

# 55 Main Street, Village of Bobcaygeon (Bobcaygeon Town Hall)

## Heritage Designation Evaluation

Village of Bobcaygeon

PLAN &) PT LOTS 2 & 3 ED OF;MAIN ST

2025



## Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. Staff have determined that 55 Main Street has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### 1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

#### i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method:

The property is a representative example of a late nineteenth century small town municipal building. The structure includes a range of features that drawn on late Victorian architectural styles including its polychromatic brickwork, quoins, window and door surrounds, and belfry.

#### ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property displays a typical degree of craftsmanship for a building of this type.

#### iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

There are no specific technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.

### 2. The property has historical or associative value because it:

#### i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community:

The property has direct historical associations with the history of local government in Verulam Township and Bobcaygeon as the former Verulam Town Hall. The building was constructed in 1874, two years prior to Bobcaygeon's formal incorporation as a village in 1876. The property demonstrates the growth of local government in rural Ontario, and Bobcaygeon specifically, in the second half of the nineteenth century.

#### ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The property yields information regarding the history of local government in Bobcaygeon and Verulam Township as its former town hall.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:

The designer and builder of the property is not known.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property maintains and supports the historic character of Bobcaygeon's Market Square. Located on the north side of the Bobcaygeon River on the main land, Market Square developed as part of the original town site of Rokeby and is currently characterized by a collection of commercial and institutional buildings clustered around a central square, of which the subject property is one, that is distinct from the grid pattern and main street pattern found on the main island of the village.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

The property is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of Market Square which developed throughout the nineteenth century as a public square and commercial hub for the north side of the community. The Square continued to be marked by a cluster of commercial and institutional buildings facing the square which date from the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.

iii. is a landmark.

The building is a landmark for its longstanding role as a community building and gathering space, first as in its role as the local town hall and then through its later uses as the fire hall, Women's Institute and Lions Club.

## Design and Physical Value

55 Main Street has design and physical value as a representative example of a late nineteenth century small-town municipal building. Constructed in 1874, it demonstrates prevalent patterns in rural and small-town municipal buildings seen in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. While government buildings in larger centres were often large and architecturally complex structures, government structures in smaller communities were built on a smaller scale with less ornate details and designs, while nevertheless utilizing current architectural trends and stylistic features. The architecture of the subject property, which was constructed as the Verulam Township Hall, is demonstrative of the types of municipal buildings constructed in Ontario in the Victorian style and its key features such as polychromatic brickwork, a steeply pitched roof and belfry.

The original municipal buildings in Upper Canada, later Ontario, came about in the first half of the nineteenth century as local government was slowly established throughout the province. Prior to 1850s, when comprehensive legislation was introduced at the provincial level to provide direction and regulation municipal operations, local governments operated on a hodgepodge of legislation and regulation with varying degrees of control at a local level to collect taxation, provide services and enforce rules within a community. These early municipal governments were primarily concentrated in larger centres, such as Toronto – then York – Kingston, and Hamilton, which erected some of the first municipal government buildings in the province.

These buildings were erected due to a need to house the officials of municipal government. Prior to this, most government operations, except for those of the provincial government, took place in courthouses which also developed in many communities in the first half of the nineteenth century. The focus of courthouses, however, was very specifically legal judgement and enforcement, and many also contained jail spaces, either attached or in close proximity to the courthouse building, making them unsuitable for other local functions; many were also situated at a distance from the town centre, which was also not seen as desirable by local officials. Town halls were to be public, accessible buildings, and use of an existing courthouse did not always fit this need, making purpose-built structures required. The passage of the first Municipal Act in 1849 further emphasized the need for structures specific to the provision of municipal administration as the framework was established for the consistent creation of local governments at city, county and township levels across the province; the passage of this act and the regularization of municipal governance across the province created a boom in construction.

