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Stantec Consulting
SJMA
Ecoplans
Mike Baker
# SANDWICH HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY

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1.0 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study was undertaken on behalf of the City of Windsor to review an area on the west side of the City that has a well-established cultural and architectural history dating back to the 1700s. In fact, the Sandwich area represents one of the oldest settlement locations in Ontario.

Heritage Conservation Districts are created under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act for the purpose of conserving something of heritage value that is common to a whole district. The emphasis in a heritage conservation district is the collective character of the overall area, as defined by its historical context, architecture, streets, landscape and other physical and visual features. There is no minimum size for heritage districts and they may be comprised of residential, commercial, or industrial areas or any combination of these uses and buildings. Heritage designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act is not focused on individual buildings nor concerned with the interior of buildings.

A publication by the Ministry of Culture¹ suggests that many heritage districts share common characteristics, including:

- A concentration of heritage buildings, structures, sites or landscapes linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use;
- A framework of structured elements including natural and built features;
- A sense of visual coherence that conveys a distinct time and place;
- Distinctiveness from other places.

The Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study will seek to determine if these characteristics exist within the area, and if so, how to best protect them. Impetus for this study was in part as a result of the recent Olde Sandwich Towne Community Planning Study Report completed by the City of Windsor. This report identified a number of strategies and recommendations to help revitalize the Sandwich area, as it has been experiencing declining investment for a number of years. One of the key recommendations in this study was to undertake a study investigating the possibility of designating Sandwich as a Heritage Conservation District. The City of Windsor also has a stated desire in its Official Plan to encourage the restoration, protection and maintenance of its heritage resources.

Approval for undertaking the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study was given by the City of Windsor on September 5, 2006 based on the Terms of Reference that had been prepared by the City of Windsor Planning Department.

1.2 WHAT HAPPENS IN A HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

As previously mentioned, a Heritage Conservation District focuses on the preservation of a collective area to help retain the key functional and visual attributes that convey or have a connection to the history of the area in which they are located. A Heritage Conservation District can include buildings, landscapes or both. When an area is designated as a Heritage Conservation District, it means that its essential elements are to be protected, but it does not mean that an area is ‘frozen’ in time or intended to be restored to some specific historical period or style.

Generally, it is the streetscape that is the focus of a Heritage Conservation District – as a result, policies and guidelines are put in place to provide direction about what kinds of alterations, additions or new construction will be considered appropriate for areas visible from the street. Heritage alteration permits are generally required for major street-facing alterations and additions, as well as new construction. Minor repairs and alterations, or additions and renovations to the side or rear of buildings typically do not require heritage alteration permits, even when in a Heritage Conservation District, although conservation guidelines may still be provided to assist with maintenance and repair of certain building elements. The interior of buildings is not affected in any way in a Heritage Conservation District.

The public realm is also usually affected in a Heritage Conservation District – guidelines and policies are often established for street trees, lighting, boulevards, signage and other such infrastructure. This is to ensure that when a municipality undertakes public infrastructure improvements or changes, that they do not have a negative impact on the heritage characteristics of the district.

Designation as a Heritage Conservation District is often considered to provide the following benefits to property owners:

- The protection and management of heritage assets (architecture, landscape and history)
- Additional information and guidance to homeowners who are undertaking restoration, renovation and redevelopment
- Potential financial assistance (through grants, tax relief programs) for renovation and restoration
- Source of new promotion and tourism initiatives (walking tours, interpretive features)
- Increased community stability.

Although Heritage Conservation District designation does put additional policies and guidelines in place, along with a more stringent review and approvals process, residents and property owners should not view designation as overly restrictive, cumbersome or an imposition on property rights, but rather as an opportunity to retain and enhance an area’s most unique and attractive features for the overall benefit of themselves and the community and city as a whole.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The Ontario Heritage Act (Subsection 40.(2) outlines the scope of a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study, stating that it shall:
• Examine character and appearance of the area including buildings, structures and other property features;

• Examine and recommend area boundaries;

• Consider and recommend objectives of designation and content of a HCD plan;

• Recommend changes to Official Plan and municipal bylaws including zoning bylaws.

Consistent with the Act, the purpose of the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study is to “provide an architectural and historical analysis of the Sandwich community on the west side of Windsor with a view to establishing one or more heritage conservation district(s).”

The Study is a two-phase process, whereby Phase 1 focuses on background research and examination to identify an area (or areas) that warrant more in-depth examination as a potential heritage conservation district(s) based on the City’s Official Plan criteria. Individual properties suitable for Part IV designation or inclusion on the Windsor Heritage Properties Inventory are also to be identified.

Phase 2 of the study is the preparation of a Heritage Conservation District Plan for the area(s) identified in Phase 1, to provide policy direction and strategies to conserve and enhance the character of the Heritage Conservation District.

This report constitutes Phase 1 of the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study.

1.4 LOCATION

The Sandwich Heritage Conservation District study area is located in the northwest area of Windsor, approximately two kilometres west of the City Centre as shown in Figure 1. The specific study area, as identified in the Terms of Reference by the City of Windsor, is a pie-shaped area bounded by the Detroit River, Huron Church Road to the east and Prince Road to the west / south as shown in Figure 2. These initial boundaries include approximately 2,600 properties, primarily residential, but with some commercial, retail and office uses on Sandwich Street as well as on Huron Church Road and Felix Avenue. Also within the Study Area are several parks and schools, some manufacturing premises, churches and other non-residential uses. A railway bisects the area in an east-west direction near the mid-point of the “pie”.

During this project, the heritage assessment focused primarily on those buildings and streets within the specific study area. However, properties on the fringes of the study area were also considered at a general level to gain an understanding of their context and relationship to the defined study area.
1.5 FORMAT OF REPORT

Our approach to the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study focused on the following aspects:

- Identifying and evaluating the key historical, architectural and streetscape features of Sandwich to determine their heritage significance;

- Reviewing the current planning and regulatory context as it pertains to heritage designation;

- Establishing a clear, defensible rationale for the appropriateness and boundaries of a heritage conservation district;

- Obtaining meaningful input and developing consensus with local stakeholders and residents.

This report contains the following components that were reviewed, investigated and analyzed for the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study:
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

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- Historical context of the Study Area
- Building and site assessment and inventory
- Visual and contextual assessment and inventory
- Policy and land use planning context
- Socio-economic context
- Movement
- Summary of public input and concerns
- Recommendations relating to the proposed boundary for the Heritage Conservation District;
- General recommendations regarding next steps and considerations to be addressed in Phase 2 of the Sandwich Heritage Conservation District project.
2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 THE HURON CHURCH RESERVE

The study area represents a large portion of the historic Huron Church Reserve whose boundaries today are the Huron Church Road on the north and on the south a line running from the river’s edge east along John B Avenue and Chappell Avenue through Malden Road to Huron Church. The reserve was one of two pieces of land retained by the First Nations following the purchase of what is now a large part of southwestern Ontario in 1790.

It lay between two areas of French settlement both composed of long narrow farms fronting on the river two of which were just inside the northern boundary of the reserve. With the exception of these two farms none of the lands in the Reserve had been granted.

All of the settlements on the British side of the river were administered from Detroit in the early 1790s. The British had retained the fort following the conclusion of the American Revolution but would be obliged to leave by 1796. Therefore provision for courts and homes for government officials and merchants had to be made. The Reserve would be ideal as the lands were still not granted and it was fairly close to Detroit. With the exception of a small area in the northwest corner the Reserve was purchased from the First Nations by the crown and a town site was surveyed.

Several merchants including William Park, Alexander Duff and James MacGregor relocated and built homes. However, the settlement grew very slowly, likely because the ferry to Detroit, then the major market in the region, was located some distance away on the farm of James Baby’s brother, François. The ferry landing eventually became the nucleus of another community, Windsor, and, as other commercial enterprises located there, Sandwich, in the words of Alan Douglas “began a gradual decline from which it never recovered.” (Uppermost Canada, 140)

A smaller reserve in the northwest corner, bounded roughly by the river, Huron Church Road and Detroit Street, was retained by the First Nations as a home for those Hurons who continued to live near the Assumption Mission. The Mission was relocated to an area near the present Assumption Church shortly after leaving Bois Blanc Island in 1747. Based on the discovery of two native burials in this area in 1964 it has been concluded that “(f)urther

View to Sandwich from Assumption Church
evidence of this important community continue(s) to lie buried under the streets, parking lots and yards of north Sandwich.” (Windsor Archaeological Master Plan, 2-18).

