

**JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

**HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM**

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

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**NAME OF PLACE: OXFORD BUILDINGS**



Top right: view of main (Jeppe Street) elevation. Top right: taken from a position in Jeppe Street, southwest of the *Oxford Buildings*, the domineering effect of the multi-storey *Monis Mansions*, the eastern neighbour of the *Oxford Buildings*, on the latter, and the lack of any interconnectivity between these two buildings, is clearly apparent.

Previous/alternative name/s : originally *Italian Warehouse*  
: by 1998 - *Price 'n Pride Furniture Showroom*

**LOCATION:** Street : Jeppe  
Street number : 133  
Stand Number : 1212  
Previous Stand Number: 1112  
Block number : OA  
GIS reference :

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

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:**

Height : 32' plus roof  
Levels above street level : two  
Levels below street level : one (22')  
On-site parking : none

The existing double storey building with gable roof occupies the site of the former *Bristol Hotel* (1903). In 1919, the section of the latter building occupying the stand at 133 Jeppe Street, was largely demolished and replaced by the existing building. See HISTORY.

## CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls : reinforced concrete frame structure, plastered brick.

Roof : corrugated iron.

Windows :

## SITE FEATURES:

## ALTERATIONS:

Extensive alterations to existing shop fronts. Plans approved: 9 November 1931.

Minor internal alterations at First Floor: provision of Rest Rooms for "European" and "Coloured" workers. Architect: Leopold Grinker (address: 306 Lewis & Marks Building, Johannesburg). Plans approved: 16 March 1943.

Minor alterations to toilet facilities on First Floor for Messrs M & J Trading Co. (Pty) Ltd. Plans passed: 17 August 1951.

Minor alterations to First Floor: Dry wall partitions, counter and shelves for Ace High Sellers and Suppliers Ltd. Approval of plans: 28 November 1955.

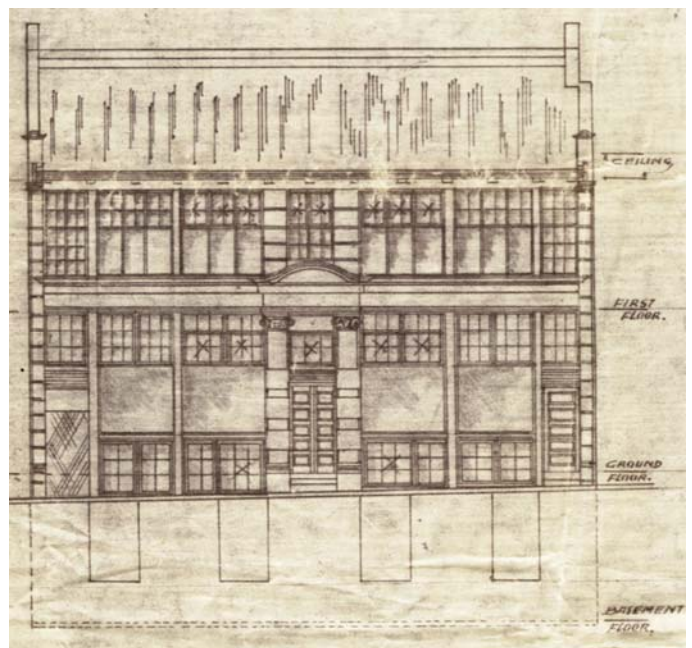
Installation of 'Colomet' cladding, fixed to steel supports, to main façade (see INTEGRITY); new steel fire escape stair inside building; removal of all existing offices and toilets on Ground Floor; new suspended ceilings and dry wall partitions on Ground and First Floors. Approval of plans: 14 September 1983. Architects: Betts McLaren Partnership. Owner shown as Tespauba (Pty) Ltd.

Conversion of building for use as Furniture Showroom (Price 'n Pride) in 1990. Owner: J.D. Group Furnishers, Johannesburg). This entailed internal alterations to the Basement (furniture display area and dry wall partitions for offices), Ground Floor (new brick and dry wall partitions), and First Floor (new strong room and furniture display areas). Architect: Joe Hohny. Approval of plans: 12 March 1990.

## INTEGRITY:

The 'Colomet' cladding affixed to the main façade of the building in 1983, is to be regretted, as it is no longer possible to appreciate any aspect of the street façade of the building. It is interesting to note that this was in fact reported on when the work carried out to the building in 1983, was inspected by the Council's Building Survey Branch on 8 July 1983. "The cladding", according to the Building Inspector assigned to inspect the work, "has already been effected and the cladding of buildings should be more stringently controlled. This proposal being a case in point. The cladding has been carried up to a certain height and then curved towards the permanent façade of plaster and then stopped short of the eaves so as to permit cross ventilation by means of leaving the fanlights of the existing building exposed by stopping short. The cladding has exposed the classical capitals to the pilasters unsightly and unfortunate. The fact that architects have handled this proposal bears no comment. I am not prepared to pass the proposal in its present form." (Written report to Chief Building Surveyor, 12 July 1983).

Right: Extract from submission drawings dated 1919 by Bertram Avery: view of Jeppe Street Elevation.



**INSCRIPTION:**

**ARCHITECT:**

Bertram Avery. (address: Natal Bank Chambers, Market Square, Johannesburg).

**BUILDER:**

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

Date on plans : 5 May 1919  
Approval of plans : 16 July 1919  
Completion date : 1920

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Edwardian.

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Warehouse and shops to street building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

Considering its current condition and concealment behind a huge wall of cladding unbecoming to the character of any building of its kind, the building contributes very little to its environment.

**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: H. Feldmann.  
Italian Warehouse Co. Ltd.  
Duncan Andrew (Pty) Ltd.  
Jeppe Investments (Pty) Ltd.  
By 1990: J.D. Group Furnishers, Johannesburg.

## PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

### BRISTOL HOTEL:

Located on this site as well as at 135 Jeppe and 69 Harrison Streets, (adjacent corner Stand 1213) between 1903 and 1919 was the famous *Bristol Hotel*, erected for the entrepreneur Ludwig. Feldmann. This magnificent three-storey edifice was designed by the architect H.C. Brauer and included a Basement, comprising various cellars as well as a shooting range. It was constructed at a cost of no less than £12 000, which explains its extensive collection of ornamentation, including pilasters, balustrades, cornices, finials, as well as the tall spire surmounting the corner tower of the building. The particularly fine elevation drawings executed by Brauer testify to his preference for ornamental detail.

In 1905 and 1910, the architect Theo Schaerer (address: Royal Arcade, Pritchard Street, Johannesburg) attended to various minor alterations to the Bristol Hotel. The architect John Adams likewise attended to minor alteration work to the buildings (i.e. drainage) in 1909 on behalf of the architect Schaerer.

It is recorded by Norwich that the building was attacked by anti-German supporters in 1917. See below. (Authors' note: the building survived this attack only to be partially demolished a few years later.)

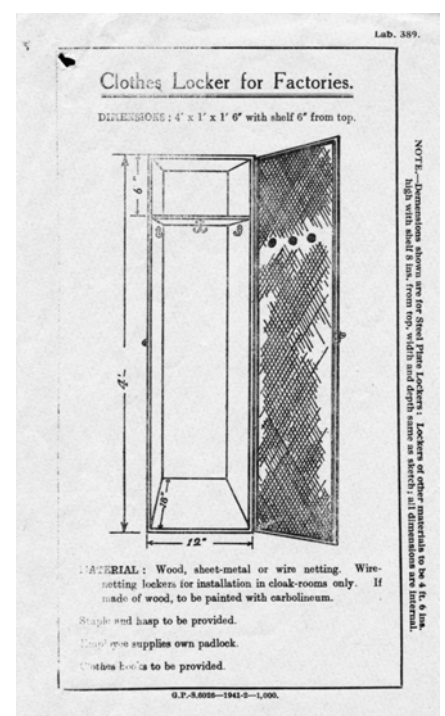
Right: "This fascinating and unique three-storey building, the Bristol Hotel was situated on the south-west corner of Harrison and Jeppe streets. It appears in the Brady Directory of 1910. In 1915 during the First World War anti-German sentiment ran high especially after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and an angered mob went on the rampage, setting light to German-owned businesses and homes. This hotel was among those attacked as it was in German hands at the time." (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards, postcard 127).



