DAVID MANN BUILDING

ADDRESS: La Trobe University campus at 133 McKoy Street, West Wodonga

STUDY NUMBER: 2C HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

DATE: 2002

CONDITION: Good

INTEGRITY: Good



(RBA, June 2024)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The David Mann Library on the La Trobe University campus at 33 University Drive (133 McKoy Street), West Wodonga is significant. Designed in 2002 by leading architects Wood Bagot, the significant elements are the cuboid form and varied external expression and material palette of cream and manganese bricks, metals screens, aluminium-framed windows, double height steel-framed verandah with slatted roof, and entrance canopy.

How is it significant?

The David Mann Library at 33 University Drive/133 McKoy Street, West Wodonga is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

The David Mann Library is of aesthetic significance as a prominent public building designed by global architectural firm Woods Bagot. The award-winning project is indicative of late Modernist design with its sleek aesthetic and its combination of distinct parts creating a dramatic effect, with expressed structural framing and glazed entry block contrasting with the relatively enclosed northern cream brick block with its pronounced horizontal emphasis and expressed services (downpipes). (Criterion E)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Located within La Trobe University's Albury-Wodonga University campus at the east end of Centre Walk, the substantial building overall has a broadly rectangular footprint of about 1,500 square metres, including the screened plant area to the west side.

The building has a cuboid form with flat and skillion roofs clad in sheet metal upon which solar panels are mounted and concealed behind parapets. It is comprised of two sections – the cream brick northern block and southern block with a more varied material palette.

The façade/main entry to the double-height building is to the south side and opens onto a spacious atrium. It is comprised of a large expanse of aluminium-framed glass in front of a verandah with slatted roof supported on steel girders, acting as rafters, the principles ones which extend forward/are cantilevered from the steel columns/posts (effectively giant order columns). A separate canopy identifies the entrance below which is a glazed porch. The glass wall returns to the east side where a metal slatted screen provides sun protection. The design of the front entry/glazed section is reminiscent of the Carre d'Art in Nîmes, in southern France, an internationally renowned project by Sir Norman Foster that was completed in 1993.



Façade/south elevation, east end (RBA, June 2024)



Façade/south elevation, east end (RBA, June 2024). Note the screen on the east elevation extending from the verandah canopy

Much of the rest of the building externally is face brick in stretcher bond – manganese to the south-west section and cream otherwise, being the northern block. The latter is punctuated by two narrow bands of near continuous, recessed glazing with regularly spaced steel supports and the upper level also includes another small, vertically orientated window at regular intervals. There are six galvanised steel downpipes to the north elevation with a line of overflow points for the boxed gutter to the flat roof behind the parapet. To the west elevation, there is also a timber screen which conceals plant.



West elevation, from south end – with plant concealed behind a timber screen (RBA, June 2024)



North block, west end, note expressed downpipes (RBA, June 2024)



East elevation, with the northern block to the right (RBA, June 2024)

HISTORIC THEMES

6.4 Making regional centres

8.2 Educating people

HISTORY

The David Mann Library was designed by prominent Australian/international architectural firm Woods Bagot and built by Zauner Constructions in 2002. Building commenced in 2001 and the library was formally opened on 15 October 2002 by the Chancellor and former microbiologist, Professor Nancy F Millis with guests of honour, Mr David Mann and Mrs Elaine Mann.



The slab is poured, 2002 ('Construction of the David Mann Library', 2002)



Chancellor, Professor Nancy Millis, unveils the plaque watched by (seated attendees from left) Mr. Earle Gow, Prof. Michael Osborne, Mr David Mann, and Mr Adrian Marron, 2002.

In June 2003, the David Mann Library received the Royal Australian Institute of Architects regional prize. The award panel noted that the 'Close co-ordination between the architects and staff (has) resulted in a building which is inviting and has great appeal to those who flock to use it' (*About the Albury-Wodonga Campus*, 2022).

The new library building was named in honour of David Mann, a distinguished member of the Albury-Wodonga community and a long-standing supporter of tertiary education in the region and La Trobe University.

Currently the David Mann Library is a joint facility shared by Wodonga TAFE and La Trobe University, Albury-Wodonga.

Woods Bagot

The long-standing architectural practice of Woods Bagot commenced in South Australia at the beginning of the 20th century by E J Woods and Walter Bagot. The practice went through various iterations subsequently but during the 1980s expanded across Australia and internationally (London and China). In this current form, they have concentrated on commercial, government, health and education sectors (J Willis, *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*).

David Mann (1927 –2012)

David Mann was a successful businessman and prominent local personality in Wodonga during the mid to late 20th century. He was the son of local retailer Ernest Mann who established produce store 'J. Mann and Sons' in 1921 (J after Joseph, Ernest's father). David took over running the business in 1960 and expanded the business to become one of Australia's largest regional shopping centres which included a supermarket, hardware store, steel store, plumbing and industrial supplies store, and at one stage employed over 100 people (*Part of the Wodonga Community Since 1921*, 2022). In 2012 historian Howard Jones described Mann as 'for decades the most influential retailer in Wodonga'. Mann died in 2012 aged 84 (Jones 2012).

COMPARISON

To date, no early 21st century buildings have been included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay, though a few have from the late 20th century. The most recent/notable example being the Former Clyde Cameron College, 41-69 Nordsvan Drive, Wodonga (HO9, VHR H2192). This Brutalist icon, also another educational facility, was designed by the Architects Group, led by Kevin Borland.

In terms of age, whilst the building is reaching what is of the accepted standard generational range of 25 years, it is a rare example within the municipality of a contemporary public facility that has been designed a widely respected architectural practice of Woods Bagot.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that the David Mann Library, La Trobe University, at 133 McKoy Street, West Wodonga is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme.

The extent of the heritage overlay should include the parcel of land (SPI 1\TP205314) on which the building is located with a nominal curtilage of 5 metres as outlined below.



(Nearmap, 22 June 2024)

PLANNING SCHEME CONTROLS

Planning Controls	Y/N
External Paint Controls Apply?	N
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	N
Tree Controls Apply?	N
Solar Energy System Controls?	Y
Outbuildings or Fences Not Exempt Under Clause 43.01-4?	N
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register Under the Heritage Act 2017?	N
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

The David Mann Library 2002., *Library Link*102.

About the Albury-Wodonga Campus, 2022., *La Trobe University*, accessed 1 August 2022, https://www.latrobe.edu.au/albury-wodonga/about.

'Construction of the David Mann Library', 2002. Image supplied by La Trobe University, Albury-Wodonga Campus.

Jones H 2012. 'Mann of Vision', *Border Mail*, accessed 29 July 2022, https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/56409/mann-of-vision/.

Part of the Wodonga Community Since 1921, 2022., *Mann Central*, accessed 28 July 2022, https://manncentral.com/history.

Willis, Julie, 'Woods Bagot', in P Goad & J Willis, eds, *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture,* 2012, pp774-775