

Heritage Evaluation

Avondale Post Office (former)

1862 Great North Road, Avondale



Image: Photo by Rachel Ford, May 2016

Prepared by Auckland Council Heritage Unit

June 2016

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to consider the place located at 1862 Great North Road, Avondale against the criteria for evaluation of historic heritage in the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (**PAUP**).

The document has been prepared by Emma Rush, Principal Advisor Special Projects – Heritage, Heritage Unit, Auckland Council. It is solely for the use of Auckland Council for the purpose it is intended in accordance with the agreed scope of work.

2.0 Identification

Site address	1862 Great North Road, Avondale
Legal description and Certificate of Title identifier	Allot 380 Titirangi Parish SO 28701 CT-60D/546
NZTM grid reference	Easting 1751180.02 Northing 5915501.31
Owner(s)	JS Commercial Property Limited
District/regional plan & zoning	Business 2
PAUP zoning	Town Centre – Avondale
Existing scheduled item(s)	None
Additional PAUP controls	Built Environment: Building Frontage – Key Retail Frontage overlay Additional Zone Height Controls: Additional Height Controls – Avondale, 32.5m / 8 storeys Historic Heritage: Pre-1944 Building Demolition Control overlay
Heritage NZ (Pouhere Taonga) listing details	n/a
Pre-1900 site (HNZPT Act 2014 Section 6)	No. The place is not recorded as an archaeological site and has not been assessed to determine if it has archaeological values. It has some potential as a site of human activity before 1900 resulting from the known subdivision of the site in 1863 and commercial activity in the vicinity.
Cultural Heritage Inventory (CHI) reference/s	CHI Places Number 20176. Historic Structure; Building – Commercial; Former Avondale Post Office
NZ Archaeology Association site record number/s	n/a

3.0 Constraints

This evaluation is based on information that was available, or was able to be sourced, at the time of writing. The primary and secondary sources that were available provided sufficient information to conduct this evaluation, but additional research may yield new or further information.

This evaluation does not include an assessment of archaeological values or of the importance of the place to Mana Whenua.

The structural integrity and condition of the building have not been addressed. Any comments on the structure or condition are based on visual inspection only.

Site visits were conducted in April and May 2016. All fieldwork was done from the public realm. The interior of the building was viewed, but was not assessed as part of the evaluation.

4.0 Historical summary

See Appendix 1 for additional historical information relating to 1862 Great North Road and for a history of the postal service in Avondale.

The site of the former Avondale Post Office (**Post Office**) at 1862 Great North Road was originally part of the Walton Estate and was sold to Mr. William Collins in July 1900. The Collins family built a substantial return-verandah villa on the site before World War One. Collins sold the house and the site in 1925 when the property was subdivided, but bought it back in 1933.

There was significant expansion recorded in the postal business in Avondale between 1912 and the 1930s. In 1935, residents petitioned for a new post office in Avondale, with concerns focused on the location of the post office, which at that time was located in the former Avondale Hotel building on the corner of Great North Road and Wingate Street. The existing post office was not considered centrally located and thus was an inconvenience to businesses and residents. This lack of a central location most likely relates to the fact that the Avondale tram terminus was located near the corner of Rosebank and Great North roads, a distance of almost 500 metres from the post office in 1935. The petition was sent to the Postmaster-General and, in December 1935, a response was received stating a decision had been made to erect a modern post office building.

The Crown purchased the land at 1862 Great North Road in October 1936 and, by the beginning of 1938, architect Llewellyn (Lew) S. Piper was employed to design the building. Piper was a noted mid-century Auckland architect with an interest in Modern, Moderne and Art Deco design, and was responsible for many commercial and public buildings in these styles. Following a call for tenders, J. A. Penman and Sons won the contract to build the structure for a price of £4,407 (£4,295 plus £112 for the tiled roof). This building firm was well established, having been in business in Auckland for over 50 years.

The purpose-built building, which replaced the post office in the former Avondale Hotel, was officially opened on 19 August 1938 by Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, the Honourable H. G. R. Mason.

The 1938 drawings indicate reinforced concrete construction, finished with a plaster façade and a glazed tile roof. The interior layout included a large public office, mail-sorting room, postmaster's office, and general office space. The drawings also showed outbuildings to the rear containing public telephone boxes, a cycle shed for the use of telegraph messengers, and a heater room. Post boxes were to be located in the Great North Road vestibule.

It appears that the building was not constructed strictly according to the original plans. These plans show the existing layout of doors and windows on the building's Great North Road elevation. However, the three windows in the centre of the façade are shown in the plans with shouldered arches at the top of the window frames, and a matching arched design in the surrounding plaster detail, rather than the rectilinear-shaped detailing evident in a 1938 photo of the building. The 1938 plans show the Rosebank Road elevation containing a set of three small windows, centrally located on the façade, noticeably different to what can be seen in a 1938 photograph. The 1938 photograph shows the fenestration present today, with the exception of the right-hand window, which was altered to form a door into a lobby to provide additional post office boxes in 1965.

The construction of the Post Office is closely associated with the arrival of trams in Avondale, which occurred in 1932. The Avondale terminus was located just east of the intersection of Great North and Rosebank roads. The construction of the Post Office on the corner of this intersection after the arrival of trams had a considerable influence on the development and location of the Avondale Town Centre, and cemented the Great North Road/Rosebank Road area as Avondale's main business area at the time.

The Post Office operated from the building at 1862 Great North Road for nearly 50 years and during this time played an important role in the community as a postal and communications agency and savings bank. Like other post offices of the time, it also provided community services including the registration of births, deaths, marriages and cars; the acceptance of licence fees for television and fishing; voting enrolment; and the collection of pensions. The Post Office was also the location of the first public toilet in Avondale. Due to these multiple functions, the Post Office provided a venue for informal meeting and communication within the Avondale community.

Being centrally located with the Avondale Township, the Post Office was the departure point for buses leaving for social events such as dances in neighbouring suburbs, and acted as the start and finish line for local activities including harrier running.

5.0 Physical description

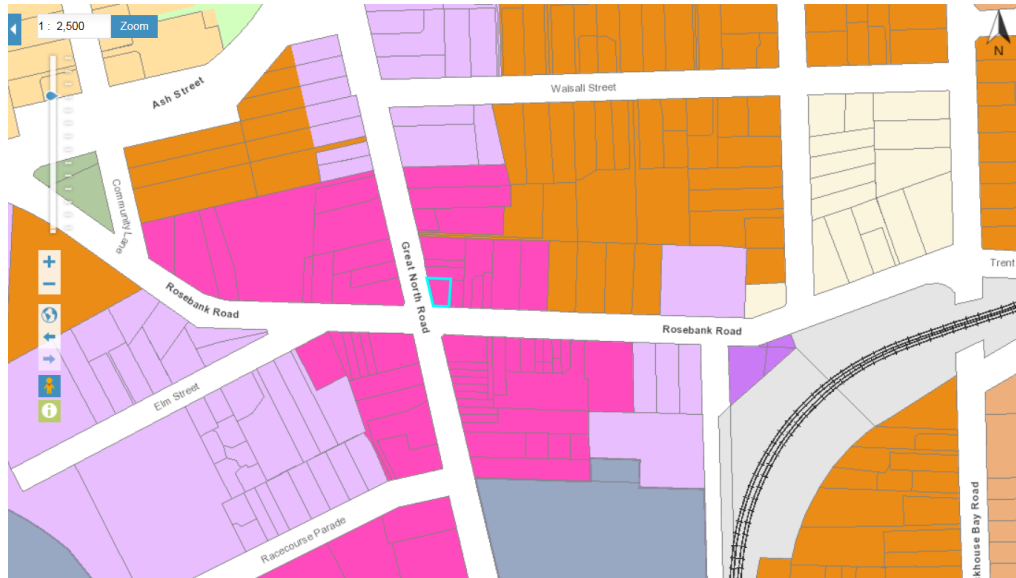


Figure 1: Former Avondale Post Office in wider context (Auckland Council PAUP GIS viewer)

Site and Context

The land at 1862 Great North Road is a trapezium-shaped property comprised of one land parcel (Allot 380 Titirangi Parish SO 28701). It is located on the north-west corner of the intersection of Great North Road and Rosebank Road. The land slopes to the west and also falls away gently from south to north.

The Post Office is a commercial building and, being located on a corner site, is clearly visible on the approach to the intersection from the west and the south. The Post Office buildings (the main building and outbuildings) cover almost the entire site, standing flush with the boundaries on the north, east and south. There are no associated gardens or landscaping.



Figure 2: Former Avondale Post Office, detailed view (Auckland Council PAUP GIS viewer)

Buildings

The main Post Office building is a single storey concrete building, which is simply detailed with Art Deco-style elements. It is roughly square in shape, with an angled and stepped façade on Great North Road, and a smaller square protruding from north-west corner. A concrete accessory building is situated to the rear (north), and can be accessed via a gated yard entered from Great North Road, or from the rear of the main building. The walls of the main building and accessory building are finished in smooth plaster. The building terminates in a simple stepped parapet with precast ornamental coping featuring fluted detailing. The hipped roof is made of glazed Marseilles tiles. The multi-light windows are constructed of galvanised steel. A flag pole extends from the roof near the south-west corner of the building.

As a corner building, 1862 Great North Road has two main façades. Along the Great North Road this façade is stepped and contains three main bays. The accessory building forms a fourth bay, separated from the main building by a gated yard. The right-hand bay contains the main entrance into the building, containing a non-original single metal door and sidelight, bordered by a raised rectilinear door surround that includes pilasters on either side with fluted capitals. Above the door is an aluminium roller door, and above that a rectangular recessed panel, now covered with signage. The central bay contains three fixed, single-paned, recessed windows. The windows are surrounded by raised rectilinear plaster surrounds containing horizontal and vertical detailing, with a rectangular bevelled panel beneath each window. Above a rectangular recessed panel, now filled with signage, extends across all three windows. The left-hand bay features a multi-light window, with operable hopper and awning sections, also bordered by a raised rectilinear plaster surround with pilasters on either side with fluted capitals. This window has a bevelled panel beneath it and a rectangular recessed panel above. In between the left and central bays, a short wall perpendicular to Great North Road contains a small, rectangular, recessed window with simple raised horizontal plaster detailing at the top and bottom. A light is located above this window.

To the north of the main building, the accessory building is visible behind a pair of gates. This building, which is flush with the footpath, is also constructed of reinforced concrete and has a smooth-plastered façade. It has a horizontal parapet and a mono-pitched roof constructed of corrugated iron. The façade features a raised plaster surround containing two narrow doorways, which, according to the 1938 plans, originally contained the wooden and glass doors to two public telephone boxes. No doors now exist, and the doorways are filled. The accessory building was not originally attached to the main building, but now a wooden framed lean-to with a corrugated iron roof and walls connects the accessory and main buildings. The accessory building and associated lean-to mask any view of the smaller square portion of the main building. Only the hipped roof of this part of the building is visible, made of glazed Marseilles tiles.

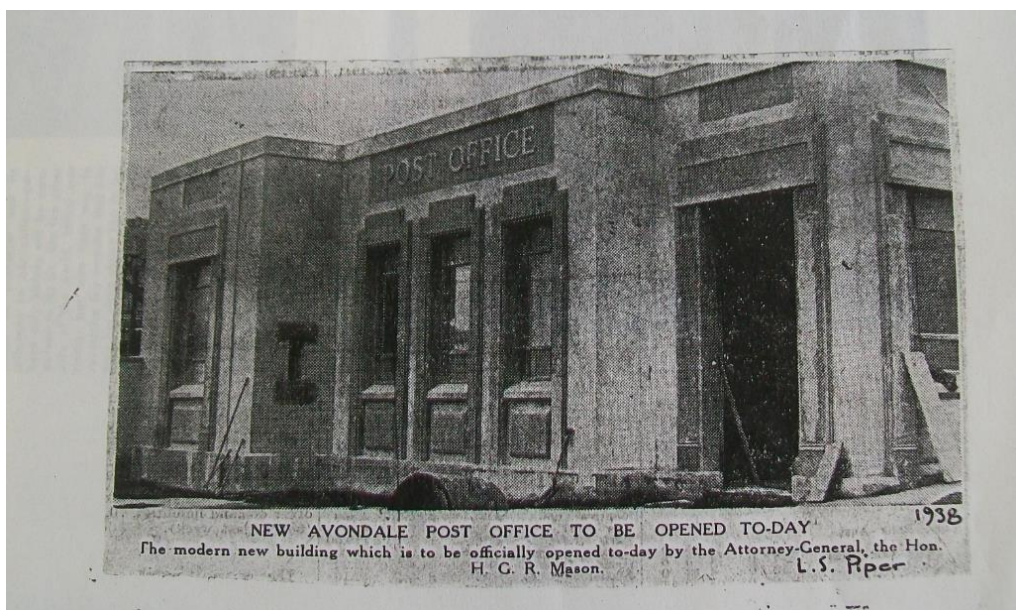
The Rosebank Road elevation also contains three bays, with the central bay slightly recessed from those to its left and right. The fenestration on this façade mimics that on Great North Road, featuring from left to right a single window, a group of three windows, and a doorway. All the windows are fixed and single paned, and are recessed. The single window in the left-hand bay is surrounded by a raised rectilinear plaster detailing that includes pilasters on both sides with fluted capitals, and a rectangular bevelled panel below. Above the window (but below the coping) is a rectangular recessed panel, now covered with signs. The three windows in the central bay each have a raised rectilinear plaster surround containing horizontal and vertical detailing. Due to the contour of the land, these windows do not feature the beveled panels below that can be seen on the

building's Great North Road façade. However, they do feature a rectangular recessed panel that extends across all three windows, similar to the one on the Great North Road façade. This panel is also obscured by signs. The doors in the right-hand bay are a wooden and glass casement-hung pair, surrounded by the same plaster detailing featured around the door on the Great North Road façade. A verandah extends over the doors and, above this, there is a rectangular recessed panel, now covered by signs.

