

Russell Christie House, March 2011 (Source: Flicker)

Forest Lane Farms House (also known as Russell Christie House)

1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, Ontario

Documentation & Salvage Report

Prepared for: Leanne Dekaneas

Revision 1: August 18, 2023

July 31, 2023

Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 2 of $38_{\text{f }19}$

1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, ON

Table of Contents

Та	able of Contents	2
LIS	ST OF FIGURES	3
	PURPOSE	
2.	HISTORY OF THE SITE	∠
	DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT SITE	
4.	HERITAGE STATUS	6
5.	CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
6.	SALVAGE PLAN	14
7.	CONCLUSIONS	15
8.	References	16
(9. Appendices	17
	Appendix A: By-Law 84-55	
/	Appendix B: Archival Data	18
,	Appendix C: Site Visit Photos, July 24, 2023	19

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Ancaster's township. Annotated by mcs to snow the subject site. (Source: illustrated Historical A	
of the County of Wentworth, McGill Digital Library, retrieved online from: wen-m-ancaster.jpg (6896×412	29)
(mcgill.ca))	5
Figure 2: Aerial View Image showing the location of the Subject site with the surrounding context. Annot	ated
by mCs to show the subject site. (Source: Google Maps, 2023)	6
Figure 3: Cultural Heritage Resources Map, Heritage Mapping. Annotated by mCs to show the subject sit	æ.
Retrieved online from: Heritage Mapping and Resources City of Hamilton	
Figure 4. View of the front façade	7
Figure 5. View of front entry showing brick condition	
Figure 6 View of the hole and other damage on the rear corner of the garage	7
Figure 7 East Façade Graffiti	8
Figure 8 Rear Façade and Garage Graffiti	8
Figure 9 View of the damaged eaves trough and brackets. This is a typical condition of the soffits, fascia	and
bracketsbrackets	8
Figure 10 Remnants of the front facades' soffits	<u>c</u>
Figure 11 View of remaining damaged soffits to the rear of the house above the garage	9
Figure 12 Collapsed roof, rotting soffits and eaves troughs to the rear of the house above the garage	9
Figure 13 View of damaged brackets at the second level of the front façade	
Figure 14 View of one of the remaining window frame on the front Façade. These do not appear to be	
original and are in a damaged state	
Figure 15 One of the remaining windows was damaged by the fire (West façade second-floor)	9
Figure 16 View of the location where the cover side porch would have been located	
Figure 17 Interior view of the front of the house showing the charred remains of the front door. This is r	
a salvageable condition	
Figure 18 Exterior view of the front of the house showing the boarded front door entry	
Figure 19 View of the existing chimney at the rear of the building	11
Figure 20 View of the existing chimney at the front of the building	11
Figure 21 Condition of interior elements – heavily deteriorated and not intact	11
Figure 22 Damaged door surround and adjacent walls.	11
Figure 23 Interior view of the house showing the collapsed second floor. The second floor has collapsed	
down to the basement in the main portion of the house	
Figure 24 Photo showing existing damage to interior plaster and ceiling moldings	
Figure 25 View of the Fireplace located in the North Room. The Mantle has sustained significant damage	
Figure 26 View of what remains of the collapsed staircase.	

August 18, 2023

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Re: 1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, ON - Documentation & Salvage Report - Revision 1

1. PURPOSE

Representatives of mcCallumSather ('mCs') Architects Kanika Kaushal and Sinclair Jeejeebhoy visited the subject site on July 24, 2023 to observe and assess the designated heritage property's existing conditions and provide an assessment of the damage inflicted by a fire in 2017¹. This review documents the extent of the damage inflicted on the house to provide a salvage report on the eleven designated historic attributes indicated in Schedule B attached to By-Law 84-55, that designate the lands and building municipally known as 1541 Fiddlers Green Road, in the Town of Ancaster, as lands and Building of Historic Value, Architectural Value, and Interest.

A documentation and salvage report which includes updated images of all elements of the property and the salvage plan for any historic material still intact are required to be submitted as part of a future Heritage Permit application. This was requested by City Staff Cultural Heritage Planner Lisa Christie per correspondence dated July 19, 2023 as the subject site is a designated heritage property and it is the intent of the current owners to go for complete demolition of the existing building.

This Documentation and Salvage report was reviewed by staff to confirm its recommendations and comments were provided in August 2023. This revised version responds to the comments provided. Once approved by Staff, a staff report would then be received by the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee, Planning Committee, and subsequently be reviewed by Council for their approvals. As shared by staff, the report will also likely recommend repeal the existing by-law.

