

50 Park Road - Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act - Refusal

Date: April 27, 2026

To: Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 11 - University Rosedale

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council refuse the heritage permit application under Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) for alterations to the property at 50 Park Road. This application was made in connection with an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application for the properties at 38, 40 and 50 Park Road that has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

The property at 50 Park Road was listed on the City's Heritage Register in 1986 and was designated in 1991 under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as per By-law 0182-1991 and it is within the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District.

The building was constructed in 1954 as the headquarters of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) by the Toronto firm of John B. Parkin with John C. Parkin as the project architect. It won critical acclaim as a "landmark modern building" in Toronto with its simple low form, clean lines, smooth surfaces and exposed steel. Its relationship to the surrounding landscape is also a noted aspect of the design which took advantage of the "park setting created by the southern extension of Rosedale Park."

The development proposes the demolition of the buildings on the adjacent properties at 38 and 40 Park Road and the construction of a new 31-storey mixed-use building that retains and integrates with the heritage building at 50 Park Road. Permission is required under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act for the alterations to the heritage property associated with this new construction.

The current proposal does not conform with the policies of the Official Plan and does not conserve the cultural heritage values and attributes of the Part IV designated property at 50 Park Road as a matter of provincial interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council refuse the application to alter the designated heritage property at 50 Park Road under Part IV, Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of a 31-storey mixed-use building, in accordance with the plans and drawings dated July 10th, 2025 prepared by BDP Quadrangle; and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by ERA Architects dated October 23, 2025.
2. In the event this decision is appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and the necessary City staff to attend the Ontario Land Tribunal in opposition to the appeal and to continue discussions with the applicant to resolve outstanding issues.

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

Council adopted the Part IV Designation By-law for 50 Park Road on February 4, 5 and 6, 2003 (By-law 0182-1991), enacted on March 25, 1991:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/pre1998bylaws/toronto%20-%20former%20city%20of/1991-0182.pdf>

Council adopted the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD) on February 4, 5 and 6, 2003 (By-law 115-2003), enacted on February 7, 2003:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2003/law0115.pdf>

On November 10th, 2025, City Council directed the City Solicitor and appropriate City staff to attend the Ontario Land Tribunal to oppose the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Application for the lands at 38-50 Park Road in its current form and continue discussions with the applicant to resolve outstanding issues.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2025/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-259948.pdf>

BACKGROUND

Heritage Property

The property at 50 Park Road was listed on the City's Heritage Register in 1986 and was designated in 1991 under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as per By-law 0182-1991.

The property contains a two-storey office building constructed in 1954 as the first permanent headquarters of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA). The building is characterized as a well executed example of the mid twentieth Miesian International Style of architecture with its simple low, boxy form, flat roof clean lines, smooth surfaces and exposed steel and minimalist design. Positioned adjacent to the ravine, the building is integrated with the site's natural slope, allowing access and egress on both levels. The north façade features glazing, providing views of the adjacent parkland. The building material palette is a combination of brick, concrete, and copper flashing.

The property is also designated under Part V of the OHA in the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD) and located on the west side of Park Road between Collier Street and Rosedale Valley Road.

38 and 40 Park Road are not listed or designated on the City's Heritage Register and are not included within the boundaries of the SRHCD. A cultural heritage evaluation report was completed by the heritage consultant for these properties which concluded that the buildings did not meet the Provincial criteria required for listing or designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Development Proposal

The City received an application to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to permit the development of a 31-storey mixed-use building containing 289 units (including 40 replacement rental dwelling units) and 700 square metres of non-residential gross floor area. This application has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

The buildings at 38 and 40 Park Road are proposed to be demolished while the existing heritage building at 50 Park Road would be retained and integrated with the new 31-storey building. The proposed alterations include a one-storey glazed addition connecting the ground floor level of the heritage building with the new building. The new building would cantilever over the heritage building by 2 metres above the second floor level to provide an outdoor amenity space. The cantilever is reduced to 1.4 metres for the residential floors above. The existing non-original terrace would be retained around the building's lower level and would be updated with a new ground-surface treatment. The non-original front planter would be removed, and the stair access to the lower level would be reconfigured.

The following alterations are proposed to the heritage building at 50 Park Road:

- Installation of a new green roof;
- New glazed connection on the southern elevation of the ground floor;

- Removal of some of the buff brick on the front elevation to restore and reinstate the width of the original main (east) entrance opening with a new recessed glazed entrance;
- Removal of some of the buff brick from the south side to allow for new ground floor and basement openings to connect to the new building;
- Extension the existing entrance stairs to align with the new entrance and connect with the new stairs to the residential lobby of the new building;
- Replacement of the existing north driveway area with a paved and landscaped patio;
- Renovation of the interior space of the heritage building.

Heritage Planning Framework

Planning Act

The Planning Act guides development in the Province of Ontario. It 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” and Section 2(r) refers to “a built form that is well designed and provides for a sense of place.”

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) (the "PPS") provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. It includes policies on key issues that affect communities, such as:

- the efficient use and management of land and infrastructure,
- ensuring the sufficient provision of housing to meet changing needs including affordable housing,
- ensuring opportunities for job creation,
- ensuring the appropriate transportation, water, sewer and other infrastructure is available to accommodate current and future needs,
- protecting people, property and community resources by directing development away from natural or human-made hazards, and
- conservation of cultural heritage and archaeology.

