

**conservation
studio**

Heritage Impact Statement

Block Arcade H0032 – Former Kodak Store

282-284 Collins Street Melbourne

Prepared for

**Perry Fung Architects P/L and
Grand Seiko P/L**

Date: 01/06/2024

Revision: 03

Revision	Date	Comments
01	27/05/2024	Draft – Client Review
02	31/05/2024	Draft
03	01/06/2024	Final

Disclaimer:

This report is released subject to the following qualifications and conditions:

The document may only be used by named party(s) for the purpose in which it has been commissioned and in accordance with the conditions of engagement.

- The document is to be reproduced in full.
- The document does not relieve any other party of their responsibilities, liabilities and contractual obligations.
- The content of this document is copyright protected. The copyright of all images, maps and diagrams remains with Conservation Studio Australia P/L or with the photographer/collection as acknowledged and referenced.
- You may not display, print or reproduce any image, map or diagram without the permission of the copyright holder.
- This document excludes the identification of Hazardous Materials including asbestos.
- The findings outlined in this document are based on a visual assessment of the building /structure / place. No invasive investigation has been undertaken.

Contents

1. Project Overview	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 The site	2
2. Heritage considerations	5
2.1 Overview	5
2.2 Statutory controls	5
2.3 Statements of Significance	5
2.4 Conservation Management Plan	6
2.5 Permit exemptions	7
3. Assessment of impacts	8
3.1 Description of the works	8
3.2 Reason for the works	8
3.3 Assessment of impacts	8
4. Conclusion	12
4.1 Conclusion	12

1. Project Overview

1.1 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared for Perry Fung Architects P/L and Grand Seiko P/L in support of the fit out of the ground floor shop within the Collins Street Entrance of The Block Arcade to form the new retail tenancy for Grand Seiko.

Much of the proposed fit out works are in accordance with the standing permit exemptions that exist on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Citation for The Block Arcade H0032; however, some works proposed by this HIS are not exempt and form the basis of this application for a permit.

The following proposed works are not permit exempt and are the basis for this application:

- Removal of the concrete infill over the brick vault of the basement ceiling to allow for reorientation of the staircase connecting the basement to the first floor.
- Infill of the existing in-floor opening in the location of the current staircase linking the basement to ground floor.
- Construction of a new steel framed mezzanine within the existing tenancy.
- Construction of a new staircase linking ground to mezzanine and basement to ground floors.
- Installation of signage within the front (Collins St) window of the store.
- Installation of a suspended ceiling throughout the basement.
- Installation of wall mounted up lights and conduit on the brickwork walls of the basement.
- Security roller door installed behind the existing glass entry doors fixed to new internal walls.

The following summary of proposed works are permit exempt in accordance with the exemptions included on the VHR Citation or as outlined in the December 2022 General Permit Exemptions

- Demolition of the existing staircase c1990 along with associated handrails and balustrade.
- Installation of linings to perimeter walls.
- Fit out of retail ground floor joinery display case units.
- Fit out of retail basement floor joinery display case units.
- Preparation and paint of existing painted surfaces.
- Modification of existing services (electrical and plumbing).
- Installation of new lighting, which have been placed to avoid the embossed ceiling papers or in the case of the chandelier, to use 12mm suspension rods that will

make small penetrations in the ceiling, much as the previously lighting was mounted.

These works will not be discussed further and on the basis, they are exempt, do not form part of this application for a permit.

1.1.1 Documents for approval

The following drawings prepared by Perry Fung Architects and dated 29 May 2024 have been referenced in the production of this HIS and form part of the documents submitted as part of this application for a permit.

- 22313-HV000 – Cover Page
- 22313-HV001 – Existing and Demolition Ground Floor Plan
- 22313-HV003 – Existing and Demolition Basement Floor Plan
- 22313-HV101 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- 22313-HV102 – Proposed Mezzanine Floor Plan
- 22313-HV103 – Proposed Basement Floor Plan
- 22313-HV104 – Proposed Ground Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan
- 22313-HV105 – Proposed Basement Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan
- 22313-HV201 – Elevations 01
- 22313-HV202 – Elevations 02
- 22313-HV203 – Elevations 03
- 22313-HV301 – Section A
- 22313-HV302 – Section B
- 22313-HV401 – Detail 01
- 22313-HV402 – Detail 02

Structural Engineering drawings have also been prepared by Cuthbert Consulting and dated 29 May 2024 and are included in this submission.

