

**conservation
studio**

Heritage Impact Statement

Melba Hall and the Conservatorium of Music Redevelopment

University of Melbourne Parkville Campus

Prepared for



Date: 02/08/2024

Revision: 04

| Revision | Date | Comments |
|----------|------------|-------------------------|
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1. Project overview

1.1 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for the University of Melbourne in support of the development of the interior of Melba Hall and the Conservatorium of Music H0925.

The Melba Hall and the Conservatorium retain their original use as practice suites and as part of the University's School of Music.

The proposed works include a number of works that are exempt under the General Permit Exemptions, December 2022. These works are generally outlined below and have not been assessed as a part of this HIS or application for a permit.

In addition to the exempt works, there are specific works that require approval by way of a permit. They are identified in the diagram in Figure 24.

1.2 Pre-application meeting

A preapplication meeting was held on site on 17 June 2024 with Permit Officer Katrina Dernelley. The meeting included a walk around the site to look at various proposed interventions, including the location of the proposed lift, changes to the entrance to the Tallis Room, review of the suspended ceilings and acoustic treatments and review of the foyer ramping.

Following the preapplication meeting, a letter of advice dated 18 June 2024 was issued and outlined the following comments in relation to the proposed works:

At officer level, I can advise that there is a level of comfort with the proposed works, subject to further design detail, which will approval through a permit from Heritage Victoria.

There is some concern regarding visual impact to the proposed ramp to the entrance and lobby and the dropped ceilings to the ground and first floors. These works would require carefully consideration in the permit application, including in the Heritage Impact Statement and any Reasonable and/or Economic Use rationale.

It is understood that the conservation and maintenance works are a good heritage outcome and that the proposed works facilitate the ongoing use of the place for its historic purpose, going towards its ongoing protection and conservation.

1.3 Supporting documents

The following drawing sets have been referenced in the preparation of this HIS and are submitted as part of the permit application.

The following architectural drawings have been prepared by Woods Bagot and are dated 12 July 2024.

- AR-2001[H]_Demolition Plan - Level 01
- AR-2002[H]_Demolition Plan - Level 02
- AR-2003[H]_Demolition Plan - Roof
- AR-2101[H]_Existing Reflected Ceiling Plan - Level 01
- AR-2102[H]_Existing Reflected Ceiling Plan - Level 02
- AR-2201[M]_GA Plan - Ground Floor
- AR-2202[L]_GA Plan - Level 01
- AR-2203[H]_GA Plan - Roof
- AR-2801[F]_Proposed Reflected Ceiling Plan - Ground Level
- AR-2802[F]_Proposed Reflected Ceiling Plan - Level 01
- AR-3200[F]_Proposed Elevations _Sheet 01
- AR-3201[F]_Proposed Elevations _Sheet 02
- AR-3202[E]_Proposed Sections _Sheet 01
- AR-3203[E]_Proposed Sections _Sheet 02
- AR-4201[C]_Detail Arrangement - CG01 & CG02
- AR-4301[C]_Wet Areas- DDA WC Room 217
- AR-4511[C]_Lift Detail Arrangement
- AR-5501[A]_Lift Details
- AR-5502[A]_Lift Details
- AR-7001[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW01, CW02
- AR-7002[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW03
- AR-7003[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW04, CW05
- AR-7004[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW06
- AR-7006[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW11, CW12
- AR-7007[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW13, CW14
- AR-7008[D]_Cabinetwork (Casework) CW15, CW16
- AR-SK-023 240712 Key Planning Interventions
- AR-SK-024 240712 Upgrade to Building Services – Wall Penetrations and Ceiling Bulkheads
- AR-SK-025 240712 Heritage Victoria Planning Application Drawing List

The following drawings, schedules and specifications detailing proposed conservation works in support of this application have been prepared by Conservation Studio and dated 15 July 2024:

- Melba Hall Reuse - Schedule of Conservation Works
- 23056.0.00 – Cover page
- 23056.1.01 - North Elevation
- 23056.1.02 - South Elevation
- 23056.1.03 - East Elevation

- 23056.1.04 - West Elevation
- 23056.2.01 – Roof Plan – Demolition Works
- 23056.2.02 – Roof Plan - Proposed
- 23056.2.03 – Roof Details
- 23056.2.04 – Roof Details

1.4 The site and description

For the purposes of this HIS, the ‘subject site’ is limited to the interior ground and first floors and parts of the exterior including the rear hard landscaping dating for 1986 and the roof and facades.

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall stands on Wurundjeri land on Royal Parade at the west side of the University of Melbourne Parkville Campus – the only State Registered building on the campus to face outwards with exception of the 1888 building, originally the Teachers College and now part of the University of Melbourne.

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall is a striking white painted cement render building constructed in the Edwardian era with Art Nouveau derived decorative elements. The plane of the Conservatorium’s slate roof breaks to form an apron-like deep eave overhang the building. This apron effect is also a feature at the expressed ends of the building which present as gables clad in terracotta shingles. The decorative frieze under the eaves of the expressed ends is finished in decorative floral treatment in the Art Nouveau style.

The north, south and west elevations are punctured by large double hung sash windows with colonial bars dividing the upper sashes into 12. The window openings on the ground floor are square set with decorative hood moulds supported by rectilinear brackets. The first floor windows are terminated by low arched heads, resulting from a radiused corner more than the construction of an actual vousoir.

Constructed by Swanson Brothers who sub-contracted the construction of the reinforced concrete first floor slab and beams to the Reinforced Concrete and Monier Pipe Construction Co Pty Ltd. The construction utilised cavity brickwork walls and reinforced concrete as an innovative application for acoustic purposes.

In 1907, Bates, Peebles & Smart were commissioned to design a purpose-built music school for the University. The design proposed had an almost symmetrical two-storey front, a modified pavilion plan with a central entrance portico facing Royal Parade and a large hall set behind the main building. This design was only partly built in the first stage of building work (completed in 1910), when the north section and portico of the front block were constructed. Subsequent building campaigns eventually realised the whole design, but with modifications. Following an appeal for funds initiated by Dame Nellie Melba, in 1913 the Public Works Department were engaged and completed a simplified design of Melba Hall to address budget constraints. The 1926–7 Tallis Wing (a gift from Sir George Tallis) was designed by University’s architects Gawler & Drummond echoing the 1909 Bates, Peebles & Smart design. The 1934–5 Marshall-Hall Wing (a gift from Herbert and Ivy Brookes) was also designed by Gawler & Drummond, though this wing upset the original symmetrical design.

The exterior of the building remains largely unchanged and has a high degree of integrity, except for the rear canopy and glazing infill hallway located between Melba Hall and the Tallis Wing. These changes date from the 1980s upgrades by Daryl Jackson Architects and are not visible from the exterior facades (north, west and south elevations)

The interior is highly utilitarian and largely void of decoration. Ceilings throughout the ground floor are finished in hard plaster, square set or coved with expressed beams dividing the ceiling into thirds. Walls are similarly hard plastered with coved corners and reveals to doors and windows leaving many featureless without architraves or other such embellishments.

The ceilings throughout the first floor vary based on the stages of construction but are largely fibrous plaster with simple square set strapping details over the joints between sheets. The later stages of building are less decorative.

The ground floor foyer is highly altered as a result of works undertaken in the 1980s by Daryl Jackson Architects. The rear wall of the original Melba Hall was largely removed, and a new wall constructed 3.5m east shortening the overall length of the Hall and establishing a new front of house foyer. A new balcony was constructed over, forming the ceiling of the new foyer, which retains a low arched pediment on the interior, which dates from the 1913 alterations to the Hall.

The central entry hall remains to its original symmetrical plan and retains two doorways on the side walls of the entrance that are original to the 1909 works.

Aspects of the building plan and layout have changed significantly over time. Prior to 1980 and after 1930 the staircases were all repositioned to the ends of the hallways to enable toilets to be introduced to the building. These among other changes, have maintained the overall symmetry in the layout and presentation of the front of the building.

The 2001 Conservation Management Plan identifies six specific phases of construction:

- Phase One - 1909 to 1911
- Phase Two - 1912 to 1919
- Phase Three - 1920 to 1933
- Phase Four - 1934 to 1980
- Phase Five - 1981 to 1990
- Phase Six - 1991 to 2001

Phase Four - 1934 to 1980 sees the most extensive changes in the building's layout, including the construction of both the Tallis Wing and Marshall Hall

In 1934, architects, Gawler and Drummond were again commissioned to design an extension to the Conservatorium of Music building. The proposed extension was to be a two-storey section at the southern end of the existing building, mirroring the Tallis wing. The additional facilities provided were to include teaching rooms at both ground and first floor levels.

The proposed extension was to have a substantial impact on the existing building as it effectively completed the balanced symmetry of the facade and to a lesser extent the symmetry of the plan form, mimicking the northern Tallis wing. Also, like the Tallis wing, the new extension continued the construction, finishes and decorative detailing of the original building.

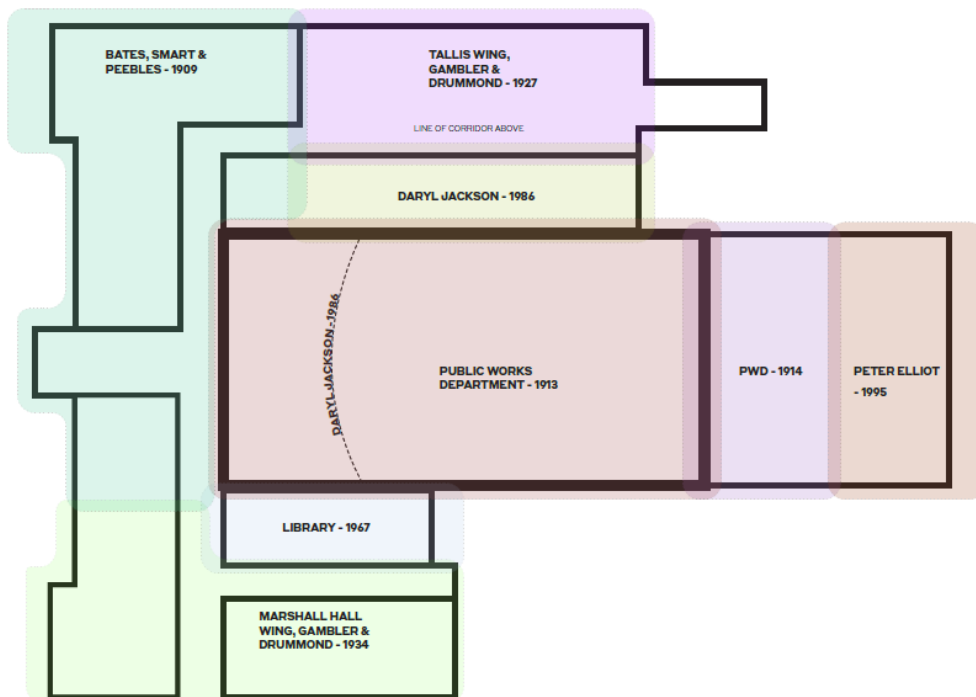


Figure 1
Diagram indicating various phases of construction and change that occurred in the building since 1909.

Phases Five - 1981 to 1990 also has an impact on the overall layout of the building resulting in significant alterations to Melba Hall, the Foyer and the infill of spaces between.

