

**Total House**

**170-190 Russell Street, Melbourne**

**Heritage Council Registrations Committee**

**Hearing – 28 February 2014**

**Members – Robert Sands (Chair), Tony Darvall, Lindsay Merritt**

# Decision of the Heritage Council

After considering a recommendation and the submissions and conducting a hearing, pursuant to Section 42(1)(a) the Heritage Council has determined that the place is of cultural heritage significance and should be included in the Heritage Register.

  

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| **Robert Sands (Chair)** |  | **Tony Darvall**  |  | **Lindsay Merritt** |

**Decision Date – 30 April 2014**

**APPEARANCES/submissions**

**Executive Director, Heritage Victoria**

Submissions were received from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria (Executive Director). Ms Renae Jarman, Heritage Operations Manager and Dr Kerry Jordan, Heritage Officer (Architectural History) appeared on behalf of the Executive Director.

**Nominator** (‘the Nominator’)

Submissions were received from the nominator – Melbourne Heritage Action (MHA). Ms Jane McDougall appeared on behalf of MHA.

**Owner** (‘the Owner’)

Submissions were received from Sovereign Plaza (Chinatown) Pty Ltd. The Owner was represented by Mr Stuart Morris QC. Mr Morris called Mr Harvey Male and Mr Bruce Trethowan to provide expert evidence.

**National Trust of Australia (Vic)**

Submissions were received from the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). The National Trust was represented by Ms Susan Brennan SC. Ms Brennan called Mr Simon Reeves to provide expert evidence.

**Other**

Submissions were received from Ms Kim Roberts. Ms Roberts represented herself at the hearing.

# written submissions received during advertising of the executive director’s recommendation

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| Mr Jacques Sheard | Ms Kim Roberts | Melbourne Heritage Action |
| Mr Mark Austin | Mr Paul Coffey | Mr Guy Sender-Smithers |
| Mr Ben Gook | Mr Michael Trudgeon | Ms Delia Teschendorff |
| Ms Dianne Peacock | Mr James Carey | Mr David Roper |
| Mr Grant Dixon | Ms Shelley Roberts | Mr Peter Malatt |
| Mr Emilio Fuscaldo | Siew Fung Then | Yingxi Adelle Lin |
| Mr Phil Burns | Ms Cassie Southon | Mr Dominic Lowe |
| Ms Marcela Dominguez | Mr Des Smith | Dr Patricia Pringle |
| Dr Sand Helsel | Mr Brent Allpress | Mr David Caldwell |
| Mr Chris Barnett | Mr Peter Jacobs | Ms Suzie Attiwill |
| Best Hooper | Ms Jane McDougall | Mr Des Cullen |
| Mr David Beynon | Dr John Betts | Ms Rilla Healey |
| Mr John Ting | Dr Flavia Marcello | Mr Julian Kosloff |

# Introduction

## The Place

1. Total House, built in 1964-1965, comprises the Total Car Park, shops at ground level, the Total Office Building and a theatre/nightclub in the basement (‘the Place’).

## Nominations

1. A nomination from Mr Rupert Mann, President of MHA for the entire building to be included in the Victorian Heritage Register (‘the Register’) was accepted by the Executive Director on 28 February 2013.

## Recommendation of the Executive Director

1. On 24 May 2013, the Executive Director recommended that the place including the multi-storey car park, the office block above and the basement theatre be included in the Register.
2. 37 submissions in support and 1 objecting to the recommendation were received. Pursuant to section 40(2) of the *Heritage Act 1995* (‘the Heritage Act’), a hearing was required to be held.
3. A hearing was scheduled for 22 November 2013. On 23 August 2013Ms Sarah Raso, acting on behalf of the Owner, requested a 3 month adjournment of the hearing. The hearing was rescheduled for 28 February 2014.

**Site Inspection**

1. On 27 February 2014, Heritage Council Registrations Committee (‘the Committee’) made a site inspection accompanied by the Hearings Manager, Ms Sarah Raso of Best Hooper Solicitors and Mr Robert Rafaniello of AFX Group. Both Ms Raso and Mr Rafaniello were advised that no submissions from them in relation to the Place would be heard during the site inspection. No submissions were received.

