

Identification and location

Name of Place: **Pacific Carpets**

Other Name British Australian Carpet Manufacturers

Address 35-65 Paramount Rd. cnr Indwe St.

Tottenham

Place Identifier 20250

Heritage Significance regional

Creation date(s): 1944

Map (Melway) 41 D5

Boundary description extent of the current allotment

Local Government Area: City of Maribyrnong

Ownership Type Private

Description

Site Type: Factory

Physical Description

As envisaged in the original design, the factory was to have three blocks stepping down to a glazed entrance with round windows incorporated in a two storey office block with a tower attached. The scheme as built replaced much of the proposed brick facade and was completed in corrugated cement sheeting. The three storey office was reduced in scale but the tower (incorporating water tanks) was completed in one corner of a vast site otherwise covered in saw tooth roof. Galvanised corrugated iron and cement sheeting has been used to unusual effect with vertical and horizontal panels alternating in the bands between the continuous steel hopper sash window strips and vertical panels on the tower. Behind this facade are steel-framed gable truss roofs. The brick scheme was partly realised with the Paramount Street facade, and later less stylish buildings in the north east corner.

The horizontal steel framed window strips of the office block are followed through in a continuous band along the Paramount Road front. A side entrance features streamlined pilasters with horizontal rendered bands. The former island gatehouse was on Indwe Street, possibly adapted into a new structure.

Condition

in good condition

Integrity

The early components are generally intact, only partly obscured by later additions.

Context

Adjacent to the small early subdivision at Tottenham, but otherwise among other large scale low profile factories.

Threats

none known

History

In 1937 Felt and Textiles of Australia Limited pioneered the carpet industry in Australia as the first company in Victoria to commence carpet manufacture with plain and stippled Wilton Body Carpet at the factory of Baldwin & Grant Pty Ltd. in Dynon Road. Shortly after the works added Patterned Wilton Carpet in Jacquard designs. The Dynon Road works (outside of the City of Maribyrnong) was operating from the 1930s, eventually operating under the Red Book Carpets banner. The buildings survive although converted to other uses.

In 1939 the company decided to introduce the manufacture of Spool Axminster Carpets into Australia but the intervention of the war caused a postponement of these plans. However, the British Australian Carpet Manufacturing Co Pty Ltd. came into being in 1941 as a result of a merger of the Wilton carpet manufacturing interests of Baldwin & Grant and the Axminster weaving of The Carpet Manufacturing Co. Ltd of England and negotiations were recommenced in 1944 with associates in England. .

The new BACM factory was built following World War II in Tottenham, taking advantage of the relatively cheap and well serviced industrial land on the western fringe. Manufacture of carpets commenced in 1947. Plain and Pattern Wilton carpets and colourful Axminsters were produced in widths up to 40' with new plant added by the 1950s to produce 108' widths. The plant is now operated by Pacific Carpets.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme

PAHT Subtheme:

Local Theme

Cultural Significance

Pacific Carpets is of regional historical and architectural significance for its important historical role in the development of the carpet textile industry in Melbourne and for its distinctive and unusual architectural form.

Felt & Textiles pioneered the Carpet industry in Australia by manufacturing plain and stippled Wilton Body Carpet in 1937 at Footscray. After an interruption caused by World War II the company was instrumental in developing the manufacture of Spool Axminster carpets in Australia. (Criterion D2) To accommodate this major undertaking a new factory was built in Tottenham in a modern and functional design. The factory design expresses the changed nature of an industry which not many years before had been a craft unknown to Australia and in the course of a few years had been introduced as a major manufacturing enterprise, completely bypassing the phase of craft workshop manufacture which had preceded industrialisation of carpet making in England.

The unique use of corrugated cladding in this up-to-date Modern composition gives the building a special position in the evolution of industrial architecture in the region and with the prominent tower, is a local landmark. (Criterion F1)

Comparative Examples

Compares in the use of corrugated cladding with the former Hardie offices and factory and the contemporary Red Book Carpets in Dynon Road (City of Melbourne).

Recommendations

Heritage Victoria Register

Register of the National Estate

National Trust Register

Other Heritage Listings

Planning Scheme Protection

External Paint Controls Apply?

Internal Alteration Controls Apply?

Tree Controls Apply?

Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act

Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?

Prohibited Uses may be Permitted?

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 within the place are visually recessive and related to the contributory elements.
- To prepare a conservation management plan which embodies the above objectives.
- To encourage continuation of the original use of the place.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

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).

Representative of the post war industrial expansion in Melbourne's West and specifically with the specialisation and diversification of the textile industry

F1 Importance for their technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.

Architecturally distinguished for its innovative design using mass produced utilitarian elements adapted to a stylish Modern scheme.

Documentation

References

Sunshine Cavalcade,
Forging Ahead.

Data recording

Assessed By

Assessed Date: