



4 August 2020

Future Melbourne Committee
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Re: Agenda Item 6.1 C327 and C328 Hoddle Grid Heritage Review

Dear Councillors,

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is pleased to write in strong support of the recommendations relating to the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review outlined in the report for Agenda Item 6.1.

We would like begin by congratulating the City of Melbourne on progressing this ground-breaking heritage study, which represents the first comprehensive review of the Central Business District in over two decades. As a member of the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review External Reference Group, the National Trust has been pleased to provide input into the preparation of the study, and we look forward to advocating strongly for its implementation.

Proposing heritage protection for 137 individual places and five precincts across the Hoddle Grid, this review encompasses all urban and built places previously identified in heritage studies that were never implemented, and various other places which have been identified through a process of extensive community consultation and engagement.

This amendment strongly aligns with the mission of the National Trust to 'inspire the community to appreciate, conserve and celebrate its diverse natural, cultural, social and Indigenous heritage' and vision that our 'diverse heritage is protected and respected, contributing to strong, vibrant and prosperous communities'.

We strongly believe that the implementation of this review will provide greater certainty and clarity for developers and the community, encouraging more sensitive and development outcomes for these important places. We also believe this review will ensure that Melbourne's distinctive 'heritage brand'—a major draw-card for tourism and events—is maintained and celebrated.

We support the progressive methodology developed and implemented by Context in the preparation of this review, as well as the peer review by GJM, which has provided additional rigour to the study. We believe this review will set a new benchmark for cultural heritage assessment in Victoria, and we commend the work that has been undertaken by Council Officers including the Aboriginal Melbourne team, the Context team, Traditional Owner groups, and other contributors. We also congratulate City of Melbourne Councillors for supporting the preparation of this important study.

We are particularly pleased to see the following elements incorporated as part of the review:

- Engagement with peak bodies and heritage advocates to expand the list beyond those places already identified to gain an appreciation **of community-held heritage values.**
- Preparation of a methodology by which all urban and built places have a preliminary **social value check** and undertake a social values assessment for those places indicated.
- Preparation of an integrated assessment of any urban and built places that have **Aboriginal connections and values.**

The National Trust supports and advocates for the identification, protection, and celebration of social value, and the richness of this aspect of the study can be seen in the stories included in the statements of significance which bring these places to life, and celebrate their value and connections to the community.

We are also pleased to note that 40% of individual buildings proposed for protection are post-war places. We strongly support the comprehensive gap study of post-war places as part of the study, and GJM's review of the *Postwar Thematic Environmental History*, which has assisted in identifying historical associations with particular themes, and provided a broader historical context for each place. We strongly support the City of Melbourne's observation that the design and location of many of these post-war places offers potential for creative and adaptive reuse.

We note that places with a build date later than 1975 were omitted from this review, and we advocate for the period 1975-2000 to be the subject of future work to ensure that significant heritage places from this period are afforded appropriate protection.

We also note that a framework for a study into interiors was drafted as part of the 2018-20 component of the review, but has not progressed at this stage. We advocate for the completion of this work be prioritised, noting that significant interiors in the City of Melbourne are highly valued by the community, but are particularly vulnerable to inappropriate redevelopment.

In conclusion, we urge the Future Melbourne Committee to accept all Recommendations provided by Management as set out in Agenda Item 6.1. We applaud the courage and leadership shown by the City of Melbourne in progressing this review, and look forward to supporting the implementation of the study.

Yours faithfully,



Felicity Watson
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National Trust of Australia (Victoria)