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DRAFT REPORT ON

Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study City of London, Ontario

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REPORT



Tausky Heritage
Consultants

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Objectives of Study

The Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study was undertaken on behalf of the City of London to review an area northwest of London's Downtown that has a range of architectural history dating from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries.

Heritage Conservation Districts are created under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the purpose of conserving something of heritage value that is common to a whole district. The emphasis in a Heritage Conservation District is the collective character of the overall area, as defined by its historical context, architecture, streetscapes, landscapes and other physical and visual features. There is no minimum size for heritage districts and they may be comprised of residential, commercial, or industrial areas or any combination of these uses and buildings. Heritage designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* is not focussed on individual buildings nor concerned with the interior of buildings.

A publication by the Ministry of Culture suggests that many heritage conservation districts share common characteristics, including:

- A concentration of heritage buildings, structures, sites or landscapes linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-economic contexts or use;
- A framework of structured elements including natural and built features;
- A sense of visual coherence that conveys a distinct time and place; and,
- Distinctiveness from other places.

1.2 Background

The Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study aimed to determine if the above characteristics exist within the study area, and if so, how to best conserve them. The Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study was a result of the 1999 London City Council approved Heritage Conservation District Program which identified potential locations in the City of London worthy of consideration for future designation as a Heritage Conservation District.

In May 2013, City Council determined that the Blackfriars/Petersville area be prioritized as the next potential heritage conservation district and further recommended that a study of the neighbourhood be undertaken for the purposes of designating a heritage conservation district. City Council issued a by-law to initiate the study of the Blackfriars/Petersville area. The purpose of the bylaw is to prohibit or set limitations on any alterations, erections, demolitions or removal of buildings or structures within the study area for up to one year. The by-law is scheduled to end no later than June 6, 2014.



1.3 Location

The Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study Area is located northwest of the City of London's Downtown (Figure 1). It is bounded by the Thames River to the east and the south and by the Canadian Pacific Railway line to the north. The boundary on the west side is irregular because it follows the floodplain boundary, encompassing the properties immediately north and west of Gower Street, west of Rathowen Street and portions of Empress Avenue Park, east of Lorraine Avenue, south of Paul Street, West Lions Park, west of Charles Street, east of the intersection of Mount Pleasant Avenue and Riverside Drive, and east of Cavendish Crescent (Figures 2 and 3).

The Study Area contains several parks, including Kensington Park, Empress Avenue Park, West Lions Park, Riverside Park, Labatt Park, Blackfriars Park and Blackfriars Park North. The Study Area contains approximately 1,490 occupied residences, with commercial and institutional buildings interspersed.

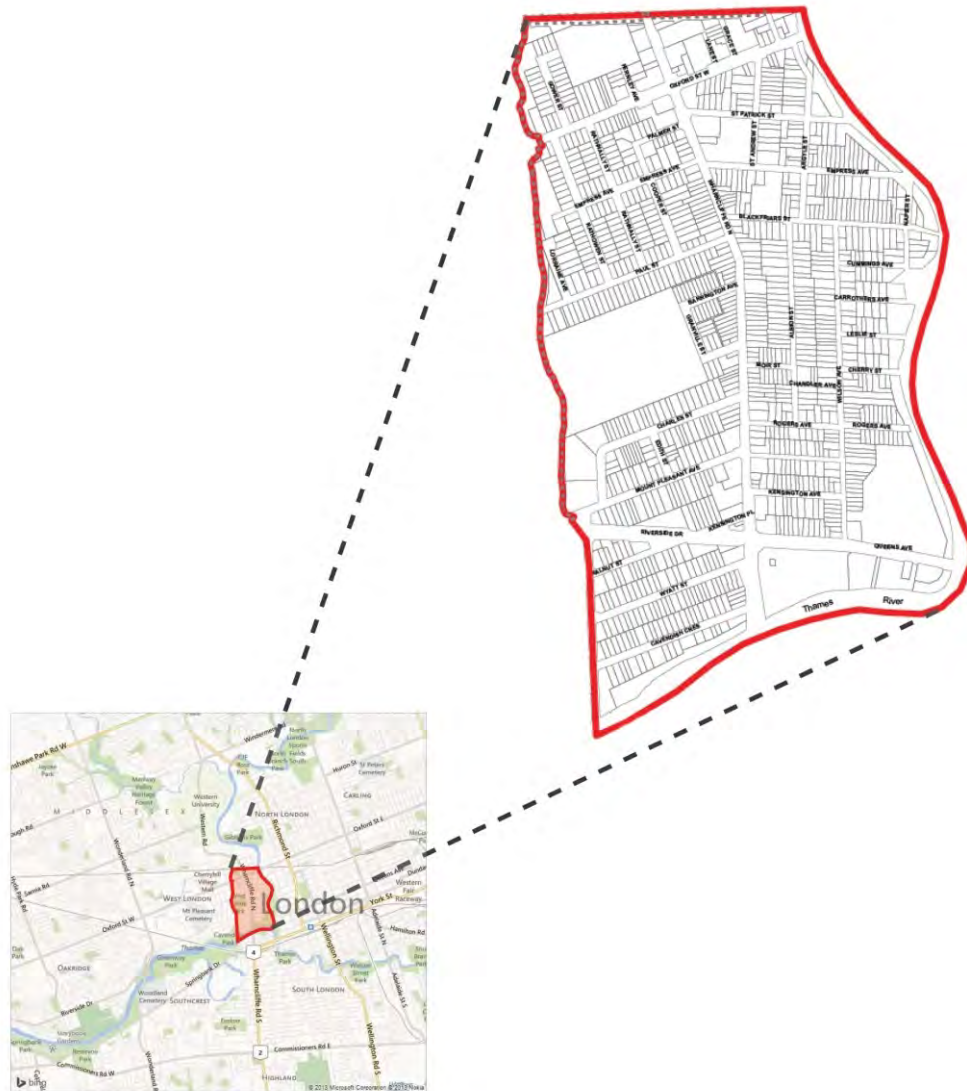


Figure 1: Study Area in the greater context of the City of London.



BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO



Figure 2: Study Area Map



BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY

CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO

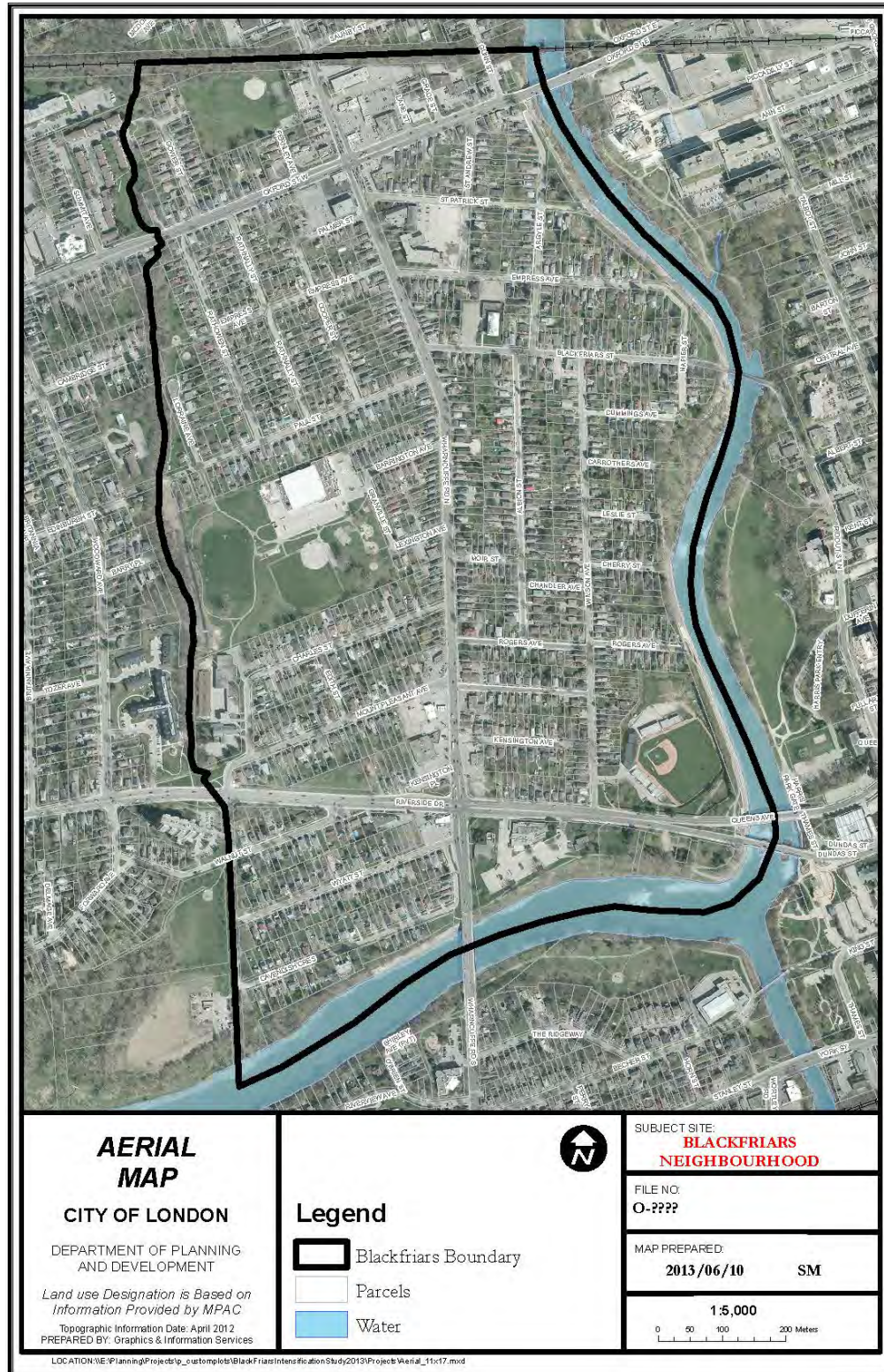


Figure 3: Study Area Map over aerial photograph



1.4 Study Approach and Methodology

As part of the Heritage Conservation District Study, the project team undertook the following tasks:

- Historical background research of the area;
- Review of existing planning framework;
- Inventory of buildings and/or character areas in the Study Area;
- Assessment of the Visual Environment;
- Community Consultation Meetings; and,
- Recommendations for planning strategies, policy tools, and Heritage Conservation District boundaries.

Because of the significant size of the study area, the team narrowed the area of focus to those areas which contain the greatest concentration of heritage resources and where there were natural, pre-existing character divisions. Using historical mapping, contemporary mapping, site visits, and public consultation, the study area was divided into 'character areas', reflecting distinctive categories of development patterns and histories (Figure 4). The assessments and inventories presented throughout this report describe significant resources, patterns and characteristics within each character area. Over the course of the study, these areas were refined based on research, field work, and consultation with the City, the public, and the Project's Steering Committee.

The study will conclude with a recommendation for a proposed Heritage Conservation District boundary, as well as identified Character Areas outside of the proposed HCD. Tools, including an HCD, that will help maintain the character of each identified area will be described, and ultimately refined through the development of guidelines in Phase 2. All photographs in the report were taken by study team members, unless otherwise noted.



1.5 What is a Heritage Conservation District?

Heritage Conservation District designation has proven to be of great benefit to those municipalities who have embraced their cultural heritage resources and ensured their conservation. Over 100 Heritage Conservation Districts have been designated across Ontario in communities of all sizes. An Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) study showed the results of designation to increase property value and higher levels of property maintenance and investment.¹

For the local Council and staff, it will require careful assessment of techniques to manage any potential increase in regulatory and advisory workloads. For property owners, designation may mean a greater level of scrutiny on actions requiring changes to the physical fabric on their property.

However, designation of a Heritage Conservation District can be considered to provide the following benefits to property owners:

- Recognition of cultural heritage values and interests;
- Additional information and guidance to property owners undertaking conservation through restoration, renovation, and redevelopment;
- Potential financial assistance through grants and tax relief programs for renovations and restorations;
- Source of new promotion and tourism initiatives; and,
- Increased community stability.

Heritage conservation in a Heritage Conservation District treats the area as a coherent whole, allowing for greater coordination of activities in both the public and private realms. At a fundamental level, designation is proof of the community's commitment to care for and enhance the Blackfriars-Petersville area. Such a commitment, along with a clear and transparent regulatory process, provides certainty in land use planning. Ultimately, it allows for a process of change management that respects the unique cultural heritage value of the area.

¹ Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, *Heritage Districts Work!*, 2009.



2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Overview

The study area comprises a low-lying plain bounded by the North Branch of the Thames River on the east, the main branch of the River on the south, the escarpment signifying the western boundary of the flood plain, and, on the north the escarpment of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Historically, the river that dominates the area has served as both an enemy and a friend. Frequently overflowing its banks, the river has often created havoc with the homes and roads in the area. As a friend it has blanketed the plain with rich alluvial soil that fed Chippewa cornfields, produced rich farm crops and market gardens, and, because of the constant danger of flooding, provided a venue for low-income housing popular with labourers and craftsmen throughout its history. The river has also been the scene of numerous recreational opportunities. As a result, the lands around the western end of Kensington Bridge came at one time to form a small resort centre, with the Riverside Hotel, a boathouse, and the field that has arguably become North America's most historic baseball site (now called Labatt Park).



Image 1: Detail from the 1893 Bird's Eye View of London. The study area lies above and to the right

The community that formed in this flood plain always had a strong individual character. Its surrounding geographical features make a strong visual impact. East of Wharncliffe Road, many west to east running roads lead towards vistas of the north branch of the river. West of Wharncliffe, one is often aware of the western rise in the landscape. The area's building stock is unified by its generally small scale. Most homes are one or one and one-half storeys in height. Especially to the east of Wharncliffe, the haphazard layout of roads, differing in width and direction, as well as the variety of building styles, creates unexpected views and reflects the composite of different surveys that preceded its development.

What residents now call Blackfriars owed its early growth to two important links in London's transportation network. Blackfriars Bridge offered the earliest access from the young town of London to an east-west route north of the main branch of the Thames River, and Wharncliffe Road served as the main north-south thoroughfare as early as 1824. First surveyed as part of London Township, various property owners began



laying out park lots within the present study area as early as 1848. Samuel Peters, a large property owner in the region, surveyed what he envisaged as the first suburban neighbourhood in 1854. The survey created the streets between Oxford Street, Blackfriars Street, Wharncliffe Road, and the North Branch of the Thames River. During the 1850s and 1860s, several other landowners surveyed other lots and roads in the northeastern part of the study area, which became known as Petersville after its first surveyor. In 1871, the building of a bridge from the end of Dundas Street to the southeast corner of the study area resulted in a new community extending west along the new east-west route. Popularly known as Kensington, it merged with Petersville in 1875 to form an incorporated village, called Petersville until 1881, when it changed its name to London West. London West retained its independence from London longer than any of the other suburbs immediately adjacent to the city, agreeing to become part of London in 1897, largely in recognition of the need for City cooperation in taming the Thames.

Despite increasingly intensive efforts to control the river, flooding remained a dangerous reality until the building of Fanshawe Dam in the middle of the twentieth century. The resulting safety of Blackfriars has affected its character. In the early 1950s, a good deal of victory housing was built west of Blackfriars, especially in the northwest corner of the study area (Character Area 4). Recent decades have seen an influx of professionals attracted to the proximity to the river dykes and to Downtown London, as well as a large number of students wanting to live close to the Western University. Both movements have resulted in sizeable additions to many of the buildings. With the disappearance of local industries, fewer residents find employment in the immediate neighbourhood, and residents are now forced further afield for routine shopping opportunities. Residents still report a strong sense of neighbourliness in the area, a sense encouraged by its pedestrian character of the area, especially east of Wharncliffe Road (Character Area 1).

2.2 The River, the Land, and the First Occupants

2.2.1 The Natural Landscape

The valley of the Thames was created by a spillway of meltwater from retreating glaciers. This carved through moraines, skirted limestone ridges of the underlying bedrock, and moved glacial till and stones down its watershed. The entire Blackfriars/Petersville study area lies within the spillway, and from earliest European settlement was known as the river flats. Higher ground surrounding the flats was originally covered with a forest of Carolinian trees, mixed with species characteristic of colder climates, like maple, oak, beech, and pine. But land immediately north of the forks of the north and south branches of the Thames, in the study area, developed as grassland; an early resident later remembered that “the grass grew so high . . . a horseman could not be seen at fifteen yards.”² It was here that Neutral Iroquois and Chippewa tribes tended cornfields on the rich fluvial soils.³ The Neutral people were obliterated by the Iroquois around 1651, but their aboriginal name, Attawandaron, survives in London as the name given to the Lawson site, home to the Ontario Museum of Archaeology. Their name for the Thames River refers to its conformation at the forks: Askunessippi, the antler river.

² John Kent Jr., *London Advertiser*, 18 November, 1884.

³ Troughton and Quinlan, parts I & II.

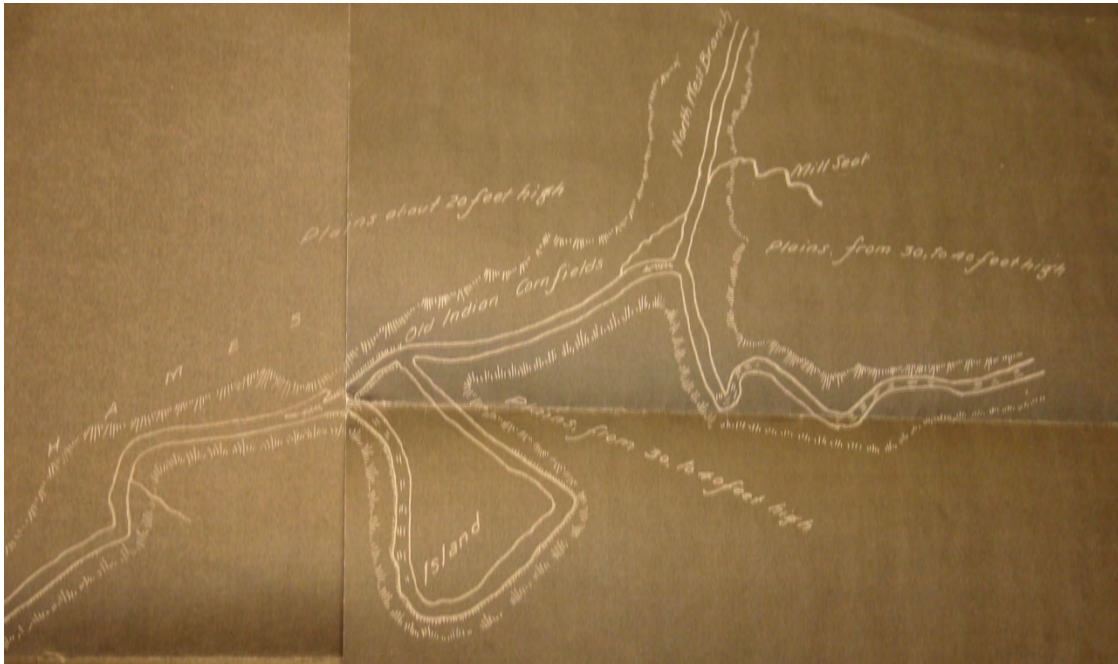


Image 2: Detail from a negative of "The Site of London", a map produced by surveyor Lewis Grant in 1830, based on the field notes, dated 1872-1873, of Augusta Jones

2.2.2 The First European Occupants

The land north of the Thames containing the future London Township (in which the study area was first geographically sited) was surrendered by Chippewa chiefs to the Crown on September 7, 1796, enabling the government at York to begin granting and leasing land so that European settlement could begin.⁴ Deputy Surveyor Abraham Iredell surveyed the outline of this territory, and produced a map on which he described it as “an excellent Tract of Land, black rich soil, Timber of all kinds, Black and White Walnut, Cherry, Bass Elm, Sugar Maples, Hickory, Beech, White and Black Ash & c & c and being well watered with springs, gravel bottom and pure water.”⁵ The first complete survey of London Township was begun by Mahlon Burwell in 1810 and completed in 1819. Also in 1810, since the government was anxious to encourage the growth of hemp in Upper Canada, Burwell was ordered by the Surveyor General to conduct “a survey of such part of the London Reserve on the River Thames as may be free from timber and suitable for the growth of hemp.” Burwell reported in June 1810 that “the most considerable tract of land in the Township of London which is free from timber . . . is that now in possession of Mr. Applegarth of which there are nearly three hundred acres of the first quality and entirely free from timber.”⁶

Joshua Applegarth, the first European settler in the township, was granted land on the flood plain for the purpose of growing hemp, needed by the British navy for making cordage and sails; his log house appears to have been located near the west end of Charles Street.⁷ In the end, Applegarth did not succeed in his enterprise; he

⁴ Surtees, 54.

⁵ Map of London Township, 1796.

⁶ Lands and Forests, Written Volumes, #15, (Reel 5), 11 March 1810; 21 June 1810.

⁷ Brock, (Applegarth), 10-13; Tausky (Victorian Architecture), 9.



moved his family away for a time, returning after the War of 1812, and lived in a log house on the flats. He hosted Burwell while the latter was completing his survey of the township in 1818-19, and served as town clerk when the first township meeting was held, also in his home, in January 1819. He later moved south of the Thames to Westminster Township.⁸

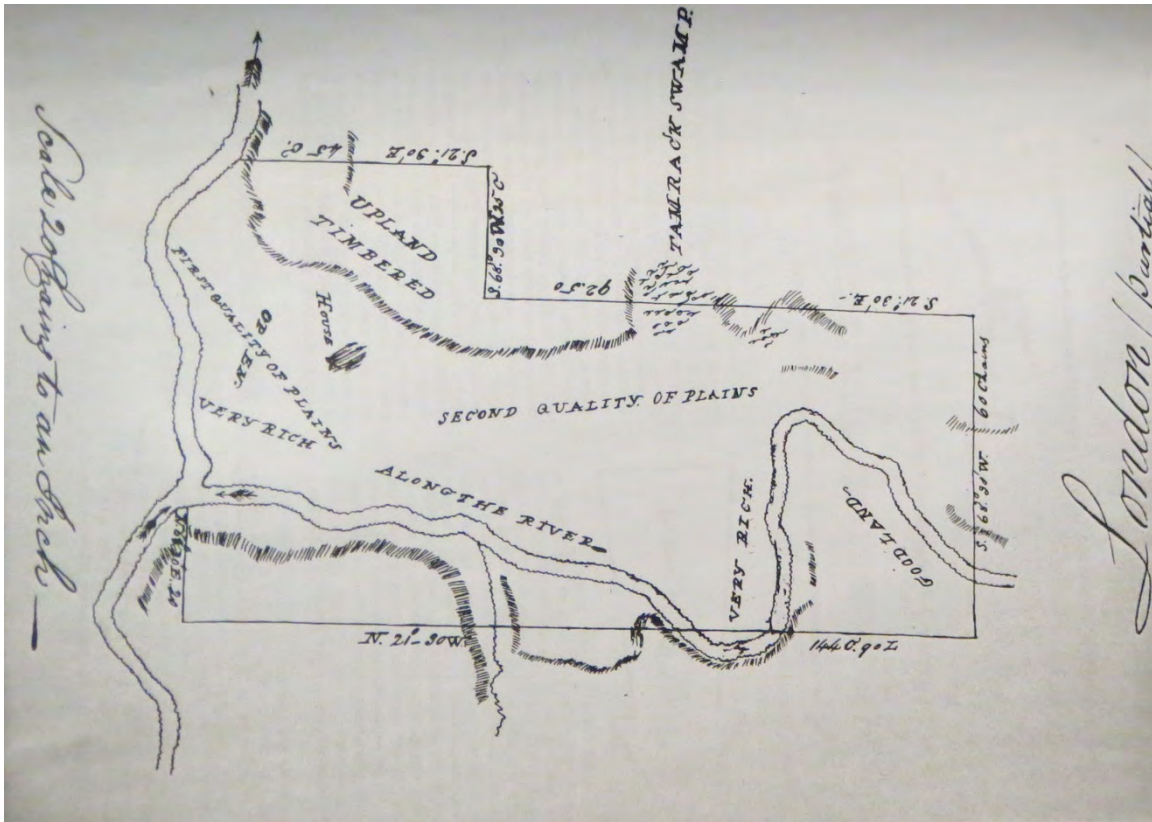


Image 3: Surveyor Mahlon Burwell's map of Applegarth's holdings, 1808 (Survey Branch of Natural Resources)

Another early family on the river flats by the name of Beverley ferried settlers across the river, although their service was often intermittent due to the ague, or malaria, from which they suffered. William Montague provided a similar service by canoe.⁹ For a time, when he occupied some of the lands previously leased to Joshua Applegarth,¹⁰ the flats were known as "Montague's Flats" in his honour; later they were known by the surnames of their next, and more successful, occupants and owners, John Kent and Walter Nixon (i.e. Kent flats on the east, and Nixon flats on the south).

John Kent was a native of Staffordshire, England, who immigrated to Upper Canada in 1823. Later that year he purchased Lots 1&2, east of the Wharncliffe Highway (or Proof Line), for £84. These 192 acres straddled the

⁸ Ibid, 16.

⁹ Ibid; Goodspeed, 34, 215; Evans, 71.

¹⁰ Brock, (Talbot), 129.



north branch of the Thames, and provided his family not only with excellent farm land on the river flats (where Kent built a house¹¹), but also property that would become valuable as building lots, north of the town plot of London.¹² When Kent died in 1859, his will highlighted the speed with which his pioneering efforts had borne profitable fruit. Registered on July 9, 1859, the document listed bequests made to his many sons and daughters of land both in the City of London and in the newly subdivided area west of the river (described here as “my said farm on the flats”).¹³

Walter Nixon was a very early resident of the study area, reported to have come into the District in the 1820s¹⁴. Possibly he was the partner of William Hale in making the first bricks in London, used to build the Court House, which was completed between 1829 and 1831.¹⁵ In 1834 he petitioned the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada for title to Lot 1, west of the Wharnccliffe Highway, on which Thomas Talbot had located him, and for which he had paid twelve shillings and six pence per acre.¹⁶ Later he also purchased Lot 2, giving him a total of 185 acres, extending from the banks of the Thames in the south two-thirds of the distance north to what is now Oxford Street. Walter Nixon had been industrious, and, like many other settlers with grain to spare and access to waterpower, sometimes operated a distillery.¹⁷ But above all else, Walter Nixon was a farmer. He was listed as pursuing that occupation with his sons, George and Joseph, in Mackintosh & Company’s directory, published early in 1871. Walter Nixon died that May, and the following year, Joseph Nixon sold the family holdings on Lot 1, west of the Wharnccliffe Highway, to John Walker, Esq. who issued his Plan of Kensington shortly thereafter (see section 2.3.2)¹⁸. Like John Kent, their neighbor across the Wharnccliffe Highway, the Nixon family could see the value of subdividing their farm into building lots for the growing populace of the City of London.

Another early settler who owned property in the study area was John Stiles, a farmer who did not seem to have his neighbours’ enthusiasm for subdividing property. Before deeding several pieces of land to Samuel Peters in 1869, Stiles owned parts of Lot 3, East of the Proof Line or Wharnccliffe Highway (immediately north of John Kent’s land), part of Lot 2 West of Wharnccliffe (likely purchased from Nixon), and Park Lot #1, south side of Oxford Street, as well as several properties further west.¹⁹ Stiles was active in the Middlesex County Agricultural Society, serving as its treasurer in 1852.²⁰

¹¹ Campbell, 12.

¹² Goodspeed, 881; UCLP, K 17/7 (1831).

¹³ London Registry Office, #5468, 9 July 1859.

¹⁴ Seaborn Diaries, 1265.

¹⁵ Goodspeed, 368; Tausky, *Victorian Architecture*, 11; Scott, 337. This author reports that the firm “continued in the making of white bricks for ten years.”

¹⁶ UCLP, N 18/54 (1835).

¹⁷ The London Township Assessment Rolls valued his distillery at \$800 in 1859.

¹⁸ UWO, ARCC, Old Abstract Book “A”, abstracts for Lot 1, West Proof Line or Wharnccliffe Highway.

¹⁹ Old Abstract Book “A”, Instrument #10236, 6 March 1869.

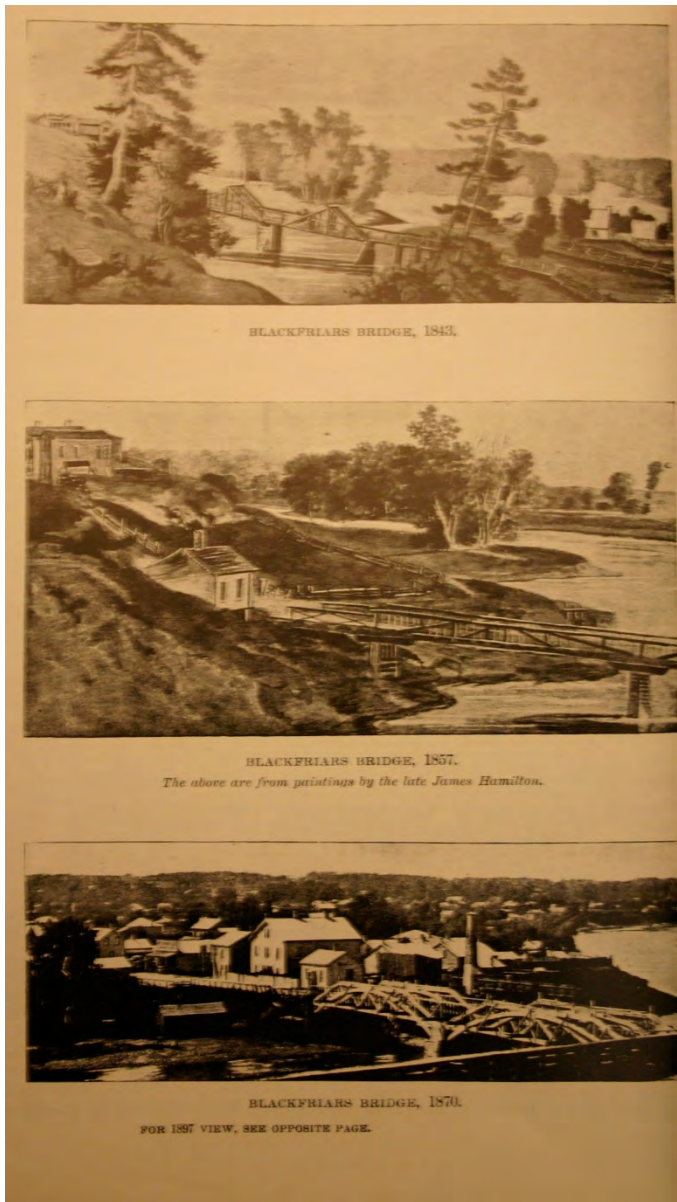
²⁰ Ibid; Goodspeed, 201.



Image 4: Detail from Sketch of Part of the London Township by "Nath, Steevens, Lt. xx Regt., '1850. The map shows the location of Nixon's distillery, some of the property owned by Stiles and the 1st and 2nd Concession lines (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

2.2.3 Early Infrastructure: Surveys, Roads, Blackfriars Bridge

When Mahlon Burwell began his survey of London Township in 1810 (completed in 1819), he drew a proof line from the Thames in a roughly northerly direction through the middle of the land to be surveyed; he then used this as a device for “proofing” his measurements of lot and concession lines, while intending it also as an allowance for a road through the township. At its southern extremity, the proof line began at the main branch of the Thames, and became an extension of the Wharnccliffe Highway which ran through Westminster Township to the south, even though the two were not connected by bridge until 1914. The proof line route through the Blackfriars/Petersville study area ran into the meandering curves of the north branch of the Thames a short distance beyond the 2nd Concession line, now Oxford Street, and the road then followed the height of land west of the Thames (now Western Road) until it rejoined Burwell’s proof line north of the Medway River.



The Wharncliffe/Proof Line route was the principal means whereby people journeying from London could travel to locations north and west of the river forks. It was the first route by which settlers travelled to find their locations, and whereby they returned to London to purchase supplies or market their goods. The route they actually took from the village of London would have been north along Ridout Street and then across Blackfriars bridge, long the only bridge connecting land on the east and west sides of the north branch of the Thames

The historical record is mute on when the first primitive bridge was constructed at the site now linking the present Ridout and Blackfriars streets. But as early as 1823, the London District Quarter Sessions dealt with a petition from Lewis Hartman, who had spent £250 constructing a bridge there, who wished to be paid for an unpaid balance.²¹ Hartman was involved again in building an improved bridge, completed in 1831, but again had to petition for all he was owed: this time payment was promised on condition "that he will, as soon as the River be frozen, compleat the Break Water of the Said Bridge."²² The approaches to the bridge, on both sides of the river, were originally much lower than they are today, so floods played havoc with footings, breakwater, and superstructure. During the next several decades, the councils of the London District, and later the County of Middlesex, spent much time and public money repairing and rebuilding Blackfriars bridge.

Image 5: Views of various bridges crossing between Ridout Street and what is now Blackfriars Street, from Illustrated London, 1897.

²¹ UWO ARCC, Road Reports for London District to 1823, 547A.

²² Ibid, 1833.



