CITY WATCH HOUSE



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1 city watch house russell street melbourne front view 1993



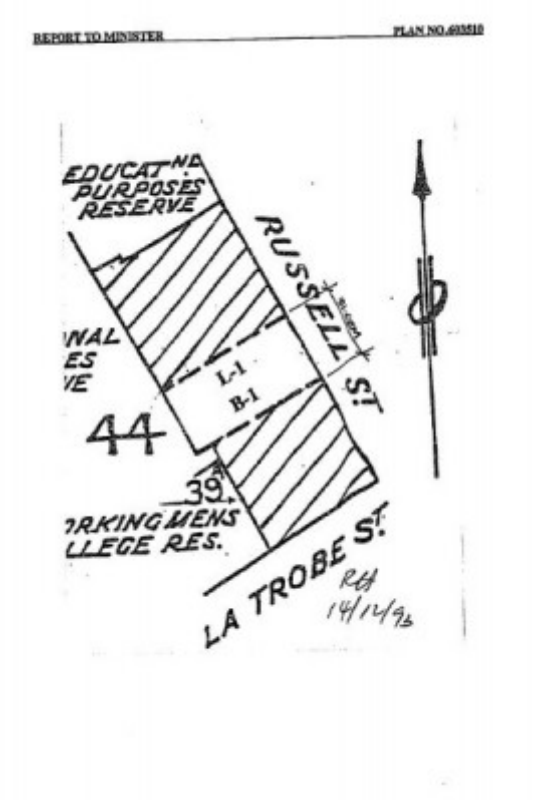
city watch house russell street melbourne aerial view oct1993



city watch house russell street melbourne front view jan1979



city watch house russell street melbourne tower detail 1993



H1006 plan

Location

345-355 RUSSELL STREET MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1006

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO484

VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

Amendment to Registration

February 10, 1994

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 19, 1999

What is significant?

The City Watch House was constructed in 1907-08 to the design of architect GBH Austin of the Public Works Department. The building was constructed on the site a former cell block of Old Melbourne Gaol. The two storey rendered front section is two rooms deep and originally contained offices on the ground floor with residential accommodation on the upper level. The rear section occupying the major part of the site contains the cell block and exercise yards. There have many small alterations to the building but it displays reasonable integrity retaining internal layout, external form and some distinctive original elements such as the bow truss steel grille roofs over the exercise yards.

How is it significant?

The City Watch House is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The City Watch House is historically significant as a site associated with prisons and the administration of justice in Victoria since 1842. The site is part of a precinct which includes the Old Melbourne Gaol, the former Magistrates' Court and the former Russell Street Police Complex. The building and its location demonstrate the inter-relationship of the various elements of the criminal justice system.

The City Watch House is architecturally significant as an important example of the work of GBH Austin of the Public Works Department. Austin's use of the Romanesque style complements his design for the adjacent Magistrates Court. The revival of the pure Norman style of Romanesque, in contrast to the American Romanesque of mixed progeny developed in the late nineteenth century by the American architect HH Richardson, would by association have been seen as underlying the ancient heritage of English law and as the appropriate style for judicial buildings.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don’t harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must notify the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a

determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions here.

Construction dates	1907,
Architect/Designer	Austin, GBH,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	797
Property Number	

History

History of Place:
Public Works Department contract books and plans show that a new city lock-up was designed in 1907-08 by the architect G B H Austin. The contractor was F G Schillabear and the cost was 10,382 pounds. An Argus article in July 1911 described the new buildings, including the adjacent court house, as the best block in Melbourne.

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY
G B H Austin, the arhitect, was born in 1860. He joined the Public Works Department in 1876 aged 16. In 1915 he was a District Architect in charge of the metropolitan District. His designs include Camperdown Court House (1886-7), Queenscliffe Post Office and Mount Buffalo Chalet. Austin was elected a Fellow of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects just prior to his death in 1921.

(From file notes 603510)

Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
Historic Building No. 1006.
City Watch House, Russell Street, Melbourne
(To the extent of:
1. all of the building known as the City Watch House marked B-1 on Plan No.603510 signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council; and
2. the land marked L-1 on Plan No. 603510 signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council, being part of the land contained in Crown Allotment 45 of Section 44, Parish of Melbourne North.)
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G6 10 February 1994 p.398]

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/