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1837 Hosmer Avenue – Design Rationale

Date: September 29, 2026 (Revised on request of the City. Original submission- May 1, 2026. Revision May 26, 2026)

Project: 1837 Hosmer Street, Vancouver, BC

Attention: City of Vancouver Planning Department

Re: 1837 Hosmer Street – Condition and Demolition Inquiry
First Shaughnessy District (F.S.D.), built 1911

From:
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1. Goal and Background

This document outlines the design rationale for a Development Permit application proposing a new single-family residence with a secondary suite, and a detached garage, in accordance with the First Shaughnessy District (FSD) Design Guidelines.
The existing house has been evaluated by multiple professionals and determined to be structurally compromised and environmentally hazardous due to extensive mould contamination. (Professional reports were previously provided to the City and are available on request).
These reports outline that it is not feasible to remediate or retain the structure.

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2. Location and Site

The property is located at the northeast corner of Hosmer Avenue and Pine Crescent and is zoned FSD (First Shaughnessy District).

- Site area: approximately 27,704 sq. ft. (irregular shape)
- No lane access
- Two existing heritage driveway crossings (one will be removed in our proposal as per Engineering requirements)
- North–south orientation
- Large changes in topography throughout

The proposed house will comply with all conditional applicable side-yard setbacks, height, and FSR regulations. The primary frontage will remain on Hosmer Avenue, maintaining the established heritage streetscape and access patterns.

3. Existing Conditions

Building:
The existing dwelling is a modest Craftsman-style structure with limited architectural distinction. A Heritage Report and Conservation Plan were conducted by Heritage Consultant, John Atkin. Atkin noted: *"The existing house is not a significant example of the style and has been compromised with the interventions over the years."* and *"The retention of the existing house does not appear to be feasible given the issues identified"* (Page 2 of Conservation Plan).

There was structural damage from a fallen tree. All reports were previously submitted to the City and is available on request). The interior environment is severely compromised by mould and is considered a significant health risk. Two professional mould assessments categorized the house as a *"Major Problem"*—the most severe category, rendering it uninhabitable. (Mould report and air analysis was previously submitted to the City and is available on request).

In Addition, the structural engineer, Allester Engineering, that previously provided the letter about the damage from the tree falling during the windstorm, also provided a Structural Condition Assessment dated September 29, 2026: *"it is our professional opinion that retention and reconstruction of the existing building is not a reasonable structural approach. Demolition and replacement is therefore recommended from a structural engineering perspective."* (Page 3 in the 'Recommendation's section of the report)

On February 19, 2026 we met with City staff, Pegah Sheikhakbari and Tim Potter and presented the mould report and structural report. The conclusion of the meeting was that the City would not oppose the demolition of the existing building. They said we were allowed to apply for the demolition of the existing house and apply for a Development Permit for a new house at this location. They stated that this application would be presented to City Council for consideration and they would not oppose the demolition of the existing building.

Landscape:
The existing landscape is not of notable heritage or design value, though mature trees are present.

4. Parking and Garage

The existing two-car garage will be replaced with a three-car detached garage located further into the rear (easterly) portion of the site, reducing its visual prominence in accordance with FSD guidelines that aims to limit the visual presence of automobiles.

- Designed with dormers and gabled forms consistent with the main house
- Integrated with landscaped pedestrian pathways connecting to the house and basement

5. Architectural Design Approach

Architectural Legacy:
The proposed design draws on a composition of heritage, picturesque residential elements, including:

- Sleeping porch
- Eyebrow dormers
- Ornamental shingles
- Traditional forms and robust detailing
- Building volume is articulated with projections and recessions.

Estate-Scale Legacy:
The design maintains the defining characteristics of estate properties:

- Defined street edge (sidewalk and boulevard relationship)
- Site enclosure
- Entry sequence (antechamber concept)
- Private, layered garden spaces

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6. Landscape Design

The landscape design emphasizes:

- Privacy and screening of parked vehicles
- Layering, filigree, and soft transitions between spaces
- Integration with architectural elements

The design contributes to pedestrian comfort and enhances both daytime and nighttime presence. A cohesive relationship is established between the main house and accessory building through appropriate siting and setbacks.

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7. Streetscape and Neighborhood Context

The proposed residence is designed to sit harmoniously within its prominent corner location.

- Massing responds to the irregular lot shape
- Streetscape character is preserved and enhanced
- Skyline continuity is maintained
- Respect for neighboring properties and heritage context is prioritized

All parking is accommodated on-site, and the property will be maintained to a high standard consistent with the neighborhood.

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8. Materials and Detailing

Materials:
The material palette reflects FSD principles of quality, durability, authenticity, and timelessness. The materials emphasize the tripartite expression:

- Roof: heavy duroid shingles
- Walls: shingle cladding with decorative banding
- Windows: wood, simulated divided light, balanced sash
- Trim: substantial and consistent wood detailing

- Columns: traditional proportions
- Doors: heritage-style design
- Base: true-cut split faced granite stone at the main level

Architectural Detailing:
Detailing reinforces the traditional character of the house, with a commitment to high-quality craftsmanship and construction standards.

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9. Siting, Massing, and Form

- **Siting:** The home displays a well-considered relationship to the street and neighboring homes as well as responding to the irregular shaped corner lot. The garage is carefully located to minimize visual presence of automobiles.
- **Massing:** As emphasized in the FSD Design Guidelines, the house displays a tripartite composition. The base is expressed in robust split-faced granite, the middle forms the principal plane, and the attic has decorative elements. Similar to the existing context, compliments estate-like with limited one-storey additions at the rear
- **Height:** Consistent with existing conditions and neighbouring homes
- **Roof Form:** Consistent with existing conditions and neighbouring homes

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10. Entrance Design

The established entry sequence—incorporating antechamber, vestibule, and landscaped transitions—will be maintained.

While the side entry approach will be modified, the prominence and visual importance of the main front entry and stairs will remain intact.

The porte-cochere entry provides a clear entry, is included in the building setback and consistent with the FSD Design Guidelines as it gives prominence adding the estate-like quality of First Shaughnessy.

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11. Landscape Implementation

The proposed landscape plan is comprehensive and aligned with FSD objectives. (Refer to Landscape Design Rationale)

- Existing trees will be retained where feasible. 55 new trees are added to the site.
- Tree protection and retention will be supervised by an arborist
- Neighboring trees will be respected
- Concepts of enclosure, screening, and layering are fully integrated

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12. Stormwater Management

A stormwater retention system is currently being designed and will incorporate an approved permeable solution.

Heritage-style pavers will be used for hardscape surfaces to complement the architectural character.

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13. Conclusion

The proposed development, including the new residence with a secondary suite, and accessory building, and integrated landscape design, reflects the spirit and intent of the First Shaughnessy Design Guidelines.

The project will:

- Respect the heritage estate qualities and character of the First Shaughnessy District
- Enhance and complements the streetscape and neighborhood context
- Retain trees where feasible
- Provide a cohesive relationship between house, garden, and street
- Contribute positively to the long-term legacy of the area

Sincerely, Hannah Leyland, Architect AIBC and Loy Leyland, Architect AIBC