

Warrnambool Woollen Mill, Heritage Assessment

October 2001

Gary Vines

**Report for
City of Warrnambool**

**Warrnambool Woollen Mill
Heritage Assessment**

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Project no. 2325

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- *Warrnambool Historical Society*

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| AHC | Australian Heritage Commission |
| AMG | Australian Map Grid |
| DCNR | Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (now DNRE) |
| DNRE | Department of Natural Resources and Environment (formerly DCNR) |
| DOI | Department of Infrastructure |
| HV | Heritage Victoria (DOI) |
| ICOMOS | International Council on Monuments and Sites |
| LCC | Land Conservation Council |
| RNE | Register of the National Estate |

Cover illustration: Parapet of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill over former main office.

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1.0 SUMMARY

This preliminary assessment of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill was undertaken for the City of Warrnambool in order to assist them in the future planning and conservation management of the site which has recently been vacated.

Background research and the site inspection has demonstrated that the site retains historic fabric relating to two major industrial ventures, the Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company of 1869 and the Warrnambool Woollen Mill company of 1876, and the rebuilt factory of 1909 and later. The assessment of significance has determined that some elements of the site are either of primary or contributory significance. On the basis of this assessment the following recommendations have been prepared.

1.1 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to assist in the conservation management of the site. They should not be seen as the only alternatives to conservation as they are based only on a preliminary assessment of the site. Further research and planning may result in alternative methods for conservation. However, the recommendations attempt to identify the core elements of the site's significant features and propose suitable management objectives for these.

1.1.1 Primary significant elements

It is recommended that the elements identified as of primary significance in section 6.3.4 and their retention or demolition

should be retained and conserved. These buildings may be reused for appropriate adaptive uses including the fitting out of interiors, but the form and fabric of the buildings should remain intact.

The following elements are of primary significance. See their retention or demolition

for location.

1. Cellars, walls, pillars and timber roof trusses of 1909 building
2. Surviving walls and roof trusses of former boiler house
3. Surviving walls of 1869 building
4. Foundation remains of 1869 meat works building
5. Surviving walls and roof timbers of 1914 c. boiler and engine house.
6. 1920 c. office with sign pediment (also includes safe)

1.1.2 Contributory significant elements

It is recommended that the elements identified as of contributory significance in section 6.3.4 and their retention or demolition

should be conserved where possible. These element, however, may have a greater level of adaptation including removal or alteration of fabric if this assists in the reuse of the site or may contribute to the conservation of the primary significant elements.

The following elements are of contributory significance

1. Walls and roof trusses of 1914 to 1920s additions
2. Curved walls and facades of 1950s remodelling
3. Walls of 1920s buildings on west
4. Walls and roof trusses of Engineering shop

Other elements of the complex not identified here are regarded as not having significance. However, these elements may be of value on providing functional utility for the site as a means for generating income of facilitating re-use and so their retention or demolition.

1.1.3 Portable Items

The surviving portable artefacts which relate to the site should be retained and conserved, preferably on site as part of historic interpretation, but if this is not possible, at a suitable local venue such as the Historical Society of Museum. The portable artefacts noted to date are:

1. Avery platform scales near waste store
2. Hollingworth & Knowles Loom in inspection area

1.1.4 Promotion and interpretation

The promotion and interpretation of the site's history is recommended as a way to develop community interest and foster creative ideas for the conservation, adaptation and reuse of the site. Promotion and interpretation could take the form of open days with guided tours, publication of guide brochures and information for the public on the history of the site, the development of interpretive

signs within the site and the research and publication of a history of the site including oral histories, documentation, further archaeological assessment and collection and cataloguing of artefacts.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage legislation protecting heritage places applies in Victoria. Heritage places can provide us with important information about past lifestyles and cultural change. Preserving and enhancing these important and non-renewable resources is encouraged.

It is an offence under sections of legislation to damage or destroy heritage sites without a permit or consent from the appropriate body (see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of relevant heritage legislation and constraints).

When a project or new development is proposed, it must be established if any cultural heritage places are in the area and how they might be affected by the project. Often it is possible to minimise the impact of development or find an alternative to damaging or destroying a heritage place. Therefore, preliminary research and survey to identify heritage places is a fundamental part of the background study for most developments.

The first stage of a study usually incorporates background research to collect information about the land relevant to the proposed development project (the study area). A second stage often involves a field inspection of this area.

Possibly the most important part of the study involves assessing the cultural heritage significance of heritage places in the study area. Understanding the significance of a heritage place is essential for formulating management recommendations and making decisions.

2.1 Project Background

The Warrnambool Woollen Mill was recently closed down following a period of operation by the Smith Family. The site is owned by the City of Warrnambool, which is undertaking a preliminary assessment to determine potential future uses for the site. The heritage assessment is therefore, part of a larger planning study.

The site is located in South Warrnambool off McDonald Street and is bounded on the south by the Merri River, the east by Lake Pertobe and the former port railway line, and the north by residential area (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Location of the Study area

2.2 Aims

The major objectives of the heritage assessment are:

To undertake a heritage assessment of Warrnambool Woollen Mills site to determine whether or not the site has any cultural heritage significance, and if so, the nature and level of that significance.

The heritage assessment is to be used to provide background information for the Warrnambool Woollen Mills Urban Design Advice Study currently being undertaken.

The assessment is to be carried out in by an expert in industrial archaeology in accordance with the principles and criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance as set out in “Conservation Plan” –James Semple Kerr- Fifth Edition 2000

The objectives of the assessment are to:

- examination of documentary evidence,
- examination of physical evidence,
- analysis of evidence,
- comparative assessment with other woollen mills in Victoria and
- assessment of significance and relevant recommendations.

2.3 Consultation

The project was discussed between the consultant, Megan McDougall or Heritage Victoria, and David Keenan of the City of Warrnambool. An on-site meeting with David Keenan and Andrew ... and former mill worker Dennis Jervies, assisted in determining the scope of the study and needs of the client and identifying various parts of the mill complex. Contact was made with Les O’Callaghan, president of the Warrnambool Historical Society, who assisted in providing copies of historical photographs and other historical information relating to the woollen mill.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 History

The Site of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill was initially left undeveloped when the Warrnambool area was settled. In the 1850s the Merri River cut a path to the south of its present course, while a channel to the east drained Lake Pertobe (then called Pertobe Lagoon). To join the Merri at its mouth. The surrounds were therefore characterised by low lying and flood-prone swampy land, not conducive to settlement.

In 1857 a tramroad was constructed to the jetty on Lady Bay. The course of this can still be followed to the east of the mill. In 1859 the diversion of the Merri River was commenced, although the 1867 plan (Township of Warrnambool, County of Villiers, by Lands and Survey Office Melbourne) does not show any change to the alignment of the Merri River. While no buildings are shown on the Mill site at this state, the plan shows slaughter houses 16 chains to the west. The area around Lake Pertobe is marked “swampy” while the mill site is shown as part of the “Sandstone and Limestone Ranges”, which are covered in “She Oak and Gum Shrub”. The alignment of MacDonald Street is shown, but not labelled.

In 1869 the Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company was started. This was one of about a dozen such firms in Victoria, which utilised a new system for vacuum canning of cooked meat for export, principally to Britain. Warrnambool was one of the earliest of the firms (the third in Victoria to be registered after the Melbourne and the tiny Lake Boga companies) and was distinguished by the broad spread of shareholding in the local area. Other contemporary meat preserving companies included the Maribyrnong, Australian, Hobson’s Bay and Victorian Meat Preserving Companies in Melbourne, the Horsham, Hamilton and Portland Companies in the Western District, and several others in the Gippsland and Central Victorian regions (Linge 1979: 238-45, 277-8).

Harbour towns were generally preferred for such works as their main market was overseas export.. Together, the meat preserving companies rescued rural Victoria from an impending recession at the end of the initial gold rushes, and established the meat and livestock industries as one of Australia’s major export industries.

By 1870 the alignment of the Merri River had been altered to follow its current path. The connection of Pertobe Creek to Pertobe Lake was severed by the “New Merri River”. However, the south western portion still connected the New Merri River to the old alignment so that the New Merri River is drained by both routes. A large meat preservation building and three other smaller buildings are drawn on the site. The boundaries of the site have been shown, though

they differ from the site boundaries of today. A small building labelled “Magazine” is shown just outside the eastern boundary of the site. As in 1867, MacDonald Street is dashed in and continues across the Merri River to form the western boundary of the site. No bridge is shown for this road, though a bridge does cross adjacent to the slaughter houses. A hill is drawn in the northern half of the site. (*Lady Bay and Warrnambool Harbour*, by Nav. Lieut. H.J. Stanley, 1870).

A photograph purported to be of the Warrnambool Woollen Mills Staff shows a group of men and women wearing dirtied aprons standing in front of a range of stone buildings. The ground slopes towards the river. A long two storey stone building with small closely spaced windows is in the background. The upper windows have segmental stone arches, while the lower ones have stone lintels. Buttresses project at irregular intervals.

