



Former Athenaeum Theatre, Cotton On store fitout

30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento

Heritage Impact Statement

Prepared for Southern Cross Shopfitting

02 July 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Corporation, their lands and waterways, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling to support the protection of their culture and heritage. We strongly advocate social and cultural justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Report register

The following report register documents the development of this report, in accordance with GML's Quality Management System.

Job no.	Issue no.	Notes/description	Issue date
3713	1	Draft Report	26 June 2025
3713	2	Final Report	2 July 2025

Quality assurance

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Project details	1
1.3	Study area	2
1.4	Methodology and scope.....	3
1.4.1	Limitations	4
2	Cultural heritage significance	5
2.1	Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)	5
2.2	Local heritage overlays—Mornington Peninsula Shire	7
2.3	Other heritage listings.....	8
2.3.1	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	8
3	Place description.....	9
3.1	Exterior	9
3.2	Interior	10
3.3	How significance is embodied in the place	15
3.4	Constraints and opportunities arising from significance.....	17
4	Current conditions	25
5	Proposal.....	27
5.1	Documentation.....	27
5.1.1	Description of the proposed works	29
5.2	Heritage advice and design input.....	34
5.3	Options considered.....	35
5.4	Timetable.....	35
5.5	Reasons for the proposed activity.....	35
6	Heritage impact assessment	36

6.1	Temporary works	36
6.2	Demolition/existing conditions	36
6.3	Construction of interior store fitout	36
6.4	Installation of shopfront signage	38
7	Mitigation measures.....	40
8	Assessment against the Heritage Act 2017	41
	8.1.1 Reasonable and economic use	41
9	Conclusion and recommendations	42
	Appendix A—Architectural Drawings	43

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

GML Heritage Victoria (GML) has been engaged by Southern Cross Shopfitting to provide heritage advice and prepare a heritage impact statement (HIS) for the proposed Cotton On store fitout within the former Athenaeum Theatre, Sorrento.

This heritage impact statement (HIS) has been prepared to accompany a permit application for retail fitout works at the former Athenaeum Theatre building at 30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento (the subject site) by Southern Cross Shopfitting. This report identifies the subject site’s heritage context and assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on the heritage values.

The former Athenaeum Theatre is a registered place on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H2227). The Athenaeum Theatre, Sorrento is identified as being of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria. The theatre was built in 1894 and was used for live theatre, dances and as a cinema. The cinema closed in April 2023 after the building was sold.

The proposed works addressed in this HIS include the construction of a Cotton On retail store within the existing ground floor interior space of the former Athenaeum Theatre building. The interior fitout works comprise the installation of shopfittings, floor finishes, paint finishes, lighting and services, internal partitions and joinery units. Minor work will take place externally, mainly relating to new signage on the existing awning.

1.2 Project details

Heritage Impact Statement for: Former Athenaeum Theatre.

Victorian Heritage Register Number: H2227

This Heritage Impact Statement forms part of a permit application for: Cotton On retail store fitout and signage.

Pre-application meeting number: P40987 and email dated 15 May 2025, with feedback and advice from Heritage Victoria.

Address and location description: The former Athenaeum Theatre building at 30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento.

Prepared by: GML Heritage (Vic)

All photographs are by GML unless otherwise acknowledged.

Prepared for: Southern Cross Shopfitting

Date: 2 July 2025

1.3 Study area

The subject site is at 30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento, on the northern side of the street between Point Nepean Road and George Street, within the Mornington Peninsula Shire (Figure 1). The site backs on to an unnamed laneway at the rear.



Figure 1 Aerial view of the Athenaeum Theatre (highlighted in red), located at 30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay, February 2025)

1.4 Methodology and scope

This report has been prepared with reference to the following documents and guidelines:

- Heritage Victoria Guidelines for preparing heritage impact statements (June 2021);
- The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013 (the Burra Charter);
- Victorian Heritage Register Statement of Significance – Athenaeum 28-36 Ocean Beach Road Sorrento. VHR H2227;
- Sorrento Commercial Precinct Statement of Significance (February 2022) HO501;
- Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme Clauses 15.03 Heritage, and 43.01 Heritage Overlay;
- Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme, Heritage Design Guidelines: Sorrento Historic Precinct; and
- Landlord's base building documentation package.

The place has no conservation management plan (CMP).

The HIS considers the potential impacts to the former Athenaeum Theatre building of the Cotton On store fitout and external signage, including cumulative impacts. The theatre (as base building) has recently undergone an internal refurbishment under Heritage Victoria Permit P40477.

The site was visited by GML Heritage in February 2025. All photos in this report are from February 2025 unless noted otherwise.

A pre-application submission was made via the Heritage Desk portal to Heritage Victoria on 16 April 2025.

A written response was received from Heritage Victoria on 15 May 2025, providing high level preliminary advice. The pre-application advice is summarised as follows:

- Fitout works should be light touch, with minimal impact to surviving heritage fabric.
- Consider the legibility of the main auditorium as a large single volume.
- Consider whether the reasonable and/or economic use compromises the conservation of heritage values; is of a scale and nature that are reasonable and compatible with the heritage significance of the place; and can be undertaken in a way that is reversible and sympathetic to heritage fabric.

GML worked closely with the Cotton On design team and Southern Cross Shopfitting project managers to develop the design, and provided preliminary heritage advice on design refinement, avoidance and mitigation of heritage impacts as part of development and revision of the architectural documentation.

1.4.1 Limitations

- This report has not assessed the archaeological potential of the site (Aboriginal or historical) nor any archaeological impacts of the proposed development. Ground disturbance is not proposed.
- No consultation has been undertaken with the Aboriginal community, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council or other stakeholders.
- The works may require separate approvals under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Planning approvals are outside of the scope of GML's advice and are not part of this assessment.
- When GML visited the site in February 2025 there was a Trenery store fitout internally, which has since been removed. There are limited photos of the existing interior conditions—they have been incorporated into this HIS where available.

2 Cultural heritage significance

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)

The former Athenaeum Theatre is a registered place on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H2227) under the *Heritage Act 2017* (Vic). The extent of the registration is defined as:

All of the building marked B1 on Diagram 2227 held by the Executive Director.

All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 2227 held by the Executive Director being the footprint of the building and being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 10318 Folio 993.

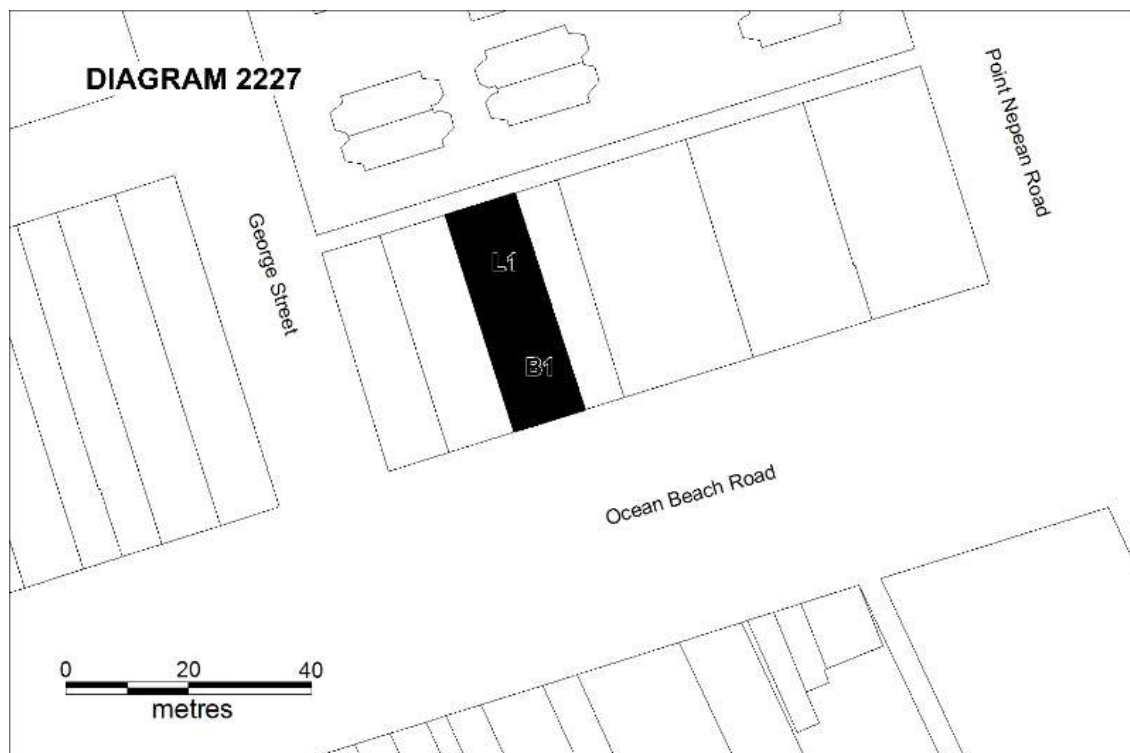


Figure 2 Extent of registration for the former Athenaeum Theatre. (Source: Heritage Victoria)

The following Statement of Significance identifies the cultural heritage significance of the place. It should be noted that the Statement of Significance was written before the cinema closed in 2023 and before recent building works took place.

What is significant?

The Athenaeum theatre was built in 1894 in the commercial centre of the seaside town of Sorrento, which became a popular destination in the 1880s. Designed by Melbourne architect, J. F. Gibbins, the multi-purpose theatrical venue was built for Isaac Bensilum, local councillor,

hotelier and entrepreneur. The building comprised an auditorium, a foyer, retiring rooms, a deep stage with dressing and store rooms beneath, and two shops with residences above. Originally used for various forms of entertainment, silent films were shown in the auditorium in the 1920s from a newly installed bio-box and by 1932 talking pictures were shown. This coincided with Moderne alterations made to the building and the introduction of new equipment.

The Athenaeum is a two storey building constructed from rough hewn local limestone with brick dressings. The front elevation is a simply detailed Italianate facade, with a heavy cornice which runs across the facade below the parapet. This incorporates a segmental arch detail placed at one extreme end with a raised decorative scroll on the parapet above. The grouping of first floor windows is also irregular, and the resulting front facade is therefore unusually asymmetrical in appearance.

The interior of the building displays both original and later Moderne detailing. The decorative auditorium features a large cornice, simple pilasters and three deep plaster domes which are set into a ceiling of panelled, floral plasterwork. Similar plasterwork also lines the proscenium wall. These features date from the original construction. Moderne styled plasterwork has been added between the pilasters of the side walls. The foyer entrance contains a bank of Moderne doors, with a frosted glass strip above incorporating the word 'Athenaeum'.

Various alterations have been made to the building since the 1930s, however the original 1894 building form remains largely intact. Extensive renovations to the building in the mid-1990s included repainting, the installation of new fittings, including lights in the Moderne style, the insertion of a wide screen in front of the early proscenium, the curtaining of the auditorium walls and the addition of two new cinemas in an adjoining building. The building has been used as a permanent cinema for many years.

How is it significant?

The Athenaeum Theatre, Sorrento is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Athenaeum Theatre, Sorrento is of architectural significance as an early example of a theatre in regional Victoria. It is important for its largely intact original ornate interior and its Moderne remodelling which reflects its new use as a cinema venue in the 1930s.

The Athenaeum Theatre, Sorrento is of historical significance for its associations with the late nineteenth and early twentieth century development of one of Victoria's premier seaside resorts. The building's multi-purpose, entertainment function reflects the early, and continuing, holiday character of this seaside town.

VHR controls

Permit exemptions apply to the building, including specific exemptions and general exemptions.

Preliminary advice from Heritage Victoria indicated that a permit application is required for the proposal.

2.2 Local heritage overlays—Mornington Peninsula Shire



Figure 3 Extent of HO408 and HO501. (Source: VicPlan with GML overlay)

The former Athenaeum Theatre is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Mornington Peninsula Shire Planning Scheme as HO408—Athenaeum Theatre, and is adjacent to HO501 Sorrento Commercial Precinct.

Sorrento Historic Precinct Policy (Commercial Area) applies to HO501 and aims to ensure that new development is complementary to the significance and character of the precinct, conserve and enhance the significant heritage places in the precinct, and ensure that significant evidence of Sorrento’s history is not prejudiced by new development.

‘Heritage Design Guidelines: Sorrento Historic Precinct’ applies to land in the Sorrento Historic Precinct. These guidelines aim to protect and enhance vistas of historical significance, and to conserve and enhance streetscapes, particularly Ocean Beach Road.

Heritage Overlay controls

Because the former Athenaeum Theatre is on the VHR, a local permit for heritage works is not needed under the Mornington Peninsula Shire Planning Scheme. Heritage Victoria

will refer the VHR permit application to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council for comments and consultation.

2.3 Other heritage listings

The former Athenaeum Theatre is not in a World Heritage Environs Area or included in the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

2.3.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The site is within an area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sensitivity. The Registered Aboriginal Party is the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. However, the highly developed physical context of the subject site results in a low likelihood that the works may affect Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Assessment and impact analysis on Aboriginal cultural heritage significance is outside the scope of this report.

3 Place description

3.1 Exterior

Externally, the building retains its historical form and proportions, including the original limestone walls and brick details, which have recently had paint removed and undergone restoration works. At street level, a new shopfront and recessed entry doors have been installed below the etched glass highlight windows, which have been retained, and their frames repainted a dark grey.

The cantilevered front awning has new signage on an aluminium sheet background, and a new rectangular suspended sign hangs under the canopy. An interpretive sign panel has been installed on the external wall adjacent to the cinema on the east side.

The rear elevation of the building has a rendered finish and is more utilitarian, with entry/exit doors and roller door to a storage bay.



