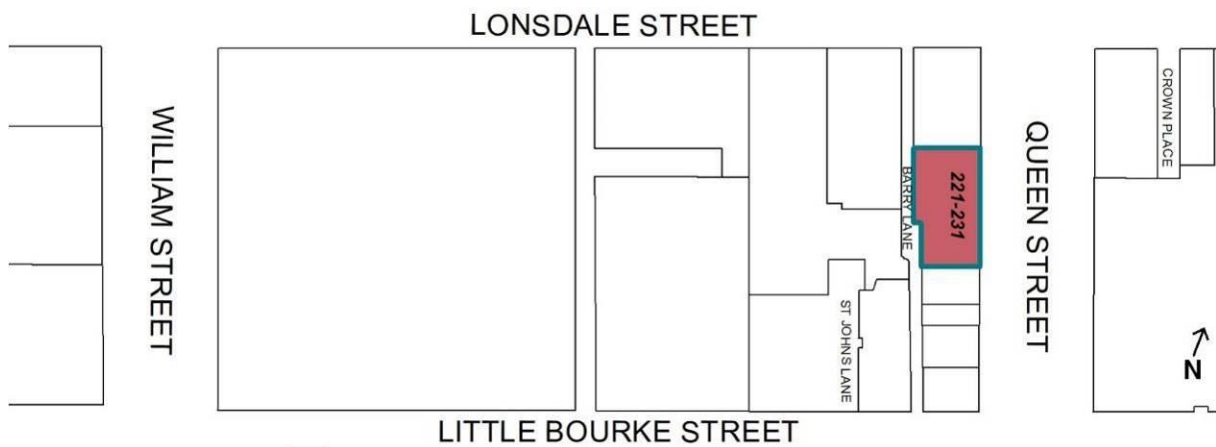


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Former Law Department's Building
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	221-231 Queen Street, Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	108079



**SURVEY DATE:** March 2019

**SURVEY BY:** Context

**HERITAGE INVENTORY** N/A

**EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY** No

**PLACE TYPE** Individual Heritage Place

**PROPOSED CATEGORY** Significant

**FORMER GRADE** C

**DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:** Fischer Group Architects

**BUILDER:** A J Galvin Pty Ltd

**DEVELOPMENT PERIOD :** Postwar Period (1945-1975)

**DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:** 1972

## 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, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
POSTWAR THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
1 Shaping the urban landscape	1.8 Expressing an architectural style 1.9 Beyond the curtain wall
3 Building a commercial city	3.2 Business and finance

## LAND USE

THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Retail, Residential, Warehouses
1920s	Retail, Residential, Warehouses
1960s	Retail, Residential, Warehouses

## 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 Department's Building, at 221-231 Queen Street, is an 11-storey postwar office building completed in 1972 to a design by Fischer Group architects, built by A J Galvin Pty Ltd. The building opened in 1972 for Sydney based firm, ADC Properties (Victoria) Pty Ltd and was owned by that company until 1989. Known as the Law Department's Building, it housed a number of State government law agencies until c1987. It continues to be used mainly for office space today.

## CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

The period from 1945 to 1975 was one of radical transformation for Melbourne; from the low-rise city that still reflected its colonial origins to a bustling international centre of commerce and culture. The surviving buildings from this period are evidence of the evolving economic and social conditions in Melbourne at the time and demonstrate the city's transition from its nineteenth century manufacturing origins to its current banking, office and service industry focus. These buildings reflect the increasing commercial and cultural role of Melbourne in the international context of globalisation and postwar optimism as well as a radically altered economic environment which saw an influx of foreign capital and ideas. Collectively, these buildings represent a transformative period in the life of the city; a period that is categorised by significant change, growth and evolution across all aspects of life – social, political, economic and cultural.

### Expressing an architectural style in the postwar period

Multi-storey commercial buildings made a significant contribution to postwar Melbourne, particularly from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. With the resumption of building construction in the 1950s after the hiatus of World War II, the advent of curtain wall construction – enabling the application of a non-load bearing skin to the face of a building – radically altered the appearance of the modern city commercial building.

Constructed predominantly for the financial and business sectors, there was an eagerness amongst clients to establish a dominant city presence and to project a modern, progressive and prestigious approach to commercial building design. The resulting Post-War Modernist style of multi-storey buildings, influenced particularly by steel and glass office tower design in the United States, were in stark contrast to the pre-war city buildings in central Melbourne and presented architects of the day with a completely new design challenge.

Thirty major city buildings were completed in Melbourne in four years alone from 1955 to 1958 and 22 were office buildings within, or on the fringes of, the CBD (Saunders 1959:91). Largely influenced by the American skyscraper, the earliest office buildings of the 1950s utilised innovative curtain walling, formed from continuous metal-framing filled principally with glass. The curtain wall is described by Miles Lewis as 'essentially a continuous, non-bearing skin on the face of a building' and is one of the 'leitmotifs of modernism, both in Australia and overseas' (Lewis 2012:185). The curtain walled 'glass box' aesthetic was embraced by the local architects, and many buildings followed to the extent that high-rise office buildings with curtain walling became a defining characteristic of the new buildings in the latter half of the 1950s (NTAV 2014:5-6).

Amongst the first curtain walled buildings to be constructed in Melbourne was the 13-storey glass-fronted Gilbert Court at 100 Collins Street (J A La Gerche 1954-56), which was built to the height limit of 132 feet (40m), and – perhaps the most influential – the free-standing ICI House, 1 Nicholson Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon 1955-58). Located on the outskirts of the Hoddle Grid, ICI House was clad on all four facades with glass curtain walling and exceeded the well-established maximum building height within the Hoddle Grid. Large numbers of similarly designed city commercial buildings followed, often displaying bold horizontal contrast between alternating rows of glazing and coloured spandrels.

### **Beyond the curtain wall**

The dominant glass box design of the late 1950s was challenged in the 1960s as the shortcomings of the fully glazed curtain wall became apparent – in particular its poor thermal performance – and new technologies became available. Advances in concrete technology, including the development of precast concrete, impacted greatly on both the appearance and structure of the commercial tower form from the 1960s onwards.

By the mid-1960s, architects were experimenting with a range of solid cladding materials for tower buildings including precast concrete, stone, reconstituted stone, tile and brick, as well as various metals for cladding,

screening and detailing. A number of buildings continued to adopt true curtain wall construction; however, a different aesthetic was created by the use of solid external cladding in place of the typically glazed spandrels of the 1950s. This aesthetic is evident in a number of existing buildings in the city centre including the Guardian Building at 454-456 Collins Street (1960-61), with its stone-faced precast concrete panelled facades.

Concrete advances saw an increase in the use of reinforced column and slab construction in 1960s multi-storey building design, however concrete-encased steelwork also continued to be used. Some buildings incorporated structural elements in their main facades (for example load-bearing precast concrete panels or structural mullions) so were therefore not of true curtain wall construction. The structural nature of these facades was not necessarily apparent to the observer and the buildings continued to display the well-established repetitive characteristics of the true curtain wall façade, such as at Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street, designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker in association with Meldrum & Partners (c1968-70).

A broad range of design approaches became apparent in multi-storey commercial buildings of the 1960s and early 1970s. The horizontality of curtain walling was often balanced by the addition of vertical elements such as façade columns, strips or fins, which introduced textural patterns and visual strength to the facades of a number of buildings. Other multi-storey towers clearly expressed their structure externally with grid-like facades which clearly reflected the internal trabeated structural system. Sun screening provided additional patterning to facades, either as a repetitive decorative motif across the façade, as an expression of the window frames (such as at Royal Mail House, 253-267 Bourke Street designed by D Graeme Lumsden, 1961-63), in the form of balconies (as at the Melbourne Office of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney building, 251-257 Collins Street, 1971-73), or occasionally as an entire screen attached to the exterior face of the building.

Buildings also varied with towers set within plazas or on dominant podiums. The State Savings Bank of Victoria at 45-63 Swanston Street, designed by Buchan Laird & Buchan (c1974), is one example of a building constructed with a dominant podium. Buildings were sometimes set back from the street line behind public plazas – a strategy adopted to gain council approval for additional building height and evident in the Bates Smart McCutcheon designed Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building at 359-373 Collins Street (c1972-1975) – while others were built within larger plaza spaces, such as the AMP Tower & St James Building Complex (1965-69), designed by US-based firm Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM).

### **Business and finance in the postwar period**

The postwar period was one of fluctuating fortunes in the business and finance sectors. In the main however, economic confidence and financial deregulation came together to create a period of growth that would radically change the appearance of central Melbourne.

Speculative investment in Melbourne increased after the Commonwealth government lifted restrictions on share dealings in 1947, which resulted in a dramatic increase in new company registrations (Marsden 2000:44-45). Subsequently, during the 1950s, a number of national and international companies sought to assert a physical presence in the country, constructing corporate buildings in the city centre. In Melbourne, up to the mid-1960s, investment was predominantly driven by British and American companies, government bodies, large Australian corporations such as AMP and BHP, and property developers, including Lend Lease (formerly Civil and Civic) and L J Hooker Ltd. Later in the 1960s, it was also driven by private developers such as Grollo and Lustig & Moar (Marsden 2000:46-47).