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The importance of Blackfriars bridge to the economy of London Township and beyond was demonstrated in 1850 when the bridge was washed out, and a public meeting of the township's St. George's Ward was held to discuss its rebuilding. Some citizens wanted to establish a joint stock company to manage the bridge and levy tolls for its repair and upkeep. Others considered it more expedient to appeal to local subscribers and neighbouring municipal bodies for the necessary funds. By July 1851, local residents had subscribed £220.9.0, the townships of Lobo, Williams, and Caradoc £90, the Township of London £35, and the Town of London £40, while over £9 had been raised through the sale of materials from the old bridge. The work now undertaken included reducing Blackfriars hill on Ridout Street (to improve the approach to the bridge on the east side) and the turfing of that hill, building a gravelled embankment on the west side of the river using earth excavated from Ridout Street, and building a fence for public safety. Samuel Peters was heavily involved in this project (probably Samuel Peters, surveyor, architect, and engineer, rather than his uncle, surveyor and principal landowner on the west side of the river).²³

Blackfriars/Wharncliffe was an essential route in and out of London, and, as settlement spread to the west, other roads linking to it brought travellers and business both to London and to crossroads, taverns, inns, and shops along the way. In 1830, twelve freeholders, including John Kent and John Stiles, petitioned that a road be made "from the Town Plot of London to the Proof Line of the township of London." In response, Roswell Mount, Surveyor of Highways for the London District, promptly laid out what would be Blackfriars Street.²⁴

Burwell's first concession line west of the forks was suitable as a road allowance for only part of its length, as it intersected the main branch of the Thames and passed through hills and valleys. In January 1834, twelve freeholders living on both sides of the Thames petitioned the District Council to open a road "from McMillen's Bridge to intersect the Proof Line in the Township of London". The new road laid out through the lands north of the main branch of the Thames made it possible for settlers in the southwest area of London Township to travel to Wharncliffe Road and thence to London on business or pleasure. The second concession line, the present Oxford Street, was another road over which settlers in the southwestern part of the township could journey to London through the Blackfriars area. It was first opened as part of regular settlement duties by those located along it. Later, statute labour kept it passable, and eventually the District, Township, and County took over its repair and resurfacing. Before the Oxford Street bridge was built across the north branch of the Thames in 1881, settlers going to London from the west travelled to the crossroads of Oxford and Wharncliffe, then south to Blackfriars, and so into London. But the destination for many would have been the shops both at the crossroads and on Blackfriars Street. Albert Dobson, whose family lived in the sub-division of the Montague homestead on the south half of Lot 21, Concession 2, London Township (currently the northwest corner of Oxford and Wonderland streets), remembered "a shopping and trading place [at] the corner of Blackfriars and Centre Streets [now Wilson Avenue]."²⁵

Eventually, the cost of opening new roads and keeping all in repair grew beyond the capacity of local authorities, especially when the practice of surfacing with planking, gravel or macadamized material was introduced. Tolls were then levied to boost local revenues, but there was resistance to paying them. After Blackfriars bridge was rebuilt in 1850-51, tolls were charged to help defray its cost. A report to the Board of Road Directors of the

²³ The complex story is told in articles in the *London Times*, 12 July 1850; *Canadian Free Press*, 10 January 1851 and 12 June 1851. For the two Samuel Peters, see Tausky, *London*, 50.

²⁴ UWO ARCC, Road Reports for London District, 1829-30, #547A.

²⁵ Dobson, 1.



county in December 1855 recommended that inhabitants living in the first and south half of the second concessions of London Township west of the river should be permitted to pass through the gate on Blackfriars bridge for half a toll, while those “persons engaging exclusively in conveying manure for farming purposes” should pass through toll free.²⁶

2.3 Suburban Development: Surveys, Settlement, Incorporation, and Annexation

2.3.1 Suburban Development during the 1850s and 1860s

2.3.1.1 Park Lots and Suburban Surveys

In 1848, John Kent had his land between the road to Blackfriars Bridge and the forks of the Thames laid out in Park Lots, ranging in size from three to nine and one-quarter acres. To provide access to these lots, he placed down the middle of his survey a north-south road that he named Centre Street (now Wilson Avenue).

Kent’s lots seem to have been designed to allow for small farms or market gardens, but just six years later Samuel Peters surveyed land he owned on the other side of Blackfriars Road into small lots intended for the making of a tighter suburb, and in so doing, created the beginning of the village of Petersville.

Samuel Peters was an immigrant from Devon, who, after settling in London in 1837, had become a successful entrepreneur – first as a surveyor, then as a grocer, the owner of a distillery and an abattoir, and a speculator. Although he generally invested in relatively small properties, ten to fifteen acres at a time, by the middle of the 19th century he owned a substantial amount of property west of the Thames. In 1853, the year before he laid out his survey next to the Blackfriars Bridge, he established a country estate for himself on an elevated plateau further north along Wharncliffe Road. There, in a substantial country house designed by his nephew (also named Samuel Peters and an architect as well as a surveyor), he added to his vocational pursuits the role of a gentleman farmer. From his new home at Grosvenor Lodge, he could literally look down on much of the land he owned to the south, giving him a pseudo-seigneurial position that enabled his son, Colonel John Peters, later to be regarded as the Squire by his Petersville constituents.

Peters’s survey stipulated that the new community was to be called Petersville rather than Bridgetown, the name commonly assigned a small settlement already formed in the vicinity.²⁷ The plan indicates the sites of Peters’ distillery, mill, and cattle shed next to the bridge. In the copy of the registered plan shown here, later street names have been written in over or next to those assigned by Peters after Queen and family, i.e., Empress Avenue was originally Ann Street; St Patrick Street was Queen Street; Argyle Street was John Street, and St. Andrew Street was William Street.

²⁶ Minutes of Middlesex County Council, 10 December 1855.

²⁷ Stott, 17



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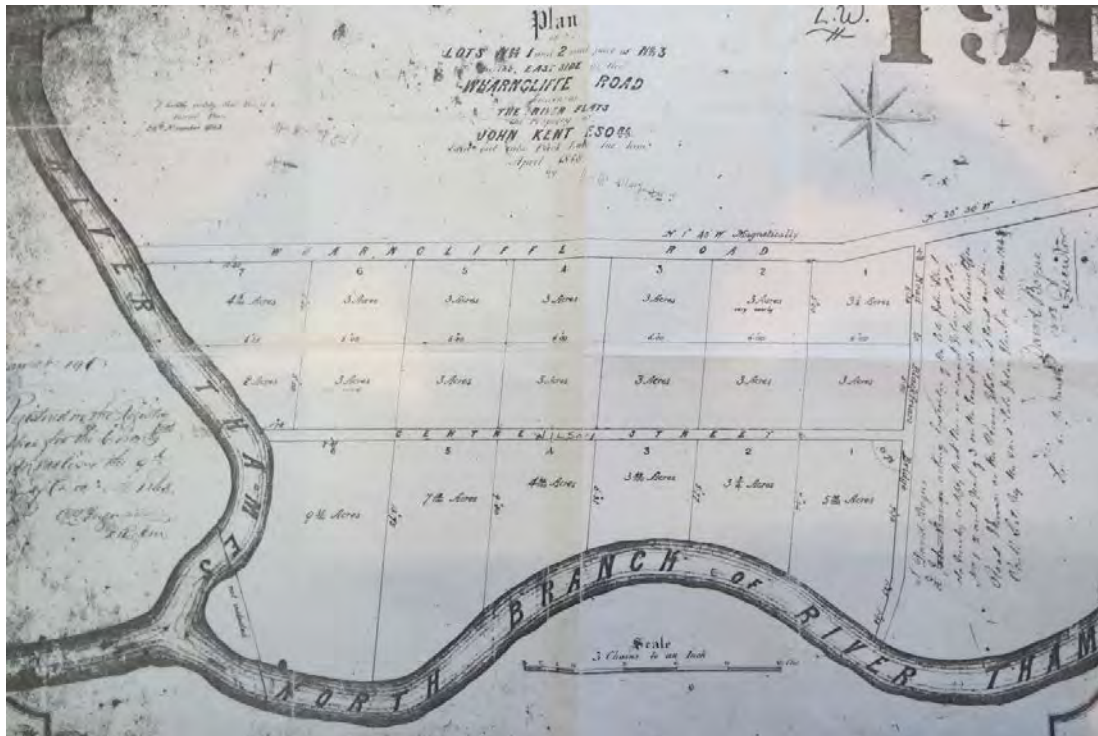


Image 6: Registered Plan 191, containing the survey of Kent's park lots



Image 7: Grosvenor Lodge, built for Samuel Peters in 1853



BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO



Image 8: Registered Plan 58, Peters' survey of Petersville/Bridgetown

Other landowners soon followed Peters' example. Duncan Campbell laid out lots along Centre Street and Wharncliffe Road, just west of Blackfriars Street, in 1856. West of Wharncliffe, small lots were surveyed along the west side of Paul Street in 1854 and Richard Rich had lots along both sides of Empress Avenue (then Caroline Street) surveyed in 1855. In the same year, James Moir surveyed small holdings further south along Wharncliffe Road and on Centre Street near the present Labatt Park. During the 1860s, Duncan Campbell had surveys made of more of his holdings just south of Blackfriars Street. North of Oxford Street, Jeremiah Hill had park lots laid out on his land near the Thames in 1850, and smaller lots were created adjacent to Gunn Street in 1854. Figure 5 indicates these plots surveyed during the 1850s and 1860s, as well as showing the course of later development throughout the study area, as indicated by the registered plans governing much of that development.



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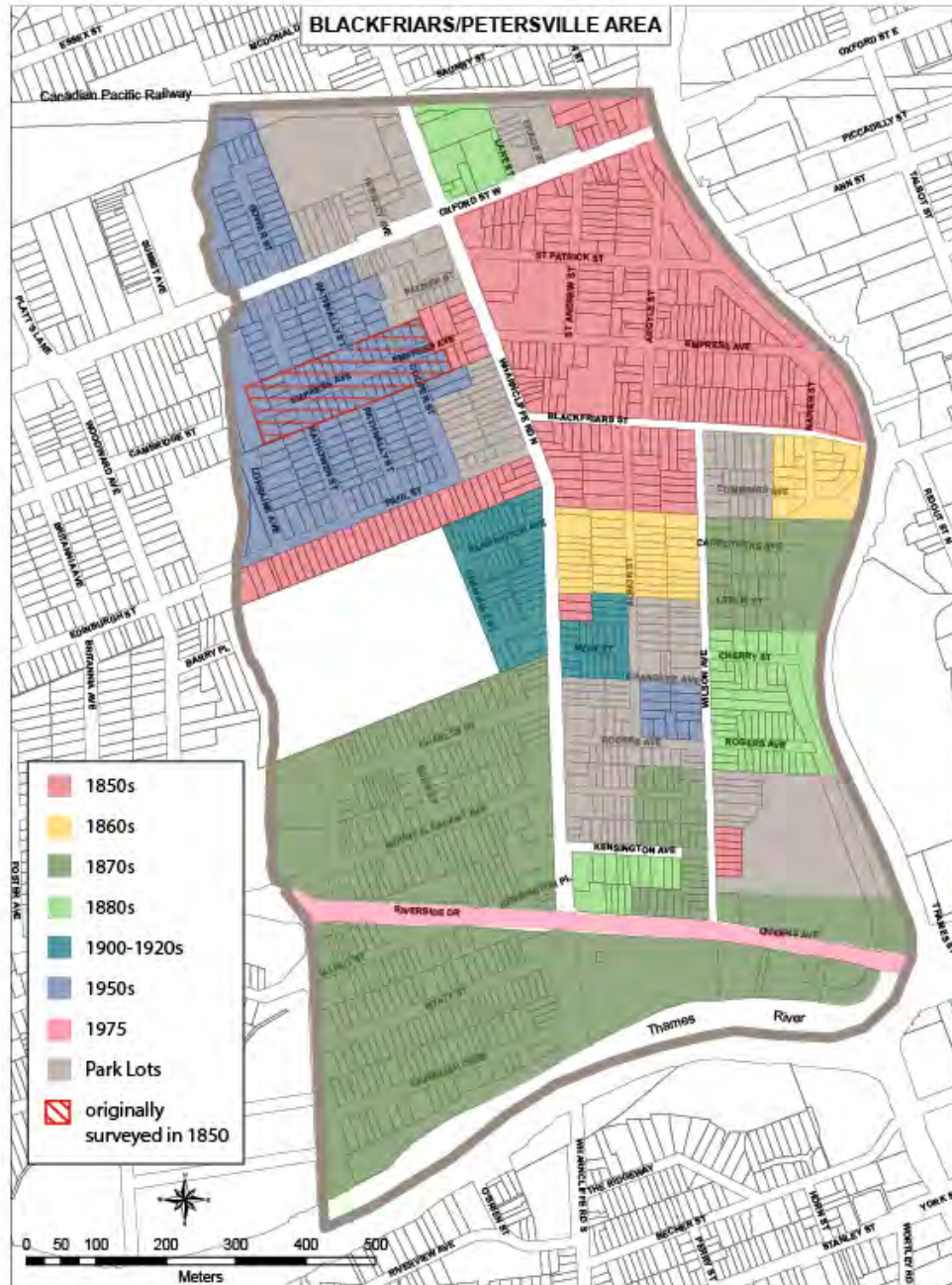


Figure 5: Map showing approximate dates of surveys within the study area



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These surveys are not an infallible guide to the progress of growth within the study area. Farmers, speculators, and businessmen purchased property on the basis of Burwell's original surveys or as parts of the park lots, so some settlement preceded the more suburban plans. Richard Rich's plan of Caroline Avenue, for example, already shows his brewery located on "Bryan Street" (now Cooper Street) and a cottage, presumably his own, facing Wharncliffe Road in front of the brewery. Nor did the existence of the new surveys ensure that the lots would be bought and occupied. Portions of the Peters survey are shown still very sparsely occupied on the 1907 Fire Insurance Plan, and Rich's Caroline/Empress Street survey was so little settled that it was re-surveyed as part of a different plan in the 1950s. Nevertheless, land assessors' records show that by 1857, 53 persons had bought land in Petersville/Bridgetown, and over 30 were residing there. By 1871, a city directory lauded the village at the base of Blackfriars Bridge as numbering around 400 residents.²⁸ A Bird's Eye View of London dated 1872 indicates how this population was then dispersed in the area.

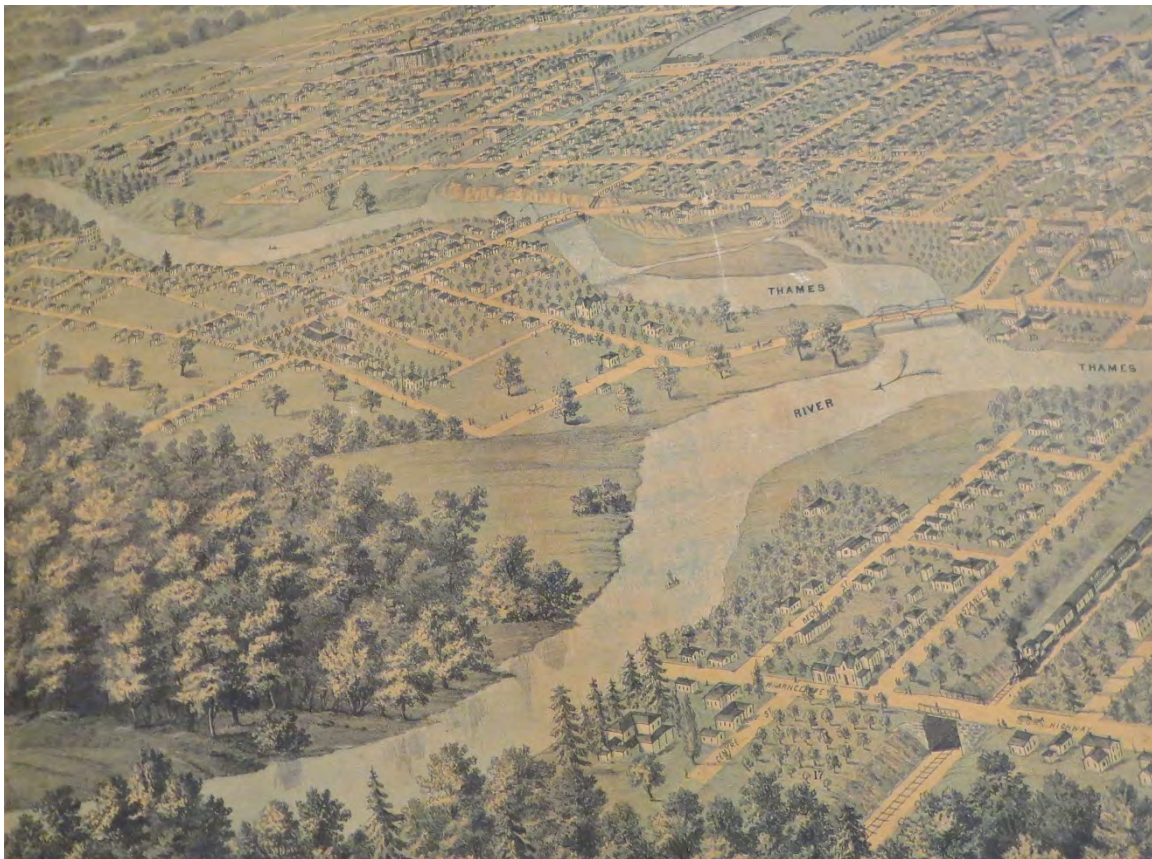


Image 9: Detail from the 1872 Bird's Eye View of London. This detail is oriented in a northeasterly direction, with the main branch of the Thames flowing towards the bottom left of the picture and the north branch flowing from the upper left

²⁸ Lovell's Canadian Dominion Directory for 1871; Stott, 17, 19.



2.3.1.2 *The Built Environment in Petersville/Bridgetown*

Some of the early residents of the village west of Blackfriars Bridge operated businesses in the vicinity. There were two nearby inns in 1854, several breweries, Peters's mill near the bridge, and Saunby's North Branch Mill further upstream (see section 2.5.1). Others worked, usually as labourers in one of these industries or across the river in London, shopkeepers, small farmers or market gardener, or artisans; a large number of carpenters and masons number among those listed in assessment rolls or deeds. Many of these craftsman were among the speculators in the area, buying lots and building on them either to sell or to rent. Both land records and assessment rolls show a somewhat transient population, with many houses occupied by tenants and with frequent changes in occupancy. Most of the houses erected in the settlement's first decades were one-storey cottages. Goodspeed's *History of the County of Middlesex* noted as late as 1889 that, "while London West is a pretty place throughout, there are not . . . many residences of a palatial description within its borders."²⁹

The favoured form of building during the 1850s and 1860s in Petersville appears to have been the Ontario cottage, a hip-roofed, one-storey house with a three-or-five-bay façade featuring a centre door and one or two windows to each side (see section 3.3) One generally finds three bays in this area, surprisingly often with the door somewhat off-centre and the windows also asymmetrical. The same façade is sometimes found on a building with a gable roof. Many, but not all, of these buildings were very modest in scale.



Image 10: 14 Empress Avenue

One of the earliest cottages in Peters's survey is the house at 14 Empress Street, built in 1856 or 1857, soon after Edwin Peters bought the property from his relative Samuel. The brick house is a fine example of a substantial cottage of the period. Typical features include the common height of the door and windows, the positioning of the windows just beneath the cornice, the shallow roof with a discernible roofline, and the requisite symmetry. The wide entranceway, with sidelights and a rectangular transom, is a stylish Greek Revival feature, although the door itself is modern.

²⁹ Goodspeed, 520.



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The house at 9 St. Patrick Street was almost contemporary with the Edwin Peters house, and shared most of its stylistic features. Although the porch and dormer here are somewhat unsympathetic additions to the original house, the house retains the handsome frame to its entranceway, with its original moulded panels below the small-paned windows. The home was built shortly after 1854 when it was purchased by John Mugford, a bricklayer and carpenter. In 1870 it was bought by Samuel Gibson, brother-in-law to Pirney Flint, well known in London as the resident of one of the stone cottages in Springbank Park. When Pirney's wife died shortly after the birth of their youngest child, the baby Edna was sent to be raised here by her aunt and uncle Gibson.³⁰



Image 11: 9 St. Patrick's Street

The ages of the elegant Peters/Mugford-Gibson houses are now easier to recognize and appreciate than those of their more humble architectural cohorts, simply because so many of the neighbourhood's small, frame houses have been hidden behind one or more layers of later cladding – ranging from insul-brick to modern vinyl or board-and-batten. Even without their newer coverings, early buildings are uncommonly difficult to date within the Petersville area, because of poorly microfilmed land records, gaps in assessment rolls, the lack of early street directories, and changes in appearance or even location as a result of flood damage, as well as the area's tendency to lag behind in implementing new architectural fashions. The modern claddings create another significant obstacle in the process. Two examples illustrate this latter point.

³⁰ Tausky, "Memorials," 147.



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Photographs from the 1950s, donated by a former resident, show the Ontario Cottage at 14 Napier with its original tongue-and-groove cladding, corner boards, cornice, and simple door and window surrounds, surmounted by a slightly protruding moulding along the top of the lintels. Each of these details, along with the building's shallow roof and relatively long ridge line, reflects the home's early date (the shingled gable, turned posts, and decorative spandrels prove the gable and the porch to be later additions) and help to narrow down the evidence from other records. In this case, records suggest that the house was built for William Donoughy circa 1869. Donoughy is described as a turner by trade, but he was a member of a clan that built many houses in the area and also bought and sold even more property. He was probably involved in building the house himself. The Donoughys tended to use similar patterns for their homes; here, the major difference between this house and those built a decade earlier is that the doorway, with its transom, extends above the windows into the cornice. The materials that cover the house today cover much of its early history, just as similar claddings obscure telling features in the majority of other frame houses in Blackfriars.



Image 12: Back and front views of the house at 14 Napier, c. 1855 (Photographs compliments of Cathy Metelnick)



Image 13: Side and front views of the house at 14 Napier today



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The modern cladding of the house at 21 Empress Avenue is similarly opaque, though the shape of the building and the positioning of its window and door point to the early date supported by land records and assessment rolls. The house was bought by Thomas Warren, a labourer, in 1854, who lived there until he sold it to John Bowman, a scale maker, in 1866. Bowman seems to have resided there as a tenant, though, for several years before becoming the official owner. After 1875 Bowman himself became landlord to a variety of tenants, most of whom called the house home for only a year. One feature that could also be misleading about the date of the house is the raised concrete foundation, a trait of many neighbourhood houses after the severe floods of the twentieth century.



Image 14: 21 Empress Avenue

One of the most intriguing houses in the area is essentially similar in form, though its combination of its cottage outline and its commercial extension are unique. Anthony Tillman bought the property on the southeast corner of Blackfriars Street and what is now Albion Street in 1858, and he sold it to his son Anthony Jr. in 1863. The Junior Tillmans built the combination house/store at the corner, and for several years operated a grocery store in the commercial part of their building. At some point, probably by 1875, the Tillmans also built the two-storey commercial and domestic premises next door, at what is now 60 Blackfriars Street. After Anthony Jr. died circa 1876, his wife Annie continued to run the grocery and rented out the other commercial premises they owned to various commercial enterprises. Her son Anthony worked there for some time as a shoemaker; by 1902 he had established himself as a tailor on Richmond Street, but continued to live with his mother in her Blackfriars home

³¹

Image 15: 66 Blackfriars Street



³¹Land Records, Plan 111, pt. Lot 13; Assessment Rolls, 1875-1886; Hill's 1866 Directory; E-mail message from Don Brock to Hilary Neary, Nov. 5, 2013



BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO

In London itself, the surrounding countryside, and throughout much of Ontario, the 1860s brought to vernacular architecture more details from the Classical Revival, such as the eared and pediment-shaped window frames, and from the Gothic Revival, such as pointed arches and gables with elaborately shaped bargeboards. Throughout the 1860s, Petersville, however, clung to the Ontario cottage form that dominated the decade before. The house at 98 Wilson Avenue, for example, strongly resembles those at 14 Empress Avenue and 9 St. Patrick's Street. It was built c. 1864 by carpenter Richard Donoughy, who lived there until he sold it to Thomas Donoughy.



Image 16: 98 Wilson (above)

One house that did display more timely trends, however, was the home Alexander Leslie had built for himself and his family. Leslie bought 20 acres from among Kent's park lots in 1863, and gradually reduced his holdings as he concentrated his market gardening into the specialized category of a "Grower and Dealer in Nursery Stock."³² Leslie Street sits along what was once the northern boundary of his land east of Wilson. While the older back wing of his house was likely built by a former owner, he erected the wing now facing the street in 1866 or 1867.³³ The broad cross gable over the centre door features a pointed window derived from the Gothic tradition, and the gable itself once featured a Gothic finial and drop, as well, most likely, as a carved bargeboard. Like most Gothic Revival rural houses, it shares these features with the symmetry and the classical entranceway with transom and sidelights, but the slight curves over the windows predict the segmental arches of the Italianate style that would dominate the rest of London during the 1870s.



Image 17: 81 Wilson Avenue

³²Leslie's advertisement in the *Historical Atlas of Middlesex County*, 1878.

³³Tausky, *London*, 70.



2.3.2 Kensington Bridge, Kensington Village, and the Incorporated Petersville
2.3.2.1 Surveys Spawed by Kensington Bridge

In 1871, a second bridge linked flood plains of the study area to the City of London across the river: the Kensington Bridge extended from the end of Dundas Street to a point directly on the northwest corner of the fork of the Thames. With the promise of more traffic in the quarter west of the bridge, speculators quickly laid out new plots of suburban lots. Potential neighbourhoods east of Wharncliffe Road were plotted in 1872 and 1876, Charles Street and what is now Mt. Pleasant Avenue in 1878. But the largest survey and the most thoughtfully planned was that carried out for John Walker on the land he had purchased from Joseph Nixon. It covered a large area on the flood plain directly west of Wharncliffe and extended west beyond the study area both along the plain and on higher ground. The plan allowed for the changes in elevation with a fan of pie-shaped lots and included larger lots in the higher and more western reaches. With one exception, the roads in the plan were all named after trees. The only remnant of this scheme within the study area is a fragment of Walnut Street. Walker Street was the exception. Named after the developer, it formed the northern boundary of Walker's suburb, and served as the main road leading to Riverside Drive above the escarpment.

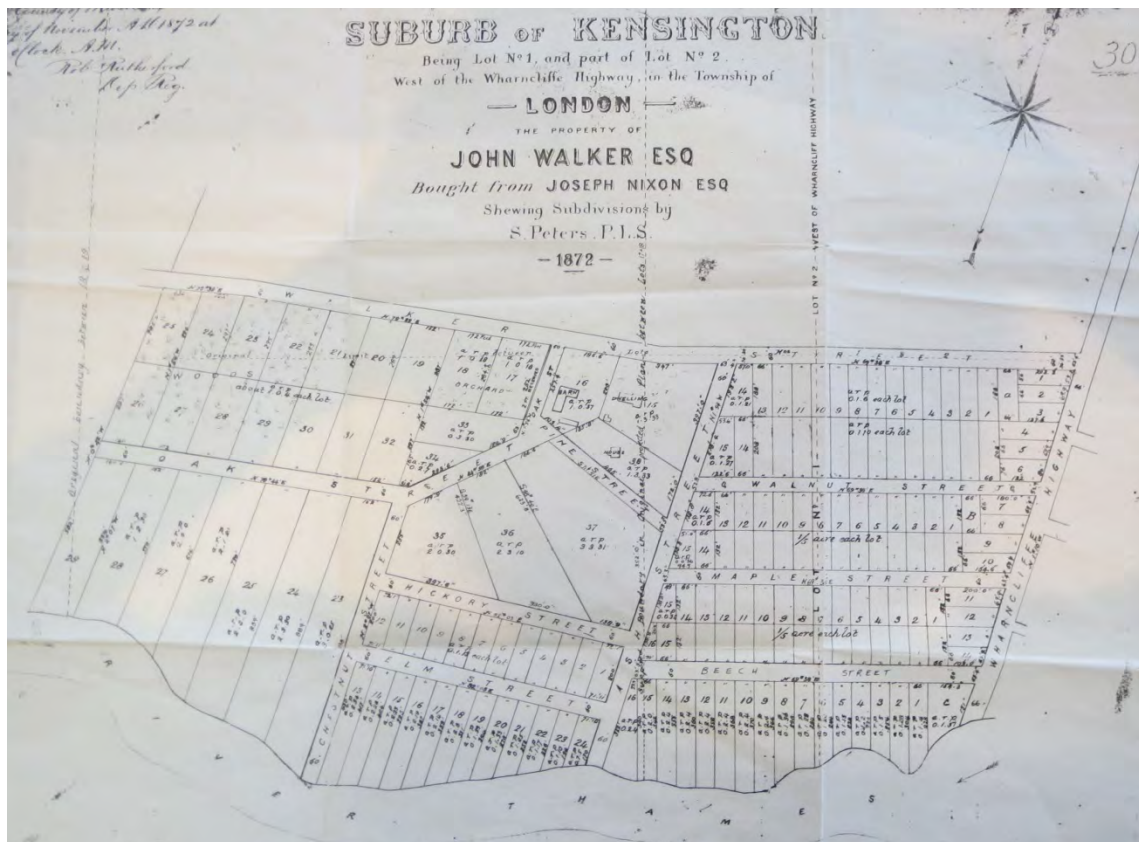


Image 18: Plan 308, John Walker's plan for the "Suburb of Kensington" (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)



An article in the *London Advertiser* bragged that the 115 lots in the new village of Kensington “will afford beautiful and convenient sites for suburban residences, which may be reached by carriage without paying tolls. . . . We expect to see rising up in a few years a pretty and wealthy suburb, of which London will be proud.”³⁴ Lots sold well at an auction held in 1872, but buyers did not take up residency with the speed that the *Advertiser* predicted. The main cause, undoubtedly, was a flood in April 1873 that sent torrents of water over the new lots.³⁵ The village of Kensington nevertheless progressed, albeit slowly, and in 1874 joined with the residents of Petersville to incorporate as the Village of Petersville.

During the same period, Petersville reached out towards Kensington with surveys on both sides of Carrothers (then Peter) and Leslie Streets in 1872. During the 1880s, Alexander Leslie formed Cherry Street and Rogers Avenue (formerly Surrey Street), with lots on both sides of each, along the north and south parts of his farm. In the areas without suburban plans, some small lots had been carved piecemeal out of the park lots. By 1897, when London West annexed to London, its two communities, Kensington and the former Bridgetown, had begun to merge visually, although the northern part of the study area was still the most populous.

2.3.2.2 An Incorporated Village: 1874 to 1897

Two things were necessary for the community of Petersville to form itself into an incorporated village. The first was political will, and the second was political means. Political will had been developed gradually, through shared social, economic, and family ties. The disparate nature of the early settlement clustered along Blackfriars Street and the crossroads at Wharnccliffe Road and Oxford Street had changed with the construction of new homes, steady population growth, the development of cultural, social, and religious institutions, and the expansion of work and commerce.

In Mackintosh’s 1871-2 directory, 130 heads of households in Petersville collectively had fifty-one different occupations. There were twelve carpenters, eleven farmers, nine bricklayers, nine shoemakers, eight laborers, and six grocers.³⁶ A large number of local residents walked into the city for employment, but many others worked in the growing community of Petersville and Kensington. The twelve farmers and half a dozen men who were listed as gardeners, nurserymen and seedsman, were cultivating the fertile river flats and the farmlands to the north and west of this expanding suburb. Many of the skilled tradesmen – painters, plasterers, bricklayers, and masons were employed constructing homes in the new subdivisions. The area boasted grocery and butcher shops, a “first-class hotel”, the Wesleyan Methodist church, a Temperance Hall, and a brick schoolhouse. In other words, Petersville could have been described as a village in all but legal standing.

Legal standing was made possible when the Ontario Legislature made substantial changes to its statute relating to municipalities, enabling unincorporated villages to achieve corporate status. In 1873, the Legislature passed “An Act respecting municipal institutions in the province of Ontario”, whereby, if the “census returns of an unincorporated village with its immediate neighbourhood . . . shew that the same contain over 750 inhabitants, . . . then on petition by not less than 100 resident freeholders and householders of the village and neighbourhood,

³⁴ *Advertiser*, 29 June 1872, quoted by Scott, 20.

³⁵ Stott, 21.

³⁶ Mackintosh, 266, and throughout the London entries.



of whom not fewer than one half shall be freeholders, the county or counties in which the village and neighbourhood are situate shall by by-law, erect the village and neighbourhood into an incorporated village.”³⁷

The advantages of incorporated status for the “village and neighbourhood” of Petersville and Kensington were many. Although residents there had had representation on township and county bodies, their political aspirations and goals for local infrastructure improvements per force were in competition for attention and funding with those of other parts of township and county. In fact, the desire of local ratepayers for what they considered to be Petersville’s fair share of London Township’s revenue surplus that year prompted the first public discussion of incorporation at a meeting held at the Temperance Hall on May 26, 1873.³⁸ From that point, events moved steadily toward the goal of political separation from London Township. On June 8, 1874, the Middlesex County Council passed By Law No. 244, incorporating the Village of Petersville under 36 Vic Cap 48, defined its boundaries, and laid down arrangements for the first election of village officers.³⁹ On January 1, 1875, became incorporated as Petersville.

The Middlesex County By-Law that formally incorporated Petersville also named Walter Lawrence as returning officer for the election of the village’s first officials. In January 1875, Joseph D. Saunby (miller) was elected reeve, and John Bowman (scale-maker), Duncan Campbell (gardener), Edward Charlton (stock breeder), and Leslie Alexander (gardener) were elected councilors. The municipal statute, 36 Victoria, Chapter 48, defined the qualifications of elected officials. They had to reside in the municipality or within two miles of it, be natural born or naturalized citizens, be male and twenty-one years of age, and “have, at the time of the election, in their own right, or in the right of their wives, as proprietor or tenant, a legal or equitable freehold or leasehold,” in whole or in part, to the value of \$600 freehold or \$1,200 leasehold.

These gentlemen had defined powers and responsibilities under the *Municipal Act*. Reeve Saunby was both head of the council and *ex officio* justice of the peace for Middlesex County. His council was responsible for appointing village officers – assessors, collectors, pound keepers, fence-viewers, overseers of highways, and road surveyors.⁴⁰ It could aid indigent persons, take the census, regulate driving on roads and bridges, make laws about temperance practices and the planting of ornamental trees, and establish compensation for lands taken (for instance, for roads or breakwaters). Its regulatory authority likewise extended to billiard tables, exhibits and shows, filth in the streets, the control of weeds, the use of open drains and watercourses, the construction of fences, the restraining of dogs running at large, the obtaining of property for schools, the abatement of statute labour for those planting shade trees, and the licensing of taverns and shops. The council could also authorize gas or water companies to lay down pipes or conduits.⁴¹ Members of council were a “health officers within their respective municipalities”, or could delegate these powers as they thought best.⁴² Perhaps few Ontario councillors would have to consider public health as intensively as those in Petersville (London West) after the flood of 1883.

³⁷ Statutes, 194-5.

³⁸ Stott, (Suburban Autonomy). For a discussion of the events leading up to incorporation, see Chapter Two.

³⁹ Middlesex County By Law No. 244, in London West By Laws. The boundaries were described as “Bounded on the east by the River Thames on the south by the River Thames on the west by a line drawn between Lots Nos seventeen and eighteen in London Township until such line strike Grosvenor Street and then east until such line strike the Wharnccliffe Road and then north to the River Thames and then bounded on the north by the above said river these said boundaries containing not more than five hundred acres in all.”

⁴⁰ Ibid, Section 372, p. 289.

⁴¹ Ibid, Section 379, p. 294.

⁴² Ibid, Section 382, p. 299-300.



