

George Weston Foods
24-78 Laurens Street, West Melbourne



Expert Witness Statement to Panel
Amendment C207 to the Melbourne Planning Scheme

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Prepared under instructions from Herbert Smith Freehills

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1.0 Introduction

This statement of evidence was commissioned on behalf of the owners of 24-78 Laurens Street, West Melbourne. I have been asked to comment on the proposal to include the site within the adjoining heritage overlay under Amendment C207 to the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

This statement addresses the significance of the existing buildings on the site and the appropriateness of their inclusion in the heritage overlay schedule to the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

The statement has been prepared with assistance from Guy Murphy of my office. The views expressed are my own.

2.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon a site visit and external and internal inspections. It references two citations relating to the subject site included in the *Arden Macaulay Heritage Review 2012* by Graeme Butler & Associates. It also draws on relevant heritage studies, the City of Melbourne's *i-Heritage Database* and the *Heritage Places Inventory*, which is an incorporated document to the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* and *Urban Conservation Areas: Guidelines for Owners North Melbourne* by the City of Melbourne. Historic MMBW plans and aerial photographs were also referenced.

3.0 Author Qualifications

A statement of my qualifications and experience with respect to urban conservation issues is appended to this report. Note that I have provided expert witness evidence on similar matters before the VCAT, Heritage Council, Planning Panels Victoria and the Building Appeals Board on numerous occasions in the past, and have been retained in such matters variously by municipal councils, developers and objectors to planning proposals.

4.0 Summary of views

My views on the heritage overlay proposed for the site can be summarised as follows.

- The subject site is of sufficient historical and architectural significance to warrant a heritage overlay as is proposed under Amendment C207.
- However, not all elements on the site warrant retention and conservation into the long term. For example, the retention and adaptive reuse and redevelopment of elements of ‘contributory’ significance, as identified in this report, is encouraged but not essential.
- It would be appropriate to amend the citation and/or statement of significance to reflect the fact that buildings of ‘contributory’ significance, as identified in this report, may be demolished.
- It is recommended that an Incorporated Plan be adopted and gazetted that provides clear guidance as to how the site should be managed into the future. A draft Incorporated Plan has been prepared in consultation with Council and is attached to this statement for consideration by the Panel.

5.0 Declaration

I declare that I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.



BRYCE RAWORTH

6.0 Listings and Controls

City of Melbourne

The site is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control, though is located immediately adjacent to an existing overlay over 3-31 Anderson Street (HO455) to the south. As noted above, Council proposes to extend HO455 to include the subject site as part of Amendment C207 to the Melbourne Planning Scheme. (The enlarged overlay would be known as the North and West Melbourne Biscuit Making Precinct). The proposed enlarge overlay would cover all of the subject site. External paint controls would apply under this overlay, but not internal alteration or tree controls.

There are no citations for the site in the City of Melbourne’s *i-Heritage Database*. The *Heritage Places Inventory* includes several entries. 24-78 Laurens Street (Weston Milling, former NB Love Flour Mills) was graded “B” in a Level 3 streetscape, while ‘Store 1 & 2 – Weston Milling’ were graded “D” in a Level 3 streetscape. (These gradings appear to have been drawing from an earlier publication, *Urban Conservation Areas: Guidelines for Owners North Melbourne*.)

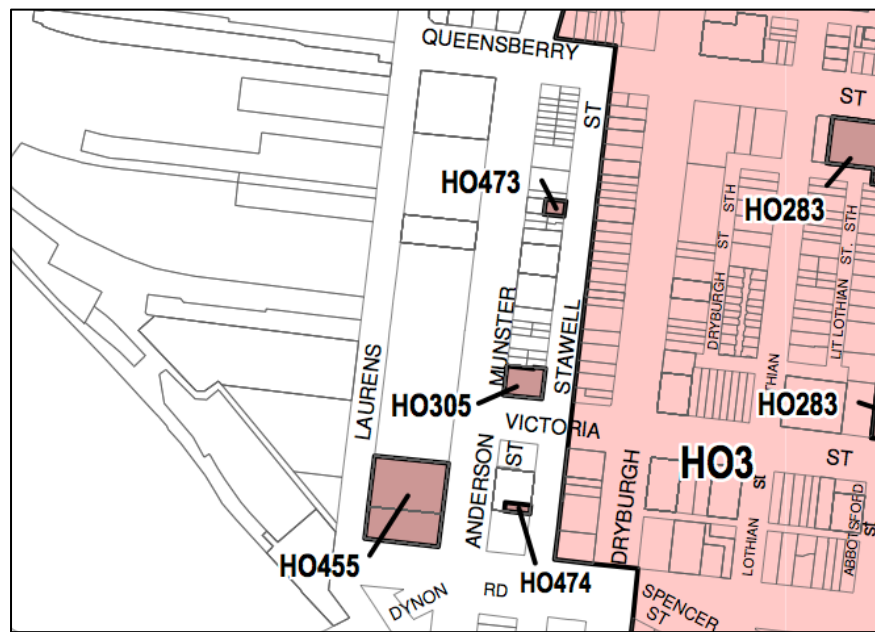


Figure 1 The current extent of HO455 encompasses 3-21 Anderson Street immediately south of the subject site.

