

## **Alterations and Demolition of a Heritage Attribute to a Designated Property at 127 Strachan Avenue and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement - Approval**

**Date:** March 2, 2023

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** 10 - Spadina-Fort York

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations to the designated property at 127 Strachan Avenue and grant authority to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement for this property. This report also recommends approval of the proposed demolition of a heritage attribute, being the removal of the single storey rear wing identified in the designation by-law. This is in connection with an Official Plan Amendment and a Zoning By-law Amendment application for properties at 109-127 Strachan Avenue for a new 13-storey (including mechanical penthouse) mixed use building that includes retention and alterations to the designated building at 127 Strachan Avenue. Both the planning applications and the heritage designation are subject of appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

The subject property was constructed in 1878 by the celebrated architect David Brash Dick and is one of his earliest individual commissions. It is a representative example of the Second Empire architectural style that was popular in Toronto in the late-19th century. It contributes to the historic character of the surrounding residential neighbourhood and anchors the southeast corner of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West. This building was purpose-built as a grocery store with apartments above for the original proprietor John H. Meyer and it maintained that use for close to 70 years. Since the 1990s it has been operating as a neighbourhood bar and restaurant.

This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations for the heritage property at 127 Strachan Avenue, in connection with the proposed redevelopment for 109-127 Strachan Avenue to allow the construction of a 13-storey mixed use building. The proposed development includes the conservation and

rehabilitation of the whole of the designated building at 127 Strachan Avenue apart from its rear single storey wing which would be removed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve

a. The alterations to the designated heritage property at 127 Strachan Avenue, in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to allow for the construction of a new 13-storey building substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated December 16, 2022 prepared by IBI Group and the Heritage Impact Assessment dated December 22, 2022 prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and subject to conditions as set out below.

b. The removal of the single storey rear wing of the designated heritage property at 127 Strachan Avenue, in accordance with Section 34 (1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of a new 13-storey building substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated December 16, 2022 prepared by IBI Group and the Heritage Impact Assessment dated December 22, 2022 prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects all subject to, and in accordance with, a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and subject to the conditions as set out below.

2. City Council direct that its consent to the application to alter the designated property at 127 Strachan Avenue under Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act and its consent to the demolition of a heritage attribute, being the single storey rear wing of the designated heritage property at 127 Strachan Avenue, under Part IV, Section 34(1) 1 of the Ontario Heritage Act are also subject to the following conditions:

a. That prior to any Ontario Land Tribunal Order issued in connection with the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment appeal, the owner shall:

1. Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the property at 127 Strachan Avenue substantially in accordance with plans and drawings dated December 16, 2022 prepared by IBI Group and the Heritage Impact Assessment dated December 22, 2022 prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects, subject to and in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.2, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning including execution of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

2. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is substantially in accordance with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for 127 Strachan Avenue dated December 22, 2022 prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

b. That prior to Final Site Plan approval in connection with the Zoning By-law Amendment for the property at 127 Strachan Avenue the owner shall:

1. Provide final Site Plan drawings including drawings related to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.2 to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Have obtained final approval for the necessary Zoning By-law Amendment required for the subject property, such Amendment to have come into full force and effect.

3. Provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject property, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

4. Provide a Heritage Lighting Plan that describes how the heritage property will be sensitively illuminated to enhance its heritage character to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager Heritage Planning.

5. Submit a Signage Plan for the proposed development to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

6. Provide a detailed Landscape Plan for the property at 127 Strachan Avenue, satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

c. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 127 Strachan Avenue, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, the owner shall:

1. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.2 above including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan, Heritage Lighting Plan and Interpretation Plan.

d. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit required in Recommendation 2.c.2 above, the owner shall:

1. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the required conservation work, required heritage lighting work, and the required interpretive work has been completed in accordance with the Conservation Plan, Lighting Plan and Interpretation Plan and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Provide replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

3. City Council authorize the entering into of a Heritage Easement Agreement under Section 37 of the Ontario Heritage Act with the owner of 127 Strachan Avenue in a form and content satisfactory to the City Solicitor and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.

4. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary Bill in Council authorizing the entering into of a Heritage Easement Agreement for the property at 127 Strachan Avenue.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On December 14, 2022 City Council adopted CC2.16 and stated its intention to designate the property at 127 Strachan Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC2.16>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Site/Heritage Property**

The property at 127 Strachan Avenue is located on the south east corner of the intersection of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West. It contains a two and a half storey detached building that is used for commercial purposes at ground floor level with residential uses above. It is adjacent to two commercial properties at 109-111 Strachan Avenue and 115-123 Strachan Avenue that form part of the development proposal but are not of heritage value.

The subject property is adjacent to the heritage property at 938-950 King Street West and 95-99 Strachan Avenue. This property is known as the Palace Arms and is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

### **Cultural Heritage Value**

The subject property at 127 Strachan Avenue was designed by the celebrated architect David Brash Dick and was constructed in 1878. It has cultural heritage value as a representative example of a mixed-use building designed in the Second Empire style which was popular in the late-19th century. It operated as a local neighborhood grocery for close to 70 years within the heart of a working-class residential enclave, which was built up to support the expansion of industry near the railway lands on the former Military Reserve. It contributes to the historic character of the surrounding residential neighbourhood by retaining its original scale, form, and massing, and its Second Empire style is reflected in many of its extant original design features.

