

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST AND DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

Description of Property

The 0.1 hectare property municipally-addressed as 419 Wilson Street East, known as the Masonic Hall, is comprised of a two-and-a-half-storey stone structure built circa 1821. It is on the northwestern side of Wilson Street East, between the intersection of Rousseaux Street to the north and Academy Street to the south, in Ancaster Village in the community of Ancaster, in the City of Hamilton.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The two-and-a-half-storey building located at 419 Wilson Street East, Ancaster, was originally constructed as a two-storey building circa 1821. The property has physical value as an early and representative example of a vernacular early-nineteenth century stone structure that also displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its significant sympathetic addition constructed circa 1914.

The property has heritage value for its associations with prominent nineteenth-century Ancasterians, including George Leith (1812-1887) and with a long-serving Ancaster organization known as the Seymour Lodge No. 272 Masons. Believed to be the oldest stone structure in the core of Ancaster Village, the building was originally used as a blacksmith shop and carriage workshop throughout the nineteenth century. The property was owned in the mid-nineteen century by George Leith, owner of the famed Hermitage Estate. The fledgling Seymour Lodge No. 272, held their first meeting in the structure in the Spring of 1872, and has continued to meet in the same space ever since. Purchased by the Lodge in 1900, the property has been the home of this local Masonic branch for over a century.

Contextually, this property defines the character of the surrounding area and is visually and historically linked to its surroundings. Its close proximity to the historic transportation corridor of Wilson Street East and continuity with the surrounding structures creates a viewscape in the transition from the residential stretch of the street to the core commercial area, acting as a gateway into the core of Ancaster Village.

Description of Heritage Attributes:

Key attributes that embody the physical value of the property as being an early and representative vernacular nineteen-century stone building, in demonstrating a high degree of craftsmanship, and its long-standing association with Seymour Lodge No. 272 Masons, include:

- The front (east) and side (north and south) elevations and roofline of the two-and-a-half-storey stone structure, including its:
 - Hip roof with a front gable and projecting side dormers;

- Coursed rubble stone walls with dressed quoins;
- Large window below the front gable with a carved stone lintel reading “Masonic Hall” and stone lug sill;
- Flat-headed window and door openings with dressed stone lintels in the second storey windows and stone voussoirs in the first storey;
- Remaining two-over-two hung wood windows;
- Masonry seams between original two-storey circa 1821 front facade and the circa 1914 third storey gable addition, and on the north side elevation between the original structure and the rear 1914 addition; and,
- Visible masonry fill on either side of the front door; and,
- Coursed rubble stone foundation.

Key attributes that embody the contextual value of the property as a defining feature of the historical character of Wilson Street East and Ancaster Village, include its:

- Location fronting onto Wilson Street East at the public right of way.