

# THE OLD ALTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Study for the reuse of a local community asset

## FEASIBILITY REPORT

19657 Main Street  
Caledon, ON



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PREPARED FOR:

Town of Caledon & The Peel District School Board

PREPARED BY:

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Circa 1891 photo of schoolchildren outside the School House, prior to alteration (Photo copied from photo wall at Alton Public School)

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COVER PAGE: Old Alton Schoolhouse

Project # 18-068-01  
Prepared by PE/SL/HC/EL/EA

# CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

v

## PROJECT INTRODUCTION

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Scope of the Report
- 1.2 Project Background
- 1.3 Deviation from the RFP Scope

## BACKGROUND

### 2 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 Site Location and Description
- 2.2 Heritage Status
- 2.3 Site History

### 3 CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE & ADAPTIVE REUSE

- 3.1 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value
- 3.2 Heritage Attributes
- 3.3 Conservation Approach
- 3.4 Adaptive Reuse Precedents for Schools

### 4 EXISTING BUILDING CONDITION

- 4.1 General
- 4.2 Floor Plans
- 4.2 Condition Assessment

### 5 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Community Consultation Process
- 5.2 Community Consultation Outcomes

## PROPOSAL

### 6 OPTIONS & PARAMETERS

- 6.1 Program Parameters
- 6.2 Proposed Program Areas
- 6.3 Infrastructural Constraints
- 6.4 Models for Ownership & Operation

## **7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE**

- 8.1 Proposed Scheme
- 8.2 Functional Analysis
- 8.3 Impact
- 8.4 Operational Considerations
- 8.5 Costing

## **8 FUNDING & GRANT OPTIONS**

- 9.1 Capital Funding
- 9.2 Operational Funding
- 9.3 Corporate Donations

## **9 CONCLUSION**

## **10 APPENDICES**

- APPENDIX A: Designation By-Law
- APPENDIX B: Context (Caledon & Alton)
- APPENDIX C: Precedents
- APPENDIX D: Septic Report by Van Harten Surveying
- APPENDIX E: Class D Cost Estimate by Altus Group
- APPENDIX F: Condition Assessment Report by Nadine International Consulting Engineers



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Project Context

ERA was retained to conduct a feasibility study into the adaptive reuse of the Old Alton Public School (“Old Alton P.S.”). The Old Alton P.S. was decommissioned in 2013 with the construction of a new elementary school (“the New Alton P.S.”) on the same property, just to the north.

While the original intent was to sever the two school properties once the New Alton P.S. was constructed, this is not currently permitted, due to a shared septic system condition. Each property requires its own septic system, and there is no space for the construction of a second system on site.

The site’s current owner, the Peel District School Board (“PDSB”) has proposed to lease the Old Alton P.S. building to the Town of Caledon (“the Town”), rather than selling it as a separate property to the Town, as originally proposed.

## Key Issues

ERA was asked to develop a proposed adaptive reuse scenario for the Old Alton P.S.

Early in the study, it became clear that (a) any proposed program would require significant infrastructure upgrades, notably the replacement of the site’s shared septic system, and (b) that these major upgrades would be dependent on an explicitly clear agreement on the owner-operator model for the Old Alton P.S. building.

As such, *ERA’s principal recommendation is the development of a clear owner-operator model*, which will lay the groundwork for the pursuit of program occupants, funding, and any future community consultation.

The recommended owner-operator model would involve the long-term leasing of the building by the Town from the PDSB, for a nominal sum, with an

outline for the eventual lot severance and transfer of the Old Alton P.S.’s property title to the Town, and an agreement on the funding responsibility for the capital upgrades required.

## Background

The development of the proposed adaptive reuse scenario for the Old Alton P.S. was informed by a number of background studies, including:

- a study of the history of the site and village;
- an understanding of the site’s cultural heritage value and heritage attributes to be conserved;
- a site visit and building condition assessment; and,
- a targeted stakeholder engagement process, and an analysis of all results of community consultation.

## Proposal

ERA developed five proposed program areas for the Old Alton P.S., and analyzed their feasibility against the context of the background studies. The five program areas are: Arts & Culture, Active Living, Innovation, Education and Tourism.

*ERA’s ultimate recommendation combines a number of program areas in a mixed-use approach, featuring:*

- *an Interpretive Heritage Display;*
- *an Arts Studio; and*
- *an Early Years Centre/Daycare.*

Grant funding opportunities that might serve such a model are additionally explored.





# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Scope of the Report

ERA Architects Inc. (“ERA”) was retained by the Town of Caledon (“the Town”) and the Peel District School Board (“the PDSB”) to undertake a feasibility study for the adaptive reuse of the Old Alton Public School (“the Old Alton P.S.”). ERA has prepared this report to assess potential uses that could be accommodated in the Old Alton Public School.

## 1.2 Project Background

The Old Alton P.S. was actively used until the construction of the New Alton P.S., on the same property, in 2013. In order to facilitate the construction of the new school, the Town granted the PDSB a plot of land, based on an agreement that the Town would eventually receive the Old Alton P.S. lands in exchange.

At the time of construction of the new school, both the Town and the PDSB believed a new municipal sanitary line would be built. As such, the new school did not build a new septic bed, and instead, intended to temporarily share the existing septic system of the Old Alton P.S. The municipal line was never built, therefore the new school and Old Alton P.S. are still sharing one septic system, with occupancy restrictions currently placed on both buildings.

*(Excerpt from the Town’s August 2017 Staff Report #2017-100: Old Alton School House Update)*

- *As part of constructing the new Alton School, the Peel District School Board and the Town of Caledon agreed to exchange land. The Town was to obtain ownership of the Old Alton School House property as part of this land exchange.*
- *Due to lack of sanitary servicing to the facilities, the Old Alton School House property cannot be transferred to the Town of Caledon. The septic system on this site services both the new school and the Old Alton School House and separate ownership is not permitted in such circumstances.*
- *In lieu of the land exchange, Peel District School Board staff has offered a long-term lease of the Old Alton School House to the Town of Caledon for nominal consideration.*
- *Staff have not recommend a long-term lease of the facility based on the projected capital costs, annual operating costs, the fact that there is currently no identified need/uses for this facility and the other limitations of this site.*
- *The Peel District School Board has offered to pay half of the costs, to an upset limit of \$15,000, for a feasibility study to help the Town determine a Town use for this facility.*

### 1.3 Deviation from the RFP Scope

The request of this RFP was to explore future use options that were limited/restricted by the site's unique shared septic condition. Early in the study, it became clear that the viability of any proposed reuse program would depend on (a) the resolution of septic condition, either through replacement with a new shared system or construction of two new systems, and (b) the ownership structure outlining responsibility for these capital upgrades.

Because these are such critical issues, Sections 6.3 and 6.4 outline the constraints imposed by the site's infrastructure requirements and the owner/operator models required to address them.

At the owner-operator stakeholder level, there is currently a conflict between the desire to meet community expectations for a vibrant new use at the Old Alton P.S., and an apparent hesitation to invest in the infrastructure upgrades required to attract and support new uses.

The success of any future adaptive reuse program will be dependent on the development of an explicitly clear owner/operator structure, so that infrastructure upgrades may be pro actively pursued, and the appropriate users/occupants attracted. The Alton community is expecting action; the first clear step will be to communicate who will be driving the project forward: the Town, the PDSB, or a third party. Questions of specific use will be secondary to the explicit development of this model and its communication to community stakeholders.

## 2 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.1 Site Location and Description

The Old Alton P.S. is located at 19657 Main Street in the hamlet of Alton, in the Town of Caledon (Peel Region). The property is located at the south end of Alton.

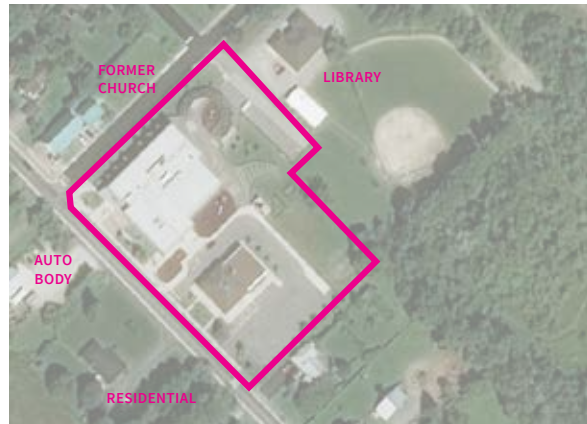
The property is L-shaped, and features two street frontages: Main Street to its southwest, and Station Street to its northwest.

There are two structures on site, both fronting onto Main Street: the Old Alton P.S., to the east, and the new Alton Public School, to the west. The property additionally features recreational yards to the east side and rear of the new school, a soccerfield down a slope at the rear of the Old Alton P.S., an asphalt parking lot to the east side of the Old Alton P.S., and a paved school drop-off route wrapping around the rear and west side of the Old Alton P.S.

The property is adjacent to a number of residential lots to the southeast and across Main Street. The Alton Library is adjacent to the northeast, an Auto Body Shop and the Alton Cemetery are located across Main Street to the southwest, and the former Alton Baptist Church building is located immediately across Station Street to the northwest.

### 2.2 Heritage Status

The property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, by By-law No. 2013-088 (see Appendix A). The designation applies to the full property, which includes the New Alton P.S. If the property is ever severed, the New Alton P.S. property will require Caledon Town Council approval for the removal of its heritage designation on title.



Aerial view of the Site, outlined in pink (Bing Maps, 2018, annotated by ERA).



Street facing west elevation (ERA 2018).



South-east corner with views of east and south elevations(ERA 2018).