Figure 4 Front view of the former Athenaeum Theatre, 30-34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento.



Figure 5 Shopfront and awning sign.



Figure 6 Fascia signage and awning sign.

3.2 Interior

The interior space retains the scale and proportion of a large theatre/hall/cinema. This includes the high ceiling and large rectangular floor plan. A reasonable view can be obtained from the front of the store through to the proscenium arch on the back wall. Views of the ceiling and decorative plaster panels on the side walls are also retained, although some panels are partially obscured by the partition and the freestanding display racks.

Early internal features include the decorative proscenium arch, wavy dado trim, ornate plaster panels along the side walls, decorative plaster ceiling panels, recessed feature domes in the ceiling, and expressed piers, which divide up the side walls.

Early timber doors with etched glazed panels have been retained and reinstalled at the rear of the window displays. The original internal stair, located towards the front of the premises, has been contained within plasterboard walls, as has an original fireplace located on the rear wall. The interior has been painted white in the recent renovations.



Figure 7 Interior view of the former Athenaeum Theatre, 30–34 Ocean Beach Road, Sorrento, looking towards rear wall.



Figure 8 Interior view of the former Athenaeum Theatre, looking towards front windows.



Figure 9 Interior view of the former Athenaeum Theatre, showing detail of decorative plasterwork ceiling.



Figure 10 Interior view of the former Athenaeum Theatre, showing detail of proscenium.



Figure 11 View of front foyer.



Figure 12 View of front foyer.



Figure 13 Entry doors with glazed highlight.



Figure 14 Original doors reconfigured as window display.



Figure 15 Dado moulding detail.



Figure 16 Ceiling detail.



Figure 17 Detail view of decorative plaster wall panel.

3.3 How significance is embodied in the place

The state-level significance of the former Athenaeum Theatre is embodied in the qualities of the place, which communicate its former use as a theatre and place of entertainment, and in the remaining decorative elements and spatial qualities, which provide physical evidence of the place's history and historic use.

Key aspects of the former Athenaeum Theatre's cultural heritage significance that are of particular relevance to this HIS are:

- Surviving heritage fabric, including decorative plasterwork in:
 - proscenium framing rear wall;
 - ceiling panels, bosses and domes;
 - decorative wall panels in openwork plasterwork; and
 - engaged piers.
- Legibility of the auditorium as a large open volume.

Relative significance of building features

Understanding the cultural heritage significance of a place and its components is a critical step in establishing levels of tolerance to change of individual components. These in turn inform the opportunities and constraints that guide the future management of the place.

The former Athenaeum Theatre is a significant building, and recent works to adapt the building for retail use have retained and conserved the significant form and fabric of the place, including many of the intact internal and external features. Important features include the form, fabric, scale and façade of the building; the early original internal features; and the spatial volume and scale of the interior. An appreciation of the scale and form of the auditorium, and views of its early decorative scheme allow visitors to gain an understanding of its former use as a theatre.

GML's analysis, drawing on the findings of the site inspection, historical research and consideration of the statement of significance, indicates that elements of the place can be divided into the following significance categories:

High cultural significance

Elements of high significance play a crucial role in supporting the significance of the place. These include individual architectural details, which comprise original and early fabric, along with characteristics of the space, which allow an understanding of its historical use as a theatre and cinema.

- Interior elements include:
 - views towards proscenium and overall space;

- proportions and volume of auditorium space communicating the expanse of a theatre/cinema;
 - views of early decorative elements;
 - moulded plaster cornice;
 - perimeter pilasters;
 - decorative plaster wall panels;
 - decorative plaster wavy dado trim;
 - moulded plaster proscenium arch and ornamental plaster surrounds;
 - decorative ceiling throughout the auditorium;
 - decorative plaster cornices;
 - decorative recessed ceiling domes;
 - enclosed staircase;
 - timber doors with etched glass inserts (fixed to window displays);
 - etched highlight window above entry doors and shopfront;
 - existing plaster wall finish; and
 - plasterboard wall with rectangular openings indicating previous projection/cinema use.
- Exterior elements include:
 - etched highlight glazing panels to shopfront;
 - form and scale of the building;
 - materials, including stone and brickwork;
 - chimney and gable at rear; and
 - views from the street towards the building.

Moderate cultural significance

These elements of lesser cultural significance play a moderate role in supporting the significance of the place:

- plasterboard wall with openings interpreting the cinema 'bio box' projection;
- 'foyer' area of tenancy;
- neutral colour palette of the interior walls and ceiling;
- neutral colour palette of the external façade; and
- boxed in fireplace (assumed in rear stair area).

Low cultural significance

These elements retain only minor significance. They may play a minor role in supporting the significance of the place. Previous works to the place have removed some features of low significance.

The below items have been identified as low significance:

- new metal framed door assembly interpreting the Moderne style.

No cultural significance

Elements that have no significance may be utilitarian in nature. Some may be intrusive and actively impact the cultural heritage significance of the place. GML has not identified any intrusive elements.

Some of the newly installed items may have been designed to be sympathetic to the cultural heritage significance of the place. For instance, the suspended ceiling lights are in a circular format, referencing the circular ceiling domes, and are carefully connected to the ceiling at strategic locations to minimise the impact of the fixings. The following items are utilitarian in nature and of no cultural significance:

- new suspended ceiling lights and fixed wall lights;
- neutral concrete floor;
- plasterboard walls and ceiling in 'foyer' area;
- services cupboards and switchboards, fire hose reel;
- new doors to rear wall; and
- accessible toilet, rear staircase and store.

3.4 Constraints and opportunities arising from significance

Constraints and opportunities arising from the significance of the place, include the need to:

- retain the remaining heritage fabric;
- retain the open nature of the auditorium and views towards the decorative elements;
- retain and enhance the public use and understanding of the place;
- sensitively integrate the elements of a shop fitout into the interior of the place;
- retain the intact nature of the exterior of the building;
- integrate any exterior signage in a way that is sensitive and in keeping with the exterior fabric and materiality; and
- integrate the proposed store fitout in a way that is easily reversible, and minimises impact on views through the auditorium space.

Elements of high significance have a low tolerance for change. Appropriate actions for buildings and elements of high significance include:

- maintain and conserve;
- replace like with like (if condition requires it); and
- change to a small degree, providing adverse impacts to the overall significance of the place or key attributes of primary significance are avoided.

Elements denoted as being of moderate significance have a moderate tolerance for change. Appropriate actions for buildings and elements of moderate significance include:

- generally maintain and conserve;
- change providing there is no adverse impact to the overall significance of the place or key attributes of primary significance; and
- remove some elements, providing adverse impacts to the overall significance of the place and key attributes of primary significance are avoided (if removed, record before removal).

Elements denoted as being of low significance have a high tolerance for change. Appropriate actions for buildings and elements of low significance include:

- change and remove, providing adverse impacts to the overall significance of the place and key attributes of primary significance are avoided.

