

Alterations and Demolition of Heritage Attributes to a Designated Heritage Property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road

Date: March 2, 2023

To: Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto East York Community Council

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

Wards: Toronto-St. Paul's Ward 12

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the alterations proposed for the designated heritage property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This report also recommends approval of the demolition of some of the property's heritage attributes under Section 34(1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This is in order to construct a contemporary three-storey rear addition.

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, known as the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House contains a 2-storey residential building that was designed by architect Douglas E. Kertland and constructed in 1934. It is considered to be an excellent example of the Arts and Crafts architectural style with Tudor Revival details and is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The heritage application proposal will include in situ retention of the primary (west) elevation and parts of the north and south side walls but most of the rear wing would be demolished to allow for the construction of the new addition. The heritage attributes proposed to be demolished include the rear three-car garage, a copper canopy over a side wall, some decorative brick infills, a chimney, some windows and flat headed openings, an original exterior light fitting and the stone knee wall by the south terrace. The heritage value of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House as an excellent representative of a grand Tudor Revival style dwelling would be lessened by the proposed removal of over half of the original building. In addition the demolition of the original three-car garage would remove the only heritage attribute that demonstrates a direct association of the original owner with the then-burgeoning automotive industry in Canada. Nevertheless most of the heritage attributes that are visible from the public realm would remain and the proposed addition has been carefully designed to create a

high quality addition that is both distinguishable from and compatible with the retained heritage fabric of the existing building.

The subject application also requires approval under the Planning Act (Minor Variance). The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to approvals required under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council approve

a. The alterations to the designated property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of a new 3-storey rear addition with such alterations being substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated February 9, 2023, prepared by Hariri Pontarini Architects Inc. and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by ERA Architects Inc., February 17, 2023 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 demolition of some of the heritage attributes of the designated heritage property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, in accordance with Section 34(1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of a new 3-storey rear addition substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings dated February 9, 2023, prepared by Hariri Pontarini Architects Inc. and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by ERA Architects Inc., February 17, 2023 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.

2. City Council direct that its consent to the application to alter the designated property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road under Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act and its consent to the demolition of some of the heritage attributes of the designated heritage property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, under Part IV, Section 34(1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act are also subject to the following conditions:

a. The Owner shall:

1. 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 63 Old Forest Hill Road dated February 17, 2022 prepared by ERA Architects Inc., to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Provide a detailed Landscape Plan for the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

b. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, 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.1 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 building permit drawings, including notes and specifications that are keyed to the approved Landscape Plan required in Recommendation 2.a.2 above to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road was listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 1975.

At its June 27, 2022 meeting, Toronto and East York Community Council directed the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning to evaluate the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and to report back to the Toronto Preservation Board and the Toronto and East York Community Council.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2022/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-228280.pdf>

On August 19, 2022 an application to the Committee of Adjustment was submitted to alter the existing two-storey dwelling by constructing a rear two-storey addition, a new integral garage, and a new side patio and in-ground pool. Heritage Planning advised the Committee of Adjustment that a report would be going to Council in December for the designation of the property and that the owner would then need to submit a Heritage Permit Application which may require reporting to the Toronto Preservation Board (TPB) and Council approval.

[Development Applications \(toronto.ca\)](#)

On December 14, 2022, City Council stated its intention to designate the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-law 138-2023).

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC2.17>

BACKGROUND

Area Context

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road is located in Old Forest Hill Village, on the east side of Old Forest Hill Road.

Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road, known as the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House, contains a T-shaped, 2-storey single family house designed by architect Douglas E. Kertland and constructed in 1934. It is an excellent representative of a grand Tudor Revival style dwelling whose design reflects Arts and Crafts movement principles. It was commissioned by George W. McLaughlin a former Vice President of General Motors of Canada for his daughter Dorothy. It also contributes to an understanding of the early history of Forest Hill as a residential enclave whose early design by-laws and practices resulted in the carefully crafted, landscaped neighbourhood still evident today.

The property is representative of the work of the important architect Douglas E. Kertland and it has contextual value as it is one in a series of grand Arts and Crafts houses with Tudor Revival style details that help to maintain and support the character of this part of Old Forest Hill Road.

The heritage attributes of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House include its asymmetrically-arranged two-storey form, with three tall chimneys rising from a roofscape that includes gable and hipped roofs with Tudor Revival materials of half-timbering and stone. The building is clad with rough-cut stone and trimmed with brick, stone, metal and wood. An extended east wing contains living quarters above a heated three-car garage, which was considered rare for the time of construction and demonstrates a direct association of the original owner with the then-burgeoning automotive industry in Canada.

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation, under all three categories of design and physical, historical and associative and contextual values (By-law 138-2023). At the time of writing this report, the Designation By-law was not available, and as such, the heritage attributes for 63 Old Forest Hill Road are from the Statement of Significance included in the Council approved designation report considered on December 14, 2022.

Adjacent Heritage Properties

None of the properties adjacent to 63 Old Forest Hill Road are currently designated under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act or included on the City's Heritage Register.

