

Building:	Former Fitzroy Gas Works Valve House	Significance:	B
Address:	Alexandra Parade (corner George Street), North Fitzroy	Melway Map Ref:	2C D4
Building Type:	Valve House	Construction Date:	c.1890
Architect:	Unknown	Builder:	Unknown



Intactness:		Condition:	
G[x] F[] P[]		G[x] F[] P[]	
Existing Heritage Listings:		Recommended Heritage Listings:	
Victorian Heritage Register	[]	Victorian Heritage Register	[]
Register of the National Estate	[]	Register of the National Estate	[x]
National Trust	[]	Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

History

The former Fitzroy Gas Valve House is the only remaining buildings from the once extensive Fitzroy Gas Works.

The Collingwood, Fitzroy & District Gas & Coke Co. was formed in January 1859. It was a joint venture between the local council and private investors, promoted by the main gas engineer of the time, Coates & Co. In 1878, the Collingwood, South Melbourne and Melbourne Gas Companies amalgamated, and became known as the Metropolitan Gas Co. The Fitzroy Gasworks was disadvantaged by its distance from the port and the Fitzroy works were closed in 1927. The site continued to be used by the Metropolitan Gas Co. as both a workshop and gas storage facility. Three large gasometers survived as local landmarks until the introduction of natural gas in the 1970s. The first of these gasometers, built in 1930, gained world prominence amongst engineers for being the largest all-welded steel structure in the world.¹

Description

The former Gas Valve House is a small red brick building with a gabled slate roof. There are parapets to the gable ends, with a raked corbel table and oculus vents, and there is a prominent corbel table along the eaves line. The northern facade is divided into five bays by pilasters, each with a semi-circular arched window with a bluestone sill. Two of the arched openings have been bricked up. The roof vents, and the rectangular windows to the street facades, are later additions. The building currently houses a natural gas regulator.

Comparative Examples

South Melbourne Gas Works, Graham Street, South Melbourne

Significance

The former Fitzroy Gas Valve House is of local historical significance and local architectural interest. Historically, the buildings are the only surviving remnants of the once extensive Fitzroy Gasworks, which played an integral part in the supply of gas to Melbourne from the mid-19th century until the 1970s. Architecturally, the buildings are typical and substantially intact examples of simple late 19th century industrial buildings.

Original Source

Gary Vines and Matthew Churchward. *Northern Suburbs Factory Study*. 1992

¹ Extract from Gary Vines and Matthew Churchward. *Northern Suburbs Factory Study*. 1992