

# JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

## HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

**NAME OF PLACE:** Aegis Insurance House

**Previous/alternative name/s** : Norwich Union House

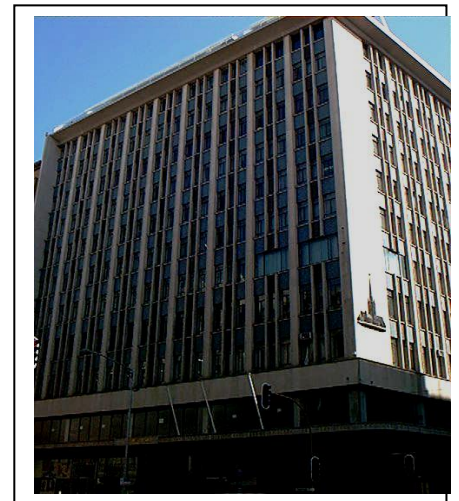
**LOCATION:** Street : Loveday  
 Street number : 37, 39, 41, 43  
 Stand number : 4412 (previously 892-894, 758-759)  
 Block number : F

**ZONING:** Current use/s : Business one  
 Previous use/s : Offices, shops at ground level

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:**

Three basement levels; ground floor; 10 ten storeys; main roof and roof over main roof (13 levels up).

The three basement levels and first floor are for parking. The double volume ground floor with mezzanine was originally designed to accommodate nine shops. The second and third floors were office space for Norwich (named Norwich floors). The fourth to ninth floors were designed with 41 offices to each floor. The 10<sup>th</sup> floor (caretakers floor) with caretakers quarters and 29 offices. The main roof were designed to accommodate the 'Non-European' quarters and the roof over the main roof included the kitchen of the 'Non-European' quarters; lift motor room and two 2,400 g. tanks (water) and one 1,600 g. tank (fire), the tanks are built on the roof of the 'Non-European' quarters.



The extra ordinary amount of in-house parking space might possibly have ensured the buildings viability to this day. For the time it was constructed in 1962 the provision of parking space was exceptional and seemingly quite visionary. Noteworthy is the particular attention that was paid

to detailed specifications in regard to the parking levels and the allocation of use by the prospective office users.

**CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:**

Walls : brick and reinforced concrete.

Roof : flat; asbestos tiles on malthoid water proofing on cement screed on breeze grading.

Windows: aluminium and fan lights.

Doors : double and single aluminium glass doors with adjustable louvres above on ground floor.

Verandah: precast facings; columns with marble column facing.

First floor: windows of obscure glass and open louvres.

Second to 10<sup>th</sup> floor: precast stonework; mosaic spandrel panels; aluminium louvre vent panels; prominent ornamental cornice between 10<sup>th</sup> floor and main roof.

**SITE FEATURES:**

**ALTERATIONS:**

The second floor converted to parking area; ramp extended.  
Estimated cost R 80 000.00.

Architect : The Basil Powell Partnership  
Plan date : 30 January 1995  
Plans passed : 2 March 1995

**INTEGRITY:**

Except for the conversion of the second floor into a parking facility, no significant changes have been effected to this building.



**INSCRIPTION:**

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:**

Salomon & Silverman

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

On plan : 3 May 1962  
Passed : 5 September 1963  
Completed : 20 November 1964

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Johannesburg Modular Regionalism (Urban Features).

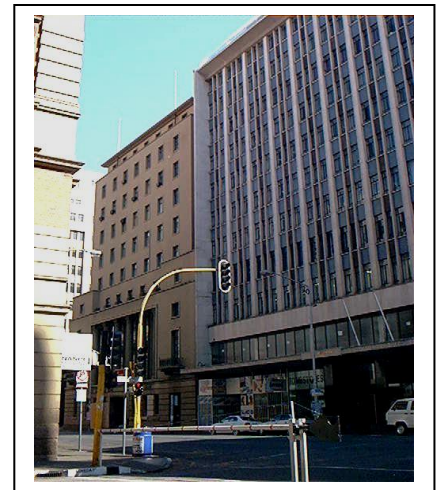
**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shops and office building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

“Noordoostelike deel sluit in hoogte en fasade-ontwerp aan by geboue in die blok net oos daarvan (Steyler-, Provinsialgebou ens.) Suidwestelike deel besit minder samehang met omringende geboue. In feite bots dit met die Barclays Bank.” RAU Report, June 1972

The windows being grouped in the traditional tripartite fashion and the built up vertical strips are in harmony with the Union Castle Building (Stand Nos. 177, 178, 5020). Note the special consideration that was given not to have made the building stand flush with its older neighbour i.e., the National Bank Building (Stand No. 5294).



**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: Norwich Union Life Insurance Society  
 T21128/1988 Doric Inv Pty Ltd



**PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:**

The Market/Loveday Streets corner stand had by 1888 a low accommodated *Israel & Ohlsen Stationery & Fancy Goods and Cash Store* of M. Backs on it. By 1892 it was replaced with a single storey brick shop, *My Bar* for Papenfus and F.R. Goode. The building had large rectangular display windows. W. Leck & F. Emley designed Sauer's Building for Dr. Hans Sauer in 1903. This six storey, partly plastered façade with corner turret, finials and verandah replaced the Papenfus and Goode building. By 1940 the Stanley House stood on this site and the adjacent site facing Commissioner Street.

The Loveday/Commissioner Streets corner of this site was originally occupied by a single-storeyed building, viz. Bussey's Building. In 1891 it was occupied by *Phillip's Imperial Bar*, which the mule-drawn coaches from Durban used as their terminus. Next to the bar and facing Commissioner Street was Goodman's Building, the town's first two-storeyed building, occupied by lawyers and estate agents.

**HISTORY:**

**GENERAL NOTES:**

The estimated cost of the building was R700 000.00 and drainage R10 000.00. The building was valued at R708 000.00 at completion. Accommodation for two 'Europeans' and five 'Non-Europeans' was approved.

## **SOURCES:**

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

Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg; The Early Years, Nasionale Boekhandel, 1964

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

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

City Engineering Department, Stand No. 4412, Township Johannesburg (Planning Dept., City of Johannesburg)

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