### **Proposal**

The applicant is proposing to construct a new 13-storey (including mechanical penthouse) mixed use building at 109-127 Strachan Avenue. The scheme includes the retention of, and alterations to, the designated building at 127 Strachan Avenue. The heritage building would be retained in-situ with only its single storey rear wing being removed and would continue to be used for commercial use at ground floor level with residential uses above. No construction is proposed above or below the heritage building which would be retained on its original foundations and with its existing internal floors. Its roof (including the chimneys and dormer windows) and the masonry would be repaired and new windows and shopfronts introduced to reflect their original appearance based on archival documentation. The intent is also to preserve any parts of the original storefront that are discovered following the removal of the existing modern storefront.

The new building would have step backs above the second floor level along both Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West to relate to the cornice height of the heritage building. Recessed glazed reveals and third floor roof terraces have been introduced to visually separate the heritage building from the new construction.

## **Heritage Planning Framework**

### **Provincial Policy Statement and Planning Act**

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province. The Act states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to "the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest."

The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS) issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The Planning Act requires that City Council's decisions affecting land use planning matters "be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement.

Policy 2.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." Properties included on the City's Heritage Register are considered to be significant in this context. "Conserved" is defined in the PPS as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

Policy 2.6.3 of the PPS directs that "planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved."

### **Growth Plan**

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) continues to provide a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which the City forms an integral part.

The Growth Plan (2020) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2020) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

### **City of Toronto Official Plan**

The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. Relevant policies include the following:

3.1.6.4 Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and as adopted by Council.

3.1.6.5 Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City. Where a Heritage Impact Assessment is required in Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, it will describe and assess the potential impacts and mitigation strategies for the proposed alteration, development or public work.

3.1.6.26 New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it.

3.1.6.27 Where it is supported by the cultural heritage values and attributes of a property on the Heritage Register, the conservation of whole or substantial portions of buildings, structures and landscapes on those properties is desirable and encouraged. The retention of facades alone is discouraged.

3.1.6.28 The owner of a designated heritage property will be encouraged to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement where the City considers additional protection beyond designation desirable due to the location, proposed alteration, and/or the nature of that property.

### **Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

## **COMMENTS**

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### **Conservation Strategy**

The historic building at 127 Strachan Avenue will be conserved in-situ as part of the proposed development and whilst being attached to the new building it will be retained as a separate volume in function, structure and appearance. A comprehensive repair and restoration program is proposed which would restore the original appearance of this prominent Second Empire style building.

The proposal includes the removal of the single storey rear wing that is identified as a heritage attribute in designation by-law. The loss of this rear wing is considered acceptable as it is proposed in association with a scheme that allows for intensification of the property while conserving and restoring the existing heritage building.

Heritage Planning staff support the proposed conservation strategy that would conserve and restore the designated heritage building at 127 Strachan Avenue.

### **Massing and Step Backs**

The new building would have step backs above the second floor level along both Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West to relate to the cornice height of the heritage building. Recessed glazed reveals and third floor roof terraces have been introduced to visually separate the heritage building from the new construction. This would ensure the heritage building remains visually prominent within the street and is not over-whelmed by the proposed new 13-storey building. The materials of the proposed new building will be determined at Site Plan stage but will be compatible with the masonry of the restored heritage building.

### **Conservation Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to the issuance of the first permit for the development, the owner should be required to submit a Conservation Plan for the work described in the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified heritage professional to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning. The Conservation Plan should detail all of the recommended interventions and conservation work including any recommended restoration work, a detailed plan describing how the heritage building will be protected during construction, a schedule of short and long-term maintenance requirements and estimated costs for all conservation work.

### **Interpretation Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to final Site Plan approval, the applicant will be required to submit an Interpretation Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

### **Heritage Lighting Plan**

The Heritage Lighting Plan should provide details of how the heritage features of the building at 127 Strachan Avenue will be lit so that its unique heritage character is highlighted.

### **Signage Plan**

The recommended Signage Plan should provide details of the signage strategy for the property at 127 Strachan Avenue including the appropriate type, scale, location and number of signs.

### **Landscape Plan**

Staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a final Landscape Plan for the open space adjacent to 127 Strachan Avenue to demonstrate how it would relate to the heritage building.



## **Heritage Easement Agreement**

Staff is recommending that the owner enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement to secure the long-term protection of 127 Strachan Avenue included in the development site.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Staff are supportive of the proposal to alter the property at 127 Strachan Avenue and to remove its single storey rear wing to allow for the development of a new 13-storey (including mechanical penthouse) mixed use building at 109-127 Strachan Avenue. Staff support the proposed alterations and removals under Sections 33 and 34 of the Ontario Heritage Act in the context of the conservation and mitigation strategies proposed for the site, and the overall revised proposed development for the Site. Staff are of the opinion that the proposal has been designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of the heritage property. As such, staff are satisfied the proposed conservation strategy outlined in the revised proposed development meets the intent of the Planning Act, and the heritage policies in the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan (2020) and the City of Toronto's Official Plan in conjunction with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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- Attachment 1 - Location Map
- Attachment 2 - Photographs
- Attachment 3 - Statement of Significance
- Attachment 4 - Plans and Drawings
- Attachment 5 - Renderings