## HISTORY:

In July 1919, the section of the *Bristol Hotel* occupying the stand at 133 Jeppe Street, was partially demolished to make way for a new building for the Italian Warehouse Co., Ltd. The architect Bertram Avery's strongly symmetrical design was anchored on the retention and enlargement of the section of the existing Basement on Stand 1212 to accommodate two store rooms of equal size, as well as the retention of large sections of the exterior walls of the former hotel. At completion, the new building comprised not only two basement store rooms, but a warehouse section and offices on Ground Floor, as well as a large single bond store on the First Floor.

By 1942, the new owners of the building were Jeppe Investment Co. It appears that the building was at the time being used as a clothing factory. The tenant at that time appears to have been Franks Dress Company. From an inspection of the building, the following comments dated 24 November 1942, were recorded by an Inspector of Factories of the Department of Labour and handed to the above tenant: "1) A minimum reading of 10 foot candles of natural light is required to all workplaces (noted working areas to a depth of 25 and 30 feet on the South and North sides



respectively). 2) Your attention is drawn to Regulation 15 (7) of the Factories Machinery & Building Work Act 1941 re sanitary conditions - No fanlight to be provided above the door leading into the washing cubicle. Walls to be carried up to the ceiling. 3) Adequate sanitary and washing accommodation to be provided for non-European employees, in accordance with the ratio's laid down under the Act. 4) No work to be performed in any section of the ground floor which is under 10 feet in height. 5) Electric lights to be installed at correct heights and spacing to give even distribution and the correct intensity of light at each work place. 6) Individual lockers as per sketch (see below) to be provided for European and non-European employees - These lockers to be placed in the respective change rooms. 7) The following provisos:- If at a future inspection it is found that ventilation needs to be improved in either the ground or first floor sections of this factory, the occupier undertakes to comply with this requirement."

#### GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building : £5 700  
Estimated cost of drainage : £100  
Accommodation approved :  
Valuation at completion : £3 000 (11 September 1920)  
Occupied :

"Today's JD group has modest origins. Founder David Sussman commenced in 1983 with two Price 'n Pride stores. In 1986 he purchased the larger, then troubled, Joshua Doore chain from the Russell's grouping. In 1988 the firm acquired World and Bradlows from W&A, and the Score Furnishers chain. Then in 1993 JD acquired the Rusfurn Group."

(Information sourced from <http://www.comptrib.co.za/decidedcases/html/78LMJUL00M.HTM>.)

#### PREVIOUS TENANTS:

By 1951: Messrs M & J Trading Co. (Pty) Ltd

By 1954: Bridge Furnishers; M & J Trading Co (Pty) Ltd.; Oxford Beer Hall.

By 1955: Ace High Sellers and Suppliers Ltd.

By 1990: Price 'n Pride.

By 1998: Price 'n Pride Furniture Showroom.

#### CURRENT TENANT:

Price 'n Pride.

#### 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.

**FURNITURE SHOWROOM**

**JVC** TELEFUNKEN

APPLIANCES  
TELEVISION

133 JEPPE STR  
TEL. 838-1419

**BRIDGE**  
FURNITURE

133 JEPPE STR  
TEL. 838-1419

APPLIANCES  
TELEVISION

TELEFUNKEN **JVC**

**NO DEPOSIT**

MTN

**SALE**

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ROYAL Meat Centre

ROYAL Meat Centre

ROYAL Meat Centre

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