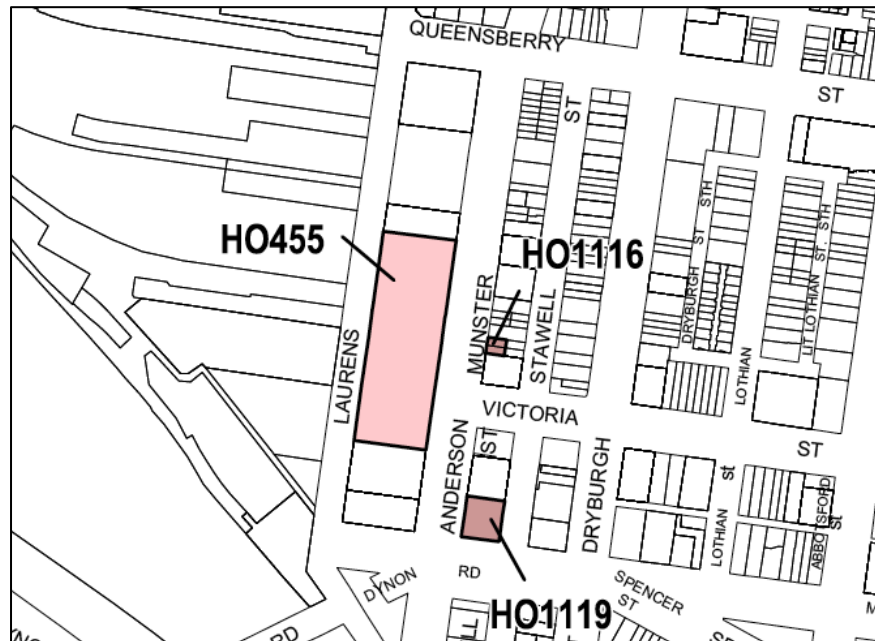


Figure 2 Extent of the area proposed for addition to HO455 (covering the subject site) as proposed by Amendment C207. The enlarged precinct would be known as the North and West Melbourne Biscuit Making Precinct

Heritage Victoria

The subject site is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

The subject site is not included on the Register of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Australian Heritage Council

The subject site is not included on the Commonwealth Heritage List nor is it on the National Heritage List. Neither was the site listed on the Register of the National Estate (this register has been discontinued).

7.0

Description

The subject site is located on a long, relatively narrow street block bounded by Miller Street to the south, Laurens Street to the west, Queensberry Street to the north and Munster Terrace and Anderson Street to the east. It is proposed to add a rectangular portion of land to the existing overlay located at the southern end of this block. This additional area of land extends only partly across the balance of the wider block, leaving an area at the northern end outside the proposed overlay. In topography, the subject land slopes gently downhill in a southerly direction, and more steeply downhill in a westerly direction, so that between Munster Terrace and Laurens Street there is a fall in elevation of over a storey in height.

The site contains a series of substantial red brick industrial buildings varying between one and five storeys height, dating from the late nineteenth century to more recent times. At the northern end of the Munster Terrace frontage are large concrete silos, which form a local landmark. Each of these constituent elements is identified as shown in the following photographs and as mapped and numbered in Figure 3 further below.



Figure 3 Annotated aerial view of the site showing building numbering.

Each building on the site is described and assessed individually below.

Building 1

Figure 4 Laurens Street elevation.



Figure 5 Anderson Street elevation.

Description

This relatively plain red brick factory/warehouse appears to date from the interwar to WWII period, with some recent remodelling of the Laurens Street facade and an apparently modern blank wall to Anderson Street.

The red brick Laurens Street elevation reads as double-storey, possibly interwar or postwar wall. It is heavily modified, with more recent modification in the c.1980s include partial rendering, new parapet capping and the insertion of new window fittings, including the post-modern ‘Serlian window’ treatment. These changes visually link the elevation to that of the adjacent Building 8. The roof form [concealed] comprises three pitched roof bays. The Anderson Street elevation is a blank double storey height brick wall with seemingly modern expansion joints, the only opening being a single pedestrian entry door. It has no detailing that suggests it is from an early period in the development of the site.

Significance

This structure is of relatively low contributory significance as a large, modified interwar to post-WWII period building that relates to the broader site’s industrial history and use and its red brick character, but is not of note in terms of visible

fabric. It appears to largely post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area.

Policy

It is encouraged, but not essential, that this structure be retained to the extent of fabric visible from the street. The concealed fabric behind makes no contribution to the heritage values of the complex and broader area.

Building 2 - T.B. Guest



Figure 6 Munster Terrace elevation.

Description

This red brick warehouse/factory dates from the early twentieth century. It presents a three-storey elevation to Munster Terrace, with an additional basement level. The Munster Terrace facade presents a row of ten regularly spaced windows at the first and second storeys, with some alteration to the pattern of windows and doorways at ground level. The parapet may have originally contained early signage that has now been replaced with modern lettering. The corrugated iron clad roof comprised two hipped bays and is concealed from street view by parapets.

Significance

This structure is of primary significance as a substantial, highly externally intact early twentieth century industrial building historically associated with key activities and occupants of the site as identified in the statement of significance. It makes a notable contribution to the streetscape and to the precinct.

Policy

This building should be retained and restored to the extent of its externally visible fabric.

Building 3



Figure 7 Laurens Street facade.



Figure 8 Munster Terrace elevation.

Description

This warehouse/factory is a composite structure. Some elements facing onto Laurens Street date from the early twentieth century, with the balance dating from the interwar period or later.

The Laurens Street elevation comprises three double height gabled brick elements. There has been considerable modification to their original openings,

with some openings bricked in, particularly on the southern gable element, and large vehicle entry doors inserted into the northern two bays. The upper gables feature circular windows with cream brick surrounds. The brickwork is partially painted, obscuring the polychrome character of the northern gables. The gables architecturally relate to the gabled Laurens Street elevation of Building 7.

