

**NATIONAL BANK OF AUSTRALASIA
105 Swan Street**

History and Description

This Richmond branch of the National Bank of Australasia was opened in 1884, and tenders for the erection of the current premises were announced several years later in October 1886. Architect for the building was Albert Purchas, a prominent early Melbourne architect. Purchas was also a surveyor, and early commissions were the surveys for St. Kilda Road and Sydney Road.

Many of his architectural commissions were undertaken in partnership with Charles Sawyer. Purchas was also responsible for the 1856 Melbourne Savings Bank, and several commissions for the Church of England.

The bank building is on a prominent corner location, and has a splayed corner entrance. It is an imposing three storey structure, and few suburban banks were erected at this scale. The simply articulated building is elegantly proportioned with banded rustication at ground floor level continued throughout the structure as quoining. A grand floor and top cornice, in combination with string coursing provide a horizontal focus. Architectural features are the window architraves and pediments. The building retains a high degree of integrity, apart from the removal of the projecting first floor corner window.

Statement of Significance

This suburban branch of the National Bank of Australasia was erected in 1886-7 by the notable bank architect Albert Purchas. Its imposing three storey height, prominent corner location, and fine architectural detailing are important components of the building's significance.

References

B. Trethowan, A Study of Banks in Victoria 1851-1939.
Architects Bibliography File, State Library of Victoria.
National Bank Archives.