

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: JET BUILDINGPrevious/alternative name/s : 1998 - *Sales House*

LOCATION: Street : cnr Bree, Fraser
 Street number :
 : [204, 206 Bree; 38, 40 Fraser]
 Stand Number : 1203, 1204, 1205
 Previous Stand Number: 1103, 991, 992
 Block number : AN
 GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
 Levels above street level :
 Levels below street level : None
 On-site parking : None

The building is of a unique design; the heavy cantilevered verandah is balanced by the pure clean line of the second level which in turn is rounded off to the top level of the building with a full circle.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: face brick.

Roof: concrete, flat.

Windows: glazed shop fronts.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

Internal alterations were carried out to building in 1978 at an estimated cost of R10 000.

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

E. I. Graff, Kruger Associates.

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans : 1 August 1976
Approval of plans : 24 February 1977
Completion date : 14 April 1978

BUILDING STYLE:

Late Modernist.

BUILDING TYPE:

Retail Store.

ENVIRONMENT:

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	<input 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: Tiger Oats Group Provident Fund.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

KAZERNE HOUSE:

By 1954, the *Kazerne House* stood at 204 Bree Street and 40 Fraser Street. Tenants during this period were Kazerne Tea Room; Chhana Bros. and Don Cycle Works.

NEW BUILDING (under construction):

During 1954, a new building was being erected at 206 Bree Street. Information on this building is lacking.

BLACK EATING HOUSE:

By 1954, a *Black Eating House* stood at 38 Fraser Street.

HISTORY:

"From modest beginnings as a single basement shop selling women's fashions, the Edgars Group has become an internationally recognised organisation with over 730 stores, covering 680 791m2, throughout South Africa and surrounding areas. Founders Morris and Eli Ross would be proud of their creation. They would also be proud of the Group's modus operandi of making the customer king as well as creating a highly motivated work force. The Group was a subsidiary of South Africa Breweries from 1982 until January 1999. In June that year the Edgars Group, previously known as Edgars Stores Limited, began trading on the Johannesburg stock exchange as Edgars Consolidated Stores Limited - listed as Edcon in the retail sector - a name more accurately reflecting the function of the Group. The Edcon Group is comprised of the following companies: Edgars, Sales House, Jet, Cuthberts, ABC, Smiley's and the Manufacturing Division." (Information sourced from <http://www.profile.co.za>).

"On the 6th September 1929, the first Edgars store opened in Joubert Street, Johannesburg. Over the past 73 years, the company has grown to six retail brands, over 720 facias in the 443 store locations throughout South Africa and the neighbouring territories of Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho. In August 2000, Edgars went live with the largest online clothing offering of any South African retailer...Our customers and staff are at the forefront of our corporate values, as we strive to be the stores of choice in our various market segments in Southern Africa for clothing, footwear, home textiles and accessories. We do this through our different retail formats. Edgars, incorporating the ABC shoe stores, is a department store, targeting the middle to upper market segments with a predominant focus in the larger shopping malls and downtown metropolitan areas. The middle to lower market segments are covered by the United Retail discount formats, trading as Jet, Sales House, Cuthberts and Smileys. We continue to align our retail brands and store sizes to meet the changing needs of our customers in the malls and on the high street. The company first began trading on the JSE in 1946. In June 1999, Edgars Consolidated Stores Limited embraced the spirit of the new millennium and began trading on the JSE as Edcon." (Information sourced from www.edgars.co.za).

"The Claude Harris Leon Foundation is a charitable trust, resulting from a bequest by Claude Leon (1884 - 1972).

A founder and managing director of the Elephant Trading Company, a wholesale business based in Johannesburg, Claude Leon also helped develop several well-known South African companies, including Edgars, OK Bazaars and the mining house Anglo Transvaal (later Anglovaal).

He served for many years on the Council of the University of the Witwatersrand, which in 1971 awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Law." (Information sourced from <http://www.leonfoundation.co.za/foundation-history.html>).

