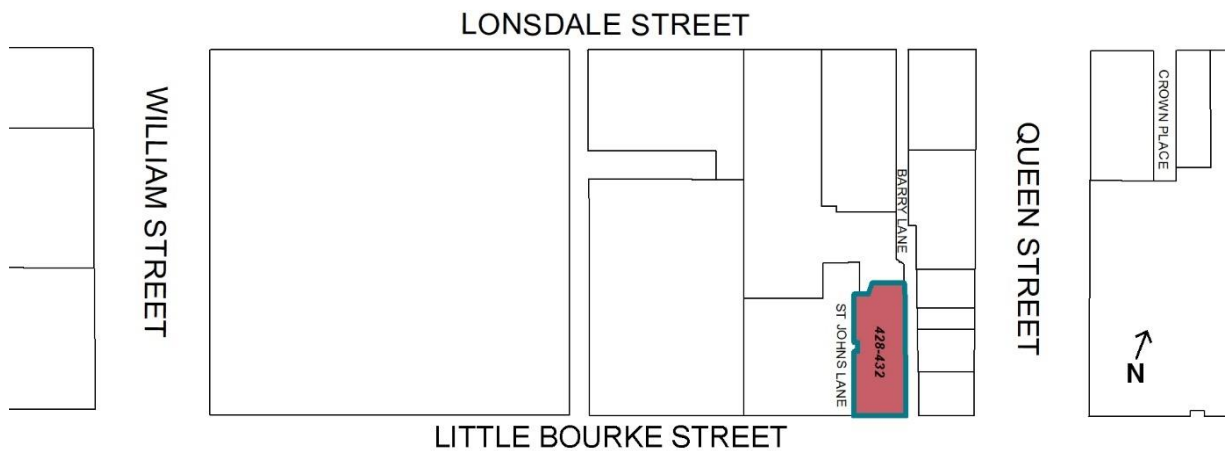


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Former Printcraft House
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	428-432 Little Bourke Street Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	105867



SURVEY DATE: October 2018		SURVEY BY: Context	
<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	H7822-1232	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	No
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Gawler & Drummond	<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	C
		<b>BUILDER:</b>	Rispin Brothers
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Interwar Period (c.1919-c.1940)Interwar Period (c1919-c1940)	<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>	1923

## 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, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
HISTORIC THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
5 Building a Commercial City	5.5 Building a manufacturing capacity

## LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
<b>Archaeological block no:</b> 19	<b>Inventory no:</b> 232
<b>Character of Occupation:</b> Commercial	
Land sale details not provided.	
1866 Cox	Building on site
1880 Panorama	Two storey building
1888 Mahlstedt	Two storey building; E Walsh, Shamrock Hotel
1905/6 Mahlstedt	Two storey building; E Walsh, Shamrock Hotel
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Hotels and lodgings
1920s	Factories and Workshops
1960s	Office

## 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

428-432 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, formerly Printcraft House, was built in 1923 for the Melbourne firm of printers, Brown, Prior & Co, who operated their printing and bookbinding business there for more than 40 years, 1923-66. The four-storey factory/warehouse building was built to a design by architects Gawler & Drummond. In 1966 it was converted to offices.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Building a Commercial City

#### *Building a manufacturing capacity*

From the 1850s, the Yarra River and the docks west of Swanston Street were in essence the 'lifeline' of the city. Port facilities and large warehouses were built in this area to serve shipping interests (Context 2012:39-40).

By the 1880s, the areas of Flinders Street, King Street, Little Bourke Street and Spencer Street comprised multiple mercantile offices, produce stores and large-scale bonded stores, including Zander's Bonded Stores and Coles Bonded Stores. As Melbourne developed through the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, so did her manufacturing industry, much of which was established in close proximity to existing warehouses and stores.

