

3. MELVILLE

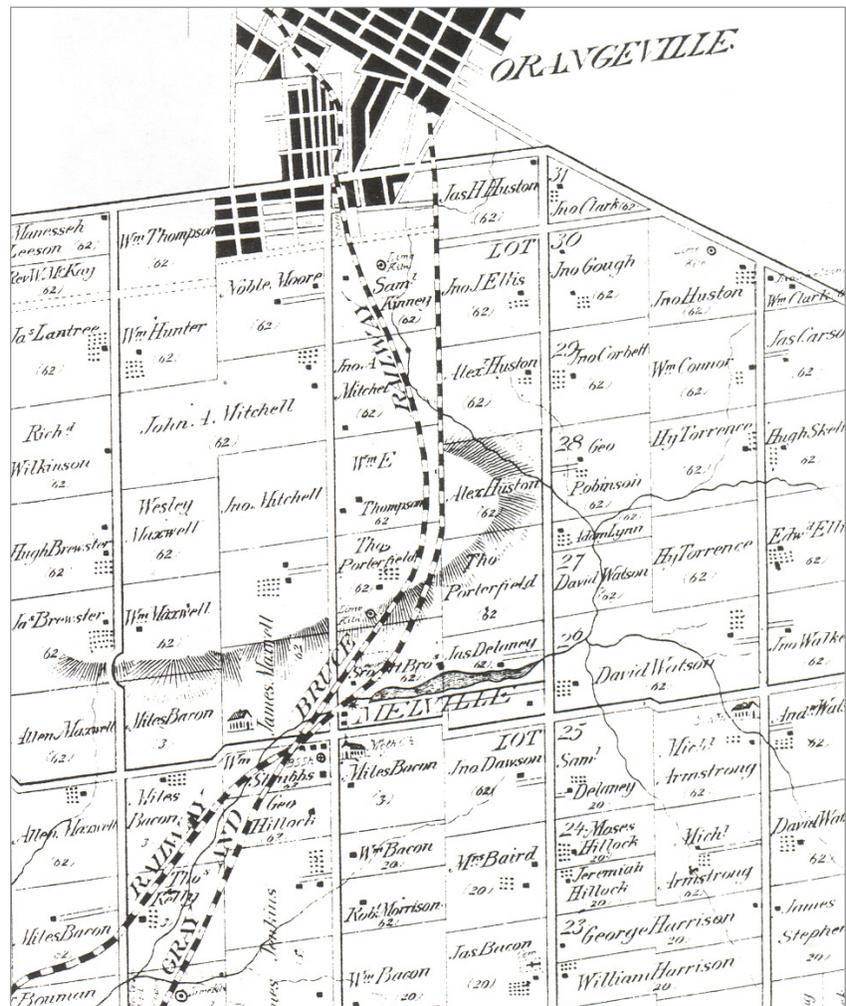
Note: All lot references are West of Hurontario Street unless otherwise noted.

3.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This is an *organically evolved rural landscape*, as described in the Town of Caledon: Criteria for the Identification of Cultural Heritage Landscapes, centered on the former industrial/railway hamlet of Melville at the crossroads of Highpoint Sideroad and Willoughby Road. The Candidate CHL area extends along Highpoint Sideroad to its intersection with Porterfield Road (Hwy 136) in the west and to Hurontario Street in the east and essentially one lot north and south along Willoughby Road.

A relatively early node of settlement (1831), this area is considered an excellent Candidate CHL because it clearly embodies and/or is associated with a number of Caledon's major historic themes.

The themes with which it is most closely associated are:
Early Industry: Grist and Sawmills along the Credit; the Railway and Outdoor Recreation-Fishing.



Melville and area, 1877
Source: 1877 Historical Atlas of Peel

3.2 INVENTORY

1. Physiographic Description

Melville rests in the valley of the eastern arm of the upper Credit River between Melville Hill to the northwest and Twenty-Five Hill to the southeast. These prominent landforms and several smaller hills are associated with the Orangeville Moraine and are formed of till, sand and gravel deposited by the receding glaciers.

2. Processes

Land Uses and Activities

Though no archaeological survey has yet been undertaken for the area this river valley with its associated relatively gentle hills would have almost certainly been occupied, at least seasonally for fishing and hunting, for many centuries prior to Euro-Canadian settlement.

The survey of Caledon Township was completed in 1819-1820. Settlement in the area of Highpoint Sideroad and Willoughby Road (First Line West) appears to date from 1831. The corners became known as West Caledon, apparently taken from the name of the Presbyterian Church (later Methodist) which had been established on Lot 25, Con. I.

The first industry was milling, with the Credit River dammed at the west end of the W ½ Lot 26, Con. I, creating the large mill pond still in evidence today extending into the east half of the lot (the full lot was owned by Jesse Ketchum Jr.). The proximity of Hurontario Street (Centre Road), which was developed more quickly than the other concession roads, and Willoughby Road, which leads to Orangeville, helped establish the crossroads as an industrial hub.

By 1859 the hamlet of Melville had been laid out on the property of Jesse Ketchum Jr. Ketchum was the son of the great entrepreneur politician and philanthropist Jesse Ketchum, who became rich selling leather to the government from his Toronto tannery. Deeply religious, Ketchum Sr. donated the land and much of the money for the construction of the original Knox Presbyterian Church in Toronto. A reformer, he moved to Buffalo after the failed Mackenzie Rebellion. Jesse Jr. returned to Canada to lands that the family owned in the



Existing dam at Melville

area of what is now Orangeville and was responsible in 1856 for laying out the north section of Orangeville as well. Ketchum is listed as an Orangeville-based 'Dealer in Real Estate' on the Subscriber's List of the 1859 Tremaine map. A tannery is shown on that map directly

across Hurontario Street from his property, Lot 26, which may well have been connected in some way to the Ketchum family tannery business.

As well as the tannery, a sawmill and oat mill were operating on the western portion of Lot 26, Con. 1 and a blacksmith's shop on the southwest corner. A road connecting these industries had been built along the south shore of the Credit while the road grid for the new village (then spelled Mellville) occupied the northern portion of the property.

In the 1870s, the hamlet's growth was enhanced when track for both the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway (TG&B) and the Credit Valley Railway (CVR) were constructed crossing south of Highpoint Sideroad just west of the Willoughby /Highpoint corners, where the Melville Junction station and switching point were located.



Former Melville Schoolhouse

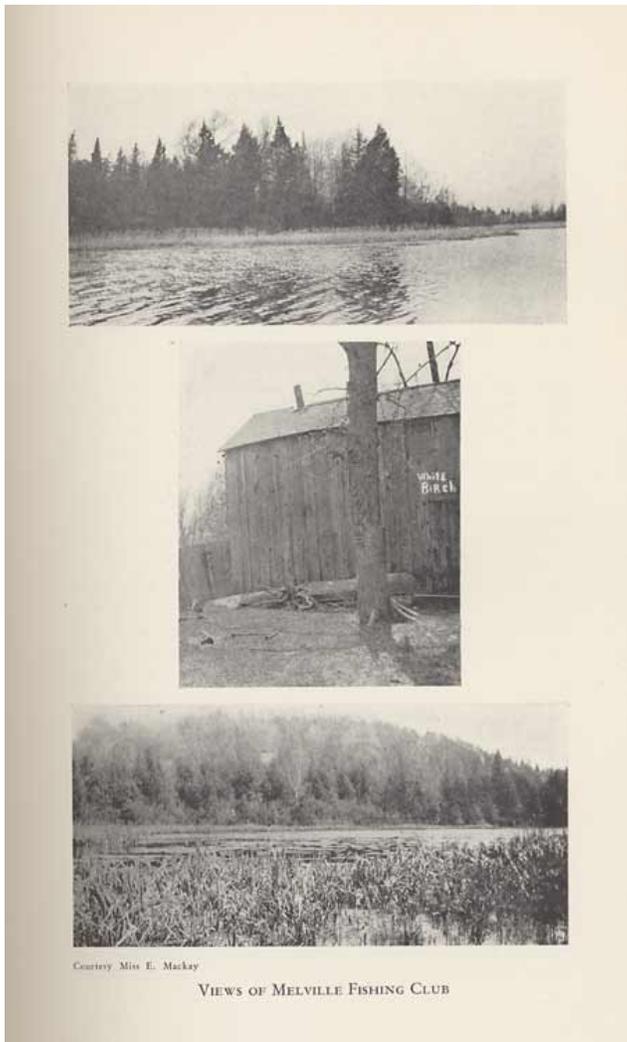
As shown on the 1877 County Atlas map, the community had a schoolhouse (still extant) and Methodist Church. The blacksmith shop was by then at the southwest corner of Highpoint Sideroad and Willoughby. In addition to the mills there was a plant nursery just north of the mill pond operated by the Scott Bros. The post office was located in the large house (still extant) at the southwest corner of Lot 26. Apparently a Grange store and Orange Lodge were also located in the hamlet.



