

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

Description of Property

The 0.16 hectare property municipally addressed as 311 Wilson Street East is comprised of a single-detached brick building, known as the Orton House, originally constructed as a one-storey dwelling circa 1850 and significantly modified into a two-storey building by the late-nineteenth century. The property is also comprised of a modern three car garage constructed in 1997. The property is located on the southwest corner of Wilson Street East and Sulphur Springs Road in Ancaster Village, in the City of Hamilton.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The two-storey brick building located at 311 Wilson Street East has physical value as a unique example of a former dwelling influenced by the Italianate style of architecture. The unique features of this property are the modifications undertaken to the original single-storey vernacular structure to convert it to a two-storey Italianate dwelling, as evidenced by the contrasting brick bonds and uneven placement and size of windows. The property also displays a high degree of craftsmanship as demonstrated by the turned and carved wooden brackets supporting the projecting eaves and the decorative belvedere which tops the truncated hip roof.

The property has historical value due to its direct association with several prominent Ancasterians. It is believed that the Italianate-influenced additions were constructed between 1869 and 1882, when the property was owned by either Thomas McMurray (1835-1875), a lawyer, or Doctor Henry Orton (1832-1882), who had a large medical practice in Ancaster and who is commemorated in a stain glass window in St. John’s Anglican Church. McMurray had his law office in the house before selling to Doctor Orton. Other prominent Ancaster residents to occupy the building included: Doctor George Devy Farmer (1866-1928); Charles Stuart (1868-1937), school principal and bank manager; and Charles Reinke (1871-1929), long-serving clerk of Ancaster Township.

The property at 311 Wilson Street East helps define the historic character of Ancaster Village. Located on the southwest corner of Wilson Street East and Sulphur Springs Road in the core of the nineteenth-century village, the property holds a prominent location in proximity to the Township Hall. It is visually, historically and functionally linked to its surroundings with its principal entrance fronting onto Wilson Street and the historic “office” entrance fronting onto Sulphur Springs Road. The size of the building and its unique style and setback at the corner help make it a local landmark, known by name as the Orton House.

Description of Heritage Attributes:

Key attributes that embody the physical value of the property as being a unique example of the Italianate style of architecture, in demonstrating a high degree of craftsmanship and its association with prominent Ancasterians, such as Doctor Henry Orton, include:

- All elevations and the roofline of the two-storey brick building including its:
 - Truncated hip roof with its central belvedere, wide projecting eaves with ornate paired wooden brackets and flanking brick chimneys;
 - Front gable dormer and oculus window that may remain intact behind contemporary front covered portico;
 - Three-bay front (east) elevation including its:
 - Brick laid in Flemish bond in the first storey;
 - Round-headed window with stone hood in the second storey;
 - Flat-headed openings throughout the first storey with alternating brick voussoirs;
 - Segmentally-arched window openings in the second storey with brick voussoirs and stone lug sills;
 - Contrasting brickwork between the first and second storeys;
 - Two-storey rear brick wing with its:
 - Gable roof with projecting eaves and paired wood brackets;
 - Segmentally-arched window openings with brick voussoirs and stone lug sills;
 - Projecting one-storey ‘office entrance’ on the north side elevation with gable roof and round window in gable; and,
 - Stone foundation.

The contemporary two-storey covered portico, constructed in 2014, and the detached three-car garage, constructed in 1997, are not considered to be heritage attributes.

Key attributes that embody the contextual value of the property as a defining feature of the historical character Ancaster Village and as a local landmark include its:

- Location at the corner of Wilson Street East and Sulphur Springs Road, with a moderate setbacks from the public rights-of-way; and,
- Distinctive features, including its belvedere and projecting side entrance.