Proposal

The existing house at 63 Old Forest Hill Road has a T-shaped configuration with its front facing west onto Old Forest Hill Road. The proposal is to remove almost all of the rear wing to allow for the construction of a new 3-storey contemporary addition. The front with its return gable ends, roof, two chimneys and one bay at second floor level of the north and south facing walls by the rear wing would be retained. This would result in the demolition of the following heritage attributes:

- the rear three-car garage
- a copper canopy over a side wall,
- the decorative brick infills that flank the double doorway along the south wall
- one of the large extended chimneys
- some windows and flat headed openings
- an original exterior light fitting
- the stone knee wall by the south terrace.

The whole of the interior of this heritage building would also be removed although it is noted that the designation by-law does not include any heritage attributes within the interior.

The ground floor of the rear east facing wall of the front of the house and one bay of the south facing return wall at ground floor level would be removed to allow for the creation of a large living and sitting room. The second floor walls above these would however be retained with their dormer windows. The existing large extended chimney along the south wall that is proposed to be demolished would be commemorated in the new addition by having a new large chimney that references the design of the original but in a slightly different location with an extended section of stone wall attached to it.

The proposed addition has a contemporary design that uses ashlar limestone, contemporary glazing and bronze detailing to create an addition that is compatible with and distinguishable from the retained original parts of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House.

Heritage Policy Framework

This application has been reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed alterations:

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 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."

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 façades alone is discouraged."

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

Standards and Guidelines

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the "Standards and Guidelines") is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and the conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project.

The Standards and Guidelines can be accessed here:

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

COMMENTS

The heritage value of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House as excellent representative of a grand Tudor Revival style dwelling would be lessened by the proposed demolition of over half of the original building. This includes the removal of much of the irregular form of the massing and roofscape that reflects its Arts and Crafts character and some of the attributes and detailing that reflects its Tudor Revival style. In addition, the demolition of the original three-car garage would remove the only heritage attribute that demonstrates a direct association of the original owner with the then-burgeoning automotive industry in Canada. Nevertheless the character of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House as seen from the public realm would remain.

The scheme was revised to retain one bay of the second floor of the south wall as this is visible from the street. The large chimney that is to be demolished is proposed to be commemorated as part of a new stone wall that marks where the original and new addition would meet. This too would be visible from the street. The Heritage Impact Assessment notes that this chimney would be altered and re-located rather than removed and the submitted plans show the new chimney having a different design to the original. These changes are considered to constitute the demolition of this heritage

attribute as the City's Official Plan states that the disassembly of a structure and reassembly at a later date is a form of demolition. As such permission is required under Section 34(1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act for the proposed works to this chimney.

The copper canopy, light fitting and stone knee wall within the south terrace that are to be removed would not be visible from the street. A similar light fitting at the front of the house and a similar stone knee wall at the front of the house are to be retained.

Heritage Planning staff support the proposed alterations and removal of heritage attributes from the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House as the proposed addition has been carefully designed to create a high quality addition that is both distinguishable from and compatible with the retained heritage fabric. Those parts of the Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House that are to be retained are where most of the identified heritage attributes exist and these are to be conserved. Although the proposed addition is taller than the existing building the roof of the addition is set back and is unlikely to be visible from the public realm. Moreover from the perspective of Old Forest Hill Road, the massing of the heritage building would remain largely unchanged as the primary facades would be retained and the portions of the building that are to be removed are minimally visible from the public realm.

The subject application also requires approval under the Planning Act (Minor Variance). The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to approvals required under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Conservation Plan

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, 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 along with a schedule of short and long-term maintenance requirements.

Landscape Plan

Staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a final Landscape Plan that enhances the heritage character of the property and shows how the stone knee walls at the front of the property that are to be retained would be integrated into the overall landscaping at the front of this property.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Photographs
Attachment 3 - Statement of Significance
Attachment 4 - Selected Drawings

LOCATION MAP

ATTACHMENT 1

63 Old Forest Hill Road



This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. The arrow marks the location of the site. (City of Toronto iView mapping)

PHOTOGRAPHS

ATTACHMENT 2

63 Old Forest Hill Road



Photo of primary (west) elevation (Heritage Planning, 2022)



Photo of primary (west) elevation and partial south elevation (Heritage Planning, 2022)



Photo of partial west and south elevations (Heritage Planning, 2022)



Photo of south and east elevations (Heritage Planning, 2022)



Photo of west elevation and partial north elevation (Heritage Planning, 2022)



Photo of north elevation (Heritage Planning, 2022)

63 OLD FOREST HILL ROAD
DOROTHY (MCLAUGHLIN) TAIT HOUSE
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

ATTACHMENT 3

The property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road 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 all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

Description

Located on the east side of Old Forest Hill Road just south of the junction with Dunvegan Road and Browside Avenue, the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road is part of a collection of grand residential properties in the Forest Hill neighbourhood, several of them designed by the same architect, Douglas E. Kertland. By providing a cohesive architectural character through their shared qualities of scale, form and massing, materials and details typical of the 1920s and 1930s, these properties create a sense of place. The Arts and Crafts movement house with Tudor Revival styling was originally owned by Canadian automotive industrialist George W. McLaughlin's daughter, Dorothy, who resided there for nearly twenty years. The house was subsequently owned by businessman, Paul D. Phelan until his passing in 2021.