Former Melville hotel / post office

By 1880 the original narrow gauge track of the TG&B had been shown to be inadequate and was replaced with standard gauge (which required new rolling stock). Ultimately the cost associated with this led, in part, to the purchase of the line by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) which by 1883 owned the CVR as well. Two CPR stations in Orangeville was considered redundant and the CVR track between Melville and Orangeville was closed in 1884 (the first track to be abandoned in Ontario). In 1932 the TG&B track between Bolton and Melville was removed.

Beyond Melville itself, typical uplands farming was carried on. However permanent settlement on the farm lots lagged behind the industrial development on Ketchum's lot. By 1859 only three farmhouse are shown. However, these lands could be considered almost fully settled by 1877 by which time mixed farming, including livestock, was seen as the most profitable approach. Lime burning was also being carried out with kilns noted on E ½ Lot 27, Con I in 1877.



Views of Melville Fishing Club
Source: Bull, Wm. Perkins, [From rattlesnake hunt to hockey](#)

Credit River, which in wending through the property of the developer Jesse Ketchum Jr. formed the basis for industry and hence a hub of settlement; Ketchum's village plan, a designed plan for growth on the north of his lot; the railways with their embanked tracks and associated structures; and, the adjacent hills (Melville Hill and Twenty-five Hill), which influenced the configuration of farmsteads. The village population never expanded to the size anticipated by Ketchum, and as viewed today from the road the influence of his plan is quite ephemeral. The alignment of the TG&B rail line is also not readily apparent through the village.

In the late 19th and early 20th century Melville Pond and the Credit River were known for trout fishing. William Perkins Bull notes "In 1883, T.W. Duggan's diary mentions with delight the sixteen-inch trout he and his friends were catching at Melville. Seven years later the Melville Trout Club was formed on preserves on the Credit River near Melville Junction on the farms of Raspin Scott and Albert Sodden."¹

Patterns of Spatial Organization

The survey of Caledon Township was completed by Samuel Rykman in 1819 and was one of the first to be undertaken using the double-front system. In this system the common unit of concession is the half-lot of 100 acres with each half of the 200 acre lot fronting on a different concession line road. These half lots are almost square. Concessions run essentially north-south in this region (actually northwest). At every five lots there was an allowance for a side road.

Beyond the survey itself four other key determinants historically shaped this area. These are: the course of the

¹ Bull, Wm. Perkins, [From rattlesnake hunt to hockey](#) : *the history of sports in Canada and the sportsmen of Peel, 1798 to 1934* , Toronto : The Perkins Bull Foundation, 1934, p. 103

Elements

Circulation Networks

For its size the hamlet of Melville was, for a time, a transportation hub. The pattern of concession and sideroads was well established though this area despite the hills, though originally Porterfield Road had to jog west at Lot 27 due to the Melville Hill ridge. The proximity of Hurontario Street, which always has been given special status no doubt helped serve the nascent milling complex. The routing of both the CVR and TG&B railways through the village en route between Toronto and Orangeville gave the area service few other, larger centers could match. The streets laid out in Ketchum's village plan internal to his property (W ½ Lot 26) have now reverted to private lanes. The current CPR line through Melville utilizes a combination of the old CVR (to Melville) and TG&B (Melville to Orangeville). Highpoint, Porterfield and Willoughby roads essentially retain their original character while Hurontario Street, always intended as a more major thoroughfare, is very much a modern provincial highway.

Boundary Demarcations

Within the Candidate CHL area properties are demarcated with a wide variety of fencing types including wire, iron, painted board and cedar rail.

Vegetation Related to Land Use

Within the hamlet of Melville there are remnant orchards, woodlots, hedgerows and windrows in association with the 19th century buildings. Mature trees line the frontages of several properties and along stretches of Willoughby Road and Highpoint Sideroad.

