APPENDIX A COMMONWEALTH HERITAGE LIST CITATION

Commonwealth Heritage List: Adelaide General Post Office

List Commonwealth Heritage List

Class Historic

Legal Status Listed place (22/06/2004)

Place ID 105518

Place File No 3/03/001/0010

Summary Statement of Significance

The Adelaide General Post Office forms an important part of Adelaide's central civic and administrative precinct, playing a critical role since 1872 in the delivery and development of postal services in Adelaide. The building, and broader precinct, are well-known images and are often used to illustrate the historical nature and prosperity of the city. The GPO was the most expensive building constructed to that time by the colonial government in South Australia. This emphasises its importance to the colony and the city of Adelaide, further underscored by the involvement of the Duke of Edinburgh in laying the foundation stone (Criterion a). Typologically, the Adelaide GPO seamlessly accommodated distinctly separate postal and telegraph functions within the one large structure. Where it differs from other GPO designs, however, is in the centralisation of a large public hall from which all transactions were carried out at counters to separate departments located around the perimeter in discrete offices, in place of an external arcade or loggia with service windows along its length. In this regard, Adelaide GPO can be considered an early exemplar of planning around an internal public space. Stylistically, the design of the Adelaide GPO included several characteristics associated with Italian architectural mannerism from around the late 1520s and the 1530s; this is seen in the balustraded parapet usage, the recessed concentric arches, the arch and flanking columns, the displaced pediments and asymmetrical elevations inflecting toward a common point that brings symmetry (Criterion d). The Adelaide General Post Office is important as a major public building erected in the Victorian Free Classical Renaissance revival style. Constructed from Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, and ornamented with Bath limestone, the building features a prominent clock tower, and is a significant streetscape item on the corner of King William and Franklin Streets. In conjunction with the Town Hall, it forms an imposing gateway feature at the edge of Victoria Square (Criterion e). The architectural expression of the tower is unique and rests upon its distinctive flared cupola roof and upper stage consoles. The use of Glen Ewin freestone and in particular the extensive modelling and carved ornamentation is representative of the highest standards of workmanship and contribute to the style of Adelaide's Renaissance Revival architecture which is outstanding nationally. The postal hall at the Adelaide GPO is also one of Australia's finest public interiors of the mid-to-late nineteenth century (Criterion f). The GPO has considerable social significance for Adelaide residents owing to the building's lengthy connection with postal services and is important to the community as a well-known landmark (Criterion g). The Adelaide General Post Office is associated with several architects of note, including Edmund Wright, Edward John Woods, Edward Angus Hamilton and Robert George Thomas (Criterion h).

Official Values

Criterion A Processes

The Adelaide General Post Office, built in 1867-1872 and extended in 1891-1892, is significant as one of South Australia's most important public buildings. Adelaide GPO forms an important part of Adelaide's central civic and administrative precinct, playing a critical role since 1872 in the delivery and development of postal services in Adelaide. With its substantial dual frontage to King William and Franklin streets and landmark tower, the GPO has a well-established relationship with the nearby Adelaide Town Hall, former Bank of South Australia, Supreme Court and Victoria Square. The building, and broader precinct, are well-known images and are often used to demonstrate the historical nature and prosperity of the city.

The GPO was the most expensive building constructed to that time by the Colonial Government in South Australia. This emphasises its importance to the colony and the city of Adelaide, further underscored by the involvement of the Duke of Edinburgh in laying the foundation stone.

The Adelaide GPO also received the first international telegraph message in Australia in October 1872 via the overland telegraph line, completed between Darwin and Adelaide in August 1872; the Darwin end of the line connected with the undersea cable from Indonesia. This technological leap made communication with the rest of the world possible in hours rather than weeks.

Criterion D Characteristic values

Adelaide General Post Office is an example of:

1. General Post Office (first generation typology 1803-1869) with combined telegraph office and second generation additions.
2. Victorian free classical Renaissance revival style
3. Colonial and Commonwealth architects.

Typologically, the Adelaide GPO seamlessly accommodated distinctly separate postal and telegraph functions within the one large structure. Where it differs from other GPO designs, however, is in the centralisation of a large public hall from which all transactions were carried out at counters to separate departments located around the perimeter in discrete offices, in lieu of an external arcade or loggia with service windows along its length. In this regard, Adelaide GPO can be considered an early exemplar of planning around an internal public space.

The inclusion of an adjunct free-standing telephone exchange demonstrates a shift in the programme to accommodate increasing demands for telephone services.

The 1920s alterations and additions to the Adelaide GPO by Commonwealth chief architect J S Murdoch in close co-operation with superintendent of public buildings in South Australia, A E Simpson, recall the transfer of responsibilities for the design of Commonwealth buildings from the State to Commonwealth governments.

Stylistically, the design of the Adelaide GPO included several characteristics associated with Italian architectural mannerism from around the late 1520s and the 1530s; this is seen in the balustraded parapet usage, the recessed concentric arches, the arch and flanking columns, the displaced pediments and asymmetrical elevations inflecting toward a common point that brings symmetry. The building also has several important Baroque elements, primarily from French and English sources, with the building hinting at the coming grand manner Baroque of 1900s England.

Criterion E Aesthetic characteristics

The Adelaide General Post Office is important as a major public building erected in the Victorian Free Classical Renaissance revival style. It features a grand postal chamber with a half-domed roof and peripheral clerestory lighting. A gallery at first floor level is supported on ornamental cast-iron trusses with matching cast iron balustrading. Constructed from Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, and ornamented with Bath limestone, the building features a prominent clock tower, and is a significant streetscape item on the corner of King William and Franklin Streets. In conjunction with the Town Hall, it forms an imposing gateway feature at the edge of Victoria Square.

Criterion F Technical achievement

Although the elements of the main façades were not uncommonly used in important buildings during the Victorian period, they are most skilfully deployed in this particular building. The architectural expression of the tower is unique and rests upon its distinctive flared cupola roof and upper stage consoles. The use of Glen Ewin freestone and in particular the extensive modelling and carved ornamentation is representative of the highest standards of workmanship and contribute to the style of Adelaide's Renaissance Revival architecture which stands apart even at the national level. The postal hall at the Adelaide GPO is also one of Australia's

finest public interiors of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. It compares with other nationally important postal halls at Melbourne and Hobart [CMP 1989, p.179].

Criterion G Social value

The GPO is significant to Adelaide residents for its lengthy connection with postal services and is important to the community as a well known landmark.

The scale of the Adelaide GPO reflects the sense of importance and civic pride in Adelaide at the time of the building's design and construction; the role of postal, telegraph and telephone services from this site for 150 years has also been integral to the history of South Australia and the development of its economy.

The importance of the building can be gauged by the enormity of the ceremony to lay the foundation stone; 3,500 people including all levels of officials witnessed Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, lay the stone to Adelaide's most expensive building. The enormous public hall has provided a social meeting place.

Criterion H Significant people

The Adelaide General Post Office is associated with several architects of note, including Edmund Wright, Edward John Woods, Edward Angus Hamilton and Robert George Thomas.

Description

Construction date 1867-72

Style Renaissance revival frontages with fully rusticated pavilions and Neo-Baroque cube-and-drum columns (rusticated or blocked columns) round the entrances, and curved Baroque mansarded clock tower.

Period Victorian c.1840 – c.1890

Structure and materials

Original fabric

The following 'original' fabric is based on the 1867-72 and 1891-3 to 1885 form of the GPO building as was completed by 1893. Refer also to section on alterations, below, for additional information on subsequent building fabric.

Levels: Three, including basement, plus three additional stages to the corner 'Victoria Tower'.

Structural frame: Solid load-bearing masonry (brick and stone) construction to wall structure on stone footings; small number of cast iron columns; cast iron beams and girders supporting roof lantern over public hall and floor over mail room hall; timber floor framing on cast iron girders; timber-framed roof structure.

External walls: Glen Ewin freestone to original principal south and east elevations, heavily rusticated with moulded stone string courses; west elevation finished with axed random rubble stonework with moulded stucco dressings to quoins, windows, doors, stringcourses and bracketed frieze. The 1893 addition presents a Murray Bridge freestone façade to King William Street on brickwork structure, essentially replicating the detail of the original. The north elevation of this wing, however, is constructed of red face brickwork with a 6-metre return from King William Street finished with ruled ashlar.

Internal walls: Generally brickwork finished with hard plaster and painted finish, with the exception of perimeter basement walls which were face stone and brickwork, some sections of wall around the public entrances and hall which were freestone and Glen Osmond stone, and gallery walls which were finished with ruled ashlar; timber-framed walls to internal lavatory partitions. 1893 wing basement walls were unpainted face brickwork.

Floor: Basement floor and ground floor public entrances of the original building are all slate flag-paved; ground floor public hall finished with Minton encaustic tiles; concrete mail room floor; elsewhere flooring

comprises timber boards on timber joists and cast iron girders. Floors finished with variously profiled moulded cement render skirtings. The basement floor of the 1893 wing is concrete.

Ceiling: Basement ceiling of vaulted brickwork to original building and ripple-iron finished to 1893 basement addition; public entrance vestibules have barrel vaulted brick structure with coffered plaster finish; public hall ceiling is constructed in a half-dome form with cast iron girders, fish scale glazing and coffered plaster finish; generally plaster finish elsewhere through original building and ripple iron through 1893 addition, west wing.

Roof: Hipped timber-framed roof form finished with slate to the external faces and corrugated galvanised iron to the internal faces; rendered brick chimneys with moulded panels and caps; hipped central lantern roof constructed of timber framing on cast iron girder framing with half-domed form, corrugated galvanised iron and fish scale glazing finish; decorative galvanised iron roof ventilators. 1893 addition was hipped roofed with corrugated galvanised steel finish.

Other: Cast iron balustrade panels with polished cedar handrails and newel posts to stairs and public hall gallery; polished cedar 6-panelled doors; various moulded cedar architraves with polished finish to doors and windows; doors to public spaces and gallery are surrounded by moulded aedicules and arched surrounds; gallery doors surmounted by arched polished timber screens; decorative cast iron brackets to perimeter of public hall supporting gallery floor; generally timber-framed double-hung sash windows, some with operable 2-light fanlight. Fireplaces throughout office areas have surrounds and slate hearths. Public hall fitted with 12-arm brass gasoliers. Externally, the basement light well facing the principal street elevations is screened by cast iron balustrade and the entrance vestibules are screened by paired wrought iron gates on friction rollers.

The GPO was constructed between 1867 and 1872-6. By 1876 the building had its present two-storey main component and its clock tower. Compositionally, nine bays faced King William Street and ten bays faced Franklin Street. The façade utilises 16th Century Roman palazzo composition as its core, parapeted in a Sansovino manner with waisted balustrading facing King William and Franklin Streets. The ground floor is presented as a basement layer with six Doric half-columns and four plain-shafted pilasters, which form in antis settings for the northern and central colonnades facing King William Street. The first floor is treated as a piano nobile. The King William Street facade has four two-storey pavilions, each projecting, to their cornice lines, just over a metre. Moving northward from the corner, these include:

(i) For the clock tower base: placed at the corner, this presents a rusticated basement with a single arch facing towards King William Street and Franklin Street respectively. These have progressively angled voussoirs and concave-scooped reveals, housing a window set in a smooth-surfaced panel and flanked by two small Doric columns supporting around arch with a keystone linked to the outer arch keystone immediately above. The aedicule sits on a chamfered sill fronted by a patterned iron railing above a three-panelled base. In the 1867 drawings by Wright, Woods and Hamilton the window was intended as a square-panelled doorway cutting down through the base to street level, and the stepped concentric arch pattern, in the manner of Soane or Sanmicheli or, for that matter, Greenway. Its use here is contemporary with James Barnet's introduction of the element in his gatehouses at Liverpool Hospital, NSW, probably in direct tribute to Greenway and Soane. Barnet employed the device in later NSW post offices such as Albury (1880-1). The second storey is separated by a Doric entablature with a plainer base above that, centred on a single recessed panel. The rustication continues on this level, but is horizontally raked only. This rustication continues into a stepped recess housing another arch supported on a string course with its keystone supporting a panelled entablature with two groups of brackets over the outer rusticated layers. The window in turn is set in a stilted arch. As originally designed it filled the arch volumes, but as built it shows a different, more complex arrangement, with a moulded architrave, and inside that is a third rusticated layer forming a partly blind panel in side the arch. The actual opening here is narrower still, a rounded slit arch. The spandrel includes two concave quadrant recessed panels.

(ii) The main entrance pavilion is separated from the clock tower base by a single aediculed bay. The basement is on two single-panelled plinth with an in antis composition in Doric with a plain frieze. The columns

and their flanking pilasters are linked in a set of rusticated banding that continues across the column shafts to form a drum-and-cube rustication, or blocked columns, a device seen more commonly in the 1880s and during the heyday of Edwardian Baroque. Behind these is a recessed rusticated surface with a central entrance arch, flanked by carved spandrel panels and filled with a large iron gate. The building title is on the entablature directly above, and the second storey, treated as an Ionic piano nobile, has two half columns in antis, flanked by rusticated pilasters. Originally the window arch was figured in a recessed layer, again forming a concentric pattern with an outer arch, recalling Soane or, earlier, Sanmicheli, and used in Australia by Greenway (see above). This was replaced by a Serlian arrangement with a single arch springing from a four-columned subordinate order, on unusually thin shafts. The entablature was distinguished by a regular run of brackets cutting across it and above that was a panelled parapet topped, in the original design, by orb finials in two pairs, in line with the column and pilaster pairings below. This was supplanted in the built version by two panelled parapet block piers flanking a miniature pediment over the Imperial crest. This was hoisted on miniature plinths and columns, bracketed with quarter parapeted gables and scroll consoles.

(iii) As for the second pavilion, but with four parapet piers above and a vestigial pediment over a central balustrade bay. Separated from the second pavilion by a five-bay recessed façade. The main basement arch was intended as identical to that in the main entry, but was replaced by a segmental arch in the final form spanning most of the distance between the rusticated columns.

(iv) As for the clock tower pavilion, separated from the third pavilion by a three bay recessed façade. It reproduces the piano nobile window originally designed for the clock tower pavilion. The parapet treatment is similar to that over the present vehicular entry pavilion three bays along. The rusticated basement has a hefty course line running across at springing point level. The basement window has an astylar architrave recessed on a smooth plane inside the rusticated arch, another mannerist device pioneered by Giulio Romano suggesting uncertain window depth. Originally the basement was to have housed the main vehicular arch, but again this was altered in the final design.

Intermediate bays: these are asymmetrical on both façades. In the original design one aediculed bay separated the end pavilions, and seven aediculed bays, half columned in Doric on the ground floor or basement level, formed the central intermediate façade. The bay numbering was also changed in the built version to a five-bay central façade and a three bay northern façade, each facing King William Street.

