

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0939

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO214

VHR Registration

September 30, 1992

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 9, 2000

What is significant?

The Former North Fitzroy Electric Railway Substation (now an elderly citizens' hostel) was built by Swanson Bros in 1915 as part of the electrification scheme for Melbourne's suburban railway system which had been approved by the Government in 1912. It was one of a number of substations in the metropolitan area used to convert 20,000v alternating current generated at the Newport power station to a 1,500v direct current before it was transmitted to the trains through overhead wires. These rotary converter substations were gradually replaced by mercury arc rectifier units under a modernisation programme started in 1949. The last section of the adjacent Royal Park to Clifton Hill railway, which had been opened in May 1888, was closed in August 1981. The former North Fitzroy Electric Railway Substation is a prominent red brick and render Renaissance-style building and a dominant element in the Park Street streetscape.

How is it significant?

The Former North Fitzroy Electric Railway Substation is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Former North Fitzroy Electric Railway Substation is of historical significance as a substantial remnant of the infrastructure built as part of the first electrification of Melbourne's rail system. The building is an important landmark in North Fitzroy and a significant reminder of the former inner circle line that opened rail access between the Northern and North Eastern suburbs and the city.

The Former North Fitzroy Electric Railway Substation is of architectural significance as a major and striking example of early 20th century industrial/infrastructure architecture.

The strong design of the building and its prominence in the local area are evidence of the importance of the railways to the development of Melbourne. The majestic nature of the building's architecture is most evident in the former interior machine hall, a particularly dramatic space lit from large windows to the north elevation. It has

retained this feel despite redevelopment.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Construction dates	1915,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	CASA ELDA VACCARI HOSTEL,
Hermes Number	497
Property Number	

History

Contextual History:History of Place:

Substations located at Glenroy, Caulfield, Mentone, Seaford, East Camberwell and Deer Park can be compared.

Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 939.

North Fitzroy Electricity Railway Substation, 863 Brunswick Street, North Fitzroy

(To the extent of-

1. The whole building known as the North Fitzroy Electricity Railway Substation; and

2. All of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 9981, Folio 485 marked L-1 on Plan 605583T, endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council, and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council.)
[Victoria Government Gazette No. G37 23 September 1992 p.2821]

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/>