

**Festival Hall**  
**272-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne**

**Heritage Council Registrations and Reviews Committee**  
**Hearing – 2 October 2018**

**Members – Dr Andrew May (Chair), Ms Louise Honman, Ms Leigh Mackay**

### **DECISION OF THE HERITAGE COUNCIL**

**Inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register** - After considering the Executive Director's recommendation, submissions received and conducting a hearing into those submissions, the Heritage Council has determined pursuant to section 49(1)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017* that Festival Hall at 272-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, is a place of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria and is to be included in the Victorian Heritage Register.

**Andrew May (Chair)**  
**Louise Honman**  
**Leigh Mackay**

**Decision Date – 15 November 2018**

## **HEARING APPEARANCES/SUBMISSIONS**

### **Executive Director, Heritage Victoria**

Submissions were received from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria ('the Executive Director'). Ms Renae Jarman, Director, GJM Heritage, appeared and made submissions on behalf of the Executive Director, assisted by Ms Nicola Stairmand, Heritage Officer (Assessments), Heritage Victoria.

### **Stadiums Pty Ltd**

Submissions were received from Stadiums Pty Ltd ('the Owner'). Mr Peter Lovell, Director and Founding Principal, Lovell Chen, appeared and made submissions on behalf of the Owner.

## **SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 44 OF THE *HERITAGE ACT 2017***

### **Stadiums Pty Ltd**

The Owner made submissions in response to the recommendation of the Executive Director pursuant to s.44 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, and requested that a hearing be held in relation to the matter.

## **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

### **The Place**

- 1 On 10 May 2018, the Executive Director made a recommendation ('the Recommendation') that Festival Hall (also known as West Melbourne Stadium) should be included in the Victorian Heritage Register ('the Register') as a place of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria.
- 2 Festival Hall is located at 272-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne ('the Place').
- 3 The following description summary is taken from page 5 of the Recommendation:  
  
*'Festival Hall is a large, unadorned, rectangular indoor sporting, and entertainment stadium in West Melbourne. The building is constructed of a steel frame infilled with brick and precast concrete panels. Internally, the stadium comprises a central timber floor with a simple stage to the north, tiers of seating to the west and east, and a balcony to the south.'*
- 4 The following historical summary is taken from page 5 of the Recommendation:  
  
*'Festival Hall, also known as West Melbourne Stadium, was constructed in 1955, replacing the 1913 West Melbourne Stadium. Festival Hall and its predecessor were the principal boxing and wrestling venues in Victoria from 1913 until at least the late 1970s. Festival Hall was a principal live music venue in Victoria from the 1950s until the 1980s and hosted some of the most important national and international musicians of that era.'*
- 5 The Committee notes that the above history and description summaries are part of the Recommendation. They are provided for information purposes only.

### **Nomination**

- 6 The Executive Director accepted a nomination to include the Place in the Register on 24 January 2018.

### **Recommendation of the Executive Director**

- 7 On 10 May 2018, the Executive Director recommended that the Place be included in the Register.

### **Process following the Recommendation of the Executive Director**

- 8 After the Recommendation of 10 May 2018, notice was published in accordance with s.41 of the *Heritage Act 2017* ('the Act') for a period of 60 days.
- 9 One (1) submission was received pursuant to s.44 of the Act, objecting to elements of the Recommendation and requesting a hearing before the Heritage Council.
- 10 In accordance with s.46(2)(a) of the Act, a hearing was required to be held.
- 11 The Heritage Council Registrations and Reviews Committee ('the Committee') was constituted to consider the Recommendation and the submissions received in response to it

and to make a determination. The Committee then invited further written submissions and a hearing was scheduled for 2 October 2018 ('the hearing').

## **PRELIMINARY, PROCEDURAL AND OTHER MATTERS**

### **Site inspection**

- 12 On 2 October 2018, the Committee made a site inspection of the Place accompanied by the Heritage Council Hearings Coordinator. Access to the Place was facilitated by the Owner. No submissions were sought, made or received at the time of the site inspection.

### **Conflicts of interest**

- 13 The Committee was satisfied that there were no relevant conflicts of interests.

### **Late material**

- 14 At the hearing, the Owner sought to introduce a slide presentation that had not previously been circulated to other hearing parties in the course of the submissions process. It was submitted by the Owner that the material included in the slide presentation was restricted to excerpts from its written submissions. The Committee admitted the slide presentation for consideration after seeking the views of the Executive Director, who made no objection.