The Credit River valley through this reach is comprised of floodplain meadow, and successional woodland areas.

To the east of the Willoughby/Highpoint Sideroad intersection, a steeply sided and still densely wooded hill forced a bend in the historic road pattern, which remains today.



Looking east along Highpoint Sideroad from just east of Melville

Buildings, Structures and Objects

*Note that * denotes properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. All concessions indicated below are west of Hurontario Street unless otherwise noted.*

Though there has been much change in the hamlet with the gradual loss of its industries (early 20th century) and status as a railway junction, significant heritage fabric still remains.

Highpoint Road

2512 Highpoint Sideroad

(W ½ Lot 26, Con. 1) at junction with Willoughby Road

2 storey, red brick structure with buff brick detailing, segmentally arched openings and hipped roof with bracketed eaves. 1 storey 'L' with similar detailing extends toward Highpoint while main section faces Willoughby despite the address. Wrap-around veranda. Former location of original Blacksmith Shop. Apparently the extant building was the post office and hotel. Existing house c. 1875. Original mill lot.

2465 Highpoint Sideroad

(W ½ Lot 25, Con. 2)

1 ½ storey re-brick 'L' plan gable fronted house with projecting bay with round arches and buff brick detailing and side verandah. Existing house c. 1875.

Southwest corner of Highpoint Sideroad and Willoughby Road

Several structures which could have associations with the railway (three buildings and the blacksmith shop shown here in 1877) and/or blacksmith's shop.

2345 Highpoint Sideroad

(E ½, Lot 26, Con. 2)

Red brick, gable fronted schoolhouse with buff brick detailing, segmentally arched openings, bracketed eave and projecting brick vestibule, built c.1870

Northeast and southeast corners of Highpoint and Porterfield roads

(Lots 25 and 26, W ½ Con. 2)

At north a fine 19th century farm complex with two brick farmhouses set well back from the road set at a 'bench' in the hill, and, to the south, a farm complex with brick farmhouse forming part of the wide viewshed as seen from Highpoint Sideroad.

Willoughby Road

20429 Willoughby Road

1 ½ storey frame cottage, c. 1850s earliest extant residence in hamlet

20469 Willoughby Road

(W ½ Lot 26, Con. 2)

Original mill lot; existing c.1920 Craftsman style house located just to the south of rail line.

**20298 Willoughby Road
(E ½ Lot 25, Con. 2)**

2 storey brick dwelling with buff brick detailing, bracketed eaves and widow's walk with iron cresting. Existing home c.1875 shown as George Hillock in 1877 Atlas map.

**21074 Willoughby Road
(E 1/2 , Lot 29 , Con. 2). Beyond but related to CHL**

5 bay, 2 storey, side-gabled stone house with ashlar façade, quoins and dentillated eaves. Earliest surviving structure in immediate area, built for Sarah and Alexander Mitchell before 1859. They purchased the full 200 acre lot in 1836 and originally lived in a log house on the property. Stone carriage house, now garage behind house. Cedar rail fence.

Other Features

Dam at outlet of Melville Pond (Modern structure but in location of original mill dam)

The existing railway track (also as it crosses Highpoint Sideroad) and stone/steel structures over Credit River.

Settlement Clusters

The Highpoint/Willoughby crossroads establishes the axis of still readily legible 19th century settlement cluster, which in terms of density etc. is recognizably different from the landscape of surrounding farmsteads.

Archaeological Sites

Though no archaeological survey has yet been undertaken in the Candidate CHL area the presence of water, the abundance of fish, game and wild edibles as well as the ease of transportation virtually guarantees at least seasonal occupation by the First Nations and their ancestors. A reasonable comparison would be with the Silver Creek area where several aboriginal sites have been found on tributaries of the Credit River.



Looking southwest from Melville Hill

3. Site Context

The Candidate CHL area is a river valley dominated by Melville Hill to the northwest and Twenty-Five Hill to the east. The general context of a mill-based settlement surrounded by traditional farmsteads within the original spatial pattern remains relatively unchanged. From several locations along Highpoint Road, particularly at Porterfield there are sweeping views to the south. The long uninterrupted views to the southwest over rolling farmland and woods from the brow of Melville Hill on Willoughby Road are particularly noteworthy.

