

**Subject: Designation of the former Drummond Presbyterian Church at 2027
Robertson Road under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act***

File Number: ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0029

**Report to Built Heritage Committee on 10 June 2025
and Council 25 June 2025**

**Submitted on May 30, 2025 by Court Curry, Manager, Right of Way, Heritage, and
Urban Design Services, Planning, Development and Building Services
Department**

**Contact Person: Sampoorna Bhattacharya, Heritage Planner I, Heritage Planning
Branch**

613-580-2999 Ext. 21580, Sampoorna.Bhattacharya@ottawa.ca

Ward: College (8)

**Objet : Désignation de l'ancienne église presbytérienne de Drummond, au
2027, chemin Robertson, en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le
patrimoine de l'Ontario***

Dossier : ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0029

Rapport au Comité du patrimoine bâti

le 10 juin 2025

et au Conseil le 25 juin 2025

**Soumis le 30 mai, 2025 par Court Curry, Gestionnaire, Services des emprises, du
patrimoine, et du design urbain, Direction générale des services de la
planification, de l'aménagement et du bâtiment**

**Personne ressource : Sampoorna Bhattacharya, Urbaniste I, Planification du
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Quartier : Collège (8)

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Built Heritage Committee recommend that Council:

1. **Withdraw the Notice of Intention to Designate 2027 Robertson Road, issued by the former City of Nepean in March, 1995.**
2. **Issue a Notice of Intention to Designate 2027 Robertson Road under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value attached as Document 5.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Conseil :

1. **de révoquer l'avis d'intention de désigner la propriété située au 2027, chemin Robertson publié par l'ancienne Ville de Nepean en mars 1995;**
2. **de publier un avis d'intention de désigner la propriété située au 2027, chemin Robertson, en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, conformément à la déclaration de valeur de patrimoine culturel faisant l'objet du document 5 ci-joint.**

BACKGROUND

This report has been prepared because designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) must be approved by City Council.

The former Drummond Presbyterian Church at 2027 Robertson Road is a two-storey stone building. Purpose built in 1898 in the Gothic Revival architectural style, the building replaced the former Union Church which stood on the same site from 1853 until 1898.

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative, and contextual values. It meets three of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the OHA.

In 1995, the former City of Nepean issued a Notice of Intention to Designate this property, formerly known as 27 Robertson Road. However, no designating by-law was passed or registered on title by the City of Nepean at the time.

Additionally, this property was listed on the City's Heritage Register in 2019. Changes to the OHA through Bill 23 (2023) and Bill 200 (2024) will result in the removal of this property from the City's Heritage Register if Council does not issue a Notice of Intention to Designate the property by January 1, 2027. Further, Council will not be able to relist the property for five years after this date. Heritage staff completed a review of all

non-designated properties listed on the City's Heritage Register in response to Bill 23 in Spring of 2023 and this property was identified as a potential candidate for designation.

DISCUSSION

Recommendation 1:

The former City of Nepean issued a Notice of Intention to Designate (NOID) this property in March 1995 for its cultural heritage value or interest. The Notice of Intention is attached to this report as Document 2. A designating by-law was never passed or registered on the property title for this property. Staff were unable to find a reason why the designation by-law was never passed and there is no evidence that the Notice of Intention to Designate was withdrawn. Given the length of time since the issuance of the NOID and the various jurisdictional and legislative changes that have occurred, staff recommend formally withdrawing the previous NOID and issuing a new NOID that reflects the current *Ontario Heritage Act* in terms of content and process.

Recommendation 2:

The Official Plan, Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), and the OHA all provide policy direction related to the designation of individual properties under Part IV of the OHA.

Official Plan

The Official Plan has policies related to cultural heritage in Section 4.5, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology. Section 4.5.1(3) states: "Individual buildings, structures, and sites shall be designated as properties of cultural heritage value under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*."

Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) replaces the former Provincial Policy Statement and came into effect on October 20, 2024. Section 4.6 of the PPS includes the following policy regarding the conservation of heritage resources:

4. Planning authorities are encouraged to develop and implement:

b) proactive strategies for conserving built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes

Policies within the City's Official Plan, as described above, direct the designation of significant properties and comply with this policy.

Should City Council designate the property outlined in this report, it would be considered "protected heritage property" for the purposes of the PPS 2024. The PPS

includes the following policy related to protected heritage property:

Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved.

Ontario Heritage Act

Part IV of the OHA provides municipalities with the authority to designate properties of cultural heritage value. Section 29 of the OHA sets out the process for the designation of individual buildings. It requires:

- that Council consult with its municipal heritage committee, and
- that the official Notice of Intention to Designate served on the owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust contain a description of the property and its heritage attributes, as well as a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a statement that a notice of objection may be served on the clerk within 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention in a newspaper.

Per by-law 2002-522, as amended, the Notice of Intention to Designate will be published online on the City's website in both official languages. Document 6 contains the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for this property.

Ontario Regulation 9/06

Regulation 9/06 (see Document 4) establishes criteria to determine if a property is of cultural heritage value or interest. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the OHA if it meets two or more of the nine criteria set out in the regulation. Through research and evaluation, staff have determined that the property at 2027 Robertson Road meets three of the nine criteria. Detailed research and analysis are outlined in the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (see Document 5), and a brief analysis of each of the applicable criteria is provided below:

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method:

2027 Robertson Road has design value as a representative example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture in a religious building in Ottawa. Adopted by many rural churches across Ontario in the 19th century, the style is characterized by stone or brick buildings with an emphasis on English medieval design elements and are typically constructed with locally available materials. The Gothic Revival style is articulated in the

building at 2027 Robertson Road through its rough-cut limestone construction material, pointed arch windows, stained glass window, and steep gabled roofline.

