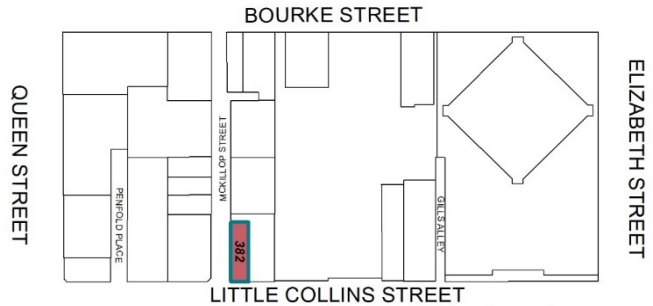


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Former Law Institute House (382 Little Collins Street, Melbourne), April 2022

Heritage Place: Former Law Institute House

PS ref no: HO1352



What is significant?

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, a three-storey shop built in 1905 and refurbished in 1924 for the Law Institute of Victoria.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The original building form and scale
- The original face brick principle façade to Little Collins and western side elevation to McKillop Streets, including original (1905) and early (1924) fenestration pattern of semi-circular and flat arched window openings in two upper levels
- The expressed lettering on the pediment 'Law Institute House'.

Later alterations made to the street level façades are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street, Melbourne is historically significant for its demonstration of a key phase in Melbourne's retail and manufacturing development during the first decades of the twentieth century, recovering from the economic depression of the 1890s. The three-storey brick building was originally built in 1905 to house the retail business of established hardware manufacturer W Willis & Co on the ground floor, with other manufacturers on the levels above. The business operated in Melbourne from the 1860s, and from the Little Collins and McKillop streets corner site for over 50 years since the late 1860s. (Criterion A)

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street is also historically significant for its long association with the Law Institute of Victoria, pivotal legal society in Victoria established in Melbourne in 1859. The institute purchased 382 Little Collins Street in 1922, modifying the building in 1924 to a design by architects Peck & Kemter. The institute occupied the building for the next 37 years until 1961. Since its establishment, the Law Institute of Victoria played a core regulatory role in Victoria's legal practice until 1996, when *The Legal Practice Act 1996* was introduced. The former Law Institute House was its third premises and the first building owned and named by the institute following its statutory recognition in 1917. With its retention of expressed lettering on the pediment, the building survives as a physical evidence that demonstrates an important phase of the institute's history throughout the interwar and postwar period, a time when the organisation's roles and importance in legal practice in Victoria continued to expand. (Criterion A)

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street is significant as a largely intact example of an early twentieth century three-storey, narrow-fronted brick building constructed in 1905 as a component of the industrial expansion in central Melbourne during this period. It retains key characteristics of its type as a low-rise utilitarian building constructed in central Melbourne in the early twentieth century. While quite utilitarian, the façade features elements of both the Victorian period Free Classical style (cornices, arched parapet and pediment) and the Federation period styling (semi-circular arched openings), which was typical of this transitional period. (Criterion D)

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020) (updated March 2022)