

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT 689 HAMILTON RD, LONDON

FINAL
JUNE 22, 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) for the property at 689 Hamilton Road, London was commissioned by the City of London in May 2023 and completed by Common Bond Collective. The property contains a two storey, commercial building constructed 1947 with a substantial front addition in c.1962. The property is located at the southwest corner of Hamilton Road and Tennyson Street in the former suburb of Ealing. The subject property was added to the City of London's Heritage Register under Part IV, subsection 27(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act in 2020.

The CHER consists of historical research, site documentation, analysis and evaluation to understand the potential heritage values and attributes of the property. The evaluation determined that 689 Hamilton Road does not meet any criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). Accordingly, a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest identifying the heritage values and attributes was not drafted.

Common Bond gratefully acknowledges the staff at the London Room and Western Archives in providing historic documentation related to the property and surrounding area.

1.0 INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) for the property at 689 Hamilton Road was commissioned by the City of London in May 2023 and completed by Common Bond Collective.

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The property at 689 Hamilton Road is considered by the City of London to be of cultural heritage value or interest and is included on the Heritage Register under Part IV, Subsection 27(3). The property is currently vacant and was subject to a Property Standards Order which expired and registered on title.

The purpose of the CHER is to describe, analyse and evaluate the property in accordance with the criteria set out in O. Reg. 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA), in order to determine if it qualifies for designation under Part IV, subsection 29(1) by meeting two or more prescribed criteria in O. Reg. 9/06.

1.2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The CHER was completed by Common Bond Collective with a project team composed of David Deo (BA, Dipl. Heritage Conservation, CAHP) and Ellen Kowalchuk (MA, CAHP). The team conducted a site visit on May 15, 2023 during which the team reviewed and documented the building exterior, landscape and surrounding context. The interior of the building was not reviewed.

Primary and secondary research was completed online and in-person. Sources and institutions included, ONLand, London Room at the London Public Library and Western Archives. Primary sources included assessment rolls, aerial photography, building permits, city directories, fire insurance plans and maps. Secondary sources included local histories of London. A complete list of sources is contained in 10.0 Bibliography.

The London Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and the London & Middlesex Historical Society were contacted by email for records relating to the property and to inquire about their interest in the property. To date, no response has been received from either organization.

2.0 STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

The study area is the property at 689 Hamilton Road (subject property). It is legally described as PT LTS 44, 45 & 46 PLAN 504 AS IN 255657, PT LT 46 PLAN 504 AS IN 255783.

The study area is an irregularly-shaped property approximately .10 hectare (.25 acre) in size and located in the London East area (Figure 1). The subject property is located on the southwest corner of Hamilton Road and Tennyson Street. Hamilton Road is a four lane, east-west thoroughfare lined with residential and commercial businesses. Hamilton Road does not run parallel to other east-west roads, but is laid out on an angle thus creating sharp angles where it intersects with north-south streets.

Across Hamilton Road and to the north of the subject property, is Holy Cross Santa Cruz Church (built c.1950). It is a large, brick structure located at the corner of Hamilton Road and Elm Street. To the east of the subject property is a small concrete block building which was previously a convenience store. It is vacant. To the east of the subject property area is a row of three modest buildings (Figure 2). The earliest dates to c.1930 and was constructed as a residence but now has a one storey commercial addition on its front elevation. The other two structures were built c.1950.

There are no identified cultural heritage resources adjacent to the subject property.¹

2.1 LANDSCAPE

The study area is a small parcel of land, approximately .10 hectares in area. It is flat and completely covered with asphalt that provided surface parking when the building functioned as a restaurant (Figure 3). The only landscaped elements are two large, wooden planters at the north end of the property which contain overgrown vegetation.

2.2 BUILT ELEMENTS

The study area contains a vacant two-storey brick restaurant building. Located in the southwest corner of the property, the structure is comprised of a rectangular rear brick mass, with a prominent one-storey gabled entrance feature on the primary (north) elevation (Figure 4). The rear building mass is a two-storey structure, with a raised foundation, and enamelled brick walls rising to a flat roof with metal cornice. It is punctuated by several window and door openings on the east and south elevations (Figure 5). The west elevation contains several large, blind openings, which originally date from the original service station design (Figure 6). The exposed parts of the rear mass's north elevation are white painted wooden siding, slightly recessed behind wall-end brick piers (Figure 7). Windows are double-hung four-over-four wooden sash type (Figure 8), and doors are metal slab (Figure 9). Bricks are buff, coated with white

¹ West of the subject property, 672 Hamilton Road was identified as a cultural heritage resource in the 2020 ASI Hamilton Road Corridor Planning Study, but was removed from the cultural heritage register on August 2, 2022.

enamel with black speckles (Figure 10).

The front entrance takes the form of a large pediment rising from a predominately glazed section at grade (Figure 11). The glazing starts atop six courses of enamelled brick, and the west elevation of the entry is entirely bricks. A wide, shallow gable rises from this point slightly above the rear building, with remnants of several restaurant signs contained within the resulting pediment (Figure 12). The roof has a standing seam metal cladding, with a louvred four sided cupola on its ridge. Red details are used throughout, including the cornice, roof cladding, and on the main entrance. Some of the windows are obscured, being boarded up with plywood.

The interior of the space is in a state of demolition. Concrete block exterior and interior walls are evident, and wall framing is exposed throughout (Figure 13).

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND EXISTING PROTECTIONS

3.1 PLANNING ACT

The *Planning Act* establishes the foundation for land use planning in Ontario, describing how land can be controlled and by whom. Section 2 of the *Planning Act* identifies heritage conservation as a matter of provincial interest and directs that municipalities shall have regard to the conservation of features of significant architectural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Heritage conservation contributes to other matters of provincial interest, including the promotion of built form that is well-designed and that encourages a sense of place.

The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), which positions heritage as a key component in supporting provincial principles and interests.

3.1.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2020)

Conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, health and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the *Planning Act*. Cultural heritage resources are considered assets that should be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the PPS.

Section 2.6 pertaining to Cultural Heritage and Archaeology states that “Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved (Section 2.6.1).”

Significant means: “in regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest.. Process and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Built heritage resource: means a building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured or constructed part or remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest as identified by a community, including an Indigenous community. Built heritage resources are located on property that may be designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage or that may be included on local, provincial, federal and/or international registers.

Conserved: means the identification, protection, management and use of *built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources* in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological

assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decision-maker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches can be included in these plans and assessments.

Protected heritage property: means property designated under Parts IV, V or VI of the Ontario Heritage Act; property subject to a heritage conservation easement under Parts II or IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; property identified by the Province and prescribed public bodies as provincial heritage property under the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal legislation, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

3.2 ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT

The *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) is the key piece of legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in the province. Among other things, it regulates how municipal councils can identify and protect heritage resources including archaeological sites within their boundaries.

The OHA permits municipal clerks to maintain a register of properties that are of cultural heritage value of interest. The City of London's Heritage Register includes: individual properties that have been designated under Part IV, subsection 29 (1) of the OHA; properties in a heritage conservation district designated under Part V, subsection 41 (1) of the OHA; and properties that have not been designated, but that City Council believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV, subsection 27 (3) of the OHA.

Subsection 27 (9) requires a property owner to provide at least 60 days notice in writing of the owner's intention to demolish or remove a building or structure on a property that is included on a heritage register, but not designated.

The OHA includes nine criteria that are used for determining cultural heritage value or interest (O. Reg. 0/9):

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or

institution that is significant to a community.

5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture

6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically lint surroundings.

9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

Based on changes to the OHA (effective 1 January 2023), a property may be included on a heritage register under Part IV, subsection 27(3) if it meets one or more of these criteria. In order to be designated under Part IV, subsection 29(1) of the OHA, a property must meet two or more criteria.

3.3 THE LONDON PLAN (OFFICIAL PLAN, CONSOLIDATED MAY 25, 2020)

The *London Plan* is the new policy framework for all planning in London. Among other objectives, it sets out ways to conserve cultural heritage (built resources, archaeological resources and cultural landscapes) and protect environmental areas, hazard lands, and natural resources. Policies 551 - 622 of *The London Plan* apply to the conservation of cultural heritage resources. The following policies are relevant to this CHER.

551_ Cultural heritage is the legacy of both the tangible and the intangible attributes that our community has inherited from past generations. Our cultural heritage resources include tangible elements such as buildings, monuments, streetscapes, landscapes, books, artifacts and art, and intangible aspects such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge.

556_ In accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council may, by by-law, establish a municipal heritage committee to advise and assist Council on cultural heritage matters. In London, the municipal heritage committee is known as the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH).

557_ In accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council, in consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), will prepare and maintain a Register listing properties of cultural heritage value or interest. The Register may also be known

as The City of London Inventory of Heritage Resources. In addition to identifying properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the Register may include properties that are not designated but that Council believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest.

572_ In accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council may designate individual properties of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Act.

573_ City Council will consider one or more of the following criteria in the identification and designation of individual properties of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design or physical value because it:
 - a. Is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.
 - b. Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
 - c. Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historic value or associative value because it:
 - a. Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.
 - b. Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
 - c. Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it:
 - a. Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area.
 - b. Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings.
 - c. Is a landmark.

3.3.1 HAMILTON ROAD AREA COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The purpose of the Hamilton Road Area Community Improvement Plan (2018) is to aid in the revitalization and re-development of the Hamilton Road Area by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A component of the Hamilton Road Area Community Improvement Plan is to encourage the conservation and restoration of local heritage resources. Additionally, the Plan emphasizes that the area's heritage should be promoted and celebrated through events, including Doors Open, heritage tours, and Hidden History of Hamilton Road meetings, and others. Placing signage on

buildings is also encouraged.

3.3.2 HAMILTON ROAD CORRIDOR PLANNING STUDY

In 2020, the City of London completed a Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (CHAR) as a support document to the Hamilton Road Corridor Planning Study.² The Hamilton Road Corridor Planning Study will implement the recommendations of the Hamilton Road Community Improvement Plan to make it easier for property owners to use their properties along the Hamilton Road Corridor. The purpose of this CHAR is to describe the existing conditions of the Hamilton Road Corridor study area, present an inventory of previously identified and potential cultural heritage resources, and propose appropriate mitigation measures and recommendations for minimizing and avoiding potential negative impacts on those resources.

3.4 EXISTING PROTECTIONS

In November 2020, the property at 589 Hamilton Road was added to the London Cultural Register of Cultural Heritage Resources as a non-designated (listed) property, under Part IV, subsection 27(3) of the OHA. The property was added to the register based on the recommendations of the 2020 Hamilton Road Corridor Planning Study.

All properties included on the Register are believed to have potential cultural heritage value or interest if their cultural heritage value or interest has not yet been recognized by their designation under the OHA.

² ASI, *Hamilton Road Corridor Planning Study*, February 2020.

4.0 HISTORICAL SUMMARY

4.1 TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS TERRITORY

The Deshkan Ziibi (Antler River in Ojibwe) has been essential to the lives of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The river and its watershed provide a source of potable water as well as a habitat for fish, wildlife, edible and medicinal plants, making it a locale for hunting, fishing, short and long term settlement. Archaeological evidence demonstrates the ancient Indigenous use of riverside locales dating back at least 10,000 to 12,000 years.

The river has also been called Askunessippi/Escunnisepe (Antlered River) by the Neutrals, and La Tranché/La Tranche (Trench) by early French explorers, settlers and fur traders. In 1793, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe named the river the Thames River after the River Thames in England.

Eight First Nations have traditional territory that overlaps the Thames River watershed:

- the Lunaapew (or Lenni Lenape) People:
 - Munsee Delaware Nation, and
 - Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit – Delaware Nation at Moraviantown;
- the Haudenosaunee People:
 - Oneida Nation of the Thames; and
- the Anishinaabek People:
 - Aamjiwnaang First Nation,
 - Bkejwanong Walpole Island First Nation,
 - Chippewas of the Thames First Nation,
 - Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, and
 - Caldwell First Nation.³

It was with the Chippewa that the British negotiated the purchase of the lands that now comprise the City of London. On September 7, 1796 the British and Chippewa signed London Township Treaty No. 6:

WHEREAS we the principal Chiefs, Warriors, and People of the Cheppewa Nation of Indians being desirous for a certain consideration hereinafter mentioned of selling and disposing of a certain parcel or tract of land situated and lying on the north side of the River Thames or River La Tranche and known in the Indian name by Escunnisepe unto His Britannic Majesty King George the Third our great Father.

³ Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, The Thames River Watershed and Traditional Territory. Accessed at <https://thamesriver.on.ca/about-us/thames-river-watershed-and-traditional-territory/#:~:text=The%20Anishinaabek%20People%20refer%20to,explorers%2C%20settlers%20and%20fur%20traders.>

The treaty encompassed lands on the north side of the Thames River in both Middlesex and Oxford counties and opened them up to European settlement. The Deshkan Ziibiing ('At the Antler River') now known as Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, is the closest signatory Descendant community. The Deshkan Ziibiing Anishinaabeg do not regard the treaty as a complete land surrender, giving up any claim to legitimate use of or say over their traditional territory (off-reserve).

4.2 EUROPEAN SURVEY

The first survey of London Township began in 1810 under direction of Deputy Provincial Surveyor Mahlon Burwell. This survey initially focused on the first six concessions north of the Thames River to Sunningdale Road but was suspended in 1812 when war broke out between Great Britain and the United States. Following the war, the northern section of the township was surveyed with the first settlers arriving between 1817 and 1818 (Figure 14).

Ontario's surveyors imposed a rigid road grid when creating townships, concessions and lots. In contrast, Indigenous trails respected local topography by working around natural features. Many of these trails became the foundation for roads in London Township. For instance, Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe travelled an Indigenous route known as the Indigenous Trail which connected Indigenous villages in the areas around London, Brantford, and Hamilton.

Part of the Indigenous Trail formed the route of Hamilton Road which was surveyed in 1827. It paralleled the South Branch of the Thames River along its northern edge. In the 1840s, the road was improved under the direction of the chairman of the Board of Works, who was coincidentally named Hamilton Hartley Killaly. Hamilton Road was graded, gravelled, bridged and planked through a pine forest to Dorchester - a distance of about 18 km from London. Hamilton Road is depicted on an 1842 map of the London and Brantford Plank Road which shows it running east out of London, crossing the Thames River and connecting to the Plank Road.⁴

4.3 LONDON EAST AND LONDON TOWNSHIP

Burwell's 1826 survey of the Town of London was bounded by the river, Queen's Avenue (then North Street) and Wellington Street. A new survey in 1840 extended the original north and east boundaries to Huron and Adelaide streets respectively. East of Adelaide Street lay London Township. London East developed as a separate entity to London Township. Originally, much of the land in London East were 'Rectory Lands' owned by the Church of England and granted to it as a Clergy Reserve.

