



Westholme (David McKee Residence - Delta Lodge) 4501 Arthur Drive

Westholme is a large British Arts and Crafts mansion located on an acre of land, on the west side of Arthur Drive. The house is set back on the property, with a large grassed front yard, a long driveway and a mature garden setting. Square in plan and two storeys in height, it is capped with a high pyramidal roof. Many of the original interior finishes remain in substantially intact condition, including unpainted fir panelling, fireplaces and a staircase with Arts and Crafts detailing. Although the entry has been relocated from the north to the east and the south verandah has been enclosed, the house retains much of its original interior configuration and layout. It has been converted for use as a care facility.

Constructed in 1905-06 and situated in a mature garden setting, *Westholme* is valued as the most significant local example of the British Arts and Crafts movement. The style and setting of the house demonstrate the social, cultural, and aesthetic values of successful businessmen and women of the early twentieth century, such as appreciation of architectural elegance and grand interior spaces, leisure and recreation, formal landscaped gardens and scenic views. Throughout, this grand and imposing house displays sophisticated detailing, with intricate interior woodwork and stained glass of superior craftsmanship. Built at a time when the late Victorian styles still had a hold on the popular imagination, this house also represents a very early, bold and confident step towards a new modern residential style. Broad, horizontal lines and an open, flowing floor plan demonstrate a familiarity with the most advanced architectural theories of the time. The grassed front yard, garden setting and curved driveway exemplify an ideal of gracious country living.

Westholme is also significant for its historical connections, first to the McKee family, who were prominent in Delta's early development. The original owner, David Alexander McKee, was the son of East Delta pioneers John McKee Sr. and Margaret McKee, who retired on a property further north on Arthur Drive. David McKee and his wife, Margaret, lived in this house until 1925.



2006

During his time in Delta, David McKee switched from farming to reclamation and development projects. In 1911, he purchased and then dyked Barnston Island in the Fraser River, turning it into cultivable condition. From 1908-1910 he was the president of the Delta Agricultural Society, and in 1913 served as the president of the Board of Trade. The property was purchased in 1925 by Oliver A. Murphy of Ladner Lumber Ltd., and was occupied for many years by Oliver and his wife, Katherine Murphy. Since 1964, *Westholme* has been used as a personal care facility, known as *Delta Lodge*.

This estate is also significant for its contribution to the character of Arthur Drive. David McKee purchased this property from William Ladner in 1904, when there were few houses that fronted what was then known as Slough Road. As the main road leading south from Ladner Village to Tsawwassen, this ultimately became the most favoured residential area in Delta. One of the finest estate houses in Delta, *Westholme* remains a very significant part of the character of the Arthur Drive heritage area.



Municipal Heritage Register

Character Defining Elements:

- prominent location, facing Arthur Drive, with a deep setback from the road, and an associated mature garden setting, including the grassed front yard, a specimen Chilean Pine and other mature trees
- residential form, scale and massing as exemplified by its square plan, two-storey height, south verandah, projecting square bays and pyramidal roof
- elements of the British Arts and Crafts style, including: exterior half-timbering, and ground-floor shingling under a later coat of stucco; and interior fir woodwork, wall panelling, stained glass panels, pocket doors, ceiling beams, panelled doors, fireplaces and wooden floors (under later carpets)
- superior craftsmanship and materials as demonstrated in the details of the interior and exterior woodwork, the stained glass windows and original fireplace elements
- fenestration, including: original double-hung wooden sash window assemblies with multi-paned upper sashes; multiple-assembly wooden sash casement windows; glazed entry door; and stained and leaded glass panels
- four internal corbelled red-brick chimneys
- later, sympathetic additions that mark the early evolution of the house, including the east-facing entry and vestibule, and the two-storey addition at the northwest corner



1912
("The Prolific Delta" Delta Museum & Archives)

Added to Municipal Register: January 15, 2007

Submitted to National Register: 2007

Designated: No

Last Reviewed: Donald Luxton and Associates, 2006, 2007