## 2.3 Site History

The Village of Alton was officially founded in 1855, following the establishment of a grist mill on Shaw's Creek in 1851. Although settlers had arrived in the area 20 years earlier, they quickly found that the land was inhospitable to agriculture, but they discovered that Shaw's Creek, a tributary of the Credit River, offered an ideal context for milling and industry. Following the establishment of the first mills, the village grew over the next three decades, reaching its heyday in the 1880s.

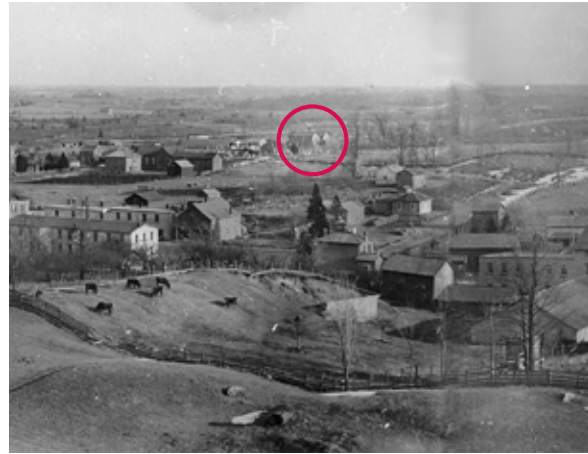
### 2.3.1 History of the Old Alton P.S.

The first school in Alton was built of log, sometime in the mid 1800s. It was soon replaced by a more permanent wood-frame structure, but this second school was eventually lost to fire. In the 1870s, the village constructed a brick school building at the village's south edge. This school would serve Caledon Township's School Section #15.

Construction began in 1873 with one red-brick building with a front-gabled roof, and two sets of double doors facing the street. The building appeared to be two storeys, but in fact featured a single storey with high ceilings, and double-height rounded arched windows. The windows and doorways featured distinct arched buff-brick lintels.

In 1876, an identical school building was built immediately to the south. One served as the girls' school, the other as the boys' school. In the following years, the two buildings were connected via a central hallway, with a bell tower built above.

In 1908, a major renovation both expanded the school's functional space and altered its design character. The two 'wings' were connected under one hipped roof, which was so low as to cut off the original double-height windows. The double doors on each wing were filled in with red brick, and the recessed hallway was enclosed, and became the



The double-gabled schoolhouse is visible at the far south edge of town, circled in pink; c.1904 (inthehills.ca).



A parade outside the double-winged schoolhouse (building to the right), circa 1907 (Photo copied from photo wall at Alton School).



A class photo outside the updated schoolhouse, circa 1935 (from Nicola Ross's *Caledon*).

school's main entrance. A rear extension provided for two additional classrooms.

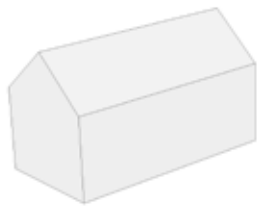
In the 1920s, the school briefly hosted a high-school program, called a "continuation school", but it primarily served only as an elementary school over its life cycle. In the 1940s, the basement, which hosted utilities, was expanded to accommodate a small gymnasium. Interior renovations to modernize the facility were conducted in the 1990s.

Beginning in the 1960s, as the school system modernized, the Township of Caledon closed 16 of its small schoolhouses. By the year 2000, the Old Alton P.S. was the only one in Caledon still in service as a school. It closed in 2013 following the construction of a modern facility immediately to the west, and was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act the same year.

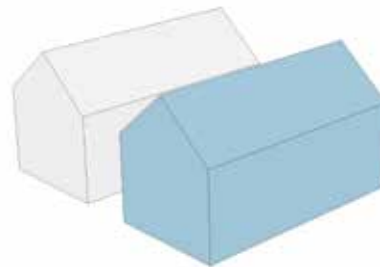


A class photo outside the original double-winged schoolhouse, circa 1891 (Photo copied from photo wall at Alton School).

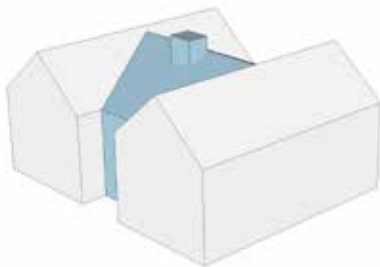
### 2.3.2 Alton School Evolution Diagram



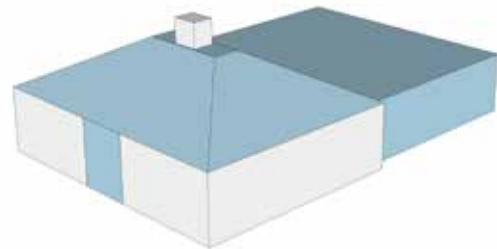
1873  
First school built



1876  
Second school built



Before 1890s  
Connection between the two schools and bell tower built



1908  
School expanded and roofline altered

## 3 CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE & ADAPTIVE REUSE

### 3.1 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Statement of Significance for the Old Alton P.S. describes the site's cultural heritage value as follows:

The property known municipally as 19657 Main Street in the hamlet of Alton contains a schoolhouse building erected in 1875 and 1876 that was remodelled and enlarged between 1907 and 1929. The form and small scale of the building with its large window openings and belfry capture a sense of a rural village school. The interior retains pre 1930s elements that from the traditional classrooms, centre hallway, office, and washrooms arrangement and reflect how these evolved over the history of the building. The site has a long standing association with, for some, five generations of families in the Alton area, as well as past staff and administrators. Alton Public School has been a community landmark and important component of the Main Street streetscape since 1875.

### 3.2 Heritage Attributes

The following Heritage Attributes are listed in the Statement of Significance. They are expected to be conserved in order to continue conveying the property's cultural heritage value.

#### 3.2.1 Exterior Attributes

- Overall form, massing and scale
- Truncated hip roof of front (older) section
- Roof-mounted belfry, bell, and ringing mechanism
- 1908 datestone
- All window openings
- Segmental and flat masonry heads and concrete lugsills of window openings but not the window frames or sash
- Fieldstone and brick foundation
- West (centre) entrance way size, location, configuration, keystone, and any components proven to be original, but not the sash or doors
- East (rear) entrance way size, location, and configuration but not the sash or doors
- All red-orange and buff coloured masonry
- All pre 1930s exterior elements relating to use of the building as a school

### 3.2.2 Interior Attributes

- 1875/1876 moulded wood trim
- Plain board trim dating to the early 20th century (pre 1930s)
- Wainscoting and chair rails
- 1908 datestone
- Pre 1930s builder's hardware (hinges, door knobs, escutcheons, etc.)
- Wall mounted coat hook racks
- Interior transoms
- Interior hallway divider
- Components of the west vestibule
- Pre 1930s doors
- Panelled embrassure of 2010 staff washroom doorway
- Pre 1930s baseboards
- Stairway components (stairs, newels, handrail supports, handrail, stringers)
- Built in cloak room cupboards in classrooms
- Built in supply cupboards, bookcases, shelving

## 3.3 Conservation Approach

The proposed conservation approach for the Old Alton P.S. is rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation is described in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as: "the sensitive adaptation of an historic place or individual component for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value".

The Statement of Significance included in the property's designation by-law (By-law No. 2013-088) describes the property's cultural heritage value, and the heritage attributes that convey or articulate that value. These are expected to be conserved throughout the Rehabilitation process.

- Narrow strip hardwood flooring and door sills; and the wider flooring beneath in the front section of the building
- Slateboards
- Vintage stalls in boys' and girls' washrooms
- All pre 1930s interior elements relating to use of the building as a school

## 3.4 Adaptive Reuse Precedents for Schools

In broad strokes, adaptive reuse is the reuse of an old site or building for a purpose other than for which it was originally built or designed.

There are several examples of successful adaptive reuse projects of old schools; two are described below, with additional precedents included in Appendix C.

### 3.4.1 Ivywild School

1604 S Cascade Ave, Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA

Originally an elementary school built in 1916, Ivywild School was closed in 2009. The 18-year old Bristol Brewery took over the space, along with a bakery, espresso/cocktail bar, delicatessen and office space. This multi-use building links commerce and community with sustainable facilities.



Ivywild School - Exterior (<https://stayoutwest.com/2018/02/the-principals-office/>)



Ivywild School - Interior (<https://www.visitcos.com/directory/ivywild-school/amp/>)

### 3.4.2 Aberdeen School

140 Botsford St. Moncton, New Brunswick

The building was constructed in 1898 and originally served as Moncton's first secondary school, Aberdeen High School. It was reconstructed following a fire in 1916 and remained a high school until the late 1970s. In 1986, it became a cultural centre. The Aberdeen Cultural Centre has played a prominent role in the development of visual and media arts. Aberdeen Cultural Centre includes a total of 27 associations, galleries and artists' studios spread over four levels.



Aberdeen School - 1898 (<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=1992>)



Aberdeen School - present (<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=1992>)



## 4 EXISTING BUILDING CONDITION

### 4.1 General

The Old Alton P.S., located at 19657 Main Street in Alton, is a one storey brick building with a partial basement. The building was constructed in 1874-1875 and opened as a school, and was dramatically altered in 1908 (see diagram on pg.7). The building has been unoccupied since the summer of 2013.

The building is clad with red brick and has an exposed foundation wall. The double-glazed insulated windows are not original. The peak roof on the original building is clad in asphalt shingles, while the rear addition has a flat roof.

### 4.2 Floor Plans

The main floor, built at grade and accessible from the street, is divided into 4 rooms. The rooms are organized around a central hallway with washrooms at the center of the plan. One of the rooms is further divided and was used as the library and school administration area.

The basement level has a mechanical room, storage space, and a multipurpose room. The basement is only accessed from a stair at the rear of the building and is not universally accessible. There are no washrooms in the basement.

The usable gross floor area (GFA) is approximately 715 sq.m. (7696 sf).

### 4.3 Condition Assessment

ERA visited the site on July 17, 2018 and performed a visual inspection of the building (interior and exterior). Refer to the Nadine International Consulting Engineers Condition Assessment Report in Appendix D, dated April 17, 2017, for a more detailed evaluation.

