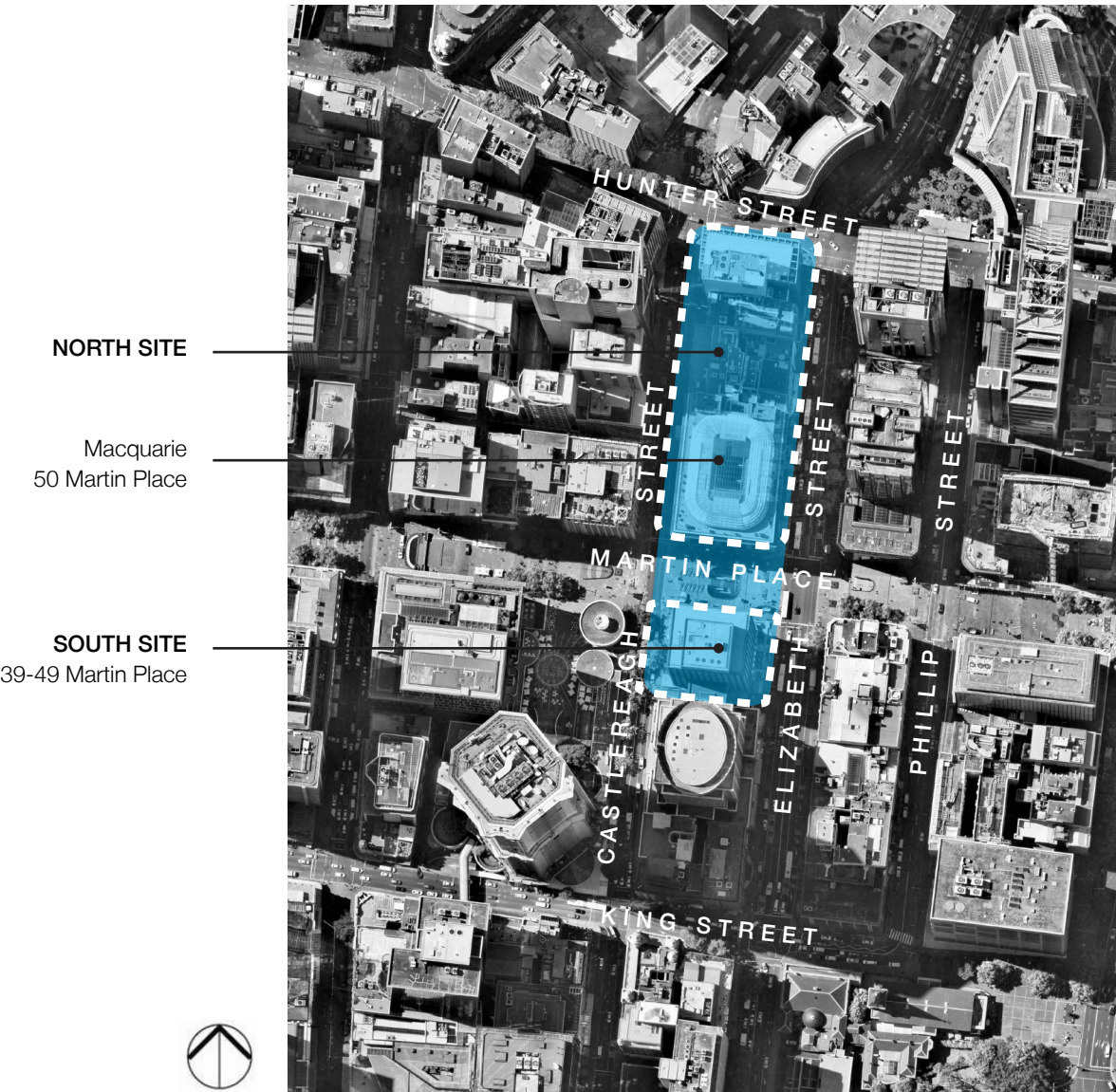
- that part bound by Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street.

The land the subject of this application relates only to the South Site (refer to Figure 4). Each site will accommodate one OSD tower above the future Sydney Metro Martin Place Station (representing the northern and southern entries/gateways to the Sydney Metro station). The land acquired for the Sydney Metro Martin Place Station is the same as for the Macquarie proposal, except that the Macquarie proposal includes the two properties north of Martin Place owned by Macquarie, namely 50 Martin Place and 9-19 Elizabeth Street.

The South Site is regular in shape and has areas of approximately 1,897m².

Located close to the centre of the Sydney CBD, the Precinct comprises the entire City block bounded by Hunter Street, Elizabeth Street, Martin Place and Castlereagh Street; that portion of Martin Place located between Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street and the northern most property in the block bounded by Martin Place, Elizabeth Street, Castlereagh Street, and King Street. Together it constitutes an above ground site area of approximately 9,400 square metres, with a dimension from north to south of approximately 210 metres and from east to west of approximately 45 metres. It incorporates a significant portion of one of Sydney's most revered public spaces – Martin Place.

INTRODUCTION



41 Location plan, not to scale, showing the Sydney Metro and Martin Place Station Precinct in blue. The Stage 2 SSD DA the subject of this report is located within the southern blue dashed box. Source: Nearmaps with TKD Architects overlay, 2017.



INTRODUCTION

1.6 Context

Martin Place

Developed in stages from 1887, Martin Place is recognised as one of Central Sydney's great public, civic and commemorative spaces, as well as being a historically valued commercial and finance location. Martin Place and a large number of buildings on, or in close proximity to, Martin Place are identified as heritage items, either as items of National, State or Local significance. The former Government Savings Bank of New South Wales at 50 Martin Place, which forms part of the Macquarie North Site, is one of these major heritage items (Figure 2).

There has been a number of redevelopment and refurbishment proposals in recent years along Martin Place to improve existing assets and recapture their premium commercial status, e.g. 5 Martin Place, 50 Martin Place, 20 Martin Place, upgrades of the MLC Centre, and 60 Martin Place. The City of Sydney Council has also identified a need to reinvigorate Martin Place.

The surrounding locality is characterised by a variety of built form and architectural styles, with many of the buildings, including those of relatively recent years, not complying with current planning controls with respect to building heights, setbacks and street wall heights.

In terms of land use the area is characterised by a predominance of office uses, with some ground floor retail, cafés, or restaurants and hotels (most notably the Westin and the Wentworth) to support its primary business centre function.

Chifley Square

Developed in stages between 1957 and 1993, Chifley Square is a significant twentieth century exercise in city planning to create a new public open space in Sydney (Figure 3). The space is characterised by its semi-circular form, with the first building, Qantas House, establishing the western quadrant in 1957. Chifley Square provide a visual termination to the vistas looking north along Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street.

The vicinity is characterised by large high-rise towers, such as Chifley Tower, Aurora Place, 8 Chifley Place and Deutsche Bank Building, interspersed with lower scale buildings. The buildings are predominantly commercial offices and comprise part of the legal and financial precinct of the city. Ground floor retail, cafes and restaurants are located variously throughout the area, including an outdoor cafe on the southern edge of Chifley Square.

Richard Johnson Square

Completed in 1974, Richard Johnson Square is an important example of late twentieth century civic planning (Figure 4). Located off Hunter Street at the intersection with Bligh Street, the small square is surrounded largely by office towers, including the significant 1936 City Mutual Life Assurance Building designed by Emil Sodersten. Incorporated within the square is the 1925 sandstone monument commemorating the first church service held in the colony, sited on the location of the country's first church erected in 1793.

INTRODUCTION



51



61



71

- 51 Martin Place looking east
- 61 Chifley Square
- 71 Richard Johnson Square

INTRODUCTION

1.7 Heritage management context

Local, State and National heritage listed items located within the Precinct are identified in the following table.

Heritage items within the Precinct

Heritage Item	CHL	SHR	LEP
Reserve Bank 65 Martin Place	105456		I1897
APA Building 53-63 Martin Place		00682	I1896
Former Government Savings Bank 50 Martin Place		01427	I1895
MLC Building 38-46 Martin Place		00597	I1894
Martin Place Station		01187	I1891
Martin Place			I1889
GIO Building 60-70 Elizabeth Street		00683	I1738
7 Elizabeth Street (now demolished)			I1737
City Mutual Building 60-66 Hunter Street		00585	I1675
Qantas House 68-96 Hunter Street		01512	I1811
Richard Johnson Square			I1673
Chifley Square			I1708

Sydney Development Control Plan 2012

Sections of the proposed development lie within the Chifley Square and Martin Place Special Character Areas, which are defined in Section 2 of the *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*. The relationship of the subject sites with neighbouring heritage items and Special Character Areas is shown in Figure 5.

Conservation Management Plans

The following is a list of conservation management plans which have been prepared for the subject and neighbouring heritage items. Those marked with an asterisk have been endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council.

- **City Mutual Building**, 60-66 Hunter Street, Sydney, Conservation Management Plan, Tanner Architects, 2005 *
- **Qantas House**, 1 Chifley Square, Sydney, Conservation Management Plan, Godden Mackay Logan, 2004 *
- **Reserve Bank of Australia Head Office Building**, 65 Martin Place, Sydney, Heritage Management Plan, NBRS + Partners, 2012
- **APA Building**, 53 Martin Place, Sydney, Conservation Plan, Peter Romey, 1990
- **MLC Building**, 42-46 Martin Place, Conservation Analysis, Clive Lucas Stapleton, 1989
- **60-70 Elizabeth Street, Sydney**, Conservation Plan, Rod Howard Heritage Conservation, 2001
- **Former Government Savings Bank of NSW**, 50 Martin Place, Sydney, Conservation Management Plan, Tanner Architects, 2012

INTRODUCTION



81 Relationship of the North and South Sites to adjacent heritage items and Special Character Areas.
Source: Nearmaps with TKD Architects overlay, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

1.8 Report structure

This report provides an outline historical overview of the development of the heritage items within the Precinct at Section 2. Summary statements of heritage significance for each of these sites is included at Section 3.

Section 4 provides a description of the proposal for the South Site.

The assessment of heritage impacts of the proposal is discussed at Section 5. The proposal is assessed for potential impacts against relevant planning and heritage controls, the heritage values of subject, neighbouring heritage items and the heritage guidelines which were approved as part of the Stage 1 Concept Proposal.

1.9 Methodology and terminology

This report follows the general guidelines for Statements of Heritage Impact, set out in the NSW Heritage Manual, Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (1996).

This report also follows the methodology and terminology described in *The Conservation Plan*, Sydney, National Trust of Australia (NSW), 7th edition 2013 by Dr J.S. Kerr and in the Australian ICOMOS *Burra Charter*.

1.10 Author identification

This document was prepared by George Phillips, Practice Director, Roy Lumby, Senior Heritage Specialist, and Sarah-Jane Zammit, Heritage Specialist, of Tanner Kibble Denton Architects.

1.11 Project Team

Client	Macquarie
Architects	Grimshaw, Tzannes and Johnson Pilton Walker Architects
Town Planner	Ethos Urban
Urban Design	Tzannes
Heritage	Tanner Kibble Denton Architects
Project Manager	Savills

INTRODUCTION

1.12 Documentation

Documents referred to in this report include:

SSDA Drawings (*Tzannes*)

Cover Sheet	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-000000
Location Plan	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-109805
Site Plan - Roof Plan	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-109806
Precinct Plan - Ground Plane	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-109808
Precinct Section	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-159801
Level 00	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300000
Level 01	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300100
Level 02-06	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300200
Level 07	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300700
Level 08	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300800
Level 09	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-300900
Level 10	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-301000
Level 11	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-301100
Level 12-26	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-301200
Level 27	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-302700
Level 28	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-302800
Level 29	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-302900
Roof	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-303000
Level Mezzanine	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-306000
Level LG	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-308000
East Elevation	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-400100
North Elevation	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-400200
West Elevation	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-400300
South Elevation	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-400400
Sign Elevations	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-400500
Section 01 NS	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-500100
Section 02 EW	CSWSMP-MAC-SMS-AT-DRG-DA-500200

Reports

- Sydney Metro Martin Place Station Precinct SSD DA Consolidated Design Guidelines, Tzannes, March 2018
- Sydney Metro Martin Place Station Precinct - South Tower - Stage 2 DA - Architectural Design Report, Tzannes, August 2018
- Sydney Metro City and Southwest Heritage Interpretation Strategy, February 2018

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The South Site, 39 Martin Place

- 1876 Wangenheim's Hotel was opened at 34 Castlereagh Street. It continued to trade under various names until the first half of the 1920s.
- 1885 The three storey Gothic style building for St Joseph's Building and Investment Society was constructed at 47-49 Elizabeth Street, to the design of prominent nineteenth century architect William Wardell.
- 1895 The Australian Star newspaper moved into its new building at 32 Castlereagh Street in December.
- 1911 32 Castlereagh Street was acquired by Sun Newspaper Limited.
- 1913 The whole of 32 Castlereagh Street was redeveloped for the newspaper publisher's new premises, designed by Joseph Kethel.
- 1920 36-42 Castlereagh Street was purchased by Carroll Musgrove Theatres in September as the site of a new cinema.
- 1924 The Prince Edward Theatre at 36-42 Castlereagh Street, also known as "The Theatre Beautiful", which was designed by the major architectural firm of Robertson & Marks opened on 22 November 1924. The first film screened there was Cecil B DeMille's "The Ten Commandments."
- A machine room and garage was erected on the site of the former Wangenheim's Hotel, which had been acquired by Sun Newspapers.
- 1926 The properties owned by Sun Newspaper Limited and St Joseph Building and Investment Society were resumed by the Municipal Council of Sydney as part of the extension of Martin Place to Macquarie Street.
- 1933 Buildings occupying the resumed properties were mostly demolished. The Sun Newspaper's garage was extensively modified to become the Spanish Mission style Monterey Restaurant designed by architects S H Buchanan & Cowper. It was to stand for about five years.
- 1936 The residue of the resumed land was subdivided into three allotments and offered for sale in September 1936. The title to the three allotments was transferred from the Council to Prudential Assurance on 26 October 1937. Prudential quickly developed the site – an application for excavation was lodged in December 1937 and one for a new building, designed by architects Hennessy, Hennessy & Co, in the middle of March 1938.
- 1937 The Prudential Assurance Company finalised the purchase of three allotments on the southern side of Martin Place opposite the former Government Savings Bank in March.
- 1939 The Prudential Building, designed by architects Hennessy, Hennessy & Co, was officially opened in May. The basement became home to Romano's Restaurant, internationally famous for its elegance and fine cuisine. The restaurant retained its prominence and popularity until 1964.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1965 The Prince Edward Theatre closed on 4 December 1965 and less than three weeks later its title was transferred to the Prudential Assurance Company.
- 1967 The sites of the Prudential Building and the Prince Edward Theatre were amalgamated onto one title in November 1967.
- 1968 Demolition of 1939 Prudential Building and adjacent Prince Edward Theatre (architects Robertson & Marks, 1924) for the construction of Prudential's new headquarters.
- 1971 Prudential's new building at 39 Martin Place was completed.



9I



10I



11I



12I



13I



14I

- 9I St Joseph's Building and Investment Society, c1930. Prince Edward Theatre is to the left and Sun Newspaper to the right. 50 Martin Place at far right.
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 66/1/9
- 10I Sun Newspaper Limited's building c1913
Source: National Library of Australia nla.obj-162897500-1

- 11I The Hotel Graham (formerly Wangenheim's Hotel and the small commercial building at 36-42 Castlereagh Street that was to make way for the Prince Edward Theatre.
Source: SLNSW a7812001h
- 12I The Prince Edward Theatre
Source: SLNSW a6942005

- 13I Prudential Assurance's office building at 37-51 Martin Place
Source: *Construction*, 17 November 1937
- 14I Prudential Building and Prince Edward Theatre photographed on 24 January 1966
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 48/5202

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



15I



16I



17I



18I



19I

1. Castlereagh House
 2. Intercolonial House, 1913
 3. Mendes Chambers, c1915,
 4. Castlereagh Chambers, 1909
 5. Builder's Exchanges, 1907/1925
 6. 58-50 Martin Place, 1928
- 15I The Blashki Building c1959.
Source: SLNSW d7_07616.
- 16I Castlereagh House c1959.
Source: SLNSW d7_07617.
- 17I 7 Elizabeth Street shortly after completion c1940.
Source: *Building*, April 1940
- 18I Looking south west from the area of Chifley Square. Qantas House in the right foreground and the P&O Building (55 Hunter Street) under construction.
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 48/3105
- 19I Development along Castlereagh Street between Hunter Street and Martin Place, c1959.
Source: SLNSW d7_0617

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Former Government Savings Bank of NSW, 50 Martin Place

- 1920 Acquisition of properties between Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street near the top of Moore Street by the Commissioners of the Government Savings Bank of NSW. The properties included several that were to form part of Martin Place.
- 1922 The foundation stone of the building was laid on 13 March 1922. Its design was subsequently modified after the Municipal Council resolved to resume properties for the extension of Martin Place.
- 1928 Opening of Government Savings Bank Building in December.
- 1931 Government Savings Bank taken over by the Commonwealth Bank. 50 Martin Place became the Commonwealth Savings Bank.
- 1932 The Australian Taxation Office moved into 50 Martin Place. Over the ensuing years it progressively occupied much of the building.
- 1967 The adjoining building at 9-19 Elizabeth completed and occupied by the Australian Taxation Office.
- 1983 Relocation of the Australian Tax Office to other premises.
- 1985 Work begins on extensive conservation, refurbishment and modification works, documented by Australian Construction Services
- 1990 Conservation, modification and refurbishment works completed
- 2012-14 The Commonwealth Bank sold the building to Macquarie Bank, which undertook further conservation, modification and refurbishment works.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



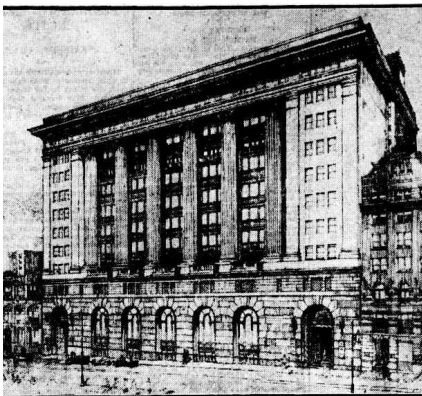
20I



21I



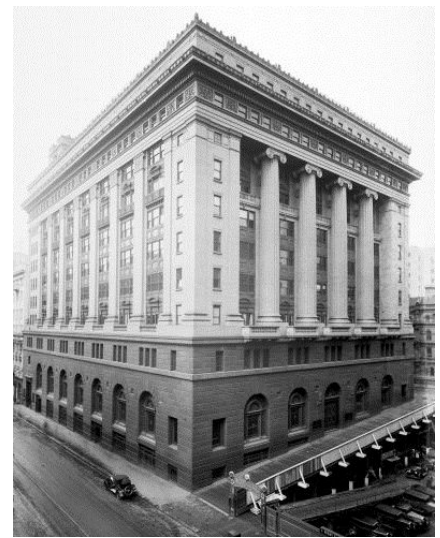
22I



23I



24I



25I

- 20I Buildings on Elizabeth Street demolished to make way for 50 Martin Place.
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 51/1083
- 21I Buildings on Castlereagh Street demolished to make way for 50 Martin Place.
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 51/1085
- 22I Buildings demolished for the construction of 50 Martin Place, some of which occupied land resumed for the Martin Place extension.
Source: SLNSW hall_35070

- 23I The original scheme for 50 Martin Place prior to the City Council's decision to proceed with the Martin Place extension.
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 March 1922
- 24I 50 Martin Place under construction.
Source: National Library of Australia nla.obj-142760970-1
- 25I 50 Martin Place shortly after completion.
Source: National Library of Australia nla.pic-vn3084842-v

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.2 Martin Place

The following provides a chronology of the development of Martin Place from the inter-war period to the present.

- 1926 The lands designated for the extension of Martin Place from Castlereagh Street to Macquarie Street were formally resumed by a notice in the Government Gazette, 1 January 1926.
- 1933 Demolition of the block between Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street commenced during April.
- 1934 Council resolved to demolish buildings between Phillip Street and Macquarie Street on 20 February. The roadway between Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street was formed by June.
- 1935 The completed Martin Place was officially opened to traffic on 8 April 1935.
- 1936 The allotments on residual resumed land between Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street (39 Martin Place) were offered for sale in September.
- 1937 The new building for Australian Provincial Assurance (APA) at 53-63 Martin Place was completed and officially opened in May. The building was designed by architect David W King.
- 1938 The new building for Mutual Life and Citizens (MLC) at 42-46 Martin Place was completed. The building was designed by Bates Smart & McCutcheon, a firm of architects based in Melbourne.
- 1950 Commencement of work on the Eastern Suburbs Railway line and Martin Place Station was announced in July. The location of Martin Place Station and its basic concept were already in place. Construction was underway the following year.
- 1964 Completion of the Reserve Bank Building, bounded by Macquarie Street, Martin Place and Phillip Street.
- 1967 The contract for the civil and structural design of the Eastern Suburbs Railway line to the Snowy River Hydro-electric Authority.
- 1968 The proposal for the pedestrianisation of Martin Place between George Street and Pitt Street, which was prepared by George Clarke and Don Gazzard in association with Professor Denis Winston, the Dean of the Faculty of Country and Town Planning at the University of Sydney, was tabled before the City of Sydney on September 10.
- 1969 The City Council decided to close Martin Place to vehicular traffic and create a civic square on 11 November.
- 1970 Design drawings and report by Clarke Gazzard presented to Council in March. Trial closure of the section of Martin Place between George Street and Pitt Street commenced on 1 September. The closure was declared permanent on 9 December.

Figures on following page

- 26| Western end of Martin Place
Source: City of Sydney Archives CRS 66/1/22
- 27| Southern side of 50 Martin Place prior to the demolition of resumed buildings, c1933
Source: City of Sydney Archives NSCA CRS 51/2668
- 28| Forming the Martin Place roadway between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets, a great source of spectator activity, c1934
Source: SLNSW hood_01073
- 29| Looking west along the newly completed Martin Place, 1937
Source: SLNSW d1_26287
- 30| Looking west along Martin Place, c1940. The APA building is at left in the foreground.
Source: SLNSW hall_38655
- 31| MLC Building shortly after completion, 1938
Source: SLNSW hood_09588

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



261



271



281



291



301



311

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1971 The first plaza was officially opened on 10 September. The two eastern-most sections of Martin Place were closed temporarily for two years for the construction of Martin Place Station late in the year.

The City of Sydney Strategic Plan Action Plan No. 24 envisaged the integration of Martin Place Station and Martin Place through an arcade extending the station concourse to the west.

1972 New Prudential Building at 37-51 Martin Place completed. It was designed by architects Alan Williams & Associates.

The Minister for Lands proposal to consider the closing of Martin Place from the eastern side of Pitt Street to the western side of Macquarie Street was gazetted on 24 November.

1977 The closure of Martin Place between Castlereagh Street and Phillip Street, was completed.

The MLC Centre was completed. A condition of consent for the project was that a pedestrian subway be constructed to link the scheme to the railway.

1979 Opening of Martin Place Station.

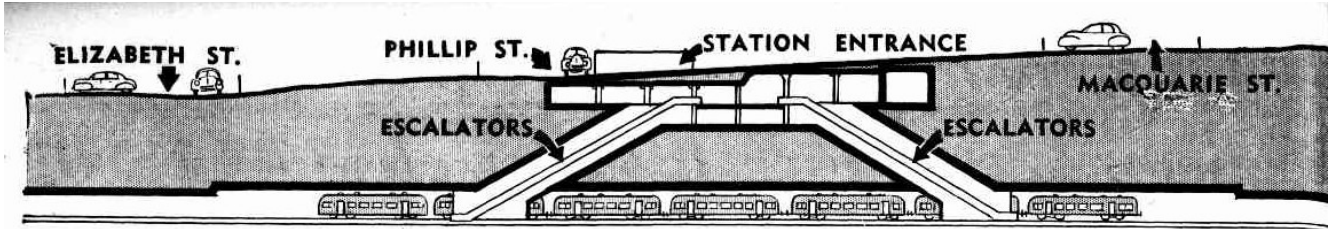
1982 Connection to Martin Place Station at mid-year. Completion of Martin Place pedestrianisation.

1984 Gazzard and Partners prepared the Civic Design Study of Martin Place. It included recommendations for new regulatory measures concerning heritage preservation.

Figures on following page

- 32I Sketch describing the proposed Martin Place Station, 1950
Source: *The Sun*, 27 July 1950
- 33I Aerial photograph looking west along Martin Place, December 1963
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1863
- 34I Reserve Bank shortly after completion in 1964
Source: National Archives of Australia A1200, L50038
- 35I Martin Place Station, 1979
Source: SLNSW d4_02947
- 36I Eastern end of Martin Place, c1985
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1286

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



321



331



341



351

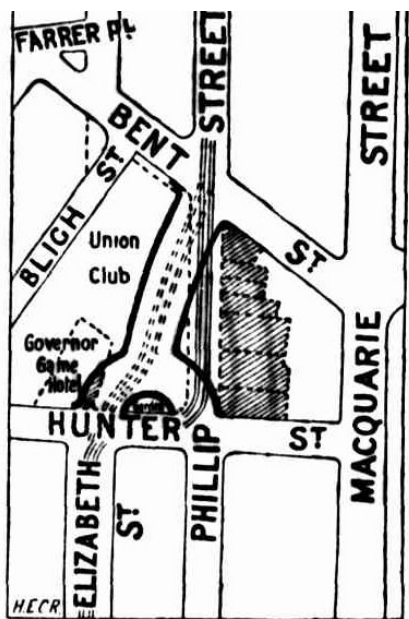


361

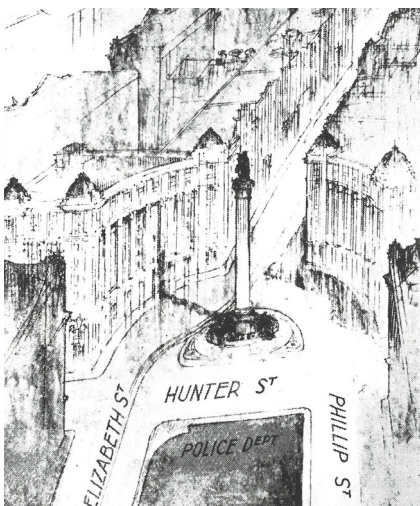
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



371



381



391

2.3 Chifley Square

- 1916 A proposal to extend Elizabeth Street from Hunter Street to the intersection of Phillip Street and Bent Street was made to the City Council. No decision was made.
- 1920 Further discussions about the extension of Elizabeth Street to Bent Street were held within the Municipal Council of Sydney.
- 1937 The Town Planning Institute of NSW presented a plan to the City Council that included closure of the end of Phillip Street to form a pedestrian space. City Engineer Arnold Garnsey produced a scheme for the Elizabeth Street extension as a means of relieving traffic congestion at the junction of Hunter Street and Elizabeth Street. The scheme, which included a formal semi-circular area flanked by curved building facades and a monument in the centre of the open space, was endorsed by the City of Sydney Council two years later.
- 1947 The City of Sydney began implementing the scheme.
- 1949 Qantas acquired the site at the western corner of Hunter Street and the extension.
- 1953 Press reports announced the intention of Qantas and the Federal Government to construct office buildings on either side of the Elizabeth Street extension.
- 1955 Construction of Qantas House, designed by Rudder, Littlemore & Rudder, on the western side of the future Chifley Square, commenced.
- 1957 The completed Qantas House was officially opened by Prime Minister Robert Menzies in October.
- 1958 Demolition of buildings on the site of the Federal Government site, known as the Commonwealth Centre commenced.
- 1961 The public square encircled by roadways on the northern side of Hunter Street, at the southern end of the extension, was named "Chifley Square" in 1961 in honour of the late Hon. J.B. Chifley (1885-1951), Prime Minister of Australia between 1945 and 1949.
- 1962 The extension of Elizabeth Street was completed.
- 1963 The Commonwealth Centre was completed. Its rectilinear mass prevented completion of the scheme.
- 1988 The Commonwealth Centre and several adjoining sites were acquired by the Bond Corporation. Construction of a new building, subsequently named Chifley Tower, commenced the following year.
- 1992 The final semi-circular form of the Square was formed with the completion of Chifley Tower, which complemented the curved form of Qantas House to the west.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1993 The Chifley Square Civic Design Study was completed for the City of Sydney.
- 1995 The Chifley Square Redesign Concept Review was completed.
- 1997 Completion of landscaping and other works at Chifley Square. The concept was initiated by Tim Williams (City of Sydney) and the design developed by Hassell. The works included a grid of cabbage palms and a cafe on the southern edge of the Square. Artworks by Simeon Nelson included the cut-out statue of Ben Chifley and a glass installation forming an extension to the rear wall of the café.



40I



41I



42I



43I



44I

- 37I Planning proposal for the extension of Elizabeth Street c1920
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 March 1920
- 38I Planning proposal c1937
Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1937
- 39I Planning proposal c1939
Source: *The Design of Sydney*, p. 6

- 40I Aerial photograph of Hunter Street at its intersection with Elizabeth and Phillip Streets, 1943.
Source: Spatial Information Exchange
- 41I Formation of Chifley Square, June 1961
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1802
- 42I The Commonwealth Centre, c1963
Source: National Archives of Australia A1200, L44754

- 43I Chifley Square viewed from the west, 23 June 1988
Source: City of Sydney Archives CRS 422 2 267
- 44I Chifley Square following the completion of Chifley Tower, c1996.
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC4412.z

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.4 Richard Johnson Square

- 1925 The foundation stone of a memorial commemorating the first church service in Australia was laid by the Governor of NSW at a site at the intersection of Bligh Street and Hunter Street on 19 March. The memorial, which was completed about two or three months later, was designed by the architectural firm of Burcham Clamp & Finch. It is located on the site of the first church to have been erected in Australia (1793).
- 1974 The island platform around the monument was enlarged and integrated with the western Bligh Street footpath. The works formed part of City of Sydney Council's Strategic Plan for reshaping Sydney. The project was designed in the architectural office of Clarke Gazzard Pty Ltd.



451



461



471



481



491

451 The memorial to the first church in Australia at the intersection of Bligh and Hunter Streets, c1935. The memorial was erected in the mid-1920s on the site of the church.
Source: SLNSW hall_35055

461 Richard Johnson Square, c1954
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1154

471 Richard Johnson Square, c1971
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1156

481 Richard Johnson Square, c1977. Works involving partial road closure and formation of the pedestrian plaza were undertaken in 1974.
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC6724

491 Richard Johnson Square, c1991
Source: City of Sydney Archives SRC1157

3 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Introduction

Located in the vicinity of the South site are several items listed at Commonwealth, State and local levels.

Sections of the proposed development lie within the Martin Place Special Character Areas, which are defined in Section 2 of the City of Sydney *Development Control Plan* 2012.

The statements of significance in the following sections have been adapted as relevant from the Commonwealth Heritage List, State Heritage Register Database or State Heritage Inventory Database entries.

Locality statements for Martin Place Special Character Areas have been adapted from the Sydney DCP 2012.

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

3.2 Significance of listed heritage items



APA Building, 53-63 Martin Place

Completed in 1937 to the design of architect David W King, the APA Building is significant for its high level of architectural quality in terms of its proportions, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. The building was designed to formalise and define the new major civic thoroughfare of Martin Place, emphasising the eastern end of Martin Place as a major commercial and professional precinct. Largely intact externally, the building is aesthetically significant as a good example of the inter-war Art Deco style and for its contribution to the Martin Place streetscape.



Chifley Square

Chifley Square is of historical and aesthetic significance as an early twentieth century exercise in city planning relieve traffic congestion, and for its naming to honour J.B. Chifley, Australia's prominent and well-loved wartime Prime Minister 1945-1949. The construction of Qantas House in 1957 (designed by Rudder Littlemore & Rudder) at 68-96 Hunter Street was integral to the creation of Chifley Square, and adds to the historical and aesthetic significance.



City Mutual Life Assurance Building, 60-66 Hunter Street

The City Mutual Life Assurance Building is significant as one of the foremost examples of high quality and well-designed commercial Art Deco architecture in Sydney's CBD, and represents the culmination of the work of one of Australia's foremost proponents of this style, Emil Sodersten. As a largely intact and well maintained late 1930s structure, the building demonstrates through its powerful elevations and dramatic interior spaces the aesthetic and commercial aspects of Art Deco architecture in Australia.

The building occupies a dominant position in the surrounding urban context, serving as a backdrop to Richard Johnson Square and as a landmark in the Bligh Street and Hunter Street streetscapes. Since its completion in 1936, the building has been a symbol of the Mutual Life Assurance Society and the building stands as a monument to the Society's participation in the evolution of Sydney's business and commerce.



Former Government Savings Bank of NSW, 50 Martin Place

The Government Savings Bank of NSW at 50 Martin Place is culturally significant at a national level as a rare example of the inter-war Beaux-Arts style, demonstrating outstanding aesthetic and technical accomplishment. Designed by Ross & Rowe, the building is located at a prominent address on Martin Place, the bank played an important role in the development of the economy in New South Wales during the 1920s. The building was constructed between 1925 and 1928 and is one of the most important examples of its style and type within Australia. The building derives historical significance from its long association with the Commonwealth Bank from 1932 to the present.

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE



GIO Building, 60-70 Elizabeth Street

The GIO Building is historically significant because of its associations with Sun Newspapers Ltd newspaper publishing activities in Sydney during the first half of the twentieth century. Its site has associations with the historically prominent figure, Joshua Josephson. The building is aesthetically significant because it is possibly the first major Interwar Skyscraper Gothic style building in Sydney, of which it is also a rare example, and because it is a major building designed by architect Joseph Kethel. The building has technical significance, due to its early and extensive use of the proprietary building material, Benedict stone. It is possibly the first major application of this material in a large city building in NSW.



Martin Place

Martin Place has historic and aesthetic significance for its ability to provide evidence of the development of Victorian and Interwar Sydney as a prestige address for commercial businesses and public institutions. It is significant for its ability to contribute to understanding the nineteenth and twentieth century town planning intention. It is demonstrative of the Victorian period and interwar periods in direct response to the Height of Building controls. Martin Place has historic associations with Sir James Martin, premier and Chief Justice of NSW. Pedestrianisation of the street in the 1970s formalised Martin Place as Sydney's principal urban space.



Martin Place Railway Station

Completed in 1979, Martin Place underground railway station is significant as a representative of the last major railway construction undertaken in the State in the eastern suburbs railway line. The whole of the structure being underground is a development of the structures built in the city in the 1930s and represents the latest in technology at the time.



MLC Building, 42-46 Martin Place

The former MLC Building, designed by Bates Smart and McCutcheon and completed in 1938, is aesthetically significant as one of the best inter-war commercial office buildings in Sydney, and the best example in Australia of the exterior use of Egyptian derived motifs in such buildings. Its quality of design and use of materials make it one of the principal contributors to the architectural character of Martin Place which is recognised as one of Sydney's finest urban spaces. The former MLC Building is historically significant as one of a small group (about a dozen) of major commercial office buildings constructed in Sydney during the second half of the 1930s.

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE



Qantas House, 68-96 Hunter Street

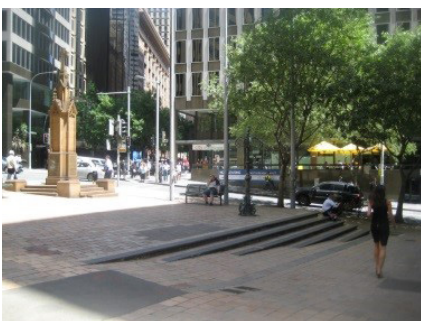
Qantas House, designed by Felix Taverner of Rudder, Littlemore & Rudder is a fine example in the Australian context of intact, post-war, multi-storeyed office buildings from the first phase in the 1950s in the Post-War International Style, and is from the small group in Sydney of this group designed prior to the amendments to the Heights of Buildings Act in 1957 that heralded the subsequent 'high-rise' phase. It has particular rarity within Australia for its unique shape, the outstanding quality of its curtain wall façade and its contribution to its urban setting. As such, it is considered to have heritage significance at a national level.



Reserve Bank Building, 65 Martin Place

The Reserve Bank, completed in 1964 and designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Section, is highly significant in the development of post-World War II multi-storey office buildings in Australia and a significant example of office building in the International style; its construction using high quality Australian materials; steel and concrete construction; and interior design details and artworks. The building's significance has been retained through a major extension (1974-1980), recladding (1993) and internal refitting. Through its prestigious design and function as Australia's central bank, the building makes an important contribution to the streetscape and character of Martin Place, Macquarie Street and Phillip Street.

The building has social significance being regarded by the Australian community as the home of the Reserve Bank function and the place where significant economic policy is carried out on behalf of the Nation.



Richard Johnson Square

Completed in 1974 to the design of Clarke Gazard, Richard Johnson Square is historically and culturally significant as an important example of late twentieth century civic planning. The square is significant for its 1925 monument commemorating the first church service held in Australia, sited on the location of the Country's first church erected in 1793.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Overview

The proposal by Macquarie is unique and innovative in aligning the aspirations for public transport, civic amenity and the long-term sustainability of Sydney as a financial centre. This will be achieved through a development designed to maximise the opportunities for an improved Metro Station, integration of the existing and new public transport infrastructure, integration of that infrastructure with modern commercial office towers and world class retailing, along with rejuvenating and complimenting some of Sydney's most revered public spaces, and substantially improving station access and connectivity.

It is designed as a fully integrated Station and OSD project that, subject to approval, will be built and delivered as one integrated project for opening at the same time as the Sydney Metro is commissioned.

The detailed design of the approved Stage 1 concept proposal for the South Tower will form the basis of this report..

No works under the subject DA are proposed for Martin Place Railway Station.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The South Site

The proposal for the South Site is a 29 storey building bounded by Martin Place to the north, Elizabeth Street to the east and Castlereagh Street to the west.

Architectural form, expression and materials

The form and architectural expression of the building comprises two principal components: podium and tower.

The podium element of the building is aligned with street boundaries on three sides. Externally, it is conceived as a direct response to, and interpretation of, the scale, height and architectural design of the former Government Savings Bank of NSW Building at 50 Martin Place, opposite the site. The podium has a strongly defined base, upper levels and termination that align with the base, upper levels and cornice of 50 Martin Place.

At ground level, comprising the entrance to the Macquarie Martin Place Metro Station, masonry piers convey a monumental character, dividing the facades into deeply recessed bays. The piers are proposed to be clad in pre-cast panels with colour pigment and red granite aggregate, alluding to the red granite cladding of 50 Martin Place.

The upper levels fronting Martin Place comprises deeply recessed bays of curved glazing, divided vertically with ceramic-clad fins, corresponding to the vertical articulation of the upper levels of the façade of 50 Martin Place with giant orders. The articulation of the facades fronting Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Streets is more restrained, similarly relating to the 'side' facades of 50 Martin Place.

The tower component of the building is set back eight metres from the Martin Place site boundary, corresponding approximately to the setback of the neighbouring Reserve Bank's office tower above its podium at 65 Martin Place. The facades of the tower are proposed to be clad in glass and bronzed aluminium, distinguishing them from the articulation and detail of the lower sections of the building. An interstitial space provides visual separation between the podium and the tower to ensure the podium is legible as a component of Martin Place.

