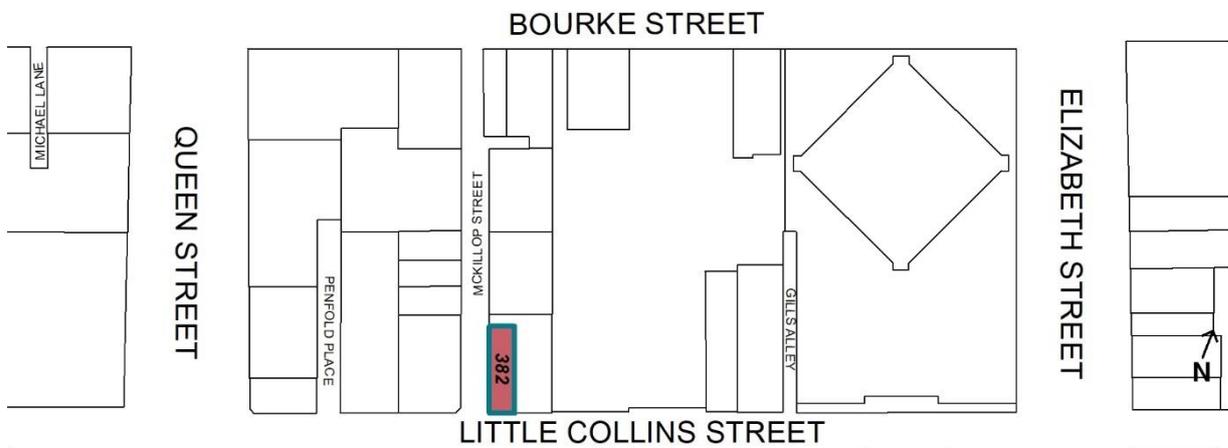


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Former Law Institute House
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	382 Little Collins Street Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	105957



SURVEY DATE: March 2019

SURVEY BY: Context

<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	H7822-1600	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	No
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Peck & Kemter (1924)	<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	C
		<b>BUILDER:</b>	Alex Sturrock (1905)
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Federation/Edwardian Period (1902-c.1918)	<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>	1905, 1924

## THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here.
HISTORIC THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
5 Building a commercial city	5.5 Building a manufacturing capacity 5.4 Developing a retail centre
4 Governing, administrating and policing the city	OTHER SUB-THEMES
	4.6 Administering justice

## LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
<b>Archaeological block no:</b> 36	<b>Inventory no:</b> 600
<b>Character of Occupation:</b> Commercial	
First land sale part of Allotment 16, Block 13, purchased by James Smith.	
1839 Williamson	No buildings, indication of subdivision and lanes
1840 Hoddle	
1855 Kearney	
1866 Cox	
1877 Dove	Two-storey building & one-storey workshop, Willis Whitesmith
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Two- and one-storey building, Willis & Co., Locksmith
1905/6 Mahlstedt	
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Manufacturing, Merchants
1920s	Offices, Retail
1960s	Offices, Retail

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

**Extent of overlay:** Refer to map

## SUMMARY

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street is a three-storey brick building constructed in 1905 by builder Alex Sturrock for established hardware manufacturer W Willis & Co. The business was associated with the site for more than 50 years from the late 1860s. The Law Institute of Victoria purchased the building in 1922, engaging architects Peck & Kemter for alterations in 1924. The institute occupied the building for the next 37 years until 1961.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Building a commercial city

#### *Developing a retail centre*

Even before the early 1850s, Melbourne had established the foundational infrastructure for international trade and commerce, including retail markets, shipping agents, and industry and finance houses - the beginnings of an entrepreneurial global city (Context 2012:2).

Retailing in Melbourne gained official recognition when eight market commissioners were elected in 1841 from a roll of local voters. The commissioners established the Western Market, which became the principal place for selling fresh food, with many goods transported from Melbourne to pastoral settlements. At this time Melbourne's population was 4479, and that of the colony was 20,416 (Young and Spearritt 2008). The growth of retailing was accompanied by the construction of warehouses to store goods.