#### 4.3.1 Exterior Brick Walls

The exterior masonry appears to be in fair condition, and shows signs of normal deterioration. Localized cracks and damaged bricks (broken and/or spalled) can be seen on the original building. Mismatched mortar, as well as some cracked window sills, can be seen throughout.

#### 4.3.2 Foundation Walls

Both the original stone foundation walls and the addition's concrete foundation walls appear to be in fair condition.

#### Evaluation Framework

Excellent: Superior aging performance. Functioning as intended; no deterioration observed.

Good: Normal Result. Functioning as intended; normal deterioration observed; no maintenance anticipated within the next five years.

Fair: Functioning as intended; Normal deterioration and minor distress observed; maintenance will be required within the next three to five years to maintain functionality.

Poor: Not functioning as intended; significant deterioration and distress observed; maintenance and some repair required within the next year to restore functionality.

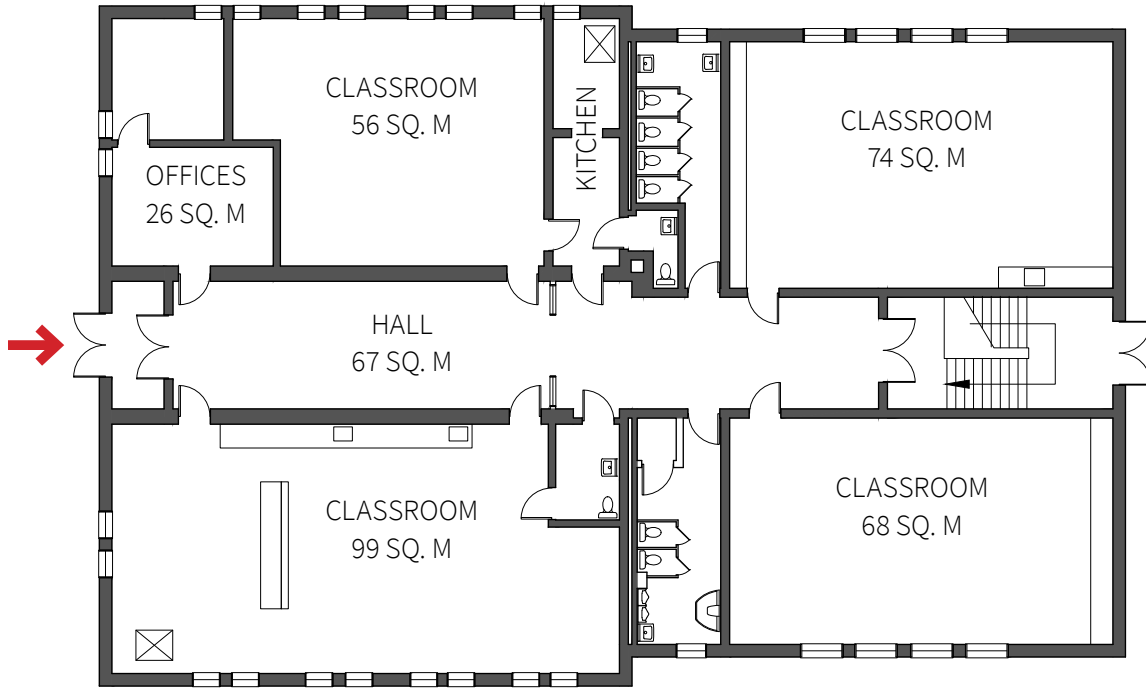
Defective: Not functioning as intended; significant deterioration and major distress observed, possible damage to support structure; may present a risk; must be dealt with immediately.



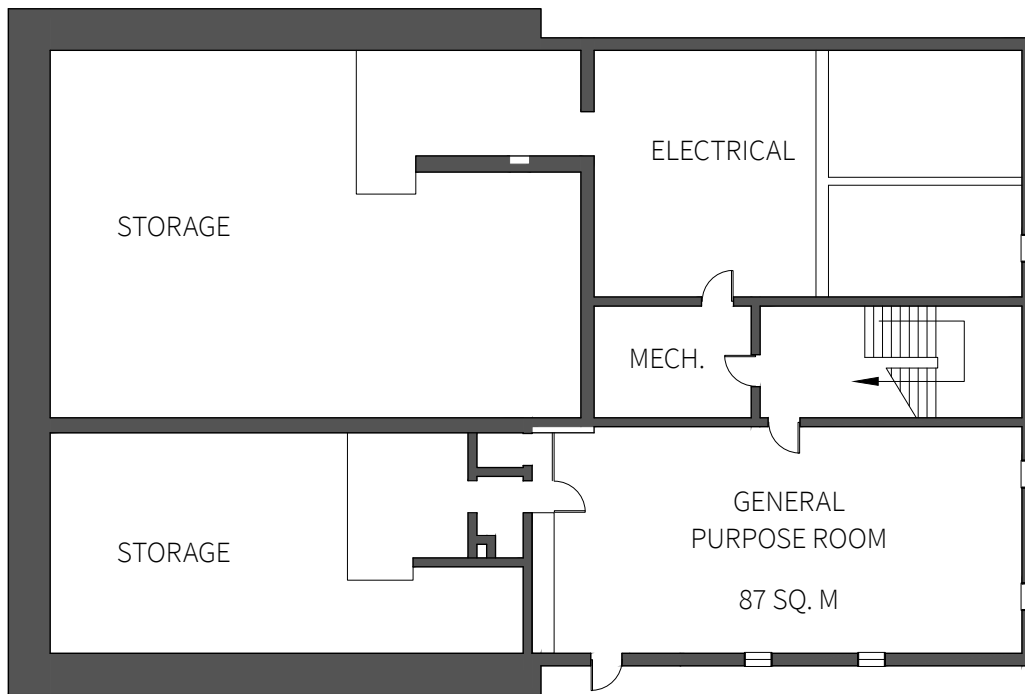
Brick deterioration on the east side of original portion of the building (ERA, 2018).



Cracked window sill on east wall (ERA, 2018).



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing Basement Plan

The stone areas exposed on the exterior require some localized repointing.

#### 4.3.3 Windows

The window frames on the original building show signs of normal deterioration. Most of the glazing appears to be in fair condition. Exterior gaskets and sealants appear to be failed and deteriorated and require replacement.

#### 4.3.4 Roof

The roof, soffits, eavestroughs, gutters and downspouts all appear to be in good condition.

#### 4.3.5 Interiors

The majority of the building's interior elements appear to be in fair condition, including the wood stair providing access to the basement.

Floor finishes appear to be in poor to fair condition. Ceiling finishing appear to be in good condition with no noticeable deficiencies.

The vinyl floor tiles, as well as the acoustic ceiling tiles, are considered to be asbestos-containing as per the Phase-1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) report prepared by Trow Associates Inc. dated December 2009.



Stone Foundation as seen from the basement(ERA, 2018).



Basement window on north wall (ERA, 2018).



Wood Stair (ERA, 2018).



Roof, bell tower and chimney (ERA, 2018).



Flat roof of the 1908 building addition (ERA, 2018).

## 5 COMMUNITY INPUT

The reuse of the Old Alton P.S. is a topic of ongoing interest for the community. There has been years' worth of active engagement with local stakeholders, producing a number of viable ideas for the building's reuse.

The Old Alton P.S. has clear value to the community, and ideas for its reuse are largely grounded in publicly-accessible community uses. An ideal proposed use would celebrate and build on the role of the building as a public asset, as a facility intrinsically linked to local culture and heritage, and, importantly, would retain and maintain the heritage characteristics of the building, both through specific conservation measures, and through the maintenance which would come from regular use and upkeep.

### 5.1 Community Consultation Process

Prior to ERA's involvement in this project, a community consultation meeting was held on October 17th, 2017. The meeting centred on the the strengths and defining characteristics of Alton as a community, the identification of service or facilities gaps within the community, and the possible uses the Old Alton P.S. might fulfill to best serve the community.

ERA has built on this successful baseline of engagement with targeted local stakeholder meetings. Stakeholders included many members of the local community, business owners and operators, and political leadership.

A full program of public consultation was not undertaken by ERA at this stage. Based on ERA's understanding of the context and previous consultation that was conducted, there is such existing community support for the adaptive reuse of the Old Alton P.S. that consultation to develop buy-in was deemed unnecessary. Furthermore, ERA perceived a risk of "consultation fatigue", and a need to demonstrate concrete steps forward based on what the community has already offered.

### 5.2 Community Consultation Outcomes

The results of the October 17th, 2017 community consultation meeting and the targeted stakeholder consultations that followed can be distilled into three categories:

- Community-wide *themes*
- *Roles* for the Old Alton P.S. amidst these themes
- Community-wide *needs*

### 5.2.1 Community-Wide Themes

The major themes of Alton as a place that arose from the discussion around new uses included:

- Culture and Arts
- Heritage
- Tourism
- Natural resources
- Recreation/sport
- Education
- Community
- Growth/development

### 5.2.2 Roles for the Old Alton P.S.

It is apparent that the Old Alton P.S. has a great depth of meaning for many residents, therefore there is an assumed community responsibility intrinsic in any future use. The school has an important role to play as a community asset - a role that both transcends and informs any new use.

Prospective roles for the building include:

- Engagement
- Community building
- Heritage stewardship
- Community stewardship
- Celebration of natural heritage
- Celebration of industrial past
- Celebration of community character

- Support for existing organizations and facilities
- Connection with other regional facilities (i.e. PAMA; Caledon Heritage, Ontario Heritage Trust)

### 5.2.3 Community-Wide Needs

While themes represent ambitions that residents have for their community, and roles represent ambitions they have for the building, needs are the current gaps in the marketplace.