It was widely understood that these new local government buildings had a number of key roles in community life and their architecture was required to reflect this. On one hand, these structures needed to provide spaces for the

basic functions of municipal government, such as Council meetings and administrative offices. However, structures of these type were also widely used during the nineteenth century as assembly and performance spaces by community groups and their design and construction also needed to take that function into account. Occasionally, these buildings were actively designed to account for a broad array of uses and were actually intended as multi-purpose buildings, with separate spaces for uses as diverse as markets, auditoriums, and fire stations, along with administrative offices and council chambers. More broadly, these structures were fundamentally public buildings and needed to be both distinguishable and accessible to local citizens in order to facilitate the some of the core activities of community life.

Many early municipal buildings, both before and after the passage of the Municipal Act, were constructed in the Classical style popular during the first half of the nineteenth century. Often based on a Palladian-inspired plan, these buildings integrated Classical design elements, such as column, porticos, cupolas and rusticated quoins, into symmetrical and balanced plans. This was also the style favoured for other government buildings, including courthouses and reflected the general understanding of the period that Classical architecture was most suited for the buildings of government because it conveyed order, balance and dignity; it was also directly associated with the origins of democracy because of the source of the style in ancient Greece and Rome. The preference for this style endured, although by the later decades of the century, architects, and by extent the municipal governments that employed them, had begun to experiment with other dominant architectural style, resulting in a diverse array of late nineteenth and early twentieth century municipal buildings across the province.

Whatever the stylistic execution, however, these structures needed to fulfil a number of key functions. The first was the practical and administrative functions of municipal government and the other, associated community uses of the buildings. The other was to display a sense of civic pride and achievement through prominent and often monumental buildings. Town hall buildings were viewed as structures which physically and visually demonstrated the prosperity of a community and were intended to be a lasting monument to the town's local government to be used for years to come. Many local councils intended their buildings to be local, and sometimes regional, landmarks which emphasized civic pride and the accomplishments of local government. As a result, many of these buildings were excessive for their purpose and vastly overstretched the financial and material resources of the community; Victoria Hall in Cobourg (1856-60) is a well-known example where a substantial and monumental Classical structure was erected for a mid-sized town and far exceeded the needs and finances of the community in the mid-nineteenth century. Despite the practical and financial implications, however, it exemplified the approach to municipal architecture throughout the nineteenth

and early twentieth century which was to create a unique and distinguishable public business to both represent and facilitate the business of government within local communities.

Rural municipal buildings, however, while needing to fulfil the same requirements generally as their urban counterparts, were very different structures. While urban centres were able to create substantial architectural monuments, this was simply not feasible for small rural townships and villages that did not have the financial resources or the need to do so. While the complexity of local government in urban centres vastly increased throughout the second half of the nineteenth century as urban dwellings demanded increasing numbers of publicly funded services, the role of local government in rural areas remained substantially less complex and most municipal buildings reflected this. In most rural areas, the roles of mayor and councillor were part-time positions, and the number of municipal staff was very low; often there was only a township clerk as the local government's full-time employee and even the clerk was sometimes a part-time role alongside part-time treasurers, roads overseers, and tax collectors. As a result, the spatial needs of rural township governments were substantially less than their urban equivalents and buildings were constructed to reflect this reality.

A typical plan for rural township halls emerged quickly in the second half of the nineteenth century. These structures were generally built on a simple rectangular plan similar to a school house or small church. The interior was often only one room, although sometimes small offices were included for the township clerk. The primary room was arranged as a public meeting hall often with a raised platform at one end for council and seating for the public; as these buildings often also doubled functionally as performance spaces and this layout was easily adaptable for this use. As municipal functions increased in size and complexity throughout late nineteenth and twentieth century, these structures were sometimes replaced by larger dedicated municipal buildings while the older town hall remained as a gathering space; in many cases, however, they were expanded and modified as needed with additions and changes to interior arrangements.

From a stylistic perspective, these types of structures were fairly diverse and the architectural style they employed was often determined by when they were constructed with Classical motifs more popular in the early to mid-nineteenth century, Victorian elements taking over throughout the second half of the century, and a shift to Romanesque or Edwardian Classical forms by the turn of the century. Like their urban counterparts, rural township buildings tended to adhere to the popular stylistic forms of the day but, in keeping with the size of the buildings and financial resources of the community, were vastly less ornate and usually consisted of a few stylistic features pasted on a very simple building. Ancaster Town Hall (1870) is one of the more ornate examples

of this type of construction, integrating a range of Classical elements, such as columns, return eaves and a cupola, on what is effectively a rectangular box.

