



# THE BRICKWORKS

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The heart of Brunswick's history

Creative spaces for  
creative people

Grant Hobson, © 1993 : Hoffman's Press Shed "Old Ways Series" State Library of Victoria

Support our vision for the creative re-use of the Pressing Shed and Engine House to provide vibrant community spaces and business opportunities for small scale studios and offices.  
Bring the space to life - experience the history.





Hoffmans Workers in 1939

Photo: Moreland Library

In the 1860s there were 44 potteries and brickworks in Brunswick, mostly operating on a small scale. In the 1870s entrepreneurs formed the Hoffman Brickworks Company. By the 1890s Hoffmans was the:

- Biggest brickworks in Victoria.
- Largest employer in Brunswick.

Hoffmans produced pottery, such as vases, sewerage pipes and toilets as well as bricks that built much of Melbourne.

Turn to page four to find out more.



Photo: Moreland Library

# The story so far

When the heritage-listed site was sold in 1996 community members and heritage experts formed Save the Brickworks to work with Council and the owner-developer to find a good heritage and community outcome for the site.



Photo: HLCD PL 2002

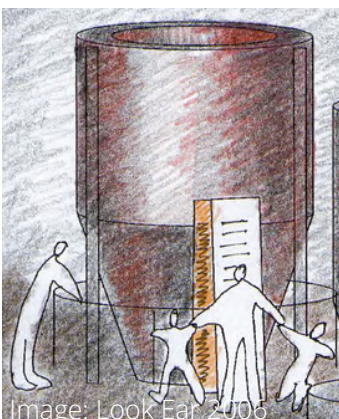


Image: Look Ear 2006

The **agreed vision** was based on building townhouses and apartments on part of the site to enable reinvestment to conserve the 'heritage core'.

Two kilns and the Pressing Shed were agreed to be adapted for uses and activities that would bring people to the site and keep alive the atmosphere, history and stories.

Image: Martin Fowler



welcoming all

# Our vision

creative spaces for creative people



Image: Martin Fowler

Lively and interactive, the Pressing Shed could be a great place for creatives, innovators and entrepreneurs to start something new. Pods tucked amongst the massive brick presses and hoppers could offer great spaces for tech and craft studios, offices, and co-working.

## What's so special?

The three storey, corrugated iron clad Pressing Shed was the centre of brick-making activities: It houses a bank of originally steam-driven brick presses, fed from above by giant hoppers and a complex system of chutes, elevators and pulleys. The kilns introduced continuous-firing technology to Australian brick making. The Hoffman kilns and the brick presses together mark the first industrialisation of the brick making process in Australia. The brick section housed the steam engine that once powered the presses. These two buildings, brick presses and feeder systems are of the highest heritage significance and essential to the story of innovation in the Australian brick-making industry.

## What was originally planned?

Approvals from Heritage Victoria and Moreland City Council allowed the redevelopment of this site but required the conservation of the historic core – the Pressing Shed and Engine Shed with the pressing Shed having interpretation as its primary use.

## What went wrong?

The Pressing Shed and Engine House were apparently not adequately maintained or secured.

## What happened recently?

A fire damaged the Pressing Shed in early 2018 and in 2020 the roof of the Engine Room collapsed.

## What is happening now?

Moreland Council and Heritage Victoria are working together to improve community safety and amenity, and protect the heritage values by stabilising and securing the site.

## What is proposed?

A permit application has been lodged at Heritage Victoria for demolition of both the Pressing Shed and the Engine House and construction of more apartments with a small interpretation facility.

## What's wrong with this?

Demolition of the Brick Pressing Shed and adjoining former Engine House will impact the outstanding historical, scientific and technological significance of the Brickworks as a whole. The demolition of the Pressing Shed with the associated relocation of the brick-making machinery, and destruction of other elements – means the loss of the earliest and a very rare surviving example of its type in Victoria and Australia.

The opportunity to create a vibrant facility accessible to the community will be lost.

**Follow us on Facebook or contact us to be notified when plans are available for public consultation.**

**Follow us on Facebook:** Brunswick's Historic Brickworks.

**Learn more:** <https://hoffmanbrickworks.wordpress.com/>

**Contact us:** brunswickbrickworksemail.com

## Who are we?

Save the Brickworks is a group of residents and heritage experts. We work with our community, Heritage Victoria, Moreland Council and the National Trust to ensure that the present and future residents of Brunswick can experience this important site.