

# Staff Report



Development Services Department

www.kitchener.ca

---

**REPORT TO:** Heritage Kitchener

**DATE OF MEETING:** March 5, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Garett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,  
519-741-2200 ext. 7070

**PREPARED BY:** Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7602

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** Ward 5

**DATE OF REPORT:** February 12, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** DSD-2024-088

**SUBJECT:** Heritage Permit Application HPA-2024-IV-002  
1385 Bleams Road  
Removal of Chimney and Fence

---

## RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, Heritage Permit Application HPA-2024-IV-002 be approved to permit the removal of chimney and the fence on the property municipally addressed as 1385 Bleams Road in accordance with the supplementary information submitted with this application.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present staff's recommendation for the removal of the chimney and the fence at the subject property municipally addressed as 1385 Bleams Road.
- The key finding of this report is the removal of the chimney and the fence are necessary as they are in poor condition. The removal of the fence would impact the heritage attributes of the property since it has been identified in the designation by-law, however, it is beyond repair, cannot be salvaged and must be removed so that the Region's Road widening on Bleams Road can be accommodated.
- There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- Community engagement included consultation with the Heritage Kitchener committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

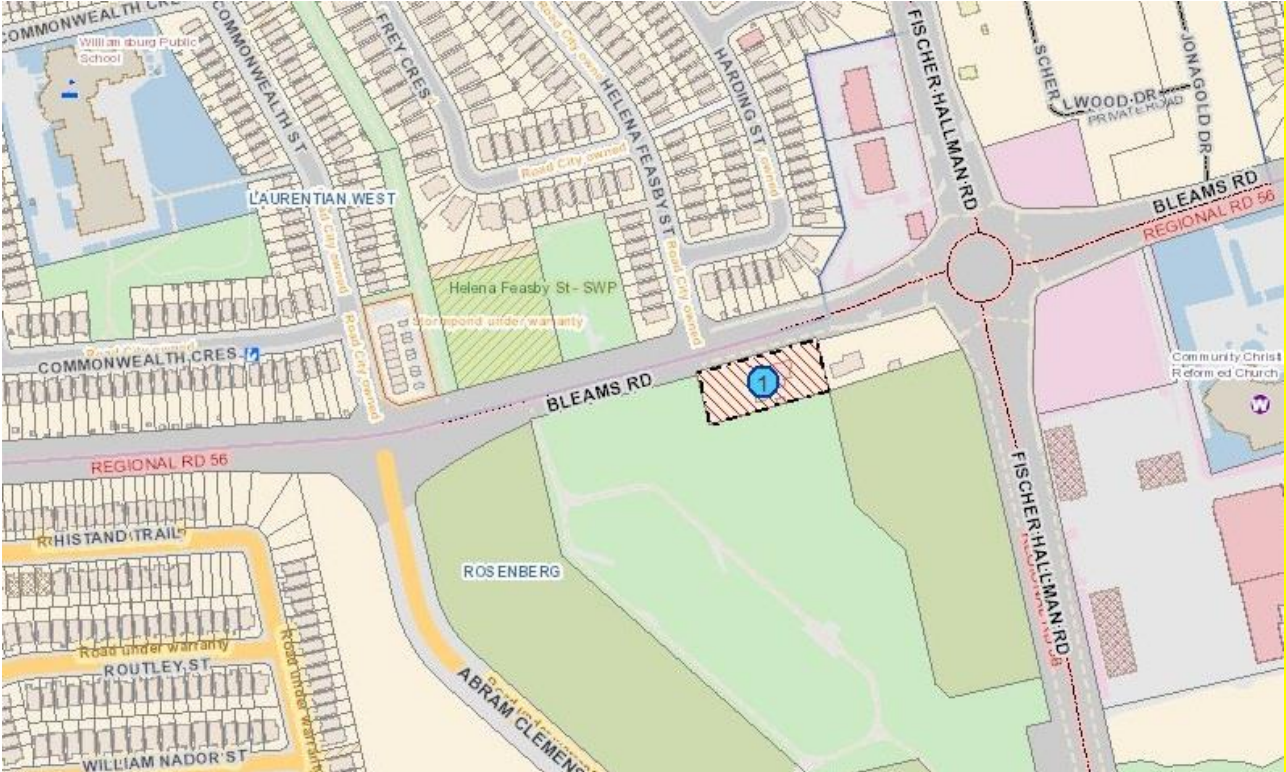
Heritage Permit Application HPA-2024-IV-002 proposes the removal of the chimney and the fence on the subject property municipally addressed as 1385 Bleams Road. The subject property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The chimney is in poor condition and deteriorating. It is not protected by the designating by-law but is on the rubble stone façade that is protected by the designating by-law. The chimney is proposed to be removed, with preservation and maintenance works to be implemented as required on the façade to preserve its cultural heritage value. The post and rail fence on the property is also

\*\*\* This information is available in accessible formats upon request. \*\*\*  
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

proposed to be removed as it is in very poor condition and beyond repair. The fence is protected by the designating by-law, however, it cannot be repaired or salvaged, and needs to be removed prior to the Region's acquisition of that portion of the property for a road widening. In reviewing the merits of this application, staff note that the removal of the fence and the chimney will not adversely impact the reasons for designation of the subject property.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Development Services Department is in receipt of Heritage Permit Application HPA-2024-IV-002 seeking permission to remove the chimney and fence at the subject property municipally addressed as 1385 Bleams Road (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Location Map of subject property (highlighted in red box).

This permit has been brought before the Heritage Kitchener Committee as the subject property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* through Designating By-law 1987-309. In accordance with By-law 2009-089, delegating Council's approval for certain classes of alterations to Staff, delegated authority is permitted for Part IV designated property after consultation with the Heritage Kitchener Committee.

**REPORT:**

The subject property is located on the southern side of Bleams Road and western side of Fischer Hallman Road, between Fischer Hallman Road and Abrams Clemens Street. Also known as the former 'Williamsburg School' the subject property contains a 2 storey rubble stone construction house, which was originally constructed as a school for the former hamlet of Williamsburg in 1864 (Fig 2).



**Figure 2.** North and West elevation of the original Williamsburg Schoolhouse.

### Williamsburg Schoolhouse

The Williamsburg Schoolhouse was originally built in 1864. It was a rectangular, gable-roofed structure constructed of granite fieldstone. A brick addition was constructed in 1874 to accommodate more students towards the rear. In 1966, the school was closed and the building was converted into a private residence. In 1987, a stone-faced, wood-framed addition was constructed at the front of the building (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3.** Phases of construction of the Williamsburg Schoolhouse. The blue arrow points to the original schoolhouse built in 1864, the red arrow points to the brick addition added in 1874, and the green arrow points to the stone-faced, wood frame addition added in 1987.

The building has been recognized for its design/physical, and historical/associative value in the designating by-law. The building is one of the few remaining original buildings from the former Hamlet of Williamsburg, and the schoolhouse is a representative example of an early construction style i.e. rubble stone construction. The designating by-law identifies the following features of the property:

- All rubble stone facades of the original schoolhouse;
- The belfry;
- The fence; and
- The wood shed.

### *Associated Planning Applications*

1385 Bleams Road was subject to a Zoning-By Law Amendment (ZBA) in 2023, which was approved by Council at it's April 24, 2023, meeting. The zoning amendment was sought to change the A-1 (agricultural) zoning to RES-6 (residential) to allow for a medium rise residential development. The applicant is proposing to build eight, three-storey townhomes towards the rear of the property.

As part of the ZBA application, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was submitted in support of the application. The draft HIA was circulated to Heritage Kitchener at its March 7, 2023, meeting. The HIA has since been approved.

### **Proposed Chimney Removal**

The chimney on the western façade of the house is in a state of disrepair (Fig. 4). There are pieces of bricks that are falling off, with the chimney separating from the rubble stone façade in some places (Fig. 5). It also appears that the chimney was altered as there are two different types of brick above and below the roof. The date of the chimney's construction is unknown, but it was most likely not part of the original construction of the structure. It should be noted that the chimney is not included in the designation by-law of the building, as the by-law only references the 'rubble stone facades'. However, the removal of the chimney might have minimal to no impact on the rubble stone façade.