A modern multistorey tower or silo element, externally clad with steel sheeting, and with six silos behind, has been inserted into the centre of the building at a small setback from the street. Two silos are also located at the north east portion of the site. The silos are of historical interest as components of the complex, but are not the largest or most prominent silos on the site, and their date of construction is not established but seems likely to be relatively recent.

The Munster Terrace frontage comprises an early section of single storey red brick wall on its south side, with a two-storey gabled facade on the north side. The lower wall appears to date from c. 1920 or earlier. The gabled structure is utilitarian in character and appears to date from the late interwar or postwar period. It has metal-framed factory windows and a double height vehicle entry with a roller door. The openings have concrete lintels. Signage has been painted onto the facade at cornice height.

Significance

The three gabled facades facing onto Laurens Street to the west are of primary significance as elements reflecting the earlier periods of development of the site that make an important contribution to the streetscape.

The Munster Street wall and gabled factory form are of contributory significance as fabric that relates to the broader site's industrial use and red brick character, but are otherwise not of particular note. This being said, if it can be demonstrated that they date from the period prior to WW11, they might be considered of primary significance.

Policy

The three gabled Laurens Street facades should be retained and restored to the extent of its external street fabric.

It is encouraged, but not essential, that the balance of this structure be retained to the extent of its brick fabric visible from the street. Greater weight might be given to retention of the Munster Street wall and factory building if these can be shown to pre-date WW11.

The silos appear to post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area, and their retention is not considered essential.

Building 4 – Thomas Brunton (later Loves)



Figure 9 Munster Terrace elevation, with the adjacent silos (Building 5) visible at right.



Figure 10 Laurens Street elevation of the same building, the additional levels reflecting the change in in level between Laurens Street and Munster Terrace.

Description

This large late-nineteenth century red brick century factory/warehouse extends across the full width of the site. It presents an intact three-storey elevation to Munster Terrace featuring cream brick quoins and string-courses, with a rendered parapet. The original configuration of arched window and door openings appears largely intact, except the insertion of a large square window at ground and first floor windows.

The Laurens Street facade is a more impressive five storeys in height. It has a similar red brick treatment with cream brick detailing. The original configuration of four arched window openings remains intact at each level.

Significance

This structure is of primary significance as a substantial, highly externally intact nineteenth century industrial building historically associated with key activities and occupants of the site as identified in the statement of significance. It makes a notable contribution to the streetscape and to the precinct.

Policy

This building should be retained and restored to the extent of its externally visible fabric.

Building 5

Figure 11 The silos as seen from Munster Terrace.

Description

These concrete silos appear in a 1945 aerial image of the site, and are believed to date from the later interwar or WW2 period. A local landmark, they are the

highest element on the site. Constructed of cast concrete, they comprise two attached rows of five individual silos capped by signage.

Significance

The silos are of contributory significance as a prominent element dating from the c.1930s-40s that demonstrates an association with flour milling. They form a local landmark. They are not believed to be of particular technological note.

Policy

Given the potential issues associated with the retention and adaptive reuse of such structures, it is encouraged, but not essential, that these silos be retained to the extent of their external visible fabric.

Building 6



Figure 12 View from Laurens Street, with the silos (Building 5) in the background.

Description

The simple, utilitarian office or service building dates from the c.1970s and is of a conventional modern design for the period, its walls being finished with painted render.

Significance

This building, while part of the historical evolution of the site, is of very limited contributory significance on account of its modern origin and lack of architectural distinction.

Policy

This building may be retained or removed as required.

Building 7

Figure 13 The Laurens Street facade.

Description

This factory/store dates from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The Laurens Street elevation comprises a double storey height gabled red brick face with cream brick parapet line and surround to the circular gable window. There has been some modification to the original arrangement of openings at the lower level, with an additional modification to the northern end of the parapet.

Significance

The gabled facade facing onto Laurens Street to the west is of primary significance as elements reflecting the earlier periods of development of the site that make an important contribution to the streetscape. It architecturally relates to the other gables bays to Building 3 facing Laurens Street south of Building 4. The balance of the building is of contributory significance on account of its limited visibility from the street.

Policy

This building should be retained and restored to the extent of its externally visible fabric.

Building 8

Figure 14 The facade of Building 8, which has been incorporated with the facade to the adjacent Building 1 to the south.

Description

This plain red brick factory/warehouse dates from the late interwar to post-WWII period, with more recent remodelling of the Laurens Street facade, which links it to the Laurens Street facade of Building 1. This remodelling is particularly evident in the detailing of the parapet. The building presents a similar double height brick facade, with modifications including changes to windows and vehicle entry openings and the c.1980s cosmetic changes. The [concealed] roof is sawtooth in form.

Significance

This structure is of contributory significance as a large, modified and relatively late building that relates to the broader site's industrial use and red brick character, but is not of particular individual note.

Policy

It is encouraged, but not essential, that this structure be retained to the extent of fabric visible from the street. It appears to largely post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area.

8.0 Significant Fabric

As noted, the subject site comprises a series of structures of varying design, scale and age with frontages onto both Anderson Street and Munster Terrace to the east, and Laurens Street to the west. Accepting that all buildings relate to the industrial activities historically undertaken on the site and have some degree of significance, a distinction may be made between elements which are of primary significance, and those of contributory significance.

Primary Significance

Elements of primary significance are those that contribute in a fundamental way to an understanding of the cultural significance of the building and are predominantly intact in form and fabric to a significant phase of the development of the complex and the broader area, ie the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These elements should be retained and restored to the extent of their externally visible elevations.

They may also be adaptively reused in a manner commensurate with the many other factory conversions that have taken place in Melbourne in recent decades, and have the potential or additional storeys if well designed.

