

--

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

Compiled by: Dr JJ Bruwer, 2002-07-29 JJ Bruwer ©

NAME OF PLACE: City Hall

Previous/alternative name/s : Gauteng Provincial Legislature

LOCATION: Street : Rissik
 Street number : 43
 Stand number : 5110 (previously 13)
 Block number : J

ZONING: Current use/s : Municipal
 Previous use/s : Municipal

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Four to five storeys; one basement level.

Van Der Waal describes the building as follows: "True to the Beaux Arts mode, the exterior of the City Hall expresses 'marche' – progress, the succession of mass by another. Thus the lateral facades, which cover nearly two blocks, were grouped in staggered masses. This gives the eastern façade (with the tower) a narrower and more dynamic aspect than that of the broader west façade. In true classicist style, the facades are vertically articulated in three sections: a ponderously conceived base, a more sculptured middle section with columns or pilasters, followed by an attic with heavy mouldings to round off the whole. The calculated symmetry and disciplined design of each façade imparts a cool and businesslike but at the same time impressive aspect to the whole, which is reinforced by the application in isolation of archeologically correct ornamentation. Thus the building makes a powerfully communicative statement at a formal level, which excludes all human emotion, participation or questioning. No wonder the Beaux Arts was one of the most effective instruments of the British Empire's propaganda apparatus. Moreover, it should be remembered that in South Africa buildings designed in the Beaux Arts mode also made a local statement in favour of unity brought about by the unification of the four colonies in 1910...Because this was an important public building, a great deal of attention was devoted to the interior finish of the City Hall. The main lobby in Rissik Street was finished in marble while the hall itself was decorated with rich classicist relief's in plaster. ...Curiously, however, with the exception of the unpretentious main entrance in the

President Street façade, the hall itself was not reflected in the exterior of the building. Neither were the minor halls.”

Some of the rooms are lavishly decorated in marble, mosaics and wood panelling. Although acoustically not very successful, the main hall has a good feeling of ‘theatre’ and is decorated in plaster, gilt and woodwork.

Refer also to GENERAL NOTES.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

External

Walls : brickwork clad with sawn border stone (rondsteen) from the Free State, so-called “Flatpan Freestone”.

Roof : hipped, partially flat; red tiles; partly cement and partly corrugated iron. An interesting feature of the work is that the original green roofing tiles were made by hand in a Spanish village which was destroyed during the Civil War. The new building is roofed by very high quality Pretoria tiles of the same design.

Windows:

Internal

Walls : internal plastering; timbering (interior) of hall and mayoral chamber of Mahogany; oak in council chamber and committee rooms; teak in offices of departmental heads.

Floor : hall (Rissik Street) of marble and mosaic; American cork in the former councillors’ waiting room and the revenue hall.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

During 1937, two storeys were added to building; the tower was taken down and reconstructed.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the open space between the City Hall and the Rissik Street Post Office was developed as part of the Civic Spine development. A fountain with obelisks were constructed in this area, i.e. in the centre of Rissik Street. The original planting in front of the City Hall was replaced with new paving, and with two Palm trees flanking the area of the entrance to the City Hall off Rissik Street.

In a report “Revamped city hall wins wide praise” in Business Day, 5 April 1995, it was reported that alterations to the building included a new debating chamber that could accommodate 100 seats. The old Selborne Hall was selected for this. Not only had the Selborne Hall to be extended, it also had to be refurbished to accommodate the new debating chamber. The old sprung floor had to make way for a new concrete slab, which was positioned 1m lower to allow space for the increase in legislature members. To accommodate new communication and electrical cables connecting the north and south service riser shafts, a 47m

tunnel was excavated manually under the existing basement. A new air-conditioning system was installed and approximately 100 existing units were removed from the 80-year old lower level windows. The windows then had to be rebuilt, which was a specialised task due to the age of the windows and the fact that they had been imported originally.

INTEGRITY:

The 1937 addition negatively affected the original design proportions but this is not of detrimental influence to the building. (RAU Report, June 1976)

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

Hawke & McKinlay

(Building contractor: MCA Meischke, who built the Rissik Street Post Office in 1897 and was one of the contractors for the Union Buildings in Pretoria)

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

On plan : 1910
Completed : February 1912 – December 1914

BUILDING STYLE:

The style of the building is Edwardian Baroque, while the portico and tower with Ionic columns and half-domed entrance show the influence of classical neo Renaissance in the architecture. It is an example of English municipal architecture as opposed to the post office building which represents the architecture of Europe.

G.M. van der Waal, 1971: "Four storey building in 'Imperialistic style'. Conservative application of neo-Baroque principals and decorations. All facades characterised by large colonnade. Main entrance in eastern façade, and accentuated by heavy tower and portico.

BUILDING TYPE:

Formerly City Hall and municipal offices. Currently Provincial Legislature building.

ENVIRONMENT:

"Teenoor die Rissikstraat- Poskantoor vorm dit 'n treffende stilistiese teëwig, en die park/plein tussen die twee geboue besit 'n hoë omgewingswaarde." (RAU Report, June 1976)

Not only is the City Hall Complex, Johannesburg's first city hall and municipal offices designed specifically for this purpose, but together with the Rissik Street Post Office, by which it is stylistically and historically strikingly counterbalanced, it forms part of one of Johannesburg's most important building complexes.

"The confined space of the City Hall" according to Van Der Waal, "in the eastern portion of Market Square strikes one immediately. The eastern façade with the main entrance is separated from the high façade of the Rissik Street Post Office by a very small square, while those in Market and President Streets cannot come into their own owing to the confined space."

In commenting on the Civic Spine project (1989-91), Herbert Prins stated as follows: "A major road – Rissik Street – passes between the City Hall and Rissik Street Post Office and divides the space. The architects have deflected the road around a fountain on the east-west axis of the space. This device seems to minimize the division of the urban space by a traffic route through it. The relationship of the buildings on all sides of the square has been maintained. No damage has been done to the relationship between the Post Office, the Town Hall or the buildings on the northern and southern sides. The buildings form the walls of the urban room. In short, the changes made have enhanced the architectural qualities and historical character of the place. I question the need for some of the alterations made to the walls and steps immediately adjacent to the east entrance of the City Hall and the appropriateness of the obelisks...my reservations relate more to the detailing of the elements and their close proximity to the Post Office than to the use of forms which some critics have found to be alien to our culture and environment."

CONDITION:

Good.

URGENT ACTION:

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

In a letter during 1977 from the City Secretary to the NMC, the latter was informed of extensive recent renovations done to the Hall to improve acoustics . Mention was also made of a proposal to reconstruct(sic.) the organ. Lastly, mentioned was made of the necessity to effect renovations to the Selborne and Duncan Hall in order to improve ventilation and air-conditioning system. The NMC subsequently indicated (in 1978) that it would be prepared to allow the former City Council (hereafter the City Council) a free hand in respect of proposed alterations to certain internal spaces (to be agreed-upon between the two parties) that might be necessary from time to time.

From a meeting between members of the former City Council Management Committee and representatives from the NMC held on 20 April 1978, it was clear that the city administrators were not in favour of a NMC proposal to formally protect the building. Councillor J.F. Oberholzer stated at this meeting that "the City Council would not change the façade of the 'City Hall' and would preserve the Council Chamber in its present form but needed time to time to make internal alterations...Once the building was proclaimed as a national monument the City Council would lose the right to make alterations."

In 1979, the City Council however agreed to declaration on condition that (1) it would not require the approval of the NMC w.r.t. the installation of security apparatus in the offices, storage rooms, toilets, internal passages, as well as the Revenue Hall and the Selborne and

Duncan Hall. It was agreed that the NMC's approval would be sought with respect to proposed changes to the exterior; features such as the main entrance and the stairs leading to the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms, the Mayor's Parlour, the Mayoress's Dining Room and rooms situated in the western wing section of the building; the Gallery on the first floor near the main entrance and the City Hall itself; as well as the adjoining boxes, lobbies and stairs.

Later during September 1979, the NMC was informed by the City Council of its intention to renovate "or, if this is uneconomical" replace the two passenger lifts at the Market Street entrance to the City Hall, "which have been in use for approximately 40 years...are now obsolete and do not meet modern safety standards." The NMC did not object to this but suggested that everything should be done not to replace but to restore the lifts.

In 1980 the City Council proposed to replace the existing Coat of Arms at the eastern entrance to the City Hall NMC. After authorising this, the NMC was subsequently informed (April 1981) by the City Engineer's Department that measures had been taken for repairs to be carried out 'in situ'.

During 1982, the NMC approved the proposed installation of additional air-conditioning units in offices.

In June 1987, the NMC was informed by the City Council of alterations carried-out to the counters in the Rates Hall, and to the area north of the Rates Hall, as well as painting and re-carpeting of offices on the second floor.

Permission for the proposed installation between the pedestals to the columns on the east façade of the building / repairs to totally eroded stonework with new insets of granite at paving level was obtained from the NMC during March 1990.

The NMC on hearing of work being proceeded with to the area in front of the City Hall, including the steps and the podium, i.e. the 'square' between the City Hall and the Rissik Street Post Office, requested clarification from the City Council. Plans were then submitted by the latter and approved by the NMC.

In July 1990, discussions took place between the Architects Fassler Kamstra & Holmes and the NMC with respect to various recycling proposals, e.g. demolition of later additions in order to restore the courtyard spaces, additional gallery floor for the banquet area, tunnelling to create access to the Harry Hofmeyr parking complex etc. After subsequent discussions in 1993, the NMC approved a submission by Fassler Kamstra & Holmes, titled "Johannesburg City Hall Accommodation of new Regional Government General Scope of Work Authorities required".

In a letter of November 1993 to City of Johannesburg, the NMC reminded the former of its obligation to obtain the necessary approvals for repairs that were being undertaken to the building.

A year later, representatives from the NMC inspected the building and expressed various concerns, i.e. the parquet floors needed to be restored and not replaced, water leakage problems should be investigated, to install an alarm system (not burglar bars), to do something to the air-conditioning units that were damaging the sandstone, urgency to repair/replace leaking down pipes resulting in damage being caused to the sandstone.

On being approached with regard to the planned use of the building as the seat of the Gauteng Provincial Government Legislature, the NMC during March 1994, expressed its full support for this development. At that stage, further discussions were held between the NMC and Fassler Kamstra & Holmes and alteration proposals were submitted. The NMC thereupon approved plans pertaining to the improvement of acoustics in the Council Chamber; installation of new plaster of Paris tiled ceilings to accommodate new air-conditioning arrangements etc.

During July 1994, NMC approval was given for the proposed alterations to the Selborne Hall (Proposal submitted by Fassler Kamstra & Holmes: "...everything that could possibly be kept without inhibiting the functional purposes of the hall should be retained: that the ceiling and the floor could be removed; that the panelling and the doors should be kept..." etc.

May 1995 – NMC approval for repairs to roofs, parapet walls and sills

NMC approval was given in June 1995 for the proposed application of White Translucent cling shield film to the insides of the window panes of the northern side of Selborne Hall and the installation of a roller shutter door in the security cubicle of the vehicular tunnel.

In December 1996, the NMC approved the (1) proposed installation of a canopy at the President Street entrance to the building (was to be a free-standing structure) (2) proposed refurbishment of the courtyard and (3) proposed establishment of a recreational area in the building next to the courtyard by the removal of the existing temporary walls (provided the ceilings would be reinstated to the original mouldings).

At a meeting in July 1998 between the NMC and the Gauteng Provincial Legislature's Internal Arrangements Committee, the main points discussed were: the enclosing of the building with a fence; and the future of the Rissik Street Post Office viz-a-viz the City Hall. The NMC agreed to favourably consider an application with respect to the proposed fencing.

In August 1999, NMC approval was given for the proposed installation of a safety rail and cat walk on roof of the building.

During March 2000, the NMC authorised the proposed installation of door opening to the courtyard.

PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Heritage Resources Act, 1999)

General protection:	Section 34(1) structure/s	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal protection:	provincial heritage site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	national heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	provisional protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
	heritage area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	listed in provincial heritage resources register	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

FORMER PROTECTION STATUS:

In 1970 the NMC decided to propose to the Johannesburg City Council that the building be declared as a national monument. The City Council was however not in favour of this proposal. It was felt that the building was not in its original condition anymore as various alterations had been effected to the building over many years. It was also felt that declaration would hamper future maintenance work. Following an agreement between the two parties in regard to dealing with alterations in future (see ALTERATIONS), the City Council finally agreed to declaration. The entire eastern portion of Market Square with the City Hall Complex thereon, was consequently declared as a national monument in 1979.

1979 – Government Notice No. 2250 of 12 October 1979

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Crown Grant 517/1910 (T18327/78) dated 12 October 1910.
(T18327/1978 City of Johannesburg)

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE

HISTORY:

When Johannesburg was proclaimed a township in 1886, local government came within the jurisdiction of only one official, viz. the mining commissioner. A sanitary board was established in 1887 and in 1897, it was replaced by a town council. The latter initially consisted of 12 councillors, but this number was later increased to 24.

The Sanitary Board and the Town Council never had a suitable venue for meetings and prior to 1901, both gathered in the Henwood Building. Afterwards the Town Council met in the Corporation Building and later, in a wood and iron building known as the Tin Temple.

An amount of £125 000 was consequently budgeted in 1909 for the erection of a city hall and municipal offices on the eastern half of Market Square. At that time it was the largest square in South Africa where trading had taken place since 1886 and the Town Council started negotiations with a view to acquiring Market Square. One half was bought from the Government who donated the other half, provided a city hall complex was built thereon.

In September 1902 the Town Council organized a competition for the design of such a complex in which only architects residing in the country could participate. Leonard Stokes, Vice-President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was appointed judge, and in March 1910 the firm of Hawke & McKinlay of Cape Town were appointed as architects.

The foundation stone was laid on 29 November 1910 by the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn. This stone stood in splendid isolation for some three years before the erection of the building could begin.

On 17 February 1912 the tender for the superstructure (the foundations were built under a separate contract) was awarded to M.C.A. Meischke. The city hall complex was designed in a grandiose Edwardian Baroque style and was built of 'Flatpan' sandstone quarried in the Orange Free State beyond Vereeniging.

The Market Building, which according to Van Der Waal, "invested the square (i.e. Market Square) with some colour", was demolished in 1915 when the city hall was completed. This significantly changed the aspect of the eastern portion of the square. Previously the open space of the square gave perspective to the buildings in the wall of the square. Now the eastern side was bereft of its spatial character. A small park was laid out on the western portion of the square after 1915, but the part occupied by the former Market Building was converted into a tram terminus which effectively prevented a connection between the City Hall

and the park. "In fact" according to Van Der Waal, "the non-functional rear aspect of the City Hall faced to the west, while the main entrance with its domed tower faced a small square opposite the Rissik Street Post Office. This square was far too small for community meetings while the 'official' aspect of the City Hall's façade with its massive columns was too overpowering for this little square to develop into an intimate little nook. The architects of the time had a great deal to say about the location of the City Hall. The Association of Transvaal Architects came out strongly in favour of a position on the western portion of Market Square, so as to ensure a substantial city square between the Post Office and the City Hall itself."

The new City Hall was officially opened on 7 April 1915 by Lord Buxton, the then Governor-General, who opened the front door with a golden key presented by Mr Meischke, the builder. The building remained open for the following two days for inspection by the public and thousands of people walked through the building. It is interesting to note that the building was used for the first time on the evening of 26 January 1915, i.e. prior to the official opening ceremony, when delegates from Belgium spoke at a public meeting in support of the Allies in the Great War.

A rather special aspect of the City Hall has always been the organ, which was erected by Norman and Beard Ltd. of Norwich from specifications by Dr Alfred Hollins, the blind organist from St. George's United Free Church in Edinburgh. The organ was opened on 4 March 1916 with a recital by Alfred Hollins.

Refer to GENERAL NOTES for interesting description of building shortly after its completion.

On 5 September 1928, Johannesburg attained city status. The proclamation was read out by the Administrator of the Transvaal, the Hon. J.H. Hofmeyr in front of a crowd of many thousands who had gathered in front of the City Hall. The Proclamation was then presented to the Mayor, Councillor W.H. Port, who received it on behalf of the City. According to Shorten, the residents of Johannesburg commemorated the event with six days of festivities.

In the years that followed, the city hall complex came to cater for the administrative, cultural and ceremonial needs of the City. Its Edwardian Baroque rhetoric remains a visible symbol of civic dignity even though a hemmed-in site deprives it of the ceremonial approaches appropriate to its functions.

In 1937 the addition of two storeys harmed the building's good proportions, but it remains a symbol of elegance and dignity.

The following comes from an article published in *The South African Builder*, June 1940: With reference to the adding of two floors: "It was decided that the task should be entrusted to the architects who had designed the original building. The contract was signed on 12 November 1937. The foundations proved so strong and so well built that, except in a few minor places, the additional two storeys could be supported without extra strengthening. The steel roof members made by Dorman Long 25 years ago were in perfect condition, and have been re-used. In planning the extensions the architects were hampered in many respects by the necessity for following the existing lay-out. They had no alternative, but to continue the Renaissance style of architecture, and it was felt that the additional height would give added dignity to the building, especially since the surrounding buildings have become much higher than was the case when the original structure was completed in 1915. The original tower has been incorporated in the extended structure. The architect evolved a scheme for lifting this tower the necessary 30 feet, but no insurance assessment was available and it was therefore necessary to pull it to pieces stone by stone and to rebuild it stone by stone. It was also decided that the Council Chamber and Council Chamber suite were not large enough. These rooms were therefore enlarged and above them was constructed a staff refreshment room surmounted by a roof garden. Over the extension of the Rates Hall, which was the largest office space in the building, has been built a luncheon parlour for the Mayor where distinguished visitors can be entertained. The provision of refreshments for large numbers of people in the City and Selborne Halls was considered to be inadequate and quite out-of-date. A very fine

kitchen and a refreshment room where liquor can be served have therefore been added, and are capable of catering for at least 3,000 people. Thus the City Hall and the Selborne Hall can each be let and served with dull dinners."

April 1947 was a red carpet occasion when the British Royal Family visited South Africa. The family made many public appearances, one of which was on a flag-bedecked dais in front of the City Hall. The Johannesburgers turned up in their thousands, making it a most fondly remembered occasion, with the bands struck up martial airs for the march past of 20 000 bemedalled ex-servicemen and women.

The passing of Field-Marshal Jan Smuts in September 1950 was in contrast a very sad and sombre day in Johannesburg. A large crowd paid homage to the former statesman by attending a memorial service in front of the City Hall. "There the purple-draped pillars and the single, solemn toll of the great clock of the Rissik Street Post Office which marked the passing of each minute, combined to impart an added note of solemnity to the deeply-moving proceedings..." (Shorten)

Many years later on 29 September 1966, the first State President of the Republic of South Africa, Charles Robberts Swart, entered the Council Chambers in the City Hall where he received the Freedom of the City at a special meeting of the Council. Acknowledging the honour, Swart referred to Johannesburg's rapid development since its founding only eight decades earlier, and the considerable contribution the City had made to the cultural and material well-being of South Africa.

The Star 10 November 1987 ("What ever happened to the City Hall?"): Through many decades the City Hall was a popular gathering place for the citizens, to the annoyance of many, and during the 1950s, "...political protest meetings...the Government ordered that there were to be no more gatherings in front of the City Hall...and the city council itself began to deliberately clutter the area with small disruptive brick built planters." Gone were the days when the Salvation Army attracted hundreds of black people, the crowd mourning the death of Lord Kitchener in June 1916, the biggest crowd ever, 25 000 people, celebrated VJ with Field Marshall Smuts and "...A couple of years later thousands cheered the Royal Family there and later, Field Marshall Montgomery was given a roaring welcome in front of the City Hall." In 1985 "...the Central Business District Association and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce appealed to the city council to consider a plan to put Rissik Street's traffic underground...and the pave the area from the steps across to the Post Office...The counsel's management committee turned the idea down flat. A councillor said a public square in Johannesburg was not desirable."

