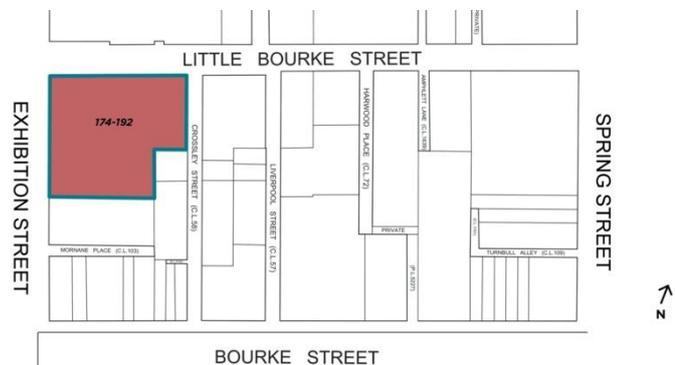


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: The Former Bryson Centre



PS ref no: HO1332



What is significant?

The Former Bryson Centre, 174-192 Exhibition Street, a multi-storey commercial building constructed in 1970-72.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place 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.

Later alterations made to the lower levels of the building are not significant.

How it is significant?

The Former Bryson Centre at 174-192 Exhibition Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1970-72 to a design by Perrott Lyon Timlock & Kesa, the Former Bryson Centre has a clear association with the postwar building boom which transformed central Melbourne into a modern high-rise city. The design of these commercial buildings from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s – many of which were architect designed – was driven by the commercial demands and the prestige afforded by a dominant city presence (Criterion A).

Containing a range of facilities for both tourists and businesspeople, the Former Bryson Centre was described on opening in 1972 as a 'city within a city'. Together with the earlier Southern Cross Hotel, which was described in a similar manner on opening in 1962 (since demolished), and Collins Place

(completed 1981), this building demonstrates the development of this multi-functional building type in central Melbourne (Criterion A).

The Former Bryson Centre is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The multi-functional building combining office space, hotel accommodation, public amenities and retail space, strongly reflects an architectural style which was popular from the 1960s through to the mid 1970s, particularly in central Melbourne, and demonstrates an innovative approach to commercial development in the 1970s. Constructed as a 23-storey structure, the Former Bryson Centre clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a later postwar commercial building, including a dominant podium base, grid-like walls which clearly express the trabeated structural system and alternating horizontal strips of glazing and solid projecting spandrels/balconies, as well as the use of materials such as precast concrete panels. These demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

Primary source

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