Figure 3 – Key Elements of Development History
2.2 THE DISTRICT SEAT: 1797-1858

Sandwich did however, acquire and retain the court of quarter sessions which was the local government of the Western District (composed of the present-day counties of Lambton, Essex and Kent). From its earliest beginnings until late in the 19th century the courts and government of the district (and later of Essex County) would be the focus of life in Sandwich. The four lots at the corner of present-day Brock and Sandwich Streets were reserved for use by the court house and land registry, the Anglican Church and the district grammar school all of which were built before the War of 1812. Today the existence of Brock School, the former county court house (Mackenzie Hall), the registry office, now the jail administration office, the jail itself, and St. John’s Church on three of the four reserve lots provides visible continuity back to the very beginnings of the community. Recent archaeological work has revealed that the Brock School and Mackenzie Hall sites have retained “significant information” about their use in the 19th century (Windsor Archaeological Master Plan, 3-18).

Many of the major office holders lived in or near Sandwich. William Hands, collector of customs and district treasurer, for example, owned the largest of the river front lots within the reserve. His house, once located on what is now the corner of Rosedale and Riverside, survived until 1960. A large estate owned
by Member of Parliament Col. John Prince whose son was a county judge, occupied a part of the south end of the town site.

By 1846, the community had 450 residents and was described as an English county town with fine old orchards and well-kept flower gardens. Several skilled tradesmen including a tanner and a saddler had come to town and there were three mills in operation. However the 12 taverns, four surveyors and six lawyers resident in the town attest to the continuing importance of the courts. The population grew considerably in the 1850s, reaching almost 1000 by 1858 when Sandwich was set off from the township as a separate municipality and the boundaries were extended to include several of the old French farm lots on either side of the Huron Reserve (see Figure 3).

Few examples of buildings from the period before 1858 still exist in the community. Landmark structures including the court house, the Duff-Baby and MacGregor-Cowan buildings represent nearly everything that remains of the period. The Marentette house, 3066 Sandwich Street, built c. 1856, and several other houses on Sandwich (3158 and 3474) date from the 1850s but have been extensively altered from their original form.

_Duff-Baby House (above), Marentette House, c. 1856 (upper right), MacGregor-Cowan House (lower right)_:
2.3 COUNTY TOWN: 1858-1914

Many of the new arrivals in the 1850s were undoubtedly fugitive slaves fleeing across the Detroit River to freedom in the Canadas. The Sandwich First Baptist Church, now a national historic site, and the Watkins home at 375 Watkins Street represent two of the few physical connections Sandwich has to its early black history. The Black community joined a diverse number of nationalities in the town including Germans, French and Scots.

At the end of the 19th century several industries came to Sandwich, including the salt mine which opened in the 1890s, the Bishop fur coat factory and a cannery. Coal and lumber suppliers built wharfs and near the corner of Mill and Sandwich Streets, a small commercial core developed which included a winery operated by Jules Robinette, a prominent citizen and land owner.

In 1912 the Essex Terminal Railway completed an extension of its line to the salt mine. It went through open country for the most part as almost no development had occurred beyond what is now College Street except for a few homes on Felix, one of the few streets that had actually been opened east of College.

A variety of examples of late 19th and early 20th century buildings existed in the area west of College Avenue. Four square style houses from the 1890s and 1900s, can be found on Sandwich Street and elsewhere, while a variety of double houses also appear in this time period.
2.4 SUBURBAN SANDWICH: 1914 -1935

The period beginning with WWI and lasting until 1929 was a time of immense growth in Sandwich and the other Border cities. Over 650 residences were built during the 1920s within the study district alone, most of them west of College Avenue. Figure 4 illustrates areas with significant concentrations of 1920’s housing.

Subdivision plans for almost every part of the study area were registered and a large number were completed. Construction on the biggest, Marlborough Park, bounded by Matchett, Manchester, Huron Church and Prince Roads, had not progressed very far before the Depression began. Another large 1920s subdivision, Old Essex, bounded by Brock Street, Giradot Avenue, Prince Road and the Essex Terminal Rail line, was not begun until 1942 when hundreds of war-time houses which still stand were built.

Almost all of the remaining open space west of College Avenue was developed in the 1920s, more than doubling the size of the community. The best examples of this era can be found in the vicinity of Alexander and Rosedale.

The new housing attracted residents who worked for or owned businesses elsewhere in the Border Cities or worked in Detroit as a great many other residents on the Canadian side of the river did.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Continual redevelopment and growth has left little of 19th century Sandwich in evidence. Buildings constructed before 1900 represent only 5% of the pre-amalgamation building stock in existence today and very few of those retain all of their original features. Yet within what was the built up area before 1914 there are a handful of well-preserved dwellings from most of the periods in Sandwich’s long development. These structures should be listed, based on criteria established for historic Sandwich as a whole.

The growth pattern of Sandwich was quite dispersed. The boundaries set by the Huron Church Reserve encompassed a large territory which was made even larger when the municipal boundary was established in 1858. Today, surviving structures of different periods can be found in close proximity. This pattern changed somewhat in the 1920s when the first instances of suburban growth created large tracts of similar housing in the course of a single decade.

The two eras of Sandwich’s development that can be best represented within the study area is the founding period and the years from 1920 to 1930 when the community achieved the height of its...
existence as a separate municipality. The two parts of the study area that best represent these periods are the Town Centre and the area around Rosedale Avenue.

2.5.1 **The Town Centre**

In a two block section of the core area can be found most of the structures that relate to the founding of Sandwich and of the Western District itself. The 1855 court house, the jail, the registry office, St. John’s, even the Dominion Hotel all relate to the era when Sandwich was the district/county capital. Later public buildings including the town hall of 1911, the fire hall, and the post office illustrate the community’s own municipal life up to the time of amalgamation. The McGregor-Cowan and Duff-Baby houses actually represent Sandwich’s earliest commercial buildings, thanks to their relationship to the fur trade. As the later homes of prominent citizens they also had a public role to fulfill in the community. Finally, the surviving commercial structures near the corner Mill and Sandwich reflect the period of later commercial activity as the community entered 20th century.
2.5.2 Rosedale Avenue

Two eras of Sandwich’s residential development are contained in the Sandwich Street and Rosedale Avenue area. Here nineteenth century dwellings related to community leaders such as W. J. McKee and Pierre Marentette can be found. Even the site of the William Hands home, possibly the earliest house in Sandwich is contained within this district. The area’s other strength is the grouping of well-preserved homes from the 1920s. This is the best and most cohesive group of 1920s structures and their owners and builders include many people who lived in Sandwich and worked elsewhere in the Border Cities or in Detroit. Within this small district can be interpreted most of the residential growth of the community in terms of dwelling style and type as well as of the people who contributed to the town’s growth and development. A key component of this district is the former Supertest service station at 3015 Riverside. The boom of the 1920s that was experienced all over the Border Cities and elsewhere in Canada was made possible in many ways by the widespread adoption of the car.

W. McKee House
Figure 4: Historical Development
Sandwich Heritage Conservation District Study

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT
- Existing Housing Built 1900-1919
- Existing Housing Built 1920-1929
- Selected 1920s Subdivisions
- Historic Commercial & Service Area

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS & SITES
1. J.H. Bishop Fur Company Buildings
2. Jail, Courthouse and Registry
3. Duff-Baby House
4. Dominion Hotel
5. McGregor-Cowan House
6. First St. Francis Separate School*
7. Canadian Canners*
8. Library*
9. Forster Secondary (General Byng P.S.)
10. Sandwich Lumber Company (Osborne)*
11. Livingston Wood Manufacturing*
12. Packard of Canada*
13. Sandwich Foundry*
14. St. Edwards Separate School
15. Tabernacle Baptist Church
16. Marlborough Public School (Marlborough Collegiate Institute)
17. Essex County Sanatorium
18. Maryvale Convent

* Demolished
3.0 ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY AREA

The study area was divided into three sub areas for the purposes of the architectural inventory since the Heritage Conservation District Study Area encompassed over 2,600 properties. This large study area was subdivided into the areas of i) East of College Avenue ii) West of College Avenue and iii) the Sandwich Study Area. The Figure below outlines these study sub areas.

