

**Subject: Application to alter 253 MacKay Street, a property designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, located in the New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District**

**File Number: ACS2024-PRE-RHU-0034**

**Report to Built Heritage Committee on 9 April 2024**

**and Council 17 April 2024**

**Submitted on March 26, 2024 by Court Curry, Manager, Right of Way, Heritage, and Urban Design Services, Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development**

**Contact Person: Taylor Quibell, Planner I, Heritage Planning Branch**

**613-580-2424 ext.74708, Taylor.Quibell@ottawa.ca**

**Ward: Rideau-Rockcliffe (13)**

**Objet: Demande de modification du 253, rue MacKay, propriété située dans le district de conservation du patrimoine de New Edinburgh et désignée en vertu de la partie V de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario***

**Dossier: ACS2024-PRE-RHU-0034**

**Rapport au Comité du patrimoine bâti**

**le 9 avril 2024**

**et au Conseil le 17 avril 2024**

**Soumis le 26 mars 2024 par Court Curry, Gestionnaire, Services des emprises, du patrimoine, et du design urbain, Services de la planification, des biens immobiliers et du développement économique**

**Personne ressource: Taylor Quibell, Urbaniste I, Planification du Patrimoine**

**613-580-2424 ext.74708, Taylor.Quibell@ottawa.ca**

**Quartier: Rideau-Rockcliffe (13)**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Built Heritage Committee recommend that Council:**

- 1. Approve the application to alter 253 MacKay Street according to plans prepared by RMA+SH architects, dated February 9, 2024 conditional upon:
 
  - a. The applicant providing samples of all final exterior materials for approval by Heritage Staff prior to the issuance of the building permit;**
  - b. The applicant providing a copy of the building permit plans to heritage staff at the time of the submission of the building permit application. The submission shall clearly identify any changes from the approved heritage permit and include a list and explanation of proposed changes.****
- 2. Delegate the authority for minor design changes to the Program Manager, Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development;**
- 3. Approve the issuance of the heritage permit with a two-year expiry date from the date of issuance unless otherwise extended by Council.**

## **RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Conseil ce qui suit :**

- 1. Approuver la demande visant à modifier le 253, rue MacKay Street, conformément aux plans soumis par RMA+SH architects et datés du 9 février 2024, sous réserve des conditions suivantes :**
  - a. que le requérant soumette des échantillons de tous les matériaux de revêtement extérieur finaux à l'approbation du personnel responsable du patrimoine avant la délivrance du permis de construire;**
  - b. que le requérant fournisse au personnel chargé du patrimoine, au moment de présenter sa demande de permis de construire, un exemplaire des plans associés au permis de construire; cette demande doit mentionner clairement tout changement par rapport au permis patrimonial approuvé et comprendre une liste et une explication des modifications proposes.**
- 2. Déléguer au gestionnaire de programme, Direction de la planification du patrimoine, Direction générale de la planification, de l'immobilier et du**

**développement économique, le pouvoir d'apporter des changements mineurs de conception;**

- 3. Approuver la délivrance d'un permis patrimonial d'une durée de deux ans à compter de la date de délivrance, sauf prolongation accordée par le Conseil municipal.**

## **BACKGROUND**

The property at 253 MacKay Street is situated on the south side of MacKay Street across from Rideau Hall, the Governor General's property and between Dufferin and Keefer Streets. The building on the property is a single storey red brick building, built in 1913, in the neo-gothic style. Constructed for the federal government the building features a flat roof, crenelated parapet, decorative wall buttresses, limestone stone inset into the masonry above the door, and an arched main entry with a heavy wood paneled double door and four transom lights. Positioned on a narrow lot, the property includes a small side yard to the east and shares a rear common wall with 180 Avon Lane (see Document 1 – Location Map).

The building was a purpose-built testing facility known as the Tape Measurement Building, constructed by the National Research Council for the Surveys Branch of the Department of the Interior and used for the comparison of length standards. It was also used during the Second World War to test and repair instruments for the Royal Canadian Air Force, and later became a Cosmic Ray Research facility where instruments measured cosmic ray activity. Its use as a testing facility contributed to scientific advances in the government. In 1959, the National Research Council added a one-storey addition at the rear (today present at 180 Avon Lane), and in 1998 the building was declared surplus and converted to residential. During this time, a one-storey solarium addition was constructed on the east façade of 253 MacKay. This building is atypical in the context of New Edinburgh as the neighbourhood is a predominantly residential community.

