

**Subject: Designation of the Former Royal Canadian Air Force Officers' Mess,
158 Gloucester Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act***

File Number: ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0039

**Report to Built Heritage Committee on September 9, 2025
and Council September 24, 2025**

**Submitted on August 28, 2025 by Court Curry, Manager, Right of Way, Heritage,
and Urban Design Services, Planning, Development and Building Services**

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Ward: Somerset (14)

**Objet : Désignation de l'ancien mess des officiers de l'Aviation royale
canadienne (Royal Canadian Air Force Officers' Mess), au 158, rue
Gloucester, en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de
l'Ontario***

Dossier : ACS2025-PDB-RHU-0039

Rapport au Comité du patrimoine bâti

le 9 septembre 2025

et au Conseil le 24 septembre 2025

**Soumis le 28 août 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**

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Quartier : Somerset (14)

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Built Heritage Committee recommend that Council issue a Notice of Intention to Designate 158 Gloucester Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* according to the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value attached as Document 4.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Conseil municipal de publier un avis d'intention de désigner la propriété située au 158, rue Gloucester, en vertu de la partie IV de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, conformément à la déclaration de la valeur sur le plan du patrimoine culturel ci-jointe (document 4).

BACKGROUND

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

The property located at 158 Gloucester Street contains a three-storey brick building constructed in 1919. The building was constructed and first used as the primary meeting hall for the Orange Order in Ottawa and is best known for its use as an Officers' Mess for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) beginning circa 1943. The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative, historical, and contextual values. It meets six of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the OHA.

This property was listed on the City's Heritage Register in 2020. 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.

The property is owned by the Department of National Defence. It is currently vacant and is being considered for disposal by the Government of Canada. While the Government of Canada is not required to follow the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the requirements of the OHA will apply to a potential future non-governmental owner.

DISCUSSION

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)

Section 4.6 of the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) includes the following policy regarding the conservation of cultural 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 set out above, direct the designation of significant properties and comply with this policy.

Should City Council designate the subject property it would be considered a “protected heritage property” for the purposes of the PPS 2024. The PPS includes the following policy related to protected heritage property:

- 4.6(1) *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 4 contains the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for this property.

Ontario Regulation 9/06

Regulation 9/06 (see Document 3) 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 158 Gloucester Street meets six 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:

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has design value as it is a rare example of an early twentieth century fraternal hall building with elements of Edwardian Classicism in Ottawa. The more streamlined style exemplified by 158 Gloucester Street was a departure from the classical styles used in the nineteenth century in Ottawa. The building features a relatively flat façade, simple lintels, and emphasis on vertical elements. It also incorporates elements of Edwardian Classicism, such as its two modest colonettes and voussoir above the third-storey central window. Purpose built as an Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street is a stately structure with high-clearance storeys, and demonstrates architectural similarities to other halls constructed for fraternal organizations in the early twentieth century.

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 at 158 Gloucester Street is associated with the theme of fraternity in twentieth century Canada. Constructed as an Orange Hall, it is directly associated with the Orange Order, an organization that played a significant role in the political landscape of Ottawa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Further, the property has historical value because it has direct associations with Canada's military history and the role of the military mess. This location was used as an officers' mess during a lengthy and significant period of the RCAF's history, and the building is best known as an officers' mess today.

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:

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the history of women's service in the RCAF. The use of 158 Gloucester Street as an Officers' Mess began at a time of significant advancement for women's service in Canada's military and coincides with changing attitudes towards gender in the Canadian military.

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:

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has historical value as it demonstrates the work of Robert Holmes, a designer and builder significant to Centretown and responsible for several notable buildings in Ottawa in the early twentieth century. In addition to 158 Gloucester Street, Holmes designed several residences in Ottawa, as well as the mixed-use building at 200–206 Sparks Street. Holmes also played key roles as foreman on major public buildings, including the Connaught Building at 555 Mackenzie Avenue and the Murphy-Gamble Building at 118 Sparks Street. Although his obituary credits him with designing 397 Kent Street (now the Centretown Mosque), evidence suggests he likely served as the construction manager rather than the architect.

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is important in supporting the character of a transitional area in Centretown. The building is located within an area between the largely high-rise office character to the north, and older, low-rise residential character to the south. Many of the buildings within the transitional area and south of Gloucester were constructed between the late nineteenth to the early to mid-twentieth centuries, and the buildings demonstrate popular architectural styles from these periods, including Edwardian Classicism, Italianate, and early Modernist styles. The building at 158 Gloucester Street fits within the established character of this area within Centretown.

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

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has contextual value as it is physically linked to its surroundings. The building is also functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. Its association with headquarters, first for the Orange Order in Ottawa, and later as the Officers' Mess for the RCAF Headquarters, is linked to the cultural heritage of Centretown. Its location provided access to Parliament Hill and other political institutions, of which many Orange Order leaders were involved with, along with access for parades on ceremonial streets such as Elgin and Wellington. During its time as an

Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street provided space for meetings and events held by non-affiliated community organizations that drew from the residential areas in Centretown

Conclusion

The property at 158 Gloucester Street meets six 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 recommendation.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR

The Ward Councillor is aware of the recommendations in the report.

CONSULTATION

The property owner was notified of the proposed designation by letter on July 29, 2025. The letter included information about the designation process, instructions on how to participate and an offer to meet with staff to discuss and answer any questions. Staff received a response letter from the Department of National Defence (DND) on August 11, 2025 which notes that DND does not support the proposed designation of this property.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The designation of these properties under the *Ontario Heritage Act* does not impact the physical fabric of the buildings. 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 resulting from the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 Photos

Document 3 Ontario Regulation 9/06

Document 4 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Document 5 Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

