

Staff Report

To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, April 8, 2025
Subject	136 Glasgow Street North – Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 136 Glasgow Street North pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
 2. That the designation bylaw be brought before Council for approval if no objections are received within the thirty (30) day objection period.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

In November 2022, the Government of the Province of Ontario passed Bill 23 (amended by Bill 185), which made changes to the Ontario Heritage Act that will remove all non-designated properties from the Municipal Heritage Register on January 1, 2027. Heritage planning staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee have been reviewing properties on the Municipal Heritage Register for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council publish its intention to designate 136 Glasgow Street North pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The cultural heritage significance and heritage attributes of the property are described in this report.

Key Findings

136 Glasgow Street North 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.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets at two or more of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value or interest as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22; see Attachment-4).

Heritage planning staff, in consultation with Heritage Guelph, have completed a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report and Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Staff have determined that the property meets six of the nine criteria used

to determine cultural heritage value according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg 569/22) under the Ontario Heritage Act. Therefore, the property merits individual heritage designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The key findings and recommendations of this report align with 2024-2027 Strategic Plan priority 6.1.4 to conserve our cultural heritage resources.

Future Guelph Theme

City Building

Future Guelph Objectives

City Building: Grow and care for our community space and places

Financial Implications

None.

Report

Location

136 Glasgow Street North is located on the West side of Glasgow Street North, east of Yorkshire Street North between Liverpool Street and Oxford Street, and its legal description is PT PARK LOT 47, Plan 8, AS IN R0781295; Guelph.

Statement of Significance

The detached residential dwelling located at 136 Glasgow Street North, is one of the City of Guelph's most impressive Italianate redbrick residences, built by Guelph architect John Hall Jr. for Thomas Gowdy, a significant industrialist, businessman, and Mayor of Guelph. Gowdy purchased the northeast part of Park Lot 47 from Henry Hatch, a land agent, in 1875. Born in 1831 in Toronto to Joseph and Ann Gowdy of Belfast, Ireland, Thomas Gowdy moved to Guelph in 1853. Thomas married twice, first to Mary Ann Cunningham, with whom he had one daughter together named Annie Elizabeth, and then again to Margaret Moore in 1864.

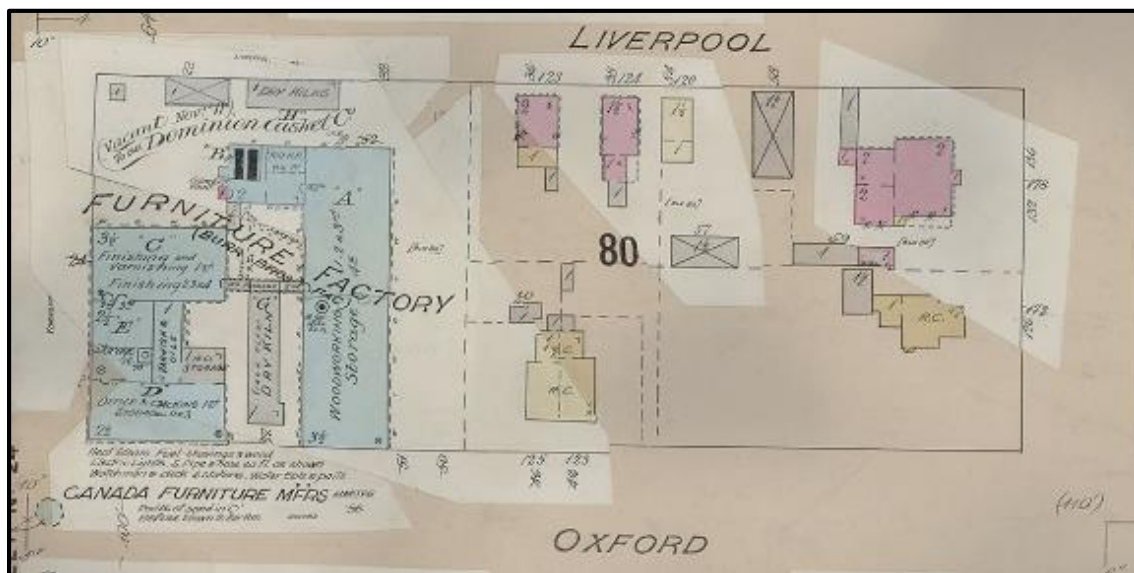
Figure 1: Photograph of 136 Glasgow Street North (Photograph: Kyra Giancaterino, 2024)



Gowdy himself was highly active in Guelph and diligently engaged in many civil and political engagements; he served as an original director of the Guelph Junction Railway, a director of the Guelph General Hospital, President of Guelph Poultry Society, Patron of Guelph Union Curling Club, Chairman of the Guelph Public Library, the President of the Toronto Lime Company, director of the Wellington Lime Company, as well as integral roles in the Dominion Life Assurance Company, Wellington Mutual Fire Assurance Company, and the Waterloo Mutual Fire Insurance Company. Politically, he served as part of the City Council for many years, and his devotion to the city was fully realized during his term as Mayor of Guelph between 1889-1890.

