



Australian Institute of Architects

18 June 2015

Representation regarding Planning Application 15 00469-01

The Tasmanian Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects now trading as the Australian Institute of Architects (herein referred to as 'the Institute'), provides the following representation with respect to the proposed development at 179 Macquarie Street, Hobart.

It is important to note that this Representation neither aims to support or oppose the proposed development. It simply intends to provide information to the Hobart City Council for the purposes of their consideration. The Institute has no intention of appealing whatever decision the relevant Planning Authority makes.

The Institute would like to ensure that the Hobart City Council is aware of the following;

- The Motors Showroom received the Triennial Award in 1972 from the Tasmanian Chapter of the Institute. The Triennial Award is the highest merit and state-based award for Tasmanian architecture. Originally awarded every three years, the Motors Showroom won the Triennial Award in the public and commercial category for works completed over the previous three years.
- The Motors Showroom is listed on the Australian Institute of Architects Tasmanian Chapter's Register of Significant Tasmanian Buildings in our top 70 buildings.

The following is a summary of publically available documentation on the Motors Showroom building;

- In 1984, the RAI published '*An Architectural Guide to the City of Hobart*'. The guide book documents notable buildings of Hobart's architectural heritage from colonial times to the 1980s. The guide book includes the motors Showroom and identifies its location, the architectural firm, and notes its status as an award winning building. It concludes by stating, 'An elegant fusion of exposed steelwork and in situ concrete'. p.22
- In 1997, The Tasmanian Chapter of the RAI and the Department of Urban Design of the University of Tasmania combined to survey Twentieth Century Architecture in Tasmania. The survey identified 315 buildings from across Tasmania worthy of consideration for

nomination and 175 selected for assessment and 60 buildings were submitted to the registrar of the National Estate that would represent the differing periods and building types across Tasmania. The Motors Showroom was selected for assessment at the time indicating it was 'deemed worthy of further investigation'.

- Published in 2002, *Architecture from the Edge, the 20th Century in Tasmania*, Barry McNeill writes; 'In grand historic Macquarie Street, Hobart, the site of many 19th Century stone buildings, Bevan Rees, while with Philp Lighton Floyd and Beattie, completed an exposed concrete motor showroom. The bronze finish fascia, stone toned walls and low scale show that a new building can be sensitive to context without pastiche effects. It received a Triennial award in 1972.' p. 86

McNeill references both the RAI/UTas survey and the RAI Architectural Guide as more specific reading on the subject.

- In 2003, The City of Hobart published the *City Fringe Heritage Review* prepared by historian Katheryn Bennett. The RAI nominated buildings for inclusion onto Schedule F of the 1982 City of Hobart Planning Scheme. The Motors Showroom was nominated and Bennett notes in the review, 'A brief survey was undertaken of the sites, and it was found that many have prima facie heritage value, however, further investigation is needed to determine whether they should be added to the Schedule.' The Motors Showroom is identified and further research is recommended.
- In 2005, Heritage Tasmania undertook a review of 20th Century nominations including those by the RAI and places identified through heritage surveys. The Motors Showroom was researched and assessed under the criteria required for entry onto the Tasmanian Heritage Register. The assessment identified that the building fulfilled the requirements for the following criteria:

A. The place is important to the course or pattern of Tasmania's history.

D. The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class or place in Tasmania's history.

F. The place has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons.

G. The place has a special association with the life or works, or a group of persons, of importance in Tasmania's history.

Importantly, the research identifies the high quality of the design noting, 'Rees designed the Motors Showroom, where the 'aggressiveness' of brutalism was tempered by a respect for the local environment.' p.2

The full data sheet is appended to this representation and provides a description of the building, its setting and its history. The status of the building remains as 'application pending' which indicates that the nomination awaits formal consideration.

- The Motors Showroom is listed under Table E13.1 Heritage Places in the Hobart Interim Planning Scheme. This scheme however came into effect after the current proposal and subsequently has no statutory basis.

The Institute understands that the Motors Showroom at 179 Macquarie Street was not formally listed and holds the general view that owners need certainty when lodging Development Applications and that as such formal heritage listing should be the primary basis for assessing heritage values when making planning application decisions.

We trust that this representation provides useful information so that Council can make an informed decision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Wheeler', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brad Wheeler RAIA
Tasmanian Chapter President