**Preliminary Matters**

*Declarations of Interest*

1. Mr Robert Sands, Chair of the Committee and Mr Tony Darvall declared past membership of the National Trust of Australia. No objections to the participation of Mr Sands or Mr Darvall were received on that basis.
2. The National Trust sought to confirm that there was no conflict of interest given that Mr Tony Darvall of the Committee was Deputy Chair of the Linking Melbourne Authority (LMA) and that Mr Stuart Morris QC was representing the LMA at the forthcoming hearing in relation to the Comprehensive Impact Statement for one of the LMA’s largest projects – East-West Link. Mr Morris stated that he had never met Mr Darvall prior to the hearing. Mr Darvall confirmed this. The Committee considered the matter. The Committee took the view that the involvement of both Mr Darvall and Mr Morris in the East West Link project could not reasonably be construed by an impartial observer as leading to a conflict or perceived conflict of interest.

## *Acceptance of Submissions*

1. The parties disagreed about whether submissions on values other than cultural heritage significance should be heard.
2. The National Trust asserted that the Committee should not hear or take into account material included in Mr Male’s expert evidence on behalf of the Owners as his submission related to issues of economic use and not cultural heritage significance. Ms Brennan argued that s38(3) of the *Heritage Act 1995* states that ‘A submission must relate only to the issue of whether or not a place or object is of cultural heritage significance or to any recommendations under section 33 in relation to the place or object’. She contrasted the objectives of s38(3) with the permitting requirements identified in s73(1)(b) Heritage Act which require the Executive Director to consider the impact that the refusal of a permit would have upon the reasonable or economic use of the place. Ms Brennan argued that as the Heritage Council was not able to consider the material submitted by Mr Male, it should not hear any arguments relating to it.
3. Mr Morris argued that it is important to provide context in the assessment of cultural heritage significance and that factors including the future needs of a place and the ability for it to be adaptively re-used are important to the ongoing cultural heritage significance of the place.
4. Mr Morris based his submission, in part, upon the language of s 42(1)(a) Heritage Act which provides that the Heritage Council may: ‘determine that the place or object is of cultural heritage significance *and* should be included in the Heritage Register’ (emphasis added). Mr Morris argued that the proper construction of this section was such that not all places of cultural heritage significance should be included on the Register and that the Heritage Council had discretion afforded to it. Mr Morris maintained that in exercising that discretion the Committee should consider the context of the Place and that such consideration could include the potential of the place for adaptive reuse, security, Occupational Health and Safety (‘OHS’) and other planning issues. Mr Morris argued that even if the Heritage Council was uncertain about whether the evidence was admissible, it was appropriate for it to hear the material before making any decisions about its admissibility.
5. The Executive Director made oral submissions supporting the position of the National Trust and stating that the only consideration in the present matter is whether the Place is of cultural heritage significance.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee called a brief adjournment to consider the submissions of Mr Morris and Ms Brennan. To ensure that the Owner was not denied the opportunity to present relevant evidence and given that Mr Male’s expert evidence had already been supplied with the written submissions the Committee determined to hear the verbal submissions of Mr Morris and Mr Male.
2. The Committee has now had an opportunity to further consider the admissibility of this material. The Committee is of the view that it is bound by the provisions of s38(3) Heritage Act which state that only material relating to ‘the issue of whether or not a place or object is of cultural heritage significance’ should be considered. The Committee agrees with the submissions of Ms Brennan that the Heritage Act does not allow for the consideration of material relating to the economic use during the registration process. The Committee specifically rejects Mr Morris’ submission that s42(1)(s) should be construed so as to enable the Heritage Council to have a discretion to refuse to register a place even if it satisfies one or more of the criterion. The Committee notes that the purpose of the Heritage Act, as outlined in s1(a), is to ‘provide for the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage significance and the registration of such places and objects’. The Committee is of the view that it is incumbent upon it to include a place on the Register if it satisfies one or more of the criterion. As was noted by Ms Brennan, s73(1)(b) Heritage Act requires the Executive Director (or the Heritage Council in the event of an appeal) to consider the economic impact of subsequently refusing any permit for the redevelopment of the Place.
3. As a result of its conclusion, the Committee has determined to exclude all material submitted that does not relate to the cultural heritage significance of the Place. As these matters fall beyond what the Committee is able to consider under the relevant section of the Heritage Act, no further reference to them has been made in this decision.

## Previous Assessments

1. The parties disputed the building’s significance based on the evidence of previous cultural heritage assessments of the building.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Owner submitted that as Total House has not been included in the Melbourne Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay it is not considered of local significance, let alone of State significance. They noted that it was not mentioned in the 1989 ‘Little Bourke Street Precinct Conservation Study’, while the 1985 ‘Central Activities District Conservation Study’ and the 2000 ‘Review of Heritage Overlay Listings’ classified the building as ‘B’ grade, and the 1993 ‘Central City Heritage Study Review’ gave it an A grade but recommended it for planning scheme protection rather than inclusion on the State Register.
2. The Nominators argued that, based on the statement of a Melbourne City Council planner, the omission of Total House in the 2011 C186 Amendment to the Melbourne Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay was an administrative error. Mr Storey stated in his written submission that ‘the planner concerned had believed that [Total House and Hoyts] were both already covered by Heritage Overlays because the electronic system lists them as being within the Chinatown Precinct, even though only small sections are actually covered.’
3. The Executive Director submitted that while there is no individual Heritage Overlay on the building, it has been listed as a ‘B’ graded building, meaning that it is ‘considered to be an important milestone in the architectural development of the metropolis’. Furthermore, there are a number of ‘B’ graded buildings currently on the Register. The Executive Director also stated that at Melbourne City Council there have been delays between the identification of significant heritage places and their inclusion within a Heritage Overlay.
4. The Executive Director submitted that the 1993 study gave Total House an ‘A’ grading, placing it of national or State importance while the 2008 study ‘Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria’ 2008 study identified Total House as being of ‘potential State significance’.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee has reviewed the above material. While the recommendations of previous studies are relevant considerations, they are not definitive. It is possible for the Heritage Council to determine to register a place that has not been identified as significant at a State level. Equally, it is possible for the Heritage Council to refuse to register a place that has been identified as potentially significant at a State level. The Committee has been presented with a very detailed analysis of the values of the place by the parties to this hearing. In making its decision, the Committee has conducted a detailed assessment of the Place against the Criteria under s8(1)(c) Heritage Act. More specifically, the Committee has relied upon the ‘Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines’ (as adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 September 2012) (‘Criteria and Threshold Guidelines’). What follows is an assessment of the Place against those Criteria.

**Issues**

1. This section is not intended to be a complete record of submissions that were made to the Committee. It is a summary of what the Committee considers to be the key issues, followed by an explanation of the position the Committee takes on each issue.
2. Any reference to Criteria refers to the ‘Heritage Council Criteria for Assessment of Places of Cultural Heritage Significance’ (refer Attachment 1 to this report).

**Summary of issues**

1. The Executive Director and the Nominators argued that the Place is of State significance as it satisfies both Criterion A and Criterion D.
2. The National Trust and Kim Roberts supported the Executive Director’s recommendation.
3. The Owner held that the Place does not satisfy any of the Criteria for inclusion in the Register.

