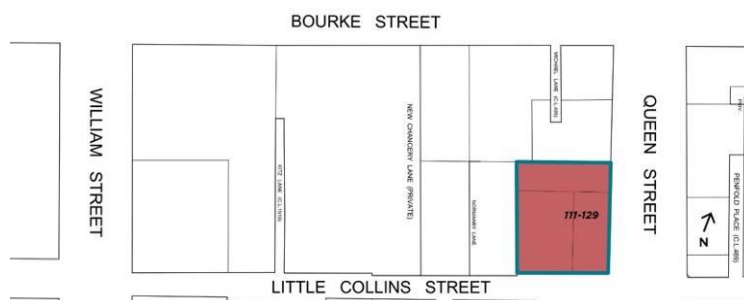


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Royal
Automobile Club of Victoria



PS ref no: HO1068



What is significant?

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building at 111-129 Queen Street, Melbourne, completed in 1961 and designed by Bates Smart McCutcheon.

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

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing; and
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design.

Later alterations, particularly at street level, are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building at 111-129 Queen Street is of historical, representative, aesthetic, social and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is historically significant as the headquarters of the large and influential RACV who were advocates for the rights of motorists, including the spending of significant public money on infrastructure for motorised transport. In the 1950s and 60s the RACV was highly influential in the promotion of tourism in Victoria. (Criterion A)

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is a fine example of a recreational club in the city centre. Built in 1961, and designed by noted modernist architects Bates Smart McCutcheon, it expresses its function through the glazed lower floors for public use and the masonry-clad residential tower above. In design it is a relatively early example of a modern tower departing from the curtain

wall of the 1950s. Its construction program was purportedly an early example of the fast-track method that enabled construction to commence concurrently with detailed design. (Criterion D)

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is aesthetically significant for its composition, of which the three-storey transparent cantilevered podium is a notable feature. Despite some alterations that have filled in the undercroft, the podium is still legible. Other attributes of aesthetic value include the main structural columns visible in a recessed glass clerestorey window above the podium and the butterfly roof over the tower block. (Criterion E)

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is of social significance for its strong and long-standing association with the RACV Club members, staff and board. Designed as a central city meeting place for members, the club facilities served as a place of social congregation for RACV members for more than 45 years. Members used the Club as a place for business and for personal celebrations and events, resulting in a strong and continuing sense of connection to the premises even after the club had moved to its new premises. (Criterion G)

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is historically significant as the headquarters of the State's premier road lobbyist, as a major tourism promoter, and as a private club serving Melbourne's business, professional and social elite that has hosted many significant political and public events for more than four decades. It has remained a highly influential organisation over several decades with many amongst its wide membership also highly influential within Victorian society. (Criterion H)

Primary source

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