The provincial policy-led planning system recognizes and addresses the complex inter-relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The PPS supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, and recognizes linkages among policy areas. All decisions of City Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS and shall conform with Provincial Plans. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by City Council shall also be consistent with the PPS and conform with Provincial Plans. Provincial Plans are intended to be read in their entirety, and relevant policies are to be applied to each situation.

Policy 4.6.1 of the PPS directs that “Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved.”

“Conserved” is defined in the PPS as the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained.

Policy 4.6.2 states that "Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless the significant archaeological resources have been conserved."

City of Toronto Official Plan

The Official 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.

South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District Plan

The former OAA building at 50 Park Road is within the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District. It is noted as an "Unrated" building within the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District Plan (SRHCD Plan).

The SRHCD Plan states that the area has a "park-like quality" with ravines defining its boundaries. The guidelines for alterations and additions to Unrated Buildings state that:

- A. New buildings and alterations and additions to unrated buildings should contribute to and not detract from the variety and heritage character of the district.
- B. New buildings and alterations and additions to unrated buildings should be designed to be compatible with the heritage buildings, in terms of scale, massing height, setback, and entry level.
- C. The roof profile and the location of the eaves lines or the roof parapet should be designed so that the apparent height of the building is compatible with that of its neighbours and is not visually overwhelming to neighbouring buildings.

With regard to the OHA, Section 41 states that

(2.2) A property that is designated by a municipality under section 29 and is included in an area designated as a heritage conservation district under this Part is subject to section 30 and sections 33 to 34.4, and not to this Part, with respect to any alterations of the property or any demolition or removal referred to in subsection 34 (1) in respect of the property if,

- (a) the designation of the heritage conservation district was made before the day section 41.1 came into force; and
- (b) no heritage conservation district plan has been adopted by the council of the municipality under section 41.1 with respect to the heritage conservation district.

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 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

The application is for a 31-storey mixed-use building which will require the demolition of the buildings on the properties at 38 and 40 Park Road. These are not designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and are not within with South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District. As such Heritage Planning have no comments with respect to their demolition.

Staff are concerned that the massing of the proposed new building, which connects to and cantilevers over the heritage building, would visually dominate and undermine the scale, form and character of the minimalist Miesian International Style building. Any new massing should be stepped back and not cantilever over this important modern structure to appropriately conserve the property's cultural heritage value.

Some of the most important characteristics of the Miesian International Style expressed by this building are minimalist, low roof form and clean lines. The proposal has not demonstrated how the changes required to install a green roof would impact the heritage values and attributes of the former OAA building. If the green roof results in a

deeper roof plan, and planting that is visible from the public realm, it would impact the low form of the roof and the clean lines and straight edges that characterise this building, and which are noted by the heritage consultant as important attributes.

Structural analysis has not been provided to confirm the heritage building can support the additional weight of the green roof without the need for additional structural support. Staff are concerned that if additional supports are needed this will impact the character and appearance of this significant heritage property.

Although the application proposes the restoration of the entrance portico of the former OAA Building, Heritage Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed alterations will undermine the integrity of the heritage resource as an independent structure by making it appear as a vestibule of the new tower.

The existing driveway area is proposed to be repaved and made into landscaped patio area. A detailed landscape strategy has not been submitted and as such it is unclear how the proposed landscaping will relate to its context within the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District.

CONCLUSION

Staff do not support the proposed alterations outlined in this report and the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment, which include changes to the low roof form, cantilevered massing over the heritage building and other alterations that do not appropriately conserve this protected heritage property. Of particular concern is the impact that the proposed cantilevered massing and green roof would have on the heritage building's simple architectural form and character. The proposed massing is too close to the protected heritage property and this, together with other proposed changes undermines the form, character and identity of this significant modern building.

Staff are of the opinion that the proposal does not conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of the protected heritage property at 50 Park Road and is therefore not consistent with the Planning Act, the PPS, and the City of Toronto's Official Plan Heritage Policies.

