



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor R. Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Charlie Toman, Planner – Development Review

DATE: November 30, 2011

REPORT NO.: PDS-2011-0095

RE: Designation of Williams-Holt property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act
504 Main Street, Glen Williams

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. PDS-2011-0095 dated November 30, 2011, recommending designation of the Williams-Holt property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, 504 Main Street, Glen Williams (Halton Hills), legally described as Lot 53, RCP Plan 1556, Town of Halton Hills, Regionally Municipality of Halton, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council indicate its intention to designate the Williams-Holt property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND FURTHER THAT the Clerks department proceed with the notification requirements as set out in the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND FURTHER THAT once the thirty-day objection period has expired and if there are no objections, that a designation by-law for Council adoption be brought forward.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, the owner(s) of 504 Main Street, Glen Williams (see Schedule 1) approached Heritage Halton Hills and requested that it be considered for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. An evaluation of the property was undertaken by members of Heritage Halton Hills and on October 19, 2011, for the reasons identified in the attached designation report (Schedule 2), the Committee recommended that the exterior façade of the property be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Originally built as an industrial building in the 1850's, the structure was converted to a residential dwelling in the 1870's with minimal exterior structural changes. The interior of the building has been renovated extensively.

COMMENTS:

504 Main Street is listed on the Town's Municipal Heritage Register and is described as being:

Built as a cabinet and chair factory by Issac Williams, son of the Glen Williams founder Benajah Williams; Associated with the neighboring tool factory since both buildings are the same size and have identical facades; Good example of the Georgian style.

As identified in the designation report, the Williams-Holt property meets the criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The principle elements proposed for designation include the English garden-wall pattern red clay bricks made locally and the earthen berm which once formed part of an original dam.

Council has two options regarding the designation process and they are as follows:

- 1) Proceed with the designation – Notice of intent to designate is then served. Should there be no objections, the final request to designate comes back to Council. Should there be an objection(s), there is an appeal process to the Conservation Review Board before the final request comes back to Council for final decision.
- 2) Not to proceed with the designation – The property is not designated.

It is recommended that Council proceed with designation of the property.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report relates to the Town's desire to Preserve, Protect and Promote our Distinctive History specifically, strategic objective D.2 "To encourage the preservation and enhancement of the historical character of the Town's distinctive neighbourhoods, districts, hamlets and rural settlement areas" and D.4, "To use the conservation of built heritage and cultural heritage landscape resources to enhance the character and vitality of neighbourhoods, and provide opportunities for economic development and tourism."

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, the property will be eligible for the Town's Heritage Property Tax Relief Program.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

If Council decides that designation under Part IV is warranted, staff will provide Written Notice of Intention to Designate as required by Section 29(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act in the manner and form and to the persons and agencies prescribed by the Ontario Heritage Act.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

Since the recommendations of this report are not related to a major project, policy or initiative, sustainability implications are not triggered and hence there are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION:

Consultation between the Clerks department, Heritage Halton Hills Committee and the property owner(s) of 504 Main Street, Glen Williams led to the preparation of this report.

CONCLUSION:

In keeping with the commitment to preserve our heritage in Halton Hills it is recommended that Council indicate its intent to designate the Williams-Holt property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

