

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This report was prepared on the lands of the Wurundjeri people who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge their stories, connection to land, water and culture which is embedded in Country. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge that this report includes a post-contact history that forms only a small part of the ongoing story.

603-627 Collins Street, Melbourne is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri people, who are, and have always been the custodians of this land. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Quality Assurance Register

The following quality assurance register documents the development and issue of this report prepared by Lovell Chen Pty Ltd in accordance with our quality management system.

Project no.	Issue no.	Description	Issue date	Approval
9659	1	Draft Heritage Impact Statement	14.04.2023	KG
9659	2	Final Heritage Impact Statement	27.04.2023	KG
9659	3	Revised HIS	18.10.2023	KG

Referencing

Historical sources and reference material used in the preparation of this report are acknowledged and referenced as endnotes or footnotes and/or in figure captions. Reasonable effort has been made to identify and acknowledge material from the relevant copyright owners.

Moral Rights

Lovell Chen Pty Ltd asserts its Moral right in this work, unless otherwise acknowledged, in accordance with the (Commonwealth) Copyright (Moral Rights) Amendment Act 2000. Lovell Chen's moral rights include the attribution of authorship, the right not to have the work falsely attributed and the right to integrity of authorship.

Limitation

Lovell Chen grants the client for this project (and the client's successors in title) an irrevocable royalty-free right to reproduce or use the material from this report, except where such use infringes the copyright and/or Moral rights of Lovell Chen or third parties. This report is subject to and issued in connection with the provisions of the agreement between Lovell Chen Pty Ltd and its Client. Lovell Chen Pty Ltd accepts no liability or responsibility for or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report by any third party.

Cover image: The former State Savings Bank from the opposite side of Spencer Street

Source: Lovell Chen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	VI
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 STATUTORY HERITAGE-RELATED CONTROLS	2
2.1 Melbourne Planning Scheme	2
2.1.1 Heritage Overlay (HO)	2
2.1.2 Design and Development Overlay (DDO)	6
2.1.3 Capital City Zone (CCZ)	6
2.2 Victorian Heritage Inventory	7
3.0 SUMMARY HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION	8
3.1 Historical evolution	8
3.1.1 Former State Savings Bank (615-623 Collins Street)	8
3.1.2 Batman’s Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street)	12
3.2 Physical description	18
3.2.1 Former State Savings Bank (615-623 Collins Street)	18
3.2.2 Batman’s Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street)	21
3.2.3 607-613 Collins Street	24
3.3 Site context	25
4.0 PROPOSAL	27
4.1 Demolition	27
4.2 Alterations	28
4.3 New development	28
4.3.1 Infill building	28
4.3.2 Tower development	28
4.4 Conservation works	29
5.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS	30
5.1 Demolition	30
5.2 Alterations	41
5.3 Additions	43
5.3.1 New infill	44
5.3.2 Tower development	45
5.4 Restoration and reconstruction	50

5.5	Vehicle accommodation and access	52
5.6	Services and ancillary fixtures	55
6.0	CONCLUSION	56

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Location plan with the subject site indicated	2
Figure 2	Detail of the Heritage Overlay (Map 8 HO 2) of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The former State Savings Bank (HO1076) and the Batman’s Hill Hotel (HO1076) are indicated by the red arrow.	3
Figure 3	c. 1989 proposed ground and basement floor plans	9
Figure 4	Undated proposed mezzanine and first floor plans, likely associated with the c.1992 works	10
Figure 5	c.1992 proposed west elevation	10
Figure 6	c.1992 proposed north and south elevations	11
Figure 7	c.1927-28 aerial of the former state Savings Bank indicated with the arrow, the Batman’s Hill Hotel to the right and the earlier building on 607-613 Collins Street to the left	11
Figure 8	The earlier building at 607-613 Collins Street, c. 1940. Note the north elevation of the Batman’s Hill Hotel in the background	12
Figure 9	The Batman’s Hill Hotel prior to c.1926 alterations	14
Figure 10	The Batman’s Hill Hotel following the c.1926 alterations Source: PROV BA 8915 VPRS 11200P1_99_16	15
Figure 11	Proposed ground, first and second floor plans from the c.1926 alterations	15
Figure 12	The Batman’s Hill Hotel, c.1967	16
Figure 13	Image of the Batman’s Hill Hotel included in the 1985 Building Identification Form. Note that the rendered brick dadoes were still partially intact at this point.	16
Figure 14	c.1987 ground floor and basement plan for the addition of a second passenger lift Source: E. Smrekar Architect	17
Figure 15	West elevation of the State Savings Bank (left) and the Batman’s Hill Hotel (right), dated 1992	17
Figure 16	The State Savings Bank from the opposite corner of Collins and Spencer Street	19
Figure 17	Former State Savings Bank (left) and the Batman’s Hill Hotel (right) with later infill between	19
Figure 18	The State Savings Bank façade from Collins Street	20
Figure 19	Later mansard roof of the State Savings Bank	20
Figure 20	Later mezzanine level in the double height banking chamber	21
Figure 21	The Batman’s Hill Hotel from the opposite side of Spencer Street	22
Figure 22	The former State Savings Bank to the left, adjoining the subject site via the later infill between the two buildings	22

Figure 23	Later roof and fifth floor level addition viewed from the roof of the State Savings Bank	23
Figure 24	Ground floor interior comprising modern fabric	23
Figure 25	The modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street from Collins Street	24
Figure 26	The State Savings Bank in 1973, with newly constructed infill building to its left	25
Figure 27	Recent aerial photograph of the subject site, outlined in red	26
Figure 28	North side of the Collins and Spencer Street intersection with Southern Cross Station on the left	26
Figure 29	South side of the Collins and Spencer Street intersection with the subject site on the left	27
Figure 30	Location of granite to be removed indicated by the red arrows	33
Figure 31	The proposed booster location in the Spencer Street façade of the former State Savings Bank indicated by the red arrows	34
Figure 32	Extent of demolition to the south and east walls of the former State Savings Bank – this is the ground floor level plan	35
Figure 33	Later mansard roof and sixth floor level to be removed indicated by the red arrow	36
Figure 34	The roof of the Batman’s Hill Hotel showing the modern mansard roof to the added fifth level.	37
Figure 35	Comparison between 1926 and 1987 ground floor plans, showing the depth of structure to approximately 8.5 metres	38
Figure 36	Later alterations to the street level Collins Street elevation including enlarged openings, inset door, modern windows and doors, glazed arched awning and re-rendered façade	39
Figure 37	Detail of the proposed Batman’s Hill Hotel facade with car park entry marked	40
Figure 38	View from Collins Street showing the effect of the deeply recessed transitional floor levels	48
Figure 39	Render of the development from the opposite side of Spencer Street, demonstrating the deep setbacks of the tower	49
Figure 40	Longer view from the south along Spencer Street	50
Figure 41	New basement set back from the title boundaries and the existing structural grid of the former bank	54
Figure 42	Blade wall retained with new façade opening indicated by the red arrow	55

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared on behalf of Sterling Global to accompany a planning permit application for the proposed redevelopment of 607-623 Collins Street, Melbourne which includes the former State Savings Bank at 615-623 Collins Street, the adjacent modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street and the Batman's Hill Hotel at 66-70 Spencer Street. (Figure 1). The former State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel are both included in the Heritage Overlay (HO) to the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

The proposed redevelopment involves retention of the principal façades and primary building volume of the former State Saving Bank. The infill building at 607-613 Collins Street is proposed to be demolished to enable the construction of a new 6-storey hotel. A new 37 to 42 storey tower will rise behind the retained volume of the heritage buildings, with deep setbacks from both principal facades. Four basement levels will be constructed with partial retention of the existing basement level (five levels in total) beneath the former bank building, to be accessed from Spencer Street. As part of the proposal a suite of façade conservation works will be undertaken to both heritage buildings.

In preparation of this report, reference has been made to the following architectural plans prepared by Carr Architects dated 24 April 2023 and numbered:

- TP-0001, TP-0010
- TP-100 to TP-107
- TP-03B1 to TP-03B2, TP-03B3 and TP-03B5
- TP-0300, TP-0300M
- TP-0301 to TP-0302, TP-0304 to TP-0309, TP-0312 to TP-0314, TP-0316 to TP-0318, TP-0321, TP-0329, TP-0333, TP-0337 to TP-0338, TP-0342 to TP-0343
- TP-2000 to TP-2007
- TP-3000 to TP-3005
- TP-8000

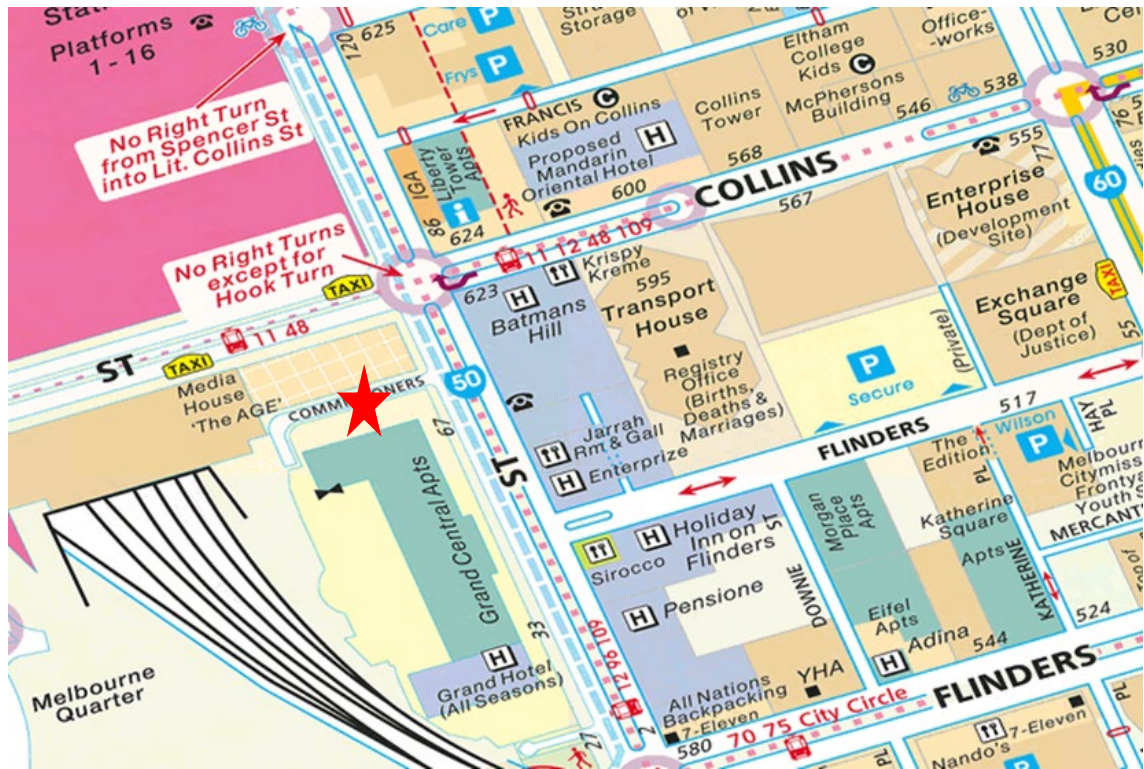


Figure 1 Location plan with the subject site indicated
 Source: <https://www.street-directory.com.au/>

2.0 STATUTORY HERITAGE-RELATED CONTROLS

2.1 Melbourne Planning Scheme

2.1.1 Heritage Overlay (HO)

615-623 Collins Street is individually identified as HO1013, and 66-70 Spencer Street is individually identified as HO1076 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (Figure 2). The modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street is not identified in the Schedule but is included in the mapped land extent of HO1013. This appears to be a mapping error and is discussed further below.

The heritage controls apply to the external building fabric, external paint controls and solar energy systems of both properties, but internal alteration controls and tree controls do not apply.

Under the provisions of the Heritage Overlay, the properties are subject to Clause 43.01 'Heritage Overlay' and Clause 15.03-1L-02 'Heritage', the latter clause replacing Clause 22 (Local Planning Policies).

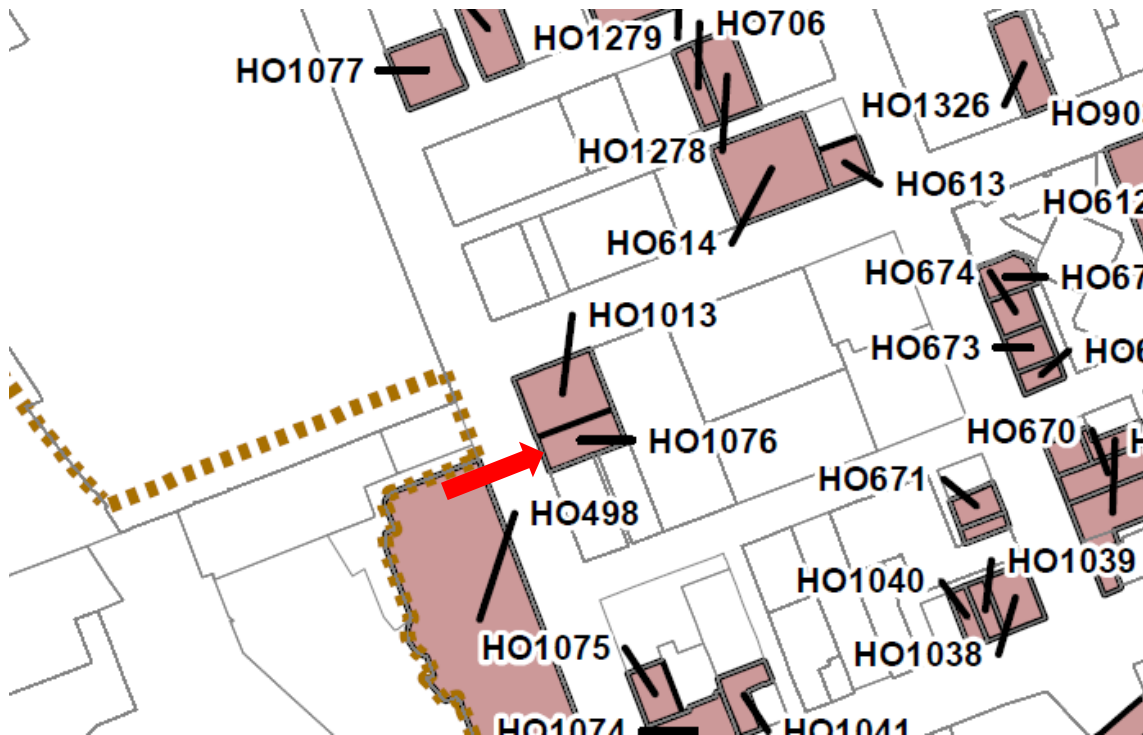


Figure 2 Detail of the Heritage Overlay (Map 8 HO 2) of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The former State Savings Bank (HO1076) and the Batman's Hill Hotel (HO1076) are indicated by the red arrow.

Source: Melbourne Planning Scheme

Statement of significance

The statement of significance for 615-623 Collins Street (HO1013) is included in the *Central City Heritage Review Statements of Significance June 2013*, which is an Incorporated Document to the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The statement of significance is extracted below:

What is significant?

