

March 19, 2024

MacKenzie Kimm

Senior Heritage Planner

City of Ottawa

MacKenzie.Kimm@ottawa.ca

Dear Ms. Fitzpatrick,

RE: 222 Gladstone Ave., 224 Gladstone Ave., and 223 McLeod St. Application for Permits Under the Ontario Heritage Act for Demolition

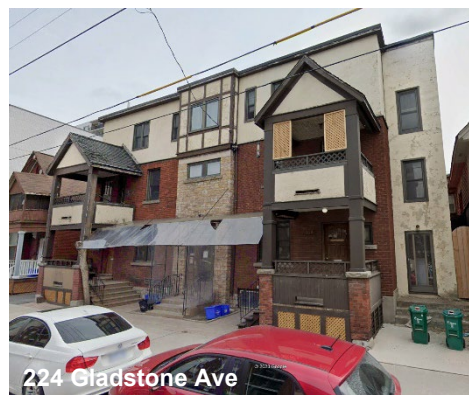
On behalf of Claridge Homes, Urban Strategies Inc. is applying for permits to demolish the properties at 222 Gladstone Avenue, 224 Gladstone Avenue and 223 McLeod in the Centretown community (“the Subject Properties”). The purpose of the applications is to facilitate a “Landmark Building” under the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan on a larger site that also includes 210 Gladstone Avenue, 377 Metcalfe Street, 379 Metcalfe Street, and 231 McLeod Street (collectively, “the Landmark Site” or “the Site”, see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Subject Site in Context

The Subject Properties are occupied by residential buildings, one of which, 223 McLeod Street, was adapted into professional offices (see images below). They are identified as “Contributing Buildings” in the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan. Claridge retained GBCA Architects to evaluate their cultural heritage value, and their Cultural Heritage Evaluations Reports (CHERs) are included with our applications. GBCA also evaluated 377 Metcalfe Street, another Contributing Building, and concluded that, of the five properties, it had potentially the most value since it retains its original design intent and integrity. At this time, Claridge is not proposing to demolish 377 Metcalfe Street and will seek to integrate it with the Landmark development.

Although GBCA’s CHER report concludes that the design value of 231 McLeod Street has been compromised through its conversion into a professional office, City staff have asked Claridge to consider retaining this building. Conserving this building in its location would present a significant constraint to Claridge’s vision for the Landmark Building and public open space, which is detailed further in this letter. Nevertheless, through the architectural design competition for the Landmark Building, Claridge will ask the design teams to consider relocating and integrating the building into the development if they feel it can contribute to achieving the objectives of the project. If no solution that is acceptable to both the City and Claridge emerges through this process, a separate demolition application for 231 McLeod Street would be submitted.



This letter describes Claridge's vision for the Site, summarizes the policy context for the Subject Properties and provides a rationale for demolition of the four Contributing Buildings.

Claridge's Vision

Claridge, whose former offices were located at 212 Gladstone Avenue, part of the Landmark Site, has acquired additional properties on the block with the aspiration to develop a legacy project that includes a tall residential building on Gladstone and a public open space at the corner of Metcalfe Street and McLeod Street that together meet the City's definition of a landmark (see Figure 2). The building will be designed by one of Canada's top architects, who will work with one of the country's best landscape architects to design the open space, both to be selected through a design competition. While the building will stand out for its height and distinctive architecture, it will also respect Centretown's rich history and contribute to its eclectic character. The open space will be designed as both an amenity for the neighbourhood and a unique destination that complements the Canadian Museum of Nature.

