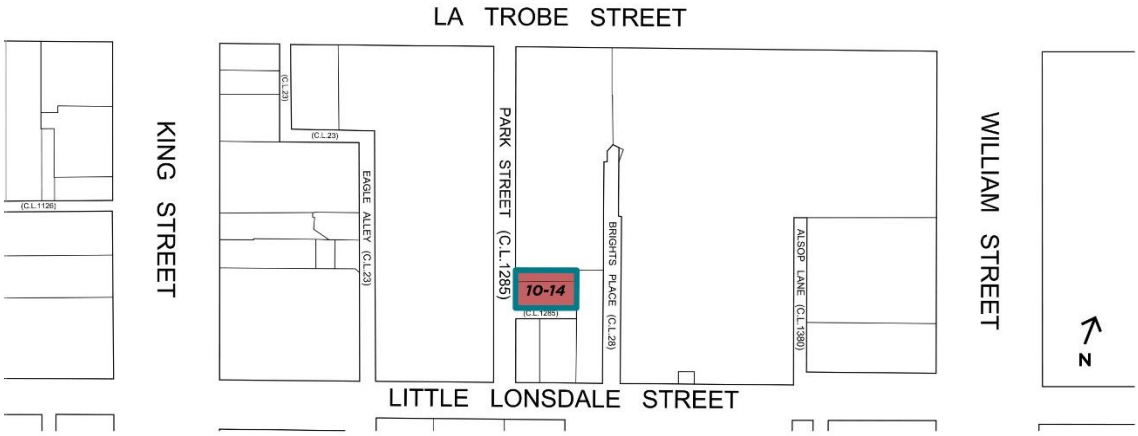
SITE NAME	CitiPower (former Melbourne City Council Substation)
STREET ADDRESS	10-14 Park Street Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	107422



SURVEY DATE: October 2017 SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY	H7822-1022	**EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY**	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Heritage Place	**PROPOSED CATEGORY**	Significant
		FORMER GRADE	C
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Not confirmed, but likely to be the architects' office at Melbourne City Council	**BUILDER:**	Not known
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Interwar Period (c.1919-c.1940)	**DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:**	1928

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review Vols. 3 & 4 June 2016) have therefore not been identified here
HISTORIC THEMES	**DOMINANT SUB-THEMES**
6 Creating a functioning city	6.3 Providing essential services

LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
Archaeological block no: 02	**Inventory no:** 22
Character of Occupation: Governmental, Services/Infrastructure	
Land sale details not provided.	
1866 Cox	Map shows building fronting La Trobe Street, possibly extending into this site.
1905/6 Mahlstedt	3 small single storey buildings on site.
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Not able to be determined
1920s	Power
1960s	Power

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

10-14 Park Street is one of several small-scale electrical substations built in the interwar period as part of the expansion of electricity supply and distribution. It operated for over 60 years as part of the Melbourne City Council's electricity supply department. It continues to operate as a substation.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Creating a functioning city

Providing essential services

Melbourne was one of the first major cities in the world, along with London and New York, to have a public electricity supply where electricity was distributed from a central generating station for use by paying private customers and for public street lighting. The nascent electricity supply enterprises adapted quickly to a new public utility technology that had its origins in the UK, USA and Europe but 'which enabled local ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit to flourish'. In addition, Melbourne's early public electricity supply development encompassed most of the evolutionary technical and structural facets of the industry (Pierce 2009:8). The Melbourne City Council was the first metropolitan council to establish its own electricity supply and distribution network in 1894.

Ray Proudley in the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* writes that:

> *In the late 1870s…electric lighting had its first impact on gas companies around the world. In [Australia] in 1881 the Victorian Electric Light Co. displayed an electric lamp (with the generator powered by a gas engine) outside its Swanston Street premises and the first Melbourne Electrical Exhibition took place in the following year…*
>
> *Small electricity generating plants were [subsequently] installed to illuminate individual premises. The Victorian Electric Light Co. was succeeded by the Australian Electric Co. and later by the Melbourne Electric Supply Co. among numerous others. Locally, the first example of the general supply of electricity from a central point was the establishment by the Melbourne City Council of the Spencer Street Power Station from which the streets of the central business district were first illuminated on 7 March 1894…*
>
> *[The first production and supply of electricity in Melbourne was commenced by private companies in the 1880s and 1890s.] In 1896 the Victorian Parliament enacted the Electric Light and Power Act to bring some sense of order and regulation to what until then had been a new and totally unregulated industry dealing in a potentially hazardous field (*Proudley 2008).

