



Electric Lighting Traction Company 82-86 Brougham Street

History

The foundation stone for the Electric Lighting Traction Company building is dated 30 March 1900 and names Hendy and Apted as the architects responsible for the design of this power station. This utility was commissioned by a local syndicate, Hendy, Leary and Co. which had been formed to supply electric power to the Geelong area. The *Geelong Advertiser* on 31 March and 31 July 1900 reported the progress on the construction site. The firm of J.C. Taylor were awarded the tender to construct this two storey brick building, Geelong's first power station. A conspicuous feature of the building was a 125 foot chimney stack which became a prominent local landmark. G. Jobbins was the initial company engineer and W.J. Mountain was listed as the corporation secretary. In 1911 the corporation became known as the Melbourne Electrical Supply Co. *A History of Geelong Electric Power Supply*, written by R. Arklay and I. Sayers, is currently lodged at the Geelong Historical Records Centre. According to this study the power station was substantially rebuilt in 1920 and new equipment installed. In 1930 the State Electricity Commission of Victoria purchased the power station from the Melbourne Electric Supply Co. The power station ceased to function in July 1961 and the site was sold in June 1970. According to information supplied on 4 April 1995, by Peter Alsop, President of the Geelong Historical Society, the chimney was taken down brick by brick in June 1970 by Harry Craig a local stonemason. In recent times the facade of the building has been incorporated into the Bay Plaza shopping centre.

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Description

82-86 Brougham Street is an attached double storey brick parapet building with a high degree of integrity. The brick and render facade features unusual details displaying a Mannerist influence. The north facade is divided into vertical rectangular bays by double height pilasters that extend through the full height of the entablature. The openings on the ground and first floor are pairs of double hung sash windows. On the ground floor the windows have triple lights above and cream brick arches. Notable details on the facade include the central bay with recessed pediments and narrow Corinthian pilasters, patterned tilework, moulded string courses and keystones. Some openings on the ground floor have been bricked in. The side entrance is marked by a stepped parapet, corbelled walls and similar windows of a different scale. The original signage decorates the entrance. The east facade is also divided into rectangular bays but has large arches with keystones, darker brick pilasters, and string courses. The building is now occupied by Coles and a new structure extends above and behind the old parapet on both facades.

Significance

82-86 Brougham Street has architectural and historic significance at a local level. It is a representative example of Federation commercial architecture in the Geelong area. The facade has a high degree of integrity and retains characteristic form and siting, as well as notable details displaying a Mannerist influence. The building has historical associations with the Electric Lighting Traction Company for whom it was built, and from 1930 to 1970 was occupied by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria continuing the building's historical association with power supply to Geelong for a period of seventy years.