With the first democratic elections of April 1994, a new era dawned upon the City Hall. This was reported on as follows in The Star of 31 March 1994: "Builders will be hard at work in the Johannesburg City Hall over the Easter weekend in an effort to ready the refurbished section for the first PWV provincial government on May 1. Johannesburg management committee chairman Ian Davidson said treasury workers had cleared out of their city hall offices and that construction would start at the weekend. This week the TEC nominated cities where regional legislatures will convene their first sittings within seven days of the election. In naming Johannesburg as host to the PWV legislature's first meeting, the TEC has thrown its weight behind the ANC-Johannesburg City Council deal to make Johannesburg the regional capital.

The PWV legislature will sit in the city hall's old council chamber, which will be enlarged to accommodate the 86 newly elected provincial representatives."

This historic development was also reported on in the Sunday Times Metro, 24 April 1994: "A 30-year dream was realised this week as a R20,6-million project to restore Johannesburg's grand old city hall was rubberstamped by the council...Mira Fassler-Kamstra and her partner Marcus Holmes have spent 10 years learning everything they can about a building they both love...Corridors silent since the early 70s will once again echo to the footsteps of top policymakers...It's a beautiful old building which has fallen into neglect. Breathing life into it is

very exciting. The real challenge is turning it into a modern, state-of-the-art office complex without damaging it historically.' "

The task of turning the City Hall into a fully function legislature facility proved enormous and it was clear however, that not everything was going to be smooth sailing. With time running out and costs continuing to escalate, the Sunday Times Metro, 3 July 1994 noted as follows: "This week, the provincial legislature's internal arrangements committee discussed the possibility of dumping the council chamber – which would seat 86 legislators with virtually no public gallery – in favour of the city hall's larger Selborne Hall. Should this be agreed to it could lead to the spending of a further R4-million on refurbishment."

The Johannesburg City Council's management committee according to a report in the Sunday Times Metro, 17 July 1994, "narrowly won a vote of confidence this week to continue revamping the City Hall for the PWV legislature, even though it is set to cost R40-million – more than double the original estimate...that if the renovations were held up and the PWV legislature could not move in as agreed, there was a possibility the ANC would choose a site elsewhere."

Almost a month later the Sunday Times Metro of 14 August 1994 reported as follows: "Renovations at the City Hall – the PWV government's new home – will be finished only in January, six months later than first agreed...City council strategic development director Ian Symon has promised to meet the revised deadline and to keep within the project's budget, which has doubled to more than R44-million."

In a publication of the Architectural Products & News, dated 9-10-94 the situation was summed up as follows: "A high profile refurbishment project in the heart of Johannesburg's CBD has been accelerated, following this city's designation as the regional capital of the PWV. On completion, the Johannesburg City Hall will have been remodelled to accommodate the PWV legislature and auxiliary services staff in style....Following ad hoc additions made to the city hall over the years, a first priority was to return the building to its original structure...Fassler, Kamstra & Holmes Architects specified internal finishes that would create a 30's era look combined with modern day conveniences. This new look is being implemented throughout the building except for the main hall which is not undergoing any remodelling at the moment. Externally, the seven storeyed façade is also to remain untouched, a result of its national monument status."

In October 1994 there was controversy over the colours 'of colonial opulence' used to decorate the interior of the building. Mr Trevor Fowler wanted the renovated City Hall to rather 'reflect the transition from colonialism to the present', using a plain colour scheme to tone down the building's elitist past. Another bone of contention was the liberal use of gold paint throughout the building. NMC decided not to get involved in this controversy. The Fassler Kamstra & Holmes team won the 1994 *Dulux Creative Colour Award* for Commercial Interior Design for the changes to the interior of the building.

