

Heritage Impact Statement

653 Talbot Street

London Language Institute



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A Professional Planning Practice

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the London Language Institute, Zelinka Priamo Ltd. has prepared a Heritage Impact Statement for a proposed development at 653 Talbot Street.

A Heritage Impact Statement is required because the subject site is listed as a Priority 1 building in the City of London's Heritage Building Inventory, it is adjacent to a property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, and is adjacent to listed Priority 1 properties.

SECTION 2 – SITE DETAILS

2.1 The Subject Lands and Neighbourhood

The subject lands are located within the Talbot neighbourhood which is viewed as London's first suburb (Appendix 1). This area has been identified as a potential heritage conservation district within Heritage Places: A Description of Potential Heritage Conservation Areas in the City of London.



Figure 1

The first of the large riverside mansions in this neighbourhood was "Locust Mount" at 661 Talbot Street (Figure 1). Named after the locust trees in the area, it was one of London's finest homes built during the prosperous period between 1849 and the panic of 1857. Its builder, Elijah Leonard, Jr., was a London businessman who became a major figure in southwestern Ontario's economy in the late nineteenth century. Unfortunately, it suffered a fire in 2000 and was demolished in 2008. The property is currently

vacant.

The neighbour on the south side, 651 Talbot Street, is another estate built c.1905 in the Queen Anne style that has significant features which include an arched cut stone doorway, a large, two-storey verandah and various decorative columns and brackets (Figure 2).

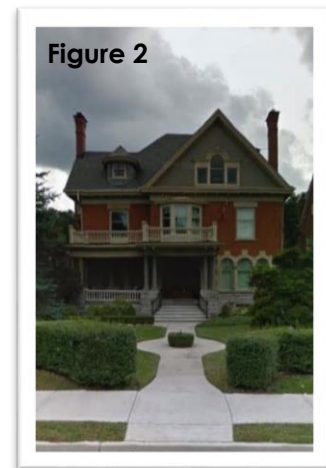


Figure 2



Figure 3

Both 661 and 651 Talbot Street are non-designated properties listed on the City of London's Inventory of Heritage Resources.

The property located directly across from the subject site at the southeast corner of Talbot and John Streets is designated properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (Figure 3).

"652 Talbot Street is a classical 2 ½ storey stuccoed building with an elaborate enclosed entranceway, and open verandah bordered by an iron

railing, recessed panels and cornice surrounding the first floor. The second floor was added later.

William C. Furness, Manager of the Montreal Telegraph Company, owned the property from 1868 until about 1912 when it was purchased by the daughters of Josiah Blackburn of the London Free Press. V. Grace and Susan M. Blackburn, both writers of note, were well known in London's cultural circles." (By law No. L.S.P.-2674-338)

The subject lands are known municipally as 653 Talbot Street (Figure 4). The lands have an area of 0.225 hectares (0.556 acres) with a lot frontage of 25.3m (83 ft) and a lot depth 89.4m (293 ft).



The 2.5-storey red brick Georgian Revival dwelling, c.1908, has unique features that include sash pane windows with upper level shutters, original chimneys, a side gable roof with three dormer windows and a unique entrance pergola and masonry wall along Talbot Street.

The small garage at the north side of the dwelling is not original to the dwelling and it is unknown when it was added. Parking is currently located to the north side of the building through a tight, single lane with direct access to Talbot Street. The rear of the subject lands slopes down to

Ann Street Park.

The property is identified as a Priority 1 building of heritage interest in the City of London Heritage Inventory.



SECTION 3 – POLICY REVIEW

3.1 Provincial Policy Statement 2014 (PPS)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act “provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning” in order to ensure efficient, cost-efficient development and the protection of resources. All planning applications, including Zoning By-Law Amendment applications, are required to be consistent with these policies.

Policies in the 2014 PPS relevant to the subject lands are as follows:

“Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscape shall be conserved.” Section 2.6.1

“Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except 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.” Section 2.6.3

3.2 City of London Official Plan

Section 13 provides policies regarding the cultural heritage value of properties in London. The subject lands are adjacent to a protected heritage property and must have regard for the following policies in the Official Plan:

Section 13.2.3.1 – Alteration or Demolition on Adjacent Lands

“Where a heritage building is protected under Parts IV, V or VI of the Ontario Heritage Act, development, site alteration or demolition may be permitted on adjacent lands where it has been evaluated through a Heritage Impact Statement, and demonstrated to the satisfaction of Council that the heritage values, attributes and integrity of the protected heritage property are retained. For the purposes of this section, adjacent lands shall include lands that are contiguous, and lands that are directly opposite a protected heritage property, separated only by a laneway or municipal road.”

