

RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA (CANBERRA BRANCH)

Heritage Management Plan



prepared by

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For

Reserve Bank of Australia

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Eric Martin and Associates were commissioned by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), Sydney, in 2019 to update the 2012 Heritage Management Plan (HMP) for the Reserve Bank Building in Canberra. The updated plan is to be in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act (Heritage) (EPBC Act).

Documentary Evidence

Soon after the establishment of the Reserve Bank of Australia, (RBA) in 1959, negotiations commenced with the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) to find a suitable site. A site near the intersection of London Circuit and University Avenue was offered; it was an integral part of the legal precinct and adjacent to a proposed major commercial precinct. In May 1961, RBA accepted the site and commenced a 99-year lease on 1 May 1962.

In December 1961, a national design competition was announced for the design of the building. The competition was managed by the NCDC who also set specific design and siting requirements for the building. The competition was advertised on 13 December 1961 and closed on 16 April 1962.

The competition received 131 submissions, which the assessors (Professor Ingham Ashwork, Professor RA Jensen and Mr Grenfell Riddick (NCDC)) considered to be extremely disappointing in their lack of architectural distinction. The assessors considered that none of the entrants could be commended without reservation. On 15 May 1962 Mr J. G. Phillips Deputy Governor of The Reserve Bank of Australia announced that the Perth firm of Howlett and Bailey, had won the first prize of 2000 pounds.

The project was tendered early in 1963. The contract was awarded to Civil and Civic Pty Ltd. Construction commenced in the 1963 and was completed in 1965.

On completion of the building the key features of the ground floor included; a large voluminous banking chamber at the front of the building, with a deep counter running across the chamber. On the back wall of the chamber was a large copper sculpture by Gerald and Margo Lewers, entitled "Four pieces". The beaten copper abstract design corresponds to the scales, weights and counterweights placed on the economy by the Reserve Bank. The sculpture was commissioned by the Reserve Bank of Australia as part of the philosophy of its Governor Dr H C Coombs of acquiring and displaying major Australian art works for the Bank buildings. The ceiling of the chamber was formed by a grid of exposed painted concrete roof beams. Within the beams were located large square light boxes, placed in an irregular layout. Behind the Banking Chamber was a masonry core area, which included the Strong Room and two sets of staff toilets. At the rear of the building was the cash handling area including a cash receival dock. To overcome spatial constraints this area included a vehicle turntable.

The original building design presented the ground floor as two distinct functional halves. The dividing line ran through the centre of the building on a north south axis. The division was represented physically by a grille across the Strong Room, a wall through the central corridor and separate male and female staff toilets in each half of the building. The front (western) half of the building accommodated the banking functions and the cash handling functions were contained in the eastern half of the building.

On completion, the RBA occupied the whole building. The ground floor contained the Banking Chamber and Cash Handling areas. Level 1 contained general administrative offices. Level 2 was designed as the executive level. Originally it contained in the southern half of the floor, a suite of executive offices and Board Room for the Governor and Board member functions when required. In the northern half of the floor was a flat for use when Executive staff were in Canberra. A feature of the original design was an 11-metre diameter glazed garden court between the residence and executive areas.

As the role of the Reserve Bank has changed and technology advanced, their needs for space reduced. In 2019 the RBA only occupied the Banking Chamber areas and half of Level 2. The remainder of the building is tenanted.



Physical Evidence

The Reserve Bank building forms the northern edge of the legal precinct at the western end of Knowles Place Civic ACT. The building is a freestanding element designed to be viewed equally from all sides. Its principal address (and entrance) is to London Circuit on the west, with secondary entrances to the north and south. The building strongly relates to the Knowles Place plaza, across which it reflects the scale and form of the Canberra City Police Station. To the eastern end and slightly elevated above the Reserve Bank Building, is the former Supreme Court building, which was the first building constructed in the precinct.

The Reserve Bank building is a well-proportioned three storeys stripped classical structure. The building is given vertical emphasis through a regular grid of cruciform cross section, marble-faced columns, which extend through the three levels to a marble clad lintel. The columns are set out from the face of the full height glazed curtain wall box, which forms the body of the building. Each level of the building is defined within the glazing by anodized aluminium clad spandrel panels. The glazing is screened externally by punched and folded anodized aluminium sunscreens (koolshade). The four elevations of the building are very similar, with the principal difference being the charcoal brick wall of the ground floor of the east elevation.

The Banking Chamber and Strong Room are the only two original spaces in the building which are substantially as originally constructed. The eastern half of the ground floor all of Level 1 and the former flat area on Level 2 have been converted to commercial tenanted office space. The remaining executive suites of the RBA at level 2 have been completely refurbished in the past 10 years. The Banking Chamber and associated toilets were refurbished in late 2011 along with refurbishment to the staff amenities area on level 2.

Statement of Significance

The Reserve Bank Building is representative of the establishment and operation of a central bank to control monetary policy in Australia. The Banking Chamber and Strong Room have the ability to demonstrate aspects of the operation of the bank.

The building is the only ACT work of the noted Perth Architects Howlett and Bailey (Project Architect, Jeffrey Howlett) and was the result of a national design competition.

The exterior of the building has significance as a key element of the Legal Precinct and Knowles Place. Its stripped classical architecture echoes the other buildings of the precinct with the low form, regular rectangular forms and light grey finishes and horizontal roofline. The way in which the building can be viewed in the round with all façades given equal design attention adds to its appeal.

The building is one of the better ACT examples of the late twentieth century stripped classical architecture with its regular grid of structural columns rising through three levels, curtain wall glazing, low horizontal roof expression and the use of light coloured stone finishes externally.

The sculpture "Four Pieces" on the rear wall of the Bank Chamber is the work of Gerald and Margo Lewers who were significant Australian artists and sculptors of the 1960's period. The sculpture is representative of artistic style of the period and the desire of the Reserve Bank Governor H C Coombs to exhibit Australian art in Bank premises.

As part of the Law Courts Precinct group of buildings it demonstrates the early design and siting policies of the NDCD for this part of the city, with respect to architectural quality and function of the buildings. The buildings are grouped around the axis of University Avenue, one of the principal radiating avenues from City Hill in the original Griffin design for the Capital. The public square, which forms the centre of the Precinct, is one of the principal formal squares in Civic.

Heritage Management

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) 1999 established a National and Commonwealth Heritage list and sets out obligations for Commonwealth agencies that own or lease heritage places. The Reserve Bank building has been recognized as significant as it is included on the Commonwealth Heritage List. As such the Reserve Bank of Australia has obligations under the EPBC Act to protect and manage the significance of the place. These are defined in Section 6.0 of the HMP.



This Heritage Management Plan fulfils the requirements for a management plan under Schedule 7A of the EPBC Act (refer Section 6.3).

The Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles to be applied in the protection of the heritage values of the Reserve Bank of Australia (Canberra Branch) are identified in Section 6.2.

Conservation Policy

OVERALL POLICY STATEMENT

The Reserve Bank of Australia Canberra Branch is a significant element of our cultural heritage and retains a high external and moderate internal degree of integrity from its original construction. The objective of the following conservation policies is that the heritage significance of the place should be managed in a manner appropriate to conserve the original elements of the building and thereby its significance. At the same time the building needs to continue to be used as a banking and office facility.

The conservation policies are presented in Section 7.0 of the HMP.

The policies include:

7.1 General

- Policy 1.1 The statement of cultural significance official values and list of items set out in Sections 4.5, 4.7 & 4.8 together with the more extensive assessments of individual items contained in this policy section, should be accepted as one of the bases for future planning work and management of the building and site.*
- Policy 1.2 The future conservation and development of the RBA Building should be carried out in accordance with the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter).*
- Policy 1.3 The policies recommended and options discussed throughout this document should be endorsed and followed when considering future planning and work associated with the RBA Building.*

7.2 Future Use of the RBA buildings

- Policy 2.1 The building should retain a banking or office function.*
- Policy 2.2 The RBA Building is to be conserved in a manner that does not compromise its significance and in a way consistent with the policies set down in this Heritage Management Plan.*

7.3 Expansion/Alterations

- Policy 3.1 Extensions and alterations to the building are not supported.*
- Policy 3.2 Internal alterations not to be Intrusive and to be sympathetic.*
- Policy 3.3 Changes to meet statutory requirements as defined by the NCC Vol 1 BCA, Australian Standards or Authorities shall be considered in the context of the Policies 4.1 - 4.3.*
- Policy 3.4 The building can be repaired and maintained provided there is no significant impact to the identified heritage values.*

7.4 Conservation of the Building and Retention of Significance

- Policy 4.1 Items of Exceptional Significance to be conserved.*
- Policy 4.2 Items and fabric of Considerable Significance to be conserved unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. Where there are no feasible and prudent alternative suitable measures that minimise any intervention in the items or fabric can occur.*
- Policy 4.3 The items of little significance, such as those of little significance in clause 4.8 should be retained but could be altered, removed, adapted or remodelled to allow for the conservation of elements of greater significance, or for operational requirements but only after consideration of alternatives that minimise any intervention or impact and appropriate recording prior to their removal.*
- Policy 4.4 The items considered intrusive in Clause 4.8 can be removed at any time, subject to archaeological control and photographic recording prior to its removal.*



7.5 Recording

Policy 5.1 Original details and finishes must be recorded prior to any major refurbishment or modification. Recording should be undertaken by a heritage specialist and recording data submitted to the relevant heritage authority.

7.6 Management

Policy 6.1 Existing registers be updated with the details contained within this report.

Policy 6.2 The Heritage Management Plan must be reviewed within every 5-year period. The review is to check that no new material is to hand, to review and change details as may be required and to reconfirm policies.

Policy 6.3 A clear management structure and system needs to be maintained by RBA to ensure works occur in a correct way, and Conservation Policies are applied.

Policy 6.4 Interpretation of the site should be promoted by means of making the HMP widely available. There is potential for displaying some information about the building in public areas of the building such as the Bank Chamber and entry.

Policy 6.5 All original documentation for the building should be retained by the RBA.

Policy 6.6 Procedures for sale or lease of the property must follow EPBC Act obligations.

Policy 6.7 The building be maintained by the Reserve Bank of Australia so that it remains sound, weathertight and fit for purpose.

Policy 6.8 Stakeholder consultation must occur with all proposed actions to the place or its fabric which will have significant impact on the Commonwealth Heritage value of the Place and stakeholders be provided with an opportunity for comment.

Policy 6.9 Resolution of conflicting policies or possible differences to the policies to be implemented.

Policy 6.10 Management of sensitive information.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Eric Martin and Associates were commissioned by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), Sydney, in February 2019 to update the Heritage Management Plan (HMP) for the Reserve Bank building in Canberra.

The plan was prepared to guide the RBA in their management of the building, maintaining and enhancing its significance in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act (Heritage) (EPBC Act).

1.2 Brief

The brief for this project was to update the 2012 HMP for the whole of the Reserve Bank of Australia building, Canberra to meet the requirements of the EPBC Act Section 7.

The scope of work to be undertaken was:

Documentary Evidence – the existing history in the above report will only be modified to include any internal and external changes since 2012;

Physical Evidence – A site inspection of the Ground Floor, Level 1 and Level 2 areas will be undertaken to update general photographs of the chamber and other areas;

Analysis and Statement of Significance – this will be reviewed and any necessary changes made;

Opportunities and Constraints – this will be reviewed and any necessary changes made and reference the RBA current possibilities which include:

- Main counter – to what extent is change possible to reduce public space and create more work space;
- Can vaults be removed or modified for more office, meeting and storage areas;
- Can a new entry to the DPP be created, including a canopy over, on the north side;
- Can bollards be installed outside entrances and glazed walls;
- Opening up access to tea room;
- Removal of the siding door at the rear of the open office; and
- Leasing of the Bank's executive office on Level 2 to an external tenant.

Conservation & Management Requirements – this will be reviewed and any necessary changes made to reflect the current issues from RBA mentioned above.

1.3 Location

The Reserve Bank of Australia, Canberra Branch, is located near the intersection of London Circuit and University Avenue, Canberra City (Figure 1). In planning terms the site is known as Block 1, Section 18, City.

The building is one of three forming the legal precinct to the west of the city centre. (The other buildings are the Law Courts of the Australian Capital Territory and Canberra City Police Station – refer Figure 2). The legal precinct forms a symmetrical balance with the Civic Square precinct on the east side of Northbourne Avenue (Figure 1).

The building is located on designated land in the ACT Territory Plan and therefore comes under Commonwealth planning legislative control (ie National Capital Authority). The Reserve Bank is a Commonwealth Agency. These factors mean that the EPBC Act applies to the building.



1.4 Current Status

The Reserve Bank of Australia, Canberra Branch is currently registered as an individual building and as an element of the Law Courts Precinct, on the following registers:

- The building is listed as an item on the Commonwealth Heritage List (R1105396)¹ refer Attachment 1;
- Registered as an individual item (ID 19704, 27/3/2001)² and an item in the Law Courts of the ACT Precinct (ID 19696, 27/3/2001), on the Register of the National Estate (R119704)³ (now defunct).
- It is included as an individual item (R069C) and an item in the Law Courts of the ACT Precinct, (R069A) in the Australian Institute of Architects Register of Significant Architecture⁴.
- The building is a nominated place to the ACT Heritage Register but, as it is located on designated land, the ACT Heritage Act 2004 does not apply⁵. The building is also protected under its CHL listing.
- The building has not been listed individually by the National Trust of Australia (ACT) but is included in the Law Courts Precinct.

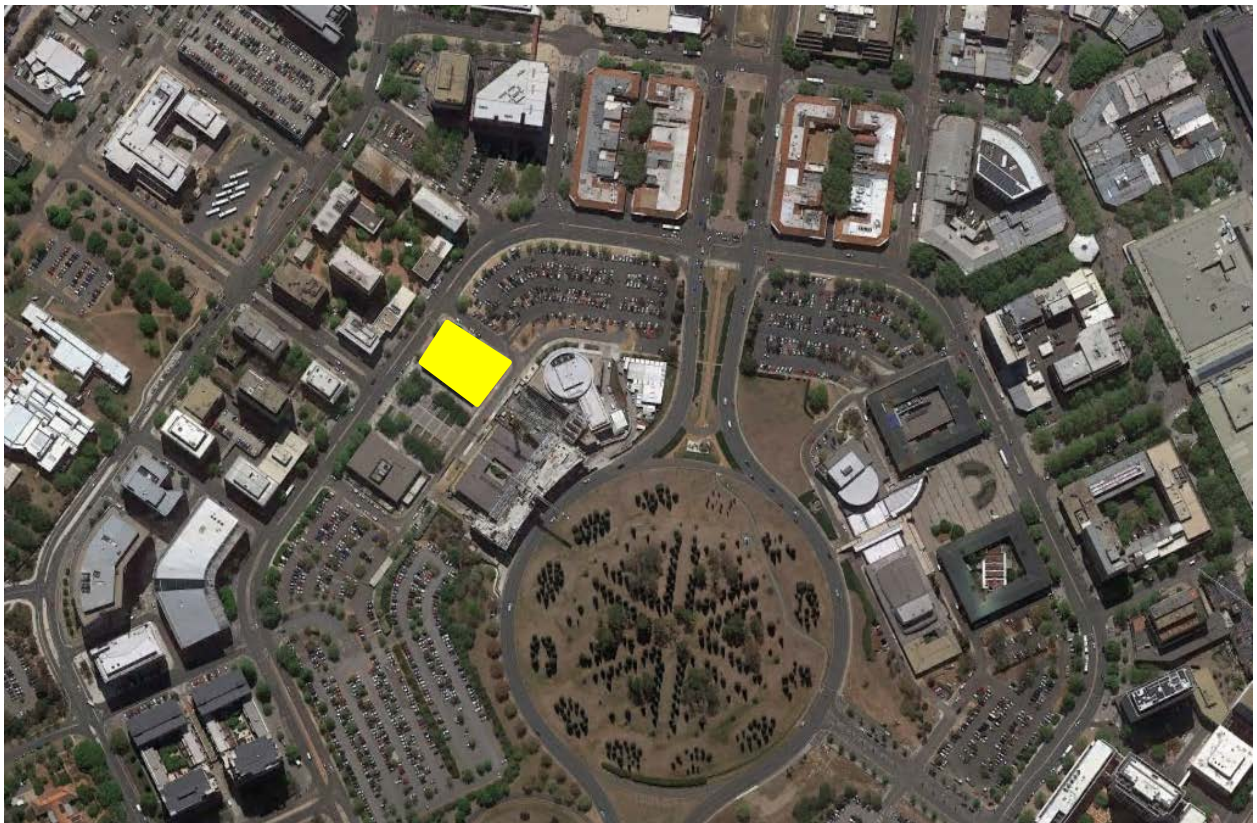


Figure 1: Location Plan

Source: Google Earth, accessed 18 March 2019

1.5 Authorship

The Heritage Management Plan has been prepared by Eric Martin AM, of Eric Martin & Associates.

¹ <https://dmzapp17p.ris.environment.gov.au/ahpi/action/search/heritage-search/record/CHL105396> accessed 26 February 2019

² <https://dmzapp17p.ris.environment.gov.au/ahpi/action/search/heritage-search/record/RNE19696> accessed 26 February 2019

³ <https://dmzapp17p.ris.environment.gov.au/ahpi/action/search/heritage-search/record/RNE19696> accessed 26 February 2019

⁴ http://www.architecture.com.au/docs/default-source/act-notable-buildings/r069_law_courts_of_the_act_and_precinct_rstca.pdf?sfvrsn=2 accessed 26 February 2019

⁵ https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/476745/242.pdf accessed 26 February 2019



1.6 Ownership

The building is owned by the Reserve Bank of Australia – Sydney.

1.7 Methodology

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared using the Burra Charter and Guidelines to the Burra Charter issued by Australia ICOMOS, NSW and JS Kerr *The Conservation Plan* using the Commonwealth Heritage List Criteria and applying the requirements of the EPBC Act.

1.8 Acknowledgements

Our appreciation is extended to Rebecca Dowell, Lesa Sheather and Jamie Moorby (RBA) for their assistance in producing this report.

1.9 Limitations

The study is limited to:

- The readily available documentation available which largely comes from the 2019 HMP.
- The inspection of the interiors was non-invasive and did not include ceiling spaces or lifting of finishes to see if original fabric was concealed.
- Original documentation of the building was limited to what was in the 2012 HMP and that which was made available through Reserve Bank of Australia. Additional information to the 2012 HMP relates to work since 2012.

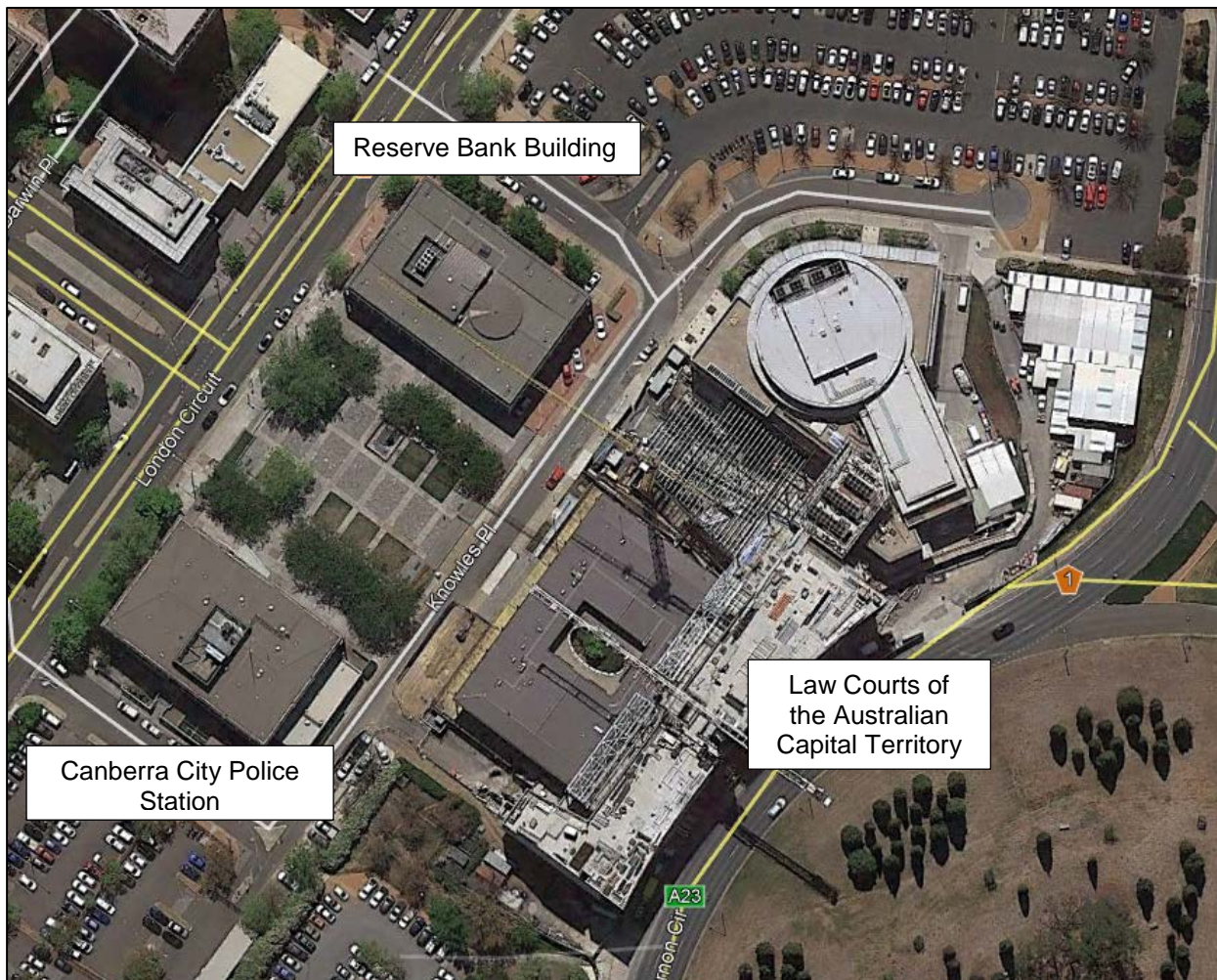


Figure 2: Law Courts Precinct

Source: Google Earth, accessed 20 March 2019

2.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

This section outlines the history of the area, building and provides information about the architect and sculptors associated with the building.

2.1 The Planning of Civic

Walter Burley Griffins design for the National Capital was generated from a number of principle axes which he projected from hills and mountains in the city site. The Principal axis was the land Axis which runs from Red Hill through to Mount Ainslie. Two secondary axes crossed this axis at right angles. The Water axis ran south East from Black Mountain along the centre of an ornamental lake (Lake Burley Griffin). A Municipal axis ran north of the lake between present day Mount Pleasant and City Hill. (Constitution Avenue is on this axis). The Municipal Axis also forms the northern arm of Griffins Parliamentary Triangle.⁶

At the western end of the Municipal axis at its intersection with the west arm of the triangle, Griffin placed his Civic Centre. As well as being located at one of the corners of the triangle, the siting of Civic is also important in Griffins' plan, as it is located at the intersection of the principle entry road to the capital (Northbourne Avenue) and the Parliamentary Triangle. In Griffins' design, 6 avenues radiated from City Hill. The hill was to be encircled by a great hexagonal boulevarde. The land enclosed by the boulevarde would contain Canberra's administrative or municipal functions as well as post office, police station, law courts, corporate offices, banks and other financial institutions. Offices and shops were to be located on land beyond the great boulevarde.⁷

Even as Griffin developed his plan, the functions of the land and the radiating avenues from City Hill changed. Over the decades of planning and construction of Canberra, the design of the roads and land use around City Hill has changed several times. By the 1930s, the hexagonal boulevarde, (London Circuit) had been constructed but to a much narrow width than Griffin envisaged, two service roads encircled City Hill and the 6 axial avenues continued through to City Hill. In 1958, with the establishment of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC), a plan was adopted which terminated 4 of the radiating avenues on London Circuit, which simplified traffic movements but enabled more flexibility in the use of land encircled by the circuit. Only Northbourne Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue, as major arterials continued beyond London Circuit to an inner ring road around City Hill.⁸

The Termination of the avenues on London Circuit allowed the planners to create a zone within 'the boulevard' where principally civic buildings and formal public spaces would be located as envisaged by Griffin. The commercial and business facilities would be located in precincts in the land adjacent the outer edge of London Circuit and along the radiating arms.

Two of the secondary axial avenues running through Civic from City Hill terminate on geographic features, Ainslie Avenue (Mount Ainslie) and University Avenue (Black Mountain). It was envisaged that these should remain open visual links to City Hill. The avenues are symmetrically located in plan on opposite sides of Northbourne Avenue and were planned to have formal squares flanked by civic buildings on the land between London Circuit and City Hill, which would give emphasis to the axis. The Ainslie Avenue axis was developed as the Civic Square with the NCDC decision to locate the Territory administration buildings and Canberra Theatre on that site. At the time this decision was made (1958) this site was also intended to include the law courts and police station.

⁶ Peter Freeman Pty Ltd "The Civic Square Precinct, Civic, ACT, Conservation Management Plan" June 2006

⁷ ibid

⁸ ibid



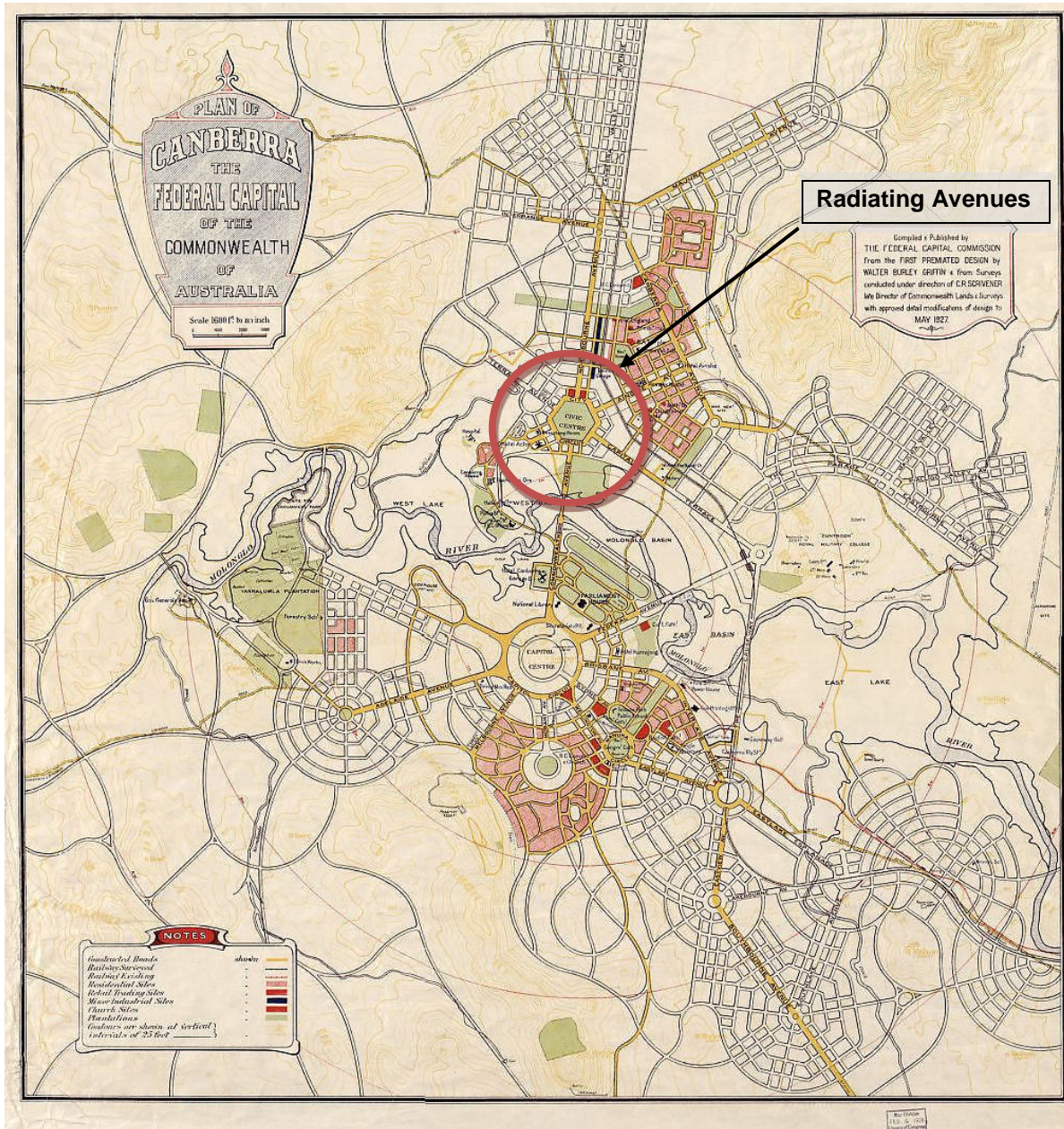


Figure 3: Burley Griffin Plan

Source: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/jhtml/>

However these were relocated to a prominent position on the axis of University Avenue, and the Law Courts Precinct developed as a mirror to Civic Square.⁹

2.2 The Design Philosophy of Civic

Griffin's plan for Canberra was imbued with the values of the City Beautiful Movement which swept America at the turn of the century. The 1893 Chicago Exposition, the 1901 McMillan Plan for Washington and the master plan for the University of California at Berkeley are all examples of the way in which American architects adapted French Beaux Art classicism to large-scale urban situations.¹⁰

Griffin's plan tuned these conventions to a high pitch. Not only were uses disposed according to functional and symbolic principles, but the mass of buildings was prescribed. Griffin envisaged horizontal buildings rather than high buildings, then flourishing in his native Chicago.¹¹

⁹ Peter Freeman Pty Ltd "The Civic Square Precinct, Civic, ACT, Conservation Management Plan" June 2006

¹⁰ NCDC, *Civic Centre Canberra, Policy Plan*, NCDC, Canberra, 1989

¹¹ *ibid*



“The prime object of the Capital City is not an intensive commerce of the throng but the housing of various specialized deliberative and educative activities demanding rather the quiet zones. Architectural rather than traffic considerations govern therefore in the placing and treating of these various functions and determined therefore for this site one general treatment which altogether must of course dominate all other constructions . . .

With a liberality in public space, and judicious distribution of centres, and directness and speed in communication between all points, the necessity of making these large units stand on end, as in the congested American Cities, can be avoided in a Capital City at least, securing a horizontal distribution of the large masses for more and better air, sunlight, verdure and beauty.”¹²

Whilst Griffin advocated “liberality in public space”, he nevertheless preferred the “rigidly formal enclosed court” of the Chicago Exposition, not the informal and amorphous relationship between buildings and open space which has come to be associated with the term “Garden City.” Griffin’s city was decidedly monumental and formal, more like Paris or Vienna than Hemel Hempstead or Welwyn Garden City.¹³

The first significant buildings in Civic, the Melbourne and Sydney buildings, fulfilled Griffin’s specification in large part. They are classical in form, horizontal in massing, have a “maximum of repetition and rhythm, and a general simplicity.” Moreover, they are built to the property line on all sides. Later buildings in the vicinity, though of lesser quality, were nevertheless built on the property boundary.¹⁴

When development accelerated in the late 1950s and early 1960s, modernism had replaced classicism as the prevalent style. Apart from an aversion to decoration, modern architecture took a different approach to buildings and space. Towers such as the development either side of University Avenue and the ActewAGL building further east on London Circuit, replaced the traditional pattern of low level (2 – 3 storey) development.¹⁵

Civic had only 20 buildings (in 1988) which would be called towers. Yet they have had a dramatic impact on Civic, given that it was originally planned to be horizontal in character with the dominant vertical element in the centre, on City Hill. Now the higher buildings ring the area outside London Circuit. In many views they appear to be haphazard, owing to their differing orientations, a consequence of Griffin’s hexagonal plan. As the buildings inside London Circuit (such as those of the Law Courts Precinct), are much lower, the overall structure and massing of Civic is almost the reverse of Griffin’s intentions.¹⁶

The pattern of Civic at present (2007) is a mixture of the two patterns: the traditional and the modern. In general, the eastern half of Civic has buildings on the property line with colonnades (with the exception of 201 London Circuit building) whilst the western-half is more akin to the ideal of free standing buildings in a field of continuous space (Hobart and Darwin Places). Recent development on Mort Street and on Section 22, City has reduced this sense of duality.¹⁷

In the late 1960s after the construction of the 201 London Circuit and the CPA buildings, the (National Capital Development) Commission adopted a general set of design controls to ensure that the higher buildings had a degree of consistency in an overall sense. The controls required white to off white masonry. Buildings such as the Canberra Centre, ACT Health Authority,) and the Lakeside Hotel (Ridges) conformed to these controls. These controls went largely unquestioned for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was that concrete as a material was in vogue around the world.¹⁸

Figure 4 illustrates the growth of Civic from 1928-1963

¹² Griffin, Walter Burley. *The federal capital plan: report explanatory of the preliminary general plan*. Melbourne, Albert J Mullett, Gov’t Printer, 1913 in NCDC, *Civic Centre Canberra, Policy Plan*, NCDC, Canberra, 1989.

¹³ NCDC, op cit

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ ibid

¹⁶ ibid

¹⁷ ibid

¹⁸ ibid



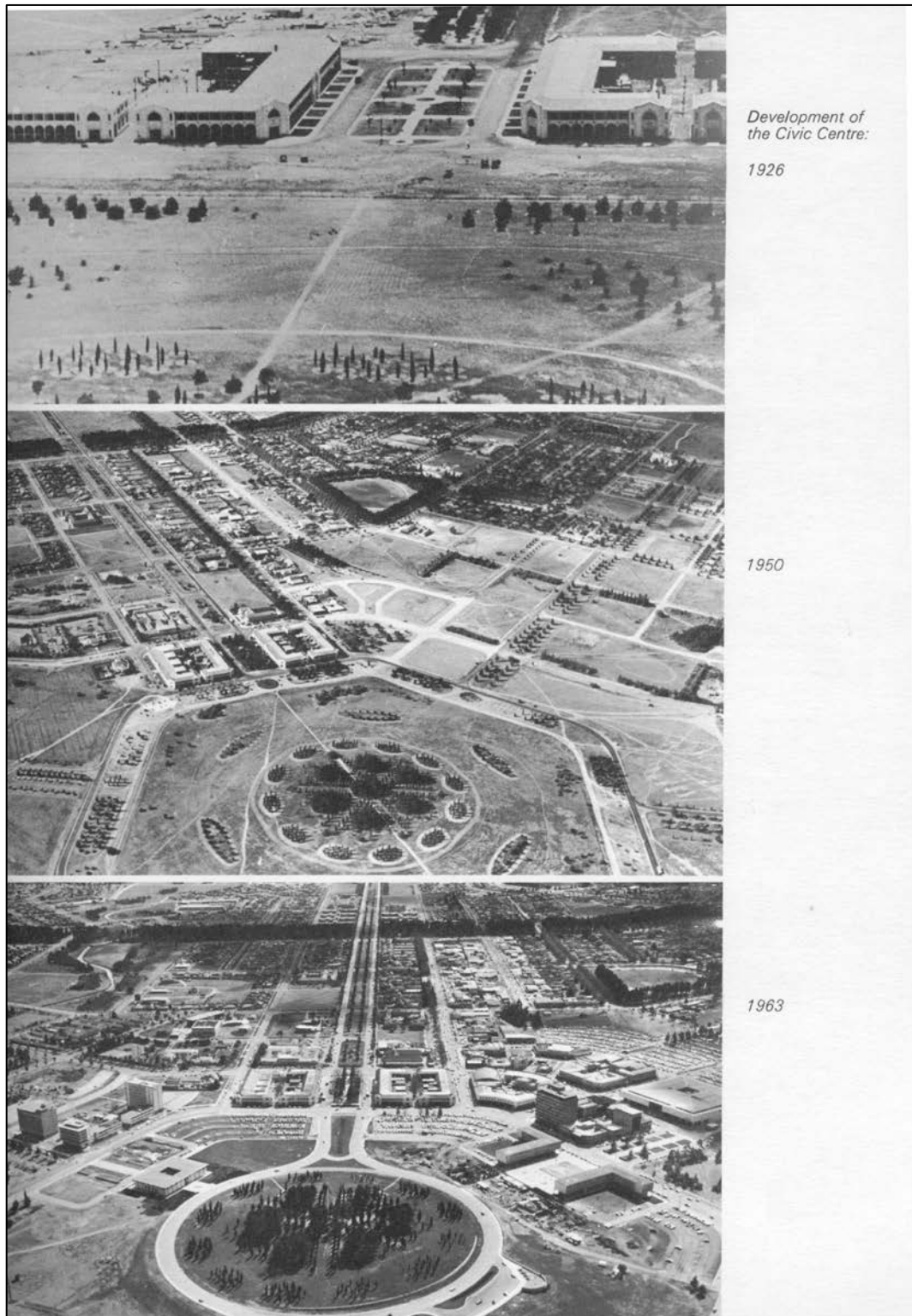


Figure 4: Civic Centre Development

Source: NCDC *The Future Canberra*, 1965, p89

The construction of multi-story office buildings in the 1960s was undertaken by both private and public sector agencies, predominantly for the purpose of housing and displaying their own businesses. Business activities such as banking and insurance sales are typical of the period¹⁹. The buildings often also included additional rented or leased office spaces for a variety of tenants.

¹⁹ Taylor, J 1994 *Post War II Multi-storeyed Office Buildings in Australia (1945-1967)*. Report prepared for the Australian Heritage Commission in ACT Heritage Council, *Entry to an Interim Heritage Places Register for ANZ Bank Building (former ES&A Bank)*, effective 19 November 2005.

2.3 The Establishment of Banking in the National Capital

The first bank to open in the National Capital was the Savings Bank department of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The bank commenced business on 13 January 1913 in a room in the Administrative Offices in Acton. In October 1913 the bank relocated to its own premises in Acton, which had been erected by the Department of Home Affairs.²⁰

In June 1925 the Chairman of the Federal Capital Commission raised the question of permanent premises for the Commonwealth Bank in Canberra. The proposal received a positive response from the Commonwealth Bank Board in July 1925 and the Deputy Governor visited Canberra to consider suitable sites.

In May 1926 the bank purchased one of the first commercial leases sold in the Civic Centre on the western corner of the intersection of Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit. A new premises was erected (now part of the Melbourne Building) and occupied in October 1927. The builder was Simmie and Co.²¹

2.4 The Establishment of a Central Bank

From the initial establishment of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in 1911 the private banks had always argued that conflict of interest existed within the bank. The issue in contention was that the Commonwealth Bank was responsible for monetary policy whilst also operating a commercial general banking arm. Changes to the structure of the Commonwealth Bank and the Banking Act sought unsuccessfully to reconcile this issue over the next 50 years.²²

In 1958 legislation was introduced to Parliament to create a separate central bank which would control national monetary policy and economic interests. The Reserve Bank of Australia was created through *The Reserve Bank Act*, which received royal assent in April 1959.²³ The first Governor of The Reserve Bank of Australia was H C Coombs (1960-1968). A requirement of the Act was that the head office of the bank must not be in the same building as the head office of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) or any other bank.²⁴ In line with this requirement, separate buildings were planned for the state capitals' and Canberra.²⁵

In a press release on the completion of the Reserve Bank headquarters building in Sydney, the then governor, H C Coombs set the tone for the bank's expectation of future buildings;

*"The massive walls and pillars used in the past to emphasize the strength and permanence in bank buildings are not seen in the new head office... Here, contemporary design and conceptions express our conviction that a central bank should develop with growing knowledge and a changing institutional structure and adapt its policies and techniques to the changing needs of the community within which it works."*²⁶

The future Canberra branch building would reflect much of this philosophy.

2.5 A New Home for the Canberra Branch

Soon after the Establishment of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), negotiations commenced with the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) to find a suitable site. A site on the southwest corner of the London Circuit, Northbourne Avenue intersection was initially offered but later withdrawn due to perceived traffic problems. An alternative site near the intersection of London Circuit and University Avenue was offered. This site was an integral part of the legal precinct and adjacent to a proposed major commercial precinct. In May 1961, RBA accepted the site and commenced a 99-year lease on 1 May 1962.²⁷

²⁰ Register of the National Estate database – Place Report – Reserve Bank of Australia. Database No 019704 page 1

²¹ Ibid page 1

²² Linklater, J – *Inside the Bank – the role of the Reserve Bank of Australia in the Economic Banking and Financial System*, Allen and Unwin Pty Ltd, Sydney 1992, page 24

²³ Schedvin, C B *In Reserve – Central Banking in Australia – 1945-75*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1992

²⁴ Ibid pg 289

²⁵ Ibid pg 291

²⁶ Ibid pg 293

²⁷ Australian Heritage Commission – Reserve Bank of Australia – draft citation 2000, pg 2



In December 1961, a national design competition was announced for the design of the building. The competition was managed by the NCDC who also set specific design and siting requirements for the building (height and bulk conditions were also imposed in the lease). The competition was advertised on 13 December 1961 and closed on 16 April 1962. It required a building to front London Circuit, but with all elevations of equal importance. Other design and siting requirements included the building having: a ground floor and two upper floors with the height not to exceed RL 1902; a copper roof; all plant contained within the building; air conditioning and heating using smokeless fuel; suitable landscaping; no underground accommodation. The Reserve Bank required the following accommodation: a banking chamber on the ground floor with a 4 foot wide (1.2m) and up to 80 feet long (24m) counter; working space of 2000 square feet (185 m²), and a 16 foot (4.8m) wide public space the full length of the counter. The manager's room was to be 250 square feet (23m²), and the assistant manager's room 200 square feet (18.5 m²). Also required was a cash handling area of 3,500 square feet (325m²) and a strong room. The climatic conditions of Canberra required special attention and the total cost was not to exceed 250,000 pounds.²⁸

The competition received 131 submissions, which the assessors (Professor Ingham Ashwork, Professor RA Jensen and Mr Grenfell Riddick (NCDC)) considered to be extremely disappointing in their lack of architectural distinction. The assessors considered that none of the entrants could be commended without reservation. They did however find that two of the schemes provided acceptable civic design, combined with some architectural distinction, and that one of these would be a good neighbour to the Law Courts adjacent. On 15 May 1962 Mr J. G. Phillips deputy Governor of The Reserve Bank of Australia announced that the Perth firm of Howlett and Bailey, had won the first prize of 2000 pounds.²⁹

The principal features of the design were the mosaic tile facing to the columns, the regular elevation design and modular plan pattern. Another feature was the internal courtyard on the second floor. The building was seen as complying with the NCDC requirement to respect the scale and materials of the existing Law Courts building. The Reserve Bank building was designed to be seen in the round, with all elevations receiving equal designed attention.³⁰

Design developments proceeded during 1962 and the project was tendered early in 1963. The contract was awarded to Civil and Civic Pty Ltd, with the tender of £307,353. This figure was £50,000 over the competition budget. Construction commenced in the 1963 and was completed in 1965³¹ (Figure 5).

²⁸ Crocket, G *The Canberra Branch of the Reserve Bank of Australia*, 2000, Australian Heritage Commission, File Notes pg 2

²⁹ *Ibid* pg 2

³⁰ *Ibid* pg 2

³¹ *Op cit* pg 3





Figure 5: Civic Circa 1964 Showing RBA Building Under Construction

Source: "The Future Canberra", NCDC, 1965

2.6 The Original Ground Floor

On completion of the building the key features of the ground floor included; a large voluminous banking chamber at the front of the building, with a deep counter running across the chamber. On the back wall of the chamber was a large copper sculpture by Gerald and Margo Lewers, titled "Four Pieces". The beaten copper abstract design corresponds to the scales, weights and counterweights placed on the economy by the Reserve Bank. The sculpture was commissioned by the Reserve Bank of Australia as part of the philosophy of its Governor Dr H C Coombs of acquiring and displaying major Australian art works for the Bank buildings. The ceiling of the chamber was formed by a grid of exposed painted concrete roof beams. Within the beams were located large square light boxes, placed in an irregular layout. Behind the Banking Chamber was a masonry core area, which included the Strong Room and two sets of staff toilets. At the rear of the building was the cash handling area including a cash receival dock. To overcome spatial constraints this area included a vehicle turntable (Figure 6-Figure 11 original drawings). In a recorded interview with Hazel De Berg in May 1965, the project Architect, Jeffrey Howlett expressed some of his thoughts behind the project Design;

"After completing the (Perth) Town Hall (in 2007 known as Council House), my partner and I were fortunate enough to win another architectural competition for the Reserve Bank of Australia in Canberra. This building furthers thoughts and ideas which emerged in the Town Hall. The palette of materials is not dissimilar. It does however go further in some respects in terms of the greater volumes that one would anticipate would enclose a banking chamber, ... and for the first time it combines working with sculptors and painters, which has in the past of course been a traditional associate.... It was a wonderful opportunity to use a sculpture by Gerry Lewers, which grows like a plant on the rear wall of the Banking Chamber, and marries to our mind, the conception of volume enriched and embellished with beautiful works."

The original building design presented the ground floor as two distinct functional halves. The dividing line ran though the centre of the building on a north south axis. The division was represented physically by a grille across the Strong Room, a wall through the central corridor and separate male and female

staff toilets in each half of the building. The front (western) half of the building accommodated the banking functions and the cash handling functions were contained in the eastern half of the building.

2.7 The Original Level 1 and 2

On completion, the RBA occupied the whole building. Level 1 contained general administrative offices. Level 2 was designed as the executive level. Originally it contained in the southern half of the floor, a suite of executive offices and Board Room for the Governor and Board member functions when required. In the northern half of the floor was a flat for the Bank Executive's use when in Canberra. A feature of the original design was an 11-metre diameter glazed garden court between the residence and executive areas.

NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 6: : Original Ground Floor Plan

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 7: Original Level 1 Plan

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 8: Original Level 2 Plan

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 9: Original Elevations 1

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 10: Original Elevations 2

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 11: Original Typical sections

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



2.8 Changes to the Building - Overview

Throughout the life of the building changes have been made to the structure and fabric of the building and services upgrading has occurred as technological change exerted its influence. Maintenance work occurred in 1972, 1977 and in 1978 the telephone, lighting and electrical services were upgraded. The Department of Works made internal alterations and additions in September 1978 and replaced the external marble cladding and installed marble over the black and white mosaic tile cladding in April 1981. At the same time some of the external screens were replaced.³²

The Department of Transport and Construction supervised a major refurbishment for the building in 1983 including redesign of the ground and first floor in January 1983, a refurbishment of the entrance canopies in February 1983, upgraded ground and first floor toilets in May 1983, and new mechanical services in August 1983.

In October 1988, the Department of, Housing and Construction designed a roof replacement and internal refurbishment. The principal result of all these alterations and additions was the infilling of the atrium to provide additional accommodation and the redesign of the cash handling area as that function changed. The Atrium framing remains within the new roof. The atrium was raised to suit new roof level. Further alterations occurred in 1994 to convert surplus accommodation for letting to tenants. This work included a new and independent entrance on the eastern side of the building with a granite floor, a marble, granite and stainless steel stair, a skylight over, and the partitioning of the first and part of the second floor space into offices.³³

2.9 Changes to the Ground Floor

In the 35 years since construction a number of physical and functional changes have occurred to the ground floor, however some of the original detail and design intent is still visible. The banking chamber has been altered in furniture layouts and partitioning, without affecting the overall impression of the space. The main counter has been altered, the floor finishes have been changed and the furniture has been updated. The installation of a solid partition around a Comms Room in the northeast corner of the chamber some years ago resulted in the removal of an original glazed door and screen. The role of the Canberra Branch has changed over time to a point where it no longer handled large volumes of notes. These changes lead to the note handling facilities and receiving dock areas becoming redundant. Another change in structure saw the managers' office move into the bank chamber. In 2001 a major refurbishment of the ground floor saw the eastern half of the building converted to commercial office space. In the original design there were two sets of male and female toilets. The refurbishments have consolidated these into separate male and female facility. In the eastern areas of the ground floor, the original money receiving and handling areas and equipment have been removed and the area converted to commercial office space. This work has absorbed the original bank manager's office area. New equipment has been installed into some of these rooms. The delivery dock turntable remains under the carpet (Refer Figure 13, Figure 14 and Figure 15).

In the 2011 works the Banking Chamber was completely refurbished with new partitions workstations, carpet and lighting installed. The cinder brick wall was cleaned and repainted. The tinted solar film on the perimeter windows (Level 1 and 2) was also replaced. The adjacent toilets were refurbished and a PWDWC constructed.

2.10 Changes to the Upper Floors

As staff levels in the Canberra Branch have reduced with its changing role, the Level 1 area has been progressively leased out as commercial office space. Since the late 1990's it has been leased to a single tenant.

The northern half of Level 2 has been converted to office space and leased commercially since 1991. The southern half of the floor is still occupied by the Reserve Bank Executive suite and staff facilities. The partitioning and fitout of the suite has been refurbished several times. In the 2011 works only the staff amenities room and adjacent, cleaners' room and toilet were refurbished. A bulkhead was constructed on the ceiling of the passage to accommodate mechanical pipe work.

³² Verbal advice Martin Ryan Progressive Controls Canberra who were the suppliers for the screen.

³³ Ibid pg 3



The Garden Court at Level 2 was built in during roof replacement works in 1984. At the same time alterations to the office areas converted the courtyard to office space.

Significant soft furnishings have been lost relate including custom-designed curtain fabric by Helen Grey-Smith³⁴, wife of the painter, Guy Grey-Smith. Commissioned directly by Dr H.C. Coombs, Helen Grey-Smith designed curtain fabric in a black and gold abstract pattern; her usual method was colour screen-printing on cotton.

The fabric for the Canberra branch has not survived but a number of examples of Helen Grey-Smith's textiles and curtain fabrics from the 1960s are held by the National Gallery of Australia, including the pattern shown in Figure 12.

This style accords somewhat with curtains shown in archival photographs of the staff recreational area³⁵.



Figure 12: Pattern by Helen Grey-Smith held in the National Gallery of Australia³⁶

2.11 The Legal Precinct

The Reserve Bank building was the second building after the Law Courts to be constructed in the Legal Precinct flanking the axis of University Avenue beyond its intersection with London Circuit (refer Figure 2). The third and last building making up the civic design group that terminated University Avenue was the Federal Police Headquarters. The formal design of the precinct and its relationship to the axis reflects the important civic design principles being implemented by the National Capital Development Commission for the Civic Centre, and the way in which these can be achieved by offering suitable sites to public institutions. The civic design status of University Avenue as one of Canberra's major axes terminating at Civic Hill had been reinforced with the construction of tower buildings of high quality design such as the former ANZ Bank building, CML Building and in the Hobart Place commercial precinct.

The courtyard onto which the three buildings face was constructed as a setting for the Law Courts and at the time of the opening of the Reserve Bank the Federal, Headquarters were under construction. The design and siting controls of the NCDC meant that the Reserve Bank would fit comfortably in scale with the existing Law Courts and the use of marble facing and flat roof profile creating a sympathetic physical connection between the precinct elements. The Law Courts building with its black columns

³⁴ <https://www.daao.org.au/bio/helen-dorothy-grey-smith/biography/>

³⁵ PN-008197.

³⁶ [Helen Grey-Smith \(1916 –2009\), furnishing fabric, c.1960, textiles, fabric, colour screenprint on cotton 120.0 h x 320.0 w cm, NGA 83.1443](#)



and white marble walls is almost a negative of the dark curtain wall and white marble columns of the Reserve Bank. The courtyard materials with pre-cast light grey exposed aggregate paving and black slate rectangles reinforced the 'colour coded' nature of the precinct.³⁷

The main change since 2012 has been the addition and linking of the former Magistrates Court to the former Supreme Court into the single Law Courts of the ACT building. Design commenced in 2015 with the new entry and new building completed in October 2018 and the refurbished Supreme Court due for completion by mid-2019.

NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 13: Ground Floor Plan 2019

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia

³⁷ Op cit pg 4



NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 14: Level 1 Floor Plan 1999

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia

NOT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING

Figure 15: Level 2 Plan 2012

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



2.12 Changes to Original Fabric

The following changes are known to have occurred.

EXTERNAL

- Columns at level 1 and level 2 reclad in marble.
- Mosaic tile spandrels over clad in anodized aluminium.
- External sunscreens replaced. West elevation all replaced in 1980's. From 2008 -2011 RBA progressively replaced damaged screens to match original detail. Good screens from West were used to replace damaged screens on other facades.
- Roof membrane removed and new roof structure and cladding installed including raising level of garden court atrium and roofing over.
- Parapet added at top of wall to enclose new roof structure.
- Entry canopies modified.
- Delivery dock entry removed.
- Planter beds installed on north and west sides.
- Roof plant room extended with screened area around new chiller (2011), old chiller and redundant plant removed from roof plant room (2011).

INTERNAL

- Cash handling area converted to commercial offices.
- Executive flat replaced by commercial office space.
- Executive office area refurbished.
- Level 1 offices refurbished.
- North entry foyer and stair modified.
- Counter to Bank Chamber altered.
- New screen and partitions installed into Bank Chamber.
- Addition of internal blinds to west side windows of banking chamber.
- Ground floor toilets modified.
- Level 1 and 2 toilets refurbished.
- Banking Chamber and associated toilets refurbished (2011).
- Minor changes to Level 1 and Level 2 Offices and carpet tiles added (2012-2019).
- Custom designed curtains in the staff recreational area.

2.13 The Architects – Howlett and Bailey

From correspondence with Greg Howlett in 2007, Jeffrey Howlett was the project architect for the Reserve Bank Building.

Jeffrey Howlett (AM) was born in India in 1928 and died in Perth (WA) in December 2005.

