

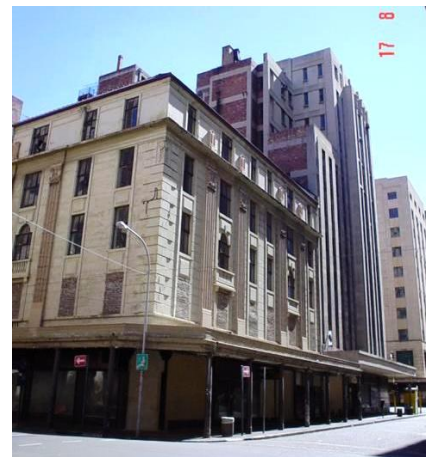
JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: NEW KEMPSEY BUILDING



Top left: corner Fox and Joubert Streets. Top right: view of the building and its neighbour, the *Shakespeare House*, in Commissioner Street. Bottom row: detail of notable façade features.

Previous/alternative name/s : none

LOCATION: Street : cnr Fox, Joubert
 Street number :
 : [113, 115 Fox; 19 Joubert]
 Stand Number : 279, 280
 Previous Stand Number:
 Block number : BF
 Suburb : Marshallstown
 GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
 Levels above street level : five
 Levels below street level :

On-site parking :

A detailed architectural history of the building remains outstanding due to the incompleteness of the plans record of this building. None of the original plans or subsequent alteration (except one) plans of the building could be found.

The design of this building of relatively modest scale is in many ways exclusive and special. Some of the special features of the building are as follows:

The balance achieved in the design of the building is quite striking. Although a-symmetrical, a marked congruity of the two street elevations has been achieved due to the choice of positioning of the ornamental pilasters and semi-circular arched windows.

In Fox Street, the down pipes are recessed in the plastered façade between two sets of fluted pilasters in moulded plasterwork.

The Tuscan column supported verandah with flattened corner is basic in plan, with a slightly flattened cornice between the architrave and frieze and a humble cornice to the entablature. In a sense, this uncluttered design automatically leads the eye to the body of the building. Sadly, the current obtrusive effect of the bricked-up windows makes it difficult to fully appreciate the symmetrical siting of the windows and the qualitative interface between the placement of windows, horizontally manifested design elements, and the strongly projected verticality of the fluted pilasters.

The exceptionally prominent entablature between the fourth and fifth floor suggests an additional floor to the building. This is reinforced by the omission of stucco and moulded plasterwork similar to that found on the rest of the eastern and southern façade.

A nice touch to the corner of the building is the quoining between the ground and fifth floor and the surmounting modest sculpture. Other special elements include the wrought iron work to the polished red granite plinth of the building (pieces of this have been removed), the ornamental balconies, two to each façade, as well as the original glazed shop fronts with aluminium trimmings.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: steel frame construction; plastered brick.

Roof: corrugated iron pitched roof.

Windows: steel casements.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

"The building regulations laid down that, from 5 November 1891, plans had to be handed in to the town engineer (Transvaal Publishing Co. 1905: 130). It is thus understandable that Johannesburg appears to have one of the most complete records of the pre-1900 period available in the country. However, many plans were lost because there was such a quick succession of buildings and stands. Plans can be found at the Building Survey Branch of the Johannesburg City Engineering Department and in the Africana Museum." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...). It has been noticed, however, during the Phase One Heritage Survey of Johannesburg City Buildings in 2002 (JJ and CJM Bruwer) that the chances of locating the original or even subsequent alteration plans of the City's landmark buildings and buildings designed by important architects (particularly where major alterations had been carried out to these buildings in recent times), are quite slim.

The plans record of this building is incomplete. The only available information with regard to alterations to the building pertains to work done in 1984; the municipal submission plan/s are missing. The estimated cost of work done at the time, amounted to R19 000 and that to drainage, to R4 500; the extent of this work would therefore have been quite significant; plans passed on 24 February 1984; architect – Sadur.

INTEGRITY:

The intrinsically attractive features of the *New Kempsey Building* are authentic, with a similar combination of certain of these features found in no other building from the same period in the City.

Except for the addition of an additional storey, the integrity of the original design of the building has remained relatively intact.

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

J.C. Cook.

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans :
Approval of plans :
Completion date :

BUILDING STYLE:

Art Deco - Stripped Neo Classical, 1920s.

"Architectural Merit: This building faces demolition, and from the first floor up is closed off entirely and bricked up." (Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

BUILDING TYPE:

Shops to street and office building.

ENVIRONMENT:

There is sadly, no interconnectivity (not in form, and neither in scale or materials) between the *New Kempsey Building* and the remaining buildings, i.e. the multi-storey *Shakespeare House* and *C.N.A. Building*, situated on the same city block.

A sense of utter desolation and abandonment surrounds this whole city block. The open wounds left by the demolition of once proud buildings signifies an irreplaceable loss; the bricked-up windows and broken window panes - exposed unfinished lateral walls - façades that were never proposed to make an imprint on the quality of streetscapes, shrouding the city block into a crevice of total depression. (Catharina JM Bruwer).

CONDITION:

The *New Kempsey Building* has in a sense, become a prime victim of demolition by neglect. An investigation of the condition of the exterior of the building at close quarters shows that no maintenance work has been done to the building for quite some time. The building, therefore, currently appears to be sharing the fate of that of the *Barbican Building* and the *second Trades Hall*, both in Rissik Street. The building meanwhile refuses to die, due to the quality of its design and materials used in its construction by highly trained artisans.

URGENT ACTION:

The dilapidated condition of the building should be attended to without delay, prevent any further vandalism of extant original fabric, e.g. wrought iron work and aluminium shop front trimmings.

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
- listed in provincial heritage resources register

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

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

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership:
By 1983: New Kempsey (Pty) Ltd.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

ROSENBERG BUILDING:

According to Van der Waal, the *Rosenberg Building* occupied the site by 1900. In 1904, this building was replaced by the *High Court Building*.

HIGH COURT BUILDING:

The three-storey Neo-Queen Anne *High Court Building*, built of brick and sandstone and completed during 1904, stood at 116 Commissioner Street, 15 and 17 Joubert Street, and 113 and 115 Fox Street. The architects McIntosh & Moffat designed this building.

HISTORY:

GENERAL NOTES:

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

PREVIOUS TENANTS:

By 1954: Fox Street - Lezard & Co, Government Sworn Appraisers; Wagstaff & Moller (Pty) Ltd; Reeds Outfitters. Joubert Street – Reeds Outfitters; Empire Hairdressing; S Frankental and the New Kempsey Tea Room.
Room 58 – Textile Workers' Industrial Union (South Africa).
Room 73 - Air Excursions & Charter (Pty) Ltd.
Room 70, 71 – German S.A. Airlines.
Room 82 – Ace Tracers, Detective and Tracing Agency.
Room 53 – Alamein Driving School.

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.

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:

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

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NEW KEMPSEY BLD'G

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FARRELS
OF FOX STREET
EXCLUSIVE MENS & BOYS WEAR

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