Architectural historian Miles Lewis notes that various precincts within the city centre had emerged by the early 1840s, and that this pattern

*remained little changed into the 20th century and which ... survives today – mercantile and warehousing activity near the Pool and the wharves, banking in central Collins Street, the retailing heart between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets, the medical precinct in the vicinity of Dr Richard Howitt's house in Collins Street East, and so on (cited in Context 2012:12).*

During the 1880s' economic boom, multi-storey retail and commercial buildings, often architect designed, were constructed to house ground-level shops with rooms above.

Development slowed during the economic depression of the 1890s, only recovering with the revival of immigration in the first decades of the twentieth century. Although affected by World War One in the period 1914-1918, by the end of the 1920s Melbourne's population had reached one million people. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the demand for residential development declined in central Melbourne as the booming retail and manufacturing sectors rapidly taking up available properties (Marsden 2000:29-30).

Development in the city slowed with the widespread economic depression of the later 1920s and early 1930s.

#### *Building a manufacturing capacity*

As Melbourne developed through the nineteenth century, so did its manufacturing industry accompanied by the building of warehouses. Factories tended to be small and specialised. Food-processing plants were established in north and west Melbourne. Large factories, built in the later nineteenth century and early twentieth century tended to be built outside the City of Melbourne, where land was more easily obtainable (Context 2012:44).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the demand for residential development declined in central Melbourne as the booming retail and manufacturing sectors rapidly took up city properties (Marsden 2000:29-30).

Similar to the situation in the retail sector, development in the city slowed, in association with the widespread economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and this had an impact on the

manufacturing industry. Because of a lack of finance over this period, instead of new construction, some city buildings were substantially remodelled to create new office, commercial and industrial spaces.

### **Governing, administrating and policing the city**

#### *Administering justice*

The court system in Victoria developed several tiers of authority. During the early years of settlement disputes were handled by police magistrate William Lonsdale (Context 2012:33).

The first gaol was built on the government block and a second one erected on Batman's Hill in 1837. From early 1840, prisoners were held at two police watch houses, and the same year a new brick gaol was built at the western end of Collins Street. A new gaol was established in 1845 in Russell Street, not far from the new Supreme Court building in La Trobe Street, which had opened in 1843. Additions were made to the Melbourne Gaol, so that by the late 1850s, the gaol, Supreme Court, Police Station, and Warders Barracks took up almost an entire city block. Following Separation from New South Wales in 1851, Governor La Trobe created the Supreme Court of Victoria, the district County Courts, and other courts of law (Context 2012:33).

In 1871 construction began of a new Supreme Court in William Street. The opening of the new Supreme Court moved the focus of the legal fraternity — the lawyers' offices and barristers' chambers — from the eastern end of town to the western end around William and Bourke Streets (Context 2012:33).

There were various reforms and redevelopments to Melbourne's courts in the early twentieth century. The High Court of Australia was created in 1903, as a partial replacement for London's Privy Council. The old Supreme Court building on the corner of Russell and La Trobe Streets was demolished in 1909 and replaced by a new Magistrates' Court. The prison system was also reformed in the twentieth century, and the (Old) Melbourne Gaol was closed in 1924 (Context 2012:35).

### **SITE HISTORY**

The land at 382 Little Collins Street was part of the first land sale in 1837. Forming part of Crown Allotment 16, Block 13, it was purchased by James Smith. The first documented occupation was in 1839, though no buildings existed on the site at this time.

The three-storey building at 382 Little Collins Street was built for William Willis, whitesmith (a metalworker who does finishing work on iron and steel) and locksmith, who operated his business in Melbourne from the 1860s (*Hamilton Spectator* 19 September 1905:2). W Willis had established his business in the former building on the subject site by the late 1860s (S&Mc 1867, 1868 & 1870). In 1877, Willis occupied a two-storey building and a single-storey workshop on the site (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993, Inventory no 600). In the 1880s, W Willis & Co services specialised in lock smithing; various steel and brass repairing and adjusting; and manufacturing of small-scale tinware for farming and grazing, including sheep and cattle ear markers (see Figure 1) (*Jewish Herald* Friday 25 March 1881:3; *Leader* 20 October 1888:4).



Figure 1. Newspaper advertisement for W Willis & Co's personalised ear markers and labels. (Source: *Leader* 20 October 1888:4).