- 24001 - SK1 - Basement / Ground Floor Stair Framing Plan & Member Schedule
- 24001 – SK2 - Ground Floor Framing Plan & Member Schedule
- 24001 – SK3 - Mezzanine Framing Plan & Member Schedule
- 24001 – SK4 - Footing Details
- 24001 – SK5 - Stair Details
- 24001 – SK6 - Miscellaneous Details
- 24001 – SK7 - Connection Details for Mullions to Existing Masonry

The following drawings are submitted for information purposes.

- 9 perspectives showing the interior and exterior presentation prepared by Perry Fung Architects

1.2 The site

The Site is the Block Arcade located at 282–284 Collins Street, Melbourne. For the purposes of this HIS, the site is limited to the former Kodak Store located on the ground floor on the western side of the Collins Street entrance to the Block Arcade.

All proposed works are limited to the interior of the tenancy and include the basement and ground floor.

The tenancy was occupied by Wittner Shoes for a considerable number of years until March 2024, when the shoe store exited removing their internal fit out including lighting, display cases and the like.

The tenancy once housed the first Kodak camera shop in Melbourne. The shop once included the rear tenancy, now Gewurzhaus. The original triarch and cartouche panel arrangement remain visible in the southern wall of the Gewurzhaus tenancy but is not visible in the subject site – refer to Figure 8. The embossed paper ceiling panels for the Kodak Shop remain largely intact within the subject site – refer to Figures 6 & 8.

The subject site is relatively utilitarian and has been stripped of many original features, such as timber staircases, original floors, and services.

The external shop front windows have been altered and relocated outside the original line of the façade, leaving the window frame recess in the granite piers exposed. The interior of the shop was once finished in hard plaster and finely decorated. The piers are now exposed granite.