The bay between the clock tower and main entry pavilion remained as originally designed, with no columns apart from the subordinate order supporting its window arches. The basement or ground floor window, originally square headed with a pediment, was replaced by a round arched window in the 1872 completion, though its framing, of two pilasters on block-corbels, remained. The upper window is as originally designed in 1867, framed by two Ionic half-columns and linked to an Italianate balustrade alluding to a balcony. Several of these details parallel components seen on Clark's Old Melbourne Treasury of 1858-62, and Edmund Wright, for one, had a compositional sensibility related to Clark's.

The central bays, spread through five aedicules, are defined by a set of half-columns. These replaced the pilasters indicated in Wright, Woods and Hamilton's 1867 drawing and represented a general increase in the ground floor façade's sculptural sense. Each window sits on a panelled spandrel, and the label moulds over each arch are quite distinct. The same bay pattern is repeated in the northern recessed portion of the façade, except that a large arched double door has been placed across the northernmost ground floor bay, spanning the entire space between the half-columns and topped with a panelled spandrel similar to those on the other pavilions at ground floor level.

Clock Tower, completed 1876: named the Victoria Tower, this was to have been about a storey taller in height than the final version, and omitted an extra facet shown in the 1867 drawings. It has a large panelled base similar in height to the pediment array over the main entrance one bay north. This replaced a mezzanine-plinth in the 1867 design: this was to have had rusticated quoins and a lunette arch housing the imperial coat of arms, and was rather neoclassical in appearance. Above is a balustraded base and an arched storey framed by Corinthian pilasters at each corner. Originally the arch was to have been rusticated, with the clock directly under it and two vent windows in smaller arches under that, but this area now houses a single vent with

sculpted spandrel inside the arch. The original columniation appears to have been intended as a pilaster and column at each corner, but by 1876 this was changed to trios of superimposed pilasters with re-entrant angles at each corner, rather in the manner of Melbourne GPO. Above this level the 1867 design showed an arched vent storey framed by paired columns at each corner, under spur entablatures. This was changed to the main clock-face storey by 1876, with the clock framed by a solidly moulded arch framed by two quasi-pilasters at each corner. The long scroll consoles intended for an open arched lookout higher up were now drawn down into this level and reduced in mass. This is less evident in the 1876 form as the consoles' gesture is reinforced by the corner pilasters to which they are attached. Either way, the consoles and their placement are a distinctly Baroque component in the tower design, and the design, particularly in its 1867 version, has strong affinities with the London Church towers of Wren and Hawksmoor. Wright's earlier Town Hall tower (1866) has this connection also. In the event the lookout storey was omitted and the dome, an elongated four-sided mansard, was drawn down to top the clock-face level directly. Originally this was to have been Gothic-arched in section, as with the Town Hall tower summit, with a large ball finial; but in the 1876 version this was converted to a catenary mansard of semi-elliptical section, very unusual in Australian mansard treatments. The finial was changed and linked to the roof by small scroll linkages. Collectively this part of the design appears much closer to French Baroque sources than the original.

The construction was in a mixture of Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, relieved by Bath limestone. Behind the 1867-72 building is a bluestone and brick building, remnant sections of the former Police station and barracks. This was arcaded when absorbed into post office extensions to the rear in 1884, and in 1912 was fused with the 1907-8 Central Telephone Exchange fronting Franklin Street. The result was a courtyard to the rear of the main Post Office building.

Interior: The central postal hall is a rectangular double-height cubic space, with a coved and skylight lantern ceiling. The massively coffered ceiling has central and flanking rosettes in each bay and full classical cornices forming the reveals of each coffer. Access to the hall is via entrance vestibules from both street frontages; each vestibule features a coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling. The upper level is a ruled ashlar finished wall with a series of round arched doorways entered from a bracketed gallery walkway with cast-iron balustrade with scrolled supports. The ground floor was paved in patterned Minton tiles, and the service doors and openings were a mixture of rounded and segmentally-arched doorways, each arch springing from a ground floor dado. This dado was integrated with the counter area, and the public were served from the sides in a manner later adopted in Melbourne.

History

History The Adelaide General Post Office was constructed between 1867 and 1872 on the site of the original Adelaide post office (1851). The Colonial government held a design competition for the new GPO and telegraph station buildings in 1865. Thirteen entries were received, and the design by Edmund Wright and Edward Woods was selected. Architects Edward Hamilton and Robert Thomas (appointed Colonial Architect in 1867) also influenced the final design, which was redrawn by Wright and Woods to alter the scale and reduce the tower in height. The first building contractor quit after disagreements about the stone being used, and builders Brown and Thompson were awarded the contract to continue construction works. The GPO was the most expensive building the Colonial Government had constructed to that point, costing a total of £53,258. The foundation stone was laid on 1 November 1867 by Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, and the post office opened on 6 May 1872. The clock, made by JB Boyce of Whitechurch, London, for £410, and bells cast by John Taylor of Lough Keough were installed in the tower in 1875. The Adelaide telephone exchange was opened in 1883 and a switchboard was installed on the first floor of the GPO. The building was extended to the north along King William Street in 1891-92 to accommodate the telegraph office. This addition was constructed by JJ Leahy and cost £16,469. (P Summerling and P Donovan, City of Adelaide Heritage Survey)

Architect Edmund Wright and Edward J Woods (1872); Edward A Hamilton and Robert G Thomas (alterations); Superintendent of Public Buildings: Charles E Owen-Smyth (1891-93 work)

Summary of use General Post Office, Telegraph Office; Telephone Exchange (added 1883)

Summary of development and/or alteration 1852: First post office on this site.

1865: Single-storey Renaissance revival Post Office in place. This had rusticated quoins and several massively rusticated arch voussoir groupings, cues that probably affected the wide and energetic rustication employed in the current building.

1865-6: Competition for successor building held.

1867-72: Construction of core of present building.

1872: Former police station behind the GPO converted to quarters.

1876: Clock installed.

1883-4: Telephone exchange added and second storey added to former police station/quarters building to provide an ironmongery store and carpenters' and instrument fitters' workshops (later partly demolished for 1891-3 wing to GPO)

1891-3: North Wing on King William Street added to house new telegraph office and administrative offices.

1907-8: New Central Telephone Exchange building constructed to the west of the GPO to designs by C T Owen Smyth. The exchange comprised four levels including basement and extended back from Flinders Street with seven bays. Extensions in 1912-3 linked the building to the GPO at the rear through the shared quarters of the former police court with three additional bays.

1921-6: Substantial alterations and additions to the design of Chief Architect, J S Murdoch, to create a six-level extension to the GPO building. This was situated over the north-western portion of the site, retaining the eastern 2 bays of the 1891-3 north wing and the 1891-3 trailing west wing and provided additional accommodation for mail handling, parcel post, telephone and administration. Within this period, a five level building for Commonwealth Offices was designed for the western portion of the site, facing Franklin Street. Ultimately, only the first stage of this building was constructed and used for the Accounts Department. Alterations to the original building were carried out as part of this reworking of the building. At basement level these included lowering of some of the floor levels in the southwest corner rooms and demolition of a large section of the northern wall of the original north wing to the new building to incorporate a large parcel post department. It is unclear what the ground floor alterations included, however first floor alterations incorporated construction of a locker room mezzanine floor area in the telegraph operators' area in the north wing of the original building, demolition of internal partition walls in the King William Street wing to provide a large, open plan area for a 'records and investigations branch' office in the 1867 section and 'accounts department' in the 1893 section. A light well was incorporated into the design between the new wing and the original building and the public and staff stairwells at the northeast corner of the original building were altered for the second time.

1925-39: Standard and Waygood passenger lift installed.

1936: Plans are prepared for alterations and additions to the ground floor, including the installation of private letter boxes in the western end of the public hall. By this time, or as part of these works, the former stamp and money order offices flanking the southeast corner of the public hall are combined by demolition of a partition wall and fireplaces to provide an enlarged money order section. This included conversion of the two counter windows to doorways. The former mail room to the southwest of the public hall is refurbished and re-partitioned to form new counter areas for registered mail. Further, the works also included alterations to the eastern end of the north mail room to provide a separate parcel post office and extensive raised platforms throughout the mail areas for 'detective' galleries.

1942: First aid and air raid precautions (unspecified works).

1946-50: Postal Institute alterations to Simpson's [?] Building. General painting and renovations to building.

c. 1959-67: Unspecified installations, repairs and maintenance.

1970s: First floor gallery level offices extensively refurbished and fourth floor area altered to provide special functions/dining room and cafeteria.

1972-3: New private letter box installation at ground floor level and alteration to mail room for postmaster control.

1975: Phased removal of telegraphic and telephone functions from the complex.

Date unknown: Various conservation and refurbishment works to interior and exterior

1990s: Retail post shop fitout to public hall and refurbishment of first floor boardroom area facing Flinders Street.

c.2000: Refurbishment of 1921 wing basement for posties and contractors area.

Date unknown: Retail shop (external revenue tenant) created in 1860s ground floor rooms facing King William Street. The former money order office flanking the southeast corner of the public hall is again reorganised and subdivided to provide a 'pack and wrap' counter area off the public hall. It would appear that [sic]

Condition and Integrity

Despite numerous phases of alterations and additions, Adelaide GPO's ability to demonstrate externally is exceptionally good with regard to the original architectural conception, as completed in 1872 and extended in 1893, when viewed from the surrounding streetscape. The exterior has been well maintained and reflects most aspects of its original attributes, particularly with reference to the following:

The entire east and south facades to King William and Franklin streets respectively; including stone construction and detail, entrance vestibules, cast iron work, clock tower elements, timber-framed door and window joinery.

Façade returns on the north and west elevations; including stone construction and detail and timber-framed door and window joinery.

Original stone and brick construction and rendered details of the north and west elevations including original timber-framed windows and doors.

Original roofscape elements to main building and clock tower.

While the original design intent is clearly legible externally, cumulative works throughout some sections of the interior have diminished or concealed the integrity of the original plan form and finishes. In general terms, vertical circulation has been reorganised in the general vicinity of the original; the planning of the public hall has changed with the introduction of service counter areas within the space, rather than service from the flanking rooms; and the opening of the original north wall at basement and ground floor levels to the 1921 building. Alterations have also affected the integrity of the interiors of the 1893 and 1921 additions and 1907-12 telephone exchange, while the former police quarters building and the western end of the 1893 addition are completely degraded internally and externally.

The building is generally in good condition, although there is evidence of deteriorating stonework and previous conservation works. There is also evidence of some damp effected masonry. (2008)

Location

141 King William Street, Adelaide, north-western corner of King William and Franklin Streets.

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Place Details

Send Feedback

Adelaide General Post Office, 141 King William St, Adelaide, SA, Australia

Photographs


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The Adelaide General Post Office forms an important part of Adelaide's central civic and administrative precinct, playing a critical role since 1872 in the delivery and development of postal services in Adelaide. The building, and broader precinct, are well-known images and are often used to illustrate the historical nature and prosperity of the city. The GPO was the most expensive building constructed to that time by the colonial government in South Australia. This emphasises its importance to the colony and the city of Adelaide, further underscored by the involvement of the Duke of Edinburgh in laying the foundation stone (Criterion a). Typologically, the Adelaide GPO seamlessly accommodated distinctly separate postal and telegraph functions within the one large structure. Where it differs from other GPO designs, however, is in the centralisation of a large public hall from which all transactions were carried out at counters to separate departments located around the perimeter in discrete offices, in place of an external arcade or loggia with service windows along its length. In this regard, Adelaide GPO can be considered an early exemplar of planning around an internal public space. Stylistically, the design of the Adelaide GPO included several characteristics associated with Italian architectural mannerism from around the late 1520s and the 1530s; this is seen in the balustraded parapet usage, the recessed concentric arches, the arch and flanking columns, the displaced pediments and asymmetrical elevations inflecting toward a common point that brings symmetry (Criterion d). The Adelaide General Post Office is important as a major public building erected in the Victorian Free Classical Renaissance revival style. Constructed from Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, and ornamented with Bath limestone, the building features a prominent clock tower, and is a significant streetscape item on the corner of King William and Franklin Streets. In conjunction with the Town Hall, it forms an imposing gateway feature at the edge of Victoria Square (Criterion e). The architectural expression of the tower is unique and rests upon its distinctive flared cupola roof and upper stage consoles. The use of Glen Ewin freestone and in particular the extensive modelling and carved ornamentation is representative of the highest standards of workmanship and contribute to the style of Adelaide's Renaissance Revival architecture which is outstanding nationally. The postal hall at the Adelaide GPO is also one of Australia's finest public interiors of the mid-to-late nineteenth century (Criterion f). The GPO has considerable social significance for Adelaide residents owing to the building's lengthy connection with postal services and is important to the community as a well-known landmark (Criterion g). The Adelaide General Post Office is associated with several architects of note, including Edmund Wright, Edward John Woods, Edward Angus Hamilton and Robert George Thomas (Criterion h).

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Criterion A Processes

The Adelaide General Post Office, built in 1867-1872 and extended in 1891-1892, is significant as one of South Australia's most important public buildings. Adelaide GPO forms an important part of Adelaide's central civic and administrative precinct, playing a critical role since 1872 in the delivery and development of postal services in Adelaide.

With its substantial dual frontage to King William and Franklin streets and landmark tower, the GPO has a well-established relationship with the nearby Adelaide Town Hall, former Bank of South Australia, Supreme Court and Victoria Square. The building, and broader precinct, are well-known images and are often used to demonstrate the historical nature and prosperity of the city.

The GPO was the most expensive building constructed to that time by the Colonial Government in South Australia. This emphasises its importance to the colony and the city of Adelaide, further underscored by the involvement of the Duke of Edinburgh in laying the foundation stone.

The Adelaide GPO also received the first international telegraph message in Australia in October 1872 via the overland telegraph line, completed between Darwin and Adelaide in August 1872; the Darwin end of the line connected with the undersea cable from Indonesia. This technological leap made communication with the rest of the world possible in hours rather than weeks.

Criterion D Characteristic values

Adelaide General Post Office is an example of:

1. General Post Office (first generation typology 1803-1869) with combined telegraph office and second generation additions.
2. Victorian free classical Renaissance revival style
3. Colonial and Commonwealth architects.

Typologically, the Adelaide GPO seamlessly accommodated distinctly separate postal and telegraph functions within the one large structure. Where it differs from other GPO designs, however, is in the centralisation of a large public hall from which all transactions were carried out at counters to separate departments located around the perimeter in discrete offices, in lieu of an external arcade or loggia with service windows along its length. In this regard, Adelaide GPO can be considered an early exemplar of planning around an internal public space.

The inclusion of an adjunct free-standing telephone exchange demonstrates a shift in the programme to accommodate increasing demands for telephone services.

The 1920s alterations and additions to the Adelaide GPO by Commonwealth chief architect J S Murdoch in close co-operation with superintendent of public buildings in South Australia, A E Simpson, recall the transfer of responsibilities for the design of Commonwealth buildings from the State to Commonwealth governments.

Stylistically, the design of the Adelaide GPO included several characteristics associated with Italian architectural mannerism from around the late 1520s and the 1530s; this is seen in the balustraded parapet usage, the recessed concentric arches, the arch and flanking columns, the displaced pediments and asymmetrical elevations inflecting toward a common point that brings symmetry. The building also has several important Baroque elements, primarily from French and English sources, with the building hinting at the coming grand manner Baroque of 1900s England.

