RICHMOND FIRE STATION (FORMER)

Richmond Fire Station

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Location

131 LORD STREET,, RICHMOND VIC 3121 - Property No 200670

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO274

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2008

The following wording is from the Allom and Lovell Building Citation, 1998 for the property. Please note that this is a "Building Citation", not a "Statement of Significance". For further information refer to the Building Citation held by the City of Yarra.

History:

The Fire Brigade Station on the corner of Lord and Newry Streets, Richmond, was built in 1893. It was designed by J A B Koch of Church Street, Richmond. The cost of the land and building was approximately ?1,100, exclusive of fittings and furniture which were to be 'on a very elaborate scale'. The building was officially opened by the mayor on 6 May 1893. When it was opened it was reported that:

`The building has a very imposing appearance, and is replete with the latest fire-fighting appliances. Electricity plays a leading part in the new service. By simply connecting the current by the merest pressure of a button, or pulling a cord, open fly the main doors, the horse rushes out of the stable, and backing itself into the horse-cart, is harnessed in full going order within 20 seconds. With such a marvellously perfect system, ought we not to henceforth feel secure against the devastating elements of fire.'

The building was considered important at the time because it incorporated a fire services system similar to those which were used in America.

John Augustus Bernard Koch emigrated to Australia in 1855, and had established an architectural practice in Richmond by 1870. He designed over sixty buildings, the majority in Richmond and neighbouring Hawthorn. After fifteen years as architect for the City of Melbourne, Koch was appointed city architect by the City of Richmond in 1887. He was a Justice of the Peace from 1866, a Richmond councillor from 1877 to 1885, and mayor in 1883. In 1903-04 he was president of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects. Koch's buildings range across a number of architectural styles, including Italianate and Gothic Revival. The former Fire Station contrasts with one of his most ornate buildings, Ontario (now Labassa), in Caulfield.

Description:

The former Fire Station at 131 Lord Street, Richmond, is a two-storey late Victorian red brick domestic-scaled building. A shallow projecting bay to the south of the west elevation has a large arched vehicle opening with panelled timber doors. The main facade of the building has no front door; the ground floor has two shallow-arched window openings, the first floor has four semicircular arched windows. There are brick string courses at ground floor sill level and first floor impost level, whilst the first floor windows have protruding keystones. The windows are timber framed double-hung sashes with single vertical glazing bars. Sills are bluestone. There is also a moulded rendered frieze across the west and south elevation at first floor level, and rendered mouldings to the gable-end of the bay. The roof is hipped and gabled, and clad in (non-original) tiles. The red brick chimney has a rendered moulded cap. The south wall, to Newry Street, is blank save for a single arched first floor window. The ground floor on the south elevation extends beyond the rear of the main building and terminates at what appear to be a gable-roofed outbuilding. To the north-east corner there is a skillion-roofed single storey addition.

Significance:

The former Fire Station at 131 Lord Street, Richmond, is of local historical and architectural significance. The building was technically advanced for its time incorporating the latest American fire service system. Architecturally, the building is a particularly simple and bold late Victorian composition. The building is an unusual and prominent heritage element on a corner in an otherwise predominantly residential area. The building was designed by prominent Melbourne architect and former Richmond councillor and mayor, J A B Koch.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Richmond Conservation Study, John & Thurley O'Connor, Ros Coleman & Heather Wright, 1985; Yarra - City of Yarra Heritage Review, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1998; Yarra - City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas, Graeme Butler & Associates, 2007;
Construction dates	1893,
Architect/Designer	Koch, JAB,
Other Names	Burnley Fire Brigade Station,
Hermes Number	103852
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

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This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/