### **Future use of the Place**

- 15 All parties were advised that, pursuant to s.44(2) and s.49 of the Act, it is not within the Committee's remit to consider future development proposals, or pre-empt any decisions regarding future permits. Rather, it is the role of the Committee to determine whether or not all elements of the Place included in the extent of nomination are of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria.
- 16 The Committee notes that many of the Owner's submissions focussed on the future use, management and development of the Place. According to its obligations pursuant to s.44(2) and s.49 of the Act, the Committee has not considered these matters in reaching its determination.

## **ISSUES**

- 17 The following section is not intended to be a complete record of submissions that were made to the Committee. It is a summary of what the Committee considers to be the key issues, followed by an explanation of the position the Committee takes on each key issue.
- 18 Any reference to Criteria refers to the *Heritage Council Criteria for Assessment of Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (as adopted by the Heritage Council on 7 August 2008) (see **Attachment 1**).

### **Summary of issues**

- 19 It is noted that a significant degree of common ground was found between the submissions of both hearing participants, particularly in relation to the cultural heritage significance of the Place to the State of Victoria.

- 20 The Executive Director recommended that the Place be included in the Register, finding that the Place satisfies Criteria A and G at State level.
- 21 The Owner agreed that the Place warrants inclusion in the Register, submitting that the Place satisfies Criteria A and G at State level.
- 22 The key points of difference between the submissions of the hearing participants concerned the content of the Statement of Cultural Heritage Significance ('Statement of Significance') and the permit exemptions, as proposed in the Recommendation.

### **Criterion A – Importance to the course or pattern of Victoria’s cultural history**

#### *Submissions*

- 23 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place satisfies Criterion A at State level for its association with the development of boxing and wrestling in Victoria, and its ongoing significance as “Victoria’s only purpose-built boxing and wrestling venue in Victoria to physically demonstrate the long-term history of these sports in the State”.
- 24 The Recommendation of the Executive Director additionally concluded that the Place satisfies Criterion A at State level as “the principal venue in Victoria for large-scale live music performances from the late 1950s until the 1980s”, submitting that it “played a key role in the social evolution of Victorian society in the post-war period by exposing thousands of patrons to the ‘new wave’ of big production live music”.
- 25 The Executive Director further submitted that the Place satisfies Criterion A at State level for its association with a number of important historical events and persons, including the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, the funeral of prominent boxer Lionel Rose, and a number of notable performances by international artists, such as the Beatles, Buddy Holly, Neil Young and Frank Sinatra.
- 26 The Owner supported the findings of the Recommendation with respect to Criterion A.

#### *Discussion and conclusions*

- 27 After considering the Recommendation and relevant submissions received in relation to the historical significance of the Place, the Committee is satisfied that Criterion A is met at State level.

### **Criterion B – Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history**

#### *Submissions*

- 28 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place is not likely to satisfy Criterion B at State level, finding that “large numbers of venues remain in Victoria to demonstrate the sporting and entertainment industries in Victoria.” It was the view of the Executive Director that “these types of places are well represented in the Victorian Heritage Register and are not rare or uncommon.”
- 29 The Owner did not dispute the Recommendation in relation to Criterion B.

*Discussion and conclusions*

- 30 After considering the Recommendation and submissions made in relation to Criterion B, the Committee is satisfied that the Place is not likely to meet Criterion B at State level.

**Criterion C – Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history**

*Submissions*

- 31 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place is not likely to satisfy Criterion C at State level, as it “does not contain physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or understood.”
- 32 The Owner did not dispute the Recommendation in relation to Criterion C.

*Discussion and conclusions*

- 33 The Committee is satisfied that the Place is not likely to meet Criterion C at State level.

**Criterion D – Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects**

*Submissions*

- 34 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place does not meet Criterion D at State level, as it cannot be considered to be a notable example of the class of “sporting venues” or “entertainment venues”.
- 35 It was the view of the Executive Director that “as a large, simple, multi-purpose space, [the Place] does not display any particular features that could classify this building as a fine, influential or pivotal example” of either class of place.
- 36 Although the Executive Director submitted that the Place today “exists substantially in its form as it was built in the 1950s”, the Executive Director clarified in verbal submissions that it could not be considered to be “highly intact” and that the Place’s level of intactness would not likely satisfy the threshold for meeting Criterion D at State level.
- 37 The Owner submitted that it had also given consideration to whether or not the Place satisfied Criterion D at State level, and had concluded that the Place did not do so, given the need to “over qualify” the significance of the class of place in order to reach the appropriate threshold of notability, and that it also did not consider the Place to be “highly intact”.