For example, the new metal framed door assembly is designed in a style to be sympathetic to the cultural heritage significance of the shopfront façade.

Elements denoted as being of no significance have a high tolerance for change, and can likely be altered or removed without impacting the heritage significance of the place.



Specific constraints and opportunities


The table below identifies specific constraints and opportunities relevant to the subject site. Advice has been informed by the building citations and relevant statutory controls.


Table 1 Constraints and opportunities relevant to the project.


Topic	Constraints and opportunities
Overall building conservation	<p>What needs to be conserved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elements of the upper façade, including original finishes. • The general arrangement of the shopfront. • The legibility of the footprint of the theatre building. • The visual prominence and views of Athenaeum Theatre, particularly as viewed along the street frontage of Ocean Beach Road. • Early and original features and decorative elements. • Legibility of original floor plan of the auditorium. • Keep the design of the store clean and uncluttered so as not to distort or obscure the significant fabric, views or to detract from its appreciation. <p>What changes can be tolerated?</p>

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful modifications that allow the space to function, including new services, bathroom and kitchen upgrades, and compliance with access and egress requirements. Painting of previously painted surfaces (subject to colour selection, to be visually neutral). General repair, conservation and maintenance works. Flooring can be changed if neutral and unobtrusive. Generally fixing to floor is preferred over fixing to walls.
<p>Ground level façade (external)</p> 	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The ground level façade has recently been altered to provide a new shopfront, incorporating existing etched glass highlight windows. The new door assembly has been set back to mimic the position of the previous entry.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise changes to façade where possible to streamline approvals process. Retain all early fabric and features, including historic etched glazing panels to shopfront. New paint finish to trim could be considered if neutral in colour. If required, a new paint finish to the façade at ground level should match the existing, and be sympathetic to the colour palette of the upper building façade's pale stonework. Updates to external signage of canopy and under awning can be considered. Retain the modest shopfront scale of the ground level façade windows and doors.
<p>Upper level façade (external)</p>	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The original upper level façade is significant and should not be altered.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain and conserve upper level façade in its current form and fabric.
<p>Rear elevation (external)</p> 	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The rear elevation is utilitarian, but comprises original building fabric. The upper storey includes a timber-clad gable and an original brick chimney. No changes to the composition of the rear elevation should be undertaken.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit works to the rear elevation to necessary minor security or services works. Avoid penetrations.

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
<p>Signage (external)</p> 	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>External signage is part of the history of the building, but should be sensitive to its historic character.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit signage to awning fascia and suspended under awning sign to streamline approvals process. • Ensure signage is of moderate scale in keeping with the building's historic character, and does not distract from or obscure the historic elements. • Any additional signage should be in keeping with existing and not fixed to significant fabric. • Change of colour to awning fascia, or ground level façade could be considered if neutral in colour.
<p>'Foyer' area (internal)</p> 	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The front section of the interior previously comprised the foyer of the cinema. It has undergone alterations over the years and does not include any decorative plasterwork. It includes a plasterboard wall with square penetrations through which films would be projected from the bio-box, communicating previous use.</p> <p>An early stair is currently boxed out with plasterboard walls, but it is understood a permit has been provided to the landlord to remove part of the stair and leave part of the fabric as an interpretive element.</p> <p>Clear views of the auditorium are possible upon entry</p> <p>The front section includes re-used 1920s era timber and etched glass doors, which have been installed as a backdrop to the window displays.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit additional fixtures to ceiling or partitions so as not to detract from views into the space and through to the theatre area. • Additional light fixtures could be added if in existing tracks, or if unobtrusive and not requiring fixings to original fabric. • Retain the plasterboard wall with rectangular cutouts as an interpretive element of the projector bio-box. • Display and merchandising at side walls is possible, but avoid or minimise fixings to original fabric. • Retain insitu the 1920s timber and glass doors, which are used as a backdrop to the window displays. Do not fix into these elements.

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
<p>'Auditorium' area (interior)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any fixings for window displays should avoid fixing into the building fabric. Floor fixings are preferable. Maintain a clear view of the new 'interpretive stair' element. Do not place fixtures in front or obscure it. <p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The former auditorium is a highly significant part of the interior. It retains original and early fabric and architectural details and decorative elements with a high degree of integrity. Uninterrupted views of the whole volume of the space convey its original scale, proportion and rhythm, providing visitors with an understanding of the former use of the premises as a theatre.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain the heritage values of the space, which are strongly associated with the interior fabric and arrangement and understanding of the space as an early theatre Retain all original and early fabric and decorative elements (e.g. pilasters, decorative plaster wall panels, dado trim). Do not fix into side walls or any decorative elements. Install shop fitout so these are on display where possible. Protect from physical damage (e.g. by setting racks and fitout away from the walls) and avoid any penetrations to these features. Explore opportunities to design the layout of the store with reference to the existing spatial proportions and architectural rhythm of the space, as expressed in the ceiling and perimeter wall divisions. For example, by installing clothing racks in a spaced pattern between the pilasters, and displaying and celebrating decorative plasterwork. Retain a high level of visibility of original and early fabric and features when locating new shop fitout features, so the former function as a theatre can be appreciated. Retain the open nature of the auditorium, expressed through its high ceilings and the large volume of the space. Avoid obscuring views through the space, keep any partitions low in height. Avoid fixing to perimeter walls. It is preferred that partitions and shopfitting units are freestanding, or fixed to the floor. Explore layouts for visual merchandising and arrangement of shopfittings to minimise elements placed against perimeter walls. Explore design opportunities to minimise the height of elements placed in front of decorative panels. Consider protecting significant fabric from risk of damage during store operations while maintaining a view of it.

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
<p>Auditorium area (interior/back of house)</p> 	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The area intended for a back of house/staff usage is part of the original auditorium and the rear wall includes original decorative proscenium and surrounds. Recent interventions include new doors to an exit and accessible toilet, and fire hose reel cupboard and services cabinets fixed to the wall. A storeroom is accessed externally. A boxed out original fireplace or chimney appears to exist within the stairway. The plasterwork of the proscenium and the decorative surrounds are intact.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This part of the space forms part of the original auditorium and should be easily viewed as such. Lines of sight should be maintained from the front of the store to the rear wall and the proscenium arch, so as not to detract from its interpretation and appreciation. • There is scope to include staff facilities, including a tearoom bench. Any services penetrations or conduits should avoid impacting the original fabric. • The location of the tea bench can make use of a capped off plumbing fixture provided by the landlord. Enquire whether a false wall is behind for provision of services. • New elements installed on the rear wall (e.g. electrical service boxes, safety signs) should be located within the proscenium arch, where alterations have already been made, rather than outside the arch, where the decorative plasterwork defines the historic theatre stage/cinema screen. • Ensure original plasterwork and historic features are protected from back of house activities (e.g. accidental damage from frequent movement of boxes, using sensitively designed and low-impact measures such as protective separation from walls). • The accessible WC, new stair and store room are not sensitive and can tolerate changes if required. • Do not fix into the wall encasing the original fireplace/chimney within the stairway.
<p>– Ceiling (interior)</p>	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The original highly decorative ceiling throughout the former auditorium comprises patterned plaster panels with decorated strapwork and a series of three decorative ceiling domes. An original wide plaster cornice surrounds the ceiling at the wall junction. These features date to the original construction of the theatre.</p>

