

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: September 5, 2023

SUBMITTED BY: Garrett Stevenson, Interim Director of Planning, 519-741-2200 ext. 7070

PREPARED BY: Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7291
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WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 9

DATE OF REPORT: August 9, 2023

REPORT NO.: DSD-2023-360

SUBJECT: Heritage Permit Application HPA-2023-V-014
15 Church Street
Construction of 6-storey Affordable Housing Building

RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, Heritage Permit Application HPA-2023-V-014 **be approved** to permit the construction of a 6-storey affordable housing building at the property municipally addressed as 15 Church Street, in accordance with the plans and supplementary information submitted with the application and subject to the following conditions:

1. That the final building permit drawings be reviewed and related heritage clearance provided by Heritage Planning Staff prior to the issuance of a building permit.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present staff's recommendation to construct a 6-storey affordable housing project on the subject property municipally addressed as 15 Church Street.
- The key finding of this report is that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on 137 and 149 Queen Street South, and the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District.
- There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- Community engagement included consultation with the Heritage Kitchener Committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

The Development Services Department is in receipt of a Heritage Permit Application HPA-2023-V-014 seeking permission to construct a 6-storey affordable housing building at the subject property municipally addressed as 15 Church Street (Fig 1).

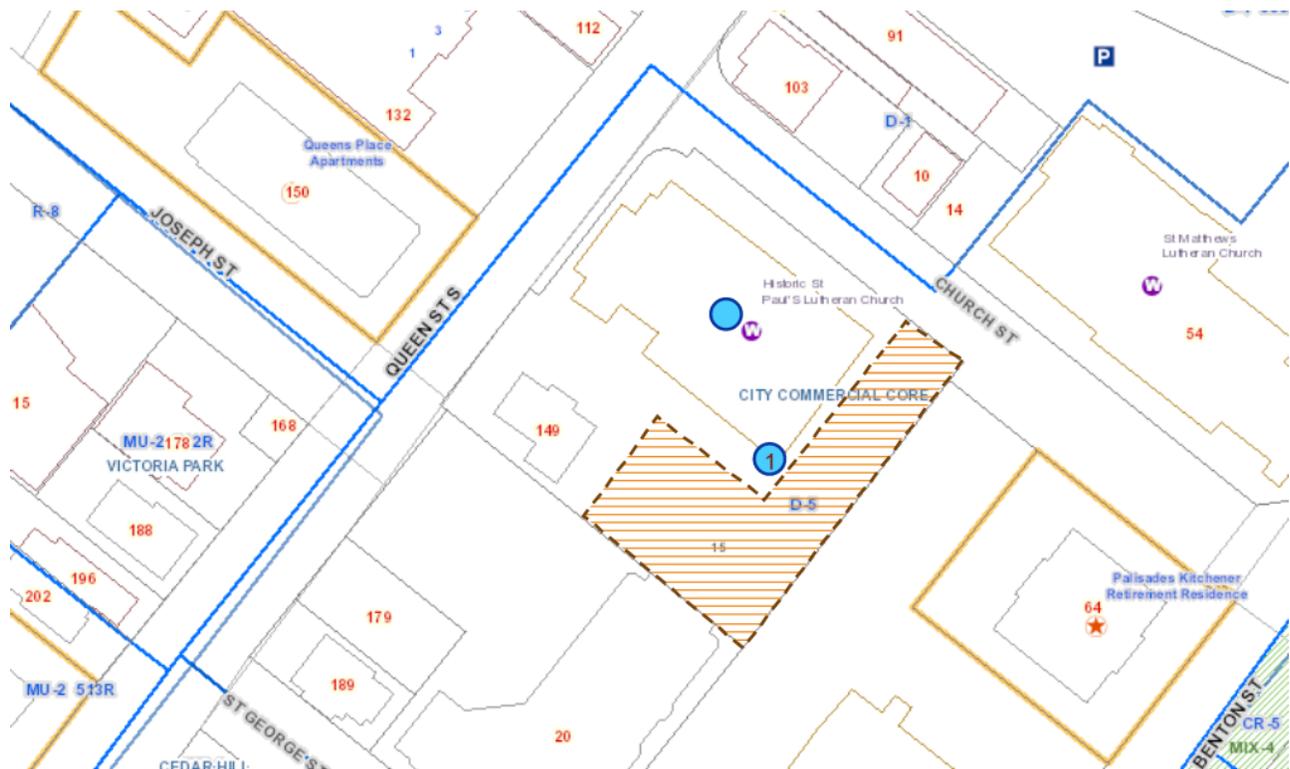


Figure 1. Location Map of 15 Church Street.

