



Can I Alter a Designated Heritage Property?

A **Designated Heritage Property** is a property that is designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The *Ontario Heritage Act* 1990 gives each municipal council the responsibility to protect those buildings that are of historical or architectural significance.



In order to designate a property the municipality must pass a by-law that includes a legal description of the property and a schedule detailing the specific **reasons for designation**.

Designation protects the property from unsympathetic alterations, which may decrease its historic, architectural or aesthetic value.

What is an alteration?

An **alteration** to a designated property is any change to the designated property that effects the **reasons for designation**. This includes new building and work of a substantial scale on existing historic buildings, such as additions and alterations that irreversibly change the building. This can include altering window profiles and sizes, and adding or removing a decorative porch.

Can I alter a designated property?

The *Ontario Heritage Act* permits the alteration of a designated property so long as the alteration does not affect the **reason for the designation** of the property. In order to determine if the alteration is permitted, the owner of the property must make an application to Council to alter a designated structure.

The detailed requirements for the alteration of a designated property are outlined in the *Ontario Heritage Act*. To get a copy of this document, please contact the Heritage Planner at 519.740.4650 ext. 4580

Who reviews the application?

The Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee will review your application for alteration and will make a recommendation to Cambridge Council regarding the application. MHAC meets on the third Thursday of each month and has established a sub committee to review applications for alterations and provide applicants with guidance during the application process.

How do I apply?

When you apply for a building permit for work on your heritage property, the permit information is automatically sent to the Heritage Planner and the process is started based on this information.

If you want to receive MHAC approval before you apply for a building permit, you will need to fill out an "Application to Alter a Designated Heritage Property" form.

What information is required when I apply?

As a minimum you should include the following information:

- ✓ the building location where the alteration is to take place;
- ✓ exact location on the building where the alteration will occur;
- ✓ type of alteration (i.e. addition, masonry work, etc.)
- ✓ materials (i.e. mortar mixes, type of wood) to be used in alterations;
- ✓ an accurate plan of the property showing its size and boundaries, as well as all buildings, driveways, parking areas and uses on the property;
- ✓ an accurate record of how the building looks currently (i.e. drawing, or photograph);
- ✓ a drawing showing how you want to alter the building;
- ✓ any materials necessary for a complete understanding of the alterations.

How Long Will it Take?

MHAC is committed to working with you to make the approval process move along as quickly as possible. However, Cambridge Council approval of the change is required before a building permit can be issued. This process usually takes 4 to 6 weeks.

What Happens after I apply?

After you apply for the alteration, you will be contacted by the Heritage Planner who will advise you of the date of the meeting at which your proposal will be discussed by MHAC. You are invited to attend that meeting and make a presentation regarding the alteration and answer any questions MHAC may have. At this meeting MHAC will make a recommendation regarding your alteration and you will be advised of the outcome of the meeting the following day.

At times when there is no agreement between the owner and the MHAC regarding the request to alter, a report will be made to Council. Cambridge Council will be advised of MHAC's recommendation and will consider the application. At this time, they may choose to consent to the application, consent to the application upon certain terms and conditions, or refuse the application. If Council approves the application, the building division will be notified and the building permit process can be completed.

If Council does not approve the alteration or makes the approval subject to conditions which cause you concern you can appeal to the provincial Conservation Review Board. The process is complete after the Board holds a hearing and issues its decision.

Need More Information?

If you have additional questions regarding altering a designated heritage property please contact

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