The basis of the State Savings Bank was formed by the amalgamation of the private Port Phillip Savings Bank (1842) and the government Post Office Savings Bank (1852) in 1896.

Architects, Billing Son and Peck or Billing Peck and Kempster, designed other branches prior to Peck and Kempster's involvement with this, the City's western branch, in 1927.

Following the detailing of the Neo-Grec movement, the former bank and four office levels above were clad in stucco and rested on a quarry finish Harcourt granite base, taking the form of a grand commercial Palazzo. Saltire-cross bronze framed windows light the monumental space of the former banking chamber and nail-head mouldings, both large and small, make up the stylised capitals on the similarly stylised, Tuscan order pilasters which support the exaggerated Doric cornice above. A smooth rusticated base storey completes the graduation of texture from the smooth upper levels to the roughness of the plinth.

This stylistic combination was commonly used in the 1920s for financial and commercial buildings. Early and relatively conservative use of the Greek Revival style reached the height of its popularity in the late 1920s imparting a suitable imposing temple-like air to, what is this case, almost symmetrical facades which remain substantially intact. As one contemporary description noted, the building was considered to have 'sufficient dignity to be counted among our notable buildings and is a striking note in our civic architecture'.

As a Neo-Grec design, the bank compares with Deva House, Bourke Street and to a lesser degree with Temple Court, Collins Street (qv), both 1924 also the Nicholas Building (1926): it is an early example of the style and the corner siting aids in the showcasing of the style. This is a major corner building which relates well to the similarly styled former Batman's Hill Hotel (1926) adjoining in Spencer Street. The State Savings Bank contributes significantly to a streetscape interspersed with similarly classically detailed buildings such as the Mail Exchange Building, the former Alexander, later Savoy Hotel, and the former Victorian Railways Building.

Contributory elements

The contributory elements within this property include, but are not restricted to, external fabric from the construction date, 1923-1924, and any new material added in sympathy to the original fabric it replaced.

How is it significant?

The former State Savings Bank of Victoria is significant historically and aesthetically to the Melbourne Capital City Zone.

Why is it significant?

The former State Savings Bank of Victoria significant:

Aesthetically, as an early and good neo-Grec design. The building is a fine and prominent example of the combination of a restrained Renaissance Palazzo form with elements of the Greek Revival style – a combination commonly used in the 1920s for financial and commercial buildings which reached the height of its popularity in the late 1920s. The style imparts a suitably imposing templelike air to the almost symmetrical street facades which remain substantially intact. As a prominent building on one of Melbourne's major intersections the former State Savings Bank building contributes significantly to a streetscape interspersed with similarly classically detailed buildings such as the Mail Exchange Building, the former Savoy Hotel, and the former Railway Building; and

Historically, as the first major city office built for the State Savings Bank of Victoria since the 1896 amalgamation, paralleling with its expansion into a new home finance role, post war. The building also evokes the supremacy of the Melbourne banking industry within the State and the nation.

The statement of significance for the 66-70 Spencer Street (HO1076) is included in the *Central City Heritage Review Statements of Significance June 2013*, which is an Incorporated Document to the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The statement of significance is reproduced below:

What is significant?

The first Batman's Hotel operated here in the 1860s to be replaced by the Batman's Hill Hotel in the 1870s. Inter-war renovation and additions to the Victorian-era

three-storey brick Batman's Hill Hotel were constructed 1926-8 at an estimated cost of £11,000 by Ivanhoe builder, George Andrew. The client was Mrs A Riley and the design from architects and engineers Greenwood Bradley & Allen working in association with hotel specialist architects, Sydney Smith & Ogg. The decision to add to the old hotel rather than redevelop the site was based on its remarkable sound condition. Apart from the façade design every effort was made to complement the existing building during the project.

The design had a sober Greek Revival façade designed solely by Greenwood Bradley & Allen. Additions were made at the rear of the hotel on all existing levels and the two added floors and roof level on the front existing wing followed the existing T-Shape plan which allowed for light courts on both sides of bedrooms either side of a central passage. Because the partitions were brick throughout, the existing Baltic pine floors were able to be retained and extended despite regulations requiring fireproof construction between floors.

The cement rendered Batman's Hill Hotel façade is parapeted with a classical cornice and central raised pediment in the Greek Revival manner, complete with acroteria and flagpole (removed). Reeded pilasters rise from the ground level podium to allow for window strips between, with matching timber-framed windows separated by cemented spandrels (windows replaced with similar joinery sections, fine balustrading added since). At the façade centre is a series of balconies, some with cemented balustrading and one with a wrought-iron Regency style balconette at the second floor level. The ground level has changed but when built it was a series of stout panelled timber doors with fine-axed basalt thresholds leading into the dining room, public and saloon bars. Parts of the cast cement colonettes and brick dadoes remain. A metal clad cantilevering awning, with ornamented soffit, was erected over the street and held the hotel's name and some Greek revival ornamentation (replaced in 1973).

The hotel complements the Greek revival detailing of the former State Savings Bank at the Collins Street corner and is one of a series of Victorian, Edwardian-era and inter-war hotels along Spencer and Flinders Streets fed by river and railway traffic.

Contributory elements

The contributory elements within this property include, but are not restricted to, external fabric from the construction date 1926-1928, and any new material added in sympathy to the original fabric it replaced.

How is it significant?

Batman's Hill Hotel is significant historically, socially and aesthetically to the Melbourne Capital City Zone.

Why is it significant?

Batman's Hill Hotel is significant:

Historically and socially as a well-preserved long-term hotel use, possessing elements from the Victorian-era to the inter-war period, and has acted as a social gathering place since its inception; and Aesthetically as a well-preserved and good example of the Greek Revival style as applied to a City hotel building. The hotel complements the Greek Revival detailing of the former bank at the Collins Street

corner and is one of a series of Victorian, Edwardian-era and inter-war hotels along Spencer and Flinders Streets, fed by river and railway traffic.¹

Property Grading

The former State Savings Bank at 615-623 Collins Street and the Batman's Hill Hotel are both identified as Significant heritage places in the *Heritage Places Inventory March 2022 (Amended January 2023)*, which is an Incorporated Document to the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Significant heritage places are defined in the document as follows:

A significant heritage place is individually important at state or local level, and a heritage place in its own right. It is of historic, aesthetic, scientific, social or spiritual significance to the municipality. A significant heritage place may be highly valued by the community; is typically externally intact; and/or has notable features associated with the place type, use, period, method of construction, siting or setting. When located in a heritage precinct a significant heritage place can make an important contribution to the precinct.²

To the east of the former bank, the post-war building (1969) at 607-613 Collins Street is included in the mapping for HO1013 (Former State Savings Bank), but is not included in the Heritage Overlay Schedule description of the heritage place. It is historically and architecturally unrelated to the former State Savings Bank and is not referenced in the statement of significance. Further, the building is not included in the Incorporated Document Heritage Places Inventory March 2022 (Amended January 2023). On this basis it has been assumed that its inclusion in HO1013 is a mapping error and it is non-contributory.

2.1.2 Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

607-623 Collins Street and 66-70 Spencer Street are subject to two Design and Development Overlays (DDO) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme. These are DDO1 – Urban Design in Central Melbourne and DDO10 – General Development Area (Built Form). Schedule 10 of the DDO includes decision guidelines to be considered where new development is proposed to heritage places or adjoining heritage places, particularly in relation to scale, street wall heights and view lines.

2.1.3 Capital City Zone (CCZ)

607-623 Collins Street and 66-70 Spencer Street are located in the Capital City Zone (CZZ1) of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Schedule 1 of the CCZ applies to the subject property and includes decision guidelines to be considered. The relevant decision guidelines are reproduced below:

Decision Guidelines

[...]

The streetscape, the scale and height of the neighbouring buildings and the proposed development, the proximity to heritage places, the design of verandahs, access from street frontages, the protection of active frontages to pedestrian

¹ City of Melbourne, *Central City Heritage Review Statements of Significance June 2013*, Incorporated Document, Melbourne Planning Scheme, 2013, p. 78-79.

² City of Melbourne, *Heritage Places Inventory March 2022 (Amended January 2023)*, Incorporated Document, Melbourne Planning Scheme, p. 5.

areas, the treatment of the front and backs of buildings and their appurtenances, illumination of buildings or their immediate spaces and the landscaping of land adjoining a road.

Securing the floor area ratio across a site where a site is developed in part to ensure:

[...]

that a heritage building being retained that an agreement be entered into to conserve the heritage building in perpetuity.³

2.2 Victorian Heritage Inventory

All three properties are included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI), identified as follows:

- 607-623 Collins Street, H7822-1779
- 66-70 Spencer Street, H7822-1783.
- 74-82 Spencer Street (also known as 615-623 Collins Street), H7822-1784.

The properties are identified for their potential to contain historical archaeological remains associated with the settlement and growth of early Melbourne. The VHI citations do not include a statement of significance for the properties.

³ Schedule 1 to Clause 37.04 Capital City Zone, 'Decision Guidelines', Melbourne Planning Scheme,

3.0 SUMMARY HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

3.1 Historical evolution

3.1.1 Former State Savings Bank (615-623 Collins Street)

The former State Savings Bank was built in 1923 to the design of Peck and Kempter. Its detailing is attributed to the Neo-Grec movement, comprising a restrained Renaissance Palazzo design with Greek Revival leanings. The building originally comprised five storeys plus basement, including a double height ground floor banking chamber and four office levels above. An article in *The Argus* dated March 1923 described the new building as being of stone and concrete construction comprising a flat roof of concrete and bronze ground floor windows.⁴ The entrances comprised Australian marble and the entry halls, corridors and stairs were of terrazzo. Internally, the banking chamber and offices contained parquet timber flooring throughout with carpeted halls and corridors at ground level. The offices, counters, fittings, and panelled walls of the banking chamber were constructed of polished Queensland maple. The building also contained three elevators.

Limited historical plans of the former State Savings Bank were available from the Public Records Office Victoria and the State Library of Victoria. The Building Index Cards (1916-1960) were sourced and these recorded a number of changes over time. These are summarised below:

December 1925	putting partitions in office
April 1930	erection of skylight
September 1930	erection of show cases
June 1935	alterations to bank
July 1935	electric sign on face of building
July 1937	poster case window
November 1940	alterations to lift
November 1958	illuminated lantern sign
August 1962	alterations
February 1976	alterations to ground floor
March 1976	change of faces illuminated lantern sign

Historical drawings provide further evidence of changes in the late twentieth century. Most notably, in 1988-89 the former State Savings Bank underwent substantial alterations and an internal refurbishment that included the ground floor banking chamber (Figure 3 and Figure 4). The works included:

- demolition of some internal walls

⁴ *The Argus*, 23 March 1923, p. 7.

- a new mezzanine level between ground and first floor
- a ground floor fit out and new timber staircase.

A 1992 elevation detailed a walkway linking the bank to the adjacent Batman's Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street) at third floor level with vehicle access below (Figure 5 and Figure 6)). The link between buildings dates to the early 1990s, and the more substantial multi-storey infill dates to c. 2002. An additional level (level 6) containing a plant room with a mansard style roof was also added in 1992 and is partially contained behind the parapet (Figure 7). Today the bank operates as part of the Batman's Hill Hotel with 66-70 Spencer Street.

607-613 Collins Street originally comprised a single-storey shop with a hipped lantern-style roof. A c. 1940 image shows the building as it presented to Collins Street (Figure 8). At that time, it was occupied by the Gippsland and Northern Co-operative Co. Ltd who sold engines and machinery largely for farmers and dairy production. The building had a double-door vehicle entry to the west, accessed via a bluestone crossover. The north façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel is visible behind the building.

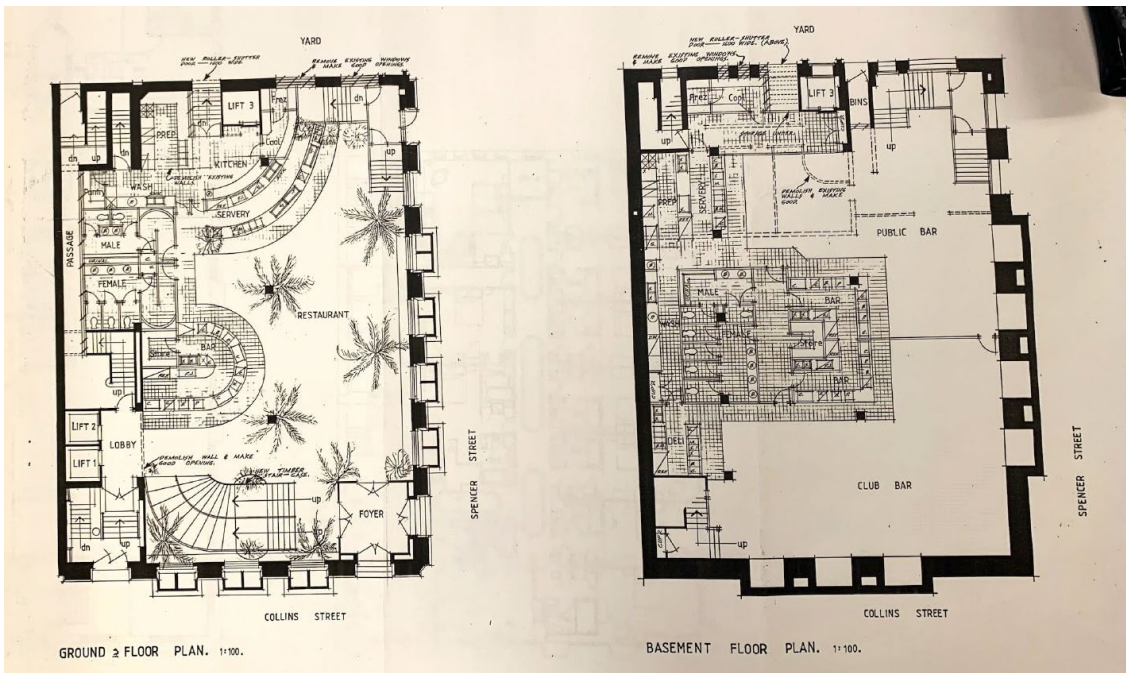


Figure 3 c. 1989 proposed ground and basement floor plans
Source: B.L & M Grollo Homes P/L