The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community:

The property has historical and associative value for its important role in the history and evolution of church life in Bells Corners. Purpose-built in 1898 as the Drummond Presbyterian Church, the building at 2027 Robertson Road replaced the former Union Church which stood on the same site from 1853 until 1898.

The former Union Church was shared between the Presbyterians, the Anglicans and the Methodists. When the Anglicans and the Methodists eventually split from the union in the late 19th century, the Presbyterians built the Drummond Presbyterian Church in 1898 as their first church in Bells Corners. In 1925, Drummond Presbyterian Church became Bells Corners' first United Church through a merger with the United Church of Canada, who operated within the building until the late 1960s.

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings:

The former Drummond Presbyterian Church is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings by its important location in the center of Bells Corners on the main road used by visiting parishioners and travelers on route to Ottawa in the early 20th century. By the 1960s, the building was too small to continue serving the growing congregation as a church. Already occupying a prominent and lucrative location on an increasingly busy commercial corridor, the church was adapted in the 1970s to serve as a commercial building. The property at 2027 Robertson Road has contextual value for its unique role in maintaining the historic rural village character of Bells Corners. Until the 1950s, Bells Corners was a small rural community with a strong agricultural presence. It is now a residential, commercial, and industrial area anchored by a commercial strip on Robertson Road; however, it still retains much of its original rural characteristics. Despite significant development in its surroundings, the building maintains a high degree of integrity and is reflective of 19th century vernacular architecture in the area, demonstrating how the rural farming village of Bells Corners has evolved and progressed over the last century.

Conclusion

The property at 2027 Robertson Road meets three of the nine criteria for designation outlined in Ontario Regulation 9/06 for designation under Part IV of the OHA. Staff

recommend that Council issue a Notice of Intention to Designate the property under Part IV of the OHA.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR

Councillor Johnson is aware of the recommendations associated with this report and provided the following commentary:

I am extremely supportive of the designation of 2027 Robertson Road under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. As one of the oldest buildings in Bells Corners, it is closely related to the early settlement of the area and is a testament to the prominent role Bells Corners has played for centuries. This building is prominently located along the commercial district and is well-known by many. I am delighted that this designation will help protect this building for future generations.

CONSULTATION

The property owner was mailed a letter regarding the upcoming staff report and the proposed designations of their properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* on April 28, 2025. A second letter was mailed on May 20, 2025. Both letters offered the owner the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss the proposed designation and answer any questions the property owner may have.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The designation of this property under the *Ontario Heritage Act* does not impact physical fabric of the building. While alterations to designated properties, including renovations to remove barriers for people with disabilities, require a heritage permit, the fees for these permits are waived and staff work with property owners to allow for accessibility retrofits.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications for this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications for this report.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 1995 Notice of Intention to Designate

Document 3 Photos

Document 4 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Document 5 Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Document 6 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

