
Little Bourke Street & Environs - Historic Area



B7240 Little Bourke St



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Location

Little Bourke Street between Swanston & Exhibition Streets,, MELBOURNE VIC 3000 - Property No B7240

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

National

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 27, 2008

Little Bourke Street & Environs between Swanston and Exhibition streets, has a concentration of buildings occupied by Chinese goods and services for sale. This gives the area a distinctive character immediately identifiable to most Melbournians, and allows the area legitimately to be called a 'Chinatown'. Chinatowns are found in many western and southeast Asia cities, and there was once a number of chinatowns in mining and rural settlements throughout Australia, but today Melbourne's Chinatown is one of only two that remain in this country, the other being in Sydney.

The quarter was established nearly 130 years ago and since then it has passed through a number of developmental phases; fortunately, buildings remain today as representatives of much of this history. There are traditional grocery stores very similar to those from the quarter's earliest days when it catered to the needs of the Chinese miners upcountry; District Associations buildings; Christian Churches; Merchants' establishments and warehouses from the turn of the century when the quarter was in its heyday. At this time the Chinese controlled the wholesaling of tropical fruits and vegetables throughout Australia. Cafes and speciality shops, with a largely

non-chinese clientele, represent the most recent, post-war phase of the quarter.

The area provides an enclave of one, two and three storey buildings and some continuous nineteenth century streetscapes, in a city centre increasingly dominated by high-rise buildings. Some of the buildings in Chinatown incorporate Chinese decorative motifs, while most are representative of mainstream European architectural styles.

Classified: 01/12/1982

Hermes Number 70167

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/>