Elements of primary significance consist of:

- Building 2
- Building 4
- Facade of Building 3
- Facade of Building 7

Contributory Significance

Elements of contributory significance are of a secondary nature in understanding the overall significance of the site. While they contribute to understanding the history and significance of the place, they are not of individual distinction with regard to the original plan form, fabric or function. They generally appear to post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area.

It is encouraged, but not essential, that they be retained to the extent of the fabric visible from the street.

Elements of contributory significance consist of:

- Building 1
- Building 3 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)
- Building 5
- Building 6
- Building 7 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)
- Building 8



Figure 15 Annotated aerial view of the subject site (outlined in dotted blue). Elements of primary significance (shaded red) should be retained in any future development. The balance of the site (shaded blue) is of contributory significance, and some degree of retention is considered desirable but not mandatory.

9.0 Statements of Significance

The two citations prepared by Graeme Butler firstly assess the significance of the Thomas Brunton & Co flour mill complex at 24-78 Laurens Street in its own right, then provide an overall assessment of the enlarged heritage overlay area incorporating the existing precinct to the south, identifying this enlarged precinct as the ‘North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct’. The former citation includes the following statement of significance for the Thomas Brunton & Co flour mill complex, which includes a useful historical overview of the site.

How is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant historically and aesthetically to North Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant

Historically for its association with this important flour milling and biscuit precinct as well as the nationally known figure of Thomas Brunton. As part of the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct commenced in the 1870s and still operating, the Brunton complex is sited close to key railway sidings where wheat shipments arrived from the north. This complex is a key part of a precinct that, when combined with that of nearby Kensington, is Victoria's biggest ever flour milling and biscuit manufacturing complex in terms of built site coverage and output. The three millers in this part of Kensington and North and West Melbourne, being Kimpton, Gillespie and Brunton, are credited with the introduction of modern roller flour milling in Victoria, a move which led to the development of the export flour trade as one of Australia's major exports. The buildings making up the precinct are landmarks within the local area and highly representative of the special role played by North & West Melbourne in rural produce and Victorian era industrial development within the State (Criterion A).

Aesthetically the complex has well-preserved, well designed and dominant buildings within the environs and precinct, aligning with the later TB Guest Buildings in scale and materials and providing part of the kaleidoscope of architectural styles as applied from the mid to the late Victorian-era to large scale industrial designs. Elements making up the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct are remarkably well preserved as presented to the street and thus parallel with the rare industrial complexes such as at the Geelong waterfront and in terms of architectural cohesion they surpass Geelong, although they do not possess the breadth of historical development. Each building described has architectural pretensions (being generally from the Italian Renaissance), by their symmetrically fenestrated and parapeted form. Although from different owners, the major buildings have similarities which allow them to act as a streetscape as well as an identifiable complex. The precinct is of State significance as an unusually original and architecturally competent and cohesive 19th century industrial complex (Criterion E).

The citation for the enlarged precinct HO455 (also known as the ‘North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling Precinct’) is as follows.

How is it significant?

North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct is locally significant aesthetically and historically, with potential State significance.

Why is it significant?

Aesthetically, the contributory elements of the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct are remarkably well preserved as presented to the street and thus parallel with the rare industrial complexes such as those at the Geelong waterfront. In terms of architectural cohesion they surpass Geelong although they do not possess the

breadth of historical development. Each building described has high architectural pretensions (being generally inspired by Italian Renaissance revival) as seen in their shared symmetrically fenestrated and parapeted form. Although from different owners, the major buildings in the complex have similarities which allow them to act as a strong streetscape as well as an identifiable complex. The precinct is of State significance as an unusually original and architecturally competent and cohesive 19th and early 20th century industrial complex (criterion A).

Historically, the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct commenced in form and in product type in the 1870s and still operates, in kind, today: being sited close to key railway sidings where wheat shipments arrived from the north. The precinct, when combined with that of nearby Kensington, is Victoria's biggest ever flour milling and biscuit manufacturing complex in terms of built site coverage and output and the second oldest after, Swallow and Ariell in Port Melbourne (1854-) which has since been redeveloped. The buildings making up the precinct are landmarks within the local area and highly representative of the special role played by North & West Melbourne in the handling and marketing of rural produce and Victorian-era industrial development within the State (criterion E).

This complex has been the subject of a number of publications and press reports over time as an indication of its worth to community (criterion G).

The three millers in this part of Kensington and North and West Melbourne, being Kimpton, Gillespie and Brunton, are credited with the introduction of modern roller flour milling in Victoria, a move which led to the development of the export flour trade as one of Australia's major exports (criterion H);

It is accepted that the proposed enlarged precinct is of historical and architectural significance. However it should be acknowledged that individual structures within the proposed precinct and within the Thomas Brunton & Co Flour Mill complex are of varying degrees of significance, with some of high importance on account of their architectural character, age and intactness, while others are of relatively low significance on account of being modified or of modern origin. The architectural and aesthetic significance of the precinct derives from the contribution the more significant elements within the precinct make to the adjacent streetscapes.

It is noted that only the exteriors of buildings were identified as warranting a heritage control.

It is also noted that the primary emphasis of the citation is upon the nineteenth and early twentieth century factory buildings. This is reasonable, and it is for that reason that emphasis is placed below on the retention of nineteenth century and early twentieth century fabric, with fabric dating from the period after WW11 generally seen to be of lesser interest.

It would be appropriate to amend the citation and/or statement of significance to reflect the fact that buildings of 'contributory' significance, as identified in this report, may be demolished.

In addition, the following changes are suggested for the statements of significance.