The east elevation is flush with the adjoining building and is unable to be seen. The north elevation is also obscured from public view, given its location behind the corrugated iron lean-to.

Modifications

The building form has remained intact, as seen in comparison between photos from 1938 and the 1960s and today.



This image from the Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Library (ref 580-7643) shows the intersection of Great North and Rosebank Road, 9 August 1963.

However, alterations have changed the original entrance and vestibule, where aluminium joinery and a roller door have replaced the original entrance doors. The plaster detailing surrounding the doorway remains intact. The multi-light windows on both façades have been replaced with single panes, with the exception of the left-hand window on the Great North Road façade. The multi-light window on the far right of the Rosebank Road façade was removed, along with small sections of the wall on either side, to make way for the doorway and doors that are present today. The verandah over the doorway was also added. These alterations were undertaken in 1965 to provide a lobby for additional post boxes. The decorative plaster that surrounded the original window remains intact around the doorway. The pair of doors now hung in the doorway closely resembles the doors in the 1938 plans.

Numerous signs and advertisements are affixed to the exterior of the building and to the windows. These obscure many of the subtle design features of the building, such as the recessed panels, and strongly detract from the aesthetic values of the building. However, this affect is reversible. Early photographs of the building show dimensional lettering ('POST OFFICE') in the recessed panels above the windows in the central bays of both façades. While signage below the coping on each façade obscures the recessed panels, it appears this lettering has been removed.

The interior of the building is highly modified, as to be expected with historic commercial buildings, as tenants and uses change over time. The 1938 plans show details of wall cabinets, public counters and pigeon holes but these have long since been removed. Since 1985, when the post office moved to a building at the other end of the Avondale Town Centre, the building has been occupied by various retail uses, including a pool hall, copy centre, restaurant, and a pharmacy.

The building appears to be in good condition, although on the Great North Road façade some deterioration (e.g. paint flaking off and bubbling) is evident.




The building remains in commercial use, and currently houses a pharmacy.

Summary of Key Features


- Located in the Avondale Town Centre
- Art deco style
- Smooth plastered finish
- Design features including pilasters with fluted capitals, and rectilinear-shaped door and window surrounds with beveled and recessed panels
- Parapet with fluted detailing.

6.0 Comparative analysis



The former Avondale Post Office can be compared to other commercial buildings designed by architect Lew Piper. Piper is a noted mid-century Auckland architect who had an interest in Modern, Moderne and Art Deco design. His career spanned at least 50 years. He was responsible for many commercial buildings in his favoured styles, and relevant examples are provided below. The analysis shows the former Avondale Post Office is a good representative example of Piper's commercial architecture from the late 1930s and early 1940s.




Address	Photo & Description	Current Heritage Status ¹
<p>Berkeley Theatre</p> <p>81-87 Tamaki Drive, Mission Bay</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, October 2015</i></p> <p>The Berkeley Theatre, built in 1939, was designed as a theatre to accommodate over 700 people, with associated dressing rooms, cloak rooms and tearooms. Four shops were incorporated into the design at ground floor to produce revenue. The plaster-finished building is a typical example of the Moderne style, which was a popular design for cinemas at the time.</p>	<p>Not scheduled</p> <p>Pre-1944 Overlay</p>
<p>Memorial Plunket Rooms</p> <p>489 Dominion Road, Mt Eden</p>	 <p><i>Source: Home and Building, Spring 1940</i></p>  <p><i>Source: Rachel Ford, May 2016</i></p> <p>The Memorial Plunket Rooms, which face on to Potters Park, were designed by Piper in 1940 in association with New Zealand's Centennial Year.</p>	<p>Not scheduled</p> <p>Pre-1944 Overlay</p>

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the heritage status is derived from the PAUP.

<p>Taumaranui Fire Station (former)</p> <p>30 Miriama Street, Taumaranui</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, February 2010</i> The former Taumaranui Fire Station, was built in 1940 and opened in 1941. It is a two-storey Art Deco-style building, with a small belltower on the roof, and is a good example of a commercial building of this style and era.</p>	<p>Scheduled in the Ruapehu District Plan</p>
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The former Avondale Post Office can be compared to other former post office buildings built in Auckland at a similar time. Relevant examples are shown below. The Post Office is considered to be a representative example of public architecture of the time. It shares similarities with other former post offices that are already scheduled in the PAUP.

Address	Photo & Description	Current Heritage Status
<p>Northcote Post Office (former)</p> <p>115 Queen Street, Northcote Point</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, March 2012</i> Designed by Government Architect John T. Mair and P.C. Cornish, the construction of this building began in 1929. The design of the building combines Inter-War Stripped Classical façades with a domestic hipped roof. The building also features steel-framed windows and a rendered walls.</p>	<p>Scheduled</p>
<p>New Lynn Police Station</p> <p>3092 Great North Road, New Lynn</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, November 2015</i> The building that currently houses the New Lynn Police Station was opened as New Lynn's second purpose-built post office in 1930. It served that role until a third building was opened nearer the mall in 1968. The building is constructed of brick with a</p>	<p>Scheduled</p>

<p>Massey Post Office (former)</p> <p>399 Don Buck Road, Massey</p>	<p>corrugated steel roof and steel joinery.</p>  <p>Source: Auckland Council Property File</p> <p>Constructed in the 1930s, the former Massey Post Office consists of a simple rectilinear timber weatherboard building with a fibrolite roof. A front façade with a post-supported verandah gives the building a retail character.</p>	<p>Scheduled</p>
<p>Post Office (former)</p> <p>10 Victoria Road, Devonport</p>	 <p>Source: Google Maps, December 2015</p> <p>Designed by architect T. E. Norman Wade (of Wade and Bartley) for the Public Works Department in 1937 in the Streamline Moderne style, this building has a façade which uses horizontal and vertical elements, including window detailing, to achieve the design intentions. Some Art Deco motifs, including zig-zag patterns are evident and, above the parapet, a hipped roof can be seen.</p>	<p>Scheduled</p>
<p>Grey Lynn Post Office (former)</p> <p>537 Great North Road, Grey Lynn</p>	 <p>Source: Google Maps, October 2015</p> <p>The former post office was constructed on the corner of Great North Road and Williamson Avenue in 1938, when this site was redeveloped. The building was designed by Wade and Bartley.</p>	<p>Not scheduled</p> <p>Special Character (Grey Lynn Business) Overlay</p>

The former Avondale Post Office can be compared to other commercial buildings built during the interwar period in Avondale, and in the wider Whau Local Board

Area.² Among these, it stands out as good example of the Art Deco style as applied to commercial buildings of the time.

Address	Photo & Description	Current Heritage Status
<p>Fearon's Building 1861-1867 Great North Road, Avondale</p>	 <p>Source: Google Maps, November 2015 The Fearon block of shops had been built on the north-west corner of Great North Road and Rosebank Road by June 1921. From the late 1930s to 1960 this block housed the Avondale branch of Farmers Trading Co.</p>	<p>Not scheduled Pre-1944 Overlay</p>
<p>Unity Buildings 1874-1878 Great North Road, Avondale</p>	 <p>Source: Google Maps, November 2015 The Unity building was erected in 1932/33 by owner J. W. Tait, coinciding with (and likely as a response to) the arrival of trams in Avondale. The building was situated to take full advantage of the proximity of the new tram terminus. The Unity Buildings were named as a result of a school competition.</p>	<p>Not scheduled Pre-1944 Overlay</p>
<p>Excelsior Chambers 1800-1888 Great North Road, Avondale</p>	 <p>Source: Google Maps, November 2015 It is understood the construction of the Excelsior Chambers was started early in 1926. The land on which the block of shops is located was approved for subdivision by the Borough Council in April 1926, and by April 1927 the building was in existence. Additions were made in 1929 and 1937-39. Excelsior Chambers was the third major block of shops constructed on Great North</p>	<p>Not scheduled Pre-1944 Overlay</p>

² The Whau Local Board area contains the following suburbs: New Lynn, Green Bay, Kelston, Rosebank, Avondale, New Windsor and Blockhouse Bay

Road after the Page's store (c.1903) and Fearon's Building.		
<p>Former McMurrays Store Building</p> <p>507-509 Blockhouse Bay Road, Blockhouse Bay</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, November 2015</i> In 1937 the McMurray family built this large shop, with living accommodation upstairs and an extensive storage basement. A hand petrol pump was installed at the side, and a post office was located in a corner of the store.</p>	<p>Not scheduled</p> <p>Pre-1944 Overlay</p>
<p>Oag's Building</p> <p>18-20 Totara Avenue, New Lynn</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, November 2015</i> Dating from 1925, this building comprises a two-storey brick and concrete-rendered commercial building. The building contains two shops and associated living areas on the upper storey. Roller shop fronts have greatly detracted from the aesthetic values of the building.</p>	<p>Scheduled</p>
<p>Sunde Buildings</p> <p>3074-3076 Great North Road, New Lynn</p>	 <p><i>Source: Google Maps, November 2015</i> The date of construction of the Sunde Buildings is unknown, but is estimated to have been c.1930s and prior to 1937. The building is generally intact above the veranda on the Great North Road frontage, with decorative elements remaining. The retail shop fronts below appear highly modified. The façade contains four separate areas of accommodation above the retail spaces on the ground floor.</p>	<p>Not scheduled</p> <p>Pre-1944 Overlay</p>

7.0 Significance criteria

(a) Historical

The place reflects important or representative aspects of national, regional or local history, or is associated with an important event, person, group of people or idea or early period of settlement within the nation, region or locality.

The former Avondale Post Office has **considerable local** significance under the historical criterion.

The construction of the Post Office at the intersection of Great North Road and Rosebank Road in 1938 is associated with the growth and development of Avondale. The Post Office was the first purpose-built post office in Avondale, and was built to service the growing district of Avondale.

The Post Office is closely associated with the pattern of development of the Avondale Town Centre, and the physical location of the main town centre. The introduction of trams to Avondale and the location of the tram terminus near the intersection of Great North and Rosebank roads led to concerns that the existing post office was not centrally located. The Post Office was constructed close to the terminus and its construction contributed to, and helped cement, the location of the main town centre around the Great North Road/Rosebank Road intersection in the mid-late 1930s. The Post Office served as an anchor-point for the continued development of the Avondale Town Centre in this location.

(b) Social

The place has a strong or special association with, or is held in high esteem by, a particular community or cultural group for its symbolic, spiritual, commemorative, traditional or other cultural value.

The former Avondale Post Office has **considerable local** significance under this criterion.

Although largely overtaken by new technologies in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, traditionally the post office was the principal means of communicating with those outside the immediate community or settlement. The Post Office was an important part of the Avondale Town Centre, providing postal, banking and telephone services, acting as the births, deaths and marriages registration office for Avondale, and providing other public services to the community. It also served as a central point within the township. As a result, it had an important role as an informal place to meet and exchange information with others from within the community. While the building no longer functions as a post office, it operated as such for nearly 50 years.

The Avondale Post Office is held in high public esteem now, and in the past. The Post Office was one of 22 places nominated for scheduling in the PAUP by the Whau Local Board, reflecting the importance of this building to the local community. In the past, the building was included in an exhibition of architectural drawings of Auckland at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. This 1986 exhibition, curated by the Auckland Branch Exhibition Sub-Committee of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, exhibited the work of Auckland architects and their influence on the city over a 100-year period from the 1880s to the 1980s.

(c) Mana whenua

The place has a strong or special association with, or is held in high esteem by, mana whenua for its symbolic, spiritual, commemorative, traditional or other cultural value.

An assessment of the place's value to Mana Whenua has not been undertaken as part of this evaluation.

(d) Knowledge

The place has potential to provide knowledge through scientific or scholarly study or to contribute to an understanding of the cultural or natural history of the nation, region or locality.

While the Post Office has contributed to the historical development of the Avondale Township, it does not possess any particular potential to yield additional knowledge. The former Avondale Post Office therefore has **little or no** significance under the knowledge criterion.

(e) Technological

The place demonstrates technical accomplishment, innovation or achievement in its structure, construction, components or use of materials.

The 1931 Napier earthquake had a significant influence on the construction of buildings in New Zealand. Prior to the earthquake, there was little provision for the seismic strengthening of New Zealand Buildings. In 1935, standards were introduced, which for the first time required designs for earthquake loadings and details such as reinforcing to be added to brick construction.

The 1938 drawings of the former Avondale Post Office show reinforced concrete construction. While this method of construction was relatively new at the time the Post Office was built, it was not uncommon. The former Avondale Post Office therefore possesses **little or no** technological significance.

(f) Physical attributes

The place is a notable or representative example of a type, design or style, method of construction, craftsmanship or use of materials or the work of a notable architect, designer, engineer or builder.

The former Avondale Post Office has **considerable local** value under the physical attributes criterion.

