

**Heritage Impact Assessment for CMH Datcentre situated on
Erf 11135, 119-123 Monty Naicker Road, Durban**



Produced for: Delta / Motseng Property Fund
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All buildings / structures over the age of 60 years are automatically protected by legislation. In terms of the National Heritage Act no 25 of 1999, provision for the automatic protection of buildings over the age of 60 years is made in clause 34.1 which stipulates that '*No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.*' Application for demolition or alteration of these structures would have to be directed to the Provincial Heritage Resources Agency for KwaZulu – Natal, *Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali* in Pietermaritzburg.

Please note also that whilst this heritage report has certain recommendations, they may or may not be upheld by the adjudicators in the appropriate Heritage Authority, when it comes to assessment. This is part of the process, and once that first level of adjudication has been completed, then the appropriate steps for a second phase can be assessed. Much can be achieved / mitigated in the design process, given correct briefing by the client and sufficient dexterity by the architects involved.

1. Introduction and methodology

Debbie Whelan of Archaic Consulting was requested by Mr. Barry St. Leger – Denny, of St Leger Denny Architects to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment of part of the CMH Datcentre Complex situated at 119-123 Monty Naicker Street, formerly Pine Street, in Central Durban. The site is located close to Union Street which links Monty Naicker with Dr. Pixley kaSeme Street, formerly West Street. The intention of the developers is to demolish the entire complex and re-develop the site.

The building in question is the oldest evident structure in the CMH Datcentre Complex. The modest structure has been largely obscured by accretions for many years, and, certainly, the complex of buildings of more recent construction which hides it to the south of the building has very little merit.

Mr. St. Leger – Denny furnished Archaic Consulting with some information regarding the site and its zoning, and this was supplemented by information kindly provided by Mr. Arthur Gammage from the Ethekwini Metropolitan Council Architectural Division. Further information was gleaned from a number of volumes of the Natal Directory, as well as the Artefacts website.

A site inspection was carried out by Mr. St. Leger – Denny and Debbie Whelan on 28th October 2013, and photographs of the building and its additions and alterations taken.

By 1936 the new building in question was constructed. It was described simply as Kempster, Sedgewick Ltd. (workshop). The neighbours at 125 Pine Street traded as 'Incorporated Sheet Metal Workers'.

The 1945 Natal Directory notes the same situation. McNamees had two retail premises in West Street, and the workshop in Congella, whilst Kempster, Sedgewick Ltd. continued to use the premises situated at 119-123 Pine Street as a workshop.

It would appear that, whilst Woodrow was working on the new Factory at Congella, a relative unknown, Spiridon Paterake was engaged to redevelop the Pine Street Site. Paterake was a recent arrival in Durban, and is recorded as having designed Park Lodge Gardens in 1935 and Stirling Court, Cato Square some 3 years later. Apart from this he practised largely in Pretoria.

3. Assessment of structure

As noted earlier in this report, there is little visible of the original structure, hidden as it is behind parapet wall accretions, covering the brick curved gable end to Monty Naicker Street, as well as the buildings around it. Furthermore, apart from the elegant Dunlop building to the east of it, there is little streetscape of any value (see Fig 2).



Fig 2: Streetscape on Monty Naicker Street: Dunlop (in the foreground), the building in question on 119-123, further development of CMH Datcentre beyond, and the BP Centre in the background, cornering onto Samora Machel Street (formerly Aliwal Street).

The old building situated at 119-123 Monty Naicker Street is constructed of English Bond brickwork with high level steel windows with a pivot - hung opening section. The roof is of elegant steel trusses, covered with corrugated asbestos, interspersed with sections of transparent corrugated sheeting. There is an elevated and central double rib running the length of the building, whilst the main roofing sections are gently cranked.

