
Request to be heard?: Yes

Precinct: General

Full Name: Felicity Watson

Organisation: National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached.

15 December 2017



Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
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EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

6 Parliament Place
East Melbourne
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T 03 9656 9818

Re: Fishermans Bend Draft Framework

Dear Madam/Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Fishermans Bend Framework. The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is state's largest community-based heritage advocacy organisation actively working towards conserving and protecting our heritage for future generations to enjoy. The National Trust's vision is that 'our diverse heritage is protected and respected, contributing to strong, vibrant and prosperous communities', and our mission to 'inspire the community to appreciate, conserve and celebrate its diverse natural, cultural, social and Indigenous heritage'.

The National Trust has been advocating for the heritage of Fishermans Bend for many years, and is represented on the South Port Urban Responsible Renewal Group, which is advocating for good planning outcomes at Fishermans Bend, including the protection and celebration of the area's rich heritage. Most recently, we have been advocating for statutory protection to be applied to places of heritage significance in the precinct, through our involvement in Port Phillip Planning Scheme Amendment C117, and the City of Melbourne's current Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review.

In our submission in 2016 responding to the Fishermans Bend Recast Vision, we called for a recognition of the potential for heritage to anchor new development, provide neighbourhood character and identity, provide amenity, and preserve our rich histories for future generations. We are pleased to see this reflected in the historical and social context outlined on p 10 of the framework. In order to more strongly reflect the importance of heritage in the Framework, we also suggest that environmental and cultural heritage be explicitly referenced in the sustainability goals outlined on pp 26–27 which underpin the targets, objectives and strategies outlined in the Framework.

In 2016, we also called for a greater recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage, and highlighted opportunities for engagement and collaboration with Aboriginal communities and designers. We are therefore pleased to see that "Caring for Country" (p 9) is central to the Framework, and that consideration has been given to the Aboriginal history of the area. We strongly support the continued engagement of Traditional Owner Groups and Aboriginal Victoria as planning for Fishermans Bend continues, and for opportunities to be provided for Aboriginal people to contribute to environmental and built form outcomes in the precinct.

Catalyst Project—General Motors Holden Site

One of the key catalyst projects identified in the Framework is for the redevelopment of the General Motors Holden Site on Salmon Street. It is the view of the National Trust that this is a

place of cultural heritage significance to the state of Victoria. However we note that while the site has been identified in the City of Melbourne's *Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review*, prepared by Biosis for the City of Melbourne (15 June 2017), further work is required by the City of Melbourne to progress a planning amendment to seek permanent heritage controls for the site.

We submit that the documentation and assessment of the GMH site should be undertaken as a matter of urgency to inform planning at this strategic site. We consider that an appropriate course of action would be for the state government to nominate the site to Victorian Heritage Register under the provisions of the *Heritage Act 2017*, and prepare a site-wide Conservation Management Plan. This should be undertaken concurrently with the development of other planning controls for the precinct, to ensure that the site's heritage values can be protected and considered in future planning. This is consistent with recommendations included in the *Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review* (see Attachment 1). The heritage significance of the site should also be emphasised more clearly in the Framework on page 48.

Sustainability Goal 3: An inclusive and healthy community

The National Trust strongly supports the strategies identified in Objective 3.8: Recognise the original topography of the area, especially the profile of the Yarra River and Hobson's Bay, as a significant historic landscape feature. We encourage the development of further strategies to recognise and interpret the area's cultural landscape, and provide opportunities for Aboriginal people to create contemporary connections with Country.

We are generally supportive of Objectives 3.9 and 3.10 identified on p 58 of the Framework, to protect architectural and cultural heritage; to strengthen the sense of place and identity; and to recognise and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage. These objectives should be reflected in robust planning controls, including overarching heritage policies for the precinct, which are consistent across both the City of Melbourne and the City of Port Phillip.

In particular, we encourage close consultation with the City of Melbourne to progress planning controls for the places in Fishermans Bend which have been identified in the *Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review*, and for support to be provided to the City for engagement with property owners to ensure the management of heritage values at complex industrial sites within the context of ongoing operations, as identified by Council in the report to the Future Melbourne Committee, Agenda Item 6.1, 19 September 2017.

With regard to Objective 3.10, we support the development of a strategy for implementing the principles of "Caring for Country", which should be led by Aboriginal people and developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities. This presents an exciting opportunity to lead the recognition and integration of Aboriginal knowledge and culture within an urban context.

Sustainability Goal 4: A climate adept community

Sustainability Goal 6: A biodiverse community

The National Trust is supportive of the protection of existing trees within the Fishermans Bend Precinct, which is referenced at Objective 4.1.3. In addition to Objective 4.1.1 to increase canopy cover to deliver 50% tree canopy coverage in public spaces, we also suggest the inclusion of a further strategy to encourage the protection and planting of canopy trees on private property.

A meaningful increase in precinct-wide canopy cover to provide economic, health, and environmental benefits, and mitigate the urban heat island effect, cannot be achieved without a strategy targeting owners of privately-owned property. This could be achieved through the development of plain English guidelines for property owners outlining the benefits of tree planting, and outlining appropriate species, and a guide to planting and protection. Minimum requirements for the provision of trees and green space should also be included in planning controls for the precinct.

We are pleased to see the importance of green infrastructure and private open space included at strategy 6.1.4, and we suggest the inclusion of an additional strategy to encourage the planting of trees on private property.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Fishermans Bend Framework. We look forward to the opportunity to speak in support of our submission at the 2018 Public Hearing.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F Watson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Felicity Watson
Advocacy Manager

Attachment 1: GMH Site citations, *Southbank and Fishermans Bend Heritage Review*, prepared by Biosis for the City of Melbourne, 15 June 2017

General Motors Holden Nos. 3 & 5 plants, 241 Salmon Street, Port Melbourne

City of Melbourne property number: 110509

Type of place: factory



Images of place 2016-2017

Historical associations:

Creation or major development date(s) of place: 1945, Inter-war, (WW1-WW2)? Yes
Post-WW2

Major owners or occupiers: General Motors Holden

Heritage Gradings:

Proposed new system (C258):

Individually significant

Alphanumeric system (building A-E, streetscape 1-3):

Existing: Proposed: B3

Heritage values:

Historical

Heritage status:

Heritage Overlay Proposed

Thematic context:

5.3 Developing a large, city-based economy



Boundary of heritage place

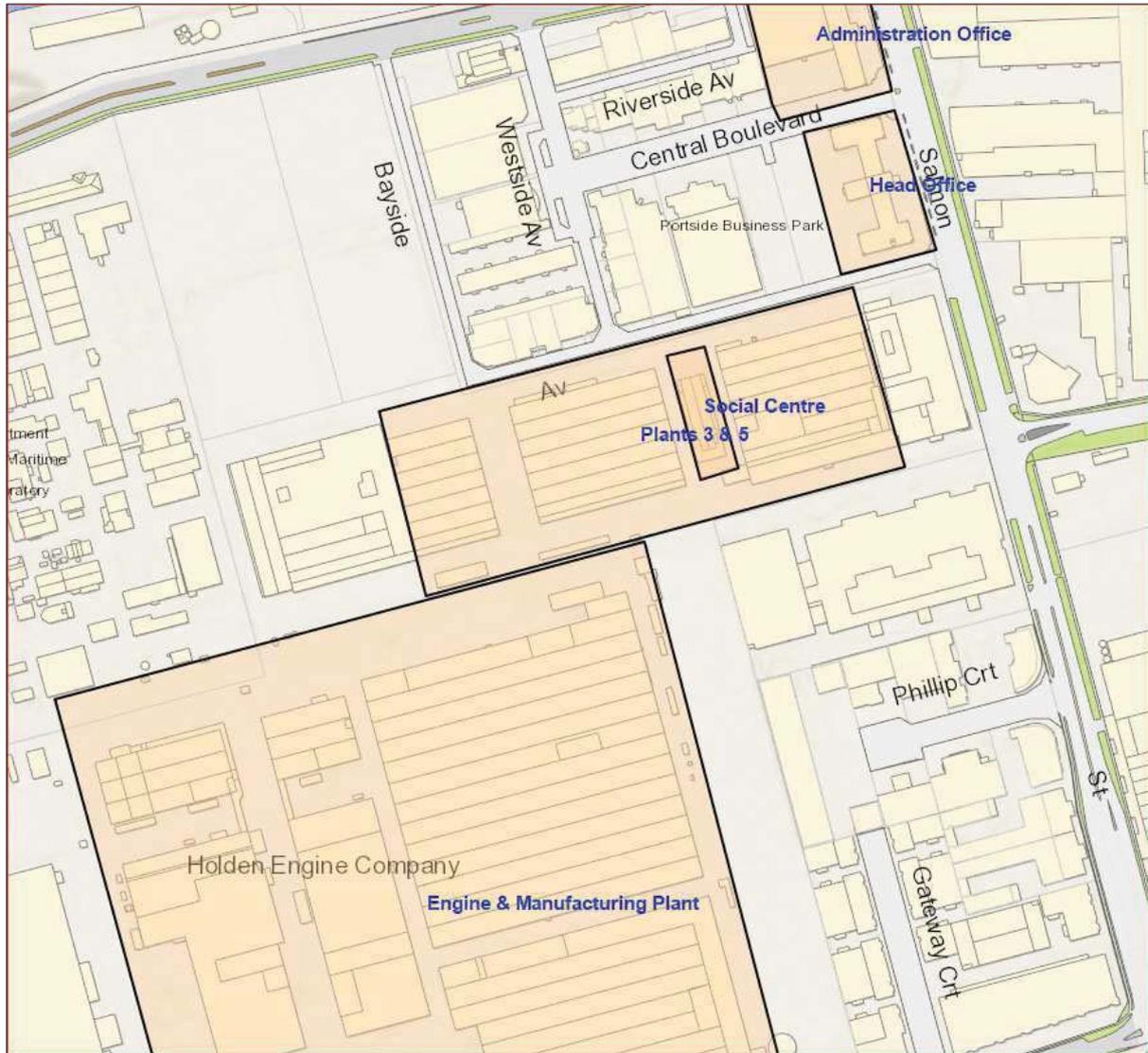
Description

General Motors Holden (GMH) Nos. 3 & 5 plants is made up of a range of steel-frame sawtooth-roof factory assembly buildings with ancillary structures around them, including amenities, ventilation equipment, electricity supply and stores. The buildings have south-facing sawtooth roofs, clad in corrugated iron (with some small sections of the original corrugated fibre cement sheeting) and steel-hopper sash windows around most elevations.

The factory is divided into three sections, with Plant 3 attached to the modern tech centre (built on the site of the former tennis courts) to the east of the Social Centre, and Plant 5 to the west of the social centre. Plant 5 has been cut in two, forming two separate buildings connected by a service-pipe bridge.

The earliest part of the group of manufacturing buildings, and the oldest surviving sawtooth roof building from GMH's Fishermans Bend factory is the section of Plant 3 between the Social Centre and the modern tech centre. This structure was in place in 1945, and is believed to have been part of the works used for munitions production during the war, and where the first production of the 18 120 and FJ Holdens after the war. The Number 5 plant was added around the late-1940s or early-1950s to provide additional capacity for the manufacture of the new Holden car.

Note that the social centre, head office, administration building and engine plant all have separate citations in this study. The following is a key map to the various GMH elements.



History

The Adelaide coach-building firm of James Alexander Holden started as a saddlery business as early as 1854, which expanded into coach building before Holden's sons transitioned into motor body building, eventually erecting a large factory at Woodville. The firm evolved over the years, moving into the automotive field in 1908, repairing car upholstery, then into full-scale production of vehicle body shells. Throughout the 1920s, Holden supplied tramcars for Melbourne, but became more prominent as a motor body builder and assembler of various models, particularly the imported General Motors chassis. In 1931, Holden merged with General Motors to become General Motors Holden Limited (GMH), and in 1936, the firm opened a new headquarters and assembly plant in Salmon Street in Fishermans Bend.

The national significance of the endeavour was recognised by the attendance of the state premier and the prime minister at the official ceremonies. The commencement of construction was marked by an official ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone on 23 February 1936, attended by then-Victorian premier A. A. Dunstan. The factory was officially opened by Prime Minister J. A. Lyons on 5 November 1936.

Production initially involved the continued assembly of locally-made bodies on imported mechanical components. However, the advent of the World War caused works to shift production to military equipment under Commonwealth contracts.

During World War II the factory produced more than 30,000 vehicle bodies for the Australian and United States forces and manufactured a wide range of equipment including field guns, aircraft, aero and marine engines. After the war, Holden returned to producing vehicle bodies, including Buick, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Vauxhall.

Before the war ended, the Australian government had already taken steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both GM and Ford provided the Australian government with studies into creating an Australian-designed car. Although Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, financial costs saw the government choose the GM proposal due to the low level of government intervention required.

Holden's managing director Laurence Hartnett favoured development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design as the basis for 'Australia's Own Car'. Holden commenced manufacture of a fully-Australian product in 1948, the 48-215, nicknamed the FX, with the second version the more famous FJ.

The factory was expanded at the end of World War II in recognition of the company's future role in civil society, and as part of post-war reconstruction. The Social Centre was constructed as part of this expansion. Plant No. 3 was completed prior to 1945, with the whole of Plant No. 5 added shortly after the war.