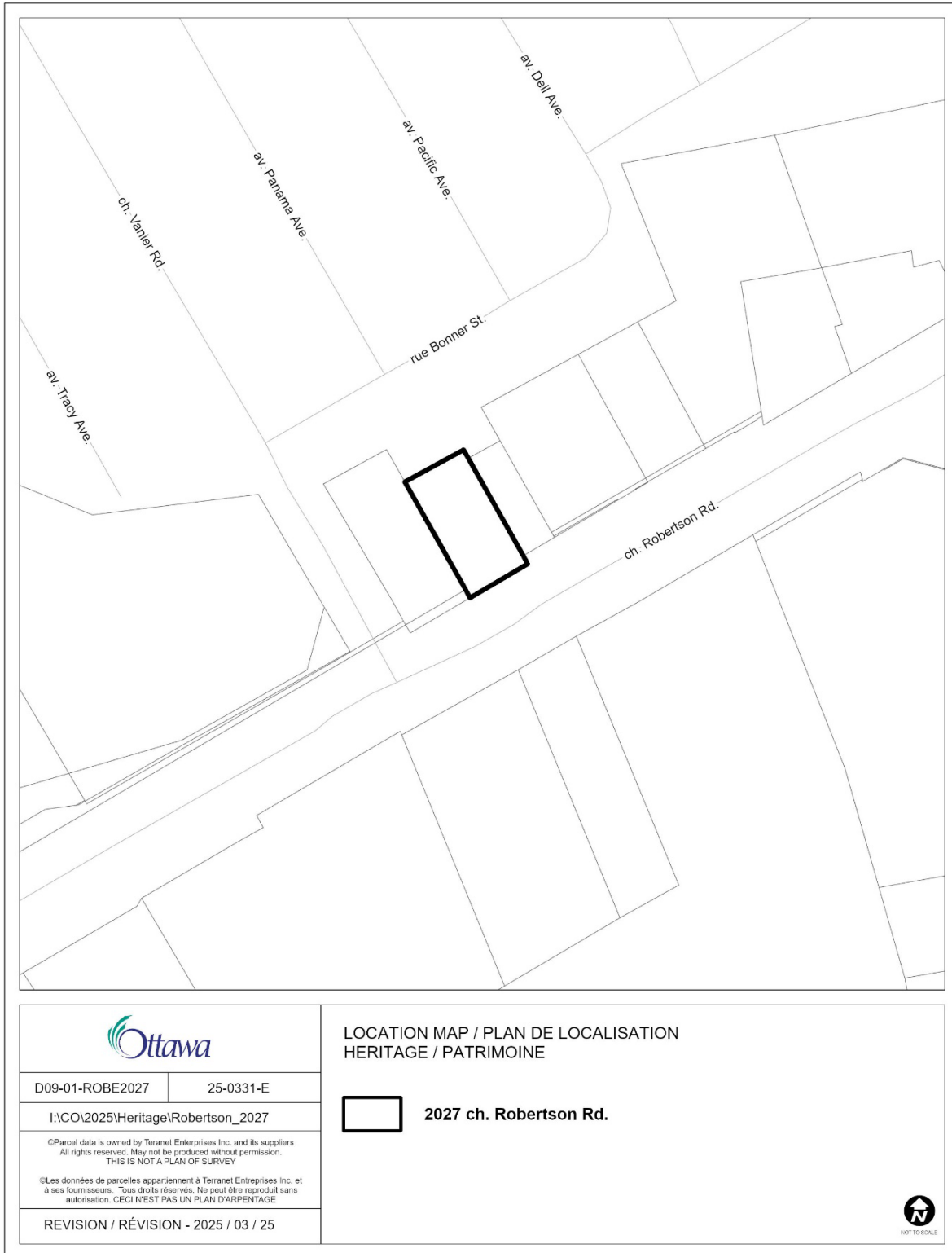
DISPOSITION

If Council does not carry the recommendation, no further steps are required. If Council proceeds with the issuance of a Notice of Intention to Designate for the property located at 2027 Robertson Road, several actions must be taken:

- 1) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building Services Development Department, to prepare the Notice of Intention to Designate. Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust (10 Adelaide Street East, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1J3) of Council's decision to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate the property at 2027 Robertson Road under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 2) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Buildings Services Department to ensure publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate according to the requirements of Section 29 the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 3) If the City Clerk receives a Notice of Objection under Section 29(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within thirty days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate, the Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building Services Department is to prepare a report regarding the objection for consideration by Council within 90 days after conclusion of the objection period, according to Section 29 (6) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

- 4) If the City Clerk does not receive any Notice of Objection under Section 29 (5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within thirty days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate, or if City Council decides not to withdraw the notice of intention to designate the property after an objection has been served, the Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building Services Department is to prepare the designation by-law, under the authority of the approval of this report and Legal Services to submit to City Council for enactment within 120 days of the publication of the Notice of Intention to Designate as prescribed in Section 29(8) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 5) Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services to cause a copy of the by-law together with a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property, to be served on the owner of the property and on the Trust according to the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building Services Department to ensure publication of the notice of the by-law in the newspaper according to the requirements Section 29(8)(4) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Document 1 Location Map



Document 2

1995 Notice of Intention to Designate

RM of Nepean
 IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT 1974
 S.O. CHAPTER 122

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES
 AT THE FOLLOWING MUNICIPAL ADDRESS
 IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

MAR 29 1995

TO: The Ontario Heritage Foundation
 77 Bloor Street West
 Toronto, Ontario
 M7A 2R9

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the City of Nepean intends to designate the property, including lands and structures, at the following municipal addresses as properties of architectural and historical value and interest under Part IV of The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974, S.O. Chapter 122.

- ✓ 1. Drummond Presbyterian Church
 27 Robertson Road
 City of Nepean
- ✓ 2. Wallace Farm House
 5519 Richmond Road
 City of Nepean


The designations are to include the exterior of the original buildings, including but not limited to walls, doors, windows, roof and trim as well as the real property associated with each of the buildings.

REASONS FOR PROPOSED DESIGNATIONS

1. The Drummond Presbyterian Church is important for both historical and architectural reasons. Built in 1896 of quarried limestone in a Gothic Revival style, the church occupies a prominent location in the heart of the Belts Corners commercial area. Many former ministers and congregation members had significant historical connections to Nepean including the Moodies, Stinsons, Gourlays, Belts, Arnolds and Gambles.
2. The Wallace Farm House is important for both historical and architectural reasons. The house was built in the 19th century of quarried limestone and rubblestone, and the Wallace family name is important historically for contributions to the agricultural industry and for the naming of Fallowfield Village.

Any person may, within thirty days of the first publication of this notice, send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the City of Nepean, notice of his or her objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. If a Notice of Objection is received, the Council of the City of Nepean will refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

DATED at the City of Nepean this 20th day of March, 1995.


 Eric Gossler, Deputy City Clerk
 The Centrepoin'te Drive
 Nepean, Ontario
 K2G 6K7



Document 3 Photos

All photos taken by City of Ottawa Staff in March, 2025



Front (south) elevation of property



East elevation of property



West elevation of property, front detail



West elevation of property, rear detail



South-east view of property from Robertson Road

Document 4 Ontario Regulation 9/06

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

Consolidation Period: From January 1, 2023 to the [e-Laws currency date](#).

Last amendment: [569/22](#).

This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.

Criteria, s. 27 (3) (b) of the Act

1. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 27 (3) (b) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Property that has not been designated under Part IV of the Act may be included in the register referred to in subsection 27 (1) of the Act on and after the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force if the property meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) For clarity, subsection (2) does not apply in respect of a property that has not been designated under Part IV but was included in the register as of the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Criteria, s. 29 (1) (a) of the Act

2. (1) The criteria set out in subsections (2) and (3) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 29 (1) (a) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Section 1, as it read immediately before the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force, continues to apply in respect of a property for which a notice of intention to designate it was given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the Act after January 24, 2006 and before the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) In respect of a property for which a notice of intention to designate it is given under subsection 29 (1.1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 3 (2) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force, the property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest set out in paragraphs 1 to 9 of subsection 1 (2). O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Criteria, s. 41 (1) (b) of the Act

3. (1) The criteria set out in subsection (2) are prescribed for the purposes of clause 41 (1) (b) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), in the case of a by-law passed under subsection 41 (1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force, a municipality or any defined area or areas of it may be designated by such a by-law as a heritage conservation district under subsection 41 (1) of the Act if the municipality or the defined area or areas of it meets the following criteria:

1. At least 25 per cent of the properties within the municipality or defined area or areas satisfy two or more of the following:

- i. The properties have design value or physical value because they are rare, unique, representative or early examples of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
- ii. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
- iii. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
- iv. The properties have historical value or associative value because they have a direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
- v. The properties have historical value or associative value because they yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
- vi. The properties have historical value or associative value because they demonstrate or reflect the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
- vii. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain or support the character of the district.
- viii. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to each other.
- ix. The properties have contextual value because they are defined by, planned around or are themselves a landmark. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply in respect of a by-law passed under subsection 41 (1) of the Act on or after the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force if a notice of a public meeting required to be held for the purposes of the by-law under subsection 41.1 (7) of the Act was given before the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

(4) For clarity, the requirement set out in subsection 41.1 (5.1) of the Act,

(a) does not apply in respect of a by-law under subsection 41 (1) of the Act that is passed before the day subsection 5 (1) of Schedule 6 to the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* comes into force; and

(b) does not apply in respect of a by-law under subsection 41.1 (2) of the Act. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

Document 5 Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Address: 2027 Robertson Road, Drummond Presbyterian Church

Date: January 2025

Prepared by: Heritage Planning Staff



2027 Robertson Road. City of Ottawa, January 2025.

Executive Summary

The former Drummond Presbyterian Church at 2027 Robertson Road is a two-storey stone building located in Bells Corners in west Ottawa. Built in 1898, it was the first church built by and for the Presbyterian congregation in Bells Corners. Constructed with local limestone and featuring pointed arch windows, the building is an example of the vernacular Gothic Revival churches found across rural villages in Ontario in the late 19th century. From 1925 until 1972, the building was home to Bells Corners United Church, and to the Elim Pentecostal Church from 1972 to 1979. The church was converted for commercial uses in 1979.

2027 Robertson Road holds historical, architectural, and contextual significance as one of the oldest buildings in Bells Corners. The property meets three of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Introduction

2027 Robertson Road, formerly 27 Robertson Road and 27 Highway #15, is located in Bells Corners in Ward 8. Bells Corners is a suburban community surrounded by Ottawa's western Greenbelt with a commercial area centered along Robertson Road. The property is situated on the north side of Robertson Road between Vanier Road to the west, Bonner Street to the north, and Old Richmond Road to the east.



The property boundaries outlined in red (left). Right: aerial image showing the property's location within Bells Corners. GeoOttawa.

Criterion 1

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

Yes

Response to Criterion

2027 Robertson Road has design value as a representative example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture in a religious building in Ottawa. Adopted by many rural churches across Ontario in the 19th century, the style is characterized by stone or brick buildings with an emphasis on English medieval design elements and are typically constructed with locally available materials. The Gothic Revival style is articulated in the building at 2027 Robertson Road through its rough-cut limestone construction material, pointed arch windows, stained glass window, and steep gabled roofline.

Supporting Details – Criterion 1

Architectural Analysis and Overview

2027 Robertson Road is a two-storey stone building originally constructed in 1898 as Drummond Presbyterian Church. It was built with rough-cut local limestone laid in uneven courses, which was salvaged from the earlier demolished Union Church on Old Richmond Road. The building includes two modern additions at the north (rear) and east elevations.

The original building has a rectangular plan and a steep gabled roof. It has a symmetrical principal façade facing Robertson Road and a prominent front vestibule with a flat roof and pointed arch windows on either side of the vestibule on the front façade. The front

door has a pointed arch opening obscured underneath a modern canopy attached at the vestibule.

Typical of Gothic Revival churches, the building features lancet windows in wood frames on the south (front), east, and west façades with stone voussoirs and sills. On the front façade, above the vestibule, is a small circular stained-glass window in a wood frame surrounded by a decorative stone feature.



Front (south) façade. City of Ottawa, January 2025.



Stained glass rose window on front (south) façade. City of Ottawa, January



West elevation. City of Ottawa, January 2025.

Architectural Style Description and Canadian Context

Gothic Revival architecture in Canada reflects a rekindling of interest in the medieval English Gothic style. The Gothic Revival movement began in England in the 1740s and was widespread in Canada through the 19th century. It was highly popular in Ontario where it became the most common architectural style for churches. The emergence of

Gothic Revival coincided with Ontario's early settlement by Europeans and was at the height of its popularity as many of its towns and cities began to boom.¹

Not to be confused with Neo-Gothic, a later 20th century medieval revival style mostly used for large institutional and religious buildings, Gothic Revival is a direct vernacular translation of medieval details and building practices to the Ontario climate.² Vernacular architecture refers to buildings constructed with locally available materials with a focus on the local community and environment. Vernacular buildings typically did not have an architect and were often built by community members or local contractors.



Tweedsmuir Memorial Presbyterian Church, Orangeville, ON.



St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Prospect, ON.

Gothic Revival buildings share a similar overall form with Georgian Revival and Neoclassical buildings and are often distinguished solely by their “add-on” Gothic-inspired details, such as bargeboards, dormers, and gable roofs. The most common and often singular feature that distinguishes buildings as Gothic Revival is the pointed arch, or lancet window.³

Architecture Style Locally

There are several local examples of 19th century vernacular Gothic Revival religious buildings in Ottawa, including the Munster Branch of the Ottawa Public Library at 7749 Bleeks Road (originally built as St. Stephen's Anglican Church in 1886) St. John's Anglican Church at 325 Sandhill Road (built in 1839), Trinity United Church at 6656 Rideau Valley Drive (built in 1894), and All Saints Anglican Church at 347 Richmond Road (built in 1865).

These buildings are modest in size and simple in design and form and feature distinctive Gothic Revival elements including pointed arch windows, rough-cut stone construction material, and steeply pitched gable roofs.



Munster Branch, Ottawa Public Library
(originally St. Stephen's Anglican Church),



St. John's Anglican Church, built 1839.