In the 1850s, the area of London East was largely rural with areas of Oak, Cedar, Black Ash and swamp. A transportation network of surveyed roads and informal trails was established. These included the east-west routes of Dundas Street (then Governor's

⁴ ASI, p. 17.

Road), Trafalgar Road and Hamilton Road. Portions of Hamilton Road were noted as being generally reliable for “troops and guns at all seasons”, although some sections were “not to be trusted at all times” (Figure 15).

The transportation network was about to be substantially increased by the construction of railways. In 1853, completion of the Great Western Railway (GWR) mainline between London and Hamilton ushered in the railway era to London. The following year the portion of the GWR mainline between London and Windsor was completed. Other lines followed in quick succession: Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway (1856); London and Port Stanley Railway (1856); Grand Trunk Railway London branch (1858) and mainline (1859); and then the Great Western Railway Sarnia branch (1859), Glencoe to Niagara Falls branch (1873) and London, Huron and Bruce branch (1876).⁵

The railways had a profound effect on economic development in Ontario by providing inexpensive, quick and importantly, year-round freight transportation. London’s railway network was instrumental in establishing its industrial economy, particularly the oil refining industry. In 1857, the first oil well in North America was drilled near Oil Springs in Lambton County and within a few years hundreds of wells were in production. London East proved to be an ideal location for the refining of crude oil, due in part to the location of the GWR line through the area (Figure 16). By 1866, nearly fifty acres in London East along the east side of Adelaide Street from York Street to south of Hamilton Road were covered with oil refineries. As many as fifty-two refineries were in production at the same time in London East. Many were small companies and competition was ruthless. When London’s oil industry was plunged into a depression in 1876, many smaller firms were forced out of business. The remaining larger firms realized they needed a united front to survive and in 1880 a group of former rivals formed the Imperial Oil Company.

London East incorporated as a village in 1874 and was then annexed to the City of London in 1885. It continued to be the location of industry for the city and as London grew during the early 20th-century, more land was required for industrial and residential expansion. London looked to expand eastward again. Ealing was a suburb of London, located in the area east and south of Adelaide Street. Along with its neighbouring suburbs of Pottersburg, Knollwood Park and Chelsea Green, Ealing was annexed in 1912 to the City of London.

The annexation added 2,200 acres to the city and extended London east beyond Highbury Avenue and south from Oxford street to the South Branch of the Thames River. While the impetus for the annexation was to provide room for future residential development and industrial expansion, another reason was to obtain Sunday street car service. Communities were required to have a population over 50,000 in order to obtain Sunday service. The annexed areas contained 4,300 residents, mostly working class, taking London's population over the 50,000 mark.

⁵ Chris Andrae, *The Industrial Heritage of London & Area* (n.p.: 1984), p. 7.

At the time of annexation, Ealing was characterized by groupings of frame houses, empty lots, high grass and bushes.⁶ The subject property and its immediate vicinity was undeveloped, and Tennyson Street had yet to be laid out (Figure 17). By 1929 both Arundell and Tennyson streets were established and a grouping of houses constructed on Tennyson street.

This remained the case until June 1947 when Frank Griffith opened Griff's Service Centre at the corner of Hamilton Road and Tennyson Street.⁷ The service centre featured a two storey concrete block building with two service bays as well as gasoline pumps. It was an outlet for Imperial Esso featuring Esso Extra gasoline. Griff's advertised all types of car and truck repair as well as specialised services for cleaning car upholstery (Figure 18).

Griffith's tenure at the station was short-lived as F.W. Nicholls was listed in the 1948 City Directory at 689 Hamilton Road. It appears that the property remained a service station for several years with Northey Service Station (1942), Arrand F. (1954), Jack Vine Shell Station Mohring L. Esso Station (1959) listed as being associated with the subject property.⁸

In 1962 the property was listed as vacant and then it transformed into a restaurant, first as White Horse (c.1962 to c.1970) and then a Scott's Chicken Villa (c.1970 to c.2020). The White Horse Restaurant served lunch and dinner, catering to locals and travellers. There was a White Horse Tavern in Paris, Ontario which appears to date to the late 1940s (Figure 19). The White Horse on Hamilton Road opened c.1962 and likely operated at that location until c.1970 when Kentucky Fried Chicken assumed ownership of the property. In 1966, White Horse opened a new restaurant at 1080 Adelaide Street North in 1966 (Figure 20).

Kentucky Fried Chicken was founded by Harland Sanders in Corbin, Kentucky. In 1929 Sanders opened a gas station in Corbin, cooking for his family and the occasional customer. Sanders cooked the food his mother had taught him as a youth: pan-fried chicken, country ham, fresh vegetables, and homemade biscuits. When demand for Sanders's cooking increased, he moved across the street to a facility with a 142-seat restaurant, a motel, and a gas station.

In 1952, Sanders signed his first franchise to a restaurant owner in Salt Lake City, Utah. Throughout the next decade, he convinced several other restaurant owners to add his Kentucky Fried Chicken to their menus, and by 1963 Sanders' recipe was franchised to more than 600 outlets in the United States and Canada. One of the earliest KFC

6 John H. Lutman and Christopher L. Hives, *The North and the East of London: An Historical and Architectural Guide*, (London: 1982), p. 71.

7 Carrie Kirkwood, *A Collection from the Hamilton Road Area, Volume 1*, p. 229, states that Griffith took over the service station in 1942 (p. 229). However, the Abstract Book indicates that Frank Griffith acquired the subject property from the City of London in early 1946.

8 *Ibid* and ASI, p. 148. The Abstract Book indicates that Shell Oil Company acquired the property from Frank Griffith in 1949.

franchises in Canada was at Carter's Restaurant in Orillia which started serving the Colonel's chicken in 1955. In 1964, Sanders sold his business and while franchising remained the foundation of the business, the new owners transformed the operation from a sit down restaurant to a take-out business. By 1970 Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) had 3,400 retail outlets.⁹

In 1974, the federal government introduced the Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP) to address the declining condition of housing and infrastructure in urban areas. The Hamilton Road area was selected by the city as a candidate for the programme. As a result of the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan, property owners received incentives to improve their buildings, and public amenities such as boulevard and parkland have been created or extended. In 2018, the city completed a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for Hamilton Road. The Hamilton Road Corridor, in which the study area is located, was identified as a sub-area. One component of the Hamilton Road Area Community Improvement Plan is to encourage the conservation and restoration of local heritage resources.

9 KFC Corporation History, accessed at <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/kfc-corporation-history/>.

5.0 HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

This section addresses the subject property's historical associations with themes and persons identified in the 4.0 Historical Summary. This supports the analysis and evaluation of the property against the criteria in O. Reg. 9/06.

5.1 THEMES

The subject property has associations with the theme of increasing automobile use for commuting and travel, particularly after World War II. In general, automobile use in Ontario had risen in popularity through the 1920s, with driving emerging as an activity unto itself. By this time, London was a major nodal point on the new provincial highway systems in southwestern Ontario. Highway 2 (Dundas Street) traversed the city, and Highway 4 (Richmond Street) linked London with Highway 3 (Niagara Falls to Windsor) and Highway 7 (Sarnia to Brampton, later extended to Peterborough and Ottawa). Moreover, most of the highway network was paved by the end of the 1920s with paving of the secondary provincial network commencing in the 1930s and as completed after World War II.