Criterion E Aesthetic characteristics

The Adelaide General Post Office is important as a major public building erected in the Victorian Free Classical Renaissance revival style. It features a grand postal chamber with a half-domed roof and peripheral clerestory lighting. A gallery at first floor level is supported on ornamental cast-iron trusses with matching cast iron balustrading. Constructed from Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, and ornamented with Bath limestone, the building features a prominent clock tower, and is a significant streetscape item on the corner of King William and Franklin Streets. In conjunction with the Town Hall, it forms an imposing gateway feature at the edge of Victoria Square.

Criterion F Technical achievement

Although the elements of the main façades were not uncommonly used in important buildings during the Victorian period, they are most skilfully deployed in this particular building. The architectural expression of the tower is unique and rests upon its distinctive flared cupola roof and upper stage consoles. The use of Glen Ewin freestone and in particular the extensive modelling and carved ornamentation is representative of the highest standards of workmanship and contribute to the style of Adelaide's Renaissance Revival architecture which stands apart even at the national level. The postal hall at the Adelaide GPO is also one of Australia's finest public interiors of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. It compares with other nationally important postal halls at Melbourne and Hobart [CMP 1989, p.179].

Criterion G Social value

The GPO is significant to Adelaide residents for its lengthy connection with postal services and is important to the community as a well known landmark.
The scale of the Adelaide GPO reflects the sense of importance and civic pride in Adelaide at the time of the building's design and construction; the role of postal, telegraph and telephone services from this site for 150 years has also been integral to the history of South Australia and the development of its economy.
The importance of the building can be gauged by the enormity of the ceremony to lay the foundation stone; 3,500 people including all levels of officials witnessed Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, lay the stone to Adelaide's most expensive building. The enormous public hall has provided a social meeting place.

Criterion H Significant people

The Adelaide General Post Office is associated with several architects of note, including Edmund Wright, Edward John Woods, Edward Angus Hamilton and Robert George Thomas.

Description

Construction date 1867-72
Style Renaissance revival frontages with fully rusticated pavilions and Neo-Baroque cube-and-drum columns (rusticated or blocked columns) round the entrances, and curved Baroque mansarded clock tower.
Period Victorian c.1840 – c.1890

Structure and materials
Original fabric
The following 'original' fabric is based on the 1867-72 and 1891-3 to 1885 form of the GPO building as was completed by 1893. Refer also to section on alterations, below, for additional information on subsequent building fabric.
Levels: Three, including basement, plus three additional stages to the corner 'Victoria Tower'.
Structural frame: Solid load-bearing masonry (brick and stone) construction to wall structure on stone footings; small number of cast iron columns; cast iron beams and girders supporting roof lantern over public hall and floor over mail room hall; timber floor framing on cast iron girders; timber-framed roof structure.
External walls: Glen Ewin freestone to original principal south and east elevations, heavily rusticated with moulded stone string courses; west elevation finished with axed random rubble stonework with moulded stucco dressings to quoins, windows, doors, stringcourses and bracketed frieze. The 1893 addition presents a Murray Bridge freestone façade to King William Street on brickwork structure, essentially replicating the detail of the original. The north elevation of this wing, however, is constructed of red face brickwork with a 6-metre return from King William Street finished with ruled ashlar.
Internal walls: Generally brickwork finished with hard plaster and painted finish, with the exception of perimeter basement walls which were face stone and brickwork, some sections of wall around the public entrances and hall which were freestone and Glen Osmond stone, and gallery walls which were finished with ruled ashlar; timber-framed walls to internal lavatory partitions. 1893 wing basement walls were unpainted face brickwork.
Floor: Basement floor and ground floor public entrances of the original building are all slate flag-paved; ground floor public hall finished with Minton encaustic tiles; concrete mail room floor; elsewhere flooring comprises timber boards on timber joists and cast iron girders. Floors finished with variously profiled moulded cement render skirtings. The basement floor of the 1893 wing is concrete.
Ceiling: Basement ceiling of vaulted brickwork to original building and ripple-iron finished to 1893 basement addition; public entrance vestibules have barrel vaulted

brick structure with coffered plaster finish; public hall ceiling is constructed in a half-dome form with cast iron girders, fish scale glazing and coffered plaster finish; generally plaster finish elsewhere through original building and ripple iron through 1893 addition, west wing.
Roof: Hipped timber-framed roof form finished with slate to the external faces and corrugated galvanised iron to the internal faces; rendered brick chimneys with moulded panels and caps; hipped central lantern roof constructed of timber framing on cast iron girder framing with half-domed form, corrugated galvanised iron and fish scale glazing finish; decorative galvanised iron roof ventilators. 1893 addition was hipped roofed with corrugated galvanised steel finish.
Other: Cast iron balustrade panels with polished cedar handrails and newel posts to stairs and public hall gallery; polished cedar 6-panelled doors; various moulded cedar architraves with polished finish to doors and windows; doors to public spaces and gallery are surrounded by moulded aedicules and arched surrounds; gallery doors surmounted by arched polished timber screens; decorative cast iron brackets to perimeter of public hall supporting gallery floor; generally timber-framed double-hung sash windows, some with operable 2-light fanlight. Fireplaces throughout office areas have surrounds and slate hearths. Public hall fitted with 12-arm brass gasoliers. Externally, the basement light well facing the principal street elevations is screened by cast iron balustrade and the entrance vestibules are screened by paired wrought iron gates on friction rollers.

The GPO was constructed between 1867 and 1872-6. By 1876 the building had its present two-storey main component and its clock tower. Compositionally, nine bays faced King William Street and ten bays faced Franklin Street. The façade utilises 16th Century Roman palazzo composition as its core, parapeted in a Sansovino manner with waisted balustrading facing King William and Franklin Streets. The ground floor is presented as a basement layer with six Doric half-columns and four plain-shafted pilasters, which form *in* antis settings for the northern and central colonnades facing King William Street. The first floor is treated as a piano nobile. The King William Street facade has four two-storey pavilions, each projecting, to their cornice lines, just over a metre. Moving northward from the corner, these include:
(i) For the clock tower base: placed at the corner, this presents a rusticated basement with a single arch facing towards King William Street and Franklin Street respectively. These have progressively angled voussoirs and concave-scooped reveals, housing a window set in a smooth-surfaced panel and flanked by two small Doric columns supporting around arch with a keystone linked to the outer arch keystone immediately above. The aedicule sits on a chamfered sill fronted by a patterned iron railing above a three-panelled base. In the 1867 drawings by Wright, Woods and Hamilton the window was intended as a square-panelled doorway cutting down through the base to street level, and the stepped concentric arch pattern, in the manner of Soane or Sanmicheli or, for that matter, Greenway. Its use here is contemporary with James Barnet's introduction of the element in his gatehouses at Liverpool Hospital, NSW, probably in direct tribute to Greenway and Soane. Barnet employed the device in later NSW post offices such as Albury (1880-1). The second storey is separated by a Doric entablature with a plainer base above that, centred on a single recessed panel. The rustication continues on this level, but is horizontally raked only. This rustication continues into a stepped recess housing another arch supported on a string course with its keystone supporting a panelled entablature with two groups of brackets over the outer rusticated layers. The window in turn is set in a stilted arch. As originally designed it filled the arch volumes, but as built it shows a different, more complex arrangement, with a moulded architrave, and inside that is a third rusticated layer forming a partly blind panel in side the arch. The actual opening here is narrower still, a rounded slit arch. The spandrel includes two concave quadrant recessed panels.
(ii) The main entrance pavilion is separated from the clock tower base by a single aediculed bay. The basement is on two single-panelled plinth with an *in antis* composition in Doric with a plain frieze. The columns and their flanking pilasters are linked in a set of rusticated banding that continues across the column shafts to form a drum-and-cube rustication, or blocked columns, a device seen more commonly in the 1880s and during the heyday of Edwardian Baroque. Behind these is a recessed rusticated surface with a central entrance arch, flanked by carved spandrel panels and filled with a large iron gate. The building title is on the entablature directly above, and the second storey, treated as an Ionic piano nobile, has two half columns in antis, flanked by rusticated pilasters. Originally the window arch was figured in a recessed layer, again forming a concentric pattern with an outer arch, recalling Soane or, earlier, Sanmicheli, and used in Australia by Greenway (see above). This was replaced by a Serlian arrangement with a single arch springing from a four-columned subordinate order, on unusually thin shafts. The entablature was distinguished by a regular run of brackets cutting across it and above that was a panelled parapet topped, in the original design, by orb finials in two pairs, in line with the column and pilaster pairings below. This was supplanted in the built version by two panelled parapet block piers flanking a miniature pediment over the Imperial crest. This was hoisted on miniature plinths and columns, bracketed with quarter parapeted gables and scroll consoles.
(iii) As for the second pavilion, but with four parapet piers above and a vestigial pediment over a central balustrade bay. Separated from the second pavilion by a five-bay recessed façade. The main basement arch was intended as identical to that in the main entry, but was replaced by a segmental arch in the final form spanning most of the distance between the rusticated columns.

(iv) As for the clock tower pavilion, separated from the third pavilion by a three bay recessed façade. It reproduces the piano nobile window originally designed for the clock tower pavilion. The parapet treatment is similar to that over the present vehicular entry pavilion three bays along. The rusticated basement has a hefty course line running across at springing point level. The basement window has an astylar architrave recessed on a smooth plane inside the rusticated arch, another mannerist device pioneered by Giulio Romano suggesting uncertain window depth. Originally the basement was to have housed the main vehicular arch, but again this was altered in the final design.

Intermediate bays: these are asymmetrical on both façades. In the original design one aediculed bay separated the end pavilions, and seven aediculed bays, half columned in Doric on the ground floor or basement level, formed the central intermediate façade. The bay numbering was also changed in the built version to a five-bay central façade and a three bay northern façade, each facing King William Street.

The bay between the clock tower and main entry pavilion remained as originally designed, with no columns apart from the subordinate order supporting its window arches. The basement or ground floor window, originally square headed with a pediment, was replaced by a round arched window in the 1872 completion, though its framing, of two pilasters on block-corbels, remained. The upper window is as originally designed in 1867, framed by two Ionic half-columns and linked to an Italianate balustrade alluding to a balcony. Several of these details parallel components seen on Clark's Old Melbourne Treasury of 1858-62, and Edmund Wright, for one, had a compositional sensibility related to Clark's.

The central bays, spread through five aedicules, are defined by a set of half-columns. These replaced the pilasters indicated in Wright, Woods and Hamilton's 1867 drawing and represented a general increase in the ground floor façade's sculptural sense. Each window sits on a panelled spandrel, and the label moulds over each arch are quite distinct. The same bay pattern is repeated in the northern recessed portion of the façade, except that a large arched double door has been placed across the northernmost ground floor bay, spanning the entire space between the half-columns and topped with a panelled spandrel similar to those on the other pavilions at ground floor level.

Clock Tower, completed 1876: named the Victoria Tower, this was to have been about a storey taller in height than the final version, and omitted an extra facet shown in the 1867 drawings. It has a large panelled base similar in height to the pediment array over the main entrance one bay north. This replaced a mezzanine-plinth in the 1867 design: this was to have had rusticated quoins and a lunette arch housing the imperial coat of arms, and was rather neoclassical in appearance. Above is a balustraded base and an arched storey framed by Corinthian pilasters at each corner. Originally the arch was to have been rusticated, with the clock directly under it and two vent windows in smaller arches under that, but this area now houses a single vent with sculpted spandrel inside the arch. The original columniation appears to have been intended as a pilaster and column at each corner, but by 1876 this was changed to trios of superimposed pilasters with re-entrant angles at each corner, rather in the manner of Melbourne GPO. Above this level the 1867 design showed an arched vent storey framed by paired columns at each corner, under spur entablatures. This was changed to the main clock-face storey by 1876, with the clock framed by a solidly moulded arch framed by two quasi-pilasters at each corner. The long scroll consoles intended for an open arched lookout higher up were now drawn down into this level and reduced in mass. This is less evident in the 1876 form as the consoles' gesture is reinforced by the corner pilasters to which they are attached. Either way, the consoles and their placement are a distinctly Baroque component in the tower design, and the design, particularly in its 1867 version, has strong affinities with the London Church towers of Wren and Hawksmoor. Wright's earlier Town Hall tower (1866) has this connection also. In the event the lookout storey was omitted and the dome, an elongated four-sided mansard, was drawn down to top the clock-face level directly. Originally this was to have been Gothic-arched in section, as with the Town Hall tower summit, with a large ball finial; but in the 1876 version this was converted to a catenary mansard of semi-elliptical section, very unusual in Australian mansard treatments. The finial was changed and linked to the roof by small scroll linkages. Collectively this part of the design appears much closer to French Baroque sources than the original.

The construction was in a mixture of Glen Osmond and Glen Ewin stone, relieved by Bath limestone. Behind the 1867-72 building is a bluestone and brick building, remnant sections of the former Police station and barracks. This was arcaded when absorbed into post office extensions to the rear in 1884, and in 1912 was fused with the 1907-8 Central Telephone Exchange fronting Franklin Street. The result was a courtyard to the rear of the main Post Office building.

Interior: The central postal hall is a rectangular double-height cubic space, with a coved and skylight lantern ceiling. The massively coffered ceiling has central and flanking rosettes in each bay and full classical cornices forming the reveals of each coffer. Access to the hall is via entrance vestibules from both street frontages; each vestibule features a coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling. The upper level is a ruled ashlar finished wall with a series of round arched doorways entered from a bracketed gallery walkway with cast-iron balustrade with scrolled supports. The ground floor was paved in patterned Minton tiles, and the service doors and openings were a mixture of rounded and segmentally-arched doorways, each arch springing from a ground floor dado. This dado was integrated with the counter area, and the public were served from the sides in a manner later adopted in Melbourne.