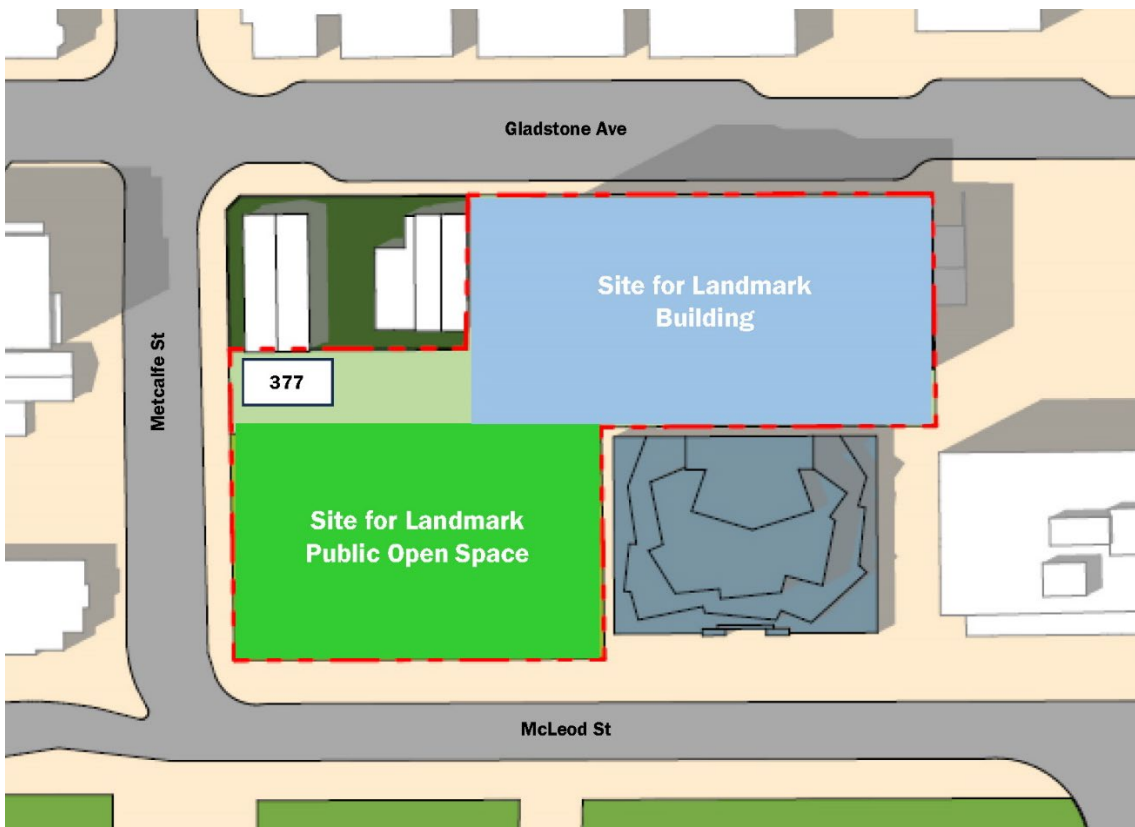


Figure 2: Diagram illustrating proposed configuration of future Landmark development

Although there is not yet a proposal for Claridge's Landmark development, the applications to demolish the buildings on the Subject Properties are required to allow the architects and landscape architects invited to the design competition to imagine the future of the site with minimal constraints. The intention is to design and construct a building and public open space that individually and together have far greater value to the community and the city than the Subject Properties.

Landmark Buildings Policy

Landmark Buildings are defined in the Centre and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan as "developments that, through their design and public uses, establish true civic or national landmarks" (Section 4.4.9.5, Policy 51). The introduction to Policy 51 goes on to state, "Landmark Buildings are those that make both significant and exceptional contributions to the public realm and overall identity of Centretown. They combine iconic architecture, extraordinary site design and a unique civic or national function to create a distinctive place that invites visitors to experience its qualities."

Policy 51 outlines specific locational requirements necessary to be eligible for a Landmark Building, which are met by the Landmark Site. Among the criteria Landmark Buildings must meet are the following:

- d) Provide and deliver a significant, publicly accessible and publicly owned park and/or a significant public institutional use, such as a cultural or community facility, on the site. Where an institutional use is not proposed, the open space shall comprise a contiguous area that is a minimum of approximately 40% of the area of the subject site and have frontage on at least two streets.
- e) Not result in a new net shadow impact on an existing public open space greater than that which would be created by the base height condition.
- g) Not require the demolition of a designated heritage building and shall respect the cultural heritage value of the site and its setting through the retention of its significant heritage resources.
- h) Demonstrate leadership and advances in sustainable design and energy efficiency.
- i) Be subject to an architectural design competition that includes City representation on the selection jury and/or, at the City's discretion, be subject to the City's specialized design review process within the framework of the Urban Design Review Panel, process to exercise a detailed peer review of landmark buildings.
- k) Fully respect the requirements of the Visual Integrity and Symbolic Primacy of the Parliament Buildings and Other National Symbols guidelines related to building height restrictions.
- l) Not exceed a height of 27 storeys.

Each proposal for a Landmark Building is subject to a formal and rigorous application and review process adopted by Council, which must include public consultation.

Claridge will be holding an architectural design competition for the Landmark development. The competition and consultation process for the project was approved by Council in June 2022, and stakeholder and public engagement commenced in December 2022.

Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan

In 2019, the City initiated the Centretown Heritage Study, and in 2022, Council adopted the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan (“HCD Plan”). The HCD Plan was informed by a heritage inventory completed by ERA Architects Inc. in 2020. The inventory identified the Subject Properties, as well as 377 Metcalfe Street and 231 McLeod Street, as “Character-Supporting Resources,” which the HCD Plan categorizes as “Contributing Buildings” (see Figure 3). As such, none of these buildings is currently designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The properties at 210 Gladstone Avenue and 379 Metcalfe Street, also within the Landmark Site, are considered non-contributing buildings.