## LOCATION MAP

## ATTACHMENT 1

### 127 Strachan Avenue

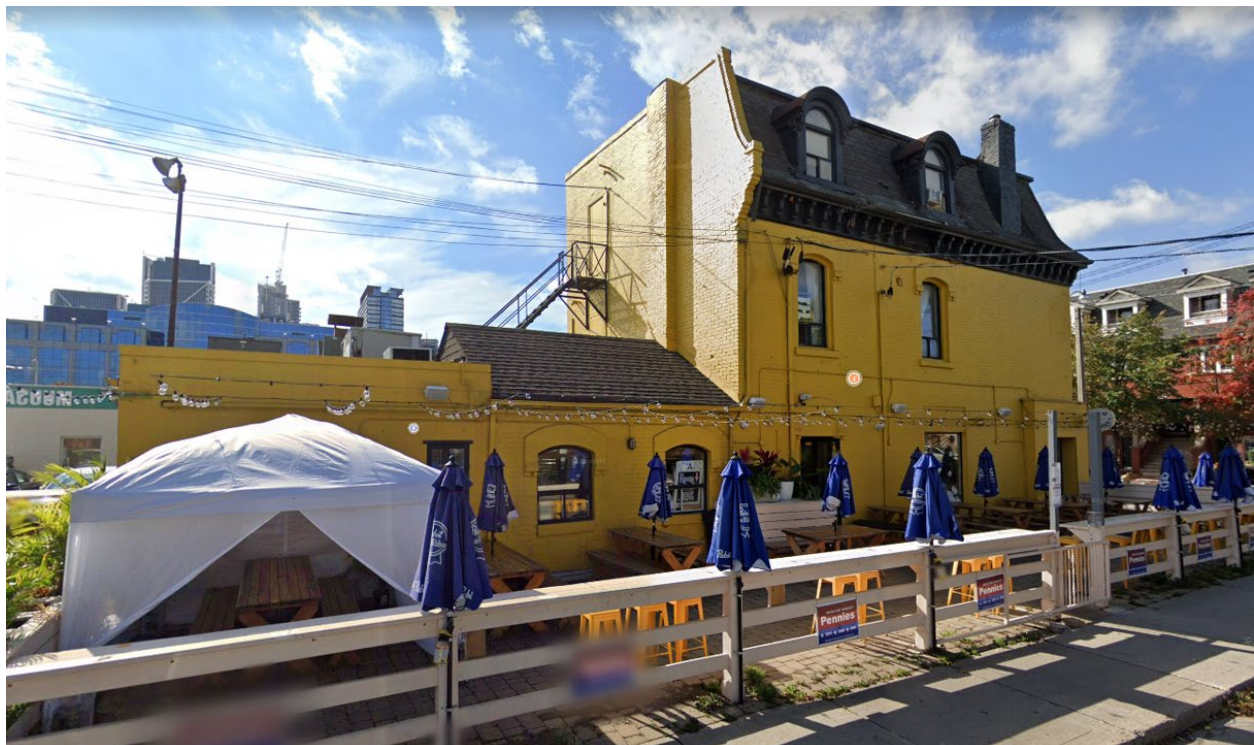


Map showing the subject property's location outlined in red at 127 Strachan Avenue on the southeast corner of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping).

127 Strachan Avenue

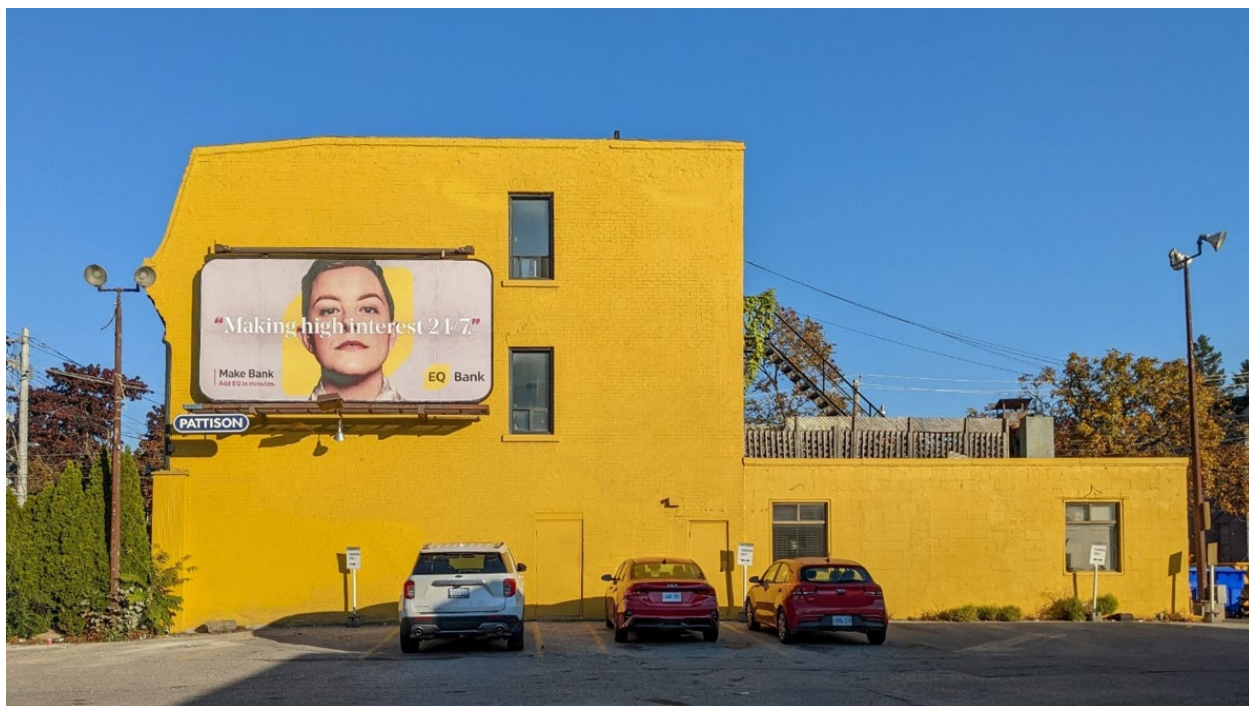


Principal (west) elevation of 127 Strachan Avenue (Heritage Planning, 2022).



