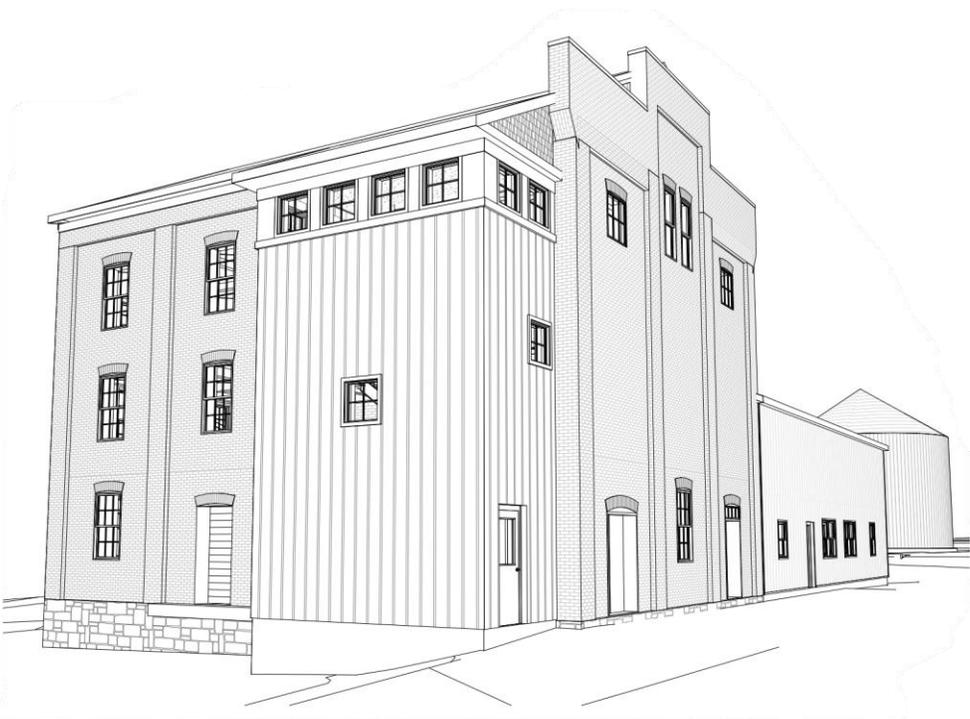


CONESTOGO MILL PROJECT

PRESERVATION & REJUVENATION

KENTON SHANTZ



Introduction

GB Architect Inc. and Imagine Inc. have been providing services regarding the changing of major occupancy and redesigning of the Conestogo Mill. This building is located at 1805 Sawmill Road, Conestogo. The property is owned by a group of investors who are planning to convert the existing building into an event centre. GB Architect Inc. and Imagine Inc. have the intent of retaining what is valuable to the historicity of the building by preserving its main architectural features. This goal comes in tandem with a desire to revise this building's layout to one suiting an event centre fully compliant with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

The structures on the property include a three story multi-wythe brick and timber building reportedly built in 1904 that is complete with wood framed roof and floor systems, a block and wood stud addition constructed around 1990, and some silos and grain elevators. While there is a nearby farm house, it isn't on the same property. The portion of this overall building that this report will focus on is the brick portion as the 1990s addition doesn't have much heritage value.

The main structure is rapidly approaching the point where collapse or controlled demolition are becoming distinct possibilities and will need to be extensively renovated in order to become a safe and attractive event centre. This project represents an opportunity for this building to become a landmark of Conestogo for years to come.

History

The first iteration of the Conestogo Mill was built in the 1840s by David Musselman, the founder of Conestogo. Originally, the town was called Musselman's Mills. The original mill was used for the processing of flour. It was sold to Henry Snider in 1856. This family owned the mill for four generations. During his son Menno's ownership, the original building was destroyed by a fire and in 1904 the red brick and timber portion of the current mill was constructed. The new mill had one turbine used for producing flour and one used for producing feed.¹ This is the building currently in question. The building was purchased by Martin Feed Mills Limited who then sold the mill to W-S Feed & Supplies Limited in 1965.² They used the mill in some capacity until selling it to the investors that are currently in ownership.

Building Features

The architectural features that we are preserving include the structural brick and timbers. These are the main existing architectural features and their preservation ensures that the original feel of the mill will remain. Due to the condition of the interior, we are hesitant to promise retaining features other than the timbers but would love to use other existing features in the renovated spaces as possible. The following paragraphs will discuss the results of a condition assessment report created by Tacoma Engineers and the actions required to restore the brick and the timber

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.therecord.com/living-story/2569290-flash-from-the-past-old-postcard-shows-mill-at-conestogo/> on April 23, 2020.

² Retrieved from https://www.wsfeeds.ca/W-S_Feed_History.html on April 23, 2020.

portions of this structure. A change to the exterior that is required to comply with the Ontario Building Code is also mentioned.

The brick is the main item requiring refurbishment on the exterior of the structure. Multiple courses of action to this end were mentioned in the report. These include: determining locations with irreparable brick and replacing them, removing the paint, installing flashings over the more vulnerable bricks located in the wash courses, and filling in window and door openings that are to be unused in the new design. Repairing the brick is necessary from structural and aesthetic viewpoints. Another item of note regarding upgrading the exterior is the replacing of the windows and doors. This is necessary as the existing ones aren't serviceable.



The main interior architectural feature is the timbers in the building. It is our intention to maintain the original timbers where possible and to replace deteriorated members as required. Portions of the deteriorated second floor framing will be removed to create a mezzanine at the one end of the space. By designing the space in this fashion, the timbers are elevated from just being a structural necessity to also being an aesthetic feature. Structural upgrades will be completed as required by the engineer and the Ontario Building Code.

An example of a change required to meet the standards of the Ontario Building Code is the stair tower visible on the front page. This is required to provide occupants with a safe way of exiting from all floor areas. Our design proposal is careful to avoid trying to match the existing century old materials of the mill but rather uses a style that will complement the original building's

powerful geometry and materials for years to come. It is also designed in such a way to minimize any impact on the existing mill's imposing façade. The stair tower is necessary and is designed to be a feature that enhances rather than detracting from the silhouette of the existing structure.

Conclusion

The changes required to bring this design to life won't detract from the historicity of this structure but will rather involve refurbishing and restoring the building's main features to ensure that it meets our client's design intents.