The Post Office has importance under this criterion as the work of notable architect Llewellyn S. Piper. Piper designed a number of commercial and public buildings in Auckland and elsewhere during the early and mid-twentieth century, as well as many residential buildings. In addition to the Post Office, Piper's designs include the Warkworth Town Hall extension; Berkeley Theatre; Milne and Choyce Department Store; Mt Eden Memorial Plunket Rooms; Auckland Electric Power Board (AEPB) building; and Auckland Harbour Bridge Authority Building. He also designed many buildings elsewhere in New Zealand. While Piper is best known for the AEPB Building, other examples of his work, including the Post Office, were included in the 1986 Architectural Drawings of Auckland exhibition at the Auckland Museum. The former Avondale Post Office sits as a good example of a commercial/public building within Piper's extensive body of work.

The Post Office is designed in the Art deco style. Art deco design was based on the principle that building design should be functional. This style rose to prominence in New Zealand in the early 1930s, when the cities of Napier and Hastings were rebuilt following the 1931 earthquake. The clean, geometric lines

of the Art Deco style were well suited to the concrete-constructed Post Office and the building is a good representative example of the Art Deco style as applied to commercial architecture in the local area.

The former Avondale Post Office is a notable example of 1930s commercial architecture within Avondale and the wider Whau Local Board area. Historic commercial buildings throughout the Whau Local Board area are typically one- or two-storey masonry buildings, like the Post Office. However, Piper's use of features such as the plaster detailing, the fenestration and the stepped façade in his design demonstrate good use of the Art Deco style as applied to commercial buildings.

(g) Aesthetic

The place is notable or distinctive for its aesthetic, visual, or landmark qualities.

The former Avondale Post Office has **moderate** significance under this criterion. Located on a corner site at the junction of Great North Road and Rosebank Road, the building is a noticeable landmark in Avondale and is clearly visible on the approach to the town centre from the south or west. The building's three-toned plaster façade and Art Deco details contribute to the visual presence and its aesthetic values. However, the signs and advertising currently affixed to the building significantly detract from its landmark and vista values.

(h) Context

The place contributes to or is associated with a wider historical or cultural context, streetscape, townscape, landscape or setting.

The former Avondale Post Office retains its original site and setting. The building has townscape value for the part it plays in defining the area that was the main Avondale Town Centre from the 1930s until the mid-1950s.

The Post Office has group values with other non-scheduled buildings in its vicinity, including Fearon's Building and Unity Buildings, which occupy two of the other three corner sites on the Great North Road/Rosebank Road intersection. The three buildings are coherent in terms of their age, style and scale, are constructed of similar materials, and share elements of their design. The Post Office contributes strongly to the historic character of the wider Avondale area, which includes a number of other interwar buildings, particularly along Great North Road.

For the reasons above, the former Avondale Post Office exhibits **considerable local** context value within the Avondale area.

8.0 Statement of significance

The former Avondale Post Office has **considerable local** significance for its association with the development of the Avondale Town Centre. The construction of the Post Office in 1938, following the arrival of electric trams in Avondale in 1932, helped cement the location of the town centre at the intersection of Great North and Rosebank roads and served as an anchor-point for the continued development of the Avondale business area.

The Post Office also exhibits considerable physical attributes value as an example of commercial architecture from the time, and represents the work of

notable architect Llewellyn S. Piper. The corner building at 1862 Great North Road is a good example of the Art Deco style as applied to public and commercial architecture in the 1930s. The visible corner location of the building and its association with other commercial buildings in the vicinity contributes to its street presence and context values.

9.0 Extent of the place for scheduling

The identified extent of place for scheduling is the area that is integral to the function, meaning and relationships of the place. In the case of the former Avondale Post Office, the identified extent of place for scheduling includes the entire site at 1862 Great North Road (the land described as Allot 380 Titirangi Parish SO 28701), containing the building known as the former Avondale Post Office.



Extent of place, 1862 Great North Road, Avondale

The primary feature of the place is 'Post Office building and former cycle shed/telephone box/heater room building'.

A number of exclusions should be listed:

- Interior of building(s)
- Aluminium roller door
- Rosebank Road verandah
- Corrugated iron lean-to.

10.0 Recommendations

Based on the preceding evaluation, it is considered that the former Avondale Post Office at 1862 Great North Road, Avondale meets the threshold for scheduling. It is recommended this place be scheduled as a Historic Heritage Place: Category B. The place has considerable local significance for its historical, social, physical attributes and context values.

11.0 Table of Historic Heritage Values

Significance Criteria (A-H)	Value* (None, Little, Moderate, Considerable, Exceptional)	Context (Local, Regional, National, International)
A – Historical	Considerable	Local
B – Social	Considerable	Local
C – Mana Whenua	Not evaluated	N/A
D – Knowledge	Little/none	Local
E – Technological	Little	Local
F – Physical Attributes	Considerable	Local
G – Aesthetic	Moderate	Local
H – Context	Considerable	Local

***Levels of significance or value:**

Exceptional: of outstanding importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is essential.

Considerable: of great importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is very important.

Moderate: of some importance and interest; retention of the identified value(s)/significance is desirable.

Little: of limited importance and interest.

NA/None: none identified

11.0 Overall Significance

Place Name and/or Description	Avondale Post Office (former)
Category	B
Primary Feature	Post Office building and former cycle shed/public telephone boxes/heater room building
Known Heritage Values	A, F, H
Extent of Place	Certificate of title boundary
Exclusions	Interior of building(s); Aluminium roller door; Rosebank Road verandah; Corrugated iron lean-to.
Additional Controls for Archaeological Sites or Features	No
Place of Maori Interest or Significance	No

Author

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Date

June 2016

Reviewer

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Date

June 2016

Appendix 1 – Historic Research

Avondale’s Postal History

Prior to 1863, the postal service was represented in the Whau District by a landing place beside the first of the Whau River bridges, approximately at the present-day crossing of the river by Great North Road.¹ Here, mail for West Auckland was brought in by boat, off-loaded, then taken by track into the bush-clad wilderness. In the early years the provision of postal and telegraph services meant much to residents; the presence of these facilities was one of the few inducements to people to settle in districts removed from the main centres, as it helped them feel that they were not completely isolated.²

The year 1863 is the first recorded date for a postal agency in the Whau Township, in a small store and butcher’s shop situated near the intersection of Rosebank Road and Elm Street, run by a Mrs. Myers.³ There were only a few settlers in the district when the post office was established,⁴ and the only other buildings of note in the township at that time were the Presbyterian Church (now St Ninians Church) at 17 St Georges Road and the Whau Hotel, located at the corner of Rosebank Road and Great North Road.⁵ According to researcher Mike Butler, there were four Whau district postmasters in the period from 1865 to 1871: Charles Cooper, L.H. Holloway, J. Holloway, and S. McCallum.⁶ It is likely that these were also the succeeding proprietors of the store.

By 1866, mail was dispatched from the Whau Bridge on a weekly basis, the river still the main transport route despite a daily run from town and back by the horse bus service of the time.⁷ In 1872 the post office was transferred to the Morris Brothers’ store at the corner of Great North Road and Crayford Street, with William Morris serving as postmaster there from 1872 to 1877.⁸ The next proprietor of the store, Mr. George Thomas, took over the postal duties from 1877 to 1881.⁹ The transport of mail from the city was maintained by a daily wagonette along the still-unmetalled Great North Road.¹⁰

In 1880, following the completion of the railway to Avondale, the post office was combined with the railway station, and the dual duties were undertaken by Mr. J. Leach (1881-1884).¹¹ From that time onwards, mail was transported by rail. Eight years later, in May 1888, the first letter carriers’ delivery was made on horseback by Ben Bollard, son of then-Chairman of the Avondale Road Board District, John Bollard.¹² The delivery extended to the Mental Hospital at Mount Albert, the end of Rosebank Road, a quarter mile beyond the Whau Bridge, and to Blockhouse Bay and New Lynn.

At that time, postmen received £15 a year, were required to deliver telegrams as part of their ordinary duties, and had to provide and keep two horses.¹³ The next postman was Mr. Sam Astley, and shortly afterwards Mr. Leach, who was succeeded as combined stationmaster and postmaster by H.F. Howard (1884-1885), then H. Bell (1885-1889),

¹ Truttman, Lisa. (2008). Avondale’s postal history. Retrieved from *Timespanner. A journey through Avondale, Auckland and New Zealand history*, <http://timespanner.blogspot.co.nz/search?q=avondale+post>

² Hon. H.G.R. Mason, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice. (19 August 1938). Unpublished speech notes, Opening of the Avondale Post Office, Auckland

³ Mason (1938)

⁴ Mason (1938)

⁵ Truttman, Lisa J. (Ed.) (2003). *Heart of the Whau*. Auckland: Avondale-Waterview Historical Society Inc.

⁶ Truttman (2003)

⁷ Truttman (2008)

⁸ Truttman (2003)

⁹ Truttman (2003)

¹⁰ Truttman (2008)

¹¹ Mason (1938)

¹² Truttman (2003)

¹³ Truttman (2008)

Amos Eyes (1889-1900), and W.A. Ridgeley (1900-1906).¹⁴ In 1902, Mr. Duncan Ingram took over the duties as postman, and the last two men who combined the duties of stationmaster and postmaster were Mr. Joshua Hutchinson (1906-1907) and Mr. Charles Moon (1907-1912).¹⁵

By 1912, the postal business in Avondale had grown to sufficient proportions to justify being located in a separate building, and in February the post office relocated from Avondale railway station to the building at the Five-Roads intersection (now the Avondale roundabout) that had formerly housed the Avondale Hotel.¹⁶ People calling at the railway station to post mail were told of the transfer in a notice that read:

“What was formerly the bar of the hotel has been remodeled into an up-to-date public postal room, which will give accommodation to both postal and telegraph branches for many years. Residential accommodation for the Postmaster and his family is provided on the upper floor.”¹⁷

Telephones were another addition to the services provided by the post office in the early 20th century.¹⁸ The manual exchange was housed in the post office itself from 1912 until 1938. In 1940, a purpose-built telephone exchange was completed on the corner of St Jude Street and Geddes Terrace.

A remarkable expansion was recorded in the postal business from 1912 to 1938.¹⁹ During this time, the postmasters were Mr. Ernest D. Thompson, appointed February 1912; Mr. Charles B. McIssac, appointed December 1921; Mr. John Brookes, appointed June 1924; and Mr. John McGregor, appointed April 1929. In the days before radio, the post office provided some news services, with information such as election results and the scores from the All Blacks' games in England being received by telegraph and displayed in the post office window.²⁰ The first public toilet in Avondale was available at the post office.²¹

The move to get a new, purpose-built post office for Avondale began on September 25, 1935, when Mr. C. H. Speakman started a petition, signed by 500 Avondale residents, pointing out that the building then in use was not centrally situated, and that inconvenience was therefore caused to businesses and residents.²² It was felt, in view of the development of the district, that a new building was necessary. The petition was sent to the then-Postmaster General, the Hon. A. Hamilton, and in December 1935 the Postmaster-General, the Hon. F. Jones, replied, stating that a decision had been made to erect a modern building.²³

The building was completed and opened on August 19, 1938, and was considered “the most important development in the postal services of the district since the first post-office store was established 75 years ago”.²⁴ The architect was Mr. L.S. Piper²⁵ and the builder was J.A. Penman & Sons.²⁶

¹⁴ Truttman (2003)

¹⁵ Truttman (2003)

¹⁶ Truttman (2003)

¹⁷ *The Challenge of the Whau. A History of Avondale 1750-1990.* (1994). Auckland: The Avondale History Group

¹⁸ Mason (1938)

¹⁹ Mason (1938)

²⁰ The Avondale History Group (1994)

²¹ Truttman (2008)

²² Avondale's Day. 1938, August 19. *Auckland Star*, p. 9

²³ Avondale's Day. 1938, August 19. *Auckland Star*, p. 9

²⁴ Avondale's Day. 1938, August 19. *Auckland Star*, p. 9

²⁵ Modern Post Office. 1938, July 28. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 14

²⁶ Chief Postmaster (Memorandum to Director-General, Property Division, February 1, 1938) on Avondale: proposed new post office buildings; tenders

The Avondale Post Office operated from the building at 1862 Great North Road for nearly 50 years. In 1974, the Government recognised the limited space available in the post office building and took the land owned by local real estate agent John Stackpole on a site between Crayford Street and St Jude Street under the Public Works Act for a new post office.²⁷

In 1977, and again in 1980, the planned closing of the existing post office in Avondale for a new one at the other end of town sparked some controversy, with the Avondale Business Association concerned over the competition of one side of Avondale's shopping centre with the other.²⁸ However, a new building was eventually constructed and completed in 1984.²⁹ The building was originally designed to house both the post office and Post Bank branches but during the 1990s the Post Bank branch was moved out and into premises elsewhere in Avondale. Today, the postal service remains part of the landscape of Avondale, with a branch of New Zealand Post in operation at 1990 Great North Road.