*Discussion and conclusions*

- 38 The Committee accepts that the Place cannot be considered to be a “notable example” of either a sporting venue or entertainment venue as a class of place, chiefly as a result of its historical and ongoing use as a flexible space. Indeed, whilst the Place’s flexibility facilitates its ability to serve multiple purposes for diverse audiences and communities, this flexibility, by its nature, appears to inherently disqualify the Place from being “notable” as either a live music performance or sporting venue.

- 39 The Committee would like to note that the comparative examples provided by the Recommendation were not particularly helpful in this respect, each place being essentially confined in its usage (i.e. places used only as a live music venue; places used only, or primarily, as a sporting venue). However, whilst the Committee would have preferred to have seen an analysis that allowed a comparison of the Place with other “flexible” venues, the Committee also accepts that the Place’s flexibility may render it somewhat atypical and uncommon within the context of places that are included in the Victorian Heritage Register as being of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria.
- 40 After considering the Recommendation and submissions received in relation Criterion D, the Committee is satisfied that Criterion D is not likely to be met at State level.

### **Criterion E – Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics**

#### *Submissions*

- 41 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place is not likely to satisfy Criterion E at State level, as it “does not display any aesthetic characteristics.”
- 42 The Owner did not dispute the Recommendation in relation to Criterion E.

#### *Discussion and conclusions*

- 43 The Committee is satisfied that the Place is not likely to meet Criterion E at State level.

### **Criterion F – Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period**

#### *Submissions*

- 44 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place is not likely to satisfy Criterion F at State level, as it “does not contain physical evidence that demonstrates any creative or technical achievement.”
- 45 In the Recommendation, the Executive Director made reference to claims that the Place demonstrated an early example of the use of prestressed concrete. However, it was the view of the Executive Director that the use of prestressed concrete wall panels “cannot be substantiated and is not evident in other documentation or demonstrated in the existing fabric.”
- 46 The Owner did not dispute the Recommendation in relation to Criterion F.

#### *Discussion and conclusions*

- 47 The Committee is satisfied that the Place is not likely to meet Criterion F at State level.

**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 people as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions**

*Submissions*

- 48 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that the Place satisfied Criterion G at State level as a result of its special association with, and continuous use by, the Victorian live music community and the boxing and wrestling communities.
- 49 The Executive Director concluded in the Recommendation that “the association between Festival Hall and the Victorian live music community is particularly strong due to the length of the association and the relationship between the place, the community and the establishment and growth of the live music industry in the State”. It was further submitted that the Place (and prior to its construction, other venues on the site of the current Place) has been Victoria’s principal boxing and wrestling venue since 1913, demonstrating its enduring importance to the boxing and wrestling communities.
- 50 In verbal submissions at the hearing, the Executive Director provided additional clarification in relation to Criterion G, stating that the Place’s social significance to the State of Victoria was augmented by the fact that many boxing and wrestling events were televised throughout the State, thereby resulting in a wide-reaching engagement with the Place via events staged there. The Executive Director further submitted that many of the live music performances held at the Place in the 1950s and 1960s helped to shape post-war Melbourne society, and the way in which Melbourne was perceived by international artists. It was the view of the Executive Director that this continuous usage of the Place demonstrates a contemporary and ongoing association with both local and international musical artists.
- 51 In verbal submissions, Executive Director clarified that the findings of the Recommendation in relation to Criterion G drew upon a number of sources such as concert programs and social media responses to questions over the fate of the venue in substantiating the social significance of the Place to the State of Victoria. It was the view of the Executive Director that the Place’s continuous usage by, and association with, the live music community is demonstrated by its ongoing contemporary recognition by emerging artists as a symbolically important venue.
- 52 The Owner supported the findings of the Recommendation in relation to Criterion G. The Owner did, however, express the view in its verbal submissions that it was a “challenge” to identify the exact community or cultural group to whom the Place has a special association. It was the view of the Owner that the whilst the live music, boxing, and wrestling communities may be regarded as “dynamic” communities, their established and ongoing usage of the Place nevertheless demonstrated that Criterion G had been satisfied at State level.

*Discussion and conclusion*

- 53 The Committee acknowledges and accepts the submissions made by hearing participants in relation to Criterion G.
- 54 It is, however, the view of the Committee that the information provided by the Recommendation was barely adequate in substantiating satisfaction of Criterion G at State level. Whilst the Committee acknowledges the expertise of the Executive Director and the

Owner’s representative in forming their respective views in relation to the social significance of the Place, the Committee finds that it has had to rely on clarification proactively sought from hearing participants through the hearing process in order to be satisfied that the Place’s use of, and association with, contemporary communities does indeed meet the State-level threshold for Criterion G.

- 55 The Committee wishes to note that it may have been additionally persuaded by the inclusion of more convincing substantiating evidence in the Recommendation that further demonstrated the nature of the community group/s to which the Place relates, and the strength and longevity of these community attachments, such as newspaper articles (both archival and contemporary), concert programs, oral histories and/or social media transcripts.
- 56 After considering the Recommendation and submissions made in relation to Criterion G, the Committee finds that Criterion G is satisfied at State level.

### **Criterion H – Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history**

#### *Submissions*

- 57 The Executive Director submitted in the Recommendation that whilst the Place demonstrated a strong connection with John Wren and the Wren family, that Criterion H was not met at State level.
- 58 It was the view of the Executive Director that the Place is “one of a number of places with clear associations with John Wren”, which includes places already included in the Register as places of State-level cultural heritage significance such as Studley House (H0789) and Victoria Park (H0075). It was the conclusion of the Executive Director that the Place in its current form “does not allow the clear association with Wren to be readily appreciated better than most other places in Victoria”
- 59 The Owner did not dispute the Recommendation in relation to Criterion H.

#### *Discussion and conclusions*

- 60 The Committee is satisfied that the Place is not likely to meet Criterion H at State level.

### **Statement of Significance**

#### *Submissions*

- 61 The proposed Statement of Significance provided by pages 5-6 of the Recommendation identified six key internal features of the Place intrinsic to its cultural heritage values, including:
- *The volume of the internal space*
  - *The central timber floor*
  - *The tiered seating to the west and east, including the early rows of steel-framed timber bleachers to the east and west and rows of theatre-like balcony seating to the south*
  - *The location of the northern stage*
  - *The balcony to the south*

- *Highly intact original amenity areas*

- 62 It was the submission of the Executive Director that the above elements of the Place's physical fabric are intrinsically linked to the Place's State-level historical and social cultural heritage significance, and therefore warrant identification in the Statement of Significance. The Executive Director further submitted that the identification of the Place's key features is important for the purpose of guiding and informing recommended permit exemptions, thereby allowing a "pragmatic approach" to the Place's ongoing management.
- 63 The Owner submitted the view that as the Place was being recommended for inclusion in the Register for its State-level historical and social significance (as opposed to architectural, aesthetic or technological/scientific significance), it would not be appropriate to single out elements of the Place's physical fabric in the Statement of Significance. It was the view of the Owner that identifying separate elements of the Place in the Statement of Significance unduly "elevated" such features above other physical elements of the Place.
- 64 The Owner further submitted that the Place was overtly and intrinsically designed to be flexible, and that the Place's social significance is inherently, by its nature, a dynamic value. It was therefore the view of the Owner that linking specific elements of the Place's built fabric, but not others, to its cultural heritage values was "concerning and challenging" for future management and permit application processes. The Owner expressed particular concern in its verbal submissions in relation to the association of the Place's fabric with its satisfaction of Criterion G, noting that the Register included precedent for registering Places of State-level social value without directly referencing any physical fabric at all in the relevant Statement of Significance (i.e. the Former Cockatoo Kindergarten [H2303]).
- 65 The Owner proposed the following alternative wording for the Statement of Significance in lieu of listing individual features of the Place, with the intention of avoiding the "elevation" of any features of the Place above others:

*'The cultural heritage significance of Festival Hall lies in its historical and social significance as Victoria's principal boxing, wrestling and live music venue in the second half of the 20th century. The significance of the place is embodied in the external and internal form and fabric of the place. Those features which distinguish the place comprise the large volume, the central flat floor area and the seating tiers to the east and west sides.'*

- 66 It was the view of the Executive Director that the amendment to the Statement of Significance, as detailed at paragraph 65, should not be accepted, as it would necessitate fresh consideration of what permit exemptions – if any – would be appropriate to instate at the time of registration in accordance with s.49(3) of the Act.

#### *Discussion and conclusion*

- 67 The Committee acknowledges the above submissions in relation to the Statement of Significance of the Place.
- 68 The Committee notes the views of the Owner that the identification of a number of elements of the Place, but not others, may prove to be problematic for the Place's future management, given the identified State-level cultural values of the Place. Whilst the Committee acknowledges that the six features identified in the Recommended Statement of Significance chiefly include elements that could be considered to be "original" or "very

“early”, the Committee does not accept this as justification for elevating such elements above others not referenced, and notes that a number of additional features of similar provenance have not been specifically identified in the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Executive Director (i.e. such as the backstage area, and the ticketing booths with frontage to Dudley Street). The Committee is of the view that the internal features of the Place are not necessarily any more intrinsic to its cultural heritage significance than its external features.

