

## JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

### HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

**NAME OF PLACE:** Security Building

**Previous/alternative name/s :**

**LOCATION:** Street : Commissioner  
Street number : 95  
Stand number : 176 (previously 896)  
Block number : G

**ZONING:** Current use/s : Business one  
Previous use/s :

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:**

Ten storeys; one basement level.

Roof with living quarters and engine room. Basement with private and public bar, restaurant, kitchen, ladies room, scullery storeroom ext.

Lighthouse on the building. In a NMC letter dd. 16 August 1989, mention was made of the discovery of the equipment to operate the lighthouse (?).

**CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:**

Walls : reinforced concrete, plastered brickwork.

Roof : flat with concrete tower.

Windows: steel frame, casement.

**SITE FEATURES:**

## **ALTERATIONS:**

New toilets on floors one, three, five and seven for ladies and urinals on floors two, four, six and eight for gents. Estimated cost £30.

Plans passed : 26 October 1937

Storeroom converted to office on the ground floor. Estimated cost £5.

Architect : Stegmann, Orpen & Partner

Plan date : April 1938

Plans passed : 7 May 1938

Removal of internal wall in basement.

On plan : 4 November 1953

Plans passed : May 1956

Internal alterations to basement. Doors and walls removed in main bar and bar counter removed, new partitions added. New entrance to lounge, dining room and coffee lounge. Estimated cost R500.

Plans passed : 13 March 1964

Aluminium and non flammable fibreglass canopy at street entrance to basement added.

Plans passed : 28 January 1964

Conversion of existing offices on the ground floor into a shop. New nine inch brick wall, doors and walls removed. New position for shop front. Interior fascia and ceiling in hardwood slats in narrow widths. Vertical glass louvres on the outside. Anodised aluminium plinth and panel on larger shop front windows. Glass mosaic to column. Metallized bronze balustrade to stairs and new steel windows. Existing parquet flooring removed and replaced with marble to match existing floor in entrance. Estimated cost R750.

Architect : Bernard Janks & Partners

On plan : January 1967

Plans passed : 28 March 1967

Deviation plans for basement and upgrading of toilets. Estimated cost R475.

Architect : Bernard Janks & Partners

Plan date : January 1967

Plans passed : 28 March 1967

On the 10<sup>th</sup> floor, door moved. Estimated cost R200.

On plan : 23 February 1971

New restaurant *Golden Egg* on ground floor. New staircase, doors removed, bricked up, plastered and painted. New flooring and wall covering. New glass shop front. Estimated cost R5 000.

Supervising architects Liknaitzky & Kaplan for Restaurant Interiors.

Plans passed : 27 September 1973

Alterations and additions to toilets. Estimated cost R17 500.

Architect : Liknaitzky & Kaplan

Plan date : March 1974

Plans passed : 19 April 1974

Conversion of toilets into offices on 10<sup>th</sup> floor. Estimated cost R3 000.

Architect : Liknaitzky & Kaplan

Plan date : May 1974

Plans passed : 13 June 1974

Ground floor, new walls, doors and staircase. New corridor storerooms on floors five, six, seven and eight. One of the interior basement walls removed. New window to workers change room. Existing offices on ninth floor permanently sealed off. Estimated cost R 8 000.

Architect : Liknaitzky & Kaplan

Plan date : Aug 1976

Plans passed : 10 June 1977

### **INTEGRITY:**

In 1989 the NMC was approached by Old Mutual Properties regarding the buildings in this city block . The former's position was as follows: "...the facades of Union Castle, Security, Investments and St. Andrews should be retained, but that the interiors could be radically altered, and possibly gutted... When the survey commissioned by the Johannesburg City Council was made in 1975/76 the R.A.U. proposed the retention of the entire block as a group of fine Art Deco buildings...They (i.e. the buildings facing Commissioner Street) are good quality examples of that period of architecture and reflect the growth and development of the City as it emerged from the Depression. Unfortunately the shopfronts have already been altered so that at street level the conservation interest is greatly reduced." (NMC - Teak Investments [Pty] Ltd, 16 Aug '89)

This should be read together with the following, as stated in a NMC letter dd. 7 August 1989:

"INQUIRY REGARDING CONSERVATION MERITS...SECURITY, ST. ANDREWS, INVESTMENT, UNION CASTLE. These few buildings were identified by the R.A.U. report as one half of a block of Art Deco buildings...Of the few, Union Castle Buildings is the best aesthetically...None of the buildings has external[sic.] features that are of exceptional value, and therefore considerable changes could be made to the interiors to improve their use for offices."

The history of this building is one of a multitude of mostly internal alterations / additions. Changes however were also carried out to the exterior (mostly to the shop fronts) and these changes have affected the integrity of the original design.

### **INSCRIPTION:**

### **ARCHITECT/BUILDER:**

J. Lockwood Hall

### **CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

Plan date : 1935

Plans passed : 11 June 1936

Completed : 4 February 1937

### **BUILDING STYLE:**

Art Deco - Exhibition Style (Urban Features).

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shops and office building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

It balances in height with the St. Andrews Building in the same block, whilst its central-accentuated composition finds reflection in the adjacent Union Castle Building. See INTEGRITY

This should be read together with the following, as stated in a NMC letter dd. 7 August 1989: South of the four buildings concerned in Commissioner Street, are buildings such as the Surrey, Triangle, Provincial, A.C.A. and Aegis. Of these, Triangle and Provincial are considered the most valuable. They are both older and of a much smaller scale (indicative of an earlier stage of development) than the Union Castle Building, the Security Building, the Investment Building and St Andrews Building. Surrey House is seen as a good Art Deco building. It is however less significant in terms of rarity than Triangle or Provincial.

**CONDITION:**

This building is vacant and has been closed up.

**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: Victoria Buildings Pty Ltd

T20119/1991 South African Mutual Life Assurance Soc  
T20119/1991 Old Mutual Life Assurance Soc of South Africa Ltd

**HISTORY:**

The estimated cost of the building was £40,000 and the drainage £200. The building was valued at £50,000 at completion. Accommodation was approved for two 'Europeans' and 10 'Non-Europeans'.

**GENERAL NOTES:**

In 1989, the NMC 's William Martinson expressed the opinion that the building's lighthouse added "special interest" to the building's character.

**SOURCES:**

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

Photograph (coloured) of Commissioner Street elevations ca. '88 : NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/124

NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/105: Union Castle, Security, Investment and St Andrews Building, Commissioner Street 93 - 99, Johannesburg

City Engineering Department, File No. 318416, Stand No. 176, Township Johannesburg (Planning Dept., City of Johannesburg)

Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City - Metropolitan Planning, Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (Cool Factory)

Registrar of Deeds, Johannesburg

**RECORDED BY:**

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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