Site History, Design and Construction

The site at 1862 Great North Road was originally part of the Walton Estate (Allotment 63) and was sold to William Collins in July 1900.³⁰ The Collins family built a substantial return-verandah villa on the corner site prior to WWI.³¹ This site and the house was transferred by Collins to Miss Kathleen Dickson in 1925 when the property was subdivided, but bought back by Collins in 1933. The Crown purchased the corner site from Collins in October 1936.³²

The Art Deco-style building at 1862 Great North Road was designed in 1938 by Llewellyn (Lew) S. Piper. His drawings for the building were dated 24 May 1938 and approved by the Town Planning Officer on 25 May 1938. Piper, who set up his architectural practice in Auckland in 1919, was, by the mid-1930s, a noted Auckland architect.³³

The building was constructed by the firm J.A. Penman and Sons in the same year,³⁴ with the tender submitted being £4,295 plus £112 extra for the tiled roof (the lowest tender received).³⁵ The firm of Penman and Sons had been in the business in Auckland for over 50 years and had erected some of the largest buildings in the city.³⁶ Piper commented that although the price submitted by Penman seemed low, Penman's experience in tendering and in building was such that there was no reason why his price should not be accepted.³⁷

The purpose-built Avondale Post Office was constructed to replace the post office that had been located in the former Avondale Hotel building on the corner of Great North Road and Wingate Street for the previous 32 years.³⁸ Newspaper reports at the time stated that that building "could not be altered structurally in any way to suit the needs of the postal facilities".³⁹

²⁷ Truttman (2003)

²⁸ Truttman (2003)

²⁹ Truttman (2003)

³⁰ Deeds Index 21A.361, LINZ records

³¹ Photograph, Avondale-Waterview Historical Society collection

³² NA 543/56, LINZ records

³³ Dave Pearson Architects Limited. (2011). *Warkworth Town Hall, Warkworth, A Conservation Plan*. Report prepared for Auckland Council, Auckland

³⁴ Local Bodies. New Lynn Borough. 1938, March 16. *Auckland Star*, 16 March 1938

³⁵ Chief Postmaster Memorandum (1938)

³⁶ Chief Postmaster Memorandum (1938)

³⁷ Chief Postmaster Memorandum (1938)

³⁸ Modern Post Office Building. 1938, July 28. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 14

³⁹ Modern Post Office Building. 1938, July 28. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 14

The Avondale Post Office was officially opened on 19 August 1938 by Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, the Honourable H.G.R. Mason.⁴⁰ It was one of several post offices constructed in 1938, along with new post offices at Devonport (on Victoria Avenue) and Grey Lynn (on the corner of Great North Road and Williamson Avenue).⁴¹

In his speech, Mason described the building as being constructed in reinforced concrete in accordance with “modern design to resist earthquake shock”, with a plastered façade and a glazed tile roof.⁴² He commented on the “ample window space” that admitted “plenty of natural light to the interior”. Mason described the rest of the building:

“The floor of the main vestibule is tiled in colours in keeping with the general colour scheme of the building. From the vestibule through glass panelled doors is the public space, measuring 24 feet by 12 ½ feet and containing seven high and two low writing desks for the use of the public. The finishing timbers are of heart rimu stained in walnut colour. In addition to the public space, there is a postmaster’s room, a mail room and general office space and a cloak room. Accommodated in a separate outbuilding are a bicycle shed and a heater room.”

Newspaper articles of the time also described the building:

*“The new Avondale post office, which has been planned by Mr. L. S. Piper, will be a single-storey concrete structure, having frontages of 67ft. and 40ft. to Great North Road and Rosebank Road respectively. It will contain a spacious public office, postmaster’s office, mailroom, staff room, telephone booths and other compartments. Fittings will be of modern design, and every attention will be given to heating and ventilation requirements. The facade will be in plaster of two shades.”*⁴³

The main entrance of the Post Office, which faced Great North Road, opened onto a lobby in which post boxes were placed.⁴⁴ Piper’s 1938 drawings of the building show the detail of the internal fit-out, including tellers’ desks, public desks, and pigeon holes for mail. The plans show details of the tellers’ drawers, which had spaces for coins, bank notes, vouchers and “stamped stationary”.

The plans for the Avondale Post Office were among those shown at the Auckland Museum in ‘Architectural Drawings of Auckland’, an exhibition illustrating the work of Auckland architects and their influence on “the face of our city over the last one hundred years”.⁴⁵

Modifications

Information contained on the property file for 1862 Great North Road shows the Avondale Post Office has undergone a number of modifications since it was constructed. The building was modified in 1965, with a new entrance created on Rosebank Road into a lobby in order to provide additional private post boxes to cater for growing demand.

⁴⁰ Avondale Post Office Official Opening To-day. 1938, August 19. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 8

⁴¹ Building in City. 1938, January 13. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 15

⁴² Mason (1938)

⁴³ Building in City. 1938, January 13. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 15

⁴⁴ Modern Post Office Building. 1938, July 28. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 14

⁴⁵ Shaw, Peter. (1986, May 3-18). *Architectural drawings of Auckland. Catalogue of an exhibition at Auckland Museum May 3-18th 1986*, Presented by Cromwell Corporation Limited and New Zealand Institute of Architects Auckland branch

Since 1985, when the post office moved from 1862 Great North Road to its new location in Avondale, the building has been used as a pool hall, copy centre, restaurant, and now is occupied by a pharmacy. The interior of the building has had a number of modifications to accommodate each business and, in 2010, the Great North Road entrance was modified to provide for the installation of a roller door.

Art Deco style

The Art Deco style became widely known following the great Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes held in Paris in 1925 (abbreviated to Art Deco).⁴⁶ The style was in its zenith in the inter-war decades of the 1920s and 1930s.⁴⁷ During this time, particularly in the United States, the number of civic, commercial, ecclesiastical and other public structures built to various Art Deco styles was considerable, and in small towns and large cities alike, Art Deco structures rose as offices, factories and restaurants.⁴⁸ Art Deco architecture was a symbol of the modern.⁴⁹

In New Zealand, Art Deco design as applied to buildings rose to prominence in the early 1930s, when the cities of Napier and Hastings were rebuilt following the 1931 earthquake that destroyed large parts of the two cities.⁵⁰ The clean, geometric lines of the Art Deco style were very well suited to the predominantly concrete-constructed buildings of the new Napier.⁵¹ Art Deco architecture arrived in New Zealand at a time when the country was in the grip of the Great Depression.⁵² During the 1930s, small Art Deco houses sprung up all over New Zealand, and businesses who could afford it employed architects to design commercial buildings “in the modern Art Deco style”.⁵³ The Deco style made little impact in New Zealand,⁵⁴ making Piper’s 1938 design for the Post Office a notable example of this style in Avondale.

Avondale Town Centre History

In 1900, Avondale Town Centre had only about five shops.⁵⁵ By the 1920s, Avondale had grown, and was described as being split into three, with one group of shops located at the railway station, another at the intersection of Rosebank and Great North roads, and the main centre located at the junction of Great North Road, St George Road, St Jude’s Street and Wingate Street.⁵⁶ A resident in the 1920s described Avondale as “a grocer’s shop, a post office and a town hall”.⁵⁷ By 1939, there were nearly 40 shops in Avondale, with the increase reflecting not just the growth in the local population, but also Avondale’s importance as a shopping area for people in West Auckland.⁵⁸

The history of the Avondale Post Office is related to the history and development of the Avondale Town Centre, and is closely linked to the arrival of the tram service in Avondale. The tram system was extended from Mt Albert to Avondale in January 1932, with the terminus located just uphill of the intersection of Great North Road and Rosebank Road.⁵⁹ The decision to locate the tramway near that intersection rather than

⁴⁶ Shaw, Peter (2003). *History of New Zealand Architecture*. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett Publishers Limited

⁴⁷ Bayer, Patricia (1992). *Art Deco Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd

⁴⁸ Bayer (1992)

⁴⁹ Shaw (2003)

⁵⁰ Bayer (1992)

⁵¹ Shaw (2003)

⁵² Shaw (2003)

⁵³ Shaw (2003)

⁵⁴ Shaw (2003)

⁵⁵ The Avondale History Group (1994)

⁵⁶ Truttman (2003)

⁵⁷ Truttman (2003)

⁵⁸ The Avondale History Group (1994)

⁵⁹ Trams to Avondale. 1932, January 29. *Auckland Star*, p. 5

at St Jude Street effectively sealed Avondale's fate to that of a township in two parts, with Avondale Primary School intersecting the two primary shopping areas.⁶⁰ The coming of the trams was not good news for all businesses, with those at the St Jude Street end of Avondale feeling increasingly isolated.⁶¹ Hayward's Theatre (now Hollywood Theatre) was not the exception, with a suggestion that a new theatre be built on the vacant section at the corner of Great North, and Rosebank Roads near the tram terminus (it is possible the site being referred to was the one later chosen for the Post Office).⁶²

The construction of the new post office complemented the development of the Great North Road/Rosebank Road intersection, with Fearon's Building (north-west corner) constructed in 1921, and the Unity Buildings (southeast corner) constructed in 1932/33.⁶³ Along with the Unity Buildings, the construction of the Avondale Post Office was seen as a symbol of progress in the suburb, after the extension of tram services to Avondale in 1932.⁶⁴ The arrival of electric trams and the construction of the post office contributed to the development of the business area in Avondale around the Great North Road/Rosebank Road intersection, and helped to cement this location as the main town centre.⁶⁵ This is evident from newspaper reports of the time, for example on the inauguration of a community lighting scheme in Avondale in 1939:

*The community lighting scheme embraces the business area, which has recently developed around the tram terminus and the new Avondale post office.*⁶⁶

A review of *Heart of the Whau* (2003), which details the story of the centre of Avondale, reveals almost all other commercial development in Avondale from the late 1930s until the mid-1950s occurred around the Rosebank Road/Great North Road part of the Avondale Township.

In summary, the location of the Avondale Post Office influenced the relative popularity of the two rather separate shopping areas along Great North Road.⁶⁷ Businesses at the south end benefitted when the post and telegraph offices had been housed in the old hotel. The construction of the Post Office to the Great North Road/Rosebank Road intersection helped the shopkeepers there. In 1985, a new post office was built on the east side of Great North Road, between Crayford and St Jude's Streets, with this part of the Avondale business area becoming more popular as a result.⁶⁸ Some balance was restored when the post office and Postbank separated, with the latter moving to premises on the west side of Great North Road between Racecourse Parade and Rosebank Road.

Social History

In his speech at the opening of the Avondale Post Office, Hon. H.G.R. Mason stated that in early years, the provision of postal and telegraph services to residents was one of the few inducements to persons to settle in districts removed from the main centres.⁶⁹ Except for a few clearings, the district of Avondale at the time the first post office opened in 1863 was covered with manuka scrub and there were only five or six settlers in the district at this time.⁷⁰

⁶⁰ Truttman (2003)

⁶¹ Truttman (2003)

⁶² Truttman (2003)

⁶³ Truttman (2003)

⁶⁴ Truttman (2003)

⁶⁵ Community Lighting. New Avondale Scheme. 1939, August 2. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 10

⁶⁶ Community Lighting. New Avondale Scheme. 1939, August 2. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 10

⁶⁷ The Avondale History Group (1994)

⁶⁸ Truttman (2003)

⁶⁹ Mason (1938)

⁷⁰ Mason (1938)

The post office in New Zealand had a broad role in each community as a postal agency, savings bank and telephone exchange, which cemented its place in New Zealand society.⁷¹ The post office provided communications and other services closely bound up with New Zealand's political, economic, and social life,⁷² with much of the official business of each town being carried out there.⁷³ Public demand for its services, including the growth of private telephones in people's homes, and the introduction of internal and international airmail services in the 1930s enabled faster, more efficient mail services.⁷⁴ By the middle of the 20th century, the post office's role in the community was expansive; beyond the traditional communication services, the post office provided important community services including registering births, marriages, deaths⁷⁵ and cars; accepting television and fishing licence fees; enrolling people to vote; and collecting pensions.⁷⁶ Post offices also provided daily weather and temperature checks for the Meteorological Office, and postmasters were able to perform marriage ceremonies.

The post office was the centre of the Avondale Town Centre in the 1930s and 1940s and was therefore utilised as the meeting and/or departure point for social and sports events. Return buses departed for events such as dances outside the township from the Post Office,⁷⁷ and the local harrier running club using the Post Office as the start and finish line for events such as its annual marathon race.⁷⁸ The Post Office at this time also provided a venue for information communication for the local community.

Llewellyn (Lew) S. Piper, Architect

The Avondale Post Office was designed in 1938 by Auckland architect Llewellyn S. Piper (1892-1975). Piper was born in 1892 in Dunedin and was educated at Southland and Otago High Schools.⁷⁹ He spent five years at the Otago School for Art, and then commenced his architectural career as a draughtsman with McDonald and Dunning in Dunedin (1910-1913),⁸⁰ before working for J. Charlesworth in Wellington (1913-1916),⁸¹ and the Education Board in 1916.⁸² During World War I, he was the draughtsman in charge of the Work's Branch of the Defence Department, designing

⁷¹ New Zealand Post. History of New Zealand Post. Retrieved from <https://www.nzpost.co.nz/about-us/who-we-are/history-of-new-zealand-post>

⁷² Te Ara – The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand (1966). Retrieved from <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/post-office>

⁷³ Tim Shoebridge. Mail and couriers, Te Ara - the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, updated 12-Apr-16. Retrieved from: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/mail-and-couriers>

⁷⁴ New Zealand Post. History of New Zealand Post. Retrieved from <https://www.nzpost.co.nz/about-us/who-we-are/history-of-new-zealand-post>

⁷⁵ Note: the Avondale Post Office performed this role from 1916 to 1987

⁷⁶ New Zealand Post. History of New Zealand Post. Retrieved from <https://www.nzpost.co.nz/about-us/who-we-are/history-of-new-zealand-post>

⁷⁷ Page 19 Advertisements Column 6. 1939, August 12. *Auckland Star*, p. 19; Page 9 Advertisements Column 4. 1943, December 24. *Auckland Star*, p. 9

⁷⁸ Harrier Racing. 1942, 24 August. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 5

⁷⁹ Untitled. (1951). *Home and Building, Volume 13(4), February-March*, p. 14-15

⁸⁰ Shaw (1986)

⁸¹ Piper, Llewellyn Stanley. (1933) In *International Press Who's Who N.Z. Biographical Sketches and Photos of Representative Commercial, Professional, Financial, Pastoral and Business Men of New Zealand*. International Press Service Association (N.Z.), Wellington

⁸² Piper, Llewellyn Stanley. (1933) In *International Press Who's Who N.Z. Biographical Sketches and Photos of Representative Commercial, Professional, Financial, Pastoral and Business Men of New Zealand*. International Press Service Association (N.Z.), Wellington

camps and hospitals.⁸³ In 1919, he set up his own practice in Auckland and remained there.⁸⁴

Originally a partner in a firm with L.E. Brooker in the 1920s and 1930s, Piper was eventually joined by his son Keith who also had an input into the AEPB building and the Auckland Harbour Bridge Authority Control building.⁸⁵ Piper held a number of prominent positions within the architectural community including being Vice-President of the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) and Chairman of the NZIA Auckland Branch.⁸⁶

Piper became a noted mid-century Auckland architect, with an interest in Modern, Moderne and Art Deco design.⁸⁷ He was responsible for many commercial buildings in these styles, including:

- 1922 – Morgan’s Building, 197-199 Cuba Street, Wellington;⁸⁸
- 1923 – Milne and Choyce Building, 131 Queen Street, Auckland;⁸⁹
- 1924 – Probert Trust, corner of Upper Queen Street and Alexandra Street (now Airedale Street), Auckland (building no longer extant);^{90 91}
- 1926 – Shops and offices for Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows, corner of Hobson and Victoria Streets, Auckland (building no longer extant);^{92 93}
- 1926 – Premises for Drapery Co. Ltd., The Square, Palmerston North;⁹⁴
- 1931 – General Traders Supplies Building, Anzac Ave, Auckland;⁹⁵
- 1937 – Warkworth Town Hall extension, 19 Neville Street, Warkworth;⁹⁶
- 1938 – Post Office, 1862 Great North Road, Avondale, Auckland;
- 1939 – Berkeley Theatre in Mission Bay;⁹⁷
- 1940 – Fire station (former), Taumaranui;⁹⁸
- 1940 – Memorial Plunket Rooms, 489 Dominion Road, Mt Eden, Auckland;⁹⁹
- 1947 – Passenger Transport Building, Great South Road, Otahuhu, Auckland;¹⁰⁰
- 1951 – AEPB Building, 2 Nuffield Street Auckland;¹⁰¹
- 1952 – Onehunga Woollen Mills, Housing Scheme for Immigrants, Auckland;¹⁰²
- 1959 – Auckland Harbour Bridge Authority Building.¹⁰³

⁸³ Untitled. (1951). *Home and Building*, Volume 13(4), February-March, p. 14-15

⁸⁴ Piper, Llewellyn Stanley. (1933) In *International Press Who’s Who N.Z. Biographical Sketches and Photos of Representative Commercial, Professional, Financial, Pastoral and Business Men of New Zealand*. International Press Service Association (N.Z.), Wellington

⁸⁵ Dave Pearson Architects Limited. (2011)

⁸⁶ Dave Pearson Architects Limited (2011)

⁸⁷ Dave Pearson Architects Limited (2011)

⁸⁸ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. (1991). Morgan’s Building. Retrieved from <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/5360>

⁸⁹ Shaw (1986)

⁹⁰ Dave Pearson Architects Limited (2011)

⁹¹ Queen Street Improvements. 1923, November 5. *Auckland Star*, p. 8

⁹² M.U. Oddfellows. 1925, March 11. *Auckland Star*, p. 9

⁹³ Tenders. 1926, May 29. *New Zealand Herald*, p. 7

⁹⁴ Piper, Llewellyn Stanley. (1933) In *International Press Who’s Who N.Z. Biographical Sketches and Photos of Representative Commercial, Professional, Financial, Pastoral and Business Men of New Zealand*. International Press Service Association (N.Z.), Wellington

⁹⁵ Dave Pearson Architects Limited (2011)

⁹⁶ Dave Pearson Architects Limited (2011)

⁹⁷ A Theatre by the Sea (1939). *Home and Building*, volume 3, no. 4, August, p. 33

⁹⁸ Plan of Fire Station for the Taumaranui Fire Board (plans show Piper’s name as architect)

⁹⁹ Memorial Plunket Rooms at Mt. Eden (1940). *Home and Building*, Spring, p. 23

¹⁰⁰ Passenger Transport Building Achieves a striking appearance that conforms with structural requirements (1953). *Home & Building*, February 1953, p. 36-37

¹⁰¹ Shaw, Peter (1991). *New Zealand Architecture*. Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton

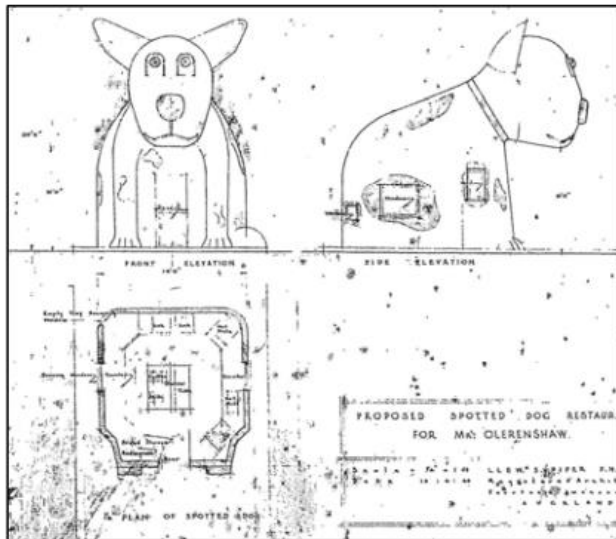
¹⁰² All Comforts with Maximum Economy. The Onehunga Woollen Mills Housing Scheme for Immigrants (1952). *Home & Building*, October 1952, p. 28-29

The former AEPB building, which was influenced by the Bauhaus style, is considered Piper's major achievement¹⁰⁴ and has won several prizes including the New Zealand Institute of Architects 25 Year Award in 1990.¹⁰⁵

Piper was also responsible for a number of residential projects, many of which featured in the magazine *Home and Building*, and in the 1986 exhibition of architectural drawings at the Auckland Museum in 1986, including:

- 1929 – Residence for D.M. McCarthy, Seccombes Road, Epsom;¹⁰⁶
- 1936 – Residence for V. Norton, Victoria Avenue, Remuera;¹⁰⁷
- 1939 – Seaside Flats at Mission Bay;¹⁰⁸
- 1939 – Flats at 89 Grafton Road, Grafton;¹⁰⁹
- 1939 – Residence at Paratai Drive, Orakei for Mrs. Harold Grocott;¹¹⁰
- 1940 – Residence at 175 St Andrews Road, Remuera for V. H. Fray Esq.;¹¹¹
- 1946 – Residence for N.B. Spencer, Clevedon;¹¹² and
- 1954 – Alterations for J. Powell, New North Road.¹¹³

One of Piper's most unusual designs was for the 'Spotted Dog Restaurant'. This 1944 design was included in the 1986 exhibition.¹¹⁴



Spotted Dog Restaurant elevations and plan drawn in 1944 by Lew Piper.

J.A. Penman and Sons, Builder

The building firm of J.A. Penman and Sons was described in a memorandum to the Director-General of the Property Division of the Post and Telegraph Department as being in business in Auckland for over 50 years and erecting some of the largest buildings in Auckland for over 50 years.¹¹⁵

¹⁰³ Toll booths, Administration building and Maintenance workshop. Auckland Harbour Bridge Authority (1959). *Home and Building*, volume 22(3), August, p. 66

¹⁰⁴ Shaw (1991)

¹⁰⁵ Historic bid for Westfield HQ, 2002, March 18. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/property/news/article.cfm?c_id=8&objectid=189018

¹⁰⁶ Shaw (1986)

¹⁰⁷ Shaw (1986)

¹⁰⁸ Seaside Flats at Mission Bay (1939). *Home and Building*, volume 4(1), November, p. 23

¹⁰⁹ Eighty-seven (1939). *Home and Building*, volume 4(1) November, p. 32

¹¹⁰ A Brick Home Overlooking the Auckland Harbour (1939). *Home and Building*, volume 3(4) August, p. 11-12

¹¹¹ Both sun and view are in the North (1940). *Home and Building*, volume 4(2) June, p. 13

¹¹² Shaw (1986)

¹¹³ Shaw (1986)

¹¹⁴ Shaw (1986)

¹¹⁵ Chief Postmaster Memorandum (1938)

James Arthur Penman was born in 1865 in Albertland, and was brought up mainly at Te Arai in Northland. After his father's death in a sawmill accident in 1879, his mother came to Auckland with James and his brother, and James found employment as a builder's apprentice.¹¹⁶

Penman purchased two and a half acres of rock-strewn land at 707 New North Road, Mt Albert, and shortly afterwards, in 1886, built his own home.¹¹⁷ The house, originally a five-roomed cottage, was built in anticipation of his marriage to Maria in April 1887. Rocks were cleared from the property and used to build the surrounding rock walls and a grass tennis court was constructed on the front lawn.

James and Maria had three sons and two daughters; one son died in infancy and another was killed at Gallipoli.¹¹⁸ James later worked with his surviving son Ross under the name J.A. Penman and Sons. Both father and son were Christian by conviction and built many churches, houses and other buildings from their base in workshops at Penman's property on New North Road.¹¹⁹ Penman lived at the property until his death in 1955.

A search of Auckland newspapers reveals that J.A. Penman and Sons was associated with the construction of a number of buildings in Auckland between 1894 and 1945. In addition to the former Avondale Post Office, the building firm is known to have constructed the following buildings:

- 1886 – 'The Rocks', James Penman's own residence at 707 New North Road, Mt Albert;¹²⁰
- 1898/99 – Rahiri House, Mt Albert (scheduled as Caughey House in Hebron Christian School, ID 1728 in PAUP);¹²¹
- 1913 – Baptist Church, Milford Road, Takapuna¹²²
- 1923 – St Cuthbert's Ladies College at Epsom;¹²³
- 1924 – Auckland Sunday School Union Building, Queen Street;¹²⁴
- 1925 – Block of shops at Edendale;¹²⁵
- 1926 – Avondale Baptist Church;¹²⁶
- 1931 – St Columba's Church, Grey Lynn;¹²⁷
- 1935 – Baptist Church in Formby Road, Pt Chevalier;¹²⁸ and
- 1940 – Auckland Harbour Board hall, St Mary's Bay.¹²⁹

¹¹⁶ Mt Albert Historical Society (May 2010). "The Rocks" 707 New North Road. Retrieved from http://mtalberthistoricalsociety.org.nz/The_Rocks.php

¹¹⁷ Mt Albert Historical Society (2010)

¹¹⁸ Mt Albert Historical Society (2010)

¹¹⁹ Mt Albert Historical Society (2010)

¹²⁰ Mt Albert Historical Society (2010)

¹²¹ Hebron Christian College (2012). About Us, School Board. Retrieved from <http://www.hebron.ac.nz/About+Us/School+Board.html>

¹²² A New Baptist Church Opened at Takapuna, 1913, January 6. *New Zealand Herald*, p.7

¹²³ St Cuthbert's College. New Site at Epsom, 1923, August 24. *New Zealand Herald*, p.8

¹²⁴ Sunday School Union Building, 1924, May 2. *Auckland Star*, p.7

¹²⁵ Real Estate Land and Buildings, 1925, December 11. *Auckland Star*, p.13

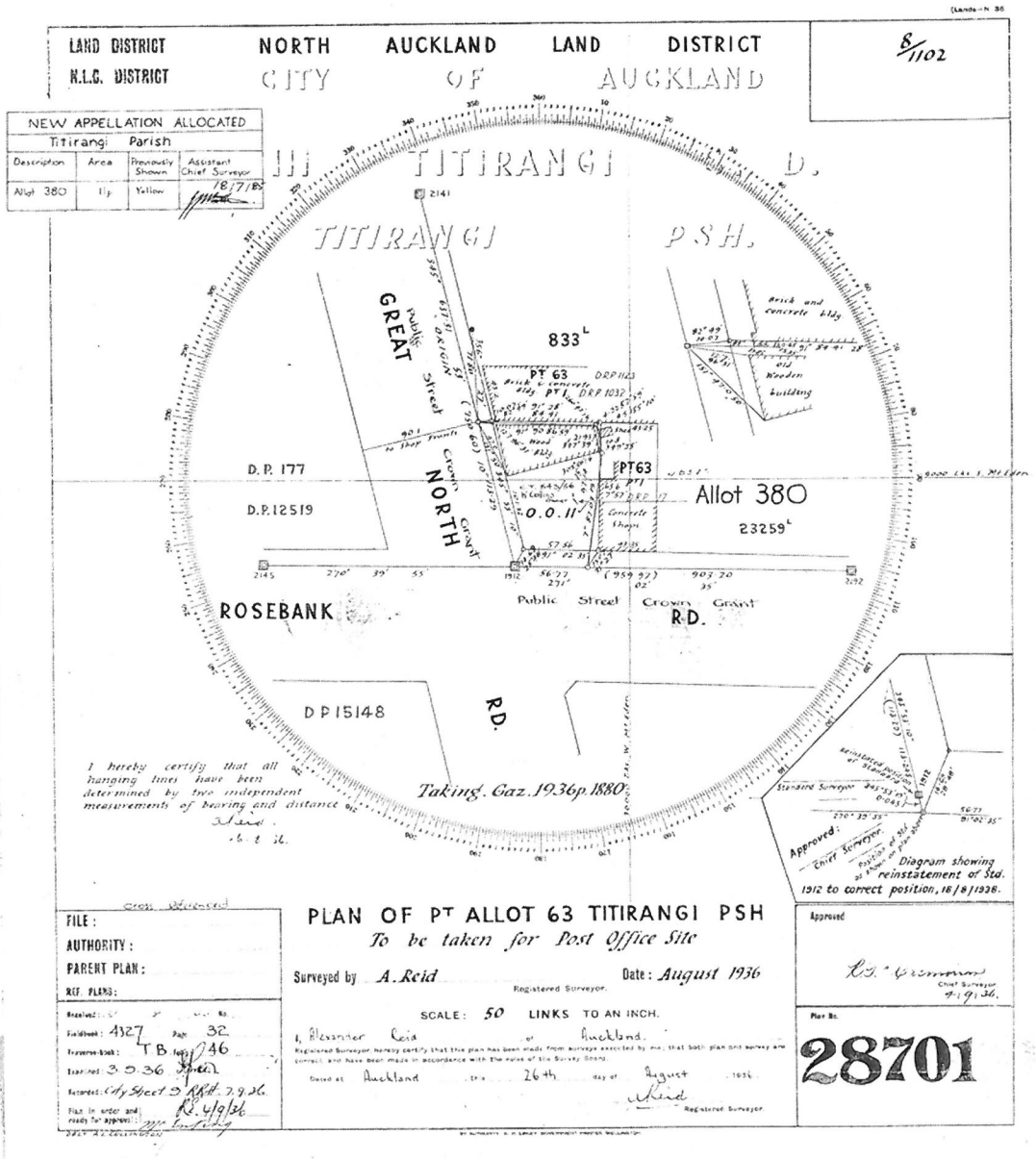
¹²⁶ Truttman, Lisa (2008). Renaming Places of Reverence. Retrieved from <http://timespanner.blogspot.co.nz/2009/12/renaming-places-of-reverance.html>