3.1.1 East of College Avenue

The built form east of College Avenue is predominantly residential use. The residential stock is comprised of post-war 1 ½ story frame housing stock. Construction materials consist of masonry exteriors or siding of various types and textures. The housing form is generally repetitive with slight modifications to its appendages of peaked gable fronts, porches with awnings, small dormers, and enclosed entranceways. These appendages have often been added after the fact by the owner to create some interest, although minor, to the façade of the simple residence.
The housing stock begins to vary as one travels west along Felix Avenue. Porches become more predominant across the whole width of the residence and small dormers are added as features to the street.

The built form continues to be 1 to 1 ½ storey modest homes close to the street. The materials used vary between masonry and vinyl siding.

A mixture of the masonry and siding materials begin to be identified in the Felix Avenue and Millen Street areas with masonry on the lower level and sided dormers above.

Porches consist of masonry columns on the outside corners extending with a clear span beam across the width of the residence supporting the upper dormers. Dormers are generally larger in this area but the form remains simple 1 ½ storey housing.

There are minor pockets of 1 ½ storey housing along Felix Avenue that are comprised of steeper roof forms and more ornate identifiable entrances.

These houses are constructed of masonry on both levels with siding used over the entrance as a feature material. The main form of the residence is symmetrical about the roofline with an offset entrance to one of its sides.
3.1.2 **Notable Buildings and Architectural Features (East of College Avenue)**

The façade of Marlborough Public School on Melbourne Road is typical of the post-war 1950’s school architecture. The façade of this educational centre is worthy of designation with its stone surrounds, imprinted date and name stones, and ornate entrance doors constructed of solid wood and criss-cross transom glazing.

The residence at 937 Felix Avenue is one of the oldest residences constructed in this area. Constructed in 1867, it appears to have been one of the original farmhouses in the Sandwich area indicated by the size of the lot, the size of the residence and accompanying trees on the property.

While the property is one of historic interest, this property may be difficult to reverse from the renovations it has sustained over time and its current status as rental accommodation.

This residence is juxtaposed by the neighbouring apartment complex which dwarfs the house by its 8 storey height and masonry and concrete structure.
The Old Dairy Building at 1055 Felix Avenue is not only of interest from an historical perspective but the form of its street façade is indicative of a time when horse and carriage was used for delivery of its milk and milk products.

While at first glance it appears to have once been a fire hall, the width between the arches and columns form the separation of its carriage doors for loading dairy products onto the horse and carriage delivery wagons. These delivery doors have been covered over with vinyl siding but the remaining form and materials of the structure are intact, allowing the modern material to be reversible to its original state.

The Maryvale Convent, now vocational school, is a 2 ½ storey buff yellow brick multi-residential complex erected in 1948 for emotionally disturbed girls. This school was the only school of its kind in Ontario and while it possesses some minor unique stone detailing, it is more significant for its history than its architectural distinction.

The inventory area East of College Avenue consists of mainly Post-War 1950’s housing stock. This is intermixed with some multi residential townhouse blocks constructed in the early 1980’s. Most of the housing stock in this zone consists of similar form 1 ½ storey simple gable roof lines with varying appurtenances of roof dormers, front porches, and entrances. There is very little unique built form in this inventory area that would make an argument to be part of a Heritage Conservation District. However the buildings of note as described may warrant consideration for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act on an individual basis. These would include Marlborough School façade, the Old Dairy Building at 1055 Felix Avenue, Maryvale Convent on Wells Street, and perhaps review of the residence at 937 Felix Avenue.
3.1.3 West of College Avenue

The inventory areas ‘East of College’ and ‘West of College’ are separated by a swath of green space, part of the ETR railway corridor that traverses north into the City of Windsor.

The area consists mainly of residences converted to rental housing stock. There is an increase in the number of buildings West of College that show unique architectural characteristics as compared to East of College. This area consists mainly of early 1920s form with some sections of late 1800s to pre 1920s, as well as some post WWII dwellings particularly east of Wyandotte, and in townhouse blocks on Bloomfield Road and St. Antoine Street.

This early 1920s duplex is perfectly symmetrical about its centerline, duplicating interesting parallel gable roofs on its main façade, and entrances. The main form is similar to the four square block house with its façade, a subgroup of the Tudor. The entrances identify the autonomy of the housing units but also share the exterior social element of the porch.

The duplex is a 2 storey structure constructed of masonry with detailing on its porch columns. Windows are increased in size compared to the post-war housing stock with its twin double hung square introducing more light to its interior spaces.

783 to 785 Felix Avenue
The residence at 749 Mill Street West, also a rental, is a 2 storey Tudor Style house and one of the larger residential built forms identified in the inventory. This particular property is situated on a corner lot.

As is typical with Tudor Style, it has a large roof area with predominant gable end constructed of stucco and segmented by wood trim borders.

The first level is constructed of masonry and the fenestration in the house is related more to the function of the interior than to the aesthetic of the exterior, particularly on the facades.

The area incorporates a mix of early 1920’s housing stock. Across the street from the Tudor exist variations of four square built form. Although very similar in building form, the simple detail is altered in its construction materials of masonry, stone, siding as well as the form of the windows, particularly on the main façade.

This form of 2 to 2 ½ storey housing stock was very common in the 1920’s subdivision and can be seen throughout the study area West of College.
The West of College Avenue Study Area is the transition zone between the pre 1900s and the post-war area. This is supported by the mix of housing stock in this area from the 1 to 1 ½ storey form to the 2 to 2 ½ storey form on the same street. There is considerable diversity of height, built form, material, style and architectural integrity in the area with many dwellings having undergone substantial alteration and/or loss of original elements to windows, porches, dormers and exterior facing materials.

3.1.4 Notable Buildings and Architectural Features (West of College Avenue)

There is an increasing number of unique built form and properties of interest for possible designation in the West of College Avenue as compared to the East of College Avenue Study Area. Similar to the Marlborough Public school façade, the J.L. Forster Secondary school façade deserves consideration for designation.

The Mason-Girardot house, constructed in 1879, was designated under Part IV. It is characteristic of the Victorian Era Italianate Style. The paired entry doors with transom, paired windows, and round window dormer are characteristic of this style as is the ornate detailing of the porch surround and front bay window.

This particular residence is constructed as a 2 storey plus attic, masonry construction.
The Gauthier House constructed in 1900 and 462 Brock Street constructed in 1890 are red brick of the Vernacular “Ontario House” style.

These houses are 1 ½ storeys with simple gable roofs. The main features consist of flat arched windows and a hipped roof verandah supported by four simple columns. Two chimneys bookend the main centre gable and entrance. This Gauthier House was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1998.

These houses are identical except for differences in the porch column details and chimneys which most likely were removed at some point in time from the 462 Brock Street property.

Other properties of interest in the West of College Study area are 749 Rosedale constructed in 1929, 3215 Peter, the Vickers-Gray House, constructed in 1909, 3323 Peter built in 1920 and 3327 Peter built in 1900. Other residential properties which are architecturally distinct tend to be in the Rosedale, Peter, Detroit Streets area of the West of College study area.
The inventory area ‘West of College Avenue’ is a transition area of early 1920s residential to Postwar 1950s. There are some pockets of townhouses in this area as well, but for the most part, they exist along the green space corridor which bounds College Avenue as existed in the East of College Avenue area.

The south portion of the West of College Avenue area consists mainly of 1 to 1 ½ storey with some 2 storey mix. This housing mix is also intertwined by 1970’s apartment towers, 6 to 8 storeys in height that significantly subdues the opportunity for architectural merit. The south portion of this study area shows no significant architectural selections for consideration in the Heritage District.

There is an increase in interesting architectural built form along Peter Street north of Brock Street to Mill Street as well as in the Peter Street / Rosedale Avenue area. This is supported by the streetscape vista which complements the residential district with the boulevard streets.

While the Mason-Girardot Manor and the Gauthier House are presently designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, other properties presently under consideration 749 Rosedale, 3215 Peter, 3323 Peter, and 3327 Peter deserve merit, mainly due to their history.

### 3.1.5 Sandwich Street Study Area

The Sandwich Street Study area boundary is Peter Street to the East, the Detroit River to the West, the Ambassador Bridge to the north and Prince Road to the South.

