

Fitwear Hosiery Factory (former)



Hosiery Factory



Development Plan

Location

11 Thomas Street BRUNSWICK, MORELAND CITY

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO557

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 12, 2023

What is significant?

The 1912 and 1930s portions of 11 Thomas Street, Brunswick (otherwise known as 'Fitwear Hosiery Factory (former)'), fronting:

- Albert Street,
- the southern end of Thomas Street and
- the southern end of the western laneway,

are significant. The form and style of the elevations are significant as well as a saw tooth roof, sign above the Albert Street parapet which reads 'HOSIERY MILLS' and the metal and painted lettering on the parapet of the Thomas Street elevation which reads 'FITWARE HOSIERY MILLS'. The modern signage and interiors are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Fitwear Hosiery Factory (former) is of local historical, aesthetic and associative significance, and has rarity value, to the City of Moreland.

Why is it significant?

The Fitwear Hosiery Factory (former) is historically significant as one of the earliest textile factories in the City of Moreland, and one of very few established prior to the interwar years. It was then one of several textile manufacturing sites in the area during the interwar years when Brunswick and Coburg were at the centre of the Australian hosiery industry. The subject site was used for manufacturing purposes for over 100 years, with this function coming to an end in 2016. (Criterion A)

Fitwear Hosiery Factory (former) is rare as one of the earliest examples of textile factories in the City of Moreland, with elements of both 1912 and 1930s construction remaining. (Criterion B)

The front facade on Albert Street and the matching elevation on the southern end of Thomas Street has aesthetic significance as a 1930s building with key detailing relating to this era. (Criterion E)

The place was associated with Effren Yoffa of E. Yoffa Pty Ltd for 44 years before being purchased by Hilton Hosiery in 1956 who produced a large amount of Australia's hosiery wear in the mid-late twentieth century. (Criterion H)

Heritage Study/Consultant Moreland Heritage Nominations Study, Extent Heritage, 2022;

Construction dates 1912, 1930, 1956,

Architect/Designer Hudson & Wardrop,

Hermes Number 206823

Physical Description 1

The former Fitwear Hosiery Factory is a two-storey factory building, which occupies a large site and includes multiple types and phases of development, as shown in the site plan displaying the estimated construction dates of various sections of the subject site, below.

NOMINATED AREA - INCLUDE ON HO

Albert Street - Southern Elevation

Although the building is oriented to Thomas Street, the primary facade faces Albert Street and consists of three distinct portions. The left and right portion were built in 1912 and altered in 1930, and is now characterised by rendered brick with nine bays of nine-pane windows (across two floors) separated by protruding rendered brick columns. The central portion was built in 1930 to connect the buildings on either side, and is characterised by one pedestrian entry via terrazzo stairs, a large roller shutter door, three metal mid-late twentieth century business signs for 'Lorraine' fitware, painted brickwork laid in a lattice style, aluminium windows and a cast iron building sign above the parapet which reads 'HOSIERY MILLS'. An arched entrance via rendered brick stairs is located at the centre of the facade, notably in the same location as the entrance on the original building.

Thomas Street - Eastern Elevation

The character of front facade is replicated on the southern end of the eastern elevation. It also includes large metal lettering to the parapet which states 'FITWEAR' and painted lettering which states 'HOSIERY MILLS'.

The remainder of the elevation moving north from this location is characterised by unpainted machine made brick and reinforced concrete bays, including 32-pane windows to the upper facade and loading bays, carparks, 8-pane windows and roller doors to the lower facade. There is one feature section along this elevation which includes cream brick laid in a lattice pattern. It is likely that this portion of the building relates to the Hilton Hosiery era.

Laneway - Western Elevation (southern end)

The southern end of the western elevation forms part of the earliest wave of construction on site, and is characterised by face brick and bays of nine-pane windows (to both floors). Moving north from here, there is another early section of the factory building which is characterised by face brick, bays of nine-pane windows (to both floors), concrete lintels above windows and doors, and a sawtooth roof.

OTHER AREAS - NOT INCLUDED IN HO

Laneway - Western Elevation (northern end)

The final section of this elevation is the northernmost part before Lobb Street which is characterised by single-storey red brick building with a corrugated iron roof. It is likely that this was built in the 1960s/70s based on the brickwork.

Laneway (off Thomas Street) - Northern Elevation

The northern elevation along a laneway which runs west off Thomas Street forms the same building as the majority of the eastern elevation and therefore has the same characteristics.

Howarth Street - Northern Elevation

The northern elevation along Howarth Street forms part of a late twentieth century cream brick building with nine-pane windows.

Interior

The interior is largely characterised by reinforced concrete, painted brick and a large amount of services hung from the ceiling. There was no historic factory equipment evident.

The factory is set within a primarily residential area, though its size and visual dominance creates an industrial feel for the immediate area.

The site in general is in fair condition, though there are several areas in poor condition. There is some spalling and corrosion to the cast iron signage on Albert Street, many windows have been smashed, and there is poor drainage throughout, leading to evident rising damp in a good portion of the original brickwork and reinforced concrete lintels.

Integrity

- Interior of western elevation bricked in*
- Demolition of 1912 cottage between the two original buildings
- Alteration of original 1912 facades, to include a new central building and removal of parapet detailing. Refer to historic sketch in 'Additional Images'
- Several large extensions to the north throughout the twentieth century
- Addition of new signage and accretions such as services

The subject site has undergone a range of alterations and additions from its original construction, as well as substantial replacement works from a large fire. It is considered to have low integrity as a result.

* Denotes element that detracts from the cultural significance of the place.

Physical Conditions

The site in general is in fair condition, though there are several areas in poor condition. There is some spalling and corrosion to the cast iron signage on Albert Street, many windows have been smashed, and there is poor drainage throughout, leading to evident rising damp in a good portion of the original brickwork and reinforced concrete lintels.

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/>