Under the 1896 Act, a number of local councils operated Municipal Electricity Undertakings (MEUs), enabling them to manage electricity distribution and retailing to their ratepayers. The City of Melbourne took up the first MEU in 1897.

By 1903 the Melbourne City Council Electricity Supply Department (MCCESD) was one of four electricity supply companies in Victoria and supplied 53.6 per cent of total generating capacity. Electric trams relied on this power supply when they commenced operation in Melbourne in 1906. The Melbourne Electricity Supply Co (MES Co.) formed in 1907, when the Electric Light & Traction Company changed its name (Pierce 2009:5-6).

Demand for electricity grew rapidly in the early decades of the twentieth century. The bulk of the Melbourne metropolitan area was supplied by just two companies, the aforementioned MCCESD and MES Co. They obtained their supply from the Spencer Street Power Station until the Newport A Power station was built at the mouth of the Yarra River between 1913 and 1918. It was constructed

by the Victorian Railways to supply energy for the electrification of the suburban rail system, but also supplied bulk electricity to the MCCESD and MES Co (Edwards 1969:27-29).

The State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) was established in 1921 under the chairmanship of Sir John Monash. The first SECV projects were the construction of the first brown coal power plant at Newport B (adjacent to the Victorian Railways Newport A traction power station), which came on line in 1923, and Yallourn A (the first Latrobe Valley power station), which opened in stages from 1924. Meanwhile, the SECV began to establish and develop its supply and distribution network. The first stage involved the construction of substations at key locations, which enabled the SECV to progressively assume control for the supply and distribution of power in the metropolitan area. From 1922 to 1924 four metropolitan substations were constructed: in the Melbourne City Council area, in operation from 1923; in Ascot Vale, in operation from 1924; in Brunswick, in operation from 1924; and in Collingwood, in operation from 1924. In 1930, the MES Co. was formally acquired by the SECV (Pierce 2009:8).

As Proudley writes,

> *However, as a consequence of the earlier private ownership, electricity distribution remained at least partly in the domain of local government with eleven Municipal Electrical Undertakings distributing and selling electricity purchased from the SECV [State Electricity Commission of Victoria], [which] [f]rom the 1950s to the early 1980s…expanded dramatically (*Proudley 2008)

The Spencer Street Power Station supplied the inner city of Melbourne with electricity until the 1960s.

In 1994, the Kennett government launched an extensive reform of the Victorian electricity industry, resulting in the creation of five electricity distribution companies based on geographic regions that took over the responsibilities of the SECV and the 11 MEUs in inner Melbourne.

SITE HISTORY

The site at 10-14 Park Street was part of Allotment 15, Section 31 in the City of Melbourne (CoMMaps). By c1877 Park Street had been formed opposite Flagstaff Gardens to allow access between La Trobe and Little Lonsdale streets (RHSV 2018). Occupation of the site appears to have been mainly residential until 1921, with three small single-storey dwellings, presumably terrace housing, occupying the site from 1895, possibly earlier (MMBW Detail Plan no 736, 1895).

Electrical substation

Between 1898 and 1900 the Melbourne City Council acquired the assets of three private electricity companies operating within its municipal boundaries, creating a new company known as the Melbourne City Council Electricity Supply Department (MCCESD), and subsequently constructed a number of electric substations. In 1907, the City of Melbourne called for tenders for the erection of electric substations to plans and specifications available from the City Architect's Office (*Age* 3 July 1907:4).

In 1921, the MCCESD supply capacity was augmented by provision for importing up to 5000kW at 6.6kV from the newly constructed Victorian Railways power station at Newport. In addition, in 1925 the first stage of conversion to three-phase importation from the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) for the Melbourne Electric Supply Company (MES Co.) supply areas was introduced (Pierce 2009: 7-8). A number of substations throughout the city were upgraded or rebuilt in order to

convert the 22,000v alternating current generated at the Newport power station to a 1,500 direct current before it was transmitted to overhead wires for use by electric trains.