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The first clerk appointed by the village council was A. C Stewart. He was responsible for keeping the minutes, recording the by-laws of the new municipality, and making an annual return to the county clerk of statistics relating to village assessment. He was also required to itemize for the Provincial Secretary the number of sheep worried by dogs, the debits of the corporation, taxes owing, and all property municipally owned.⁴³

Operating within this legislative framework, it was now the job of the members of the Petersville village council to craft laws and regulations designed to guide and shape the lives of their fellow citizens. One of their first by-laws, #4, specified how certificates would be granted for obtaining tavern and shop licenses. Applicants were required to post a bond of \$200, and to be of “good fame, reputation and conversation,” and to obey a host of other strictures, including staying closed on the Sabbath, keeping stables for six horses, and having at least four bedrooms for guests.⁴⁴ Tavern licences were granted to William Swarts on Lot 7, Blackfriars Road, Henry Taylor on Lot 1, Blackfriars Road, and Peter Steels on the Wharncliffe Highway. Shop licenses were given to A. Tillmann, Lot 12, Wharncliffe Highway, William Loughrey, Lot 1, Blackfriars Road, and C. Waldock, Lot 10, Oxford Street.⁴⁵



Image 19: Map of Village of Petersville as Incorporated in 1875

⁴³ Ibid, Section 190, p. 238-9.

⁴⁴ Petersville By-Law #4, passed 6 February 1875.

⁴⁵ Ibid, By-Law #7.



Other by-laws passed by the village council suggested either standards to be achieved or reflected the hard realities of life in the late nineteenth century. By-Law #8 was designed to guard against “the sale of light bread and the employment of deleterious material in making the same”: after specifying the legal weight of a loaf (four pounds, it went on to state that “all bread made contrary to the provisions of this By-Law shall be liable to be seized by the Village constable or Inspector and shall be forfeited and disposed of for the benefit of the poor of the Village of Petersville.”⁴⁶

In May 1875, the council allocated \$1,725 from the “Surplus Distribution Fund allotted by the County of Middlesex . . . for erection of a School-house.”⁴⁷ A number of by-laws were predictably designed to keep order and foster morality, such as those against brothels, selling “intoxicating drink” to minors, or breaking the Sabbath, but some surprising laws give insight into other values and some unexpected practices of the community. By-law #21⁴⁸ forbade “profane swearing, obscene, blasphemous, or grossly insulting language”, gambling houses, vagrancy, drunk and disorderly behavior, . . . bathing or swimming in any public place whereby the public exposure of . . . persons may be obnoxious to public morals or outrage decency”, “unnecessary or improper noise with instrument of music . . . in the public Highways”, and the destruction of shade trees. Fines were listed for each infraction, and those unable to pay could “be committed to the Common Jail of the County of Middlesex for any term not less than ten days nor more than sixty days.”

By 1877, the village had grown sufficiently in human and animal complexity to require the services of a constable and a pound keeper. The first constable, James Daniells was hired at the annual salary of \$50 and had George Jolly as an unpaid assistant. By contrast, the first pound keeper, Patrick Laughname, had to rely on fees for compensation.⁴⁹

The issue that dominated political discussion for the next few years, by both council members and citizens was a possible name change for the Village of Petersville. Today, the events and emotions surrounding this change seem like a tempest in a teapot, but at the time, debate on the question raised hackles, fists, and tempers. The small community which developed along Blackfriars Street and the crossroads of Wharncliffe and Oxford had been referred to as Petersville long before incorporation, at Samuel Peters’s bidding. The Peters family had done much, besides laying out the first major suburban subdivision, to have some claim to recognition: they had employed residents in their industries, bought homes within the subdivision, donated land for both the Methodist and Anglican churches, and rewarded successful scholars in the school. “Squire” John Peters, son of the elder Samuel Peters, had served on the County Council.⁵⁰ The name “Petersville” had its supporters, led by Alexander Leslie. The movement for a name change was led by Reeve William H. Bartram. His reasons, and those of his supporters, were widely varied: they included resentment at the suggestions of paternalism in “Petersville,” a sense that the name had no relevance in Kensington, and as land south of Blackfriars was subdivided, and as the area known as Kensington developed to the south and southwest, and a pervasive sense that the old name sounded too rural.⁵¹ After much public debate and the inclusion of a name change on the

⁴⁶ Ibid, passed 6 April 1875.

⁴⁷ Ibid, By Law #10, passed 4 May.

⁴⁸ Passed 4 December 1876.

⁴⁹ Ibid, By-Law #24, Passed 5 March 1877.

⁵⁰ See Byers and McBurney, 282

⁵¹ For a detailed account of the events and debates surrounding the changing of the village’s name from Petersville to London West, see Stott, Suburban Autonomy, Chapter Two.



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ballot by which officials were elected in January 1881, the Village of Petersville became the Village of London West by an act of the Ontario Legislature dated 4 March 1881.⁵²

Council business in the decades leading up to annexation focused largely on routine business and the development of local infrastructure. Developers continued to be able to open new roads in their subdivisions.⁵³ The prospect of stimulating opportunities for local employment was likely the deciding factor in the Council's decision to allow R. S. Murray ten years' exemption from taxes on property on the north side of Blackfriars Street on which he planned to open a woollen factory; he was required to employ "not less than ten people . . . in said Woollen Factory" with "at least five of said number" to be "adults."⁵⁴ Unhappily, the by-law in question was repealed four years later after Murray had closed the factory.⁵⁵

Village by-laws did not immediately reflect the response of the council to the catastrophic flood of 1883. But in 1885, the first Board of Health not composed of councillors was appointed.⁵⁶ In 1889, the village appointed its first Medical Health Officer, John Fraser, M.D. (who was on the staff of the London Medical College), and, in 1889, its first Health Inspector, Luke Jeffries (wood turner).⁵⁷

Meanwhile, in an attempt to prevent the flood-prone waters of the Thames from again devastating the village, a timber and earthen breakwater had been constructed by the council from Napier Street to Kensington Bridge, and along the "southern boundary of the said village between Centre Street and the Wharnccliffe Highway." This involved diverting Lackey Street (just north of the Thames, east of Wharnccliffe), acquiring from landowners pieces of property that either fronted on the river or were in the path of street diversions, and creating the Thames Esplanade, a public street and sidewalk. This extended "from Dundas Street near Kensington bridge northerly along the bank of the river Thames to Napier Street" and was sixty six feet wide.⁵⁸ These public works projects were intended both to protect village property from future floods and to provide citizens of London West with recreational enjoyment of the river when it was flowing peacefully within its banks and breakwater.

Minutes of the Village of London West have not survived, but factors influencing council to explore amalgamation as a solution to rising economic challenges are reflected in a lively public debate on the issue in 1890, in a draft by-law of 1893, and in the final amalgamation by-law of 1897.⁵⁹ Having recently erected a necessary but costly breakwater and esplanade, the council had insufficient revenue for improvements to police and fire services, let alone spending needs relating to water and sewage, street lights, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and street paving.

A joint committee of village and city agreed upon terms of amalgamation, which were described in London West's first annexation by-law. This stipulated that the current assessment would be fixed for ten years, except on improvements or new buildings. Police protection, water service, and fire hydrants would be expanded into Ward 7 (as the village would become), and the city would assume the village debt and London West's share of

⁵² 44 Victoria, Chapter 45.

⁵³ Ibid, By-Laws #58 and #62, passed in May and August 1882, respectively.

⁵⁴ Ibid, By-Law #63, passed 2 May 1882.

⁵⁵ Ibid, By-Law #191, passed 13 April, 1886; the London West Assessment Roll for 1894 valued Murray's woollen mills at \$1500.

⁵⁶ Ibid, By-Law #79, passed 3 February 1885, and renewed 2 February 1886.

⁵⁷ Ibid, By-Laws #229A, passed 5 March 1889, and #231, passed 2 April 1889; Goodspeed, 295-6.

⁵⁸ Ibid, By-Law #202 passed 4 December 1886, and #203, passed 14 January 1887.

⁵⁹ Gregory Stott explores the 1890 debate on annexation in Chapter Five.



the county debt. London would agree to keep the breakwater in repair, but would not be responsible for property damage should a future flood damage that installation.⁶⁰ These terms were put to a vote of the village ratepayers and accepted by them as part of the council election held on January 2, 1893. But London's City Council then prevaricated, likely concerned both with the village's rising debt, as well as the cost of expanding services to a suburb with a small tax base. The proposed amalgamation was stalled.

When discussions resumed between the parties regarding annexation, it was done with London West acknowledging the necessity and the City of London the inevitability of amalgamation. London East and London South had already joined the city, in 1885 and 1890 respectively, thereby pointing the way for London West, which would bring its tax base, debt, and demands for infrastructure with it.⁶¹ City officials, however, struck a harder bargain than the failed one negotiated with the village in 1893.

For 1898, the first year of annexation, assessment of the former village was to be that of 1897. For seven years thereafter, taxation was to be 25 mills to the dollar, with the valuation of property to be that of the City of London. London would apply three of those 25 mills toward breakwater repairs and street improvements, but the city denied any responsibility "for any damage or injury which may be sustained or suffered by any person, firm or corporation by reason of the want of maintenance or repair of the said breakwater". Water mains would be laid and fire alarms established in the village; general improvements, street cleaning, and culverts were also promised. London assumed the debenture debt of London West as well as its share of the debt of Middlesex County. London West would, on annexation, become part of the city's Ward Two, rather than retaining political identity as its own ward, as had been in the agreement of 1893. The official date of annexation would be 20 December 1897, as long as negotiated terms were agreed to by vote of the electors of the village, to be taken on 28 June 1897.⁶²

On that day, only 332 of London West's 600 electors bothered to exercise their franchise, but those that did gave a decisive 297 to 35 vote in favour of annexation. In reporting the election results, the *London Free Press* commented:

The most ardent supporters of the by-law never anticipated such a majority, but the better thinking portion of the community saw that, commercially, the city and London West were one. They were connected by street railway, and the people were one community, socially. The great mistake that London West made was to separate from the Township of London in 1872, and become a distinct municipality.⁶³

The connection by street railway had been more tenuous than the *Free Press* suggested. In August 1893, Council made an agreement with the London Street Railway Company (LSR) to extend its service into the village, along Dundas from Kensington Bridge, then north along Wharncliffe to Oxford Street and back. The following year, the Company sought and received permission to extend a line into the area below Mt Pleasant Avenue in lower Kensington, an indication of how much that part of the village was growing, and the following year it was extended further west.⁶⁴ Street railway service was a boon to those villagers who worked across the

⁶⁰ London West By-Laws, #266, passed 5 January 1893.

⁶¹ Worrall, 26, 28.

⁶² By-Law #332, dated 1 June 1897.

⁶³ *London Free Press*, 29 June 1897. The paper made an error with the date of village incorporation. That occurred in 1875, not in 1872.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, By-Law #291, passed 15 December 1894.



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river in London, but, because the City would not allow streetcar tracks on the Kensington Bridge, West London passengers still needed to walk from the west side of the river to Richmond Street in order to travel further on the streetcar system.⁶⁵



Image 20: The West London Streetcar at the west end of the Kensington Bridge, c. 1895

It was only in 1897 that the London Street Railway was able to build a second bridge next to the first in which the street railway could cross the river. The bridge opened the day after annexation, and must have seemed a concrete sign of the new relationship between city and suburb.

The former citizens of London West, who were accustomed to electing a reeve and four councilors to direct the affairs of their village, would now be voting, with the rest of Ward Two across the river, for fewer representatives on a larger city council managing much more complex urban affairs. Over the next decades, the paramount issue for the former residents of London West would be how the City of London would provide new services, and, in particular, how it would protect their modest properties against the very real threat of floods. A West London Improvement Society was formed to monitor the new relationship between the former village and the present city. It was active long after city amenities were expanded into the new suburb and after the building of the Fanshawe Dam brought security against flooding. West Londoners continued to be involved in local planning issues, participating as the West London Citizens Advisory Committee in the development of the West London District Plan as part of the City of London's 1982 Official Plan.⁶⁶ Similarly, as work on the recasting of this plan went forward in the 1990s, many of the issues identified by the local advisory group as important to the community were similar to those now raised in connection with the HCD study: zoning, density, traffic issues, and heritage preservation.

⁶⁵ Stott, *Suburban Autonomy*, 140; Luckman, 55.

⁶⁶ See the *West London District Plan*.



Image 21: Willowbank, 84 Cavendish Crescent



Image 22: 34 Wyatt Street

2.3.2.3 The Buildings of the Incorporated Village

By far the most distinguished home in the new village of Kensington was Willowbank, an Italianate residence built for William Henry Bartram in 1876, designed by London architect William Joanes.⁶⁷

Bartram was a barrister, born in England, who had been called to the Bar in 1871. His first legal partnership was with Charles Hutchinson, also of Petersville. He served his village as clerk, reeve, and solicitor, was a founding member of the St. George's Society in London, registrar of the London Law School, and a member of St. George's Anglican Church in London West, and the leading proponent of changing Petersville's name. (He was also solicitor for the *London Advertiser*, which might be one explanation why that paper covered events in the village so assiduously.)⁶⁸ The house Joanes designed for him incorporates several typical Italianate features: the shallow hipped-roof with broad eaves, supported by heavy paired brackets set in a deep cornice; the bay window with broad eaves also supported by brackets and surmounted by iron cresting; the round-headed and segmental-arched windows; the octagonal posts and cutwork spandrels of the porch facing the river.⁶⁹

What particularly distinguishes the composition of the facade, though, is the protruding frontispiece, terminating in a shallow pediment derived from the style's classical underpinnings. Unfortunately, the façade is now very difficult to view. It is located on Cavendish Crescent (once Beech Street in Walker's survey) next to the river,

⁶⁷ Lutman, 59.

⁶⁸ Goodspeed, 725. 726.

⁶⁹ Hipped-roof: a roof type that slopes upwards from all sides of a structure, often at a shallow slope with no vertical ends, and meeting in the centre of the roof; Cornice: A horizontal decorative moulding that often surrounds the top edge of a building where it meets the roof line.



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and situated to face east over what was once a large front yard. A massive modern double house has recently been built on the lots that constituted this yard, so that the only way to view Willowbank is from the river path.

Given the popularity of the Italianate style in the 1870s, one would expect to find more examples of the type in the “Village of Kensington” and throughout the study area generally. But, as during the 1860s, the villagers tended to be very conservative. Although John Pocock built his house at 34 Wyatt Street between 1876 and 1879, after the appearance of Willowbank, the five bays of his late Georgian Ontario cottage suggest that the building might even date from the first half of the 19th century – although a pointed window in what appear to be an addition at the side shows some slight influence from the Gothic Revival. (The concrete foundation is later than the house.)

John J. Pocock was a shoe merchant, who began a business that became one of the City’s most prosperous enterprises. His son Philip joined him in 1872, and later bought the business along with his brother John. First called Pocock Bros. Boots and Shoes, located at 140 Dundas St., it was incorporated as the London Shoe Company in 1896. Philip Pocock was a close associate of Adam Beck (one of the buildings at Beck’s sanatorium for treating tuberculosis was called the Pocock Pavillion); he served as a trustee and chair of the Separate School Board, sat on the University of Western Ontario Board of Governors, promoted the building of the University Medical School on South Street, and donated money to build St. Peter’s Seminary.

An architectural conservatism similar to that found in the Pocock house is evident in the home built at 42 Empress Avenue, at the corner of Argyle Street, for Edward and Emma Houghton. Edward was a mason, who bought a half acre at that corner in 1872 and constructed his brick home soon thereafter. Despite the early deaths of two daughters, there were seven persons living in the house by 1880; an article by a descendant includes a sketch of the floorplan that helps one envision how they used their space. Similar to the Ontario cottages of the last two decades, this one betrays its 1870s date of construction only by the segmental arches over the windows and the front door. A photograph taken between 1898 and 1903, however, also shows a storm porch, with very pronounced Italianate brackets.⁷⁰



Image 22: The house at 42 Empress Avenue, built by Edward Houghton in 1872. The house next door along Argyle, seen in the background, was constructed in 1909 as the home of Tom and Mable Houghton.

⁷⁰ Stott, “Bricklayer,” 11, 20



Image 23: A drawing (not to scale) of the building's floor plan by Jean Dunham and a photograph of the house c. 1900

Emma Houghton, the daughter of Edward and Emma, retained possession of the house until after the 1937 flood. Away at the time, she called her relatives in her house and in the house next door to assure them that 42 Empress Avenue house had not been seriously affected by the flood in 1883. The 1937 flood had a more devastating effect, so that the current owners of the house can still see the flood line in the attic. Bill Houghton, next door, recalled that they had placed the chesterfield and mattress on the lawn to dry, when the health inspector came by and slashed them both open with a knife, in order to assure that they would be no longer be used. Other possessions were salvaged, though people found “flood mud” clinging to them even years later. Both Emma and her relatives sold their houses after the 1937 flood.⁷¹

The bold, robust barge boards of the early Gothic Revival made an impact in Petersville in the 1870s and 1880s, if not in the 1860s. Two remaining examples are found at 85 Albion Street and 35 Empress Avenue. The 1½-storey house at 25 Empress is extremely unusual in applying the striking bargeboard, along with a heavy drop which is broken, to a very simple gable-front house displaying the classical orderliness still found in a side-hall plan. The formality of the façade has also been emphasized by the use of bricks that are more uniform in colour than those found elsewhere on the building, and its Georgian antecedents are also indicated by the straight lines of the voussoirs above the windows. The house was built around 1874 for Isabella and William Smith, the latter a teamster who later became a contractor, replacing an earlier dwelling on the site. It is tempting to speculate that William was trying to demonstrate his talents or that Isabella, who owned the title to the house, aspired towards a more romantic or picturesque style than was common among her neighbours.

⁷¹ Houghton, “Bricklayer,” 38.



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Image 24: 85 Albion Street (left) and Image 25: 25 Empress Avenue (right)

Later than 25 Empress, probably built in the 1880s, the handsome 1½-storey home at 85 Albion Street is of a popular type, the three-bay gable-roofed house with a centre door surmounted by a cross-gable, usually displaying a round-headed window, as here, or a pointed window. The gable over the door is attractively wide here; the house boasts both the elongated finial and drop that complete the Gothic Revival trim; and the bargeboard is combined with an equally striking Italianate door (the porch is a later addition). The unusual design, with arches in the transom over the door itself and also over both sidelights, is unique to the London area. Surprisingly, there are several in Blackfriars.

Three of these London doors can be found on Leslie Street, where many of the buildings show Italianate traits. The house at 11 Leslie vaunts a particularly original and impressive façade, gaining something of the movement and tactility that the Italianate movement borrowed from its Renaissance and Baroque Italian models.



Image 26: 11 Leslie Street



The unusual treatment here relies on the relatively simple device of using brick headers to create projecting double arches over the door and windows, moving like waves along the bow window and under the cornice. These arches contrast with the strong horizontal lines of the protruding sill courses to create a façade with a well-controlled and balanced dynamic tension. The house was undoubtedly built after bricklayer Samuel Moore bought the property on which it sits in 1881; it displayed his work to great advantage.



Image 28: 101 Wharncliffe Road North (below)

While earlier styles arrived late and lingered long in Petersville/London West, the few late 19th-century example of the Queen Anne Revival style were more timely. The exuberant rendition of Queen Anne Revival at 101 Wharncliffe Road, with its plethora of roof types and angles, its multiple gables, many different window shapes and stained glass, turned porch posts, spindlework, and complex decorative shinglework and mouldings displays what might be regarded as excessive flamboyance even for this wildly eclectic and showy style. (The bandshell porch with its conical roof is hidden in the photograph below; it should also be noted that the half-timbered enclosure over and adjacent to the porch is a later addition.) The house exemplifies well

the Queen Anne Revival style of the 1890s in the weightiness of its decoration: in the heaviness knobs on the porch posts, for example, and the large stone voussoirs around the ground floor window. The house was built for John Kelley (sometimes spelled Kelly), a market gardener, in 1897-1898.⁷² That the house points to his prosperity was undoubtedly part of its stylistic point.

A somewhat earlier, more restrained, and much less typical example of the style is found at 88 Albion Street, built for Stephen Jeffries, a fishmonger, whose family lived on the property for over 100 years.⁷³ This highly picturesque building achieves its results with much less flamboyance than the Kelley house. The tongue-and-groove siding creates a canvas against which the eclectic decorative features - the eared window and door frames with their pediment-shaped lintels, the late Victorian bargeboard, the cresting over the porch, the oriel window with its hipped roof – are discretely displayed.

⁷² Lutman, 61.

⁷³ Lutman, 60.



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Image 29: 88 Albion Street

It should be noted that Blackfriars Street, particularly, took on a less pastoral appearance as the 19th century progressed. In addition to the various industrial enterprises next to the bridge, the two-storey buildings rose between Wilson Avenue and Albion Street that were designed to house shops on the ground floor with living quarters above. A picture taken from Argyle Street right after the 1883 flood shows the Tillman house on the corner of Albion Street, with the two-storey building next door that is still there today. The arched windows of 84 Blackfriars Street suggest that it was relatively new when the flood attacked the area. Note, too, that the oak tree between 64 and 66 Blackfriars Street is present in both pictures, though so large now that it has made its way into the basement of the corner building.



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Image 30: Photograph from Argyle Street looking towards Blackfriars Street after the flood in 1883 (University of Western Ontario)

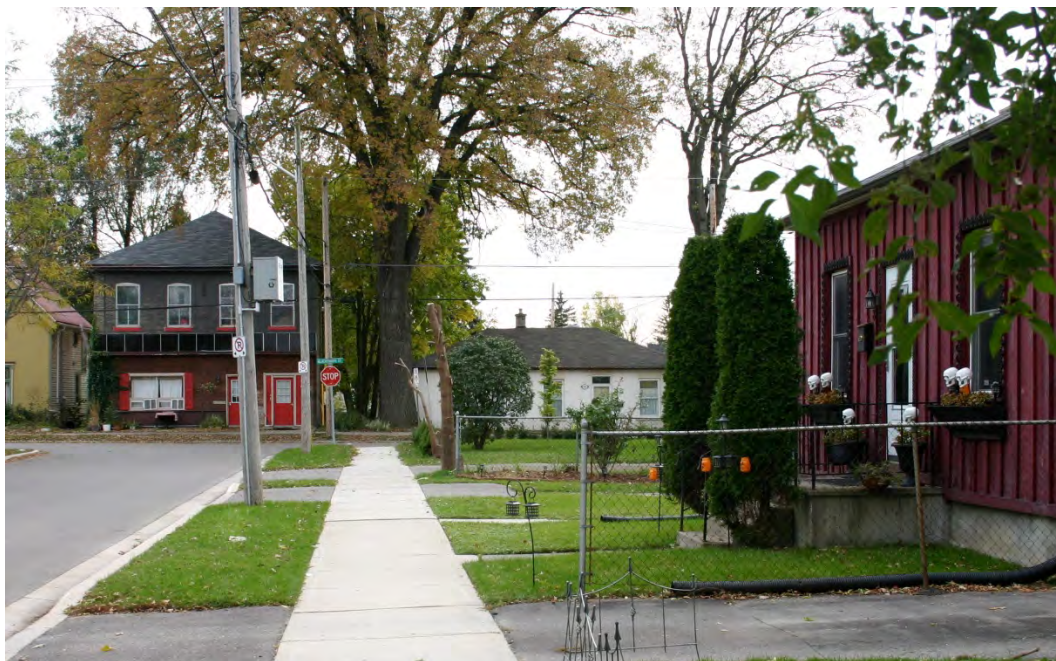


Image 31: Photograph from Argyle Street looking towards Blackfriars Street, 2013



2.3.3 Annexation and the Arrival of City Amenities

2.3.3.1 Streets, Sidewalks, and Public Transportation

In the first years after annexation, many streets in the former London West were renamed by city council because of duplication between suburb and city. Some were named after city officials: the former Centre Street became Wilson Avenue after the mayor, Dr. John Wilson; and Elm was renamed Meredith Avenue after the city solicitor, Thomas G. Meredith.⁷⁴ At the time of annexation, streets in London's new suburb were earthen, subject to potholes, and frequently in a ruinous state when the river flooded. In summer, the city ran a program of street watering to keep dust at bay. Eventually, gravel was spread on the more travelled streets, and later they were paved with asphalt as the volume of traffic warranted. An interesting glimpse into experimental road surfaces was published in the *London Old Boys Reunion* of August 1923. It described an invention of Robert Greene, proprietor of the Greene-Swift Clothing Company - the "Twin Trail or Saw Edge Roadway". He had installed an example of it on Alexander Street (later Mt. Pleasant Avenue) between Wilson and Wharncliffe. Sounding very much like a massive zipper, this roadway consisted of "a strip of gravel laid between two pavement strips with serrated edges . . . in order to give farmers a safe road devoid of ruts for horses and wagons, and a smooth pavement for motor cars."⁷⁵

London West brought to amalgamation a dowry of rough streets and sidewalks. During the first decades after union, sidewalks were installed through most of the city, and the new suburb was included in this expansion of service. Council minutes of the time frequently contain petitions for new sidewalks, as well as petitions *against* such improvements. In 1904, council considered By-Laws for the construction of cement sidewalks on Wharncliffe Road from Empress to Blackfriars, on the west side of Albion from Blackfriars to its southern end, and on the east side of Wilson from Dundas to Cherry Street.⁷⁶ Thus concrete sidewalks came piecemeal to the pedestrians of London West.

As mentioned above, public transportation had first come to London West in 1893, and the day after London West voted in favour of annexation in June 1897, the opening of the electric streetcar bridge over the north branch of the river at the foot of Dundas Street, beside the Kensington bridge. The *London Free Press* reported, "Cars will now run direct from Dundas street east through London West to the terminus at Oxford street bridge. Three cars will be put on this route at once, giving a 12-minute service."⁷⁷ Gasoline-powered buses were gradually introduced beginning in the early 1920s; by 1940 they had totally replaced by streetcars.⁷⁸ In 1951, a new London Transportation Commission (LTC) superseded the London Street Railway, and several bus routes have serviced the study area in subsequent decades.^{79 80}

⁷⁴ Priddis, 49.

⁷⁵ Quoted in Brock, *Fragments*, 202.

⁷⁶ London City Council Minutes, 1904, 122-3.

⁷⁷ 29 June 1897.

⁷⁸ *Morningstar*, 22-26.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 31, (by the City of London Act 1951, Chapter 107.)

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 36.



2.3.3.2 Water, Sewers, Garbage, and Electricity

Water mains were laid in London's new suburb in the first year of annexation, primarily for fire protection, but also so that households could hook up to the mains for domestic use.

London gradually expanded its sewer service from the original system (built in 1852 beneath King Street, and dumping its contents into the Thames) to one that, by the turn of the century, delivered waste to a sewage farm (now the Greenaway Plant).⁸¹ In 1911, city Aldermen Tancock and Morgan moved that the city engineer give the cost "of installing and equipping a pumping plant for a sewage system in London West." Engineer George W. Wright subsequently gave a conservative estimate of \$200.⁸² During the years of the First World War, London expanded its lines of sewer pipes extensively, and London West's turn came in 1920, when council approved expenditure of \$520,936.34 to expand service to that suburb.⁸³

The by-laws of Petersville/London West prohibiting the depositing of nuisances in the streets, and descriptions in the press of garbage afloat in flood waters, along with the post-flood reports of the Board of Public Health, all remind the modern reader just how fastidious we have become about refuse. London inaugurated the collection of garbage and ashes from the rear of properties in 1913, and by 1933 this system had been expanded to include all parts of the city.⁸⁴

Shortly after annexation, in March 1898, Ward 2 councilors George C. Jolly and H.M. Douglas recommended to city council that the Oxford, Blackfriars, and Kensington bridges be fitted with electric lights.⁸⁵ Subsequent council minutes show that London was gradually becoming electrified, with the city engineer at the fore in planning the expansion of this service. In 1906, city engineer Aquila Ormsby Graydon recommended that lights be installed at the west end of the Dundas Street bridge, on Oxford Street west of Wharncliffe, and on Gunn and Saunby streets.⁸⁶

2.3.3.3 Fire and Police Protection

An early item of city business after the annexation of London West was the provision of fire protection to the western suburb. On 8 March 1898, Alderman George C. Jolly (himself once a resident of the former London West) and Alderman H. M. Douglass, both representing Ward 2, moved that eleven fire alarm boxes be placed in strategic locations in the community.⁸⁷ Later that year the city water commission reported that, in fulfillment of the amalgamation agreement, water mains had been laid down on streets in London West for fire protection. Eight-inch mains had been laid along Wharncliffe, Oxford, and Mt. Pleasant, six-inch mains along Dundas, Wilson, Blackfriars, and Wharncliffe north of Oxford, and four-inch mains along Alexander (later Mt. Pleasant) between Wilson and Wharncliffe, Albion, Gunn, Mill, Saunby, Paul, Wyatt, Napier, and upper Mt. Pleasant.

⁸¹ Pipes, Pavement & Pillars, (unpaginated).

⁸² London City Council Minutes, 1911, 63, 151.

⁸³ Ibid, 1920, 149, 166.

⁸⁴ Pipes, Pavement & Pillars, (unpaginated).

⁸⁵ Ibid, 1898, 73.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 1906, 64.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 1898, 73.



Thirty-six fire hydrants had been installed in the area, with more planned for future years.⁸⁸ The new suburb has never had its own fire station, the nearest now being the downtown station at 400 Horton Street.

During its time as a separate village, Petersville/London West had its own police protection in the person of a constable. Once annexed to the city, the new suburb was policed by London's force, with its increasingly professional and well- equipped men and women.

2.3.4 The Study Area in the Twentieth Century

2.3.4.1 The Edwardian Period

The years before the First World War saw a great deal of growth in the study area, especially in its southern half. There were some new surveys during the period, but most of the physical growth took the form of infill, especially in plots laid out in the 1870s and 1880s.

The Edwardian period is known for a stylistic movement called Edwardian Classicism, when the flamboyant decorative features of the Queen Anne Revival gave way to a simpler and more classical treatment of the built form, with features such as classical columns used for porch posts and Palladian windows dominating gables. In London, however, an enthusiasm for Queen Anne decorative motifs lasted until the First World War, and the classical motifs were typically combined with somewhat muted Queen Anne Revival ornament. Very little of the classical influence permeates the study area, but simpler versions of the Queen Anne style dominate the landscape, especially in the southern part of the study area.



Image 32: 12 Cherry Street (above)

The most popular architectural style in this area during the Edwardian period was a 1½-storey cottage presented in a somewhat simplified version of the Queen Anne Revival style. Often the house possesses a purely rectangular footprint, with the relatively narrow bargeboards, ornamented with linear moldings, outlining the eaves; a carved pattern in the triangular panel at the apex of the of the façade; and decorative shinglework throughout the triangle defined by the roofline. The well preserved tongue-and-groove house at 12 Cherry Street, built in 1912 and first occupied by Joseph Benson, characteristically features a sunburst or fan motif in the triangular panel, an unvaried pattern of shaped shingles in the upper gable, and stained glass in the window and door transom.

In an equally popular variation of this form, the straight gable roof is replaced by a gambrel roof, allowing for more room on the second floor; in some instances the cross gable, also with a gambrel roof, allows for even more light and room in the upper storey. This is true of the house at 4 Cherry Street, built in 1908 and 1909 for Charles Howey. Here the shallow upper incline of the roof allows for a broader triangular panel in the apex, while the box bargeboard allows for further geometrical ornamentation.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 20th Annual Report of the Water Commission of the City of London, 1898, 8-9, 15-16.



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Image 33: 4 Cherry Street. Note the keyhole window in the east side, an attractive feature found throughout London

A somewhat more complex variation of the Edwardian cottage, and one that is more common elsewhere in London, features a hipped roof with a cross-gable, sometimes projecting, from the front façade (see 126 Mt. Pleasant Ave.) Sometimes, this form also sports a projecting gable wing at the side of the house, as at 30 St. Andrew Street.



Image 34: Houses at 126 Mount Pleasant (left) and 30 St. Andrew Street (right)



2.3.4.2 During and After the World Wars

Nancy Leppan found in her house at 45 Wilson Avenue the military kit of one Pte. John Harris who had fought and been seriously injured in World War I. In an effort to give these artifacts the proper home and recognition, she sought information from related families and military historians. The outpouring of interest in attempting to discover this soldier is itself a fitting tribute, not only to Pte. Harris, but to all the area soldiers who fought for Canada in the two terrible wars that dominated the first half of the 20th century.⁸⁹

There was little growth or building in the study area between the wars, but the parts of the area west of Wharncliffe Road saw a great surge of new housing in the early 1950s. A relatively large survey (Plan 444) in 1950 plotted new lots between Paul Street, Oxford Street, Cooper Street, and the escarpment,⁹⁰ and it was very quickly filled with Victory Housing, the sort of housing, often government-sponsored, that was designed throughout North America to provide returning soldiers with economical, quickly built homes. Victory Houses typically have only one storey with hipped or gable roof, roughly similar footprint, and slight eaves. The front façade can display various arrangements of door and windows. The victory housing settlement that arose from Plan 444 is notable, not only for the characteristic consistency of form in its streetscapes, but also for the variety and treatment of materials in its buildings.



Image 35: Victory Housing along Empress Avenue

⁸⁹ E-mail messages from Len Fuhrer, Jonathan Vance, and Genet Hodder, May 17 – June 24, 2013, provided by Don Menard, London Heritage Planner.

⁹⁰ Registered Plan 444, London Registry Office.



While Plan 444 led to a particularly well unified development, other victory houses, along with other forms of 1950s housing, are liberally scattered throughout the western part of the study area. Built only a few years later, several two-storey buildings, very different in scale and type, fill the block bordered by Chandler Street, Albion Street, Rogers Street, and Wilson Avenue, where the Catholic School was formerly located.

2.3.4.3 Since 1960

While there has been occasional infill housing since 1860, there have been no major surveys or new plots of buildings. The major road-planning change in the area was the extension of Riverside Road from the top of the escarpment to a widened Queens Avenue. As the Plan of Survey for the new road indicates, it involved cutting through several roads in the old “Suburb of Kensington” plan and creating a barrier between the now-separated communities to its north and south. It also encouraged the several commercial enterprises to locate where it crosses Wharncliffe Road; these enterprises cater more to customers arriving by the major arterial roads rather than to those in the immediate neighbourhood.



Image 36: Plan of Survey for Riverside Drive

With the building of Fanshawe Dam in the mid-twentieth century, the threat of floods that kept Blackfriars a working-class, economical district has disappeared. While the small scale of the buildings still attracts labourers, artisans, young families, and retirees, Blackfriars has also become a haven for more professional and prosperous residents attracted by the proximity of the river, the dyke, and downtown London. It has also become home to many students. As a result, numerous homes have seen large additions, and there is pressure for more intensive development.



A large percentage of the homes in the study area have been significantly altered – through additions, new cladding (e.g., aluminum, vinyl, board and batten) or through a purposeful artistic remaking. If every home in Blackfriars is not the owner’s own castle, it often becomes his or her canvas, remade through a variety of surface treatments including unusual, and often striking, paint or stain combinations; applied decoration, or even, in one case, wood shingles and copper trim. The resulting “funky” or “eccentric” environment (terms quoted from residents) has added to the neighbourhood’s distinctive unpredictability.



Image 37: 11 Rogers Street (left) and 37 Blackfriars Street (right)

2.4 Bridges, Floods, and Protective Measures

2.4.1 Bridges

By the 1870s, the last wooden Blackfriars Bridge was once again in danger of collapse (see section 2.2.3.2). The City Board of Works persuaded the interested municipal parties – the City of London and the County of Middlesex – to consider an iron bridge, and after a delegation travelled to observe the results of this new technology in Buffalo and the Alleghenies, a bridge was commissioned from the Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Canton, Ohio. The bowstring truss bridge, with a single span of 212 feet, used over 9,000 pounds of wrought iron, and cost \$6,000. Once the stone abutments were in place, it was constructed in two weeks.⁹¹

Though having agreed to the project, neither officials nor the general populace were entirely confident about the bridge’s viability. Therefore, watched by London’s mayor, the City Engineer, the county Warden, the City Council, the Board of Works, the County Road Directors, and a crowd of citizens, the bridge was put to a severe test at its official opening on September 20, 1975. About forty tons of gravel were pulled over the bridge by ten teams of oxen. The oxen were first directed to walk across the bridge, then to trot, and finally to proceed two abreast. The bridge has stood for nearly 140 years, though it has undergone many repairs along the way, and is currently being reassessed once more.⁹²

⁹¹ Tausky, London, 78

⁹² Tausky, London, 78



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The second crossing of the north branch for the residents of London and Petersville, just above the forks, was the Kensington bridge, linking the two ends of Dundas Street. The first structure, a wooden one, was erected in 1874. Washed away in the flood of 1883, it was replaced with a Warren Truss metal bridge, built and installed by the Dominion Bridge Company (headquartered in Montreal) at a cost of \$11,94.50, with the assistance of local bridge expert, Isaac Crouse. That bridge was 313 feet in length, with a 16-foot roadway, and it rested on massive stone



Image 38: Blackfriars Bridge, circa 1875. Carling's Brewery is in the background. (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

piers. It was twinned with the London Street Railway bridge in 1897, and dismantled in 1929-30 when the vehicular bridge was rebuilt by the Hamilton Bridge Company for \$125,000.⁹³

Now a newer twin bridge crosses the Thames at the Kensington Bridge site, channeling Queens Avenue and Dundas Street on the east side of the river into Riverside Drive on the west.

The first bridge over the river at Oxford Street was made of iron, was 398 feet in length, and was built in 1881 by the Hamilton Bridge and Tool Company, at a cost of \$20,710. Washed into the flooding river two years later, its replacement was a steel truss bridge on strengthened abutments. (These two bridges - along with Blackfriars - were constructed at a higher elevation than bridges downstream because the Saunby dam (approximately 500 feet south of the Blackfriars bridge, which served to supply water to the Blackfriars Mill below Ridout Street) raised the level of the river upstream. This dam also washed away in the flood.⁹⁴) Traffic bottlenecks by the mid-twentieth century led to the



Image 39: The Warren Truss Kensington Bridge (in back) with the railway bridge in front, circa 1909 (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

⁹³ Gilbert, 42; Morningstar, 19.

⁹⁴ London City Council Minutes, 1937, F5.



construction of a new two-lane bridge over Oxford Street, built in 1954 by Aiken and McLaughlin of St. Catharines, with Murray Dillon & Co. providing architectural and consulting services. This four-span bridge was 420 feet in length, had a roadway of 30 feet, and cost \$300,000. Constructed at the same time was a new CPR railway bridge over Oxford Street and the Thames, at a cost of \$313,000. Again, traffic flow necessitated the bridge being widened to four lanes in 1980. It was then named after the veteran Ward 2 Councilor, Norman Bradford.⁹⁵ Recently, a face-lift has vastly improved the sidewalks and guardrails of the Oxford Street Bridge, making it more pedestrian friendly.



Image 40: Wharncliffe Street Bridge, in 2013

The first bridge at Wharncliffe Road was built in 1914 at a cost of \$31,300. This 409-foot bridge had a road width of approximately 18 feet. In common with bridge building practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the abutments were built by one company, and the superstructure by another. The masonry work was completed by Bain and Ross of Embro, the steelwork by Hamilton Bridge Works, and the floor by the city's engineering department.⁹⁶ In 1958, this steel bridge was replaced with a concrete one considered to be the "largest continuous concrete pouring job" in the area since the construction of the Fanshawe Dam. The reconstruction of the bridge required widening the road approaches and cost \$800,000⁹⁷

2.4.2 Floods

To its east and south the community of Petersville/London West was dominated by two branches of the Thames River. No matter how land was subdivided, built upon, and cultivated, no matter what family, community, and civic organizations were established there, the community was always under threat of floods and freshets on the river. When swollen with the waters of spring thaw or by unusually heavy rainfall, the north branch was a particularly powerful adversary to human habitation in its flood plain. Mahlon Burwell recognized this power. In reporting to Surveyor General Thomas Ridout on his survey of the town plot of London in 1826, Burwell noted that curiosity had prompted him to ascertain which of the branches of the Thames that joined at London discharged the most water. "When the waters are high and overflow their lower banks, the North Branch shows at one view its superiority in point of force and weight of water", he wrote.⁹⁸ His observation was prescient.

The watershed of the north branch covers approximately 1,655 square kilometers.⁹⁹ Even before land in this watershed had been largely deforested and many swamps had been drained, floods and freshets on the river

⁹⁵ *London Free Press*, 25 May, 1954, 17 September 1979, 7 October 1980.

⁹⁶ Brock, *Fragments*, 186.

⁹⁷ *London Free Press*, 8 September 1958.

⁹⁸ *Lands and Forests*, *ibid*, Burwell to Ridout, 21 July 1826.

⁹⁹ UTRCA website. This figure is a total of the watershed upriver of the Fanshawe Dam, plus the watershed of the Medway Creek, which flows into the north branch downstream from the Dam.



occurred with great frequency, as early surveyors of the Thames region duly noted. A chronology compiled by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in 1952, shows that floods occurred in almost two-thirds of the years since Governor Simcoe visited the forks in 1793, and most often in the spring of the year.¹⁰⁰

2.4.2.1 *The Flood of 1883*

In spite of the regular occurrence of floods, people seemed to have no hesitation about buying lots and building on the river flats. Indeed, in 1873 and 1874, soon after the first lots in John Walker's Suburb of Kensington were purchased, water inundated low land on the former Nixon's Flats. Kensington was again flooded in the spring of 1883, but this was nothing compared to the freak flood visited upon London a few months later. July had already been unusually wet when an electrical storm during the night of July 10-11, centered over London and the watershed to the north, dropped more rain than the ground and river could absorb. A wall of water swept down the north branch, washing houses off their foundations, drowning people in their beds, and because of the ferocity of the flood and the time of night, making rescue efforts very difficult.¹⁰¹ The one-year old Oxford Street bridge collapsed into the river, the Kensington bridge washed away, and only the venerable Blackfriars bridge withstood the flood. Seventeen lives were lost in London, and the emotional and economic impact on those whose houses and land were inundated took a heavy toll.¹⁰² Photographs from the time show the devastation visited upon Kensington and Petersville.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 44-49. Between 1792 and 1951, floods and freshets were recorded on the Thames during 160 of those 241 years. See also Hives, Appendix III.

¹⁰¹ For heart-rending descriptions of the flood and aftermath, see Hives, 41-55; Stott, *Suburban Autonomy*, Chapter Four; UTVCA 1952 Report, Summary, 139-40.

¹⁰² Hives lists those lost (p.61), with one error: three of the children of Robert Lacey – not *Stacey* – were drowned. (see Goodspeed, 883)



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Image 41: The scene near Blackfriars Street and Wharncliffe Road after the 1883 flood (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)



Image 42: Viewing at a house shift by the 1883 flood (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)



A maudlin poem by Ingersoll's poet of cheese, James McIntyre, gave this description.¹⁰³

At London where two branches join,
It seem'd two furies did combine
For to spread far both death and woe,
With their wild, raging overflow.
E'en houses did on waters float
As though each had been built for boat,
And where was health, and joy and bloom
Soon naught but inmates for the tomb;
Flood o'erflowed both vale and ridges
And swept railroads, dams and bridges.
A mother climbed in a tree to save
Her infant from a watery grave,
But on the house you saw its blood,
Where it was crushed 'gainst tree by flood.

Clumsy though his verse undoubtedly is, McIntyre does evoke the destruction to home and garden. A report by London doctor William Waugh, a member of the London Medical College, to the Provincial Board of Health, described how a Sanitary Committee, set up by the City of London to help its western suburb, dealt with the challenges of health and safety after the flood waters had receded: "314 houses in Kensington and over 80 along the banks of the river . . . were rendered for the time uninhabitable. The entire flooded district was covered by a thick tenacious deposit of a most disagreeable smell." As the flood had mixed run-off from farms, the accumulated detritus of mill ponds, and the contents of open culverts, out-houses, and manure piles with the carcasses of dead livestock and small animals, the Sanitary Committee had its work cut out for it. Its first task was to make houses habitable again, and to do that it needed water. The village wells of London West were badly contaminated, so pipes were run from the city waterworks. Open pools of water were drained; piles of refuse were covered in tar and burned; and the grounds around houses were raked and sprinkled with lime. Houses were cleaned of refuse, their basements pumped out, floors washed, and fires kept alight to dry walls and floors. Wells were pumped out, cleaned, and disinfected. Physicians then inspected houses before their owners could reoccupy them. Waugh concluded that the sanitary condition of the flooded area was greatly improved, and his colleagues agreed that because of these measures, there had been "less sickness in London West this summer and autumn than usual".¹⁰⁴ London West's big city neighbor had rendered great service, and by these acts had reminded the suburb of the advantages of belonging to a more populous municipality.

¹⁰³ The University of Western Ontario Archives and Research Collections Centre holds an extensive collection of photographs of the 1883 flood. Paul Peel's sketches were published in the *Canadian Illustrated News*, and are reproduced in Gilbert, p.49. McIntyre's "poem" was published in his *Musings on the Banks of the Canadian Thames*, (Ingersoll: H. Rowland, 1884), and included in Hives, p. 36.

¹⁰⁴ Waugh, 301-303.



2.4.2.2 Protective Measures post-1883

In his 1981 MA thesis, Christopher Hives described three stages in human attitudes to periodic flooding. The first stage is characterized by an acceptance of flooding as a normal event, beyond human control: this was the attitude expressed by residents in Petersville/London West before the flood of 1883. The second stage, demonstrated by those residents after that flood, was to insist that protective measures should be taken to prevent a re-occurrence. To this end, the village of London West constructed a timber and earthen breakwater from the Oxford Street bridge along the west bank of the north branch and the north bank of the main branch, and residents conscientiously monitored its maintenance and repair after annexation to the City of London. The third stage would not be reached until the next catastrophic flood hit the London suburb in 1937: the realization that local efforts at flood control were inadequate, and systematic river basin-wide solutions were necessary.¹⁰⁵

As London West saw heavy floods on the Thames in the years leading up to annexation, it is no wonder that maintenance of the breakwater was part of the agreement with the City of London. Early in 1898, Alderman George C. Jolly, one of the councilors for Ward 2 (in which the former London West was now a part), moved that the city engineer draw up plans for “a cement concrete wall for West London Breakwater” from Oxford Street bridge to Ash Street. Although \$75,000 was eventually allocated to this project, the city decided not to use concrete in the construction of the breakwater and subsequent floods frequently breached the earthen portion.¹⁰⁶

An early indication that London might require action in relation to flood-control measures came in 1901, when the Special Committee on Estimates recommended that, following the example of Brantford, city council should apply to the Legislature for assistance “toward protecting low lying land” by “remodeling the present London West Breakwater, and making it a permanent structure.”¹⁰⁷ This initiative was pursued for several years without positive results.¹⁰⁸ In December 1904, the Special Committee on the London West Breakwater reported to council that a consulting engineer, W. T. Jennings, had determined that a concrete or masonry wall was “not necessary as being too costly, and suggest[ed] construction of an earth dyke in lieu thereof, at an estimate cost of about \$15,000.”¹⁰⁹ In order to erect a new dyke, the city purchased small pieces of land from residents bordering the breakwater north of Blackfriars Street, thus enabling workmen to widen the river channel and fill the breakwater; this filling was done by using “material deposited there from street cleaning, excavations, and by teamsters, draymen, etc., to whom the City paid 10 cents per load . . . and this portion is now safe from floods.”¹¹⁰

This was an optimistic assessment. Residents of West London who stood to lose most from floods kept a watching brief on city council plans relating to the breakwater, and frequently addressed council with their concerns. In 1912, new city engineer, William Norman Ashplant, having studied the reports of his predecessors and other consultants, gave somewhat different advice to council. In his view, the breakwater between Oxford and Blackfriars required “some form of impervious construction”; he reminded council that \$21,178 had been spent in the previous fifteen years to maintain the aging earthen bank, and recommended “an embankment with

¹⁰⁵ Hives, iii-iv.

¹⁰⁶ London City Council Minutes (1898), 112, 347.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid (1901), p. 92.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid (1905), 102.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid (1904), 289.

¹¹⁰ Ibid (1905), 141-2, 334-5. For example, see London Registry Office, Instruments #10657, #10671, #10801 all 1905.



a slope of 1½ to 1, formed of gravel procured from the river bed and faced with reinforced concrete” surmounted by a “pipe rail fence” to protect pedestrians.¹¹¹ The following year the city purchased a concrete mixing machine, and Ashplant reported that work could commence; if, however, finances were tight, the construction could be “postponed for this season. If the river” he mused, “is allowed to pass through Springbank dam at its lowest before winter sets in and to remain so until after the spring freshets, I consider the exaggerated nervousness of West Londoners from any possible flood and failure of the existing earth embankment will be eliminated.”¹¹² One wonders if Ashplant’s opinion of the “exaggerated nervousness” of West London residents was a common attitude at London city hall.¹¹³

Work finally began on the concrete-faced breakwater between Oxford and Blackfriars in the summer of 1915. High water delayed construction several times, but in December city engineer Brazier reported work nearly completed. The final cost was \$22,813 (\$2,187 less than the estimate), and Brazier offered this assessment of the project: “the work throughout is of first class workmanship and material and should form permanent protection for that section of the breakwater for all time.”¹¹⁴

The Thames River was not totally quiescent in the next couple of decades, but the breakwater kept floodwaters at bay. During heavy flooding on the north branch in March 1929, water rats rather than the river itself invaded West London: they were washed out of their holes on the banks by the rising Thames.¹¹⁵

2.4.2.3 *The Flood of 1937, and Subsequent Protective Measures*

The flood of 1937 broke all records in London for a natural disaster. Its origins lay in the unusually high level of precipitation that the entire Thames watershed experienced during the month of April (especially in the week prior to the actual flood), more precipitation than could be contained in the river basin by all branches. Low lying areas in the city not protected by breakwater or dykes began flooding on 26 April, and men were soon recruited to fill sandbags to raise the level of the West London breakwater against the rising river.¹¹⁶ The Thames overflowed this barrier with ease near Blackfriars, and also near Kensington Bridge, where the force of the converging branches swept water into the western suburb.¹¹⁷ Again, as in 1883, boats were used to ferry people fleeing homes in West London, but now trucks also moved residents to higher ground.¹¹⁸ The city quickly turned to the Red Cross to manage relief efforts, and provincial public health officials were soon involved in disease control and sanitary remediation. Local residents recall the many acts of kindness offered them by other Londoners, and in particular how local laundries and dry cleaning companies dealt with much water-soiled

¹¹¹ Ibid (1913), 282-3.

¹¹² Ibid (1914), 383.

¹¹³ Baker and Neary, 38-9.

¹¹⁴ London City Council Minutes (1915), 717-8.

¹¹⁵ Hives, 90, quoting from the *London Advertiser*, 16 March 1929.

¹¹⁶ In fact, the city purchased 16,500 used bags from local dealers on 26 April, and then ordered an additional 25,000 from a firm in Walkerville. Before this shipment arrived the city realized the flood could not be held back by such a barrier. London City Council, Minutes of #2 Committee (11 May 1937), 236.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 102-3. Hives’ account of the 1937 flood is very extensive. See also the report of C.A. Harris, “Thames River Flood” in City of London, Board of Health Minutes, 8 June 1927.

¹¹⁸ Stott, Bricklayer, 92.



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linens.¹¹⁹ In all, 545 acres of the city were flooded, and 1,075 buildings were affected, most of which were dwelling houses. Total flood damage to public, private, and farm property, including money spent on relief within the affected areas in the Thames basin, was estimated to be almost \$2,000,000.¹²⁰



Image 43: The Flood of 1937, viewed from the west end of Mount Pleasant Avenue (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 93; interview with Lynne Gilliam, 19 September 2013.

¹²⁰ UTVCA Report, 1952, Summary, 146.



Image 44: Houses along Wyatt Street, drying out after the 1937 flood (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

In response, the city established a Flood committee of the whole council, chaired by the Mayor, Thomas Ford Kingsmill Jr.; it held its first meeting on 31 May 1937. Several residents of flooded areas were permitted to address the committee. Oscar A. Liscumb (an electrical contractor living on Wilson Avenue) urged the Council to seek assistance from other levels of government “with greater taxing power” . . . “For seventy-five or eighty years the London West district has been recognized to be a flood area, but governments have continued to collect taxes and permitted people to buy and sell land therein and to build buildings. They feel justified in stating that the taxes collected over a period of years, under these circumstances, are obtained under fraud. They want protection so they will feel safe in going to bed there.” Joseph C. Linnell (81 Blackfriars Street, who worked at Dennisteel), had suggestions to make about improving the retaining wall south of that street with concrete, and cautioned against inaction: “if the City Council does not promise definite and adequate protection the people will withhold payment of their taxes until protection is supplied.”¹²¹ The consensus of the first meeting was that the Province of Ontario should be more deeply involved in flood control measures.

The second meeting provided an opportunity for the Mayor to consult council on who might be invited to attend a conference on flood control, to be held in London. He himself favoured a broad representation of civic officials, engineers, Chamber of Commerce members, and representatives of conservation and reforestation groups.¹²² City Engineer William Martin Veitch reported to the third meeting of the flood committee on the condition of the

¹²¹ First Meeting of Committee re Flood, in London City Council Minutes (1937), F1.

¹²² Second Meeting, F4.



breakwater and made recommendations for its improvement: these were adopted at the council meeting of 14 June.¹²³ On 8 June, C.A. Harris of the Board of Health reported on that body's participation in flood relief and recovery. He said that his department had to "condemn as unfit for habitation a certain number of houses", which he noted, had only worsened an "already acute problem of housing which exists in this city."¹²⁴ Perhaps it was in response to this situation that city council offered to owners of homes in low-lying areas the opportunity of transferring their houses to city-owned land on higher ground.¹²⁵ The council minutes of 7 June 1937 included a motion that distilled in its preamble the city's evolving position on the responsibility for future flood control measures.

That whereas the recent flooding of many municipalities in the vicinity of the River Thames has called attention to the urgent need for taking action to prevent a recurrence of this disaster;

AND WHEREAS the problem of the prevention of floods in the Thames River Valley is a problem far greater than any one municipality is financially able to handle, and is also one in which the protection of all is concerned rather than protection for any one municipality;

AND WHEREAS it is apparent that a solution of this pressing problem is one which will require the assistance both technical and otherwise of the Provincial and Dominion Governments, and is a matter which must be of great concern to these Governments;

AND WHEREAS immediate action is essential;

The motion went on to authorize the Mayor to invite mayors, wardens, members of the provincial legislature and member of the Dominion Parliament from the affected areas, as well as engineers and experts on flood control to the conference planned in London.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, the West London Improvement Society kept pressure upon council to improve the breakwater, and on 4 July 1938 a new by-law received first and second reading; it authorized "concrete facing on the earthen dykes on the north and west side of the River Thames abutting on West London, as a local improvement under the provisions of The Local Improvement Act."¹²⁷

2.4.2.3 The Road to Fanshawe Dam

Finally, political efforts and increased public knowledge about the larger scientific and environmental causes of flooding, resulted in a series of provincial Acts designed to address a problem that could only be resolved on a regional basis. On 14 April 1943, during the tenure of Liberal Premier Harry C. Nixon, the Thames River Control Act passed the Ontario Legislature. Nixon lost power in August of the same year, and the new Progressive Conservative premier George Drew was slow to act on further flood control legislation. But finally, in April 1946, his government passed an act providing for the establishment of conservation authorities "for the purposes of

¹²³ London City Council Minutes (14 June 1937), 314; the meeting was held on 27 June.

¹²⁴ Harris, *Ibid*, 61.

¹²⁵ London City Council Minutes (17 May 1937), 274.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 7 June 1937, 299.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 4 July 1938, 293.



conservation, restoration and development of natural resources . . .and for the prevention of floods and of water pollution.”¹²⁸ The next year, floods in March and April prompted representatives of municipalities in the whole Thames watershed to meet in May for the purpose of forming a Thames Valley Authority. But those in the lower reaches of the Thames basin were not in total agreement with the plan, and so a second meeting was held that August attended by those municipalities in the watershed upstream of the village of Delaware. This time there was agreement, and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority became a reality.¹²⁹ London joined with the cities of Woodstock and Stratford, the towns of Ingersoll, Mitchell and St. Marys, the villages of Embro and Tavistock, and townships in Huron, Middlesex, Oxford and Perth counties in this multi-purpose organization. London’s John Cameron Wilson became the first chairman of UTRCA.¹³⁰

One of the first tasks of the new authority was the construction of the Fanshawe Dam on the north branch above London; it was designed to control flooding on the river once and for all. Sod was turned on 30 November 1950, and the dam was subsequently completed at a cost of close to \$5,000,000. It was officially opened on 25 June 1953.¹³¹ In the sixty years since its construction, there have been no floods on the Thames to threaten the people of Blackfriars/Petersville/London West.

2.5 The Character of London West

2.5.1 Aspects of the Area’s Demography

2.5.1.1 Occupations

Historically, Petersville/London West was always more a neighbourhood of farmers, market gardeners, and working people than a community of citizens aiming to break into the middle class. Even before incorporation, the enumerator of London Township for the 1871 census identified residents of Petersville as such. Of the 143 workers listed there, the most numerous occupation was that of laborer: 36 men. There were 16 shoemakers one currier, six clerks, one storekeeper, two bookkeepers, six dressmakers, four tailors, and one tailoress. Seven farmers lived within the boundaries of the as yet unincorporated village, and already five men identified themselves as gardeners. The building trades were well represented with eleven carpenters, six bricklayers, a stonemason, a turner, a plasterer, seven painters, two cabinetmakers, and one chair maker. Horses were omnipresent in village society, and Petersville could boast five blacksmiths, a sadler, one carriage maker, and a harness maker. The railway and the factory beckoned from the City of London, and were represented by one conductor, a brakeman, a telegrapher, and two machinists. Few were employed in the provisioning trade, but there were two butchers, one fish dealer, two hotel keepers, a druggist, and at least one grocer. The rest of the workers were a miscellany – a letter carrier, a watchman, two pedlars, a bookbinder, and John Bowman, the scale maker. Many of these men would have been employed in their own concerns, or locally, and the remainder would have crossed Blackfriars bridge into the city for their work.

Only a decade later, the numbers and diversity of occupations changed dramatically. Even more labourers and artisans were represented, but professional and clerical occupations were also living in Petersville. There were

¹²⁸ Ibid, 146-9.

¹²⁹ Hives, 156-7.

¹³⁰ Brock, Fragments, 251.

¹³¹ UCTRA, Twenty Years, 10, 20.



two governesses, a secretary, two barristers, an artist, an architect, one night editor, two insurance agents, a law-student, two photographers, three schoolmasters, two music teachers, a Methodist minister, and three bank clerks. Petersville was changing from a small, largely rural society, to one of greater complexity. This complexity gradually changed character as the area became more closely linked with the city, as its residential density increased, and as work itself was influenced by technology, increased mechanization, and developments in communication.

2.5.1.2 Commerce, Industry and Land Use

The earliest commercial and industrial establishments in the study area were developed on lots fronting the roads that led to and from London. Blackfriars Street, Wharnccliffe Highway, and Oxford Street were the routes that travellers would have taken both departing from and journeying to the “metropolis” at the forks of the Thames, especially when Blackfriars was the only bridge over the north branch.

The 1854 assessment roll for London Township offers a glimpse of a few commercial establishments already in operation in the Blackfriars/Petersville area (see section 2.3.1). The 1871 census and Mackintosh’s directory for 1871-2 provide a richer snapshot both of the occupations of local residents and of businesses and manufactories in the area. The largest establishment was undoubtedly Hilliard and Saunby’s North Branch Mill, located on the river at the end of Beaufort (then Mill Street). It lay outside of the study area of this project, but the mill did employ millers, teamsters, and labourers who lived in Blackfriars/Petersville, and its owners were deeply involved in the politics and social life of the community: the first and last Reeves of the village were both members of the Saunby family – Joseph D. and William J. For many decades, a familiar occupation in the village was that of shoemaker. Sixteen shoemakers were recorded in the 1871 census on village lots in Petersville (so called even before incorporation). Anthony Tillman was perhaps the first to establish such a shop, on Blackfriars near Albion Street. Later, Tillman’s widow, Annie, kept a grocery shop there for many years. Grocers and other provisioners of food in that era were small establishments, and usually located along major thoroughfares. Mackintosh’s directory for 1871-2 lists six grocers, three butchers, one baker, one dairyman, and one fishmonger in Petersville. Many residents of Blackfriars/Petersville worked in London across the river, but many also plied their skills from home.

As early as 1871, an enterprise with which Blackfriars/Petersville became closely identified – that of gardener, market gardener, nurseryman, and farmer – was well represented in the census and directory lists. In the 1871-2 directory, six gardeners and 12 farmers were listed. Among the former, the names Alexander Leslie, Duncan Campbell, John Kelly, John Lackie, and Thomas McBroom would be associated with market gardening and land development for many years.¹³² In White’s 1881 directory for London and Middlesex County, sixteen men are listed as gardeners, farmers, or nurserymen. Some of these growers owned land on Centre Street (later Wilson Avenue). Others were located on Beech, Oxford, Ann, Walker, and Kensington streets. Many of these gardeners also owned property west of the study area in Upper Kensington and on Francis Street, where land was also of high quality.¹³³

¹³² Mackintosh, 266&c. (Petersville residents are listed among those from London.)

¹³³ White’s, 436-502. Land records bear this out.



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Foster's directory for 1901 gives precise information about which residents of Blackfriars/Petersville worked at home, and which worked elsewhere. As in earlier years, the main thoroughfares, Blackfriars Street and Wharncliffe Road, boasted more commercial establishments than other streets in the area, which were largely, although not totally, residential. For instance, Blackfriars Street was the home of D. Collins & Sons Ice Dealers (north side near bridge), five grocery stores (one of which also housed a post office), a baker, a druggist, a butcher, a shoemaker, the Collins Hall Hotel (at Wilson Street), and a shoemaker. Wharncliffe Road also boasted five grocers (one of which housed the Kensington Post Office), a blacksmith shop, a couple of gardeners, a couple of contractors, several civic establishments – halls, schools, and churches - and a livery and boarding stable owned by John Kelly at #101.

Elsewhere in the area, brush and broom manufacturers were located on Wilson Avenue (Gurd & Co. – Laura D. Gurd - at 152 ½, and David Andrewes at 154), on Empress Avenue (Harry Thorn at 79), and on Oxford Street (John Hobbs at 79). Benjamin Lawton had an upholstering business at Oxford and Wharncliffe. Joseph Andrews ran a sausage manufacturing business on Dundas Street at Wharncliffe Road. Matthew Kershaw, photographer, plied his trade on Mt. Pleasant Avenue near Charles Street. Mrs. Mandana Evans ran a laundry on Napier Street north of Blackfriars. Several draymen and teamsters operated out of their home properties, as did a few contractors, a plasterer, and a landscape gardener. One printer, T. R. Rhoder, was established on Albion Street.¹³⁴

When not in flood, the Thames River was a source of both power and recreation. Near the north bank of the main branch both a hotel and a boat-building concern were established in the late 1870s and early 1880s. John W. Rogers constructed pleasure boats from his property on Dundas Street, and the Riverside Hotel, under the management of Richard McDonald, offered scenic accommodation to visitors.



Image 45: The Riverside Hotel, after the flood of 1883 (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

¹³⁴ Foster's, multiple pages.



Forty years later, the commercial character of Blackfriars/Petersville had changed a great deal. Businesses clustered mainly on major thoroughfares, and fewer trades were located on residential streets. The 1941 Vernon's directory listed one grocery and two meat stores on Blackfriars. With major east-west and north-south transportation routes focusing on Dundas Street and Wharncliffe Road, these thoroughfares had become more commercial in nature. Dundas now boasted two grocery stores, a restaurant, three service stations, a shoemaker, the Dutch Laundry and United Cleaners, as well as Labatt Memorial Park. Wharncliffe Road was home to a furniture store, several grocers, a meat store, Weir's Beauty Shoppe, a branch of the Bank of Montreal, a restaurant, a dry goods store, service stations, a barbershop, a plumbing concern, and, near the Oxford crossroads, a grocery store, a butcher, a barber, an upholstery shop, and a plumbing business. A few small concerns were located on residential streets. Wilson Avenue was home to Dinsdale's shoe repair shop, Dixon's grocery store, and Taylor's barbershop. M. Crawford ran a confectionery business at Empress near Wharncliffe -- an ideal location near the school and its population of children with pennies in their pockets.¹³⁵

Many factors have combined to alter the commercial character of this community in the last seven decades. Industries once sited on the north bank of the Thames (Dutch Laundry and Forest City Linen Supply) closed long ago, and were replaced by parkland, a residence for troubled youth at Belton House (WAYS - Western Area Youth Services), a community gathering place (Kiwans Senior Centre), and the headquarters of Junior Achievement. Changes in road alignment (particularly the development of the Dundas/Riverside corridor), in LTC routes, in demographics (notably the influx of student residents), and in general shopping patterns, have led to the establishment of several bars and restaurants on Wharncliffe Road north of the bridge, to the intensification of service outlets, medical offices and eateries near the Oxford and Wharncliffe crossroads, and, in general, to the opening of businesses designed to serve all Londoners rather than just those living in the immediate neighbourhood.

2.5.1.3 2.5.1.3 Family Histories

Petersville/London West retained its village character long after annexation to the City of London. This is borne out in the histories of several area families who remained rooted in the neighbourhood in spite of floods and the economic pull of London. The scale of development in Petersville/London West is very much a village scale – compact, pedestrian friendly, with shops, services, clubs, schools, and churches all within reasonable distance. Of course there are, and always were, many people who moved out of the community, but enough have stayed and enough of succeeding generations have returned that the closeness and intimacy of village life happily survives. Interviews with local residents and surveys from public meetings document this village characteristic.

The study area has always been dominated by the river because of its propensity to flood. Since that threat was removed by the building of the Fanshawe Dam, the positive presence of the river has been felt – in the recreational possibilities along banks and adjacent parklands, in the beauty of its ever-changing water, and in the flora and fauna of valley lands. Families in Blackfriars/Kensington today value their proximity to the Thames, and the ease with which they can walk along it and into the city.

¹³⁵ Vernon's 1941 Directory, multiple pages.



2.5.2 The Development of a Village Society

2.5.2.1 Schools

The first school in Petersville was built on land purchased from Jeremiah Hill, first miller of the North Branch Mill sometime after he had acquired the mill property in 1846. The half-acre school lot north of Oxford and east of Wharncliffe cost £10, and the building erected on it was one of the first brick schoolhouses in London Township.¹³⁶ After the incorporation of Petersville, the school also served as the venue for public meetings and the election of village officials.

Population growth necessitated planning for a larger building, and the village council of Petersville issued debentures for one in June 1876. A new, brick, two-storey school with basement was opened on 14 August on Ann (Empress) Street.¹³⁷ John Dearness, then inspector of schools for East Middlesex, praised its furnishings and construction. It was also equipped with a bell, which sounded the alarm for local residents during the flood of 10-11 July 1883.



Image 46: The Ann Street (Empress Avenue) School, as shown in Illustrated London, 1897

¹³⁶ London Township History, Vol. 1, 207, 248.

¹³⁷ London West By-Laws, #18, passed 5 June 1876; Brock, Fragments, 102.



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Continued growth of the village to the south and west saw a larger increase in the number of school-aged children than could be accommodated earliest school. Until a new facility could be built, the village school board leased the Hall which Kensington postmaster, Robert Albert Jones, had built on Wharncliffe Road. A new primary school opened in 1887, but was filled to capacity by 1888.¹³⁸ After much village controversy, an addition was added shortly thereafter. Annexation of the village to the City of London was accompanied by responsibility for schools of London West being assumed by the city's Board of Education. In 1898, a Kindergarten was established at the Albert Hall, in Kensington and an additional classroom opened at the Ann Street school.

A new Empress Avenue Public School was built in 1925, fronting on Wharncliffe Road at the northeast corner of Empress. Currently, it is the home of Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion School; English language elementary students in the neighbourhood attend Eagle Heights Elementary School on Oxford Street.



Image 47: Empress Avenue Public School, now the Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion School

Roman Catholics attended St. Peter's School north of the Cathedral until a primary school was built on Wilson Avenue between Chandler and Rogers. The Separate School Board purchased land there in 1917 and opened St. Joseph's School in 1921.



Image 48: Drawing of St. Joseph's School

¹³⁸ Stott, *Suburban Autonomy*, 46-7.



As with all elementary Catholic schools in London at the time, the teachers were all members of the Sisters of St. Joseph.¹³⁹ As the Catholic population grew, a new parish was created in West London. Mass was celebrated in the school on Wilson Avenue until the new St. Joseph's Church was built on Charles Street. A new school, constructed immediately north of the church, opened in 1954.¹⁴⁰ By the mid-1980s, the population of West London had changed sufficiently that St. Joseph's School transitioned to other educational purposes, and Catholic children were bussed to alternative locations.



Image 49: St. Joseph's School, opened in 1954, now serves as the non-Catholic Christian Academy

2.5.2.2 Churches

Petersville's first church, an off-shoot of North Street Methodist Church, London, was established in 1870, when the trustees sold, for \$5.00, Lot #24 on the south side of Ann Street to the trustees of the Petersville Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada.¹⁴¹ The first service in the newly constructed brick church was held on 31 July 1870.¹⁴² The Wesleyan Methodist Church, Petersville, became a separate charge, detached from the North Street congregation, in 1876. Over time, a Sunday school room was added, and a parsonage built facing St. Andrews Street.¹⁴³ The church had a variety of names over the years: Petersville Methodist Church, London West Methodist Church, Empress Avenue Methodist Church, Empress Avenue United Church, and, finally, Empress United Church.