After eight months work on City Hall, The Star, 8 November 1994 ("City Hall fine print not finalised") made reference to a new bone of contention: "The PWV legislature has not yet signed a lease to occupy City Hall...despite having moved in over the weekend...Mr Fowler said issues such as the length of the lease and maintenance and repairs still had to be sorted out."

In the Sunday Times, 27 November 1994 ("No rent for R50m PWV Parliament"), the following was stated: "For a year teams of decorators and builders have been transforming the dilapidated old building into a R50-million showcase...Now MPs have decided to plaster the walls and floors of the dining area with mud, to give an 'ethnic' feel to the Victorian building."

Sunday Times Metro, 22 January 1995 ("City Hall threatens Joburg's dream"): Originally, R20,6 million was set aside in March 1994 to breathe new life into the building. Then, in July, another R19,3-million was allocated for this. This week the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council received a recommendation that a further R5,7-million be allocated to the refurbishment. Total therefore – R45,6-million.

The Star, 3 October 1995 ("City Hall refurbishment costs up"): This report mentioned the Gauteng Legislature's displeasure of the fact that the refurbishment project was still not completed. Mention was made that total project costs now came to R50m-million.

Finally, after a year and seven months work on City Hall, the Saturday Star 14 October 1995 reported as follows: "For those who felt inconvenienced and did not understand the reason behind the cording-off Commissioner, Market, President and Pritchard streets at lunch-time yesterday, the occasion was to mark the official inauguration of the Gauteng, government's taking over of the Johannesburg City Hall and the Rissik Street post office as its new home. Addressing hundreds of people who attended the ceremony, Premier Tokyo Sexwale said his cabinet had decided to stay in the city because 'Johannesburg is the symbol of South Africa's economic activity, the engine of productivity, the heartland of commercial viability and the hub of South Africa's Financial services'. The provincial government is to establish regional offices in Pretoria, Soweto, Alexandra and the Vaal Triangle."

In closing the history of City Hall for the millennium, the Sunday Times, 18 November 2001, ("Sold For A 'Measly' R20-Million") described the selling of City Hall as follows: "Joburg residents are hopping mad after the city bosses sold the city hall to the Gauteng Legislature – for what they say is a measly R20-million. The council has also let go of the Dr Beyers Naude Square) and the Harry Hofmeyr parking garage." Councillor Mike Moriarty was quoted as follows – "Given that the city has failed to maintain the building properly, this is the best deal we will get."

GENERAL NOTES:

Shortly after the completion of the building under the supervision of the Town Hall Special Committee, interesting information was published in respect of the new building. The following is a selection of extracts of what was published in this regard: "Excavations. The excavation contract was carried out by Mr. P. Jansen, and was completed within a period of three months. Where much rocky ground was at first expected the soil was found so soft in parts that the excavations were increased from seven to thirteen feet...The Building... form two distinct portions, the Municipal Offices on the higher part of the Site, with their main frontage facing the Post Office; and the Town Hall on the lower part with a main frontage to Harrison Street. The Elevations are Renaissance in style, the Ionic order predominating. The caps and other enrichments being richly carved...The whole of the external walls are built in Freestone from the Flatpan Quarries, O.F.S., and the roofs covered with Spanish green glazed tiles. Internally, marble has been largely used for the wall decorations for the columns and staircase of the principal entrance to the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber, and for the counters, etc., in the Rates Hall. The ceilings of the Town Hall, Reception Rooms, Entrance Halls, etc., are embellished with modelled plaster enrichments...The floors of the Municipal Offices and public Rooms are of American Maple, while those of the Entrance Halls, etc., are laid with vitreous Mosaics. The floors of the Councillors Lobby and Rates Hall are laid with American block cork paving. The metal Worker's art is well represented in the wrought iron balustrade to the Main staircase of the Municipal Offices and in the electroliers in the public rooms...The construction throughout is fire-resisting. Reinforced Concrete having been largely used for floors and roofs...The Frontages. Towards Rissik Street the building has been set back on the Site some 200 ft. from the Post Office front, and the square thus formed is laid out with a stone paved terrace, relieved by flower boxes. The lower end of Market Square beyond Harrison Street is now planted with trees and lawns, which will also take the place of the old Market Buildings...the tram lines being deviated away from Harrison Street in a wide sweep. The Main Entrance...of the Municipal Offices is from the Rissik Street Entrance; a flight of granite steps, occupying the whole length of the front, lead up to the colonnaded portico beneath the central Tower. From the Entrance vestibule, corridors to the right and left communicate with the various departments on the Ground Floor. The Offices. The large Rates Hall... is situated in the centre

