

FORMER CABLE TRAM ENGINE HOUSE 1 Bridge Road

History and Description

This building was the first of 11 tram engine houses erected between 1885 and 1891 to operate the Melbourne cable trams. It was built by the Melbourne Tramways Trust and leased to the Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Co. Ltd. which owned and operated the system. The system was the world's largest single cable tram network. Prior to 1885 the company operated an extensive service of horse drawn omnibuses and the cable tram network was virtually a copy of the omnibus routes.

The Richmond engine house was closed in 1927 and has since been used as a garage, factory and warehouse. The cable winding machinery and chimney stack have been removed.

The building is still owned by the Melbourne Tramways Board, is an important element at one of the main entry points to Richmond, and complements the cable tram depot at the other end of Bridge Road.

Statement of Significance

1 Bridge Road is significant as the first cable tram engine house in Melbourne. The building is substantially intact.

References

National Trust file no. 3142.

Correspondence from Tramways Museum Society of Vic. to Government Buildings Advisory Council, June 1983.