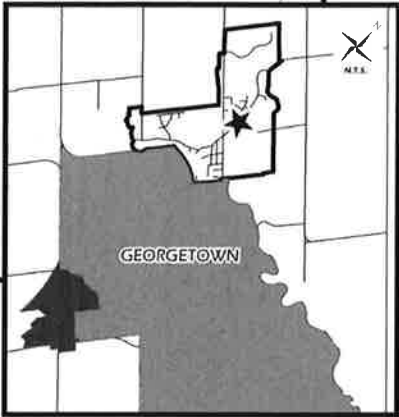
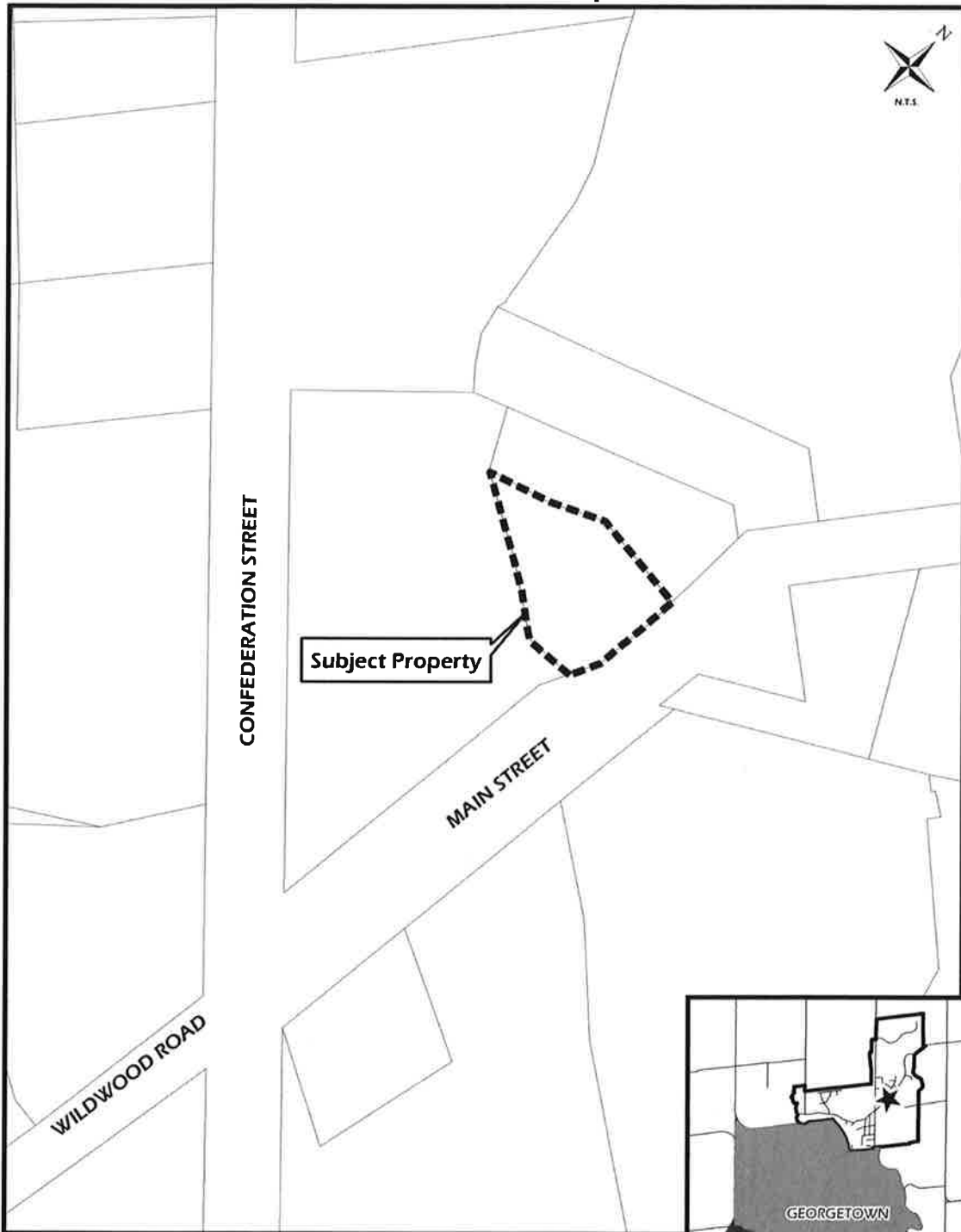
Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Toman, MPlan
Planner, Development Review

John Linhardt, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning, Development &
Sustainability

Dennis Y. Perlin
Chief Administrative Officer

**Appendix 1 to PDS-2011-0095
Location Map**



Source:
Teranet Parcel Fabric, Property Code Data - Provided by Teranet
Bell Single Line Street Network - Provided by the Region of Halton
MNR Water Features - Streams, Creeks, River - Provided through the Region of Halton

Produced by:
TOWN OF HALTON HILLS
2011

Appendix 2 to PDS-2011-0095
Reasons for Designation Report

Williams-Holt Building



ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Heritage Halton Hills Designation Report 2011

By John Mark Rowe

Williams-Holt Building

Location

The Williams-Holt building is located at 504 Main Street, Glen Williams, Town of Halton Hills, having Assessment Roll Number 24 1507 000 361 800. The property is identified as Lot 62 on the original Plan of the Village of Glen Williams, which was later divided into lots 53 and 54. Today it is known as Lot 53 on Halton Hills Plan RCP1556, being parcels 10,11,12,13 and 14 PM103 with an irregular lot adjacent to the Credit River.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Historical Background

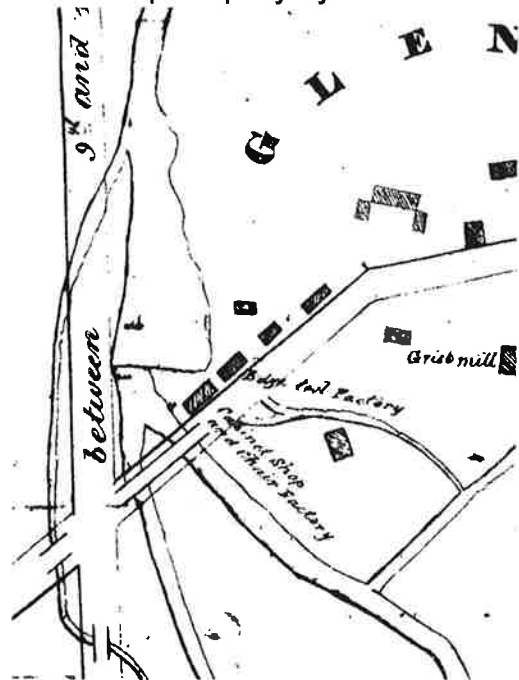
In 1824 the Crown granted Lot 21, Concession 10 to John Butler Muirhead of Niagara. On the 9th of November 1825, the executors of J. B. Muirhead sold all 200 acres to Benajah Williams of Gainsborough Township.

Benajah Williams moved to Esquesing Township at the age of 60, with his third wife Elizabeth Williams and their children – Joel, Lydia, Charles, George, Jacob, Ira, Isaac, and Israel. His sons helped him build a saw mill the same year and the village of Williamsburg was born.

His seventh child was Isaac Williams (1820-1911), who married Sara Maria Ackert (1824-1897), in 1842. She was the daughter of Peter and Catherine Ackert of Lot 26, Concession 10. Isaac and Sara Maria Williams had six sons – George, John, Joseph, Peter, Isaac and James Williams.

An editorial in the *Canada Christian Advocate* dated the 19th of September 1849, offers this opinion of the manner in which Benajah Williams kept everything business-like within the family. "...the business of this village is carried on principally by the sons of the first settler, old Mr. Williams, after whom the place is called. The sons, however have their property independent of each other, which is by far the best way. They own an excellent flouring mill, saw mill, woollen factory, tannery, and chairmaking establishment."

Benajah Williams raised his nine children to be self-sufficient in their pioneer world. This half of Lot 21 was sold to Charles Williams and Isaac bought village lots 61 and 62 from his brother in 1848. In 1850, access was made easier to the village when the road was straightened to cut directly from Wildwood Road to Main Street, rather than crossing at the flats, through the present ball park. (See Ressor's Survey). Wildwood Road was a winding road hacked out of the wilderness by the Williams family to allow easy access to the village from Trafalgar Road –



1854 Map – Ressor's Survey

the principal thoroughfare through the township. The road was given to the township by the family.

Isaac built a small dam across the Credit River at the back of the property where he diverted the water power beside a frame building (508 Main Street) to power a cabinet and chair factory. He must have built this frame factory in 1848, the year he purchased the two village lots.



The 1851 *Canada Directory* for Williamsburg, population 200, lists Isaac Williams as a cabinetmaker. His brother Charles was the miller and saw mill owner, David handled boots and shoes, while Jacob was the woollen factor. The 1851 census also shows Isaac and Sarah Maria Williams as residents of Ballinafad, where they lived on six acres.

The map shows dates from the 1854 map of Reesor's survey, across the river. The village section shown was taken from an earlier survey, but which one and which date was not specified. The squared off river indicates the dam, while two tail races are shown across the road from the edge tool factory (508 Main Street) and the "Cabinet shop and Chair factory" (504 Main Street). The building across the road using the tail race water power was a shingle mill later run by Moffit Forester, who married Isaac's niece in 1854.

The map shows a collection of industrial buildings at the "gateway" to Glen Williams. Although other industrial buildings were found at the centre of the village (Jacob Williams' woollen mill) and the far edge of the village (Tweedle's saw mill), this collection was the culmination of the plan by patriarch Benajah Williams to present an image of a booming 19th century industrial village – just like the New England he had left after the American Revolution.

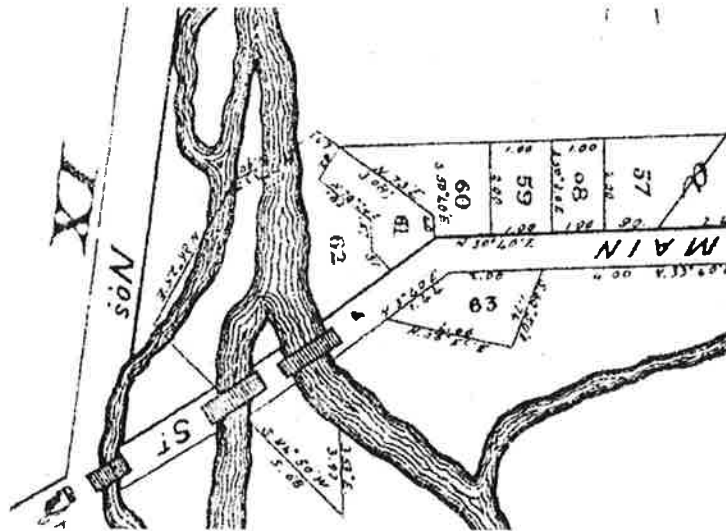
The frame shingle factory across the new road was probably built beside the original village road about the time the road was realigned in 1850. It served as a shingle mill, bobbin factory and barrel factory before being converted into the double residence shown in the photograph. This building burned down in January 1939. The site is currently part of the ballpark.

The survey map would suggest that the brick cabinet shop was built sometime before 1854, perhaps shortly after the edge tool factory, which was the original cabinet making factory. A triple brick building would have been a costly enterprise for a cabinetmaker, even with the free labour of his brothers, but Isaac Williams found an entrepreneur to join the family efforts.

Williams entered into a partnership with John Holt, a pumpmaker and shingle factor sometime after the 1851 directory. It would not be difficult to imagine that Holt, leasing the new shingle factory, would have arrived at an agreement with his neighbour Isaac Williams to build a substantial factory for his pump making enterprise. The partnership between Williams and John Holt was publically dissolved in an advertisement in the *Halton Journal*, dated the 5th day of December 1856. No earlier advertisement of the partners' businesses has been discovered. However, in 1855 the two partners mortgaged Williams' entire parcel for £300.

While the mortgage would usually suggest the building date, the map directs us to believe that the mortgage came about after the construction. Perhaps the funds were necessary to purchase the equipment needed for the enterprise. A finished brick building would be more attractive collateral in any case. Therefore, based on all the accumulated evidence a construction date of 1852 would be reasonable.

The dissolution of the Williams-Holt venture was due to financial stress caused by sales and mortgages initiated by Isaac Williams, which quickly took on a life of their own. After using his entire land purchase of 2 acres and 23 perches as collateral for the £300 mortgage, he sold the 1848 frame factory to Silas Beebe. He then sold the shingle mill to Moffit Forester, a relation through marriage. However, Williams and Holt took back a mortgage from Forester in the unbelievable amount of £1028! That was July 1856; however, the partnership crumbled by December 1856.



This map from the 1877 Halton County Atlas, shows the village lot boundaries. The dam has been removed and the factory races filled in. The race from the right is from the saw and flour mills.

The properties went through many legal difficulties, involving William and James Barber of Georgetown and the Bank of Montreal. The 1857 directory lists Silas Beebe in the edge tool factory (508 Main), Robert Brown as pumpmaker (504 Main) and Moffit Forester as the shingle miller. Isaac Williams had left the village for good. He later became a travelling patent medicine salesman in Michigan.

By the 1860s Brown was the pumpmaker (504 Main), while he leased the frame mill across the road to Bradshaw and Hunt, who manufactured bobbins for sewing machines as well as machine and screw driver handles. Robert Hunt purchased 508 Main Street from Robert Brown in 1866 and probably converted it into a dwelling house, which he sold to Hugh and Sarah Melville in 1870.

In 1871, Brown sold the brick pump factory to George Hunt. He converted the property into a dwelling house. At this point, the bridge over the Credit River locally became known as "Hunt's Bridge". The Hunt family sold the house in 1905 to John Campbell for \$1100. After 31 years, the estate of Catherine Ann Campbell sold the house for \$900 to Robert and Nellie English in 1936. Nellie English's estate sold the house via Helen Gillis in January 1963 to Ken and Shirley MacDonald.

The MacDonalds retired to Georgetown and sold the property to Doug McDonald. In 2001, McDonald started construction on a new addition at the rear of the property. During this time, the interior of the house was gutted, leaving no trace of the original home. Even the interior strapping was removed and updated. The family of Joseph Aiello and Mary Grech moved into their new home on the 1st day of July 2010.

Site Analysis

The Williams-Holt House was built in the simple "elegant box" design of the Georgian style. All houses in the village built by the Williams family from this era used the same design. The construction of this Georgian building as an industrial facility resulted in an unadorned example of the style.



The simple rectangular box has eight windows on the front façade balanced on either side of a simple door – one on each floor. The upper door – now bricked in with a wooden slat door hiding the alternate colour bricks – would never have had a landing, since its purpose was to allow direct access to the floor from the outside to swing goods in and out of the second floor.

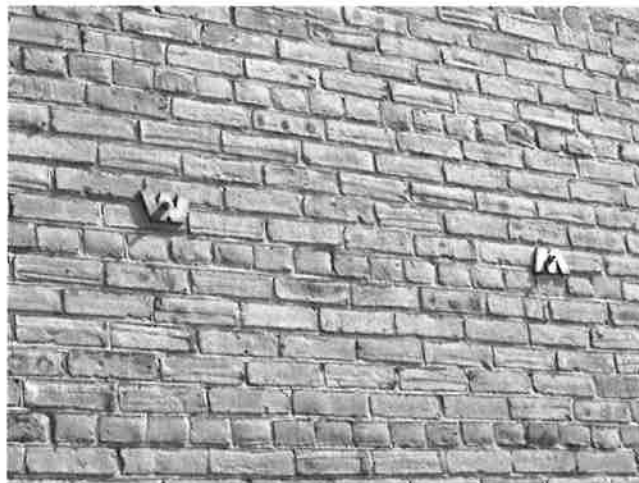
The rear façade had fewer windows and a rear door, now hidden by the 2001 addition. The modern addition removed an earlier rear addition, evidence of which can be seen on the north-west corner. A previous roof outline and a plaster interior wall can be identified.

The southern wall has one ground floor window – now expanded into a modern bay window, as the only aperture. White mortar outlines a former exterior chimney which has been removed. The chimney serviced the former furnace in the basement.



The north wall is of the most interest to the industrial heritage of the building. A single second floor window fills the western quarter of the wall. The ground floor features two former doors, which

were bricked over during the 2001 renovation, using similar style vintage brick. An window sympathetic to the design has been inserted in the western cavity. An examination of the photograph on page six taken in the 1980s, shows the two apertures were still open. One covered by a non-functioning wooden slab door and the western one in use.



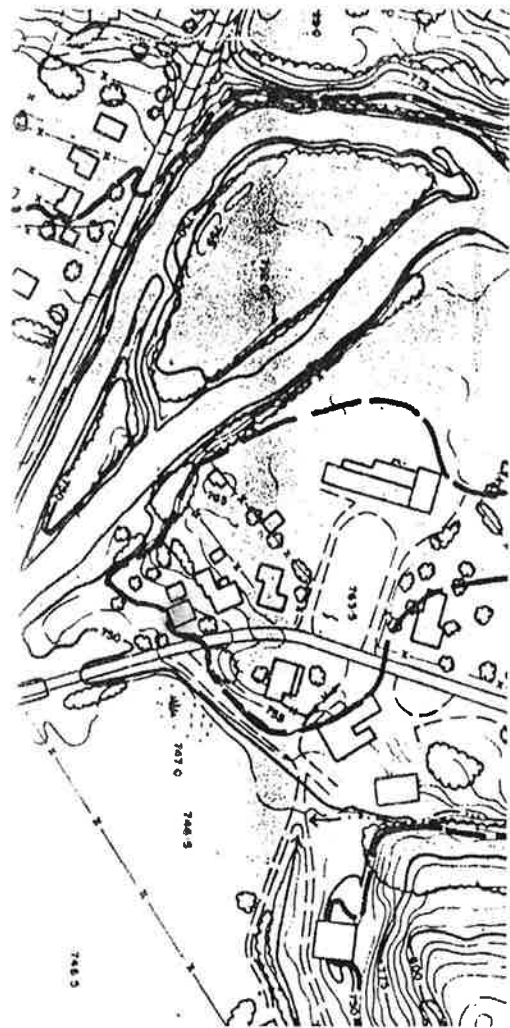
The locally-made red brick was laid in a traditional English Garden-wall or American bond brick pattern. That

involves courses of headers separated by five courses of stretchers, with queen-closers next to the quoin headers, in the header course. The headers would turn a brick to right angles to the exterior wall, allowing a solid brick wall, three deep, to be tied together. Since this was built as an industrial building, only the ground floor is triple-brick in width, while the upper floor is double-brick. To maintain strength and to keep the walls from bowing out metal rods run the length of the building between the two floors. Mr. McDonald replaced the original rods with these ones capped with alternating "M" and "W"s. They represent the Williams and MacDonald/McDonald families.



