

SUMMARY OF STATE HERITAGE PLACE

REGISTER ENTRY

**Entry in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the
*Heritage Places Act 1993***

NAME: **Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd** **PLACE NO.:** **26308**
 Buildings - four former garages and
 two double storey office/workshop buildings

ADDRESS: **32-56 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Mile End**

CT 5289/572 A171 D41533 Part Section 3 Hundred of Adelaide

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings demonstrate an important aspect of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, providing evidence of the expansion of secondary industry and suburban housing in South Australia in the 1920s and 1930s and the need for industrial buildings to accommodate this.

In their design, scale and progressive sequence of construction (marked by dates) the former AESCo buildings illustrate the impact and response to major developments in metropolitan Adelaide during the interwar period: suburban expansion and industrialisation. The consequent rising demand for electricity is reflected in this sequence of buildings, which also illustrate characteristic industrial design features of that period. In 1946 Premier John Playford effectively nationalised the Adelaide Electricity Supply Company by forming the Electricity Trust of South Australia (ETSA) as South Australia's public electricity supply company, and took over the assets and the operations of AESCo.

Comprising a row of six industrial buildings of similar design featuring decorative brick gables and large windows, all inscribed 'Adelaide Electricity Supply Company', the complex was constructed between 1923 and 1937.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (under section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)

- (a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history,

The former AESCo buildings are an example of the growth of secondary industry in South Australia in the 1920s and 1930s, the expansion of electricity supply in metropolitan Adelaide and the need for industrial buildings to accommodate this expansion.

AESCo, a private company, had been responsible for the supply of electricity to South Australia since 1904 and was formally incorporated in 1905. In 1923 AESCo bought land on the corner of South Road and Sir Donald Bradman Drive to provide accommodation for the Mains and Metres Department of the Company. This was the company's first expansion beyond its Grenfell Street headquarters and it continued to build a series of industrial buildings on this site from 1923 through to 1937.

EXTENT OF LISTING

The extent of listing is the Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings - four former garages and two double storey office/workshop buildings as generally indicated on the attached site plan. The extent of listing does not include all building interiors, and any other buildings and structures on the site apart from those mentioned

COMMENTARY ON THE LISTING

Description and notes with respect to a place entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the *Heritage Places Act 1993*

Physical Description

The former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings comprise a group of gable-ended commercial /industrial buildings constructed over the period 1924–1937 in the inner-metropolitan suburb of Mile End. Six of the buildings face onto Sir Donald Bradman Drive and are constructed of red brick and concrete, with corrugated iron roofs and corrugated iron insets along the sides. Four of the six comprise a row of attached single-storey former garages, and the other two are designed as freestanding two-storey office/workshop accommodation. All the main facades have decorative brick gables and large windows and all are inscribed with 'Adelaide Electricity Supply Company Limited' and some with dates.

The components currently identified as being intrinsic to the heritage significance of Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings include:

- Four attached single storey former garages on the north-eastern corner of South Road/ Sir Donald Bradman Drive including particularly the decorative

brick gable ends to the southern facades, original signage, and exterior red face brick work and roof forms.

- Two freestanding two-storey buildings facing Sir Donald Bradman Drive including particularly the decorative brick gable ends to the southern facades, original signage, and exterior red face brick work and roof forms.

History of the Place

The land on which the AESCo buildings are located on the corner of South Road and Sir Donald Bradman Drive had traditionally been used for outdoor activities by the local community since the early years of settlement in West Torrens. West Torrens became an attractive location for secondary industry from the 1920s due to its proximity to the city and the development of the Mile End Railway Yards, and many industrial operators moved here from the city.

Dates in the pediments of three of the buildings and on the side of another give an indication of the sequence of construction. The first building, located at the centre of the group of five, is dated 1924 and is single-storey with corrugated iron sides. The current entrance to the building complex is located to the east of this building and further east is another building of two storeys with no date inscribed on it. Further east again is another two-storey building with no date on the front but 1937 inscribed on the side. To the west of the 1924 building are two two-storey buildings located side by side; one is dated 1928 and the last one, on the corner of South Road and Sir Donald Bradman Drive, is dated 1935. The design of the buildings continued to be very similar over time, creating an important row of industrial buildings on this site. The basic warehouse form of the red brick and concrete structures is elaborated at the street frontage by the decorative gables with stepped gable ends. The concrete beams and pillars give a clear grid expression to the facades.

The South Australian economy had been dependent on primary industry until the 1920s. From this time, there was a shift in focus to secondary industry and this was supported by Liberal and Country League (LCL) Premier Richard Butler, who initiated an industrialisation program in his first term (1927–30). This program was greatly developed by Butler's successor, Premier Thomas Playford, from 1938. The gradual expansion of the AESCo buildings from 1924 to the late 1930s exemplifies this change and the expansion of the industrialisation program.

Many West Torrens residents took advantage of AESCo's scheme for hiring its 'Adelect' stoves and hot water services during the 1930s. This had the effect of encouraging householders to replace their gas appliances with electric ones. This scheme was successful as the company was responsible for the cost of wiring, installation and maintenance of each appliance. In 1946 Premier Playford effectively nationalised the Adelaide Electricity Supply Company by forming the Electricity Trust of South Australia (ETSA) as South Australia's public electricity supply company, which took over the assets and the operations of AESCo.

In the 1990s ETSA de-commissioned the buildings and offered them for sale as warehouse accommodation and for individual commercial ventures. The whole site was sold to one private Melbourne-based owner, who now rents the buildings for various uses, including retail premises for the buildings facing Sir Donald Bradman Drive and Abbott Pathology in another building. The sale resulted in some alterations to the building openings facing the two main roads. However, the buildings largely retain their 1920s and 1930s character of red face brick with strong concrete structural grid elements.