The subject property was listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 1975.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Design or Physical Value

The Dorothy (McLaughlin) Tait House has design value as an excellent representative of a grand Tudor Revival style dwelling whose design reflects Arts and Crafts movement principles. The Arts and Crafts elements are present in the picturesque composition of the asymmetrical building massing and elevations, the combination of steeply pitched gabled and hipped clay tile roofs with dormers and dominant chimneys, the recessed entry porch and projecting oriel and bay windows, the flat-headed window openings and the cladding which combines rough-cut wood around the window openings, and half-timbering on highly decorative red brickwork in various patterns. The Tudor Revival is seen in the broad Tudor arch of the principal entry opening and wooden door with ornate metal detailing, the copper gutters, downspouts and light fixtures, and the half-timbering with carved columns, cornice lines and bargeboards. The situation of the house on its property with its long, south elevation facing the garden and the narrower, west elevation facing Old Forest Hill Road is characteristic of the informal quality of the Arts and Crafts architecture which responds to the site's topography and orientation. This unusual arrangement is enhanced by the intentional diagonal entry to an elliptical drive which creates a north-east route to the principal entrance with its stone and landscaped terrace.

The house displays a high degree of artistic merit in the complexity of the overall building massing, the combination of multiple gable and hipped clay tile roofs punctuated with a variety of dormers and extended chimneys with their clustered and corbeled red brick flues, and in the wealth of detail seen in the materials including rough stone, a variety of brick pattern work and half timbering, and the range of door and window opening combinations. A high level of craftsmanship is present in the skilled carpentry required to construct the complex roof-scape and carved wooden detailing, and in the masonry with its random patterns of various shades and shapes of rough-hewn stone.

Historical or Associative Value

The property has historic value for its direct association with the Canadian auto industry magnate McLaughlin family, including former Vice President of General Motors of Canada, George W. McLaughlin, and his daughter, Dorothy Marion for whom he purchased the property in 1934 and commissioned the existing house to the designs of the important local architect, Douglas Kertland.

Constructed in 1934, shortly after the incorporation of Forest Hill Village, the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road contributes to an understanding of the early history of Forest Hill as a residential enclave whose early design by-laws and practices resulted in the carefully crafted, landscaped neighbourhood still evident today.

The property is representative of the important architect Douglas E. Kertland, who is known for winning the competition to design the CNE's Automotive Building (1928-9). Kertland's residential architecture was widely published from the mid-1920s to the 1940s and he designed at least six other grand homes adjacent to or in the vicinity of the Dorothy M. McLaughlin House in Forest Hill.

Contextual Value

Situated on the east side of Old Forest Hill Road just south of the junction with Dunvegan Road and Browside Avenue, the subject property maintains and supports the character of the neighbourhood. It is one in a series of grand Arts and Crafts houses with Tudor Revival style details sharing a two-storey scale with complex asymmetrical massing and a unified mix of materials featuring stone, brick, wood and metal in a consistent landscaped and well-treed setback.

Constructed in 1934, as one of a number of Kertland-designed houses in the neighborhood, and as a part of the development of Forest Hill Village, the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings.

Heritage Attributes

Design or Physical Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the design and physical value of the property as representative of Arts and Crafts principles executed with Tudor Revival styling:

- The set-back, placement and orientation of the two-storey building on its large, landscaped lot where its west and south elevations are partially viewed simultaneously from the south end of the elliptical drive fronting onto Old Forest Hill Road
- The scale and irregular form of the two-storey house with its asymmetrically composed building massing and roofscape combining hipped and gabled roofs, punctuated by dormer windows and three extended chimneys, bay and oriel windows and a recessed, west-facing main entrance
- The stone cladding material comprised of rough-hewn stone at both storeys on all elevations except the west and its returns on the north and south elevations where half-timbering and inlaid brick are used at the second storey level
- The half-timbering featured on the second floor level of the west elevation, in the south-facing, gable end of the west elevation, and the north return
- The decorative brick infill with its variety of patterns, mirrored in the large roof gable ends on the west and south elevations, the north return, and below the openings flanking the double doorway leading to the flagstone garden terrace on the south elevation
- The intricate wood carving found on the half-timbering, the bay and oriel windows and the main entrance
- The copper material used in the gutters, and downspouts with their decorative collectors, the lighting fixtures above the main west entrance and the double doorway leading from the dining room to the stone garden terrace on the south elevation, as well as the conical copper canopy above the single-door entry on the south elevation
- The heated three-car integrated garage with living quarters above
- The recessed main entrance in the west elevation with its splayed wooden surround and Tudor-arched wood door with its vertical panels beneath a single window set deep beyond a heavy, flat-headed wooden entryway containing intricately carved columns
- The existing arrangement of the flat-headed openings on all four elevations
- The existing original stone knee walls with their smooth stone coping framing the main entrance terrace on the west elevation, the garden terrace on the south elevation and the garden wall between the south terrace and the stone wall defining the south boundary of the property