2. HISTORY OF THE SITE

The subject building was built by John Squire Russell, one of the original Scottish settlers in the Scotch Block of Ancaster, Ontario in 1860. Also know as the Russell-Christie house (Mr. Christie was also an owner per Designation By-Law 84-55), this building was one of the best examples of the first homes of the Scotch Block of Ancaster until it was significantly damaged by a fire in 2017 which has destroyed most of the architectural value of the home. What remains is a deteriorated shell with the broken bones of a proud history.

Site Timeline:

Building Property designated per constructed in 1984 Property vacant since 2015 (per order to move the property to vacant property list that was

registered on title in 2015.)

Building destroyed by Fire in 2017.

¹ Talking Walls Photography. Retrieved online from: <u>Russell Christie House - Ontario Abandoned Places</u> (<u>talkingwallsphoto.com</u>)

A search of the McMaster University's Digital Archives yielded the following map for Ancaster's township. Annotated by mCs to show the subject site with ownership under J.Russell.

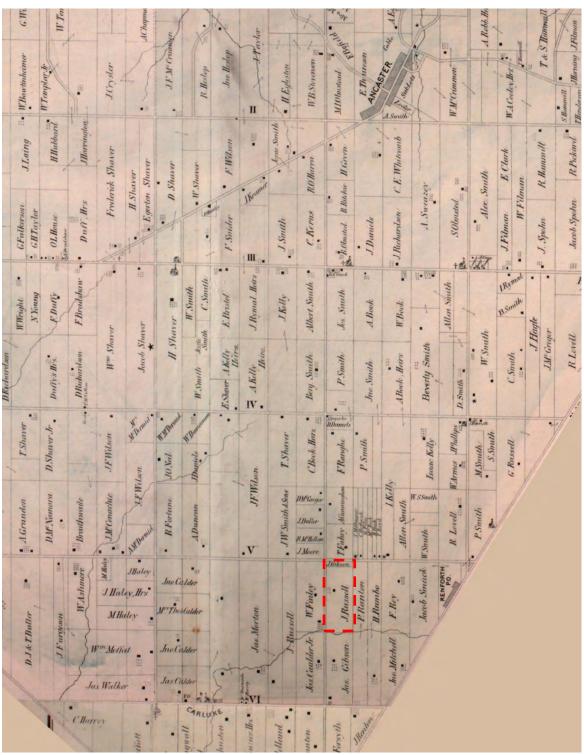


Figure 1. Ancaster's township. Annotated by mcS to show the subject site. (Source: Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Wentworth, McGill Digital Library, retrieved online from: wen-m-ancaster.jpg (6896×4129) (mcgill.ca))

3. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT SITE

The subject site is located southeast of Fiddlers Green Road and Butter Road intersection in Ancaster, Ontario and is surrounded mostly by farmlands.

Property Description: Frontage: 213 metres Depth: 305 metres Area: 6.5 hectares Existing Zoning: A1 (Agriculture)



Figure 2: Aerial View Image showing the location of the Subject site with the surrounding context. Annotated by mCs to show the subject site. (Source: Google Maps, 2023)

4. HERITAGE STATUS

The subject site and building are designated (purple color) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Adjacent properties include listed heritage property at 137 Carluke Road W (mustard color) and inventoried properties Cranston Farms at 37 & 152 Carluke Road E (light yellow color).



Figure 3: Cultural Heritage Resources Map, Heritage Mapping. Annotated by mCs to show the subject site. Retrieved online from: Heritage Mapping and Resources | City of Hamilton

5. CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a photo documentation (from July 24, 2023) of each designated heritage attribute as described in the designation by-law 84-55 to describe its existing conditions and make appropriate recommendations as applicable.

Condition

1. Exposed Brick and stone facades of the walls and foundations, including the garage area



Figure 4. View of the front façade



Figure 5. View of front entry showing brick condition



Figure 6 View of the hole and other damage on the rear corner of the garage.

Assessment and Recommendations

The house was significantly damaged in the 2017 fire. Following which, the house has been vacant causing further deterioration. Per the extent of damage caused to the brick and mortar, we determine the front façade to be the most intact and well-kept. In all other parts of the house, the mortar and bricks have sustained significant fire damage, deteriorated or have been vandalized with graffiti causing further damage.

The rest of the house's façade has some graffiti scattered around. There are also some areas with visible damage like what is seen in Figure 6 where there is a large hole in the wall. Otherwise, it is typical fire damage that is seen throughout the house.

The stonework around the windows and doors remains intact, as seen in Figure 5. It is recommended that 10% of the bricks from the lower level of the front façade be salvaged and stored in a monitored and temperature controlled space either on site or off-site. These can be used as part of the future development or to design a commemorative design feature/landscape feature with a historic plaque that would describe the history of the site and the Forest Lanes Farm House building to the future occupants / visitors.

