

PROSERPINE POST OFFICE

Address	13 Main Street, Proserpine
Lot Plan	2RP720090
Coordinates	(E: 664967 N: 7743300)
Integrity	Fair
Condition	Good
Statutory Listings	Nil
Non-Statutory Listings	Nil
References	University of Queensland, 1983. Historic Post Offices in Queensland: A National Estate Study, Department of Architecture. David Scobie Architects, 2005. Proserpine Main Street Study & Datasheets. Historical information from the Proserpine Historical Museum.

Street View



Location Map



Physical Description

The Proserpine Post Office is situated on the northern side of Main Street, at the western end of the town's commercial precinct. The building is located next to the brick telegraph exchange building.

The Proserpine Post Office is an unusual combination of timber, brick and masonry used in a twin porch and gable design. The southern frontage of the post office faces Main Street. The single, timber clad gable sits between the two concrete step entrances. The timber section sits forward from the concrete columns. Located centrally below the gable, slightly inset are three sash windows. Within the gable is lettering spelling out "PROSERPINE POST OFFICE".

Brick and concrete foundations and concrete steps lead up to the covered private mailbox veranda where post boxes are set into a masonry with rounded corners. The veranda entrance porches comprise brick columns with art deco motifs on each external side of the columns. Steel handrails leading up these steps, and a concrete ramp on the eastern side of the building are modern safety additions.

There are small tin awnings on the southern main entrance to the veranda and to the side – one over the steps and one over the ramp entrance - these are additions to the original building.

The remainder of the building is timber clad with sash windows. The roof of the main building is comprised of large, plain gables facing the east and west.

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 were 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. Proserpine 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. Cane was transported to the mill via a tramway and then transported to a wharf on the Proserpine River.

Postal services in the Proserpine area began in 1892 when a receiving office was opened at Breadalbane Station. In 1895, Mr. Johnathan Jupp built a store at what is now 45 Main Street and opened an unofficial post office. This office operated until 1904 when the government acquired land and opened a local post office. It was run by Mrs Maggie Tracey. The development of a post office in a town was a signal that the government was confident in the town's future.

The current timber and brick post office was built on the same site by Mr P.J. Wollon of Brisbane. At a cost of £3947, it opened in June 1940. It was built to a standard post office design of a twin porch and gable, a style that was common between 1920 and 1939, one that provided more office space and a mail veranda while retaining a domestic scale that was designed by the Queensland Branch of the Commonwealth Department Of Works. Although the post office was originally planned as a wholly timber building (as per standard post office designs), Proserpine Shire Council requested the government incorporate bricks and cement into the design. The tender was duly reviewed and re-let.

Changes to the building were made in 1995 when it was refurbished as an Australia Post Shop. Further changes occurred in April 2010 when the building became a private post office.

Historical Significance

Criteria A - <i>the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history</i>	Located on the site of the first Proserpine Post Office, the current building demonstrates the evolution of postal services in the region. The new building justifies the region's original push for postal services in Proserpine and is representative of the government's confidence in the future of the town and the region's expanding population.
Criteria D - <i>the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places</i>	Although the use of timber and masonry to construct the Proserpine Office varies from standard Post Office design, the building's extant twin porches, mail veranda and central gable still demonstrates the principle characteristics of a 1920-1939 post office building designed by the Queensland Branch of the Commonwealth Department Of Works.
Criteria E - <i>the place is important because of its aesthetic significance</i>	The unique variation of the typical 1920-1939 post office building designed by the Queensland Branch of the Commonwealth Department of Works makes a significant visual contribution to the built character of Proserpine.

Criteria H - *the place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the region's history*

The Post Office has had a long connection with the people of Proserpine and the surrounding district as a provider of communication services that have been conducted from this building since 1940.