In 1888, Willis sold the business to George Edward Hull, who carried on the business under the same name of W Willis & Co (*Age* 20 October 1888:20). From the 1890s, the business expanded their hardware production to include the manufacture of fireproof safes, weighing machines and security doors, items that became the mainstays of the firm's sales. By the turn of the century, the firm was supplying the Commonwealth government, banks and other major merchants in Melbourne with security doors (*Hamilton Spectator* 19 September 1905:2).

When Hull died in 1898, the property was devolved to his widow, Isabella Hull (*Argus* 25 May 1898:1). Isabella commissioned builder Alex Sturrock to construct a new three-storey building to replace the original shop and workshop and accommodate the expanding business (see Figure 2) (RB 1906-8; MCC registration no 9718, AAI record no 76917). In the new building W Willis & Co had its showroom on the ground floor shop, with most manufacturing of the company's goods occurring in their factory in West Melbourne (*Hamilton Spectator* 19 September 1905:2).

The upper storeys of the subject building were accessed through doors in McKillop Street. In 1910, the first floor was leased to Gill & Hambly, printers and stationers, and J L Newbiggin & Co, electrical contractors. From 1913 until 1923, the first and second floors were used for the manufacturing and sales of jewellery by jewellers including Webster & Cohen, William R Addison, Webster & Taunt, and J W Werster & Son (S&Mc 1910-1923).

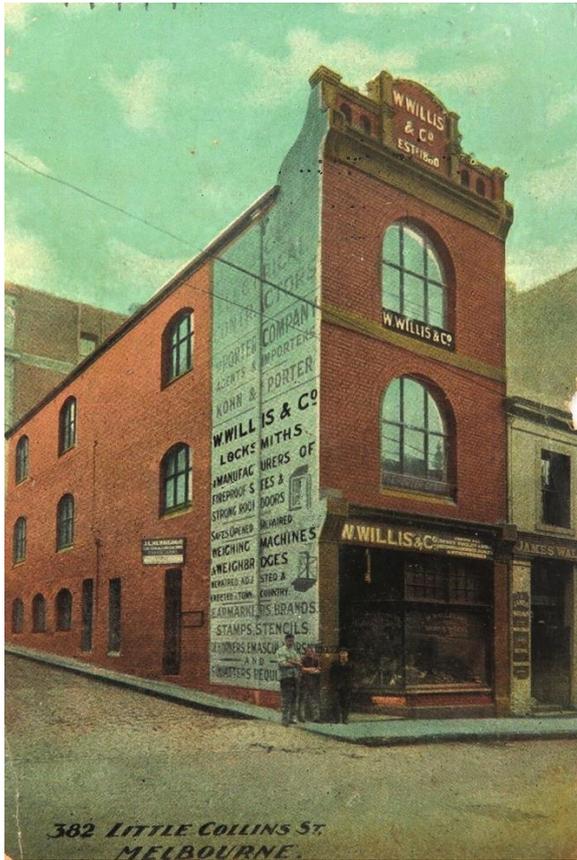


Figure 2. Showing the subject building occupied by W Willis & Co, c1910. (Source: PickFR 2019)

In 1922, 382 Little Collins Street was sold to the Law Institute of Victoria and W Willis & Co moved to 120A Queen Street c1923, ending its association with the subject land for over 50 years since the late 1860s (*Hamilton Spectator* 19 September 1905:2; S&Mc 1923-25; *Argus* 19 January 1924:5).

In 1924, architects Peck & Kemter invited tenders for alterations to the premises at 382 Little Collins Street for the Law Institute of Victoria (*Argus* 19 January 1924:5). The total cost for the alteration was £13,000, raised by a loan and debentures to members (Peacock 2009:25).

The Law Institute of Victoria occupied the building from 1924 until 1961. 382 Little Collins Street was the institute's third home, following the former Temple Court (demolished in the 1920s) between Collins and Little Collins streets (from 1959 to 1883) and the Supreme Court in William Street (from 1883 to c1923). In March 1859 a group of 26 Melbourne solicitors founded the Law Institute of Victoria. The institute started to play a significant role in the late 1880s, commenting on proposed legislation and, through its complaints committee, referring cases of 'misconduct' to the Supreme Court. In 1905, Flos Greig became the first woman to be admitted to practice as a solicitor in Victoria, and shortly after, was the first female member of the institute. In 1917 the institute finally obtained statutory recognition and it quickly became the pre-eminent voice of the 'lower branch' of the profession (solicitors) in Victoria.

