

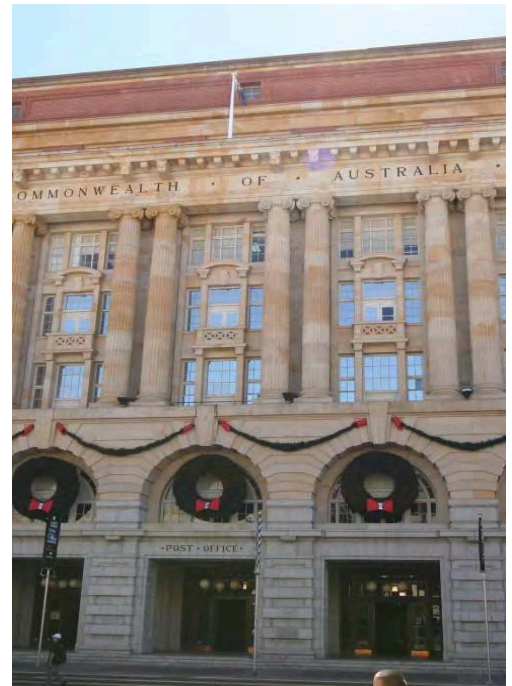
GPO Perth

Address Forrest Place, Perth, Western Australia
Practice John Smith Murdoch, Commonwealth Architect
Designed 1912 Completed 1923

History & Description *GPO Perth* was the most ambitious building project in Perth at the time of inception. Commonwealth Architect, John S Murdoch designed it in 1912. In collaboration with Hillson Beasley, Chief Architect of the Public Works Department of Western Australia, it was documented for tender. The contract was let in 1914, four weeks before the outbreak of World War I, which delayed completion until 1923. As well as fulfilling its GPO functions, the place accommodated a number of Federal departments.

GPO Perth was also the most expensive and largest building to be completed in Western Australia at the time.

GPO Perth is a seven-storey building constructed of brick with a steel structural frame. The front of the building is rendered in the Federation Academic style, and employs Mahogany Creek granite for its formal steps, lower walls and rusticated piers to the first entablature, then Donnybrook freestone for the upper walls with giant order Ionic order columns, entablature and corner pavilions.



Philip Griffiths Architects 2006

Statement of Significance *GPO Perth* is a key cityscape element, being the central building of Forrest Place, Perth's major civic space. The aesthetic attributes of the GPO, which combine well with the *Commonwealth Bank (fmr)* and the *Perth Railway Station* to create the Forrest Place Precinct, are important in establishing the aesthetic identity of the City of Perth.

GPO Perth is a fine example of monumental architecture and is a rare example in Australia of a large building in the Beaux Arts style. The characteristics of the style are well demonstrated in both exterior and interior of the building.

The exterior is monumental in scale, symmetrical and has a façade of sculptural quality arising from the uses of large-scale classical motifs (such as giant Ionic columns) and high quality local materials (Donnybrook freestone and Mahogany Creek granite) and craftsmanship. Similar Neo Classical details are also evident in the interior, particularly in the significant postal hall.



Forrest Place 1954 National Archives

Criteria Applicable Insert Criteria N1, N2, N4 and N5.



Contract drawing 1914 National Archives



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East façade 1925 Battye Labara