Historical or Associative Value

The following heritage attribute contributes to the historic and associative value of the property as it represents the history and direct association of the original owner with the then-burgeoning automotive industry in Canada:

- The extended east wing of the house, containing an integrated and heated, three-car garage at the first storey

Contextual Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the contextual value of the property at 63 Old Forest Hill Road as it conveys the historical residential character of Forest Hill Village

- The set-back, placement and orientation of the two-storey building on its large, landscaped lot where its west and south elevations are partially viewed simultaneously from the south end of the elliptical drive fronting onto Old Forest Hill Road

Note: the 1990s eastern extension of the south garden flagstone terrace and knee walls, the street walls and iron gates fronting onto Old Forest Hill Road and the in-ground swimming pool are not considered heritage attributes

63 Old Forest Hill Road



Existing west elevation (Source: Wayne Swadron Architects, 2022).



Primary (west) elevation (Source: Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



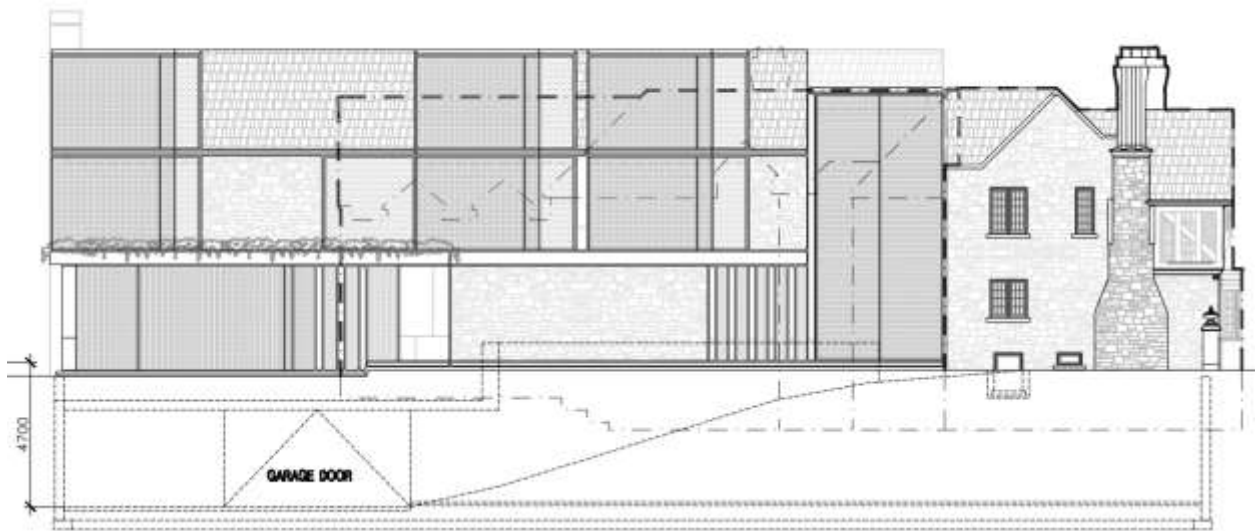
Existing south elevation with red outline area indicating portion of house to be removed.
(Source: Wayne Swadron Architects, 2022)



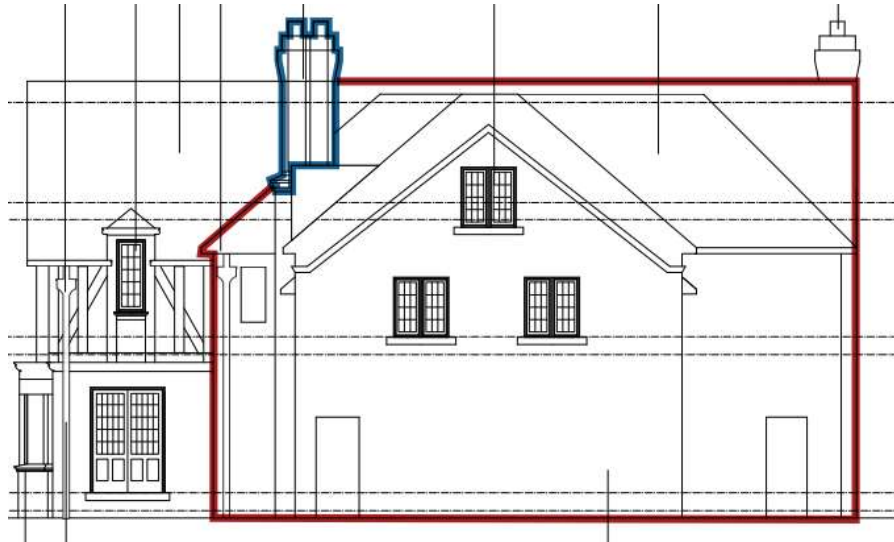
Proposed south elevation (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022)



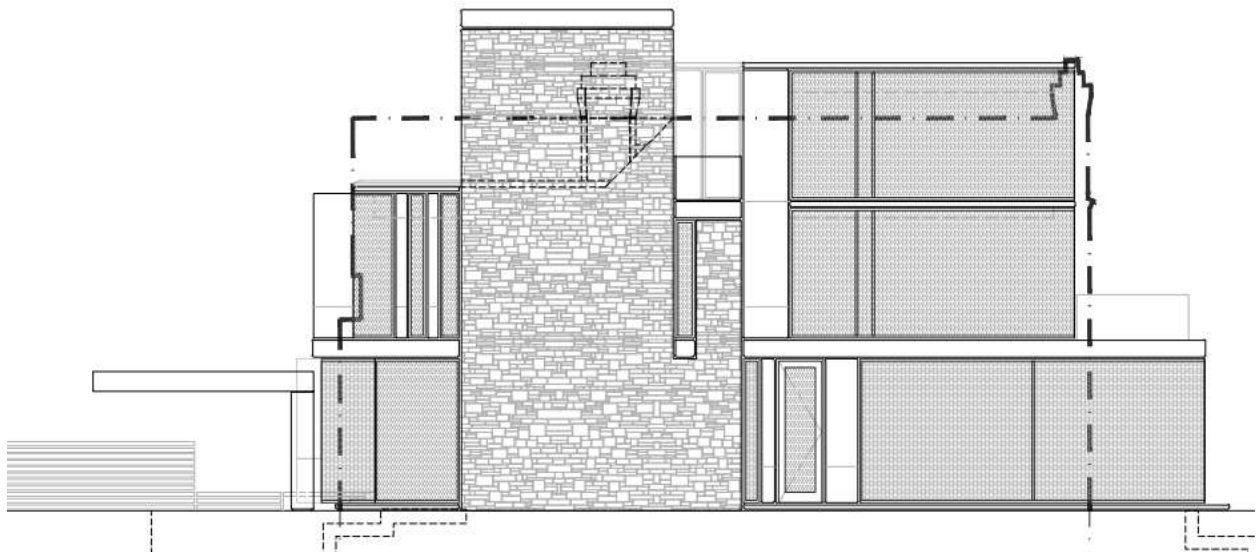
Existing north elevation with red outline area indicating portion of house to be removed.
(Source: Wayne Swadron Architects, 2022)



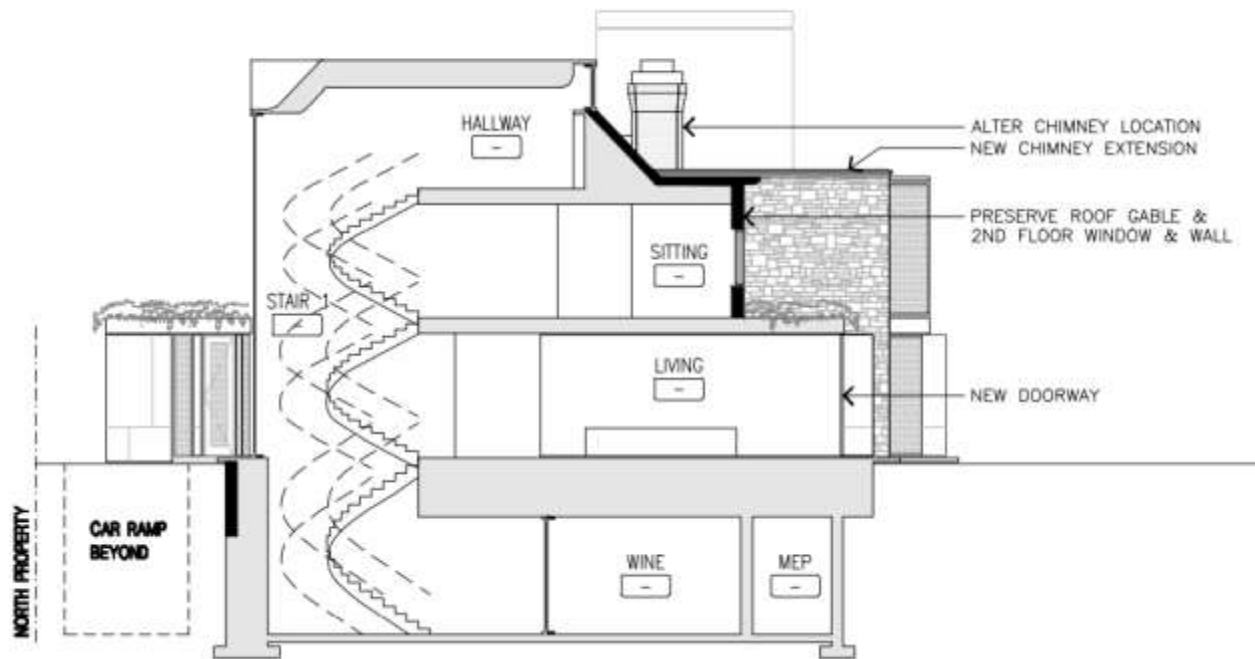
Proposed north elevation (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



