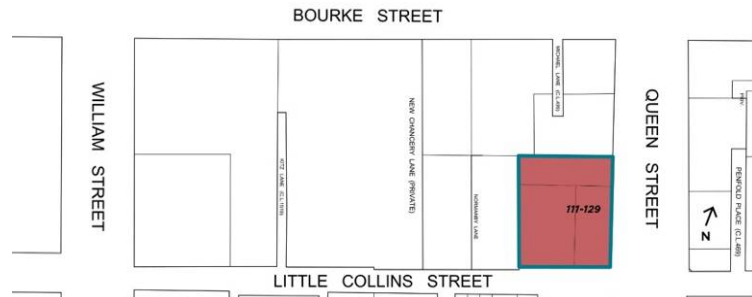


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (111-129 Queen Street, Melbourne), April 2022

Heritage Place: Former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria



PS ref no: HO1068



What is significant?

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building (RACV) 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
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design.

Alterations that occurred after 2004 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. The RACV is 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 semi-public use and the masonry-clad tower containing accommodation above. It is a relatively early example of a modern tower departing from the glazed 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 two-storey cantilevered podium is a notable feature. Alterations have reduced the architectural effect, but its form and detailing are still legible. Other attributes of aesthetic value include the visible structural piers supporting the tower and the butterfly roof of 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 for RACV members to socialise for more than 45 years. Members used the Club as a place to conduct business and for personal celebrations and events, resulting in a strong and continuing sense of connection to the building even after the club had moved to new premises. (Criterion G)

The former Royal Automobile Club of Victoria building is 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) (updated March 2022)