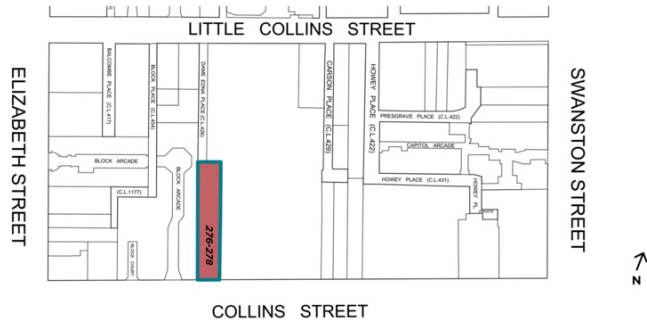


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Former Allans Building (276-278 Collins Street, Melbourne), April 2022

Heritage Place: Former Allans Building



PS ref no: HO1318



What is significant?

The Former Allans Building, 276-278 Collins Street, a multi-storey commercial building constructed in 1956-57.

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 street level facade are not significant.

How it is significant?

The Former Allans Building at 276-278 Collins Street is of historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

Constructed in 1956-57, to a design by Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes, Mewton and Lobb in association with Charles N Hollinshed, the Former Allans Building 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).

The Former Allans Building has strong and enduring associations with the development of the music industry in Melbourne. The music dealership, which continuously occupied the site in Collins Street from at least 1876 to c1982, was noted as being the largest in the southern hemisphere by 1877 (Criterion A).

The Former Allans Building is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Post-War Modernist commercial building. The building strongly reflects the style which was popular in the 1950s, particularly in central Melbourne. Constructed to the prevailing limit-height of 40m (132 feet) at the time, the Former Allans Building clearly demonstrates typical characteristics of a 1950s structure with a curtain wall façade. The transparent front façade of alternating rows of glazing and opaque glass spandrels, along vertical mullions which divide the facade into a grid-like pattern, and the use of materials such as opaque glass and metal window frames, demonstrate important aspects of the Post-War Modernist style (Criterion D).

The Former Allans Building has close associations with the Allan family, headed by George Leavis Allan who worked in the music industry in Melbourne from 1853 and established the music business, Allan & Co, with his son in 1881. The Allan family owned the music business through the latter part of the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century. The family were significant contributors to the music industry in Melbourne for over 100 years and the family name was synonymous with this industry for a long period (Criterion H).

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020) (updated March 2022)