These may not be needs that the Old Alton P.S. is specifically able to fulfil: they apply to the larger community and relate to services that residents may currently have to leave the community to access, or services that may currently exist within the community and are overstretched or could be expanded on.

Leading needs that have been identified include:

- Retail
- Central information source (i.e. municipal information, tourism information)
- Food/drink
- Seniors/youth facilities & programs
- Residential
- Office
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Group activity/event space
- Arts/cultural programming

## 6 OPTIONS & PARAMETERS

### 6.1 Program Parameters

There are many possible uses for the Old Alton P.S. which are both compatible with the physical building as well as the larger community. Each prospective program area outlined in Section 6.2 exhibits a core set of community-centric characteristics. These prospective programs should be:

**Place-based:** Measurable benefit to local economy, through local jobs, local market, local products, local materials.

**Community-driven:** the idea of strengthening and celebrating the neighbourhood's heritage and identity by celebrating the school as a historic pillar of the community.

**Cultural contributors:** uses which contribute to the cultural fabric – makers, artisans, and craftspeople-, or products with roots in local natural resources.

**Multi-use:** a mix of uses that will allow for financial sustainability, while ensuring whole-community engagement. Alton's population size limits the viability for a single use or specialised facility due to market capacity.

**Multi-audience:** Development in smaller urban centres often must engage several target audiences in order to be sustainable. These broad audience segments are:

- Visitors (who are looking for *experiences*)
- Current residents (who are looking for *services*)
- New residents (who are looking for *opportunities*)

**Multi-demographic:** seniors to youth, commuters to retirees.

## 6.2 Proposed Program Areas

The Old Alton P.S. has the capacity to be a multi-use space that can serve many of the needs identified by the community. This could include a mixture of uses, business models, and revenue streams, but would require the development of an over-arching mandate or ‘positioning statement’ to create a recognizable and memorable identity for the building as a destination. Five distinct program areas have been identified to fulfill this mandate:

- Arts and Culture
- Active Living
- Innovation
- Education
- Tourism

Each program theme is assessed as follows to explore its viability and community impact.

### 6.2.1 Arts and Culture

*Overview:* The most popular choice identified in the community feedback, an Arts and Culture Hub can build on Alton’s strategic position as a cultural centre within the region.

*Program ideas:* Arts classes, youth and seniors’ programming, gallery space, retail with crafts and artisanal products, studio rental, art therapy office, special events.

Demonstration activities mixed with production could create viable year-round engagement for visitors and residents: i.e. a jewelry studio, print shop, or textile studio with space to watch the artists in process, and opportunity to purchase products.

*Competitive profile:* With many galleries in the region, a diversified hub will be better positioned than a single-use facility that encroaches on existing community assets (i.e., not a visual arts gallery). A further competitive study of arts programs in the area would be required to assess overlaps and synergies.

*Viability:* A strong option, given community support and regional engagement. Targets all three audience segments: visitors, current residents, potential new residents.



Precedent: Workroom, Toronto, ON



## 6.2.2 Active Living

*Overview:* Providing group fitness spaces, a meeting place or hub for outdoor recreation (hiking, cycling), connection to BMX park, soccer and baseball fields.

*Program ideas:* Yoga studio, crossfit and fitness classes, youth & seniors' classes, meeting space for guided walks, hikes and bike tours, nutrition and wellness retail.

*Competitive profile:* As the active outdoor theme is very strong in Belfountain, this may be direct competition and could hinder efforts toward regional synergies. However, there appear to be no gyms in the immediate area, so this could be a development area.

*Viability:* A very strong theme, but would take extensive marketing and outreach programming given Alton's limited catchment area, and could overlap negatively with Belfountain's market position, should the communities wish to continue the joint 'passport' marketing effort started in recent years.



Precedent: Bomb Fitness, Toronto, ON

## 6.2.3 Innovation

*Overview:* An innovation hub creates a central location for social communities or shared work space focused on research, start-ups, technology development and mentoring. Functions as a knowledge base, R&D centre and social gathering spot.

*Program ideas:* Hot desks/co-working, makerspace, pitch sessions ("Dragons Den"), investment and start-up advice and events, research and development labs, independent office space.

*Competitive profile:* CBIZ – Caledon Business Innovation Zone – opened in 2018 and probably will capture the local market in this field. There is also the RIC (Research, Innovation, Commercialization) centre serving Mississauga, Caledon and Brampton, which has significant industry ties.

*Viability:* Co-working innovation hubs often struggle in rural areas where people largely have the space and ability to work from home if they are self-employed. This theme would take time – and municipal sponsorship – for success. In what is largely a commuter town, there may not be sufficient need for this type of investment or focus on local business development. At the regional level this is imperative; at the community level it may not be. However, a space for special events along this theme, or a community satellite of CBIZ, may be viable.



Precedent: weWork, Toronto, ON

## 6.2.4 Education

*Overview:* Consistent with the historic use of the building, the school could very easily be updated to a flexible, multipurpose learning centre.

*Program ideas:* Adult/continuing education classes, early years centre, qualification testing and skills development, tutoring, ESL, computer literacy.

*Competitive profile:* Peel Region has several adult learning centres (Mississauga, Brampton). ESL centres are a rapidly growing and profitable field, as are computer literacy classes. The closest sizable early years centre appears to be in Bolton.

*Viability:* While this theme would be relatively easy to implement and communicate, and could resonate with the community, (the building is a school, after all) it is better suited to a private operator than as a municipal resource. This offers a strong partnership model that could offer the Town a structure that mitigates having the full operational management fall to the Town itself.



Precedent: Adult Learning Centre, Peel Region

## 6.2.5 Tourism

*Overview:* An information centre for visitors, perhaps incorporating lodging or special events.

*Program ideas:* Welcome centre, municipal information booth, maps and guided tours, B&B or hostel, events or festival headquarters

*Competitive profile:* The Millcroft Inn is currently expanding, making a second visitor lodging project problematic from a competitive standpoint. The Alton Mill is also expanding, catering to more weddings, events and visitor traffic. A stand-alone tourism centre wouldn't have direct competitors, but may not serve enough of a viable need unless it is positioned as a regional hub and receives support from neighbouring communities.

*Viability:* Being centred on visitors, this use does not directly engage the immediate community, which fails to address a central community engagement priority raised through consultation. Viability of this theme is low for a stand-alone tourism focus, but high as a component part of all other themes. In other words, tourism can be integrated into arts, activity, education, etc. to become part of the visitor experience.



Precedent: Banff Information Centre, Banff, AB

## 6.3 Infrastructural Constraints

The capacity of the building to support increased use is a critical measure of determining the feasibility of its reuse. Without a guarantee of viable infrastructure, we can assume that no owner or operator will take a risk on investing in the building, including the Town and the School Board.

We also assume that an operator interested in investing significantly in the building would prefer to hold the title on the building, and this would require the property to be severed so that title could be held separate from the new school. Without this designation of ownership or prospect of future ownership, the long term investment appeal of the building is decreased.

### 6.3.1 Septic

Refer to the report by Van Harten Surveying (Appendix E) for additional information regarding the known state of the current septic system. Based on this assessment and information provided by the Town and School Board in the course of this study, ERA's understanding is that:

- The new school and Old Alton P.S. legally share one property, and therefore one septic system;
  - In order to legally sever the properties and have the Old School operate under a new owner, each building requires a separate septic system;
- The status of the current system is not well understood, including its capacity. Due to this, its long term use is not recommended;
- There is no room on the property to construct a separate, second septic system; and
- The recommended approach is to design and install a new system servicing both buildings together. It would be limited in size given the land restraints (only available land is the soccer field), and would have limitations on daily flow rates. (The system proposed by MMM Group in 2013 could satisfy this requirement).

Based on this recommendation, the property on which the Old School sits cannot be severed, and single ownership must be retained over the entire site, including both school buildings. Furthermore, the single septic system is recommended to be replaced. If a new system is pursued, it is important to note that though a new system could be accommodated on the existing small soccer field, it is not an ideal location.

### 6.3.2 Parking & Access

- Currently, there are 40 standard and 2 barrier free parking spaces on the upper level beside the Old Alton P.S., and 17 standard and 1 barrier free parking spaces on the lower level beside the library and baseball field;
- As outlined in the Town of Caledon Zoning By-law for Elementary Schools, 1 parking space per 100 sqm of GFA or portion thereof and 1 parking space per portable classroom is required;
- The New Alton P.S.'s GFA is 3093 sqm, therefore, 31 parking spaces are required; 2 of which are barrier-free
- Therefore, the New Alton P.S. requires 13 parking spaces on the upper level, in addition to the 18 it already has on the lower level;
- Any new use proposed for the Old Alton P.S. would have to accommodate the remaining available parking spaces (29);
- The existing fire route must be maintained; and
- The existing drop-off/pick-up route must be maintained.