It is likely that the subject site was one of the substations nominated for an upgrade, as, in September 1928 the City of Melbourne advertised tenders for the erection of an electric substation in Park Street (*Age* 12 September 1928:4). It is assumed that the building was constructed later in 1928. No information about the building's designer could be found, although it is likely to have been designed by the then city architect. A 1962 map shows the substation in situ (Figure 1).

The electric substation operated under Melbourne City Council for over sixty years until the privatisation of the electricity industry saw it transferred to CitiPower Ltd in 1995 (CT:V2919 F671).

Today, 10-14 Park Street continues to operate as an electric substation.

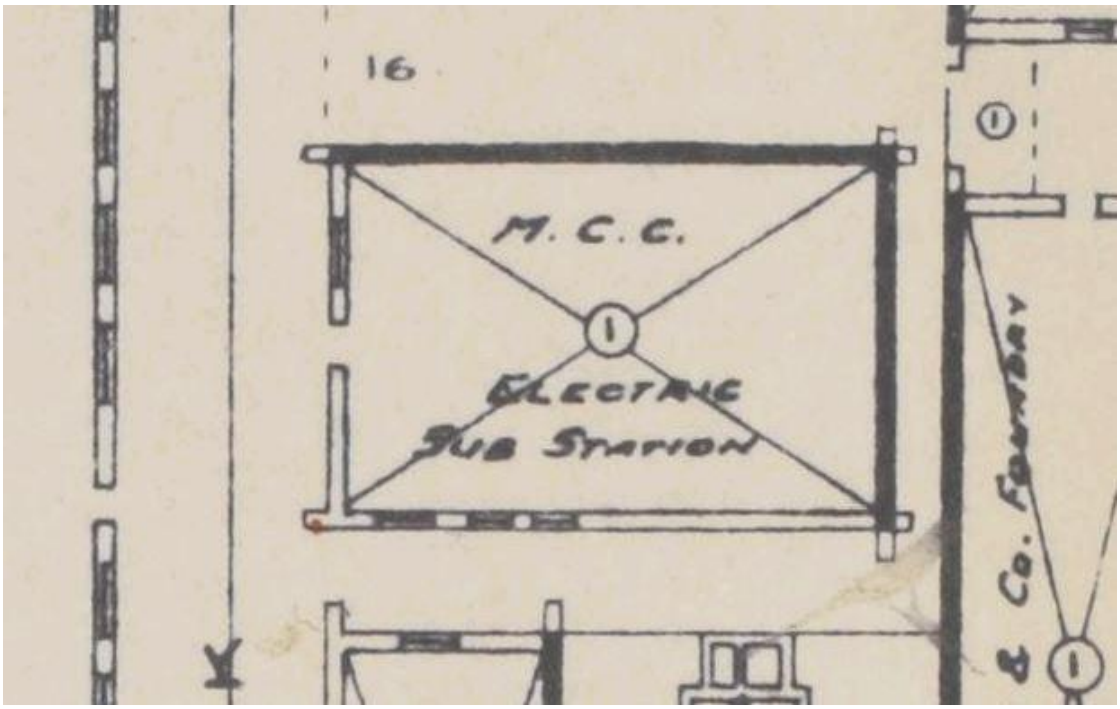


Figure 1. Detail from a reprinted 1962 Mahlstedt plan shows the Melbourne City council (MCC) electric substation occupying the subject site. (Source: Mahlstedt Map Section 2, no 2a,1962).

SITE DESCRIPTION

10-14 Park Street is situated in a laneway between LaTrobe and Lonsdale Streets near Flagstaff Gardens. Its immediate surroundings are those of tall buildings to the north and east and two-storey shops and residence to the south, separated by a small laneway (470-474 Little Lonsdale Street, also assessed as part of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review).

