

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT FORMER COMMERCIAL HOTEL, BROUGHAM, ON

FHBRO Number: **05-036**
DFRP Number: **09820**
Resource Name: **Former Commercial Hotel**
Address: **1709 Hwy 7 Rd, Pickering Airport Lands, Brougham, Ontario**
FHBRO Status: **“Recognized” Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **Around 1860**
Designer: **Not known**
Original Function: **House and hotel**
Current Function: **Offices**
Modifications: **Removal of front porch, reconstruction of south wall, new triple glazed reproduction windows, replacement of dormer roofing and chimneys (80’s).**
Custodian: **Transport Canada**

Description of Historic Place

The former Commercial Hotel consists of a two-storey brick building with a gable roof and features pointed arched windows prominently positioned in two dormers with finials and decorative wood fascia. Facing Highway 7, it was initially built as a home and then converted into a hotel. Although it is now being used as offices, the sign “Commercial Hotel” painted on its front façade gives a clear indication of its past. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

Heritage Value

The Former Commercial Hotel is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values:

Historical value:

The Former Commercial Hotel is a good example of 19th century post-pioneer rural settlement in Canada, at a time when urbanization and a more diverse economy began to transform the rural communities. The building represents a second-generation of progress, and the idea of permanence, consolidation, stabilization and maturation in rural townships. The Former Commercial Hotel is also associated with local Brougham families and current tenant M. McGiniss, who is well known in the community for his active contribution as an environmentalist. The Former Commercial Hotel is the last surviving example of three hotels in Brougham, and is a very good example of Brougham’s prosperous time in a major period of local development in the 1850s and 1860s.

Architectural value:

The Former Commercial Hotel is a two-storey red brick building with a gable roof, and is a good example of rural domestic architecture. The exterior brickwork, pointed arched windows, decorative wood fascia and finials are characteristic elements from Gothic Revivalism and give the facades a charming and reassuring appearance. The building offers a good example of an effective interior layout with proven flexibility to accommodate different functions over time. The plan was generated within a rectangular footprint, with an entrance point from each side and rooms arranged around a central staircase. The building’s solid timber and

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE
National Historic Sites Directorate, Parks Canada
25 Eddy Street, 5th Floor, Gatineau, QC K1A 0M5
Telephone: 819-997-6740 / Fax: 819-953-6146 / Web Site: www.parkscanada.gc.ca/federalhb

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brick construction demonstrates good craftsmanship and materials that are evocative of artisanal traditions. It has endured many alterations but appears to be in good condition, with surviving interior details, such as the front door, the stairwell and the balustrade.

Environmental value:

The Former Commercial Hotel, as part of the remaining red brick buildings that stands out among the row of clapboard houses, reinforces Brougham's present character. Its associated landscape has evolved over time, with the removal of the open porch and the addition of a shed in the rear. However, the site has generally retained its character and relationship to the building. The Former Commercial Hotel acts as a familiar symbolic landmark for the people of Brougham, and it has gained further awareness since the land expropriation by the federal government in 1972 to make way for a new airport.

Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of the Former Commercial Hotel should be respected:

Its role as a manifestation of the historical theme of 19th century post-pioneer rural settlement in Canada and of the idea of permanence and consolidation in a period of progress and prosperity as reflected in:

- The physical references to its former functions, including the painted sign "Commercial Hotel" marking its front façade; and,
- Its importance as the last surviving example of three hotels from this period in Brougham.

Its good aesthetic and functional design, and good quality materials and craftsmanship as manifested in:

- Its scale and massing, composed of a two-storey, rectangular brick clad structure with a gable roof, dormers and chimneys;
- The composition of the front façade with its two large paned windows on either side of the entranceway;
- The red brick cladding, second-storey pointed arched windows, decorative wood fascia and finials, characteristics of the Gothic Revival style;
- The simple and effective arrangement of its plan consisting of rooms around a central stairway; and,
- The surviving interior details such as its front door, stairwell and balustrade.

The manner in which the building reinforces the rural character of Brougham as evidenced in:

- Its noticeable presence in the hamlet accentuated by its two-storey red brick construction,
- Its physical proximity to Highway 7 and its relationship with the adjacent properties, which has remained unchanged in its character; and,
- Its symbolic landmark value as contributing to the history of the hamlet.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. For further information contact FHBRO. October 2006

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