### 6.3.3 Physical Building Upgrades

Regardless of use, building upgrades are required in order to bring the building up to Ontario Building Code Standards. This includes:

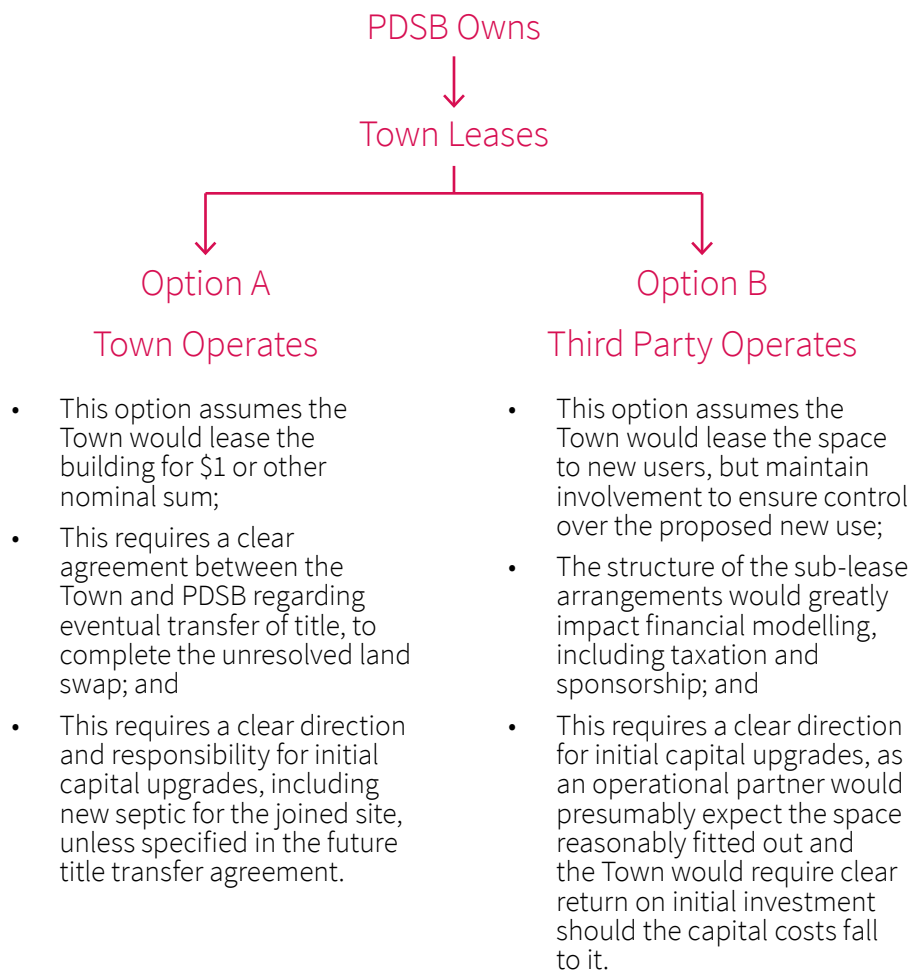
- New accessible washrooms;
- AODA upgrades to doors, hardware, and openings;
- Removal of all asbestos-containing materials;
- Installation of sprinklers as per required by the Ontario Fire Code; and
- Upgrades to the water distribution system.

## 6.4 Models for Ownership & Operation

The availability and identification of a possible owner or operator is another measure of feasibility. Without a committed owner or operator, operational feasibility cannot be fully measured or assessed.

While there was an intention to execute a land swap between the PDSB and Town prior to the building of the New Alton P.S., this swap has not been completed to date, and PDSB is currently the owner of the entire land parcel. Given the septic restrictions and recommended approach outlined above, the land cannot be severed, and as such, the PDSB must remain the owner. It is ERA's understanding that the PDSB does not wish to be involved in the operation of the building, and that there is an intent on the part of both the PDSB and the Town to eventually sever the lot and transfer the Old Alton P.S.'s ownership to the Town, although the method for doing so, while under one septic system, is unclear at this time.

With this understanding, however, ERA has outlined two potential operational/ownership models below:



Option A is understood to be the preferred model. A clear, formalized agreement between the Town and PDSB is now required in order to advance either of these options.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADAPTIVE RE-USE




Suggested new uses for the building are driven by four primary considerations:

- Feasibility from a structural and architectural perspective;
- Stakeholder/community priorities;
- Celebration of the site's history and conservation of its heritage features; and,
- The current constraints as outlined herein, both in terms of required infrastructure and current ownership model.

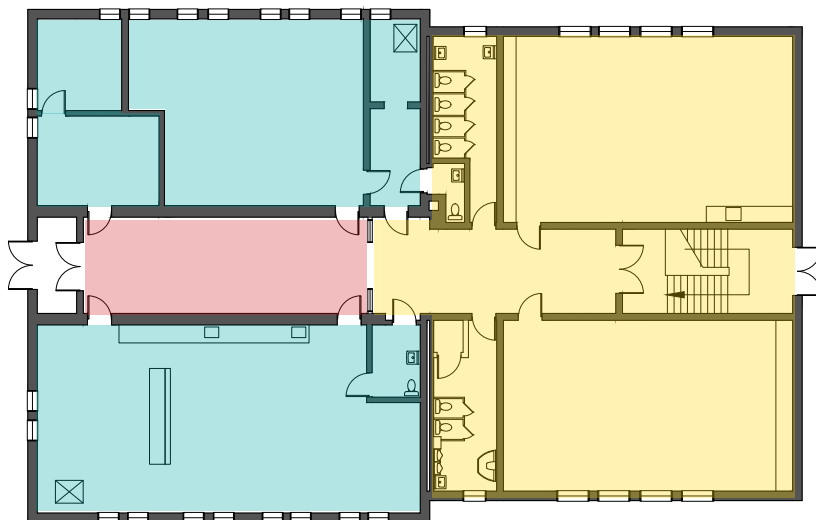
Within this section, we have illustrated uses that resonate with the community and the needs we have assessed. The proposed uses are also sympathetic to operation adjacent to a busy school, and can be operated under what we understand to be the current preferred model (ownership by the PDSB with a lease to the Town), with the long-range view of the Town assuming ownership once larger site transfer considerations are resolved.

### 7.1 Proposed Scheme

The proposed program is a mixed-use operational model, featuring three main program elements:

-  early years centre/daycare
-  arts/cultural studio space
-  interpretive heritage installation

In our opinion, this variety of uses responds directly to community needs, and functionally best celebrates and animates the historic School building.



Existing floor plan with diagrammatic proposed program overlaid

### 7.1.1 Program

The three proposed uses respond to articulated needs in the community as well as provide a diversity of revenue streams which is essential to operational function. They also respond uniquely to the historic narrative of the building: as the building originally evolved over time to accommodate expanded use, so too does this layout respond to the growing and diverse nature of the community.

The streetfront portion of the building presents the arts and cultural element of Alton's identity, while offering an approachable, animated studio/retail activity space that will be open to the public. The two large rooms can be programmed as artist studio space, with opportunities for workshops, community events and retail frontage. The entry into this space is through an "indoor street", the hallway that once connected the two original classrooms. This 'street' will feature a heritage display, with the capacity for rotating exhibits.

The indoor street leads to the main entrance of the daycare, located to the rear, in the newer addition to the original building. Responding to the needs of a growing community, the daycare also reflects the existing functionality and identity of the site as adjacent to a school. The focus on families and children, education, and care-giving is inscribed in the history of the building, and flows naturally from the heritage focus of the indoor street.

These proposed uses can serve visitors (heritage and arts classes/retail), current residents (daycare and arts studio) and help attract new residents (daycare), thereby offering a built-in longevity in terms of audience demand. The combined facility also offers a strong municipal stewardship role, with a distinct service to local residents alongside a viable business operation and tourism draw.



Kid Icarus, Toronto: printmaking space and retail



Paper Plus Cloth, Toronto: studio, workshop and retail



Artscape Youngplace, Toronto: mix of studio spaces and children drop in centre in the basement



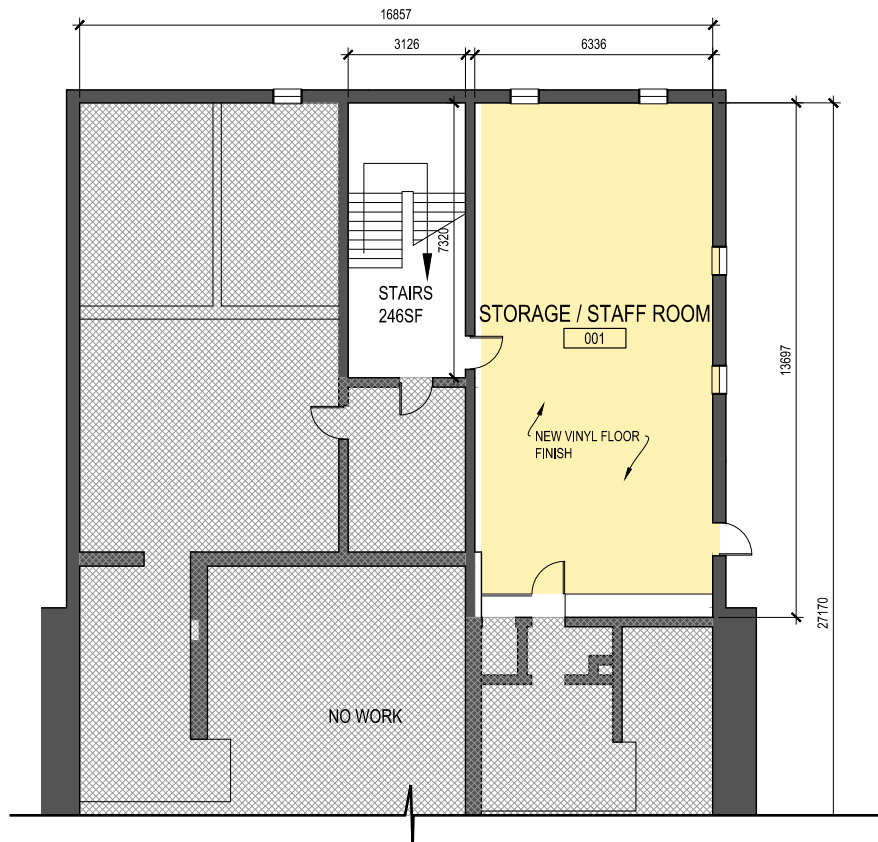
Little Picasso, Halifax: art themed day care

### 7.1.2 Layout

The layout of the ground floor offers two studio spaces with approximately 70 sq.m. of open space and a separate storage/staff room. Accessible washrooms are off the main hallway for general use.