The construction of large bank buildings was also prolific during the postwar period with the passing of the Banking Act 1947, which led to an increase in the number of bank branches established in Victoria. One of the most significant changes in banking in Australia at this time was the creation of the new Reserve Bank of Australia in 1959, which replaced the central bank known as the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Heritage Alliance 2008:17). Bank buildings constructed in the central city during this period included the State Savings Bank of Victoria at 233-243 Queen Street (1967-68), the Bank of Adelaide Building at 265-269 Collins Street (1959-60) and the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building at 251-257 Collins Street (1971-73).

The period between 1961 and 1963 was one of business recession, while the years between 1967 and 1969 was a time of growth due to two mineral booms. From 1967 to 1971 the construction of new office space in the city centre more than doubled that of the previous five years (City of Melbourne Strategy Plan 1974 in Clinch 2012:66-67). The property boom ended during the economic crash of the early 1970s and the 1974 oil crisis when many British institutions that had founded the commercial property industry left Australia. Government bodies and banks subsequently took over much of the building construction in the city centre (Marsden 2000:48).

### **SITE HISTORY**

The subject site at 221-231 Queen Street is part of Crown Allotments 10 and 11, Block 19, purchased by Charles Scott and Charles Howard respectively in 1837 ('Town of Melbourne' 1838). From the 1880s the subject land comprised three allotments, with two shop-residences at 221 and 223 Queen Street, and a large warehouse at 225-231 Queen Street. The latter was occupied by Sidney Cooke printers, furnishers and ink manufacturers until at least 1970 (see Figure 1) (Mahlstedt Map, no 19, 1888; MMBW Detail Plan no 1016, 1895; S&Mc 1955-1970).





Figure 1. A detail from a 1966 photograph of the western side of Queen Street showing the Victorian shop-residences and Sidney Cooke warehouse that previously occupied the subject site at 221-231 Queen Street. (Source: Halla 1966, SLV)

In 1969, Vic State Developments Pty Ltd lodged a preliminary permit application with Melbourne City Council to construct an 11-storey building at 225 Queen Street, with the superintending architects listed as Design & Construction Consultants Pty Ltd (a subsidiary of the Fischer Group of companies, also referred to as Group Architects); both the submitting and superintending architect firms were listed at the same address in Sydney, possibly indicating they were they run by the same company (BP 40357).

In 1970 ADC Properties (Victoria) Pty Ltd, likely the result of a change in business name, became the proprietor of the three allotments addressed as 221-231 Queen Street; this company featured in all later correspondence to Melbourne City Council (CT:V8858 F901).

Developers ADC (Australian Development Corporation) Properties Pty Ltd was founded in Sydney in 1960. The company acquired key sites across Sydney and Melbourne, including the subject site at 221-231 Queen Street, on which they built large-scale investment developments, often for the sole purposes of leasing. The firm partnered with the Fischer Group of companies on many of the development projects, extending their joint interests to Melbourne in 1969 with the construction of office buildings at 221-231 Queen Street and the corner of St Kilda Road and Armadale Street (*Sydney Morning Herald* 9 October 1969:12). The company's headquarter was in ADC House, 189 Kent Street, Sydney. The company continues to operate today with a focus on subdividing real property into lots (Bloomberg 2019).

In February 1970, ADC Properties (Victoria) Pty Ltd formally applied to develop the land at 221-231 Queen Street, with the construction of an 11-storey office building with basement carpark to replace the existing shop, office and warehouse buildings on site (BP 1880). While the original building plans are not available, from available correspondence and other plans it is clear that Group Architects were responsible for the design of the subject building with Taylor Thomson Whitting Pty Ltd operating as consulting engineers.

In March, a tender notice for the excavation of a site on Queen Street, measuring 103 feet by 56 feet, was advertised by Group Architects, which is likely related to the clearing of part of the subject site (*Age* 18 March 1970:25; BP 1880; CT V8858 F901). In July of the same year, 'demolition hands' were invited to apply for work at 225 Queen Street (*Age* 31 July 1970:20).

In June 1972, architects A V Pupedis & Associates submitted detail drawings for the brass-coloured infill panels planned for the building's pre-cast concrete façade (BP 41245).

By July 1972 the subject office building at 221-223 Queen Street was completed (see Figure 2) (Age 1 July 1972).

