423 Smith Street



fitzroy smith street fitzroy smith street 423

Location

423 Smith Street, FITZROY VIC 3065 - Property No 343530

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO333

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2014

Precinct statement of significance

Component streets include:

Argyle Street,

Johnston Street,

Little Oxford Street,

Rose Street,

Smith Street,

St David Street.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Early survey

Before land sales, Smith Street was developed as a route from Melbourne to Heidelberg by early Heidelberg settlers. Hoddle's survey formalised this route as Smith Street, being mid-way on the survey grid between Nicholson and Hoddle Streets (each one mile-apart). (110)

First land sales

When the land was sold, the Smith Street area formed the eastern edges of Crown Allotments 51, 69, 72, 82 and 85, and the western edges of Allotments 52, 68, 73 and 81, as subdivided by the government in 1838.(111) The first private subdivision of government lots in the Heritage Overlay Area had commenced by 1842, and affected half of the west side, south from Johnston Street. By December 1849, the east side had begun to be subdivided, and by December 1854, only the two allotments to the south of Alexandra Parade (85 and 86) were yet to be subdivided. One of the earliest buildings remaining from this era in Smith Street, is the Grace Darling Hotel (144 Smith St), built in 1854 while the shops at 293-295 Smith Street (1852-53), although altered, are thought to be among the oldest group of retail buildings in Melbourne.

Municipal government

East Collingwood was established as a new municipality in 1855 (112), with Smith Street as the municipal boundary between Fitzroy and East Collingwood. The Borough of Fitzroy, to its west, was created in 1858.(113) A range of small businesses had located in Brunswick Street and Gertrude Street in South Fitzroy, and to a lesser extent Smith Street, Victoria Parade and the south end of Napier Street, by 1864.

Consolidation

The 1860s and 1870s were periods of consolidation in Fitzroy's commercial strips, as the rude structures of the early decades were replaced with more substantial premises. This is most apparent along Gertrude, Brunswick and Smith Streets. The 1870s and 1880s saw the replacement of many earlier single fronted shop buildings with rows of shops, and several banks were established in the street including the Bank of Australasia (229 Smith Street, since rebuilt as ANZ Bank) in 1875, the Savings Bank (337 Smith St, later State Savings Bank of Victoria) 1879-1880, and the Bank of New South Wales in 1873. Along with hotels, banks were amongst the largest and most imposing of nineteenth century buildings, and most located on prominent corner sites.

By the turn of the century, Smith Street had been almost fully developed, and contained many highly ornate two-storey commercial buildings dating from the between the 1870s and 1890s, some up to three-storey. Its retail emporia distinguished the area and gave rise to exuberant architecture. The street was remembered as being second to only three or four of the central streets in the Melbourne district for the density of its traffic.

Department stores

Smith Street became identified with businesses which combined manufacturing and retailing on a large scale, producing some of the largest commercial buildings in the City, some rising to four storeys. Most notable of these enterprises was Foy and Gibson which developed a series of buildings stretching along Smith St for approximately two kilometres from north to south. The majority of the firm's manufacturing took place on the Collingwood side of Smith Street while most of its large retail outlets were on the west side. Similarly, Henry Ackman and Co., which had expanded its business from pawn-broking to dealing in second-hand furniture and general merchandise, occupied shops, warehouses and factories on both sides of Smith Street.(114) Other large retail entities were established into the early part of the 20th century: for example the Paterson's store which was built at 173-181 Smith Street in 1911.(115)

Another was G. J. Coles & Co. Pty Ltd: GJ Coles, in partnership with his brothers Jim and (Sir) Arthur, opened a fancy goods store at 288 Smith Street, Collingwood In April 1914, under the banner of G&J Coles. Jim Coles died in 1916 so, after the war, George and Arthur sold their store to an uncle and in June 1919 opened another, larger premises at 170-172 Smith Street. This was the first store for the new firm of G. J. Coles & Co. Pty. Ltd., created on 1 July 1921, with George as managing director. The shop at 170-172 Smith Street was rebuilt in the late 1930s to become the only custom designed GJ Coles & Co building in the City of Yarra, as an example of a nationally known retailer's suburban store.

Public transport

The first power driven public transport to be introduced to Fitzroy was the cable tram, one route running along Gertrude Street and Smith Street in 1886- 1887. Unlike the pattern of urban development in some of Melbourne's then outer suburbs, where the location of tram routes facilitated and stimulated the development of those streets into major commercial strips, the tram routes in Fitzroy were located along streets which were already important commercial precincts such as Smith and Brunswick Streets.

Main development era

The main development period of the Smith Street Heritage Overlay Area is that of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras, with a contribution from well-preserved inter-war buildings and individually significant buildings of any era.

Contributory elements

Contributory elements include (but not exclusively) mainly attached Victorian-era and Edwardian-era, one and two-storey shops and residences having typically:

. Facade parapets, with pitched roofs behind;

. Two storey wall heights, with some significant landmark buildings of up to 4 levels,

. Face brick (red, bichrome and polychrome) or stucco walls;

. Corrugated iron roof cladding, with some slate roofing;

. Chimneys of either stucco finish (with moulded caps) or of face red brickwork with corbelled capping courses;

. Post-supported street verandahs as shown on the MMBW Detail Plans (116);

. Less than 40% of the upper street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors;

. No front or side setbacks; also

. Timber and metal framed display windows at ground level, timber or tiled shopfront plinths, and entry recesses.

Contributory elements also include:

. Public infrastructure, expressive of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras such as bluestone pitched road paving, crossings, stone kerbs, and channels, and asphalt paved footpaths; and

. Well-preserved inter-war buildings and individually significant buildings of any era.

How is it significant?

HO333 Smith Street Heritage Overlay Area, Fitzroy/Collingwood is **aesthetically and historically** significant to the City of Yarra (National Estate Register [NER] Criteria E1, A4)

Why is it significant?

The Smith Street Heritage Overlay Area is significant:

. As the City's most important Victorian and Edwardian-era commercial strip, serving the whole of Collingwood and Fitzroy and beyond, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries;

. For its expression of the early commercial development phases in the City, with the modest commercial and residential development from the 1850s-60s still evident, the more substantial premises in the 1860s and 1870s, the development associated with the advent of the cable tram to the street in the late 1880s, and the Edwardian-era retail boom;

. As a substantially intact collection of well-preserved late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and retail buildings of note, including hotels, shops, and some industrial buildings to the north of Johnston Street;

. For the unusual or particularly ornate and exuberant Italianate and Edwardian details on many buildings, reflecting the importance of this retail strip in the broader history of manufacturing, retailing and commerce in the Melbourne metropolitan area and the municipalities of Collingwood and Fitzroy; and

. As the centre for large scale manufacturing and retail emporia, such as the highly significant Foy and Gibson company.

References

110 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. p 7.

111 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. p 9.

112 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. p 38.

113 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. p 38

114 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. pp 30-31.

115 Fitzroy History Society. op cit. p. 31.

116 See MMBW Detail Plan 1196 of 1899

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - South Fitzroy Conservation Study, Jacobs Lewis Vines, 1979; Yarra - Fitzroy Urban Conservation Study, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1992; Yarra - City of Yarra Heritage Review, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1998; Yarra - City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas, Graeme Butler & Associates, 2007;
Construction dates	1925,
Other Names	Factory/Warehouse,
Hermes Number	100933
Property Number	

Physical Description 2

part 423-425

Integrity

Fair

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/