This sub study area contains the highest proportion of architectural built form of interest as well as the highest mix of use. The previous study sub-areas were comprised mainly of residential stock while the Sandwich Street Study area contains a broader range of uses. However, it should be noted that the majority of architectural built form of heritage interest exists north of Chippawa Street. There are a few architectural features that are significant between Prince Road and Chippawa including the Sandwich First Baptist Church, The Baby-Lajeunesse house, the Askin-Baylis House, and the R. Pollard House.
3.1.5.1 Prince Road to Chippawa Street

Sandwich Street south consists of a number of variations of the four square house characteristic of the early 1900s. These houses are very simple in form and usually contain front porches and front dormers. These two storey houses utilize the attic space within their four sided hip roofs.

The construction materials vary from wood siding to concrete block depending on locally available construction materials. A local concrete block manufacturing plant supplied the concrete block for those textured block houses.

The Sandwich Street South area also contains many low rise apartment blocks with entrances that face the main Sandwich Street. These properties often have extended deep lots that contain multiple units and parking for the complex.

The development of this 1970 / 1980 housing form provides low cost housing for the area but makes it very challenging for consideration as a Heritage Conservation District. These apartment tracts were designed as simply as possible lacking the character of some of the properties of downtown Sandwich.
3.1.6 Notable Buildings and Architectural Features (Prince Road to Chippawa Street)

The Sandwich First Baptist Church is one of the most important properties in terms of the history of the area. This church was a refuge to black slaves seeking freedom. Due to the proximity to the Detroit River, the slaves in the 1850’s used Sandwich Baptist as a place of hiding.

This church was built in 1851, after the expansion of the original log structure that was constructed in 1820.

It became a National Historic Site in 2000, the highest Heritage Designation in Canada.

The Baby-Lajeunesse House is a simple Georgian Revival House converted to a variety store / residence. It was constructed in 1855 and is an example of the modest form of residence intermixed with the larger format of the 2 ½ storey four square house. This property is presently a designated property as it was the birthplace of the first Mayor of Sandwich.

The Askin-Baylis House built in 1902 is an example of a modified four square. Its roof lines are simple hips similar to the four-square but it is much larger as a result of an offset rear bay allowing the creation of a wrap-around porch. It is common to the Regency architectural style, although very modest. Its detailing, porch, fenestration and roof fascia are very simple and lack ornate definition.
The R. Pollard House located at 3474 Sandwich was constructed in 1855. It consists of the modest scale and form similar to that of the Baby-Lajeunesse House.

It is a 2 storey with similar masonry colour and texture styles. The windows and entrance door are simple flat arch style.

3474 Sandwich Street – R. Pollard House

3.1.6.1 Chippawa Street to Detroit Street (Sandwich Central Business District)

This area from Chippawa Street north to Detroit Street in the Sandwich Study Area is the Central Business District (CBD) of Sandwich. This area contains the greatest mix of architectural built form other than residential although minor single unit residential exists in this area.

This is the town centre and contains a number of architecturally and historically significant structures which are important to the origin and development of Sandwich.

Sandwich Central Business District

3305 Sandwich Street - St. John Anglican Church & Cemetery
St. John Anglican Church & Cemetery was established in 1796, one of the oldest structures in the Sandwich area, with its current building constructed in 1852. This property was designated in 2004 under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Tower was constructed in 1852 and is of the Norman style after the province of Normandy in northwest France, while the rear of the building was removed and rebuilt in 1871 in Gothic style.

Mackenzie Hall, now a Community Centre, is the former Essex County Courthouse constructed in 1855 and was designated in 1978. Its form is very prominent in the centre of the Sandwich CBD and is characterized by the Tuscan Renaissance Revival Style. This building is solidly constructed of hand dressed limestone and sandstone trim. Wooden cornices and pediment complement the stone detailing.

3277 Sandwich Street – Mackenzie Hall

356 Brock Street – Windsor/Essence County Jail

3255 Sandwich Street – Former Sandwich Town Hall

356 Brock Street was once the former Essex County Registry Office. The initial section (approximately ¼ of the current building) was constructed somewhere between 1855 and 1858, with a substantial addition in 1925. It is a 1 storey building constructed of smooth dressed stone.

The building is of the Tuscan Revival style, consisting of circular pediments that once contained the words ‘County Registry Office’.

3255 Sandwich Street was once the Sandwich Town Hall. Designed in 1911 and constructed in 1912, it is a 2 storey red brick building which once housed the police station as well as the library. This Classical Revival structure is symmetrical with a slate hip roof and portico surround porch.
The Duff Baby Mansion, constructed in 1798 and oriented to capture a view of the Detroit River is the oldest known building in Southwestern Ontario. The former residence was owned by the Honourable James Baby, a politician who served on the Executive and Legislative Councils of Upper Canada which is now known as Ontario.

This 2 ½ storey Georgian Style structure was framed of hand-sawn timbers, clad in pine clapboard, and sits on a stone foundation. It was designated in 1977 and currently is owned and maintained under an Ontario Heritage Foundation Easement.

The Perry-Breault house, its neighbour to the east, located at 245 Mill Street, is a Vernacular Queen Anne Cottage Style built in 1895. This structure was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1999. Its form is an L shape 1 ½ storey with paired double hung windows in its roof dormers, and a triple double hung window in its main street gable. It is also adorned to the street face with a full width verandah and a bay window adjacent to the intersection of its L shape.

This residence originally had cedar shingles on its roof, and clapboard and fishscale siding. Some of the ornateness remains in its detail at the gable peak and the fascia gingerbread trim.
The Jules Robinet Winery Building was constructed in 1895 and designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1993. It is a three storey Vernacular Commercial Building with a flat roof and angle corner entrance. Its detailing consists of flat top arched windows, and bracket supports on the cornice.

3200 Sandwich Street – Jules Robinet Winery Building

The Sandwich Post Office was constructed in 1906 and is a familiar form of architecture across small towns across Southwestern Ontario.

This building resembles the Romanesque and Classical Revival Styles and is a 2 ½ storey red brick structure with a stone base. This style consists of mansard dormered roofs and cornices detailed with dentil moulding.

This building was a very important part of the Sandwich downtown and displayed a fountain in the hardscaped front area of the property.

The Langlois House built in 1888 is another example of modest architecture in the central Sandwich area.

It is of the Queen Anne Style and although the main form remains intact, alterations over time have removed much of the detail of the Queen Anne Style.

363 Mill Street, the former Sandwich Fire Hall, was built around 1921 but its accompanying stable predated 1915. The original structure was reconstructed after a 1940s fire that destroyed the upper floor and the top of the hose drying tower. The remaining structure is very modest in form and detail. The
original fire hall, designed by a local architect, was designed in the Classic Revival Style.

The J. Spiers store on the corner of Sandwich and Mill Streets is one of the few commercial selections of architecture of notable interest. Its 2 storey form and masonry structure is common throughout the small downtowns of Southwestern Ontario. Typical for this building type was the small family shop on the main level with living accommodations on the second level. Flat top arch windows decorate the upper level.

The Wigle-Hanaka House located at 3164 Sandwich Street, also a modest house of light red brick, common to this area, includes a small entry porch on the front for shelter. This residence is not only unique due to its small scale, but also because of its setback from the street, providing a large front yard area untypical of main street residences. Designated in 1993, this Georgian Revival Cottage was built approximately 1890. Another interesting and unique feature of this narrow residence is the perfect alignment of the front and rear entrances which in African terms was called the ‘shotgun’ style.
The Dominion House Tavern was built in 1880 and Designated in 1993. It is of the Georgian Revival Style. This structure originally had a surrounding verandah but it was removed when excavation took place for a basement and an addition in 1945.

The McGregor-Cowan House located at 3118 Sandwich Street is representative of Georgian architecture and was originally built in 1808. Constructed of clapboard siding, it is simple in form and symmetrical about the entrance. Its chimneys on either side of the roof ridge were part of a unique French-Canadian heating system at that time, independently heating a separate half of the house.

While there are many other selections of architecture and features in the Sandwich Street Study area, the major selection of notable buildings, and designated properties exist in the this study area. This Central Business District is the key area, architecturally, for designation as a Heritage Conservation District.

