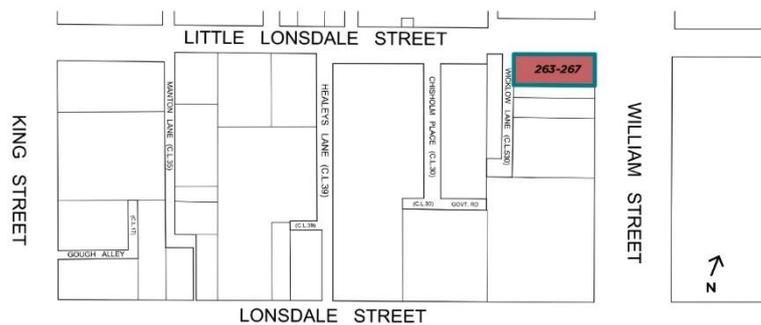


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Metropolitan Hotel

PS ref no: HO1231



What is significant?

Metropolitan Hotel at 263-267 William Street, Melbourne, built in 1925.

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;
- Hipped roof and flat parapet;
- Chamfered corner entry, and the pattern and size of original fenestration with double hung sash windows and stone sills;
- Classical motifs and styling to the façade including pilasters and major and minor cornice;
- Early brick chimney; and
- Art deco style metal lettering reading 'Metropolitan' on the William Street façade.

Later alterations made to the facades including the large round arched windows and corner window at the upper level and altered window and door openings at the ground level are not significant.

How it is significant?

Metropolitan Hotel at 263-267 William Street, Melbourne, is of local historic, rarity, representative and social significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The Metropolitan Hotel building at 263-267 William Street is historically significant due to its association with the long term and continued operation of the Metropolitan Hotel on the same corner site from 1854 to present day. The Metropolitan Hotel is of historical significance for its association with the establishment of city hotels as meeting places; the increased occupation of women as publicans, particularly from the early 1900s; and the hotel's role from the late 1930s in raising money for charity. As one of a number of Melbourne hotels that underwent significant change in the 1920s and 1930s due to the demands of the Liquor Licenses Reduction Board from 1907, requiring hotel owners to provide adequate accommodation and facilities for the public, the Metropolitan Hotel is illustrative of the substantial hotel development that took place at this time. (Criterion A)

The Metropolitan Hotel is a rare surviving example of a traditional corner hotel. Once a ubiquitous land use and activity, the number of traditional hotels are in severe decline in the Hoddle Grid Study Area, reducing from over 100 in the 1920s, to approximately 45 in the 1960s, and with around 12 currently retaining their location, building form and use. (Criterion B)

The Metropolitan Hotel at 263-267 William Street is a representative example of a hotel from the interwar period. This typology is characterised by the corner location and splayed entrance, two-storey building form with residential accommodation on the first floor and public areas on the ground floor. A key characteristic of the Metropolitan Hotel is the restrained neo-classical character typical of the interwar period. Its integrity is consistent with other examples where the pattern and type of doors and windows have been altered, particularly to the ground floor. (Criterion D)

The Metropolitan Hotel is of social significance for its long connections with the city, as a place of social congregation for more than 160 years, providing a meeting place for particular organisations and groups, as well as for informal meetings, social activities and celebrations. The social significance of the Metropolitan Hotel is evidenced by the regular, long-term, and continuous use as a hotel – a ‘public house’ – serving the legal fraternity and court visitors in particular and continuing to serve that function today. (Criterion G)

Primary source

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