

**Subject: Carlington North Veterans' Housing Heritage Study**

**File Number: ACS2022-PIE-RHU-0009**

**Report to Built Heritage Sub-Committee on 12 April 2022**

**and Planning Committee on 28 April 2022**

**and Council 11 May 2022**

**Submitted on March 24, 2022 by Kevin Lamer, Acting Manager, Right of Way,  
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**Ward: River (16)**

**Objet : Étude sur le patrimoine des logements pour anciens combattants à  
Carlington Nord**

**Dossier : ACS2022-PIE-RHU-0009**

**Rapport au Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti**

**le 12 avril 2022 et au Comité de l'urbanisme le 28 avril 2022**

**et au Conseil le 11 mai 2022**

**Soumis le 24 mars 2022 par Kevin Lamer, Gestionnaire par intérim, Services des  
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**Quartier : Rivière (16)**

## REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Built Heritage Sub-Committee recommend that Planning Committee recommend that Council:

1. Approve the creation of the Veterans' Housing Character Area for the area shown in Document 1;
2. Adopt the Veterans' Housing Character Area Management Guidelines, attached as Document 3;
3. Direct staff to undertake monitoring for a period of three years and report back to the Built Heritage Sub-Committee on the conservation outcomes of the Veterans' Housing Character Area Management Guidelines as outlined in Section 7.0 of Document 3;
4. Direct staff, in consultation with the community and ward councillor, to coordinate the design and installation of commemorative installations or interpretive signage within the Veterans' Housing Character Area;
5. Direct staff to evaluate 1 Harrold Place (Harrold Place Park) and 915 Merivale Road (St. Teklehaimanot Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church) for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

## RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Sous-Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Comité de l'urbanisme de faire les recommandations suivantes au Conseil :

1. d'approuver la création du secteur pittoresque de logements pour anciens combattants dans la zone illustrée dans le document 1;
2. d'adopter les lignes directrices sur la gestion du secteur pittoresque de logements pour anciens combattants, présentées en pièce jointe dans le document 3;
3. de demander au personnel de procéder à une surveillance pour une période de trois ans et de rendre compte au Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti des résultats obtenus en matière de conservation par suite de l'application des lignes directrices sur la gestion du secteur pittoresque de logements pour anciens combattants, comme le décrit la section 7.0 du document 3;

4. **Enjoindre au personnel, en consultation avec les résidents et le conseiller du quartier, de coordonner la conception et l'installation d'œuvres commémoratives ou de panneaux d'interprétation dans le secteur pittoresque de logements pour anciens combattants;**
5. **Enjoindre au personnel d'évaluer le 1, place Harrold (parc de la place Harrold) et le 915, chemin Merivale (église orthodoxe Tewahedo éthiopienne Saint-Teklehaimanot), en vue d'une désignation en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2019, through the city-wide Heritage Inventory Project, Council directed staff to conduct additional heritage analysis of the veterans' housing subdivisions in Carlington North ([ACS2019-PIE-RHU-0012](#)). A heritage study was developed to determine appropriate heritage conservation mechanisms. The study was undertaken by Heritage Planning staff in three overlapping phases: I) research and documentation, II) community engagement, and III) analysis and evaluation.

This report has been prepared to present the study findings and recommendations. Staff recommend the approval of each of the five recommendations in this report to achieve the study goal to "recommend potential heritage conservation and commemoration approaches for the study area." The creation of the Veterans' Housing Character Area and an associated commemoration strategy will ensure that the historical significance of the veterans' housing subdivisions is recognized and remembered.

The recommendations in this report are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and align with both the previous and Council-approved Official Plans, which have policies related to heritage and the identification of special areas of cultural heritage value.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

En 2019, dans le cadre du Projet d'inventaire patrimonial mené à l'échelle de la ville, le Conseil a enjoint au personnel de procéder à une analyse patrimoniale supplémentaire du lotissement de logements des anciens combattants de Carlington-Nord ([ACS2019-PIE-RHU-0012](#)). Une étude patrimoniale a été menée afin de déterminer les mécanismes appropriés de conservation du patrimoine. Cette étude a été réalisée par le personnel de la planification du patrimoine en trois étapes qui se chevauchaient : I)

recherche et documentation, II) participation de la collectivité, et III) analyse et évaluation.

Le présent rapport a pour objet de présenter les conclusions de l'étude et les recommandations qui en ont découlé. Le personnel recommande l'approbation de chacune des cinq recommandations décrites dans le présent rapport afin d'atteindre l'objectif de l'étude consistant à « recommander des approches en matière de conservation du patrimoine et de commémoration pour le secteur à l'étude ». La création du secteur pittoresque de logements pour anciens combattants et l'élaboration d'une stratégie connexe de commémoration permettront de s'assurer que l'importance historique des lotissements de logements des anciens combattants est reconnue et commémorée.

Les recommandations du présent rapport sont conformes à la Déclaration de principes provinciale et correspondent au Plan officiel précédent et à celui approuvé par le Conseil, qui contiennent des politiques liées au patrimoine et à la désignation de secteurs particuliers de valeur du patrimoine culturel.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2019, through the city-wide Heritage Inventory Project, Council directed staff to conduct additional heritage analysis of the veterans' housing subdivisions in Carlington North ([ACS2019-PIE-RHU-0012](#)). A heritage study was developed to determine appropriate heritage conservation mechanisms. The study was planned to commence in 2020; however, due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the study was postponed. The study began in 2021. Heritage Planning staff conducted research, documentation, and community engagement to learn about the veterans' housing subdivisions and to consider strategies for conservation and commemoration.

This report has been prepared to present the study findings and recommendations to the Built Heritage Sub-Committee and Council.

### **Study area**

Wartime Housing Limited, a federal Crown corporation, built and managed houses for war workers and veterans during a nation-wide housing shortage during and immediately following the Second World War. In Ottawa, two subdivisions were built by Wartime Housing Limited in Carlington North.

## **Veterans' Housing Project No. 1**

The first subdivision of 200 rental houses was constructed south of Carling Avenue at Merivale Road in former Nepean. Construction was completed in 1946 and the subdivision lands were annexed to Ottawa.

## **Veterans' Housing Project No. 2**

A second subdivision of 200 rental houses was built immediately south of the first subdivision. The lands of the second subdivision were annexed from Nepean to Ottawa in 1947.

Thematic street names were chosen to reflect the military heritage of the subdivisions including Admiral Avenue, Veterans Avenue and General Avenue.

Council's direction to staff included a map of the study area, shown in Document 1. The study area boundary is based on the 1946 and 1947 subdivision plan boundaries. The area is generally bounded by Carling Avenue to the north, Fisher Avenue to the east, General and Marshall Avenues to the south and Merivale Road to the west. The area is primarily residential and consists mainly of houses built by Wartime Housing Limited following the Second World War.

## **Objectives**

The goals of the study were to:

- Engage with and learn from residents and stakeholders about the history and importance of these veterans' housing subdivisions
- Document all buildings and streetscapes in the study area
- Complete an analysis of existing streetscape character and neighbourhood context
- Conduct historical research related to the study area
- Recommend potential heritage conservation and commemoration approaches for the study area

## Methodology

The study was undertaken by Heritage Planning staff in three overlapping phases: I) research and documentation, II) community engagement, and III) analysis and evaluation.

### I) Research and documentation

The research and documentation phase involved several methods to collect relevant historical information and document the study area. Staff undertook historical research to articulate the history of the study area and chronologize its development. Research included consulting archival sources from the City of Ottawa Archives, Library and Archives Canada and internet archives such as newspapers.com, consulting secondary research compiled by historians and scholars studying veterans' housing and the broader history of Ottawa, and oral history provided by current and former residents of the study area.

A detailed account of the history and development of the study area is attached as Document 2. The information contained in Document 2 will evolve as new information becomes available and additional reference material is accessed. Staff plan to bring updates to Document 2 in the future.

Research also involved a contextual review of other subdivisions built by Wartime Housing Limited (WHL). Heritage Planning staff met with staff from the City of Kitchener to discuss the WHL subdivision in Kitchener's St. Mary's neighbourhood, and City of Toronto staff about the WHL subdivisions Sunshine Valley, Avon Park and Harding Park. Individual building research was conducted using fire insurance plans and city directories to document each dwelling's original occupant and confirm approximate construction dates. Staff conducted site visits to photograph individual properties and landscapes in the study area.

### II) Community consultation

The study used several methods to reach and engage with impacted residents, members of the broader Carlington community, former residents, and people with historical or familial ties to the neighbourhood. Feedback was received through a public survey, community meetings, and email and phone correspondence.

Two community meetings were held to inform the study. Notice of these meetings was mailed to property owners and tenants by the City of Ottawa, distributed through the project's email circulation list, and posted on Ottawa.ca.

The first meeting was held on October 7, 2021. At this meeting, Heritage Planning staff presented the purpose of the project, explained the study process, and presented preliminary research findings. The presentation was followed by an informal question and answer period. Most questions were related to the final recommendations and outcomes of the study, which at the time were undecided.

A second meeting was held on March 15, 2022. At this meeting, Heritage Planning staff provided an overview of the project to date, a summary of the research that had been completed, and a summary of the recommendations proposed to be presented to BHSC in this report. Attendees were encouraged to review and comment on a draft of the proposed Veterans' Housing Character Area Guidelines available on Ottawa.ca.

### III) Evaluation and analysis

Using the information compiled through research, documentation, and community engagement, heritage staff identified the study area's cultural heritage character and related it to the physical fabric of the study area. This involved the use of aerial imagery and visual analysis of neighbourhood documentation to identify common physical features that contribute to the character of the area.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Recommendation 1:**

#### Creation of the Veterans' Housing Character Area

Heritage conservation options were reviewed and analyzed by Heritage Planning staff. Several strategies for heritage conservation were explored, including options under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the City of Ottawa's Official Plan. Staff considered many factors such as the collective value of the subdivisions and the contributions individual houses.

Based on the analysis of available heritage conservation tools and strategies, staff recommend that the study area be identified as a Cultural Heritage Character Area, known as the Veterans' Housing Character Area.

Both the previous and Council-approved Official Plan have policies related to heritage and the identification of special areas of cultural heritage value that may not merit designation.

Section 2.5.5 (3) of the City's previous Official Plan (2003) stated that:

The City may recognize core areas of Villages, older residential neighbourhoods, cultural landscapes or other areas in both the urban and rural areas as Cultural Heritage Character Areas, where designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* may or may not be appropriate. In these areas, the City will prepare design guidelines to help private and public landowners construct new buildings, or additions or renovations to existing buildings, to reflect the identified cultural heritage features of the community.

Section 4.5.1 (13) of the new Official Plan provides direction for establishing design guidelines in areas of cultural heritage value:

The City may identify areas of cultural heritage value where heritage designation may not be appropriate but that may benefit from design guidelines, interpretive programming or other tools that will assist in the conservation and understanding of these areas.

A Cultural Heritage Character Area (CHCA) is a tool that recognizes and commemorates the cultural heritage value of neighbourhoods, streets or areas that may not merit designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. A CHCA provides an historic context statement for the neighbourhood, identifies relevant themes and attributes and provides management and design guidelines to conserve heritage value as the area evolves. The City has similar areas in Sandy Hill and in the village of Richmond. A CHCA can be implemented through a Community Design Plan (ie. Richmond) or as a standalone document (ie. Sandy Hill).