The roof of the building is conceived as a crown, clad in ceramic to match the lower sections of the building and screening plant and equipment. Profiles on the east and west of the roof are varied in response to solar access requirements.

Planning and function

The ground floor of the building provides access to the Martin Place Metro Station, retail, and an entrance to the commercial office levels.

On the upper levels, viable commercial floorplates are achieved by confining service cores into a narrow band on the southern side of the building.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL



501 Proposed south tower, not to scale
Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018

5 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report identifies and assesses potential heritage impacts associated with the proposed design of the South Tower, as part of the Sydney Metro and Martin Place Station Precinct.

The proposal is assessed against relevant statutory provisions, guidelines of the NSW Heritage Office relating to heritage impacts, and relevant policies from the 2012 Conservation Management Plan for 50 Martin Place. It has also been assessed against the approved Consolidated Guidelines provided that form part of the Stage 1 SSDA application.

The assessment includes a discussion on the potential impacts of future building on the South Site on adjoining heritage items with regard to their setting and streetscape presence.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.2 Assessment against the approved SSD DA Stage 1 Heritage Guidelines and Consolidated Design Guidelines

5.2.1 Neighbouring heritage items: settings and views

SSD DA Stage 1 Heritage Guidelines

Retain and enhance the setting and streetscape presence of neighbouring heritage buildings.

- *A building on the South Site should relate in scale and architectural expression to the historic buildings on Martin Place and Elizabeth Street in its vicinity.*
- *A building on the South Site should respect the landmark qualities of the Reserve Bank.*

SSD DA Consolidated Design Guidelines

Guideline 2

Reinforce the streetwall and the distinctive attributes of the block on Martin Place.

Guideline 8

Create distinctive architectural designs appropriate for each site, with the scale of buildings responding appropriately to the character of the area and the building form and articulation reinforcing the key features of the locality, such as the street wall height an relationship to 50 Martin Place.

Guideline 11

Retain and enhance the setting and streetscape presence of neighbouring heritage buildings.

Guideline 12

Podium streetwalls.

Guideline 13

Tower form, scale and setbacks.

Guideline 14

Streetwall articulation.

Guideline 16

Scale

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT



511 Proposed south tower, looking up Elizabeth Street. Not to scale.
Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018



521 Podium materiality and detail. Not to scale.
Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018

The key views which relate to the South Site include those down Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street, as well as those along Martin Place, and in particular its relationship to the setting of Martin Place and its significant buildings, including 50 Martin Place (opposite) and the Reserve Bank Building (adjacent).

Through careful design of the building at street level, the proposed scheme reinforces the setting of Martin Place and the adjacent historic buildings through the scale, form and setbacks of the podium. The podium uses the datum height established by the 50 Martin Place parapet to reinforce the established street walls along Martin Place, Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street.

The proposed tower also reinforces and enhances the streetscape presence through its use of materials and architectural expression, which retains a solid masonry podium at street level. An interstitial space provides a transitional zone that articulates the tower as a discrete element above the podium.

A pronounced visual separation between the tower and the podium is also employed to reinforce the solidity of the streetwall in comparison to the glazed tower.

Views along Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street to the historic 50 Martin Place will be partially obscured by the proposed South Tower. Whilst this has the potential to reinstate the historic streetscape views which existed prior to the demolition of the 1939 Prudential Building, its impact has been minimised through the scale of the podium and proposed setback of the tower. The proposed tower also provides a bookend to the Martin Place site, which reinforces the strong lineal character and spatial enclosure of Martin Place.

The tower and podium will be prominent in views looking east along Martin Place, with the potential to impact views to the Reserve Bank. The proposed eight metre set back from Martin Place ensures that there is sufficient distance that the tower will not be visually dominating, maintaining the visual prominence and landmark qualities of the Reserve Bank.

Overall, the proposed tower on the South Site will not impact on the setting or views of 50 Martin Place, the Reserve Bank or Martin Place in general. The potential impacts to the views and setting of 50 Martin Place have been minimised through the scale and architectural expression of the podium, whilst the eight metre setback to the tower minimises the impact on views to the Reserve Bank looking east through Martin Place.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.2.2 Former Government Savings Bank of NSW, 50 Martin Place

SSD DA Stage 1 Heritage Guidelines

*Retain the exceptional aesthetic significance of the building's exterior.
Retain the landmark qualities and civic presence of the building within Martin Place and its environs.
Retain the identity of the building as one of the finest purpose-designed bank buildings in Australia.*

SSD DA Consolidated Design Guidelines

Guideline 8

Create distinctive architectural designs appropriate for each site, with the scale of buildings responding appropriately to the character of the area and the building form and articulation reinforcing the key features of the locality, such as the street wall height and relationship to 50 Martin Place.

Guideline 15

Materiality.

Guideline 18

50 Martin Place

Separated by Martin Place and sited opposite, the proposed development on the South Site will not impact physically on the significant fabric of 50 Martin Place.

The tower is conceived as a direct response to, and interpretation of, the scale, height and architectural design of the former Government Savings Bank of NSW Building at 50 Martin Place. The design of the tower however does not replicate 50 Martin Place, ensuring that the distinctive architectural qualities and aesthetic significance of 50 Martin Place are retained, enhancing the historic building's civic presence within Martin Place and its environs.



531 Proposed South Tower opposite 50 Martin Place, interpreting datum and materiality.
Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.2.3 Martin Place

SSD DA Stage 1 Heritage Guidelines

Retain and enhance the urban character, scale and strong linear enclosure of Martin Place.

SSD DA Consolidated Design Guidelines

Guideline 2

Reinforce the streetwall and the distinctive attributes of the block on Martin Place.

Guideline 8

Create distinctive architectural designs appropriate for each site, with the scale of buildings responding appropriately to the character of the area and the building form and articulation reinforcing the key features of the locality, such as the street wall height an relationship to 50 Martin Place.

Guideline 11

Retain and enhance the setting and streetscape presence of neighbouring heritage buildings.

Guideline 12

Podium streetwalls.

Guideline 13

Tower form, scale and setbacks.

Guideline 16

Scale

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT



54| Proposed South Tower, as viewed from Martin Place.

Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018



55| Proposed South Tower built to street alignments, Elizabeth Street.

Source: Tzannes Architects, 2018

The proposed development complies with the principles in this section of the Heritage Development Guidelines.

The proposed building:

- is built to the street alignments of Martin Place, Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street;
- presents a formal character to Martin Place by means of the composition of its facades and the materials that have been selected;
- has its principal commercial address oriented to Martin Place.

The podium:

- is related in height to the former Government Saving Bank Building at 50 Martin Place;
- is related to the historic buildings of Martin Place through its architectural expression, proposed building materials and the colours that are intrinsic to these materials. While contemporary in its detailed resolution, the podium draws upon the precedent established by the facades of 50 Martin Place. This is most evident in its tripartite composition of base, shaft and termination;
- minimises the visual impact of the Metro entry on the Martin Place frontage by means of the deep blades that are intended to provide an equivalent to the solidity of traditional masonry walls pierced by windows, at the same time allowing openness and a contribution to the public domain;
- there are no cantilevered awnings on the Martin Place frontage.

The high-rise section:

- is set back eight metres from the Martin Place street frontage, which is approximate to the set back of the Reserve Bank Building at 60 Martin Place to the street frontage;
- the building's facades are to be clad in glass and aluminium, which will contrast with the solidity of materials selected for the podium;
- is separated from the podium by an interstitial space that is a transitional zone that articulates the tower as a discrete element above the podium. A terrace on the Level 9 of the podium, allied to a deep glazed setback beneath the tower, will form a distinct break between the podium and the tower.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.3 NSW Heritage Office

The assessment of heritage impacts has been undertaken in reference to the model questions given in the NSW Heritage Office's publication '*Statement of Heritage Impacts*'. The responses assess the potential heritage impacts of the proposed building envelopes of the North and South sites on neighbouring heritage items.

How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?

The proposed South Tower includes a podium that is directly related to the height of 50 Martin Place and thus conforms to the street wall height of significant buildings in its vicinity. The proportioning, fenestration and materiality of the podium all assist in minimising impacts on the area – the podium, although contemporary in design, reflects the formal design of Victorian, Federation and interwar era buildings along Martin Place.

Impacts of the tower rising above the podium will be minimised by setting it back from the Martin Place site boundary and by cladding it in light and reflective materials to dematerialise its mass.

Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item?

The South Site is situated near several heritage items within Martin Place that are listed in Schedule 5 of Sydney LEP 2012. Proximity to these items is determined by the existing constraints of the site and the existing nature of the heritage context of its immediate vicinity.

How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?

The South Site was originally occupied by an office tower completed in 1939 that conformed to the heights of other interwar buildings along Martin Place. It was replaced at the end of the 1960s by a 20 storey tower clad in precast concrete, with setbacks from street boundaries relating to then-current Council regulations.

The proposed development will enhance views to and from nearby heritage items because its podium is aligned with street boundaries, thus reinforcing the original character of Martin Place as an avenue lined with a consistent "wall" of buildings. The contemporary architectural design and height of the podium will also enhance views because they are influenced by the height and architectural design of 50 Martin Place.

The siting of the tower component, set back from the podium, ensures that views along Martin Place are not adversely impacted. The visually emphatic external expression of the podium ensures that it remains the predominant visual focus in street level vantage points, while the predominantly glazed exterior of the tower assists in reducing its apparent visual bulk and merges with the skyline of existing office towers beyond.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

Is the building sited on any known, or potentially significance archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?

The South Site has not been identified as having archaeological potential in the Central Sydney Archaeological Zoning Plan.

Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?

The South Tower is sympathetic to nearby heritage items in several ways:

- The height of the building's podium is the same as that of 50 Martin Place. The podium thus reinforces the historic pattern of development along Martin Place from the 1920s and 1930s;
- The architectural design of the podium, although contemporary, reflects and interprets the architectural character of 50 Martin Place. This will impart an appropriately monumental character that is an important component of Martin Place;
- The podium is built to the street alignments, thus reinforcing the historic pattern of development along the street;
- The tower rising above the podium is visually separated from it and set back from Martin Place, lessening its potential impacts. Its reflective glass and metal cladding is relatively neutral, thus reinforcing the considered design of the podium and its contribution to an important heritage precinct.

Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?

Refer to the response to the previous question.

Will the public and users of the item still be able to view and appreciate its significance?

The proposed development will not prevent the public and users of surrounding items viewing and appreciating their significance.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.4 Sydney Harbour Catchment Regional Environmental Plan (SREP) 2005

The South Site falls within the boundaries of the REP. Heritage items listed in Schedule 4 of the REP are located in close proximity to the Harbour and to associated waterways. None are in close proximity to the subject site.

Clause 15 of the SREP contains heritage provisions, as follows:

15 Heritage conservation

The planning principles for heritage conservation are as follows:

- a. Sydney Harbour and its islands and foreshores should be recognised and protected as places of exceptional heritage significance,*
- b. the heritage significance of particular heritage items in and around Sydney Harbour should be recognised and conserved,*
- c. an appreciation of the role of Sydney Harbour in the history of Aboriginal and European settlement should be encouraged,*
- d. the natural, scenic, environmental and cultural qualities of the Foreshores and Waterways Area should be protected,*
- e. significant fabric, settings, relics and views associated with the heritage significance of heritage items should be conserved,*
- f. archaeological sites and places of Aboriginal heritage significance should be conserved.*

There are no impacts arising from the proposal that will relate to the planning principles above.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.5 Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012

The proposal is assessed below against the relevant heritage provisions of the 2012 *Sydney Local Environmental Plan*.

LEP Provision	Response
Clause 4.3 Height of buildings	
4.3 (1) The objectives of this clause are as follows:	
<p>(a) to ensure the height of development is appropriate to the condition of the site and its context,</p> <p>(b) to ensure appropriate height transitions between new development and heritage items and buildings in heritage conservation areas or special character areas,</p>	The South Tower complies with the objectives of this clause. Its podium has similar height to 50 Martin Place and is consistent with the heights of items at 38-46 Martin Place, 53-63 Martin Place and 60-70 Elizabeth Street.
Clause 5.10 Heritage conservation	
(1) Objectives The objectives of this clause are as follows:	
<p>(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of the City of Sydney,</p> <p>(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,</p>	<p>Although the South Site is not identified as a heritage item, it is situated within the Martin Place Special Character Area and is located in the vicinity of several local and state listed heritage items.</p> <p>The proposed South Tower achieves the objectives of this clause through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – retention of the significant fabric and setting of Martin Place; – retention of views within Martin Place, including unobstructed views to the GPO; – establishment of a building form that reinforces the existing urban character of Martin Place. This is achieved by a podium aligned with street boundaries that has the same height as 50 Martin Place, above which is a tower that is set back from the alignment of Martin Place.
(c) to conserve archaeological sites,	The South Site is not identified in the Central Sydney Archaeological Zoning Plan as an archaeological site.
(d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.	The South Site is not identified as a place of Aboriginal significance.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.6 Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012

Clause 2.1.7 Martin Place Special Character Area

Martin Place is of social, cultural and historic significance, being the site of various monuments, in particular the Cenotaph, as well as the site of many historical events, which reinforced its image as the civic and ceremonial heart of the City. Its initiation was after the siting of the GPO in 1863, as a small meeting place in the front of the post office. Its subsequent planned evolution and development illustrates the application of city planning principles of the 1880s to 1930s, which culminated in its complete pedestrianisation in 1970. It represents the financial heart of the City, containing significant public and financial buildings.

Martin Place consists of a cohesive group of buildings with a consistent street wall of up to 45m. These buildings have similar architectural features, characterised by the use of richly textured masonry facades, intricate architectural detailing, vertical emphasis and grand proportions at street level, representative of their function as housing various major public and business institutions. The built form encloses a significant linear public space, with strong vistas terminated to the east and west by significant buildings. The GPO clock tower is an important landmark visible from various points within Martin Place.

Martin Place is also significant for its supportive network of lanes, being rare examples of pedestrian thoroughfares reminiscent of Victorian Sydney laneways such as Angel Place and Ash Lane.

The proposal is assessed in the following section against the relevant provisions of the Martin Place Special Character Area DCP.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

DCP Provision	Response
Clause 2.1.7 Martin Place Special Character Area	
Principles	
<i>(a) Development must achieve and satisfy the outcomes expressed in the character statement and supporting principles.</i>	The proposed South Tower will re-establish the street alignment. It has the potential to contribute to the significant character of the street through its massing, detailed design and selection of materials to be used on the outside of the building.
<i>(b) Conserve and enhance the significance of Martin Place as one of Central Sydney's grand civic and ceremonial spaces, and as a valued business location.</i>	The South Tower will achieve the requirements of this principle through the design, form and scale of its podium. The podium reflects the scale, form and material character of historic development on the street in a contemporary manner. The tower rising above the podium will enhance the place as a valued business location because of its proximity to the Metro Martin Place Station and the Eastern Suburbs Line station and by the provision of high quality office space.
<i>(c) Retain and enhance the urban character, scale and strong linear enclosure of Martin Place by requiring new buildings to:</i> <i>i. be built to the street alignment;</i> <i>ii. have street frontage heights consistent with the prevailing form of buildings in the area; and</i> <i>iii. to have building setbacks above those street frontage heights.</i>	The South Tower: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a podium that is built to the street alignment; – a street height frontage based on the existing building at 50 Martin Place, which was completed in 1928; – a building setback for the section of the development above the podium.
<i>(d) Protect and extend sun access and reflected sunlight to Martin Place during lunchtime hours from mid-April to the end of August</i>	The exterior of the South Tower is to be clad in reflective materials including glass and metal.
<i>(e) Provide sun access to significant sandstone buildings in Martin Place to improve the ground level quality of the public space.</i>	This provision is not applicable to the South Tower.
<i>(f) Protect existing significant vistas to the east and west and ensure new development will not detrimentally affect the silhouette of the GPO clock tower.</i>	Views to the east and west along Martin Place will be protected by the architectural design of the South Tower's podium and by the setback of the tower above it.
<i>(g) Retain human scale at street level, while respecting and positively responding to the monumental nature of the place.</i>	The South Tower's podium achieves compliance with this provision by its architectural design, which is based on the precedent of 50 Martin Place to its north. The podium is divided into a base, shaft and termination that is similar to the composition of the facades of 50 Martin Place. Warm, rich materials similar in colour and texture to those used in the significant buildings lining both sides of Martin Place will be used in the podium.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

DCP Provision	Response
<i>(h) Conserve and enhance the heritage significance of the nineteenth and twentieth century institutional and commercial buildings and their settings.</i>	The South Tower will have no impact on the heritage significance of heritage items in its vicinity. Impacts of settings and views to and from these items is discussed in Section 5.3.
Clause 3.2 Defining the Public Domain	
3.2.1.2 Public views	
<i>3.2.1.2(1) Buildings are not to impede views from the public domain to highly utilised public places, parks, Sydney Harbour, Alexandra Canal, heritage buildings and monuments including public statues, sculptures and art.</i>	Views to the east and west along Martin Place will be maintained by the South Tower's podium and the setback of the office tower above it.
<i>3.2.1.2(2) Development is to improve public views to parks, Sydney Harbour, Alexandra Canal, heritage buildings and monuments by using buildings to frame views. Low level views of the sky along streets and from locations in parks are to be maintained.</i>	The South Tower will enhance views along Martin Place because its podium will reinstate the historic "street wall" character in this section of the street. The architectural design and composition of the podium's facades will also enhance views.
Clause 3.9 Heritage Provisions	
<i>3.9.5(3) Alterations and additions to buildings and structures and new development of sites in the vicinity of a heritage item are to be designed to respect and complement the heritage item in terms of the:</i>	
<i>(a) building envelope;</i> <i>(b) proportions;</i> <i>(c) materials, colours and finishes; and</i> <i>(d) building and street alignment.</i>	<p>The South Tower reinstates the important built form of Martin Place. Its podium reflects the precedent of 50 Martin Place, which it matches in height, scale, proportions and composition. The selection of materials, colours and finishes is compatible with those of 50 Martin Place and other important interwar era buildings in the vicinity of the South Tower.</p> <p>The section of the South Tower rising above the podium is deferential to nearby significant items through its setback from the Martin Place alignment, its restrained and simple form, and by cladding the building in neutral, reflective materials.</p>
<i>3.9.5(4) Development in the vicinity of a heritage item is to minimise the impact on the setting of the item by:</i>	
<i>(a) providing an adequate area around the building to allow interpretation of the heritage item;</i>	The area around significant items in the vicinity of the South Tower will not be changed or reduced by the proposed development.
<i>(b) retaining original or significant landscaping (including plantings with direct links or association with the heritage item);</i>	This provision is not applicable to the South Site.
<i>(c) protecting, where possible and allowing the interpretation of archaeological features; and</i>	This provision is not applicable to the South Site.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

DCP Provision	Response
<i>(d) retaining and respecting significant views to and from the heritage item.</i>	<p>The South Tower will have no impact on significant views to heritage items in its vicinity. The tower component is at a sufficient distance from the items along Martin Place to minimise any impacts it may have on views to them.</p> <p>Impacts of settings and views to and from these items is discussed in Section 5.3.</p>
Clause 5.1 Central Sydney	
5.1.3 Street frontage heights and setbacks for Special Character Areas	
<i>5.1.3(1) Minimum and maximum street frontage heights and front setbacks for buildings in or adjacent to a Special Character Area must be provided in accordance with Table 5.1 and as shown in Figures 5.12 to 5.19. Where the figure shows the entire site as shaded, additional storeys above the street frontage height is not permitted.</i>	<p>The setback and height of the South Tower's podium complies with the requirements of Figure 5.16 of the Martin Place Special Character Area.</p> <p>The height and mass of the tower component has been approved.</p>
5.1.6 Building Exteriors	
<i>5.1.6(1) Adjoining buildings, particularly heritage buildings must be considered in the design of new buildings in terms of: (a) street alignment; (b) street frontage heights; (c) setbacks above street frontage heights; and (d) facade proportions including horizontal or vertical emphasis and enclosed corners at street intersections.</i>	<p>Refer to previous sections of this statement of heritage impact.</p>

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.7 Conservation Management Plans

5.7.1 50 Martin Place Conservation Management Plan

Conservation Management Plan - Policies

The proposal is evaluated against relevant policies from the 2012 'Former Government Savings Bank of NSW Conservation Management Plan' by Tanner Architects, as follows:

7.4.2 Context and Setting

Policy 22 Respect and enhance the building's streetscape contribution to Martin Place, Castlereagh Street, Pitt Street and Elizabeth Street. The major visual contribution of the building to Martin Place should not be altered nor compromised.

The South Tower complies with this policy through the design of the building's podium, which is based on the precedent established by the facades of 50 Martin Place. These have informed the height, composition and form of the podium. The detailed architectural resolution interprets the facades, while the selection of materials and colours is intended to complement the building and relate to the materiality of other significant buildings along Martin Place.

6 PUBLIC ART AND HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

SEARs Requirements

The SEARs includes a requirement for heritage interpretation for the Martin Place Station Precinct as follows:

Include a Heritage Interpretation Plan, providing opportunities for the proposal to reflect on the heritage character and significance of the site and surrounding area, including Martin Place.

Heritage interpretation for Martin Place is addressed in the 'Sydney Metro City and Southwest Heritage Interpretation Strategy' (February 2018).

This report, prepared to fulfil the conditions of consent for CSSI 15_7400, provides the appropriate interpretation strategy for the site and its environs.

It identifies the following themes:

- The Tank Stream and the pre-European history of the place;
- Martin Place Station ESR;
- Development of the City;
- Transport; and
- The Great Fire of 2 October 1890.

No additional heritage interpretation is proposed as part of this application.

7 CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

7.1 Background

The Department of Planning and Environment Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements for the Stage 2 Development Application include the following requirement relating to consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW:

14. Pre-submission consultation statement

The EIS must include a report describing pre-submission consultation undertaken, including a record of the stakeholders consulted, the issues raised during the consultation and how the proposal responds to those issues. In particular, an agreed schedule of consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW must be included in the EIS.

Throughout the design phase of the project Macquarie has undertaken regular consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW, including presentations on the following dates:

- 3 May 2017
- 1 November 2017
- 2 May 2018

A summary of the issues raised by the Heritage Council at these presentations and how the proposal responds to these issues is outlined below.

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

7.2 Presentation 3 May 2017

Heritage Council Resolutions

The following is extracted from the Heritage Council's minutes of the 3 May Council Meeting:

Discussion:

The members [of the Heritage Council]:

- asked to see the visual images of the proposal from all sides.*
- members sought clarification on how the 4.5m set back [of the North Tower from Martin Place] was determined, noting that 8 or 10 [metres] was acceptable for heritage items.*
- sought clarification on why the presentation to the whole Council differed from the presentation that had been given to the sub committee.*
- members noted their comments from previous comments given to the design review panel about the opening [between the Great Hall in 50 Martin Place and the Lobby of the North Tower], and how those comments have been taken on board.*
- the north side of the design is not as well designed as the public space area or as well as the south side.*
- Members noted the facade, neighbouring walkways, bulk and scale are all important factors for how this is considered. The design principles should be shown and the presentation did not show that.*

Noted / resolution:

The Heritage Council of NSW:

- 1. notes the presentation.*
- 2. requests the proponent provide details on the design principal [sic] and rationale for the proposed development on:*
 - a. the proposed reduction in setback for the southern building (39 Martin Place).*
 - b. the relationship of that building to Martin Place (both east and west).*
 - c. more information about the street activation and all street frontages.*
 - d. the relationship of northern building to 50 Martin Place in terms of its elevation, bulk, scale and massing.*
- 3. Seeks a schedule of consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW.*

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

Responses to Heritage Council's resolutions

Design principles for the precinct were formulated as part of the Heritage Impact Statement (TKD Architects) and The Urban Design of Sydney Metro Martin Place Station Precinct (by Tzannes Associates) and were lodged with the Stage 1 State Significant Application in May 2017.

The guidelines provided details and rationale for:

- the proposed set back of the tower element of the southern building (section 3.3.3.4)
- the relationship of the building to Martin Place (section 3.3.3.5)
- information about street activation (section 3.3.2)
- the relationship of the northern building to 50 Martin Place (sections 3.3.3.3 and 3.3.3.5)

7.3 Presentation 1 November 2017

Heritage Council Resolutions

The following is extracted from the Heritage Council's minutes of the 1 November Council Meeting:

Discussion:

- *Discussed the proposed setback of the South Tower [to Martin Place]. Various options were considered, and the 8 m setback proposed by the proponents was not considered to not be adequate [sic] to minimise the visual impact of the South Tower on Martin Place. Council considered that a minimum 10-15 m setback [from Martin Place] would be more appropriate.*
- *Discussed the progression of the design of the North Tower and its connections with 50 Martin Place.*
- *Considered a request from the proponents for a regular consultation schedule with the Heritage Council as the project progresses. It was considered that further presentations to the Heritage Council could be made in 2018, provided that the proposal has evolved to the point where further comment from the Heritage Council is required to inform significant stages of the proposed development design.*

Noted / resolution:

The Heritage Council noted the presentation and provided comments.

The Heritage Council of NSW:

- 4. Thanked the presenters for their update.*
- 5. Has concerns with the proposed 8 m setback to the South Tower [to Martin Place] and recommends a minimum setback of 10-15 metres.*
- 6. Invited further presentation to the Heritage Council in 2018, provided that comment from the Heritage Council is required for significant stages of the proposed development design.*

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

Responses to Heritage Council's resolutions

A Visual Impact Analysis prepared by Tzannes Associates in January 2018, which supported the Planning Proposal (LEP amendment) provided a consideration of alternative envelopes for the South Tower with setbacks from the Martin Place boundary illustrated at 8, 10, 12 and 15 metres.

TKD Architects provided an assessment of the visual impacts of each of these alternative set backs from various vantage points from a heritage perspective in January 2018. The assessment concluded that:

- an increase in the proposed set back of the tower from 8 metres to a setback of between 10 and 15 metres will not materially alter the visual impacts of the tower envelope on the important characteristics and heritage significance of Martin Place.
- The setback of the tower above a podium reinforces the street wall of Martin Place, enhancing the spatial enclosure of the street formed by building facades of consistent height.
- the setback of the tower from the podium is only one of a number of design strategies required to ensure that the future building achieves the objectives of the Martin Place Special Character Area. Design guidelines provided in the Heritage Impact Statement (June 2017) relate also to façade composition; the use of materials to ensure a visual distinction between the podium and tower elements; the use of materials in the façade of the podium building which are complementary to those of historic buildings in Martin Place; the visual separation of the tower from the podium elements, and; the height of the podium element.
- the proposed envelope with an 8m setback permits a new building on the site which better relates to neighbouring heritage items and to Martin Place than the present building – which is inconsistent with the urban and historic character of the street – and will enhance the role of Martin Place as a financial centre in the city.
- the proposed envelope with an 8m tower setback will allow for a new building which relates positively to neighbouring heritage items within Martin Place and Elizabeth Street in scale, materiality and architectural expression, all mutually reinforcing the Martin Place street wall, and will enable a commercial development of a quality commensurate with the exceptional heritage significance and urban environment of the Martin Place.

Refer to Section 5 this HIS, which assesses the heritage impacts of the proposed design of the South Tower and the potential impacts of the 8m setback on Martin Place and adjacent heritage items.

Also refer to the Stage 2 Design Report by Tzannes, which outlines the Amended SSDA Consolidated Design Guidelines in Section 3, and the Design Principles and Urban Design Response of the South Tower's design in relation to the site context and Design Guidelines in Sections 4 and 5.

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

7.4 Presentation 2 May 2018

Heritage Council Resolutions

The following is extracted from the Heritage Council's minutes of the 2 May Council Meeting:

Discussion:

The Heritage Council Approvals Committee discussed:

1. *Summary of proposed changes to North Tower*
 - a. *Connections to 50 Martin Place from Ground floor, level 4 and level 10 and proposed materials used.*
 - i. *Proposed connections intend to be complimentary [sic] to the existing lifts which will be retained.*
 - b. *Three significant artworks to be incorporated into the base of the North Tower, in the public domain.*
 - i. *Currently proposed in / around the Metro entrance which closes for two hours a day.*
 - ii. *Challenges of reinstating the artwork in the streetscape and / or south entrance.*
2. *Development of South Tower*
 - a. *Proposed podium*
 - i. *solid masonry form.*
 - ii. *Ceramic and glass façade for consistency with materiality.*
 - iii. *Expression is consistent with existing building in terms of depth, form and façade.*
3. *Council agrees that there is not enough information to make extensive comment on the design.*

Decisions:

After discussion, the Heritage Council Approvals Committee:

1. *Noted the report and presentation.*
2. *Provided the following comments on the proposed development:*
 - a. *Portal preferred to laneway as a connection between the two buildings, subject to appropriate design and materiality.*
 - b. *Combination of materials seems reasonable but unable to see what it means from an elevational perspective due to lack of detail.*
 - c. *Ground floor openings appear to conflict with the underside of the stair do not work from a heritage or design perspective.*
 - d. *More detail is required for the Committee to provide extensive comment.*

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

Response to the Heritage Council's resolutions

Stage 2 Development Applications – providing detailed designs for the north and south over station development sites – were lodged in October 2018.

In response to the Heritage Council's comments, the detailed designs include:

- a through-site 'portal' link for the north site, rather than a laneway;
- an amended design for the ground floor interconnecting opening between 50 Martin Place and the north site, which better relates to the marble stair in the Grand Hall;
- details of the façade materials for both north and site sites.

Refer to Section 5 in the Sydney Metro and Martin Place Integrated Station Development SSD DA - Stage 2 HIS reports, which assesses the heritage impacts of the proposed designs of the North and South Towers and the potential impacts of the proposed works on 50 Martin Place, Martin Place and adjacent heritage items.

Also refer to the Stage 2 Design Reports by JPW and Tzannes, which outline the Design Principles of the proposed Urban Design and Architecture of the North and South Tower and their relationship with Martin Place, Metro Precinct and adjacent heritage and non-heritage context.

CONSULTATION WITH THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

7.5 Future consultation

Future consultation will be undertaken at dates to be confirmed in consultation with the Heritage Council, having regard for the following key milestones in the design and construction programme:

Design

Concept design	June 2019
Design development	January 2020

Construction

Construction structure	August 2010
North Tower ground floor	May 2021
South Tower ground floor	January 2022
North Tower level 6	September 2021
South Tower level 6	April 2022
North Tower Practical Completion	September 2023
South Tower Practical Completion	December 2023

Refer also to Appendix F of the Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by Ethos Urban.

8 CONCLUSIONS

This Stage 2 State Significant Development Development Application seeks approval for the detailed design of a commercial tower on the South Site, located above the site of the future Martin Place Metro Station. The demolition of the late 1960s building on the South Site, which was approved as part of the Sydney Metro proposal, has provided the opportunity for a new building that responds positively to the heritage significance and important civic qualities of Martin Place.

This Heritage Impact Statement addresses the heritage requirements of the SEARs and provides a detailed assessment of potential impacts arising from the proposal on heritage impacts within the precinct, having regard for relevant policies contained in the endorsed Conservation Management Plans for heritage items in the vicinity.

The assessment concludes that the proposed design of the building has been carefully and purposefully considered to minimise potential impacts on 50 Martin Place, on the Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street streetscapes and on adjacent heritage items. These impacts have been minimised through the following considered design decisions:

- The podium has been designed to reflect the height datum set by the parapet of 50 Martin Place to ensure that the streetwall on Martin Place, Elizabeth Street and Castlereagh Street are reinforced;
- The podium interprets the architecture of the highly significant building at 50 Martin Place and relates it to other significant buildings along the street;
- The architectural expression of the podium maintains the monumental civic character of the street and minimises impacts on heritage items in the vicinity of the South Site;
- Impacts of the tower component are minimised by its setback from the Martin Place frontage of the South Site, the visual separation of the tower from the podium, and an external cladding of reflective materials that should ameliorate its mass.

APPENDIX A HERITAGE INVENTORIES

Commonwealth Heritage List

- The Reserve Bank of Australia

State Heritage Register

- APA Building
- Former MLC Building
- Martin Place Railway Station
- GIO Building
- Commonwealth Bank (Former Government Savings Bank of NSW)
- City Mutual Life Assurance Building
- Former Qantas House

City of Sydney LEP Inventories

- APA Building
- Martin Place
- Martin Place Railway Station
- Richard Johnson Square
- Chifley Square
- 7 Elizabeth Street
- The Reserve Bank of Australia

Place Details

[Send Feedback](#)

Reserve Bank, 65 Martin Pl, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Photographs



List	Commonwealth Heritage List
Class	Historic
Legal Status	Listed place (22/06/2004)
Place ID	105456
Place File No	1/12/036/0432

Summary Statement of Significance

The Reserve Bank building (1964) designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Section, is highly significant in the development of post World War II multi storey office buildings in Australia. It is a significant example of a 1960s office building notable as being a well designed example of the International style; its construction using high quality Australian materials; steel and concrete construction; and interior design details and artworks. The building's significance has been retained through a major extension (1974-1980), recladding (1993) and internal refitting (Criteria A.4, D.2 & F.1).

The Reserve Bank building is of historical significance in its ability to demonstrate the changing functions and role of the Reserve Bank of Australia, particularly that of the head office, since 1964.

The International style of the building represents the post war cultural shift within the banking industry, away from the traditional architectural emphasis on strength and stability towards a more contemporary and international style (Criterion A.4).

Through its prestigious design and function as Australia's central bank, the building makes an important contribution to the streetscape and character of Martin Place, Macquarie Street and Phillip Street (Criterion E.1).

The two foyer art works are of historical and aesthetic significance. The artworks by Bim Hilder and Margel Hinder are significant examples of Australian modernist sculpture of this period by two significant artists, who were selected as the winners of design competitions by the Reserve Bank. The furnishings by Fred Ward are of historical and aesthetic significance. Designed for the building by Ward, who was one of the leaders in modern Australian industrial design at this time, the furnishings are of a simple and functional design which are now considered to be pieces of art in themselves (Criteria A.4, F. 1 & H.1).

The variety of moveable heritage items located throughout the building including furniture, china, flat wear, silverware, napery and accessories, pottery, tapestry and artworks are significant having been specifically designed or purchased for the building as well as being of artistic merit in their own right (Criterion F.1).

When constructed elements of the mechanical and electrical services within the building were considered advanced and innovative, and although many elements have been removed or substantially altered, their incorporation in the building is still of interest today, this included the fire sprinkler system, smoke detectors and fire alarms; interior and signage lighting; and airconditioning.

The provision of two residential flats, for use by visitors to the bank; squash courts; and firing range were relatively uncommon for the time (all removed 2001). The two doors to the main strongroom were at the time of construction the largest and most technically advanced in the southern hemisphere (Criteria A.4, B.2 & F.1).

The Reserve Bank head office building is associated with successive governors of the Reserve Bank: Dr. H. C. Coombs; J.G. Phillips (KBE); H.M.Knight (KBE DSC); R.A. Johnston (AC); B.W. Fraser and I.J. Macfarlane. The building is also associated with personnel of the Commonwealth Department of Works, Banks and Special Projects branch, responsible for the building's design in particular: C.McGrowther; Profesor H. I Ashworth; C.D. Osborne; R.M. Ure; F.C. Crocker; G. A. Rowe; as well as E.A. Watts (builders for both stages of construction) and Frederick Ward (furniture designer) (Criterion H.1).

The building has social significance being regarded by the Australian community as the home of the Reserve Bank function and the place where significant economic policy is carried out on behalf of the Nation (Criterion G.1).

(Australian Historic Themes: 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction; 3.18 Financing Australia; 7 Governing; 8.10.2 Creating visual arts; 8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings)

Official Values

Criterion A Processes

The Reserve Bank building (1964) designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Section, is highly significant in the development of post World War II multi storey office buildings in Australia. The building's significance has been retained through a major extension (1974-1980), recladding (1993) and internal refitting. The Reserve Bank building is of historical significance in its ability to demonstrate the changing functions and role of the Reserve Bank of Australia, particularly that of the head office, since 1964. The International style of the building represents the post war cultural shift within the banking industry, away from the traditional architectural emphasis on strength and stability towards a more contemporary and international style.

The two foyer art works are of historical and aesthetic significance. The artworks by Bim Hilder and Margel Hinder are significant examples of Australian modernist sculpture of this period by two significant artists, who were selected as the winners of design competitions by the Reserve Bank. The furnishings by Fred Ward are of historical and aesthetic significance. Designed for the building by Ward, who was one of the leaders in modern Australian industrial design at this time, the furnishings are of a simple and functional design which are now considered to be pieces of art in themselves.

When constructed elements of the mechanical and electrical services within the building were considered advanced and innovative, and although many elements have been removed or substantially altered, their incorporation in the building is still of interest today, this included the fire sprinkler system, smoke detectors and fire alarms; interior and signage lighting; and airconditioning.

The provision of two residential flats, for use by visitors to the bank; squash courts; and firing range were relatively uncommon for the time (all removed 2001). The two doors to the main strongroom were at the time of construction the largest and most technically advanced in the southern hemisphere.

Attributes

Original and subsequent fabric that demonstrates continuity of use by the Reserve Bank.

Criterion B Rarity

When constructed elements of the mechanical and electrical services within the building were considered advanced and innovative, and although many elements have been removed or substantially altered, their incorporation in the building is still of interest today, this included the fire sprinkler system, smoke detectors and fire alarms; interior and signage lighting; and airconditioning.

The provision of two residential flats, for use by visitors to the bank; squash courts; and firing range were relatively uncommon for the time (all removed 2001).

Attributes

Remnant evidence of original services, and remnant evidence of the former residential flats.

Criterion D Characteristic values

The Reserve Bank building (1964) designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Section, is highly significant in the development of post World War II multi storey office buildings in Australia. It is a significant example of a 1960s office building notable as being a well designed example of the International style; its construction using high quality Australian materials; steel and concrete construction; and interior design details and artworks. The building's significance has been retained through a major extension (1974-1980), recladding (1993) and internal refitting

Attributes

The architectural attributes that demonstrate the International Style.

Criterion E Aesthetic characteristics

Through its prestigious design and function as Australia's central bank, the building makes an important contribution to the streetscape and character of Martin Place, Macquarie Street and Phillip Street.

Attributes

The multi-storey form and the quality of external finishes to the building.

Criterion F Technical achievement

The Reserve Bank building is highly significant in the development of post World War II multi storey office buildings in Australia for its use of high quality Australian materials; steel and concrete construction; and interior design details and artworks.

The furnishings by Fred Ward are of historical and aesthetic significance. Designed for the building by Ward, who was one of the leaders in modern Australian industrial design at this time, the furnishings are of a simple and functional design which are now considered to be pieces of art in themselves

The variety of moveable heritage items located throughout the building including furniture, china, flat wear, silverware, napery and accessories, pottery, tapestry and artworks are significant having been specifically designed or purchased for the building as well as being of artistic merit in their own right.

When constructed elements of the mechanical and electrical services within the building were considered advanced and innovative, and although many elements have been removed or substantially altered, their incorporation in the building is still of interest today, this included the fire sprinkler system, smoke detectors and fire alarms; interior and signage lighting; and airconditioning.

