

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

Description of Property

The 1.09-hectare property municipally addressed as 801 Dunsmure Road is comprised of a three-storey school building constructed 1922, known as the W.H. Ballard Public School. The property occupies the block formed by Dunsmure Road, Tragina Avenue North, Roxborough Avenue and Weir Street North, in the historic Homeside Neighbourhood in the City of Hamilton.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The 1922 three-storey school building located at 801 Dunsmure Road has design and physical value as it is a representative example of the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture as applied to an urban elementary school and as a rare example of a Hamilton school building with a central auditorium and covered light well. The property displays a high degree of craftsmanship, demonstrated by its elaborate three-storey round stone front bay with carved parapet and decorative brick and stone detailing throughout. The property also displays a high degree of technical achievement through the early use of a steel-frame structure as applied to a school building in Canada.

The historical value of the property lies in its association with prominent local educator and long serving Inspector of Public Schools William Henry Ballard (1845-1934), in whose honour the school was named, and with the theme of Hamilton's industrial expansion in the twentieth century. The property is also associated with the prominent architectural firm of Warren and McDonnell, who were also responsible for the construction of the former Princess Elizabeth School (1922), which is a designated property under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Contextually, this property is important in defining the character of the historic Homeside Neighbourhood. It is historically and visually linked to its surroundings, being on its original location on an entire block in the centre of Homeside. This large and distinctive structure dominates the surrounding area, has been well-known to generations of Hamilton students and is considered to be a local landmark.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that embody the physical value of the property as being a representative twentieth-century Collegiate Gothic school, a rare example of a Hamilton school building with a central auditorium, in demonstrating a high degree of craftsmanship, in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement, and the historical value for its associations with William Henry Ballard, include:

- All four elevations and roofline of the original 1922 school building, including its:
 - Three-storey massing;

- Rectangular plan with flanking blind end pavilions to the north and south;
 - Brick exterior cladding;
 - Brick parapet with capstones and moulded cornice;
 - Central three-storey decorative bay in the front (south) elevation, including its:
 - Main entrance on the ground floor with an arched door opening with elaborate carved details;
 - Portico with plain Doric columns supporting the entablature with triglyphs, carved plaque reading “W. H. Ballard School”, dentils, moulded cornice, and elaborate finials; and,
 - Round stone bay in the upper storeys with elaborate carved stone parapet, carved stone tablets including the central plaque showing 1922 as the year of construction, flanked by plaques showing the former City of Hamilton crest and the crest of Ontario, on the left and right respectively;
 - Shaped brick parapet with carved stone panel flanked by finials over a round stone bay;
 - Three-storey projecting bays highlighting the entrances on side (east and west) elevations, including:
 - Carved stone door surrounds with stone reliefs reading either “BOYS” or “GIRLS” under a stone moulding;
 - Dichromatic brick decorations;
 - Paired windows in the upper storeys; and,
 - Brick pilasters supporting a moulded cornice with carved stone crests topped by decorative carved stone panels flanked finials;
 - Projecting brick panels on blind end pavilions with dichromatic bricks in lozenge pattern topped by moulded cornice. On the front (south) elevation, the moulded cornice over the blind end pavilions is supported by carved stone crests surmounted by carved stone panels flanked by finials;
 - Window openings grouped in sets of five with continuous stone lug sills and stretcher brick window surrounds; and,
 - Horizontal and vertical stone banding with decorative carved stone inset plaques on front (south) elevation.
- Interior features of the central auditorium in the 1922 original building, include its:
 - Steel-frame construction; and,
 - Central two-storey auditorium with third storey classrooms supported by steel trusses overhead.

The 1978 gymnasium addition and the replacement windows in the original 1922 school building are not considered to be of heritage value or interest.

Key attributes that embody the contextual value of the property as a defining feature of the historical character of Homeside and as a neighbourhood landmark, include its:

- Location filling the entire block bordered by Dunsmure Road, Tragina Avenue North, Roxborough Avenue and Weir Street North; and,
- Moderate setback from the public right-of-way along Dunsmure Road to the south and Tragina Avenue North and Weir Street North to the east and west.