

# Advisory Committee of Council Information Report

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Committee	Heritage Guelph
Date	Monday, September 11, 2023
Subject	<b>220 Gordon Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report</b>

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## Description

This information report provides a cultural heritage evaluation and draft statement of significance and determination of cultural heritage value or interest for 220 Gordon Street. This report is provided to Heritage Guelph for review and comment in preparation for a notice of intention to designate the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

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## Executive Summary

### Key Findings

The stone building at 220 Gordon Street is listed as a non-designated built heritage resource on the City of Guelph's Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This report recommends that the 2-storey, limestone portion of the building at 220 Gordon Street meets five of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22, made under the Ontario Heritage Act.

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## Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

### Location

The subject property is located on the southeast corner of Gordon Street at James Street East (Figure 1). The property is adjacent to the Brooklyn and College Hill Heritage Conservation District.

The legal description of the property is Lots 1 and 2 of Benjamin Harrison's unregistered survey. These lots and the existing buildings are indicated on a surveyor's plan of the subject property from 1979 (Figure 2).

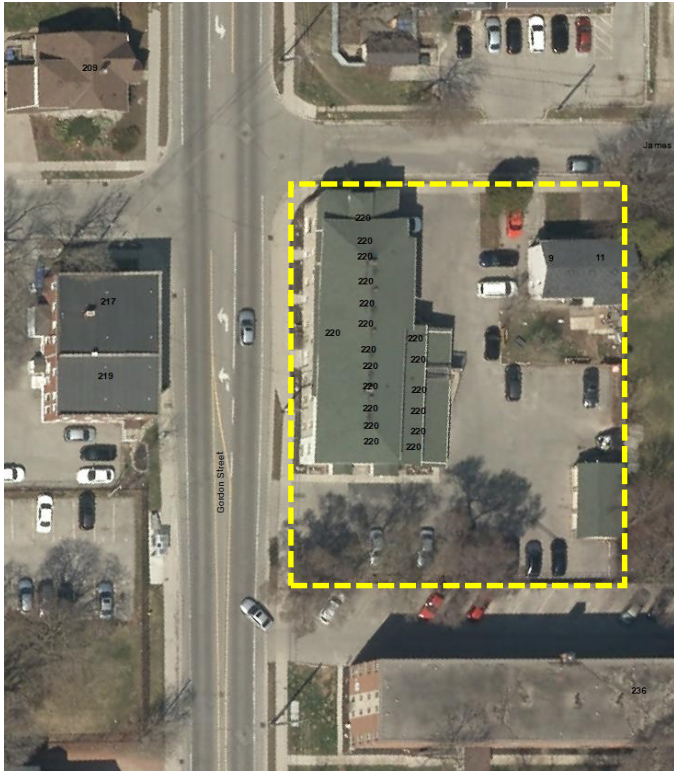


Figure 1 - 2021 orthographic photo with subject property indicated in yellow. (City of Guelph GIS)

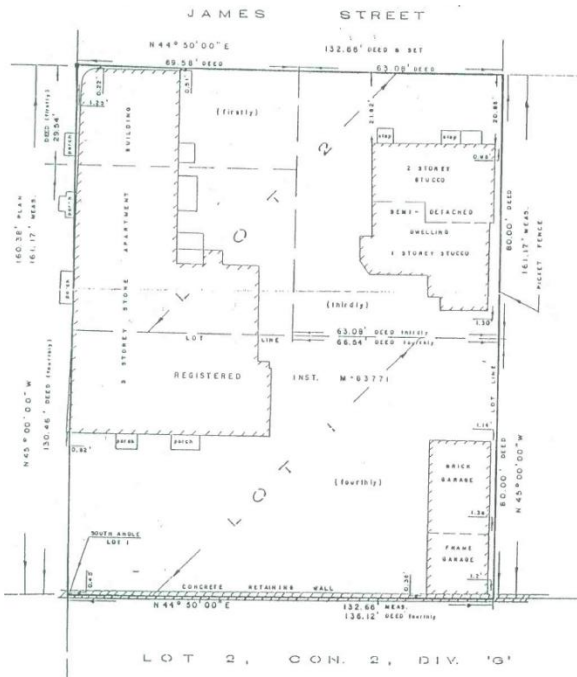


Figure 2 - 1979 Survey Plan (Van Harten Surveying Ltd)

The subject property includes: a 3-storey, apartment building on the corner (Figures 3, 4, 5); two semi-detached dwellings addressed as 9 and 11 James Street East (Attachment 1 - Figure 6); and a brick, 3-car garage in the southeast corner (Attachment 1 - Figure 7).