The elevation to Monty Naicker Street has been obscured by an unfortunate parapet wall, which negates any roofscape that this building may have once formed with its neighbour. This parapet has two main openings of roller shutter, set into a blank wall with branded signage. A passing attempt has been made at elaboration, in the ruled plastering and the defined

projecting plastered string course at the top of the parapet. Furthermore, the brickwork to this elevation is stretcher bonded, with a narrow brick with deeply raked horizontal coursing.

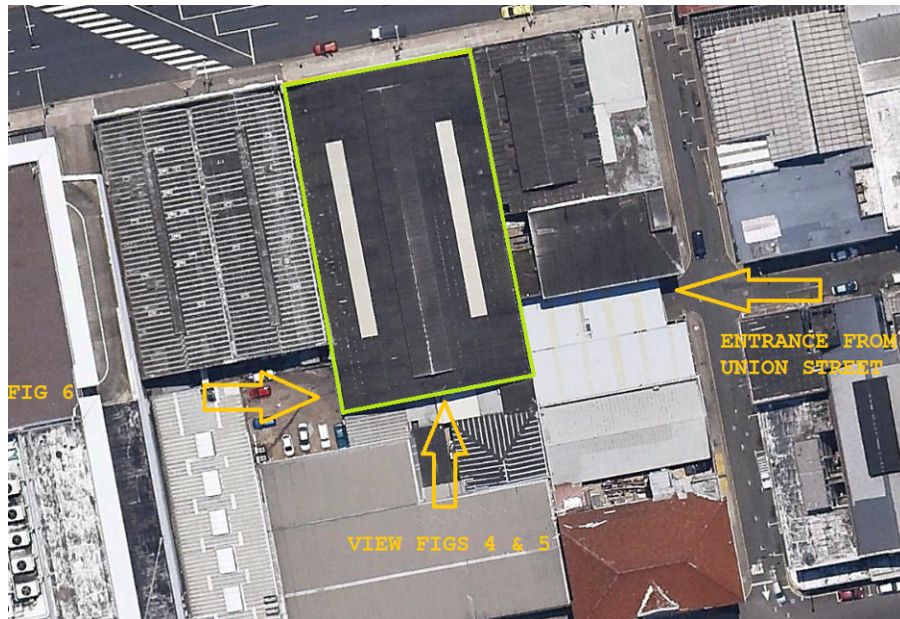


Fig 3: Google Earth image showing positions of origin of photographs

The east and west elevations are obscured due to their location behind buildings. The south elevation is partly visible, viewed from a small courtyard amongst the excrescence of unplanned building space that forms the bulk of the CMH Datcentre site.



Fig 4 and 5: South end of building, upper section showing efflorescence

An access to the building enabled by the formation of Portion 1 of 11137 leads towards a side entrance off Union Street comprising a corrugated sheeting covered parking, which leads into the building. On the other side, a lightwell to the west reveals an entrance of shutters, from a gently projecting end bay.



Fig 6: South western corner of old building from lightwell as per Fig 3

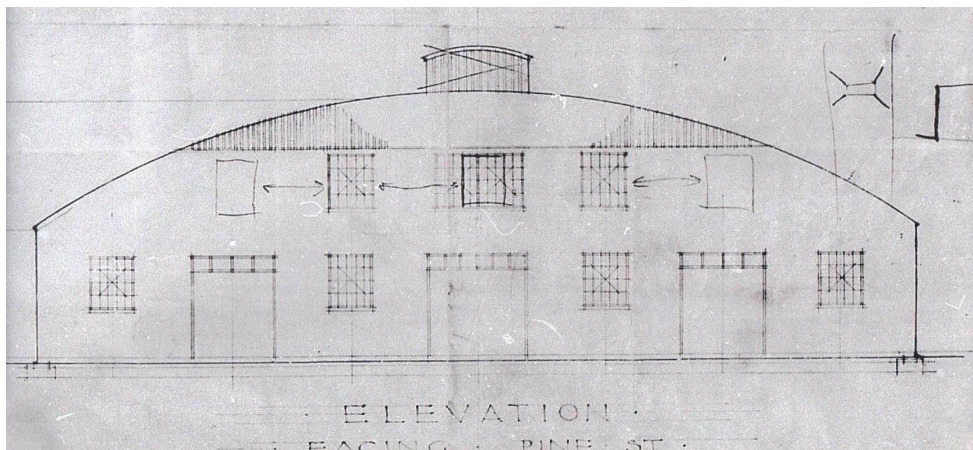


Fig 7: Patrake's approved elevation for the workshop for McNamees, 1933 (with kind assistance Mr Arthur Gammage)