History

History The Adelaide General Post Office was constructed between 1867 and 1872 on the site of the original Adelaide post office (1851). The Colonial government held a design competition for the new GPO and telegraph station buildings in 1865. Thirteen entries were received, and the design by Edmund Wright and Edward Woods was selected. Architects Edward Hamilton and Robert Thomas (appointed Colonial Architect in 1867) also influenced the final design, which was redrawn by Wright and Woods to alter the scale and reduce the tower in height. The first building contractor quit after disagreements about the stone being used, and builders Brown and Thompson were awarded the contract to continue construction works. The GPO was the most expensive building the Colonial Government had constructed to that point, costing a total of £53,258. The foundation stone was laid on 1 November 1867 by Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, and the post office opened on 6 May 1872. The clock, made by JB Boyce of Whitechurch, London, for £410, and bells cast by John Taylor of Lough Keough were installed in the tower in 1875. The Adelaide telephone exchange was opened in 1883 and a switchboard was installed on the first floor of the GPO. The building was extended to the north along King William Street in 1891-92 to accommodate the telegraph office. This addition was constructed by JJ Leahy and cost £16,469. (P Summerling and P Donovan, City of Adelaide Heritage Survey)
Architect Edmund Wright and Edward J Woods (1872); Edward A Hamilton and Robert G Thomas (alterations); Superintendent of Public Buildings: Charles E Owen-Smyth (1891-93 work)
Summary of use General Post Office, Telegraph Office; Telephone Exchange (added 1883)
Summary of development and/or alteration 1852: First post office on this site.
1865: Single-storey Renaissance revival Post Office in place. This had rusticated quoins and several massively rusticated arch voussoir groupings, cues that probably affected the wide and energetic rustication employed in the current building.
1865-6: Competition for successor building held.
1867-72: Construction of core of present building.
1872: Former police station behind the GPO converted to quarters.
1876: Clock installed.
1883-4: Telephone exchange added and second storey added to former police station/quarters building to provide an ironmongery store and carpenters' and instrument fitters' workshops (later partly demolished for 1891-3 wing to GPO)
1891-3: North Wing on King William Street added to house new telegraph office and administrative offices.
1907-8: New Central Telephone Exchange building constructed to the west of the GPO to designs by C T Owen Smyth. The exchange comprised four levels including basement and extended back from Flinders Street with seven bays. Extensions in 1912-3 linked the building to the GPO at the rear through the shared quarters of the former police court with three additional bays.
1921-6: Substantial alterations and additions to the design of Chief Architect, J S Murdoch, to create a six-level extension to the GPO building. This was situated over the north-western portion of the site, retaining the eastern 2 bays of the 1891-3 north wing and the 1891-3 trailing west wing and provided additional accommodation for mail handling, parcel post, telephone and administration. Within this period, a five level building for Commonwealth Offices was designed for the western portion of the site, facing Franklin Street. Ultimately, only the first stage of this building was constructed and used for the Accounts Department. Alterations to the original building were carried out as part of this reworking of the building. At basement level these included lowering of some of the floor levels in the southwest corner rooms and demolition of a large section of the northern wall of the original north wing to the new building to incorporate a large parcel post department. It is unclear what the ground floor alterations included, however first floor alterations incorporated construction of a locker room mezzanine floor area in the telegraph operators' area in the north wing of the original building, demolition of internal partition walls in the King William Street wing to provide a large, open plan area for a 'records and investigations branch' office in the 1867 section and 'accounts department' in the 1893 section. A light well was incorporated into the design between the new wing and the original building and the public and staff stairwells at the northeast corner of the original building were altered for the second time.
1925-39: Standard and Waygood passenger lift installed.
1936: Plans are prepared for alterations and additions to the ground floor, including the installation of private letter boxes in the western end of the public hall. By this

time, or as part of these works, the former stamp and money order offices flanking the southeast corner of the public hall are combined by demolition of a partition wall and fireplaces to provide an enlarged money order section. This included conversion of the two counter windows to doorways. The former mail room to the southwest of the public hall is refurbished and re-partitioned to form new counter areas for registered mail. Further, the works also included alterations to the eastern end of the north mail room to provide a separate parcel post office and extensive raised platforms throughout the mail areas for 'detective' galleries.
1942: First aid and air raid precautions (unspecified works).
1946-50: Postal Institute alterations to Simpson's [?] Building. General painting and renovations to building.
c. 1959-67: Unspecified installations, repairs and maintenance.
1970s: First floor gallery level offices extensively refurbished and fourth floor area altered to provide special functions/dining room and cafeteria.
1972-3: New private letter box installation at ground floor level and alteration to mail room for postmaster control.
1975: Phased removal of telegraphic and telephone functions from the complex.
Date unknown: Various conservation and refurbishment works to interior and exterior
1990s: Retail post shop fitout to public hall and refurbishment of first floor boardroom area facing Flinders Street.
c.2000: Refurbishment of 1921 wing basement for posties and contractors area.
Date unknown: Retail shop (external revenue tenant) created in 1860s ground floor rooms facing King William Street. The former money order office flanking the southeast corner of the public hall is again reorganised and subdivided to provide a 'pack and wrap' counter area off the public hall. It would appear that

Condition and Integrity

Despite numerous phases of alterations and additions, Adelaide GPO's ability to demonstrate externally is exceptionally good with regard to the original architectural conception, as completed in 1872 and extended in 1893, when viewed from the surrounding streetscape. The exterior has been well maintained and reflects most aspects of its original attributes, particularly with reference to the following:

- The entire east and south facades to King William and Franklin streets respectively; including stone construction and detail, entrance vestibules, cast iron work, clock tower elements, timber-framed door and window joinery.
- Façade returns on the north and west elevations; including stone construction and detail and timber-framed door and window joinery.
- Original stone and brick construction and rendered details of the north and west elevations including original timber-framed windows and doors.
- Original roofscape elements to main building and clock tower.

While the original design intent is clearly legible externally, cumulative works throughout some sections of the interior have diminished or concealed the integrity of the original plan form and finishes. In general terms, vertical circulation has been reorganised in the general vicinity of the original; the planning of the public hall has changed with the introduction of service counter areas within the space, rather than service from the flanking rooms; and the opening of the original north wall at basement and ground floor levels to the 1921 building. Alterations have also affected the integrity of the interiors of the 1893 and 1921 additions and 1907-12 telephone exchange, while the former police quarters building and the western end of the 1893 addition are completely degraded internally and externally.
The building is generally in good condition, although there is evidence of deteriorating stonework and previous conservation works. There is also evidence of some damp effected masonry. (2008)

Location

141 King William Street, Adelaide, north-western corner of King William and Franklin Streets.

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Report Produced Wed May 11 09:36:23 2016

Heritage Places Database Search

Heritage Places

Heritage Place Details

LOCATION

Map	Show Map
Address	141 King William Street ADELAIDE
Locality	ADELAIDE
Accuracy	L - low level confidence
Development Plan	ADELAIDE Council
Polygon Type	B - Building footprint

DESCRIPTION

Details	Adelaide General Post Office (GPO), including the original 1872 building, remaining 1893 extensions, former Telephone Exchange (1907) and its 1914 extension
Significance	Opened in 1872, the Adelaide GPO was one of South Australia's most important public buildings, and represents the critical role played by postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications in the development of the state. The scale and impressive architectural detailing of the building and its prominent location in the centre of Adelaide reflect its importance as the focus of the network of communication services in South Australia for many decades. Its construction was the result of the entrepreneurial drive of Postmaster-General Sir Charles Todd, who was instrumental in establishing telegraphic communications in both South Australia and Australia and in encouraging the state Government's monopolistic control of all communication services in South Australia. The subsequent additions to the building and the construction of the separate Telephone Exchange were a direct response to increasing demand for the new technologies of telegraph and telephone services in the years leading up to and following Federation. [HB 11/2006]
Subject Index	Communication (postal and tele) - Post Office
Class	State

STATUS

Status Code	REG - Confirmed as a State Heritage Place in the SA Heritage Register

Status Date	24-JUL-1980

REFERENCE

LGA	Adelaide
State Heritage ID	10860
Heritage Number	1299

SECTION 16 INFORMATION

Section 16

PLAN PARCEL & TITLE

As listed in the SA Heritage Register

Plan Parcel & Title Information	CT 6084/525 D86151 A807,CT 6091/763 D86151 A801,CT 6122/319 D86151 A800

Disclaimer

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GIS files

To access downloadable GIS files, go to **Data.SA**.

APPENDIX B TYPOLOGICAL SURVEY

First generation post offices: 1803 to 1869

Through people's parlours

Public mail services were a First Fleet importation, being an unofficial extension of the British Royal Mail services originally made public in 1635.1Deliveries were initially by police and other officials, often collecting private fees, with some private mail outside Australia being contracted individually with specific ships. The receiver typically paid. A regular 2d mail service was established between Sydney and Parramatta in 1803, mail being shipped along the Parramatta River. A Postmaster for New South Wales, the emancipist boat builder Isaac Nichols, was established on the eve of Governor Macquarie's arrival in 1809. Mail content was mostly official, personal mail being largely restricted by limited literacy. Nichols collected incoming and outgoing overseas mail, supervised its transport to and from ships, and distributed it from his own house for an expensive surcharge (i.e. 1 shilling per letter, 5 shillings per parcel). After Nichols' death in 1819 his successor, George Panton, established the European settlers' first Post Office building outside a private house, although he retained the same personal control over overseas mail exercised by Nichols. The new Legislative Council passed their Postal Act in 1825, transferring postal services to a specific government agency, although retaining private contractors for transport and delivery. Regular government sea mail services to Hobart and Newcastle began around 1828, along with weekly coach transport to Goulburn and Bathurst.

Tasmanian postal services were authorised from Sydney and organised under Nichols' aegis on very similar lines, the first Hobart Postmaster, James Mitchell, previously a farmer, running Van Diemen's Land services from a private house in Hobart, from 1813 to 1822. The earliest known were at Macquarie and Argyle Streets, opened from around 1816, Collins Street, 1818, and in conjunction with John Collicott's general store after 1822. Launceston and George Town gained postmasters that year, and a system of convict mail messengers between major settlements, mounted and armed, was in place by 1825. There were 55 of these by c. 1846.

Purpose-built post offices

Mortimer Lewis, the colonial government architect in NSW, designed a General Post Office for Sydney in 1825. His design reflected its perceived importance as a civic building, being temple-fronted with half-columns, as with a contemporary bank. Its 1848 successor was similar, but with the columns free-standing in a full front portico. This became the centre of a 2d letter service.

Melbourne and Adelaide had each gained a provisional postmaster and post office in 1837 (Melbourne's in a bark hut, Adelaide's in a general store) and then small GPOs in 1841, both on their present sites. Compulsory sender-paid stamped services were introduced in 1850-51 in NSW and Victoria respectively. By then Sydney, Hobart, Launceston and Melbourne all had morning, midday and afternoon deliveries in their city areas, and the major colonial settlements were all linked by regular packet boats and overland transport. The regional post offices gained their first stimulus in the early 1850s, aided by the spread of stage coaching.

The range of outlying post office buildings which now appeared in the Australian colonies retained the form of houses, as they often were, or sometimes stage coach depots or inns. The Victoria region had 14 of these by 1845, 30 by 1849, and 54 by 1853.2 There were 146 in South Australia by 1860.3Van Diemen's Land had 30 by c. 1846.

The generally standard divisions of this first generation typology of post offices usually included a residential component of several rooms and storage areas, 'offices' and kitchen for the store owner or postmaster and family, a front room for business transactions, or, in the case of stage coach inns as at Ararat and Hamilton, multiple front rooms, guest rooms, public kitchen, privies and stables. 4As

overland telegraph lines were developed the Morse code apparatus were accommodated in specific rooms.

These early post office buildings were invariably accompanied by a yard space, usually enclosed with a light fence, for coaches, drays, and horses. Their street front address was usually a porch, paved apron or verandah, with flanking windows sometimes flush with the street boundary. Externally, they resembled private houses or shops rather than specific institutional or public buildings. Symbolic or structurally expressive ornamentation was usually minimal or non-existent, and the material vocabulary was that of contemporary houses: timber, unrendered brick or stone, and basic timber or flagstone flooring.

Significantly, the regional post offices in particular were the typological nuclei for their more monumental successors, when post offices were progressively rebuilt from the 1860s onward and as their design was concentrated in the hands of colonial government architects. By that time the postal system had expanded to become a major component of most colonial governments, with sizeable public service establishments and, generally, specific ministers in each colonial cabinet.

Some later post offices retained this early typology external form and materials usage through the later nineteenth century and even into the 1900s, as with Braidwood in NSW, 1866-74, and later 'villa' and shop forms that marked a series of post offices under James Barnet's aegis, including West Kempsey, c. 1876, Gulgong, 1879, Coonamble, 1880, Warialda, 1880, Boggabri, Rylstone and Menindee, 1881.5South Australia had a series, including shop-form buildings for Moonta, 1866-7, Two Wells, 1875-6, Laura, 1877, Port Lincoln, 1877, Lobethal, 1883-4, Hawker, 1882-3 and Crystal Brook, 1884. House and row house forms marked Two Wells, 1875-7, Meningie, 1877, and Crystal Brook, 1884, and in quite sophisticated government designs by Owen Smyth and others, the suburban post offices at Alberton, 1899, and Burnside, 1903-4. Most of these were rebuilt versions of earlier post offices, as with Burnside's original in 1874, Crystal Brook's, 1873, and Lobethal's, 1864-74.

The South Australian tendency in later purpose-built postal buildings was often for telegraph offices to open first, with the post office moving its activities in later and the final result being an improvisation of sorts. This happened in Moonta, 1865, Kingston, Meningie, 1873, Laura, 1872-4, and Hawker, 1881. 6 South Australia, as with NSW, lacked Victoria's level of colonial wealth and the retention of a first generation form for numbers of regional post offices was, as for NSW, a sensible path financially. For marginally different reasons first generation types persisted even longer in regional Western Australia, partly through the climate, partly through the rapid population and infrastructural expansion from a fairly limited base, and through consequent difficulties in government funding. Examples are Gingin, 1886, Pingelly, Mount Barker and Broome Hill, c.1892-3, Brunswick 1895-6, Capel and Perth (Brisbane Street), 1896-7, and Norseman, 1897. This was during Poole and Grainger's terms as government architects, and both were determined 'monumentalists' by nature.

First generation GPOs

The same General Post office (GPO) and subordinate post office arrangement, predicated on a prepaid stamp system, was adopted in all Australian colonies. The colonial capitals' GPO buildings included a distinct postal hall for the preparation and stamping of pre-paid mail, and sorting facilities and dedicated areas for the deliverers to pick up mail for specific areas. This broadly followed the system in London's General Post Office, built in 1840.

Second generation post offices: 1870 to 1929

Monumental post offices

The second generation in Australian post office design spanned stylistic phases including middle and later Victorian Italianate and round-arched, free treatments of Gothic and Romanesque, Federation, Free Style, Neo-Baroque and Neo-Georgian. The colonial, then state architects' offices designed most of these post offices up until c.1907-11. They were at the height of their powers in this period, headed variously by Wardell, Clark, Kerr, Barnet, Hanson, Temple-Poole, Bindley, Vernon, Owen Smyth, Brady, Beasley, Walker, Rickards and McRae.

The Federal designers who succeeded them were under the aegis of JS Murdoch. All these were in the front rank of Australian architects and were assisted by a highly talented group including J J Clark, J T Kelleher, E Wilson Dobbs, A J McDonald, Thomas Pye, F D G Stanley, A E Michaels, and the various Williams: Kemp, Oakeshott and Hardwick. This genre included designs for major trans-shipment offices, such as Albany, which handled all incoming mail to Western Australia until that region's linkage to the Trans-Australian railway in 1917. Their construction was pushed further by increasing urbanisation, particularly after 1900-18, and by suburban development in larger cities and towns, requiring new post offices to service expanding residential areas. In each case, too, the post offices began to rival the railway stations as social gathering places, and became almost nineteenth-century replacements for marketplaces or town squares.