Trinity United Church, built 1894.



All Saints Anglican Church, built 1865.

Relation of Building to Style

Built in 1898, the former Drummond Presbyterian Church at 2027 Robertson Road is a representative example of the vernacular Gothic Revival religious buildings found in rural villages in Ontario in the 19th century. Characteristic of the style, it is a simple purpose-built church building constructed of stone, featuring a rectangular plan, pointed arch windows with stone voussoirs and sills, a stained glass window, and a gabled roof.

The features that characterize the building as a vernacular building in the rural context include its modest size and its locally sourced limestone construction material. There is no known architect attributed to its design. The church was built by Ottawa-based contractors George A. Crain (masonry) and Richmond-based Brown Bros. (woodwork) for a total cost of \$2,500. Crain used stone salvaged from the demolished Union Church in Bells Corners (c. 1853), which the Presbyterians had originally shared with the Methodists and Anglicans from 1853 until 1898.

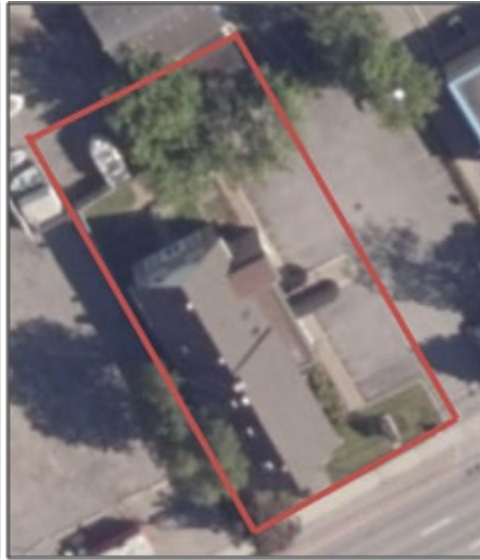
Alterations

Despite its conversion from religious to commercial use and some alterations and additions, the building maintains its original form, massing, and Gothic Revival design

elements. Interior restorations and repairs were undertaken in 1979 for its conversion into an office, which included removing the sole interior wall and pouring concrete a concrete floor.⁴ Later exterior alterations included two additions built at the rear (north) and side (east) elevations. Aerial images indicate the additions were built between 1991 and 1999.



Aerial view of the original building before additions, 1991. GeoOttawa.



Aerial view of the building in 2022, with additions. GeoOttawa.

The east side addition is clad in stucco and includes Gothic Revival-style pointed arch windows that mimic the original windows. A third original window opening on the east façade was retained and is used as an entrance into the main building from the addition. The rear addition is clad in wood with a pitched gable roof, features two pointed arch windows, and is roughly the same height and length as the original building.



Side addition on the east elevation. City of Ottawa, January 2025.



Original window opening inside east addition. City of Ottawa, January 2025.



Rear addition on the north elevation. City of Ottawa, January 2025.



Rear addition, west façade. City of Ottawa, January 2025.

Criterion 2	
The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	No
Response to Criterion Heritage staff compared the building to others of a similar age and typology and have concluded that this building exemplifies a moderate degree of craftsmanship for buildings of its type. The property does not meet this criterion.	
Criterion 3	
The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	No
Response to Criterion Heritage staff compared the building to others of similar age or typology and have concluded that this building exemplifies typical construction methods for buildings of its type. The property does not meet this criterion.	
Criterion 4	
The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution	Yes

that is significant to a community.	
<p><i>Response to Criterion</i></p> <p>The property has historical and associative value for its important role in the history and evolution of church life in Bells Corners. Purpose-built in 1898 as the Drummond Presbyterian Church, the building at 2027 Robertson Road replaced the former Union Church which stood on the same site from 1853 until 1898.</p> <p>The former Union Church was shared between the Presbyterians, the Anglicans and the Methodists. When the Anglicans and the Methodists eventually split from the union in the late 19th century, the Presbyterians built the Drummond Presbyterian Church in 1898 as their first church in Bells Corners. In 1925, Drummond Presbyterian Church became Bells Corners' first United Church through a merger with the United Church of Canada, who operated within the building until the late 1960s.</p>	

Supporting Details – Criterion 4

The site on which the 2027 Robertson Road property is located formerly comprised of a Union Church, built in 1853. Union churches referred to spaces where members from various denominations gathered as a single, interdenominational congregation, often arising in areas with low population densities out of necessity. Activities and sermons emphasized shared Christian principles and cooperative worship.⁵ In 1898, this church was demolished, and the current building was constructed, serving as a church for various denominations until 1979.

There were three major waves of church building in rural Nepean in the 19th century – in the 1840s to 1850s, in the late 1860s to early 1870s, and in the 1880s. The 1840s and 1850s saw Union churches shared by the protestant denominations open at Merivale and Bells Corners, and the agricultural prosperity of the late 1860s and early 1870s saw many of the early Union churches replaced by more elaborate single denomination buildings, often financed by a few wealthy farmers in the various congregations.⁶ A depression in the late 1870s put a temporary halt to church construction, but the late 1880s inaugurated a new era of church building.⁵

By the mid-19th century, the Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Methodists were sharing a simple log church in the village of Bells Corners. In the early 1850s, they established a committee composed of two trustees from each denomination to oversee the construction and maintenance of a more substantial church building.⁷ John Lowry and Hugh Stinson, prominent local farmers and landowners, served as the trustees of the Presbyterian congregation.⁸

Hugh Bell, a successful early settler in Bells Corners after whom the village was named, donated an acre of land on Old Richmond Road for the new Union Church and a burial ground (the present-day Bells Corners Union Cemetery).⁹ Bell and farmer John Dawson, the trustees for the Anglican congregation, were responsible for overseeing the construction of what would become the first formally organized church in Bells Corners.¹⁰ The Union Church officially opened on Old Richmond Road in 1853.

