

Appendix A – Report IPGPL25-050

Heritage Designation Brief



The Barrie Building

310-314 George Street North

Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee

Heritage Designation Status Sheet

Street Address:	310-314 George Street North
Roll Number:	040050227000000
Short Legal Description:	PT LT 1 S OF CHARLOTTE ST E OF GEORGE ST(PETERBOROUGH) AS IN R658103 S/T & T/W R506157 ; PETERBOROUGH
PACAC Application Review Date:	September 9, 2025
Heritage Type:	Built Structure
Designation Type:	Ontario Heritage Act – Part IV
Designation Brief Completion Date:	June 2025
Designation Brief Completed by:	Heritage Preservation Office staff
Comments:	

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The subject property has been researched and evaluated to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990 (the Act). A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets **any two** of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. Staff have determined that 310-314 George Street North meets criteria and has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Act.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

i. is a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method:

310-314 George Street North is a rare and early example of Art Deco style in Peterborough and features several key components of the style, including glazed terracotta on the street elevation, geometric, low-relief decoration, and streamlined, horizontal bands of windows.

ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The building displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its use of glazed terracotta in low-relief geometric design, horizontal bands of glass and bronze on the western façade. Its overall composition is an excellent rendering of Art Deco design principles.

iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

When it was constructed, 310-314 George Street North was an extremely modern building using up-to-date technology in its construction and interior furnishings. Built on a steel frame, the building featured bands of windows across the western façade above the storefronts which set it apart from older, Victorian buildings in downtown Peterborough. It also had a passenger elevator in the original 1910 design, although this has now been updated with modern technology. This elevator was one of the earliest elevators installed in a building in Peterborough. Furthermore, when the building was completed in 1915, it possessed the most up-to-date fittings in its offices including a vacuuming system, electric wiring, heating, and plumbing.

2. The property has historical value or associative value because it:

- i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community:**

310-314 George Street North is directly associated with the commercial sector as it was the home of a long-standing business in Peterborough — Barrie's Furriers—as well as many other smaller local businesses. Initially constructed as a store, fur factory, and office space, the property was important in the development of Peterborough's business community through the provision of modern office space for rent.

- ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:**

The subject property has the potential to yield additional information that contributes to the understanding of early twentieth century Peterborough's business community within the central core.

- iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to the community:**

310-314 George Street North was designed by the Toronto architectural firm, Bond and Smith, established by English architect Charles Herbert Acton and Peterborough-born architect, Sandford Fleming Smith, the grandson of Sir Sandford Fleming. 310-314 George Street North was one of the firm's last completed commissions and reflects the design practice of this firm in the early 1910s with regard to their commercial buildings.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

- i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of the area:**

The property maintains the commercial character of the surrounding area, which is dominated by nineteenth-century three- and four-storey structures built to the lot line. Although a later addition to George Street than many of the other structures in the area and stylistically distinctive from them, 310-314 George Street North maintains the overall character of the commercial core through its placement on the site, height, and proportions.

- ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:**

The subject property is historically and physically linked to its surroundings as a continuation of the multi-story commercial structures of the downtown core. Although currently surrounded by more modern buildings, 310-314 George Street North is visually, historically, and functionally linked to the historic commercial area. It is an integral part of the urban, commercial landscape of the City's downtown core.

iii. is a landmark:

The property is a local landmark as one of the few Art Deco buildings in Peterborough.

Design and Physical Value

310-314 George Street North is a rare and early example of Art Deco commercial architecture in Peterborough. Completed in 1915 by the Toronto firm Bond and Smith to a 1910 design, the building features several key components of the style, including a terracotta façade, geometric, low-relief decoration and streamlined, horizontal bands of windows.

The Art Deco style emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century and reached the height of its popularity in the 1920s and 1930s. A movement that encompassed visual art, architecture, and design, the Art Deco style was consciously modern, integrated modern materials such as steel, concrete and glass in designs that eschewed historical forms and details. While, in reality, many Art Deco buildings were based on classical design principles, buildings in the style integrated decorative motifs based on abstracted, geometric elements, such as chevrons and zigzags, into overall designs that were intended to be streamlined and modern. In cities across Canada, many office buildings were constructed in this style which was used to emphasize the verticality of increasingly tall structures. Glazed architectural terracotta was also used extensively in Art Deco buildings, in order to accommodate the decorative nature of the style. The style was seen as an embodiment of modernity and the increasing urbanization and rapid technological growth of the early twentieth century.