The property is located within the New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District ("HCD"), which was designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2001 (Bylaw 2001-44). The New Edinburgh HCD Plan (By-law 2016-95) was adopted by Council in 2016. As part of the original HCD study, an inventory evaluated each property for their contribution to the cultural heritage value of the HCD. At that time, 253 MacKay Street was identified as a Category 2 property in the HCD (see Document 3 – Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form). In the 2016 Plan, all Category 1-3 properties were deemed to be "contributing" properties in the HCD.

The New Edinburgh HCD was designated for its cultural heritage value as a significant

example of a small nineteenth century village located within the urban area of the City of Ottawa and for its association with Thomas MacKay – a Scottish entrepreneur who was instrumental in the construction of the Ottawa-section of the Rideau Canal. New Edinburgh was a self-sufficient residential community in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The HCD features a high level of architectural integrity with a diverse mix of architectural styles and types. Its primary architectural character is made up of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential buildings, making this property unique to the area.

This report has been prepared because applications for alterations and additions to properties designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* require the approval of City Council after consultation with the Built Heritage Committee.

## **DISCUSSION**

The application to alter 253 MacKay Street is to permit the construction of a one-storey rooftop addition and a partially covered rooftop deck to the existing one-storey building. The new mass will be setback from the front façade, have a low sloped shed roof, be clad in a charred wood, with aluminum clad wood frame windows. The rooftop deck will be concealed with a privacy screen extending along the west side and plantings will be strategically located on the rooftop and solarium to screen the addition (See Document 6-7).

This proposal will also require a minor variance to seek relief from the Heritage Overlay, Section 60 of the Zoning By-law which requires that additions to buildings be located in the rear yard and not exceed the height of the building.

### **Recommendation 1:**

The New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District Plan has guidelines for existing buildings, both contributing and non-contributing. Specifically, there are guidelines for additions to existing buildings. The general guidelines for additions speak to the additions style, location, height, scale, and materials.

The proposal has been evaluated against the guidelines in the New Edinburgh HCD Plan and Heritage Staff have determined that the proposal is consistent with the objectives and intent of the Plan for the following reasons:

- The proposed addition is a rooftop addition so the the guideline stating, “The height of any addition to an existing building shall not exceed the height of the existing roof line” cannot be met. However, the purpose of this guideline is to ensure that the historic building remains the dominant presence in the streetscape, as such staff reviewed the proposal with this intent and looked at

context, massing, materials, scale, and location when considering compatibility. The subject property is situated between two, two and a half-storey buildings and MacKay United Church to the east, which mitigates the impact of the increased height of the addition on the streetscape. The proposed addition is set back from the front façade, mitigating the visual impact of the new massing from the street. The addition will not obscure or detract from the heritage character of the existing building or the streetscape.

- The Heritage Conservation District Plan notes that “additions shall normally be located in the rear yard”, however in the context of this site, there is no rear yard and only a small side yard, which creates an instance where a rear yard addition is not feasible, and a rooftop addition is the only option. The setbacks and design of the addition mean that the proposed location of the addition does not have a negative impact on the cultural heritage value of the Heritage Conservation District. In accordance with the Heritage Conservation District Plan, the unique context and characteristics of the site were reviewed in consultation with the community and the applicant.
- The addition is consistent with the streetscape as the massing and form of the existing building will be retained. The building will remain the dominant presence in the streetscape, showcasing the crenellated parapet, limestone stone, and front entrance.
- The proposed rooftop deck facing MacKay Street is set back from the roof edge and not visible from the street at the grade of the house. While it could be viewed from different vantage points, it will only be slightly noticeable from the street and will not obscure or detract from the heritage character of the existing house or the streetscape.
- The addition will be designed in a contemporary style that is clearly distinguishable from the original building. The proposed charred wood cladding material for the new addition is sympathetic to the existing building. The material is natural which is a preferred material in the district.
- As noted above, the Tape Measurement Building is a unique building in the Heritage Conservation District which is almost entirely made up of residential house-form buildings. The guidelines in the Heritage Conservation District Plan were developed to address the most common building types in the district. Given the unique history, typology and character of this building in the Heritage Conservation District, this application was considered for its overall compliance with the objectives, policies and guidelines of the Heritage Conservation District

Plan.

