

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

Description of Property

The 0.4-hectare property municipally addressed as 134 Cannon Street East, Hamilton is comprised of a former industrial complex of brick buildings, formerly known as the Cannon Knitting Mills. The complex is comprised of five distinct brick structures constructed between circa 1866 and 1927, including: 130 Mary Street, built circa 1866; 122 Mary Street, built circa 1880 to replace the original 1855 Turnbull foundry; 11 Kelly Street, built 1910; 140-146 Mary Street, built in 1911 and completed in 1927; and 134 Cannon Street, built 1920. The complex occupies the entire half block formed by Kelly Street, Mary Street and Cannon Street, located in the Beasley Neighbourhood, in the City of Hamilton.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property, known as the Cannon Knitting Mills, has design or physical value as it is a rare surviving example of a nineteenth- to twentieth-century industrial complex in downtown Hamilton comprised of five distinct brick structures built over a 61 year period from circa 1866 to 1927. These various buildings which comprise the complex demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship, including the: brick pilasters with pointed tops and stone accents on 11 Kelly Street; rounded corner entrance on 122 Mary Street with wooden cornice supported by Corinthian capitals; projecting eaves on 122 Mary with decorative wooden brackets; and shaped brick parapet designed to accommodate a rooftop louvre on the north elevation of 146 Mary Street.

The property has long-standing associations with two of Hamilton's leading historic industries – textiles and metalworking, and is associated with several prominent Hamilton firms, including: the Turnbull brother's Mary Street Foundry, the Laidlaw Manufacturing Company, and the Chipman-Holton Knitting Company, which was one of the most successful hosiery manufacturers in North America. The property is associated with a significant event in Hamilton's labour history, as the Laidlaw Manufacturing Company was the only one of the foundries affected by the Moulders' Strike of 1892 to accept the demands of the striking workers. The property also acted as an incubator for small firms which later expanded greatly, including the Hamilton Pottery Company, once the largest pottery manufacturer in Canada, and the still operating Brown Boggs Company.

The property is also associated with leading Hamilton architectural firm Stewart and Witton, who were responsible for designing two additions to the complex in the early-twentieth century: 11 Kelly Street in 1910 and 140-146 Mary Street (1911-1927). The pair designed a number of prominent residential, commercial, and industrial buildings in Hamilton and beyond. A surviving example of their industrial designs includes the former Thornton and Douglas Ltd. Factory, located across the street at 147 Mary Street, now Welkom House.

This property is a tangible reminder of the working-class roots of the Beasley neighbourhood and has the potential to yield information about the working-class communities of the surrounding area. As a surviving industrial complex surrounded by worker’s housing, the property defines the character of this part of Beasley, the earliest extant buildings pointing to Beasley’s status as Hamilton’s first industrial area, while the eclectic massing and style of the various additions speaks to the growth and continued presence of industry over most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is visually, historically, and functionally linked to its surroundings through its connections to local worker’s housing, to other surviving industrial sites in the area, and to the former rail yard on Ferguson Avenue. The property is also, as a distinctive and massive structure which rises over the rest of the neighbourhood, considered a prominent local landmark.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the property as a rare surviving example of an industrial complex whose evolution over time is evident in its component structures, its historical associations with Hamilton’s metal working industry, with the historic Mary Street Foundry and Laidlaw Manufacturing Company and with the Moulders’ Union Strike of 1892, as well as in demonstrating a high degree of artisanship, include:

- The front (west) elevation and roofline of the four-storey circa 1866 brick building at 130 Mary Street, including its:
 - Side gable roof;
 - Brick façade laid in Common bond;
 - Six bay façade separated by raised brick pilasters;
 - Paired segmentally-arched windows with brick voussoirs and wooden lug sills; and,
 - Large ground-floor windows in the two southernmost bays with segmented openings, transoms, brick voussoirs, stone skewbacks, and stone lug sills.

- The front (west) and side (south) elevations and roofline of the three-and-a-half-storey circa 1880 corner brick building at 122 Mary Street, including its:
 - Hip roof with a rounded corner and wood-framed dormers;
 - Projecting eaves with decorative wooden brackets, moulded frieze and decorative brick corbelling below;
 - Raised brick pilasters separating the bays with paired wooden brackets below the upper cornice;
 - Rounded southwest corner with a ground-floor entrance including a curved wooden cornice, decorative end brackets, wooden frieze with dentils, metal columns with Corinthian capitals and transoms;
 - Segmentally-arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wooden lug sills; and,
 - Large ground-floor windows on the west elevation with segmented openings, transoms, brick voussoirs, stone skewbacks, and stone lug sills.

Key attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the property as a rare surviving example of an industrial complex whose evolution over time is evident in its component structures, its historical associations with Hamilton’s textile industry, the Chipman-Holton Knitting Company, and the architectural firm Stewart & Witton, as well as in demonstrating a high degree of artisanship, include:

- The front (south) and side (east) elevations of the three-storey 1911 brick building at 11 Kelly Street, including its:
 - Brick facades laid in Common bond;
 - Brick pilasters with pointed tops with diamond-shaped stone accents;
 - Flat-headed openings with stone sills and remaining multi-pane metal windows; and,
 - Decorative brickwork including courses of corbelled brick and relief work.

- The front (north) and side (west) elevations and roofline of the western portion of the 1911-1927 brick building at 140 and 146 Mary Street, including its:
 - Brick facades laid in Common bond;
 - Raised brick pilasters separating the bays;
 - Large flat-headed window openings with stone sills and remaining multi-pane metal windows;
 - Segmentally-arched openings in the ground floor of the three southern ground-floor bays with brick voussoirs and brick sills; and,
 - Stone foundation.

- The front (north) elevation and roofline of the eastern portion of the 1911-1927 brick building at 140 and 146 Mary Street (fronting onto Cannon Street East), including its:
 - Shaped brick parapet;
 - Central window with semi-circular transom, brick voussoirs and stone keystone, end stones and sills;
 - Flanking windows with semi-circular transoms, brick voussoirs and stone keystones, end stones and sills; and,
 - Recessed brickwork between first and second storey windows.

- The front (north) and side (east) elevation of the three-storey 1920 brick building at 134 Cannon Street East, including its:
 - Brick façades laid in Common bond;
 - Flat-headed window openings with stone lug sills;
 - Projecting ground-floor wooden cornice;
 - Decorative stone accents and banding;
 - Shallow paired brick pilasters; and,
 - Stone door surround.

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

- Location filling the half block formed by Cannon, Mary, and Kelly Streets.