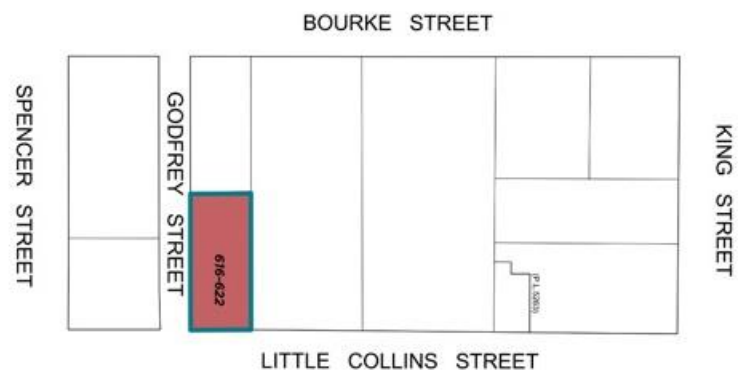


## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Heritage Place:** Former Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board Building



**PS ref no:** HO1280



### What is significant?

616-622 Little Collins Street, built in 1937 and extended in 1938-39 for the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works.

Elements that contribute to the significance 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;
- The Doric columns; vertical piers, spandrels, and flagpole spire;
- The recessed lobby doorway, surround, cornice, copper doors; and
- The etched bronze signage, emblazoned lettering, and iron panel gates.

Later alterations are not significant.

### How it is significant?

616-622 Little Collins Street is of local historic, aesthetic and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

### Why it is significant?

The site of 616-622 Little Collins Street is historically significant as the location of the 1840 camp of Captain William Lonsdale, the first Police Magistrate of the Port Phillip district. (Criterion A)

Built in 1937 and extended in 1938 and early 1939, the building at 616-622 Little Collins Street is historically significant for its association with the administration of tramways in the City of Melbourne from 1937 to 1983. Formed in 1919, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board (MMTB) ran the entire tram network until it was subsumed into the Metropolitan Transit Authority in 1983. 616-622 Little Collins Street is historically significant for its use as the headquarters of the MMTB, housing centralised management, administrative and design functions. (Criterion A)

The building at 616-622 Little Collins St is an intact and striking example of a large public utility building. Extending for three blocks along Godfrey Street, it combines elements of the moderne, stripped classical and art deco architecture. Features include a squared entry framed by brown granite faux Doric columns which sits below a cornice with the words 'Melbourne Metropolitan Tramways Board' in a gilded font; vertical bands of piers inset with regular window and spandrel panels to the front facade, a setback roof profile with flagpole spire, brass entry doors and decorative metal panel gates. (Criterion E)

The building at 616-622 Little Collins Street is significant as the last work of prominent MMTB architect, Alan Gordon Monsborough. During the 1920s and 1930s Monsborough was noted for his adaptation of the Greek revival style for industrial settings, particularly for buildings such as tram depots and substations. (Criterion H)

#### **Primary source**

---

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)