DISPOSITION

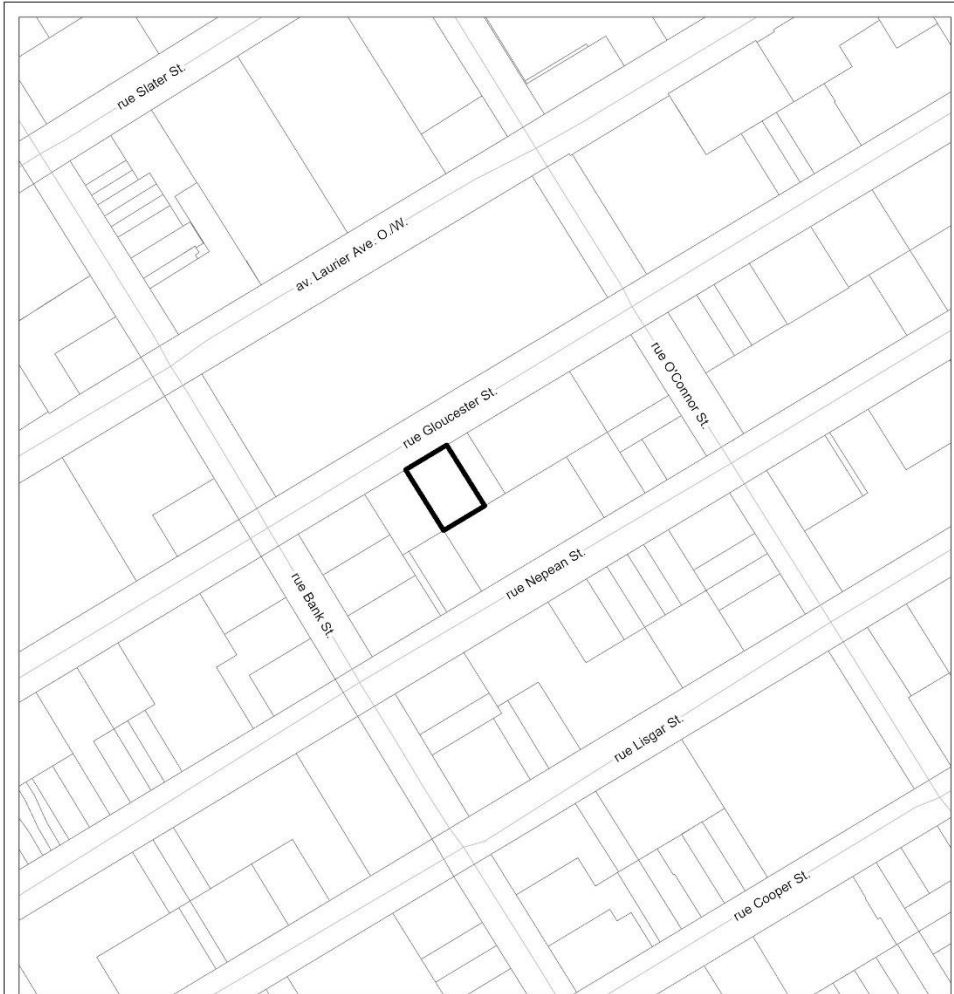
If Council does not carry the recommendation, no further steps are required. If Council proceeds with the issuance of a Notice of Intention to Designate for the property located at 158 Gloucester Street, several actions must be taken:


- 1) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building Services 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 158 Gloucester Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 2) Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Development and Building 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



	
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REVISION / RÉVISION - 2025 / 08 / 05	

LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION
HERITAGE / PATRIMOINE

 **158 rue. Gloucester St.**



Document 2 - Photos



Front façade



North and west façades



North and west façades (detail)



East façade (partially obstructed by 150 Gloucester Street)

Document 3 – 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:

2. 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.
3. The properties have design value or physical value because they display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
4. The properties have design value or physical value because they demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The properties have contextual value because they define, maintain or support the character of the district.
9. The properties have contextual value because they are physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to each other.
10. 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 4 – Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Description of Property

The former Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Officers' Mess at 158 Gloucester Street is a three-storey, brick building constructed in 1919. The building is located on the south side of Gloucester Street between Bank Street and O'Connor Street within Centretown, Ottawa.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property at 158 Gloucester has design value as a rare example of an early twentieth century fraternal hall building with elements of Edwardian Classicism in Ottawa. The vernacular streamlined architectural style exemplified by 158 Gloucester Street was a departure from the classical styles used in the nineteenth century in Ottawa. The building features a relatively flat façade and emphasis on vertical elements. Elements typical of Edwardian Classicism include its brick pilasters with stone capitals, and voussoir above the third-storey central window and the distinct triangular pediment. Originally constructed as an Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street demonstrates architectural similarities to other buildings constructed for fraternal organizations in the early twentieth century in Ottawa and across Canada.

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is associated with the theme of fraternity in twentieth century Canada. Constructed in 1919 as an Orange Hall, it is directly associated with the Orange Order, a Protestant fraternal organization that played a significant role in the political landscape of Ottawa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The property also has direct associations with the Royal Canadian Air Force, serving as an officer's mess from 1943 until 2022. The military mess is a significant institution in Canadian military history dating to the mid-eighteenth century. The mess provided a place for dining and socialization with members of the same rank. The building is best known as an officers' mess today.

The property has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of the history of women's service in the Canadian military. The RCAF was the first service to establish a women's division during the Second World War. Beginning in 1943, after pushback from service women such as Wilhelmina Walker, commanding officer of the Women's Division, women were permitted to participate in mess activities alongside their male counterparts. The use of 158 Gloucester Street as an Officers' Mess began at a time of significant advancement for women's service in Canada's military and coincides with changing attitudes towards gender in the Canadian military.

Built by Robert Holmes, 158 Gloucester Street demonstrates the work of a designer

who is significant to Centretown's architectural history. Holmes, a long-time resident of Centretown, and a designer and prolific contractor, was responsible for or played a role in the construction of several notable buildings in Ottawa in the early twentieth century.

This building at 158 Gloucester Street supports the character of a transitional area in Centretown. The building is located within an area between the largely high-rise office character to the north, and older, low-rise residential character to the south. The building defines the character of the area as one of many buildings in the area constructed between the late nineteenth to the early to mid-twentieth centuries that demonstrate popular architectural styles from these periods, including Edwardian Classicism, Italianate, and early Modernist styles.

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings. Its association with headquarters, first for the Orange Order in Ottawa, and later as the Officers' Mess for the RCAF Headquarters, is linked to the cultural heritage of Centretown. Its location provided access to Parliament and other political institutions, of which many Orange Order leaders were involved with, along with access for parades on ceremonial streets such as Elgin and Wellington.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the former RCAF Officers' Mess as a representative example of an early twentieth century institutional building with elements of Edwardian Classicism include:

- Three-storey height and three bay façade
- Buff brick cladding
- Rectangular window openings with decorative lintels
- Brick pilasters with simple stone capitals
- Red granite foundation and stone accents
- Upper central palladian window with modest colonettes and voussoirs
- Triangular pediment and flat roofline
- Moulded granite pilaster caps, cornices, and coping

Key attributes that demonstrate its contextual value include:

- Brick "RCAF ARC" lettering on the vestibule façade
- Metal RCAF lettering on the vestibule staircase baluster

The interior of the building and any additions or outbuildings are excluded from this designation.

Document 5 – Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Ontario Regulation 9/06 Assessment

158 Gloucester Street

Date: July 2025

Prepared by: Heritage Staff



(Source: City of Ottawa, 2018)

Executive Summary

The property at 158 Gloucester, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Officers' Mess, is a three-storey brick building with a basement and red granite foundation located in Centretown. 158 Gloucester Street was constructed in 1919 by Robert Holmes (c. 1863-1927), a prolific contractor and designer based in Ottawa. The building was first used as the headquarters for the Orange Order in Ottawa, before being leased to the federal government and used as the Officers' Mess for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) headquarters beginning circa 1943. The building has design value as a rare example of an early twentieth century fraternal hall building with influences of Edwardian Classicism

in Ottawa. The property at 158 Gloucester Street also has historical and associative value due to its role as an Orange Hall, as a military mess, and its history as it relates to the role of fraternal organizations in Ottawa's history and to the role of women in the RCAF. Finally, 158 Gloucester Street also has contextual value as it is physically and historically linked to its surroundings in Centretown as a transitional area between the primarily high-rise office area north of Gloucester and the primarily low-rise residential area to the south.