Although these buildings were still usually distinguishable architecturally from other rural buildings, some rural municipal buildings strongly resembled other types of institutional structures, particularly school houses. That they were constructed using a variety of architectural styles occasionally made it more difficult to differentiate between these new municipal buildings and other institutional architecture. However, their role as the seat of local government was emphasized not just by their architecture but also by their location. When constructing their new municipal buildings, councils generally wanted them to be located in a place that was a central hub for the local community to make them more easily accessible to the public. Most rural township halls were constructed in the township's largest settlement and commercial hub and were located in a prominent central place in that community. Not only did this make the township building accessible for people from the surrounding rural areas and hamlets, who would come into the larger centre for a variety of reasons, but also placed the structure in a position of prominence at the centre of community life.

The subject property was constructed in 1874 as the township hall for the Township of Verulam. At this time, Bobcaygeon had not been incorporated as a separate municipal entity and the village was the township's primary settlement; even after Bobcaygeon's incorporation two years later, it remained the township's administrative centre. The building was constructed as part of the fallout from the Municipal Loan Fund and Verulam Township, although with a number of others in what is now the City of Kawartha Lakes, received grant funding from the provincial government for the construction of local infrastructure. The building was constructed at a cost of about \$1,200.

The building is two stories in height with a steeply pitched gable roof topped with a small belfry. The building is of red brick construction with polychromatic buff brick decorative features, including quoins and window and door surrounds. The date stone and signage stating "Town Hall" remain extant in the gable on the front elevation of the building. Like most buildings of this type, the building is quite simple on a basic rectangular plan with symmetrical massing and no additions or protrusions; the one exception to this is the unique covered stairway on the southwest side of the structure which is used to access the upper storey of the building from the exterior. When it was originally constructed, the building was used as Council chambers, but also as a performance space on the second floor with a stage for plays, necessitating the upstairs access. It also contained a lockup holding cell and spaces for municipal administration.



Stylistically, the building drew from the overarching Victorian institutional style. Architecture classified as Victorian is diverse and eclectic, but falls outside one of the primary, and more rigid, stylistic types of the second half of the nineteenth century, such as Gothic Revival, Italianate, or Queen Anne styles. While many architects and builders across both rural and urban Ontario chose to construct new buildings in one of the more defined architectural styles of the day, others chose to take different elements from different styles and mix them to create what is now known generically as the Victorian style; although this term is often used to refer to any building outside of the major styles constructed between about 1840 and 1900, its use extended up until around 1910, when a shift to more consciously Classical forms emerged. This high-level category generally included a mix of Classical and Gothic motifs and was, by far, the most commonly employed in residential properties, and was characterized largely by their use of polychromatic brickwork, gable roofs and decorative elements including ornate bargeboard, moulded window hoods and rounded or lancet windows to add aesthetic appeal.

However, this style was also readily adapted to institutional buildings, particularly schoolhouses and municipal buildings. These buildings, including the subject property, were often fairly simple structures, generally a rectangular footprint with symmetrical massing and the use of the Victorian style provided them with additional aesthetic appeal that was not expensive to execute. Generally, these institutional Victorian buildings included a steeply pitched gable roof and polychromatic brickwork, executed in elements such as quoins, window and door hoods, and coursing, as well as decorative elements such as small belfrys and rounded windows. The subject property fits well within this architectural type and is representative of its execution on a small-town municipal building.

The building has had limited exterior modifications since it was originally constructed, except for the ground floor on the front façade. In 1934, the Bobcaygeon Fire Hall was relocated to this location and the original central doors to enter the building removed and replaced with three garage doors for the fire vehicles to enter and exit. When the building was later taken over by the Lions Club, the garage doors were removed and the central entrance replaced in its original location and with the buff brick door surround, although it is slightly narrower than the 1874 entrance with a single, instead of double doors.

