

Building:	Former Alma Wool Works Complex	Significance:	B
Address:	663 Victoria Street, Abbotsford	Melway Map Ref:	2H G3
Building Type:	Factory	Construction Date:	1861 onwards
Architect:	Unknown	Builder:	Unknown



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

History

Nettleton's Fellmongery was established in 1861 on the Yarra River, Collingwood, by Peter Nettleton, trustee to various building societies, and board member of the Bank of Victoria. The Fellmongery included Nettleton's own bluestone house, still surviving, facing Victoria Street. Nettleton died in 1901, and in 1917 the works passed to James Schofield Pty Ltd and to the Alma Woolscouring Co Pty Ltd in 1920. In 1980 operations ceased on this site.¹

Description

The former Alma Woolworks, Collingwood, is a complex of 19th century buildings situated on the Yarra River, including a former residence, woolshed and wool washing shed.

The residence, originally belonging to Nettleton's Fellmongery, is a single-storey building of bluestone construction built in two sections. The south section has a rendered elevation with pick faced bluestone quoining facing Victoria Street, with a convex cast iron verandah returning along a random-coursed bluestone facade on the west side. A central four panelled door is flanked by double-hung sash windows with bracketed sills. The hipped roof is slated and has bracketed eaves. The verandah is supported on timber posts. The rear (north) section is has a verandah supported on timber posts and returns around three sides of the building, connecting with a separate outbuilding. This building is of coursed rubble bluestone and has a hipped corrugated iron roof.

The former woolshed, located to the north of the residence, is a three-storey building constructed of brick and quarry-faced bluestone, with a hipped corrugated iron roof. The building is constructed on the sloping river bank, and has an arcaded lower level facing the Yarra with alternating bluestone piers and cast iron columns. The upper level is of face brickwork with dogtooth ornamentation beneath the eaves, and windows are multi-paned, double-hung sashes.

Significance

The former Alma Wool Works is of considerable local historical and architectural significance.

The former residence derives its significance from its association with Peter Nettleton, Collingwood's best known fellmonger. It is a remnant of the longest surviving fellmongery complex within Collingwood, established during the early phase of industrial activity in the suburb. The house demonstrates the practice of proprietors of industrial establishments living on their premises, in contrast to the preference of later Victorian industrialists to reside in the more fashionable residential suburbs of Melbourne. Largely intact, the former residence is also a rare surviving example of an early bluestone cottage.

The former woolshed is the major surviving building of the original Nettleton's Works, later to become James Schofield Pty Ltd and later again the Alma Woolscouring Co Pty Ltd. It is the key building in Collingwood's, and possibly Melbourne's, largest surviving woolscouring complex. Architecturally, the unusual arcade to the river is of particular note. The whole complex is the earliest remaining substantially intact industrial complex in Collingwood. Its location on the river illustrates the role of the Yarra as a sewer for Melbourne's animal processing factories in the 19th century.

Original Source

Andrew Ward. *Collingwood Conservation Study*. 1995.

¹ Rate Books. MMBW litho No. 1302 (1901).