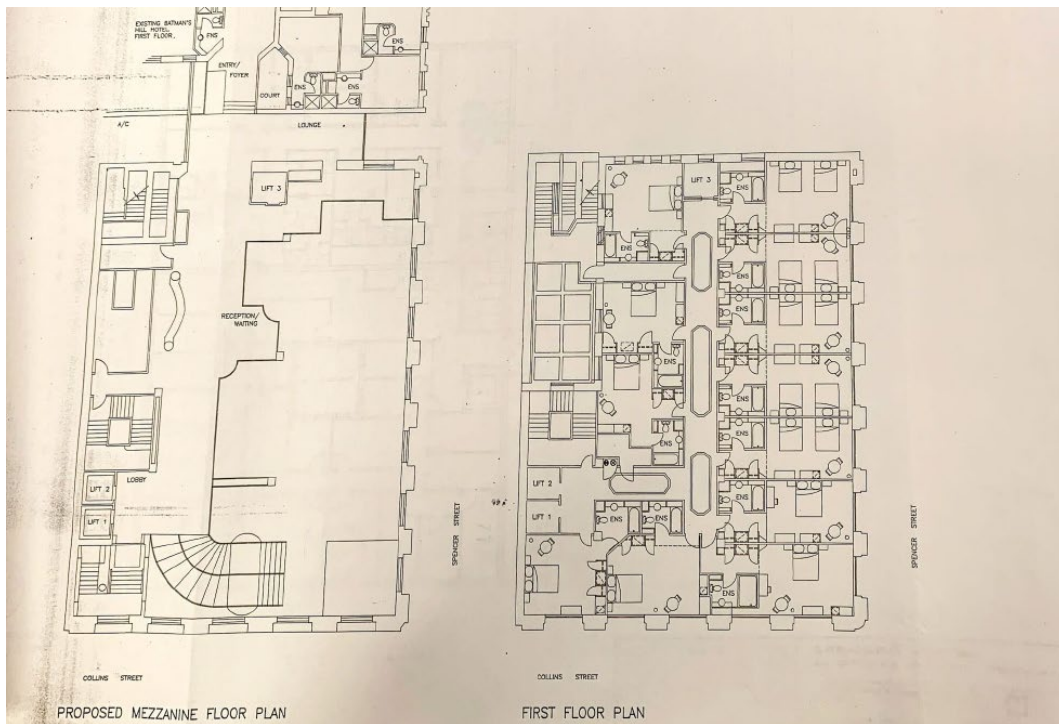


Figure 4 Undated proposed mezzanine and first floor plans, likely associated with the c.1992 works
Source: Lovell Chen archives

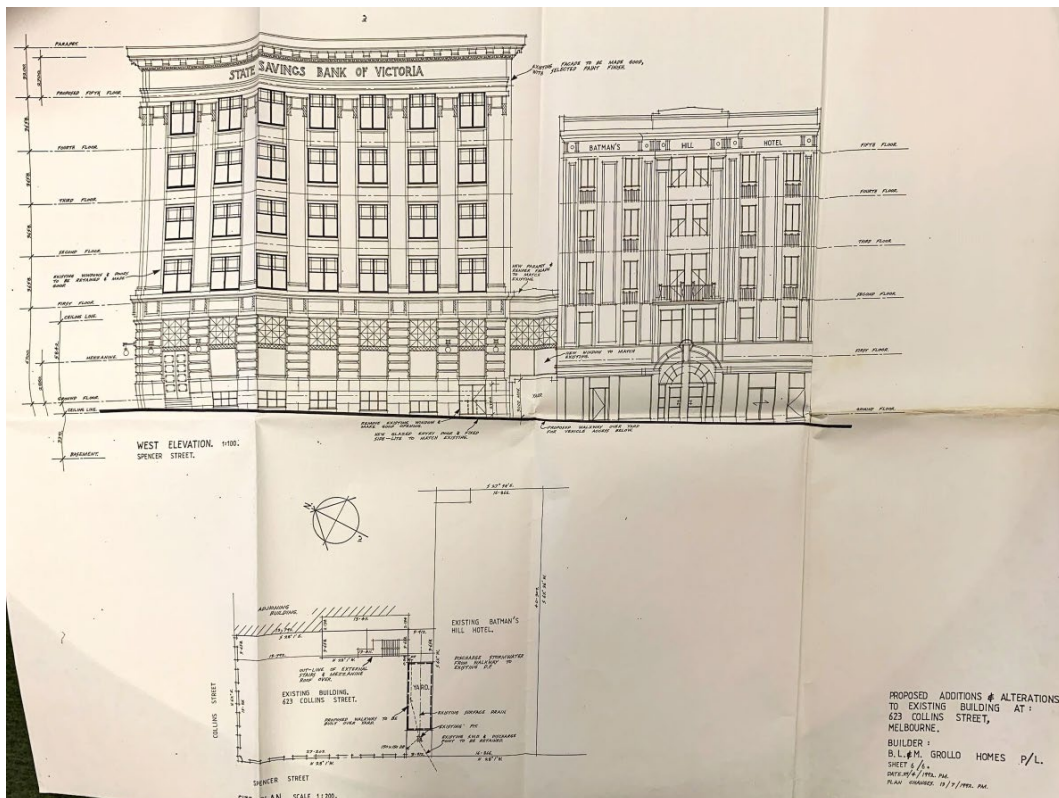


Figure 5 c.1992 proposed west elevation
Source: B.L & M Grollo Homes P/L

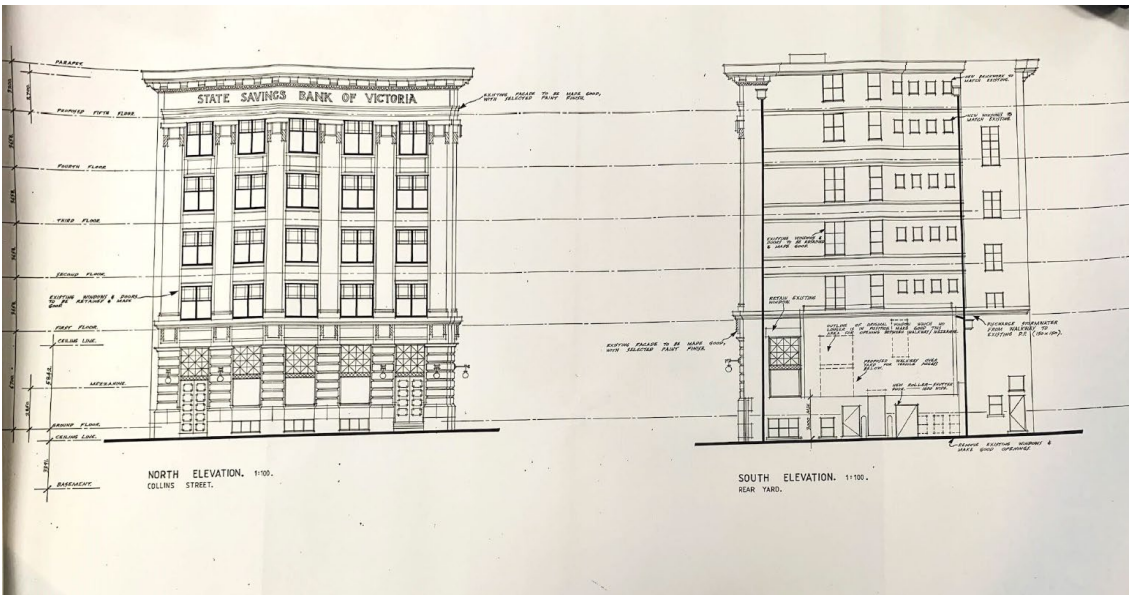


Figure 6 c.1992 proposed north and south elevations
Source: B.L & M Grollo Homes P/L

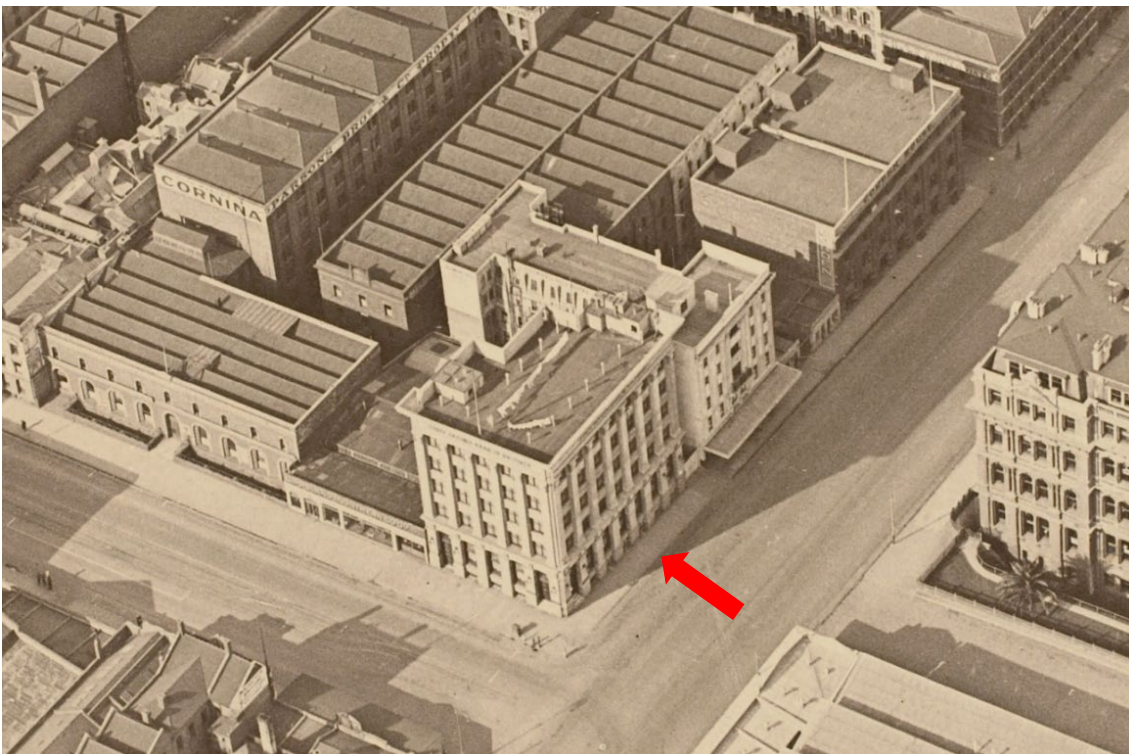


Figure 7 c.1927-28 aerial of the former state Savings Bank indicated with the arrow, the Batman's Hill Hotel to the right and the earlier building on 607-613 Collins Street to the left
Source: Airspy, SLV mp003295



Figure 8 The earlier building at 607-613 Collins Street, c. 1940. Note the north elevation of the Batman's Hill Hotel in the background
Source: H.H Paynting, SLV file pi009814

3.1.2 *Batman's Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street)*

The site of the Batman's Hill Hotel has been occupied by a hotel since the 1860s, though has been replaced and reconstructed throughout its history⁵. The c. 1870s Batman's Hotel was reconstructed in the early twentieth century as a three-storey building, then later two additional storeys were constructed, which is evident in the elevation in Figure 9. The hotel was further substantially altered in 1926 to the design of Greenwood Bradley & Allen and Sydney Smith & Ogg, incorporating a new Interwar façade⁶ (Figure 10). The current building accordingly reflects this phase of development and presents as an Interwar building in the restrained Greek Revival style.

The 1926 plans evidence that the ground floor Spencer Street elevation initially contained five sets of timber double doors, three sets of timber framed windows and a flat awning over the footpath (Figure 11). This indicates that considerable changes have been made to the principal façade, which currently comprise modern aluminium framed doors and windows in enlarged openings at street level, and a new

⁵ City of Melbourne, *Central City Heritage Review Statements of Significance June 2013*, Incorporated Document, Melbourne Planning Scheme, 2013, p. 78-79.

⁶ City of Melbourne, *Central City Heritage Review Statements of Significance June 2013*, Incorporated Document, Melbourne Planning Scheme, 2013, p. 78-79.

awning with a glazed arch. Windows to the upper floors have also been replaced with modern aluminium frames in a jockey sash arrangement and Juliette balconies have also been introduced (Figure 12).

The Building Index Cards (1916-1960) were sourced for the site and recorded a number of changes over time. These are summarised below:

September 1926	alterations and additions to the Batman's Hill hotel
March 1927	erection of verandah
January 1928	erection of lamps under verandah
April 1933	electric signs
July 1936	erect electric sign on face of building
September 1938	alterations to hotel
April 1959	alterations to toilets and bathrooms
October 1963	construct illuminated sign under verandah
August 1967	alterations
January 1968	illuminated sign under verandah
September 1968	illuminated sign under verandah
January 1973	internal alterations to hotel
February 1973	verandah alterations

The image contained in the Batman's Hill Hotel Building Identification Form prepared by Graeme Butler in 1985 shows the building as containing the original upper-level windows, a flat awning, and only minor changes to the street level elevation, retaining some of the rendered brick dadoes below ground floor windows (Figure 13). The Juliette balconies were not present at that time. Floorplans dated 1987 were also sourced, detailing a proposal for a second passenger lift (Figure 14). The plans indicate that by 1987, some changes had been made to the internal planning. The fifth-floor level was also added in 1987. Works to adjoin the Hotel to the adjacent former State Savings Bank date to the late 1980s to early 1990s, and the more substantial multi-storey infill dates to c. 2002. An elevation of the Hotel and State Savings Bank dated 1992 show the street level elevation as altered with arched awning and Juliette balconies present (Figure 15). Accordingly, the majority of alterations to the principal façade took place in the late 1980s.

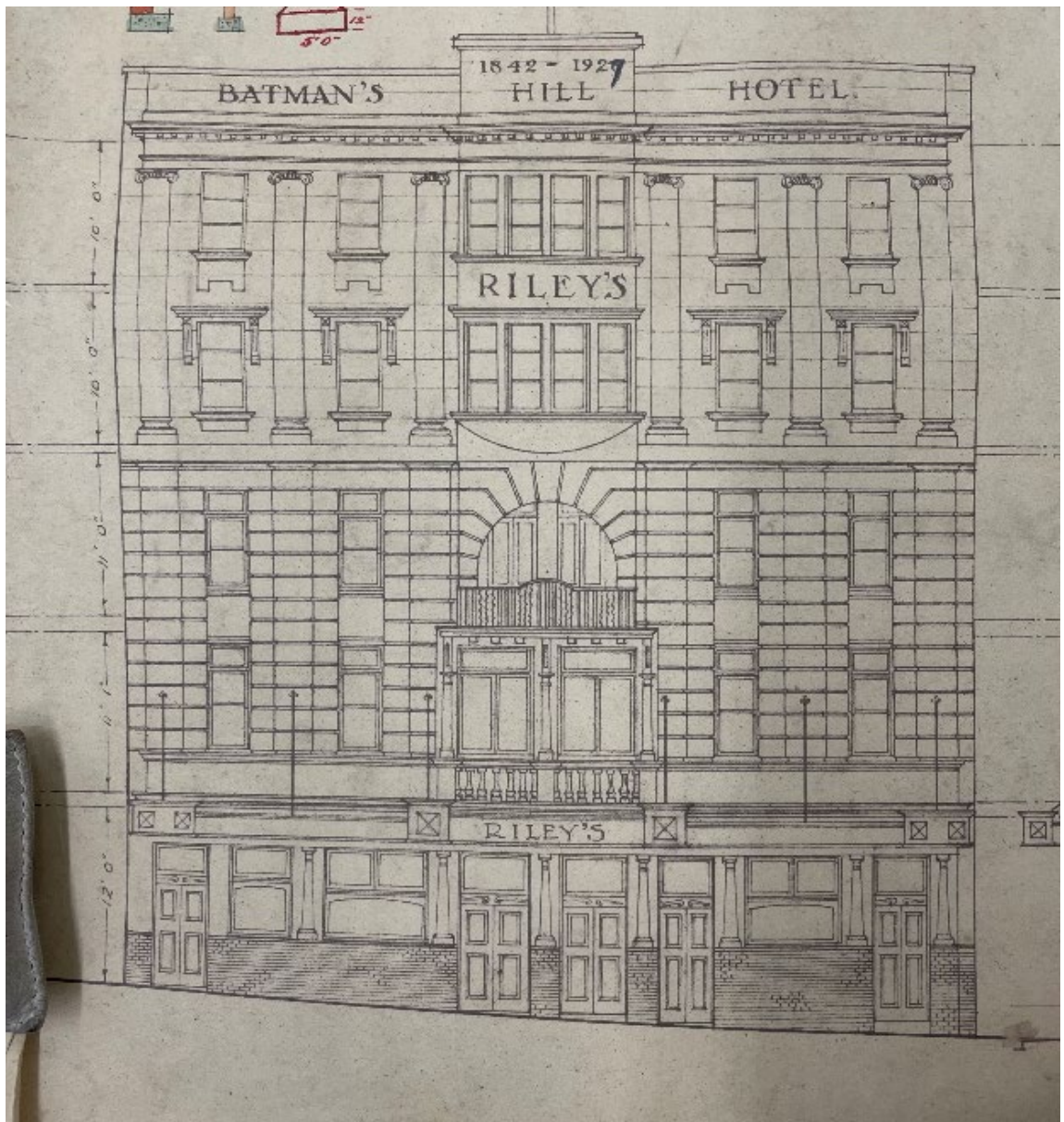


Figure 9 The Batman's Hill Hotel prior to c.1926 alterations
Source: PROV, BA 8915 VPRS 11200P1_99_1



