

Heritage Inventory

SHI Number
1910597

Item Name: **Former Sulphide Corporation Assay Building**

Location: **13 A Main Road, Boolaroo**

Address: 13 A Main Road
Suburb / Nearest Town: Boolaroo 2284
Local Govt Area: Lake Macquarie
State: NSW
DUAP Region: Hunter & Central Coast
Historic region: Lower Hunter
Parish:
County:

Other/Former Names:

Area/Group/Complex: **Group ID:**

Aboriginal Area: Awabakal

Curtilage/Boundary:

Item Type: **Group:** **Category:**

Owner: Private - Corporate

Admin Codes: **Code 2:** **Code 3:**

Current Use:

Former Uses:

Assessed Significance: **Local** **Endorsed Significance:**

Statement of Significance: The remaining early assay building has strong Local and Regional heritage significance in its ability to demonstrate both the early and latter associations with the evolving nature of the Former Cockle Creek Sulphide Corporation, and the closure and remediation of the site by Pasminco for alternative uses. It is an instrumental development building from a key period of development of the site and its prosperous beginnings in the early twentieth Century. These beginnings also saw the first major industrial process develop in the area and was an impetus for the ongoing development of the nearby Boolaroo township. Whilst largely a utilitarian building it has some landmark qualities with its distinctive over scaled roof line and its proximity and location to the main entry road to the site. The retention of the building has strong social significance to the local and regional community as the last remaining building from the 100 years of heavy industry on the site. The local and regional historical societies have expressed a clear desire for the retention of the building. The former Assay building demonstrates some rarity as the last remaining building on the site from the previous significant use that has been able to remain, especially when other significant buildings have been demolished for reasons of high contamination. The intactness of the western room is a good representative example of its use and function within the site and clearly demonstrates as a laboratory. The relationship of the building to the main entry road is also representative of the early functions and layout of the site and will benefit future interpretation.

Historical Notes or Provenance: The development of the Boolaroo township was closely tied to the development of the Sulphide Corporation on the subject site. The site was selected in 1895 and began development almost immediately. By 1899 there were almost 400 employees at the Sulphide Corporation Works. Apart from the newly constructed buildings of the Sulphide

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Corporation, there was very little further development in the district. It was the first major heavy industry in the Hunter region. In 1988 the site became subject of a merger and became Pasminco Limited. In 1991 a community health survey revealed widespread soil and dust contamination and elevated children's blood lead levels. In September 2003 the Pasminco Cockle Creek site was closed and underwent a major process of demolition and remediation of the site. The site is currently subject to a major plan being prepared for its future use.

Themes:

Designer:

Maker / Builder:

Year Started: 1915

Year Completed:

Circa: No

Physical Description: The exterior of the building is a relatively simple, single story, utilitarian rectilinear building of red face brickwork. It consists of four distinct sections: The main original building, 1915. The eastern extensions, 1966. The northern annex and toilet amenities, 1961, and the north eastern chemical store and equipment room, 1968.

Physical Condition: Generally the building is in good structural condition. The building has not been well maintained in recent years and many of the finishes and fixtures are in need of repair.

Modification Dates:

**Recommended
Management:**

Management:

Further Comments:

Criteria a) The former Sulphide Corporation assay office has some local historical significance as the last surviving remnant of the former operations on the site. It is associated with the early developmental stages and historic phase of the site, which saw the first major industrial process develop in the area and was an impetus for the development of the nearby Boolaroo township. The historic significance is through the association with the the growth and development of the Sulphide Corporation and was due to the prosperous operations at the time with the record production of lead bullion, which spurred further development in the company. Whilst this is a tenuous association it still meets the guidelines for inclusion but is of limited specific historic significance as an assay building.

Criteria b) The former assay building has strong and special associations with the significant development of the Sulphide Corporation, which was a major industry for the region, both domestically and internationally. The company was forward thinking and ever evolving in its processes and work practices. The assay building by its nature in testing and research would have played a significant role in the progressive development and operations of the company.

Criteria c) The former assay office has limited aesthetic significance and is essentially a utilitarian

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building from the late Federation period. The steep and large profile of the roof has some potential for its unusual relative scale to the building and does demonstrate the nature of the building and its attempts at the time for internal thermal control of the building. The roof form would have played a distinctive role in the cultural landscape of the working site as a denotable landmark on the entry road to the site. The retention of the building has a similar opportunity to continue this distinctive quality as a landmark in the evolving site.

- Criteria d)** The Sulphide Corporation has strong ties to the local community as per the overall site significance. In the recent demolition of the buildings on the site much interest was shown by the local and regional historical societies for the retention of some of the earlier buildings. For contamination reasons the buildings could not be retained. The subject building does not carry the same contamination concerns and the local and regional historical societies have expressed their strong desire to Lake Macquarie Council for the retention of the building for reasons of social significance.
- Criteria e)** Whilst the purpose for the building was for research and testing, the remaining building is largely just a warehouse for these activities and there is little technical potential for the building to demonstrate further scientific information. Some of the early scientific testing equipment may have some potential as moveable heritage items, although this has not been specifically determined. The moveable items will be retained and form part of the interpretive collection for later assessment.
- Criteria f)** As the last remaining building to be retained from the former significant use for the site, the assay building does have some rarity value. The retention of the building aids significantly in avoiding the complete loss of all built evidence of this former use.
- Criteria g)** The former assay building is a good representative example of an early assay and laboratory building of this type. This especially includes the intact custom interior of the western room.

Integrity / Intactness:

References:	Author	Title	Year
	Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd	Heritage Consultants	2009

Studies:

Parcels:	Parcel Code	LotNumber	Section	Plan Code	Plan Number
	LOT	201		DP	805914

Latitude:

Longitude:

Location validity:

Spatial Accuracy:

Map Name:

Map Scale:

AMG Zone:

Easting:

Northing:

Listings:

Custom Field One:

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Custom Field Two:

Custom Field Three:

Custom Field Four:

Custom Field Five:

Custom Field Six:

Data Entry: **Date First Entered:** 25/02/2010 **Date Updated:** 18/05/2010 **Status:** Basic

Item Name: **Former Sulphide Corporation Assay Building**

Location: **13 A Main Road, Boolaroo**

Image/s:



Caption: Former Assay Building

Copyright:

Image by:

Image Date:

Image Number:

Image Path:

Image File: 1910597.jpg

Thumb Nail Path:

Thumb Nail File: