

---

# Barnett's Building



B6348 Barnett's Building

---

## Location

164-166 Bourke Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3000 - Property No B6348

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Local

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 12, 2005

What is significant? Barnett's building was designed and built in 1938 by noted modernist architects Seabrook & Fildes. It was constructed for Louis Barnett and Sons to house their hair and beauty salon business, and their tenant, the Weber & Rice Health & Strength College.

The facade of the four storey building incorporates three rows of metal framed windows, with bright blue enamelled spandrel panels in between, surrounded by a frame. The blank area above originally formed a backdrop for freestanding lettering spelling BARNETT'S, incised coloured lettering for the college, and a striking mural depicting the college's activities, all now removed or covered over.

How is it significant? Barnett's building is significant for architectural and historical reasons at the Local level.

Why is it significant? Barnett's building is architecturally significant for a current facade that is a rare example of the influence of European modernist trends. That was once also unusual and idiosyncratic for its use of colour and signage as an integral part of the conception, though these elements are largely removed. The use of metal framed 'strip-windows' with bright blue metal spandrels between was highly adventurous, and anticipated the look

of the curtain walling that became standard on office blocks in Melbourne after WWII by 17 years.  
Historically, the building was unusual for providing both beauty facilities for women and physical improvement for men on the same site, and in a purpose designed building

Classified:10/06/1992

Revised: 06/05/2002

Hermes Number 64434

Property Number

---

*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/>*