The launch of the Holden 48-215 was an event of national significance, with Prime Minister Ben Chifley and GM Managing Director Harold Bettle officiating on 29 November 1948. The Social Centre was chosen as the venue for the launch.

Expansion of production saw Holden establish a second Victorian assembly plant in Dandenong in the late-1950s ending complete vehicle construction at Fishermans Bend in lieu of concentrating on component manufacture with a focus on substantial engine manufacturing.

The earliest part of the plant was at the corner of Salmon and Lorimer streets, with reinforced concrete art deco office buildings fronting large areas of steel-framed sawtooth-roof factory space. The factory was designed by a team of four: L. H. Hartnett, managing director; E. J. L. Gibson, construction engineer; J. S. Storey, director of engineering and N. A. Pointer, equipment engineer.

The 1950s saw major expansion to the south and west, including the construction of the engine plant (now mostly abandoned). In the 1990s, the new V6 engine plant was constructed towards Todd Road, filling the last remaining vacant land. Holden began to sell off sections of its 38-hectare manufacturing plant in more recent years, with the original office now occupied by Boral, and the earliest assembly buildings demolished to make way for an industrial park. The 1950s boiler house, which featured an early glass curtain wall design, was demolished in 2011.

The Social Centre was recognised for its important role within the factory worker community and the social history of the industry sector. In 1996 a major refurbishment was undertaken, and in 2009 it was renamed JC's Café in recognition of long-standing employee John Connell. A time capsule was placed behind a plaque outside the Social Centre by Prime Minister John Howard on 29 November 1998 to recognise the 50th anniversary of the FJ Holden, to be opened in 2048 (Commemorative plaques).

Comparative analysis

The Holden Nos. 3 & 5 plants comprise the earliest surviving large-scale automotive manufacturing plant employing a sawtooth-roof design. The site compares with the Ford Geelong plant of the same era (VHR H2305) and the later GMH Dandenong plant, Ford Broadmeadows plant and Martin & King Motor Producers Ltd in Clayton. Plants 3 & 5 are the oldest surviving parts of the manufacturing section of the Holden Fishermans Bend works.

The Government Aircraft Factory and small parts of the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and Aeronautical Research Laboratories have steel-framed sawtooth-roof industrial buildings of a similar style and period as GMH, while part of the Kraft factory may also retain a few bays of 1945 sawtooth-roof buildings. Some of the PMG workshops in Sturt Street may also date from the WWII period. Overall, however, pre-war sawtooth-roof factory buildings have become increasingly rare. Timber-framed versions of factory sawtooth roofs are nearly extinct.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

General Motors Holden Nos. 3 & 5 plants, Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Contributory elements include:

- corrugated iron-clad sawtooth-roof form;
- steel-framed windows;
- red brick ventilation structures; and
- brick masonry office section elevations.

How is it significant?

General Motors Holden is historically significant to Fishermans Bend, the city of Melbourne and to Victoria in general.

Why is it significant?

This place is historically significant as it is a major surviving component of the original 1936 works of GMH, established in response to government initiatives to ensure Australian manufacturing in preference to imported motor vehicles, in partnership with General Motors Canada and the Holden motor body builders.

The factory is also significant as the place where the first Holden vehicles were manufactured, known as 'Australia's Own Car', a nationally-significant manufacturing endeavour which was promoted as part of the independent economic and political revival of the country after World War II, and later seen as a precursor to the post-war boom. (Criterion A)

The factory is significant in its scale and form, being the largest surviving part of the original pre- and immediate post-war production areas. It is also significant in its association with Sir Laurence John Hartnett CBE, an engineer who made several important contributions to the Australian automotive industry, who is often called 'The Father of the Holden'. (Criterion H)

Sources used for this assessment

The following sources and data were used for this assessment:

Davis, Tony; Kennedy, Ewan; Kennedy, Alistair (1998). *The Holden Heritage: Eighth Edition*. Blakehurst, New South Wales: Marque Publishing. ISBN 0-947079-57-2.

Darwin, N, 1983, *The History of Holden Since 1917* Melbourne: Gordon & Gotch ; History of Holden, Holden History In Brief, http://history.gmheritagecenter.com/wiki/index.php/History_of_Holden.

Holden Retirees Club website, <http://www.hrc.org.au>.

Australia Builds a Motor Car, General Motors Australia Pty Ltd, 1948.

<http://www.hrc.org.au/files/GM%20Australia/GMA%20Aust%20builds%20a%20Motor%20car%20OPT.pdf>

Recommendations

Revise Heritage Places Inventory.

Proposed heritage overlay individually as General Motors Holden Nos. 3 & 5 plants, 251 Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Nominate to Victorian Heritage Register.

Apply external paint controls with policy to reintroduce original finishes and colour schemes.

Recommend a Conservation Management Plan be prepared for all GMH sites prior to any future development.

General Motors Holden engine and manufacturing plant, 241 Salmon Street (61-85 Cook Street), Port Melbourne

City of Melbourne property number: 537568

Type of place: factory



Images of place 2016-2017

Historical associations:

Creation or major development date(s) of place: 1950, Post-WW2

Major owners or occupiers: General Motors Holden

Heritage Gradings:

Proposed new system (C258):

Individually significant

Alphanumeric system (building A-E, streetscape 1-3):

Existing: Proposed: C3

Heritage values:

Historical

Heritage status:

Heritage overlay Proposed

Thematic context:

5.5 Building a manufacturing industry



Boundary of heritage place

Description

General Motors Holden engine and manufacturing plant comprises a range of steel-frame sawtooth-roof factory buildings with ancillary structures around them, including amenities, ventilation equipment, electricity supply and stores. The buildings have south-facing sawtooth roofs, clad in corrugated iron – with some small sections of the original corrugated fibre cement sheeting – and with steel hopper sash windows around most elevations. On the western side are the tall, functionally-determined forms of the automated foundry and moulding plants, some of which have had the cladding removed.

History

The Adelaide coach-building firm of James Alexander Holden started as a saddlery business as early as 1854 and expanded into coach building, before Holden's sons took to motor body building, eventually erecting a large factory at Woodville. The firm evolved over the years, moving into the automotive field in 1908 repairing car upholstery, then into full-scale production of vehicle body shells. Throughout the 1920s, Holden supplied tramcars for Melbourne, but was more prominent as a motor body builder and assembler of various models, particularly the imported General Motors chassis. In 1931, Holden merged with GM to become General Motors Holden Ltd (GMH) and, in 1936, the firm opened a new headquarters and assembly plant in Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

The commencement of factory construction was marked by an official ceremony and the laying of the foundation stone on 23 February 1936, attended by then-Victorian premier A. A. Dunstan. The factory was officially opened by Prime Minister J. A. Lyons on 5 November 1936.

Production initially involved the continued assembly of locally-made bodies on imported mechanical components. However, the interruption of war caused works to shift production towards military equipment under Commonwealth contracts.