Secondary (north) elevation of 127 Strachan Avenue (Google Streetview, 2020).





Side (south) elevation of 127 Strachan Avenue (Heritage Planning, 2022).



Rear (east) elevation of 127 Strachan Avenue (Heritage Planning, 2022).

## **Statement of Significance**

### **127 STRACHAN AVENUE**

### **ATTACHMENT 3**

The property at 127 Strachan Avenue, is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

## **Description**

The property at 127 Strachan Avenue is located in Toronto's West Queen West neighbourhood, prominently situated on the southeast corner of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West. It contains a three storey mixed-use commercial building that dates to 1878. In 1999, alterations to the building resulted in a reconfiguration of the storefront. The building was originally constructed as a grocery for John H. Meyer, a former hotel proprietor, to support the surrounding working-class neighbourhood. It continued to operate primarily as a grocery until the 1950s. More recently, it has served as a restaurant with a popular summer patio on the north side of the building.

## **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

Constructed in 1878, the property at 127 Strachan Avenue has design and physical value as a representative example of the Second Empire architectural style that was popular in many prominent commercial, public, and residential buildings in Toronto from 1860 to 1900. The property retains its original scale, form, and massing as a three-storey building with a one-storey rear wing, and its design value as a representative example of the Second Empire style is reflected in many of its extant original features, including its brick construction with ornamental brick, wood, and stone details, segmental-arched windows on the north and west elevations, mansard roof supported by a bracketed cornice, and round-arched dormers. Although altered and presently overclad, the building also retains the distinguishing feature of a commercial storefront at grade, differentiating this building from the surrounding residential properties.

The subject property at 127 Strachan Avenue is valued for its association with the architect David Brash Dick (1846-1925). With architectural drawings dating to 1877, it is one of the earliest recorded buildings he designed as the sole contributing architect. During his career, Dick established himself as the architect of choice for several prominent clients including the Consumers' Gas Company and the University of Toronto, and is a recipient of the Ontario Association of Architects' Honor Roll, which is only bestowed upon those who have made a significant contribution to the province's architectural heritage, either through their body of work or their influence in the wider community of design, education, and/or publication.

Contextually, the building at 127 Strachan Avenue supports and maintains the historic character of the working-class neighbourhood that developed in the late 19th century and thrived due to the proximity of several large industrial complexes established near the railway. The property's materiality, scale and massing contribute to the low-rise

residential streetscape, which has been reinforced through the introduction of several compatible infill projects along Strachan Avenue.

The building at 127 Strachan Avenue is also historically, visually and physically linked to its setting, anchoring the southeast corner of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West. The property was one of the last buildings to be erected as part of the initial build-out of the neighbourhood in the 1870s, and was centrally located within the residential enclave on a prominent corner site. Relative to the surrounding house-form buildings, the larger scale and higher-quality materials used in its design and construction are indications of the commercial nature of the property and its important role in serving the local residential community.

## **Heritage Attributes**

### **Design or Physical Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 127 Strachan Avenue as a representative example of a Second Empire, purpose-built mixed-use property within a residential enclave:

- The scale, form, massing, and rectangular-shaped plan of the property as a three-storey building with one-storey rear wing
- The mansard roof with the extended parapet firewalls on the south and east ends, supported by a cornice featuring ornamental brackets, and gable roof on the rear wing
- The materials, with the brick masonry construction featuring stone, brick and wood detailing (the masonry has been painted)
- The round-arched dormers with the wood detailing and brackets on the west and north slopes of the mansard roof
- The brick chimney that projects from the north slope of the mansard roof
- The vertically-oriented, segmental-arched window openings on the west and north elevations, with stone sills and overhanging brick hoods
- A ground floor storefront featuring an increased proportion of glazing compared to the upper stories
- The location of the entrance to the upper floors on the south side of the Strachan Avenue (west) elevation

### **Historical or Associative Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 127 Strachan Avenue as a representative example of the work of architect David Brash Dick:

- The scale, form, and massing of the property as a three storey building with a rectangular-shaped plan
- The subject property's architectural detailing in the Second Empire style, which is demonstrative of the architect's versatility

## **Contextual Value**

Attributes that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 127 Strachan Avenue as defining, supporting and maintaining the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to its setting:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building prominently anchoring the southeast corner of Strachan Avenue and Adelaide Street West, with its principal elevation fronting Strachan Avenue
- The scale, form, and massing of the property as a three storey building with a rectangular-shaped plan
- The property's material palette, consisting of brick with wood and stone detailing
- The subject property's architectural detailing in the Second Empire style, which was popular for residential and commercial properties during the period in which the surrounding working-class neighbourhood was built up
- A storefront and entrance to the upper floors on the Strachan Avenue (west) elevation