¹³⁹ Sisters of St. Joseph, History, 18.

¹⁴⁰ Power and Brock, Gather, 284-5.

¹⁴¹ London Township, Instrument #360, 8 January 1870.

¹⁴² Goodspeed, 519.

¹⁴³ Empress Street United Church Centennial, 3.

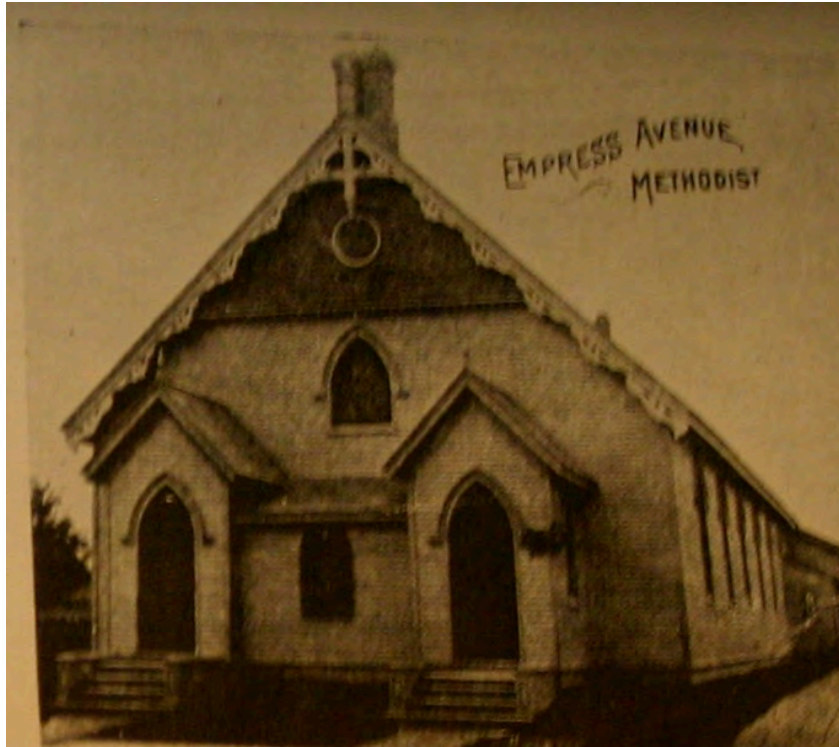


Image 50: Empress Avenue Methodist Church, from Illustrated London, 1897

Empress Church was never wealthy, but it was rich in fellowship and social engagement. Worship services were central, but so too were Sunday school classes, an orchestra for concerts, Bible classes, a young men's class, a "Pak-O-Pals" girls class, a Young People's League, and a Drama Club. During the Second World War, all serving in the armed forces from the congregation were sent gift boxes and regular correspondence.¹⁴⁴

Post-war population growth necessitated the building of a new church, this one fronting on Blackfriars Street, with ample parking, a gymnasium, a spacious sanctuary, a modern kitchen, and facilities for Sunday school, and meetings. With its new building and location, the church was renamed Empress United Church.

A second Methodist congregation, the Kensington Mission, was established in 1890, and the following year was meeting at Adam Flowers' house at 28 Wharncliffe Road.¹⁴⁵ In 1901, John Morrison was its pastor. The Kensington Methodist Mission joined Empress in 1916, but a Sunday school continued to be held at the Wharncliffe Road house: in 1921 Mrs. A. Clarke was its director.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 4.

¹⁴⁵ Might's Directory, 1891, 108.

¹⁴⁶ Empress, *ibid*; Vernon's Directory, 1921, 173.



Image 51: Empress United Church

In recent years many churches have been challenged to keep members involved and numerous enough to support a viable congregation. Empress United Church's population was close to 1,000 at its height, but by 2010 had dwindled to 50 or 60 members. In June 2010, Empress amalgamated with Colborne Street United Church, and later that year, Robinson United Church joined as well. The former church on Blackfriars Street was sold by the United Church Council of Middlesex Presbytery to Southside Construction in January, 2012. The construction company plans to renovate the interior for offices, and its owner, Vito Frijia, who also owns the London Lightning of the National Basketball League of Canada, hopes his team can train in the gymnasium of the former church.

The second denomination to establish a place of worship in Petersville was the Anglican Church. As with the first Methodist church in the village, Samuel Peters was the donor of the property, having left land in his will to the Diocese of Huron for a church.¹⁴⁷ The parish began as a mission from St. Paul's Cathedral, which provided ministerial services until the first rector was appointed in 1881.¹⁴⁸ The first brick church was sited where Empress Public School (now Jeanne Sauvé) was later built, but its congregation soon outgrew the building. The present church was designed by Fred Henry (partner of John M. Moore): its cornerstone was laid on 25 June 1890.¹⁴⁹ Henry's design, with its belfry and decorative bargeboard, is fitting for a village church and a reminder of the still semi-rural character of its location in 1881.

¹⁴⁷ Luckman, 61.

¹⁴⁸ Walters, (unpaginated); White's 1881 directory referred to this as a "Chapel of Ease", 421.

¹⁴⁹ Tausky, Victorian Architecture, 386.



Image 52: St. George's Anglican Church

The old church was used for a Sunday school until 1923 when it was demolished to build Empress Public School, and a new parish hall was then built behind the church.¹⁵⁰ In the 1950s, West London enjoyed a building boom, and the congregation of St. George's expanded with it. A new rectory was purchased in Whitehills in the 1980s, and the former home next to the church now operates as a men's residence with Turning Point, which provides services for people recovering from alcoholism and drug dependency. The church continues to upgrade its facilities through the Century Building Fund established in 1990, and to provide worship and fellowship in the community.¹⁵¹

Other Protestant denominations left lighter footprints in London West. For a time a Baptist Mission met in the Albert Hall on Wharncliffe Road.¹⁵² St. Paul's Presbyterian Church lived at 73 Wharncliffe Road, joining the United Church of Canada with church union in 1925.¹⁵³ Similarly, the Church of God, which is Pentecostal in character, had a home at 155 Wharncliffe Road, before moving elsewhere in London.¹⁵⁴ None of these denominations survived as long as their Anglican and United Church counterparts of St. George's and Empress United.

¹⁵⁰ Luckman, *ibid*; the London West Assessment Roll for 1894 recorded that the Parsonage was unfinished.

¹⁵¹ Walters, *ibid*.

¹⁵² Might's directory, 1891, 22.

¹⁵³ Vernon's directory, 1911 (131), 1921 (173), (1931) .

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 1951 (826), 1961 (731), 1971 (985).



Roman Catholics in the Petersville/London West area would originally have been parishioners of St. Peter's Cathedral in London. Part of the city's growth in population after the Second World War included an increase in the number of Roman Catholics in the Kensington neighbourhood. Before the Diocese of London purchased land on Charles Street for a new church, Mass was said at St. Joseph's School on Wilson Avenue. Sod was turned for St. Joseph's Church on 4 November 1951. It was one of three pre-fabricated churches built for the Diocese at this time in London. Dedicated on 9 July 1952, the new parish boasted 190 families registered in its first year, and that number grew as the close-knit neighbourhood expanded. But as London grew westward, the Catholic population of the parish aged and diminished. Eventually, St. Joseph's parish was clustered with St. Pius X parish in Oakridge Acres in 2006, and then closed.¹⁵⁵



Image 53: Former St. Joseph's Church

2.5.2.3 Halls and Clubs

Churches and schools eventually provided meeting facilities for residents of Petersville/London West, but some of the first gathering places were the three halls built privately by local residents for their social needs. The first such hall was the Hammond Temple Temperance Hall built by Jeremiah McDonald on the east side of Wharncliffe Road south of Ann (Empress) Street.¹⁵⁶ The Temperance Society was recorded in the 1868 directory; it was then meeting at the Petersville schoolhouse on Wednesday evenings.¹⁵⁷ The Society was also

¹⁵⁵ Power and Brock, 284-5.

¹⁵⁶ A mortgage was given by James Campbell, machinist to John H. Griffith of London, on Lots 21 & 22 of the Peter's Survey (Plan 58) on 23 October 1872, "save and except those portions of premises conveyed by James Campbell to Jeremiah McDonald and to Hammond Temple Temperance Lodge #7. London Registry Office, Petersville, Instrument #2576. The Hall was on 1/8 acre, part of Lot 21.

¹⁵⁷ Anderson, 123.



noted in the 1871 census, evidence that local residents were already mobilized to combat the social evil of overindulgence in alcohol.

Daniel Collins built a hotel and public hall in his three-story complex at the corner of Blackfriars and Centre Street (later Wilson Avenue).¹⁵⁸ It was a popular place for many village meetings, and a centre for the distribution of clothing and comfort after the flood of 1883 swept through the Blackfriars area.¹⁵⁹ Jabel's Tent, No. 18, of the Knights of the Maccabees of the World under the Great Camp of Ontario, boasted many secret adherents. One of them, George Fernley, planned to build a hall, flanked by stores, on Wharncliffe Road as a meeting place.¹⁶⁰ Another entrepreneurial businessman built the Albert Hall, a centre for social and political meetings in the Kensington neighbourhood. Robert Albert Jones was a grocer and Kensington postmaster with his shop on the west side of Wharncliffe south of Mt. Pleasant Avenue, and his hall next door. Whether he named the hall after himself, or perhaps after the mourned and beloved consort of Queen Victoria is a fact lost to history.

2.5.2.4 Sport and Recreation

In his family history, *The Tree and the Bridge*, John A. Dwyer recalls his childhood on Cummings Avenue during the 1920s and 1930s:

The poplar tree on the breakwater stands about forty feet tall. There is another one like it 50 yards away. These trees were large when I was just a young lad and they look the same today [2005]. I've estimated that they are at least one hundred and fifty years old. . . . Around the poplar trees there was an apple orchard and we kids climbed those trees every day and built tree houses. It was a wonderful time of life – to live in the trees and fish in the river in the summer and skate on the ice in winter.¹⁶¹

The river and its borders were the sources of an enticing round of seasonal entertainments in its earlier history. The 1870s by-laws of Petersville prove that swimming in summer, sometimes with inadequate clothing from the village Council's perspective, was a popular sport, and historic photographs show fisherman on a shallow breakwater. Area residents could rent boats from Mitchell's boathouse, one of three at the Forks.

¹⁵⁸ Stott, *Suburban Autonomy*, 37 quotes the *London Advertiser*, 13 December 1878, which expressed the hope that the hall would be completed for Christmas, 1878; Hill's directory, 1886, 284.

¹⁵⁹ *London Free Press*, 22 March 1952, noted in Hives, 50.

¹⁶⁰ Stott, *Suburban Autonomy*, 75-6, quotes the *London Advertiser*, 30 November 1880. No Fernley hall is listed in the 1891 directory.

¹⁶¹ Dwyer, 7, 8.

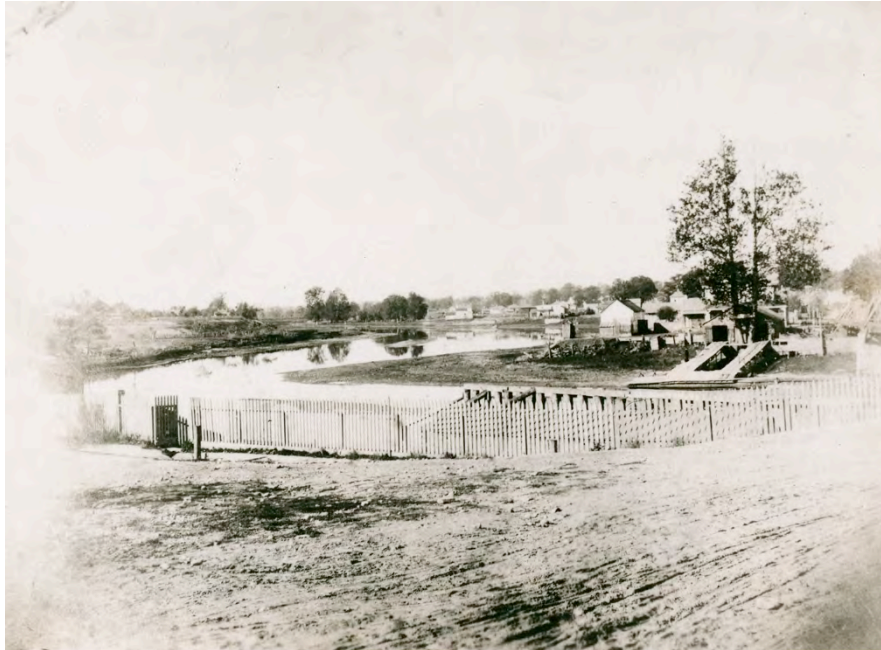


Image 54: Photograph, c. 1875, looking from the foot of Dundas Street west to Mitchell's Boathouse across the north branch to the Thames and to the river heading west (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

In 1881, William Lee Judson published an exuberant, exotic account of boating at the “Forks”:

. . . rounding into the channel, the sail was set to a fair breeze from the north, and our tiny vessel joined a stream of fancy craft which hurried with steam, sail, oars or paddle, to the rendezvous of the day. . . . There were yawls, scows, dug-outs, bark canoes, shells, tubs and kayaks beside scores of skiffs. . . . The rigging is wonderful, and full of devices that would puzzle the Ancient Mariner. . . . On Kensington Flats cattle were gathering in the shadows of huge sycamores, or cooling their feet in the shallow marge of the stream, which reflected everything like a mirror.¹⁶²



Image 55: Photograph showing the building of the Victoria, the ill-fated steam that capsized further down the Thames, at Roger's boat-building enterprise, 1880. In the background is the first Kensington Bridge, a wooden structure. By the time of this photograph, the Riverside Hotel also shared space at the Forks, in the southeast corner of the Study Area (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

¹⁶² Judson, *Kuhleborn*.



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Some of these craft would have been built by John W. Rogers's nearby boat-building enterprise. Rowing long remained a major activity at the Forks, practiced both by city clubs and by university teams. One of Canada's most well-known rowers, Ned Hanlon, rowed here.

Winter activities included skating, tobogganing, and even horse racing on the Thames; the horses were shod with shoes containing protruding nails.¹⁶³



Image 56: Advertisement for Cooper & Gibson's Blackfriars Skating Rink, from Anderson's 1868-69 City Directory (left)

From the time of the first efforts at flood prevention in London West, during the 1880s, progressing along the esplanade/dyke offered a chance for exercise, socializing, nature study, and reflection. This is the only one of the historical forms of river-oriented recreation still available to area residents. Now the river rarely freezes over

solidly enough for skating, swimming is not allowed, and, owing to the removal of barriers at the Springbank Dam downriver, the river is now too shallow at the Forks even for canoeing.¹⁶⁴

Possibly because the Kensington point, at the western base of Kensington Bridge, was such a focus for water-related activities, it became a playground for land sports as well. The current location of Labatt Park was used for various recreational games already around 1870, when it was simply a grassy field.¹⁶⁵ By 1870, it had become the home of the London Tecumsehs, a team founded in 1868, which won the Canadian championship in 1876, and moved into their own new stadium in at the Forks in 1877, the year it won the championship of the new International League. On August 27 of that year the Tecumsehs defeated the Chicago White Stockings at Tecumseh Park; the *London Free Press* reported that their pitcher, Fred Goldsmith, credited with inventing the curve ball, "puzzled the visitors wonderfully" with his "scientific pitching."¹⁶⁶ Both the Tecumsehs and the International League disintegrated soon after, but the team was revived around 1920. Meanwhile, local teams used the park; its most famous product was George (Mooney) Gibson, a Mount Pleasant Avenue resident, who went on to play with the Pittsburgh Pirates and the New York Giants, and was the first baseball player named to the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame. The field was given a million dollar upgrade and a new name, Labatt Park, before a Detroit Tigers farm team (the London Tigers) started to play there in 1989. Now home to the London Majors, the stadium and the Majors clubhouse are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The field is generally acknowledged the "oldest continually operating baseball grounds in the world," though the Guinness Book of World Records credits Fuller Field in Clinton, Massachusetts, (1878) as having the "world's' oldest continuously used baseball

¹⁶³ Tausky, "Summary," 15.

¹⁶⁴ Conversation with Mike Murphy, president of the London Rowing Club

¹⁶⁵ "Labatt Park, *Wikipedia*, 3 (accessed December 2013)

¹⁶⁶ Tausky, *Victorian Architecture*, 238.



diamond/field,” on the grounds that home plate at Labatt Park has been moved from its original position.¹⁶⁷



Image 57: A composite photograph of Labatt Park during the 1870s, when London's famed Tecumsehs baseball team was an international star. Later developed into a well-equipped facility, the park can still claim to be the oldest site in North America continuously devoted to playing baseball (Western Archives, University of Western Ontario)

Several area parks offer green space for more informal games and outings: the Blackfriars Parks along the north branch of the Thames River, Riverside Park and a public bike/walking path along the main branch bounding the study area on the south, Empress Avenue Park against the embankment on the west, and Kensington Park adjacent to the CPR embankment on the north. West Lions Park, also against the embankment, west of Granville Street, offers more formal sports facilities: a lighted minor baseball diamond, a lighted soccer field, a spray pad, a play structure and two swing sets, and a skateboard park.

Since 2002, it has also been the site of the Kinsmen Recreational Centre, a community centre functioning effectively as a hub of the entire study area. Among the offerings of the Kinsmen Centre are sunken ice pads and a viewing lounge overlooking the rinks, a computer lab, meeting rooms, art lessons, birthday party packages, and a life-size chess board.¹⁶⁸



Image 58: The Kinsmen Recreation Centre, designed by Murphy & Murphy, Inc., 2002

¹⁶⁷ “Labatt Park, *Wikipedia*, 1, 3-5 (accessed December 2013); <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com> (accessed December 2013).

¹⁶⁸ www.loncon.ca/Recreation (accessed December 2013).



2.6 Effects of History on the Study Area

Many facets of the long, rich, complicated history of the study area have contributed to the special qualities it has today. A chronology, showing major events and movements in this history, can be found in Appendix C. The major contributing factor is undoubtedly the river, but its course of development and its economic status have also played major roles.

Though the flooding of the Thames has had catastrophic consequences over time, it has also enriched the area with fertile soil, a suitable location for neighbourhood initially composed of people who had limited means, and, from the esplanade of the 1880s to the dyke of today, a place for residents to meet and to enjoy the natural environs of the river. In the past, it was also the scene of many recreational activities: skating and tobogganing in winter and swimming, fishing, and boating in summer. These activities are no longer possible on the river, and the recreation it now offers is of the quieter sorts mentioned above.

The area's survey-by-survey course of development is evident in the different widths of the streets, their varying and sometimes unexpected directions and dead ends, and, in general, in a kind of crazy quilt layout, especially on the east side of Wharcliffe Road. This seeming randomness in road layout is reflected in the different architectural atmospheres created in different enclaves throughout the area.

Because of its humble beginnings and physical containment, the area offers a unique opportunity to study the evolution of a working-class neighbourhood, with small-scale residential buildings dominating the landscape even in a period where many residents are seeking greater space. There are several landmark structures in the area: St. George's Church, the former Empress School, a rare collection of cottages from the 1850s and 1860s, the homes of such market gardeners and developers as Alexander Leslie, the dyke, Blackfriars Bridge, and Labatt Park.

Such landmark structures make a significant contribution to the neighbourhood, but the most valuable resource is perhaps the unique sense of a village radiated by the narrow streets and the small homes, nestled calmly against the skyscrapers of the city just across the river.



3.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

This section of the study has been prepared based on Dissemination Area (“DA”) data provided by the City of London for the Blackfriars-Petersville Study Area, dated June 2013. DA data provides a snapshot of different indicators for the Study Area at one time. Block level data addresses more a more precise area and gives a better image of the key figures, such as population, over time. The overall profile below is a combination of Census DA data and Block level data.

3.1 Community Statistics

The Study Area had a total population of 2,757 in 2011. The population of the Blackfriars-Petersville Study Area was 2,891 in 2006, a decrease of 6%. The Study Area population was stable prior to 2006; data shows the 2001 population was 2,832.

The student population in the Study Area may be undercounted in the above data, especially given the high proportion of rental dwelling units in the Study Area (see below) and the (typically) transient nature of student residents. The total population of the Study Area could be higher than shown.

3.2 Population Profile

The population in the Study Area is 51% female, and 47% male. The age cohorts and the populations of residents within each cohort are shown in Table 1 below. As seen in Table 3.1, the age cohorts most represented in Blackfriars-Petersville study area are young adults (ages 20-29) and adults ages 45-64.

Table 1: Blackfriars/Petersville Study Area Population Profile

Age Cohort	% of Population
0-19	16%
20-29	24%
30-44	22%
45-64	26%
65+	12%

There were 1,824 occupied private dwellings in the Study Area in 2011, as compared to 1,872 in 2006 and 1,740 in 2001. In 2011, roughly half were owner-occupied and half were rented. It is expected that this high portion of rental units is due to the proximity to the University of Western Ontario.

The breakdown by the structural type of housing in the Blackfriars-Petersville Planning District is listed in Figure 6 below.

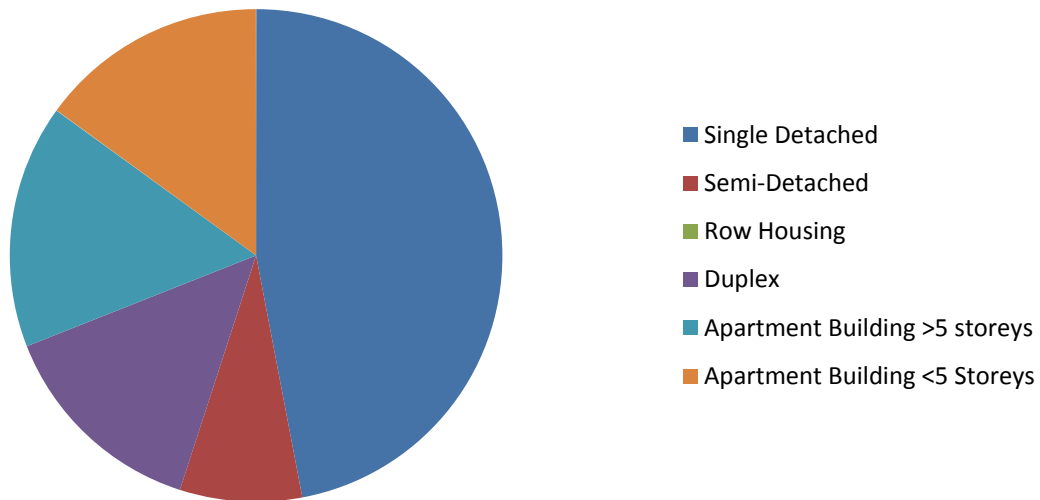


Figure 6: Occupied Dwellings by Structural Type

The average value of an owned unit within the Blackfriars-Petervilles study area in 2011 was \$162,358.00. The average monthly rental payment for a dwelling unit was \$658.23. This amount seems to indicate that many dwelling units are rented by the bedroom.

The median individual income for the Blackfriars-Petersvilles area in 2011 was \$24,633.43 compared with the City of London median individual income of \$29, 478 with an average individual income of \$39, 229. In 2011, median family income for the City of London was \$74, 448.



4.0 ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Character Areas within the Study Area as a Whole

The Study area as whole, as discussed earlier, is a flood plain area of fertile soil, defined along the east and south by the Thames River and along the west by a shift in topography that forms a high ridge above the consistently level elevation of the Blackfriars neighbourhood. The elevated rail line that runs across the north end completes the definition or experience of the study area. Given these clear boundaries the area has often been thought of as a single, coherent entity, possessing one definable character. The study team does not share that conclusion. After having assimilated extensive input from the wide range of stakeholders, after a series of comprehensive walking tours throughout the area and based on our research we believe that the study area demonstrates a continuity of change with distinct sub-areas.

The study area is an eloquent history of the evolution of modest 'worker's' housing in London over the 80 years between 1850 and 1930. The narrative of this consistent form of development and urban planning is written, throughout the area, in the architectural vernacular based on British and European models. The architectural form, massing and details of this housing was built generally from memory, initially by farmers and later by craftsmen trained in England and Scotland before immigrating to the 'Colonies'. The most popular of these house types fall generally within the 'Ontario Cottage', typology that is found throughout Southern Ontario. There are variations of this one-storey, square floor plan with four rooms, hipped-roof cottage, throughout the area that include the, Victorian Gothic, Regency and Queen Anne cottages.

As the city grew, the market for modest affordable homes grew as well and the study area reflects those cycles of economic growth. Small sections of 'new' housing filled in where larger lots or agricultural plots were subdivided into the typical narrow building lots of the area. The pattern of this evolution of affordable housing generally started from the north-east, moving south along the River east of Wharncliffe, then to the west and north again along the west side of Wharncliffe. This continuity of change can be visualized as a clock-wise pattern, moving from the mid-1800's, Georgian Cottages in the north-east, to the Victory housing of the mid 1900's in the north-west.

The story of how this house type evolved and how the sub-areas reflect this evolution and consequently have subtle but discernible differences in form and character can be clarified by the following:

- The one and one-half storey house form is found consistently throughout the entire study area. Of the 1100, residential buildings fully 88 % or +- 970 are single storey, or storey and one-half, while buildings 2 storey and greater account for only 12 % or 131 of the total.
- Generally the consistently oldest homes are within the study area east of Wharncliffe, where 78% of the existing houses were constructed from 1850 to 1930. Within the study area west of Wharncliffe, only 44% of the houses were built within the same 80 year time span.
- The street patterns, lot sizes and lay-outs vary within the study area. (see Section 2). Generally the streets on the east portion are oriented at right angles to Wharncliffe, while on the west they are at an acute angle that reflects a later and much larger survey
- The narrower streets on the east side that run east-west end in views of the treed bank of the Thames River Dyke, while the wider streets with a similar orientation on the west side of the study area terminate with views of the treed escarpment.



- The north-west section of the study area has a very consistent inventory of post WW2 ‘Victory’ or Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) housing. Typically one and one-half storey, gable-roofed, frame houses on raised basements. This area is characterized by wider lots to accommodate driveways for the increase in automobile ownership at that time. There are more street trees, and less variety in streets, lot sizes and house types as in the east section of the study area.

4.2 Characteristic Building Types in the Proposed HCD

The following section identifies 9 types or variations of types of houses that are found throughout the proposed Heritage Conservation District. This typology of one, one and one-half and two storey houses is illustrated by photographs of examples within the area. These particular houses were selected to illustrate most clearly the original character and details of each different house type and variation. An important aspect of the evolving story of Blackfriars is the adaptation and alteration of these basic house types as housing needs changed, affluence increased and as styles and materials were selected based on shifting social-cultural ‘fashion’ or value. The identification of these ‘types’ is intended to assist the resident and visitor to read the changes and to understand the ‘story’ of the history of this evolving area.

4.2.1 The Ontario Cottage

As discussed earlier the overwhelming scale of the housing throughout the study area, or 88% is single to one and one-half storey cottages or bungalows. This ubiquitous, small scale built form, reflects a consistent history of almost 100 years of modest, economical home building, with a significant percentage of these homes being considered as prototypical “Ontario Cottages” or vernacular versions and evolved types of the same.

“The word ‘cottage’ comes from the Scottish word ‘cotter’, a term for a person who owned a small shanty or lean to as a residence, a garden and a plot of land large enough to feed his family. These homes became known as cottages. In the first year of immigrating to Canada most Europeans in the late 18th century either built a lean to or a log cabin. The proportions of the log cabin built by these early settlers were 15’x16’. These are the exact dimensions of cottages found in Europe that date back to 1086.¹⁶⁹

“What sets the cottage in Ontario apart from cottages in Great Britain — and, indeed, from other parts of the British Empire? Although its ancestry can be traced to the Royal Engineers, and to design influences from England, Ireland, Scotland and even India, cottage builders in Ontario showed a strong preference for one-story three-bay cottages capped by hip roofs. The probable reason for this was almost certainly economic, although the preference for the hip over the gable roof cannot be explained, surprisingly enough, on economic grounds. The hip roof, which is stronger than the gable roof under certain conditions, actually uses more framing materials. In addition, and predictably, these cottages made use of an immense variety in building materials, ranging from wood framing faced with clapboard or stucco to structures built of brick, sandstone or limestone. Wood shingles or slates were originally used to protect roofs, although asphalt shingles have increasingly been used as a replacement material. The choice of building materials, until the late nineteenth century, generally reflected the availability of local materials. In addition, eaves of varying depths, were used to give protection to

¹⁶⁹ www.OntarioArchitecture.com (accessed October 2013).



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the upper parts of walls. Likewise, storm porches, when built, offered protection during cold and wet periods, and the more prevalent verandah offered shade during the warm months.”¹⁷⁰

“These are one or one-and-a-half storey buildings with a cottage or hip roof. The cottage roof is an equal hip roof where each hip extends to a point in the centre of the roof. The gable roof has a single long hip or ridge in the center. The Ontario Cottage is the vernacular design based on the Regency Cottage which generally has a more ornate doorway and a partial or full verandah surrounding it. The roof of later Victorian versions could have a centre gothic revival style dormer and generally had two chimneys.”¹⁷¹

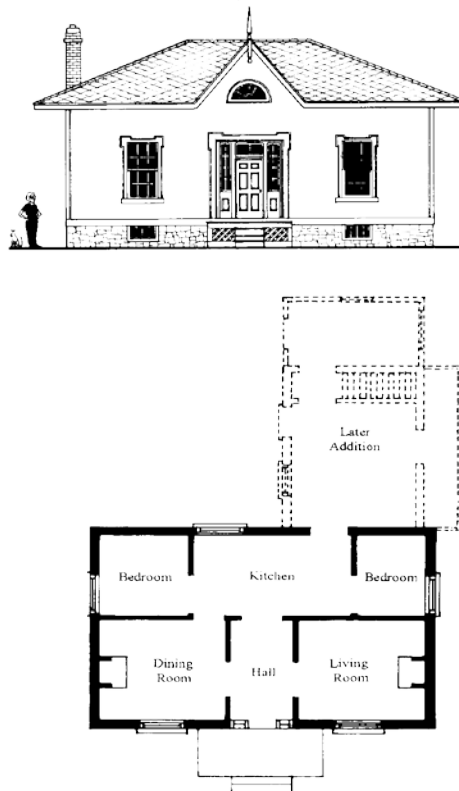


Image 59: Typical Georgian or Ontario Cottage, elevation and plan illustration, (Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson (The Ancestral Roof))

¹⁷⁰ Lynne D. Distefano, “The Ontario Cottage: The Globalization of a British Form in the Nineteenth Century,” *TDSR* Volume 12, No. 2, 2001.

¹⁷¹ Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, *The Ancestral Roof: Domestic Architecture of Upper Canada*, 1964.



4.2.2 Worker's Cottages

"In towns, factory owners built rows of worker's cottages which were preferred living space for good workers. These small worker's cottages formed the basis of the Ontario Cottage. Two rooms in the front, two smaller rooms in the back and a small kitchen cooking area out the back provided shelter for anywhere from 4 to 10 workmen."¹⁷²

The three bay, hip-roofed Georgian or Ontario cottage located at 98 Wilson Avenue was probably built between 1864, when carpenter Richard Donoughy bought the property and 1873 when he sold it to Thomas Donoughy. Attributing a date to this cottage is problematic because the Donoughys not only built many buildings within the study area, but also bought and sold many properties.

The three-bay, gable-roofed cottage with a sign posted near the front door at 5 Leslie Street suggests that the house was built in 1874 by carpenter James Boulton. The lot on which this house was built was not surveyed until 1872, and a pointed window in the east gable shows a Gothic Revival influence consistent with the assigned date. Otherwise, with its windows and doors reaching to the low cornice and with its vernacular asymmetry, the cottage could be much earlier.

The three-bay, gable-roofed cottage at 165 Wharncliffe Road North was likely built c. 1875. This is one of the few mid-Victorian houses to survive along Wharncliffe Road North.



Image 60: 98 Wilson Avenue



Image 61: 5 Leslie Street



Image 62: 165 Wharncliffe Road North

¹⁷² www.OntarioArchitecture.com (accessed October 2013).



4.2.3 The Gothic Revival Ontario Cottage

“In 1864 the “Canada Farmer” newspaper promoted the Small Gothic cottage which was more along the lines of an Ontario Cottage with a hip roof and only one storey. Later in the same year, Canada Farmer came out with plans for “A Cheap Farm House”. This is the design that became known as the Gothic Revival cottage. “It is built on a center hall plan with the central hall being 6 feet wide. On the left is a living room, on the right are two bedrooms, 11 by 13 feet in size. The kitchen and pantry would be in the back of the house, almost separate. The kitchen would also have a bedroom and there would be no bathroom in the house.”¹⁷³



Image 63: 84 Albion Street (c. 1885) 3 bay, Georgian cottage with Gothic Revival centre gable



Image 64: 123 Wilson Avenue, 3 bay, Georgian Cottage with Gothic Revival centre gable and later Queen Anne porch built in 1879/1880, probably by the owner, Abraham Bending, who was a mason.

¹⁷³ www.OntarioArchitecture.com (accessed October 2013).



4.2.4 Side-Hall Plan Cottage

The side-hall plan cottage is based on a modified Georgian, centre-hall plan. This variation is likely based on a the owner/builder's smaller budget or a requirement for less space. The larger three-bay symmetry of the Ontario cottage has be reduced to three smaller bays as in 8 Leslie, or a single three-sided projecting bay as in 40 Empress. However this local variation still maintains the hip-roofed solidity of its larger cousin and the characteristic graceful detailing of the main entry and windows.



Image 65: 40 Empress Avenue, probably built c. 1882 for George Jolly, described in a city directory only as a secretary/treasurer. The Italianate door and brackets are consistent with this date.



Image 66: 8 Leslie Street, (1870) built c. 1880 when sold to John Bradley, prior to that time the property was part of the Alexander Leslie market garden



4.2.5 1 and 1 ½ storey gable-roofed house with cross-gable over front door

The house at 2 Carrothers Avenue was probably built c. 1873 when carpenter George Hodges took out a substantial mortgage with Edward Whately of Swansea, England, likely as a means of financing the house. He seems to have been overly ambitious, because the house reverted to the Whately family, and served as a rental property until 1886 when Whately sold the property to a salesman named Alexander Currie. Interestingly, the value of the property rose substantially between the time of Alexander Currie's purchase of the house and its sale to the wife of a market gardener in 1905. It is tempting to suspect that Currie added the visible two-storey brick house to an early cottage, at the back, recently demolished. The unusually delicate bargeboard is consistent with a date in the 1880s or early 1890s. (Close relatives of this graceful, well-detailed, 3-bay Georgian cottage can be found throughout rural southern Ontario.)



