

# WHERE THE PAST COLLIDES WITH THE FUTURE



DEVELOPER : The Perri Group  
ARCHITECT : Tandem Design Studio  
HERITAGE ARCHITECT : Bryce Raworth  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER : Webber Design

The revitalisation of West Footscray's historic Wool Store is transforming the iconic site into a premium, high-amenity precinct. The 4-storey warehouse includes 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of modern office space, as well as meticulously restored heritage features complemented by advanced infrastructure.

**In Melbourne's inner west, a striking transformation is unfolding.** West Footscray Wool Store, a proud industrial relic from the mid-20th century, has been reborn as a dynamic business, leisure and logistics hub.

The Perri Group is redefining what it means to repurpose heritage sites for modern industry. "WEFO is where the past collides with the future," says David Scalzo, Managing Director. "We've honoured the building's original purpose while shaping a cutting-edge destination for the next wave of innovation and enterprise."

The original 4-storey wool store, built between the 1940s and 1950s, was once a vital part of Victoria's export economy. Today, it has been meticulously restored and reinvented by The Perri Group as part of the Western Industrial Precinct, a key State Significant Industrial Land (SSIL) earmarked for growth under Plan Melbourne 2017–2050.

With over 11,200m<sup>2</sup> of high-bay warehousing and flexible workspace, the development is set to become the 'new Port Melbourne', offering next-gen infrastructure, logistics, and lifestyle facilities, located 5 km from the CBD and 3 km from the Port of Melbourne.

"The site was strategically acquired to provide unmatched accessibility," David explains. "Tenants enjoy proximity to two train stations, 125+ car spaces, state-of-the-art wellness and end-of-trip amenities, plus potential F&B offerings and recreation zones."

Restoring the building came with its share of complexities. The original sawtooth roof was removed and replaced due to asbestos. High-bay lighting and modern fire systems were installed. Iconic steel windows were removed, sandblasted, and reglazed with thermal-efficient E-glass. "Retaining the building's industrial DNA while achieving modern comfort was one of our biggest challenges," David said. "But it was worth it. We've made something timeless."

Heritage restoration also extended to the building's original 'Goldsbrough & Mort Wool Store' signage and Victorian Ash floorboards, each detail carefully revived.

True to its future-forward mission, the WEFO Wool Store was developed under an endorsed Sustainable Management Plan (SMP) in line with the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS). From solar panels and LED lighting to thermal glazing, rainwater harvesting, and high indoor



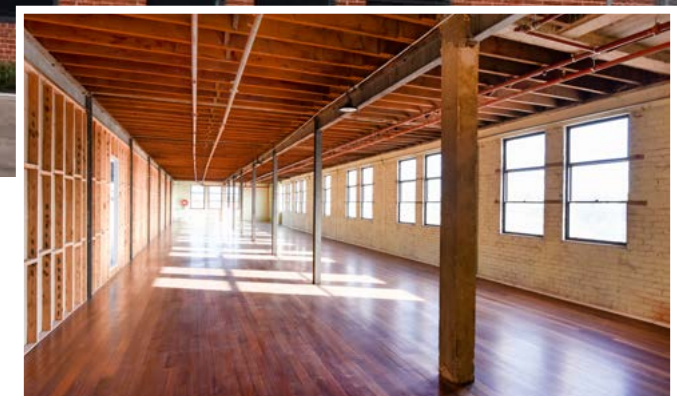
environmental quality, every aspect was designed with sustainability and wellbeing in mind.

Additional measures, such as bicycle transport facilities, low-VOC materials, and a waste management strategy that diverted over 70% of demolition material from landfill, helped create a development that's as environmentally conscious as it is commercially compelling.

"We've delivered a space that balances high function with environmental responsibility," said David.

Beyond the bricks and mortar, WEFO is a place with identity. Its rebirth has elevated the local streetscape, revived community pride, and set a new standard for placemaking in West Footscray.

"It's more than a commercial park," explained David. "It's a landmark. Locals and visitors alike comment on how good it is to see the building brought back to life. It now serves a whole new generation



of innovators, while continuing to tell the story of Melbourne's industrial past."

The WEFO Wool Store exemplifies The Perri Group's commitment to delivering projects that are not only commercially viable but socially and culturally meaningful. By seamlessly integrating heritage, sustainability, and innovation, the development offers tenants space, a sense of identity, connection, and opportunity within a thriving inner-urban community.

From neglected wool store to multi-tenanted, activated precinct, The Perri Group's work on the WEFO Wool Store is a masterclass in adaptive reuse, and a bold vision of what's possible when history, design, and future-focused enterprise come together.

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# SAFEGUARDING WEFO WOOL STORE WITH END-TO-END FULL SCOPE SECURITY

AHS Security Group played a pivotal role in the WEFO Wool Store redevelopment, delivering end-to-end security solutions across both the construction and operational phases. This high-profile mixed-use precinct, blending retail, commercial, and hospitality spaces with heritage architecture, required a security plan that was both robust and adaptable.

“Our scope of work covered the entire lifecycle of the project,” said Hass Al, Client Services Manager at AHS Security Group. “From conducting a full risk assessment to deploying static guards, mobile patrols, and solar-powered CCTV with motion detection and remote access, we ensured the site was fully protected at every stage.”