**Figure 4.** Current condition of the chimney on west façade.



**Figure 5.** Current condition of the chimney

The owners will need to remove the chimney to assess the condition of that portion of the façade. They intend to repair, preserve and maintain the rubble stone façade, and will come in for an additional heritage permit, if required, for any additional restorative work. However, the extent of the work required can only be determined once the chimney has been removed. The removal of the chimney is not a part of the ZBA application.

#### *Proposed Fence Removal*

The post and rail fence that has been included in the designating by-law is the wooden fence that fronts onto Bleams Road, with a portion of it on the western end in the municipal right-of-way. The fence is comprised of round cedar posts with turned ball top and two horizontal pipe rails between the posts, with the installation of modern flanges in some places (Fig. 6-8). The fence is also in very poor condition, with leaning posts, some missing tops, and rails missing in some places. The cedar posts are also rotting at the ground and it has been determined that they are beyond repair. Furthermore, the region is going to acquire the portion of the property along Bleams Road on which the fence is presently located to accommodate a road-widening which is going to include a multi-use trail. Due to this and

the deteriorating condition of the fence, it needs to be removed so that the road widening can take place.



Figure 6. Current condition of the post and rail fence.



Figure 7. Rotting cedar and missing pieces on the fence.



Figure 8. Missing tops on the fence.

Staff have had additional engagement with the owner's heritage consultant regarding whether portions of the fence could be salvaged and installed elsewhere on the property, and were informed due to the fence's extremely poor condition, it cannot be salvaged as well. The proposed fence removal is part of the approved development concept considered with the ZBA application.

The proposed alterations meet the "Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties", especially:

- Respect for historical material – repair or conserve rather than replace building materials and finishes, except where absolutely necessary. Minimal intervention maintains the historic content of the resource.
- Maintenance – with continuous care, future restoration will not be necessary. With regular upkeep, major conservation projects and their high costs can be avoided.
- Respect for the buildings history – do not restore at one period at the expense of another.

The proposed alterations meet the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada", especially:



- Conserve the heritage value of an historic place. Do not remove, replace or substantially alter its intact or repairable character-defining elements. Do not move a part of an historic place if its current location is a character-defining element.
- Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.
- Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
- Maintain character-defining elements on an ongoing basis. Repair character-defining elements by reinforcing their materials using recognized conservation methods. Replace in kind any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of character-defining elements, where there are surviving prototypes.

### Heritage Planning Comments

In reviewing the merits of this application, Heritage Planning Staff note the following:

- The subject property municipally addressed as 1385 Bleams Road is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by way of designating by-law 1987-309.
- The proposal is for the removal of the chimney and the fence on the subject property.
- The chimney is not protected by the designating by-law, and is in poor condition. Part of brick are falling off and in some areas, the chimney has started separating from the rubble stone façade.
- The chimney is proposed to be removed with minimal impact to the façade. The applicants intend to preserve and restore the façade, but in order to determine what works might be needed to do that, the chimney must be removed first. The applicants will be applying for another heritage permit for restoration work, if needed.
- The fence is also in poor condition. There are tops missing, and the cedar has rotted beyond repair. Furthermore, the portion of the fence on which the fence is located will be acquired by the Region for road widening, so the fence must be removed in order to facilitate that. The fence is beyond repair and portions of it cannot be salvaged as well.
- The proposed work is consistent with the Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties and with Parks Canada's The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada; and
- The proposed work will not adversely impact the building nor its reasons for designation.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

CONSULT – Heritage Kitchener has been consulted regarding the subject Heritage Permit Application.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

- *DSD-2023-080 – Draft Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) – 1385 Bleams Road – Proposed Construction of 8 Three-Storey Townhomes.*
- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2022*
- *Planning Act*

**APPROVED BY:** Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Heritage Permit Application HPA-2024-IV-002