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**Date** December 18, 2023 **Report No.** 2023-740

**To** Chair and Members  
Brantford Heritage Committee

**From** Patrick Vusir – Intermediate Planner, Long Range Planning  
Planning and Development Services  
Community Development Commission

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### 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item   
Item For Consideration

### 2.0 Topic **Notice of Intention to Demolish 25 William Street, a Non-Designated, Listed Property on the City’s Heritage Register [Financial Impact – None]**

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### 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2023-\_, titled “Notice of Intention to Demolish 25 William Street, a Non-Designated, Listed Property on the City’s Heritage Register”, BE RECEIVED; and,
- B. THAT the following comments of the Brantford Heritage Committee be provided to Staff for inclusion in Staff’s future report to Committee of the Whole – Planning and Administration:
  - i. \_\_\_\_\_;
  - ii. \_\_\_\_\_; and
  - iii. \_\_\_\_\_.

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## 4.0 Background

The City has received a notice of intention to demolish the building at 25 William Street, known as “Lawfield”, which is a non-designated, listed property on the City of Brantford’s Heritage Register. 25 William Street is located at the northeast corner of Church Street and William Street as shown on the Location Map attached as **Appendix A** and the Aerial Photo attached as **Appendix B**. 25 William Street can be seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: 25 William Street, once called "Lawfield", as seen from William Street in December 2022.**  
Source: Google Street View.



The subject property was added to the City of Brantford’s Heritage Register as a non-designated, listed property in accordance with Council’s September 20, 2022 decision respecting Part 2, Phase E of the Heritage Register Project. A property information sheet is attached as **Appendix C** to this Report.

As a non-designated, listed property, Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that the owner provide the City with 60-days’ written notice of intention to demolish a building or structure on the property. The purpose of this notice requirement is to provide listed properties with interim protection from demolition, which allows the City some time to evaluate whether the proposed demolition will negatively affect the cultural heritage value or interest of the property. Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* itself does not provide the City with the ability to deny the demolition, extend the 60-day review timeframe, or

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impose any other controls on a non-designated, listed property. If cultural heritage value or interest is negatively affected, the City may choose to designate the property under Part IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, which is a different tool enabled by the Act which provides stronger demolition controls.

On December 13, 2023, the owner of 25 William Street submitted a notice of intention to demolish the building (“Lawfield”) on the property. Based on the submission date, the 60-days’ notice period will end on February 11, 2023. The property, though once residential, was converted to offices for the Canadian Red Cross Society in 1990; the property is currently vacant.

## 5.0 Analysis

25 William Street was reviewed through the Heritage Register Project and added to the Heritage Register by Council as it meets three project criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, as identified on the property information sheet attached as **Appendix C**:

- It (Lawfield) is a representative example of its architectural style (“Queen Anne” or “Queen Anne Revival”).
- It is associated with an industrial leader (James Kerr Osborne, who was involved with the company that eventually became Massey Ferguson).
- It is associated with the architects Smith & Gemmell.

With respect to architectural style, the building – Lawfield - is considered a representative example of the Queen Anne architectural style which was popular in Brantford from 1880-1910. Staff note that the Property Information Sheet attached as **Appendix C** notes a construction date of 1880 & 1900. Staff have reviewed mapping available in City records. Lawfield is not shown in the 1875 Bird’s Eye Map of Brantford (Figure 2) but does appear in the 1892 Bird’s Eye Map (Figure 3). This would support the noted date of construct c.1880 which is when the Queen Anne style of architecture was popular. The style of architecture is known for:

- A complexity of form and decorative mix of numerous materials;
- 2 to 2.5 storeys;
- asymmetrical with multiple roof types on one house (e.g. gable, hip, and conical);

- Irregular plan;
- Stone foundation, brick or wood construction and exterior;
- Multiple shingle profiles;
- Prominent towers or corner turrets;
- Often, multiple balconies, porches or verandahs.

**Figure 2: Excerpt of 1875 Bird's Eye Map of the City of Brantford; the corner of Church St and William St is vacant.**

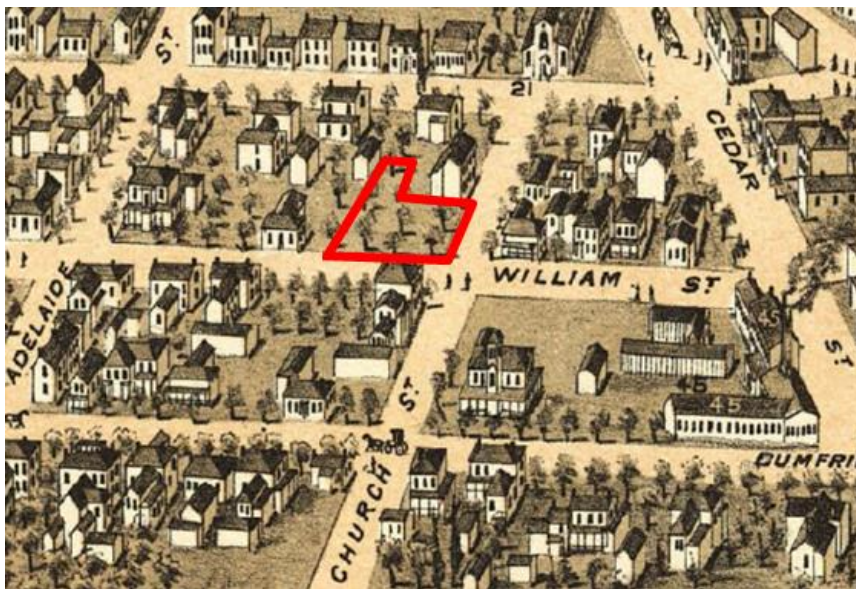
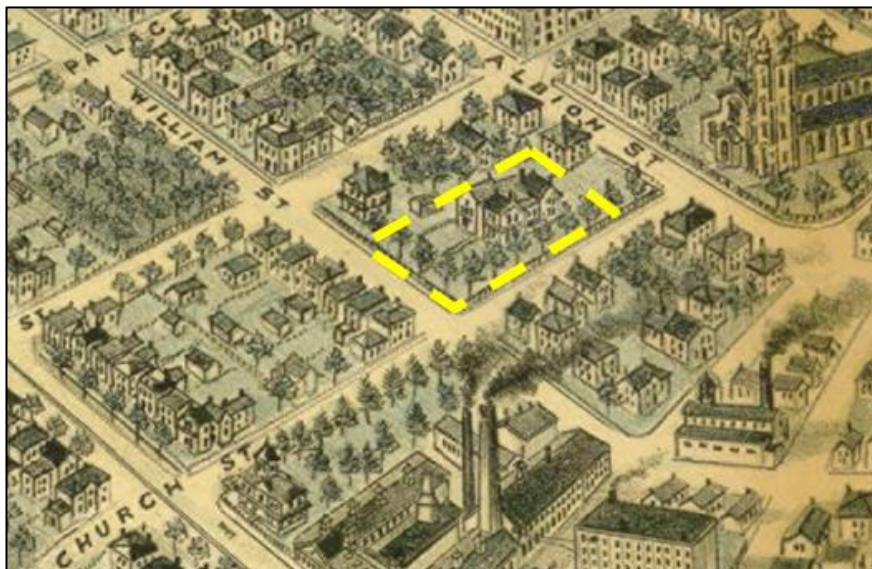




Figure 3: Excerpt from the 1892 Bird's Eye Map of Brantford. Lawfield is visible at the corner of Church Street and William Street. The cross-gabled design and approximate window layout is visible.

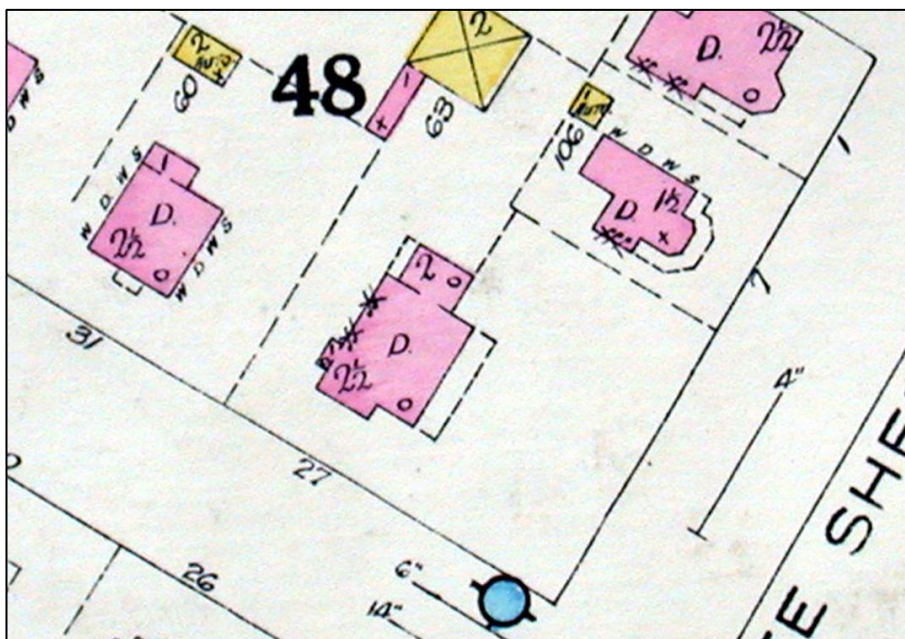


Lawfield displays a number of features of the Queen Anne style, namely:

- A complexity of form and decorative mix of numerous materials: cross gables, polychromatic brick, prominent ornate chimneys, stone window lintels with brick segmental relieving arches above; ogee or trefoil arch-topped windows; lancet-arched entryway with flanking columns; wood trim in gable end and at eaves; large wooden brackets.
- 2 to 2.5 storeys; asymmetrical with multiple roof types on one house (gable and clipped gable or “jerkinhead” for main portions, shed- and gambrel dormers or bays).
- Irregular plan (cross gables, bay projection on north, and 2 storey bay).
- Stone foundation, brick or wood construction and exterior (including wood trim in gable end reminiscent of Tudor architecture).
- Multiple shingle profiles – square and hexagon.

Figure 4 shows an excerpt from the 1919 Fire Insurance Plan for the City of Brantford. It shows the footprint of Lawfield, and indicates that there would have been porches at the time the plan was prepared. For the foregoing reasons, Staff is of the opinion that the building is a representative example the Queen Anne architectural style and that the criterion is appropriate.

Figure 4: Excerpt from 1919 Fire Insurance Plan. Lawfield was previously numbered 27 William Street before becoming 25 William Street.



With respect to the second criterion, that the property was associated with industrial leader James Kerr Osborne, Staff note that a review of the 1877 – 1927 Brantford Expositor Semi-Centennial notes James Kerr Osborne was a charter member of the Brantford Board of Trade when it was established in 1879. The Semi-Centennial Souvenir edition records that he joined A. Harris, Son & Co “about 1872” before it merged with the Massey Company of Toronto (to become Massey Harris, before eventually becoming Massey Ferguson), and that he had “built the house at the corner of Church and William Streets now occupied by Arthur Bixel”. Accordingly, Staff is of the opinion that the project criterion of “association with an industrial leader” is accurate.

With respect to the third criterion, that the property was associated with the architects (James Avon) Smith & (John) Gemmel, Staff have consulted the City’s Heritage Inventory and the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada. Both sources make reference to an article in the Brantford Expositor from April 5, 1890. The Biographical Dictionary, in its entry for James Avon Smith, notes a residential project for “James Ker Osborne, William Street at Church Street, 1880-81” and makes reference to the Brantford Weekly Expositor (December 10, 1880, 2) and the Brantford daily Expositor (April 5, 1890, 4). Staff will attempt to find these articles as part of ongoing research, and note that this is sufficient for the purposes of the project criterion. Staff, accordingly, are of the opinion that the project criterion of “association with architects” is appropriate.

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## 6.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this Report.

## 7.0 Climate and Environmental Implications

Climate and environmental implications cannot be quantified at this time, but demolition will send materials to landfill.

## 8.0 Conclusion

The City has received a notice of intention to demolish the vacant former residence known as Lawfield at 25 William Street which is a non-designated, listed property on the City's Heritage Register. The building was listed on the City's register as it met three project criteria: (1) it is a representative example of its architectural style ("Queen Anne" or "Queen Anne Revival"); (2) it is associated with an industrial leader (James Kerr Osborne, who was involved with the company that eventually became Massey Ferguson); and (3) it is associated with the architects Smith & Gemmell.

Staff has conducted a review of available sources and is of the opinion that all three project criteria are accurate; accordingly, the demolition of Lawfield would represent a loss of cultural heritage value or interest. On that basis, Staff will be recommending that Council consider issuing a Notice of Intention to Designate under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and that Staff and the Brantford Heritage Committee be directed to conduct further research and prepare a designation by-law. The Brantford Heritage Committee is being provided with this opportunity to provide comments for inclusion in Staff's future report to Committee of the Whole – Planning and Administration in January 2024.



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Attachments:

Appendix A: Location Map

Appendix B: Aerial Photo

Appendix C: Property Information Sheet.

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required  yes  no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk  yes  no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council?  yes  no