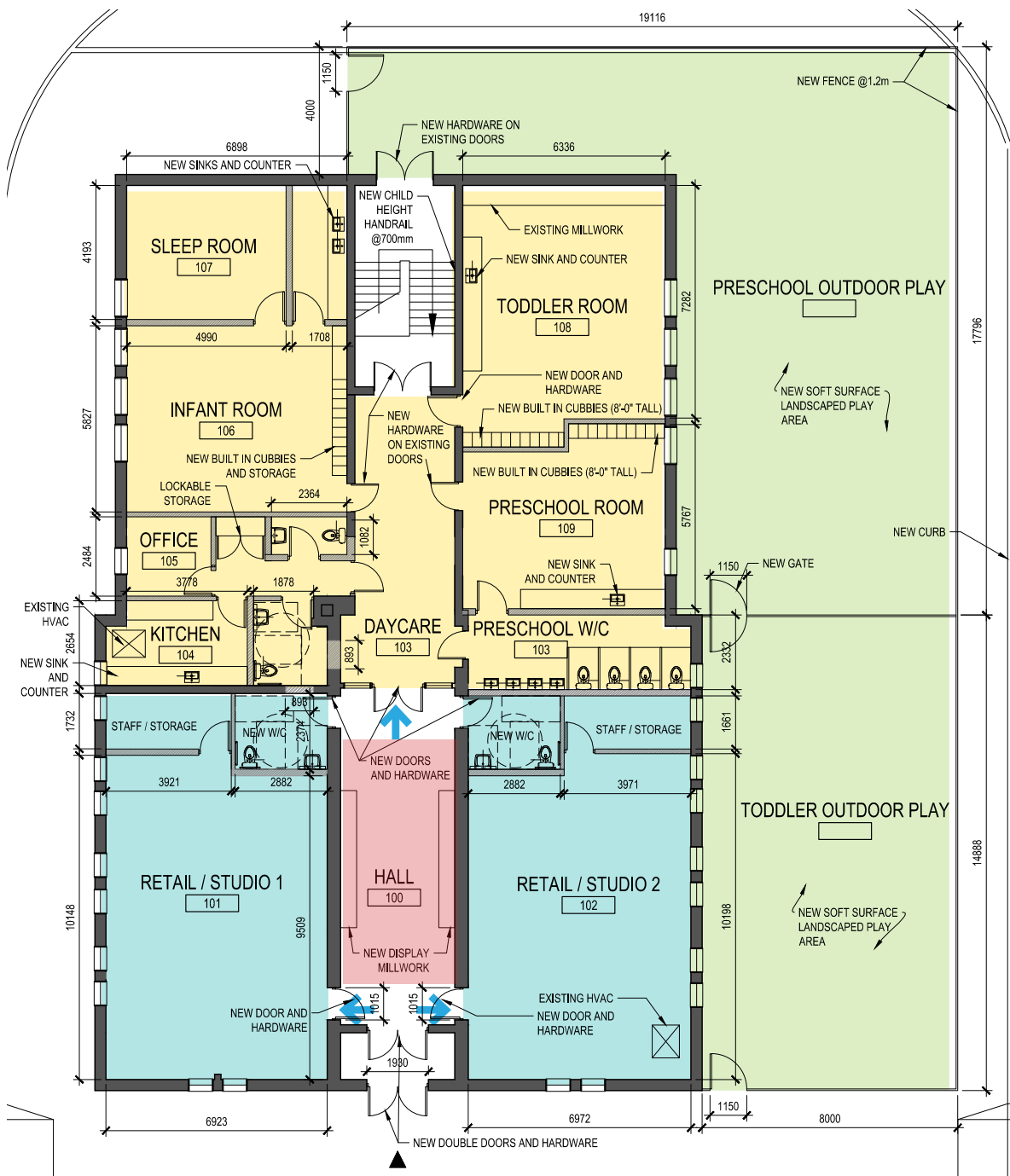
The wide central corridor can function as both an indoor street and an exhibition space for interpretation of the building's history.

The daycare will have over 260 sq.m. of space with three separate rooms for infant, toddler and preschool ages, a kitchen, office, and washrooms off a main corridor. Each of the activity rooms have at least 36 sq.m. of open space for flexible programming. The basement is designed to be only accessible to staff and is a dedicated storage area and staff room. An adjacent outdoor play area will be located to the east of the building, and will be secured by a 1.2m fence with lockable gates.



Proposed Basement Plan (ERA Architects)





Proposed Ground Floor Plan (ERA Architects)

### 7.1.3 Alterations/Improvements

New washrooms are proposed to be installed for the daycare and separate new barrier-free washrooms for the retail/studio tenants. The washroom adjacent to the preschool activity room is proposed to have new fixtures sized and installed at a height appropriate for children. A new barrier-free washroom and additional new powder room off the main corridor will service the staff and any child requiring an accessible washroom.

New partitions are proposed throughout the interior of the building to address the needs of the daycare and the studio spaces.

The kitchen will be modified and upgraded to support the functions of the daycare and will need renovations to the existing HVAC system, potential new equipment, fixtures, and millwork.

New barrier-free double doors fitted with exit hardware are proposed to be installed at the main entrance and within the vestibule for universal access to the space. New door hardware is proposed to be installed on the existing doors off the main corridor where possible.

At the entrance to the daycare, new lockable and barrier-free double doors are proposed to infill the existing partition. The existing partition may have to be modified in size and reinforced for this purpose.

The north stairs are to be maintained and a new child height handrail is proposed to be installed at 700mm above the height of the stair nosing. A child gate is proposed to be installed on the landing at the top of the stairs to the basement so that access to the basement is limited to staff.

A new outdoor play area is proposed to be installed directly east of the building, replacing a row of parking stalls. A new curb is proposed to be poured around a new soft surface landscaped area. A new 1.2m fence with secured gates is proposed around the perimeter of the outdoor play area and the basement windows will be overhauled for safety.

The suspended ceiling throughout the building is proposed to be removed and new LED lighting fixtures are proposed to be installed in each of the new spaces as base building lighting.

The existing hardwood floor is proposed to be maintained with minor repairs and cleaning. The floor at the entry vestibule is proposed to have a new integrated entry mat installed.

## 7.2 Functional Analysis

Each of the proposed new uses can be assessed by the following criteria: community impact, financial impact, resource impact (i.e. space, staffing, renovations & equipment), and impact on brand.

	<b>Early Years Centre/ Daycare</b>	<b>Arts Studio Space</b>	<b>Heritage Display</b>
<b>Overview</b>	A Early Years Centre in this location would be convenient for those families with young children and appropriate to its context, being adjacent to the new school.	An arts/cultural studio space would be a small gallery, retail, or workshop space. Could bring in industry experts for ticketed workshops.	Celebrate local values, memories, ties to the community, and reinforce the value of maintaining the past within current evolution and growth.
<b>Community Impact</b>	Benefit to young families in the community and provide an animated use to the building.	Benefit for community through the education of new skills and as a place to gather over a shared interest/ creative project.	A distinct priority for the community, celebrating and maintaining the heritage of the building will serve to engage local residents and directly reflect their values.
<b>Financial Impact</b>	Relational to operating model: could be operated by for-profit, not-for-profit, charity, or by school board itself. Revenue scale and rental rates would be contingent on this model. Presumably would not be directly operated by Town.	Retail aspect would support the tenants; workshops and additional afterhours programming extend operational business hours.	This module is positioned as revenue neutral, assuming self-guided heritage elements. Costs associated with developing heritage interpretation materials should be factors in design budget.
<b>Resource Impact</b>	Staffing would be hired, and potential for placements for ECE students	Staffing minimal typical - low overhead	If the heritage element is self-guided, minimal resources are needed beyond the initial design considerations and setup.
<b>Impact on Brand</b>	Retains educational theme of the heritage building.	Arts focused space is aligned with Alton as an arts hub.	Reinforces local community identity and heritage within increasing densification and larger GTA growth.

## 7.3 Impact

The adaptive reuse of the Old Alton P.S. proposes a new program for the building with minimal impact to the exterior. The new interior layout maintains the original corridor, and several interior heritage attributes can be retrofitted, salvaged, or reused where appropriate.

### 7.3.1 Demolition

In order to accommodate the new program, a handful of modifications are required to the existing building. This includes:

- the removal of interior partitions;
- the removal of asbestos containing materials including vinyl floor tiles and acoustic ceiling tile;
- the renovation of the washroom and kitchen spaces and provision of new plumbing;
- the removal of the carpet, millwork and all wall finishes in the southern rooms;
- the removal of the drop ceiling, exposing an original ceiling height of ~15 ft;
- the removal of the row of parking spaces and walkway directly adjacent to the building; and
- the retrofit of existing HVAC, electrical, and plumbing systems as required.

### 7.3.2 Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes located on the exterior of the building, including openings, the original windows, the bell tower, the brick walls and stone foundation are proposed to be maintained. Impact on interior heritage attributes are proposed to be minimal. This includes:

- the removal of the original millwork in the northwest classroom; this is recommended to be salvaged and reused elsewhere in the building;
- a new interior door opening in the original wall of the corridor;
- the widening of door openings and the replacement of doors as required for barrier free access and security; and
- original doors that can be reused with new hardware are proposed to be kept in place.



Front doors (ERA, 2018).