Howlett spent the early part of his life in Hyderabad, India, before accepting a scholarship in 1945 to the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. This experience, including the exposure it enabled to key figures of post-war Modernism, was pivotal in the development of Howlett's architectural sensibilities. After completing the diploma in 1950, Howlett worked for a year in the London County Council under the direction of Sir Leslie Martin before a return to India and marriage to Kath, his lifelong love. Because his family had shifted to Perth, Western Australia, Howlett decided to follow and test the waters for a year. While in Perth he worked with several local practices before relocating to Melbourne



(in 1956) and accepting a position as senior design architect with Bates Smart and McCutcheon where he met Donald Bailey.³⁸

It was from Melbourne that he and Donald Bailey won the Australia-wide competition for the design of the new Perth City Council administration buildings (Council House). This brought Howlett back to Perth, where the firm of Howlett and Bailey was established and where he remained for the rest of his life.³⁹

Council House was opened by the Queen during the 1962 Perth Empire Games. This wonderful civic building became a point of reference for modern optimistic Perth, which was about to embark on the process of rebuilding large parts of the city as the result of a major mineral boom. Few of the resulting buildings came anywhere near the design quality of Council House.

The Public Suite, the second component of the competition won by Howlett and Bailey, was to house a series of performance halls. Its original site behind Council House was subsequently abandoned and the building redesigned by Howlett and Bailey. The Perth Concert Hall was opened in 1973 on a site a little further to the east along St Georges Terrace. This building, with its solid opaque interior, giant projecting roof, and use of white off-form concrete, forms a counterpoint to the transparent filigree of Council House.⁴⁰

The period between these two buildings was an exceptionally fertile one for Howlett and Bailey. The firm won the competition for the Reserve Bank in Canberra in 1962. The Beatty Park Pool kiosk and manager's house, now demolished, was designed for the Empire Games. There was a series of very fine Modernist houses, the Onslow Street townhouses, St Columbia College at The University of Western Australia, Century Batteries warehouse and Mt Newman House.⁴¹

During this period the practice was at its most experimental, using materials in an inventive manner and testing forms in establishing an architectural approach. The resulting architecture was ordered and axial but modern, joining with other Modernist architects who incorporated an interest in classical principles. At the same time Howlett was adapting this work to the particular conditions of Perth. He acknowledged the reality of late-twentieth-century cities and, through his architecture, suggested a way of making sense of the disorder.⁴²

Howlett and Bailey won many design awards and commendations from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and in 1978 Jeff Howlett was honoured by the RAI with Life Fellowship. In 1992 a retrospective exhibition titled *Howlett: Architectural Projects* was curated by Michael Markham and Peter Brew and held at the University of Western Australia, coinciding with Howlett's period there as visiting professor at the School of Architecture. In 2000 he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to architecture as a designer and educator.⁴³

Howlett's old partner, Donald Bailey, described him many years later as a particularly gifted and inventive designer.⁴⁴

Howlett survived a major stroke in 1993 but was unable to continue practising as an architect. Nevertheless, he again attempted to make sense of the disorder, this time through the medium of oil pastel and paper. For this, he had to learn to work with his left hand on small tray-bound pieces of paper which were later assembled into larger sheets. He used oil pastel like paint, with rich surfaces and often startling colours. Like his architecture his forms were bold and simple. Howlett's desire to express himself visually took on a new urgency. It became, for him, a major form of communication, a way of evoking memories, of making visible his past and his present, and a way of telling his stories. He was always a great storyteller.⁴⁵

Donald Bailey left the firm in 1973 to return to Canberra to take up the position of National Director of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. Howlett oversaw all projects completed by the firm up until

³⁸ Architecture Australia website. "Obituary Jeffrey Howlett" by Geoffrey London
<http://archaust.com/aa/aaissue.php?issueid=200603&article=16&typeon=3> viewed 21 June 2007

³⁹ ibid

⁴⁰ ibid

⁴¹ ibid

⁴² ibid

⁴³ ibid

⁴⁴ ibid

⁴⁵ ibid



1992. During this time he also tutored and lectured at Curtin University of Technology and the University of Western Australia, where he was appointed Visiting Professor in 1991.⁴⁶

Since the late 1990s Howlett and Bailey have as a practice been part of several mergers of architectural practices in Western Australia. In 2007 they are part of the prominent practices of Cox Howlett and Bailey Woodland. The work of the practices has been recognised by a large number of awards. Jeffrey Howlett's son Greg carries on the family connection as a director of the practice.⁴⁷ The Practice is now Cox Architecture with new directors.

2.14 The Sculptors - Gerald and Margo Lewers⁴⁸

The Lewers were the artists responsible for the sculpture *Four Pieces* located in the Banking Chamber.

Lewers, Gerald Francis (1905-1962), sculptor and construction engineer, and Hettie Margaret Ernestine (1908-1978), artist, were husband and wife. Gerald was born on 1 July 1905 in Hobart, seventh of eight children of Robert David Lewers and Maria Bispham, née Propsting. By 1906 Robert had been transferred to Sydney, where he settled on the North Shore. Gerald attended Chatswood Public School, the Friends' High School, Hobart (as a boarder in 1920), and Barker College (1920-23), Sydney. In 1924 he sailed in a lugger with A. F. B. Hull's zoological expedition to the Great Barrier Reef. Two years later Lewers joined his brother-in-law Mervyn Farley in a construction and quarry business; he studied part time at (East) Sydney Technical.

Margo was born on 23 April 1908 at Mosman, Sydney, second of three children of Gustav Adolf Plate (d.1913), a German-born grazier and his wife Elsie Gill, née Burton. Having learned to type, Margo worked successively as a secretary, as a cadet commercial artist with the *Daily Telegraph*, and with a small firm that produced hand-made wooden articles with Australian motifs. She soon established her own studio and made hand-printed textiles and pottery. Later, she designed pots for R. Fowler Ltd.

Gerald and Margo met at Antonio Dattilo-Rubbo's evening art-classes in the late 1920s. In 1931 he travelled in Europe and studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule, Vienna. Back in Sydney, on 6 October 1932 he married Margo at the district registrar's office, Mosman. In 1934 they went abroad and enrolled at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London. Gerald studied under John Skeaping and exhibited (1934) with 'Six Colonial Artists' at the Cooling galleries, New Bond Street. Margo worked at textile design, painting and drawing with John Farleigh.

In Sydney in 1935 Margo established the Notanda Gallery, an interior-decorating shop in Rowe Street, and continued to design hand-printed fabrics. Her daughters Darani and Tanya were born in 1936 and 1940. The shop closed in 1939. An active member of the Sydney branch of the Contemporary Art Society of Australia, Margo was a pupil (1945-50) in Desiderius Orban's evening painting-classes. Gerald had returned to Farley & Lewers which built (1937) the Port Pirie-Port Augusta railway line in South Australia. About 1942 he took over the management of the firm's quarry at Castlereagh, New South Wales.

During his spare time (Gerald) Lewers carved animals and birds in wood and stone, creating a large number of realistic and semi-abstract sculptures. These intimate and small-scale works (mainly in private collections) captured the physical characteristics and movement of the animals.

In 1950 Gerald retired from Farley & Lewers to become a full-time sculptor. Next year the family moved to his farmhouse on the Nepean River.

A member of the Society of Artists, Sydney, and of the Contemporary Art Society, Lewers took part in solo and group exhibitions. He helped to establish the Society of Sculptors and Associates in 1951 and was its founding treasurer. From 1953 until his death Lewers received over fifteen major commissions, among them 'Relaxation', a reclining 'sandstone figure of heroic size' (University House, Canberra), and the sandstone relief on the York Street front of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Sydney, 1954), and a fountain for the Rex Hotel in Canberra. He and Margo were jointly commissioned to create a garden of pebbles, cacti and sandstone shapes for the M.L.C. Building, North Sydney (1957). Lewers

⁴⁶ *Western Australian state Living Treasures 2004*, Government of Western Australian pg 13

⁴⁷ Author's note

⁴⁸ "Lewers, Hettie Margaret Ernestine (Margo) (1908-1978)" in *Australian Dictionary of Biography – online edition*. <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A150725b.htm> viewed 21 June 2007



worked with swiftness and certainty, and later began to use metal, especially for public fountains 'whose shapes mirrored and reflected the moving waters' (I.C.I. House, Melbourne; Macquarie Place, Sydney).

From 1950 Margo worked in a variety of mediums including painting, textiles, sculpture and mosaic. She won recognition as a leading postwar abstract expressionist. Her early compositions explored colour and formal geometric abstraction; her work became more fluid and expressionistic by the early 1960s. She showed extensively in Australia and in several international travelling exhibitions; she received numerous public commissions (including the mosaic wall for the Canberra-Rex Hotel (1957) and the Aubusson tapestry (1968) for the Reserve Bank of Australia's boardroom, Sydney); and she won at least fourteen awards and prizes.

While holidaying at Chillagoe, Queensland, Lewers was thrown from a horse and fractured his skull. He died of a brain haemorrhage on 9 August 1962 at Cairns hospital and was cremated. A major memorial exhibition was held at the A.G.N.S.W. in 1963. At the wish of Dr H C Coombs, (Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia at the time) Margo completed Gerald's design for a huge copper relief in the Reserve Bank, Canberra. The work was installed in December 1964.

Margo Lewers died of cancer on 20 February 1978 at her Emu Plains home and was cremated. Through the generosity and persistence of her daughters, the Emu Plains property and collection of artworks was offered to Penrith City Council. In 1981 the Lewers Bequest and Penrith Regional Art Gallery was opened. The Lewers' work is represented in most national and State galleries, as well as in regional and university collections.



3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

3.1 Setting of the Building

The Reserve Bank building forms the northern edge of the legal precinct at the western end of Knowles Place Civic ACT. The building is a freestanding element designed to be viewed equally from all sides. Its principal address (and entrance) is to London Circuit on the west, with secondary entrances to the north and south. The building strongly relates to the Knowles Place plaza, across which it reflects the scale and form of the Canberra City Police Station. To the eastern end and slightly elevated above the Reserve Bank Building, is the former Supreme Court building, which was the first building constructed in the precinct (Figure 16 and Figure 17).



Figure 16: View of RBA Building and Precinct from North West



Figure 17: View from University Ave

The former Supreme Court has now been connected to the former Magistrates Court with a large new infill building and a combined entry between the original Supreme Court Building as it faces the square remains the same (Figure 18). This complex is known as the Law Courts of the Australian Capital Territory.

Figure 18:



The courtyard is paved in stone and has 4 symmetrically placed garden beds which contain deciduous trees. The Northeast garden is a fountain containing the bronze sculpture. 'Dreaming' by Milan Vojsek. (Figure 19)

Figure 19: Dreaming Sculpture and Square



The legal precinct is located across London Circuit from one of Canberra's principal commercial precincts. A significant difference between the two precincts is that the legal precinct comprises only three storey buildings, whilst the commercial precinct is notable for its 6 to 14 storey towers, most of which are of a later construction date to the legal precinct.

There is a change to Hobart Place with a new apartment block on London Circuit under construction.

The footpath west of the Reserve Bank building (London Circuit) is red brick paved with red face brick planter boxes adjacent to the column faces. The paving extends along the north face of the building as a two metre wide path with stainless steel grated drain. An irrigated lawn area extends from the path to



face brick planter beds adjacent the concrete footpath along the street edge. A single line of deciduous trees has been planted in the centre of the lawn parallel to the garden. The brick paving on the north and west faces was replaced including upgraded drainage in 2010 and 2011 respectively to remove drainage and trip hazard problems.

3.2 Exterior

The Reserve Bank building is a well-proportioned three storeys stripped classical structure. (Refer Figure 20 & Figure 21) The building is given vertical emphasis through a regular grid of cruciform cross section, marble-faced columns, which extend through the three levels to a marble clad lintel. The columns are set out from the face of the full height glazed curtain wall box, which forms the body of the building. Each level of the building is defined within the glazing by anodized aluminium clad spandrel panels. The glazing is screened externally by punched and folded anodized aluminium sunscreens (Koolshade). The four elevations of the building are very similar, with the principal difference being the charcoal brick wall of the ground floor of the east elevation (Refer Figure 22).



Figure 20: South West View

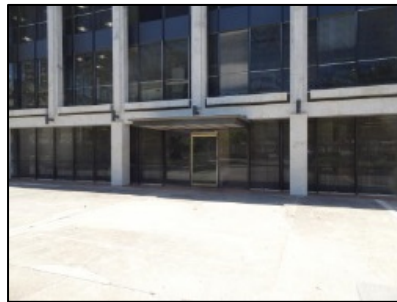


Figure 21: Detail of South Entry



Figure 22: East Elevation from North East

Above the marble clad lintel beam, a 1-metre high fully compressed fibre cement sheet clad parapet encloses the new roof structure and cladding, which was installed in 1988. The cladding is painted grey and is generally in good condition. Generally the external cladding is in good condition. The anodised spandrel panels have minor staining and are partly discoloured but are physically sound. The aluminium sunscreens vary in condition from fair to good (Figure 23 & Figure 24).

The entrances to the north, south and west include a small cantilevered canopy with a steel perimeter beam, quadrant gutter and prismatic diffusers on underside.

The RBA have been progressively replacing damaged screens and installing screens where missing over the past four years. Most of the ground level screens are new. These screens are subject to periodic damage from drunken pedestrians in the area at night. In the 2011 refurbishment a small louver grille was installed at the top of one window at the ground level on the north elevation. The grille is partially concealed by a mesh screen and has minimal visual impact.

Cylindrical lights are on the building perimeter at first floor level.

Changes to the exterior over time (refer Section 2.12) have made little change to the overall impression of the buildings original modernist design principles. The changes have been integrated so well that without the aid of a list of the changes, it is difficult to identify introduced elements. The materials and colours used reflect those of the original design.

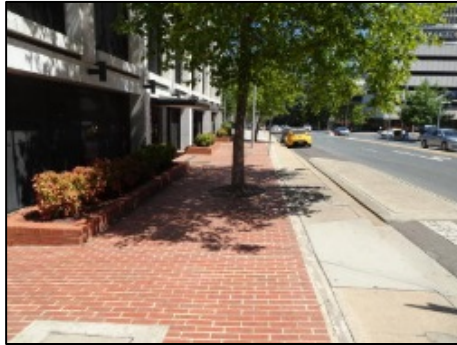


Figure 23: Brick Paving on London Circuit



Figure 24: Former Delivery Dock Location

3.3 Interior

3.3.1 GROUND FLOOR

a) *Banking Chamber*

The principal entries to the Banking Chamber are through two automatic sliding doors on the west elevation (London Circuit). The immediate impression upon entering the chamber is one of light and space. This has been enhanced through increased lighting levels introduced in the 2011 works. The chamber is three storeys high and half as deep as it is wide. The space is generous in its proportions. (Refer Figure 25).

The front and side walls of the Banking Chamber are glazed full height with painted spandrel panels defining a horizontal line within the glazing that corresponds to the floor levels of the building. The glazing is screened externally from direct sunlight by external anodised aluminium sunscreens. Solar film which was installed on the level one and two glazing in the 1980's was replaced in the 2011 works but is not detectable as a new element. The solar film was less effective to the west side so blinds were added to this side in 2016. The central area of the rear wall of the chamber is clad in grey marble at ground floor level, and black cinder bricks for the upper two levels. The brick wall was repainted in 2011 to conceal efflorescence and refresh the appearance. Either side of the central area, the wall is set back and rendered and painted for the upper levels, with a glazed screen at ground floor. A key feature of the rear wall of the chamber is a large copper sculpture by Gerald Lewers, entitled "Four pieces", which dominates the central wall area. (Refer Figure 26) The sculpture has lights installed for highlighting or illumination at night. The lights are currently being replaced.

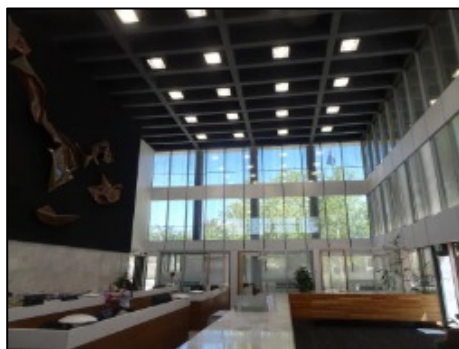


Figure 25: General View of Chamber from SW

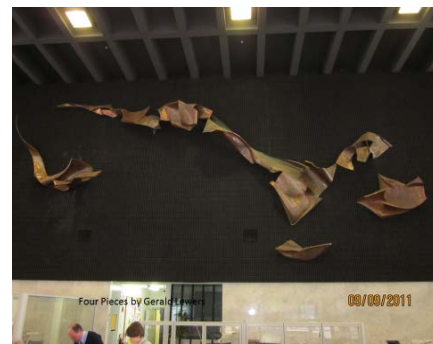


Figure 26: 'Four Pieces' Sculpture

There are selected paintings and furniture remaining in Canberra that are of heritage significance. There are two Fred Ward chairs and occasional table, and some lower value art works of general historical significance.

The public entry area of the Banking Chamber is separated from the staff area by a wide marble topped counter, which returns in an "L" form around the entry to the south and a low partition of similar material to the counter front screens the north end (non-original). The counter is faced in



Blackwood veneer and suspended above the floor by 275 mm high tubular steel legs (Refer Figure 27).

The counter has been altered from its original configuration where it formed a continuous single line across the chamber (refer Figure 5). The existing side counter to the south (refer background of Figure 27 and foreground of Figure 25) is a section of the original counter, which has been relocated and altered. The internal fitout of the counter was completely updated and replaced in 2011. The three teller positions and their screening on the counter have also been altered. This has principally been through removal of the glass screening around the teller positions. The workstations and associated furniture were all replaced in 2011.

The Banking Chamber had new carpet tile floor finish throughout installed in 2011. Furnishings on the public side of the counter are simple with modern visitor chairs adjacent to the entry. Between the chairs and central to the front wall is a large square laminated strip timber screen. The screen is one storey high and includes a customer writing tablet, a clock and a calendar. (Refer Figure 27).

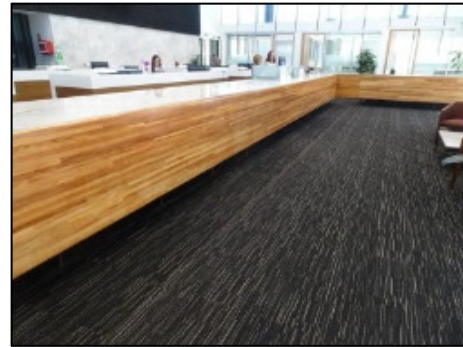


Figure 27: Reception Counter

The staff area of the banking chamber has low height; new, free standing workstation furniture. New offices were constructed in the 2011 works. On the south side of the Chamber the offices have clear anodised aluminium framed glazed partitions as high as the ground floor perimeter glazing. The southern offices have no ceilings. The northern offices have similar glazed partitions on the fronts with opaque film to provide some visual privacy to the rooms. There are sections of painted plasterboard partitions on the wall face and a bulkhead across the front of the rooms at the same level as the spandrel panel on the perimeter wall. The use of clear anodised aluminium and a white paint finish on the partitions has reduced the visual impact of the partitioning. The more solid partitions on the north help to draw the eye towards the cinder brick wall and sculpture at the back of the Chamber.

The coffered beams of the roof form the ceiling over the Banking Chamber have been painted charcoal. Large square incandescent lights are recessed between the beams on an irregular grid. Half of the lights are original fixtures. Additional fixtures of similar design to the original lights were installed in 2011. All lights now have LED fittings.

Beyond the rear (East) wall of the chamber are staff toilets (circa 2001), the original Strong Room with grilles and parquet floor intact and a small staff kitchenette in the area occupied by The Reserve Bank of Australia.

b) Fire Stair

The fire stairs are adjacent to the south entry. The detail of the stair with its steel frame and balustrade appears to be original. The fire stairs are contained within a concrete shaft (Figure 28). The stair has precast concrete treads and a painted concrete floor to landings.

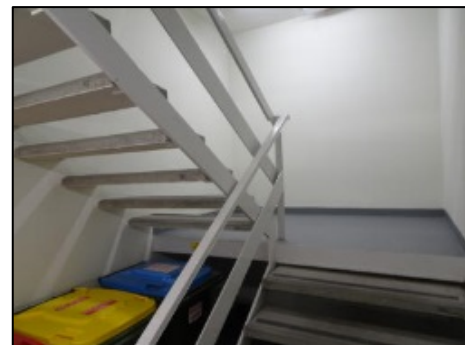


Figure 28: Typical Construction Fire Stair



c) Strong Room

Thick concrete walls, floor slab and roof enclose the Strong Room. Access is through two doorways which are fitted with heavy steel strong room doors. The Strong Room is compartmented by full height steel grilles and doors. In the original plan the room was only 2 compartments with a grille running north - south on the centre of the room.

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The only furniture in the room is steel shelving which is free standing and does not appear to be original. On the north wall there was a timber crash rail running continuously between the two door openings. There is now a metal bench along most of the north wall. The floor of the Strong Room is finished with parquetry.

Figure 29: Strong Room

A duct runs along the north side at high level but is not functional and it is not clear how it works.

d) Staff Toilets

This area has been completely refurbished in 2011 and now contains a shower, toilet cubicles and locker area. All of the facility and fixtures date from the 2011 refurbishment. The floors are a charcoal ceramic tile; walls are gloss white ceramic tiles to full height. The ceiling is suspended drop in vinyl faced plasterboard tile with recessed light fittings. An accessible toilet was also added.

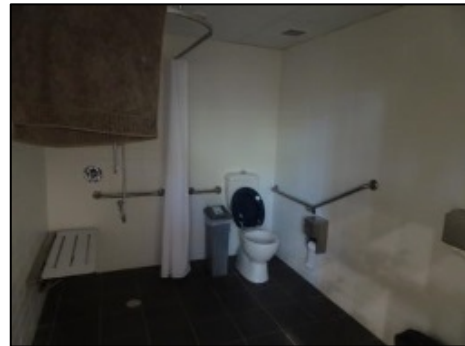


Figure 30: Staff Toilets

e) North Entry Foyer

This room was an element of the original design however it was completely refurbished in 1994. The original lift has been retained however the stair configuration and construction was replaced together with the floor and wall finishes and lighting (refer Figure 31).

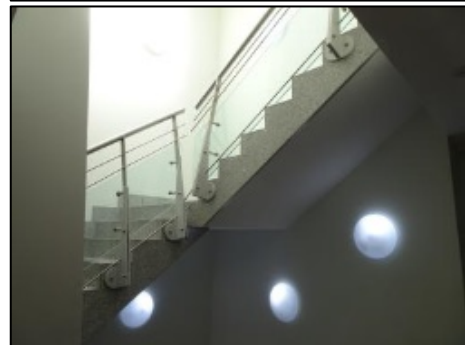


Figure 31: N Entry Lobby Stairs

f) Tennant Office Area

The eastern half of the ground floor is circa 2001 commercial office fitout with carpet tile, a mix of clear anodised aluminium framed and plasterboard partitions and a suspended exposed grid acoustic tile ceiling (Figure 32 & Figure 33). It continues to undergo minor changes.

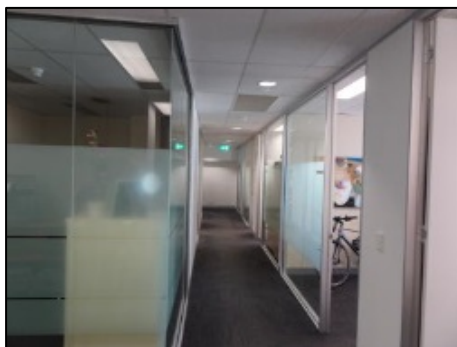


Figure 32: Ground Floor East Offices General View

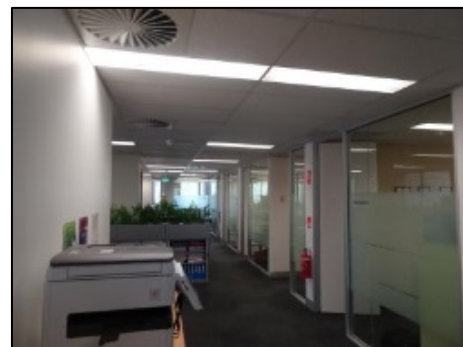


Figure 33: General View Open Office Area



Staff toilets and kitchenette are located near the Strong Room and are also a modern fitout dating from the 2001 refurbishment (Figure 34 & Figure 35).

The floor area is in quite good condition and the only visible evidence of the tenancy being located in a bank building is the eastern door to the Strong Room, which is located in the corridor leading to the toilets.



Figure 34: Kitchenette in Ground Floor



Figure 35: Ground Floor Typical Toilets

3.3.2 LEVEL 1

The whole of this area has been refurbished as commercial office space. Detailing and finishes are similar to the east half of the ground floor, ie:

- Carpet tile flooring (installed 2008-2009);
- Mix of clear anodised aluminium frame and plasterboard partitions.
- Suspended exposed grid ceiling with acoustic tiles (Figure 36 & Figure 37).
- Circular air conditioning outlets and recessed fluorescent lights.

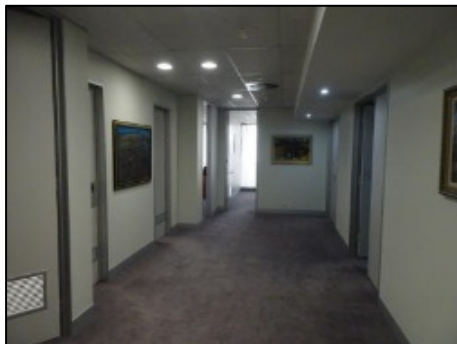


Figure 36: Typical Fitout Level 1

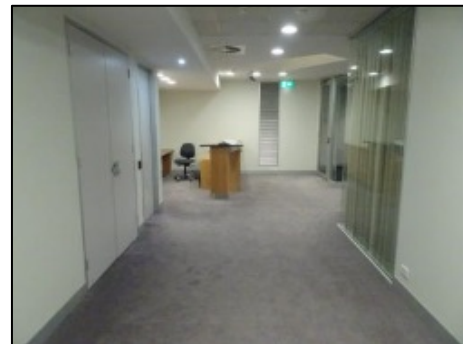


Figure 37: General View Level 1 Offices

- The toilet areas are a mid-1980s fitout. The area is generally in quite good condition.
- No elements or fabric from the original fitout was identified during the inspection.

3.3.3 LEVEL 2

The whole of Level 2 is now fitted out with modern partitions. The detail of the fitout of the tenanted area is similar to Level 1 (Figure 38). The executive area is similar but includes fabric-panelled screens and timber faced doors and joinery representative of a 1990s executive office fitout (Figure 39, Figure 40 and Figure 41). Toilets on this level are 1980's (tenant) and 1990's and 2011 (Executive Area) fitout.

The broadloom carpet that existed in 2011 has been replaced with carpet tiles.

Staff amenities/toilets – the staff amenities room was refurbished in 2011 works along with reconfiguration of the kitchenette and new joinery installed. A partition has been installed across a part of the North side of the room to screen off the staff amenities area from the dining area (refer Figure 38 to Figure 41).



The Level 2 areas are in good condition.



Figure 38: Typical fitout detail level 2 tenancy



Figure 39: Executive Area Passage



Figure 40: Meeting Room Level 2



Figure 41: Staff Amenities Area Level 2

There was no fabric found from the original building (other than core walls and fire stairs) but the structure for the former garden court may be encapsulated in some of the partition walls (based on comparison of original plans and roof replacement documentation).

