

<b>Building:</b>	Former National Bank of Australasia	<b>Significance:</b>	B
<b>Address:</b>	261 Victoria Street, Abbotsford	<b>Melway Map Ref:</b>	2G H1
<b>Building Type:</b>	Bank	<b>Construction Date:</b>	1887
<b>Architect:</b>	Albert Purchas	<b>Builder:</b>	W H Smith



**Intactness:**

G[x] F[ ] P[ ]

**Condition:**

G[x] F[ ] P[ ]

**Existing Heritage Listings:**

Victorian Heritage Register [ ]  
 Register of the National Estate [ ]  
 National Trust [x]

**Recommended Heritage Listings:**

Victorian Heritage Register [ ]  
 Register of the National Estate [x]  
 Heritage Overlay Controls [x]

## **History**

In 1866 Alexander Skeene, a manager, was listed as owner of vacant land measuring 166 feet by 100 feet on the north-west corner of Victoria and James Streets. In 1887 a National Bank was built on the site, with Alexander Campbell listed as manager. Tenders were called for the work on 4 September 1886.<sup>1</sup>

Andrew Ward. *Collingwood Conservation Study*. 1995.

## **Description**

The former National Bank of Australasia is a double-storey building of rendered masonry construction, designed in an Italianate style. The ground floor of the Victoria and Hoddle Street facades are rusticated in the manner of a Renaissance palazzo, embellished with vermiculated quoining. The central projecting entrance porch is supported on Tuscan Doric columns, and is flanked by semi-circular arched window openings with vermiculated keystones. Above the porch is a balustraded balconette. A moulded cornice divides the two storeys. At first floor level, the rendered walls are quoined, and the rectangular double-hung sash windows have bracketed pediments. There is a tripartite window above the entrance porch, articulated with Ionic pilasters. The first floor cornice is modillioned and dentilated, surmounted by a balustraded parapet, with a central stilted semi-circular arched pediment containing the words EST 1858 in raised lettering. The name of the bank is inscribed within the frieze below the first floor cornice.

## **Comparative Examples**

Former State Savings Bank, 231 Victoria Street, Abbotsford

Former National Bank, 171 Smith Street, Fitzroy

Former Union Bank of Australia, 165-167 Smith Street, Fitzroy

## **Significance**

The former National Bank of Australasia at 261 Victoria Street, Abbotsford, is of local architectural significance and local historical interest. The building is a good example of the restrained use of the Italianate palazzo style, typical of bank premises in the late 19th century. The building's association with Albert Purchas, architect of the Melbourne General Cemetery (from 1852), and of the Richmond South branch of the bank, is of interest.

## **Original Source**

Andrew Ward. *Collingwood Conservation Study*. 1995.

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1 Rate Books 1886, 1887. Trethowan, B. *A Study of Banks in Victoria 1851-1938* 1976. National Bank Files.