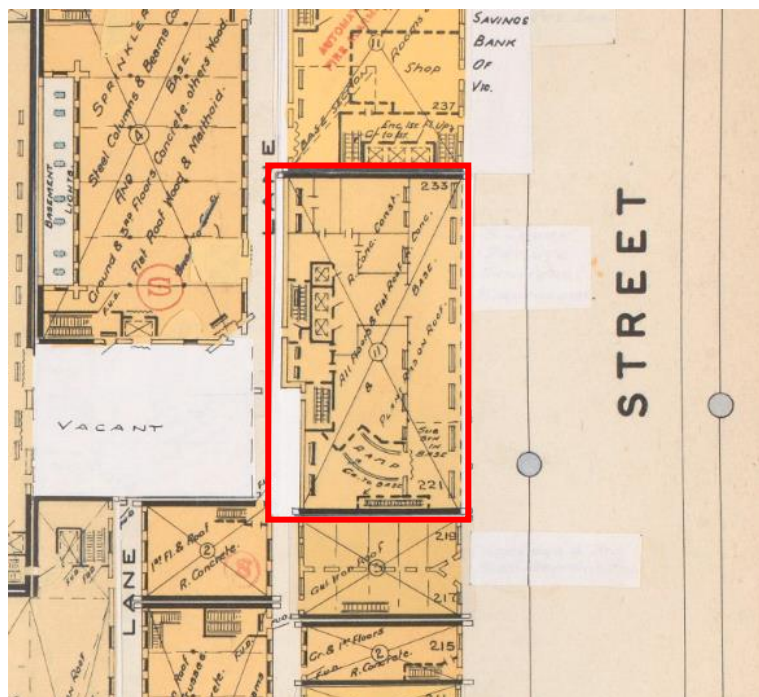


Figure 2. Detail from Mahlstedt fire survey plan dated 1948, and presumably amended in the 1970s, shows the subject building as an 11-storey building with basement of reinforced concrete construction. (Mahlstedt Map Section 1, no 16, 1948).

In November 1972 a newspaper article reported that the building's pre-cast concrete façade had been made using moulds from an earlier building in York Street, Sydney, also designed and constructed by the Fischer Group for ADC Ltd. The fact that moulds had been reused to cast the panels for another building, albeit with slight dimensional modifications, was unheard of at the time. A leading firm in the Australian stone and concrete industry, Melocco Bros Pty Ltd, carried out the adjustments to the panels (see Figure 3) (Age 6 November 1972:23). 95-99 York Street, Sydney, had an almost identical façade design (lower levels now altered) as seen in Figure 4 (Sydney Morning Herald 21 July 1969:54; Age 6 November 1972:23). The Melbourne model, however, was given a different finish: sand-blasted in quartz aggregate and white cement, while marble aggregate was used in Sydney. Also, slight dimensional changes were made to the panels by Melocco Bros, to suit the local site (Age 6 November 1972:23). Built in 1969 by the Fischer Group in collaboration with Melocco Bros, another ADC building at 87 Elizabeth Street, Sydney (Figure 5) had a very similar arched ground-level colonnade (since altered) (Sydney Morning Herald 9 October 1969:12).

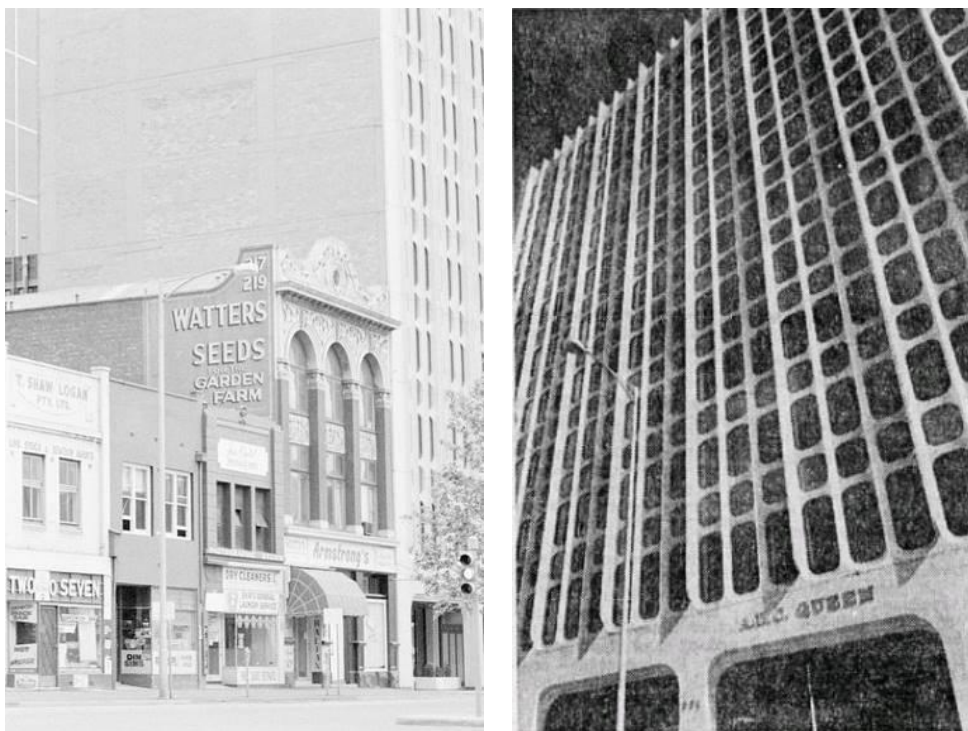


Figure 3. Photography of the subject building from 1972 reveals that few changes have been made to its exterior. (Source: Halla c1972, SLV (left); Age 6 November 1972:23 (right))