10-14 Park Street is a single-storey Interwar red brick substation with an industrial aesthetic. It has a hipped roof concealed by a façade parapet. It combines a brick structure expressed across the façade as large piers between the large door and square format window with steel framed glazing. The stucco parapet is gabled above a moulded string course and there is an oculus window with timber ventilator. The large window has a sill with sheet panelling below before a second sill located just above pavement level. This feature appears in other substations (Figure 6, Figure 7) and appears to be an important design feature, providing ventilation to the machinery within.

INTEGRITY

10-14 Park Street is a site that has high integrity with no visible alterations to the exterior. It retains its original face brick wall surface and window and door openings. The ventilation panels have been sheeted over underneath the window sill. Whilst its surroundings have been mostly redeveloped, 470-474 Little Lonsdale Street provide comparable scale to the substation. The interior has not been investigated and it is not known whether any of the machinery and equipment remains. The building still retains its original use as a substation.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The earliest substations were small-scale buildings and their importance is not necessarily reflected in their design. The expansion of electricity supply in the interwar period reflected the importance of this new type of industrial building and efforts were made to produce designs that reflected their location and the importance of their function. Substations benefited from the philosophy that saw industrial uses as worthy recipients of design inspiration and sometimes even flamboyance as a way of celebrating the new development of electricity. Electrical substations across Melbourne show a variety of architectural manners, generally reflecting the civic and urban design concerns of the municipal electricity supply departments, the earlier electric companies and the role of the SEC. Pavilion styles proliferate in parkland areas of the Domain and the Fitzroy Gardens. Other substations in urban streetscapes tend to more austere modernism or simply adhere to a functional industrial aesthetic or a simple gable roofed 'shed'. Even in the more austere examples there is generally brickwork detail and care taken in their massing and composition (Biosis, 2007:19-25).

A large portion of the first power station erected by Melbourne City Council is included on the Heritage Overlay (HO737). This complex comprises the surviving remnants of the power station erected in 1894 to power electric lighting in the streets (Figure 2). Several other buildings used as substations are within existing or proposed precinct HOs.

The following examples are comparable with the subject building, being of a similar style, scale and construction date, although their original uses vary. The images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dated c2000 or later.

Substation, 651-669 Lonsdale Street, 1915 (HO737)

It is a three-storey brick substation with two basement levels, built in 1915.

Figure 2. Substation at 651-669 Lonsdale Street constructed 1915.

620-648 Little Bourke Street, c1910-1925 (HO737 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

CitiPower substation at (part of) 620-648 Little Bourke Street Melbourne is a two-storey interwar brick warehouse building constructed between 1910 and 1925 by Melbourne City Council Electricity for use as a carpenter's workshop to service its electricity supply station situated on the same site. The building was converted for use as an electric substation, likely in the 1920s or 1930s, and remains in use for that purpose today.

Figure 3. Substation at 620-648 Little Bourke Street constructed between 1910 and 1925.

1-3 Evans Lane, 1913 (Contributory in interim HO1297 Little Lonsdale Street Precinct)

Built in 1913 by builders Reynolds Bros to designs by architect W Rain, this warehouse was converted to an electrical substation in 1928, as part of a program by the City of Melbourne to supply new substations in the 1920s. It continues to operate as a substation today.

Figure 4. 1-3 Evans Lane constructed 1913.

28 Crossley Street, build date unknown (Contributory in HO500 Bourke Hill Precinct)

A single-storey substation in Crossley Street, off Bourke Street.

Figure 5. Substation at 28 Crossley Street, unknown built date.

12-14 Guildford Lane, 1920s (Contributory in HO1205 Guildford & Hardware Laneways Precinct)

It is a single-storey brick electricity substation built in the 1920s.

Figure 6., Substation at 12-14 Guildford Lane constructed c1920.

21 Market Lane, build date unknown (Contributory in HO507 Little Bourke Street Precinct)

It is a single-storey brick substation in Market Lane, off Bourke Street.

Figure 7. 21 Market Lane, unknown built date

23-25 George Street, 1938 (Interim HO1248 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

23-25 George Parade is one of several small-scale electrical substations built in the interwar period as part of the expansion of electricity supply and distribution.