When compared to other examples of small-town municipal buildings constructed around the same time period, the subject property falls well within the typical stylistic design and massing of structures of this type. A comparable, extant example can be found in Oakwood, where the Mariposa Township Hall is located; as with Verulam Township, Mariposa Township constructed the Town Hall here as its primary settlement area. Also



constructed in 1874 as part of a broader construction program for small-town municipal buildings at this time, this example is slightly larger and more ornate than the Bobcaygeon building but contains similar stylistic features including its steeply pitched roof and polychromatic brickwork, including its window hoods. Both buildings are highly typical of late nineteenth-century Victoria institutional design and, together, these two structures demonstrate the types of buildings being constructed in small communities for their municipal governments in the 1870s.

Overall, the subject property is demonstrative of small-town municipal buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century. It is executed using key architectural features that were popular in Victorian institutional architecture at this time, including the polychromatic brickwork, belfry and gabled roof on a small scale and with limited decorative features. It is a representative example of this type of building in Kawartha Lakes, built for the local governments of its former municipalities.

### Historical and Associative Value

55 Main Street has historical and associative value as the former Bobcaygeon Town Hall. The building was constructed in 1874 as a new town hall for the Township of Verulam and, after the incorporation of Bobcaygeon as its own separate village, was used by both municipal Councils for council meetings, as well as other community gatherings. The property yields information regarding the history of municipal government in Bobcaygeon and Verulam Township and the growth of local government in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries prior to their amalgamation as part of the City of Kawartha Lakes in 2001.

Verulam Township was first surveyed in 1831 and the first settlers arrived in the Township the following year. At the time of the survey, a village and mill site were reserved on Lot 16 in Concession 10 on the north side of the Bobcaygeon River. Initially named St. Albans, after the English village, the name was changed the following year by Lieutenant Governor John Colborne to Rokeby, named after Rokeby Park in England's County Durham. At the same time, lot 15 to the south of the townsite was purchased from George Boulton, an early speculator, by Thomas Need, an Oxford-educated son of an English country landowner and magistrate. The land Need purchased included the islands to the south of the government townsite and he quickly set about establishing a saw mill on the river, as well as surveying a new village site with the assistance of surveyor John Read. This site, along with the original government site, would eventually become Bobcaygeon.

Administratively, Verulam Township was first governed as part of the Newcastle District which was formed in 1798 including townships of part of what is now Northumberland County, Durham County and later Peterborough and Victoria Counties as they were surveyed throughout the early decades of

the nineteenth century; the northern part of the district was later detached to form the Colborne District that largely consisted of Peterborough and Victoria Counties. By 1850, a separate municipal Council had formed for the United Counties of Verulam, Fenelon, and Bexley and which met for the first time on January 21, 1850. These townships eventually split off to form their own governments as their populations grew throughout the 1850s.

The creation of this system of government was established through the Municipal Corporations Act, also known as the Baldwin Act after its primary author Robert Baldwin, in May 1849. The Act established a system of local government pertained to the entirety of Ontario, then Upper Canada, and effectively recognized two important pillars of local governance: first was that counties, as opposed to the older districts, were established as upper tier governments with responsibilities within their geographic bounds and second, local townships were recognized a unit of municipal government in rural areas. The Act was a major shift in how local municipalities were governed; prior to its passage, local areas were governed with a hodgepodge of local powers and organization based on a range of older legislation beginning with the District Councils Act in 1791. In contrast, the Act was comprehensive in its application and provided clear direction for elections and local powers. Where this had the most impact was in rural areas; most urban areas in the province were more or less governed with structured local governments by the mid-century, but local powers in rural areas were less defined. For rural townships, therefore, the Act introduced a clear system of local governance that allowed for local townships to pass by-laws, collected tax levies and provide local services, as well as their relationship with the upper tier county, although then, as now, provincial legislation limited and defined the powers that local councils could have.