Although affected by World War One in the period 1914-1918, by 1921, 38 per cent of Melbourne's workers were employed in industry with almost all new factory jobs in Australia between 1921 and 1947 created in Sydney and Melbourne. The growth of manufacturing, assisted by a new federal tariff in 1921, stimulated urban growth and by the end of the 1920s, Melbourne's population had reached one million people. The expansion of new sectors in the manufacturing industry was maintained by buoyant levels of domestic demand (Marsden 2000:29; Dingle 2008).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the demand for residential development declined in central Melbourne as many residents moved out of the city to the suburbs, and the booming retail and manufacturing sectors rapidly took up available city properties (Marsden 2000:29-30). Multi-storey factory, workshop and warehouse buildings, some designed by architects, increasingly took over the city.

Development in the city slowed with the Great Depression that commenced in October 1929 and continued through the early 1930s. Because of a lack of finance over this period, instead of new construction, some city buildings were substantially re-modelled to create new office, commercial and industrial spaces, and also for use by government.

From the 1930s, like the rest of Australia, an increasing proportion of the city's workforce took up jobs in manufacturing, an industry that led Australia's recovery from the economic depression and a time when, the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* notes, a

*steep rise in tariffs, devaluation of the Australian pound, falling wages and electricity costs all made local producers far more competitive internationally. Textiles benefited first, then the metals industries and engineering took over as pacemakers* (Dingle 2008).

After being the centre of manufacturing in Australia in the 1920s, Melbourne's importance in this regard began to decline. During the 1940s some city factories and warehouses were left empty or converted for other uses (Context 2012:35).

### SITE HISTORY

The site of 428-432 Little Bourke Street was occupied by a building as early as 1866. By 1880, a two-storeyed building was in existence on the site, which, by 1888, housed the Shamrock Hotel and did so until c1908 (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993, Inventory no 232; *Herald* 30 July 1908:3).

The current four-storey building at 428-432 Little Bourke Street was constructed in 1923 as a printer's warehouse and three shops for Brown, Prior & Co, printers and bookbinders. The firm commissioned architects Gawler & Drummond to design the new building, which was built by the Rispin Brothers (MBAI 52870; PROV VPRS 11200/1, unit 66; *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List* 18 July 1923:5). The building was built as a four-storey reinforced concrete structure (see Figure 1).

In 1923, the *Herald* described the new brick and reinforced concrete building to be built in Post Office Place for Brown, Prior & Co (Post Office Place was the portion of Little Bourke Street between Queen and Elizabeth streets):

*The building covers an area of [32 metres] 105 feet by [12 metres] 41 feet, and is of four stories high. In the design a handmade crossman tile is to be used. The upper portion being finished in a glazed white cement. Direct light is obtained on three sides and there is a wide service right-of-way on either side of the building. The construction is brick with all the floors and roof in reinforced concrete...All the windows throughout are of metal frames... A goods lift and service lift will be installed...The building when complete and fitted up will cost approximately £14,000 (Herald 12 September 1923:10).*

Original blueprint plans indicate that the central opening at ground floor level led into a stairwell and that the floorplan was clearly arranged to accommodate a specific layout of shop and office spaces (see Figure 2). The original goods elevator opening is still visible on Barry Lane (PROV VPRS 11200/1, unit 587).

Printers and bookbinders, Brown Prior & Co, established by Francis A Brown and Henry E Prior in Queen Street by 1902, printed most of book seller and publisher Robertson & Mullens's (forerunner to Angus & Roberston) publications from 1922 at a time when Australian publishers rarely owned their own print houses. In 1923 a new company was registered, named Printcraft House Pty Ltd, and in the same year, Brown, Prior & Co built their own premises, Printcraft House, at 428-432 Little Bourke Street.

Brown, Prior & Co became Brown, Prior, Anderson Pty Ltd in 1937 (Figure 3). Bill Anderson completed his printing apprenticeship with the firm from 1908 and worked for the company from 1918. Anderson became the managing director of Brown, Prior and Anderson (BPA) in 1937; in 1966, when he was chairman of directors, the company moved to Burwood (Holroyd 1993). BPA continued as a printing house until 2013, when it went into receivership after buying the assets of failed firm Sands Print Group (Kiernan 2013).

