

8 Lowther Avenue - Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property Under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act - Approval

Date: July 13, 2026

To: City Council

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: University-Rosedale - Ward 11

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the alterations proposed for the property at 8 Lowther Avenue under Part V, Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act in connection with the construction of a roof top addition with roof deck.

The subject property is located on the north side of Lowther Avenue between Bedford Road and Avenue Road and contains a three-storey semi-detached building with brick and stone cladding. The subject lands are part of the East Annex Heritage Conservation District (EAHCD).

The development proposal includes a new roof addition with roof deck on top of the existing third storey. The new addition is higher than the ridge of the existing heritage building and would therefore not comply with the guidelines for additions in the EAHCD Plan which state that additions should be lower than the height of the existing ridge.

Staff are supportive of the proposed roof addition and associated roof deck railing which are set behind the roof ridge of the existing building and stepped back 6.48m from the street and would therefore not over-power the existing heritage building. The addition on top of the heritage building is minimally visible from the street and would not have a negative impact on the EAHCD's cultural heritage value.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the construction of the roof addition and alterations at the heritage property at 8 Lowther Avenue, in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, with such alterations substantially in accordance with plans and drawings prepared by Joseph Cohen, dated May 20th, 2026 and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

The East Annex Heritage Conservation District was designated by Council under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-law 1994-0520) that includes the property at 8 Lowther Avenue.

BACKGROUND

Heritage Property

Located within the East Annex Heritage Conservation District (EAHCD) on Prince Arthur Avenue between Bedford Road and Avenue Road, the subject property at 8 Lowther Avenue contains a three-storey building with brick and stone cladding. At the time the District Plan was undertaken, the property was assigned a "C" rating, defined as "a property which retains much of its original character and is a vital reminder of a community's past".

Development Proposal

The proposal is to construct a new roof addition with deck patio and railing on top of the existing three-storey building. It would be 2.1m in height and set behind the existing roof ridge at 6.48m from the front of the building. Other works on the property include a small rear third-floor addition, new rear balconies and new windows on the side and rear. Apart from one new second floor side window, all the other proposed works are not visible from the street. No alterations are proposed to the front of the house.

Heritage Planning Policy Framework

Toronto Official Plan

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."

3.1.6.32 Impacts of site alterations, developments, municipal improvements, and/or public works within or adjacent to Heritage Conservation Districts will be assessed to ensure that the integrity of the districts' heritage values, attributes, and character are conserved. This assessment will be achieved through a Heritage Impact Assessment, consistent with Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, to the satisfaction of the City.

3.1.6.33. Heritage Conservation Districts should be managed and conserved by approving only those alterations, additions, new development, demolitions, removals and public works in accordance with respective Heritage Conservation District plans.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/chapters-1-5/>

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>

East Annex Heritage Conservation District (EAHCD)

The EAHCD Plan contains guidelines that are intended to "ensure that physical changes in the area contribute to and strengthen the character of the East Annex." The

Plan states that the guidelines "are not intended to be used as strict regulations" but to "provide assistance in design and decision making." Notwithstanding this, new development proposals are strongly encouraged to meet the overall objectives of the EAHCD Plan and where they are unable to do so, justification is to be provided for review.

At the time the EAHCD study was undertaken, the heritage property at 8 Lowther Avenue was assigned a "C" rating; meaning "properties which retain much of their original character and are vital reminders of a community's past".

The EAHCD guidelines states that additions to heritage buildings within the District should generally be located at the rear and should be lower than the height of roof ridge of the existing heritage building. Clay brick should be used as the predominant exterior material on publicly visible facades.

COMMENTS

The proposed roof addition does not comply with the guideline in the EAHCD Plan, which state that additions should be lower than the height of the roof ridge of the existing building. However, the addition is stepped back 6.48m from the front of the heritage property and would be minimally visible from the street. The heritage property will remain visually prominent, and the overall height, setback and size of the new roof addition and roof deck railing will not negatively impact the character of this part of the East Annex HCD. All other proposed works are designed appropriately and will generally not be visible. Staff are therefore supportive of the overall proposal.

CONCLUSION

Heritage Planning staff are supportive of the proposed new construction and alterations to the heritage property at 8 Lowther Avenue under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Heritage Planning staff are of the opinion the proposal is consistent with the guidelines of the EAHCD Plan and other applicable policies, objectives and guidelines. It is therefore recommended that City Council approve the application under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONTACT

Colin Pang, Heritage Planner, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning
416-392-1534, colin.pang@toronto.ca

Mary L. MacDonald, Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning
416-338-1079; Mary.MacDonald@toronto.ca

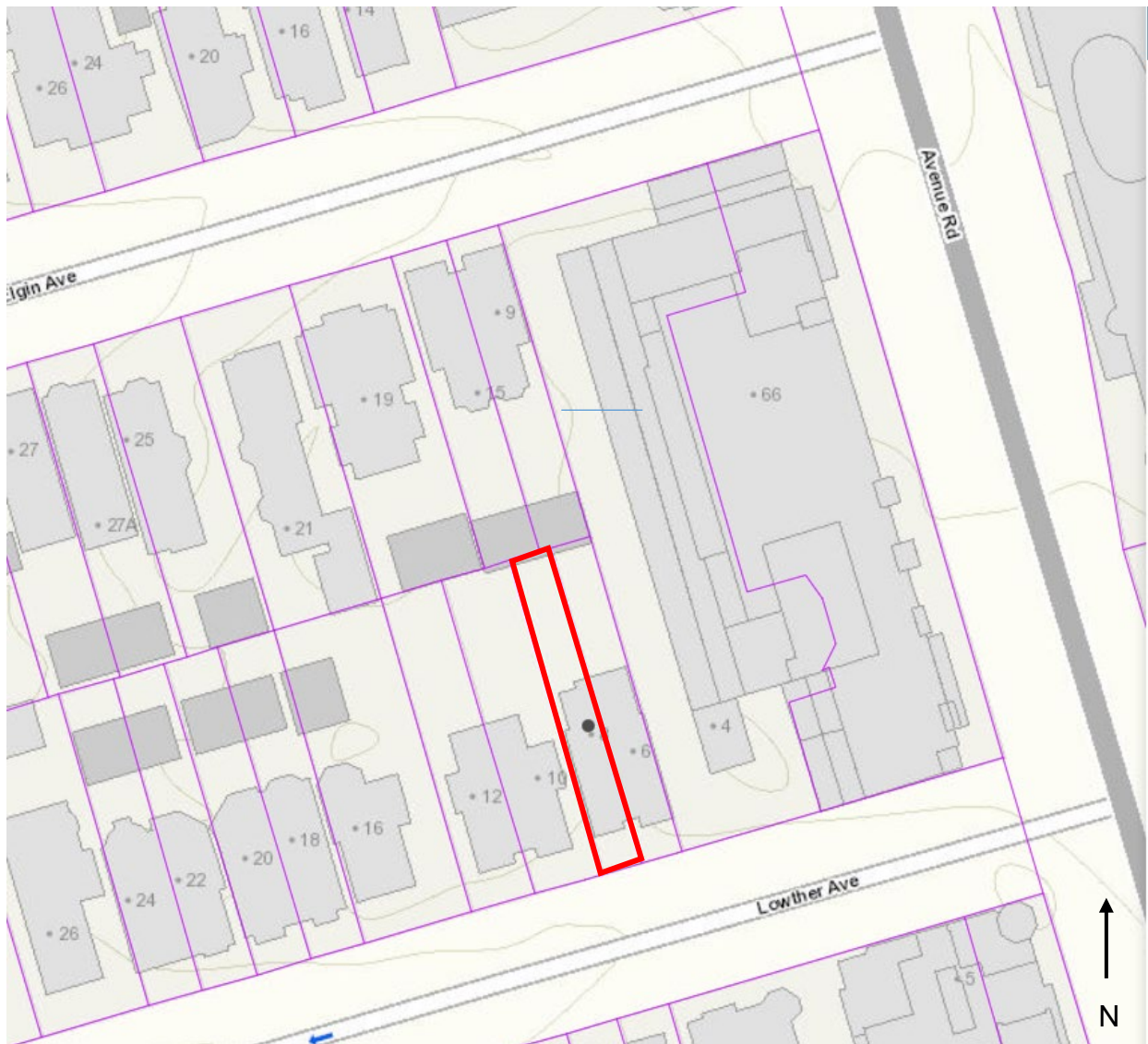
SIGNATURE

Jason Thorne
Chief Planner and Executive Director
City Planning

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Photographs
Attachment 3 - Selected Drawings
Attachment 4 - Renderings

8 Lowther Avenue



Location Map, showing the property at 8 Lowther in red outline (City of Toronto, 2026)

8 Lowther Avenue



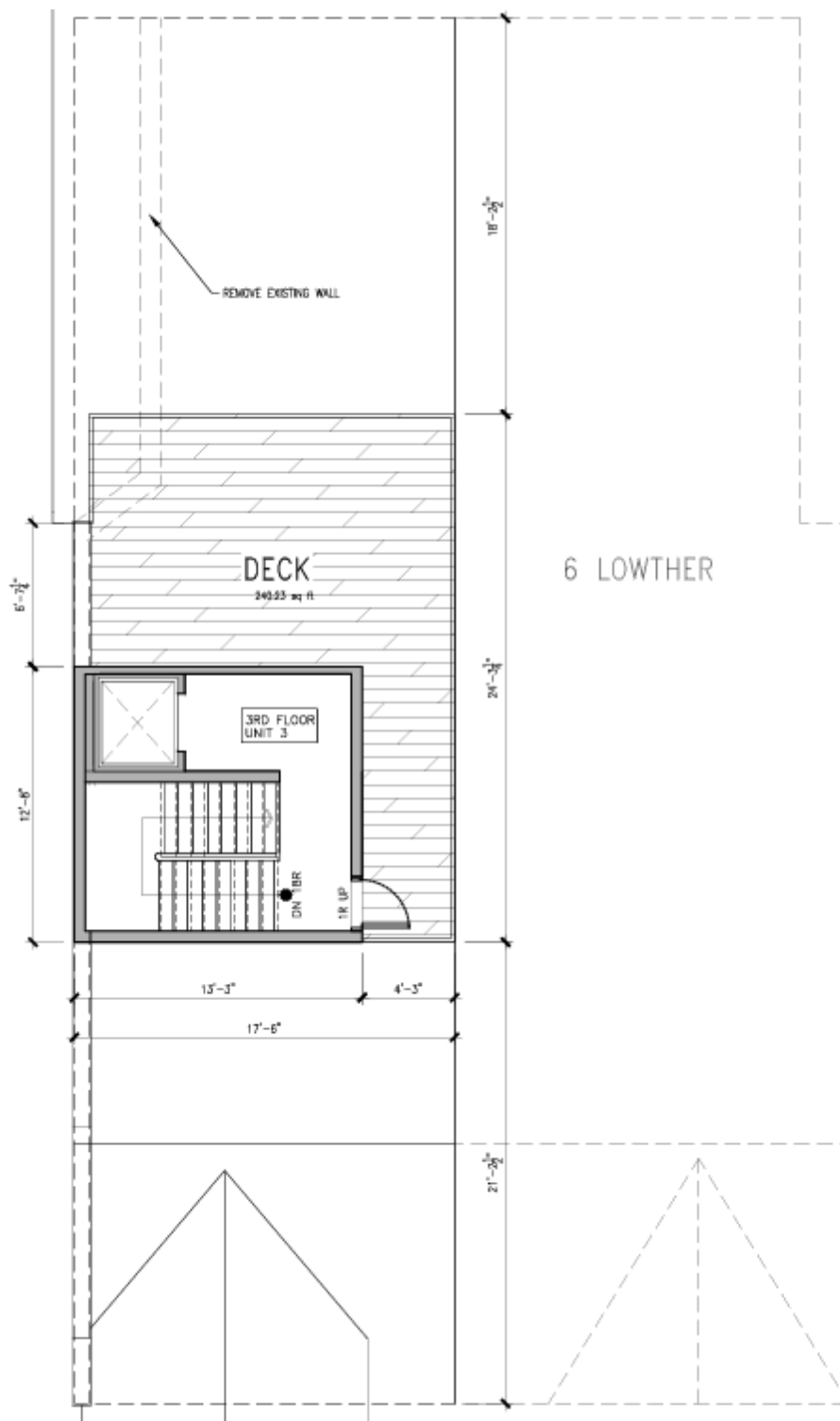
Primary (south) elevation of 8 Lowther Avenue outlined in yellow showing the building as seen from Lowther Avenue. (Heritage Planning, 2026)



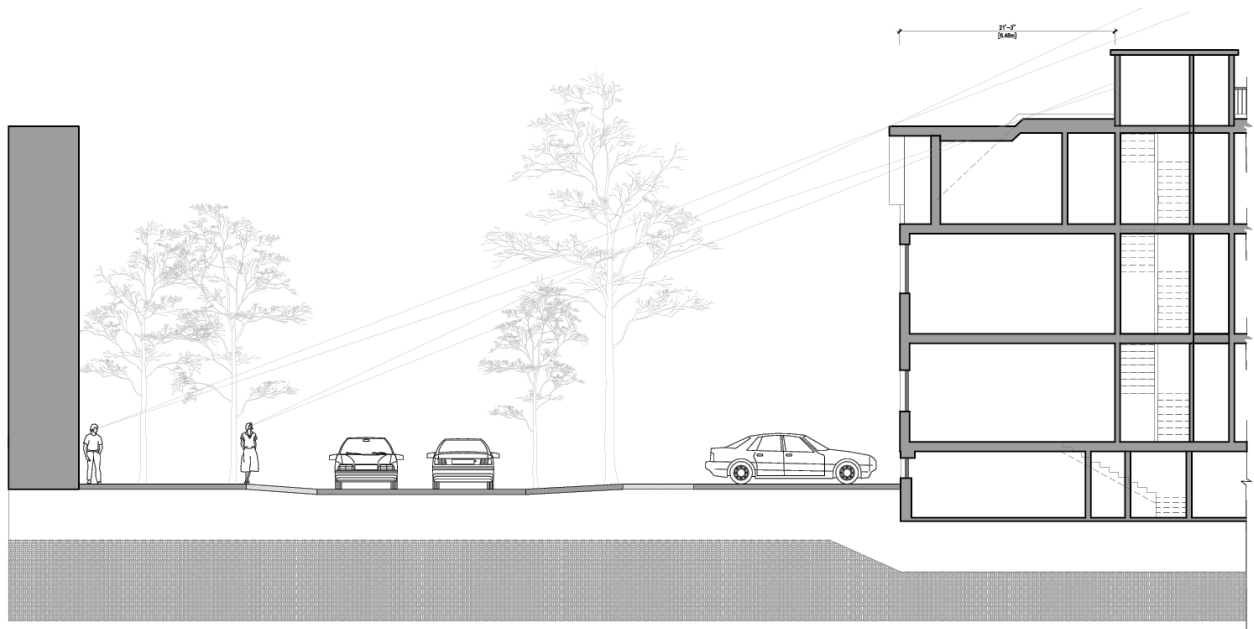
West elevation of 8 Lowther Avenue showing existing windows, doors and roof
(Source: Heritage Planning, 2026)



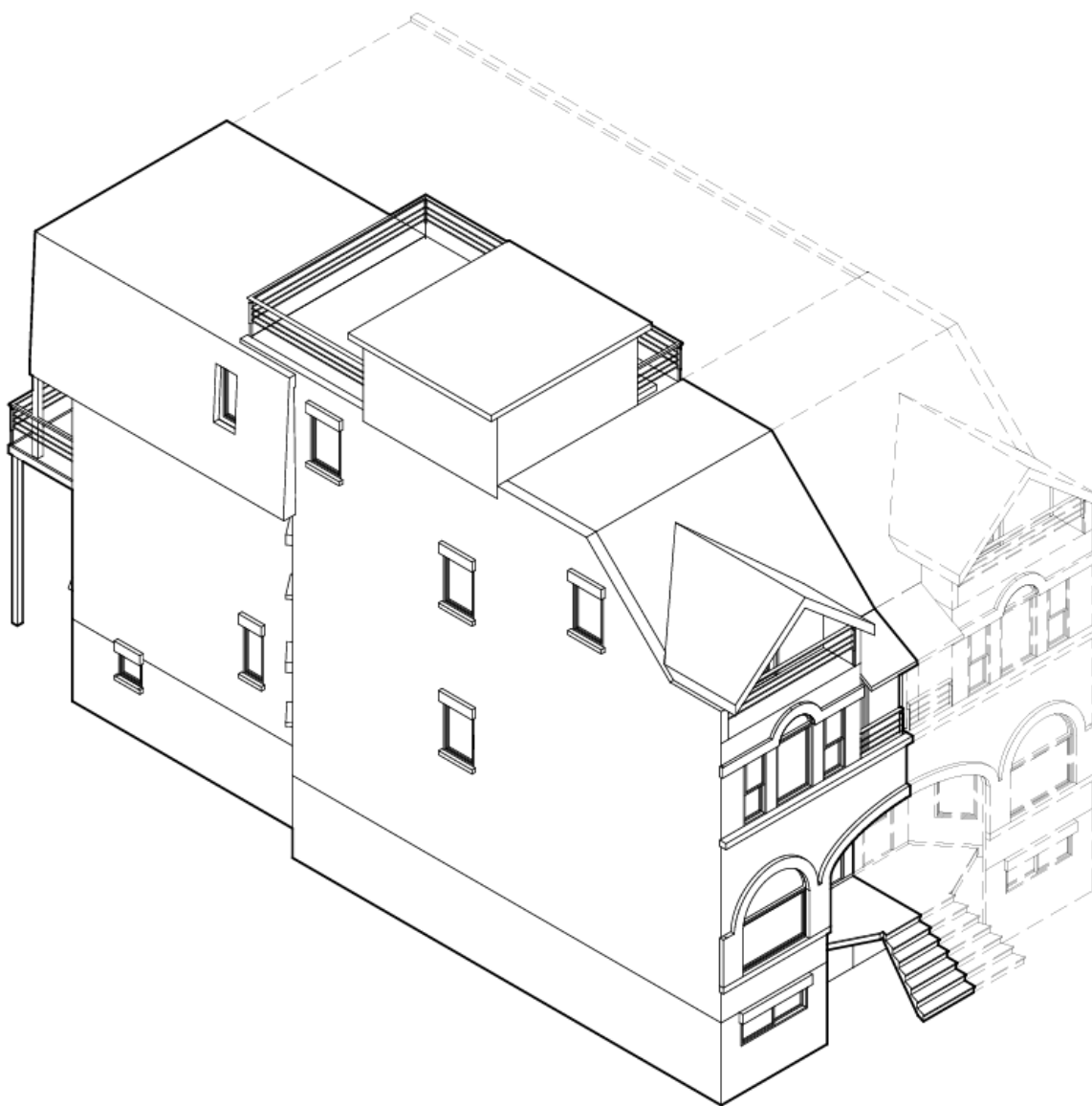
Front elevation (south) showing the roof addition and roof deck railing on top of the existing building at 8 Lowther (Source: NMR Design., 2026)



Roof plan view showing the size and floor plan and set back of the roof addition and roof deck railing (Source: NMR Design., 2026)



Cross section drawing showing new roof addition with a set back from the front of the heritage building (Source: NMR Design., 2026)



Isometric plan view of the new roof addition and roof deck (Source: NMR Design., 2026)



Proposed rendering of south elevation showing the proposed roof top addition which will be set back from the street (NMR Design, 2026).



Proposed rendering of isometric view showing the proposed roof top addition which will be set back from the street (NMR Design, 2026).