City of Melbourne Hoddle Grid Heritage Review

Postwar Thematic Environmental History 1945-1975

March 2020

Figure 1. Aerial view of Melbourne, 1959 (State Library of Victoria H2016.33/35)

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Introduction

Melbourne in the Postwar Period

Between 1950 and 1970, Melbourne became – for the first time since the 1880s – the fastest growing city in Australia. Perhaps more than any other Australian city, it exemplified the Fordist paradigm of urban growth – high investment in manufacturing, especially of protected consumer products such as cars and electrical goods, high levels of immigration, high levels of car and home ownership and high levels of government intervention in the provision of infrastructure. Melbourne became the main beachhead of American economic and cultural influence, and the leading centre of modernist innovation in art, architecture and design.

Graeme Davison, 'Welcoming the World: the 1956 Olympic Games and the re-presentation of Melbourne' in J Murphy and J Smart (eds), *The Forgotten Fifties: aspects of Australian society and culture in the 1950s,* p. 65.

The twentieth century represented Australia's coming of age. The post-World War II period was intrinsically linked to the concepts of progress, prosperity and expansion. Governments across the country became official patrons for this notion of progress, which became increasingly associated with a modern aesthetic in art, architecture and design. European and American influences on architecture in particular became an optimistic expression of post-war recovery – a vision of progress towards a brighter and better future (Lewi & Goad 2019:22-24).

For Melbourne, the years between 1945 and 1975 were characterised by great social, cultural and physical transformation. In the immediate postwar years, Melbourne was a city 'in the doldrums' (Lewis et all 1993:203). Building activity was at a standstill and an atmosphere of stagnation hung over its centre. An editorial in the *Herald* lamented that 'too many old, two-storey buildings front our main streets' while influential architect, Robyn Boyd, denounced 'the commercial slums of the city', despairing at the lack of office space and the 'derelict little buildings' that populated the city centre (*Herald* 21 March 1955:3).

The 1950s heralded dramatic changes. As author and historian, Robyn Annear, attests, it was at this time that:

Melbourne was being remade. It was always being remade, but from the mid-1950s the city was falling over itself in the pursuit of progress (Annear 2014:xi).

This was a period of great optimism and energy – the lifting of constraints on building materials in 1952 and the gradual recovery of Melbourne's economy brought a new-found confidence to the city. The rise of car ownership, the introduction of television to Australia, the hosting of the Olympic Games, and the arrival of a million immigrants from Europe and the UK over a 20-year period contributed to the substantial cultural, social and physical transformation of the city (MV).

The explosion of construction from 1953 onwards was a dramatic turning point in the evolution of central Melbourne, with the demolition of older buildings considered to be a 'sign of progress, prosperity and expansion' (*Port of Melbourne Quarterly* 1958:11-15). In 1959, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that:

For the five years ended September 30 last year (1959), the MCC handled building applications valued at nearly 52 million pounds…In the central business area, 102 buildings were erected during the five years. Prominent among these were those erected by large companies as their Australian headquarters, which evidenced the confidence of business enterprise in the future of Australia and of Melbourne in particular (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 May 1960:5).

During this period, Melbourne asserted itself as a forward-looking international city by embracing the new-found architectural language of Chicago and New York and rejecting the applied decoration of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Post-War Modernist style of multi-storey buildings, influenced particularly by the steel and glass office tower design in the United States, stood in stark contrast to the pre-war city buildings in central Melbourne.

Part motivated by a surging national pride, and part driven by the need to provide increased accommodation and lettable space for the expanding city, the introduction of the postwar office block transformed the skyline of Melbourne and its patterns of land use (Taylor 2001:18). Tall office buildings became an internationally recognised symbol of Melbourne's aspiration for expansion and prosperity (Taylor 2001:58). The scale and modernity of Melbourne's new buildings reflect the city's belief in its economic and commercial future and the rejection of its small-scale manufacturing and retailing past.

Australia had settled into a new, more independent sense of national pride and identity removed from British antecedents by the mid-1960s. Melbourne had successfully hosted the 1956 Olympic Games, which brought maturity and growth for the city, as well as a role on the international stage, while the introduction of television in the 1950s led to a growing interest and concern for international affairs and global issues.

The physical fabric of Melbourne continued to evolve apace. The sharp rise in car ownership altered the city's layout and appearance through the introduction of multi-level carparks, parking meters and garages, as well as the construction of road infrastructure to provide vehicular access to the city centre. It also influenced the relocation of manufacturing and retailing services outside the city centre (Marsden 2000:41-42).

In 1970, the construction boom showed little signs of slowing down, with the *Age* reporting that:

> the building rate in Melbourne's Golden Mile business area is booming this year and is already a record. The City Council has issued permits for buildings valued at $107,585,000 – double the value of the previous year record year 1966 and triple last year's permits (*Age* 15 June 1970:3).

It was this building boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s that began to turn the tide on wholesale demolition and development and focused people's attention on what was being lost in Melbourne's city centre. As Rodney Davidson, former chair and president of the National Trust in Victoria and founding chair of the Historic Buildings Preservation Council, noted in 1979:

> until about 1971 it was difficult to get people interested in conservation issues. Then suddenly Melbourne woke up one morning and found there was a big hole where the Paris end used to be…it was that more than anything which brought home the consequences of extravagant development (*Age* 12 April 1979:15).

This growing concern to preserve elements of Melbourne's past ultimately led to reforms to planning schemes and the establishment of registers to protect historic buildings that continue to exist today.

Hoddle Grid Postwar Thematic Environmental History

The *Hoddle Grid Postwar Thematic Environmental History 1945-1975* (the Postwar TEH) has been prepared to document and illustrate how various themes have shaped the environment and culture of central Melbourne following World War II. In this way, the Postwar TEH provides a context for postwar heritage places that have been identified within the Central Business District of the City of Melbourne as part of the *Hoddle Grid Heritage Review* (2020).

This Postwar TEH builds on an earlier version prepared by Context titled *Post-World War Two Thematic History* for the City of Melbourne.

The Hoddle Grid Heritage Review study area extends slightly beyond Robert Hoddle's surveyed grid. The boundary encompasses a section of the Yarra River or Birrarung, recognising that the history of the Hoddle Grid is inextricably linked to the presence of the river and that the grid plan is aligned with its course. In the west, the study area boundary goes to Wurundjeri Way, including the railway and part of the former Batman's Hill, one of several hills that gave the city landscape its particular shape. To the north-east it extends to A'Beckett and Victoria Streets (Context 2018:2).

The Postwar TEH is arranged thematically, with themes consistent with those of the *Thematic History – A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment,* prepared by Context in 2012. The following text provides an explanation for the role of the 2012 Thematic History, and it equally applies to the purpose and function of the Postwar TEH:

> The role of the Thematic Environmental History is not to provide a comprehensive account of the social and economic history of the municipality. It is intended to be a concise document that takes a broad-brush approach, setting out the key themes that have influenced the historical development of a municipality and helping to explain how and why the built and human-influenced environments of that municipality look as they do today. A thematic environmental history is an essential part of a municipality heritage study, helping ensure that the places that reflect and represent the historical development of the municipality are recognised.

> The Heritage Victoria publication *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes* highlights what is distinctive about Victoria, and offers a guide to the development and use of themes in local thematic environmental histories. Appendix 1 compares the themes developed for this thematic environmental history with the framework of Victoria-wide themes.

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This thematic environmental history is arranged around the selected themes, using these themes as chapters. It does not follow an overall chronological order, although within each chapter the narrative may progress in a linear fashion. The process of determining historical themes has been similar to that undertaken for any other thematic municipal history, in that a large amount of secondary material has been drawn on in researching land-use patterns, and economic and social developments. The vast quantity of available literature relating to the history of the City of Melbourne provides a valuable, if somewhat overwhelming, resource; the archives of the City of Melbourne (now housed at PROV) are a significant collection in themselves. It has not been possible to use all of this material to prepare this report, but a selection of the available resources has been drawn on.

Following each sub-theme, the report lists examples of places and objects to help the reader understand the connection between the identified historical themes and the tangible places and objects in the City of Melbourne that relate to each theme. This is an indicative list only, for the purpose of demonstrating the different kinds of places that might relate to the different themes.

No thematic environmental history can ever be considered complete. As more research is undertaken, evidence is uncovered through heritage studies, as community stories are told and as social perspectives change, new aspects of a locality's history will inevitably emerge (Context 2012:vi-vii).

The Postwar TEH is divided into the following historic themes, drawn from the 2012 Thematic History:

    1.0   Shaping the urban landscape
    2.0   Governing, administering and policing the city
    3.0   Building a commercial city
    4.0   Creating a functioning city
    5.0   Living in the city
    6.0   Working in the city
    7.0   Shaping cultural life
    8.0   Enjoying the city
    9.0   Preserving and celebrating the city's history

These themes are discussed more fulsomely below, as they relate to the Melbourne Central Business District in the postwar period (1945-1975).