This social dimension registered in the second generation of colonial post offices from the 1860s, when most acquired porticos, porches, stepped aprons, imposing postal halls, colonnaded perimeters and enclosed post box areas. Though they retained the residential component that had marked the earliest post offices, these were more distinctive in identity than their temple-fronted or single-storey predecessors had been. In part this distinctiveness was fuelled by the growing perception that post offices worked as civic centres and town meeting points. Post offices also came to be seen as the embodiment of civic progress and local vitality, as important to many regional centres as the railway. The new pattern to their design additionally reflected the government architects' growing ease and skill with nuanced and monumental form and gesture.

Monumental post offices were also constructed in regional Victoria in the second half of the nineteenth century. The phase of Public Works Office rebuilding and expansion came under the direction of William Wardell and was assisted by J J Clark, Peter Kerr, C H E Blackman and others. This produced the most cohesive rebuilding program in the Australian colonies, beginning with Beechworth and Daylesford post offices in 1858-63, continuing through the purge of Wardell and his principal assistants in 1878, and culminating in George Watson, S E Bindley and J T Kelleher's Bendigo, Fitzroy and other post offices around 1881-7. Most of these replaced earlier timber or house and shop-form post office buildings, as at Creswick, 1854-7, then 1863; Ballarat, 1851, then 1863-4; Daylesford 1858,then 1866-7; Beechworth (Peter Kerr), 1853, then 1858-9/1869-70; Kyneton, (Peter Kerr), 1870; Castlemaine (J J Clark), 1848, then 1872-4; Stawell, 1857, then 1873-5; Warrnambool (C H E Blackman), 1848, then 1875-6; Hamilton (Blackman), 1844, then 1875-7; Maryborough (J H Marsden), 1854, then 1877-8; Echuca (John Brown), 1848, then 1877-8; then, under Watson, Port Fairy, 1843, rebuilt 1880-1; Fitzroy, new, 1883-4; Bendigo, 1852 (tents) 1853 (timber), then 1883-7; and finally Carlton, 1867, then 1883-4.

Smaller post offices

Domestic and institutional expression also came in smaller designs. Smaller post offices reflected this new tendency toward recasting post office functions in conspicuously permanent and gestural masonry buildings. Victoria developed a system quite early, whereby even substantially house-form post offices gained a clear institutional identity with mail rooms projecting as breakfronts and wings, and a round-

arched, horizontally accentuated Italianate styling. This distinctive style set post offices and other small government buildings apart from more usual housing and is seen in the series initiated by Henry Williams and appearing in Central and Western Victoria: at Heathcote, 1869, Maldon, 1870, Avoca, 1871, Beaufort 1871-2, Coleraine, 1874-5. Penshurst, by Alfred Snow, 1878, fused a courthouse with an otherwise domestically scaled post office, a linkage seen later in the larger and monumental post office at Traralgon, 1894-5.

Barnet matched this in NSW, designing, alongside his 'domestic' or 'villa' post offices, a set with imposing, episodic fronts to state their institutional identity. Wentworth, 1867-93, Gundagai, 1880, Grafton, 1874-8, 1887, Richmond, 1875, Molong and Parkes, 1880, all used one or two-storey residences enveloped in a layer of arcaded masonry to form public entries. In the last four these were deepened into loggias. Narrabri and Tumut, 1879, and Dungog, 1880, were hybrids of these two arcade functions. Casino, 1879/1891, Bourke, 1880, and Cooma, 1879, expanded verandah and porch components in their otherwise residential forms, again to indicate their institutional role. Tiny Jerilderie, c. 1879, marked its identity with a wing housing expanded windows, rather like a contemporary school; Urana, of the same date and region, used an outsized wing and extruded verandah - again expansions from an otherwise domestic vocabulary - to accentuate a direct linkage with the street. This was repeated at Boggabri, at the other end of the state, 1881, and extended in the encircling street face of Gunning, 1881.

Second generation GPOs and civic post offices

The GPOs abandoned their residential role in this period and instead, all six 'final' GPOs, from Melbourne of 1859-1903, to Brisbane and Sydney, 1867, to Hobart, c. 1903 and to Perth, 1914-23, sought to draw the public in through the empathetic device of long, enclosed, arcaded loggias, components that were also increasing in the regional post offices. Sydney and Melbourne, in particular, were renowned for their social commentary and experimentation, Sydney through Barnet's bold articulation of the arcade and his provision of Loureiro's sculptures of modern life; Melbourne through the Griffins' collaboration with Murdoch in converting the GPO Postal Hall into a region where the public was symbolically served from either side, inverting the nineteenth-century pattern of crowds milling around an island counter of postal officials. Both were logical strategies.

From imposing street fronts, the mid- to late-nineteenth century GPOs became inner city thoroughfares, permeable at most edges and assuming, internally, the character of roofed-in streets, like giant arcades but with their array of visual signals under much closer control. Apart from James Barnet's towered or porticoed NSW designs and the arcaded post offices of William Hanson in South Australia and Charles Tiffin in Queensland, suburban and rural post offices were naturally more basic in their accommodation, their public gesture usually just extending to shorter loggias, arcaded bays and balconies. But if the funds were available Australian public works architects were generally happy to add clock towers or loggias. This reflects the highly civic and iconic role of the post offices, particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and may well explain their continual proximity to town halls and shire offices. After 1914-19, town and suburban war memorials, another symbol of Australian social bonding, were often placed either directly outside or even inside the porches or halls of post offices.

Riding the rails

Railways made their major inland incursions in the later 1850s and 1860s. Cobb and Co, who by that time held the Australian coaching monopoly, shrewdly co-ordinated their deliveries around the new rail heads. Colonial governments' railway takeovers hastened this composite system, which began introducing British and European sophistications such as specific mail vans (1869) and mail sorting carriages (1877) on regular mail trains ('Travelling Post Offices' or TPOs) beginning with Queensland and Tasmania in 1877. Many of these services were eventually shut down after c. 1932, about the time when motor post services were extending.

In NSW the TPOs lasted until 1984,8 being generally attached to overnight passenger trains known as 'Mails'. Their disappearance accompanied a general demise of night passenger trains to regional Australia, other than in Queensland. The one-time power of this railway linkage was memorialised by the appearance of imposing mail exchanges near major city railway terminals in the period 1910-1920, by architects such as JS Murdoch in 1915-17 (Melbourne) and George McRae in 1913 (Sydney).9These were also similar to JS Murdoch's landmark railway station designs, in particular Port Augusta (c.1917). By then rail transport had cut most inter-colonial and interstate mail delivery times from several days to around one or two, although the Queensland, Tasmanian and South Australian railway systems were still isolated in some segments and relied on ships or coaches to carry the mail partway. These gaps were filled in during the early twentieth century, when apart from Tasmania and northern Australia, the railways carried virtually all long distance mail inside Australian borders. The capital city mail exchanges all appeared after Federation, and at the end of this period of rail consolidation. Their celebratory role was expressed in a massive cuboid architecture, partly reflecting ferro-concrete frame construction and embodying the simplification and stripping down of Renaissance and Baroque referencing that was by then occurring in other larger city buildings.

Urbanisation and increases in mail volume

Apart from the mail exchanges, the principal effect of this consolidation and improvement in mail transport was an increase in internal and overseas Australian mail, a need to expand postal working space in almost all centres, and the expansion of assistant mail staff, all of whom had to be accommodated in post office buildings. Post office savings banks spread from the 1860s, as at Carlton in Victoria in 1867, and the post offices, often placed close to government offices and courthouses as at Kyneton and Maryborough, began to take on government agency roles, becoming an initial point of contact for routine legal and bureaucratic procedures.

The other new factor in post office building was the electric telegraph, which came under post office aegis in all Australian colonies after 1854 and required new spaces for its dynamo and key equipment, for the induction of its cables and areas for transcribing. The telegraph network usually preceded the railways, connecting all the eastern colonies by 1859, South Australia by 1865, Perth in 1877 and linking overseas with a line to Port Darwin and a submarine cable to Java by 1872. The volume of mail and telegraph traffic also increased with developing literacy and was a direct index of Australia's growing social sophistication.

The immediate effect of these personnel increases and telegraph proliferation was to double the volume needed in most post office buildings, and this in turn, compounded by the population growth in both colonial capitals and regional centres, meant that large numbers of post offices were reconstructed to new designs between the late 1860s and about 1920. 41 post offices had been rebuilt and enlarged in NSW by 1878 and over the next 11 years (to about 1890) another 169 NSW post offices were built to the designs of James Barnet's office alone.

Telephones, horizontality and post office size

Another major change with an impact on post office buildings typology was the spread of telephone services from 1880. These were quickly subsumed by the colonial post offices, in part because of the expense in building landline services and their equipment. Telephones needed manual exchange rooms, which were large in area and required additional staff rooms. After 1890 it seemed logical to attach these to existing post and telegraph buildings. Since relatively few people had domestic telephones, the post offices also became the local place to cluster groups of public telephones. Each of these in turn required a cubicle or booth, and collectively altering the ground area and frontal appearance of post offices significantly. Telephone exchanges effectively doubled the ground area occupied by a post office, and they brought even more personnel under the post office roof: operators, technicians, and billing

and additional bookkeepers. This is reflected in the increasingly horizontal bearing of 1900s post offices, which relied more specifically on long street frontages and the address of crucial intersections than on the 'beacon' effect of the earlier clock towers and other vertical components. Clock towers disappeared from new post offices in NSW in the 1890s, being replaced, largely, with conspicuous vestibule spaces and entry halls.

This coincided with the Federalising of post office building designs. The Federal Department of Works and Railways took over their design, progressively, from around 1905-11, although state government architects continued some involvement till around 1917. In NSW the state government office, under the aegis of George Oakeshott, Walter Vernon and George McRae, designed 125 new post offices between 1891 and 1916. Murdoch's department then oversaw another 34 in NSW between then and the Depression. These architects all continued Barnet's earlier strategy in placing solidly finished 'rhetorical' breakfonts and wings on residential post offices, to emphasise their institutional role.

Yards and annexations

To this horizontal spread in newer post offices was added the telephones further use of generated electric power, and the subsequent provision for transformers, substations and generator space. The service yard component of post offices, which had been grafted onto many of the post-1860s designs, was also affected, as telephone networks needed mobile technicians to service them: their vehicles and trailers increased steadily with the physical expansion of the telephone system and its loading, and these vehicles all had to be stored. By the 1960s a series of purpose-built PMG telephone technical depots had appeared, as at Tally Ho in Melbourne's eastern suburbs (1965). So did purpose built telephone exchanges, which were all under the Post Master General's aegis up until the Australia Post/Telecom split in the mid-1970s. The telephone system additionally required a physical manufacturing base, given that the PMG's department now produced everything from circuitry equipment to concrete manhole covers.

Accordingly, a series of factory and storage buildings, all effectively part of the post office function, proliferated in this period. With motor vehicles, particularly, came the need for garages and for maintenance and servicing areas, particularly in the 1900s when motor service stations were few and the expectation was that vehicles be privately serviced. But the tendency to retain specific service centres remained over several decades following. The other conspicuous result, and perhaps the post office's most pervasive symbol at the turn of the century, was in telephone poles carrying dozens of lines, some of which lingered on into the 1980s. Following British practice the colonial railways all constructed parallel telegraph and then telephone systems that remain in place outside areas of automatic signalling. Telephony's typological impact on individual post offices was less obvious internally, as the mail halls and telegraph offices largely remained in place as the frontal 'public' component, and the telephone exchange, bulky externally, was generally added on to one side or to the rear and performed its detailed duties away from the postal halls, sometimes screened from public sight by ripple glass windows.

The expanding volume of mail prompted a second development - the takeover of buildings near major post offices for overflow activities. The Melbourne parcels dispatch office, for example, occupied a building behind the GPO in Little Bourke Street from the 1900s on. The mail exchanges also soon exceeded capacity and this prompted takeovers of existing buildings nearby or next door. The Bourke Street sorting houses in Melbourne, e.g. Harrison's Ramsay complex originally built in 1879, are a case in point. It also follows that many of these 'take-over' or annexed buildings were inexpressive of their postal function externally.12

Expanded duties

Besides these roles the post offices gradually accumulated other duties as well. The Commonwealth Bank used Australian Post offices as retail outlets from the Federation period on, a role only relinquished when the bank moved to automatic teller machines en masse in the 1980s. In addition, post offices gathered a range of other public service functions, including drivers' licence issue (South Australia), radio and television licence handling, quasi-banking roles such as the provision of money orders, electoral and census recording, and a conduit for paying government authorities' bills. Interestingly, almost all post offices built in the period 1900-1930 favoured some intimacy of scale and touches of domesticity, apart from Perth's GPO (1914-23). That followed the large, simplified Baroque and Classical referencing of the mail exchanges. The suburban and rural post offices, by contrast, were linked increasingly to contemporary domestic form and detail (Leongatha, Orbost, Cobram, Surrey Hills and Box Hill in Victoria), or had an implicit grand manner softened by an intimacy in scale (South Melbourne, Rochester, Brunswick, Carlton North in Victoria). Many still retained a residential role, and this was not to recede until later in the twentieth century.

Off the rails

Other modes of transport were quickly co-opted into mail service, although they did not in themselves have a major effect on post office size or typology. These included tram-hauled mail services, motor trucks, vans and buses after c. 1905. A radical change occurred with the spread of air transport from the later 1920s, when regular air services were established and the increasing power of aircraft allowed the carriage of large mail sacks. Regular air mail services provided by airlines such as ANA, from the late 1920s, cut the transport time for mail to 12 hours between each capital GPO in the Adelaide-Brisbane chain. By the later 1930s, more powerful planes cut this time again to four or five hours. From this period, air transports also made rapid and scheduled overseas mail services realisable, delivering letters and parcels to the UK in five or six days, and being linked to an Empire-wide, standard tariff system radiating from Cairo and terminating (for Australia) in a dock at Sydney's Rose Bay.13

All this prompted an upsurge in air mail traffic, assisted in quantity by the appearance of tissue-paper aerogrammes. Even within Australia these became an option for fast mail delivery. For a long time airmail had weight and surcharge restrictions, but these were eased in 1960, primarily through the dramatically increased speed, size and lifting capacity of prop-jet aircraft and then jet engine aircraft. These had taken over most Australian air travel by 1965, reducing total mail transport times to around three hours between most Australian capital GPOs. Architecturally the first impact of this was seen in the expansion of mail transit facilities at airports, freed from any function as postal halls and from the usual railway-era links with telegraph and telephone. These depots were usually attached to the terminal buildings but were sometimes isolated or free-standing buildings. The air transport of mail also had physical impacts in the development of specific airmail processing at city and regional mail sorting depots and post office counters.

