BLAIR VILLAGE
A HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN
IN THE CITY CAMBRIDGE

FINAL REPORT
February 1999

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Heritage Conservation District Boundary
- - - - Primary Area
- - - - Secondary Area
1. INTRODUCTION

In May of 1997, the City of Cambridge completed the Blair Area Special Study (BASS). The principle goal of the study was to determine a vision and land use plan for the area. One of the recommendations was to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Plan to "ensure that new development will be compatible and harmonious with the existing village heritage and character through detailed guidelines for building design, streetscapes, landscapes and scenic roads."


This document consists of the text and Schedule "A" of the Blair Area Heritage Conservation District Plan. The Plan was prepared under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, Heritage Conservation Districts. The purpose of the Plan is to conserve and enhance the historic and rural village character of Blair, and ensure compatible new development.

The resident community was actively involved in the preparation of the Plan. A steering committee, composed of a variety of stakeholders, was appointed by City Council to assist and advise the consultants retained by the City of Cambridge to undertake this work. Information newsletters were sent to property owners as part of the process, and public meetings and open houses were held during the preparation period. City staff and the consultants were also available to the public on an individual basis over the course of the study.

This report contains a variety of information, analysis and direction, including the goals of the Heritage Conservation District; the Heritage District boundary; conservation guidelines for the historic buildings, landscapes and streetscapes; design guidelines for new development; streetscape improvements for the core area; and implementation strategies. It has been written in a practical manner so that it can be readily understood and applied to the District.
2. THE VISION FOR BLAIR

A vision for the future of the Blair area evolved in the Blair Area Special Study. A detailed land use study was undertaken by the City of Cambridge, and was incorporated into the new City of Cambridge Official Plan as policy to be used in regulating land use. The Vision for Blair established the framework within which this Heritage Conservation District Plan was designed. The vision is as follows:

"The community of Blair will remain a village in character, form and function, protected from suburban development with strong policies to protect and enhance the natural environment and heritage features, and promote village design. New development must be assimilated into the village - not be an entity unto itself, nor engulf the village.

Blair will remain small and compact, walkable and self-contained with a central village core. The village core will promote the interaction of residents and become the centre of the community with a mix of residential, commercial and institutional land uses. Commercial uses will primarily provide convenience goods and service to the community residents and promote some tourism. Mixed uses within buildings will be encouraged. The development of a 'village green' at the historic intersection of Old Mill and Blair Roads will be encouraged to provide a central community focal point, where residents and visitors can interact in a compact, garden parkette setting.

The vision of the recommended land use plan anticipates the completion of the village community to a logical bio-physical boundary. The vision incorporates a range of housing types that will allow for integration of social and economic classes, and ages including young adults with children to senior citizens. New residential development will evolve through in-filling and subdivision of land as a logical extension of Blair south of the existing village to the municipal boundary, and this will constitute completion of the village to a logical boundary.

An integrated trail system will be developed, for passive recreational use, linking the Blair and Bechtel Creeks with the Grand River Blair Trail, the Langdon Hall property and historic railway lands. In addition to the expansion of the existing trail network in Blair, an active neighbourhood park will be developed to provide an opportunity for children and adults alike to pursue active recreation. This park will become a neighbourhood focal point for the entire Blair community.

Significant heritage attributes of the community will provide the impetus for the completion of a Heritage Conservation District Plan under the provision of the Ontario Heritage Act to ensure the protection of the remarkable heritage features in Blair. The heritage plan will also provide a design code that will define guidelines for building form, materials and details to best reflect the existing Blair community architecture, landscapes and land use. Diverse village streetscapes ranging from narrow streets to wider more open streetscapes with a diversity of lot sizes and housing types will be directed by this guideline.

Construction of the North-South Arterial Road around Blair would significantly reduce the volume and speed of traffic on Blair Road that currently bisects the village, creating the single most negative impact to the existing community. This reduction of through traffic will allow for the continued village core growth along Blair Road and promote Blair as a destination for its historic streetscape, views and access to the Grand River, natural environmental features and unique village attributes.

In all, the community of Blair will remain a village within the City, unspoiled by urban development and the pressures for suburbanization, yet vibrant with new and existing residential land uses and a traditional village core. Blair shall remain a harmonious village community."
3. GOALS

The Blair Area Heritage Conservation District Plan presents a unique opportunity for the community to conserve and enhance one of the most historic, rural and beautiful parts of the City of Cambridge. The goals for achieving the Plan include the following:

3.1 PHYSICAL GOALS
A primary objective of the Plan is to conserve and enhance the village character of Blair and to ensure compatible new development. This will be achieved through the following goals:

- Encouraging the conservation of historic buildings and landscapes.
- Blending new development with the historic and rural character of the area.
- Introducing features that will enhance the area, such as streetscape improvements to the village core.
- Achieving a cohesive, well designed and identifiable historic area.

3.2 SOCIAL GOALS
The community has been actively involved in promoting and achieving the preparation of this Heritage Conservation District Plan. A primary objective is to build on and continue this community involvement through the following goals:

- Working with the Cambridge Council through its Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC).
- Establishing a Blair Heritage Committee to advocate the Plan.
- Fostering community support to conserve the historic and rural character.
- Enhancing community awareness of sound conservation practices.

3.3 ECONOMIC GOALS
The Blair Area will continue to grow and change. A primary objective is to ensure new development does not spoil or overwhelm the valued historic and rural character of the Area. The economic goals are:

- Guiding new development (including subdivisions, commercial and residential infill) to fit into and enhance the historic and rural character of the area.
- Conserving historic structures to sustain and build the economic base.
- Assisting the City of Cambridge in identifying and prioritizing capital expenditures.
- Identifying Blair as a community asset in the City of Cambridge.
4. HERITAGE PLAN DIRECTION

4.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The heritage of Blair is a combination of historic buildings, landscapes, and streetscapes. The actual number of very historic buildings is quite small - 27 out of a total of 122. They are some of the oldest in Waterloo Region and defining in their architectural presence. Most were built between 1817 and 1850 by Mennonite families who emigrated from Pennsylvania. They include houses, barns, mills, inns, a church, a school, and a store. Associated with them are a number of historic landscapes, including three mill ponds and the former wagon tracks and farm lanes, now public streets.

Following this golden age of early settlement, the village grew very little over the next 100 years. Only 18 buildings were added, mainly small but attractive houses in the Ontario Gothic and Ontario Cottage styles. The one exception is the magnificent Langdon Hall, built 1898-1901 by Eugene Langdon Wilks to the Classical Revival design of well-known Toronto architect Eden Smith. With the exception of a few outlying houses, the early and later historic buildings form a fairly compact grouping on Blair and Old Mill Roads.

The second major period of growth commenced in the 1960s and continues to the present, with the addition of 77 houses. These were built both in the old village and on new streets such as Highgrove Court, John Bricker Drive and Morningside Drive. Most are builder-designed in the prevailing style of the day - ranch, split-level and 2-storey traditional. Guiding further new development so that it better relates to the traditional village is a major purpose for this plan.

The significance and rarity of Blair's heritage is dependent on the survival of a small cluster of the earliest buildings in Waterloo Region with their early associated landscapes, lanes and roads. Also, the setting of the village on the Grand River and enclosed by the landscapes of the Blair and Bechtel Creeks provides a rich rural character. The whole is a wonderful heritage, largely authentic and unspoilt.
4.2 DIRECTIONS

The Plan addresses four major directions:

- Conservation
- New Development
- Streetscape Improvements
- Implementation

Conservation of the historic buildings, landscapes and streetscapes of Blair is the first and most important step of the Plan. They define the historic and rural character of the village. Although reasonably well cared for and not under threat of loss, the Plan provides guidelines and policies for their proper conservation and continued protection.

The second direction of the Plan is to ensure that new development - residential subdivisions and infill, new building in the core and future commerce - complements the historic and rural character of the village. This is achieved by detailed guidelines for building design, street layout and landscaping to ensure new development is a contiguous part of the village. These guidelines apply to new development both within and outside the old village.

The third direction of the Heritage Plan is to propose streetscape improvements to the village core as defined in the City of Cambridge Official Plan on Blair Road. Centred on Lamb's Inn at 1679 Blair Road, this is a character defining area of the village and improvements should contribute to ensuring that the historic centre of the village is ultimately protected and enhanced. Improvements include traffic calming techniques, pedestrian sidewalks and amenity spaces, period street lights and landscaping.

The fourth direction of the Plan guides how it is implemented. Basically, the Plan is achieved in two ways - by voluntary conservation guidelines for minor building work and private landscapes, and by conservation policies for major work which includes new building, alterations and additions. Minor work and private landscaping do not require approval from the Cambridge LACAC. Major work and landscapes on municipal property do require application to and approval from the LACAC.

As a designated Heritage Conservation District, financial assistance is available to property owners to achieve good conservation through the City of Cambridge Heritage Conservation Fund. In addition, conservation advice is available through the City.
BLAIR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT PLAN

MAP 1
HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT BOUNDARY ANALYSIS

Legend

Study Area Boundary

1, 2, 3... Areas of analysis
5. HERITAGE DISTRICT BOUNDARY

Establishing the boundary for the Heritage Conservation District in Blair was a key task. The boundary reflects:

- Including and protecting the old historic village.
- Including new development areas that could impact the character of the old village.

The merits of the different areas within the Study Area Boundary defined in the City of Cambridge Official Plan (see Map 1 - Heritage District Boundary) are as follows:

Area #1 The Old Village
The research into the historic settlement of Blair and its surviving historic buildings, landscapes and streetscapes established the old village centre as the most historic area in the village. It is deemed appropriate that this area be in the Heritage District.

Area #2 The Grand River
The Grand River area has a rich pre-European settlement history, dating back many hundreds of years as a Neutral Indian seasonal encampment and burial ground. Designated a Canadian Heritage River since 1994, it is deemed appropriate to be in the Heritage District.

Area #3 Langdon Hall
Built in 1898, Langdon Hall with its enclosing estate of rides, walks, forest and walled garden is a rare and remarkable heritage property rarely found elsewhere in Ontario. It has been superbly restored and is very well maintained. It is considered geographically discreet yet integral to the history of the Blair area, and is deemed appropriate to be included in the Heritage District.

Area #4 Morningside Drive
Morningside Drive was originally established in the early 1800s as a lane to Wismers' farm at the north end of the settlement and later as the road to Ferrier's Mill in Doon. When Highway 401 was constructed in 1961, Morningside was cut off and became a cul-de-sac. Subsequently, new houses have been built on the east side. The historic Eshelman farmhouse of c1860 is located on the west side. Morningside is one of the earliest established roads in the Study Area and is deemed appropriate to be included in the Heritage District.

Area #5 Highgrove Court
Highgrove Court is a partly developed residential cul-de-sac. It is to one side of the old village, separated from it by Blair Creek. While of no historic value, it forms part of the entry character to the village. It is deemed appropriate that, over time, it be seen and become one with the old village, primarily through an integrated landscape plan. Highgrove Court is therefore included within the Heritage District.
Area #6 Future Residential (BLI Lands)
Presently in agriculture, this area abuts the old village and is planned for new residences. It will impact the old village and policies within the Heritage Plan will ensure a harmonious blend with the existing historic village and rural character. It is deemed appropriate to include this new development area within the Heritage District.

Areas #7 & #8 Future Industrial Park
Designated for a future campus-style industrial park, areas #7 and #8 are presently in agriculture and well to the west side of the old village. These areas are significant in establishing the entry character of the village. Including these development areas in a secondary tier Heritage District will ensure appropriate landscaping, buffering and screen details to minimize the visual, sound, lighting and other negative impacts on the historic and rural character of Blair.

Area #9 Agriculture and Natural Environment
The southwest corner of the Blair Village Special District is in agriculture, with a number of old and new residences. It is separated by the Blair Creek and is not a contiguous part of the old village. Designation of these properties, where appropriate, should fall under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (individual properties). The area is not deemed appropriate to include in the Heritage District.

Area #10
This area has historical and landscape value. A newer single detached residence is now present on this property, but it was the site of the stables for Langdon Hall and the Gran Allee entrance to the estate passes through. It is, therefore, deemed appropriate to include in the Heritage District.

The analysis suggests a primary and secondary tier Heritage District, of equal importance but slightly different in make-up. The primary tier includes established historic areas. The secondary tier is located at the periphery, having a secondary but direct impact on the historic village. Areas #1, #2 and #4 have high historical and architectural value and are included in the primary Heritage District. Areas #3 and #10 are historical, and to be further developed and are in the secondary tier. Areas #5 and #6 (BLI lands) are new development areas that directly impact on the historic village and are included in the primary Heritage District. Areas #7 and #8 have an impact on the entry and west side of the village and should be in the secondary tier with new development guidelines. Area #9 is excluded from the Heritage District, as it contains no historically or architecturally significant buildings, and is isolated and unconnected to the existing historic village.

The designating by-laws of four properties currently designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act are recommended to be repealed so that these properties may become part of the Heritage Conservation District. These properties are 256 Morningside, 1490 Blair Road, 1679 Blair Road and the Sheave Tower on Old Mill.
6. CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

Preserving the historic and rural character of the village is a main goal of the Plan. In interviews and questionnaires for the Blair Area Special Study, stakeholders consistently said that preserving the character of the village was the most important priority. In defining what this character was, residents offered many thoughts - narrow streets; historic buildings; variety; hedgerows and trees. They wanted this character preserved and extended into new development areas so the village - old and new - appeared and felt as one. While character may appear to be highly elusive and indefinable, it is readily interpreted by carefully analyzing the parts that make up the village and their relationship one to another. Physically, they include buildings, streets and open space. Defining these character elements not only ensures their conservation, but provides a sound basis from which to design integrated new development.

Review of stakeholders' opinions and on-site analysis has determined that the key character defining elements of the village are as follows.

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<td></td>
<td>Mix of old and new</td>
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<td>Mix of uses (church, house, store)</td>
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<td>Variety of sizes, shapes, frontages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hedgerow edges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Treed canopies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No curbs, gutters, sidewalks or street lights</td>
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<th>LANDSCAPES</th>
<th>Rolling land with abundance of trees</th>
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<td>Creeks &amp; ponds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grand River</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Birds &amp; wildlife</td>
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7. CONSERVATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

A primary goal of the Plan is to conserve the historic and rural character of Blair. This is made up of the historic buildings and streetscapes, and the distinctive landscapes of the village which includes the street trees, hedgerows, old mill ponds, lanes and roads. Appropriate conservation and restoration will be achieved by using the Conservation Guidelines (voluntary) and mandatory Policies in this section of the Plan, together with technical and design assistance from the Cambridge LACAC and potential funding from the City, Waterloo Region and other sources. In general, conservation work falls into two categories - major and minor work.

FOR MINOR WORK

- LACAC approval is not required, although technical and design advice is available.
- Consult the voluntary Conservation Guidelines for advice on preserving the historic building character.
- Meet with the Blair Heritage Committee, a group of local residents who advocate the Plan.
- Enquire about conservation grants from the City.

FOR MAJOR WORK

- LACAC approval is required.
- The Conservation Policies are mandatory.
- Consult the Conservation Guidelines for advice on preserving the historic building character.
- Meet with the LACAC Coordinator for information and advice on the application and approval procedures.
- Enquire about conservation grants and loans from the City and other funding sources.

Minor work, maintenance and repairs means work that does not substantially change the historic appearance of the building and includes re-roofing, painting, eavestroughs, new siding, window replacement and door replacement. Major work includes both new building and work of a substantial scale on existing historic buildings, such as additions and alterations, that irreversibly change the building's historic fabric - for example altering window profiles and sizes or removing a decorative porch. Where there is a question as to whether work is minor or major, the LACAC Coordinator shall be consulted for clarification.
7.2 BUILDING

INTRODUCTION

There are 122 buildings in the Heritage District of which 27 are very historic and 18 are historic. (See Table 1 and Map 2 - Historic Buildings of Blair.) The very historic were built largely between 1817 and 1840 by early Mennonite settlers and include houses, barns, mills, a store, hotel, school and church. They are some of the oldest and finest buildings in the Region. The historic are later in date and more modest in size and style. They are mainly houses in the Ontario Gothic and Ontario Cottage styles. Together these two categories of historic buildings define the historic character of the village.

Of concern is their integrity. Many have been altered, added to and covered with siding. This has diminished their historic appearance and authenticity. Over time it is envisioned that, through the use of the Conservation Guidelines and Policies and funding assistance, many of these buildings can regain their originality and beauty.