Image 67: 2 Carrothers Avenue

2 Leslie Street is a 1 ½ story, three-bay, gable-roofed house with projecting centre bay and vernacular entry door, arched sidelights and transom light. As with the house at 2 Carrothers, this house likely dates from the 1870s. Gardener George Watson was living on the property in 1875. Its value also rose substantially after 1886, however, suggesting that the brick structure once at the front of an earlier cottage may date from c. 1887. The handsome three-arched Italianate doorway is distinctive to the London area; three of these rare doorways are found on Leslie Street.



Image 68: 2 Leslie Street



4.2.6 2 storey, 3 bay, hip-roofed house



Image 69: 13 Napier Street (1873), London buff brick with Gothic centre gable, paired roof brackets, an asymmetrical entry and front porch



Image 70: 11 Leslie Street, 2 storey, 3 bay, side-hall plan house with Italianate detailing, Likely, and unexpectedly, built as late as c. 1890, after it was purchased by bricklayer Samuel Moore. The Italianate London Doorway, (Note vernacular entry with arched sidelights and transom) the segmental arches over the doors and windows, and the bracketed bay window are all consistent with the Italianate style



4.2.7 Queen Anne Revival

“... the Queen Anne Revival held sway in house design from the mid-1880s to almost 1910. A hybrid mode rooted in early 18th-century design in England which became the specialty of such English architects as R.N. Shaw and J.J. Stevenson, Queen Anne Revival was marked by the pervasive use of red brick, often trimmed with light, pretty ornament, such as fans and sunflowers, of wood, molded brick or terracotta...The style's real importance lay in the variety, intimacy and picturesqueness it gave to countless small detached and row houses and small to mid-sized apartment houses in a period when mass housing close to downtown was in demand in Canada.”

There are certain specific architectural elements and materials that typical to the London area. “First it has the light yellow brick of Harrisburg and west. More important for pin-pointing the location, however, is the decoration on the gables. Whether the Queen Anne, Victorian or Second Empire, this type of detailing was made by a group of people who either had similar training or were from the same company: London is full of this really exquisite craftsmanship that is very different from that of other parts of the province.”¹⁷⁴

4.2.8 Edwardian

“The Edwardian period is associated with the reign of Edward VII, son of Queen Victoria, who reigned between 1901 and 1910. By the last decade of the 19th century, when Victoria was in decline and the era was waning, the changes in the arts were so remarkable, that what was to become known as 'Edwardian' was in full flower by 1897. The period lasted until the end of the First World War and is a precursor to the simplified styles of the 20th century.

The Edwardian houses built 'on spec' in new suburbs often were characterized by a gable front, three or four bedrooms upstairs, and a generous front porch. These modest two storey brick house often had a veranda that spanned the whole front façade with a pediment over the staircase. “The porch is supported by gently tapered smooth columns supporting ornate Ionic capitals and stylized abacuses.



Image 71: 12 Cherry Street, built in 1912 for Joseph Benson (Note "linen-fold" or fan detailing of gable decoration)



Image 72: 58 Albion Street, built c. 1906 (note "linen-fold" or fan detailing of gable decoration)

¹⁷⁴ Wortley Village Heritage Conservation District Study, 2011.



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Above the columns a plain architrave supports the porch. Under the soffit of the roof, a similar plain frieze board echoes this architrave." ...Compared to the Victorian, the Edwardian style was less weighted down with swaths of velvet and moire and more decked out with trellises, built-in furniture and cheery patterns. It was happier, less concerned with pomp and protocol, and filled with light. The light came from the new source of energy, electricity, as well as from the removal of the heavy draperies on both doors and windows in Victorian times."¹⁷⁵

Preceding the Edwardian period, the house at 9 Blackfriars Street assumed its present form in the late 1880s or early 1890s when a second storey was added to an earlier one-storey cottage. The horizontal wood cladding of this 2 storey, hipped-roof, side-hall plan house is unusual for this type. The house was the home of Daniel Collins, who owned an ice business, selling ice from the Thames River throughout London.



Image 73: 9 Blackfriars Street (1890's)



Image 74: 54 Blackfriars Street, 1915



Image 75: 100 Wilson Avenue, built c. 1914

¹⁷⁵ www.OntarioArchitecture.com (accessed October 2013).



4.2.9 Edwardian 1 and 1 ½ storey gambrel-roofed house with side bay



Image 76: 2 Cherry Street, 1909, built for Charles Howey, this 2 storey, hip-roofed house with projecting side bay and gable has the Victorian-style porch which is a contemporary addition (Note the keyhole window)



Image 77: 98 Wilson Avenue, 2 story, hip-roofed house with side gable, built between 1900 and 1907



5.0 VISUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ASSESSMENT

The Study Area contains residential, institutional and commercial streetscape features, as well as a number of parks and open spaces that are utilized by the residents of the area and the larger community. As part of the visual and contextual assessment, the consultant team closely examined the fabric of the public realm and inventoried features including mature vegetation, streetscape structure, significant views and vistas, visual and physical connections, alignment and grouping of buildings, and approaches associated with the Study Area. Factors that compromised the visual integrity of the Study Area, such as vehicle parking, inappropriate signs and advertising, insensitive lighting styles and street furnishings were also recorded. Below, the findings of the visual and contextual assessment are presented.

5.1 Alignment and Grouping of Buildings

The layout and form of the built environment can influence the legibility of place, and the ease in which people can read and define a neighbourhood. The manner in which buildings are aligned and grouped can contribute greatly to the character and overall sense of place along a streetscape. Where buildings have a consistent setback, massing and form, an uninterrupted rhythm is established along the street, creating a sense of unity and accord. In instances where buildings are greatly misaligned in terms of setback and scale, or where gaps within the streetscape exist, a feeling of discord is produced.

There are pockets of residences within the Study Area that have a very consistent alignment and grouping, typically relating to the year that the lots were surveyed and the age of the houses. The alignment patterns differ across character areas identified in Section 1.3. While the patterns in these character areas differ from one another, certain areas show a high level of integrity and rhythm and reflect the development patterns of their era, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of the homeowners.

Character Area 1 has a tangible rhythm and consistency in alignment and massing of its houses. The vast majority of houses in this character area are one and one and a half storeys. As almost 80% of the houses in this area were built between 1850 and 1930, the original massing, architectural patterns, and rhythms are largely intact. Despite a greater diversity of architectural style than in other character areas, such as Character Area 4 discussed below, the common massing, set-backs, and streetscape patterns are intact and create a distinct character for this area.

Due to the development history of Character Areas 2 and 3, there is a greater diversity of housing types and far fewer homes dating back to the period between 1850-1930. These areas stood apart from Character Area 1 because the rhythm, massing, and streetscape features was less intact and appeared to be more transitional – representing a mixture of development patterns and ages. Streets in these areas, such as Wyatt Street and Cavendish Crescent have a greater diversity of housing ages and styles, thus have a less consistency in building groupings and massing. There is consistency, however, in alignment, as most houses have similar set-backs, regardless of age.



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Image 78: A row of Ontario cottages show consistent form, massing, and alignment, Wyatt Street

Character Area 4 has a noticeably different pattern than the other character areas, mostly due to the extreme uniformity of the area in terms of architectural style, massing, and set-back. The houses are spaced evenly apart and are of very similar or identical size. These houses have a small footprint and are consistently set-back from the street, providing consistent rhythm and long, symmetrical viewsheds along the streets. The streets and driveways are more expansive here, reflecting the development patterns of the mid-century. However, these patterns are very consistent, thus the character is strong in this area, albeit distinctly different from Character Area 1.



Image 79: A row of Victory Houses shows uniformity in massing, alignment, and architectural style that creates a strong pattern throughout most of Character Area 4, Cavendish Crescent



5.2 Views and Vistas

Views and vistas serve as the windows to, from, or within the Study Area. Views can take on a number of forms; long or short, open or closed, each of which contribute differently to the look and feel of a place. Views to a landmark feature can provide a sense of unity within the surrounding neighbourhood by providing a central focal point to which the neighbourhood can connect to. Views can often serve as one of the defining features of a place, if it is significant or memorable.

The Thames River and associated dyke provide an important backbone along the east side of the Study Area with significant views along the river and into the study area from the dyke. Similarly, the dyke serves as the terminal point of many street's closed views. The dyke and river also serve as a prominent landmark from which a visitor or resident can orient themselves while walking or driving through Character Area 1.



Image 80: Access to the Thames River, associated greenway, and the views from the dyke are a prominent place-making feature in the Study Area, especially for Character Area 1



Image 81: The dyke serves as the terminating point of many views along streets running east-west in Character Area 1

Similarly, the escarpment on the west side of the study area serves as a terminus to views west along streets such as Paul Street and Empress Avenue. The presence of a distinct terminus with a dramatic change in topography and mature vegetation greatly enhances the viewsheds along east and west running streets throughout the Study Area.

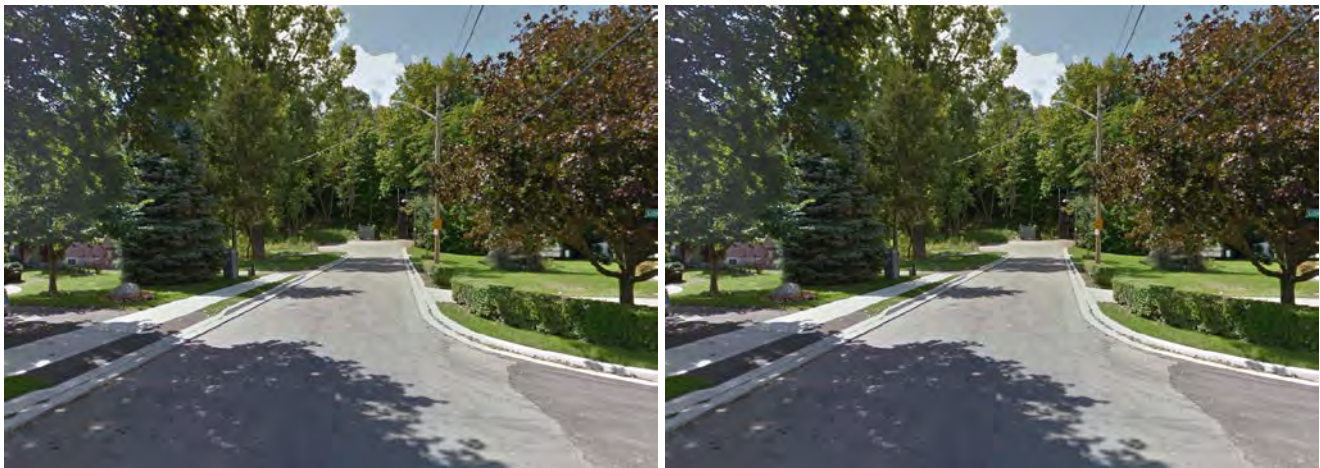


Image 82: Empress Avenue looking west towards escarpment (left), and Paul Street looking west towards escarpment (right)



5.3 Approaches To and From the Study Area

Approaches to or from a place are categorized as either detectable or undetectable. Approaches that are considered detectable are those which are emphasized by gateways, or other signals, that indicate the space or place is somehow different from that which neighbours it. This may be a shift in the built form, land use or scale of a place. Undetectable approaches are just that, entries into a neighbourhood that are not clearly defined nor readily discernible from the surrounding context.

Due to the topographic features that encase the Study Area, there are many detectable gateway approaches into the Study Area. Crossing of the Thames River marks entrance into the Study Area from the south along Warncliffe Road North, and from the east on Queens Avenue, Blackfriars Street, and Oxford Street West. The escarpment and/or public green space marks entrance into the Study Area from the west on Riverside Drive and Oxford Street West, although these entrances are less detectable than those over the Thames River. From the north, entrance into the study area via Wharncliffe is detectable due to passage under a railroad bridge and the associated bermed topography which creates a gateway around the road.

While there are several gateway features that create detectable entrances into the Study Area, the landuse and character of the adjacent areas within the Study Area are important to reinforce the 'sense of arrival' and truly create a detectable approach and arrival into an area of significant heritage character. Commercial areas within the Study Area diminish the sense of arrival in some cases. As an example, the commercial development along the intersection of Oxford and Wharncliffe and Riverside and Wharncliffe interrupt the sense of arrival initially created by the gateway feature of a river crossing or railroad bridge.

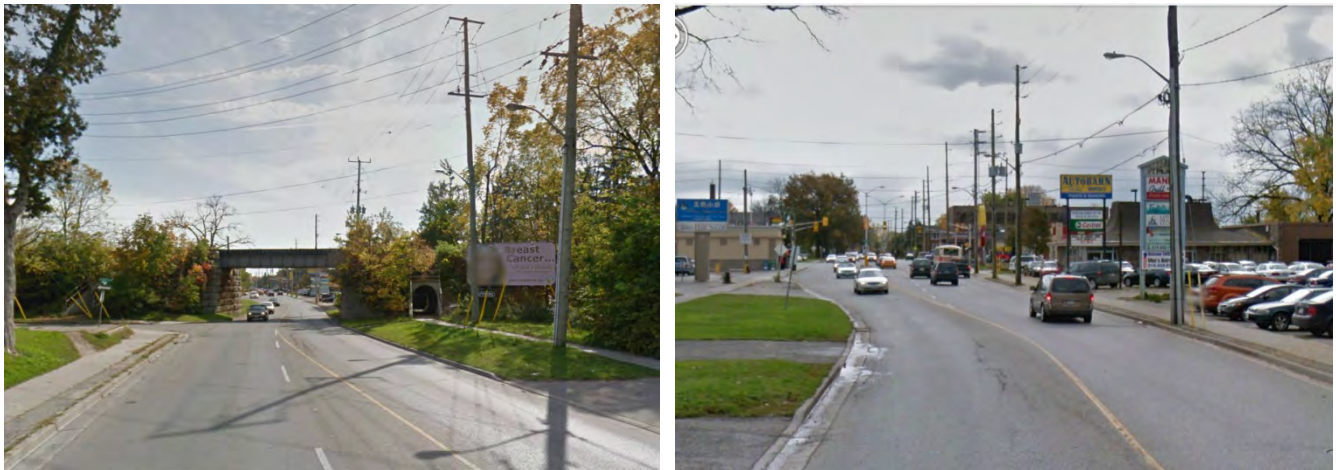


Image 83: Northern approach to Study Area via Wharncliffe Road

The northern approach, (above left), is marked by a gateway feature (railroad bridge and vegetated berms), creating a detectable feature entrance into the Study Area. The landuse and character of the development immediately within the Study Area through this gateway features (above right), however, does not reinforce the sense of arrival or its 'special' character.



Image 84: Eastern approach to the Study Area via Queens Avenue

The eastern approach to the Study Area via Queens Avenue, is also marked by a gateway feature (bridge over Thames River), creating a detectable entrance into the Study Area. The landuse and character of the development immediately within the Study Area through this gateway feature (Labatt Park and public green space with mature trees) does reinforce the sense of arrival and 'special' heritage character of the area.



5.4 Street Trees and Mature Vegetation

Mature street trees can be a strong defining characteristic of an older neighbourhood. They offer scale and visual continuity to an area and provide a sense of enclosure to the neighbourhoods nestled under their broad canopies. An important element in the fabric of a community, mature street trees can be viewed simultaneously with the surrounding architecture, visually expressing the age of the surrounding built form.

Based on the streetscape inventory presented below, there are a diversity of streetscapes within the Study Area, and no strong patterns that are specific to any of the four identified Character Areas. The major vehicular arteries, such as Wharnccliffe Road and Oxford Street, typically only have a sidewalk. The least dense areas with minimally travelled roads, such as Lorraine Avenue and Argyle Street, have at least one side with no sidewalk at all. However, throughout the entire study area, at least one side of every street has a sidewalk, providing excellent accessibility for pedestrians. The streets with grassed boulevards and street trees are typically a mix of mature trees and newly planted trees, assumed to be a replacement for sick or dead mature tree. These streets, such as Cavendish Crescent, Mount Pleasant Avenue, and Cherry Street, and their street trees provide a closed corridor with long vistas down the street. Streets with only a grassed boulevard often had a similar effect because mature trees were planted on the house-side of the sidewalk. Again, these trees were of varying age and health, but often provided the feeling of enclosure and framing of vistas down the street.

Due to the low height of the housing typically in the Study Area (i.e., one or one and a half storey houses), mature vegetation in backyards is also visible and significantly contributes to the overall feeling of mature vegetation and healthy canopy cover in the area.



Image 85: Typical streetscape without boulevards or street trees



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Image 86: Typical streetscape without grassed boulevards and trees on the house-side of sidewalk.



Image 87: Typical streetscape with boulevards and street trees



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Image 88: Typical streetscape without sidewalk



Image 89: Continuous swath of mature trees in the backyards of multiple residences



5.5 Materials, Surfaces, and Textures

The materials, surfaces and textures used within a landscape are often subtle, but important factors when it comes to the understanding of a site. Depending upon how they are used they can connect a streetscape, helping the navigator to understand it, or they can confuse its legibility when too many variations create a cluttered streetscape. The materials, surfaces and textures used within the Study Area tend to be of similar quality and style, adding a cohesive element to the overall streetscape.

There is a general sense of greenness within the residential and park spaces of the Study Area. Typically, the streets are narrow, most noticeable in Character Area 1, and there are swaths of mature trees throughout the Study Area, reducing the amount of pavement visible along the streetscape. The set-backs of most of the houses provide for a front yard, and many yards are well landscaped. Contributing to this overall greenness are driveways constructed out of pervious materials, further reducing the general amount of pavement in the streetscape and adjacent landscapes.



Image 90: A two-track driveway eliminates impervious pavement and enhances greenness of streetscape, and gravel is used as an alternative to asphalt or concrete, creating softer, more natural aesthetic

Further, there is a general sense of care within parts of the Study Area. Community gardens, public spaces that have been adopted by residents, and common signage indicate a sense of community pride pervasive in the area, but more commonly on the east-side of Wharncliffe, in Character Area 1.



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Image 91: Blackfriars Community Garden (left); Adopted boulevard garden and community signage (right)

Fences and pavement details can act as entry features and provide opportunity for further embodiment or interpretation of the associated architecture. They can also provide a physical link within the landscape to the neighbourhood's history. Fences and cobbled paving add to the heritage character of the streetscape and the general character of the Study Area.



Image 92: Examples of fencing and paving materials that embody the heritage character of the associated architecture



5.6 Visual Detriments

Elements that detract from the overall visual character of a place are identified as visual detriments. Often they tend to be of a different quality or aesthetic than the surrounding elements, and have the capacity to clutter or detract from the more pleasing elements in a landscape.

Inappropriate signage can be one of the most noticeable detriments to a streetscape, particularly in a commercial core, where competing styles, placement, and sizes can clutter the visual landscape. Massing and scale of buildings that does not relate to the massing, scale, or development period of the other buildings within the Study Area can also be a visual detriment. Unorganized car parking can also detract from the visual appeal of a neighbourhood.

Areas of commercial development in the Study Area are typically heavy with a diversity of signage, built form, alignment, and character. In general, this detracts from the heritage character of the adjacent residential areas. This type of development is clustered around major arterial roads or intersections, around Oxford and Wharncliffe Road, for example. As mentioned previously, this development counteracts the 'sense of arrival' created by the landforms and gateway features that surround the Study Area boundary because it visually alters the appearance and feel of the Study Area and deteriorates the historic pattern and form of the other streets.

Similarly, the development patterns along some sections of Wharncliffe Road bisect the Study Area, particularly in the southern and northern most extents of the Study Area. This prevents a cohesive rhythm or character to span across most sections of Wharncliffe, however, there are some locations in the center of the Study Area where the age of housing, massing and alignment creates a visual rhythm and corridor of heritage character.

5.7 Visual and Contextual Opportunities and Challenges

In communities where built form varies in terms of scale or style, the streetscape can offer continuity and legibility. Therefore, improving upon the streetscape, and reinforcing the visual coherence of the landscape fabric of the Study Area as a place, is one of the greatest opportunities that exist within the Study Area today.

The incorporation of enhanced lighting elements and signage, as well as street furnishings, boulevard treatments and paving improvements for vehicular and pedestrian crossings can each contribute to a stronger, more visually unified streetscape. Along Wharncliffe Road, and at gateways to the neighbourhood, improvements such as banners, ornamental paintings, interpretive panels or public art can establish a greater sense of arrival and a stronger identity within the area itself.

The large, overarching canopies of mature trees are greatly intertwined with the heritage identity of so many older neighbourhoods.¹⁷⁶ Trees within both the public and private realm can aid in softening inconsistencies within the built environment and contribute to the visual unity of the street; ensuring that the tree-lined streets of the Study Area are perpetuated over the next one hundred years is an important aspect of maintaining and enhancing the streetscapes of the area. Planting new trees where gaps exist combined with identifying replacement requirements are the first steps in maintaining the longevity of the neighbourhood's urban forest.

¹⁷⁶ Street trees were traditionally planted as the "air-conditioning units" for the residences to provide shade from direct summer sunlight.



6.0 MOVEMENT

6.1 Street Network

The street network in the Study Area is a grid system comprised of arterial roads, secondary collectors and local streets. Most residential streets have a two lane cross-section and accommodate on-street parking on at least one side and have several all-way stop intersections.

Wharncliffe Road, Oxford Street, and Riverside Drive are all classified as arterial. Blackfriars Road is classified as a secondary arterial. The remaining streets in the Wortley Village Study Area are classified as local streets with two-way traffic. The Blackfriars Bridge will be a key gateway feature marking the entrance into the Study Area when it is reopened. This is the most detectable entrance into the Study Area and significantly contributes to and reinforces the heritage character of adjacent areas.

Based on information found in the City of London's *2030 Transportation Master Plan: SmartMoves*, sections of Riverside Drive and Wharncliffe Road within the study area are identified as "approaching capacity" in a 2009 assessment of the afternoon peak hour traffic Conditions.

6.2 Public Transit

The Study Area is located immediately across the Thames River from Downtown London and is served by multiple bus routes that connect the Study Area to downtown and beyond. Buses run within the Study Area along all of the major arterials roads – Wharncliffe Road, Riverside Drive, and Oxford Road.

According to the Smart Moves report, Oxford Road, along the northern extent of the Study Area, is identified for a proposed Rapid Bus Transit line, running east-west, with a proposed stop at the intersection of Wharncliffe Road and Oxford Street. Oxford Street is also identified for road improvements to include 2 to 4 through lanes with centre turn lane recommended within the next 5 years.

6.3 Cycling Network

The City of London recognizes cycling as an important component to a balanced transportation system. As a result, the City of London Bicycle Master Plan was developed to propose a network of 83 on and off-road facilities to provide the residents of the City of London alternative travelling options for recreational and utilitarian usage.

On-road bicycle routes are typically found along roads where traffic volumes and vehicle speeds are low. Also, they are selected due to their ability to connect to a number of destinations such as schools, parks and commercial areas. According to the current City of London cycling map available on the City's website, Riverside Drive is the only road in the Study Area marked as a cycle route. This road is equipped with marked cycle lanes. According to the City's Bicycle Master Plan, Riverside Drive is identified as a priority on-street bike connector route. Additionally, there is a multi-use pathway identified along the Thames River dyke.



6.4 Parking

Residential parking within the Study Area is primarily provided on front yard driveways, garages and rear lanes. Many of the residential streets also accommodate on-street parking on at least one side.

Along the commercial/retail strip of Wharncliffe Road, sufficient private parking is available. One municipal parking lot is available within the Study Area, immediately within the southeastern corner of the Study Area, south of Riverside Drive and east of Wharncliffe Road, adjacent to the Thames River. A City of London by-law prohibits overnight on-street parking within the entire City including the Study Area.

6.5 Pedestrian Infrastructure

In general, the Study Area has a relatively pleasant pedestrian environment due to the provision of sidewalks throughout the area, streetscapes with mature vegetation, and easy way-finding as a result of the grid street pattern. Sidewalks exist on both sides of all streets within the Study Area, with the exception of three residential streets that have a sidewalk on only one side. The majority of streets in the Study Area do not have a boulevard separating the sidewalk from the street. This is most noticeable in the commercial and retail strips along Wharncliffe Road and Oxford Street. Most intersections have sidewalk ramps to accommodate pedestrians with mobility impairments.

There is a well-used network of paths and greenways along the dyke on the Thames River and along the escarpment to the west side of the Study Area. There is inconsistency in the formality of the pathways – however, the paths along the river are generally paved and in good condition. The paths along the escarpment and the portions of the River along the south west side of the Study Area are less formal and typically unpaved and of varying width.



Image 93: Paved multi-use path network along the Thames River, running parallel to the eastern boundary of the Study Area



7.0 LANDUSE PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

This section provides the land use planning and policy context for the Study Area. The Provincial Policy Statement and the City of London Official Plan provide direction regard neighbourhood development and the protection and conservation of cultural heritage resources. The applicable policies are summarized below. The existing land use planning context is also outlined, including current Official Plan designations and Zoning for the Study Area.

7.1 General Land Use

The Study Area is predominantly a mature low rise residential neighbourhood. The dominant housing form is single detached dwellings, however there are a number of single detached dwellings that have been given additions or made into two- or three-unit converted dwellings, while maintaining the general built form of the single detached dwelling from the street. The Study Area also contains some duplexes and mixed-use (commercial/residential) buildings.

There are also a number of neighbourhood facilities, including churches, elementary schools, a recreation centre, and seniors centre, which serve the local population. The Thames River, West Lions Park, Cavendish Park, Empress Avenue Park, Kensington Park, and Labatt Stadium provide opportunities for outdoor activities and recreation.



Image 94: Low-rise single detached dwellings on Albion Street



7.2 Provincial Policy Statement

The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement ('PPS') provides direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning, and as such is applicable to the Study Area. All land use planning decisions 'shall be consistent with' the PPS, as mandated by the Planning Act.

Section 2.6 of the Provincial Policy Statement provides direction on cultural heritage resources. Relevant policies include:

Section 2.6.1: Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.

Section 2.6.3: Development and site alteration may be permitted on adjacent lands to protected heritage property where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.

Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to conserve the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property affected by the adjacent development or site alteration.

7.3 City of London Official Plan, 1989

7.3.1 Official Plan Status

The Council of the City of London Official Plan ("OP") was approved in 1989. The OP was amended by OPA 438 in 2011, which implemented the most recent five-year comprehensive review. The OP contains policies and objectives for the growth and development of the City of London, particularly with respect to effective use of land and services, and guiding infill and intensification. The City of London is in the process of updating its Official Plan. The Official Plan review (referred to as "ReThink London") is anticipated to be completed in 2014.

This section of the report reviews the heritage policies of the OP, and outlines the current land use designations within the Study Area. The land use designations in the new OP are essentially the same as the previous Official Plan. Within the previous OP, the predominant designation in the Study Area is "Low Density Residential".

7.3.2 Heritage Policy Context

Section 13.1 of the OP contains specific policies with respect to properties of cultural heritage value or interest and heritage conservation districts. The policy objectives for heritage resources are to:

- i) Protect in accordance with Provincial policy those heritage resources which contribute to the identity and character of the City;*
- ii) Encourage the protection, enhancement, restoration, maintenance, and utilization of buildings, structures, areas, or sites within London which are considered to be of cultural heritage value or interest to the community;*



iii) Encourage new development, redevelopment, and public works to be sensitive to, and in harmony with, the City's heritage resources; and

iv) Increase public awareness and appreciation of the City's heritage resources, and encourage participation by the public, corporations, and other levels of government in the protection, restoration, and utilization of these resources.

Section 13.3 contains specific policies on Heritage Conservation District ("HCD") as provided for under the *Ontario Heritage Act, 2005*:

"Under the Ontario Heritage Act, a Municipal Council may designate all or part of the municipality as a Heritage Conservation District. This provides for the protection and enhancement of groups of properties that collectively represent a certain aspect of the development of the municipality considered worthy of preservation. The overall character and value of a Heritage Conservation District is derived both from individual properties and from the combined historic and aesthetic value of the structural and natural components of the area".

Section 13.3.1 of the OP outlines the evaluation criteria that are used by Council in consideration of designating a HCD:

(a) the association of the area with a particular historical event or era that is unique to the community;

(b) the presence of properties which are considered significant to the community as a result of their location or setting;

(c) the presence of properties representing a design or method of construction which is considered to be of cultural heritage value or interest to the community, region, province, or nation;

(d) the presence of properties which collectively represent a certain aspect of the development of the City which is worthy of maintaining; and

(e) the presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, may not constitute sufficient grounds for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District, but which collectively are significant to the community.

Section 13.3.1 iii) states that a background study must be submitted that assists in the evaluation for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District. This Study comprises the required background study.

7.3.3 Residential Intensification

Section 3.2.3 of the OP provides policies with respect to intensification and infill development in residential areas. The OP states that residential intensification in the Low Density Residential Designation may be permitted by an amendment to the Zoning By-law. Such an amendment would be subject to the policies of Section 3.2.3.

The OP defines residential intensification as:



“the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists on the site through:

- Redevelopment, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
- The development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- Infill development, including lot creation;
- The conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings for residential use; and,
- The conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation”

Section 3.2.3.2 outlines the scale and form that residential intensification shall take. In the Low Density Residential designation, intensification shall be up to 75 units per hectare in density, with the exception of dwelling conversions. Zoning may permit the conversion of detached dwellings to add one or more dwellings units, however site specific zoning amendments to allow conversions will be discouraged within primarily single detached neighbourhoods. The form of intensification and infill development may be single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, attached dwellings, cluster housing, or low rise apartments.

Section 3.2.3.4 states that development applications for residential intensification shall adequately demonstrate that the proposed development is sensitive to and compatible with the existing neighbourhood, on the basis of a review of the existing and proposed built form, massing, and architectural treatments. To assess the appropriateness of a proposed zone change, the applicant shall undertake an inventory of the characteristics of neighbourhood, for example its lots, buildings, streetscapes, topography, street patterns, and natural environment.

Section 3.2.3.6 states that residential intensification will be encouraged to preserve and upgrade buildings of cultural heritage value.

Section 3.2.3.7 states residential intensification will only be permitted where adequate infrastructure exists, including:

- Parking
- Community facilities and outdoor space
- Transit and transportation infrastructure
- Municipal services

7.3.4 Near Campus Neighbourhoods

The Study Area lies within the “Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Area”, an identified group of neighbourhoods in proximity to the University of Western Ontario and/or Fanshawe College. The Near-Campus Neighbourhoods are subject to special policies outlined in Section 3.5.19. The intent of these policies is to protect and enhance communities by issues particular to being near these large academic institutions.



Sections 3.5.19.3 and 3.5.19.4 set the vision and goals for the planning of Near-Campus Neighbourhoods. In general, these goals speak to encouraging residential intensification that is balanced and appropriate in form, size, scale, mass, density, intensity, and location. Residential intensification is to be directed towards nodes and corridors, and away from the interior of established low density neighbourhoods.

Section 3.5.19.5 characterizes appropriate intensification “as those which are not comprised of one or more of the following attributes:

- Developments within low density residential neighbourhoods that have already absorbed significant amounts of Residential Intensification and/or Residential Intensity and are experiencing cumulative impacts that undermine the vision for Near-Campus Neighbourhoods
- Developments proposed along streetscapes and within neighbourhoods that are becoming unsustainable due to a lack of balance in the mix of short- and long-term residents;
- Residential Intensity that is too great for the structure type that is proposed;
- Inadequately sized lots that do not reasonably accommodate the density and intensity of the proposed use;
- Proposed lots and buildings requiring multiple variances that, cumulatively, are not in keeping with the spirit and intent of the zoning that has been applied;
- A lack of on-site amenity area;
- Inadequate parking areas to accommodate expected level of Residential Intensity;
- Excessive proportion of the site devoted to parking areas and driveways;
- Built forms or building additions which are not consistent in scale and character with the neighbourhood, streetscape and surrounding buildings;
- Developments which continue an ad-hoc and incremental trend towards Residential Intensification within a given street, block, or neighbourhood, rather than a proactive, coordinated, and planned approach toward Residential Intensification

(Note: According to the OP, Residential Intensity refers to the usability of an existing dwelling, building, or site and its capacity to accommodate occupancy, or any increase or addition thereof)

Appropriate locations for intensification, as outlined in Section 3.5.19.6, are those areas designated Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential and Multi-Family, High Density Residential and are along arterial roads serviced by public transit.

Section 3.5.19 also provides sets of criteria for the evaluation of proposals of residential intensification and residential intensity in Low Density, Multi-Family Medium Density, and Multi-Family High Density land use designations. There are also criteria for the evaluation of consents for severance and of minor variances.

Section 3.5.19.14 states that the stock of heritage buildings within Near-Campus Neighbourhoods is a significant asset to these communities and should be preserved wherever possible.