The statement of significance for 24-78 Lauren Street, including my suggested

amendments, is as follow:

How is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant historically and aesthetically to North Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant

Historically for its association with this important flour milling and biscuit precinct as well as the nationally known figure of Thomas Brunton. As part of the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct commenced in the 1870s and still operating, the Brunton complex is sited close to key railway sidings where wheat shipments arrived from the north. This complex is a key part of a precinct that, when combined with that of nearby Kensington, is Victoria's biggest ever flour milling and biscuit manufacturing complex in terms of built site coverage and output. The three millers in this part of Kensington and North and West Melbourne, being Kümpton, Gillespie and Brunton, are credited with the introduction of modern roller flour milling in Victoria, a move which led to the development of the export flour trade as one of Australia's major exports. ~~The~~ ~~Some~~ ~~buildings~~ ~~making~~ ~~up~~ ~~within~~ the precinct are landmarks within the local area and highly representative of the special role played by North & West Melbourne in rural produce and Victorian era industrial development within the State (Criterion A).

Aesthetically the complex ~~has~~ ~~includes~~ well-preserved, well designed and dominant buildings within the environs and precinct, aligning with the later TB Guest Buildings in scale and materials and providing part of the kaleidoscope of architectural styles as applied from the mid to the late Victorian-era to large scale industrial designs. Buildings of primary significance within ~~Elements~~ ~~making~~ ~~up~~ the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct are remarkably well preserved as presented to the street and thus parallel with the rare industrial complexes such as at the Geelong waterfront and in terms of architectural cohesion they surpass Geelong, although they do not possess the breadth of historical development. ~~Each~~ ~~building~~ ~~described~~ ~~has~~ Buildings of primary significance ~~have~~ architectural pretensions (being generally from the Italian Renaissance), by their symmetrically fenestrated and parapeted form. Although from different owners, the major buildings have similarities which allow them to act as a streetscape as well as an identifiable complex. The precinct is of State significance as an unusually original and architecturally competent and cohesive 19th century industrial complex (Criterion E).

Elements of primary significance consist of:

- *Building 2*
- *Building 4*
- *Facade of Building 3*
- *Facade of Building 7*

The citation for the enlarged precinct HO455 (also known as the 'North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling Precinct') including my suggested amendments is as follows.

How is it significant?

North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct is locally significant aesthetically and historically, with potential State significance.

Why is it significant?

Aesthetically, ~~the~~ ~~contributory~~ ~~some~~ ~~elements~~ ~~of~~ ~~greater~~ ~~significance~~ of the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct are remarkably well preserved as presented to the street and thus parallel with the rare industrial complexes such as those at the Geelong waterfront. In terms of architectural cohesion they surpass Geelong although they do not possess the breadth of historical development. ~~Each~~ ~~building~~ ~~described~~ ~~has~~ ~~The~~ ~~major~~ ~~buildings~~ ~~have~~ high architectural pretensions (being generally inspired by Italian

Renaissance revival) as seen in their shared symmetrically fenestrated and parapeted form. Although from different owners, the major buildings in the complex have similarities which allow them to act as a strong streetscape as well as an identifiable complex. The precinct is of State significance as an unusually original and architecturally competent and cohesive 19th and early 20th century industrial complex (criterion A).

Historically, the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct commenced in form and in product type in the 1870s and still operates, in kind, today: being sited close to key railway sidings where wheat shipments arrived from the north. The precinct, when combined with that of nearby Kensington, is Victoria's biggest ever flour milling and biscuit manufacturing complex in terms of built site coverage and output and the second oldest after, Swallow and Ariell in Port Melbourne (1854-) which has since been redeveloped. ~~The~~ Some buildings making up the precinct are landmarks within the local area and highly representative of the special role played by North & West Melbourne in the handling and marketing of rural produce and Victorian-era industrial development within the State (criterion E).

This complex has been the subject of a number of publications and press reports over time as an indication of its worth to community (criterion G).

The three millers in this part of Kensington and North and West Melbourne, being Kimpton, Gillespie and Brunton, are credited with the introduction of modern roller flour milling in Victoria, a move which led to the development of the export flour trade as one of Australia's major exports (criterion H).

10.0 Draft Incorporated Plan

It is accepted that the subject site as whole is of sufficient historical and architectural significance to warrant a heritage overlay. However the site contains elements which are variously of high significance and low significance, and on this basis it is suggested that an Incorporated Plan be adopted and gazetted that provides clear guidance as to how the site should be managed into the future. A draft Incorporated Plan has been prepared in consultation with Council and is attached to this statement for consideration by the Panel.

The draft Incorporated Plan notes that while elements of 'contributory' significance contribute to an understanding of the history and significance of the place, they are not of individual distinction with regard to the original plan form, fabric or function, and they generally appear to post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area. It is encouraged, but not essential, that they be retained to the extent of the fabric visible from the street, but they may be demolished subject to permit.

3-21 Anderson Street & 24-78 Laurens Street
WEST MELBOURNE

Incorporated Plan

November 2013

Draft for review purposes only

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3-21 Anderson Street & 24-78 Laurens Street
WEST MELBOURNE
INCORPORATED PLAN

November 2013

1.0 Introduction

The buildings at 3-21 Anderson Street and 24-78 Laurens Street (also known as 1-25 Munster Terrace), West Melbourne are of historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne and have been included within the Heritage Overlay (as discussed below) on that basis. The purpose of this incorporated plan is to recognise the significance of the site and establish a framework to allow for its on-going use and potential redevelopment in a manner that retains its significant heritage qualities.

This incorporated plan is prepared for the purpose of *Clause 43.01* of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* to exempt certain development, including demolition of some elements, from the requirement for a permit under the provisions of *Clause 43.01* of the Scheme.