Figure 10 The Batman's Hill Hotel following the c.1926 alterations
Source: PROV BA 8915 VPRS 11200P1_99_16



Figure 11 Proposed ground, first and second floor plans from the c.1926 alterations
Source: PROV, BA 8915 VPRS 11200P1_99_10



Figure 12 The Batman's Hill Hotel, c.1967
Source: K.J Halla, SLV file dc000100



Figure 13 Image of the Batman's Hill Hotel included in the 1985 Building Identification Form. Note that the rendered brick dados were still partially intact at this point.
Source: Graeme Butler via Hermes Database, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

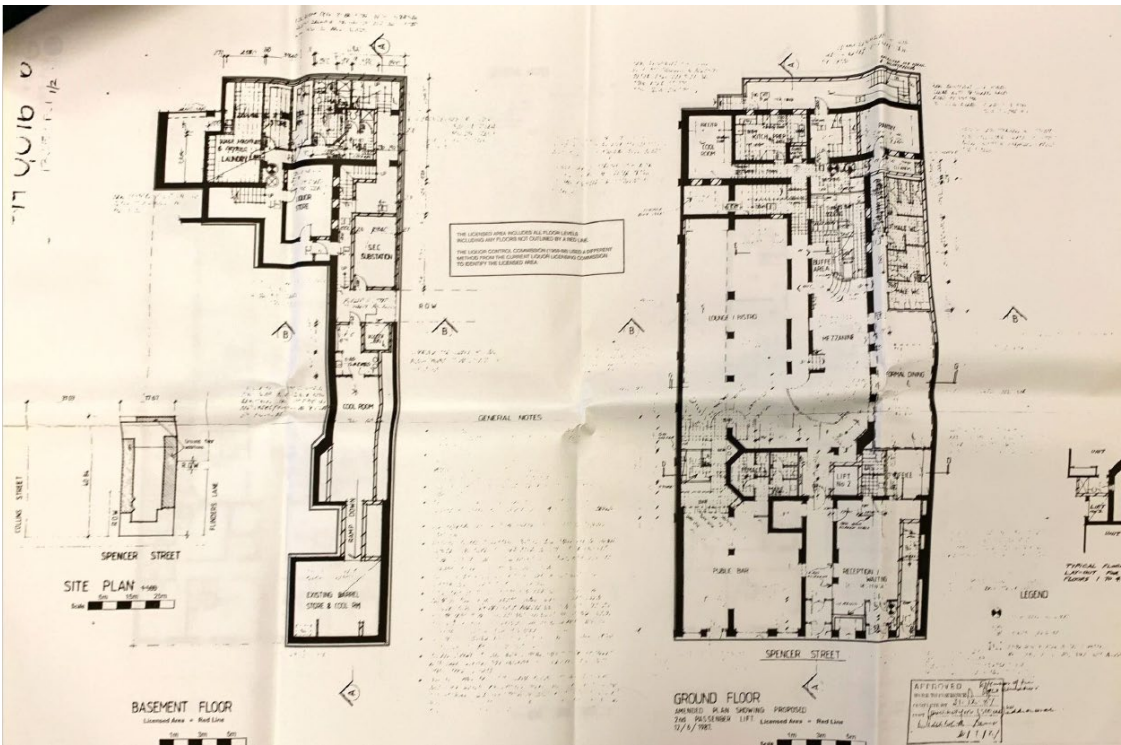


Figure 14 c.1987 ground floor and basement plan for the addition of a second passenger lift
Source: E. Smrekar Architect

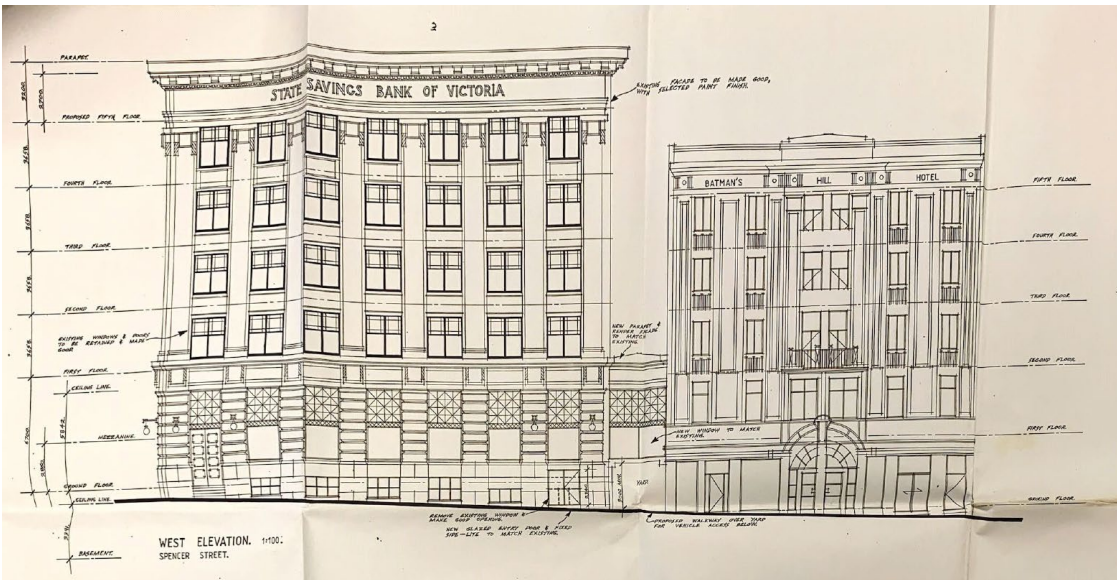


Figure 15 West elevation of the State Savings Bank (left) and the Batman's Hill Hotel (right), dated 1992
Source: B.L & M Grollo Homes P/L

3.2 Physical description

3.2.1 Former State Savings Bank (615-623 Collins Street)

The former State Savings Bank is located on the south side of Collins Street, to the east corner of Spencer Street (Figure 16). The property has been amalgamated with the 66-70 Spencer Street and the modern infill building to its east (607-613 Collins Street). The bank is built to the original title boundaries. To the south it adjoins the Batman's Hill Hotel, which the building currently operates as part of, via later infill development between the two buildings (Figure 17).

The former State Savings Bank is a six storey plus basement building constructed of reinforced concrete with a stuccoed façade that sits atop a quarry finish Harcourt granite base⁷. It presents as a prominent element to the corner of Spencer and Collins Street, incorporating a restrained Renaissance Palazzo style façade with Greek Revival leanings. The façade is broken up by the expressed double-height ground floor that is elevated above street level and forms a distinctive base capped by a minor entablature with ornamented mouldings at first floor level (Figure 18). The ground level piers are rusticated and frame large, bronzed windows with saltire-cross fanlights. The upper façade is simpler and repetitive in contrast to the distinctive base. It is comprised of pilasters spanning the upper four floors that frame windows which have been replaced with modern aluminium frames. The building is capped by the large, ornamented frieze and exaggerated cornice, which conceals the roof beyond. It initially contained a flat concrete roof which was replaced with a mansard style roof clad in sheet metal, added with the sixth-floor level in 2002 (Figure 19). The building currently comprises a beige paint scheme that is consistent with the Batman's Hill Hotel.

The principal entry is located on the street corner via steps from Collins and Spencer Street which access a covered foyer area with terrazzo floors and coffered ceiling. The entry doors comprise modern fabric and are angled across the building corner. Later flat canopies have been added above each set of steps. A secondary entry is also located to the east of the north elevation and contains similar materials, though does not have a later canopy. Other changes to the façade, aside from the modern upper-level windows, include a second entry on Spencer Street that was added post 1992. Generally, the building is externally intact and the later alterations and additions, such as the sixth-floor level, are largely undetectable from the public realm. The 'State Savings Bank of Victoria' inscription has been removed from the entablature and replaced with 'Batman's Hill on Collins' signage.

The east elevation abuts the neighbouring infill building to the north and contains a later fire stair to the south. The south elevation adjoins the Batman's Hill Hotel via infill. The infill is a simple rendered masonry structure with aluminium framed windows. It incorporates the exit to the hotel basement car park. Due to the south sloping topography of Collins Street, the basement level of the bank becomes at grade to the south. The remainder of the south elevation contains square windows with modern aluminium frames. This elevation has been largely altered due to the infill that was expanded over two phases of development. Many of the openings, particularly at the lower levels, are later.

The bank likely ceased operations around c.1992 based on the alterations undertaken that year when the Commonwealth Bank took over the State Savings Bank of Victoria. Today it operates as part of the Batman's Hill Hotel with the adjacent property (66-70 Spencer Street). The banking chamber on the ground floor contains c. 2000 flooring and finishes and is currently used as a lobby and bar area for hotel

⁷ Graeme Butler & Associates, 'State Savings Bank of Victoria, Western Branch, 615-623 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000', *Central City Heritage Review 2011*, City of Melbourne, 2011

guests. The c. 1989 mezzanine level is accessed via a later timber staircase (Figure 20). The coffered ceiling and timber wainscoting are consistent with the 1923 Argus description of the bank and are likely to be original. Upper levels have been refurbished and floorplans altered for hotel accommodation.



Figure 16 The State Savings Bank from the opposite corner of Collins and Spencer Street



Figure 17 Former State Savings Bank (left) and the Batman's Hill Hotel (right) with later infill between



Figure 18 The State Savings Bank façade from Collins Street

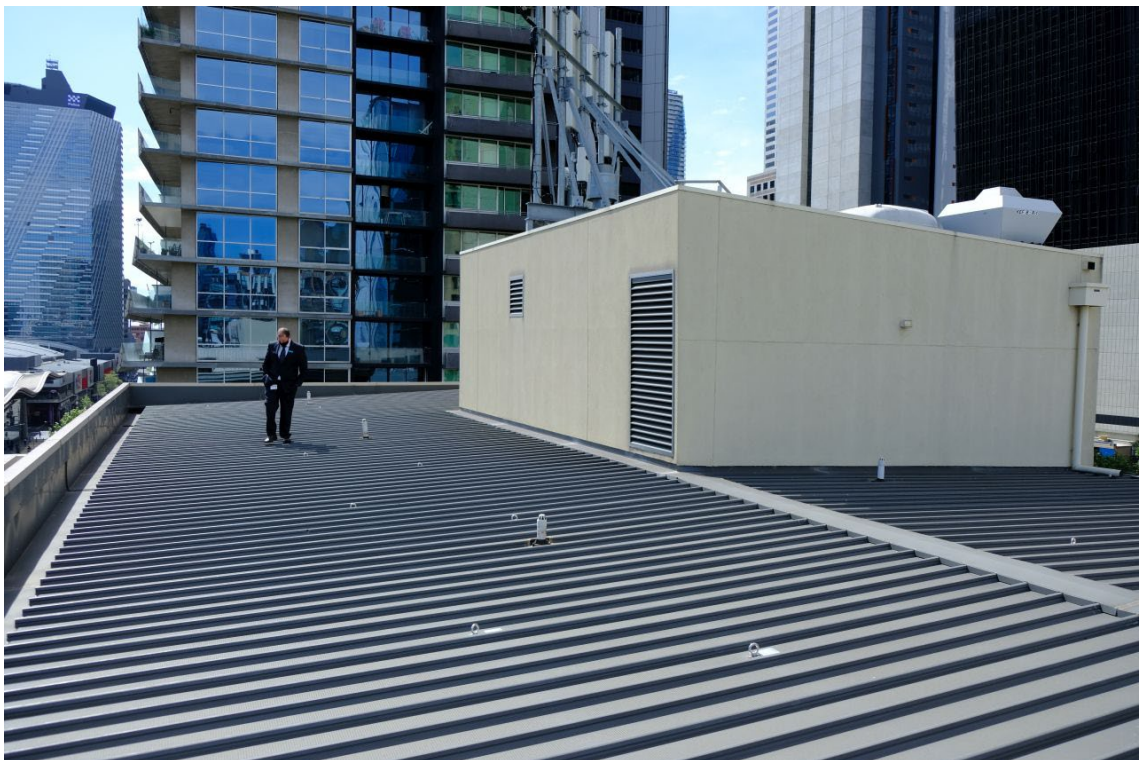


Figure 19 Later mansard roof of the State Savings Bank



Figure 20 Later mezzanine level in the double height banking chamber

3.2.2 *Batman's Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street)*

The Batman's Hill Hotel is located on the east side of Spencer Street, near the corner of Collins Street (Figure 21). The property has been amalgamated with the former State Savings bank (615-623 Collins Street) and the modern infill building to its east (607-613 Collins Street). The hotel is built to the original title boundaries and abuts the six-storey Great Southern Hotel to the south. To the north it adjoins the former State Savings Bank, which the Hotel currently occupies, via later infill development between the two buildings (Figure 22).

The Hotel is a five-storey building constructed of masonry with a cement rendered finish. It presents to Spencer Street in the restrained Greek Revival style comprising an ornamented façade with a series of pilasters separating vertically proportioned bays of modern aluminium framed windows. To the centre of the façade are recessed balconies with angled entries and a mix of concrete and wrought iron balustrades. The façade is parapeted with a classical cornice, rendered pediment and retains the 'Batman's Hill Hotel' inscription. At first floor level there is a later canopy with central glazed arch. While the cast cement colonettes remain at street level, the remainder of the façade has been highly altered. It contains recessed entries with modern glazed doors and windows. The rendered dados have been removed and the façade and recessed entries have been re-rendered. The building currently comprises a beige paint scheme that is consistent with the former State Savings Bank.

The fifth-floor level is a later addition concealed below a low mansard roof clad in sheet metal (Figure 23). The rear wing has a flat sheet metal roof. The building comprises an I-shaped footprint. Its central section is detached from neighbouring development to incorporate light courts and presents with a simple rendered masonry exterior and modern aluminium framed windows. Tucked behind the parapet to the principal façade is a small terrace at top floor level. Internally the building has been significantly

altered and comprises mostly modern fabric. The ground level is occupied by the hotel bar and gaming room and upper floors contain refurbished hotel rooms (Figure 24).