It is recommended that City Council refuse the application to alter 50 Park Road under Part IV, Section 33, of the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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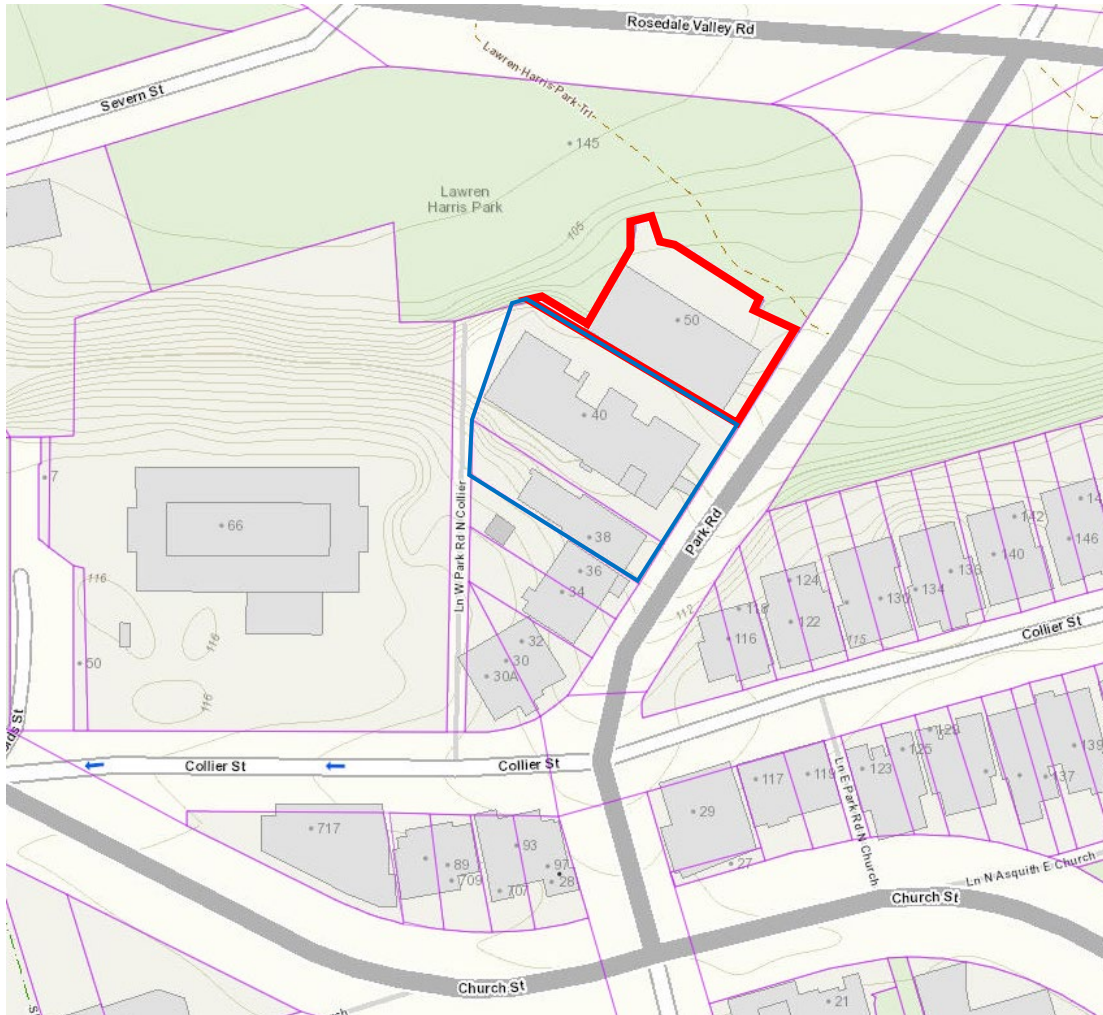
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Photographs
Attachment 3 - Reasons for Designation
Attachment 4 - Selected Drawings and Renderings

LOCATION MAP

ATTACHMENT 1

38-40, 50 Park Road



Location Map: Boundaries for the development proposal occurring at 38-40 in blue outline and 50 Park Road is shown in red outline; (City of Toronto mapping)

PHOTOGRAPH
50 Park Road

ATTACHMENT 2



East elevation façade of 50 Park Road (ERA Architects, 2025)



South elevation of 50 Park Road (ERA Architects, 2025)



North elevation of 50 Park Road (ERA Architects, 2025)



West elevation of 50 Park Road (ERA Architects, 2025)

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

ATTACHMENT 3

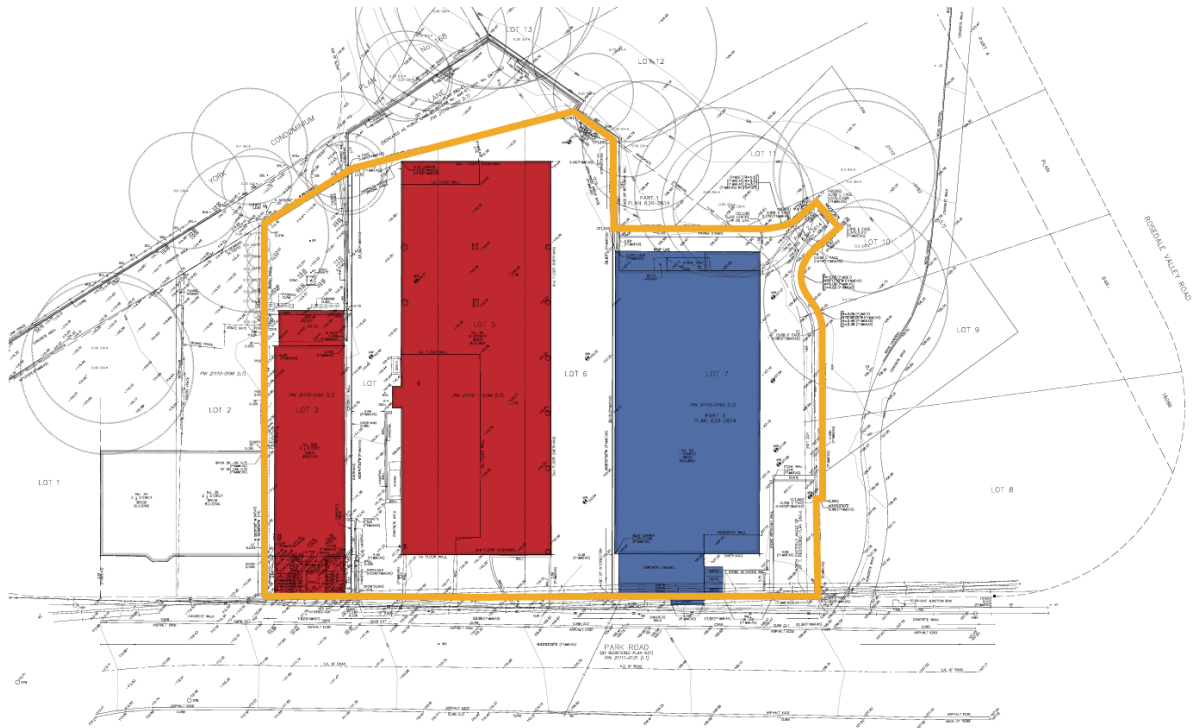
Reasons for the designation of the property at 50 Park Road (Ontario Association of Architects Building):

