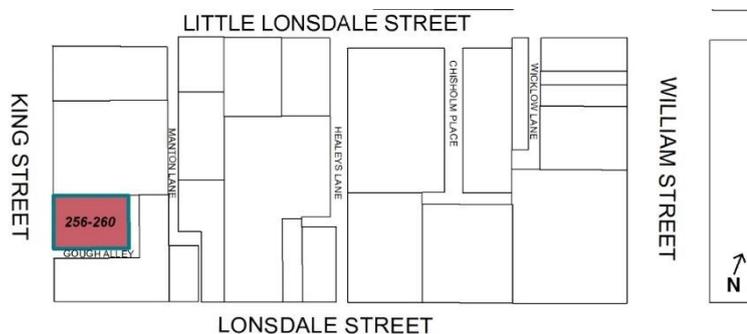


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Paramount House



PS ref no: HO1342



What is significant?

The former Paramount House at 256-260 King Street, Melbourne, a two-storey commercial building built in 1929-30 to a design by architect Eric C Beedham.

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

- The original building form and scale;
- The original painted render (possibly originally unpainted) and face brick walls and pattern of fenestration including cornice, parapet, decorative recessed semicircular arches above and rectangular panels below upper floor windows, painted render lintels and pattern of window openings; and
- The original multi-pane steel frame windows.

Later alterations made to the street level façade are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Paramount House at 256-260 King Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and rarity significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Paramount House at 256-260 King Street, Melbourne, constructed in 1929 is historically significant for its ability to demonstrate one aspect of Melbourne's social and cultural history related to the provision of entertainment and the transmission of American popular culture through film from the interwar period. Through its association with American film company Lasky Films Ltd (later Paramount Films), the building also demonstrates the increased distribution of American films in Melbourne and Australia at a time when sound was introduced to picture making and film production had increased in America. With this expansion, American film companies established 'exchange' centres for the distribution and marketing of films in countries such as Australia. By the 1970s, the building was occupied by Cinema International Corporate Pty Ltd (later CIC-Fox and United International Pictures), a combined distributing venture for American film studios including Paramount Pictures, Universal Pictures, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), United Artists, 20th Century Fox and Walt Disney

Productions. The building was long associated with the moving picture industry, from its construction in 1929 to 1989. The building at 256-260 King Street, opened by Lasky Films Ltd, and including a small private theatre at which trade showings were given, provides tangible evidence of this component in the film distribution industry. (Criterion A)

The former Paramount Film Service building at 256-260 King Street is significant as a rare surviving example of a purpose-built interwar commercial building associated with the film industry. Constructed in 1929 to act as a headquarters of prominent international film distribution companies, the building originally incorporated offices, film vaults and storage accommodation and a small picture theatre for trade showings. Its exclusive long-term use (from 1930 to 1989) as the core distribution centre is significant, as no other building of its type within Hoddle Grid is known to have such long-term associations. (Criterion B)

Primary source

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