

Statement of Significance

13076 Leslie Street – George Sproxton House

The George Sproxton House at 13076 Leslie Street is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

Description of Property:

The George Sproxton House at 13076 Leslie Street is a 1 ½-storey dichromatic brick house with a rectangular plan and side gabled roof, located on the west side of Leslie Street, north of Bethesda Sideroad. The property is located within the historic hamlet of Oak Ridges, formerly part of Whitchurch Township, but now located in the northeastern portion of the City of Richmond Hill.

Design and Physical Value:

Dating to c. 1853, the George Sproxton House at 13076 Leslie Street has design and physical value as a representative example of mid-19th-century Georgian farmhouse architecture in the former hamlet of Oak Ridges. The building has retained many of its original architectural features representative of the Georgian architectural style, including its rectangular plan, medium-pitched side-gabled roof, rubblestone base and red brick cladding with buff brick quoins and voussoirs, flat headed windows with six-over-six wood sash units, and the main raised entrance with a paneled wooden door and transom.

Historical and Associative Value:

The subject property has historical and associative value as the former residence of two generations of the Sproxton family, who came to York County from Yorkshire, England in the early 19th century, and were early settlers and famers in Whitchurch Township. George Sproxton built the existing dwelling as part of his farmstead c. 1853, and the Sproxton family farmed the property from around 1850 to 1900.

Contextual Value:

The George Sproxton House is one of a number of nineteenth century farmhouses that help to define the historical agricultural character of the former hamlet of Oak Ridges in Whitchurch Township.

The George Sproxton House has stood on this property since c.1853, when it was part of a farmstead owned by the Sproxton family in Oak Ridges. As such, the subject property has additional contextual value as it possesses long-standing and significant physical, visual and historical links to its surroundings, including to remaining landscape features of the Sproxton farm, such as the original farm lane running west from Leslie Street, Hayes Lake (formerly Sproxton Lake) to the north, and the woodlands to the west. The subject property also has long-standing and significant physical, visual and historical links to the former agricultural community of Oak Ridges.

Heritage Attributes:

Design and Physical Value

The heritage attributes contributing to the value of the property as a representative example of mid-19th-century Georgian farmhouse architecture in the former hamlet of Oak Ridges are:

- The scale, form and massing of the 1 ½-storey building with rectangular plan;
- The medium-pitched side-gabled roof;
- The building's exterior materials, including the rubblestone foundation, and red-brick cladding with buff brick quoins and voussoirs;
- The balanced three-bay composition of the house's south (front) elevation, comprised of a central doorway flanked by two windows;
- The balanced two-bay composition of the house's east (side) elevation;
- The windows, including:
 - Flat-headed window openings with stone sills and buff brick voussoirs, and historical wood six-over-six sash units (where extant); and
 - Flat-headed basement windows on the east elevation with red brick voussoirs and quoining;
- The paneled wooden door surmounted by a transom window with decorative diamond-shaped tracery on the house's front (south) elevation; and
- The brick chimney at the west gable-end.

Historical and Associative Value

The heritage attribute that contributes to the value of the property for its connections to George Sproxtton and the Sproxtton family, early settlers and farmers in Oak Ridges, are:

- The house's scale, siting, and orientation within a large former agricultural farmstead property on the west side of Leslie Street, north of Bethesda Side Road; and
- The house's modest Georgian farmhouse architectural style and material palette.

Contextual Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the contextual value of the property as part of a collection of 19th century farmhouses and country estates in the former hamlet of Oak Ridges are:

- The house's scale, siting, and orientation within a large former agricultural farmstead property on the west side of Leslie Street, north of Bethesda Side Road;
- The house's Georgian farmhouse architectural style and material palette; and
- The original access lane running west to the house from Leslie Street.

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Note: the house's west 'summer kitchen' addition is currently in a state of partial demolition, and is not considered to possess significant heritage attributes.