





plan 603289(B).JPG

## Location

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, 156-292 GRATTAN STREET PARKVILLE, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0924

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO342

## VHR Registration

June 24, 1992

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 16, 2000

What is significant?

The Old Arts building at the University of Melbourne was built between 1919 and 1924 at a cost of seventy-one thousand pounds. Designed by Chief Architect of the Public Works Department, S C Brittingham, it was the last stone building to be constructed on the campus. It is located adjacent to the Old Quadrangle, and forms part of the central core of the University campus. The two storeyed complex is in a Tudor-Gothic style. The brick construction has bluestone footings, and the exterior, including buttresses, is clad in Kyneton freestone. A five-level castellated and turreted clock tower, containing the foundation stone laid in October 1921, rises above the Old Arts building and adjacent Old Quadrangle, to visually dominate the site. Its bell was cast by Gillett and Johnston of Croydon, England and was installed in 1925.

The core of the Old Arts building consists a group of two storey lecture spaces with timber trussed hipped roofs with lanterns for top-lighting. Various materials are used on the roofs of the lectures halls, including corrugated iron, flat iron sheets, slates and bituminous felt. Flanking the lecture halls are the south, east and west elevations containing offices and tutorial rooms. These wings, with long gable roofs, have a series of projecting gables to each facade. The window openings are square-headed with chamfered reveals and drip moulds. The trefoil motif is repeated in the leadlight windows on both levels. The original lecture halls had steeply raked floors but many were converted during the post-war period to provide large flat floor lecture halls.

How is it significant?

The Old Arts building is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Old Arts building, with its tower, forms an important landmark defining the oldest precinct on the university campus. The inclusion of a tower reflected the original intention to include a tower in the unbuilt south wing of the Old Quadrangle. Architecturally, the Old Arts building draws its inspiration from the original university buildings, forming a coherent visual unit with them. It was the last stone building to be constructed on the campus and symbolises the historical association between the arts faculty, the earliest and largest school of university, with the Law Building and Quadrangle, the oldest building on the campus and where arts subjects were first taught.

## 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](#).

### **Specific Exemptions:**

#### **1. Maintenance**

Daily maintenance activities involving the replacement of existing fittings and finishes with appropriate replacements including plumbing fittings, lighting and power services, floor, wall and ceiling finishes, partitions and door roofs and external cladding are exempt from permits.

#### **2. Replacement of External Components**

For external replacement on external buildings, materials will be as existing or a permit for change will be sought. Paint colours will be as existing within a previously approved range. For long programs of a number of years, for example stone work restoration, initial approval to be obtained and only referred back in the event of major change.

#### **3. Safety and Other Legislative Requirements**

Permits not required where concealed services or equipment are required to be replaced or upgraded. Where certain legislative standards are required by authorities such as for sprinklers heads, smoke detectors, small signage and other small items, these do not require permits.

#### **4. Conservation Plans**

Any interior works which are in accordance with a Conservation Plan approved by the Historic Buildings Council will not require a permit.

~

#### **5. Internal Painting**

No permits are required for internal painting in Registered Buildings if colours are in neutral or heritage tints.

#### **6. Internal Alterations**

Permits are required for alterations to original and other elements which contribute to the architectural or historic significance of a section of a

registered building, for example columns, staircases, mouldings, doors and joinery.

No permits required except in the case of alterations to structural walls, floor and roof framing.

No permit required for construction of non-load bearing walls.

## 7. Grounds and Landscaping

No permits required within registered land area for hard landscaping such as pavements, steps, bollards, lighting, etc.

Construction dates	1921,
Architect/Designer	Brittingham, Samuel C,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	916
Property Number	

---

## History

History of Place:

(from George Tibbits, The Old Arts Building University of Melbourne, History and Conservation Guidelines, 1995)  
In 1912 proposals for new buildings were developed in the university which included designs prepared by some of the professors, a master plan by the architect George de Lacy Evans and an architectural competition, as preparation for the university to approach the government for a large building grant. After this complex preliminary process, interrupted by the start of the First World War, the Public Works Department was commissioned to prepare a design for the Arts and Education block, the building now known as Old Arts. The building was designed and built between 1919 and 1924. A museum and office section intended for the north-west side was not built.

In the 1930s some extra rooms were added and some larger rooms subdivided. Heating was introduced and alterations made to the acoustics and casement sash windows were introduced. Repairs during the 1920s and 1930s introduced new materials into the fabric. A brick extension designed by architects Gawler and Drummond was added in 1936-37 on the north-west side of the building. At the end of the Second World War another extension, designed by the Public Works Department, was added to the north-east side. Further alterations were made in the post-war period.

## Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 924.

OLD ARTS BUILDING, THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

(To the extent of:

1. the whole of the building known as the Old Arts Building, University of Melbourne, as shown marked B-1 on Plan 603289F(A), endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council; and

2. the land extending-

**west** - from the base of the building line of Old Arts to a line level with the east facade of the Old Commerce Building

**south** - the whole of the South Lawn (excluding the underground carpark)

**north** - to south face of the Natural Philosophy Building

this being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 8876 Folio 379 and marked L-1 on Plan 603289F(B), endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council.)

[Victoria Government Gazette No. G24 24 June 1992 p.1579]

*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/>*