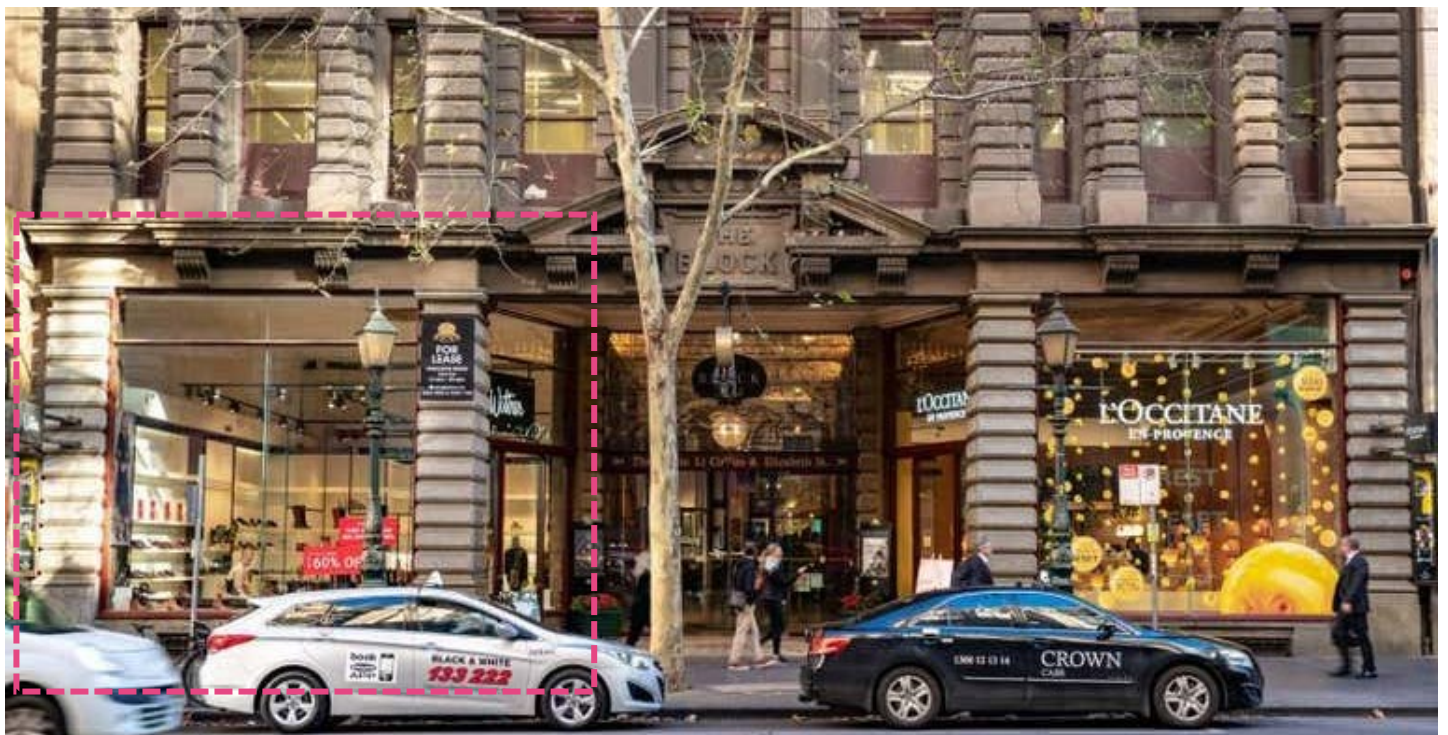


Figure 1

View of The Block Arcade from Collins Street showing the location of the proposed works within the Collins Street tenancy.



Figure 2
View of the interior ground floor of the tenancy

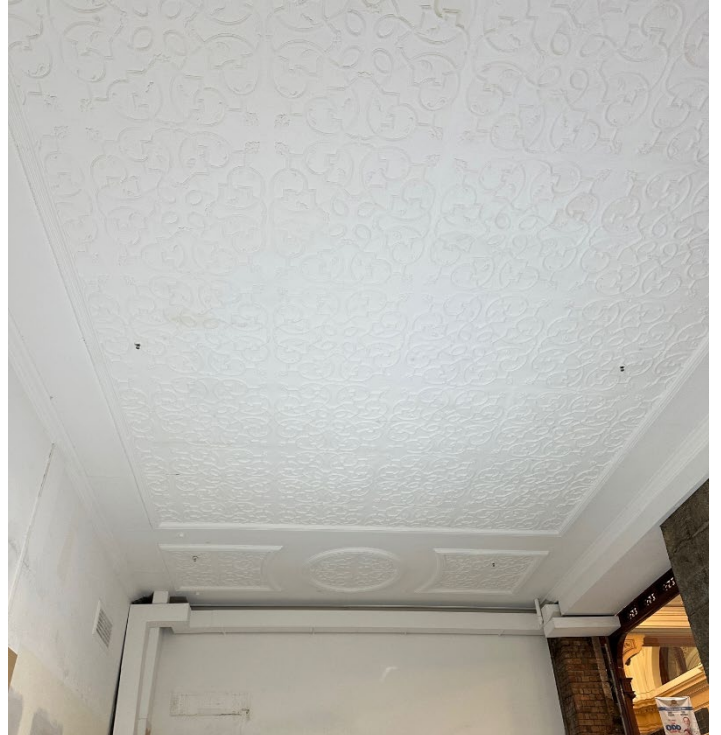


Figure 3
View of the panelled ceiling with embossed papers.



Figure 4
View of the basement space.

