

LEEDERVILLE POST OFFICE (FMR) LEEDERVILLE



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Leederville Post Office (fmr)
Other names	
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	2203
State Heritage Register:	1 Dec 1995
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	156 Oxford St
Locality	Leederville
Survey	LOT: 3 D/P: 62323
Vol/folio	1650/432
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	<p>Exceptional</p> <p>Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.</p>
Management category	<p>Category 1</p> <p>The place should be retained and conserved. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place and be in accordance with a Conservation Plan if one is in place.</p>
Statement of significance	<p>The place is a fine example of Federation Arts and Crafts public architecture which is domestic in scale</p> <p>The place contributes to the streetscape, continuing the scale and character of Oxford Street</p> <p>The place demonstrates the provision of government services to an expanding suburb, the result of the gold boom experienced in the late 1890s.</p> <p>The place contributes to the community's sense of history and place, as a rare example of an early inner city suburban post office.</p>

PLACE USE	
Original use	Transport/Communications: Communications - Post Office
Current use	Commercial: Restaurant
Other use	Transport/Communications: Communications -Housing or Quarters

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Construction date	1898; 1997
Walls	Brick
Roof	Terracotta tile
Architectural Style	Federation Romanesque
Physical description	<p>The one storey building has a tiled hipped roof and a symmetrical front with central entry brick arched verandah - three facing the main street and one at each end.</p> <p>The severity of the external facades is a measure of the change of design direction between Temple Poole and Grainger. The two central pillars of the three front arches feature low simplified ionic capitals. It originally included a residence for the post master as well as the post office, however renovation during the 1990's has removed most of the original internal partitioning.</p>
Condition	Good
Integrity	Moderate
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The suburb of Leederville was named after William Leeder who arrived in Western Australia aboard the Rockingham in 1830. He took up Swan Locations Ac and Ad on the eastern side of Lake Monger. Between these and further allocations, he ended up owning all the land in what is now known as Leederville (the family home was erected on the hill where St Mary's Church now is).

The area was declared a Roads Board district in 1895, a municipality in 1896 and later under the control of the City of Perth. When the Town of Vincent was formed in 1995, Leederville came under its jurisdiction.

The Leederville Post Office is one of only four remaining examples of a suburban post office which incorporated a post master's residence and one of a series built to serve the rapidly expanding suburban areas during the gold rush period. Others built in the same period included the Aberdeen Street, Brisbane Street, Victoria Park and (now demolished) Hay Street post offices. All exhibited a similar style, adapted for their sites. Although Leederville Post Office was built under the direction of PWD Chief Architect J. H. Grainger, the design continued the pattern established by his predecessor, George Temple Poole, but with some small variations.

The foundation stone made from Meckering granite, was laid by E. H. Wittenoom, Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, on 3 May 1897. During the ceremony he spoke about the development of the area and added 'I am very pleased to know that so close to Perth there was so much land available for cutting up for small allotments', where people could live more comfortably than in the more crowded city. If it was one thing they desired more than another it was that people should acquire land and settle down and erect homes from themselves. A leaden box containing, among other things, current newspapers, a Government Gazette, Year Book, postage stamps and working drawings of the building, was placed behind the stone.

The contract for its construction was let to A. Davenport in February 1897 and the building was completed in September at a cost of £1,168.

It was one of five public buildings erected on what was known as the Fitzroy Park Estate. The others were the Leederville Primary School (1896), headmaster's house (No. 164 Oxford Street 1897 - 1985), Municipal Chambers (1897 - 1940 and the Police Station (1897 - 1964).

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

It was first listed in the 1898 edition of Wise's Post Office Directories, but the postmaster's name was not included. In 1899, the postmistress was Miss Matilda Pollard and she remained there until 1910 when John G. Cornish took over.

Early resident Gordon Hughes said that in the early years the Post Office used to look like a house with chimneys and open fireplaces. These were later taken off and the bricks were used to build at the rear. The building was extended and altered further over the years, with some former windows being replaced with private letter boxes. The post office function was extended into the residential section of the building as the district developed. The postmen and telegram boys all used push bikes to deliver the mail and telegrams and there were two deliveries of mail each day.

In the 1940s, the area they covered was very large from 'North Perth, part of West Perth, Leederville, Mount Hawthorn, Joondanna and Glendalough and part of Osborne Park' (Les Beckham OH). At that time there was a Morse Room at the rear where all the telegrams were deciphered. In 1949 the last year of the Directories, no mention was made of the postmaster but it indicated that a public telephone box had been erected outside sometime previously.

Peter Ryan was one of the longer serving postmasters having been appointed in the 1970s and he was still there in the early 1990s. It was around that time that Leederville's postal requirements eventually outgrew the building and a new postal facility was provided in a new building adjacent at No. 288 Vincent Street.

In the late 1990s, the Post Office was purchased by a private owner and converted to the Post Cafe in 1997.

In 1999, a two storey building was constructed at the rear with a frontage onto Vincent Street for shop/offices and a car park. Other restaurants followed Post Cafe including the franchise 'Nandos' followed by the coffee shop franchise 'Dome', with alterations being made to cater for this in 2007.

In 2024 the restaurant space is occupied by Totally Thai, with the Oxford Post Office remaining in the adjacent Vincent Street building.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th century onwards show the construction of the aforementioned Vincent Street building in the 1990s as well as the addition of another structure on the northern side of the original post office building in the early 2000s. This building is occupied by Oxford Bridal as of 2024. There have been no other visible changes to the subject place since then.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historic theme	Infrastructure: Transport and Communications Peopling WA: Demographic Development Economy: Commerce	
Associations	George Temple Poole John Grainger A. Davenport	Architect Architect Contractor
Sources	P2203 Leederville Post Office Assessment Documentation for inclusion on the State Register, DPLH, 1995. Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES



Leederville Post Office 1942, NAA K1131, W677A



Leederville Post Office 1945, NAA K1131 W1175/A