This plan is incorporated in the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* under *Clause 43.01* Heritage Overlay and *Clause 81* Incorporated Documents

2.0 The Site

This incorporated plan relates to part of the long, relatively narrow street block bounded by Miller Street to the south, Laurens Street to the west, Queensberry Street to the north and Munster Terrace and Anderson Street to the east. More particularly, it relates to the extent of mapping of this land encompassing 3-21 Anderson Street and 24-78 Laurens Street within the enlarged 'North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling Precinct' (HO455).

The site contains a series of substantial red brick industrial buildings varying between one and five storeys height, dating from the late nineteenth century to more recent times. At the northern end of the Munster Terrace frontage are large concrete silos, which form a local landmark. Each of these constituent elements is identified as shown in the following photographs and as mapped and numbered in Figure 1 further below.



Figure 1 Annotated aerial view of the site showing building numbering.

This land contains a complex of structures of varying design, scale and age, with varying degrees of visibility from the street. These structures are identified by numbers 1-8 in the annotated aerial image above. A description of each of these buildings is given as follows.

Building 1*Laurens Street elevation**Anderson Street elevation*

This relatively plain red brick factory/warehouse appears to date from the interwar to WWII period, with some recent remodelling of the Laurens Street facade and an apparently modern blank wall to Anderson Street.

The red brick Laurens Street elevation reads as double-storey, possibly interwar or postwar wall. It is heavily modified, with more recent modification in the c.1980s include partial rendering, new parapet capping and the insertion of new window fittings, including the post-modern ‘Serlian window’ treatment. These changes visually link the elevation to that of the adjacent Building 8. The roof form [concealed] comprises three pitched roof bays. The Anderson Street elevation is a blank double storey height brick wall with seemingly modern expansion joints, the only opening being a single pedestrian entry door. It has no detailing that suggests it is from an early period in the development of the site.

Building 2*Munster Terrace elevation*

This red brick warehouse/factory dates from the early twentieth century. It presents a three-storey elevation to Munster Terrace, with an additional basement level. The Munster Terrace facade presents a row of ten regularly spaced windows at the first and second storeys, with some alteration to the pattern of windows and doorways at ground level. The parapet may have originally contained early signage that has now been replaced with modern lettering. The corrugated iron clad roof comprised two hipped bays and is concealed from street view by parapets.

Building 3*Laurens Street elevation**Munster Terrace elevation*

This warehouse/factory is a composite structure. Some elements facing onto Laurens Street date from the early twentieth century, with the balance dating from the interwar period or later.

The Laurens Street elevation comprises three double height gabled brick elements. There has been considerable modification to their original openings, with some openings bricked in, particularly on the southern gable element, and large vehicle entry doors inserted into the northern two bays. The upper gables feature circular windows with cream brick surrounds. The brickwork is partially painted, obscuring the polychrome character of the northern gables. The gables architecturally relate to the gabled Laurens Street elevation of Building 7.

A modern multistorey tower or silo element, externally clad with steel sheeting, and with six silos behind, has been inserted into the centre of the building at a small setback from the street. Two silos are also located at the north east portion of the site. The silos are of historical interest as components of the complex, but are not the largest or most prominent silos on the site, and their date of construction is not established but seems likely to be relatively recent.

The Munster Terrace frontage comprises an early section of single storey red brick wall on its south side, with a two-storey gabled facade on the north side. The lower wall appears to date from c. 1920 or earlier. The gabled structure is utilitarian in character and appears to date from the late interwar or postwar period. It has metal-framed factory windows and a double height vehicle entry with a roller door. The openings have concrete lintels. Signage has been painted onto the facade at cornice height.

Building 4



Laurens Street elevation



Munster Terrace elevation

This large late-nineteenth century red brick factory/warehouse extends across the full width of the site. It presents an intact three-storey elevation to Munster Terrace featuring cream brick quoins and string-courses, with a rendered parapet. The original configuration of arched window and door openings appears largely intact, except the insertion of a large square window at ground and first floor windows.

The Laurens Street facade is a more impressive five storeys in height. It has a similar red brick treatment with cream brick detailing. The original configuration of four arched window openings remains intact at each level.

Building 5



These concrete silos appear in a 1945 aerial image of the site, and are believed to date from the later interwar or WW2 period. A local landmark, they are the highest element on the site. Constructed of cast concrete, they comprise two attached rows of five individual silos capped by signage.

Building 6

The simple, utilitarian office or service building dates from the c.1970s and is of a conventional modern design for the period, its walls being finished with painted render.

Building 7

This factory/store dates from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The Laurens Street elevation comprises a double storey height gabled red brick face with cream brick parapet line and surround to the circular gable window. There has been some modification to the original arrangement of openings at the lower level, with an additional modification to the northern end of the parapet.

Building 8

This plain red brick factory/warehouse dates from the late interwar to post-WWII period, with more recent remodelling of the Laurens Street facade, which links it to the Laurens Street facade of Building 1. This remodelling is particularly

evident in the detailing of the parapet. The building presents a similar double height brick facade, with modifications including changes to windows and vehicle entry openings and the c.1980s cosmetic changes. The [concealed] roof is sawtooth in form.

3.0 Statement of Significance

The statement of significance for the site in Council's citation is as follows.