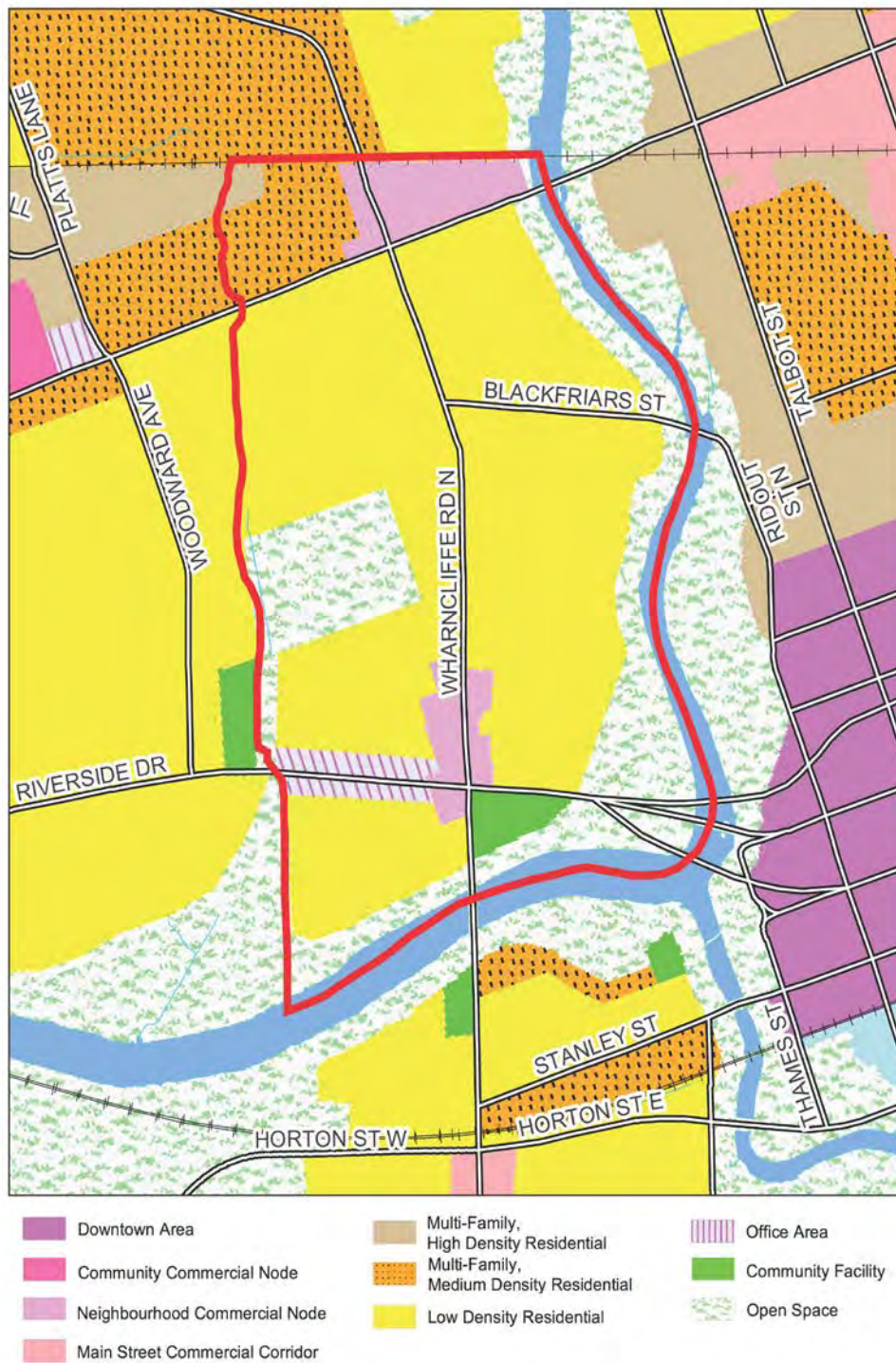
7.3.5 Land Use Designations

The Study Area is comprised of lands designated Low Density Residential, Office Area and Main Street Commercial Corridor. This section of the report summarizes these land use designations with respect to overall goals and permitted uses, and outlines the policies relevant to the Heritage Conservation District Study, such as infilling and intensification and scale and character of development.

The land use designations in the Study Area are shown on Figure 8 – “City of London Official Plan Schedule A Land Use”.



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Source: City of London Official Plan Schedule 'A' Map No.5

Figure 8: Land use designations in the Study Area



7.3.5.1 Low Density Residential

The Study Area is predominantly designated 'Low Density Residential'. Section 3.2 of the new OP provides the detailed policies for the Low Density Residential designation and states that lands designated Low Density Residential are to be developed primarily for low-rise forms of housing. These forms include single- and semi-detached and duplex dwellings. It is also noted that multiple attached dwellings, such as row or cluster houses, may be permitted in areas designated Low Density Residential, so long as the densities of such dwellings are similar to the detached units surrounding it. Development which enhances the character of the residential area is promoted.

The policies contained in Section 3.2 of the OP also notes that non-residential uses which are compatible with and essential to a neighbourhood's function are also permitted. Additionally, secondary uses, such as home occupations, group homes and office conversions, may be permitted in the Low Density Residential areas.

Section 3.2.2 of the OP provides specific policies on the intended scale of development for the Low Density Residential designation. Generally, development is to have a low-rise form with low coverage, and should minimize any issues with respect to loss of privacy, obstruction of views and shadowing.

Section 3.2.3 of the OP contains policies concerning residential intensification. Residential intensification may include the development or redevelopment of a vacant or underutilized site, infilling, the conversion of non-residential uses to residential, and the expansion or conversion of existing residential buildings to create additional units.

Section 3.2.3 states that intensification may be permitted in the Low Density areas, subject to a Zoning By-law amendment and provisions concerning location, form, height and scale, servicing, parking and amenity areas. Within the Low Density Residential designation, residential intensification will be considered up to 75 units per hectare. A Planning Impact Analysis, which should include a Neighbourhood Character Statement and a Compatibility Statement, is required to provide justification for a Zoning By-law Amendment to permit residential intensification in a Low Density Area. Intensification projects are to be creative and innovative in their urban design elements to ensure compatibility in character with the surrounding area.

Section 3.2.3.5 of the new OP further notes that a public Site Plan Approval process will be required for residential intensification projects. This process will ensure that the project is sensitive to existing private amenity spaces (such as the location of garbage facilities and loading areas). The public review will also make sure there is consideration given to the project's impact on adjacent properties and proposes measures to mitigate impacts (such as fencing and planting buffers), where necessary.

Section 3.2.3.6 of the OP provides policies to ensure that any residential intensification projects in areas designated Low Density Residential are well integrated with heritage buildings. These policies state that proponents of intensification projects will be encouraged by the City of London to preserve and upgrade heritage buildings, and where there are buildings which are designated that are part of a project, bonusing provisions may be available to increase the project's density.



7.3.5.2 Multi-family, Medium Density Residential

The Study Area is designated Multi-family, Medium Density Residential in the area north of Oxford Street and west of Wharncliffe Road. Section 3.3 of the OP outlines the policies for the Multi-family, Medium Density Residential designation, and states that lands designated Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential are to be developed for “*multi-unit residential developments having a low-rise profile, and densities that exceed those found in Low Density Residential areas but do not approach the densities intended for the Multi-family, High Density Residential designation*”. Development in the Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential Designation should generally be no more than four storeys and 75 units per hectare.

Section 3.3.1 of the OP states that the primary uses within the Multi-family, Medium Density Residential Designation shall be multiple-attached dwellings, apartment dwellings, converted dwellings, rooming and boarding houses, and care facilities. Single- and semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, existing high density residential buildings, and convenience commercial and service stations are also provided for.

Section 3.3.2 of the OP states that the Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential designation is best suited to areas of existing or planned medium density residential development, and lands in close proximity to shopping areas, commercial districts, open space or Regional Facilities. The designation may also serve as a transition between designations of a high or lower density.

7.3.5.3 Neighbourhood Commercial Node

The commercial areas around Wharncliffe Road and Riverside Drive, and north of Oxford Street are designated “Neighbourhood Commercial Node”. Lands with this designation are “intended to provide for the daily or weekly convenience shopping and service needs of nearby residents and, to a lesser extent, passing motorists.” (OP Section 4.3.8.1). A variety of convenience and service commercial uses are provided for in this designation to achieve this intent.

The Neighbourhood Commercial Node envisions strip or plaza style development that emphasizes the design of the street edge and access from transit stops. Development shall be in harmony with the surrounding residential area in terms of design, appearance and scale.

7.3.5.4 Office Area

The lands on either side of Riverside Drive, from the west boundary of the Study Area to the Neighbourhood Commercial Node are designated “Office Area” in the new OP. Section 5.2 of the OP notes these locations are to “*provide for the development of general office uses in small- to medium-scale office buildings*.” Limitations are placed on the scale of development to promote the Downtown should as the primary office employment area in the City.

The Office Area designation envisions buildings which are low to medium rise height, and medium scale, which will have minimal impacts on and are well integrated with the surrounding area. It is intended that buildings within the Office Area designation are clustered and have a nodal form. A high level of visual prominence is encouraged.



7.3.5.5 Open Space

The west bank of the Thames River and West Lions Park are designated “Open Space” in the new OP.

This designation serves to protect and enhance lands that contain or contribute to important ecological functions and significant natural features. Aside from components of the Natural Heritage System and ecological areas, the Open Space designation consists of district and regional parks, cemeteries, golf courses, flood plain lands, and hazard lands.

Permitted uses on lands designated Open Space include parks and private open space uses such as cemeteries and golf courses, agriculture, conservation management, and recreational and community facilities.

7.3.5.6 Community Facility

The area to the south of Riverside Drive and east of Wharncliffe Road, the location of the Kiwanis Seniors Community Centre, is designated “Community Facility”. The intent of this designation, as outlined in Section 6.2 of the OP, is to provide for *“a wide range of large institutional uses which serve the regional area... these uses include social and health services which are intended to meet both the day-to-day needs and the long-term care requirements of City residents”*. Permitted uses in the Community Facility designation include residential care facilities, health clinics, correctional and supervised residences, and emergency care establishments, as well as community centres, day care centres, churches, schools, libraries, and fire and police stations.

7.4 City of London Zoning By-law

This section of the report provides information on the current zoning in the Study Area. Additionally, information is provided on the City of London’s Heritage (“HER”) zone, as it may be applied to a heritage resource or conservation district designated under Parts IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

A number of site visits were made, and there are many properties which appear to not conform to the various regulations of the Zoning By-law with respect to setbacks, lot frontage, and area. This is not unexpected given the age of many of these properties, which predate the Zoning By-law.

The various zones and zone variations in the Study Area fall into four general categories: residential zones, office zones, commercial zones, and community use and open space zones. The details of each of these zones are explained below. The specific regulations of each zone are listed in Appendix A.



7.4.1 Residential Zones

The residential areas of the Study Area have four residential zones: the R2-2, R3-1, R5-6, and R9-3 zones. The R2-2 zone is the predominant zone in the Study Area, covering a majority of the properties within it.

The R2 and R3 zones generally permit low density and low rise residential uses, such as single and semidetached dwellings, duplexes and converted dwellings. The R5 zone also permits townhomes and row houses. The R9-3 zone permits higher density forms of housing, including apartments, lodging houses and residential care facilities. The R9-3 zone that exists in the Study Area has a height limit of 12m. The regulations of the R2-2, R3-1, and R9-3 zones are summarized in Appendix A, Table A1

7.4.2 Office Zones

Three zones are found in the Study Area which provide for and regulate offices and office related uses. They are the Office Zone (OF), the Office Conversion Zone (OC), and the Restricted Office Zone (RO). These zones are generally located along Oxford Street, Wharncliffe Road, and Riverside Drive.

The Office Zone, specifically variation OF2(4), applies to the property at 75 Blackfriars Street. The parent OF zone is intended to provide for general office uses. The site specific OF2(4) variation allows the use of the church on the property as an office. Medical/dental offices and medical/dental laboratories are allowed within the confines of the existing building, but clinics are prohibited. A gymnasium in association with an office is also allowed. The regulations of the OF2(4) zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A2

The Office Conversion zones OC4 and OC5 applies to a number of small residential properties within the Study Area. The general purpose of the OC zone, as outlined in Section 17.1 of the Zoning By-law, is to provide for the conversion of existing residential building to office uses. The OC4 zone variation permits dwelling units and offices. The OC5 zone variation permits dwelling units, offices, and medical/dental offices within existing buildings. The regulations of the OC4 and OC5 zones are summarized in Appendix A, Table A3

Restricted Office zones RO1 and RO2, which apply to some individual properties within the Study Area, are intended to provide for and regulate new office uses outside of the downtown core. These zones generally permit small-scale buildings in medium and high density areas.

The RO1 zone variation permits medical/dental offices and offices. The RO2 zone variation permits clinics, medical/dental offices, medical/dental laboratories, and offices. The regulations of the RO1 and RO2 zones are summarized in Appendix A, Table A4.

7.4.3 Commercial Zones

There are six commercial zones in the Study Area, covering a variety of commercial land uses. The commercial zones are: Convenience Commercial (CC), Arterial Commercial (AC), Highway Service Commercial (HS), Neighbourhood Shopping Area (NSA), Automobile Service Station (SS), and Restricted Service Commercial (RSC).



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The parent Convenience Commercial zone applies to small sites in the Study Area. The general purpose of the CC zone, as outlined in Section 29.1, is to provide for and regulate *“a limited range of commercial uses which service the day-to-day convenience needs of the immediate neighbourhood.”*

That CC zone permits convenience service establishments, convenience stores, financial institutions, and personal service establishments. Drive-through facilities are prohibited in the CC zone. The regulations of the CC zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A5.



Image 95: Blackfriars Cafe, a commercial use in the interior of the neighbourhood

The Arterial Commercial zone AC4(9) is given to some commercial properties on Wharncliffe Road at the south end of the Study Area. Section 26.1 states:

“... This zone provides for and regulates a mix of small scale retail, office, personal service and automotive uses located along arterial roads which serve both vehicular and pedestrian trade. This zone tends to be applied in older areas of the City where auto-orientated uses have existed for some time and in areas along arterial roads that serve both a local and broad market area.”

The AC4(9) zone permits a range of uses, including but not limited to restaurants, food stores, financial institutions, convenience service establishments, offices, retail stores, bake shops, taverns, service and repair establishments, and home and auto supply stores. The regulations of the AC4(9) zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A6.

The Highway Service zones HS(5), HS1, and HS2 applies to a number of properties in the commercial area around Wharncliffe Road and Riverside. Section 27.1 outlines the intent of the HS zone as being to provide for *“a range of commercial and service uses which cater to the needs of the travelling public. They tend to be located on major arterial roads with high traffic volumes at major entrances to the City.”*



Permitted uses in the HS parent zone include animal hospitals, restricted automotive uses, convenience service establishments, convenience stores, financial institutions, and restaurants. The HS(5) zone variation allows parking for permitted uses. The HS1 zone variation permits assembly halls, private clubs, and taverns, in addition to the uses permitted under the parent zone. The HS2 permits automobile repair garages and taxi establishments in addition to the uses permitted under the parent zone. The regulations of the HS(5), HS1, and HS2 zones are summarized in Appendix A, Table A7.

The commercial area north of Oxford Street and east of Wharncliffe Road is zoned Neighbourhood Shopping Area zone NSA5. Section 23.1 of the Zoning By-law states:

“... The NSA zone provides for and regulates a range of neighbourhood-scale retail, personal service and office uses which are primarily intended to provide for the convenience shopping and service needs of nearby residents. Zone variations of the zone are differentiated based on uses and maximum permitted gross leasable floor area for certain defined uses. Shopping centres are the permitted form of development; however, stand-alone buildings may also be permitted at appropriate locations normally near the perimeter of the property to satisfy urban design goals to create a street edge and screen parking lots. The NSA5 Zone variation is used for this purpose. A limited range of automotive uses may be permitted by using the Automobile Service Station (SS) Zone.”

Permitted uses in the NSA 5 zone variation include bake shops, clinics, convenience service establishments, day care centres, financial institutions, food stores, libraries, medical/dental offices, restaurants, retail stores, and service and repair establishments. The regulations of the NSA5 zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A8.

The Automobile Service Station zone SS1 applies to some small properties within the Study Area. The general purpose of the SS zone, as outlined in Section 17.1 of Zoning By-law, is to “provide for and regulate a limited range of automotive related uses which provide a service to the immediate neighbourhood. The only use permitted in the main SS zone variation is a gas bar which is the least intensive of the automotive uses.” The SS1 zone variation permits automotive service stations, in addition to gas bars. The regulations of the SS1 zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A9.

The Restricted Service Commercial zone RSC6 applies to a single lot in the Study Area As outlined in Section 28.1, the purpose of the RSC zone is to provide for “a range of moderate intensity commercial uses, and trade service uses, which may require significant amounts of land for outdoor storage or interior building space and a location on major streets.”

The RSC6 zone variation permits automobile sales and service establishments with and automobile body shop. The regulations of the RSC6 zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A10.



7.4.4 Community and Open Space Zones

There are three zones in the City of London for community uses, Regional Facility (RF), Community Facility (CF), and Neighbourhood Facility (NF). All three are found within the Study Area. These zones and their variations provide for a variety of community uses, such as school, churches, and community centres, at a range of scales.

The Labatt Stadium is the only property in the Study Area zoned Regional Facility (RF). The intent of this zone is to provide for large scale uses that regularly attract large numbers of people. Besides stadia, the RF zone also permits schools, churches, recreational facilities, libraries, nursing homes, care establishments, and institutional uses. The regulations of the RF zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A11.

West Lions Park, the London Christian Academy (Charles Street) and the Kiwanis Seniors Community Centre (Riverside Drive) are given the Community Facility zones CF1 and CF2. The purpose of the parent CF zone, as outlined in Section 32.1, is to provide for

“... institutional type uses which provide a city-wide or community service function. The Community Facility Zone includes uses which are more intense than those included in the Neighbourhood Facility (NF) Zone and which may impact adjacent land uses.”

The CF1 zone variation permits churches, community centres, day care, schools, group homes, and libraries. The CF2 zone variation permits public recreational buildings, public swimming pools, and studios. The regulations of the CF1 and CF2 zones are summarized in Appendix A, Table A12.

The Neighbourhood Facility (NF) zone is intended for elementary schools and churches. Within the Study area this zone applies to the Jean Sauve Public School and the Empress. As outlined in Section 33.1 of the Zoning By-law:

“This Zone provides for and regulates public and private facility uses which primarily serve a neighbourhood function. They include small to medium scale uses which have a minimal impact on surrounding land uses and may be appropriate adjacent to or within residential neighbourhoods.”

The regulations of the NF zone are summarized in Appendix A, Table A13.

The Open Space zone OS1 applies to Kensington Park (west of Wharnccliffe Road, south of the railway) and to Empress Avenue Park (west end of Empress Avenue). The OS1 zone permits private and public parks, golf courses, conservation lands, agriculture/horticulture, and recreational buildings.

7.4.5 Heritage Zoning

The City has a Heritage Zone (HER) within the Zoning By-law. The purpose of the HER zone is outlined in Section 34.1 as follows:

“This zone provides for and regulates buildings, structures and lands that have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. This zone may be compounded with other zones only to the extent of identifying the permitted uses. Regulations shall be as prescribed by the HER zone.”



The HER zone permits uses that are permitted in the accompanying compound zone (such as residential, commercial, or institutional). The HER zone is designed to recognize the dimensions and setbacks of a property as they exist at the time of the passing of the Heritage Zoning. The purpose of the HER zone is to ensure that the built character of the site or neighbourhood is maintained.

The HER zone has been applied to some individual properties that have been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. To date, the HER zone has not been applied to any of the City of London's Heritage Conservation Districts.

7.4.6 Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation Study Area By-law L.S.P.-3431-1777

The City of London passed By-law L.S.P.-3431-1777 for the Blackfriars-Petersville Planning District on June 6, 2013, under the authority of Section 40.1 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to designate a heritage conservation study area for Heritage District designation. The by-law prohibits any alterations, erections, demolitions, or removals of buildings or structures within the heritage conservation study area for one year.

The by-law has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board though a hearing has not been scheduled. It remains in force until the appeal is resolved.

7.5 Development Activity

There has been some development activity taking place within the Study Area, and we understand that much of the development has been for multi-unit or multi-bedroom development catering to a student market. This section of the report summarizes the new developments that have been proposed and other planning activities that are ongoing.

7.5.1 Recent Development Proposals

City staff has advised of the following development interest in the Study Area.

7.5.1.1 96 Albion Street

A two-storey duplex has been proposed at 96 Albion Street. Each unit is to have five bedrooms and four parking spaces are to be provided in the rear yard. The total gross floor area of the building is to be 343.7 m² (3,700 sq.ft.) Site Plan approval is required for the development. A pre-consultation meeting with City Staff has not been held.

7.5.1.2 12 Leslie Street

A pre-consultation meeting was held for a proposal at 12 Leslie Street. The proposed development is a two-storey duplex, with five bedrooms per unit. The building is to be 320.0 m² (3,444 sq.ft.) with a height of 7.5



metres, and will have two parking spaces in the rear yard. Site Plan Approval is required for the development. A complete application has not yet been submitted.

7.5.1.3 108 Wilson Avenue

A proposed development is to be a two-storey duplex with five bedrooms per unit at 108 Wilson Avenue. The building is to have a gross floor area of 299.0 m² (3,218 sq.ft.), a height of 8.5 metres, and four parking spaces provided in the rear yard. The application has been reviewed by City of London staff and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. The application has not yet received approval.

7.5.1.4 186 & 188 Wharncliffe Road North

Two duplexes have been proposed for 186 and 188 Wharncliffe Road North. This site is located next to the intersection of Wharncliffe Road North and Blackfriars Street. It formerly contained two single storey detached dwellings. The proposed development will be two two-storey duplexes of 7.4 metres in height and two parking spaces each in the rear yards. The development is permitted as of right in the R2-2 zone. Site Plan approval and building permit have been issued for 188 Wharncliffe Road and the site is now under construction. Site Plan consultation for 186 Wharncliffe Road is underway.

7.5.2 Past Development Applications

The number of building permits, minor variance and consent applications that were made within the Study Area in the previous three years are listed below in Table 2. The locations of building permits in the Study Area since 2010 are shown on Figure 10. The locations of past planning applications in the Study area are shown on Figure 11.

Table 2: Blackfriars/Petersville Past Development Applications

Year	Building Permit	Minor Variance/Consent
2010	26	5
2011	22	4
2012	22	6
2013*	12	3

Note: Applications are listed by dated submitted

**January 1st - April 15 2013*



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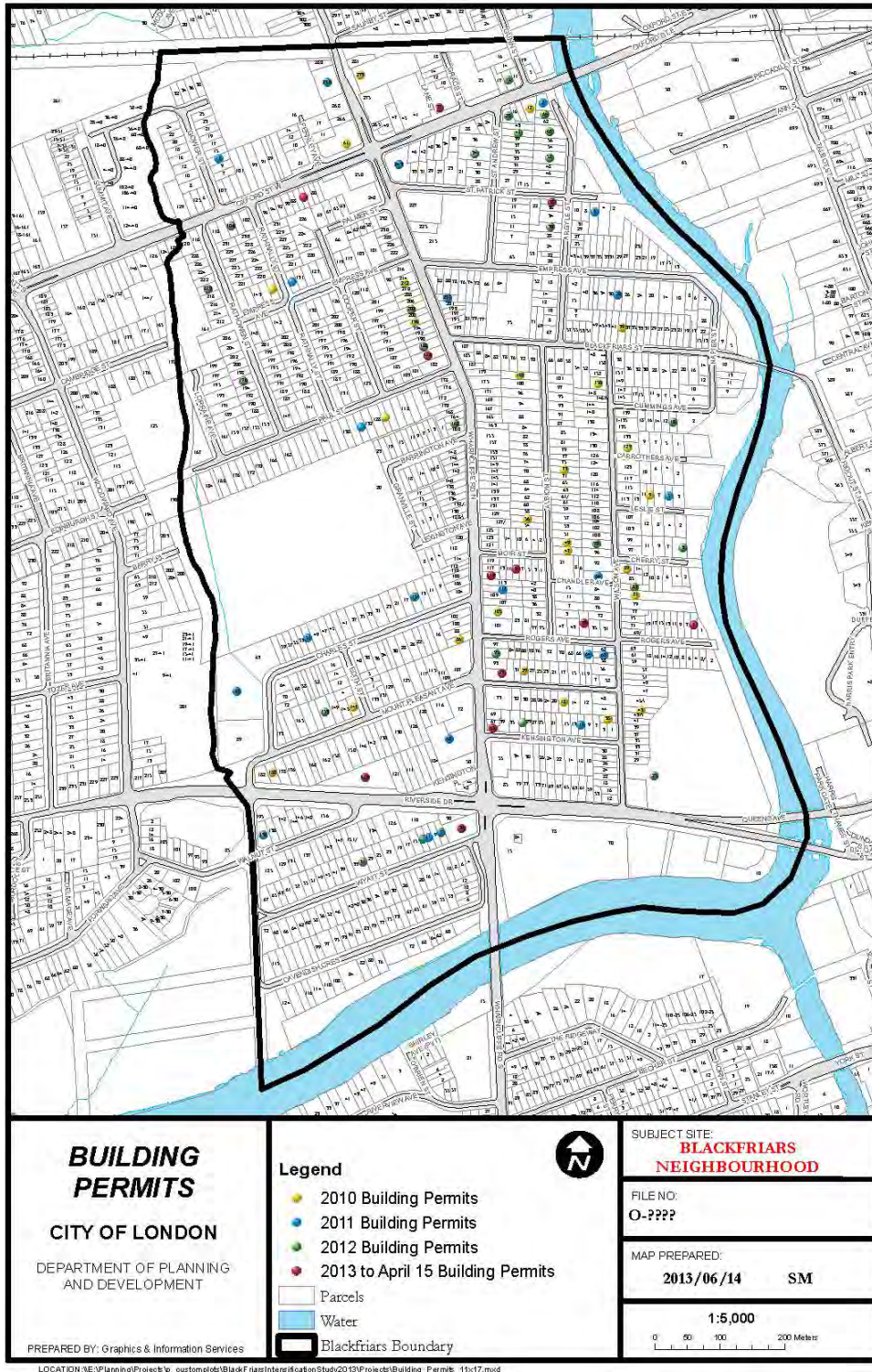


Figure 10: Location of building permits in the Study Area



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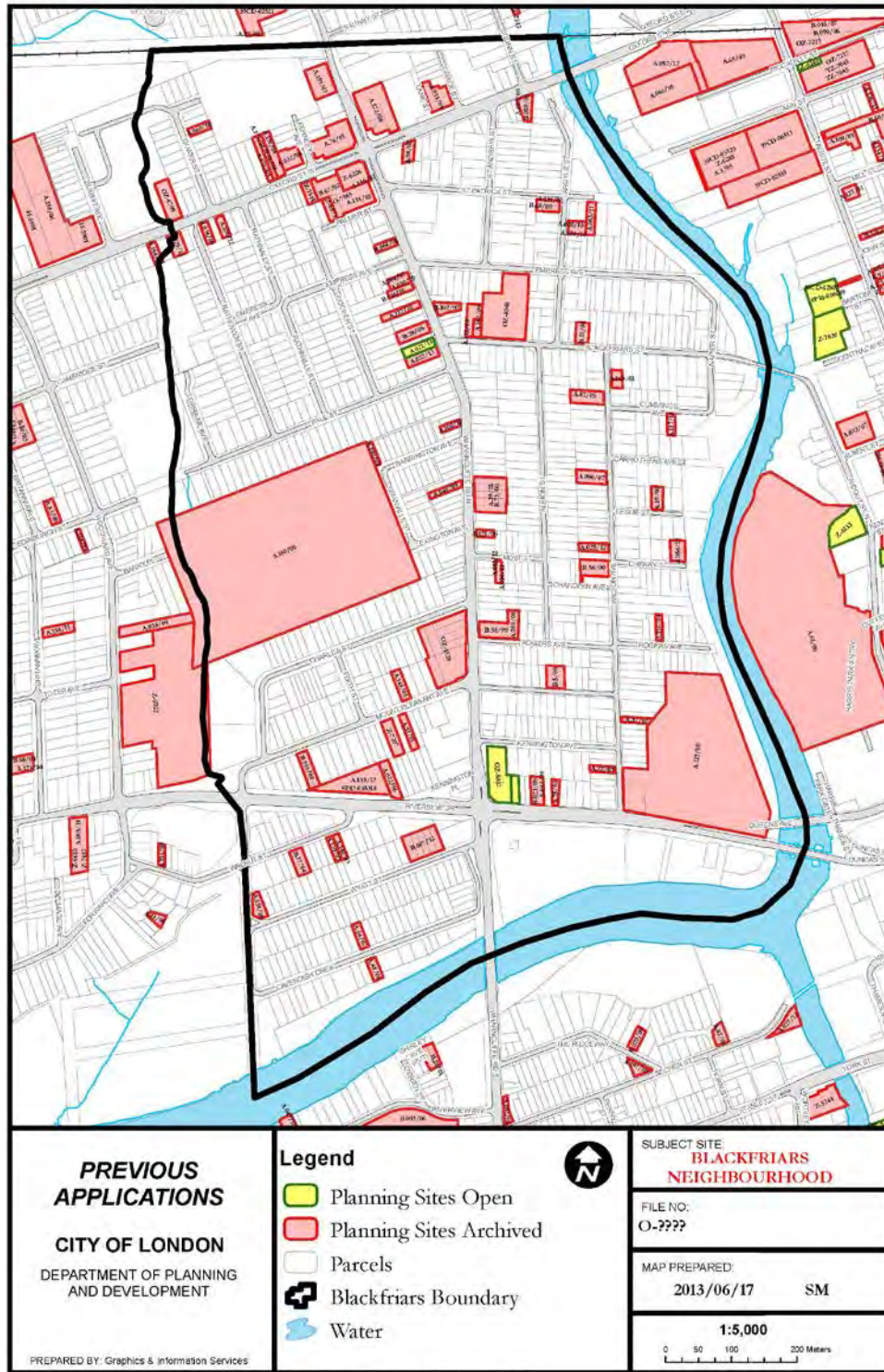


Figure 11: Previous planning applications in Study Area



7.6 Planning Opportunities & Challenges

7.6.1 Opportunities

The Study Area has a mix of housing and community facilities, and is located near Downtown and the University. The relationship with the Thames River, Labatt Stadium, and the local parks; the schools, churches, and community centre; the variety of commercial uses within walking distance, and; the proximity to downtown are all assets that create a complete and vibrant community.

Continued reinvestment in neighbourhoods is important to ensure maintenance and upkeep of both the private (houses) and public (streetscape, infrastructure) realm. This investment can take the form of updates to houses, additions to small houses to provide space for ‘modern living’, and in some cases intensification of properties. These projects can bring new residents and diversity in age and demographics, and support to maintain such institutions as local schools. However, new construction should be respectful of existing neighbourhood character.



Image 96: Small houses on Rogers Avenue

7.6.2 Challenges

While renovations redevelopment can be an opportunity for communities, in the Study Area some residential intensification has presented a challenge in the way it is affecting the character of the existing neighbourhood.

Residential intensification has come to the area in the form of both modifications and additions to existing dwellings, and the complete redevelopment of properties to increase the number of bedrooms in a new dwelling given the proximity to the University of Western Ontario. Some recent development applications propose new construction up to three times the existing intensity of the current fabric. Such developments have increased the number of rental units in the Study Area in a short amount of time.



The residential intensification has occurred in a manner that has impacted the character of the Study Area. New construction has generally been incongruent with the exiting character of the neighbourhood as shaped by the scale, built form, architectural and building style, rooflines, streetscape, and the amount and location of parking areas.



Image 97: Lawn signs seen East of Wharncliffe

We understand that maintenance, property standards, and nuisance complaints have been issues with some rental properties. The target market of these rental properties are university students, causing a demographic shift in the Study Area. These impacts have been part of the neighbourhood's concern with intensification, and appear to be driving some of the desire and support for a Heritage Conservation District in the Study Area.

Addressing these issues is a challenge given that the PPS provides for and promotes intensification, and these policies are reflected in the City of London Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The principal issue is the scale of intensification in the interior of the neighbourhood, and the lack of sympathetic design that pays respect to the scale, form, and style of housing and streetscapes in the neighbourhood. As the signs in the neighbourhood state: "Build homes, not boxes."



Image 98: New construction and additions not in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood

7.6.3 Greater Near-Campus Neighbourhood Study

Many areas in London that are near to universities and colleges face similar impacts associated with student rental intensification. Recognizing this, the City of London prepared the Greater Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Study (2008) to address the phenomenon. Issues identified by the Greater Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Study were:

- A continued exodus of long-term residents and an influx of short-term, transient residents;
- Dwellings modified to add bedrooms, increasing the residential intensity;
- Council, Committee of Adjustment, and Consent Authority decisions to limit inappropriate and unsustainable forms of intensification have been overturned by decisions of the Ontario Municipal Board;
- Reduction of landscaped areas and poor property maintenance detract from the amount and quality of residential amenity space;



- By-law enforcement complaints are numerous;
- A declining residential building stock;
- A disproportionately high number of bedrooms; and,
- Continued high resale housing costs based on the income potential of the property, rather than comparable resale value, which acts as a disincentive to attracting long-term, permanent residents to live in these neighbourhoods.

The recommendations of the Greater Near-Campus Neighbourhoods Study included changes to policy and regulations which were implemented through detailed and comprehensive Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments in 2012. The contents of these amendments were:

Official Plan Amendment

- New definition for “Residential Intensity”:
 - *“Residential Intensity refers to the increase in the usability of an existing dwelling, building, or site to accommodate additional occupancy including, but not limited to, building construction or addition, increasing the number of bedrooms, and expanding parking areas, but does not include the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists.”*
- Urban design policies for additions that add one or more dwelling units.
- Additional policies for Multi-Family Medium Density Residential and Multi-Family High Density Residential land use designations to encourage residential intensification in areas with these designations and where located on arterial roads.
- Additional policies for Low Density Residential that specific residential intensification and residential intensity proposals are to be consistent with all policies of the OP, will not represent “spot zoning”, will be on a site that can accommodate the proposed use, that potential negative impacts are mitigated, and that the proposal represents a positive precedent within the neighbourhood.

Zoning By-law Amendment

- Amended definition for “Parking Area”, such that for residential uses the calculation of Parking Area Coverage will include access driveways, aisles, driveways, and parking spaces.
- Amendments to definitions of the following land uses limiting the number of bedrooms to a maximum of 3 bedrooms per dwelling unit within Near-Campus Neighbourhoods:
 - Converted Dwelling
 - Duplex
 - Triplex
 - Fourplex
 - Single Detached Dwelling
 - Apartment Building
 - Stacked Townhouse
 - Street Townhouse
 - Townhouse



- Semi-detached Dwelling

- Amendment to the R1 zone requiring that one interior side yard be a minimum of 3.0 metres in width where there is no attached garage.
- Amendment to general zoning regulations to require that no part of any rear yard parking area be located closer than 3.0 metres from the rear lot line or any one side lot line
- Reductions to maximum height permitted to 9.0 metres for most dwellings in the R1, R2, and R3 zones.

The changes have significantly “tightened” the parameters for intensification, however the problem requires measures to address some of the qualitative, character defining elements as well as the use and setback regulations.



8.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation was an important component of the Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District Study to inform residents about the project and its potential implications as well as to obtain their input and concerns regarding potential designation. Consultation opportunities included the following:

- Meeting and input from LACH (October 9, 2013)
- Site Visit with members of Steering Committee (October 16, 2013)
- Meeting and input from Steering Committee (October 30, 2013)
- Two Public Meetings (September 16, 2013 and October 30, 2013)
- Two Questionnaires

8.1 Steering Committee

A Steering Committee composed of members of the Blackfriars Resident's Association, representatives from the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), and the City Councillor for the area, was assembled by City staff at the initiation of the study to provide neighbourhood representation, community coordination, and input. A site visit with members of the steering committee and a meeting was held as part of the study. The site visit was intended to provide an opportunity for Steering Committee members to offer their perspective of the study area. The meeting was to provide an overview and progress update regarding the proposed HCD. Study Area boundaries, character defining resources of the area, and the Heritage Conservation District study and plan process were discussed in the meeting.

