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## Planning and Urban Design

May 31, 2024



**RE: INTENTION TO DESIGNATE A PROPERTY UNDER PART IV OF THE  
ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, PEARSE BUNGALOW, 7484 SIXTEENTH AVENUE & RIGFOOT FARM – THE  
GEORGE AND CATHERINE MILLER HOUSE, 9318 REESOR ROAD**

To **Mr. Pearson**

This will confirm that at a meeting held on May 29, 2024, Markham Council adopted the following resolution:

**That Council state its intention to designate 7484 Sixteenth Avenue & 9318 Reesor Road under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in recognition of their cultural heritage significance**

Please find attached the Statements of Significance which summarize the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and provides a description of the heritage attributes of the property. Notice of objection to the notice of intention to designate the property may be served on the clerk within 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention on the City's website (May 31, 2024). Refer to 'Ontario Heritage Act Notices' at the link below. The notice of objection must include the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

<https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home>

Should you have any questions regarding the Statement of Significance or the implications of heritage designation, please contact Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner, at [emanning@markham.ca](mailto:emanning@markham.ca)

Kimberley Kitteringham  
City Clerk

C. Ontario Heritage Trust

Attachment: Statement of Significance

Received

JUN 04 2024

Ontario Heritage Trust

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House

9318 Reesor Road  
c.1839

Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

#### **Description of Property**

Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House is a two-storey stucco and brick dwelling located on the west side of Reesor Road, north of Sixteenth Avenue.

#### **Design Value and Physical Value**

Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House has design and physical value as a locally rare example of adobe brick construction and as a unique example of an evolved building showing three distinct periods of development. The south-facing two-storey main block, built in 1839, was constructed of adobe brick, a building technology that was occasionally used in early nineteenth century York County due to the abundance of heavy clay. It is one of only four known examples of adobe brick construction still standing in Markham. The dwelling was designed in a restrained version of the Georgian architectural tradition. A one-and-a-half storey brick wing was added to the north side of the dwelling in the mid-1850s, providing an entrance facing Tenth Line (Reesor Road). In the early 1880s, the oldest portion of the house was updated with two-over-two paned windows and Italianate “eyebrow” arches over door and window openings on the south and east walls.

#### **Historical Value and Associative Value**

Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House has historical value and associative value, representing the theme of immigration, particularly the significant wave of British who arrived in Markham Township in the 1820s -1830s, and for its association with George Miller, a prosperous and innovative farmer in this area of old Markham Township. George Miller, a native of Cummertree Parish, Dumfries, Scotland, emigrated to Upper Canada in 1832 and settled on Lot 16, Concession 9 Markham Township, a former Crown reserve lot that was granted to King’s College, the forerunner of the University of Toronto, in 1828. In 1839, the same year George Miller purchased the property he was leasing, his spacious two-storey farmhouse of adobe brick was constructed. Miller named his property “Rigfoot Farm” after the estate he had lived on in Scotland. He married Catherine Somerville in 1840. George Miller was noted for his interest in the improvement of farm stock. He imported Leicester and Cotswold breeds of sheep and Short-horned Durham cattle. In addition to livestock, George Miller imported trees from Scotland for his farmstead. He helped organize the Provincial Exhibition, a forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition, and received many awards for his stock at the Exhibition. He was also involved in the Home District Agricultural Society and served as a vice president.

In addition to his success in agriculture, George Miller owned a sawmill on Little Rouge Creek and became a major landowner in this area of Markham, amassing just under 885 acres by the late 1850s.

Rigfoot Farm remained in the ownership of George and Catherine Miller's descendants until 1934 when it was purchased by Reuben Richard Pearse and Helen (Chester) Pearse. The Pease family farmed in the Scarborough Township community of Hillside and moved to Markham after selling their property to Dr. Robert Jackson, the owner of Dr. Jackson Foods Limited, for his Valley Halla estate, now part of the Toronto Zoo lands.

### **Contextual Value**

Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House is of contextual value for being physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings where it has stood since 1839. The property is historically-linked to the Pearse Bungalow at 7484 Sixteenth Avenue which was constructed in the 1930s on Rigfoot Farm as a secondary dwelling.

### **Heritage Attributes**

Character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of Rigfoot Farm – The George and Catherine Miller House are organized by their respective Ontario Regulation 9/06 as criteria, as amended, below:

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's design value and physical value as a locally rare example of adobe brick construction and as a unique example of an evolved building showing three distinct periods of development:*

#### **Main Block**

- Rectangular plan;
- Fieldstone foundation;
- Two-storey height;
- Stucco-clad adobe brick construction;
- Medium-pitched gable roof with projecting, open eaves and single-stack brick chimney;
- Three-bay configuration of the primary elevation oriented to the south with a centrally-placed single-leaf door with raised "eyebrow" arch;
- Single-leaf door on east gable end wall with raised "eyebrow" arch;
- Rectangular window openings with cambered heads and raised "eyebrow" arches, projecting lugsills, and flat-headed two-over-two paned windows on the primary (south) elevation and east gable-end walls;
- Flat-headed, rectangular window openings on west gable end wall with two-over-two paned windows and projecting lugsills;
- Small rectangular multi-paned rectangular attic window.

#### **Brick Wing**

- Rectangular plan;
- Masonry foundation;
- One-and-a-half storey height;
- Red brick walls in common bond;

- Medium-pitched gable roof with projecting, open eaves;
- Three-bay configuration of the primary elevation oriented to face east with an off-centre single-leaf door;
- Flat-headed rectangular door and window openings with radiating brick arches and projecting lugsills with six-over-six paned windows on the ground floor and six-over-three paned windows on the second storey.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's historical value and associative value, representing the theme of immigration, particularly the significant wave of British that came to Markham in the 1820s -1830s, and for its association with Georg Miller, a prosperous farmer in this area of old Markham Township:*

- The dwelling is a tangible reminder of Scottish immigrant George Miller who came to Upper Canada in 1832 and became a prosperous and innovative farmer in Markham Township.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings:*

- The location of the building on its original site near the north-west corner of Sixteenth Avenue and Reesor Road, where it has stood since 1839.

*Attributes of the property that are not considered to be of cultural heritage value, or are otherwise not included in the Statement of Significance:*

- Barns and other accessory buildings.