The Property at 50 Park Road is designated on architectural grounds. The building was constructed in 1954 as the headquarters for the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA), an organization incorporated in 1890 to promote the formal education and professional registration of architects in the Province. The designs of the Toronto firm of John B. Parkin Associates, with John Cresswell Parkin as partner-in-charge, were chosen following an architectural competition organized in 1950. The building provides administrative space and facilities for the educational and social activities of the OAA.

The OAA Building reflects the mid-twentieth century Miesian International Style, with its exposed painted steel framing supporting open grids, expanses of windows, buff brick panels, and a flat roof. The structure, with its two-storey rectangular plan, is set into a hillside off Rosedale Valley Road. The brick panel wall with the name of the building (enlarged from the original design) and a recessed glazed entrance portico form the principal (east) facade of the building. A set of stairs leads directly off the sidewalk to the entry level. The long five-bay north elevation is almost fully glazed at both floor levels to integrate visually the interior spaces with the adjoining public parkland.

The OAA Building, though located on a small lot, was designed to take advantage of the park setting created by the southern extension of Rosedale Park on the north and west sides of the site. A terrace bounded by low plantings wraps around the lower level of the building and separates it from the adjoining parkland. With its clean lines, straight edges, smooth surfaces, and exposed steel, the building is one of the few and a particularly well- executed example of the International Style in the City of Toronto.

