

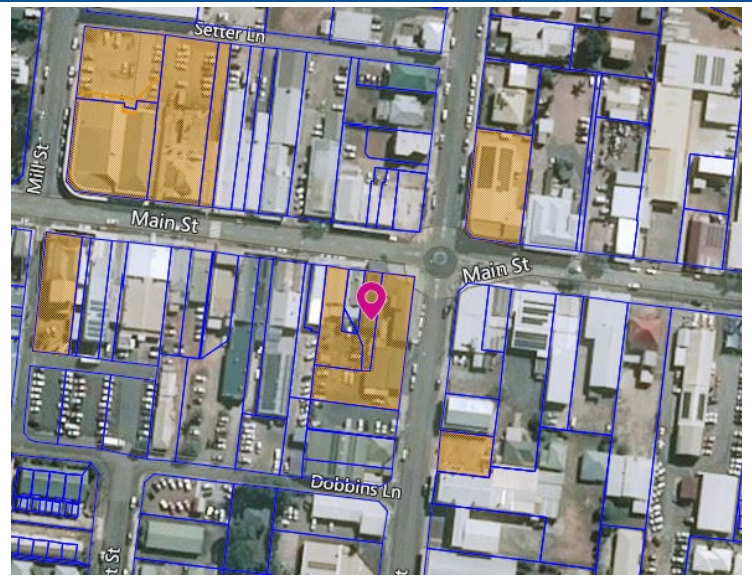
METROPOLE HOTEL AKA GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL

Address	78-82 Main Street, Proserpine
Lot Plan	2RP709926, 3RP709926
Coordinates	(E: 665189 N: 7743237)
Integrity	Fair
Condition	Fair
Statutory Listings	Nil
Non-Statutory Listings	Nil
References	Historical information provided by Proserpine Historical Museum. David Scobie Architects, 2005. Proserpine Main Street Study & Datasheets. Townsville Daily Bulletin, Thursday 30 June 1938, p.7.

Street View



Location Map



Physical Description

The Metropole Hotel is located on a prime position in Proserpine's commercial precinct on the southern side of Main Street and the corner of Chapman Street.

The main building on the corner is a two-storey building with a pyramidal hipped roof and a small, corner facing stepped parapet. It has a wide, open veranda which extends to both the Main Street and Chapman Street elevations, but which is truncated and enclosed at each corner. Each of the posts on the upper veranda has decorative fretwork.

A small plaque is located centrally on the truncated corner of the parapet with "EST 1929" written on it.

Access to the veranda from the upstairs rooms is via double timber framed glass doors. The ground floor window fittings and doors have been altered, with the main entrance doors comprising aluminium frames. The veranda posts are stop chamfered at street level.

Adjacent to the hotel, to the west, is an additional building that forms part of the Metropole Hotel complex.

This two-storey building, the former Hadlow Building, has an enclosed veranda with aluminium framed windows and which extends over the footpath.

Historical Context

The Proserpine district was first settled by European pastoralists in the 1870s. One property, Glen Isla, was set aside for a 3000-acre sugar plantation in 1882. Although land was cleared by Pacific Islander and Chinese labour, and machinery and a mill was ordered for crushing, the Crystal Brook Sugar Company Limited was not successful. The land was subdivided under the auspices of the Crown Lands Act 1884 which provided for the resumption of larger pastoral runs and conversion to small selections. In the 1890s, part of the Glen Isla property was included in the Proserpine township. The township and district developed quickly after the establishment of the Proserpine Central Sugar Mill in 1897. The mill, which was financed under the provisions of the Sugar Works Guarantee Act 1893, was located in the centre of town, with frontage on Main and Mill Streets.

The mill drew workers and settlers to the region, and in the early 1900s, a number of hotels were established. One of these, the Great Northern Hotel, was opened in 1900 by Tom Simpson. A timber hotel, it was constructed back from the main street. Between 1901 and 1912 there were approximately six different licensees and proprietors. Under the proprietorship of Chas Hearn, the old hotel was demolished c.1929- early 1930s by the Mazlin Brothers and a new brick hotel was opened in 1935.

The reconstruction of the hotel in the early 1930s was contemporaneous with Proserpine Mill's return to grower ownership. Although specific construction details of the new building, architects and builders are not known, it is clear that the new hotel comprised ample accommodation facilities in the upstairs section. Although the mill had some onsite accommodation for seasonal workers, it was also common for single male workers to stay at hotels. In June 1938, the licensee, Jim McDougall Junior applied for a name change and the hotel became known as the Metropole Hotel. According to the Proserpine Historical Museum, the hotel extended its patronage during the 1940s and was used by local school teachers. It also appears that some of the rooms upstairs were let to solicitors during the 1950s-1990s. Tom Hill and the Olivetta family took over the hotel in 1973. In 1987 they bought Field's Tractor Sales, the site of the former Proserpine Motors, which is adjacent to the hotel in Chapman Street and converted the building to a Liquor Barn. In October 1999, Hill sold his share to the Olivetta family. In the same year, the hotel was extensively refurbished for approximately \$300,000. In November 2005 the Olivetta family sold the hotel to the Carter and Mills family. They purchased the Hadlow building next door on Main Street in 2006. The Hadlow building had previously been a cafe and a hairdressers, and the upstairs had been used as a residence, dressmakers and as solicitor rooms. After extensive refurbishments, it reopened as a function room upstairs in 2010.

Historical Significance

Criteria A - *the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history*

The Hotel Metropole is important as the site of one of the early hotels in Proserpine and is strongly associated with the provision of accommodation during the 1930s at a time when the sugar industry was expanding in the district after local growers had regained control over Proserpine Mill.

Criteria E - *the place is important because of its aesthetic significance*

The Metropole Hotel, with its stepped parapet, open veranda and double timber framed glass doors, is a prominent two storey 1930s building that contributes significantly to the aesthetics of Proserpine's Main Street commercial precinct.