According to the 1924 building plans, the alterations involved: creation of office rooms on upper levels; in-fill of rear and McKillop Street windows; new stair cases for the access to the upper levels; new openings to the western elevation on the first and second floor level, some of which mimicked the original semi-circular arched windows while others were rectangular; replacement of all window frames; and re-modelling of the whole ground floor. At the ground level, three new lettable retail

spaces were created. Two smaller shops were accessed from McKillop Street, while a new corner entrance was created for the larger shop fronting Little Collins Street as seen in Figure 3 (MBAI 5935 & 6152; PROV VPRS11200/P1 unit 670).



Figure 3. Drawing by Peck & Kemter in 1924, showing the proposed changes to the McKillop Street elevations. The coloured sections indicate the proposed changes to this elevation included new windows to the upper-level and all new ground-level façade. (Source: PROV VPRS11200/P1 unit 670)

The building became known as Law Institute House, with the name 'Law Institute of Victoria' expressed on the pediment (see Figure 4 and Figure 5). The organisation's roles and importance in legal practice in Victoria continued to grow during its time at the Law Institute House. A few years after the move, in 1927, the first issue of *Law Institute Journal* was published. In 1931, Legal Women's Association was established, and the Association's annual and monthly meetings were held in the Law Institute House. In 1933, the institute became a constituent member of the newly formed Law Council of Australia. The *Legal Profession Practice Act 1946* entrenched the institute's position as the representative of the solicitor profession by tying membership of the institute to the issue of practising certificates; by 1948, almost all solicitors in Victoria had become members of the institute (Peacock 2009:18-37; McQueen 2008). During this time, upper storey offices were utilised for meetings and gatherings associated with the institute. Some of the regular events hosted in the premises included the University of Melbourne's Annual Convocation and the Annual General Meeting of the Law Institute of Victoria (*Age* 25 November 1941:4; *Argus* 28 February 1934:15; *Argus* 25 February 1929:1).

The Law Institute of Victoria occupied part of the upper levels of the subject building from 1924, sharing the building with a number of tenants. In 1925, the ground floor shop facing Little Collins Street was vacant, but soon became tenanted by Renovations Dry Cleaners, which remained through to the 1940s. Between 1927 and 1942, H Jennings, tobacconist and hairdresser; Leona Tearooms; J H S Campbell, solicitor; and F T Warry, sign writer operated their businesses from the same building (S&Mc 1927-1942).

Throughout the wartime and postwar period, despite the increasing need for more space, the Law Institute of Victoria was required to keep the tenants under wartime landlord and tenant laws. Even when the institute gained possession of the second floor in 1955, there was not enough space for efficient operation of the institute.

In October 1960, the Law Institute of Victoria advertised the building at 382 Little Collins Street for sale. According to the auction notice, it contained three shops on the ground floor, and 'high-class' offices above (*Age* 3 October 1960:2). In 1961 the Law Institute of Victoria relocated to premises at 465 Little Bourke Street (Peacock 2009:18-37).

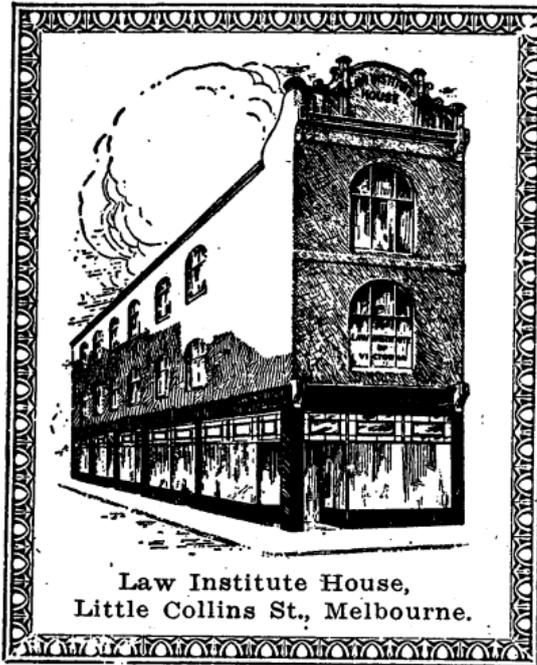


Figure 4. Illustration of 382 Little Collins Street, by 1924 known as 'Law Institute House'. (Source: Law Institute Journal 1927 vol.1:2)

