



City of Kelowna
Planning Department
1435 Water Street
Kelowna BC, V1Y 1J4

June 13, 2024

To whomever it may concern,

RE: Nido Design Infill Housing Proposal at 2124 Pandosy Street - Kelowna

This report is to comment on the appropriateness of the proposed development at 2124 Pandosy Street, a property within the Abbott Street Heritage Conservation Area which is also listed on the Kelowna Heritage Register and protected through a heritage designation bylaw.

The below observations consider the proposal's alignment with the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

I have worked closely with the developer and architects to come up with a proposal that doesn't negatively impact the heritage value of the property nor its character defining elements, while allowing the historic property to evolve to include new, relevant and ongoing uses that also respond to the City of Kelowna's need to densify, and to add additional and diverse housing options for its growing population. Nido's proposed drawing set is a result of our collaboration.



Render of the Cadder House with new infill townhouses (view from southeast corner). source: Nido Design.

Brief history of development

The Cadder House was built for Thomas Willing (T.W.) Stirling, who came to Kelowna in 1894 and was prominent in the tree-fruit industry where he was an early president of the BC Fruit Growers' Association. Stirling built 'Cadder House' (named after Cadder in Lanarkshire, his family's original seat) in 1908. It was reportedly the largest residence in Kelowna when built, and one of the few houses in the young city that might be termed a 'mansion'. Early fire insurance maps of Kelowna show the subject property extending from Pandosy Street in the east all the way to Abbott Street in the west and covering all the city blocks between Cadder and Glenwood Avenues. However, the large estate was not sustainable even for Stirling or for Byron McDonald, another local, prominent and influential businessman who owned the property from 1930 to 1936. Over the decades, the building's large size and hefty property upkeep influenced the shift to institutional uses of the property including as a KGH nurses residence in the 1920s, as a senior citizens' facility (Oka Lodge) starting in 1964 and later as a psychiatric care facility. In fact, the 1948 fire insurance plan for Kelowna already shows the long, large Cadder House property dissected by (the recently laid) Long Street, subdivided into three smaller lots between Pandosy and Long Street, and its western section between Long and Abbott already developed with 'new' houses.

Today, the original massive property purchased and developed in 1908 contains no less than 33 housing units on 30 lots, subdivided and filled in over the decades, the vast majority constructed during the post WWII housing boom in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Although the Abbott Street Heritage Conservation Area features mostly properties originally developed as single-family lots from the early 1900s to the 1950s, this property is an exception. It represents a one-of-a-kind mega property which during the 1940s, was cut up and developed into single-family lots. Many of these mid-century infill homes have since been demolished and replaced with HCA approved 'new builds' in the last two decades. Another anomaly this property represents is its long-term use as an institutional property associated with the hospital, or as a multi-family rental since 2004. Its two decades as a large, single-family mansion, are actually the shortest period in its development history, and not the use by which it is most remembered by the community.

Evaluating heritage values and significance

The subject house is significant "for its association with the Kelowna's significant tree-fruit industry, through two former residents, and with health care services, through two institutional uses. It also has value for its architecture and its stature, reported to have been the largest private residence in Kelowna when it was built". However, as stated above, the context of the large estate has been heavily altered through subdivision and infill of single-family homes over the decades. In fact, in 1950, the Cadder House lost its Cadder Avenue address, and was given a Pandosy Street address, because of the two homes constructed to its north in 1949 and 1950 which obscure its historic frontage from Cadder Avenue. A relatively large garden remains

between the house and Pandosy Street, still larger than most typical front gardens in the neighbourhood, a surviving hint to its original property size.

Identification of the character defining elements of the property

The Statement of Significance lists the following CDEs:

- The largest residence in Kelowna when built
 - Foundation and ground floor rendered in locally manufactured (Haug) rusticated concrete block
 - Cross-gabled design
 - Simple, classically-inspired symmetrical front elevation
 - Prominent porch under cross gable
 - Gabled, medium-pitched main roof with several small gabled pedimented dormers
 - Small square bay projecting on right side
 - Large lot with many trees, including oak, pine, and fir

Recommendations and strategies to inform the design of the addition

Given the history of the property, which includes both the exceptionally large size of the house and the property, but also its longer history of institutional, multi-unit uses and its history of densification in response to the post WWII housing crisis, it is reasonable to propose additional densification on the property to accommodate multi-family units (townhouses), as long as the large garden can be preserved and the public view of the historic Cadder House from Pandosy is not disrupted. The remaining large property can handle additional uses and structures, as long as these are in keeping with Standards & Guidelines standard 11 - 'additions to historic places' which requires additions to be "physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place¹." The siting of the townhouses is proposed to the north of the Cadder House, which has been out of the public view since 1950, and with the first (Eastern) unit designed to be lower than the others, the view of the Cadder House from Pandosy Street and what's left of its large garden, will be retained as desired.

Distinguishability - The townhouses' design is simple and subtly contemporary, so that they read as a clearly infilled structures, which is both honest (it doesn't create confusion about what is historic and what is new) and traditional (architects in the past never imitated traditional design but applied the trending designs of their time, which allows us to easily read and interpret historic and mixed-era streetscapes).

Compatibility - The townhouses' design is compatible to the historic house in its gable roofs and their pitch and in the composition of masonry cladding on the ground and main floors with wood-like cladding in the gables. The materials proposed are a mix of newer and traditional

¹ Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada - page 23

materials - both of which are compatible in design with the traditional materials of the neighbourhood.

Subordinate - Additions can be large, but they must not 'steal the show' from the historic house. The townhouses lack the complex window composition and expressive colour scheme of the historic house, making them not only distinguishable but also less intricate. The monochromatic white elevations act as a canvas to the richer tones and textures of the Cadder House. The modest height of the first townhouse on Pandosy intentionally enables the visibility of the Cadder House from the northeast corner of the property.

Summary

It is my professional opinion that the development proposed here by Necessary Homes and Nido Design, is a good model of conservation and evolution for a historic neighbourhood. Heritage Conservation is a tool for managing change in historic places and Heritage Conservation Areas. Historic properties should be able to thoughtfully change and evolve, especially when these changes include relevant and sustainable uses. Although the introduction of townhouses may be perceived as bold for a neighbourhood that until now featured mostly detached single family homes, multi-unit housing is actually an important part of the Cadder House property legacy. This form of infill aligns with the heritage values of the property, its development history, and follows the national standards for additions to historic places.

Yours Truly,



Elana Zysblat, CAHP
heritage consultant