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Cultural Heritage Landscape worth considering

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By



The West Montrose Residents' Association — also known as BridgeKeepers — is holding a meeting that will be well worth attending.

The meeting, which may end up actually being held within the West Montrose Covered Bridge, will feature professor Robert Shipley, from the University of Waterloo's Heritage Resources Centre.

Earlier this year, Shipley presented a report to Woolwich council, outlining the reasons he believes that the West Montrose area qualifies as a Cultural Heritage Landscape. Such a designation could put restrictions on development, as well as renovations of existing buildings, throughout the designated area.

It would likely also put a damper on the gravel pit that is being proposed by Capital Paving, on nearby Letson Road.

Shipley's report first came to council in April, without a great deal of comment.

In his research, he talked to residents of West Montrose, to determine their connection to the village, and their feelings about it.

Through his research, he learned that residents truly do value the quiet, historical nature of the village, and are proud of the West Montrose Covered Bridge. This is one of the most important elements in whether an area should be designated as a Cultural Heritage Landscape — the view its own residents hold towards it.

"It's highly valued by the community, both the individual elements (of the bridge), and the landscape as a whole," said Shipley.

While Woolwich council has yet to formulate a response to the report presented by Shipley, his arguments are definitely worth considering. And this means that the meeting being planned by the BridgeKeepers is well worth attending, if only to learn more about this designation, and the impact it could have.

At the very least, it will give local residents more information to process, as they consider the future of the area — one with a gravel pit, or one without.

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