

Statement of Significance

13561 Leslie Street - Forester House

The Forester House at 13561 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 Forester House at 13561 Leslie Street is a 1 ½ storey residential structure built in the Gothic Revival Cottage style with an irregular building footprint and a bellcast porch. The property is located on the east side of Leslie Street, just south of Bloomington Road and within the former hamlet of White Rose.

Design and Physical Value

The Forester House at 13561 Leslie Street, built circa the 1870s, has design and physical value because it is a representative example of the Gothic Revival Cottage architectural style. The Forester House consists of a 1 ½ storey frame structure with painted brick veneer with rear and side additions. Historical architectural features that contribute to the building's representative Gothic Revival Cottage style include its frame construction with brick veneer, its medium-sloped side gable roof with front gable adorned with wooden vergeboarding and finial, the three-bay symmetrical composition of the front façade, the flat-headed windows with stone sills and brick voussoirs on the front and side facades, the flat-arched doorway at grade, the lancet-arch window with stone sill and brick voussoir on the second storey, and the one-storey porch on the front façade with a bellcast roof and wooden trim, featuring elliptical arches and drops.

Historical and Associative Value

The Forester House has historical and associative value for its direct association with the prominent Forester family, who lived and farmed on the subject property from 1879 to 1955. The Forester family were early settlers with roots in the area dating back to 1830, owned and farmed multiple properties and hundreds of acres in the area, and were engaged in the White Rose Methodist community. The Forester family is also associated with nearby heritage properties including the Forster Phylis Rawlinson Log House at 11715 Leslie Street (circa 1830s, designated), the John Forrester House at 188 Gormley Road West (1909, designated) and the John Forrester House at 13560 Leslie Street (circa 1880s, demolished).

Contextual Value

The Forester House has contextual value because it is one of a number of nineteenth century farmhouses that help define the historical agricultural character of the former hamlet of White Rose in Whitchurch Township.

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The Forester House has further contextual value because it is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings. The property retains its physical and visual links to the surrounding agricultural landscape, including the rural landscape to the north, west, and south, and the creek and historic railroad running on the east side of the property. The Forester House is a remaining physical example of the White Rose rural community, which diminished and disappeared in the early twentieth century.

Heritage Attributes

Design and Physical Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property as a representative example of the Gothic Revival Cottage style are:

- The scale, form, and massing of the 1 ½ storey historical front (west) portion of the building, featuring a rectangular plan;
- The medium-pitched side gable roof with steeply-pitched front gable;
- The frame construction with brick veneer;
- The symmetrical composition of the main (west) façade, with three bays at grade and one bay on the second storey;
- The window and door openings, including:
 - The flat-headed windows with brick voussoirs and stone sills on the north, south, and west facades;
 - The lancet arch window with brick voussoir and stone sill on the west façade;
 - The principal flat-headed doorway with brick voussoir on the west façade;
- The wooden vergeboarding and finial within the front gable;
- The one-storey front porch spanning the width of the west elevation, including:
 - The bellcast roof; and
 - The wooden columns with elliptical arches and drops.

Historical and Associative Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property as having association with the Forester family is:

- The building's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Leslie Street.

Contextual Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property for defining and maintaining the rural character of the former hamlet of White Rose are:

- The building's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Leslie Street; and
- The house's 19th century Gothic Revival architectural style.

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Note: the building's rear (east) and side (south) additions are not considered to possess heritage attributes.