

Milton House, 21-25 Flinders Lane, Melbourne (VHR H0582)

Q&As

What is Milton House?

Milton House was included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) in 1984. The three storey brick building with Art Nouveau features was constructed in 1901 as a private hospital for the eminent Melbourne surgeon, William Moore, who was the first master of surgery graduate of the University of Melbourne. It was designed by the architects Sydney Smith and Ogg, but much of the detail is thought to be that of their consultant Robert Haddon, the leading local exponent of the Art Nouveau. Milton House was subsequently used as a rooming house, reverted to a medical context in its use by the Victorian Health Commission for X-ray purposes and later became government and commercial offices.

What has happened?

Milton House is adjacent to the north plaza of 1 Spring Street (Shell House). Both places are on the same title and in the same ownership, but are separately registered in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR).

On 11 November 2020, Heritage Victoria received a permit application for proposed works at 1 Spring Street (Shell House) comprising the development of the north plaza including construction of a tower cantilevered above the south east corner of Milton House. A permit application was also received for interior and exterior works to Milton House to upgrade access to the place and allow for integration with the proposed development of 1 Spring Street (Shell House). Conservation works were also proposed.

On 4 August 2021, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria refused the application on the grounds that:

- The works to Milton House are proposed to activate and create a relationship between the place and a proposed redevelopment of 1 Spring Street (Shell House). The redevelopment is not supported and the proposed works to Milton House are considered unnecessary in this context.
- The scale and bulk of the proposed tower for 1 Spring Street (Shell House), its cantilevering above Milton House and the close proximity of supporting columns to the heritage building would have significant visual impact on the place and is detrimental to the cultural heritage significance of the place.
- The current commercial use of Milton House appears to be viable without the proposed changes.

What happens next?

The permit applicant, owner or a person with a real and substantial interest in the place may request a review of the Executive Director's determination to refuse the application. A request for a review must be made to the Heritage Council of Victoria within 60 days of the refusal of the application.