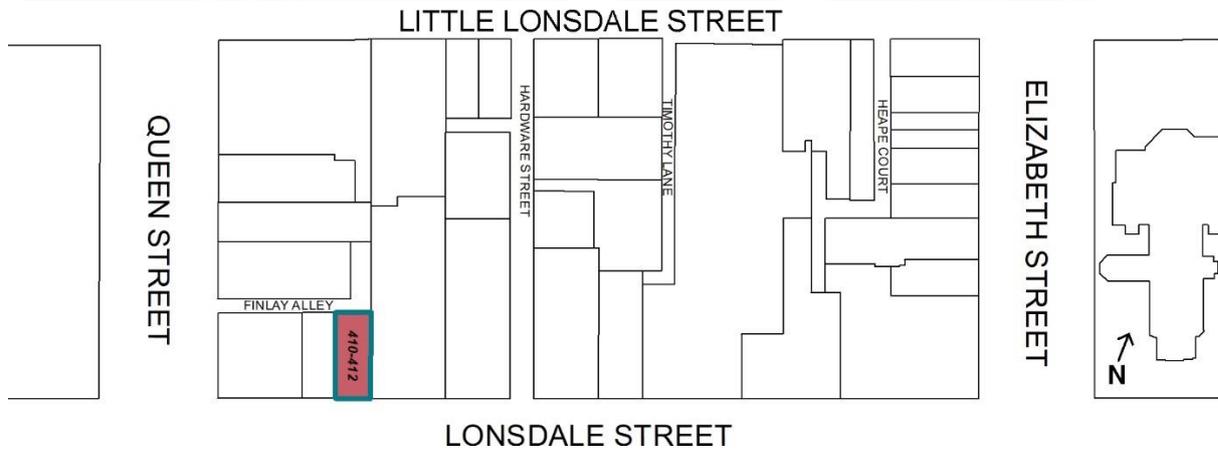


SITE NAME	Warehouse
STREET ADDRESS	410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	105736



SURVEY DATE: October 2018

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY H7822-2183

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PLACE TYPE Individual Heritage Place

PROPOSED CATEGORY Significant

FORMER GRADE C

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: H W & F B Tompkins

BUILDER: Not known

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Interwar Period (c.1919- c.1940)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION: 1922

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, Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here.
HISTORIC THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
2 Building a Commercial City	2.4 Building a retail centre
3 Shaping the urban landscape	3.2 Expressing an architectural style

LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
Archaeological block no: 12	Inventory no: Inventory not provided.
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Not able to be determined
1920s	Warehouses
1960s	Offices

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

410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne is a five-storey interwar commercial warehouse, built in the Chicagoesque style in 1923 for hardware merchants J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd to a design by architects H W & F B Tompkins. From 1935 it was occupied by electrical engineers and machinery merchants Thomas Brothers Pty Ltd who were associated with the building for at least the next 25 years.

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).

By the early 1840s, Elizabeth and Swanston streets, from the Town Hall in the east and the General Post Office to the west, had become the focus of retail activity, influenced also by the location of the Western Market in the west of the city. The Eastern Market opened in 1847 as a fruit and vegetable market on the corner of Stephen Street (later Exhibition Street) and Bourke Street and drew retail activities further east (MPS:86). Because of the distance from the Yarra River, the less desirable fringe development of mixed factories and artisans residences developed in the north of the grid, along Lonsdale Street and La Trobe Street (MPS:6). This area became a centre for furniture and clothing manufacture and engineering works.

With the economic boom of the 1880s, the 1880s-1890s was a decade of significant expansion in Melbourne. Investment funds poured in from Britain, imposing buildings were constructed, and speculation reached fever pitch in land, houses, offices and shops (Marsden 2000:28). As Graeme Davison states, commercial Melbourne extravagantly asserted 'her wealth in stucco and stone' (cited in Marsden 2000:28). The growth of retailing was accompanied by the construction of warehouses to store goods.

Development slowed during the economic depression of the 1890s, only recovering with the revival of immigration in the first decades of the twentieth century. Although affected by World War I in the period 1914-1918, by the end of the 1920s, Melbourne's population had reached one million people. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the last residents moved out of the city to the new suburbs, with the retail and manufacturing sectors rapidly taking up city properties (Marsden 2000:29-30).

Multi-storey retail, factory and warehouse buildings were constructed across Melbourne, with three- or more storied buildings proliferating between Bourke and Lonsdale streets from the 1880s to the 1920s.

Development in the city slowed with the widespread economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Because of a lack of finance over this period, instead of new construction, some city buildings were substantially remodelled to create new commercial spaces.

Shaping the urban landscape

Expressing an architectural style

The interwar period brought with it a jump in tall building construction in the central city, made possible by the use of structural steel and reinforced concrete framing. In response, a height limit was imposed by the Melbourne City Council in 1916, dictated by the limitations on fire-fighting at that time. A maximum height of 40 metres (132 feet) was dictated for steel and concrete buildings, a limit that was not broken until the 1950s. Architects experimented with a range of styles to express the increased height in buildings.

Some styles adapted the classical styles from earlier periods. Commercial buildings in the 1920s were mainly of the Commercial Palazzo style, as exemplified by Harry Norris's Nicholas Building in Swanston Street (1925). The style was an early attempt at creating a style suitable for the tall building. It was divided into a base, shaft and cornice, much like a Renaissance palazzo. The scale, however, was greatly enlarged, with the shaft stretching up to ten storeys.

Other styles were more closely associated with the modern movement and expressed a more dynamic and streamlined aesthetic. Emphasis was placed on the horizontal or vertical composition of a building to accentuate certain qualities of the building. In styles such as the Commercial Gothic style and the Jazz Moderne, vertical fins and ribs were used accentuated the increased height of buildings. Landmark examples include, respectively, Marcus Barlow's Manchester Unity Building (1929-32) and the Tompkins Bros' Myer Emporium in Bourke Street (1933). (Context 2012:19-20). The Moderne style typically expressed the horizontal plane with continuous bands of steel framed windows and masonry spandrels running across the full width of a façade, and often returning around a curved corner. A landmark example is Harry A Norris' Mitchell House at 352-362 Lonsdale Street (1937).

SITE HISTORY

The land at 410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne was part of the Crown Allotment 1, Block 29, purchased by Matthew Cantlon (CoMMaps). A map from 1856 indicates that there was a building on the subject site along the Lonsdale Street frontage (Bibbs 1856). The Mahlstedt fire insurance plans show that the subject site was occupied by a two-storey structure in 1910 (Mahlstedt Map Section 2, no. 4A, 1910).

The existing building at 410-412 Lonsdale Street was erected in 1923 as premises for J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd (*Herald* 4 July 1923: 4). J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd was a firm of wholesale ironmongers founded by James Swan Kidd and established in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, in 1881 (*Fitzroy City Press* 16 July 1881:1). In the 1890s, J S Kidd & Co established several suburban branches, importing 'English, American and Continental hardware', including 'tools of all descriptions for carpenters, plumbers, plasterers, farmers and others; wire netting, fencing and barb wire, wire staples, axes, augers, spades, shovels, crosscut saws, colonial ovens, paints; oils and white lead'. The firm also imported bicycles (*Weekly Times* 11 July 1896:3).

By 1935, J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd relocated to a new two-storey warehouse in Leister Street, Carlton (*Herald* 13 November 1935:21). The new five-storey premises for J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd at 410-412 Lonsdale Street (see Figure 1) was designed by architects H W & F B Tompkins. The building was constructed from bricks with a cement finish to the front elevation and featured steel frame windows. It also included an electric goods elevator and polished maple office partitions. The basement was protected by a concrete fireproof floor finished with a granolithic surface (*Herald* 4 July 1923:4). A fire occurred at the warehouse in 1934, causing damage estimated at £20,000 (*Weekly Times* 20 October 1934:6).

The Lonsdale Street building, described as 'a modern warehouse containing basement and five floors', was sold in 1935 to Richard R Thomas, chairman of R & C Thomas Brothers Pty Ltd, electrical engineers and machinery merchants (*Age* 26 October 1935:1). The firm sold ASEA (Allmänna Svenska Elektriska Aktiebolaget) electrical equipment and the building had been renamed 410-412 Lonsdale Street 'ASEA House' by 1938 (S&Mc 1938). Thomas Brothers supplied transformers to the Department of Civil Aviation in 1951 (*Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* 8 February 1951:360). R & C Thomas Brothers Pty Ltd remained at the premises until at least 1955, and by 1960 the site was

occupied by electrical engineers under the name of ASEA Electric (Figure 2) (S&Mc 1955; 1960). It is not clear whether this was Thomas Brothers Pty Ltd under a new name, although given the earlier naming of the building as ASEA House during their occupation, it seems likely.

By 1970, the building at 410-412 Lonsdale Street had been renamed AEWL House, and was used as offices (S&Mc 1970). AEW UK Long Lease REIT PLC (AEWL) is a United Kingdom-based, closed-ended investment company (Reuters n.d.).

The building permit card indicates that the site had an illuminated sign erected on the façade of the building in 1957 (MBAI 31738). Later alterations followed, mainly pertaining to internal alterations and the erection of partitions (MBAI 40697). The shop front and foyer were renovated in 1986, and the shop was again refitted in 1990 (BP 61092; 67687). Today the building contains four businesses and one shop (CoMMaps).



Figure 1. New five-storey premises at 410-412 Lonsdale Street designed for J S Kidd & Co Pty Ltd and built in 1923. (Source: *Herald* 4 July 1923:4)



Figure 2. Group of buildings in Lonsdale Street in 1958, including 410-412 Lonsdale Street then known as ASEA House. (Source: Sievers 1958, SLV)

H W & F B Tompkins, architects

The firm of H W & F B Tompkins, architects, was established in 1898, when the two brothers won the design competition for the Commercial Travellers Association (CTA) Clubhouse in Melbourne. Born in England and educated in South Africa, Henry William and Frank Beauchamp Tompkins emigrated to Australia in 1886. Harry worked under Richard Speight Jnr, and Frank worked with ecclesiastical architects including Evander McIver. The firm grew in popularity after winning the CTA competition, becoming a leading commercial firm in the early twentieth century. Their work prior to World War II reflects the influence of the Romanesque, Baroque Revival and the Moderne, particularly that popularised in the United States. Better known for their department stores, and in particular the

relationship established with Sidney Myer from 1913, the firm constructed the different phases of the Myer Emporium in Melbourne. H W & F B Tompkins operated until the 1950s, when they became Tompkins & Shaw and then Tompkins, Shaw & Evans. The firm was acquired in 2003 and became Tompkins MDA Group, and remains one of the longest surviving firms in Victoria (Beeston 2012:707-708).

SITE DESCRIPTION

410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne is a narrow fronted five-storey interwar warehouse building, designed in the interwar Chicagoesque style. The façade is of painted render, probably over non-loadbearing brickwork. It has a hip and gable corrugated iron roof, concealed behind a parapet. It sits on the north side of Lonsdale Street, the land falling to the east.

The ground floor is separated from the upper levels by a deep spandrel, which has been enlarged with the replacement of the original shop front (see Figure 1 and Figure 2), providing a prominent base for the upper levels. Above the spandrel the façade is divided into three equal width vertical panels separated by projecting pilasters to provide the vertical emphasis characteristic of the style. There is a single large window opening per module at each floor level, separated at each floor level by a recessed spandrel with decorative panels and faux Juliet balcony, and the top floor level is differentiated from the other levels by a flush spandrel and minor cornice. The pilasters terminate in a parapet and substantial dentilled cornice supported by a bracket at each end.

The original steel framed four-pane windows appear to survive at the upper levels. The ground floor has been significantly altered with contemporary shopfronts and entry foyer.