The creation of a township Council in Verulam corresponded directly with this legislation. Through the clarification of what powers local areas had and how they were divided between upper and lower tier municipalities, townships such as Manvers had clear direction for local governance. The foundations of government proceeded quickly. In 1850, the township Council, which included Verulam, Fenelon and Bexley, elected councillors for five wards. Of these councillors, only two – James W. Dunsford and Jabez Thurston – were from Verulam Township, while the other three – John Langton, William Suddaby and Sam Brock – were from Fenelon. John Langton was elected as Reeve by the Council and their first meeting was held on January 21, 1850 in Fenelon Falls.

The functions of local government in the nineteenth century were fairly limited and this is reflected in the Council minutes and by-laws from 1850 onwards. By-laws included the appointment and remuneration of township officers, such as the treasurer and clerk, direction regarding assessment and taxation, the regulation of domestic animals, the construction of highways and sale of lumber and stone from road allowances, and the dispersion of funds for public

schools in the township. Additional items addressed by the Council throughout the late nineteenth century include the regulation of liquor and taverns, funding of infrastructure including bridges and wharfs, the purchase of fire equipment, the regulation of drains and watercourses, and providing grants to local organizations, namely the Agricultural Society. This was effectively the limit of what township councils were allowed to do at this time under the provisions of the Municipal Act at this time which limited the powers of different sizes and types of municipalities.

Under the Municipal Act, townships were also allowed to erect new town halls, which Verulam Township did in 1874. It is not entirely clear where the Council met prior to its construction. The new town hall was funded not by local taxpayers, but rather by the province. In 1852, the provincial government, then the government of the Upper Canada, established the Municipal Loan Fund to allow the newly forming municipal governments across the country to borrow at the same interest rates as the central government; this was largely intended to fund infrastructure projects, including railways. Over the next two decades, municipalities across the province borrowed at a steady rate, including for town halls. Many municipalities borrowed huge sums of money to build new civic buildings, plunging them into significant debt that many could not repay. By 1873, the government had to move to abolish the fund in order to limit municipal borrowing and, in doing so, took over municipal loans that had been unpaid.

However, in the spirit of fairness, the province also provided grants to municipalities that had not borrowed from the fund. Many municipalities who received the funding used them to build new or to complete in progress town halls, resulting in a substantial building boom of civic buildings between about 1873 and 1875. This included Verulam Township which received a grant of \$4,600 in 1874 from the province. A large portion of this grant was allocated for the construction of a new town hall near Market Square. Land was purchased from William Snowdown on the east side of Market Square for \$1. The new hall was not entirely intended for only the Council's use as it was much larger than was actually required, but was also intended to house a market, a holding cell, and performance space on the upper level. This type of multi-use municipal building was extremely common at this time and the construction of municipal buildings that included facilities such as performance spaces continued well into the twentieth century. In this way, the building was not only intended to be a centre for township governance and administration, but also a community hub for Bobcaygeon and the surrounding rural area.

The site for the new hall was chosen to be in Bobcaygeon as the township's primary settlement. By the mid-1870s, Bobcaygeon had a population of around 1,000 people and was by far the largest community in Verulam Township; it was accessible from both parts of the township on either side of Sturgeon

Lake. The community had grown rapidly throughout the 1860s and 1870s as the lumber industry brought substantial economic growth to the area with the expansion of the Boyd Lumber Company and associated local mill, and by extension, the growth of other local businesses and services, particularly supporting the agriculture and tourism sectors. The construction of the new town hall in this location made sense, making it both the economic and administrative hub of the township.

However, in 1876 just two years after the hall was built, Bobcaygeon incorporated as a village and a separate municipal entity from Verulam Township. At this time, communities which reached a population of 1,000 people were allowed to incorporate as their own communities and Bobcaygeon reached this population milestone – its nineteenth century peak – in the mid-1870s. The decision to separate from the township had several advantages for the growing village. It allowed the new Bobcaygeon Council to focus solely on issues related to the town, many of which, such as its major industrial growth, were very different from those in the rural parts of the township. However, and more importantly, village Council had great powers than their township counterparts to allow them to address challenges specific to growing population centres, particularly around fire inspections, public health, public cemeteries, and the regulation of markets.