In summary, staff have reviewed the applicant's proposal, in consultation with the community. Staff have determined that, although the height of the addition does not adhere to a guideline, it meets the intent of the guideline and Heritage Conservation District Plan as a whole. Heritage staff recommend two condition of approval for this permit prior to the issuance of a building permit. The applicant must provide final exterior samples for review prior to the issuance of a building permit as a condition of approval to ensure that the selected materials are consistent with the Heritage Conservation District Plan.

The second condition is related to changes that may emerge to the plans during the detailed building permit phase of a project. It is incumbent on the applicant to ensure that the Heritage Planning Branch is made aware of any changes to the approved plans that arise through the detailed design phase of a project. To expedite the building permit process and assist heritage staff in identifying changes that may arise after the heritage approval, heritage staff recommend a condition requiring the applicant to provide a digital copy of building permit plans directly to heritage staff at or before the time of submission of a building permit application. The submission must include a list of changes from the original approval and clearly identify them on the plans. This recommendation also ensures that the authority delegated to the Program Manager, Heritage Planning Branch for minor design changes is exercised and documented appropriately.

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

City Council adopted Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada ("Standards and Guidelines") in 2008. This document establishes a consistent set of conservation principles and guidelines for projects involving heritage resources. The New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District Plan was based on the principles included in the Standards and Guidelines. As such, applications in the Heritage Conservation District are reviewed using the policies and guidelines in the Heritage Conservation District Plan which are more contextually specific than the Standards and Guidelines.

### **Conclusion:**

Staff have reviewed the application to alter 253 MacKay Street in accordance with the objectives, policies and guidelines of the New Edinburgh Heritage Conservation District Plan and have no objections to its approval subject to the conditions outlined above.

### **Recommendation 2**

Delegate authority for minor design changes to the Program Manager, Heritage Planning Branch, Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department

Minor design changes may emerge during the working drawing phase of a project. This recommendation is included to allow Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development to approve these changes should they arise.

### **Recommendation 3**

Issue the heritage permit with a two-year expiry date from the date of issuance.

The *Ontario Heritage Act* does not provide any timelines for the expiry of heritage permits. A two-year expiry date is recommended to ensure that the project is completed in a timely fashion.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendation.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

The Councillor is aware of the application related to this report.

### **CONSULTATION**

The plans were posted on the City's Development Application website on February 21, 2024.

Heritage Ottawa was notified of this application on February 21, 2024, and offered the opportunity to provide comments.

The New Edinburgh Community Association (NECA) participated in a pre-consultation meeting with the applicant on October 23, 2023. Staff and NECA provided comments to the applicant. NECA also provided comments to staff once the formal submission was made, these comments are attached as Document 8 to this report. NECA does not support the application.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility implications associated with this report.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk implications.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no asset management implications.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS**

The statutory 90-day timeline for consideration of this application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* will expire on May 13, 2024.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 Current Context Photos