3.3 EVALUATION

To be identified as a CHL an area must clearly embody both heritage significance and integrity. The following Significance Criteria are excerpted from the *Town of Caledon: Criteria for the Identification of Cultural Heritage Landscapes*, and are provided here for reference.

Significance

Significance Criteria

While any landscape upon which humankind has left their imprint is a cultural landscape, only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the jurisdiction can be identified as cultural heritage landscapes. To be considered significant from a heritage perspective it must be demonstrated through the Inventory Report that the Candidate CHL meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Is associated with events that made significant contributions to the broad patterns of area history, i.e., strong association with central themes.*
- B. Is closely associated with the lives of individuals and/or families who are considered significant to the history of the area.*
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular settlement pattern or lifeway whether derived from ethnic background, imposed by the landscape, was the practice of a specific historic period or a combination of the above.*
- D. Manifests a particularly close and harmonious long-standing relationship between the natural and domestic landscape.*
- E. Has yielded or is likely to yield information important to prehistory or history.*
- F. Is strongly associated with the cultural and/or spiritual traditions of First Nations or any other ethnic and/or religious group.*

Integrity

A CHL must be able to be justified as distinct area of contiguous heritage integrity. The key individual elements which constitute the cultural heritage landscape and the way in which their interweaving makes a unique 'place' must still clearly reflect the historic period and/or organic evolution from which the heritage significance derives.

Conclusions

Based on the preceding examination, the Melville Candidate CHL readily meets Significance Criteria A and B. With respect to Criteria A. it clearly embodies Caledon's milling, railway and recreational heritage (as well as the progression over time from one to the other). With respect to Criteria B. it pertains to Melville's association with Jesse Ketchum Jr. and his influence on the hamlet's form and development.

The integrity of the original 19th century settlement patterns and landscape is generally well maintained throughout the Candidate CHL with clear evidence of its milling origins as represented by the mill pond/dam, its past as a railway based settlement cluster established by the schoolhouse, hotel and the remaining CPR railway tracks in a surrounding context of hillside farmsteads.

3.4 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Melville area was settled and developed in response to the establishment by Jesse Ketchum Junior, son of the famous early industrialist, philanthropist and Mackenzie rebel, of mills on the section of the upper Credit River system which ran through his property (Lot 26, Con. I). This mill site formed the basis of an industrial hub, which also included a blacksmith shop and a tannery. By 1859 Ketchum had laid out a village to the north of the Credit River and another road internal to his lot connecting the industries to the south of the River. It is likely that this early growth and industrial base led to its inclusion in both the TG&B and CVR Railway systems.

Though both the industrial and railway activity of the hamlet gradually diminished during the late 19th century, evidence of this era and the community it spawned is still very evident in such elements as the large mill pond and dam and the restored schoolhouse (see below). Early in the 20th century the mill pond was stocked with trout and became the base for the Melville Trout Club, ushering in the era of Caledon as a recreational centre. As well, the broader contextual features such as Melville Hill and the surrounding rural landscape of farmsteads remain little changed in general appearance.

