

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Former Patersons Pty Ltd (Part 152-158 Bourke Street, Melbourne), April 2022**

**Heritage Place:** Former Patersons Pty Ltd



**PS ref no:** HO1266



**What is significant?**

The former Patersons Pty Ltd Building at Part 152-158 Bourke Street, built in 1934 to a design by architect Arthur W Purnell.

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
- The pattern and size of fenestrations to its Bourke Street façade at above ground level
- The stepped parapet, concrete spandrels and steel framed casement sash windows
- Green-glazed tiling, vertical fins, balconette and flagpole.

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

**How it is significant?**

The former Patersons Pty Ltd Building at 152-158 Bourke Street is of local historic, aesthetic and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

**Why it is significant?**

The building, Part 152-158 Bourke Street, built in 1934 for Paterson Pty Ltd as a furniture store and warehouse to a design by architect Arthur W Purnell, is historically significant for its association with manufacturing and retailing in the City of Melbourne. From 1938, and particularly after World War Two, Patersons expanded into suburban Melbourne, regional Victoria and interstate; by 1950 it

operated 22 branches throughout Australia. Patersons Pty Ltd was listed as a public company in 1949 and was an important part of the Bourke Street retail strip until 1987. (Criterion A)

The former Patersons Pty Ltd Building at 152-158 Bourke Street is of local aesthetic significance for its upper façade which is a fine example of the moderne style that was popular in the interwar period. The particular characteristics include an emphatic vertical expression derived from the ten vertical fins that run the full height of the façade and extend beyond the stepped parapet. Projecting slightly from the main façade each fin is clad in distinctive green glazed terra cotta tiles. Decorative elements such as the balconette and flag pole contribute to the sense of verticality contrasted by horizontal bands of windows and concrete spandrels. A repeated curved Art Deco motif is inscribed across the lowest concrete spandrel at the bottom edge of the façade. (Criterion E)

The former Patersons Pty Ltd building at 152-158 Bourke Street is significant for its long association with the Paterson family, who manufactured furniture in Richmond from 1884, and who sold furniture and homewares from this site from 1896 and from the current building from 1934 until 1987. The building is also significant for its association with architect Arthur W Purnell, who, both on his own and in partnership with others, designed houses, factories, offices, shops, sports centres and warehouses in Melbourne. A large number of these buildings still exist, including the Melbourne landmark Michael's Corner (1915) on Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. (Criterion H)

#### **Primary source**

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