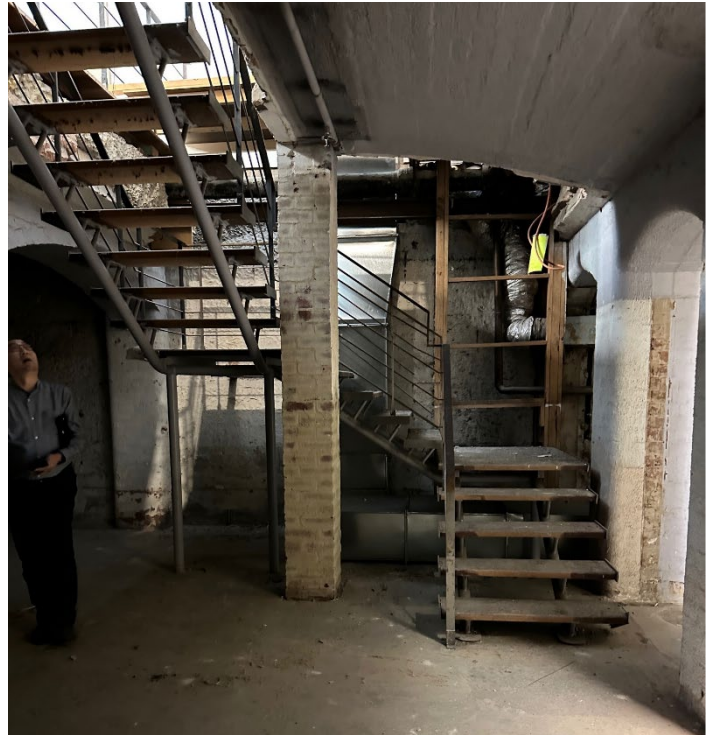


Figure 5
View of the stairs in the basement and the opening previously created in the brick vaulted ceiling.



Figure 6
View of the tenancy showing the division of the space post Kodak's rental.



Figure 7
Existing stair within the tenancy space.



Figure 8
Interior of the Kodak shop located in the Block Arcade c1911.



Figure 9
Kodak window display at the Block Arcade Christmas c1920.

2. Heritage considerations

2.1 Overview

The heritage considerations that are relevant to the site can be summarised in the table below:

Name	Authority	Identifier	Statutory Controls
Statutory Controls Apply			
The Block Arcade	Victorian Heritage Register	H0032	Yes
The Block Arcade	City of Melbourne	HO569	Yes, superseded by listing on the VHR

2.2 Statutory controls

The following Statutory controls apply to the Block Arcade.

2.2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

The Block Arcade is included on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as H0032 to the extent of:

Block Arcade, 280–286 Collins Street and 96–102 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne City Council.

EXTENT:

1. All the building known as the Block Arcade marked B1 on Diagram 32 held by the Executive Director.

2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 32 held by the Executive Director, being the land described in Certificate of Titles.

2.2.2 City of Melbourne

The Block Arcade is individually included as HO596 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Melbourne Council Planning Scheme.

The provisions of Clause 43.01 – Heritage Overlay in the Melbourne Planning Scheme is superseded by the inclusion of the Heritage Place on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017.

2.3 Statements of Significance

The site contains a number of Statements of Significance, which are generally aligned in their findings of the cultural heritage values of the place, being:

- Architectural;
- Aesthetic;
- Social; and
- Historical

The following Statements of Significance are included below:

2.3.1 Victorian Heritage Register

What is significant?

The Block Arcade was developed by financier Benjamin Fink. The Collins Street section of the building was completed in February 1892 and is similar in style to the Milano Galleria Vittorio Arcade in Italy. The new shopping arcade was designed by David.C.Askew of the architectural firm Twentyman and Askew. The cost of erection was £46 233. The bluestone footings for the building came from the original structure on the site, the Briscoe & Company Bulk Store. The site of 96–102 Elizabeth Street was purchased by the City Property Company Ltd in January 1892. Architect David Askew was called upon to continue his style for the arcade and this area was completed in October the following year. The Block Arcade comprises of arcade shops with mezzanine levels above for social rooms and offices, shops to Collins Street, Block Place and Elizabeth Street and four levels of office space above. The arcade forms an L-shape with a polygonal planned space with a glazed roof at the corner of the L. The kink in the plan was due to the shape of the original block subdivision and the

location of Block Place, the lane behind. Linking the two spaces is an elaborately patterned mosaic floor of tiles, which were imported from Europe. When the arcade was constructed the *Building and Engineering Journal* noted that the flooring contained the largest area of mosaics yet laid down in Australia. In 1907, scenic artist Philip Goatcher for the Singer Sewing Machine Company decorated the ceiling of their premises on the east corner of the Collins Street entry to the arcade. The other shop to Collins Street, which housed the first Kodak shop in Melbourne contains an elaborate pressed metal ceiling. The facades to Collins and Elizabeth Street are designed in the Victorian Mannerist style with elaborate stucco decoration. Particular facade elements include; triangular and segmental pediments; rustication and an exaggerated cornice with brackets. Features of the upstairs office spaces include timber joinery around lift entries, tessellated tiles to the lobby spaces, elaborate leadlight windows and decorative plasterwork to arches in the corridors. There is also one surviving communal timber telephone box situated in a corridor.