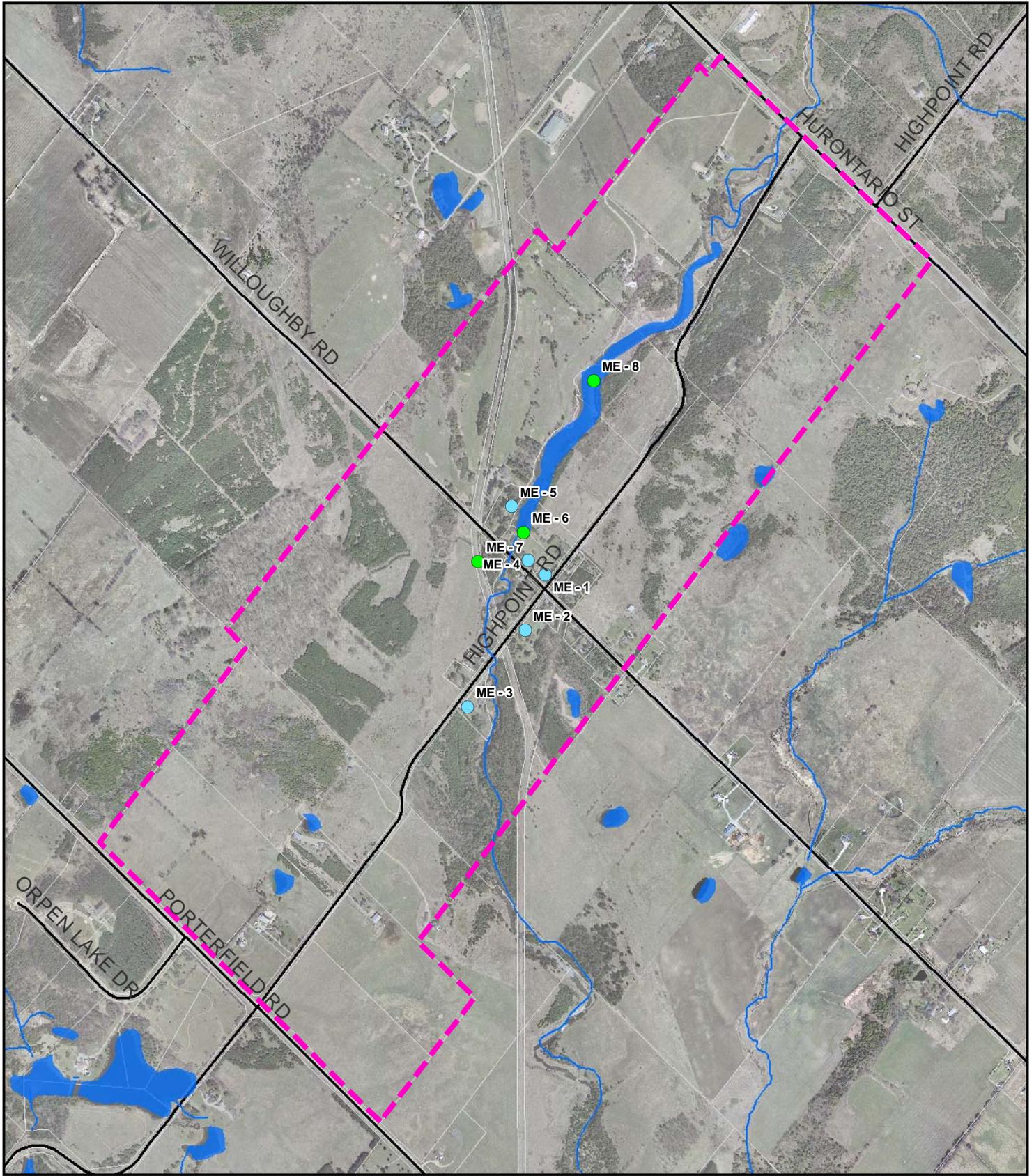
Character-Defining Elements (Numbers refer to Caledon CHL Inventory database)

- ME-1 2512 Highpoint Sideroad, (W ½ Lot 26, Con. I)
- ME-2 2465 Highpoint Sideroad, (W ½ Lot 25, Con. 2)
- ME-3 2345 Highpoint Sideroad, (E ½, Lot 26, Con. 2)
- ME-4 20429 Willoughby Road,
- ME-5 20469 Willoughby Road, (W ½ Lot 26, Con. 2)
- ME-6 Dam at the outlet of Melville Pond
- ME-7 the existing railway track and bridge (also as it crosses Highpoint Sideroad and Credit River)
- ME-8 Melville Pond

It is thus recommended that the Candidate CHL referred to as Melville be identified as a CHL.

3.5 BOUNDARIES

The Candidate CHL area encompassed Lots 25, 26 immediately to either side of Highpoint Sideroad between Porterfield and Hurontario (Con. I, II). The west halves of Lots 25 and 26, Con. II, with their farmsteads are considered the contextual gateway/buffer to the essential core of the CHL with its industrial hamlet theme/character. While the Study Area encompassed the whole of Lots 25 and 26 between Porterfield and Hurontario Streets (Con. I, Con. II) the actual distribution and density of heritage resources within this area indicates that the actual CHL boundary may more accurately be considered as including Lot 26, but only (for the most part) the northern half of Lot 25.



- Character Defining Elements
- Road
 - Built
 - Landscape
 - ▭ CHL Boundary
 - Rivers / Streams
 - Lakes / Ponds
 - Property Boundary (2006)