The building displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its terracotta façade, one of the building's most important components. Composed of glazed white terracotta blocks, it integrates low-relief, geometric design in a way consistent with wider trends in Art Deco architectural terracotta usage. It also retains the symmetrical layout of Art Deco commercial structures, enhanced through the

horizontal bands of windows on the upper stories of the building which complement its vertical bands of terracotta.

When it was constructed, 310-314 George Street North was an extremely modern structure. Built on a steel frame, the western façade, comprised of imported terracotta, bronze, and glass, allowing for the long horizontal bands of windows across the front of the building that both adhered to the streamlined aesthetic of the Art Deco style and allowed for natural light to enter into the upper storey offices. In contrast to the Victorian buildings around it, this was a conscious shift to a new aesthetic and technological approach that reflected the interior usage of the structure. Similarly, the new offices also contained a range of modern conveniences, including a vacuuming system, heating, interior plumbing and electrical wiring. Although now replaced with modern elevators, the building contained an elevator in its original 1910 plan, which was executed in the final structure. This is a very early example of an elevator in a building in Peterborough.

The lower storey of 310-314 George Street North was initially composed of two recessed storefronts and central entrance for access to upper offices. Although this has now been converted to a single, central entrance, the modifications to the front of the lower story have been sympathetic to the original design, both with regard to materials and to Art Deco design principles, including symmetry and subdued decoration. The building remains an important and intact example of Art Deco design in Peterborough.

Historical and Associative Value



310-314 George Street North has cultural heritage value or interest as a commercial building within Peterborough's downtown core and in its long-standing use by Barrie's Furriers, the firm owned by Thomas Barrie, which initially commissioned the structure and occupied it throughout much of the twentieth century. Constructed as a store, fur factory, and office building, it retained this function until its conversion into a hotel in the early twenty-first century. It is an important example of an early twentieth century office

building where different businesses could rent out space as needed, an essential function in Peterborough during this period with an increase in office-based, professional businesses in the city.

Barrie's Furriers initially occupied a portion of the Turnbull Building, moving out in late 1912 or early 1913. It was the removal of Barrie's which precipitated the renovation of the Turnbull Building in 1913, ultimately leading to its partial collapse later that year. Barrie had commissioned a new building in 1910 and Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith developed blueprints for a building to accommodate Barrie's own business as well as space for twenty-nine offices to rent to other businesses. The building was not completed, however, until 1915 and Barrie's occupied two different sites on George Street before moving into the new storefront in late 1915.





Throughout most of the twentieth century, 310-314 George Street housed offices for a range of business and services on the second and third stories while Barrie's retained the storefront for sales and fourth floor as a fur factory. By the early 1920s, Barrie's had become a significant commercial employer in Peterborough, employing over 40 people in roles ranging from sales to fur cutting. During this period, Barrie's also expanded into western Canada, opening offices in Edmonton, Regina and Saskatoon. The upper storey

offices were home to a range of other businesses beginning in 1916 when the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company began to rent out office space above the new storefront, remaining in the building until 1932. Other businesses in need of office space quickly followed, likely attracted to the building's modern amenities, and throughout much of the twentieth century, the Barrie Building—as it became known—housed a wide array of businesses, including dentists, wool importers, and accountants. Occasionally, these spaces also served non-commercial purposes. For example, in 1917, two rooms on the third floor were donated by Barrie as quarters for the members of the Peterborough Returned Soldiers' Association.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Barrie Building faced significant vacancies in many of its rental spaces. Although there was an increase in occupancy in the early 1990s, it had, by 2000, been converted into a hotel, first a Days Inn, and then the Peterborough Inn and Suites.

Beyond its importance within the City of Peterborough's downtown commercial development, 310-314 George Street North has particular historical value as the work of Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith. The firm, which was both successful and prolific during its period of operation between 1897 and 1914, was founded by English architect Charles Herbert Acton Bond and the



GEORGE STREET, PETERBORO, ONT.