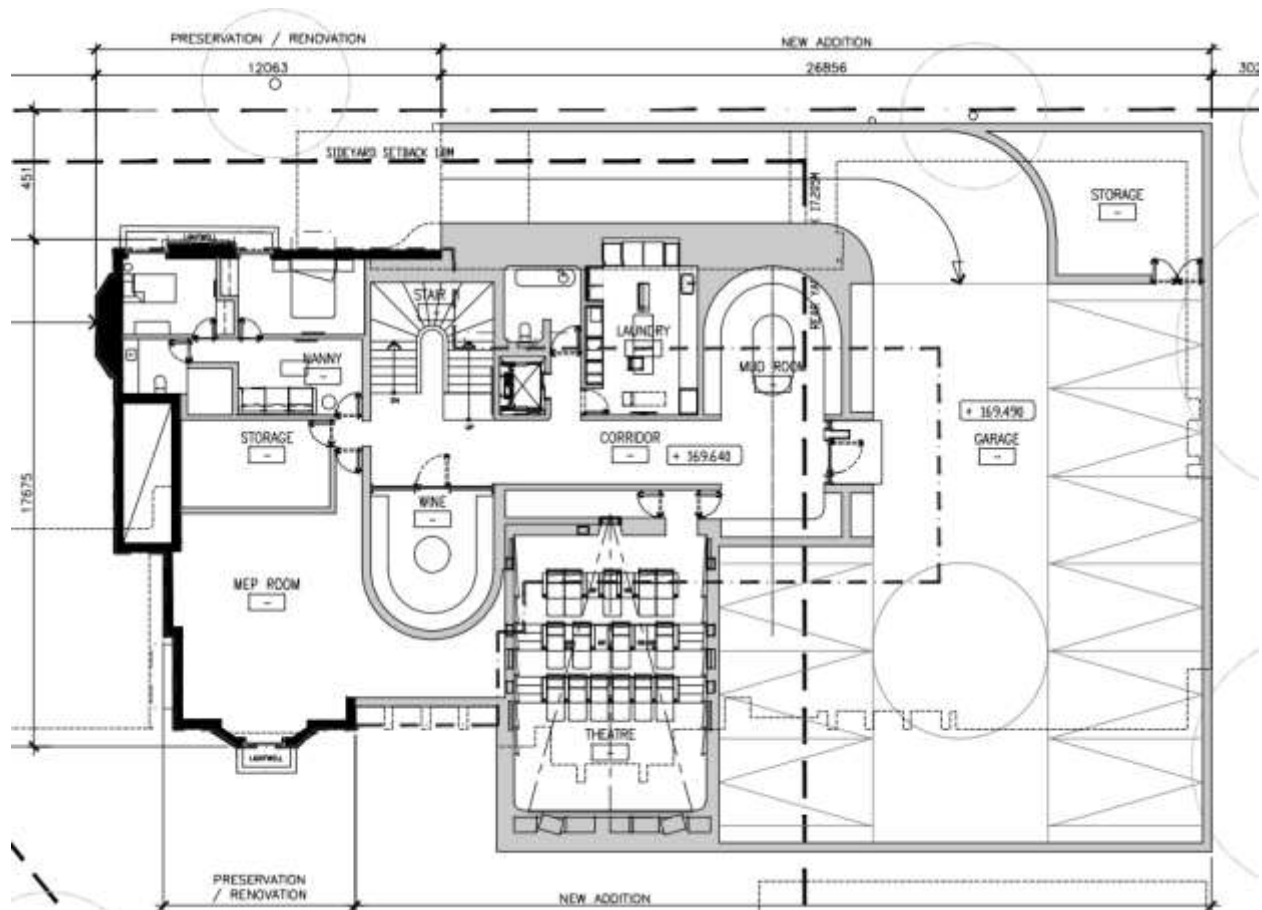
Existing east elevation with red outline area indicating portion of house to be removed.
(Source: Wayne Swadron Architects, 2022)



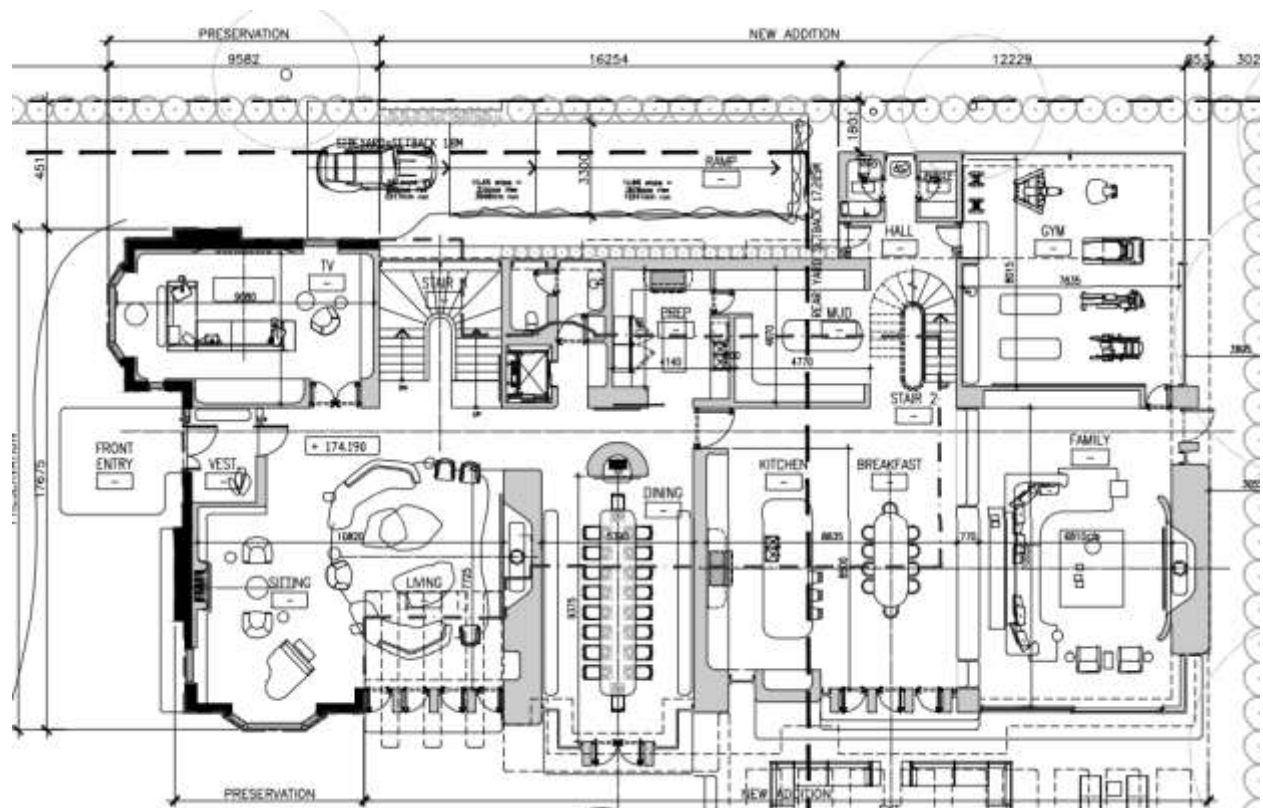
Proposed east elevation (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



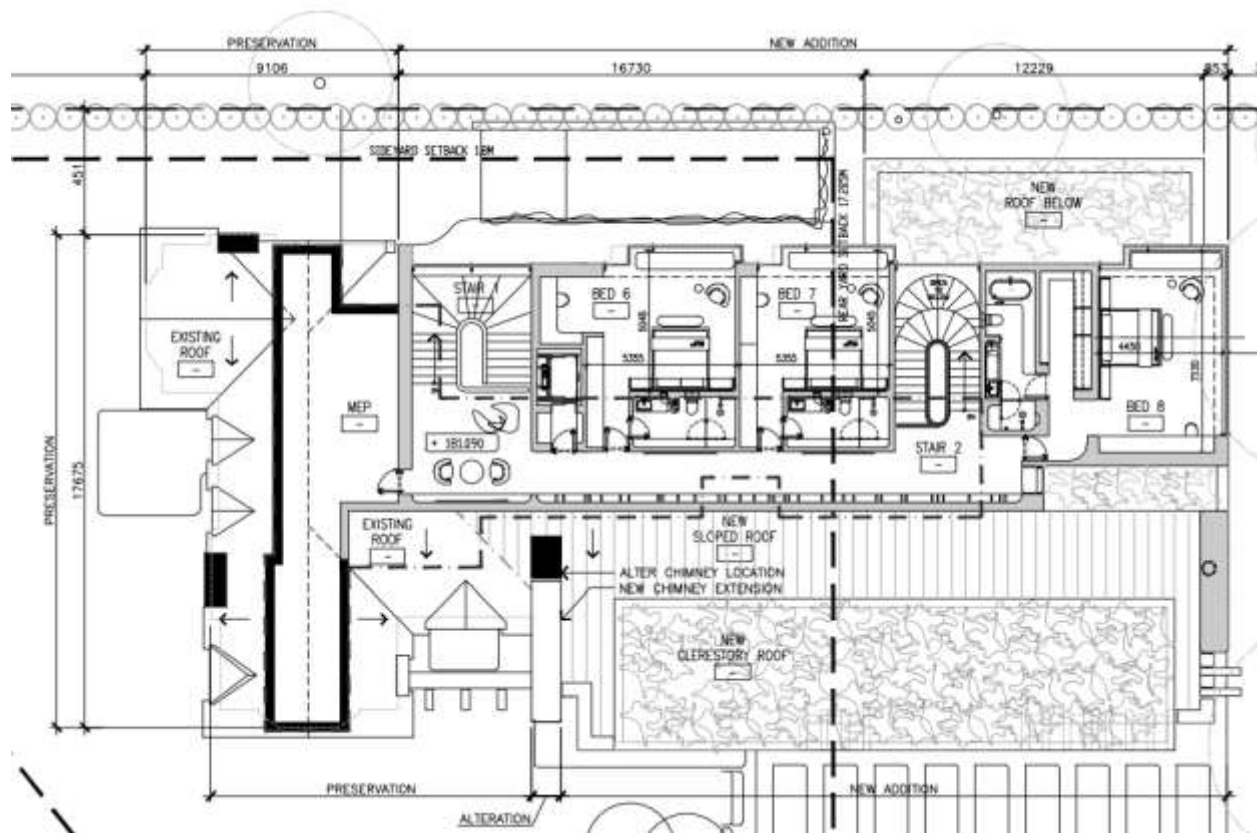
Proposed section (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