The team faced unique challenges inherent to mixed-use developments. “Precincts like WEFO Wool Store require layered security,” Hass explained. “We needed to protect high-traffic public

areas while maintaining strict control over back-of-house and restricted zones. At the same time, we had to make sure our security presence didn’t interfere with the visitor experience, especially in hospitality and retail spaces.”

Given the heritage significance of the Wool store, integrating modern security infrastructure required careful planning. “We worked closely with site managers and heritage consultants to select and position surveillance equipment discreetly, preserving the site’s architectural character and ensuring all installations were compliant and non-invasive,” said Hass.

To future proof the precinct, AHS Security Group implemented innovative solutions including mobile, solar-powered surveillance towers with 4G connectivity, providing real-time monitoring and flexible placement as site conditions evolved. “Our digital reporting system also gave site managers live updates, incident logs, and patrol verification,” Hass added. “It created a transparent, efficient communication loop that will continue to support the precinct into its operational phase.”

Through its combination of strategic planning, cutting-edge technology, and heritage-sensitive implementation, AHS Security Group has delivered a comprehensive security solution that safeguards both the legacy and future of the WEFO Wool Store precinct.

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## WHERE HISTORY MEETS MODERN ENGINEERING: HERITAGE-SAFE TESTING SOLUTIONS

In the ambitious transformation of Melbourne’s historic WEFO Wool Store, Integrity Testing International played a critical behind-the-scenes role in ensuring the century-old structure could support the demands of a modern redevelopment, without sacrificing its heritage character.

“Integrity was brought on as a specialist structural engineering consultant to understand the present structure’s ability to accommodate the proposed development, particularly its foundations, columns, and floor slabs,” explained Director Rikki Tongue. “With limited historical documentation and no room for error, Integrity Testing conducted a diagnostic investigation using proprietary non-destructive techniques to assess the structural integrity of the site.

“Our Mod-shock® foundational and column testing methods allowed us to evaluate load-bearing capacity and structural condition without intrusive excavation or disruption to the operational building,” said Rikki. “Especially at the southern end, where part of the floor slab was semi-suspended, we needed to determine which areas were safe to carry additional loads.”

The heritage nature of the Wool Store, combined with ongoing limited-use operations and potential asbestos presence, demanded a tailored approach. “We couldn’t rely on traditional geotechnical testing or destructive methods,” Rikki said. “Our systems are completely



non-destructive, portable, and low-impact, ideal for sites with sensitive heritage or safety concerns.”

In addition to foundational analysis, Integrity’s testing satisfied Australian and international compliance standards, including AS 2159-2009 and ISO 22477-10:2016. “All our methods align with ISO 9001-2015 quality standards,” Rikki added.

Working closely with the client and consulting engineers, Integrity ensured all data requirements were met ahead of major construction. Their real-time insights provided direct, in-situ measurements without the need for complex desktop conversions, saving time and reducing risk.

“Ultimately, our goal was to deliver accurate, efficient, and non-intrusive diagnostics that respected the heritage value of the structure,” said Tongue. And in doing so, Integrity Testing helped lay the groundwork—quite literally—for the Wool Store’s new future.

*For more information contact Integrity Testing International, email [info@integritytesting.com.au](mailto:info@integritytesting.com.au), phone 03 5444 0782, website [www.integritytesting.com.au](http://www.integritytesting.com.au)*





# ADAPTIVE FIRE SAFETY SOLUTIONS FOR COMPLEX HERITAGE SITES

At the revitalised WEFO Wool Store precinct, Focus Fire Protection delivered a performance-led fire safety solution that balanced modern compliance with heritage preservation, engineering a full-system overhaul within one of Melbourne’s most complex adaptive reuse environments.

“Our scope included stripping out and replacing the damaged concrete fire tanks, installing fully compliant modern replacements, refurbishing and recommissioning the site’s fire pumps, replacing every sprinkler head across the facility, and delivering a new, networked fire detection and evacuation system,” explains Mike Donohue, Project Lead at Focus Fire Protection.

The biggest challenge came in protecting the main warehouse, which required a fire safety overhaul within the high-ceilinged, heritage-sensitive, multi-use environment, with void ceilings approaching 20m high. Traditional point or beam detection was either non-compliant or impractical due to ongoing maintenance requirements.

Instead, Focus Fire Protection implemented a KIDDE MODULASER aspirating system, using long sample pipe runs with modular detection heads feeding into a central FIP. “It gave us reliable coverage in a harsh, dusty environment while respecting the heritage aesthetic,” Mike explained. “It’s a great example of performance-based engineering being done right.”

Focus Fire Protection also played a critical role in identifying flaws in early consultant drawings, saving the client more than \$500,000 through targeted value management, refined layouts and smarter

material strategies. Their collaboration with Fusion Fire also ensured full compliance with AS1670 and AS7240 battery recharge standards, an area often overlooked.

“WEFO is a project we’re incredibly proud of, but our work in the BESS sector is equally exciting,” says Mike. “We’re doing some great things in battery energy storage fire protection right now, and the level of risk and innovation required in that space makes it a natural fit for our expertise.”

By combining heritage sensitivity with advanced detection technologies, Focus Fire Protection delivered a performance-based fire safety solution tailored to a challenging adaptive reuse environment—demonstrating the practical application of intelligent design in achieving lasting safety outcomes.



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