Single storey sheds are located in front of this main building and a small single storey gabled building is on the left hand side. The land slopes towards the creek in the foreground. A stack of wood billets is located to the right in front of the small sheds.

This is probably a shot taken when the meatworks was operating. The buildings are clearly of the pre-fire period and the dress is more akin to the 1870s and the meatworks activities than a woollen mill (Plate 1).

A public company, The Warrnambool Woollen Mill Company Ltd, was floated in 1874 with locally subscribed capital of £25,000, and with the intention of establishing a woollen mill in the Polworth Flour Mill of Alexander Struth on the Merri River at Woodford. This was powered by a water wheel generating 20 horse power.

However, the location was seen as unsuitable and at a special meeting on 17 June 1875 the directors jumped at the offer by the shareholders of the defunct Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company to sell their land and buildings at South Warrnambool for £5,000. (Linge 1979: 352-66; Defunct Company Records VPRS #316, Public Records Office)

Fresh Capital was raised, but was still not sufficient to provide plant and machinery, and keep the works operating. The company went into liquidation in June 1876 and the plant and land was sold at auction. The mill was able to continue as a going concern because the local grazier and entrepreneur, Robert Hood of Sherwood on the Hopkins River, and who had been chairman of directors in the defunct company, purchased the mill and ran it as a personal venture, turning his own wool into tweeds that gained notice for their quality.

The venture was said to be starting to pay when on the night of 24 March 1882, fire destroyed the building and plant. The loss was estimated at £20,000, most of which was Borne by Hood. Insurances totalled £13,000 but only £1,500 was paid. Further effort to raise £12,000 to rebuild failed and the shell of the building remained unused until November 1910 (Sayers & Fry 1987: 264).

The Warrnambool Chamber of Commerce decided in about 1908 to encourage secondary industry with local capital. Marcus Saltau and Peter John McGennan, a Cooper by Trade, with interests in box, nail and wire manufacturing, shipping, and dairy equipment, were the main impetus behind the move. A public meeting in September 1908 determined that £40,000 should be raised and John W. Younger, Marcus Saltau, Robert Swinton, James Dickson and Peter John McGennan were appointed provisional directors. William L. Marfell was made secretary. Saltau was elected chairman of Directors, a post he held for the next 34 years (Sayers & Fry 1987: 265).

The capital was raised almost entirely in Warrnambool through the efforts of a team of volunteer canvassers which included many of the town's leading businessmen. While there was some difficulty in raising sufficient capital to commence operation, an overdraft with personal guaranties by the directors for up to £4,000 each, ensured that first manager, John E. Bennett, was able to sail to England in December 1909 to purchase machinery and recruit experienced staff. Twenty operatives from the Yorkshire Woollen industry were employed (Sayers & Fry 1987: 265-6).

The Woollen Mill was officially opened on 14 November 1910 by Marcus Saltau in the dual role of company chairman and Mayor. The mill paid its first dividend of 2 ½ percent for the half year to May 1912. At this stage the mill was working two shifts and had 12 months worth of orders. In 1914 a new generator to produce electricity was ordered to assist with expansion plans. This course was taken because of a delay in the Warrnambool council moving on an electricity supply for the town. The mill then provided power to the town. By October 1915 the mill was 'fully twice its original size'.

The period up to about 1923 saw the mill prosper, in part due to large Government orders for cloth for military supply during the War. For much of 1916 the entire production was for the Government. Profits of up to £39,000 and dividends to 18 per cent were paid in this period. However in the 1920s, profits, production and demand all fell so that a £21,000 loss was recorded in 1925 (Sayers & Fry 1987: 267).

In 1922 the plant was upgraded with machinery for worsted manufacture, although this disruption probably contributed to the lack of profitability. Profits resumed in the 1930s and even through the mill was effected by the depression, it coped by means of stringent economies and energetic marketing. When

times were slack, staff were put on short hours and the number of shifts were reduced, rather than through lay-offs.

Following a production boom during the Second World War, the mill moved into a period of consolidation as competition from overseas ate into its profits. In 1955, the Warrnambool Woollen Mill Company formed a new company in partnership with the Wangaratta Woollen Mills Ltd., Annexes opened during the war in Port Fairy and Timor Street were closed, and the Warrnambool mill concentrated on Woollen production.

In the 1950s and 60s, the mill pursued a vigorous policy of expansion and modernisation. It is probably from this period that the buildings were updated to their current modernist facades. At the same time, many new products were introduced including the first efforts in Australia to make electric blankets in 1958 and the installation of Swiss Sulzer looms in 1965.

Worsted production was discontinued in 1962 and in 1968 Dunlop purchase the Woollen Mill, following another offer from Onkaparinga in South Australia. Under Dunlop, expansion continued and the Wendoree Woollen Mill and Dreamspun Textiles were added to the company in 1968 and 79 respectively.

Much of the plant of these firms was moved to Warrnambool and major expansions were required to house them. The Blanket finishing and packing building at the north of the site was probably constructed about this time (1970s), with the cliff face cut back further to accommodate them.

In 1982 Dunlop sold the Woollen Mills to Onkaparinga Woollen Co. Ltd. As part of a move away from textiles, and then in 1983 Onkaparinga were taken over by Macquarie Worsteds, a subsidiary of General Investments and Industrial Equity Ltd.

During the mill's history, a surprising small number of managers have been responsible for the company's operation. Four managers spanned the period from 1909 to the 1980s – J. Bennet (1909-30), W. Overend (1931-44), W.S. Crowe (1944-71, and Don Jenkins (1971-xx). The first three managers were all English, reflecting the role of the Yorkshire woollen industry in developing Victoria's textile industry. (Sayers & Fry 1987: 269-72).

In 1994, the Woollen Mill was about to close as the Macquarie Group decided to pull out of Warrnambool because it was rationalising its operations. An agreement was subsequently struck between the Warrnambool City Council and the Smith Family to continue operations at the mill with assistance of a \$300,000 grant from the state Government (Press Release Office of the Minister of Regional Development, State Government of Victoria 8/12/1994).

A distinguishing aspect of the story of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill, was its role as in community development. It was established as a means to improve local job opportunities and economic development, and continued up to the period of the Smith Family operation to have a strong role in the local community. While an employers provident fund was established in 1922, consideration was given to a form of profit sharing arrangement with employees. This is interesting in the light of Fletcher Jones being among the chairmen of directors (1942-58) who undertook a similar scheme at his clothing factory on the other side of Warrnambool (Sayers & Fry 1987: 270-1).

4.0 METHODS

The *Heritage Act 1995* protects all non-Aboriginal archaeological sites in Victoria older than 50 years. A wide range of archaeological site types are protected by this Act, including below-ground features (such as building foundations, wells and artefacts) and above-ground features (such as the standing remains of buildings, machinery, fence posts and exotic vegetation). These may be single sites or complexes made up several related parts.

The physical investigation of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill was undertaken on 5/10/01. This involved an inspection of all parts of the mill complex including cellars, exteriors, interiors and partial view from the roofs where these were accessible. Initially David Keenan acted as guide to point out particular features, such as the structural remains in the cellars. Photographs were taken of selected structures and features, and a contemporary plan was annotated with descriptive features.

Historical Photographs and plans were viewed and a comparison made between these and existing conditions in order to determine the stages of construction and alteration.

5.0 RESULTS

The inspection revealed that there is evidence of several phases of building on the woollen mill site, which reflect the different uses, and possibly three major reconstructions.

5.1 Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company buildings

The oldest parts of the structures relate to the 1869 Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company buildings. It is probably that the earliest photograph (Plate 1) shows the meatworks buildings around 1870 although the historical society has a note that it depicts the Woollen Mill in the 1890s. Evidence of these buildings is not obvious on the ground, but several features point to survival of small parts of footings and possibly sections of walls.

The small building on the left (west) can also be identified in a number of later photographs, including one showing the aftermath of the fire (Plate 2), and another the newly erected woollen mill buildings possibly dated 1914 (Plate 4).

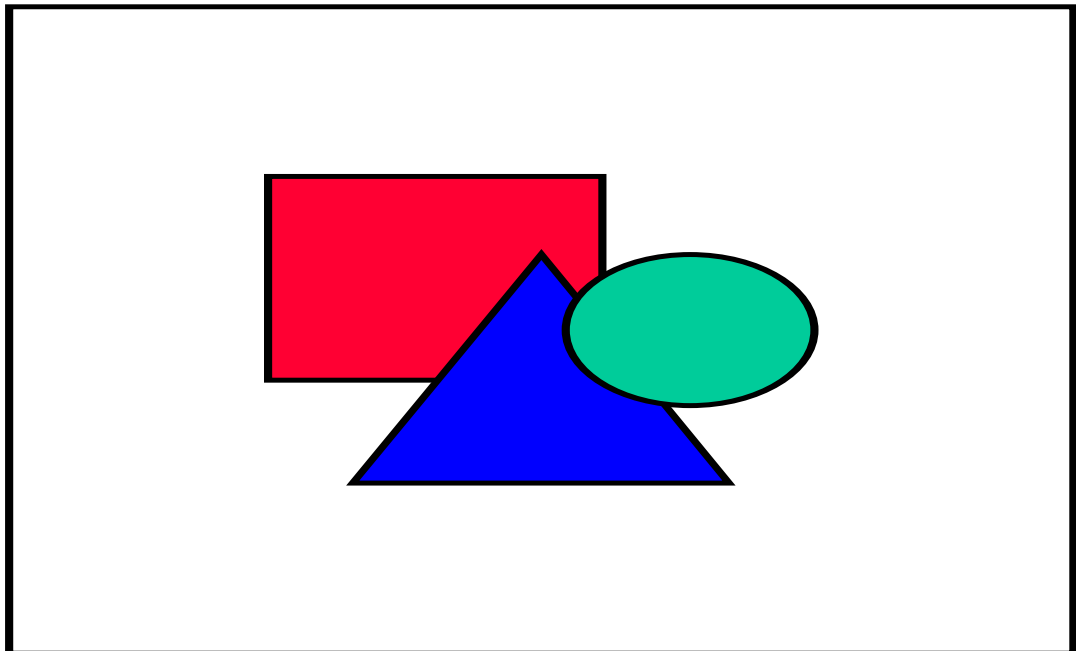


Plate 1: Warrnambool Woollen Mill 1890s?.

In these photos, the early stone building stands out from the adjacent stone and corrugated iron sawtooth roof structure of eight bays. Two slightly later shots (Plate 9 Plate 10) shows the same sawtooth building now with a ninth bay partially obscuring the early building. The end walls of the early building (north and south) have been extended upwards.

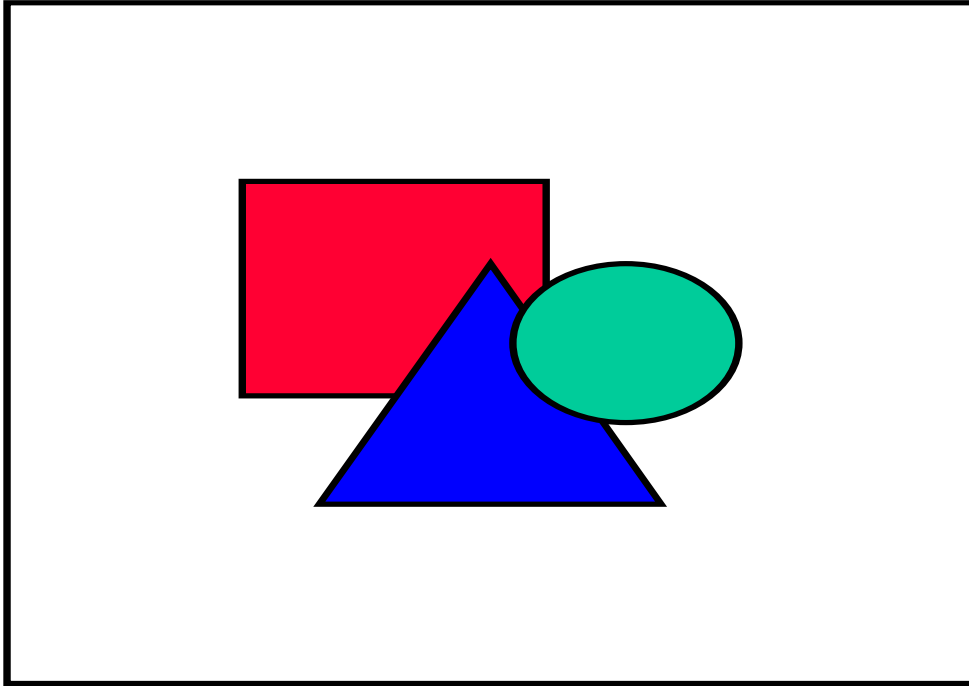


Plate 2: Warrnambool Meat Preserving Company following the fire in 1882.

A comparison with the site plan (figure 2) and aerial photograph (Plate 14) shows that this early structure is not the present canteen as suggested by the community reference group, but a section of building near the card bins under the westernmost bay of the sawtooth roofed carding section. This would appear to align with the northern end of the cellars. Unfortunately it is not possible to view any exposed walls of this structure, apart from the roof area (see plate xx), as they obscured by the card bins.

At the extreme northern end of the cellars there is evidence of early foundations and structures. At the end of cellars 1 and 4 are stone footings, standing about 1.5 metres high and 4 metres long. Similar footings are visible in cellars 10 and 11, although only a single course is visible at the base of the later walls. Also at the north end of cellar 11 is a sloping stone structure in the form of a flue or drain. These features are probably remains of the foundations of the main 1869 meat works building and other single storey structures of the period which were located immediately south. It is highly likely that further structural features are buried beneath the floors of the building to the north of this point (Plate 3)



Plate 3: Footings of 1869 meatworks

5.2 1909 reconstruction

In the fire of 1882, it appears that the main part of the meatworks was almost entirely destroyed, only part of the walls and buttresses remained (Plate 2). The historical references say that this is how the buildings remained until 1909 when the site was reconstructed.

The 1909 reconstruction appears to have entailed the erection of a large saw-tooth roofed building over the site of the meatworks, but extending further south than previous buildings (Plate 4). This initially had eight east-facing bays, with stone walls on the lower part and corrugated iron cladding on the upper parts of the walls. Other lower, gable-roofed buildings were located south of this, including one which was evidently a boiler house with two metal chimneys.

The 1909 section of the building can be identified by the timber trussed roof. This employs a very simple structural form of twinned Oregon lower cords with two vertical and two diagonal truss members. The top cord is formed by the roof rafter, carried on a longitudinal bearer which is supported by the longer of the truss verticals. The trusses are supported on alternate iron 'H' pillars and beams, with a single diagonal strut on the intervening posts. Diagonal Angle iron struts spread the truss weight on ogee ended corbel pieces (Plate 5).

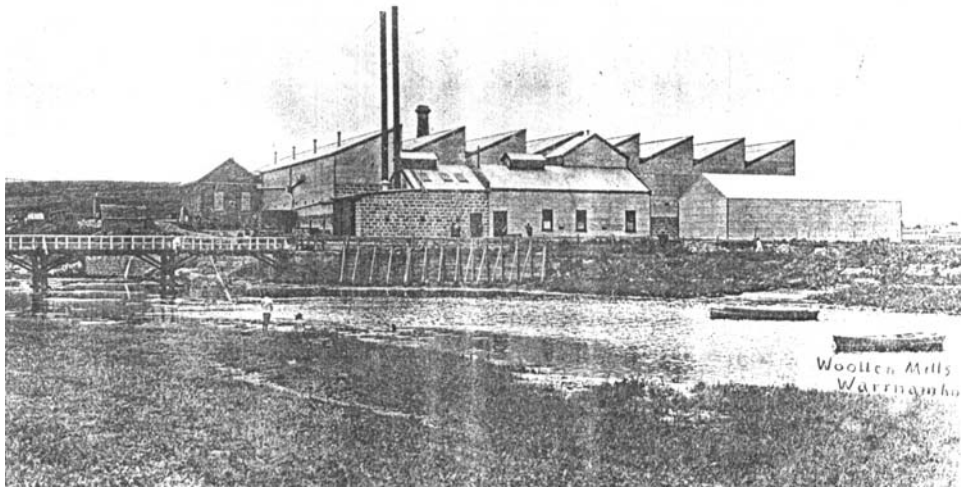


Plate 4: The Rebuilt Woollen Mill c 1914.

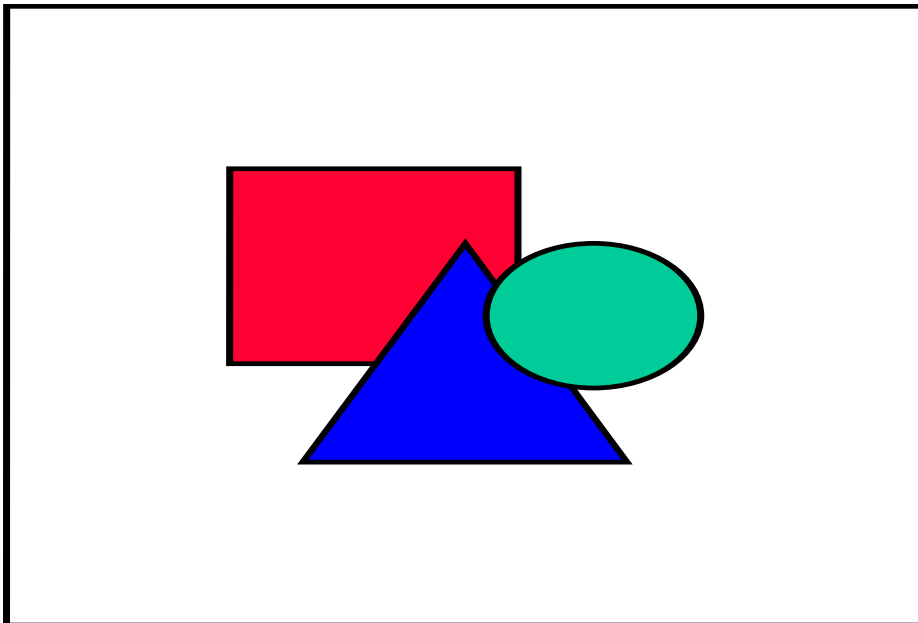


Plate 5: Original 1909 timber roof trusses.