- 69 In light of the above conclusions, the Committee resolves to accept some, but not all, of the amendments to the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Owner, detailed in paragraph 65 above. The Committee resolves, however, to not include any reference to specific “features that distinguish the place”, as proposed by the Owner. The final Statement of Significance, as determined by the Committee, is detailed in **Attachment 2**.
- 70 As discussed at paragraph 38, the Committee additionally finds that the Place’s inherent flexibility and sustained use as a dynamic venue contributes to its atypicality and uniqueness of character. It is the view of the Committee that the Place’s flexibility has allowed it to serve the dynamic communities recognised as having an association with the Place and, as such, the Statement of Significance has been further amended to reflect this conclusion (see **Attachment 2**).
- 71 However, the Committee recognises the pragmatic intentions of the Executive Director in formulating the Statement of Significance in a way that would assist in setting the permit exemptions as proposed on pages 14 and 15 of the Recommendation. It is the view of the Committee that to amend the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Owner could potentially result in a more conservative management approach, suggesting that the cultural heritage values of the place are embodied by the Place’s physical fabric in its *entirety*. The Committee accepts that to amend the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Owner would necessitate a review of the acceptability of the permit exemptions as proposed on pages 14 and 15 of the Recommendation.
- 72 A discussion of the necessary amendments to the Permit Policy as proposed by the Recommendation are discussed below.

## **Proposed Permit Policy**

### *Submissions*

- 73 In its written submissions, the Owner requested a number of changes to the Permit Policy, including changes to the permit exemptions as proposed by the Recommendation, and the removal of identified place elements considered to be of “primary cultural heritage significance” and of “no cultural heritage significance”, as outlined on page 14 of the Recommendation.
- 74 The Executive Director indicated in its written submissions in reply that it would agree to accept some, but not all, changes to the proposed permit exemptions. The key point of contention between the two hearing parties on this subject related to whether or not the changes to the proposed permit exemptions, as requested by the Owner, were in conflict with the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Recommendation.
- 75 As briefly discussed at paragraph 66, it was the view of the Executive Director that the amendment to the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Owner (see paragraph 65)

would inhibit the establishment of permit exemptions at the time of registration. It was the submission of the Executive Director that to accept that the cultural significance of the place is “embodied in the internal and external form and fabric” would essentially accord State-level significance to each internal and external feature of the Place, thereby making it impossible for the Executive Director to recommend any permit exemptions in accordance s.38(2) of the Act<sup>1</sup> and preventing the Heritage Council from establishing permit exemptions at the time of registration in accordance with s.49(3) of the Act.<sup>2</sup>

- 76 The Executive Director submitted that both ss.38(2) and 49(3) of the Act require that any permit exemptions recommended by the Executive Director, or established by the Heritage Council, must only be for works or activities that do not harm the cultural heritage significance of the Place. The Executive Director noted that “harm”, as defined by s.3 of the Act, “includes moving or removing any part of the place or object.”

#### *Discussion and conclusion*

- 77 As discussed at paragraph 69 above, the Committee has determined to adopt the changes to the Statement of Significance, as proposed by the Owner.
- 78 The Committee accepts the submissions of the Executive Director that any permit exemptions granted by the Heritage Council at the time of registration pursuant to s.49(3) must not include activities or works that would harm the Place, in accordance with the definition of “harm” as provided by s.3 of the Act.
- 79 As discussed at paragraph 71 above, the Committee is of the view that the amended wording of the Statement of Significance may demonstrate an “all encompassing” approach to identifying State-level significant elements of the Place, accepting as it does that the Place’s cultural heritage significance is “embodied in the external and internal form and fabric”, and deleting any reference to place elements identified as being of “primary” cultural heritage significance”, as opposed to those of “no cultural heritage significance”, as outlined on page 14 of the Recommendation.
- 80 Therefore, in accepting the changes to the Statement of Significance as proposed by the Owner, the Committee has formed the view that, in this instance, it would not be appropriate for the Heritage Council’s determination to include any categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the Place for which a permit under the Act is not required.
- 81 The final Permit Policy is detailed in **Attachment 3**.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 38(2) of the Act stipulates that “The Executive Director must not make a recommendation referred to in subsection (1) in relation to any categories of works or activities if the Executive Director considers that the works or activities may harm the cultural heritage significance of the place or object”

<sup>2</sup> Section 49(3) of the Act stipulates that “A determination that a place or part of a place, or object, should be included in the Heritage Register may include categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the place or object for which a permit under this Act is not required, if the Heritage Council considers that the works or activities would not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place or object.”