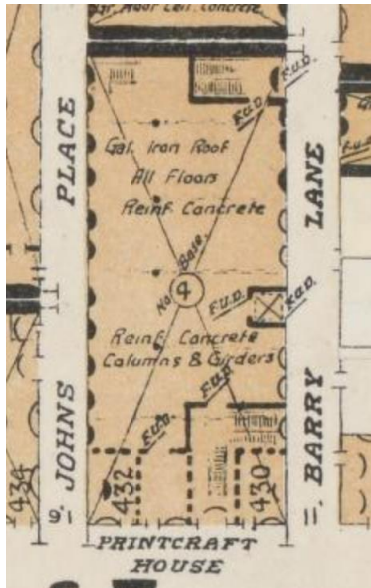


Figure 1. Mahlstedt plans showing Printcraft House in 1925. (Source: Mahlstedt Map Section 1, no 16, 1925)

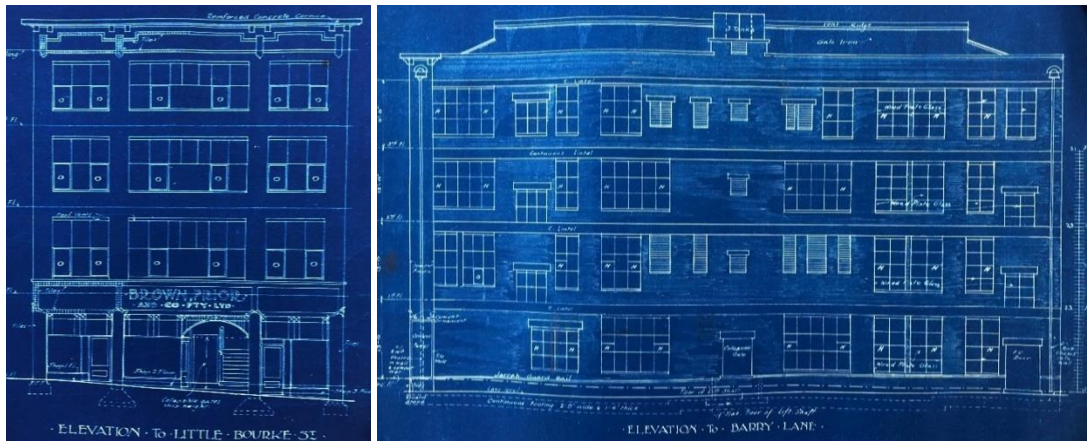


Figure 2. Front and side elevations of the subject building from architect plans 1923 (Source: PROV VPRS 11200/1, unit 587)



Figure 3. The subject building is shown in the middle ground in 1955 with the multi-storey City West Telephone Exchange in Little Bourke Street under construction behind. A sign for the original occupants Brown, Prior, Anderson P/L. is clearly visible on the side of the building. (Source: Strizic 1955, SLV copyright)

In 1960, alterations were made to the front of the building (MBAI 33888). These alterations probably included the removal of the original decorative details over the shopfronts and entry way, which are visible in the original elevation plans (PROV VPRS 11200/1, unit 587). Early Browne Prior Anderson signage on the building can be seen in the image from 1955 (see Figure 3). The building was converted to offices in 1966 after Brown Prior Anderson vacated the premises (CoMMaps).

By 1970 the building was described as a 'development site' (S&Mc 1965; 1970), and by 1974, the site had become a Post Master General's (PMG) garage (S&Mc 1974).

In 2008, the subject building was refurbished and subdivided into strata offices with a ground level bar (CoMMaps). In the same year the Danish Club leased a floor of the building, and the building became known as Denmark House. The Danish Club, established in Melbourne in 1889, moved to 428-432 Little Bourke Street after selling its former clubrooms located in a Victorian mansion on Beaconsfield Parade in Middle Park. In 2014 the Danish Club celebrated 125 years in Victoria in the subject building (Lorentzen 2014). Today the building is also home to the Swedish Consulate, as well as housing the offices of a number of other businesses.

#### *Gawler & Drummond, architects*

The architect firm Gawler & Drummond consisted of John Stevens Gawler (1885-1978) and Walter Drummond (1890-1930). The firm designed a range of domestic, industrial, commercial and church buildings, as well as buildings for the University of Melbourne Campus, including the Grainger Museum (1935-39). Other noteworthy examples are the McRorie house in Camberwell (1916) and the Deaf and Dumb Society's Church at Jolimont (1929). In 1941 the practice changed its name to Gawler & Churcher after partnering with Eric Churcher (1892-1858). Gawler was active in local politics and served as a council member of the Shire of Nunawading, and later of the City of Box Hill (1927-51). In 1948-50 he was the president of the Municipal Association, and 1949-53 he was a part-time member of the Victorian Housing Commission (Lewis 1996).

#### *Rispin Brothers, builders*

The Rispin Brothers were master builders who constructed a number of large scale projects around Melbourne. Their works include Newspaper House, built in 1932 on Collins Street near the corner of Swanston Street, and the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue in South Yarra, built in 1930; the latter is noted for its dome (*Herald*, 15 June 1933:1; *Herald*, 15 May 1930:27).

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The former Printcraft House, at 428-432 Little Bourke Street, is a four-storey factory/warehouse building constructed in loadbearing face brick with a reinforced concrete column and slab internal structure. Originally built in 1923 it was converted to offices in 1966 and then refurbished and subdivided into strata offices with a ground level retail space in 2008. Located on the northern side of Little Bourke Street between Queen Street and William Street, the building has laneways running along each side, Barry Lane to the east and St Johns Lane to the west. The building is built to the property boundaries and occupies the entire site.

The principal façade facing Little Bourke Street is of painted render over loadbearing brickwork, and consists of retail spaces at ground level with three levels above. The façade is symmetrical, comprising a wide central bay with a narrower bay each side, separated by wide rendered mullions. The ground level has been significantly altered and , includes the removal of the original shopfronts and decorative details. The levels above have a regular layout of large openings with a mix of fixed and openable casement multi-pane steel framed windows that are original. The façade terminates in a substantial cornice supported on four pairs of brackets.

The east and west façades are finished in loadbearing red face brickwork laid in English bond. They have an irregular array of openings fitted with a mixture of original and replacement multi-pane steel frame windows. Above the ground and upper storey windows are continuous painted render lintels that extend along the full length of the side elevations of the building. The lower half of the rear façade is covered with rough painted render, and has an external air conditioning plant which is supported by two large steel platforms fixed to the wall.

### **INTEGRITY**

The former Printcraft House at 428-432 Little Bourke Street is relatively intact with some changes visible to the original or early fabric. The building retains its original scale; painted render principal façade and cornice to Little Bourke Street and side walls of loadbearing face brick with continuous painted render lintels. It retains its original fenestration, pattern of openings and steel frame windows. Alterations on the ground floor of the Little Bourke Street façade include the replacement of the original shopfronts and removal of decorative details. Overall, the building is of high integrity.

### **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

The construction of warehouses and industrial buildings was an important phase of development in central Melbourne, especially during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The buildings were usually low scale and located in minor streets and laneways with rear lane access to facilitate the movement of material in and out of the building. Today most of these early factory or warehouse buildings are no longer operating as such, and have often been adapted to house professional offices or other commercial functions.

The brick warehouses constructed around the early twentieth century and early interwar period are generally of a simple utilitarian character, utilising loadbearing face brick external walls with either a steel post and beam or reinforced concrete internal structure. Windows were generally large to maximise access to natural light at a time when artificial lighting was not adequate for the manufacturing process.