The two doors to the main strongroom were at the time of construction the largest and most technically advanced in the southern hemisphere

Attributes

Technical aspects of its construction, mechanical and electrical services and strongroom doors, all furnishings and the moveable objects of design listed above.

Criterion G Social value

The building has social significance being regarded by the Australian community as the home of the Reserve Bank function and the place where significant economic policy is carried out on behalf of the Nation.

Attributes

Continued use of the building by the Reserve Bank for the above purpose.

Criterion H Significant people

The artworks by Bim Hilder and Margel Hinder are significant examples of Australian modernist sculpture of this period by two significant artists, who were selected as the winners of design competitions by the Reserve Bank. The furnishings by Fred Ward are of historical and aesthetic significance. Designed for the building by Ward, who was one of the leaders in modern Australian industrial design at this time, the furnishings are of a simple and functional design which are now considered to be pieces of art in themselves

The Reserve Bank head office building is associated with successive governors of the Reserve Bank: Dr. H. C. Coombs; J.G. Phillips (KBE); H.M.Knight (KBE DSC); R.A. Johnston (AC); B.W. Fraser and I.J. Macfarlane. The building is also associated with personnel of the Commonwealth Department of Works, Banks and Special Projects branch, responsible for the building's design in particular: C.McGrowther; Profesor H. I Ashworth; C.D. Osborne; R.M. Ure; F.C. Crocker; G. A. Rowe; as well as E.A. Watts (builders for both stages of construction) and Frederick Ward (furniture designer).

Attributes

The artworks of Bim and Marget Hinder, evidence of use by successive Governors of the Reserve Bank, and remaining Fred Ward furniture.

Description

HISTORY OF THE SITE

Martin Place was originally a small lane called Moore Street which ran between George Street and Pitt Street and was widened into a substantial thoroughfare as part of the setting for the General Post Office in 1891. In 1921, Moore Street was renamed Martin Place. In 1926, the Municipal Council of Sydney purchased a number of properties in Macquarie and Phillip Streets in anticipation of the extension of Martin Place to Macquarie Street, including those properties which would later be demolished for the Reserve Bank head office building. After Martin Place was formed the residential land on either side of the street was auctioned in 1936 however, the properties between Phillip and Macquarie Streets were passed in and did not sell until after WWII. The closure of Martin Place to traffic occurred between 1968 and 1978 and it became a pedestrianised civic plaza.

HISTORY OF THE RESERVE BANK

The Commonwealth Bank of Australia was established by legislation in 1911. The main functions of the bank were to undertake general banking and savings bank activities. In 1945 the bank's powers were formally widened to include exchange control and the administration of monetary and banking policy with the Commonwealth Bank Act and the Banking Act. The Reserve Bank Act 1959 preserved the original corporate body under the name of the Reserve Bank of Australia to carry on the central banking functions of the Commonwealth Bank, but separated commercial banking and savings banking activities into the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The Reserve Bank has since then been Australia's central bank with its own Board, Governor and Staff.

The Reserve Bank has two broad responsibilities - monetary policy and the maintenance of financial stability, including the stability of the payments system. The Bank's powers are vested in the Reserve Bank Board and the Payments System Board. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Bank is an active participant in financial markets and the payments system. It is also responsible for the printing and issuing of Australian currency notes. As well as being a policy-making body, the Reserve Bank is a large financial institution which provides selected banking and registry services to Federal and State Government customers and some overseas official institutions. Its assets include Australia's holdings of gold and foreign exchange. The Bank is wholly owned by the Australian Commonwealth Government.

A requirement of the Reserve Bank Act 1959 was that the head office of the bank must not be in the same building as the head office of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) or any other bank. In line with this requirement, separate buildings were constructed for the state capitals Darwin and Canberra. The Bank is currently comprised of a Head Office, located in Sydney, branches in Adelaide and Canberra, regional offices in Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth and representative offices in London and New York.

RESERVE BANK SITE

The land on which the Reserve Bank is built, was in the 19th century occupied on by the first Wesleyan Chapel built in 1821 and subsequently used as a Unitarian Chapel in 1850, a Wesleyan School House also built in 1821 and purchased in 1843 by the Roman Catholic Church to be used as a school (demolished c1876). There was also a free standing Georgian house occupied by a solicitor and a Georgian cottage.

By the mid 1870s following the demolition of the church and school a row of three, 3 storey Italianate terrace houses known as "Lucretia Terrace" was erected (c1876). The Georgian house was demolished and two, four storey late Victorian terrace houses were erected (1891). In c1875 the Georgian cottage was demolished and the cottage next door and two, three storey terraces were built, one of these was demolished in 1921 and a three storey brick building known as "Whitehall" was erected on the site.

In 1957, the Director-General of Works (Dr Lodge) suggested to the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank that the site at the top of Martin Place, owned by the City Council would be suitable for the construction of the head office of the Reserve Bank, and it was subsequently purchased for this purpose. The Bank's administrators called for a design for the building which was contemporary and international, to exemplify a post war cultural shift away from an architectural emphasis on strength and stability towards a design that would signify the bank's ability to adapt its policies and techniques to the changing needs of its clientele. Before plans were drawn up representatives of the Reserve Bank and the Commonwealth Department of Works made detailed studies overseas into Reserve Bank planning and organisation.

The Sydney Reserve Bank building was designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Division (Sydney) in 1959 under the direction of a Design Committee consisting of: C. Mc Growther, Superintendent of Reserve Bank Premises; H.I. Ashworth, Consulting Architect (Sydney University); C.D. Osborne, Director of Architecture Department of Works; R.M. Ure, Chief of Preliminary Planning, Department of Works; F.C. Crocker Architect in charge, Bank Section, Dept. of Works; and G.A. Rowe, Supervising Architect, Bank Section, Dept. of Works. The consulting engineer was D. Rudd and Partners and the builder was E.A. Watts Pty Limited. The site was cleared in 1961 and the building was completed by 1964 ready for occupation in January 1965. It was built to accommodate more than 1850 people at a cost of ten million dollars.

In a press release on the completion of the Reserve Bank headquarters building in Sydney, the then governor, Dr H.C. Coombs highlighted the contemporary design of the building: "The massive walls and pillars used in the past to emphasise the strength and permanence in bank buildings are not seen in the new head office... Here, contemporary design and conceptions express our conviction that a central bank should develop with growing knowledge and a changing institutional structure and adapt its policies and techniques to the changing community within which it works".

The Reserve Bank design is characteristic of buildings of this era on less constrained sites, where the architect utilised the opportunity to define the base from the shaft using a podium. The building was constructed using a steel frame supporting reinforced concrete floor slabs (using lightweight concrete). This was a solution to the need to produce an economical structural system using a combination of steel and concrete.

The materials used in construction of the Reserve Bank were to be of Australian origin and manufacture. Externally, maintenance and durability determined the choice of marble, granite, aluminium and glass. The facade of the tower had the structural and functional columns expressed as vertical Imperial black granite shafts with Wombeyan marble spandrel panels. The white marble faced pre-cast concrete spandrel panels alternated with recessed windows between the granite columns. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor perimeter beams were faced with Wombeyan marble with a recessed glazed screen wall to the office areas behind a balcony.

Internally decorative ceilings which emphasised the structural bays appeared in buildings of the 1960s and were used in the Reserve Bank. Impressive aluminium decorative ceiling panels emphasised the structural bays of the ground floor public space and lift lobby. The entry and forecourt were paved in Narranderra Grey marble, marble being the most popular stone throughout this period. The ground floor lift lobby walls and internal walls facing the forecourt were clad in Wombeyan marble. The east and west walls of the entry vestibule were clad in Imperial black granite.

Prestige areas for the conduct of important company business in buildings of this period generally had ceilings treated in the same manner as general office ceilings, the exception being the board rooms and executive areas, as is the case in the Reserve Bank where shallow curved plaster vaults enriched the space. The floor of the board room was paved in Wombeyan white marble. Specially woven heavy duty wool carpet manufactured in Australia was used in the general office and executive areas.

Walls of the period were often timber panelled, in the Reserve Bank special areas had demountable timber panelling in Queensland black bean and Tasmanian blackwood.

The ground floor, and sometimes mezzanine or first floor levels, of many buildings of this period accommodated service based commerce. Often this activity represented a public interface for the owner/occupants of the building. The Reserve Bank was constructed with a four storey podium divided into two upper floors with projecting horizontal fins and two floors of full height recessed glazing to the mezzanine below. This contained the two storey public area and the banking chamber in the mezzanine over. Also included in public areas of a number of office buildings of this period was an auditorium or theatrette, and one was included in the Sydney Reserve Bank.

Also included were two residential flats to accommodate senior executives travelling from interstate, a relatively uncommon feature for office buildings of this period.

The building was the central distribution point for notes and coin for NSW and Papua New Guinea and the basement included the vaults or strongrooms. They were innovative in their use of concrete and metal sheet to create an impenetrable surround for the strong rooms. Also of interest are the metal strong room doors significant for their size and sophistication.

The Reserve Bank was a prestigious and desirable place to work. There was a strong staff hierarchy and senior positions had considerable community status. This status is demonstrated in physical terms by the design of executive and staff areas in the building. In the 1960s the building was known to provide more extensive staff facilities compared with other contemporary buildings. In this building they consisted of the cafeteria, executive and Board dining rooms, the staff lounge, the staff library, a medical suite, squash courts and associated amenities, an auditorium and an observation deck on the 20th level for the use of staff and ex staff. A Firing Range was provided for the training of security guards. The provision of the Squash Courts and the Medical Centre would appear to be uncommon facilities provided in multi storey building of this period.

Care was often taken in selecting finishes to areas of staff relaxation, special ceiling finishes were occasionally applied, such as in the case of the Reserve Bank third floor cafeteria where the ceiling was plaster domes in a square grid. Occasionally stone veneers were applied to the walls of these areas, such as in the staff lounge of the Reserve Bank, where slate was used as the wall finish.

The service areas were designed for ease of cleaning and minimal maintenance with vinyl and ceramic tile finishes popular for both floors and walls. The Reserve Bank used ceramic tiles and vinyl to line the walls of service areas and vaults. The floors of the computer and service areas were of vinyl. The Reserve Bank used Terrazzo as a floor finish in the toilets. Terrazzo was often used in this way in more prestigious 1960s developments.

The Reserve Bank is also notable for the incorporation of a fire sprinkler system, smoke detectors and fire alarms throughout. All working areas of the building were airconditioned, and notably, the ceiling in the cafeteria was perforated to form a ventilated ceiling which acts as a low velocity supply air plenum.

The lighting of the Reserve Bank was also notable. Wall washers were used in the Reserve Bank, where a perimeter strip of recessed fluorescents served to visually detach the ceiling from the wall in the passages and reception area. The opposite effect, that gained by concealing strip fluorescents where they would throw light upwards onto the ceiling, was more uncommon, but was used in the office of the Governor of the Reserve Bank. Recessed down lights, both fluorescent and incandescent, were a popular means of lighting areas such as lift lobbies, passages and other public spaces where a softer light than that provided in the general office areas was appropriate, as was the case in the Reserve Bank. Of note was the use of recessed downlights in the cafeteria, set into the interstices of the square grid formed by the shallow cast plaster domes. The lighting of a decorative ceiling was a further area of exploration by architects and lighting engineers of the period. Usually in the major public area of an office building, elaborate decorative ceilings could be either integrated into the lighting design or the subject of it. The latter was used in the Reserve Bank banking chamber public areas where the lighting is the focus of the decorative ceiling bays. The exterior Reserve Bank emblem was lit by shaped cold cathode tubes which follow the outline of the emblem.

The detailed aesthetic design input into the building extended beyond the building structure and facade treatments and interior design and included ancillary fixtures, fittings and objects for use specifically within the building. These included art works specially commissioned for the public spaces, furniture, china, flat wear, silverware, napery and accessories specifically selected or designed for use within the building. The interior decor and furniture were designed by the Department of Works R. M. Ure and I. Managan, with Frederick Ward, Industrial designer.

Interior furnishings including tables, chairs, couches, credenzas and desks were designed by Fred Ward. Fred Ward (1900-1990) was one of the leaders in modern Australian industrial design of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. During the 1950s Ward was head of the Australian National University's design department. Around 1961 he resigned from ANU to set up private practice, after being invited by the Reserve Bank Governor Dr H.C. Coombs to undertake the furnishings of several Reserve Bank buildings including Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide and Port Moresby. His furnishings are of a simple and functional design which are now considered to be pieces of art in themselves. Ward also designed the furniture for numerous other important buildings including University House, Canberra, the Academy of Science Building, Canberra and the National Library, Canberra (with Arthur Robinson).

To further enhance the prestige of the building works of art by Australian artists and sculptors were used. Following an Australia wide competition the first prize winners were commissioned to execute their works for the Reserve Bank. The lift foyer features a wall relief by Bim Hilder and the free standing podium sculpture in Martin Place is by Margel Hinder. Both sculptors were actively engaged in the post war period designing works for multi-storied office buildings and there was a high degree of co-operation between the artists and architects at this period. Prestige buildings of this period generally commissioned public art highlighting the high profile of the buildings in company marketing strategies and also possibly arising from benevolent policies of these companies.

Bim (Vernon Arthur) Hilder (1909-1990) trained at the East Sydney Technical college and first exhibited his sculptures in 1945. Hilder had worked as a carpenter for Walter Burley Griffin. His murals were styled "wall enrichments in metal". Aside from the Reserve Bank mural (1962-1964) he also designed the large mural on the facade of the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre (1963) and a memorial fountain to Walter Burley Griffin in Willoughby City area (1965). His work is represented in the Art Gallery of NSW and the University of New England.

Margel Hinder (1906-1995) was American born moving later to NSW. Along with her husband Frank, they contributed to the development of Modernist Australian art focusing on abstraction. They were contemporaries of the Lewers, Ralph Balson, Yvonne Audette, Carl Plate, and Tony Tuckson. Margel Hinder's work is represented in every major Australian Gallery. Her major commissions include the James Cook Memorial Fountain, Newcastle (1966), Northpoint Tower (1970) (now at Macquarie University, Sydney); Woden City Plaza, Canberra; the Western Assurance Co. Building, Sydney (1960); and the State Office Block, Sydney (demolished). Hinder received an Order of Australia in 1979.

Clay from the excavations for the Bank from its initial construction and c1974 extension was set aside for the production of a series of commemorative hand crafted pots. These were commissioned from Henry A. Le Grand of Canberra, some were purchased by officers of the Bank and the others were used as decorative elements in the executive suites and remain in the building.

A specially woven tapestry, 10ft by 5ft for the Board Room was designed by Margo Lewers and woven in France at the Aubusson workshop in 1968. Entitled "Wide Penetration" the abstract design in blue and yellow was woven in a limited edition of three copies. The tapestry is no longer hung in the Board Room but remains in the Bank's extensive art collection.

A second specially commissioned tapestry was made in 1988 by Sue Batten for display in the Board Room. The tapestry was woven at the Victorian tapestry workshop and the design was inspired by the Bank's Charter and includes elements from the paper 5 dollar note. The tapestry is now hung in the currency display area on the ground floor.

A series of paintings by Australian artists were purchased by the Bank over a period of time and found their permanent home in the executive offices, foyers and hallways of the bank.

On Macquarie Street was a setback created to enable the establishment of a formal Australian Native garden which was designed as the result of a public competition won by Melbourne architect, Malcolm Munro. The garden was flanked on either side by shallow pools and had ornamental gravel surrounds. It was planted with Australian shrubs. This garden feature has now been replaced with landscaping including formal box hedges and flowering shrubs.

ALTERATIONS TO THE BUILDING

Between 1974 and 1980 the Reserve Bank was extended to the south, this extension to the original building involved substantial additions on each floor to incorporate the adjacent site to the south. The site consisted of two properties Washington House and Federation House, both properties were demolished for the extension.

In November 1993 the original facades were overclad. The original Wombeyan marble cladding was deteriorating due to a combination of weathering and pollution. The new facade was a combination of Australian and Italian stone, with the original Imperial Black granite from South Australia being used for the Columns and Italian Bianco Sardo grey granite for the spandrels. The work was designed by Arup Facade Engineering and was designed to have a minimum visual impact on the building. At the same time the eastern end of the ground floor was modified from a banking chamber to form the public exhibition area.

COMPARISON

In addition to the Head Office, branch offices were constructed in the central business districts of each of the state capital cities, as well as in Canberra and Darwin during the 1960s and 1970s. A number of purpose designed office buildings were erected to designs by the Commonwealth Department of Works Banks and Special Projects Branch as part of the initial establishment of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

The buildings in Darwin and Brisbane have been previously sold. The Reserve Bank still owns the buildings in Perth and Hobart (to be sold 2001), Adelaide, Canberra, and Melbourne. The buildings constructed throughout Australia by the Bank during the 1960s reflected a confidence in things Australian and in the future.

The Canberra Branch building of the Reserve Bank (RNE 19704) was the result of an architectural competition, managed by the NCDC. Howlett and Bailey from Perth won the competition from 131 submissions. It was constructed by Civic and Civic and completed in 1965. Also of a contemporary design, the Canberra building is in the Stripped classical style. The architectural qualities of the Canberra Reserve Bank building rely on the lightness of the structure, the regular structural pattern, the contrast between the marble faced columns and beams and the receding pattern of the glazing. The vertical effect imparted by the columns extending over two levels gives the low rise building a sense of height and is most effective. The columns are cruciform in plan and support a beam carefully separated from the column. The glazed curtain wall is supported on the beam and uses aluminium mullions. The very strong, blank wall of the secure ground floor cash handling area on the external south eastern side of the building is another powerful reminder of its modernist qualities where the internal function gains external expression. Internally the most important space is the banking chamber. It is a symmetrical design with a central entrance under a canopy with black slate entrance floor, converting into carpet once inside the room.

The Reserve Bank, Adelaide, (RNE 101627) was built in 1963-65 to a design by the Commonwealth Department of Works architects C. D. Osborne, R. M. Ure, G. A. Row and F. J. Crocker. It is constructed from largely Australian building materials of high quality including Wombeyan marble, South Australian black granite and Victorian Harcourt grey granite. Of particular interest is the building's inward curving wall to both the east and west elevations.

DESCRIPTION

The Reserve Bank, Sydney is located in a prominent corner position fronting Martin Place between Macquarie Street and Phillip Street.

The Reserve Bank 1964, is a refined example of the Post War International style. The building is a 22 storey high rise tower with three level basement. It is constructed of a steel frame concrete encased with reinforced concrete slabs. The building contains some unusually long cantilever beams on the 1st to 3rd floors. The Reserve Bank provides a notable example of a characteristic of buildings of this era on less constrained sites, where the architect utilised the opportunity to define the base from the shaft using a podium. The Reserve Bank has a four storey podium divided into two upper floors with projecting horizontal fins and two floors of full height recessed glazing to the mezzanine below. The building is entered via a bronzed railed grey and black granite terrace with steps to accommodate the site slope and adjacent footpath.

The tower section above the second floor is set back from the site boundaries on the three street frontages. The rectangular building floor plate surrounds a central bank of

lifts. The tower is capped with recessed balconies to level 20. Above this is a roof terrace with full height glazing and extensive cantilever roof.

The facade treatment of the building is distinctive and derives from both the modular design created to allow office subdivision which is expressed in the window mullions and the use of materials including the extensive use of natural stone. The vertical columns faced in black granite and aluminium define the eight bays of the tower and extend up to form the supports for the balconies. The use of black polished granite cladding was a popular choice of the time, the Reserve Bank used Imperial Black granite for the columns. The subdivision of the facade into smaller vertical bays was characteristic of buildings where sun control was a central concern. Between the columns spandrel panels in grey granite alternated with recessed glazing. The glazing panels stop short of the corner.

The basements contain vehicular access areas, the main switchboard as well as the three main strongrooms and a series of voucher stores and cash handling areas. Originally they also contained extensive plant areas. The Strong Rooms are located in the basement originally used for the storage of bullion and cash. They have a degree of technical significance for their innovative use of concrete and metal sheet to create an impenetrable surround for the strong rooms. The metal strong room doors are significant for their size and sophistication.

The ground floor is symmetrical around the central main vestibule which is a two storey volume with a general banking chamber on the western side and a public display area on the eastern side. The display area replaces the former Bonds and Stock Banking Chamber of the original design. The ground level entrance foyer/vestibule remains substantially intact including internal finishes of Wombeyan marble to the south wall, granite floor, east and west Imperial granite walls including high level glazing, anodised aluminium ceiling and the south wall relief by Bim Hilder. Alterations include the introduction of a security desk, new entrance doors, and reconfigured glazing.

The mezzanine is set back from Martin Place frontage creating an atrium over the ground floor. With the first and second floors it forms a podium from which the office tower springs. The third floor housed the staff amenities area with a staff cafeteria and kitchen, an auditorium and staff library and a staff lounge outside the lift foyer. These areas were originally designed with distinctive character which has now been altered by later refurbishments. The eleventh floor contains the Board Room (featuring a marble floor), Board Dining Room, Board Members Common Room and Reception and meeting areas. The twelfth floor contains the Governor's Suite, reception areas and executive suites.

The sixteenth floor housed two residential flats, the flats have been removed in recent works. The floor also included the medical centre. The seventeenth to nineteenth floors held two squash courts and an observation gallery was located along the northern facade. These were all removed in recent works. The twentieth floor houses staff amenities. Most lift foyers are marble lined, Level 3 is timber.

Some of the original furniture designed for the building including tables, chairs, couches, credenzas and desks remain within the public spaces, offices and special areas of the building.

Public Art: The main entrance foyer features an expansive wall relief by Bim Hilder. It is made up of many separate small parts of beaten copper and bronze. One section of it incorporates a six inch piece of quartz crystal uncovered by geologist Ben Flounders in South Australia's Corunna Hills. Another displays semi precious stones. The Martin Place forecourt features a free standing podium sculpture by Margel Hinder. The Podium sculpture is a 26ft high free standing sculpture. It is unnamed and has no banking reference, but was designed to complement the architecture of the building. It is welded sheet copper on a stainless steel structural frame with molten copper decoration. The original design Maquette is also located in the Bank. Other important elements include the brass lettering text of the Bank's 1959 charter set on a black granite wall in the main foyer; the opening commemorative plaque; the Bank emblem originally located on the western parapet wall of the building constructed in cast aluminium with green enamelled finish designed by Gordon Andrews (now removed); the portrait of Dr H. C Coombs, the first Governor by Louis Kahan purchased in 1964.

The Westpac (former Bank of NSW) building erected on the opposite corner to the Reserve Bank occupies a similar footprint and has a similar mass, providing a gateway effect at the top of Martin Place.

History Not Available

Condition and Integrity

In general the building retains its early appearance and character despite having undergone considerable alterations and modification. Internal finishes have been considerably altered in many locations, and have been replaced with new finishes. Internally the building has been remodelled at the upper office levels. The boardroom and the lift foyers have remained largely intact. The ground level double volume spaces are intact, however there has been substantial alteration to furniture and fittings. The original marble ceiling panel has been replaced in metal.

In 1980 a major extension to the south was undertaken, the addition replicated the original building in height, form, and finishes.

From 1991-1995 upgrading of offices and basement areas, removal of asbestos requiring the stripping of all internal finishes, upgrading of building services and fire protection facilities, new ceilings, lighting and carpets and the extensive restoration and recladding of the external facade of the building.

The Parliamentary Committee on Public Works has approved changes to the building (2000) included conversion of the staff cafeteria, auditorium and staff facilities (level 3) to office accommodation; demolition of the two residential flats and creation of new cafeteria space; removal of the two squash courts and plant equipment (level 17) and conversion to office use including lowering of the high level windowsills to the north elevation and enlarging of existing recessed marble panels to windows on the south facade; conversion of level 19 ancillary space to office use; and removal of the Firing Range.

The building is well maintained and is in excellent condition (2001)

Location

65 Martin Place, corners with Macquarie and Phillip Streets, Sydney.

Bibliography

Architecture in Australia "Reserve Bank of Australia" September 1966.

Australian Heritage Commission, Register of the National Estate, Place Reports for Reserve Bank, Canberra and Reserve Bank, Adelaide.

City of Sydney, Heritage Database Inventory Report "Reserve Bank".

Drill Hall Gallery Catalogue "Fred Ward: A selection of Furniture and Drawings" Drill Hall Gallery: 2 May-16 June 1996.

Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners Pty Ltd. "The Reserve Bank 65 Martin Place Sydney 2000 Conservation Management Plan" June 2001.

Proposed headquarters, Sydney, for the Reserve Bank of Australia. 1959. Folios F 725.24099441

Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Register of Twentieth Century Buildings of Significance: "Heritage Inventory Report: Reserve Bank, 2000".

Staples, M "From Pillar to Post: Regional heritage and the erasure of Modernist architecture" in Rural Society Journal Volume 9 No 1, 1999.

Taylor, J. "Post World War II Multistoried Office Buildings in Australia (1945-1967)" Report. For the Australian Heritage Commission 1994.

Woodhead International & Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners Architects Pty Limited. "Revised Statement of Heritage Impact: Reserve Bank of Australia- Head Office Consolidation, 65 Martin Place, Sydney, New South Wales". Revised May 2001.

Other sources of information

Bloomfield Galleries: Information on Margel Hinder

Information on Fred Ward from the Drill Hall Gallery.

Reserve Bank of Australia Web site www.rba.gov.au

Report Produced Fri Mar 3 11:36:29 2017



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

APA Building

Item details

Name of item: APA Building
Other name/s: Lindt Café
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Commercial
Category: Commercial Office/Building
Location: Lat: -33.8680115738 Long: 151.2109010560
Primary address: 53-63 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Parish: St James
County: Cumberland
Local govt. area: Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council: Metropolitan

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOTS	1-11		CP/SP	73146

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
53-63 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney	St James	Cumberland	Primary Address

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
Marshall Investments Pty Ltd & 53 Martin Place Pty Ltd1	Private	

Statement of significance:

The construction of the APA building marked the beginning of the development of the eastern end of Martin Place and Phillip Street as a major commercial and professional precinct. It was designed and constructed for the former Australian Provincial Assurance Association Ltd on a block purchased to construct a new headquarters for the association.

The APA Building exhibits a high level of architectural quality in terms of its proportions, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. The building was designed to formalise and define the new major civic thoroughfare of Martin Place. The structural system utilised in the building facilitated a very short construction time and reduced noise problems.

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: David W. King
Builder/Maker: Kell and Rigby
Construction years: 1936-1936

Physical description: The APA Building occupies a site with a frontage of 123 feet to the south side of Martin Place. The block extends through from Elizabeth to Phillip Streets, has a frontage on these two streets of 57 feet and the main entry is located on the central axis of the Martin Place elevation.

The building is limited by the 150 feet height limit in force at the time. It consists of 12 main floors, a lower ground floor and basement and a set back roof (12th) floor with an intermediate tower floor and lift motor room over.

The facade is polished red granite to the lower ground and ground levels with a combination of moulded and extruded glazed terra-cotta blocks to the exterior of the upper levels, including the roof (12th) floor and tower. The terra-cotta blocks are glazed in a light cream tone splattered with white and are supplemented at the roof parapet level with a triple row of deep green glazed terracotta bands. The terra cotta blocks were supplied by Wunderlich Limited and were chosen for their durability, permanence of colour and self cleaning character of material.

The external form of the building is dictated by the grid of 9ft 6in. This is expressed externally as a truncated triangular pilaster, which runs in an unbroken line from an expressed balcony form at the level of the 2nd floor to the facade setback at the level of the 12th (or roof) floor. These pilasters continue in an abbreviated form against the face of the 12th floor setback, the overall effect being one of a major vertical emphasis and one of symmetry.

The windows to the main office floors are of particular interest, being A.S. Spiers patent box frame types of Queensland Maple, which allow the sashes to be reversed for cleaning. Steel windows are used to the light well of the building, providing some measure of daylight to the toilets, main stair and rear office areas.

The main entry is from Martin Place and is via a set of trachyte steps to a glass automatic entry doorset. The original timber entry doors of inlaid Queensland maple are in their original positions. The entry opening is surmounted by a cast bronze lintel bearing the inscription 'No. 53' and has surface mounted letter to the granite over stating 'APA Building'.

The main entry foyer walls are of cream Botticino marble with a skirting and architraves of dark green Verte Des Alpes marble. An imposing pair of green scagliola columns with original bronze-framed glass doors and top glazing flank each side of the foyer. The ceiling is of plaster with a heavily corbelled cornice and a domed recess for the central light. The original bronze lift doors, set into the south wall of the foyer, have been painted over.

The main stair features treads, risers and landings of white marble, a handrail of Verte Des Alpes marble with solid balustrades of cream scagliola and walls of cream scagliola. (Romey 1990:4-9)

The most significant aspect of the structural system utilised for the APA Building was the speed at which the steel and concrete composite system allowed the work to proceed. The use of bolted structural steel not only reduced the noise level of the process, considered a major problem at the time when riveting was still common, but allowed for the steel frame to be erected in a period of fifteen weeks. Equally impressive was the curing of the concrete which was poured at the rate of two floors in five working days.

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential:

Physical condition is good. Archaeological potential is low.

Date condition updated:01 Oct 97

Modifications and dates:

1936 - constructed

early 1940s - western half of the roof (12th floor) completed and caretakers flat removed

mid 1940s - removal of detailed lift lobby

1961 - façade thoroughly cleaned and minor alterations

mid 1960s - new doorway built into the existing window opening on the corner of Phillip Street and Martin Place. Lower ground floor windows to Elizabeth Street and Martin Place enlarged and reveals trimmed with black granite. New aluminium doors and glazing installed into the openings and original awning on the Elizabeth Street facade removed.

late 1970s - major part of the building air-conditioned and lift lobbies refurbished

1989 - remaining APA signage removed with the exception of that over the main entry.

Current use:

Office Space

Former use:

Office space and restaurant

History

Historical notes: The development of a new headquarters building for the Australian Provincial Assurance Association Ltd in Martin Place was intrinsically connected to the development of Martin Place itself. When on April 8, 1936, the extension of Martin Place to Macquarie Street was opened, a series of development sites along each side of the new thoroughfare were made available by the Sydney Municipal Council. The first two sites sold were those between Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street. The northern block was sold to the Rural Bank of NSW and the southern block was purchased by the Australian Provincial Assurance Company Ltd on May 23, 1935, for the sum of 83,000 pounds.

David W. King, a young architect, was appointed to prepare a design for the project and to oversee the construction. The brief was to erect premises to the full building height, and to design in conformity with that of the surrounding buildings.

The contract was let to builders Kell and Rigby following the calling of tenders in February 1936 and construction began in early June 1936, subsequent to five months of preliminary work and excavation.

The structural systems selected for the project was that in common use at that time, a structural steel frame with reinforced concrete floor slabs and concrete encasement to the steel work. This composite systems allowed for extremely rapid construction of the superstructure and work on the steel frame commenced on June 3rd 1936 and was completed on September 17th, a period of fifteen weeks.

The building was opened in May 1937 and was considered successful by the press of the period. The first tenant was of course, the Australian Provincial Assurance Association who occupied the ground floor, three quarters of the first floor and all of the basement, but other floors were taken by the legal firm of Allen, Allen and Hemsley, by a government department and several smaller organisations, including the architectural practice of David King himself. The lower ground floor was occupied for many years by a quality restaurant (Cahill's) with direct access from Elizabeth Street via steps.

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, many of the tenants, including the APA, relocated to other premises and the Department of Manpower and Industry effectively took over the building. Exceptions to this move were the practices of both Allen, Allen and Hemsly, and David W. King. It was during this period that the western half of the twelfth floor was completed. This level had previously been completed at the eastern end only, due to the 150 foot high limit affecting the building differentially in regard to the change of level between Elizabeth and Phillip Streets. The eastern end had been used as a caretaker's flat, with the western half utilised as a roof garden.

After 1945 the APA resumed occupation of the building and were to remain in residence until 1989.

In 1987 the APA which was undergoing restructuring finally sold the building to Noden Pty Ltd.

In August 1989 the building was sold to the Charter Property Group. (Romey 1990:2-4)


In December 2014 the Lindt Chocolate Cafe on the ground floor of the Phillip Street frontage was the scene of a siege on 15-16 December 2014, when a lone gunman held staff and customers as hostages. The siege resulted in the death of two hostages, Mr Tori Johnson and Ms Katrina Dawson, and also the death of the gunman Man Haron Monis. After the siege, memorial flower bouquets filled nearby areas of Martin Place and many Sydneysiders came to Martin Place to mourn and reflect. Subsequent memorial services were held in the city at the nearby St Mary's Cathedral and St James' Church, and condolence books were set up in other Lindt cafes.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

7. Governing-Governing	Defence-Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation	Involvement with the Second World War-
------------------------	--	--


Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The construction of the APA building marked the beginning of the development of the eastern end of Martin Place and Phillip Street as a major commercial and professional precinct. It was designed and constructed for the former Australian Provincial Assurance Association Ltd on a block purchased to construct a new headquarters for the association. The Association subsequently remained in the building for over fifty years. The building represents a brief period of economic expansion between the end of the depression and the Second World War. The architect David W. King occupied a suite in the building for over thirty years and was largely responsible for ongoing maintenance and alterations to the building during this time. (Romey 1990:36)
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The APA Building exhibits a high level of architectural quality in terms of its proportions, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. The building was designed to formalise and define the new major civic thoroughfare of Martin Place. The building presents a uniform and harmonious composition around the three sides of its block. (Romey 1990:35)
SHR Criteria e) [Research potential]	The structural system utilised in the building facilitated a very short construction time and reduced noise problems. The plan of the building and use of windows and light well enabled a high level of efficiency in terms of natural lighting and ventilation. (Romey 1990:35)
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The APA Building is the last remaining example in Martin Place of what was a consistent group of structures exhibiting a conformity of scale, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. (Romey 1990:35)
Integrity/Intactness:	The main fabric of the building has survived largely unaltered since its construction in 1937. (Romey 1990:35)
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act - Site Specific Exemptions	<p>Record converted from HIS events</p> <p>Order Under Section 57(2) to exempt the following activities from Section 57(1):</p> <p>(a) The maintenance of any building or item on the site where maintenance means the continuous protective care of existing materials.</p> <p>(b) alterations to the interior of the building, except insofar as such works would affect-</p> <p>- the Martin Place entrance foyer;</p> <p>- the external appearance of the building;</p> <p>(c) The minor repair of the building where minor repair means the repair of materials and includes replacement of minor components such as individual bricks where these have been damaged beyond reasonable repair or are missing. The replacement should be of the same material, colour, texture, form and design as the original it replaces.</p> <p>(d) Change of use;</p> <p>(e) Subdivision</p>	Jan 19 1990
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p>	Sep 5 2008

			<p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p> <p>Minister for Planning</p> <p>Sydney, 11 July 2008</p> <p>To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00682	02 Apr 99	27	1546
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00682	19 Jan 90	11	
Local Environmental Plan	CSH LEP 4		07 Apr 00		

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written	Peter Romey	1990	Conservation Plan for APA Building	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office
Database number: 5045409
File number: S90/03181, HC 33520, 10/20759

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

MLC Building

Item details

Name of item: MLC Building
Other name/s: Mutual Life & Assurance Building
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Commercial
Category: Commercial Office/Building
Location: Lat: -33.8673657728 Long: 151.2096236000
Primary address: 42-46 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area: Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council: Metropolitan

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	1		DP	83642

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
42-46 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

The former MLC Building is aesthetically significant as one of the best inter-war commercial office buildings in Sydney, and the best example in Australia of the exterior use of Egyptian derived motifs in such buildings.

Its quality of design and use of materials make it one of the principal contributors to the architectural character of Martin Place which is recognised as one of Sydney's finest urban spaces.

The building contains a substantially intact insurance chamber and relocated boardroom, ante-room and lift lobby and relocated remnants of other architectural features. The former MLC Building is historically significant as one of a small group (about a dozen) of major commercial office buildings constructed in Sydney during the second half of the 1930s. It is associated with the well known Melbourne architects Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, and as the winner of a design competition, reflects the architectural taste of the period. (RAIA 2008)

Date significance updated: 16 Oct 08

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Bates Smart & McCutcheon (Sir W P Osborn McCutcheon)
Builder/Maker: Concrete Constructions Ltd.
Construction years: 1936-1938

Physical description: The former MLC Building occupies a prominent position on the corner of Martin Place and Castlereagh Streets, Sydney. The steel-framed building was erected to a height of 150 ft. (49.3 m), the maximum allowable in Sydney at the time, although the tower rose another 50 ft. (16.5m) higher. Externally the upper floors are clad in buff Wondabyne Sandstone (Wallace 1971) supplied by Hawkesbury Sandstone Limited.

The base of the building is of "Rob Roy Red" from Sodwalls Quarry (Wallace 1971). The stone has a tooled finish with a vertical polished scalloped polished border next to the window mullions. Polished Rose Red granite is used for the plinth course, running beneath the windows and around the doorways. The emblem of the Society has been incorporated into the detail over the main entrance from Martin Place and Castlereagh Streets. The granite was

supplied by the firm Loveridge and Hudson Ltd.

The windows are arranged in pairs between wide piers with slender mullions between the windows. The innovative spandrel panels between the windows were enamelled fluted steel panels, the flutes running horizontally.

It contains other architectural features of note, including the polished granite surrounds to the lift doors at ground floor level, and two pairs of large bronze doors to both entrances of the building (granite surrounds were re-erected around new lifts).

A relief sculpture on the prominent tower above the corner of Martin Place and Castlereagh Street depicting the company's logo 'Strength in Unity' a man attempting unsuccessfully to break up a bundle of rods. This emblem is prominent on all facades and on the lobby floor.

Internally the building originally included eleven floors above ground level, part of the ground floor and the whole of the upper five floors being devoted to the activities of the Company, the others being available for letting. 'Princes' Restaurant (now demolished) occupied the basement level while the sub-basement accommodated air conditioning plant and other services. A caretakers flat was included on the tenth floor.

Most of the floors were left open so that partitions could be erected as required. On floors 1 to 5 a central corridor divided lettable spaces. The ground floor incorporated an insurance chamber on the Martin Place/Castlereagh Street corner and three lettable spaces. The executive offices of the company were located on the 9th floor, and were entered through a lift lobby and anteroom finished in travertine. The offices, boardroom and anteroom were finished in walnut and maple panelling and blue carpet. The 10th floor accommodated a caretaker's flat, and dining facilities for the staff.

A survey of the building made by Clive Lucas Stapleton and Partners in January 1987 to determine how the building had changes since construction is attached Figures 1-5 show the major alterations carried out since 1939. According to their report:

Generally, all the original partitioning on floors 1 to 10 was removed, ceiling and lighting replaced as well as flooring. All walls to the flat and dining facilities on the 10th floor were removed. All the executive offices on the 9th floor were replaced, except the lift lobby, staircase, boardroom and anteroom. On the ground floor, the insurance chamber remained relatively intact, as did the Castlereagh Street Entrance, but the main entrance vestibule and lift lobby was extensively altered. Princes Restaurant was removed from the basement.

The building has been extended to the west in a style matching the original. Windows and spandrel panels are now aluminium.

**Physical condition
and/or
Archaeological
potential:**

The building has maintained in good condition since the substantial renovations of the late 1980s. The main insurance chamber on the ground floor of rare scale and high quality finishes survives in substantially intact condition.

