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Department of Community & Development Services  
1593 Four Mile Creek Road  
P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0  
905-468-3266 • Fax: 905-468-0301

[www.notl.com](http://www.notl.com)

May 6, 2025

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

**REGISTERED MAIL**

**RE: 167 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, THE BLACK HOUSE (Part Lot 91),  
Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake,  
Notice of Intention to Designate  
Ontario Heritage Act, Part IV**

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 29(3) (a) (b) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18, please find enclosed a copy of:

Intention To Designate 167 Four Mile Creek Road, Black House (Part Lot 91)

Sincerely yours,

Grant Bivol  
Town Clerk

Enc.

Received

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Ontario Heritage Trust



## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

**TAKE NOTICE** that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property at **167 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, THE BLACK HOUSE (Part Lot 91, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Township, ON)** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

### **Description of Property**

The subject property is located on 167 Four Mile Creek Road and is known as the Black House. The subject land is located east of Four Mile Creek Road with a moderate setback. The residence is set on a decent sized parcel which is flat towards the west of the parcel but slopes down towards the east, which is the rear of the property. The landscaping on the subject property includes a few trees towards the front and rear. The access to the residence is directly from Four Mile Creek Road through a paved pedestrian walkway and a separate gravel driveway.

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

The property known as the Black House has cultural heritage value or interest for its design and physical values, its historical and associative values and its contextual values.

The residential structure on 167 Four Mile Creek Road is a representative example of the Queen Anne Revival style with influences from the Italianate style. The one and a half storey detached dwelling was constructed in 1902 and has a T-shaped plan. The subject property features a slightly asymmetrical façade with a tower protruding out on the façade, a central entrance and a pair of double windows on either side of the entrance. The façade also contains a covered porch with a pediment, which is supported on wooden posts and wooden railings. The frieze detail on the porch features a wooden cornice with dentils and pairs of wooden brackets. The main construction material of the residence is natural Queenston cement with partial stucco finish. Apart from the stucco finish, the central tower, side gables and dormers on the side elevations are clad in fish-scale and cedar shake shingles respectively. Black House also contains a complex roofline with the central tower having a steeply pitched hipped roof and the main structure of the residence with a cross-gable roof with gable ends on both the side elevations as well as the rear elevation. The gable ends feature moulded fascia with dentils. The overhanging eaves in the roofline contains wooden cornice with dentils and pairs of wooden brackets. The house has a bay window on the south elevation with a mansard roof, topped off with metal cresting detail. The window openings in the subject property range from segmentally arched openings on the first storey to rectangular vertical openings on the second storey. The windows on the first storey contain plain wooden trim within the structural openings of the windows with plain concrete lug sills. The windows on the second storey, on the other hand, contain plain wooden trim on the outside of the structural window openings with wooden slip sills.

The Black House displays a high degree of physical value as being an early example of poured concrete construction in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Research into the construction methodology indicates that floor joists were set on ledgers, and then cast into the concrete for all the floors. This method of construction varied from the general wooden frame structures found in the

Town and therefore gives an insight into the alternate construction craftsmanship being utilized in the early 1900s.

167 Four Mile Creek Road also has historical associations with Queenston Cement Works company also known as Isaac Usher & Son. The company was run by Isaac Usher and Hudson Usher, between 1885 to 1904. The cement plant was established in 1885 towards the east of St. Davids and on the face of Niagara Escarpment. The raw material for the plant was sourced from the Niagara Escarpment. At the height of its operation, Queenston Cement Works, supplied natural cement to Sault Ste. Marie and St. Lawrence canals. Apart from the major infrastructure projects, Queenston Cement Works also supplied cement to residences in the St. Davids urban area. Among these houses, the Black House is one of the few surviving examples of a residence constructed using natural cement. The house reflects the work of Isaac Usher as a cement masonry contractor. During the early 1900s the most common material for the construction of residences was considered to be stone or brick masonry with wooden frames. During this time, he experimented with cement as a construction material.

The Black House has contextual value because it is important in maintaining the character of the area. 167 Four Mile Creek Road is part of the historic fabric of St. Davids urban area as it lies in close proximity to various other historic buildings and also buildings listed and designated on the Municipal Heritage Register. It acts as a character supporting resource for St. Davids. The house also has contextual value because it is historically linked to its surroundings. It was constructed using natural cement produced by the Queenston Cement Works. The company was run by Mabel's father, Isaac Usher, and brother, Hudson Usher, between 1885 to 1904. The natural cement material used in the construction of the house was mined from the Niagara Escarpment.

### **Description of Key Heritage Attributes**

Key exterior attributes that embody the heritage value of 167 Four Mile Creek Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake include its:

- Two storey Queen Anne Revival style residence with Italianate influences
- Asymmetrical façade
- Tower on façade
- Main entryway featuring a transom and moulded trim with dentil details
- Pair of double windows on facade
- Covered porch, wooden posts and railings
- Frieze, cornice with dentils and pairs of wooden brackets on porch
- Natural Queenston cement used for construction
- Fish-scale and cedar-shake shingles on central tower and side gables
- Cross-gabled roof with hipped roof on the central tower
- Moulded fascia with dentils on gable ends
- Overhanging eaves with denticulated cornice and pairs of brackets
- Bay window on the south elevation with a mansard roof, topped off with metal cresting detail
- Segmentally arched openings on the first storey and basement and rectangular vertical openings on the second storey
- Location on Four Mile Creek Road

### **Objections**

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice of Intent to Designate. Objections should be directed to Grant Bivol, Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S 1T0. The last date to file a notice of objection is **June 5<sup>th</sup> 2025**.

**Queries**

Any further queries should be directed to Sumra Zia, Heritage Planner at (905) 468-3266 ext. 327 or through email at [sumra.zia@notl.com](mailto:sumra.zia@notl.com).

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Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake this 7th day of May 2025  
GRANT BIVOL, CLERK

Received

MAY 07 2025

Ontario Heritage Trust