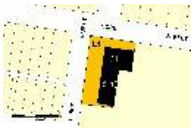
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Victorian Heritage Database Report

CRAIG & SEELEY OFFICES AND SHOWROOM











Location:
35 HOPE STREET BRUNSWICK, MERRI-BEK CITY

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:
Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H2026
Listing Authority: VHR

Heritage Overlay Number: HO244

Statement of Significance:
What is significant?
The Craig & Seeley Offices and Showroom were designed in 1962 as the new headquarters for the manufacturer of Chef brand cookers. They were opened by Premier Bolte in July 1963. Designed by Melbourne architect Theodore Berman, the building projected a modern image for a company newly

established on a site long associated with the gas industry and stove manufacturing. The offices feature the company's own factory-made porcelain enamel panels on the Hope and Percy Street facades in a striking display of diamond-pointed rustication. Green panels resembling shallow pyramidal forms stud the wall surface in a pattern that wraps around the corner of the building. A large signboard of red enamel panels is incorporated into the architecture replicating the company's logo, a white Chef running with a steaming dish. The volumetric background of green, the complementary colour of red, highlights the sign to eye-catching advantage, projecting the brand image towards the spectator.
The gas industry first occupied this site from 1891 when the Brunswick Gas and Coke Company established a gasworks. From 1906 to the late 1950s it was occupied by the Lux Foundry, which used the surviving retort house as its principal building. Craig & Seeley, who came to the site in the early 1960s, were instrumental in the stove manufacturing industry in the post-war years. Their popular Chef brand appliances endured as a household name until the demise of the company in November 2001.

How is it significant?
The Craig & Seeley Offices and Showroom are of architectural, aesthetic and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?
The Craig & Seeley Offices and Showroom are architecturally and aesthetically important for their boldness, invention and defiance of convention in their external design. The offices have further importance for illustrating the company's innovative venture into fabricating and promoting their porcelain enamel ware for modern architectural application.

The building is architectural interest as one of the best examples of the commercial work of architect Theodore Berman, one of Melbourne's earliest and most fluent exponents of the overt vocabulary of commercial vernacular or featurist architecture.

The Craig & Seeley Offices and Showroom have historical importance as the former headquarters of Australia's largest cooking appliance manufacturer. The building is associated with the great surge of manufacturing in the post war years and the redevelopment and immigration programmes that sustained this activity.

The offices are of historical interest for their association with the gas industry. The site has a long history of association with the industry, first as a gasworks where gas was manufactured, then as a foundry where cast iron stoves were made and more recently as a modern plant for manufacturing gas appliances. The modern offices stand in juxtaposition with the surviving nineteenth century retort house, the two buildings providing a narrative of our changing use of gas and its associated technologies.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1906 - 1950
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	MERRI-BEK CITY
Other names	
Hermes number	12609
Property number	

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online