The infill between the hotel and former State Savings Bank is a simple rendered masonry structure with aluminium framed windows. It incorporates the exit to the hotel basement car park at grade. It has a narrow, rectangular built footprint that approximately aligns with the I-shaped plan of the hotel.



Figure 21 The Batman's Hill Hotel from the opposite side of Spencer Street



Figure 22 The former State Savings Bank to the left, adjoining the subject site via the later infill between the two buildings



Figure 23 Later roof and fifth floor level addition viewed from the roof of the State Savings Bank



Figure 24 Ground floor interior comprising modern fabric

3.2.3 607-613 Collins Street

607-613 Collins Street is located on the south side of Collins Street near the corner of Spencer Street (Figure 25). The building abuts the State Savings Bank to the west and the Batman's Hill Hotel to its rear (south). It is separated from a single storey contemporary infill to its east by a narrow walkway, which adjoins a late twentieth century tower rising behind it.

The building is a six-storey office building constructed in 1969, originally comprising five-storeys (Figure 26). It is constructed of reinforced concrete and masonry. It presents to Collins Street with a series of pre-cast concrete rectangular framing elements containing aluminium framed windows above a concrete spandrel panel. At street level the eastern half of the facade contains a contemporary glazed shopfront and to the western half is the hotel car park entry that accesses the basement levels, with fixed glazing to its west. The east façade is characterised by expressed concrete slabs with Roman brick cladding. The envelope of a building that formerly adjoined the site is evident on the façade. The building originally had flat concrete roof with a small plant room to the northeast but has since had an additional floor added contained within a mansard style roof with street facing shed dormers. The south of the west elevation faces the former State Savings Bank, and the south elevation faces the Batman's Hill Hotel. Both elevations contain windows.

As noted earlier, this building is non-contributory for the purposes of the local heritage policy.



Figure 25 The modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street from Collins Street

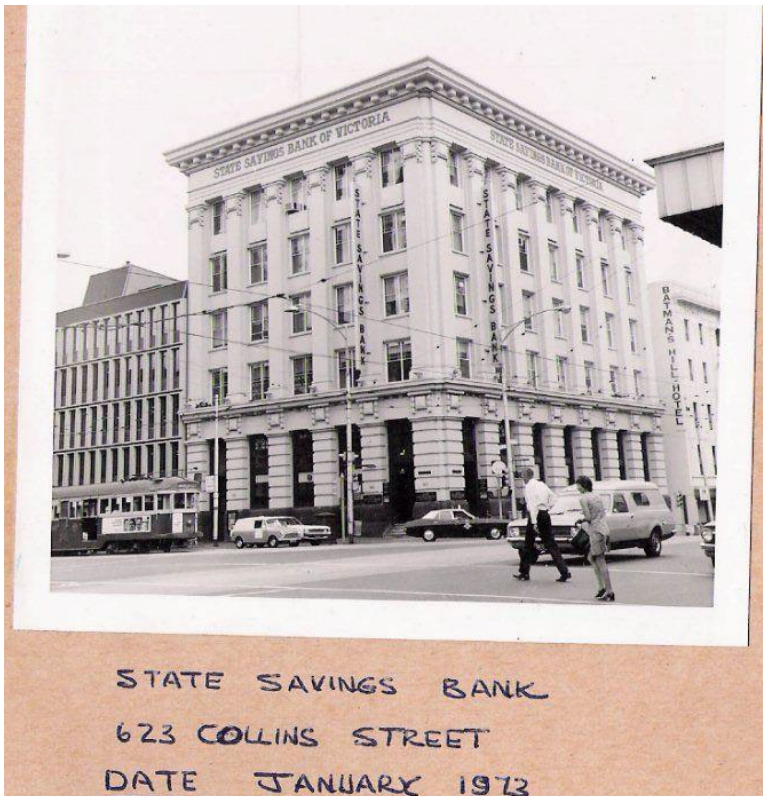


Figure 26 The State Savings Bank in 1973, with newly constructed infill building to its left

Source: https://www.statebankvictoria.org/?page_id=5955

3.3 Site context

The corner of Spencer and Collins Street is a major intersection on the western fringe of the Melbourne central business district (CBD) (Figure 27). It serves as a main thoroughfare for traffic running north – south over the Yarra River and inner CBD traffic running east – west. Tram routes extend along both streets. The topography of Spencer Street slopes down to the Yarra River (south), while Collins Street generally levels out directly in front of the property.

In the vicinity of the subject site is Southern Cross Station located on the north-west street corner of the intersection, to the northeast corner of the intersection is a contemporary tower development (Figure 28), and to the southwest corner is a contemporary office building set behind The Age lawn (Figure 29). At the rear (east) of the Bank is the Batman’s Hill Hotel which forms part of the broader site. Opposite the hotel on the west side of Spencer Street is the Former Victorian Railway Headquarters (33-67 Spencer Street) which is included on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) (H699). Together with the subject site and the Batman’s Hill Hotel, these sites constitute the heritage character on the southern side of the intersection. This contrasts with the contemporary buildings that characterise the northern side of the intersection.

The west end of Collins Street is populated by modern and contemporary commercial tower development. Deeper within the CBD and further east, Collins Street is characterised by a high number of buildings included on the Heritage Overlay and the VHR which affords a richer heritage character.



Figure 27 Recent aerial photograph of the subject site, outlined in red
Source: Nearmap, February 2022



Figure 28 North side of the Collins and Spencer Street intersection with Southern Cross Station on the left



Figure 29 South side of the Collins and Spencer Street intersection with the subject site on the left

4.0 PROPOSAL

The design proposal involves full demolition of the modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street and partial demolition of the former State Savings Bank and Batman's Hill Hotel. The principal Collins and Spencer Street façades will be retained as with the former State Savings Bank's primary building volume. The new work involves a new 6-storey hotel in place of the modern infill and a 37 to 42-storey tower rising behind the volume of the heritage buildings.

4.1 Demolition

The proposal involves full demolition of the modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street, partial demolition of the former State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel and removal of the later infill between the two buildings.

The principal façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel will be retained and repaired, with demolition proposed to remove more recent alterations and additions such as the awning, street level glazing in enlarged openings and the Juliette balconies. A brick column to north bay of the principal façade will also be removed to accommodate an enlarged opening for car exit from the basement. Behind the facade the bulk of the building is extensively altered and is proposed for demolition to accommodate the new development beyond.

To the former State Savings Bank, part of the east elevation currently abutting the infill development at 607-613 Collins Street and part of the south elevation are proposed for demolition, holding the front

five metres of the east elevation and eight metres of the south elevation. External features to be demolished include the c. 2002 sixth floor, later mansard roof and roof plant, later canopies, balustrades to the principal corner entrance, the later Spencer Street entry and a single course of granite to the two southernmost window bays on Spencer Street. Internal demolition is focussed on later fabric including the c. 1989 stair in the banking chamber, c. 1989 mezzanine level, fire stairs, lifts, service cores, and internal partitions.

4.2 Alterations

Minor alterations are proposed to the principal facades of the former State Savings Bank including the addition of glass infill to the principal corner entrances and boosters to the two southernmost window bays on Spencer Street. The boosters are to be located at grade in place of later fabric that would have replaced the basement ventilation. New window openings will also be added to the east elevation that will be revealed through the removal of the adjacent infill building. Alterations to the Batman's Hill Hotel façade involves an enlarged opening for vehicle access and changes to the highly altered street level façade. Other alterations are limited to reversing later additions, improving the street presentation of the hotel and conservation works, discussed further below.

4.3 New development

The new development comprises two separate components: the new six-storey infill building at 607-613 Collins Street and the tower development set behind the façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel and the retained volume of the former State Savings Bank.

4.3.1 *Infill building*

The new infill building at 607-613 Collins Street will comprise six -storeys and rise to a height of 25.7 metres. It will present as a podium element within the streetscape, with the tower rising behind it. Similar to the Spencer Street elevation, the new development incorporates a deep wide slot to Collins Street that separates the new infill from the former State Savings Bank. The infill will be set back from the east elevation of the bank in the order of four metres, which is increased to 5.7 metres at ground level. From Collins Street the north elevation is setback in the order of half a metre, which increases to two metres at ground level, and 14.8 metres in the void between the two buildings. The tower above partially cantilevers over this void, set back eight metres from Collins Street, which forms a lightwell between the bank and new infill at the street front. The greater setbacks of the ground level provide a concourse around the building.

The infill adopts a simple, contemporary design that draws on the fenestration of the former State Savings Bank. It incorporates a brise soleil façade comprising a small grid pattern with tonal references to a larger secondary grid. The external walls of the building are concealed behind the brise soleil façade. A solid concrete base frames the recessed ground level entry and references the line of the bronzed saltire cross fanlights of the former State Savings Bank. The building footprint further incorporates a large lightwell with a five-metre setback from the east title boundary at second floor level and above. The six-floor level will accommodate a roof top terrace with incorporated landscaping.

4.3.2 *Tower development*

The tower incorporates a tripartite arrangement in which the heritage buildings present as a podium base within the streetscape separated from the main tower rising above by several transitional levels. A

deep wide slot is incorporated into the Spencer Street frontage and the height of the tower is set down from 42 to 37 storeys.

Behind the former State Savings Bank the 42-storey tower component rises to a height of 143 metres. Levels 8 to 11 constitute the transitional levels that separate the retained volume of the bank from the tower element. These levels incorporate a greater setback in the order of 11 metres to the tower façade (7.4 metres to the edge of sun shading) from Collins Street and a setback in the order of 11 metres from Spencer Street (7.4 metres to the edge of sun shading). The upper tower incorporates a setback in the order of 8 metres to the glazed façade (7.4 metres to sun shading) from Collins Street and 8.3 metres from Spencer Street (8 metres to sun shading).

Behind the Batman's Hill Hotel, the 37-storey tower component rises to a height of 127 metres. Levels 6 to 8 constitute the transitional levels that separate the heritage facade from the tower element. These levels incorporate a greater setback in the order of 11 metres to the tower façade (7.4 metres to sun shading) from Spencer Street and the upper tower incorporates a setback in the order of 8.3 metres to the glazed façade (8m metres to sun shading) from Spencer Street. A setback in the order of 5m is provided to the south.

The tower adopts a contemporary design comprising a glazed façade to the four elevations articulated by a horizontal façade shading system comprising metal blades of 0.6m in depth. These also express the alignment of the floor plates. Vertical articulation is provided by way of light grey metal columns between the floor levels. The transitional lower levels incorporate mesh canopies that project out to the line of the tower above. To Spencer Street there is an east side core that presents as a solid element deeply recessed between the northern and southern tower components. To the former State Savings Bank a new rooftop bar (Level 7) will be constructed in place of the removed c. 2002 sixth floor level and mansard roof. It will incorporate a setback in the order of five metres to the external walls from both Collins and Spencer Street title boundaries and is likewise setback from the southern and eastern parapets to a lesser extent. The rooftop bar is a flat roof structure with a consistent architectural treatment as the tower development. Its finished floor level is set 0.5m below the height of the retained bank parapet. A new 1100mm glass balustrade will be constructed behind the parapet. A new rooftop terrace is also proposed on Level 5 of the Batman's Hill Hotel, behind the retained façade, above the height of the retained parapet. The terrace will be an open, uncovered space that is setback from the north, south and west external walls in the order of two to four metres.

Landscaping will be incorporated into the rooftop terraces of the infill building, Batman's Hill Hotel and former State Savings Bank, and at grade to Spencer and Collins Street.

Four levels of basement carparking will be constructed below the existing basement level (five in total), to be accessed from the existing car park exit point on Spencer Street. The existing entry point from Collins Street within the modern infill building will be removed and all basement access will be relocated to Spencer Street.

4.4 Conservation works

As part of the proposal a suite of conservation works will be undertaken to reverse later additions and conserve the facades of the former State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel.

The façade of the former State Savings Bank is largely intact and will be retained and conserved, including all characteristic architectural features such as the bronzed windows, entablatures, and decorative mouldings. The later canopies to the building entries and the later secondary entry on Spencer Street will be removed. The façade will be made good in place of removed fabric and will be

repainted in a compatible colour scheme. Internally, the existing ground-floor banking chamber will be retained and refurbished for use as a restaurant. The later lobby doors and walls, lifts, other services, and the c. 1989 staircase will be removed. Sympathetic flooring will be reinstated, and the northeast entry chamber and the timber wainscoting will be retained. The c.1989 mezzanine level will be removed and reinstated. Upper levels within the primary building volume will also be retained and refurbished for hotel use.

To the Batman's Hill Hotel, extant early or original features will be retained and conserved, including the parapet and pediment, pilasters, colonettes and decorative mouldings. The later arched awning to the street front will be removed and replaced with a flat awning, consistent with the building's early presentation. At street level the modern glazing will be replaced to recapture the earlier façade rhythm and fenestration through the reintroduction of fanlights and dados. At upper levels the modern windows will be replaced with a tripartite arrangement to resemble the original c.1926 windows. The façade will be made good in place of removed fabric and will be repainted in a compatible colour scheme. The building volume behind the hotel façade will be rebuilt to capture an understanding of the three-dimensional form.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS

The proposal has been assessed against the relevant heritage provisions in the Melbourne Planning Scheme, including the local heritage policy and strategies at 15.03-1L-02 'Heritage' and the decision guidelines at Clause 43.01 'Heritage Overlay', Schedule 1 to Clause 37.04 'Capital City Zone' and Schedule 10 to Clause 43.02 'Design and Development Overlay'.

It is noted that internal controls do not apply to the properties, however, brief comment has been made on the works proposed to the interiors.

5.1 Demolition

The proposal involves full demolition of a non-contributory building and partial demolition of two significant buildings. Clause 15.03-1L-02 includes the following strategies and policies for demolition:

Demolition Strategies

The demolition of a non-contributory place will generally be permitted.

Full demolition of significant or contributory buildings will not generally be permitted.

Partial demolition in the case of significant buildings, and of significant elements or the front or principal part of contributory buildings will not generally be permitted.

Encourage the retention of the three-dimensional form regardless of whether it is visible whilst discouraging facadism

Encourage adaptive reuse of a heritage place as an alternative to demolition.

The poor structural or aesthetic condition of a significant or contributory building will not be considered justification for permitting demolition.

A demolition permit not be granted until the proposed replacement building or works have been approved.⁸

For the purposes of this policy the front or principal part of a ‘significant’ or contributory’ building is defined as:

For most non-residential buildings, the front or principal part is generally considered to be one full structural bay in depth complete with the structure and cladding to the roof or generally 8-10 metres in depth.⁹

Clause 15.03-1L-02 also contains the following decision guidelines to be considered for full or partial demolition:

Demolition policy guidelines

The assessed significance of the heritage place or building.

The character and appearance of the proposed building or works and their effect on the historic, social and architectural values of the heritage place and the street.

The significance of the fabric or part of the building, and the degree to which it contributes to its three-dimensional form, regardless of whether it is visible.

Whether the demolition or removal of any part of the building contributes to the long-term conservation of the significant fabric of the building.

Whether the demolition will adversely affect the conservation of the heritage place.