### 3.1.6.2 Detroit Street to Huron Church Road

The area from Detroit Street to Huron Church Road consists of unique residences, open space, and wonderful vista of the Ambassador Bridge, a historic structure in itself, in the background of this area. While there has been an influx of multi-unit residential complexes in the last 30 years, this area has retained some of the most unique residences in the Sandwich study area.

The residential area in the Detroit, Alexander, Rosedale, Indian Road and Peter area contains some of the most unique houses in the whole of the Study Area. These houses consist of an array of various roof forms as well as entrances and architectural detail. Mansard cut roofs, and varying styles of Tudor detailing add to the distinctive neighbourhood adjacent to the University area.

This is also complemented by the Alexander and Rosedale boulevard streetscape that pronounce the stately architectural built form.

While many of the houses along Indian Road function as rental properties, as do a majority
west of College Avenue, these buildings contribute to the unique residential area of the Sandwich Study area, with those on the south side of Indian Road being more intact.

As well there is an interesting mix of housing style and type including the row housing form which exists on Rosedale in the Donnelly Street area.

This area deserves further investigation as a part of a Heritage Conservation District.
3.1.6.3 Notable Buildings and Architectural Features (Detroit Street to Huron Church Road)

The Marentette House located at 3066 Sandwich Street is yet another example of the modest architectural form in the Sandwich Study Area. This ‘Ontario Cottage’ Style displays a full porch across the front of the house and a steep gable centred on the main façade. It is typical of the ‘working man’s cottage’ design brought to Canada by the British. Most of the ornate detail of this Ontario Cottage, constructed in 1856, has been removed over time.

The William McKee House located at 3020 Sandwich Street on the contrary is a large estate known as the ‘Casa Grande’. This large structure of the Tudor Revival Style is one of the most ornate residences in the whole study area maintaining its Tudor detailing. It boasts two large gable facades symmetrically placed about the entrance. It is prominently placed to view the Detroit River, was built in 1907 and deserves individual designation or inclusion in a Heritage Conservation District.

The Masson-Deck House located on Alexander was built in 1924 and designated in 1998. This house is of the French Cottage Style with steep hip roofs and flat top dormers. The roof is constructed of cedar and the main body of the house is made of stucco exterior.

The peak of the house is topped with a cupola chimney. Its entrance is subtly decorated with a small canopy supported by wooden brackets.
The Leroy Rodd House built in 1925 is located at 3034 Peter. This house is a 2 ½ storey residence representative of the Colonial Revival Style. It displays a low pitch centered dormer and portico entrance.

Triple windows decorate the front façade on each side of the symmetrically designed face architecturally placed about the entrance. The building is constructed of stucco accompanied by projected horizontal trim below the second floor window sills.

3.1.7 Summary of Architectural Inventory

The area East of College Avenue consists of mostly post war residential stock and lacks the substance to justify its consideration as part of a Heritage District. There are select properties which should be considered for designation on an individual basis under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act such the Marlborough School façade, the Old Dairy Building at 1055 Felix Avenue, and the Maryvale Convent on Wells Street. The residence at 937 Felix Avenue, thought to have been constructed in 1867, also deserves further investigation and consideration as one of the oldest houses in that area.

The area West of College Avenue shows an increase in the number of designated properties and properties for potential designation. However, the discontinuity of the heritage built form presents significant challenges for this area to be part of a Heritage Conservation District.

There is also a high ratio of rental housing stock in the West of College Avenue study area due to its proximity to the University of Windsor. In such areas, single family housing stock frequently is viewed as opportunities by small investors to capitalize in the real estate sector and therefore there is a high number of converted homes, walk up apartments and six storey apartment blocks integrated, although not well,
amongst the built form in this area. This creates a major juxtaposition in adjacent housing scales, lack of landlord upkeep and architectural life and safety features such as exit stairs appended to historic homes in the most simplistic and unadorned ways possible. This is also compounded by buildings which are abandoned as well as exhibit features which attract vandalism.

The challenge in this area is to create policies to monitor and regulate such activities which will often continue to erode the districts if the problems are not addressed.

The West of College Avenue area does contain some properties of merit, primarily on Peter Street adjacent to the Central Business District. These consist mainly of the Mason-Girardot House, the Gauthier House, presently designated, as well as other properties which should be considered for designation on an individual basis such as 3323 Peter, 3327 Peter, and 462 Brock Street, constructed in 1890.
Erosion of Heritage Building Stock

In general the largest selection of architectural inventory for consideration exists in the Sandwich Street Central Business District from Chippawa to Detroit in terms of building function. This area contains architectural and historical selections in the government, institutional, commercial, and mixed use areas.

There remain a number of challenges in this area as well but these challenges are more likely to be overcome by instituting policies to retain and help restore the built form in this area in order to preserve some continuity of the architectural form and features.

In particular, the Central Business District contains a number of buildings that have been covered over time with the modern materials of aluminum or vinyl siding and the replacement of large storefront windows with small uninviting sliding windows. These elements are often reversible and provide an opportunity to reestablish the façade on the main street that once existed.

Although more difficult to reverse, there is a discontinuity of scale in some buildings due to the abandonment and removal of the second and third floors. As well there appear to be a number of open undeveloped lots on Sandwich Street. This is an opportunity to develop policy and guidelines for the development of the lots in the Heritage Conservation District that will reinforce the existing heritage built form. The integration of similar building form, scale, architectural detail, and setbacks will assist in developing and reinforcing the continuity necessary within a Heritage District.

As presented, the residential area in the Detroit, Alexander, Rosedale and Peter area contain the most unique houses in the whole of the Study Area. These are architecturally significant due to the various styles, roof forms, as well as the architectural detail.

In summary, there are two areas deserving consideration of a Heritage Conservation District designation from an architectural perspective: the Central Business District and residential area north of Detroit to the Ambassador Bridge between Sandwich and Donnelly. These areas contain the broadest selection of architecturally significant built form with generally greater consistency and integrity and should be considered for designation as a Heritage Conservation District in part or as a whole due to the architectural form, architectural features, streetscape, and history of the buildings in these areas. While there are significant architectural and historical selections adjacent to this boundary, these properties would be more appropriately considered for designation on an individual basis under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.
4.0 VISUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ASSESSMENT

4.1 MATURE VEGETATION

What often contributes to the character of older neighbourhoods, and distinguishes them from other neighbourhoods is the presence of large mature trees and the overhead canopy that they provide. Mature street trees greatly contribute to the urban landscape fabric and are one of the most important elements in providing unity and defining a neighbourhood. They can be an extension of architecture in terms of representing the age of the built form both visually and functionally.

When many of the homes were built, air-conditioning did not exist, and the shade provided by trees was a significant function of the trees on hot summer days. Many working class neighbourhoods, without landscape features and paved roads, were deemed unsightly and the street trees contributed to the overall improvement of the neighbourhood. The appreciation may have changed over the passage of time, reflecting shifting attitudes towards the natural world and conflicts with the built environment, but generally shaded streets lined with mature trees in residential neighbourhoods were a source of civic pride. As urban environments grew, the urban dweller gradually became cut off from the natural world and their contact and understanding of trees became based on knowledge of the trees closest to them. The trees, in the parks and open spaces, and on the streets became significant in that they represented the limited contact with nature and their influence upon how the citizens thought and felt about the natural world.

Trees lining the streets and sidewalks were inventoried by the City of Windsor in order to depict the species and relative maturity of the present vegetation. 2440 street trees were inventoried within the study area; 370 were private homeowner trees and data was not collected for these specimens and thus not included in the results below. Information such as species, size and age for each of the remaining 2079 trees was recorded.
Ecoplans’ analysis of the data collected by the City of Windsor, as well as additional field inventory conducted by Ecoplans’ as part of this study indicates that within the study area, 4% of the street trees were considered to be large or mature trees (planted before 1935), while 74% of the trees were considered to be of an intermediate age and size (planted between 1965 and 1980). The remaining 24% of the trees were found to be immature in age and size (planted after 1980).

Sixty-five different tree species were inventoried within the study area. The dominant tree genus was the maple tree, which consisted of 46% of the entire tree population. Norway maple (Acer platanoides) was the most prevalent consisting of 24.4% of the total number of trees (63% of the maple population), while silver maple (Acer saccharinum) comprised 11.4% of the total population (25% of the maples). Other maple species included sugar maple (Acer saccharum) and red maple (Acer rubrum) each consisting of 1.5% of the total population; sycamore maple (Acer psuedoplatanus), columnar maple (Acer platanoides ‘Columnar’), Crimson King maple (Acer platanoides ‘Crimson King’), and Schwindler maple (Acer platanoides ‘Schwindler’) were also found within the study area.

Honey locust (Gleditsia tricanthos) was another dominant species with 13.8% of the street tree population. Little leaf linden (Tilia cordata) comprised 6.0% of the trees inventoried, while green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica) made up 4.0% of the population.

Norway maple represents the majority of the intermediate age/size category of the street trees, while silver maple made up a large majority of the mature trees inventoried. Honey locust and little leaf linden comprised the majority of the immature specimens.

For the most part, the residential streets within the study area are consistently lined with trees. Although intermittent gaps are present, a fairly continuous canopy was observed. Areas that had little to no vegetation included the north end of Bloomfield Road, the east end of South Street, and the southern half of Melbourne Road. Roads adjacent to industrial areas such as Russell Street and Wilkinson Street were also void of trees. College Avenue acts as an entry way to the area, yet it is lined with very few trees. This area should be focal point, providing views into the interior of the district.
Emerald ash borer is an inherent threat in Windsor and Essex County and as such, poses a threat to the ash trees and the overall canopy of the proposed district. The Emerald ash borer (EAB) attacks all sizes and species of ash (*Fraxinus* sp.). It was first detected in the Windsor area in July 2002 and since then it is estimated that several hundred thousand ash trees in Windsor and Essex County have been lost to the emerald ash borer. Infested trees have been removed and ash trees throughout the area are continually monitored for the pest. Unfortunately, the emerald ash borer can be difficult to detect early and signs of EAB can be mistaken for other pests and diseases that affect ash trees. The ash borer poses a significant threat to the proposed heritage district as ash composes 5.5% of the tree species. About half of the ash trees are considered to be intermediate in age and size while half are classed as immature.

Mature street trees in the proposed heritage conservation district study area are an essential element of the visual character of the area and are an integral part of the neighbourhood’s heritage integrity. In addition to the consistency of the mature and canopied tree lined streets, trees are also essential in providing a consistent feel to the neighbourhood by screening and softening the views of incompatible architectural additions to the neighbourhood such as multi-storey residential buildings and townhouse developments. This function also includes the screening or filtering of the view of the Ambassador Bridge and its associated traffic behind the houses along Indian Road.

### 4.1.1 The ‘Jesuit’ Pear Trees

Within the boundaries of the study area is a single tree referred to as the ‘Jesuit’ or ‘Mission’ Pear Tree, found in a vacant lot along Russell Street. Traditional lore has it that these trees originated from France (either Normandy or Provence) and were brought over by the Jesuit Missionaries in the 1700’s via Montreal. With due respect to the local lore, although neither we nor past historians/researchers have been able to substantiate their origin, the tree will be referred to in this document as the Jesuit Pears.

In addition to the one remaining tree found within the study area boundary, there is a second tree in the vicinity of the study area, at the corner of Riverside Drive West and Askin Avenue (as part of a residential landscape). A few remaining trees are found in Windsor, as well as in Detroit and the region (one specimen being behind the Windsor’s Community Museum La Maison Francois Baby House, 254 Pitt Street West).
The Pear trees were quite significant as part of the rural heritage of the area, in terms of their function (shade and food source) and visually as part of the landscape. The Plant and Microbial Genetic Resources Committee (PGRC) writes: “In the 1700’s French Jesuit missionaries planted pear trees in the region; they served as trail markers and a source of food for early settlers.”

The following caption is taken from Ernest Lajeunesse’s 1960 book “The Windsor Border Region: Canada’s Southernmost Frontier”:

“Orchards of apples, pear and cherries were to be found on nearly every farm. Situated in the southernmost part of Canada, and being almost surrounded by water, the frontier peninsula possessed exceptional advantages in this branch of horticulture. From these orchards came many noted kinds of apples, especially spies, russets and snows. As cider fruit these apples maintained a high reputation. The Detroit census for July 1782 reports prospects of a thousand barrels of cider (sic) being made that year. The crowning glory of these orchards was the pear tree. Nearly every farm had one or more of these giant trees that each year produced at least twenty-five to thirty bushels of fruit that was used for stewing and preserving. Although they have been called Jesuit pear trees, their origin is unknown and like the orchards they have all but disappeared from the scene.”

The following passage, written in 1887, also describes the ‘value and beauty’ that fruit orchards and specifically the pear trees contributed to the life and the agricultural landscape of the early settlers:

“Our view of Canadian agriculture would be incomplete indeed without a particular notice of these old orchards, which are so distinguishing a feature in the river landscape, and in which the Canadians showed such commendable enterprise...But the crowning glory of the French orchard was the pear tree. Nearly every homestead possessed one, some two or three few exceeded a half dozen. Such was its wonderful size and productiveness that one specimen usually amply satisfied the wants of a family. These pear trees were and still are, conspicuous objects in the river scenery and for size, vigor and productiveness are truly remarkable. A bole [trunk] six feet in girth, and a height of sixty feet are only common attainments. Many show a circumference of trunk of eight to nine feet, and rear their lofty heads seventy, and sometimes eighty feet from the earth! They bear uniform crops, thirty to fifty bushels being often the annual product of a single tree. The fruit is of medium size, ripening about the end of August, and though as a table fruit superseded by many sorts which an improved horticulture has introduced, it still holds a fair rank, and in some respects is not surpassed, if equally by any. The flesh is crisp, juicy, sweet and spicy. For stewing and preserving it is quite unrivalled.”
The text continues with the author questioning why they could not find historical references to the origin of the trees. She raises doubt about the assertion that seeds were brought from France (as opposed to nursery stock), because when grown from seed the trees would revert to their original form and the art of grafting was not practiced in these pioneer times by the Canadians, “and was little then practiced in America.” To bring seedlings across the ocean at that time would have been a daunting and laborious task, so exactly how these trees made their way to Canada is still unknown.

It is believed that the pear trees found in the area today are not the original trees, but that they are the progeny of the original trees. Researchers at the Plant and Microbial Genetic Resources Research Station believe that one of the pear trees near the station is close to 200 to 250 years old. The remaining trees have not reproduced on their own, however, the Research Station collected seed and are successfully producing seedling trees for distribution.

With respect to this study, the Jesuit Pear is a significant heritage resource and a direct link to the past history of the region.

4.2 ALIGNMENT AND GROUPING OF BUILDINGS

Often it is the elements of a landscape that determine its legibility as a place; the ease with which people can read a space and define it as a unique area. The alignment and grouping of buildings that collectively contribute to the streetscape often makes a significant contribution to the overall character or sense of place on a street. When buildings are of a consistent setback and scale along a street, it can create an uninterrupted rhythm along the street, contributing to the continuity of the landscape fabric. If buildings vary greatly in their scale and setback, it can create discord.

The study area can be divided into three sections using scale, setback, and alignment and grouping of buildings. The built form within the industrial landscape scale area, as shown to the left, is of a large scale, often dwarfing those buildings of a smaller scale that are adjacent. The setback from the road is not consistent throughout this area, and is often a considerable distance from the street. Buildings appear to be scattered throughout this area, and as such, there is no detectable rhythm along the streets. The overall scale, both with
respect to the buildings, as well as the vast open spaces of the area, contribute to its unfriendly nature with respect to human scale.

The prewar landscape scale is much more intimate than that of the industrial area. Buildings tend to be more consistent in their alignment and groupings. Within an area bounded by Russell Street, Detroit Street, Peter Street and Prince Road buildings tend to be more commercial in nature, and are typically two to four stories tall. There are also several institutional buildings, such as General Brock Public School, St. John’s Church, as well as the Windsor Jail, that are not of the same scale or setback as the majority of the buildings in the area, but for the most part, due to their massing and architectural detailing, serve as markers or accents within the streetscape. The predominant height of the buildings in the area, outside of the commercial core, is two-storey. Consistency is particularly apparent on streets such as Indian Road or Rosedale Avenue, where save for a few lots where homes have been demolished, the setbacks and alignments are repetitive, creating a strong sense of human scale.

Within the post war landscape area, the alignment and grouping of buildings are perhaps the most consistent of all the areas within the overall study area. There is little to no variation on many of the streets in terms of the heights of buildings, and the setbacks are quite tight to the street, contributing to the spatial sense of the area. More recent public housing developments along Millen Street and Wells Street, while they do have a consistent pattern of development, ignore that of the rest of the street, and often turn their backs on the neighbourhood. In addition, there are several institutional buildings...
within the area that differ from the rest of the built form on the streets.

While there are many notable buildings within the study area that differ from their surroundings, and therefore serve as architectural punctuation marks within the streetscape, few serve as markers, or definitions of space, and transitions between neighbourhoods.

4.3 VIEWS AND VISTAS

Views are openings in the natural or built environment that allow observation of scenic vistas and viewsheds. Views and vistas serve as the windows to, from, or within the study area. Views can be long or short, open or closed. View can often serve as one of the defining features of a place, if it is significant or memorable.

One of the more scenic features associated with the study area is the Detroit River. A wide ribbon of deep blue water that flows along the northwestern boundary of the study area, there are several viewpoints with views to a picturesque riverbank dotted with pendulous weeping willow. It should also be noted that although the river does provide such views, these are limited from within the study area. Much of the industrial development along the river screens views to the river from within the study area. Several of the parks along the river provide optimal viewing locations, however from within the built environment, it is only Detroit Street that affords viewers a riverbank vista.

The Ambassador Bridge is a grand and imposing built form, and is visible from many locations throughout the study area. The bridge is a highly symbolic structure for many, representing the connection between two countries, the history of development in the area, as well as the ingenuity of mankind. As such, it serves as an important touchstone in the neighbourhood, to not only the history of Sandwich, but to Windsor as a whole. Vistas to the bridge are afforded to viewers along Sandwich Street, as well as from specific points on Russell Street and Alexander Avenue. There are also fleeting views from other locations, particularly in the winter months when vegetation is defoliated, on street such as Rosedale Avenue and Indian Road.
Many of the tree lined streets within the district provide important vistas. Streets such as Rosedale Avenue have long, picturesque views that are framed by stately street trees. Many of the streets within the study area are long, straight, and often uninterrupted due to relatively little relief in topography, and therefore afford viewers long views that span nearly the width of the study area, such as on Peter Street. On others, the roadway takes a sharp angle, and therefore terminates the view. This occurs on Alexander Avenue, where the roadway turns to meet Rosedale on a right angle, and therefore the view is terminated by stately homes, and framed by large street trees.

4.4 APPROACHES TO AND FROM THE STUDY AREA

Approaches to or from a place are often categorized as either detectable or undetectable. Many approaches are announced or emphasized by gateways, or other signals that the space or place is somehow distinguishable from that which neighbours it. This may be a shift in the built form, land use or scale of a place.

Many of the approaches to the study area are signaled by a change in the scale of the built form in the area. The boundary at Huron Church Road is well defined because of the scale and capacity of the roadway itself. When traveling across Huron Church road into most points within the study area, the change in scale and land use is quite evident. Shifting from the large institutional scale of the university, or that of the many commercial developments along Huron Church Road on the east side, the scale becomes much more intimate to the west, signaling a change in the character of the place. Along Huron Church Road itself, there are no detectable approaches to the study area, predominantly because of the large greenspace corridor established along the length of the west side of the road.
Along the length of Prince Road the difference between the north and south sides of the road is less apparent, but still detectable for the most part. Much of the south side of the road consists of institutional development, thus it has a much larger scale and setback from the road than that of the residential on the north side. At the intersection of Prince Road and Huron Church Road, there is nothing to indicate a gateway or approach into a space that differs from that which is adjacent.

A change in scale also indicates an approach to a unique area on Sandwich Street. Traveling north along Sandwich Street towards the study area, much of the landscape adjacent to the road is dominated by industrial development, and can be characterized by fairly large open spaces. At Watkins Street, this character shifts noticeably, as the buildings become smaller in scale, and the setback from the road decreases significantly. Similarly when approaching the study area from the north, traveling south, the change in scale is apparent at Chewitt Street, where the wide open spaces of adjacent parks disappear, and the more intimate setbacks of the commercial district appear. This gateway effect is somewhat confused currently by the proliferation of signage along the length of Sandwich Street that identifies Old Sandwich Towne.

4.5 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces provide much needed areas of refuge within our urban centres. They are the spaces in which nature becomes accessible for urban dwellers, an island of green within a sea of hard spaces. Historically, parks were thought of as an important place in terms of health care, often referred to as breathing spaces amid the smog of the industrial revolution.

To a certain extent, the parks within the study area boundary still perform the same function. The area faces many problems regarding elevated levels of pollution, and the trees that spread their large canopies within these parks perform an important role in terms of mitigation of air quality today. The parks and open spaces of the neighbourhood are the lungs of the neighbourhood.
None of the parks within the study area boundary have historical significance per se, however several of them have elements within them that serve as important touchstones to the area’s collective history. The windmill in Mill Park is a replica built in 1992, however, it represents not only the mill built by one of Sandwich’s most important historical figures, Jacques Baby, it also represents the many windmills that once lined the Detroit River. There are also civic open spaces within the study area that contain similar historical replicas, such as the fountain that sits in front of the Post Office on Sandwich Street, which appears to date from the early 1900’s, but was in fact fabricated much more recently. The cemetery associated with St. John’s Church also represents some of the tangible history of the area. The cemetery dates back to the early 1800's, and represents one of, if not the first, integrated cemeteries in Canada. As such, it represents an important part of not only the history of the people of Sandwich, but for the entire country.

Some of the parks within the study area serve to spatially define some of the smaller neighbourhoods within the study area. Both Crowley Park and College Avenue Park are large tracts of greenspace that flank College Avenue. In part, they form the boundary between the prewar and post war landscape scale areas, as shown to the right.

Bradley Park and Matchette Park are the oldest parks within the study area, dating to 1943. These parks represent the cultural history of the area, as both were constructed and enhanced to respond to a booming population following the Second World War. Both of these parks contain play equipment, large expanses of green spaces and many mature trees.
Parks such as Brock, Mill and McKee along the waterfront also reflect the history of the study area in name only. McKee Park, for example, was named after a former Mayor of the Town of Sandwich.

4.6 STREETS AND LANES

Crisscrossing throughout the landscape, streets and lanes are often the tie that binds the fabric of the landscape together. Linking people and places together, they are often compared to the arteries and veins of the human body, and are the conduits through which we all must travel to get from one place to another.

Perhaps the most utilitarian of all streets associated with the study boundary, Huron Church Road serves as an important international connection between the United States and Canada. At peak times, transport trucks can be seen queuing for kilometers to cross the Ambassador Bridge. As such, the road represents a strong physical barrier, daunting for both pedestrians and motorists to cross. The greenspace that flanks the western side of the road provides an important buffer for the study area, but given the scale of the roadway itself, as well as most of the traffic on it, it contributes little to the streetscape in general. Prince Road, while not on the same scale as Huron Church Road, is also an arterial road with wider lanes and little streetscape charm.

Sandwich Street has a unique streetscape character within the study area. Dominated by commercial development, it represents the heart of Old Sandwich, and has many elements that contribute to it. In the older district, from Brock Road through to Detroit Street, pedestrian scale decorative lighting has been introduced. This lighting also extends down Mill Street to the Duff-Baby house, providing an important visual cue in terms of linkages.

Most of the streets internal to the study area are tree lined residential streets, and are of a picturesque quality. Streets such as Indian Road and Rosedale Avenue have rows of mature street trees that are relatively intact, and enhance the overall visual character of the streets. As is depicted on these photos, the prewar landscape contains the most mature street trees, and has the most streets with consistent rows of trees linking the neighbourhood.
View of planted centre median on Rosedale Avenue

Several of the streets on the western half of the study area have grassed medians that are planted predominantly with intermediate aged Norway Maple. In the prewar area, Indian Road and Rosedale Avenue both have planted centre medians which lend a more picturesque quality to them, and in the post war area, streets such as Lena Avenue, Felix Avenue and Beechwood Court have planted medians.

In the industrial area, streets typically have no sidewalks, curbs or gutters. Streetscape vegetation is often dominated by early successional vegetation typical of disturbed sites. In the prewar area, typically the streets have a large grassed boulevard, and sidewalks on both sides of the streets. This right of way confirmation often lends more of a grand sense of scale to the street, and is pedestrian friendly. In the post war area, streets typically have a much narrower boulevard between the sidewalk and the street, and sidewalks generally occur on one side of the street. This right of way configuration tends to lend a more suburban feel to this portion of the study area.

