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# Mechanics' Institute - Williamstown



B1017 Mechanics' Institute



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## Location

15 Electra Street, WILLIAMSTOWN VIC 3016 - Property No B1017

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

File only

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The gold rush and trade helped make Williamstown a busy and expanding seaport during the mid-19th century. The Mechanics Institute was begun in 1859, and was added to once in 1869 and again in 1874 to meet the demands of the town's growing population. The Williamstown Mechanics Institute is the oldest and most substantial in Victoria, having a two storey front section, side wings and rear hall. It is also an unusual example of a Mechanics Institute being on such a large block of land. The Institutue serves as an important reminder of a type of education facility, common from the mid 19th to early 20th centuries, now long since superseded by government run institutions.

Hermes Number 65831

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Williamstown mechanics institute was built variously in 1859, 1869 and 1874, the exact dates of each section are not clear. The building is built with stucco main (Electra Street) and rear hall facades (on Melbourne Road). The remainder of the exterior walls are face brick, now painted. The Electra street facade comprises a symmetrical two storey central block and single storey wings of unequal size on both sides. The northern is also symmetrically arranged around a central doorway, with pairs of roundheaded windows to either side. The southern wing is barely half the width and contains just 3 arched windows. Wings and main body have parapets each differing from the others. The southern is the simplest, just continuing on the string course, whilst the northern is a solid parapet and the two storey section has a full balustraded parapet with central nameplate. The interior rooms are simply and typically detailed.

*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/>*