“A holding provision may be applied on the zoning of lands adjacent to protected heritage properties, to ensure that prior to development or site alteration, a Heritage Impact Statement is required to demonstrate how the heritage values, attributes and integrity of the protected heritage property are to be conserved and how any impacts may be mitigated.”

3.4 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport developed the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit as a guide to help understand the heritage conservation process in Ontario.

The tool kit provides guidelines for the preparation of heritage studies, such as Heritage Impact Statements and provides a list of possible negative impacts on a cultural heritage resource. These include, but are not limited to, the following impacts:

1. Destruction of any, part of any, significant heritage attributes or features;
2. Alteration that is not sympathetic, or is incompatible with the historic fabric and appearance;
3. Shadows created that alter the appearance of a heritage attribute or change the viability of a natural feature or plantings, such as a garden;
4. Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship;
5. Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of built and natural features;
6. A change in land use where the change in use negates the property's cultural heritage value; and
7. Land disturbances, such as change in grade that alters soils and drainage patterns that adversely affect cultural heritage resources.

SECTION 4 – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the conversion of the dwelling and property to a centre for tutoring English as a second language. The main floor will function as the administration level and common areas, the second floor will contain four instruction areas, and the third floor will contain additional instruction areas.

The intent is to maintain the property in its current state, as much as possible, with the main focus on the front facade of the dwelling. The interior of the dwelling has been gutted by the previous owner, and the exterior requires repair and maintenance. The exterior repairs will include repointing of brick, repair work to soffits/decorative moulding/window moulding, and repair/replacement of the roof sheathing and shingles. All the windows will be replaced because they are all in various states of deterioration. The style of the windows will be constant with the current windows especially on the front façade.

A minimal addition is proposed at the rear of the dwelling to allow for the extension of the fire stairs to the second and third floors required by the Ontario Building Code. The proposed addition will require the removal of three existing windows and one chimney. The height of the addition does not extend above the slope of the existing roof and any views of it will be minimal from Talbot Street. The design of the addition is not finalized but will be constructed with reclaimed brick and most likely will have new windows.

Due to the very narrow lane access, the intent is to widen the driveway for better accessibility for pedestrians and vehicles. This would require the removal of the retaining wall that runs along the south side of the driveway from Talbot Street to the front door. In addition, a secondary access point will be added to the south of the front yard to act as a drop off area. This will require the removal of a small part of the front brick wall along with the north brick column. The column is proposed to be repurposed/replaced.

A portion of the rear landscaped open space will be replaced with a parking area required for the proposed conversion. The existing garage will be altered and will be opened up to act as a

pass through for accessing the new parking lot, which includes 8 parking spaces, and a sidewalk connecting it directly to the rear entrance of the building.

The brick wall along Talbot Street will be repaired and will have new wrought iron or aluminum fence added to the top. The existing pergola will be repaired and a new wrought iron or aluminum gate will be added.

The majority of the trees on site will be retained; however, a few trees may be removed and replaced, especially those deemed to be in poor condition.

Refer to Appendix 2 for Site Plan and Elevations.

SECTION 5 – ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION

5.1 Provincial Policy Statement 2014 (PPS)

The proposed conversion is consistent with the policies of the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement. The existing building will be retained with very little change to the exterior and will conserve the heritage attributes of the adjacent property designated under Part IV of the Ontario Act.

5.2 City of London Official Plan

The proposed conversion will be sensitive to the characteristics of the adjacent protected heritage properties and will not have a negative impact on their heritage values, attributes or integrity. The existing building will be retained and will be sympathetic to its neighbours heritage attributes since there is no change to its scale, massing, form or to its contribution to the streetscape.

