

## **Heritage Report: Reasons for Heritage Designation**



**15 Bramalea Road**

**September 2020**

## Profile of Subject Property

Municipal Address	15 Bramalea Road
PIN Number	142020618
Legal Description	BLOCK E, PLAN 720, EXCEPT PART 4 ON PLAN 43R-18990 AND PARTS 1, 2, 3 ON PLAN 43R-36263; AND SAVE AND EXCEPT PART 4 & 5 ON PLAN 43R-36263; BRAMPTON
Ward Number	7
Property Name	Simmons Canada Front Office Wing
Current Owner	ADMNS BRAMPTON INVESTMENT CORPORATION
Owner Concurrence	Yes
Current Zoning	Industrial
Current Use(s)	Vacant industrial warehouse with front office wing
Construction Date	Original construction date 1964 (with expansion to the warehouse constructed in 1973). The heritage structure will be reconstructed by reinstating its heritage attributes; salvaging, reusing and incorporating selected materials; and recreating its original design, scale and footprint.
Notable Owners or Occupants	Simmons Canada
Heritage Resources on Subject Property	One-storey front office wing facing Bramalea Road
Relevant Council Decision	Approval of settlement agreed by the City and Owner resulting in the decision issued by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (the "LPAT") on September 13, 2019
Additional Information	None

## **1. Introduction**

The property at 15 Bramalea Road is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value or interest. The property meets the criteria for designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design or physical value, historical or associative value and contextual value.

## **2. Description of Property**

The heritage designation applies to the one-storey front office wing facing Bramalea Road and its surrounding permeable (green) landscape. The other portions and features of the property are not protected through the designation. 15 Bramalea Road is located on the northeast corner of Bramalea Road and Steeles Avenue East, in the former Chinguacousy Township, now the City of Brampton. In 1964, Simmons Canada, a bedding manufacturer established new facilities in the Satellite City developed by Bramalea Business Park, purchasing 20 acres in 1963. The warehouse facility and its one-storey front wing was subsequently constructed on the property to replace the aging Toronto plant.

## **3. Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

### **Design/Physical Value:**

The property has architectural value as the building consists of an administration (office) wing distinguished in design from the warehouse facility. The overall design is representative of the International Style of architecture, characterized by simple geometric forms broken into a series of volumes under a flat-shaped roofing.

The one-storey front office wing at 15 Bramalea Road exhibits design or physical value as a representative example of the International Style of architecture applied to an office and factory building within a suburban environment. The notable and character defining architectural features of the front office wing are the prominent front entrance with a side display bay window that are both covered by a large canopy, a simple longitudinal form broken into a series of windows and white glazed brick. The design of the front office wing within a surrounding permeable (green) landscape is conveying the general impression of geometry, repetition, minimalism and symmetry that applies to suburban offices and industrial buildings represented by this architectural style.

**Historical/Associative Value:**

The property has direct associations with the Simmons Canada Company which was one of the first industries established within the new Bramalea Business Park and Satellite Master Planned City model of Bramalea. The property was acquired by Simmons Canada in 1963 and remained in their ownership until 2008. It was the company's flagship operation for the country. The building's office and warehousing facilities are also directly associated with the development of the Bramalea Business Park and the Master Plan model of development by the Bramalea Consolidated Developments.

In 1957, approximately 8,000 acres of farmland in the south-east part of Chinguacousy Township was being purchased for the development of a "Satellite City". Intended to be separate entity from the neighbouring Towns of Brampton and Malton, the concept was funded by the newly-formed Bramalea Consolidated Developments Ltd., a private company that would go on to develop and manage properties throughout North America.

Simmons Canada is one of the earliest and longest industries to be established within the master-planner "Satellite City" model. Bramalea was planned with a live-work model that tied industrial and commercial clusters to nearby residential neighbourhoods. The Simmons factory is a significant reminder of how this planning model evolved.

**Contextual Value:**

The property exhibits contextual value, as it reflects the early master planning model of the Bramalea Business Park and the development Bramalea as "Satellite City". The property is important for maintaining and supporting this model of urbanization as well as the industrial character of the area.