Designation as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* is not an appropriate tool at this time, taking into consideration the conservation goals, community feedback, and planning policies. While the intent of a Heritage Conservation District designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* is to manage change, not to prevent it, staff determined that a less restrictive approach implemented under the Official Plan would simultaneously achieve the goals of conservation and commemoration while responding to the integrity of the subdivisions and addressing the concerns of area residents. In addition, historic research into the planning and design intent of the area revealed that the original dwellings were designed to be altered and grow over time, addressing both the national housing crisis of the immediate post-war era and the changing needs of area residents. Further, no properties are recommended for listing on the City's Heritage Register. The Heritage Register could provide interim protection for individual properties; however, it does not recognize the collective value of



the subdivisions. Listing all properties within the study area on the Heritage Register is not an appropriate approach.

Recommendation 3 recommends monitoring and evaluating the performance of the character area in conserving the heritage values of the area over time. It is possible that other heritage conservation tools such as Heritage Register listing, could be implemented following the scheduled review, subject to community input and Council approval.

The proposed Veterans' Housing Character Area will not designate any properties under Parts IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* or result in the addition of any properties to the municipal heritage register as non-designated listings. Property owners will not be required to seek additional permits or other permissions to alter their properties.

### **Recommendation 2:**

#### Cultural Heritage Character Area Management Guidelines

Staff recommend that Council adopt the Veterans' Housing Character Area Management Guidelines attached as Document 3 to implement the CHCA as per the provisions of both the new and old Official Plans.

According to the new Official Plan, the area is targeted for significant intensification. The guidelines in this document strive to balance intensification with conservation of cultural heritage.

The guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with all other relevant municipal and provincial planning policies and by-laws, including the Merivale Road North Community Design Plan (2018) and relevant urban design guidelines.

The primary function of the guidelines is to provide guidance on managing change and conserving the area's heritage character. Through the implementation of character area guidelines, area residents will retain flexibility in designing and constructing alterations and additions. Other development activities, such as the construction of infill housing, can respond to and be informed by the guidelines.

**Recommendation 3:**

## Monitoring of Character Area Performance

Staff recommend that the performance of the Veterans' Housing Character Area be monitored by staff for a period of three years and that the results of this monitoring be reported to Council following the conclusion of the three-year period.

**Recommendation 4:**

## Commemoration

One of the findings of the study was that the area contains intangible heritage that is valued by the community and merit commemoration and interpretation to contribute to a greater understanding of the significance of the area. These intangible elements include the specific memories and stories of servicemen and women in the Second World War who later settled in the area, the lives and experiences of children living within the area as it developed, the persistent sense of community cultivated by current and former residents, and the significance of the area as a site of Ottawa's development during the post-war era.

Some commemorative activities occurred prior to this study, including the installation of a commemorative bench in Harrold Place Park in 2017. Staff recommend that formal commemoration of the Veterans' Housing Character Area be designed in consultation with the community and Ward Councillor and installed in the area. Commemoration may include but is not limited to interpretive signage, plaques, and public art that recognizes the significance of the area and remembers its veterans. It is anticipated that commemoration could be implemented in 2023.

**Recommendation 5:**

## Evaluation of Potential Part IV Designations

While the value of the study area is primarily related to the collective elements of the subdivisions and the organization of the neighbourhood as a whole, staff have identified the following properties and recommend they be assessed as candidates for potential designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

## a. 1 Harrold Place (Harrold Place Park)

Harrold Place Park is a well-known destination in the veterans' housing subdivisions. Harrold Place was named in memory of Ernest William Harrold, a local man who

reported for the Ottawa Citizen in 1913 until he went overseas to serve in the First World War. His death in 1945 coincided with the construction of Veterans Housing Project No. 1, and so Harrold Place Park was named in his memory. The unique “dog bone” shape of the park and its placement at the heart of the first veterans’ housing subdivision pushes houses to the periphery in favour of public greenspace. This design approach creates a distinct and recognizable spatial arrangement associated with Wartime Housing Limited subdivisions.

b. 915 Merivale Road (St. Teklehaimanot Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church)

915 Merivale Road was designed by the modernist architect James W Strutt in 1957-1959 and features elements of American A-frame architecture. It is recognized as a building of design significance and is associated with an architectural concept known as the Linked Hyperbolic Parabola, which unites walls and ceilings to form one continuous structure. Built as St. Peter’s Anglican Church, the building has ties to Ottawa’s Anglican and Ethiopian Orthodox congregations. It is a striking building along Merivale Road.

## **Conclusion**

The veterans’ housing subdivisions in Carlington North are representative and relatively intact examples of the planned neighbourhoods developed by Wartime Housing Limited across Canada in the postwar years. They are the only known Wartime Housing Limited subdivisions located within the amalgamated City of Ottawa. The subdivisions were built in direct response to the housing crisis and reflect a coordinated effort from several levels of government and various private sector players during a time of considerable housing need. They are some of the first subdivisions built in Ottawa after the Second World War and they represent a defining moment in residential planning in Ottawa and in Canada. These subdivisions survive as legacies of the war and as markers in the growth and development of postwar Ottawa.

Staff recommend the approval of each of the recommendations in this report to achieve the study goal to “recommend potential heritage conservation and commemoration approaches for the study area.” The creation of the Veterans’ Housing Character Area and an associated commemoration strategy will ensure that the historical significance of the veterans’ housing subdivisions is recognized and remembered.

## **Provincial Policy Statement**

Staff have reviewed the recommendations in this report and have determined that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications.

## **CONSULTATION**

Notices were mailed to all residents and owners in the study area in September 2021, informing stakeholders of the study's commencement, engagement opportunities, and how to access more information online. Notices were also distributed to the local community association and through the Councillor's newsletter.

An online survey was available on [ottawa.ca/vetshousing](http://ottawa.ca/vetshousing) from September 7, 2021 to October 19, 2021. The survey collected data on perceptions of the study area and the potential implementation of cultural heritage conservation tools. A public meeting was held over Zoom on October 7, 2021 and attended by approximately 30 people and the Ward Councillor. An As We Heard It Report detailing the survey results and public meeting is included as Document 4.

A second notice was mailed to all residences and owners in the study area in March 2022, informing stakeholders that the initial study phase had concluded and providing an overview of staff's draft recommendations. The draft guidelines were made available online at [ottawa.ca/vetshousing](http://ottawa.ca/vetshousing). The notices also included an invitation to a second public meeting, held over Zoom on March 15, 2022 as well as details regarding meetings of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee and Council. An As We Heard Report summarizing the 2022 public meeting is included as Document 5.

Notices were emailed to Heritage Ottawa, the Carlington Community Association and the Strutt Foundation informing them of this report and its recommendations.

## **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR**

The Ward Councillor is aware of this report to committee.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendations.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk implications.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no asset management implications associated with this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

Design and installation of commemorative signs or plaques will reflect the City's Accessible Design Standards for Signage and Wayfinding and follow the Accessible Procurement Guidelines.

**CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

The character area guidelines recommended in this report encourage the retention of existing dwellings in the Veterans' Housing Character Area. The retention, restoration, and reuse of the existing building stock contributes positively to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with urban development and reduces the volume of construction and demolition waste received by landfills.

The character area guidelines recommended in this report support the retention and growth of trees, reflecting the objectives of the City of Ottawa Urban Forest Master Plan.

**INDIGENOUS GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS**

The report considers that Indigenous and equity-deserving groups faced unequal access to government benefits and programs, including housing for veterans, following the Second World War. These historical barriers carry into the present.

**TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priorities:

- Thriving Communities: Promote safety, culture, social and physical well-being for our residents.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Map

Document 2 History and Development of Veterans' Housing

Document 3 Guidelines and Context

Document 4 As We Heard It Report – Fall 2021

Document 5 As We Heard It Report – Winter 2022

**DISPOSITION**

Heritage Planning staff are responsible for implementing the recommendations in this report.