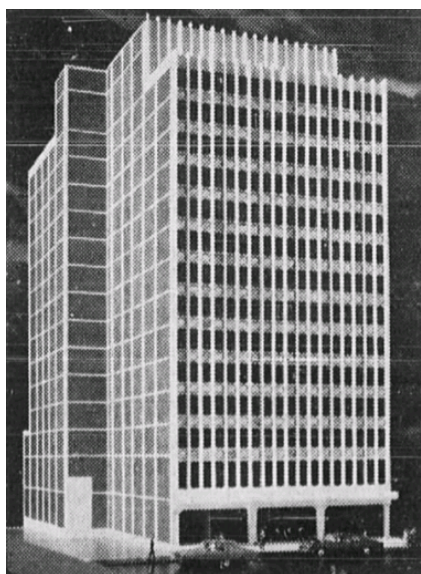


Figure 4. Rendering of 95-99 York Street, Sydney, built in 1970 using same precast concrete moulds. The secondary elevation to 168-172 Clarence Street also features same panels. The lower section of York Street façade has been since altered. (Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 July 1969:54)



Figure 5. 87 Elizabeth Street, Sydney (corner Elizabeth and King streets), built in 1969 and now substantially altered. (Source: *Sydney Morning Herald* 9 October 1969:12)

Throughout the 1970s the property changed hands often between numerous investment holding companies (CT:V8901 F556). From 1974, 221 Queen Street housed the State government Law Department's offices, including the executive government law agencies of the State Law Office, Attorney General, Crown Solicitor and Parliamentary Counsel (S&Mc 1974). In 1974, the Law



Department's Building, as it was known, was addressed as 221-223 Queen Street, and by 1980s as 221 Queen Street (*Age* 14 June 1986:179).

In 1985, 221-231 Queen Street was purchased by investment company Hextrom Pty Ltd, possibly a subsidiary of the Burns Philp Trustee Company based in Sydney, which was the firm listed on the certificate of title (*Age* 13 November 1985: 33; CT:V9666 F001). Originally a major Australian shipping line, by the 1980s Burns Philp was a multinational company in control of over 200 firms spanning 100 industries (SLQ 2009).

In late 1985, the subject building housed a number of offices of the Victorian Public Service (*Age* 7 December 1985:169). The building was refurbished in 1987, in which year 'superb office suites' were advertised for lease. This may indicate the year that the State government relinquished its offices in the building (*Age* 3 December 1987:27).

In 1989 the building was sold for \$16.25 million and was promptly strata subdivided into multiple office units across the eleven floors (*Age* 12 April 1989:27; CT:V9889 F972). Numerous investors purchased office space in the building, with various professional services firms taking up residency, including the ANZ Bank (*Age* 18 April 1990:23).

Changes to the building since its construction have been largely confined to the interior spaces, including the construction of internal partitions to a number of floors from 1980 to 1992 (BP). Building permit cards also detail 'repairs to the external façade' in 1982, though it is not known which repairs these relate to as the upper floors of the building appear to be externally intact from the time of construction. Permit documentation also records refurbishments pertaining to the ground floor shops in 1986-1992. These changes at street level have retained the original structure of the colonnade, with retail and office foyer shopfronts fitted with contemporary units (see Figure 6).

Today, the basement level of the subject building is occupied by a restaurant bar, and the ground level houses café businesses. The offices of numerous law and financial firms and professional services consultancies, including real estate agency Marvelli Town & Associates, who have tenanted offices in the building since at least 1989 and who purchased an office unit on the first floor in 1994, occupy levels 1, 2, 4-8 and 10 (*Age* 18 November 1989:256; CT:V9889 F977). Levels 3 and 9 are occupied by the Reformed Theological College and Australian Pacific College, respectively.



Figure 6. Image from a 1989 auction notice for one of the ground-level shops shows the original structure of the colonnade. (Source: *Age* 7 November 1989:33)

*Fischer Group, architect*

The Fischer Group of companies was a consortium of companies providing design, construction and management services. In the 1960s, Sydney Fischer formed a number of subsidiary firms including Design & Construction Consultants Pty Ltd, Fischer Constructions Pty Ltd, Hydraulic Installations Pty Ltd, Shop & Office Fitters Pty Ltd, Glass Products Pty Ltd, and Airstream Pty Ltd. As a package, the company offered the construction and fit out of numerous large-scale development projects, a large number of which occurred in Sydney.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Group carried out a number of projects for ADC Properties Pty Ltd, including the ADC Houses at 189 Kent Street, Sydney (1964), which both ADC Properties and Fischer Group used as their headquarters; 95-99 York Street, Sydney (1970); 87 Elizabeth Street, Sydney (1969); in 77 Pacific Highway, North Sydney (1969); and the subject building at 221-231 Queen Street, Melbourne (1972) (*Sydney Morning Herald* 9 October 1969:12; *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 July 1969:54).

*Melocco Bros Pty Ltd, contributing designers*

Based in Annandale, NSW, Melocco Bros was also associated with the other Fischer Group and ADC Properties Pty Ltd's projects including the subject building at 221-231 Queen Street.

The Italian Melocco brothers, Peter, Antonio and Galliano, were the first tradesmen to practice mosaic craft in New South Wales and introduced terrazzo to Australia. It has been estimated that about 90 per cent of the marble, scagliola and terrazzo work in Sydney between 1910 and 1965 was undertaken by the Meloccos and their studio. Galliano, who joined the family business in the 1920s after completing his education in engineering, was responsible for building up the construction and concrete aspects of the business. He introduced ready-mixed concrete to Australia in 1941 (Kevin 2005).

*Taylor Thomson Whitting, consulting engineers*

The engineering firm Taylor Thomson Whitting was established in Sydney in 1959 when noted structural engineer Dick Taylor (1921-2018) was joined by Jock Thomson and Alan Whitting. Operating today as TTW, the firm remains one of Australia's leading engineering consultancies. Notable commissions include the State Office Block, Sydney (1961, now demolished), the Walk Through Aviary at Taronga Zoo (1972), and more recently, The Mint, Sydney, and Bunjil Place in Narre Warren, Melbourne (Taylor Thomson Whitting 2019).

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is an 11-storey commercial building in the late Post-War Modernist style. It was constructed in 1972, and designed and constructed by subsidiaries of the Fischer Group. The building is located on the western side of Queen Street between Lonsdale Street and Little Bourke Street, and also has a rear frontage to Barry Lane.

The building demonstrates the characteristics of the style, particularly through its use of free form or organic nonloadbearing precast concrete panels as its principal facade instead of the flat, aluminium framed glass curtain-wall systems that characterised the initial phase of the style, or its later derivative that used precast concrete elements but with a rectangular emphasis.

The principal facade to Queen Street comprises a nonloadbearing precast concrete panel curtain wall that is divided vertically into eight bays, separated by projecting vertical ribs that terminate in modest finials above the roof parapet. Cast into each panel are three vertically proportioned window openings with curved corners, with what appears to be frameless glazing. Also within each module, below the window at floor level, is a recessed square panel with rounded corners and a brass (possibly anodised aluminium) finish. There is a lesser vertical rib between each window module, which similarly terminates as a finial above the parapet. Other than the repetitive modest finials, the building has no formal termination or parapet at the roof level, as is typical of the style.

At street level, the main structural grid of the building is expressed as a colonnade that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules. The actual shopfronts are recessed and the curved vocabulary of the window modules to the upper levels is expressed within the street level openings with curved corners where the columns meet the linear line of the first floor precast concrete panels, emphasised by unusual corbelling cast into the soffits. Contemporary shop fronts sit within these four equal bays. Early photographs indicate that the original shop fronts may have been further recessed creating a colonnade. A bronze relief Victorian Coat of Arms is extant near the central entrance and is indicative of the building's original use as the Law Department's building. A second bronze relief, possibly depicting St George and the Dragon, is positioned internally above one of the lifts in the main lobby. The signage 'ADC Queen' seen in the 1972 photography (Figure 5) has been removed.

The southern end wall is exposed above the neighbouring building, revealing the basic precast concrete post and beam construction infilled with nonloadbearing brickwork.

The rear elevation facing Barry Lane is of nonloadbearing brickwork laid in stretcher bond with steel bands attached to the façade at the floor levels. The original pattern of fenestrations is extant with steel framed windows and louvres, with sloping brick sills.

## INTEGRITY

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is highly intact with very few changes visible to original or early fabric. Above the street level, the building retains its original modular pattern of fenestration, and the materiality of the precast panels with projecting vertical ribs and finials, window openings and brass-finished recessed square panels with rounded corners. The rear and side (south end) facades of nonloadbearing face brickwork with original pattern of fenestrations are also intact.