## Criterion A – Importance to the course, or pattern of Victoria’s cultural history

1. The parties disagreed on whether the Place satisfied Criterion A.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director submitted that Total House is of importance to the course of Victoria’s cultural history as it ‘reflects the massive increase in car ownership and infrastructure post-World War II’. The Executive Director went on to argue that the increase in multi-storey carparking seen in the 1950s and 1960s was ‘essential for the economic growth and well-being of the central business district’. Further, the Executive Director argued that there is a clear association between the Place and the rise in car ownership post World War II and that this association is evident and readily appreciated in the fabric of the building.
2. The National Trust agreed with the Executive Director’s conclusion in relation to the criterion. In his expert evidence delivered on behalf of the National Trust’s submission Mr Reeves submitted that Total House reflects major changes to the structure and form of the city ‘brought about by the dramatic increase in private car ownership in Victoria from the late 1940s’ and that this phase is an important part of the evolution of Victoria’s society and environment. Mr Reeves submitted that the increase in car ownership and its impact on Australian society ‘is one of the most significant themes in the second half of the twentieth century’. He stated that due to its intactness, architectural expression and position the association of Total House with this movement can be readily appreciated better than in other similar examples.
3. Mr Reeves was also of the view that an important parallel theme to the provision of dedicated off-street carparking is the emergence of the hybrid use of multi-storey carparking and office space. He submitted that, of the buildings which represented this hybrid type at the time, Total House stands out for its intactness, architectural quality and the inclusion of the office storeys in the initial proposal – rather than as a subsequent addition.
4. In written submissions the Nominator concurred with the recommendation of the Executive Director and the National Trust, noting that Total House is one of three multi-level carparks directly facilitated by the former City of Melbourne in the period and provided a unique combination of carpark, office and entertainment space. The Nominator argued that the initial Lido nightclub, situated in the basement of Total House was also a significant element of the Place and ‘probably the only purpose built nightclub and the most extravagant available in the city at that time’.
5. In expert evidence provided on behalf of the Owner, Mr Trethowan stated that while the growth of the use of car traffic infrastructure such as car parking represented the push in post-war development, the growth in car use has contributed to Melbourne’s post-war ‘urban blight’ and is best preserved by memory alone. He expressed the view that multi-level carpark buildings of the 1950s and 1960s are not a building type which is important and should be retained. In this respect, Mr Trethowan differentiated between carparks, which he characterised as a ‘means to an end’, as opposed to shopping centres and drive through retail outlets which are the ‘ends in themselves’.
6. Mr Trethowan expressed the view that the Lido nightclub mentioned in the Nominator’s submission is not important to the course of Victoria’s history and stated that ‘[n]othing remains today that associates Total House with [the Lido’s] existence’.
7. Mr Trethowan also questioned the assertion contained in submissions lodged by the National Trust that Total House was the first carpark in Victoria combined with another use (e.g. in a ‘hybrid’ format). Mr Trethowan argued that Kings Parkade at 34-60 Little Collins Street was completed one year before Total House and was also of a hybrid format.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion A is satisfied.
2. It was accepted by all parties that the rise in the use of motorcars post-World War II and the resulting change to the form of the City (and State) is of importance to the pattern of Victoria’s cultural history and has made a ‘noticeable and influential’ impact. The Committee is of the view that the rise of the motor car is one of the themes that has had the greatest impact upon Victoria’s cultural history over the past 60 or so years.
3. To satisfy this criterion, the Criteria and Threshold Guidelines also require that the Total House building has a clear association with the theme and that the theme is reflected in the physical fabric of the place.
4. The Executive Director, the Nominator and the National Trust each submitted that the carpark has a clear association with the growth of car use in the post-war period and that as the building was specifically designed to accommodate cars, the use is evident in the fabric. The Committee concurs. The construction of a carpark is clearly related to the growth of vehicular traffic. Further, in the Committee’s view, the form of the building clearly reflects ‘the massive increase in car ownership and infrastructure post-World War II’.

