

Identification and location

Name of Place: Creamota

Other Name

Address 19 Sunshine Road
Footscray West

Place Identifier 8818

Heritage Significance city

Creation date(s): 1940

Map (Melway) 41 J5

Boundary description The significant structures are confined to the main 4 story mill building and associated office and store.

Local Government Area: City of Maribyrnong

Ownership Type Private

Description

Site Type: factory - food processing

Physical Description

The Creamota mill takes the common form of the standard grain mill with four machinery floors to a narrow rectangular plan set diagonally across the block, probably to align with the railway siding which runs off the Tottenham yards across Sunshine Road at a 45 degree angle. Constructed in red brick with reinforced concrete bands forming window lintels, the structure has internal reinforced concrete pillars and floors.

The roof is of corrugated iron on simple fabricated steel lattice trusses. There is a concrete tank on roof supported on the walls and internal concrete pillars. Beside the mill stands the 30 metre high concrete silos capable of storing 4000 tonnes of grain. Formerly, a tall concrete chimney vented the coal fired boilers, although these became redundant with conversion to mains electricity and individually powered, electrically driven milling and sifting machines. The Office on the north side is contemporary, while original storage buildings to the south have been modified and extended. Other buildings of more recent date have been built to the south and west of the mill. A railway siding connects directly into loading bays with below ground delivery hoppers.

Machinery in the mill includes Simon roller mills up to about 50 years old, and some grain cleaning and sorting equipment of similar age, although some of the plant is far more recent.

Condition

In good condition and externally intact.

Integrity

The adjacent flour mill is gone but otherwise the site is remarkably intact, including much of the early equipment.

Context

Located among contemporary factories and warehouses, opposite the Tottenham rail yards, which were the prime locational factor for industry in this area, providing transport access via private sidings.

Threats

none known

History

Creamota was established in the early 1930s by Fleming & Co, (Aust) Pty Ltd, whose head office was in Collins Street Melbourne. The earliest record of their factory appears in the City of Footscray rate book for 1934-35, which identified the manager as Andrew Fleming. Fleming's was a small family owned business. It ran an oat mill then a flour mill, and had a considerable export market, until driven out of competition by European subsidised exports. The flour mill was sold and the firm concentrated on producing Creamota and Sergeant Dan breakfast foods, and also stock feed, for the domestic market. During World War 2 the factory produced "Sergeant Dan Creamed Wheat" for the US troops serving in the Pacific area (City of Footscray 1984:45). Other famous brands were "Quikota" porridge and "Mammy" brand flour. The majority of flour production was for export markets in Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Far East.

In 1961 the business was sold to Quaker Oats Products Australia Ltd, a branch of the international Quaker Oats Co of Chicago. The factory continued to manufacture breakfast cereals, and added Luv pet food and Pampas pastry to its range, the plant for which replaced the former stock feed division (City of Footscray 1984:45). In 1965 the neighbouring site of the former Qualcast lawn mower factory (dating from the mid 1930s) was purchased for the company's expansion, and in 1984 a new plant for Pampas pastry was completed on that site. At this time the plant employed 350 people in total (City of Footscray 1984:45; Sands & McDougall)

The factory was taken over by Anchor Foods in 1987. This was the South Australian company that produced dried fruits and breakfast foods.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme Manufacturing and Processing

PAHT Subtheme: Feeding people

Local Theme Industry Pushing Outwards:

Cultural Significance

Creamota is of historical and architectural significance to the City of Maribyrnong as the most substantial grain mill in the district reflecting the highpoint of industrial design of the period with its simple utilitarian lines and functional plan. (Criterion F1) The mill represents the importance of food processing in the western region and stands as one of a small number of surviving mills, where once dozens operated in the metropolis and hundreds in Victoria. (Criterion B2) The adjoining contemporary office section is contributory. The elaboration of grain milling and development of specialist food products is expressed by the Creamota mill, which produced brand-name cereals and cooking products in addition to stock flour and oat products. (Criterion C2)

Comparative Examples

Compares closely with the Bunge mill in Ballarat, and the later parts of the Waterwheel complex in Bridgewater. The other surviving mill of slightly earlier date is Darling & Son in Albion, which also retains much original equipment.

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="WRIHS"/>
Planning Scheme Protection	<input type="text" value="Recommended"/>
External Paint Controls Apply?	<input type="text" value="Yes - retain unpainted"/>
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	<input type="text" value="Yes - identify significant machinery"/>
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

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. Identification of potentially significant machinery is required, for example in comparison with the Darling Flour Mill in Albion.
To encourage continuation of the original use of the place.

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.

Creamota is one of the last surviving grain mills in Melbourne or Victoria, where once there were over 100.

C2 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of Australia.

The elaboration of grain milling and development of specialist food products is expressed by the Creamota mill, which produced brand-name cereals and cooking products in addition to stock flour and oat products.

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

The Creamota mill is a fine example of the functional industrial styling which eventuated in the period around World War Two.

Documentation

References

City of Footscray *125th Anniversary Celebrations*, 1984.
Sands & McDougall *Melbourne and Suburban Directory*, 1934
Forging Ahead, City of Footscray, n.d. c1947

Data recording

Assessed By
Assessed Date: