

**Place name** Esso-BHPP buildings

**Survey Date:** 04/07/2004

**Other name**

**Id:** 973

**Street** 64 to 72 Foster Street

**Last Update** 04/10/2004

**Locality** Sale

**Postcode**

**Official Locality**

**Property No**

**Local Government Area** Wellington Shire

**Precinct:** Not in precinct

**Easting**

**Northing**

**Map**

**Workshop number**

**Workshop votes**

**Field survey number**

**Community priority**

**Designer** Production Department, Esso Ltd.

**Builder**

**Ownership** Shire

**Built Date** 1975, 1986 **Change Date**

**Description** The Esso-BHPP offices are located at the southern fringes of the city with frontage on the southern side of Foster Street. At the Foster Street boundary, the land is approximately 5-6 metres below street level, sloping towards the banks of the Sale Canal. The offices are contained within two wings, constructed in reinforced concrete and built in 1975 and 1986 respectively. As a whole the complex represents a good example of Late Modern architectural ideas in office design.

The earlier wing, to the east of the site, is the most architecturally interesting section of the building. Two massive horizontal bands delineate the two levels of offices and continue in unbroken manner along the street. Constructed of precast slabs, these sections of wall appear to hover above the recessed windows which are barely visible due to shading. The entrance is positioned asymmetrically with a rhombus-shaped hood projecting towards the street. Natural light enters each office through two internal courtyards and outer offices have views over the Sale Canal.

The later section of the building is a four storey structure connected to the east wing by covered passage ways on two floors. The cubic form of this building echoes the horizontality of the former section but emphasises the tensile qualities of the structure rather than attempting to create the illusion of heavy masonry as in the earlier section. The facade is broken only by the vertical interruption of the stairwell on the west wall and the irregular form of the services block which protrudes above roof level on the east side. Metal grid structures shade the windows which are flush with the smooth wall surfaces, allowing views over sweeping lawns to the west and towards the canal.

The Esso-BHPP office complex is in excellent condition, demonstrating two successive designs, sympathetic in form and materials.

Feature	Style	Wall Materials	Roof Materials
Building	Modern	Concrete	Not visible/known

**Condition** Excellent

**Integrity** Intact

Redevelopment/change

Commercial

Building

**National Themes**

**Local Themes**

7. BUILDING SETTLEMENTS & TOW

7.1 Ports

**History**

The site occupied by Esso-BHPP Australia has a long association with industries important to the local economy. Part of the site was an early saw mill, located for strategic reasons near the canal where timber was received via river transport. In the Inter-war years, the site was occupied by the Sale District Co-operative Butter and Cool Store Ltd. which later became Gippsland Amalgamated Milk Products.(1)

The Butter factory foundation stone was relaid when the office complex for Esso was established in 1975 to the designs of the firm's own engineering department.(1)

Oil was discovered in the Bass Strait off Ninety Mile Beach in 1967, establishing Sale as an oil and gas 'boom town'. Although the main treatment plant was established at nearby Longford, Sale became the administrative centre for the firm and the residential centre for many of its employees. The establishment of the firm had significant effects on the growth of the town, resulting in the upgrading of services to residents in the form of

improved water supply and waste disposal.(3)

An article in The Bulletin of August 1969 records changes to Sale due to the establishment of Esso. Richter Bawden, the drilling contractor for Esso was located in galvanised iron offices near the stockyard and other service companies such as Tri-state, Baker Oil Tools, Halliburton, Schulmberger, Directional Drillers, Helicopter Utility Services and Christiansen Diamond Products had also set up premises in the town. Accommodation for employees was in scarce supply causing high rental inflation while local hotels such as the Criterion were permanently booked and the caravan park full. The subdivision of 500 private and 200 Housing Commission allotments was instigated to satisfy the housing demand.(3) The Esso housing in Inglis Street and later executive housing in Hutchison and Patten Streets are examples of this residential development.

