

Heritage Impact Statement

52-60 Collins Street, Melbourne

Application – Amended Redevelopment
1 April 2021

ADVERTISED PLAN

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	2
2.0 Sources of Information	2
3.0 Brief History	3
4.0 Description	8
5.0 Significance	13
6.0 Policy Considerations.....	17
7.0 Development Proposal.....	19

ADVERTISED PLAN

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

1.0 Introduction

This assessment of heritage impacts was prepared for Dexu, owner of the sites at 52 and 60 Collins Street, Melbourne, and provides an update to a report prepared by this office in August 2019. The report relates to a proposal to redevelop the land, including retention of the portion of 52 Collins Street that is included in the Victorian Heritage Register, demolition of the remaining built form and construction of a new multi-storey building. All the subject land is included in the Collins East Precinct (HO504) in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*, while Amendment C387 proposes to introduce an individual Heritage Overlay (HO1313) to 60 Collins Street.

The following analysis comments upon the significance of the existing buildings on the site, whether the proposed redevelopment is appropriate in character and detail, and whether it is acceptable in terms of the potential impact on the significance of the registered area and Heritage Overlay.

2.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon inspections of the subject site and its environs. Reference has been made to relevant sections of the Melbourne Planning Scheme, including the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) and Heritage Buildings within the Capital City Zone (Clause 22.04). Sources of historical information are cited where relevant. Heritage studies and other sources referred to include:

- *Central Activities District Conservation Study, 1985*
- *Central City Heritage Study Review, 1993*
- *Central City Heritage Review, 2011*
- *Heritage Policies Review, 2016 (Amendment C258)*
- *Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, 2018*
- *Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, July 2020*
- *Philip Goad, Melbourne Architecture, 2009*
- *Heritage Alliance, Survey of Post-war Built Heritage in Victoria, 2008*
- *National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Melbourne's Marvellous Modernism, 2014.*
- *NBRS & Partners, 'Statement of Heritage Impact: 60 Collins Street, Melbourne', 9 July 2018*
- *Reserve Bank of Australia archives.*

This report is intended to be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Bates Smart and other documents submitted with respect to the present application.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

3.0 Brief History

A Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan shows the subject land as being occupied by a number of properties in 1895. To the south these include 52-54 Collins Street, 56-58 Collins Street and 60 Collins Street, and to the west addresses are 88-90 Exhibition Street and 92-94 Exhibition Street (Figure 1).

At the time that the MMBW plan was prepared, the property at 52-54 Collins Street was occupied by a three storey building with a Boom style facade added in works in 1881. Designed by Billing & Son architects and constructed by builder Henry Yeo, the building known as Melville House functioned as professional premises and residences. New shopfronts, which can be seen in Figure 2, were added in 1927 but have since been demolished and the ground floor restored. Like Melville House, the three storey Victorian building at 56-58 Collins Street known as Harvey House served as residences and professional rooms (Figure 3).

To the north-east corner of Collins and Stephen (now Exhibition) streets, the Duke of York Hotel was established in 1848. From c.1880 the two storey building with neo-classical style facade was known as the United Service Club Hotel (Figure 4). At the time of its demolition in 1958 it was named the Occidental Hotel.

To Exhibition Street, no.88 functioned as a costumier while no.90 was a surgery and dispensary. The Hurst and Green building at 92-94 Exhibition Street, the premises of produce merchants, was built in 1893.

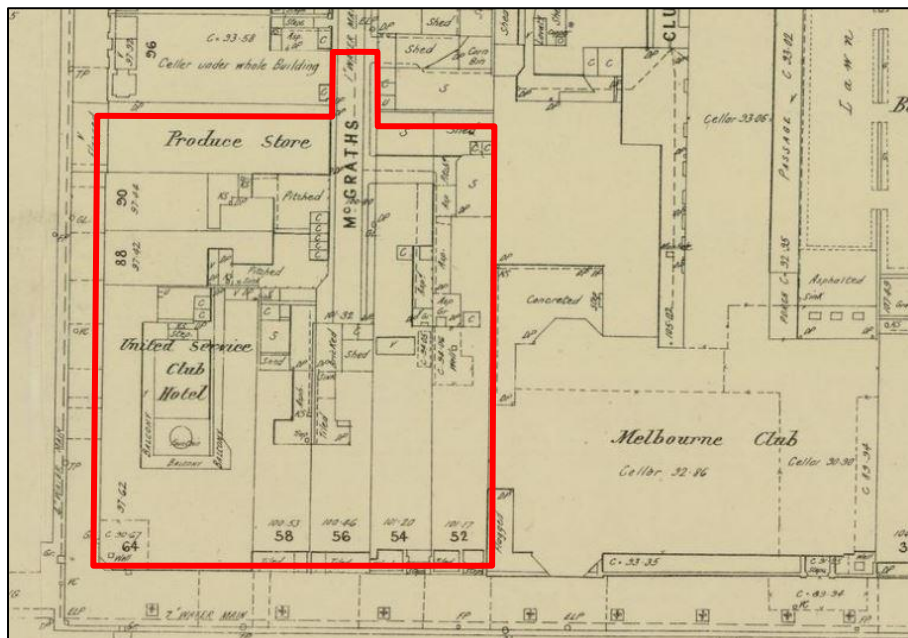


Figure 1 Detail of MMBW plan no.1013 from 1895. The subject site is outlined in red.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

Project Address:
52-60 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC



Figure 2 Melville House at 52-54 Collins Street in the 1950s or 1960s. Note the 1920s shopfronts.
Source: State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3 Harvey House at 56-58 Collins Street (seen at right of image) in the 1950s or 1960s. Part of the hotel at 60 Collins Street is visible at left of image.
Source: State Library of Victoria.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright



Figure 4 Image dated c.1875-80 looking east along Collins Street. The United Service Club Hotel at 60 Collins Street is indicated by the arrow. Source: State Library of Victoria.

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) was created by an Act of Parliament in 1959, and planning for a new Melbourne branch began the same year. Another seven purpose-built office buildings were planned for every state and territory capital at the same time. The architects and engineers for the Melbourne project were the Commonwealth Department of Works, together with Professor Brian Lewis of the University of Melbourne and representatives of the Bank, who made up a planning team that coordinated the Bank's requirements with the building design.¹

In December 1961 tenders were invited for the first of two stages of construction, with the contract awarded to E.A Watts Pty Ltd. The initial stage involved demolition of the remaining buildings at 56-60 Collins Street and 88-94 Exhibition Street, excavation of the site and construction of three basements, the ground and first floor levels in unfinished structural steel and reinforced concrete. These works were completed in November 1963 and construction of the second stage, taking the building to its full height of 16 floors, commenced in January 1964. Stage two was carried out by Civil and Civic Pty Ltd, a division of Lend Lease Corporation.²

Dr Herbert Coombs, first Governor of the newly created Reserve Bank, suggested Sidney Nolan be commissioned to create an artwork for the building in June 1962. The resultant mural depicting the Eureka Stockade was installed on the eastern wall of the ground floor entrance foyer (Figure 5). It was designed to be visible from both within the space and through the glazed wall facing Exhibition Street,

¹ Reserve Bank of Australia archive, file no. SRP-a-498
² Reserve Bank of Australia archive, file no. SRP-a-498

ADVERTISED
PLAN

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

though one contemporary report noted that 'It's an exciting work of art – but reflected light from the street makes it almost invisible'.³

The building opened in September 1966. The ground floor acted as a service area and lobby, while the basement levels housed the vaults for cash, gold and security holdings. Banking chambers were located on the first and second floors, with the main chamber on the former and bonds and stocks on the latter. The remaining floors housed other bank departments, board room and staff amenities as well as three floors for let on levels five to seven.

The building continued to be occupied by the RBA until it was sold at the end of 2018, at which time the Nolan mural was removed to the Australian National University.



Figure 5 *Eureka Stockade mural by Sidney Nolan, photographed in 1968.*
Source: State Library of Victoria.

ADVERTISED PLAN

³ Isabel Carter, 'Breakfast at the bank', *Herald*, 6 September 1966.

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

Project Address:
52-60 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC



Figure 6 *The Reserve Bank of Australia in 1969. Note the pale marble cladding to vertical structural elements including the columns of the ground floor, and the dark granite to spandrels. Note also the recessed ground floor.*

ADVERTISED PLAN

4.0 Description

The properties at 52 & 60 Collins Street are adjacent lots to the north-east corner of Collins and Exhibition Streets in the Melbourne central business district. The building at 52 Collins Street, known as Melville House, has an ornate three storey boom style facade with decorative features including arch headed windows surmounted by decorative keystones, fluted pilasters and a balustraded parapet. The northern end of the building has been demolished and an undistinguished modern multi-storey tower constructed to its rear.

The property at 60 Collins Street, the former Reserve Bank of Australia, is an International style multi-storey curtain wall tower. The building originally featured contrasting facings of marble to the columns and granite to the spandrels (both sourced from quarries in New South Wales), anodised aluminium window frames and a butterfly roof. The ground floor originally consisted of a recessed front (set well behind the columns) to a concourse featuring a Sidney Nolan mural of jewellery enamel on copper depicting the Eureka Stockade.

Extensive works to the exterior during the 1990s have resulted in the loss of critical aspects of the original character, materiality and detailing of the building. The marble facings to the vertical structural elements were over-clad in segmented stainless steel, and the uppermost band of granite spandrel panels were removed. The columns that supported the perimeter of the building, and the recessed ground floor, are no longer in evidence. The 1990s works extended the interior of the ground floor so that the western wall to Exhibition Street more closely aligns with the tower above, removing the deep undercroft that was a feature of the design as built. The original slender marble clad columns at ground floor were subsumed within heavy piers clad in dark granite facings with stainless steel details. Two new projecting stone cornices delineate the ground and first floors. The windows between the columns, as well as the curved aluminium framed glass wall to Collins Street, now feature horizontally oriented glazing bars.

The Eureka Stockade mural by Nolan has been removed.

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**



This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

Figure 7 Melville House at 52 Collins Street, with modern tower at rear.

To the north, the adjacent building at 100 Exhibition Street is a modern 11 level building of serviced apartments. To the east, the Melbourne Club at 36-50 Collins Street is a three storey brick and stucco structure with a range of outbuildings and an extensive walled garden that is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H30).

On the opposite side of Exhibition Street, to the west, the building at 68-72 Collins Street is a three storey building constructed in 1867 to serve as a residence and surgeon's consulting rooms, and is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H422). Le Louvre, at 74 Collins Street is a three storey early Victorian building altered c.1925. The redevelopment of 80 Collins Street will involve a new three to four level retail podium addressing Collins Street with a 36 level tower to the rear.

To the south of the subject site on the opposite side of Collins Street, the Collins Place development is a large mixed use complex with a pair of high-rise towers and plaza with a spaceframe roof.

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

Project Address:
52-60 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC



Figure 8 *The former RBA building at 60 Collins Street. The original pale marble of the ground floor columns that rose as a continuous vertical expression of structure through the height of the building has been replaced or overclad with segmented steel cladding that is expressly articulated in terms of individual panels. A cornice at the summit of the building replaces the original spandrel panels and further changes the language of the building. At the ground floor, another cornice treatment establishes a visual break between the ground and first floors*

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

ADVERTISED PLAN



Figure 9 Image showing the west elevation of the RBA building to Exhibition Street. The non-original segmented stainless steel cladding to the columns of the upper levels, granite clad piers and infill glazing of the ground floor level are apparent.



Figure 10 The non-original wide piers, cornices and curved glazed wall to Collins Street.

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright



Figure 11 The Melbourne Club at 36-50 Collins Street, east of the subject site.



Figure 12 View toward the registered building at 68-72 Collins Street with the redevelopment of 80 Collins Street under construction. The subject site is to the right.

ADVERTISED PLAN

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

5.0 Significance

The property at 52 Collins Street is of state significance, being included on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as place H607. The extent of registration is noted as:

Historic Building No. 607 Melville House, 52-54 Collins Street, Melbourne (to the extent of the interior and exterior of that part of the building between the Collins Street boundary and the northern extremity of the front gable roof and the land as entered in the Register Book as Volume 6175 Folio 132).

The plan of registration is shown below at Figure 13 below. The VHR statement of significance for Melville House is as follows:

What is significant?

Melville House assumed its current facade in 1881 when alterations and additions to an existing building were designed by Billing & Son architects for the owner Dr Ray. The work was carried out by the builder Henry Yeo. Melville House consists of a pair of three-storey, stuccoed brick structures that originally served as residences and professional premises. Stuccoed details include the first floor round-headed windows framed by columns, and at second floor level the decorative band beneath the windows and the hoods. The surviving original portions of the facade of Melville House are typical examples of domestic so-called Boom Style architecture. A balustraded parapet completes the composition. New shop fronts were incorporated into the ground floor in 1927 and the two buildings were linked at an unknown date.

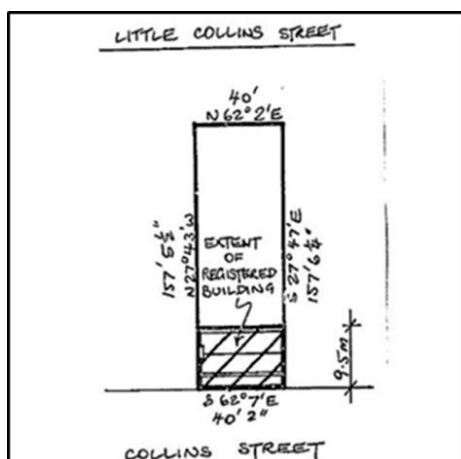
How is it significant?

Melville House is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Melville House is historically significant as one of the few surviving nineteenth century residences in the central city area. It is representative of the more domestic scale buildings that were occupied by professionals such as doctors and lawyers at the top end of Collins Street.

Melville House is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the so-called Boom Style architecture of 1880s Victoria. The lavish use of stucco decoration is typical of the style but is a rare surviving example of the type in the city.



**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

Figure 13 VHR plan of registration.
Source: Victorian Heritage Database.

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

The whole of the site at 52 Collins Street is included within the Collins East Precinct (HO504). This precinct encompasses properties on the north and south sides of Collins Street between Swanston and Spring Streets. The statement of significance for 52-54 Collins Street as included in the i-Heritage database is as follows: '*Altered, but architecturally successful and complementary to the Renaissance revival stylist of the Melbourne Club, also externally representative of a period when medical practitioners dominated the eastern end of Collins Street.*' The modern tower addition to the rear of Melville House is not mentioned in the statement of significance, or graded in any study, and this is appropriate as it is clearly of recent origin, is of no heritage interest, and arguably detracts from views to the host heritage building due to its heavy masonry character.