The growth in the number of automobiles and the development of long-distance automobile travel created a new business sector serving the traveller. The introduction and use of motor vehicles can be described in three phases: the early phase from the beginning of the century to about 1919 when automobiles were introduced; the second phase from 1920 to 1930 when increasing production introduced automobiles to a broader market and a third phase from 1946 to 1961 when the mass produced and marketed automobile, motorized society.¹⁰

Automotive-related services expanded rapidly in London during the second phase of motorization up to 1930. Vernon's London City Directory recorded 17 establishments in 1912 and 33 in 1919 and by 1930, there were 123 automotive establishments in the city.¹¹ New entrepreneurs began specialized repair work and supplied increasing amounts of gasoline, tires, spare parts, and accessories. The growth in the number of motor vehicles between 1939 and 1949 was double that of the previous decade, and the number of vehicles in London increased by 150 per cent between 1949 and 1961. All this growth was, of course, taking place within the context of an economic and demographic boom. Automobile-related services such as gas and service stations concentrated themselves in London's downtown and along Dundas Street, but a few located themselves along the length of Hamilton Road (Figure 21).

In the 1960s, London began to adopt comprehensive planning frameworks for land use, traffic, and highways. This was necessitated, in part, to address the city's 1961 extensive boundary expansion. This change in planning coincides with the change in

¹⁰ Gerald T. Bloomfield, "No Parking Here to Corner: London Reshaped by the Automobile 1911-1961." *Urban History Review*, Volume 18, No. 2 (October 1989), p. 143.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

use of the subject property from a gas station/service centre to a restaurant. Currently, the study area is located in a segment of Hamilton Road that is classified as Civic Boulevard in the London Plan (2016).

5.2 PERSONS

The subject property has direct associations with Frank Griffith who owned and operated Griff's Service Centre from c.1942 to c.1948. Griffith's worked at a service station in Stratford prior to moving to London and opening a small service station at the corner of Hamilton Road and St. Julien Street. In May 1941, he moved to Hamilton Road and Hyla Street where he operated another service station.¹² No other biographical information about Frank Griffith was identified during research for this CHER.

No other historical associations (ie event, belief, organization, architect, builder) were identified during the research for this CHER.

¹² "Official Opening...Tomorrow: Griff's Service Centre." *London Free Press*, June 20, 1947, p. 13.

6.0 DESIGN & PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

This section describes the physical evolution of the subject property, along with any styles, building types or material elements pertinent to the property's potential for cultural heritage value. Refer to 2.0 Study Area Overview for a detailed description of the building, landscape and related illustrations.

6.1 SITE EVOLUTION

The subject property is believed to have been vacant until the construction of Frank Griffith's service station in 1947. Fire insurance plans show a vacant lot between 1907 and 1940, and assessment rolls¹³ from 1939 show no values listed for buildings on the lot.

The first visual evidence of development on the site is a 1947 photograph looking southwest at the service station shortly after it opened (Figure 22). A set of two open air pumps are shown close to the road, while the service station building is located further back on the property. The structure rises two storeys to a flat roof, with a smooth rectangular massing. This form is punctuated by a chamfered northeast corner, containing the retail entrance at grade, with an art deco style sign mounted above. The sign advertises 'GRIFF'S' in vertical typesetting, and may have neon lighting.

The building features a dark coloured band around the base of the building, with plain white walls above topped by a thin cornice. The main walls lack any obvious brick detailing, probably being finished with a smooth render or stucco. Two large garage doors are on the west side of the north elevation, beyond which three large industrial steel sash windows are seen. The eastern third of the building contains retail uses and washrooms at grade. Above are wooden sash windows with a four-over-four configuration. All window and door openings have flat lintels.

Stylistically, the building conveys clear but restrained modernist influences, as seen in the art deco sign, stark colour scheme, lack of decoration, and simplicity found in wall textures, massing, and wall openings.

A presumably contemporary (but undated) photograph shows a view of the interior looking south, out of another set of industrial steel sash windows (Figure 23). The building contains a pneumatic hoist as well as a pit, and other automotive materials and tools. The interior is covered in a plaster render, with a steel beam structure shown on the south wall carrying the roof.

The next resource to show the site in detail is the 1958 fire insurance plan (Figure 24). The plan is largely consistent with the 1947 photographs, showing the building set back into the corner of the lot, with four underground gasoline service tanks (above ground

¹³ Assessment rolls were available and consulted for the years 1939, 1953, 1959 and 1966 at the Western University Archives.

pumps are not indicated). It is illustrated as a two-storey concrete block structure, with 'ordinary glass in metal frames' on the south and west elevations. The east side of the building is shown as a dwelling at the second storey.

A 1969 photograph shows the north and east sides of the building following its transition to a restaurant some years earlier (Figure 25). It shows a new front addition on the original building mass. The new front features a glazed curtain wall at grade with two doorways, surmounted by a large gabled pediment bearing the restaurant's box sign. Set back along the pediment's ridge is a louvred cupola with dramatic shape. The original building mass appears to have been significantly modified - the chamfered corner has been filled in, and most of the wall openings have been removed, save several second storey windows on the east side. The structure has been reclad in enamelled brick on all sides except the north, which features wooden siding above the pediment. A white fence is evident in the paved landscape behind the restaurant.

Subsequent images of the site have been located on Google Maps, real estate and food review websites providing an impression of the site in the 21st century. Changes to the site following its conversion to a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant appear minimal, limited to updated box signage, and new red materials (paint and roofing) corresponding to branding. Small landscaped planter boxes are seen at the edge of the parking lot as early as 2009, when the property also had a large sign with KFC bucket (Figure 26). As of 2021 the site is shown as boarded up.

Based on site review in 2023, the building displays very few exterior changes since 1969, with the exception of branding and signage related to the change in the restaurant.

6.2 STYLE / BUILDING TYPE

Gas Station / Service Centre

Since the introduction of the automobile in the 19th century, refuelling has been a constant preoccupation for drivers. Fuel was first obtained from oil terminals or other local businesses carrying petroleum by-products, usually in a can for funnelling into the car. In the early 1900s new systems were developed to pump gasoline directly from underground pumps into cars' fuel tanks. These fixed pumps liberated existing businesses from the cumbersome and dangerous practice of selling gasoline, but necessitated the development of an entirely new type of retail operation.¹⁴

Initially pumps were established on curbs adjacent to streets, which quickly led to traffic problems (Figure 27). These were followed by drive-in fuel stations, which allowed customers to drive into the retail site for refuelling away from traffic. The earliest drive-in stations were highly functional sheds featuring little decoration but perhaps some advertising. Lubrication and washing bays were found on larger stations.

14 L.C. Macfarlane, The Canadian Encyclopedia, "Gasoline Stations," last edited 4 March 2015, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/gasoline-stations>

Station design evolved to include canopies, and facilities grew into service centres as companies offered new products (accessories, tires and batteries) and services (repairs).¹⁵

Functionally, early gas stations were characterized by a service building and pumps located in a paved, often corner site. The pumps are sometimes sheltered by a canopy. The main building is usually a one storey structure containing a retail office, washrooms, and several bays for automobile maintenance services.

Stylistically, service stations tended toward historical and domestic styles throughout the 1920s. As companies established stations outside the city centre, conservative stations attempted to blend in with their surrounding residential neighbourhoods (Figures 28). Style was also tied to marketing, as some companies relied on architectural forms and styles for branding. The early designs of London-based Supertest for example utilized cottage-scale buildings with Tudor-revival detailing (Figure 29), while Joy Oil built stations in Ontario with a whimsical French chateau aesthetic (Figure 30). Supertest Petroleum Corporation (founded as London Automotive Service Ltd in 1923) merged with British Petroleum (Canada) prior to being purchased by Petro-Canada in 1983.¹⁶ A single Tudor-style Supertest station structure (built c.1929)¹⁷ remains in London at 1 Carfrae Crescent, and is listed on the register of cultural heritage resources (Figure 31). A Joy Oil station also remains extant on Toronto's Lake Shore Boulevard West, having been relocated and conserved by the City of Toronto in 2008.¹⁸

In 1937, influential Canadian modernist architect Gordon S. Adamson wrote about gas station design in the RAIC Journal. The article suggests European gas stations were 'admittedly better than ours,' going on to question the preponderance of romantic station design in Canada:

*We have often been puzzled over the obvious preference for the romantic among the gasoline companies of Canada and the United States. Does it mean that the average customer is a sentimentalist whose thoughts turn to Merrie England or the castles on the Rhine while a most efficient modern mechanical pump gaily clocks up the gallons? Are gables, half timber work, flower boxes, and doveless cotes subtle suggestions to the motorist to buy more gallons and take himself off into the country where according to the romantic novelists such things are to be found? The answer eludes us.*¹⁹

The piece is accompanied by images of modern European and American station

15 Ibid.

16 City of London plaque, 1 Carfrae Crescent.

17 "City of London Register of Cultural Heritage Resources," December 9, 2022, p. 13 of 134.

18 L.C. Macfarlane.

19 Gordon S. Adamson, "Gasoline Stations," *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* 14, no. 11 (November 1937): p. 229.

designs, contrasted by more traditional Canadian examples (Figures 32 & 33). Adamson's modernist sensibilities aside, his words demonstrate that architects were taking gas station design more seriously, as they were becoming increasingly ubiquitous features of the built environment.

Modernist ideas did impact gas station design shortly thereafter, with more functional International Style influenced designs common through the late 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Such changes were characterized by highly rectilinear building forms and flatter roofs. Materially, plate glass replaced decoration and porcelain enamel replaced terra cotta.²⁰ It was within this context that Frank Griffith opened his service stations at 689 Hamilton Road in 1947, and archival photographs show that the facility originally had a clear modernist aesthetic. This aesthetic was entirely lost however, when the station was converted to a restaurant and highly modified.

²⁰ L.C. Macfarlane.

7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

This section evaluates the property against the nine criteria in the OHA used for determining cultural heritage value or interest (O. Reg. 9/06). The evaluation results provide the basis for recommendations to designate the property under Part IV, subsection 29 (1) of the OHA, and if applicable, a statement of cultural heritage value.

7.1 O. REG. 9/06

Criteria	Evaluation
<p>1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.</p>	<p>No - Due to extensive modifications following conversion to a restaurant in the 1960s, the property lacks a well-defined or noteworthy building type. The gas station pumps were removed, and only the walls, structure and several windows have been retained from the original building. The conversion to restaurant involved repurposing the existing service building with a new addition, and did not result in the creation of a new building type of note.</p> <p>Stylistically, the gas station’s original modernist aesthetic was completely destroyed through the restaurant conversion and is no longer discernible. The style of the restaurant shares some features with a contemporary, purpose-built White Horse restaurant in London (see Figure 20). These include the broad gabled above a glazed curtain wall and a similar cupola, which appear to be derived from an earlier restaurant location in Paris, Ontario (Figure 19). These connections however do not represent a style that was determined to be significant however and the criteria is not met.</p>
<p>2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.</p>	<p>No - The original building was functional, serving light industrial uses, with little decoration or elaborate design. Following conversion to a restaurant, no materials or forms were added that demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.</p>

Criteria	Evaluation
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	No - Both as a service centre and restaurant the property supported routine commercial enterprises. No noteworthy technological methods or systems were employed on the site, and it does not demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	No - The subject property functioned as a service centre from 1947 to c. 1959 and then as a restaurant from c.1962 to c.2020. Given that it served as a gas / service station for a relatively short period of time, it cannot be determined to have direct associations with a theme of significance to a community.
5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	No - It cannot be demonstrated that further historic research about the property would yield more information that contributes to understanding a community or culture.
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	No - No architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist has been identified.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	No - In the vicinity of the property, there is a lack of consistent urban fabric and no dominant character, with nearby structures including low-scale residential and commercial buildings dating to the 1930s, a substantial institutional building dating to c.1950 and an office building.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	No - The building on the property was constructed in 1947, after most of the other buildings in the vicinity. It was also substantially modified when its use changed from a gas/ service station to a restaurant.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.	No - The property would not be considered a landmark.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on historical research, site review, analysis and evaluation, the CHER concludes that 689 Hamilton Road does not meet any criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). Accordingly, a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest identifying the heritage values and attributes was not drafted.

However, research conducted for this CHER about Hamilton Road reinforces its historical significance - first as an Indigenous trail, then as an early settler road and then as a part of the City of London's road network. Its history should be promoted through interpretative measures (plaques, murals) and included on heritage tours.

9.0 FIGURES



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the subject property, outlined in red on Hamilton Road (Google, CBCollective 2023).



Figure 2: Three modest building located directly east of the subject property (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 3: View southwest of the subject property, showing the former restaurant building in the landscape (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 4: Looking southwest at the north elevation of the former restaurant building (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 5: View of the former restaurant's east and south elevations (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 6: View of the former restaurant's west and south elevations. The blind openings at centre are remnants from the original service centre's steel sash windows (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 7: Southwest view of the building's north elevation, including the gabled addition, and siding applied to the original mass (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 8: Remnant four-over-four wooden sash window on the south elevation, in poor condition (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 9: Metal slab door on the south elevation (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 10: Detail of speckled white enamel brick on the south elevation, with damage revealing buff material beneath (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 11: Photograph showing the form and details of the front gable portion, added when the building was converted to a restaurant (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 12: Two remnant signs on the front of the building, including ghosted text when the location was branded a Scott's chicken Villa (CBCollective 2023).



Figure 13: Limited view of the building interior. Note the original concrete block exterior and interior walls (CBCollective 2023).