An attempt should also be made to salvage the voussoirs of the lower level windows and door. A heritage consultant/ engineer should be consulted prior to commencement of demolition at site to check if this is possible considering the existing fire damage.



Figure 7 East Façade Graffiti





Figure 8 Rear Façade and Garage Graffiti

Graffiti is a common sight throughout the building. Most are on the interior but some larger ones are seen prominently displayed on the façade of the house and on the garage walls.

2. Cornices, soffits, fascias, brackets built-in eaves troughs, and rainwater leaders



Figure 9 View of the damaged eaves trough and brackets. This is a typical condition of the soffits, fascia and brackets.

The fire has destroyed the roof above the main house. There remains little examples of carpentry. See Figures 9 – 13. Eaves troughs have completely burnt away along with all other supporting members over the main house. All rainwater leaders are no longer visible. Fascias have been destroyed. The same case remains for most of the soffits except for what remains above the garage.

The exterior carpentry above the garage has some portions intact however still sustained a large amount of damage and is thus not feasibly intact enough for salvaging. Wood appears to be rotted or in the process of rotting. What remains has continued to deteriorate along with the rest of the house.



Figure 10 Remnants of the front facades' soffits



Figure 11 View of remaining damaged soffits to the rear of the house above the garage.



Figure 12 Collapsed roof, rotting soffits and eaves troughs to the rear of the house above the garage



Figure 13 View of damaged brackets at the second level of the front façade.

3. Exterior windows including sash, frames, sills, and shutters.



Figure 14 View of one of the remaining window frame on the front façade. These do not appear to be original and are in a damaged state.

There remain no examples of the original carpentry and glass. Frames that remain such as the one of two examples seen in figure 14 and figure 15, are not original.



Figure 15 One of the remaining windows was damaged by the fire (West façade second-floor)

 All Exterior wooden architectural fenestrations such as the side porch roof structure, and side doors with jambs and sills



Figure 16 View of the location where the cover side porch would have been located.

All Exterior wooden architectural fenestrations such as the side porch roof structure, and side doors with jambs and sills were lost in the fire. There remain no physical examples of these elements after the fire. Please refer to archival photos for porch photos.

5. Front door, including side lights and fanlight and all related woodwork



Figure 17 Interior view of the front of the house showing the charred remains of the front door. This is not in a salvageable condition.

The front door, including side lights and fan lights, and all related woodwork, has been destroyed by the fire in 2017. There remains no evidence of these elements.



Figure 18 Exterior view of the front of the house showing the boarded front door entry.

6. Three exterior chimneys as presently in place



Figure 19 View of the existing chimney at the rear of the building.



Figure 20 View of the existing chimney at the front of the building.

The chimneys were found to be in very poor condition. As shared in structural assessment report prepared by Tacoma Engineers dated August 17, 2023 'The three chimneys were found to be in intact, but in very poor condition. The chimneys have loose bricks at the top that are considered a fall hazard.' Hence the existing chimneys are not in a salvageable condition and would need to be removed.

Please refer to Appendix B for archival photos.

7. All interior wooden doors, frames, trim, baseboards and window trim



Figure 21 Condition of interior elements – heavily deteriorated and not intact.

All these elements have been destroyed or damaged by the fire. What is left after the fire has decayed or has been vandalized. Please refer to Appendix C for more interior photos.



Figure 22 Damaged door surround and adjacent walls.

8. All Pine floors on the second storey





Figure 23 Interior view of the house showing the collapsed second floor. The second floor has collapsed down to the basement in the main portion of the house.

All the Pine floors on the second floor were destroyed by the fire and collapsed down to the first floor. There remains no evidence of the second floor, other than the collapsed remains of burnt rotting wood.

Given the second floor is sinking at site, the interior conditions are highly unstable and unsafe. Please refer to Appendix C for more interior photos.

9. Interior Plaster including ceiling moldings and ornamental light fixture surrounds



Figure 24 Photo showing existing damage to interior plaster and ceiling moldings.

There remains no physical example of the plasterwork. All the plaster and interior walls has since been destroyed by being exposed to the weather where it would have absorbed moisture in the air and deteriorated in the 6 years since the fire in 2017. Plaster is naturally fire resistant due to its porous nature. However, this means that the material acts like a sponge when exposed to fluids. (National Fire Chiefs Council, n.d.) Over time the plaster has crumbled away as it continuously absorbed and releasing moisture when it dried.

No ornamental light fixture was documented at site.

10. Fireplace in the front north room including surround and mantel



Figure 25 View of the Fireplace located in the North Room. The Mantle has sustained significant damage.

The fireplace remains in the original location. All decorative elements have been destroyed. The mantle remains significantly damaged having been exposed to the weather and damaged by the fire. The chimney for this fireplace is a falling hazard and would need to be removed.