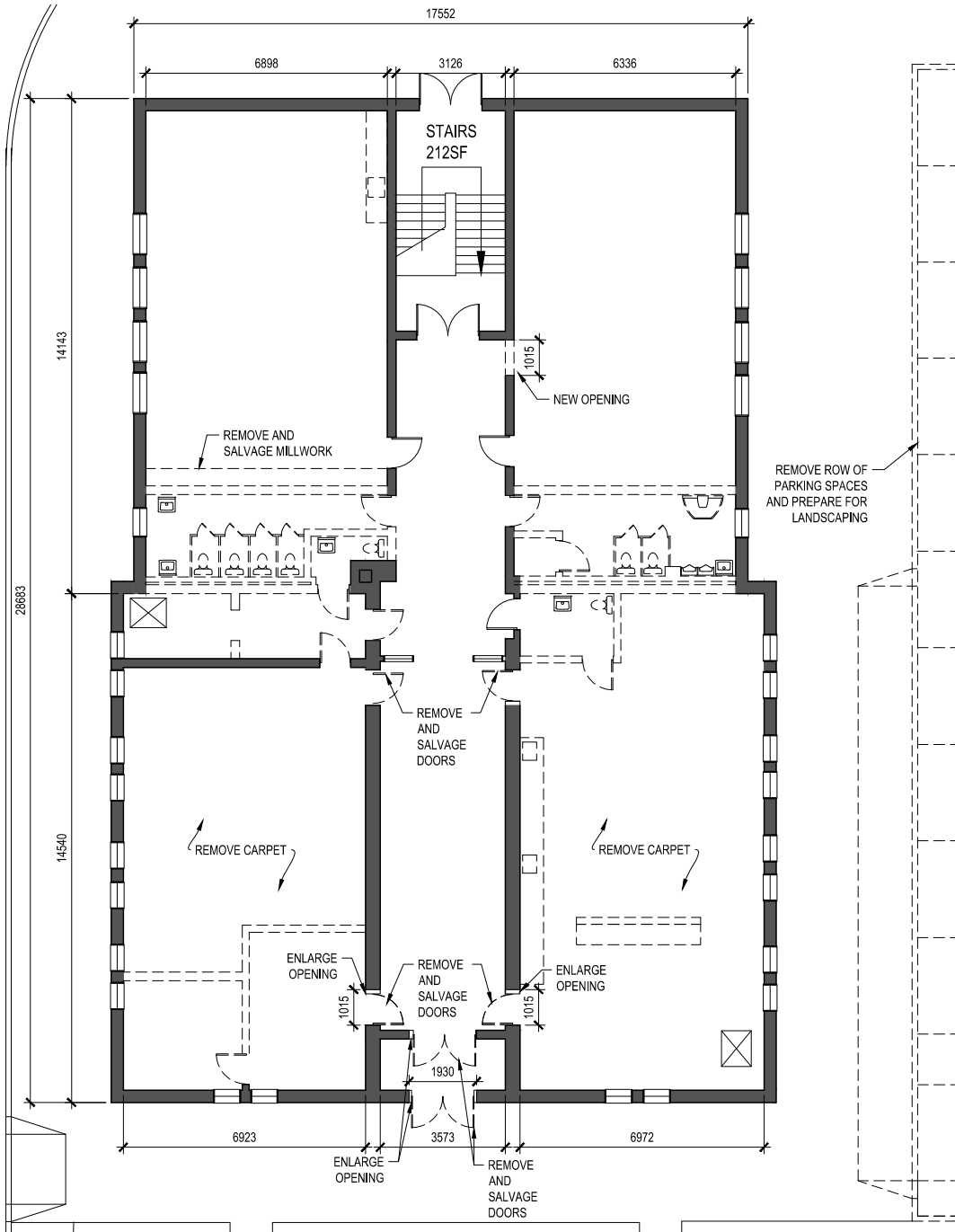
Original front doors (ERA, 2018).



Built in millwork (ERA, 2018).



Built in millwork (ERA, 2018).



Demolition and Removals, Ground Floor Plan (ERA Architects)

### 7.3.3 Parking

The proposed daycare use requires private, adjacent, outdoor space. The excess of parking on site allows for the removal of one row of parking to facilitate the outdoor play area.

As described in section 7.2.2, there are currently 40 spaces on the site. The diagram to the right demonstrates how the revised parking plan would function. There would be 31 parking spaces (including 2 BF) for the new school, and 14 parking spaces (including 2 BF) for the old school and its new use.

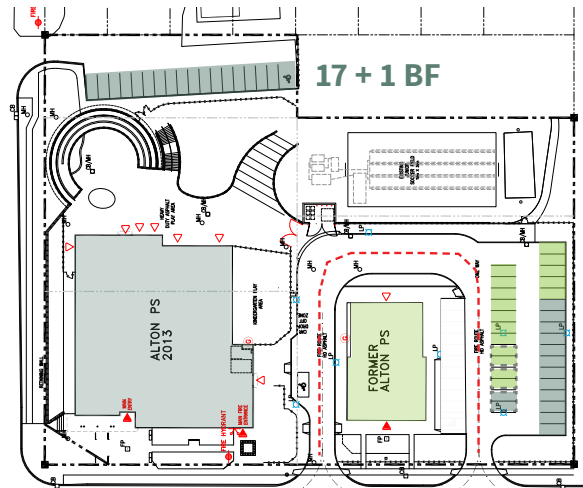
### 7.3.4 Septic

Given the restraints on available land for a larger septic system, occupancy within the Old Alton P.S. will be capped to accommodate the existing system (or a new similar system). A comprehensive review of the occupant load and corresponding use will be required to determine the specifics.

### 7.3.5 New Alton P.S.

No impact is anticipated on the adjacent new school. The existing fire access route and drop-off/pick-up route have been maintained, the required number of parking stalls have been maintained (but are now split between 2 levels), and the proposed use and occupancy of the Old Alton P.S. is not projected to conflict with the use of the neighbouring new school.

A traffic study is recommended to assess the impact at peak drop-off and pick-up times, as there may be some overlap between the New Alton P.S. and the daycare.



Existing site plan with parking requirements annotated in green (PDSB with annotations by ERA)

12 + 2 BF  
12 + 1 BF

## 7.4 Operational Considerations

Each of the proposed new uses can uniquely respond to the question of operation described above in Section 7.3. There are a variety of options when it comes to ownership, and each option must be carefully considered.

Outlined below are the proposed operational models for each of the proposed new programs. All of these assume the Old Alton P.S. has been leased to the Town by the PDSB.

In Section 9, funding opportunities are outlined. As available funding is determined by applicant eligibility, the operational structure of the facility would have to be determined before a funding program could be confirmed. For example, many of these funding streams are not accessible to a municipal applicant, however they are accessible to a non-profit operational partner. Funding eligibility may assist in informing an operational structure for the facility as a whole.

### 7.4.1 Heritage Display

Proposed operational model: Town as operator

- The Town could design, source material for, and manage admission to the display. This would also include consideration of revenue streams, such as collecting donations, offering opportunities for sponsorship, or changing a fee for a guided tour or interpretive service for interested groups (i.e. school tours).

Alternative model: Partnership opportunity, industry partner or community organization

- A private partner could be engaged to showcase the role of industry in Alton's history; the aggregate industry would be a primary candidate for this. This process would most likely require a RFP issuance to ensure objective selection of the industry partner. An existing community organization could also manage the selection and display coordination of the exhibit, as well as providing docent or interpretive services. This could either be volunteer or salaried through the community organization. Guidance from a more established operator, such as PAMA, and access to archival materials is an option here as well.

## 7.4.2 Arts Studio/Flex Space

Proposed operational model: Partnership opportunity with private operator

- A small business operator could sub-lease the space as a studio/retail shop. This would be the most viable option to avoid perception of subsidy or Town-sponsored competitive entrant into a crowded market. A tenant should be selected to complement existing facilities such as Paul Moran gallery and the Alton Mill Arts Centre. A screen/printmaking shop, pottery facility, woodworking shop or similar have been suggested and would offer regional and local synergies for arts walks, increased destination marketing, and local engagement.

Alternate model: Town as operator

- The Town could operate the space as delivery location for courses, community programs, or a local hub for organizations such as CBIZ, with an emphasis on growing and supporting arts-related small businesses. As an operating arts hub, however, there could be a perceived unfair advantage in the Town as operator in competition with the Alton Mill and Paul Moran Gallery, among others.

## 7.4.3 Early Years Centre/Daycare

Proposed operational Model: Partnership opportunity with registered charitable daycare operator or EarlyOn facility

- Within Caledon, EarlyOn centres are managed by the Region of Peel. It should be noted that Caledon has not been identified as an area of greatest or identified need as of the 2017 report *Planning for EarlyON Child and Family Centres in Peel*. However, local interviews have indicated that there is an increasing demand due to recent residential growth, as well as developments currently in the application stage. An inter-governmental discussion may be required regarding priority areas for increased service balanced with the availability of a new operating location. To fit with the facility's larger theme, a licensed provider of arts-focused early childhood programming could also be engaged.



## 7.5 Costing

Based on the Order of Magnitude (Class D) Estimate prepared by Altus Group, the proposed interior renovation work would cost roughly \$1.35M. Refer to the report in Appendix F for a detailed breakdown.

It is also worth noting that a new septic system (+/- 8000 L/day sewage flow; common system with shared leeching bed) could cost in the range of \$100-150k.

### 7.5.1 Capital & Operating Costs

The above noted costs should be read in conjunction with the Condition Assessment Report prepared by Nadine International Consulting Engineers, dated April 2017, noting a 1-5 year spend of \$329,569, and a 6-30 year estimate of \$628,308 required to keep the building in a good state of repair (see Appendix D).

The proposed design does not impact the costs put forward by Nadine International, and they are still relevant figures for planning purposes.

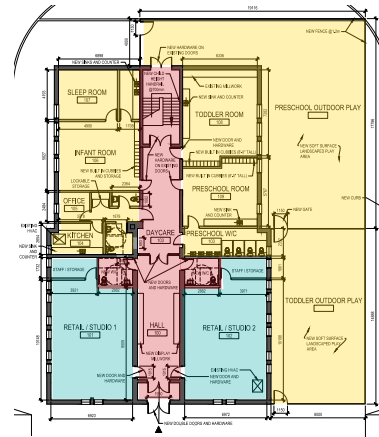
### 7.5.2 Potential Phasing

Given the magnitude of the cost, a phased approach may be a suitable course of action. This would require a further analysis\*, but at a high level, one can imagine the following approach to phasing:

1. Heritage Display
2. Arts Studio/Flex Space
3. Early Years Centre

Not only would phasing allow for a reduced initial cost, but would also allow for a progression of the ownership transfer between the PDSB and the Town, and progressive testing of the site concept from a business perspective - all while achieving the goal of activating the site.

