



# Interpretation Plan and Strategy

**The Lower Mayfield School, S.S.#14**

**1524 Countryside Drive, Brampton, Ontario**

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Prepared for:

Habitat for Humanity GTA  
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## Executive Summary

Somerville Planning has been retained by Habitat for Humanity GTA to prepare heritage interpretation plan and strategy for the proposed development located at 1524 Countryside Drive. The site is the location of the former Chinguacousy School Section 14, Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse (“Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse”), which was constructed in 1873 and demolished in 2010.

While the Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse was not designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act prior to demolition, the property did contain heritage value and was listed on the City of Brampton’s Municipal Heritage Registry as a “Class B” heritage structure. As a condition of the demolition the City retained the c.1873 datestone of the school with a requirement that any future development meaningfully integrate this element into the site.

Section 1 of this document provides an introduction to the site, a review of the historical context and heritage value of both the site and the immediate context. Section 2 introduces a proposed methodology for developing the interpretation strategy and builds the strategy from the identified heritage value.

The intent of the strategy is to provide an interpretation that is engaging across a diverse population, modern in its style and provides an opportunity for place-making.



## SECTION 1

### Introduction

The site at 1524 Countryside Drive at the evolving intersection of Countryside Drive and Dixie Road within the Countryside Villages Secondary Plan. The Plan is bounded by Mayfield Road to the north, Dixie Road to the east, Countryside Drive to the south, and Heart Lake Road to the west. The area incorporates the concepts of “new urbanism” where neighbourhoods are planned to be pedestrian friendly and transit supportive and is still in the process of being built out.

The site proposal is to construct a 3-storey stacked townhouse development containing 15 units for Habitat for Humanity GTA.



Aerial view of site with buildings that are subject to the Heritage Interpretation Plan in dashed outlined (annotated by Somerville Planning).





## Historical Context

The intersection of Dixie Road and Countryside Drive has long been associated with education and the schooling of rural children, with three schoolhouses having existed around the intersection. The first school was a log structure constructed in 1837 (exact site unknown). The second log schoolhouse was constructed in 1847 at the northwest corner of the intersection. This was replaced in 1873 by a one-room red brick schoolhouse located at the northeast corner. The proposed development shares the same northeast location as the former (c.1873) Lower Mayfield School, S.S. #14 (demolished, 2010).

The Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse No. 14 originally serviced a very large (4200 acre) school district stretching along Countryside Drive between Kennedy Road and Bramalea Road. The original structure was a gable-roofed one-room schoolhouse which included a gable-roofed vestibule containing a six-over-six sash window. The structure was completed in red brick with buff brick coining, decorative dichromatic brickwork and a c.1873 datestone at the gable-end (retained by the City of Brampton). The gable roof of the building was completed with a unique six-columed bell domed tower containing the schoolbell. It was regarded as the only brick schoolhouse in Chinguacousy Township.



Undated Photo of the Lower Mayfield School with closeup of gable-end datestone (retained)

Significant renovations were undertaken to both the interior and exterior of the school in 1955 which impacted its physical appearance. The renovations replaced the original north windows with a window wall and covered the brick

exterior with white stucco finished in green trim. The school was closed in 1960 after which it was sold off and used for residential purposes until 2010 when it was demolished.

## Heritage Value

Prior to the demolition of the Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse, the property was assessed internally by the City of Brampton and identified as a “Class B” heritage property. The City of Brampton’s Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value is a tool grounded in Regulation 9/06 Ontario Heritage Act, the Regulation includes three primary criteria for evaluation:

### **Design value;**

- Is a rare, unique or early example of a style, type expression, material or construction method;
- Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit; or
- Demonstrates a high degree of scientific achievement.

### **Associative value;**

- Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity or institution that is significant to a community;
- Yields or has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture; or
- Demonstrates or reflects the work of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

### **Contextual value**

- Is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area;
- Is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surrounds; or
- Is a landmark.

While the heritage value of the property was never formally assessed, Regulation 9/06 provides a valuable lens in which to understand the potential cultural heritage value of a subject property as it relates to the proposed commemoration strategy.

## Design Value

Originally, the structure contained significant design value relating to the craftsmanship relating to the exterior finishes. The 1955 modernizations removed, covered and obscured any potential design value associated with these elements. The poor physical condition of the school was noted by the City of Brampton as a contributing factor in the decision not to designate the structure when the demolition was brought forward for consideration.

## Associative Value

The Lower Mayfield School contained direct associations with the theme of education and the role schoolhouses had in provision of education within rural communities. These structures formed a foundational institution in the development of the community and were one of the first structures to be built during the settlement phase of the area. The school was closely associated with this educational legacy as the last of three schools to be constructed around the intersection of Countryside and Dixie Roads.

## Contextual Value

Contextually, the Lower Mayfield School played an important role in defining and supporting the rural character of the area and linked to its development. Additionally, the building served as a visual landmark at the northeast corner of Countryside and Dixie Road until its removal in 2010.

The removal of the Lower Mayfield School obviously precludes any designation of the site, however the datestone does provides a physical fragment on which to build an interpretation strategy that embodies the residual cultural heritage value associated with the site, which include:

- Association of the property with the theme of education and the provision of schooling within rural communities; and
- The significant association the intersection has with the schooling, having had three schools existing around the corners over the past 173 years.

Section 2 - the Interpretation Strategy will propose a means of operationalizing the heritage themes, and doing so in a way that is meaningful and connects with the surrounding contemporary community.

## SECTION 2

### Interpretation Strategy

In developing a successful interpretation strategy, three primary questions need to be answered:

1. Why is an interpretation required?
2. Who is the audience for the interpretation?
3. What are the key characteristics or values being interpreted?

The demolition of the Lower Mayfield School in 2010 was primarily due to the condition of its physical integrity and not its overall heritage value. As part of the demolition approval, the City retained the c.1873 datestone with the requirement that any future development meaningfully integrate it as part. This requirement speaks to the inherent value this property has within the community. The proposed redevelopment of the property provides an opportunity to showcase and engage both the future residents and the broader community into the history associated with this property and the area in a meaningful way.

The primary audience for the proposed interpretation strategy is the immediate community which includes the future residents and the surrounding community. The proposed plaque will be located at both a major entry point to development as well as a publicly accessible location along Countryside Drive. The proposed location will provide both an opportunity to link the history of the site with the present, providing a placemaking opportunity that roots the new development within this historical context.

Identifying the modes that the audience is to interact with the site assists with scaling the interpretation to meet these types of interactions. In the case of the Lower Mayfield School, the primary modes of interaction can be subdivided into two primary spheres of interaction;

Macro: The general public passing through the area (car/bicycle);

Micro: The immediate and neighbouring residents passing by or interacting with the site (pedestrian)

Through the process of reviewing the heritage value of the subject property through the lens of Regulation 9/06 we have been able to identify significant characteristics or values associated with the property. These values relate to education and the role it played in the development of this early community.

Based on the questions posed by the interpretation strategy this report has revealed the purpose for interpretation, the audience for the interpretation and the characteristics to be interpreted, these include:

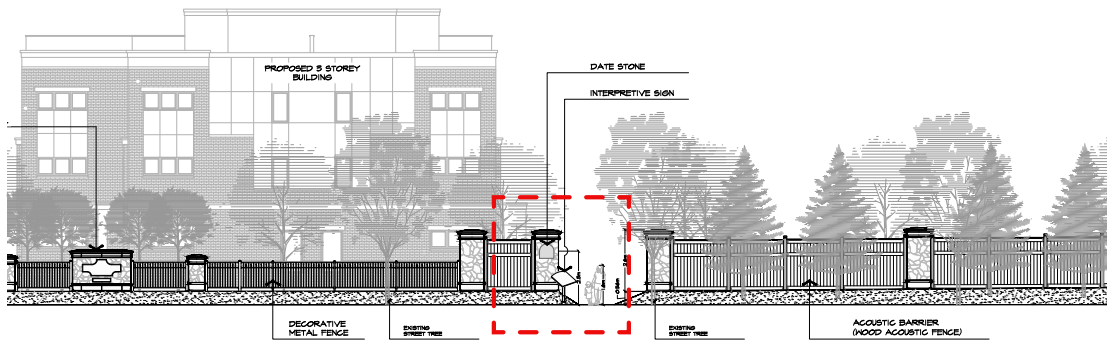
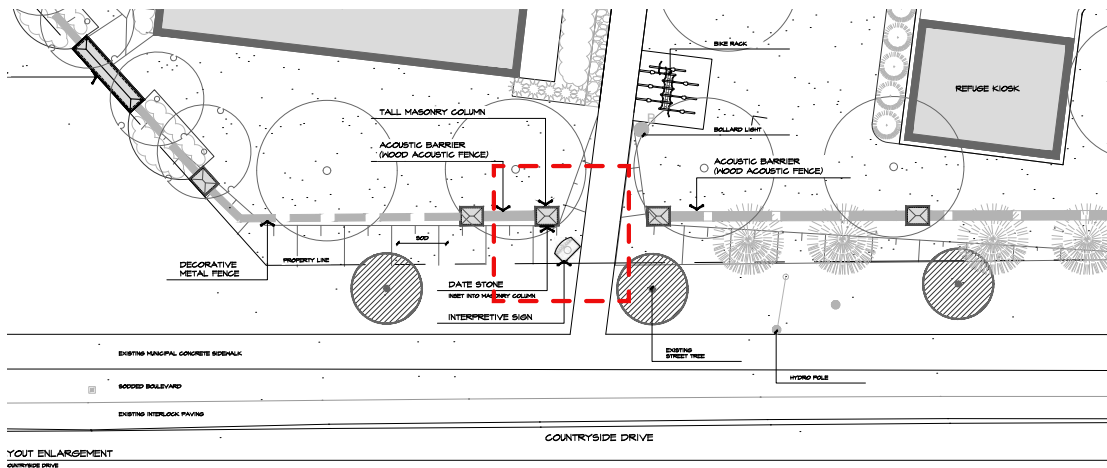
- Linking the interpretation to the historic associative theme of education;
- Providing opportunities for placemaking;
- Creating a visual landmark in the area; and
- Providing different scales of interpretation to engage passersby at both the macro (car/bicycle) scale as well as the micro (pedestrian) scale.

#### Interpretation Theme

The theme for the interpretation is a textual description of the date stone and its relationship to the history of education within the local area. The theme is meant to provide a means of connecting the contemporary site context with the original rural context. This is achieved through a photograph of the original building with the date stone clearly visible in the image, providing a history of the number of school buildings located around the intersection and relaying the distance travelled by the students to reach this location.



Proposed image to accompany the plaque verbiage



Proposed datestone and plaque location

### Location

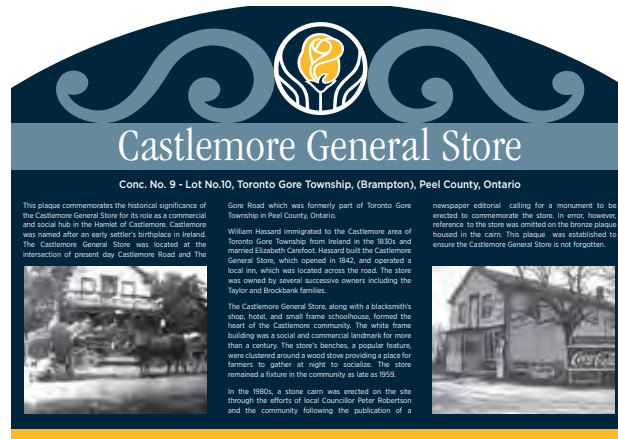
The south elevation of the building and a large acoustic wall which is required to be constructed in order to provide noise attenuation for amenity spaces. Along this wall there is a pedestrian entryway that into the development. The Lower Mayfield School c.1873 datestone is proposed be integrated into the west entry pillar of this walkway with the plaque stand located immediately adjacent to the pillar.

The west location was selected as it provides the highest visibility from Countryside Drive as a street tree would potentially block this view if it were located on the east entry pillar.

### Scales of Interaction

Two scales of interaction are integrated into the proposed strategy. The c.1873

datestone is proposed to be integrated into the western portion of the acoustic wall and will be clearly visible for both passing motorists and bicyclist. The intent is to engage curiosity and drive pedestrian site exploration of the plaque. This datestone will be complemented with a simple interpretive plaque that includes a picture of the schoolhouse and a brief description of its history



Proposed plaque design to be located near datestone

**Proposed Plaque Verbiage**

*This plaque commemorates the date stone of the now demolished Lower Mayfield School S.S.#14 which stood at this property from 1873 until 2010.*

*For over 173 years the intersection of Countryside Drive and Dixie Road has been associated with the schooling and education and schooling of rural.*

*The first small log schoolhouse was constructed in 1837 and would have been one of the first buildings in the newly settled area. The initial building was soon replaced with a larger single-room log schoolhouse in 1847.*

*In 1873, a new one-room red brick schoolhouse was constructed for \$2000. The new school was regarded as the only brick schoolhouse in Chinguacousy Township and included a unique six-columned bell-domed tower.*

*In 1955 the schoolhouse was completely renovated removing or covering over many of the original design elements including the brick walls which were covered in stucco and the original windows which were replaced with a new window wall. Additionally, the interior was modernized with new linoleum floors, black-*



*boards, electrical fixtures and most significantly indoor plumbing.*

*The c.1873 Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse No.14 served the local (4200 acre) school district which stretched east/west along Countryside Drive between Kennedy Road and Bramalea Road. The size of the district required students to walk up to 20 minutes to school regardless of the weather.*

*In 1960 after 87 years of operation, the Lower Mayfield Schoolhouse closed its doors to students for the last time.*

*After the closure, the school building was converted to residential use until 2010 when the building was finally demolished.*

## Conclusion

The proposed heritage interpretation strategy for 1524 Countryside Drive provides the community and residents with opportunities to view and engage with the associative historic value of the Lower Mayfield School, its relationship with rural education and the physical evolution of the community.

The proposed interpretation strategy is rooted in an understanding of the property's strong associative value and a desire create an an approach that commemorates this history in an engaging, enlightening and light-hearted manner.

The opportunity to create physical interpretation strategy provides a place-making opportunity that connects the present with the past within this newly developed context.

The proposed interpretation strategy for 1524 Countryside Road will promote public awareness, placemaking and encourage further site exploration.