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
	<p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ceiling and its features date to the original construction of the auditorium and should be retained. • Any required fixings should be carefully considered, and alternative fixing locations would be preferred. • Use existing fittings. If lighting upgrades are required, consider changing only the lamps of the newly installed suspended 'ring' fixtures and retaining the ring, or supplement existing lighting by providing other non-suspended forms of indirect lighting. • Avoid penetrations as much as possible. Make sure any fixings are small, reversible/repairable and installed in less sensitive parts of the decorative ceiling along the geometry of the ceiling plasterwork. • The divisions and proportions of the ceiling, and the location of the domes provide a reference point that could inform the store layout below and the layout of the lighting fittings.
<p>Design opportunities for new works</p>	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>There is an opportunity to celebrate and complement the historic character of the building through sympathetic design of the new shop fit out.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New architectural detailing should avoid replicating historical details of the building and should be contemporary in style to complement but not distract from the historic character. • New works should generally respect the existing scale, spatial volume, pattern and rhythm of the interior of the auditorium to enable an understanding of the space as a former theatre. This includes maintaining views across the space and keeping partitions low in height wherever possible. • Maintain views of significant fabric, including decorative plaster perimeter panels. Avoid high fixtures against walls that would obscure these details. • Use a thoughtful and responsive approach to the material and chromatic palette of the new works so that it responds well to the heritage context and yet is contemporary in design.
<p>Sorrento Historic Precinct Design Guidelines</p>	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>The relevant Mornington Shire Council Policies and Guidelines relating to the site should be considered and incorporated into the design. As most of the works are internal, the important external elements appear to be limited to external signage and paint colours.</p>

Topic	Constraints and opportunities
	<p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To minimise potential impacts, signage could be limited to the existing signage locations (front of awning and under awning sign) and any colour changes should be kept to a restrained palette.

4 Current conditions

The cinema ceased operations in 2023 and was sold. The owner has carried out works to convert the cinema into a retail premises, in accordance with a permit from Heritage Victoria. This included demolishing internal elements of the previous cinema, and retaining some original significant fabric, including decorative plaster and ceilings. During our site visit in February 2025, a 'pop up' Trenery store occupied the space, which consisted of a partitioned-off back of house store area, change rooms, display racks and a sales counter. GML understands that the building owner is to remove part of an early staircase that is currently partitioned off in the front section of the tenancy and install an interpretive element with salvaged materials, in accordance with a permit from Heritage Victoria.

Photographs were taken by GML on 27 February 2025, at this time, there was a Trenery store fitout installed.

The previous Trenery shop fitout has subsequently been removed by the Lessor's team on 19 May 2025. The following photos illustrate current existing conditions and were supplied by Southern Cross Shopfitting.



Figure 18 View of side wall after previous fitout removed. (Source: Cotton On, June 2025)



Figure 19 View towards rear of auditorium after previous fitout removed. (Source: Cotton On, June 2025)



Figure 20 View of façade after previous fitout removed. (Source: Cotton On, June 2025)

5 Proposal

This section of the report describes the proposed works based on a review of the Southern Cross Shopfitting Package Heritage Consultant Issue Rev A dated 28 May 2025. It addresses proposed works to two main components:

- the exterior shopfront signage; and
- the interior store fitout.

5.1 Documentation

This report has assessed the impact of the proposed store fitout works and external signage on the former Athenaeum Theatre based on the following documentation (Table 5.1). The documents are included in Appendix A.

Table 5.1 Relevant proposal documentation, prepared by Southern Cross.

Document name	Issue date	Revision
A001 COVER PAGE	28.05.25	A
A002 GENERAL NOTES	28.05.25	A
A003 GENERAL NOTES - SERVICES	28.05.25	A
A103 ZONAL AREA PLAN	28.05.25	A
A104 FLOOR & FINISHES PLAN	28.05.25	A
A104.1 TIMBER FLOOR SETOUT PLAN	28.05.25	A
A105 SIGNAGE PLAN	28.05.25	A
A106 REFLECTED CEILING PLAN	28.05.25	A
A201 SHOPFRONT ELEVATION AND PLAN	28.05.25	A
A202 ELEVATIONS	28.05.25	A
A203 ELEVATIONS	28.05.25	A
A401 FITTING ROOM LAYOUT	28.05.25	A
A901 3D VIEWS	28.05.25	A
E101 SERVICES & ELECTRICAL PLAN	28.05.25	A
E102 LIGHTING PLAN	28.05.25	A

Document name	Issue date	Revision
F101 FIXTURE PLAN	28.05.25	A
CO Sorrento Materials & Finishes	28.05.25	-
FF&E SCHEDULE		
COG GENERAL GROUP STANDARDS	26.08.24	E
• SCT-4 WAP unit	01.03.2024	-
• SDT-1 Door types reserve door	01.03.2024	-
• SFJ-1 Floor junction details	01.03.2024	-
• SFJ-2 Floor junction details	01.03.2024	-
• SGD-1 CCTV decal installation	01.03.2024	-
• SJD-4 COG Counter module	01.03.2024	-
• SPJ-3 Surface mounted wall post	01.03.2024	-
• SPT-1 Partition type – typical stud wall	01.03.2024	-
• SPT-2 Partition type – plasterbd wall	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-1.4 Reserve OPS box	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-3.1 Kitchenette standard	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-5 Reserve details BOH posts	14.08.2023	A
• SRD-6 Reserve details BOH racking	14.08.2023	A
• SRD-7 Reserve Details Hooks	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-9 Reserve Details folding table	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-10 Reserve Details ladder	01.03.2024	-
• SRD-15 Reserve Details floor paint	01.03.2024	-
COC COTTON ON STANDARD DETAILS	14.08.24	C
• C02.1.3 Shopfront surface mounted sign non illuminated	17.04.24	-
• C02.4.5 Fitting room frame	11.09.23	-
• C04.6 Mega speaker zoning and finish	15.07.2022	I
• C05.3 Fitting room number tags	04.08.2023	A
• C05.4 Fitting room entry portal	17.05.2024	B
• C05.6 Fitting room	14.08.2024	E
• C05.8 Fitting room door talker	26.03.2024	-
• C05.9 Fitting room door hardware	14.08.2024	-
• C06.6.3 POS	14.08.2024	C
• C06.7.1 Credenza Modules	04.08.2023	-
• C06.7.3 Module Credenza	04.08.2023	-
• C07.1.8 Large scale wall image frame	26.03.2024	-

Document name	Issue date	Revision
• C07.2.1 Timber freestanding framewall	04.08.2023	A
• SK03 FR returns shelf with rail	20.02.2025	-
• SK23 Fridge shroud unit	14.04.2025	-

5.1.1 Description of the proposed works

The proposed works for the Cotton On store fitout include all of the works described in the drawings listed in Table 2.1 above, and are summarised below:

Exterior:

- installation of non-illuminated surface mounted sign to fascia of existing shopfront awning;
- application of new signage panels to both sides of double sided suspended under awning illuminated sign; and
- installation of shop window illuminated sign (internally behind glass).