11. The main stairway, including stringers, treads, risers, banister, and handrail, spindles and newel post



Figure 26 View of what remains of the collapsed staircase.

The interior stairs were destroyed by the 2017 fire. There remains no salvageable evidence.

Given the second floor is sinking at site, the interior conditions are highly unstable and unsafe. Please refer to Appendix C for more interior photos.

6. SALVAGE PLAN

Presently, there are no further plans beyond demolition and sale of the vacant property.

Salvage to include:

Property Details:

Choice Selection of Brick Masonry from the first level of the front façade.

- Prior to demolition, the destination of salvaged bricks should be determined prior to the initiation of any salvage process.
- Scaffolding or lift equipment may be required on the front façade to facilitate the safe removal of select bricks for salvage.
- Bricks that can be salvaged from the front facade should be stored in a covered, secured and
 monitored facility until they can be reused. If they cannot be reused, they should be donated to an
 architectural salvage.
- Incorporation of salvaged materials in the future should be accompanied by
 interpretation, (i.e. a plaque or other commemoration feature), so residents and visitors can
 understand the significance of the site, building and materials.
 Bricks should be salvaged/extracted in a manner that they are not impacted by irreversible
 damages.
- An inventory of salvaged bricks is recommended to be prepared by the contractor at site which would include the following basic information:

Inventory of Salvaged Materials or Grab Sheet

Forest Lane Farms House (also known as Russell Christie House)									
1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, Ontario									
Reviewer Details:									
Name									
Company									
Date of Docu									
General	Elevation	Material	Description	Measurements	Photograph				
Location	(North/South/East	(brick,	(eg. Red bricks that	(Size and Weight)	and date				
(Interior or	or West)	stone etc)	comprise the		taken				
Exterior)			exterior walls)						
	-	L	1	•]				

7. CONCLUSIONS

This Documentation and Salvage report has been prepared by mcCallumSather Architects Inc. for 1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster. This report provides a conditions assessment for the historically significant elements as stated in Schedule "B" of By-Law 84-55, visually observed at the site on July 24, 2023, to determine whether any of the elements are salvageable.

This assessment found the building in an advanced state of despair and parts of the buildings demonstrated compromised structural integrity – please refer to Structural Condition Assessment report prepared by Tacoma dated August 17, 2023 for the subject site for more details. Out of the 11 items indicated in Schedule "B", the only historic element that is in a state of salvage is a portion of masonry along the building's front façade, particularly the lower level. We recommend a heritage specialist or engineer visits the site at the time of demolition to assess remaining high-quality bricks that can be salvaged, 10% of the lower level of the front façade is recommended (contingent to site conditions at the time of extraction). The rest of the historic elements were either destroyed completely or partially destroyed and are not in a condition to recommend salvage.

Presently, there are no further plans beyond demolition and sale of the vacant property. We recommend that salvaged bricks be stored for future re-use for a commemorative design feature/landscape feature and a plaque be installed adjacent to it. This will be an educational intervention that describes the site's history to the community and future users. It is further recommended that a copy of this report should be submitted to the Archives at Hamilton Public Library after it has been reviewed by Staff, Heritage Committee and approved by Council.

Should there be any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Kanika Kaushal Senior Heritage Professional M.Arch., B.Arch., Intern OAA, CAHP, APT, MRAIC, COA

kanikak@mccallumsather.com 647.212.4447

8. References

Canada's Historic Places 2010 Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. Second Addition. Canada's Historic Places, Ottawa

City of Hamilton 2021 Municipal Heritage Register. Retrieved from: https:// spatialsolutions.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ef3 61312714b4caa863016bba9e6e68f

2021 Interactive Zoning Map. Retrieved Online from: https://www.hamilton.ca/city-planning/official-plan-zoning-by-law/interactive-zoning-mapping

2014 Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties – Heritage Identification and Evaluation Process. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Toronto.

Council, N. F. (n.d.). *Plaster and plasterboard*. Retrieved 07 27, 2023, from National Fire Chiefs Council: https://www.ukfrs.com/promos/16860#:~:text=Plaster%20and%20plasterboard%20tend%20to,in%2 0large%20sections%20once%20wetted.

The Corporation of the Town of Ancaster. (1984). By-LAw No. 84-55. (p. 4). Ancaster: The Corporation of the Town of Ancaster.

