Williamstown Post and Telegraph Office (Former)

Williamstown Post and Telegraph Office (former), Hobsons Bay Heritage Study 2006

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Location

1 Parker Street WILLIAMSTOWN, Hobsons Bay City

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO242

Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The former Williamstown Post & Telegraph office, designed by William Wardell and CG Ross and constructed by Daniel Sexton in 1860 with later additions, at 1 Parker Street, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

The former Williamstown Post & Telegraph office is of local historic, social and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it is significant as one of the oldest public buildings in Williamstown and illustrates the formative years in the development of the city during the mid nineteenth century. Part of the building is believed to be the oldest surviving Victorian Colonial Post Office. (AHC criteria A4 and G1)

Aesthetically, it is significant as a rare example of a public building in a quasi-domestic style seldom seen in contemporary public buildings. It provides a visual link between two important nineteenth century commercial streetscapes and successfully addresses its unusual island site by the multi-bayed style chosen. (AHC criteria E1 and F1)

Socially, it is significant for its strong associations with the Williamstown community as an important public building and meeting place for over 100 years until its closure in 1979. (AHC criterion G1)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;
Architect/Designer	Ross, CG, Wardell, William W.,
Hermes Number	22221
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Comparable with the two earlier medieval revival ecclesiastical residences in Williamstown (Holy Trinity parsonage, and St Mary's Presbytery), this building has the similar picturesque and Tudoresque overlayer to what appears as a less than picturesque base, because of the stuccoed cuboid nature of the pre-existing 1860 structure. Pointed arches to ground level openings with label moulds and grouped flat-arched main windows to the upper storey, reinforce the more overt Tudor trademarks of the half-timbered gables, oriels and pepper-pot chimneys.

Of the 1860 building only the west face and rear gabled roof form are indicative of its original state. Internally, much of the ground level internal subdivision has changed; the 1860 kitchen and stair hall being the surviving two spaces of the original five. The first floor's original residential role was replaced by staff amenities and so too has its subdivision been altered. Tree avenues that once lined the reserve in Cole and Parker Streets have been removed and intrusive modern buildings have been added to the reserve on the west of the building.

A recent renovation has provided a sympathetic colour scheme. There have been minor changes to the windows and the addition of coloured glazing. The interior has recently been stripped and rebuilt and a new picket fence has been erected.

Integrity

External Integrity and condition

Integrity - Moderate. *Condition* - Good

Physical Description 2

Context

A dominant site which bridges between the two 19th century commercial streetscapes in Nelson Place; albeit in a contrasting architectural style to the dominantly Renaissance revival elevations adjoining. However some visual link remains given the period detail (19th century) common to all. The multi-bayed design addresses itself to all elevations revealed by the near island siting and hence achieves spatial success, if not complete success when seen as a two dimensional infill between the two.

Historical Australian Themes

Establishing lines and networks of communication, Establishing postal services

Physical Description 3

Associations

Victorian Colonial Government

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/