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# GLENTHOMPSON BRICKWORKS



23386 Brickworks  
Glenthompson 1094

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## Location

Donald Forbes Street, GLENTHOMPSON VIC 3293 - Property No 0004

## Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

## Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 14, 2004

What is significant?

The Thompson brothers, George and Joseph, formerly of Ballarat and the new owners of Yallum Park, established the Glenthompson Brickworks in 1900. The clay in the area was already known for its suitability for brick making. The business prospered and consolidated with the increasing demand for the red bricks that it could produce using traditional manual methods. With the decline of that demand, the Thompson family sold the business to Donald Forbes, a local pastoralist and Reg Williams, a local master builder in 1947. They made immediate improvements to the plant and, in 1949, sold out to Glenthompson Brickworks Pty Ltd, with Forbes remaining as Managing Director. The company prospered with the post World War Two boom. Again, it invested in substantial plant and equipment resulting in a production of 18,000 bricks a day. Forbes died in 1953, and his successor, Frank Borbiro began to explore alternative fuels for firing the kilns. In 1956 the Brickworks became the first in Victoria to make the transition to oil firing. Borbiro, a Hungarian refugee, served on the Shire of Mount Rouse Council, the Portland District Development Committee, Glenelg's regional planning authority and Willaura

Hospital Board. Borbiro was awarded an MBE for community service in 1979. Countless buildings have been constructed throughout the region using Glenthompson bricks, including many of great architectural significance. Angora Banner Pty Ltd purchased the Brickworks in 1988 and is the current owner. The Brickworks, the most important supplier of bricks in the Western District outside Ballarat, is of particular interest because of its traditional method of firing in single kilns rather than the Hoffman process of continuous firing in circular kilns used in Melbourne. The Brickworks are in full working order and retain an excellent degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Glenthompson Brickworks are of historical, scientific and architectural significance to the Southern Grampians Shire and the township of Glenthompson.

Why is it significant?

The Glenthompson Brickworks are of historical significance to the township of Glenthompson as a representation of a new industry, which started in 1901, which became one of the major employers in the town. The Glenthompson Brickworks are also historically important as one of the most substantial industrial complexes in the study area and for their regional market share. It is of technical significance for replacing the laborious and strictly limited production of bricks in other towns and on major properties, but still using strictly traditional, although much improved methods. It is of architectural significance for its long-term connection with the construction industry generally and especially through the master builder, Reg Williams and his connections including the architects, Seabrook and Fildes.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002;
Construction dates	1901,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	23386
Property Number	

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## Physical Conditions

The buildings are in fair to good condition and appear to be in working order.

## Physical Description 1

The Brickworks comprise the pit, now very extensive and a range of industrial buildings, including kilns, of various ages, forms of construction and materials and a brick chimney. The pit extends away from the structures towards the north-east. The dark cream brick chimney, located near the entrance off Donald Forbes Street, is the most distinctive structure on the site and a landmark for the area. It is square in section, slightly tapering and approximately 25m high. It is reinforced with iron straps at regular intervals. The corrugated iron sheds are conventionally industrial with a series of gabled roofs and large doorways. The kilns are also brick. Smaller brick buildings, mostly built of cream brick, are used as offices.

## Historical Australian Themes

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity

## Usage/Former Usage

Brickworks

## **Integrity**

Excellent degree of integrity as an operating brickworks.

## **Physical Description 2**

S. Fielding, original owner of the land

The Thompson brothers, first owners of the Brickworks 1901 - 1947

Donald Forbes & Reg Williams, joint owners of Glenthompson Brickworks Pty. Ltd.

Frank Borbiro MBE, manager and owner in partnership with Reg Williams of Glenthompson Brickworks Pty. Ltd.

Jo Morganti, employee for over 3 decades from 1952.

*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/>*