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values. It meets six of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Introduction

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is a three-storey brick building with a basement and red granite foundation, constructed in 1919 and designed by Robert Holmes. 158 Gloucester Street is located in Centretown, east of Bank Street and west of O'Connor Street.

<i>Criterion 1</i>	
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
<i>Response to Criterion</i>	
<p>The property at 158 Gloucester Street has design value as a rare example of an early twentieth century fraternal hall building with influences of the Edwardian Classicism in Ottawa. The more streamlined style exemplified by 158 Gloucester Street was a departure from the classical styles used in the nineteenth century in Ottawa. The building features a relatively flat façade and emphasis on vertical elements. Elements typical of Edwardian Classicism include its brick pilasters with stone capitals, and voussoir above the third-storey central window and the distinct triangular pediment. Purpose built as an Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street is a stately structure with high-clearance storeys, and demonstrates architectural similarities to other buildings constructed for fraternal organizations in the early twentieth century.</p>	

Supporting Details – Criterion 1

The property at 158 Gloucester Street was constructed in 1919 and has design value as a good example of an early twentieth century Orange Hal with influences of Edwardian Classicism in Ottawa. The property at 158 Gloucester Street is a three-storey brick

building with a basement and red granite foundation. The building features large windows with decorative lintels, as well as a modest cornice at the roofline. The façade includes stone columns and arches, along with moulded granite pilaster caps, cornices, and coping.¹ Emphasis is drawn to the upper central palladian window, which is reinforced brick pilasters with stone capitals, and voussoir above the third-storey central window. Although 158 Gloucester Street is only three storeys in height, it is an imposing and stately structure with high ceilings, standing much taller than the three-storey building to its east, 152 Gloucester, and is nearly as tall as the eight-storey building to its west, 170 Gloucester.

The building retains a high degree of integrity. Several major interior modifications have occurred since the building's construction; however, exterior modifications have been limited to small storage additions in the sideyard (c. 1945 and 1996), and the addition of a new entrance, steps, and fire escape (c. 1959-1961).



158 Gloucester Street. (Source: City of Ottawa, 1995.)

Masonic and Fraternal Organization Hall

¹ The Ottawa Journal, "Many Attend Orange Hall Stone Laying." October 11, 1919, Page 2.

The property at 158 Gloucester Street demonstrates architectural elements common to Orange and other fraternal organizations' halls in the early twentieth century.

Architecturally, halls for fraternal organizations often included some similarities. For example, Masonic Temples in Ontario, Canada, and around the world vary in size and architectural expression but commonly feature symmetrical façades with classical elements, symbolizing the organization's historic and cultural origins in stonemasonry and its teachings related to classical orders of architecture.² This was also notable in the Ottawa Masonic Temple, which operated on Metcalfe Street from approximately 1912 to 1975 and was designed by architect J.A Ewart. The Metcalfe Street Temple was demolished circa 1976.



Front façade of 430 Churchill North, looking west. (Source: City of Ottawa, 2023)

Fraternal halls have been considered a distinct architectural typology in Ontario by historians. During the nineteenth century, meeting halls proliferated across Ontario's settlements. These halls were often simple, utilitarian structures. As Ontario urbanized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, larger, elaborate, and multi-storey halls were constructed.³

² J. S. Curl, "Freemasonry and Architecture," in *Handbook of Freemasonry*, ed. Henrik Bogdan and Jan A. M. Snoek (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 557–605.

³ Thomas McIlwraith, *Looking for Old Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 156–158.

The Orange Hall at 175 James Street in Hamilton, constructed in 1905, is another example of an early twentieth century hall with elements of Edwardian Classicism.⁴ The building was constructed a retail space at grade. The Orange Hall at 216 Princess Street in Winnipeg was constructed in 1903, and though it was designed with a primarily Classical Revival style, it contains some similarities with 158 Gloucester Street, such as the flat colonnettes on the third storey, emphasis on the upper central palladian window, and its tall storey heights.⁵ Finally, the Orange Hall at 394 Euclid Avenue in Toronto was constructed in 1913 with elements of the Edwardian Classicism style.⁶



Orange Hall in Hamilton Source: Google Maps, (2025)

⁴ City of Hamilton, Beasley Inventory – Candidates for Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, staff report, June 10, 2022, 11 pages.

⁵ Manitoba Historical Society. “Scott Memorial Orange Hall (216 Princess Street, Winnipeg).” *Historic Sites of Manitoba*, last revised September 26, 2024. <https://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/scottmemorialorangehall.shtml>.

⁶ Architectural Conservancy Ontario, “The Movie House,” last updated January 31, 2022, accessed July 29, 2025, <https://acotoronto.ca/building.php?ID=3513>.



Orange Hall in Winnipeg. (Source: Manitoba Historical Society Archives.)



Orange Hall at 394 Euclid Avenue in Toronto (Source: Google Maps, 2018.)



Former Ottawa Masonic Temple, 1913, Metcalfe Street near Laurier Avenue West (Library and Archives Canada, William James Topley Collection, Item No. 3410413)



Former Orange Hall on Albert Street (Library and Archives Canada, Dept. of Public Works Collection, Item No. 4161384)

158 Gloucester Street, the Albert Street Orange Hall, the Winnipeg Orange Hall, and the Metcalfe Masonic Temple share commonalities in their large, relatively flat and imposing façades. While the number of storeys in these buildings is modest, the large storey heights result in a taller overall building height.

Influence of Edwardian Classicism

Edwardian Classicism is an architectural style that was popular in Ontario for residential, commercial and institutional buildings at the turn of the twentieth century. The style incorporates classical features, though they are generally understated and applied sparingly. Buildings typically have simplified massing, smooth surfaces and many windows, and doors and windows often have flat arches or plain stone lintels.

158 Gloucester Street displays elements of Edwardian Classicism, through features such as its flat arches, understated colonettes, and simplified massing and cornices.

Other non-residential buildings in the Edwardian Classicist style in Ottawa include 84 Slater Street, 43 Eccles Street, and most notably as a fraternal hall, 430 Churchill Avenue North, the Westboro Masonic Temple constructed in 1924.⁷

Other Heritage Attributes

There have been few alterations to the building since its construction. Exterior modifications have been limited to small storage additions in the sideyard (c. 1945 and 1996), and the addition of a new entrance, steps, and fire escape (c. 1959-1961).^{8 9}

¹⁰As part of the entrance additions, two inscriptions were added that have become among the most notable features of the building. First, the words “RCAF ARC”, meaning Royal Canadian Air Force / Aviation Royale Canadienne, were carved into the buff brick façade with red brick. The word “RCAF” was also added into the baluster of the metal entryway staircase. These features are unique and are now associated with the building.