5.3 Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

An impact assessment as outlined in the *Ontario Heritage tool Kit, Info sheet #5 Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans (2006)* is provided as follows:

- Destruction of any, part of any, significant heritage attributes or features:
 - The existing building on the subject land will be retained, with very little change to the exterior. Changes to the property mainly include repairs and general maintenance.
 - It is understood the retention of original windows is strongly encouraged when it pertains to historically significant structures. However, at this time the property is not designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and it is not known if all the windows of the property would be considered significant heritage attributes. Maintaining the front façade of this building is important; therefore, there is no proposed changes to the position or size of the window openings. The decision was made to replace them with a similar style because the condition of them was not suitable for retention.
 - The proposed addition at the rear of the dwelling does require the removal of two existing window openings, one dormer and one chimney, which could be seen as the removal of potential significant heritage attributes. As stated above, the

property is not designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and is unevaluated, therefore any potential significant heritage attributes or features are just speculative at this time. Consideration was given to the potential impacts to the property as a whole when deciding the location of the proposed addition. The proposed location was chosen because it is at the rear of the property, would have minimal views to it from Talbot Street and would have the least impact on the main intent to preserve the front façade of the building.

- The existing garage is intended to be altered to accommodate an access to the new parking lot at the rear of the property. The garage could potentially be a significant heritage attribute; however, it is not original to the dwelling and is not being completely removed just altered to allow vehicles to pass through it.
 - The proposed conversion will be sympathetic to its neighbours heritage attributes since there is no change to its scale, massing, form or to its contribution to the streetscape.
- Alteration that is not sympathetic, or is incompatible with the historic fabric and appearance:
 - The proposed alterations are compatible with the historic fabric and appearance of the property or of the neighbourhood.
 - The intent is to maintain the property in its current state with the main focus on the front facade of the dwelling. Majority of the proposed is repair work to existing features which is in keeping with general maintenance of the property.
 - The proposed addition that is required to accommodate a staircase as per the Ontario Building Code is small and is located at the rear of the property. The location was chosen to avoid incompatibility with the front façade of the dwelling and the streetscape. The views of the addition from Talbot Street is intended to be minimal, with a slight possibility of a view at the south side of the building between 651 Talbot Street (Figure 5).
 - To avoid incompatibility, the existing windows will be replaced with a similar style to maintain the current appearance of the front façade.



- Shadows created that alter the appearance of a heritage attribute or change the visibility of an associated natural feature, plantings, such as a garden:
 - A shadow study was not required by staff; however, no shadowing is anticipated to effect 652 Talbot or 651 Talbot Street.
- Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship:

- The proposed conversion does not isolate heritage attributes of the neighbourhood. There is no change to how the existing built form, massing, and setbacks of the property contribute to the rhythm of the existing streetscape.
- Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of built and natural features:
 - The intent of the proposal is to maintain its existing streetscape presence and will not have a direct or indirect obstruction to the significant views or vistas to the streetscape.
- A change in land use where the change in use negates the property's cultural heritage value:
 - Historically the area has been residential; however, there are other office type uses along Talbot Street that include law offices, dentists, and consulting firms. The daily function of the proposed learning facility would be very similar to the existing residential use. The parking is proposed at the rear of the property to avoid negative impacts to the residential character of the area.
- Land disturbances such as change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect cultural heritage resources:
 - Measures will be made to avoid any adverse impacts on the adjacent land if any land disturbances on the subject lands is required.

SECTION 6 – CONCLUSION

It is our opinion the proposed conversion of the existing dwelling and property to a centre for tutoring English as a second language will conserve the significant built heritage resources of the property and surrounding neighbourhood.

The intent is to maintain and restore the heritage elements of the property with the main focus to the front façade. The intent of the proposal is to maintain its existing streetscape appearance to conserve the heritage attributes of the adjacent protected and listed non-designated heritage properties.

Appendix 1 & 2

SOURCES

Photo credit for figure 1: Ivey Family London Room, London Public Library, PG F-353, Glen Curnoe, 1988

City of London Fire Insurance Plans 1881 (revised 1888), 1892 (revised 1907) and 1912 (revised 1922), University of Western Ontario Libraries Map and Data Centre;

Aerial Photos, 1922 and 1965, University of Western Ontario Libraries Map and Data Centre;

Inventory of Heritage Resources 2006, City of London; and

Ontario Heritage Tool Kit, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.