

Draft Statement of Significance: McCormick's Factory – 1156 Dundas Street**Description of Property**

The property consists of an "E" shaped main building of four storeys, with a five storey block in the centre, located at 1156 Dundas Street, between McCormick Boulevard on the west and Ashland Avenue on the east in the City of London on Lots 98 -106, Part Blocks E and F on Plan 494. Built in 1913 subsequent additions have been made to the original structure but the designation statement does not apply to these with respect to architectural features.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Interest

Initially built for the McCormick's Biscuit Company, this structure retains importance for its historic association with Thomas McCormick and family who played significant roles in London's economic and cultural development. Architecturally, it is one of the few remaining examples of the early modern industrial style in London with some unique features adding to its importance. Contextually, the former factory illustrates the relationship of the building to the industrial growth of the city and the role the factory played for the East London community.

Thomas McCormick came to London from Ireland as a young man. In 1858 he opened a small shop on Clarence Street and began to make and sell candy. Success forced a move to larger premises on Dundas Street and then to Wellington and Dundas, the site later of Hotel London. Thomas McCormick Senior founded the McCormick Retirement Home in London. After his death the business was taken over by his sons, including Thomas Jr. By 1912, a larger and more efficient plant was needed. Thomas McCormick Jr. largely designed the new plant after visiting over a hundred biscuit and candy factories in Europe and the United States. What he, and the London architectural firm of Watt and Blackwell created, was considered to be one of the finest and most sanitary factories in North America. In 1914 the new plant was opened in East London on more than 100 acres of farmland, called Priests Swamp on old maps.

Constructed by the firm of Frost and Winchester, Windsor, the building featured an early use of the Kahn System of steel encased in concrete in the London area. Albert Kahn was one of the great industrial architects of the early twentieth century and his brother Julius established the Trussed Concrete Steel Company in Walkerville. Considered fireproof, its outside walls were faced with white glazed terra cotta, very rare in London. With windows making up about 68 per cent of the outside walls the plant was exceptionally well lit and ventilated. It was described in company brochures as a "sunshine palace" and a "Palace of Sweets". The total floor space of almost 10 acres was occupied by as many as 1000 workers producing 135, 000 pounds of candy and 100,000 pounds of biscuits in a regular working day.

The McCormick's factory was meant to be a model factory, illustrating state of the art features of factory design, and to include features such as the provision of a baseball park, bowling greens, a tennis court and croquet grounds for the enjoyment of the workers.

In 1927 McCormick's Limited amalgamated with D. S Perrin to form the Canada Biscuit Company. Thereafter the ownership changed several times. Regardless of ownership the factory remained a notable landmark in Old East London and is one of several district structures exemplifying the industrial growth of the city into this area.

Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that embody the heritage value of the McCormick's factory as a unique example of early 20th century industrial architecture in London include:

- Four storeys with a centre block of five storeys
 - Its shallow "E" shape with three slightly projecting arms on a five story building
 - A main entrance canopy supported by chains
 - Box like pendants on the canopy feature the letters M and C on the outer faces; a secondary entrance to the east has a similar canopy.
 - Original large glassed areas with three windows which open surrounded by glass bricks.
 - Window openings in the centre arm on the first and fifth floors vary from the remainder by having five smaller windows at the bottom with glass bricks above.
 - Basement windows are mostly filled with glass brick.
 - The facades on three sides are covered in white glazed terra cotta tiles.
 - Between the window openings are narrow projections which extend from ground level to just below the top of the building.
 - Window sills are of curved glazed brick. Under the sills are rectangular tiled areas with a slightly raised border one tile deep.
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Heritage Attributes(Draft Revisions to the Previous Statement)

Key exterior attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the former McCormick's factory as a unique example of early 20th century industrial architecture in London include:

- Rectangular massing set back approximately 18 m. from Dundas Street, with east and west pavilions of four stories and the central projection of five stories; dimensionally, its length across the front, Dundas Street, façade is approximately 109 metres, with a depth of varying dimensions, from 43 metres on the west, to 34 metres in the centre. (Later additions to the original factory are not identified as having heritage interest worthy of preservation.)
- The facades on the south, east and west are clad with white glazed terra cotta tiles; vertically, tile panels provide a rhythmic, pilaster-like, effect from base to cornice and, horizontally, panels serve to frame window openings.
- Along the Dundas façade, window openings on each floor form a pattern of five openings on the east and west bays, four between each bay, three in the central bay. One full opening is present on the sides of each projecting bay with a smaller single window at the point where the bay meets the main structure.
- Window openings on the east and west facades are defined by a similar cladding pattern as exists on the front façade.
- Window sills are of curved glazed brick. Under the sills are rectangular tiled areas with a slightly raised border one tile deep.
- A main entrance canopy is supported by chains; Box like pendants on the canopy feature the letters M and C on the outer faces; secondary entrances to the east and west on the front façade have similar, but smaller, canopies.

Notes:

1. At present, there is an added front storey extension on the east projection clad in a material similar to, but not, terra cotta. The heritage attributes above suggest that this addition can be removed to restore the original front façade appearance. If so, dimensions can be made more precise at a later date.
2. It is not certain what may be beneath the present cornice cladding material.
3. It is assumed that the portion of the statement of value related to the historical values of the McCormick name and business will remain as previously published.