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London
CANADA

RECEIVED
2023/07/13
(YYYY/MM/DD)
Ontario Heritage Trust

July 13, 2023



Ontario Heritage Trust
via email

Re: Notice of Intention to Designate Property at 81 Wilson Avenue
The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18

Enclosed for your information is notice of the Council of The Corporation of the City of London's intention to designate the property identified above pursuant to Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18 and the reasons for designation. Any person who objects to any intended designation must, **within thirty days** after the date of first publication, serve on the City Clerk a notice of objection in writing, setting out the reason for the objection and all relevant facts. The *Ontario Heritage Act* provides that where a notice of objection has been served, the Council shall consider the objection and decide whether to proceed with designation.


Michael Schulthess
City Clerk
/kg

encl.

cc: Heritage Planners, City of London, heritage@london.ca

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81 Wilson Avenue – Alexander Leslie House

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE PROPERTY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of The Corporation of the City of London intends to designate as a property of cultural heritage value or interest the following property in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990*:

Property Description

81 Wilson Avenue

Publication Date

July 13, 2023

Last Date for Objection

August 12, 2023

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Legal Description: PT LT 4, E/S WILSON AV, PLAN 191 (W), PT 1 33R5907;
LONDON

PIN: 08260-0083

Description of Property

The property at 81 Wilson Avenue is located on Part of Lot 4 in RP191(W) in the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District and is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The property is on the east side of Wilson Avenue between Rogers Avenue and Cherry Street. The building at 81 Wilson Avenue, known as the Alexander Leslie House, is a one and one half-storey, buff brick dwelling with an unusually broad centre cross gable, in which is found a pointed Gothic window that echoes a similar pointed window in the earlier back wing of the building.

The main block of the building was constructed by prominent nurseryman Alexander Leslie c. 1865-66. The back wing predates the main block and was built while the property was owned by Rev. Hompesch Massingberd, c. 1854-1862. The Blackfriars' Nursery, Petersville, operated at this location under Leslie's proprietorship from 1863 to his death in 1901.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property at 81 Wilson Avenue meets **four of nine criteria** for determining cultural heritage value or interest under O. Reg. 9/06 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and displays Design Value and Physical Value, Historical Value and Associative Value, and Contextual Value.

Criterion 1 —The building at 81 Wilson Avenue displays design value and physical value as an early, representative example of the cottages built by market gardeners in London West from the mid-1850s to the early 1900s. It is a one and one half-storey buff brick building with a gable roof, and a main door flanked by two-over-two windows on each side. The entranceway is centred under a cross gable, which originally held a decorative finial and bargeboard that has been replicated and restored. The building is solidly built, with walls composed of three layers of bricks bonded by iron ties. The back wing of the house predates the main block visible from the street, and the two parts of the house are unified with a pointed window derived from the Gothic tradition on the broad cross gable over the centre door, that echoes the window in the gable of the back wing. Progressive Italianate influence is evident in the classical entranceway with transom and sidelights, and in the segmental arches of the windows and entranceway. These features anticipate the Italianate style that would dominate the rest of London in the 1870s. The windows on the main floor of the main block of the house are exceptionally large at 7 feet in height.

Criterion 4 —The property at 81 Wilson Avenue displays historical value and associative value for its direct association with Scottish Presbyterian nurseryman, florist, and market gardener Alexander Leslie (1827-1901), a person of significance to the community of Petersville in the mid-to late-19th century. A prosperous and successful businessman, Leslie was a "Dealer in Nursery Stock" who operated the Blackfriars' Nursery in Petersville from 1863 to 1901, supplying the city's gardeners and the Covent Garden Market with flowers and plants, fruit and ornamental trees, bushes, and vines.

The large window openings on the main floor and basement level of the house contribute to its historical value as a market gardener's home where the large windows could support the germination of seedlings.

The property is illustrated on the 1872 Bird's Eye View of London, and the Blackfriars' Nursery, Petersville was prominently advertised in city and business directories of the day.

Criterion 7 —The property at 81 Wilson Avenue has contextual value for its importance in defining, maintaining, and supporting the character of the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District, in which it is a Contributing Resource. As one of the earliest settled residential properties in the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District, the property reflects a development pattern of workers' and market gardeners' houses with small market gardens on site. The property also reflects the favoured style of cottages built by market gardeners who settled in Blackfriars-Petersville in the 1850s and 60s, and as such it is important in maintaining and supporting the character of the area.

Criterion 8 —The property at 81 Wilson Avenue has Contextual Value because it is physically and historically linked to its surroundings on the river flats of London West. It was the intention of the original holder of the Crown grant, John Kent, to create Park Lots for small gardens or market gardens in his 1848 survey of these lands. This purpose was realized by Alexander Leslie, as a leading dealer in nursery stock, and the proprietor of the successful Blackfriars' Nursery, Petersville on this property from 1863 to his death in 1901. The illustration of Leslie's Nursery on the 1872 Bird's Eye View of London adds to its historical authenticity and cultural heritage value.

The detached outbuilding located at the rear of the Alexander Leslie House is not considered to be a heritage attribute of the property.

Heritage Attributes

Heritage attributes that contribute to the Design Value and Physical Value of the property include:

- The form, scale, and massing of a one-and-one-a-half storey, buff brick dwelling with an unusually broad centre cross gable
- T-plan of the building, with the main block (front) built in c.1865-1866 and the back wing built in c. 1854-1862
- Pointed Gothic windows in the cross gable of the main block and in the gable of the back wing
- Heavy finial and drop in the north gable
- Chimney on the north gable, originally paired with a chimney on the south gable (not extant)
- Replicated bargeboard, finial and drop in the front cross gable
- Italianate-influenced segmental arches of the windows and entranceway
- Exceptionally large (7 feet in height), two-over-two wood windows, with wood storm windows, on the main floor
- Basement window openings
- Front doorway with a pair of divided sidelights flanking a central door and a transom, with inset oculus
- Fieldstone foundation walls

Heritage Attributes that contribute to the Historical Value and Associative Value of the property include:

- Location within the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District
- Exceptionally large (7 feet in height), two-over-two wood windows, with wood storm windows, on the main floor
- Basement window openings

Heritage Attributes that contribute to the Contextual Value of the property include:

- Deep setback of the house from the street, contrasting with adjacent buildings
- Location within the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District

Heritage Attributes



1. The form, scale, and massing of a one-and-one-a-half storey, buff brick dwelling with an unusually broad center cross gable



2. T-plan of the building, with the main block (front) built in c.1865-1866 and the back wing built in c. 1854-1862



3. Pointed Gothic windows in the cross gable of the main block and in the gable of the back wing



4. Heavy finial and drop in the north gable



5. Chimney on the north gable, originally paired with a chimney on the south gable (not extant)



6. Replicated bargeboard, finial and drop in the front cross gable



7. Italianate-influenced segmental arches of the windows and entranceway



8. Exceptionally large (7 feet in height), two-over-two wood windows, with wood storm windows, on the main floor



9. Basement window openings



10. Front doorway with a pair of divided sidelights flanking a central door and a transom, with inset oculus



11. Fieldstone foundation walls

Note: Not every heritage attribute indicated above; image is considered indicative of heritage attributes

DATED at London, Ontario on July 13, 2023

Michael Schulthess, City Clerk