Whether there are any exceptional circumstances.¹⁰

In addition, Clause 43.01 sets out decision guidelines that are to be considered in assessing the proposal, which includes the following pertaining to demolition:

Whether the demolition, removal or external alteration will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.¹¹

In a whole of site context, the development response is one which proposes differing approaches to the extent of demolition across the two heritage buildings. In the case of the former bank building the modern roof top addition, part of the east wall and part of the south wall are to be demolished along with much of the internal fabric above the former banking chamber. The focus of these works is on the retention of the three-dimensional corner form with the new tower development set well back from both frontages. The approach in the case of the Batman’s Hill Hotel is one of facade retention with part reconstruction of the return wall on the north side and south wall above the neighbouring building.

Acknowledging that in both cases the approach moves away from policy guidance for demolition works to significant buildings, it is one which, as discussed below, can be supported. The approach considers the issue of demolition having regard for the specific nature of the fabric impacted and its contribution

⁸ Clause 15.03-1L-02 ‘Heritage,-Demolition Strategies’

⁹ *Heritage Places Inventory March 2022 (Amended January 2023)*, Incorporated Document, Melbourne Planning Scheme, p. 4.

¹⁰ Clause 15.03-1L-02, ‘Heritage - ‘Demolition Strategies’

¹¹ Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay Decision Guidelines

to the significance of the place and its presentation. There is strong support in both the local policies for heritage and the decision guidelines at Clause 43.01 (as reproduced above) for such an approach and the decision guidelines make it clear that significance is a factor to be considered. See, for example, the following:

The significance of the fabric or part of the building, and the degree to which it contributes to its three-dimensional form, regardless of whether it is visible.

This guideline does not suggest all fabric regardless of visibility should be retained, rather the significance of all fabric is required to be considered. Importantly, the language and intent of the local policies do not prohibit partial demolition. The local heritage policies and guidelines at Clause 15.03-1L-02 and the decision guidelines at Clause 43.01 allow scope for partial demolition of significant heritage places where the nature of the fabric to be removed and its relative contribution to the significance of the place would support such an approach. In the case of this proposal, the streetscape presence of the heritage buildings will be maintained with sufficient depth of lower-level structure maintained or rebuilt in the case of the Batman's Hill Hotel, to ensure that there is still the ability to read the three-dimensional form.

Former State Savings Bank (615-623 Collins Street)

The proposed partial demolition of the former State Savings Bank is limited to fabric that currently adjoins or addresses the modern infill to the east and the Batman's Hill Hotel to the south and is visually secondary to the understanding the place. The principal facades to Collins and Spencer streets are to be retained, as is the primary building volume including the existing floor levels and partial slab extent. This will protect the three-dimensional volume of the building, its prominence to the intersection and the characteristic architectural features of the Renaissance Palazzo design.

Demolition to the principal facades is limited to later additions and a single course of granite to the two southernmost window bays on Spencer Street (Figure 30 and Figure 31). This part of the façade has been altered and contains later infill in place of the original saltire cross basement ventilation grilles. The removal of the lower lintel course will re-present the openings as consistent with others across the facade at this level, which contain a single lintel course.



Figure 30 Location of granite to be removed indicated by the red arrows

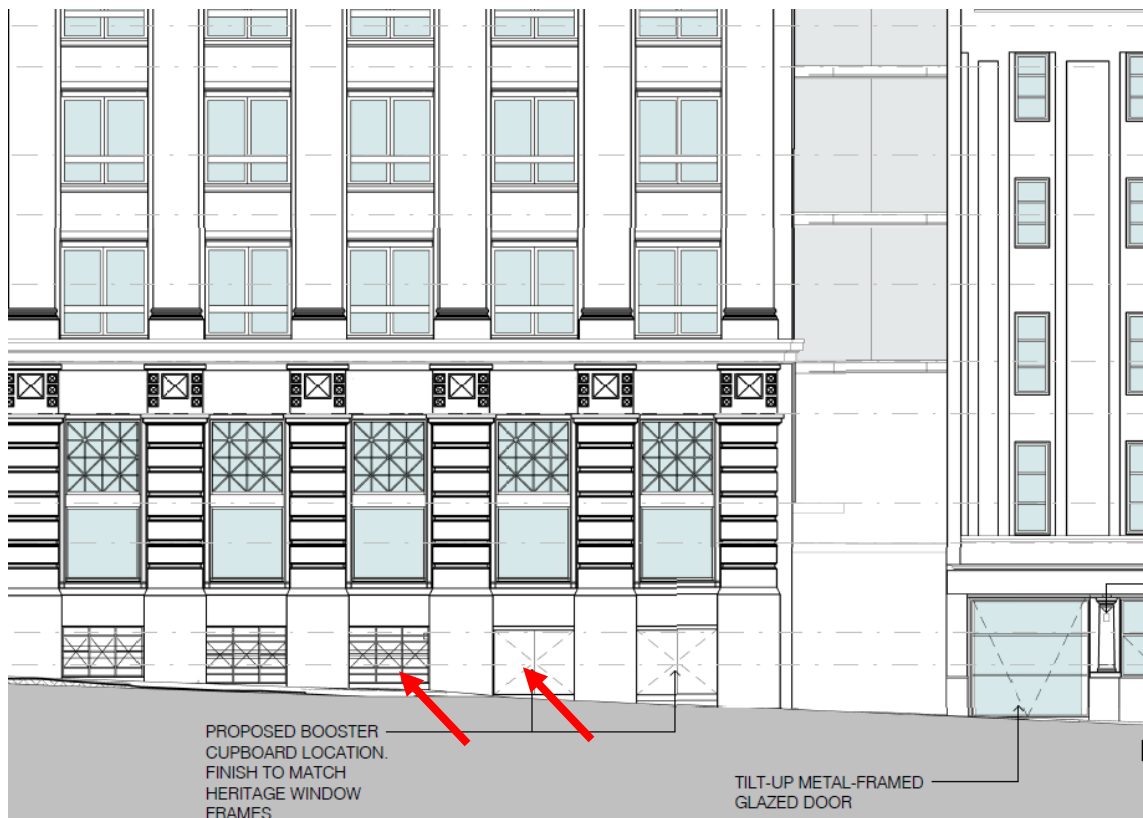


Figure 31 The proposed booster location in the Spencer Street façade of the former State Savings Bank indicated by the red arrows
Source: Carr Architects

The south elevation of the bank has been altered through the introduction of the c. 1992 infill between the bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel that was further expanded in 2002. Throughout these phases of development, various changes were made to the external wall and its openings. The front (west) eight metres of the south wall will be revealed through the removal of the later infill and the return wall will be made good (Figure 32). This will recapture a greater sense of volume and reinstate the individual presentations of the two heritage buildings by reinstating a void to the Spencer Street frontage.

Part of the east return elevation of the former State Savings Bank will be demolished with the proposed demolition of the adjoining infill building at 607-613 Collins Street, holding the front (north) 5m (Figure 32). In conjunction with the setback of the new infill building, this will allow the former State Savings Bank to be viewed three-dimensionally from Collins Street. The southern part of the east wall looks onto the light well between the bank and the modern infill and contains the fire escape stairs. This is a typically utilitarian elevation treated with restrained architectural detailing that is not characteristic of the Renaissance Palazzo style that the building is recognised for. Its removal will facilitate a necessary connection to the tower development that will still allow the building to be independently expressed in the streetscape.

The later mansard roof and sixth floor level will also be removed as part of the proposal (Figure 33). These elements comprise later fabric and do not contribute to the significance of the building. The removal of the roof and top floor level will therefore have no impact on the assessed values which support that significance.

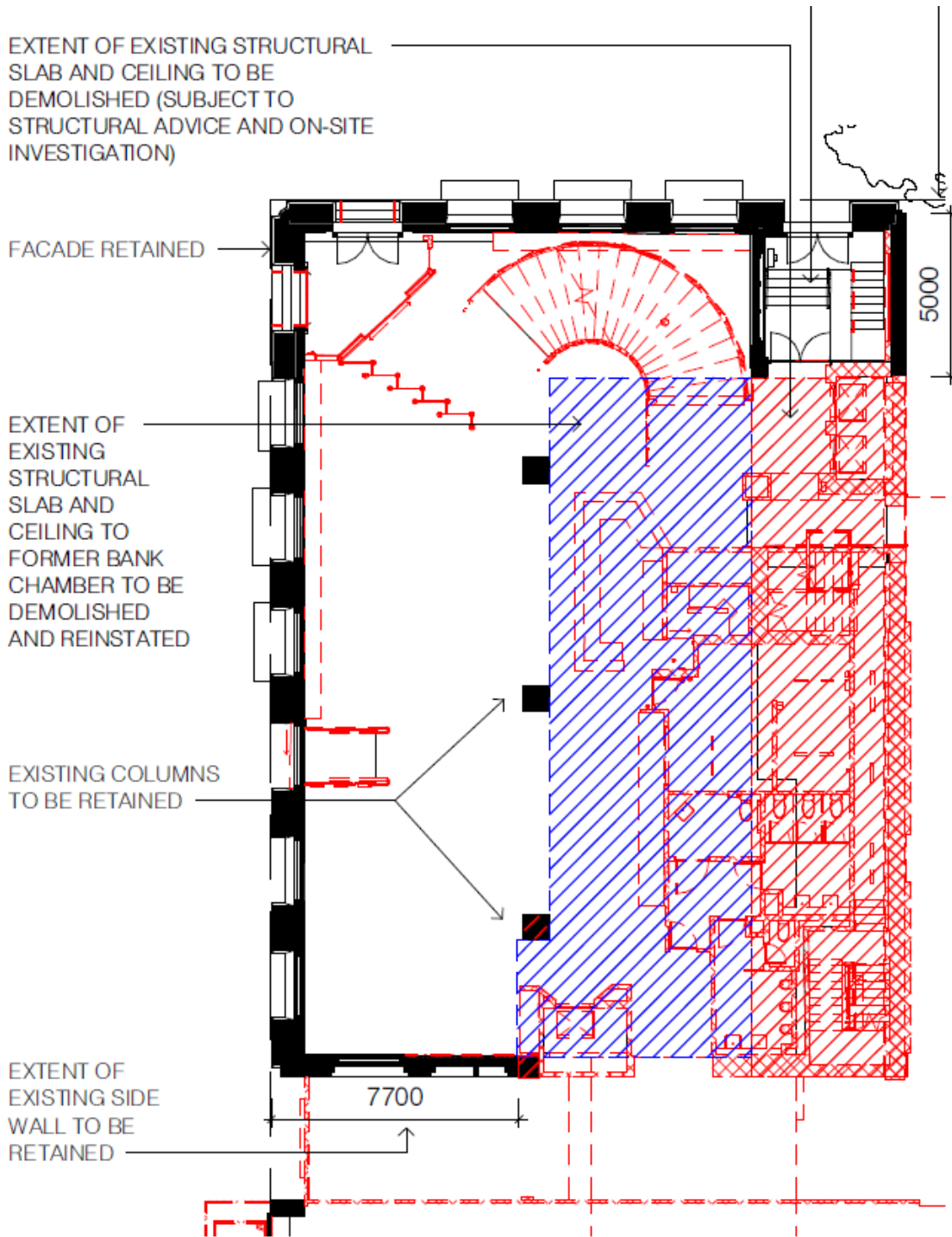


Figure 32 Extent of demolition to the south and east walls of the former State Savings Bank – this is the ground floor level plan
Source: Carr Architects



Figure 33 Later mansard roof and sixth floor level to be removed indicated by the red arrow
Source: Nearmap October 2021

The proposed partial demolition of the former State Savings Bank retains the principal facades; primary building volume; will reveal a greater extent of the south and east elevations and maintain the ability to understand the original three-dimensional form as viewed in the round. In responding to both demolition strategies and the policy guidelines, the demolition works maintain the significance of the former bank building and include works which partially reveal and reconstruct the original external presentation of the place. They are works which are consistent with the objectives of the relevant policy and also go beyond policy in maintaining the former banking chamber.

Batman's Hill Hotel (66-70 Spencer Street)

The proposed partial demolition of the Batman's Hill Hotel involves removal of fabric at the rear of the hotel, beyond the retained façade, removal and reinstatement of the splayed re-entrant walls to the upper facade and the removal of some fabric for a new vehicle exit from the basement.

Facade retention

In contrast to the former bank building, the proposed demolition of all but the facade of the Batman's Hill Hotel is contrary to the guidance provided in Council's heritage policy which encourages retention of the three-dimensional form and fabric of a building and discourages facadism.¹²

In moving away from greater building depth retention, the design issues which have impacted on the determination to do so include the need to construct basement parking, the irregular structural layout

¹² Clause 15.03-1L-02, 'Heritage - 'Demolition Strategies'

of the existing building, the modified roof form (Figure 34), the extensively modified interiors and the plan form of the rear wing upper floors. Albeit that like the banking chamber, the hotel is not subject to internal heritage controls, the interiors have been transformed and convey little about the original hotel layout. There is no clearly defined structural grid (Figure 35) and they reflect progressive change over many years.



Figure 34 The roof of the Batman's Hill Hotel showing the modern mansard roof to the added fifth level.

From a heritage perspective this is a building where other than for historical value, significance primarily resided in the architecture of the facade. The external fabric is otherwise effectively concealed from street view by abutting buildings. Accepting that visibility of fabric is not required in determining significance, this is a building where the fabric beyond the facade does no more than support that facade and provide a three-dimensional form. The removal of this fabric and replacement with fabric extending 7 plus metres back from the facade will maintain that form with an enhanced ability to read the form in the exposed return north wall.

As noted, as part of these works, the splayed re-entrant walls in the centre of the upper facade would also be removed and rebuilt. These elements are original but have been modified to accommodate modern door framing. Their demolition and accurate reconstruction will result in the loss of a small amount of original fabric and have no adverse impact on the significance of the retained facade.



Figure 35 Comparison between 1926 and 1987 ground floor plans, showing the depth of structure to approximately 8.5 metres

Ultimately, while noting the general expectation for Significant heritage place, the test for demolition should consider the relationship of the fabric to the heritage values/significance of the heritage place. In these cases, the judgement has been made that the extent of demolition proposed is acceptable in that context.

Across the project as a whole, in determining to demolish all but the facade of the Batman’s Hill Hotel a relevant consideration has also been the balancing action of retention of a depth of the former State Bank building, thereby maintaining the significant ground level banking chamber. While the action of demolition is considered for each site, as an individually significant site, the combined outcome is such that the more extensive demolition on this site is an acceptable outcome.

Vehicle entrance

At ground level the Spencer Street façade has over time been altered and as compared to the original presentation, now contains enlarged openings, recessed entries, and modern glazing (Figure 36). Proposed demolition works at this level include works to remove altered fabric and return the facade to its earlier presentation, as well as the creation of a new opening for a vehicle exit from the basement. The creation of the opening involves the removal of a brick pier which is the only one in the principal façade that does not contain a colonette. Although the structural brickwork is likely early or original, the column has been re-rendered, the original window to its south and door to the north removed and new

recessed entries constructed in enlarged openings to either side. Removal of the fabric will allow for a discrete carpark exit to be located in the façade and will be treated with a glazed door to read as part of the broader building presentation.



Figure 36 Later alterations to the street level Collins Street elevation including enlarged openings, inset door, modern windows and doors, glazed arched awning and re-rendered façade

In a functional sense, the approach is one which is necessary to deliver the proposed basement car parking and access ramps off Spencer Street. The car parking numbers are understood to be at the minimum number required to support such a development and accordingly the basement area able to be created is critical.