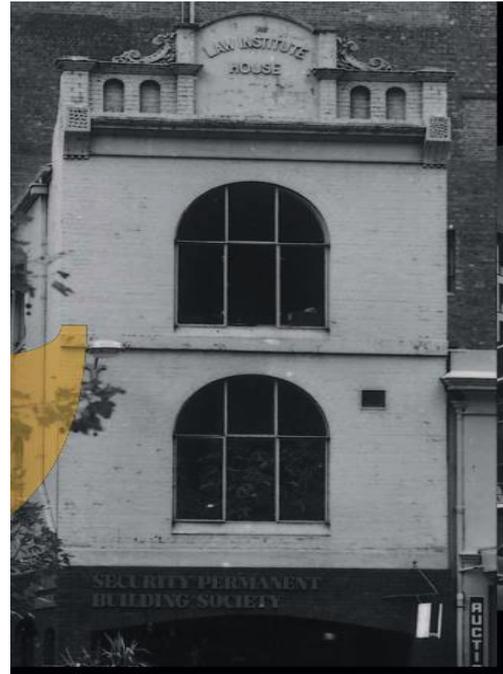


Figure 5. The building still carried the name in the 1970s after the Law Institute had left the building. (Peacock 2009:25)

Following the sale in 1961 tenders were invited to apply tiles to the shop front at 382 Little Collins Street (*Age* 28 April 1961:18). Alterations to the shopfronts were carried out in 1966, and again in 1970 (MBAI). In 1966, two ground floor shops in the subject building were combined into an office facing Little Collins Street. During the 1970s, the office was occupied by the World Permanent Building Society (Figure 6). In 1990, this was converted back to a shop (CoMMaps). The current ground-level elevations have since been altered with modern glazed shopfronts, retaining one of the arched shopfronts to McKillop Street.

In 2018, the building at 382 Little Collins Street contained two businesses and a shop (CoMMaps).

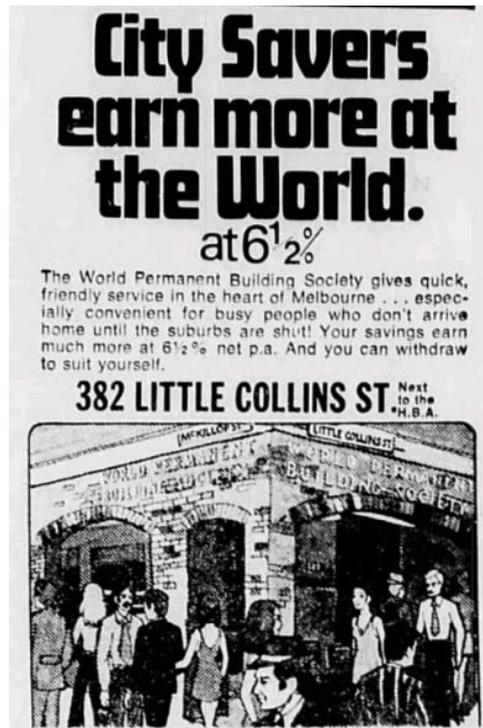


Figure 6. A newspaper advertisement for the World Permanent Building Society. The rendering shows the ground-floor shopfronts altered in c1966-1970. (Source: *Age* 17 April 1973:5)

*Peck & Kemter, architects*

Peck & Kemter formed as a partnership between Solon Alonzo Peck (1870-1930) and George Alfred Kemter (1887-1971), becoming known as Peck & Kemter by 1920. As Peck & Kemter, they collaborated with Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin on the Capitol Theatre building, Melbourne (1920-24) (Paterson 2012). In the same decade they undertook modifications to 382 Little Collins Street, Peck & Kemter carried out renovations to the Brunswick Baths (1928) and designed the Bankers & Traders Insurance building, Collins Street, Melbourne (1928); the Sheep Pavilion, Melbourne Showgrounds (c1928); the Aeolian Building, Swanston Street, Melbourne (c1928); and The Strand, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne (1929) (Paterson 2012).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The former Law Institute House at 382 Little Collins Street is a three-storey, narrow-fronted Edwardian era building constructed in 1905, and modified in 1924. The building has two street frontages, being located on the north-eastern corner of Little Collins and McKillop Streets between Elizabeth and Queen streets. The land slopes from the rear of the building on McKillop Street to the principal elevation on Little Collins Street.

