

Statement of Significance for 161 Windermere Road

Legal Description of Property

161 Windermere Road is a two storey white brick residence on Concession 3 PT Lot 18, former London Township, Middlesex County.

Statement of Significance

The two storey white brick residence at 161 Windermere Road is a building of architectural importance for its Queen Anne style, and cultural significance for its ties to the market gardening industry near London.

The two storey house was built circa 1890 by Lemuel (sometimes recorded as “Samuel”) Cole. Recorded in census documents as an oil operator residing in Petrolia, Ontario in 1871, Cole relocated to London Township by 1881, purchasing 23 acres of land on Concession 3 Lot 18 from William Glass in 1882. Cole became a market gardener, with assessment rolls showing two acres planted in orchards or gardens, and four acres planted in wheat by 1885. According to census documents, by 1891 Cole and his wife Grace owned a two-storey, nine-room brick house on the property, placing the construction of the house around 1890. Cole owned the property until 1910, residing there until sometime in 1910-1911.

The early to mid 1900s saw ownership of the property on which 161 Windermere sits pass to other market gardeners, including “The Lettuce Man” Frank Whitehall, who owned the property from 1910 to 1920, residing there from circa 1913 to 1920. From 1920 to 1946 the property was owned by Albert and Harold Lucas, brothers who had worked for Whitehall after moving to the London area from New Brunswick in 1913. The Lucas brothers were market gardeners who also owned Harbert Gardens on Concession 4 of London Township, where they kept four greenhouses, selling their produce to both local wholesale distributors and at the Covent Garden Market. Harold Lucas was involved in a number of local community and political organizations, including serving as Deputy Reeve of the township from 1946-49.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Among the many Queen Anne style domestic structures in London, the two storey house at 161 Windermere Road stands out in terms of its unusual massing and fine execution of decorative details. (N.B. the two- bay garage attached to the west elevation is not included as a heritage attribute.) The heritage attributes typical of the Queen Anne style include:

- White brick exterior
- Asymmetrical massing
- A diagonally positioned projecting front entrance way, featuring a double leaf entrance with recessed panels and transom
- A decorative sculptured wood second floor balcony, atop of which is a gabled, open roof
- Patterned slate tiles applied to main roof and second storey balcony
- Patterned slate applied to the partial roof of the first storey of the double bay window on the north elevation, and to the gablet behind the chimney of the east elevation

- Copper eaves troughs and down spouts, with decorative animal figures
- Two storey angled bay window of the north elevation and the two storey rounded bay window of the east elevation
- Decorative gables crowning the bay windows of the north and east elevations which include sculpted barge boards and oversized corner brackets
- Patterned coved cornice above the second storey of the east elevation double bay window and along the cornice of the first storey of the angled entrance
- Cut stone lintels over all the windows and doors of the north, east and west elevations (of particular note is the pediment over the main entrance, with its delicate floral pattern)
- Cut stone coursing between the stories of the two storey bay window on the east elevation
- Partially capped linked double chimneys of the east and west elevations
- Cut stone block foundation