The site at 60 Collins Street is also included in the Collins East Precinct HO504. The statement of significance HO504 as included in the *Heritage Precincts Statements of Significance February 2020*, is as follows:

Collins Street has often been identified as Melbourne's leading street. This is due, in part, to the pleasant amenity and distinctive character of its eastern end. Its relative elevation and proximity to the Government Reserve and points of access to the City provided for its development as an elite locale. Initially a prestige residential area, the Melbourne Club re-established itself here in 1857 and by the 1860s the medical profession had begun to congregate. By the turn of the century it was firmly established as a professional and artistic centre of Melbourne, with part of its fame due to its tree plantations in the French boulevard manner (hence the 'Paris end'), which date from 1875.

A number of significant buildings come together in this precinct to form a series of prominent streetscapes. These include, at the western end, the Town Hall, Athenaeum, and Assembly Hall through to the Scots and Independent Churches, with the Regent Theatre through to the redeveloped T&G building opposite. The eastern end includes the early 19th century residential and artists' studio buildings at the foot of No. One Collins, with the predominantly 20th century intact run to the north featuring Alcaston, Anzac Portland and Chanonry Houses, and Victor Horsley Chambers plus the nearby Melbourne Club.

At all times until the post 1939-45 war period, redevelopment took place in a quiet and restrained manner with an emphasis on dignity, harmony and compatibility with the intimate scale and pedestrian qualities of the street. These qualities are still embodied in significant remnant buildings and other artifacts, despite the intrusion of large developments. The qualities of the street are also embodied in the social functions of the buildings which include elite smaller scale residential, religious, social, quality retailing and professional activities.

Key Attributes

- *The buildings remaining from before the Second World War.*
- *The boulevard quality of this end of Collins Street with street tree plantations and street furniture.*
- *A consistent height, scale, character and appearance of the remaining 19th and early 20th century buildings.*
- *The historic garden of the Melbourne Club.*

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

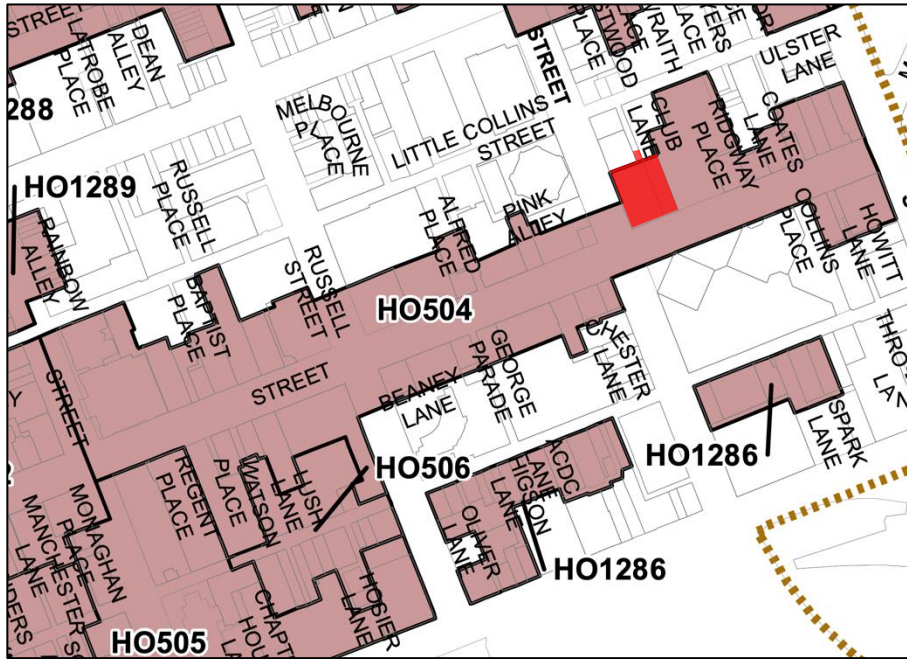


Figure 14 Detail of the Heritage Overlay map, with the subject site outlined in red. Source: Melbourne Planning Scheme.