This is the only proposed intervention into the façade that involves the removal of early fabric that is not to be reinstated. In the context of the level of change to the façade, removal of a single brick column is not considered to detract from the overall presentation and significance of the place (Figure 37).



Figure 37 Detail of the proposed Batman’s Hill Hotel facade with car park entry marked
Source: Carr Architects

607-613 Collins Street

The modern building at 607-613 Collins Street is included in the mapped land extent of HO1013, however, this appears to be a mapping error as the listing relates to the former State Savings Bank at 615-623 Collins Street. The building is unrelated historically and does not contribute to the significance of the former State Savings Bank, neither has it been identified as having any heritage value in its own right. Its demolition will have no adverse impact on the significance of HO1013.

Conclusion

From a heritage impact perspective, the critical consideration is whether the proposed extent of demolition across both buildings will have an adverse impact on the cultural heritage significance of the place. The following table provides a summary of considerations against the relevant decision guidelines for demolition at Clause 15.03-1L- 02.

Table 1 Assessment against demolition decision guidelines

Decision guideline	Assessment
The assessed significance of the heritage place or building.	This assessed significance of both buildings will be unaltered by the proposed extent of demolition.
The character and appearance of the proposed building or works and their effect on the historic, social and architectural values of the heritage place, and the street.	The proposed works to the retained facades remove later accretions and reinstate/restore the earlier appearance. The primary building volume of the former bank will also be retained and the facade of the Batman’s Hill Hotel. Refer to the Section 5.3 Additions.

Decision guideline	Assessment
The significance of the fabric or part of the building, and the degree to which it contributes to its three-dimensional form, regardless of whether it is visible.	<p>The external fabric to be removed from the hotel evidences the three-dimensional form. The only original fabric impacted in the front 8.5 metres depth are the side walls. The roof is not original.</p> <p>None of the fabric to be removed is of significance.</p> <p>The east and part of the south wall of the former bank evidence the three-dimensional form of the building. Retention of a significant depth of structure will ensure that the original three-dimensional form can be understood.</p>
Whether the demolition or removal of any part of the building contributes to the long-term conservation of the significant fabric of the building.	<p>The removal of the fabric does not contribute to the long-term conservation of the significant fabric of the building.</p> <p>The project includes active conservation of significant fabric in the retained facades.</p>
Whether the demolition will adversely affect the conservation of the heritage place.	No.
Whether there are any exceptional circumstances. ¹³	There are none.

5.2 Alterations

The proposal involves minor alterations to the exterior of the former State Savings Bank. Clause 15.03-1L-02 'Alterations strategies' includes the following policy regarding alterations to significance buildings:

Alterations Strategies

Preserve external fabric that contributes to the cultural significance of the heritage place on any part of a significant building, and on any visible part of a contributory building, should be preserved.

Before deciding on an application to alter the fabric of a significant or contributory building, the responsible authority will consider, as appropriate:

- The assessed cultural significance of the building and heritage place.
- The degree to which the alterations would detract from the significance, character and appearance of the building and heritage place.

¹³ Clause 15.03-1L-02 'Heritage – Demolition Policy Guidelines'

- Its structural condition.
- The character and appearance of the proposed replacement materials.
- Whether the alterations can be reversed without loss of fabric which contributes to the significance of the heritage place.¹⁴

The proposed alterations to the former State Savings Bank are minor in nature and will not alter or remove any external fabric which contributes to the cultural significance of the heritage place. The south and east return elevations will be made good following removal of the c. 2002 infill to Spencer Street and the c. 1969 modern infill building at 607-613 Collins Street. The elevations will be made good with a rendered masonry finish and repainted in a consistent paint scheme. New windows to the east elevation will present as contemporary punched openings to be distinguished as new work. The introduction of new openings to the return elevation will have minimal visibility from the streetscape and will not alter the presentation of the principal elevations.

The primary corner entrance to Spencer and Collins Street will be retained with existing terrazzo steps and bronze doors. The openings will be infilled with glass to redirect access through the eastern Collins Street entrance and to be experienced internally from within the proposed restaurant. Currently, the bronze doors are typically left open to provide access to the building. Therefore, the introduction of glazed infill within the openings will be consistent with the existing presentation of the entrance. The glass infill will not impact the fabric of the bronze doors nor their ability to resume operation in future, should the infill be reversed. The glazing will be understood as contemporary insertions within the existing openings and do not detract from the appearance of the building.

The alterations proposed to the façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel are assessed below in sections 5.4 Restoration and reconstruction and 5.5 Vehicle accommodation and access, as the alterations primarily relate to these two parts of the policy.

The following table provides a summary of considerations against the relevant decision guidelines for alterations at Clause 15.03-1L-02.

Table 2 Assessment against alterations decision guidelines

Decision guideline	Assessment
The assessed significance of the building and heritage place.	This will be unaltered by the minor insertions.
The degree to which the alterations would detract from the significance, character and appearance of the building and heritage place.	The proposed alterations are minor and will not detract from the significance, character or appearance of the building. The bronze doors are kept open currently and will continue to be kept open with the glazed infill.
Its structural condition	NA

¹⁴ Clause 15.03-1L-02, 'Heritage - 'Alterations Policy Guidelines']

The character and appearance of the proposed replacement materials.	The glazing is a discrete insertion. It allows the opening to be read with the doors in an open position.
Whether the alterations can be reversed without loss of fabric which contributes to the significance of the heritage place.	Yes, the doors will be kept in situ. The glass could be removed in future and the doors would become operable.

5.3 Additions

The proposal involves the construction of a new infill building at 607-613 Collins Street and a tower development set behind the retained heritage building. Clause 15.03-1L-02 includes the following policy regarding additions to significant buildings:

Additions strategies

Ensure additions to significant or contributory buildings:

- Are respectful of the building's character and appearance, scale, materials, style and architectural expression.
- Do not visually dominate or visually disrupt the appreciation of the building as it presents to the street.
- Maintain the prominence of the building by setting back the addition behind the front or principal part of the building, and from other visible parts and moderating height.
- Do not build over or extend into the air space directly above the front or principal part of the significant or contributory building.
- Retain significant roof form within the setback from the building façade together with roof elements of original fabric.
- Do not obscure views of façades or elevations associated with the front or principal part of the building.
- Are distinguishable from the original fabric of the building.

The design of additions is to:

- Adopt high quality and respectful contextual design.
- Avoid direct reproduction of the form of historic fabric.¹⁵

The *City of Melbourne Heritage Design Guide 2020* defines the 'front or principal part of a building' as:

For most non-residential buildings, the front or principal part is generally considered to be one full structural bay in depth complete with the structure and cladding to the roof or generally 8-10 metres in depth.¹⁶

¹⁵ Clause 22.04 Heritage Places in the Capital City Zone, 'Additions'

¹⁶ City of Melbourne, *Heritage Design Guide 2020*, p. 55.

In addition, Clause 43.01 sets out decision guidelines that are to be considered in assessing the proposal:

- Whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building will adversely affect the significance of the heritage a place.
- Whether the location, bulk, form and appearance of the proposed building is in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and heritage place
- Whether the proposed works will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.¹⁷

Also relevant to consideration of heritage impacts, is Schedule 10 to the DDO (DDO10). Schedule 10 includes additional guidelines and built form outcomes for tower additions adjoining heritage places, requiring towers and additions to be designed and spaced to ensure buildings do not visually dominate heritage places and streetscapes, nor significant view lines¹⁸.

5.3.1 *New infill*

The new infill building at 607-613 Collins Street has been designed as a podium element within the streetscape which relates to the scale and form of the former State Savings Bank. It rises to a height of six-storeys which is in proximity with the bank parapet and aligns with the height of a new glass balustrade on the bank rooftop. This also complies with the decision guidelines and built form outcomes contained in Schedule 10 to the DDO, which requires that the proposed street wall height responds appropriately to the prevalent parapet height of adjoining buildings.¹⁹ The infill is respectful of the scale of the heritage building and ensures it does not dominate or overwhelm.

The development further incorporates setbacks that provide space around the bank and to retain its prominence on the site, within the streetscape and particularly to the intersection. The infill is set back from the Collins Street title boundary in the order of half a metre and integrates a deep wide slot that creates a void between the infill and the bank's east elevation. This will reveal part of the east elevation that currently abuts built fabric. Through the void and setbacks, the former bank building will be able to stand proud, recapture an independent identity and be viewed three dimensionally.

The design of the infill has been informed by the architectural expression of the former bank but adopts a contemporary design that will be clearly identifiable as new work. The brise soleil façade draws on the rectilinear fenestration of the State Savings Bank and presents a simple interpretation of the traditional forms through its double layered grid. Constructed of concrete, it presents a contemporary material palette that positively relates to the bank's solidity formed by its granite and stuccoed exterior. The infill façade treatment is an interpretation of the order and articulation of the State Savings Bank which comprises a framed base and elongated upper façade. The concrete base of the infill frames a recessed entry and references the datum of the bronze saltire pattern fanlights of the State Savings Bank. This recreates a sense of intimacy at ground level and elongation to the upper façade. The subtle tonal treatment that reveals the larger secondary grid further references the line of the bank's frieze and minor entablature. The proposed infill therefore presents an improved relationship to the bank than

¹⁷ Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay, 'Decision Guidelines'

¹⁸ Schedule 10 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay, 'General Development Area- Built Form

¹⁹ Schedule 10 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay, 'General Development Area- Built Form

the current c. 1969 infill building. It will not detract from the character of the State Savings Bank nor adversely impact its significance.

5.3.2 *Tower development*

The tower development has been treated as a distinct element that is separate from the podium presentation in the streetscape. Rising behind the retained volume of the former State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel façade, the tower has been treated as a discrete form, incorporating transitional levels that break up the massing to manage the interface between the two elements.

On Spencer Street, as extending across both heritage sites, the tower incorporates a deep wide slot which aligns with the original gap which existed between the Batman's Hill Hotel and the former State Savings Bank. At this point, the height of the southern part is set down in response to the sloping topography and the lower scale development towards the Yarra and as a reference to the varying heights of the former State Savings Bank and Batman's Hill Hotel. The varied heights and setbacks provide articulation to the tower development, breaking up the scale and massing. In this manner the design responds to the two-lot presentation of the hotel and adjacent former bank building, presenting as two distinct forms rather than a single unifying element across the two sites. Through re-establishing a 14-metre-deep void between the hotel and former bank at the street front, the two heritage buildings reclaim their independent identities. The heritage buildings currently abut, and the re-introduction of the void and exposure of the side wall reinstates the historic condition.

The tower adopts generous setbacks to both heritage buildings. Immediately above the retained volume of the former bank, Levels 8 to 11 are deeply set back, in the order of 11 metres from Collins Street and 11 metres from Spencer Street, with horizontal mesh covered horizontal blades partially projecting back into the space. The deep setbacks of the transitional levels ensure the former State Savings Bank remains the dominant form as viewed from the intersection and close views (Figure 38 and Figure 39).

Immediately above the retained façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel Levels 6 to 8 are also deeply set back, in the order of 11 metres from Spencer Street. The outer edge of the blade-like canopies aligns with the face of the tower above. The 'necking' effect of these more deeply set back lower levels increases the visual sense of separation between the retained volume of the former bank building and the rebuilt volume of the former hotel building and allows the retained heritage facade to present as part of a three-dimensional form.

From level 12 and above, the northern tower component is set back 8 metres to the face from Collins Street and 8.3 metres to the face from Spencer Street with horizontal shading blades projecting 0.6 metres forward of this line. From level 9 and above, the southern tower component is set back 8.3 metres to the face with horizontal shading blades projecting 0.6 metres forward of this line. Combined with the necking treatment on the lower levels, the deep and varied setbacks are sufficient to maintain the reconstructed volumetric presentation of the Batman's Hill Hotel and the retained volume of the former bank building. Any sense that the upper levels cantilever over levels 6 to 11 is managed by the use of the canopies which directly reference the facade alignment above.

A rooftop bar is to be located in place of the later sixth floor level (proposed level 7) and mansard roof of the former State Savings Bank. It adopts greater setbacks than the existing mansard roof form and its finished floor level is set 0.5m below the height of the parapet. Level 5 of the southern tower component likewise incorporates a roof terrace behind the hotel facade with a glazed balustrade, set just above the height of the parapet. The terrace is to be set back from the title boundary and the north

and south sides in the order of two to four metres. In oblique views from across the intersection and along Spencer Street, particularly at a distance, the terraces will have limited visibility and will present as part of the tower development behind. Similarly, a terrace and residential facilities are to be constructed on level 37 of the tower. These facilities will have no visibility from the immediate surrounds and have no impact on the former hotel. The incorporated landscaping involves low-scale planting that will have minimal visibility behind the retained parapets.

Addressing the relevant policy and guidelines, the tower rising above the heritage buildings will be visually prominent in the streetscape, but the retained depth of original and rebuilt heritage structure is sufficient to ensure that the heritage buildings remain the dominant element at a pedestrian interface level. The heritage buildings will retain their primacy on the site and will continue to be read as prominent streetscape elements.

The tower does not obstruct any part of either building's immediate relationship to the street or any significant view lines to the principal façades. Due to the subject site's location on the western fringe of the CBD, there is an established backdrop of tower development behind the hotel when looking east from Spencer Street. The proposed tower will be evident in longer views but as a continuation of this existing backdrop. This is an approach which in a central city context can successfully manage the transition from heritage building as podium and contrasting tower form above.

The tower adopts a contemporary design that is identifiable as a new element, comprising a glazed façade to all elevations with horizontal shading devices, which creates a simple backdrop and contrasts the solidity and fine detailing of the heritage building. It will be clearly distinguished from the original fabric of the heritage facades. The tower development therefore presents a highly contextual and considered design that will not adversely affect the significance of the Batman's Hill Hotel or the former State Savings Bank, nor detract from their presentation and prominence in the immediate streetscape setting. The following table provides a summary of considerations against the relevant policy at Clause 15.03-1L-02.

Table 3 Assessment against Additions policy

Heritage Policy	Assessment
<p>Are respectful of the building's character and appearance, scale, materials, style and architectural expression.</p>	<p>Consistent with the approach pursued on similar projects across the central city area the tower design response pursues a contemporary architectural form which is visually and physically distinct from that of the retained heritage buildings. The contrast in character and appearance is respectful of the retained streetscape frontage in avoiding any competitive elaboration or detailing.</p> <p>As related to scale the transition from heritage podium to tower top is dramatic in contrast but again consistent with the pattern of like development. It is a transition which is respectfully managed in setbacks and overall tower form.</p>

Heritage Policy	Assessment
Do not visually dominate or visually disrupt the appreciation of the building as it presents to the street.	<p>The Batman's Hill Hotel and former State Savings Bank present in a streetscape context as strong visual markers of a corner site. Their distinctive architecture and pedestrian scale support their ready recognition as heritage places. In this context the former bank and to a slightly lesser degree the hotel dominate the corner.</p> <p>The placement of a tower within/behind these structures will alter that dominance in the combination of towers and heritage base will as a whole become the corner presence. The tower will not visually disrupt the appreciation of either of the heritage buildings as streetscape elements but will predominate in any longer views. In closer views the distinctive heritage architecture combined with the tower setbacks will ensure that the heritage buildings remain visually dominant.</p>
Maintain the prominence of the building by setting back the addition behind the front or principal part of the building, and from other visible parts and moderating height.	The tower has been set back and articulated sufficiently to maintain the prominence of the retained buildings. A sufficient depth of low built form is to be constructed behind the former Batman's Hill Hotel facade to ensure that the three-dimensional understanding of the place is maintained. In this case the outcome gains further strength in the part exposure of the new north side wall.
Do not build over or extend into the air space directly above the front or principal part of the significant or contributory building.	NA
Retain significant roof form within the setback from the building façade together with roof elements of original fabric.	The roof form and structure on both buildings is not original and is to be replaced.
Do not obscure views of façades or elevations associated with the front or principal part of the building.	The proposed works do not obscure views of the retained facades.
Are distinguishable from the original fabric of the building.	The proposed new construction is distinguishable from the original fabric.