The archaeological potential of the site is unknown.

Date condition updated: 19 Feb 09

**Further
information:**

Comparisons:

It is one of a small group of extant major commercial office buildings built in Sydney during the second half of the 1930s. These are:

Asbestos House, York Street 1930-5

Manufactures House, O'Connell Street 1935

Railways House, York Street 1934-6

City Mutual Life Building, Hunter & Bligh Streets 1935-6

ACA Building, King & York Streets 1936

APA Building, Martin Place & Elizabeth Streets 1935-7

Chatsworth House, Bent Street1936-7

Co-Operative Insurance House, Pitt Street1936-7

MLC Building Martin Place & Castlereagh Street1936-8

Transport House, Carrington & Margaret Streets1938

Booth House, Young & Bridge Streets1938

David Jones Store, Market & Castlereagh Sts1938

AWA Building, York Streets1937-9

Red Cross House, Clarence & Kent Streets1937-9

Inter-Ocean House, George & Jamison Streets1939

Water Board Building, Pitt Street1939

Delfin House, O'Connell Street1938-40

Queensland Insurance Building, Pitt Street1940

McNade House, Spring Street1940

ACI Building, William & Boomerang Streets1940-41

Of these buildings, and those built in other major Australian cities during the same period, the MLC Building is the best example of a building built in the Art Deco Skyscraper/Moderne style with a strong Egyptian design influence.

MLC also built a new headquarters in Melbourne as the Sydney Building was nearing completion. The overall form and structural similarities, though not the detailing, of the two buildings are very striking.

Comparative Boardrooms

Boardrooms were included in the original design of the following Sydney buildings, of these only four still exist. The boardrooms in the City Mutual Life Building and the ACI are considered excellent examples of their type. They are not as large in scale as the MLC boardroom and are less formally conceived. The MLC boardroom is the only one with an anteroom and finely finished lift lobby.

Railways House1934-6Demolished

City Mutual Life Building1935-6Intact

ACA Building1936Demolished

APA Building1935-7Demolished

MLC Building 1936-8Intact

AWA Building1937-9Intact

Inter-Ocean House1939Demolished

Water Board Building1939Demolished

Delfin House1940Extensively Altered

ACI Building1941Intact

Comparative Insurance Chambers

The following buildings include insurance or banking chambers:

City Mutual Life Building1935-6Substantially Intact but mezzanine introduced

ACA Building1936Altered

APA Building1935-7Substantially altered

MLC Building 1936-8Substantially intact

AWA Building1937-9Substantially intact

Transport House1938Substantially intact

Water Board Building1939Substantially altered

Delfin House1940Intact

Of the substantially intact chambers those in AWA, ACA and Transport House are of inferior finish to the MLC Chamber. The significant chambers in Delfin House and the City Mutual Life Building are much larger than that of the MLC Building. However, the detailing of the MLC insurance chamber is unusual because of its plaster relief panels depicting scenes of everyday life in Sydney (in a similar way to the AWA Building and the Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne, c.1930. The chamber, although small, has very high quality finishes; such as moulded travertine and cast plaster bas-reliefs.

It is a major pre-war example of the work of Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, a noted 20th century Australian firm of architects.

As the winner of a two stage design competition for a major building, it more than other buildings of similar age reflects attitudes about architectural taste in the late 1930s.

Current use: Offices
Former use: Offices

History

Historical notes: The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as to whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

Major insurance companies were formed in Victorian Australia, often with British assets, to cover the problems of world trade, internal communication, retirement and the constant hazard of fire. The Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Company, which commissioned Bates, Smart and McCutcheon to build its new Sydney Headquarters at the corner of Martin Place and Castlereagh Street in 1936-1938, already had on the same site a substantial Victorian building, which was demolished in 1937.

During 1936 the Mutual Life and Citizen's Assurance Society held a two stage competition for the design of its new building to be erected on the site. It attracted more than 70 entries. The winning design by Bates, Smart and McCutcheon selected from a short list of six was built during 1937-1938.

The architects, Bates Smart & McCutcheon had been a distinguished Melbourne-based firm since 1926, although the experience of the principals went back to the nineteenth century. The majority of the firm's work prior to World War II was domestic and the MLC building is its

only large commercial undertaking in Sydney between the wars. Other commercial buildings designed by the Bates Smart & McCutcheon during the period 1930-1942 include the AMP Building (1931) and Buckley & Nunn Ltd, Men's Store (1934), both in Melbourne.

The building's architect Osborn McCutcheon was a man who garnered national respect from his peers, his work was recognised by the award of the RAIA Gold Medal in 1965 and he was knighted in 1966.

The building belongs to the period of recovery from the Depression and is the near contemporary of the City Mutual Life building in Hunter Street, of Transport House and of David Jones' Market Street store. MLC also built a new headquarters in Melbourne as the Sydney Building was nearing completion: the structural similarities, though not the detailing, of the two buildings are very striking.

Alterations were made to the Sydney building in 1987-1988 under the supervision of Clive Lucas Stapleton. These included the infill of the light well and relocation of the lift core and stairs, the widening of the Martin Place entry and the relocation of the executive suite to level 10. The existing granite lift core surrounds were relocated and reused and a matching surround made for a new fourth lift.

The MLC Building is one of a group of buildings which form the boundaries of Martin Place. Apart from the most recent buildings, and although individual buildings within the group have been constructed over a period of more than 100 years, there is a high degree of unity in building form, height and the use of high quality masonry materials.

The MLC Building is one of only three remaining buildings, (the others being the Commonwealth Bank and APA Building) which define the eastern end of Martin Place, forming a hard wall to a maximum height of 12 storeys.

The building is very prominent when viewed from the eastern end of Martin Place, its verticality in design and the tower standing out and making a large contribution to the particular urban quality of Martin Place.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)
[Historical significance] The MLC Building has historic significance as the headquarters of the MLC Insurance company in Sydney since the Victorian period. It is a major pre-war example of the work of Osborn McCutcheon, Bates Smart McCutcheon, a noted twentieth century Australian firm of architects.

As the winner of a two stage design competition for a major building, it more than other buildings of similar age reflects attitudes about architectural taste in the late 1930s.

SHR Criteria b)
[Associative significance] The MLC Building is a major pre-war example of the work of Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, a noted 20th century Australian firm of architects. The buildings designer, Osborn McCutcheon's contribution to Australian architecture was recognised in 1965 by the award of the RAIA Gold Medal and he was knighted in 1966.

SHR Criteria c)
[Aesthetic significance] The MLC Building has technical significance due to intact fabric that demonstrates past building techniques and technology. The building contains rare examples of early porcelain enamel finished fluted steel spandrels beneath the windows.

It is the best demonstrative example of the use of Egyptian derived motifs in the design of inter-war commercial office buildings in Australia.

Its quality of design and use of materials make it one of the principal contributors to the

SHR Criteria d)
[Social significance]

architectural character of Martin Place which is recognised as one of Sydney's finest urban spaces.

SHR Criteria e)
[Research potential]

The building does not demonstrate a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW of social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity]

It is a rare and relatively intact example of an Art Deco Skyscraper/Moderne style insurance building in Sydney. It features exceptionally fine stone detailing with Egyptian motif.

It is one of a small group of extant major commercial office buildings built in Sydney during the second half of the 1930s. (There are approximately 13 others) It is rare at State level.

It contains a substantially intact late 1930s commercial insurance chamber of rare scale and high quality finishes.

The MLC Building has technical significance due to intact fabric that demonstrates past building techniques and technology. The building contains rare examples of early porcelain enamel finished fluted steel spandrels beneath the windows.

It is the best demonstrative example of the use of Egyptian derived motifs in the design of inter-war commercial office buildings in Australia.

Its quality of design and use of materials make it one of the principal contributors to the architectural character of Martin Place which is recognised as one of Sydney's finest urban spaces.


SHR Criteria g)
[Representativeness]

It contains a substantially intact suite of late 1930s commercial executive rooms, including the lift lobby, ante-room and boardroom, which is the largest and most formal of its type surviving in Sydney (the finishes of some of these spaces have been dismantled and stored.)

The building is an important contribution to the urban quality of Martin Place and Castlereagh Street, having strong visual relationship with the Commonwealth Bank and APA Building and other major nineteenth and twentieth century office buildings in this locality.

Assessment criteria:


As the winner of a two stage design competition for a major building, it more than other buildings of similar age reflects attitudes about architectural taste in the late 1930s.

Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act - Site Specific Exemptions	<p>Alts any part on interior except ground</p> <p>Order Under Section 57(2) to exempt the following activities from Section 57(1):</p> <p>(1) The maintenance of the building where maintenance means the continuous protective care of existing material; without the introduction of new materials;</p> <p>(2) Alterations to any part of the interior other than the ground floor commercial chamber on the corner of Martin Place and Castlereagh Street, Sydney, except where these would change the external appearance of the building; and</p> <p>(3) Change of use.</p>	Jun 24 1988
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage</p>	Sep 5 2008

			<p>Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p> <p>Minister for Planning</p> <p>Sydney, 11 July 2008</p> <p>To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00597	02 Apr 99	27	1546
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00597	24 Jun 88	105	3360
Local Environmental Plan	CSH LEP 4		07 Apr 00		

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Tourism		2007	Commerce Walking Tour	View details!
Tourism	Attraction Homepage	2007	Commerce Walking Tour	View details!
Written	Royal Australian Institute of Architect (NSW) Heritage Committee	2008	State Heritage Register Nomination Form	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.





(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office

Database number: 5045268

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Martin Place Railway Station

Item details

Name of item:	Martin Place Railway Station
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Transport - Rail
Category:	Railway Platform/ Station
Location:	Lat: -33.8678017091 Long: 151.2112065130
Primary address:	Eastern Suburbs Railway, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area:	Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council:	Metropolitan

The listing boundary is the whole of the underground system including platforms, concourses and entrances.

Boundary:

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Eastern Suburbs Railway	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address
Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
RailCorp	State Government	05 Nov 98

Statement of significance:

Martin Place underground railway station is significant as a representative of the latest major railway construction undertaken in the State in the eastern suburbs railway line. The whole of the structure being underground is a development of the structures built in the city in the 1930's and represents the latest in technology at the time.

Date significance updated: 06 Oct 15

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Physical description:	BUILDINGS
	station complex and entrances, 1979
	STRUCTURES
	platforms - concrete
	escalators (9)
	concourses
	subways


Current use:	Railway Station
Former use:	Railway Station

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport-Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements	(none)-


Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria f) [Rarity] This item is assessed as historically rare. This item is assessed as scientifically rare. This item is assessed as arch. rare. This item is assessed as socially rare.

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p> <p>Minister for Planning</p> <p>Sydney, 11 July 2008</p> <p>To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.</p>	Sep 5 2008

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		01187	02 Apr 99	27	1546
Heritage Act - s.170 NSW State agency heritage register					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Tourism		2007	Martin Place Railway Station	View details
Tourism	Attraction Homepage	2007	Martin Place Railway Station	View details

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office
Database number: 5012097
File number: 10/02353

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

GIO Building

Item details

Name of item:	GIO Building
Other name/s:	Sun Building
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Commercial
Category:	Commercial Office/Building
Location:	Lat: -33.8682479719 Long: 151.2108732860
Primary address:	60-70 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Parish:	St James
County:	Cumberland
Local govt. area:	Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council:	Metropolitan

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	1		DP	87319

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
60-70 Elizabeth Street	Sydney	Sydney	St James	Cumberland	Primary Address
153-163 Phillip Street	Sydney	Sydney	St James	Cumberland	Alternate Address

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
NGI Investments Pty Ltd	General	

Statement of significance:

The GIO Building is historically significant because of its associations with Sun Newspapers Ltd newspaper publishing activities in Sydney during the first half of the twentieth century. Its site has associations with the historically prominent figure, Joshua Josephson.

The building is aesthetically significant because it is possibly the first major Interwar Skyscraper Gothic style building in Sydney, of which it is also a rare example, and because it is a major building designed by architect Joseph Kethel.

The building has technical significance, due to its early and extensive use of the proprietary building material, Benedict stone. It is possibly the first major application of this material in a large city building in NSW.

Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 71

Date significance updated: 27 Aug 08

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Construction years: 1929-1929

Physical description: The subject building is identified as occupying Lot 1 D.P. 87319 at 60-70 Elizabeth Street and 153-163 Phillip Street. It consists of a structural steel, reinforced concrete and masonry structure, and contains seven basement levels given over to car parking, a lower ground and ground floor level, and eleven upper floors. The building is accessed via entries on Elizabeth and Phillip Streets, whilst vehicular access is located on the southern end of the Elizabeth Street facade and the loading dock is situated on the Phillip Street side of the building.

The exterior of the building was designed in what has become known as the Interwar Skyscraper Gothic style. There were relatively few buildings erected in this style in Australia, which showed the influence of American skyscraper design of the 1920s, the most notable example of which was Howells and Hood's Chicago Tribune Building of 1922-25. Indeed, this precedent was acknowledged in the Australian architectural press. The adaptation of Gothic embellishments and its inherent verticality was though appropriate as an expression of the height and vertical thrust of tall buildings in America during the 1920s. The major examples of this style of architecture in Sydney were designed and built between 1926 and 1930. The style effectively formed a bridge between the dominant Commercial Palazzo idiom of the 1920s and the Art Deco style of the late 1920s and 1930s - "... relatively few buildings were built in this style, but they provided potent images which had effects on the Art Deco style." Its characteristics, a number of which appear in the facades of 60-70 Elizabeth Street, include concentrated "medieval" motifs and detailing concentrated at the base and parapet levels of the building, vertical expression achieved by the accentuation of window mullions, and "Gothic" towers above the level of the roof to form a landmark on the city skyline.

60-70 Elizabeth Street has strong visual associations with other interwar office buildings in this part of the city. They include the former APA Building to its immediate north at 53 Martin Place, the former State Savings Bank at 48-50 Martin Place and the former MLC Building at 42-46 Martin Place. As a group, the buildings provide a valuable demonstration of the ways in which architectural styles in tall office buildings evolved during the interwar period, and are evidence of the major changes that took place in this part of the city as a result of extending Martin Place to Macquarie Street.

A Structure and Facade Review of the building was undertaken by Ove Arup & Partners for Rider Hunt Terotech, and is appended to this report. The building was also inspected by Roy Lumby on 8 September 1999.

EXTERNAL FABRIC

The exterior of 60-70 Elizabeth Street has retained much of its early configuration and a

relatively large amount of early fabric. The configuration of its facades is characteristic of many office buildings erected during the interwar period, consisting of a polished stone base (the ground floor cladding) that is extended into the upper part of the building by means of decorative detailing, a relatively plain shaft of window bays and decorative detailing at the top of the building and parapets. The facades were originally symmetrical and arranged in a tripartite configuration broken into five bays of windows of unequal width, but this configuration has since been obscured by the additions that were erected during the latter part of the 1930s on the southern side of the building. Early metal framed windows still remain in place in the large arched openings above the ground floor levels on both facades, although a leadlight window above the Elizabeth Street entrance, visible in early photographs, has been removed. All other windows were replaced as part of the late 1980s works. The flat roofs are covered with a proprietary membrane system, identified by Rider Hunt Terotech as "butynol". The original awning that sheltered the ground floor level of the Phillip Street facade has been removed, although the brackets that held suspension cable off the facade are still in place.

Other modifications to the exterior of the building include: installation of new shop fronts on both facades; erection of canopies above the Phillip Street entrance and above shop fronts on the Elizabeth Street facade; recently installed stone cladding along the ground floor level of the Phillip Street facade, insertion of grilles above the level of ground floor openings along the Phillip Street facade and the addition of large plant room spaces on the roof levels. Many of these alterations and additions were carried out during the 1980s. However, doors to the ground floor car part vestibule in Elizabeth Street may also be remnants of early building fabric.

Some parts of the building are in defective condition. These have been identified by Ove Arup & Partners as follows:

- Concrete is spalling off the stair structure and walls in a number of locations in the tower on the eastern side of the building, and corroding reinforcement has been exposed. There is also evidence of water penetration into the tower;

- There are numerous cracks in the fire stairs, reflecting the joints between steel framing and masonry infill panels;

- Cracking has occurred in the roof parapet at the southern end of level 11 and the top of the plant room wall at the southern end of the building above level 11, on its eastern and western sides;

- The metal plant room roof has been damaged by pedestrian traffic across it, and screws fixing the roof sheeting have corroded, as have gutters associated with the roof. There has been some water penetration through the roof or from the guttering;

- Some of the hold-down bolts of the handrails around the level 10 and 11 roofs have corroded;

- There are a small number of locations where cement rendered surfaces are deteriorating and coming away;

- Two steel framed windows in the tower at level 11 are corroding;

- Staining has taken place on facade paintwork and on the reconstructed stone surfaces;
- Fittings and mechanisms on the original windows at the lower levels of the building are broken or ineffective in operation. Several of the windows do not seal properly when closed;
- Areas of dampness are evident in basement levels due to water penetration through perimeter walls, particularly in the northwestern and south western corners.

INTERNAL FABRIC

Unlike the exterior of the building, virtually all of the building's interior were removed as part of the alterations that were carried out during the 1980s. The only early fabric remaining in the building is the former board room and an adjacent anteroom of the seventh floor. There is very little else left of the original building fabric apart from structural columns, floor slabs and concrete stairs in the roof towers.

The ground floor levels contain retail tenancies and a large central circulation space that links Elizabeth and Phillip Streets. Wide stairs and an escalator accommodate the change in level. Finishes throughout date from the late 1980s and are dominated by the extensive use of light toned marble. Columns are faced with mirrored glass whilst ceilings are divided into recessed sections from which large light fixtures are suspended. Floor finishes consist of carpet surrounded by a marble margin.

Generally the office levels reflect fitouts undertaken by the various tenants. For instance, the foyer on the fifth floor has an "Art Deco" theme, designed by the Department of Public works around 1996. Lift lobbies are also given some distinction according to tenant requirements such as the lobby on the tenth floor, which is finished with a panelled timber dado. However, the ceilings of the lift lobbies are uniform, with coved sides and a flush ceiling decorated with plaster mouldings in a "Gothic" motif similar to that found in the ceiling of the early board room on the seventh floor.

The Board Room on the seventh floor presently forms part of the Attorney General's tenancy. It and the adjacent ante room are part of the building's early fabric. Kethel's 1927 drawings do not indicate a board room at this level nor does it appear in Scott, Green & Scott's 1938 documentation. It is quite possible that it was decided to locate the two rooms here whilst the building was under construction, or they may have been relocated from another level during the works carried out during the 1980s. Original fabric in these spaces includes timber wall panelling, timber parquet floor and a fireplace with a low panelled timber ceiling above it in the board room. The ceiling above the rest of the Board Room may also be original. The ante room has only retained early timber wall panelling, although earlier ceilings may be concealed above the existing suspended ceiling, and original flooring may be concealed beneath present coverings. Wall mounted light fixtures and other luminaires are recent fabric.

The toilet areas throughout the building are fitted out with recently installed fabric, as are the lift cars. There are now five lifts, two fewer than when the building was first completed. The lift cars are lined in timber, with panelled timber ceilings.

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 52-55

Current use: Commerical offices
Former use: Commerical offices

History

Historical notes: ABORIGINAL OCCUPATION

It is possible that the site of 60-70 Elizabeth Street was once used by Aboriginals living in the area of what is now the City of Sydney. It is not known how many Aboriginals lived around Sydney at the time of the First Fleet in 1788, but several language groups are known to have occupied the area, the first of which to come into contact with Europeans being coastal members of the Dharruk group. Up to eleven small clan groups of around fifty people lived near Sydney Harbour. Although Governor Phillip harboured good intentions towards the Aborigines, widely disparate attitudes towards land ownership, the effects of disease (the Aboriginal population was decimated by an epidemic from around April 1789), and marginalisation caused a major decline in the numbers and cultural survival of Aboriginal people in Sydney.

THE EARLY OWNERS OF THE SITE

The land on which 60-70 Elizabeth Street stands is comprised of sections of three early land grants made in Section 40 of the City of Sydney. It includes land from part of Allotment 7, granted to Jacob Josephson on 5 April 1836, part of Allotment 18 granted to Francis Wilde (or Wild) on 14 May 1836 and part of Allotment 8 granted to Joseph Roberts on 29 December 1842, although all were in occupation for a number of years beforehand.

The major part of the site consists of that portion located on the part of Allotment 7, one of several adjoining parcels of land granted to Jacob Josephson. Josephson was a jeweller by profession, a Jewish Christian who reached Sydney in May 1818 as a result of being convicted of having forged bank notes in his possession. He died in the first half of the 1840s, and his son Joshua Frey Josephson inherited his property, including Enmore House, in 1945.

Joseph Josephson was born in 1815 in Hamburg, and arrived with his mother in Sydney in 1820. He displayed great musical talent and was teaching music by 1834. On 17 February 1844 he became a solicitor, the same year in which he was elected to the Sydney City Council to represent Cook Ward. In 1848 he became Mayor of Sydney as well as a justice of the peace, and on 9 June 1855 he was admitted to the NSW Bar. The following year he travelled to England, entered Lincoln's Inn and was called to the Bar in April 1859. On his return to Sydney he practiced as a barrister and in 1862 became a land titles commissioner under the newly introduced Real Properties Act. During this decade he was a director of the Australian Joint Stock Bank and invested in pastoral and city land. In 1868 he became solicitor general, but resigned from parliament in 1869 after his appointment as a district court judge. Josephson resigned in 1884 to devote more time to his private affairs, and died in January 1892. Lot 7, however, remained in the possession of the Josephson family until the beginning of the 1920s.

Lot 8 appears to have been occupied by one Richard Roberts from July 1829 onwards, and was not associated with Joseph Roberts and also William Henry Roberts until September 1842. It remained in the possession of members of the Roberts family until 1874, when title to it was conveyed to John Starkey.

The land granted to Francis Wild in 1836 was hotly contested several years later by Bridge Jagon, who claimed to be his widow, and John and Mary Harper, who claimed to have been left the land in Wild's will. A ruling was made in favour of Mary Harper and it came into her possession at the beginning of 1851. The John Harper mortgaged the property to John Thomas Neale in December 1864, but about three years later it was sold to Jacob Christian Fischer, probably as a means of settling the payment of the mortgage. After Jacob Fischer died in August 1894 titled passed to his widow Jane, and on her death in December 1905 to her son George. On 1 July 1908 it was then conveyed from George Fischer to Sir Matthew Harris. Harris (1841-1917) was the great nephew of John Harris of Ultimo. He acquired a large amount of real estate, partly through inheritance, and between 1881 and 1900 he represented the Ward of Denison on the Sydney Municipal Council, and Sydney-Denison in the Legislative Assembly between 1894 and 1901. Harris served as Mayor of Sydney between 1898 and 1900. He later became president of Sydney Hospital was a vice president of the Royal Agricultural Society and president of the Wentworth Park Trust. In all probability Harris purchased the property as an investment.

The property remained in the possession of the Harris family until 1927, when it was then sold to Sun Newspapers Limited.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE

By 1835 the land granted to Francis Wild and William Roberts was substantially developed but Josephson's more substantial adjoining lot was relatively empty, containing only four detached, domestically scaled buildings along Phillip Street. However, by the second half of the 1830s the section of Elizabeth Street between Hunter and King Streets was "bounded on both sides ... by a series of irregular-built private dwellings - some of them having, however, a respectable appearance; but the principal buildings are towards the south end of the section, near which, a very handsome enclosed series of Chambers, for the use of the legal profession, have been erected; communicating with Elizabeth and Phillip Street, and being in the immediate vicinity of the Supreme Court House, they are found to be very convenient by the gentlemen of the law ..." Already the legal profession was congregating in this part of Sydney. Phillip Street, by contrast, was relatively undeveloped.

By 1842 Wentworth Chambers, the future site of 60-70 Elizabeth Street and possibly the "handsome enclosed series of Chambers" previously mentioned, had been erected on part of Josephson's grant. At the end of the 1840s the character of Elizabeth Street had undergone substantial change. The section between Hunter and King Streets showed that "with few exceptions the whole of the buildings are of modern construction, and being situated in the vicinity of the Supreme Court, are principally occupied as Chambers by the Barristers, and other members of the Legal Profession". Wentworth Chambers consisted of two single storeyed gabled buildings with an open passage running between them. Josephson appears to have lived or operated chambers on the opposite side of the street at the same period.

Joseph Josephson's land was brought under the provisions of the Real Property Act in February 1863 by his son. It was one of the earliest properties in NSW to have been brought under these provisions, and at the time much of it was occupied by a number of houses that fronted Elizabeth and Phillip Street. A Certificate of Title dated 30 September 1873 confirms that Joshua Josephson was the owner of the land. Wentworth Court, or Place as it was termed, was occupied by "weekly tenants" in the middle of the 1870s. By the first half of the 1880s the building was known as Wentworth Court and contained a ground floor and two upper levels. It was considered to be sufficiently important in the middle of this decade to warrant separate listing in Sands Sydney and suburban directory. Its mixed tenants included artists,

merchants, watchmakers, surveyors, and most of all, solicitors and barristers. A photograph of the building taken in May 1926, shortly before it was demolished, shows its Elizabeth Street facade to have been a restrained three storey building with a high parapet and a simple tripartite fenestration pattern. At the same time, the Phillip Street facade was more elaborate in its decorative treatment and punctuated by arched openings, in addition to being a storey taller.

The title of the land was transferred to Sydney Arthur Josephson and William Edward Wilson as joint tenants. Title to the land was transferred from Josephson and Wilson to Sun Newspapers Ltd in stages, from May 1920 to February 1921. The site was then consolidated when Sun Newspapers Ltd purchased a large amount of Lot 18 from the Harris Family during 1927. It has not been ascertain when the company purchased Lot 8 or part thereof.

SUN NEWSPAPERS LTD

The Australian Newspaper Company was one of several that published newspapers in Sydney during the 1890s. Its Australian Star was one of only two evening newspapers published in Sydney during that decade. However, after 1901 the company began to run at a loss. In 1907 it started attempts to raise capital, and towards the end of 1908 it needed to raise capital to fund new plant and for other purposes. The chairman of the Company, Sir Robert Anderson, approached the managing director of the Associated Tobacco Companies, Sir Hugh Denison, for a loan to assist these funding requirements. Despite obtaining the loan, in a relatively short period of time the Australian Newspaper Company found itself contemplating the very real prospect of liquidation. One of its directors, Herbert Easton, induced Sir Hugh Denison to examine the company's position, and the result was that a consortium of a number of Sydney's businessmen formed a new company that was called the Sun Newspaper Company Limited. Two of the board of the Australian Newspaper Company served on the board of the new organisation, and a complete overhaul of its publications was made. The Australian Star remained in publication for a further three months, whilst the Sunday Sun was transformed into a daily paper, and the first issue of its successor, The Sun, was issued on 1 July 1910. Its editor, Montague Grover, aimed to provide the publication with something new:

...[h]e succeeded so well that many of his differences have since become the routine of up-to-date journalism. Prior to the advent of "The Sun" Australian newspapers did not have front windows for the display of their best goods, but now most of them have followed the fashion of printing their leading news items on the front page. Sedater [sic] schools of journalism looked askance at many of Mr. Grover's "revolutionary" changes, but the public evinced a growing appetite for them. Crispness and brightness of presentation in all department of news was the aim.

Circulation on the first day was double that of The Star, helped no doubt by promotional stunts such as motor boats bearing Sun posters speeding around the harbour and a chariot drawn by seven horses driven by a golden haired "Apollo" traversing Sydney's streets. The new newspaper turned out to be no less surprising, with news on the front page instead of the expected advertising and changes tot he conventional layout of newspapers from that era. The sun was successful because, amongst other things, its publishers made great and innovative use of a cable service from overseas and gave a large amount of its space over to crime and human interest stories. Further increases in circulation meant that the premises occupied by the newspaper became inadequate, so land at the rear of the Castlereagh Street building, extending back to Elizabeth Street, was purchased and a new building was erected over the entire site. The building was completed towards the end of 1915.

In 1918 Sun Newspapers Ltd took over the failing The Northern Times in Newcastle and changed its name to The Newcastle Sun, and erected a new four storey building in Hunter Street, Newcastle. This was designed by architect Joseph Kethel. During the second half of the 1920s the company expanded its interests still further. The Daily Telegraph Newspaper Co Ltd, which had been founded in 1879 and had erected a very large building at the corner of

King and Castlereagh Streets between 1912 and 1916, found itself falling behind in this competitive era. A new company was set up to incorporate the Daily Telegraph Newspaper Co Ltd, with holding the controlling interests in it.

In January 1921 Moore Street, which extended between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets beyond Martin Place, which only stretched between George and Pitt Streets, was renamed Martin Place as well. Evidently Sun Newspapers Ltd recognised that the extension would eventually take place, reflected by the purchase of the property between Elizabeth and Phillip Streets from Josephson and Wilson that concluded in February 1921. The building occupied by Sun Newspapers Ltd was located at the head of Martin Place and so right in the path of the proposed extension of the street through from Castlereagh Street to Macquarie Street. This had been suggested as far back as 1909 by a Royal Commission into the improvement of the City of Sydney.

Architect Joseph Kethel lodged an application for a new building with the Sydney City Council on 18 January 1926, and the following May another application was lodged, this one for the demolition of Wentworth Court. However, two months later an application was lodged, this one for the demolition of Wentworth Court. However, two months later an application was lodged by the building contractors Stuart Bros for the excavation of the site and yet another application was lodged for demolition a few days after that.

In the mean time, however, Sun Newspapers Ltd organised an architectural competition that was held in 1926, with six architects selected to submit entries, indicating that the newspaper was reconsidering its new premises. The entries were adjudicated by Professor Leslie Wilkinson, Chair of the School of Architecture at Sydney University and Kingsley Henderson, a prominent architect from Melbourne whose practice designed many major office buildings throughout Australia during the 1920s and into the 1930s - "After adjudication had been carried out in the usual way, and the names of the competitors kept sealed until after the award had been made, by a remarkable coincidence the winner, Mr J Kethel, turned out to be the architect who had carried out the "Sun" Newspapers' work for many years past..." Kethel lodged a revised application for the new building on 27 July 1927. The structural engineer for the project was E Leslie James.

JOSEPH ALEXANDER KETHEL

Joseph Alexander Kethel was born on 31 January 1866. He was the second son of the Honourable Alexander Kethel, MLC, and was indentured into the practice of Thomas Rowe and Sydney Moore Green, architects, in 1887. A number of business premises located in Sydney were designed in Kethel's office. They included the building for Alliance Assurance Company at 97 Pitt Street (demolished), the London Assurance Building at 16-20 Bridge Street (demolished), major alterations to an office building at 16 Loftus Street, Sydney (circa 1921, demolished) and numerous private residences and pastoral homesteads. The buildings included "Cavan" in the vicinity of Yass, "Chatsworth" at Potts Point (1922, demolished) and a residence at Leura, both for William Rhodes (demolished), ecclesiastical buildings such as the former Fuller Memorial Church in Surry Hills and theatres such as the Independent Theatre at North Sydney. Kethel held the position of Honorary Architect to the Royal Australian Historical Society. He died on 29 April 1946.

Kethel was responsible for a number of earlier buildings for Sun Newspapers, so it is not surprising that he received the commission for 60-70 Elizabeth Street, for he designed the newspaper's earlier building in Castlereagh Street and its premises in Newcastle. He also designed a buildings for the publishers of Truth and Sportsman at 61-73 Kippax Street, Sydney.

THE SUN BUILDING

The newly completed Sun Building, erected by the firm of Concrete Constructions Ltd, was officially opened on 15 October 1929 by the Governor of NSW, Sir Dudley de Chair. Was attended by a large number of dignitaries, including the Premier, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the President of the Legislative Council, the Vice-Chancellor of the University (of Sydney) and numerous others.

The appearance of the building's exterior excited interest because it was an example of the newly popular "commercial Gothic" idiom that enjoyed a brief flowering in Sydney and other Australian cities in the second half of the 1920s and into the early 1930s. This aroused mixed feelings in some quarters. The editors of the influential architectural journal *Building* felt that

...[t]he five great openings at the bottom are dignified enough in themselves, only with their turned columns of Tuscan form and darker material, they do not appear to be in keeping with the rest of the ornament, which is applied to, rather than embodied in the composition. The symbol of the firm - the sun - held like a great balloon in the sky is the most daring and outstanding feature of the work. The seven floors in the shaft of the building, contained in five vertical bays, are essentially commercial and severely plain, probably intended to throw the ornamental proportions into high relief..

Some aspects of the building reflected peculiarities inherent in the height restrictions current at the time, and because of the fall across the site the building effectively ended up with two different roof levels. Towers on either side of the building served different functions. That on the Elizabeth Street side held aloft the gilded balloon representing the sun, whilst the tower on the Phillip Street side contained an observation platform. Below it, a cafeteria for the use of staff opened out onto the roof over the Elizabeth Street side of the building. Such staff amenities were relatively common parts of interwar office building design, but evidently not so common in other newspaper offices. A hospital located on the thirteenth floor was another facility provided for the benefit of the staff, as was a "mechanical suite where each departmental foreman has his own table, and mechanical toilets with enclosed showers, etc." Further consideration was shown for the staff by the use of "Vita glass" in a number of the building's windows. This proprietary glass was claimed to allow the passage of ultra violet radiation, and so benefit those working behind it.

Seven high speed lifts, travelling at the maximum permitted speed of 600 feet (182 metres) per minute were installed. This was amongst the largest lift installations in any Sydney office building during the interwar period. Some of the innovations to be found in the building included the largest mechanical ventilation system installed in any Australian building of the time, (no doubt due in part to there being three floors constructed below the level of Phillip Street) while the exhaust fan in the system was the largest that had yet been installed in any Australian building up to that time. The basement levels contained the printing machinery and heavy storage.

The exterior of the building was clad in a rich variety of materials. The ground floor levels were finished with Uralla granite, with emerald pearl around the windows and red granite on the Elizabeth Street facade. Above these levels it was clad in Benedict Stone of a soft grey hue. Benedict stone, apparently named after the person who invented it, appears to have been introduced in America during the 1880s. It was manufactured in a straightforward fashion - selected stone was crushed into chips and dust, then washed and mixed with a special cement. It was then poured into moulds of the required configuration. The Sun Building was the first major project in Sydney, if not Australia, to make use of this material. The decorative potential of stone was exploited to enhance parts of the interior as well. The main entrance vestibule was ornamented in "richly coloured" Cudgegong marble, whilst the main entrance stair landings and mid landings were tiled with panels depicting Apollo, the Sun God. By contract, the rest of the interiors were considered to be quite plain. The newspaper took pride in the fact that "wherever possible" Australian materials, "in keeping with the national character of the paper" were used.

One very unusual feature associated with the building was the two landscaped plots in front of the Elizabeth Street facade. A central path connected the main entry and the footpath along the street. The plots, protected by chains slung between posts, were enhanced by decorative pedestals amidst expanses of lawn and young trees. Regretfully they were to have a short life, as this section of Elizabeth Street was widened around 1934.

Apart from the Sun Building there were a number of large buildings erected for the publishers of newspapers in Sydney during the second and third decades of the twentieth century. They included the Daily Telegraph Building at the corner of King and Castlereagh Streets (now known as the Trust Building), designed by the architectural firm of Robertson & Marks and completed in 1916, the Sydney Morning Herald Building at the corner of Hunter and O'Connell Streets, designed by the architectural firm of Manson and Pickering and completed in 1929, and the Evening News Building designed by the architectural firm of Spain and Cosh and completed in 1926.

SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF SUN NEWSPAPERS LTD

On 1 October 1929 Sun Newspapers Ltd merged its interests with those of S Bennett Ltd to form Associated Newspapers Limited, which was an operating as well as a holding company. The following January the new company purchased the Daily and Sunday Guardian from Smith's Newspapers Ltd and the remaining shares in Daily Telegraph Pictorial Ltd were purchased in February 1930. The directors of the company were forced to undertake some drastic measures as a result of the economic depression of the early 1930s and correspondingly reduced circulating revenue. As a result the Evening News and Sunday Pictorial were discontinued, the Daily Guardian and Daily Pictorial were incorporated into a new newspaper called The Daily Telegraph, and the Sunday Guardian and Sunday Sun were incorporated into one newspaper. In this way the company published a morning, an evening and a Sunday newspaper. During 1936 the principal assets of S Bennett Limited were sold to Consolidated Press Limited (of which Associated Newspapers was a shareholder), as was the goodwill of The Daily Telegraph. At this time Associated Newspapers were possessed of only one active subsidiary company in the form of Sun Newspapers Limited. It was decided to consolidate these interests and reduce operating expenses by amalgamating the two companies, and to this end Sun Newspapers was voluntarily liquidated on 29 March 1937. S Bennett Limited was the next subsidiary to go, and was liquidated during 1938, whilst the Newcastle Sun was sold to the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate Pty Limited. On January 26, 1938, the company launched a "pioneer journey in Pictorial News in Australia", Pix. During 1939 and 1940 the company invested in new plant and machinery to allow for expanded circulation and business, whilst at the end of 1939 a subsidiary company, Wireless Newspapers Pty Limited, was placed into voluntary liquidation. Around this time the company was also acquiring shares in Australian Newspaper Mills Pty Limited. Its stable of publications included the Daily Sun, Woman, Sunday Sun, World's News, Pix, Wireless Weekly and Radio and Hobbies. By 1943 Wireless Weekly had been replaced by Pocket Book Weekly, and despite the strictures of paper rationing circulation figures exceeded previous years.

In 1947 two new magazines were introduced - Sporting Life and Glamour - and in the second half of 1949 Sungravure Limited was formed to take over the company's rotogravure printing activities. At the Annual General Meeting of Associated Newspapers held at the end of 1953, W O Fairfax gave notice of his candidature for election to the Board. This followed on from negotiations with John Fairfax and Sons Pty Limited earlier in the year that were concluded by the issue of shares to that company, to assist Associated Newspapers in improving its financial position. John Fairfax and Sons were also given representation on its Board. In June 1955, 60-70 Elizabeth Street was sold to the Government Insurance Office of New South Wales, whilst magazine and job printing rights were sold to Sungravure Limited, mirroring continued difficulties within the company. By the end of 1956 W O Fairfax had become Chairman of Directors whilst production and distribution of The Sun was transferred to John Fairfax & Son's Broadway premises. Employees were transferred to Sungravure and John Fairfax and Sons, which carried the bulk of newsprint requirements.

In the second half of 1970 half of Sungravure Pty Limited was sold to the International Publishing Corporation, an overseas company that was the world's largest publisher of magazines. Associated Newspapers now only published The Sun and The Sun Herald. By 1974 the parent company was deriving a trading profit from the publication of The Sun and operated an interest of one-third in The Sun Herald. In a reversal of what had happened in 1970, on 21 April 1978 Associated Newspapers regained total ownership of Sungravure Pty Limited.

SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE SUN BUILDING

Evidently Sun Newspapers Ltd foresaw the need to expand its new premises within the next decade, for its site was enlarged in October 1931 by the acquisition of a new title from the Sydney City Council of a part of the former Allotment 7, 68-70 Elizabeth Street. The Council of the City of Sydney had resumed this land the previous year, in August 1930. An application to demolish the buildings which stood on this land was made in November 1933. The site was expanded yet again by a new title in March 1936 from the addition of part of Lot 7 and part of Lot 8 in Section 40, purchased from the Council of the City of Sydney in November 1935. The Council had resumed the land in May 1935.

