

Research and Evaluation Report



Hamilton-Reed House
65 Main Street North, Acton, Town of Halton Hills

February 2026

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1.0 Property Description

65 Main Street North	
Municipality	Acton, Town of Halton Hills
County or Region	Halton Region
Legal Description	PT LTS 7 & 8, BLOCK 1, PL 63, AS IN HR370748 ALSO SHOWN ON PL1098, HALTON HILLS; PIN: 250020036
Construction Date	c.1870
Original Use	Residential
Current Use	Mixed-Use
Architect/Building/Designer	Builder Richard Hamilton
Architectural Style	Gothic Revival/ Ontario Cottage
Additions/Alterations	Rear two-storey addition
Heritage Status	Listed on the Town's Heritage Register
Recorder(s)	Laura Loney
Report Date	February 2026

2.0 Background

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the property at 65 Main Street North in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills, Ontario (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The report includes an evaluation of the property's cultural heritage value as prescribed by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

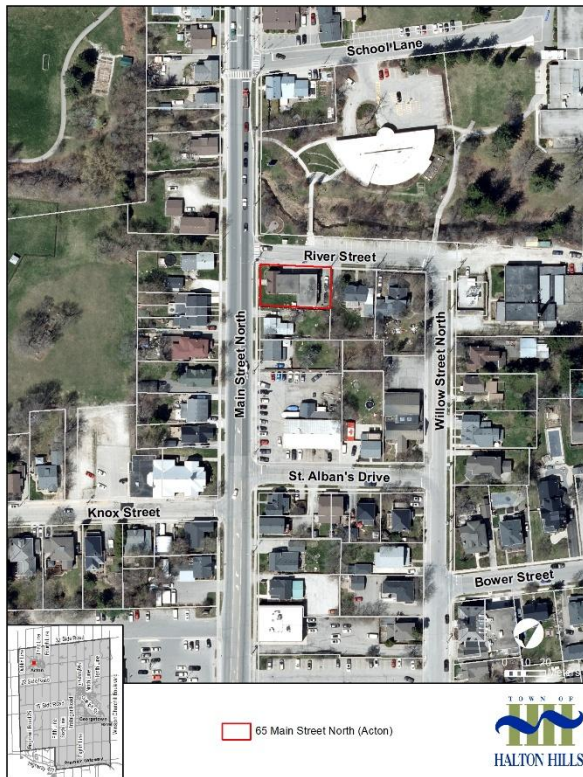


Figure 1: Location Map – 65 Main Street North

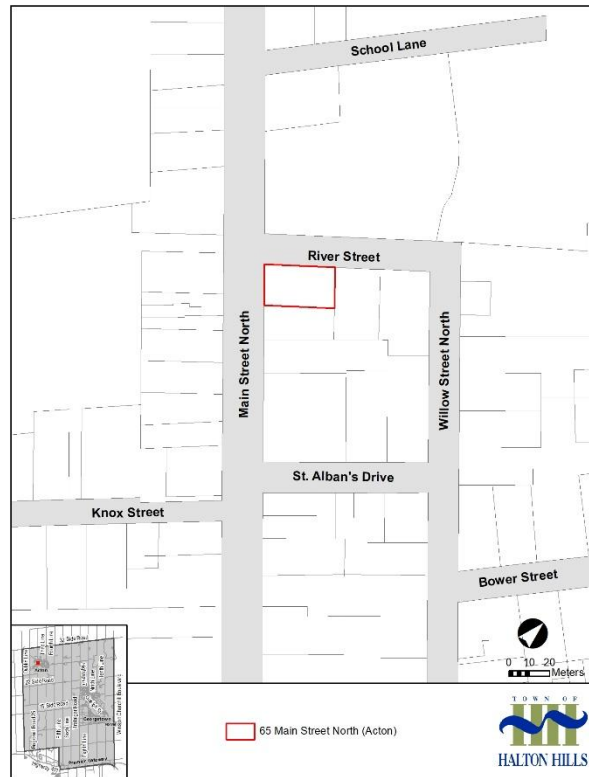


Figure 2: Aerial Photograph – 65 Main Street North

2.1 Historical Background

Indigenous History

The enduring history of First Nation Peoples in Halton Hills can be traced back through time immemorial before contact with Europeans in the 1600s. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Credit River was central to Indigenous ways of life, supporting settlements, fisheries, horticulture, transportation, and trade. Iroquoian-speaking peoples, ancestors of the Wendat, occupied the Credit River Valley for hundreds of years until the mid-1600s, establishing semi-permanent villages. There are numerous archaeological sites in Halton Hills dating from this period, ranging from village sites to burial grounds, which reveal a rich cultural heritage.

The Wendat were displaced by the Haudenosaunee around 1649-50 amid the conflicts that arose between European colonial powers and their First Nation allies. The Mississaugas (part of the Anishinaabe Nation) arrived in southern Ontario in the 1690s, settling in two groups along the north shore of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. The western group, occupying the area between Toronto and Lake Erie, became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Until the early 19th century, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation followed a seasonal cycle of movement and resource harvesting along the Credit River (Missinnihe, meaning “trusting creek”), and other rivers. In the winter months, extended family groups hunted in the Halton Hills area, travelling south towards the mouth of the river in the spring for the salmon run. The Mississaugas’ fisheries and traditional economies were diminished because of increased Euro-colonial settlement, leading to a state of impoverishment and dramatic population decline.

In 1818, the British Crown negotiated the purchase of 648,000 acres of land from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, including present-day Halton Hills, under the Ajetance Treaty (No. 19), named after Chief Ajetance. This left the Mississaugas with three small reserves on the Lake Ontario shoreline. The legitimacy of early land “surrenders” to the Crown is questionable when considering the Mississaugas’ traditional understanding of property ownership. Unlike the British, the Mississaugas understood land in spiritual terms, and did not share the idea that access to land and resources could be given up permanently.

In 1986, the Mississaugas initiated a claim against the Government of Canada over the 1805 Toronto Purchase. On June 8, 2010, the parties involved reached a final compensatory agreement. It resulted in a cash payment of \$145 million to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.¹

European Settlement History

On July 9, 1829, the Crown granted the patent for all 200 acres of Lot 28, Concession 3, in the Township of Esquesing to the Canada Company.

¹ This brief overview of Pre-Treaty Indigenous Territory within the land now known as Halton Hills is taken from the Town of Halton Hills’ 2023 *Cultural Heritage Strategy*. This document includes additional recommendations relating to Truth and Reconciliation in Heritage Planning as part of the Town's commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.



Figure 3: Subject property identified on the 1819 Patent Plan



Figure 4: Subject property identified on the 1822 Patent Plan

On November 11, 1833, the entire 200 acres were sold to Rufus Adams. Rufus and Maria Adams had been farming the land from 1825 and sold this area to Rufus's brother, Rev. Zenas Adams in 1848, who divided the property into village lots. Sidney Smith purchased the parcel from the Adams family and in 1870 sold it to William Stephenson and Thomas Easton. The following year, Stephenson sold the property to Richard Hamilton, who constructed the existing building.



Figure 5: Subject property identified on Tremaine's 1858 Map of the County of Halton, Canada West

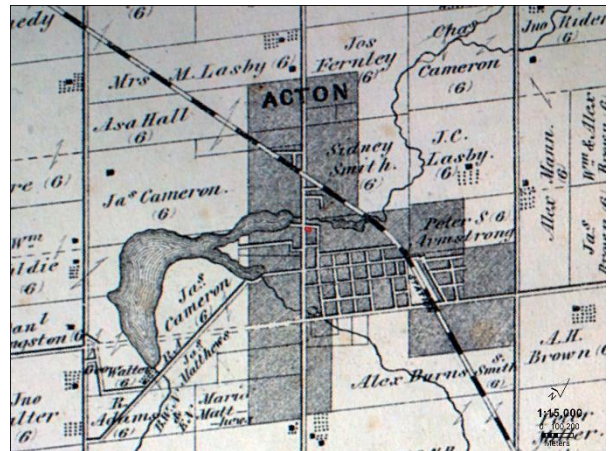


Figure 6: Subject property identified on the 1877 Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Halton, Ontario

Hamilton Family & Construction of the Hamilton-Reed Home

Richard Hamilton (1836-1909) was a respected community member in Acton, working as a carpenter, builder, and foreman carpenter for Beardmore's tannery for many years, making vats, leeches, and additions for the tannery as it expanded. Hamilton was married to Jane Matilda McCutcheon (1841-1917) and together they had a daughter. Hamilton and local carpenter John Bell built several of Acton's homes, including the original commercial building on what is now known as the Second Block downtown Acton. In 1874, Hamilton purchased the subject property and built his home at the corner of Main and River Streets, purportedly the fifth or sixth brick home erected within the community. Hamilton was also a local member of Council for the Village of Acton and a School Trustee.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS FOR THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF ACTON In the County of Halton, ON MONDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JANUARY, 1876.	
For Reeve,	
1	HENDERSON. DAVID HENDERSON, Merchant.
2	McGARVIN. NELSON MCGARVIN, Physician.
For Councillors.	
1	CHRISTIE. DAVID D. CHRISTIE, Merchant.
2	HAMILTON. RICHARD HAMILTON, Carpenter.
3	NICKLIN. EDWARD NICKLIN, Miller.
4	SECORD. JOHN SECORD, Merchant.
5	SMITH. CHARLES SYDNEY SMITH, Farmer.
6	SPEIGHT. JOHN SPEIGHT, Wheelwright!

Figure 7: Public Election Notice, including Richard Hamilton, *Acton Free Press*, December 30, 1875, p.2.



Figure 8: Richard and Jane Hamilton and their Daughter Mary Ellen Hamilton (Courtesy of Carolyn Smith via McCutcheon's from Donaghadee)

Hamilton sold the subject property to Robert Royce in 1883, following which they moved to Erin where Hamilton became the manager of the building department for J. McMillan & Co. and later operated a grocery business.

Royce Family

Robert Royce (1809-1887) emigrated from England in 1829, first settling in Dundas and then spending many years in Eramosa. Royce married Elizabeth (Eliza) Gawthrop (1813-1888) in 1833 and together they had several children.

In 1883, the Royce family moved to Acton following the purchase of the subject property from Richard Hamilton. The property was transferred through probate of will from Robert Royce to Eliza following his death. In 1908, the property was transferred from Royce's estate to James H. Reed (1867-1960).

Reed Family

Lydia M. Johnston (1869-1962) was born in Acton and married James H. Reed in March 1893 at her family home, following which the couple operated a farm in Erin. In 1904, they moved to Acton. James and Lydia Reed were active members of Acton's United Church, while James was a member of the local School Board. They had two children, Luella and Harold Reed. The *Acton Free Press* reported that in 1912, Reed had one of only three cars in the town and had bought the first five-passenger car sold in Acton.

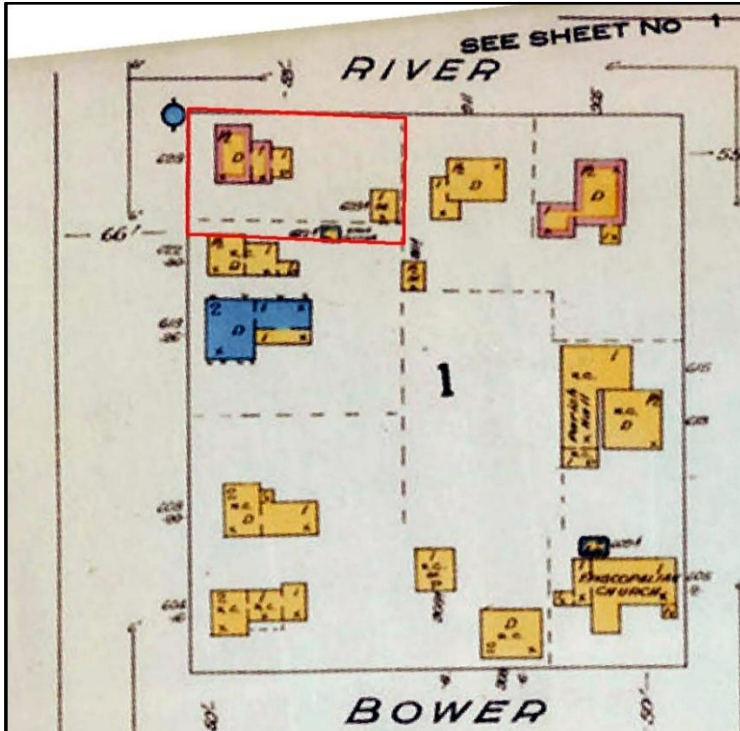


Figure 9: Subject property identified on the 1934 Fire Insurance Plan of Acton



Figure 10: Mrs. James Henry Reed, formerly Mary Elizabeth Thompson (1866-1935), daughter of George C. Thompson and Georgina Elizabeth Standish, c.1898 (EHS 20885)

James and Lydia celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in their Main Street home in Acton and recollected that they had spent almost 50 years in the same location to the *Acton Free Press* in March 1953. Following James H. Reed's death in 1960, the property was transferred from his estate to Lydia Reed, and in 1962 the property was transferred to Luella.

Mid-Twentieth-Century Ownership to Present

The property was purchased in 1962 by Jacob Vanderkooy (1930-2017) and Baukje Vanderkooy (1932-2018), who owned the property until 1972 when it was sold to Abed Aries and Adele Aries, however they transferred the property the same year to Margaret Roselle Colbeck. Aerial photography suggests the rear additions were added prior to 1974 (Figure 11) and were likely constructed for its use as a primarily residential property. In 1976, veterinarian Dr. Ron Trenton lived at the property and opened his veterinary clinic at this location. The property changed ownership several more times until purchased by its current owner in 1992.



Figure 11: Subject property identified in 1974 aerial photography



Figure 12: Subject property identified in 1999 aerial photography



Figure 13: Subject property identified in 2007 aerial photography



Figure 14: Subject property identified in 2015 aerial photography

2.2 Property & Architectural Description



Figure 15: Subject property identified in 2025 aerial photography

The property at 65 Main Street North is a rectangular parcel located at the corner of River Street and Main Street North in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills. The property features a one-and-a-half storey original frame residence with brick veneer facing Main Street North as well as a significant two-storey flat-roofed addition. The south and eastern portions of the property features a grass lawn, while the rear is dominated by the rear addition and features an asphalt parking lot. Beyond the north elevation of the rear addition is an additional paved parking area. The property does not feature any significant trees or landscaping.



Figure 16: Looking southeast towards the subject property along Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)



Figure 17: Looking northwest towards the subject property along Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)



Figure 18: Looking southwest along River Street towards the subject property (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

The nineteenth-century residential building within the property is oriented towards Main Street North and is set back a few metres from the existing sidewalk along the right of way and accessed via a paved walkway. Capped brick pillars are extant along the side and front property lines adjacent to this building.



Figure 19: Looking towards the subject property at the southeast corner of River Street and Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

The front (southwest) elevation of the existing building featuring symmetrically placed, single, segmentally arched window openings with painted wooden on either side of the entrance, which features a segmentally arched window opening with glass transom. Above the window and door openings are brick jack arches featuring buff and red brick. The existing foundation at grade has been parged. At the upper storey, a Gothic-arched window opening with buff brick voussoir and painted wooden sills is centered beneath the central gable peak above. Wooden shutters are extant on either side of this window opening. The gable peak features decorative painted wooden bargeboard that extends below the eaves. Beneath the eaves on either side of the gable peak a decorative brick detailing featuring buff brick is extant, with the red brick beneath the buff brick revealing a cross pattern. Dichromatic buff and red brick quoining is extant at each corner of the existing building.



Figure 20: Front (southwest) elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

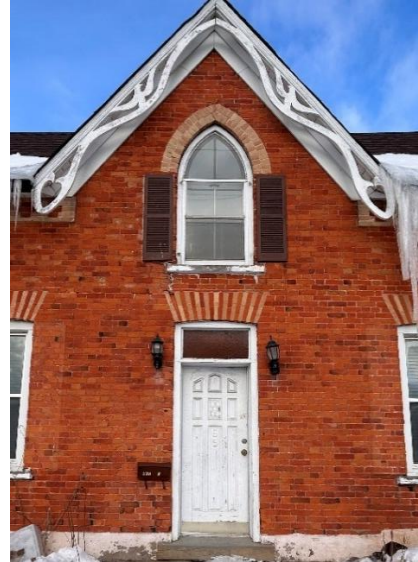


Figure 21: Detail of the front (southwest) elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

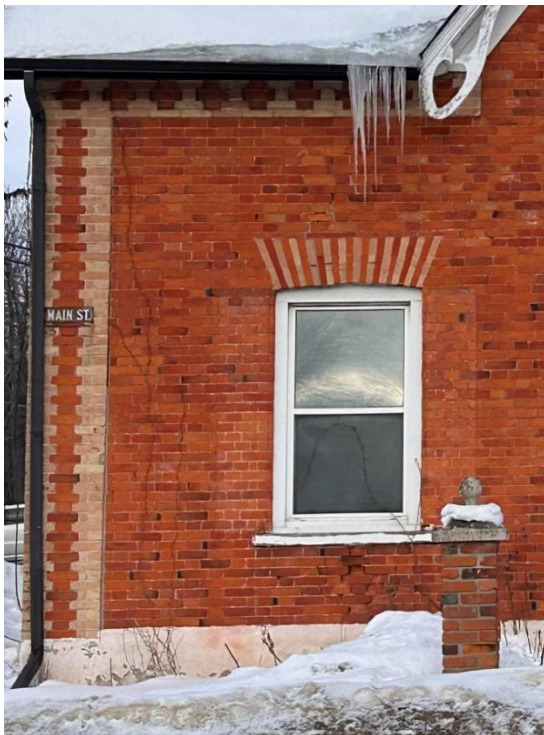


Figure 22: Detail of the front (southwest) elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)



Figure 23: Looking towards the south corner of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

At the southeast corner of the side (southeast) elevation, a brick chimney extends above the existing roofline. The existing brick is slightly darker than the brick on each elevation, and its location at this corner also suggests that it is a later alteration to the existing building. At the first storey, a single segmentally arched window is centered on the side elevation featuring a painted wooden sill, wooden shutters, and dichromatic brick voussoirs above. At the upper storey are two symmetrically placed single segmentally arched window openings with painted wooden sills and dichromatic brick voussoirs above. Beyond the original one-and-a-half storey structure, a one-storey brick addition is extant within the larger two-storey addition to the existing building, featuring a bricked-in window opening with no extant sill and dichromatic brick voussoirs above the segmentally arched opening, and two smaller contemporary window openings within this portion of the building. The addition beyond is painted concrete block and contemporary vertical siding.



Figure 24: Southeast elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House and rear addition at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

The side (northwest) elevation features a single segmentally arched window opening with painted wooden sill and dichromatic jack arch at the first storey, with a slightly smaller single segmentally arched window opening with dichromatic voussoirs centered above at the upper storey. The dichromatic quoining is extant at each corner and is connected with the buff brick string course featuring a cross pattern like the front (south) elevation. Decorative wooden bargeboard extends along the eaves of the roof above.



Figure 25: Side (northwest) elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

The rear (northeast) elevation of the original one-and-a-half storey frame residential building with brick veneer is almost entirely obscured by the rear two-storey flat-roofed addition at the rear, featuring brick at the first storey along River Street and contemporary vertical siding above, and concrete block at the first storey of the rear elevation of the addition and contemporary vertical siding above that. This rear addition is a contemporary addition to the property.



Figure 26: Looking towards the northwest corner of the Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)



Figure 27: Side (northwest) elevation of the Hamilton-Reed House with rear addition at 65 Main Street North (Town of Halton Hills 2026)

2.3 Architectural Style and Comparative Analysis

The residential building can be described as Gothic Revival, as it is reflective of the prevalent characteristics featured in residential Gothic Revival Cottage in Ontario throughout the mid-nineteenth century. The Gothic Revival style was prevalent in Ontario between 1830 and 1900, with the Gothic Revival Cottage being the most popular home style until the 1950s. There are many variations of the Gothic Revival Cottage in Ontario, with many featuring different exterior finishes and detailing. However, the pattern and footprint of these cottages remained similar and consistent. These Cottages were often constructed of brick (often dichromatic), stone, and wood. Gothic Revival Cottages typically feature a one-and-a-half storey massing, bargeboard, a central lancet window beneath a gable peak, gable roof, and a central entrance flanked by sidelights and transoms.

The Gothic Revival architecture details that are extant in the existing dwelling include its one-and-a-half storey massing, brick exterior with dichromatic detailing, central lancet window beneath a gable peak, gable roof, wooden bargeboard, and a central entrance with a transom.

3.0 Description of Heritage Attributes and Evaluation Checklist

The following evaluation checklist applies to Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation of Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The evaluation tables utilize an 'X' to signify applicable criteria and 'N/A' to signify criteria that are not applicable for this property.

Design or Physical Value	
Is rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method	X
Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	X
Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	N/A

The Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills is an excellent representative example of a nineteenth-century Gothic Revival, or Ontario Cottage, residential building. Although the two-storey rear additions have altered the original rear elevation of the building, the scale, form, and massing of the original residential building has been retained, as well as the building's original orientation towards Main Street North.

This one-and-a-half storey frame building with brick veneer, features many characteristics consistent with the style, the most popular style in Ontario until the mid-twentieth century. These details include its one-and-a-half-storey massing, dichromatic brick exterior, central lancet window opening beneath the gable peak on the front elevation, the gable roof, wooden bargeboard, and the central entrance with transom window above. Unique features on the Hamilton-Reed House that display a high degree of artistic merit include the use of dichromatic brick throughout the façade, including red and buff brick dichromatic brick voussoirs above the segmentally arched window openings, the buff brick voussoir above the lancet window opening on the front elevation, and dichromatic brick within the quoining at each corner and along the string course that extends through the upper storey along the front (southwest) and side (northwest) elevations.

Historical or Associative Value	
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	X
Yields, or has potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community	X

The Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North has significant value due to its historical associations with carpenter Richard Hamilton and his family, as well as the Reed family. The existing residential building within the subject property was constructed by prominent local Richard Hamilton. Hamilton was a respected community member in Acton, working as a carpenter, builder, and foreman carpenter for Beardmore's tannery for many years, making vats, leeches, and additions for the tannery as it expanded. Hamilton and local carpenter John Bell built several of Acton's homes, including the original commercial building on what is now known as the Secord Block downtown Acton. In 1874, Hamilton

purchased the subject property and built his home at the corner of Main and River Streets, purportedly the fifth or sixth brick home erected within the community. Hamilton was also a local member of Council for the Village of Acton and a School Trustee.

The property is also associated with James H. Reed and wife Lydia M. Johnston, who moved to Acton in 1904 to the subject property. James and Lydia Reed were active members of Acton’s United Church, while James was a member of the local School Board. They had two children, Luella and Harold Reed. The *Acton Free Press* reported that in 1912, Reed had one of only three cars in the town and had bought the first five-passenger car sold in Acton. James and Lydia celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in their Main Street home in Acton, recollecting that they had spent almost 50 years in the same location to the *Acton Free Press* in March 1953.

Contextual Value	
Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area	X
Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings	X
Is a landmark	N/A

The Hamilton-Reed House at 65 Main Street North in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills has significant contextual value as it is important in defining and maintaining the character of the area, as one of many late-nineteenth-century residential-form buildings within the surrounding area. The property, although modified over time with a significant rear addition, has been used continuously for residential purposes since its construction and is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings. The existing residential-form building is similar in scale, form, and massing to surrounding buildings and has not been identified as a landmark in the area.

4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 65 Main Street North has physical and design, historical and associative, and contextual value and therefore meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest.

The heritage attributes of the property at 65 Main Street North that contribute to its physical and design value include:

- The setback, location, and orientation of the existing building at the corner of Main Street North and River Street in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills;
- The scale, form, and massing of the one-and-a-half-storey frame residential building with brick veneer with gable roof;
- The materials, including red and buff brick, wood sills, and wooden bargeboard;
- The front (southwest) elevation, including:
 - At the first storey, the segmentally arched window openings with dichromatic brick jack arches and wood sills and central, segmentally arched entrance with transom;
 - At the second story, the lancet window opening beneath the central gable peak with buff brick voussoirs and wood sill;
 - Dichromatic brick detailing above the first storey and dichromatic quoining at each corner;
 - Decorative wooden bargeboard beneath the gable peak;

- The side (southeast) elevation, including:
 - At the first storey, the segmentally arched window opening with dichromatic brick voussoir and wood sill within the original two-and-a-half storey portion of the building;
 - At the second storey, the segmentally arched window openings with dichromatic brick voussoirs and wood sills;
- The side (northwest) elevation, including:
 - At the first storey, the segmentally arched window opening with dichromatic brick jack arch and wood sill,
 - At the second storey, the segmentally arched window opening with dichromatic brick voussoirs and wood sill;
 - Dichromatic brick detailing above the first storey and dichromatic quoining at each corner; and,
 - Decorative wooden bargeboard beneath the gable peak.

The heritage attribute of the property at 65 Main Street North that contributes to its historical and associative value includes:

- The legibility of the Hamilton-Reed House as an excellent representative example of a nineteenth-century Gothic Revival, or Ontario Cottage, residential building.

The heritage attributes of the property at 65 Main Street North that contribute to its contextual value include:

- The legibility of the Hamilton-Reed House as an excellent representative example of a nineteenth-century Gothic Revival, or Ontario Cottage, residential building;
- The setback, location, and orientation of the existing building at the corner of Main Street North and River Street in the community of Acton in the Town of Halton Hills; and,
- The scale, form, and massing of the one-and-a-half-storey frame residential building with brick veneer with gable roof.

5.0 Sources

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