3.3.4 ROOF LEVEL

The roof level includes the main plant room which is centrally located in the building floor plan (Figure 42). Walls are concrete and the roof is colorbond metal deck. The plant room roof level is higher than the main building roof. The roof over the main building area is a low pitch colorbond metal deck, which is enclosed within a fibre cement sheet clad parapet.

The plant room is now quite empty with the old mechanical air handling unit having been replaced in late 2011 with a new chiller. The units had reached the end of their serviceable life. Due to the need to keep the building operational it was necessary to install the new chiller in a new enclosure north of the plant room prior to the old air handling units being removed.

The louvers for the screening were installed in 2012. In the eastern half of the roof a raised circular area of roofing is location of the former roof garden. The walls under the circular roof are framed by panels of fixed louvers. The roof area is in good condition. All of the visible finishes are from the 1981 roof replacements works.

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Figure 42: Mechanical Services Roof Layout

Source GHD Tender Drawings



Figure 43: Roof

Source: EMA 2019



4.0 ANALYSIS & STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As the Reserve Bank of Australia building is located on designated land and the crown lease on which the building sits owned by a Commonwealth Agency, the assessment will be undertaken using the Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) criteria. If the assessment indicates that the site may be worthy of the National List, then a nomination to the National Heritage List may be recommended.

Other Heritage values may be attributed to the place by non-Commonwealth agencies and public interest groups through their assessment and listing processes (e.g. ACT Heritage List, National Trust of Australia (ACT), Australian Institute of Architects). However as these will have no statutory control on the site they have been excluded from the assessment.

4.1 Assessment Criteria

COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE LIST CRITERIA

The Commonwealth heritage criteria for a place are any or all of the following⁴⁹:

1. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history;
2. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history;
3. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history;
4. The place has a significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of:
 1. A class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or
 2. A class of Australia's natural or cultural environments;
5. The place has a significant heritage value because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
6. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
7. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
8. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history;
9. The place has significant heritage value because of the place's importance as part of Indigenous tradition.

4.2 Analysis

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section analyses the buildings and setting in a wider context to more clearly understand their relevance and importance.

4.2.2 LOCATION

The site is centrally located within the early Canberra City area and part of the Law Courts Precinct and early legal/commercial office centre of Civic. The building is adjacent to the axis of University Avenue, one of the principal avenues from City Hill.

4.2.3 SETTING & LANDSCAPE

The only landscape work which seems to have been part of the original building construction was the paving and retaining wall east of the building, entry drive to the loading dock and a narrow band of paving out to the face of the columns. The planters, now located on the north and west side of the building, were constructed during the 1980s'. It is not clear from research whether the trees north of the building were planted in 1964. The brick paving on the north and west sides of the building and associated drainage is not original having been replaced in 2010-11.

⁴⁹ <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/about/commonwealth-heritage/commonwealth-heritage-list-criteria> accessed 18 March 2019.



The building form and finishes play an important role in framing the northern edge of the Law Courts Precinct. The building also defines the edge of the formal square which is central to the Precinct and bisected by the University Avenue axis. The stone paving materials of the square extend to the edge of the Reserve Bank and Canberra City Police Station.

The building has two secondary entry points which address the square, but these are now only used occasionally by occupants of the building. The location of the entries is not defined in any way in the landscaping of the square. The three main planter beds and sculpture pool are located to form a smaller square within the public space; a wide walkway runs between the planter and the buildings parallel to the building face and planning axis. The garden beds contain mature deciduous trees which give a changing character to the square as the seasons change.

A rise in ground level of approximately 1.5 metres on the east side of the square is traversed by a row of stairs, which frame the eastern edge of the space. At the top of the stairs, the Knowles Place roadway forms a 'forecourt' to the Law Courts of the ACT building. The original Supreme Court Building sits symmetrically on the planning axis overlooking the square. The location of the Law Courts of the ACT building on the upper level strengthens its visual prominence in the Precinct.

The building is one of 3 buildings in the Legal Precinct which are designed in the stripped classical style of architecture.

The regular grid of white columns and curtain glass windows (stripped classical design features) used in both the Reserve Bank building and Canberra City Police Station, together with their similar height and horizontal roof planes, add to the formality and symmetry of the central square of the Law Courts Precinct.

The building is a major component of the Law Courts Precinct which provides a termination point to University Avenue. The Precinct is a notable example of urban planning in Civic enhanced by the symmetry and Architectural consistency of the three buildings which enframe it.

4.2.4 THE BUILDING

The Architect for the building regarded it as a high quality design expression of modernist principles and a new approach to the design of bank buildings. The assessment panel of the National design competition for the building considered the design to;

"... provide acceptable civic design, combined with some architectural distinction... and would be a good neighbour to the ACT Court House adjacent."

Hardly a glowing endorsement. However some consider the restrained architectural response to be a reflection of the tight design and siting controls placed on the site.

The building is not known to have won any design or construction excellence awards.

The exterior of the building has had several cosmetic changes over the 45 years (as listed in Section 2.12). However, the overall form massing and clarity of the original design is still clearly evident. The changes have been largely sympathetic to the original design in form, material and colour.

The interior has been substantially altered with the exception of the Bank Chamber and Strong Room and south fire stair, which remain the only surviving original spaces in the building. The loss of the cash handling areas and equipment at the east half of the ground floor has substantially reduced the integrity of the building to demonstrate its original internal design and function. The integrity of the remaining original spaces (Bank Chamber, Strong Room and South fire stair) is high to very high.

The sculpture 'Four Pieces' by Gerard and Margo Lewers, in the Banking Chamber demonstrates the sculptural style of the mid 1960's and the desire by the Bank for major art work to adorn public spaces.

Level 1 has been completely refurbished and no original fabric was identified.



At level 2, the Reserve Bank of Australia still has an Executive Suite and Staff Amenities in original location of these functions. The fitout of the office and meeting room area is completely from a 1990s refurbishment. The staff amenities room and adjacent cleaner room were refurbished in 2012 with new floor and wall tiling, sanitary fixtures and new joinery. The framework of the original garden court at level 2 may exist within some of the wall framing. The form and location of the court is still evident in the roof of the building. The loss of the garden court in the level 2 office areas detracts from an appreciation of the original design.

The northern entry foyer has been completely remodelled at ground level including a new stair and lift.

There are no original toilet or kitchen areas remaining in the building. At the time of the ground floor east refurbishment the turntable in the dock and associated roller shutter were intended to be retained under carpet and within ceiling space. These spaces were not accessed during the inspections although advice from RBA indicates they were both retained.

The retention of an Executive area at level 2 is a strong connection to the original design intent and function of the bank building. The quality of the new fitout reflects the executive nature of the space.

4.2.5 OTHER ISSUES

The Reserve Bank building served for many years as the distribution point for cash notes in the ACT. The building is associated with the evolution of a national central bank with the separation of monetary policy from commercial banking functions. It was constructed in the formative years of the Reserve Bank of Australia and its role has been associated with the management of fiscal policy nationally since construction. As the institution responsible for fiscal policy, the Board of the Reserve Bank of Australia will have included prominent people from the business community of Australia over its more than 40 years of operation. The association of each individual with the Canberra branch will have varied according to whether the board met in Canberra or not during their time in office. The research to date has not established sufficient history about the individual Board members to establish whether historically significant people (other than former Governor H C Coombs) have been associated with the building, and to what extent.

Coombs himself was a historically important figure in Australian finance academia and public life. Specifically he was a significant figure as the first Governor of the Reserve Bank and responsible for commissioning the design for the Canberra and Sydney Branches. Coombs was also instrumental in the introduction of major artworks into the Bank design.

4.2.6 THE 2011 REFURBISHMENT AND WORK 2012-2019

In 2011 there was a major refurbishment (refer Section 2.12 for an outline) and since then only minor changes, mainly to the tenanted space.

The refurbishment works and work since are considered not to have had a detrimental impact on the significance of the Banking Chamber or building. Overall they have enhanced the presentation of the significant elements of the space.

The roof plant room extension and chiller have had a minor visual impact on some ground level views of the building however this is not considered to have had a detrimental impact on the significance of the place.

4.3 The People

4.3.1 HOWLETT AND BAILEY

From communication with Greg Howlett (Jeffrey Howlett's son) it is apparent that the RBA project was still held in high regard by Howlett even late in his life. A history of the work of Howlett and Bailey was written, by Don Bailey in 1991, however a copy of this history has not been found in research, so it is difficult to accurately assess how the project compares to their other works of the period or later.



From the history in Section 2 of this report and the interview with Jeffrey Howlett in 1964 (quoted in the history), it is clear that the firm was undertaking several significant public projects at the time. They were clearly innovative designers, seeking to explore the potential of existing materials in the new modernist architectural style. Council House in Perth is a significant Western Australian building and has been recognised for its architectural excellence by listing on the Western Australia State Register of Heritage Places, and the Register of the National Estate.

4.3.2 GERALD AND MARGO LEWERS

The following analysis of the work of the Lewers is extracted from *“Monumental Art of Knowles Place” Report for the AHC prepared by G Thompson (date not known)*

Throughout the 1930s and perhaps due to the onset of war, sculptural decoration of buildings was not considered. After the Second World War, it became policy (in Australia) to allocate a percentage of the building costs to monumental arts. Dr H C Coombs, the Governor of the Reserve Bank in the 1960s, was seen to play an important role in this development by organising a number of sculptural competitions and commissions for new Reserve Bank buildings around Australia. Gerald Lewers won the commission for a piece in the Canberra Branch by entering a small model in the Sydney Reserve Bank competition in 1962. The model accompanied designs for wall enrichment and a formal garden.

The Work (later entitled “Four Pieces”) was completed after Gerald's death by his wife Margo, and established him as a first rank monumental sculptor, and Margo was credited for achieving such a ‘subtle collaboration’.

Following his death, Gerald Lewers was recognised for his great scope and impressive talent. Margo became a leader in avant-garde painting from the late 1950s. Painting and mosaics are recognised as her mediums. In the year of Gerry's Reserve Bank commission, Margo won the Henry Caselli Richards prize in Brisbane, and awards in Rockdale and Wellington NSW. She was one of four women painters recognised in the Tate Gallery exhibition of Australian Art in London in 1963.

Gerald Lewers works were celebrated in the Bicentennial Exhibition, *The Great Australian Art Exhibition* (1988) and he therefore remains a nationally significant artist to this day. However his metal relief piece on the Sydney Commonwealth Bank, “*Four Pieces*” in the Canberra Branch of the Reserve Bank, “*Reclining Figure*” ANU Canberra, and the ICI fountain in Melbourne, remain particularly famous examples of his larger monumental pieces.

Both Gerald and Margo Lewers have significant Modernist works in Canberra. Margo's mosaic at the Rex Hotel on Northbourne Avenue, Gerry's sandstone figure at ANU and their joint copper wall piece for the Reserve Bank. All these pieces contribute as highly significant public art in Canberra.

“*Four Pieces*” is also historically significant for its inclusion in a special class of public art commissioned for the Reserve Bank of Australia in 1962 under the guidance of Dr H.C Coombs an important figure historically in Australian finance, academia and public life.

4.4 Comparative Analysis

4.4.1 GENERAL

- There are no other purpose built bank buildings in the ACT of this period which retain a banking chamber of the quality of that in the Reserve Bank.

The Commonwealth Bank Branch at the corner of London Circuit and Northbourne Avenue was purpose built. The original chamber was a 1 and half storey space. The chamber has been substantially altered in volume and finishes over time. The former ANZ Bank building on the opposite side of London Circuit to RBA, is of a similar period of design and construction to the RBA and once had an impressive Bank Chamber. However the building was refurbished in 2006 and the Bank Chamber converted to a Bar.

With the exception of the former ANZ Bank (Uni Bar) on the opposite side of London Circuit, there are no other freestanding bank buildings in the ACT, which have such a strong urban setting. The Reserve Bank building is on one side of a key civic plaza.



- While the Banking Chamber and the Strong Room are substantially as they were originally, (in overall form volume and detailing construction) on the ground floor all other areas have changed and altered over the years.
- The turntable is of interest as a technique for managing vehicles but contains nothing of innovation or of industrial interest.
- The principal significance of the building is in its external design, form, and finishes, and as an integral part of the Law Courts Precinct.
- The only interior spaces retaining some integrity to the original design and function are the Banking Chamber, Strong Room and the southern Fire Stairs.
- The building entrances are notable for their expression of function, yet being understated in the overall elevation designed. The principal entry (West) has a larger canopy over it than the two side entrances. The fabric of the main entrance has changed. The original entry was revolving doors. The only other building entry is the roller door to the receival dock. The roller door has been retained within the building above the ceiling level. The opening has been covered with glazing similar to the existing external glazing. This entry did not form a strong element on the elevation, partly because it is set back behind the column grid and partly because it is screened by planter boxes. The entry when coupled with the driveway leading to it is a simple expression of one of the former functions of the building.

4.4.2 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The building design is described by Apperley et al as Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical:

“In Australia the expanding National Capital seemed an appropriate locale for the style: amongst the earliest examples was the building for the Law Courts of the ACT.

“Broad characteristics of the style are symmetrical massing creating a fundamentally classical composition but without use of classical motifs and details. Static rather than dynamic. Repetitive rhythm of column or column like elements. Reliance on carefully considered proportions. Monumentality.”⁵⁰

The use of mosaic tiles and marble originally as cladding on the exterior of the RBA building is a reflection of the classical period. However, it should be noted that in the original construction only the ground level of the columns was clad in marble. The tall slender columns and clean lines of the curtain wall combine to create a feeling of formality and aloofness to the building whilst providing a light and airy interior as desired by the client.

Due to the number of public buildings being designed in Canberra at the time there are several other examples of the Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical style of a similar size to the Reserve bank demonstrated in Canberra. These include:

- Former ACT Supreme Court (Figure 44) Yunken Freeman Bros Griffith and Thompson Architects 1961
- Canberra City Police Station (Figure 47) Hassell McConnel and Partners 1964
- Civic Square Buildings (Figure 46) Yunken Freeman Architects 1963
- National Library Parkes ACT (Figure 45) Bunning and Madden with T E O’Mahoney 1964

This analysis is limited to the contemporary low-rise buildings in Canberra.

All of the four examples listed above are competent examples of the style. They all demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Symmetrical facades
- Regular grid of columns and structural bays with height exceeding width
- Colonnade to perimeter of building

⁵⁰ Apperley, Irving and Reynolds *Identifying Australian Architecture*, p 229.



- Broad horizontal expression of floor levels and roof.

They are all buildings for public institution which have a level of security required for their operation. It is interesting to compare how the different Architects have addressed security in the design of the building and at the same time explored the stripped classical and modernist principles.



Figure 44 Former Supreme Court Building

Photo by Eric Martin & Associates 2007



Figure 45 National Library of Australia

Photo by Eric Martin & Associates 2007

The former Supreme Court Building is the most enclosed of the four examples, with windows limited to a continuous ribbon window at the upper floor level and glazed entry foyers. It has a much 'heavier' roof expression than the others. A deep continuous parapet gives the impression of being supported on slender marble columns which rise through the full height of the building. The columns are freestanding through their full height and form a colonnade around the marble clad box form of the former Supreme Building.

The National Library of Australia has similarities to the former Supreme Court building. It also has a prominent roof parapet which supports freestanding columns which rise through its full 6-storey height. Windows are minimal and limited to small units within vertical contrasting panel in the marble clad walls.



Figure 46: Civic Square Buildings

Photo by Eric Martin & Associates 2007



Figure 47: Canberra City Police Station

Photo by Eric Martin & Associates 2007

The Canberra City Police Station mirrors the Reserve Bank building across the public square in a number of design elements (slender marble columns full height, minimalist roof expression on the elevation and a narrow colonnade to the perimeter). The building is more enclosed than the RBA with the walls composed of a modulation of masonry panels and rectangular windows. A continuous white hit and miss masonry screen covers the ground floor windows.

The Civic Square buildings are simple rectilinear forms similar in height to the Reserve Bank. They present a more flush elevation treatment, with the columns in the same plane as the wall cladding at levels 1 and 2. The overhanging level 1 floor forms a roof to the colonnade which encircles the ground floor. The incorporation of the columns into the wall cladding, gives the

building a less classical feel than the other examples. The Civic Square buildings are lesser examples of the style than the other 3 buildings.

The Reserve Bank Building is the only surviving purpose built freestanding bank building in Civic (and possibly the ACT) still used for banking purposes.

Significance in relation to the other RBA buildings around the country. These buildings were designed and built as part of a singular building program, and, as such, they share a common design philosophy and are expressed in similar architectural forms throughout the country. This building program gave the Bank a consistent architectural identity in each state capital, as well as Canberra.

The RBA buildings were in Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart, Darwin and Port Moresby). These buildings share many distinctive features and are best understood as a family group.

The HMP Reserve Bank of Australia, 65 Martin Place Sydney⁵¹ provides a comparative analysis as follows:

The creation of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) as a separate entity was followed by the construction of eight purpose-built office buildings to house its operations in every state and territory capital in Australia, namely:

- 45 St George Terrace, Perth (1973). No longer owned by RBA.
- Head Office, 65 Martin Place, Sydney (1964).
- 182 Victoria Square, Adelaide (1963). No longer owned by RBA.
- 102 Adelaide Street, Brisbane (c1964). No longer owned by RBA.
- 22 London Circuit, Canberra (1965)
- 111 Macquarie Street, Hobart (1974). No longer owned by RBA.
- 60 Collins Street, Melbourne (1966).
- Bennet Street & Smith Street, Darwin (1967). No longer owned by RBA.

The buildings were designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works Banks and Special Projects Branch, utilising the Late Twentieth-Century International or Stripped Classical architectural style. The Head Office, Sydney is an example of the Late Twentieth-Century International style in Central Sydney.



Figure 13 – The Reserve Bank of Australia building, Darwin, c1970. Source: National Archives of Australia.

Source: National Archives of Australia

⁵¹ Heritage Management Plan: Reserve Bank Of Australia 65 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000 NBRS+Partners p47-49.





Figure 14 — The Reserve Bank of Australia, Melbourne, c1967. Source: State Library of Victoria



Figure 15 — The Reserve Bank of Australia, Canberra, c2002. Source: Australian Heritage Photographic Library

The Reserve Bank buildings throughout Australia reflected a confidence in things Australian and in the future, when the Australian economy was booming. They were designed as statements of ‘corporate pride’ and the vital economic role the Reserve Bank aspired to play in the Nation. The buildings were significant in creating an International image for the Australian economy, and were in part due to the vision of Dr HC Coombs as the first Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

Sydney was the first project in this significant building program following the purchase of the site in Martin Place from the Council of the City of Sydney in December 1958. Dr Coombs was determined that the Head Office would be an impressive structure, built to reflect the Bank’s prestige and leadership of the financial system. As the flagship building, it was to be largely constructed from Australian materials.

The Head Office opened in 1964 and included a number of specially commissioned modern sculptures and an ‘Australian’ native garden in Macquarie Street. The building was well received in architectural circles, but drew some criticism from the general public, who dubbed building the “Marble and Gold Palace” for its perceived extravagance on Commonwealth expenditure on Public Works, which coincided with a ‘credit squeeze’ within the general Australian economy.

The design of the Head Office building reflected the architectural philosophies of the time, providing a tower located over a podium that related to the streetscape, and incorporating extensive staff facilities.

The Head Office accommodated both banking and administrative functions, and staff training and recreational facilities. The building originally contained a target practice facility to enable security staff to be trained in the use of pistols and small arms for security. These facilities were common in the major bank headquarters²⁷ throughout the city, but had generally been removed or adapted for other uses by the late 1990s as other security systems were developed.

The Head Office of the Reserve Bank also contained a Staff Cafeteria, a Medical Centre and Squash Courts. These types of facilities were often included in multi-storeyed government buildings constructed in Sydney in the 1960s, for example the QANTAS House, the Goodsell Building (demolished) and the former State Office Block (demolished).

The Canberra building was the only RBA building not designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works.

The Canberra and Sydney buildings were the first to be constructed, and the buildings that followed were consistent in their style.

Several of the RBA buildings occupied a comparable symbolic position of civic importance in each city (London Circuit in Canberra, Martin Place in Sydney, King George's Square in Brisbane).

More information can be found in Russell Rodrigo's article, cited below.

"In terms of formal aesthetics, the suite of new RBA buildings form a cohesive group that reflects Coombs' design ideals as well as his conviction that contemporary design could better reflect the changing institutional character of the banking sector and its relationship to the community it served."⁵²

4.5 Analysis Against Criteria

(Refer Section 4.1 for the criteria in full).

4.5.1 PROCESSES [CHL (A)]

The Reserve Bank Building is associated with the establishment of the nation's central bank. It is representative of the separation of monetary policy in the central bank from the commercial customer functions of the Commonwealth Bank.

4.5.2 CHARACTERISTIC VALUES [CHL (D)]

The Reserve Bank Building is a fine example of Late 20th Century Stripped Classical design, as detailed in section 4.4.2. It is one of the finer examples of the style in the ACT.

The Banking Chamber and Strong Room have the ability to demonstrate elements of the operation of the Central Bank as, to a lesser degree, does the concealed turntable in the former cash handling area.

As part of the Law Courts Precinct group of buildings it demonstrates some of the early planning and design principles placed on Civic buildings and places by the NCDG. The buildings are grouped around the axis of University Avenue, one of the principal radiating avenues from City Hill. The courtyard is one of the principal formal squares in the city. The large sculpture 'Four Pieces' which adorns the Banking Chamber is representative of sculptural art of the 1960's and reflects the Bank's desire to display major art in public spaces.

4.5.3 ASSOCIATIONAL LINKS [CHL(H)]

The Reserve Bank Building is associated with the establishment and operation of the Reserve Bank of Australia principally in the ACT but also nationally.

⁵² Russell Rodrigo, 'Banking on Modernism: Dr H.C. (Nugget) Coombs and the Institutional Architecture of the Reserve Bank of Australia', *Fabrications: The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand* 26, no.1 (2016).



The building was designed by noted Perth architectural firm Howlett and Bailey (Project Architect Jeffrey Howlett). It was the first major work outside Western Australia and is their only work in the ACT. The design was the winning entry in a national design competition.

The sculpture 'Four Pieces' which is a feature of the Bank Chamber is the work of Gerald and Margo Lewers who were significant Australian artists and sculptors of the period. The sculpture is also a reflection of the policy of the Governor of the Bank at the time (H C Coombs) to feature Australian art within the bank premises.

4.5.4 AESTHETIC VALUE [CHL (E)]

The exterior of the Reserve Bank Building is a fine example of Late 20th Century Stripped Classical architecture with a low set and simple building form and regular grid of slender columns which rise uninterrupted through the three levels of the building. The building is designed to be viewed in the round and sits comfortably within the legal precinct of three buildings. The building provides framing to the north side of the Law Courts Precinct courtyard and the University Avenue Axis. External changes to the building in the past forty years have only slightly diminished its aesthetic significance

The massing and materials of the building are similar to the other two in the precinct.

The Banking Chamber is a well-proportioned and impressive space three storeys in volume. The full height glazing on three walls creates a sense of openness and light in the chamber which contrasts with the dark back wall on which is located the sculpture "Four Pieces". The overall impression of the space is in stark contrast to traditional bank chambers which are dark, sombre and enclosed. The Bank Chamber is a unique example of its type in the ACT both in size and design.

The timber faced service counter is the longest freestanding bank counter in the ACT.

The aesthetic quality of the design has been acknowledged in the buildings listing on several Heritage Registers (Commonwealth Heritage Register and Australian Institute of Architects Register of Significant Architecture).

As part of the Law Courts Precinct group of buildings it demonstrates the early design and siting policies of the NCDC for this part of the city, with respect to architectural quality and function of the buildings. The buildings are grouped around the axis of University Avenue, one of the principal radiating avenues from City Hill in the original Griffin design for the Capital. The public square, which forms the centre of the Precinct, is one of the principal formal squares in Civic.

4.6 Historic Themes

The following Australian Historic Themes apply:

- Administering Australia 7.6
- Developing Institutions 4.3
- Financing Australia 3.18
- Planning Urban Settlements 4.1

4.7 Statement of Significance

The Reserve Bank Building is representative of the establishment and operation of a central bank to control monetary policy in Australia. The Banking Chamber and Strong Room have the ability to demonstrate aspects of the operation of the bank.

The building is the only ACT work of the noted Perth Architects Howlett and Bailey (Project Architect, Jeffrey Howlett) and was the result of a national design competition.

The exterior of the building has significance as a key element of the Legal Precinct and Knowles Place. Its stripped classical architecture echoes the other buildings of the precinct with the low form, regular



rectangular forms and light grey finishes and horizontal roofline. The way in which the building can be viewed in the round with all façades given equal design attention adds to its appeal.

The building is one of the better ACT examples of the Late twentieth century stripped classical architecture with its regular grid of structural columns rising through three levels, curtain wall glazing, low horizontal roof expression and the use of light coloured stone finishes externally.

The sculpture "Four Pieces" on the rear wall of the Bank Chamber is the work of Gerald and Margo Lewers who were significant Australian artists and sculptors of the 1960's period. The sculpture is representative of artistic style of the period and the desire of the Reserve Bank Governor H C Coombs to exhibit Australian art in Bank premises.

As part of the Law Courts Precinct group of buildings it demonstrates the early design and siting policies of the NCDC for this part of the city, with respect to architectural quality and function of the buildings. The buildings are grouped around the axis of University Avenue, one of the principal radiating avenues from City Hill in the original Griffin design for the Capital. The public square, which forms the centre of the Precinct, is one of the principal formal squares in Civic.

4.8 Significance of Components

From the overall analysis in Sections 4.2 - 4.5, the following section evaluates the significance of the various elements of the site. This process is aimed at assisting in the ongoing conservation and management of the place. The levels of significance are divided as suggested by J S Kerr in *The Conservation Plan*.

The following degrees of significance are used:

Grading	Justification	Comment Regarding Status
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding item of local or State significance. High degree of intactness. Item can be interpreted relatively easily.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
Considerable	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations may detract from significance.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
Moderate	Altered or modified elements. Elements with heritage value, which contribute to the overall significance of the item.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
Some	Alterations and intervention detract from the overall significance. Difficult to interpret.	
Intrusive	Damaging to, or adversely affecting the item's heritage significance.	

The assessment is based on elements that contribute to the integrity and significance of the place and its **local significance** only.

Table 1 – Tolerance for Change

Tolerance for Change	Application to the Reserve Bank Building
Low Tolerance	The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) embodies the heritage significance of the component and its contribution to the site. It retains a high degree of intactness with only very minor alterations that do not detract from significance.



