



An agency of the Government of Ontario



Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

This document was retrieved from the Ontario Heritage Act Register, which is accessible through the website of the Ontario Heritage Trust at **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.

---

Ce document est tiré du registre aux fins de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, accessible à partir du site Web de la Fiducie du patrimoine ontarien sur **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.



202

Durham

Pickering Civic Complex  
One The Esplanade  
Pickering, Ontario  
Canada L1V 6K7  
Direct Access 905.420.4660  
Toll Free 1.866.683.2760  
cityofpickering.com

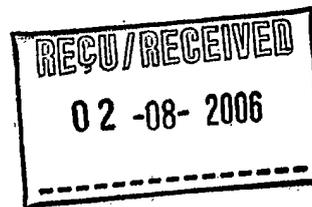
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Clerk's Division

Division 905.420.4611

Facsimile 905.420.9685

clerks@city.pickering.on.ca



BY REGISTERED MAIL

July 31, 2006



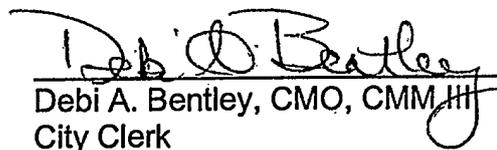
1505 Whitevale Road  
RR 1  
Locust Hill, ON  
L0H 1J0

**Subject:** 1505 Whitevale Road - 'Willson' House  
City of Pickering  
Heritage Designation, Part IV  
The Ontario Heritage Act  
File: A-2800-004-06

At a meeting held July 24, 2006, the Council of the Corporation of the City of Pickering passed By-law 6691/06, a copy of which is enclosed, to designate property municipally known as 1505 Whitevale Road, Pickering, as a Heritage Structure under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

A Notice of Passing to Designate this property will be advertised in the August 9, 2006 issue of the newspaper. A copy of the advertisement has been attached for your information.

Further information regarding the designation can be obtained by contacting Debi Bentley, City Clerk at 905.420.4660 ext. 2153.

  
Debi A. Bentley, CMO, CMM III  
City Clerk

DB/lb  
Encl.

cc: The Ontario Heritage Foundation  
10 Adelaide Street East  
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3

Director, Planning & Development

RC

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PICKERING

BY-LAW NO 6691/06

Being a by-law to designate the property and buildings at 1505 Whitevale Road, Lot 21, Concession 4, (Willson House) as being of historical and architectural value or interest.

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property and buildings at 1505 Whitevale Road, (Willson House) as being of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of the municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Pickering has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as 1505 Whitevale Road and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule 'A' to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation was served upon the Clerk of the municipality.

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PICKERING ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The property at 1505 Whitevale Road, more particularly described in Schedule 'B' is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule 'B' to this by-law in the property Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at 1505 Whitevale Road and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Pickering as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

By-law read a First, Second and Third time and finally passed this 24th day of July, 2006.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Ryan, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debi A. Bentley, City Clerk

By-law 6691/06

Schedule 'A'

Reasons for Designation

Willson House  
1505 Whitevale Road

The Willson house is one of the earliest surviving farmhouses in Pickering. The Willson family descendents were successful, contributing members of Pickering society, and participated in the maturing of the township.

The building dates to 1861, and is a classic example of an Ontario vernacular farmhouse. The exterior is Georgian in form, while the interior is representative of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, with a Greek revival sensibility.

The Willson House is of contextual significance as one of the earliest farmhouses in the Township. The remaining cultural landscape in the vicinity of the house and two acre property currently enables the original context to remain partially intact.

Cultural Heritage Value: On October 16, 1843, Casper Willson purchased 50 acres in Lot 21, Concession 5 of the Township of Pickering from F.W. Heward, who had obtained a Crown Grant of 200 acres on September 24, 1840. The 1851 census showed Casper living on this property in a one-story frame house. The one and a half story brick clad house was built in 1861 as an addition to the front of the frame house. The original frame stood until the mid 1940's and was used as a kitchen, utility room and woodshed for the brick house. The property was passed on to Edward Willson in 1882, to Marie (Willson) Gannon in 1938, to Donald Willson in 1949 and, in part, to Douglas Willson in 1986, remaining in the Willson family until 2001.

Born in 1814, Casper was the second child, and first son, of Asher and Susannah Willson, who settled land along Concession 5, Lot 22 in February, 1832 (the house is still located on the north side of Concession 5 to the west of this property). In Home District, Upper Canada on April 2, 1839, Casper married Elizabeth Hubbard (the granddaughter of Thomas Hubbard, one of the earliest and influential settlers in Pickering Township). They were married by Rev. Israel Marsh, pastor of second Baptist Church, Whitby, Ontario and witnessed by Thomas Hubbard and Nancy Sharrard. Elizabeth Hubbard was born in 1821. She and Casper had seven children.

In addition to farming the land, raising livestock and crops, Casper played a significant role in community life; elected as a deacon of the Christian Church in 1842, became a charter member of the Sons of Temperance in 1850, was the superintendent of the Sunday School as early as 1851 and for many years after, and elected Committee-man for Ward 4 of the Pickering Agricultural Society in 1851. Elizabeth was active as a Sunday school teacher; she owned one of the

first Bell organs in the community and loved to entertain. Their son, Edward (who was Township Assessor for many years) took over the farm before Casper's death and continued to farm the land until his son; Warren (who lived on Lot 20, Concession 4) took over the farm chores.

The Willson family members have played key roles in Pickering Township's history. Casper's father, Asher Willson, served as Pathmaster in the early 1800's. Asher, along with two of his sons, Joseph and William, were involved in the 1837 rebellion and were imprisoned for their participation. Casper died in 1888 and is buried, along with other family members in the Brougham Cemetery. Douglas Willson, the last descendant to live in the home, was born on February 1, 1923 in Toronto, Ontario. He served in the military from 1942 to 1946 in the R.C.A.F. as a Radar Mechanic and was stationed in Gander, Newfoundland (overseas). In 1988, he restored and renovated the house, where he and his wife Margaret Phyllis Willson (new Campbell) lived until 2001. The Willson descendants have been successful, contributing members of society, many remaining in Pickering or the area – a true and lasting connection to the heritage of Pickering Township.

The 1994 (Hough Stansbury) inventory report rates this property as a Class A, the highest possible score.

Heritage Attributes: The one and one-half storey brick house at 1505 Whitevale Road was built in 1861. Prior to that, from ca. 1843 to 1861, they had lived in a single-storey, frame, neo-Classical house on the same lot. This latter structure became the kitchen, utility rooms and woodshed for the new brick house. 'Features such as the segmentally arched window and door openings, the centre gable with lancet window, finial and pendant would have probably been added at that time (1861)...dicromatic with quoins and arches picked out of buff brick.' (Hough Stansbury Inventory, 1994) Casper Willson's grandfather-in-law, Casper Staats (also referred to as Stotts), was United Empire Loyalist. Yet the house built in 1861 reflects the fact that the two main streams of immigration into Upper Canada were melding into an Ontario identity.

The 1994 inventory describes the interior:

The interior features entry directly into the parlor where a wide enclosed stair leads via a winder section of the second storey. The formal dining room is entered through the doorway directly to the west of the main door. The wood trim is largely intact and features broad moulded door and window casings; a wainscoted dado of beaded boards in the parlor (to which the window casings finish) and a separate paneled dado treatment for the windows in the dining room with casing extending to the floor to which the high bases finish. The doors are of four-paneled design.

This remains an accurate description of the interior of the property.

To quote Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, 'The little vernacular house, still stubbornly Georgian in form and wearing its little gable with brave gaiety became the abiding image of the province. It was to be the Ontario Classic style.

In plan this house is derivative of American copy-books, i.e. axial, stable virtuous; but the elements which push the design towards the picturesque are the polychrome-patterned brick details from industrial and lower-middle class Gothic Revival usages in northern England, southern Scotland and Ulster.' As Alan Gowans has written, so ...six years before Confederation the Willsons had had built for them an Ontario Classic style house in which they and two succeeding generations would live (the earlier, neo Classical structure was replaced in 1988 with the extant entrance and family room). Situated on a knoll and facing the road as the house does, and with protecting trees around it, the house placement harks back to Casper's boyhood home at 1390 Whitevale Road.

In conclusion, of particular note are the high quality of the polychrome brickwork, the brick themselves which reportedly were kilned nearby and are of a remarkably uniform colour, the shutters which appear identical to those in the 1880 oil painting, the gently arched window heads, the roof-top finial, and the two entrance doors of the 1861 house with their distinguishing arched-head transoms.

A number of images of the house have been preserved, for example: an 1880 painting of the Willson House by Southworth; a 1908 photograph of the Christian Ladies' Aid Social Evening.

The house and grounds should be preserved to enable this significant heritage building to remain, at least partially, in its original contextual environment, that of an early example of an Ontario farmhouse.

This house and the remaining property (2 remaining acres of the original 50 acres) deserve designation as a heritage site for the architectural merit and for the long and well-documented contribution of an original settler family of Pickering. Of particular significance is the continued dedication to the preservation of this property, in spite of expropriation, the Willsons remained loyal to their heritage. The Willson family and their descendants participated in the beginning and the maturing of the Pickering Township.

By-law 6691/06

Schedule 'B'

Legal Description

Willson House  
1505 Whitevale Road  
Lot 21, Parts 1 and 2  
Concession 4  
Plan 40R-9437