(This should be amended in accordance with the recommendations in my statement of evidence)

How is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant historically and aesthetically to North Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The Thomas Brunton & Company Australian Flour Mill is significant

Historically for its association with this important flour milling and biscuit precinct as well as the nationally known figure of Thomas Brunton. As part of the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct commenced in the 1870s and still operating, the Brunton complex is sited close to key railway sidings where wheat shipments arrived from the north. This complex is a key part of a precinct that, when combined with that of nearby Kensington, is Victoria's biggest ever flour milling and biscuit manufacturing complex in terms of built site coverage and output. The three millers in this part of Kensington and North and West Melbourne, being Kimplon, Gillespie and Brunton, are credited with the introduction of modern roller flour milling in Victoria, a move which led to the development of the export flour trade as one of Australia's major exports. The buildings making up the precinct are landmarks within the local area and highly representative of the special role played by North & West Melbourne in rural produce and Victorian era industrial development within the State (Criterion A).

Aesthetically the complex has well-preserved, well designed and dominant buildings within the environs and precinct, aligning with the later TB Guest Buildings in scale and materials and providing part of the kaleidoscope of architectural styles as applied from the mid to the late Victorian-era to large scale industrial designs. Elements making up the North & West Melbourne Biscuit Making & Flour Milling precinct are remarkably well preserved as presented to the street and thus parallel with the rare industrial complexes such as at the Geelong waterfront and in terms of architectural cohesion they surpass Geelong, although they do not possess the breadth of historical development. Each building described has architectural pretensions (being generally from the Italian Renaissance), by their symmetrically fenestrated and parapeted form. Although from different owners, the major buildings have similarities which allow them to act as a streetscape as well as an identifiable complex. The precinct is of State significance as an unusually original and architecturally competent and cohesive 19th century industrial complex (Criterion E).

As noted, the subject site comprises a series of structures of varying design, scale

and age with frontages onto both Anderson Street and Munster Terrace to the east, and Laurens Street to the west. Accepting that all buildings relate to the industrial activities historically undertaken on the site and have some degree of significance, a distinction may be made between elements which are of primary significance, and those of contributory significance.

Primary Significance

Elements of primary significance are those that contribute in a fundamental way to an understanding of the cultural significance of the building and are predominantly intact in form and fabric to a significant phase of the development of the complex and the broader area, ie the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These elements should be retained and restored to the extent of their externally visible elevations.

They may also be adaptively reused in a manner commensurate with the many other factory conversions that have taken place in Melbourne in recent decades, and have the potential for additional storeys if well designed.

Elements of primary significance consist of:

- Building 2
- Building 4
- Facade of Building 3
- Facade of Building 7

Contributory Significance

Elements of contributory significance are of a secondary nature in understanding the overall significance of the site. Buildings of contributory significance are generally of low contributory value, with the exception of the silos (Building 5), which are a landmark. On the basis of research undertaken to date, it is believed these date from pre-1945. It would be preferable that the silos be retained and incorporated in development in some manner, but it should be accepted this would need to be subject to further exploration of their condition and physical constraints, and the feasibility of their adaptive reuse.

While elements of contributory significance contribute to understanding the history and significance of the place, they are not of individual distinction with regard to the original plan form, fabric or function. They generally appear to post-date the identified period of significance for the complex and the broader area. It is encouraged, but not essential, that they be retained to the extent of the fabric visible from the street, but they may be demolished subject to permit.

Elements of contributory significance consist of:

- Building 1
- Building 3 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)
- Building 5
- Building 6
- Building 7 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)

- Building 8

4.0 Relevant future considerations

Section 5 of this Plan provides permit exemptions for a range of works on the site that will facilitate its potential future redevelopment.

A number of permit exemptions are contemplated for several key heritage elements on the site, being Building 2, Building 4, the facade of Building 3 and the facade of Building 7.

However, this Incorporated Plan anticipates that some other heritage buildings may be demolished in whole or in part subject to permit, and subject to appropriate photographic documentation, on the basis that their removal may be necessary for the future use and development of the site. A larger range of permit exemptions are also sought for these elements, which include:

Building 1

Building 3 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)

Building 5

Building 6

Building 7 (excluding facade, which is of primary significance)

Building 8

The appropriate documentation would include a detailed archival quality photographic record of the buildings to be demolished, external only, accompanied by a written description that put each building in context in terms of its historic use within the site. If demolition is contemplated for some or all of these buildings, it may be appropriate to undertake this exercise for the site as a whole.

5.0 Exemptions from Planning Scheme Requirements

For Building 2, Building 4, Building 5, the facade of Building 3 and the facade of Building 7, no permit is required under *Clause 43.01* of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme* for:

- Emergency and safety works to prevent damage and injury to property and persons.
- To implement fire safety measures other than partial demolition.
- Removal of items such as plant and equipment, external lighting, pipe work, ducting, wiring, etc and making good. If removal of plant requires removal of walls or roof, these are to be reinstated as per their pre-existing condition.

- Remedial treatment of corroded or contaminated elements and areas.
- The erection of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety which will not adversely affect significant fabric of the place.

For all the buildings and land included in the subject land other than Building 2, Building 4, the facade of Building 3 and the facade of Building 7, no permit is required under *Clause 43.01* of the *Melbourne Planning Scheme*:

- For emergency and safety works to prevent damage and injury to property and persons.
- To implement fire safety measures other than partial demolition.
- For removal of items such as plant and equipment, external lighting, pipe work, ducting, wiring etc and making good. If removal of plant requires removal of walls or roof, these are to be reinstated as per their pre-existing condition.
- To externally alter a building by structural work, rendering or blasting or in any other way provided the building has been recorded to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- To externally paint an unpainted surface.
- To externally paint a building if the painting constitutes an advertisement.
- To construct or display a sign.

As discussed above, it is understood that demolition of these elements (ie elements other than Building 2, Building 4, Building 5, the facade of Building 3 and the facade of Building 7) in full or in part is specifically anticipated as an acceptable outcome by this Incorporated Plan. While retention of facades of these buildings is encouraged, it is not considered essential to the future conservation, adaptation and development of the site.

