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# Williamstown Racecourse Site (Former) and Canary Island Palm Tree



Williamstown Racecourse Site (former) and Canary Island Palm Tree, Hobsons Bay Heritage Study 2006

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## Location

Racecourse Road ALTONA, Hobsons Bay City

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO262

## Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Williamstown Racecourse (former), originally established in 1869 and used until 1948, at Racecourse Road, Altona.

How is it Significant?

The Williamstown Racecourse (former) is of local historic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, it is significant as the remnants of one of the earliest racecourses in the metropolitan area and demonstrates the early development of recreational facilities within the municipality. The remnant built fabric assists in interpreting the history of this once important place, while the remnant Canary Island Palm is associated with the golden age of the course during the early twentieth century. (AHC criteria A4 and D2)

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

Construction dates 1869,

Hermes Number 22243

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Most of the buildings associated with the former Williamstown Racecourse were destroyed by fire or have been removed. The surviving elements include:

A single Canary Island Palm set in a circular remnant ornamental flower bed on the former site of the Bird Cage enclosure

The concrete base of the former Racecourse grandstand. A stencilled sign on the north and south wall faces of the base reads 'Williamstown Racecourse established c1870 Army Camp c1940-1945 Grandstand destroyed by fire 1946'.

Brick footings, and numerous broken bricks (Glen Iris and South Yarra fire bricks), lines of rusted steel cable fencing, an asphalt paved area and roadways, an underground concrete tank (septic?)

The graded line of the race track, which is still evident around the edge of the grass land. In the middle of the track are footing remnants of former buildings which may have been associated with the army camp or the hostel.

The former racecourse railway station site is north of the creek while at the creek crossing of Racecourse Road is a concrete ford which presumably replaces an earlier crossing marked on nineteenth century maps. North of the site is the Kororoit Creek, the brown brick, tiles and concrete of the 1969 Wiltona immigration hostel and to the south is the Pines scout camp. A section of basalt paving lies to the west of the camp. To the east is the bay and wetlands. A recent yellow concrete paved bike path has been built through all of this.

## Integrity

External Condition

The grandstand remnants and general layout next to the creek are ruins, although the palm is healthy.

External Integrity

Low.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Organising recreation, Playing and watching sports

## **Physical Description 3**

### *Associations*

City of Williamstown, Werribee Shire Council, Williamstown and Werribee Coursing Club?

*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/>*