

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

JJ Bruwer ©
Cellphone: 082 325 5823

NAME OF PLACE: [Second] YORK HOUSE



Left: Rissik Street elevation.

Top right: the building as seen from the southeast corner of Rissik and Pritchard Streets.

Second left: seen in this photo from left to right, is the *Barbican Building*, the *Price 'n Pride Building*, and the *second York House*.

Previous/alternative name/s : York Arcade

LOCATION: Street : Rissik
 Street number : 57
 Stand Number : 4613
 Previous Stand Number: 1451
 Block number : V
 GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
 Levels above street level :
 Levels below street level :
 On-site parking :

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls:

Roof:

Windows:

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

J. C. Cook & Cowen.

BUILDER:

Hubert Morisse & Company (Pty) Limited - Building Material Merchants.

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans :
Approval of plans :
Completion date :

BUILDING STYLE:

Johannesburg Modular Regionalism.

BUILDING TYPE:

Shops to street, arcade and office building.

ENVIRONMENT:

CONDITION:

Good.

URGENT ACTION:

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

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

- General protection: Section 34(1) structure/s
- Formal protection: provincial heritage site
- national heritage site
- provisional protection
- heritage area
- listed in provincial heritage resources register

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

FORMER PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Monuments Act, 1969)

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership:

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

YORK BUILDING:

"Another striking group of buildings were conceived in the same style. They were either entirely or almost completely white and also more 'poetic' in design. The *Sacke Building* (1903-4), 23 / 5 / 7 Joubert Street, the most important of these, bears a strong relationship to the German-Swiss architecture of the time, as was evident from the application of a mansard roof (unusual for Johannesburg at the time), a particular type of window (almost square), organic Jugendstil ornamentation and the distinctive shape of the tower and gables. Indeed, the senior partner of the architects who designed the building, H Kallenbach, was trained in Germany. The design of the building was derived from a German model and was never again used in the city [see also Pre-History: H-2 and H-3]...With some exceptions, like the gable of the [first] *York Building* (1898) 44 Kerk Street [and 57 Rissik], the Jugendstil or Art Nouveau was rarely applied in Johannesburg." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

OFFICES OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC, THE MAGDEBURG AND THE NORD DEUTCHE:

G.A. Leyds recalls a dark period in the history of Johannesburg: "Diering Street, Kenilworth, is named after Mr Louis Diering, a German estate financial and insurance agent, a pioneer who had his offices in Rissik Street (No. 57), opposite Lombardy House. He was highly respected, and became a burger of the Republic, and thus after the Boer War a British subject. During the 1914 – 1918 war, when German submarines had torpedoed the 'Lusitania', serious riots broke out in Johannesburg. The houses and business premises of most of the Germans were burnt to the ground; notable cases were the liquor stores of Rolfes, Nebel, and Liberman and Bellstedt & Co., the Bristol Hotel, Rissik Street, and the house of Mr Piel of Anghern and Piel's Cold Storage Works. The Germans in Johannesburg were of course greatly frightened having lost all they had and being treated as outcasts by the population, and having received no police protection at the time of the riots. For them Mr Diering organised a 'Helping Hand' Society and he became their mentor, he himself being trusted by the authorities. The German insurance companies which he represented in 1897 (the Trans-Atlantic, the Magdeburg and the Nord Deutche) are no longer in existence." (Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg).

"Johannesburg's Demand for the internment of Germans 12 May 1915. Feeling against the Germans was running high during the First World War especially after the sinking of the *Lusitania* with the subsequent loss of many lives, and many German businesses and residences were being burnt. According to the records of the fire brigade, sixty-five fires were fought between 3.25 p.m. and 12.45 p.m. on 12 and 13 May 1915. Main Street, Johannesburg was reported to have been flowing with burning whisky from a nearby alcohol depot and in Newtown the large fodder warehouses smouldered for up to three weeks as a result of these anti-German riots." (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards).

HISTORY:

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building :
Estimated cost of drainage :
Accommodation approved :
Valuation at completion :
Occupied :

Undated newspaper article: "York House Gets New Lease Of Life" - York House, one of the newer additions to Old Mutual Properties' Johannesburg portfolio, is getting a new look as the revival of the city's CBD continues apace. It is on the corner of Rissk (sic.) and Kerk streets and one of the areas earmarked for mall status is the section of Kerk Street that runs from Harrison Street up to Von Brandis Street. This process should be completed within the next 18 months. York House consists of

two wings, the first having been built more than 50 years ago and the second as recently as 1972. The original wing is an eight storey building which faces Rissik Street. The other newer half faces on to Kerk Street and is a storey higher. Old Mutual Properties bought the property two years ago and the decision to spruce up the street level façade was prompted by the likely transformation of Kerk Street into a pedestrian mall. Another motivating factor was the generation of renewed interest in the building's shopping potential. The architects responsible for the management and design work of the revamped structure were H Moross and Partners. The work entailed closing down Rissik Street entrance of the shopping mall to provide additional space for a new Wimpy restaurant and to allow for the expansion of existing shops. The remaining mall has been given a new ceiling. It is curved to create an arch-like effect and extends over the Kerk Street pavement as an attractive canopy. The 'bright and cheerful' look of the shopfronts that flank the entrance to the arcade, extends into the arcade itself. Anton Bieber, regional property manager, Johannesburg, says the revamped street façade of York House has given the building an upmarket appeal which will stand it good stead when Kerk Street becomes a pedestrian mall."

CURRENT TENANTS:

National Union Of Metalworkers Of Sa (NUMSA): PO Box 260483, Excom, 2023; Municipality, Education, State, Health And Allied Workers (MESHAWU): 7th Floor. PO Box 11307, JOHANNESBURG, 2000.

SOURCES:

For additional illustrative information, see relevant supplementary photo album in electronic format.

See SOURCES DOCUMENT for information on sources consulted with reference to this document.

RECORDED BY:

Heritage Resources Management team Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.
Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



LEWIS

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

PRICE 'N PRIDE

25 1 2004



2007 82

TOP
MAT

YOR

YORK
YORK
YORK

TORGA OP

28 9 2003

TOP
HAT
W
H
AT
W
H
AT
W
H
AT





25 1 2004