The building was later extended to the west by a single additional bay and the north by several bays, with a more complex riveted iron truss system. Beneath the main floor is the cellar area, built on 18 parallel, two metre high limestone walls with randomly spaced arched openings between. The iron pillars are founded on basalt blocks set in the top of the walls (Plate 6). The original timber floors have been placed by a suspended reinforced concrete raft with beams supported directly on the stone walls. The western-most section of the

cellar has a roof of curved corrugated iron supported on 'H' beams and probably filled above with cinder or concrete. This is similar to the proprietary fire-proof building systems used in woollen mills in particular from the mid nineteenth century.

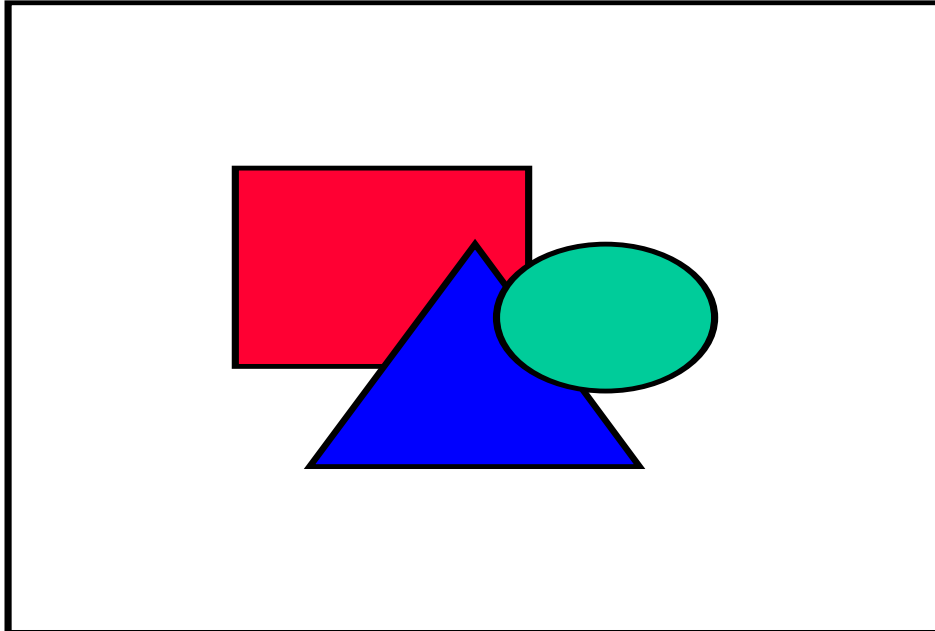


Plate 6: Detail of pillar support over cellar.

A key feature of the design of the factory is the segregation of various parts by substantial walls which extend above the roof line to form parapets (see Plate 7). These played the dual role of preventing fibre contamination between various sections, for example so the different dyed wool colours did not become mixed, and inhibiting the spread of fire. It is possible that the company had learned from the disaster of the 1882 fire.

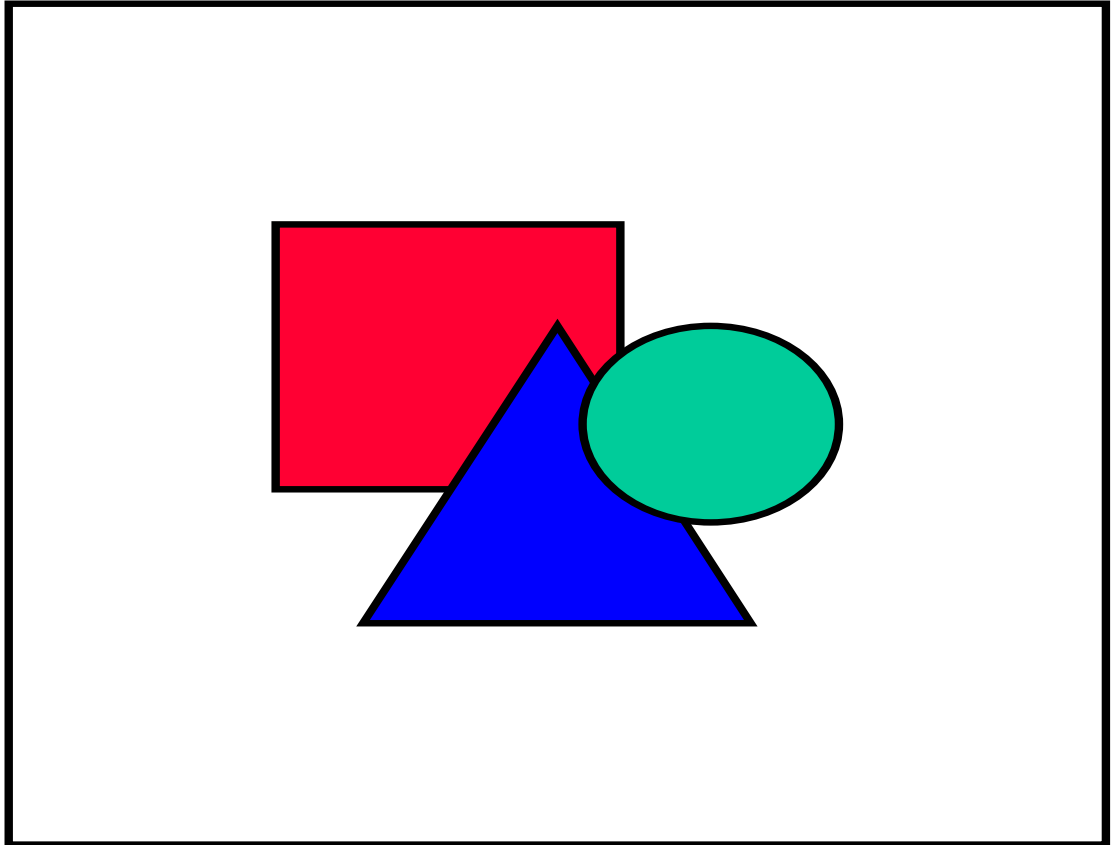


Plate 7: Interior of mending and packing department c 1920.

The 1909 boiler house survives, and can be identified on the south side of the Spinning section by the timber king-post roof trusses originally fitted with a small roof monitor, but now having a glazed ridge lantern. This later contained the carbonised wool bins. The blending department building to the west may also incorporate part of the boiler house (Plate 8).

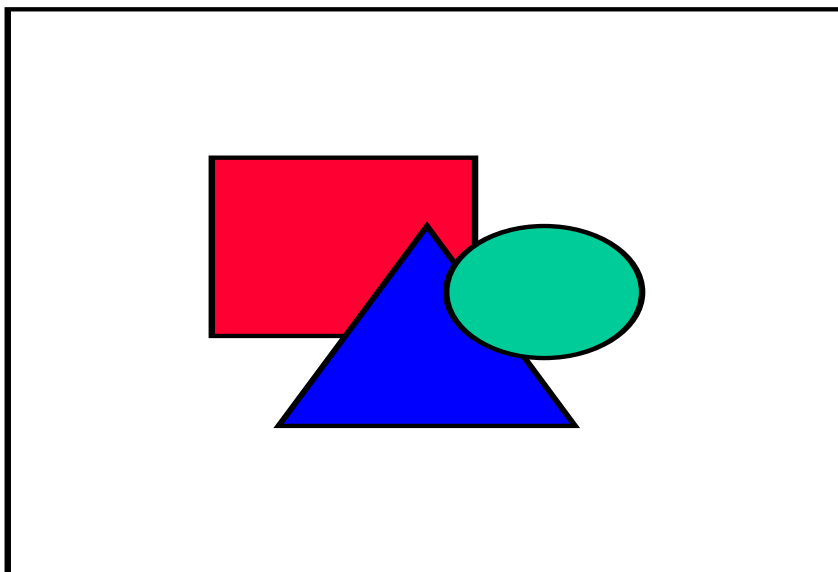


Plate 8: 1909 boiler house roof.

5.3 Interwar expansion

Considerable expansion is believed to have occurred during and following World War I, which probably included the northward enlargement of the Spinning Department. The installation of an electricity generating plant in 1914 was probably also the trigger for the construction of the new boiler and engine house and tall brick chimney on the east of the complex (Plate 9).

