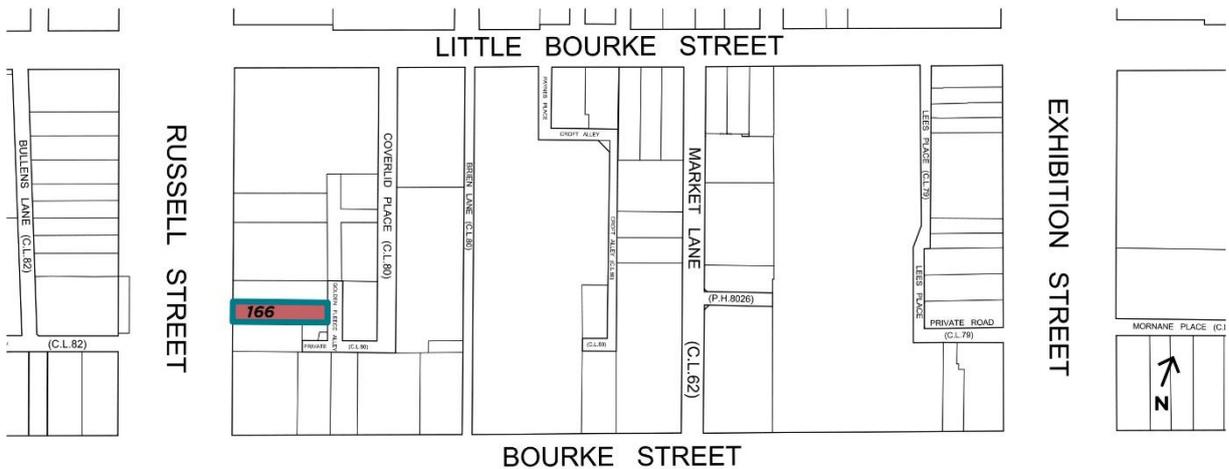


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Shop
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	166 Russell Street Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	108586



SURVEY DATE: October 2017

SURVEY BY: Context

<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	H7822-1540	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	No
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Possibly William J Ellis (not confirmed)	<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	C
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Victorian Period (1851-1901)	<b>BUILDER:</b>	Thomas Dally
		<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>	1877

**THEMES**

<b>ABORIGINAL THEMES</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
<b>HISTORIC THEMES</b>	<b>DOMINANT SUB-THEMES</b>
5 Building a Commercial City	5.5 Developing a retail centre
	<b>OTHER SUB-THEMES</b>
3 Shaping the urban landscape	3.2 Expressing an architectural style

**LAND USE**

<b>HISTORIC LAND USE</b>	
<b>Archaeological block no:</b> 31	<b>Inventory no:</b> 540
<b>Character of Occupation:</b> Commercial	
Land sale details not provided.	
1866 Cox	Building on site
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Shop and residence
1905/1906	Shop and residence
<b>THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE</b>	
1890s	Shop and residence
1920s	Cafes and Temperance.
1960s	Not able to be determined.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map

**SUMMARY**

Originally built as one of an identical pair, this four-storey commercial building now stands as a single building, following the demolition of 168 Russell Street c.1970. The cohesive arrangement of elements such as arched windows openings, moulded cornices and parapet detailing forms an Italianate façade to the upper floors.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Building a commercial city

#### *Developing a retail centre*

Even before the early 1850s, Melbourne had established the foundational infrastructure for international trade and commerce, including retail markets, shipping agents, and industry and finance houses - the beginnings of an entrepreneurial global city (Context 2012:2).

Retailing in Melbourne gained official recognition when eight market commissioners were elected in 1841 from a roll of local voters. The commissioners established the Western Market, which became the principal place for selling fresh food, with many goods transported from Melbourne to pastoral settlements. At this time Melbourne's population was 4479, and the colony's was 20,416 (Young and Spearritt 2008). The growth of retailing was accompanied by the construction of warehouses to store goods.

Miles Lewis notes that various precincts within the city centre had emerged by the early 1840s, and that this pattern

*remained little changed into the 20th century and which ... survives today – mercantile and warehousing activity near the Pool and the wharves, banking in central Collins Street, the retailing heart between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets, the medical precinct in the vicinity of Dr Richard Howitt's house in Collins Street East, and so on (cited in Context 2012:12).*

The department store Buckley and Nunn opened in 1854, establishing Bourke Street as the preferred retail strip.

Suburban retailing increased towards the end of the 1880s as greater Melbourne's population approached 280,000 and tramlines transported shoppers to suburban shops (Young and Spearritt 2008).

Retail premises in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century generally included upper-level accommodation for families involved in the business. Multi-storey shop and dwelling type buildings housing ground-level shop with rooms above were constructed across the retail strips of Melbourne, and three- or more storied commercial and retail buildings began to proliferate between Bourke and Lonsdale streets from the late 1880s (Lovell Chen 2017:220).

### Shaping the urban landscape

#### *Expressing an architectural style*

In the 1870s and 1880s there was a building boom, both commercial and residential. The 1880s property boom made its mark on commercial design in the central city, with a new, bold generation of architects. Renaissance and Italianate revival influences with simpler form and detail were commonly used throughout the Victorian period from the 1850s to the 1880s. The extent to which these styles could be reproduced was dependent on several factors including the skill of the architect, the importance of the building and its cost. From the 1880s Boom Style commercial buildings, such as William Pitt's Windsor Hotel and the Block Arcade, were characterised by increasingly rich decoration (Context 2012: 17).

## SITE HISTORY

The land at 166 Russell Street is part of Crown Allotment 1, Block 23, purchased in April 1839 by a Sydney businessman Archibald Mossman, who also bought Allotments 2, 3, 4 and 20 in the same block (DCLS). The first documented occupation of the land at 166 Russell Street was in 1866 (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993). In a study of the Little Bourke Street Precinct, Graeme Butler noted that there is a remnant rubble basalt wall incorporated into the rear wall of 166 Russell Street, which presumably dates from the precinct's main growth period in the mid-nineteenth century (Butler 1989:43).

In 1877, the current mid-Victorian four-storey building replaced the single- and two-storey buildings that existed on the site. The current building at 166 Russell Street was one of a row of identical shops known as 166-168 Russell Street (Figure 1, Figure 2).



Figure 1. A 1920s bird-eye view over Bourke Street shows the subject building at its full extent. (Source: Row 1932, SLV)

In October 1877, the then owner, watchmaker John Powell, submitted a building application to erect two three-storey shops on the land formerly numbered 108-110 (currently 166-168) Russell Street. The builder was Thomas Dally, and it is probable that the architect was William J Ellis, who invited tenders for erecting 'two three-storey shops and dwellings' in Russell Street at the same time (MCC registration no 7379, as cited in AAI record no 73082; *Argus* 8 September 1877:11). In December of the same year, tenders were invited for slating the roofs of two shops next to the Temperance Hall, and the shops were completed by early 1878 (*Argus* 7 December 1877:3; RB 1878).

Although the building application and the tender notice specified the building as three storeys, it is likely that the building was completed as a pair of four-storey premises, as the first Net Annual Value (NAV) of each shop at 166-168 Russell Street in 1877-78 was £200, which was significantly higher than the NAV of £160 of the adjoining three-storey Temperance Hall at 170 Russell Street (RB 1878). Each containing eight rooms and a ground-floor shop, the shops at 166-168 Russell Street were as tall as the Temperance Hall, later the Savoy Theatre, now demolished (Figure 2).



Figure 2. 166-168 Russell Street before the demolition of no 168. (Source: VHD)

According to the Mahlstedt Fire Survey Plans until the mid-nineteenth century, both 166-168 Russell Street and the Savoy Hotel were the tallest buildings on the east side of Russell Street between Bourke and Lonsdale streets, an area that had been developed mainly with one or two-storey retail buildings (Figure 2) (S&Mc 1884-1942; Mahlstedt Map, section 1, no 4, 1910, 1925 & 1948).

The tenants at 166 Russell Street between 1877 and 1880 were Daniel O'Connell, tailor, and John Powell & Co, watchmakers, who were also the first owner of the subject building. Between 1880 and the mid-1880s, it was leased to Joseph Davis's furniture warehouse, until it was replaced by pawnbroker Jacob Solomon's office in the late 1890s. Later, the building housed the Commercial Bank of Australia in the early 1920s (S&Mc 1920) and a Chinese café called 'Eastern Café' between the mid-1920s and the mid-1940s (S&Mc 1925-1942). In the 1970s, a Chinese restaurant occupied the site.

The land at 166-168 Russell Street was subdivided in 1921 when number 168 was sold to Josephine Ignatius and Benjamin Alentorn, who lived and ran a restaurant on the site at 168 Russell Street (S&Mc 1922). The building at 168 Russell Street was demolished c1970 to make way for the current three-storey office building (CoMMaps).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The building at 166 Russell Street was originally built as one of an identical pair (166 and 168 Russell Street). Number 168 was demolished c1978. 166 Russell Street remains as a separate single building.

The four-storey brick building has a stuccoed front façade, with face brick to each side. The cohesive arrangement of elements such as arched window openings, moulded cornices and parapet detailing results in an Italianate façade to the upper floors.

Each floor has a set of three identical window openings. The first floor and third floor have rounded arched openings with key stones and moulded architraves. A moulded cornice and decorative frieze run along the façade at the spring point of the arches. The second floor has segmented arched openings, with keystones and moulded architraves. Double hung timber windows occur on each level. A decorative moulded cornice runs along the base of each level.

A decorative parapet at the top of the building conceals a hipped roof. Originally, the parapet had a pediment located centrally over the pair of buildings (see Figure 2). This has now been removed, but

a scroll end detail remains on the south end. On the northern edge of the building, a rough edge to the rendered finish marks the location where the paired building (now demolished) joined the subject building (Figure 3).



Figure 3. The rough edging at the northern end bordering a c1970 building currently at 168 Russell Street. (Source: Context, January 2018).

The rear form of the early building is intact with face red brick and original windows still evident. A remnant rubble basalt wall is evident at the rear of the property. It likely dates from the precinct's main growth period in the mid-nineteenth century (Figure 4) (Butler 1989:43).



Figure 4. Bluestone section dating from the mid-nineteenth century. (Source: Context, November 2017)

### **INTEGRITY**

The building form at 166 Russell Street is still intact although the paired building has been demolished. The upper front façade retains a high level of intactness apart from the central pediment that is missing. Substantial alterations have occurred at street level.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Late Victorian buildings constructed during the 1880s contributed to shaping Melbourne into a commercial city. Often with multiple storeys, the buildings accommodated commercial or retail business at ground level and office, workshop floors or residences to the upper floors. Being influenced by the 1880s property boom, these buildings were popularly treated with Renaissance revival and Italianate styles, which are closely associated with Melbourne's Boom Style.

The subject building compares well with the following examples, drawn chiefly from the Central City Heritage Review 2011, being of a similar use, scale, location and creation date. The images are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

Selected examples from the 1880s include:

*209 -215 Bourke Street, 1876 (Interim HO124 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review )*

Built in 1876 this three-storey, late Victorian building is comprised of four shops with residences above. The upper façade presents a unified arrangement and exhibits the classical styling typical of the period.



Figure 5. 209-215 Bourke Street constructed 1876. (Context 2018)

*Former Gordon Building, 384-386 Flinders Lane, 1885 & 1888 (Interim HO1271 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

Also designed by architect Frederick Williams, 384-386 Flinders Lane was built as office accommodation. The distinctive four-storey (plus basement) office building was originally built as two-storeys (plus basement) in 1885, with an additional two-storeys built several years later in 1888. The cohesive arrangement of elements such as arched windows openings, moulded cornices and parapet detailing results in an integrated Italianate façade.



Figure 6. 384-386 Flinders Lane constructed 1885 and 1888. (Source: Context 2017)

*Former Wilson's shop & residence, 299 Elizabeth Street, 1885 (HO1017)*

A three-storey rendered brick shop and former residence. Designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style and built for Charles Wilson in 1885.



Figure 7. Former Wilson's shop & residence, 299 Elizabeth Street constructed 1885. (Source: CoMMaps)

*Former Warburton's shops & warehouse, 365 Little Bourke Street, 1887 (HO1052)*

A pair of three-storey brick former warehouses to Little Bourke and Rankins Lane with another two-storey building to Warburton Lane with ground level parking. Designed by Twentyman & Askew and built by William Radden. It was refurbished and subdivided into a mix of retail, office and residential units in 2000.



Figure 8. Former Warburton's shops and warehouse, 365 Little Bourke Street constructed 1887. (Source: CoMMaps)

166 Russell Street is similar to 209-215 Bourke Street. Both were early examples of three/four-storey retail and residential buildings constructed in the late 1870s. 166 Russell Street compares well with the other examples as a relatively intact example of a late Victorian building constructed in a simplified Italianate style.

**ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

✓	<p><b>CRITERION A</b> Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION B</b> Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION C</b> Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).</p>
✓	<p><b>CRITERION D</b> Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).</p>
✓	<p><b>CRITERION E</b> Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION F</b> Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION G</b> 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 (social significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION H</b> Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).</p>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

**MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME**

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

**OTHER**

N/A

## REFERENCES

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Mahlstedt, G 1910, Index to City of Melbourne detail fire survey, Mahlstedt, Melbourne.

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Row 1932, 'Melbourne 1920, showing Bourke and Elizabeth Street', State Library of Victoria (SLV): Imaging 19th Century Victoria Digitising Project; Row Circuit Camera Views of Melbourne, accessed 22 March 2018.

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Young, John and Spearritt, Peter 2008, 'Retailing' in eMelbourne, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM01241b.htm>, accessed 13 June 2017.

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**PREVIOUS STUDIES**

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**Central Activities  
District Conservation  
Study 1985** D

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**Central City Heritage  
Study 1993** C

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**Review of Heritage  
overlay listings in the  
CBD 2002** Ungraded

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**Central City Heritage  
Review 2011** Ungraded

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Heritage Place:** Shop

**PS ref no:** Interim HO1260



**What is significant?**

The four-storey building at 166 Russell Street, Melbourne, which was completed in 1877 and which survives as part of a pair.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The building’s original external form, materials and detailing;
- The building’s high level of integrity to its original design;
- Decorative parapet with scroll end detail (southern end);
- Round and segmented arched window openings with keystones and moulded architraves;
- Moulded major and minor cornices;
- Double-hung timber framed windows;
- Early built form at rear of building with face red brickwork and extant windows; and
- Remnant rubble basalt wall (at rear)

Later alterations made to the street level façade is not significant.

**How it is significant?**

166 Russell Street, Melbourne is of local historic, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

**Why it is significant?**

166 Russell Street is historically significant as a Victorian-era building that represents a key phase in the retail development of Melbourne when investment in city property from the late 1870s culminated in the economic and building boom of the 1880s. Built for owner and watchmaker John Powell, 166 Russell

Street is typical of buildings of the Victorian era that housed retail outlets at ground level with residences and workspaces for business-owners on the floors above. It is a relatively early example, predating the 1880s boom period of development. The remains of a bluestone wall that border Golden Fleece Alley is significant as a reminder of earlier site development. (Criterion A)

166 Russell Street is a representative example of a retail and residential building from the mid-Victorian era. It demonstrates the Italianate style that was popular for many buildings of this period. While the building with which it was paired has been demolished, 166 Russell Street remains legible with its attributes of Victorian form, scale and stucco wall decoration. (Criterion D)

166 Russell Street is aesthetically significant as it exhibits key characteristics of the Italianate style, including a cohesive arrangement of classical elements such as a decorated parapet, moulded cornices, and arched window openings with moulded architraves and keystones. (Criterion E)

### **Primary source**

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Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)