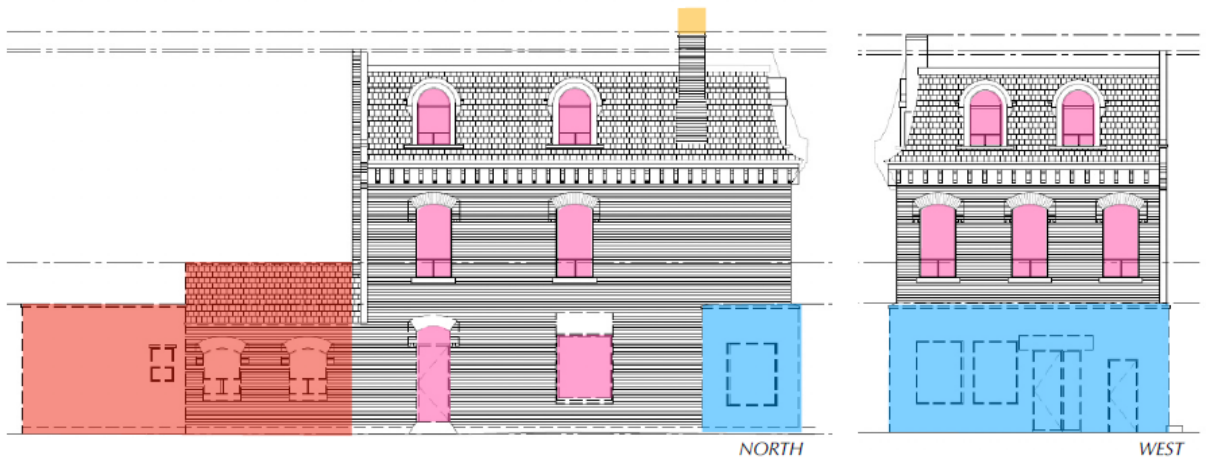
**Note: The concrete block rear addition is not considered a heritage attribute**



## ARCHITECTURAL PLANS & DRAWINGS

## ATTACHMENT 4

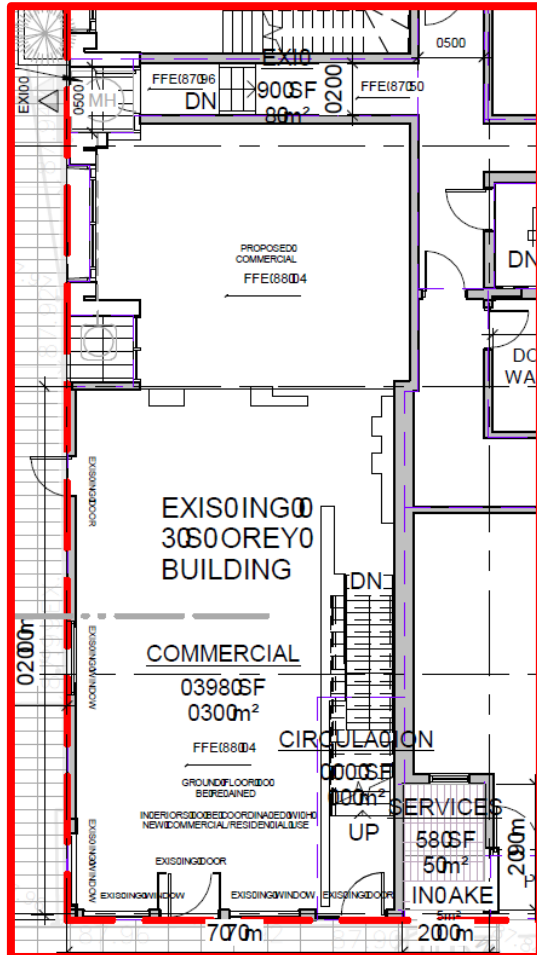
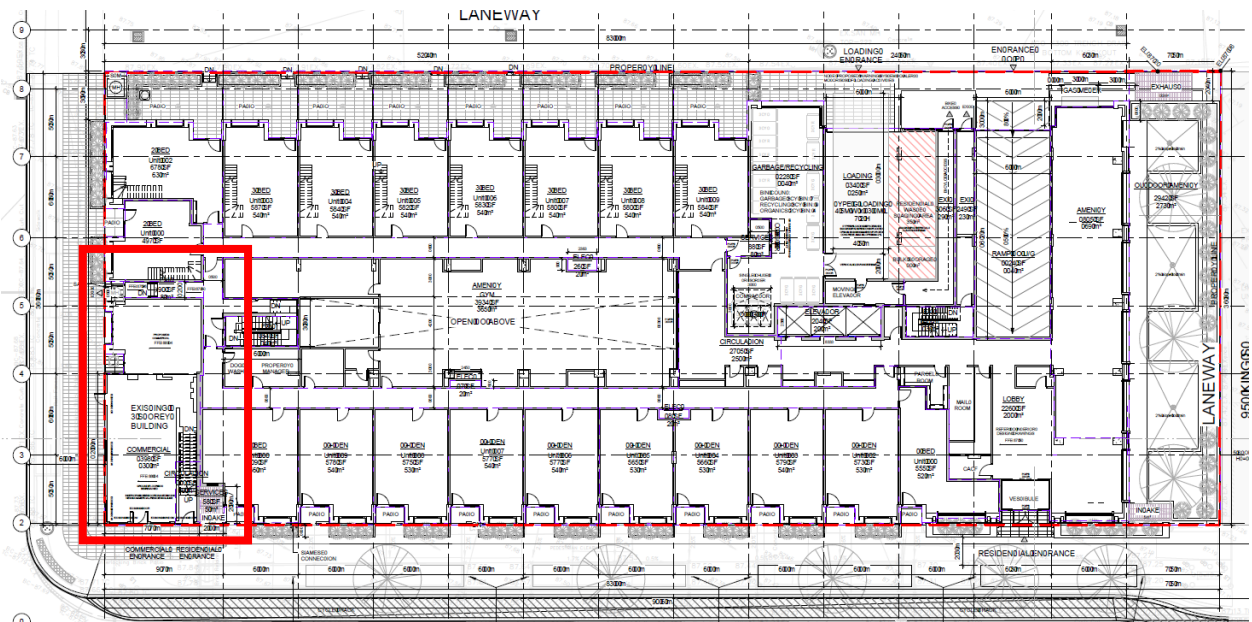
127 Strachan Avenue



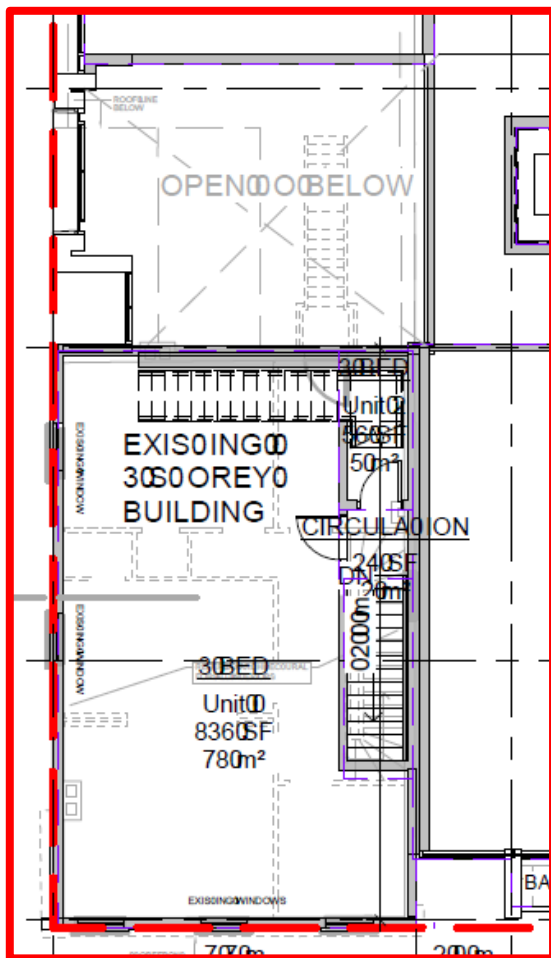
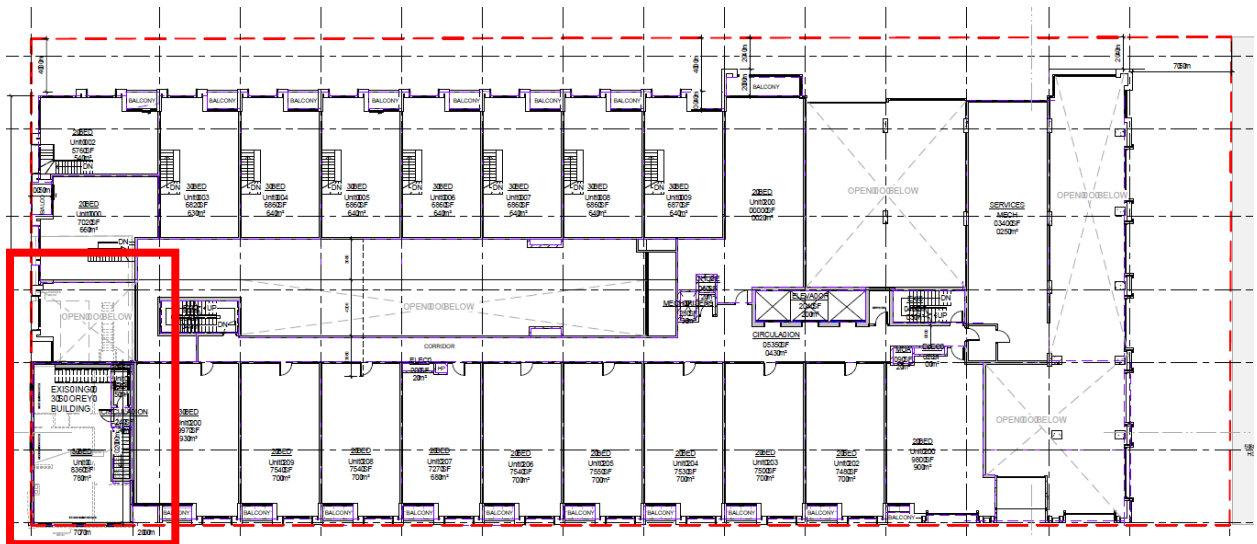
### *Legend of interventions:*