158 Gloucester Street is the best example of an Orange Hall in Ottawa, and one of the best examples of an early twentieth century fraternal Hall in the city. Finally, it strongly demonstrates elements of Edwardian Classicism.

⁷ City of Ottawa, “Property Information Sheet – 430, av Churchill Ave N.” N.d.

⁸ City of Ottawa, Building Permit No. 961829, issued December 5, 1996.

⁹ City of Ottawa, Building Permit No. 46545, issued November 23, 1961.

¹⁰ City of Ottawa, Building Permit No. 13929, issued May 29, 1945.

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 have reviewed primary sources including fire insurance plans for the subject building, compared the building to others of similar age or typology, and consulted relevant secondary sources including architectural history books. Staff's review concluded that the construction method for 158 Gloucester Street is typical of the building's construction era and type. As such, the property does not display a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	

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 have reviewed primary sources for the subject building, compared the building to others of similar age or typology, and consulted relevant secondary sources including architectural history books. Staff's review concluded that the construction method for 158 Gloucester Street is typical of the building's construction era and type. As such, the property does not display a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	

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 that is significant to a community.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The property at 158 Gloucester Street is associated with the theme of fraternity in twentieth century Canada. Constructed as an Orange Hall, it is directly associated with the Orange Order, an organization that played a significant role in the political landscape of Ottawa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further the property has historical value because it has direct associations with Canada's military history	

and the role of the military mess. 158 Gloucester Street was used as an officers' mess during a lengthy and significant period of the RCAF's history, and the building is best known as an officers' mess today.

Supporting Details – Criterion 4

Fraternal History of Ontario

The property at 158 Gloucester Street contributes to an understanding of the role of fraternal organizations in Ottawa's history. 158 Gloucester Street was designed as the primary Orange Hall for the chapters located in the city of Ottawa. The Orange Order is a Protestant fraternal organization founded in 1795 in what is now known as Northern Ireland. The organization was particularly prominent in Canada between the early nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition to Protestantism, the Orange Order was known for its loyalty to the British Monarchy, for its role in politics, and as a social institution and provider of mutual aid. The Orange Order was also controversial due to a reputation for sectarianism, anti-Catholicism, and in some cases, rioting.¹¹

In the late nineteenth century, fraternal organizations were the predominant form of voluntary association in Ontario. Organizations, such as the Freemasons and Orange Order, contributed to the socio-cultural history of Ontario.¹² The Orange Order in particular, provided a bond for protestant communities in the developing nation of Canada. By the end of the nineteenth century, it is estimated that in 1 in 3 protestant men in Canada were members of the Orange Order.¹³

The Orange Order was also known for its anti-Catholic sentiments. Particularly in the mid-nineteenth century, fights broken out between Orangemen and Catholics, with some fights devolving into riots, where men were killed in New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario.¹⁴

The Orange Order has had an extensive presence in Ottawa. The first chapter in Ottawa, known as a lodge, was formed in 1830. The lodge met in a rented space near Sparks and Bay streets until 1872 when the first dedicated Orange Lodge was built at the corner of Queen and O'Connor. This building was purchased by the federal government only 9 years later, and the Orange Order then met in various rented spaces

¹¹ Cecil J. Houston and William J Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), Preamble, Page 3.

¹² Gregory Klages, "Freemasonic and Orange Order Membership in Rural Ontario During the Late 19th-century," *The Ontario Historical Society*, Volume 103, Number 2 (2011), Pages 192-193.

¹³ Cecil J. Houston and William J Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), Page 3.

¹⁴ Michael S. Cross, "'The Laws are Like Cobwebs': Popular Resistance to Authority in Mid-Nineteenth Century British North America," *Dalhousie Law Journal*, Volume 8, Issue 3, Article 6 (1984), Pages 107-108.

until 1888, when a second hall was built on Albert Street near O'Connor. Again, the hall was expropriated by the federal government in 1918 and later demolished.¹⁵

The 158 Gloucester Street Hall was constructed in 1919 as the main hall for all lodges in the city of Ottawa.

Other Orange Halls were constructed in Villages for lodges in Carleton County, now in the city of Ottawa. One hall was known to have existed in 1922 near Billings Bridge on Bank Street.¹⁶ One of the most notable was the Orange Hall at 6691 Rideau Valley Drive South in the Village of Kars. This building was built prior to 1863 and was relocated to Upper Canada Village in 2006.¹⁷

The Orange Order played a role in shaping the politics and identity of Bytown and Ottawa. The organization, pro-Protestant and pro-Monarchist, included an extensive list of members, notably four Prime Ministers: John A. Macdonald, John Abbott, Mackenzie Bowell, John Diefenbaker as well as early mayors of Ottawa.¹⁸ Other prominent Ottawans were highly involved in the Orange Order. For example, Francis Clemow, City Councillor and Senator, was at one time the Orange Order county master of Carleton County.¹⁹ Clemow Avenue in the Glebe is named after the late Senator, who held an estate on this street and was thought to have influenced the public realm in the area.²⁰ Finally, notable Ottawans who acted as executives for Orange Order lodges when the Gloucester Hall was in use included C.G. Pepper and G.S. Sloan, both later City Councillors, as well as Albert Edwin Honeywell, later MPP.²¹²²²³

Later in the nineteenth century, and during the twentieth century, the Orange Order was embraced by the political establishment and acted as more of a general community organization. Events were held in Ottawa and across the Ottawa Valley, often drawing thousands of attendees. These events included parades, sports, galas, speeches, and carnival activities. Orange auxiliary organizations were created so that women could participate. The Orange Order was also a strong supporter of Canada's war effort, having claimed to have enlisted 60,000 Orangemen in the First World War and many

¹⁵ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Orange Celebration at Exhibition Grounds." July 10, 1929, Page 19.

¹⁶ Public Archives Canada, National Map Collection, *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan*, vol. 2 (1922), Page 165.

¹⁷ City of Ottawa, *Application under the Ontario Heritage Act to Remove 6691 Rideau Valley Drive South, Kars Loyal Orange Lodge No. 35* (Ottawa: City of Ottawa, October 26, 2006).

¹⁸ Tomasz Soroka, "The Canadian Orange Movement. The concept of Political and Social Tradition." In *Place and memory in Canada: Global Perspectives*, edited by Magdalena Paluszkiwicz-isiaczek, Anna Reczyńska, Anna Śpiewak (City: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2005), Page 543.

¹⁹ The Ottawa Journal, "Hon. F. Clemow Passed Away." May 28, 1902, Page 9.

²⁰ The Glebe Report, "What's in a (street) name? The Clemows and Powells." January 16, 2015.

²¹ The Ottawa Citizen, "City Councils Since 1850." August 16, 1926, Page 126.

²² The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Council Adopts Board's Report on Works Dept." March 3, 1931, Page 5.

²³ "Albert Edwin Honeywell," Legislative Assembly of Ontario, accessed July 4, 2025, <https://www.ola.org/en/members/all/albert-edwin-honeywell>

others in the Second World War.²⁴ As previously described, the architecture of 158 Gloucester Street is reflective of the most prosperous period for fraternal organizations in Ottawa and Ontario's history. Historians have noted that organizations like the Orange Order became significantly less prominent in Ottawa during the second half of the twentieth century, likely due to suburbanization, demographic, and other social changes.²⁵

The Officers' Mess at 158 Gloucester Street was also used as a meeting space for various other organizations and social events. For example, the Hall was used by the Imperial War Veterans in Canada in 1923.²⁶ In 1928, when the receiver radio emerged as a new form of entertainment, an exhibition with various models and information was held in the Orange Hall.²⁷ In 1921, a large bazaar was held in the Gloucester Hall to raise money for the Orange Order band and for an Orange Order orphanage in Picton. The bazaar was opened by then-Mayor Frank H. Plant, and featured a cake booth, ice cream and soft drink counter, and many kinds of games.²⁸

After 158 Gloucester Street was leased and later sold to the federal government, an Orange Hall was constructed in 1947 at 334 Gladstone as a replacement.²⁹ It was a modest single-storey structure that was later demolished circa 1998.

The only other surviving example of a purpose-built Orange Hall in Ottawa is located at 41 Rosemount Avenue. This modest, single-storey brick building was constructed in 1912.³⁰

Through its design and history as a hall for fraternal organizations and other community organizations during a particular period of their prominence, 158 Gloucester Street provides an understanding of these organizations' role in shaping the culture and politics of Ottawa and Ottawa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Though with some exception described below, the theme of fraternity is carried forward in the later use of the site as the RCAF Officers' Mess. The Officers' Mess was a social area, though with highly regimented customs meant to invoke camaraderie within the military.

²⁴ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Orangemen Pledge Every Effort Behind War Effort of the Dominion." July 13, 1940, Page 3.

²⁵ John H. Taylor, *Ottawa: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company and Canadian Museum of Civilization, National Museums of Canada, 1986), 183.

²⁶ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Organizing Imperials." November 19, 1923, Page 5.

²⁷ The Ottawa Citizen, "Radio Show Inaugurates Season of Entertainment." December 5, 1929, Page 16.

²⁸ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Bowell Lodge Bazaar Opened Last Night." April 5, 2021, Page 9.

²⁹ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Laying Cornerstone of New Orange Hall." October 10, 1946, Page 15.

³⁰ The Ottawa Citizen, "Corner Stone Orange Hall." November 6, 1912, Page 14.



Orange Hall at 41 Rosemount, Ottawa. (Source: Google Maps, 2017)

Military Mess

The Mess has long been an institution in Canada's military. The origins of the Mess in the Canadian military date to well before Confederation, into the eighteenth century during the Seven Years' War. Mess' were since created for the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and were further separated by rank. The function and traditions of each military mess differ; however, at a high level, they act as an institution for dining and for socializing.³¹

The property at 158 Gloucester Street was established as an Officers' Mess circa 1943 to serve staff at the Airforce Headquarters (AFHQ) in downtown Ottawa. AFHQ was the command and administration centre for the RCAF, and was responsible for matters such as strategic direction, logistics, and organization.³² AFHQ functioned separately from the nearby Rockcliffe Air Station, which had its own Officers' Mess established in 1924.³³ Social activities were regularly held at the Officers' Mess. For example, in 1948,

³¹ E. C. Russell, *Customs and Traditions of the Canadian Armed Forces*, 2nd printing (Ottawa: Deneau & Greenberg, Dept of National Defence, 1980),

³² Royal Canadian Air Force, *The Evolution of Air Materiel Command*, Summer 2008, https://airforceapp.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal/Vol1-2008/Iss2-Summer/Sections/09-The_Evolution_of_Air_Materiel_Command_e.pdf.

³³ Government of Canada, *The National Marine Conservation Areas Policy*, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1999), accessed July 14, 2025, <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection/NM97-12-2-5-1999E.pdf>.

a banquet was held with the Canadian Olympic hockey team, and banquets were held with foreign dignitaries.³⁴

The Officers' Mess had specific customs, and etiquette was expected to be followed meticulously. For instance, special seating arrangements were often required, and certain rooms were often reserved for higher-level staff. Unless an exception was given by the commanding officers, special attire known as a "mess kit" was to be worn. Toasts were always to be carried out in a clockwise fashion, and "God Save the King" was played following the dinner if a band was present. Smoking was only permitted after the president gave permission or lit his cigarette himself.³⁵



RCAF Officers' Mess Jacket. (Source: Gieves, *Uniform*, Unknown Date, Artifact no. 1989.0475, Ingenium – Canada's Museums of Science and Innovation, <http://collection.ingenium.ca/en/id/1989.0475.001/>)

Other military mess buildings in Ontario have been designated federally by the Federal Heritage Review Officer (FHRO). These include RCAF Officers' Mess (Building 38) at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton, as well as the Army Officers' Mess at Vimy Barracks at CFB Kingston.³⁶ ³⁷ Mess buildings in Ottawa include the Naval Officers'

³⁴ Royal Canadian Air Force, *The Spook*, June 1948, <https://publications.rcaf.info/RCAF/Spook/1948/Spook-1948-06-C.pdf>

³⁵ Royal Canadian Air Force, Notes for Newcomers, AFP 4, 3rd Edition, HQ 562 – 4, November 1943.

³⁶ Parks Canada, "Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office - Officers' Mess" accessed July 14, 2025, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_fhbro_eng.aspx?id=6936&i=46655.

³⁷ Parks Canada, "Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office – Vimy Barracks (C-1)" accessed July 14, 2025, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_fhbro_eng.aspx?id=7460

Mess at 78 Lisgar, designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.³⁸ The Army Officers' Mess at 149 Somerset West is also designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.³⁹ This building continues to be used as an Officers' Mess for the Army, Navy, and Air Force.⁴⁰ An all-ranks mess also exists at the Shirleys Bay Campus in Ottawa.⁴¹ Finally, the Drill Hall at 1 Cartier Square is designated by FHRO, and was the site of two officers' mess'.⁴² The Officers' Mess at Rockcliffe CFB was demolished alongside the other buildings on the base in preparation for Wateridge Village.⁴³



Canadian Forces Officers' Mess at 149 Somerset Street West (Source: City of Ottawa, 2016)

³⁸ Ontario Heritage Trust, "*Ontario Heritage Act Register: 78 Lisgar Street*," accessed July 14, 2025, <https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/oha/details/file?id=12879>.

