

## Heritage Citation



### Wynnum Central Post Office (former)

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 155 Bay Terrace, Wynnum, Queensland 4178
<b>Type of place</b>	Post / telegram office
<b>Period</b>	Interwar 1919-1939
<b>Style</b>	Free Classical
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1_RP139550
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Information — January 2011
<b>Construction</b>	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Masonry
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (H) Historical association

The Wynnum Central Post Office and telephone exchange building was constructed in 1924 during a period of significant growth in the suburb. It provided essential postal, telegraph and telephone services to the local community. The single building incorporated a public space, a mail room, a telephone exchange and staff rooms. The telephone exchange operated until 1955, and the Post Office until 1995.

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## History

Europeans first arrived in the suburb of Wynnum in the mid-19th Century, with land sales in the 1860s. By the late 19th Century, it was a seaside resort for Brisbane weekenders, prompting more commercial and residential development. From the 1880s, mail and telegraphs had been processed from the railway station, but this system was not enough for those living and holidaying in Wynnum.

After petitions to the Postmaster General's Department, Wynnum's first post office was opened in a timber building on the corner of Bay Terrace and Bridge Street in 1908. By 1915, this first post office was described as 'congested and undermanned'.

In the early 1920s, Mr J H Bayley, the local federal member, lobbied for a new Post Office and telephone exchange. In early 1923, he informed the Wynnum Town Council that the Commonwealth Minister for Works had approved the work and that plans were being prepared. Drawings by the Commonwealth Department of Works & Railways in Brisbane were produced, and by July 1923, construction was expected to start soon.

Located on a prominent intersection of Bay Terrace and Edith Street, the new building opened for business in March 1924 and incorporated a mail room, telephone exchange and staff rooms. The post office was divided into various functional rooms. The public space, office counters and a public telephone cabinet were at the centre front of the building and were accessible from the eastern and western porches. The mail room, the largest in the building, was located behind the counter and stretched to the eastern side of the building. In the front north-western room was the manual telephone exchange providing for 300 subscribers. Behind the exchange were separate 'retiring rooms' for female and male employees. The staff entry and a mail verandah for receiving and dispatching mail bags were behind the mail room. Letter carriers had a room on the south-eastern corner of the building.

By 1935, Wynnum had 3 postmen and a daily mail delivery service. The manual telephone exchange remained in operation until it was replaced in 1955 by an automatic exchange erected in Edith Street. By 1960, the branch had been renamed the Wynnum Central Post Office. The post office closed in 1995, and private businesses have since used the building.

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## Description

The former Wynnum Central Post Office is a civic building in the Free Classical style, built during the interwar period. It stands at the corner of Bay Terrace and Clara Street in Wynnum. Its materials, form, openings and scale reflect its original use as a post office, designed by the Commonwealth Department of Works. The front section features a complex hip-and-valley roof form with deep battened eaves, constructed of corrugated sheet metal. The rear of the building has a low-pitched roof.

The key features of the building are its scale, form and detailing. The building, set at the corner of the lot, is a single-storey rendered masonry structure on brick piers, with a highly symmetrical three-bay front elevation. The front elevation features a slightly projecting central bay flanked by a porch on the left and an enclosed room on the right which was originally another porch. A heavy, square, rendered pillar supports the open porch.

The front elevation of the building features a central bay with wide corner pilasters with attenuated horizontal bands. Below the central bay windows is a distinctive geometric diamond-patterned plaster moulding that breaks up the flat masonry surface. Above the windows are the words 'Wynnum Central Post Office' in raised lettering. Other walls are covered in smooth render. The lower portion of the building features a masonry plinth in a contrasting dark tone.

The building's windows consist of single, double or triple banks of double-hung sash windows, set on a continuous projecting masonry sill in a contrasting tone. The glazing consists of six panes in the upper sash and one pane in the lower sash. In the centre of each pilaster is a small narrow fixed window.

Entry to the building is via concrete stairs with metal railings from Bay Terrace to the open front porch. The porch consists of two pairs of half-glazed timber doors. Sidelights and transom windows surround one of the doors.

A rectangular single storey addition to the rear is clad in corrugated metal sheeting and has a low pitch skillion roof. The remainder of the lot is a paved bitumen car park.

## Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Form: Low-set, single-storey civic building in the Free Classical style with a hip and valley roof.
- Structure:
  - Roof: Timber-framed corrugated sheet metal
  - Walls: Rendered masonry
  - Openings: Original location, size, arrangement, joinery and material of all original doors and window openings, including double hung sash windows, projecting masonry sills, sidelights and transoms, and half-glazed timber doors.
- Setting: Orientation and corner setting of the building. Views to and from the building from Bay Terrace and Clara Street.

## Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Car park
- Corrugated sheet metal clad extension with a flat roof.

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## Statement of significance

### Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

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## Historical

### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as an essential civic building constructed in Wynnum during the 1920s.

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## Historical association

### CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

operating as Wynnum's post office and the centre of postal, telegraph and telephone services from 1923 to 1995.

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**Note:** This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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