The front awning sign (SH-01) is constructed of three dimensional individual letters which are 350mm high x 40mm deep and pin fixed to the fascia. There is no illumination to this sign. The under awning blade sign (SH-02) is an existing sign with an existing powdercoated frame, which will be modified to allow for the insertion of an illuminated logo panel to each side and a painted timber decorative moulding. This sign is back-illuminated.

The window sign (SH-03), positioned internally, is a red coloured LED sign. It will be illuminated at night. No work to the upper façade is required as part of the proposed works.



Figure 21 Cotton On external signage (main awning sign) and internal illuminated window sign.

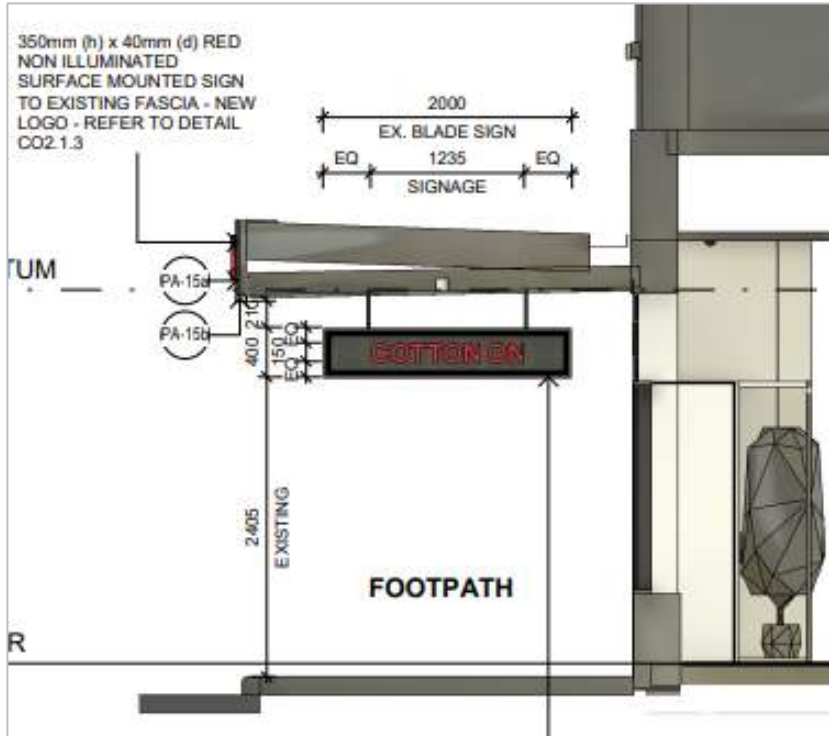


Figure 22 Part plan A201 showing location of under awning signage.



Figure 24 A 3D rendering of the proposed fitout, view towards rear of store. (Source: Southern Cross Shopfitting, part drawing A901)



Figure 25 A 3D rendering of the proposed fitout, view towards front of store. (Source: Southern Cross Shopfitting, part drawing A901)

During the works

Temporary works and construction phase

No temporary buildings or site sheds are required. On-street carparking out the front of the premises will be used for deliveries and contractor car parking.

No hoarding is required. The contractor will install sheet plastic to the glass storefront to block visuals into the tenancy throughout the works. Residue-free tape will be used for easy removal. The temporary sheet plastic will be established when the project commences and removed after completion of works.

Management of deliveries:

- Items will be delivered early morning and taken into the store at the time of arrival;
- Deliveries will be staged in accordance with the works, only required materials and decorative items will be delivered when needed;
- The front foyer area will be used as a storage area whilst works are proceeding, which includes storage of freestanding toolboxes and first aid items;
- All items once delivered will be relocated to the front foyer and placed in a general area on the floor, away from walls;
- Items placed in the area of works will be installed directly after deliver, there is ample space within the floorspace to ensure clearance from walls;
- Framing will be made off site and installed on delivery;
- For management of deliveries, there will be pre delivery communication including delivery schedules and material specifics, including how items are palletised;
- There will be a minimum of 2 people for full supervision and monitoring during the process, ensuring adherence to protection protocols, which include guiding the delivery vehicle, assisting with manual handling or mechanical aids (dolly/trolley/pallet jack/a frame)

Inductions and supervision

- All personnel attending to the site will be briefed/trained on the heritage of the site and the requirements and do's & do nots of the site.
- Training will include site requirements, including no stacking against walls or doors.
- Workers will be directed that plasterwork is strictly not to be touched during the fit-out period; training of all site attendees will be conducted to ensure this is followed.
- An experienced Site Manager will be engaged to supervise, ensuring that the conditions of heritage and general requirements of the site are adhered to throughout the works.
- The same team of workers will be used for the duration of the fit out, ensuring continuity of understanding the heritage values.

5.2 Heritage advice and design input

Southern Cross Projects engaged the services of GML to provide preliminary heritage advice that would ensure that the development of the Cotton On store would respond well to its heritage context. Heritage input into the design has included detailed advice on the built form, typology, scale, character, detail and materiality.

Representatives from the project team visited the site with GML Heritage to gain a thorough understanding of the place, and its important heritage fabric and characteristics. This was followed up with iterative heritage advice that GML provided to the design team as the design concepts progressed.

Draft versions of drawings detailing the proposed store fitout were provided to GML for review and feedback at key points in the design development stages.

Preliminary heritage advice responding to the early concept drawings provided to GML Heritage was provided to Southern Cross Shopfitting and Cotton On in a detailed heritage advice memo, including a summary of advice as follows:

- Explore design opportunities to arrange the racking/display shelving to work with the division and rhythm of the divisions of the side walls and/or ceiling.
- Ensure display is floor mounted or freestanding. Do not fix to walls. Consider a lower height than 3,250mm.
- If possible, keep heights low to maintain views through the space and explore opportunities to maximise an appreciation of the decorative wall panels, including how views of them may be integrated into the design approach.
- Explore opportunities to create a tailored design approach that maintains a good view across the former auditorium to give visitors a sense of the space's previous use as a cinema and theatre. This is particularly relevant to the installation of fitting rooms, clothing racks and the counter.
- Do not fix any new elements against the proscenium or decorative surround.
- Avoid obscuring the new interpretive stair element (to be installed by landlord), including any interpretive floor treatment.
- Explore opportunities to embed interpretive elements into the design that tell stories or convey the history of the place to visitors.

