GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME	former Gore Post & Telegraph Office
ADDRESS	101-103 Main Street, Gore
PHOTOGRAPH	

(October 2021)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. (at time of assessment)	H30	**HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY**	n/a
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Section 3 Block X Town of Gore		
GDC FILE NUMBER	3273048		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	1901-2		
ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/ BUILDER	Peter Walker, architect; George Morrison, contractor		
STYLE	Commercial classicism		

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey building with rectangular footprint and hipped roof; single-storey extension to the south has a modern pyramidal roof. Symmetrical façades, constructional polychromy around door and window openings, decorative cornice. Arched and flattened arch windows feature keystones and aprons. Single chimney and ventilator mounted on roof. Pilasters frame central entry on west elevation with arched opening framed by columns with capitals.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, cement, tile.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Unspecified additions (1906). Clock tower removed (c.1945); southerly chimney removed (date unknown). Roof erected over single-storey wing (P&T yard and outbuildings) at south end (late 1970s); Main Street elevation ground floor alterations, including installation of canopies (late 20th C).

SETTING

The former Gore Post Office stands on the east side of Main Street, opposite the block bounded by Bowler Avenue in the south and Mersey Street in the north. The building is located immediately to the west of the adjacent rail line; the town centre is to the north. The scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the building is located.

HISTORY

Gore's first post office was officially established with the appointment of postmaster Joseph Burrows on 1 July 1867. In December 1875 the post office was relocated to the railway station; it would appear that a purpose-built office was erected close by in c.1878. Added to over the years, the building was deemed inadequate by the end of the 19th century with the growth in operations leading to the construction of a new building located between the railway station and post office. (The latter, at the corner of Main and Mersey Streets, was sold for removal in early 1903.) The foundation stone of the new building was laid by Southland MP and Postmaster-General Sir Joseph Ward on 17 December 1901. Post office staff moved into the new building, which had been completed for some months, in early December 1902. In 1906 a clock and chimes were installed in the clock tower, which was deconstructed in c.1945 because it was considered an earthquake risk. The building also housed other government departments and was superseded by the new (now former) post office on the other side of Main Street in 1958. Since that time the 1901-2 post office has accommodated various commercial, hospitality and retail functions.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Gore Post Office has historic significance for its association with the development of the district's communication infrastructure and as a reflection of the size and scale of Gore by the turn of the 20th century.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Gore Post Office has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of past post office staff and their customers.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Gore Post Office has high architectural significance as a building designed by Invercargill architect Peter Walker in a commercial classical style. It is notable that the Gore building was not a product of the Government Architect's office, although Walker's design is comparable to Government Architect John Campbell's post offices of the period. Walker, who appears to have practised between c.1896 and c.1910, also designed the Bluff Government Offices (1899-1900) and the 1903 sections of the Club Hotel in the same town. The latter was built for Joseph Ward and his mother Hannah Barron Ward, raising the possibility that it was a personal connection that resulted in Walker being awarded the Gore Post Office commission.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Gore Post Office has technological and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its Edwardian brick construction and detailing. George Morrison was a Dunedin builder and contractor who had earlier been based in Lawrence (early 1870s).

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Gore Post Office has high contextual significance as a town centre landmark and for its historic relationship with both the neighbouring railway line and the former Post Office on the opposite side of Main Street.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the structure post-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the use and development of the neighbouring railway line since the 1870s.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The former Gore Post & Telegraph Office has high overall heritage significance to Gore and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historic significance for its association with the development of the region's communication infrastructure and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former staff and users. The former Gore Post Office has high architectural significance as a commercial classical design by Invercargill architect Peter Walker and high contextual significance as a town centre landmark and in relation to the building that replaced it on the opposite side of Main Street. The building's site has potential archaeological significance relating to its pre-1900 use and development.

References

- *Mataura Ensign* 3 April 1900, p. 3; 29 September 1900, p. 2; 13 April 1901, p. 2; 16 April 1901, p. 2; 18 May 1901, p. 3; 8 June 1901, p. 2; 2 July 1901, p. 2; 12 December 1901, p. 5; 12 August 1902, p. 5; 15 November 1902, p. 2; 4 December 1902, p. 2; 18 December 1902, p. 2; 20 December 1902, p. 2; 27 January 1903, p. 3; 17 December 1901, p. 3; 19 December 1901, p. 2; 2 August 1902, p. 2; 25 January 1906, p. 5; 3 February 1906, p. 5.
- *Evening Star* 21 September 1895, p. 2.
- *Otago Daily Times* 28 February 1871, p. 2.
- https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2509
- https://icc.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Heritage-Impact-Assessment-Club-Hotel-New-Zealand-Heritage-Properties.pdf

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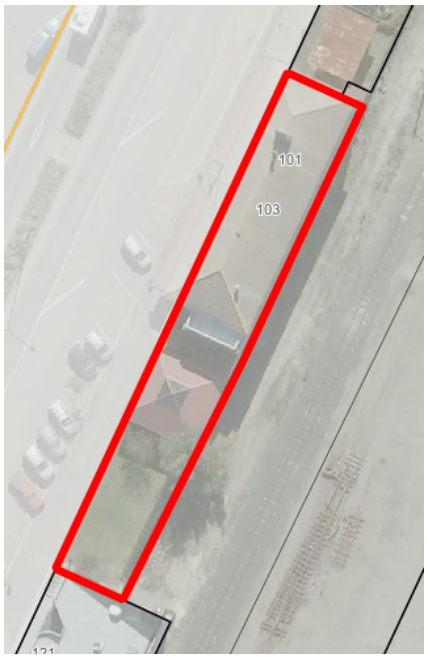

Extent of scheduling, former Gore Post Office, 101-103 Main Street, Gore.

Building before tower was removed. Auckland Libraries Heritage Collection.