For all of the site, a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works that are not exempted above.

The responsible authority shall be notified of any proposed exempt demolition and works prior to the works taking place. The notification will make reference to the relevant basis of exemption as listed above in Section 5 of this Incorporated Plan.

6.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the site. It also draws on relevant documentation, including the two citations relating to the subject site included in the *Arden Macaulay Heritage Review 2012* by Graeme Butler & Associates. Historic MMBW plans and aerial photographs were also referenced.

Draft for review purposes only

**BRYCE RAWORTH PTY LTD
CONSERVATION•URBAN DESIGN
CONSERVATION CONSULTANTS
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS**

**BRYCE RAWORTH
M. ARCH., B. A. (HONS), ICCROM (ARCH)**

Bryce Raworth has worked with issues relating to heritage and conservation since the mid-1980s, and has specialised in this area since establishing his own consultant practice in 1991. **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, Conservation•Urban Design**, provides a range of heritage services, including the assessment of the significance of particular sites, preparation of conservation analyses and management plans, design and/or restoration advice for interventions into significant buildings, and detailed advice regarding the resolution of technical problems relating to deteriorating or damaged building fabric.

From 2004-2011 Raworth was a member of the Official Establishments Trust, which advises on the conservation and improvement of Admiralty House and Kirribilli House in Sydney and Government House and The Lodge in Canberra. As a member of the former Historic Buildings Council in Victoria, sitting on the Council's permit, planning and community relations committees, Raworth has been involved with the registration and permit processes for many registered historic buildings. In 1996 he was appointed an alternate member of the new Heritage Council, the successor the Historic Buildings Council, and in 1998 was made a full member. At present he provides regular advice to architects and private owners on technical, architectural and planning issues relative to the conservation and adaptation of historic buildings, and is occasionally called upon to provide expert advice before the VCAT. He is currently the conservation consultant for the cities of Kingston, Frankston and Stonnington, and conservation consultant to the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund.

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd has prepared conservation plans for a number of registered historic buildings, including Walter Burley Griffin's Essendon Incinerator. The company's experience with institutional buildings has led to preparation of conservation plans for the Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, Castlemaine Gaol, J Ward, Ararat, the former Russell Street Police Headquarters, Ballarat State Offices, Camberwell Court House, Shepparton Court House and the Mont Park asylum precinct.

With respect to historic precincts, the company has provided detailed advice towards the resolution of heritage issues along the Upfield railway line. The company is currently contributing to redevelopment plans for the former Coburg Prisons Complex (comprising Pentridge Prison and the Metropolitan Prison) and the former Albion Explosives Factory, Maribyrnong. In 1993 Bryce Raworth led a consultant team which reviewed the City of Melbourne's conservation data and controls for the CBD, and in 1997 **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** revised the former City of South Melbourne Conservation Study with respect to the area within the present City of Melbourne.

In recent years **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** has also provided documentation and advice during construction on the restoration of a number of key registered and heritage overlay buildings, including the Ebenezer Mission church and outbuildings, Antwerp, the former MMTB Building, Bourke Street West, Melbourne, the former Martin & Pleasance Building, 178 Collins Street, Melbourne, and the former Uniting Church, Howe Crescent, South Melbourne. At present the office is documenting substantial restoration works to the MOMA at Heide, Templestowe Road, Bulleen, to the Church of the Sacred Heart, Grey Street, St Kilda, and to the Coburg Prisons Complex (including the Pentridge Prison entry buildings and walls to Champ Street).

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STATEMENT OF EXPERIENCE

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Professional Status:	Conservation Consultant and Architectural Historian
Current Positions:	Conservation consultant to the cities of Kingston, Frankston and Stonnington Conservation consultant to the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund
Organisation Membership:	Royal Australian Institute of Architects
Professional Experience:	independent practice as conservation consultant and architectural historian from January 1991 (ongoing). Services include: identification and assessment of the significance of sites and complexes; preparation of guidelines regarding the safeguarding of significant sites; provision of technical, design and planning advice to architects, owners and government on issues relating to the conservation of sites of cultural significance; expert witness advice on conservation issues before the VCAT member, Historic Buildings Council (architectural historian's chair) 1993-1996; member, Heritage Council (architect's chair) 1998-2002 conservation consultant to the cities of Brighton, Northcote and Sandringham (1989 only), Essendon, Hawthorn and Kew (1989-1994), Melbourne (1992-2009) and Prahran (1992-1994) established the Metropolitan Heritage Advisory Service on behalf of the Ministry for Planning & Environment - this service was offered to the cities of Brighton, Essendon, Hawthorn, Kew, Northcote and Sandringham in 1989-90
Studies:	Certificate of Architectural Conservation, ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property at Rome), 1994 Master of Architecture by thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993 (thesis: <i>A Question of Style: Domestic Architecture in Melbourne, 1919-1942</i>) B. Architecture (First Class Honours), University of Melbourne, 1986 B. Arts (Second Class Honours, Division A), University of Melbourne, 1986
Committee Membership:	Twentieth Century Buildings Committee, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1990-1994 (Chairman 1992-1993) RAIA Jury, Conservation Category, 1995, 1996, 1998 and 2001 Awards (Chairman 1996 & 1998)
Awarded:	Henry and Rachel Ackman Travelling Scholarship in Architecture, 1987-88 JG Knight Award, conservation of Heide 1, Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Chapter, 2003 Lachlan Macquarie Award for heritage (commendation), conservation of Heide 1, Royal Australian Institute of Architects National Award program, 2003 Palladio Scholarship, Venice, 2006