The principal Little Collins Street façade is painted loadbearing brickwork, with the render finish limited to details such as the narrow spandrels at first and second floor levels, brackets, cornices, parapet and pediment. The façade is symmetrical, and dominated at the first and second floor levels by a large triple bay window with a semicircular arch of three courses of brick voussoirs. At roof level, the building terminates in a cornice with a console bracket at each end supporting a decorative arched parapet topped with a minor cornice and a central raised curved pediment. The name of the building (LAW INSTITUTE HOUSE) is expressed in render on the pediment. The windows are steel

framed, which probably replaced earlier timber framed windows during the 1924 modifications. At the street level, a single wide shopfront has replaced the original configuration, with a top hamper of black material with the name of the current business in large lettering.

While quite restrained and utilitarian, the façade features some elements of both the Victorian period Free Classical style (cornices, arched parapet and pediment) and the Federation period styling (semi-circular arched openings).

The western side elevation to McKillop Street is also of painted loadbearing brickwork. Some of the original window openings at the first and second floor levels have been retained (see Figure 3), comprising large triple bay windows with arched heads of three courses of brick voussoirs. The window frames on this elevation are steel-framed, same as the Little Collins Street frontage.

The modern (post-2001) shopfront to Little Collins Street returns into McKillop Street for approximately half of the length of the frontage. The tile cladding and an arch-headed shopfront on the ground-floor elevation fronting McKillop Street date to 1966.

## INTEGRITY

382 Little Collins Street is largely intact above the ground level with a few changes visible to original (1905) and significant early (1924) fabric. Associated with the building's use by the Law Institute of Victoria, the 1924 changes include the new openings in the McKillop Street frontage and addition of expressed lettering 'Law Institute of Victoria' on the pediment. Above the ground level, the building retains its early (1905 and 1924) fenestration to both street elevations as well as the 1924 steel frame windows. Later changes are mostly limited to the ground level, including the modifications to the shopfronts on both elevations and tile cladding on the McKillop Street elevation.

The building also retains the original built form and scale, expression of materials and stylistic details. Overall, for the evidence retained of the original building and its 1924 modifications for the institute, the building is of high integrity.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The modestly scaled small shops or warehouses constructed during the Edwardian era were an important phase of development in central Melbourne, especially during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These buildings are typically built of loadbearing brick, with a minimal level of detail that generally reflects Victorian influences. Many of these buildings are no longer operating in their original industrial or manufacturing role, often adapted to house businesses or offices with retail at ground level, resulting in substantial changes to shopfronts.

The following examples are comparable with the subject building at 382 Little Collins Street. Drawn chiefly from the *Central City Heritage Review* 2011, they are of a similar use, scale, location and creation date. The images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

*37 Little Collins Street, 1906 (Interim HO1276 - Recommended as significant within the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

This two-storey brick commercial building, constructed c1906, operated as a tea and coffee merchants for a considerable part of its early history. Designed by architects H W & F B Tompkins, the building is notable for its Federation era styling.



Figure 7. 37 Little Collins Street, 1906. (Source: Context 2018)

*84-86 Elizabeth Street, 1910 (Significant in HO502 The Block Precinct)*

A three-storey brick building built by builders George Farnsworth & Son in 1910. Showing Arts and Crafts influences, it was designed by Bates, Peebles & Smart for jewellers Henry Newman & Co.



Figure 8. 84-86 Elizabeth Street, built in 1910.

*103-105 Lonsdale Street, 1908 (Significant in HO507 Little Bourke Street Precinct)*

Former warehouse/factory originally of three storeys. Designed in the Romanesque Revival style and built by J J Oliver in 1908. Now an office building with ground level retail it was refurbished and subdivided in 2008 with the addition of two extra storeys and an accessible rooftop.



