

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
610 MARKHAM STREET

ATTACHMENT NO. 4R

The property at 610 Markham Street is worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for its cultural heritage value.

Description

The property at 610 Markham Street is located on the west side of the street at the north end near Bloor Street West and contains a 2½-storey detached house form building. Archival records indicate that it was the first building constructed on the west side of Markham between Bloor and Lennox Streets and, in September 1889 it was owned and occupied by Robert Watt, a contractor who possibly built it. In 1967, it was acquired by local entrepreneur Edwin "Honest Ed" Mirvish.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 610 Markham Street has cultural heritage value for its design as a late 19th century house form building that is representative of its type with features derived from the popular styles at the close of the Victorian era, including the Gothic Revival and Italianate. The Robert Watt House is distinguished by its surviving original detailing and retains its architectural integrity.

The Robert Watt House is historically linked to Mirvish Village, the famed artists' enclave created by Ed Mirvish and his family on Markham Street between Bloor Street West and Lennox Street. Originally acquired for additional parking for the nearby "Honest Ed's" retail complex, the houses were saved and converted as an artists' enclave with studios as well as restaurants and unique shops. Mirvish Village became a cultural and tourist destination in Toronto, including the property at 610 Markham Street.

Contextually, the Robert Watt House at 610 Markham Street assists in defining, maintaining and supporting the character of Mirvish Village, which consists of the collection of preserved detached, semi-detached and multi-unit house form buildings dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that contribute to this special area within the Palmerston neighbourhood.

The property at 610 Markham Street is also visually, historically, physically and functionally connected to its setting on the east side of Markham Street in Mirvish Village where it complements the neighbouring house form buildings in scale, setback and vintage detailing.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the building known historically as the Robert Watt House on the property at 610 Markham Street are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on the west side of Markham Street, south of Bloor Street West

- The scale, form and massing of the 2½-storey rectangular plan above the stone foundation
- The materials, with the brick cladding (now painted) and the brick, stone and wood detailing
- The cross-gable roof, with the brick chimney on the south end and, on the east slope, the gable containing the decorative wood detailing
- The principal (east) elevation, where the lower storey is partially enclosed with the main entrance recessed in a round-arched opening at the north (right) end, and a secondary entry in an addition at the south end
- On the east elevation, the fenestration with the Palladian window with the stained glass transom that is centered in the first (ground) floor beneath an oriel window in the second storey and a round-arched opening in the attic level (the flat-headed opening at the north end of the second floor appears to be an alteration)
- On the round-arched door and window openings, the decorative brickwork