References

This Summary has been adapted from the assessment report in:

- Peter Bell, Carol Cosgrove, Susan Marsden & Justin McCarthy., *Twentieth Century Heritage Survey – Stage 2 (1928-1945)* (2008)

SITE RECORD

PLACE NO.: 26308

Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings - four former garages and two double storey office/workshop buildings
32-56 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Mile End 5031

FORMER NAME: N/A

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: A group of six gable-ended commercial /industrial buildings constructed of red brick and concrete, with corrugated iron roofs and corrugated iron insets along the sides. Four of the six comprise a row of attached single-storey former garages, and the other two are designed as freestanding two-storey office/workshop accommodation. All the main facades have decorative brick gables and large windows and all are inscribed with 'Adelaide Electricity Supply Company Limited' and some with dates.

DATE OF COMPLETION: 1924-1937

SA HERITAGE REGISTER STATUS: **Description:** Provisional entry
Date: 10 April 2013

LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS **Local Heritage Place** City of West Torrens Council

CURRENT USE: **Description:** Commercial / industrial
Dates: C1990 to present

PREVIOUS USE(S): **Description:** Motor garage, warehouse, offices
Dates: 1924-c1990

ARCHITECT: **Name:** Unknown
Dates:

BUILDER: **Name:** Unknown
Dates:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: **Description:** City of West Torrens

LOCATION: **Unit No.:** N/A
Street No.: 35-56
Street Name: Sir Donald Bradman Drive
Town/Suburb: Mile End
Post Code: 5031

LAND DESCRIPTION: **Title Type:** CT
Volume: 5247
Folio: 572
Lot No.: Allotment 171, D41533
Area: Mile End
Hundred: Adelaide

PHOTOS

PLACE NO.: 26308

Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings - four former garages and two double storey office/workshop buildings
32-56 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Mile End 5031



Buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4 – former garages
Southern elevation looking north-west from Sir Donald Bradman Drive (June 2012)



Building 6 – former offices / workshops
Southern elevation (looking north) (June 2012)

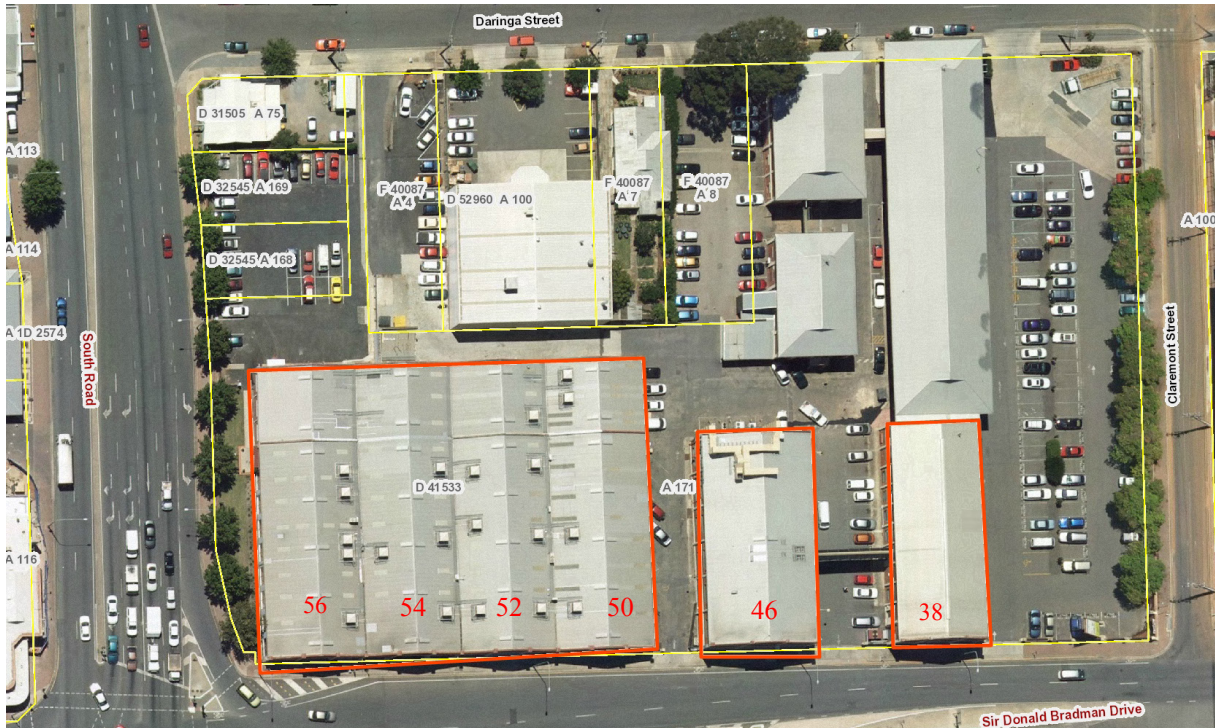


Building 5, - former offices / workshops
Southern elevation (looking North) (June 2012)

SITE PLAN

PLACE NO.: 26308

Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings - four former garages and two double storey office/workshop buildings
32-56 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Mile End 5031



Former Adelaide Electric Supply Co Ltd Buildings,
32-56 Sir Donald Bradman Drive Mile End
[Buildings marked as street numbers 38, 46 and 50-56, and outlined
in red are included in the extent of listing]