How is it significant?

The Block Arcade is of architectural, aesthetic, social and historical importance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Block Arcade is of architectural and aesthetic importance as an excellent intact example of a shopping arcade. The design draws on early and influential European models and as such is important in its ability to demonstrate the essential and typical qualities of those designs and the continuity of the tradition of covered shopping streets. The Elizabeth and Collins Street facades are fine examples of the Mannerist style demonstrating many of the characteristic elements, such as a combination of triangular and segmental pediments and rustication.

The Block Arcade is of architectural and aesthetic significance as it features lavish interior decoration, including an extraordinary mosaic tile floor. Based on the Milan Galleria Vittoria, it has a glass roof over the arcade with a glass dome at its corner. Its internal spaces, with their high quality finishes, have been maintained and the arcade remains a grand and prestigious retailing precinct. Attention to detail has also been carried through to the office spaces on the levels above the arcade.

The Block Arcade is of social and historical importance as the grandest and most fashionable amongst what became an extensive network of retail arcades that provided an alternative pedestrian route to Melbourne's major streets. Many of the arcades constructed in Melbourne before the turn of the century have not survived or have been altered considerably. The Block Arcade is important as an essential element in the social institution of doing The Block. This was a friendly expression referring to the stylish shopping trend of the late 19th century which involved starting in Collins Street at Swanston, then moving west to Elizabeth, north to Little Collins Street and back to Swanston. The Block was the place to be seen and those who frequented the popular thoroughfare, its shops and tea houses were often recorded by caricaturists in the city's social pages.

2.4 Conservation Management Plan

The property has a Conservation Analysis Plan that dates from the late 1980s, which we have not been able to obtain a copy of.

It is largely assumed that this document is outdated and from past experience, we are aware that the Plan does not follow the current Conservation Plan model established by Kerr in the early 1990s. As such, it is not likely to contain policies related to changes or development of the place, rather it is a detailed analysis of condition and chronological development.

2.5 Permit exemptions

The VHR Citation for the Block Arcade includes specific exemptions for ground floor retail spaces within the Arcade.

These exemptions are further supported by the December 2022 General Permit Exemptions including commercial fit outs within spaces that have previously been adapted.

The exemption allows for the fit out of the space to support continued retail uses, stating the following:

- *Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and provided that the location of the heating unit is concealed from view.*
- *Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in-situ.*
- *Occasional refurbishment of shop interiors to accommodate tenants' requirements is intrinsic to the continued usage of these spaces for retail operation. The display of merchandising material is an essential component of retailing. Alterations to decorative ceilings will be subject to permit approval. The following works are considered permit exempt:*
 - *The interior design and fit out of retail tenancies including shelving, display units, associated furnishings and lighting design provided there is no damage to walls, floors and ceilings. This includes removal and replacement of fittings.*
 - *Alteration to existing decorative schemes to shop interiors, provided they do not remove or damage evidence of original paint and other decorative schemes. Proposals to alter existing pictorial representation are subject to permit approval. Colour schemes are to be approved by Block Centre Management.*
 - *Removal or infilling of false walling in the dividing archway between two adjacent shops to create a larger tenancy or two separate tenancies provided that such works do not damage or remove existing building fabric.*
 - *Installation of air conditioning to tenancies in accordance with existing systems and Management approval.*
 - *Installation, removal or replacement of kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring provided installation does not damage significant built fabric. (Installation of air extraction systems for commercial kitchen tenancies will be subject to permit approval.)*

3. Assessment of impacts

3.1 Description of the works

The works include the fit out of the retail tenancy located on the western side of the Collins Street entrance to The Block Arcade.