During World War II the factory produced more than 30,000 vehicle bodies for the Australian and United States forces, and manufactured a wide range of equipment including field guns, aircraft, aero and marine engines. After the war, Holden returned to producing vehicle bodies including Buick, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Vauxhall.

Before the end of World War II, the Australian government had already taken steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both GM and Ford provided the government with studies into building an Australian-designed car. Although Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, financial costs saw the government choose the GM proposal due to the low level of government intervention required.

Holden's managing director, Laurence Hartnett, favoured the development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design be used as the basis for 'Australia's Own Car'. Holden commenced manufacture of a fully-Australian product in 1948, the 48-215, nicknamed the FX, followed by a second version, the more famous FJ.

At the end of World War II the factory was expanded, in recognition of the company's future role in civil life, and as part of post-war reconstruction efforts. The Social Centre was constructed as part of this expansion.

The launch of the Holden 48-215 was an event of national significance, with Prime Minister Ben Chifley and GM Managing Director Harold Bettle officiating, on 29 November 1948. The Social Centre was chosen as the venue for the launch.

Expansion of production saw Holden establish a second Victorian assembly plant in Dandenong in the late-1950s, ceasing complete car construction at Fishermans Bend. Instead, the Fishermans Bend began to concentrate on component manufacture, including a substantial engine manufacturing plant.

The earliest part of the plant was at the corner of Salmon and Lorimer streets, with reinforced concrete art deco office buildings fronting large areas of steel-framed sawtooth-roof factory space. The factory was designed by a team of four: L. H. Hartnett, managing director; E. J. L. Gibson, construction engineer; J. S. Storey, director of engineering and N. A. Pointer, equipment engineer.

The 1950s saw major expansion into the south and west, including the engine plant (now mostly abandoned). In the 1990s, the new V6 engine plant was constructed towards Todd Road, filling the remaining vacant land. Holden began to sell off sections of its 38-hectare manufacturing plant in recent years, with the original office now occupied by Boral, and the earliest assembly buildings demolished to make way for an industrial park. The 1950s boiler house, which featured an early glass curtain wall design, was demolished in 2011.

The Social Centre was recognised for its important role within the factory worker community, and the social history of the works. In 1996 a major refurbishment was undertaken, and in 2009 the Centre was renamed JC's Café in recognition of long-standing employee John Connel. A time capsule was placed behind a plaque outside the Social Centre by Prime Minister John Howard on 29 November 1998, to recognise the 50th anniversary of the FJ Holden, to be opened in 2048 (Commemorative plaques).

Comparative analysis

The Holden engine and manufacturing plant is among the largest expanses of sawtooth-roofed factory spaces in Victoria. At over 200 metres by 400 metres, it compares with the later GMH Dandenong plant, the Ford Broadmeadows plant and the Martin & King Motor Producers Ltd space in Clayton. It is more than twice as large as its contemporary, Olex Cables in Sunshine Road, Tottenham.

The Government Aircraft Factory and small parts of the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and Aeronautical Research Laboratories have steel-framed sawtooth-roofed industrial buildings from a similar period to GMH, while part of the Kraft factory may retain a few bays of its 1945 sawtooth roof. A small part of the PMG workshops in Sturt Street may also date back to the World War II period. Overall, however, pre-war sawtooth-roof factory buildings have become increasingly rare, and even the 1950s-1970s welded-steel sawtooth-roof factories are becoming rare. Today, timber-framed versions of factory sawtooth roofs are nearly extinct.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

General Motors Holden factory engine and manufacturing plant, 241 Salmon Street (61-85 Cook Street), Fishermans Bend.

Contributory elements include:

- corrugated iron clad sawtooth-roof form;
- steel-framed windows; and
- the specialised form of the tall foundry buildings.

How is it significant?

General Motors Holden factory engine and manufacturing plant is historically significant to Fishermans Bend, as well as the city of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

This place is historically significant as a demonstration of the later expansion of the GMH factory in the 1960s, at a time when local manufacture of motor vehicles was increasing dramatically and Holden was becoming the largest car-maker in Australia. The expansion and modernisation of the plant reflected the great prosperity Australia enjoyed during the 'Long Boom' of the post-war period. (Criterion A)

The factory is also significant as it is the place where engines and other components were manufactured for Holden cars for over 50 years.

Sources used for this assessment

The following sources and data were used for this assessment:

Directories

Salmon Street appears in the Port Melbourne Rate Book for the first time in 1942 and first appears in Sands McDougall in 1938 in Port Melbourne West. 1945 lists GMH as works on 50 acres. Caprice Avenue and Cook Street aren't mentioned before 1949.

Rate books

General Motors Holden

Year No. on Roll Occupier Occupation Owner Occupation Description of Property Rate Detail
(N.A.V.) Rate Detail (Paid)

1936 3336 General Motors Holden Ltd on Fishermans Bend B, G, I works £1618 £2022.10

Davis, Tony; Kennedy, Ewan; Kennedy, Alistair (1998). *The Holden Heritage: Eighth Edition*.
Blakehurst, New South Wales: Marque Publishing. ISBN 0-947079-57-2.

Darwin, N, 1983, *The History of Holden Since 1917*, Melbourne: Gordon & Gotch ; History of
Holden, Holden History In Brief,
http://history.gmheritagecenter.com/wiki/index.php/History_of_Holden.

Holden Retirees Club website, <http://www.hrc.org.au/>

Australia Builds a Motor Car, General Motors Australia Pty Ltd., 1948.
<http://www.hrc.org.au/files/GM%20Australia/GMA%20Aust%20builds%20a%20Motor%20car%20OPT.pdf>

Recommendations

Revise Heritage Places Inventory.

Proposed heritage overlay individually as General Motors Holden Engine and Manufacturing Plant.