Despite the separation of the township into two municipal entities, Bobcaygeon remained Verulam's township seat and the Council continued to meet there. It appears that both Councils and municipal employees continued to use and share the Verulam Town Hall which quickly became known as the Bobcaygeon Town Hall. For the new Village of Bobcaygeon, this proved a financial savings as they did not have to construct a new municipal administration building for the newly incorporated municipal government. It also made sense administratively; although the two municipal governments had separate Council and staff, they often acted in concert over shared matters. Similarly, unlike contemporary municipalities, late nineteenth century municipal governments had very few staff and their Councils did not meet on as regular a basis, meaning that less physical space was needed for meetings and administrative which made sharing a building easier. In 1900, Verulam Township sold the building to the village for \$1,200 with the agreement that the township Council would continue to use it which they did.

The building continued to serve municipal needs for most of the twentieth century. In 1934, the ground floor of the building was converted into the fire station when the village's original 1890 fire hall was demolished. During this time, the building was also used for the local Women's Institute which met in the back of the building. Finally, in 1959, both Councils and municipal administrations moved out of the old town hall and into the former Boyd Lumber Company offices which had been donated by Sheila Boyd for the

Bobcaygeon Public Library but which were transferred from the Boyds into the joint ownership of the Village of Bobcaygeon, the Township of Verulam and the Bobcaygeon Public Library Board. In 1990, the village finally sold the original town hall to the Lions Club which continues to occupy the building which serves as the Lions Hall. When the City of Kawartha Lakes was created in 2001, the Township of Verulam and Village of Bobcaygeon had already amalgamated into a single municipality, but no longer occupied or used this structure and it continued in the ownership of the Lions Club

The subject property is an important historic structure in Bobcaygeon for its role as the former town hall for both Verulam Township and the Village of Bobcaygeon. The property has direct historical associations with the history of local government in Bobcaygeon through this historic role and yields information regarding the development of the local municipal governments for both Verulam Township and Bobcaygeon from the mid-nineteenth century onward. It has also served as an important community building through its role as the town hall to its present role as the Lions Hall.

### Contextual Value

55 Main Street has contextual value as part of the historic landscape of Bobcaygeon's Market Square. Located on the north side of the Bobcaygeon River on the main land, Market Square developed as part of the original town site of Rokeby and is currently characterized by a collection of commercial and institutional buildings clustered around a central square, including the subject property which maintains and supports its historic character with regard to the street pattern and layout that is distinct from the rest of the village. It is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of the development of Market Square as a distinct commercial area and public square in the nineteenth century for the northern part of the community. It is a local landmark as the original Bobcaygeon Town Hall.

The area that is now the village of Bobcaygeon was surveyed in the early 1830s as part of the broader survey of Verulam Township at this time. As part of the survey, a village site was reserved on Lot 16 in Concession 10 on the north side of the Bobcaygeon River and named Rokeby. At the same time, Lot 15 in the same concession, which included the islands in the Bobcaygeon River, was purchased by George Boulton, then sold to Thomas Need who quickly established a saw mill in this area and set about surveying streets and lots on the island with the assistance of surveyor John Read.

The two village sites were both intended to be laid out in grid patterns, but in reality, it did not materialize in this way. An 1837 plan of Rokeby, which also shows the northern end of the main island, shows streets laid out in a grid pattern, which is consistent with the Read survey on the island, but not on the government town site which was realigned to centre around Market Square,

intended to be the commercial centre of Rokeby. This altered the alignment of the streets and removed the strict grid pattern present in the island survey, creating unique lots configurations and layouts on the main land where the subject property is located.

Market Square was intended to serve a primarily commercial purpose, but also serve as a public square with five streets - Front Street East, Front Street West, Queen Street, Joseph Street, and Main Street - emptying into it. The area was originally intended to serve as an outdoor market where farmers could sell their produce, although this function did not actually begin in the nineteenth century. However, the area quickly became a commercial hub for Rokeby and the northern part of the community. There is evidence of businesses being established in this area as early as the mid-nineteenth century and likely as early as the late 1830s in this area as the first businesses in Bobcaygeon began to open.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the area around Market Square was home to a range of small businesses encircling the square, which centred around a water fountain where local residents collected water. The 1904 Fire Insurance Map, which was prepared just six years after the subject property was constructed, shows a range of commercial properties around the square including several general stores, a grocer, livery stables, a carriage shop, carding mill and the Rokeby Hotel, which burned down the following year but was soon rebuilt. Two institutional buildings, Knox Presbyterian Church and the subject property, in its original role as the Bobcaygeon Town Hall, were also built on the square by this time.