Further additions included a range of gable roofed structures in the south east corner evidently with timber frame and corrugated iron cladding. The iron roof trusses appear the only section of these that survive.

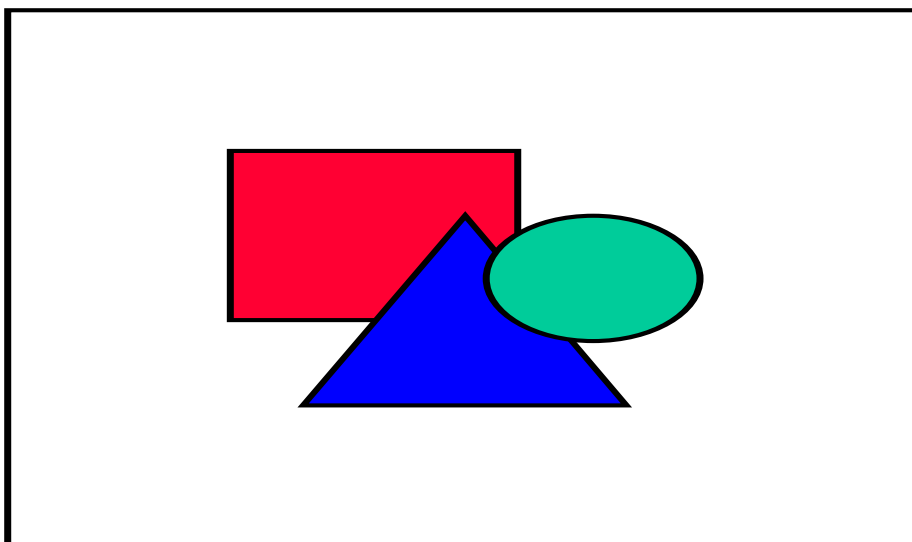


Plate 9: Expanded mill possibly in the 1920s showing new chimney.

On the west side, further small buildings were added around this time, possibly including the office building with a parapet bearing the company name and establishment date. “WARRNAMBOOL WOOLLEN MILL COMPANY LTD. ESTD. 1909”. This does not appear to have been one of the buildings erected in 1909, but probably reflects the opening of the new worsted plant in the early 1920s.

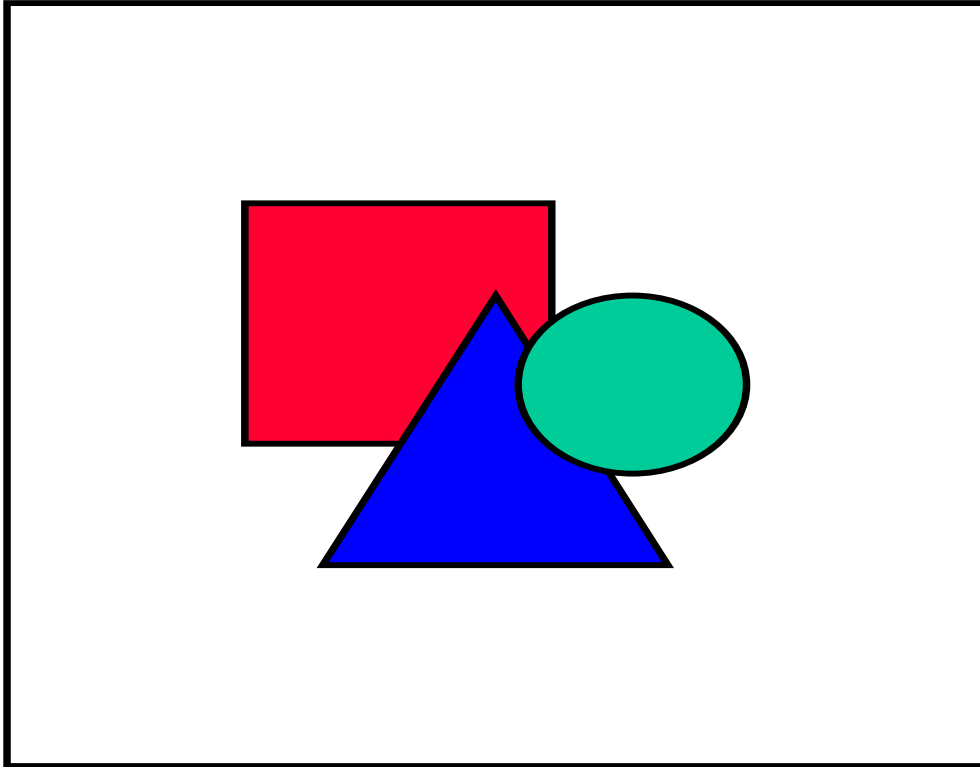


Plate 10: View of Mill from west during launch of new worsted plant c 1920

It was probably also at this stage that the northern weaving sheds were constructed. The available photographs do not show this part of the site until quite late, but the 1920s view appears to show the excavation of the hillside was at that stage just north of the office building.

Further buildings were added on the west side by the 1930s. These include what is now the canteen, and another smaller gable roofed structure further west that is now demolished (Plate 12). Further remodelling appears to have occurred near the office with a double door entrance provided to the south (Plate 11).

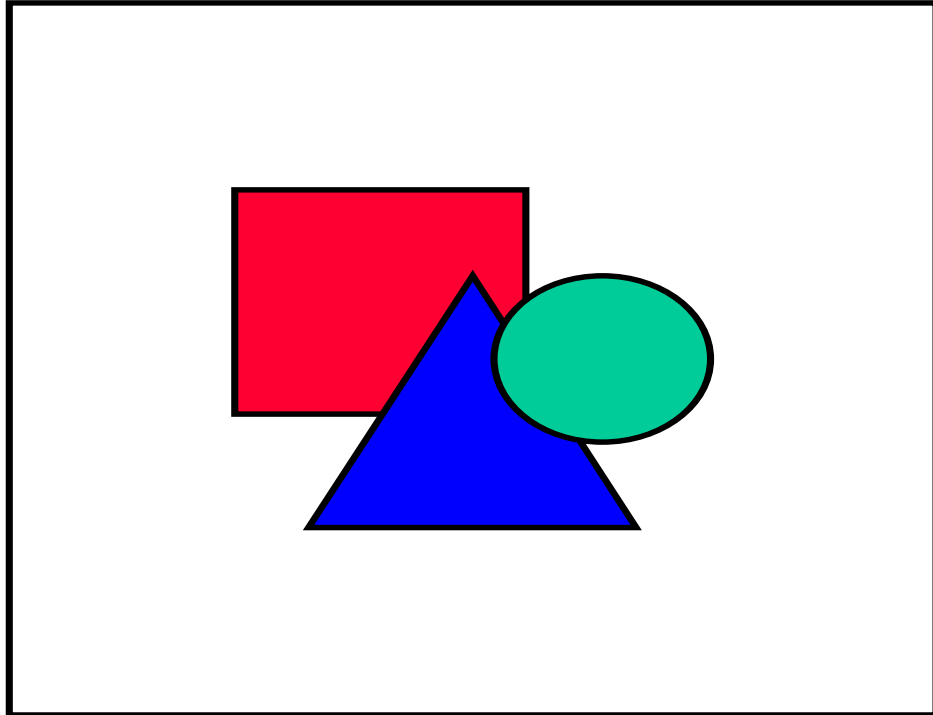


Plate 11: Workers group at factory entrance next to office c 1920.

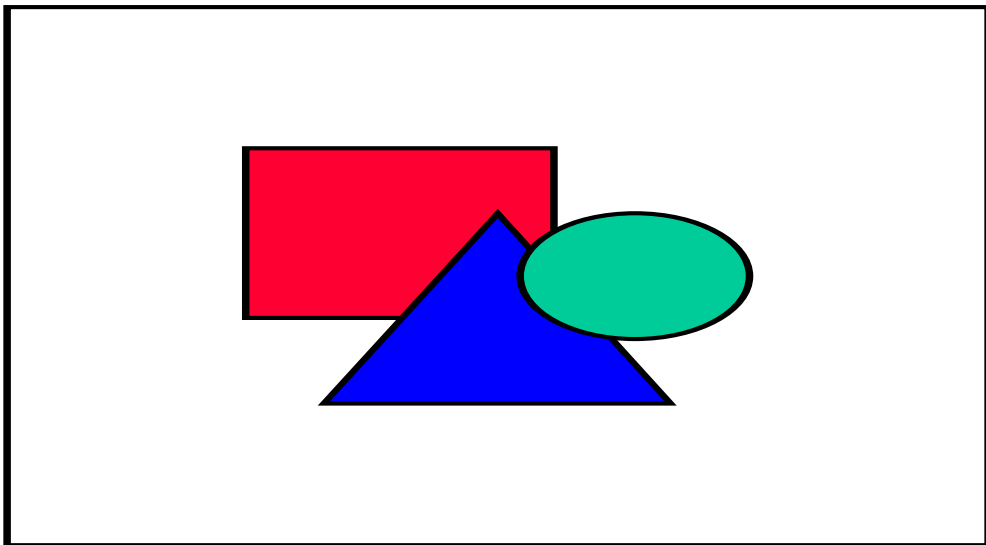


Plate 12: Woollen Mills c. 1950.

