
Melbourne Glass Bottle Works (Former)



Melbourne Glass Bottle Works (former), Hobsons Bay Heritage Study 2006

Location

2-38 Hudson Road and Booker Street and Douglas Parade and Raleigh Street and Simcock Avenue
SPOTSWOOD, Hobsons Bay City

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO46

Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Melbourne Glass Bottle Works (former), comprising a complex of buildings constructed between 1880 and 1940, at Booker Street, Douglas Parade, 2-38 Hudson Road, Raleigh Street and Simcock Avenue, Spotswood.

How is it Significant?

The Melbourne Glass Bottle Works (former) is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it is significant as the oldest continuously operating industrial complex in the city and possibly the metropolitan area. The Melbourne Glass Bottle works was one of the first major industries to locate in the Spotswood area and the present complex illustrates the significant expansion of the company from the late nineteenth century to the present day. It illustrates how Spotswood grew to become one of the major industrial centres in Melbourne by the Interwar period. The complex is notable for its ability to illustrate changing technologies over a 100-year period and for elements such as the former Staff amenities buildings that illustrate facilities provided by major employers for workers in the Interwar period. (AHC criteria A4 and B2)

Aesthetically, the Moderne building facing Booker Street is significant as a rare example within the municipality of this building style. It demonstrates the forward and progressive nature of the company during the Interwar period. The Edwardian staff amenities block is also significant as an intact and well-resolved example of its style and type. (AHC criteria E1 and F1)

Heritage Study/Consultant Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;

Construction dates 1880,

Hermes Number 14976

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The Former Melbourne Glass Bottle Works complex (now Australian Consolidated Industries) occupies two large sites and a number of smaller sites in Booker Street, Hudsons Road and Simcock Avenue in Spotswood. Much of the extant built fabric dates from the interwar era, which was a significant period of expansion for the company (See History), however, there is some surviving earlier fabric as well. The following elements are located on the site to the east of Booker Street:

East side of Booker Street

A two and three level red brick building to Booker Street and Simcock Avenue, which appears to have been built in stages during the 1930s. The building facing Booker Street is typical of the late 1930s-1940s with its curved walls, Moderne styling, steel framed windows, decorative curving string courses, and glass bricks. A notable element is the centrally located multi-level section hovering over the siding entry, which housed the main canteen and is the architectural focus of the design with its horizontal window strips, semi-circular tripartite flag pole mountings and curved flanking walls. South of the main entrance, large steel framed saw tooth roof sections extend along Booker Street toward Hudsons Road. A later but similar addition to the main block extends to the north toward Simcock Avenue.) This block is in good to fair condition generally but shows cracks and damage to elements apparently due to brick growth. This could be controlled by introducing vertical expansion joints in the affected walls.

On the eastern perimeter of the site, facing Douglas Parade, is a bluestone rubble wall which predates much of the rest of the complex and is possibly all that is left of the nineteenth century works. About 5 years ago a substantial section at the north end collapsed, revealing the foundations and basement of the former boiler house. This structure had further bluestone walls set back from the Douglas Parade elevation, with red brick lined openings for windows and doors, all having been bricked in. The eastern or Douglas Parade wall of the boiler house also had such openings, but when the wall was reconstructed, the brick details were omitted, so now there is no external or visible evidence of the boiler house. However, this and possibly other foundations and basements of early buildings clearly survive beneath the fill used to level the yard behind the perimeter wall.

West side of Booker Street

The part of the complex on the west side of Booker Street comprises the former plastics plant and the current bottle manufacturing plant. Significant or early buildings on this site include:

- The early twentieth century timber and steel framed corrugated iron clad gabled stores (1920s) with gabled roof and ridge vents.
- The red brick timber framed former Moulded Plastics Building on the corner of Hudson Road and Booker Street. This has been partly altered by the addition of metal hording and tiling, and replacement of windows for the General Office.
- Part of the early glass-making plant in the centre west of Booker Street, which incorporates structures from the mid twentieth century including the brick chimney.

Other buildings and elements include:

- An Edwardian-era brick staff amenities building with associated Canary Island Palm on the north side of Simcock Avenue near Douglas Parade. This was once part of a complex of similarly scaled buildings seen in the 1945 aerial view, apparently connected with tennis courts and a refuge dug-out [M Jones, 2000].
- Two island gatehouses on opposite sides of Booker Street that show where the railway siding line once crossed between the two parts of the complex. These are designed in a Moderne manner and are presumably contemporary with the c.1930 Moderne wing on the east side east of Booker Street. The siding is also evident from the chamfered corners of flanking buildings west of Booker Street.
- Remnants of the railway siding are still evident in certain locations.

Physical Conditions

External Condition

Good (partially disturbed, well preserved) in part but the 1930s block which is in good to fair condition generally but shows cracks and damage to elements apparently due to brick growth. This could be controlled by introducing vertical expansion joints in the affected walls.

Integrity

External Integrity

The 1930s wing of the complex has a high integrity to its construction date but other sections of the complex have been changed over time, including even the stone wall which was reconstructed in recent times.

Historical Australian Themes

Manufacturing and Processing

Physical Description 2

Associations

Melbourne Glass Bottle Works Co Ltd, Australian Glass Manufacturers Ltd., Australian Consolidated Industries, Alfred Felton

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>