INTEGRITY

410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne is highly intact with few changes visible to original or early fabric. The building retains its original scale and built form including the original pattern of fenestration, pilasters, decorative spandrels, window openings and steel framed glazing, cornice and parapet. Alterations include deepening of the spandrel at first floor level and replacement of the original shopfronts with contemporary glazing and entry doors. Overall the building is of high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Structural steel and reinforced concrete framing became popular building materials in interwar Melbourne, inspired by Chicagoan architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Departing from load-bearing brick walls, many 1920s examples employed these new building methods that allowed windows to become larger and more prominent on facades, whilst also allowing for increased building heights. Most of the buildings during the early interwar period were designed in the interwar Commercial Palazzo or Chicagoesque styles, both of which emerged with the rebuilding of the core area of Chicago after the 1871 fire.

Buildings of this style were characterised by an expressed structural system of concrete columns and floor plates, and typically retained elements of classical detailing (albeit restrained) in the form of a solid horizontal base, expressed (often rusticated) pilasters, projecting cornices and decorative mouldings.

The following examples are comparable with 410-412 Lonsdale Street, being of a similar use, scale, location and/or creation date. The images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dated c2000 or later.

Benjamin House, 360 Little Collins Street, 1929 (HO1210)

The commercial building (former warehouse) at 358-360 Little Collins Street, incorporates building components from pre-1869, 1871 and 1929. The latter works are most evident in the current building form and expression, including the five-storey height, Chicagoesque-style facade, and large windows to the east elevation above ground floor level.



Figure 3. 358-360 Little Collins Street, built in 1929.

482-484 Bourke Street, 1926 (Interim HO1241 – Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

482-484 Bourke Street is a four-storey reinforced concrete commercial building originally built for the Victorian Amateur Turf Club (later known as the Melbourne Racing Club). The building façade features classical styling associated with the classical revival styles of the interwar period.

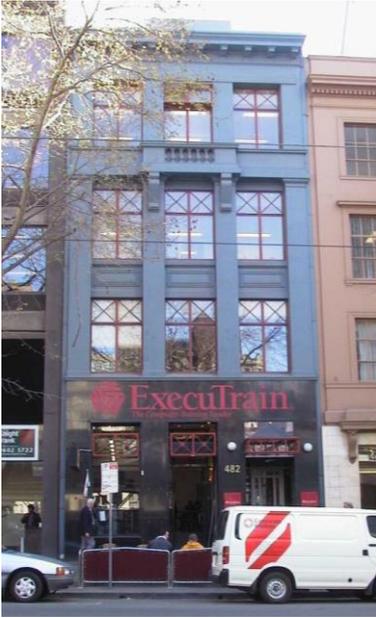


Figure 4. 482-484 Bourke Street, built in 1926. (Source: iHeritage)

Dreman Building, 96-98 Flinders Street, 1915 (Interim HO1272 – Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

The Dreman Building, built in 1915, is a six-storey brick Edwardian/Federation era commercial/warehouse building. Built on a narrow city block, the building has a shopfront at ground level and a distinctive façade to the upper five levels. The building is associated with a number of commercial operators including the French Gaulois Tyre Company and Williams the Shoemen Pty Ltd.



Figure 5. 96-98 Flinders Street, built in 1915. (Source: Context 2017).

480 Bourke Street, 1925 (Interim HO1242 – Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

480 Bourke Street is a four-storey interwar office building designed by A & K Henderson, Alsop & Martin in 1925.



Figure 6. 480 Bourke Street, built in 1925 (Source: Context, 2017)

Former Union Bank, 351-357 Elizabeth Street, 1926-1927 (HO1019)

A five-storey rendered brick bank building. Designed by Butler & Martin in the Commercial Palazzo style and built for the Union Bank by Thompson & Chalmers in 1928.



Figure 7. 351-357 Elizabeth Street, built in 1926-27.

The former warehouse at 410-412 Lonsdale Street is a simple and restrained example of a Chicagoesque style commercial building similar to other examples in central Melbourne. Although the ground level shop fronts have been replaced and first floor spandrel altered and replaced, the retention of the original steel framed windows and subtle details such as the spandrels with decorative panels and faux Juliet balconies and the differentiation of the top floor level is notable.

The subject site is especially comparable to the HO listed building at 482-484 Bourke Street. Both buildings were constructed at a similar time, are similar in scale, and exhibit key characteristics of the interwar Chicagoesque style.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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

Age, as cited.

City of Melbourne Interactive Maps (CoMMaps) 2017, <http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>, accessed 17 December 2018.

Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, as cited.

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

Context Pty Ltd 2017, 'Canterbury Heritage Gap Assessment', prepared for the City of Boroondara.

Fitzroy City Press, as cited.

Herald, as cited.

Lewis, Miles (with Philip Goad and Alan Mayne) 1994, *Melbourne: The city's history and development*, City of Melbourne, 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 Planning Scheme (MPS), 'Melbourne and its Heritage Precincts', reference document to Clause 22.06 Heritage Precincts Policy of the Melbourne Planning Scheme, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au>, accessed 9 December 2018.

Reuters n.d., *AEW UK Long Lease REIT PLC (AEWL.L)*, <https://www.reuters.com/companies/>, accessed June 2019.

Sievers, Wolfgang 1958, 'Office building at 406 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne and surrounding buildings', State Library of Victoria (SLV) Wolfgang Sievers collection, accessed online 18 December 2018.

Weekly Times, as cited.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985**

E

**Central City Heritage
Study 1993**

C

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

Ungraded

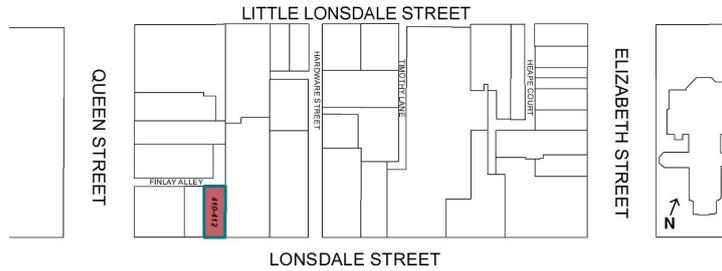
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011**

Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Warehouse

PS ref no: HOXXXX



What is significant?

The warehouse at 410-412 Lonsdale Street, a narrow fronted five-storey warehouse building built in 1923 in the interwar Chicagoesque style.

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

- The original building form and scale;
- The original pattern of fenestration;
- The external wall surfaces of painted cement render;
- The original steel framed windows to the upper floors; and
- The external decoration to the façade, including pilasters, parapet, substantial dentilled cornice supported by a brackets and decorative spandrels.

Later alterations made to the shopfront and first floor level spandrels are not significant.

How it is significant?

The warehouse at 410-412 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The five-storey building at 410-412 Lonsdale Street is historically significant for its association with development that proliferated in this part of the city, between Bourke and Lonsdale streets, from the 1880s to 1920s. Commonly comprised of three- or more-storeys these buildings were used for retail, factory and warehouse purposes. The building continued to be associated with hardware and electrical industry for almost 40 years. The building at 410-412 Lonsdale Street exemplifies a key phase in

Melbourne's development when, during the economic boom of the 1920s, an increasing number of commercial enterprises constructed architect designed multi-storey premises in the city to house retail and manufacturing outlets and associated warehouses. (Criterion A)

The building is significant as a highly intact example of the wave of development in central Melbourne during the early interwar period that replaced the low scale masonry buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This early wave of building most commonly featured the interwar Commercial Palazzo or Chicagoesque styles, which utilised the engineering benefits of steel and concrete frame structures. This allowed for window areas and open floor areas to be maximised, and provided flexibility for external articulation and decoration. The building at 410-412 Lonsdale Street is a modestly scaled, restrained and highly intact example of the interwar Chicagoesque style. It retains key characteristics of the style, such as a strong vertical emphasis resulting from projecting pilasters and mullions, terminating in a substantial cornice, and with large windows separated by recessed spandrels with decorative panels and faux Juliet balcony, and the top floor level is differentiated from the other levels by a flush spandrel and minor cornice at each floor. The building is also notable as a work of the eminent firm of Melbourne architects H W & F B Tompkins. (Criterion D)

Primary source

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