5.4 Post WWII expansion

The next major phase of construction came following World War II when small additions were made to the complex and a major restructure of the organisation of production. This is reflected in the red brick additions on the north and south which brought a quite different style of design reflecting the International or Streamlined Modern architecture that was then fashionable in industrial buildings. That this was more than just a functional requirement can be seen in the reconstruction of the earlier stone buildings to provide them with similar curved brick corners and external walls were rendered to provide a cohesive finish with cement pilasters and string courses. This work was evidently carried out in stages with the two storey triangular building on the south added first, and the western elevation rationalised next. When finally realised in full, the new scheme featured dark walls with white window mullions and string courses and parapets (Plate 13).

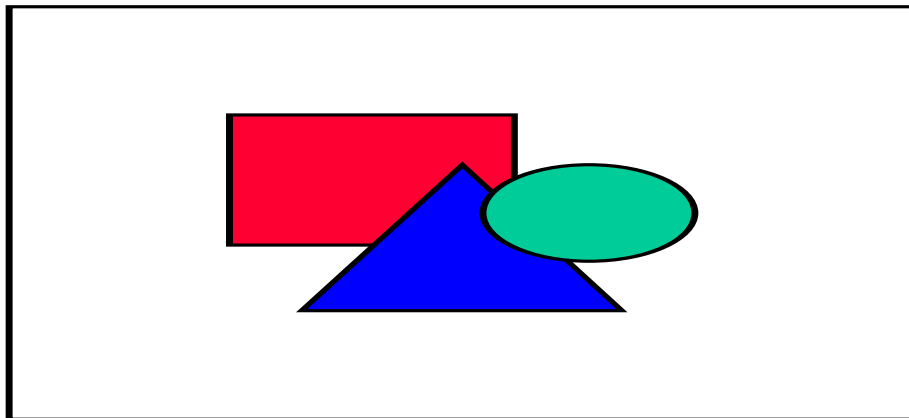


Plate 13: View of works from the east c 1960s.

By the 1950s the works had reached much the same size it is now with the exception of the Blanket finishing and packing department on the north. A plan of the period shows that the cliff face was immediately north of the Weaving department before this (Figure 2).

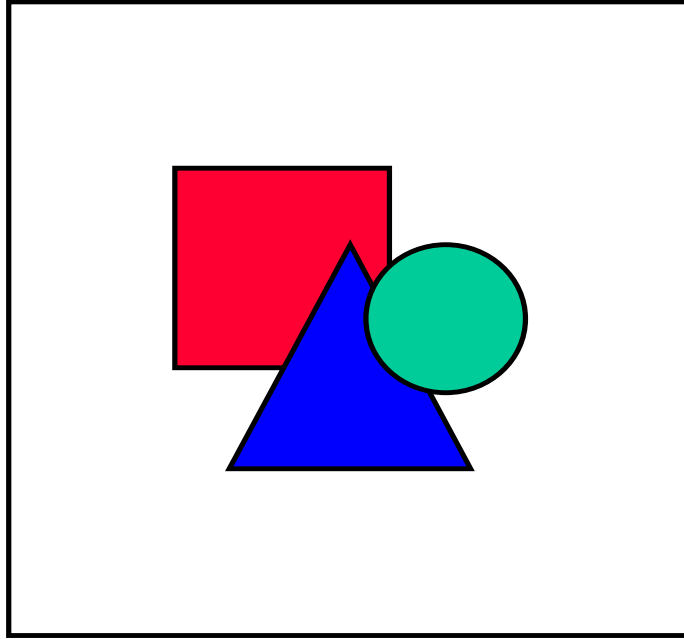


Plate 14: Aerial Photograph of Woollen Mill 7/3/2001

Figure 2: Plan of South Warrnambool.

6.0 INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

The buildings of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill demonstrates a complex history of industrial development and reconstruction. The surviving buildings can be read as an historical record of the period 1869 to the 1990s. Evidence of the earliest meat preserving works buildings, the reconstruction for the woollen mills, and later additions can be identified, and demonstrate a range of generally typical industrial architectural forms.

It is apparent that the earliest structures are within the area of the cellars and this forms a significant core. However, other aspects of the buildings such as the substantial limestone walls, variety of timber and iron roof truss systems, and the streamlined architecture of the post WWII period, all add interest to the site.

However, the now-obsolete industrial buildings also present a dilemma for future management and conservation. The type of structure, location and local economic factors suggest that it is unlikely that they can continue to be used for their original purpose. Therefore some substantial adaptation and modification is likely if they are to survive in the future.

6.2 Comparative Analysis

There are very few early industrial buildings surviving in Victoria in comparison to other categories of historic buildings such as homesteads, town halls, railway stations and the like. This is partly due to the high attrition rate due to changes in location, technology and economic impacts in industry. Only one relatively intact nineteenth century meat preserving works is known – the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company in Pipemakers Park, Maribyrnong. This is a group of bluestone buildings which feature some interesting early features such as fire-proof building methods. It is in the layout and plan of the site that its former function can be recognised, rather than any specific meat preserving equipment.

Nineteenth and early twentieth century woollen mills fare slightly better. Several of the Geelong Mills survive with much of the original 1860s and 1870s structures intact. They are:

- Victorian Woollen and Coth Manufacturing Co. Ltd., 1865
- Collins Brothers' Union Mill, 1874
- Alexander Gray's Albion , 1870
- Barwon Woollen Mill Company Ltd. 1873

The 1871 Ballarat Woollen Mill Company Ltd and 1875 Castlemaine Woollen Mill Company Ltd. Were the only other mills of the period outside of Geelong and Melbourne. The most intact of the Geelong mills are the Victorian Woollen Co, which retains substantial bluestone structures, and the Barwon Mill, which has ornate polychrome brickwork.

Fragments of the Castlemaine Woollen Mill survived the recent fire including the polychrome brick exterior walls. The Melbourne Woollen Mill in Yarraville retains substantial section of bluestone walls and part of the 1868 sawtooth roof, probably the oldest example of this roof type in Australia. The 1872 Alfred Woollen Mill in Williamstown had similar components left before it was demolished about 2 years ago.

The next wave of mill construction came in the early twentieth century, as the industry diversified and specialist manufacturers gained a position in the market. Among the prominent mills of the period 1900 to the 1920s were Foy and Gibson in Collingwood, Hilton and Lincoln in Coburg, AKM in Richmond, Yarra Falls in Abbotsford and Bradmills in Footscray. The distinguishing feature of these mills was the larger scale operations and the diversification into cotton spinning and weaving and other types of fabrics. Mill construction was similar in design although the buildings reflected the changes in construction materials with machine made brick and fabricated steel replacing stone and timber. Lincoln and Hilton provide the closest parallel being single storey saw-tooth roof buildings.

The use of limestone at Warrnambool is unusual for the period and reflects the local conditions where the stone was plentiful and still relatively cheap to obtain compared to the costs of transporting brick from Melbourne manufacturers. Limestone continued as a common building material in Warrnambool until the late 1930s, when it had been superseded by brick in most other places by the end of the nineteenth century.

6.3 Preliminary Assessment of Significance

An assessment of archaeological site significance encompasses a range of heritage criteria and values. The heritage values of a site or place are broadly defined as the ‘aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations’ (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992: 21). This means a place can have different levels of heritage value and significance to different groups of people.

Archaeological sites are most commonly assessed in terms of historical and scientific values, particularly by what a site can tell us about past lifestyles and people. There is an accepted procedure for determining the level of significance

of an archaeological site. The following discussion is a summary of these procedures. For a detailed discussion, please see Appendix 1.

The scientific values of historical archaeological sites are assessed using three main criteria: site contents (cultural material, organic remains and site structure), site condition (degree of disturbance of a site), and representativeness (the regional distribution of a particular site type). In the case of the Warrnambool Woollen Mill, while there are components that may be defined as archaeological remains, such as the footings of the 1869 building, it is primarily of significance as a standing historic building. In which case, the assessment of significance takes a different course as follows.

6.3.1 Cultural Heritage Significance

Heritage Victoria is the State government body responsible for protecting non-Aboriginal heritage places in Victoria, including gardens, buildings, shipwrecks and historical archaeological sites. Heritage Victoria administers the *Heritage Act 1995*, and has provided formal criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance. Applying these criteria will determine if a heritage place should be considered for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register.