¹²⁷ St Columba's Church Progress in Grey Lynn, 1931, March 14. *New Zealand Herald*, p.12

¹²⁸ New Church Opened, 1935, April 30. *New Zealand Herald*, p.10

¹²⁹ Hall to be built for Auckland Yachtsmen, 1940, April 3. *Auckland Star*, p.11

Appendix 2 – Certificate of title



NEW ZEALAND REGISTER

Reference: Land Transfer (Compulsory Registration of Titles) Act, 1924.
Deeds Index. 21A. 855
Application No. 12656C.



Register-book,
Vol. 543, folio 56.

543/56

CERTIFICATE OF TITLE UNDER LAND TRANSFER ACT. LIMITED AS TO PARCELS AND TITLE.

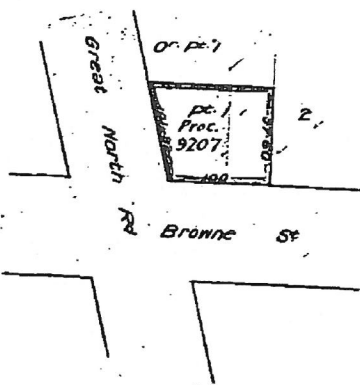
This Certificate, dated the twenty-eighth day of October one thousand nine hundred and thirty-one under the hand and seal of the District Land Registrar of the Land Registration District of AUCKLAND Witnesseth that KATHLEEN DICKSON of Auckland, Spinster,

is seized of an estate in fee-simple (subject to such reservations, restrictions, encumbrances, liens, and interests as are notified by memorial under written or endorsed hereon, subject also to any existing right of the Crown to take and lay off roads under the provisions of any Act of the General Assembly of New Zealand) in the land hereinafter described, as the same is delineated by the plan hereon bordered green, be the several admeasurements a little more or less, that is to say: All that parcel of land containing situated in the City of Auckland being part of Lot one (1) on a plan lodged in the Deeds Register Office at Auckland as No.17 and being portion of Allotment 63 of the Parish of Titirangi.

METRIC AREA IS



Proc. 9207. - O. S. P.



E. R. Adams
Assistant District Land Registrar.

Mortgage No. 354 243 (R471-33) Kathleen
Mortgage No. 401311 (R569/302) Kathleen Dickson to Joanna
Dickson.
Produced 6/11/31
E. R. Adams
A.S.R. *ARK*

Mortgage No. 403269 (R572/42) Mortgage No. 401311
Joanna Dickson to James Dickson.
Produced 6/11/31
E. R. Adams
Asst. L.R.

Mortgage No. 214835
Joanna Dickson to Bank of New Zealand
produced 6/11/31 at 11 am

K No. 13579 Certificate of Land & Income
Tax Assessment No. 23-3-32 at 100c.
Produced 6/11/31
Assist. Land Regr.

Transfer of 26087 Kathleen Dickson to
William Collins of Abroadale, warehouseman,
produced 6/11/31 at 11:41 am

This certificate of title has ceased to be limited as to
title. Entered 6/11/31
James
Assist. Land Registrar.

Over

REGISTER

X. 11. 13898 *Handwritten notes*
of the residue of the estate of
James Russell of Auckland solicitor as
executor - 18.12.1984 at 10.31 o'clock

Proc 9207 being part of which land
for the purpose of a first office entry
2/10/1984 at 11.02

Transfer of 22225 of the residue William
Ballins to my wife Sharon married
manara, Helina Beatrice Katterns
married woman and Winifred Jessie
Ballins separate all of Auckland as
tenants in common in equal shares
produced 1/12/1984 at 10.50 am

Mortgage P. 207100
to William Collins

Reduction of principal sum of mortgage
207900 produced 11/4/1985 at 11.55 am

Appurtenant to the residue of the
land within described as a Right
of Way over part of the land in
OT 548/190 created in and by
Transfer 2.9.991d Subject to future
consent
The Right of Way abovementioned has
been reserved to by the Auckland
City Council subject to the following
conditions:

- 1. That the Right of Way be formed
- 2. That a gate be erected and maintained
- 3. That no buildings be erected on

L. 168220 Evidence of marriage of
Winifred Jessie Ballins & Robert
William Webb of Auckland
Blacksmith, entered 10/6/1941 at
9.45 am

THIS REPRODUCTION (ON A REDUCED SCALE)
 CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE
 ORIGINAL REGISTER FOR THE PURPOSES OF
 SECTION 213A LAND TRANSFER ACT 1952
 L. G. [Signature] D.L.R.

of the residue of the estate of
 B.363328.1 Transmission to James Russell
 Bruce Kingston of Auckland solicitor as
 executor - 18.12.1984 at 10.31 o'clock

of the residue
 B.363328.2 Transfer to Peter Pharo and
 Wayne Porter Field both of Auckland company
 directors as tenants in common in equal
 shares - 18.12.1984 at 10.31 o'clock

of the residue
 B.363328.3 Mortgage to Oliphant & Bell
 Investments Limited - 18.12.1984 at 10.31
 o'clock

of the residue
 B.363328.4 Mortgage to Oliphant & Bell
 Investments Limited - 18.12.1984 at 10.31
 o'clock

B399339.1 Gazette Notice (NZ Gazette
 21.3.1985 p.1227) declaring the "land
 shown in Proc 9207" to be Crown Land
 subject to the Land Act 1948 -
 4.4.1985 at 1.42 o'clock

B.889818.1 Variation of terms of
 Mortgage B.363328.3 - 16.9.1988
 at 2.35 o'clock

B.889818.2 Variation of terms of
 Mortgage B.363328.4 - 16.9.1988
 at 2.35 o'clock

C055509.5 Transfer to Bryan Harold Gore
 of Auckland, butcher and Rosemary Anne
 Gore his wife - 17.10.1989 at 11.50 o'clock

C055509.6 Mortgage to National Australia
 Bank (NZ) Limited - 17.10.1989 at
 11.50 o'clock

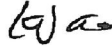
C.877894.2 Transfer to Murali Ganesh
 Kodoor, Geeta Murali Ganesh both of
 Auckland gentlemen and John Fisher
 Limited at Whakatane - 15.8.1995 at 2.07
 o'clock

C.877894.3 Mortgage to Bank of New Zealand
 - 15.8.1995 at 2.07 o'clock

DISCLAIMED
 9/18 FOR RGL



D231547.1 Transfer to Murali Ganesh
Kodoor, Geeta Murali Ganesh and Orchid
Holdings Limited
24.12.1997 at 9.08.



for DLR

D629857.5 Mortgage to The National Bank of
New Zealand Limited
9.8.2001 at 1.52



for RGL



COMPUTER FREEHOLD REGISTER UNDER LAND TRANSFER ACT 1952



Historical Search Copy

R.W. Muir
Registrar-General
of Land

Identifier NA60D/546
Land Registration District North Auckland
Date Issued 09 December 1985

Prior References

GN B399339.1

Estate Fee Simple
Area 278 square metres more or less
Legal Description Allotment 380 Parish of Titirangi

Original Proprietors

Girish Soma Patel and Manjula Soma Patel

Interests

Subject to Section 8 Mining Act 1971
Subject to Section 5 Coal Mines Act 1979
D044838.4 Mortgage to ANZ Banking Group (New Zealand) Limited - 13.9.1996 at 10:33 am
5815640.1 Discharge of Mortgage D044838.4 - 27.11.2003 at 9:00 am
5815640.2 Transfer to Girish Soma Patel, Manjula Soma Patel and Jagdish Soma Patel - 27.11.2003 at 9:00 am
8202800.1 CAVEAT BY HASHEM SLAIMANKHEL - 21.7.2009 at 9:31 am
8326275.1 Withdrawal of Caveat 8202800.1 - 1.12.2009 at 9:38 am
8326275.2 Transfer to JS Commercial Property Limited - 1.12.2009 at 9:38 am
8326275.3 Mortgage to DBR Limited - 1.12.2009 at 9:38 am
8612442.1 Discharge of Mortgage 8326275.3 - 15.10.2010 at 2:20 pm
8612442.2 Mortgage to ASB Bank Limited - 15.10.2010 at 2:20 pm



HALF INCH DETAIL OF FRONT ELEVATION

1862 GREAT NORTH ROAD

P.No. 496

24 MAY 1938

ER POST OFFICE

1 of 6

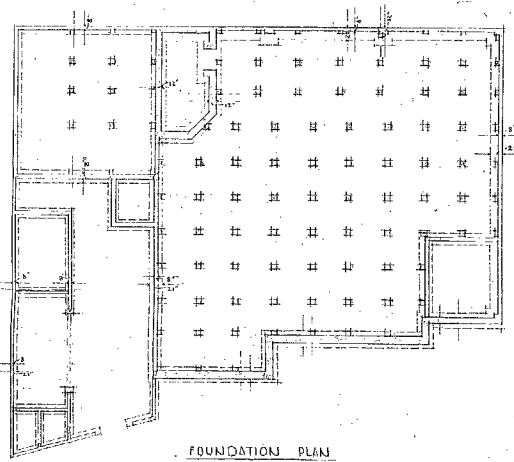
DRAWN BY
CHECKED BY
SCALE

4

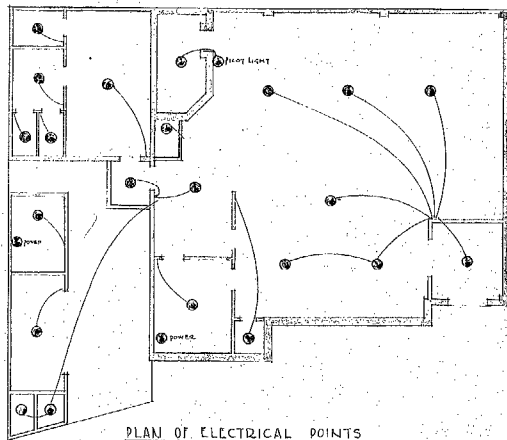
PLAN OF POST OFFICE BUILDING GREAT NORTH ROAD & ROSEBANK ROAD AVONDALE · AUCKLAND · NEW ZEALAND

LEVEL: S. PIPER · F. W. D. I. A.
REGD. ARCHITECT
14 SHANNON ST. AUCKLAND



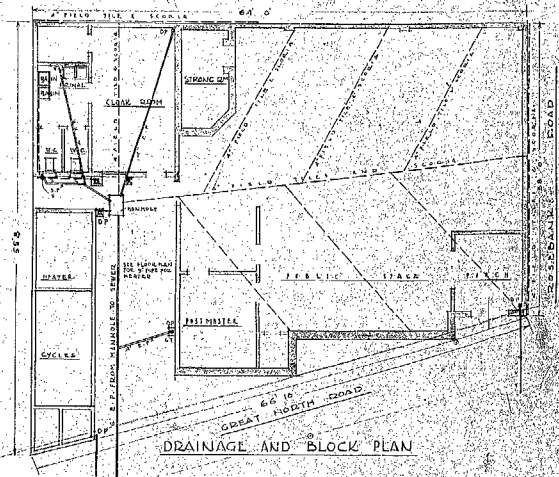


FOUNDATION PLAN



PLAN OF ELECTRICAL POINTS

SCALE EIGHT FEET TO ONE INCH



DRAINAGE AND BLOCK PLAN

(A1)