A great deal of the spreading regional air services that marked the later 1950s and early 1960s was due to the general provision and subsidy of air mail. In turn air transport also posed a new challenge to the rail-based mail exchanges, since no major airports were near rail transport and airmail was no longer bound by the early twentieth-century mail exchange and terminal station linkage. The rail-based mail exchanges were largely closed by the later 1980s, along with the extensive tunnels and railway station linkages and yards that served them, as in the former Spencer Street station postal tunnel and Sydney Central Station's mail yard terminal behind the Railway Square Mail Exchange. This in turn affected the usage of ancillary buildings' around them, as with the Bourke Street sorting buildings in central Melbourne, which eventually closed along with the mail exchange.14

The suburban train networks were disconnected from mail transport in the 1930s and '40s and this gradually allowed new post offices to be built away from railway or tram lines. They had invariably been kept close well into the twentieth century, as with Hawthorn West, Hawthorn Central, Canterbury, Surrey Hills, Mont Albert and Box Hill in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, or Ashfield, Burwood, Strathfield, and Homebush in Sydney's inner west, all or which were within 400m of a railway station.

Loss of residential role

The other significant change in this 'Second Generation' period was the gradual disappearance of any residential component. Residences had been part of almost all post offices, other than GPOs, since the early decades of the nineteenth century, and the postal halls in front of or below them often suggest typological origins in 'front rooms' or public inn spaces. For the older post offices with these integrated residences, the latter were gradually converted into offices and storerooms, their bathrooms and kitchens becoming amenities for the day workers. There were major implications for regional post offices, which no longer housed or were identified with specific families in a given town or suburb. To some extent the longevity of many employees would have lessened this impact, but the freeing of post offices from their residential role clearly severed some community roots, making the postal employees and their families less visible in terms of place, and reducing their place-profile to that of say, railway or bus personnel.

Third generation post offices: 1930 to 1974

Retail connections in the 1950s and 1960s

The new 'freedom' in terms of the siting and location of postal buildings also reflects the 'motorising' of Australian communities and suburbs, and in turn, newer post offices were reshaped by car and truck access. Motor vehicle ownership increased enormously across Australia during the twentieth century, and the motorisation of commercial and mail transport accompanied this. The traditional role of post office as community gathering place was immediately challenged by this development, which recast post offices increasingly as short term transit stops and aligned them to drive-in/drive-out usage, not unlike service stations. Ballarat and Benalla Mail Centres are the direct result of this, and more 'publicly' presented post offices such as Warragul (1967), South Blackburn (1956, demolished), Eildon (c.1957), Manuka ACT (c.1970) and Queanbeyan NSW (c.1971) were similarly geared, sited on street corners near off-street parking, or in the heart of angle-parking retail areas.

The first generation form, of a lightly scaled verandah, returned, while the outer walls, close to the cars and patterned with ranks of post office boxes, became appropriately abstract in surface. The logical extension of this was to put post offices into conventional shop spaces. This is seen in the regional shopping malls that appeared after Toombul, Top Ryde and Chadstone were built in 1959-61. All these could be accessed by car or bus only, and the traditional local pedestrian access, on which most second generation post offices were predicated, was lost in these instances. At the malls, post offices were either slotted into pre-built retail tenancies or set out as gazebo 'events' in the early malls' outdoor garden areas. Post offices in these settings were often separated from their mail exchanges and sorting rooms, and this had significant implications in that it articulated post offices' retail areas as physically separate from their other functions.

Rise of the industrialised postal centre-functions, materials and imagery

This new division accompanied the emergence of automated and semi-automated regional mail centres, intended to supplant the old rail-based mail exchanges. These included Sydney's Redfern Mail Exchange, of c.1962, which was initially plagued by faulty processing and machinery, and later depots such as Blackburn and Dandenong in Victoria, where problems were ironed out. These new centres often rendered mail sorting far less 'public-hall' and more factory 'production-line' than it had been: their

buildings had workstation processing built into their internal planning, in contrast to the earlier sorting rooms, which had more social and conversational environments and allowed freer physical movement.

However, the shift to automated or key-punch mail sorting rooms in larger post offices moved slowly. At the same time, van-based parcels delivery and, in the 1990s, motorcycle-based letter services were probably an equal influence on mail centre form. The need was, in particular, for undercover servicing of multiple delivery vans and vehicle couriers' expanded sorting areas, either in extended or new premises. This meant that a large shed or warehouse form began replacing the old sorting rooms at the rear of earlier post offices. Since this shift gathered momentum in the 1960s and 1970s, materials usage in these extensions, or in rented or acquired premises such as warehouses (South Melbourne, 1967-87) or converted bowling alleys (Ballarat, 1965-86) was often very different from that of the earlier second generation nineteenth-early twentieth century post offices. Examples are the spread of asphalt and concrete paving to back yard postal areas.

Construction and design form changes, mostly to strict budgetary limits, shifted to utilising industrial and warehouse modes. These included, either bought or freshly built, exposed ducting and conduit; builders' foil linings or open-soffit ceilings, often with the frames exposed; large-span wall treatments using ribbon windows and expanses of brick, sometimes in conjunction with steel or reinforced concrete grid-framing; clear span internal trussing to leave the most flexible space below; glazed or thin-skinned partitions, freed from structural roles; and sudden shifts in floor claddings to mark specific territory over a standard set of concrete floor slabs. Between the 1950s and 1973, too, there was a growing use of asbestos compounds for lagging, sound deadening and wall lining components, and as an ingredient of vinyl tiling. Arguably, asbestos had an immediate affect in freeing up materials and spatial usage, since it was an appliqué fireproofing and sound-deadener with minimal structural impact. But it also drastically altered the economic and environmental implications in the subsequent usage of buildings with the material, and has impacted on the degree to which 1960s postal buildings can be economically used now.15

Post office designs of this period had their basis in architectural changes occurring in the 1920s and 1930s, although relatively few Australian post offices were built in the 1930s and 1940s due to a cessation of capital works for Commonwealth agencies in those years. South Yarra's new post office (1946) showed architecture's possibilities in this era, and forms a group with others such as Morwell (1954). These designs are linked, broadly, by a shared debt to the juxtaposition of brick massing by Willem Dudok, a major influence on European architectural modernism in Australia during the 1930s. This approach was widely applied in early post-WWII government designs, being seen in schools, pumping houses, libraries and related projects. Morwell Post Office is closely related to pre-WWII projects on these general lines, and is dominated externally by juxtaposed brick massing in thick planes, a balanced asymmetry with the main entry to one side, and the maintenance of some monumentalist ceremony in the entrance. In typology its themes and arrangements were similar to those of the second generation post offices, but with modernist architecture as an intervening medium.

The later 1950s saw a move to light, airy and open forms, with extensive glass and bright, y everyday materials, in particular house bricks, steel tubing for balustrades and other elements, planter box step balustrading, tiling and linoleum. This was all fairly domestic, and monumentalism was generally out of favour at this time, in part because corporate and public service-based modern architecture was expressing itself increasingly as an industrially produced product, infinitely adaptable through volumetric adaptation and abstraction.

Around the middle 1960s the light post-WWII forms favoured in public buildings began falling into disfavour. In contrast later designs favoured thick and enveloping brick or concrete, heavier massing, and presentation of the ground floor spaces as hooded undercrofts. This approach marks the design of

Fawkner Post Office in Victoria (1970) and Mentone (1972), and is seen also in a range of NSW suburban and regional post offices.

Changes in postal processing

Mechanical and vehicular components in mail sorting, as well as changes in staff roles and functions, prompted a greater articulation of areas in postal buildings which had previously been more shared or open. This is seen in the proliferation of administrative offices and equipment storage areas, particularly, most of which either filled the old residential rooms of post offices or were added to new postal centres, usually as a first-floor usage. The 1960s and 1970s also saw the provision of more conspicuous relief or escape areas from the increasingly mechanised work: lounge areas and kitchens. This in turn brought mail centres and post offices into new health law territories, and prompted still further changes, as in the expansion of simple toilets into systematically allocated washrooms and rest facilities. On postal sites generally, the motorization of delivery and commuting among postal workers brought equally marked changes. Even where a post office maintained a generally second generation (1870s-1920s) form, its service yard invariably changed significantly, to allow lock-up sheds - first for the postal bicycles, then for postal motorcycles - car spaces for couriers, technicians' vehicles and commuting postal staff, fuel storage and bowsers (as at Ballarat), and storage and service areas for maintenance equipment. These in turn forced security works on this yardage, primarily in the form of high, heavy duty fences and gates, external lighting, and camera surveillance. Interestingly, the mail centres were now increasingly connected to a new set of congenial institutions. These included major public service centres requiring large postal contact, as with the Australian Tax Office at Dandenong, the close linkage of new or refurbished post offices to regional administrative centres, as at Parramatta or Chatswood in NSW, or to perceived centres of office activity, as at St Kilda Road, South Melbourne (c. 1970).

Style and theme changes in architecture

Street front post offices themselves changed in the 1950s and 1960s, in part under the influence of modernist architecture, where open or at least direct entry planning was stressed, cutting out the vestibules and antechambers that often marked earlier designs, and with interiors that were now often much brighter and more simply divided. The public contact areas inside post offices were shaped by conspicuously modern movement materials and usages, in particular plate glass, tiling and plastics. The plans for public areas became, generally, simple two part divisions of space on either side of a counter. This made post office interiors resemble those of contemporary banks or shops, and that was arguably the intention: that post offices be aligned with everyday retail in transactions and visual experience.

The resemblance was not inappropriate given the post office's continuing role as Commonwealth Bank outlets and their slowly increasing role selling value added items for retail, alongside the more traditional post office merchandise of stamps. The architectural implication of this shift was huge, since in program it rendered the sense of specifically postal place and occasion, so crucial in second generation post office design, completely redundant. A range of these post offices were built in Melbourne during the 1960s, notably Richmond, Hawthorn Central and Camberwell (1965-7). The subsequent pattern has been to divide the 1960s post offices into two or more retail units with office space then being let in the upstairs portions.

All are marked by external grids in steel-framed plate glass, accentuating the shopfront parallel in modernist terms; the other common program was the use of administrative offices above on a first floor.

Fourth generation post offices: 1975 and later

The disappearing post office

The telephone had expanded the program in postal buildings enormously, so its separation from the post office in the Australia Post-Telecom restructure of July 1975, had a dramatic effect on the whole post office system. This separation meant the demolition of the comprehensive PMG system, and ushered in strategies for drastically reducing and rearranging post office size and function. Post offices developed from this period, effectively the fourth generation in Australian post office design, were marked primarily by an increasing invisibility.

The maintenance of Australia's huge and increasingly complex telecommunications network was taken out of the post offices' aegis formally, and Telecom and its Telstra successor progressively separated their technical facilities, personnel, telephone exchanges, research and manufacturing sectors from the physical territory and form of the post offices. This often meant that half of all post office facilities and their yardage and open site areas became gradually redundant. Added to this were the marginal reductions in mail and parcels custom though increasing use of private couriers, and the expansion of couriers' direct aircraft access from IPEC onward (c. 1963).

Mail alternatives

Even more significant, from the 1970s, were the development of alternatives to mail. The telegraph function of post offices was drastically compressed in area through telephone replacements of the telegraph machinery and the decreasing cost of trunk calls. Then the telegraph function disappeared from post offices altogether, replaced by telex machines (from 1954)16 and then fax machines in the 1980s. The great majority of these were privately operated away from post offices, as changes in electronics and radio manufacture had made equipment privately available in areas where previously, as with the telephone exchanges and the telegraph, the post office's collective resources had been necessary to purchase the essential equipment and build physical transmission networks. Digital telephoning, variable frequency transmission and broadband web systems have further rendered the post office and its traditional spatial and physical apparatus even more isolated from this realm of communication, although some post offices sell computer peripherals such as recordable disks and printers. Telex, faxing, email and web usage merely completed a privatising and personal encryption of electronic communication that can be seen as early as the news bureaux' wire photo transmissions of the 1940s and '50s, or commercial firms' tickertape and teletype machinery of the 1910s-1930s.17

Mail delivery

More recently changes in the delivery of letters have acted to reduce the usable volumes of post offices even further, including contraction of personnel at mail centres and the use of independent contractors for delivery and distribution of mail. Express mail is also sent through a separate distribution system, generally eliminating the need for direct sorting within post offices themselves. In line with this decentralised delivery system and the reduction of needed space, many administrative office roles also disappeared, meaning that much office space in surviving post offices and mail centres was made redundant or used for storage. This in part stemmed from the post offices' declining role as a public service contact point, and also from the Commonwealth Bank's reduced presence.

New fusions with retail and adaptive re-use

For these general reasons the typology and public identity of post offices changed yet again. Postal counters were more limited, and were coupled to a largely commercial post box function often requiring only a few square metres of sorting and allocation space. In some cases post office functions were (re) united with another retail function, returning to the old post office-general store operation. Newsagents

have also joined this role. Where separate post offices have been retained, these have been increasingly moved to the same buildings as mail centres, and have been reconfigured as retail or 'shop' pattern segments of the larger mail centre building. In malls and large shopping precincts the post office is routinely settled in a shop and has often been moved from the locality's original or earlier post office building. By implication, the post office's traditional visual presence has been greatly reduced.

The strongly residential post offices have always had a potential for renewed residential use, particularly as their old domestic spaces can be seen as attractive upgraded contemporary accommodation. The rich decorative character and conspicuous street placement of numbers of former post offices (in Victoria the 1909-15 Hawthorn, Canterbury and Box Hill buildings, for example) also lent themselves to single and multiple retail adaptations or restaurant functions. The semi-arcaded, roofed-street interiors of the GPOs have favoured retail conversions in all state capitals; while the larger regional post offices - Rockhampton, Townsville, Geelong, Ballarat - allow for adaptations to arts centres and office suites.

As a décor-logo, the Australia Post retail outlets have generally absorbed some of the private warehouse imagery of the later, industrialised mail centres, being dominated by large tubular air-conditioning and electrical servicing ducts and simple white- painted interiors. Their array of retail items mostly approximates newsagents' stationery sections, along with some specifically postal items such as mailing bags and prepaid envelopes. Apart from their postal service retail and some post office box distribution, they also perform virtually no other duties inherently connected to the nineteenth or early twentieth century post office.

In both function and imagery, therefore, the independent post office building with a dedicated postal function has begun to recede from Australian communities. Postal services and operations remain, albeit in a constantly evolving form, but within retail centres or in shared retail premises. Society will also continue to invent new ways to communicate, inevitably leading to further changes to post office infrastructure.

APPENDIX C SCHEDULE OF CONSERVATION WORKS

1.0 CONSERVATION WORKS SCHEDULE

1.1 Introduction

This Schedule of Conservation and Repair works has been prepared for Cushman and Wakefield on behalf of Australia Post. It forms part of the Adelaide GPO Heritage Management Plan (HMP) being prepared for the GPO site and subject to the provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (the Act). The GPO building was originally constructed between 1867-1872 with substantial additions in 1891-3 and 2922-6 and is included in the Commonwealth Heritage List, the Register of the National Estate and State Heritage Register (SA).

The Schedule of Conservation and Repair works provides a commentary on the existing condition of the building and a schedule of conservation and repair works. It is understood a substantial conservation works package occurred between 1982 and 1987 to the principal elevations and public postal hall interior. The emphasis of the schedule is on the conservation of significant fabric. As such, works outlined in this section describe critical repairs and maintenance to prevent, slow or manage future deterioration of built fabric.

