
Doonside Precinct



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Location

Burnley Street and Doonside Street RICHMOND, YARRA CITY

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Doonside Industrial Precinct, comprising 61-91 Burnley Street and 1-9 & 26 Doonside Street, Richmond. It is a grouping of factory buildings constructed during the 1930s and early 1940s. They include the places where iconic Australian brands, such as Jex steel Wool and Repco auto parts, were manufactured.

The contributory and significant elements are large inter-war factory complexes having typically:

- Pitched roofs set behind parapets;
- One to two levels in wall height;
- Moderne styling;
- No side setbacks, minimal or zero front setbacks;
- Render and face brick walls;

- Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors.

Nos. 61-65, 67 and 77 Burnley Street and 1-9 Doonside Street are contributory to the precinct. 81-95 Burnley Street and 26 Doonside Street (HO252) are Individually Significant to the precinct.

How it is significant?

The Doonside Industrial Precinct is of local aesthetic and historic significance to the City of Yarra.

Why it is significant?

Aesthetically, as a concentration of interwar factories around the intersection of Burnley and Doonside streets, which are exceptional in their stylistic consistency. The earlier ones - at 61-65, 77 and 91 Burnley Street - exhibit decorative traits of Jazz Moderne, including simplified classical pilasters, cast geometric bas reliefs, and the stepped ziggurat motif. The later buildings - 85 Burnley Street, 1-9 Doonside Street and 26 Doonside Street - have striking vertical entrance 'towers', 85-91 Burnley Street has incised 'speed' lines, characteristics of the Streamlined Moderne, and 26 Doonside Street exhibits an interesting and sophisticated composition with a limited palette of materials (cream and glazed brown brick). The factory at 1-9 Doonside Street has less of a horizontal emphasis, instead showing an avant-garde Functionalist influence. (Criterion E)

Historically, as a tangible illustration of industrial development that was so important in Richmond from its earliest years. In the Yarraberg area, David Mitchell - owner of 'Doonside' house and the cement works beside it - was the pioneer of this development. In the 1930s, Richmond City Council zoned Yarraberg as one of three areas set aside for manufacturing, leading to its rapid redevelopment during this decade. The buildings constructed during this period demonstrate the modern preference for single-level factory floors, sometimes with offices above. (Criterion A)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Heritage Gaps Study: Review of remaining 17 heritage precincts from the 2009 Gaps report, Context Pty Ltd, 2013;
Hermes Number	162831
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

This compact precinct is centred on Doonside Street, on the east side of Burnley Street. It is located just north of the Yarraberg residential area, and the factories of the precinct were built in what was formerly a residential area (including open land connected with 'Doonside' house).

The precinct comprises late interwar industrial buildings, all of which were constructed within a ten-year period, between c1931 and 1942. As such, they can all be loosely termed 'Moderne' in style, providing overall visual continuity, but with different approaches to ornament and massing that illustrate changes over that decade.

The earliest factory, at 65 Burnley Street, is a single-storey building constructed to the streetfront. It has a gabled hip roof, hidden behind a parapet with a sawtooth soldier-course brick frieze. The frieze continues to No. 61, which is a single-storey, hip roof building, again concealed behind the parapet, set back from the footpath to allow for a carpark. This long, symmetrical building has a shallow breakfront at either end, which is slightly taller than the nine bays between them. The entrance is at the centre of the building. Window bays are divided by stripped-back fluted Doric pilasters. There are Jazz Moderne geometric fountain-like *bas reliefs* beneath the frieze and as pilaster capitals (NB: pilaster capitals only to the north breakfront, as the south one has been partially demolished).

Jazz Moderne floral *bas reliefs* and fluted details are applied to the parapet above the chamfered corner entrance of the single-storey Jex factory, at 77 Burnley Street. There is a stepped detail around the doorway and a curved

concrete hood above it.

67 Burnley Street, built between 1936 and 1940, is a small, single-storey building with gabled roof, concealed behind a parapet with a cement moulding along the top.

A ziggurat detail, also typical of the Jazz Moderne, is seen above a former entrance in the southern half of the Repco building of c1938, a single-storey rendered structure. The northern half, of 1942, shows the transition to a more restrained Streamline Moderne. This section is two-storey, constructed of brick with render dressings. The horizontal is emphasised by inset lined in the brick and the render parapet, as well as concrete strip hoods above the large, multipane steel windows. The chamfered corner is the decorative focus, with vertical glass-brick windows in a striking render surround.

Leggett's factory, 1-9 Doonside Street, of c1935-39, is a two-storey brick building with a rendered upper floor. It is a very large building, which occupies the entire allotment, with a series of five parallel roofs, all hidden behind the front and side parapets. The side walls are of red brick, which is likely the colour of the brick to the front, which has been overpainted. Like the 1942 Repco building, Leggett's balances long horizontal bands with a vertical 'tower' at the centre of the facade, which marks the entrance. On either side are brick 'pillars' stepping up to the centre section which bears the raised letters 'Leggett's' set on a diamond. There are tall vertical windows below it, and shallow concrete hood over the two doorways. The windows are multipaned steel with brick piers between them. Leggett's evinces a less decorative approach, move toward Functionalism.

In regard to intactness, the southern breakfront of 61 Burnley Street has been partially demolished to create a driveway to the rear yard. 65 Burnley Street has been re-rendered and partially clad with stone. The windows of 67 Burnley Street have been enlarged, and the facade may have been stripped of detail. The face brick of 77 Burnley Street has been rendered over. The brick of the Repco buildings, 81-95 Burnley Street, has been overpainted, and part of the single-storey section raised to two storeys. Leggett's, at 1-9 Doonside Street, has also been overpainted.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>