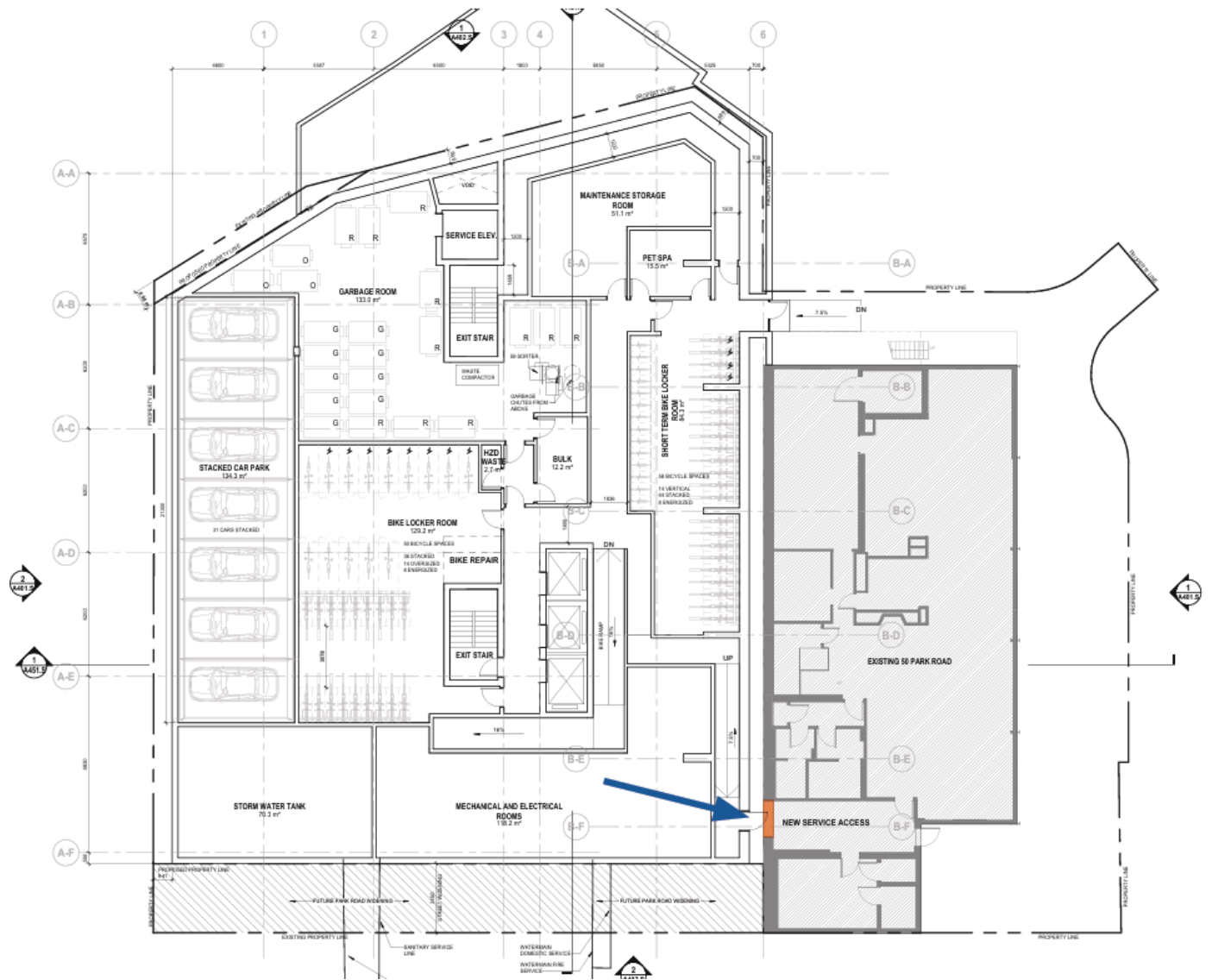
Source: Designation By-law 182-91



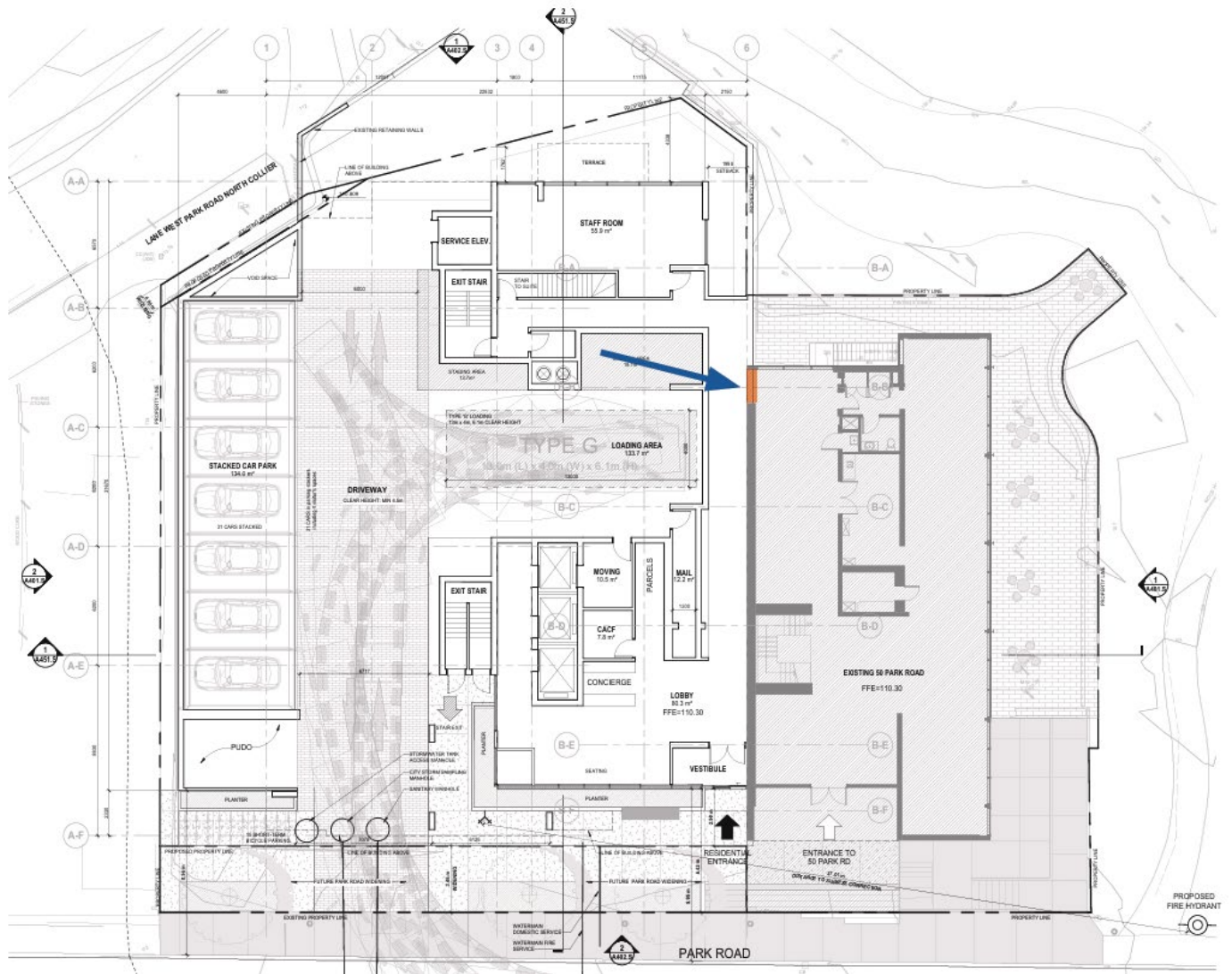
Survey drawing showing the property boundaries of 38, 40 and 50 Park Road. The buildings at 38 and 40 Park Road shown in red will be demolished and the building at 50 Park Road in blue will be retained in situ (HIA by ERA Architects Inc. 2025).



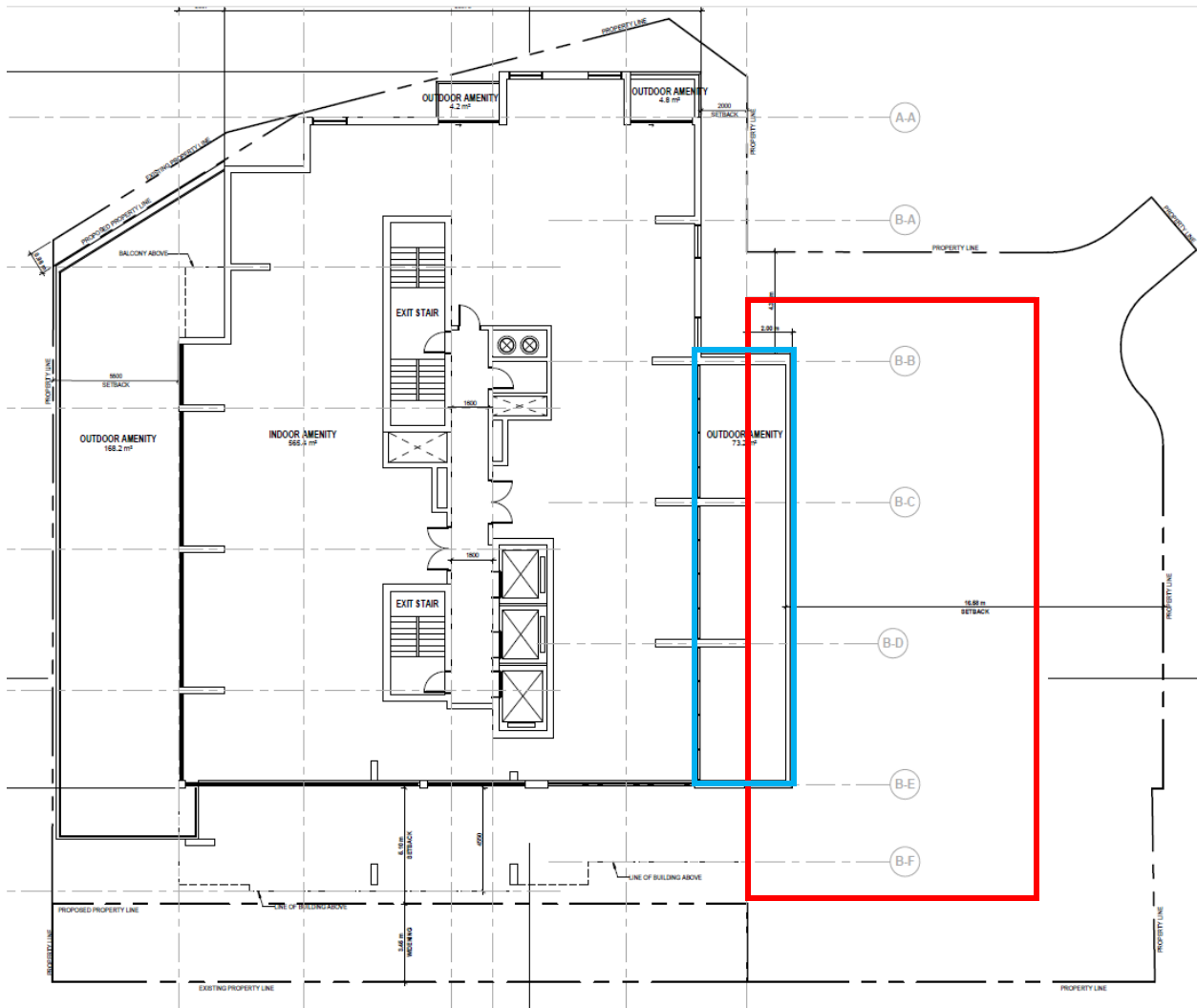
Site Plan drawing showing heritage building at 50 Park Road in red outline and proposed 31 storey new tower building at 38-40 Park Road (BDP Quadrangle, 2025).



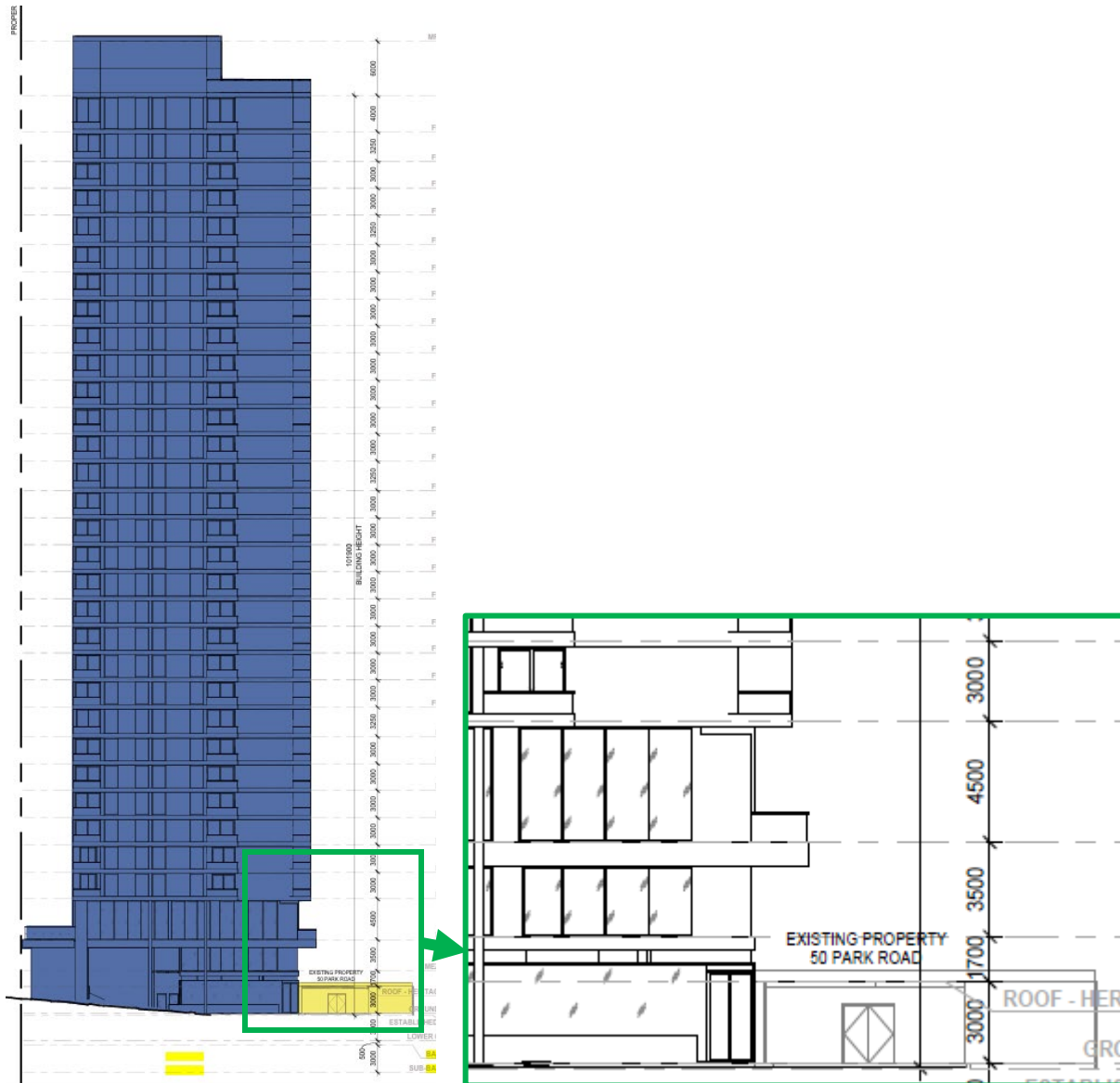
Basement Floor Plan with heritage building in red box drawing and arrow showing proposed new opening on the south elevation (BDP Quadrangle and ERA, 2025).



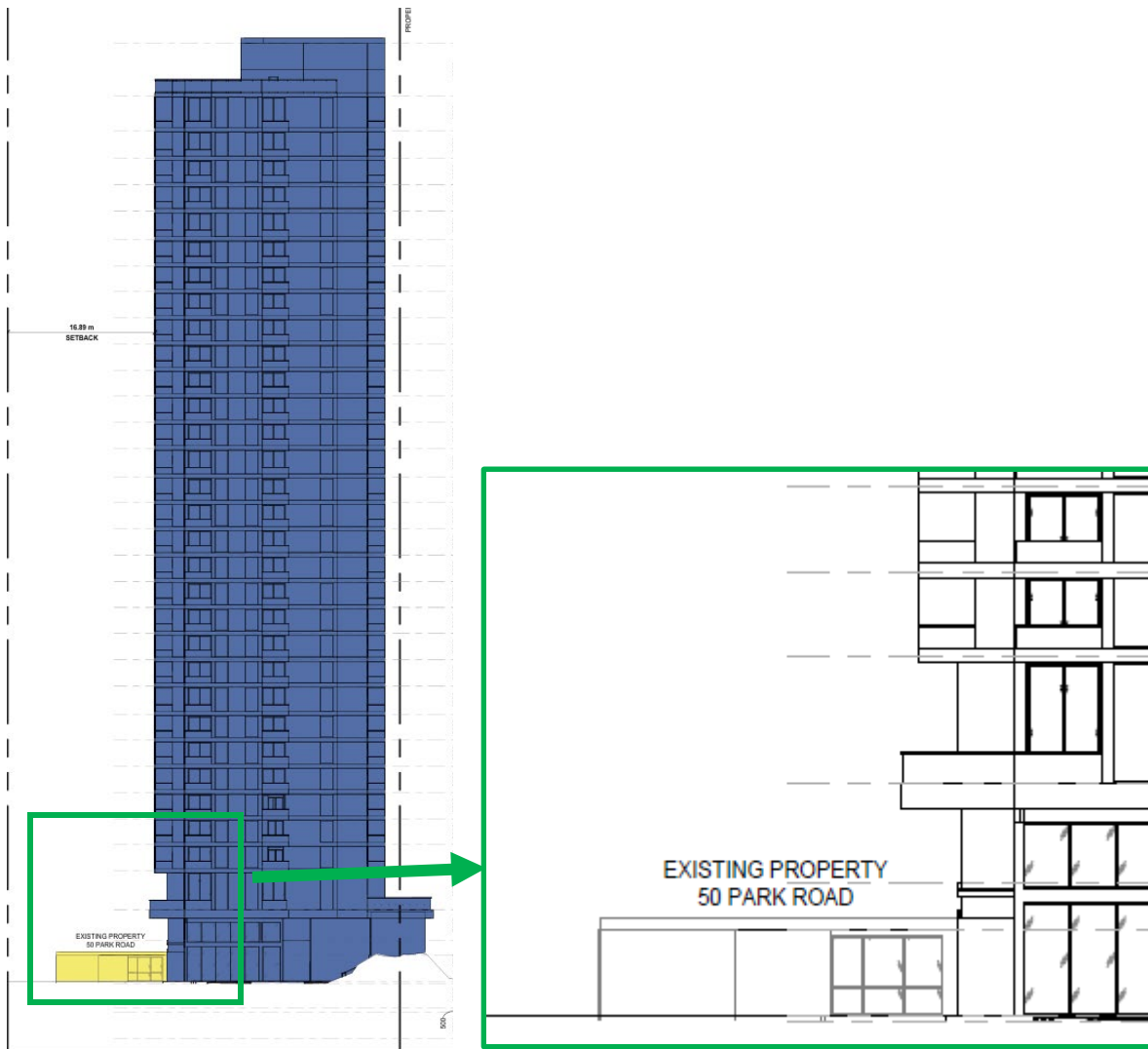
Ground Floor Plan drawing with heritage building in red box and arrow showing proposed new opening on the south elevation (BDP Quadrangle and ERA, 2025).