Following this, the design was developed, taking into account the preliminary heritage advice. A full set of design development drawings were marked up by GML with commentary to enable the design team to finalise the design and detailing of the architectural documentation, taking into consideration the GML review and heritage advice.

The interior store fitout works are designed based on the Cotton On store standards, with modifications to standard details and layout designed in response to early heritage advice, and to avoid physical impacts to important heritage fabric.

Several factors have driven the design:

compliance with the building code of Australia and Australian Standards, including Design for Disability Access; and alignment with Cotton On store branding guidelines (modified to suit heritage context).

5.3 Options considered

The possible options for the Cotton On store fitout were limited due to the requirement to arrange the store within the existing foyer and auditorium spaces of the former Athenaeum Theatre.

Options for specific design and fixing details were carefully considered and discussed with the project design team in the early stages of concept development. These principles have been implemented in the proposed design and include:

- not fixing to walls in the main auditorium, with shopfittings to be floor fixed to avoid damage to original decorative plasterwork on the walls and ceilings;
- keeping new partitions separate from perimeter walls;
- installing low protective walls in back of house areas (removable partitions);
- changing the proposed location of speakers so they are not fixed to ceilings, but are now fixed to display racking;
- confining new light fixtures to walls and not mounting to the ceilings; and
- retaining existing lights installed as part of base building to eliminate potential for damage to ceiling.

5.4 Timetable

The proposed fitout works are programmed to commence on site on 1 September 2025, provided all the necessary approvals and permits are in place.

5.5 Reasons for the proposed activity

The works follow on from the recent base building works, which were completed by the building owner for the purpose of adapting the former theatre to a retail use. The Cotton On store comprises a reasonable use of the space, which aligns with the intent to use the space for retail purposes.

The Cotton On store will also allow members of the public to appreciate the former Athenaeum Theatre.

6 Heritage impact assessment

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed against sections 101(2) and 101(3) of the Heritage Act 2017.

Impacts of the proposed works are considered under the following headings:

- temporary works;
- demolition/existing conditions;
- shopfront signage; and
- interior shop fitout.

6.1 Temporary works

Temporary works are limited to the plastic sheeting adhered to the inside of the shopfront to prevent vision into the tenancy for the duration of the works. This is non-residue and easily removed, and would not have an impact on the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Management measures during the works designed to avoid adverse impacts and are outlined in section 5.1.1 and are considered adequate.

6.2 Demolition/existing conditions

The former Athenaeum Theatre has previously undergone approved building works to convert the former theatre to retail space. This was carried out by the building owner under permit P40477. It is our understanding that the permit conditions associated with the previous permit have been resolved to the satisfaction of Heritage Victoria.

No demolition works are required as part of this project. The base building will be handed over to Cotton On as a clean shell after the landlord has finished their works.

6.3 Construction of interior store fitout

The construction of the interior store fitout will have some identified heritage impacts, which are primarily visual.

Visually, the project involves introducing partition walls that are three metres high (i.e. not full height) for changerooms and separating the back of house areas from the retail

selling floor, creating a minor interruption to the views towards the rear. This view is significant because it demonstrates the original open, auditorium character of the space.

The partitions have been kept as low as practical to provide privacy and space division for changerooms/back of house, and kept towards the rear of the space. This allows for the views across the auditorium and to the rear wall to be mostly preserved, and allows for the entire decorative ceiling to be viewed and appreciated. This helps maintain the legibility of the main auditorium as a large single volume.

The partitions will cause a slight disruption to the view, but will not detract significantly from the overall impression of the space as a former theatre, due to their position and lower height. The partitions can be removed without impact to the original fabric. They are required for the store's functional operations and constitute an acceptable heritage impact.

The important surviving original fabric, including decorative plasterwork on walls and ceilings that demonstrates the significant original and later Moderne detailing, is being retained and protected. The store fitout has been designed to be 'light touch' and for elements to be removable without damaging the important features of the former theatre. The general approach to the fitout is that there will be no fixings to the original decorative plasterwork, including ceilings, and that all fixtures and fittings can be removed with minimal impact to the fabric.

The fixed shopfittings and display racking will be floor mounted, and located off the walls to ensure no fixings are made into the perimeter walls or any decorative plasterwork. A structural engineer will provide advice in relation to the stability of the display racking.

The fitout of the front (foyer) part of the interior comprises wall mounted fixtures, but these walls do not include any significant surviving fabric. The interpretive stair element provided as part of the base building works will be kept clear to maintain vision to the stair. The interpretive 'shadows' on the floor and ceiling will also be kept clear.

The back of house area at the rear of the store has been carefully planned to incorporate functional requirements within a small footprint. Low height walls are proposed to protect the plasterwork of the proscenium from risk of damage from impact. These walls are removable. The amenities that have been already installed as part of the base building works will be retained and used as-is. A small kitchenette bench will be installed. It is anticipated that water supply will need to be routed from the toilet area, through the wall adjacent to the proscenium. If possible, a previously used services penetration will be used for this supply, otherwise a minimal new penetration will be made. This penetration will have minimal impact because it would not be inserted through the particularly

significant decorative plasterwork of the proscenium arch. It will be small and able to be patched in the future.

The installation of laminated timber floor does not form a fixed junction with the perimeter of the former auditorium walls, and it is a removable element. The existing floor over which the flooring will be laid is not original, and comprises a concrete slab. Consequently, this aspect of the proposed works has no identified heritage impacts and is a reasonable intervention. The back of house area will retain the existing concrete flooring.

Apart from the red colour of the Cotton On logo, which is a minor element within the overall space, the materiality of the fitout elements comprises neutral colours and natural finishes and does not compete with the overall aesthetic qualities of the space. All existing painted surfaces will be retained and will not need to be repainted, avoiding additional visual changes or potential impacts from unsuitable paints (eg: acrylic paints).

There will be no fixings of services to the ceiling. This has been intentionally avoided, and Wi-Fi points, lighting and speakers will be mounted to newly constructed low height racking and walls.

The identified impacts have been partially mitigated through the design of the proposed works. The design of the new store responds well to the heritage values of the site and displays careful consideration of the heritage context in which it is to be constructed. In line with the Burra Charter, the new works are readily distinguished from the old. The installation of a retail store is aimed at improving the profile and economic potential of the former Athenaeum Theatre, and it is anticipated that this will support the ongoing viability of the place and the dissemination of its heritage values.

The Cotton On retail store will also draw people into the space, including visitors and members of the local community, allowing them to appreciate the heritage significance of the interior of the former Athenaeum Theatre.

6.4 Installation of shopfront signage

The proposed works involve some alterations to the front façade of the building, which is architecturally significant to the extent that the early fabric and design is an important early example of a theatre in regional Victoria.