During the second half of the 1930s architects Scott Green and Scott were responsible for the design and documentation of a series of alterations and additions to the building (refer to Appendix 3). In June 1936 Scott Green and Scott lodged an application to the building. In June 1936 Scott Green and Scott lodged an application for the enclosure of the northern lightwell in 1938, which was adjacent to the recently completed APA Building on Martin Place. Documentation describing major extensions to the building on the site of 68-70 Elizabeth Street was lodged in July 1938. This necessitated the demolition of a building called Dymocks Chambers on Elizabeth Street and Northfield Chambers (erected around 1888) at 163 Phillip Street. In June 1939 it was proposed to construct a floor across a lightwell on the fifth floor. The same architects were involved with the building continued after World War Two, but by this time was known as EA & TM Scott. They were responsible for the design and documentation associated with the construction of a mezzanine level between the sixth and seventh floors in 1946-47, a fan room on the western side of the roof of the extension and the construction of lavatory accommodation at the Phillip Street level.

After ownership of the building was transferred to Associated Newspaper Ltd during the liquidation of Sun Newspapers in August 1939, from the next month part of the basement was leased by the Sydney City Council. Associated Newspapers Limited finally became proprietor of the land on 17 December 1953. The title was transferred from Associated Newspapers to the Government Insurance Office on 15 June 1955. The building was then extensively remodelled internally to suit the requirements of its new owners and many original finishes and fittings were swept away. The works were designed by the Government Architect's Office and carried out by the Public Works Department. At the same time extensive repairs and refitting of the steel framed windows took place, and the whole of the works were completed by the middle of 1957. Associated Newspapers tenanted a part of the building until February 1963.

From 1959 onwards the building was subjected to numerous programs of alteration and modification, and for a number of years these were designed by the architectural firm of Morrow and Gordon. The modifications carried out under their direction affected a large part of the building. In 1959 the firm documented alterations to the main entrance off Phillip Street, partitions on the ninth floor and alterations to provide a car park, which included the construction of a series of ramps and "mezzanine" levels between the existing floor slabs. Between 1961 and 1964 their work included alterations to toilets and associated spaces, further alterations on the ninth floor, a covered way on the roof, a new tea room on the sixth floor, alterations on the seventh floor, and alterations to the "tank". In 1968 major upgrading of the mechanical ventilation system was documented and two years later plans were prepared for and alterations to the ground floor.

Apart from Morrow and Gordon, there were other architects who were responsible for work to the building in this period. For instance, the Melbourne-based architect Guildford Bell designed facilities for Ansett Transport Industries in the basement and ground floor levels during 1959.

The pace of change continued unabated during the 1970s and 1980s. Extensive alterations were carried out in 1970 and 1971, while alterations to Floors 7, 9, 10 and 11 took place in 1972. All were designed by architect RB Keers. In 1985 major alterations to the building, valued at \$12 million, were documented by the architectural firm of Keers Banks and Maitland. This resulted in the removal of all the interior fabric excepting structural items from the ground levels upwards and installation of new services, lifts, stairs and toilet areas. New plant room accommodation was constructed at roof level, many windows were replaced and the introduction of retail tenancies on the ground floors resulted in modifications to the facades at street level. Since these extensive modifications were completed, there have been various alterations related to internal partitioning and changes in tenancies.

Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 4-16

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	Publishing-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Communication-Activities relating to the creation and conveyance of information	Communicating by the printed word-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical significance]

60-70 Elizabeth Street has important associations with Sun Newspapers Ltd, which did much to change the way in which newspapers were published in Sydney in the early part of the twentieth century, and with the subsequent publication of newspapers up until the mid twentieth century;

It is one of a number of large buildings erected specifically for the use of newspaper publishing in the second and third decades of the twentieth century in the City of Sydney. However, evidence of this past use has been removed from much of the building's interior;

The site has historical associations with the significant figure of Joshua Josephson, who was a prominent legal figure and for a time mayor of Sydney, as well as holding property interests in the city centre.

Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 70

SHR Criteria c)

[Aesthetic significance]

60-70 Elizabeth Street is an important work by the architect Joseph Kethel, who was responsible for the design of a number of buildings for newspaper publishers during the first third of the twentieth century and designed a wide range of other buildings.

The building is a rare example of a large Interwar Skyscraper Gothic style building in the City of Sydney, with a relatively intact exterior. It was the first major example of this style to be erected in Sydney, and may be the first to have been erected in Australia. The building also contains a small amount of original internal fabric in the form of the boardroom on the seventh floor and the associated ante room;

The building is an important part of the architectural fabric of the area around Martin Place, Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street and has strong visual relationship with the former APA Building and other major interwar office buildings in this locality.

Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 70

SHR Criteria d)

[Social significance]

The building is not considered to demonstrate any social significance. It does not appear to have any association with a contemporary community for social, spiritual or other reasons.

Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 70

SHR Criteria e)

[Research potential]

The exterior of the building has technical significance because it was the first time that a proprietary synthetic stone, Benedict stone, was employed as the cladding of a major building in Sydney.


Conservation Management Plan

60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)

Author: Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd

Year: 2001

Page: 70

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act - Site Specific Exemptions	<p>Order Under Section 57(2) to exempt the following activities from Section 57(1):</p> <p>(1) The maintenance of any building or item on the site where maintenance means the continuous protective care of existing materials;</p> <p>(2) Change of use</p> <p>(3) Internal alterations</p>	Aug 4 1989
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p> <p>Minister for Planning</p> <p>Sydney, 11 July 2008</p>	Sep 5 2008

To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00683	02 Apr 99	27	1546
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00683	04 Aug 89	87	5078
Local Environmental Plan	CSH LEP 4		07 Apr 00		

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written	Rod Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd	2001	Conservation Management Plan - 60-70 Elizabeth Street (GIO Building)	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office
Database number: 5045197
File number: S90/03178 & HC 33531

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Commonwealth Bank

Item details

Name of item:	Commonwealth Bank
Other name/s:	The Government Savings Bank of New South Wales, CBA Building
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Commercial
Category:	Bank
Location:	Lat: -33.8673092818 Long: 151.2102322270
Primary address:	48-50 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
County:	Cumberland
Local govt. area:	Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council:	Metropolitan

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	1		DP	182023

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
48-50 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney		Cumberland	Primary Address

Statement of significance:

The Commonwealth Bank at 48 Martin Place is culturally significant at a National level as a rare example of Inter-War Beaux-Arts architecture demonstrating outstanding technical accomplishment. It is also of exceptional local and State significance. Located at a prominent address on Martin Place, the building played an important role in the development of the economy in New South Wales during the 1920s. The building was constructed between 1925 and 1928 and is one of the most important examples of its style and type within New South Wales and Australia. 48 Martin Place is one of the finest banking institutions in Australia and the finest in New South Wales. The cultural significance of 48 Martin Place and its setting will be maintained through its association with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000).

Date significance updated: 06 Jul 00

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker:	48 Martin Place - Ross & Rowe Architects and Consulting Engineers; Primary Structure - A.S. McDonald
Builder/Maker:	Concrete Constructions Ltd.
Construction years:	1925-1928
Physical description:	The Commonwealth Bank building fronts Martin Place on the south, Elizabeth Street on the east and Castlereagh Street on the west. The building is an extensive eleven-storey structure plus mezzanine above ground, with three basement levels. Externally the building displays monumental civic scale and precise, symmetrical detailing utilising classical motifs. The Classic inspiration for the building is evident in the columns used on the exterior:

- Ionic columns on the Martin Place façade,
- Corinthian columns framing the balcony doors, and
- Doric columns on the roof.

The great Ionic columns on the Martin Place façade unite the six central floors, with the remaining floors serving as base and frieze. Above the base storey, strongly expressed with red granite facing, the cladding is pink terracotta blocks arranged in small tessellated effect.

Terracotta cladding is also used on the Martin Place columns. At the upper levels, ornate terracotta detailing is included on the cornice, entablature and pilaster capitals. At roof level, the building has a Classical attic storey and dentilated cornice.

48 Martin Place has tremendous civic presence, portraying an image of massive solidity. The rich colour of the façade materials makes the Bank a most eminent landmark amongst its neighbours. It is a magnificent example of Beaux-Arts revivalist architecture, and a visual and technical masterpiece. The style was used to express the wealth and stability of financial institutions emphasising the qualities of:

- a monumental scale expressed by giant order;
- symmetry and the sculptural treatment of the facades;
- comprehensive use of classical motifs and details (both externally and internally);
- up-to-date structural techniques allowing expansive rooms; and
- high quality materials and finishes.

Extensive conservation works have restored the principal public areas to near original condition internally. The Banking Chamber, Grand Hall and Safe Deposit area are impressive in scale and detailing and form a sequence of grand interiors.

The Banking Chamber is detailed in an extravagant neo-Classical style, displaying substantial use of marble, and scagliola on tremendous stylised columns. The banking staff occupy the central space, which features marble, bronze and glass partitions. The main entrance is from Martin Place with access available from both Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets, and also at the northern end of the building, between the Grand Hall and the Banking Chamber. The lofty ceiling is coffered and treated in a decorative manner, achieved by use of Wunderlich pressed metal panels fixed to the concrete slab. The arrangement had been detailed to give efficient and reflected light. Large bronze lamps supply artificial light reflected off the ceiling, providing diffused general lighting.

The Grand Hall forms a pedestrian way between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets. A ribbed barrel dome, embellished with mosaics and stained glass panels depicting prosperous Australian industries at the time of construction, surmounts the passage. Located centrally within the Hall is the Grand Stair, a wide marble staircase with bronze grille balustrade and Queensland maple handrail. The stair converges centrally at the Government Savings Bank's Memorial Window and Tablet located on the northern-most wall. Walls of marble and the sumptuous detail create a remarkable architectural space.

The Safe Deposit area in the basement level is remarkably intact. Great barrel domes create a magnificent groined ceiling of three bays supported by marble pilasters. The ceilings are decorative, and brass pendant lights hang from the centre of each dome. Mosaic spandrels above marble walls are framed by the ceiling vaults and depict wreaths and festoons in rich green and red against a neutral setting. The whole is framed by a green and red leaf and berry motif on deep yellow mosaic tiles. The floors are white marble with decorative black border tiles.

While the lettable office space on the upper floors has been extensively altered, the stairways connecting the upper floors are largely intact. The stairs within the chambers are terrazzo, and balustrades are bronze with timber handrails. Original timber framed hydrant covers with frosted glazed panels and timber and brass mail chutes, no longer in use, have been retained within the stair chambers, along with the floor levels detailed in decorative tiles on the walls. Windows with deep reveals are located at each level of the stair chambers. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

**Physical condition
and/or
Archaeological
potential:**

Physical condition is excellent. Archaeological potential is low.

**Modifications and
dates:**

Date condition updated:06 Jul 00

Modifications 1928-1984

The building had no major building construction since completion in 1928. The major changes that had occurred in the building since its construction until 1984 are listed below:

- Mechanical Ventilation: Wall fans installed throughout the building. Packaged air conditioning units installed in many areas including the Banking Chamber.

- Lifts: Original lift cars and doors replaced. Marble door reveals concealed by new door frames.
- Banking Chamber: Several major changes were evident in 1984:
 - Glazed lantern covered over by ceiling tiles. Glass roof replaced with corrugated steel sheeting.
 - Ceiling bays covered over by ceiling tiles. Decoration painted out.
 - Original lights removed from all but the perimeter zone.
 - Grilles removed from all arched windows.
 - Air conditioning units installed on the floor within the work area.
 - Original inner entrance doors removed from the Martin Place vestibule.
- Grand Hall: Original decoration painted over and light fittings removed. Stair nosings replaced with terrazzo. Smoke ventilation system installed in the 1960s, glass roof removed and concrete slab installed.
- Office Floors: Tiled terracotta partitions removed from most areas. Original light fittings removed, and extensive surface wiring and fluorescent light fittings installed.
- Central and Northern Lightwells: White tiles removed from the walls. Glass lanterns at the base of both wells removed and framing covered.
- Level 2 Offices: Minor changes include partitioning of the original Boardroom. Original light fittings replaced.
- Level 4 Offices: Suspended ceiling installed over new services and ductwork. Tiles removed and walls rendered.
- Level 9: Caretaker's flat, dining room, kitchen and professional offices removed.
- Roof: Timber buildings introduced during World War 2. Cooling towers added to serve the Banking Chamber and Level 4.

Modifications 1984-1990

A synopsis of the extensive conservation works undertaken throughout 1984-1990 is provided below:

- Façade Restoration: Hand-cleaning of the terracotta and granite, removal of masons putty and re-pointing.
- Windows: All windows replaced with new welded brass units (subsequently bronzed). Original decorative copper and brass components removed, restored and replaced in their original positions. Internal window frames of Queensland maple restored.
- Scagliola: New wall panels of scagliola introduced and original panels removed, restored and installed in new locations due to the relocation of the lifts. Scagliola applied to columns was stabilised using epoxy injected with fine hypodermic needles into deteriorated areas. Walls were hand-cleaned in-situ.
- Marble and Lift Services: Original existing marble was cleaned and repolished, and relocated in some areas, for example in the north-west lift lobby to accommodate a new lift. Both north-west and north-east lift lobby areas modified by the introduction of new shafts and developed with new marble (from local and overseas sources) to match the existing. Fire stairs and new service ducts introduced while maintaining and protecting the adjacent original fabric.
- Metalwork: Original metalwork elements including the decorative external spandrel units, Banking Chamber entablature, the balustrades, perimeter lamps and writing slopes within the Banking Chamber, external lamps adjacent the Martin Place entrance and entrance doors were removed, stripped to base metal, repaired and straightened, coloured (bronzed) and reinstalled.
- Paintwork: Decorative paintwork to match original colour schemes was newly applied to the ceiling of the Banking Chamber, the Grand Hall vaulted ribs, ceilings of the lift lobbies, the Safe Deposit Public lobby and Vault lobby and the restored original Boardroom.
- Asbestos: Asbestos removed from the ceiling spaces, floors, voids and from behind the decorative metal curtain wall panels.
- Services: Extensive new services introduced into the building, with central facilities housed in new roof buildings integrated with the original towers and colonnades. Existing roof towers restored for reuse as service towers in accordance with the original intention.
- Levels 2 & 3: Original Executive offices (Level 2) restored. Original panelling, doors and hardware on Levels 2 and 3 restored for reuse.
- Banking Chamber and Grand Hall: Banking Chamber and Grand Hall restored and adapted

for contemporary banking facilities and creation of a new Foyer for the Head Office by modification of the rear counter line (reducing the counter by one full bay). Works included the restoration of the Martin Place rising bronze door and the renewal of the hydraulic system and controls, the introduction of new stairs leading to the Safe Deposit Vault and installation of bronze lights, reconstructed to match the original perimeter lights within the ceiling bays.

- Safe Deposit and Basement: Safe Deposit areas were largely preserved. A new 32 vehicle carpark was installed, accessed from the Castlereagh Street side of the upper and lower basements with a loading and servicing facility introduced.

- Atrium: Original central lightwell adapted to form an atrium extending from the roof to a garden at Level 2, where the floor has been infilled. The concrete frame was clad in polished granite, with white Carrara marble floors, and the space glazed at roof level.

- Office Floors: The large (1850m²) office floors were modified for modern office use by introduction of air conditioning, suspended ceilings, sprinklers, extensive electrical and communication services. New plant rooms, switch rooms, toilets, tea rooms and fire stairs installed. Original Queensland maple architraves restored.

- Disabled Access: Disabled access provided within a new entrance at Elizabeth Street via a ramp leading to the north-east lift lobby. Disabled toilet facilities provided on levels 1, 3 and 9.

Current use: Public Bank and Commercial Offices

Former use: Public Bank and Commercial Offices

History

Historical notes: 1920-1928

The successful growth and development of the Government Savings Bank of NSW over several decades necessitated relocating the operation to larger premises capable of not only accommodating the current requirements but also future ones. Between November 29, 1920 and September 21, 1921 the Commissioners of the Bank purchased five adjoining strips of land (comprising seven properties) between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets. The properties had frontages of 280 feet to both streets and a total cost of 298,500 pounds.

The eventual dimensions of the amalgamated site were 45 metres to Martin Place on the south, 59 metres to Elizabeth Street on the east and 63 metres to Castlereagh Street on the west. In addition to its potential for development at the required scale, the site was undoubtedly favoured for its proximity to an established civic district and central location amidst the emerging retail and financial districts of the City following World War I.

It was during the Bank's administration of W. H. O'Malley Wood (President) and H. D. Hall and J. H. Davies (Commissioners) that 48 Martin Place was erected. During a ceremony on March 13, 1922, three foundation stones for the building were laid by:

The Hon. James Dooley MLA - Premier of New South Wales

The Hon. J. T. Lang MLA - Colonial Treasurer

Mr O'Malley Wood - President of the Bank

Construction eventually commenced in February 1925 and 48 Martin Place was completed late in 1928, to be officially opened by the Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. T. R. Bavin, on December 13 of that year. The roof provided panoramic views over the harbour and the city in 1928, and the whole building symbolised the optimism and forward thinking of the 1920s prior to the great Depression, in addition to the prestige, security and strength of the Bank. The location, size and grandeur of the building confirmed a belief in the stability and endurance of the Australian economy in general, and the distinguished place of New South Wales in that development in particular.

At the time of its construction, the building was the most expensive in Australia, having been constructed at a cost of 1,500,000 pounds.

1980-1990

Recognising the importance of 48 Martin Place, the Commonwealth Bank commissioned Australian Construction Services late in 1980 to develop proposals for the conservation and upgrading of the building. Various building elements, in particular the facade, were examined over several subsequent years. Research also included the removal of one window of each type from the south-east corner of the building to investigate the method of detailing and the condition of the metal and working mechanisms.

Following the relocation of the Commonwealth Taxation Department in 1983, who had occupied the floors above the Banking Chamber since the 1930s, the Commonwealth Bank took the opportunity to engage in a major restoration project for this notable City property. After a series of feasibility and design studies were undertaken by Australian Construction Services, with input from Mr Peter Freeman of the Australian Heritage Commission, the Commonwealth Bank decided, in early 1984, to make 48 Martin Place Head Office for the organisation.

The restoration programme was undertaken in three stages between 1984 and 1990:

Stage One: Internal demolitions, scaffolding and hoarding, and asbestos removal;

Stage Two: Major works of restoration, reconstruction and refurbishment, internal construction and services installation;

Stage Three: Final interior fitout and finishing. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Technology-Activities and processes associated with the knowledge or use of mechanical arts and applied sciences	(none)-
5. Working-Working	Labour-Activities associated with work practises and organised and unorganised labour	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical significance]

The building at 48 Martin Place represents the importance of the savings bank movement established in New South Wales (Campbell's Bank 1819), which founded the pattern for the other Colonies, and of which both the Government Savings Bank and the Commonwealth Bank were successors.

48 Martin Place is associated with prosperous industries within New South Wales at the time of its construction. Stained glass panels within the Grand Hall depict the 'basic sources of wealth' as they were seen in the 1920s, which were ultimately connected to banking.

The Government Savings Bank promoted thrift, playing an important role as the 'People's Bank' for the average citizen who could deposit small sums and gain interest, including children via school savings accounts. The institution operated a wide network of offices and branches throughout suburban and rural New South Wales.

The Government Savings Bank is directly associated with much of the suburban development of the 1920s in New South Wales by providing home loans through the Advances for Homes Department. This assisted subsequent prosperity within the building industry and associated services.

In 1931, the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales was the largest savings bank within Australia and the second largest in the British Empire.

The distinguished location, scale and majestic style of the new Head Office signified the optimism and confidence of the 1920s following World War I, the belief in the stability and endurance of the Australian economy and the pre-eminence of the Sydney CBD financial

centre.

The project instigated by the President and Commissioners of the Government Savings Bank was remarkable in scale and cost, providing a considerable boost to employment and the building trade in NSW in the 1920s.

The building is associated with the emergence in the 1920s of large construction companies.

The project was instrumental in the expansion of Wunderlich within New South Wales, who effectively established a new Australian industry for the creation of terracotta blocks.

The Government Savings Bank was directly associated with critical political and financial events of the Depression period.

As a major financial institution representing small investors, the collapse of the Government Savings Bank in 1931 had a devastating effect upon the lives of ordinary citizens.

The Bank was a significant and conspicuous casualty of the conflict between Federal and State governments over economic policies to relieve the Depression. The closure contributed to division within the Labor party that was brought about by the contentious policies of the New South Wales Labor government under J. T. Lang's Premiership.

The collapse represented a crucial loss of confidence at a critical time in the Depression that was encouraged by media reports. Loss of confidence also arose from the dispute between Federal and State Labor governments and general fear of the policies instigated by NSW Premier Jack Lang.

Establishment of the Commonwealth Bank is associated with the philosophy of the Federal Labor government prior to World War I for state control of banking.

48 Martin Place has been consistently used as a financial centre and public banking facility, and continues to provide evidence of its associations.

The restoration of the Bank between 1984 and 1990 was a significant conservation project by an important government institution, reflecting the prosperity and confidence of the banking industry during the 1980s.

48 Martin Place represents an important conservation project, enabling the revival of several trades and skills associated with the heritage industry. The building represents the ability of older buildings to maintain original functions at a time of major institutional and technological change in banking.

The intactness of the original Bank building retains the ability to demonstrate the original customer service procedures and the hierarchy of the management structure. Many such features were preserved during the restoration.

48 Martin Place is an excellent example of the continuing American influence on the design of large commercial buildings in Sydney and contains many features of turn-of-the-century American financial institutions. The direct contact with American architecture is significant.

The building was commissioned by the first president of the Government Savings Bank of NSW at 48 Martin Place, W. H. O'Malley-Wood, and Commissioners H. D. Hall and J. H. Davies.

The building is associated with political figures James Dooley (former Premier of NSW) and J.

T. Lang (former Colonial Treasurer), who along with O'Malley-Wood laid the foundation stones in 1922.

48 Martin Place represents the finest work of the significant architectural and engineering firm of H. E. Ross and Rowe. The surviving comprehensive documentary record of the original sketch, design and construction drawings enhances the importance of this association.

48 Martin Place represents a building constructed within the final phase of use of the combined skills of architecture and engineering within the architectural profession.

SHR Criteria c)

[Aesthetic significance]

The building was directly associated with the firm after completion when Ross and Rowe moved their practice into the building. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

48 Martin Place is a magnificent example of Beaux-Arts revivalist architecture - a visual and technical masterpiece.

The building is aesthetically distinguished. The façade materials are detailed in rich colours that make the building distinctive amongst the significant streetscape of Martin Place. In particular, the terracotta is aesthetically distinguished not least because of its contrast to the traditional masonry materials of the surrounding buildings. The roofscape has been designed to integrate service elements with the neo-Classical design of the remainder of the building, with respect for the high visibility of the roof. Internally, the extensive use of Australian marbles and scagliola provide rich appeal. The building reflects the materials and wealth of natural resources available within NSW and Australia at the time of its construction.

48 Martin Place displays high quality craftsmanship and high quality materials throughout.

The building displays tremendous civic presence through its monumentality and consistent use of classical motifs. It is prominently located over the width of an important city block. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

SHR Criteria d)

[Social significance]

The Commonwealth Bank is an important financial institution and Sydney has been the National Headquarters since 1913. 48 Martin Place was originally constructed as a Head Office (for the Government Savings Bank of NSW) and is significant now as the Head Office for the Commonwealth Bank, an institution of national importance. In 1990, operations were relocated from 120 Pitt Street, the original Head Office.

48 Martin Place provides evidence of the significance of banking to the community, especially in a government and business sense. The building was designed to represent the status of banking institutions in the public esteem through the instruments of government and politics, and reflected the stability and confidence of the era which were considered as an important part of banking. While the building itself remains a symbol and the importance of banking is still acknowledged, current community values and the regard for politics and large institutions in general have changed.

The Martin Place Executive offices on Level 2 were designed for and originally occupied by the Commissioners and the Senior Executive Officers. The prestige of their design and location is directly connected with people who hold authority within the Bank. Social significance can be attributed to these rooms as they continue to be used by Senior Executives. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

SHR Criteria e)

[Research potential]

The building demonstrates superior technical accomplishment, utilising innovative and unique design and engineering features and technical innovations, including the use of terracotta blocks as permanent formwork over a majority of the façade.

The Martin Place entry doors display significant technical innovation, being hydraulically operated vertical action doors housed in special cavities in the basement.

The mechanical fire escape operating from Level 1 and incorporating a false sill and keystone is the only known example within Australia. The physical evidence of the mechanical fire escape, albeit retained in a non-working state, provides a major source of information.

The main Safe Deposit Vault door and small-scale emergency doors employed the most up-to-date technology of the time, and have not required replacement since their installation. The technology extended to the treatment of the retracting floor around the main door, used

to allow the door to swing freely for opening and closing, and also to keep it in place during the Bank's operating hours.

The reinforced concrete frame was a large-scale concrete structure used relatively early within Australia.

The strong rooms located within the columns display a significant degree of technical innovation.

48 Martin Place has strong associations with creative achievement within Australia and the building has lost little of its design and technical integrity. The visual/sensory appeal and landmark/scenic qualities remain as strong as they were initially.

48 Martin Place is a well documented and researched building. In addition to the original drawings, a remarkable surviving source of information, much of the research potential was investigated and recorded in the recent conservation work (1984-1990). Considering the thoroughness of the previous conservation work, the building is unlikely to yield additional information. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)


SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity]

The Beaux-Arts style is rare in Australia, with no identifiable distribution pattern evident, and the building exhibits uncommonly rich detailing and unique use of materials.

48 Martin Place is a rare example of an early 20th century financial institution within the country, remarkable in its setting within the Martin Place streetscape and in exceptional condition.

The technique of using façade terracotta as formwork and also special features such as the mechanical fire stair and Martin Place hydraulic door are rare within Australia. (Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000)

Assessment criteria:

Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
21(1)(b)	Conservation Plan submitted for endorsement	48 Martin Place CMP	CMP conditionally endorsed by Heritage Council 15 May 2001.	May 15 2001
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p>	Sep 5 2008

			Minister for Planning Sydney, 11 July 2008 To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.	
--	--	--	--	--

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

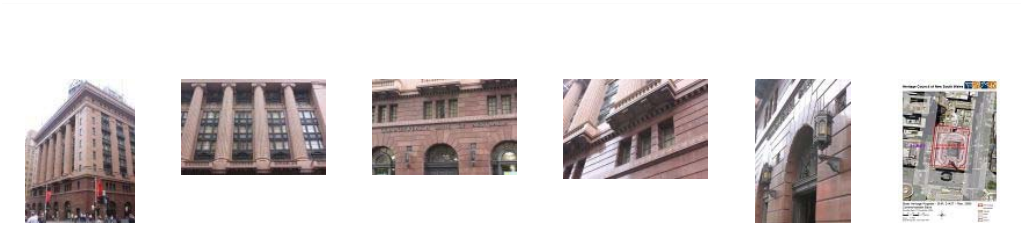
Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		01427	17 Nov 00	150	11885

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Tourism		2007	Commerce Walking Tour	View details!
Tourism	Attraction Homepage	2007	Commerce Walking Tour	View details!
Management Plan (HC endorsed)	Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd	2000	Conservation Management Plan - Commonwealth Bank, 48 Martin Place, Sydney 48 Martin Place, Sydney Under review	
Written	Tanner & Associates Pty Ltd	2000	State Heritage Inventory form	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office
Database number: 5045790
File number: S90/03730

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Former "City Mutual Life Assurance" Building Including Interiors

Item details

Name of item:	Former "City Mutual Life Assurance" Building Including Interiors
Other name/s:	City Mutual Life Assurance Society Ltd Building; Capita Building
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Commercial
Category:	Commercial Office/Building
Location:	Lat: -33.8675771917541 Long: 151.209181274367
Primary address:	10 Bligh Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area:	Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
10 Bligh Street	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address
60-66 Hunter Street	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address
60-66 Hunter Street	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address

Statement of significance:

The City Mutual Building is one of the most impressive and innovative of Australia's Interwar Art Deco commercial office buildings and a notable exemplar of its style and period. The building is recognized as the finest achievement in this style of its notable architect, Emil Sodersten, and the high quality of its design is matched by its fabric and fine detailing, both internally and externally. Features of particular note and rarity include the elaborate scagliola work in the Assurance Chamber and the bronze relief sculptures over the entry. The sculpture's central figures are a reinterpretation of Benzon's "Flight from Pompei", with flanking bas relief panels of indigenous flora, including banksias and flannel flowers, by renowned sculptor Rayner Hoff over the main entry. The relatively high degree of intactness of the building's important facades and interior spaces, particularly the entry hall and former Assurance Chamber, are also notable and enhance the site's overall significance.

The building's dramatic exploitation of its important corner site and the importance this gives to the building in its context is also an important aspect of the building's aesthetic significance, it serving as a backdrop to Richard Johnson Square and a local landmark in local streetscape views.

Since its completion in 1936 the building has been a symbol of the Mutual Assurance Society and though no longer owned or occupied by them it remains a reminder of the Society's role in the evolution of Sydney's commercial life and building development.

Date significance updated: 04 Jan 06

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Emil Sodersten

Builder/Maker: J Cassidy & Concrete Construction Pty Ltd

Construction years: 1934-1936

Physical description: A particularly fine and exemplary model of Interwar Art Deco office building modelled on the latest American "skyscrapers" of the 1920s and 1930s. Generally acknowledged as the finest example of the work of architect Emil Sodersten this 1936 building fully exploits its important corner site by providing two major streetscape facades and an imposing entrance on the splayed corner emphasized by polished black granite, restrained decorative detailing and surmounting tower. The steel framed building of 11 stories (plus basement + tower levels) is clad with Wondabyne sandstone above a two-storey basecourse of polished red granite. Bronze framed windows and spandrel panels feature at ground and first floor level and steel casement windows above (though many of these were replaced c. 1988). The severity of the main facades is relieved by its careful detailing and use of materials and modelling is provided by the projecting v-shapes of the windows and the skilful setbacks of the corner tower. The black granite to the main entry is enlivened by a bass-relief by the noted sculptor Raynor Hoff and bronze doors and handrails.

Internally the main features include a fine entry hall with marble to walls floor and stair and sliding bronze doors which leads to the splendid, double-height former Assurance Chamber set diagonally through the building and surrounded with offices on all sides. This chamber features fine and rare examples of scagliola on walls and columns as well as marble and bronze detailing. The layout was originally arranged in a v-shape around a central lightwell which also lit one side of the Assurance Chamber but this was infilled in 1988. Most offices have been modernized but the original Boardroom and its custom designed furniture on Level 2, the adjacent corridor and lift foyer and the entrance and stair lobby off Bligh Street are generally retained as originally. Category:Individual Building. Style:Inter-War Art Deco. Storeys:11 + basements + tower. Facade:Sandstone cladding, granite cladding; bronze & steel frame windows. Side/Rear Walls:Rendered masonry. Internal Walls:Plastered brick. Roof Cladding:Waterproof membrane, corrugated steel sheeting. Internal Structure:Conc. encased steel frame. Floor:Reinf. conc. Slab. Roof:Reinf. conc. Slab. Ceilings:Decorative plaster, susp. Plasterbd. Stairs:2 levels of original Hunter St lobby stair & 1 level of Bligh St lobby stair. Fire Stairs:Modern concrete fire stairs. Lifts:3 passenger lifts (Hunter Street); 1 lift (Bligh St lobby). AirConditioned:Yes

Physical condition and/or Intrusive Elements:Modern fitouts which have destroyed and/or obscured significant features of original layout and finishes (including present fitout of Assurance Chamber).

Archaeological potential:

Modifications and dates: 1936

Further information: Exceptional Significance:The main facades to Hunter & Bligh Streets and all original fabric and detailing on these (including cladding, decoration, bronze and steel windows, etc). Internally the major spaces including the main entry hall, double-height Assurance Chamber, remnants of the original stair, original Boardroom, its bathroom and furniture on Level 2, Bligh Street entry and lobby. Medium Significance:The building's roof areas and secondary spaces internally which still retain original layout and/or fabric including the lift lobbies, secondary stairs, remnant scagliola tile finishes in hall ways, original timber joinery and office fitouts. Also the later mezzanine level in the Assurance Chamber. Low Significance:Adapted areas with fabric, layout and fitout sympathetic to the original building. :First air-conditioned private office building in Sydney

Was a heritage item in 1989, and has remained so since.

Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

Current use: Commercial Offices
Former use: Commercial Offices, Club

History

Historical notes: The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as to whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

The corner of Bligh Street and Hunter Street was not occupied by any very permanent buildings for most of the nineteenth century. It is shown as vacant on city plans of 1822, 1843 and 1880, but in 1891 the City Mutual Life Assurance Society bought lot 4. right on the corner, then occupied by some small commercial premises. All these were demolished and, after a competition, George Mansfield's four-storey offices were erected for the insurance company in 1893.

The late Victorian colony had been growing in economic activity and the risks implicit in world trade, intercolonial communications, retailing and home ownership from accident, death or fire had encouraged the growth of major insurance companies, often backed by British capital. The City Mutual, founded in 1878, survived the economic bleakness of the 1890s and prospered in the twentieth century. In the early 1930s, again with depression looming, the society decided to rebuild on the same site and on the adjacent Lot 3 in Bligh Street.

After another competition in 1934, the winning architect was Emil Sodersten, the creator of the War Memorial in Canberra six years earlier. The American-style Art Deco skyscraper was completed in October 1936 and 'the whole of Sydney is talking about the new City Mutual Building ... People passing in the trams lean forward to gaze upon it, while those walking up Hunter Street stop to admire its streamlined symmetry' (Building, 12 October 1936, 31). The use of red granite and white Hawkesbury sandstone from Wondabyne, together with the scagliola employed extensively in the interiors, was much praised. The bronze sculptural reliefs were by Raynes Hoff, well known from his work at the Hyde Park Anzac Memorial.

Only the first three floors were initially occupied by the company, while the upper floors were leased. The sub-basement was soon redesigned by Sodersten as a restaurant and library for the Pickwick Club, while the roof-top garden around the caretaker's flat was soon removed.

In 1946-1947 a mezzanine was inserted in the great insurance chamber by H.R. Rowe of Ross and Rowe, over Sodersten's vehement opposition. An eleventh storey was added to the two wings by C.C. Ruwals and Howard in 1956. Extensive conservation works were undertaken by Travis Partners in 1989.

City Mutual occupied the building, gradually resuming the upper floors, until the 1990s, when the building was sold on separate strata titles to a number of businesses.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)
[Historical significance] Since its completion in 1936 the building has been a symbol of the Mutual Assurance Society and though no longer owned or occupied by them it remains a reminder of the Society's role in the evolution of Sydney's commercial life and building development. Has historic significance at a State level.


SHR Criteria c)
[Aesthetic significance] The City Mutual Building is one of the most impressive and innovative of Australia's Interwar Art Deco commercial office buildings and a notable exemplar of its style and period. The building is recognized as the finest achievement in this style of its notable architect, Emil Sodersten, and the high quality of its design is matched by its fabric and fine detailing, both internally and externally. Features of particular note and rarity include the elaborate scagliola work in the Assurance Chamber and the bronze relief by Rayner Hoff over the main entry with its flanking bronze bas-relief panels of Australian flora. The relatively high degree of intactness of the building's important facades and interior spaces, particularly the entry hall and former Assurance Chamber, are also notable and enhance the site's overall significance.

The building's dramatic exploitation of its important corner site and the importance this gives to the building in its context is also an important aspect of the building's aesthetic significance, it serving as a backdrop to Richard Johnson Square and a local landmark in local streetscape views.

The building provides an important record of the building technologies and techniques of Sydney's earliest "skyscrapers". It was also the first office building to have air-conditioning and retains remnants of this original fitout and equipment. Has aesthetic significance at a State level.

SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity] The use of scagliola finishes in the main Assurance Chamber. Is rare at a State level.

SHR Criteria g)
[Representativeness] The building is one of the finest examples of the aesthetic principles and construction techniques of the Interwar Art Deco "skyscraper". It is also the most notable representative example of the Art Deco work of its designer, Emil Sodersten.

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

The main Assurance Chamber should be fitted out and used in a manner which appropriately exposes and conserves its significant finishes, layout and spatial qualities.

Original fabric should be preserved and appropriately conserved, particularly where it has largely been removed and remains only as token reminders (eg. the scagliola finish of rooms and lobby/hall areas outside the main Assurance Chamber). Consideration should be given to reinstating covered over elements (eg. original stairs, scagaliola finishes, joinery, etc) as part of future development/refurbishment programs.

The building should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement, or a Conservation Management Plan, should be prepared for the building prior to any major works being undertaken. There shall be no vertical additions to the building and no alterations to the façade of the building other than to reinstate original features. The principal room layout and planning configuration as well as significant internal original features including ceilings, cornices, joinery, flooring and fireplaces should be retained and conserved. Any additions and alterations should be confined to the rear in areas of less significance, should not be visibly prominent and shall be in accordance with the relevant planning controls.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1675	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

Study details

Title	Year	Number	Author	Inspected by	Guidelines used
City Mutual Building, 60-66 Hunter Street, Sydney: Conservation Management Plan	2005		Tanner Architects Scott MacArthur		N o
City Mutual Building, 60-66 Hunter Street, Sydney: Conservation Management Plan	2005		Tanner Architects Scott MacArthur		N o

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written			Extensive material (primary sources) is held by the City Mutual Assurance Society, including reports, photographs, drawings, etc. Building, 12 October, 1934 ; 12 October 1936; 24 January 1938 Building, 24 January 1938, 139, 142 Daniel Thomas, `	
Written	Scott MacArthur, Tanner Architects	2005	City Mutual Building, 60-66 Hunter Street, Sydney: Conservation Management Plan	
Written	Anita Heiss		Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	
Written	Roy Lumby/20th Century Heritage Society of NSW	2005	A regional identity: City walk brochure	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2423706

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Qantas House (No. 1 Chifley Square)

Item details

Name of item:	Qantas House (No. 1 Chifley Square)
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Commercial
Category:	Commercial Office/Building
Location:	Lat: -33.8659733441 Long: 151.2106868260
Primary address:	68-96 Hunter Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Parish:	St James
County:	Cumberland
Local govt. area:	Sydney
Local Aboriginal Land Council:	Metropolitan

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
			CP/SP	74556

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
68-96 Hunter Street	Sydney	Sydney	St James	Cumberland	Primary Address
1 Chifley Square	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address

Statement of significance:

Qantas House, No. 1 Chifley Square, Sydney, designed in 1950 by Felix Tavener of Rudder Littlemore & Rudder, Architects and completed in 1957 represents the highest standard of architectural response to its urban setting and client needs through its form, composition and construction.

A variant of the Post-War International style of architecture, Qantas House represents transitional aspects of 'moderate' 1930s European modernism, combined with the latest in post-war curtain wall technologies and materials and is the best design response to its setting in Australia from this period.