## Criterion D - Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

1. All parties agreed that Brutalist architecture is an important phase in Victoria’s history. The parties disputed whether the Place was a notable example of Brutalist architecture.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director submitted that the Place satisfies Criterion D as ‘one of the earliest and best expressions of Brutalist architecture in Victoria’. According to the Executive Director, the Place reflects the ideals of Brutalism seen in ‘differentiating the functional parts of the building and the ‘honest’ display of its materials and structure’. Submissions from the Executive Director argued that Total House is a very early example of a multi-story Japanese inspired Brutalist building in Victoria and an outstanding example of the Japanese influence on architecture at the time.
2. In their written submissions, the Nominator agreed with the Executive Director’s comments and characterised Total House as a ‘landmark of post-WWII modernist design, both in form and function’. They submitted that the landmark nature of the design is evident in the use of cantilevered reinforced concrete and the use of off-form concrete.
3. In his expert evidence on behalf of the National Trust, Mr Reeves agreed with the Executive Director’s submission that the Place satisfied Criterion D. Mr Reeves submitted that from the late 1950s Japanese influence could be seen in many aspects of Australian culture including architectural design and it was at this time that Japan became a destination for Australian architects travelling overseas. Mr Reeves argued that the influence of Japanese architecture on the design of Total House is well established. He stated that this influence can be seen in the design of the concrete balustrading and the use of the multi-storey carpark and elevated office block to express two primary functions as ‘separate volumes’. Furthermore he is of the view that Total House is the largest and a notably early example of a building ‘demonstrating the pervasive influence of contemporary Japanese architecture’. Mr Reeves concluded that Total House demonstrates characteristics of the Brutalist class of buildings and is ‘a significant benchmark in the early development of the style in Victoria’.
4. Ms Roberts also supported the conclusion of the Executive Director, that the Place satisfied Criterion D. She asserted that the Place is important as an excellent example of a building constructed in the Brutalist style and a building which illustrates the engagement of Victorian architects with Japanese Brutalism in the 1950s and 1960s. She concurred with the Nominator that the Place is a ‘distinctive Victorian example of modernist architecture of the 1960s’. In oral submissions, Ms Roberts suggested that the building was comparable in quality to many of the Japanese examples of Brutalism and noted that there is a desire among parts of the architectural community to see Total House acknowledged as a significant part of Victoria’s architectural history.
5. The Owner accepted that Brutalism is a phase or period of architecture that was of significance in Victoria’s history and agreed that architecturally significant Brutalist buildings may be ‘regarded as important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of that class’. They disagreed, however, with the Executive Director’s conclusion that Total House was a notable example of a Brutalist building.
6. In expert evidence, Mr Trethowan expressed the view that to be included as an important example of Brutalism, the Place must merge international precedents and local traditions. He argued that Total House is a copy of Japanese buildings, missing key elements (such as off-form concrete details) and, as a result, ‘does not represent any ground breaking or innovative use of reinforced concrete’. As such, Mr Trethowan submitted that Total House does not represent a ‘stepping stone’ in the development of an Australian Brutalist architecture and that the Japanese influence is ‘very explicit to the extent that there is a significant degree of plagiarism where the influence is not demonstrated creatively but as a direct transplant of contemporary Japanese examples’. He contended that there are other places which better exemplify the expression of the Brutalist style in Victoria, identifying Sandown Racecourse (Japanese-influenced), Clerehan House, South Yarra and BHP Research Laboratories as examples.
7. In response the Executive Director argued that whether the Place is ‘a stepping stone’ is not relevant to satisfying Criterion D; instead the test is whether the Place has a clear association with a movement of importance in Victoria’s history. Submissions made by the Executive Director stated that ‘Brutalism is a major movement in Victoria’s architectural history’ and that this is a notable example of a building constructed in the Brutalist style. The Executive Director also took issue with Mr Trethowan’s characterisation of Melbourne Olympic Swimming Pool and Beaurepaire Centre as early examples of Brutalism. In the Executive Director’s view these were ‘modernist’ rather than Brutalist buildings.
8. In oral submissions Ms Brennan for the National Trust made the point that the question to be addressed by the Committee was not whether this was the earliest or the best Brutalist building, but whether the principal characteristics of a Brutalist building are evident in the physical fabric of the building. The National Trust submitted that this was clearly the case.
9. In response to Mr Trethowan’s argument that the Place is a direct copy of Japanese Brutalism, the Executive Director and Mr Reeves both commented that very little in architecture is totally original and that this does not necessarily limit its significance. Both Mr Reeves and the Executive Director dismissed Mr Trethowan’s characterisation of the building as ‘urban blight’ as irrelevant to whether it satisfied this Criterion.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion D is satisfied. The Criterion and Threshold Guidelines stipulate that to determine whether Criterion D is satisfied the Committee should consider: whether the place has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement ... in Victoria; whether that event, phase etc is of historical importance, having made a strong, noticeable or influential contribution to the evolution or pattern of Victoria’s society or environment; that the principal characteristics of the class are evident in the physical fabric of the place and that the place is a notable example of the class in Victoria.
2. Total House was variously characterised by parties to the hearing as being designed in a Brutalist style or a ‘Japanese- influenced’ Brutalist style. All parties were in agreement on this point and the Committee agrees that the building features key elements of the Brutalist style.
3. There was also a broad acknowledgement from the parties that Brutalism is a movement of importance in Victoria’s cultural history and has made a strong and noticeable contribution to the pattern of Victoria’s environment. The Committee believes that this was evident from the various examples of other significant ‘Brutalist’ style buildings that were identified by parties to the hearing.
4. The area of disagreement between the Owner and other parties centred around whether Total House was a notable example of a Brutalist building within Victoria. The nominators argued that it was notable as a rare, fine and highly intact example of a Brutalist building in Victoria. The expert evidence of Mr Trethowan on behalf of the Owner argued that the design was largely plagiarised and that there were other better examples of Brutalist style buildings in Victoria.
5. The Committee is of the view that Total House demonstrates the characteristics of this movement and this is evident in the fabric of the building. On the basis of the information presented to it, the Committee is satisfied that Total House is a notable, highly intact, distinctive and early example of Brutalist architecture in Victoria.

## Criterion H - Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history

1. The Executive Director submitted that the place has a connection with Gordon Banfield of the noted architectural practice – Bogle and Banfield and identified Bernard Joyce as the architect of the building in the Statement of Significance.
2. The Owner submitted that the association with Gordon Banfield is not of importance to Victoria’s history and that the Executive Director’s reference to Bernard Joyce as the architect of the building is inaccurate. The Owner claimed that this Criterion was not satisfied.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director claimed that the connection to both Bogle and Banfield and Joyce was of significance at a local level.
2. The Owner agreed that the connection to Bogle and Banfield was of significance at a local level. The Owner disputed the assertion that Joyce was the architect of the Place, to support this contention, Mr Trethowan submitted an account of his interview with Mr Harry Pels during which Mr Pels only recalled receiving design input from Gordon Banfield.
3. In oral submissions, the Executive Director acknowledged that the disputed association of Bernard Joyce with the Place is not important and agreed to its removal from the Statement of Significance and inclusion under local significance.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that the Criterion H is not satisfied. The Committee notes that the Executive Director and the National Trust agree that the connection to Bogle and Banfield is not of significance at a State level and is of the view that the Statement of Significance should be amended accordingly.
2. The Committee agrees with the Owner that there is substantial uncertainty about the involvement of Mr Joyce in the design of the Place. As a result, specific mention of Mr Joyce should be deleted from the Statement of Significance. The Committee’s changes are shown in Attachment 2 to this report.

**Conclusion**

1. The Committee finds that Total House is of historic and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It meets the significance threshold for inclusion in the Victoria Heritage Register according to Criterion A and Criterion D within the Heritage Council’s Criteria.
2. A revised Statement of Significance has been adopted and is shown in Attachment 2 to this report.



**ATTACHMENT 1**

**HERITAGE COUNCIL CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGIFICANCE**

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| CRITERION A | Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION B | Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION C | Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION D | Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects. |
| CRITERION E | Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. |
| CRITERION F | Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period. |
| CRITERION G | Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions. |
| CRITERION H | Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history. |

**These were adopted by the Heritage Council at its meeting on 7 August 2008, and replace the previous criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 March 1997.**



**ATTACHMENT 2**

***What is significant?***

Total House, built in 1964-65, comprises the Total Car Park, shops at ground level, the Total Office Building and a theatre in the basement.

*History Summary*

Total House was one of a number of multi-storey car parks constructed in the City of Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s in response to the massive rise in car ownership during the post-war period. In 1955 the City of Melbourne recommended that parking stations be established on every city block. The site of the future Total House was purchased in 1959-61 by the City of Melbourne and tenders for a new car park were advertised in 1962. The new building was designed by the architectural firm of Bogle & Banfield Associates, a partnership of Alan Bogle (1902-76) and Gordon Banfield (1922-2007). The developer of Total House was the Savoy Car Park Company, which was controlled by Gordon Banfield, who owned or developed many car parks and entertainment venues in the city in the 1960s and 1970s. It is one of the earliest examples in Victoria of the Brutalist style, which incorporated ideas of integrity in the expression of materials, structure and function, and gave rise to dramatic building forms. Brutalism dominated construction in post-war Japan, and details of these buildings were widely published and admired by western architects: in Australia Robin Boyd published a monograph on Kenzo Tange in 1962. At this time many Australian architects visited Japan. The design of Total House shows a strong Japanese influence. In the basement of Total House was the luxuriously-appointed Lido nightclub, the first of its kind in Victoria. Most of the shop fronts and the entry to the offices were altered in the 1980s or 1990s, with glass canopies added at this time.