In addition to the streets of the neighbourhood, there are also several lanes that thread through the pre war area. Some of the lanes still function as they historically did, providing an additional layer of connectivity to the neighbourhood and serving a utilitarian role. Several have now been converted to turf, and are regularly mowed by the property owners adjacent. These lanes are not used as frequently by motorists, but provide pedestrian linkages throughout the prewar area. All of the lanes are narrow, approximately five metres in width. Many have scrub and successional vegetation bordering them, and some are framed with mature trees on adjacent properties.

View of typical lanes within the study area, both gravel and turf
4.7 MATERIAL, SURFACES AND TEXTURES

The materials, surfaces and textures used within a landscape often provide a strong connective or disjointed element to it. They can serve to link a streetscape, or to clutter it if there are too many variations within it. Those used within the study area tend to be of similar quality and style, adding a cohesive element to the streetscape overall.

Many of the driveways in the study area are the traditional asphalt, but there are some, particularly in the pre-war area, that tend to mimic more accurately what may have been there historically, using gravel or concrete unit pavers in two bands, with turf in between. In some instances, stamped concrete has been used in a pattern strongly resembling natural stone.

The spaces between homes and the streets are predominately lawn, a traditional treatment in the front yard. Sandwich Street tends to differ from the rest of the community in that it is dominated by commercial development, and therefore has more hard surfacing than other areas.

4.8 FENCES AND HEDGES

Fences and hedges are elements in the landscape which serve to link spaces visually, as well as separate them spatially. Historically, fences were used primarily for practical purposes, either to keep animals in or out. In Victorian times, fences were used to delineate space, but not predominantly for privacy. In modern times, fences or hedges are most often employed to enclose a space, and create a sense of privacy.

Most of the fences within the study area are of a wood plank or picket variation. There are several styles within the district, including the traditional picket with varying levels of detail, as well as the simple plank. Cast iron fences are also found within the district, a historically popular choice for the wealthy, as it could be cast into virtually any pattern. The cast iron fence that encircles the cemetery at St. John’s Anglican Church appears to be quite old, and provides function, separating public from private space, and contributes to the aesthetic quality of the streetscape.

There are several streets within the study area along which many homeowner’s have defined their private space with chain link fences. These fences are predominately utilitarian in nature, providing no privacy or aesthetic interest, only separating one lot from the next.
Hedges, often used for property boundary delineation and privacy, are found throughout the study area as well. Most are clipped to a standard height, and are composed of the typical hedge species, such as privet, boxwood and cedar.

4.9 SIGNAGE, LIGHTING AND STREET FURNISHINGS

Linking neighbourhoods together, signage, lighting and street furnishings are often an important element in the visual continuity or discord of a neighbourhood. They are elements that can collectively contribute to the character, or lack thereof within a given space.

There are many signs located along the length of Sandwich Street within the study area that identify Sandwich Town. These signs are built of natural stone, and do contribute to the overall character of the streetscape. However, as has been indicated previously, these signs may also contribute to some confusion regarding the definition of Sandwich as a place because of their scattered locations.

Of note are the many decorative murals located with the study area, particularly along the length of Sandwich Street. Not only do these murals serve to brighten drab building façades, they also serve to educate the public about the rich and diverse history associated with Old Sandwich Town.
Although the Old Sandwich Town signage and the decorative murals serve as a strong visual identifier and improve the aesthetic quality of Sandwich Street, there are also many signs associated with the commercial buildings along the street which detract from it. Many of the signs are not complimentary to the built form with which they are associated, and are often backlit or neon.

For the most part, street lighting throughout the district takes the form of the standard cobra head street lighting mounted on wood hydro poles. The only decorative street lighting is a decorative light fixture done in an historical style at a pedestrian scale. It is associated with the core area, from Brock Road through to Detroit Street and extending down Mill Street to Russell Street. This lighting identifies the area as unique, as well as linking some of the more important built elements within the study area.

Street furnishings are also present within the core area, and are coincidental with the decorative street lighting. Street furniture includes higher end bus shelters, planters, decorative trash receptacles and benches. All of the elements contribute to the overall character of Sandwich Street, and identify it as a unique place within the rest of the study area.

4.10 VISUAL DETRIMENTS

Visual detriments are those elements that detract from the overall visual character of a place. Often they tend to be of a different quality or aesthetic than the surrounding elements, and tend to clutter or detract from the more pleasing elements in a landscape.

Lack of appropriate property maintenance detracts from the overall visual character of the neighbourhood in many areas. Some of the buildings within the study area have been abandoned by owners, in effect abandoning the entire neighbourhood. Homes that are in a state of disrepair, have been damaged by fire, or are boarded up occur regularly on the fringes of the pre-war area, often at the interface between industrial and residential land uses. These homes represent gaps within the streetscape, and detract immensely from the rest of the streetscape.
Inappropriate signage is also a distracting element occurring within the study area. There are several examples scattered throughout the pre war area, primarily associated with convenience stores and strip development. The majority occur along Sandwich Street, where there are many neon and backlight signs that seem to dwarf the buildings upon which they are mounted, confusing the visual landscape immensely.

Unorganized car parking can also detract from the visual appeal of a neighbourhood. Cars that are parked on front yards tend to distract from the heritage character of the buildings behind them. Although this is not a great problem within the study area due to the abundance of on street parking available, it does occur in some areas.

4.11 VISUAL AND CONTEXTUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In an area where built form varies in terms of scale or style, the streetscape is often what provides a sense of continuity in a community. Improving upon this streetscape, and thus improving the legibility of the study area as a place, is one of the greatest opportunities that exists for the study area today. Streetscape opportunities are not limited to boulevard tree planting but can include providing consistent lighting, signage, furnishings, boulevard treatments, paving improvements such as pedestrian walkways and vehicular crossings. Additional improvements can include banners, ornamental plantings, interpretive panels and public art.

Existing streetscape features are illustrated on Figures 5, 6 and 7. The neighbourhood boasts many streets with mature trees, but there are also many streets with gaps within these trees, stretches devoid of any street trees or recently planted and the opportunity to interplant and continue to strengthen that resource exists within the neighbourhood.

The study area has a very rich history, with many of the residents living in the neighbourhood for several generations. This history also includes volunteerism and community involvement. The neighbourhood has tremendous opportunity in terms of taking collective ownership of some of the green spaces within the study area, and improving upon them. In doing so, not only would the landscape of the neighbourhood be improved, so too would the sense of community within it.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in the study area is to provide guidelines for a consistent and unifying streetscape treatment within the context of mixed use (residential single dwellings, multi-storey high density residential units and commercial uses). Maintaining and enhancing the boulevards to be...
consistent as well as increasing opportunistic plantings would serve to strengthen the unity of the place to deal with challenges such as varied building set-backs, detrimental views such as uncomplimentary parking, fencing, and commercial signage fronting some streets. Challenges may also include where space is lacking for any form of streetscape. Due to the mix of both commercial and residential properties and uses along the streets, there is also an opportunity to incorporate more historically sensitive street furniture in the area. The streetscape needs to be coordinated in this area to reflect, or pay homage to the historical roots of the neighbourhood, and to reflect more strongly the spirit of the place.

Another issue which can both be an opportunity and challenge are gateway features to be considered at major entries into the proposed heritage conservation district. The location and nature of these features, which would greatly benefit the character of the ‘place’ and the aesthetics of the streetscape can be explored in more detail in the design guidelines phase of the study.

Footnotes


Street furniture

An example of a wall between homes at St. John's

A formal sidewalk along a property with a formal entrance

There is a large yard which is partly covered with trees and shrubs. It is separated from the street by a fence.

An example of a formal hedge, commonly found within the study area.

Materials

An example of the decorative sign posted on the sidewalk.

The sign is located on the sidewalk near the street.

This information about the study area included in the materials.

Signage

There are several unique features to Sandwich. These are discussed in the study area.

Through the study area, there are many homes with front porches and gardens.

Many of the homes within the study area have large front yards.

Views

There are several views of the study area from different perspectives.
parks and open space

gateways

mature vegetation