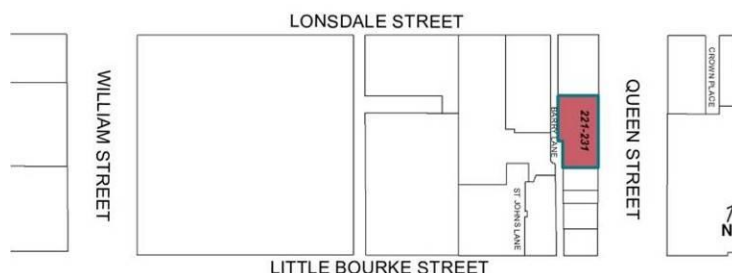


STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Law
Department's Building



PS ref no: HO1372



What is significant?

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street, Melbourne, designed and built by the Fischer Group of companies in 1972, is significant.

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

- Original building form and scale;
- Original non-loadbearing precast concrete curtain wall to its principal (Queen Street) façade;
- Original frameless glazing to upper level windows;
- Original street level colonnade, with corbelling and curved corners that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules, and set backs to shopfronts and entry lobby; and
- Original non-loadbearing face brick wall with fenestration pattern and windows to its rear (Barry Lane) façade.

Later alterations are not significant.

How it is significant?

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The former Law Department's Building, opened in 1972, is historically significant as evidence of the broadening of state government powers after World War Two, a shift that resulted in increased

occupation of buildings by State government offices in the Melbourne city centre. The State government's law offices were housed in the building from 1972 until c1987. The former Law Department's Building is historically significant as a large-scale building that demonstrates the growth in government demand after the war. (Criterion A)

Located in the financial and legal precinct in the western part of the city, the former Law Department's Building provides evidence of the significant investment made in city building by interstate interests as a form of fund investment after World War Two, in this case by Sydney firm, ACD Properties Pty Ltd. (Criterion A)

The former Law Department's Building is significant as a highly intact example of postwar commercial development in central Melbourne utilising the Post-War Modernist style that characterised the wave of development in curtain wall design during the 1960s and 1970s. These buildings represented the new modernism in their modular, industrial Bauhaus inspired aesthetic incorporating features such as consistent access to daylight and open floor plans to meet new standards for commercial office accommodation. The building exhibits key characteristics of later examples of the style, with a precast concrete curtain wall used to achieve variety of expression and flexibility of form. (Criterion D)

The former Law Department's Building is aesthetically significant for its unusual curtain wall detailing, with curved windows and elaborate brass spandrel panels (designed by architects A V Pupedis & Associates) to achieve a much more organic aesthetic. It is also notable for its unusual and highly intact street level colonnade, with corbelling and curved corners and set back shopfronts and entry lobby. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)