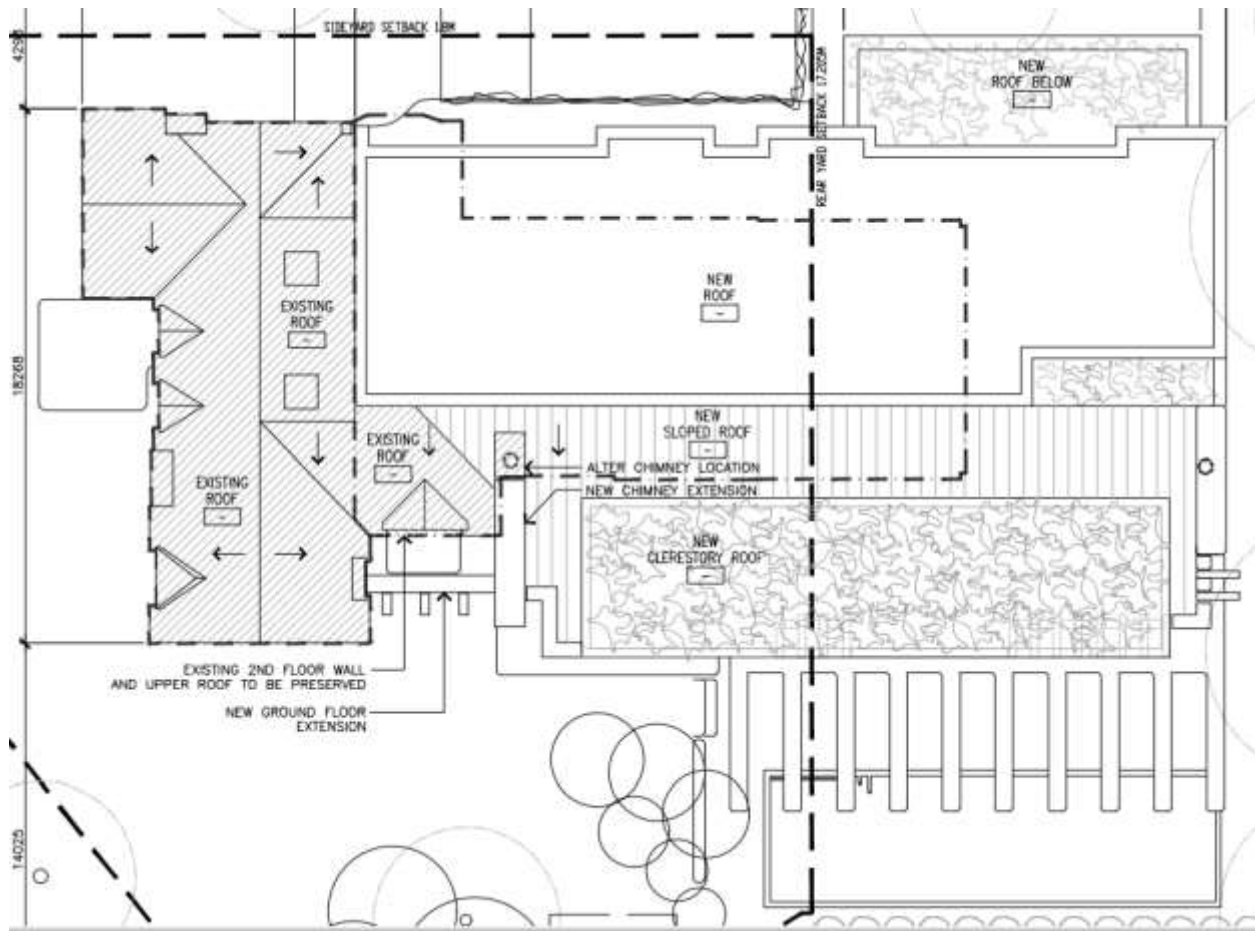
Proposed Basement Plan (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022)



Proposed Third Floor Plan (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022).



Proposed Roof Plan (Hariri Pontarini Architects, 2022)