The proposed new signage will be a visual change to the existing presentation of the front façade. However, the impact of the new signage on the heritage significance of the former Athenaeum Theatre has been minimised by using the existing signs that are in place. The front awning sign (SH-01) is minimal and non-obtrusive. It is constructed of

three dimensional individual letters that are 350mm high by 40mm deep and pin fixed to the fascia. There is no illumination to this sign. The fascia will be finished in a muted colour that is similar to existing external paint colours and is complementary to the stonework of the façade. The under awning blade sign (SH-02) is an existing sign with an existing powdercoated frame, which will be modified to allow for the insertion of an illuminated logo panel to each side and a painted timber decorative moulding. This sign is back-illuminated. It is of a standard size that is appropriate for its location.

The window sign (SH-03), positioned internally, is a red coloured LED sign, which is proportional to the window in size, and does not compete with the form and scale of the building, and is consistent with its historical character as a public-facing commercial frontage. It will be illuminated at night.

'Heritage Design Guidelines: Sorrento Historic Precinct' applies to land in HO501 Sorrento Historic Precinct and is an incorporated document in the Mornington Peninsula Shire Planning Scheme. These guidelines aim to protect and enhance vistas of historical significance, and to conserve and enhance streetscapes, particularly Ocean Beach Road.

The relevant guidelines are as follows:

- To ensure public services and works, such as street furniture, plantings and signs, do not detract from the historical main street layout.
- To maintain the commercial focus in the section of Ocean Beach Road east of Melbourne Road.

The signs are applied to existing building elements (awning fascia and suspended blade sign) and no alterations to the shopfront are proposed.

The design of the proposed signage is well-considered and reasonable, and effectively avoids or minimises potential heritage impacts. As it is minimal and unobtrusive, it will not visually dominate the heritage significance of the theatre and is in keeping with the other retail store in the heritage streetscape. The significant historical architectural character of the original theatre will still be expressed and be able to be understood and there will be minimal impact on the heritage significance of HO501.

7 Mitigation measures

Several measures to mitigate the heritage impacts have been integrated to date through the design of the proposed works.

To mitigate residual heritage impacts, and avoid any other potential impacts such as accidental damage, the following additional mitigation measures are recommended:

- It is recommended that Cotton On store managers and staff be briefed on the heritage significance of the place to ensure ongoing care of the original features.
- It is recommended that merchandise be added to the display racks in a careful manner to ensure that no damage is caused to the plasterwork behind the fixtures. The condition of the plasterwork should be inspected at routine intervals to monitor for any damage and update staff practices if necessary.
- It is recommended that Cotton On confirm that any coat hangers (or the like) used on the display racks will not risk damage to the plasterwork.
- Low walls are being constructed in the back of house areas to protect the original plasterwork from any risk of damage from stock or movement of goods. It is recommended that a detail drawing of the design be provided in order to fully understand the interface between the wall and the proscenium plaster, including the installation method.
- If a penetration is required for water supply to the back of house tea bench, it should be kept to a small diameter, and should be located and carried out in a way that ensures no impact on the decorative plasterwork of the proscenium. This includes the route of any pipework.
- The drawings have noted that the builder is to protect the plaster wall panels from damage during the construction phase. This should be monitored and implemented during construction.
- The drawings include a note to contractors advising them of the heritage status of the place; contractor understanding of this should be confirmed during site induction.
- Confirm how the freestanding display wall frames will be positioned, fixed and stabilised around the perimeter of the auditorium with advice from a structural engineer, and ensure that this method avoids any construction or physical impacts.
- Co-ordinate with the building owner to ensure the approved interpretation of the stair at the front of the store is complied with. Currently the required outline on the floor and ceiling are not indicated on Cotton On's plans for the proposed works.

8 Assessment against the Heritage Act 2017

Section 101 of the Heritage Act 2017 sets out the considerations that must be made in determining permit applications.

Recent changes have occurred to the former Athenaeum Theatre, with the closure of the theatre and works undertaken to the base building for its conversion to retail use.

The proposed Cotton On store fitout respects the cultural heritage significance and values of the place, and carefully integrates into setting.

The installation of the store fixtures and fittings has been carefully considered to avoid impact to the remaining heritage fabric.

8.1.1 Reasonable and economic use

Section 101(2)(b) considers the extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or object.

The proposed works should be supported as a reasonable use of the place. The former Athenaeum Theatre recently underwent approved works to convert it for use as a retail space. Base building works have been completed, resulting in a large space suitable for fitout by a retail lessee. The fitout of the Cotton On store is a well-considered and sensitive design response that constitutes a reasonable use of the space as a retail store.

The fitout is sympathetic to its heritage context. The scale of the store fixtures and partitions are reasonable and have been kept to a minimum height so as not to compete with the scale and proportions of the existing auditorium. The fitout has been undertaken in a way that all elements are removable/reversible, providing the ability for the space to be returned to its current state should the tenant move out. Alternatively, future similar retail tenants could also use or adapt the fitout.

The Cotton On store is a reasonable use as it aligns with the use of the space for retail purposes. The store will enhance the public profile and economic viability of the place, and provide opportunities for visitor engagement with its heritage significance.

The tenancy of the Cotton On store in the premises provides an income stream that supports the ongoing functioning and maintenance of the place. The use of the space as a retail store will contribute to its ongoing maintenance and conservation.

9 Conclusion and recommendations

This HIS has identified and assessed the heritage impacts of the proposed Cotton On store fitout to the heritage significance of the former Athenaeum Theatre.

The proposed store fitout on the site would result in minimal heritage impacts to the former Athenaeum Theatre and no physical impact to its important original fabric. The store fitout constitutes a slight visual impact within the auditorium of the former theatre, which will obscure the expression of the cultural significance to a minor extent. The proposal also has beneficial impacts, as members of the public will be able to visit the store and appreciate the space. Providing for these uses is a crucial part of retaining and communicating the cultural heritage significance of the former Athenaeum Theatre.

Externally, the conservative approach to installing new shopfront signage is in keeping with the heritage streetscape and does not compete with the form, scale and materiality of the building or nearby significant buildings in the precinct.

To help minimise or mitigate the risk of heritage impacts of the project, the following actions could be implemented:

- Implement the mitigation measures proposed in Section 7 of this HIS.
- Store manual and staff inductions would identify the importance of the original plasterwork and other heritage features of the interior of the building. This could include a short history of the place to enable staff to gain an understanding of the significance of the former theatre.
- Builders' and subcontractors' inductions would include information on the cultural heritage significance of the place.
- Signage on the worksite and protection zones will also be required to protect the vulnerable plasterwork.

It is considered that the design and layout of the proposed Cotton On store is well considered and responds positively to the historical context without mimicking it.

Appropriate measures for management should be incorporated by the project manager throughout all stages of the works (pre- and post-construction, and for the duration of construction) to ensure significance is understood and that original fabric is protected.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to have an acceptable impact on the heritage values of the former Athenaeum Theatre.

Appendix A—Architectural Drawings

Drawing set as noted in Section 5.1