Document 3 Heritage Survey Form

Document 4 Site Plan

Document 5 Existing Conditions Elevations

Document 6 Proposed Elevations

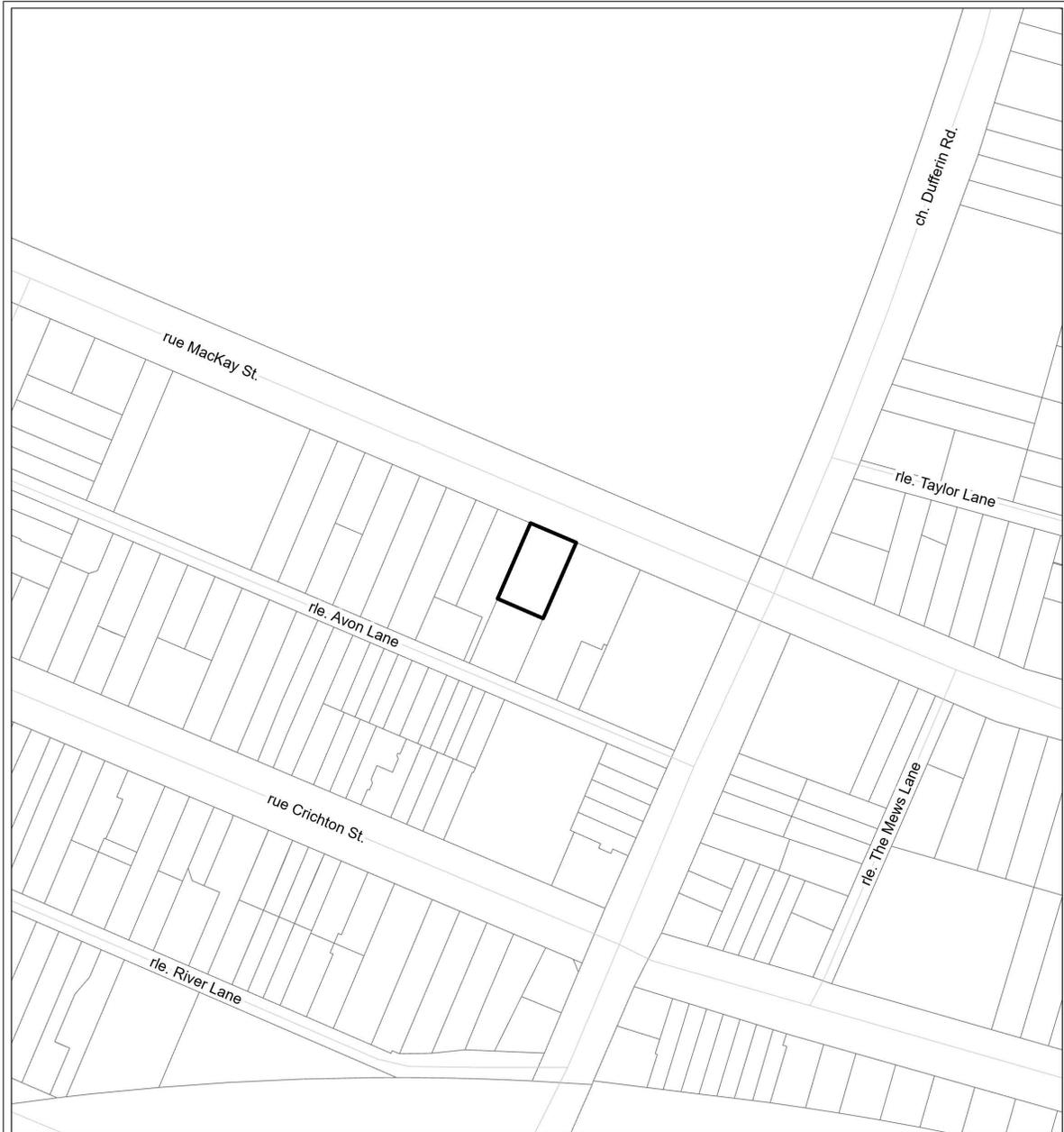
Document 7 Renderings and Streetscape Perspectives

Document 8 New Edinburgh Community Association Comments

## **DISPOSITION**

Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services, to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust, 10 Adelaide Street East, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Toronto Ontario, M5D 1J3 of Council's decision.

Document 1 – Location Map



	
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<small>©Les données de parcelles appartient à Teranet Entreprises Inc. et à ses fournisseurs. Tous droits réservés. Ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation. CECI N'EST PAS UN PLAN D'ARPENTAGE</small>	
REVISION / RÉVISION - 2024 / 01 / 22	

LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION  
HERITAGE / PATRIMOINE



