



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES- ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Katanning Roller Flour Mill demonstrates a turn-of-the-century utilitarian industrial aesthetic. (Criterion 1.1)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill occupies a corner of the intersection of the two most important streets in Katanning. Situated on an elevation, the building has dominated the skyline since its construction. The *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* is a landmark in Katanning. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is significant for its influence on the settlement and economic development of Katanning. The building of the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* played a vital role in the development of hub services for the railway and the milling of produce for Katanning and the surrounding agricultural districts. (Criterion 2.1)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is associated with the production of quality flour in the district and its consequent economic and social impact on the community of the 1890s. It demonstrates the importance of Katanning as the centre of a rich and successful farming district in the 1890s. (Criteria 2.1, 2.2)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill has a close association with the firm of F. & C. Piesse and with the Piesse family. The Piesse family established many of the first businesses in Katanning and were influential in Katanning's ongoing development. (Criterion 2.3)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is an important historical memorial to all those people associated with milling and grain-growing in Katanning, and the personalities who built and operated them. This includes F. & C. Piesse, F. H. Piesse in particular and all those who worked at the mill during its operation. The production of flour no longer takes place within the district in which the wheat is grown. The means of transporting, storing and milling have changed considerably since 1889. (Criterion 2.3)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is significant for its role in increasing the production standards of Western Australian flour milling. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Because a large proportion of its original milling machinery is intact, the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* has potential as a teaching site for turn-of-the-century milling practices in Western Australia. (Criterion 3.1)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is highly valued by the community. The 1927 buyout of the mill, the public activity in 1979-1981 to support the purchase and restoration of the mill, and the subsequent purchase of the place by the Katanning Shire Council indicates a high degree of social and economic commitment to the place. The restoration of the place for use as a museum of the town, mill and Piesse associations with the area, show that the place is held in high regard. (Criterion 4.1)

For many years the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* contributed to the well-being of the local community and provided employment for the people of the town, together with industrial and commercial pre-eminence for the district. Prior to its closure, in 1976, the Mill activities, mill horses and whistle, as well as the building, contributed substantially to the town's community's sense of place. As a museum, the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* fulfils a social role in displaying artefacts of Katanning's past as well as examples of milling technology. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

In 1891, the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* was constructed to conform to the, then, current design of roller flour mills and, although a few of these mills exist elsewhere in the state, no other mill in Western Australia has the machinery still intact. The survival of much of the machinery intact is rare and highly significant. (Criterion 5.1)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill was a technical achievement for Western Australia in 1891, and incorporated the latest technology in roller flour milling. The evidence of that technology has been substantially retained through the retention of the plant and machinery, and the building survives to demonstrate the new forms, in generally traditional materials, that were devised to accommodate the new technology. The vertical form of the building is significant as it reflects gravity conveyance in the milling process, a process which is now made obsolete by pneumatic conveyance. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is characteristic of a roller flour mill of the 1890s and a representative example (inclusive of plant and machinery) of flour milling in a farming community of this period. (Criterion 6.1)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill demonstrates the form, location and siting (in proximity to the railway and the wheat growing district) of flour milling at the close of the nineteenth century. (Criterion 6.2)

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is representative of the flour milling process which has been so important to rural communities and gives an insight into the standards and type of light industrial craftsmanship of the turn of the century. (Criterion 6.2)

The high level of intactness of the machinery demonstrates the form, technology and development of flour milling in Western Australia and can be used for the interpretation of other, less complete, mills in the State. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is typical of other roller flour mills throughout the state but, unlike many others which are now derelict, is in good condition and contains much of the original machinery and fixtures. In 1989, repairs to the timber floor, ducting and external stairs and walls of the second storey were made. Elimination of termite activity was undertaken.¹ Further repairs and renovations have taken place together with some adaptation of the place for public usage of the museum.

Katanning Roller Flour Mill was granted funds for the treatment of termite infestation in the building in 1992 and 1993. Further elimination of termites was being undertaken, in 1993, as part of on-going maintenance.²

The conservation of the building and the equipment, machinery and other artefacts it houses are now maintained, on an on-going basis and to professionally recognised standards so ensuring the conservation of its significance. For further discussion see McKay, P. and Richards, O. 'Katanning Mill and Museum, Katanning, Western Australia. Interpretation & Management Plan Report', (Report to the Western Australian Heritage Committee, April 1991).