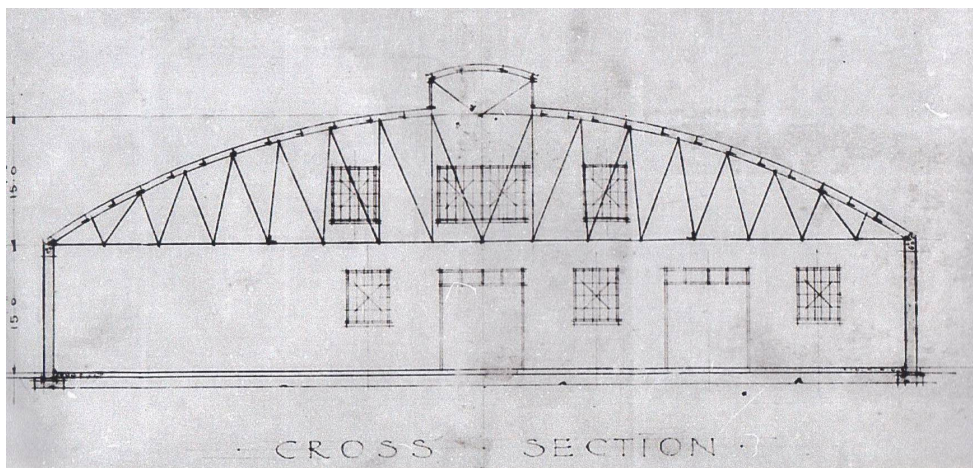


Fig 8: Patrake's approved section for the workshop for McNamees, 1933 (with kind assistance Mr Arthur Gammage)

The submission drawings prepared for the Council show a clumsy and inarticulate building, which as the contemporary photographs show, is relieved only by the lightness of the steel roof trusses.

The interior is a single open space, which is used as workshop. It has a good light quality, from the clear sheeting, and high level south light windows. The steel trusses are exposed, acting as the main architectural feature of the space. The walls are plastered and painted and the floor is a smooth granolithic finish.



Fig 9: Interior looking towards the south



Fig 10: Interior looking towards the north

4. Recommendations

Significance of structure:

The structure is of low significance on all levels. Although much of the external fabric of building together with its 3 dimensional quality is obscured, the drawings show a clumsy building that has little architectural quality. Association with McNamees Furnishers (as the site) as well as Kempster Sedgewick may have some minor merit, but, in the opinion of the author, this is certainly no motivation to retain the structure.

Significance	local	regional	national	international
architectural	low	low	low	low
social	low	low	low	low
technical	low	low	low	low
historical	low	low	low	low
scientific	low	low	low	low

Given the limited significance of the building, as well as its limited contribution to the streetscape, demolition, should it be required, is an option. However:

- It is recommended that the building next door (currently Dunlop) be acknowledged somehow in the planning process, since this does have some architectural merit.
- It is recommended that the trusses be reused in the new development, failing which they be offered to Amafa for reuse in structures which have relevance in terms of history or heritage.



Fig 11: Dunlop building on the corner of Union Lane which could benefit from sensitive treatment of the streetscape onto Monty Naicker Street

5. References

<http://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=1236&countadd=1>

Natal Directories: 1920, 1929, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1936, 1945, 1946, 1950

Kind assistance: Mr Arthur Gammage, Ethekewini Metropolitan Council Architectural Division