Relations between the three denominations remained amicable until Bishop Lewis, the Anglican bishop in Kingston, denounced the concept of union churches following a visit to Bells Corners in 1864. Reverend C.B. Pettit, rector of Richmond Parish, which then included Bells Corners, firmly supported the new directions that were being mapped out for Anglicanism in the diocese and convinced the local vestry to build a church of their own in Bells Corners.¹¹ In 1869, the Anglican congregation in Bells Corners officially split from the Union Church and Bishop Lewis built Christ Church on Old Richmond Road.¹²

Following the great fire of 1870 which devastated Bells Corners, the Union Church was the only building to survive, and was used as a space for refuge for families whose homes were destroyed.¹³



The original Union Church and Bells Corners Union Cemetery on Old Richmond Road. Bruce S. Elliott.

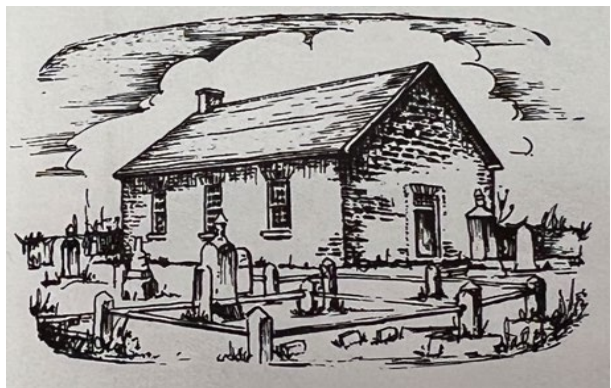


Illustration of the original Union Church on Old Richmond Road. Bruce S. Elliott

In 1898, the Presbyterians bought out the shares held by the Methodists. The former Union Church was demolished, and in its place, the Drummond Presbyterian Church was

built using some of the same stone.

The Drummond Presbyterian Church officially opened on November 20, 1898 on Arnprior Road (today known as Robertson Road), on land donated by prominent local landowner Thomas Robertson, becoming the first church built and occupied by the Presbyterians in Bells Corners.¹⁴ The church is believed to have been named “Drummond” as the Presbyterians may have hoped a wealthy local by that name would support the church financially, but no record was found to support this claim. Another historian suggests that it was named for a well-known Scottish minister and author, Henry Drummond.¹⁵

In addition to regular church services, Drummond Presbyterian Church operated a Sunday school for children run by volunteer parishioners. The church also organized several clubs and charitable organizations, including the Ladies Aid of Drummond Presbyterian Church¹⁶ and the local branch of the Women’s Home Missionary Society (W.H.M.S.), a women’s missionary group.¹⁷ Many Presbyterian families from the surrounding rural areas travelled long distances weekly on foot or by horse to Bells Corners to attend services at the location.¹⁸

Several prominent local families were associated with Drummond Presbyterian Church in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including the Robertson family who owned a significant amount of land in Bells Corners and operated a tavern on Arnprior Road (later renamed Robertson Road for their contribution to the early development of the village). Thomas Robertson had donated a portion of his land (Concession 2; Lot 11) to the Presbyterian congregation for the construction of the church in 1898.¹⁹

The Stinson family from Corkstown Road were highly involved in the daily operations of Drummond Presbyterian Church. Hugh Stinson, one of the church’s trustees, served as its secretary-treasurer for several years. His wife, Alma Stinson, was the church organist, a teacher at the Sunday school, and a leading member of W.H.M.S. alongside Mrs. T. Robertson.²⁰ Others included the Armstrongs from Eagleson Road, the Griersons from Hazeldean Road, and the Condies, Henrys, and the Plunketts from Greenbank Road.²¹

Perhaps the most significant family in the congregation were the Moodies, one of Bells Corners’ prominent early settler families, who served as the church’s caretakers through the 20th century.²² The Moodies, successful farmers and local landowners, resided near the church and would light the wood stove fire in the basement every Saturday to heat the building in time for Sunday service.²³ Douglas Aubrey Moodie, who was born in Bells Corners in 1908 and baptized at Drummond Presbyterian Church, was a lifelong active member of the congregation, volunteering as church elder for several decades while he served as reeve of Nepean Township from 1954 to 1969.²⁴ After Drummond Presbyterian Church joined the United Church in 1925, Moodie served as a trustee for the new Bells

Corners United Church.

Moodie had a very successful career in local politics and was highly influential in the development of Nepean Township during the postwar period. Known as the “Father of Nepean”, Moodie is credited with transforming rural Nepean into one of the fastest growing suburban areas in Ontario post-annexation.²⁵ Drummond Presbyterian Church is mentioned in Moodie’s 2003 memoir *The Spirit of Nepean*. According to Moodie, attending services at the church in the early 20th century was a “great opportunity to see your neighbours and exchange family news”.²⁶ Moodie described the Presbyterian community in Bells Corners as large and active, with generous members who financially supported the church.²⁷

As a church serving both local and traveling parishioners, and as a significant community hub and meeting space for several organizations and charities, the Drummond Presbyterian Church was an important resource for Bells Corners’ early Presbyterian community through the 20th century.

In 1925, the Presbyterian Church of Canada joined the United Church of Canada, and as a result, Drummond Presbyterian Church became Bells Corners United Church (BCUC).²⁸ The United Church was inaugurated in Toronto on June 10, 1925 when the Methodist Church of Canada, the Congregational Union of Canada, the Small General Council of Union Churches, and 70 per cent of the Presbyterian Church of Canada entered into a union.²⁹ The impetus was a desire to coordinate ministry in the Canadian northwest and collaborate in overseas missions. It was the first union of churches in the world to cross historical denominational lines.³⁰



Celebration of the parish's 57th anniversary at Bells Corners United Church at 2027 Robertson Road in 1955. City of Ottawa Archives.