It is proposed to fit out the existing basement and double height volume shop with the construction of a new steel framed mezzanine. These spaces will be connected by a new steel framed staircase; part of which, will occupy the existing hole between the ground floor and basement.

The works propose to partially infill the existing hole from the previous stair and to remove a section of concrete infill to accommodate the new stair.

In summary the proposed works subject to a permit application include:

- Removal of the concrete infill over the brick vault of the basement ceiling to allow for reorientation of the staircase connecting the basement to the first floor.
- Infill of the existing in-floor opening in the location of the current staircase lining the basement to ground floor.
- Construction of a new steel framed mezzanine within the existing tenancy.
- Construction of a new staircase linking ground to mezzanine and basement to ground floors.
- Installation of new concrete pad footings for the steel structure to support the staircase.
- Installation of a new sign in the front window facing Collins Street.
- Installation of a suspended ceiling throughout the basement.
- Installation of wall mounted up lights on the brickwork walls and columns of the basements including electrical wiring.
- Installation of a security roller door behind the existing glass entry doors to be closed out of trading hours.

3.2 Reason for the works

The works are required to by Grand Seiko to accommodate the proposed watch store within the Block Arcade tenancy.

3.3 Assessment of impacts

The following Section makes assessments of the proposed works against Section 101(2)(a) of the Heritage Act 2017 – the extent to which the application affects the cultural heritage significance of the place or the object.

The Statement of Significance identifies architectural, aesthetic and historical values, which are embodied in the fabric of the place, and are summarised as:

- The Block Arcade is of architectural and aesthetic importance as an excellent intact example of a shopping arcade.
- Influenced by European models and as such is important in its ability to demonstrate the essential and typical qualities of those designs and the continuity of the tradition of covered shopping streets.
- The Elizabeth and Collins Street facades are fine examples of the Mannerist style demonstrating many of the characteristic elements.
- The Block Arcade is of architectural and aesthetic significance as it features lavish interior decoration, including an extraordinary mosaic tile floor.
- The Block Arcade is of social and historical importance as the grandest and most fashionable amongst what became an extensive network of retail arcades that provided an alternative pedestrian route to Melbourne's major streets.

The social values of the place are embodied in the ongoing and continued use of the place as a shopping arcade. This value is supported by the fit out of the space to enables the ongoing use of the place.

The statement of Significance identifies that in the nineteenth century, The Block Arcade was one of a number of highly regarded and popular shopping locations, stating:

The Block was the place to be seen and those who frequented the popular thoroughfare, its shops and tea houses were often recorded by caricaturists in the city's social pages.

The continued use of the Block Arcade, particularly the primary street facing tenancies on Collins Street is an essential part of the social and historical value of the place.

The application for this permit is based on a number of specific works actions to fit out the space. Each has a varied impact on the fabric of the place and are individually discussed below:

Floor alterations and the replacement of the staircase

The proposal to remove a further small section of the existing floor to accommodate the proposed staircase does not impact on the historic fabric. The works will comprise of the removal of a section of timber flooring built up over the brick vaults of approximately 1200mm x 1115mm; and the removal of a section of concrete infill approximately 600mm x 1200mm. The installation of the stair will also include the removal of a small section of the brickwork in the vaulted ceiling of approximately 380mm wide x 1200mm (approximately 15 bricks). Refer to Figures 10 & 11, which clarify the make up of the existing floor and shows the mass concrete infill within the brickwork voussoir and vaulted ceiling.

The adjacent section of floor will be infilled where the current stair is located, including reinstatement of the brick vault keyed into the existing surrounding brickwork.

The proposed staircase will require new steel columns to support the stair, its handrails and the stair above leading to the mezzanine. The columns will require new concrete pad footings, which will require the cutting out of the localised section of the existing basement floor slab. The columns will contain base plates that are grouted and bolted down to the new concrete pad footings. The columns will be encased in new walls that form part of the overall fit out works.

The proposal to support the staircases from new steel columns prevents the need to include new steel supports and framing to the existing brickwork voussoir beams and vaulted ceilings, which are assessed to have insufficient loads needed to support both sets of stairs. As such, this is considered to be a positive outcome for space and able to be easily reversed.

