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# Excelsior Lodge of Industry Masonic Temple



Excelsior Lodge of Industry  
Masonic Temple, Hobsons  
Bay Heritage Study 2006



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## Location

21-25 Electra Street WILLIAMSTOWN, Hobsons Bay City

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO96

## Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Excelsior Lodge of Industry Masonic Temple, comprising the Hall designed by CJ Polain and constructed by RT Leak in 1890 and the 1932 addition designed by John W Parry and constructed by JH Whitham, at 21-25 Electra Street, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

The Excelsior Lodge of Industry Masonic Temple at 21-25 Electra Street, Williamstown is of local historic, social and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

#### Why is it Significant?

Historically and socially, it is significant for its strong associations with the early development of Masonic associations as the oldest known purpose built Masonic temple in the city. As a large architect designed building on a prominent site close to the Mechanics Institute the complex provides a powerful illustration of the importance of Masonic associations in the development of the Williamstown community during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The 1932 addition demonstrates the significant increase in membership of the Masonic societies in the period prior to World War 2. (AHC criteria A4 and G1)

Aesthetically, the 1890-91 building is significant as a superior example of a Masonic Temple, with notable design detail that expresses its Masonic role and demonstrates the importance of Masonic Societies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It relates to the nearby Mechanics Institute building and makes a significant contribution to the historic character of Electra Street as part of the important grouping of public buildings in this area. (AHC criteria E1 and F1)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006; |
| Architect/Designer        | Polain, CJ,   |
| Hermes Number             | 15026   |
| Property Number           |   |

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## Physical Description 1

The Masonic Hall at 21-25 Electra Street, Williamstown is a single-storey, red brick hall with a symmetrical Classical facade on its street elevation. It has a hipped slate roof behind its parapet. On its north side, set back from the street boundary, is a later interwar single-storey, double-fronted, brick addition with a hipped iron roof concealed behind the parapet. This contains

Significant original elements include:

- Rendered Corinthian pilasters
- Semi-circular arched openings with cement rendered archivolt
- Moulded stringcourse with dentils
- Consoled entablature with central pediment
- Balustraded parapet surmounted by beehives and orb
- Marble tablet on facade

The original centrally located doorway within the Classical facade has been closed in. A photograph from Williamstown Illustrated published in 1904 indicates that this was done soon after the building was completed. There are severe cracks in the facade.

## Integrity

External Integrity and condition

*Integrity - High. Condition - Fair*

## **Physical Description 2**

Context

The Masonic Hall forms part of a group of public buildings in Electra Street, which includes the adjoining Williamstown Mechanics Institute and Free Library in a related Classical style, and the Wesleyan Church complex (opposite).

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Developing Cultural Institutions and Ways of Life, Forming associations.

## **Physical Description 3**

*Associations*

Excelsior Lodge of Industry, Sir WJ Clark Bart, CJ Polain, JH Whitham.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*