9. Appendices

Appendix A: By-Law 84-55

Appendix "D" to Report PED23220

THE CORPURATION OF THE TOWN OF ANCASTER Page 18 of 38

BY-LAW NO. 84-55

To Designate the Lands and Building Municipally known as 1541 Fiddler's Green Road, in the Town of Ancaster, as Lands and Building of Historic Value, Architectural Value and Interest

WHEREAS this Council is empowered under subsection (6) of Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980, Chapter 337, to enact By-laws to designate real property, including buildings and structures thereon, as described in Schedule "A" attached hereto to be of historic or architectural value or interest, and

WHEREAS this Council has caused to be served upon the owner of the lands and premises municipally known as 1541 Fiddler's Green Road, in the Town of Ancaster, and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation notice of intention to so designate the described property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in this municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks, and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation of the described property has been served on the Clerk of this municipality within the time prescribed by the said Statute, and

 ${\tt WHEREAS}$ this Council's reasons for the proposed designation are as set forth in Schedule "B" attached hereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF ANCASTER ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. In this By-law the word "property" means real property and includes all buildings and structures thereon.
- 2. There is hereby designated as being of historic value, architectural value and interest the property municipally known as 1541 Fiddler's Green Road, in the Town of Ancaster, and more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto.
- 3. YATES and YATES are hereby authorized and directed to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Wentworth.
- 4. The Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause a copy of this By-law to be served upon the owner of the property 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 Town of Ancaster.

ENACTED AND PASSED THIS 11th DAY OF

JUNE

1984.

Marzon

Clerk

SCHEDULE "A"

ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate lying and being in the Town of Ancaster, in the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth (formerly in the Township of Ancaster, in the County of Wentworth) comprising the centre part of Lot Forty-three in the Sixth Concession of the said Township of Ancaster containing one hundred and eleven acres be the same more or less and which may be more particularly described as follows: COMMENCING at a point on the westerly limit of said Lot Forty-three distance ten chains eighty links (712.80 feet) more or less from the north-west angle of said lot said point being the south-westerly angle of said lot said point being the south-westerly angle of the lands firstly described in a Memorial registered in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of Wentworth as No. N26 and being the lands conveyed by one John Russell to one James Gibson, and THENCE in a southerly direction following the westerly limit of said Lot Forty-three to a point distant northerly thirty-five chains (2,310 feet) more or less from the south-westerly angle of said Lot Forty-three said point being the north-westerly angle of the lands secondly described in said Instrument No. N.26, and THENCE north seventy-seven degrees east twenty chains (1,320 feet) more or less to the easterly boundary of said Lot Forty-three, and THENCE in a northerly direction following the easterly boundary of said Lot Forty-three to a point in said easterly boundary distant ten chains eighty links (712.80 feet) more or less from the northeasterly angle of said Lot Forty-three and being the southeasterly corner of the lands firstly described in said Instrument N.26, and

THENCE in a westerly direction twenty chains (1,320 feet) more or less to the place of beginning.

SCHEDULE "B"

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION OF THE FOREST LANE FARMS HOUSE, 1541 FIDDLER'S GREEN ROAD, IN THE TOWN OF ANCASTER

This building known as 1541 Fiddler's Green Road, in the Town of Ancaster has historic and architectural value and interest. This building is one of the best remaining examples of a house in the Scotch Block of Ancaster. It was built by John Squire Russell, one of the original Scottish Families to settle in the Scotch Block. The house was built in 1860 and only the Russell family and Mr. Christie, today's owner, have lived in this home and generally it is as originally built.

Without restricting the generality of the foregoing the reasons for this Council designating the described premises include the intention that the following features of the described premises should be preserved, that is,

- (a) all exposed brick and stone facades of the walls and foundations, including the garage area, and
- (b) the cornices, soffits, fascias, brackets built in eaves troughs, and rain water leaders, and
- (c) all exterior windows including sash, frames, sills and shutters, and
- (d) all exterior wooden architectural fenestrations such as the side porch roof structure and the side doors with jambs and sills, and
- (e) the front door including the side lights and fan light and all the related woodwork and sill, and
- (f) the three exterior chimneys as presently in place, and
- (g) all interior doors, frames, trim, baseboards and window trim, and
- (h) all pine floors on the second storey, and
- (i) the interior plaster including ceiling mouldings and ornamental light fixture surrounds, and
- (j) the fireplace in the front north room including the surround and mantel, and
- (k) the main stairway including the stringers, treads, risers, banister, handrail, spindles and newel post, but

Council has no intention that any alteration, maintenance, repair, replacement or improvement of elements of the premises requires the prior written consent of this Council unless such affect the reasons for the designation of the premises as described in paragraphs (a) to (k) herein.

BY-LAW NO. 84-55

Registry Division of Wentworth (No. 62) C. D. CERTIFY that this instrument is registered as of

JUN 2 8 1984 i

Land Registry Office at Hamilton Ontario.

