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## JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

### HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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**NAME OF PLACE: CHAMBER OF MINES BUILDING**

Previous/alternative name/s :

**LOCATION:** Street : bounded by Sauer, Marshall, Main and Hollard  
Street number : 16 Sauer  
: (66, 68, 70, 72, 74 Main; 12, 14, 16, 18 Sauer;  
: 65, 67, 69, 71, 73 Marshall; Hollard)  
Stand Number : 1220  
Previous Stand Number:  
Block number : BU  
Suburb : Marshallstown  
GIS reference :

**ZONING:** Current use/s : offices  
Previous use/s : offices

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:**

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

Completed in 1921-23, this building, the *second Chamber of Mines Building*, with its Main Entrance off Hollard Street, opposite the *BHP Billiton Building* (BV-3), constitutes an architectural and historic anchor in the Main Street Mall. The historic association of the building with one of the city's most respected mining institutions, i.e. the Chamber of Mines, makes this an extraordinary significant building.

**CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:**

Walls:

Roof:

Windows:

No original building plan/s available.

**SITE FEATURES:****ALTERATIONS:**

Extensive renovations were carried out to the building in 1954.

**INTEGRITY:**

The integrity of the building, from the point of view of both the original design and materials (original fabric), is high.

**INSCRIPTION:****ARCHITECT:**

Emley & Williamson

'...the partnership between Frank EMLEY and Frederick WILLIAMSON from around 1920 in Johannesburg. Emley was joined by Williamson on Emley's winning the competition for the design of the Main Building (or Central Block) for the University of the Witwatersrand, the first building on the new University campus. Emley's health suffered at the time the new Main Building was being designed and Williamson was responsible for much of the work. Nine of Emley and Williamson's buildings, designed mostly in the Edwardian/Beaux Arts neo-classical style, were displayed at the exhibition of Dominion and Colonial architecture held in London in 1926, among 305 South African exhibits. Emley & Williamson were elected by the Witwatersrand Master Builders Association to design the Association's Johannesburg headquarters. Their work was widely illustrated in contemporary periodicals and in subsequent publications as being representative of a particular Johannesburg style. The practice was continued by Williamson after Emley's retirement.'  
(Architects In South Africa 1780 – 1940; Draft manuscript, J Walker & G M van der Waal, 1992, HSRC, Pretoria.)

**BUILDER:****CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

Date on plans :  
Approval of plans :  
Completion date : 1921-3

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Art Deco – Monolithic.

Architectural Merit, Artwork of Merit, Workmanship of Merit: "This building is one of the Art Deco Buildings Johannesburg is famous for. The stepped façade allowing for sun angles is a fine example of form and function coming together in an artistically resolved way. The decorative cast concrete panels are spectacular."  
(Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Offices.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

The building contributes significantly to the quality of its environment.

**CONDITION:**

The exterior of the building appears to be in good condition. (CJMB)

**URGENT ACTION:**

**SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:****PROTECTION STATUS:** (under National Heritage Resources Act, 1999)

General protection:	Section 34(1) structure/s	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Formal protection:	provincial heritage site	<input 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:** (under National Monuments Act, 1969)**NOTES:****DEEDS INFORMATION:**

Original ownership: Chamber of Mines of South Africa

**PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:****HISTORY:**

The history of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines dates from 1887, when the first Chamber was established in the *Central Hotel* in Commissioner Street. The 'modern' Chamber, however, was only founded, two years later. According to Neil Fraser, the "founding companies of the Chamber read like a 'who's who of Joburg history' - The Corner House (later Rand Mines and now Randgold and Exploration Limited) representing Wernher, Beit, London and led by H Eckstein and JB Taylor (a must-read is the recently published 'Lucky Jim - Memoirs of a Randlord' drawn from JB Taylor's manuscripts and notes which gives a fascinating account of the events and people involved in the founding gold mining industry but also covers a much wider spectrum); Consolidated Gold Fields (later Gold Fields of South Africa) led by Cecil Rhodes; the Robinson Group led by JB Robinson and the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company (now JCI Limited) led by Barney Barnato."

[http://www.joburg.org.za/citichat/2004/feb23\\_citichat.stm](http://www.joburg.org.za/citichat/2004/feb23_citichat.stm)

The *first Chamber of Mines Building* stood in Market Street, opposite Market Square.

Below: Doran, I.: Johannesburg, A Thomson (advertising and business) Publication, December 1978.

## Chamber of Mines – clearing house for expert know-how

The Chamber of Mines of South Africa is a unique co-operative organisation, acting in the common interest of its members. It acts as a kind of clearing house for technical and expert information of all kinds. And it can do this more efficiently and with more co-operation, probably, than any other similar organisation anywhere, because of the traditions and experience built up through non-competitive marketing in the gold mining industry.

Co-operation within the gold mining industry, through the Chamber of Mines, for example, facilitated the speedy establishment of the companion uranium industry at the end of World War II, when an investigation proved that many of the ore-bodies mined for gold contained uranium too. All the major uranium producers are members of the Chamber.

The story of the Chamber begins towards the end of 1887, the year after the discovery of gold-bearing deposits on the farm Langlaagte, a few miles west of present-day Johannesburg.

The first Chamber was formed by an enterprising band of men on the new gold field. Membership comprised mining men in their personal capacities rather than the company representation of today.

The Chamber became the mouthpiece of people, transplanted from all parts of the world, who had come to live in the sprawling mining camps of tents and shacks.

After the initial burst of activity, however, public spirit waned, the Chamber became moribund and might have disappeared from the scene had it not been for a number of far-sighted mining men who re-constituted it as the Witwatersrand Chamber of Mines in 1889. This was the real start of the Chamber as we know it today.

Through the contributions made to it by the mining institutions, the Chamber carries out on-going research, which is not confined to the mining field only but is of benefit to such areas as science, medicine and engineering.



The Chamber of Mines Headquarters, Johannesburg

### GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	:	no original building plan/s available.
Estimated cost of drainage	:	
Accommodation approved	:	
Valuation at completion	:	
Occupied	:	

### PREVIOUS TENANT/S:

CURRENT TENANT/S:



Above: "The Johannesburg skyline, 1952: (left) the old Marshall Square police headquarters; (centre) the new Chamber of Mines; and (distant right) Escom House. (From Chipkin, C.M.: *Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society 1880s – 1960s*).

#### **SOURCES:**

##### Published Sources

Chipkin, C.M.: *Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society 1880s – 1960s*, David Philip Publishers, Cape Town, 1993.

The Rand-Pretoria Directory 1954 (Comprising Complete Alphabetical And Trades Directories of Johannesburg, Pretoria And Reef Towns), Cape Times Limited, Cape Town, 1954.

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

##### Unpublished Sources

Plans records of surveyed buildings, Marshallstown and City of Johannesburg: Archives, Building Control, Development Management, City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

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Van Der Waal, G-M.: *Die Karakter Van Die Argitektuur In Die Binnestad Van Johannesburg Tot 1920*, unpublished thesis, RAU, November 1972.

Van Der Waal, G-M.: *Die Boukuns van Johannesburg, 1886 – 1940*, unpublished doctoral thesis, RAU, November 1984.

##### Newspapers, Periodicals (including Journals)

Doran, I.: *Johannesburg, A Thomson* (advertising and business) Publication, December 1978.

##### Internet sources

[http://www.joburg.org.za/citichat/2004/feb23\\_citichat.stm](http://www.joburg.org.za/citichat/2004/feb23_citichat.stm)

### 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

### RECORDED BY:



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