P.No. 496
1862 GREAT NORTH ROAD

APPROVED AS TO ZONING
[Signature]
Date: 12.12.1938

2 of 6

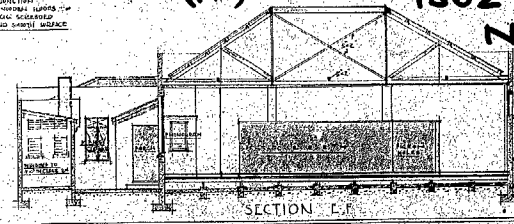
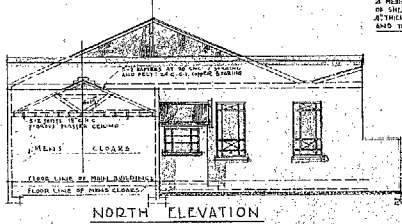
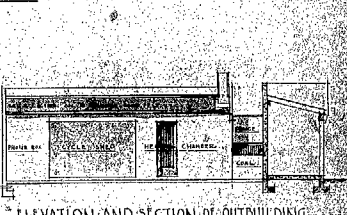
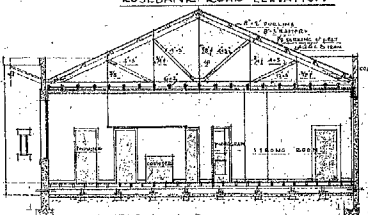
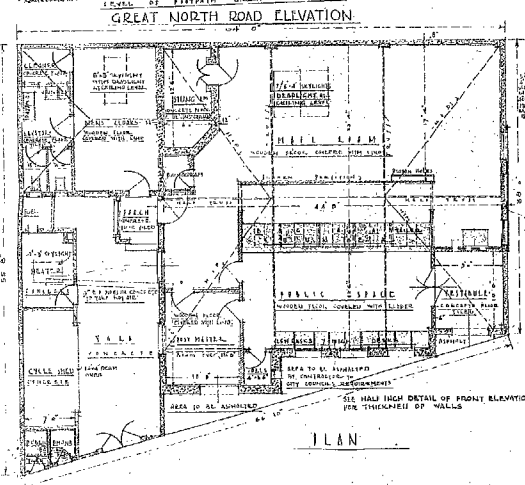
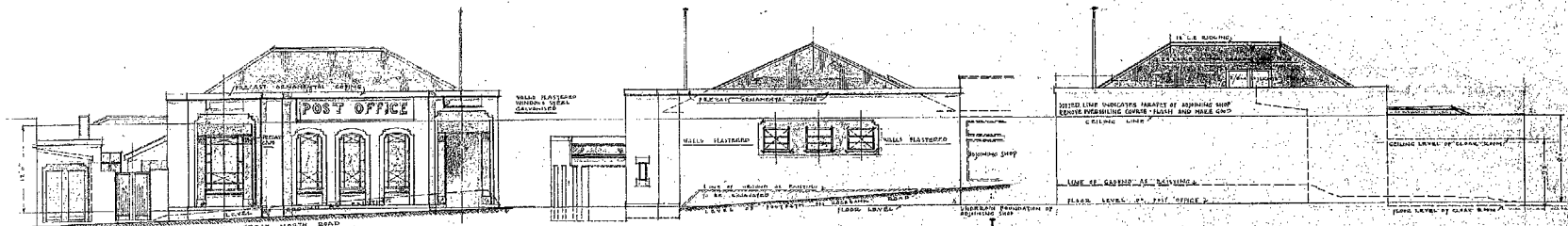
DRAWN BY J.S.P.
TRACED BY J.S.P.
SCALE 8 FT. TO ONE INCH

1

PLAN OF POST OFFICE BUILDING GREAT NORTH ROAD & ROSEBANK ROAD AVONDALE AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND

LEWIS & HARRIS ENGINEERS
14 SWANSON ST. AUCKLAND





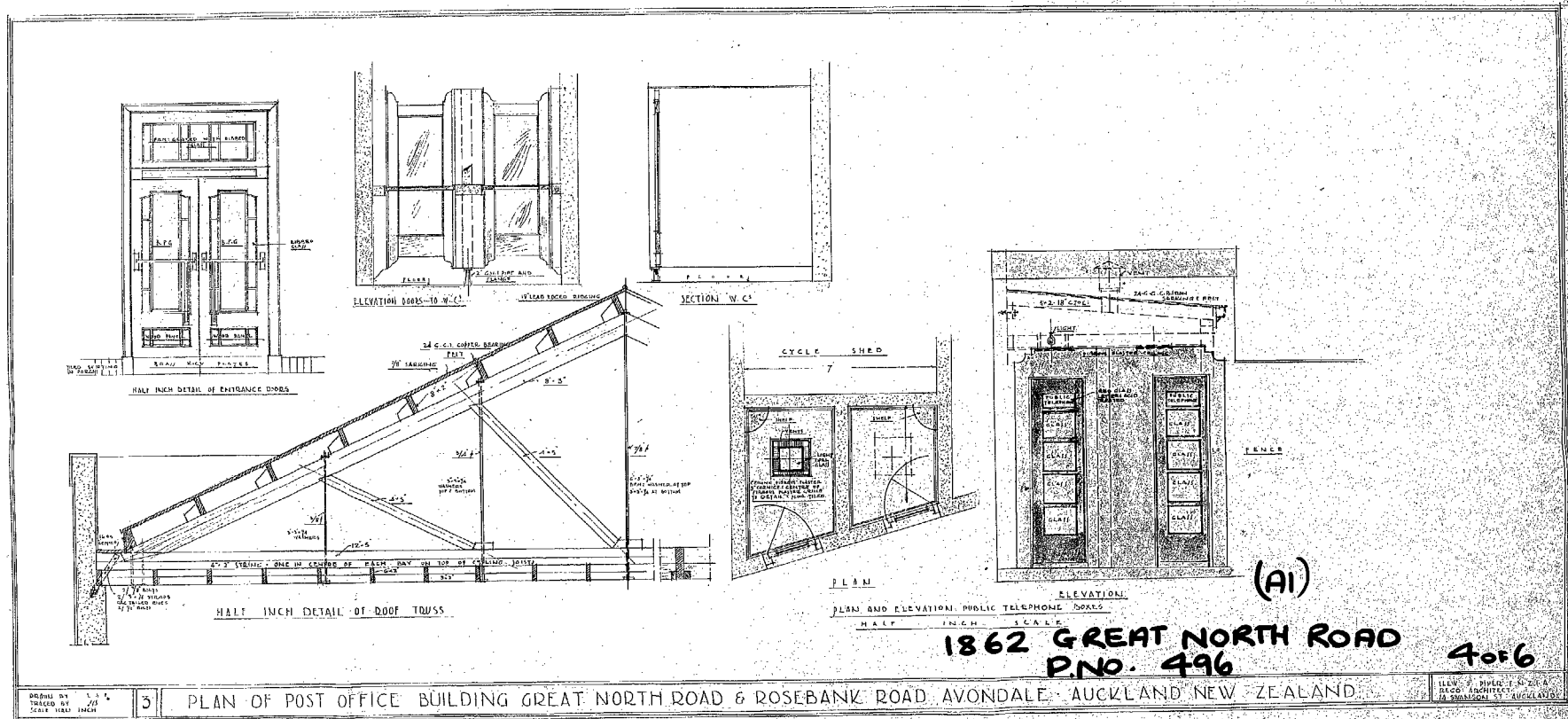
THE NUMBER OF THE DRAWING IS RE-ARRANGED
 WITH A VIEW TO CONVENIENCE OF REFERENCE.
 IT BEING LAYED AND WISED AT THE OFFICE
 OF THE ARCHITECT. THESE DRAWINGS BEING
 AT THE OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT. THESE DRAWINGS
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**1862 GREAT
 NORTH
 ROAD
 P.No.
 496
 3 of 6**

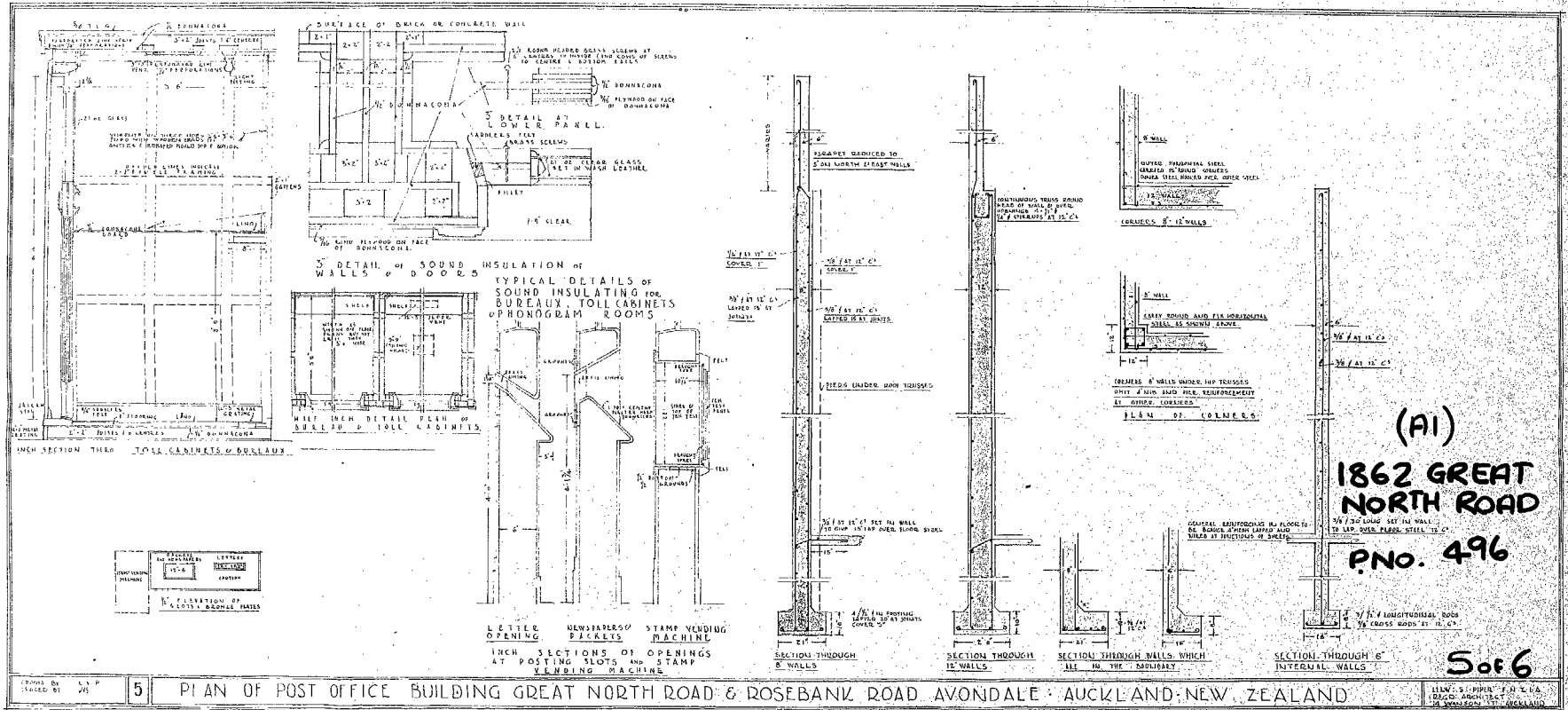
2 PLAN OF POST OFFICE BUILDING GREAT NORTH ROAD & ROSEBANK ROAD AVONDALE AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND





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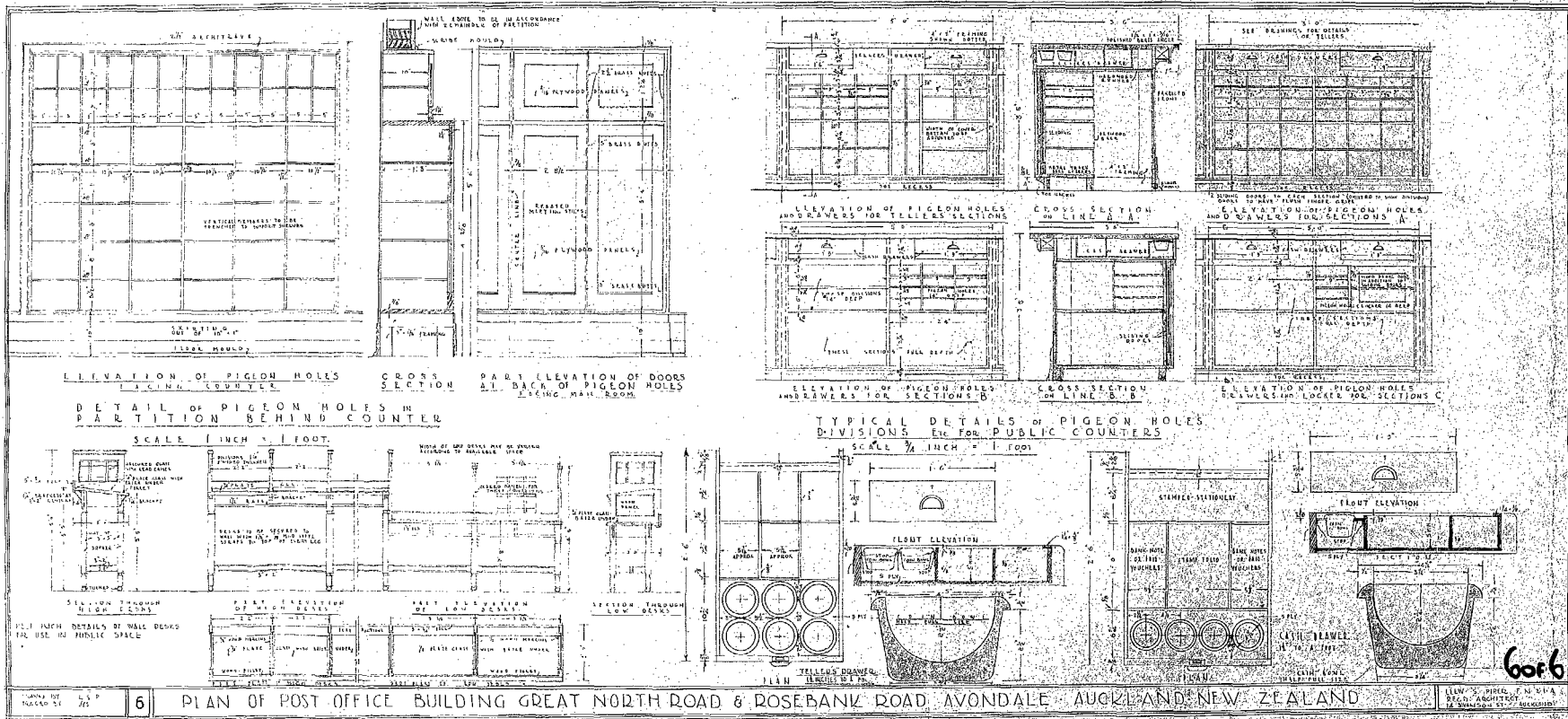