The following examples are comparable with 428-432 Little Bourke Street, being of a similar style, scale, construction date and use. The images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

*562-566 Little Bourke Street, c1920s (HO701)*

The former Sun Electric Building is a four storey brick former warehouse with a basement. Built in the early 1920's it was refurbished into an office in 1987. Converted and subdivided into residential units with ground level retail in 2000.



Figure 4. 562-566 Little Bourke Street, built c1920s.

*337-339 La Trobe Street, 1923-24 (HO1208)*

A mid-block, three-storey face brick warehouse building with classical derived detailing including bricked pilasters and a dentil cornice. Contrasting lintels topped with squared corbels make features of these wide factory windows.



Figure 5. 337-339 La Trobe Street, built in 1923-24.

*353 Exhibition Street, 1926-27 (Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

353 Exhibition Street is a narrow-fronted, three-storey factory/warehouse building constructed in 1927 in loadbearing face brick.





Figure 5. 353 Exhibition Street, built in 1926-27.

*Dialogue Melbourne, 27-29 Little Lonsdale Street (Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

A two-storey warehouse with contrasting cement rendered lintels and expressed corbels over the ground floor. Windows replaced but in the original scale and form of the building remain intact.



Figure 5. 27-29 Little Lonsdale Street. built in 1924.

*401-405 Little Bourke Street, 1911 (Significant in HO1205 Guildford & Hardware Laneways Precinct)*

A five and three storey Edwardian red brick building with a basement and ground level parking. Built around 1912 as a store and warehouse which covered the address of 401-403. In 1937 it was refurbished and extended to include 405. The rear three storey extension was completed in 1954. It was fully refurbished and subdivided into retail, office and residential units in 1986.



Figure 7. 401-405 Little Bourke Street, built in 1911.

428-432 Little Bourke Street is a relatively intact example of an interwar factory warehouse building, utilitarian and functional and refined in its design, of which there are several surviving examples within central Melbourne (albeit often adapted to house new uses such as professional offices). The building is a now rare example in the area around the central sector of the Hoddle Grid, where its broader streetscape context has been considerably affected by later twentieth century redevelopment.

It is comparable with a number of other HO listed examples of the type, including 337-339 La Trobe Street (HO1208) and 562-566 Little Bourke Street (HO701), being of a similar character, scale and degree of intactness. It is also comparable with 27-29 Little Lonsdale Street, which has been assessed as individually significant as part of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review.

---

**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.

CoMMaps 2018, <http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>, accessed 7 June 2018.

Context Pty Ltd 2012, 'Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

*Daily Commercial News and Shipping List*, as cited.

Dingle, Tony 2008, 'Manufacturing' in *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au>, accessed 19 December 2018.

Fels, M, Lavelle S, and Mider D 1993, 'Archaeological Management Plan', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

*Herald*, as cited.

Holroyd, J P 1993, 'Anderson, George (1878–1969)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au>, published first in hardcopy 1993, accessed online 3 January 2019.

Kiernan, Steven 2013, 'Receivers take over BPA Print Group' in *ProPrint*, <http://www.proprint.com.au/News/337150,receivers-take-over-bpa-print-group.aspx>, accessed 3 January 2019.

Lewis, Miles 1996, 'Gawler, John Stevens (1885–1978)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au>, published first in hardcopy 1996, accessed online 3 January 2019.

Lorentzen, Peter 2014, *Melbourne's Danish Club turning 125 years*, <https://www.sbs.com.au>, accessed online 12 December 2018.

Lovell Chen 2017, 'Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendments C271 and C301 – Guildford and Hardware Laneways Heritage', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Mahlstedt's Pty Ltd 1925 *City of Melbourne detail fire survey, Section 1*, Mahlstedt Pty Ltd, Melbourne.

Marsden, Susan 2000, *Urban Heritage: the rise and postwar development of Australia's capital city centres*, Australian Council of National Trusts and Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra.

Melbourne Building Application Index (MBAI), retrieved from Ancestry.com 2015, *Victoria, Australia, Selected Trial Brief & Correspondence Registers and Other Images*, 1837-1993 [database online], <http://ancestry.com.au>, accessed online November 2018.