Esso-BHPP decided to relocate its head quarters to Melbourne in December 1991. At that time around 200 employees and their families were resident in Sale.(4) The Esso offices were sold to the City of Sale and have been converted to the new municipal offices for the (now) Wellington Shire.

**REFERENCES**

- (1) 'Weekly Trading Guide', July 2, 1986.
- (2) Property details provided by Public Affairs Consultant, Esso.
- (3) 'The Bulletin', August 9, 1969, p.75.
- (4) 'The Age'. 5/5/93 (Property pages).

Period	Associations
	Esso Australia Ltd.

Heritage Protections Register	Reference	Zoning	Status
Planning Scheme	x		Recommended

**National Estate**

**Research Required**

**Recommendations** Worthy of further comparative analysis.

**Fieldwork priority?**

**Stage 1 Ranking** Assessed: Sale Heritage Stu **Stage 2 priority** Planning Scheme: Individua

**Final Ranking** Local significance **Final Recommendation**

**Statement of significance** The Esso-BHPP office complex at 64 to 72 Foster Street, Sale is of local aesthetic and historic significance to Wellington Shire. Aesthetically, the buildings are of architectural interest as examples of Late Modern design, reflecting the 'up-to-date' corporate image of the firm. Historically, it is significant for its associations with a firm which had a significant impact on the growth of Sale in the 1960s and 1970s. (RNE criteria A.4, F.1)

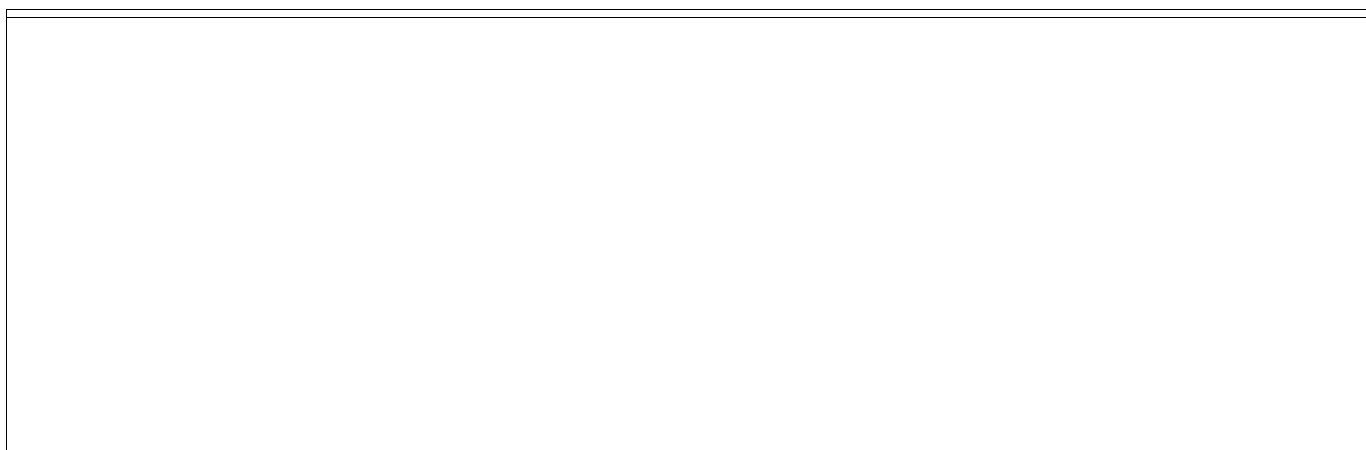
**Extent of designation**

**Informant**

**Notes**

**Follow up**

<b>Bibliography</b>	Context Pty Ltd, (1994), City of Sale Heritage Study Context Pty Ltd, (2004), Wellington Heritage Study: Sale Review
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Foster Street 0064, ID 973.jpg

Context

01/01/1994



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Judy Powell

22/09/2006



UpdateFoster Street 0064-0072, ID 0973(xii).jpg

Kristy Crawford

25/01/2007



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Kristy Crawford

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