

# JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

## HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: CAMILAS CHASODIM BUILDING ("Generous Giving")



Left: Jeppe Street elevation.

Top: View of the building with its western neighbour the *Kazerne Buildings* clearly visible in the foreground.Previous/alternative name/s : by 1998: *Savells*

**LOCATION:** Street : Jeppe  
 Street number : 117  
 Stand Number : 1191  
 Previous Stand Number: 1100  
 Block number : AM  
 GIS reference :

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

### DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :  
 Levels above street level : two  
 Levels below street level : one  
 On-site parking : none

The original shop fronts of the building comprised one small and three large glazed sections with intermediary tiled wall surfaces up to dado height. Access was via the entrance in Jeppe Street with double composite teak doors, leading to a public space with a counter gained entrance. The general office and public sections on ground floor with wooden floors and ceilings were in stark contrast to the remaining interiors of the building, with bare reinforced concrete floors and ceilings. The prominent stringcourse appearing on the main façade between the ground and first floor, calls for special mention. So also, does the most unusual elongated steel frame window with rounded corners and 7" concrete surround on the first floor, and cornice to the parapet. In an effort to 'modernize' the building, however, a most unappealing aluminium panelled front was 'designed' by the Edgars' Architectural Department, which currently obscures the above interesting façade aspects, and robs the

building of a worthy identity (see ALTERATIONS). Ironically, the uncluttered cantilevered pavement hood originally designed to compliment the rest of the building, now tends to reinforce the 'modern' appearance of the building.

Basement:       waterproofed concrete floor area used for storage.

Ground floor:   general office and warehouse.

First floor:     warehouse.

Roof:            staff W.C.

#### **CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:**

Walls            : reinforced concrete frame structure; plastered local stocks.

Roof             : concrete covered with asphalt; section to rear of building - lean-to corrugated iron, with Howe truss.

Windows         : steel frame with parliament hinges.

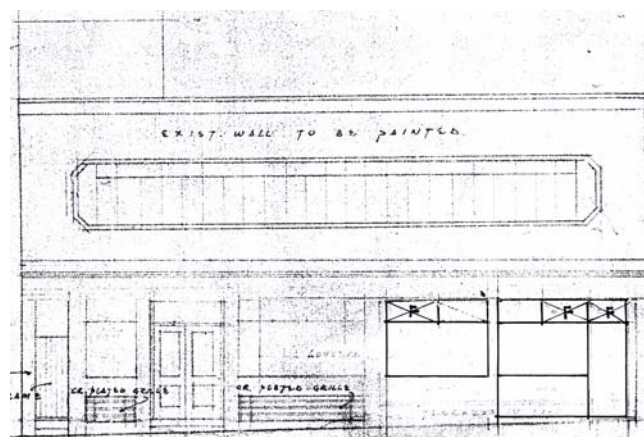
Floors           : reinforced concrete to most of the building; wood on concrete to general office area.

#### **SITE FEATURES:**

#### **ALTERATIONS:**

External alterations to the building include: 45° corners to the original elongated window section, new shop fronts; new door, new chrome plated grilles, new glazed doors and external walls to be painted. Internal alterations included the removal of partitioning and the relocation of an existing counter to a new position. Approved 7 November 1956; estimated cost – building £150; architect – Leslie Simon (address: 912 Southern Life Buildings, Main Street).

Right: extract from municipal submission drawings dated 1956.



External alterations to the building: new aluminium cladding to the first floor of the building for Edgars Stores Limited; estimated cost – building R2850; Author Edgars' Architectural Department.

Internal alterations: municipal submission plans missing; approved – 2 February 1979; estimated cost – building R4500; architects – E.I. Graff, Kruger Associates.

#### **INTEGRITY:**

Except for the aluminium cladding to the building, which is cosmetic and could easily be removed, external alterations to the building have largely been carried out in sympathy with the existing character of the building. This building could therefore still become a valuable part of the historic building stock of the City.

#### **INSCRIPTION:**

#### **ARCHITECT:**

W. Percik.

#### **BUILDER:**

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

Date on plans :  
Approval of plans : 18 August 1936  
Completion date : circa 1937 (see attachment: copy of letter dated 16 June 1936).

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Early Modernist.

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shops to street, office and warehouse building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

If the Bree Street elevation of the building is reinstated, the building will visually, become a valuable 'bridge' between the *Kazerne Buildings* (see AM-1) and *Wise Mart Building* (see AM-3). Currently, the aluminium cladding to the upper part of the main facade totally detracts from the quality of the streetscape and leaves the building standing isolated, preventing any form of visual harmonization with its immediate surround.

**CONDITION:**

Neglected.

**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: Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association.  
By 1979: Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association.

**PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:**

**HISTORY:**

The authors' choice of a fitting name for the building, is derived from the latter's association with the Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association – hereafter the Association, the original owners and occupants of the building. It appears that the administration of this Association was located at 52a Sauer Street (see Pre-History: P-1), i.e. the building of Max Rosettenstein, brother of Leo, the founder of the Johannesburg suburbs of Rosettenville and Kenilworth, prior to the completion of the subject

building.

The phrase 'Camilas Chasodim' (translated to mean "Generous Giving") appropriately reflects the origin of the organization, also known as the Jewish "Helping Hand". This information has been furnished to the authors by Mr Ian Rosettenstein, a descendant of the pioneer Leo Rosettenstein, and has been verified with the help of Mr Yehuda Kay, SA Jewish Board of Deputies.

The Association was established in Johannesburg on 12 July 1891 by Mark Fine. Jaques Klisser, son-in-law of Leo Rosettenstein served as president of the Association during 1898. From its small beginnings the Association "advanced loans to (its male) members, on the security of two or more others, also members, to help them establish a business. All other types of loans were refused although occasionally, they were allowed for 'travelling', which could have been assistance for a smous or to help a man bring his family to South Africa." (Kaplan, M. & Robertson, M.: Founders and Followers...).

The 1954 Rand-Pretoria Directory lists this site as being occupied by The Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association. By 1963, however, the Association's offices had been relocated to 176 - 192 Ninth Floor, *Shakespeare House*, 116 Commissioner Street, Marshallstown (BF-3).

#### GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building : £8 300  
Estimated cost of drainage : £300  
Accommodation approved : none  
Valuation at completion :  
Occupied :

#### PREVIOUS TENANTS:

By 1937: Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association, PO Box 1336.

By 1954: Witwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association, PO Box 1336; Sacks & Rebenstein (Pty) Ltd; Sachs & Co (Pty) Ltd.

By 1971: Edgars Stores Limited.

#### CURRENT TENANT/S:

#### 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.

Box 1326. 137054 TELEPHONE 33-5664.

**Uitwatersrand Hebrew Benevolent Association.**  
חברה "נמילות חסדים"

~~520 WATERLOO STREET, JOHANNESBURG, TRANSVAAL PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA~~

Johannesburg, 16th June, 1937.

The City Engineer,  
City of Johannesburg.

**ENGINEER**  
17 JUN 1937

1191


Dear Sir,

With reference to your communication No. 17054 of the 27th November 1936, the building mentioned therein on Stand 1191 formerly 1100 Johannesburg Township, has been completed and occupied by us for some time.

I shall be obliged if I may be informed whether matters are now in order for the return of the R. C. deposit of £15:0:0 and the Footway deposit of £15:0:0, both of which were paid in to your office on the 11th December, 1936.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

  
SECRETARY.

PT details  
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27/6/37







25 1 2004





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0003

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