



Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

INCLUSION OF A PLACE IN THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST

I, Malcolm Bligh Turnbull, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, having considered, in relation to the place listed in the Schedule of this instrument -

- (a) the Australian Heritage Council's assessment whether the place meets any of the National Heritage criteria; and
- (b) the comments determined to have been given to the Council under section 324JG and 324JH of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and

being satisfied that the place specified in the Schedule has the National Heritage value or values specified in the Schedule include, pursuant to section 324JJ of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the place listed in the Schedule in the National Heritage List.

Dated 19th day of June 2007

[Signed]

Malcolm Bligh Turnbull
Minister for the Environment
and Water Resources

SCHEDULE

STATE

Local Government Area

Name:

Location / Boundary

Criteria / Values

VICTORIA**Melbourne City****High Court of Australia (former):**

450 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, comprising the whole of Allotment 13B Section 19, City of Melbourne.

Criterion**Values**

- (a) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history.

The former High Court Building is important in the course of Australia's history because it was the first headquarters of the High Court of Australia. Built between 1926 and 1928, it operated from 1928 to 1980, a time when many Constitutional and other landmark judicial decisions were made affecting the nation's social and political life. The whole of the building and its interior design, fit-out (including original furniture) and architectural features bear witness to these events.

As the first purpose built building for the home of the nation's High Court, it combines the then budgetary austerity of the Commonwealth with a skilled functional layout, where the public entry is separated from the privacy of the Justices' chambers and the Library by the three central Courts, in a strongly modelled exterior, all viewed as a distinct design entity. The design of the building set out chambers for each of the judges and their associates and a central library which provided for collegiate interaction between them but separated them from the public areas. The relationship established by the building's layout was significant as it reflected the intellectual and operational ethos that Australia chose to adopt for its highest court.

The original stripped classical style and the integrity of the internal detailing and fit out of the Courts and Library is overlaid by sympathetic additions with contrasting interior Art Deco design motifs. The additions retain access to natural light for the three Courts and the original strongly modelled stripped classical style is replicated in the façade treatment of the later additions and influenced the design of a later adjacent building.

The High Court is the apex of Australia's judicial system being the highest court of appeal and the interpreter of the Constitution. As the home of the High Court for over fifty years the former high court building provided important judicial services. It functioned as the principal registry of the High Court from 1928 to 1976. Important cases were researched in its library, heard and decided in its Courts. Court Room One, which accommodated the Full Bench, was important as the place where a number of Constitutional and other landmark judgements were made.

- (a) continued The place is associated with the initial operation of the Federal Court system from 1977 until 1999 and the gradual expansion of the Commonwealth's constitutional power, which now determines the judicial and political framework in Australia.
- (h) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history. The former High Court building is significant for its associations with judges who have had a profound effect on the nature of the High Court as an institution and judges that have made landmark decisions which changed the political and social fabric of the nation. The place is significant because of its association with:
Sir Isaac Isaacs – Chief Justice and Governor General
Sir Owen Dixon – Justice, Chief Justice and considered the greatest legal advocate of his time.

The Chief Justice's chambers and the adjacent Library and their internal design and fit out demonstrate the nature of the accommodation that reflects the status of the Chief Justice and the close connection between the Chief Justice's chambers, the Library and the Courts. The Justices' chambers link some of the greatest jurists of the nation with the operations and decisions of the High Court.

For a description of any references quoted above, and more information on each of the places please search the Australian Heritage Database at <http://www.deh.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl> using the name of the place.