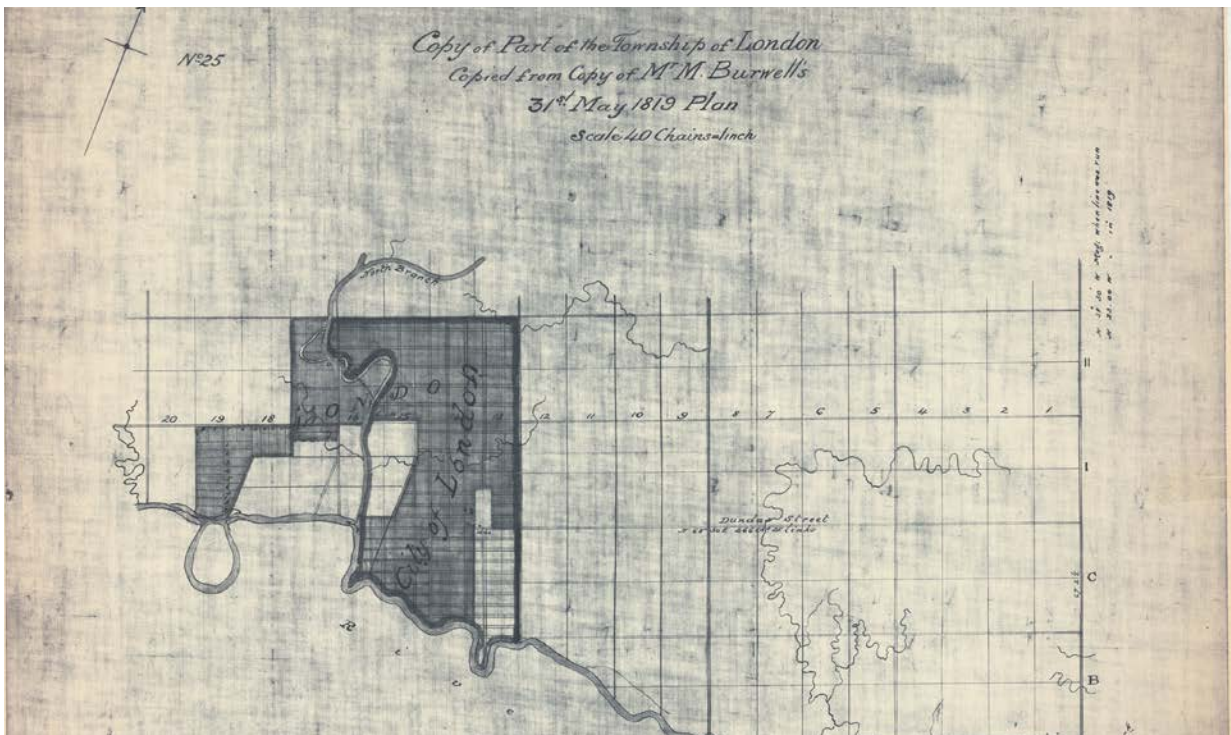


Figure 14: 1819 map of London Township showing layout of concessions and lots (UWO Library 2357401).



Figure 15: Detail of an 1850 sketch with red arrow indicating Hamilton Road (UWO Library CX1007/CBCollective).



Figure 16: 1855 map showing route of the GWR (highlighted with orange line) and the portion of Hamilton Road to the west of the study area (red arrow) (UWO, CXX10 I).

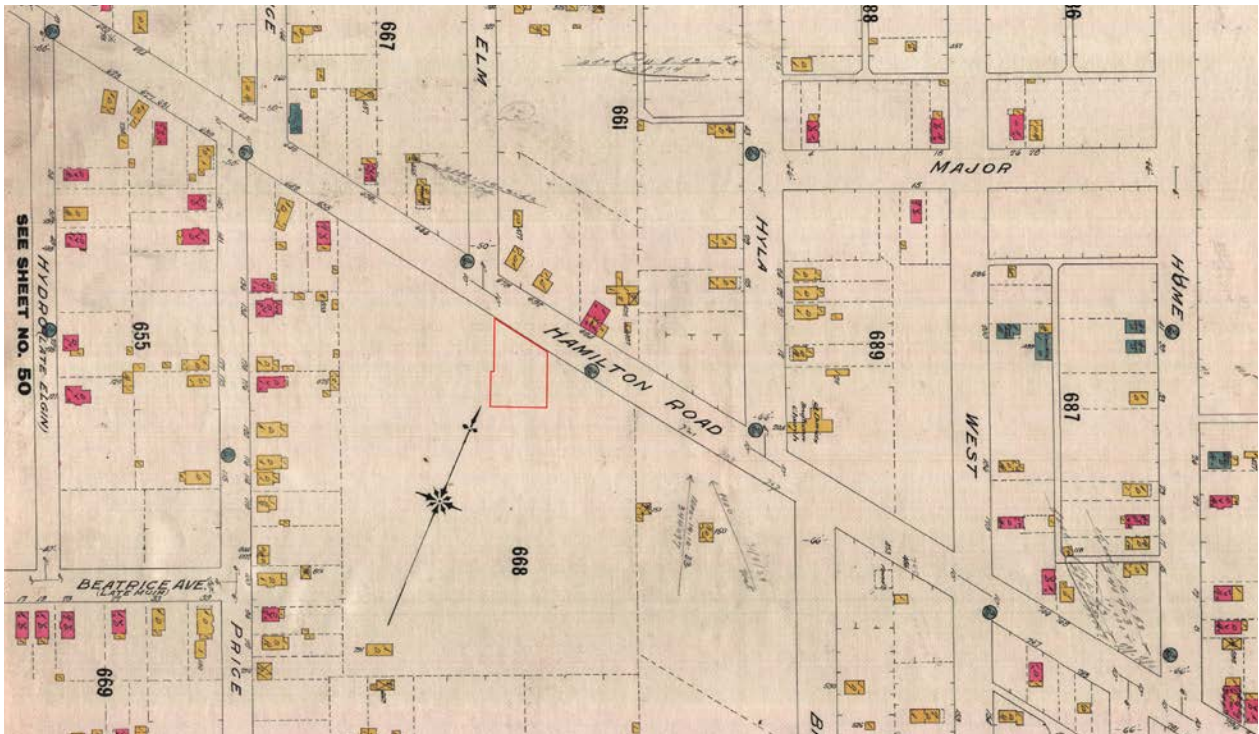


Figure 17: 1915 FIP showing the undeveloped Block 668, with the location of the study area it outlined in red (UWO Map & Data Centre).

THE FREE PRESS LONDON, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1947. PAGE THIRTEEN

OFFICIAL OPENING . . . TOMORROW

GRIFF'S SERVICE CENTRE

HAMILTON ROAD - - - AT TENNYSON AVENUE

*New Service Centre
Latest London Outlet
For Imperial Esso and
Esso Extra Gasoline*

Air-Conditioning
for Griff's Service Centre supplied by
G. W. STEVENS & SON
376 HIGHBURY AVE. PAIR. 4057-J
— LONDON —

DECORATING and PAINTING
of the smart new Griff's Service Centre by

Proprietor of the Service Centre

Opening on Saturday, June 21st will be one of London's newest and most complete service stations operated by Frank Griffith, who has had over fifty years experience in service station work. This station is equipped to handle all types of car repairs and various specialized services such as lubrication work. The new station employs specialists in this type of work, and they use the famous Lubrol L-3-Master. This equipment enables them to offer their patrons the best lubricating service available. Only high quality Mobilene grease is used. . . . The finest chassis lubricant made. Once your car has been lubricated here, it is guaranteed to remain free of squeaks for 1,000 miles. The new station uses modern equipment to thoroughly clean the upholstery of your car. By their Hydro Air Cleaning Service, they also sanitize the interior of all automobiles.

Frank Griffith started working in a service station at Brantford, Ontario in 1913. In 1934 he moved to London and opened a small service station on the corner of Hamilton Road and St. Julian Street. In May 1941 he moved to Hamilton Road and Hyla Street where he operated until the opening of his own Service Centre.

Pictured above is London's most up-to-date service station with new and modern equipment which will officially open tomorrow. Inset shows the interior of this fine station, which will supply all car and truck services.