(A1)
 1862 GREAT
 NORTH ROAD
 P.No. 496

Sheet 6

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

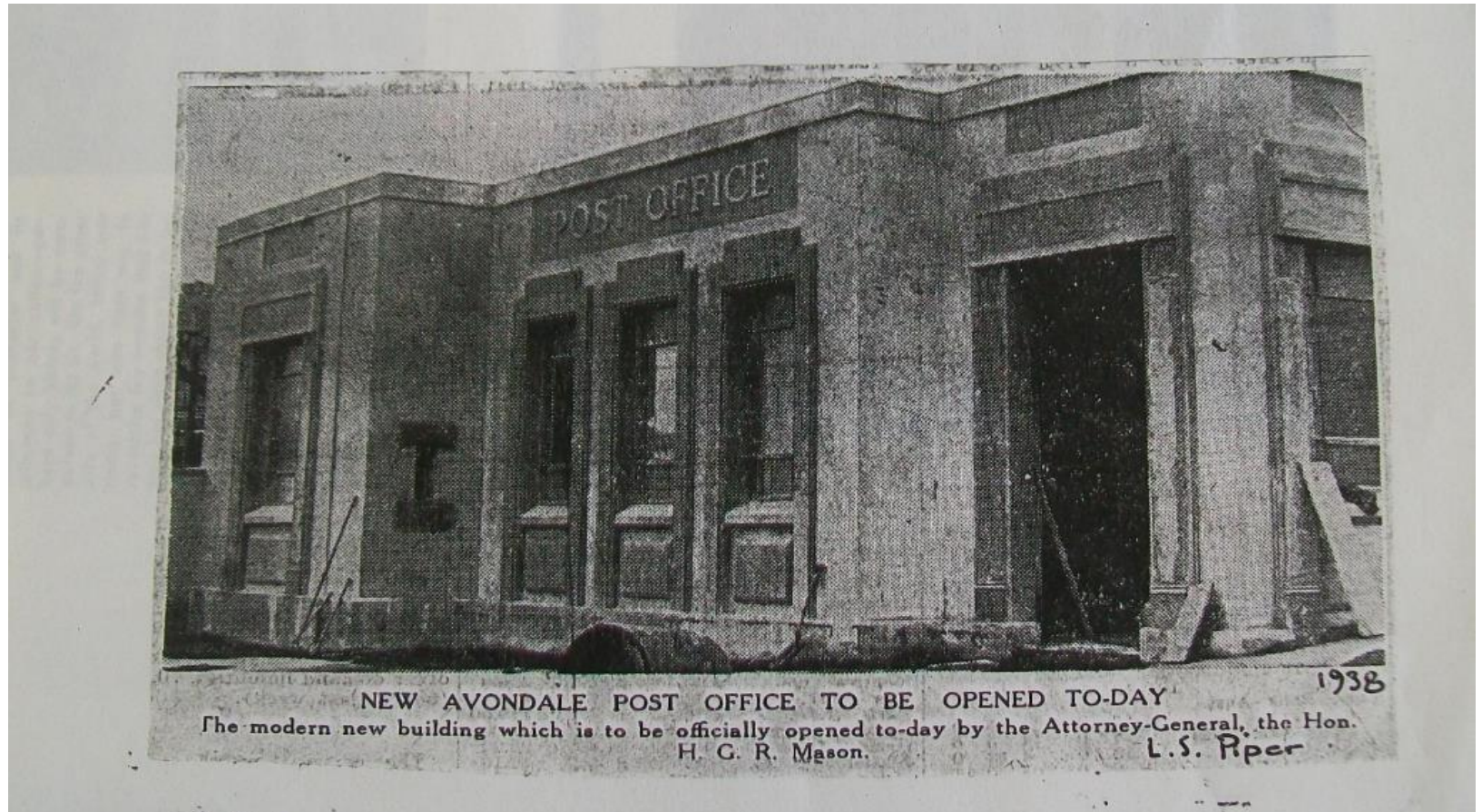


PLAN OF POST OFFICE BUILDING GREAT NORTH ROAD & ROSEBANK ROAD, AVONDALE, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

6086

(A1) 1862 GREAT NORTH ROAD P.N.O. 496

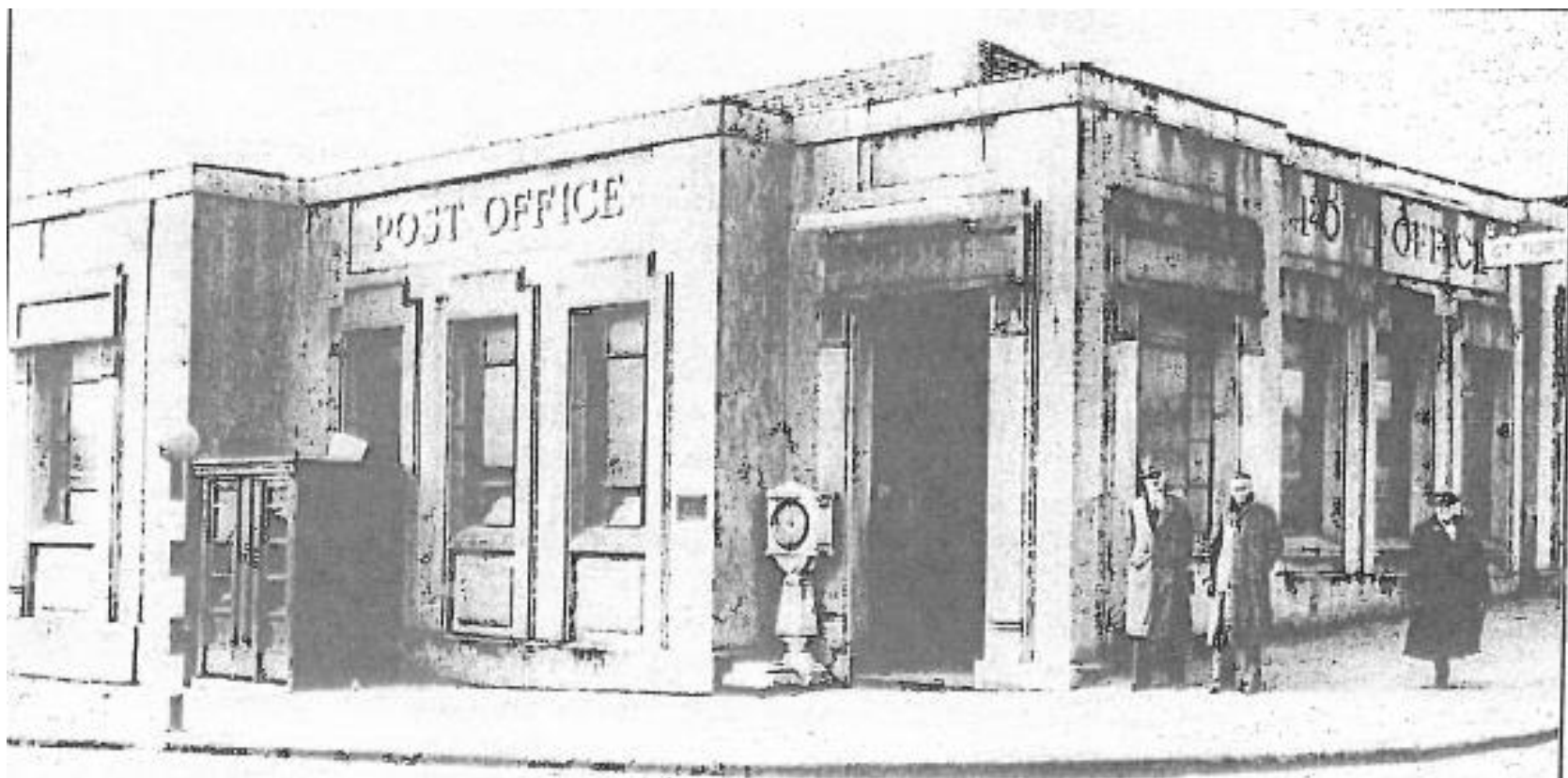
Appendix 4 – Historic Photographs



NEW AVONDALE POST OFFICE TO BE OPENED TO-DAY
The modern new building which is to be officially opened to-day by the Attorney-General, the Hon.
H. G. R. Mason. L.S. Roper

1938

Avondale Post Office, 19 August 1938.



Avondale Post Office, about 1950. Source: *The Challenge of the Whau. A History of Avondale 1750-1990.* (1994).
Auckland: The Avondale History Group



This image from the Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Library (ref 580-7643) shows the intersection of Great North and Rosebank Road, 9 August 1963, with the Avondale Post Office on the right.



Avondale Post Office (on left), showing the location of the Avondale Tram Terminus on Rosebank Road, date unknown. Source: Avondale Historical Society, Volume 12, Issue 67.

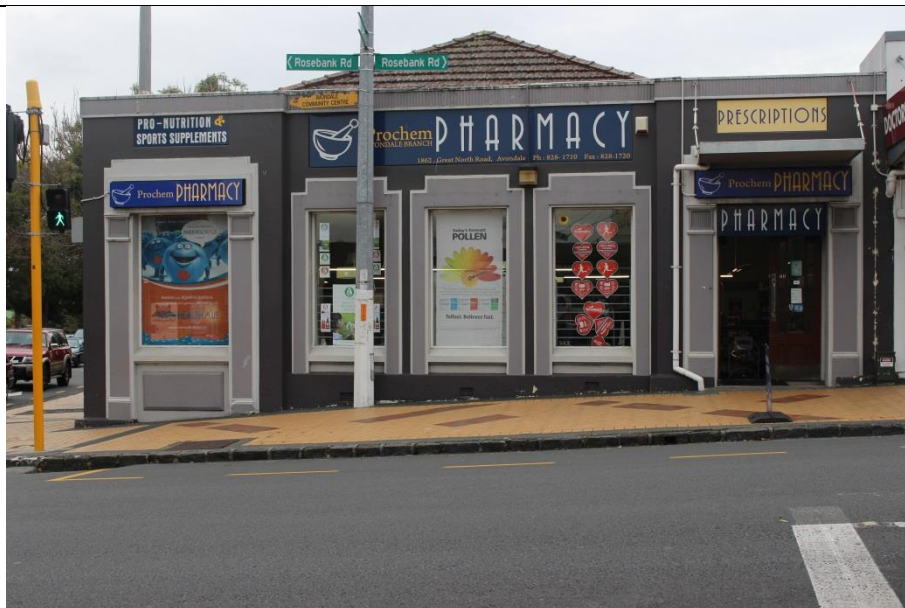


Former Avondale Post Office in 2010.

Appendix 5 – Photographs



Great North Road façade, showing three bays, gates to the rear yard, and former telephone boxes (at right)



Rosebank Road façade



Multi-light window (Great North Road façade)



Window detail (Great North Road façade)



Former telephone boxes (Great North Road façade)



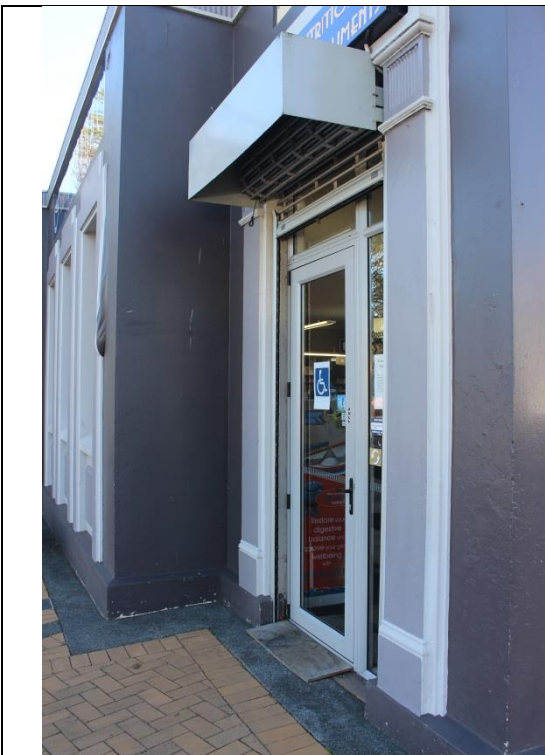
Doorway and door (Rosebank Road façade)



Gates to rear yard and utility area (Great North Road façade)



Detail of ornamental plastering and coping



Great North Road entrance with aluminium door and roller door



Set of three windows on Great North Road façade