Public Records Office Victoria (PROV), City of Melbourne building plans and permits (1916-1960), VPRS 11200/P1.

Public Records Office Victoria (PROV), City of Melbourne building plans and permits (1916-1960), VPRS 11201/P1.

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

Strizic, Mark 1955, 'Construction work on building in Little Bourke Street, Melbourne', State Library of Victoria (SLV) Mark Strizic collection of photographic negatives, accessed online 3 January 2019.

**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

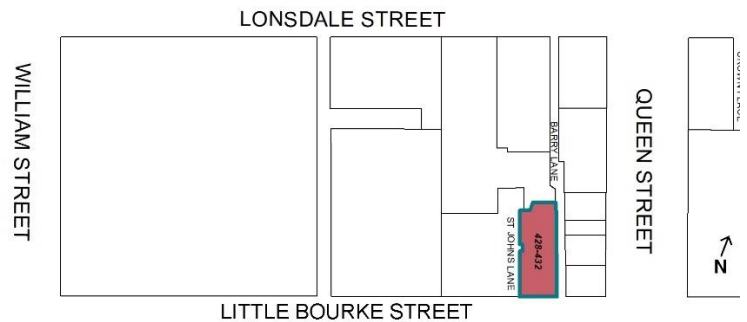
---

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Heritage Place:** Former Printcraft House



**PS ref no:** HOXXXX



### What is significant?

The former Printcraft House building at 428-432 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, a four storey brick and concrete former warehouse building built in 1923 to a design by architects Gawler & Drummond for the printers Brown, Prior & Co.

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

- The original built form and scale;
- The original painted render and face brick walls and pattern of fenestration including cornice, continuous painted render lintels and pattern of window openings;
- The substantial decorative cornice surmounting the façade; and
- The original steel frame windows.

Later alterations made to the street level façade, such as the insertion of new shopfronts, are not significant.

### How it is significant?

428-432 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

### Why it is significant?

The former Printcraft House building at 428-432 Little Bourke Street, built in 1923 for the Melbourne firm of printers, Brown, Prior & Co, is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the long-term industry and warehouse concentration in this part of the city, and as a remnant of printing industry

buildings located in proximity to the 1926 Argus Building at the Elizabeth and Latrobe streets corner. The historical grouping of buildings for similar uses has characterised the city's development.

The building is historically significant for its association with the Melbourne firm of printers and bookbinders, Brown Prior & Co, established by Francis A Brown and Henry E Prior in Queen Street by 1902. Brown Prior & Co printed most of book seller and publisher Robertson & Mullens's (forerunner to Angus & Roberston) publications from 1922 at a time when Australian publishers rarely owned their own print houses. Brown, Prior & Co became Brown, Prior, Anderson Pty Ltd in 1937 and occupied 428-432 Little Bourke Street for more than 40 years from 1923 until 1966. The company continued as a printing house until 2013. (Criterion A)

The former Printcraft House building at 428-432 Little Bourke Street is significant as a relatively intact example of an early interwar warehouse/factory building constructed in 1923 as a component of the industrial expansion in central Melbourne during this period. The building is an example of the many low scale warehouse/factory buildings of a simple utilitarian character, that were located in minor streets and laneways with rear lane access to facilitate the movement of goods and materials in and out of the building. These buildings are now becoming increasingly rare in the area around the central sector of the Hoddle Grid, where its broader streetscape context has been considerably affected by later twentieth century redevelopment.

Like other examples of its type, it utilises loadbearing face brick external wall with a reinforced concrete internal structure, and painted render and face brick walls. Built to a design by architects Gawler & Drummond, and like other examples of its type, 428-432 Little Bourke Street demonstrates a refined yet highly functional aesthetic with symmetrical facade with simple parapet, a regular pattern of large efficient steel framed windows with painted render lintels. The lack of superfluous decoration reinforces this simple and disciplined industrial aesthetic. (Criterion D)

#### **Primary source**

---

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