Helen Grange in a most informative newspaper article titled "Graceful old stores have all gone" (date of publication not known) on department stores in early Johannesburg, writes as follows: "Of all the character changes which have left their mark on Johannesburg none has been more noticeable than the disappearance, in the 1970s, of the graceful old department stores. Its contemporaries – Ansteys, Belfast, Ackermans, Paramount and Stuttafords went too. So complete was the rout that Stuttaford's building in the city remained derelict for years. Some would even remember the firm of Blinman,

Holwell and Islip – a department store with style and panache in the British manner in Eloff Street on the site now occupied by the OK. The OK was one of the stores which stayed – and flourished. Historically, these stores all stood relatively close to each other, in the city's prime spots. Their siting was considered to be of huge significance in terms of fashion appeal – and only very few streets were regarded as fashionable. These streets were all north of Commissioner Street – that part of the city which the Transvaal Republic auctioned to the public in 1886 when Johannesburg was born. South of that street on what historically mine-owned land, are the grandiose old mining and financial houses. John Orr's had been a pioneer department store. Stuttafords had also been a household name since early in the century. But when Sam Cohen launched the cash-and-carry store called OK Bazaars in 1927 he was told it would fail – it was, people said, on the 'wrong side of Eloff Street'. Not only did the Eloff Street store do a roaring trade, it triggered a new age of cash stores and remained a powerful force even when similar cash stores were foundering. Instalment credit Because large department stores occupying four to five floors presented management difficulties, speciality department stores emerged – and quickly grew. One of the earliest speciality stores to open its doors was Hepworths, a menswear [sic.] retailer launched in 1894 in Harrison Street [on the corner of Eloff Street]. Edworks, the country-wide shoe chain opened its first Johannesburg shop on the corner of Joubert and Pritchard streets in 1924 – Foschini's clothing outfitters started in 1925 (in Pritchard Street) and Truworhs opened soon afterwards in 1926 (on the corner of President and Eloff). But the most noteworthy speciality store was Edgars, which started in 1939 as a tiny business specialising in giving instalment credit to typists and shop assistants when John Orr's was serving the upper end of the market. Since then, Edgars has established the largest and most successful speciality department store in Market Street (where the Belfast used to be) while also spreading its chain into shopping centres and other central areas nationwide. Its subsidiaries [sic.], Sales House and Jet Stores are major chains in their own right, each aiming at identifiable segments of the market. It was management difficulties which saw the closure of the old-timer, Greatermans, in 1982. The space vacated was promptly taken by Dions, a very successful speciality store dealing in furniture, sporting and photographic equipment and appliances....While some department stores went to the suburbs some, like Ansteys whose tall stepped building was the city's highest for years, and the bargain-basement shop, Paramount, simply disappeared. Ackermans, a giant in the 1920s, was bought out by Pep stores and today exists only as a supplement to Pep."

See also *Foschini Building* (Joubert Street), AC-9.

It was highly fashionable in the Seventies to collect trousseau and I still possess some of the articles collected during those years; a wooden cutlery-holder bought at the main OK as it was known then; pieces of a dinner-set from *Greatermans* with the words 'Microwave oven safe' printed on the bottom – keeping in mind that microwave ovens were not a household name in the 70s in South-Africa; a rose-pattern stainless steel kitchen utensil set from *John Orr's* at a sale price of R25.00 – remember the rose-pattern, it was on everything such as glasses, dinner sets, carving sets and cutlery. Every Easter season a special stand was allocated for Easter eggs in *Greatermans* at the entrance on Rissik Street, the eggs I remember were the size of an ostrich egg, hand decorated with icing sugar and by special request, a name was iced on the egg. The best place to have breakfast on a Saturday morning was at the restaurant located on one of the upper floors in *Greatermans* – their scrambled eggs and toast was well known. My first account was opened at Edgars, the manageress was a Mrs. Van Den Heever, and with her help the account was opened without the permission of my parents, keep in mind that during the 70s women had fewer rights than now! The amount I could buy for was a staggering thirty rand! *John Orr's* had a Lucy Bar and it was very vogue to say 'O, I went to John Orr's today.' The clothes sold at *Foschini's* and *Truworhs* were more expensive but their window dressing was always very tasteful and nice shops to do window-shopping at. (Catharina JM Bruwer).

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	: R350 000
Estimated cost of drainage	: R5 000
Accommodation approved	:
Valuation at completion	:
Occupied	:

PREVIOUS TENANT:

1998 - Sales House.

CURRENT TENANT:

Jet Clothing Store.

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:

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Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



Jet
SALES HOUSE callcentre

Jet

Jet

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