
Williamstown City Council Electricity Supply Department (Former)



Williamstown City Council
Electricity Supply Department
(former), Hobsons Bay
Heritage Study 2006

Location

6 Bath Place WILLIAMSTOWN, Hobsons Bay City

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO27

Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The former Williamstown City Council Electricity Supply Department complex, designed by Morsby & Coates and constructed in 1929 with later additions, at 6 Bath Place, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

The former Williamstown City Council Electricity Supply Department complex at 6 Bath Place, Williamstown is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, the complex as a whole is significant for its strong associations with the City of Williamstown Electricity Supply department as perhaps the only remaining buildings in the municipality associated with this business. Williamstown was one of a small number of inner suburban councils to provide electricity supply and this complex illustrates the financial success of the business that had significant long-term benefits for the city, which included paying in full for the construction of the new town hall extension in 1926-27. (AHC criteria A4, B2 and G1)

Aesthetically, although basic in form and layout, the 1929 building is significant as a near original example of an Interwar industrial building, which expresses its former role by the integral signage on its front elevation. It therefore contributes to the precinct of municipal buildings and is also related to the Interwar commercial development in Ferguson Street. Finally, it is of interest as an example of the work of architects, Morsby & Coates, who designed a number of buildings for the City of Williamstown, including the nearby town hall during the Interwar period. (AHC criteria E1 and F1)

Note - this building was demolished in 2005.

Heritage Study/Consultant Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;

Architect/Designer Glynn, Bryan, Morsby & Coates,

Hermes Number 14972

Property Number

Physical Description 1

Allom Lovell & Associates (2000) provide the following description of former Williamstown City Council Electricity Supply Department complex:

Bath Street Wing (1929)

The original section of the building dates from 1929 and faces Bath Place. Constructed of unpainted red brick, the principal west elevation features a heavy stepped parapet element of unpainted grey render, which contains the words 'Williamstown City Council Electric Supply Department' in the render. The row of three vehicle door openings beneath the sign appears to be original. The southernmost bay of this elevation contains a door and single window, and appears possibly to be a later addition. Side walls to this wing are of red face brick with the alignment of the parapet reflecting the form of the sawtooth roof behind. The roof to this wing is supported by timber trusses on steel beams and is clad in corrugated Zinalume.

Internally, the southern end of this wing comprises a series of timber partitioned offices. In general, the layout and fabric of these rooms appears to date either from the construction of the building in 1929 or to be an early alteration. This area features an early vertical boarded dado treatment throughout. North of the offices, the building has exposed brick walls and a concrete floor and consists of two large open workshop areas, one of

which has been modified through the construction of new walls enclosing the driveway through the building.

The condition of this wing of the building is generally poor, with extensive cracking and water penetration throughout.

South-East Wing (1929/1965)

As noted above, the ground floor section of this utilitarian two-storey rear wing appears to date from 1929, but to have been extensively remodelled and extended in 1965 when the following works were undertaken:

- The existing brickwork to the external walls of the original rear wing was built up and a new asbestos clad sawtooth roof constructed. The walls are of face red brick with a plain parapet and render capping.
- Various door and window openings were altered and new ones created including a driveway access, which extended through the entire building, from Bath Place through to Wellington Parade.
- Also on the ground floor a series of amenities rooms were constructed and a new stair introduced, while on the first floor meter testing and storage rooms and a drawing office were constructed.

Externally, the buildings appear to be generally intact as remodelled in 1965, apart from the bricking up of two 1965 windows at ground floor level on the south elevation.

Internally, floors are concrete on the ground floor and timber at first floor level. On both levels the plan form of the building appears to be generally intact to the 1965 works. The ground floor accommodates the driveway and a series of staff rooms and toilets, while on the first floor are offices which originally accommodated the meter testing and storage rooms and a drawing office. Partition walls are generally lined with masonite.

North-East Wing (1960)

This wing is generally intact as constructed in 1960. Constructed of red brick, the building has a hipped roof clad with corrugated asbestos cement sheet. The principal east elevation to Wellington Parade has a plain brick parapet with a render capping and is dominated by three steel-framed multi-paned windows, while the north elevation has a continuous row of highlight windows and a large double door providing access onto the fenced yard to the north. Internally, the building comprises a single open space with a partitioned office in the south-east corner. The original mezzanine floor has been removed from the west end of the space.

Integrity

External Integrity and condition

Integrity - High. Condition - Fair (Varies)

Physical Description 2

Context

Forms part of a precinct of Interwar buildings in this area and is related by its function and style to the Williamstown Town Hall complex.

Historical Australian Themes

Development Local, Regional +National Economies; Power & Fuel

Physical Description 3

Associations

Williamstown City Council, Morsby & Coates

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/>