REPORT:

The subject property is located on the west side of Church Street towards the rear of 137 and 149 Queen Street South. The subject lands have been severed from 137 and 149 Queen Street South. These properties are located within the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District (VPAHCD) and are designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). Additionally, these properties, along with the subject property, are also located within the Victoria Park Neighborhood Cultural Heritage Landscape. 139 and 147 Queen Street South are both classified as Group ‘A’ buildings – meaning they are of high significance.

15 Church Street is also subject to an active site plan application, which also required the submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of a complete application. The draft HIA was circulated to the Heritage Kitchener Committee at the June 6, 2023, meeting. The site plan application has received conditional approval, subject to several heritage conditions, including but not limited to the approval of the HIA, and that the applicant obtain a heritage permit for the construction of this building.

137 & 149 Queen Street South – St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

137 Queen Street South, also know as the St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, was built in 1889 with yellow buff brick in the Gothic Revival architectural style (Fig. 2). It also includes an elegant spire with many fine architectural details such as brick buttresses, voussoirs, and stained-glass arch windows. It still contains many intact original elements and is in good condition. There have been newer additions, but they have been built towards the rear of the church.



Figure 2. Picture of 137 Queen Street South. Source: draft HIA

149 Queen Street South is a two-and-a-half storey house that was built in the Queen Anne architectural style in circa 1900 (Fig. 3). It was originally built to serve as the manse and then the Lutheran Bible Translators office. It has also been well-maintained with many intact original elements.



Figure 3. Front façade of 149 Queen Street South.

Proposed 6-storey Affordable Housing Building

The applicant is proposing to develop the site with a 6-storey affordable housing building which will also include one level of underground parking and a two-way ramp entry/exist along Queen Street South. There will also be at grade parking with access from Church Street. A total of 57 dwelling units and 27 parking spaces are proposed. The principal entrance is proposed to be from Queen Street South with a secondary public entrance along Church Street. The new building will be slightly set back from the existing house at 149 Queen Street South. There are no alterations proposed to the existing church and house.

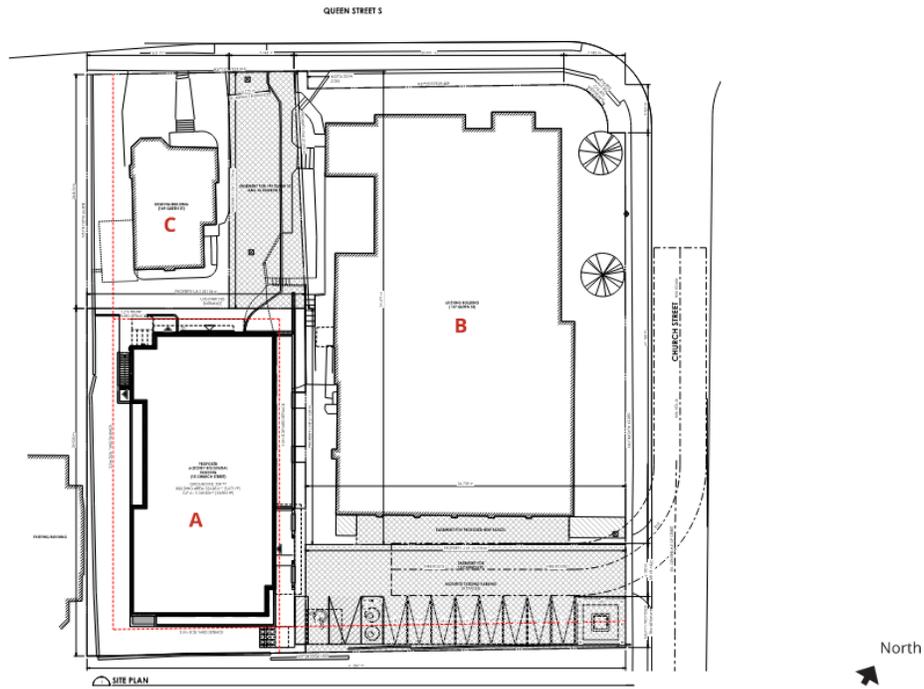


Figure 4. Proposed Site Plan for the affordable housing building.

The building will be clad in appropriate materials, with the first two storeys being clad in traditional brick, and the rest of the storeys are going to be clad with a light grey fibre-cement siding. The windows are proposed to be of aluminum framing. The light grey colour will also help in ensuring that the existing heritage resources remain prominent from the streetscape.



Figure 5. Rendering of the Proposed Development.

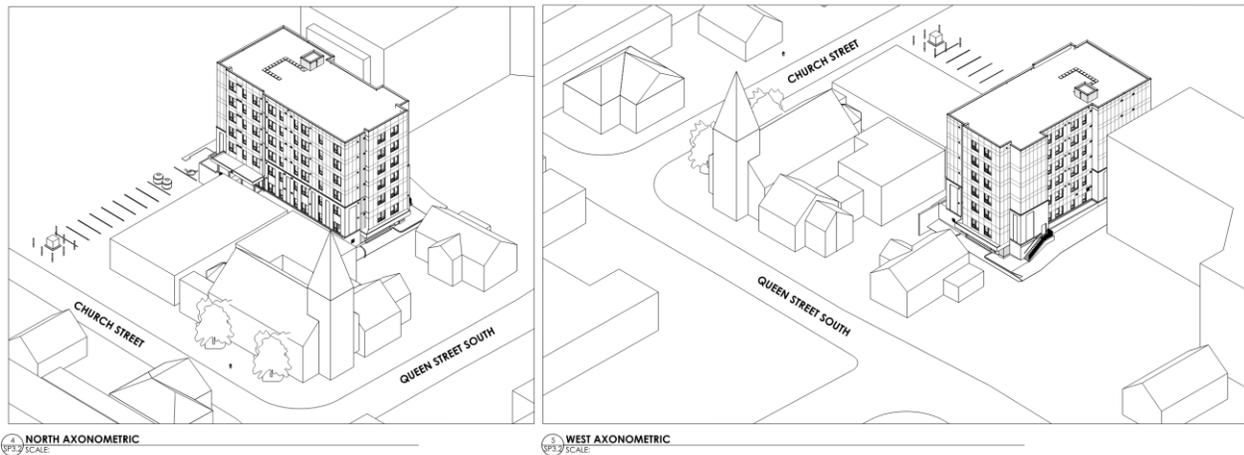


Figure 6. Axonometric views of the proposed development

New Buildings in Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District

The VPAHCD Plan identifies that redevelopment within the district, and especially within the Queen Street South corridor is expected. However, the main goal of the Plan is to ensure that new development enhances the historic and civic character of Queen Street South. Policies included within the Plan for new building include:

- **Public Realm** – *New building shall contribute to the public realm of Queen Street South, which is perceived as an historic, gracious and tree-lined thoroughfare.*
 - The new building will contribute to the public realm of Queen Street South, with the upper storeys being visible from the street but will not have a negative impact on the streetscape.
- **Pedestrian Scale** – *New building shall emphasize a human scale that creates a comfortable, safe and livable streetscape.*
 - The new building emphasizes a human scale that creates comfortable, safe, and livable streetscape. The building is 6-storey in height and sufficiently set back from the street, being built behind 149 Queen Street South.
- **Design** – *Contemporary design of a high quality shall be achieved that is complementary to the historic character of the Area in terms of massing, materials, and scale.*
 - The new building is of a contemporary design, which is compatible but distinguishable from the existing heritage resources in its proximity. The building takes design cues from the rest of the District, and is complementary to the historic character of the area. It is of an appropriate size and scale, and proposed appropriate materials that are complementary to the District. Furthermore, there are neighboring buildings of the same height and massing, which further contribute to the compatibility of the proposed development within the VPAHCD.
- **Location** – *New Building shall be located to create streetscape continuity and pedestrian scale.*
 - The new building is located behind the existing house at 149 Queen Street South, and is sufficiently set back from Queen Street South so as to not be imposing on the street. Thus, there will be no changes to the existing streetscape and pedestrian scale.
- **Density** – *Every effort shall be made to blend new high rise building with neighboring low rise residences. This could include varied building heights and elevations and the breaking up of the building mass.*
 - The proposed building is a mid-rise building, and the front façade facing Queen Street South does include some setbacks so that the existing heritage resources remain prominent from the streetscape.