- demolished*
- altered*
- removed and replaced with new*
- infill with masonry*

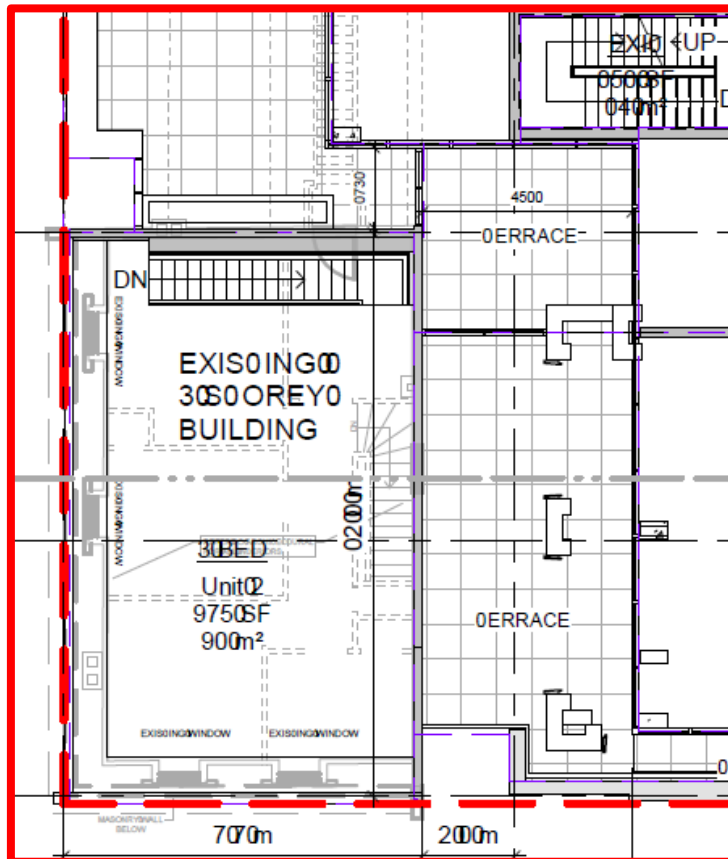
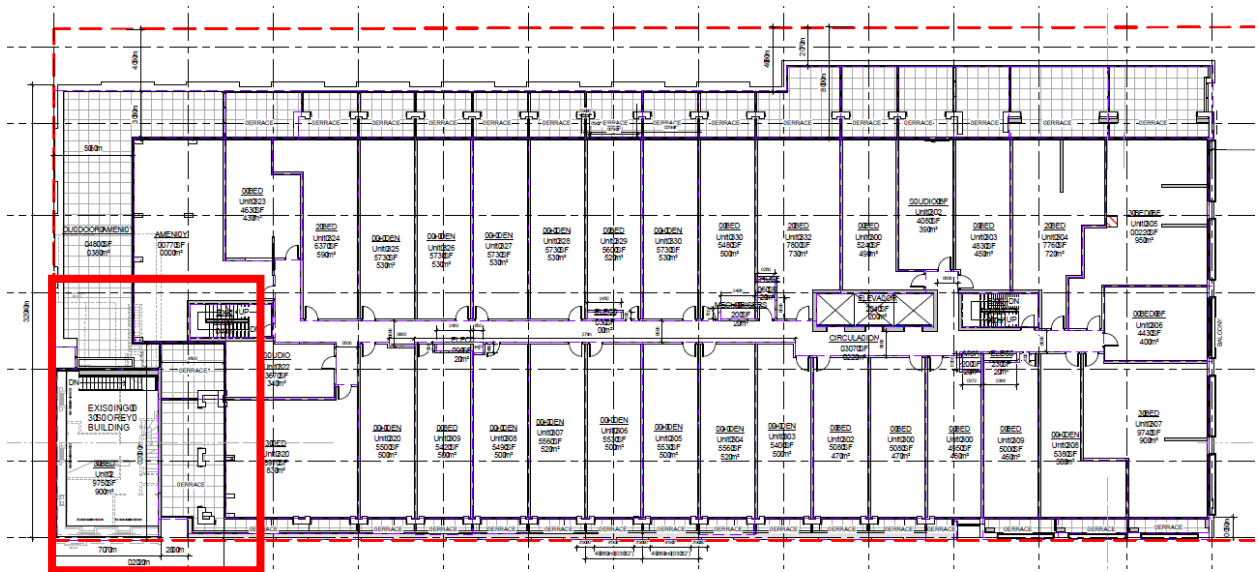
Existing elevations showing areas to be removed and altered. (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)



