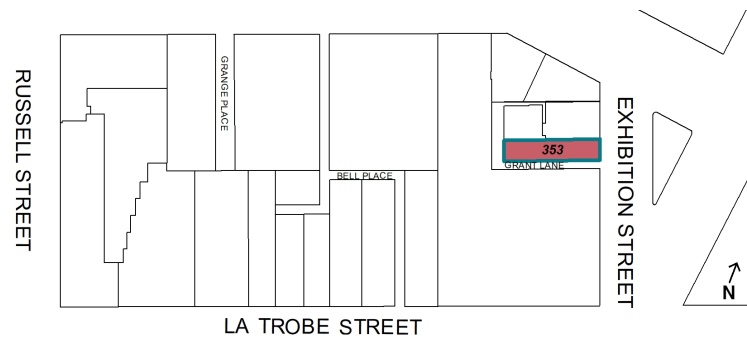


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Warehouse (353 Exhibition Street, Melbourne), April 2022

Heritage Place: Warehouse



PS ref no: HO1334



What is significant?

353 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, a three-storey face brick warehouse built to a design by Arthur W Purnell in 1926-27.

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

- Original building form and scale

- Original face brick walls and pattern of fenestration including parapet, pilasters, continuous painted render lintels and pattern of window openings
- Original steel frame windows along Grant Lane.

Later alterations such as the replacement of original windows and doors on its Exhibition Street elevation and insertion of new openings at the ground level are not significant.

How it is significant?

353 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former motor car showroom and sale room building at 353 Exhibition Street, constructed in 1926-27 to a design by architect Arthur W Purnell, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the rise of manufacturing in the city in the 1920s which led the recovery from the economic depression of the late 1920s-early 1930s. From the end of World War Two to the beginning of the 1970s, Melbourne underwent the most sustained growth in its history, mostly based on the manufacturing industry. The building at 353 Exhibition Street exhibits this growth, housing tenants involved in the motor and clothing manufacturing industries from c1930 until the mid-1970s, until it was converted to shops in 1982. Built initially for Barlow Motors Pty Ltd as a motor car showroom and sale room, the building also provides evidence of the early years of motoring in Victoria. With the doubling of registrations of motor cars, trucks and cycles in Melbourne between 1917 and 1922, the car showroom was a new type of place developed for the purpose of showing and selling cars. Although Barlow's occupancy was brief, the building was used in association with the motor industry into the 1970s. (Criterion A)

353 Exhibition Street is significant for the substantial evidence it retains of its development in the interwar period for use as a motor showroom and factory warehouse building. It is one of several such buildings that survive from the period, which are generally low scale and use simple construction of loadbearing face brick walls with either a steel post and beam or reinforced concrete internal structure. The building is now a rare example in the area around the north-eastern periphery of the Hoddle Grid, where its broader streetscape context has been considerably changed by later twentieth century redevelopment. While modest and utilitarian, like other buildings of its type, 353 Exhibition Street demonstrates a refined yet highly functional aesthetic and exhibits other key characteristics of its type including a symmetrical facade with simple parapet and a regular pattern of large, efficient steel framed windows with painted render lintels. The lack of superfluous decoration reinforces this simple and disciplined industrial aesthetic. (Criterion D)

Primary source

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