Figure 9. 103-105 Lonsdale Street, built in 1908.

The three-storey building at 382 Little Collins Street is an intact example of a modest early twentieth century shop/factory building, utilitarian and functional in its design. However, such low scaled central-city examples with restrained design are somewhat under-represented on the current City of Melbourne's HO, which thus provides limited scope of comparison. The subject building shares some similarities with the above Federation period buildings that were built of load-bearing masonry, and has restrained decoration compared to their Victorian period precursors, but still retaining some references to traditional architectural styles.

Like 382 Little Collins Street, a smaller-scale building at 37 Little Collins Street (interim HO1276) demonstrates a similarly restrained yet refined design, which exhibits some decorative brick and render detailing as well as semi-circular upper-level window popular in the Federation period retail/factory buildings. Representing small-scale manufacturing and retailing premises built in the early twentieth century, 382 Little Collins Street is also comparable to 84-86 Elizabeth Street (significant in HO502), which is an example of a narrow-fronted, low-scale Federation period building with refined ornamentations influenced by Arts and Crafts movement.

Architecturally, supervised by a builder rather than an architect, 382 Little Collins Street is relatively austere in its degree of decoration compared to the above-listed architect-designed examples on the HO. In terms of its transitional and highly utilitarian nature of the design, despite their different scales, 382 Little Collins Street is more closely comparable to the builder-designed example at 103-105 Lonsdale Street (significant in HO507) than the above architect-designed examples.

As a modestly ornamented example, the former Law Institute House is an architecturally understated building, however, the building survives in good condition and a high level of intactness and integrity to its original state above the ground level. It is of some architectural value as a three-storey building on a corner site with two street frontages, built during this stylistically transitional period in central Melbourne that is under-represented in the current HO of the City of Melbourne.

Historically, the subject building's long-term use by the Law Institute of Victoria is what sets this place apart from many HO-listed examples of a similar scale, period and early use. Whilst the interwar period conversion of earlier retail and manufacturing buildings was a common practice in central Melbourne context, the subject building's 1924 modification and long association with the Law Institute of Victoria from 1922 to 1961 is highly notable.

The former Law Institute House was the third premises of the Law Institute of Victoria, and the first building owned and named by the institute following its accommodation in the former Temple Court (demolished in the early 1920s) at 422-428 Collins Street and the Supreme Court at 192-228 William Street. With its retention of expressed lettering on the pediment, the building survives as a physical evidence that demonstrates the institute's important history phase throughout the interwar and postwar period, a time when the organisation's roles and importance in legal practice in Victoria continued to expand.

**ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

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✓ **CRITERION A**  
Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

---

**CRITERION B**  
Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

---

**CRITERION C**  
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).

---

✓ **CRITERION D**  
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

---

**CRITERION E**  
Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

---

**CRITERION F**  
Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)

---

**CRITERION G**  
Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

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**CRITERION H**  
Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

**MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME**

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

**OTHER**

N/A

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**PREVIOUS STUDIES**

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**Central Activities District  
Conservation Study 1985**

E

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**Central City Heritage  
Study 1993**

C

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**Review of Heritage  
overlay listings in the  
CBD 2002**

Ungraded

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**Central City Heritage  
Review 2011**

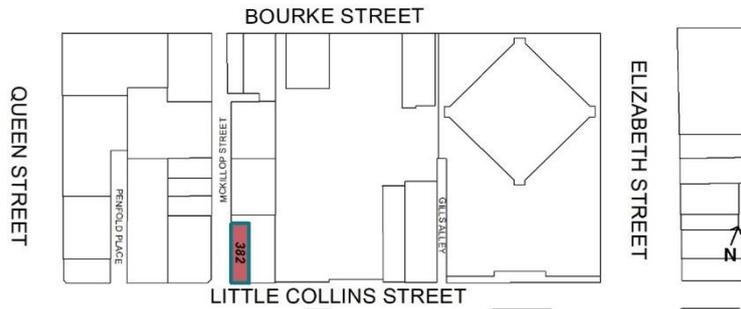
Ungraded

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Heritage Place:** Former Law Institute House

**PS ref no:** HOXXXX



**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; and
- 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**

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