³⁹ Ontario Heritage Trust, "*Ontario Heritage Act Register: 149 Somerset West*," accessed July 14, 2025, <https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/oha/details/file?id=7581>

⁴⁰ CFMWS, "National Capital Region (NCR) Officers' Mess," accessed July 14, 2025, <https://cfmws.ca/national-capital-region/facilities/messes/ncr-om>

⁴¹ CFMWS, "CRPTC All Ranks Mess," accessed July 14, 2025, <https://cfmws.ca/national-capital-region/facilities/messes/crptc-all-ranks-mess>

⁴² Parks Canada, "Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office – Drill Hall" accessed July 14, 2025, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_fhbros_eng.aspx?id=2479.

⁴³ City of Ottawa, *CFB Rockcliffe Community Design Plan*, accessed July 14, 2025, https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/documents/cfb_rockcliffe_cdp_en.pdf.



RCAF Officers' Mess at CFB Trenton (Source: Department of National Defence, 1994).



Vimy Barracks Officers' Mess (Source: Department of National Defence, 1993).



Officers' Mess at CFB Rockcliffe (Source: Library and Archives Canada).

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has historical and associative value because it has direct associations with the history of the military mess, which is significant to Ottawa as Canada's capital and to Canada's military. 158 Gloucester Street was used as an officers' mess during a lengthy and significant period of the RCAF's history, and the building is best known as an officers' mess today.

Criterion 5	
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.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The property at 158 Gloucester Street has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the history of women's service in the RCAF. The use of 158 Gloucester Street as an Officers' Mess began at a time of significant advancement for women's service in Canada's military and coincides with changing attitudes towards gender in the Canadian military.	

Supporting Details – Criterion 5

Women's Role in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and Military

The creation of the Gloucester Officers' Mess coincides with changing attitudes towards gender in the Canadian military.

Women were traditionally barred from service in Canada's military. During the First World War, women were employed in manufacturing roles and, prior to the existence of the RCAF, were first employed in more technical roles in the British Royal Air Force (RAF), which had six training bases in Southern Ontario.⁴⁴

In the 1930s and early 1940s, women began to create unsanctioned paramilitary groups. These groups existed across the nation and included thousands of women. By the summer of 1941, amidst a labour shortage and pressure from women's paramilitary organizations and other women's organizations, Defence officials began to employ women in Canada's military.⁴⁵ This was a significant milestone that saw the creation of three women's services, one being the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, which was shortly thereafter renamed the Royal Canadian Force Women's Division. By the end of the war, approximately 17,000 women had served in the Women's Division.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, women continued to experience barriers, both in terms of pay and social standing compared to men.⁴⁷ For example, women were barred from officers' mess. Wilhelmina "Willa" Walker, who became the commanding officer of the Women's

⁴⁴ Camas Clowater-Eriksson, Report (Ottawa: Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 2020) pages 4-6.

⁴⁵ Sarah Hogenbirk, "Women Inside the Canadian Military, 1938-1966," (PhD thesis, Carleton University, 2017), pages 60-66

⁴⁶ Camas Clowater-Eriksson, Report (Ottawa: Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 2020) page 7.

⁴⁷ Camas Clowater-Eriksson, Report (Ottawa: Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 2020) page 7.

Division, was known as a women's advocate in military service. Frustrated with the regulation at an officers' mess, Willa once sat in a vehicle eating crackers in sub-zero temperatures outside a mess, until the male officers became so ashamed that they invited her inside.⁴⁸ In 1943, the RCAF changed their position and allowed women to become full members of a mess with the same rights and privileges as men.⁴⁹

Women demonstrated their abilities in the force: having initially been able to participate in nine trades, women filled roles in 65 of 102 trades later in the war. Over 17,000 women served in the RCAF in total. In January 1946, less than a year following the end of the Second World War, the Women's Division was disbanded. The RCAF tried to retain women in its service, however, the Women's Division was ultimately disbanded due to pressure from the Army and Navy.⁵⁰



Members of the R.C.A.F. Women's Division with the Canadian Bomber Group headquarters in England (Library and Archives Canada, Canadian Forces Joint Imagery Centre (CFJIC) – photographs. Item No. 4542811)

A dinner honouring the Women's Division was held in the Gloucester Mess in January 1946. The attendees, Princess Alice, the Governor General, and over 100 RCAF officers, attest to the level of esteem held to the women's division by the RCAF.⁵¹ In

⁴⁸ Elinor Florence, "Willa Walker blazed the trail for RCAF airwomen," *The Maple Leaf*, March 7, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/maple-leaf/rcaf/2019/03/willa-walker-blazed-the-trail-for-rcaf-airwomen.html>

⁴⁹ Sarah Hogenbirk, "Women Inside the Canadian Military, 1938-1966," (PhD thesis, Carleton University, 2017), page 145

⁵⁰ Mathias Joost, "Answering the call: a history of the Royal Canadian Air Force's non-commissioned members", Pages 39-40.

⁵¹ *The Ottawa Journal*, "RCAF Honors Women's Division at Mess Dinner." January 24, 1946, Page 3.

October 1944, another dinner was held in the Gloucester Mess to honor Willa Walker in her retirement.⁵²

The property at 158 Gloucester Street has direct historical and associative value with the history of women's service in the RCAF. This has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the role of women in Canada's Forces today.

Criterion 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.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The property at 158 Gloucester Street has historical value as it demonstrates the work of Robert Holmes, a designer and builder significant to Centretown and responsible for several notable buildings in Ottawa in the early twentieth century.	

Supporting Details – Criterion 6

The designer was Robert Holmes (c. 1863-1927). Holmes was a member of the Orange Order and was a prolific builder in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Ottawa. He was a resident of Centretown, best known as a contractor and did not have a formal education in architecture. Holmes worked on several larger institutional and federal projects as well as smaller residential projects.

Robert Holmes was born at Holmes' Corners, a small settlement then within Huntley Township, now within the city of Ottawa. The settlement was named after his parents, who were Irish immigrants, and it contained an Orange Hall.⁵³ His father, James Holmes, was a building contractor.⁵⁴ Holmes relocated to Ottawa in his late twenties, and became a well known contractor in the city.

Holmes built his residence, 80 Arlington Avenue (since demolished), which was the first residential building on the street. He was also responsible for the modest residence at 351 Chapel Street.⁵⁵ Most notably, Holmes also designed 200, 202, 204, and 206 Sparks Street, located on the south side of Sparks Street just east of Bank Street. Holmes' obituary states that he designed 397 Kent Street, though there is competing

⁵² The Ottawa Journal, "R.C.A.F. Honors Willa Walker." October 17, 1944, Page 10.

⁵³ County of Carleton. Ottawa City Directory, 1864-5. Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co., 1864.

⁵⁴ The Ottawa Journal, "Obituary – Mr. James Holmes." March 27, 1920, Page 2.