This phase of the development of the building roughly corresponds with that of the sixth Ormond Chair of Music, Michael Brimmer, who was awarded the position in 1980 and also held the position of Dean of Faculty from 1981 to 1985.⁶¹ In 1989, Brimmer, accepted an early retirement package.

In 1986 the architects, Daryl Jackson Pty Ltd were commissioned to refurbish the interior of Melba Hall, which involved adding a gallery and updating the seating, and to provide new rooms by filling in the area between Melba Hall and the two adjacent wings. The alterations to the interior of Melba Hall included the west wall being moved eastwards approximately 3.5 metres to create a larger foyer space in front of the hall, the creation of gallery, grading of the floor, introduction of fixed seating, and enlargement of the stage. Between Melba Hall and the Tallis Wing, a glass covered passageway was established, and the remaining area was filled with several small offices. On the southern side of Melba Hall, another office was created at ground level and a control room above.

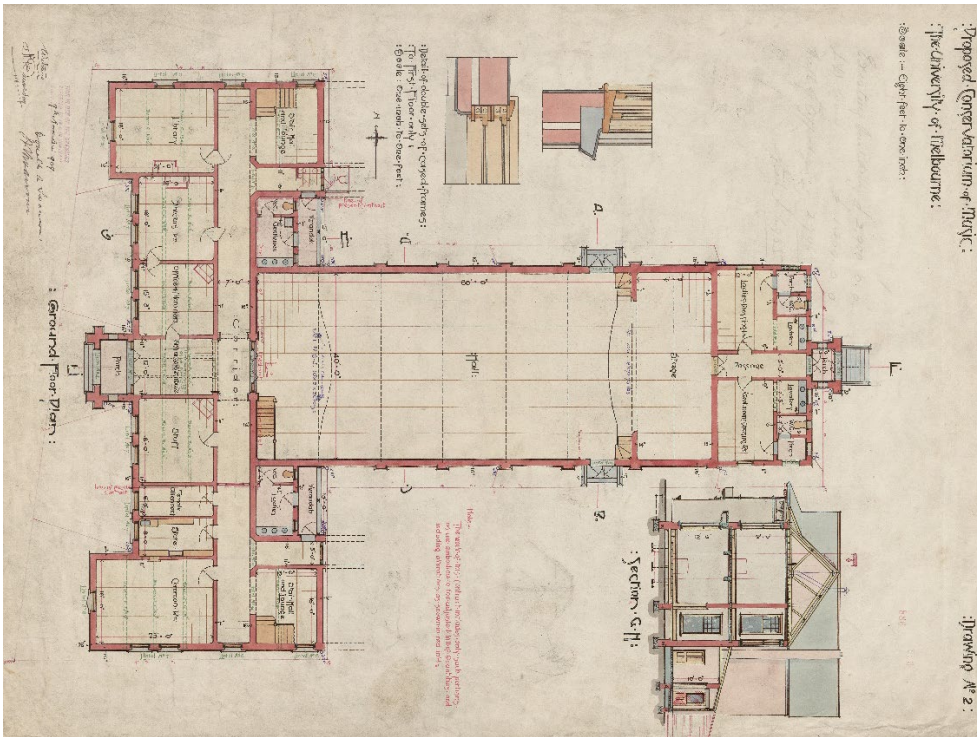


Figure 2
1909 Contract Drawings for the construction of Melba Hall and the first Stages of the Conservatorium. Note the original layout of Melba Hall with a proscenium wall not realised.

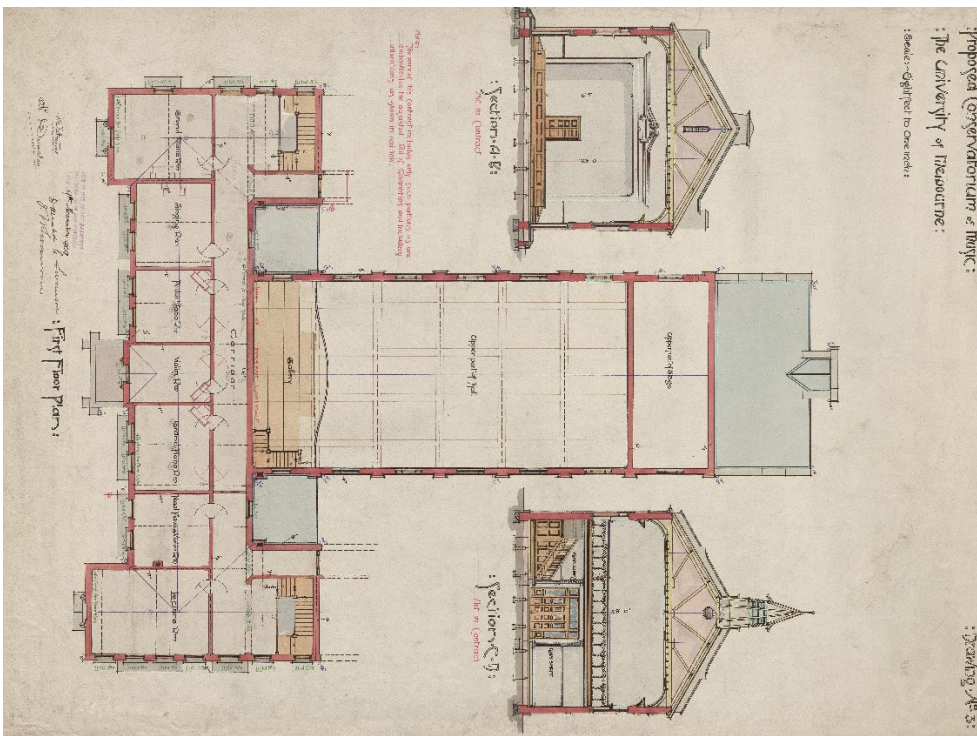


Figure 3
1909 Contract Drawings for the construction of Melba Hall and the first Stages of the Conservatorium. Note the original proposal for the configuration of Room 209 & 210.

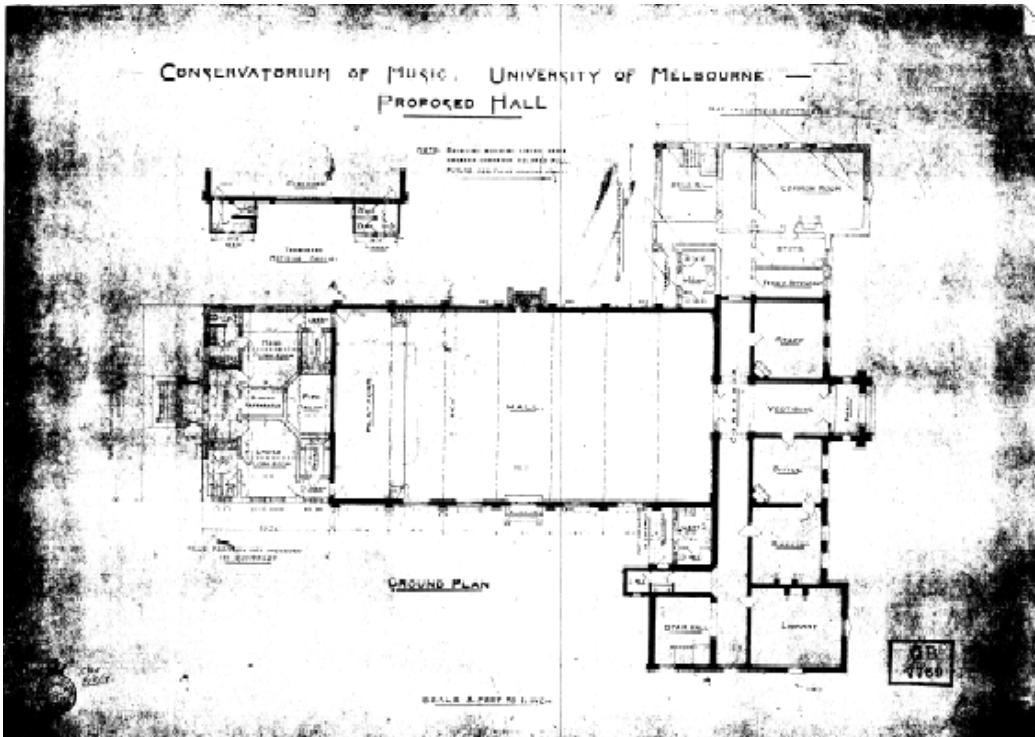


Figure 4
1913 Plan showing the south wing as removed from the contract due to budget over runs.

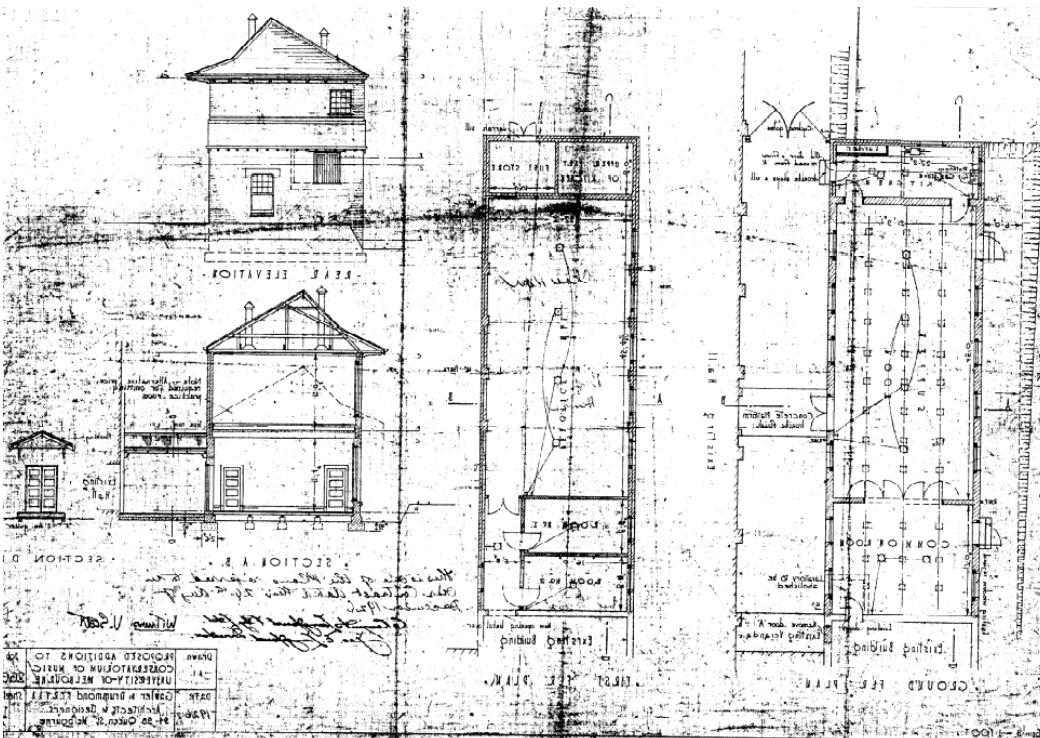


Figure 5
1926 Plan showing the Tallis Room on the north wing.

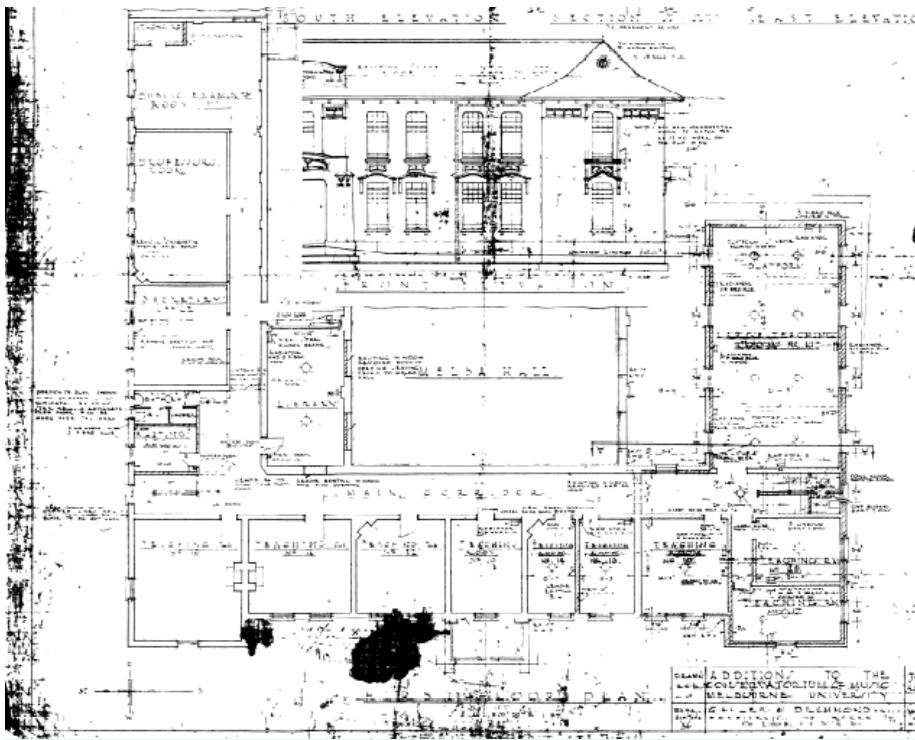


Figure 6
1934 South Wing and Marshall Hall showing the revised arrangement of Rooms 209 & 210.

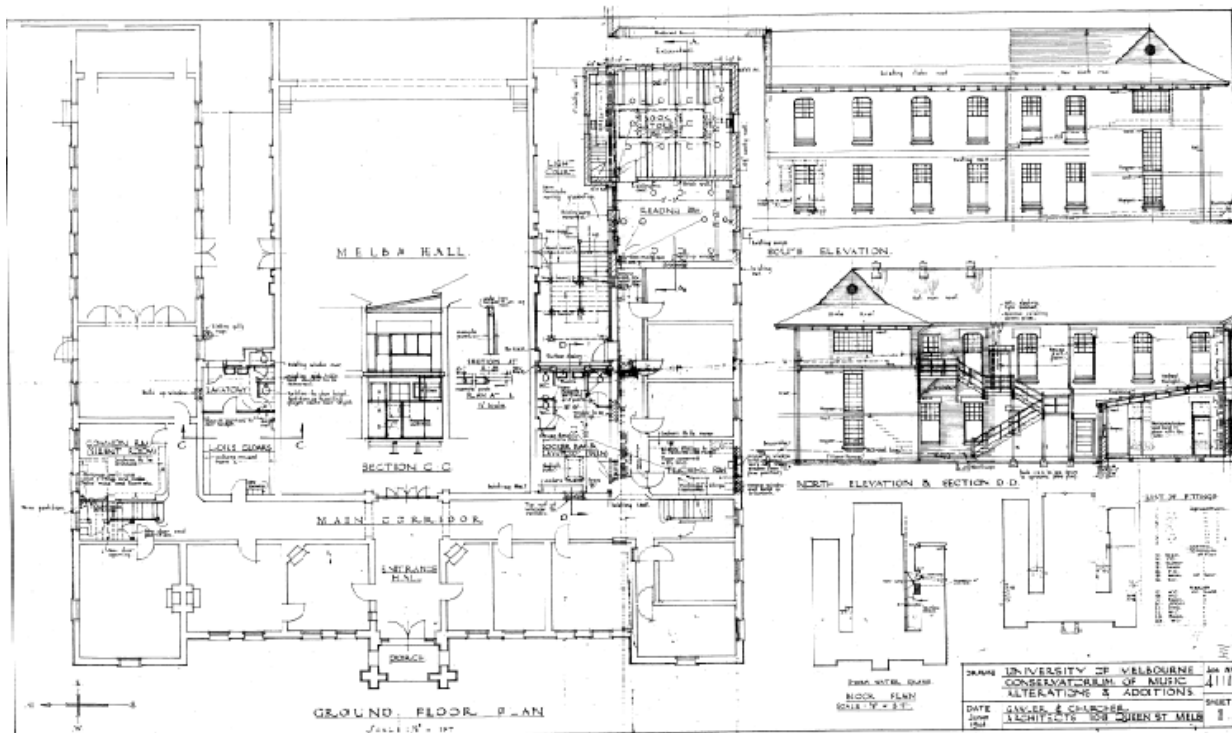


Figure 7
1941 proposal for the extension of Marshall Hall at the eastern end of the south wing, never constructed.



Figure 8
Exterior view of the west elevation – front of building.

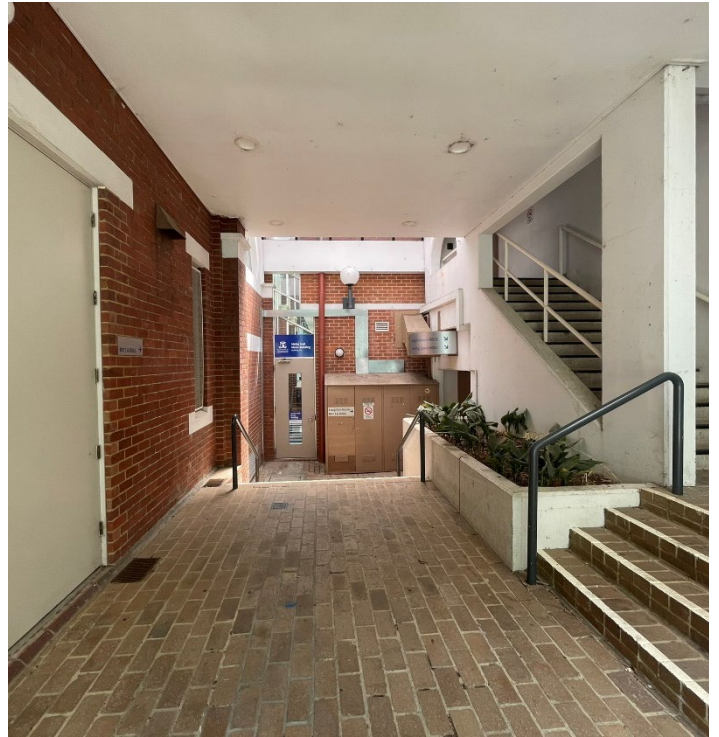


Figure 9
View of the rear entry, where the platform lift is proposed to be installed.



Figure 10
View of the northern end of the west elevation.



Figure 11
View of the north west corner of the building showing existing landscaping.



Figure 12
Typical first floor practice room showing applied acoustic treatments.



Figure 13
Typical first floor practice room showing applied acoustic treatments.



Figure 14
Ground floor kitchen and staff space.



Figure 15
Typical first floor practice room showing applied acoustic treatments.



Figure 16
Ground floor office space in the location of the proposed lift core.



Figure 17
Typical ground floor office space.



Figure 18
Storage room in the front of the building.



Figure 19
Typical ground floor office in south wing.



Figure 20
Melba Hall showing the stage and raked seating from 1986.



Figure 21
Front foyer showing the 1986 alterations.



Figure 22
Front entrance looking west.



Figure 23
Front foyer showing the 1986 alterations

1.5 Summary of proposed works

The proposed works include two forms of work, those that are considered permit exempt under the General Permit Exemptions, December 2022 and works that are subject to a permit.

1.5.1 Permit application works

The following is a summary of works requiring permit approval and represented in Figure 1 below:

1. New ramp from Arrival Hall to main (rear) entrances into Melba Hall for accessibility.
2. Existing office becomes location for:
 - New Lift.
 - New Phone Room.
 - New Electrical Services Room.
3. Internal partitions removed to create larger shared office space.
4. Tallis Room Entry:
 - New airlock.
 - Walls to adjacent rooms have been squared.
5. Two existing offices become new storage room accessible from Tallis Room.
6. New dedicated plant access room.
7. Melba Hall Accessibility Upgrade
 - Addition of seven wheelchair seating spaces.
 - New platform lifts and stair arrangement.
 - Fire sprinkler installation to ceiling
8. New teaching ensemble space – previously 2 offices
9. New large teaching ensemble space – previously post grad research.
10. Dedicated roof access space.
11. New DDA toilet.
12. Installation of suspended ceilings to various rooms to accommodate new air conditioning, acoustic treatments and other services including sprinkler systems, electrical fire and lighting.
13. Application of acoustic treatment to the interior walls of various rooms to facilitate continued use as a practice suite.
14. Installation of localised built-in cabinetry.
15. Replacement of various doors to provide acoustic separation for practice suites.
16. Wall penetrations to provide for new mechanical services.
17. Upgrade of existing windows to include a secondary internal window to localised areas of the building for acoustic reasons.



Figure 24

Diagram indicating the general location of works described in section 1.1.1 Permit application works.

1.5.2 Permit exempt works

The following summary details the works that form part of the development that are permit exempt in line with the General Permit Exemptions, December 2022:

1. Preparation and painting of internal walls, ceilings, architraves, skirtings, windows, doors and the like, noting that original paint finishes will not be disturbed as a result of these works.
2. Replacement of non-original carpets throughout the building.
3. Replacement of non-original lighting in existing locations throughout the building.
4. Upgrade of non-original door hardware throughout the building to provide compliance with disability access and retaining original decorative hardware where remnant in the foyer.
5. Replacement of blinds to windows
6. Installation of loose furniture.
7. Installation of wall hung artwork.
8. Replacement of mechanical ducting within the Melba Hall roof space to match existing and utilising same penetration locations.
9. Roof replacement works including upgrades to gutters, replacement of roof slates and corrugated roof sheeting.
10. Exterior repairs and repainting.
11. Removal of non-original seating from the Melba Hall auditorium.

2. Heritage considerations

2.1 Overview

The heritage registrations and listings relevant to the site are summarised in the table below:

| Name | Authority | Identifier | Statutory Controls |
|---|--|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Statutory Controls Apply | | | |
| Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall | Victorian Heritage Register | H0925 | Yes |
| Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall | City of Melbourne Heritage Overlay | HO332 | Yes, superseded by listing on the VHR |
| Non-statutory listings | | | |
| Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne University | National Trust of Australia (Victoria) | B3105 | No |
| Conservatorium of Music including Melba Hall | Register of the National Estate | 5287 | No |

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as H0925. It is registered for 'Architectural', 'Historical', and 'Social' significance.

There is no Permit Exemption Policy associated with this registration.

The VHR describes the Extent of Registration as:

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 925.

CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC AND MELBA HALL, THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

(To the extent of:

1. *The building known as the Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall, University of Melbourne, Parkville, shown marked B-1 on Plan 602929K(A), endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council.*

2. *The land extending*

West – to Royal Parade

South – to a line level with the south side of Genetics

East – to the Genetics Building

East/South – Melba Hall to the Genetics Building

East/East sides – Melba Hall to a line 5 metres from the building

North – to a line 10 metres from the building

This being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 8876 Folio 379 and marked L-1 on Plan 602929K(B), endorsed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council.)

[Victoria Government Gazette No. G24 24 June 1992 p.1580]

2.2 Heritage Overlay

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall is individually identified in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme as HO332.

Clause 43.01 of the Heritage Overlay in the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme is superseded by the inclusion of the Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall on the VHR. In accordance with Clause 43.01-2 of the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, acts as the relevant referral authority.

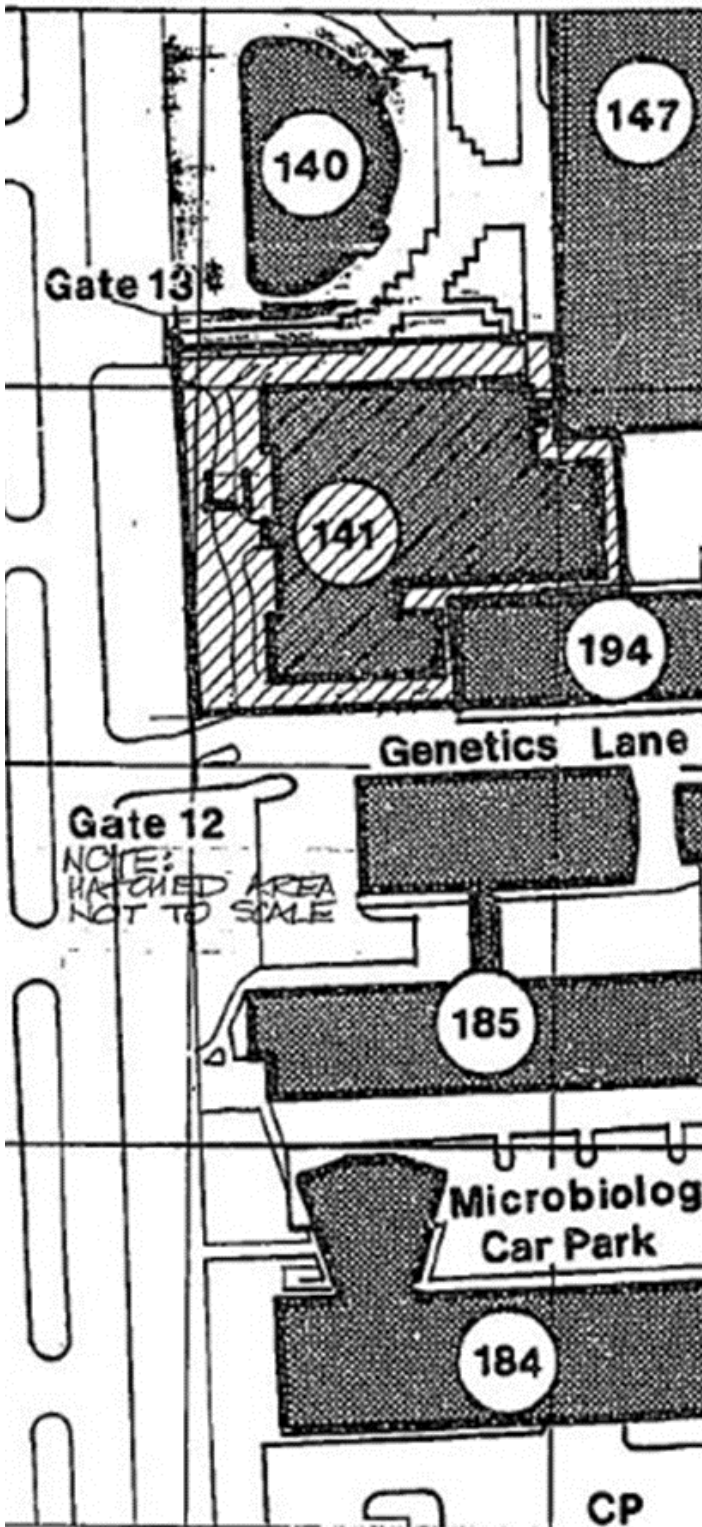


Figure 25
VHR Extent of Registration Diagram 602929K indicating the land surrounding the Conservatorium that is registered.

2.3 Statements of Significance

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall has several Statements of Significance related to its various heritage registrations, conservation guidelines, and non-statutory listings. These Statements of Significance are consistent in identifying the cultural heritage significance of the place as being expressed through:

- Architectural value associated with its unique Edwardian design with Art Nouveau elements; and its evidence of English influence on Australian architecture in the 1890s and 1900s.
- Historical value associated with its status as the first of its kind established by a university in the British Empire; and its association with Dame Nellie Melba and other prominent Victorians.
- Social value associated with its enduring use as a place of musical education and performance in Victoria.

The 2001 Conservation Plan additionally recognises the place as an early example of the use of reinforced concrete in building construction.

The wording of each Statement of Significance is provided below for reference purposes.

2.3.1 Victorian Heritage Register

What is significant?

The Conservatorium of Music was established in 1895 and run by Professor Marshal Hall in rented rooms in a building opposite Carlton Gardens. Later the Conservatorium was moved to the grounds of the University of Melbourne and located in a purpose-built building. The first stage was erected in 1909 and opened in April 1910. The two-storey rendered brick building was designed by architects Bates, Peebles & Smart and the contractors were Swanson Brothers. Dame Nellie Melba laid the foundation stone. Melba Hall was completed in 1913 to designs by the Public Works Department, and two later wings, the north Tallis Wing in 1927 and the Marshall-Hall Wing in 1935 were added by university architects Gawler & Drummond. The additions were in a matching style to complete the original design symmetry. The additions were made possible by the continuing support of benefactors such as Sir George Tallis, and Mrs Herbert Brookes, the daughter of Sir Alfred Deakin.

The white stucco walling is shaded by the wide eaves of the slate roof and contrasts with the terracotta, patterned gables. The building has wide projecting eaves in the manner of English domestic architecture of the period. The shaped eaves brackets, ground floor window hoods, tile faced gables and Art Nouveau decoration of clover, cress and gumnuts ornament the façades. The windows are one multi-pane sash over a single pane lower one. The projecting porch and parapet in the centre of the main west façade is in the Free Style manner and contains the foundation and memorial stones. The interior is sparsely detailed and the Melba Hall has a barrel vaulted ceiling. Melba Hall was renovated in the 1980s.

How is it significant?

The Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall is of historical, social, and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall is historically significant as the first facility of its kind to be established by a university in the British Empire. The Conservatorium of Music building, begun in 1910, reflected the public support and acclaim achieved at that time in Victoria, having overcome considerable early prejudice towards a university-based school of music. Its success in receiving government funding was a measure of the school's ability in being self-funded since its inception.

The Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall are historically significant for their association with Dame Nellie Melba who, despite a relatively short period of involvement in the school, was actively involved in the school's activities during its critical period of physical development and was instrumental in raising funds to build the hall that bears her name.

The Conservatorium of Music is socially significant as a focus of musical education in Victoria, a role which it continues to this day. Regular concerts were conducted by the Conservatorium's students, which together with the school's ability to attract musicians of international standing, played an

important part in stimulating Melbourne's cultural life. The Conservatorium's teaching facilities were also extended to working people through the Workers' Education Association and state schools around Melbourne.

The Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall is architecturally significant as a fine and unusual example of Edwardian design in Victoria. The Conservatorium of Music is an important early twentieth century building in Victoria, illustrating a fusion of Art Nouveau detailing with an otherwise traditional classically derived building form. The building is also an interesting example of the influence in Australia of English architecture of the 1890s and 1900s. Although details of the façade are an Art Nouveau reflection, the building is an original design expression which may be seen as part of the recurrent search for an indigenous architecture style.

2.3.2 Conservation Management Plan 2001

What is significant?

The Conservatorium of Music at the University of Melbourne was built in a series of stages over a 25-year period during the first half of the twentieth century. The initial design was by the architects Bates, Peebles & Smart in 1909 of which only two-thirds of the west wing was built. The original plan and fabric remain substantially intact and are in good condition.

The Conservatorium of Music is a two-storey masonry, timber, and reinforced concrete building. It is an Edwardian Free Style building as expressed by the wide eaves with their long brackets and the double pitch gambrel roof, both of which endow the building with a domestic air. Decoration of stylised gumtrees in the Art Nouveau manner is to be found both externally, in particular on the symmetrical west façade, and internally in the ground floor foyer. Other interesting features include the bowed and rectilinear window hoods, rounded window frames, pylon entrance porch, and a parapet feature. The exterior of the Conservatorium suggests that influence of the English architecture of the period especially that of the institutional buildings of CH Townsend and the domestic buildings of CFA Voysey.

A hall was constructed in 1913 as a consequence of the endeavours of Dame Nellie Melba, after whom it was named. The original design for the hall was modified by the Public Works Department (PWD) who were given the task of completing that phase of the works. Melba Hall has been treated differently to the rest of the Conservatorium building for externally much of the wall has been left as red face brick, although the cement mouldings and upper parts of the wall are painted white. Melba Hall is less ornamented, partly due to financial constraints. The interior of the hall is gracious and indicates a classical heritage with its panelled elliptical vaulted ceiling and arched windows.

The next two phases were completed by the architects, Gawler & Drummond, who in 1926 were commissioned to design the northern Tallis Wing, which was not part of the original project but which was designed to conform with it. In 1934, this firm of architects (although Drummond had died) completed the southern third of the west wing, although the original design was altered. They also designed the southern Marshall-Hall Wing, which also continues the general appearance of the west wing. Subsequently some minor alterations took place before 1986, when a major internal refurbishment and some additions were made by Daryl Jackson. In 1995, Peter Elliott was commissioned to extend the ancillary area at the rear of Melba Hall.

How is it significant

The Conservatorium of Music is of architectural, technical, social, and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Conservatorium of Music is significant as being a notable extant example in Melbourne of an institutional Edwardian era building designed in the Free Style with prominent application of Art Nouveau decoration. The Free Style developed in England in the 1890s incorporating the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement and was an eclectic, relatively ahistorical style, which was commonly utilised for non-residential buildings. The Conservatorium is distinguished by several features

including the double-pitched gambrel roof, wide eaves, window hoods, and the extent of the Art Nouveau decoration.

The Conservatorium of Music is of significance as a notable design of the architects, Bates, Peebles & Smart. This practice in its various guises has been a prominent and important Melbourne one for approximately one and a half centuries. The original design for Melba Hall was altered and the decoration simplified by the PWD, and is representative of the contemporary approach of the PWD.

The Conservatorium of Music was partly constructed from reinforced concrete and has technical significance because it represents an early example of the use of this material. In Melbourne, reinforced concrete was being used for bridges at the end of the 1890s but the first all reinforced concrete building was completed in 1907.

The Conservatorium of Music is significant for being the first institution of its kind to be created at a university in Australia, and was done so against considerable resistance in 1895. It was also supposedly the first conservatorium to be established at a university within the former British Empire and has remained a respected Australian institution.

The Conservatorium of Music is significant for its associations with the various people such as those who have held the position of the Ormond Chair of Music, which include G Marshall-Hall (1890-1900), FS Peterson (1900-14), WA Laver (1915-25), and Sir B Heinze (1926-57). They have been eminent figures in the Melbourne music fraternity. The efforts of key patrons (Dame Nellie Melba, Sir George Tallis, and Ivy and Herbert Brookes) have been integral to sections of the buildings being constructed.

2.3.3 National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Designed by Messrs Bates, Peebles and Smart, Architects, and erected by Swanson Bros Builders in 1909/1910. Various additions to the two-storeyed building were carried out by Messrs Gawler and Drummond, Architects, in the style of the original, the Royal Parade façade being completed in 1935.

The white stucco walling is shaded by the wide eaves of the slate roof and contrasts with the terracotta, patterned gables. Although details of the façade are an Art Nouveau reflection, the building is an original design expression which may be seen as part of the recurrent search for an indigenous architecture style. The classification includes the North, South and West façades including the pediment of Melba Hall, together with sufficient of the building necessary for support.

2.3.4 Register of the National Estate

The Conservatorium of Music is an important early twentieth century building in Victoria, illustrating a fusion of Art Nouveau detailing with an otherwise traditional Classically derived building form. The building is also an interesting example of the influence in Australia of English architecture of the 1890s and 1900s. The Conservatorium is of historical significance as a focus of musical education in Victoria, a role which continues to this day.

The Register of the National Estate was closed in 2007 and is no longer a statutory list. All references to the Register of the National Estate were removed from the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) on 19 February 2012.

2.4 Conservation Management Plan

The Conservatorium of Music & Melba Hall has a Conservation Plan prepared by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants in 2001. This document details Levels of Significance and Conservation Policies for the place. The document also provides an assessment of the cultural significance of the place against the HERCON Criteria.

It is noted that the RBA CMP is now over 20 years old and is considered to have used an outdated methodology for the assessment of levels of significance. The CMP designates all fabric from the periods between 1909 to 1948 equally, as fabric of primary significance. It identifies no fabric or spaces at a secondary level of significance. A modern CMP may have regard to the historical uses, architectural distinction or social value of individual spaces within a building in determining significance rather than adopt a system based solely on the age of their fabric. Many of the spaces at Melba Hall provide back-of-house functions or are purely utilitarian in their layout and presentation. Today, these might be seen to be less significant than the front facade of Melba Hall, its foyer and circulation spaces or the volume of the hall itself. As such these secondary spaces might, today, be reasonably viewed as holding a lower degree of significance, irrespective of their age or originality. The greater part of the proposed works will take place in areas that might reasonably be included among these secondary spaces.

The Statements of Significance also focus the architectural values on the external appearance of the building over that of the interior. The CMP does not differential this difference in the assignment of levels of significance.

2.4.1 Levels of Significance

The CMP details four Levels of Significance: Primary Significance, Secondary Significance, Tertiary Significance and No Significance (intrusive). These are defined as follows:

The areas of primary significance are all those parts that are to be conserved and protected under the Historic Buildings Act. Areas of contributory significance are those parts that are not intrinsically significant (because they are additions or have been altered) but whose form or character impinges on the areas of primary significance and are to be protected by the Buildings Committee of the University. Areas of no significance may be demolished or altered. However, while such areas of

no significance remain in and around a building of primary significance, some areas of no significance may be specified as areas of contributory significance so as to be monitored by the Buildings Committee of the University. This is to ensure that effects on areas of significance will be considered when areas of no significance are to be changed or demolished.

The building is largely considered to be of Primary Significance and clarified as:

The remaining original building fabric, built between 1909 and 1942 (except those areas noted as of lesser significance below).

Many of the proposed works detailed in this HIS impact the Tertiary Significant fabric and reverse some aspects of the Intrusive nature of changes that occurred post 1986 impacting areas of the works identified as Intrusive in the CMP.

Whilst some works will impact spaces that are of Primary Significance, these changes have been considered in the context of the policies outlined in the CMP and detailed below.

The specific areas of the building that are identified as being of Tertiary Significance or to be Intrusive and are summarised as follows:

Tertiary Significance:

- Foyer enlargement and altered west wall of Melba Hall
- Melba Hall Gallery (room 117)
- Extension of room 118
- Room 115, 121, 125-129, 135 (kitchen)
- Room 213-15 and Rooms 220, 222, 224, 226

Intrusive:

Partitions between rooms: 102 and 103, 105 and 106, 206 and 207, 221 and 223 and additional doorways created in these rooms.

2.4.2 Conservation Policies

The following Conservation Policies are extracted from the 2001 RBA CMP and are considered to be relevant to the works proposed in this HIS:

The Place

The distinguishing original qualities and character of the place shall not be destroyed or compromised – while recognising that periodic improvements may be necessary to keep pace with contemporary building regulations and levels of amenity.

Use

The current use of the Conservatorium of Music building as a school of music and centre for music performance is considered appropriate and its continued use as such is encouraged.

Interpretation

If in the future it becomes feasible to re-instate more of the original building plan (1909-42), the opportunity should be taken to do so.

Documents relating to the history and significance the Conservatorium of Music should be made widely available to staff, students and visitors to the place to enhance appreciation of the cultural significance of the place. The same documents should also be made available to interested bodies such as Heritage Victoria, the Australian Heritage Commission, the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and the Melbourne City Council. Some interpretative material is on permanent display in the foyer area but consideration could be given to increasing the amount of interpretative material within the public areas of Conservatorium of Music.

Future Developments

The design and nature of any future proposed modifications to the site should take into account the cultural significance of the place, the broad and specific recommendations of this report with respect to significant fabric.

Although it may be necessary in the future to enlarge or make modifications to the place, no modifications to the existing building should be made that would further obscure the general form and significant elevations of the existing building.

Any physical intervention to the fabric of the Conservatorium of Music should be limited and not allowed to compromise the cultural significance of the place.

Conservation Policy for the Building Fabric

- a. The guidelines contained in the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of places of Cultural Significance (The Charter) should be used in consideration of any proposed building works.
- b. Before undertaking any works, including those connected with repairs and maintenance, careful consideration should be given to the significance of the fabric which will be affected and the potential impact of those works upon the significance.
- c. Building fabric of Primary Significance should be retained and conserved as a matter of priority in order to preserve the individual significance of the building fabric concerned and the overall significance of the place.
- d. There should be no irreversible modifications undertaken to the fabric of Primary Significance.
- e. Building fabric of Secondary Significance should preferably be retained where possible, but may be adapted, or refurbished in order to adapt the building for appropriate and sustainable use, providing that the significance of the place as a whole is not compromised as a result of the change(s). Demolition should only be considered if, by the removal, there is minimal detrimental impact on the overall significance of the place.
- f. Building fabric of Tertiary Significance may be retained and adapted where it is useful in order to adapt the place for appropriate and sustainable use. In some cases it will be appropriate to replace fabric of little significance with contemporary, less intrusive and more appropriate alternatives.
- g. Building fabric identified as being Intrusive should ultimately be removed at an appropriate time.
- h. Qualified and experienced conservation practitioners should be retained to document, specify, and supervise any works interventions relating to building fabric and contents.
- i. The future survival of the building will only be secured by means of appropriate and sustainable use; while the broad use of the building is unlikely to change even in the long-term, the role and use of individual spaces and areas must be given careful consideration with respect to impact upon significant fabric; due regard must be given to the need for the building to retain viable uses when considering the impact of future change upon significant fabric.
- j. Existing and new services throughout the building should be rationalised and grouped to minimise impact. Whilst it is acknowledged that interventions to the building fabric may be necessary to provide a contemporary level of amenity for inhabitants and visitors, all effort should be made to minimise the impact of all services within the building.
- k. When redecoration is proposed to any building fabric assessed as being of Primary Significance it is recommended that investigations as to the original decorative scheme be undertaken.

3. Assessment of impacts

3.1 Description of the works

As outlined above, the works include changes to a number of spaces within the Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall. The alterations are generally minor and isolated to specific spaces within the building, including:

| Room | Existing Use | Significance Level | Change | Detailed summary of changes |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 100 | Entry Foyer | Tertiary and Primary | Construction of disability accessible ramping to access Melba Hall. Most of the works are located within the Tertiary area. Some ramping included in the primary area – entry | Construction of a series of 1:20 ramps and landings to provide a foyer seating space with disability accessible entrance to both sides of Melba Hall through existing doors. Ramp will integrate with built-in seating. |
| 104 | Office | Primary | Construction of new passenger lift and phone room | New lift core and lift constructed inside the room. This will result in the removal of the existing timber floor and floor structure, along with creation of a hole in the concrete ceiling and expressed beam to form the vertical lift shaft. New entry in the eastern wall of the roof to connect the lift to the Hallway. New telephone room on west side of lift core. New electrical services room adjacent to lift shaft. |
| 107 | Offices | Intrusive | Removal of internal partitions to create larger shared office space | Removal of intrusive partitions c1990s to re-establish original room formation. |
| 127 & 128 | Tallis Room and Offices | Tertiary | New vestibule space | Alteration of existing splayed walls from 1986 to form larger opening for disability turning circle. |
| 134, 128 & 129 | Tallis Room and Offices | Tertiary and Primary | Two existing offices become new storage room accessible from Tallis Room | Formation of two new openings in the south wall of the Tallis Room to access Rooms 128 and 129 offices from 1986. Closing up of existing doorways on south side of Rooms 128 and 129 dating from 1986. |
| 204 & 200 | Practice Room and First floor Hallway | Primary | Construction of new passenger lift and display room | New lift core and lift constructed inside the room. This will result in the removal of the existing ceiling and floor structure to form the vertical lift shaft. Modify existing door to form new entry in the eastern wall of the room to connect the lift to the Hallway. New display room on west side of lift core. New roof access space adjacent to lift shaft. |
| 117 | Melba Hall | Primary | Disability and Fire services upgrades | New sprinkler system installed in roof cavity and will penetrate ceiling in centre of flat panels. New platform lift installed at north western edge of the stage. |
| 209 & 210 | Offices | Primary | Removal of partitions to form larger practice suite | Removal of existing walls and doors to form new larger practice room. Establish new door at eastern wall of room to Hallway. |

| Room | Existing Use | Significance Level | Change | Detailed summary of changes |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| 223 & 225 | Post Grad Research Office | Primary and Intrusive | Removal of wall between Room 223 and 225 to form larger ensemble practice suite. | Removal of wall separating room 223 and 225. Retain doorways on south wall. |
| 217 | Storage | Primary | Establish new disability accessible toilet. | Changes to the fitout of the room to construct and new disability accessible toilet along with associated plumbing works. |
| - | Rear Entry | Intrusive | Alter existing rear entry stairs and paving to meet disability access requirements. | Alter existing brick paved steps to include platform lift along with other alterations to include handrails, tactile nosing strips and the like to AS1428.1. |
| 101-108, 112-116, 138, 134, 201-210, 212, 219, 221, 223 & 225 | Offices, Practice Rooms and Teaching Spaces | Primary and Tertiary | New suspended ceilings and bulkhead for acoustic and services. New sprinkler systems. New Mechanical services to individual rooms. New dry fire, lighting and other electrical services to individual rooms. | Installation of suspended ceilings to various rooms to accommodate new air conditioning, acoustic treatments and other services including sprinkler systems, electrical (dry) fire and lighting. Wall penetrations within the ground and first floor hallways to provide for new mechanical heating, cooling and air intake services. The overall approach to mechanical services includes the installation of a unit in each room to ensure that rooms remain acoustically separated. A shared ducted system cannot achieve this requirement. Similarly, air intake is designed to manage acoustic performance and to avoid direct fresh air as a result of wall vents or operable windows |

In addition to the above list of isolated works there are more general works that apply to most spaces on the ground and first floor, which are identified as follows:

- Application of acoustic treatment to the interior walls of various rooms to facilitate continued use as a practice suite.
- Installation of localised built – in cabinetry.
- Replacement of various doors to provide acoustic separation for practice suites many of which date from the 1980s works.

3.2 Reason for the works

The University of Melbourne continue to use the Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall as a teaching, performance and private practice suites for students at tertiary and post graduate level. The School provides needed practice spaces with specific acoustic and requirements.

The works are needed to address the aging nature of the place and the lack of suitability of the facility for teaching, performances and practice for tertiary and post graduate students. The essential elements of the project required to address the building's current condition and encumbrance includes:

- Thermal performance and the introduction of mechanical heating and cooling and air intake systems currently not present in the building.
- Acoustic treatments to ceilings and walls to create better quality practice spaces.
- Disability access to the first floor of the Conservatorium and Melba Hall through a lift and minor ramping and a platform lift.
- Services upgrades including the introduction of wet fire (sprinklers) services.
- Reconfiguration of two spaces within the building to provide better teaching spaces and necessary storage.

3.3 Assessment of impacts

The following Section makes assessment 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 object.

The Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall are identified as having historical, social, and architectural significance at state level. The architectural significance is embodied in the fabric of the place, whereas the historical and social values relate to continued and ongoing use of the place for the specific purpose for which it was built. Its status as a Conservatorium of Music and the first of its kind to be established by a university in the British Empire is of great historical importance that is supported by its social values founded in its association with a number of prominent Victorians, including Dame Nelly Melba.

Its enduring association with music education in Victoria is also of historical and social importance and the basis for the proposed works outlined in this HIS.

The architectural significance of the Conservatorium of Music and Melba Hall is expressed through the architectural style of the building and its noted views and settings in the context of the University of Melbourne's Parkville Campus as one of a number of standalone buildings constructed at the western edge of the campus facing outward to Royal Parade, noting that 1888 – former Teachers College was not originally part of the university.

It is recognised that the building is a palimpsest of phases of construction between 1909-1938 and further adapted in 1986 and the 1990s; however, externally, the elevations of the building resulting in a cohesive architectural outcome that contains details that inform the building use, such as the double window sets that appear in some rooms but not other.

The proposed works enable to continued use of the building by the School of Music through a series of functional upgrades needed to continue the use of the place for teaching, practice and performance.

To support the continued use of the place, conservation works will be undertaken to the exterior of the building including repairs to the exterior rendered facades, deep timber lined eaves with timber brackets, roof slates, Marseille pattern tiles and corrugated sheet metal, replacement of existing roof mounted plant platforms, upgrade of existing gutters to plumbing code compliance including incorporation of two additional downpipes to the

exterior or the building and preparation and painting of all existing painted masonry and joinery.

The interior, whilst dated, remains in good condition and requires very minimal conservation works to protect the fabric and cultural heritage values of the place.

The works will include retention, repair and conservation of a number of details, which assist in understanding the progressive construction of the building. These include elements such as the skirting boards ceiling materials which vary, architrave and stopping blocks where they exist, picture rails, stop chamfers and the Art Nouveau inspired plaster capitals and cornices located in the ground floor foyer. Other details, such as the double windows located in practice rooms are an early acoustic treatment and they will be retained.

Similarly, the Art Nouveau inspired timber stairs will be retained and conserved, despite not being original, they are likely to contain some features from the original staircases that were relocated and reconfigured post 1938.

3.3.1 Works of minimal to no impact

The following works are located in area that are designated Tertiary Significance, largely relate to the 1980s or 1990s fabric and or are associated with the reversal of past works considered to be intrusive.

Tallis Room and offices

The proposed works in the vicinity of the Tallis Room largely impact fabric that was introduced to the place in 1986 following the infilling of the northern light well between Melba Hall and the north wing.

The reconfiguration of wall, closing off of doors and removal of sidelight windows all relate to non-original (1986) fabric and as such it is considered that they do not impact the significance of the place.

The formation of two new openings approximately 2000mm wide each in the southern wall of the Tallis Room to connect to proposed storage spaces, formally Rooms 128 and 129 results in a minor loss of fabric dating from the 1926 works. The southern wall of the Tallis Room once contained window openings and exit doors that were infilled in during the construction of Rooms 128 and 129 in 1986. The formation of these openings has minimal impact on the original fabric on the basis that the south wall of the Tallis Room has been infilled and highly modified over time.

The works also result in minimal to no visual impacts on the heritage fabric. As detailed in Section 2.4 of this report, the CMP is considered to be outdated and does not consider that spaces such as the Tallis Room have been significant modified over time to accommodate the ever changing needs and growth of the School of Music. It is difficult to assign this space and other altered and highly utilitarian spaces to a Primary level of significance, as they do not demonstrate the architectural values associated with the quality of architectural design that can be observed in the external presentation of the building, or in the more public spaces such as Melba Hall and entrance foyer.

The formation of a storage space directly connected to the Tallis Room is a functional requirement that supports the continued use of the space as an ensemble based practice room and provides necessary storage for large format percussion instruments, chairs and the like.

The impact is imperceivable from anywhere other than the interior of the Tallis Room and is largely offset by the supporting function of the storage space and whilst the CMP considered the perimeter of the Tallis Room to be Primary Significant fabric, there are ultimately pre-existing hierarchies within the significance levels that should be considered. Minor and localised areas of original fabric will be removed to form the two new openings; however, it is noted that this fabric is highly altered and does not present as primary significant fabric that is representative of the architectural values of the Conservatorium.

Existing walls that are imbedded within other fabric, should reasonably be downgraded in their significance level on the basis that they attribute little to no understanding of the cultural heritage values associated with the place. The southern wall of the Tallis Room does not represent or impart sufficient information to ascertain the architectural, historical or social values of the Conservatorium.

Room 107

The proposal to remove the 1990s interventions to room 107 are aligned with the policies outlined in the CMP. The partitions that divide this room into three spaces are considered intrusive.

These proposed works result in a good conservation outcome through the restoration of the original volume of the space.

Room 217

The CMP identifies Room 217 as being of Primary Significance; however, is it a post 1940 modification of the building to establish toilets and storage spaces within the original stairwells. As such, we are of the view that this space is of a Tertiary Significance and holds no direct architectural, social or historical values.

The proposal to fit this room out as a disability accessible toilet results in no change to the configuration of the room. It is utilitarian and as such, the fitout will not result in loss of architectural features or fabric that represent or impart sufficient information to ascertain the architectural, historical or social values.

Rear entry stairs

The rear entry steps located on the external north east corner of the building is hand landscaping that dates from the 1986 works. The works in this location are limited to the installation of a platform lift and changes to the stairs to include other disability access features such as tactile indicators, handrails, nosing strips and the like as required by AS1428.1 – Australian Standard - Design for access and mobility.

These works will include demolition of parts of the 1986 brick paving and concrete stair structure. This fabric is considered to have no heritage value and therefore does not result in detrimental impacts on the cultural heritage values.

Melba Hall

Melba Hall is identified as a space of Primary Significance; however, the majority of the fabric within the Hall dates from the 1980s works, which resulted in significant changes to the overall volume of the space.

The proposed works within this space are limited to the installation of a fire sprinkler system within the roof cavity with sprinkler heads that penetrate the centre of ceiling panels to avoid decorative elements within the original ceiling.

The installation of the sprinkler heads will result in a single hole in the vicinity of 50mm diameter in the centre of each plaster ceiling panel. It is considered that this impact on the heritage fabric is minor and offset by the value the sprinkler system will provide in fire protection to the building.

The sprinkler layout has been prepared to minimise visual impact on the rhythm and layout of the vaulted ceiling. It is not compliant with current codes, but has been accepted and dispensed on the basis of the cultural heritage value of the ceiling as part of the first phase of the construction of the building.

Other works within this space support disability access and include the installation of a platform lift and the removal of existing seats (dating from 2010) to provide disability seating positions.

The raked floor, stage, seating and balcony all date from the 1980s works and are not of heritage value. The continued use of the Hall as a performance venue associated with the Conservatorium and maintaining public accessibility for concerts and other performances is fundamental to the historical and social cultural heritage values of the place.

The proposed works do not diminish the social, historical or architectural values of Melba Hall. They are considered to be a positive outcome for the space, that supports and fosters continued use of the venue into the future.

Fixed joinery

A number of fixed joinery units are proposed to various teaching and practice space. The units marked CW01 – CW06 and CW11-CW16 will be positioned in Utilities and Storerooms, many of which are rooms that were constructed in 1986.

Joinery units CW01 – seating and CW02 – bin is proposed to be installed in the hallway. The seating will provide some separation of the proposed ramping and is located in the foyer space that was altered in 1986 works.

Other joinery is proposed to be installed in ground floor meeting rooms.

It is also proposed to replace the existing cabinetry unit in the ground floor staff kitchen with a similar unit.

The proposed joinery has no impact on the heritage fabric or historical or social values associated with the place. The proposed joinery units support continued and ongoing use, which is both a historical and social value within the Statement of Significance.

3.3.2 Works of minor or localised impact

There are four specific areas of alteration that results in some localised, albeit minor impacts on the building. These works impact individual spaces, and are not perceivable from the exterior of the building.

The lift and Rooms 104 & 204

The proposed lift provides two functions for the building, the provision of passengers and disability access between the ground and first floors and secondly as a goods lift to relocate large format instruments including pianos. The size of the lift has been specifically chosen to accommodate this purpose and to ensure that the lift overrun does not exceed the roof from. As such, it has not visual impacts on the exterior of the building.

The lift has been set in from the external west façade to avoid visual impact on external windows and establishing two small rooms, a telephone room on the ground floor and a display room on the first floor.

These works support continued use and do not result in detrimental impacts on the cultural heritage values.

Rooms 223 – 225

The proposal to remove interior walls within rooms 223 and 225 to establish a larger ensemble based practice room supports the needs of the School of Music and results in the loss of minor fabric dating from the 1926 addition of the north wing. This area of the building was subsequently modified through the dividing up of Rooms 223 and 224 (originally one room). This is one example of the ever changing arrangement of rooms throughout the Conservatorium, demonstrating the changing needs of the School in providing practice rooms of different sizes and scales to host instruments of varying sizes and forms, and in response to the constantly changing needs of teaching spaces that provide for group or one on one teaching.

These spaces are identified in the CMP as having a Primary level of significance. As previously discussed, the attribution of this level of significance does not correlate with the inherent differences that exist between the public spaces compared with individual teaching spaces that take on a more back of house nature. They are not accessible to most, other than the music students and their teachers, and as such do not provide the architectural quality that is experienced through the exterior or public interior spaces.

These works are needed in response to the School requirement for larger ensemble based teaching spaces, which cannot be found elsewhere within the building. The

Conservatorium by nature of its early twentieth century design contains a large number of small scale rooms that have limited capacity for teaching and for practice. Such room formats are no longer required by the School and like many changes that have occurred to the building over the past 100 years, these changes are necessary to the continued use of the building as the Conservatorium.

