
Former Melbourne Harbour Trust Willamstown Stores & Workshops



B6834 Melbourne Harbour Trust Stores

Location

Ann Street,, WILLIAMSTOWN VIC 3016 - Property No B6834

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1790

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 4, 2007

The Williamstown Workshop sheds, originally erected as a single cargo shed on North Wharf of the Yarra in 1887-88 and reconstructed as four separate sheds on specially reclaimed land at Ann Street Williamstown in 1921-22, are of architectural and historical significance at the State level.

With the remnant east end of Shed No 9 at South Wharf, they are the remains of the oldest surviving cargo sheds in the Port of Melbourne. The sheds retain the roof trusses and the ridge lanterns/vents of the original 1887-88

shed.

During relocation the sheds appear to have had most of their rolling timber doors replaced with multi-pane double hung sash windows, and the three sheds fronting the bay had half-timbering and decorative timber brackets added to the gable ends.

The 'Machine Shop' (Shed No. 2) retains an original timber sliding door.

The 'Store' (Shed No. 1) was reconstructed closest in form to the original, retaining its original chamfered timber columns and foilated metal straps.

The height of the other sheds was raised by the replacement of the timber posts with longer ones of rolled steel. The sheds are corrugated-iron clad, as was the original 1887-88 shed, and some of the windows from the original shed have been re-used.

Melbourne's other remaining nineteenth century cargo sheds have also been considerably altered. The small eastern remnant of No.9 Shed South Wharf (1888) has the most intact walls of an early shed. However it has been substantially damaged by fire, and converted for other maritime and tourism purposes over its history. Its present renovation includes the construction of a modern ridge lantern.

No. 2 Shed South Wharf (1891), once part of a much longer shed, has been moved to a new location and had a ridge lantern added as part of its adaptation for tourism purposes. When originally constructed, the sheds were part of the great period of port improvement occasioned by the formation of the Melbourne Harbour Trust in 1887. They are evidence of the movement of the port downstream as the river was widened and re-aligned, and of the building style used by the Trust at that time. The complex also expresses the Melbourne Harbour Trust's expansion and centralisation of its maintenance, repair and construction facilities at Williamstown in the early twentieth century, and the new Melbourne Harbour Trust policy of conducting maintenance internally rather than by outside contractors. The development of the Melbourne Harbour Trust Workshops was integral to the early twentieth century expansion of the Port of Melbourne in response to rapidly increasing trade and size of shipping, and other technological developments. The Workshop built and maintained dredges, floating and wharf cranes, service vessels, gangways and other equipment for the expanding and mechanising port. The Workshops also played a major role in providing maritime services for the Australian and United States fleets during the Second World War. While the complex has since been expanded, and complemented by a depot at Port Melbourne, it remains the oldest Melbourne Harbour Trust workshop. The site is relatively intact, and set in an historical maritime context which includes the Ann street Pier. Aesthetically, the buildings are of interest for their English Domestic Style timber detailing on otherwise utilitarian corrugated iron sheds was an attribute of some late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial buildings, notably the neo-Classical detailings of the Montague Goods Shed, and T Robinson Agricultural Implement Works in Spotswood, both of which have been demolished in recent years. The Ann Street workshops now constitute one of the last known examples of this type of industrial design in Victoria. The buildings are also significant for their retention of original trusses, which are rare surviving examples of the use of angle iron and tie rods, comparing with the few which remain in No. 9 Shed, South Wharf.

Classified: 03/02/1998

Hermes Number 65766

Property Number

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/>