Bramalea Consolidated developed a Master Plan that balanced industrial/business parks, residential neighbourhoods, commercial and cultural centres, greenbelts and recreational facilities, overlaid with inter-urban expressways, creating an idyllic, self-sustaining community. The proximity to major highways, Toronto International Airport, Canadian National Railway Line, as well as to commercial centres made Bramalea's business park one of the most popular in the Greater Toronto Area. Dozens of other companies had similar facilities in the Bramalea Business Park, with low horizontal buildings set in generous landscapes.

#### **4. Description of Heritage Attributes/Character Defining Elements**

The heritage attributes comprise the front (west) and sides (north and south) elevations of the reconstructed and replicated one-storey front wing of the former Simmons Factory Building facing Bramalea Road, including all entranceways and windows, together with construction materials of brick, metal, pebbledash aggregates and associated building techniques. The detailed heritage attributes are found on and around the reconstructed and replicated one-storey front wing of the former Simmons Factory Building facing Bramalea Road. They consist of:

- The massing and orientation of the building facing Bramalea Road
- The placement of the building and its setback from Bramalea Road
- The view of the building from Bramalea Road unobstructed by other buildings, structures or constructions
- The flat roof and one-storey height of the building
- The design composition of the front (west) and sides (north and south) facades, which feature a rhythm of glazed white brick veneer walls, laid in common bond, with tripartite window fenestration and paired tripartite window fenestration separated by a column
- The facades supported by a continuous base and topped with pebbledash aggregate panels
- The main entrance and adjacent display case windows on the front (west) elevation
- The canopy that covers the main entrance and display case windows
- The permeable landscaping and grass around the building

#### **5. Policy Framework**

In the context of land use planning, the Province of Ontario has declared that the wise use and management of Ontario's cultural heritage resources is a key provincial interest.

A set of Provincial Policy Statements (PPS) provides planning policy direction on matters of provincial interest in Ontario. These statements set the policy framework for regulating the development and use of land. The relevant heritage policy statement is PPS 2.6.1, which states that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". PPS 2.6.1 is tied to Section 3 of the *Ontario Planning Act*, which stipulates that land use planning decisions by municipalities "shall be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statements.

The policy is also integrated with the Ontario Heritage Act. This piece of legislation grants municipalities powers to preserve locally significant cultural heritage resources through

heritage designation. Decisions as to whether a property should be designated heritage or not is based solely on its inherent cultural heritage value or interest.

City Council prefers to designate heritage properties with the support of property owners. However, Council will designate a property proactively, without the concurrence of a property owner as required. These principles are reflected in Brampton's Official Plan. The relevant policies are as follows:

Section 4.10.1.3: All significant heritage resources shall be designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act to help ensure effective protection and their continuing maintenance, conservation and restoration.

Section 4.10.1.5: Priority will be given to designating all heritage cemeteries and all Class A heritage resources in the Cultural Heritage Resources Register under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 4.10.1.6: The City will give immediate consideration to the designation of any heritage resource under the Ontario Heritage Act if that resource is threatened with demolition, significant alterations or other potentially adverse impacts.

In 2015, the City Council adopted a new Strategic Plan to guide the evolution, growth and development of the city. Heritage preservation is one of the goals of this new Strategic Plan. In 2017, City Council endorsed the Planning Vision.

These principles are also guided by recognized best practices in the field of heritage conservation.

## **6. Resources**

Goldsmith Borgal & Company Architects Ltd. (2019, February). *Heritage Impact Assessment for 15 Bramalea Road*.

Leonard, Jim. (2008, March) *Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Resources, Simmons Canada Factory (front façade only) 15 Bramalea Road, Brampton*

## 7. Appendix



Figure 1: Aerial map showing 15 Bramalea Road. The exact boundaries of the property are not shown. This map is for information purposes only with the north oriented at the top. The arrow marks the one-storey front office wing identified as the built heritage resource of the property.



Figure 2: Image looking east from Bramalea Road showing the one-storey front office wing.