Past tenants have used the basement as storage space, which has not been accessed by the public, as such the space is highly utilitarian. The works proposed by this HIS include the activation of the basement as an extension of the sales floor for Grand Seiko and the proposal includes a staircase that is compliant for the purposes of public access. As such, it is considered necessary to replace the existing stair that is understood to date from the 1980s - 90s.



Figure 10
Existing stair opening showing remnant brick vault and chunk of infill concrete proposed to be removed to accommodate new stair.

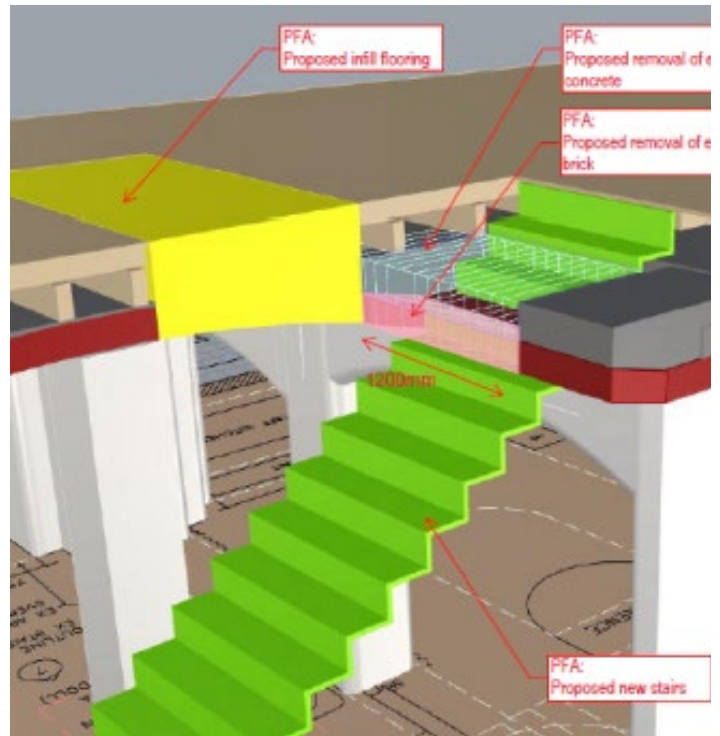


Figure 11
Diagram showing the proposed removal of concrete infill over the brick vault to accommodate the stairs.

Construction of the mezzanine

The construction of the mezzanine of the northern third of the shop will not impact the overall quality of the space and will not obstruct remnant features such as the decorative panelled ceiling. The mezzanine has been internally designed to peel away from the full height shopfront windows that face into the arcade to avoid visual clutter within the overall volume.

The mezzanine contains limited steel structure that will be fixed to perimeter walls. Whilst the columns will be bolt-fixed back to the building structure, the mezzanine is otherwise reversible from the space. The impact on the perimeter walls is negligible and consistent with impacts by past fit outs within this space.

We consider that the construction of the mezzanine has no adverse impacts on the place or its architectural, or aesthetic values.

Basement ceiling works

The proposal to install a timber veneer ceiling throughout the basement suspended from the existing brickwork vaults will not result in adverse impacts on the overall cultural heritage values.

The works are needed to provide acoustic finishes, house lighting, mechanical and fire services that would otherwise be exposed. The proposed installation includes fixing of a typical split batten system screw fixed to the underside of the brick vaults. The fixings will comprise of screw fixed battens fixed into the mortar joints.

The veneer panels will be curved to match the vaulted form of the ceiling.

This impact on the fabric is minor, reversible and repairable, and will not detract from the space as the ceilings will comprise panels that do not full the entirety of each vault, such that the brickwork vaults and expressed voussoir beams will remain readable within the space.

These works also include the surface mounting of up lights to increase the light levels in the basement. The lights will be mounted on the brickwork walls and columns with screw fixings. The fixing of the lights will have minimal impact on the brickwork, fixings can be located into the mortar joints reducing impacts on the fabric.

Signage

The proposal to include signage within the Collins Street window does not strictly comply with the signage policy included in the VHR Citation, which states:

Signage:

The Block Arcade Centre Management provides external signage for all tenants of the Block Arcade to maintain consistent presentation of signage for all tenancies. Signage installed in accordance with Management policy is permit exempt. Management will approve all proposals for signage prior to installation.

Signage utilising the following are not permitted in any location within the Block Arcade:

- *Strobe, flashing or activating signs or lighting.*
- *Moving, rotating or stroboscopic signs.*
- *Cardboard or foam lettering.*
- *Boxed or cabinet-type signs, unless totally recessed.*
- *Cloth, paper, cardboard and similar stickers or decals around or on any surfaces of the shopfront.*
- *Signs utilising luminous, vacuum-formed, plastic letters.*
- *Signs utilising unedged or uncapped plastic letters, or letters with no returns and exposed fastenings.*
- *Temporary, handwritten or portable signs used to display 'specials' or sale prices.*

External Signage: Retail Area

- *Suspended glass arcade signage, with black and white text/logo for each tenant, gilt stallboard signage to be located at the foot of shop windows and the main shopfront window. (Signage is restricted to shop name only.)*

- *Installation of directional signage in arcade areas provided there is no damage to significant building fabric.*

Internal Signage: Shops:

- *Location of internal signage is to be placed no less than 900mm from either side of the shopfront.*
- *Maximum signage area is 0.15m² per 1000mm of shop frontage.*
- *Neon signage is acceptable provided that the sign is not to be viewed side-on.*

It is considered that this policy was developed over 20 years ago and has not progressed with changes and development in signage.

The Block Arcade has maintained a high degree of consistency in the application of general shop signage; however, it is proposed that the installation of a large format sign suspended within the Collins Street windows would not adversely impact the cultural heritage values of the place. It is not visible from within the arcade and will not affect the aesthetics and visual cohesion of the arcade space, which, as detailed above, has retained a high degree of visual cohesiveness in the approach the signage.

The sign measures approximately 680mm high and 1200mm long and is constructed of laser cut sheet metal and is backlit. The sign will be suspended from a metal armature.

The proposed signs are largely consistent with the policy for Internal Signage: Shops.

Overview

None of the proposed works outlined above harm the place or cause adverse or detrimental impacts on the architectural, social, aesthetic or historical values of the place.

The works are limited to interior tenancy spaces, which are recognised to be altered and themselves, do not represent the cultural heritage values related to Mannerist architecture of the Collins & Elizabeth St facades; do not impact the overall interior of the arcade or the mosaic floor, which contribute to the high aesthetic values. The historical and social values related to continued and ongoing shopping and as a past time, are also not impacted by the works.

The proposed works include some covering up of original fabric that is reversible. It also includes the removal of concrete floor and alteration of an existing opening within the ground floor. This will have little to no impact on the cultural heritage values of the place, noting that the impact is limited to a section of introduced concrete – possibly from the 1980s or 90s.

The proposed works are largely reversible, particularly the lining of the basement ceiling and the installation of the mezzanine and its structure.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed works have no impact on the cultural heritage values of The Block Arcade. Values such as historical and social values are reinforced by the works as it supports the continued use of the place for high quality shopping and activation of the city streetscape.

The architectural and aesthetic values are not impacted by the proposed works as they do not impact the interior of the arcade of the Mannerist style of the Collins and Elizabeth Street facades. Given the works relate to a shop tenancy fit out and are considered part of the constantly evolving nature of the individual shops within The Block Arcade, they are typically reversible enabling changes in the tenancies.

On the basis that the works are largely reversible, involve typical shop fit out and result in very minor and localised impacts on the fabric of the place, we consider that the works do not adversely impact the place and request that a permit be granted approving those works identified herein.

4.1.1 Permit conditions

In order to manage minor changes in the works, finishes pallet and possible latent or unknown conditions, we respectfully request that the permit contain the following condition:

Should further minor changes in accordance with the intent and approach of the endorsed documentation become necessary, correspondence and supporting documentation must be prepared and lodged in accordance with the permit condition for endorsement by the Executive Director Heritage Victoria. If the Executive Director considers that the changes are not minor, an amendment to the permit or a new application will be required.