⁵⁵ "A Journal for the Architectural Engineering and Contracting Interests of Canada," H. Gagnier Limited Publishers, Volume 9 (1916), Page 432.

evidence that the building was designed by Arthur LeBaron Weeks. It is most likely that Holmes acted as construction manager on the site. The building was then known as the First Congressional Church and later the First United Church, now the Centretown Mosque, which is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.⁵⁶

As contractor foreman, Holmes was the construction manager for the Connaught Building (555 Mackenzie Avenue), then known as the Customs House, and designated under Parts IV and V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Finally, he was the foreman on the Carling Building, also known as the Murphy-Gamble Building, at 118 Sparks Street designated as National Historic Site of Canada, as a Classified Federal Heritage Building, and under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of the Sparks Street HCD.^{57 58 59}

Although Holmes has been a relatively unknown designer and builder by name, he made significant contributions to Ottawa's architecture during the early twentieth century and interwar period.



The Connaught Building at 555 Mackenzie Avenue. (Source: Library and Archives Canada)

⁵⁶ The Ottawa Journal, "Notice to Contractors." June 11, 1911, Page 10.

⁵⁷ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Injured by Hoist." October 9, 1913. Page 1.

⁵⁸ Parks Canada, Connaught Building National Historic Site of Canada, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=454

⁵⁹ Parks Canada, Connaught Building – Classified Federal Heritage Building, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_fhbro_eng.aspx?id=2991



397 Kent Street. (Source: City of Ottawa, 2015.)



200-206 Sparks Street. (Source: Google Maps, 2018.)

Criterion 7

The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.

Yes

Response to Criterion

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is important in supporting the character of a transitional area in Centretown. The building is located within an area between the largely high-rise office character to the north, and older, low-rise residential character to the south. Many of the buildings within the transitional area and south of Gloucester were constructed between the late nineteenth to the early to mid-twentieth centuries,

and the buildings demonstrate popular architectural styles from these periods, including Edwardian Classicism, Italianate, and early Modernist styles. The property at 158 Gloucester Street, with its brick cladding, low-rise building height, shallow setback, and early twentieth century architectural style, exemplifies the established character within the office-residential transitional area in Centretown. The building at 158 Gloucester Street fits within the established character of this area within Centretown.

Supporting Details – Criterion 7

158 Gloucester Street is located in Centretown, east of Bank Street and west of O'Connor Street. North of the site, Centretown is primarily characterized by high-rise office and residential buildings built since the 1950s, with fragments of pre-war urban fabric. South of the site, the neighbourhood is primarily characterized by residential buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early- to mid-twentieth centuries.

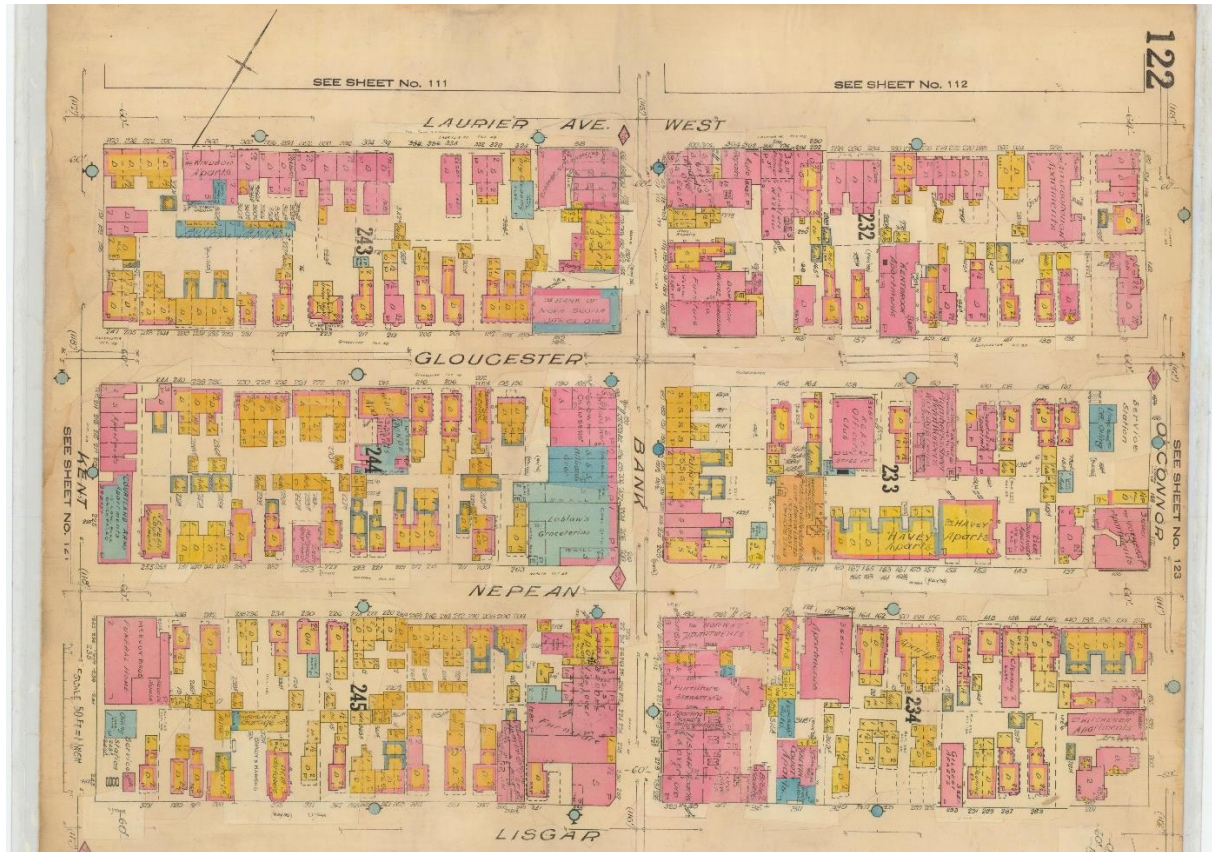
Centretown developed significantly in the second half of the nineteenth century, following the proclamation of Ottawa as Canada's capital. A construction boom occurred, with Centretown becoming a hub of government and business activity. Residential development largely began in the mid-1870s and grew consistency thereafter. The residential areas are most pronounced south of Gloucester Street, which still includes a large building stock from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These neighbourhoods are comprised of two- to three-storey detached dwellings and with low-rise apartment buildings. Postwar walk-up and high-rise apartment buildings, parking lots and infill development are also found.⁶⁰

The area north of Gloucester was long used for office buildings for civil servants. For example, the two predecessor Orange Halls to 158 Gloucester Street were built in this area and were both expropriated by the federal government for offices.⁶¹ Nonetheless, the north side of Gloucester and areas further north were also primarily low- to mid-rise, until the high-rise office buildings began to be constructed in the late 1960s to early 1970s. These buildings often spanned entire blocks and significantly changed the character area of the area to the north.⁶² 158 Gloucester Street was leased by the federal government in Second World War; however, its structure and use as a clubhouse was effectively retained.