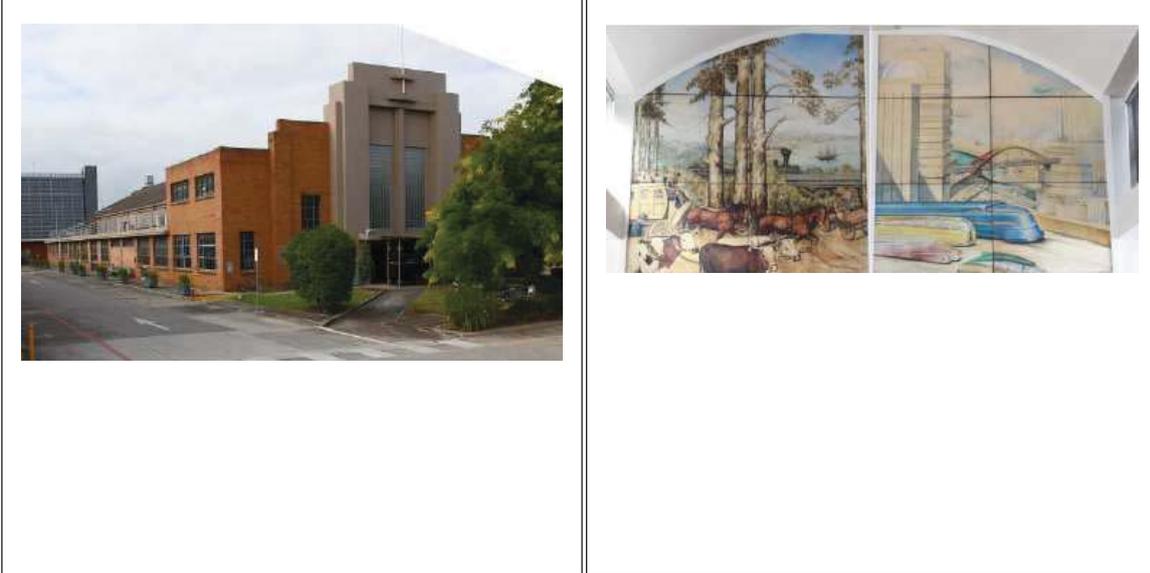
Apply external paint controls with policy to reintroduce original finishes and colour schemes.

Recommend that a conservation management plan be prepared for all GMH sites prior to any future development.

General Motors Holden Social Centre, 241 Salmon Street (Caprice Avenue, Port Melbourne)

City of Melbourne property number: 537568

Type of place: amenities building



Images of place 2016-2017

Historical associations:

Creation or major development date(s) of place: 1945, Post-WW2

Major owners or occupiers: General Motors Holden

Heritage Gradings:

Proposed new system (C258):

Individually significant

Alphanumeric system (building A-E, streetscape 1-3):

Existing: Proposed: A3

Heritage values:

Aesthetic, Historical

Heritage status:

Heritage Overlay Proposed

Thematic context:

5.5 Building a manufacturing industry

9.1 A working class

9.3 Working in the post-war city



Boundary of heritage place

Description

The General Motors Holden Social Centre is a brick masonry hall in streamlined moderne style with art deco decorative detailing. The building is situated between two factory buildings – Plants 3 and 5 – and surrounded by internal factory roadways with a small tree plantation at the front. The recently created Bayside Avenue passes the front (northern) elevation of the building but does not provide access as the building is still within the GMH property.

The facade is in the form of progressively-projecting bays rising in steps in a ziggurat form, with the central bay in cement render surmounted by an attached flagpole with fins, flanked by cream brick bays. Windows in the facade are multi-pane steel-framed, the central bay having glass bricks that decrease in size towards the outer bay. Side windows are similarly steel-framed with opening casements.

An upper outdoor terrace has cross-pattern metal railings.

Internally, the building features a large dining hall with parquet floor, side aisles and a stage with a proscenium arch. On either side, painted murals depict the 'History of Transport'. Behind the stage is a large commercial kitchen and above this the executive dining room with strap-pannelled ceiling timber joinery cupboards, benches and stairs. A dumbwaiter is connected to the kitchen below and there are built-in upholstered benches around the walls.

History

The Adelaide coach-building firm of James Alexander Holden started as a saddlery business as early as 1854, and expanded into coach building, and then his sons developed motor body building, eventually erecting a large factory at Woodville. The firm evolved over the years, moving into the automotive field in 1908, repairing car upholstery, then the full-scale production of

vehicle body shells. Throughout the 1920s Holden had supplied tramcars for Melbourne, but was more prominent as a motor body builder and assembler of various models, particularly for the imported General Motors chassis. In 1931, Holden merged with GM to become General Motors Holden's Limited (GMH), and in 1936, the firm opened a new headquarters and assembly plant in Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend in Port Melbourne.

The national significance of the endeavour was recognised by the attendance of Premiers and Prime Ministers at official ceremonies, and extensive media coverage. The commencement of construction was marked by an official ceremony and laying the foundation stone on 23 February 1936 attended by then Victorian Premier A.A. Dunstan. The factory was officially opened by the Prime Minister J.A. Lyons on 5th November 1936.

Production initially involved the continued assembly of locally made bodies on imported mechanical components. However, the intervention of war caused the works to shift production to military equipment under Commonwealth contracts.

During World War Two the factory produced more than 30,000 vehicle bodies for the Australian and United States forces and manufactured a wide range of equipment, including field guns, aircraft, aero and marine engines. After the war, Holden returned to producing vehicle bodies, including Buick, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Vauxhall.

Before the war ended, the Australian Government had already taken steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both GM and Ford provided studies to the Australian Government for an Australian-designed car. Although Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, financial costs saw the government choose the GM proposal due to the low level of government intervention.

Holden's managing director, Laurence Hartnett, favoured development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design as the basis for "Australia's Own Car". Holden commenced manufacture of a fully-Australian product in 1948, the 48-215, nicknamed the FX, with the second version being the more famous FJ.

The factory was expanded with at the end of World War Two - in recognition of the future civil role and as part of post war reconstruction. The Social Centre was constructed as part of this expansion.

The launch of the Holden 48-215 was a event of national significance with the Prime Minister Ben Chifley and GM Managing Director Harold Bettle officiating on 29 November 1948. The Social Centre was chosen as the venue for the launch.

Expansion of production saw Holden establish a second Victorian assembly plant in Dandenong in the late 1950s, so that complete construction of cars ceased at Fishermans Bend, and would concentrate on component manufacture including a substantial engine manufacturing plant.

The earliest part of the plant was at the corner of Salmon Street and Lorimer Street, with reinforced concrete 'Art Deco' office buildings fronting large areas are steel-framed saw-tooth roof factory space. The factory was designed by a team of four (L H Hartnett, Managing Director; E J L Gibson, Construction Engineer; J S Storey, Director of Engineering and N A Pointer, Equipment Engineer).

In the 1950s, major expansion to the south and west occurred, including the engine plant (which is now mostly abandoned). In the 1990s, the new V6 engine plant was constructed towards Todd Road, filling the last remaining vacant land. Holden started selling off sections of its 38-hectare manufacturing plant in the last few years, with the original office now occupied by Boral, and the

earliest assembly buildings having been demolished to make way for an industrial park. The 1950s Boiler House, which featured an early glass curtain wall design, was demolished in 2011.

The Social Centre was recognised for its important role in among the factory workers and the social history of the works. In 1996 a major refurbishment was undertaken, and in 2009 it was renamed JC's Café in recognition of long standing employee John Connell. A time capsule was placed behind a plaque outside the Social Centre by Prime Minister John Howard on 29 November 1998, to recognise the 50th anniversary of the FJ Holden, to be opened in 2048 (commemorative plaques).