*\* Note: Phasing the program may create potential issues from a life safety perspective. The full building will likely require initial upgrades to meet Building Code requirements as part of Phase 1.*



## 8 FUNDING AND GRANT OPTIONS

Public funding is available for capital upgrades, with eligibility for funding based on owner and operating structure as well as intended community use.

Prior to evaluating funding options as a working budget for required capital work, a formal lease agreement would have to be finalized so that the lead applicant is clear, and eligibility established. If one of the specified uses was to be operated by a not-for-profit or community organization, for example, many of these funding options could be available. If the Town is the lead, many of these options - but not all - are available for a municipal applicant.

Below is a selection of possible funding opportunities which may be appropriate for the adaptive reuse of the Old Alton P.S. This list is by no means exhaustive, and further research would be required to establish eligibility would need to be undertaken, dependent on the applicant and the exact scope of work identified.

### 8.1 Capital Funding

GRANT	GRANTING BODY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	GRANT AMOUNT
Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage - Legacy Fund	Canadian Heritage	A municipal administration (or one of its agencies, boards or commissions) that demonstrates an active partnership with at least one community-based group for the purposes of the proposed project.	Community-initiated capital projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commemoration of a 100th anniversary or greater, in 25-year increments;</li> <li>• Commemoration of a significant local historical event or a significant local historical personality;</li> <li>• <i>Restoration, renovation or transformation of existing buildings or exterior spaces with local community significance that are intended for community use;</i></li> <li>• Encouragement of arts and heritage activities in the local community that are intended for and accessible to the general public.</li> </ul>	Up to 50% of the eligible project expenses, to a maximum of \$500,000.
Canada Cultural Spaces Fund	Canadian Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An incorporated not-for-profit arts and/or heritage organization operating in a professional manner;</li> <li>• <i>Provincial/territorial governments and municipal administrations and their agencies;</i></li> <li>• Equivalent Aboriginal peoples' institutions or organizations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction and/or renovation</li> <li>• Specialized equipment;</li> <li>• Feasibility Studies for construction and/or renovation projects.</li> </ul>	

GRANT	GRANTING BODY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	GRANT AMOUNT
Ontario Trillium Foundation: Capital Grants	Ontario Trillium Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A charitable organization;</li> <li>• A foundation registered as a charity with the CRA;</li> <li>• An organization incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation;</li> <li>• A municipality with a population of 20,000 or less;</li> <li>• A First Nation</li> <li>• A Metis, Inuit or other Indigenous community;</li> <li>• <i>Any collaboration of two or more organizations where one organization is an eligible applicant as listed above. A municipality of over 20,000 is eligible in partnership with an eligible applicant.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buying and installing equipment;</li> <li>• <i>Undertaking renovations, installations and repairs;</i></li> <li>• Building structures or spaces;</li> <li>• Making better use of technological resources.</li> </ul>	From \$5,000 to \$150,000
Rural Economic Development Fund	Province of Ontario	<p>A legal entity that is a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not-for-profit;</li> <li>• Municipality;</li> <li>• Local Services Board;</li> <li>• Ontario Indigenous community or association.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans and strategies;</li> <li>• Applied research and analysis to support planning and priority setting;</li> <li>• Sector development and economic diversification;</li> <li>• Marketing promotional or branding activities;</li> <li>• Workforce attraction, retention and development.</li> </ul>	
Caledon Designated Heritage Property Grant Program	Town of Caledon	<p>Designated heritage properties owned by any level of government are NOT eligible <i>except where a non-profit/community group has assumed responsibility for the property's maintenance by long-term lease or legal agreement.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any work that directly and appropriately preserves, restores and/or enhances heritage attributes;</li> <li>• Labour, materials and equipment for such work;</li> <li>• Work on heritage portions of the property (not on non-heritage additions).</li> </ul>	Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$4,000, subject to available funding.
Canada Small Business Financing Program	Independent Financial Institutions (organized through the federal government)	<p>Small businesses or start-ups operating for profit in Canada, with gross annual revenues of \$10 million or less. Not-for-profit organizations are not eligible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing or improving land and buildings used for commercial purposes;</li> <li>• <i>Purchasing new or existing renovations to premises occupied by the business as a tenant;</i></li> <li>• Purchasing or improving new or used equipment.</li> </ul>	

GRANT	GRANTING BODY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	GRANT AMOUNT
Canada Post Community Foundation Grants	Canada Post Community Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charitable organizations with a valid CRA registration number;</li> <li>Registered non-profit organizations with a valid B/N business registration number;</li> <li>Elementary or high school groups;</li> <li>Local community or Aboriginal groups;</li> <li>Community libraries;</li> <li>Registered Canadian amateur athletic associations.</li> </ul>	<p>Projects that focus on education, development, culture/civic programs, health and physical activity, social services and arts and culture for youth and families.</p> <p>School projects that would qualify would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground structures;</li> <li>Library supplies;</li> <li>Electronics;</li> <li>Music instruments;</li> <li>Sports equipment;</li> <li>Participation in school-organized humanitarian efforts;</li> <li>After-school programs;</li> <li>Science fairs and other educational events.</li> </ul>	Up to \$25,000.

## 8.2 Operational Funding

GRANT	GRANTING BODY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	ELIGIBLE PROJECTS/PROGRAMS	GRANT AMOUNT
Investing in Regional Diversification	FedDev Ontario	Incorporated not-for-profit organizations in Southern Ontario with mandates that include economic development.	<p>Projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhance business attraction, investment and employment opportunities in Southern Ontario regions and communities;</li> <li>strengthen regional businesses and clusters with the goal of economic diversification and sustainability;</li> <li>develop and expand collaborative efforts to strengthen regional assets and competitiveness; and,</li> <li>improve the economic circumstances of communities facing distress.</li> </ul> <p>Eligible costs include: labour, expertise, non-capital, capital.</p>	

GRANT	GRANTING BODY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	ELIGIBLE PROJECTS/PROGRAMS	GRANT AMOUNT
Tourism Development Fund	Province of Ontario	Municipalities, not-for-profit organizations and businesses interested in undertaking tourism-related ventures.	<p>Non-capital, project-based funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop research-based innovative and emerging tourism sectors;</li> <li>• support tourism organizations' capacity building;</li> <li>• encourage new private-sector tourism investment attraction; and,</li> <li>• enhance Ontario's overall economic competitiveness and opportunities for the Ontario tourism industry.</li> </ul> <p>Eligible expenses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting services and project management;</li> <li>• Research costs;</li> <li>• Tourism sector strategic planning;</li> <li>• Business plan support, economic assessments and feasibility studies;</li> <li>• Organizational development and capacity building;</li> <li>• Conference organization costs, including speaker fees;</li> <li>• Project-related permits, fees and other similar charges.</li> </ul>	
Ontario Trillium Foundation: Seed Grants	Ontario Trillium Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A charitable organization;</li> <li>• A foundation registered as a charity with the CRA;</li> <li>• An organization incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation;</li> <li>• A municipality with a population of 20,000 or less;</li> <li>• A First Nation</li> <li>• A Metis, Inuit or other Indigenous community;</li> <li>• <i>Any collaboration of two or more organizations where one organization is an eligible applicant as listed above. A municipality of over 20,000 is eligible in partnership with an eligible applicant.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching a new concept, idea or approach;</li> <li>• Developing, launching or testing a new idea, approach or event (like piloting a new program or running a demonstration project);</li> <li>• Conducting a feasibility study;</li> <li>• Convening around an emerging issue.</li> </ul>	\$5,000 to \$75,000

### 8.3 Corporate Donations

Opportunities could exist to engage major community partners as supporters of the project, either through naming or signage rights, sponsorship of displays or programs, or event sponsorship. Specific levels of investment and corresponding recognition would need to be developed, as well as a fully transparent method of contacting potential donors. Ownership and operating structure is also a major consideration of any effort to attract donors, as a municipally-run or -owned centre would have restrictions on the acceptance of private funds, as would the PDSB.

## 9 CONCLUSION

The Old Alton P.S. is an attractive heritage building in a prime location along Main Street. The building holds significant value for the community, as several generations of Alton residents have attended the school. As such, the Old Alton P.S. has a high degree of reuse potential.

The proposed adaptive reuse of the building contemplates a mixed-use approach - heritage display, artist studios and an early years centre/daycare. This partnership/mixed-use approach will allow for a divestment of full risk and allow for direct encouragement of local entrepreneurial and artistic activity, while responding to community needs.

The largest issues identified in this report are not about the specific use, but about infrastructure on the site - primarily septic - and the question of ownership and operating model. These issues are interrelated, as investment in upgrades such as septic would fall to an owner/operator, and the expected revenue streams of the new uses would need to accommodate the model of financial return required by that operator.

Once a clear direction is formalized regarding ownership and operating structure, we see the Old Alton P.S. as a viable community hub, and have outlined a mixed-use model that responds to the needs of community members, intricacies of the site, and celebrates the heritage of the building.

### *Next Steps*

Following the Town's commitment to move forward, a formal lease will have to be negotiated, a call for potential partners may be issued, and further community consultation could be held. Issuing an EOI (expression of interest) for private partners based on the proposed uses could be very worthwhile as well.

An agreement from the Town to assume an ownership role would resonate strongly with the local community. This commitment would demonstrate a stewardship role that would serve the Town well in the long run. While we recognize initial upgrades are not insignificant, a concerted engagement with the community and campaign to attract operational partners could be quite successful.