

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** former Geraldine Post Office  
**ADDRESS** 47-49 Talbot Street, Geraldine

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(Dr J Wilson, September 2018)

**FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** No. 103      **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 2019 / 2  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Sec 2 SO 17999

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2475155300

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1907-8

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** John Campbell, Government Architect, Public Works  
Department; Charles Calvert, contractor

**STYLE** Edwardian Baroque

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Two-storey building with irregular L-shaped footprint and hipped roof forms. Principal windows have keystones and Gibbs surround; central recessed entry is framed by a segmental pediment; triangular pediments crown first floor windows and central bay above. Single storey porch at north west corner provides access to first floor. Double-hung sash or casement windows with multi-pane uppers. Clock suspended from metal bracket above entry. String courses, decorative relief work within pediments, solid parapet concealing roof. Lean-to along rear (north-east) elevation and hip roofed extension at northern corner.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Brick, roughcast cement plaster, timber and corrugated iron.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Clock fitted (July 1909). Exchange building addition (1938).

**SETTING**

The former post office stands on the north-east side of Talbot Street, directly opposite the eastern terminus of Cox Street. To the south-east are located the manse, church and hall of St Mary's Anglican Church. The extent of scheduling includes the land parcel on which the building is located.

## **HISTORY**

Geraldine's first purpose-built post office was erected in 1875. It was a timber structure and stood immediately to the north-west of the current building. The new post office was open for business in early October 1908, although not officially opened by the Premier and Postmaster-General Sir Joseph Ward until Saturday 31 October. Accommodation for the postmaster was provided on the first floor and an exchange building was later added at the rear; the original exchange having been accommodated within the main building. The post office clock, funded by public subscription, was installed on the façade of the building in July 1909. Since its sale by NZ Post in 2003, the building has been in private ownership and retail use.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has historical significance for its association with the provision of government post and telegraph services in the town for more than 90 years. The building also represents the social pattern whereby former government buildings gained new uses after their closure in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has cultural significance as a site of community identity and as a demonstration of the way of life of its former postmasters, their families, staff and customers.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has architectural significance as an Edwardian Baroque building designed by the Government Architect, John Campbell, who had overall responsibility for the 'corporate' style of government buildings from 1899 until his retirement in 1922. The Geraldine Post Office represents Campbell's preference for the ornamental exuberance of the Edwardian Baroque style in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has technological and craftsmanship value for the quality of its brick masonry construction and classical detailing. Charles Calvert of St Albans, Christchurch submitted the successful tender for the post office in October 1907. Calvert was also responsible for erecting the Sign of the Kiwi (1916) on the Port Hills.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has contextual significance as a notable historic feature within the Geraldine town centre. As the terminal view at the east end of Cox Street (SH 79) the building is a local landmark. There are a number of other scheduled buildings on Talbot Street, including the former Crown Hotel (heritage item # 103) and St Mary's Anglican Church and vicarage (heritage items #105 and 104); together these items contribute to the historic character of the town's principal thoroughfare.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

Although the former post office post-dates 1900, its site may have potential archaeological significance in relation to the earlier development of the site, including that part of the property previously occupied by the 1875 post office.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Geraldine Post Office has overall significance to Geraldine and Timaru district as a whole. The building has historical significance for its association with government services in

the town for over 90 years and cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of its former staff and customers. The former Geraldine Post Office has architectural significance as an Edwardian Baroque design produced by the Government Architect and technological and craftsmanship value for the quality of its brick masonry construction and classical detailing. The former Geraldine Post Office has contextual significance as a local landmark and although the building post-dates 1900 its site may have potential archaeological significance in relation to the colonial development of the town centre.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 23 August 1907, p. 2; 21 February 1908, p. 4; 6 October 1908, p. 4.
- *Temuka Leader* 17 March 1906, p. 3; 15 November 1906, p. 3; 9 April 1907, p. 2; 24 August 1907, p. 3; 22 October 1907, p. 2; 3 December 1907, p. 3; 10 December 1907, p. 3; 27 July 1909, p. 2.
- *Star* 2 November 1908, p. 1.
- *Otago Witness* 18 November 1908, p. 45.
- *Lyttleton Times* 17 February 1875, p. 2; 29 May 1908, p. 6.
- *Press* 13 August 1909, p. 5; 1 October 1937, p. 10; 30 November 1937, p. 17; 12 July 1941, p. 12.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2019>
- Peter Richardson 'Building the dominion: government architecture in New Zealand, 1840-1922' PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1997. Available online.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand - Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903 (available online).
- Peter Richardson 'An Architecture of Empire: The government buildings of John Campbell in New Zealand' MA thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1988. Available online.
- <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2c3/campbell-john>



Extent of scheduling, 47-49 Talbot Street, Geraldine.