

## 190 HIGH STREET, KEW POLICE STATION , COURT HOUSE AND POST OFFICE

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Original Use: Kew Police Station, Court House  
and Post Office

Date of Construction: 1886 and 1888<sup>18</sup>

Architect: John Henry Harvey<sup>19</sup>

DESIGNATION A  
CITATION NO.68



Court House

### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

Erected under the supervision of G.W. Watson<sup>20</sup>, this complex of public buildings includes the Kew Post Office which was opened in 1888<sup>21</sup>. They are unified in design and combine to form one of the most impressive complexes of public buildings in Victoria. They are built in the English vernacular free style in red brick and render, with render banding and ornamentation defining the edges of the buildings with quoining and pilasters, and the openings with architraves and ornamentation. The roofs are in slate, with the Court House having a terracotta ridge capping, while all three have red brick chimneys with strapwork and corbelling. In using the English vernacular free style, these buildings were one of the first to adopt this style and were an influential precursor to Edwardian architecture.



Post Office



Police Station

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Kew Post Office, Court House and Police Station are of significance as one of the most impressive groups of public buildings in Victoria, for their successful and early use of the English vernacular free style, and as a landmark in Kew on one of its most prominent sites.

## HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: N/A.

GBR: Registered - Court House and Police Station only

RNE: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

National Trust: File No.5560

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- 18 Trethowan, B., 'The Public Works Department of Victoria: 1851-1900'  
19 *ibid.*  
20 National Trust of Aust.(Vic), 'Post Office, Court House and Police Station...'; September 18 1986  
21 *ibid.*, 'History of the Kew Post Office'

## 185 HIGH STREET, NATIONAL BANK

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Original Use: Bank  
Date of Construction: 1891<sup>1</sup>  
Architect: Inskip and Robertson<sup>2</sup>

DESIGNATION A  
CITATION NO. 69

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### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The National Bank of Australasia was established in 1859<sup>3</sup> and a branch at High Street Kew, was operating by 1892<sup>4</sup>. Inskip and Robertson designed a number of banking chambers in Melbourne and elsewhere in Victoria<sup>5</sup> including this building. In February 1889 the *Australian Builder and Contractor's News* recorded that a building on the corner of Walpole and Bulleen (now High) Streets was to be demolished to make way for the erection of the National Bank<sup>6</sup>. The two-storey building accommodated a banking chamber as well as three shops onto High Street (now demolished), one of which was later occupied by the *Mercury* newspaper<sup>7</sup>. In 1918 the Colonial Bank amalgamated with the National Bank of Australasia<sup>8</sup>, now called the National Australia Bank.

The design of the bank takes full advantage of its corner position, with both of the street facades embellished with render mouldings. In a manner typical at the end of the economic boom, the bank is ornately decorated. There is a trabeated system represented across it with half-fluted pilasters, that rise to a projecting pediment to the corner entrance door. In the manner of a basement, the ground floor has rusticated walls and round headed windows in the spandrels of which are heavily foliated render mouldings, while the floor above has been presented as the piano nobile, with large rectangular windows filling the wall plane and surrounded by render architraves. The whole is surmounted by an Italianate parapet.

Apart from the demolition of the High Street shops, the building remains in a substantially intact condition, however the front doors have been replaced and the railings to the front door added.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The National Bank is of significance as a substantially intact bank of the early 1890s, the exterior of which is a fine example of the degree of decoration typical of that date. It is a rare survivor of a nineteenth century example of this building type in Kew and is one of few intact nineteenth century commercial premises in the High Street area.

## HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

GBR: N/A

RNE: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

National Trust: Not currently listed.

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<sup>1</sup> Architects' Index, University of Melbourne

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Victoria and its Metropolis*, Vol IIB, p.547

<sup>4</sup> Architects' Index

<sup>5</sup> Trethowan, B., 'Banks in Victoria-1851 to 1939', prepared for the HBC, 1975, p.46

<sup>6</sup> Architects' Index

<sup>7</sup> Rogers, D., *A History of Kew*, p.175

<sup>8</sup> Trethowan, *op.cit.*, p.139

## 2 HIGH STREET, SHOP AND RESIDENCE

Original Use: Residence and shop  
Date of Construction: Circa 1919-1920  
Architect: Unknown

DESIGNATION A  
CITATION NO.70



### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

In 1915 a Mr Bisset, chemist, was the occupant of this two-storey building <sup>1</sup> while by 1920 the tenant of the property was Alan Cunningham, who ran his chemist business from these premises <sup>2</sup>. The building appears to have been built for Bisset's occupation; the Rate Books merely recording land with an N.A.V. of £6 in 1914.<sup>3</sup> It is a two storeyed shop with a residence above, that is built in red brick (now unfortunately painted over), that retains much of its original decoration. At parapet level, the render has mouldings of Art Nouveau origin, and the acute corner site is accentuated with the three sided oriel window at first floor level that is clad with pressed metal sheeting to the ogee shaped roof and its spandrel panels. The verandah to the ground floor is most distinctive and appears original, being cantilevered out from wrought metal brackets, while the shop windows and entrances all retain their original arcaded form.