BCUC was originally part of the Britannia, Fallowfield Charge of the United Church, and

in 1958 it became a separate charge served by supply ministers. 1960 brought a significant change – in this year, the church's first full-time ordained minister was appointed.³¹ By then, the modest 19th century building at 2027 Robertson Road had become too small to accommodate the growing congregation, and it was determined that a new larger church was needed. BCUC's new church, which they continue to occupy in the present-day, was built in 1969 at 3955 Old Richmond Road. In 1972, BCUC sold 2027 Robertson Road to the Elim Pentecostal Church who operated from the building until it was sold to lawyer Ron Faulkner in 1979 for conversion into a law office.³²

The property has historical and associative value as it illustrates the evolution of the Presbyterian Church in Bells Corners through the 20th century. Originally established by the Presbyterians as their first denominational church in Bells Corners, and later becoming the community's first United Church in 1925, the property at 2027 Robertson Road had served the Presbyterian community at its location for nearly 75 years.

<i>Criterion 5</i>	
The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	No
<i>Response to Criterion</i> Based on research conducted by Heritage Staff, the property does not yield information that contributes to the understanding of a community or culture. The property does not meet this criterion.	
<i>Criterion 6</i>	
The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	No
<i>Response to Criterion</i> The building has no known architect. It was constructed by Ottawa-based building contractor George A. Crain; however, no records were found of Crain's plans for the building. Because of limited historical evidence pertaining to Crain's involvement in the design and construction, the property does not meet this criteria.	

<i>Criterion 7</i>	
The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	No
<i>Response to Criterion</i> <p>The property is located in Bells Corners, an area of mixed character with a commercial strip on Robertson Road. Since the 1980s, most historic properties and farmlands facing Robertson Road had been replaced with new commercial, industrial, and institutional development, with the exception of the former Drummond Presbyterian Church and the Hartin Hotel building at 1993 Richmond Road. As one of the oldest properties in the area, featuring Gothic Revival architecture, the property does not support the character of the area. The property does not meet this criteria.</p>	
<i>Criterion 8</i>	
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	Yes
<i>Response to Criterion</i> <p>The former Drummond Presbyterian Church is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings by its important location in the center of Bells Corners on the main road used by visiting parishioners and travelers on route to Ottawa in the early 20th century. By the 1960s, the building was too small to continue serving the growing congregation as a church. Already occupying a prominent and lucrative location on an increasingly busy commercial corridor, the church was adapted in the 1970s to serve business functions instead. In its adaptability, the building continues to play an important role in the community at its location on Robertson Road.</p> <p>2027 Robertson Road has contextual value for its unique role in maintaining the historic rural village character of Bells Corners. Until the 1950s, Bells Corners was a small rural community with a strong agricultural presence. It is now a residential, commercial, and industrial area anchored by a commercial strip on Robertson Road; however, it still retains much of its original rural characteristics. Despite significant development in its surroundings, the building maintains a high degree of integrity and is reflective of 19th</p>	

century vernacular architecture in the area, demonstrating how the rural farming village of Bells Corners has evolved and progressed over the last century. Converted for business uses in the 1970s, the building also contributes to supporting the evolving contemporary commercial character of Robertson Road.

Supporting Details – Criterion 8

The property maintains a strong physical, functional, and historical relationship with its surroundings. Built in 1898 on the main road between Goulbourn and Ottawa, which was historically lined with commercial establishments, taverns, and hotels, Drummond Presbyterian Church was well situated to accommodate its congregation which included several families who travelled to Bells Corners every week for services.

Bells Corners was strategically built up at the midway point between Richmond and Bytown (now Ottawa). Its two main roads, Robertson Road and Richmond Road, offered advantageous commercial opportunities in the early 19th century. Established in 1833 as Arnprior Road, the opening of what is now called Robertson Road created a prominent intersection at Richmond Road, one of the oldest roads in Ottawa and one of the busiest in the region, providing a lucrative location for businesses catered to travelers.

Robertson Road soon became a busy concession road dotted with pubs, hotels, and taverns by the mid-19th century, earning it the nickname of “Whiskey Road” among travelers.³³ Several early settlers in Bells Corners operated hotels and taverns on this strip, including Hugh Bell, Robert Moodie, and David Hartin.³⁴ In 1850, Bells Corners became part of Nepean Township and it flourished into a commercial hub for the outlying rural areas, having grown substantially to include several new establishments, including shoe shops, blacksmiths, and a tailor.³⁵

The Great Fire of 1870 destroyed most of Bells Corners’ early buildings. The only four buildings to survive were Mrs. Bell’s house, a schoolhouse, and two stone churches on Old Richmond Road – the former Union Church and Christ Church – which have since all been demolished.³⁶ As the area was rebuilt after the fire, Bells Corners remained mostly rural but continued to function as a service centre for the local area and as a stopping place for travelers until the temperance movement closed the hotels in the early 20th century.³⁷

Bells corners was a small but significant village at the time of the building’s construction in 1898, home to farms, inns, and businesses catering to stagecoach and foot traffic. Churches were often built in such locations to serve growing rural communities that developed along key transportation routes. A church in this setting would have served as a spiritual, social, and communal anchor for early settlers and visitors, reinforcing the role of Bells Corners as a local service center in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