On the basis of these criteria, heritage places are generally given a significance ranking of State, Local or none. Historical archaeological sites, as with other heritage places, can be considered for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register if they have State significance. However, *all* historical archaeological sites are included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory and are given statutory protection, irrespective of their level of significance.

The historical sites identified and recorded during this survey have been assessed using the Heritage Victoria criteria (listed in Appendix 1). The significance assessments are summarised below.

6.3.2 Assessment against Heritage Victoria Criteria

Site Name and Number: Warrnambool Woollen Mill

Relevant Criteria:

- A.** The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.

The site is historically important for its association with two significant formative industries – meat preserving and woollen cloth production. It is also critical to the history and development of Warrnambool as a major regional city

- B.** The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.

Very few early Woollen Mills, or meat preserving company buildings survive in Victoria. This is one of only a handful of such works in the state.

- C.** The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.

The site has a local value in education relating to Warrnambool's history and a wider value in relation to the story of Victoria's industrial development and early building techniques

- D.** The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.

The mill has close associations to several locally important individuals including Robert Hood, proprietor of the meat preserving works, and John W. Younger, Marcus Saltau, Robert Swinton, James Dickson, William L. Marfell, Peter John McGennan J. Bennet, W. Overend, W.S. Crowe, and Don Jenkins, directors and managers of the woollen mill.

- E.** The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

Several design elements are of note including the foundation remains of the meat works, the stone cellars, the variety of roof truss systems and the Streamlined Modern of the post WWII remodelling.

- F.** The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

Not applicable

- G.** The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

The Warrnambool Woollen Mill played a significant role in the social fabric of the city, being established as a community and economic endeavour and run for the benefit of local people whether to generate employment, provide an outlet for local produce, or to bring profits and capital back to the region. In this respect it is an interesting parallel to Fletcher Jones & Staff also in Warrnambool.

Significance: **Regional**

6.3.3 Statement of Significance

The Warrnambool Woollen Mill is of Regional significance for its historical, architectural and social values.

Historically it demonstrates an important phase in Victoria's development when industries were established to make use of the primary production of the rural areas and assist in economic expansion. The place is associated with one of Victoria's earliest meat preserving works, and one of only three large nineteenth century woollen mills outside of Melbourne and Geelong. In the twentieth century the mill was a significant local employer and an unusual example of successful secondary industry in a rural setting.

Architecturally the place demonstrated distinctive building styles which reflect both the particular design requirements of textile mills (large floor spaces, separated operation areas, even lighting), and the distinctive local or regional building materials in its extensive use of local limestone. The various phases of the site's history and development can be recognised in the range of materials and design details employed in the buildings.

Socially the place is important as one of the major centres of employment in Warrnambool and for its particular role in the social and economic development of the town. The creation of an industry aimed at providing general prosperity in the community rather than as an individual or corporate profit-making venture is unusual in Victoria.

6.3.4 What is significant

The following elements are of primary significance. See their retention or demolition

for location.

1. Cellars, walls, pillars and timber roof trusses of 1909 building
2. Surviving walls and roof trusses of former boiler house
3. Surviving walls of 1869 building
4. Foundation remains of 1869 meat works building
5. Surviving walls and roof timbers of 1914 c. boiler and engine house.
6. 1920 c. office with sign pediment (also includes safe)

The following elements are of contributory significance

1. Walls and roof trusses of 1914 to 1920s additions
2. Curved walls and facades of 1950s remodelling
3. Walls of 1920s buildings on west
4. Walls and roof trusses of Engineering shop

Other elements of the complex not identified here are regarded as not having significance. However, these elements may be of value on providing functional utility for the site as a means for generating income or facilitating re-use and so their retention or demolition

7.0 MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

Cultural heritage places provide us with evidence of past human activity. Heritage places may be confined to a small area, or represented by a complex of features, including a cultural landscape. The nature of human activity is that the places used in the past are affected by the actions of the present, particularly urban expansion and agricultural processes. This means cultural heritage places are a diminishing resource.

Cultural heritage places are valuable, not only for the scientific records of the past they provide, but also for their social significance. Many Aboriginal places, for example, have a special significance to Aboriginal communities as places where traditional life has continued and places that may have sacred or symbolic significance.

Many heritage places may also be outstanding examples of artistic and creative achievement. Heritage places are valuable to Australians – and the rest of the world – as they not only provide a link with a culturally rich past, but they can contribute to recreational and community life.

Heritage places may also have economic potential (Pearson and Sullivan 1995: 15). These values should, where possible, be protected and handed on to future generations. We all have some degree of social, spiritual, ethical – and legal – obligation to see that this happens.

7.1.1 Potential Impacts

The closure of the mill will inevitably result in impacts on its significance as the loss of its traditional use means a substantial change. The potential for abandonment, vandalism and deterioration due to lack of maintenance exists until a suitable future use can be found. Pressures to maximise economic use from the site may lead to loss of significant fabric where this cannot be incorporated into new development and uses.

7.2 Management Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to assist in the conservation management of the site. They should not be seen as the only alternatives to conservation as they are based only on a preliminary assessment of the site. Further research and planning may result in alternative methods for conservation. However, the recommendations attempt to identify the core elements of the site's significant features and propose suitable management objectives for these.

7.2.1 Primary significant elements

It is recommended that the elements identified as of primary significance in section 6.3.4 and their retention or demolition

should be retained and conserved. These buildings may be reused for appropriate adaptive uses including the fitting out of interiors, but the form and fabric of the buildings should remain intact.

7.2.2 Contributory significant elements

It is recommended that the elements identified as of contributory significance in section 6.3.4 and their retention or demolition

should be conserved where possible. These element, however, may have a greater level of adaptation including removal or alteration of fabric if this assists in the reuse of the site or may contribute to the conservation of the primary significant elements.

7.2.3 Portable Items

The surviving portable artefacts which relate to the site should be retained and conserved, preferably on site as part of historic interpretation, but if this is not possible, at a suitable local venue such as the Historical Society of Museum. The portable artefacts noted to date are:

1. Avery platform scales near waste store
2. Hollingworth & Knowles Loom in inspection area

7.2.4 Promotion and interpretation

The promotion and interpretation of the site's history is recommended as a way to develop community interest and foster creative ideas for the conservation, adaptation and reuse of the site. Promotion and interpretation could take the form of open days with guided tours, publication of guide brochures and information for the public on the history of the site, the development of interpretive signs within the site and the research and publication of a history of the site including oral histories, documentation, further archaeological assessment and collection and cataloguing of artefacts.

7.3 Report Lodgement

This report has been distributed to:

- Heritage Victoria (two copies)
- City of Warrnambool

7.4 Independent Review of Reports

Archaeological reports and the management recommendations contained therein will be independently reviewed by Heritage Victoria.

Although the findings of a consultant's report will be taken into consideration, recommendations in relation to managing a heritage place should not be taken to imply automatic approval of those actions by Heritage Victoria.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

A 1. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

A1.1 Introduction

Assessing the significance of a cultural heritage place is undertaken to make decisions about the best way to protect and manage that particular heritage place. The category and significance of a heritage place will also determine if it is to be given statutory protection. The statutory issues that affect heritage places are discussed in detail in Appendix 2.

Places that are assessed as having National heritage significance can be added to the Commonwealth Register of the National Estate, those of State significance to the Victorian Heritage Register. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria maintains a register of known Aboriginal sites, and Heritage Victoria lists all known historical archaeological sites on the Victorian Heritage Inventory. A heritage place can also be protected under a planning scheme administered by local government. The National Trust maintains a list of significant heritage places, and local historical societies will often have substantial knowledge about local heritage places.

Assessment of the significance of a heritage place can be complex and include a range of heritage values. The cultural heritage values of a site or place are broadly defined in the Burra Charter – the set of guidelines on cultural heritage management and practice prepared by Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) – as the ‘aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations’ (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992: 21). Various government agencies, including the Australian Heritage Commission and Heritage Victoria, have developed formal criteria for assessing heritage significance. These have been included at the end of this appendix and used in this report as applicable.

The primary criterion used to assess archaeological sites is *scientific* significance. This is based on the capacity of archaeological relics and sites to provide us with historical, cultural or social information. The following evaluation will assess the scientific significance of the archaeological sites recorded during this project. The **scientific significance assessment** methodology outlined below is based on scores for research potential (divided into site contents and site condition) and for representativeness. This system is refined and derived from Bowdler (1981) and Sullivan and Bowdler (1984).

A1.2 Criteria for significance assessment – archaeological sites

i) Scientific significance assessment: historical archaeological sites and Aboriginal artefact scatters and isolated artefacts

Scientific significance is assessed by examining the *research potential* and *representativeness* of archaeological sites.

Research potential is assessed by examining *site contents* and *site condition*. Site contents refers to all cultural materials and organic remains associated with human activity at a site. Site contents also refers to the site structure – the size of the site, the patterning of cultural materials within the site, the presence of any stratified deposits and the rarity of particular artefact types. As the site contents criterion is not applicable to scarred trees, the assessment of scarred trees is outlined separately below.