Comparative analysis

The moderne elements of the Social Centre complement the slightly-older GMH office buildings on Salmon Street. The Rootes Factory a little further south on Salmon Street is also a notable example of a similar style in the nearby area.

Elsewhere in the study area, the Streamlined moderne style that was once common in the automotive industry buildings is now rare. The 1936 Mitchell House in the CBD is an example of the style as it was applied to office buildings, while the Relova Redressing Laundry on Hoddle Street shows the use of prominent architectural expression of a modern industrial activity. This was a well-established direction in industrial architecture by the 1930s with several examples to be found in the industrial northern and western suburbs, such as with Olympic Tyres, Pilkington Glass, the Southern Can Company and Hopkins Odlum, all in Footscray.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The General Motors Holden Social Centre, constructed in 1945 off Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Contributory elements include:

- moderne styling with prominent facade treatment;
- attached flagpole and fins, glass brick and steel-framed windows;
- upper outdoor terrace and metal railings;
- internal fittings and finishes including parquetry floor and stairs;
- 'History of Transport' murals;
- stage and proscenium arch; and
- internal panelling, joinery, dumbwaiter and built-in benches to executive dining room.

How is it significant?

The General Motors Holden Social Centre is historically, socially and aesthetically significant to Fishermans Bend, the city of Melbourne and to Victoria more broadly.

Why is it significant?

The Social Centre is historically significant as it was the focus for workers' amenities and social activities for over 70 years, and has been an integral part of the overall GMH Fishermans Bend plant. Its construction at the end of World War II reflected the optimism for the future commercial success of the company, particularly as the manufacturer of the Australian FJ Holden, highlighted by the site being used in 1948 to launch the 48-215 Holden, known as 'Australia's Own Car'. (Criterion A)

The Social Centre is of aesthetic significance for its finely-detailed and decorative streamlined moderne styling and its intact interior, which includes the 'History of Transport' mural. (Criterion E)

Sources used for this assessment

The following sources and data were used for this assessment:

Davis, Tony; Kennedy, Ewan; Kennedy, Alistair (1998). *The Holden Heritage: Eighth Edition*. Blakehurst, New South Wales: Marque Publishing. ISBN 0-947079-57-2.

Darwin, N, 1983, *The History of Holden Since 1917 Melbourne*: Gordon & Gotch; History of Holden, Holden History In Brief, http://history.gmheritagecenter.com/wiki/index.php/History_of_Holden.

Holden Retirees Club website, <http://www.hrc.org.au/>

Australia Builds a Motor Car, General Motors Australia Pty Ltd, 1948.
<http://www.hrc.org.au/files/GM%20Australia/GMA%20Aust%20builds%20a%20Motor%20car%20OPT.pdf>.

Directories

Salmon Street appears in the Port Melbourne Rate Book for the first time in 1942 and first appears in Sands McDougall in 1938 in Port Melbourne West. 1945 lists GMH as works on 50 acres. Caprice Avenue and Cook Street aren't mentioned before 1949.

Rate books

General Motors Holden
Year No. on Roll Occupier Occupation Owner Occupation Description of Property Rate Detail (N.A.V.) Rate Detail (Paid)
1936 3336 General Motors Holden Ltd on Fishermans Bend B, G, I works £1618 £2022.10

Recommendations

Revise Heritage Places Inventory.

Proposed heritage overlay individually as General Motors Holden Social Centre, 241 Salmon Street (Caprice Avenue, Port Melbourne).

Nominate to Victorian Heritage Register.

Apply external paint controls with policy to reintroduce original finishes and colour schemes.

Apply internal alteration control to murals, original joinery and parquet floor.

Recommend that a conservation management plan be prepared for all GMH sites prior to any future development.

General Motors Holden head office administration buildings, 251 Salmon Street, Port Melbourne

City of Melbourne property number: 110593

Type of place: office



Images of place 2016-2017

Historical associations:

Creation or major development date(s) of place: 1935-6, Inter-war (WW1-WW2)

Major owners or occupiers: General Motors Holden

Heritage Gradings:

Proposed new system (C258):

Individually significant

Alphanumeric system (building A-E, streetscape 1-3):

Existing: Proposed: A3

Heritage values:

Aesthetic, Historical

Heritage status:

Heritage Overlay Proposed

Thematic context:

3.2 Expressing an architectural style

5.3 Developing a large, city-based economy



Boundary of heritage place

Description

The General Motors Holden (GMH) administration building is a reinforced two- and three-storey building with symmetrical projecting central and end bays surmounted centrally by a tower. The building is in a streamlined modern style with art deco decorative detailing. It faces onto Salmon Street with a small garden plantation at the front. The corners on the buildings feature groups of five raised vertical strips which were originally painted in contrasting colours to provide highlights with incised vertical sections between the steel-framed windows. The exterior design, with its art deco styling and motifs, reflects the predominant industrial style of the period and is clearly the work of a competent architect, although who this was has not yet been determined. The buildings bear some resemblance to the 1928 GM assembly plant in Regina, Canada, so it is possible that the design came from another GM office in North America. (The private road adjacent to the building and known as Central Boulevard still remains, but the 'gate posts' in the central median are a recent addition and do not have heritage significance.)

History

The Adelaide coach-building firm of James Alexander Holden started as a saddlery business as early as 1854, and expanded into coach building, and then his sons developed motor body building, eventually erecting a large factory at Woodville. The firm evolved over the years, moving into the automotive field in 1908, repairing car upholstery, then the full-scale production of vehicle body shells. Throughout the 1920s Holden had supplied tramcars for Melbourne, but was more prominent as a motor body builder and assembler of various models, particularly for the imported General Motors chassis. In 1931, Holden merged with GM to become General Motors

Holden's Limited (GMH), and in 1936, the firm opened a new headquarters and assembly plant in Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend in Port Melbourne.

The national significance of the endeavour was recognised by the attendance of Premiers and Prime Ministers at official ceremonies, and extensive media coverage. The commencement of construction was marked by an official ceremony and laying the foundation stone on 23 February 1936 attended by then Victorian Premier A.A. Dunstan. The factory was officially opened by the Prime Minister J.A. Lyons on 5th November 1936.

Production initially involved the continued assembly of locally made bodies on imported mechanical components. However, the intervention of war caused the works to shift production to military equipment under Commonwealth contracts.

During World War Two the factory produced more than 30,000 vehicle bodies for the Australian and United States forces and manufactured a wide range of equipment, including field guns, aircraft, aero and marine engines. After the war, Holden returned to producing vehicle bodies, including Buick, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Vauxhall.

Before the war ended, the Australian Government had already taken steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both GM and Ford provided studies to the Australian Government for an Australian-designed car. Although Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, financial costs saw the government choose the GM proposal due to the low level of government intervention.

