

Identification and location

Name of Place: F.T. Wimble & Co

Other Name Grit Company of Australia, Australian Grit Pty Ltd.

Address 13-21 Annesley Street & Cranwell Street
Braybrook

Place Identifier 8729

Heritage Significance city

Creation date(s): 1930 c. **Map (Melway)** 27 D10

Boundary description Extent of current allotment.

Local Government Area: City of Maribyrnong

Ownership Type Private

Description

Site Type: factory

Physical Description

Single story rendered red brick factory featuring bold cement-rendered pilasters and steel framed windows set in horizontal bands. A timber framed, sawtooth roofed, corrugated-iron clad industrial building is at the rear. The facade presents large steel, industrial glazing set in an opening framed by a massive curved rendered surround forming lintel, sills and jambs, as the principal and distinguishing architectural feature which accentuates the horizontal motif.

Condition

In good condition, although original finishes have been over painted on the facade.

Integrity

Generally intact although the face brickwork on the facade has been painted over.

Context

Corner site among predominantly industrial premises in the Braybrook industrial zone.

Threats

No present threat although redevelopment in the local area may threaten the site, particularly if rezoning occurs.

History

This site had been occupied since the early 1940s by the firm, Australian Grit Pty Ltd, grit manufacturers (S&M; rate books). It was known as the Grit Company of Australia in 1956. Australian Grit were one of a very few specialist manufacturers of industrial abrasives for metal cutting, sanding and grinding, which came out of the development of local engineering and metal manufacturing firms during and following World War II, and possibly as a direct result of the interruption of imports of abrasives due to the war (Directories; *Australasian Ironmonger*).

They were later taken over by Carborundum Industries, which in turn became part of the Multinational 3M Corporation (3m Website).

F T Wimble & Co were operating as printers' furnishers from at least the late 1920s from premises at 459 - 463 Little Bourke Street Melbourne. They provided equipment and Printer's Ink to Melbourne newspapers and other printers. They were one of only half a dozen such suppliers at the time and appear to have moved to the Braybrook premises during an expansion period in the 1960s. The firm only moved out of the site in the middle of 1998 and now operates from Geddes Street, Mulgrave. This firm has its origins in an old English family firm of ink manufacturers. The Australian branch was commenced in Melbourne around 1867 by F.T. Wimble, who was believed to be the first to manufacture printing ink in Victoria. By 1888 Wimble had retired from the business, although the new owners, J.W. Goddard, H. Franks and W. Franks, kept the name F.T. Wimble & Co.

The business was expanded to include all aspects of printers' furnishers and machinery, and branches were opened in Sydney and Brisbane (Sutherland 1888:624). The firm had an ink works in Vockler Street Yarraville in the 1890s and occupied a number of premises in Melbourne in the 19th and early 20th centuries. From the 1930s to the 1950s their Melbourne address was in Queens Street, and they were listed by Sands & McDougall as printers furnishers and type founders, manufacturers of printing ink, roller compositors and varnish (S&M; rate books). The move to Braybrook did not occur until the 1960s. Sands & McDougall first mentions the F.T. Wimble & Co Ltd factory in Annersley Street Braybrook in 1963. In 1992 F.T. Wimble & Co was taken over by SICPA Australia Pty Ltd, a company made up of Australia's three oldest ink manufacturers - Sidney Cook, R.Collie & Co, and Wimble. Operations were removed to the Sidney Cook Brooklyn factory. The Braybrook site is still used as an ink factory by Ink Colour (Aust) Pty Ltd. (Rod Urquhart, pers.com. 17 12 1999).

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme

PAHT Subtheme:

Local Theme

Cultural Significance

The premises of Australian Grit/F.T. Wimble is of significance to the City of Maribyrnong. Architecturally it is a simple but a distinctive building form in the Moderne style, reflecting the period of industrial expansion in the Braybrook area in the pre World War Two period and the local prominence of the Moderne style for industrial buildings in the area at this time. (Criterion E1)

Historically the building has a long association with unique or distinctive industries including grit manufacturing and one of the few printers' requisite suppliers in Melbourne. (Criteria B2 & D2)

Comparative Examples

Architecturally, a typical small factory of the period reflecting the Moderne Style notable in several larger scale, local examples such as BACM Tottenham and Olympic Tyres and Rubber.

Recommendations

Heritage Victoria Register	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Register of the National Estate	<input type="text" value="No"/>
National Trust Register	<input type="text" value="Recommended"/>
Other Heritage Listings	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Planning Scheme Protection	<input type="text" value="Recommended"/>
External Paint Controls Apply?	<input type="text" value="Yes - removal of paint"/>
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Tree Controls Apply?	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?	<input type="text" value="No"/>
Prohibited Uses may be Permitted?	<input type="text" value="No"/>

Recommendations

The following objectives relate to the Statement of Significance and the cited fabric or contributory elements.
To conserve and enhance the significant elements of the place.
To conserve and enhance the public view of these elements.
To conserve and enhance the visual relationships between the contributory elements.
To ensure that new or altered elements are visually recessive and related to the contributory elements.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

B2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practised, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.

Distinctive in the unique functions as a grit manufacturer and later printing ink manufacturer, demonstrating the range of industrial manufacturing in the Braybrook noxious trades area.

E1 Importance for a community for aesthetic characteristics held in high esteem or otherwise valued by the community.

A simple but expressive example of Moderne styling as applied to a small industrial building.

D2 Importance in demonstrating the principle characteristics of the range of human activities in the Australian environment (including way of life, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique).

The place is notable for its long association with two distinctive industries including the grit manufacturer and printing ink manufacture.

Documentation

References

Sutherland, A. *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, Melbourne, 1888, Vol.IIB, p.624.
Sands & McDougall, City of Footscray Rate books.
Information given by Mr Rod Urquhart, employee of SICPA, in an informal telephone interview on 17 December 1999.

Data recording

Assessed By
Assessed Date: