
Bank of Australasia (Former)



Bank of Australasia (former),
Hobsons Bay Heritage Study
2006



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Location

189 Nelson Place WILLIAMSTOWN, Hobsons Bay City

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1769

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO221

Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The former Bank of Australasia, designed by Reed & Barnes and constructed by Pearce & Murray in 1876-77, at 189 Nelson Place, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

The former Bank of Australasia at 189 Nelson Place, Williamstown is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it was the second major purpose-built bank in Williamstown (after the ES&A Bank, 1873); the eighth such building commissioned by the bank in the colony since incorporation in 1835; and their first suburban branch bank building. It demonstrates the importance of Nelson Place as the main commercial centre in Williamstown during the later part of the nineteenth century. It is also important as the first commission within Melbourne for the Bank of Australasia by the renowned architectural firm of Reed & Barnes. (AHC criteria A4 and H1)

Aesthetically, it is architecturally significant as an important example of the work of the renowned architectural firm of Reed and Barnes. The building is an original and elegant composition in the Italian Renaissance Revival style with rich decoration and detail and makes an important contribution on a prominent corner site to the historic Nelson Place streetscape. (AHC criteria E1 and F1)

Note: Included on the Victorian Heritage Register as VHR 1769.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;
Construction dates	1876,
Architect/Designer	Reed & Barnes,
Hermes Number	22201
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

This Italian Renaissance revival bank is of two storeys, faced in stucco and parapeted in form. It was described in rate books as of stone (footings) and brick and containing 8 rooms (3). A smooth rusticated base gives due emphasis to the more richly ornamented upper storey with its balustraded and pierced parapet. This ornament includes the aedicule window treatment (with the implied vermiculated stucco fanlight shutters); the wrought iron balustrade panels, forming a saltire cross to span the balconettes at the base of each aedicule; the unusual string mould segment used at each corner; and the deeply bracketed cornice moulding above. Arched fenestration at the corner level is linked by an impost mould and adjoins an impressive six-panel door-pair facing Nelson Place. A fine pair of wrought iron gates is placed across this door.

Shutters are gone from the upper windows; otherwise near original except for colour. There are unrelated commercial additions at the rear, visible from the side street.

Integrity

External Integrity

Integrity - High. Condition - Good.

Physical Description 2

Context

A major corner element in the historic Nelson Place precinct that complements 185-87 Nelson Place, echoes No.195 opposite and is countered on the west by the wedge formed by the post office.

Historical Australian Themes

Financing Australia

Physical Description 3

Associations

Bank of Australasia, Reed & Barnes

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/>