of the Building immediately under the Council Chamber, and is directly accessible from the side entrances in Market Street and President Street...The large central Court yard, which gives light to the internal offices of the building...is reached through a vaulted carriage-way leading on to President Street. The Council Chamber And Committee Rooms. On the first floor and immediately over the Rates Hall are situated the Council Chamber, Committee Rooms, Councillors' Library and Councillors' Lobby, forming a self-contained suite reached by a broad flight of marble steps leading up from the main Entrance Vestibule, Rissik Street front. The central position of these rooms ensures their being cut off from all noises of traffic in surrounding streets. The Council Chamber...has a domed top lighted ceiling, ornamented with modelled plaster. The Committee Rooms are suitably finished and panelled in oak, and ornamental plaster ceilings. Facing the Post Office on this floor are the Mayor's Parlour and Town Clerk's Offices, while various other offices occupy the frontages on Market and President Streets. The Town Hall And The Selborne Hall. The Town Hall has its Main Entrance in President Street, a spacious Entrance Hall with five doors from the street giving direct access to the body of the Hall itself. On each side of the Entrance Hall staircases lead up to the Gallery floor. Corridors surround the Hall both on the main floor and upper floor, Bays opening out from the latter in the Hall in the form of projecting balconies...The organ is placed at the end of the Hall facing the entrances...On the First Floor, with separate entrance from President Street, is the Selborne Hall."

SOURCES:

Opname Historiese Geboue In Johannesburg, Second Report June 1976, Inner City, RAU

Photograph (coloured) West and North elevations ca. 1988 : NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/124

NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/A ; Johannesburg General, Vol. 1

NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/7: Johannesburg City Hall Complex, Rissik Street, Johannesburg (included in this file is an interesting photograph taken of the huge crowd in 1918 at the time of the peace celebrations at the City Hall)

Neame, L.E.: City Built On Gold, Central News Agency Limited, no date

The Star 10 November 1987 : City Hall has lost its civic function

Sunday Times Metro 24 April 1994 : New glory for old city hall

Sunday Times Metro 3 July 1994 : Price of City Hall facelift to rocket

Sunday Times Metro 3 July 1994 : Facelift's close shave

Sunday Times Metro 14 August 1994 : City Hall project 6 months behind

Saturday Star October 21 1995 : "Jo'burg parties as buildings taken over"

The Johannesburg Historical Foundation (Norwich, I ; Grant, B.L. ; Saul D) Some Historic Drives & Walks of Johannesburg Framic, no date

NMC File 9/2/228/68, Vol. 1-3: City Hall, Market Square, Johannesburg (this file contains extensive information with regard to the Organ)

The Market Square Of Johannesburg: Catalogue of buildings on and around the square till about 1920 (Compiled by G.M. van der Waal), Public Library, Johannesburg, 1971

Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis, The buildings of Johannesburg 1886-1940, Chris Van Rensburg Publications, 1987

South African Architectural Record, March 1948

Restorica, Summer 1991 (The Civic Spine)

Registrar of Deeds, Johannesburg

RECORDED BY:

Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.

Photographs by Chris JH Coxen (unless otherwise indicated).

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Historic Value:

- Associated with historic person, group or organisation
- Associated with historic event or activity

Architectural/Aesthetic value:

- Important example of building type
- Important example of a style or period
- Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics
- Work of a major architect or builder

Social/Spiritual/Linguistic value:

- Associated with social, spiritual, linguistic, economic or political activity
- Illustrates an historical period

Scientific/Technological value:

- Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement
- New, rare or experimental building techniques