Medium/Moderate Tolerance	The key attribute should be retained and conserved through the maintenance and restoration. The key attribute (form, fabric, function and/or location) only partly embodies the heritage significance of the component and the site, or has been considerably modified.
Much/ High Tolerance	The key attribute (form, fabric, function, and/or location) has little heritage significance to the component or the overall site

Table 2 – Elements of Significance

Item	Level of Significance	Tolerance for Change
BUILDING		
Marble cladding to columns at ground floor	Exceptional	Low
Curtain wall glazing	Exceptional	Low
Columns continuous through 3 levels of facade	Exceptional	Low
Freestanding siting of the building	Exceptional	Low
Rectilinear Form and massing of the building	Exceptional	Low
Banking Chamber: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uninterrupted 3 storey volume and sense of openness and light Full height glazing to N, W and S Glazed screens and doors on E wall (A in Figure 48) Cinder brick textured block finish to E wall including charcoal or dark grey colour “Four Pieces” sculpture Main service counter its detail and position in the Chamber Screen and counter adjacent front entry (B in Figure 48) Coffered exposed beam ceiling Marble wall finish on part E wall 	Exceptional	Low
Strong Room – including parquetry floor, steel grilles and 2 strong room doors.	Exceptional	Low
Roof garden – remaining fabric and form in roof of building	Exceptional	Low
Receival dock turntable and remaining evidence of former walls and doors concealed above ground floor E ceiling	Exceptional	Low
The buildings design relationship and harmony with the Law Court Precinct, and its enframement of the University Avenue vista. Stripped classical external design features	Exceptional	Low
South fire stairs construction detailing	Considerable	Medium
Level 1 and 2 marble cladding and aluminium spandrels	Considerable	Low
Retaining wall around E end of building	Considerable	Medium



Former driveway to receival dock	Considerable	Medium
External Sunscreen	Considerable	Low
Former use of part of Level 2 for RBA executive and staff functions	Some	Medium
Entry canopies (N, W and S)	Some	Medium
Brick paving detail along north and west of building	Some	Medium
Sliding door at rear of the offices (C in Figure 48)	Some	Medium
Commercial office fitouts ground, level 1 and non RBA areas level 2	Little	High
Materials of construction of Level 2 RBA executive area	Little	High
Toilet fitouts all 3 levels	Little	High
North entry foyer stairs and floor and wall finishes	Little	High
Metal deck roof and parapet walls at main roof level	Little	High
Landscaping north of building	Little	High
Internal blinds		
Partitions and furniture annotated with 2011 refurbishment of Banking Chamber and level 2 staff amenities room.	Little	High
Plasterboard partitions in Bank Chamber	Intrusive	Not applicable

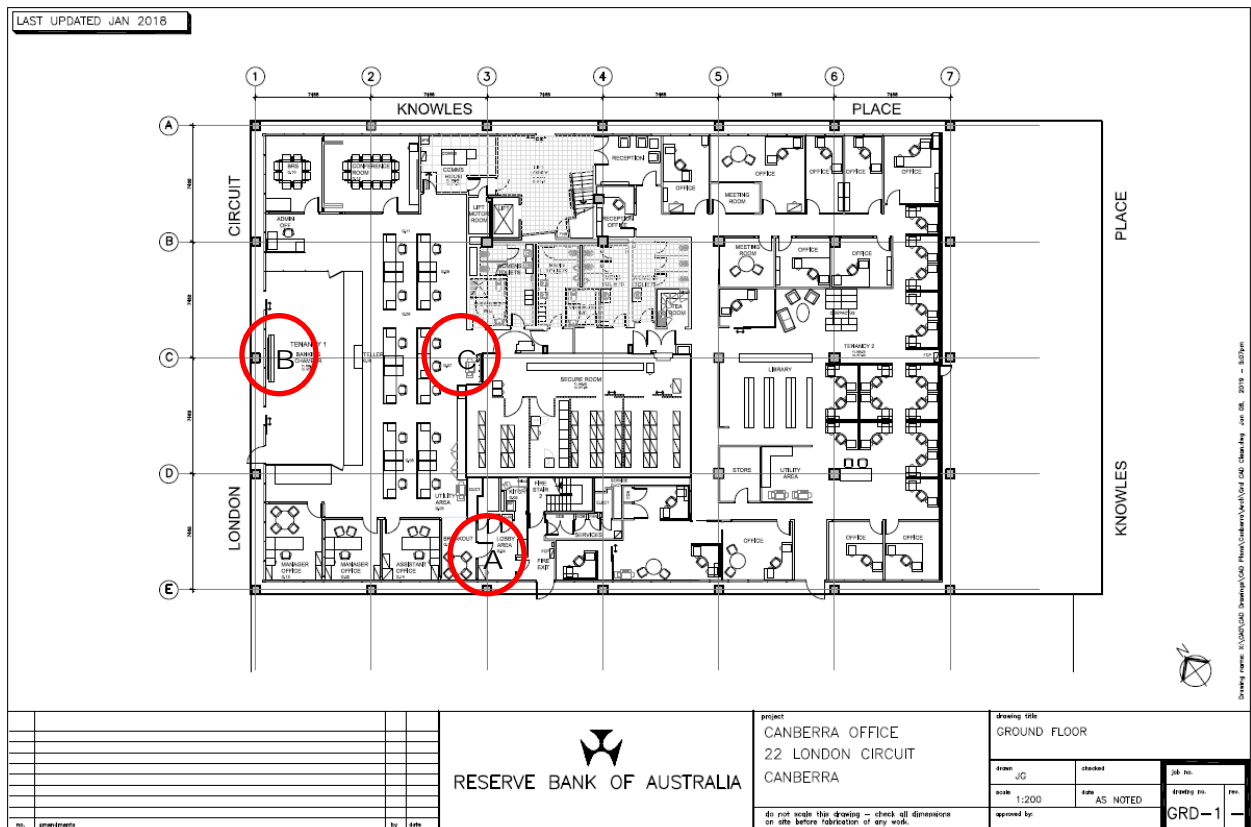


Figure 48: Ground Floor Plan 2019

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia



5.0 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

This section outlines the requirements set down in legislation and those that arise from either the Statement of Significance or stakeholders who have an interest but no legislative control over the place. This will place certain constraints and opportunities on the place, which are set down in the policies in Section 7.

5.1 Australian Heritage Council (AHC)

The Australian Heritage Council is an independent body of heritage experts established through the Australian Heritage Council Act 2003.

The Council's role is to assess the values of places nominated for the National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, and the list of overseas places of historic significance to Australians. The Council provides advice to the federal Minister for Environment on conserving and protecting listed values. The Council may also nominate places with heritage values to these lists.

It is the Council's duty to promote the identification, assessment and conservation of heritage and to advise the Minister on a range of matters relating to heritage. It also engages in research and promotional activities.

The Council until March 2012 held the Register of the National Estate (RNE) - a list of some 13000 natural and cultural heritage places throughout Australia. The list is now defunct and has no legislative significance it can no longer have places added or removed. The Register is a reference database and is used for public education and the promotion of heritage conservation generally.

The Reserve Bank building is on the Commonwealth Heritage List so the AHC will maintain an interest and role in the ongoing conservation of the place. Under the EPBC Act there are requirements for the Reserve Bank of Australia to consult with Department of Environment and Energy or refer actions to them in the ongoing heritage management of the place if the RBA considers it is required.

The official Commonwealth Heritage Values for the place as identified in the Commonwealth Heritage List are listed below⁵³:

A Process

The Reserve Bank is important as the nation's central bank having evolved from the separation of the central banking (monetary policy) function from the commercial, customer focussed activities of the Commonwealth Bank.

Attributes

The whole Bank.

B Rarity

Not applicable.

C Research

Not applicable.

D Characteristic Values

It is one of three buildings in the precinct, demonstrating the Stripped Classical style of architecture with their typical features such as simple rectangular forms, echoes of colonnades, symmetry and horizontal skyline, all linked by a landscape plaza also expressing a geometric minimalist style. The sculptural work in the Reserve Bank, by Gerald and Margo Lewers demonstrates the sculptural styles of the times and the role of art to adorn public places.

Attributes

The building's Stripped Classical style demonstrated by the features noted above. Also the sculptural work of Gerald and Margo Lewers.

⁵³ http://environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;search=state%3DACT%3Blist_code%3DCHL%3Blegal_status%3D35%3Bkeyword_PD%3D0%3Bkeyword_SS%3D0%3Bkeyword_PH%3D0;place_id=105396 accessed 18 March 2019



E Aesthetic Importance

The aesthetic importance of the Reserve Bank building which links harmoniously with the precinct, is created by the elegance of its minimalist design style, the low scale and simple building form, and the use of pale grey marble cladding which provides a light visual quality. The location of the bank in the precinct, being visual subservient to The Law Courts of the ACT building, enhances the latter's projection of authority and dignity. The Reserve Bank contributes enframement to visual axis of the Black Mountain vista.

Attributes

It's harmony within the precinct resulting from style, scale, form, colour and materials plus its visual relationship to the axis of the Black Mountain vista.

F Technical Achievement

The Reserve Bank of Australia building, constructed 1963-65, is a major component of the Law Courts Precinct. The precinct provides a noteworthy contribution to Canberra's townscape by its siting as a terminating point for University Avenue at City Hill, its arrangement of buildings giving prominence to the former Supreme Court (now part of the integrated Law Courts of the ACT building), and its design execution in the contemporary modern design idiom.

The design of the Reserve Bank is additionally important for its overall impression of institutional security. The impressive space of its banking chamber makes full use of the building's height and proportions. Design features of the chamber are the sculpture, 'Four Pieces' by Gerald and Margo Lewers, and the timber counter and furniture contemporary with the design of the building.

Attributes

The building's designed relationship to the Law Courts Precinct, its impression of institutional security, its sculpture, timber counter and furniture.

G Social Value

Not applicable.

H Significant People

Not Applicable.

I Indigenous Tradition

Not applicable.

5.2 ACT Government, Heritage Council of the ACT, ACT Planning Authority

The ACT Heritage Council provides advice to the Minister for Environment and Heritage, on the assessment and conservation of places of Heritage significance in the ACT. Council is also responsible for maintaining the ACT Heritage Register.

The RBA building has been nominated to the ACT Heritage Register. It cannot be registered under the ACT Heritage Act 2004. The ACT Heritage Council may provide advice/comment to the AHC if requested. They in turn may provide the NCA and RBA with a comment on the heritage implications of any proposal. The AHC may comment on a matter without consulting the ACT Heritage Council.

There is no requirement for the Reserve Bank of Australia to consult with the ACT Heritage Council in the ongoing management of the place. However as an interested stakeholder and given that NCA only comment on external works, it is recommended that the ACT Heritage Council be approached for comments on major issues affecting significance of the interior (whether they impact on official values of significance or not).

The ACT Planning Authority has no direct legislative control on the building but does on the surrounding streets.

5.3 National Capital Authority

The control of the exterior is under NCA responsibility as it is designated land. They have responsibilities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) 1999 Act to ensure their actions do



not adversely impact on places of heritage significance. NCA has no legislative control on the interior. Design controls are set out in NCA City Hill Precinct Code.

The National Capital Plan Part 2 Statement of Planning Principles, Section 2.4 Liveability Objective 2 Urban Design and Heritage states the objective as:

Enhance the character of Canberra and the Territory as the National Capital by identifying, protecting, conserving and presenting natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places.

and the principles as:

- 1. The National Capital Authority will consider heritage places in Designated Areas as Commonwealth Areas for the purposes of protecting the environment in the manner currently afforded under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and any subsequent legislation.*
- 2. Within Designated Areas, the National Capital Authority may require Heritage (or Conservation) Management Plans to accompany development applications for heritage places which should be prepared to meet requirements equivalent to those in the EPBC Act. The National Capital Authority may require Heritage Impact Statements to accompany development applications for a heritage place.*
- 3. Development should be consistent with the requirements of any relevant Heritage (or Conservation) Management Plan for that particular place.*
- 4. The management of heritage places should ensure that their use and presentation is consistent with their heritage values. Heritage places will be presented and interpreted to increase public awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of the National Capital and its conservation, subject to any reasonable requirements for privacy or confidentiality.*
- 5. The National Capital Authority will adopt the Australian Natural Heritage Charter and the Burra Charter as key guiding documents respectively for natural and cultural heritage places within Designated Areas.*

Works approvals will be required for all works on site that will affect landscape, setting and external fabric of the buildings. This includes even minor works and maintenance.

As indicated in the principles above, a Heritage Management Plan (HMP) can assist the process of approvals provided work is consistent with the HMP and a statement of heritage impact is included with Works Approval submission.

NCA have no jurisdiction over the interior of the buildings.

5.4 National Trust of Australia (ACT)

The National Trust of Australia (ACT) has no statutory authority, but is an authoritative interest group whose views are generally held in high regard by the local authorities, other stakeholders and key interest groups.

The RBA site has not been listed by the National Trust of Australia (ACT) as an individual item. However, the National Trust is likely to take an interest in the future use, preservation and conservation of the building.

They would be considered a stakeholder representing some community views in any future community consultation.

5.5 Australian Institute of Architects (The Institute)

The Australian Institute of Architects has no statutory authority, but is an authoritative interest group whose views are generally held in high regard by the local authorities, other stakeholders and key interest groups.

The Institute has recognised the importance of the RBA building with its listing individually and as part of the Law Courts Precinct on their Register of Significant Architecture. They will maintain an interest in the future of the building, and should be invited to comment in any future community consultation process.



5.6 Burra Charter

The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter, amended and as adopted in 2013) provides specific guidelines for the treatment of places of cultural significance.

This study has been prepared in accordance with those principles. The Charter provides specific guidance for physical and procedural actions that should occur in relation to significant places. Guidelines relevant to protection, conservation, presentation and interpretation of the official values and heritage significance to the RBA Building are:

- The significant elements of the site should be conserved and managed in a manner which does not place the item at risk (Article 2)
- Conservation works and changes on the site should be based upon a policy of minimal intrusion and change and should not distort an appreciation of the original fabric (Article 3)
- Conservation works should be based upon best practice using traditional techniques in preference to modern adaptations (Article 4)
- Conservation and future use to consider all aspects and relative degrees of significance (Article 5)
- The use of the building has substantially remained office/banking in nature, so future use should continue this type of use (Article 7)
- The setting of the building is important and needs to be conserved with no new detached un-associated construction or other action which detracts from its heritage value (Article 8)
- The building should be retained in its current location (Article 9)
- Conservation, interpretation and management of a place should be facilitated in a manner which provides for the participation of people for whom the place has special association and meanings (Article 12)
- Conservation, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, interpretation and adaptation are all part of the ongoing conservation of the place and should follow accepted processes (Article 14–25)
- This study is part of the Conservation process. More detailed studies of the site may be necessary before any new major conservation works occur (Article 26)
- The impact on the significance should be considered before any change occurs (Article 27)
- Existing significant fabric should be recorded before disturbance occurs. Disturbance of significant fabric may occur in order to provide evidence needed for the making of decisions on the conservation of the place (Article 28)
- The decision making procedure and individuals responsible for policy should be identified (Article 29)
- Appropriate direction and supervision should be maintained through all phases of the work and implemented by people with appropriate knowledge and skills (Article 30)
- A log of new evidence and additional decisions should be kept. (Article 31)
- Copies of all reports and records relating to the significance and conservation of the place should be placed in a permanent archive and be made publicly available (Article 32)
- Significant items from the site should be recorded, catalogued and protected (Article 33)
- Adequate resources are provided for conservation work (Article 34).

5.7 Arising from the Statement of Significance

The general requirements are:

- Elements of significance must be retained, conserved and maintained in accordance with the Burra Charter. Minor adaptation may be considered provided a careful assessment of impact on heritage values, significant fabric is conserved and careful recording occurs.
- Elements of little significance should be conserved and maintained as part of the place.



- Elements identified as intrusive should be removed if and when practicable to reduce the adverse impact on the overall significance of the place or to conserve elements of greater significance.

The RBA Building and its setting should be retained. The significance of the place can be maintained by ongoing maintenance.

There is a need to ensure adequate protection of the items of higher significance by means of appropriate maintenance and ongoing protective care.

Significant fabric should be retained as far as possible but upgrading is possible within the constraints set out in the Heritage Management Plan

Interpretation of the site should be developed for the benefit of all visitors.

5.8 Building Controls

Compliance with statutory regulations such as the National Construction Code (NCC) particularly Volume 1 Building Code of Australia (and as a consequence Australian Standards, Fire Safety, Disabled Persons Access) is recommended.

The significance of the building will mean a carefully considered approach is required in some instances so that the significance is not compromised.

This may require negotiation with all relevant authorities to reach satisfactory resolution where differences occur. The solutions should retain the significance of the buildings and setting unless there is no other feasible and prudent alternative.

If the proposed solution will have a significant impact on the Commonwealth Heritage Values of the place, the action will need to be referred to the Minister for Environment and Energy. Advice on preparing referrals is provided on the Department of Environment and Energy website.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/about/business/permits.html>

5.9 Owner – Reserve Bank of Australia

The Reserve Bank of Australia has no plans to vacate the building.

The Bank intends to continue use of the building. There are no plans to expand or reduce operations in Canberra. Periodic maintenance of the building will require replacement of some plant and fabric of the building over time and the Bank are looking to this HMP to guide decision-making in planning such works.

The importance of achieving an economic return on the asset has increased pressure to reduce the level of occupancy of Level 2 by the Bank.

To this end the HMP has been briefed to consider the following issues:

- Main counter – to what extent is change possible to reduce public space and create more work space;
- Can vaults be removed or modified for more office, meeting and storage areas;
- Can a new entry to the DPP be created, including a canopy over, on the north side;
- Can bollards be installed outside entrances and glazed walls;
- Opening up access to tea room, possible relocation of the glazed screen and expanding adjacent areas to include staff recreation facilities;
- Removal of the sliding door at the rear of the open office;
- Add a ceiling over the offices on the south side of the banking chamber.



5.10 Moral Rights – Howlett and Bailey

Moral rights for the original design of the Reserve Bank of Australia Canberra Branch rest with Jeffrey Howlett (or his estate). In 2019 this will be through his son Greg Howlett of Perth WA.

Moral rights are personal to the architect of the works and include:

- the right of attribution of authorship;
- the right to take action against false attribution of authorship; and
- the right of integrity and authoring.

The right of attribution lasts 50 years after the death of the architect Jeffrey Howlett in 2005⁵⁴.

The owner is required to notify the original designer or the estate that alterations to or demolition of the building is proposed. The notification must give the original designer 3 weeks to decide if they wish to:

- make a record of the building before alteration or demolition (usually a photographic record); and/or
- consult 'in good faith' with the owner about the alterations or demolition.

If the original designer does not respond to the notice within the period of 3 weeks the owner may proceed immediately with the proposed alterations or demolition.

If the original designer notifies the owner within the initial 3 week period that it wishes to make a record of the building or consult with the owner regarding the proposed alterations or demolition, the owner must allow a further period of 3 weeks for making the record and or conducting the consultation.

If the Architect has died then consultations are through the company, estate or trust if such exist and in this case it is through Greg Howlett.

⁵⁴ <https://architectureau.com/articles/obituary-10/> accessed 19 March 2019



6.0 HERITAGE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (Act 1999) as amended

Environment and Heritage Legislation Amendment Act (No 1) is an Act which amends the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) 1999 to include "National Heritage" as a new matter of National Environmental Significance and protects listed places to the fullest extent under the Constitution.

The Act also:

- Establishes the National Heritage List.
- Establishes the Commonwealth Heritage List.

The Act also sets out obligations for Commonwealth agencies to identify, protect and manage heritage places under their control.

All Commonwealth Government agencies that own or lease heritage places are required to assist the Minister and the Australian Heritage Council (AHC) to identify and assess the heritage values of these places. They are required to:

- Develop heritage strategies which involve;
 - Producing a register of the heritage places under their control;
 - Undertaking a program to assess and identify heritage values of all places owned or controlled by a Commonwealth agency;
- Develop a management plan to manage places in the Commonwealth Heritage List consistent with the new Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles prescribed in regulations to the Act;
- Ensure the ongoing protection of the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place when selling or leasing a Commonwealth Heritage place; and
- Ask the Minister for advice about taking an action, if the action has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a Commonwealth Heritage place.

6.2 Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles

Heritage management principles provide a guiding framework for excellence in managing heritage properties. They set the standard and the scope of the way places should be managed in order to best protect heritage values for the generations ahead.

The principles should be used when preparing and implementing management plans and programs.

The Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles as set out in Schedule 7A of the EPBC Act⁵⁵ are:

- The objective in managing Commonwealth Heritage places is to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit, to all generations, their Commonwealth Heritage values.
- The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should use the best available knowledge, skills and standards for those places, and include ongoing technical and community input to decisions and actions that may have a significant impact on Commonwealth Heritage values.
- The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should respect all heritage values of the place and seek to integrate, where appropriate, any Commonwealth, state and territory and local government responsibilities for those places.
- The management of Commonwealth heritage places should ensure that their use and presentation is consistent with the conservation of their Commonwealth Heritage values.
- The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should make timely and appropriate provision for community involvement, especially by people who:

⁵⁵ <https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/management/commonwealth> accessed 19 March 2019



- have a particular interest in, or associations with, the place, and
 - may be affected by the management of the place.
- Indigenous people are the primary source of information on the value of their heritage and the active participation of Indigenous people in identification, assessment and management is integral to the effective protection of Indigenous heritage values.
 - The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should provide for regular monitoring, review and reporting on the conservation of Commonwealth Heritage values.

The Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles are embodied in the Conservation Policy Section 7.0 of this HMP and should be adopted by Reserve Bank of Australia in applying the Policy.

6.3 Heritage Management Plan

Under the EPBC Act, the RBA is required to prepare a Heritage Management Plan to meet the requirements of a Commonwealth Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) as specified in the EPBC Act (Schedules 7A and 7B) to ensure that the place will be managed in accordance with the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles (See next section) set out in Schedule 7B.

The following table lists the requirements for the Heritage Management Plan under schedule 7A of the EPBC Act and how this HMP addresses each.

No	Requirements (Schedule 7A)	Compliance Comments
(a)	Establish objectives for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of the Commonwealth heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 1.2 and 7.0.
(b)	Provide a management framework that includes reference to any statutory requirements and agency mechanisms for the protection of the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 5.0; Section 6.2 and Section 7.6
(c)	Provide a comprehensive description of the place, including information about its location, physical features, condition, historical context and current uses; and	Complies: Section 3.0.
(d)	Provide a description of the Commonwealth Heritage values and any other heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 4.0.
(e)	Describe the condition of the Commonwealth heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 3.0,
(f)	Describe the method used to assess the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 4.0.
(g)	Describe the current managements and goals, including proposals for change and any potential pressures on the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place; and	Complies: Section 5.0.
(h)	Have policies to manage the Commonwealth Heritage values of a place, and include in those policies, guidance in relation to the following:	Complies: Section 7.0.
	(i) The management and conservation processes to be used.	Complies: Section 5.7, 6.2 and 7.6.



No	Requirements (Schedule 7A)	Compliance Comments
	(ii) The access and security arrangements, including access to the area for indigenous people to maintain cultural traditions;	Complies: RBA have an electronic security system in place. There are no indigenous access requirements or issues known to impact on the site.
	(iii) The stakeholder and community consultation and liaison arrangements;	Complies Section 5.0 and Section 6.8
	(iv) The policies and protocols to ensure that indigenous people participate in the management process;	Not considered specifically applicable to the place with respect to its significance.
	(v) The protocols for the management of sensitive information.	Complies: Section 7.6 Policy 6.5 and 6.10
	(vi) The planning and management of works, development, adaptive reuse and property divestment proposals;	Complies: Section 7.0
	(vii) How unforeseen discoveries or disturbance of heritage are to be managed;	Complies: Section 7.1 and Section 7.6, Policy 6.3
	(viii) How, and under what circumstances, heritage advice is to be obtained;	Complies: Section 7.1, Policy 1.3 and Section 7.3. Section 7.6 and Policy 6.3
	(ix) How the condition of Commonwealth Heritage values is to be monitored and reported;	Complies: Section 7.7 Section 7.6 – Policy 6.3 and 6.7
	(x) How records of intervention and maintenance of a heritage places register are kept;	Complies: Section 7.5. Policy 5.1
	(xi) The research, training and resources needed to improve management;	Complies: Section 7.6 Policy 6.3
	(xii) How heritage values are to be interpreted and promoted; and	Complies: Section 7.6 Policy 6.4.
	(i) Include an implementation plan; and	Complies Section 7.7
	(j) Show how the implementation of policies will be monitored; and	Complies. Section 7.6 Policy 6.2 and 6.3
	(k) Show how the management plan will be reviewed.	Complies: Section 7.6 - Policy 6.2



6.4 Commonwealth Heritage List

This list, established under the EPBC Act, places obligations on Commonwealth Agencies which control items that are entered onto the list. In June 2004 the Reserve Bank Building was entered into the Commonwealth Heritage List. (Place ID 105396). A copy of the citation is included in Appendix A.

The citation includes a Statement of Significance for the place and a listing of the Official Values for which the place is listed. These have arisen from an assessment of the significance of the place against the Commonwealth Heritage criteria. It is these values (and those in section 4.5 of this HMP) which the Conservation policies of Section 7 of the HMP aim to protect, conserve, present and transmit.

The Commonwealth Heritage List is a list of natural and cultural heritage places owned or controlled by the Australian Government.

These include places connected to defence, communications, customs and other government activities that also reflect Australia's development as a nation. The list will be comprised of places, or groups of places, in Commonwealth lands and waters, that are identified as having Commonwealth heritage values.

Anyone can nominate a place for inclusion in the list.

The Australian Heritage Council assesses nominated places against set criteria and makes recommendations to the Minister about listing. The final decision on listing is made by the Minister.

Australian Government agencies that own or control places included in the Commonwealth Heritage List are legally required to develop a plan to protect those places. Even where an endorsed plan is in place agencies must ask the Minister for Environment and Energy, for advice if they propose taking any action that may have a significant impact on the Commonwealth heritage place they own or control.

The following sections outline the responsibilities of RBA under the EPBC Act to protect the Canberra Branch building.

6.5 Heritage Strategy

The Reserve Bank of Australia has a Heritage Strategy 2019-2021 dated February 2019 in place as required under the EPBC Act (refer Attachment 2).



7.0 CONSERVATION POLICY

The purpose of the conservation policy is to provide a guide to protect, conserve, present and transmit to the building owners and managers of a place the official heritage values and items of significance. It should be sufficiently flexible to recognise constraints and requirements accommodate compatible development or change and at the same time enable the official values and significance of the place to be retained and, in some cases, partly recovered.

Definitions used are taken from the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter).

In general, the Conservation Policy is preceded by the information on which the policies are based and where helpful followed by examples or options which arise from the policies.

The recommended policies for the Conservation of Reserve Bank of Australia Canberra Branch Building (RBA Building) are set out below. The policies are brief and should be read in conjunction with the associated text, as this will make the context clear and aid interpretation. This section is structured so that general policies come first followed by policies for specific fabric and spaces.

For clarity, 'official values' and Heritage Significance are sometimes referred to in this section under the term simply as 'significance'.

Overall Policy Statement

The RBA Building is a significant element of our cultural heritage and retains a moderate to high degree of integrity of its original construction. The objective of the following conservation policies is that the official heritage values and heritage significance of the place should be managed in a manner appropriate to conserve the original elements of the building and thereby its significance. At the same time the building needs to continue to be used as a banking and office facility.