Figure 3 - 220 Gordon St, view from west. (Photo: S. Robinson, 2023)



Figure 4: 220 Gordon St, view from south, 220 Gordon St (Photo: S. Robinson, 2023)



Figure 5: 220 Gordon St, rear of property from north (Photo: S. Robinson, 2023)

## Background

The property known today as 220 Gordon Street was part of lands originally owned by Benjamin Harrison in 1843. At that time Gordon Street was known as Dundas Road. Harrison had created a survey of his land which was never officially registered but is still used today to determine early land ownership in this block. Harrison's survey is shown in Attachment 2 - Figure 1 and consists of Lots 1,2 and 6-12 all east of Dundas Road (now Gordon Street) and south of Bay Street (now James Street East). The lots indicated on the north side of Bay Street are from William Day's survey registered separately as Plan 302.

In 1835 William Crowe bought Lot 1 from Benjamin Harrison and the south part of Lot 2 in 1856. William Crowe and his wife Emma Masters operated a wagon and carriage building shop on that property. A native of Laxton in Yorkshire, William Crowe settled in Guelph in 1832 with his parents John Crowe and Harriot Aldous. William Crowe had four siblings: Dr. W. R. Crowe, Ann Crowe, John Crowe (farmer) and Robert Crowe (a carpenter and blacksmith). The extended Crowe family was an industrious and significant family in Guelph. William's father was a tailor and his mother taught in school. William's brother Robert Crowe married into the Raymond family who had established the Raymond Sewing Machine Company. William's nephew, John Crowe, initially worked at the Raymond Sewing Machine Company and was responsible for a patent issued for developing improvements to the sewing machine. Later, John Crowe started the Crowe Foundry on Norfolk Street. In 1854 William Crowe constructed a cultivator used for tillage that received an award at the Guelph Exhibition. He was a choir leader, Sunday school superintendent, a Farmers & Mechanics Institute committee member, as well as a lieutenant in the McKenzie Rebellion and a major with the Canadian Rifles.

In 1854, a fire burned the Crowe buildings on the Gordon Street property, including a cottage, the wagon shop, stable, and outbuildings. The cost of replacing the buildings was \$3,000 and without insurance a subscription was started to assist William in recommencing his business. The footprint of the Crowe buildings is seen in Cooper's 1862 and 1875 maps of the Town of Guelph (Attachment 2 - Figures 2 and 3) and in a detail from the 1877 Atlas of the County of Wellington (Attachment 2 - Figure 4). These images show the building on the property as extending from Lot 2 down into Lot 1 with an L-shape footprint. It is not known when the eastern extension of the building was demolished.

By 1864 Crowe withdrew his claim to the property which transferred it to his mortgager John Howitt. William Crowe remained in Guelph until his death November 13, 1866, at the age of 52.

The land title abstract (Attachment 2 - Figure 5) indicates that in 1873 Lots 1 and 2 were purchased by Thomas Oldham who took out a mortgage for \$1,300 in 1875 and then \$3,000 in 1878. According to the Couling Architectural Inventory the building was rebuilt and added onto around 1875 with later additions made at both ends. Couling suggests that the northernmost portion of the existing building was built in 1875 for Thomas Oldham as a corner store with a dwelling above.

According to the Vernon directories, Oldham was a knitter and eventually opened a woolen manufacturing factory on the property. During Thomas Oldham's ownership of the property, Thomas and Isaac Pinder (father and son) lived and worked in the

building as barrel makers (Attachment 2 - Figure 6) and by 1903, Robert Pinder ran a grocery in the corner store. After Thomas Oldham's death, his widow Jane Oldham and their three daughters Miss Eliza B, Miss Harriet (a teacher) and Miss Maria (a teacher at the senior Girl's School) reside on the property (Attachment 2 - Figure 7). Maria Oldham remains unmarried and received the deed to the property in 1899 where she lived until selling to Frederick Walker in 1921. When Walker sold the property to Charles Barber (a shop owner and butcher) in 1929 the property had undergone alterations to become an apartment building as indicated on the 1922 (1929) Fire Insurance Plan (Attachment 2 - Figures 9) and the 1946 Fire Insurance Plan (Attachment 2 - Figure 10).

Vernon's Directory of the City of Guelph indicates the building contained the Edgehill Tea Rooms in 1930 and by 1959 the building was known as the Edgehill Apartments (Attachment 2 - Figures 11 and 13).

A 1940 air photo of the Brooklyn neighborhood (Attachment 2 - Figure 12) as well as Couling's photos of the property in 1974 (Attachment 2 - Figures 14 and 15) show alterations made about 1929 and later.

### **Building Description**

The building we see today (Figure 6) evolved over time and can be divided chronologically into three sections: William Crowe's wagon factory and Thomas Oldham's knitting mill (c. 1850-1875); William Oldham's corner store with dwelling above (1875); and the additions creating a third floor in 1929 and the 1990s.



Figure 6 - Overlay on photo depicting the stages of construction. (Photo and overlay: S. Robinson, 2023)

The current building has a limestone first and second floor with a hip roof third floor extending from a three-story, 2-bay (wood frame) addition at the south end of the building and continuing (stepped back from the plane of the stone exterior) to the midpoint of the north section of the building. There is a brick chimney near both peaks of the main hip roof.

A stone parapet seen on the west elevation (Attachment 1 - Figure 4) marks the earlier north wall of the building before the 1875 addition. The added northern

portion of the building has a rounded corner in the roof and stone exterior that likely contained a corner entrance to a store. Subsequent alterations have added a hip roof dormer facing James Street East and the corner entrance has been filled in with granite fieldstone rubble (Attachment 1 – Figure 4) in a fashion similar to the masonry of houses nearby at Gordon and James Street West built in the 1930s. A good example is seen at 209 Gordon Street (Attachment 1 - Figure 5).

The first and second floors of the building were constructed with roughly-squared, rock-faced limestone in varied sizes laid in a broken range and pointed to give the appearance of finer cut stone. The pointing is not likely the original as it extends across all the stone exteriors visible on front, side and rear elevations.

The original window and door openings of the building have solid limestone lintels and tooled limestone sills. Openings introduced altered later have multiple stones at the top of the openings and are likely supported by a steel lintel. An example of this would be the two larger store windows and the corner door (now filled in) at the corner of Gordon St and James St W. The original corner window on the second floor over the corner door has a convex, rock-faced lintel stone and a convex, tooled limestone sill.

Other examples of corner stores in Guelph's residential neighbourhoods that are listed on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties include 12-16 Eramosa Rd; 217/219 Gordon St; 110 Norwich St E; 294 Woolwich St (now Park Grocery); 295 Woolwich St (now With the Grain); 194 Waterloo Ave; 440 York Rd.

As the semi-detached dwellings at 9 and 11 James Street East (Attachment 1 – Figure 6) and the 3-car garage in southeast corner of subject property (Attachment 1 – Figure 7) are not listed on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties and have no heritage status.

### **Statement of Significance**

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets five of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22. The heritage attributes of 220 Gordon Street display: design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

### **Design/Physical Value**

220 Gordon Street meets Criterion 1 having design or physical value as it is a representative example of limestone construction from the mid-19th century with an 1875 addition that has a corner entrance door in a rare, rounded, 2-storey limestone corner.

### **Historical/Associative Value**

The subject property meets Criterion 4 because it has direct associations with a theme of historical mixed use involving local corner stores with housing above – a combination that was conventional in many of Guelph's residential neighbourhoods since the establishment of the Town and in some cases continuing into the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Contextual Value**

The subject property meets Criteria 7 because it is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the architectural character of the area. This segment of the Gordon Street streetscape is an important historic element adjacent to the Brooklyn and College Hill Heritage Conservation District.

The subject property meets Criteria 8 because the stone building is visually and historically linked to its surroundings. The 1875 limestone addition to the north expanded the commercial/residential uses and its architectural design is quite compatible with the materials and form of the original building. The close proximity of the corner store doors and flanking windows to the street gives it visual prominence at this intersection within the historic Gordon Street streetscape.

The subject property meets Criteria 9 because the building's distinctive form and limestone construction has become a landmark within the historic Gordon Street and College Hill streetscape.

## **Attachments**

Attachment-1: Current Photos

Attachment-2: Historic Images and Documents

## **Departmental Approval**

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