Site condition refers to the degree of disturbance to the contents of a site at the time it was recorded.

The *site contents* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 0 No cultural material remaining.
- 1 Site contains a small number (e.g. 0–10 artefacts) or limited range of cultural materials with no evident stratification.
- 2 Site contains:
 - (a) a larger number, but limited range of cultural materials; and/or
 - (b) some intact stratified deposit remains; and/or
 - (c) rare or unusual example(s) of a particular artefact type.
- 3 Site contains:
 - (a) a large number and diverse range of cultural materials; and/or
 - (b) largely intact stratified deposit; and/or
 - (c) surface spatial patterning of cultural materials that still reflect the way in which the cultural materials were deposited.

The *site condition* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 0 Site destroyed.
- 1 Site in a deteriorated condition with a high degree of disturbance; some cultural materials remaining.
- 2 Site in a fair to good condition, but with some disturbance.
- 3 Site in an excellent condition with little or no disturbance. For surface artefact scatters this may mean that the spatial patterning of cultural materials still reflects the way in which the cultural materials were laid down.

Representativeness refers to the regional distribution of a particular site type.

Representativeness is assessed by whether the site is *common*, *occasional*, or *rare* in a given region. Assessments of representativeness are subjectively biased by current knowledge of the distribution and number of archaeological sites in a region. This varies from place to place depending on the extent of archaeological research.

Consequently, a site that is assigned low significance values for contents and condition, but a high significance value for representativeness, can only be regarded as significant in terms of knowledge of the regional archaeology. Any such site should be subject to re-assessment as more archaeological research is undertaken.

Assessment of representativeness also takes into account the contents and condition of a site. For example, in any region there may only be a limited number of sites of any type that have suffered minimal disturbance. Such sites would therefore be given a high significance rating for representativeness, although they may occur commonly within the region.

The *representativeness* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 1 common occurrence
- 2 occasional occurrence
- 3 rare occurrence

Overall scientific significance ratings for sites, based on a cumulative score for site contents, site integrity and representativeness are:

- 1-3 low scientific significance
- 4-6 moderate scientific significance
- 7-9 high scientific significance

A1.3 Cultural Heritage Significance Assessment

Heritage Victoria is the State Government body responsible for protecting non-Aboriginal heritage places in Victoria, including gardens, buildings, shipwrecks and historical archaeological sites. Heritage Victoria administers the *Heritage Act 1995*, and has provided formal criteria for the assessment of cultural heritage significance. The application of these criteria will determine if a heritage place meets the threshold to be considered for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register.

Although most historical archaeological sites will have application to Criterion C, which addresses scientific value (discussed in detail above), several of the other criteria may still be applicable. On the basis of these criteria, heritage places are generally accorded a significance ranking of State, Local or none. Historical archaeological sites, as with other heritage places, can be considered for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register if they are considered to have State significance. It should be noted, however, that *all* historical archaeological sites are included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory and are accorded statutory protection, irrespective of their level of significance.

(Criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 March 1997 pursuant to Sections 8(c) and 8(2) of the Heritage Act 1995):

- CRITERION A.** The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.
- CRITERION B.** The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.
- CRITERION C.** The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.
- CRITERION D.** The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.
- CRITERION E.** The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.
- CRITERION F.** The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.
- CRITERION G.** The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

APPENDIX 2

A 2. STATUTORY REGULATIONS

i) Victorian cultural heritage legislation

The Heritage Act 1995 details statutory responsibilities for historic buildings and gardens, historic places and objects, historical archaeological sites, and historic shipwrecks. These responsibilities are set out in Part 1 of the Act, which states that one of the main purposes of the Act is to: ‘provide for the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage significance and the registration of such places and objects’. The Act is administered by Heritage Victoria, part of the Department of Infrastructure. The Act establishes the Heritage Council, a ten-member, independent statutory authority. The Heritage Council determines which heritage places are included on the Victorian Heritage Register and acts as an appeal body.

- The Victorian Heritage Register

The Victorian Heritage Register was established pursuant to Section 18 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. Heritage places included on the Heritage Register are places assessed as having cultural heritage significance at a State level. For a place to be added to the Victorian Heritage Register a nomination must be made to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will review nominations and make recommendations to the Heritage Council for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. All recommendations are advertised in a relevant newspaper and the owners or any party with a substantial interest in the heritage place or object can make a submission to the Heritage Council.

A permit may be required for particular works or activities in relation to a registered place or object. Permit applications must be submitted to the Executive Director who will consider the application and determine the matter.

Should the applicant or owner object to the decision of the Executive Director, an appeal can be made to the Heritage Council.

- The Heritage Inventory

The Heritage Inventory was established pursuant to Section 120 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. The Heritage Inventory includes historical archaeological sites, places and relics in Victoria, providing they are older than 50 years, and regardless of their level of cultural heritage significance.

A Consent will be required for particular works or activities, including excavation, in relation to an archaeological site. Under the Heritage Act it is an offence to damage or disturb relics and archaeological sites, whether or not they have been included on the Heritage Inventory, without obtaining the appropriate permission from the Executive Director.

Consents and Permits

Depending on whether a place/site is listed on the Heritage Register or the Heritage Inventory, any proposed works will require the submission of an application for either a *Permit* (Heritage Register) or a *Consent* (Heritage Inventory). If an archaeological site has been added to the Heritage Register, this will take precedence: a Permit will be required, but not a Consent. In summary:

- A Permit is required if the site is on the Heritage Register. The assessment of the Permit application will be guided by its heritage status as a site of State significance.
- A Consent is required if the site is on the Heritage Inventory (and not on the Heritage Register). The assessment of the Consent application will be guided by

the significance and integrity of the site.

Applications for Consents or Permits should be accompanied by a cheque for the prescribed fee. The cheque should be payable to the **Heritage Council**. The fees payable for particular classes of work are advised in Schedule 3 (Permits) or Schedule 5 (Consents) of *Heritage (General) Regulations 1996 (Statutory Rule No. 85/1996)*. The application should be made on the appropriate form and sent to:

Mr Ray Tonkin
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria
Level 22
Nauru House
80 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

General queries relating to either Consent or Permit applications can be directed to:

Permits Co-ordinator
Heritage Victoria
Level 22
Nauru House
80 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Ph: (03) 9655 6519
Fax: (03) 9655 9720

Consultation relating to the Heritage Inventory and to historical archaeological sites should be conducted with Heritage Victoria archaeology officers, contact details as above.

Consultation and discussion with Heritage Victoria should be initiated well before lodging an application for a Consent or Permit to disturb or destroy a historical archaeological site.

Additional Legislation

Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975

The Commonwealth Australian Heritage Commission Act established the Australian Heritage Commission and provides for protection of Aboriginal and historic cultural sites, and of natural sites of significance to Australians. The Australian Heritage Commission maintains the Register of the

National Estate (RNE), which lists significant sites of the natural and cultural environments, including heritage places that are important to Aboriginal, European and Asian cultures in Australia.

Any place that has been nominated and assessed as having cultural heritage significance at a National level can be added to the RNE. Places are assessed against formal criteria included in the Act in 1990. The general purpose of the register is to 'alert and educate all Australians to the existence of places of National Estate significance, and to provide an essential reference and a working tool for balancing conservation and development decisions' (Pearson and Sullivan 1995: 48–9). Protection under the Australian Heritage Commission Act is only enforceable, however, where the place in question is on Commonwealth property or is affected by actions of the Australian government. Listing on the RNE has no direct legal constraint on owners of private property, or on State or local governments.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Victorian Planning and Environment Act provides local governments with the power to implement heritage controls over significant buildings or places. Heritage and conservation areas and heritage places – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – can be identified and listed on a particular local planning scheme, and protected as places of heritage significance. A planning permit may be required from the local council if a place is subject to a heritage overlay control or is individually listed in the planning scheme. It is advisable to check with the relevant local council to determine if any additional permits are required.

Environment Effects Act 1978 and Amendment Act 1994

The Victorian Environment Effects Act may have relevance with certain projects as it requires some development proposals to be assessed for their possible impact on the environment. The definition of environment includes the cultural heritage of the project area.

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Maps, Plans and Photographs

- 1853 – Lady Bay, Warrnambool, by John Barrow:
- 1867 – Township of Warrnambool, County of Villiers, by Lands and Survey Office Melbourne:
- 1870 – Lady Bay and Warrnambool Harbour, by Nav. Lieut. H.J. Stanley:
- 1890 – Photograph of Warrnambool Woollen Mills Staff: (meat works in 1870s-80s?)
- 1918 –Lady Bay Warrnambool:
- Dec. 1923 – Plan of Warrnambool Harbour, by E. Masters:
- Jan 1948 – Aerial photo:
- December 1969 – Aerial photo:
- 1970 – Aerial photo:
- c1960 Plan of South Warrnambool (Warrnambool Water Works Trust?)