This report has been developed from a visual inspection of the exterior and interior of the building, including the roof (from current access) and refers back to the Conservation Management Plan (March 2007), prepared by Bruce Harry + Associates.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Management Plan (HMP).

2.0 Building condition

The built fabric of the Commonwealth-owned portion of the Adelaide GPO is in reasonably good condition to levels above ground, both externally and internally. The exterior is substantially intact, retains its historic form and detailing and legibility of the corner presentation amongst a precinct of other former civic buildings. The principal changes have occurred internally, including the evolution of postal services and mail delivery and re-configuration of office accommodation or cosmetic finishes and linings. Visible exterior alterations are relatively minor and are contained to local portions of the building, either to facilitate services, DDA access and tenancy signage.

The original two-storey GPO building (1867-72) is constructed to the King William and Franklin street boundaries of the site (the principal elevations), with the five-level Victoria Tower marking the south-east corner of the allotment. The CMP (2007) identifies the original building as being constructed of ashlar Glen Ewin freestone, with Bath limestone ornamentation and Glen Osmond bluestone plinth and basement walls and a corrugated iron roof atop a timber-frame. The roof over the main hall includes a half-dome skylight, with corrugated iron on an iron frame and glazed clerestory windows – a new framed glass enclosure has been constructed to its exterior. The parapet decoration consists of a plain frieze surmounted by a decorative cornice with a bottled balustrade punctuated by raised pediments. The tower is elevated in three stages; panelled with re-entrant corners to the base, arched louvre openings to the belfry and; narrower upper comprising the clock face, bracketed cornice and cupola roof form. Chimneys are typically stucco finished with run and cast decoration, windows are timber-frame double-hung timber sashes and a cast and wrought iron railing fence on a stone plinth protects the light wells to the sub-basement.

2.1 Exterior

The external stonework, above ground level is generally in good condition, though there are very small local portions of missing pointing. There are multiple locations of water ponding and inadequate drainage to the sub-basement light well bases, resultant in water-related deterioration (rising damp) to internal faces of low level stone, which is in poor to fair condition – this continues to multiple faces within the internal walls to perimeter rooms to a single room depth (refer below).

The bottles to the parapet balustrade are of an inconsistent appearance with adjoining stone and substantial cracking is evident to the top cushions, with some loss. There is local cracking and water-related deterioration to moulded cornice dimensioned stones, evidence of previous repair and recent installation of unsympathetic moulded portions about the pediment. The balustrade coping stone and pier caps exhibit substantial weather discolouration and stone exfoliation. It appears that a program of progressive render repair has occurred to the rear of the piers and pediment, though cosmetic cracking remains. The early repairs appear visually comparable with c.1920s works and the latter is demonstrative of a higher cement content.

The brick and stucco chimneys exhibit substantial water and cosmetic deterioration and a similar repair approach and recent works have occurred using unsympathetic patching. They appear in fair condition, though cosmetic cracking remains. The remaining brick chimneys require stabilisation and re-pointing.

The roof cladding to the original portion of building is in fair/poor condition and is of varying origin. The corrugated galvanised iron short-length roof sheets, cappings and flashings have substantial rust build-up – they have been previously coated and local sheets appear to have been previously replaced. Box gutters have been previously coated with a bituminous tanking, though localised water ponding and algae growth is evident. The water-path was not traced and the condition of concealed downpipes was not able to be viewed. It is apparent that inadequate roof drainage or blockages regularly occur at the north-east corner of the 1893 wing, resulting in back-flow and water ingress to the first floor level space. The secondary hipped roof protecting the original half-dome roof over the main hall appears in sound condition.

The roof access system is a combination of earlier substantially weathered unprotected timber ladders and landings, with aluminium framed and mesh planking, ladders and balustrade – no roof anchor points were observed.

Roof ventilation is all of metal construction and is a combination of original decorative Doric order circular ventilators with cruciform finials, more recent circular service flues and triangular roof space vents. The latter are in a similar condition to the roof sheeting and have been subject to sympathetic repair for water-tightness and vermin-proofing. Modern works included the installation of surface-mounted fluorescent lighting to the rear face of the parapet balustrade base and roof-mounted square hollow section steel out-riggers have been installed to cantilever across the balustrade coping for the display of banner flag signage – both appear in fair condition.

Timber door and window openings generally retain their original form and fabric, with the exception of the public entrance hall to the 1893 extension, which includes a modem aluminium framed sliding door. Timber joinery appears generally to be in good condition, however the working order of window sashes was not checked.

The entrance doors from the public entrance halls are modern and in good condition.

Some openings contain wrought and cast iron gates and grilles. These elements appear sound with only minor examples of surface corrosion. The roller gates remain in good operable order but have been fitted with later bird mesh and Perspex infill.

Metal louvres to tower openings were not inspected.

External doors have been fitted with modern brass hardware and furniture, which appears in good order.

The integrity of the original windows and doors of the rear, west elevation has been compromised with a number of phases of change. The original joinery, where evident, appears in sound condition.

Accretions include wire screens and exhaust fans.

2.2 Interior

The interior configuration of the building appears substantially as it was when surveyed for the previous CMP (2007) and generally remains in fair/good condition. The interior has been progressively refurbished through the renewal of finishes and linings, sub-division of spaces through stud-framed construction or metal storage cages and the installation or renewal of amenities (kitchen and bathroom). A modern coating system has been applied to originally unpainted stone and brick surfaces at basement level. There has been substantial previous modification of original treatments, fitments and decorative finishes. Building services, fire systems and escape provisions were not surveyed as part of this visit.

Lath and plaster ceilings generally remain in the basement (Rooms B3, B4, B6, B8, B10 and possibly B12, B14) and are generally in fair condition, though there are some rooms where a modern ceiling has been installed beneath (Rooms B6, B12, B14). There is local failure, fatigue and cosmetic cracking and loss of plaster, principally where scars of previous penetrations have not been repaired. Quadpartite brick vault ceilings are located below the main hall (Room B1) though a failing modern coating masks an assessment of their condition. Similarly, ceilings in Rooms B2, B7 and B11 are over-painted brick arches. Where modification of ceilings (incl. replacement) has occurred, this has been with a proprietary suspended ceiling system or flush plasterboard and coved cornice, both are in generally fair and good condition respectively. A large proportion of the peripheral ground and first floor office ceilings are suspended beneath lath and plaster.

There has been progressive change to original slate floors in the basement which are in variable condition; modern concrete slab flooring is now evident (Rooms B7, B9, B10), the original slate floor has been lowered and replaced with concrete slab flooring (Rooms B6, B8, B12 and B14) and covered with timber floorboards or vinyl tile. The extant slate flooring exhibits substantial areas of water-related deterioration and salt efflorescence (Rooms B2 - B4) and some delamination. A slate DPC is evident within brick columns above the finished sub-basement floor level – though it is masked by a modern coating and appears in fair condition save deterioration at the perimeter. Slate sills to sub-basement windows are in various condition – there appears a coating has been applied to some, itself peeling and blistering and, there is local exfoliation and de-lamination of slate. Sub-basement drainage or sub-surface damp has not been traced and there is evidence of original drainage routes in original drawings.

Water-related deterioration is replicated at basement level to stone walls within perimeter rooms (to a single room depth) to the King William and Franklin street elevations which are in poor/fair condition due to rising damp and salt attack. A modern coating system has been applied to originally exposed stone and/or the plaster finish, which has progressively de-bonded from the stone, itself becoming friable and crumbling, mortar pointing is missing to both stone and brick construction (incl. brickwork infill) and stone has further deteriorated where services have been installed with limited ventilation or radiators installed immediately in front. The coating system is in variable condition and is flaking and peeling locally and failed due to underlying stone/plaster deterioration.

Timber joinery throughout is of various origin, including original 1872, 1893 as well as 1920s, 1930s and later. It is also of varying integrity and condition. Key issues relate to refacing of doors with steel plate (basement), mechanical damage, missing glazing and haphazard furniture and hardware replacement.

Original window sashes are generally extant but many, particularly in the basement, include later accretions including exhaust fans and furniture. The working order was not checked, but it is evident many require sash pulls, counter weights and sash cords. Some moulded timber architraves have been removed or altered. Plaster architraves are also evident and generally sound.

Skirtings throughout are variously plaster or moulded timber. Key issues relate to missing or altered section, where walls have been demolished, and mechanical damage.

Wall linings of rendered and hard-plaster finish are generally in good original condition however, original decoration has been over-painted. Minor surface crazing occurs locally. Ruled ashlar finish is evident in

Room G2, Public Hall. The early colour scheme is evident within the detectives' gallery walk. Modern board linings to stud walls are in good condition.

Strong rooms and safes have vaulted brick ceilings, rendered brick walls, original slate or later concrete floors and iron doors of various age. With the exception of inoperable door hardware/ locks they are in good condition.

Services throughout the building are of various dates and operable condition. A full audit was not carried out to determine function. Key issues have arisen throughout the basement due to constant layering and insensitive installation methods over an extended period. This has resulted in large amounts of pipework, conduits, wiring, drainage etc. visible throughout the basement in particular. In the case of ground and first flor areas, much of the service infrastructure is concealed within the suspected ceiling space.

Overall, the building is in generally good condition, though the basement is in dilapidated condition with a general build up of dirt and debris over and above the generally average condition. The focus for a prioritised conservation and refurbishment works should be the basement and roof areas, to arrest water ingress and associated deterioration. As a result of a substantial package of works in 1982-7 and continued occupation of the building subsequently, the interiors elsewhere are in a good to fair condition though demonstrate scars of progressive change and unsympathetic previous modification.

Recommended conservation works are discussed below.

3.0 Approach to Conservation and Repair Works

The schedules allow for regular inspections of fabric, with an emphasis on susceptible features such as guttering and downpipes, door and window openings and general drainage associated with buildings.

Generally, day-to-day maintenance work can be carried out in accord with the conservation policies in the CMP, with periodic reference to a conservation specialist. However, major maintenance works should be undertaken under the direction of an appropriately qualified conservation practitioner. The main aim of such work should be to retain as much as possible of the historic fabric.

Typical maintenance works should include:

- Inspection and cleaning-out of gutters, downpipes, light wells, drainage systems and drainage areas and checking for inoperable or failing elements,
- Checking connection to site stormwater system to ensure proper functioning on a regular basis (ie. annually),
- removal of bird-droppings, vermin, (in-)organic growth, vegetation and substantive discolouration to original construction using biological or organic means – this process should not attempt to remove the patina of age across the building,
- servicing of timber-framed openings, doors and glazed sash windows and checking weather resistance,
- inspections and maintain a register of hazardous materials, including: asbestos, lead-paint,
- renewal of decorative treatments and re-working of non-original components in an appropriate and sympathetic manner (may require specialist input),
- maintaining existing power, pipelines or other services where this involves no alteration to the fabric of the place,
- removal of redundant services or modification of services (may require specialist input for substantial works), and,

- regular monitoring of the condition of significant fabric.

4.0 Schedule of Works

This document recommends that an annual inspection of the building be undertaken, with particular attention to areas susceptible to damage and wear. Specific attention is to be paid to locations of potential water ingress including: roof, rainwater goods, chimneys, parapets (incl. parapet balustrade), the sub-basement and painted finishes.

In addition to the above, this document provides a prioritised approach to conservation of deteriorated portions of the building and acknowledges the observations of the CMP (2007). The series of tables below group the works into similar components or locations, identify these works and provide an approach for their implementation.

Priority A works include items actively compromising heritage fabric due to their current poor condition, and that therefore require immediate attention to halt further degradation. Priority A items should be undertaken as soon as possible after identification, but within five years.

Priority B works include items that require repair but the state of damage or deterioration is not severe and is not negatively affecting surrounding heritage fabric. Priority B works should be undertaken within a five to 10 year timeframe.

Priority C works include more active conservation works (as distinct from maintenance works) that seek to return original detail to the structures and undertake detailed repair where required. These works are not considered to be urgent works and may be undertaken within a ten year timeframe as funding is available.

In addition to these works, all previously painted plaster, timber and metal elements should be repainted as required arising from identification or assessment at annual inspection.

5.0 Building elements

5.1 Roof (incl. roof ventilators)

As noted earlier the roof is clad in short-length corrugated iron sheeting, flashings, cappings and guttering. There is evidence of re-roofing and subsequent local replacement or modification where failure has occurred. The key issue for the roof is the undertaking of regular inspections and, as required, maintenance and repairs to ensure that the roof remains watertight and rainwater goods are not obstructed.

Roof (incl. roof ventilators)		
1.	De-rust existing metal roof components and ensure water-tight integrity of complete roof (incl. upper roof and clerestory windows over main hall).	A
2.	Ensure all flashings and cappings are secure and watertight at laps and joins.	A
3.	Ensure all penetrations through roofing are watertight.	A
4.	Remove redundant fixtures, fitments and accretions to the roof space.	B
5.	Remove previous treatments and rationalise and upgrade roof access system to contemporary compliance.	B
6.	Replace all metal roofing, rainwater goods and accessories. *A like-for-like replacement involves new heritage galvanised sheeting in the traditional profile with matching rainwater goods and accessories, though consideration should be given to the reinstatement of the original slate roof*	B

Roof (incl. roof ventilators)		
	and compatible rainwater goods and accessories, should physical or documentary evidence demonstrate that the original roof was slate.	
7.	Undertake full conservation of half-dome roof and glazed clerestory windows, to retain and conserve original detail. Replacement of metal components should match the original profile and be of a compatible finish to the new metal sheeting (match new elsewhere). *Consideration could be given to reconstruction of the original secondary roof structure.* *Consideration should be given to improvements to achieve contemporary compliance for stormwater management.*	B
8.	Reconstruct all triangular roof ventilators to match original form using new heritage galvanised sheeting and flashings.	B
9.	Inspect, conserve and maintain decorative metal roof ventilators (fleches) – ensure sufficient structural restraint.	B

5.2 Rainwater goods

All rainwater goods (box gutters, eaves gutters, valley gutters and rainwater goods) appear to be non-original and are likely to be of a date commensurate with the roof replacement works or later.

Key works for rainwater goods include regular inspection and cleaning to ensure good condition and proper operation.

Rainwater goods		
10.	Inspect and clean rainwater goods on a regular basis.	A
11.	Clean gutters, downpipes and check connection to site stormwater system to ensure proper functioning on a regular basis (ie. annually).	A
12.	Investigate cause of stormwater backflow/leakage to north-east corner of building (1893 portion) and provide additional/ improved rainwater goods to accommodate flow.	A
13.	Investigate and rectify cause of damp in wall at south-west corner of public hall (visible from Public Hall G8), possibly caused by a failure to a concealed downpipe.	A
14.	Replace all non-original metal box gutters, eave gutters, sumps, rainwater heads, rainwater goods and accessories to be compatible with the roof material and match original detail where possible. *Consideration should be given to improvements to achieve contemporary compliance for stormwater management.*	B
15.	Conserve and maintain viable original gutters and rainwater goods to the half-dome roof over the main hall. If replacement is necessary, use of cast-iron components to match original detail is recommended. *Consideration should be given to improvements to achieve contemporary compliance for stormwater management.*	B

5.3 Masonry Construction (Stone and Brick)

With the exception of minor infill to earlier openings in west elevation and repair undertaken in 1985-9, all masonry is original to its 1872 and 1893 construction.