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## CONCLUSION

- 82 The Committee finds, in accordance with section 49(1)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017* that Festival Hall at 272-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria, and meets the State level threshold for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register under Criteria A and G.
- 83 The Statement of Significance, Permit Policy and Extent of Registration are detailed in **Attachments 2, 3 and 4.**

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**HERITAGE COUNCIL CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

CRITERION A	Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history
CRITERION B	Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.
CRITERION C	Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.
CRITERION D	Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.
CRITERION E	Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
CRITERION F	Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.
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.
CRITERION H	Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

**These were adopted by the Heritage Council at its meeting on 7 August 2008, and replace the previous criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 March 1997.**

## ATTACHMENT 2

### STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

#### WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT?

The cultural heritage significance of Festival Hall at 202-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, lies in its historical and social significance as Victoria's principal boxing, wrestling and live music venue in the second half of the twentieth century. The significance of the place is embodied in the external and internal form and fabric of the place. Festival Hall is notably and historically a highly flexible space, allowing it to service a number of dynamic communities and usages. Festival Hall at 272-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, including the external form and fabric and the following internal features:

- The volume of the internal space
- The central timber floor
- The tiered seating to the west and east, including the early rows of steel framed timber bleachers to the east and west and rows of theatre-like balcony seating to the south
- The location of the northern stage
- The balcony to the south
- Highly intact original amenity areas.

#### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Festival Hall is a large, unadorned, rectangular indoor sporting and entertainment stadium in West Melbourne. The building is constructed of a steel frame infilled with brick and precast concrete panels. Internally, the stadium comprises a central timber floor with a simple stage to the north, tiers of seating to the west and east, and a balcony to the south. A vast stadium space dominates the interior of the building. This space has historically been reconfigured to accommodate different uses.

#### HISTORY SUMMARY

Festival Hall, also known as West Melbourne Stadium, was constructed in 1955, replacing the 1913 West Melbourne Stadium. Festival Hall and its predecessor were the principal boxing and wrestling venues in Victoria from 1913 until at least the late 1970s. Festival Hall was a principal live music venue in Victoria from the 1950s until the 1980s and hosted some of the most important national and international musicians of that era.

#### HOW IS IT SIGNIFICANT?

Festival Hall is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criteria~~on~~ for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

### **Criterion A**

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

### **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.~~

### **WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?**

Festival Hall is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

Festival Hall is historically significant as Victoria's principal purpose-built boxing and wrestling venue. Since the late nineteenth century, boxing has been a highly popular spectator sport in Australia attracting crowds in the thousands with many more watching televised matches since the 1960s. Festival Hall – and the 1913 West Melbourne Stadium that it replaced – was the home of Victorian boxing throughout much of the twentieth century, earning it the name “The House of Stoush”. Festival Hall hosted the boxing and gymnastics for the 1956 Olympic Games and was the venue for bouts of key national and international athletes including Lionel Rose, Johnny Famechon, Anthony Mundine, Lester Ellis and Barry Michaels. Festival Hall was the venue for the televised ‘TV Ringside’ (1966-75) and ‘World Championship Wrestling’ (1964-78) and hosted Lionel Rose's State Funeral in 2011. Festival Hall remains as the only purpose-built boxing and wrestling venue in Victoria. [Criterion A]

Festival Hall is historically significant as one of Victoria's primary live music venues since its opening in 1955 and as the principal venue in Victoria for large-scale live music performances from the late 1950s until the 1980s. Festival Hall played a key role in the social evolution of Victorian society in the post-war period by exposing thousands of patrons to the “new wave” of big production live music. Festival Hall hosted some of the biggest national and international acts of the day including the Beatles, Buddy Holly, Neil Young, The Kinks and Frank Sinatra. [Criterion A]

Festival Hall is socially significant for its association with the live music industry in Victoria. The association between Festival Hall and the Victorian live music community is particularly strong due to the length of the association and the close relationship between the place, the live music community and the establishment and growth of the live music industry in the State. [Criterion G]

Festival Hall is socially significant for its association with the boxing and wrestling community in Victoria. As the site of Victoria's principal boxing and wrestling venue since 1913, the association between Festival Hall and the boxing and wrestling communities in Victoria is particularly strong. While the use of the place for boxing and wrestling has declined since the late 1970s, it remains affectionately known as “The House of Stoush” and continues to be used by the wrestling community for events. The association between the place and the boxing community has more recently been celebrated with Festival Hall being the venue for champion boxer Lionel Rose's State Funeral (in 2011). [Criterion G]

## ATTACHMENT 3

### PERMIT POLICY

## ~~PROPOSED~~ PERMIT POLICY

#### Preamble

The purpose of the Permit Policy is to assist when considering or making decisions regarding works to a registered place. It is recommended that any proposed works be discussed with an officer of Heritage Victoria prior to making a permit application. Discussing proposed works will assist in answering questions the owner may have and aid any decisions regarding works to the place.