Figure 8. 23-25 George Parade constructed 1938. (Source: Context 2017)

10-14 Park Street is one of several smaller substations within the City of Melbourne including 28 Crossley Street, 21 Market Lane, and 12-14 Guildford Lane. They share a common history in the development of electricity supply in the City of Melbourne and an interwar industrial aesthetic. It is comparable to 620-648 Little Bourke Street (HO737), 12-14 Guildford Lane (contributory within HO1205) and 21 Market Lane (contributory within HO507). Like the other substations, 10-14 Park Street exhibits a high level of integrity of form and use.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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

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

Age, as cited.

Argus, as cited.

Biosis, 2007, Cross Street Electrical Substation Footscray, report for the City of Maribyrnong.

City of Melbourne Interactive Maps (CoMMaps) 2018, http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/, accessed 1 April 2018.

Land Victoria, Certificates of Title (CT), as cited.

Proudley, Ray 2008, 'Light and Power' in *eMelbourne,* School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, http://www.emelbourne.net.au/, accessed 1 April 2018.

Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) 2018, *Discovery Series Brochures: Melbourne's streets and lanes: what's in a name?,* http://historyvictoria.org.au, accessed online 14 March 2018.

Mahlstedt's Pty Ltd 1962 *City of Melbourne detail fire survey. Section 2*, Mahlstedt Pty Ltd, Melbourne.

Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan, as cited, State Library of Victoria.

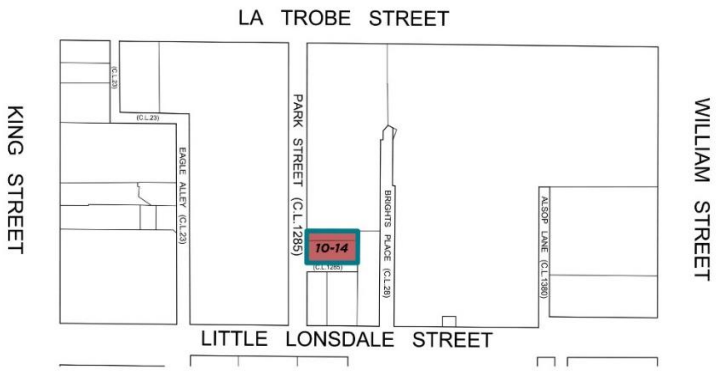
Sands & McDougall, *Melbourne and Suburban Directories* (S&Mc), as cited.

PREVIOUS STUDIES	
Central Activities District Conservation Study 1985	D
Central City Heritage Study 1993	C
Review of Heritage overlay listings in the CBD 2002	Ungraded
Central City Heritage Review 2011	Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: CitiPower (former Melbourne City Council Substation)

PS ref no: Interim HO1257



What is significant?

The electrical substation at 10-14 Park Street Melbourne, built in 1928 for the Melbourne City Council Electricity Supply Department.

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;
- Loadbearing face brickwork;
- Gabled stucco parapet with oculus window and timber ventilator
- Moulded string course;
- Pattern and size of original fenestration (Park Street (west) and south elevations); and
- Steel-framed window and ventilation panels (Park Street (west) elevation).

How it is significant?

10-14 Park Street is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The electrical substation at 10-14 Park Street is historically significant for its association with the development of services provided to Melbourne's evolving electricity system. Constructed in 1928, the building still operates as a substation for Citipower. It demonstrates the expansion of the electricity supply system established in 1894 by the Melbourne City Council Electricity Supply Department, in particular to accommodate the conversion of alternating to direct current for use by trains and other users. (Criterion A)

10-14 Park Street is representative of an Interwar substation similar to others at 620-648 Little Bourke Street, 21 Market Lane and 12-14 Guildford Lane. These buildings share a common history in the development of electricity supply in the City of Melbourne and an industrial aesthetic that contributes to the richness of building form and small scale of the Hoddle Grid, also relating to the scale of 470-474 Little Lonsdale Street. Attributes of the building are its red brick walls and stucco mouldings, parapet and

original door and window to the main façade. The building is enhanced by a high level of integrity and is legible as an industrial building in a laneway landscape. (Criterion D)

Primary source

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