Abbreviations

CBD	Central Business District
CDA	City Development Association
CoM	City of Melbourne
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
MCC	Melbourne City Council
MMBW	Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works
NTAV	National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
PROV	Public Record Office Victoria
SLV	State Library of Victoria
VHD	Victorian Heritage Database

CONTEXT

Thematic Environmental History

1.0   Shaping the urban landscape

1.1   Foundations of town planning in Melbourne's city centre

The first phase in the centre's postwar history…involved neither development nor redevelopment but an artificially-prolonged period of stasis due to prolonged wartime controls. This was reflected in the mixture of land uses, low-scale and 'pre-modernist' architecture, and the low-key city life…What this means in heritage terms is that much of the prewar city centre, even the colonial city centre, survived intact until the 1960s (Marsden 2000:57).

Australian interest in town planning, and the concept of national planning in particular, developed significantly after World War II (Marsden 2000:65). At the height of the war, the Commonwealth Government had been concerned with the poor regulations surrounding the development of Australia's capital cities and threatened to withhold vital housing funding for states without appropriate planning legislation. Consequently, the Victorian Government approved the *Town and Country Planning Act 1944*. This Act gave local councils voluntary powers to prepare and administer (either alone or jointly with another council) local planning schemes. Under these schemes, councils could prescribe the use and development of land within their municipality. Importantly, Interim Development Orders (IDOs) were introduced, which acted as stopgap controls until a scheme was approved or amended (Leskovec nd:277-278).

The Town and Country Planning Board was established under the 1944 Act and commenced operation early in 1946. The Board was established to report to and advise the Minister of Public Works on the planning provisions outlined in the Act. These provisions marked the beginning of statutory planning in Victoria (Public Record Office Victoria).

In 1949 the state parliament passed the *Town and Country Planning (Metropolitan Area) Act 1949*. This amendment to the principal 1944 Act gave the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) – a public utility board established in 1891 to provide water supply, sewerage and sewage treatment functions for the City of Melbourne – the power to prepare and administer a planning scheme for a defined metropolitan area in Melbourne. The Town and Country Planning Board's role was to advise on the planning schemes drafted by the MMBW (Leskovec nd:278-279). The metropolitan region would broadly incorporate municipalities within a 15-mile (24km) radius of the central city, with a 25-mile (40km) extension to take in the Frankston area. E F Borrie, the MMBW sewerage engineer, was appointed chief planner.

The *Melbourne Planning Scheme Report* prepared by the MMBW was released in 1954. It was subsequently translated into the new Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme (MMPS) (Lewis et al 1993:216-17). Its development reflected the postwar expectation that the new era would produce modern, efficient, scientifically planned cities (Howe cited in Marsden 2000:65). The MMPS was publicly submitted in 1954 with an IDO put in place in February 1955. Although the MMPS was formally submitted to the State Government in 1958, it took a further 10 years before a planning scheme for metropolitan Melbourne was formally gazetted (Leskovec nd:278).

1.2   City of Melbourne's first planning scheme

Initially state and local government treated the Melbourne city centre as a central business zone, with little control placed on the construction of office blocks, warehouses and small factories. Therefore, by the early 1960s, the city represented 'almost a purely market-controlled allocation of space and intensity of site use' (John Paterson Urban Systems, 1972). Any development controls, such as those introduced in Melbourne in the mid-1960s, sought to 'tidy up' rather than influence the pattern of city centre activities (Marsden 2000:64).

On 25 October 1961, Melbourne City Council (MCC) resolved to prepare a specific local planning scheme for Melbourne's central city (Town and Country Planning Board of Victoria 1963/1964:26). The person appointed to prepare the inner-city planning scheme was E F Borrie, the chief planner of the 1954 *Melbourne Planning Scheme Report*.

The MMPS was placed on public exhibition in 1964. It became a properly gazetted scheme in May 1968. The central city was given its own Central Business Zone as part of the MMPS but the metropolitan scheme contained minimal information about how it was to be administered. This responsibility was left to the MCC (Ramsay Consulting for DELWP c2016:8).

1.3   Plot ratios and development outcomes

E F Borrie's 1964 planning report for central Melbourne drew attention to land use control and zoning, and recommended the implementation of Plot Ratios (Figure 2) (Ramsay Consulting 2012:7-8). The Plot Ratio, or Floor Area Ratio, is the relationship between the total amount of usable floor area that a building has and the total area of the lot on which the building stands. The ratio is determined by dividing the total or gross floor area of the building by the gross area of the lot. A higher ratio is more likely to indicate a denser construction with higher buildings. In 1964, the recommended highest Plot Ratio was 8.1:1 at the corner of William and Collins streets. The lowest recommended Plot Ratio was 1:1 on Elizabeth Street adjacent to the Queen Victoria Market, and at the north end of King Street adjacent to Flagstaff Gardens. Most blocks were set at below 5:1, meaning that for a building that covered the whole site, five storeys would be the maximum height.

The impact of Plot Ratio controls was the consolidation of the traditional city fabric into larger allotments, particularly clustered in the east, and the western hill of Bourke and Collins streets. Base level Plot Ratios were allocated to districts and a bonus system was introduced which allowed for increased floor areas in exchange for open residual (civic) space at ground level, such as plazas and common areas. Specific uses such as 'international standard hotels' could also achieve bonuses (City of Melbourne 2016:5-7). The 'slab' towers of the earlier 1960s with the lift and services core on the property boundary, gave way to the taller and more efficient freestanding towers with a central cores and high efficiency floor plates of up to 2,000 square metres, set back from street frontages via a forecourt, plaza or podium (CoM 2004).

Figure 2. Plot ratios from the 1964 planning report for central Melbourne (Ramsay Consulting 2012:22)

1.4   Site consolidation

In the early 1960s, offices comprised more than 40 per cent of Melbourne city addresses (Davison cited in Marsden 2000:58). From the late 1960s, skyscrapers also consumed more land as buildings became taller and wider. Adjacent city properties were purchased and amalgamated to form large redevelopment sites. The creation of these large scale 'superblocks' relied on demolition. Historian, Susan Marsden, writes that by 'combining long-established plots and closing streets the procedure threatened to obliterate street and block patterns dating from the foundation years of the capital cities' (Marsden 2000:60-61).

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As a consequence, Melbourne's skyline, its ground level spatial configuration and the 'colourful mix of forms and functions in the nineteenth-century town' (Davison cited in Marsden 2000:57) were 'radically transformed' between 1956 and 1975 (Marsden 2000:57):

> These changes were ascribed to postwar prosperity, to architects' discovery of the International style, and to property and mining booms as well as rising land values. The change was most pronounced at the heart of the financial district near Collins Street where land values soared. As land taxes were tied to the unimproved capital value redevelopment was inevitable. The old urban mix 'gave way to the high-rise uniformity of the corporate bureaucracies in the 1960s' (Dunstan cited in Marsden 2000:58).

In this period, most of Australia's largest companies, including Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP), Royal Dutch Shell (Shell), Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI), General Motors Holden (GMH), Ansett and their accompanying financiers were established within city centres (Marsden 2000:58). The Conzinc Rio-Tinto building (now demolished) replaced Melbourne Mansions at 89-101 Collins Street in 1963 (Figure 3). Architectural historian, Miles Lewis AM, notes that this curtain walled office building, set back from Collins Street to provide a north facing garden entry, was one of the first high-rise developments to break the building line of Collins Street and set the precedent for providing open space at the ground level of buildings as a 'quid pro quo for various dispensations offered to developers' (Lewis et al 1993:262).

Figure 3. Conzinc-Rio Tinto Building at 95 Collins Street, 1970 (State Library of Victoria, H2011.55/1479)

1.5   Abandoning height controls and building higher

During World War II and up to 1953 there was little building activity in Australian city centres. Wartime austerity severely restricted the availability of materials for building, and costs were high. With the various state governments lifting constraints on building materials after 1952, development resumed (Jennifer Taylor 2001:15). As reported in University of Melbourne's Architectural Department's publication *Cross-Section* in 1954:

> *All over Australia urban building is lazily awakening. The scene in Melbourne city, which only last year seemed condemned to building inactivity forever, has quite suddenly changed. After 14 years almost without a new building, many major works are now actually under way and several more are in advanced planning* (*Cross-Section* 1954: No 18, Figure 4).

The following year it was reported that 'Sydney and Melb[ourne] cities' booms reached the stage where each street seemed to have some bldg.(sic) activity' (*Cross-Section* 1955: No 33).

Commercial expansion in central Melbourne had been hindered by a 132 foot (40 metre) height limit that had been enforced since 1916. Many office buildings built precisely to this height limit had been erected in the interwar period, and this continued after the war with the completion of the first postwar example, the new premises for petroleum giant H C Sleigh Ltd at 166-172 Queen Street (Bates, Smart & McCutcheon) in 1953. While some other buildings followed, it was not until the height limit was lifted in 1956 that commercial development in the city boomed. As was later recorded in *Architecture Australia*, no fewer than 30 new multi-storey office buildings were built in and around the city centre between 1955 and 1958 (Heritage Alliance 2008:19-20).

