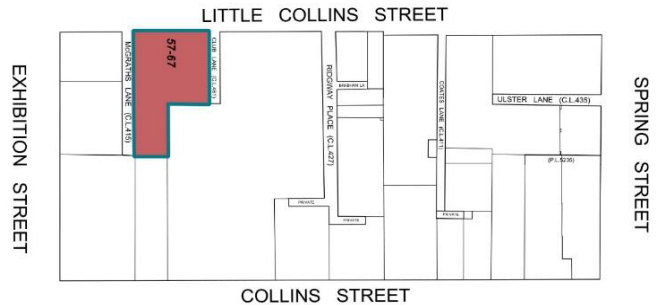


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Former Craig Williamson Pty Ltd complex (57-67 Little Collins Street Melbourne), April 2022

Heritage Place: Former Craig, Williamson Pty Ltd complex

PS ref no: Interim HO1348





What is significant?

57-67 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, built in two major stages in 1912 and 1925 for Craig, Williamson Pty Ltd, is significant.

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

- The buildings' original external form (incorporating buildings from 1912 and 1925), materials and detailing
- The 1925 three-storey building's high level of integrity to its original design composed of a masonry pier and beam structure
- Earlier two-storey face brick masonry components (from c1880s and 1912) of the former Craig, Williamson Pty Ltd complex in McGrath Lane and Club Lane
- Pattern and size of original fenestration (Little Collins Street, McGrath Lane and Club Lane)
- Large square industrial steel-framed windows (Little Collins Street).

More recent alterations, including the ground level shopfronts, replacement of glazing, infill to window openings and roof deck with glazed balustrade, are not significant.

How it is significant?

57-67 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, is of local historical and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The complex at 57-67 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, incorporating structures from c1880s, and built in 1912 and 1925 for drapery, clothing and furniture business Craig, Williamson Pty Ltd, demonstrates the growth in manufacturing that was part of the buoyant new economy in early twentieth century Melbourne following the economic depression of the 1890s and new federal tariffs introduced in the early 1900s. Craig, Williamson Pty Ltd, who were also major retailers with premises in Elizabeth

Street from the 1890s, as well as in Bendigo and Ballarat, consolidated their manufacturing and storage at 57-67 Little Collins Street in the city centre close to their retail operations. (Criterion A)

The building is significant for its association with the Commonwealth Postmaster-General's Department from 1932-88. Having acquired the building in 1927, in preparation for the future automation of Melbourne's telephone system, the first PMG Research Laboratories were established on the upper two floors. The premises are historically significant as the site of the Mayser or 'atomic clock' that supplied accurate timekeeping to all master clocks in Australia. (Criterion A)

57-67 Little Collins Street is representative of an interwar industrial building and maintains its rhythm, scale and form from the 1925 period. This is evident along Little Collins Street where the masonry framework is inset with large metal-framed windows. The interwar characteristics are evident to the upper floors of the Little Collins Street elevation with restrained stucco mouldings over brickwork. Earlier parts of the building are also evident along McGrath and Club lanes where the red brick elevations form part of the urban landscape. (Criterion D)

Primary source

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