

## JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

### HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

**NAME OF PLACE:** Investment Building



Jhb Metro - Cool Factory

**Previous/alternative name/s :**

**LOCATION:** Street : Commissioner  
Street number : 97  
Stand number : 175 (previously R/898)  
Block number : G

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

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:**

Ground floor with shops; seven storeys; no basement.

The building stands flush with the St. Andrews Building and was stepped forward with rounded corners at all levels, to also stand flush with the Security Building.

**CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:**

Walls : plastered brick; steel frame construction.

Roof : flat, concrete.

Windows: steel frame, casement and hopper.

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

The only record of alterations to the building pertains to the installation of office partitions on the seventh floor of the building. The architect responsible for this was C.R. Kallenbach.

**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."

**INSCRIPTION:**

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:**

Reid & Martin

All that could be found of the original plans of the building, is that of its North (rear) Elevation.

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

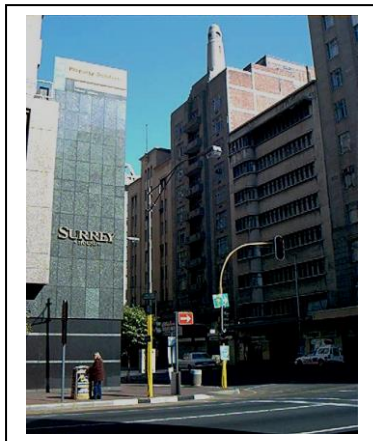
On plan : 9 November 1936  
Completed : ca. October 1937

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Art Deco idiom.

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shops and office building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

Joins the Union Castle Building in height. Joins the Security Building and the St. Andrews Building in terms of use of colour and materials. 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:**

First to seventh storeys appear to be vacant; the building shows clear signs of disrepair and neglect.

**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 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: Investment Buildings (Pty) Ltd

By 1976 : Old Arcade (Pty) Ltd.  
By July 1998 : Classic Investments Pty Ltd

T50538/1989 South African Mutual Life Assurance Soc  
T50538/1989 Old Mutual Life Assurance Soc of South Africa Ltd

**HISTORY:**

**GENERAL NOTES:**

The NMC in 1989, viewed the building to be a "part of a group of four Art Deco buildings. The Plans Committee has suggested that the facades and roof line be retained."

**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, Stand Nos. 181 and 5019, Township Johannesburg (Planning Department), City of Johannesburg [Note that this source pertains to the old Arcade Building at the rear of the Investment Building. The plans of the latter building to which reference is made in this form, are located on this file].

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