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is in very good condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

While the ambience of a working mill environment cannot be sustained now the building is a museum, the fabric of the building has a high level of intactness and much of the original milling machinery is still in place in the basement and on the floors above the ground floor.³ See also McKay, P. and Richards, O. 'Katanning Mill and Museum, Katanning, Western Australia. Interpretation & Management Plan Report', (Report to the Western Australian Heritage Committee, April 1991).

Katanning Roller Flour Mill has a high degree of integrity.

¹ McKay, P. and Richards, O. 'Katanning Mill and Museum, Katanning, Western Australia. Interpretation & Management Plan Report' (Report to the Western Australian Heritage Committee, April 1991) p. 13.

² Heritage Council of Western Australia: I92/66.

³ National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

There are other roller mill buildings still existing elsewhere (at Dongara, Greenough and York, for example) which were built in approximately the same period, circa 1890s; however, the *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* is the only example where much of the equipment and machinery still remains in the building and where it is possible to demonstrate the technology and processes of roller flour milling.

Katanning Roller Flour Mill has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* is a three-storey flour mill built as the *Premier Flour Mill* for the firm F. & C. Piesse, in 1891, to mill flour for the Katanning District.

F. & C. Piesse had been established, in 1879, by brothers F. H. and C. Piesse, as a general merchants in Williams to sell foodstuffs and supplies to the settlers, and to buy wool, sandalwood and kangaroo skins for export.⁴ The business prospered and, by 1886, had opened branches in other towns and had also diversified into the manufacture of aerated waters.⁵

In 1889, Katanning was declared a townsite by the W. A. Land Company which chose the area as the site upon which to build the central station for the Company's new railway line. F. & C. Piesse started business there with a general store immediately after the line was constructed and by the end of 1889, they were confidently advertising themselves as 'Merchants and Importers', with branch stores at Wagin, Narrogin, Arthur River, Williams and Katanning, and stated:

We are offering the largest and most varied stock of groceries, drapery, ironmongery, china and glassware and agricultural implements ever exhibited in the Country Districts...Purchasers would find it to their advantage to inspect our Stock and test for themselves before making an expensive trip to Albany or Perth when they can be so well Served on the spot...Sandalwood, gum skins of all kinds and any local produce purchased at highest rates. Liberal cash advances made against wool.⁶

Flour, at this time, was imported from South Australia as the general opinion was that flour in Western Australia was not of a sufficiently high standard to compete.⁷

The opening of a roller flour mill in Northam, in 1890, by the Byfield family, produced high quality flour and, after reviewing its operations, F. & C. Piesse decide to open such a mill next to their store in Katanning.⁸ The *Premier Flour Mill* was to be managed by F. H. Piesse, senior partner

⁴ Bignell, M. *A Place to Meet. A History of the Shire of Katanning, Western Australia* (University of Western Australia Press for the Shire of Katanning, Nedlands 1981) p. 65.

⁵ *ibid.* pp. 55, 66.

⁶ *Australian Advertiser* 30 October 1889 p. 4. quoted *ibid.* pp. 76-77.

⁷ *ibid.* p. 89; This is also alluded to on the speeches at the time of the opening of the mill see *Australian Advertiser* 4 May 1891 *ibid.* p. 34.

⁸ *ibid.* p. 89.

of F. & C. Piesse, who was also the sitting member in the Legislative Assembly for the district.⁹

A report in the *Australian Advertiser* of 1890 stated:

The settlement lies chiefly on the west side of the line. Austral Terrace, the chief thoroughfare, runs parallel to the line on this side. Way up its northern end is the home - a large one with verandah - of Mr F. H. Piesse. The gentlemen may be regarded as the founder of the town of Katanning. His house is the largest and best residence in the township, as the store of his firm is by far the largest building...It occupies a large block. The whole of the frontage is taken up by the store and offices; behind it a large yard...a wool press of modern type, a large warehouse and a blacksmith shop.... There is here too a 10 h.p. engine and boiler which is reported to be intended to drive a sawmill or roller flour mill.¹⁰

F. & C. Piesse was also responsible for the building of an aerated water factory in Katanning and the beginning of the Great Southern Railway Mineral Water Co. Pty. Ltd. which was known Statewide for its Piesse's Dry Ginger Ale.¹¹

The *Premier Flour Mill* was designed by J. J. Talbot Hobbs in close consultation with O. C. Schumacher of Victoria who was to supply the machinery. Hobbs was prominent Perth-based architect who had migrated to Perth in 1887. By 1891, he had been responsible for the design of a number of buildings including the Princes Building and the Masonic Lodge in Perth, domestic buildings and additions to St. Albans Church in Highgate. Hobbs called for tenders for construction on 10 October 1890,¹² and before the end of the month, Thorn, Bower and Stewart of York were given the contract to erect the mill at a price of £1,760.

The opening of the *Premier Flour Mill* was performed by the Hon. J. A. Wright, President of the W. A. Land Company on 1 May 1891.¹³ All of the machinery in the mill was operated by electricity.¹⁴ The installation of the plant made F. & C. Piesse the first concern in the State to have electric light, which initially supplied the firm's store, warehouse, aerated water plant and the hotel next door.¹⁵ As a result Katanning was one of the first towns in Western Australia to have electricity and the dynamo was an exhibit of interest to all who visited the town for some years.¹⁶

While Wright was in Katanning for the opening of the mill, F. H. Piesse persuaded him to authorise the excavation of a large dam for railway water purposes and to plant an orchard of 10 acres upon its eastern bank. The dam was excavated in the same year and, afterwards, purchased by F. & C. Piesse to supply the new mill with water.

⁹ *ibid.* pp. 85, 140, 165. F. H. Piesse would later hold a Cabinet portfolio as Commissioner for Railways (1897) and become Deputy Premier (1899).

¹⁰ *Australian Advertiser* 28 May 1890 p. 3. quoted Bignell, pp. 84.

¹¹ Best, B. *Katanning 1840-1906* (Claremont Teachers College, extract from Student Thesis, n.d, no pagination); "Katanning's Jubilee: A complete history of the progress of the town and district from 1889-1939" *Great Southern Herald* (special issue. n.d. circa 1939) p. 8.

¹² National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

¹³ Katanning's Jubilee p. 16.

¹⁴ Bignell, pp. 95-6.

¹⁵ Best, extract.

¹⁶ Katanning's Jubilee, pp. 7, 8; Best, extract.

The machinery in the mill, at opening, was:

Ground floor - smutter, packer, cylindrical scalper;per (Schumacher)m hopper and elevator boots (Schumacher)m feeder and mixer, Second floor - oat and barley separator - sectional roller and scalper, two sets smooth rollers - gravel and mineral separator - cylindrical scalper (separating bran and pollard). Top floor - five dressers (Schumacher), three dust collectors nine sets elevator heads, one wheat screen, one purifier (for middlings, &c.), one bran duster. The elevators are worked by chain pullies, and all the machines are driven from belts connected with the main shaft on the ground floor. The power is obtained from a 16 h.p. engine by Robinson & Sons of Rochdale, England, and 30 h.p. boiler by James Martin & Co., Gawler, S. A. The engine room is at the rear of the building.¹⁷

At the opening, the *Australian Advertiser* reported that:

The machinery moved with ease - without a rattle. The noise it made is like nothing more than the humming of a well-spun top. They saw the wheat put into the hopper, they saw what was transpiring in the various machines, and they saw the bags of flour taken from the Eureka packer, and they all admired.¹⁸

The gravel and mineral separator, on the second floor, was said to be the only one of its kind in Western Australia. The mill was capable of producing four tonnes of flour every twelve hours, the power generated by a 16 h.p. engine by Robinson & Sons of Rochdale, England, with a 30 h.p. boiler from James Martin & Co., Gawler, South Australia.¹⁹

By October 1891, the firm had purchased 8,000 bags of wheat - 1,500 having been obtained from districts between Katanning and Beverley - to begin production. The overall cost was estimated to be £6,000.²⁰ The production of the *Premier Flour Mill* was initially 500 lb or 2.5 bags an hour, but the amount of wheat coming into the mill exceeded this capacity and, to accommodate the excess, the first stack for wheat was built on railway property opposite the mill.²¹

The building of the *Premier Flour Mill* did much to increase the economic power of Katanning, and to increase the demand for wheat and oats to be milled into flour. This, in turn, encouraged more settlers into the area and ensured Katanning's continued development.²² Although Katanning was not officially proclaimed a townsite by the Governor until 16 May 1898,²³ the town progressed quickly after 1891. The Great Southern Districts Pastoral and Agricultural Society was founded, the first church (St. Patrick's Roman Catholic) was built, a small schoolroom was established and several new settlers arrived to take up large holdings of

¹⁷ *Australian Advertiser* 4 May 1891 p. 3.

¹⁸ *Australian Advertiser* 4 May 1891 p. 4. quoted in Bignell, p. 91.

¹⁹ Bignell, p. 91.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 89; Katanning's Jubilee, p. 8, 16; Thorn, Bower and Stewart, after the completion of the mill, constructed the first brick residences of the town (also on behalf of F. & C. Piesse).

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 8.

²² *ibid.*; Katanning Shire Council, 'Submission to the Western Australian Heritage Council on the Acquisition and Restoration of the Old Flour Mill' (Katanning Shire Council, Katanning n.d. circa 1981), p. 7.

²³ Best, extract.

land in the district.²⁴ A second public house had opened to compete with the Katanning Hotel and there was both a branch of both the National Bank and of the Union Bank.²⁵

The *Premier Flour Mill*, and the activity it supported, both directly and indirectly contributed largely to Katanning's growth as a regional centre. Along with the *Premier Flour Mill*, some small industries, including wagon building and joinery works, were established and contributed to the development of the Katanning township.²⁶

In 1902, the mill was altered and electricity installed to double its production capacity to that of 1,000 lbs of flour per hour.²⁷ The plant was a 150 horse power Rushton and Hornby Engine, complete with a cooling tower and oil storage and it supplied the town with electricity. On the 11 July 1902, the *Great Southern Herald* reported that:

Messrs. F. and C. Piesse recently signed a contract to accept with three months the supply of all plant and paraphernalia required for the installation of a thoroughly complete and up-to-date electric light plant to be erected at the rear of their Austral Terrace premises and by means of this Katanning towns-folk will be supplied to order with the light that does not fail.²⁸

In 1904, the general store of F. & C. Piesse was sold and, in 1905, the partnership dissolved, with F. H. Piesse retaining the *Premier Flour Mill*.²⁹ F. H. Piesse died in 1912 and his son, F. T. R. Piesse, took over the management of the mill and increased the capacity of the plant to 2,000 lbs an hour.³⁰

By 1914, the mill was progressing well and had received contracts from as far afield as Egypt. This stimulated F. T. R. Piesse to build large steel storage silos and to install more modern machinery with an automatic conveyor to move the wheat to the mill. High above the front entrance he erected a two metre high electric name sign.³¹

As a working mill, the mill was an important source of employment for a number of the townspeople over the years and the mill whistle, which was blown every day at 'smoko', lunch time and to signify the end of the day's work, became the time clock which regulated the rest of the town's activities.³² The sight of horse drawn wagons going to and fro along the spur line of the railway created an interesting diversion for many of the residents and played an important part in framing the identity of the town.³³

24 Katanning's Jubilee, pp. 8, 16. For a full discussion of the history of Katanning see Bignell.

25 *ibid.*, p. 95.

26 Katanning's Jubilee, p. 8; Best, extract.

27 National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

28 Best, extract.

29 Bignell, p. 208.

30 Katanning's Jubilee, p. 16.

31 Bignell, p. 266.

32 Katanning Shire Council, p. 1.

33 *ibid.*

In 1921, F. T. R Piesse suspended operations, citing unprofitability as the cause³⁴ although, there is evidence to suggest that F. & C. Piesse were, in fact, expanding their mill holdings elsewhere in the State as both the Cottesloe *Eureka Flour Mill* and the *Kellerberrin Mill* were purchased by them in this year.³⁵

The prospect of the *Premier Flour Mill* closing was so devastating to the economic well being of Katanning that the mill's bankers decided to reopen the mill, in 1922, under the management of D. Wilson.³⁶ The mill was still owned by F. T. R. Piesse but, when he died in 1925, his executors decided to close the mill. However, a local company was formed by several of the town's leading businessmen to take over the mill and, on 14 June 1927, the mill reopened with the name of *Katanning Flour Mills Limited*, under the management of W. J. Cobb.³⁷ The new company commenced to function with a capital of £25,000 of which £20,000 had been subscribed from the district. The initial share holding was diverse and represented a cross section of the town: mill hands, farmers, labourers, housewives, railway employees, small business owners and large merchants bought shares to keep the mill afloat. Although no longer in Piesse family ownership, the Piesse family continued to have an association with *Katanning Roller Flour Mill* until the 1930s with both E. S. R. Piesse (Chairman) and H. V. Piesse on the Board of Directors.³⁸

The new company specialised in farmer's gristing orders and the manufacture of bran, pollard, semolina, "Swan" rolled oats and other products, in addition to the main product: "Swan" flour, and the milling of proprietary brand-name flours for outside retailers. An extensive export market for the mill products was established by the new management, while the main product "Swan Flour" was used by all the leading bakers in the state.³⁹

Shortly afterwards, some shops and offices were constructed in front of the mill on the Clive Street and Austral Terrace frontages. The new buildings were managed by the mill and included the mill office.

Included in the purchase was the town's electric light and power plant, which was immediately upgraded with the installation of a 150 h.p. Rushton Hornsby crude oil generator. This generator supplied the town until 1961, when the SEC purchased the power plant and electrical distribution system on the 4 December 1961 at £85,125. During 1962, the Katanning supply was converted to AC power.⁴⁰ This necessitated the

34 Bignell, p. 286.

35 Information from Palassis Architects: 'Conservation Plan Stage One: Statement of Significance: Cottesloe Flour Mill, Cottesloe' (for Oldfield Knott, Architects, December 1993, no pagination.) chronological section, 1921.

36 Bignell, p. 287.

37 *ibid.*, p. 289; Both the *Eureka Flour Mill* and the *Kellerberrin Flour Mill* owned by F. & C. Piesse were also put on the market at this time. See Palassis Architects, chronological section 1927.

38 Katanning's Jubilee, p. 16.

39 *ibid.*

40 *ibid.*

conversion of motors, starters and wiring in the mill machinery to accommodate the new power supply.

In the early 1970s, the mill complex was purchased by the *Katanning Oat Milling Company*. The *Katanning Oat Milling Company* specialised in oat and stockfeed milling rather than flour milling⁴¹ and by 1976, the company had closed the flour milling operation because it was no longer considered economically viable.⁴² The *Katanning Oat Milling Company* continued to mill oats and stockfeed until 1981 when they liquidated their assets after a lucrative offer for the site from a large supermarket chain who wished to redevelop the site.

The proposed redevelopment included the demolition of the mill building. A public outcry ensued. A petition for the retention of the mill had been circulated, in 1979, and 600 people signed it.⁴³ There was a high level of public support for the retention of the building in the community. It was argued, in the press, that the mill was integral to the formation of Katanning as a town and that the mill should be preserved as a museum to celebrate the forthcoming Centenary Year of Katanning (1989).⁴⁴ The council was offered the mill for nothing if it purchased the three adjoining shops for \$19,000. On this basis, the mill and its equipment was purchased by the Katanning Shire Council, in 1981. A loan was taken out and the rent from the shops (\$3,600 p.a.) was used to recoup the purchase price.⁴⁵ At the time of purchase, the mill was in a generally dilapidated condition with a leaky roof, inappropriate paint treatments, and the facade of the mill obscured by the shops which were of poor architectural quality.⁴⁶ Funding, through the National Estates grants programme, was made of \$22,000 and the initial stages of restoration - cleaning and making the building secure - began.⁴⁷ Local community involvement included school children helping to clean the mill each Thursday afternoon.⁴⁸ A Flour Mill Museum Committee was formed and in unique move to finance the restoration of the mill, invited the American Seventh Fleet to Katanning three times, during 1981 and 1982, for their 'rest and recreation' break. \$15,000 was raised for the mill's restoration.⁴⁹

With further funding made available, in 1987, to celebrate Australia's forthcoming Bicentennial Year (1988), considerable work was done on the repair and restoration of the building and rehabilitation of the interior areas in order to render them suitable for public viewing.⁵⁰

41 Katanning Shire Council, p. 3.

42 *ibid.* p. 1.

43 Segal, M. "Oat Mill may become town's tourist attraction" *Great South News* 11 March 1981.

44 *The Great Southern Herald* 24 December 1980.

45 Zekulich, M. "Old mill gets a champion" *Australian* 28 March 1981.

46 National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

47 Terlick, P. "Major boost for Old Flour Mill" *The Great Southern Herald* 10 December 1981 p. 1.

48 *The Great Southern Herald* 8 July 1982.

49 "Watch out girls - the Navy's coming to town" *The Great Southern Herald* 20 August 1981.

50 McKay, and Richards, p. 1; see also Katanning Shire Council.

In 1989, the mill was open to the public as a tourist attraction and housed the Katanning Tourist Association; the archives and a display of memorabilia of Kobeelya School,⁵¹ changing displays of the work of local craft-workers, the records of the 1989 Katanning Schools Reunion, and historical records and displays related to the mill itself.⁵²

As a museum, the mill is a tourist attraction and is used in the promotion of Katanning as a tourist destination. The museum also acts as an educational and historical research facility and as centre for cultural activity and interest for the local community.⁵³

The purchase and renovation of the place by the Shire of Katanning indicates a high degree of commitment for its retention within the community.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is a purpose-built three storey roller flour mill, with a basement under the northern section. It was constructed, in 1891, as the *Premier Flour Mill* for F. & C. Piesse.⁵⁴ It is sited on the corner of Clive Street and Austral Terrace in Katanning and occupies the highest point of the townscape.⁵⁵ The site was originally 3 acres in size and incorporated the mill, offices, the store, a large warehouse and a blacksmith shop, various machinery and ducting.⁵⁶

The mill was sited near the railway to facilitate the off-loading of grain and the shipment of the finished products. A spur line enters the mill site from Austral Terrace on the east side, runs for the depth of the building and continues further. Produce was loaded into wagons by means of an overhead timber chute which was lowered from the underside of the first floor which spans the line. The rail connection is extant but unused.⁵⁷ The form of the mill buildings and the extension of the spur line onto the site to incorporate direct access to the railway yards adjacent, reflected the new technology available for milling in large quantities and the collective process of storing grain and producing flour in one large operation and railing out the finished products for distribution and sale.⁵⁸

The mill is built in English bond red brick and has a corrugated iron roof. The building is 12.6m high with a 19.5m stack.⁵⁹ The height of the building was, at the time of construction, an important component of its function as a mill, as gravity conveyance was used in the milling process to move the product from process to process.

51 Kobeelya School was established in the former Piesse residence in Katanning and, therefore, has a historical connection with the Mill.

52 McKay, P. and Richards, O. 'Katanning Mill and Museum, Katanning, Western Australia' (Report to the Western Australian Heritage Committee, October 1989) p. 1.

53 McKay, and Richards, (1991), p. 1.

54 Katanning Shire Council

55 *ibid.*, p. 3.

56 *Australian Advertiser* 28 May 1890, p. 3. quoted in Bignell, p. 84.

57 Katanning Shire Council, pp. 3, 31.

58 National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

59 *Australian Advertiser* 4 May 1891.

The building is a simple rectangular form with parapeted gables. The ornamentation and facade treatment reflects the functional nature of the manufacturing process that the building accommodates. It has well-defined brick detailing - the facades are divided into bays by brick piers, which run uninterrupted through its full height and are finished by a brick capping which originally carried the name of the building. Windows and other openings are placed symmetrically within the facade and, together with the piers, set up a pleasing rhythm. The proportions of the windows, along with piers emphasise the verticality of the building and visually reduce its bulk.⁶⁰ The building originally had a bull nose verandah to both the Clive Street and Austral Terrace facades.