At the street level the original structure of the colonnade that divides the frontage into four equal shopfront modules remains, including corbelling and curved corners where the columns meet the linear line of the first-floor precast concrete panels. The original retail and office foyer shopfronts have been fitted with contemporary shopfronts, and the setback to the alignment of the shopfronts may have been reduced. Other than these changes the building is unusually intact at street level by comparison with other examples. Overall the building is of very high integrity.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The 1950s saw the development of the modern multi-story office building in Melbourne, often built for insurance companies or finance companies, or for professional offices. From this time through to the 1970s, the Post-War Modernist style enjoyed widespread popularity, particularly for high-rise commercial buildings in the City of Melbourne. Reinforced concrete frames provided the structural

systems, allowing the façade to be clad in a non-load bearing curtain wall. In early examples, curtain walls were typically fully glazed with an aluminium frame, while in later examples, precast concrete was used to create moulded and curved façade modules incorporating window openings while maintaining the rigid modular Bauhaus inspired aesthetic.

The following examples are comparable with the former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street, being of a similar use, scale, style and/or construction date.

### State-significant places

A small number of 1960s to mid 1970s buildings in the Hoddle Grid within the City of Melbourne have been assessed as being of State-level significance and are included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). These include:

- Total House, 170-90 Russell Street (Bogle & Banfield 1964-65; VHR H2329 & HO1095)
- Former Hoyts Cinema Centre, 134-44 Bourke Street (Peter Muller 1966-69)
- Victorian Government Offices, Treasury Reserve Precinct (Yuncken Freeman 1967-68 – outside the Hoddle Grid)
- Eagle House, 473 Bourke Street (Yuncken Freeman 1971-72; VHR H1807 & HO901)
- BHP House, 130-148 William Street (Yuncken Freeman 1969-72; VHR H1699 & HO767).

### Locally-significant places

As only a piece-meal evaluation of postwar buildings within the Hoddle Grid in the City of Melbourne has previously occurred, few buildings from this period are currently included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme on a permanent basis. Those that are, are generally currently included within Heritage Precincts but are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as Individual Heritage Places, as follows:

#### *Precinct Heritage Overlay*



Former Reserve Bank of Australia, 56-64 Collins Street (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1964-66) included in HO504 Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.

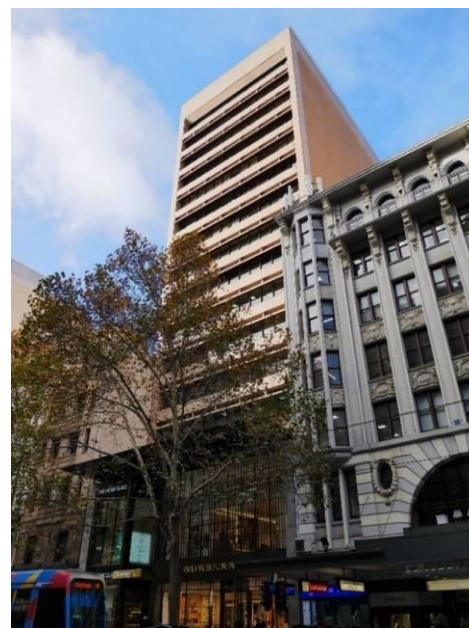


Former State Savings Bank of Victoria, 45-63 Swanston Street, (Buchan Laird & Buchan, 1974) included in HO505 Flinders Gate Precinct (Non-contributory).





Wales Corner, 221-231 Collins Street (Stephenson & Turner, 1964-66) included in HO502 The Block Precinct (fronting Collins Street) & HO506 (fronting Swanston Street) Collins East Precinct as a Contributory place.



Former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Building, 251-257 Collins Street, (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 19741-73 included in HO502 The Block Precinct (fronting Collins Street) & HO506 (fronting Flinders Lane) (Non-contributory).

One individual heritage place recently included in a site-specific Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis is the Scottish Amicable Building, 128-146 Queen Street (Yuncken Freeman, 1966) (HO1213):



Scottish Amicable Building, 128-146 Queen Street

#### *Other examples*

Despite the demolition of many 1960s and 1970s multi-storey commercial buildings in the City of Melbourne, a number of fine and highly representative examples of this building type that are not currently included in the Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis have been retained with sufficient integrity to demonstrate this class of place. These buildings clearly illustrate the advancement of construction techniques from the 1960s through to the mid 1970s and demonstrate the broad range of design approaches of the period. The podiums of the majority of these places have been modified at street level. Examples include:



Former RACV Club, 111-129 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1961) (Interim HO1068)



Former Australia Pacific House, 136-144 Exhibition Street (McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, 1975-78)



Royal Insurance Group Building, 430-442 Collins Street, (Yuncken Freeman, 1965) (Interim HO1010)



Office Building, 516-520 Collins Street (architect unknown, c1974)



Former Guardian Building, 454-456 Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1960-61)



Former South British Insurance Company Ltd Building, 155-161 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1961-62)