8.2 Public Meetings

The first public meeting held on September 16, 2013 was attended by approximately 80 residents and property owners. The meeting was intended to introduce the consulting team to the residents and property owners of the area as well as introduce the idea of the Heritage Conservation District in the Blackfriars/Petersville area. In general, there was support for the study and very little negative feedback or input regarding the study and its implementation.

The second public meeting held on October 30, 2013 was attended by approximately 100 residents, real estate agents, and property owners. The meeting was intended to provide an update on the progress of the study, present the consulting team's findings to date, and open up a discussion from the public regarding any questions or concerns for the team. The public meeting was representative of the complexity of the study area as there was both a great deal of support and opposition to the study and potential Heritage Conservation District designation. The consulting team's findings indicated that at the time of the meeting there were four character areas within the study area, one of which could be designated as a HCD. The meeting generated many questions and discussion points which focused on the following:

- Justification for four character areas



- Potential HCD boundaries
- Restrictions to alterations/renovations to buildings within the study area
- Characteristics of the area
- Differences between Part IV and Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
- Differences and similarities between East of Wharnccliffe and West of Wharnccliffe
- Guiding future change in the study area
- Anticipated impacts to investment properties within the study area
- Public places/landmarks such as Riverside Park, Labatt Park, Blackfriars Bridge, and the Thames River

8.3 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was circulated at each public meeting in order to provide an opportunity for written feedback from those in attendance at the public meetings (Appendix B). The questionnaires were used to gain an insight into community member's opinions of the potential HCD, provide feedback on boundaries, and provide an opportunity for concerns to be presented in a written manner to the consulting team.

38 attendees responded to the first questionnaire issued at the September 16, 2013 meeting. 35 of the respondents indicated that they lived in the study area, and 11 indicated that they have had a long family history associated with the Blackfriars/Petersville area. When asked what makes the area different from other areas within the city, most respondents replied that the area had a small scale, or a "human" feel to the area that was made up of small, narrow streets, and comfortable small scale homes. A majority of respondents indicated that they perceive the boundaries of the Blackfriars/Petersville area to be Oxford Street to the North, the Thames River to the East, the Thames River to the South, and Wharnccliffe Road to the West. When asked about special concerns or issues, the respondents indicated that character of the area including building heights and scale was a general concern. Respondents also indicated that they are concerned about the flexibility of regulation that designation as an HCD would bring, with specific regards to repairs and renovations to their buildings.

22 attendees responded to the second questionnaire issued at the October 30, 2013 meeting. 20 of the 22 respondents indicated that they live within the study area. 15 of the respondents indicated that they support the refined study area that was presented at the meeting, and those who did not support the boundaries suggested that the entire study area should be the HCD, or that they felt the entire area should not be an HCD. When asked if they supported the creation of an HCD in the recommended area, 16 respondents supported the designation, 3 did not support the district, 1 was uncertain, and 2 did not answer. When asked about key contributing heritage elements in the area respondents indicated that the architectural style and uniqueness of the area, in relation with the close proximity to the Thames River and the Blackfriars Bridge helped define the character of the area. A couple of respondents indicated that there was little heritage value in the area, other than the bridge. When asked again about special concerns or issues, respondents indicated that retaining the character of the area was important to them. Respondents also indicated that intensification, parking, and property values were a concern. Lastly, some respondents indicated that they a HCD designation would make it difficult to sell property or that not all residents agree with the steering committee.



8.4 Public Consultation Conclusions

Based on feedback received from the public meetings, Steering Committee members, and questionnaires, it appears that there is support for designating some areas of the original Study Area as a Heritage Conservation District. Based on concerns voiced at the public meetings and some negative feedback received from the questionnaires there is some concern as to property values, real estate, and repairs and renovations to buildings however, a majority of the feedback received was supportive of the Part V designation.



9.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Heritage Conservation District Boundaries

As outlined in this Study, there are a number of characteristics and criteria identified by the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the *City of London Official Plan* for the evaluation and assessment of potential Heritage Conservation Districts. These include:

- The association of the area with a particular historical event or era that is unique to the community;
- The presence of properties which are considered significant to the community as a result of their location or setting;
- The presence of properties representing a design or method of construction which is considered to be of cultural heritage value or interest to the community, region, province, or nation;
- The presence of properties which collectively represent a certain aspect of the development of the city which is worthy of maintaining; and
- The presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, may not constitute sufficient grounds for the designation of a heritage conservation district, but which collectively are significant to the community.

The historic, architectural, visual, and planning contexts indicate that a refined portion of the original Study Area warrants designation as a Heritage Conservation District. The elimination of buildings, streets, and landscapes that would be difficult to support within the boundary as well as those that would merit stronger inclusion in a potential adjacent HCD or character area have been removed from the proposed HCD boundary.

In order to provide a consistent and defensible HCD Boundary, Official Plan policies and the following key elements were established as the criteria for evaluating potential boundaries:

- Architectural interest, consistency and integrity;
- Streetscape character;
- Historical relevance/association; and
- Land use context



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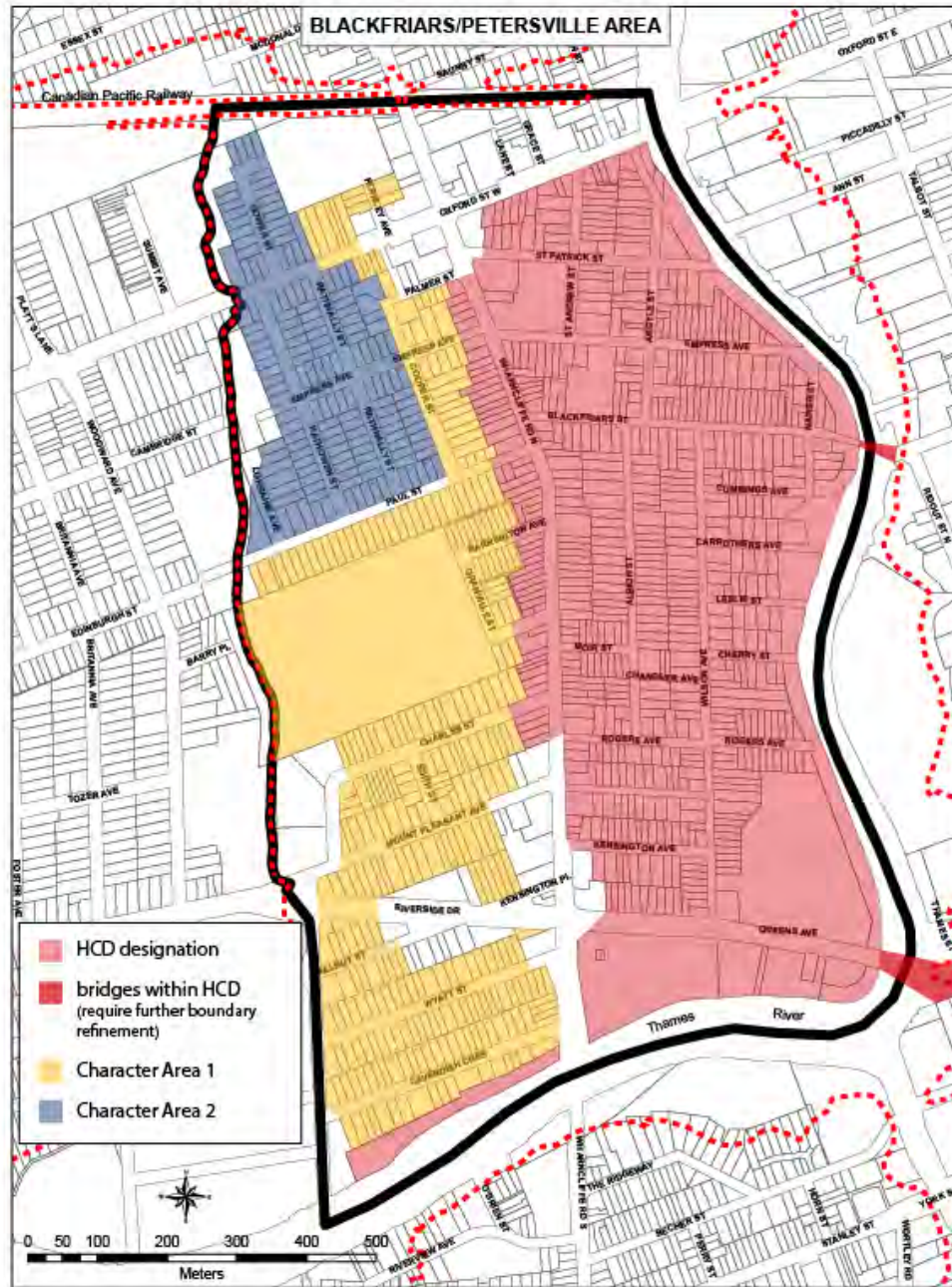


Figure 12: Final recommendations for HCD designation.



9.1.1 Recommended Heritage Conservation District Boundary

Based on the evaluation criteria, the portion of the Study Area that merits inclusion within a proposed HCD is illustrated in Figure 12.

The rationale for the proposed Heritage Conservation District boundary is based on the following:

- The land within the proposed boundaries are defined by early settlement and subdivision patterns associated with its early surveyors and settlers
- The proposed HCD is physically and historically linked to its surroundings, including Wharncliffe Road and the Thames River
- The modest scale of buildings and small lots of the area within the proposed boundaries are representative of the area's early working-class history and residents
- The narrow streets and mature tree canopy coverage defines the streetscape characteristics of the area
- A majority of the area's architectural styles and features are consistent with the methods, materials, and forms of the era in which they were constructed
- A number of landmarks heritage landmarks are present in the area including the Blackfriars Bridge, Labatt Park, St. Georges Anglican Church, Empress Avenue School.

9.2 Heritage Character Statement for Proposed HCD

9.2.1 Historic Context

The area encompassed by the proposed Heritage Conservation District boundaries has a long tradition as a suburban landscape within the City of London. Historically an independent village, the area has a history of individual identity within London and has continued to be an area shaped profoundly by its own history. The area's historical importance and tangible heritage elements provide the distinctive quality required for a Heritage Conservation District.

From the earliest surveys and settlers, the Blackfriars-Petersville area has had an intimate relationship with the flood plain in which it resides. Home to some of the City's richest alluvial soil, the area has both benefitted and suffered as a result of its proximity to the North Branch of the Thames River. Initially settled by a small collection of individual families in the early nineteenth century, the initial subdivision of properties and extensive surveying resulted in the creation of some of London's earliest tight-knit suburban areas. Incorporated first as Petersville, later as London West and eventually annexed as part of London, the proposed Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District was home to the area's working-class who settled on the small lots within close proximity and danger of the river. The area's early suburban settlers are most evident today by the various renditions and mixes of 1 and 1 ½ storey Ontario cottage homes and similar styles spread throughout the narrow streets that have survived the most destructive and fatal floods of 1883 and 1937.



9.2.2 Architectural Character

The architectural character of the proposed Heritage Conservation District is a character that indicates a continuity of change based on a variation of worker-style housing that ranges predominantly from the 1880s to the 1930s. The overwhelming majority of architectural forms and styles within the proposed district are of the vernacular Ontario cottage style with various renditions and features. The homes within the proposed HCD are reflective of modest, economical home building in the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

Amongst the modest residential dwellings remain a collection of landmarks that have continued to be cornerstone features of the area. Most notably, the Blackfriars Bridge has served as the earliest bridged water crossing into London from its western neighbours and later suburbs. Wharncliffe Road, an initial highway for early settlers served to be just as important to settlements and commerce in the area. Labatt Park, the former Empress Avenue School, and St. Georges Anglican Church are just a few examples of the heritage features that continued to serve the recreational, educational, and religious aspects of the past and present within the district.

The area is populated by both tangible and intangible character-defining elements. For the proposed Blackfriars-Petersville HCD the modest variations of the 19th and 20th-century cottages, Blackfriars Bridge, and the Thames River are a few of the many tangible heritage attributes worthy of conservation. Conversely, the sense of history embodied in the rich architectural heritage and streetscapes contributes to the intangible qualities of the area.

9.2.3 Streetscape Character

The streetscape character of the proposed Heritage Conservation District is largely defined by long viewsheds along narrow streets, terminating with a view of the Thames River dyke system and associated greenways and landscapes. While the presence of mature street trees and grassed boulevards is inconsistent, there is an overall feeling of enclosure and maturity provided by the existing street trees and mature trees within the front and back yards of residential properties, again heavily reinforced by the backbone of mature vegetation along the river.

Overall, the streetscape is defined by swaths of consistent massing and set-backs of residential dwellings, which gives the area a discernible rhythm and pattern as it is experienced along the streetscape. This is noticeably different from the rhythms and patterns experienced within adjacent streetscapes, such as along many parts of Wharncliffe Road, which give the area a distinct character. The Blackfriars Bridge, Thames River, and the numerous public greenspaces and parks that line the river and its dyke mark the arrival into the area, creating gateway features that further define its character.



9.3 Heritage Character Statement, West of Wharncliffe Road

Although, the proposed HCD boundaries do not include the area West of Wharncliffe Road, the areas have been identified as having a particular character described below.

9.3.1 Historic Context

In many ways, the area west of Wharncliffe Road has a history shared with that east of Wharncliffe. Both possessed the same fertile alluvial soil, both experienced devastating floods, those in the southern part were close enough to the river to have a strong sense of its presence and to enjoy river-related activities. Both have an early settlement history. The first settlers within the study area -- Applegarth, the Montagues, Nixon, and possibly even John Kent, lived west of what is now Wharncliffe Road prior to the founding of the City of London. The west side of Paul Street and Empress Avenue west of Wharncliffe were among the 1850s suburban surveys. Now, however, little remains of any very early settlement west of Wharncliffe Road.

The vast majority of the area was surveyed during the 1870s (in the south) or the 1950s (in the north). Growth occurred more slowly in the southern parts of the area, so that the array of buildings there ranges from the 1870s through the 1950s, with some even later infill. Most of the later surveys here were larger than those east of Wharncliffe, so that the landscape generally appears less episodic. In the northwest section of the study area, a much more homogenous visual milieu is created by solidly 1950s development, mainly characterized here by streetscapes of Victory housing. Despite the later dates of construction, the areas west of Wharncliffe Road, especially those in the south, catered mainly to a working class clientele and to farmers or gardeners.

9.3.2 Architectural Context

The areas west of Wharncliffe Road, to the rise of land that was an earlier river bank and edge of the flood plain, and from the river north to the rail line constitutes almost one half the original Blackfriars-Petersville study area. Just as the east portion of the study area tells the story of the development of the small house in London from the late 1800's to post WWI, the development of the west portion of the study area can be understood as reflecting the post WWII evolution of this same type.

The south-west portion of the west of Wharncliffe area has over 45 houses built before 1900, while the north-west portion has less than 10. The north-west section of the study area was the last portion of the flood plain to be developed, and it has a very consistent inventory of post WWII "Victory" or CMHC housing. There are almost 200 houses built between 1950 and 1954 and they are typically one and one-half storey, gable-roofed, frame houses on raised basements.

The Ontario Cottage type of small house slowly gives way to the raised bungalow and one and one half storey houses as you move north through the west half of the study area. Remarkably the character and 'feel' of the neighbourhoods remains somewhat consistent with the older neighbourhoods on the east side - the, modest intimacy of scale and mass of the houses, the low eaves, 2 -3 bay fronts that address the street, the porches, building materials, front yards and landscape.



9.3.3 Streetscape Character

This area is characterized by slightly wider lots to accommodate driveways for the increase in automobile ownership at that time. The street patterns, lot-sizes and lay-outs in this area generally are at an acute angle west of Wharnccliffe that reflect later and much larger surveys. The streets are generally wider on the west side of the study area and they terminate with a view to the treed escarpment.

The streetscape of roads, boulevards and architecture is generally more diverse on the west side of Wharnccliffe representing a greater diversity of housing ages and styles of the development patterns and ages of the houses. The streetscape character of the areas of a concentrated Victory homes (north of Paul Street) does provide for a unified viewshed as the homes are of a typical form, height and set back from the road and from each other. This contributes to this area's character.



10.0 IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS REPORT

Golder Associates Ltd. has prepared this report in a manner consistent with the standards and guidelines developed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport, Programs and Services Branch, Cultural Division, subject to the time limits and physical constraints applicable to this report. No other warranty, expressed or implied is made.

This report has been prepared for the specific site, design objective, developments and purpose described to Golder Associates Ltd., by the City of London (the Client). The factual data, interpretations and recommendations pertain to a specific project as described in this report and are not applicable to any other project or site location.

The information, recommendations and opinions expressed in this report are for the sole benefit of the Client. No other party may use or rely on this report or any portion thereof without Golder Associates Ltd.'s express written consent. If the report was prepared to be included for a specific permit application process, then upon the reasonable request of the Client, Golder Associates Ltd. may authorize in writing the use of this report by the regulatory agency as an Approved User for the specific and identified purpose of the applicable permit review process. Any other use of this report by others is prohibited and is without responsibility to Golder Associates Ltd. The report, all plans, data, drawings and other documents as well as electronic media prepared by Golder Associates Ltd. are considered its professional work product and shall remain the copyright property of Golder Associates Ltd., who authorizes only the Client and Approved Users to make copies of the report, but only in such quantities as are reasonably necessary for the use of the report by those parties. The Client and Approved Users may not give, lend, sell, or otherwise make available the report or any portion thereof to any other party without the express written permission of Golder Associates Ltd. The Client acknowledges the electronic media is susceptible to unauthorized modification, deterioration and incompatibility and therefore the Client cannot rely upon the electronic media versions of Golder Associates Ltd.'s report or other work products.

Unless otherwise stated, the suggestions, recommendations and opinions given in this report are intended only for the guidance of the Client in the design of the specific project.



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CLOSURE

We trust that this report meets your current needs. If you have any questions, or if we may be of further assistance, please contact the undersigned.

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APPENDIX A

Zoning By-law Zone Regulations Tables



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A1 – Residential Zone Regulations

Regulations	R2-2	R3-1	R9-3
Lot Area	360 m ²	250 m ²	1,000 m ²
Lot Frontage	9 m	9 m	30 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street (Main Building)	4.5 m	4.5 m	6 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street (Garage)	6 m	6 m	n/a
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m	6 m	8 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Dept – Primary Collector	6 m	6 m	6 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Dept – Secondary Collector	6 m	6 m	6 m
Read Yard Depth	7 m	6 m	1.2 m per 3 m of building height, or 4.5 m, whichever is greater. 6 m plus 1 m per 1 m in height above 6 m where abutting an R1 or R2 zone.
Landscape Open Space	n/a	n/a	30%
Lot Coverage	45%	45%	30%
Height	9 m	10.5 m	12 m (See Zone Map)
Density (Maximum Units per Hectare)	n/a	n/a	100
Parking Area Coverage	15%	15%	n/a
Number of Units Per Lot	1	1	n/a

*0.5 metres per 1.0 metres of building height, or 3.0 metres, whichever is greater

**1.2 metres per 3 metres of building height above 3 metres, or 4.5 metres, whichever is greater



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A2 – Office Zone Regulations

Regulations	OF2(4)
Lot Area	800 m ²
Lot Frontage	20 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street	6 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Primary Collector	6 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Secondary Collector	6 m*
Read Yard Depth	**
Landscape Open Space	20%
Lot Coverage	40%
Height	15 m
Total Gross Floor Area for Medical/dental offices and labs	1,300 m ²
Total Gross Floor Area for Office & Gymnasium Uses	2,555 m ²

*Plus 1.0 metres per 10.0 metres of building height above the first 3.0 metres

**1.2 metres per 3 metres of building height above 3 metres, or 4.0 metres, whichever is greater

Table A3 – Office Conversion Zone Regulations

Regulations	OC4	OC5
Lot Area	As exists	
Lot Frontage	As exists	
Landscape Open Space	30%	
Maximum Enlargement of Existing Dwelling	10%	
Height	As exists	



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A4– Restricted Office Zone Regulations

Regulations	RO1	RO2
Lot Area	450 m ²	800 m ²
Lot Frontage	15 m	20 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street	6 m*	6 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m*	8 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Primary Collector	6 m*	6 m*
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Secondary Collector	6 m*	6 m*
Rear & Interior Side Yard Depth	**	**
Landscape Open Space	30%	
Lot Coverage	40%	
Height	10 m	12 m

*Plus 1.0 metres per 10.0 metres of building height above the first 3.0 metres

**1.2 metres per 3 metres of building height

Table A5 – Convenience Commercial Zone Regulations

Regulations	CC	CC1	CC2(14)
Lot Frontage	20 m	12 m	30 m
Lot Depth	60 m	30 m	30 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street	6 m		
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m		
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Primary Collector	6 m		
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Secondary Collector	6 m		
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	6 m	3 m	6 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	3 m	1 m	3 m
Landscape Open Space	15%	0%	15%
Lot Coverage	30%	45%	30%
Height	8 m	10 m	8 m
Total Gross Floor Area	1,000 m ²		
Gross Floor Area for Individual Uses	300 m ²		
Gross Floor Area – Food Stores	n/a		500 m ²
Gross Floor Area – Restaurants, Take-out	n/a		150 m ²



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A6 – Arterial Commercial Zone Regulations

Regulations	AC1(1)	AC2	AC4	AC4(9)
Lot Area	450 m ²			
Lot Frontage	15 m			
Lot Area – Existing Dwellings	270 m ²			
Lot Frontage – Existing Dwellings	9 m			
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	0 m			
Rear Yard Yard Depth	4.5 m	7.5 m		
Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	1 m and	6 m		
Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	3 m	0 m		
Landscape Open Space	10%			
Lot Coverage	40%			
Height	10 m			
Total Gross Floor Area	300 m ²		800 m ²	
Total Gross Floor Area – Eat-in Restaurants	n/a		300 m ²	

Table A7 – Highway Service Commercial Zone Regulations

Regulations	HS	HS(4)	HS(5)	HS1	HS2
Lot Frontage	30 m				
Lot Depth	30 m				
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	6.0 m*				
Interior Side & Rear Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	6.0m**				
Interior Side & Rear Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	3 m**, and 0.0 m within the same HS zone				
Landscape Open Space	15%				
Lot Coverage	30%				
Height	8 m		15 m		8 m

*plus 1 m per 3 m of building height above 3 m

**plus 1.5m per 3 m of building height above 4 m



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A8 – Neighbourhood Shopping Area Zone Regulations

Regulations	NSA5
Lot Frontage	25 m
Lot Depth	40 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	0 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	8 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	0.0 m within the same NSA zone and 3 m from any other zone boundary
Landscape Open Space	15%
Lot Coverage	30%
Height	8 m
Total Gross Floor Area	500 m ²
Gross Floor Area – Office	20% of Gross Floor Area
Gross Floor Area – Food Stores	3,200 m ²
Gross Floor Area – Restaurants	500.0 m ²

Table A9 – Automobile Service Station Zone Regulations

Regulations	NSA5
Lot Frontage	30 m
Lot Depth	30 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	15 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	6 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	3 m
Landscape Open Space	15%
Lot Coverage	25%
Height	9 m
Total Gross Floor Area	1,000 m ²
Gross Floor Area – Office	20% of Gross Floor Area
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth for Fuel Pumps, Gas Bar Kiosk and Dispenser Canopy	3 m



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A10 – Restricted Service Commercial Zone Regulations

Regulations	RSC6
Lot Frontage	45 m ²
Lot Depth	60 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	6 m plus 1 m per 3 m metres of building height above the first 3 m
Rear & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	6 m plus 1.5 m per 4 m metres of building height above the first 4 m
Rear & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	3 m plus 1.5 m per 4 m metres of building height above the first 4 m; or 0.0 m within the same RSC zone
Landscape Open Space	15%
Lot Coverage	30%
Height	12 m
Open Storage Space	30% of lot area

Table A11 – Regional Facility Zone Regulations

Regulations	RF
Lot Area	4,000 m ²
Lot Frontage	500 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth	6 m*
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth	6 m**
Landscape Open Space	15%
Lot Coverage	30%
Height	40 m

*plus 1 m per 3 m of building height above 3 m

**plus 1.2 m per 3 m of building height above 3 m



APPENDIX A

Blackfriars/Petersville HCD - City of London Zoning By-law Zone Regulation Tables

Table A12 – Community Facility Zone Regulations

Regulations	CF1	CF2
Lot Area	1,200 m ²	1,200 m ²
Lot Frontage	30 m	30 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street	6 m	6 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m	8 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Primary Collector	7 m	7 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Secondary Collector	6 m	6 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Residential Zone	10 m	10 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth – Abutting a Non-Residential Zone	6 m	6 m
Landscape Open Space	25%	25%
Lot Coverage	30%	40%
Height	12 m	15 m

Table A13 – Neighbourhood Facility Zone Regulations

Regulations	NF
Lot Area	700 m ²
Lot Frontage	30 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Local Street	6 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Arterial	8 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Primary Collector	6 m
Front & Exterior Side Yard Depth – Secondary Collector	6 m
Rear Yard & Interior Side Yard Depth	6 m
Landscape Open Space	25%
Lot Coverage	30%
Height	12 m

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APPENDIX B

Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE

BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HCD PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT #1

September 16, 2013 St. Georges Anglican Church, 227 Wharncliffe Road North, London, ON

Name:

Address:

Do you live within study area? If yes, how long have you lived within the area?

Do you have a family history in the study area?

Do you have any special stories, photographs, news paper clippings, etc related to its history you would like to share with the team?

What do you notice or feel when you enter Blackfriars/Petersville that makes it different from other areas?

(additional questions on back)

September 16, 2013

QUESTIONNAIRE

What is the most predominant factor that distinguishes Blackfriars/Petersville from its surroundings?

- A) Building character or distinctive architecture
- B) Rivers, shorelines, and other natural features
- C) History (Original settlement history of events)
- D) Other, Please specify

What do you consider to be the geographic boundaries of the Study Area?

Do you think there are numerous smaller community areas that make up Blackfriars/Petersville? Please describe.

Do you have any special concerns or issues you would like the consulting team be aware of?

QUESTIONNAIRE

BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HCD PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT #2

October 30, 2013

St. Georges Anglican Church, 227 Wharncliffe Road North, London, ON

Name:

Address:

Do you live within study area? If yes, how long have you lived within the area?

Do you support the Refined Study Area presented tonight?

Do you support the creation of a Heritage Conservation District in the recommended areas?

QUESTIONNAIRE

What would you consider an appropriate boundary for this district?

In your opinion, what are some of the key contributing heritage elements in this area that define its character as a "district"?

Do you have any special concerns or issues you would like the consulting team be aware of?



APPENDIX C

Summary of Historic Events and Movements



SUMMARY OF HISTORIC EVENTS AND MOVEMENTS IN THE BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE STUDY AREA

1792-3

Augustus Jones surveyed the Thames River and commented upon the geography surrounding the forks.

1796

The Crown purchased land (containing the future London Township) from Chippewa chiefs.

1807

Joshua Applegarth applied for a licence of occupation of 1000 acres of land north and west of the forks of the Thames for the cultivation of hemp.

1810

Mahlon Burwell began the survey of London Township, which he completed in 1819.

1817

William Montague settled near Applegarth and often ferried new settlers across the Thames (near the present location of the Wharncliffe Bridge).

1823

John Kent arrived in London Township, taking up land on both sides of the Proof Line.

The first Blackfriars Bridge had been built by this year.

1834

Walter Nixon petitioned for land west of the Wharncliffe Highway.

1854

John Kent divided his land east of the road to Blackfriars Bridge into park lots.

1854

Samuel Peters commissioned a subdivision of his lands between Wharncliffe, Blackfriars, the river, and Oxford Street, requesting that the new development be called “Petersville” rather than, as was the case with a small settlement already established there, “Bridgetown.”

As still extant buildings indicate, the new Petersville was characterized largely by a collection of one-storey Ontario cottages, some, quite substantial, built of brick, and others of wood.



1863

Duncan Campbell subdivided land south of Blackfriars, east of Wharncliffe and west of Centre Street.

1868

Alexander Leslie, a prosperous nursery and market gardener, established a Gothic Revival homestead at what is now 81 Wilson Avenue. His later subdivisions of his land created Leslie Street (at the northern boundary of his property), Cherry Street, and Rogers Avenue, originally Surrey Street.

1870

A Methodist Chapel was built on Ann Street on land sold for \$5.00 by the Peters Family. (It was renovated and enlarged in 1880.)

1871

The first Kensington Bridge (a wooden one) opened between City of London and Kensington/Petersville.

1872

John Walker subdivided land purchased from Joseph Nixon into the Kensington subdivision west of Wharncliffe Highway, metaphorically paving the way for a barrage of new building in the southern part of the Study Area. The remaining physical evidence suggests that development may have been slower than expected. While there are some buildings from the 1870s still standing – mainly cottages with Italianate influence sometimes evident in the arched windows, most appear later.

July 1: The Petersville post office opened on Blackfriars Street with William Loughrey as postmaster.

1874

January: A flood on the Thames caused heavy damage in Kensington.

St. James Anglican Church, Westminster, established a mission in Petersville, meeting in the schoolhouse.

June 8: The Middlesex County Council passed By-Laws (#s 243 and 244) leading to the incorporation of Petersville, then with a population of 1,097.

1875

January 1: By-laws incorporating Petersville as a village went into effect.

January 4: Petersville held its first municipal election.

September 28: Blackfriar's Bridge opened. It was the first iron bridge in London. In 2013, it is still theoretically the oldest iron bridge in North America still open to vehicular traffic.

1876

Barrister William H. Bartram, reeve of Petersville and largely responsible for the change of its name to London West, builds Willowbank, a dignified and substantial Italianate home on the north bank of the Thames River.



**BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT STUDY
CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO**

August 14: New Petersville school opened at the corner of Ann and William Streets (Wharnccliffe Road and Empress Avenue).

October 8: St. George's Anglican Church dedicated. It had begun as a mission in 1874, established by Rev. Evans Davis of London South.

1877

Tecumseh Park (now Labatt Park) was officially open. London merchant W.J. Reid bought land and built Tecumseh Park, a baseball diamond, and seating. The London Tecumsehs won the International Association Baseball Championship that year. Labatt Park is now acknowledged as the "oldest continually operating baseball grounds in the world."

1878

Collins Hall was built by Daniel Collins on Blackfriars Street.

1879

Joseph Andrews launched the steamer *Enterprise* from L.C. Rogers' shipyard at Victoria Pier, Kensington.

1880

Jerry McDonald opened the Riverside Hotel south of Dundas Street overlooking the forks.

Anglicans built a small white brick church near the corner of Wharnccliffe Road and Ann Street (now Empress Avenue).

London City Gas Works extended lines onto Blackfriars Bridge.

November 1: Kensington Post Office opened with Robert A. Jones as postmaster.

December: After a stormy meeting, the Petersville village council voted to change its name to London West.

1881

The first bridge was built across Oxford Street. The iron bridge was constructed by the Hamilton Bridge and Tool Company.

February 17: The Ontario Legislature passed the Bill changing the name of Petersville to London West. The population of the village was 1,602.

1883

July 10, 11: A flood on the North Branch washed out Oxford and Kensington Bridges, and devastated London West. As a result, in following years, a timber and earthen embankment and an esplanade were erected between Napier Street and the Kensington Bridge.



1884

A second Kensington Bridge was built across the north branch by the Dominion Bridge Company (rebuilt in 1930 by the Hamilton Bridge Company).

1887

A school for Kensington children opened in Robert Albert Jones' Albert Hall on Wharncliffe.

1890

September 21: Kensington Mission began at 79 Dundas Street. It united with Empress Methodist church in 1916.

1891

Population at the end of the year: 1,916.

1893

London West and City of London Councils began negotiations over annexation.

London West Council made an agreement with the London Street Railway Company to extend services into the village.

1897

June 28: London West residents voted to annex the village to the City of London.

September 2: The Province of Ontario proclaimed future annexation of London West to the City of London.

December 20: London West annexed by City of London.

December 21: The London Street Railway Bridge built over the north branch of the Thames River opened.

1897-98

The boisterous Queen Anne house at 101 Wharncliffe Road was built for market gardener John Kelley (Kelly). A later owner, James Rogers, was a manager at Rogers' Electric, and, as a landowner, was responsible for the name of Rogers Street.

1898

Many West London streets were renamed to prevent duplication with others in London.

Water mains were laid along West London streets.

March: 80 feet of the dyke along the west side of the north branch of the Thames collapsed in floodwater.

1900-1915

Very simplified 1½-storey Queen Anne Cottages were constructed throughout the area. With a rectangular footprint, either a straight gable or a gambrel roof, and a decorative upper storey on the façade, they represent a



BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO

distinctive vernacular interpretation in this area that suggests the use of local builders. The popularity of the form in this area also indicates a local building boom during these years.

1904

March 25-27: A severe flood ravaged West London.

1905

Earthen dyke constructed between Oxford and Blackfriars.

1914

October: Wharncliffe Bridge over main branch of Thames opened.

1915

A concrete breakwater was completed, replacing the earthen one from Oxford to Blackfriars.

1921

St. Joseph's Separate School opened on Wilson Ave., under the supervision of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

1925

Empress Avenue Public School was built at Empress and Wharncliffe, replacing the earlier school on the site.

1937

A massive flood in April broke through the breakwater and flooded West London.

1938

London used the Local Improvement Act to finance concrete facing of the breakwater.

1946

The Provincial Legislature passed legislation enabling conservation authorities.

1947

A flood in 1947 prompted London City Council to allocate \$135,000 for flood control measures.

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority was established.

1950-1951

The sections of the Study Area west of Wharncliffe road experienced an influx of post-war Victory Housing, especially in northwest corner of the Area. A particularly well-defined Victory Housing neighbourhood was laid out and immediately filled just south of Oxford Street, west of Cooper Street, north of Paul Street, and east of the rise in land to the west of the flood plain.



**BLACKFRIARS/PETERSVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT STUDY
CITY OF LONDON, ONTARIO**

1952

July 9: St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church on Charles Street was dedicated.

1953

The City Public Utilities Commission opened its first outdoor artificial rink on Granville Street, supported by London West Lions Club. This formed the basis for West Lions Park, which now hosts several well-equipped sports fields.

June 25: Fanshawe Dam was officially opened.

1954

A new bridge was built over the river at Oxford Street, and a new CPR overpass was constructed over the north branch of the Thames River and Oxford Street.

The new St. Joseph's school opened on Charles Street.

December 1: The cornerstone of the new Empress United Church on Blackfriars Street was laid.

1958

The former Wharncliffe bridge was replaced with one of concrete construction.

2002

Kinsman Recreation Centre opened on Granville Street, adjacent to West Lions Park.

2010

Empress United Church was sold to Southside Construction. The congregation merged with that of Colborne United Church.

2013

Revelations about new student housing planned for the area led to a decision to assess the area for its potential as a Heritage Conservation District.

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