The first city building to exceed the 132 feet limit was the 20-storey (81 metre) ICI House, 1 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1958), located just outside the Hoddle Grid (Figure 5). It was followed by the 26-storey (96 metre) Conzinc Rio-Tinto building at 95 Collins Street (Bernard Evans, 1962, demolished), which retained the title of Melbourne's tallest building until the end of the decade. By then, high-rise development was becoming common, and it was reported in 1973 that buildings of 20 or more storeys were appearing in central Melbourne at a rate of approximately one per year. The title of Melbourne's tallest building changed frequently in the following decades: from Marland House 570 Bourke Street (1971, 121 metres), to BHP House at 140 William Street (1972, 152 metres) to the Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building at 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-75, 153 metres) (Heritage Alliance 2008:20).
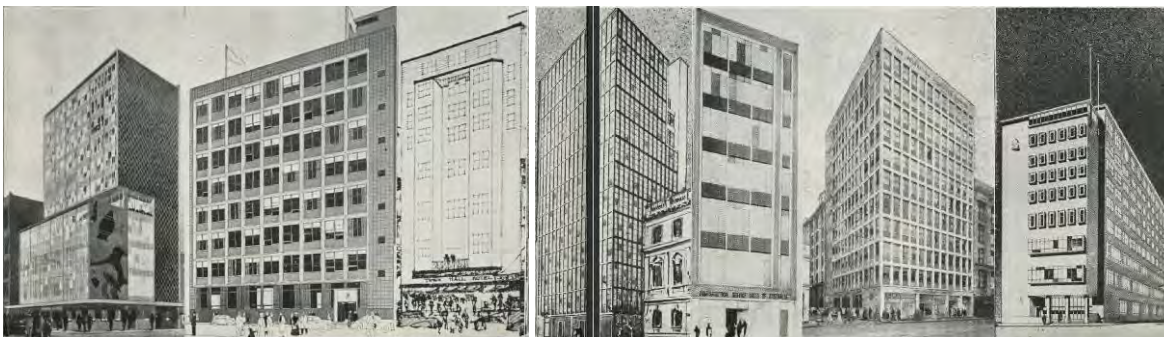

Figure 4. Sketches showing high-rise buildings being constructed in the City of Melbourne, 1954 (Cross-Section April 1954, No 18)

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Figure 5. Lonsdale Street showing ICI building, Melbourne, Vic. Rose Stereograph Co, 1955 (State Library of Victoria)

1.6 Campaigning for a better Melbourne

In November 1953, an activist group, the City Development Association (CDA), was founded to counteract the perceived stagnation of development in central Melbourne in the post-World War II era. As reported in the *Age* at the time, 'for too long Melbourne has been standing still. The time has come for her to reassert herself and to show that the citizens of this generation…can plan and build just as well as their fathers and grandfathers did in making this a truly great city' (*Age* 18 November 1953:2). The CDA included an array of businessmen and professionals in the fields of architecture, planning and academia. Sir Norman Myer of the Myer Emporium was appointed the CDA's first chairman.

Pledging to 'campaign for the necessary action that will relieve or solve many of the worst problems that have overtaken the city and metropolitan area in the last 20 years,' the CDA advocated for such things as civic improvement, slum redevelopment, traffic and parking in the central city, high-rise office towers, and high-density living (*Age* 18 November 1953:2). CDA initiatives included the founding of Moomba, the promotion of 'the Paris End' of Collins Street, the beautification of Flinders Street near the railway station and the development of off-street parking (*Age,* 17 June 1960:6; Dunstan 2008). The CDA was almost disbanded in November 1965 due to lack of funds and despite attempts to revive it, appears to have languished soon after (*Age* 16 November 1965:12; *Age* 30 November 1965:12).

1.7 Diversifying the city centre

In the 1970s, the office zone expanded upwards and outwards to encroach on the old wholesaling, light industrial and professional districts (Marsden 2000:58). MCC developed the *City of Melbourne Strategy Plan* in 1974 which focused on the city's overall accessibility (to be improved by the underground rail loop), office employment, government activity, entertainment and character. It also projected a large increase in employment and a moderate increase in housing.

For the central city the Strategy Plan encouraged high-density office development, especially in the vicinity of the proposed underground city railway stations. The central city was divided into three precincts of office, retail and entertainment with Plot Ratio maximums of 10:1, 8:1 and 6:1 respectively and bonuses of up to 2:1 in each. It also recommended the application of 'View Protection Policies' along the western, southern and part of the eastern edges of the Hoddle Grid to preserve views into and out of the central city (Ramsay Consulting 2012:8-10).

Unfortunately, the MCC was contending with weak finances and years of chaotic administration at the time of developing the 1974 Strategy Plan and its implementation consequently failed. Even so, this first attempt to revitalise Melbourne caused an "awakening of public awareness" of the need for urban reform. This led to a successfully implemented Strategy Plan in 1985 (Figaredo 2019).

1.8   Expressing an architectural style

Multi-storey commercial buildings made a significant contribution to postwar Melbourne, particularly from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. With the resumption of building construction in the 1950s after the hiatus of World War II, the advent of curtain wall construction – enabling the application of a non-load bearing skin to the face of a building – radically altered the appearance of the modern city commercial building.

Constructed predominantly for the financial and business sectors, there was an eagerness amongst clients to establish a dominant city presence and to project a modern, progressive and prestigious approach to commercial building design. The resulting Post-War Modernist style of multi-storey buildings, influenced particularly by steel and glass office tower design in the United States, were in stark contrast to the pre-war city buildings in central Melbourne and presented architects of the day with a completely new design challenge.

Thirty major city buildings were completed in Melbourne in four years alone from 1955 to 1958 and 22 were office buildings within, or on the fringes of, the CBD (Saunders 1959:91). Largely influenced by the American skyscraper, the earliest office buildings of the 1950s utilised innovative curtain walling, formed from continuous metal-framing filled principally with glass. The curtain wall is described by Miles Lewis as 'essentially a continuous, non-bearing skin on the face of a building' and is one of the 'leitmotifs of modernism, both in Australia and overseas' (Lewis 2012:185). The curtain walled 'glass box' aesthetic was embraced by the local architects, and many buildings followed to the extent that high-rise office buildings with curtain walling became a defining characteristic of the new buildings in the latter half of the 1950s (NTAV 2014:5-6).

Amongst the first curtain walled buildings to be constructed in Melbourne was the 13-storey glass-fronted Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street (J A La Gerche 1954-56), which was built to the height limit of 132 feet (40m), and – perhaps the most influential – the free-standing ICI House, 1 Nicholson Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon 1955-58). Located on the outskirts of the Hoddle Grid, ICI House was clad on all four facades with glass curtain walling and exceeded the well-established maximum building height within the Hoddle Grid. Large numbers of similarly designed city commercial buildings followed, often displaying bold horizontal contrast between alternating rows of glazing and coloured spandrels.

1.9   Beyond the curtain wall

The dominant glass box design of the late 1950s was challenged in the 1960s as the shortcomings of the fully glazed curtain wall became apparent – in particular its poor thermal performance – and new technologies became available. Advances in concrete technology, including the development of precast concrete, impacted greatly on both the appearance and structure of the commercial tower form from the 1960s onwards.

By the mid-1960s, architects were experimenting with a range of solid cladding materials for tower buildings including precast concrete, stone, reconstituted stone, tile and brick, as well as various metals for cladding, screening and detailing. A number of buildings continued to adopt true curtain wall construction; however, a different aesthetic was created by the use of solid external cladding in place of the typically glazed spandrels of the 1950s. This aesthetic is evident in a number of existing buildings in the city centre including the Guardian Building at 454-456 Collins Street (1960-61), with its stone-faced precast concrete panelled facades.

Concrete advances saw an increase in the use of reinforced column and slab construction in 1960s multi-storey building design, however concrete-encased steelwork also continued to be used. Some buildings incorporated structural elements in their main facades (for example load-bearing precast concrete panels or structural mullions) so were therefore not of true curtain wall construction. The structural nature of these facades was not necessarily apparent to the observer and the buildings continued to display the well-established repetitive characteristics of the true curtain wall façade, such as at Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street, designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker in association with Meldrum & Partners (c1968-70).

A broad range of design approaches became apparent in multi-storey commercial buildings of the 1960s and early 1970s. The horizontality of curtain walling was often balanced by the addition of vertical elements such as façade columns, strips or fins, which introduced textural patterns and visual strength to the facades of a number of buildings. Other multi-storey towers clearly expressed their structure externally with grid-like facades which clearly reflected the internal trabeated structural system. Sun screening provided additional patterning to facades, either as a repetitive decorative motif across the façade, as an expression of the window frames (such as at Royal Mail House, 253-267 Bourke Street designed by D Graeme Lumsden, 1961-63), in the form of balconies (as at the Melbourne Office of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building, 251-257 Collins Street, 1971-73), or occasionally as an entire screen attached to the exterior face of the building.

Buildings also varied with towers set within plazas or on dominant podiums. The State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street, designed by Buchan Laird & Buchan (c1974), is one example of a building constructed with a dominant podium. Buildings were sometimes set back from the street line behind public plazas – a strategy adopted to gain council approval for additional building height and evident in the Bates Smart McCutcheon designed Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building at 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-1975) – while others were built within larger plaza spaces, such as the AMP Tower & St James Building Complex (1965-69), designed by US-based firm Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM).

1.10   Brutalism and brickwork

Brutalism was another architectural style that emerged in commercial building design in Australia as early as 1959, when Harry Seidler used off-form concrete for an eight-storey office block in Ultimo, NSW. That same year, Melbourne architect Kevin Knight (from the office of Oakley & Parkes) prepared plans for the International Order of Oddfellows (IOOF) Building at 380 Russell Street, Melbourne that broke new ground with its banded façade of reinforced concrete spandrels.