**253 rue MacKay Street**



**Document 2 – Current Context Photos**



253 MacKay Street, Photograph taken from the north side of MacKay Street, 2024



253 MacKay Street, Photograph taken from the north-east side of MacKay Street, 2024



253 MacKay Street taken from the sidewalk in front of the manse at 255 MacKay Street



Streetscape photograph of MacKay Street facing east



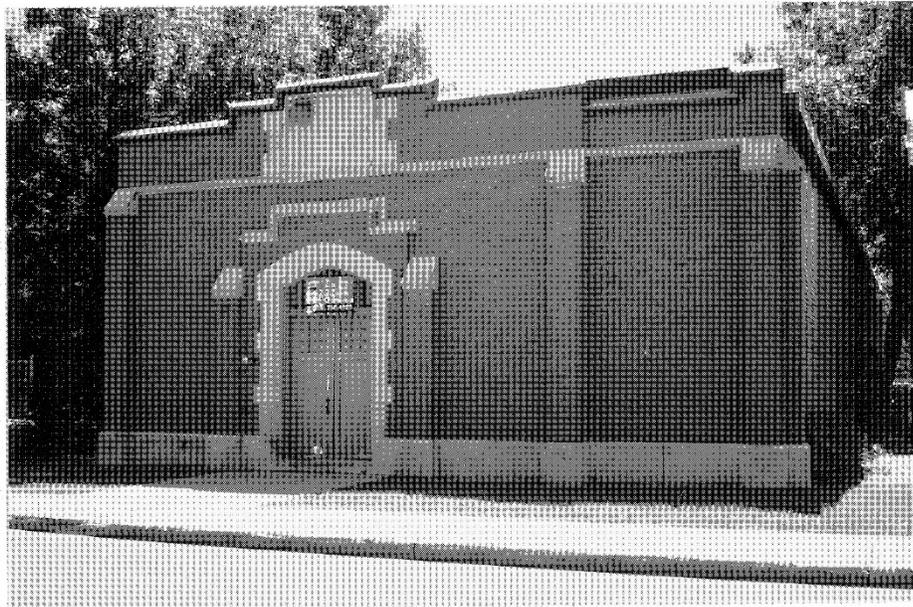
Streetscape photograph of MacKay Street facing south-west

Document 3 – Heritage Survey Form



HERITAGE SURVEY AND EVALUATION FORM

MUNICIPAL ADDRESS: 253 MacKay Street	BUILDING NAME: Comparator Building		
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: MacKay Street S	LOT: 23 (W)	BLOCK: 904	PLAN: 42
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1913/1914	ADDITIONS:		
ORIGINAL USE: Research Facility	PRESENT USE: Vacant		
ORIGINAL OWNER: Federal government	PRESENT OWNER: Avator Developments		



VIEW: Southwest  
 SOURCE: M. Benson  
 DATE: Summer 1997  
 NEGATIVE NO:

**PHASE ONE EVALUATION**

POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE	CONSIDERABLE	SOME	LIMITED	NONE
History				
Architecture				
Environment (landmark or design compatibility)				
Phase One Score /9	Potential Heritage Building Yes/No		Potential Heritage District Yes/No	
Phase Two Classification	Group 1	2	3	4

**HISTORY***Prepared By: M. Benson**Date: Summer 1997***DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Factual/Estimated)**

1913/1914

**TRENDS**

Presence of federal government in the neighbourhood by the early twentieth century, expansion of scientific services provided by the federal government, growth of the professional public service..

**EVENTS**

None known.

**PERSONS/INSTITUTIONS**

Test facility built specifically for the Surveys Branch of the Department of the Interior for the comparison of length standards. Thermometers later tested and instrument repair shop added. Facilities added during Second World War to test and repair instruments for the Royal Canadian Air Force. Building later used to test cameras used in air survey.

**SUMMARY/COMMENTS ON HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Varied role in scientific advances by the federal government.

**HISTORICAL SOURCES**

Middleton, W.E.K., *Physics at the National Research Council of Canada, 1929-1952.*

**ARCHITECTURE***Prepared By: M. Benson**Date: Summer 1997***ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN (Plan, Storeys, Roof, Windows, Material, Details, etc.)**

One storey testing facility is approximately 40 feet in width by 140 in length (terminating at Avon Lane) with flat roof. Building features a crenellated parapet, decorative wall buttresses and arched main entry with heavy wood panelled double doors and four pane transom light (painted over). Red brick veneer exterior walls.

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE**

Neo-Gothic.

**DESIGNER/BUILDER/ARCHITECT**

Federal government of Canada.

**ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY**

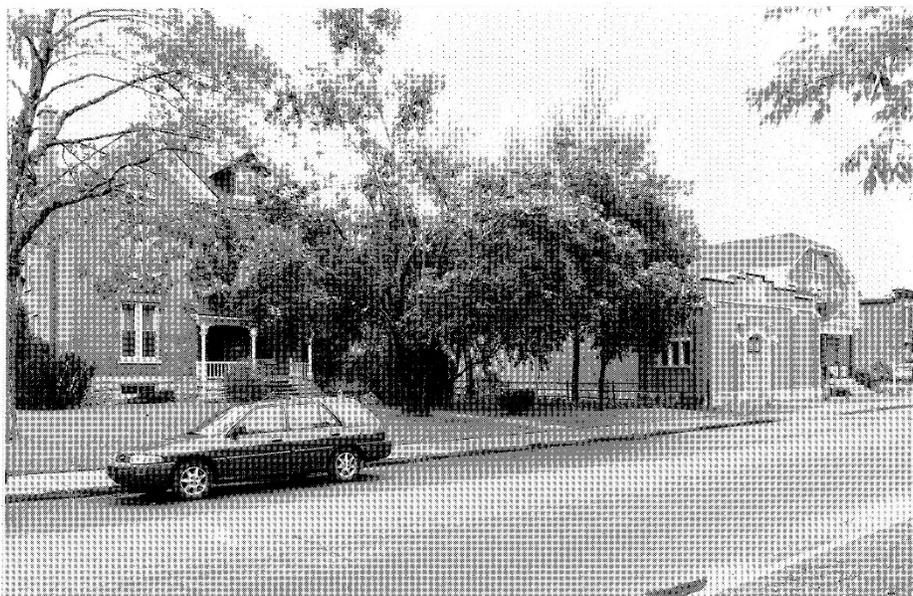
Good: Footprint unchanged; roof raised one storey at rear in 1959 by the National Research Council. Converted to residential use through addition and modification in 1998-99.

**OTHER**

Building specifically designed with heavy insulation, thermostatic control, and absence of windows.

**SUMMARY/COMMENTS ON ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

An unusual example of the Neo-Gothic institutional style located in residential neighbourhood.

**ENVIRONMENT***Prepared By: M. Benson**Date: Summer 1997***HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT NAME (if any):** New Edinburgh

VIEW: Facing north west  
SOURCE: R. Lalonde, Corporate Services  
DATE: 1998  
NEGATIVE NO: 98H-111, 1.5

**COMPATIBILITY WITH HERITAGE ENVIRONS**

Moderately compatible with heritage residential environment.

**COMMUNITY CONTEXT/LANDMARK STATUS**

Highly visible from MacKay Street; local landmark.

**SUMMARY/COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Contributes to heritage quality of neighbourhood but not its residential character.

<b>PHASE TWO EVALUATION</b>
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DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
	Pre-1879	1880 to 1914	1915 to 1939	After 1939

HISTORY	E	G	F	P	SCORE
1. Date of construction					15/40
2. Trends					35/45
3. Events					0/5
4. Persons					9/10
History Total					59/100
ARCHITECTURE	E	G	F	P	SCORE
1. Design					30/35
2. Style					29/35
3. Designer/Builder					2/5
4. Architectural Integrity					17/25
Architectural Total					78/100
ENVIRONMENT	E	G	F	P	SCORE
1. Design Compatibility					22/50
2. Landmark					40/50
3. Community Context					/
Environmental Total					62/100

Category	Phase Two Score, Potential Heritage District	Phase Two Score, Potential Heritage Building
History	59 x 20% = 11.8	x 40% =
Architecture	78 x 35% = 27.3	x 40% =
Environment	62 x 45% = 27.9	x 20% =
Phase Two Total Score	67 /100	/100

PHASE TWO EVALUATION SUMMARY				
Phase Two Score	Above	to	to	Below
Group		2		

## **Document 8 – New Edinburgh Community Association Comments**

As stated in NECA's October 31st, 2023 e-mail, the principle concern of the Heritage & Development Committee was the overall mass of the proposed addition and its substantial intrusion on New Edinburgh's surrounding landscape.

The new version does very little to reduce the size and visual impact of the proposed rooftop addition.

### **BUILDING HEIGHT:**

The original building height was 8.9 metres. The new height is 8.7 metres (+/-) as per architectural drawings DD2.2. This looks like a 'give or take' set up and does not provide clarity. Visually the difference seems negligible.

### **REAR YARD SETBACK:**

We reiterate our position that the proposal should adhere to the Heritage Overlay Zoning which requires a setback of no less than 3.0 metres from the rear lot line. This would result in reducing the size of the addition which overwhelms the existing building.

### **ROOFTOP AMENITY SPACES**

The committee was pleased to see the elimination of the proposed 3rd level balcony above the aluminum and glass curtain wall. However, the design for the rooftop deck facing Rideau Hall is still problematic and cannot be endorsed by the committee. The proposed privacy screens and opaque guards with charred wood cladding render the structures more solid and heavier and extend the mass of the addition.

NECA will not support this application unless there are some meaningful changes in the design which will reduce the size of the new addition and clearly make it subordinate to the original unique structure it would sit on.