

Building:	Former Cable Tram Depot	Significance:	B
Address:	649 Bridge Road, Richmond	Melway Map Ref:	2H G7
Building Type:	Cable Tram Depot	Construction Date:	1885
Architect:	Unknown	Builder:	Unknown



Intactness:		Condition:	
G[] F[x] P[]		G[x] F[] P[]	
Existing Heritage Listings:		Recommended Heritage Listings:	
Victorian Heritage Register	[]	Victorian Heritage Register	[]
Register of the National Estate	[]	Register of the National Estate	[x]
National Trust	[x]	Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

History

The tram depot in Bridge Road, Richmond, was the first of 15 tram shed complexes built between 1885 and 1891 to house the Melbourne cable trams. The depots were built by the Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Co. Ltd. which owned and operated the service. The tracks and eleven cable winding engine houses were built by the Melbourne Tramways Trust and leased to the company until 1916. Thereafter, the system was vested in a Tramways Board. Prior to 1885, the company operated an extensive service of horse-drawn omnibuses and the cable tram network virtually followed of the omnibus routes. The Richmond Depot was closed in 1927.

The former Tram Depot is now part of the Rydges Riverwalk hotel complex.

John & Thurley O'Connor, Ros Coleman & Heather Wright. *Richmond Conservation Study*. 1985.

Description

The facade of the original cable tram depot is presently incorporated into the six-storey Rydges Hotel complex, however it still retains its not inconsiderable aesthetic quality. The long facade is of polychromatic brickwork, with walls of brown brick articulated by red brick piers. The plinth and upper walls are also of red brick. Windows are double-hung sashes with segmental-arched heads with brown brick voussoirs and bluestone sills. Towards the east and west ends of the facade are two segmental arched openings, decorated with rendered vermiculated quoining, and crowned by rendered pediments. A moulded cornice runs across the length of the facade.

The hotel, constructed in the late 1980s, rises from behind the original single-storey facade, which is all that remains of the original structure.

Significance

The former Richmond Cable Tram Depot, Bridge Road, Richmond, is of local architectural and historical significance. The facade is substantially intact, although its architectural significance is considerably diminished by the 1980s six-storey hotel built behind. Historically, it was the first of 15 cable tram depots to have been constructed in Melbourne, and is one of the surviving sheds of the original cable tram network, which now demonstrate the route and extent of the cable tram system.

Original Source

John & Thurley O'Connor, Ros Coleman & Heather Wright. *Richmond Conservation Study*. 1985.