*Description Summary*

Total House is a Brutalist style reinforced concrete building with shops on the ground floor along Russell and Little Bourke Streets, seven elevated parking decks above, four levels of offices with a smaller footprint elevated above the top deck, with a theatre in the basement. The car park levels are utilitarian in design, with supporting columns inset from all edges so that from the street they appear as floating platforms dominated by the balustrades, which are divided by long slots and give a strong horizontal emphasis. The elevated office block takes the form of an almost solid box open to the north and south with protruding frames around deeply inset curtain walls. It is supported above the top deck on cruciform columns and beams at the corners, allowing it to appear virtually unsupported in views from the ground. When built the concrete was unpainted as on most of the laneway elevation, but the exterior of the car park was painted blue in the 1980s. Panels of dark brickwork were once a feature of the exterior and interior of the ground floor but apart from two sections along Little Bourke Street these have been painted white.

This site is part of the traditional land of the Kulin Nation.

***How is it significant?***

Total House satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history

Criterion D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

***Why is it significant?***

Total House is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

Total House reflects the massive increase in car ownership in the post-Word War II period and the infrastructure developed to accommodate the large numbers of cars in the City of Melbourne. The construction of off-street car parking facilities became essential to the economic well-being and growth of the Central Business District to relieve congestion and provide access for shoppers and businessmen. (Criterion A)

Total House is a landmark of post-World War II modernist design and is one of the earliest and best expressions of Brutalist architecture in Victoria. Brutalism incorporated ideas of the integrity of expression of materials, structure and function. Total House reflects these ideals in differentiating the functional parts of the building and the ‘honest’ display of its materials and structure. Total House is also an outstanding example of Japanese influence on architecture in Victoria in the post-war period. Until then local architects had been inspired largely by the buildings of Europe and the United States, but the innovative Brutalist concrete architecture of post-war Japan was widely admired and published in the west, and inspired Australian architects to visit Japan at this time to research its architecture and landscapes. (Criterion D)

Total House is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history

Criterion D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history.

Total House demonstrates the involvement of the Melbourne City Council in the development of car parking facilities in the city in the 1950s and 1960s. The theatre is significant as the only purpose-built nightclub opened in Melbourne in the post-war period, and during its time as the Lido offered the most extravagant nightclub experience in the city. (Criterion A)

Total House is the most architecturally interesting of the multi-storey car parks constructed in Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s, and the design of the office section with its box-like form with a protruding frame was to become a continuing theme in architecture in Victoria. (Criterion D)

Total House is significant for its association with the architectural firm of Bogle & Banfield Associates which was responsible for some of Melbourne’s most important buildings in the post-war period. Gordon Banfield was described in the mid-1970s as the largest landowner in the city, and his companies owned or developed many car parks and entertainment venues in the city in the 1960s and 1970s. (Criterion H)



**ATTACHMENT 3**

**PROPOSED PERMIT POLICY**

DRAFT ONLY – NOT YET APPROVED BY THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

The purpose of the Permit Policy is to assist when considering or making decisions regarding works to the place. It is recommended that any proposed works be discussed with an officer of Heritage Victoria prior to making a permit application. Discussing any proposed works will assist in answering any questions the owner may have and aid any decisions regarding works to the place. It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan is undertaken to assist with the future management of the cultural significance of the place.

All of the registered place is integral to the significance of the place and alterations are subject to permit application.

The extent of registration covers the whole site. The addition of new features or structures on the site may impact upon the cultural heritage significance of the place and requires a permit. The purpose of this requirement is not to prevent any further development on this site, but to enable control of possible adverse impacts on heritage significance during that process. Interior works in the office building are permit exempt provided they are not visible from outside the building.

**Exemptions for minor works:**

Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

**PROPOSED PERMIT EXEMPTIONS**

**General Conditions:**

**1.** All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

**2.** Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

**3.** If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

**4.** Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

**5.** Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

**Interiors of Office Building:**

Interior works to the office building that are not visible from outside the building.



**ATTACHMENT 4**

### EXTENT OF REGISTRATION

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 2329 held by the Executive Director being all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 320291, Lot 1 on Title Plan 681552, Lots 1 and 2 on Title Plan 580160, Lot 1 on Title Plan 109888 and Lots 1 and 2 on Title Plan 891700.

2. All of the building marked B1 on Diagram 2329 held by the Executive Director.