Gowdy commissioned architect John Hall Jr. to design and build his 1876 Italianate style home, which he would reside in until his death in 1913. John Hall Jr. was a prominent architect and contractor in Guelph, who within the prime of his career designed around thirty buildings in Guelph, Listowel, Galt and Alliston. Gowdy's choice of Hall comes as no surprise, as Hall was at this point in his career known simply as "The Architect" for new residences in Guelph. Also involved were some of Guelph's most skilled tradespeople of the late nineteenth century, including Robert Emslie, William Day, George Howard, and Thomas Dobbie.

Figure 2: Detail from Fire Insurance Plan 1897 (revised 1907) showing 136 Glasgow Street North in the upper left corner and Burr Bros Furniture Factory to the right (Guelph Civic Museum, 2013.39.1)



The structure has undergone many changes since construction, with significant additions to the north and west sides. While the general form of home has been maintained, certain features have undergone significant alterations, namely the reconstruction of the central tower, the mansard roof of the central building and hipped roof of the tower, and the removal of the original brick chimney and iron-crested that previously topped the roofline. Despite these alterations, the property has retained its integrity as a representative example of Italianate architecture in Guelph.

The facade is symmetrical, containing a central tower with identical windows on either side, which is not typically characteristic of the Italianate Villa architectural style. The front door is a double door with arched windows on the top half and

paneling on the bottom surround a foliate bolection ornament. There are five primary windows on the facade, with ornate frames, lintels, and sills constructed from stone with ornately carved stone-scroll accents. The central second-floor window that faces onto the balcony of the tower is also a paired, floor-to-ceiling pane with an arch-top transom containing three circles with distinct window shapes; the central circle is the biggest of the three and contains a four-leaf clover-shaped design while the other two reside on each side of the central circle, containing a three-leaf clover design.

The masonry employed in this structure is of a high degree of craftsmanship, particularly in the ornate stonework framing the window openings and central entry, as well as with the tool-margined, bush-hammered, and bevel-edged stone quoins. Similarly, the roofline is accented by decorative stonework paired with carved cornice and brackets.

Determination of Cultural Heritage Value

The residential building at 136 Glasgow Street North is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets six of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by 569/22. The subject building at 136 Glasgow Street North has design and physical value, historical and associative value, and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

This property meets Criterion 1 as it is a representative example of the Italianate style within the City of Guelph.

This property meets Criterion 2 due to its impressive display of craftsmanship and artistic detail throughout its masonry work, most notably around the front entrance and windows, the way the decorative stone design is paired with the cornice brackets at the base of the roof, and the transoms above the front door and central window.

Historical/Associative Value

This property meets Criterion 4 due to its direct association with the highly successful industrialist and eminent public official Thomas Gowdy, the founder of Gowdy's Agricultural Works and the Mayor from 1889-1890.

This property satisfies Criterion 6 as it was designed by architect John Hall Jr, a prominent builder and contractor in Guelph, who within the prime of his career designed around thirty buildings in Guelph, Listowel, Galt, and Alliston.

Contextual Value

This property meets Criterion 7 as it supports the character of the area. It is one of the earlier and more prominent residences on Glasgow Street North.

This property meets Criterion 9 as its location on the corner of Glasgow and Liverpool has historically and contemporaneously allowed it to function as a prominent landmark, as demonstrated by its repeated use as a reference point in the Guelph Daily Mercury.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 136 Glasgow Street North should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- Building form, including:
 - Hipped roof
 - Central tower
 - Symmetrical façade
- Redbrick exterior walls
- Window and door openings in redbrick walls
- Wood Front doors, including transom and sidelights
- Wood corbels flanking the front doors
- Stone masonry, including:
 - Sills
 - Lintels
 - Coursing
 - Quoins

Financial Implications

None.

Consultations and Engagement

A letter was sent to the property owners via email on February 3, 2025.

At the [November 4, 2024 meeting of Heritage Guelph](#), the committee passed the following motion:

That the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the **136 Glasgow St: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report** be provided to staff and Council for their consideration. Comments: none.

At the March 6, 2025 meeting of Heritage Guelph, the committee passed the following motion:

That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that 136 Glasgow St N merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and

That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that the committee supports the heritage attributes for 136 Glasgow St N as outlined in the Heritage Planning staff report dated March 6, 2025.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Ontario Regulation 9-06 Criteria for Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Departmental Approval

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