Holden's managing director, Laurence Hartnett, favoured development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design as the basis for "Australia's Own Car". Holden commenced manufacture of a fully-Australian product in 1948, the 48-215, nicknamed the F X ,with the second version the more famous FJ.

The factory was expanded with at the end of World War Two - in recognition of the future civil role and as part of post war reconstruction. The Social Centre - was constructed as part of this expansion.

The launch of the Holden 48-215 was a event of national significance with the Prime Minister Ben Chifley and GM Managing Director Harold Bettle officiating on 29 November 1948. The Social Centre was chosen as the venue for the launch.

Expansion of production saw Holden establish a second Victorian assembly plant in Dandenong in the late 1950s, so that complete construction of cars ceased at Fishermans Bend, and would concentrate on component manufacture including a substantial engine manufacturing plant.

The earliest part of the plant was at the corner of Salmon Street and Lorimer Street, with reinforced concrete art deco office buildings fronting large areas are steel-framed saw-tooth roof factory space. The factory was designed by a team of four (L H Hartnett, Managing Director; E J L Gibson, Construction Engineer; J S Storey, Director of Engineering and N A Pointer, Equipment Engineer).

In the 1950s, major expansion to the south and west occurred, including the engine plant (which is now mostly abandoned). In the 1990s, the new V6 engine plant was constructed towards Todd Road, filling the last remaining vacant land. Holden started selling off sections of its 38-hectare manufacturing plant in the last few years, with the original office now occupied by Boral, and the earliest assembly buildings having been demolished to make way for an industrial park. The 1950s Boiler House, which featured an early glass curtain wall design, was demolished in 2011.

Comparative analysis

The GMH Fishermans Bend plant compares with Geelong's Ford factory as another likely-American-imported design. (The Geelong Ford factory was almost certainly an off-the-shelf design by Albert Kahn.) The nearby Rootes factory also demonstrates the moderne style as applied to a car factory, although in this case, executed in fibre cement sheeting. Finally, the GPO workshops in Sturt Street reflect the contemporary government application of the moderne style.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

General Motors Holden head office administration buildings, 251 Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Contributory elements include:

- wide, symmetrical plan and elevations;
- reinforced concrete structural form;
- streamlined moderne style; and
- steel-framed windows.

How is it significant?

The broader General Motors Holden site is historically and aesthetically significant to Fishermans Bend and the greater city of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

GMH is historically significant as a major surviving component of the original 1936 General Motors Holden works, which was established as a response to government initiatives to ensure Australian manufacturing of motor vehicles would be preferred to imports, but in partnership between General Motors Canada and the Holden Motor Body Builders. (Criterion A)

The factory is also significant as it is the place where the first Holden vehicles were manufactured, known as 'Australia's Own Car', a nationally-significant manufacturing endeavour which was promoted as part of building the nation's independence economically and as a sort of political revival after World War II; these efforts would later be seen as precursor to the post-war boom.

The building is significant for its strong public presentation, demonstrating the scale and importance of the post-war endeavour. It is also significant in its association with Sir Laurence John Hartnett CBE, an engineer who made several important contributions to the Australian automotive industry, and is often called 'The Father of the Holden'. (Criterion H)

The site is aesthetically significant for its fully-resolved moderne architectural style, executed on a grand scale. (Criterion E)

Sources used for this assessment

The following sources and data were used for this assessment:

Davis, Tony; Kennedy, Ewan; Kennedy, Alistair (1998). *The Holden Heritage: Eighth Edition*. Blakehurst, New South Wales: Marque Publishing. ISBN 0-947079-57-2.

Darwin, N, 1983. *The History of Holden Since 1917* Melbourne: Gordon & Gotch; History of Holden, Holden History In Brief, http://history.gmheritagecenter.com/wiki/index.php/History_of_Holden.

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Australia Builds a Motor Car, General Motors Australia Pty Ltd, 1948.

<http://www.hrc.org.au/files/GM%20Australia/GMA%20Aust%20builds%20a%20Motor%20car%20OPT.pdf>.

Directories

Salmon Street appears in the Port Melbourne Rate Book for the first time in 1942 and first appears in Sands McDougall in 1938 in Port Melbourne West. 1945 lists GMH as works on 50 acres. Caprice Avenue and Cook Street aren't mentioned before 1949.

Rate books

General Motors Holden

Year No. on Roll Occupier Occupation Owner Occupation Description of Property Rate Detail (N.A.V.) Rate Detail (Paid)

1936 3336 General Motors Holden Ltd on Fishermans Bend B, G, I works £1618 £2022.10

Recommendations

Revise Heritage Places Inventory.

Proposed heritage overlay individually as General Motors Holden head office administration buildings, 251 Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Nominate to Victorian Heritage Register.

Apply external paint controls with policy to reintroduce original finishes and colour schemes.

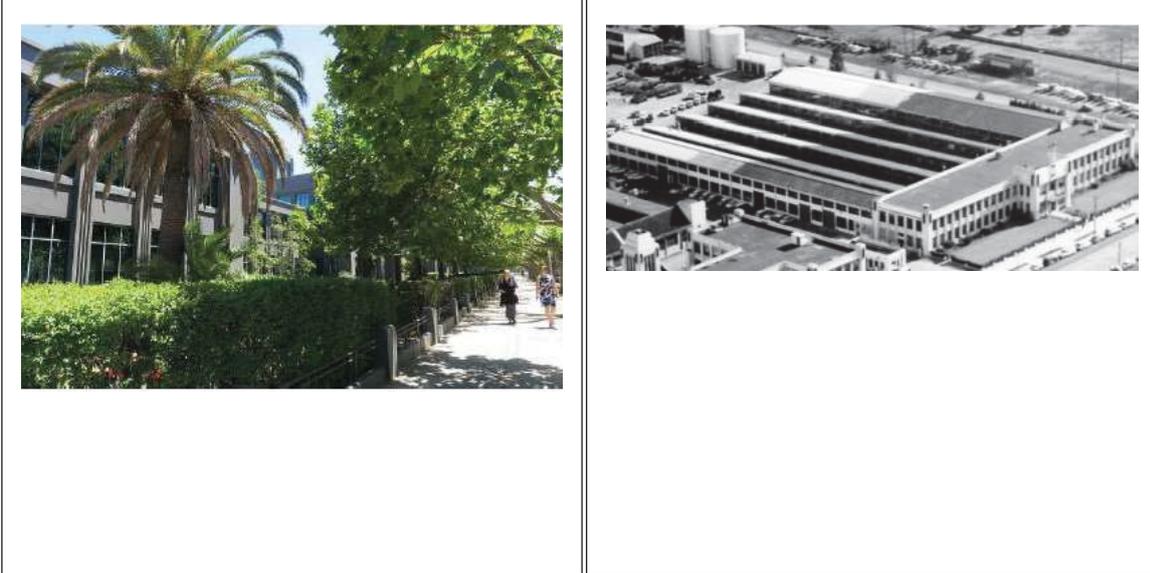
Apply tree controls to mature palms in front of building on Salmon Street.