The window and door openings are topped with a lintel of double course soldier bricks of the same style as the wall.

The building sits on a foundation of stone, with a partial basement under the southern end of the house. It is accessed through a trap door and has been repaired as part of the renovations. This half basement is where a furnace had been installed in the 20th century, which used the exterior chimney mentioned earlier. On the exterior near the south-eastern



1965 Contour Map

corner are two iron posts embedded in the structure. Their purpose remains unclear.

A medium height gable roof covered with modern composite roofing material protects the building. Brick chimneys sit at the peak at each end of the building. Mounted on the gable ends is unadorned barge board with eaves return which finishes off the roofing in a simple style replicating the original barge boards.

The last feature of this property of heritage interest is the grounds, as they relate to the long-gone dam and raceway in relation to the Credit River. The map shown was drawn in 1965 by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and is used here to illustrate the contour of the land around the house. The heavy dotted line, which encloses the house, is the maximum flood line. This in itself illustrates the unusual height, being so close to the river.

At the back of the property is a surprisingly steep berm, which isolates the house from the river. This earthen berm was undoubtedly part of the original dam system shown in 1854. The photograph below was taken from the river bank, looking up.

The site is littered with interesting evidence that points to the existence of the dam. There is a shoal across the Credit River at this spot. On the shore are two large squared rocks with carved indentations.

Evidence of a raceway or flume can be perceived along the north side of the house. The height of the berm at the back corner of this property is probably close to the original height, minus the sluice gate which would have regulated the flow of water through this narrow channel downhill to the current ball park. This flume would have provided enough power enough for both the edge tool factory (508 Main) and the pump manufactory (504 Main). The two doors on this side of the house permit a belt or similar conduit of the power generated by the flume to enter the building. A similar arrangement would have existed on the other side of the flume for the edge tool factory.



REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Design/Physical Value (OHA Regulation 9/06):

The Williams-Holt House is a mid 19th century example of Georgian architecture adapted for industrial purposes. As the “factory” grew beyond family enterprises, this style of building was no longer constructed. Besides the usual Georgian features, simplified for an industrial building, the three additional doors emphasize the functionality of the building.

The design value extends beyond the building to encompass the high earthen berm between the house and the river and the apparent flume or raceway which once conducted water from the dam of contemporary vintage.

Historical/Associative Value (OHA Regulation 9/06)

The building is an interesting example of a mid-nineteenth century brick industrial building converted to a house with minimal exterior structural changes. It was one of three buildings which formed an industrial complex. As a brick building situated at the head of the bridge, it was a landmark from the date of construction. It continues to serve as a representative of the historic nature of the village, which lies tucked around the corner.

Cultural Value

The Williams-Holt House is an integral part of the historic core of the village of Glen Williams. The Georgian design associates it with buildings built by the founding family, which it was. It also represents a family-based era of industry on which the word manufacture – built by hand – was defined.

Description of Heritage Attributes/Character Defining Elements

- English garden-wall pattern red clay bricks made locally
- Industrial adaptation of the Georgian style
- Five original access doors – three of which are bricked in
- Earthen berm which once formed part of an original dam

Documentation

The Christian Guardian
The Canadian Champion
The Georgetown Herald
The Halton Journal
Canada Directory 1851
Census of the Dominion of Canada, Erin 1851; Esquesing 1861, 1871
Abstract of Land Transactions for Esquesing Township
Abstract of Land Transactions for Village of Glen Williams
The Descendants of Benajah Williams, John Blythe Dobson, 2008.
Oxford Dictionary of Architecture, James Stevens Curl, Oxford: 2006
Esquesing Historical Society Image 00148 of the wooden house.
Sketch of Altered Road through Glen Williams, Richard Tracy, Town Clerk, 1850.
Plan of Town Lots, Georgetown, May 1854; David Reesor, proprietor,
George McPhillips, surveyor.
"Plan of Glenwilliams", *Halton County Atlas*, 1877
Map of Glen Williams showing 100 Year flood levels, Credit Valley Conservation
Authority, 1965
John Mark Rowe, Photographer