- **Height** – *Design Treatments to lessen the perception of height in new high rise development shall be considered, such as façade setbacks, mansard roofs, gables and varying building finishes and textures.*
 - The proposed building is 6 storeys in height, and due to its placement on the property lot, will serve as a transition between adjacent existing low rise residential and the high rise buildings on its other side. Furthermore, the use of light colours on the upper storeys will ensure that the building does not overshadow the existing heritage resource.
- **Materials** – *Materials typical of the historic Area, such as brick, shall be used.*
 - The proposed development does include brick as an exterior cladding material, making it compatible but distinguishable from the existing heritage resources.
- **Roofs** – *Roofs shall be designed to create an attractive skyline and screen roof equipment.*
 - The proposed development has a flat roof, which is contemporary in design. The flat will ensure that the features of the church such as the gable roof and the spire remain prominent from the streetscape.
- **Windows** – *The appearance, placement, and proportion of windows shall be complementary to historic windows in the Area, if possible.*
 - The appearance and proportion of the windows of the proposed development is complementary to the historic windows in the Area. The proposed windows are aluminum framed, rectangular framed, and are compatible with the Area.
- **Verandahs** – *Verandahs shall be incorporated, wherever possible, to continue an historic tradition in the Area.*
 - Since this is a 6-storey affordable housing development, incorporating verandahs for each unit was not possible. However, since this building is sufficiently setback from the main streets and will be behind 149 Queen Street South, there will be no negative impact to the historic tradition of the Area and the streetscape of the Area.
- **Colours** – *Colours of paint and materials shall be complementary to the historic character of the Area.*
 - The proposed colours and materials are complementary to the historic character of the Area. The proposed development uses brick and light-grey cladding to remain distinct but non-imposing.
- **Conservation** – *Where historic buildings are integrated into new building developments, the following approaches are encouraged in order of preference:*
Preservation/Conservation – maintaining historic buildings with little alteration.
Adaptive Reuse – reusing historic buildings with restoration and/or rehabilitation.
Incorporation – adaptive reuse that typically requires significant alteration.
 - The existing heritage resources will be preserved with no alterations proposed.
- **Landscaping** – *Landscaping should enhance new building and the Queen Street South streetscape. Landscaping should create continuity in the streetscape between adjacent properties, where possible. Plant material, where appropriate, should be used to often building size, mass and edges to maintain a human scale for pedestrians. Landscaping should screen and buffer service areas, parking, open storage and other unsightly areas where required. Landscaping should buffer high density buildings from low density where required.*
 - According to the HIA, the proposed ground level landscape design is to include planting beds and landscape features incorporated into and/or surrounding hardscape areas. Preference will be given for locally sourced materials for landscaping. The landscape plan's planting scheme will focus on hardy, low maintenance species, including deciduous trees, shrubs, grasses, and ground cover. To ensure that the heritage value of the cultural landscape is preserved, all the new proposed plantings considered will be assessed in relation to the existing heritage.
- **Demolition** – *Conservation and integration of historic buildings into new development is encouraged. Where removal of an historic building to accommodate higher density is*

contemplated, moving the buildings onto a new site shall be considered. Where removal of historic building is not feasible, the careful salvage of key historic building fabric shall be undertaken so as to be used in the restoration of other similar style buildings. Applications for demolition or removal shall be to the LACAC.

- No existing heritage resources are proposed to be demolished as part of the proposed development.

Heritage Planning Comments

In reviewing the merits of this application, heritage planning staff note the following:

- The subject property municipally addressed as 15 Church Street is located within the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District and is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act;
- The proposal is for the construction of a 6-storey affordable housing building behind 149 Queen Street South;
- 137 Queen Street South and 149 Queen Street South are classified as Group 'A' buildings within the VPAHCD;
- The proposed development is compatible and distinct in its design, and incorporates traditional materials to blend in within the District. Furthermore, the proposed colours are light in colour and are meant to be non-imposing, so that the existing heritage resources remain prominent from the streetscape;
- The VPAHCD Plan recognizes that the Queen Street South corridor could be redeveloped and includes various policies to guide new development, and the proposed development meets the intent of these policies;
- The proposed addition will not adversely impact the heritage attributes or character of either the subject property, adjacent properties, or the streetscape of VPAHCD, and the Victoria Park Neighborhood Cultural Heritage Landscape; and
- The proposed development is consistent with Parks Canada's *The Standards and Guidelines for Historical Places in Canada*.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES

- *DSD-2023-224 – Draft Heritage Impact Assessment – 137 and 149 Queen Street South*
- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2022*

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Heritage Permit Application HPA-2023-V-014

Attachment B – Draft Heritage Impact Assessment – 139 and 147 Queen St. S

Attachment C – 15 Church Street Design Drawings