Figure 38 View from Collins Street showing the effect of the deeply recessed transitional floor levels
Source: Carr Architects



Figure 39 Render of the development from the opposite side of Spencer Street, demonstrating the deep setbacks of the tower
Source: Carr Architects



Figure 40 Longer view from the south along Spencer Street
Source: Carr Architects

5.4 Restoration and reconstruction

A suite of conservation works will be implemented to the State Savings Bank as part of the proposal. Clause 15.03-1L-02 includes the following policy regarding restoration and reconstruction of heritage places:

Encourage the restoration and/or reconstruction of heritage places.

Ensure where there is to be reconstruction or restoration to any part of a significant building, or any visible part of a contributory building, that it be an authentic restoration or reconstruction process, or should not preclude such a process at a future date.

Ensure where there is to be restoration or reconstruction of a building, it is based on evidence of what a building originally looked like by reference to elements of nearby identical buildings, other parts of the building or early photographs and plans.²⁰

As part of the proposal Lovell Chen has assisted with historic research and conservation works scoping to inform the restoration of the State Savings Bank. No original floorplans or images of the bank were located; therefore, the works have been guided by physical analysis and the documentary evidence available.

The bank is largely intact to the Spencer and Collins Street elevations. The conservation works are directed at reversing later alterations and restoring the earlier presentation of the building. This includes removal of the later awnings, secondary entry to Spencer Street and the mansard roof form. The secondary entry to Spencer Street will be made good to match existing. A course of granite and a basement stallboard window will be reinstated below the retained ground floor window. The basement window will contain a powder coated frame to match the bronze frames throughout.

To the broader façade, general conservation works will be undertaken include patching and repair of damaged plasterwork and render, repainting as informed by paint analysis, removal of redundant signage and fixtures and making good of the façade, further investigations into deteriorated fabric, and re-running damaged mouldings and cornices. The 'Batman's Hill on Collins' signage will be removed as part of the works. Refer to the Schedule of Works prepared by Lovell Chen (Appendix A).

The principal façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel has been extensively and to a degree unsympathetically altered over time and the 'conservation' works are directed at the removal of later alterations and reinstatement of the earlier presentation of the building. The term reinstatement is used here as the ability to accurately reconstruct/restore is limited in the absence of evidence. The approach is accordingly one which seeks to reinstate forms and proportions which are interpretative of the original. This includes the removal of the later arched awning, Juliette balconies, and modern doors and glazing, particularly at the street level which is highly altered.

A new cantilevered awning verandah will be reconstructed consistent with the c. 1926 drawings and historic images. It is anticipated that fabric from the original verandah is likely contained in the existing structure and will inform this work.

To recapture the c. 1926 façade rhythm and fenestration, fanlights to openings will be reinstated at street level and a brick dado treatment. In conjunction with these works the later recessed entries will be brought back into alignment with the Spencer Street elevation. The modern upper-level windows will additionally be replaced with a tripartite window arrangement, similar to the original, and will comprise double glazing for acoustic requirements. The Batman's Hill Hotel inscription will be retained, as with the central balconies and the angled wall alignment.

Similar to the State Savings Bank, general conservation works will be undertaken to the broader facade including patching and repairs to damaged plasterwork and render, repainting, removal of redundant signage and fixtures and making good. This work will include further investigation into deteriorated fabric, crack injection and re-running damaged mouldings and cornices.

²⁰ Clause 15.03-1L-02 'Heritage Restoration and reconstruction'

The proposed restoration works are a positive outcome that is consistent with the heritage policy and will support the long-term conservation of the retained heritage fabric.

5.5 Vehicle accommodation and access

Four additional levels of basement carparking will be integrated into the proposal, to be accessed from an existing entry point on Spencer Street located in the infill between the State Savings Bank and Batman's Hill Hotel. Clause 15.03-02-1L includes the following policy regarding parking and access:

Vehicle accommodation and access strategies

Discourage new on-site car parking, garages and carports, and vehicle crossovers unless:

Car parking is located to the rear of the property, where this is an established characteristic.

Any new garage or carport is placed behind the principal or front part of the building (excluding verandahs, porches, bay windows or similar projecting features), and:

- it will be visually recessive;
- it will not conceal an original contributory element of the building (other than a plain side wall); and the form, details and materials will be respectful of, but not replicate details of the building.
- Ramps to basement or sub-basement car parking are located to the rear of the property, or to a side street or side lane boundary, where they would not visually disrupt the setting of the significant or contributory building, or impact on the streetscape character.²¹

The former State Savings Bank and Batman's Hill Hotel have an existing basement level that currently accommodates shared car parking. The proposal seeks to expand the on-site car parking by way of an additional four basement levels and alterations to the existing basement. The proposal also involves relocation of the vehicle exit point from Collins to Spencer Street, which is necessary due to the one-way traffic and tram routes along Collins Street. The existing entry point between the former bank and Batman's Hill Hotel will be retained and a new exit will be constructed within the hotel façade.

In the former State Savings Bank, the north and west walls of the existing basement will be retained along with the former basement windows that are visible at street level, and existing structural columns. To further protect the existing structure, the lower basement levels will be set back from the Collins and Spencer Street external walls and located within the line of the retained structural columns (Figure 41). The works will have no visual impact to the State Savings Bank and the basement levels have been designed to minimise impact on extant fabric.

The new vehicle exit point requires the creation of an enlarged opening in the Batman's Hill Hotel facade, removal of the hotel's northern external wall and internal alterations at ground floor level to provide access to the lower levels. It is noted that internal alteration controls do not apply to the property. The northern part of the Spencer Street façade is the most practicable location for the car exit point as it is located adjacent to the existing entry point between the hotel and former State Savings

²¹ Clause 15.03-11-02 'Heritage- Vehicle accommodation and access', Melbourne Planning Scheme

Bank on Spencer Street. In the context of the whole site redevelopment, it avoids intervention into the more intact façade of the former State Savings Bank. Further, the street level façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel has been considerably altered and comprises contemporary fabric and enlarged openings.

To minimise the impact on the presentation of the building, the size of the opening has been minimised as best possible and a northern blade wall will be retained at ground level (Figure 42). This will protect the integrity of the building corner. The blade wall has been extended as far east as possible while still allowing space for car manoeuvring. The enlarged opening is comparable to the opening of the south adjacent bay, which originally comprised a brick dado below a window in between two colonettes. The enlarged opening is accordingly proportionate to the existing street level façade rhythm and fenestration. A metal framed glazed tilt door will be constructed in the new opening to provide a consistent presentation to the remainder of the street level façade that comprises glazed doors and windows. It will carry the datums of the facade and will read as a glazed opening as opposed to a void in the façade.

Although the proposed vehicle exit point will be located within a principal façade which is contrary to the heritage policy, its careful design and treatment is considered to achieve a level of visual harmony with the broader facade. Further, it does not conceal any contributory or original elements of the heritage building and is respectful of the building's form, details and materials. It is responsive to the conflicts and challenges of car parking within heritage buildings in CBD areas and presents a solution that will minimise impacts on the broader site. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed vehicle access and accommodation is acceptable from a heritage perspective.

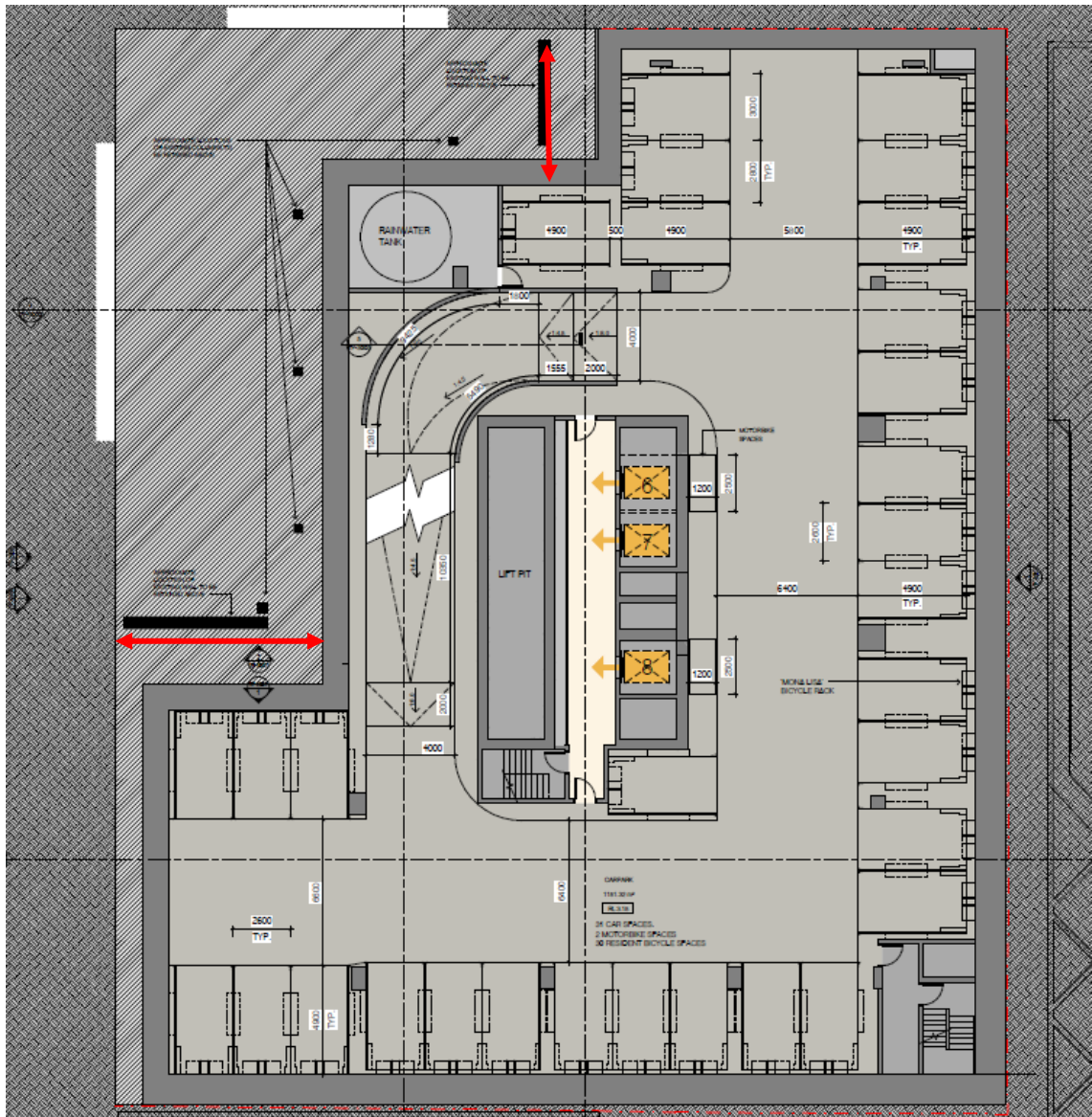


Figure 41 New basement set back from the title boundaries and the existing structural grid of the former bank
Source: Carr Architects



Figure 42 Blade wall retained with new façade opening indicated by the red arrow
Source: Carr Architects

5.6 Services and ancillary fixtures

The development incorporates services for the new tower development including plant rooms and street level boosters. The policy relating to services and ancillary fixtures in heritage overlay areas is contained in Clause 15.03-1L-02 and includes the following:

Services and ancillary fixture strategies

[...]

Ensure services and ancillary fixtures are installed in a manner whereby they can be removed without damaging significant fabric.

Ensure, for new buildings, services and ancillary fixtures are concealed, integrated or incorporated into the design of the building.²²

The proposed services have been integrated into the design of the tower to minimise visual impact within the streetscape and impact on the significance of the heritage building. The core is to be

²² Clause 15.03-1L-02 'Heritage - Services and ancillary fixtures', Melbourne Planning Scheme

centrally located in the tower development in order to provide access to the new areas, the State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel. The roof plant and lift overrun on the top tower level will not be perceptible from street level due to the height of the tower. The solid exterior of the lower lift core reads as a physical delineation of the two tower components, aligned with the void to Spencer Street. It will be understood as part of the contemporary development and will have no adverse impact on the streetscape presentation of the former State Savings Bank or the Batman's Hill Hotel. A smaller residential plant room to the southern tower component is located to the east behind the residential facilities, gym and pool on level 37 and accordingly will be concealed from Spencer and Collins Street. The hotel plant will be located on level six of the State Savings Bank, concealed behind the solid façade and parapet. It will have no impact on the building exterior or any existing windows. The new services integrated into the site development are accordingly consistent with the local heritage policy and will not result in any adverse impact on the significance of the places.

New boosters are proposed to be located in the former bank's Spencer Street façade, beneath the two southernmost window bays to this frontage. This will require removal of one course of granite to both window bays. The boosters are required to be in an accessible area at street level and have been appropriately located in a part of the façade that has been previously altered. The two southernmost window bays have had basement windows removed and infilled with later solid fabric. It is therefore a less sensitive part of the façade. The booster cupboards in the facade will be treated with a powder coat finish that matches the bronze detailing of the windows. This ensures the boosters will be distinguished as new work while complimenting the broader façade. No new services are proposed in the principal façade of the Batman's Hill Hotel.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The proposal for 607-623 Collins Street, Melbourne has been guided by the heritage significance of the former State Savings Bank and the Batman's Hill Hotel. It provides a balanced outcome that involves retention of the primary building volume of the former bank as it presents to the Collins and Spencer Street intersection and the façade of the hotel. The extent of demolition is focussed on later additions and fabric at the rear that does not contribute to the understanding of the place. It will assist in revealing additional volume that had been concealed by later additions and reinstate the individual identities of the buildings. The proposed infill building has been treated as a podium element that is responsive to the form and scale of the former State Savings Bank, while the tower rises behind the retained building volume and is treated as a secondary back-drop element on the site. The tower proposes deep setbacks from the principal facades, several lower transitional levels, incorporated voids for a two-lot presentation and a stepped height arrangement. Through the active conservation of the former State Savings Bank and Batman's Hill Hotel, the proposal includes conservation works that will ensure the buildings retain their presentation in the streetscape. The significance of the buildings and their architectural legibility will therefore not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed development and will be appropriately conserved. In consideration of the decision guidelines at Clause 43.01-8, the proposal will not adversely affect the significance of the individual heritage places.