Although altered internally, its external facade remains largely intact. The graceful double-curved facade is coherently ordered and its shape reflects and visually reinforces the implementation of a long-planned extension to Elizabeth Street. It became the inspiration for the eventual completion of the ironically named, but no less significant, Chifley Square, modelled on a town planned scheme of of some eighty years before. Qantas House is a key defining element in this important, planned, urban space; it provides an appropriate visual termination to important vistas and it visually links to adjoining important buildings and streets.

Historically significant as the first planned world headquarters for Qantas Empire Airways, at

the time Australia's only, and Government-owned, international airline, the building, and in particular the aerofoil-shaped aluminium mullions of its curtain wall, gives form to Qantas' forward looking and expansive image at a time when air travel was taking off. Qantas Airways remained as its sole occupant for twenty-five years and remains associated with the building through its lease of the ground floor. The building is highly regarded by the people of Sydney for its inherent aesthetic qualities and its association with Qantas, an Australian corporate icon.

Qantas House is a fine example in the Australian context of intact, post-war, multi-storeyed office buildings from the first phase in the 1950s, and is from the small group in Sydney of this group designed prior to the amendments to the Heights of Buildings Act in 1957 that heralded the subsequent 'high-rise' phase. It has particular rarity within Australia for its unique shape, the outstanding quality of its curtain wall facade and its contribution to its urban setting. As such, it is considered to have heritage significance at a national level.

A well known and much loved city landmark, Qantas House is an icon of its time; a quintessential Sydney building that represents a brave future and a strong sense of history and of place.

Date significance updated: 26 Feb 04

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Rudder, Littlemore and Rudder, Architects

Builder/Maker: Concrete Constructions Pty Ltd

Construction years: 1955-1957

Physical description: Qantas House is distinguished by its graceful, segmented, curved facade which consists of a 46m high, double glazed curtain wall of green glass with enamelled blue-green steel spandrel panels. It is located on the western side of Chifley Square which itself is located at the intersection of Elizabeth, Hunter and Phillip Streets in Sydney.

In following the curve of Chifley Square, the building's plan respects the semi-circular form which was proposed for the northern side of the square in its original design of 1908. Qantas House is still a distinctive feature of Chifley Square and its curved form provides a welcome pedestrian area at the front of the building.

The building was designed in the post war International Style. The base, middle and top of the building are differentiated by changes in the facade treatment.

The base consists of a double height foyer which incorporates a mezzanine level. On the facade, the volume of this space is differentiated from the upper levels of the building by the use of dark green and black polished granite cladding and by the large, uninterrupted panels of glazing set in bronze frames.

The eleven storeys of the middle section of the facade are characterised by the repetitive pattern of the smaller aluminium-framed curtain wall panels. The curtain wall is composed of vertical standard sections which include awning windows at their tops, central panels of fixed glazing and enamelled steel spandrel panels at their bases.

At the northern end of the building is a full height sandstone faced wall on which a vertical 'Qantas Airways' sign was originally located. The sandstone facing returns in a long band to

form the top of the facade composition, providing an exciting demarcation of the building against the sky. Above this band, a recessed roofline contains staff facilities and a rooftop recreation area.

The reinforced concrete structure of the building is relatively conventional. However, the planning is noteworthy in that the service cores are assymetrically placed adjacent to the boundaries with the adjoining buildings. This allows for the inclusion of a light well at the rear of the building, ensuring the penetration of light deep into the interior. It also means that the curved line of the building against the sky is not interrupted by vertical projections of centrally located service cores.

The planning may also have resulted from a desire to maximise the available building envelope - the building appears to have reached the maximum floor space ratio and maximum height which were allowable under the planning codes at the time.

At its south eastern corner, the building joins Emil Sodersten's 1936 City Mutual Life Building in a carefully considered and sensitive manner. The polished granite base course below the foyer windows respects the line and material of the base of Sodersten's granite clad building. In addition, the proportions of the fenestration of Qantas House's curtain wall panels and the steel framed windows of the WL building are similar.

In successfully taking advantage of its corner site, Qantas House also forms an elegant termination to the long view northwards along Elizabeth Street.

The exterior of the building is in near original condition, the only notable changes having been the loss of the original cantilevered entrance awning and original exterior signage and the formation of a new entrance to the lift lobby at the northern end of the building.

Internally, the double height volume of the foyer is intact although the current recent fitout has resulted in some partitioning of the space. The original curtains to the office and foyer levels have been removed or replaced with vertical drapes. Originally, the building interior featured Australian grown timbers such as sycamore, mahogany and walnut.

The building is no longer completely owner occupied. The entrance to the northern service core currently leads to the offices of Australian Casualty and Life.

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential:

The exterior of the building generally retains its original appearance, except that the and original cantilevered entrance awning and and external signage have been lost. Archaeological potential is low.

Date condition updated:03 Jan 01

Modifications and dates:

- 1964/1965 Alterations and additions. WC and bathroom to ground floor.
- 1966/1967 Storeroom, fourth floor. Extensions to building.
- 1982/1983 Refurbishment of building by Stephenson and Turner, Architects.
- A separate entrance to the office floors was formed at the building's northern end. The facade was repaired and restored.
- 1988/1989 Alterations to ground floor and mezzanine.
- 1992 Modification of ceiling, north fire stair and basement. Installation of revolving door.
- Entrance awning. The original sweeping cantilevered entrance awning has been replaced with

the current unsympathetic awning.

Signage. The original 'Qantas Airways'signage from the sandstone wall at the northern end of the building has been removed along with the neon signage from the rooftop over the building's northern service core.

(City of Sydney Heritage Inventory, Inventory No. 2014.)

Further information: Some of the original interior finishes have been lost and the original foyer space has been partly partitioned, the result of a relatively recent interior fitout. A recent air conditioning system has led to the lowering of the ceiling under the foyer's mezzanine and the original stairs at either end of the public area have been blocked. The original curtains to the office and foyer levels have been removed or replaced with vertical drapes.

0 It has not been possible to gain access to the office floors of the building so the extent of the survival of the original office level interiors has not been assessed.

0 Many of the changes to the interior of the building would be reversible and it is likely that there is sufficient documentary and physical evidence to allow for the reinstatement or interpretation of many of the elements of the original design.

Current use: Office
Former use: Office

History

Historical notes: Following WWII, Australia acquired a new status and prosperity which arose from the country's vast natural wealth. The Liberal government fostered economic growth and the desire for 'progress' was widely embraced. The optimism and energy of the time were illustrated by new office buildings which provided an internationally recognised symbol of the country's aspirations and abilities and transformed both the patterns of landuse and the skylines of Sydney and Melbourne.

The years following WWII had seen a surge in the activities of Qantas and the company had achieved stature as a major world airline. Qantas House symbolised Australia's progress in aviation generally and the aeronautic future of Qantas Airways in particular. The construction of the building during this period reflected the increasing importance of international travel to the increasingly affluent middle class in Australia. The building was opened by Prime Minister Robert Menzies 'with great fanfare' on October 28th, 1957. (Jahn, Graham, Sydney Architecture, p 162.)

In its new company headquarters, Qantas wished to project a progressive image with the use of the latest imported curtain wall technology combined with Australian materials such as granite, marble and a variety of timbers. Qantas House was the first office building to use Australian black granite from Adelong and Bookharn green granite from the Yass area. Marble was sourced in the country town of Mudgee and the Wombeyan Caves area. Queensland maple was used extensively throughout the building and other timbers featured included walnut, mahogany and sycamore. As well as being chosen for aesthetic and patriotic reasons, there were economies to be achieved through the use of materials which could be found close at hand.

The desire to reflect a specifically Australian character was rare in office interiors of the 1950s. In keeping with the prevailing International Style, the Australian theme in Qantas House was reflected more in the choice of materials than in the way they were used.

In her report 'Post World War II Multistoried Office Buildings in Australia (1945-1967)', Jennifer Taylor states that the 'aesthetic ideas informing the design of multistoried office buildings in the '50s and '60s in Australia essentially belonged to architectural traditions developed in the Bauhaus, Germany in the late 1920s and early '30s and transported to America after the closure of that school by the Nazi government, where they blended with

America's own traditions associated with multistoried building design. These ideas form the mainstream of architectural modernism, and are characterised by a value placed upon clarity, rationality, honesty, efficiency, functionality and technology. The external skin of the building was often the vehicle for a potent expression of such values. The glass curtain wall was prized as representing the complete release of the external fabric from its structural role'. (Taylor, Jennifer, Report: 'Post World War 11 Multistoried Office Buildings in Australia (1945-1967): External Skin/Cladding', p 4)

Buildings demonstrating the new curtain wall technology began to appear in Australian cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne, from 1955. Qantas House (completed 1957), with its sweeping curtain wall attached to a reinforced concrete frame, is therefore an early example of the influence of this contemporary American technology and aesthetic in Australia. The building is significant in that it embraced this construction and aesthetic within the constraints of the 150' height limit which remained in place in Sydney until 1963.

As might be expected during a period of expansion, investment in office buildings had been growing during the late 1950s. In general, however, the buildings themselves were of low budget and limited dimension. They were usually infill structures of limited height, were built right to the building line and provided minimal pedestrian amenity. Context was generally seen as inconsequential and plazas associated with these buildings tended to divorce rather than unite the building with the city.

Within this context, the curved form of Qantas House, which addresses and shapes Chifley Square, is rare. Its form broke from the standard flat facade of most contemporary office buildings with its sweeping glass wall and dramatic cantilevered entry awning (now lost). Its curved facade and more three-dimensional aesthetic distinguish it from the other buildings in the 9r up.

Jennifer Taylor also states that, at their most progressive, 'the new office blocks principally were f ree-standing or virtually so, and by 1957 Australia could boast designs as aesthetically and technologically advanced as any outside America, and not far behind developments there. An interesting hybrid of infill and freestanding solutions occurred in response to certain sites, notably corner locations, where innovative buildings appear to strive to break free of the constraints of the physical restrictions. The curving forms of the Qantas Building ... provide the most exuberant example.' (Taylor, Jennifer, Essay: 'Post World War 11 Multistoried Office Buildings in Australia (1945-1967)', p 7)

Australia's affair with these early curtain walls was short-lived, and they reached their peak of development and prestige in the early 1960s.

Qantas House was judged the best new building in the British Commonwealth by the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1959, and was awarded the Bronze medal.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Technology-Activities and processes associated with the knowledge or use of mechanical arts and applied sciences	(none)-

3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport-Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements	(none)-
8. Culture-Developing cultural institutions and ways of life	Leisure-Activities associated with recreation and relaxation	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical significance]

- Qantas House is an important landmark in the development of the modern office building in Australia. Significant for its use of early curtain wall technology and as one of the last multi-storey buildings designed prior to amendments to the Heights of Buildings Act in 1957 in NSW, it is from the first phase of curtain wall buildings that provided a transition to the mature high-rise buildings of the 1960s.

- Qantas House is significant as the first purpose-built world headquarters office building for Qantas Empire Airways, at that time Australia's only, and Government-owned, international airline. It is important evidence of the rapid post-War growth in Qantas Empire Airways' international operations and in air travel generally. Alterations to Qantas House to allow for the construction by Qantas of the adjacent Wentworth Hotel are important evidence of changes in the nature of air travel and the growth of international tourism in Australia.

- Qantas House is a statement of the confidence and progressive spirit which was characteristic of Australia during the 1950s. The international status and progressive nature of Qantas' operations when combined with the exuberant form and imagery, the use of innovative and local materials, and innovative techniques and services in the building itself, provides an exemplar of the positive, forward-looking aspects of Australian society during this period.

- The construction of Qantas House marked the partial implementation of a significant town planning scheme for the betterment of Sydney and provided the pattern for the eventual completion of Chifley Square as a significant urban space some eighty years after it was first envisaged. The fulfilment of this town planning vision provides important evidence of the complex nature of such activity and the interaction between various levels of Government, professionals and land owners.

- Qantas House shows the continuity of use from the time of construction to the present as a commercial office building and the continuous use of the ground floor for a publicly accessible use associated with travel. It provides evidence of the period during which air travel originated at city terminals for departure to Sydney Airport. It also provides evidence of the nature of changes in the nature of office use and fitout since the time of construction, including those resulting from the change from a single owner occupier to multiple tenancies on its upper levels.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- is associated with a significant activity or historical phases;
- maintains or shows the continuity of historical process of activity; and
- shows evidence of significant human activity.

SHR Criteria b)

[Associative significance]

- Qantas House has a strong association with Qantas Airways, a prominent Australian company of international renown. Qantas Empire Airways constructed the building as its first purpose-designed world headquarters, as an identifiable icon for its modern image, and was its sole occupant for twenty-five years. This association is continued through its lease of the ground and mezzanine floors and naming rights to the building.

- Qantas House is important for its public use associations with air travellers since its time of construction, as a booking and information venue for Qantas and other airlines that occupied the ground floor including TAA and Australian Airlines.

- Qantas House was designed by the noted architectural firm Rudder Littlemore & Rudder, with Felix Tavener as the design architect, and is arguably their most significant building achievement.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied is:

SHR Criteria c)

[Aesthetic significance]

- is associated with a significant event, person or groups of persons.

- Qantas House is a masterpiece of architectural form, composition and construction. It represents the highest standards of architectural design response its urban setting and its client's needs. Its unique graceful double curved form strikes a chord with the public and professionals alike. The composition of its façade elements is coherently ordered, as is its curtain wall construction featuring aerofoil-shaped mullions, symbolically linking building and client, lustrous teal coloured spandrels and green-tinted glazing.

- Qantas House is an important early and innovative example of post-War multi-storeyed office building in Australia. It was one of the first uses of curtain-walled technology in Australia and was designed as a showcase for Australian materials. It also featured an innovative internal fitout and use of air conditioning services. It was critically acclaimed in the architectural press at the time and it was the recipient of the 1959 Royal Institute of British Architects Bronze Medal.

- Qantas House is significant as a variation within the Post-War International style of architecture, representing some aspects of transition from interwar European modernism. Characteristics of earlier styles can be identified in both the building (a humanist/organic form, a traditional composition and symbolic use of elemental forms) and in the influences identified by its designer, while its materials, such as aluminium, and its curtain wall construction arrived as post-War construction technologies.

- As a landmark building in such a prominent location, Qantas House demonstrates an excellent urban design response. Its relationship with Chifley Square, which it helps to define, reflects earlier twentieth-century schemes for the space and has itself been respected by the recent developments around this important urban space. The generous footpath space in front of Qantas House provides an appropriate forecourt to the public ground-floor booking hall.

- Qantas House was designed as and forms an aesthetically distinctive termination of the northern view along Elizabeth Street, while at the same time the building leads the eye around the Chifley Square space and onto the extension of Elizabeth Street as Philip Street.

- The external form of Qantas House retains its integrity with only minor alteration, and its key internal ground-floor/mezzanine space is retained along with its key internal circulation spaces. Although much of the building's internal fabric has been altered, the external fabric remains largely intact.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- shows, or is associated with, creative or technical innovating or achievement;
 - is aesthetically distinctive;
 - has landmark qualities and
 - exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology.
- It is likely that Qantas House is viewed as culturally significant within the community of NSW generally, not just for its association with Qantas, an Australian corporate icon, but also for its readily appreciated aesthetic and townscape qualities. This level of esteem was evident at the time of construction and there is evidence, through media coverage in recent years when it was perceived as being under threat, that it remains.
- Qantas House is also held in a high level of esteem by the architectural profession and other conservation groups in NSW. The building is included on the Royal Australian Institute of Architects Register of Twentieth Century Buildings of Significance and they recently nominated the building for inclusion on the State Heritage Register.
- Qantas House is likely to have a strong association for current and former employees of Qantas Airways because of its former headquarters role for twenty-five years and its current role as the Qantas city-based booking office.

SHR Criteria d)
[Social significance]

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- is important for its associations with an identifiable group; and
 - is crucial to a community's sense of place.
- Although the building interior has been considerably altered, it is likely that some internet fabric of the interior would be able to reveal further information about spatial arrangements, materials and finishes from the original construction period.
- Qantas House has the potential to yield important information on aspects of mid-twentieth-century architectural history and other technical aspects of its construction, such as the detail of the internal fitout, the provision of air conditioning services, the first phases of curtain wall construction and office functional arrangements in the 1950s and 1960s.
- Qantas House is an important reference site for its early use of high-quality, curtain-walled technology and as a showcase for Australian building materials, including the granite and sandstone facing of the façade.
- Because of the depth of excavation for the construction of the basement levels for Qantas House across most of the site, there is little potential for archaeological remains that predate the existing building to remain intact. There is some potential for intact subsurface deposits to survive in the northwestern corner of the site (currently lightwell) as the amount of disturbance that has occurred in these areas is uncertain. The northwestern corner of the site may contain the northern extension of an early brick-barrel drain, dating to the 1820s. (This drain previously ran diagonally across the site but was removed during the construction of Qantas House and replaced by a modern ceramic drainpipe. It is also likely to adjoin the southeastern boundary of the site).
- Although not part of the Qantas House site itself, the area adjoining the front of Qantas

SHR Criteria e)
[Research potential]

House (Philip Street and Chifley Square) has high potential to contain intact subsurface deposits related to the previous street alignment and associated development.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information; and
- is an important benchmark or reference site or type.
- Qantas House is a rare and outstanding example of architectural design of the highest quality in the Australian context from the first phase of post-War, multi-storey commercial building construction in Australia in the period up to 1960.

SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity]

- Qantas House is a unique example in the Australian context of a curved, curtain wall building of this type and period.
- The façade of Qantas House retains its original, aluminium-framed, curtain wall construction, with distinctive aerofoil-shaped mullions. This early technology is becoming increasingly rare with continual upgrading of buildings and the Qantas House façade is an excellent example of this type.
- Qantas House is one of the five heritage listed 'non-high-rise' multi-storeyed buildings within Sydney (four in the city of Sydney and one in North Sydney) to remain that were constructed prior to 1960. Qantas House and the MLC building in North Sydney represent the finest examples from this period, and both represent distinctive and different forms of Post-War International style architecture.
- Qantas House is part of a small group of multi-storey buildings constructed by the last generation of Post-War corporate clients whose buildings were specifically designed to reflect that corporation's public image.
- Qantas House is a rare example of Post-War International Style architecture with an expressionist form.
- Qantas House illustrates a high quality consideration for its context and for urban design, forming a key element in the Chifley Square urban area that was part of this long-standing town planning scheme for the betterment of this area of Sydney that dated to the early twentieth century.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- scarce example of particular style custom or activity esteemed by the community; and
- demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest.
- Qantas House is representative of the intact Post-War International style, multi-storeyed office buildings from the 1950s. It is one of only a handful of similar intact buildings in Sydney from that period and only a small numbering Australia.

SHR Criteria g)
[Representativeness]

- Qantas House is a fine example of early curtain-walled building technology in Australia, with

an unconventional curved design.

- Qantas House is one of the small group of post-War, multi-storeyed office buildings remaining intact in NSW whose design preceded the amendments to the Heights of Buildings Act in 1957.


- Qantas House is representative of the group of commercial buildings in Sydney associated with travel and is representative of the group of buildings with ground-floor public booking hall spaces.

- Qantas House is a good example of the work of the architectural firm Rudder Littlemore and Rudder.

- Qantas House is associated with the group of planned and implemented proposals for the betterment of Sydney's streets.

The State Heritage Register inclusion criteria satisfied are:

- is a fine example of its type;
- is part of a group which collectively illustrate a representative type; and
- is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size.

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
21(1)(b)	Conservation Plan submitted for endorsement	Qantas House, 1 No. Chifley Square, Sydney (Godden Mackay Logan, Feb 02)	<p>CMP endorsed 9 July 2002 - expires 9 July 2007</p> <p>Amendment to CMP endorsed 6 July 2004 - expires 9 July 2007</p>	Jul 9 2002
21(1)(b)	Conservation Plan submitted for comment	Qantas House CMP Amendment No 1	CMP amendment endorsed 6 July 2004 - expires 9 July 2007	Jul 6 2004
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	<p>SCHEDULE OF STANDARD EXEMPTIONS</p> <p>HERITAGE ACT 1977</p> <p>Notice of Order Under Section 57 (2) of the Heritage Act 1977</p> <p>I, the Minister for Planning, pursuant to</p>	Sep 5 2008

			<p>subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, do by this Order:</p> <p>1. revoke the Schedule of Exemptions to subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act made under subsection 57(2) and published in the Government Gazette on 22 February 2008; and</p> <p>2. grant standard exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, described in the Schedule attached.</p> <p>FRANK SARTOR</p> <p>Minister for Planning</p> <p>Sydney, 11 July 2008</p> <p>To view the schedule click on the Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval link below.</p>	
21(1)(b)	Conservation Plan submitted for endorsement	Submission for Endorsement of CMP prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates dated 2008		Jun 12 2009

 **Standard exemptions** for works requiring Heritage Council approval

Listings

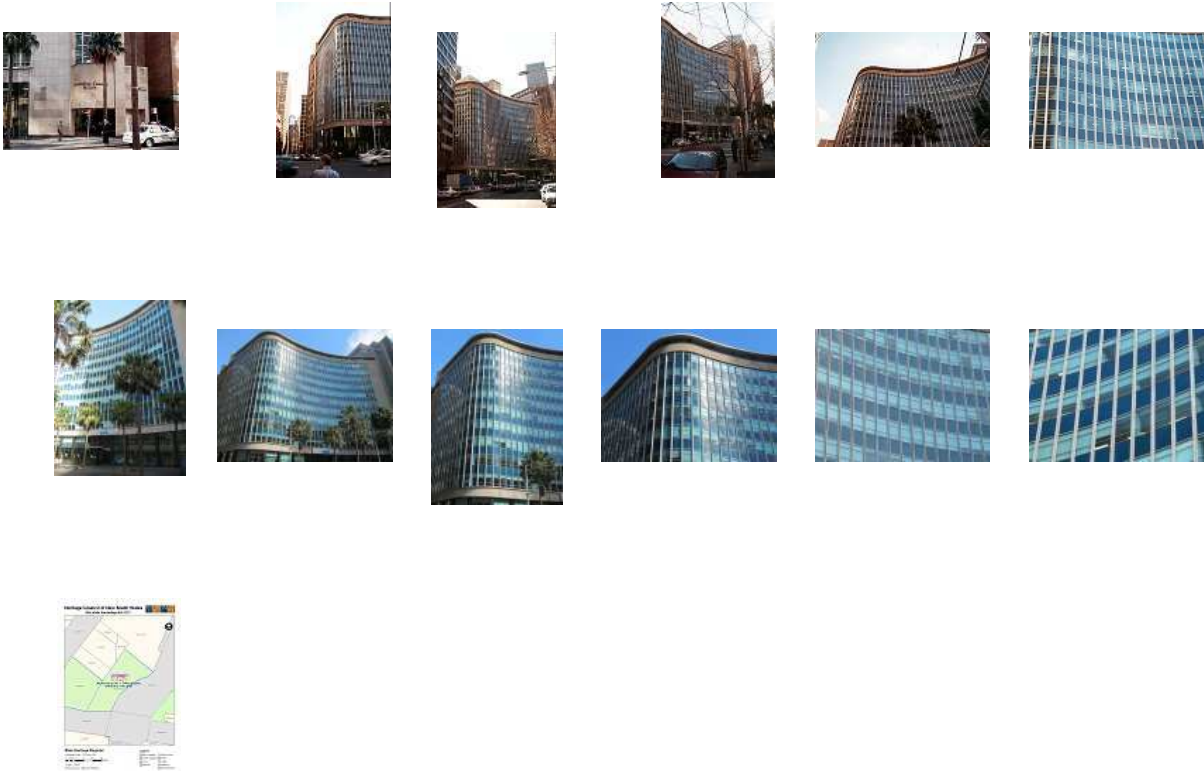
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		01512	25 May 01	89	2940

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		1958	Architecture in Australia magazine - Qantas House - Jan/Mar 1958	
Written	Australian Heritage Commission		Register of the National Estate listing information	
Written	Jahn, Graham	1994	Sydney Architecture	
Written	Jennifer Taylor in conjunction with Susan Stewart	1994	Post World War II Multistoried Office Buildings in Australia 1945-1977	

Written	Royal Australian Institute of Architects	2000	State Heritage Inventory form	
Written	Sydney City Council		Sydney City Council Heritage Inventory	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Heritage Office
Database number: 5049926
File number: EF14/5522; H00/419

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



Home > Topics > Heritage places and items > [Search for heritage](#)

Former Australian Provincial Assurance (Apa) Building Including Interiors

Item details

Name of item: Former Australian Provincial Assurance (Apa) Building Including Interiors
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Commercial
Category: Commercial Office/Building
Location: Lat: -33.8695880364305 Long: 151.209746481882
Primary address: 53-63 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area: Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
53-63 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

The APA Building exhibits a high level of architectural quality in terms of its proportions, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. The building is representative of the brief period of economic expansion between the end of the depression and the Second World War. The APA building is the last remaining example in Martin Place of what was a consistent group of structures exhibiting a conformity of scale, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail.

Date significance updated: 09 Jan 06

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: David W. King
Builder/Maker: Kell & Rigby
Construction years: 1936-1937

Physical description: The APA building was constructed in 1936-1937 in a brief period of economic expansion between the end of the depression and the Second World War. It is an example of Art Deco or Jazz Modern style which was at its peak at the time of the building's construction. The most notable feature of the building is its facade of granite and terracotta. Situated in Martin Place, the building is a integral component in the streetscape, and is the last remaining example of the consistent group of structures which exhibited a conformity of scale and detail. The main fabric of the building has survived largely unaltered from its original construction and is in reasonable condition. Internally, the main public areas of the building remain reasonably intact in terms of their original detail, and in good condition. Martin Place is unique in the history of the urban development of Sydney, in that the street was deliberately created between the years 1892 and 1935 to be a great urban thoroughfare. An incidental result of the development of Martin Place was that the blocks becoming available along both sides of the thoroughfare were taken up by major commercial and professional organisations for the purpose of developing quality office buildings to house their head offices. Consequently, Martin Place became the most prestigious address in the business area of Sydney, and remains so to this day.

The APA building was designed to formalise and define the new major civic thoroughfare of Martin Place, and continues to do so with the transition of the street into pedestrian space. The building presents a uniform and harmonious composition around three sides of the block.

Category: Individual Building. Style: Inter-War Art Deco. Storeys: 13 + Lower Ground Floor & Basement. Facade: Granite cladding, glazed terracotta tiles. Side/Rear Walls: Granite cladding, terracotta tiles. Internal Walls: Plastered brick, plasterbd. stud. Roof Cladding: Waterproof membrane. Internal Structure: Conc. encased steel frame. Floor: Reinf. conc. slabs, marble, terrazzo, carpet, ceramic tiles. Roof: Reinf. conc. slab. Ceilings: Decorative plaster, suspended plasterbd., timber boards. Stairs: White marble clad entry stairs, main stair clad in marble and terrazzo, fire stairs - all in reinforced concrete. Fire Stairs: Exit in Phillip Street. AirConditioned: Yes Sprinkler System: Yes. Lifts: Three, original lift cars and motors still in use.

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential:	<p>The APA Building, when it was opened, was considered to encompass the latest advances in building technology of the period. The structural system used for the building enabled the superstructure to be constructed extremely quickly - 15 weeks for the steel frame. The use of terracotta blocks on the facade was perceived as the most interesting aspect of the building at the time and basically remains intact. Services were of a high standard for the period. The existing ground floor foyer is relatively original..Intrusive Elements:Several areas of the lower facade of the building have been subject to previous alterations not compatible with the detail character of the original fabric.</p> <p>Date condition updated:09 Jan 06</p>
Modifications and dates:	1936-1937
Further information:	<p>Exceptional Significance:Elements of the building are of outstanding significance due to their design integrity and originality. These elements are the construction and design of the facade and roof fenestration, and the main public areas of the building. High Significance:The scale, facade modulation and roof fenestration of the building, are an integral component of what remains an urban space dominated by pre-World War II buildings. Was a heritage item in 1989, and remains so since that time. Streetscape:Martin Place was listed on the Heritage Streetscape Map in the Heritage LEP 2000.</p> <p>Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.</p>
Current use:	Offices
Former use:	Offices

History

Historical notes:	<p>The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.</p>
--------------------------	---

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

The site for the building was purchased by the Australian Provincial Assurance Association Ltd from the Sydney Municipal Council in May 1935 for 83,000 pounds. David W. King was appointed to prepare a design for the project and construction by builders Kell & Rigby was commenced in 1936. The building was opened in May 1937, and was considered extremely successful by the press of the period. The Australian Provincial Assurance Association occupied the basement, ground floor and three-quarters of the first floor. The remainder of the building was occupied by the legal firm Allen, Allen and Hemsley, a government department, several smaller organisations and the architectural offices of David King. In 1939, with the outbreak of WW2, the APA relocated to other premises and the building was effectively taken over by the Department of Manpower and Industry. After 1945, the APA resumed occupation of the building, and were to remain in residence until 1989. The lower ground floor was occupied by a quality restaurant (Cahill's) with direct access from Elizabeth Street. The building underwent little major change from 1937 until the late 1970s, when extensive renovations were carried out. These included extensive repointing of the terracotta and granite, upgrading of the lift cars, new marble paving to ground floor and major refurbishment to office floors. In 1987 the APA sold the building to Noden P/L, although they remained in residence until 1989. David King had remanded a tenant until the late 1960s and his practice had been responsible for the ongoing maintenance and minor refurbishment of the building until that time. The building was again sold to the Charter Property Group in August 1989.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The construction of the APA Building and the Rural Bank opposite marked the beginning of the development of the eastern end of Martin Place and Phillip Street as a major commercial and professional precinct. Has historic significance at a State level.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The APA Building exhibits a high level of architectural quality in terms of its proportions, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. Has aesthetic significance at a State level.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The APA building is the last remaining example in Martin Place of what was a consistent group of structures exhibiting a conformity of scale, facade treatment and vocabulary of detail. Is rare at a State level.
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	The building is representative of the brief period of economic expansion between the end of the depression and the Second World War. Is representative at a State level.
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the 🏛️ State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

Conservation of the building and site should be in accordance with the Burra Charter principles. Certain qualities of the building have been identified as being of exceptional significance. The scope of work applied to these areas of the building should be limited to maintenance, preservation, restoration, and the minimum necessary reconstruction to retain this significance. Certain areas previously subject to unsympathetic alteration would not be compromised by further adaptation.

The building should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement should be prepared for the building prior to any major works being undertaken. There shall be no vertical additions to the building and no alterations to the façade of the building other than to reinstate original features. The principal room layout and planning configuration as well as significant internal original features including ceilings, cornices, joinery and flooring should be retained and conserved.

Heritage Floorspace restrictions apply to this site. Awarded 19 February 1998.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1896	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

Study details

Title	Year	Number	Author	Inspected by	Guidelines used
Conservation Plan for APA House	1990		Peter Romy		N o
Conservation Plan for APA House	1990		Peter Romy		N o
Conservation Plan for APA House	1990		Peter Romy		N o

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		1984	Martin Place Civic Design Study	

Written			Council Records (BAs, DAs)	
Written	Peter Romey	1990	APA Building, 53 Martin Place, Sydney : conservation plan	
Written	Anita Heiss		Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	
Written	Paul Rappoport	2004	53 Martin Place Sydney: Conservation Maintenance Plan	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2423829

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Martin Place

Item details

Name of item: Martin Place
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Urban Area
Category: Streetscape
Location: Lat: -33.8692563806212 Long: 151.208490894265
Primary address: Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area: Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

Martin Place has Historic and Aesthetic Significance for ability to evidence the development of Victorian and Interwar Sydney as a prestige address for institutional buildings. Ability to reflect the status of Sydney because of its relationship with Institutional Buildings. It is significant for its ability to contribute to understanding the nineteenth and twentieth century town planning intention. It has ability to evidence key period of building activity during the Victorian period and later the interwar period and post war period in direct response to the Height of Building controls. Martin Place has Historic Association Significance for its association with Sir James Martin, premier and Chief Justice of NSW.

Date significance updated: 03 Jul 06

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Plaza area designed by Clarke Gazzard Pty Ltd, architects.

Construction years: 1891-1891

Physical description: The topography is generally sloping. The streetscape forms part of a grid and is bounded by Macquarie Street and terminated by George Street. The backdrop is not characterised by highrise. The street is characterised by commercial buildings. The streetscape features terminating vistas to CBC and ANZ Banks, Macquarie Street and Sydney Hospital. The roadway is wide and pedestrianised. Footpaths are wide and are bitumen, stone and paved. Kerbing is predominantly concrete. Remnant sandstone guttering also occurs. Utility services are concealed. There is little visual clutter. There is no awning pattern. Façade depth is pronounced. Extent of glass is not pronounced. Public domain feature include historic cenotaph (PD1), fountain (PD2), 'Passage' sculpture (PD3), and exposed drains within the GPO site (PD4). Neutral elements include telephone booths, seating, garbage bins and bollards. The landscape component of the streetscape comprises street plantings of London Plane trees. The subdivision pattern along the streetscape is irregular, narrow, wide consolidated resulting in a dense urban form. The predominant built form is Victorian and Interwar commercial. Buildings are built to the street alignment.

There are several Sydney 2005 LEP Schedule 8 Part 1 properties that contribute to the streetscape these include the GPO (Westin Hotel), Challis House, the Former MLC Building, Commonwealth Bank, APA Building, and the Reserve Bank. The Colonial Mutual Life Building (10A-16 Martin Place) street facade is the only Schedule 8 Part 2 Item listed in the Sydney LEP 2005 for Martin Place. The Tank Stream, listed on the State Heritage Register for archaeological value and as a Schedule 8, Part 3, abuts Martin Place. Contains many landscape items, including the Cenotaph (1928) and associated poplar planting's, Lloyd Rees Fountain (1976), and the Dobell Memorial Sculpture by Bert Flugelman (1979). The Plaza area from Pitt to Macquarie Streets was designed by Clarke Gazzard Pty Ltd, architects. Category: Urban Plaza. Style: Victorian, Inter-War and contemporary buildings.. General Details: Refer to Archaeological Zoning Plan.

Modifications and dates: 1891, 1976

Further information: Note that Martin Place Railway Station is listed on the State Heritage Register.

Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

Current use: Plaza
Former use: Street

History

Historical notes: During the Colonial period, two or three storey brick and shingle buildings were built facing George and Pitt Streets. Most were shops with residences over. The centre of the block where the Tank Stream flowed, was left largely undeveloped. The General Post Office occupied a site on George Street from c.1830. This was a two-storey brick building thought to have been designed by Francis Greenway.

Martin Place commenced as a narrow lane, which ran between George Street and Pitt Street and was widened into a substantial thoroughfare as part of the setting for the General Post Office in 1891. The stretch between Pitt Street to Castlereagh Street was known as 'Foxlow Place' after the maiden name of the wife of Mr Hosking, the first elected Mayor of Sydney, in office between 1842 and 1843. The south side of Foxlow Place remained vacant up to 1867. The north side had been almost completely built upon with various businesses. In the same year, John Hosking was recorded as occupying 8-10 Foxlow Place as business premises. Foxlow Place was renamed Moore Street during the 1870's, in honour of Alderman Charles Moore, Mayor of Sydney 1867-69. Further buildings had been constructed on the southern side by 1876 including many private dwellings and small businesses.

The development of the built environment of Martin Place occurred in four distinct phases. Firstly, there was the construction of the General Post Office during the 1870's and 1880's, followed by the second stage consisting of the development of the western end of the street by such buildings as the Bank of Australasia, Challis House and the CML Building around the turn of the century. The third major period of activity began with the construction of the Government Savings Bank (now the Commonwealth Bank) in 1928 and ended with the opening of the Prudential Building in 1939. The fourth stage was the extension to Macquarie Place.

James Barnet's new post office in the Italian Renaissance revival style was built in two stages. The first was completed in 1874, fronting George Street. The second stage was completed in 1887 extended through to Pitt Street and incorporated a clock tower. The finishing stone to the tower was laid in 1885 and the colonnade along the northern side of the post office was opened to the public in May 1887. The tower clock was not completed until 16th September 1891. In 1898 the George Street frontage of the building was widened by two bays and by 1904 a fourth storey with two large mansard roof sections had been added by W.L. Vernon. Vernon made these additions with reluctance and did what he could to make them as unobtrusive and as harmonious as possible. Some years later he wrote: "Unfortunately the stately dignity of the building (has been marred) by the addition of an attic in the French design whose varied lines and want of repose is out of harmony with the rest of the structure..."

In 1863 when the land was purchased for the construction of the GPO, provision was made for a 20 foot wide lane and a 12 foot colonnade from George to Pitt Streets on the northern side of the building. The first official proposal for a street on the northern side of the post office was made by the Hon. Treasurer, Geoffrey Eagar in 1864 and was duly approved by the Executive Council. The purchase of additional land to the north of the lane from a Mrs Hughes enabled the widening of this lane in the 1870's. From this time numerous schemes were put forward to establish a suitable public street within the block defined between Pitt and George Streets and Hunter and King Streets.

In July 1877, Barnet prepared sketches of buildings to face the new GPO across a piazza. The buildings were in a style to echo the GPO and stretched the length of the block from George Street to Pitt Street with mansard storeys at each end. Barnet's proposal of June 1888 shows a 70 feet line and 100 feet line for the northern boundary of the street. The 100 feet line was adopted.

Before the General Post Office was completed, an unforeseen opportunity for extending Martin Place presented itself. On the night of 1 October 1890 a fire broke out on the eastern side of Pitt Street and by the following morning the entire block of buildings between Hosking Place and Moore Street and from Pitt Street to Castlereagh Street had been burnt out.

Following the 1890 Great Fire of Sydney the Government passed an Act that enabled Council to acquire enough land to widen Moore Street such that it would continue from the first section between George Street and Pitt Street. The pedestrian lane connecting George Street and Pitt Street, popularly known as Post Office Place or Lane, was named Martin Place in 1891 in memory of former Premier and Chief Justice of NSW, Sir James Martin. It was not until January 1921 that Moore Street was renamed Martin Place. By November 1890 the resumed land was being cleared to establish a street 100 feet wide. On 15 February 1892 the area not required for Martin Place (then called Post Office Street) was put up for auction in eleven lots.

Buildings already in existence along the northern side of the new street, opposite the Post Office, were resumed and demolished. In 1891 National Mutual Life Building was constructed on the corner of George Street and what was then Chisholm Lane (currently Angel Place). This building was designed with the intention that it would front a grand piazza on its southern façade. The Bank of Australasia which had opened in Sydney in 1835, bought the three lots nearest to George Street in 1900 and 1902, consolidating the title in 1904. An American architect, Edward Raht, resident in Sydney since 1891 and already responsible for the Equitable Life Assurance Co building adjacent in Martin Place in 1896 was commissioned to design a new bank building, which was completed in 1904, with a banking chamber and rooms for tenants as well as for bank officers.