7.1 General

Policy 1.1 *The statement of cultural significance official values and list of items set out in Sections 4.5, 4.7 & 4.8 together with the more extensive assessments of individual items contained in this policy section, should be accepted as one of the bases for future planning work and management of the building and site.*

To implement this, the Reserve Bank of Australia and Australian Heritage Council (AHC) need to adopt this Heritage Management Plan, including the Statement of Significance, as the Heritage Management document controlling this place.

Policy 1.2 *The future conservation and development of the RBA Building should be carried out in accordance with the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter).*

It is important that experienced conservation practitioners and trades people are involved in any future proposals or work at RBA which will affect significant fabric and that sound conservation principles are applied to any such works.

Further explanation of these issues is outlined in Section 5.7 Burra Charter.

Policy 1.3 *The policies recommended and options discussed throughout this document should be endorsed and followed when considering future planning and work associated with the RBA Building.*

For the ongoing protective care of any heritage asset including the RBA Building, there needs to be an accepted position which guides the future of the place. (The AHC should review and provide advice and comments on the Final HMP. The Reserve Bank of Australia will need to endorse the HMP and these policies as the document for managing the building and site).

This HMP provides a basis for this to occur provided it is supported by all parties and implemented in future management decisions.



Where proposed work is in accordance with the HMP then there is unlikely to be any effect on the heritage significance of the place.

Where a proposed action is likely to have significant impact on official heritage values then the proposal should be referred to the Minister for Environment and Energy for advice.

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to do so, it is recommended that the RBA consult with the ACT Heritage Council for comment on any proposed major internal works or works which may impact on the significance of the place.

7.2 Future Use of the RBA buildings

Policy 2.1 The building should retain a banking or office function.

The RBA building has undergone some change internally in use. The original banking role still remains, although the percentage floor area and level of original equipment has been reduced. The Banking Chamber and Strong Room should retain their original function as far as possible (in the case of the Strong Room that of safe storage of bank information and equipment or other non-invasive use would be acceptable).

The preference is for the RBA area, particularly the banking chamber to retain a banking or office function. Other uses may be possible provided the overall form and significant elements are conserved.

The other commercial office areas should remain as such. Toilets and kitchenette areas may be modified and altered to suit changing needs of the office areas but an administration/office function would be acceptable.

Policy 2.2 The RBA Building is to be conserved in a manner that does not compromise its significance and in a way consistent with the policies set down in this Heritage Management Plan.

Ongoing economic use of the buildings as far as practical is important to ensure it is kept in good condition and sufficient funding needs to be provided for maintenance. This may require a level of sensitive adaptation (consistent with this HMP) of some areas to suit a new function.

7.3 Expansion/Alterations

Further expansion of the building is not supported as it would detract from the symmetry and clean lines and form of the building, and therefore compromise official values.

Minor change to the exterior may be possible if impact on official heritage values is minor.

Alteration to the interiors which modify the size and volume of the Banking Chamber will need careful consideration so as to minimize impact on heritage values.

Policy 3.1 Extensions and alterations to the building are not supported.

The building now has a strong degree of balance and order in both form and elevation treatment and any external additions would compromise that and therefore detract from the aesthetic significance of the place.

Minor changes to the exterior fabric or detail may be possible subject to a review of details and assessment on impact and the impact on heritage values is minor.

This means a new entry to the DPP is possible including a new canopy if it repeats similar details that exist at present. This has occurred in the past with minimal impact.

Installation of bollards for security outside entrances is possible.



Policy 3.2 Internal alterations not to be Intrusive and to be sympathetic

This means:

- No major structures (including plant) to be placed on the roof if they are visible from ground level on London Circuit, Vernon Circle, Knowles Place or the ground floor entry (West Lobby) of the former Supreme Court.
- The following are permitted within the Banking Chamber:
 - Additional unobtrusive lighting at ceiling level;
 - Replacement of carpet;
 - Relocation of loose furniture and partitions;
 - Removal or modification of intrusive items;
 - Removal or modification of 2011 partitions;
 - Further changes to the counter are not supported;
 - Opening up access to the tea room is possible subject to final details. Glazed screen wall to Chamber to remain.
 - Removal of the sliding door at the rear of the offices may be possible but required further investigation and research in to its history.
 - The vaults are to remain with cages and doors but use within the spaces can change. Reconnection of duct to Air conditioning is possible even if a small hole is required in the vault walls.
- New fitout to be separated from original fabric and not unnecessarily adversely affect any original details. The original components include:

Floors	-	Parquetry
Walls	-	Marble walls; cinder brick wall in chamber
	-	Grilles and entry doors to Strong Room
	-	Glazed screen and doors east wall
	-	Four pieces sculpture
	-	Front counter and screen at entry

- Kitchenettes in any area of the building can be modern, as all earlier detail has gone.
- Window dressing should be contained within window frame. It should present neutral colour to exterior. Furnishings should be Venetian blinds.
- Internal signage should be discreet and minimal to BCA and authority requirements.
- Cabinets, fire hose reels, etc to be contained within cupboards preferably not located in the significant spaces with appropriate signage on doors.

Cables for services are to be concealed whenever possible (e.g. skirtings). Chasing into render is to be avoided. Surface conduits are to be avoided except in store rooms. Extreme care must be exercised to minimise damage to original fabric. The integration of new services must be carefully considered before implementation.

New ductwork and plant are to be concealed.

- No controls are placed upon changes to the interior of the tenanted spaces of ground floor and level 1 except that original fabric concealed within walls ceilings or under floor finishes must be retained in any alterations.

Policy 3.3 Changes to meet statutory requirements as defined by the NCC Vol 1 BCA, Australian Standards or Authorities shall be considered in the context of the Policies 4.1 - 4.3.

This will include such aspects as fire safety and access for people with disabilities. Changes of use which increase occupancy levels may require a review of Toilet facilities. A proposal for additional toilet provision may require consultation with AHC.



This will require detailed consideration of each proposal an endeavour to conserve original fabric and maintain the significance of the building, yet meet the performance requirements.

Policy 3.4 *The building can be repaired and maintained provided there is no significant impact to the identified heritage values.*

Maintenance will also result in some original material in poor condition being replaced. Poor condition means rotten and decayed. It does not mean damaged as a result of its age. The original areas of the building are old and the patina that exists is part of its history. Wholesale replacement to new condition is not acceptable. Essential replacement however is acceptable but when replacing original fabric new details should match original details without conjecture. When replacing non-original fabric the options are to return the building to a known earlier state, replacing it to match existing details or adding new material in a sympathetic way.

- External sunscreens should not be removed. Replacement of damaged screens with new screens of the same material (Koolshade) is acceptable. (Progressive Controls in Fyshwick are a possible local supplier).
- The anodised aluminium spandrel panels could be replaced by mosaic tile to match original detail
- Marble cladding should be replaced with marble of the same colour if replacement is required.

7.4 Conservation of the Building and Retention of Significance

Policy 4.1 *Items of Exceptional Significance to be conserved.*

Refer Section 4.8 for what is included under this heading. This requires some works to be undertaken to protect the building and regular inspection and maintenance work to ensure that the building remains in sound condition.

The items listed “exceptional significance’ must be retained and conserved in accordance with the Burra Charter. No adaptation should occur unless essential for the ongoing protection of the building. Any proposed change must be preceded by careful recording

This means:

- No intrusion or modification to significant elements of Banking Chamber and Strong Room.
- Continued maintenance of stonework is essential, including repair of damaged stonework, if and when it occurs.
- The original configuration and curtain wall design of the windows to be preserved.
- Marble work in Banking Chamber to be preserved.
- Parquetry floors to be preserved.
- Counter and screen beside entry in Banking Chamber and details to be retained in situ.
- No additional permanent signage to be affixed to external building face.
- Original lighting to be retained in situ and continue to be used as far as possible. Where replacement of light fittings is required, it is acceptable to upgrade the lamp and ballasts to modern specifications
- Original door hardware in the Banking Chamber area to be retained in situ.
- ‘Four Pieces’ sculpture to be preserved.
- Investigate original colour schemes through paint scrapes and implement as appropriate.

Policy 4.2 *Items and fabric of Considerable Significance to be conserved unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. Where there are no feasible and prudent alternative suitable measures that minimise any intervention in the items or fabric can occur.*



Refer Section 4.8 for what is included under this heading. This requires some works to be undertaken to protect the building and a regular inspection and maintenance work to ensure that the building remains in sound condition.

The items listed 'considerable significance' should be retained and conserved in accordance with the Burra Charter. Minor adaptation may be considered provided significant fabric is conserved and careful recording occur. They should be retained as is, subject to essential maintenance. They should not be removed unless essential for the operation of the building.

Policy 4.3 *Items of some significance in Clause 4.8 should be retained if feasible but can be altered and removed to allow for operational requirements after consideration of alternative and any potential impacts.*

Policy 4.4 *The items of little significance, such as those of little significance in Clause 4.8 should be retained but could be altered, removed, adapted or remodelled to allow for the conservation of elements of greater significance, or for operational requirements but only after consideration of alternatives that minimise any intervention or impact and appropriate recording prior to their removal*

Policy 4.4 *The items considered intrusive in Clause 4.8 can be removed at any time, subject to archaeological control and photographic recording prior to its removal.*

Policy 4.3 and 4.4 allow for retention of elements which contribute to the significance of the place whilst allowing some degree of change to elements of lower significance to meet the changing operational needs of RBA.

7.5 Recording

Policy 5.1 *Original details and finishes must be recorded prior to any major refurbishment or modification. Recording should be undertaken by a heritage specialist and recording data submitted to the relevant heritage authority.*

Correct conservation process is to record by means of drawings and photographs buildings or details before they changed. These should be archived with RBA or on site.

Records of change should also be recorded by the RBA (which forms part of the RBA Heritage Strategy). This will include recording of where movable heritage items are relocated too.

Responsibility for maintaining the archives and updating with the new information on changes is the responsibility of the RBA archivist. This responsibility includes notification to the Workplace Department Manager of changes required to the Heritage Register.

Any evidence uncovered during the execution of the work should similarly be recorded.

7.6 Management

Policy 6.1 *Existing registers be updated with the details contained within this report.*

This includes Australian Heritage Council and Australian Institute of Architects.

Policy 6.2 *The Heritage Management Plan must be reviewed within every 5-year period. The review is to check that no new material is to hand, to review and change details as may be required and to reconfirm policies.*

The HMP will be reviewed in accordance with section 341X of the EPBC Act. Section 341X of the EPBC Act states that:

- (1) At least once in every 5-year period after a plan for managing a Commonwealth Heritage place is made under section 341S, the Commonwealth agency concerned must cause a review of the plan to be carried out.
- (2) The review must:



- (a) assess whether the plan is consistent with the Commonwealth Heritage management principles in force at the time; and
 - (b) assess whether the plan is effective in protecting and conserving the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place; and
 - (c) make recommendations for the improved protection of the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place.
- (3) The person carrying out the review must publish, on the Internet and in a daily newspaper circulating in each State and self-governing Territory, a notice inviting anyone to give the person comments within 20 business days on:
- (a) whether the plan is consistent with the Commonwealth Heritage management principles; and
 - (b) the effectiveness of the plan in protecting and conserving the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place.
- (4) In carrying out the review, the person must consider the comments (if any) received in accordance with the notice.

The Workplace Department Manager is responsible to ensure that these reviews occur and the required consultation is programmed and implemented. The Manager may commission the review by an external consultant.

Policy 6.3 *A clear management structure and system needs to be maintained by RBA to ensure works occur in a correct way, and Conservation Policies are applied.*

The current Heritage Strategy 2019-2021 and the Bank's decision making process as it applies to Heritage Matters in detail in Section 2 of the Heritage Strategy and Figure 49 below.

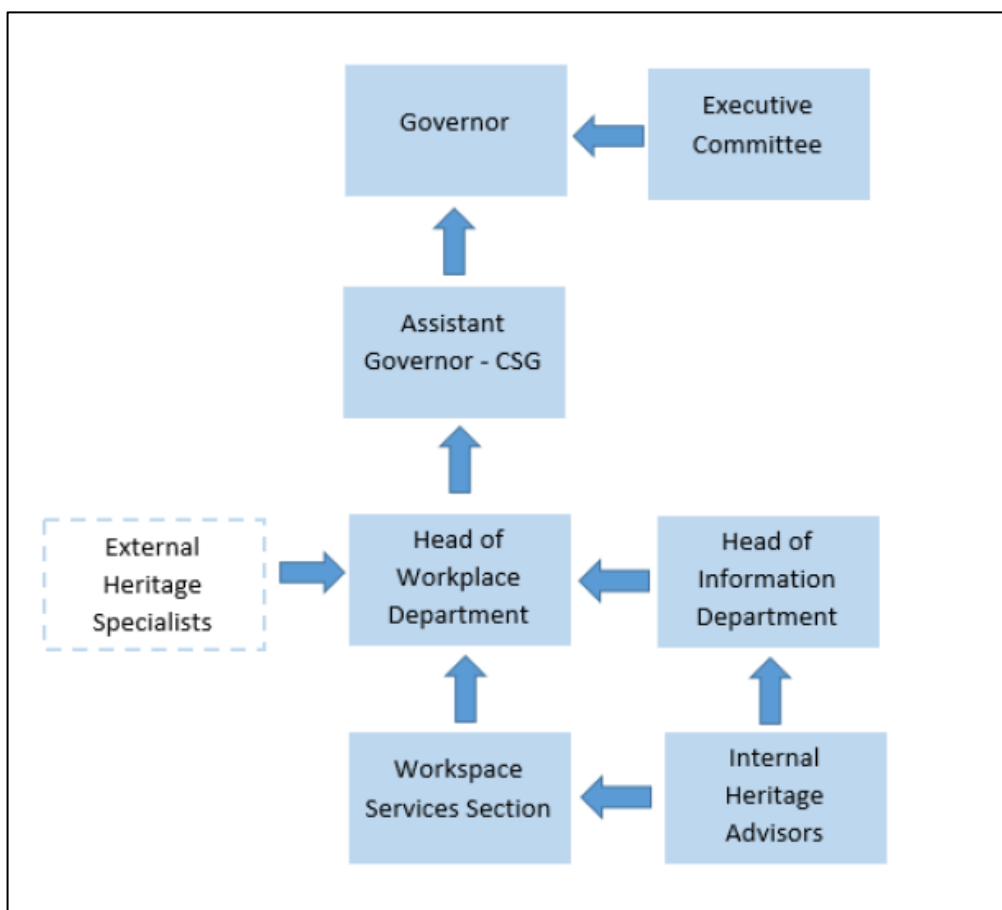


Figure 49: RBA Decision Making Process as it applies to Heritage

Source: RBA Heritage Strategy 2019-2021, p 7



Responsibilities of key personnel are detailed in Section 2.4.

A copy of the Heritage Strategy is included as Attachment 2.

Also within the strategy are:

- Community consultation;
- Conflict resolution;
- Steps for disposal of properties;
- Staff training;
- Promoting community awareness; and
- Monitoring.

Policy 6.4 *Interpretation of the site should be promoted by means of making the HMP widely available. There is potential for displaying some information about the building in public areas of the building such as the Bank Chamber and entry.*

This will actively promote the significance of the place to occupiers and as wide an audience as possible and also enable other people to appreciate the significance of the building.

The building presently does not contain much interpretation material. The installation of such material can assist in enhancing the appreciation of the building. The only information is a plaque which provides interpretative information about the 'Four Pieces' sculpture including information about the artist.

Figure 50: Plaque re "Four Pieces" Sculpture

Source: RBA 2019



Provision of interpretative plaques on the footpaths adjacent to the property would assist in a wider appreciation of the site. (This may require authority approval).

An information booklet or brochure on the building should be made available in the Bank Chamber for visitors. This should include

- Brief History of RBA and Canberra Branch
- Description of the building
- Summary of its significance
- Identify the significant elements.

The RBA maintains a website which promotes its history and function. It is recommended that as part of the public interpretation of the Canberra Branch a section be added to the website to promote the heritage properties owned or managed by RBA. This could include description, brief history, statement of significance and historic photos of the properties. This information can be assembled from HMP's for the sites or RBA Archives. A link to the Commonwealth Heritage Listing for the places would be helpful.

Policy 6.5 All original documentation for the building should be retained by the RBA.

There are substantial original records which provide useful information on the building held in the Sydney archives of RBA. Copies of some original plans are held in the Canberra Branch. RBA is the appropriate custodian for original documentation. A copy of this HMP may be stored with the Australian Archives.

The location and custodial arrangements of records should be identified in the RBA Heritage Register (as per Clause 3.4 of the RBA Heritage Strategy) and a full inventory of records and objects associated with the place must be retained on site by RBA. A copy of the Inventory should also be left in the Head Office Archives.

The Bank will maintain a comprehensive inventory of the Bank's movable cultural heritage, e.g. heritage furniture.

Policy 6.6 Procedures for sale or lease of the property must follow EPBC Act obligations.

If RBA or later owners of the building should ever wish to sell or lease part or all of the site, they must give the Minister for Environment and Energy at least 40 business days' notice before executing the contract. The agency must ensure that the contract includes a covenant, the effect of which is to protect the Commonwealth heritage values of the place, unless, having regard to other means of protecting those values, the agency is satisfied that it is either unnecessary or unreasonable of it including such a covenant in the contract is impracticable.

If the Minister is informed that the Australian Government agency is satisfied that it is unnecessary to include such a covenant in the contract, the Minister may advise the agency about measures to ensure the ongoing protection of the Commonwealth heritage values of the place, in which case the agency must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the measures are taken.

Policy 6.7 The building be maintained by the Reserve Bank of Australia so that it remains sound, weathertight and fit for purpose.

- (a) This is to ensure that the obligations under the EPBC Act are implemented.
- (b) The management structure (refer Policy 6.3) needs to identify the persons responsible for this.
- (c) An annual inspection to occur to ensure this is achieved. As a minimum the following items to be included.
- (d) An annual inspection of the site and setting: The Workplace Department Manager to arrange a review of the condition of elements contributing to the Official Heritage values. A written report is to be submitted and include details in the Annual Report.

The following Checklist identifies specific areas to be monitored on at least an annual basis to ensure the protection of the fabric of this heritage asset. A more comprehensive checklist and time frames should be developed by RBA as part of an Asset Management Plan for the building. The following list should be incorporated into that list:

- Monitor external fabric. Record crack development and or spalling of stonework. Repair as necessary.
- Monitor weatherproofness and operation of windows and doors.
- Replace broken glass.
- Monitor soundness of roof sheeting, cappings and valleys. Implement repairs urgently.
- Monitor soundness of floors.
- Check soundness of balustrading and handrails internal.
- Check soundness and condition of external screens and clean out tracks at ground floor



- Monitor condition of trees on and adjacent the site. Implement program of progressive maintenance when considered appropriate (tree condition poses threat to the building).

Policy 6.8 Stakeholder consultation must occur with all proposed actions to the place or its fabric which will have significant impact on the Commonwealth Heritage value of the Place and stakeholders be provided with an opportunity for comment.

- (The stakeholders are NCA, DEE, ACT Heritage Council, National Trust, Australian Institute of Architects, adjoining owners, Jeffrey Howlett (estate). The general public are also considered a stakeholder under the EPBC Act.
- Consultation may be in writing or by face-to-face meetings and focus groups. The selection of format will depend on the nature and impact of the issue under consideration.
- The EPBC Act requires all Commonwealth Agencies proposing to take an action which will have significant impact on the Commonwealth Heritage value of a place to refer the proposal to the Minister for Environment. The Act requires all referrals to have a 10 day public comment period. The Minister is required to provide a response to the referral within 20 business days. Advice on preparing referrals is provided for Commonwealth Agencies on the DEE website.
- A reasonable timeframe should be provided for response to written documents, eg 3 weeks.
- Stakeholders should be informed in writing of the outcome of consultation and the consultation process taken.

Consultation is to be in writing or by face-to-face meetings.

Policy 6.9 Resolution of conflicting policies or possible differences to the policies to be implemented by:

- Clearly setting out the differences with reference to the HMP.
- Defining the objectives of the action proposed in principle.
- Articulating a full range of options to meet the objectives and the impact on the heritage values of each.
- Refer to conflict resolution procedure as stated in Clause 2.7 of the RBA Heritage Strategy 2019-2021.
- Trying to reach a conclusion of the best action to meet the objectives and minimising the impact on heritage values.
- Presenting the information to DEE for comment and decision.

Policy 6.10 Management of sensitive information

Reserve Bank of Australia provides a highly confidential role in parts of its operations. Therefore security controls are in place for the management of access and storage of confidential and sensitive documentation relating to the banks operation. These controls should apply to sensitive archival information relating to the history of the Canberra Branch.

Sensitive Historic documents (such as photos, plans and details) should be held in the Head Office Archives (Refer Policy 6.5).

7.7 Implementation

The RBA building has significance and should be conserved as set down in the Conservation policies in Section 6.

It is strongly recommended that as part of any refurbishment of the building the conservation works be implemented and that the controls set down in the Conservation Policies be adopted as controls for refurbishment.



All conservation work should be under-taken by professionals experienced in Conservation work.

This will ensure that the obligations of the Agency under the EPBC Act will be met.

The RBA have in place a procedure for monitoring condition of the fabric of the building and reporting and budgeting for any required works. The present system involves:

- Regular inspection of the property by a representative of the Workplace Department.
- The Workplace Department Manager is required to submit forward plans.

Interpretative material should be progressively introduced into the building during the next 5 years as described in Section 7.6 Policy 6.4.

Records of maintenance and Change impacting on the fabric of the building, its setting or official values should be recorded as described in Section 7.5 Policy 5.1 and archived in the RBA Archives. The regular maintenance reviews and works should continue to be recorded, budget and implemented under existing systems.

The following section contains recommendations for conservation action arising from the Conservation Policy as related to the significant spaces and elements.

7.7.1 GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE WORK

Banking Chamber (refer also Policy 3.2)

- It is highly desirable and important to the significance of the building that the Banking Chamber should remain as a Banking Chamber. However sympathetic adaptation to another use which complies with the following guidelines, is reversible and does not diminish the significance of the space could be considered.
- Alterations to the chamber to reduce the volume of the space to be minimized.
- Additional solid partitions above 1500mm high should be discouraged. Existing partitions can be removed.
- Partitioning should not exceed the height of the top of the first floor spandrel panels. Partitions of this height should preferably be glazed (or majority glazed). The intention should be to maintain a sense of translucence in the chamber. Visual and auditory privacy can be provided by double glazing and blinds
- Plant, equipment and fixtures, if located on the ceilings of partitioned rooms in the chamber are not to be visible from any other position in the chamber to a 1.8metre high person standing anywhere in the chamber.
- Freestanding screens should be of a timber veneer facing similar to the main counter on the public faces.
- Freestanding screens should be of one height (max 1500mm).
- Alterations to the eastern cinder brick wall or the sculpture shall be minimized. Suggested restrictions are:
 - Penetrations less than 20mm diameter in wall
 - Painting in a different colour or finish
 - Application of any additional sculptural elements to the wall.
- Feature lighting of the sculpture should be reactivated.
- Carpet in the chamber can be replaced.
- Reinstatement of the original layout of the reception counter should be considered.
- Lighting in the chamber may be enhanced provided it has no greater physical impact on the space than existing lighting.
- New services in the chamber should be concealed.



- Marble cladding on east wall should be retained.
- Perimeter windows must not be permanently covered over at any level. Tinting of windows with glare control film is acceptable provided other elements of this clause are met.
- Exposed structural roof beams to remain exposed.
- Staff furniture may be replaced.
- Window dressings may be replaced but must always retain a filtered view into or out of the chamber day or night.
- Feature lighting of the chamber or sculpture at night during special events should be considered as part of the public interpretation of the space. Explanatory plaques located inside the west wall could be read by pedestrians when the building is closed.
- Alterations to furniture layout and detail within the chamber are acceptable but noting:
 - The main counter should retain its principle arm parallel to the west wall. Relocation forward or backward in the Chamber is possible provided that a generous public area is retained in front of the counter.
 - The screen and bench adjacent to the front entry should be retained in situ.
- No intermediate floor levels are to be constructed within the Banking Chamber.

Strong Room

- The Strong Room should not be altered in its overall size or shape. The steel grilles should generally be retained as is and the central grille is to be retained across the north south axis of the room. The Strong Room doors must be conserved.
- The central corridor may be altered. It is desirable that a section of the corridor outside the eastern strong room door be retained unchanged as it is original fabric.

Eastern Half of the Building

- The turntable should be retained. Concealing it below carpet as it is currently is acceptable.
- Partitioning and ceilings may be replaced or altered. Any concealed original fabric to be retained in situ.

Treatment of Significant Fabrics in Works

Should earlier or known original fabric or fixtures be revealed during any refurbishment works, the following actions are recommended:

- Record the material photographically and with file notes indicating location, material and condition.
- If possible retain material in position and clad over in new works in a manner which will allow its future reinstatement.
- If the finish or fixture cannot be retained review this report to establish its significance. For items of potential significance seek the advice of a qualified heritage practitioner or Australian Heritage Council.
- If possible, significant fixtures could be relocated for display elsewhere in the ground floor.

Second Floor

The 1990s fitout for RBA can be recorded and removed if repurposed.



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ATTACHMENT 1 COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE LIST CITATION



Reserve Bank of Australia, 20-22 London Cct, Canberra, ACT, Australia

Photographs:



List: Commonwealth Heritage List
Class: Historic
Legal Status: [Listed place](#) (22/06/2004)
Place ID: 105396
Place File No: 8/01/000/0442

Summary Statement of Significance:

The Reserve Bank of Australia building, constructed 1963 -65, is a major component of the Law Courts Precinct (RNE db 19696). The precinct provides a noteworthy contribution to Canberra's townscape by its siting as a terminating point for University Avenue at City Hill, its arrangement of buildings giving prominence to the Supreme Court, and its design execution in the contemporary modern design idiom.

The design of the Reserve Bank is additionally important for its overall impression of institutional security. The impressive space of its banking chamber makes full use of the building's height and proportions. Design features of the chamber are the sculpture, 'Four Pieces' by Gerald and Margo Lewers, and the timber counter and furniture contemporary with the design of the building.
 (Criterion F1)

It is one of three buildings in the precinct, demonstrating the Stripped Classical style of architecture with their typical features such as simple rectangular forms, echoes of colonnades, symmetry and horizontal skyline, all linked by a landscape plaza also expressing a geometric minimalist style. The sculptural work in the Reserve Bank, by Gerald and Margo Lewers demonstrates the sculptural styles of the times and the role of art to adorn public places.
 (Criterion D2)

The aesthetic importance of the Reserve Bank building which links harmoniously with the precinct, is created by the elegance of its minimalist design style, the low scale and simple building form, and the use of pale grey marble cladding which provides a light visual quality. The location of the bank in the precinct, being visual subservient to the former Law Courts building, enhances the latter's projection of authority and dignity. The Reserve Bank contributes enframement to visual axis of the Black Mountain vista. (Criterion E1)

The Reserve Bank is important as the nation's central bank having evolved from the separation of the central banking (monetary policy) function from the commercial, customer-focussed activities of the Commonwealth Bank.