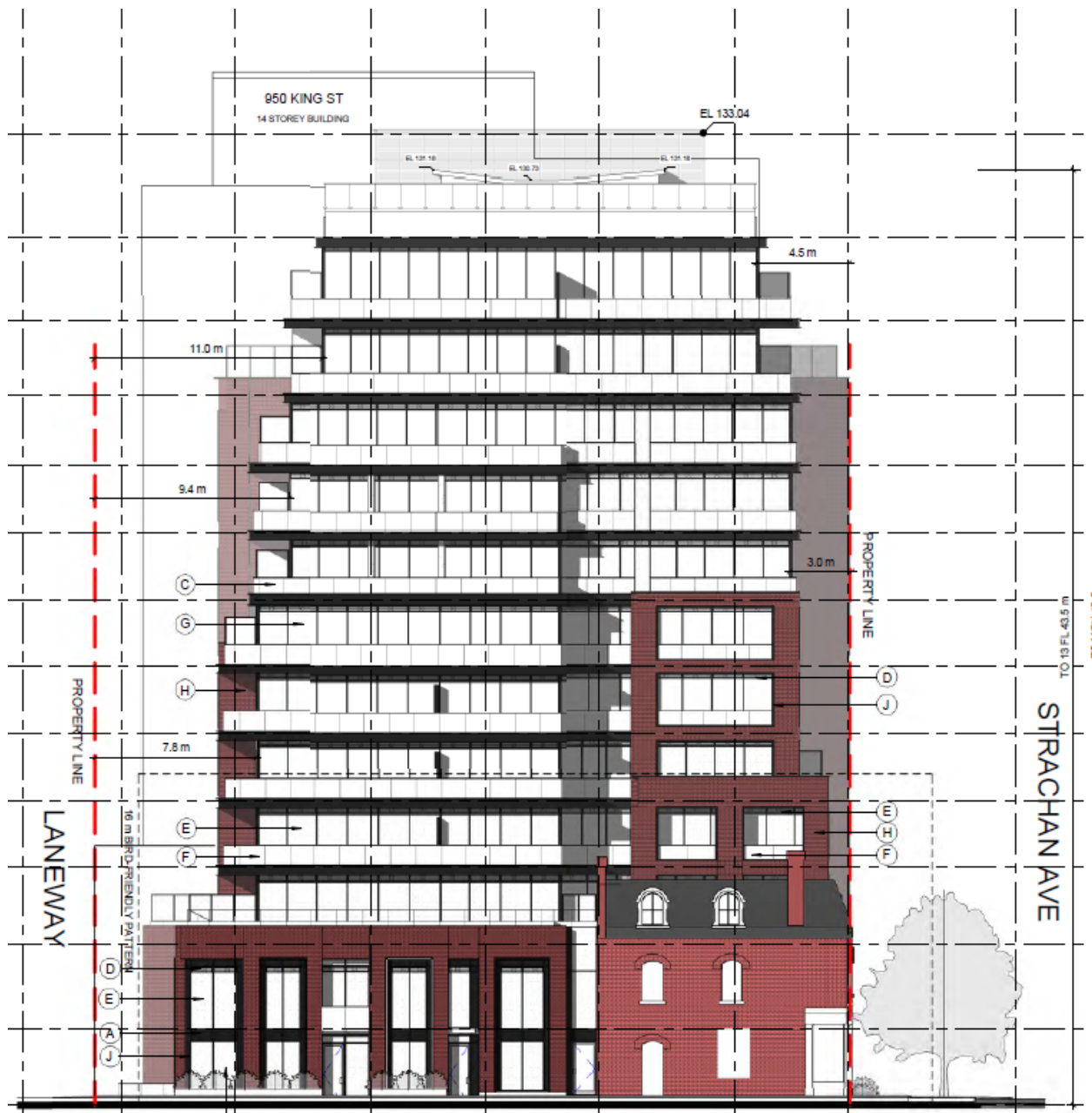
Proposed Ground Floor Plan with heritage building highlighted in red box (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)



Proposed Second Floor Plan with heritage building highlighted in red box (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)



Proposed Third Floor Plan with heritage building highlighted in red box (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)

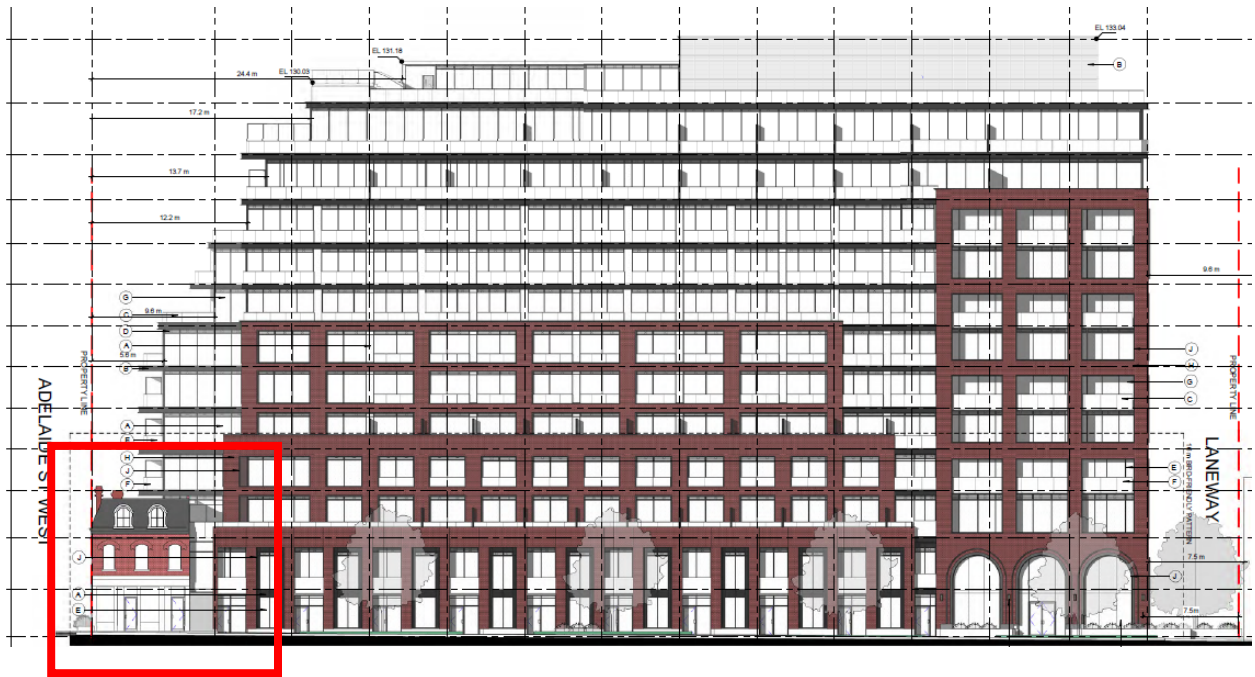


Proposed Front (Adelaide Street West) Elevation (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)





Proposed Side (Adelaide Street West) Elevation of 127 Strachan Avenue (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)



Proposed Front (Strachan Avenue) Elevation with heritage building highlighted in red (Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)



## RENDERINGS

## ATTACHMENT 5

### 127 Strachan Avenue



(Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)





(Heritage Impact Assessment from GBCA)