It is considered that these changes are limited in their impact on the basis that they remove some localised areas of original fabric. The changes are considered acceptable on the basis that these spaces are generally altered to some degree and that the removal of a single wall is a less impactful alteration than alternative spaces, where several walls would need to be removed to achieve the same special requirements.

Rooms 209-210

A similar alteration is proposed to Rooms 209 and 210 to establish a larger single room with the installation of a new door in the hallway.

The southern wing was the last phase of construction to complete the intended U shaped design of the Conservatorium. The 1909 plan shows the rooms at each end of the building (north and south) to be large singles rooms, such is the case for Rooms 101 and 201. During the future planning and development of the Conservatorium, the southern wing was constructed with two smaller rooms on the ground and first floors in the location of Rooms 209 and 210.

The growing and changing needs of the School requires larger format teaching spaces, which can accommodate upwards of 20 students as larger teaching spaces to accommodate ensembles and larger format instruments such as grand pianos. There are few rooms in the existing building able to support this use and the removal of the walls dividing Rooms 209 and 210 present the lowest impact on any space. The School has little need for the small-scale rooms constructed in the south wing in the 1940s, as the school moves away from individual office spaces, which are lacking in flexibility and do not support the continued use of the building by the School.

The historical and social values of continued use support these changes. And the minor impact that these changes many have on the architectural values are largely imperceivable. The architectural values are founded in the exterior presentation of the building and in Melba Hall. These changes do not impact those values identified in the Statement of Significance.

Foyer and front entrance

The proposed works to the front foyer include the ramping of sections of the floor establishing a series of 1:20 ramps and landings that result in changes in the floor level of 190mm at a time. The ramps provide disability access to Melba Hall, which currently does not exist.

The majority of the ramping is located within the 1986 modification of the foyer, which is a space considered to be of Tertiary Significance and policies within the CMP support modification of this space where it supports the ongoing and continued use of the building by the School of Music. A section of the ramping is located in the hallway and front entrance, which are spaces identified as Primary Significance.

The series of ramps maintain the symmetrical layout of the overall building and have been specifically developed so that the foyer can continue to be used as a waiting room for pre-events and intermissions for concerts in Melba Hall and whilst still providing much needed disability access to the space.

The proposed ramping has been specifically designed to minimise visual impacts and result in minor changes in the floor level. The minor changes in level and shortened ramps have resulted in design outcomes that avoid handrails, kerb rails and other visual obstruction in the foyer and entrance.

Narrowing of the ramping away from the wall would result in the need for additional steps, handrails, kerb rails and other compliance based elements that would visually impact the overall foyer space and the presentation of the front entrance.

Thus, the proposed works are considered to be sensitive to the architectural values of the place. The reduce visual clutter, result in minor changes to the floor level, that are largely reversible and do not impact original fabric beyond the replacement of localised sections of skirting within the entrance., which are proposed to be removed, altered and reinstated

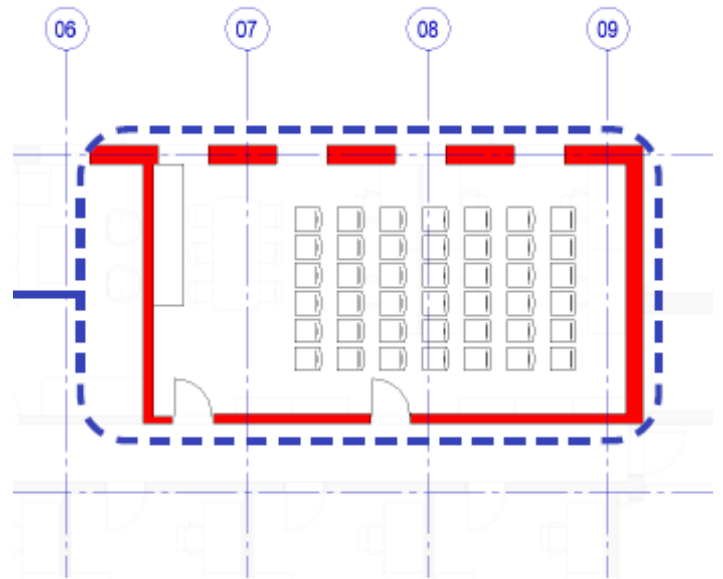


Figure 26
Proposed reconfiguration of Rooms 223 and 225.

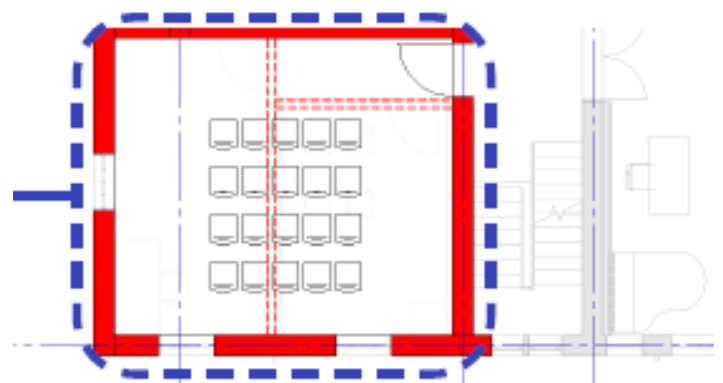


Figure 27
Proposed reconfiguration of Rooms 209 and 210.

Ceilings and services

To manage the integration of services, including mechanical heating, cooling and air intake; fire sprinkler services, dry fire services and acoustic treatments, the works propose the installation of a suspended ceiling / bulkhead into the majority of ground and first floor rooms. Presently the ground floor ceiling is a concrete slab with no cavity, as such to date, the approach to services has been to surface mount all services within exposed conduits, resulting in visual clutter and exacerbating the overall utilitarian nature of the interior.

Presently the building is unconditioned and is in need of heating, cooling and air intake to assist with continued use and prevent extreme changes in temperature, which impact the tuning of instruments, such as pianos and stringed instruments. The overall approach to mechanical services includes the installation of a unit in each room to ensure that rooms remain acoustically separated. A shared ducted system cannot achieve this requirement. Similarly, air intake is designed to manage acoustic performance and to avoid direct fresh air as a result of wall vents or operable

windows. In order to manage the array of services required for the building, and to assist in acoustic treatments, it is proposed to form suspended ceilings creating the necessary cavity to conceal services units and allow access for maintenance.

Where windows are located higher on the wall, it is proposed to establish a 300 wide pelmet to prevent the ceiling / bulkhead from clashing with the window head. The 300mm set back provides visibility to the head of the existing windows and minimises any visual impacts from the exterior looking through the windows. This scenario does not occur at every window as the existing ceiling heights vary. The axonometric detail shown in AR-SK-024 240712 Upgrade to Building Services – Wall Penetrations and Ceiling Bulkheads presents a typical and worst-case scenario. Where there is sufficient clearance above windows, it is proposed to extend the suspended ceiling to the wall.

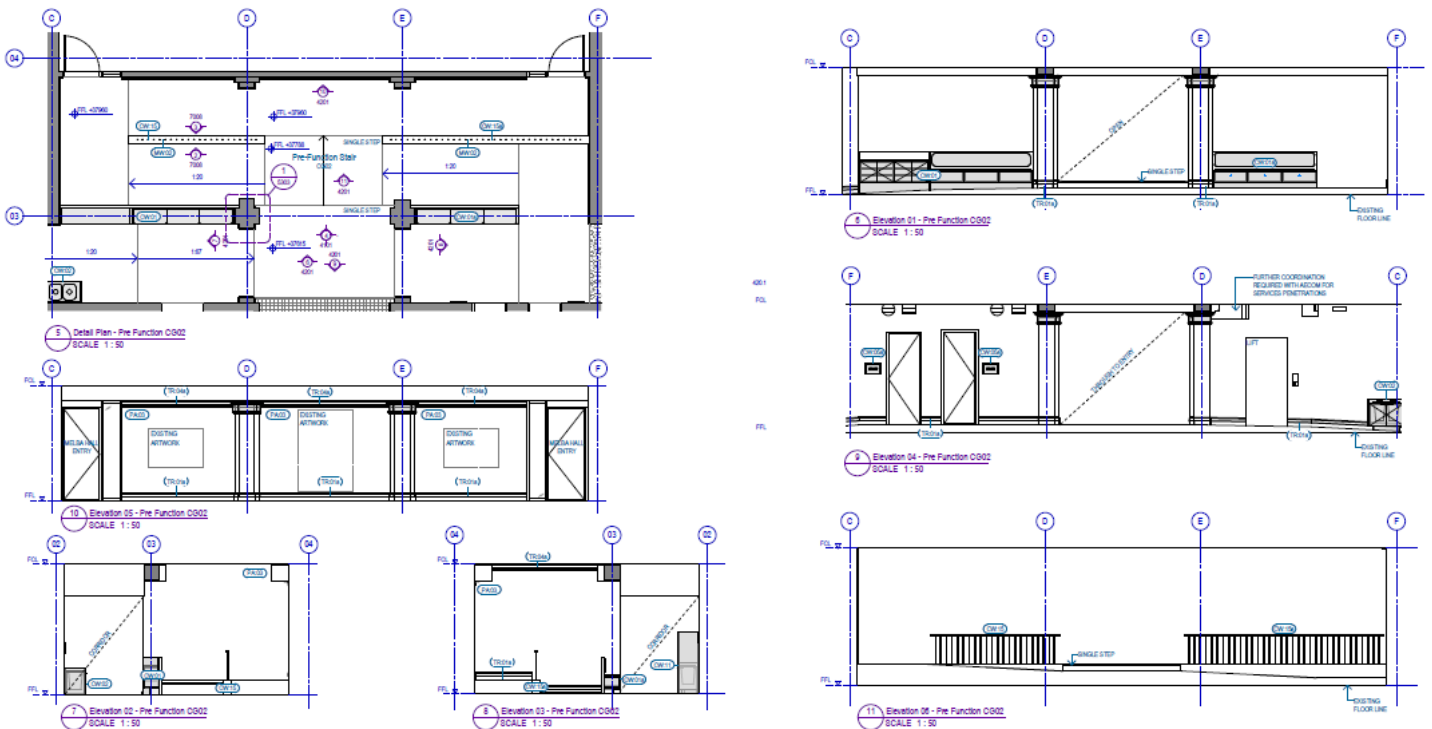


Figure 28
Proposed ramping layout and sections showing the minimal increases in the overall floor height through the foyer.

The reflected ceiling plans show the details of the 300mm offset pelmet to all perimeter rooms on the ground and first floors and where windows exist on two sides of the room this detail is returned.

There are no decorative ceilings the Conservatorium, with exception of the front entry foyer, which this treatment is not proposed to be installed. The suspended ceilings will leave original ceilings in place on both the ground and first floor, such that these works are reversible with minimal impact on the heritage fabric.

In order to provide many of the services, a series of penetrations will be needed in the wall between the hallway and each practice suite or teaching space. The proposed typical layout of penetrations is shown on drawing AR-SK-024 240712 Upgrade to Building Services – Wall Penetrations and Ceiling Bulkheads. It is considered without the introduction of the suspended ceiling that the penetrations and services will result in visual impacts or result in large number of penetrations on the existing first floor ceilings.