⁶⁰ "Centretown," Neighbourhood Heritage Statement, City of Ottawa, 2020.

⁶¹ The Ottawa Evening Citizen, "Laying Cornerstone of New Orange Hall." October 10, 1946, Page 15.

⁶² City of Ottawa, "GeoOttawa Aerial Photography, 1958, 1965, 1976. [aerial photographs]. Scale not given. Ottawa, ON: City of Ottawa, 1965. {Link: geoOttawa <https://maps.ottawa.ca/geoottawa/>}. (Accessed July 7, 2025).



The character on the south side of Gloucester and further south has been retained, while the smaller footprint buildings have been replaced with large mid- to high-rise office buildings. (Source: Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan, 1948, vol 1, 122.)

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is now located in the transitional area between the largely high-rise office character to the north, and the largely nineteenth century and early-twentieth century character to the south. Many low-rise commercial and institutional buildings from the early twentieth century continue to exist along Bank Street and south of Gloucester. There are many such examples on the south side of Gloucester Street, such as 150 Gloucester, two properties to the east of the subject site, which was built during the interwar period as a two-storey storefront for plumbers and sheet metal workers, and is today used by a social services organization.⁶³

Many of the buildings in the transitional area are brick-clad or stone and feature very modest building setbacks with little to no landscaped amenity space. Architectural styles from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including Italianate and Edwardian Classicism, are often seen.

Other nearby examples south of the subject site include 315 Lisgar, a two-storey brick building designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The building was

⁶³ Public Archives Canada, National Map Collection, *Ottawa Fire Insurance Plan*, vol. 1 (1948), Page 122.

constructed three years after 158 Gloucester Street and features a similar colour brick. In addition, the building exhibits typical characteristics of early twentieth century institutional buildings including its brick cladding, traditional storefront with large display window, awning, and recessed entrance.⁶⁴

The property at 158 Gloucester Street, with its brick cladding, low-rise building height, shallow setback, and early twentieth century architectural style, exemplifies the established character within the office-residential transitional area in Centretown.

In terms of its immediate surroundings, many other buildings continue to exist that were constructed of a similar architectural style and of a similar construction period. An example one block to the east is 110 Gloucester, a four-storey apartment building constructed in 1912 in the Edwardian Classicist style. There are many such examples on the south side of Gloucester Street, such as 150 Gloucester, two properties to the east of the subject site, which was built during the interwar period as a two-storey storefront for plumbers and sheet metal workers, and is today used by a social services organization. The nearby blocks of Bank Street have retained a low-rise commercial character, and many of them were constructed in a similar period and a similar architectural style as well. For example, 196-200 Bank Street, a two-storey brick building was constructed with an early twentieth century commercial style. Immediately south of 158 Gloucester Street is 171 Nepean Street, a four-storey building constructed in 1935 as an officer and printing plant in a vernacular style with Edwardian Classicism influences.

Criterion 8	
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	Yes
Response to Criterion	
The property at 158 Gloucester Street has contextual value as it is physically linked to its surroundings.	
The building is also functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. Its association with headquarters, first for the Orange Order in Ottawa, and later as the Officers' Mess for the RCAF Headquarters, is linked to the cultural heritage of Centretown. Its location provided access to Parliament and other political institutions, of which many Orange Order leaders were involved with, along with access for	

⁶⁴ "Designation of Bible House at 315 Lisgar Street under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*," report to Built Heritage Committee, January 16, 2024, and Council, January 24, 2024, <https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=162191>

parades on ceremonial streets such as Elgin and Wellington. During its time as an Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street provided space for meetings and events held by non-affiliated community organizations that drew from the residential areas in Centretown.

Supporting Details – Criterion 8

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is physically, functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. The building was constructed in its location due to its proximity to Parliament and other key federal buildings in Ottawa’s downtown core. It is also historically linked the residential areas of Centretown, which hosted many of the community organizations that held meetings and events in the building.

The building is physically linked to the architecture of its surroundings. In terms of its immediate surroundings, many other buildings continue to exist that were constructed of a similar architectural style and of a similar construction period. An example one block to the east is 110 Gloucester, a four-storey apartment building constructed in 1912 in the Edwardian Classicism style. There are many such examples on the south side of Gloucester Street, such as 150 Gloucester, two properties to the east of the subject site, which was built during the interwar period as a two-storey storefront for plumbers and sheet metal workers, and is today used by a social services organization. The nearby blocks of Bank Street have retained a low-rise commercial character, and many of them were constructed in a similar period and a similar architectural style as well. For example, 196-200 Bank Street, a two-storey brick building was constructed with an early twentieth century commercial style. Immediately south of 158 Gloucester Street is 171 Nepean Street, a four-storey building constructed in 1935 as an officer and printing plant in a vernacular style with Edwardian Classicism influences.

The building was first used as the Ottawa headquarters for the Orange Order. It was historically linked to its surroundings as its central location provided an easy opportunity to convene members from across Ottawa. It provided easy access to Parliament and other political institutions, of which many Orange Order leaders were involved with. Finally, it provided easy access for parades on ceremonial streets such as Elgin and Wellington.

During its time as an Orange Hall, 158 Gloucester Street provided space for meetings and events held by non-affiliated community organizations that drew from the residential areas in Centretown.

Finally, the building was linked historically to its surroundings given its context within AFHQ. The RCAF occupied many buildings in downtown Ottawa, most of which have since been demolished or significantly altered and converted to other uses. These

include the Jackson Building, used by the RCAF Photographic Establishment, various buildings on Victoria Island, as well as large temporary buildings constructed near Elgin and Cartier.^{65 66} 158 Gloucester Street therefore serves as the most prominent visible legacy of the RCAF's role in downtown Ottawa.

Headquarters in Centretown

The property at 158 Gloucester Street is also associated with headquarters in Centretown, which is a component of Centretown's character and cultural heritage value. The large number of headquarters in Centretown is reflective of its location in Ottawa and Ottawa's role as the nation's capital. Examples of headquarters in Centretown include those of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) as well as the Royal Society of Canada.⁶⁷ The property at 158 Gloucester Street was built as the headquarters for the Orange Order in Ottawa, and was later used as the Officers' Mess for the RCAF Headquarters.

<i>Criterion 9</i>	
The property has contextual value because it is a landmark	No
<i>Response to Criterion</i>	
The property does not have contextual value as a landmark. The property at 158 Gloucester is located mid-block on Gloucester Street. Other nearby buildings are more prominent, and 158 Gloucester Street is not known to be used for wayfinding.	

⁶⁵ City of Ottawa Archives, Honouring the RCAF in Ottawa: Capital Skies, (Ottawa: City of Ottawa Archives, 2024), <https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/heritage-and-history/city-ottawa-archives>.

⁶⁶ The Ottawa Journal, "Work is Progressing." February 04, 1942, Page 21.

⁶⁷ City of Ottawa, "Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan," June 2022, https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/centretown_minto_plan_en.pdf.

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