The internal structure of the building is of jarrah posts and beams. The floors are of tongue and groove jarrah timber in a variety of sizes, fixed to jarrah joists.⁶¹ The roof structure is of two types. The first type consists of rafters supported at the wall plate and at the centre of the space by timber columns. The second type consists of five trusses which are a cross between a king and a queen post truss. The whole of the roof is covered with corrugated galvanised iron sheeting.⁶²

In 1902, the mill was altered to double its production capacity to that of 1,000 lbs of flour per hour.⁶³ In 1909, the mill was upgraded to again double its milling capacity but there is no record of actual physical intervention in the fabric.⁶⁴ In 1912, the capacity of the plant was again increased to 2,000 lbs an hour.⁶⁵ Further improvements included gantries, electric elevators and conveyors, a storehouse capable of holding 1,500 tons of wheat, and five large silos with a capacity of 40,000 bags.⁶⁶ In 1914, a large steel storage silo for the store grain, and more modern machinery with an automatic conveyor to move the wheat to the mill was installed, together with a two metre high electric name sign.⁶⁷ Some time after the original construction of the mill (perhaps at the time of the 1914 expansion), extensions to the Austral Terrace facade were made, in a manner which followed the style of the earlier building and the effect has been to strengthen the rhythm already set up.⁶⁸

In 1927, further upgrading of the mill, now under the name of *Katanning Flour Mills Limited*, was undertaken, including the installation of a 150 h.p. Rushton Hornsby crude oil generator to provide more electricity.⁶⁹

In the 1930s, the bullnose verandah was removed and a series of small shops were built in front of the mill, obscuring the lower portion of the mill. The shops were freestanding with approximately a six inch gap

60 Katanning Shire Council, p. 5.

61 *ibid.*, p. 7.

62 *ibid.*

63 National Trust Assessment Exposition, September 1982.

64 *ibid.*

65 Katanning's Jubilee, p. 16.

66 *ibid.*

67 Bignell, p. 266.

68 Katanning Shire Council, p. 5.

69 Katanning's Jubilee, p. 16.

between them and the front of the mill. The details and proportions of the shops did not relate well to the original structure.⁷⁰

The flour mill remained in production until 1976. Oat milling continued to be operated from the site. The flour milling machinery was unused but remained insitu. The building began to deteriorate in condition. By 1981, the roof leaked and there was a general air of dereliction. Also, the red bricks, above the line of the shops, and the external timber joinery of the building were painted, in an inappropriate colour (lime-green), at some stage in the 1970s.

Conservation and renovation of the place began, in 1987, with the demolition of the free-standing shops in front of the mill. The demolition did not interfere with the original fabric of the building. With the shops removed a verandah was reinstated. For safety purposes the new verandah is cantilevered from the building, but it retains the same design elements as the original verandah. The original, unpainted brickwork remains and the new verandah is at the same height as the previous shops. The brickwork above the verandah has been repainted in a more appropriate cream colour upon recommendation from the National Trust.

The interior areas were enlarged and made safe to render them suitable for public access.⁷¹ Lighting suitable for the illumination of the machinery for museum purposes was installed, floors and walls where machinery had been removed were repaired, new fire escapes installed, missing brickwork made good, old stairs repaired, ventilation improved and access made easier for the disabled.⁷²

The mill houses various amounts of the original milling equipment on each of the floors. The machinery on the ground floor level is not complete but there is still a substantial amount in place.⁷³ The machinery in the basement and on the first and second floor is largely intact and in a generally good condition. Some conservation of the machinery was undertaken in 1989.⁷⁴

Katanning Roller Flour Mill is currently used as a museum and offices for the Katanning Tourist Association.⁷⁵ A delicatessen occupies premises adjoining the main mill building which were originally the mill office and laboratory and this business also utilises a small part of the mill building for a storeroom.

13.3 REFERENCES

⁷⁰ Katanning Shire Council, p. 5.

⁷¹ Photographs held on file, HCWA NEP 81/82; Katanning Shire Council, p. 1.

⁷² For a full discussion of the changes to the fabric of the building prior to and during conversion see Katanning Shire Council, pp. 31 ff. Also McKay, and Richards, (1991), pp. 6 ff; Richards, R. *The Murray District of Western Australia*. (Shire of Murray, Harvey, WA 1978).

⁷³ McKay, and Richards, (1989), p. 3.

⁷⁴ see McKay, and Richards, O. (1991), pp. 5-6, 14.

⁷⁵ McKay, and Richards, (1989), p. 1.

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