Based on the work of modern architecture pioneer Le Corbusier, and largely inspired by his design for the *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1952), this architectural style became widely accepted internationally. Brutalism incorporated ideas of integrity in expression of materials (especially off-form concrete), structure and function, and often gave rise to dramatic sculptural forms (VHD Hoyts Cinema Centre).

Brutalism became more widespread in central Melbourne in the 1970s. The Mid City Centre at 194-200 Bourke Street (Bogle & Banfield, 1969-70), is a notable example, with its façade of chamfered concrete volumes.

During the 1960s and 70s, face brickwork also made a return with the Houston Building at 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kolle & Associates, 1964-65), the State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton & Lobb, 1967-68) and the 13-storey Nubrik House at 269-275 William Street by architects Buchan, Laird & Buchan (1972) (NTAV 2014:22).

1.11   Overseas influences

America was the strongest overseas influence on the post-World War II architecture of Australian capitals. Australian architects often studied in American universities or visited the USA on study tours. American advances in the manufacturing of steel and concrete were also adopted in Australia. While steel was the main material in North American skyscrapers, concrete was used more often in Australia, and often combined with high-strength steel (Marsden 2000:70-72).

Another influence on architectural design was émigré architects who arrived in Melbourne before and after World War II. The impact of postwar immigration on Australian cities can be described in three ways: the enlivening of city centres by the arrival of European and Asian immigrants into mainly Australian-born communities; the rapid increase in the size of capital cities; and the roles played by particular immigrant groups, especially in the fields of architecture, economies, politics and cultural activities (Marsden 2000:95-99). Architect Kurt Popper, who arrived in Melbourne from Vienna in 1940, developers Bruno and Rino Grollo (sons of an Italian immigrant), and Viennese immigrant Ted Lustig and his Israeli son-in-law Max Moar, have had a significant impact on Melbourne's city landscape through architecture and property development.

Émigré architects were often educated in progressive institutions where modernism was more advanced than in Australia. Their expertise and modernist designs gained recognition and were translated into the local context. Many were also involved with teaching at architectural schools and influenced the next generation of architects (Lozanovska & McKnight 2015:352-353). Examples in the city centre include the apartment buildings, Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970), both designed by Kurt Popper.

1.0 Shaping the urban landscape	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Abandoning height controls and building higher	Marland House, 570 Bourke Street (1971) BHP House, 140 William Street (1972) Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building at 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-75)
Expressing an architectural style	Gilbert Court, 100-104 Collins Street (1954) Coates House, 18-20 Collins Street (1957)
Beyond the curtain wall	Guardian Building, 454-456 Collins Street (1960-61) Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street (1968-70) Royal Mail House, 253-267 Bourke Street (1961-63) Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building, 251-257 Collins Street, 1971-73 State Savings Bank of Victoria, 45-63 Swanston Street (1967-68) Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building, 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-1975)
Brutalism and brickwork	Mid City, 194-200 Bourke Street (1969-70) Houston Building, 184-192 Queen Street (1964-65) State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (1967-68) Nubrik House, 269-275 William Street (1972) Total House, 170-190 Russell Street (1966) Hoyts Cinema Centre, 140 Bourke Street (1966-69)
Overseas influences	Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) 13-15 Collins Street (1970) AMP Tower & St James Building Complex,527-555 Bourke Street (1965-69)

CONTEXT

2.0 Governing, administering and policing the city

Public administration related to the government provision of services to Australian cities and states has always been based in capital cities. Government departments increased steadily from the late nineteenth century and continued to be of major importance after World War II (Marsden 2000:82). Architect Miles Lewis argues that public works buildings before 1945 comprised 'restrained and sober metropolitan architecture', whereas after the war, government institutions sought to construct buildings that embodied images of modernity and progress. E F Borrie's 1954 plan for Melbourne, for example, proposed a new layout of major public buildings around Parliament House (Lewis et al 1993:221).

In the postwar period, the number of government offices increased dramatically in city centres due to two phenomena: an expansion in Commonwealth revenue and powers, and the extension of state government responsibilities to include welfare, housing, education, culture, and public transport services (Marsden 2000:83).

2.1 Commonwealth government

In 1948, the Commonwealth Government compulsorily acquired land on either side of Little Lonsdale Street, between Spring and Exhibition streets. The Commonwealth Centre (now demolished) was subsequently constructed on this block of land (with a street address of 11-39 La Trobe Street) over the period 1958 to the early 1960s. Its construction transformed 'the image of the Federal government in central Melbourne into that of a modern corporation' (Lewis et al 1993:223-24, 255).

As Commonwealth powers increased after World War II, Commonwealth buildings in city centres rose in number. Of particular influence was the transfer in 1942 of income tax revenue from the states to the Commonwealth and the resultant construction of buildings for the Taxation Office, including a building in Bourke Street, which opened in 1958. Marsden writes that the Commonwealth government presence, including the establishment after the war of the new Department of Housing and Construction, reinforced Melbourne's continuing pre-eminence as Australia's financial centre, at least until the 1960s.

A telephone exchange and postal hall building was constructed by the Commonwealth government at 114-120 Russell Street in the period 1948-54. In 1956 the building served as a relay station for the broadcasting of newly arrived television. In 1959, the Commonwealth Arbitration Courts opened at 450 Little Bourke Street, and in 1965 the Reserve Bank of Australia opened at 56-64 Collins Street. Telephone exchanges were also constructed by the Commonwealth Department of Works at 376-382 Flinders Lane (opened in 1957) and at 447-453 Lonsdale Street (1969).

2.2 State government

Historically state governments have aimed to increase local economic activity by promoting investment in their respective capital city. In the 1960s, state government policy required or encouraged interstate developers and engineering firms to set up subsidiary operations in their own states. In addition, both state and local governments have played a role in the provision of infrastructure for ports, railways, streets, freeways, and underground services, resulting in a concentration of government headquarters in the city centre (Marsden 2000:84-85, 88). However, increasingly, state and federal governments have adopted policies of privatisation, withdrawing from direct provision of infrastructure and services such as telecommunications.

In the 1960s the Treasury Reserve, lying just outside the Hoddle Grid, was transformed by the construction of the Victorian State Offices at 1 Treasury Place and 1 Macarthur Street. An architectural competition was held in 1962 for an office tower to be placed behind the Old Treasury Building. Barry Patten of Yuncken Freeman won the competition with a design for two buildings; a low-scale building directly behind the Old Treasury Building (1 Treasury Place), and a taller tower to the north of matching design (1 Macarthur Street). A third building, to house the State Chemical Laboratories, was constructed to the east of the tower at the same time in the late 1960s. Completed by 1970, the buildings were designed in a modern style and transformed the nineteenth century precinct into a modern, multi-functional complex (VHD Treasury Reserve Precinct).

2.0 Governing, administering and policing the city	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Commonwealth government	Telephone Exchange and Post Office, 114-120 Russell Street (1954)
	Batman Automatic Telephone Exchange, 376-382 Flinders Lane (1957)
	Commonwealth Arbitration Courts, Little Bourke Street (1959)
	Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (1964-66)
	Lonsdale Exchange Building, 447-453 Lonsdale Street (1969)
	Former Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building, 359-373 Collins Street (1975)
State government	Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works Head Office, 613-639 Little Collins Street (1973)
	State Savings Bank, 264 Little Bourke Street (1961)

2.0 Governing, administering and policing the city	
Sub-themes	**Examples**

CONTEXT

3.0   Building a commercial city

3.1   Manufacturing

From the 1960s, many factories relocated from Melbourne's city centre to the suburbs, although some manufacturing remained until the late 1970s, mainly in the fields of clothing, printing and food processing (Marsden 2000:99). The textile industry was an important sector of central Melbourne's economy, however in Flinders Lane and Flinders Street, crowding and a lack of parking forced this industry into decline from the 1960s (May 2008a). Wilder House, built in 1956 at 41-45 A'Beckett Street, is an example of a purpose-built textile factory from this period.

3.2   Business and finance

The postwar period was one of fluctuating fortunes in the business and finance sectors. In the main however, economic confidence and financial deregulation came together to create a period of growth that would radically change the appearance of central Melbourne.

Speculative investment in Melbourne increased after the Commonwealth government lifted restrictions on share dealings in 1947, which resulted in a dramatic increase in new company registrations (Marsden 2000:44-45). Subsequently, during the 1950s, a number of national and international companies sought to assert a physical presence in the country, constructing corporate buildings in the city centre. In Melbourne, up to the mid-1960s, investment was predominantly driven by British and American companies, government bodies, large Australian corporations such as AMP and BHP, and property developers, including Lend Lease (formerly Civil and Civic) and L J Hooker Ltd. Later in the 1960s, it was also driven by private developers such as Grollo and Lustig & Moar (Marsden 2000:46-47).

The construction of large bank buildings was also prolific during the postwar period with the passing of the *Banking Act 1947*, which led to an increase in the number of bank branches established in Victoria. One of the most significant changes in banking in Australia at this time was the creation of the new Reserve Bank of Australia in 1959, which replaced the central bank known as the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Heritage Alliance 2008:17). Bank buildings constructed in the central city during this period included the State Savings Bank of Victoria at 233-243 Queen Street (1967-68), the Bank of Adelaide Building at 265-269 Collins Street (1959-60) and the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building at 251-257 Collins Street (1971-73).

