

Victorian Producers Co-operative Company Ltd No 5 Wool Store –

85-105 Sutton Street, North Melbourne (HO1118)



Statement of Significance

Place Grading: C2

What is significant?

This six-level red brick sawtooth profile building of 1956 includes:

- Modernist design character devoid of any of the stylistic ornament of most previous wool stores in the City;
- a vast floor space with the requisite sawtooth roof on the top floor;
- roof clad with deep profile corrugated fibre cement sheet;
- continuous aluminium framed horizontal glazing strips encircle the building, divided by cavity brick clad spandrels;
- window glazing with heat absorbing glass;
- a concrete encased steel frame expressed on the exterior of the building;
- metal clad sliding timber doors regularly spaced along the ground floor, broken only where they meet a vertical glazed curtain wall extending the height of the building at its south end;
- an interior of broad expanses of suspended concrete floor slabs, punctuated only by the drop elevator enclosures for the bails; and
- originally a large goods lift was located next to the reinforced concrete escape stair at the south end of the building's west elevation.

How is it significant?

Victorian Producers Co-operative Company Ltd. No. 5 Wool Store significant historically and aesthetically to North Melbourne and the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

Victorian Producers Co-operative Company Ltd. No. 5 Wool Store significant

Historically, as a major built symbol of the importance of primary production and in particular, wool growing and marketing, to Australia, particularly in the post Second War period, and the strength of growers in successfully organising this market. The building is one of the few surviving structures built for a company that received wide national press coverage because of its representation of growers from many parts of Australia, its evolution being part of a national primary producer cooperative movement: the Victorian Producers Co-operative Company became one of the biggest. Also by its scale as indicative of the special role played by North Melbourne and Kensington in industrial expansion for the City of Melbourne and the State and the traditional link with primary industry (Criterion A); and

Aesthetically, as an austere but totally functional example of the Modernist approach to a building type that has simple and lingering requirements from the Victorian-era onwards as indicated by its layout, open floor space, and sawtooth top level (Criterion E).