In the present day, many of these commercial buildings have been retained, although not all of them and some of them have been converted to residential use; the two major institutional buildings also remain extant, although the subject property now served as the Lions building, as opposed to its original role as the municipal building. Some of the buildings, such as the former Cain Brothers general store which has been converted into the Bobcaygeon Inn, are heavily modified but still retain certain historic features that make them recognizable as older structures within this area of Bobcaygeon. The buildings are oriented facing the main square where there is the fountain and gardens that mark the centre of Market Square which is a defined and recognized area of the village. The area exists as a secondary commercial area, separate from Bolton Street on the main island which is the village's main commercial area. These two areas differ in their massing and layout, creating two distinct commercial spaces within the community; whereas Bolton Street is a typically historic main street with commercial buildings lining both sides of the street, Market Square is oriented in a square layout, with buildings facing the central irregular square.

55 Main Street supports and maintains the specific historic character of Market Square as one of its surviving, extant historic buildings. The majority of the historic buildings, including the subject property, are between one-and-a-half and three stories in height and built in a range of late Victorian commercial and institutional styles. Like the other buildings in this area, the property faces the square and forms part of its historic landscape. It is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of the development of Market Square as a distinct commercial area in Bobcaygeon beginning in the late nineteenth century where many commercial and institutional structures remain extant. It remains an important part of the overall character and landscape of the square.

In addition to its role as a contributing property to the overall character of Market Square, the property is an important local landmark as the former Bobcaygeon Town Hall. The building was constructed in 1874 as the town hall for the Township of Verulam and was an important community space for municipal administration, as well as a community gathering space in the upstairs performance space. When the municipal administration moved out to the building on Canal Street East, the building was converted into the Verulam and Bobcaygeon Fire Hall, with the Women's Institute operating from the back. The building was later taken over by the Lions Club which continues to operate out of the premises. These long-standing community uses make it a well-known and prominent building in the village and a local landmark.



## Summary of Reasons for Designation

The short statement of reasons for designation and the description of the heritage attributes of the property, along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief, constitute the Reasons for Designation required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

#### **Design and Physical Value**

55 Main Street has design and physical value as a representative example of a late nineteenth century small-town municipal building. Constructed in 1874, it demonstrates prevalent patterns in rural and small-town municipal buildings seen in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. While government buildings in larger centres were often large and architecturally complex structures, government structures in smaller communities were built on a smaller scale with less ornate details and designs, while nevertheless utilizing current architectural trends and stylistic features. The architecture of the subject property, which was constructed as the Verulam Township Hall, is demonstrative of the types of municipal buildings constructed in Ontario in the Victorian style and its key features such as polychromatic brickwork, a steeply pitched roof and belfry.

#### **Historical and Associative Value**

55 Main Street has historical and associative value as the former Bobcaygeon Town Hall. The building was constructed in 1874 as a new town hall for the Township of Verulam and, after the incorporation of Bobcaygeon as its own separate village, was used by both municipal Councils for council meetings, as well as other community gatherings. The property yields information regarding the history of municipal government in Bobcaygeon and Verulam Township and the growth of local government in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries prior to their amalgamation as part of the City of Kawartha Lakes in 2001.

#### **Contextual Value**

55 Main Street has contextual value as part of the historic landscape of Bobcaygeon's Market Square. Located on the north side of the Bobcaygeon River on the main land, Market Square developed as part of the original town site of Rokeby and is currently characterized by a collection of commercial and institutional buildings clustered around a central square, including the subject property which maintains and supports its historic character with regard to the street pattern and layout that is distinct from the rest of the village. It is historically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of the development of Market Square as a distinct commercial area and public square in the nineteenth century for the northern part of the community. It is a local landmark as the original Bobcaygeon Town Hall.

## Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

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

### Design and Physical Attributes

The design and physical attributes of the property support its value as a representative example of a late nineteenth-century small-town municipal building.

- Two-storey red brick construction
- Gable roof
- Belfry
- Exterior covered stairway
- Buff brick including:
  - Quoins
  - Windows hoods and surrounds
  - Entrance hoods and surrounds
- Fenestration including:
  - Sash windows
- Central entrance
- South elevation entrance

### Historical and Associative Attributes

The historical and associative attributes support the value of the property as the former Bobcaygeon Town Hall.

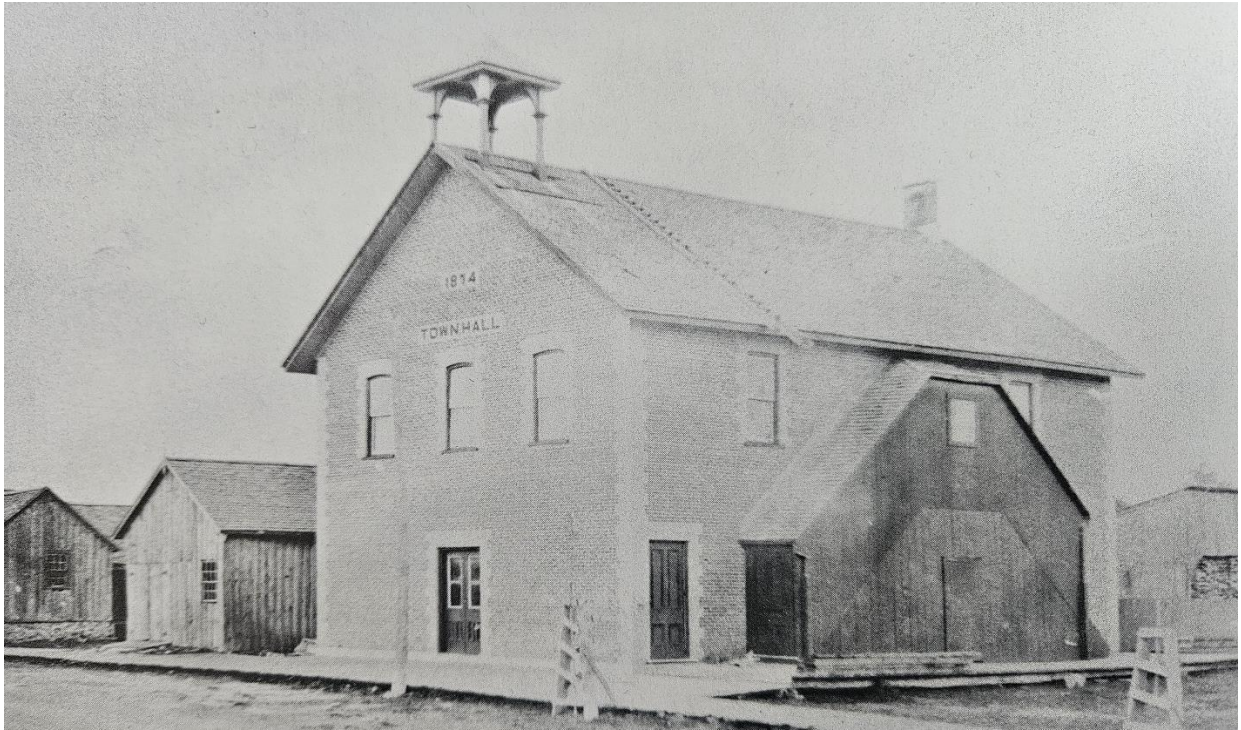
- Historic use as the Bobcaygeon and Verulam Town Halls
- “Town Hall” and “1874” signage

### Contextual Attributes

The contextual attributes of the property support its value as a local landmark and as a contributing property to the historic landscape of Market Square.

- Location facing onto in Bobcaygeon’s Market Square
- Views to and from the property of Market Square and Main Street

## Images



*Bobcaygeon Town Hall, n.d.*



*Bobcaygeon Town Hall, c. 1977*













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