Former State Savings Bank, 258-264 Little Bourke Street (Meldrum & Partners, 1961)



MLA Building, 308-336 Collins Street (Stephenson & Turner, 1963)



Royal Mail House, 255-267 Bourke Street (D Graeme Lumsden, 1963)



Former Sleigh Corner Building, 158-164 Queen Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1964)



The Former Houston Building, 184-192 Queen Street (E & G Kollé & Associates, 1965)



AMP Tower and St James Building Complex, 527-555 Bourke Street (Skidmore Owings & Merrill in association with Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1965-69)



Former Dalgety House, 457-471 Bourke Street  
(Peddle Thorp & Walker, 1966-68)



Former State Saving Bank of Victoria, 233-243 Queen Street  
(Godfrey & Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb, 1967-68)



Former Legal & General House, 375-383 Collins Street  
(B Evans, Murphy, Berg & Hocking, 1967)



Former AMP Building, 344-350 Collins Street (Godfrey  
& Spowers, Hughes Mewton and Lobb, 1966-68)



Equitable House, 335-349 Little Collins Street  
(unknown architect, 1968)



Former Australia-Netherlands House, 468-478 Collins Street  
(Meldrum & Partners with Peddle Thorp Walker, 1968-70)





Former Methodist Church Centre, 130-134 Little Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, 1966-67)



Cowan House, 457-469 Little Collins Street (E & G Kelle, 1969)



Lonsdale Exchange, 447-553 Lonsdale Street (Commonwealth Department of Works, 1969)



Former Dillingham Estates House, 114-128 William Street (Yuncken Freeman, 1976) (Interim HO1180)



Former Bryson Centre, 174-192 Exhibition Street (Perrot Lyon Timlock & Kesa, 1970-72)



Former Commonwealth Banking Corporation Building, 359-373 Collins Street (Bates Smart & McCutcheon, c1972-75)



Nubrick House, 269-275 William Street (Buchan Laird & Buchan, 1972)



Office Building, 178-188 William Street (McIntyre McIntyre & Partners, 1972-73)



Former National Bank of Australasia Stock Exchange Branch, 85-91 Queen Street (Meldrum & Partners, 1973)



Former MLC Building, 303-317 Collins Street (Demaine, Russell, Trundle, Armstrong & Orton, c1970-1973)



Office Building, 589-603 Bourke Street (Peddle Thorp de Preu, 1973-75)

### Analysis

The former Law Department's Building at 221-231 Queen Street is comparable to a number of central Melbourne buildings included – or recommended for inclusion – in the HO. In particular, the subject building demonstrates how some designers used the potential of precast concrete to create moulded and curved façade modules incorporating window openings while maintaining the rigid modular Bauhaus inspired aesthetic. In this respect there are not many comparative examples in central Melbourne with sufficient integrity to demonstrate these characteristics in their original condition. Comparable examples are the Royal Insurance Group building at 430-442 Collins Street (interim HO1010) and Equitable House at 335-349 Little Collins Street (recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review). These buildings all demonstrate the use of repetitive non-loadbearing precast concrete modules to achieve a three-dimensional depth to their facades, although in a much more rectilinear and much less curvaceous aesthetic. A more direct comparison would be with the former National Bank of Australasia Stock Exchange Branch building at 85-91 Queen Street (Recommended as individually significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review), although unlike the largely intact street level of 221-231 Queen Street, the lower levels at 85-91 Queen Street have been altered. The subject building is unusually intact at street level by comparison with other examples.

**ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

✓	<b>CRITERION A</b> Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).
	<b>CRITERION B</b> Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).
	<b>CRITERION C</b> Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).
✓	<b>CRITERION D</b> Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).
✓	<b>CRITERION E</b> Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).
	<b>CRITERION F</b> Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)
	<b>CRITERION G</b> 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).
	<b>CRITERION H</b> Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).



**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**Ungraded

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**Central City Heritage  
Review 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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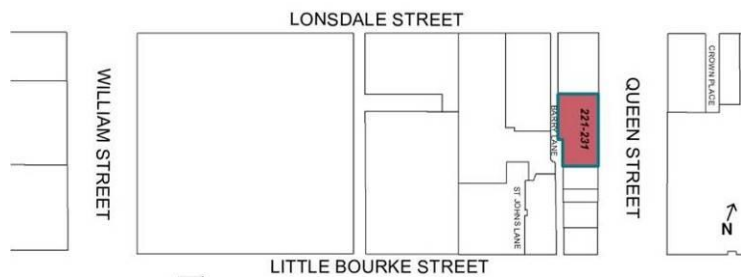


## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Heritage Place:** Former Law  
Department's Building



**PS ref no:** HOXXXX



### 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)

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**Primary source**

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