(Criterion A4. Australian Historic Themes, Administering Australia 7.6, Developing institutions 4.3, Financing Australia 3.18, Planning urban settlements 4.1)



Official Values:**Criteria****Values**

A Processes

The Reserve Bank is important as the nation's central bank having evolved from the separation of the central banking (monetary policy) function from the commercial, customer-focussed activities of the Commonwealth Bank.

Attributes

The whole Bank.

D Characteristic values

It is one of three buildings in the precinct, demonstrating the Stripped Classical style of architecture with their typical features such as simple rectangular forms, echoes of colonnades, symmetry and horizontal skyline, all linked by a landscape plaza also expressing a geometric minimalist style. The sculptural work in the Reserve Bank, by Gerald and Margo Lewers demonstrates the sculptural styles of the times and the role of art to adorn public places.

Attributes

The building's Stripped Classical style demonstrated by the features noted above. Also the sculptural work of Gerald and Margo Lewers.

E Aesthetic characteristics

The aesthetic importance of the Reserve Bank building which links harmoniously with the precinct, is created by the elegance of its minimalist design style, the low scale and simple building form, and the use of pale grey marble cladding which provides a light visual quality. The location of the bank in the precinct, being visual subservient to the former Law Courts building, enhances the latter's projection of authority and dignity. The Reserve Bank contributes enframement to visual axis of the Black Mountain vista.

Attributes

Its harmony within the precinct resulting from style, scale, form, colour and materials plus its visual relationship to the axis of the Black Mountain vista.

F Technical achievement

The Reserve Bank of Australia building, constructed 1963 -65, is a major component of the Law Courts Precinct. The precinct provides a noteworthy contribution to Canberra's townscape by its siting as a terminating point for University Avenue at City Hill, its arrangement of buildings giving prominence to the Supreme Court, and its design execution in the contemporary modern design idiom.

The design of the Reserve Bank is additionally important for its overall impression of institutional security. The impressive space of its banking chamber makes full use of the building's height and proportions. Design features of the chamber are the sculpture, 'Four Pieces' by Gerald and Margo Lewers, and the timber counter and furniture contemporary with the design of the building.

Attributes

The building's designed relationship to the Law Courts Precinct, its impression of institutional security, its sculpture, timber counter and furniture.

Description:**History**

On 13 January 1913 the Savings Bank Department of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia opened for business in Canberra. A week later the Savings Bank Department and General Banking commenced operations. Both departments occupied a room in the Administrative Offices in Acton. In October 1913, the Commonwealth Bank moved into its own premises, erected by the Department of Home Affairs, in Acton. In June 1925 the Chairman of the Federal Capital Commission raised the question of permanent premises for the Commonwealth Bank in Canberra. The proposal received a positive response from the Commonwealth Bank Board in July 1925 and the Deputy Governor visited Canberra to consider suitable sites. In April 1926, the Commonwealth Bank acquired the lease for the site on the western side of Northbourne Avenue and the corner of City Circuit (now London Circuit) for 5,600 pounds. Each leaseholder had to erect a building in



accordance with the design of the Federal Capital Commission. Tenders for the Commonwealth Bank's new premises closed in November 1926 with Simmie and Co being the successful contractor at 11,326 pounds. The Commonwealth Bank moved into its new premises (part of the Melbourne Building) in October 1927.

When the Reserve Bank separated from the Commonwealth Bank, it continued to occupy space on the first floor of the Commonwealth Bank premises. The working conditions were very cramped and the Reserve Bank, almost immediately, began negotiations with the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) to find a suitable site for its own premises. The NCDC at first offered the Reserve Bank a site on the southwestern side of Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit but later withdrew this offer because of perceived traffic problems. The NCDC then offered the Reserve Bank a site on London Circuit near the intersection with University Avenue. This site was opposite a proposed commercial precinct and was an integral part of a legal precinct. The Reserve Bank agreed to accept the site in May 1961 and applied for a 99-year lease, commencing on 1 May 1962 at a rental of 5% of the unimproved capital value of the land. The lease was subject to review every 20 years. Although the NCDC would not permit an architectural competition for the corner site on Northbourne Avenue, there was no objection to a competition for the legal precinct site, notwithstanding the fact that NCDC imposed height and bulk conditions in the lease.

The Canberra Branch of the Reserve Bank is the result of an architectural competition, approved by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA). The National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) managed the competition to the requirements of the Reserve Bank. The competition was advertised on 13 December 1961 and closed on 16 April 1962. It required a building to front London Circuit, but with all elevations of equal importance. Other design and siting requirements included the building having: a ground floor and two upper floors with the height not to exceed RL 1902; a copper roof; all plant contained within the building; air conditioning and heating using smokeless fuel; suitable landscaping; no underground accommodation. The Reserve Bank required the following accommodation: a banking chamber on the ground floor with a 4 foot wide (1.2m) and up to 80 feet long (24m) counter; working space of 2000 square feet, and a 16 foot wide public space the full length of the counter. The Manager's room was to be 250 square feet and the assistant manager's room 200 square feet. Also required was a cash handling area of 3,500 square feet and a Strong Room with walls, floor and roof 2 feet 6 inches thick. The climatic conditions of Canberra required special attention and the total cost was not to exceed 250,000 pounds.

There were 131 submissions from 248 registrations, and the assessors: Professor Ingham Ashworth, (Sydney); Professor R A Jensen (Adelaide); and Mr Grenfell Ruddick (NCDC Associate Commissioner) reported that the response was "extremely disappointing" with the majority of the schemes lacking "architectural distinction". Another complaint was that the schemes were "totally unsuited for the site in question." The assessors report noted that "the most successful schemes were those based on a simple rectangular form. The winning architects were Howlett and Bailey of Perth. Tenders for construction eventually closed in July 1963 with the successful tenderers being Civil and Civic Pty Ltd with a quotation of 307,353 pounds, some 50,000 pounds more than the competition limit. Construction was commenced in 1963 and completed in 1965.

The artwork in the Banking Chamber was initially sculpted by Margo Lewers in 1965 to a design by Gerald Lewers. This work was originally untitled but has since been referred to as 'Four Pieces'. Cast in copper, it occupies the major part of the wall, high on the southern side of the Banking Chamber. Another major sculpture was a freestanding aluminium and fibreglass figure by Donald Brook, also 'Untitled'. This was installed in 1965 in the roof garden but was removed when the atrium was converted to office accommodation and now resides with the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery.

Throughout the life of the building changes have been made to the structure and fabric of the building and services upgrading has occurred as technological change exerted its influence. Maintenance work occurred in 1972, 1977 and in 1978 the telephone, lighting and electrical services were upgraded. The Department of Works made internal alterations and additions in September 1978 and replaced the external mosaic tiles with marble cladding in April 1981. The Department of Transport and Construction supervised a major refurbishment for the building in 1983 including redesign of the ground and first floor in January 1983, a refurbishment of the entrance canopies in February 1983, upgraded ground and first floor toilets in May 1983, and new mechanical services in August 1983. In October 1988, the Department of Housing and Construction designed a roof replacement and internal refurbishment. The principal result of all these alterations and additions was the infilling of the atrium to provide additional accommodation and the redesign of the cash handling area as that function changed. Further alterations occurred in 1994 to convert surplus accommodation for letting to tenants. This work included refurbishment of the independent entrance



on the northern side of the building with a granite floor, a marble, granite and stainless steel stair, a skylight over, and the partitioning of the first floor space into offices. Alterations to the buildings in recent years illustrate a change towards a cashless society.

The original building design reflects the money handling nature of banking in a cash oriented society. The design of the Reserve Bank and its operation centred on the receipt, and distribution of cash. The careful arrangements for receiving cash in a secure cash handling area, the location of the Strong Room in the centre of the building, the bold, wide (but carefully uncluttered) public counter together with the scale and overwhelming impressiveness of the banking chamber were all meant to give a real sense of security as well as provide a perception of the significance and importance of the role of the Reserve Bank in the Australian banking system.

The Reserve Bank building was the second building after the Law Courts of the ACT to be constructed in the legal precinct near the intersection of University Avenue and London Circuit. The third and last building making up the civic design group that terminated University Avenue was the Federal Police Headquarters. The design of the precinct reflects the important civic design principles being implemented by the National Capital Development Commission and the way in which these can be achieved by offering suitable sites to public institutions. The civic design status of University Avenue as one of Canberra's major axes terminating at Civic Hill had been established with the construction of buildings such as the ANZ Bank building in the Hobart Place commercial precinct.

Description

The Reserve Bank is a most pleasing proportioned structure built of enduring and handsome materials in a most prestigious precinct. The building is a low scale example of a modernist structure where the overall impression is one of regular structural fineness and tight details.

The architectural qualities of the design rely on the lightness of the structure, the regular structural pattern, the contrast between the marble faced columns and beams and the glazing. The attention to detail is precise and is expressed in the way the vertical and horizontal structural elements connect and the subtle spacing of the structure from the glazed curtain wall accommodation box behind. The articulated structure, regular elevation pattern and the minimal visual impact of the roof are typical features of the modernist functional style. The vertical emphasis of the columns extending over two levels to give the low rise building a sense of height is most effective. The columns are cruciform in plan and support a beam carefully separated from the column. The glazed curtain wall is supported on the beam and uses aluminium mullions. The very strong, blank wall of the secure ground floor cash handling area on the external southeastern side of the building is another powerful reminder of its modernist qualities where the internal function gains external expression.

Internally the most important space is the banking chamber. It is a symmetrical design with a central entrance under a canopy with black slate entrance floor, converting into carpet once inside the room. The carpet is not the original fabric. In the southeastern corner of the banking chamber there is a glazed entrance to offices through a timber and Georgian wired glass partition with the door matching the partition design. In the centre of the eastern wall there is an entrance to the Strong Room. From the public side, the folded and wrapped copper abstract Gerald Lewers sculpture 'Untitled' ('Four Pieces') and the matt black ribbed wall on which it is fixed dominate the room. Another noticeable feature is the banking counter, a most handsome piece of furniture with a laminated timber front and a marble top, sitting on dowel metal legs. The interior is light and airy as a result of the full height glazing on three sides of the room. The glazing has had to be screened because of the effect of sunlight. The ceiling is coffered and the wall under the sculpture is marble-faced. The banking chamber is a most important space and its historic fabric and built in furniture described contribute to its significance.

The Strong Room is entered through a glass sliding door from the banking chamber. The Strong Room door is by John Tam (Australia) and has an anchor motif. The space is divided into areas by metal grills. The floor is parquet. The Strong Room is important for the way it is designed as the hub of the building and for its significant fabric and form of design reflecting the cash handling nature of the way society and banking operated at the time.

The courtyard onto which the three buildings face had been constructed as a setting for the Law Courts and at the time of the opening of the Reserve Bank the Federal Police Headquarters were under construction.



The design and siting controls of the NDCDC meant that the Reserve Bank would fit comfortably in scale with the existing Law Courts and the use of marble facing and flat roof profile created a sympathetic physical connection between the precinct elements. The Law Courts building with its black columns and white marble walls was almost a negative of the dark curtain wall and white marble columns of the Reserve Bank. The marble cladding has replaced original mosaic tiles. The courtyard materials with pre-cast light grey exposed aggregate paving and black slate rectangles reinforced the 'colour coded' nature of the precinct.

History: Not Available

Condition and Integrity:

The building design has been modified by the addition of sunscreens to the exposed glass areas, which has reduced the intended transparency of the banking chamber. The mosaic tiling has been replaced by marble cladding.

Location:

20-22 London Circuit, Canberra.

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ATTACHMENT 2 RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA HERITAGE STRATEGY 2019-2021





RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA

HERITAGE STRATEGY 2019-2021

February 2019

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*, the Reserve Bank of Australia (“Bank”) is required to assist the Minister by identifying and assessing places¹ in its ownership that demonstrate National or Commonwealth Heritage values by:

- Providing a written document that integrates heritage conservation and management within the Bank’s overall property management and planning framework.
- Producing a register of the heritage places under its control.
- Developing strategies to protect and conserve Bank property consistent with the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles prescribed in Regulations to the Act.
- Ensuring the ongoing protection of the Commonwealth Heritage values when selling or leasing a Commonwealth Heritage place.
- Seeking advice from the Minister about taking an action, if the action has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant heritage impact on a Commonwealth Heritage place.

The period of the original strategy having now expired, this document provides ongoing guidance for a further 3 years from 2019–2021 consistent with Section S341ZA(3)(d) of the *EPBC Act*.

1.2 Objectives

This Heritage Strategy has been updated to enable the Bank to continue to meet its obligations under the *EPBC Act*, in relation to maintaining a Heritage Strategy, and to provide a copy for the Minister for the Environment and Energy.

The main aim of this updated Heritage Strategy is to:

- Assist the Bank to identify items within its ownership that demonstrate Commonwealth Heritage values.
- Inform the Bank of its obligations under the *EPBC Act*.
- Enable the Bank to meet its obligations under the *EPBC Act*.

Under Section S341ZA(3)(d) of the *EPBC Act*, the Bank must update its heritage strategy every three years and lodge a copy of the updated strategy with the Minister.

Reporting requirements are outlined in Section 3.5 and Section 6 of this Strategy.

¹ As defined in Section 528 of the *EPBC Act 1999* and set out in section 1.4 of this Heritage Strategy.

1.3 Methodology

This report generally follows the format set out in the document published by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage in February 2004, and titled *Australia's Commonwealth Heritage — Making a Heritage Strategy*.

1.4 Definitions

The term 'heritage value' used throughout this report includes historic and Indigenous heritage as defined in Section 528 of the *EPBC Act*. Historic heritage includes places associated with the non-indigenous cultural heritage of Australia encompassed in the country's history. Place, as defined in Section 528 of the Act, includes:

- (a) *A location, area or region or a number of locations, areas or regions; and*
- (b) *A building or other structure, or group of buildings or other structures (which may include equipment, furniture, fittings and articles associated with the building or structure, or a group of buildings or structures); and*
- (c) *In relation to the protection, maintenance, preservation or improvement of a place – the immediate surroundings of a thing in paragraph (a) or (b).*

Indigenous heritage includes all places that are part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's spiritual links to the land or which tell the story of Indigenous peoples from time immemorial to the present.

The word 'conservation', as used throughout this document, has the meaning given it in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter)*, namely:

Conservation refers to all the processes involved in looking after heritage places and objects, and can include maintenance, preservation, restoration and reconstruction activities, and forms of adaptation.²

1.5 Authorship

This report was prepared by the Reserve Bank of Australia with input from Pamela Jeffery, Senior Heritage Specialist/Architect, and Sophie Bock, Senior Heritage Consultant, both of NBRSEARCHITECTURE.

² Burra Charter Article 1 Definitions 1.4 Conservation.

Figure 1 - Map showing the location of current property holdings owned by the Reserve Bank of Australia



2. MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE PLACES

2.1 Reserve Bank of Australia Management Objectives

The Bank recognises its responsibility to identify and care for the heritage property in its control, consistent with best practice in conservation and property management.

This objective is consistent with the Bank's existing facilities management policies and corporate values. The concepts inherent in the Bank's corporate values are in keeping with those of the Department of the Environment and Energy or the department administering the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* from time to time, particularly in demonstrating its accountability for the efficient and effective use of public resources through 'good governance and transparency'.

2.2 Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles

The heritage management principles underpinning the Commonwealth Heritage List are set out in Regulation 10.03D (Schedule 7B) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act Regulations 2000*.

COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

- a) The objective in managing Commonwealth Heritage places is to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit, to all generations, their Commonwealth Heritage values.
- b) The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should use the best available knowledge, skills and standards for those places, and include ongoing technical and community input to decisions and actions that may have a significant impact on Commonwealth Heritage values.
- c) The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should respect all heritage values of the place and seek to integrate, where appropriate, any Commonwealth, State and Territory and Local Government responsibilities for those places.
- d) The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should ensure that their use and presentation is consistent with the conservation of their Commonwealth Heritage values.
- e) The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should make timely and appropriate provision for community involvement, especially by people who:
 - (i) have a particular interest in, or associations with, the place, and
 - (ii) may be affected by the management of the place.
- f) Indigenous people are the primary source of information on the value of their heritage and the active participation of Indigenous people in identification, assessment and management is integral to the effective protection of Indigenous heritage values.
- g) The management of Commonwealth Heritage places should provide for regular monitoring, review and reporting on the conservation of Commonwealth Heritage values.

Regulation 10.03D Schedule 7B

2.3 Heritage Management and the Reserve Bank of Australia's Corporate Plan

The Bank's Workplace Department currently manages heritage property owned by the Bank and obtains independent advice from Heritage Specialists where necessary. The Department Head is located at Sydney. The Workplace Department encompasses facilities management, property and infrastructure services, project management, workspace services, engineering, physical security and procurement functions, which are primarily carried out from the Bank's Head Office in Sydney.

The Bank owns assets in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, and engages external Heritage Specialists with specific knowledge of particular State or Local Government statutory requirements to deal with relevant issues, or in the event of unforeseen discovery or disturbance of heritage, such as potential archaeological deposits, landscape features at places owned, or collections held by the Bank.

In addition, Heritage Specialists provide expertise in a range of services including general advice, and input and advice where appropriate in the preparation of:

- Heritage assessment reports
- Heritage management plans
- Statements of heritage impact
- Building condition reports
- Maintenance plans
- Documentation of repairs
- *EPBC Act* referrals
- Indigenous consultation and advice
- Heritage audits and statutory compliance reviews
- Archaeological works and monitoring
- Landscape assessments
- Valuations
- Curatorial advice on fixed or moveable artefacts.

2.4 Responsibilities of Key Reserve Bank of Australia Personnel

The existing corporate structure of the Bank includes specialised staff responsible for overseeing and advising on the implementation of Bank policy in relation to heritage items.

The Bank currently has a process in place to deal with heritage issues as they arise and where necessary, engages internal Heritage Advisors (such as Curators and Archivists) with appropriate expertise to deal with specific heritage related issues. Figure 2 shows the relationship of internal Heritage Advisors and external Heritage Specialists, in the context of the Bank's organisational structure, to assist with overseeing the Workplace Department's consistent implementation of this Heritage Strategy.

The key personnel responsible for ensuring the Bank's stewardship of Commonwealth Heritage listed places are:

Assistant Governor, Corporate Services Group

All proposed major changes to heritage places should be referred to the Assistant Governor (Corporate Services) for review and approval, prior to works being carried out. This role reports directly to the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia and is a member of the Bank's Executive Committee.

Head, Workplace Department

Minor changes, relating to maintenance and day-to-day use of heritage places, can generally be approved by the Head of the Workplace Department in consultation with the Heritage Advisor.

Heritage Advisor

The Heritage Advisor shall:

- Be suitably experienced internal Specialist (e.g. Curator or Archivist) or an external Heritage Specialist.
- Review proposed works to any item listed as demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values, and report to the Head of Workplace Department.
- Oversee the consistent implementation of heritage management principles and the Bank's Heritage Strategy.
- Oversee the establishment and maintenance of a Register of Bank places demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values.
- Seek appropriate professional advice in the event of unforeseen discovery or disturbance of heritage on sites owned by the Bank.

Heritage Assessment and Review Process

Any material heritage issues will be reviewed in the first instance by the Head, Workplace Department, and advice will be sought from staff associated with the management of heritage places, including the equipment, furniture, fittings, artefacts or collections associated or connected with these places. Where appropriate, internal Heritage Advisors and/or External Heritage Specialists will be consulted to assist in determining actions and/or responses. The Head of Workplace Department will make recommendations to the Assistant Governor, Corporate Services for approval prior to notifying the Minister if required under the *EPBC Act*.

The Commonwealth Government has negotiated bilateral agreements with Australian states and territories to delegate responsibility for conducting environmental assessments under the *EPBC Act* and, in certain circumstances, the responsibility for granting environmental approvals under the Act. However, Section 49(1) of the *EPBC Act* states:

A provision of a bilateral agreement does not have any effect in relation to an action in a Commonwealth area or an action by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth agency, unless the agreement expressly provides otherwise.

If a proposed action is covered by an *assessment* bilateral agreement, then that action is assessed under the accredited state/territory process. After assessment, the proposed action still requires approval from the Minister under the *EPBC Act*.

If a proposed action is covered by an *approval* bilateral agreement, then it will be assessed and approved by the state/territory in accordance with an agreed management plan. No further approval is required from the Minister under the *EPBC Act*.

The following government bodies may assist where bilateral agreements are in place or proposed in relation to historic³ and Indigenous heritage in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. These organisations publish technical information that may assist Bank staff in the maintenance and interpretation of historic resources, including places and collections.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment
ACT Heritage
Dame Patti Menzies Building
Challis Street
Dickson ACT 2602
Ph. 13 22 81
heritage@act.gov.au

NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
Heritage Branch
Locked Bag 5020
Parramatta NSW 2124
Ph. 02 9873 8500
heritage@heritage.nsw.gov.au

VICTORIA

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Heritage Victoria
PO Box 500
Melbourne Vic 8002
Ph. 03 9938 6894
heritage.victoria@delwp.vic.gov.au

³ Including moveable heritage.

The Bank will, in relation to places or collections that are considered to have Indigenous heritage values, identify and consult with the Indigenous people with rights and interests in the place.

The Bank will review its list of current key contacts in relevant agencies to ensure that appropriate consultation and liaison is carried out in relation to heritage matters.

2.6 Community Consultation

Under the provisions of the *EPBC Act* Commonwealth agencies are required to consult with the public and to take into consideration their concerns where appropriate when developing their strategic and management plans. The Bank will endeavour to identify and consult all relevant stakeholders when proposing changes in use of the fabric of any properties that are Commonwealth Heritage Listed, especially representatives of the community in which the place is located.

The type of consultation may vary, depending on the proposed changes to a place, but generally early consultation will be undertaken to identify and resolve any potential conflict prior to the Bank committing itself to a particular management decision regarding use or management of that place.

Stakeholders, including community groups and Indigenous stakeholders, may comprise such diverse groups as:

- Owners/occupants of the building.
- Local Council.
- Regional staff or retired staff groups.
- Interest groups and community organisations such as local historical societies, the National Trust of Australia, the Australian Institute of Architects.
- Indigenous groups.
- Owners and/or occupants of neighbouring properties.

Where appropriate the Bank will identify and consult with the Indigenous people with rights and interests in a place or collection that are considered to have Indigenous heritage values. The publication titled *Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values* (Australian Heritage Commission, 2002) will be used by the Bank as a guideline when consulting in particular with indigenous groups.

The guideline sets out principles and processes to encourage the consultation with and active involvement of Indigenous people in the identification, conservation and management of Indigenous Cultural Heritage. In particular, the document guides emphasise that Indigenous people should be the determinants of the significance of places in accordance with their culture. The publications listed in Section 8.0 of this report may provide background to Bank staff, and/or its heritage specialists, in dealing with community consultation.

2.7 Conflict Resolution between User Needs and Heritage Significance

Buildings and places, including those with listed heritage values, owned or leased to others by the Bank of Australia are used for accommodation of the Bank and/or its subsidiaries. In some instances, the use of a building may contribute to its historical or social significance, and it may therefore be desirable to continue that use.

Some buildings owned and used by the Bank have had previous uses that are identified as being of some significance to the place.

Where the Bank's use of a property conflicts with the conservation of its heritage significance, preference should be given to those uses that are most compatible with the item's significance. Compatible uses generally:

- Retain the significant character and quality of the building and its various elements.
- Require little or no change to the physical fabric of the place or are easily reversible.
- Require little or no change to the setting or surroundings of the place that contribute to the significance of the place.

Conflict between user needs and heritage significance may arise where modification of the existing building or site is required to enable an activity to be carried out. For example, where:

- Extensive additions or internal modifications are required, such as removal of significant fabric (walls, murals, joinery, etc.), additions that dominate the heritage item, etc.
- The activity will require the introduction of new services that would adversely affect its heritage significance.
- Changes to the immediate setting of a building or place would adversely affect its heritage significance.

Conflict over heritage matters in relation to Bank property may arise from any of the three tiers of Government. In resolving such conflicts, the Bank's responsibilities under Commonwealth legislation shall take precedence over State or Local Government controls.

The Bank may, from time to time, be required to deal with a conflict between the existing or proposed use of a property and conserving the heritage significance of that place. In general, the Head of Workplace Department will report to, and advise, the Assistant Governor (Corporate Services) on the resolution of conflict arising from user needs and heritage significance. Minor issues may be resolved by:

- Adapting the proposed activity or changing the activity altogether to reduce or remove the impact on the heritage significance.
- Adapting the proposed design to reduce the impact on heritage fabric/heritage significance.

Early and informal liaison with relevant heritage authorities is an integral part of these processes.

If attempts to reconcile the use of the building with its heritage significance fail, then other options may be considered as outlined in the Bank's existing Asset Management Strategy, including:

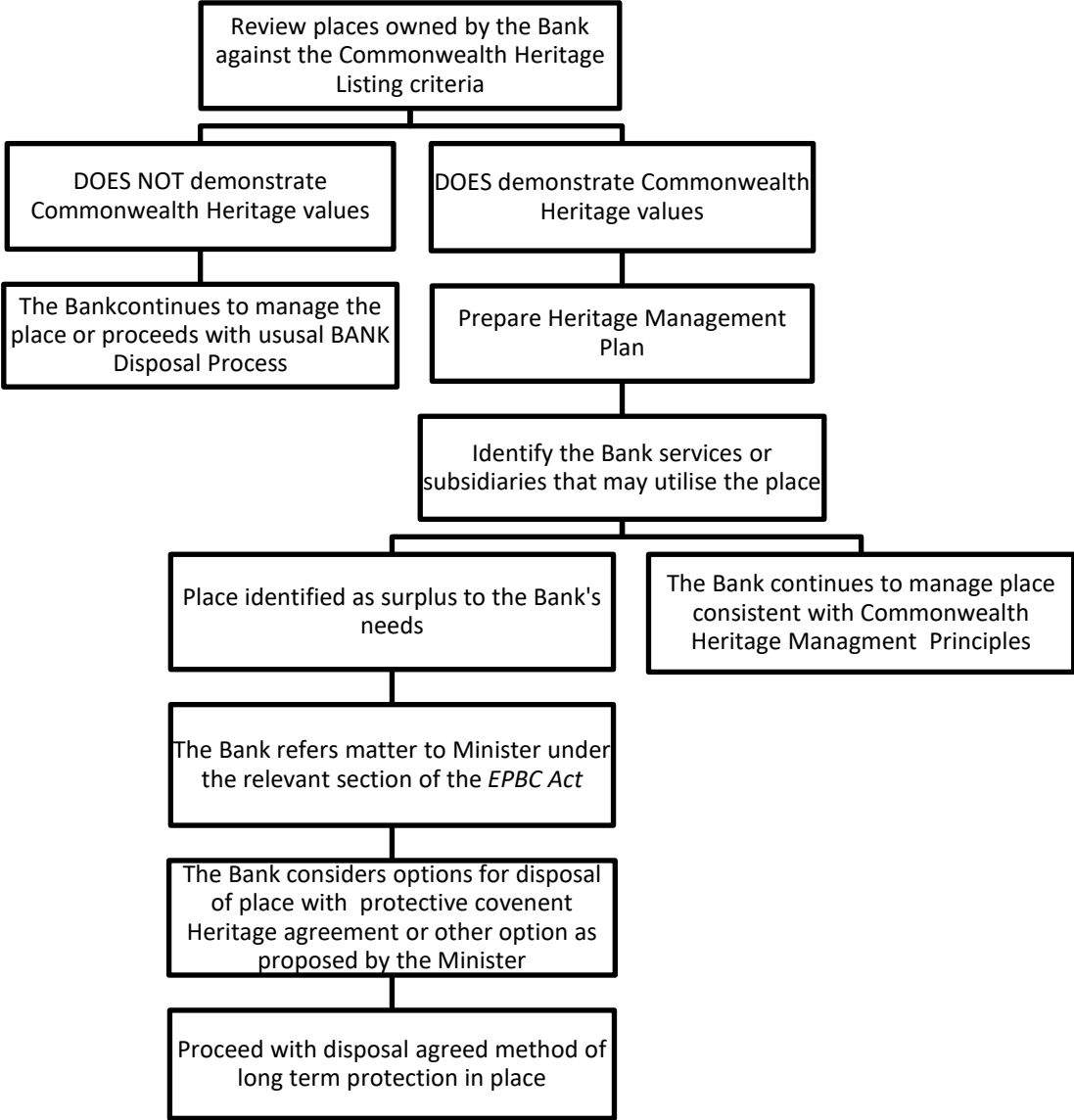
- Leasing.
- Disposal.