FAST BATTERY CHARGE
CHAMPION SPARK PLUG CLEANER and TESTER
POWER CAR WASHING • **GRINDING** • **REPAIRING**

IMPERIAL PRODUCTS

Figure 18: Ad for the opening of Griff's Service Centre in June 1947 (London Free Press, June 20, 1947, p. 13).

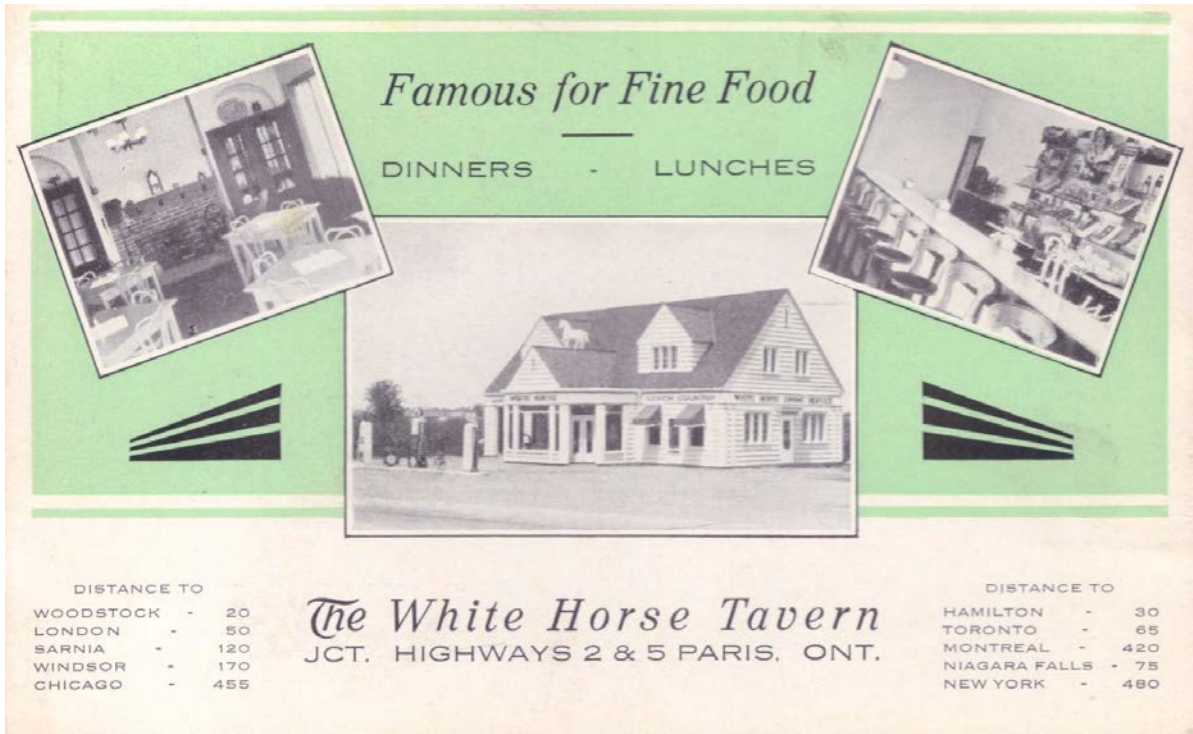


Figure 19: Ad for the White Horse Restaurant in Paris. Note the gas pumps at the front of the property (Paris Museum and Historical Society).



Figure 20: A 1966 photo of the White Horse at 1080 Adelaide Street North (Vintage London).

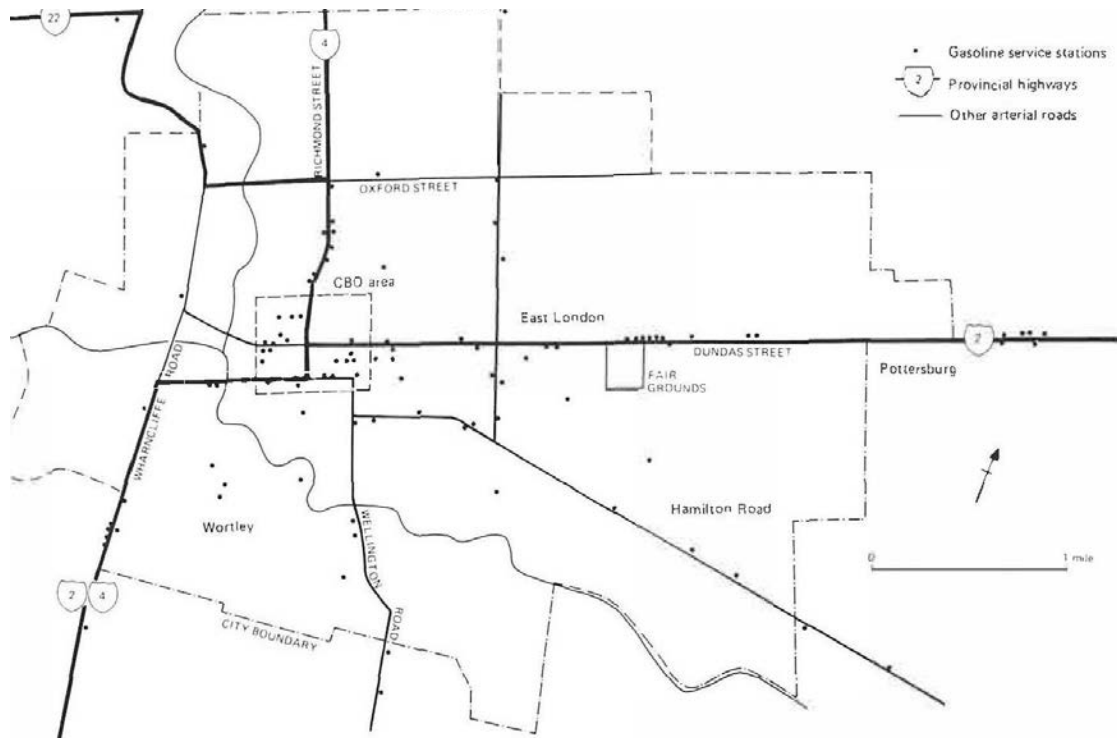


Figure 21: A map showing the location of gasoline service centres in London in 1961 (G.T. Bloomfield, "No Parking Here to Corner," p. 162.)



Figure 22: 1947 photograph showing the original service centre with pumps in foreground, and main building behind (UWO Archives via Vintage London Facebook).



Figure 23: 1947 photograph showing the new interior space of the service centre (Vintage London Facebook).



Figure 24: 1958 fire insurance plan with the study area outlined in red, showing the original service centre building and underground tanks (UWO Archives).



Figure 25: Photograph attributed to 1969 showing the building following conversion to a White Horse Restaurant several years earlier (*Vintage London Facebook*).



Figure 26: Google earth image from 2009 showing the Kentucky Fried Chicken site with standalone sign and planters (*Google*).



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0058_it1188

Figure 27: Archival photograph showing a curbside gas pump in Toronto in 1928 (COTA: Series 372, Sub-series 58, Item 1188).



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0001_it0614

Figure 28: 1924 archival image showing a gas station in Toronto's Yonge and Eglinton area, with brick and wood detailing on service station canopy matching the material palette of nearby residential properties (COTA: Series 372, Sub-series 1, Item 614).



