

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R071
Name of Place: Robert Garran Offices
Other/Former Names: Patents Office
Address/Location: Kings Avenue BARTON 2600
Block 1 Section 3 of Barton

Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1984	Level of Significance:	Local
Citation Revision No:	2	Category:	Government
Citation Revision Date:	August 1990	Style:	Stripped Classical

Date of Design:		Designer:	E Henderson, Chief Architect of the Department of Interior, Works and Services
Construction Period:	1939-41	Client/Owner/Lessee:	Commonwealth of Australia
Date of Additions:		Builder:	

Statement of Significance

A major public building of its time, and comparable to the Institute of Anatomy in period, style materials and scale. Its stripped classical design is enhanced by Art Deco detailing and decoration. The building makes an outstanding contribution to its environment and the streetscape of Kings Avenue. The building is an example of the Interwar Stripped Classical style, and forms an important contribution to Federal Capital architecture.

Description

A two and three-storey sandstone building E-shaped in plan, including a courtroom and basement prison cell to meet the requirements of the Patents Office. The external sandstone facings and embossed round metal panels with bronze lanterns set on fluted stone pillars flanking the bronze entry doors show a strong influence of the Art Deco style. The building is generally constructed of load-bearing masonry. Originally used as the Patents Office, the building has been sympathetically linked to a new office building housing the attorney General's Department.

Condition and Integrity

Good - the building has been altered sympathetically and now linked to another of building designed by Jackson Teece Chesterman and Willis.

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

Designed by government architect, E. Henderson.

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

A rare example of a public building of the Stripped Classical style of architecture with Art Deco entry and detailing of its time in the ACT.

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

The building makes an outstanding contribution to its environment, originally a freestanding building it is now linked to another building; its Spartan appearance enhanced by Art Deco detailing and decoration. It contributes significantly to the streetscape of Kings Avenue.

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

Socially and historically important in Canberra as the former Patents Office.

References

Other Information Sources