

Heritage Designation Brief



The Higgins House

91 Langton Street

Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee

HERITAGE DESIGNATION STATUS SHEET

Street Address:	91 Langton Street
Roll Number:	050110130000000
Short Legal Description:	PLAN 14 BLK E PT LOTS 11,12 & 20 45R-5635 PARTS 1,3,4,6 & 7 CORNER 0.54AC 96.76FR D
Owners' Concurrence:	Yes
PACAC Application Review Date:	March 8, 2011
On Site Evaluation Date:	January 2010
Evaluation Category:	B (60.6)
Evaluators:	Jennifer Patterson
Heritage Type:	Built Structure
Designation Type:	Ontario Heritage Act – Part IV
Designation Brief Completion Date:	February 25, 2011
PACAC Application Approval Date:	
Designation Brief Completed by:	Jennifer Patterson
Submission Date:	
Objections Noted:	
Comments:	

"The short statement of the reason for the designation, including a description of the heritage attributes along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Report constitute the "Reasons for the Designation" required under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Heritage Designation Report is available for viewing in the City Clerk's office during regular business hours."

SHORT STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Heritage Evaluation Criteria Note:

Category B: The properties in this category are of distinct importance by virtue of architectural, historical and environmental criteria along with integrity of design and construction. They stand out individually but are of lesser overall significance than "Category A" properties. "Category B" properties hold city-wide importance.

91 Langton Street has good cultural heritage value. The structure was built on land once owned by George Hilliard, a prominent land owner and Conservative Member of Parliament who counted Sir John A. MacDonald among his supporters. The original land was divided into twenty small lots and sold off in 1881, one of which was purchased by John C. Higgins, carpenter, millwright, and sawyer. This property remained in the Higgins family until the 1970s.

John C. Higgins was born in Ireland in 1839, and married Margaret Denver in 1870 in Ontario with whom he had one son and seven daughters. The 1891 census indicates that the Higgins used this house for boarders and seven family members.



91 Langton Street has architectural value as an example of a simple vernacular style Victorian era dwelling constructed of wood and covered in brick veneer on the top of a small hill overlooking the Otonabee River on what was then a rural landscape.

Of significance is the later addition to the house that is an early example of a major innovation in

building technology, the early residential use of concrete in this area. In 1904, Fred Tuggey a stone mason was approached by a local builder, Thomas McKee who had a contract to build a house at 633 Aylmer Street. McKee had purchased a machine for hand casting concrete blocks that resembled rough cut stone and needed an experienced mason to try the new technique. That same year John Higgins was contracted to build a house on Water Street and hired Tuggey and McKee to build it of the block. So impressed was Higgins by the durability and speed of construction using concrete that he had a large addition to his home at 91 Langton constructed of it as well. The cement was purchased exclusively from

the Canada Cement mill in Lakefield, Ontario, which opened in 1901 to provide cement for the construction of the Liftlock, and in 1909 was renamed the Canada Cement Company. That cement was unique in its composition given the strength requirements of the Liftlock. This makes the addition at 91 Langton Street a rare example of an intersection of significant historic events, the arrival of an innovative building process, now commonplace, and the use of a type of cement available during the construction of an internationally significant engineering wonder.

ORIGINAL OWNER: John Higgins

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Possibly John C. Higgins

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1888-9

CONTEXT- SITE AND SETTING: Originally known as 1045 Water Street, the address of the property was changed to 91 Langton Street in the 1970s. The property was part of Smith Township until 1900 when it was officially annexed into Peterborough. The property retains traces of its rural beginnings, with its large lot and front entrance facing the Otonabee River. Mature trees surround the house, and it backs onto a wooded area which still contains an old fence constructed of wood now weathered over time.



SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations and the roof including all facades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, plaster parging, metal and glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features:

Exterior Elements:

- Original wood frame construction with painted brick veneer
- Solid concrete block addition on south elevation
- Medium hip roof
- Verandah with Eastlake style details
- Segmented arch window openings
- Original wooden windows
- Wooden sills and blinds
- Original wooden fascia