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Peterborough-born Sandford Fleming Smith, the nephew of Sir Sandford Fleming. They completed numerous designs throughout southern Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, including other designs in Peterborough such as the 1903 Ontario Bank and an 1897

set of row houses for Sir Sandford Fleming at 1, 5, and 11 Fleming Place. 310-314 George Street North is one of the firm's later designs and is consistent with their work on commercial buildings during the early 1910s, where they often made use of white, glazed terracotta with low-relief, geometric designs in the Art Deco style. For example, two Toronto buildings executed during the same period, 19 Dundas Square (the Hermant Building) completed for Imperial Optical in 1913 and the Danforth Avenue Union Bank, also completed in 1913, demonstrate the wider use of white glazed terracotta and Art Deco stylistic elements in the firm's later work. The decoration on Hermant Building, in particular, is congruous with that on 310-314 George Street North, demonstrating the place of the Barrie Building within Bond and Smith's wider body of work. Although completed after the Hermant Building, 310-314 George Street North was actually designed first, making it likely that the work on the Peterborough commission informed the firm's work in Toronto. This work is also significant as an early example of Art Deco architecture in general, as the style did not reach its height until after the First World War and demonstrates the firm's up to date knowledge of contemporary architectural trends.

Contextual Value

The subject property is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as continuation of the three- and four-storey commercial buildings which make up Peterborough's downtown core. Although currently surrounded by more modern buildings, 310-314 George Street North has visual and functional links to the wider historic character of George Street, making it an integral aspect of the downtown's commercial landscape.

310-314 George Street North was a later addition to the downtown core, composed primarily of nineteenth-century buildings constructed in the Italianate commercial style. The Art Deco style in which it was designed is consciously modern and visually distinct from other structures in the commercial area, reflecting its date of construction as well as its role as a new office building offering modern amenities. Designed in a style that reflected the developing architectural trends in other Ontario cities, the building demonstrates a shift from the eclectic Victorian styles towards a new type of architecture that embodied early twentieth-century ideals about modernity and industry. However, despite its stylistic distinctiveness, the Bond and Smith design was sympathetic to the surrounding streetscape, integrating the building into the commercial core through adherence to the standard scale, proportion and setback of Peterborough's established commercial structures. Its original use as an office building and store also linked it to the more northerly blocks of George Street through its function, a link which remains in its continued use as a commercial property. As a result, 310-314 George Street North maintains and supports the character of the surrounding area through its connection to the wider commercial landscape of downtown Peterborough, both historically and in its present use.



"The short statement of reason for designation, including a description of the heritage attributes along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief constitute the "Reasons for the Designation" required under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Heritage Designation Brief is available for viewing in the City Clerk's office during regular business hours."

SHORT STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

310-314 George Street North has cultural heritage value or interest as a commercial office building and store in Peterborough's downtown core constructed for Barrie's Furriers, an important Peterborough business throughout much of the twentieth century. Completed in 1915, the building is an early and rare example of architecture in the Art Deco style in Peterborough. It is an important heritage resources in the overall landscape of Peterborough's commercial downtown. A late design of the Toronto architectural firm Bond and Smith, which itself had important connections to Peterborough through its principal Sandford Fleming Smith, the building is well-executed and displays a high degree of craftsmanship and technical achievement in the use of glazed white terracotta, bronze and glass on a steel frame structure. When initially constructed, the building was fitted with one of the earliest elevators in Peterborough, as well as centralized vacuuming system, heating, and plumbing.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations and the roof including all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, terracotta, plaster parging, metal and glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features:

Exterior Elements:

- 4-storey brick structure on a steel frame
- Art Deco Style
- Flat roof
- Construction to the west lot line of the property
- Symmetrical composition of west façade, including door and window openings and decorative motifs
- Recessed central entrance
- Decorative white glazed terracotta, including
 - Abstract geometric ornamentation
- Fenestration, including:
 - Original window openings, including their arrangement in horizontal bands;
 - Metal elements including frames, recessed decorative bands and all bronze features;
 - Window sills;
 - Window openings and their associated elements including moulding, jambs, and trim.
- Viewshed from the building along George Street North