Recommend that a conservation management plan be prepared for all GMH sites prior to any future development.

General Motors Holden administration building, 261 Salmon Street, Port Melbourne

City of Melbourne property number: 110594

Type of place: office



Images of place 2016-2017

Historical associations:

Creation or major development date(s) of place: 1935-1936, Inter-war (WW1-WW2)

Major owners or occupiers: General Motors Holden

Heritage Gradings:

Proposed new system (C258):

Individually significant

Alphanumeric system (building A-E, streetscape 1-3):

Existing: Proposed: A3

Heritage values:

Aesthetic, Historical

Heritage status:

Heritage Overlay Proposed

Thematic context:

3.2 Expressing an architectural style

5.3 Developing a large, city-based economy



Boundary of heritage place

Description

The General Motors Holden administration building is a reinforced, two-storey building with symmetrical projecting central and end bays. The building is in a streamlined moderne style with art deco decorative detailing. It faces onto Salmon Street with a small garden plantation at the front. The corners on the buildings feature groups of five raised vertical strips, which were originally painted in contrasting colours to provide highlights with incised vertical sections between the steel-framed windows. The exterior design, with its art deco styling and motifs, reflects the predominant industrial style of the period and is clearly the work of a competent architect, although who this was has not yet been determined. The building bears some resemblance to the 1928 GM Assembly Plant in Regina, Canada, so it is possible that the design came from another GM office in North America. (The private road adjacent to the building and known as Central Boulevard still remains, but the 'gate posts' in the central median are a recent addition and do not have heritage significance.)

History

The Adelaide coach-building firm of James Alexander Holden started as a saddlery business as early as 1854, and expanded into coach building, and then his sons developed motor body building, eventually erecting a large factory at Woodville. The firm evolved over the years, moving into the automotive field in 1908, repairing car upholstery, then the full-scale production of vehicle body shells. Throughout the 1920s Holden had supplied tramcars for Melbourne, but was more prominent as a motor body builder and assembler of various models, particularly for the imported General Motors chassis. In 1931, Holden merged with GM to become General Motors

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The national significance of the endeavour was recognised by the attendance of Premiers and Prime Ministers at official ceremonies, and extensive media coverage. The commencement of construction was marked by an official ceremony and laying the foundation stone on 23 February 1936 attended by then Victorian Premier A.A. Dunstan. The factory was officially opened by the Prime Minister J.A. Lyons on 5th November 1936.

Production initially involved the continued assembly of locally made bodies on imported mechanical components. However, the intervention of war caused the works to shift production to military equipment under Commonwealth contracts.

During World War Two the factory produced more than 30,000 vehicle bodies for the Australian and United States forces and manufactured a wide range of equipment, including field guns, aircraft, aero and marine engines. After the war, Holden returned to producing vehicle bodies, including Buick, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Vauxhall.

Before the war ended, the Australian Government had already taken steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both GM and Ford provided studies to the Australian Government for an Australian-designed car. Although Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, financial costs saw the government choose the GM proposal due to the low level of government intervention.

Holden's managing director, Laurence Hartnett, favoured development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design as the basis for "Australia's Own Car". Holden commenced manufacture of a fully-Australian product in 1948, the 48-215, nicknamed the F X ,with the second version the more famous FJ.

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In the 1950s, major expansion to the south and west occurred, including the engine plant (which is now mostly abandoned). In the 1990s, the new V6 engine plant was constructed towards Todd Road, filling the last remaining vacant land. Holden started selling off sections of its 38-hectare manufacturing plant in the last few years, with the original office now occupied by Boral, and the earliest assembly buildings having been demolished to make way for an industrial park. The 1950s Boiler House, which featured an early glass curtain wall design, was demolished in 2011.

the Social Centre was recognised for its important role in among the factory workers and the social history of the works. In 1996 a major refurbishment was undertaken, and in 2009 it was

renamed JC's Café in recognition of long standing employee John Connell A time capsule was placed behind a plaque outside the Social Centre by Prime Minister John Howard on 29 November 1998, to recognise the 50th anniversary of the FJ Holden, to be opened in 2048 (commemorative plaques).

Comparative analysis

The GMH Fishermans Bend plant compares to Geelong's Ford factory as another likely-American-imported design. (Ford was almost certainly an off-the-shelf design by Albert Kahn.) The nearby Rootes factory also demonstrates the moderne style as applied to a car factory, although in this case executed in fibre cement sheeting. Finally, the PMG workshops in Sturt Street reflect the contemporary government application of the moderne style.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The General Motors Holden administration building, constructed in 1936 at 261 Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Contributory elements include:

- two-storey symmetrical form;
- moderne styling with prominent facade treatment;
- attached flagpole and fins, glass brick and steel-framed windows; and
- upper outdoor terrace and metal railings.

How is it significant?

General Motors Holden is historically, socially and aesthetically significant to Fishermans Bend, to the city of Melbourne and to Victoria as a whole.

Why is it significant?

The GMH plant is historically significant as a major surviving component of the original 1936 works of GMH, which was established in response to government initiatives intended to ensure a preference for Australian-manufactured vehicles in preference to imports, but in partnership between General Motors Canada and the Holden Motor Body Builders. (Criterion A)

The factory is also significant as it is the place where the first Holden vehicles were manufactured, known as 'Australia's Own Car', a nationally-significant manufacturing endeavour which was promoted as part of building the nation's independence economically and as a sort of political revival of the country after World War II; these efforts would later be seen as precursors to the post-war boom.

The building is significant for its strong public presentation, demonstrating the scale and importance of the endeavour. It is also significant for its association with Sir Laurence John Hartnett CBE, an engineer who made several important contributions to the Australian automotive industry, and is often called 'The Father of the Holden'. (Criterion H)

It is aesthetically significant for its fully-resolved moderne architectural style. (Criterion E)

Sources used for this assessment

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Holden Retirees Club website. <http://www.hrc.org.au/>.

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Rate books

General Motors Holden

Year No. on Roll Occupier Occupation Owner Occupation Description of Property Rate Detail (N.A.V.) Rate Detail (Paid)

1936 3336 General Motors Holden Ltd on Fishermans Bend B, G, I works £1618 £2022.10

Recommendations

Revise Heritage Places Inventory.

Proposed heritage overlay individually as General Motors Holden administration building, 261 Salmon Street, Fishermans Bend.

Nominate to Victorian Heritage Register.

Apply external paint controls with policy to reintroduce original finishes and colour schemes.

Apply tree controls to mature palms in front of building on Salmon Street.

Recommend that a conservation management plan be prepared for all GMH sites prior to any future development.