As such the suspended ceilings will reduce the visual impacts of the services on the individual rooms and circulation spaces.

On the basis that the proposed suspended ceilings are largely reversible and conceal services that are needed for continued use of the building. We consider that these works have minimal impact on the architectural values of the place. The architectural values are largely related to the exterior of the building, as the interior is largely featureless and is of a highly utilitarian nature. As such, the installation of new ceilings will not detrimentally impact the historical, social or architectural values, noting they works support the continued use by the School of Music.

Acoustic treatments and window upgrades

In addition to the introduction of the ceilings, further acoustic testing has shown that much of the noise transfer occurs through the existing doors, noting that secondary doors were added in 1986 to improve this condition.

It is proposed as a part of these works to replace a number of doors where rooms will continue to be practice suites to provide the required acoustic separation. These works are predominantly located on the first floor where most doors have been replaced in the past. As such, these works do not impact historical fabric.

It is also proposed to install some acoustic wall linings to practice rooms. The extent of this treatment varies depending on the size and configuration of the room; however, this is highly reversible and given the featureless nature of rooms, these works will not impact the architectural value of the individual rooms. These works are largely localised to first floor practice suites.

As continued use of the place by the School of Music is a key value associated with the historical and social significance, we consider that this change facilitates the ongoing use and supports the social and historical cultural heritage values.

As part of the acoustic treatments, it is proposed to upgrade a number of ground floor windows within the building.

Many rooms within the Conservatorium contain a double window set for acoustic purposes. This is an early detail and part of the original construction. Following this approach, it is proposed to include a second double hung window set to a number of windows in the north and western ends of the building, specifically Rooms 101, 102, 103, 108 and 109 on the ground floor

The details of the new secondary window will match those existing across most of the first floor and will leave the existing original window in situ, largely unmodified. The works will require the removal of architraves, which are proposed to be salvaged and reinstated over the new frame and window, thus forming a double glazing window system incorporating a jockey sash in the form of a timber double hung window set.

These works are consistent with existing treatments throughout the building and will not impact the architectural values, setting or appearance of the building.

3.3.3 Management of detrimental impacts

The following section makes assessment of the proposed works against Section 101 (2) (f) of the Heritage Act 2017 – measures proposed to avoid, limit or manage the detrimental impacts.

The proposed works result in very few physical changes to the layout and overall volume of rooms. The localised changes are considered to be minor and are considered not to result in detrimental impacts on the architectural values of the place, which are founded in the external architectural presentation of the building, which is thought to be an important early twentieth century building in Victoria, illustrating a fusion of Art Nouveau detailing with an otherwise traditional classically derived building form. This value is not impacted by the proposed works.

It is also noted that the proposed conservation works including roof and façade repairs and re-painting will enhance the architectural values of the place.

Historical and social values founded in continued use by the School of Music and for its original purpose are fundamental and are enhanced by the proposed works, which support this function.

3.4 Reasonable use statement

The following section makes support for the proposed works against Section 101(2)(b) of the Heritage Act 2017.

This section does not detail an economic use associated with the development. The works are funded by the University of Melbourne and do not result in a return investment through rental or sale of the place. The works are funded to provide needed spaces for students to continue to develop their education through performance, teaching and dedicated purpose-built practice suites. As such there is no economic argument associated with the development. This section focuses on reasonable use.

Four principal constituencies make use of Melba Hall, namely, the University, concert goers, staff and students.

The University of Melbourne is a first-tier educational institution. It is intended that, by 2030, the University will be recognised as a leading global university in Asia and the Pacific, with a depth and breadth of expertise to become the global destination and partner of choice for the region. As part of a suite of policies to bring these goals into effect, it seeks to lead in terms of the quality of the teaching spaces across all of its campuses. The provision of equitable access to these spaces is central to this work.

The University's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2023 - 2026 was released in March 2023. It articulates a renewed commitment to disability inclusion at the University of Melbourne and focusses on foundational actions from which the University can continue to improve. The DIAP notes:

In publishing the DIAP, the University commits to champion, implement and resource actions to minimise or remove structural, systemic and cultural barriers to participation for people with disability.

The achievement of these goals is central to the University's intended role among global educational institutions. The provision of equitable access across the University, including at Melba Hall, is both a reasonable expectation of the University and one that is required under Federal legislation, as discussed below.

In terms of staff and students at Melba Hall, the University of Melbourne is committed to ensuring these groups have access to teaching and learning spaces of the highest order. To this end, the current works seek to provide improved levels of thermal comfort through enhanced air-conditioning and modern acoustic treatments to the spaces within the facility. Again, these present as essential improvements for

the users of the hall that will allow the reasonable and preferred use of these spaces to continue.

Finally, Melba Hall has, since its inception, been a concert venue. This aspect of the facility remains central to its role within the broader complex. Again high levels of amenity and thermal comfort to patrons in foyers and circulation areas are reasonable expectations for audience members that will allow the venue to continue its ongoing and valued use.

This reasonable use statement explores the functional need for two aspects of the works: the disability accessible ramping in the front of house leading into Melba Hall; and the need for suspended ceilings throughout much of the ground and first floor rooms.

3.4.1 Suspended ceilings

The need for the ceilings is detailed in this application to provide acoustic treatments and to integrate a large number of building services that are currently not present within the building and are needed to support continued use of the facilities by the School of Music.

As previously identified, there are no cavities on the ground floor such that these services and associated penetrations in the walls to feed the services would be highly exposed. The installation of suspended ceilings will conceal the services, penetration and provide acoustic treatments, which are also necessary to ongoing use of the place as practice suites.

The introduction of dropped ceilings is required to bring the building up to current standards for thermal comfort as well as acoustic performance, which have been summarised by the Services Engineers AECOM and the Architects Woods Bagot as:

- thermo-comfort additions need to be made to make the spaces useable..
- addition of acoustic treatment between spaces to meet minimum educational standards
- design approach to suspended ceilings in-lieu of exposed services and as a design approach to mitigate the visual impact.

In its current form, the majority of the building does not have adequate heating, cooling or ventilation. The design proposes to introduce mechanical conditioning and ventilation systems compliant with current NCC standards including AS1668.2 to meet the needs of the building occupants' comfort and amenity.

The proposed acoustic upgrades in the form of additional ceilings, upgraded walls and new doors, improve sound isolation within the building to enable concurrent use of practice rooms, teaching spaces, and academic offices. The quality of internal acoustic upgrades is also commensurate with ISO 23591 'Acoustic quality criteria for music rehearsal rooms and spaces'.

The proposed design creates a new ceiling void to conceal services (rather than exposing them) as the ceiling materiality assists with acoustic performance to the spaces.

The new suspended ceilings will accommodate new heat and cooling, air intake wet and dry fire services, lighting and the like. All of which are needed to provide a conditioned space for storage of string and percussion instruments, such as pianos and other instruments.

The School of Music has provided the following statement in relation to the reasonable use of the place which details the needs of the school and supports the need for the suspended ceilings within practice and teaching spaces, along with the need for acoustic treatments.

Melba Music Hall building is a much valued teaching and performance venue for the Faculty of Fine Arts & Music. However, the Faculty has always had to contend with multiple building issues created by the age and original design.

Temperature control – Office and teaching spaces are invariably cold in winter and hot in summer, this is of particular issue when practising and performing on musical instruments. Students and teachers often resort to opening windows however the noise of traffic and trams on Royal Parade is not conducive to music making .

Acoustic Isolation – The building has always been a combination of music making spaces, teaching spaces and admin /office spaces. The age and style of original construction has meant there is considerable sound transfer between rooms and between floors. There have been many previous interventions to try and mitigate sound transfer from

- the Hall(117) to other teaching and office spaces
- practice rooms to office and other practice rooms
- ensemble rooms and teaching and office spaces.

Current limitations mean that we are unable to program performances and ensemble teaching concurrently and that larger ensembles create significant issues for collaborative working, zoom meetings and the like.

3.4.2 Disability accessibility and discrimination

Disability access is a common right and the building is used by the public and students that may require disability accessible paths of travel.

The University of Melbourne has adopted standards for the implementation of disability access and facilities throughout all their buildings and across all of their campuses as a legal obligation in providing tertiary and post graduate education to a variety of people with varying needs. The University's standards are derived from the Disability Discriminations Act and Australian Standard AS1428 Design for access and mobility.

The Disability Discriminations Act 1992 (DDA) is a Commonwealth legislation that makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including employment, education, getting or using services and accessing public places, because of their disability. The objectives of the Act are:

- (a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:
 - (i) work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; and
 - (ii) the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and
 - (iii) existing laws; and
 - (iv) the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- (b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- (c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

Division 2A – Disability standards of the Act details that the Minister may impart disability standards in relation to any area in which it is unlawful under this Part for a person to discriminate against another person on the ground of a disability of the other person.

For the purposes of building designs and architecture the Australian Standard AS1428.1:2009 – Design for access and mobility applies and has been developed by the Australian Standards Committee ME-064, Access for People with Disabilities.

The objective of this Standard is to provide building designers and users (architects, property owners and regulators) with the minimum design requirements for building work to enable access for people with disabilities. This standard is referenced in the Building Code of Australia (formerly BCA now the National Construction Code NCC) and Disability Access to Premises—Buildings, and has been used in determining solutions for the refurbishment works detailed in this application.

There are currently stairs within the foyer at both of the main entry doors to Melba Hall itself. The Premises Standards, created under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, apply to this building. Under these standards, and the NCC, equitable access at this main entry point should be achieved as part of any new work in this area. The existing stairs do not provide equitable access.

The new design proposes to create a ramped entry through the foyer as shown on the drawings to enable access to the rear of the Hall for occupants / visitors unable to safely use stairs. The design team considered a number of options to achieve this. Heritage impact was a consideration in the design process. The arrangement of the proposed ramps responds to the original line of the rear wall to the Hall, since modified as part of the 1980s refurbishment, and retains the original arrangement of the main N/S corridor. The ramp grades are also shallower than the maximum allowed, to maximise user amenity and minimise visual impact on the space.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed works support the continued use of the existing building for the purpose for which it was constructed – School of Music. The continued use of the place for its original purpose is fundamental to conserving the historical and social values associated with the Conservatorium and Melba Hall. As such, we find that the proposed works do not diminish these values and are considered to enhance such values by ensuring that the building remains usable for the purpose of practice suites, a performance space and as teaching spaces for the School of Music into the future. Changes to the building layout and services are needed to support the continued use and to provide adequate and appropriate spaces for the School.

The architectural values are inherently found in the exterior elevations and presentation to Royal Parade. Whilst there is some value in the envelope of Melba Hall and the remnant details that existing in the entry foyer, they are minimal.

The proposed works result in some minor removal of fabric; however, this is localised and is considered to have no impact on the architectural significance found in the exterior of the building. Similarly, the introduction of new ceilings and minor ramping of the foyer floor is similarly considered to have minimal impact, and is far outweighed by the social and historical values of continued use.

4.2 Permit conditions

We respectfully request the following permit conditions be incorporated into the permit to manage potential changes and latent conditions.

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.

Historical interpretation is proposed as part of the overall development; however, at this stage, a strategy is yet to be developed. As such we also request a condition be incorporated into the permit to allow for the submission and approval of an interpretation strategy.