**The extent of registration of Festival Hall in the Victorian Heritage Register affects the whole place shown on Diagram 2386 including the land and all of the building (exteriors and interiors) as well as the canopy extending into the Dudley Street road reserve.** Under the *Heritage Act 2017* a person must not remove or demolish, damage or despoil, develop or alter or excavate, relocate or disturb the position of any part of a registered place or object without approval. It is acknowledged, however, that alterations and other works may be required to keep places and objects in good repair and adapt them for use into the future.

If a person wishes to undertake works or activities in relation to a registered place or registered object, they must apply to the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria for a permit. The purpose of a permit is to enable appropriate change to a place and to effectively manage adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of a place as a consequence of change. If an owner is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that Heritage Victoria be contacted.

Permits are required for anything which alters the place or object, unless a **permit exemption** is granted. Permit exemptions usually cover routine maintenance and upkeep issues faced by owners as well as minor works or works to the elements of the place or object that are not significant. They may include appropriate works that are specified in a conservation management plan. Permit exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.38 of the Heritage Act) or after registration (under s.92 of the Heritage Act). It should be noted that the addition of new buildings to the registered place, as well as alterations to the interior and exterior of existing buildings requires a permit, unless a specific permit exemption is granted.

#### Conservation management plans

It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan is developed to manage the place in a manner which respects its cultural heritage significance.

#### Aboriginal cultural heritage

If works are proposed which have the potential to disturb or have an impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage it is necessary to contact Aboriginal Victoria to ascertain any requirements

under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. If any Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered or exposed at any time it is necessary to immediately contact Aboriginal Victoria to ascertain requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

### Other approvals

Please be aware that approval from other authorities (such as local government) may be required to undertake works.

### Archaeology

Any works that may affect historical archaeological features, deposits or artefacts at the place is likely to require a permit, permit exemption or consent. Advice should be sought from the Archaeology Team at Heritage Victoria.

### Cultural heritage significance

#### Overview of significance

The cultural heritage significance of Festival Hall at 202-306 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, lies in its historical and social significance as Victoria's principal boxing, wrestling and live music venue in the second half of the twentieth century. The significance of the place is embodied in the external and internal form and fabric of the place. Festival Hall is notably and historically a highly flexible space, allowing it to service a number of dynamic communities and usages.

~~The cultural heritage significance of Festival Hall lies in its historical and social significance as Victoria's principal boxing, wrestling and live music venue in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The significance of the place is embodied in the external and internal form and fabric of the place.~~

- a) ~~All of the features listed here are of **primary cultural heritage significance** in the context of the place. A permit is required for most works or alterations. See Permit Exemptions section for specific permit exempt activities:~~
- ~~• Original external form and fabric.~~
  - ~~• Volume of the internal space.~~
  - ~~• Central timber floor.~~
  - ~~• Tiered seating to the west and east, including the early rows of steel-framed timber bleachers to the east and west and rows of theatre-like balcony seating to the south~~
  - ~~• Location of the northern stage.~~
  - ~~• Balcony to the south.~~
  - ~~• Highly intact original amenity areas (being the bathroom to the south of the stage on the Rosslyn Street side of the building and the male bathroom to the left of the entrance doors to Dudley Street).~~
- b) ~~The features of **no cultural heritage significance** include the following:~~
- ~~• The fabric of the northern stage.~~
  - ~~• Bar fit outs.~~
  - ~~• Suspended ceiling.~~
  - ~~• Partitions and fit outs in the areas under the tiered seating.~~
  - ~~• Bathroom and amenity area fit outs not included in a) above.~~
  - ~~• Non-original partitions and seating.~~
  - ~~• The external and internal colour scheme.~~
  - ~~• Lighting, audio-visual systems, security systems, air-conditioning systems and the like.~~

- ~~•—Signage from 1980 onwards (internal and external).~~

Specific permit exemptions are provided for these items.

## **~~PROPOSED~~ PERMIT EXEMPTIONS (UNDER SECTION 38 OF THE HERITAGE ACT)**

*Nil.*

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.38 of the Heritage Act). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.92 of the Heritage Act).

### **~~General Condition 1~~**

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

### **~~General Condition 2~~**

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

### **~~General Condition 3~~**

All works should ideally be informed by Conservation Management Plans prepared for the place. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

### **~~General Condition 4~~**

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

### **~~General Condition 5~~**

Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the relevant responsible authority, where applicable.