The NSW Government Savings Bank operated as a subsidiary office within the New South Wales Postal Department until the end of 1900 after which time Post Offices became an agency of the Commonwealth subsequent to Federation being established in 1901. In 1903 the Bank was required to find new premises. In 1905 the State Government leased a purpose built building in Moore Street, between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets. The Citizen's Life Assurance Company had built the building and offered a ten-year lease with the option to purchase. The site of the Moore Street building, now the site of the present plaza entrance to the MLC Centre previously accommodated a portion of the Australia Hotel. On May 1, 1914, the Savings Bank of New South Wales (known as "Campbell's Bank" established in June 1819), amalgamated with the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales. The bank first Governor, Denison Samuel King Miller, decided to relocate the Bank's head Office from Melbourne to Sydney where it remains today. The decision reflected the emerging pre-eminence of the Sydney CBD financial centre within Australia. The Commonwealth Bank achieved healthy expansion during the wars years, which was largely attributable to government business. The building was later extended in a similar style in 1933 and in 1968 in a modern style. Both of these buildings, located adjacent one another on George Street, are important landmarks that define the western end of Martin Place. It was intended at one stage for Martin Place to be extended through to York Street, however these banks refused to give up the auspicious location.

Martin Place had a strong civic and ceremonial tradition regularly reinforced by the Anzac Day marches and services, public ceremonies associated with royal visits and the celebrations at the end of both world wars. The arrival of the American Fleet of 1908, the Coronation of 1911, Hospital Saturday Collections, Button Days, Recruiting, Armistice Day, Anzac Day, were always best celebrated in Martin Place. The redcoats marched into Martin Place from Macquarie Street each Thursday near half-past twelve. Isadore Brodsky recalls that Martin Place had been the Actors Promenade where one could admire the celebrities of Theatre, where Billy Hughes could be spotted and where A.D. Kay could mount his box and win a crowd. Jim Tyrrell second hand book-seller and proprietor of Tost and Rohu dealt Tibby the newsboy, "Hoppy" Buchanan the flower sellers the con men, the man with the telescope, a tiny milk bar ...you could find them all in Martin Place. Flower sellers in King Street decamped to the spaciousness of Martin Place created an atmosphere of unexcelled charm and bouquet. A line of poplars was planted. Martin Place became the centre of the city although there is no palace or cathedral. The entire Martin Place precinct became a place for the people and by 1935 was the centre of activity within the city and a meeting place for various nationalistic movements, surrounded by buildings, commensurate with its importance to the community.

The decision to proceed with the extension of Martin Place, was finally implemented by the State Government in 1923 and it was agreed to acquire enough land on either side of the extension so that when it was sold at an increased value it would pay for the new street. In January 1926 the resumptions were gazetted but the affected properties were leased back to the existing tenants until sufficient funds were available for the works. In 1926 the Municipal Council of Sydney purchased a number of properties in Macquarie and Phillip Streets in anticipation of the extension of Martin Place east to Macquarie Street. These properties included those which would later be demolished for the building of the Reserve Bank head office building. Funding cuts and altered traffic flow proposals resulted in no progress being made on the Martin Place extension for some years. Eventually, in June 1934, Martin Place was extended from Castlereagh Street to Elizabeth Street and the final extension to

Macquarie Street was opened in April 1935.

Much discussion had taken place as to the form and function of the space created by the extension of Martin Place. It was finally concluded that the extension would accommodate the types of businesses seeking prestigious city centre addresses and would not only transform that part of Sydney but boost real estate values and the Council's rate returns. The Town Planning Association wrote in December 1932 that the significance of Martin Place as a "show street" be recognised, that all street corners be splayed or well rounded and that all buildings be a uniform height of 150 feet.

Following the opening of the extension of Martin Place to Macquarie Street, a series of development sites along each side of the new thoroughfare were made available by the Sydney Municipal Council. The first two sites sold were those between Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street. The northern block was sold to the Rural Bank of NSW and the southern block was purchased by the Australian Provincial Assurance Company Ltd on May 23, 1935, for the sum of 83,000 pounds. Blocks to Macquarie Street were not sold until after World War II, and it was not until the late 1960's that the twin towers of the Westpac Building and the Reserve Bank were constructed to complete the development of Martin Place.

Martin Place is probably unique in the history of the urban development of Sydney, in that the street was deliberately created between the years 1892, and 1935 to be a great urban thoroughfare. An incidental result of the development of Martin Place as that the blocks becoming available along both sides of the thoroughfare were taken up by major commercial and professional organisations for the purpose of developing quality office buildings to house their head offices. Consequently, Martin Place became the most prestigious address in the business area of Sydney, and remains so to this day.

The construction of the APA building marked the beginning of the development of the eastern end of Martin Place and Phillip Street as a major commercial and professional precinct. The building at 53-63 Martin Place was designed to formalise and define the new major civic thoroughfare of Martin Place. David W. King a young architect was appointed. The brief was to erect premises to the full building height and to design in conformity with that of the surrounding buildings. In a special feature in 1938, Building nominated the APA Building as one of a group of nine "Sydney Buildings that have made Architectural History", with the caption "the APA Building, Sydney, may be said to represent the new Sydney, for it is built upon one of the sites made available by the extension of Martin Place. ...While the lines are very simple, they impart a vertical effect that is most impressive... The building was opened in May 1937. The APA Building is the last remaining example in Martin Place of what was a consistent group of structures exhibiting a conformity of scale, façade treatment and vocabulary of detail.

The design and construction of the APA Building closely followed that of the Rural Bank opposite (F.W. Turner, opened 1936), and together these buildings set the precedent for the redevelopment of the extended Martin Place as the commercial and professional address for Sydney, with Art Deco as the architectural language for this redevelopment. The Prudential Building (Hennessy and Hennessy, 1939), the MLC Building (Bates, Smart and McCutcheon, 1938) and alterations to the Australia Hotel (Emil Sodersten, 1937), exemplify this phase. Challis House assumed the function of a commercial city building that was closely linked with tourism by virtue of the occupation of the lower floors by the Railways Ticketing Office and Government Tourist Bureau.

During the war it was feared that the Post Office tower might be a target, and in 1942 the clock and bells were dismantled. No move was made to re-erect the tower until twelve years after the war had ended. For the next five years public pressure began to grow. Robert Menzies, Prime Minister supported the project in April 1962. Work began after Anzac Day, 25 April 1963 and was finished on Anzac Day, 1964.

In 1957, the site at the top of Martin Place on the southern side was purchased by the Commonwealth Bank as the location for the first Reserve Bank of Australia building. The government had decided to separate the Central Bank from the rest of the Commonwealth Bank Group to ensure a sense of fair trading between all trading banks and the Central Bank. The Bank's administrators made a deliberate decision to call for a design for the building that was contemporary and international to exemplify a post war cultural shift away from an architectural emphasis on strength and expressed through massive walls and pillars. For the newly created Bank, the decade of the 1960's was tremendously significant in creating an International image for the Australian economy. Covenants on the site required that the facades of the building be constructed of stone and other complimentary materials and that the building have a minimum height of 150 feet with a setback to Martin Place of 16 feet above a height of 60 feet from Macquarie Street. Three members of the Design Committee undertook an overseas tour to investigate design and building trends generally and specific

facilities for other central banking agencies. A conscious policy of using materials of Australian origin works by Australian artists and sculptors was adopted. Extensions to the south of the building were completed in 1980.

The idea of developing a pedestrian square in front of the GPO was again proposed in 1954 by town planners George Clarke and Geoffrey Faithful. Development of a civic plaza was seen as a viable solution to alleviate the increasing congestion of traffic and people in this area. Twelve years later, the idea had gained wide support and in 1966 Clarke, Gazzard and partners together with Professor Denis Winston (then Professor of Town Planning at the University of Sydney) proposed a scheme which subsequently gained the support of city Council. Stage two between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets was opened in July 1976, and stage five between Phillip and Macquarie Streets in September 1977. The remaining stages from Castlereagh to Phillip Streets, with Elizabeth Street between were completed concurrently with Martin Place railway station. Martin Place station was finally put into service in 1980.

The period 1970's and 1980's also witnessed the demolition of several major buildings (the Australia Hotel, the Rural Bank and the Prudential Building) and erection of new structures to replace these. The foremost of these, the MLC Centre, the Prudential Building and the State Bank, have been designed to a very different set of urban design concepts, particularly in regard to scale and setbacks, yet Martin Place has remained a space defined by buildings of a perceptively high quality, and has retained its character as Sydney's most important urban space.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Communication-Activities relating to the creation and conveyance of information	(none)-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Technology-Activities and processes associated with the knowledge or use of mechanical arts and applied sciences	(none)-
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages-Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical significance]

Martin Place has Historic Significance:

For its ability to evidence the development of Victorian and Interwar Sydney.

For its ability to evidence its role as a prestige address for institutional buildings.

For its ability to reflect the status of Sydney because of its relationship with Institutional Buildings Significant for its ability to contribute to understanding the nineteenth century town planning intention.

For its ability to illustrate the pressure on city sites in the later nineteenth century to maximise returns on their property by increasing the number of storeys.

For its ability to reflect in its materials the wealth of natural resources available for building within New South Wales and other Australian States.

For its ability to evidence key period of building activity during the Victorian period and later the interwar period and post war period in direct response to the Height of Building controls.

For its protection of original buildings due to resident action to save.

SHR Criteria b)


[Associative significance]

Martin Place has Historic Association Significance for its:

Association with Sir James Martin, Premier and Chief Justice of NSW.

Association with important Institutions, including the Post Office

Association with prominent local architects, including Barnet

SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	Martin Place has Aesthetic Significance:
	As one of Sydney's most important 19th and 20th century townscapes with a high degree of architectural intactness remaining from a variety of periods.
	For its ability to illustrate various periods of development and architectural styles and building types.
	For its collection of professional chambers.
	For the number of public and commercial buildings designed by distinguished architects.
	For its important street planting which provides a green and attractive environment.
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	For the high level of integrity of the building stock.
	Has aesthetic significance locally. Has cultural significance locally.
	Martin Place is a pedestrian thoroughfare, meeting place and access point to railway. Has social significance locally. Has cultural significance locally.
SHR Criteria e) [Research potential]	Martin Place has Technical Significance: For its use of sandstone and for the vast array of quality building materials and finishes used.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	Tank Stream (Refer to Archaeological Zoning Plan) Martin Place has Rarity Significance: As a rare surviving example of an important institutional Street
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	Macquarie Street has Representative Significance:
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

RECOGNISE THE HISTORICAL LAYERS

Victorian Development

These form the character of the city

Interwar Development

Buildings of the early twentieth century usually have an appropriate scale and are therefore neutral elements although some buildings may contribute to the significance of the area and are therefore contributing elements

Interwar development provides a greater range of finishes, greater extent of solid façade and recessed balconies which provide more wall façade than post-60's development.

Interwar development provides hierarchical composition to centre, base, middle and top and a stepped skyline

Associated planting lessens visual impact of Interwar development

Buildings of the Post-War Development were seen to indicate Sydney's progressive status

PROTECTION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Protect Subdivision Pattern

Retain Victorian, subdivision

Do not allow amalgamation of sites within these important subdivisions

Retain the block width characteristics of an area

Protect Key Period Significant (Contributory) Development and Settings

Retain Victorian Public Buildings

Retain Victorian Commercial Buildings

Retain Interwar Buildings where they contribute to the streetscape

Retain significant corner buildings

Retain Scale

Maintain building alignments

Retain pattern of forms

Retain finishes and details

Protect Significant Building Type – Warehouse

Retain scale and finishes.

Remove detracting additions to (Contributory) Development

Awnings

Airconditioning

Dominating signage

Large infill shopfront (reconstruction may be required)

Reinforce the street character dominant scale

Maintain scale of development abutting lanes so that it is complementary to adjacent buildings and encourages pedestrian use by providing for retail or other activity in the lane.

Reinforce the dominant street character and scale
Retain scale of institutional development
Maintain characteristic building alignment
Retain characteristic building form and façade composition
Retain characteristic building finishes and details

Change of Use
Retain commercial usage
Retain institutional usage
Retain an understanding of a former use by not allowing the new use to compromise the significant façade.

ENHANCEMENT OF STREETScape SETTING

Landscaping
Encourage trees at the end of streets to reinforce landscape vistas and frame views.
Encourage trees to screen detracting development

Views
Protect the close and distant views which are important to the character of the city
Reinforce street end vistas with street trees

Pedestrianisation
Retain role of the space as public open space, by maintaining and enhancing pedestrian access and activity.

Street Parking
Incorporate street trees.
Do not alter street alignment.
Car Parking/ Access (CBD)
Do allow new car access from the street
Generally allow parking access from rear lanes
Reduce the impact of below ground garages by narrowing garage door, garage lighting screening, providing appropriate gates and doors and providing landscape screening

ENHANCE SIGNIFICANCE ON REDEVELOPED SITE

Redevelopment of Detracting Sites
Respect the Established Area Character
Encourage appropriate replacement development on detracting sites.
Recognise the collective precedent and impact of the proposal.
Recognise the verticality of significant City streetscapes
Avoid raised podiums
Respect the character of precinct
Respect the scale and form of significant development
Prepare policy for development of former industrial sites (Glebe) or large sites

Respect the Established Façade
Encourage reinterpretation of Victorian Subdivision in the vicinity
Respect building line, scale, form and roof pitch of significant development in the vicinity
Encourage façade qualities being multiple finishes, greater extent of solid façade and recessed balconies.
Reduce the impact of uncharacteristic scale and large extent of glass
Reduce the impact of minimal setbacks for increased building height
Encourage streetwalls
Encourage reinterpretation of adjacent significant façade composition
Encourage rendered and painted finishes
Encourage an appropriate level of contemporary decorative detail

Avoid Visual Clutter
Reduce the impact of A/C, signs etc.
Awnings should not occur in street
Disallow bridges and projections over the street lane which overshadows the Lane, obstructs a view or vista or diminishes pedestrian activity at ground level

Landscape screening
Encourage screening (landscape and architectural) to detracting development by appropriate policy

Enhance Significance of Area
Establish/maintain and enhance street planting to unify streetscapes
Encourage render/paint/stone finishes to detracting developments
Remove / discourage reproduction of period detail in contemporary development
Provide landscape screening to detracting sites
Promote public buildings
Promote retail strip
Promote art installations on improvements within the area

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEP PROTECTION

BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT

Adjust boundary to include area which do contribute to an understanding of the significance of the Streetscape. Consider extension of the boundary of the Streetscape to Angel Place.

STATUTORY PROTECTION
Confirm listing in the LEP

Interpretation
Interpret Victorian street lane pattern and subdivision
Encourage historical interpretation of the laneway.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1889	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		1993	City of Sydney, Areas of Special Significance, 1993.	
Written		1937	Building Magazine, 24 August	
Written			City of Sydney Draft Development Control Plan, 1990.	
Written	Anita Heiss		Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	
Written	D Gazzard	1988	'The People's Promenade' in the Design of Sydney	
Written	Higgenbottom	1995	Conservation Management Plan 16-32 Bridge Street	
Written	Howard Tanner		Conservation Management Plan 48 Martin Place	
Written	Isadore Brodsky	1962	The Streets of Sydney	
Written	Lucas Stapleton	1991	Conservation Management Plan GPO	
Written	Noel Bell Ridley Smith	2001	Conservation Management Plan 65 Martin Place	
Written	NSW Heritage Office		State Heritage Inventory 2 Martin Place	
Written	P Romey	1990	Conservation Management Plan 53 Martin Place	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government
Database number: 2424652

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Martin Place Railway Station

Item details

Name of item: Martin Place Railway Station
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Transport - Rail
Category: Railway Platform/ Station
Primary address: Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area: Sydney

Boundary:

The listing boundary is the whole of the underground station area from the main public and pedestrian concourse where ticket vending machines and ticket windows are located (to the entrance of the western pedestrian subway as defined by the line of the newsagent and shops). Within the paid concourse the boundary extends up to the open ceiling above the concourse, while in the station area the boundary should be considered to be a 5 metre radius from the tunnel ceiling and platform ends. (Does not include modern retail areas).

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
RailCorp	State Government	
RailCorp	State Government	
RailCorp	State Government	

Statement of significance:

Martin Place Railway Station is significant as a representative example of the most recent major railway construction undertaken in Sydney city, as part of the Eastern Suburbs Railway (ESR). The design of the Martin Place Station as displayed in its colour scheme particularly, reflects the design ideas of the 1920s city underground stations such as St James and Museum, and the individual colour schemes used for each of the stations on the ESR. Martin Place is a good example of alate Twentieth-Century International style structure which is highly intact with many of its original materials and finishes still in place.

Date significance updated: 14 May 09

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Fowell, Mansfield Jarvis and McLurcan
Builder/Maker: Urban Transport Authority
Construction years: 1973-1979
Physical description: BUILDINGS
Station complex and entrances, (1979)

STRUCTURES

Platforms, (1979)

Escalators (9), (1979)

Concourses, (1979)

Subways, (1979)

STATION COMPLEX AND ENTRANCES (1979)

The station complex is below ground with access via stairs from Martin Place and then banks of three escalators to the concourse level. Pedestrian access is via arcades constructed at the same time as the station and leading to adjacent office and retail plazas. The ceiling of the public concourse above the platforms is raked following the topography of the street above and the supporting concrete beams are painted red to match the feature ceramic wall tiling, also in red.

STRUCTURES (1979)

The station consists of an island platform with two faces serving an Up and Down line. The platform is accessed via two sets of three escalators. The station and platforms are constructed of reinforced concrete finished with pre-cast white terrazzo panels, and red glazed ceramic wall tiles.

The ceilings of the escalators are moulded plywood with recessed strip lighting.

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential: The station is in good condition with a high degree of original fabric intact.

Date condition updated: 13 Nov 08

Modifications and dates: c2000: The station has not been significantly altered from its original design other than through the introduction of updated automated ticket barriers and indicator boards.

Current use: Railway Station

Former use: Nil

History

Historical notes: Martin Place Station was opened on 23 June 1979 as part of the inauguration of the Eastern Suburbs Railway (ESR) line. The station had been constructed using an open-cut excavation.

A line to the eastern suburbs had been part of the wider rail plan for Sydney since the late 1890s, with provisions made for the eventuality during the construction of the city underground stations in the 1920s, although work never proceeded past the planning phase at this time.

Since the late 1940s the ESR had been under construction on and off, with meaningful progress made from the early 1970s. The construction of the line was a contentious political issue, not only because of the extended period over which it was undertaken, but also because of the resumptions and demolitions throughout Woollahroo that were required to build it. The alignment and profile for the ESR was set in 1926 and construction on the railway was started by the NSW Department of Railways. In 1952, the project was abandoned until the mid 1960s. In 1967 the NSW Department of Railways engaged the Snowy Mountains Authority (SMA) to prepare and develop documents for the city tunnels and stations, Kings Cross tunnel and stations, and Rushcutters Bay viaduct and various other associated works.

The City and Suburban Electric Railways (Amendment) Act, Act No. 13 of 1947, made provision for the construction of further electric railways in the City of Sydney, serving the eastern, southern and south-eastern suburbs. This Act amended an earlier scheme proposed by JJC Bradfield in 1916 which had provided for an eastern suburbs line (via St James Station) and a south-eastern railway. The Act made provision for the construction of 44 miles of new suburban electric railways.

The design of the stations along the ESR line was an integral part of the process, with each station being a different colour to identify it. Bright red was used throughout Martin Place in both glazed tiles for walls and columns and painted cement surfaces. The red was chosen to reflect the banking and finance associations of the area. The design of the ESR underground stations continued the design ideas of the city underground stations of the 1920s, with individual station colours and features.

As with other stations on the line, the new modern design also included escalators as the principal access to station platforms and the introduction of electric ticket machines and automatic barriers and gates - the first time they were used on the NSW railways network.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport-Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements	Railway Infrastructure-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The station has historic significance as the only new station constructed in the city centre and only the second railway station built in the Sydney city area since World War II, the other being Circular Quay. It is an essential component of the ESR, a project that had taken over forty years from conception to completion. The station was also the first to introduce electronic ticket machines and automatic barriers as standard, which is now commonplace across the city rail system.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The station is a good example of a Late Twentieth-Century International style design and demonstrates many of the key aspects of the style. This includes the feature red ceramic wall tiling, the red painted concrete structure and other finishes and materials which are all part of the original 1970s station design and fitout. Individual station colours were a feature of all the ESR stations, with Martin Place retaining the best example.
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	The place has the potential to contribute to the local community's sense of place and can provide a connection to the local community's history.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The station is rare, being one of only two railway stations constructed in the centre of Sydney since the end of World War II, the other being Circular Quay Station.
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	The station is a representative example of a late twentieth-century railway station and is part of a collection of similar stations built for the Eastern Suburbs Railway in Sydney.
Integrity/Intactness:	Martin Place Station is intact and has a high level of integrity.
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the 🏛️ State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - s.170 NSW State agency heritage register	SRA s.170 Register				

Study details

Title	Year	Number	Author	Inspected by	Guidelines used
State Rail Authority Heritage Register Study	1999	SRA162	State Rail Authority		N o
S170 Heritage & Conservation Register Update	2009		Godden Mackay Logan		Y e s
Heritage Platforms Conservation Management Strategy	2015		Australian Museum Consulting		Y e s

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written	Christopher Jay	1979	Eastern Suburbs Railway Brings New Direction for Underground Architecture	
Written	Urban Transport Commission	1979	Eastern Suburbs Railway: Now a Reality	

--	--	--	--	--

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: State Government

Database number: 4801162

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



Home > Topics > Heritage places and items > [Search for heritage](#)

Martin Place Railway Station Including Interiors

Item details

Name of item: Martin Place Railway Station Including Interiors
Type of item: Built
Group/Collection: Transport - Rail
Category: Railway Platform/ Station
Primary address: 3 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Parish: St Philip
County: Cumberland
Local govt. area: Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
3 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney	St Philip	Cumberland	Primary Address

Statement of significance:

Martin Place Railway Station is significant as the only underground railway station constructed in the centre of the city within the last 50 years. It is a good example of a Late Twentieth-Century International style structure which is highly intact with many of its original materials and finishes still in place. Its design by architects Fowell Mansfield Jarvis & Maclurcan Pty Ltd was awarded a public buildings merit award by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1979.

Date significance updated: 10 Feb 16

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Fowell Mansfield Jarvis & Maclurcan Pty Ltd
Construction years: 1967-1979
Physical description: The station is below ground with access via escalators and /or stairs from Martin Place. Some of the access is through arcades constructed at the same time. The station contains 2 platforms and is constructed of reinforced concrete finished with pre-cast terrazzo panels, and red glazed ceramic wall tiles. The ceiling is raked following the topography of the street above and the supporting concrete beams are painted red to match the feature ceramic wall tiling also in red.
Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential: The station is in good condition with a high degree of original fabric in tact.
Date condition updated:25 Jul 06
Modifications and dates: The station is little altered from its original design other than automated ticket barriers and indicator boards.
Further information: Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

History

Historical notes: The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain

elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>).

The alignment and profile for the Eastern Suburbs Railway was set in 1926 and construction on the railway was started by the NSW Department of Railways. In 1952, the project was abandoned until the mid 60s when it was started again. In 1967 the NSW Department of Railways engaged the Snowy Mountains Authority (SMA) to prepare and develop documents for the city tunnels and stations, Kings Cross tunnel and stations, and Rushcutters Bay viaduct and various other associated works.

The City and Suburban Electric Railways (Amendment) Act, Act No. 13 of 1947, made provision for the construction of further electric railways in the City of Sydney, serving the eastern, southern and south eastern suburbs. This Act amended an earlier scheme proposed by J.J.C. Bradfield in 1916, which had provided for an Eastern Suburbs Railway (via St James Station), and a South Eastern Railway. The City and Suburban Electric Railways (Amendment) Act of 1947 made provision for the construction of 44 miles of new suburban electric railways.

The Eastern Suburbs Railway is a key component of Sydney's transport network linking Central Station with the city centre and the suburb of Bondi Junction, a distance of 7.5 kilometres.

The railway was first proposed in the 1920s and construction actually commenced, but the Great Depression and the Second War caused its abandonment until the 1960s. In 1967 the New South Wales Government awarded the contract for the civil and structural design of the entire line to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority (SMA), the Commonwealth Government agency responsible for the design and construction of the Snowy Mountains Scheme in south-eastern Australia. The contract involved approximately 10 kilometres of single track tunnel structures and crossovers, four underground stations and one surface station, two 772metre concrete viaducts and a further 800 metres of surface works, including a prestressed concrete overbridge. Originally the line was planned to extend south through Randwick and the NSW University but this did not eventuate. The proposed stations were to be known as: Charing Cross, Frenchmans Road, Randwick, University and Kingsford.

With the establishment of SMEC in 1970 from the SMA, the contracts were transferred. The work cost \$800 million and was completed in 1973. The Eastern Suburbs Railway continues to serve the people of Sydney today.

Martin Place Railway Station and its Place within the Urban Design of Martin Place:

Martin Place was created in stages between 1860 and 1935 and transformed into a pedestrian area between 1968 and 1978. The final form of the area was determined by prolonged argument and, ultimately, compromise between the City Council, State Government and authorities and private landowners.

By the late 1960s, the conversion of Martin Place into a pedestrian plaza had reached as far east as Pitt Street. In mid 1971, a new plan for the long-term development of the City, known as the Strategic Plan, was published. The second of four principles in this plan involved the improvement of 'access and movement within the city', including pedestrian movement (Gazzard, 1988: 84). Included among the 'actions', was the extension of Martin Place as a pedestrian plaza through to Macquarie Street. This extension of the closure of Macquarie Street had long been proposed and objected to by various parties, not the least of whom were the affected property owners. The design of Martin Place Railway Station played an important role in promoting the extension of Martin Place to Macquarie Street and in determining the design of the eastern-most end of the plaza.

Construction of the Eastern Suburbs Railway line had first been proposed in the 1920s, begun and then abandoned until the 1960s. In 1967, the State Government awarded the contract for the civil and structural design of the line to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority. The section of the line near Macquarie Street was 30 metres below ground level; the main concourse for the proposed Martin Place Station were thus below street level and extended from under Phillip Street as far as Macquarie Street. It was proposed to construct entrances, with escalator access, down to the concourse from both streets. Concurrent to the development of the station, there were proposals to provide underground access from the railway concourse, under Elizabeth Street, to connect with a retail arcade within the Prudential Building on the southern side of Martin Place. The area beneath the roadway between Elizabeth and Castlereagh Streets consisted of basements, owned by the Council, which had been constructed for an aborted State Savings Bank building.

Above ground, the design of the Pitt Street-Castlereagh Street block of Martin Place took shape. Taking advantage of the six-metre height difference between the two streets, a raised terrace, overlooking the existing plaza area of Martin Place to the west, was proposed for the Pitt Street end of the block. At the Castlereagh Street end, it was proposed to build a sunken amphitheatre for civic and public performances, from which access under Castlereagh Street would lead via a shopping arcade into the City owned basements to the railway concourse. This vital link was opposed for sometime and would be the last element in the overall plan to be constructed (see below). Varied uses for the plaza above were proposed. The short block between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Street was considered suitable for markets and the area between Elizabeth and Phillip Street was to be a quiet landscaped haven. The final section, between Phillip and Macquarie Streets, was to be an important place of arrival in the City centre. A large fountain was proposed to provide a focal point for the vista towards Sydney Hospital and it was envisaged that outdoor café seating would make this area a good waiting area near the railway entrance.

The Minister for Lands gave notice of the closure of Martin Place from the eastern side of Pitt Street to the western side of Macquarie Street, exclusive of cross streets, on 24 November, 1972. Almost every Government Agency and owner objected, resulting in prolonged negotiations. The objector who could not be satisfied was the Chairman of the Rural Bank, who used his high level contacts to ensure that the plaza, as first gazetted, extended only as far as Elizabeth Street, stopping short of the Rural Bank (1973). In reality, the upper two blocks were closed for a number of years to through traffic to allow railway construction, ultimately paving the way for permanent closure. The objections of the Rural Bank were finally overcome in 1974. It had always been the Railway's intention to build an entrance to the station in the corner of the Rural Bank Building because there was no room on the footpath. This entrance could be moved into the plaza, if created, a clear incentive for the Rural Bank's co-operation. The design of for the upper two blocks of Martin Place were finalised during 1975.

The design of the middle block between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets had, meanwhile, been held up by a number of considerations, partially connected to the railway. It was not clear if the concourse of the railway station would extend beyond the eastern side of Elizabeth Street. Secondly, it was a condition of consent for the MLC Centre, then under construction, that a subway be built under Castlereagh Street to connect the building to the station. Thirdly, the lessee of the old basements of the aborted State Savings Building, Prudential Insurance Company, were reluctant to surrender their lease to Council "The architects were trying to bring all these issues together so that the MLC tunnel under Castlereagh Street would connect into a naturally lit shopping arcade in the basements and then join under Elizabeth Street to the railway concourse. If this was realised there would be an undercover connection from the amphitheatre on the western side of Castlereagh Street to the railway concourse" (Gazzard, 1988: 89).

The design by Fowell Mansfield Jarvis & Maclurcan Pty Ltd was awarded a public buildings merit award by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1979.

These issues took years to resolve; this section of Martin Place would be the last to be built. The Eastern Suburbs Railway line officially opened in 1979. Although originally proposed to extend southwards into Randwick, the line was only built to Bondi Junction. The shopping arcade and connection to the railway station was not made until 1982.

Martin Place Station and Railway Architecture of the Period:

There are seven stations that form part of the Eastern Suburbs Line: Redfern, Central, Town Hall, Martin Place, Kings Cross, Edgecliff and Bondi Junction (Town Hall Station was extended to provide for the Eastern Suburbs line. Additional underground platforms were constructed

at the other stations). Martin Place and Kings Cross lie within the City of Sydney. Until the recent construction of the Airport Line, these had been the only two new stations to be opened in the City since Circular Quay Station in 1956.

The platforms for the Eastern Suburb Railway line at Redfern and Central Station had been constructed in 1947-52, before work on the line was stopped. These platforms were excavated by open cut methods, from the surface down. When work started on line again in the 1960s, the remaining platforms were excavated and lined by tunnelling methods; the concourses were constructed in excavations opened from the surface and connected to the platforms by escalators shafts. Excavation at Martin Place and Kings Cross was complicated because explosives could not be used; the concourse excavations were completed using large bulldozers with ripping attachments and hand-held pneumatic tools (Kennedy, 1982). The Eastern Suburbs Railway stations were not the first stations to have escalators access to platforms. Wynyard Station opened in 1932, is accessed from York Street by still extant escalators. The provision of retail possibilities was also not new. At Wynyard, for example, there was Wynyard Arcade.

A high level of finishes was demanded for the new stations and included the use of various wall and wall surfaces, including mosaic tiles, terrazzo, exposed terrazzo and rubber, and suspended moulded panel ceilings, all popular Post World War II commercial finishes. In their 1979 publication, *The Story of the Eastern Suburbs Railway Line*, the Public Transport Commission of New South Wales described their new stations as follows:

"All of the new stations are provided with an Automatic Fare Collection system with ticket vending machines and automatic barriers. Major bus interchange terminals are provided over the stations at Edgecliffe and Bondi Junction. These terminals offer passengers a direct transfer from buses to rail platforms via stairs and high speed escalators.

"The new stations, being the most modern in Australia, are bright and attractive with many sophisticated inclusion such as studded rubber platforms, special level adjusting P.A. sound equipment, excellent lighting, closed circuit surveillance equipment at Martin Place, Kings Cross, Edgecliffe and Bondi Junction, and modern amenities and booking office facilities.

"(Martin Place) The predominant colour is red, with extensive use made of white terrazzo and off-form finished concrete. Platform and escalator shafts are finished with deep red moulded plywood ceilings coved at intervals for lighting, and hinged to allow access to the services located above them.

"(Kings Cross) The concourse is paved with grey-green terrazzo forming a background for a colour scheme of orange, which appears in the plywood ceilings and tiled columns. Walls are lined with white tile and precast terrazzo panels. Booking office windows have surrounds of blue moulded panels which are used throughout the ESR system to identify ticket selling areas.

"(Edgecliff) Both gallery and concourse are paved with terrazzo and walls are lined with bluff-coloured exposed aggregated render. Columns are faced attractive glazed tiles of deep blue-the basis for the station colour scheme. Four escalators lead to the platform which, like the concourse and gallery, is finished with ivory coloured plywood ceilings.

"(Bondi Junction) Two escalators, complimented by stairs, operate between the bus platforms and the concourse which is lined with light grey exposed aggregate render. The ceiling is bright yellow metal slats with recessed lighting covers. Four escalators run from the concourse, through shafts with yellow moulded plywood ceilings to the rubber paved platform. The light grey exposed aggregate walls form a backdrop to the deep orange glazed tiled columns." (Public Transport Commission of NSW, 1979: 8-10)

Integrity in the stations along the Eastern Suburbs Line varies; integrity is generally higher at platform level. While the entrance from the public domain and concourse is largely intact at Martin Place, it has been reconfigured at Bondi Junction as a result of recent works to the Bus Interchange above; at Kings Cross Station, the wall tiling has been painted, whereas it is largely intact at other stations. As reflected by the listings on the s170 Register of State Rail, Martin Place is the more intact station of the two stations that lie within the City of Sydney area.


The tiling of railway stations was not a new phenomenon. St. James and Museum Stations (1926) and Circular Quay Station (1956), part of the City Circle, all feature extensive tiling. The differences in shape, colour and pattern are a product of different eras. The tiling of these stations in turn echoes the extensive tiling carried out to 46 stations that form part of the London Tube network in 1906/7. While these schemes were decorative, earlier use of tiling in the London underground was white, to improve illumination (Rose, 2007).

A similar palette or hard-wearing materials would be used in the Melbourne underground city stations, the first stations for which were opened in 1981.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport-Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements	Railway-movements

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The station has historic significance as the only railway station constructed in the centre of Sydney in the last 50 years.
SHR Criteria b) [Associative significance]	The station is associated with the construction of the Eastern Suburbs Railway Line.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The station is a good example of a Late Twentieth-Century International style design which demonstrates many of the key aspects of the style. This includes the feature red ceramic wall tiling, red painted concrete structure and othe finishes and materials. The station, designed by architects Fowell Mansfield Jarvis & Maclurcan Pty Ltd, was awarded a public buildings merit award by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1979.
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	The station is an important hub in the transport network of the centre of Sydney used daily by commuters.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The station is rare being one of only 2 constructed in the centre of Sydney within the last 50 years.
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	The station is a representative example of a Late Twentieth century railway station which is part of the eastern suburbs rail line in Sydney.
Integrity/Intactness: High	
Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.	

Recommended management:

A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement should be prepared for the station prior to any major works being undertaken. The principal layout and planning configuration as well as significant internal original features such as the terazzo cladding and ceramic tiling should be retained and conserved.

Recommendations

Management Category	Description	Date Updated
Statutory Instrument	Nominate for State Heritage Register (SHR)	05 Sep 16
Statutory Instrument	Nominate for State Heritage Register (SHR)	05 Sep 16

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1891	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		1979	The Story of the Eastern Suburbs Railway	

Written	Brady, I.A.	1979	Eastern Suburbs Railway: A Political and Economic Survey of Sydney Suburban Railways, with Particular Emphasis on the Construction of the Eastern Sydney Railway	
Written	Clarke Gazzard Architects	1976	Martin Place Pedestrian Precinct (Prepared for the City of Sydney)	
Written	Rose, Douglas	2007	Tiles of the Unexpected Underground: A Study of six Miles of Geometric Tile Patterns on the London Underground	
Written	Gazzard, Don	1988	'The Peoples' Promenade: Martin Place 1860-1985', in Peter Webber (ed.), "The Design of Sydney: Three Decades of Change in the City Centre"	
Written	Gunn, John	1989	Along Parallel Lines: A History of the Railways of New South Wales, 1850-1986	
Written	Kennedy, B and B	1982	'Martin Place Railway Station' from "Subterranean Sydney"	
Written	Peter Webber (ed)	1988	The Design of Sydney: Three Decards of Change in the City Centre	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government
Database number: 2431104

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



Home > Topics > Heritage places and items > Search for heritage

Richard Johnson Square Including Monument and Plinth

Item details

Name of item:	Richard Johnson Square Including Monument and Plinth
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Parks, Gardens and Trees
Category:	Urban Park
Location:	Lat: -33.8675549408237 Long: 151.208691038508
Primary address:	Bligh Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area:	Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Bligh Street	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

Richard Johnson Square is historically and culturally significant as an important example of 20th century civic planning.

Date significance updated: 01 Feb 06

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Construction years: 1925-1925

Physical description: The square is of historic and cultural significance as the site of the Christian service in Australia. Category: Urban Plaza. General Details: Refer to Archaeological Zoning Plan.

Modifications and dates: 1925

In 1974, the island platform around the monument was enlarged and integrated with the western Bligh Street footpath.

Further information: Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

History

Historical notes: The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There

is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

Commemorates the site of the first church erected in Australia (1793-1798), the Chaplain being the Reverend Richard Johnson.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages-Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages	Community facilities-

Recommended management:

The building should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement, or a Conservation Management Plan, should be prepared for the building prior to any major works being undertaken. There shall be no vertical additions to the building and no alterations to the façade of the building other than to reinstate original features. The principal room layout and planning configuration as well as significant internal original features including ceilings, cornices, joinery, flooring and fireplaces should be retained and conserved. Any additions and alterations should be confined to the rear in areas of less significance, should not be visibly prominent and shall be in accordance with the relevant planning controls.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1673	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written	Anita Heiss		Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2424648

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Chifley Square

Item details

Name of item: Chifley Square
Type of item: Complex / Group
Group/Collection: Urban Area
Category: Townscape
Primary address: Chifley Square, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area: Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Chifley Square	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address
68-96 Hunter Street	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address
Phillip Street	Sydney	Sydney			Alternate Address

Statement of significance:

Chifley Square is of historical and aesthetic significance as an early 20th exercise in city planning to create a new public open space, and for its naming to honour J.B. Chifley, Australia's prominent and well loved wartime Prime Minister 1945-1949. The construction of the heritage-listed 1957 Qantas House (designed by Rudder Littlemore and Rudder) at 68-96 Hunter Street was integral to the creation of Chifley Square, and adds to the historical and aesthetic significance of the Square.

Date significance updated: 07 Aug 07

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Construction years: 1957-1993

Physical description: The area is characterised by large-scale high-rise tower buildings interspersed with lower scale development. The majority of towers at the edges of the Square are seen as individual elements within the cityscape, however they follow the street alignment at lower levels, with a curved alignment to the north creating a distinct sense of enclosure for the Square. The curved form of the Square and the recent Aurora Place to the east, visible within this setting, create a unique urban landscape within the Sydney CBD and provide a visual relief and break in the intensely built up area of the financial centre.

Modifications and dates: Sydney's Deutsche Bank Place at 126 Phillip Street, which fronts Chifley Square, designed by London's Foster & Partners (Lord Norman Foster) was constructed 1996-2005. This was regarded as an iconic modern building of high design quality within the City's financial district at its time.

In 2007, a Stage 1 DA approval was given for demolition and redevelopment of the Goodsell building site at 8-12 Chifley Square.

Further information: Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply

indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

History

Historical notes:

The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

The original concept of the semi-circular form was first proposed by John Sulman in 1908. The same concept resurfaced in 1937 and was proposed by City Engineer Garnsey, as a means of relieving traffic congestion at the junction of Hunter and Elizabeth Streets. The scheme was implemented in 1947.