V. Mattuff

Reg'n Fees/6.00 en fry

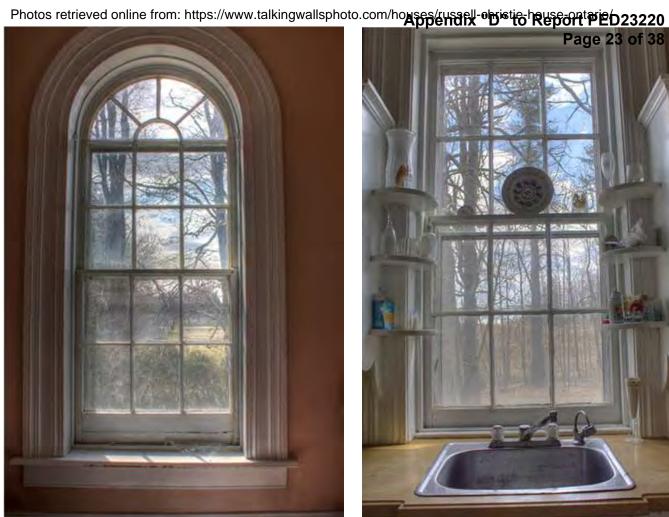
THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF ANCASTER 300 Wilson Street East Ancaster, Ontario L9G 2B9

BOX 154

Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 22 of 38_{f 19}

1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, ON

Appendix B: Archival Data



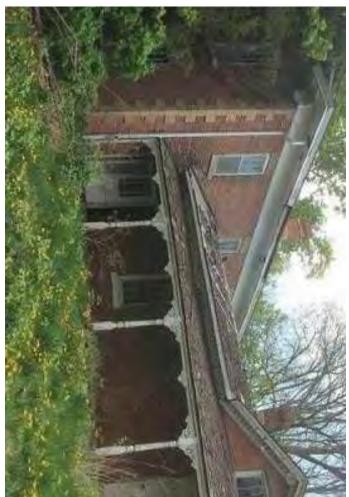














Photos retrieved online from Vintage Ancaster Facebook Page Appendix "D" to Report PED23220



