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CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF ESSEX

33 Talbot Street South, Essex, Ontario, N8M 1A8
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February 27, 2025

Provincial Heritage Registrar

Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3



RE: **Various Properties in Essex Centre**

Dear Ontario Heritage Trust.

At their regular meeting on Tuesday February 18th, the Council for the Corporation of the Town of Essex issued a Notice of Intention to Designate the properties located at 87 Station Street and 18 Gordon Avenue, under section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Why were these properties selected?

These properties have been selected because they display cultural heritage value and interest.

Attached is a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the properties and a description of the heritage attributes of the properties.

Notice of Objection

A Notice of Objection to the Notice of Intention to Designate may be served on the Clerk of the Town of Essex by **Wednesday April 2, 2025**. The Notice of Objection must set out the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

Your cooperation with the preservation of our past is greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

Rita Jabbour, RPP

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c.c. Joseph A. Malandruccolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk

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APPENDIX A

Essex Railway Station

Municipal Address

87 Station Street North, Essex Centre

Legal Description

PLAN 176 PT LT 90 PT LT 283

General Description of Property

87 Station Street North is located on the southern side of Station Street within Essex Centre. It is comprised of the former Essex Railway Station: a large fieldstone building that was built in 1887, replacing the original wooden station with the stone structure.

Description of Property that has Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The area of the property that demonstrates cultural heritage value or interest is the area that encompasses the entirety of the former Essex Railway Station.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Design/Physical Value

The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

87 Station Street retains significant design or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship. The building was constructed in 1887 to replace an earlier structure by the Michigan Central Railway and was the only station along the Canadian Southern Railway to be made out of stone. It has also survived two explosions since its construction and has been restored to its original condition.

Historical/Associative Value

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.



87 Station Street retains significant historical or associative value because it has direct associations with an organization and institution that is significant to the community. The Essex Railway Station played a significant role in the overall development of Essex and the settlement of the surrounding areas.

The railway first came to Essex in 1873, after train tracks were laid across the Talbot Trail and the creation of the Canadian Southern Railway line between Niagara Falls and Windsor. The Essex Station would serve as a central stop on this route and allowed the community to become a transportation hub in Essex County, spurred on by productive lumber and agricultural industries and the establishment of several key services.

In 1883, the Michigan Central Railway leased a portion of the railway from the Canadian Southern Railway, later constructing a branch line that connected Essex to Amherstburg. In 1887, the Michigan Central Railway built the large stone station to replace an earlier structure.

On April 10th, 1907, the station was heavily damaged in an explosion caused by a box car that had been loaded with 5000 pounds of dynamite, less than 75 yards from the station. The explosion caused a ton of damage in the community, destroying several buildings and industries, such as the original Essex Methodist Church, the electricity plant, two lumber mills, and several commercial buildings and residential homes. Two rail workers were killed by the impact of this explosion; however, many more people were injured throughout the community. Despite being heavily damaged, the Essex Station remained standing and was repaired soon after.

The building served as the community's train station until 1979, when the last passenger train passed through the community. The rail line would be continued to be used by freight trains, until the fall of 2012 when the rail ties and steel tracks were removed.

Contextual Value

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

49 Talbot Street South retains contextual value because it helps to define the character of the surrounding area through the materials used to construct the building to be unique to the station.



Alongside this, the building helps define and maintain the character of Station Street and the surrounding areas due to its size and history with the railway. The building helps to define the area around heritage park in Essex Center and serves as a main focal point within the community.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

87 Station Street retains contextual value because it is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings. It is historically linked to its surroundings due to its use as the Essex Railway Station from its construction in 1887 until the railway tracks were removed in 2012. It now serves as a reminder for what helped establish Essex as the transportation hub of Essex County and helped develop Essex Centre from a small settlement area into a thriving community.

It is both physically and functionally linked to its surroundings as it serves as a reminder about the historic rail line that helped shape Essex Centre into the community it is today. Today, it serves as an important educational and communal space within the community that is aimed at ensuring the importance of the railway is remembered.

The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

87 Station Street retains contextual value because it serves as a well-known marker within Essex Center due to both its size and longstanding history. It also serves as a defining feature of the community's landscape, an important feature in maintaining the area's character.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the design/physical value of 87 Station Street, includes:

- The mass, form, and style of the building,
- The fieldstone on all elevations,
- The stone bricks on the upper elevation,
- All existing window and doorway openings,
- The large arches at the northern side of the building,
- The existing roof lines and peaks,
- The decorative finial,



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- The brick chimneys at the southern side of the building,
- The wooden gables on the northern facade,

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the historical/associative value of 87 Station Street, includes:

- The location of the building on the south side of Station Street at the eastern side of heritage park, along the former rail line

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the contextual value of 87 Station Street, includes:

- The location of the building on the south side of Station Street at the eastern side of heritage park, along the former rail line