GOALS

<p>| Very Historic Buildings | • To recognize these buildings as some of the oldest and most valuable historic buildings in the Heritage District and the Region. |
|                         | • To give high priority to their conservation and restoration. |
|                         | • To give high priority to funding restoration work. |
|                         | • To encourage sound conservation practice. |
| Historic Buildings      | • To recognize these as valuable buildings that contribute to the historic character of Blair. |
|                         | • To encourage conservation and appropriate restoration. |
|                         | • To make available modest funding assistance. |
| Assistance              | • To provide design and technical restoration assistance through the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee. |
| Guidelines              | • To make the Conservation Guidelines widely and regularly available to all property owners in the village. |</p>
<table>
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<th><strong>VERY HISTORIC</strong></th>
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<td>Joseph Wismer Log House</td>
<td>c1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Bechtel House</td>
<td>1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Wismer House</td>
<td>c1827</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samuel B. Bowman House</td>
<td>1832</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Bechtel House</td>
<td>pre-1834</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben. B. Bowman House</td>
<td>1843</td>
</tr>
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<td>John Renshaw House</td>
<td>1847</td>
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<td>Henry Bechtel House</td>
<td>1851</td>
</tr>
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<td>John Lamb House</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Moses Eshelman House</td>
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<td>Joseph Blaschke House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Langdon Hall</td>
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<td>c1830</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Henry Bechtel Sawmill</td>
<td>1854</td>
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<td>Sheave Tower</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<td>Jacob Bechtel Dairy</td>
<td>c1817</td>
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<td>John Bechtel Barn</td>
<td>pre-1834</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamb's Inn</td>
<td>c1849</td>
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<td>Farmers' Inn</td>
<td>c1861</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miller's Store</td>
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<td>Blair's Second School</td>
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<td>Regular Baptist Church</td>
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<td>c1871</td>
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<td>Vernacular house</td>
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<td>1912</td>
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<td>Small Barn</td>
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<td>Vernacular house</td>
<td>1913</td>
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MAP 2
HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Legend

Heritage Conservation District Boundary
- Primary Area
- Secondary Area
- Historic
Shown above is the John Bechtel Residence at 58 Fallbrook Lane. Constructed prior to 1834, it is a fine example of a substantial 2-storey Mennonite Georgian residence of plastered stone construction. These were the earliest residences built in Blair. The style is robust, plain, near symmetrical and well proportioned. Windows and doors are evenly centred horizontally and vertically and a full length verandah is along the front. The windows are double-hung sash. The glass panes were originally smaller and more numerous, sometimes 12 over 12. There are small loft windows at the gable ends. A low stone wall fronts the garden on the street line. The essential conservation approach to these early residences is to retain their rugged simplicity and not introduce features from later styles.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain the elegant simplicity and proportions of the exterior. Do not "fuss up" with decorative features. Simplicity is the key to the style.
- Conserve as many original features as possible, particularly old window sash with original glass.
- If replacing features, duplicate the size and style of the original, particularly fascia boards, verandah columns and shutters.
- When re-shingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They are an authentic and historic material.
- Use historic paint colours. The original colours may be found by peeling away the paint layers to the first layer. This may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Alterations and Additions Policies. Approval is required from LACAC.
Shown above is the Jacob Hilborn house at 79 Old Mill Road, built in 1884. This is a good example of the Ontario Gothic style that was popular in the latter half of the 1800s. Construction was commonly wood frame with brick or wood siding. A distinguishing feature is the pointed front gable. The proportions were usually vertical, with a centre door and windows evenly distributed on the principle elevations. Windows would be double-hung sash with small panes before 1870 and larger after. Decorative features were few but important, such as elaborate gingerbread trim in the front roof gable and brackets under the soffits. The conservation approach to these mid-1800s residences is to retain their original wall finish, vertical proportions, symmetrical placement of windows and doors and decorative features which provide visual delight on an otherwise fairly plain facade.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain and conserve the balanced and symmetrical proportions of the facade. If upgrading windows, ensure they match the style of the old.
- Retain and conserve the original wall finish. A popular local finish was ashlar plaster, scored to look like stone.
- When reshingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. These are an authentic and historic material.
- Retain and conserve decorative features such as gingerbread trim, finials and drops.
- Paint using period colours. These were generally few but rich and dark colours such as forest green and brown, and used in combination with lighter colours such as ivory. Original paint colours may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Alterations and Additions Policies. Approval is required from LACAC.
QUEEN ANNE REVIVAL RESIDENCE
BUILDING STYLE & CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Shown above is the Angus McNally Residence at 1585 Blair Road, built in 1896. This is a good example of the Queen Anne style that was popular with wealthier clients in the late 1800s. It is a picturesque style, usually two storeys high with a variety of gables, towers, dormers, balconies, tall chimneys and verandahs of different materials and details. Such decorative features were made possible at the time by new machinery to make them and pattern books from which to choose. Queen Anne houses have a dramatic and eye-catching appearance. Queen Anne is one of the harder styles to conserve as there is so much detail to maintain, but the results can provide much pride and delight. The conservation approach is to preserve the many different materials and decorative details and ensure alterations and additions match up to the original.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain and conserve the many different decorative details. If replacing, duplicate the original.
- Retain and conserve the verandah with its decorative handrail, spindles and column caps.
- Use period paint colours. Vivid dark colours predominated, often in combinations of two and three to highlight the architectural decoration. Colours included blues, dark green and browns, maroons, reddish orange, bronze yellow and warm brown. Original paint colours may have faded over time.
- When reshabingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They are an authentic and historic material.
- Conserve the old window sash with its wavy glass.
- For large work, consult the Alterations and Additions Policies. Approval is required from LACAC.
ONTARIO COTTAGE RESIDENCES

BUILDING STYLE & CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Blair Heritage Plan

Shown above is an Ontario Cottage style residence at 1645 Blair Road, built in 1910. This is a good example of the small but attractive Ontario Cottage style residence that was popular from the 1800s on. Construction was commonly wood frame with a brick or wood siding. The houses were single-storey with a shallow-pitched cottage style roof, and windows were evenly placed on the principle elevations. As a humble dwelling, decorative features were few initially. However, a transom over the front door, possibly with stained glass, was popular. The roof soffits and fascias were painted wood in one of the traditional colours such as forest green or brown. Verandas were sometimes added as means allowed. The conservation approach is to retain the charming character of these small residences by conserving their original appearance, exterior finishes and colours.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain and conserve the balanced and symmetrical proportions of the facade. If adding or altering a window, ensure it complements the proportions of the original windows.
- Retain and conserve the original wall finish such as brick, stucco or wood clapboard. Avoid vinyl or metal siding.
- Retain and conserve decorative features such as the front entrance transom with its stained glass, painted wood soffits and soffit brackets.
- Paint using period colours. These were generally few but rich and dark colours, such as forest green, burgundy and brown. Second accent colours were sometimes used. Original paint colours may have faded over time.
- When reshingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They are an authentic and historic material.
- For large work, consult the Alterations and Additions Policies. Approval is required from LACAC.
Shown above is the magnificent Langdon Hall, situated on the east side of the village and said to have been a great source of pride in the community when it was built for Eugene Langdon Wilks between 1898 and 1901. This impressive residence was designed by New York architect Edward Lee Young in the American Federal Revival style and was meant to be clad in clapboard in the manner of similar mansions overlooking the Hudson River. The project was carried out by Toronto architect Eden Smith who changed the material to red brick. The Federal style is distinguished by a semi-circular fanlight above the front door and windows aligned horizontally and vertically in symmetrical rows. On the main front facade there is a neoclassical style full-height entrance portico with pediment and the roof supported by ionic columns. Equally important as the building is the landscape setting, with an expansive forelawn which sets the house off admirably upon the approach up the driveway.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for heritage conservation.

- Retain and conserve the balanced and symmetrical proportions of the facade.
- Retain the original and historic exterior brick wall material.
- Conserve and maintain the original wood detailing and decoration, such as roof soffits, fascias and brackets.
- When re-shingling the roof, use the original roofing material or that complementary to the building style. Cedar shingle would be an option.
- Use historic paint colours. Original colours may be found by peeling away the paint layers to the first layer. This may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations policies. Approval of LACAC is required.
Shown above is the historic Meadow Creek Manor at 28 Meadowcreek Lane. The style is vernacular, meaning it does not have a formal design but is a collection of different styles and additions, some old and some new. Other vernacular buildings were built all at one time but lack any defining style. Like Meadow Creek Manor, vernacular buildings often have a random but interesting appearance, revealing the local architectural designs of the day. In this example, the different parts are well integrated into a handsome building.

The conservation approach is to retain the essential architectural character, which includes the original appearance, exterior finishes and details.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Conserve the original appearance of the building.
- Retain the original and historic exterior wall materials, such as brick, stucco or wood siding.
- Conserve and maintain the original wood detailing and decoration, such as roof soffits, fascias and brackets.
- When reshingling the roof, try to determine the original roofing material. On early buildings, cedar shingle was the authentic historic finish.
- Use historic paint colours. The original colours may be found by peeling away the paint layers to the first layer. This may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
Showed above is the John Bechtel barn, built in three stages in the early 1800s and situated on the corner of Langdon Drive and Fallback Lane. The coach house was built first, shortly after the turn of the century. With massive lower stone walls and a large painted metal and wood upper storey, they are visually dramatic and handsome buildings. Barns are now a rare but valued historic building type in a village. This barn's corner position shows it off particularly well. Like their counterparts the mills, the essential architectural character of a barn is its large unadorned and visually striking form. It is important to retain this bold minimalist character. New openings for windows are generally best large to match the scale of the facade. The essential conservation approach is to retain the large and bold scale of these building types.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain the original and simple form and detail of the building.
- Conserve and restore the lower stone walls and upper wood or metal siding. Wood is preferred as it is more historic in appearance.
- Ensure exterior changes complement and enhance the scale and detail of the former barn. Do not insert small size windows that would be out of proportion.
- Use historic paint colours. While the finish was originally untreated barn board, over time barns have been painted or re-covered with metal. Solid primary colours such as red or green are appropriate.
- When reroofing, consider cedar shingles or metal. They are authentic and historic materials.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
Shown above is the former Henry Bechtel sawmill at 1740 Blair Road of 1854, later converted to a power generating station and now used as a residence. This is an excellent example of a former industrial building that has been converted to a new use, but that still retains its historic and original appearance. The architectural character is sturdy and unadorned, with stone walls, cedar shingle roof and symmetrically placed windows. A well-fitting board and batten addition is to one side. The entire roof has been re-shingled in cedar. The essential conservation approach for former industrial buildings - barns, mills and factories - is to retain their bold simplicity of shape and detail.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain the original robust form and detail.
- Conserve the original window openings and their old sash, if still existing.
- If putting in new openings, blend their size, proportions and placement with the originals and use the same lintel, sill and sash details.
- When re-shingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They give an authentic and historic look.
- Use historic paint colours. They were usually few and basic colours such as forest green, burgundy, brown and black. Original colours may have faded.
- Retain and conserve unusual but distinctive features such as old chimneys and mill race pipes.
- Conserve and restore lower stone walls and upper wood or metal siding. Wood is preferred as it is more historic in appearance.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
Shown above is Lamb's Inn at 1679 Blair Road, built by John Lamb c.1849. It is a good example of an old inn located in a prominent position in the centre of the village and having been added to and extended over its 150-year history. Of distinction is the full length 2-storey verandah that ties the different building phases and window/door placements together. When a building has evolved and grown over time, conservation should subtly show these changes, even if some elevations appear unbalanced. Changes are part of its history. Lamb's Inn is being beautifully restored inside and out, but in a way that conserves its rural charm, character and eccentricities. It sets an excellent example for the eventual restoration of the former Farmer's Inn, a little to the east on Blair Road and now an apartment building. The conservation approach is to preserve the historic and rural character of the building.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Conserve and restore the original appearance of the inn.
- Retain the original and historic exterior wall materials such as brick, stucco or wood siding.
- Conserve and maintain the original wood detailing. If replacing, duplicate the original.
- When reshingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They are an authentic and historic material.
- Use historic paint colours. The original colours may be found by peeling away the paint layers to the first layer. This may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
CHURCHES
BUILDING STYLE & CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Blair Heritage Plan

Shown above is the Blair Community Church at 12 Old Mill Road, originally built in 1853 as the Regular Baptist Church. The style is simple and elegant with a gable-fronted central window flanked by two doorways. On the side elevation are three similar and evenly placed tall windows. The windows are distinctive, with their many small panes of early glass in wooden sash. Originally brick, the building was later stuccoed. The conservation approach to churches in the village is to retain the essential simplicity and repose of the building. Any alteration or addition should complement the original style.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Retain the original and historic exterior wall materials, such as brick, stucco or wood siding. Vinyl and metal siding are strongly discouraged.
- Conserve and maintain the original wood detailing such as the roof soffits and fascias.
- When re-shingling the roof, consider cedar shingles. They are an authentic and historic material.
- Conserve the original windows and sash. Do not replace with new large sheets of glass. They destroy the heritage character of the windows and the building.
- Landscape the front of parking lots where they face the street. This will better set off the church and enhance the rural character of the streetscape.
- Use historic paint colours. The original colours may be found by peeling away the paint layers to the first layer. This may have faded over time.
- For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
COUNTRY STORES
BUILDING STYLE & CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Shown above is Miller’s Store at 1660 Blair Road, built originally by John Lamb in 1856. This was Blair’s second store and is located opposite Lamb’s Inn. Adjoining it is the residence and tailor shop built by John Lamb in 1848. The store is a 2-storey brick Georgian style building with side-gabled roof and a symmetrical front consisting of centre entrance, side and upper windows. Like the earlier Mennonite Georgian residences, the style has an elegant simplicity. Country stores can be purpose-designed, with a traditional centre door and large side display windows. Other building types, such as a residence or barn, may have been changed and adapted to use as a store. The conservation approach should be to preserve the particular historic character of the building, with all its eccentricities and individuality.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

• Conserve and restore the original appearance of the store.
• Use painted wood signs, located above the store front or hung over the front door. Illuminate with traditional goose-neck lights.
• Use canvas awnings, either fixed or retractable, over the store front. They are traditional and provide weather protection and visual colour.
• Retain original wood storefronts or windows. They provide character and uniqueness. Paint using period historic colours.
• Place flower boxes or hanging baskets in front of the store during the summer months. They provide a country touch.
• For large work, consult the Additions and Alterations Policies. Approval from LACAC is required.
Shown above is a former barn that has been altered to accommodate a retail store. It sits behind Miller's Store at 1660 Blair Road, and is a good example of the conversion of a historic building from an obsolete to a new use. The original barn shape has been preserved and painted wood siding, similar to what was there, has been used. There are new windows, with small panes of glass, and a centre door. The character and presence of the old barn is still present. The key objective of alterations is to conserve the historic character of the building and to ensure the original shape, proportions, height and window placements are preserved. Major building alterations require application to, and approval from, the LACAC for the City of Cambridge. Funding may be available to assist the historic restoration part of the work.

POLICIES

Style
- Alterations should conserve the character and key features of the historic building style. Refer to the Conservation Guidelines.

Walls
- Original exterior wall finishes should be conserved. When changed or renewed, finishes should complement the historic style of the building. Historic materials include stone, brick, stucco and wood. Vinyl and aluminum siding are strongly discouraged.

Windows
- New or enlarged windows should complement the style, proportion and placement of the original. When altered, they should appear integrated with the old.

Doors
- New door openings should complement the style, proportion and placement of the original.
Trim • Original painted wood soffits, fascias and details should be conserved. If adding, duplicate the original design.

Roof • Changes to the roof, such as the addition of dormers, should harmonize with the overall proportion of the historic building. Soffits and fascia lines should be continued and paint-finished. Vinyl cladding is strongly discouraged.

Decoration • Decorative features, such as porch posts and handrails, brackets and dentils should be conserved.

Porches • Alterations to porches should retain the style of the original posts, rail and spindles. Traditional painted wood porch floors are encouraged. Pressure treated timber is strongly discouraged.

Colour • Historic colours should be used. Refer to the Conservation Guidelines for the appropriate colours.

Guidelines • The Building Conservation Guidelines shall apply to alterations.

LACAC • The LACAC Coordinator should be consulted for advice and information on the approval process for building alterations.
Shown above is an excellently designed new addition to the historic Bechtel Sawmill at 1740 Blair Road. The roof line, proportions and window style have been continued into the new wing. It is important that additions complement the architectural style of the building. They should blend in comfortably and inconspicuously and seem at one with the principle building. To achieve this requires first an identification of the building style (Ontario Gothic, Queen Anne...) and second an insightful analysis of what the predominant architectural characteristics of the building are - the height, roof lines, scale, window proportions, materials, textures and colours. To continue these characteristics will ensure a good fit between new and old. This does not mean to copy the historic style, but rather to create visual continuity. Building additions require application to, and approval from, the LACAC for the City of Cambridge.

POLICIES

Location

- Additions should be located to the rear or side of the existing historic building so as to maintain the original principle facade.

- Where additions are brought forward, they should not visually dominate or overpower the existing historic building.

Design

- A clear distinction between old and new is encouraged.

- Contemporary design for additions is acceptable when it is complementary in terms of scale, mass and texture to the existing or neighbouring historic building.

Height

- The height of additions should complement the predominant height of the original building.

Materials

- For additions, materials similar to the original building or typical of the area should be used, with an emphasis on brick, stone, stucco and wood.
Roofs
- Original historic roof shapes and details should be conserved.
- The roof of the addition should be similar or complementary to that of the existing historic building.
- New roof vents, skylights, satellite dishes and metal chimneys should be located in an inconspicuous manner.
- Cedar shingles are encouraged as a roof finish.

Chimneys
- Original historic chimneys should be conserved or rebuilt to match the original where feasible. With additions, masonry chimneys should be given priority over metal.
- Unused chimneys should be capped and conserved, not removed.

Walls
- Wall materials should continue the existing and be typical of those found in the historic building style.

 Entrances
- New entrances to additions are encouraged to be located on secondary rather than principle facades.

Windows
- The appearance, placement and proportion of height to width of windows should be similar or complementary to the existing historic building style.
- Closing-in of existing windows should be avoided but, when unavoidable, windows should be made blind to retain an impression of their past presence.
- The window style should match the original (double-hung is traditional).

Verandahs
- New verandahs should be incorporated, whenever appropriate, to complement the existing building.
- Their detail should complement the original building.

Colours
- Paint colours should be appropriate to the historic style of the building. Refer to the Conservation Guidelines.

Guidelines
- The Building Conservation Guidelines shall apply to additions.

LACAC
- The LACAC Coordinator should be consulted for advice and information on the approval process for building alterations.
RESIDENTIAL INFILL

CONSERVATION POLICY

Blair Heritage Plan

Shown above is a new residence built at the corner of Meadowcreek Lane and Old Mill Road. It is a good example of a new house that fits in well with the old village. Although it is quite large, it does not appear overwhelming. The dormers give interest to the roof, there is a welcoming entrance portico, the garage is to one side and the materials used are painted wood. The landscaping is masterly. A naturalized hedgerow encloses the street sides with large maples on Meadowcreek. A country-style gate gives access to the driveway. Within, the landscape is an artful blend of the natural and the maintained. The result is a building and landscape that perfectly complements the rural character of the village. The conservation approach is to ensure that new residential infill is harmonious with the old village character. This will entail conserving as much of the prevailing landscape as possible, positioning the house in a manner complementary with its neighbours and designing the house so that it fits into the historic streetscape. Residential infill requires application to, and approval from, the LACAC for the City.

POLICIES

Trees

- As many existing trees and hedgerows as possible should be retained.

Position

- The house should be positioned to preserve the landscape special features and be complementary to neighbouring houses.

Hedgerow

- If there is no hedgerow a new one should be planted.

Design

- The design should have a simple and strong form and preferably be one and a half or two storeys like the earlier residences.

Verandah

- A verandah on the front is encouraged. This animates and visually anchors the house to the site.
Garage  • The garage should be set back from the front, so the house and garden are shown off well.

Windows  • Windows and doors should be set evenly and symmetrically.

Colour  • Paint colours complementary to historic colours should be used.

Materials  • Building materials that blend in with the rural character of Blair, such as wood, stucco, brick and stone, should be used. Vinyl and aluminum siding are strongly discouraged.

Ornament  • Reproduction Victorian ornament such as brackets and mouldings should be avoided. They are not authentic.

Driveways  • Gravel finish driveways are encouraged. This is the rural tradition.

Landscape  • Refer to Landscape - Country Gardens Guidelines.

Fences  • Chain link and pressure treated fences are strongly discouraged. Picket, split rail, fieldstone, traditional wire and post and farm (equestrian) fences are encouraged.

LACAC  • The LACAC Coordinator should be consulted for advice and information on the approval process for Residential Infill.
BUILDING DEMOLITION

CONSERVATION POLICY

Blair Heritage Plan

Shown above is the former 4-storey Carlisle Mill which burned to the foundations and was replaced by the present single storey structure known as Blair Mills. Blair has lost few buildings over the past 198 years. Loss has been caused mainly by fire, including the Durham Mill in 1955, the Carlisle Mill in 1931 and the Bowman barn in 1962. Demolition has rarely occurred. The rural tradition is to keep and reuse old buildings for other purposes rather than pull down. A good example of reuse is the former Bechtel Sawmill, which was later converted to a power generating station and is now a residence. Another example is the former Bechtel Tannery built circa 1830. It was later converted into an elegant residence. The intent of the Plan is to strongly discourage demolition of the remaining historic buildings in the village. Demolition requires application to, and approval from, the LACAC of the City of Cambridge.

POLICIES

Presumption • There shall be a presumption against demolition. Conservation of historic buildings in the District is a primary goal.

• Property owners are encouraged to work with existing buildings, altering, adding to and integrating them into new development rather that demolishing.

Moving • Where removal of an historic building is contemplated, moving the building onto a new site shall be considered.

Salvage • Where removal is not feasible, the careful salvage of key historic building features shall be undertaken so that they can be used again in the restoration of other similar style buildings.

Act • Where demolition is applied for, the procedures of the Ontario Heritage Act shall be followed.
7.3 LANDSCAPES

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, during preparation of the Blair Area Special Study, extensive research was undertaken to determine what stakeholders valued in Blair. A strong response was the rural character of the village with its tree-lined streets, hedgerows, spaciousness, nature and history. Residents felt keenly that the landscape of Blair was beautiful and special and deserved protection. Further, that the landscape character should be extended into new development areas so the village is seen as an integrated whole - not old separated from new. Wildlife was also highly valued by residents, for which landscapes provided habitat. The landscapes of Blair are the major source of its rural character. Background research has determined that many of the man-made landscapes - mill ponds and hedgerows - are very old. The four mill ponds were built in c1820 to c1830, while the hedgerows along lanes and streets were first established on wagon trails in the early 1800s. This section outlines the main landscape types in the village and the guidelines to conserve and manage them. The Ontario Heritage Act does not deal specifically with private landscapes. The Plan sets out voluntary guidelines to promote good landscape stewardship. In cases where properties are not owned by the City of Cambridge, such as the creation of new golf facilities adjacent to the Grand River, adherence to the provisions of this Plan, especially Section 7.3 (Landscapes) is strongly encouraged. In particular, the maintenance of views, vistas and the use of this Plan's recommended planting list provides an opportunity to vegetatively restore some of the highly cultivated areas adjacent to the Grand River. However, municipal property landscapes, particularly street trees and hedgerows, are afforded protection by the municipality adopting the Plan as policy. Changes to municipal landscapes require approval of LACAC in accordance with the landscape policies.

GOALS

HISTORY To conserve the historic landscapes. Examples = hedgerows, mill ponds, cemeteries.

CHARACTER To conserve and enhance the rural landscape character. Example = tree-lined streets, hedgerows.

DIVERSITY To conserve and enhance landscape diversity. Examples = wetlands, woodlots, creeks and hedgerows.

NATIVE SPECIES To encourage the use of native plant material to ensure the integrity and health of the local ecosystems. Examples = residential gardens, woodlots.

WILDLIFE HABITAT To preserve and enhance the natural habitat for wildlife. Examples = food-bearing shrubs.
BLAIR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT PLAN

MAP 3
HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

Legend

Heritage Conservation District Boundary
Primary Area
Secondary Area
Hedgerow
Mill Pond

Rivers & Creeks
Natural Environment
Cemetery
Garden
INTRODUCTION

Blair is a village of water. To the east is the magnificent Grand River, shown above, designated a Canadian Heritage River in 1994. Enclosing the old village is the Blair Creek to the west and the Bechtel Creek to the east. With their rich natural environments, they contribute greatly to the rural character of the village. The Grand River is distinguished by a large valley with a well drained upland zone, a mid-level collection zone of hillside springs and a bottom conveyance zone of the river and seasonal floodplain. The creeks provide overland drainage in the upland zone. The most important conservation areas of rivers and creeks are the riparian edges which are one of nature's richest inland ecosystems. They team with life, act as wildlife corridors and contain a rich diversity of vegetation adaptable to wet conditions during high water flow and dry conditions during base flow periods. It is an important substrate for numerous abiotic and biotic systems.

GOALS

• To conserve and manage the riparian ecosystems of the Grand River, Blair and Bechtel Creeks in their natural state.
• To protect native plants and prevent the infiltration of invasive exotic species.
• To integrate the Grand River, Blair and Bechtel Creeks into the richly diverse living landscape of the village as a whole.

LOCATION

The location of the rivers and creeks is shown on the Map 3 - Historic Landscapes.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

The key conservation initiative is to protect and enhance the riparian edge. Maintenance and restoration, when required, is best undertaken in late summer. Strategies include natural regeneration, managed succession and plantation.
Natural Regeneration
Natural regeneration basically allows the river and the creeks to regenerate their own natural succession. It is important to protect the watercourses with a 10 m wide naturalized buffer. This acts as a transition zone between urban development and water courses for sediment filtration, wildlife habitat and bank stabilization.

Managed Succession
Managed succession accelerates restoration of the area by thinning and weeding to encourage the growth of desirable species, and by planting some pioneer and climax species.

Plantation
Plantation restoration is carried out on sites that have been stripped of vegetation by natural or human forces. Climax species are planted and maintenance is carried out over a five year period to check erosion, weed growth and habitat damage until an adequate canopy is achieved.

PLANTINGS

When new plants are introduced in the riparian edge of waterways as a means of restoration, it is important that they be native and appropriate to the ecological substrate. The following plants are native to the Blair area rivers and creeks and are suitable for maintenance and restoration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bottomland (moist)</th>
<th>Riparian</th>
<th>Edge Shrubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slippery Elm</td>
<td>Slippery Elm</td>
<td>Hackberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Ash</td>
<td>Nannyberry</td>
<td>Witch Hazel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Ash</td>
<td>Red Osier Dogwood</td>
<td>Chokecherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Ash</td>
<td>Common Alder</td>
<td>Sumac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Maple</td>
<td>Button Bush</td>
<td>Viburnum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Maple</td>
<td>Black Willow</td>
<td>Dogwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Maple</td>
<td>Peach-leaved Willow</td>
<td>Blue Beech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Elm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Birch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Cedar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackberry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speckled Elder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balsam Poplar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Hemlock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large-toothed Aspen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironwood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striped Maple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Herbaceous Plants
Marsh Marigolds
Skunk Cabbage
Joe Pye Weed
MILL PONDS
LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE
Blair Heritage Plan

INTRODUCTION

Once a source of water power, the four mill ponds in Blair - Durham, Sheave, Carlisle and Bechtel - are now beautiful landscape features and rich wildlife ecosystems in the village. They contribute greatly to the historic and rural character of Blair, and should be carefully conserved and managed by their owners with advice from the Grand River Conservation Authority. Shown above is the Bechtel Mill Pond.

Their values include the storage and purification of water before it gets into the Grand River and the provision of habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, aquatic life and plant material. They are rich in nutrients and teem with life. Fungi and bacteria are at work everywhere, breaking down dead plant and animal tissues and releasing nutrients, particularly during spring. This is one reason why they are so productive and attract a broad range of wildlife.

GOALS

• To conserve and manage the former mill ponds and their associated wetlands.
• To manage the mill ponds in a naturalized manner with native plant material.
• To protect the rich ecosystems associated with the mill ponds and ensure residential development does not have a negative impact.
• To integrate the mill ponds into the richly diverse landscape of the village.

LOCATION

The locations of the mill ponds is shown on the Map 3 - Historic Landscapes.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES
The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

The conservation of the mill ponds should include the preservation of the existing ponds and the creation of new embankments where appropriate.
A 10 m wide grass buffer should be established around the mill pond to act as a transition zone between urban development (mainly residences) and the ponds. This provides a filter for the overland flow of chemicals and nutrients into the pond. The grass should be cut twice a year to encourage a dense cover to control invasive weeds.

Native wetland vegetation should be protected and encouraged to develop naturally. Where necessary, certain aspects of wetland vegetation should be accelerated, particularly for overhead canopy along the water’s edge to lower the water temperature for aquatic life and to reduce algae growth.

Large, dead trees are important for wildlife in wetlands and should be left. They are used for nesting, perching and food.

As active ecosystems, the mill ponds are in a constant state of change. Maintenance may be required, including:

- Periodic dredging of certain portions of the ponds that are subject to sedimentation, to improve the water flow.
- Removal of exotic exploiter plants which can rapidly colonize a wetland to the detriment of native bio-diversity.

### PLANTINGS

An important goal is to ensure the mill ponds are managed in a naturalized manner and with native plant material. Plants in the mill ponds fall under four main categories - marginal, emergent, submergent and floaters. Marginal plants grow at the water’s edge and are adaptable to variable water levels. Emergent plants have their stems above the water’s surface and their roots below. Submergent plants are rooted and grow entirely under water. Floating plants, with or without roots, float on the water’s surface. The following is a partial list of recommended marginal and herbaceous plants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marginal Plants</th>
<th>Herbaceous Plants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Willow</td>
<td>Marsh Marigolds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Maple</td>
<td>Cattails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Maple</td>
<td>Skunk Cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Maple</td>
<td>Blueflag Iris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Cedar</td>
<td>Yellowflag Iris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Alder</td>
<td>Joe Pye Weed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nannyberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray Dogwood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viburnum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button Bush</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach-leaved Willow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Ash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HEDGEROWS

INTRODUCTION

Hedgerows are a beautiful landscape feature in Blair. Many of them are very old and were established along the early wagon tracks which subsequently became today's lanes and roads. They contribute to the historic and rural character of the village as well as providing windbreaks, privacy, wildlife habitat and landscape beauty. Most importantly, they are now a rare remnant landscape feature in a village and should be conserved. Shown above is the hedgerow along Cemetery Lane (Ashton Street).

GOALS

- To create and retain and manage existing old hedgerows in the village.
- To infill old hedgerows where required to provide landscape continuity.
- To extend new hedgerows into new residential areas.
- To carefully maintain the hedgerows through annual pruning and management.
- To integrate the layout of hedgerows into the richly diverse living landscape of the village as a whole.
- To integrate isolated woodlots with new hedgerows.

LOCATION

The location of hedgerows is shown on the Map 3 - Historic Landscapes.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

Existing Hedgerows

Where hedgerows exist, they should be maintained and rebuilt. Maintenance should consist mainly of removing dead or diseased branches and thinning overcrowded or mature stock. A 30% to 50% porous cover should be achieved for an effective windbreak. Quality trees should be selected for full growth. The lower mantel shrubs should be retained for windbreak and wildlife habitat. While
existing hedgerows self-seed, occasionally tree planting is required for rebuilding. Prevailing plant species should be continued.

New Hedgerows
New hedgerows should be extended in both the old village where they are absent and in new residential areas. They will provide visual continuity between old and new areas, enhance the rural character of the village and provide a network of wildlife corridors. Prevailing native species should be planted. Coniferous species could be white cedar and white pine and deciduous white and red oak, burr oak, black walnut and sugar maple. Native lower mantel shrubs such as hazelnut, viburnum and hawthorn, as well as lilac and apple, are also important to plant as wildlife habitats and corridors.

PLANTINGS
An important goal is to ensure the hedgerows are managed in a naturalized manner and comprise native plant material. The following is a partial list of recommended native species.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trees</th>
<th>Edge Shrubs &amp; Trees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td>Viburnum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Oak</td>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basswood</td>
<td>Hazelnut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Walnut</td>
<td>Gray Dogwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td>Red Berried Elder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut</td>
<td>Common Buckthorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shagbark Hickory</td>
<td>Blue Beech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Cherry</td>
<td>Sumac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Ash</td>
<td>Apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Pine</td>
<td>Red Osier Dogwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
<td>Lilac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Elm</td>
<td>Hackberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ironwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serviceberry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Common naturalized plants include lilacs and apples and are not considered invasive. In old hedgerows, a common species is now buckthorn, which has largely displaced the original hawthorn. While not native, it has become well established and near impossible to remove. In new hedgerows, hawthorn should be used.
TREES

INTRODUCTION

The rural character of Blair is, in large part, established by the abundance of trees, some old growth. The diverse ecology of the area - rivers, creeks, wetlands, uplands and lowlands - has nurtured a remarkable diversity of species. Deciduous trees include maple, beech, basswood, oak, shagbark hickory, butternut and walnut. Coniferous trees include red and white pine and cedar. They occur in small and large stands, hedgerows, creeks and river valleys, enclosing ponds and in residential gardens. Trees enhance the rural character of Blair, provide wildlife habitat, nourish and protect soils from wind and water erosion.

GOALS

- To catalogue and conserve significant trees in the village.
- To renew trees when required, particularly along roadsides.
- To plant a variety of native trees, appropriate to their habitat.
- To integrate the treescape into the richly diverse living landscape of the village.

LOCATION

Trees are located throughout the village.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

The conservation of trees aims to provide the best conditions for growth, to encourage stand renewal and to improve the health, diversity and appearance of the landscape. There are three basic approaches - cleaning, thinning and stand improvement. Cleaning is done in young stands to regulate composition and favour valuable species. Thinning can remove up to 35% of the medium age (25 years) stand to allow the remaining quality trees more room and light to grow fuller and faster. Stand improvement harvests large
mature trees for sale and removes defective, crooked and leaning specimens and inferior species. A few large dead trees and snags are left for wildlife habitat.

**TREE MANAGEMENT**

Two tree management approaches are recommended for trees in Blair - selective cutting, and shelter wood cutting. A main difference between them is the degree of exposure of the forest floor to sunlight.

**Selective Cutting**
Selective cutting involves the cutting out of individual trees or small groups every 10 to 20 years. The visual impact is minimized and continuous regeneration occurs in the openings. Not more than 10% of the stand's volume is removed at any one time. Because of frequent cutting, however, particular care should be taken to minimize the damage to young trees.

**Shelter Wood Cutting**
Shelter wood cutting removes a stand in two or three cuts until a young stand is completely released. The approach is aesthetically pleasing as the woodlot is always present. It also promotes abundant regeneration of desirable species. As with selection cutting, however, care must be exercised so as not to damage young trees. The three cutting stages include a Preparatory Cutting which removes malformed, diseased and weak trees; a Second Cutting of 30-35% of the standing volume done several years later to encourage the development of seedlings; a Final Cutting five to ten years later when all merchantable trees are harvested.

**PLANTINGS**

The planting approach towards existing trees and woodlots is that they should be managed to be self-sustaining. As such, only occasionally will it be necessary to manually plant new species. New species should be native, appropriate to the site and planted in a naturalized manner. Recommended species include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upland (well drained)</th>
<th>Lowland (imperfectly drained)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shagbark Hickory</td>
<td>Basswood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td>Bur Oak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Oak &amp; White Oak</td>
<td>Silver Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basswood</td>
<td>Red Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Walnut</td>
<td>Black Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td>Black Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut</td>
<td>Green Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Cherry</td>
<td>Hackberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Pine</td>
<td>Red Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Birch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Beech</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serviceberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEW WOODLOTS

LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

The low density and plentiful open space in the village provides space for the planting of new small woodlots. Such woodlots will provide wildlife habitat, strengthen the rural character of the village and protect soils from wind and water erosion. They frequently return a landscape to its best use with a beneficial impact on the area’s ecology and appearance. New residential areas provide a good opportunity to plant new woodlots. The natural process of succession is from grasses to shrubs (dogwoods, sumac and hawthorn) to pioneer trees (birch, poplar, apple and cherry) to intermediate trees (ash and oak) to a climax forest (maple, beech). Reforestation can begin at any of these stages.

GOALS

- To introduce new woodlots into the existing village and new residential areas.
- To plant a variety of native trees.
- To integrate the new woodlots into the richly diverse living landscape of the village as a whole.

LOCATION

New woodlots can occur in all parts of the old and new village.

GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

The design of new woodlots should be appropriate for the particular soils, slope, moisture and exposure of the site. Species selection will be governed by what grows best in these varying conditions and include not only interior trees but edge shrubs and flowers important for wildlife and natural appearance. Selecting the stage of succession for the new woodlot will be governed by its purposes and also by the desired appearance. For wildlife habitat, early succession shrubs with their abundance of fruit will be appropriate. If an existing woodlot is being enlarged, intermediate and climax trees could be more appropriate to visually blend the old and new. A desirable approach is to create diversity of succession, appearance and species. This provides opportunity for ecological balance and meeting the diverse characteristics and opportunities of the site.
Natural Regeneration
This approach entails abandoning the land and letting natural succession commence through wind and bird-borne seeding. The first species to grow are those that can withstand the severe competition of the weeds and grasses, and usually include the hawthorns, cedars and dogwoods.

Managed Succession
This approach entails the planting of pioneer species such as poplars, paper birch, autumn olives, hawthorns and sumac, with intermediate and climax species planted five years later. The pioneer species are particularly beneficial in providing an early canopy that reduces weed competition for trees through shade and improving soil fertility. The site should be sown with a light grass cover in the fall and planted in the spring. Each tree should have a small mulch base to inhibit weed invasion. Selectively cut down large weeds for the first five years. Do not cut the grass. Plant native forest edge shrubs and sow wildflower seed. These will bring on an early seed source in the new plantation.

Climax Plantation
This approach entails the planting of climax species such as maple, beech and oak. An advantage is that a young woodlot appearance is immediately created. However, there is a higher cost for the stock. The site should be prepared and managed in the same manner as for a managed succession.

PLANTINGS

Plant stock will vary according to budget (the larger the stock the higher the cost); design intent (what effect is desired, when); and maintenance (smaller stock requires more initial maintenance). Most importantly, the future woodlot should complement the native plants in its particular area of the village. The stock can range from seed, seedlings and whips to nursery trees. With the exception of natural regeneration, all planting approaches entail pre-started stock.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural regeneration</th>
<th>Lowland (imperfectly drained)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Cedar</td>
<td>Basswood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trembling Aspen</td>
<td>Bur Oak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Alder</td>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Osier Dogwood</td>
<td>Red Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Green Ash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland (well drained)</td>
<td>Beech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shagbark Hickory</td>
<td>Silver Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut</td>
<td>Red Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Oak &amp; White Oak</td>
<td>Black Maple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basswood</td>
<td>Hackberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Walnut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Beech</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern White Pine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STREET TREES
LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Shown above are the trees on either side of Old Mill Road. With their leafy canopy extending over the lanes and roads, they are a distinctive feature and part of the rural village character. Many were planted in the late 1800s as the result of a law that required property owners to plant trees along their frontage. Their values include summer shade and winter shelter. However, many of the older trees are now in decline and disfigured through age and limb removal for overhead wires. The key conservation approach is to conserve healthy street trees, replace old and diseased trees, infill gaps and extend new trees along the streets of new development areas.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES
The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

Inventory
An inventory of street trees should be carried out to determine their health and scope of replacement.

Existing Trees
Healthy existing trees should be conserved and maintained. Old and diseased trees should be removed.

New Trees
New street trees should replace those removed, infill gaps and extend into new residential areas. New trees should also be planted on streets in the old established parts of the village where they are lacking.

Species
Appropriate tree species are deciduous and include primarily sugar maple and red oak, along with burr oak, beech and white ash. Spacing should be approximately 10 m to create a continuous overhead canopy.

Pruning
Street trees should be carefully maintained through annual pruning and management.
MEADOWS & LAWNS
LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Shown above is the horse paddock belonging to Meadow Creek Manor, with distant views of the countryside beyond. Most lots in the village are spacious and many have large areas maintained as manicured lawns, rather than left as meadows. Because the maintenance of lawns is environmentally damaging - motor cutting pollutes the air; watering uses up precious ground water; and herbicide sprays kill wildlife, particularly birds that feed their young with worms from the lawn in spring - it is advised that lawns should be reduced in size. The intent is to minimize the maintenance impact on the environment and to turn more lawn over to naturalized areas for wildlife. The following are some environmentally friendly guidelines for lawn maintenance.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES
The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- Reduce lawn area. Expand naturalized areas for wildlife.
- Avoid herbicide sprays. If absolutely necessary, use selective herbicides and selectively spot spray the largest and most obnoxious weeds.
- Use drought-resistant grasses. They require little watering and do not brown during dry spells.
- Cut grass to a minimum of 2" high. This reduces stress on the grass and shades bare patches to discourage weeds.
- Sow in a clover mix to cover 1/4 to 1/3 of the lawn area. Clover provides needed nitrogen to the lawn, adds colour and scent and out-competes weeds.
- Sow wild flowers into the lawn as was common in medieval times and known as "flowery medes." Low-growing flowers that co-exist with grass include English daisies, clover and chamomile.
- Sow small bulbs such as crocuses or scilla into the lawn for spring showing.
Shown above is the garden at 166 Morningside Drive. This is a very well designed residential garden. The lot is not overly large but the garden appears spacious by the way it has been divided up into a series of “rooms.” At the front is the garage and car park, both screened by coniferous trees so that only the house is seen prominently and to advantage. Brick paths lead to the front and side entrances, edged with hedges and groundcover. Steps lead down to a paved sunken courtyard in the centre of which is a small pond. Being low and enclosed by a ground cover bank to the north creates a warm micro-climate where many sun-loving plants thrive. Vegetable and flower gardens extend down the south boundary. An old lilac hedgerow, running along one side of the vegetable garden, has been preserved. A lawn continues east to a bank affording magnificent views across the Grand River valley.

The success of this garden results from the way it has been shaped to take advantage of the sloping site to provide a series of delightful garden spaces for different purposes and plants. The house and garden meld together to create a harmonious whole. Over time, more emphasis on native plant material would be welcome.

GOALS

- To encourage country style gardens.
- To plant native plant species that provide continuity with the naturalized landscapes of the village.
- To locate non-native exotic plants around the residence and separated from native plants.
- To integrate residential gardens into the richly diverse living landscape of the village as a whole.

LOCATION

The location applies to existing and new residential gardens in the village.
CONSERVATION GUIDELINES
The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation,

A country garden should build on the intrinsic qualities of the surrounding rural landscape - qualities of simplicity, organic form and harmonious detail. Simplicity is all. Principles include:

- Allowing the site to suggest the design.
- Enhancing the rural village character.
- Using naturally occurring elements.
- Expressing the local ecology.
- Creating a quiet understated appearance.

These principles will give a garden in Blair coherence, durability and harmony with the surrounding rural landscape. Recommended design details are as follows:

DESIGN DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Create a soft-edged country garden design. Avoid over designed, over built and assertive city style design.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driveways</td>
<td>Gravel is the traditional rural finish. It is porous and textured. Asphalt paving and concrete pavers are city style finishes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance Gates</td>
<td>Wood posts and gates are traditional. Elaborate brick or stone piers are city style designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary Hedges</td>
<td>Native species hedgerows are a rural tradition. For additional enclosure, a wire fence between wood fence posts can be added. Pressure treated timber fences or chain link fences are city style designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawns</td>
<td>Traditionally, rural lawns were quite small. Ground cover plantings may be used to reduce the size of the grassed area and therefore the need to use lawn maintenance chemicals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences</td>
<td>Painted wood picket fences were traditional. Other appropriate styles include split rail and wire and post and fieldstone walls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower Beds</td>
<td>Country garden flower borders are traditionally full of a few classic flowers. Invasive exotic species should be avoided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Surfaces</td>
<td>Traditional hard surfaces were flag stones. They blend with the natural and rural character. Concrete pavers and interlocking blocks are hard-edged city style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining Walls</td>
<td>Dry limestone walls are a traditional retaining wall approach. Small plants seed in the joints. Pre-manufactured concrete is hard-edged city style.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLANTING FOR WILDLIFE
LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Wildlife is an integral part of the rural character of Blair. The diversity of natural environments - upland woods; lowland wetlands and rivers, creeks, ponds; and hedgerows - provide food and cover for a large variety of insect, bird and aquatic life. The presence of the Outdoor Education Centre next to Blair Creek is evidence that Blair is a significant wildlife habitat experienced and enjoyed by school children, visitors and residents alike. The intent is to approach the landscape of the village as a living whole and to protect and expand wildlife habitat throughout.

GOALS

- To conserve and manage existing wildlife habitat.
- To extend and connect new wildlife habitat with existing and new hedgerows, woodlots and ponds.
- To integrate wildlife habitat into the richly diverse living landscape of the village as a whole.

LOCATION

Wildlife habitats are found throughout the village.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

The essential habitat requirements are food, water, shelter. These are accomplished by:
- A combination of open space and closed cover.
- A diversity of plant layers - grass, flowers, shrubs, small trees, large trees.
- Use of native plants - harder, longer-living and preferred by wildlife.
- Presence of decomposing as well as live plant material.
- Absence of chemical spraying, thus protecting organisms vital to the ecology.
PLANTINGS

There are many plant species that are valuable to wildlife for food and cover. Some are listed below. Plantings should be selected and placed, if possible, to achieve a dense low front of shrubs to a higher inner canopy of tall trees. Corridors of plantings are preferable to clumps, and should be connected to existing hedgerows or creek corridors. In this way the wildlife habitats throughout the village become one.

LARGE TREES

Trees are essential in a wildlife landscape. Conifers provide year-round cover and produce cones as a food source for small mammals and songbirds. Deciduous trees provide summer cover, nesting sites and food such as nuts, berries and seeds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Food Season</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OAK (Quercus)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>food source for bluejays, woodpeckers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>squirrels, chipmunks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE BIRCH (N) (Betula papyrifera)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>catkins attract finches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HACKBERRY (N) (Celtis occidentalis)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>blue-black fruit attracts thrushes,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other songbirds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE CEDAR (N) (Thuja occidentalis)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>good cover for song and gamebirds;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>food and cover for rabbits and hares</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SMALL TREES

Many small trees are good for both songbirds and small mammals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Food Season</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAWTHORN (Crataegus species)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>Excellent nesting sites. Food for 25 bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>species. Browsed by rodents and deer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIN CHERRY (N) (Prunus pennsylvanica)</td>
<td>SumF</td>
<td>25 bird species feed on the berries. Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mammals eat bark and berries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOECHERRY (N) (Prunus virginiana)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>70 bird species feed on the berries. Browsed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>by rabbits. Mammals eat bark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGHORN SUMAC (Rhus typhina) (N)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>30 bird species eat fruit. Winter food for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>deer, rabbits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NANNY BERRY (N) (Viburnum leniago)</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>Many birds eat berries. Browsed by rabbits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and deer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SHRUBS

Serviceberry
Peach-leafed Willow
Grey Dogwood

Highbush Cranberry
Black Elderberry
Pincherry
INTRODUCTION

Blair Cemetery is one of the most historic sites in Waterloo Region. The head stones serve as a catalogue of the history of settlement in Blair. The first burial in 1804, that of 8-year old John Bricker, is marked by a cairn (erected in 1970) in which is embedded an early sandstone marker. His parents, John and Nancy Bricker, are buried nearby. Among the early families represented are the Bechtels, Wismers and Bowmans. Somewhat later, John and Grace Lamb of Lamb's Inn were buried here as were members of the McNally family, owners of the woollen mill (originally the Durham Mill). A large tapele top elm tree (Ulmus glabra pendula), at least 80 years old, grows in their midst. Since 1898, the cemetery has been owned and managed by a board of trustees.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES
The Guidelines are voluntary, but they provide assistance for historic conservation.

- The grave stones should be carefully conserved and restored as required.
- Over time, the new concrete block shed in the centre of the cemetery should be replaced with an attractive stone structure with cedar shingle gabled roof and wood doors.
- Consideration should be given to repairing and raising the stone pillars at the foot of Ashton Street, with a metal arch and lettering "Blair Cemetery" affixed, to restore the original entrance feature.
- Consideration should be given to disguising the chainlink fence with a hedge planted on the outside.
BLAIR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT PLAN

MAP 4
HISTORIC STREETSCAPES

Legend

Heritage Conservation District Boundary

- - Primary Area
- - Secondary Area

Location Of Historic Streetscapes

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7.4 HISTORIC STREETSCAPES

INTRODUCTION

The first human imprint on the Blair area was made by First Nations peoples as they travelled up the Grand River watershed. Where needed, trails were cut through the forest, and it was an Indian trail east of the Grand that European settlers followed on the last leg of their long trek from Pennsylvania.

The pattern of permanent roads in Blair was established by these early Mennonite settlers. Based on research, it seems likely that the first ford across the Grand River was located at the concrete bridge on Fountain Street. Samuel Betzner Jr., the first of the Mennonites to take up land in the Blair area, proceeded south from the ford and then west into his farmstead on Old Mill Road. That track was the beginning of Blair's first streets - what are now Blair Road and Old Mill Road.

Joseph Wismer, like Samuel Betzner Jr., also arrived in 1800. He had chosen Lot No. 10 to the north of Betzner's ford, and the wagon track made by the Wismers became Morningside Drive. When the Bechtel family arrived a few years later, they extended the track from the ford further south beyond the turn off to the Betzner farm in order to reach their allotted farmstead.

The pattern of traffic changed when a bridge was built across the Grand River south of the ford, circa 1835 - wagons came across in the middle of the village rather that at the north end. Bechtels' farm track now became a public road and by the 1840s it extended past the Bechtel farm to the south towards Galt. The Bechtels also owned land in North Dumfries - the wagon track to their land holdings there became the route of the present Langdon Drive.

A creek flowed through the Bechtel farm to the river, fed by springs far to the west. The water power generated when this creek was dammed permitted the building of the Durham Flour Mill on Blair Road, and also a tannery to the west circa 1830. In order to reach the tannery, another farm track was created over Bechtel land and this eventually became Fallbrook Lane. The creek which ran through the lands purchased by Samuel Betzner Jr., known later as Bowman Creek, was of equal importance. It too was dammed.
and the water power put to use, in this case to run the settlement's first sawmill and later a grist mill, Carlisle Mill on Old Mill Road, both built by the Bowman family.

When Preston, Hespeler and Galt amalgamated to become the City of Cambridge in 1973, the present names were given to Blair's streets. Analysis reveals that many of the lanes and roads in Blair are very historic and date back to 1800 as farm lanes and wagon tracks. (See Map 4 - Historic Streetscapes.) They are an integral part of the historic and rural character of the the village and should be managed in a manner that conserves and enhances their historic character. This entails maintaining their narrow widths, avoiding curbs, gutters and sidewalks and conserving and enhancing the edge hedgerows and trees.

The most recent trail is the Grand River Trail, established in 1982 on the former Grand Trunk Rail line of 1873-74. Used for recreational hiking, it follows the south side of the Grand River affording fine vistas across the countryside.

GOALS

BLAIR ROAD

Blair Road is one of the earliest roads in Blair, established as a wagon track leading southeast from the ford to the Bechtel farmstead. It was recorded as an existing traveled road by surveyors in a report of 1816 when they traversed the northern boundary of North Dumfries, and circa 1840 it was extended through the Bechtel farm towards Galt.

Goals • To maintain the existing paved width (21'), shoulders and curving design • To identify the road with historic style street signs. • To prepare a landscape plan for the full length of the road that will provide a distinctive appearance of its historical roots. • To undertake streetscape improvements in the village centre. (See Streetscape Improvement section.) • To install street lights in the core area only. • To carefully manage street trees and hedgerows with annual pruning.

OLD MILL ROAD

Beginning as a wagon track into Sam Betzner Jr.'s land holdings, it was continued further west when Rev. Joseph Bowman acquired this land, later splitting into two forks, one curving south as the road to West Dumfries and the other west as the Dickie Settlement Road to New Dundee. Old Mill became a public road in the 1830s and is recorded in land transfers after 1846 as the road from Blair to the Carlisle Mill. Today it is one of the most beautiful and scenic village roads in Waterloo Region.
Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (21') and shoulders (8').
  • Not to undertake road widening or installation of sidewalks, curbs, gutters and street lights. To finish in tar and chip.
  • To conserve and extend the hedgerows and street trees through management and annual pruning.
  • To identify the road with historic style street signs.
  • To carefully manage street trees and hedgerows with annual pruning.

MORNINGSIDE DRIVE

Morningside is one of the very earliest routes in the village, originating in 1800 as a wagon track into Joseph Wismer's farm and later extended to Doon and known as the road to Ferrie's Mill or Mill Street.

Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (20') and shoulders (8').
  • To improve the appearance of the drive so it becomes part of the old village. Improvements would include planting edge street trees and hedgerows. Street lights should not be installed. Use tar and chip.
  • To identify the drive with historic style street signs.

LANGDON DRIVE

Langdon Drive began as a farm lane heading south through the Bechtel farm to the family's land holdings in Township of North Dumfries. It eventually connected with other primitive roads and became a public road under the Township of Waterloo in 1830. It is still a beautiful, narrow rural road enclosed by a dense hedgerow.

Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (17') and shoulders (7').
  • To conserve and enhance the edge trees and hedgerows through management and annual pruning.
  • Not to widen the Drive or install curbs, gutters and street lights. To finish in tar and chip.
  • To post a "No Truck" traffic sign.
  • To identify the drive with historic style street signs.

FALLBROOK LANE

Access to Bechtels' tannery was by a track which turned off the farm road (now Langdon Drive) that led to the family's land in North Dumfries. Over time, this track was extended and then turned back towards the river to meet the earthworks of the mill dam on Blair Road. Many years later the track connected with Blair Road and became a public street, Fallbrook Lane. It is one of the most beautiful small scenic roads in the village.
Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (17') and shoulders (7').
  • To conserve and enhance the edge trees and hedgerows through management and annual pruning.
  • Not to widen the lane or install curbs, gutters. Use tar and chip.
  • To identify the lane with historical style street signs.

MEADOWCREEK LANE

Meadowcreek Lane is a later addition to the streets of Blair, appearing as Craig Street on the Allan and Geddes Survey of 1857 (former Benjamin B. Bowman farm). It is thought to have been in place by 1862 as a narrow gravel road. When the new school (present Blair Outdoor Education Centre) was built in 1959, Meadowcreek was extended further south across Old Mill Road. While relatively new compared with the other streets, it has an attractive rural character with fine views across a horse paddock at the west end.

Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (16') and shoulders (2').
  • To conserve and enhance the edge trees and hedgerows through management and annual pruning.
  • Not to widen the lane or install curbs and gutters. Use tar and chip.
  • To identify the Lane with historical style street signs.

ASHTON STREET OR CEMETERY LANE

Ashton Street probably originated in the early 1800s as a narrow lane from Old Mill Road to the cemetery. When the Allan and Geddes Survey was laid out in 1857, Ashton Street followed its course; the section north of Old Mill Road was never put through. In 1930, the Cemetery Board created a ceremonial entrance to the cemetery by erecting stone pillars and an ornamental archway at the Old Mill end of the lane. Frost undermined the structure, and at some point the arch was removed and the pillars reduced to their present form. Ashton Street is a landscape gem - short and very narrow and enclosed by high banked hedgerows.

Goals • To maintain the narrow paved width (12') and shoulders (3').
  • To conserve and enhance the edge trees and hedgerows through management and annual pruning.
  • Not to widen the lane or install, curbs and gutters. Use tar and chip.
  • To re-erect the ceremonial entrance at Old Mill Road, with a metal archway inscribed "Blair Cemetery."
  • To identify the lane with historic style street signs.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

All municipal service work that impacts on the character of the historic streetscapes shall be presented to LACAC for review and approval. In general, Hydro, Bell, Cable and gas lines should be buried so as to preserve and enhance existing and future trees and hedgerows.
8. NEW DEVELOPMENT

8.1 INTRODUCTION

A primary goal of the Plan is to ensure that new development is assimilated into the village and promotes the historic attributes and rural characteristics of the existing village. Traditional approaches of land use controls seem to produce buildings that often do not fit with the community. Character- and context-based regulations are most appropriate for inclusion in heritage conservation plans and design guidelines. These policies will provide flexibility, but ensure that the rural and historic characteristics of the village are carried through in new development.

New residential development is anticipated south of John Bricker Road between Blair and Bechtel Creeks, and on the west side of Morningside Drive. The design of these areas is of paramount importance to ensure compatibility and integration with the existing village.

Langdon Hall is an exemplary historic estate of national architectural and historic significance. The principle building and its associated historic landscapes are integral heritage attributes that are widely recognized in the village. Through the Blair Area Special Study, it was identified that new development may be pursued for the Langdon Hall, Thomson and Ministry of Transportation properties. Given the spectacular heritage features of this property, the lands have been incorporated into the Heritage Conservation District as a secondary area.

New business park development is ultimately anticipated at the interchange of Highway 401 and Fountain Street, to the west of the old village. These lands will have an impact at the entrance to the village, particularly visual, sound and lighting influences on the historic and rural character. Accordingly, these lands have been included in the Heritage Conservation District as a secondary area. Policies have been recommended to minimize those impacts, particularly to Morningside Drive, Old Mill Road, Fountain Street and Dickie Settlement Road.
NEW RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION
CONSERVATION POLICY

Blair Heritage Plan

Shown above is a new residence built at Ashton Street, immediately north of the Blair Cemetery. It is an excellent example of a new residential property that could typify a new home in a subdivision. The lot is non-suburban: square in shape and approximately +1000 m\(^2\) (0.5 ac.) in area. The steep-pitched roof covered with cedar shingles is an authentic and historic design and material. The large verandah with symmetrical centre-hall entrance and windows is a classic and historic design. The detached garage, setback from the residence, sets off the attractiveness of the home. The landscaping is well balanced, and the curved gravel driveway is the rural tradition. The result is a new building and landscape that compliments the rural character of the village.

The fundamental design features for new residential subdivision to continue the historic village character are:

- narrow streets
- hedgerows and street trees
- variety of lot sizes, shapes and frontages
- rural street design
- traditional style buildings.

POLICIES

Streets

- Maximum recommended width of 12 metres (40 ft.) with a pavement width of 6 metres (20 ft.) and a shoulder width of 0.9 metres (3 ft.).
- Cul-de-sacs are strongly discouraged and streets should be short, and horizontally and vertically winding.
To make it more in keeping with the character of the Village, consideration be given to retrofitting John Bricker Road to include narrowing the pavement and shoulder widths, removal of street lights, narrower ditches and the provision of traditional street trees and hedgerows.

**Street Lights**
- Are strongly discouraged as not being in the character of the village residential areas.

**Curbs/Gutters**
- Are strongly discouraged. Rural cross-section with narrow roadside ditches and no curb and gutter shall be designed.

**Sidewalks**
- Street trees should be planted at 8 to 12 metre centres (26 to 40 ft.) within the boulevard and close to the shoulder.
- Hedgerows shall be planted to establish a “soft” landscaped edge to the street.
- Species selected shall be native, generally of a shade tree variety and monocultures will be avoided.

**Building Lots**
- Within a subdivision there should be a variety of lot sizes, shapes and frontages, with every third lot being of different, shape size and frontage than the two previous lots.

**Design**
- The design of dwellings shall typically be of one and a half to two storeys like the earlier residences, with a simple and strong form.

**Verandah**
- A verandah on the front is encouraged. This animates and visually anchors the house to the street.

**Garage**
- The garage shall be setback from the front (either recessed or detached), or if the garage is in the front of the principal dwelling, that the garage doors not face the street.

**Windows**
- Windows and doors should be set evenly and symmetrically.

**Materials**
- Building materials that blend in with the rural character of Blair, such as wood, stucco, brick and stone, should be used. Vinyl and aluminum siding are strongly discouraged.

**Colour**
- Colours complimentary to historic colours should be used.

**Landscape**
- Refer to Landscape - Country Gardens Guidelines.

**Fencing**
- Chain-link and pressure treated fences are strongly discouraged. Picket, split-rail, fieldstone, tradition wire and post, and farm (equestrian) fences are encouraged.
Driveways

- Gravel finish driveways are encouraged. This is the rural tradition.

Utilities

- Bell, cable TV and hydro transformers and pedestals should be sited with regard to the visual impacts from the street.
- To the extent possible, above ground utilities should be located away from intersections and other views.
- Utilities are to be adequately screened in the form of architectural walls and/or plantings.

City Staff

- City staff should be consulted for advice and the approval process for New Residential Subdivision.
The magnificent Langdon Hall of the American Federal Revival design is an exceptional heritage property within the village of Blair. Located at the easterly periphery of the historic village, the principle country hotel building and associated mature landscapes are considered to be integrated and recognized heritage features in Blair. Entrance driveway winding through hedgerows and woods to an open meadow fronting the hall establishes the rural character for this country hotel. To the rear are formal gardens with a fenced kitchen garden to the south and an extensive conifer plantation beyond. Tree-lined grand allees and lanes traverse the estate. Of particular significance are the ancient poplars along the east Gran Allee. The forest is a unique mix of Carolinian deciduous species, notably the tulip and cucumber trees and sassafras. While the principle building is significant unto itself, the grounds of the property are equally important. Any new development through the expansion of the hotel or recreational uses, should be carefully planned and designed to conserve and promote this historic estate.

POLICIES

Design Brief - As a part of the approval for additional land uses for Langdon Hall, Thomson and the Ministry of Transportation properties, a Design Brief shall be prepared illustrating how the principle historic buildings and landscapes are to be conserved, promoted and integrated into any new development plans. The brief should illustrate how views from particular vantage points of heritage features are to be preserved or otherwise addressed, and should define materials to be used to complement the estate. Materials should include building structures, landscape features and furniture, lighting and parking materials.

LACAC - The LACAC Coordinator should be consulted for advice and information on the approval process for Langdon Hall.
The ultimate new development of business park uses at the intersection of Fountain Street and Highway 401 will have a direct impact as the entrance to the Village of Blair. Particularly, existing residential uses on Morningside Drive, Old Mill Road and Highgrove Court could be impacted by visual, sound and noise emissions from the future business park land uses anticipated at the interchange. The lands should be developed in a campus-style setting with significant screening and buffering to the existing residences; a horizontal form of clustered buildings with a single principle entrance; quality building materials and naturalized landscaping. This prestige business park, with significant accessibility and visibility to Highway 401, should be developed as a high quality place of commerce at the north-west gateway to the City of Cambridge, with an integrated and common theme that promotes the historic and rural character of Blair.

POLICIES

Entrances  • A single principle entrance should be provided to the two quadrants of business park lands: one north of Fountain Street to align at the intersection of Dickie Settlement Road, and the other intersecting with Old Mill Road or extending west of Dickie Settlement Road. These entrances may be a public or private street with a maximum width of 20 metres (66 ft.), perhaps designed as a grand boulevard.
Landscape Berms • A combination of berms and naturalized landscaping shall be
designed and constructed on the west side of Morningside Drive,
the north side of Fountain Street, the north side of Old Mill Road,
and the west side of Dickie Settlement Road north of Old Mill
Road to provide a solid visual screen between the future business
park land uses and the existing residences. Berms and buffering
shall be a minimum of 25 metres in depth. These buffers will be
comprised of trees planted at 8 to 12 metre centres (26 to 40 ft.)
and hedgerows of native species. Monocultures shall be avoided.
Structural buffers such as walls or barriers are strongly
discouraged.

Street Lights • If necessary, are to be decorative.

Sidewalks • Are permitted internal to the business park areas, but are
discouraged along Fountain Street, Old Mill and Dickie Settlement
Roads. A walkway connection to the village core may be
appropriate.

Curbs • May be permitted, particularly to narrow the width of paved areas
and maximize the extent of landscaped buffers at the principle
entrances.

Buildings • Shall be located toward Highway 401 and away from Morningside,
Fountain, Old Mill and Dickie Settlement roads. Buildings should
have a maximum height of two storeys unless massing can be
otherwise integrated into the landscape.

Materials • High quality contemporary design is encouraged with appropriate
building materials and colours.

Parking/Loading • Parking should be well screened from views and be internal to the
site. Where possible, screening should be provided through
landscaped buffers and plantings, not structures (walls and
barriers).

Landscaping • To meet the requirements of the Blair, Bechtel and Bauman Creeks
Subwatershed Plan a maximum area of 65 per cent of individual
business park blocks north of Fountain Street shall be pervious,
and 75 percent to be pervious south of Fountain Street. The
landscape buffers may be included in these calculations.
SWM Area
• Stormwater management areas for the two business park quadrants shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Cambridge Stormwater Management Design Guidelines. Extensive naturalized vegetation shall be encouraged of native species to integrate these facilities with the rural landscapes of the Village of Blair.

Fencing
• Chain-link and pressure treated fences are strongly discouraged. “Living Fences” comprised of planting materials are considered to be more appropriate.

Signage
• Shall be located only at the principle entrances and along Highway 401, and should be of a high quality not exceeding 4.5 m (15 ft.) in height.

Utilities
• Bell, cable TV and hydro transformers and pedestals should be sited with regard to the visual impacts on the street.
• To the extent possible, above ground utilities should be located away from intersections and other views.
• Utilities are to be adequately screened in the form of architectural walls and/or plantings.

City Staff
• City Staff should be consulted for advice and information on the approval process for new business park development.
9. STREETSCEAPE IMPROVEMENTS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In addition to conservation, the Heritage Conservation District Plan will promote the historic and rural character of Blair through streetscape improvements throughout the Village. Many of these improvements are dealt with in other sections of the plan, such as the maintenance of hedgerows, and the construction of new hedgerows and street trees along existing village roads (e.g. Morningside Drive). The village core however warrants particular attention as the centre of the community, and the place of commerce. The village core contains many of the very historic buildings constructed by early Mennonite settlers between 1817 and 1850. The core also integrally relates to the Grand River and the multi-use community trail that will interlink Blair to other communities in the City of Cambridge and with the City of Kitchener.

Blair Road and its intersection with Old Mill Road should be promoted as a significant component of the Heritage District. Village core streetscape improvements are incorporated into the Heritage Conservation District Plan to promote the historic village characteristics. Equally and of utmost importance to residents during the preparation of the Blair Area Special Study, was the issue of traffic calming along Blair Road. Traffic speed, and not necessarily volume, was identified as the single-most significant negative impact on the quality of life for village residents. While the streetscape improvements contained in the Plan meet these two objectives, they are considered to be conceptual. Further refinement through detailed design analysis and public participation will be required. These conceptual improvements are not intended to commit municipalities to capital expenditures to implement the Plan. Funding sources will be required to be investigated.

9.2 VILLAGE CORE STREETSCEAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The village core streetscape improvements have been incorporated into the Plan to address the dual objectives of promoting the Heritage District and dealing with traffic speed through calming techniques. The core is considered to be the most important component of the village in the context of what makes up a village.
Improvements have been incorporated to:

- promote the significant heritage features of the core
- enliven the use of the core and make it safe for pedestrians
- develop community focal points for village resident and visitor interaction
- link the north and south sides of Blair Road in the village
- integrate the community of Blair with other communities and
- promote new buildings to be developed in the character of the village.

Traffic calming techniques shall also be incorporated as a part of the streetscape improvements. Narrowing the street is the most simplistic approach to traffic calming through reducing the pavement width, adding on-street parking or adding a median. Blair Road is a Regional Road (No. 42) and currently serves as a major arterial carrying a considerable volume of traffic. Impediments to traffic flow are not likely to be acceptable to the road authority. The traffic calming techniques therefore should primarily deal with the reduction of speed and not functionality.

This can be accommodated through a “perception” of a narrower street, which may be nearly as effective as physically changing the street width. This perception can be accomplished through:

- street trees within the boulevard with the potential for a closed overhead tree canopy above the road
- buildings oriented close to the street
- the construction of curbs and sidewalks to clearly delineate the boundary between pedestrian and vehicular movements
- the provision of alternative surface materials at key intersections along the street
- the construction of crosswalks that provide the right-of-way to pedestrians over vehicles
- the provision of street lights that identify a built-up area and
- the construction of landscape boulevards that provide a “soft” landscaped edge.
POLICIES

Traffic Calming

- Oversized speed limit signs be erected at Meadowcreek Lane and Langdon Drive (40 kph) with notification that you are entering Blair Village.

Parking

- No parking provided on Blair Road, with the exception of three visitor spaces to be provided on the north side at the Blair Trail overlook, not to conflict with the private neighbouring driveway.
- Alternative road surfacing materials (e.g. stamped concrete) be used across Blair Road at Meadowcreek Lane, Fallbrook Lane and Langdon Drive to identify the entry to the village and promote traffic calming.
- Alternative road surface materials (e.g. stamped concrete) to be constructed at the historic intersection of Old Mill and Blair Roads to identify the center of the village and promote traffic calming.
- Narrow the pavement width from Meadowcreek Lane to Farmers’ Inn (1635 Blair Road) through curb construction.
- Promote calming at Old Mill and Blair Roads, and Fountain and Blair through construction of tight curb radii.

Crosswalk

- Construct a crosswalk of alternative road surface material (e.g. stamped concrete) at the center of the village to link the north and south sides of Blair Road. The design and location to be determined.

Street Lights

- Erect decorative street lights of an historic style at intersections to identify the village core and promote traffic calming.
- Style of lights should be of a pedestrian-scale, simple and decorative.

Walkways

- Alternative materials (e.g. stamped concrete or stone dust for secondary locations) should be constructed on Blair Road (south side) from Meadowcreek Lane to Farmers’ Inn (1635 Blair Road); on Blair Road (north side) from the William Tilt House (1688 Blair Road) to the Blair Trail lookout; and Old Mill Road (south side) to Ashton Street. Typical concrete sidewalks are strongly discouraged and are not in keeping with the rural village character.
- Walkways will define the limits of pedestrian movements, minimize conflicts with vehicular traffic, and promote the use of the core by residents.
- Will also provide linkages to the multi-use trail network (Blair Trail and Galt-Berlin Grand Trunk Trail), and community trail loop through the village (both on and off road).
- Street furniture, including benches and litter bins, will be added in strategic locations.

**Cycle Paths**
- Cyclists are encouraged to use the off-road trail system. On-road cycling lanes should be reviewed in consultation with the Region of Waterloo.

**Landscaping**
- Encourage the construction of contiguous landscaped boulevards to narrow and define driveway entrances and soften the edge of Blair Road.
- Landscaping should be comprised of low berms with shrubbery, street trees and some sod.
- Maximum driveway widths of 6 metres (20 ft.) shall be encouraged.

**Signage**
- Typical city street signs shall be replaced with decorative historic street signs.
- Commercial signs shall be simple and depict the character of the village. Painted wood signs are encouraged and may be located above store fronts or hung over the front door. Illuminate with traditional goose-neck lights.
- Portable signs are strongly discouraged.

**Civic Monument**
- The north-west corner of Blair and Old Mill Roads, should be demarcated with a civic monument identifying the historic Village of Blair.

**Buildings**
- Commercial, residential and mixed-use land uses are encouraged. Buildings should be typically freestanding.
- Height of new buildings should conform to the average height of buildings along the same side of the street (typically 1½ to 2 storeys).
- Setbacks of new buildings from the street line should conform to the average setback of buildings on the same side of the street.
- An infill facade should be composed of materials similar to original adjacent facades. Dissimilar materials are strongly discouraged.
- Refer to Residential Infill Conservation Policy to further preserve the character and integrity of the core through appropriate architecture and site planning.
Village Green
- Should be located at Blair Trail at the overlook of the Grand River of the former stone bridge abutment.
- Comprised of compact seating and gardens as a community focal point in a recreational setting.
- Should be passive, intimate, and promote interaction of residents and visitors. Design must address the issue of traffic noise from Blair Road, and ensure the privacy of the adjacent residence.

Utilities
- Bell, cable TV and hydro transformers and pedestals should be sited with regard to visual impacts on the street.
- If possible, overhead utilities should be buried from Meadowcreek to Fallbrook Lanes on Blair Road, and Ashton Street to Blair Road on Old Mill Road.
- Utilities are to be adequately screened in the form of architectural walls and/or plantings.
- To the extent possible, above ground utilities should be located away from intersections and other views.

City Staff
- City Staff should be consulted for advice and information on the streetscape improvements and the approval process for new uses in the village core.

IMPLEMENTATION
- The Streetscape Improvements Plan illustrates conceptual improvements to promote the heritage district and traffic calming in the Village core. A detailed design will be required to be undertaken with public participation to refine proposed improvements, establish priorities, and identify funding alternatives and cost-sharing opportunities. No commitment to undertake these works is in place at this time. Cambridge City Council and Regional approval will be required before any projects are implemented.
10. IMPLEMENTATION

The three main areas of implementation in the Plan are Conservation, New Development, and Streetscape Improvements.

CONSERVATION

KEY GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS
The key groups and individuals to implement the conservation of the historic buildings and landscapes in Blair are as follows:

LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LACAC)
The City of Cambridge LACAC will administer the Plan in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act. Specifically, the LACAC will review major work in the Heritage Conservation District for approval, and recommend on grant applications. LACAC will also work with the Blair Heritage Committee and provide technical and design advice as required.

LACAC COORDINATOR
The LACAC Coordinator will provide coordination and assistance to the Blair Heritage Committee, the LACAC and historic property owners. The LACAC Coordinator will also ensure the Heritage Conservation Guidelines and Policies are regularly distributed to property owners as the need arises. These Guidelines are considered essential to heritage awareness and good conservation and must be made available.

THE BLAIR HERITAGE COMMITTEE
The Plan recommends that a Blair Heritage Committee be formed. This committee of up to three members should be comprised of local residents and business owners with an interest in heritage. Their role will be to promote the Plan and make residents and newcomers aware of the guidelines and policies. In all cases, the Committee should retain close relations with LACAC. Upon approval of the Plan, the procedures for setting up the committee should be determined.
MUNICIPAL/UTILITY WORKS REVIEW

Future municipal/utility works in the village carried out by the City of Cambridge, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and utilities shall be presented to LACAC for review. The Blair Heritage Committee shall also be advised of the review process.

LACAC APPLICATION PROCESS

Major work on historic buildings requires approval from the LACAC. The LACAC Coordinator will be available to assist applicants. The typical steps for application are as follows:

Step 1 Confirm with the LACAC Coordinator whether the work is major or minor and therefore whether or not application needs to be made.
Step 2 Complete a Designated Heritage Property Alteration application form and submit to it the LACAC Coordinator.
Step 3 The application is considered by the LACAC. The applicant is encouraged to attend the meeting.
Step 4 The applicant is informed of the LACAC recommendation and may stay at the meeting to hear first-hand how the application is dealt with.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

The City of Cambridge Community Heritage Fund provides limited grants to property owners in the Blair Heritage Conservation District. Typically, a property is eligible for one matching grant a year of up to $3,000 to help towards renovation/restoration costs. Larger grants may be available for exceptional work. Inquiries and application should be made through the LACAC Coordinator. Application to other funding sources (regionally, provincially and federally) may also be facilitated through LACAC.

MONITORING THE PLAN

The Plan is not a static document, but one that should be continually monitored and improved through periodic changes. One aspect that requires particular attention is minor work, maintenance and repairs. This scope of work does not require review and approval by the LACAC. It depends on voluntary compliance with the Conservation Guidelines. Monitoring the outcome should be undertaken every three years. If there is an extensive loss of certain minor but historic features in the area, consideration may have to be given to including these in the scope of work requiring LACAC approval. General activity within the Heritage Conservation District shall be monitored by LACAC on behalf of Cambridge Council.
REFERENCES

The Robert Leggett Collection, held in the City of Cambridge Archives, was used as the basic source of information on the historic buildings of Blair.


--------- "The Trek of the Pennsylvanians to Canada in the Year 1805." WHS Annual Report 22 (1934).


How to Build a Marsh. Don Mills: n.d.


Farm Ponds in Ontario. Publication 515. n. d.


The Jacob Bectel House, 1817
second oldest house in the City of Cambridge

APPENDIX

The Appendix is not part of the Plan
but provides background information
and analysis for the Plan
1. HISTORIC SETTLEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Blair and area has a distinct rural character made up of a superb natural and a man-made heritage. The natural heritage includes the Blair and Bechtel Creeks flowing into the Grand River, with a rich associated bio-physical diversity. The man-made heritage includes aboriginal encampment sites in the Grand River valley, Mennonite settlement west and south of the Grand in the early 1800s and later Victorian and contemporary contributions. The area has developed and changed little for 150 years following the Early Mennonite settlement period, with the result that an original and unspoiled country atmosphere prevails in a relatively untouched and unspoiled early historic village.

The purpose of this section is to briefly trace the key settlement periods which may be divided into the Aboriginal, Early Mennonite, Late Mennonite, Victorian and the 20th Century.

SETTLEMENT PERIOD

Aboriginal Period
pre-1800

The Grand River valley was originally the territory of the Neutral Indians, so named by the French but known to their close relatives the Hurons as the Attawandaron. (1) Like the Hurons, the Neutrals were mainly an agricultural people. They settled in villages and moved on to new locations only when the surrounding farmland was exhausted. The Neutrals served as a useful buffer and trading intermediary between the Huron Nation to the north and the Six Nations Iroquois to the east. (2) However, this balance was disrupted in 1650 when the Six Nations defeated and displaced the Hurons and the Neutrals in order to gain direct access to the rich fur trade with the Algonquins further north. When the first European settlers arrived from Pennsylvania in 1800, six miles on either side of the Grand River from above the falls at Elora to Lake Erie had been ceded by the British to the Six Nations, their allies against the Americans in the War of Independence. (3)
The upper reaches of the Grand River were used regularly used by aboriginal peoples as seasonal campsites, one of which was located on the river flats below Cruickston Park Farm and just south of the Jacob Bechtel house in the Blair area. At the turn of the century, there was a large low mound, closer to the river than to the present Blair Road, and in this area had been located a native campsite and burial grounds. The owner of the farm from 1882-1912, James Barclay, knew the location of the burial grounds and directed his farmhands to avoid it when ploughing. According to his granddaughter, Mr. Barclay collected a great number of flint arrow heads, a tomahawk and a small oval grinding stone from this field by following his ploughman along the furrows. (4) Since the Neutrals are known to have traded in flint, it seems possible that there had been a Neutral village on this spot in earlier times. (5) Also, their practice of carrying the bones of their ancestors to be reburied at each new village site could explain the large burial mound. (6)

The non-natives in the area before 1800 were fur traders who built temporary shelters on the river bank. Of these, Nathaniel Dodge stayed on after the European pioneer settlers arrived, purchased land and became a permanent resident. (7) There is a family tradition among his descendants that he and his wife, Elizabeth Wismer, were buried at his request in the native burial ground, the only non-natives granted this honour. Dodge's property subsequently became part of the Cruickston Park holdings.

**Early Mennonite Period**

**1800-1840**

European settlement of the Blair area commenced in 1800 with the arrival of Mennonite families from Pennsylvania. Both Samuel Betzner Jr. and his father purchased land from Richard Beasley in 1800 and in 1802 Betzner Sr. sold 69 acres from his holdings in Lot 4 to John and Ann (Nancy) Bricker from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, upon which land the village of Blair later developed. (9)

John and Ann Bricker are believed to have lived on this 69-acre parcel until about 1806 when it was sold and later divided into two lengthwise strips - the first severance in the community of Blair. It was on the westerly half of the strip that the first schoolhouse in Waterloo County was built, as well as a wagon works, a tavern, a store, a church and a tailor shop. The Brickers were also responsible indirectly for the creation of the first cemetery in Waterloo County. The first non-native burial inland from the Great Lakes
took place in 1804 when their 8-year old son died and was buried on the hill behind their farm house. (10)

Other enterprising Mennonite families arrived from Pennsylvania in the early 1800s, notably the Bechtels, who established a large and well equipped farmstead including a lime kiln to produce mortar. This enabled them to carry our a significant amount of stone building in the village, such as Jacob Bechtel's and other houses, a tannery, flour mill foundations, a saw mill and a store. The earliest settlers bought their land directly from Richard Beasley, who had obtained a large tract of land, known as Block No. 2, from the Indian Reserves. In 1805, the remainder of Block No. 2 was purchased outright by the German Company made up of Pennsylvania Mennonites. (11)

In 1816, the Reverend Joseph Bowman arrived from Pennsylvania and in 1817 purchased Samuel Betzner Jr.'s large landholding in the area of Old Mill Road. He constructed a dam and the first sawmill, taking advantage of the water power of the Bowman Creek and the great stands of pine on the property. (12) Joseph's son Benjamin B. Bowman donated land from his patrimony to build the church as well as the sites of the first and second schools. The sawmill, Durham Mill, and the Bechtel tannery made up Blair's industry in the 1830s. The building of a covered bridge across the Grand River (similar to the bridge at West Montrose) circa 1835 helped to open up the community to further development in the 1840s.

Late Mennonite Period
1841-1860

The Late Mennonite Period was distinguished by two significant events - the construction of the Carlisle Mill in 1846 (13), and the sale of Benjamin Bowman's farm in 1855. The construction of the Carlisle Mill on Old Mill Road represented a continuation of the energy and enterprise of the Early Mennonite Period. The Reverend Joseph Bowman's son Samuel B. Bowman built the flour and chopping mill to serve the needs of the growing community as other settlers arrived to take up farms and businesses in the area.
Pioneer settler Jacob Bechtel's son Henry built a stone sawmill at the north end of the village powered by raceways connecting with the Bechtel Creek. (14) In 1849, John Lamb purchased land from Benjamin B. Bowman and built Lamb's Inn in the centre of the village, and it became a stop on the stagecoach route from Galt to the Huron Road.
connecting Guelph and Goderich. (15) The Farmers’ Inn, also built by John Lamb, incorporated the settlement’s first store and gave Blair a second hotel, while the brick building he attached to his own house across the road became the second store. In addition to this commercial activity, a new school and a Baptist Church were built on Old Mill Road, the farm road through the Bowman property.

In 1855, Benjamin B. Bowman sold all of his remaining farm holdings to Charles Allan and James Geddes of Elora who proceeded to lay out a street plan and subdivision (Plan 580). The streets were accepted by the municipality but never built, the lane leading into Blair Cemetery being the only remnant of the new street layout that remains. This sale witnessed the opening up of Blair beyond the Mennonite community.

**The Victorian Period**

*1861-1900*

The Victorian Period may be described as the "age of rail" for Blair. During the 1860s Blair had felt the effects of a general recession which saw the closing of two mills and a store, but in 1873-74 the Grand Trunk Railway put a branch line through from Galt to Berlin, making Blair the depot for local farmers shipping and receiving goods. (16) Implements were delivered to George Tilt, the Massey Harris dealer, and the Carlisle Mill kept two teams of horses busy taking wagon loads of flour to the station and picking up western grain and corn from the United States. Farmers shipping stock brought them to a holding pen in the stock yards located nearby. When a new cable was needed for the Sheave Tower, or when a steam boiler was ordered by the owners, they were delivered by rail. In addition to freight service there were two trips a day for passengers.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Blair had changed from a predominantly Mennonite farming community to a mixed economy of industry, commerce and transportation. Both the old tannery building on Fallbrook Lane and the Bechtel sawmill on Blair Road had been converted to generating plants supplying power to Preston. Nevertheless, Blair remained a relatively small settlement with a population of only 175. By 1900, industry and growth were in the neighbouring towns of Galt, Preston and Hespeler. There was one remarkable addition to the area in this period, however, namely Langdon Hall built in 1898. This noble residence and estate is of national significance and is now open to the public as a hotel.
The 20th Century
1901-1998

The early 20th century period in Blair is characterized by consolidation and limited growth. While Galt, Preston and Hespeler experienced significant industrial, commercial and residential expansion, Blair was relatively dormant, although some of the older industries carried on for a time.

Joseph Hilborn, who had taken over the Carlisle Mill from his father Jacob Hilborn in 1903, modernized the operation by installing a steam engine and boiler, hence the brick chimney still on the site. The Hilborns, father and son, ran the business for 64 years and with new owners it continued to operate even after the disastrous fire of 1931. The McNally Woollen Mill had closed down in 1911 and the machinery sold off, but the building continued in use as an ice storage shed until it was destroyed by fire in 1955. The Grand Central Railway became part of Canadian National system in 1923 and played an important, though reduced, role for the community. In 1932 the passenger service was discontinued and eventually the line was closed down. The train station, which was located downstream from the bridge and on the east side of the tracks, was removed at and the Post Office moved to a private home.

By World War II, the resident population had increased slightly to 200, most of whom worked in Galt or Preston and whose social life was less centred on the village than it had been at earlier times. Between 1915 and 1949, 11 new houses were recorded in the village and another nine in the next decade. In 1954 the population of Blair was recorded as 300.

During the 1950s, a few new businesses appeared in Blair: the Poultry Process Plant, located at 5 Meadowcreek Lane, was opened in 1950 by Keith Boyd; an Egg Grading Station was set up in a wooden frame structure on the old school property at 20 Old Mill Road; and Bob Leggett's Blair Machine and Welding was established in a building he constructed on Old Mill Road in 1955.

In many ways, the 1960s marked the end of an era in Blair history - the railway tracks were lifted, the school was closed, and the village was absorbed by the Town of Preston, thereby eliminating the need for a post office. Blair was no longer an official address. The most significant event was the opening in 1960 of the 26 mile section of Highway
401 from Milton to Preston and the construction of the concrete highway bridge spanning the Grand River to carry the 401 on to Blair in 1961. (17)

With convenient access to Highway 401 and neighbouring cities, pressure to develop the remaining farm lands surrounding the village of Blair for urban use has increased. Clusters of new housing have been built on the edges of the old village: six new residences on Morningside Drive north of Fountain Street; seven in Highgrove Court off the Dickie Settlement Road south of Fountain Street; and a housing estate on John Bricker Drive, in the area south of Old Mill Road. In addition to the housing estates, new houses have been inserted between earlier buildings in the established areas of Blair.
2. INDIVIDUAL HISTORIC BUILDING ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The individual historic building analysis has been undertaken to determine the relative historical and architectural significance of the historic buildings of Blair and their architectural integrity. Historical significance has been undertaken for the 27 very historic buildings only. It was determined that the 18 historic buildings were largely of modest scale with lesser historical significance. A scoring of High, Medium and Low was assigned in each category. Historical research came mainly from the Leggett Collection in the City of Cambridge Archives, Waterloo Historical Society Annual Volumes and from LACAC reports. Architectural research came mainly from on-site analysis. The relative scores of the very historic and historic buildings are shown below.

### 27 VERY HISTORIC BUILDINGS

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<td>Historical Significance</td>
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### 18 HISTORIC BUILDINGS

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Interpretation of the scorings shows high values of historical and architectural significance for the 27 Very Historic buildings, but their architectural integrity has suffered from later incompatible changes and neglect. As to be expected, the architectural significance of the 18 Historic Buildings is largely in the medium scoring range. Again, their architectural integrity has suffered from later incompatible changes and neglect. The results indicate the need for well directed conservation over the next 25 years to restore the architectural heritage of many of the historic buildings of Blair.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Wismer Log House</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Jacob Bechtel House</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>1490 Blair Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Wismer House</td>
<td>c1827</td>
<td>220 Morningside Dr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samuel B. Bowman House</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>66 Old Mill Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Bechtel House</td>
<td>pre-1834</td>
<td>58 Fallbrook Lane</td>
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<td>Ben. B. Bowman House</td>
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<td>John Renshaw House</td>
<td>1847</td>
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<td>John Lamb House</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>1656 Blair Road</td>
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<td>Henry Bechtel House</td>
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<td>Robert Buckler House</td>
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<td>1855</td>
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<td>Angus McNally House</td>
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<td>1898</td>
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<td>Sheave Tower</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<td>Farmers' Inn</td>
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<td>Miller's Store</td>
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<td>1660 Blair Road</td>
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<td>Blair's Second School</td>
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<td>Regular Baptist Church</td>
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<td>c1880</td>
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<td>Ontario Gothic style house</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>79 Old Mill Road</td>
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<td>Vernacular house</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>71 Old Mill Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church (Union Sunday School)</td>
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<td>Vernacular house</td>
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<td>1896</td>
<td>61 Old Mill Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vernacular house</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>23 Meadowcreek Lane</td>
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</table>
JOSEPH WISMER LOG HOUSE  c1800
256 Morningside Drive

Historical Significance: High
In 1800, Joseph Wismer established his 400-acre farmstead to the north of Blair village on the present Morningside Drive. This substantial log house is now recognized as the original homestead of the pioneer Wismer family, and one of the oldest houses in Blair.

Architectural Significance: High
Modern siding conceals a 1 & 1/2 storey log house in the Mennonite Georgian style, with low pitched roof and windows and doors symmetrically placed on the principle elevations. The sound condition of the logs indicates that they were protected by wood siding at an early date. There is a verandah on the front elevation and a 1-storey addition to the rear.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The basic form, proportions, window and door openings are all surviving. It is encouraged that, in time, the aluminum siding be removed and painted wood clapboard be restored or re-installed.

JACOB BECHTEL HOUSE  1817
1490 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
A date stone JB/EB on the gable end marks this house as one of the oldest in Blair. Jacob Bechtel was among the first group of settlers to arrive and the Bechtel family acquired extensive land holdings in Blair and operated some of the first mills. In 1882, John Barclay of Guelph acquired the remaining farm of 134 acres from the estate of Jacob Bechtel’s son Henry. Some 20 years later, Mr. Barclay sold off an 80-acre portion of the farm on the other side of Blair Road to Mr. Langdon Wilks, who built Langdon Hall.

Architectural Significance: High
The original 2-storey Mennonite Georgian style stone house of 1817 with side door and windows and full-length verandah are still present. A later brick addition projecting forward at the south end was added by Mr. Barclay in 1883, who then plastered and scored the front of the old house to match the new brickwork. Recent changes include new coloured metal roof and shed dormer window.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The architectural integrity of this house has remained largely intact and it has been well maintained. When re-shingling the roof, consideration should be given to cedar shingle, which would have been the original finish.

HENRY WISMER HOUSE  1827
220 Morningside Drive

Historical Significance: High
When pioneer Jacob Wismer arrived in Blair in 1800 he already had a grown family, some of whom remained behind in Pennsylvania. His son Henry arrived somewhat later and Jacob severed off a 200-acre portion of the farm for him. Henry built this house in 1827.
Architectural Significance: Medium
This is an attractive, small 1&1/2 storey Georgian Mennonite house of orange brick with buff brick quoins. The windows are symmetrically placed. There is a substantial new addition to one side faced in board and batten.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The original building has been very nicely conserved. Although the windows have been renewed and old chimneys removed, it still retains its historic character.

SAMUEL B. BOWMAN HOUSE 1832  66 Old Mill Road

Historical Significance: High
Cedarbrook Farm was built by Samuel B. Bowman on land from his father's large holdings. The Rev. Joseph Bowman arrived from Pennsylvania in 1817, purchased this property and built the community's first sawmill here. Samuel B. Bowman, in turn, founded the Carlisle (now Blair) Mill in 1846.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a magnificent 2&1/2 storey Georgian Mennonite residence with a number of later additions. Built on stone foundations, the exterior walls are of white pine timbers stacked one on top of another and no doubt cut from the great stands of pine on the property. The house was then sheathed in clapboard. The windows are 8/8 double hung sash, the roof cedar shingle and there is a verandah wrapping around the front and principle side elevation.

Architectural Integrity: High
This house is an example of excellent restoration of a very historic building in the village.

JOHN BECHTEL HOUSE  pre-1834  58 Fallbrook Lane

Historical Significance: High
This is a very early house believed to have been built for John Bechtel who operated the nearby tannery and was registered as owner in 1837. The date stone (IB/SB 1834) may refer to Jacob Bechtel or to Isaac Bechtel, another member of the family. The house and farm remained with the Bechtels until 1856 when it was sold to the Bowman family.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a magnificent 2-storey Georgian Mennonite residence. The original appearance of the house has been preserved, with plaster walls, full-width front verandah, narrow front door and double-hung windows with shutters.

Architectural Integrity: High
A superb example of historic building conservation.

BENJAMIN B. BOWMAN HOUSE  c1843  29 Old Mill Road

Historical Significance: High
This house is located on land purchased in 1817 by the Rev. Joseph Bowman from pioneer settler Samuel Betzner Jr. When Joseph's son, Benjamin B. Bowman, acquired the property he took over and added to an existing house believed to have been built by Samuel Betzner Jr.
Architectural Significance: High
This is a 1&1/2 storey Georgian Mennonite style house with the classic placement of centre door and two flanking windows on the main elevation and matching windows on the side. There is a 1-storey rear wing. A later columned portico has been added to the front elevation and the house has been vinyl-sided.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The architectural integrity is largely intact, particularly with the retention of the old window sash. Over time, it is recommended that the front portico and the concrete block chimney be removed and that the original wood clapboard be restored or renewed and the roof cedar shingled.

JOHN RENSHAW HOUSE  c1847  1646 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
Although built by William Henderson, this house is best known for its second owner of 1859, shoe and boot maker John Renshaw. From 1865 to 1931, members of the Renshaw family served as postmasters and railway station masters in this house, thus carrying out two very important functions of village life at this period.

Architectural Significance: High
This is an orange brick 1&1/2 storey Georgian Mennonite style house with a later board and batten addition. A substantial verandah extends along the front elevation, which faces away from the street. Many original features such as the wood trim, window frames and sash still survive. There is a bay window on the side elevation facing Blair Road.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The historic character of the house has been well preserved. Some landscaping around the verandah apron would nicely frame the house.

JOHN LAMB HOUSE  1848  1656 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
John Lamb was an early and influential business man in the community. In 1848, on land subdivided by Benjamin Bowman in 1847, he built this small Georgian building as a residence and tailor shop. He then went on to build a store adjoining the tailor's shop, the Farmer's Inn across the road, incorporating two earlier buildings, and finally Lamb's Inn. John Lamb is buried in Blair Cemetery (d.1880).

Architectural Significance: High
This is a little architectural gem consisting of a very small 1&1/2 storey frame house. It is attached to the larger Miller's Store building of 1856. Originally clad in painted wood siding, the John Lamb House is now covered in metal siding. Of great value are the original 12/12 window sash, with small 6/6 in the gable end. It is also notable for its corner entrance, which may be a later alteration.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The architectural integrity and historic character of the house are very much present. Over time, reinstating the original clapboard siding and cedar shingle roof would enhance this unique and beautiful little building.
HENRY BECHTEL HOUSE  c1851  4 Old Mill Road

**Historical Significance: Medium**
Henry Bechtel was a member of one of the earliest and most influential families in Blair. This house was built on part of a 35-acre strip purchased by Henry's father, Jacob Bechtel, in 1817. In addition to the house, which he owned from 1851 to 1859, in 1854 Henry built the Bechtel Sawmill across the road on the same parcel of land.

**Architectural Significance: Medium**
Similar in size to the house at 8 Old Mill Road, this is a small 1 & 1/2 storey dwelling. The plaster finish is of the period, although some decorative stone trim has been added around the door and windows.

**Architectural Integrity: Medium**
This building is close to its original historic appearance although the new door and sidelights and decorative stonework are not traditional. Consideration should be given to a cedar shingle roof.

ROBERT BUCKLER HOUSE  c1851  8 Old Mill Road

**Historical Significance: Medium**
This house is believed to have been built by Robert Buckler, on land severed from the Benjamin B. Bowman property in 1850. Benjamin B. Bowman repurchased the property in 1854 and retained ownership until 1875, even though he had sold off most of his extensive land holdings in 1855 when he moved to Michigan. Members of the Kinzie family operated Maple Leaf Dairy on this property around 1906.

**Architectural Significance: Medium**
This is a charming, small 1 & 1/2 storey early residence. The original wall finish was probably painted wood clapboard or plaster. More recently it has been bricked and a later style porch installed on the front.

**Architectural Integrity: Low**
Although very much changed over time, this is a very well kept property.

WILLIAM TILT HOUSE  c1854  1688 Blair Road

**Historical Significance: High**
William Tilt taught at Blair's first school and built his house on the site the school had occupied. In 1884 the property passed to his son, George Tilt, who was a drover and Massey-Harris farm implements dealer. Members of the family lived here until 1925. In 1958 the residence was converted to a retirement home.

**Architectural Significance: High**
This is a 2-storey Georgian Mennonite style house of orange Doon brick, with a verandah added along the front elevation in 1900. A large frame and vinyl clad addition has been added to the rear. Changes include new vinyl clad double-hung windows.

**Architectural Integrity: Medium**
The historic appearance of the building has been well preserved despite the large vinyl-clad addition to the rear. It is recommended that landscaping be introduced in front of the addition to soften its contrasting appearance.
**MOSES ESHELMAN HOUSE  c1860**

99 Morningside Drive

**Historical Significance:** High
The land where this house is located was one of Blair's first farms, settled in 1800 by George Bechtel and deeded to his daughter and her husband, Samuel Eshelman in 1826. In 1860, the farm was passed on to their son, Moses Eshelman, who is believed to have built the present brick house.

**Architectural Significance:** High
This is a Georgian Mennonite 1&1/2 storey front-gabled house of orange brick with windows and doors symmetrically placed on the principle elevations. There is a 1-storey wing to the rear. A sunporch has been added to the front, later clad in random coursed stone, with a balcony above. The setting is particularly attractive with mature maples and Scot's pines.

**Architectural Integrity:** Medium
The original building is basically intact with elegant 6/6 windows intact. The discordant feature is the sunporch on the front elevation, which is out of character with the original building. Removal of this feature to a more compatible design would do credit to the building. Re-roofing with cedar shingles is also encouraged.

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**JOSEPH BLASCHKE HOUSE  c1861**

1725 Blair Road

**Historical Significance:** Medium
It is believed that the present house was built when Joseph Blaschke purchased the property in 1861, although the land had been owned previously by Henry Bechtel and then Nancy Stauffer. The Blaschkres operated an abattoir in the area of the present Limerick Road. The house remained in the family until 1899.

**Architectural Significance:** Medium
This is a 1 &1/2 storey residence on a raised bank foundation. The front portion has a centre doorway with flanking windows and a later cobblestone porch. A traditional multi-windowed sunporch has been added on the side elevation. Originally finished in wood clapboard or plaster, the house is now clad in metal siding.

**Architectural Integrity:** Low
The original historic building is basically intact but much added to. Restoring or reinstating the original finish of painted wood siding or plaster and the cedar shingle roof would greatly enhance the historic character of the house.

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**MEADOW CREEK MANOR  c1862/1871**

28 Meadowcreek Lane

**Historical Significance:** High
The present residence is believed to have as its core a house built circa 1871 by Adam Keifhaber on foundations of an earlier house which burned down. The earlier house was built by Christian Kreh, circa 1862. In 1930, Elliot and Henrietta Grasset added a large masonry wing to the west side. The present owners since 1974 added an east wing and later an additional section to the west.

**Architectural Significance:** High
This is a very handsome English country-style residence. The original structure dates back possibly to 1832 and various additions have been made, most substantially in the
1930s. Notwithstanding the changes made, a historic character has been preserved and enhanced. It is located on a large property which includes a small bank barn and paddocks.

Architectural Integrity: High
While lacking a predominant building style, the residence exudes great historic charm and the various additions have been sensitively handled.

ANGUS MCNALLY HOUSE 1896
1585 Blair Road

Historical Significance: Medium
The Angus McNally House was the fashionable residence of the second generation owner of the McNally Woollen Mill. It was built in 1896 on land severed from the Mill holdings. When the Durham Mill, owned by members of the Bechtel family, was taken over by creditors in 1867, John McNally and others acquired the building. The McNally family assumed sole ownership of the business in 1875.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a very attractive 2 1/2 storey brick residence and an excellent example of the Queen Anne Revival style, with its elaborate wood trim, multi-gabled roof and off-centre front porch. Also of note are the windows on the front bay - round-arched on the ground floor, square-headed with small panes above a single large sash at second floor level and a small paired window in the gable peak. The cream and green trim colours are very appropriate for the period.

Architectural Integrity: High
This is a very well conserved building.

LANGDON HALL 1898-1901
1 Langdon Drive

Historical Significance: High
Langdon Hall, situated east of the village, is said to have been a great source of pride in the community when it was built for Eugene Langdon Wilks, a descendent of the famous Astor family of New York City. The Langdon Hall estate was created from part of the adjoining Matthew Wilks property, Cruickston Park, augmented by 80 acres purchased from James Barclay, then owner of the old Jacob Bechtel farm. Langdon Hall is now a country hotel with extensive grounds and gardens.

Architectural Significance: High
This large and imposing red brick residence was designed by New York architect Edward Lee Young in the Federal Revival style, a building style which is rare in this part of Ontario. It is characterized by a large panelled front door with fanlight above, and by rows of symmetrically aligned windows on the main facade. There is a Neoclassical style full-height entrance portico on the front main facade.

Architectural Integrity: High
Langdon Hall has been superbly restored together with its landscape setting of forelawn, pleasure and kitchen gardens.
BECHTEL TANNERY  c1830  46 Fallbrook Lane

Historical Significance:  High
The Bechtel Tannery is one of the earliest manufacturing sites in Waterloo Region and it is rare in Ontario to find a tannery of stone, rather than frame, construction. It is known that the Bechtel family had a lime kiln for their use in making mortar. The tannery was built around 1830 on land settled by the Bechtel family in 1802 and was operated by Jacob Bechtel’s son, John Bechtel, until 1848. The Bechtel Creek was dammed to form a pond above the building and this supplied the motive power for the mill. The tannery was later used as a distillery, a power plant and a fish hatchery.

Architectural Significance:  High
This early industrial building of two storeys in stone was later converted to a residence. The original window openings have been largely retained. Later changes have included roof dormers and a handsome front entrance porch. The landscaping with split rail fence, and Bechtel Creek and mill pond to the rear, provides a very attractive setting.

Architectural Integrity:  High
This is an excellent example of adaptive reuse of an old industrial building, retaining its historic character.

CARLISLE MILL  1846  91 Old Mill Road

Historical Significance:  High
The Carlisle Mill was built by Samuel B. Bowman, son of the Rev. Joseph Bowman who had acquired extensive land holdings in this part of Blair. It has been operating as a grist mill since 1846, originally using the water power of the Bowman (Blair) Creek dammed about three quarters of a mile upstream. The mill race emptied into a reservoir from which an enclosed flume supplied the water wheel that powered the mill machinery.

Architectural Significance:  Medium
Following a fire in 1931, the former 4-storey wood frame mill was rebuilt as a single storey structure (Blair Mills) on the old foundations. A brick chimney survives from the post-water power period. The setting on the mill creek and opposite the Sheave Tower is particularly attractive.

Architectural Integrity:  Low
Over time, to enhance its historic character it is encouraged that board and batten replace the metal siding and wood shingle replace the metal roof. Priority should be given to conserving the chimney, which is a valuable early industrial feature.

HENRY BECHTEL SAWMILL  1854  1740 Blair Road

Historical Significance:  High
Blair’s second sawmill was constructed by Henry Bechtel on part a 19-acres parcel he purchased in 1845 to build a dam and millrace for his grist mill located on Blair Road to the south (the Durham Mill). He made further use of this water power by building the sawmill in 1854. The Bechtel family’s lime kiln supplied the mortar to construct the building and dam. In 1893, the sawmill building was converted to a power generating station by John Scherer. It became a residence in 1942.
Architectural Significance: High
Henry Bechtel's sawmill of 1854 is a fine example of an early industrial building, being of stone construction, 1-storey on the road side and 2-storeys on the river side. The building has been beautifully conserved as a residence with a board and batten addition that admirably complements the original and a cedar shingle roof.

Architectural Integrity: High
This building is an excellent example of adaptive reuse of an industrial building with an addition that preserves the original historic character.

SHEAVE TOWER  1876
Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
The Sheave Tower, constructed in 1876 by the owners of the Carlisle Mill, is the last regional survivor of a rare type of early hydro technology. Its purpose was to increase the power supplied to the mill machinery by Bowman Creek. The sheave was a wheel affixed to the top of the tower through which ran a cable to the mill across the road, transmitting an extra 15 HP generated by the turbine at the base of the tower. Later, a motor driven turbine was installed adjacent to the tower to generate the needed power, but this system was later abandoned.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a unique historic structure situated on the Blair Creek, beloved by artists and photographers.

Architectural Integrity: Low
Sheave Tower is in very poor state of repair and urgently needs restoration, including foundation stabilization and wood siding. This should be a priority restoration project in the Heritage District.

JACOB BECHTEL DAIRY  c1817
1476 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
Presently a residence, this was originally an outbuilding known as "the long row." It was joined to the Jacob Bechtel house of 1817 by a frame structure which was removed by James Barclay in 1883 when the house was enlarged. Mr. Barclay's granddaughter recalled that "the long row" included a back kitchen, wood and coal storage, laundry and tile-floored milk cellar. Bechtel Creek flows under the building.

Architectural Significance: Medium
With the conversion of this 1-storey farm outbuilding to a residence, little remains of the original except the stone walls. There is a new addition to either side of the original structure, and a door and a picture window inserted facing the street.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
With their horizontal proportions, the old and new portions blend together well. It is recommended that consideration be given to a more harmonious paint colour to blend the new and old together, and to cedar shingling the roof.
JOHN BECHTEL BARN  pre-1834
Fallbrook Lane

Historical Significance: High
The massive beams supporting this structure confirm that it is very old, and may well have been built by the Bechtels in the early 1800s. It was recorded as present when this property was sold to Bowman family in 1856.

Architectural Significance: High
This impressive and very old barn occupies a prominent corner location. The historic complex includes a small stone and timber frame driveshed at the corner of Langdon Drive. Changes to the barn over its long history have included raising the structure slightly to provide a higher basement area and adding a small single-storey residential wing to one side. The barn has been well maintained.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
This is a remarkable, well preserved barn. Either the present painted metal siding and metal roof or new board and batten siding and cedar shingle roof are appropriate finishes. Any renovation should consider the heroic scale of the building.

LAMB'S INN  c1849  1679 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
The front portion of the building dates from 1849 when John Lamb acquired the property, although it is believed that earlier structures may have been incorporated. It served as a stop for the Huron Road stagecoach. A succession of owners followed from 1856 but the building has never lost its hospitality function as a tavern or eatery.

Architectural Significance: High
Lamb's Inn is one of the most important and character defining buildings in the centre of the village of Blair, with its large size and its splendid recently restored 2-storey front verandah. The long rectangular front portion is the original inn building of five bays, but with later alterations to the openings.

Architectural Integrity: High
Recent restoration has restored the architectural integrity of Lamb's Inn and is a wonderful example of how restoration can revitalize the historic character and appeal of a building. Further restoration work is planned.

FARMER'S INN  c1861  1635 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
In 1861 John Lamb purchased two small buildings, a house and Blair's first store, and joined them together to form the Farmer's Inn. This hostelry provided affordable accommodations for farmers traveling through Blair. The building later became multiple housing known as The Terrace.

Architectural Significance: Medium
This large and prominent 2-storey inn is now an apartment building. Formerly finished in plaster, it has been recently clad in light blue vinyl siding with new, smaller vinyl windows installed. Any decorative features that may have existed have been removed.
Architectural Integrity: Low
The architectural integrity and historic character of this building have largely been lost. As a large building and in a very prominent location in the village, this is very unfortunate. It is recommended that a detailed analysis be undertaken to restore this building with funding assistance from the City.

MILLER'S STORE 1856 1660 Blair Road

Historical Significance: High
Although Miller's Store was built by John Lamb adjoining his home and tailor shop, it is best known by the name of a much later shop keeper. The building straddles two adjoining lots which Lamb acquired from the Benjamin Bowman subdivision. This was Blair's second store - John Bechtel's store of 1844, located across the road, was later incorporated by Lamb into the Farmer's Inn.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a 2-storey orange brick Georgian style building with side-gabled roof, centre door and symmetrically placed side and upper windows. Originally, a verandah with bellicast roof extended along the front of the building.

Architectural Integrity: High
The building has been very well maintained and most of the original architectural features are intact. It is recommended that the original verandah be rebuilt, thereby strengthening the historic appearance of the front facade.

BLAIR'S SECOND SCHOOL 1854 20 Old Mill Road

Historical Significance: High
Now a residence, Blair's second school was constructed in 1854 on land donated by Benjamin B. Bowman. It served until 1872 when the School Section No. 1 trustees purchased the Regular Baptist Church from the Christadelphian Church, and the two institutions switched buildings. Later, the congregation sold the school building and it was converted to a private residence.

Architectural Significance: High
This is a charming old single storey stone building. The basic form has survived a number of later but sympathetic additions. The roof has recently been cedar shingled.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The building has retained its historic character. It is recommended that the soffits and fascias be of painted wood to match the original.

REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH 1853 12 Old Mill Road

Historical Significance: High
The Regular Baptist Church was built in 1853 on land made available to the Anabaptists by Benjamin B. Bowman. In 1872, the building was purchased by the trustees of School Section No. 1. It reverted to religious use in 1959 when a new school (present Outdoor Education Centre) was built. The church building became the home of the Blair Community Church.
Architectural Significance: High
This is a simple but elegant front-gabled building with a central 9/9 double-hung window flanked by two doorways. There are large 8/6 double-hung windows on the side elevations. This was one of several brick buildings, later plastered over in this case, which began to appear in the village towards the end of the Mennonite Period. The roof is asphalt shingle and a small porch has been added on the side elevation at the rear.

Architectural Integrity: High
The building is very much original in its historic appearance. It is encouraged that, in time, the roof be cedar shingled and the side entrance porch be re-designed to be more in keeping with the church. A landscape buffer to the car park would greatly improve the setting of the church.

166 MORNING SIDE DRIVE  built c1880

Architectural Significance: High
This is an 2-storey buff brick Ontario Gothic style house with windows and doors symmetrically placed on the principle elevations. There is a bay window on one side elevation. Windows are 8/8 at the first floor level and 6/6 above. A substantial and very well designed addition has been added to the rear, in matching brick with a link to the main house clad in board and batten. A free-standing garage, also clad in board and batten, is located to one side of the house. The original house was moved here from Doon in 1936 and located on land severed from the Wismer farm.

Architectural Integrity: High
This is a very well conserved house with a well-designed addition. Although some details are not of the period, the overall effect is complementary to the character of the house. A very good example of conservation and of adapting to modern needs.

229 OLD MILL ROAD  built c1871

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a 1 1/2 storey Ontario Gothic style house with a full-width front verandah and a lean-to back addition. The windows and doors are placed symmetrically on the principle elevations, with a small dormer on the front roof. The finish is new painted board and batten. The verandah has been renewed.

Architectural Integrity: High
This house has been lovingly restored and, together with landscaping, looks very attractive. While some details are not original, the historic character has been retained.

201 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1884

Architectural Significance: Medium
This 1 1/2 storey Ontario Gothic style farm house has a plaster on brick finish. The original windows and doors are symmetrically placed on the principle elevations. Various additions are to the rear. The original front verandah has been closed in and there is a large wood-sided addition to the rear. The farm was originally settled by a branch of the Wismer family, the house was built by John Wismer and the property was acquired by Harry Kinzie in 1917.
Architectural Integrity: Low
The basic form and proportions of the house remain, but closing in the front verandah has diminished the historic character. It is encouraged that, over time, the verandah be redesigned more in keeping with the period.

140 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1892

Architectural Significance: Low
The main part of the house is 2-storey plaster on stone with a substantial one and one half storey addition to one side. The plaster finish has fallen into disrepair. This house is located on a portion of the John Wismer farm, severed in 1892 for David Wismer.

Architectural Integrity: Low
This house has lost much of its historic appearance. While preference is for restoration, demolition is also acceptable given its very dilapidated state of repair.

110 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1912

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a 1&1/2 half storey Ontario Gothic style house, with a barn to one side, set on a rise of land above the Sheave Tower mill pond. There is a single storey addition to the rear. The wall finish is recent stucco. Some of the original window openings have been enlarged.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
Although altered from its original appearance, the historic character of the house has been retained.

79 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1884

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is an Ontario Gothic style 1 &1/2 storey residence with the classic front gable and symmetrically placed windows and doors. A later but attractive and well integrated porch with Doric columns was added on the street side. The window shutters are original. The house was built for miller Jacob Hilborn facing the Carlisle Mill. In 1905 it was taken over by his son Joseph, who carried on the business and lived in the house until 1921. Historic photographs show that the original finish was ashlar plaster, scored to imitate stone. The plaster is now painted over.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
This is a very attractive historic house in near original condition. It is encouraged that the appearance of the original ashlar plaster be restored and, in time, the roof cedar shingled.

71 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1917

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a 1&1/2 storey textured concrete block vernacular style house with later side and rear additions. Although not very historic, it has a nice rural character that complements Old Mill Road. It is an example of a house style that was popular around 1920.
Architectural Integrity: Medium
This house has been well maintained, with a pleasing rear addition and country style front garden. Consideration could be given to building a porch to animate the front elevation.

67 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1872

Architectural Significance: High
Best known as the Union Sunday School, this building was constructed in 1872 as a meeting house for the New Mennonite Society and is presently owned by the Radha Krishna Mandir congregation. It is a single storey front-gabled church building with centre door and flanking side windows. A modern brick addition has been added to the rear. The building is now clad in vinyl siding.

Architectural Integrity: Low
Historic photographs show this building was originally finished in painted board and batten with a cedar shingle roof. Priority should be given to reinstating the original finishes to restore its historic appearance.

65 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1860

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a small, colourful and charming side-gabled 1&1/2 storey vernacular house with a side bow window and front sun porch. It was owned from 1896 to 1941 by members of the Hilborn family who, at one time, operated the Carlisle Mill. Probably the original finish was painted clapboard; it is now aluminum siding.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
Although the original exterior finish is covered with metal siding, it has been successfully painted to give it a nice rural historic character. In time, restoring the original wood clapboard finish and cedar shingle roof would be a benefit.

61 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1896

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a 1&1/2 storey Ontario Gothic style house built for the Hilborn family who owned the Carlisle Mill at this time. There is front gable and a porch facing Old Mill Road, with a symmetrical placement of doors and windows on the principle elevations. The finishes include metal siding and asphalt shingle.

Architectural Integrity: Low
Historic photographs indicate the original finish was ashlar plaster, scored to imitate stone, similar to that of 79 Old Mill Road. It is encouraged that the original finish be restored to revitalize the historic character of the house.

57 OLD MILL ROAD  built 1910

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is an attractive 2-storey vernacular house finished in plaster, with a porch on the side elevation. The front elevation has a centre door with windows to either side and above.
Architectural Integrity: Medium
The house is original and nicely kept, with the addition of decorative shutters and flower boxes. Consideration should be given to replacing the metal roof with cedar shingle.

1580 BLAIR ROAD  built 1928

Architectural Significance: Medium
This 1 & 1/2 storey residence with stone foundations was once a small bank barn. It has been successfully adapted to its new use and the old doorways in the stone foundations still remain. The house has wood siding with painted trim, soffits and fascias. A cobblestone chimney has been added to the front gable end.

Architectural Integrity: High
The historic character of the building has been well preserved. It is recommended that replacing the asphalt roof shingles with cedar would enhance this historic character.

1605 BLAIR ROAD  built 1908

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a small 1 & 1/2 storey red brick residence with front gable and wrap-around porch and an attractive gingerbread in the gable. The property was part of McNally's mill lands.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
Various changes have been made, including the installation of a picture window at ground floor level and partial closing in of a front window on the second. It is recommended that the porch be painted in a period colour and a period style handrail be installed. This would add a needed decorative touch.

1627 BLAIR ROAD  built 1871

Architectural Significance: Medium
This quite old 1 & 1/2 storey row house has pleasing proportions. The original finishes would have been either plaster or painted wood clapboard with a cedar shingle roof. The building was recently clad in vinyl siding. Joseph Hilborn owned the house, 1915-42.

Architectural Integrity: Low
The row house has lost much of its historic character, primarily because of the light blue vinyl siding. Restoring and replacing the original wall finish and re-shingling the roof in cedar shingle would greatly enhance the historic appearance of this building.

1645 BLAIR ROAD  built 1910

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a small but charming Ontario Cottage style residence with a hipped roof, centre door and double hung-windows on the principle elevations. There is a small decorative porch on the front.

Architectural Integrity: High
The building has been nicely conserved with many of its original features. It is encouraged that a cedar shingle roof be installed.
1660 BLAIR ROAD  built c1856

Architectural Significance: Medium
This small barn on the Miller Store property has been converted to a retail business. It is important as representing the type of small outbuilding found on most village properties in earlier times.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
The basic shape and barn character has been well maintained although window and door changes have been made. This is an example of successful adaptive re-use of a historic building.

1680 BLAIR ROAD  built 1884

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a 1 & 1/2 storey Ontario Gothic style buff brick residence on land severed off the William Tilt property by George Tilt for his sister Ellen Little. There are a number of very well designed recent additions. The landscaping beautifully frames the building.

Architectural Integrity: High
This is a good example of a blend of old and new building.

23 MEADOWCREEK LANE  built c1913

Architectural Significance: Medium
This is a charming small 1&1/2 storey vernacular cottage with a full-width front verandah, central doorway and flanking 6/6 sash windows. It is well situated in the centre of a large treed lot, once part of a farm on Old Mill Road which belonged to the Clemens family. The lot was bought by John Kenyon in 1913.

Architectural Integrity: Medium
This is a well conserved historic house. Consideration should be given when re-roofing to using cedar shingles and to re-siding with painted wood clapboard.
3. HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

The historic landscape quality of the Blair area is essentially informal and natural. It is a subtle blending of natural landscapes - river, creeks, wetlands and forests - and early man-made landscapes of utilitarian purpose - mill ponds and races and roadside trees and hedges. They are frequently indivisible, as former man-made landforms gently return to forest and roadside hedgerows regenerate with native plants. With the exception of the Langdon Hall estate, formal historic landscapes are limited to formal layouts for orchards and the occasional specimen tree in the cemetery or a front garden. To sustain the historic landscape ambiance of Blair, therefore, is to nurture a naturalized and informal appearance.

Representative Sites

#1 Grand River Corridor
Designated a Canadian Heritage River in 1994, the Grand River is a historic landscape of panoramic scale, with an extensive bottomland of cattails, sedges and grasses enclosed by willow, ash, red maple, cedar and basswood.

#2 Old Mill Road
Beginning as a wagon track in 1800, Old Mill Road continues to be a country road enclosed by an abundant hedgerow mainly of lilac, buckthorn and rose, with a mature sugar maple, ash and beech tree canopy.

#3 Sheave Tower Pond
The Sheave Tower mill pond is a bio-diverse landscape dominated by wetland meadows (formerly the mill pond) of aster, cattails, sedges, goldenrod and grasses, edged by stands of ash, slippery elm, red maple, cedar and basswood. Blair Creek tumbles over a falls at the Sheave Tower.

#4 Carlisle Mill Pond and Race
 Constructed in 1846 on Bowman Creek, Carlisle Mill Pond and Race form an extensive historic landscape now used as an Outdoor Education Centre by the Waterloo County Board of Education. The race is approximately 800 metres long from dam to mill. The landscape is distinguished by dramatic changes of elevation allowing for a wide bio-diversity from upland maples, beech and black cherry through to moist bottom land poplar, aspen, black willow, cedar and ash. The stream is clear, cold and swift running.

#5 Cemetery Lane
Shown as Ashton Street in the Allan & Geddes Survey of 1857 and probably in place circa 1820, this narrow steeply inclined and bermed lane is edged with black locust with an understorey of lilac, ash and buckthorn. A pioneer regeneration of hack berry, sumac and bramble is also prevalent.

#6 Durham Mill Pond
Constructed circa 1830 by Henry Bechtel for water power from Bechtel Creek for the Durham Mill on Blair Road, the pond is approximately four acres in area. The
Mill burned down in 1955, but the pond has been restored and maintained as a focal point in a residential estate. There is a significant amount of native vegetation and regeneration enclosing the pond, including dogwood, alder and sumac.

#7 Bechtel Tannery Pond
Constructed circa 1830 to derive power from the Bechtel Creek, the pond is approximately two acres in area. The race was rebuilt as a decorative feature by the Kirkwood family, who converted the tannery building to a residence, circa 1922. A rich riparian vegetation edge with a mix of tree species encloses the pond.

#8 Langdon Hall
The estate of Langdon Hall was laid out in 1898 in the Classical Revival style and comprises an entrance driveway winding through woods to an open meadow fronting the Hall. To the rear are formal pleasure gardens with a fenced kitchen garden to the south and an extensive conifer plantation beyond. Tree-lined grand allees and lanes traverse the estate. Of particular significance are the ancient poplars along the east Grand Allee. The forest is a unique mix of Carolinian deciduous species, notably the tulip and cucumber trees and sassafras.

#9 Cedarbrook Farm
The landscape of Cedarbrook, established in 1832, is a formal grassed open space set within a mature plantation of spruce, giving way to a regenerated understorey of hack berry, ash, maple and beech and edging onto the bottom lands of Blair Creek.

#10 Glaser Farmstead
The property at 28 Meadow Creek Lane represents a small farm holding of the type that was common in the village in the 1800s. Against the backdrop of thick woods along Blair Creek to the north, there is a large house framed by mature trees, a paddock, the remnants of an old orchard and a small circa 1860 barn, all enclosed by old wire fencing and lilac hedgerows.

#11 Cemetery
The cemetery is included as an historic landscape both for its great age (192 years) and the ancient Camperdown elm in the centre, distinguished by the horizontal, twisting and pendulous shape of its branches.

#12 Langdon Drive
Langdon Drive, established prior to 1830, represents a wide variety of landscapes ranging from moist bottom lands with cedar thickets (to the south) to more fertile, drier land to the north dominated by red oak, white pine, sugar maple and beech. The hedgerows that edge the drive are naturally regenerating with an abundant seedling understorey.
4. HISTORIC LANES & ROADS

The first imprint on the Blair area was made in the Aboriginal Period. When the First Nations peoples travelled up the Grand River watershed, the river itself was their main highway. Where needed, trails were cut through the forest, and it was an Indian trail east of the Grand that early European settlers followed on the last leg of their long trek from Pennsylvania. In fact, Indian trails formed part of their route once they left the settled areas of their former homeland. (18)

The pattern of permanent roads in the Blair area established in the Early Mennonite period had its starting point at the spot which came to be known as Betzner’s ford. When the earliest settlers arrived opposite their chosen lots on the west side of the Grand, the challenge was to locate a crossing for their heavily loaded wagons. (19) Based on informed conjecture, it seems likely that the first ford was located where the present concrete bridge crosses the Grand River at the foot of Fountain Street. (20) Samuel Betzner Jr., the first of the Mennonites to take up land in the Blair area, turned south after crossing the river and then west into his farmstead on Beasley’s Old Survey Lots 4 and 5. That track was the beginning of Blair’s first roads - what are now Blair Road to the south and Old Mill Road to the west.

Joseph Wismer, like Samuel Betzner Jr., arrived in 1800. He had chosen Lot No. 10, to the north of Betzner’s ford, and the wagon track the Wismers made to reach their land became Morningside Drive. When the Bechtel family arrived a few years later, they extended the track from the ford in the other direction - further south, beyond the Betzner farm, to reach Lot No. 3.

The pattern of traffic changed when a bridge was built across the Grand River south of the ford, circa 1835 - wagons came across in the middle of the village rather that at the north end. Bechtels’ farm track now became a public road and by the 1840s it had been extended past the Bechtel farm, to the south towards Galt. The Bechtels also owned land in North Dumfries - the wagon track to their land holdings there became the route of the present Langdon Drive.

A creek flowed through the Bechtel farm to the river, fed by springs far to the west. The water power generated when this creek was dammed permitted the building of the Durham Flour Mill on Blair Road, and also a tannery to the west, both circa 1830. In
order to reach the tannery, another farm track was created over Bechtel land and this eventually became Fallbrook Lane. The creek which ran through the lands purchased by Samuel Betzner Jr., known later as Bowman Creek, was of equal importance. It too was dammed and the water power put to use, in this case to run the settlement's first sawmill, and later the Carlisle Mill, on Old Mill Road, both built by the Bowman family.

When Preston, Hespeler and Galt amalgamated to become the City of Cambridge in 1973, the present names were given to Blair's streets. In addition to the roads described above, long-term residents remember foot paths on private property that were used as "short-cuts" from one street to another. Many of these have disappeared as house lots became more formalized.

The most recent trail is the Grand River Trail, established in 1982 on the former Grand Trunk Rail line of 1873-74. Used for recreational hiking, it follows the south side of the Grand River affording fine vistas across the countryside.

Representative Sites

#1 Wagon Trail
The route which the early Mennonite settlers followed from Niagara to the Blair area brought them first to a fording place on the Speed River near the future site of Erb's Mill. From here they traversed the river flats to the Betzner ford.

#2 Betzner Ford
The Betzner ford is considered the first crossing place over the Grand River in the future Waterloo Township and is referred to in early Township by-laws. Before the construction of the covered bridge, circa 1835, this ford allowed the settlers access to their lands on the west side of the Grand.

#3 Blair Road
Blair Road began as a wagon track leading southeast from the ford to the Bechtel farmstead. It was recorded as an existing traveled road by surveyors in a report of 1816 when they traversed the northern boundary of North Dumfries (21), and circa 1840 it was extended through the Bechtel farm towards Galt. The course of the road was altered somewhat when it was rebuilt in 1963 further from the river and covering the railbed in the area south of the village.

#4 Old Mill Road
Beginning as a wagon track into Sam Betzner Jr.'s land holdings, it was continued further west when Rev. Joseph Bowman acquired Lot 6, later splitting into two forks, one curving south as the road to West Dumfries and the other west as the Dickie Settlement Road to New Dundee. Old Mill became a public road in the 1830s and is recorded in land transfers after 1846 as the road from Blair to the Carlisle Mill. With the advent of Highway 401, access from Old Mill to New
Dundee was cut off and Dickie Settlement Road was extended north to intersect Fountain Street.

#5 Morningside Drive
The track leading north from the ford to Wismers' farm was known as Mill Street or the road to Ferrie's Mill (Doon). When Highway 401 was put through in 1961, this road, like Old Mill Road, was cut off and became a dead end.

#6 Langdon Drive,
Langdon Drive began as a farm lane heading south through the Bechtel farm to the family's land holdings in the Township of North Dumfries. It eventually connected with other primitive roads and became a public road under the Township of Waterloo in the 1830s.

#7 Fallbrook Lane
Access to Bechtels' tannery was by a track leading off the farm road (Langdon Drive) to their land in North Dumfries. Over time, this track was extended and then turned back towards the river to meet the earthworks of the mill dam on Blair Road. Many years later, the tannery was converted to a residence and Fallbrook Lane connected with Blair Road.

#8 Meadow Creek Lane
Meadowcreek Lane runs west from Blair Road at the north end of the village and then turns south. It is a later addition to the streets of Blair, appearing as Craig Street on the Allan and Geddes Survey of 1857 (former Benjamin B. Bowman farm). It is thought to have been in place by 1862 as a narrow gravel road. When the new school (present Blair Outdoor Education Centre) was built in 1959, Meadow Creek was extended further south across Old Mill Road.

#9 Ashton Street or Cemetery Lane
It is not known when this lane from Old Mill Road south to Blair Cemetery came into use. When the Allan and Geddes Survey was laid out in 1857, Ashton Street followed its course; the northern section of Ashton Street was never put through. In 1930, the Cemetery Board created a ceremonial entrance to the cemetery by erecting stone pillars and an ornamental archway at the Old Mill end of the lane. Frost undermined the structure, and at some point the arch was removed and the pillars reduced to their present form. The lane was paved recently.

#10 Grand Trunk Railway
The prepared right of way for the rail line was turned over to the GTR by Conveyance Deed No. 5812 from the Town of Galt, registered in 1874. Although rail traffic through the village ceased many years ago, the railbed remained and in the 1980s the City of Cambridge made it into a hiking trail.
NOTES

The Robert Leggett Collection, held in the City of Cambridge Archives, was used as the basic source of information for this study. All land transfers referred to are documented by copies of Memorials and Deeds which form part of the Collection.


5. Breithaupt, p. 221.


8. Bricker, p. 81.