Figure 29: Detail of a 1951 archival photograph showing a Supertest service station (demolished) on Dundas Street at the foot of Elizabeth Street. The use of side-gables, false half-timbering and large tapering chimney all advance the Tudor aesthetic (UWO Archives via Vintage London Facebook).



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0041_it0816

Figure 30: 1947 archival photograph of a Joy Oil station in Toronto, with the company's signature chateau aesthetics visible in the roof turrets, finials and massing (COTA: Series 372, Sub-series 41, Item 816).



Figure 31: Google earth image showing a former Supertest service station building at 1 Carfrae Crescent, currently used as a convenience store. Note the massing of the rooflines and large tapered chimney (Google).

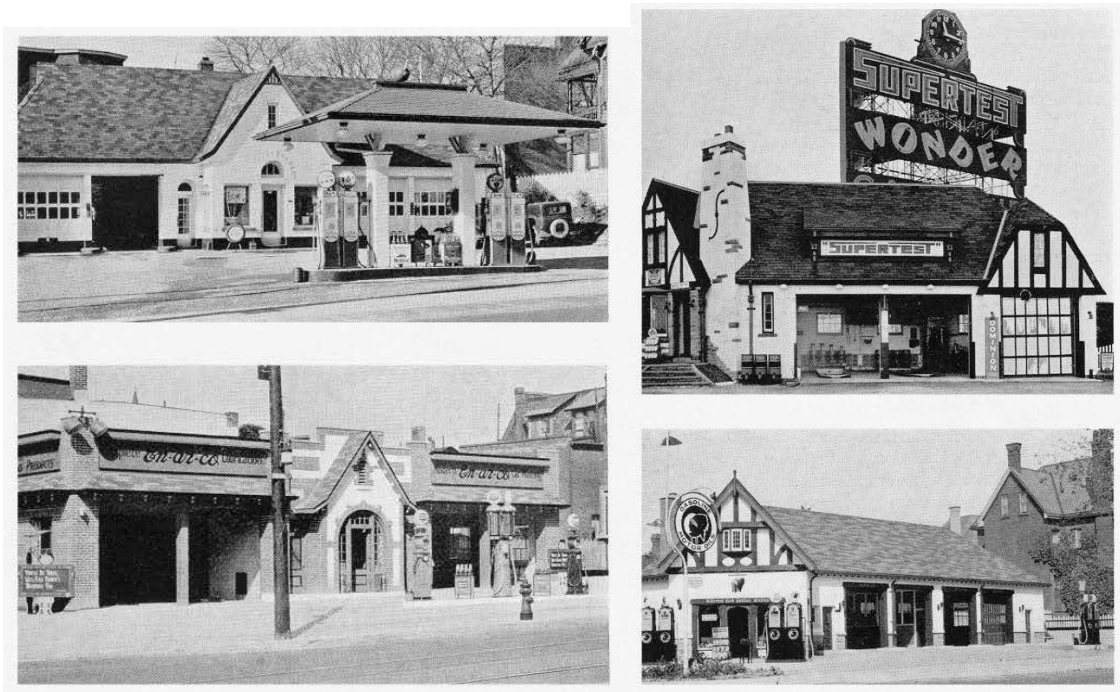


Figure 32: Selection of images corresponding to Adamson's RAIC article. The images were provided by companies upon request for '...a photograph of what they considered their best station.' Note the Tudor-revival Supertest station at top right (*RAIC Journal*, November 1937, p. 26).

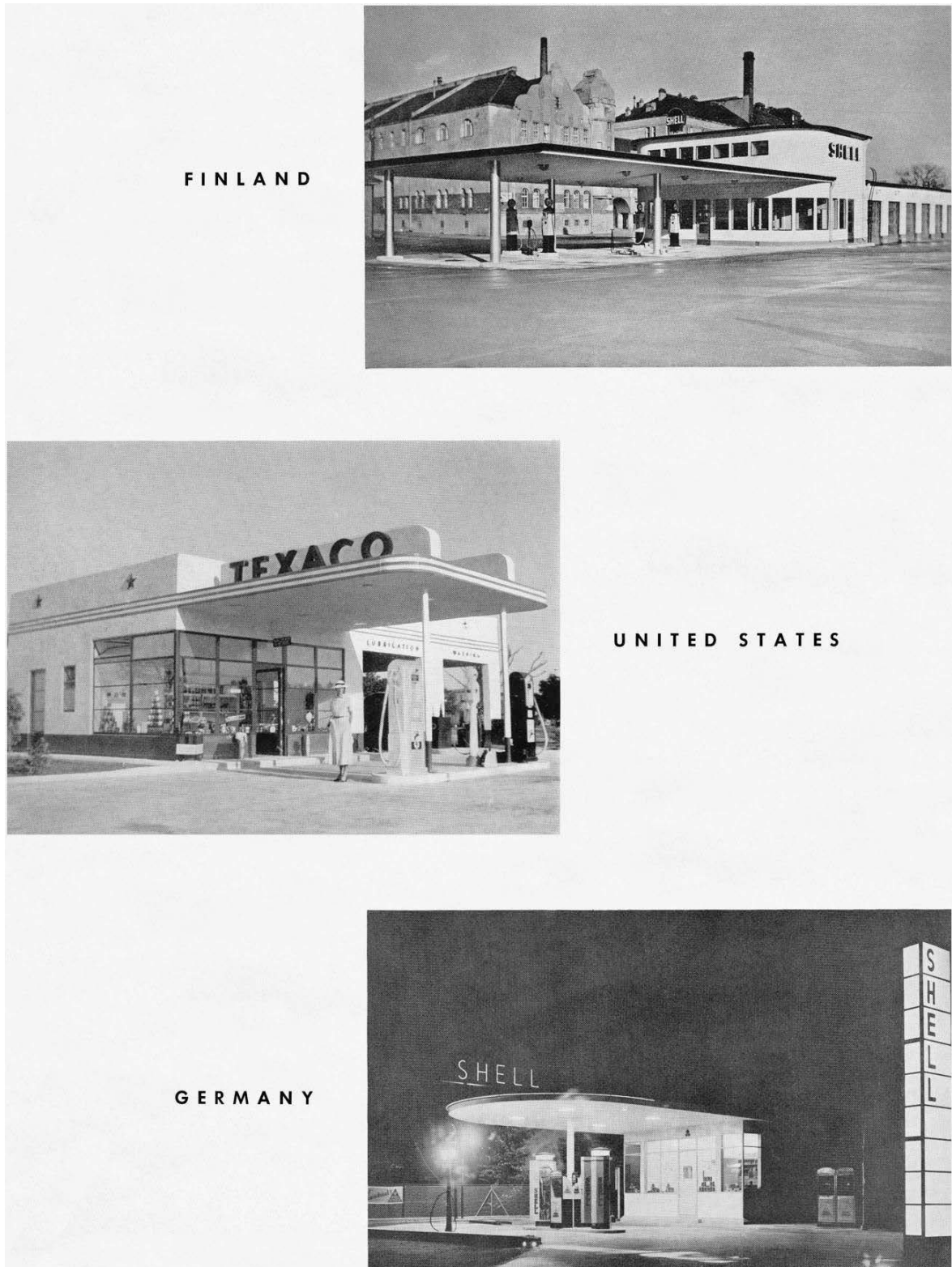


Figure 33: Corresponding examples from Europe and the United States, showing more modern designs and aesthetics applied to gas stations (*RAIC Journal*, November 1937, p. 28).

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