The completion of Qantas House with a curved form in 1957 made a major contribution to the creation of Chifley Square. The place was officially named "Chifley Square" in 1961 in honour of the late Hon. J.B. Chifley (1885-1951), 16th Prime Minister of Australia in 1945-1949. In 1962 Elizabeth Street was extended, creating a public square with a traffic island in the middle.


The final semi-circular form of the Square was formed with the completion of Chifley Tower in 1993 to the east of the Square, which completed the curved form of Qantas House to the west. Further public domain works were implemented in 1996-1997 to reclaim the Square, improve its quality and create a sophisticated public plaza. (from Sydney LEP 2005 Character Statement for Special Area 14 Chifley Square).

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy- Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

8. Culture- Developing cultural institutions and ways of life	Creative endeavour-Activities associated with the production and performance of literary, artistic, architectural and other imaginative, interpretive or inventive works; and/or associated with the production and expression of cultural phenomena; and/or environments that have inspired such creative activities.	(none)-
---	--	---------

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	Chifley Square is of historical significance for the history of town planning in Australia, as an early 20th exercise in city planning to create a new public open space.
SHR Criteria b) [Associative significance]	Named in honour of Australia's 16th Prime Minister the Hon. J.B. Chifley.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	Chifley Square is of aesthetic significance as an early 20th exercise in city planning to create a new public open space. The construction of the heritage-listed 1957 Qantas House (designed by Rudder Littlemore and Rudder) at 68-96 Hunter Street was integral to the creation of Chifley Square, and adds to the historical and aesthetic significance of the Square.
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

Chifley Square is to be recognised and enhanced as one of the major public open spaces in the heart of the financial centre of the city.

The use of the space as a destination and meeting place for people is to be promoted and encouraged.

The history of the place and its evolution in the design of both public and private domain should be interpreted to enhance a distinct sense of place inherent in the character of Chifley Square.

The urban character and distinct sense of enclosure of Chifley Square is to be reinforced by emphasising and reinforcing the semi-circular geometry of the space, requiring new buildings to be integrated with the form of existing buildings and limiting the height of new buildings.

Sun access to the Square during lunchtime hours from mid-April to the end of August is to be protected and extended.

Works to unify the Square and improve the relationship between the space and the buildings forming it are to be encouraged.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1708	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written			Sydney LEP 2005 Character Statement for Special Area 14 - Chifley Square	
Written	Anita Heiss		"Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2431190

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Flat Building Including Interiors

Item details

Name of item:	Flat Building Including Interiors
Other name/s:	Seven Elizabeth Street, Sydney
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Residential buildings (private)
Category:	Block of Flats
Primary address:	7 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Parish:	St Philip
County:	Cumberland
Local govt. area:	Sydney

The curtilage is parcel of land on which the building is situated (Lots 1 to 57 of Stata Plan No.13171).

Boundary:

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
7 Elizabeth Street	Sydney	Sydney	St Philip	Cumberland	Primary Address

Statement of significance:

The building is historically significant because it is the only block of flats constructed in the City of Sydney during the 1930s to have survived and still fulfil its function as a residential building. The building is aesthetically significant because of its associations with two prominent and influential designers, architect Emil Sodersten and interior designer Marion Hall Best. Emil Sodersten was one of the most important architects to have practised in New South Wales during the 1920s and 1930s. Famous for the residential flat buildings that were designed in his office, this is the only one known to have been constructed in the CBD and shows the influence of the modernist European architecture on his work. As such it has state significance. Its interiors were an early and well publicised example of the work of Marion Hall Best, who went on to exercise a great influence on interior design in this state during the three decades after World War II.

Date significance updated: 29 May 13

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker:	Emil Sodersten, Architect and Marion Hall Best interior designer (interiors)
Builder/Maker:	H.W. Thompson & Co.
Construction years:	1939-1940
Physical description:	A 10-storey apartment building, designed to contain 54 flats with two shops at ground floor level and a basement restaurant. The building is steel framed with reinforced concrete floors, clad with pale cream brickwork, and originally had green painted steel framed windows. Each level above the ground floor contained 6 bachelor flats. An awning with green coloured fascia divided the street frontage from the upper floors. Beneath the awning the street frontage was clad in ivory tinted structural glass (Vitrolite), above a black tile base, a small section of which remains. The shopfronts to each side of the entrance are rounded, while the top hampers were subdivided by two horizontal and two vertical bars into six subdivisions fitted with broad reeded glass placed vertically. The glazing of the shopfronts was almost flush with the Vitrolite facing. The shopfront frames, transoms and dividing bars were removed but were reconstructed circa 2010 based on the documentary evidence of the original design. The main ground floor foyer is paved with the original green and buff coloured terrazzo in a chequered pattern and divided by brass strips, and the glazed entrance doors still feature the original triple push bars of chrome finish. In the centre of the entrance, stairs lead down to the basement, formerly a café. The stairs were originally finished in terrazzo,

buff coloured to treads and green to risers. The walls enclosing the basement stair are later, as originally the stair was enclosed only by a balustrade clad in ivory Vitrolite, and secured by a roller shutter. The black tile base to the street frontage continued into the entrance foyer as a skirting, above which the render was originally sand coloured and coursed. The ceiling of the foyer was originally a rich wine colour complimented by a gilt cornice. The flagpole was also reinstated circa 2010.

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential: In 2010, the shopfront were reconstruced based on documentary evidence of the original. The flagpole was also reinstated circa 2010.

Date condition updated: 29 May 13

Modifications and dates: Original steel framed windows have been replaced with aluminium framed sashes. The stair to the basement has been fire isolated. The shopfronts have been altered - stall boards and glazing have been removed and new fabric inserted. The ground floor exterior has been reclad with travertine. The flagpole is missing. The interior of the building has been unsympathetically altered through insensitive fire upgrading. Many kitchens and bathrooms are altered, however at the time of the National Trust listing at least one flat retained the original kitchen and most of the original bathroom fabric in 2004.

Further information: Comparative Analysis:

Emil Sodersten's Works:

Sydney born, Emil Lawrence Sodersten (born Sodersteen) was the second of seven children born to Swedish master mariner Emil Gustavus Sodersteen and his Australian wife Julia. Emil changed his surname to Sodersten in the Post WWII era. For clarity, the later spelling is adopted.

Sodersten began his studies at Sydney Technical College in 1915, working part time with the architectural practice of H.E. Ross & Rowe. In 1921, he attended Leslie Wilkinson's lectures at the University of Sydney. Following a brief period in Queensland where, with the firm F.R. Hall & Prentice, he helped design the City Hall, Sodersten worked for John P. Tate & Young on office buildings in Sydney. Two years following his registration as an architect (1923), Sodersten established his own office where he also executed presentation drawings for other architects (1925). Together with John Crust, he designed the Australian War Memorial in Canberra; he resigned, however, before the building was completed. By the mid 1930s, having designed a number of buildings in the City, including Wall House in Loftus Street and Trenton House and Tudor House in Phillip Street, Sodersten's reputation was well established. During the period leading up to the outbreak of World War II, he came to be considered among the leading Sydney architects working in the Art Deco Style.

The French decorative styles later termed Art Deco and Moderne entered Australia, mostly via the United State of America (as opposed to Europe) in the late 1920s. Art Deco, a term coined as an abbreviation for 'art decoratif', belonged to the pro-decoration design idiom. In its original (Parisian) state, Art Deco was a full-blooded coherent decorative style, one of splendour and luxury that utilised series of stylised motifs, zigzags and curvaceous geometry. Developed during the 1920s, Art Deco (USA) was considered to be a 'bastardised version' of the European style and tended to utilise less surface decoration than its French counterpart.

Art Deco reflected the aspiration of the era. Caught between two world wars and a depression, the late 1920s and early 1930s represent a brief period during which new styles were presented to a public that was: "seeking newness, perhaps a rebirth, as it climbed back to what was hoped would be an even footing, with everyone being able to participate in the country's economy" (Thorne, R., and K. Cork, 1994: 9). Art Deco celebrated the exciting, dynamic aspects of the post WWI machine age, unashamedly making a 'direct assault' on the emotions by the use of vivid, purely decorative elements. Eye catching materials and finishes, such as chrome, veneer and opaque glass, found favour: "Straight lines- often three in parallel- were used horizontally, vertically and diagonally in conjunction with geometric curves. Low relief sculpture was popular: it was heavily stylised and tended to be rather naively symbolic of speed, power, industry and progress" (Apperley, R., et al, 1989: 188). The popularity of Art Deco for movie theatre design did much to popularise the style in the Australian imagination.

The first phase of Art Deco (USA) was geometrical and angular and: "derived its visual vocabulary from the exposition and reflected 'the dominance of the triangle and "T"-square couple with stylised classic derived ornaments" (van Daele, P., and R. Lumby, 1997: 17). Commercial buildings were graced with strongly modelled vertical fins, giving a stepped skyline or silhouette. By these means, buildings were given a strong suggestion of arrested vertical and/or horizontal motion. Fully resolved Art Deco buildings began to appear in Sydney around 1933 as the worst effects of the Great Depression eased and just before the second phase of Art Deco design appeared: the curvilinear and streamline phase.

By the mid 1930s, Sydney architects practicing in the Art Deco Style had turned more towards German expressionist architecture, and the 'streamlined' functional shapes developed by industrial designers, and away from the predominantly Art Nouveau influences of the pre WWI era. A distinctive characteristic of Interwar era architecture in Sydney was the continual refinement and reduction in decoration, revealing simple masses punctuated by fenestration. Between 1931 and 1935, Sodersten explored the 'dramatic potential' of the modern form: "His work demonstrates a mastery of composition and carefully worked detail that was a direct legacy of his Beaux Arts training. From 1931 to 1935 he designed a range of buildings where, in a play raking brick fans, vertical ribs, texture and pattern, he manipulated the decorative potential of this material" (Stapleton, M., 2001: 181).

During the Interwar period steel framed structures were typically clad with brick for fire rating purposes. The Royal Exchange Assurance Building (1937) was the first glass façade building in Sydney; the trend was not, however, readily adopted until the Post WWII era. Inspired by the intricately patterned brickwork of contemporary Dutch and German Schools and architects such as Van der Maey, Dudock and De Klerk, whose work was often illustrated in the journal "Building", fine brickwork was considered to be a signatory feature of Sodersten's work: "delightful essays in brick, a material which he handles in masterly fashion. In his love of this versatile medium, Emil Sodersten is a worthy successor to the late Horbury Hunt" (Sodersten, E., 1934: 92); "(it) must have influenced the red-brick virtuosity of Sodersten's apartment blocks and the complex geometry of his building fabric" (Stapleton, M., 2001: 179).

Sodersten was also noted for his use of colour. A 1934 review, for example, stated that: "All Sodersten's work is colourful" (Stapleton, M., 2001: 91). Of the use of colour, he had reputedly remarked in 1930 that: "We are understanding colour a little better, especially now that synthetic stone- or as craftsmen prefer to call it, pre-cast stone- is making better results possible...the judicious use of colour could do a great deal to enhance the outside appearance of a house, just as much as the inside" (Cooper, N., 1930: 9).

Sodersten's buildings often incorporated innovative features. Birtley Towers (1934), containing fifty-four flats over nine floors, was one of the first (and the largest) residential apartment block to be built in Sydney as the Depression eased; his extension to the Australia Hotel included innovative mechanical ventilation for bathrooms, thereby allowing the living areas to maximum window areas; and the City Mutual Building was one of the first buildings in Sydney to include fully ducted air conditioning and automatically controlled lifts.

Sodersten's interiors were as carefully worked and detailed as his exteriors, the best known examples being the City Mutual Building and the now demolished interior of the Australia Hotel (1936). Interior designer Marion Hall Best, however, executed the interiors of No. 7 Elizabeth Street; these interiors were Hall Best's first major commission.

Of all his varied work (including city buildings, theatres, hotels, factories and private residences), Sodersten was particularly recognised by his contemporaries for his success in the 'field of flat buildings'. In 1934, Art in Australia described his most recent designs as: "delightful essays in brickwork, a material which he handles in masterly fashion. In his love of this versatile medium, Emil Sodersten is a worthy successor to the late Horbury Hunt. ...These fine modern piles of flats were surely bold challengers to the many thoughtless and shoddy buildings of this type that unfortunately already exist to spoil our skyline. ...Some architects sign their buildings, but Emil Sodersten need never bother for, like paintings by Orpen or Brangwyn, they are so personal that every touch is Sodersten and no one else. ...For so young a man- and he has but reached his very early thirties- to have produced so colourful and fascinating a style is really remarkable; particularly when it is realised that it has been evolved solely in Australia without the influence from contemporary architecture overseas, for Sodersten has not yet been abroad" (Sodersten, 1934: 91).

Sodersten's designs appeared regularly in popular publications. Of his work in the 1930s Maily Stapleton states: "In the early 1930s Sodersten was exploring the qualities of modern material and the dramatic potential of modern form. His work demonstrates a mastery of composition and carefully worked detail...from 1931 to 1935 he designed a range of brick buildings where, in a play of raking brick fans, vertical ribs, texture and pattern, he manipulated the decorative potential of this material. Sodersten...buildings encapsulate the changing direction of Australian architecture in the Interwar years" (Stapleton, M., 2001: 179-81).

In 1935, Sodersten went abroad where he discovered the work of European architects working in the Functionalist or Moderne Style; his work altered on his return to Sydney, as exemplified by Marlborough Hall (1938) and Elizabeth House (1939). Rather than adopting the rendered walls often associated with the moderne style, Sodersten continued to use brickwork, particularly texture brick, with 'forthright horizontal and vertical forms', a combination that would prove influential in Sydney. Sodersten designed two bachelor flat

complexes on his return to Sydney, being Marlborough Hall and Seven Elizabeth Street.

While Sodersten continued to work until the 1960s, his final work is considered to be "less innovative"; his "new approach seems to lack the vigorous individuality of his Art Deco work", which "exemplifies the pursuit of modern internationalism in Australia and acceptance of radical new forms" (Stapleton, 2001: 179-81).

Buildings in Sydney designed by Emil Sodersten between 1920 and 1950 include:

- c.1920 Gwydir Flats (now Wilkinson House), Forbes Street, Darlinghurst(local heritage listing)
- 1925 Kingsley Hall, 14-18 Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross
- 1928 The Broadway, 285 O'Sullivan Road, Bellevue Hills(local heritage listing)
- (Before) 1933 Tudor House, 127 Phillip Street
- 1930 Cheddington Apartments, 63 Elizabeth Bay Road, Elizabeth Bay
- 1930 Twenty Apartments, 20 Macleay Street
- 1931 St. Bede's Church, Church and College Street, Drummoyne
- 1934 Birtley Towers, Birtley Place, Elizabeth Bay(local heritage listing)
- 1934 Wychbury, 5 Manning Street, Potts Point(local heritage listing)
- 1934 Werrington Apartments, 85 Macleay Street, Potts Point
- 1934-6 City Mutual Life Building, corner Hunter and Bligh Streets(local heritage listing)
- 1936-8 Former Bryant House, 80-82 Pitt Street (with T.W. Hodgeson and Sons (local heritage listing)
- 1938 Belvedere, former Marlborough Hall, 2 Barncluth Square, KingsCross (local heritage listing)
- 1928 7 Elizabeth Street Apartments, Sydney
- 1939 Elizabeth House, Elizabeth and Foster Streets, SurryHills
- 1949 Reid Building Accommodation Block, St. Johns College, Carillon Avenue, University of Sydney

Inter-War Residential Flat Buildings in Sydney:

Residential flat buildings emerged in Europe and America in the mid to late nineteenth century. Directly challenging the cherished suburban ideal of detached houses with gardens, residential flat buildings were initially slow to take hold in Sydney following the construction of the first purpose built residential flat building in 1905. The number of flat buildings increased dramatically during the 1920s before being temporarily halted by the onset of the Great Depression. The revival of flat building in the mid 1930s was regarded as a sign by contemporary observers of a return to better times. In May 1935, the Sydney Morning Herald remarked that the procession of builders who were buying land for the erection of flats had no trouble selling their product, often long before they were completed.

Sydney's first precinct of inner city flat buildings was located in and around Macquarie Street, developing from c.1900 and reaching its peak with Esplin and Mould's The Astor, in 1923. Early residential flats were converted office buildings. The first purpose built mansion flats in Sydney was The Albany (1905), a seven storey building which once stood opposite Parliament House (now demolished). The Albany combined dwellings with professional chambers and was home to a prestigious clientele. The Albany was followed by Craignish (Macquarie Street, 1907), Stathkyle (Bligh Street, 1909), Wyoming (Macquarie Street, 1911) and the Temperance and General Insurance Company Building (Macquarie Street, 1915). Wyoming is the sole survivor from this period. These early buildings followed commercial architecture with their heavily rusticated stone bases, brickwork, narrow arched windows and Roman arches. By the early 1920s, the Palazzo style had become more favoured for commercial buildings, a trend also evident in the design of The Astor.

The number of residential flat buildings in Sydney increased dramatically during the 1920s. Within the City of Sydney, Kings Cross, Darlinghurst, Potts Point and Elizabeth Bay were favoured locations. A number of examples from these areas are listed as heritage items by the City of Sydney. While flat building increased in the inner suburbs, few major apartment

buildings were built in the CBD after The Astor (1923). City land was in too much demand for retail and business purposes: "In fact, apartment development was priced out of the city, along with workers' housing" (Butler-Bowden, C., and C. Pickett, 2007: 46).

On the subject of small bachelor flats, Decoration and Glass commented in 1938 that: "Small flats, known generally as 'bachelor flats', and slighter later than 'minimum flats', are very popular in England and on the Continent, and are fast becoming the vogue here in Australia" (Butler-Bowden, C., and C. Pickett, 2007: 90).

In an article in Decoration and Glass in June 1940, Number Seven Elizabeth Street was discussed alongside the nearly completed Marton Hall. These two buildings were described as achieving the 'ultimate in bachelor flats.' Marton Hall, which once stood in Margaret Street, has been demolished. As with Number Seven Elizabeth Street, Marton Hall was promoted by means of a colourful brochure (copy held by the National Library of Australia).

Residential flat construction provoked a wide variety of responses. The Australian National Journal of 1939 championed flat buildings as evidence of Sydney's increased sophistication. A greater number of flats were built in Sydney between 1933 and 1941 than in Melbourne, Sydney's great rival, Melbourne (Butler-Bowden, C., and C. Pickett, 2007: 72-73). Rampant flat building, however, was not without its critics. This form of residential accommodation stood in direct contrast to the ideal of detached houses in suburbia that had been steadfastly promoted since 1900. The construction of flats in Sydney was opposed by both major political parties, the UAP and Labour, and by many local councils, who typically cited traffic increase (and hence the destruction of tranquillity) and the unsuitability of the flat environment for the raising of a family. Flats built before 1940 were built without regulation via specific controls. Owners, for example, were not required to provide open space on-site. Inevitably, not all were built to a high standard. One contemporary critic went so far as to describe flats as 'immoral', 'horrid growths' (van Daele, P., and R. Lumby, 1997: 52). Despite such opposition, flat construction comprised 41 % of all dwellings built in Sydney between 1933 and 1941. Over 500 flats were constructed annually between 1935 and 1941 (Spearritt, P., 1978: 72).

Few purpose built residential flat buildings were constructed in Central Sydney during the interwar period. Contemporary literature (Building, The Home, Decoration and Glass etc.), the RAI A Twentieth Century Register, the NSW Art Deco Society and the recent publication "Homes in the Sky: Apartment Living in Australia" cite the following:

1915, T & G Building (demolished)

1923, The Astor (local heritage listing)

1938, 7 Elizabeth Street Apartments (not listed)

c.1940, Marton Hall (demolished)

There would appear to have been a small number of primarily commercial buildings designed to include some residential accommodation. Hengrove Hall in Macquarie Street, for example, designed for occupation by medical professionals, was described in Building, 13 May, 1929 as follows: "In the other floors the space is cut up into suites consisting of one fair sized room with bathroom and kitchenette, a bachelor type of flat popular amongst quite nice people at the present time" ('Building', 13/05/1929: 50).

Marion Hall Best:

Marion Hall Best (1905-1988) was one of Australia's preeminent interior designers during the twentieth century. Her first interior design was for her mother's home at Palm Beach in 1929. In 1938 she undertook a correspondence course in interior design from New York and attended lectures at the University of Sydney. In the same year she opened her business in Queen Street Woollahra (Marion Best Pty Ltd), followed by a shop in the city in Rowe Street.

Marion Best's entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography notes that the interior design of 7 Elizabeth Street was the most important amongst her first commissions. Early commissions also included the Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre in Erskineville (1941), the Rachel Forster Hospital for Women and Children in Redfern (1942 - a heritage item under South Sydney LEP 1998), and an exhibition for the Australian Red Cross Society. Following World War II, Marion Best was in charge of the David Jones Art Gallery and co-founded the Society of Interior Designers of Australia in 1951. One of her largest commercial commissions was for the Regent Theatre in Wollongong in 1957, and it is apparently the last surviving example of one of her major commercial commissions.

Her cutting edge use of colours and sourcing of up to date fabric and furnishings from overseas designers were hallmarks of her work, and along with frequent coverage in magazines, exposed her style to a wide audience. The Historic Houses Trust of NSW maintains a collection of Marions Hall's work and contemporary publications. In 2005, the Regent Theatre in Wollongong was listed on the State Heritage Register, largely due to the significance of the surviving Marion Hall Best interior.

Conclusions:

Interwar residential buildings are rare within the CBD. The near contemporary example, Marton Hall, has been demolished. The two pre World War II residential flat buildings currently heritage listed within the CBD, Wyoming (1911) and The Astor (1923), are representative of different architectural styles.

Emil Sodersten is an important and influential figure in the design of Sydney residential flat buildings in the 1920s and 1930s. He designed a number of residential flat buildings now listed as heritage items by the City of Sydney, mostly located in Kings Cross and Elizabeth Bay. His work is represented by two listed buildings, both commercial buildings, within the CBD: Bryant House and the CML Building. Both are, arguably, more complex and dynamic buildings. In contrast to these two buildings, 7 Elizabeth Street represents a more progressive version of Modernism as a result of Sodersten's 1935 voyage to Europe, leaving behind Art Deco for a more pure aesthetic. As a result it is less imposing and complex than the contemporary Marlborough Hall (1938) or Birtley Towers (1934).

7 Elizabeth Street is also an early work of influential Sydney designer Marion Hall Best (extent of fabric associated with her unknown).

Current use:	Residential; office; retail
Former use:	Residential; office; retail

History

Historical notes:	The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.
--------------------------	--

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

The building stands on what was part of Allotment 8 Section 39 of the City of Sydney, which was granted to James Norton on 23 April 1841. The land remained in the possession of Norton and his family until sold in October 1880 to a consortium of William Paling, Andrew McCulloch and William Billyard. In August 1895 the land was sold to Mrs Elizabeth Kirby. By 1896 the undertaking concern of Mrs. P. Kirby & Son Limited was established on the site and occupied the premises until the mid 1920s. During that time the then large parcel of land was split up via several transactions between Mrs Kirby and William Kirby. In October 1925 Mrs Kirby sold the property to William Lowe, who transferred its title to a company called Elizabeth House Limited. The company took out two mortgages over the building on the site in 1928. The building was used for investment purposes, with leasing to a restaurant proprietor and the Everhot Electric Company in 1929. Elizabeth House Limited, probably under pressure from the effects of the Great Depression, sold the property at the end of 1934 to a consortium of Jack Favie accountant and Hugh Poate, surgeon, and Kenneth Douglas, bank manager. An application for a new block of flats was lodged with the City Council on 28 November 1928 by architect Emil Sodersten, who also designed the building. Title to the property was transferred to a company called Seven Elizabeth Street Limited on 1 June 1939 and an application to demolish the existing building on the site lodged about two weeks later. The company then mortgaged the property to the Commonwealth Bank the following

September, presumably to finance the construction of 7 Elizabeth Street. The prominent interior designer Marion Hall Best was employed to design the interior of the flats.

The following contractors were employed on construction and finishing of the building:

Builder: H.W. Thompson & Co.

Excavator: E.M. Spinks

Telephone System: Telephone Sales & Service Co.

Elevator: White Elevators Pty Ltd

Shopfronts and Mirrors: James Sandy Pty Ltd (Sandy's)

Flooring: Timberworths Pty Ltd

Stainless Steel and Chrome Work: E.A. Harper & Sons Pty Ltd

Blinds: Milroy & Simmons Pty Ltd


In August 1960 the title to the building was transferred to Seven Elizabeth Street Units Limited, and in 1977 it was converted to strata title.

In 2010, the shopfront were reconstruced based on documentary evidence of the original. The flagpole was also reinstated circa 2010.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Accommodation-Activities associated with the provision of accommodation, and particular types of accommodation – does not include architectural styles – use the theme of Creative Endeavour for such activities.	Flats-
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages-Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages	Community facilities-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The building has historic significance as the one of the few blocks of flats constructed in the CBD in the 1930s which has survived and still fulfils its original function as a residential building.
SHR Criteria b) [Associative significance]	The building is associated with the work of architect Emil Sodersten and interior designer Marion Hall Best.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The building has state significance for its association with and as a representative of the work of prominent architect Emil Sodersten, and influential interior designer Marion Hall Best. Well known for his residential flat buildings, No. 7 Elizabeth St is the only one known to have been designed by Emil Sodersten within the CBD, and shows the influence of modernist European architecture on his work. Its interiors were an early and well publicised example of the work of Marion Hall Best, who went on to exercise a great influence on interior design in N.S.W. during the three decades after World War II.
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	The building is a rare example of inner city living dating from the inter war period in the CBD.
SHR Criteria e) [Research potential]	The site is not identified in an archaeological zoning plan and the area has been well researched and it is unlikely that the site would reveal further information that would contribute to the significance of the area.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The building is rare within the centre of the CBD.
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	The building is a representative example of an inter war block of apartments found in the centre of Sydney.
Integrity/Intactness:	High externally and Medium internally
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

The building should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement, or a Conservation Management Plan, should be prepared for the building prior to any major works being undertaken. There shall be no vertical additions to the building and no alterations to the façade of the building other than to reinstate original features. No additions to the building are feasible given the constraints of the lift and stairs. The reconstructed shopfronts are to be retained. The original internal planning configuration of the building, the original interiors of the units, the lobby and as well as significant internal original features including ceilings, joinery, flooring, bathroom fitouts should be retained and conserved. Any alterations should be confined to the rear in areas of less significance, should not be visibly prominent and shall be in accordance with the relevant planning controls. The basement entrance should be reinstated to the original configuration.

Recommendations

Management Category	Description	Date Updated
Statutory Instrument	Nominate for State Heritage Register (SHR)	05 Sep 16

Listings

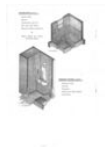
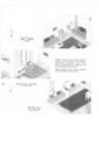
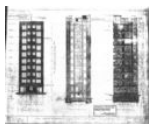
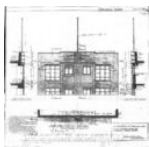
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1737	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		2005	State Heritage Inventory entry for Regent Theatre, 197 Keira Street, Wollongong (SHI No.5053515)	
Written		1940	Decoration and Glass (magazine) June 1940	
Written		1940	'Number Seven Elizabeth Street, Sydney,' Nine Storeys of Bachelor Flats in the Heart of the City', Decoration and Glass, June, 1940	
Written		1929	'Plans, Hengrove Hall, 193 Macquarie Street, Sydney', Building, 13 May, 1929	
Written	Apperly, Richard, et al	1989	A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture, Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present	
Written	Cooper, Nora	1930	'Striking the Individual Note: Two Sydney homes that reflect the personality of one of our younger Architects', The Australian Home Beautiful, 01/12/1930	
Written	Fitzgerald, Shirley	1992	Sydney 1842-1992	
Written	Ritchie, John(ed)	2002	The Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 16 1940-1980, Pik-Z	
Written	Roberts, Jan(ed)	2003	The Astor	
Written	Sodersten, Emil	1934	Art in Australia, 05/11/1934	
Written	Spearritt, Peter	1978	Sydney Since the Twenties	
Written	Thorne, Ross and Kevin Cork	1994	For all the Kings Men: The King Theatre of Sydney, NSW	
Written	Alex May	2005	Marion Hall Best: a profile originally published in Sydney Morning Herald's Domain Section May 2005	
Written	Butler-Bowden, Caroline and Charles Pickett	2007	Homes in the Sky: Apartment Living in Australia	
Written	Catriona Quinn	2006	'Best, Marion Esdaile Hall (1905-1988)', "Australian Dictionary of Biography", Volume 17	

Written	Ferson, Mark and Mary Nilsson (eds)	2001	Art Deco in Australia: Sunrise Over the Pacific	
Written	Roy Lumby	2003	National Trust of Australia (NSW) Classification Report	
Written	Tod, Les and Kevin Cork	1989	The Dream Palaces. Part II: The Spanish Influence	
Written	van Daele, Patrick and Roy Lumby	1997	A Spirit of Progress; Art Deco in Australia	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2428684

File number: S047500

[Return to previous page](#)

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.



[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Heritage places and items](#) > [Search for heritage](#)

Reserve Bank Including Interior

Item details

Name of item:	Reserve Bank Including Interior
Type of item:	Built
Group/Collection:	Commercial
Category:	Bank
Location:	Lat: -33.8697517372948 Long: 151.210514764895
Primary address:	65 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000
Local govt. area:	Sydney

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
65 Martin Place	Sydney	Sydney			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

The Reserve Bank is a 22 storey high rise tower of Post War International Style, which occupies a full block on Martin Place. It has historic importance for its ability to exemplify a post war cultural shift within the banking industry. This shift led away from an architectural emphasis on strength and stability (expressed through massive walls and pillars) towards a contemporary design that would signal the bank's ability to adapt its policies and techniques, to the changing needs of its clientele. For these reasons the building has outstanding ability to reflect through its aesthetics the changing nature of financial institutions. It is a good example of a Post War International office building designed by an important government organisation finished in high quality Australian materials. Due to recent restoration work it has great potential to continue in its restored state. The building is of social significance for its ability to demonstrate the importance attached to the use of Australian public art, in prestige buildings in the post war era. The incorporation within the building of two residential flats is rare for its time. The two doors to the main strongroom in the building are of scientific significance as the largest and most technically advanced strongroom doors of their time in the Southern Hemisphere.

Date significance updated: 09 Jan 06

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker:	Commonwealth Department of Works, Bank and Special Project Section. F.J.Crocker (architect in charge)
Builder/Maker:	E.A. Watts Pty Limited
Construction years:	1961-1964
Physical description:	The Reserve Bank, located on a prominent site, has 3 glazed facades. A 4 storey podium is divided into 2 upper floors with projecting horizontal fins and 2 floors of full height recessed glazing to the mezzanine below. This contains the 2 storey public area and the banking chamber in the mezzanine over. The building is entered via a bronzed railed grey and black granite terrace which accommodates the site slope. The tower is capped with recessed balconies at L20. Above this is a roof terrace with full height glazing and an extensive cantilever roof. The vertical columns, faced in black granite and aluminium, define the 8 bays of the tower and extend up to form the supports for the balconies. Between the columns 4 panels of white marble spandrel panels over clad in granite alternate with recessed glazing.

The glazing panels stop short of the corner. The plan is rectangular around the lift foyer core. The granite podium floor finish and external floor finishes continues internally. Internally 8 anodised metal ceiling panels sit within the structural grid. Most lift foyers are marble lined, L3 is timber. The original lead lined leather acoustic doors and timber panelling are retained extensively. The board room features a marble floor. Category:Individual Building. Style:Post-War International. Storeys:22 (including Mezzanine and Ground) + 3 basement. Facade:Granite, Glazed curtain wall. Side/Rear Walls:Granite, Glazed curtain wall, Marble overlaid in granite above podium. Internal Walls:Rendered brick, Granite, Marble. Roof Cladding:Waterproof membrane. Internal Structure:Reinf. conc. structural steel frame. Floor:Reinf. conc. slab. Roof:Reinf. conc. slab. Ceilings:Susp. plasterboard metal pan tile. Stairs:4. Fire Stairs:4. Sprinkler System:Yes. Lifts:15. AirConditioned:Yes

Physical condition and/or Archaeological potential:

In general the building retains its original design appearance but some of the original fabric has been replaced with new compatible finishes. Internally the building has been remodelled at the upper office levels but specific significant spaces such as the boardroom, and lift foyers are retained intact. The ground level double volume spaces are highly intact, although there has been substantial alterations to furniture and fittings. The original marble ceiling panel has been replaced in metal. Intrusive Elements:The external stairs to the Martin Place underground.

Date condition updated:09 Jan 06

Modifications and dates:

1964

Further information:

High Significance:The north, east and west facades of the tower, the podium space and the ground floor foyer, banking chamber, lift lobby and public art. Medium Significance:All original built in and loose furniture associated with the interiors of high significance. Low Significance:General office areas.

Heritage Inventory sheets are often not comprehensive, and should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. An inventory sheet with little information may simply indicate that there has been no building work done to the item recently: it does not mean that items are not significant. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items, and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.

Current use:

Bank

Former use:

Bank

History

Historical notes:

The "Eora people" was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as "Eora Country". Within the City of Sydney local government area, the traditional owners are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora. There is no written record of the name of the language spoken and currently there are debates as whether the coastal peoples spoke a separate language "Eora" or whether this was actually a dialect of the Dharug language. Remnant bushland in places like Blackwattle Bay retain elements of traditional plant, bird and animal life, including fish and rock oysters.

With the invasion of the Sydney region, the Cadigal and Wangal people were decimated but there are descendants still living in Sydney today. All cities include many immigrants in their population. Aboriginal people from across the state have been attracted to suburbs such as Pyrmont, Balmain, Rozelle, Glebe and Redfern since the 1930s. Changes in government legislation in the 1960s provided freedom of movement enabling more Aboriginal people to choose to live in Sydney.

(Information sourced from Anita Heiss, "Aboriginal People and Place", Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani>)

Following the decision by the Australian government to separate the Central Bank from the rest of the Commonwealth Bank Group, it was proposed that land in Macquarie Street and

Phillip Street be used for the site of a new Reserve Bank building. Clearing of the site commenced in March 1961, and the building was completed in 1964. The Bank's administrators made a deliberate decision to call for a design for the building that was contemporary and international. They wanted the design of the building to exemplify a post war cultural shift away from an architectural emphasis on strength and stability (expressed through massive walls and pillars) towards a design that would signify the bank's ability to adapt its policies and techniques to the changing needs of its clientele. At the same time the bank adopted a conscious policy of using materials of Australian origin and manufacture and chose to further enhance the prestige of the building through the use of works by Australian artists and sculptors. The bank no longer retains any information on the reason for the inclusion of the two residential flats. It is believed they were to accommodate senior executives travelling from interstate. They were an unusual inclusion. Major changes to the exterior and interior of the building were approved by the parliament of Australia in December 2000, following an investigation and report by the Parliamentary Public Works committee in 2000. A large percentage of the building, being vacant, is to be refurbished for lease to the private sector. The residential flats are to be demolished and the space used for a new cafeteria. The level 3 Auditorium, cafeteria and associated staff spaces are to be deleted. North elevation level 17 window sills are to be lowered. Former plant room space and squash courts on level 17 are to be replaced with office space.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce-Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services	(none)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)
[Historical significance] The Reserve Bank is of historical importance for its ability to exemplify a post war cultural shift within the banking industry . This shift led away from an architectural emphasis on strength and stability (expressed through massive walls and pillars) towards a contemporary design that would signal the bank's ability to adapt its policies and techniques, to the changing needs of its clientele.


SHR Criteria c)
[Aesthetic significance] The two safes at the time were the largest and most technically advanced in the Southern Hemisphere.

Has aesthetic significance at a State level. Cultural:The Reserve Bank is a good example of a Post War International office building designed by an important government organisation . The building is finished in high quality Australian materials and due to recent restoration work has great potential to continue in its restored state. The incorporation within the building of two residential flats of high quality is rare for its time.

SHR Criteria d)
[Social significance] The building is of social significance for its ability to demonstrate the importance attached to the use of Australian public art, in prestige buildings in the post war era. The incorporation within the building of two residential flats is rare for its time. Has social significance at a State level.The Reserve Bank is a good example of a Post War International office building designed by an important government organisation . The building is finished in high quality Australian materials and due to recent restoration work has great potential to continue in its restored state. The incorporation within the building of two residential flats of high quality is rare for its time.

SHR Criteria f)
[Rarity] The Reserve Bank is important for the coordinated program of Australian public art, within the building. The incorporation within the building of two residential flats of high quality, is rare for its time.

SHR Criteria g)
[Representativeness] The Reserve Bank is important for its ability to exemplify a post war cultural shift within the banking industry.

Assessment criteria: Items are assessed against the  **State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria** to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

General: The overall form of the Reserve Bank should be retained and conserved. A conservation plan should be prepared to guide the future use and maintenance of the building. Finishes never intended for painting, such as the marble and granite should remain unpainted and should continue to be appropriately maintained. Surfaces intended for painting should continue to be painted in appropriate colours.

Exterior: All remaining intact fabric on the external facades and the public art, should be retained and conserved. As the original building is a significant feature within the Martin Place streetscape and has a distinctive silhouette there should be no vertical extension. Alterations to the recessed podium should not be considered. Any future development should preserve the existing form, external surfaces and materials of the facade, and door and window openings should not be enlarged or closed in.

Interior: All remaining intact fabric on the interior such as the ground floor foyer and banking chamber areas, public art, and lift lobby should be retained and conserved. As the general office interiors excluding the lift foyers and the boardrooms have been extensively remodelled, further alterations could be carried out in these areas, subject to a heritage impact assessment.

The building should be retained and conserved. A Heritage Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement, or a Conservation Management Plan, should be prepared for the building prior to any major works being undertaken. There shall be no vertical additions to the building and no alterations to the façade of the building other than to reinstate original features. The principal room layout and planning configuration as well as significant internal original features including ceilings, cornices, joinery, flooring and fireplaces should be retained and conserved. Any additions and alterations should be confined to the rear in areas of less significance, should not be visibly prominent and shall be in accordance with the relevant planning controls.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Local Environmental Plan	Sydney LEP 2012	I1897	14 Dec 12		
Heritage study					

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written		1966	Architecture in Australia September 1966 pp71-77	
Written			Australian Heritage Commission Martin Place Urban Conservation Area	
Written	Anita Heiss		Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Indigenous History of Sydney City	
Written	Jennifer Taylor		Post War II Multistorey Office Buildings in Australia 1945-67	
Written	Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners	2001	The Reserve Bank of Australia, 65 Martin Place, Sydney : conservation management plan	
Written	Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners	2001	The Photographic record for the Reserve bank	
Written	Noel Bell, Ridley Smith & Partners.	2001	Revised statement of heritage impact : Reserve Bank of Australia, head office consolidation, 65 Martin Place, Sydney	

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.



(Click on thumbnail for full size image and image details)

Data source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Name: Local Government

Database number: 2423917

Every effort has been made to ensure that information contained in the State Heritage Inventory is correct. If you find any errors or omissions please send your comments to the [Database Manager](#).

All information and pictures on this page are the copyright of the Heritage Division or respective copyright owners.