

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, July 15, 2025
Subject	117 Surrey St. E – Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 117 Surrey St. E. 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 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 117 Surrey St. E. 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

117 Surrey St. E. 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 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-1).

Heritage planning staff, in consultation with the Heritage Advisory Committee, have completed a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report and

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Staff have determined that the property meets five 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

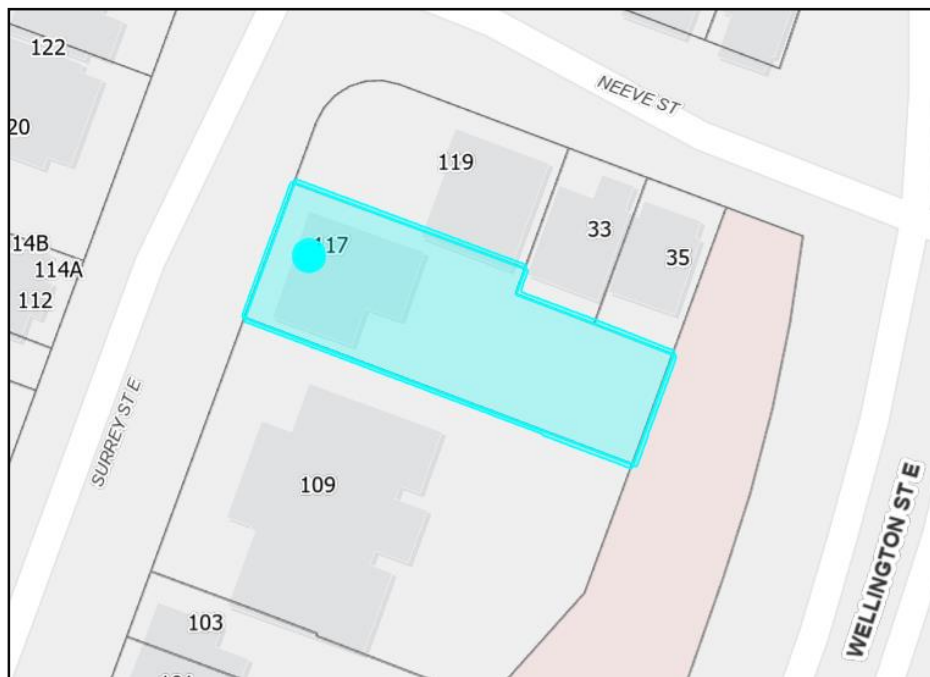
None.

Report

Location

The subject property is located at 89 Surrey St. E., between Neeve St. and Wyndham St. S. The legal description is PT PARK LOT 84, PLAN 8, AS IN RO679868, S/T RO679868 ; GUELPH

Figure 1: GIS map showing location of 117 Surrey St. E. (City of Guelph GIS)



Statement of Significance

Figure 2: Current photo of 117 Surrey St. E. (Imogen Goldie, 2025)



After spending years establishing mills in England, Scotland and Sweden for Dixon, Dudgeon and Co., William Allan immigrated with his family to Canada from Scotland in 1831 and settled in Guelph in 1832. Allan purchased the recently constructed Canada Company Mill on the eastern bank of the Speed River which is often noted as the first mill in Guelph. Renaming the facility Allan's Mill, William would expand the complex quickly with the addition of brewery, distillery and carding mill, creating a facility that spanned both banks of the Speed River by the early 1840s.

In 1838 ownership of the first house in Guelph, the Priory, was passed to William Allan when he acquired the Canada Company properties adjacent to his mill lands. By 1847 the Priory and Allan's milling industries passed on to David Allan Sr. who remained in the residence until 1876.

In 1855 the former Grist Mill lands near Allan's mill were surveyed for John Neeve and the land was subdivided into number lots and sold, officially adding William Allan to the land titles in the area. Neeve's 1855 survey created lots 11 and 12 where 117 Surrey St. E. remains. The residential dwelling at 117 Surrey St. E. was likely constructed between 1856 and 1858, after the Neeve survey was completed but before William Allan passed away in 1859. Between 1858 and 1860, a stone second storey addition to the mill was underway and a loan was secured by David Allan and others

from the Trust and Loan Company of Upper Canada. It is possible that the extensive quarrying and labour required for the mill expansion was used to help construct William Allan's limestone home then. 117 Surrey St. E. remained with the Allan family, passing on to William's sons David and James after his death. The property was then transferred to David's son William Allan Jr. in 1868. After David Allan suffered a paralytic stroke in 1876, the Allan family began to move on from the mill operations. The mill was sold to David Spence in 1877, and 117 Surrey St. E. sold to Charles Davidson the same year.

117 Surrey St. E. is a detached two and a half storey, residential dwelling made of broken course, tuckpointed limestone with limestone quoins. It has a neo-classical design including Georgian features like a symmetrical front façade and central entrance which were features also common in the Scottish landlord style of building. There is an end gable roofline with chimneys at each end. The 3-bay front façade has 5 window openings, each with heavy stone lintels and projecting, tooled sills. The east and west sides of the main stone building also have window openings with the same heavy lintels and projecting tooled sills, one opening on the west face and three on the east. Decorative shutters and a decorative door case were added to the front façade of the building in the latter half of the 20th century and there is no evidence they are replacing or replicating any previous architectural features. A full building-width porch or veranda is indicated on the Fire Insurance plans from the 1880s until the 1950s but there is little evidence to what that may have looked like.

The structure has a buff brick tail that appears on Cooper's 1862 map which was expanded to be flush with the East side of the stone residence, the extended brick tail first appears on the 1922 fire insurance plan. There is evidence at the rear of the building that the brick tail once had a chimney and substantial footing for a large fireplace possibly facing outward as part of a summer kitchen.

117 Surrey St. E., known as the William Allan House, was a residential dwelling erected on former mill lands by the mill owner and his family. It is situated near both the Allan family-operated mill and on the river that powered it. The building maintains the character of the nearby area and the City of Guelph with its well maintained, local limestone construction. It contributes to the character of the surrounding early Guelph neighbourhood which is populated by other low-rise limestone and early brick residential dwellings.

Determination of Cultural Heritage Value

Figure 3: 1974 Photo of 117 Surrey St. E. (Gordon Couling, 1974)



The neo-classical, residential dwelling (now commercial) at 117 Surrey St. E. 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 569/22. The subject building at 117 Surrey St. E. has design and physical value, historical and associative value, and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets criterion 1 because it is representative of an early architectural style and local limestone construction found in many of Guelph's early neighbourhoods.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets criterion 4 because it was home to several generations of the Allan family who were central to the establishment and growth of the milling industry in Guelph as longtime owners of the nearby Allan's Mill.

The subject property meets criterion 5 because of its siting on former mill lands and part of a community that grew out of the milling industry and its housing needs.

Contextual Value

The subject property meets criterion 7 because of the local limestone construction, use of brick and neo-classical vernacular architectural style that connects it to other early Guelph buildings on Surrey St. E., Neeve St., and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The subject property meets criterion 8 because of its location on former mill lands and proximity to the original and current location of the Allan's Mill structures and the proximity to the Speed River

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 117 Surrey St. E. should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

Building form, including:

- Limestone exterior walls
- Side gable roofline
- Location and form of chimneys
- Window opening with lintels and projecting sills
- Buff brick tail with early 20th century buff brick addition

Consultations and Engagement

A letter was sent to the property owners on April 17, 2025.

At the [May 1, 2025, meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee](#), the committee passed the following motion:

1. That the Heritage Advisory Committee advises City Council that 117 Surrey St. E. merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
2. That the Heritage Advisory Committee advises City Council that the committee supports the heritage attributes for 117 Surrey St. E. as outlined in the Heritage Planning staff report dated May 1, 2025.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Ontario Regulation 6/06 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Departmental Approval

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