

**HISTORY :** Australian Knitting Mills Ltd. operated at this site from about 1912, with an entrance on Stewart Street. Previously, other manufacturers of hosiery and woollen garments seem to have been located here.<sup>1</sup> They registered "Kookaburra" as a trademark in 1913 for unshrinkable ladies hosiery. The mark was a kookaburra, with a snake in its mouth.<sup>2</sup> This symbol is visible in medallions on both buildings. In about 1940, AKM commenced large extensions to its mills and the east building may be one such.<sup>3</sup>

**VISUAL DESCRIPTION :** The west building is a red brick, three-storey (and attic) early Modernist factory of seven bays. There is a rendered string-course band at first and third-stories and the corner bays form astylar towers, with narrow brick fins between the other bays, which have large glazed areas with soffit panel moulds. There is a very deep plain parapet with two horizontal projecting planes and a cornice-capping and disc motif. Windows are steel framed and Georgian wired. Roofs are sawtooth, asbestos-clad behind parapets. The south elevation's frieze in the first and seventh bays is decorated with corporate medallions of the company's two principal trademarks : the kookaburra with snake and the suspended sheep, in bas-relief. The east building is also red brick, similarly decorated, with "Australian Knitting Mills Ltd" sign-writing between. It is seven bays also, but four stories. First and seventh are also solid; two and six having strip-windows, with tiled spandrel and the centre three bays virtually as a curtain wall. At third floor is a brick cornice and frieze, and at fourth, a dentillated cornice. At the south-west corner is a plain tower. On the north elevation it has piers with Voyseyian flat plate tops over the parapet and three stories with metal windows. The buildings are linked by bridges.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS :** Facade design : S. Suplice, Paris (1733-49), Servandoni; Former Port Authority Building, Flinders Lane & Market Street (1929), Sydney Smith, Ogg & Serpell. There are 26 industrial sites identified in the Study. Comparable to : 64 Balmain Street, Rosella Works (ref : 187); 80 Balmain Street (ref : 190); Goodwood Street, Pelaco Works, c.1910; 47 Richmond Terrace, c1910 and 153 Palmer Street, c1910.

**SIGNIFICANCE :** An early Modernist brick, three-storey factory of about 1940. Of local architectural and historical significance.

**INTACTNESS :** Excellent.

**CONDITION & THREATS :** Excellent.

**REFERENCES :** 1. Sands & McDougall, Directories.

The 1897 MMBW plan 1067 shows a house on this site.

Further information : Airlie Worrall "All Wool and a Yard Wide" : Victoria's wool textile industry, 1900 to 1930", Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1988.

2. Mimmo Cozzolino, Symbols of Australia, (Penguin) Melbourne 1980 and Toby & Juliana Hooper, The Laughing Australian. A Celebration of Australia's Kookaburra. (Thomas Nelson) Melbourne 1982, p.57.

Janet McCalman, Struggletown. Public and Private Life in Richmond 1900-1965, (MUP) 1985, p.217.