A number of heritage studies have examined places in the CBD, some of which have assessed or graded the building at 60 Collins Street. These are summarised in the table below:

Study	Grading
Central Activities District Conservation Study 1985	D (contributory)
Central City Heritage Study Review 1993	C (contributory)
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Not assessed
Hoddle Grid Heritage Review 2018	Not assessed
Heritage Policies Review 2016 (Amendment C258melb)	Contributory
Hoddle Grid Heritage Review 2020 (Amendment C387melb)	Individually Significant

The *Heritage Places Inventory February 2020 Part A (Amended July 2020)*, an incorporated document to the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*, identifies the site at 56-64 Collins Street as Contributory to the Collins Street East Precinct. A contributory heritage place is defined at Clause 22.04 as follows:

A contributory heritage place is important for its contribution to a heritage precinct. It is of historic, aesthetic, scientific, social or spiritual significance to the heritage precinct. A contributory heritage place may be valued by the community; a representative example of a place type, period or style; and/or combines with other visually or stylistically related places to demonstrate the historic development of a heritage precinct. Contributory places are typically externally intact, but may have visible changes which do not detract from the contribution to the heritage precinct.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

Amendment C387 proposes to implement the recommendations of the *Hoddle Grid Heritage Review 2020* and introduce an individual Heritage Overlay control (HO1313) to the former Reserve Bank of Australia building. The statement of significance is reproduced below:

What is significant?

The Former Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street, a multi-storey office building constructed in 1964-66.

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

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

Later alterations made to the street level facades are not significant.

How it is significant?

The Former Reserve Bank of Australia at 56-64 Collins Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1964-66 to a design with input from Prof. Brian Lewis, C. McGrouther, C. D. Osborne, R. M. Ure, and F. C. Crocker, the Former Reserve Bank of Australia has a clear association with the postwar building boom which transformed central Melbourne into a modern high-rise city. The design of these commercial buildings from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s – many of which were architect designed – was driven by the commercial demands and the prestige afforded by a dominant city presence (Criterion A).

The Former Reserve Bank of Australia is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist office building. The building strongly reflects the style which was popular in the postwar period, particularly in central Melbourne. Constructed as a dominant 16-storey building on a corner site, the Former Reserve Bank of Australia building clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a postwar curtain-wall structure. The cuboid form, with facades displaying a regular grid composed of horizontal bands of glazing with dark spandrels and contrasting vertical columns, as well as the variety of materials, including granite and marble cladding and aluminium window frames, demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

6.0 Policy Considerations

As the proposed works are to take place outside of the registered area, the City of Melbourne is the relevant statutory authority. The property is subject to the provisions of Clause 43.01 as the whole of the land is included within HO504. The purpose of Clause 43.01, the Heritage Overlay, is as follows:

To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.

To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.

To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.

To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- *The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *The significance of the heritage place and whether the proposal will adversely affect the natural or cultural significance of the place.*
- *Any applicable statement of significance (whether or not specified in the schedule to this overlay), heritage study and any applicable conservation policy.*
- *Any applicable heritage design guideline specified in the schedule to this overlay.*
- *Whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the location, bulk, form and appearance of the proposed building is in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and the heritage place.*
- *Whether the demolition, removal or external alteration will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the proposed works will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.*

The proposal must also be assessed against local heritage policy as set out under Clause 22.04, Heritage Places within the Capital City Zone. This policy provides more detailed guidance as to the forms of development that might be appropriate in Heritage Overlay areas. Relevant sections of the clause are quoted as follows:

Demolition

It is policy that:

- *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.*
- *Retention of the three dimensional form is encouraged; facadism is discouraged. The adaptive reuse of a heritage place is encouraged 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.*

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

- A demolition permit not be granted until the proposed replacement building or works have been approved.
- Fences and outbuildings which contribute to the cultural significance of the heritage place are not demolished.

Before deciding on an application for full or partial demolition, the responsible authority will consider, as appropriate:

- 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.

New Buildings

It is policy that:

New buildings are in keeping with 'key attributes' of the heritage precinct as identified in the precinct Statement of Significance and:

- Key attributes of the heritage precinct such as:
 - Building height, massing and form; style and architectural expression; details; materials; front and side setbacks; and orientation and fencing.
 - Prevailing streetscape height and scale.
- Do not obscure views from the street(s) and public parks of the front or principal part of adjoining significant or contributory places or buildings.
- Do not visually dominate or visually disrupt the appreciation of the heritage place.
- Maintain a façade height which is consistent with that of adjoining significant or contributory buildings, whichever is the lesser.
- Set back higher building components so as not to dominate or reduce the prominence of an adjoining significant or contributory place or building.
- Do not adopt a façade height which is significantly lower than prevailing heights in the street.
- Are neither positioned forward of the façade of adjoining significant or contributory heritage places or buildings, or set back significantly behind the prevailing building line in the street. New buildings should be positioned in line with the prevailing building line in the street.
- Do not build over or extend into the air space directly above the front or principal part of an adjoining significant or contributory building or heritage place.
- Where abutting a lane, are respectful of the scale and form of historic fabric of heritage places abutting the lane.
- Do not impact adversely on Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

The design of new buildings is to:

- Adopt high quality and respectful contextual design.
- Adopt an interpretive design approach to other details such as verandahs, fences and shopfronts.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

A Design and Development Overlay also applies to the site. The design objectives of DDO10 are as follows:

- *To ensure development achieves a high quality of pedestrian amenity in the public realm in relation to human scale and microclimate conditions such as acceptable levels of sunlight access and wind.*
- *To ensure that development respects and responds to the built form outcomes sought for the Central City.*
- *To encourage a level of development that maintains and contributes to the valued public realm attributes of the Central City.*
- *To ensure that new buildings provide equitable development rights for adjoining sites and allow reasonable access to privacy, sunlight, daylight and outlook for habitable rooms.*
- *To provide a high level of internal amenity for building occupants.*
- *To ensure the design of public spaces and buildings is of a high quality.*
- *To encourage intensive developments in the Central City to adopt a podium and tower format*

Built form outcomes relevant to heritage considerations are as follows:

Street wall height is scaled to ensure:

- *Height that respects the scale of adjoining heritage places*

Towers and additions are designed and spaced to ensure:

- *Buildings do not visually dominate heritage places and streetscapes, nor significant view lines.*

The adjusted floorplate is designed and spaced to:

- *Buildings do not visually dominate heritage places and streetscapes, nor significant view lines.*

Decision guidelines relevant to heritage considerations are as follows:

Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- *Whether the proposed street wall height responds appropriately to the prevalent parapet height of adjoining buildings, respects the scale of adjoining heritage places and provides a human scale.*
- *Securing the floor area ratio across a site where a site is developed in part to ensure:*
 - *that an agreement be entered into to acknowledge that the remaining site cannot be later developed*
 - *that when a heritage building being retained, that an agreement be entered into to conserve the heritage building in perpetuity*

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

7.0 Development Proposal

A permit for the redevelopment of the subject site was issued on 22 May 2020 by the Minister for Planning (PA1900656). The permit allows for part demolition of 52 Collins Street, demolition of 60 Collins Street, and construction of a multi-storey building.

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

The present amended proposal is also for the construction of a new multi-storey mixed-use development, involving the total demolition of the former Reserve Bank of Australia building and the modern tower addition to the rear of Melville House. Since the existing permit was granted, however, purchase of the air rights to the adjacent Melbourne Club land has been arranged, enabling a higher Floor Area Ratio on the subject site.

From a heritage perspective, there are two separate considerations in relation to the proposal – firstly, the extent of demolition, and secondly, the appropriateness of the new works. These aspects of the proposal are discussed separately below.

Demolition

It is noted that, prior to the 2020 *Hoddle Grid Heritage Review*, the former Reserve Bank building had been consistently graded as a contributory building (ie C or D graded) by earlier heritage studies. This grading, as well as the comments in the i-Heritage database entry for the place, are indicative of a building that is representative of its typology only, rather than a building of individual interest. Furthermore, the building does not appear to have been recognised for its design by many recent writers, including *Melbourne Architecture* by Philip Goad and the 2008 *Survey of Post-war Built Heritage in Victoria* by Heritage Alliance. Accordingly, the recently gazetted Amendment C258 maintained this level of grading when identifying the former bank building as contributory.

When comparison is made with other postwar curtain walled office buildings in the CBD, it can be observed that there are numerous other examples that are of a higher level of significance, with most substantially more intact. These include (but are not restricted to):

- Alliance Assurance Company at 410 Collins Street. Designed by AC Leigh, Bartlett & Partners and completed 1957. Graded Significant.
- London Assurance House at 470 Bourke Street. Designed by Bernard Evans & Partners and completed 1960. Graded Significant.
- Eagle House at 473 Burke Street. Designed by Yuncken Freeman and completed 1972. Graded Significant. Also included in the Victorian Heritage Register
- Allan's Music Store at 276-278 Collins Street. Designed by Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb in 1957. Graded Significant.
- Australian Mutual Provident Society at 406-408 Lonsdale Street. Designed by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon in 1958. Graded Significant.
- Colonial Mutual Life at 330 Collins Street. Designed by Stephenson & Turner in 1963. Graded Significant.
- H.C. Sleigh House at 170 Queen Street. Designed by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon in 1964. Graded Significant.
- Estates House at 114 William Street. Designed by Yuncken Freeman in 1976. Graded Significant.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

Within the Collins East Precinct itself are two Significant graded examples of tall modernist buildings. These are:

- Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street. Designed by John La Gerche and constructed 1954-5. The first high-rise glass box in the city, the impression of which is given by the sheer aluminium and glass curtain wall that wraps around the corner into Alfred Place. Described in i-Heritage as follows *'Notable features include an intact shop front. Aluminium and glass curtain walls on two sides and sheer walls on the others are determined by the corner site and land-locked north and west boundaries. The service core occupies one of these walls. Two lifts and a stair within the core serve 13 reinforced concrete floors and an alternative escape stair shaft terminates the glazing at the north-east corner. Practical hopper sashes set in the curtain wall provides alternative ventilation to the only mechanical air-service available and obscured glazing at knee height lends modesty to the otherwise transparent sheeting. The absence of false ceilings meant there was nothing to hide and , although this was typical in most contemporary buildings, Gilbert Court was the only one not to use opaque spandrel panels. The simplicity and transparency of the facade is continued in the butt-glazed shopfronts, style-less lobby doors and the street number balances successfully over the entry.'*
- Coates Building at 18-22 Collins Street. Designed by John La Gerche and constructed 1959. Described in i-Heritage as follows *'Notable features include an intact shop front. Twelve-storey aluminium curtain wall office building with a seemingly totally transparent glass facade. The thin edges of floor slabs are clad in aluminium, as part of the curtain walling system, to suggest that they do not exist in what then becomes a glass-clad 'egg crate'. There are no false ceilings to lend artificial mass to the floor slabs and the corollary of that is there is no air-conditioning hence there are hopper sash windows openable at each level of the facade. Natural aluminium shopfronts are mainly original on the ground level, with the exception of a new bronze anodised suite at Number 18. Tenants' Directory and lobby are also near original, along with the sign 'Coates Building' attached above the entrance. An all aluminium facade, even the side-wall reveals of the building are clad in embossed aluminium sheet, which quickly disappears around the corner, where the more utilitarian concrete finish is exposed on the side walls. Terrazzo flooring inside and outside of the building is original and even the Mimosa Coffee Lounge (there since the building's opening) appears to have some original fittings in it.'*

It is noted that the Collins East Precinct is of significance chiefly for its late nineteenth and early twentieth century building stock, as indicated by the statement of significance for the place. This confirms that the primary significance of HO504 is related to the buildings from prior to World War Two, although the precinct area does include some graded postwar buildings.

While Amendment C387 proposes introduce an individual Heritage Overlay control (HO1313) to the former Reserve Bank of Australia building, the citation prepared as part of the 2020 *Hoddle Grid Heritage Study* does not recognise the extent of alteration that has occurred. In relation to the building's intactness the study comments:

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

The Former Reserve Bank of Australia building, including the original form and the detailing of the exterior of the building above street level, remains highly intact from its original construction in 1964-66. The original design at street level provided both space and shelter for pedestrian traffic by setting walls back from the building line behind rows of columns. Works in the 1990s has altered this original design.

Overall, the Former Reserve Bank of Australia building retains a high degree of architectural integrity to the Post-War Modernist style in fabric, form and detail. While the building has undergone alterations at street level, these do not diminish the ability to understand and appreciate the place as a fine example of a Post-War Modernist multi-storey office building.

The building has been more altered than credited in the 2020 Study. As noted previously, the columns that supported the perimeter of the building, and the recessed ground floor, are no longer in evidence. The street level works that occurred in the 1990s extended the interior of the ground floor so that the western wall to Exhibition Street more closely aligns with the tower above, removing the deep undercroft that was a feature of the design as built. The original slender marble clad columns at ground floor were subsumed within heavy piers clad in dark granite facings with stainless steel details. Two new projecting stone cornices delineate the ground and first floors, establishing a visual break between these levels. The windows between the columns, as well as the curved aluminium framed glass wall to Collins Street, now feature horizontally oriented glazing bars.

Alterations to the upper levels are not recognised in the 2020 Study. The original pale marble facings to the vertical structural elements have been removed or over-clad in segmented stainless steel that is expressly articulated in terms of individual panels, overwriting the continuous vertical expression of structure that originally extended through the height of the building. A cornice at the summit of the building replaces the original granite spandrel panels and further changes the language of the building.

The result of these extensive works is the loss of critical aspects of the original character, materiality and detailing of the building such that a grading of Significant, and individual Heritage Overlay control, is not warranted.

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**



Figure 15 Image showing the lower levels of the building, including the perimeter columns and undercroft concourse to the ground floor in July 1966.
Source: Reserve Bank of Australia Archive.



Figure 16 The concourse in August 1966.
Source: Reserve Bank of Australia Archive.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

Having regard for these considerations, the impacts associated with the demolition of the former Reserve Bank building are judged to be acceptable with regard to the significance of the precinct, subject to an appropriate replacement proposal that responds well to its heritage precinct environment and that can be seen to achieve a broad community benefit for the site in terms of use, planning and design.

The proposed demolition of the modern tower form to the rear of Melville House is acceptable subject to an appropriate replacement design for this part of the site. This fabric is of no identified significance and adopts a heavy masonry character that arguably establishes a visual competition with, and thus detracts from, the presentation of the historic building itself. It does not contribute to the significance of the wider Collins East Precinct and therefore its loss will have no impact.

Additionally, it is noted that both the City of Melbourne and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have supported the demolition of the former Reserve Bank of Australia and the modern tower at the rear of 52 Collins Street with the issue of Permit PA1900656.

Proposed development

Like the proposal that has been approved, the amended scheme takes character and detail cues from the surrounding built form in a well-considered and elegant design that is respectful of the heritage streetscape and nearby graded buildings. This said, the scale of the proposed tower is increased, from 101 metres to 156 metres, and a number of other changes have been introduced that are intended to provide an appropriate heritage and urban design response.