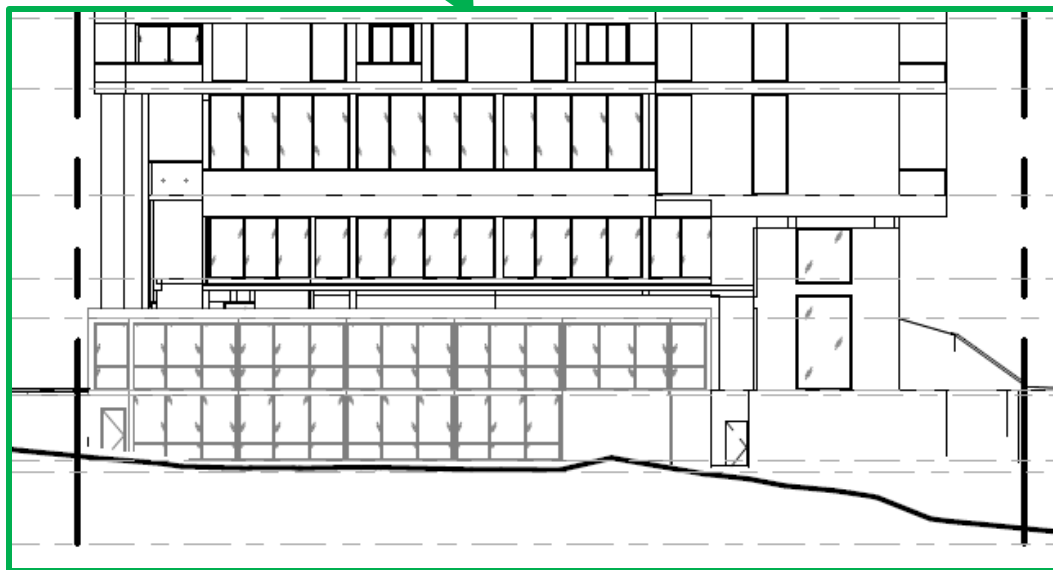
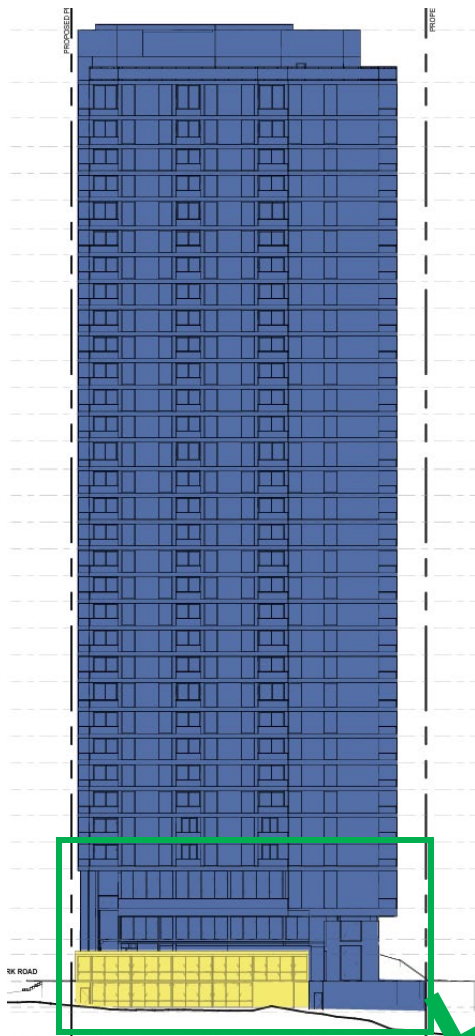
Level 2 plan with heritage building highlighted by the red box and cantilevered addition highlighted by the blue box. (BDP Quadrangle, 2025).



Primary East Elevation with heritage building highlighted in yellow and expanded extract of front elevation of heritage building in the green box (BDP Quadrangle and ERA, 2025)



West Elevation with heritage building highlighted in yellow and expanded extract showing heritage building in the green box (BDP Quadrangle and ERA, 2025)



North Elevation with **heritage building highlighted in yellow** and expanded extract showing heritage building in the green box (BDP Quadrangle and ERA, 2025)

SELECT RENDERS

ATTACHMENT 4

38-40, 50 Park Road



Rendering of the proposed development, looking southwest toward the Site from Park Road (oeee studio, 2025)



East façade rendering of the proposed development, looking west toward the site from Park Road (oeee studio, 2025)