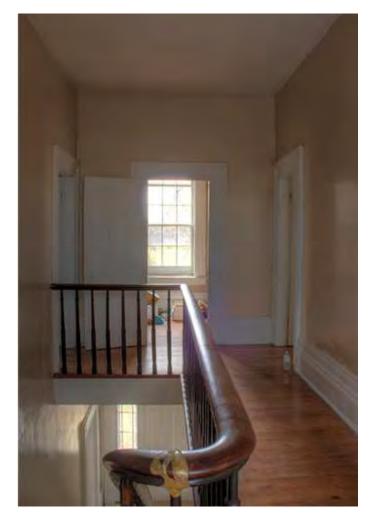










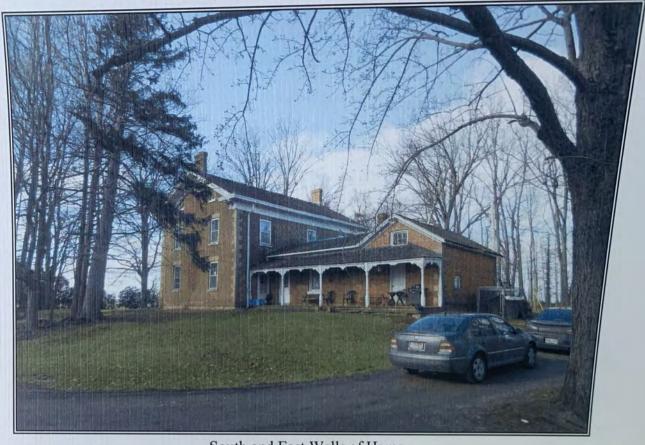








PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY



South and East Walls of Home



North and West Wall of Home

INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY



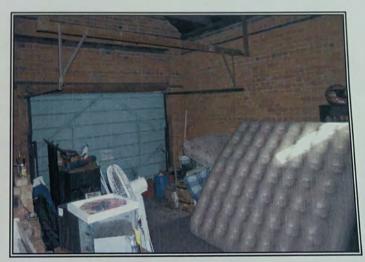
Living Room



Stairs to Second Floor



Bedroom



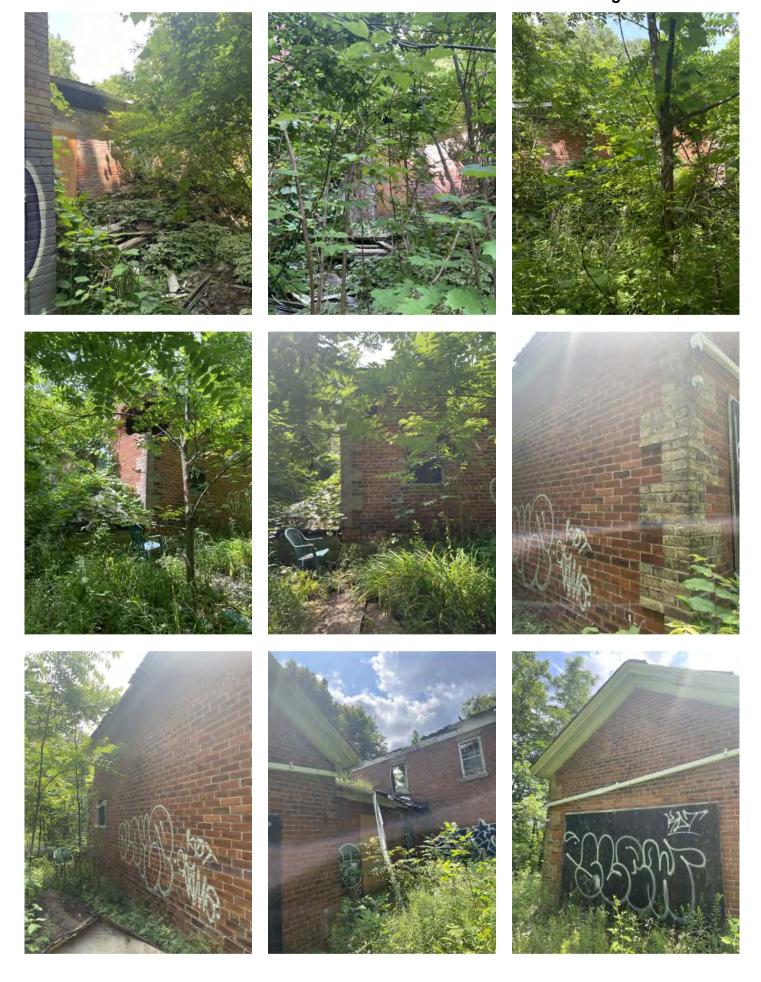
Garage - Storage Room

Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 30 of 38_{f 19}

1541 Fiddlers Green Road, Ancaster, ON

Appendix C: Site Visit Photos, July 24, 2023

Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 31 of 38



Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 32 of 38



Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 33 of 38















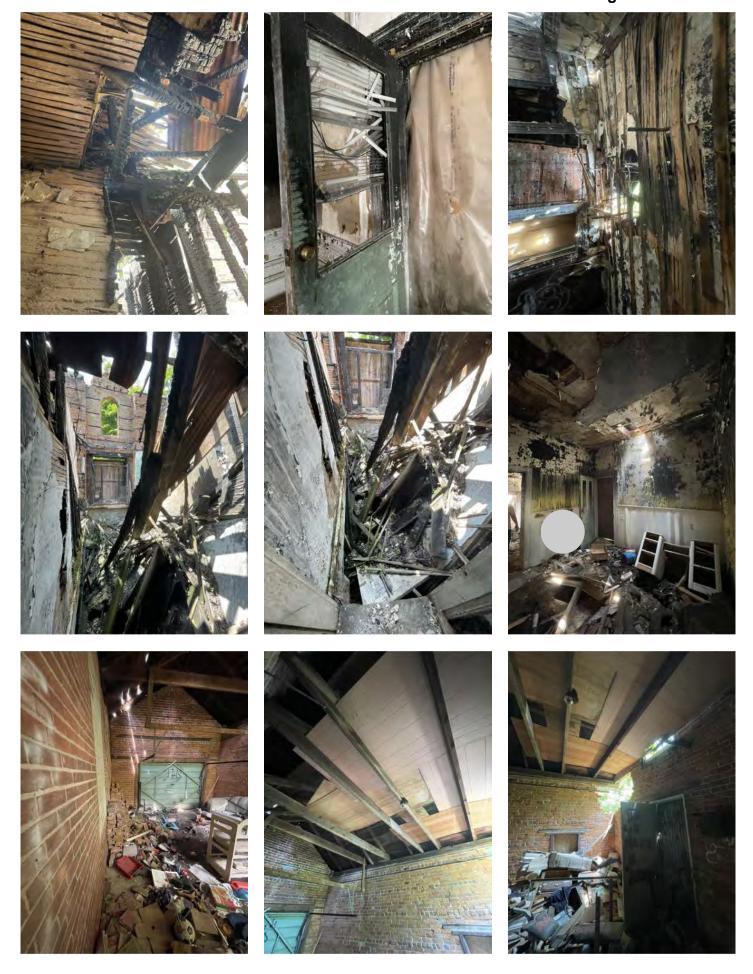




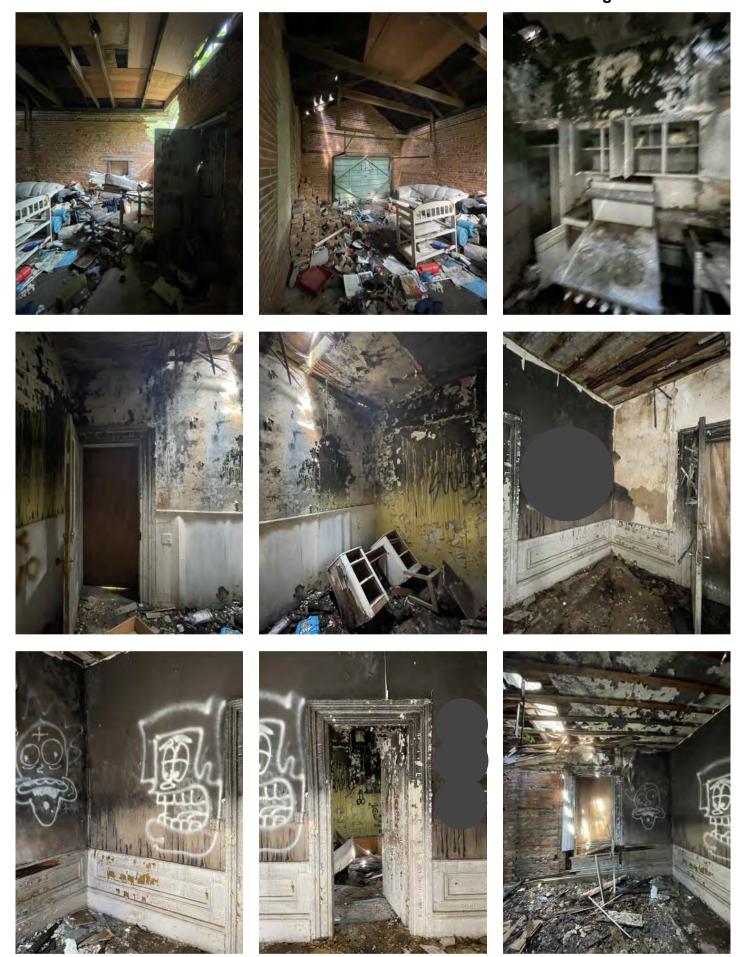
Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 34 of 38



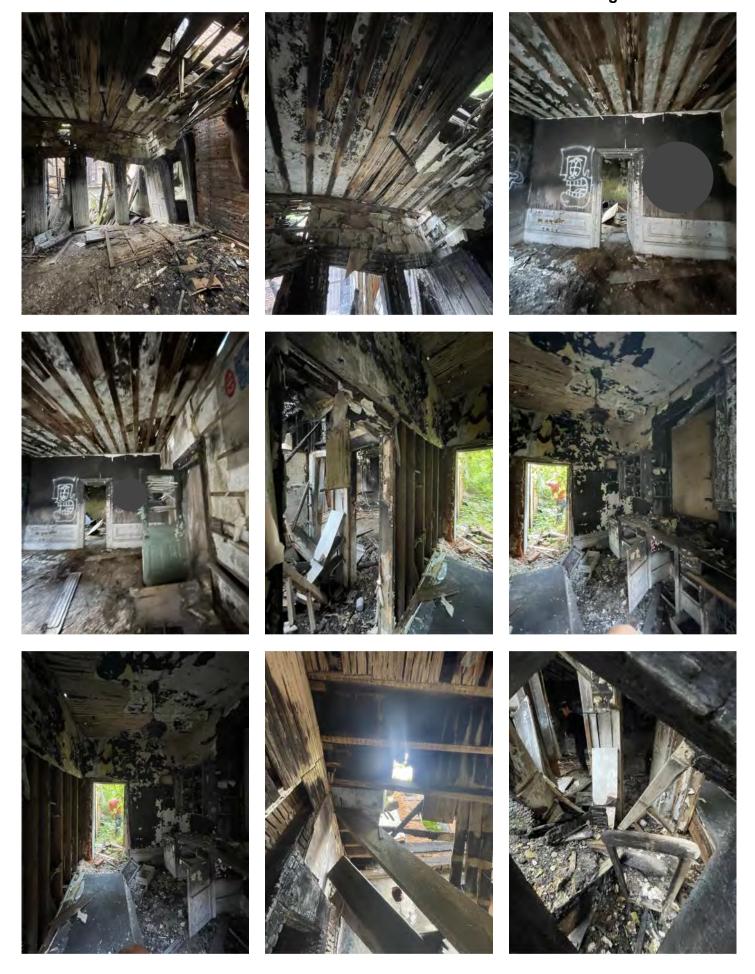
Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 35 of 38



Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 36 of 38



Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 37 of 38



Appendix "D" to Report PED23220 Page 38 of 38