Prior to leasing to others or disposal of a heritage property, the Bank will:

- Identify all heritage values of a property.
- Identify any constraints on future use that may influence the leasing or disposal options (for example, should the building remain in public ownership).
- Referral of the proposed disposal under the *EPBC Act*.
- Take all reasonable action to secure ongoing protection of heritage values by covenant, heritage agreement under *EPBC Act*, agreement by State/Territory, identification of potential governmental use of the property, or any other measure proposed by the Minister.

The sequence of steps to be taken in the disposal of a Heritage place by the Bank are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Sequence of steps to be taken in the disposal of a heritage place by the Reserve Bank of Australia



3. RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

3.1 General Compliance with Section 341 of the *EPBC Act 1999*

Under Section 341 of the *EPBC Act 1999* the Bank is obliged to identify, manage and protect places in its ownership or occupation that demonstrate Commonwealth Heritage values. It is required to compile a register of those places and then to undertake specific heritage management plans for each place that merit inclusion on the Commonwealth Heritage List.

A place must demonstrate one or more of the Commonwealth Heritage List criteria set out under Section 10.03A of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 and satisfy the threshold for demonstrating significance for a local, state, national or international region.

3.2 Commonwealth Heritage Values

Criteria

The Commonwealth Heritage List is a list of the natural, cultural and historic heritage places owned or managed by the Commonwealth Government. In 2005 the Reserve Bank of Australia engaged specialist consultants to identify buildings, places and associated items under its control that demonstrate Commonwealth Heritage values. Those works were completed in 2007. Since that date no new acquisitions with Commonwealth Heritage values have been made, and the Bank has no current plan to make new acquisitions. If a new acquisition was necessary, the Bank would undertake a review of any new property at the time of their acquisition to identify Commonwealth Heritage values and where appropriate include them in the RBA Heritage Register as required under the *EPBC Act*.

Heritage values may be identified by:

- i. Considering all natural and heritage values, recognising Indigenous people as the primary source of information on the significance of their heritage and participation as necessary to identify and assess Indigenous heritage values.
- ii. Identifying values against the Commonwealth Heritage criteria.
- iii. Using expert heritage advice to ensure levels of documentary and field research are appropriate to best practice assessment and management of heritage values.
- iv. Using a comparative and thematic approach.
- v. Consulting widely, as appropriate, with government stakeholders and the community.

Under the provisions of the *EPBC Act*, a place must demonstrate one or more of the Commonwealth Heritage List Criteria to be entered on the Commonwealth Heritage List.

COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE CRITERIA

- (a) The place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history;
- (b) The place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history;

- (c) The place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history;
- (d) The place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of:
 - (i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or
 - (ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments;
- (e) The place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- (f) The place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- (g) The place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- (h) The place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history;
- (i) The place's importance as part of Indigenous tradition.

Regulation 10.03A

Thresholds

While a place can be assessed against criteria for its heritage value, this may not always be sufficient to determine whether it is worthy of inclusion on a particular heritage list.

The Australian Heritage Council may also need to use a second test, by applying a 'significance threshold', to help it decide. This test helps the Council to judge the level of significance of a place's heritage value by asking 'just how important are these values?'

To reach the threshold for the Commonwealth Heritage List, a place must demonstrate 'significant' heritage value. This can only be considered by comparing the nominated place to other, similar types of places. This allows the Council to determine if one place is 'more' or 'less' significant compared to other similar places, or if it is unique. The degree of significance can also relate to the geographic area, for instance, the extent of a place's significance Locally, Regionally (or State), Nationally or Internationally.

As many of the places listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List will be of only local or state-level significance, the thresholds for the Commonwealth Heritage List will be different to those used for the National Heritage List.

3.3 Reserve Bank of Australia Places demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage Values

The Bank currently owns five places that are used by its own staff or staff of its subsidiaries as offices, data centres or training facilities. Three of those places are identified in Commonwealth, State or local lists, however the two places listed below have been identified as demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values and meet the thresholds for listing as individual items:

- 20–22 London Circuit, Canberra ACT — Office Building.
- 65 Martin Place, Sydney NSW — Head Office Building.

3.4 Reserve Bank of Australia Heritage Register

In keeping with Section 341ZB of the *EPBC Act 1999*, the Bank maintains a register of places in its ownership that meet the Commonwealth Heritage List criteria and threshold for listing. The Heritage register is amended when the Bank acquires or divests places from its property holdings.

Workplace Department will, in consultation with its Heritage Advisor and/or Heritage Specialists, assess each of its places against the criteria for the Commonwealth Heritage List to identify those properties with potential heritage values, and will undertake appropriate consultation with stakeholders identified by the Heritage/Advisor and/or Heritage Specialists. Formal heritage assessments will be undertaken by specialist consultants to the Bank, and where appropriate will include the preparation of nomination forms for each place demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values for consideration by the Minister and potential inclusion on the Commonwealth Heritage List.

In addition, the Bank will adapt its existing website to provide public access to relevant Commonwealth Heritage List inventory sheets available through the Department of the Environment and Energy.

INVENTORY SHEETS

Each inventory sheet will contain the following information:

- a) a comprehensive description, and clear plan showing the name and location, of each place that has Commonwealth Heritage values;
- b) a discrete heritage place identification number for each place;
- c) details of ownership, leases, licences, rental or other tenure arrangements, as applicable;
- d) a summary description of the significant physical characteristics and elements of the place;
- e) a sequential summary of the use of the place;
- f) a statement of significance for the place, identifying its heritage values and specifying any that are Commonwealth Heritage values;

- g) a record of any other heritage listings, providing relevant register numbers;
- h) a record of the date and nature of any works, maintenance or other activity at the place that is relevant to conservation of its heritage values;
- i) a specification of any property or information access restrictions or requirements;
- j) an outline of any consultation requirements relating to the place;
- k) a list of relevant conservation documents or references;
- l) a record of when information has been updated;
- m) cross references to:
 - i. agency place records of any objects that are significant by association with the place, indicating their current location; and
 - ii. archived records of particular importance to the heritage values of the place.

Regulation 10.03G (2)

3.5 Review and Reporting of the Reserve Bank of Australia Heritage Register

The Bank will periodically review and maintain an up to date version of its Heritage Register. If no heritage values are demonstrated by properties under the control of the Bank, it will consult with the Australian Heritage Council who may advise that a strategy is not warranted in such a situation. Such a report to the Minister must include:

- (a) An outline of the identification program;
- (b) Details of any surveys conducted, or expert advice obtained by, the agency to identify the Commonwealth Heritage values;
- (c) A summary of the work undertaken with respect to each of the matters included in these Regulations for the identification and assessment of the Commonwealth Heritage values.

Regulation 10.03G (3)

4. HERITAGE PLANNING

4.1 Maintaining the Reserve Bank of Australia Heritage Register

All the Bank places that have existing heritage listing, together with places with potential for statutory heritage identification, will be entered in the Bank's Heritage Register.

To assist in the process of monitoring, compliance and review, the Heritage Register will be linked or cross-referenced to the Bank's Asset Management Database. Once data is entered in the Register, it will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis or when changes are carried out to a place demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values.

Records specifically associated with all stages of the conservation of any heritage property will be retained in a permanent archive held by the Bank.

4.2 Public Access to the Reserve Bank of Australia's Heritage Register

Given the limited number of heritage places included in its Heritage Register, the Bank will provide a hyperlink from its website (<https://www.rba.gov.au/>) to the Commonwealth Heritage List database (<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/commonwealth-heritage-list>) to enable public access to the individual listings for the Bank places that demonstrate Commonwealth Heritage values.

4.3 Heritage Management Plans for Commonwealth Heritage Places

The Bank will ensure all places in its control that demonstrate Commonwealth Heritage values have appropriate management plans dealing with the ongoing maintenance and conservation of the place .

Heritage management plans for individual places will be commissioned progressively, following identification of places displaying Commonwealth Heritage values through a thematic history of the Bank. Existing management plans will be reviewed every five years and revised to reflect current physical condition and address current criteria.

The methodology for the preparation of conservation or heritage management plans for historic places will generally follow the format recommended in *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* and *Dr JS Kerr's Conservation Plan (Australia ICOMOS, 7th edition, 2013)*.

The Bank currently holds Heritage Management Plans for two Listed Places included in the Commonwealth Heritage List: the Reserve Bank of Australia Head Office (Sydney) and the Reserve Bank of Australia Canberra Branch. Those Plans have been revised in 2019 and are pending review by the Department. Subject to approval by the Department, those Plans will be due for review again in 2024 as required under Section 341X(1) of the *EPBC Act*.

Under section 341S of the *EPBC Act* a management plan must be made and registered as a legislative instrument. The RBA may, in addition, request the Minister to endorse a Heritage Management Plan under section 341T of the Act.

4.4 Existing Use of Heritage Places by the Reserve Bank of Australia

The Bank reviews its property portfolio as necessary to meet its needs and those of its subsidiary companies. The Bank maintains properties throughout New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, and augments its accommodation, both in Australia and overseas, by leasing additional space as required.

Properties owned by the Bank are currently used for:

- Banking and administration: 65 Martin Place, Sydney (NSW) and 20-22 London Circuit Canberra (ACT).
- Conference and educational purposes: HC Coombs Centre for Financial Studies (NSW).
- Data processing and business resumption: Bella Vista (NSW).
- Note manufacturing and storage: Craigieburn (VIC).

4.5 Current or expected changes that may affect Commonwealth Heritage Values

The Bank reviews its property portfolio periodically to where possible determine changes to its properties including potential development or the disposal of any of its existing properties. Within the life of this Heritage Strategy the Bank will continue to undertake maintenance and plan for medium works or major capital works programs. Decisions about future activities and works will take into consideration the Commonwealth Heritage values of affected properties and the policies and recommendations contained in the relevant Heritage Management Plan.

Planning for development at places demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values will be informed by Commonwealth Heritage management principles, the Burra Charter, the relevant Heritage Management Plan, and where necessary independent expert heritage advice. Potential impacts will be assessed and works likely to have a significant impact on Commonwealth Heritage values will be referred to the Minister responsible for overseeing the implementation of the *EPBC Act*. In general terms a 'significant impact' is an impact that is important, notable, or of consequence, having regard to its context or intensity. The Bank will seek advice from the Department and/or suitably qualified consultants where there is uncertainty about the impact of an action, prior to undertaking works. Under the Act, the Minister is obliged to respond within 20 business days after an agency has formally sought advice under a referred action. An action may include, but is not limited to construction, expansion, alteration or demolition of buildings, structures, infrastructure or facilities; and the sale or lease of land.

4.5.1 Major Capital Works

Major capital works are classified by the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Works (the Public Works Committee) as projects with an estimated value of over \$15 million and must be submitted to the Public Works Committee (PWC). All major capital works are listed on the PWC's website and interested persons and organisations are invited to make submissions. The PWC report is available to the public following tabling of the matter in Parliament.

4.5.2 Medium Works

Building projects undertaken by the Bank, as an Australian Commonwealth agency, having an estimated cost of between \$2 million and \$15 million (excluding GST) are classified by the Public Works Committee as 'medium works'. The Bank is required to notify the Public Works Committee of such works prior to the calling of tenders to undertake those works.

4.5.3 Minor Works

Minor repairs and maintenance works are regularly undertaken as part of the cyclical maintenance program implemented by the Bank. Decisions regarding works and repairs are guided by and consistent with the policies and recommendations contained in the Heritage Management Plan specific to each Commonwealth Heritage listed place.

In all instances, that is major, medium or minor works, the Workplace Department will undertake a self-assessment to determine the likely impact of any proposed works on the Commonwealth Heritage values identified for heritage places or refer the proposal to an independent Heritage Specialist for an assessment.

The *EPBC Act* does not define major and minor works. In undertaking a self-assessment of any works, the Department of the Environment and Energy recommends considering if the works are likely to:

- i. permanently destroy, remove or substantially alter the fabric (physical material including structural elements and other components, fixtures, contents, and objects) of a heritage place
- ii. involve extension, renovation, or substantial alteration of a heritage place in a manner which is inconsistent with the heritage values of the place
- iii. involve the erection of buildings or other structures adjacent to, or within important sight lines of, a heritage place which are inconsistent with the heritage values of the place
- iv. substantially diminish the heritage value of a heritage place for a community or group for which it is significant
- v. substantially alter the setting of a heritage place in a manner which is inconsistent with the heritage values of the place, or
- vi. substantially restrict or inhibit the existing use of a heritage place as a cultural site?

A copy of the assessment is to be retained as part of the maintenance file for the specific place. Specialist advice should be sought to advise the Workplace Department where there is uncertainty about the likely impacts of any proposed works. The *EPBC Act* sets out significant penalties for actions that have a significant impact on Commonwealth or National Heritage values of a place.

4.5.4 Disposal

Properties identified as surplus to the requirements of the Bank may be disposed of in accordance with the Commonwealth Property Disposals Policy⁴ and s341ZE of the *EPBC Act* which sets out the process for notifying the Minister at least 40 days prior to executing the contract.

The Bank is obliged to ensure any contract for sale or disposal includes a covenant where practicable to protect the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place and advise the Minister.

⁴ Administered by the Department of Finance.

4.6 Heritage Approval Process

Actions on, or impacting on, Commonwealth land, and actions undertaken by Commonwealth agencies, are subject to the requirements of the EPBC Act. Under the Act, actions on Commonwealth land or undertaken by a Commonwealth agency should be self-assessed to determine if they are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, the definition of which includes heritage values of places.

The process of self-assessment outlined in the Significant [Impact Guidelines 1.2](#) (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities 2013) will be followed by the RBA or a heritage specialist before any proposed actions are undertaken. This will assist the Bank in deciding whether or not the action is likely to have a significant impact on the environment. It is the Bank's responsibility as the person undertaking an action to consider the extent of impacts on the environment, including heritage values. If the impacts are likely to be significant, or if the Bank is unsure, the action will be referred to the Department of the Environment and Energy. Only a referral decision from the Department of the Environment and Energy constitutes legal approval under the EPBC Act. If an action is referred, the Minister for the Environment will decide whether it is likely to have significant impact on the environment and whether approval is therefore required under the EPBC Act. If the Minister decides that the action is likely to have a significant impact, it will be deemed a controlled action and be subject to the EPBC Act assessment and approval process.

The Bank will document all decisions and reasoning made during the self-assessment process, whether or not it decides to refer any proposed actions. The Bank will also contact the Heritage Branch at the Department of the Environment and Energy (heritage@environment.gov.au) if it has any questions or to seek comments on self-assessment for proposed actions. Where possible, it will provide self-assessment documentation to the Department for their records as part of best practice heritage management.

The Bank has plans to undertake refurbishment of its Head Office Building in Sydney. These works will be self-assessed prior to them being carried out to determine if they are likely to have a significant impact on the environment on Commonwealth land, the definition of which includes heritage values of places.

4.7 Commonwealth Heritage Values and Reserve Bank of Australia Forward Planning

Under Section 341ZE of the *EPBC Act 1999*, the Bank is required to protect Commonwealth Heritage values of places sold and leased, and to:

- Give the Minister at least 40 business days' notice before executing the contract.
- Ensure the contract includes a covenant that will protect the heritage values of the place or inform the Minister as to why the Bank is satisfied this is unreasonable or impracticable.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure any advice from the Minister regarding the ongoing protection of the Commonwealth Heritage values of the place is taken.

Details of resolution of conflict arising from the disposal or use of Bank assets are set out in Section 2.7 of this strategy.

4.8 Maintenance and Long-Term Conservation

In keeping with regulation 10.03E (Schedule 7C 3(f)) the Bank will ensure the long-term conservation of heritage items by integrating heritage resource management into the overall corporate planning of the Bank, and by providing adequate funding and personnel.

In addition to the above:

- A portion of the annual maintenance budget will be dedicated to the implementation of a cyclical maintenance program for heritage places.
- Funding will be allocated as required for maintenance or specific conservation works, where identified in heritage management plans for specific places.
- The Bank will train staff and/or engage Heritage Specialists to ensure adequate expertise is available to make decisions relating to changes to Commonwealth Heritage listed places.

5. STAFF TRAINING AND PROMOTION OF HERITAGE ASSETS

5.1 Introduction

The quality of decision-making in relation to heritage issues relies on the availability of information about the historic resources that the Bank manages. The Bank recognises the need to raise the awareness and understanding of heritage issues among managers and staff, and to achieve more effective integration of cultural resource management within its existing organisational structure.

5.2 Staff Training and Best-Practice Heritage Management

The Bank has a small portfolio of buildings demonstrating Commonwealth Heritage values. Given the limited number of items, the Bank shall engage Heritage Specialists with the appropriate skills, as well as maintaining the skills of current key personnel to ensure the following issues are addressed:

- The Bank's obligations under Commonwealth legislation.
- Ensure an appropriate skill base of knowledge and expertise of conserving buildings from different periods.
- Current philosophical approach to heritage conservation.

Key personnel of the Bank will establish contact with government heritage agencies at Commonwealth, State and Local levels to ascertain the resources they hold, including their technical knowledge and current philosophical approach to conservation.

5.3 Promoting Community Awareness of Heritage Resources

The principal reason for conserving cultural heritage places is for the significance they represent to the community. The community may be local, regional, state or national in size and distribution. It is therefore important to involve relevant community groups, through consultation, in the processes of management of Bank property that has identified or potential heritage values.

Local Indigenous communities will be consulted where a place has special meaning to them.

Increasingly, the wider community has an expectation that it should have a say in the future of, or limited access to heritage properties owned by the Commonwealth of Australia or its agencies. Identified local interest groups and community organisations should be informed of the planning process and critical dates, to allow both the Bank and other parties the opportunity to fully participate in the process.

The Bank will endeavour to identify and consult with relevant community groups listed in 2.5 of this document, and other stakeholders, when works are proposed to a place that are likely to have a significant impact on the Commonwealth Heritage values identified for that place.

6. MONITORING HERITAGE STEWARDSHIP

6.1 Obligations under the *EPBC Act 1999*

The Bank will demonstrate goals and policies set by the Australian Government in relation to heritage are well informed, responsible, appropriate and generally cost-effective. This will be shown by setting appropriate goals to measure success, and open decisions to public scrutiny.

The Head of Workplace Department will be responsible for the preparation of a Triennial Report consistent with Section 341ZA of the *EPBC Act*. The triennial report will be submitted to the relevant Minister and will address the following issues:

- (a) An outline of consultation undertaken with relevant stakeholders in the review process;
- (b) A summary of the agency's (Reserve Bank of Australia) achievements against its objectives for management of its heritage places;
- (c) An evaluation of the success of each of the heritage matters included in a Commonwealth agency heritage strategy in achieving the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of Commonwealth Heritage values;
- (d) An update of the extent to which the identification and assessment of Commonwealth Heritage values of all agency property has been achieved, and the values included in an agency's heritage places register;
- (e) An update on the progress and timeliness of the preparation of management plans for Commonwealth Heritage places;
- (f) An outline of any physical and management changes that have occurred to the agency's Commonwealth Heritage places since the last strategy was prepared, and of any expected changes;
- (g) An update on progress with Commonwealth Heritage training programs;
- (h) A specification of the time-frame for updating the Heritage Strategy following the review;
- (i) An update on other heritage issues relevant to the agency's management of Commonwealth Heritage places in accordance with the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles.

Regulation 10.03F

6.2 Monitoring and Review

The *EPBC Act* requires Heritage Strategies to be monitored and reviewed to determine if the strategy is effective over time and whether it needs amending as a result of changing circumstances.

6.2.1 Identify key performance indicators

- The description, condition and integrity of the place identified in a Heritage Management Plan, or the Commonwealth Heritage values demonstrated and their attributes listed in the Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL), will be accepted as the benchmark by the Bank against which to monitor and review any change to those values.
- Evaluate outcomes and formally notify the Department of changes to the demonstrated Commonwealth Heritage values or attributes to facilitate the updating of the CHL entry consistent with s10.03G of the EPBC Regulations.
- Determine if works were adequately assessed for likely heritage impacts prior to be carried out and if works were consistent with policies, recommendations and timeframes contained in the relevant Heritage Management Plan
- Has the approval process outlined in this Heritage Strategy and relevant Heritage Management Plans been followed.

6.2.2 Identify who is responsible for monitoring indicators

The Bank will allocate heritage responsibilities to ensure its obligations are satisfied. Where appropriate, stakeholders identified in this Heritage Strategy and specific Heritage Management Plans will be consulted to assist in monitoring Commonwealth Heritage values demonstrated by art or furniture collections, or associated items, held by the Reserve Bank of Australia.

6.2.3 Frequency of review of the strategy

Given the limited number of properties under the control of the Reserve Bank of Australia, heritage monitoring and review may be combined with its existing annual reporting obligations.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Implementation Stage 1 – Financial Year 2018-2019

The Workplace Department shall:

- i. Continue to maintain the Bank's heritage register. Maintain relevant Bank building files to identify changes to the place, and where applicable changes to associated heritage such as heritage furniture, throughout the financial year to ensure the ongoing protection of Commonwealth Heritage values. Copies of heritage assessments are to be retained on relevant building files for each Commonwealth Heritage Listed place.
- ii. Require the Heritage Advisor to report annually to the Head of the Workplace Department on the heritage tasks overseen by the Workplace Department and its consultants in the financial year 2018-2019 including:
 - a) Bank staff participation in training workshops conducted by other agencies and commercial providers.
 - b) Any relevant changes to current Commonwealth heritage obligations and best practice heritage management.
- iii. Continue to promote community awareness of the heritage values of Bank buildings through its museum, website and publications providing information on the history, people and usage of the places.
- iv. Review existing Heritage Management Plans prepared for properties identified as demonstrating Commonwealth heritage values (namely 65 Martin Place, Sydney and 20-22 London Circuit, Canberra) as required under Section 341X (1) of the *EPBC Act*. Reviews are to monitor the appropriateness of policies, and where necessary amend the implementation process to ensure the management of Commonwealth heritage values is integrated into the Bank's building and maintenance program.

7.2 Implementation Stage 2 – Financial Year 2019-2020

The Workplace Department shall:

- i. Continue to maintain the Bank heritage register. Maintain relevant Bank building files to identify changes to the place, and where applicable changes to associated heritage such as heritage furniture, throughout the financial year to ensure the ongoing protection of Commonwealth Heritage values. Copies of heritage assessments are to be retained on relevant building files for each Commonwealth heritage Listed place.
- ii. Require the Heritage Advisor to report annually the Head of the Workplace Department on the heritage tasks overseen by the Workplace Department and its consultants in the financial year 2018-2019 including:
 - a. Bank staff participation in training workshops conducted by other agencies and commercial providers.
 - b. Any relevant changes to current Commonwealth heritage obligations and best practice heritage management.

- iii. Continue to promote community awareness of the heritage values of Bank buildings through its museum, website and publications providing information on the history, people and usage of the places.

7.3 Implementation Stage 3 – Financial Year 2020-2021

The Workplace Department shall:

- i. Continue to maintain the Bank heritage register. Maintain relevant Bank building files to identify changes to the place, and where applicable changes to associated heritage such as heritage furniture, throughout the financial year to ensure the ongoing protection of Commonwealth Heritage values. Copies of heritage assessments are to be retained on relevant building files for each Commonwealth heritage Listed place.
- ii. Require the Heritage Advisor to report annually the Head of the Workplace Department on the heritage tasks overseen by the Workplace Department and its consultants in the financial year 2018-2019 including:
 - a. Bank staff participation in training workshops conducted by other agencies and commercial providers.
 - b. Any relevant changes to current Commonwealth heritage obligations and best practice heritage management.
- iii. Prepare and submit a triennial report to the Minister, including:
 - a. The status of the ongoing program of identification and assessment of heritage places owned by the Bank;
 - b. Details of any surveys conducted, or expert advice obtained, by the Bank to identify Commonwealth Heritage values;
 - c. A summary of work undertaken with respect to each of the matters identified in the Regulations for the identification and assessment of Commonwealth Heritage values.
- iv. Continue to promote community awareness of the heritage values of Bank buildings through its museum, website and publications providing information on the history, people and usage of the places.
- v. Monitor and review the Bank Heritage Strategy in 2019-2021, and every three-year period thereafter, in keeping with the requirements of the *EPBC Act* to establish and maintain its effectiveness. The review will be managed by the appointee of the Head of the Workplace Department and will involve heritage professionals and stakeholders as required to ensure the Heritage Strategy remains relevant and a workable document.

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9. APPENDICES

9.1 List of Reserve Bank of Australia Properties Showing Current Heritage Status and Displaying Commonwealth Heritage (CH) Values

PROPERTY ADDRESS	CURRENT STATUTORY PROTECTION			POTENTIAL
	LOCAL	STATE	COMMONWEALTH	CH VALUES
New South Wales				
Head Office 65 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000	SLEP 2012 (Heritage Item No. I1896)	--	CHL (Place ID 105456) Heritage Management Plan issued 2019, due for review 2024	YES
HC Coombs Centre for Financial Studies 122a Kirribilli Avenue Kirribilli NSW 2065 The site includes: 8 Carabella Street Kirribilli NSW 2065	-- NSLEP 2013 (NSHS No.0019)	--	--	NO NO
Business Resumption Site Elizabeth Macarthur Drive, Northwest Business Park Bella Vista NSW 2153	--	--	--	NO
Australian Capital Territory				
20-22 London Circuit Canberra ACT 2600	--	--	CHL (Place ID 105396) Heritage Management Plan issued 2019, due for review 2024	YES
Victoria				
Note Printing Australia Ltd 1-17 Potter St CRAIGIEBURN VIC 3064	--	--	--	NO

ABBREVIATIONS

CHL	Commonwealth Heritage List
SLEP	Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012
NSLEP	North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013

Information current at January 2019.