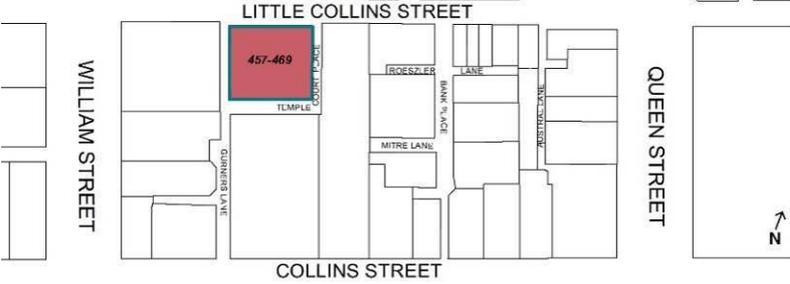


## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

<b>Heritage Place:</b> Cowan House	<b>PS ref no:</b> HO1353
	

### What is significant?

Cowan House at 457-469 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, designed by architects E & G Kolle & Associates and constructed in 1969, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- Original form and scale;
- Original modular composition of the facades to the office tower comprising precast concrete panels with inset aluminium frame windows and glazed ceramic tiles;
- Original podium form and undercroft, colonnades and loggia; and
- Original materials including glazed ceramic tiles, glazing and rough face concrete blockwork.

Later alterations are not significant.

### How it is significant?

Cowan House at 457-469 Little Collins Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

### Why it is significant?

Cowan House, designed by *E & G Kolle & Associates*, and opened in 1969, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of postwar development and rapid growth in Melbourne of corporate architecture of the 1950s-70s. Located in the financial and legal precinct in the western part of the city, it reflects the expansion of large national and international companies opting for construction and naming rights of new city office buildings as a form of promotion and fund investment. Constructed for

the Melbourne-based subsidiary of English real estate and investment company Capital & Counties (Australia) Pty Ltd, occupants from 1969-c1983, the building evidences the significant investment made in city building after World War Two by overseas companies. (Criterion A)

Cowan House is significant as a highly intact example of postwar commercial development in central Melbourne in the Post-War Modernist style that characterised this new wave of development. These buildings represented the new modernism in their modular, industrial Bauhaus inspired aesthetic and incorporated features such as consistent access to daylight and open floor plans to meet new standards for commercial office accommodation. The building exhibits key attributes of the Post-War Modernist style that characterised this wave of development, including concrete post and slab construction, a non-loadbearing precast concrete panel façade with a repetitive modular geometry and a street level undercroft and colonnade which wraps around two sides of the building. Cowan House is also representative of the early wave of high-rise commercial buildings constructed following the abolition of the 40 metre (132 foot) height limit for buildings in the city centre. The building is notable for its incorporation of a colonnade and loggia to the Gurners Lane frontage. (Criterion D)

Cowan House is aesthetically significant as a highly intact example of the later postwar development in curtain wall design during the 1960s, where a mix of materials was utilised to create a greater modularity and three-dimensional quality to the facades. Its aesthetic significance resides in the fine attention to detail on all four elevations and for the variety of materials used, of differing colours and textures including precast concrete panels, glazed ceramic wall tiles and rough-cast concrete blockwork, with each elevation being well considered and detailed. (Criterion E)

#### **Primary source**

---

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