Key works include conservation of original fabric, particularly to damp-affected basement areas.

Masonry Construction		
16.	Identify types of paint applied to internal stone and brick construction and wash-down. Undertake sample applications of organic hand-applied proprietary paint removal system to brick and stone construction to remove non-compatible paints or non-original finishes to masonry surfaces – do not use non-neutral chemical products or sand-blasting/ pressurised water methods. *As part of this process, investigation and recording of previous decorative finishes should occur.*	A
17.	Conserve and remediate deterioration to stone and brick construction – allow walls to 'dry' prior to commencement of damp repair. Treat salt-attack using approved proprietary paper poultice or dry-vac system. Note: this may require multiple applications. Following damp and salt treatment, conserve and repair stone, brick and pointing using materials and techniques to match composition and profile of original construction. *As part of this process, a DPC (if extant) should attempt to be located. If not extant, consideration should be given to the installation of a proprietary injection chemical damp-proof course and external works to mitigate deterioration to stone construction. In conjunction, ensure stormwater and groundwater is adequately diverted or collected.*	A
18.	Carefully remove any accrual of bird droppings, nests etc. and maintain effective bird spike system to all nesting/ perching surfaces.	A
19.	Wash down all external masonry (incl. stucco) surfaces with biocide and hot water to remove organic growth, vegetation and surface pollution – this may require multiple attempts. *If further cleaning is required, conduct sample applications and undertake low-pressure water mist clean using proprietary method.*	B
20.	Investigate sections of eroded/missing mortar – remove all friable portions back to sound mortar and determine composition of original mortar. Allow to clean and re-point missing portions to match original composition and profile.	B
21.	Inspect, conserve and repair localised sections of deteriorated stone, brick and pointing using compatible materials to match original construction.	B
22.	Refer Section 5.4 : Chimneys	
23.	Refer Section 5.5 : Parapet	

5.4 Chimneys

Metal caps have been placed upon the decorative stuccoed multi-chamber brick chimneys. There is evidence of progressive repair and removal of original components.

Key works include stabilisation, re-pointing of brickwork, repair of stucco and reconstruction of original detail.

Chimneys		
24.	Remove biological growth and clean stucco finish on a regular basis.	A
25.	Ensure chimney caps remain water-tight and securely restrained.	A
26.	Stabilise, reconstruct, repoint face brick chimney at northern end of 1893 building. Mortar and pointing to match composition and profile of original construction. Replace missing/ fretting bricks to match, as required.	A
27.	Remove unsympathetic or non-compatible previous repair, clean sound stucco, reinstate missing portions, repair cracking and re-run top coat to flat/run portions, ensuring decorative profiles are maintained. *Consideration should be given to reinstatement of stepped caps as shown on the original drawings.*	B

5.5 Parapet (incl. pediments and balustrade)

The parapet walls to King William and Franklin Streets are largely original to their 1872 and 1893 dates of construction. It is evident that some reconstruction work has replaced the original balusters with new. These later elements are now failing, cracking and deteriorating.

Key works include relate to the conservation, either replacement or repair, of failing parapet members.

Parapets		
28.	Wash down all masonry and stucco finishes with biocide and hot water to remove all organic growth and vegetation – this may require multiple attempts and should occur on a regular basis.	A
29.	Balustrade bottles: investigate origin and compatibility of previous repairs, including fixings and cracking to top cushion. Investigate compatible stone for repair and replacement and conserve and repair failing portions to match original detail.	A
30.	Conserve and repair stucco to rear face of plinth and pediments to match composition and profile of original (refer Chimneys). *Unsympathetic repairs should be removed and re-done using traditional methods to match earlier construction and a new top-coat applied.*	B
31.	Inspect, conserve and repair localised sections of deteriorated stone, brick and pointing using materials and techniques to match composition and profile of original construction.	B
32.	Balustrade copings: Conduct sample applications and undertake low-pressure water mist clean using proprietary method.	B
33.	Reconstruct missing urns to 1893 pediments to match original detail as evidenced.	C
34.	Remove unsympathetic light fixtures (incl. associated conduit) from rear face of parapet and make good where fixings revealed. Install new sympathetic lighting system, if required, to illuminate parapet, roofscape and roof access system as necessary.	C

5.6 Light wells

It appears the original light wells to building permitter are a source of water ingress to sub-basement areas. Originally lined with slate on a crushed metal base with sub-ground stormwater drainage, the light wells appear deteriorated and in poor condition and integrity.

Key works include the investigation of water management, construction integrity and conservation works.

Services		
35.	Clean out and investigate condition of paving, tanking and flashings including floor and sill construction and stormwater drainage route. Conserve and repair or replace as required all non-viable portions using materials and techniques to match composition and profile of original construction. *Consideration should be given to improvements to achieve contemporary compliance for stormwater management.*	A
36.	Conserve and maintain viable original portions and replace to match original detail with compatible material – undertake remediation works to stone in conjunction (refer Masonry Construction). Conserve and maintain lower sections of stone – conserve, repair and repoint portions affected by works to match original detail.	A
37.	Undertake regular inspections of integrity and remove build-up of water and leaf litter.	A
38.	Rationalise all non-original accretions to lights, including electrical and mechanical services.	B

5.7 Cast and Wrought Iron Components (ornament, columns, railings)

Large amounts of decorative cast and wrought iron work are located around the building which date variously from the 1870s, 1890s and 1920s dates of construction. The components appear intact and in relatively good condition, with the exception of small sections of corrosion.

Key works include the conservation of all original ironwork.

Cast and Wrought Iron		
39.	Locally de-paint, de-rust, prime and apply rust inhibitor to all exposed/deteriorated portions of metal. Cut out sections of non-viable rust-affected metal portions (incl. fixings) and replace with like to match existing profile and fixing detail.	A
40.	Inspect and re-fix (match original detail) fence panels at ground level as required.	A
41.	Renew or reinstate opaque decorative finishes as required, following investigation of previously applied finishes, to match adjacent coating.	B
42.	Ensure original cast iron tracks and runners to sliding gates remain free of debris, corrosion or deterioration and remain operable.	B

5.8 Windows, Doors and Joinery

The principal street facades contain original timber-framed windows which are identified as significant. They appear generally sound and intact, but their operative condition was not assessed. The majority of external doors are later fabric and of little or no significance, while the majority of internal doors are original to 1870s, 1890s, 1920s and 1930s.

Key works involve the retention and conservation of original fabric and reconstruction of appropriate door and window detail.

Window, Doors and Joinery		
43.	Assess condition of all timber-frame sash windows – inspect operation, water-tightness, weights, pins and plugs, timber beads, timber joinery, hardware, glass and putty, paint finish.	A
44.	Conserve and maintain windows in-situ to operable order – modify weights, re-rope and consolidate/replace deteriorated sections of timber with equal to match existing species and detail.	A
45.	Renew decorative finishes as required, or on a regular basis (i.e. no greater than 10 year cycles), following investigation of previously applied finishes.	A
46.	Slate Sills (Basement): Investigate flaking + blistering of opaque coating and exfoliation of slate. Remove opaque coating and allow to conserve and maintain all sills in-situ using traditional techniques. *Should replacement be required then slate type and profile should match original detail.*	A
47.	Remove modifications from basement doors (steel plate) and reglaze as required to match original doors.	B
48.	Timber Skirtings, Architraves and Rails: Retain and conserve original timber-frame joinery where extent. Where damaged or missing, reconstruct to equal detail using equal or compatible materials.	B
49.	Cement Skirtings, Awes and Mouldings: Retain and conserve original where extant, repair mechanical damage and reconstruct missing to equal detail to match composition and profile of original construction.	B
50.	Tower Louvres: Investigate flaking + blistering of opaque coating – allow to undertake local conservation to louvre blades and reinstate opaque finish, following investigation of previously applied finishes.	B
51.	To elements identified as being of primary significance, remove later modifications to doors and windows (frames, door types, glazing, services, hardware and the like) and reinstate original configuration and details using equal or compatible materials, where sufficient evidence exists.	C
52.	G10: Remove cement render skirtings and reinstate moulded timber or plaster to match composition and profile of original construction.	C
53.	Reverse previous modification of opening configuration, including removal of bricks, to reinstate original or early spatial configurations to elements or locations identified as being of primary or secondary significance. Make good adjacent surfaces such as floors and walls to match original detail.	C

Window, Doors and Joinery		
54.	Where original internal doors have been replaced with unsympathetic flush single-panel doors, reconstruct original panelled timber doors to match original.	C
55.	Where arched openings to Public Hall (Room G2) have been altered to include doors or alternate configurations, investigate original form and reconstruct to match where possible.	C

5.9 Ceilings

Original lath and plaster ceilings variously remain intact, have been replaced or concealed by later plasterboard or suspended acoustic tile ceilings.

Key works include removal of unsympathetic ceilings and the retention and conservation of remaining original ceilings.

Ceilings		
56.	Carefully remove non-original linings to reveal original lath and plaster ceiling construction and reinstate original room volumes/ceilings.	A
57.	Investigate condition of original lath and plaster ceiling and conserve and maintain viable portions in-situ – undertake repair using traditional methods to equal detail to match original construction. *Consider replacement of complete ceiling where extensive portions are non-viable. Preference should be given to reinstatement of lath and plaster, though use of modern materials could be considered, subject to identified significance of location.*	A
58.	Investigate condition and integrity of remnant plaster cornices. Retain, maintain and conserve original and reconstruct where missing to match original detail. Note: retain square-set where cornice not employed.	A
59.	Retain and conserve original mini-orb ripple iron ceiling lining to 1893 basement areas. Repair and reconstruct missing to match original.	A
60.	Locate any remnant ceiling vents and retain and conserve as part of any ceiling conservation program.	A
61.	To all vaulted areas, remove non-compatible modern coatings to brick vaults and conserve and repair extant brick construction. *Consideration should be given to the recording previous decorative treatments prior to their removal.*	B

5.10 Stairs, Ramps and Vertical Transportation

Remnant stairs, ramps and vertical transportation are generally not original to the nineteenth century building and can be retained or removed as required. The exception being the form and location (not the fabric) of the slate entrance steps to rooms G1 and G7 and clock tower steps.

Key works include retention and conservation of extant original stairs.

Stairs		
62.	G1 and G7: Slate steps have been reconstructed to match original form and profile. Retain and maintain to match original as required.	B
63.	G8: Date from c.1960s. Retain or remove as required and make good/ reinstate original adjoining surfaces.	B
64.	B6, B8 and B12: Stairs and Steps appear to date from the 1920s and can be retained and conserved or altered as required. If removed, then make good/ reinstate original adjoining surfaces.	B
65.	G12: DDA Access Ramp – Remove as required as part of future adaptation works where a new route for an accessible path may be available. Reinstate portions of previously removed original section of building to equal detail to match composition and profile of original construction.	C

5.11 Flooring

Numerous original floor structure survives including slate flags, timber boards on timber framing, early concrete (1893). In some cases, the original has been replaced or concealed.

Key works include the retention and conservation of all original floor structure and fabric as well as reconstruction of original types where appropriate.

Flooring		
66.	Conserve and maintain original floor construction in-situ – allow to remediate damp and consider installation of chemical damp-proof course.	A
67.	Identify types of material and adhesion method of recent covering (eg carpet, vinyl tiles, timber) – note material containing asbestos may be present. Undertake sample removal method to reveal underlying/ original floor finish/ construction. Carefully remove non-original floor treatments to reveal previous/original treatments below. Investigate condition of revealed floor finish and construction and conserve and repair in-situ.	A
68.	Investigate source of damp to extant original slate floor. Treat, conserve and repair damp deterioration and salt attack in-situ. Undertake repair using traditional methods and equal or compatible products. Replace severely delaminated sections only as required with new slate to match original type and size. *As part of this process, a DPC (if extant) should attempt to be located. If not extant, consideration should be given to the installation of a proprietary injection chemical damp-proof course and external works to mitigate future deterioration.*	A
69.	Basement: Investigate portions of concrete slab flooring where abutting dilapidated original stone and brick construction - determine sub-surface and footing condition to reveal extent of rising damp/salt-attack to original walls. *Consideration should be given to local removal of concrete flooring to facilitate stone conservation. Reinstatement of flooring should enable*	A

Flooring		
	'breathability' to original construction. This may include reinstate original floor levels where previously reduced (1920s)	
70.	Ground + First: Investigate type of floor finish below carpet in Public Hall (G2) to confirm existence of original encaustic tiles or later timber parquetry. Should these be extant, then retain and conserve in-situ.	C

5.12 Interior Finishes and Fitout

The interior of the building is generally in good condition with the basement in poor/fair condition. Many rooms have numerous phases of refurbishment which have resulted in concealment, removal or damage to original finishes and fitout. Very few original fixings or fixtures remain; these are generally associated with the Victoria Tower and strong rooms.

Key works include the identification of original interior finishes and fitout and retention and conservation of such. Other works relate to revealing concealed tails by removing unsympathetic accretions.

Interior		
71.	Remove redundant furniture, fixtures, furnishings and equipment where not identified as being of primary or secondary significance.	B
72.	Remove non-original or elements identified as being of little or no significance which have altered the legibility of the original room configuration, such as partition walling and suspended ceilings. *Consideration should be given to retention of portions/fragments in-situ (eg. wall nibs) or investigate and record accreted change prior to alteration for future interpretation works.*	B
73.	Reconstruct adjacent original form and fabric as required where redundant or unsympathetic alterations are removed.	B
74.	1.17 and 1.18: Remove non-original linings to wall face, conserve and repair original wall construction beyond using traditional methods to match original detail and renew decorative treatments, following investigation of previously applied finishes.	B
75.	Either rationalise or remove redundant occupant amenities including kitchen and bathroom. Conserve and repair as required all original construction revealed using traditional techniques to equal detail to match composition and profile of original construction. *Consideration should be given to the sympathetic incorporation of same as part of any adaptation works.*	C
76.	Retain and conserve marble and timber honour boards in-situ or relocate within the building as appropriate.	C

5.13 Services

The building contains large quantities of non-original service equipment, particularly throughout the basement area where it is apparent these services have been installed without regard o significant form or fabric.

Key works include the rationalisation of present services, removal of redundant services, reconstruction of damaged significant fabric and sensitive concealment of retained services.

Services		
77.	Remove redundant or unsympathetic recent services, voids, penetrations and/or mechanical exhaust vents.	A
78.	Remove all surface-mounted conduits, light fittings, signs, brackets, fixings and the like.	A
79.	Maintain and conserve historic services, such as natural ventilation in-place if discovered during works.	A

5.14 Maintenance/ Management

As discussed, the building is in good general condition however an on-going program of maintenance should be established that potential defects do not jeopardise significant fabric.

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