The period between 1961 and 1963 was one of business recession, while the years between 1967 and 1969 was a time of growth due to two mineral booms. From 1967 to 1971 the construction of new office space in the city centre more than doubled that of the previous five years (*City of Melbourne Strategy Plan 1974* in Clinch 2012:66-67). The property boom ended during the economic crash of the early 1970s and the 1974 oil crisis when many British institutions that had founded the commercial property industry left Australia. Government bodies and banks subsequently took over much of the building construction in the city centre (Marsden 2000:48).

3.3   Retail decline and revitalisation in the city centre

Central Melbourne and Central Sydney accounted for approximately one third of Australian metropolitan retail sales in the 1950s. However, the 1950s saw city retailers increasingly struggle to attract consumers from the suburbs, largely due to the increase in car ownership in the postwar period. To counteract this, in 1953 Myer Ltd erected the first multi-storey carpark to be built since World War II in Lonsdale Street. Another carpark, the Grand Central Carpark, opened in Bourke Street soon afterwards (Heritage Alliance 2008:16).

Suburban development and the construction of suburban shopping complexes such as Chadstone Shopping Centre also had a major impact on Melbourne's city centre into the 1960s with traditional businesses including shops, manufacturing and professional services moving to new suburban locations (Spearritt cited in Marsden 2000:49). Several city department stores closed and were demolished or converted to other uses. The Eastern Market (located at the corner of Bourke and Exhibition streets) was demolished in 1960 to make way for the Southern Cross Hotel (now demolished) (Marsden 2000:49).

Some inner-city retailing persisted in this period with Allans and Co opening a new music store at 276-278 Collins Street in 1957 and Myer constructing the Department Aerial Crossover, a four-storey pedestrian bridge over Little Bourke Street designed by longtime Myer architects Tompkins, Shaw and Evans (1963) (Lewis et al 1993:264).

Alliances between government ministers, councillors and traders sought to halt the decline of retail in the Melbourne city centre. Two main strategies emerged: to expedite car access and, from the 1970s, to encourage

pedestrians through, for example, the creation of car-free malls, Sunday trading, and the establishment of open-air markets (Marsden 2000:51-52).

In an effort to revive the city's waning retail economy, a trial closure of Bourke Street between Swanston and Elizabeth streets was introduced in late 1973. This followed discussions between MCC and the Retail Trader's Association. The trial resulted in protests from shop keepers and caused traffic chaos (May 2008c). The 1974 Strategy Plan pursued the concept, encouraging 'the maintenance and growth of the retail areas as the major centre for shopping for the metropolitan area' (City of Melbourne 1974:267), but it was February 1978 before the section was formally closed to through traffic. Policies within the Strategy Plan also aimed to counteract:

> *present economic market forces that would force entertainment and retail activities out of the CBD. The mandatory requirements for retail or entertainment floor space will ensure that the variety provided by shops, restaurants or cinemas is maintained* (Interplan for CoM 1974:267).

3.0 Building a commercial city	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Business and finance	London Assurance House, 468-470 Bourke Street (1960)
	Canton Insurance Building, 43-51 Queen Street (1957)
	Guardian Building, 454-456 Collins Street (1960-61)
	AMP Tower and St James Building, 527-555 Bourke Street (1965-69)
	MLC Building, 303-317 Collins Street (c1970-73)
	BHP House, 140 William Street (1973)
	AMP Building, 402-408 Lonsdale Street (1956-58)
	State Savings Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street (1967-68)
	Bank of Adelaide Building, 265-269 Collins Street (1959-60)
	Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building at 251-257 Collins Street (1971-73)
	State Savings Bank, 264 Little Bourke Street (229 Swanston Street) (1961)
	Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (1964-66)
	Stock Exchange House, 351-357 Collins Street (1968)
Retail decline and revitalisation	Total House, 170-190 Russell Street (1966)
	Allans Building, 276-278 Collins Street (1956-57)
	Myer Department Aerial Crossover, Little Bourke Street (1963)
	Bourke Street Mall (pedestrianised 1978)

CONTEXT

4.0 Creating a functioning city

4.1 Planning for cars

In the 1940s and 1950s public transport was still a major contributor to the city's transport needs…[However] motoring interests argued they deserved government support because they took pressure off an overstrained public transport system…By the 1970s…public transport was…justified mainly as a subsidiary service for city-bound commuters and the carless minority of children, women and old people (Davison 2004:128-29).

Suburbanisation and car ownership increased significantly after World War II and 'city expansion, freed from the restraints of fixed-rail transport, began to accelerate' (Howe, Nichols & Davison 2014:1). In 1911, the Melbourne metropolitan area, around 67,340 hectares, lay within a 16-kilometre radius of the General Post Office; this steadily increased to 80,290 hectares by 1947, and to 210,308 hectares by 1961 (Pryor cited in Marsden 2000:61). In the decade 1947-57 alone, the number of vehicles on Melbourne's roads doubled (Lewis et al 1993:219).

This increase in car ownership and use brought a host of requirements for the city, including freeway access, on-street parking, parking stations (whether above or below ground), premises to sell cars and workshops to repair them. The requirements of cars also influenced the relocation of industry, and the outward expansion and decentralisation of the city (Rymer 2018).

Melbourne was transformed from a public transport-oriented and pedestrian-friendly place into a place where 'the car had taken over the streets' (Marsden 2000:41-42). Traffic signals, road signs and parking meters proliferated, with parking meters first installed in the City of Melbourne in 1955. As a consequence, retailing declined, and much public spending focused on the construction of infrastructure for cars, such as freeways, bridges, car parks, petrol stations, and road widening (Marsden 2000:41-42), including the widening of Elizabeth Street and Kings Way in the 1960s.

In the postwar period the provision of off-street parking became essential to the economic well-being and growth of the city centre and the wider city area. Many at-grade off-street parking spaces were located on sites where buildings had been demolished, however the increasing number of cars led to a recommendation from the City Development Association in 1955 that more off-street parking be provided. Nine car parking stations were recommended, one for each city block. Total House, 170-190 Russell Street, was one such building (Figure 6). The site for the car park was purchased in 1959-61 by the City of Melbourne and tenders were advertised in 1962. The complex, which combined a multi-level car park, offices and a theatre, was designed by architects Bogle Banfield and Associates and opened in 1965 (VHD Total House).

Figure 6. Total House at the corner of Russell and Little Bourke Street, 1966 (State Library of Victoria H91.244/5423)

4.2 Planning for public transport

Despite the growth in road transport and car ownership in the postwar period, tram, rail and bus routes established in earlier years continued to direct traffic into city centres. The Melbourne Metropolitan Transport Committee released the Melbourne Transportation Plan in 1969 that recommended the construction of 510 kilometres of freeways, 64 kilometres of arterial roads, three new railway lines, railway extensions, and an underground railway loop (Lewis et al 1993:250).

An underground railway loop had been proposed for Melbourne as early as 1926 as a solution to ease congestion in the city centre, with a former engineer of the railways commenting that other major cities had dealt with their commuter congestion problems by going underground '... Melbourne, owing to its undulating contours, was well adapted for such railways' (*Argus* 17 June 1926:14). Discussions ensued in the following decades until the Victorian Parliament passed the *City of Melbourne Underground Railway Construction Act* in 1960. This Act enabled the construction of a proposed loop, however due to financial constraints, it was a further 10 years before the project commenced.

The project involved the construction of four tunnels running almost the entire length of La Trobe and Spring streets, and three new underground stations: Flagstaff, Museum (later renamed Melbourne Central) and Parliament (Figure 7). Tunnelling works began in 1971 and a tunnel boring machine, nicknamed The Mole, was brought into operation in 1972 to complete the first phase of the loop (Follington 2018). The loop was progressively brought into service from 1981 with the opening of Museum, followed by Parliament Station in 1983 and Flagstaff in 1985 (Carroll 2008).

Figure 7. Proposed Underground Rail Loop station locations included in the Melbourne Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 1969 (Public Record Office Victoria).

4.3 Providing health and welfare services

Health, welfare and education services were historically established in Melbourne's city centre. The Stella Maris Seafarer's Centre at 588-600 Little Collins Street (1972-73) was one of many charities established as part of the Catholic Church's official missionary work to provide pastoral care, services and support for seafarers.

The Pharmaceutical Guild, established in Victoria in 1928 to ensure the quality of medicines and to establish a uniform scale of wages for pharmaceutical assistants, constructed a building at 18-22 Francis Street in 1954 to a design by Cowper, Murphy and Appleford. Optometrists, Coles and Garrard, established an office building and consulting rooms at 376 Bourke Street in 1957 to a design by architects Meldrum and Noad.

The Queen Victoria Hospital, established in La Trobe Street in 1896 as the first women's hospital in Victoria, moved to 210 Lonsdale Street in 1946. Its primary aim was to be a hospital 'For Women, By Women'. By 1965 it became the new Monash University's teaching hospital for gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics and changed from treating solely female patients to being a 'family hospital'. Renamed the Queen Victoria Medical Centre in 1977, it relocated to the Monash Medical Centre at Clayton in 1989 (Russell 2008).

4.0 Creating a functioning city	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Planning for cars	Total House, 170-190 Russell Street (1965)
Planning for public transport	Degraves Street Subway Flinders Street (1956)
	City Loop Underground Railway (1971-85)
Providing health and welfare services	Pharmaceutical Guild Building, 18-22 St Francis Street (1954)
	Coles and Garrard Building, 376 Bourke Street (1957)
	Stella Maris Seafarer's Centre, 488-500 Little Collins Street (1972-73)
	Methodist Church Centre, 130-134 Little Collins Street (1966-67)

5.0   Living in the city centre

5.1   Housing and lodging

The provision of accommodation has always been a major function of Australian city centres, and has included the establishment of hotels, hostels, boarding houses and serviced apartments, as well as terraces, flats and medium-density housing. Since the 1950s, the market sought by inner-city developers has moved to an almost exclusively middle- to higher-income group. New forms of accommodation from the 1950s replaced older buildings with high-cost, high-rise buildings for a restricted range of users (Marsden 2000:53).

The postwar era saw the introduction of apartments and flats in the well-established inner suburbs of South Yarra and St Kilda, spreading to Caulfield, Malvern, Camberwell, Hawthorn and Prahran. Victoria's first block of 'own-your-own' or 'OYO' flats were built in Hawthorn in 1949 and the subsequent introduction of strata title legislation by architect and Lord Mayor Bernard Evans led to the proliferation of this housing type from the early 1950s (Heritage Alliance 2008:23).

The apartment boom reached the inner city in the late 1960s, facilitated by the *Conveyancing (Strata Titles) Act* of 1961. An Australian innovation, the legislation allowed each lot or apartment to have its own title deed (Stent 2018). Many émigré architects, who were experienced in higher density living in Europe, specialised in apartment design. Viennese-born architect Kurt Popper, for example, built two blocks of residential flats in central Melbourne – Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969) and 13-15 Collins Street (1970) (Heritage Alliance 2008:21).

Although marketed as a glamorous and convenient lifestyle, high-rise city apartment living was not popularly embraced. Exhibition Towers, an 11-storey residential building located at the north-west corner of Exhibition Street and Little Lonsdale Street, was designed and built as a residential and commercial building. Constructed in 1968-69 to a design by Kenneth McDonald & Associates, the building was an endeavour to provide 'OYO' flats in the city centre. 'High prices, high bills and Melbourne's conservative living style' contributed to difficulties in finding buyers for the units and the building was converted to the Courtesy Inn Motel in 1971 (*Age* 17 February 1971:3). It was also reported in 1971 that Park Tower was using its tenants' car spaces as a public car park and the flats were being let on short-term leases. Similarly, the two-month-old 13-15 Collins Street apartments contemplated filling its lower four floors with shops, offices and medical practices (*Age* 17 February 1971:3, Figure 8).

In 1974, the MCC introduced a policy to encourage residents back to the city through the construction of a variety of residential typologies. However, because development was market driven, it was predominantly offices and retail spaces that were constructed in the city centre (Marsden 2000:54, 112).

The Collins Street project — shops and offices planned for the lower floors.

Park Tower OYO — only 25 per cent. of the 76 units have been sold.

Figure 8. Plans for city apartments reconsidered due to lack of interest, 1971 (Age 17 February 1971:3)

5.2   Hotels

The lack of hotel accommodation was a cause for concern in central Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s. In the lead up to the 1956 Olympic Games, it was reported that the city's hotel accommodation was not only far below international standards, but did not provide enough beds to host large numbers of tourists. Up until that time, hotels primarily focused on the provision of food and drink; there was no legal requirement to provide accommodation. To boost the number of hotel beds in the lead up to the 1956 Games, amended liquor laws were introduced that made it essential for every hotel to offer lodgings. This new law contributed to the closure and demolition of an unprecedented number of city hotels in the postwar period. Between 1951 and 1961, 23 hotels in central Melbourne closed, with only five top city hotels from Melbourne's bygone era – Scott's, Menzies', the Oriental, the Windsor and the Federal – remaining. Within a decade, all but one (the Windsor) had been demolished (Annear 2005:193).

Despite a push to provide more hotels with higher standards in time for the Olympic Games, ultimately only a handful were constructed. Hosie's Hotel (1954-56) at the corner of Elizabeth and Flinders streets, was one of the first modern hotels to be built in central Melbourne (NTAV 2014:42).

The 1960s saw the opening of Australia's first high-rise, American-style hotel. With the increasing use of faster jet planes, international travel for both luxury and business purposes became a glamourous pursuit. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, US-based hotels such as the Hilton and the Pan Am-owned Intercontinental began establishing the first international hotel chains.

The Southern Cross Hotel (now demolished) opened in 1962 as Australia's first modern hotel of the jet age – a sign that the city had established itself as an international destination (Annear 2005:186). It occupied a large site on Bourke Street in central Melbourne, formerly occupied by the grand Eastern Market. The hotel, owned by Pan American Airways, set the new standard for city hotels in Melbourne and its central plaza, shopping arcades, and ten-pin bowling alley represented a new concept of public space (Goad). The Southern Cross Hotel remained Melbourne's premier hotel into the early 1980s, famously hosting The Beatles during their 1964 tour and national events such as the Logies and the Brownlow (Brown-May 2005).The Bryson Centre (now Rydges Hotel), 174-192 Exhibition Street (1970-72), was one of a number of high-rise buildings planned for the eastern end of the city in the early 1970s to 'meet the tourist boom expected with the opening of the new airport at Tullamarine' (*Age* 1970:2). The 23-storey Bryson Centre incorporated office space, a 600-seat cinema, restaurants, convention centres and a 292-room hotel, named Hotel Melbourne, which was located on the upper 13 floors of the building. The Bryson Centre was described by the *Age* as a 'city within a city – every need is either within the hotel walls or within walking distance outside' (*Age* 1972:19).

5.0 Living in the city centre	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Housing and lodging	Park Tower, 199-207 Spring Street (1969)
	13-15 Collins Street (1970)
	Treasury Gate, 99-101 Spring Street (1971)
	Exhibition Towers, 287-293 Exhibition Street (1969-71)
Hotels	Former Hosie's Hotel, 1-5 Elizabeth Street (1954-56)
	The Bryson Centre (now Rydges Hotel), 174-192 Exhibition Street (1970-72)

6.0 Working in the city

6.1 Working life

After World War II, Melbourne's economy gradually recovered and the city consolidated its role as the financial capital of Australia. Banking and stock-broking industries and the associated workforce grew apace and the city's working population occupied the growing number of new city offices.

The number and size of Melbourne's legal firms evolved in line with the city's population and strong economy, and was most heavily concentrated around William Street and the Supreme Court buildings on Lonsdale Street.

Those working in the medical field were mostly based either at the east end of Collins Street, where a large number of private consultants, hospitals and small clinics were located, or in the Carlton / Parkville area where several large public hospitals were established.

Conversely, the number of factories operating in central Melbourne had declined by the middle of the twentieth century. While Flinders Lane remained an important wholesale area for fashion and textiles in the second half of the twentieth century, clothing manufacturing declined. The north-west area of the city remained an area for light industrial and mechanical workshops and there was small-scale manufacturing north and west of Lonsdale Street (Context 2012:72).

7.0   Shaping cultural life

7.1   Arts and creative life in the city

The Melbourne city centre contains numerous important cultural sites, such as libraries, museums, theatres, art centres, lecture halls, workshops and institutes, and also provides many less formal exhibition and performance spaces.

In the art world, the war years saw an unprecedented growth in the creation of, and interest in, local art, as well as a palpable shift in subject matter away from idyllic pastoral and domestic scenes to social commentaries on life in postwar Melbourne. One of the most enduring and celebrated images of twentieth century Melbourne is John Brack's *Collins Street, 5pm* (1955), which paints a portrait of the monotonous nature of Melbourne's peak hour (Context 2012:75).

The growing interest in local art was supplemented by small-scale, simple exhibition spaces such as Tye's Gallery, a large basement space at the rear of a furniture store in Bourke Street, which was founded in 1945. Artists generally managed their own exhibitions within this space. The establishment of the Stanley Coe Gallery in Bourke Street in 1950 saw the emergence of managed exhibitions of contemporary local art. In 1953 French émigrés Georges and Mirka Mora established Mirka's Gallery in Collins Street, while John Reed established the Gallery of Contemporary Art in 1956. This became the short-lived Museum of Modern Art and Design of Australia in 1958, which utilised exhibiting space at Ball & Welch Department Store in Flinders Street where artist, Arthur Boyd, first showed his 'Bride' series (Galbally 2008).

By the late 1950s contemporary Australian art was becoming highly marketable and a rush of new commercial galleries were established. These were generally established outside the city centre in suburbs including South Yarra, St Kilda and Collingwood (Galbally 2008). The establishment of these galleries away from the city centre was countered by the creation of a permanent, purpose-built building for the National Gallery of Victoria's art collection. The NGV International building, located on St Kilda Road, was designed by architect Sir Roy Grounds and opened to the public in 1968.