Notably, the tower expression to the Collins Street and Exhibition Street corner volume remains essentially as before, albeit rising to the new height. The plinth expression to this corner envelope retains the same shopfront treatment as has previously been approved, a treatment that responds positively to the streetscape character of the 'Paris End' of Collins Street, and to neighbouring heritage buildings in particular.

Having regard for the fact that the existing building on this portion of the site is a tall modern building, the construction of another tall building is not in itself seen to raise heritage issues other than those addressed below in relation to the interface with the heritage building at 52 Collins Street, in terms of the proposed built form to its rear and glazed entry envelope to its side, in terms of views toward the Melbourne Club both from Collins Street and from the rear, and in relation to the heritage precinct more generally by means of the podium design, materials and detailing.

The proposed multi-storey envelope to the rear of Melville House, as presently conceived, has been substantially reimagined relative to the previous approval. An appreciable change is the removal of the stepped form on the east side of this envelope, with the associated envelope now having a more unified, sheer form rising full height on a consistent setback. This has been achieved in part as a result of the acquisition of air rights to the adjacent Melbourne Club, enabling an increase to the allowable Floor Area Ratio. The financial arrangements that underpin this acquisition will assist the Melbourne Club in its continuing program of conservation works, with a preliminary list of conservation projects that are to be contemplated having been prepared by the Melbourne Club.

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

The architectural expression of this eastern tower form has also been amended as a result of a detailed examination of varying options. The treatments that have been reviewed have included a range of options for a more solid 'plinth' type expression to the lower levels, to establish a masonry scale relationship with the heritage buildings. This review has established that such a treatment tends to draw the eye away from the heritage buildings, toward the built form to the rear, rather than emphasising the heritage fabric in the foreground. This can be contrasted with the typical use of 'plinth' strategies on a street frontage, where the eye follows the line of built form and the modern 'plinth' element needs to have a certain visual strength in the street view.

The proposed character of this eastern tower expression improves upon the existing condition with a masonry framed and glazed structure that is at once both more contemporary and more complementary than the existing heavy masonry envelope. It provides a refined and appropriately modern, yet neutral backdrop to the significant building and to the neighbouring Melbourne Club, enabling these heritage structures to retain their streetscape prominence. The proposed tower form is handsomely detailed, and will fit well within the broad range of taller built form found within this part of Collins Street. The vertically oriented tripartite articulation references the historical three storey forms that are found in the vicinity.

In terms of views from Collins Street, the eastern tower expression provides a modulated, differentiated and generally recessive backdrop to both Melville House and the Melbourne Club.

The eastern elevation of the eastern tower form, as seen in views from the garden of the Melbourne Club, includes a solid stone walled expression to its base that establishes an immediate backdrop to the heritage built form, with the masonry-framed grid of glazing rising above. While this grided tower wall expression is sheer, the three storey module, pronounced masonry framing and uniform expression associated with it provide a well-considered and neutral backdrop to the heritage buildings of the Club.

When the present proposal is compared to the existing approval, there is no appreciable increase in impact, notwithstanding the change in architectural character and the removal of the step or setback that had previously been proposed.

The increased floor area of the tower as amended will not result in any additional impact on the heritage streetscape. In terms of the Melbourne Club, the tower will extend to the shared boundary, but will not project into the airspace above this property.

In views from the garden of the Melbourne Club looking east, the approved proposal would have a high degree of visibility. In the amended design, the impact of this visibility, which is essentially similar to that of the existing approval, is mitigated through the articulation that divides the elevation into an appropriately fine grain in the tower levels above the base element.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**

Project Address:
52-60 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC



Figure 17 Architects' perspective view of the proposal from Collins Street.



Figure 18 Architects' perspective of the proposal, with the Melbourne Club to the east.

**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

In conclusion, the demolition of the former Reserve Bank building, as much altered postwar building, will have little appreciable impact upon the significance, character and appearance of the heritage place. Any modest impact that may be said to be sustained through the demolition of this building must be seen in the context of a new building that responds well to other aspects of planning policy and that can be seen to result in benefits to the city context and the community that are substantial.

The proposed new building, although resulting in an appreciable increment of change within the precinct, is a well-resolved, carefully considered scheme that has been designed to be respectful of its heritage context. To the extent that the present proposal represents a variation on the existing approval for the site, the changes have been adopted after an extensive review of options in terms of detailing and articulation, and with appropriate consideration for the heritage context provided by Melville House, the Melbourne Club, and this eastern end of Collins Street more generally.

Having regard for all the above, the proposal has been developed with appropriate regard for the decision guidelines of the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) and relevant heritage policy (Clause 22.04).

ADVERTISED PLAN

**This copied document to be made available
for the sole purpose of enabling
its consideration and review as
part of a planning process under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987.
The document must not be used for any
purpose which may breach any
copyright**