

Building:	Former Yorkshire Brewery	Significance:	A
Address:	88 Wellington Street, Collingwood	Melway Map Ref:	2C E11
Building Type:	Brewery	Construction Date:	1858 onwards
Architect:	James Wood	Builder:	Unknown



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

History

The Yorkshire Brewery was established in 1858 by Collingwood brewer and hotelier, John Wood. Wood is said to have commenced operations in a timber building on a two acre site on the eastern side of Wellington Street, Collingwood. According to the *Australian Brewers' Journal* of July 1890, though the plant initially used at the site was 'primitive in design and of limited capacity', the beer Wood produced proved very popular and the premises were soon enlarged. In 1865, Wood's eldest son, Mr A E Wood became a partner and the name of the firm was changed to John Wood and Son.¹

By the mid 1870s, the need for further expansion was recognised, and it was decided to construct a new factory complex. James, another of Wood's sons, was an architect, and he was entrusted with the task of preparing plans and specification of 'a building fully equal to the existing requirements of the trade, with ample provisions for future extensions.'² A foundation stone weighing 5 tons was laid in 1876. The principal buildings in the complex were the main brew tower, a large cellar and storage building of a basement and two floors, (a boiler house?) and a substantial brick chimney stack.

The economic downturn of the 1890s had a disastrous effect on the company's trade and the brewery ceased production in 1898. The premises were later rented by the so-called 'Triple Alliance', which comprised the Carlton Brewery, McCracken's City Brewery, and the Castlemaine Brewery. In 1908 Colonel Ballenger, formerly head brewer of the successor to 'Triple Alliance,' Carlton and United Breweries (CUB), took over the former Yorkshire Brewery, becoming its managing director and changing its name to the Ballenger Brewery Co. Pty Ltd. Ballenger's beer proved too sweet for the public's taste, however, and the enterprise failed. The brewery was purchased in late 1909 by CUB and again became known as the Yorkshire Brewery. It was used for many years as a stand-by plant to the main brewing complexes at Carlton, East Melbourne (Victoria Brewery), and Abbotsford, and was later used as a cooperage.³

In 1954, after extensive alterations, the plant at the Yorkshire Brewery was converted to a malthouse and became known as the 'Yorkshire Maltings'.⁴ This conversion involved the removal of all evidence of the brewing process from the tower, the demolition of several early elements of the complex, and the construction of a number of new brick structures, including the three storey red brick kiln building south of the main brew tower.

Malt production at the site ceased in 1984 and the site was used for storage.⁵

Allom Lovell & Associates, *Yorkshire Brewery Conservation Policy and Assessment of Impact of Proposed Works*. 1997

Description

The former Yorkshire Brewery is a complex of buildings including the brew tower, cellar building, silos and stables.

The brew tower is six storeys high, of polychromatic brick construction and surmounted by a French Second Empire style slated mansard roof. Walls are of brown brick, with cream brick quoining and window dressings, and cream and red brick string courses. Window openings are semi-circular arched, except for those on the upper level which have segmental arched heads. Some of the original double-hung sashes survive; most of the windows have been infilled. There is a heavy cream brick modillioned entablature, above which is a cream, brown and red brick parapet. The mansard roof rises above the parapet, and has circular ventilators on each elevation. The roof is surmounted by a cast iron balustraded widow's walk and flagpole.

Internally, the upper level within the mansard roof is steel or iron framed with chamfered timber purlins. Above the purlins, the ceiling is lined with beaded boards. A narrow timber stairway ascends through four flights to the roof. The upper floor level coincides with the base of the roof

section which is braced with heavy timber sections. Some Robert Boby Ltd (England) grain handling equipment is situated on this level, carried on massive riveted built up I beams, which are original. The lower portions of the tower have been rebuilt internally with steel platforms, stairs and metal grain bins, this work having involved the bricking up of some of the external openings. Five steel platform levels have been installed, below which are two more levels, including ground level, which adjoins the engine room. A Ruston (Lincoln, England) oil fuelled 8 cylinder engine is located here, in derelict condition.

Comparative Examples

Victoria Old Distillery, Northumberland Street, Collingwood.

Significance

The former Yorkshire Brewery is of state architectural and historical significance.

The Brewery is a surviving example of a large 19th century brewing complex, including a brewing tower, illustrating an early phase of industrial development in Collingwood. It is the most notable surviving brewery complex in Collingwood, a district noted for its breweries in the 19th century, and reflects the development of the brewing industry in Victoria.

It is also the largest and most prominent brewing tower in the State. Architecturally, the significance of the tower is enhanced by its impressive scale, which was one of the tallest structures in the district in the 19th century, and remains a significant local landmark.

The tower is a notable work of the architect James Wood, architect son of the brewer owner, John Wood. It is representative of the French Second Empire style and a good example of the use of polychromatic brickwork. The mansard roof is a feature typically associated with 19th century brewing towers.

Original Source

Allom Lovell & Associates, *Yorkshire Brewery Conservation Policy and Assessment of Impact of Proposed Works*. 1997

1 *Australian Brewer's Journal*. 20 July 1890, p. 267.

2 *ibid.* p. 267.

3 Heritage Victoria. Report to the Minister.

4 A Ward. *Collingwood Conservation Study*.

5 D Overend. Submission to the Historic Buildings Council on the former Victoria Brewery.