Another major Melbourne institution, the State Library of Victoria, was extended in 1961 with the construction of the La Trobe Library (Figure 9 and 10). The aim was to resolve the issue of disunity and gain some coherence and distinction along the north boundary of the city block. The works were completed in 1965 (Lovell Chen 2011:100).
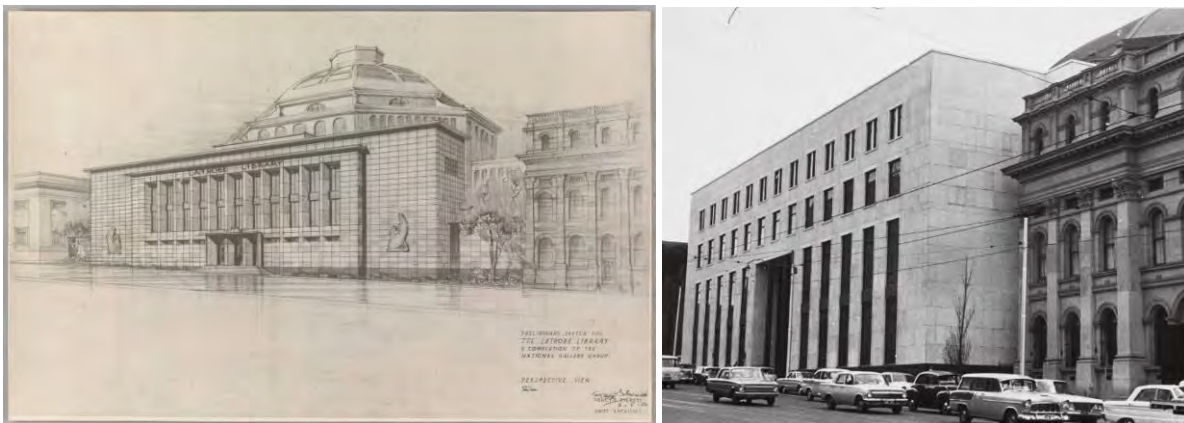

Figure 9 and 10. Preliminary sketch of the proposed La Trobe Library, 1950 and the completed design, 1964 (State Library of Victoria H28187 and H30064)

7.2   Belonging to an ethnic or cultural group

The mass immigration of Europeans during the postwar period led Melbourne to become one of the most multi-cultural cities in the world. Italians and Greeks settled in large numbers within the municipality, where they occupied run-down Victorian workers' cottages, and rejuvenated them, often in a Mediterranean style, and established cafes and other places of business (Context 2012).

Melbourne's cosmopolitan café society was established by European migrants, particularly Italians, after World War II. Well-known cafés that opened in the city centre in the 1950s included Pellegrini's at 66 Bourke Street, Mario's café in Little Bourke Street, the sidewalk café operated by the Oriental Hotel at 17 Collins Street and Mirka's Café at the corner of Exhibition and Little Bourke Streets (Hanscombe 2009). In 1975, it was reported that

CONTEXT

Melbourne had become the third largest Greek-speaking city in the world and Lonsdale Street became the focus of Greek cafes and other businesses (Lewis et al 1993:239).

Chinese immigrants and investors from South-East Asia have been responsible for the renewal of historical Chinatowns in Australia and in the 1960s new Chinese immigrants helped to revive Melbourne's own Chinatown. Assisted by the City Development Association, a Chinatown Development Association was established and a proposal tabled to decorate Little Bourke Street with lanterns, banners and Chinese murals on shop fronts (*Age* 9 July 1959:12). Meanwhile, the See Yup Society – a society for Chinese citizens – opened a new building in Little Bourke Street in 1965, which provided shops and accommodation for Chinese classes, dances and clan meetings (*Age* 30 April 1966:5).

7.3   Protests and activism

Following the commencement of the Vietnam War in 1955, the Australian Government pledged its support to the United States. In 1965 it sent conscripted young men into overseas service, and subsequently instigated the greatest social and political dissent in Australia since the conscription referendums of World War I (Australian War Memorial). The Women's Liberation Movement also gained momentum during this period.

The 1960s and 1970s were rife with protest. Within central Melbourne, significant events included the Vietnam moratoria organised by Jim Cairns of the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign in 1970, when more than 70,000 people marched through the city of Melbourne to protest against Australia's participation in the war (Marsden 2000:107). Melbourne was also the scene of one of the first anti-conscription protests, which took place at the Melbourne National Service office in Swanston Street in 1965 (Langley 1992:17-18).

In 1966, Lyndon B Johnson became the first President of the United States to visit Australia, invited by Prime Minister Harold Holt who pledged that Australia would go 'all the way with LBJ'. His visit to Melbourne, which involved a motorcade through the city centre, drew mass crowds. It also incited protests from students who opposed Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. A 1960s almanac recorded that:

> A[n] estimated 750,000 people turned out in Melbourne to welcome visiting US President Lyndon Johnson. Although most of the crowd are pro-LBJ, a strong anti-war contingent demonstrates against the visit, chanting 'LBJ, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?' (Reason 2016)

Figures 10 and 11. President Johnson among the crowds on Swanston Street, Melbourne, 1966 (Age, 22 October 1966)

While early protests were relatively small in size, in the late-1960s there was an increased sense that the war in Vietnam was one 'that couldn't be won'. The peace movement grew in popularity and momentum as a result (Hamel-Green).

The Vietnam moratorium protests, the first of which took place on 8 May 1970, were the largest public demonstrations in Australia's history until that time and represented a growing discontent towards the government's commitment to the Vietnam War in general and conscription in particular. The primary objectives were to force the withdrawal of Australian troops from Vietnam and end conscription. The protests took place during a period of great social change in Australia, when people from a range of backgrounds were prepared to defy authority.

A total of 200,000 people across Australia took part in the First Moratorium. It was the Melbourne city centre that hosted the largest event – 70,000 people marched peacefully down Bourke Street led by organiser Jim Cairns. This equated to more than one in 30 Melburnians. The Australian Council of Trade Union (ACTU) president at the time, Bob Hawke, described the moratorium rally and march as 'the most significant public participation in a political

event' (*Age* 9 May 1970:1); another reporter stated that: 'It was, without doubt, the most impressive demonstration seen in Melbourne. The sheer weight of numbers alone was staggering…It was a legitimate expression of opinion by a substantial section of the population' (*Age* May 1970:15).

As reported in the *Age* the day following the First Moratorium, 'the successful demonstration virtually guarantees that more mass demonstrations will be attempted, perhaps in support of causes other than Vietnam. The Vietnam Moratorium Committee has given enlarged meaning to the notion of peaceful public dissent…' (*Age* 9 May 1970:15).

The intense social activism of the late-1960s was also embodied in the Women's Liberation Movement, a feminist movement that fought for equal civil rights and personal and social liberation. In 1969, women's liberationists met outside the Commonwealth Offices in Melbourne to protest against the repeated failure of the Arbitration Commission to award equal pay for equal work. Though the Commission ultimately awarded equal pay to women, this only applied to strictly equal work. In 1972, the Melbourne Women's Liberation set up a centre at 16 Little La Trobe Street to act as a gathering place for members of the movement (Fairbanks).

Figure 12. Marchers moving down Collins Street during the Vietnam Moratorium, 1970 (Australian War Memorial, P00671.009)

Figure 13. First Vietnam Moratorium in Melbourne, 1970 (State Library of Victoria)

7.4   City Square debates

Another controversial issue in central Melbourne in the postwar period was the provision of a city square. Robert Hoddle's design for the city of Melbourne lacked any form of civic or open space within the grid, but reserved blocks or allotments for markets, public buildings, and churches. The lack of any public space or sweeping boulevards was criticised as early as 1850, and proposals for public squares within the Hoddle Grid cropped up regularly from the 1850s.

A city square for Melbourne was a common topic of discussion throughout the 1950s and 1960s, with frequent debate about the most appropriate location for such a space. In 1966, when the Queen Victoria Building on the corner of Swanston and Collins streets, and the adjacent City Club Hotel opposite the Town Hall were demolished pending future development, Council decided that was a good site for the long-debated city square, and purchased the land.

Lord Mayor Bernard Evans welcomed the decision, stating the 'decision by the City Council to proceed with the first stage of the project is a welcome initiative in the long, frustrating fight for a more beautiful Melbourne' (*Age* 5 July 1966:2). Those opposed to the plan criticised the chosen location, bemoaning the fact that 'the site suggested, near the Town Hall, would create a dead frontage which would restrict Melbourne's business development' (*Age* 7 September 1960:6).

Despite this opposition, Council proceeded to acquire properties along Swanston Street between the Town Hall and St Paul's Cathedral, and east up to and including the Regent Theatre. Buildings purchased included the Cathedral Hotel, Cathedral House, Guy's Buildings (demolished 1969), Green's Building and the Town Hall Chambers (demolished 1971) as well as Wentworth House and Regency House on Flinders Lane. The Regent Theatre was also slated to be demolished, but was saved by a union ban (Annear 2005:215-225).

A brief for the City Square was developed and it was here that the political and social climate of the 1960s first intersected with architectural outcomes, coinciding as it did with Australia's involvement in the war in Vietnam and the resultant protest marches that took place along Swanston and Collins streets. Councillors, concerned that the creation of a large public square would encourage protests and demonstrations by creating a platform to stage such mass events, decided that the square would be designed in such a way that there would be no potential for the public to gather in large numbers (Reed 2011). A national design competition was held and architects Denton, Corker & Marshall were awarded the commission. A makeshift plaza, paved and planted to offset the demolition hoardings, was developed on the site of the future City Square in 1970 (Annear 2005:223, Figure 15). This site did little to assuage the Government's fears about inciting 'the spirit of democracy' – the plaza providing the ideal location to stage a large-scale Labor rally in protest of Gough Whitlam's dismissal in November 1975 (Figure 16).

