

# Monsanto Chemicals, Huntsman Chemical. Co.



1969a - Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study 1999



1969b - Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study 1999



1969c - Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study 1999



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Site 005 - Monsanto Chemicals, Huntsman Chemical Co.jpg

## Location

454 Somerville Road, BROOKLYN VIC 3012 - Property No 5

## Municipality

BRIMBANK CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO030

## Heritage Listing

Brimbank City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 10, 1997

### Statement of Significance

The factory complex at Huntsman Chemicals is of State historical significance for its association with the beginnings of sophisticated industrial, pharmaceutical, and chemical manufacture in Australia, and in particular in connection with the manufacture of Aspirin. It also has important associations with war-time manufacture of medicines.

The office block is of State architectural significance as a superb and rare example of American Colonial Revival architecture as applied to an industrial complex, which demonstrates the development of highly-capitalised multinational companies in Australia. The canteen wing behind is also of significance as a continuation of the same architectural theme and evidence of the amenities offered by the firm.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Brimbank - Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, G. Vines, 2000; Brimbank - Melbourne Western Region Cultural Heritage Study, Meredith Walker, Christine Johnston & Carmel Boyce, 1986; Brimbank - Melbourne Western Region Industrial Heritage Study, G. Vines & A. Ward, 1989;
Construction dates	1941,
Hermes Number	106304
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

### Description

This extensive chemical processing plant has a main office block which is a notable Georgian domestic revival (or "American Colonial Revival") styled building, similar to Commonwealth munitions factory office design. It is in

brick with tiled hipped roof and projecting pedimented portico, featuring four huge Doric columns standing on a stepped paved plinth. The columns rise through two floors (the full height of the buildings) with the section of facade behind them slightly projecting.

Window treatment is unusual with tall narrow multi-paned windows in pairs to the top floor and mullioned windows at the ground floor. All have segmental brick arches and white contrasting keystones. An oculus vent in the pediment follows with the same contrasting stone key. The main doorway features a fanlight set in a small cut-away pediment, supported on classical columns and framing panelled double timber doors. A single-storey block of similar design forms an "L" shaped wing behind, providing accommodation for the laboratories at one stage, now the training centre and canteen. This building has identical window treatment to the main building and many other stylistic similarities, although the eave brackets are less prominent, and some details such as rusticated quoins are absent. The short section of the L is a later (c1960s) addition in a simple Modernist Style. The interiors of both these buildings are very plain, having been renovated in the 1970s or 80s.

Another main building on the site from the original phase includes the large brick processing building, originally used for Aspirin manufacturing. This has large steel-framed windows, steel trusses and corrugated iron roof and is currently used as a workshop, store and office. Between these two is the steel-framed, corrugated iron-clad boiler house, and large cylindrical concrete water tower. Many other buildings and external plant cover the site, most of which are of relatively recent construction. However, the above-mentioned buildings demonstrate the historical core of the works.

## Physical Conditions

### Condition/integrity

The office block and canteen are in excellent condition and well maintained. Other buildings on the site have obviously undergone substantial modification to accommodate changes in manufacturing processes. The majority of buildings are of quite recent origin, with the modern chemical processing plant taking the form of freestanding cracking towers and complex pipework. A small later addition to the canteen block is not considered significant.

## Historical Australian Themes

- 3 Developing local, regional and national economies
- 3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity

*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/>*