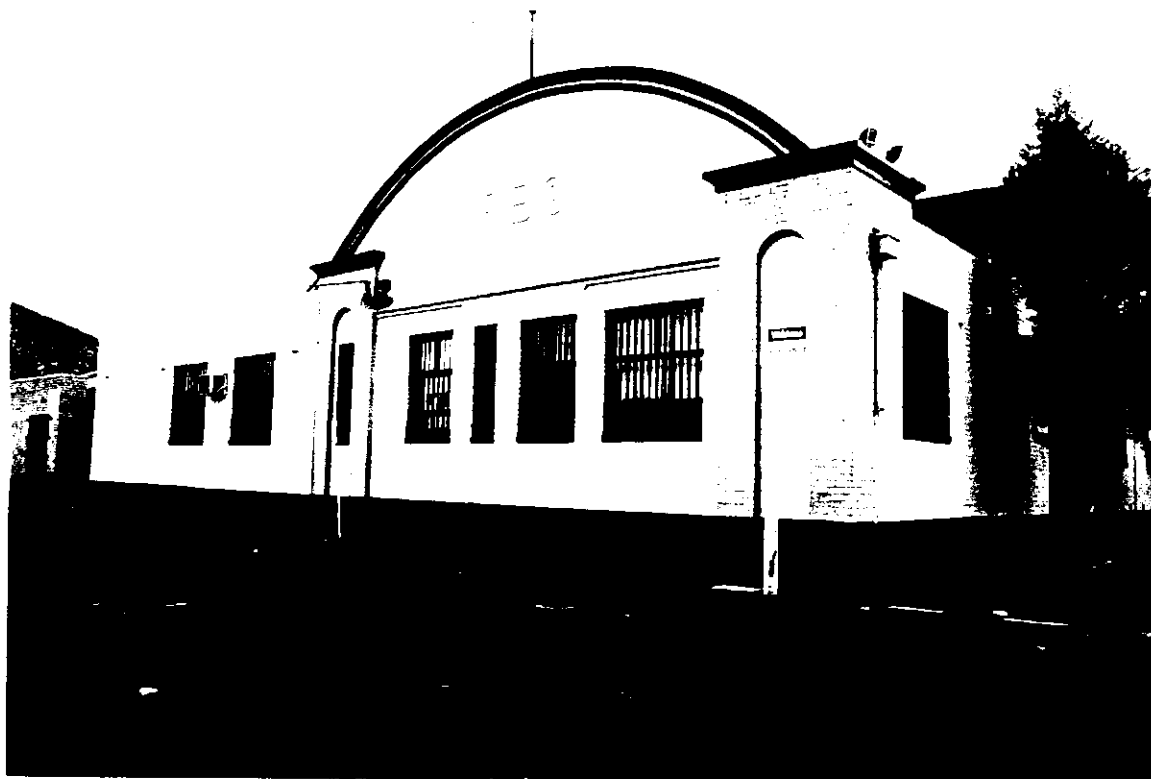


<b>Building:</b>	Former Phoenix Biscuit Co. Complex	<b>Significance:</b>	B
<b>Address:</b>	Grosvenor Street, Abbotsford	<b>Melway Map Ref:</b>	2D D12
<b>Building Type:</b>	Factory	<b>Construction Date:</b>	1889; 1889-90; c.1925
<b>Architect:</b>	Unknown	<b>Builder:</b>	Unknown



<b>Intactness:</b>		<b>Condition:</b>	
G[ ] F[x] P[ ]		G[ ] F[x] P[ ]	
<b>Existing Heritage Listings:</b>		<b>Recommended Heritage Listings:</b>	
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 Phoenix Biscuit Co. was established in the first decade of the 20th century in the former Victorian Ice Co. factory on the north-west corner of Grosvenor Street and Southampton Crescent. In 1888, its predecessor, the Melbourne Ice Co., owned land with a 110 feet frontage on the corner of Grosvenor Street and Southampton Crescent. In 1889, the Victorian Ice Co. is listed as the owner of the site; construction of its new factory was commenced in 1890. By 1890, Michael Condon, a manufacturer, was owner of an ice works; this continued to operate until into the 20th century. The Asbestos Co. buildings are thought to have been used as stores by the Phoenix Biscuit Co. from as early as 1910.

The former Australian Asbestos Co. building, in Grosvenor Street, opposite the end of Southampton Crescent, was built c.1889. In 1887, Michael Dwyer, Hugh Kelly and William Smith owned land here. The Australian Asbestos Co. erected a brick factory on 50 feet of the most northern area of the land in 1888; B Schultz was the manager of the factory. Directors in 1889 were Isaac Barnett and Henry Walker. Walker also owned land south of the factory and a candle works further east. He was also the proprietor of a large boiling-down and candle works on the north bank of the Yarra in West Melbourne, which had its origins in the 1850s and was still in use in the 1880s. It is probable that Walker was expanding his business ventures in the 1880s following the compulsory purchase of his West Melbourne works for Harbour Trust works. However by 1900, the asbestos factory appears to have succumbed to the Depression and was in the hands of the St James Building Society.

By 1930, the Phoenix Biscuit Co. had established a new building on the south-west corner of Grosvenor Street and Southampton Crescent. This building appears to have been used as the company's offices.

The site is now occupied by Weston's Biscuits.

## **Description**

The former Victoria Ice Co. factory is a two-storey rendered brick industrial building with a number of small rectangular window openings with bluestone sills. Many of the window openings have been bricked up. There is a sawtooth-roofed addition at the rear of the site. A timber-framed metal-clad walkway connects the first floors of this building and the former Australian Asbestos Co. building opposite. The former Australian Asbestos Co. building is a two-storey red brick factory with a gabled facade to Grosvenor Street. At ground floor level, this elevation has a central segmental arched vehicular entrance and a large square window opening with non-original steel-framed windows. The first floor has two window openings and the elevated walkway is attached to it.

The Phoenix Biscuit Co.'s own building on the south-west corner of Grosvenor Street and Southampton Crescent is a single-storey brick building which faces Grosvenor Street but has its entrance off Southampton Crescent. The east elevation, to Grosvenor Street, has two wide brick piers with recessed arched panels and moulded cornices which flank a very large arched parapet with brick copings and rendered tympanum bearing the letters PB CO in low relief. One of the piers has a slit window opening; between the piers are four unevenly sized window openings. The north elevation has similar fenestration and a plain flat parapet. The building appears to have been extended to the south along Grosvenor Street. The face brickwork has been painted.

## **Significance**

The Phoenix Biscuit Co. complex is of local historical significance and architectural interest. Historically, the site has been occupied by the same biscuit factory since the first decade of the 20th century, and two of the buildings also have associations with early refrigeration and asbestos industries. Architecturally, the two 19th century buildings are typical examples of unadorned late

Victorian industrial buildings, whilst the Phoenix Biscuit Co. building is typical of inter-War commercial architecture.

**Original Source**

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