### **~~Specific Permit Exemptions~~**

#### **~~Building Exteriors~~**

- ~~•—Minor patching, repair and maintenance which replaces like with like.~~
- ~~•—Replacement or upgrading of air conditioning systems, water and sewerage systems, security systems, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc.~~
- ~~•—Removal of redundant external services such as hot water services and wiring.~~
- ~~•—Installation or repair of damp proofing.~~
- ~~•—Painting of previously painted surfaces.~~
- ~~•—Replacement of roof sheeting on a like for like basis.~~
- ~~•—Removal of signage from 1980 onwards.~~
- ~~•—Removal or replacement of non-original doors and windows.~~
- ~~•—Installation, removal or replacement of public address systems, detectors, alarms, emergency lights, exit signs, luminaires and the like.~~

- Installation of new fire hydrant services including sprinklers and fire doors.

### **Building Interiors**

- Minor repairs and maintenance which replaces like with like.
- Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings.
- Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.
- Installation, removal or replacement of curtains, curtain tracks, rods and blinds.
- Installation, removal or replacement of devices for wall or ceiling hangings.
- Demolition or removal of non-original or early stud/partition walls, suspended ceilings, wall linings or doors.
- Removal or replacement of non-original door and window furniture and glazing.
- Demolition or refurbishment of existing bar areas.
- Replacement of the northern stage with a new stage with proportions similar to the existing or original stage.
- Removal or replacement of existing signage.
- Installation of removable stud/partition walls in areas under the tiered seating provided that installation does not damage/remove original fabric.
- Refurbishment of bathrooms, toilets and kitchens including removal, installation or replacement of non-original sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings, excluding works to highly intact early bathrooms.
- Installation, removal or replacement of audio-visual equipment, security systems, air-conditioning systems and the like.
- Installation, removal or replacement of public address systems, detectors, alarms, emergency lights, exit signs, luminaires and the like.
- Installation of new fire hydrant services including sprinklers and fire doors.

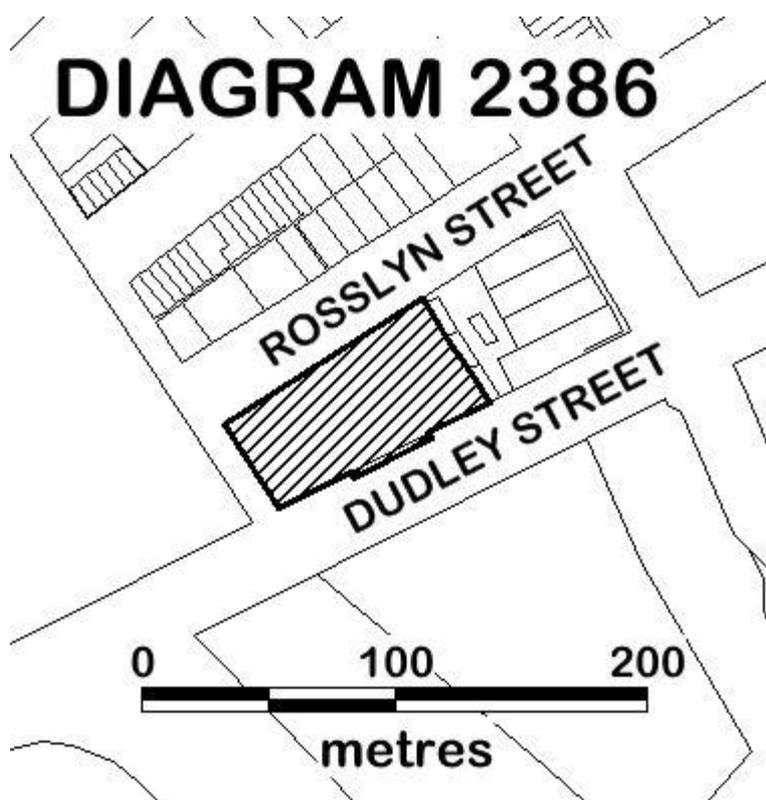
## ATTACHMENT 4

### EXTENT OF REGISTRATION

#### **RECOMMENDED-EXTENT OF REGISTRATION**

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2386 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 743078 and part of the road reserve for Dudley Street.

The extent of registration of Festival Hall in the Victorian Heritage Register affects the whole place shown on Diagram 2386 including the land and all of the building (including the exteriors and interiors).



#### **RATIONALE FOR EXTENT**

The extent of registration of Festival Hall comprises the cadastral block, which includes all of the building fabric as well as the canopy extending into the Dudley Street road reserve.

**AERIAL PHOTO OF THE PLACE SHOWING PROPOSED-EXTENT  
OF REGISTRATION**