After decades of debate, Melbourne's City Square was finally opened in 1980. (May 2008d)

Figure 15. The temporary plaza on the site of the future City Square, 1970 (State Library of Victoria H2003.100/910)

Figure 16. Labor protest rally in City Square, November 1975 (State Library of Victoria H2012.140/488)

7.0 Shaping cultural life	
Sub-themes	**Examples**
Arts and creative life in the city	NGV International, St Kilda Road (1968)
	La Trobe Library Extension (State Library of Victoria) La Trobe Street (1961-65)
Belonging to an ethnic or cultural group	Pellegrini's Espresso Bar 66 Bourke Street (1954)
	Stalactites Restaurant 177-183 Lonsdale Street (1978)
	Italian Waiters Club, 20 Meyers Place
	China Town Little Bourke Street (remodelled in 1960s)
City Square debates	City Square, 44-86 Swanston Street (1980)

CONTEXT

8.0 Enjoying the city

8.1 Expressing civic pride

In 1948, Melbourne lord mayor Sir Raymond Connelly described Melbourne as a city 'in the doldrums, a metropolis whose civic pride was wilting' (Serle cited in Lewis et al 1993:203). The key events of Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1954 and the 1956 Olympic Games did much to boost civic pride, attract investment and promote Melbourne to the world.

Queen Elizabeth II became the first reigning monarch to visit Australia in 1954. In anticipation of her visit, the city of Melbourne underwent a 'royal face lift', with decorations including a large illuminated crown on the domed roof over the main entrance to Flinders St Station and a bushland scene covering the upper part of the Coles' store in Bourke St (*Weekly Times*, 24 February 1954:58). Her visit coincided with the city's preparations for the 1956 Olympic Games.

8.2 Melbourne's introduction to the world stage

The staging of the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne gave the city a major boost as an international tourist destination and won for Melbourne the reputation as the 'friendly city' (Context 2012:93).

As early as 1948, discussions had commenced regarding the 'immediate development of important public works in the city' to 'merit selection of Melbourne for the 1956 Olympic Games' (*Age* 15 October 1948: 8). Works proposed included the construction of subways and underground railways and a new Spencer Street station, as well as better parking facilities; reconstruction of leading hotels and the erection of new hotels; and modifications to the present licensing laws (*Age* 15 October 1948:8). Melbourne was announced as the host city of the 1956 Olympic Games at a meeting of the International Olympic Committee in Rome in 1949.

As the first Olympic Games to be held in the Southern Hemisphere, there was a public awareness that 'we must not under-estimate the importance of the Games in presenting Australia to the world… Australians, particularly Victorians, should realise that the standard of preparation for the games must be of the highest order' (*Age* 30 June 1950:2). Following the announcement in 1949 that Melbourne would host the games, there was a flurry to update the city's image and, as Barry Humphries has wryly noted, "half of Victorian Melbourne was torn down in the stampede to be modern" (Heritage Alliance 2008:41).

A key concern was the low standard of Melbourne's hotels, with the *Age* reporting that 'it is apparent to all Australian travellers going abroad that our existing hotel accommodation is far below world standard. Staging the Games therefore gives Australia a chance to lift this standard, and to attract more visitors to the Commonwealth.' (*Age* 30 June 1950:2) It was further reported that 'hotels to accommodate visitors to the 1956 Olympic games in Melbourne will be designed on the most modern lines and will be situated mainly within the city limits' (*Age* 23 March 1950:4).

Ultimately, only a handful of hotels were constructed in the city for the Olympic Games. Hosies Hotel (1954-56, Figure 17) at the corner of Elizabeth and Flinders streets, designed by architects Mussen, Mackay and Potter and the Town Hall Hotel (now demolished) were two hotels built in the city centre in anticipation of the Games.

Another widely reported issue at the time was Melbourne's constrained licensing laws. Newspaper editorials raised the issue of Victoria's restrictive liquor licensing laws from as early as 1949, stating that Olympic hospitality was a national matter and the licensing laws 'should be changed so that city hotels can capture the 'community atmosphere' of American hotels' (Herald, 25 June 1949:9). A Victorian referendum was held in March 1956 to extend hotel closing hours from 6pm to 10pm, but was defeated, with only six of the 66 state electorates voting in favour of ten o'clock closing. The 'six o'clock swill' ultimately remained in place during the Games. It proved somewhat of a curiosity for international visitors accustomed to more relaxed drinking and café cultures (Reeves 2016).

The 1956 Olympic Games were an important milestone in the city of Melbourne's maturation and growth (Reeves 2016). The international event was a coming of age for Australian sport and proved that Melbourne, and Australia, was capable of hosting a global event never before held outside of Europe or the United States of America (ABC Archives).

Figure 17. Hosie's Hotel Melbourne, cnr. Elizabeth & Flinders Streets, 1955 (National Library of Australia)

8.3   Entertainment and socialising

The retail and entertainment precincts in Melbourne, which emerged in the early 1960s, were largely protected from consolidation and redevelopment due to lower plot ratio controls and difficulty in consolidating a sufficient number of properties to achieve a legitimate tower form. The level of redevelopment in these precincts is more modest, with fine grained, smaller sized allotments along with valued heritage fabric. During this phase, conservation of heritage buildings was not yet an intentional pursuit, but rather a residual effect of the prevailing logic of the planning system (CoM 2016:5-7).

Higher disposable income, more leisure time, and larger metropolitan populations created an increase in entertainment and tourism industries in every Australian capital city. According to Marsden, only the office and finance sector has had more impact on the physical expansion and alteration of existing places, especially in central Sydney and Melbourne. Even though increased suburbanisation from the 1950s led to the closure of entertainment venues and theatres in Melbourne's city centre, other venues opened. In 1970, for example, Hoyts Cinema Centre in Bourke Street opened the first multi-cinema complex in Australia.

Clubs have also historically been an important part of city life. The Lyceum Club for women built new premises at 2-18 Ridgway Place in 1959 while new clubrooms for the RACV Club were built at 123 Queen Street in 1961. Such places provided patrons with a space in the city to meet, network and promote cultural activities.

8.0 Enjoying the city	
Sub-themes	**Specific examples**
Melbourne's introduction to the world stage	Hosies Hotel, 1-5 Elizabeth Street (1954-56)
Entertaining and socialising	Hoyts Cinema Centre, 134-144 Bourke Street (1966-69) Mid City, 194-200 Bourke Street (1969-70)
	Lyceum Club, 2-18 Ridgway Place (1959) RACV Club, 111-129 Queen Street (1961)

CONTEXT

10.0   Preserving and celebrating the city's history

10.1   Conserving the urban environment

After a lull in building activity in the city during the war years, Melbourne saw dramatic redevelopment from the late 1950s. Planning visions that described inner-city areas as ripe for development drew vocal protest from residents who saw the destruction of community, local business people who objected to the impact of freeways, and conservationists who opposed the loss of historic buildings (Marsden 2000:94).

The demolition of a number of historic buildings in the 1950s led to the formation of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) in 1956 and by the late 1960s, conservation efforts were driven by broad new alliances between residents, National Trusts and unions. In Melbourne for example, the Builders Labourers Federation worked with the National Trust in the 1970s to impose 'green bans' on buildings the union refused to demolish, including the Regent Theatre on Collins Street. This activism led to reforms to the planning scheme.

The Register of Historic Buildings was established in 1974 through the *Historic Buildings Act 1974* and this provided statutory power over specified historic buildings. However, despite being heritage listed, a terrace dwelling at 80 Collins Street was demolished in the mid-1970s in order to give the proposed Nauru House office tower a Collins Street address. This event helped to trigger a new Central City Interim Development Order, approved in June 1976, which introduced additional planning controls over demolition (Ramsay Consulting 2012:10).

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Appendix 1

A comparison of the *City of Melbourne Postwar Thematic Environmental History* themes with the *Victorian Framework of Historical Themes (2012)*

City of Melbourne TEH Themes (based on 2012 TEH)	Victorian Framework of Historical Themes
Shaping the urban landscape	6.2 Creating Melbourne 9.3 Achieving distinction in the arts 2.5 Migrating and making a home
Governing, administering and policing the city	6.2 Creating Melbourne 7.3 Maintaining law and order
Building a commercial city	5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity 5.3 Markets and retailing 5.5 Banking and finance
Creating a functioning city	3.3 Linking Victorians by rail 3.4 Linking Victorians by road in the twentieth century 3.5 Travelling by tram 3.7 Establishing and maintaining communications 8.3 Providing health and welfare services
Living in the city	6.7 Making homes for Victorians
Working in the city	5.8 Working
Shaping cultural life	2.5 Migrating and making a home 2.6 Maintaining distinctive cultures 7.2 Struggling for political rights 9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene
Enjoying the city	5.6 Entertaining and socialising 5.7 Catering for tourists 9.1 Participating in sports and recreation
Preserving and celebrating the city's history	7.5 Protecting Victoria's heritage

CONTEXT