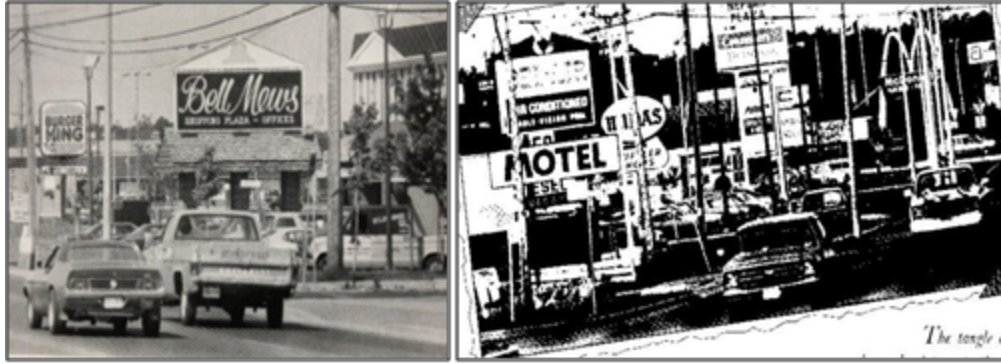
As one of the neighbourhood's oldest remaining buildings, 2027 Robertson Road maintains the historic rural village character of Bells Corners, reflecting the early vernacular building stock in this area through its Gothic Revival design and local stone construction material.

The Hartin Hotel building, constructed in 1870 shortly after the fire to serve travelers on route to Ottawa, is currently located just east of the subject property in a prominent location at the intersection with Robertson Road. The former Drummond Presbyterian Church and the Hartin Hotel are the oldest in Bells Corners and the only remaining 19th century limestone structures on this stretch of Robertson Road. The location for the Presbyterians' new church would have been chosen for its prominence on an important regional road in the heart of Bells Corners, placing it at the center of community life during a period when religion played a major role in daily existence. Its visible and accessible location would have reinforced its role as a community gathering space for both local residents and travelers and ensured that both local and visiting parishioners could attend services.



Bells Corners' two oldest buildings. Left: the former Hartin Hotel (c. 1870) at 1993 Richmond Road at the intersection with Robertson Road. Right: the former Drummond Presbyterian Church at 2027 Robertson Road. City of Ottawa, 2014; 2025.

The decades following the Second World War saw several new residential subdivisions built in Bells Corners, encouraging commercial development along Robertson Road to serve the growing population.³⁸ By the 1980s, most historic properties and farmlands facing Robertson Road had been replaced with new commercial, industrial, and institutional development, except for the former Drummond Presbyterian Church and the Hartin Hotel building at 1993 Richmond Road.



Robertson Road in the 1980s. City of Ottawa Archives.

As Bells Corners urbanized and commercialized over time, the small church could no longer meet the needs of the growing congregation. Its existing location offered a lucrative opportunity for a business, and it was converted in 1979 to serve a new, and increasingly important, purpose on Robertson Road. Occupying the same location since its construction, the former church serves as a link to Bells Corners' early history, reflecting the changing settlement patterns and priorities of the community through the 20th and 21st centuries.

Criterion 9

The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

No

Response to Criterion

The property contains features 19th century Gothic Revival elements, a recognizable form as a former church, local stone construction material, and a shallow setback from a major road. However, due to its small size and its location on a busy street with a mixed character, the property is not considered a landmark.

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Document 6 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Description of Property

2027 Robertson Road contains a two-storey stone building constructed in 1898 as the Drummond Presbyterian Church. The property is located in Bells Corners in west Ottawa on the north side of Robertson Road, between Vanier Road and Old Richmond Road.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The former Drummond Presbyterian Church, 2027 Robertson Road has design value as a representative example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture in a religious building in Ottawa. Adopted by many rural churches across Ontario in the 19th century, the style is characterized by stone or brick buildings with an emphasis on traditional English medieval design elements and are typically constructed with locally available materials. The building was constructed in 1898 by Ottawa-based contractor George A. Crain using local limestone salvaged from the demolished Union Church in Bells Corners (c. 1853-1898). The Gothic Revival style is articulated in the building at 2027 Robertson Road through its rough-cut local limestone cladding, pointed arched windows, stained glass window, and steep gabled roofline.

The property has historical and associative value for its important role in the history and evolution of church life in Bells Corners. Purpose-built in 1898 as the Drummond Presbyterian Church, the building at 2027 Robertson Road replaced the former Union Church which stood on the same site from 1853 until 1898. The former Union Church was shared between the Presbyterians, the Anglicans and the Methodists. When the Anglicans and the Methodists eventually split from the union in the late 19th century, the Presbyterians built the Drummond Presbyterian Church in 1898 as their first church in Bells Corners. In 1925, Drummond Presbyterian Church became Bells Corners' first United Church through a merger with the United Church of Canada, who operated within the building until the late 1960s.

The former Drummond Presbyterian Church is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings by its important location in the center of Bells Corners on the main road used by visiting parishioners and travelers on route to Ottawa in the early 20th century. By the 1960s, the building was too small to continue serving the growing congregation as a church. Already occupying a prominent location on an increasingly busy commercial corridor, the church was adapted in the 1970s to serve as a commercial building.

2027 Robertson Road has contextual value for its unique role in maintaining the historic rural village character of Bells Corners. Until the 1950s, Bells Corners was a small rural community with a strong agricultural presence. Despite significant development in its

surroundings, the building is reflective of 19th century vernacular architecture in the area and serves as a reminder of the former rural character of Bells Corners.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that contribute to the heritage value of 2027 Robertson Road as a representative example of a Gothic Revival building include its:

- Two storey massing and rectangular plan
- Steep pitched front gable roof
- Rough-cut limestone cladding laid in uneven courses
- Pointed arched windows in wooden frames
- Stone voussoirs and sills
- Protruding front vestibule on south elevation with pointed arched wooden door frame
- Circular stained glass window in wooden frame surrounded by decorative stone feature
- Stone foundation

The interior of the building, the side (east) and rear (north) additions, and any outbuildings, are excluded in this designation.