

Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**Olex Cables**

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**Location:**

207 Sunshine Road, TOTTENHAM VIC 3012 - Property No 8301592005

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Included in Heritage Overlay

**Heritage Overlay Number:** HO162

**Listing Authority:** Maribyrnong City

**Statement of Significance:**

Olex Cables is of historical and architectural significance to the City of Maribyrnong for its distinctive Moderne design which reflects both the prominence and success of the Olympic Tyre and Rubber Company, and the importance of the growth of the telecommunication industry in the immediate Post War period. (Criterion D2) The factory is historically important as one of the largest cable makers and as a major local initiative begun by the firm founded by Sir Frank Beaurepaire. (Criterion H1) The works is architecturally important for the application of International architectural and design elements (albeit in a relatively late context) to an otherwise utilitarian and functional factory. (Criterion F1)

Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) criteria

The Australian Heritage Commission criteria consist of a set of eight criteria which cover social, aesthetic, scientific, and historic values. Each criterion has sub-criteria written specifically for cultural or natural values. The relevant criteria are:

D.2 good example of type

F.1 design or technological achievement .

H.1 association with important person or group

## Description

Updated Amnd C31 GV expert witness reviewed citations

Large industrial complex exhibiting Post-War International style architectural features to the main elevations, but otherwise a utilitarian industrial structure of the period. The two storey office block to Sunshine Road is of orange and red face brick (now over-painted) metal-framed strip windows with overhangs and concrete lintels. The original entrances (two separate office entrances for staff and visitors and a third for the factory workers at the west end) have glazed aluminium double doors. A foundation stone beside the original main entrance bears the inscription:

THESE FACTORY AND OFFICE BUILDINGS

WERE OPENED BY

THE RT. HON. R.G. MENZIES C.H., Q.C., M.P.

PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

4TH APRIL, 1960.

Steel framed, bolted and welded saw-tooth roof and clear-span production buildings are uniformly clad in a generally three-part division of walls with corrugated fibre cement (asbestos) sheeting on roofs and upper walls, red brick lower walls and continuous glazed panels to the middle sections. This varies on some west and south elevations with either a taller glazing on the south, or full height cement cladding on the westernmost elevation. Some parts have been reclad recently in steel decking. Internal posts have been eliminated by large truss frames across the roof lights spanning up to 50 metres.

The Olex complex reflects the architectural style of the original Beaurepaire's tyre factory in Cross Street only in terms of its forward looking architectural treatment although in this case employing International Style to express its modernity.

A less sympathetic three storey addition has been erected on the east end of the office range over what was formerly a staff carport. Additions to the south of the complex date to the 1970s and 80s in more contemporary clear span all-corrugated steel clad designs.

## PREVIOUS PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Large red brick and concrete complex exhibiting limited International style architectural features to the main elevations, but otherwise a utilitarian industrial structure of the period. Steel framed, bolted and welded saw-tooth roof and clear-span production buildings are uniformly clad in corrugated galvanised iron, some reclad recently in steel decking.

Reflecting the architectural style of the original Beaurepaire's Tyre factory in Cross Street the Olex complex presents its main facade to a minor roadway on the west side of the works. As envisaged the plant featured a large range of sawtooth roof shedding with a central office on Quarry Road styled in a Moderne, Egyptian inspired manner featuring a low masonry building with tall narrow steel framed windows creating a colonnade

effect and a taller central "pylon" entrance feature.

The formal classically derived landscape surrounding the factory was designed with suitable exotic species including Italian cypress and other conifers which are now mature. Planter boxes include some original shrubbery.

Intact to its Post WW2 state with some additions

#### Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme Manufacturing and Processing

PAHT Subtheme: Manufacturing and Processing

Local Theme Legacy of Defence Industries

Creation date(s):1956-60 c.,

Heritage Significance city

Map (Melway) 41 C4

Boundary description

bounded on the north by Sunshine Road frontage (the more architecturally significant elevation) the east by Olympia Street, west by Quarry Rd and south by a line 5m from the main pre-1961 buildings.

Local Government Area: City of Maribyrnong

Ownership Type Private

Heritage Study / Consultant	Maribyrnong - Maribyrnong Heritage Review, Jill Barnard, Graeme Butler, Francine Gilfedder & Gary Vines, 2000
Construction Date Range	1956 - 1960
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	MARIBYRNONG CITY
Other names	
Hermes number	28668
Property number	8301592

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*