

Central Power Plant, Eyre Street

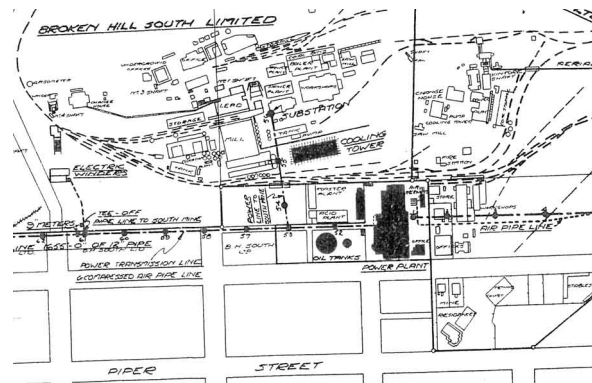
The Central Power Supply emerged as a result of discussions between the mines, all of which used electrical power underground and for surface works. Each mine required a surface generating plant typically powered by steam. Broken Hill, however, lacked fuel and water - two essentials for steam generation. Coal was imported and so, in cases of severe drought, was water. The plan for a central generating facility was first proposed by F J Mars, Consulting Electrical Engineer to several Broken Hill mines, in June 1927. A study into the advantages of steam versus diesel-powered generators was undertaken. Diesel-powered generators were recommended, based on considerations of the intermittent load and the cost of water. To construct and operate the power station a company, the Western New South Wales Electric Power Pty. Ltd, owned by the North Mine, Broken Hill South and the Zinc Corporation, was incorporated on 25 August 1930.

The power station was commissioned in July 1931 to deliver power with compressed air being delivered from September 1931. The plant consisted of six diesels driving generators supplying power to North Broken Hill (including the British Mine), Broken Hill South, The Zinc Corporation and the Sulphide Corporation in addition to the Public Works Department for pumps and the Stephen's Creek dam. Another four diesels supplied compressed air to the North Mine, Broken Hill South and the Zinc Corporation for use underground. Bunkers for fuel oil were erected on the site and at Port Pirie, with the fuel being transported by rail to the plant at Broken Hill.

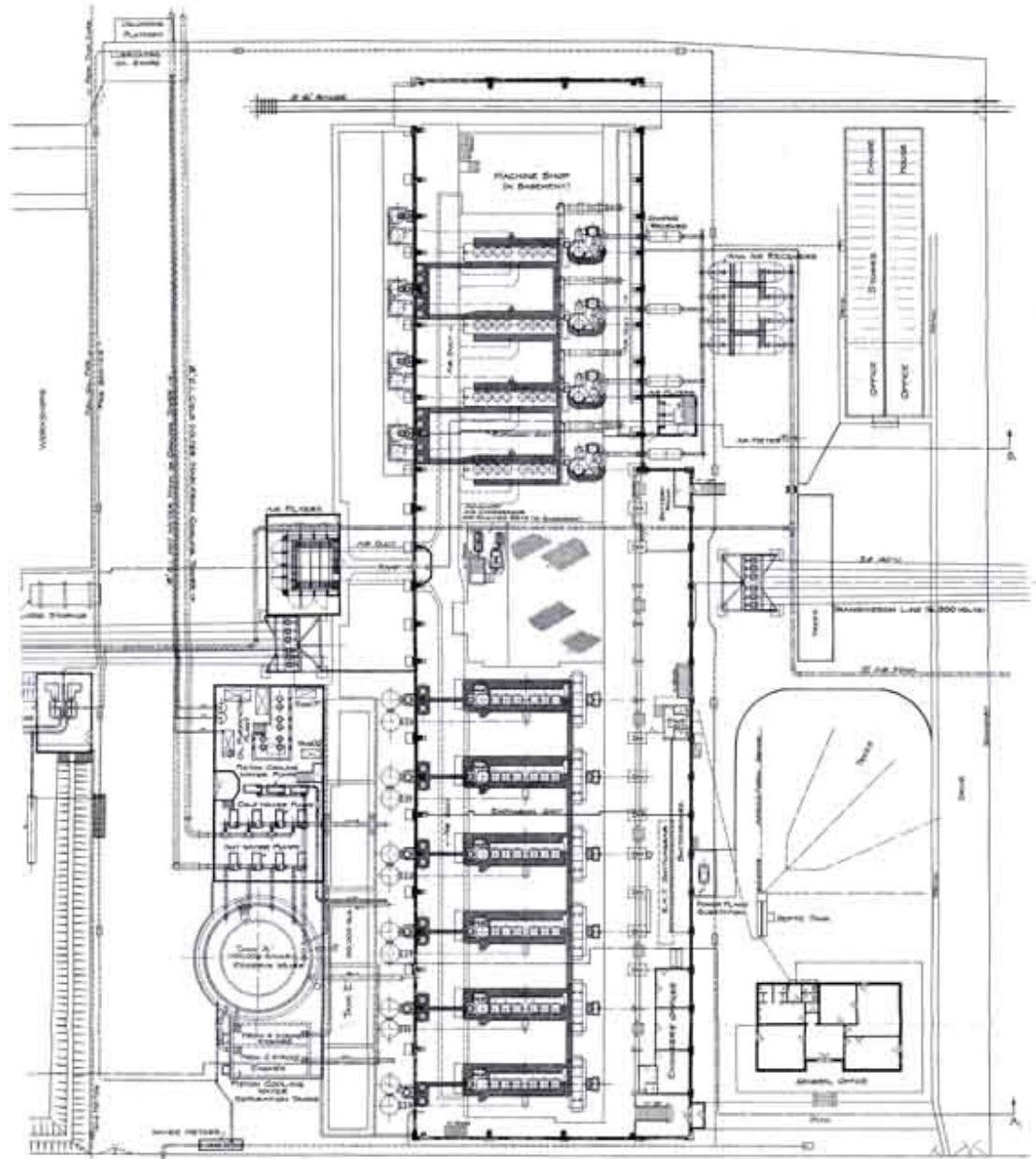
The CPS consists of two large steel framed buildings with cement rendered concrete walls resting on concrete foundations. They are joined in the centre by a cross wing. The southern of the two buildings (Station A) was constructed first in 1930, while the northern one (Station B) was constructed in 1949 - 50. The General Offices of the CPS are located on the Eyre St. frontage of the CPS complex. The building is a single storey concrete rendered building, with a timber framed roof clad with corrugated galvanised iron

The small stone building with red brick quoins, corrugated galvanised iron roof on timber trusses fronting Eyre Street, is the Central Mine Assay Office (presumably this is where Albert Morris worked). This building consists of two small wings joined across the centre. The centre section has a concrete veranda and the main access doors.

We cannot visit the interior of the building which in any cases has had its equipment removed however as we wiz around you will see remains of power lines and the compressed air main.



1932 Plan of the Power Station and surrounding mining infrastructure from BHP South and the Central mine.



WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES ELECTRIC POWER PTY. LTD.
 DIESEL ELECTRIC AND COMPRESSED AIR CENTRAL POWER PLANT
 FOR THE
 BROKEN HILL MINES (AUSTRALIA)
 SCALE - 5 INCH = 1 FOOT

Drawing No. C.P.P. 1 Drawn by E. J. ... Checked by ... Approved by ... General Superintendent July 1932
--

Plan of the Central Power Plan July 1932 (before it was duplicated), Eyre Street is at the bottom of the plan.