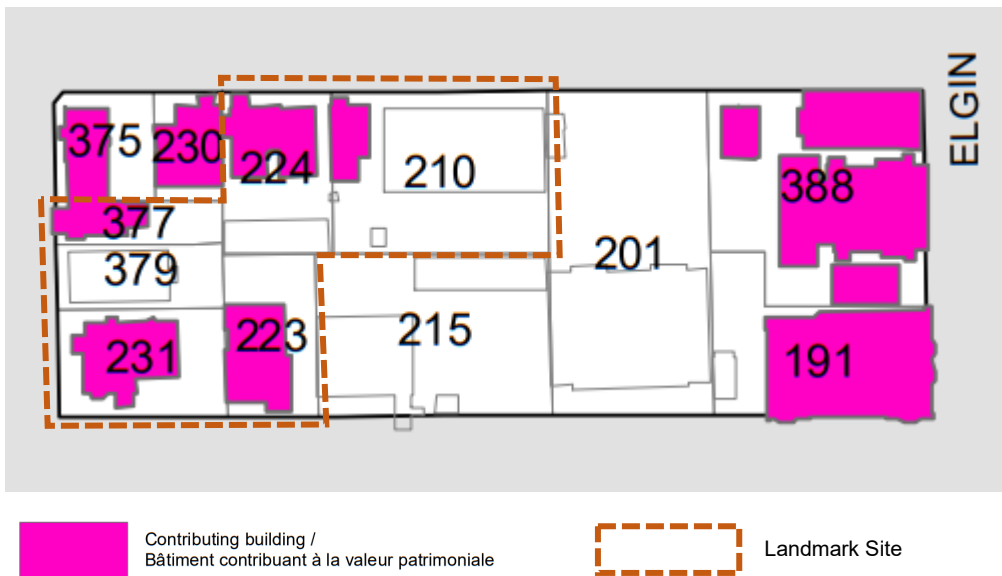


Figure 3: Map of Contributing / Non-contributing / Part IV properties on the subject block (Excerpt from HCD Plan, Figure 10)

Part B of the HCD Plan contains “Policies and Guidelines for Managing Change” in the HCD. Policy 4.1.2 states, “Demolition of Contributing buildings as defined in Section 3.5 will not normally be supported. To be considered, applications must meet the prescribed criteria as outlined in Section 5.” The following are the relevant policies in Section 5 applicable to Contributing Buildings:

- The introduction to Section 5.0, which addresses demolition and relocation, states, “There may be opportunities in the Districts [Centretown and Minto Park] for the removal of certain Character-Supporting Resources (CSRs) if their removal will accomplish other city building goals. Any application to demolish must be carefully considered and replacement buildings must comply with the policies and guidelines of this Plan.”
- Policy 5.0(1) states, “Demolition, relocation or partial demolition of Contributing properties will not normally be supported.”
- Policy 5.0(2) states, “Any application to demolish an existing building must be accompanied by plans for its replacement. New construction must be compatible with, and sympathetic to, the character of the HCD and meet the policies and guidelines of this Plan. In the rare instances when a replacement building is not proposed immediately, the proponent should submit plans for greening the property until its redevelopment.
- Policy 5.0(3) requires applications for the demolition of a Contributing building to include either a structural assessment; an assessment that the building is damaged/ compromised/ or altered to the extent that it no longer contributes to the cultural heritage value of the HCD; or an analysis of the building that demonstrates that alternative retention options have been meaningfully considered.
- Policy 5.0(5) states, “Demolition of certain Character-Supporting Resources may be considered where the applicant can demonstrate that: the attributes of the building or reasons that express its contribution to the HCD and its streetscape have been compromised or altered; the history of the property will be appropriately recorded and commemorated as part of the new development; the proposed replacement building meets the policies and guidelines outlined in Section 9; and the proposed redevelopment will facilitate achieving broader city-building goals.

Section 9.5 of the HCD Plan specifically addresses Landmark Buildings, referencing the applicable policies in the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan. It states the following objectives:

- Where Landmark Buildings further the intensification goals of the City, development will be compatible with the cultural heritage value of the District and reflect its history, character and development patterns; and
- New construction and development where there are Contributing buildings will respect the character of those buildings through their retention and the sympathetic design of the new structure.

Section 9.5 includes extensive policies and guidelines applicable to the construction of Landmark Buildings in the HCD, and Section 9.6 contains further policies and guidelines applicable the Museum of Nature Special Character Area, which includes the properties at 379 Metcalfe Street, 231 McLeod Street and 223 McLeod Street (see Figure 4).

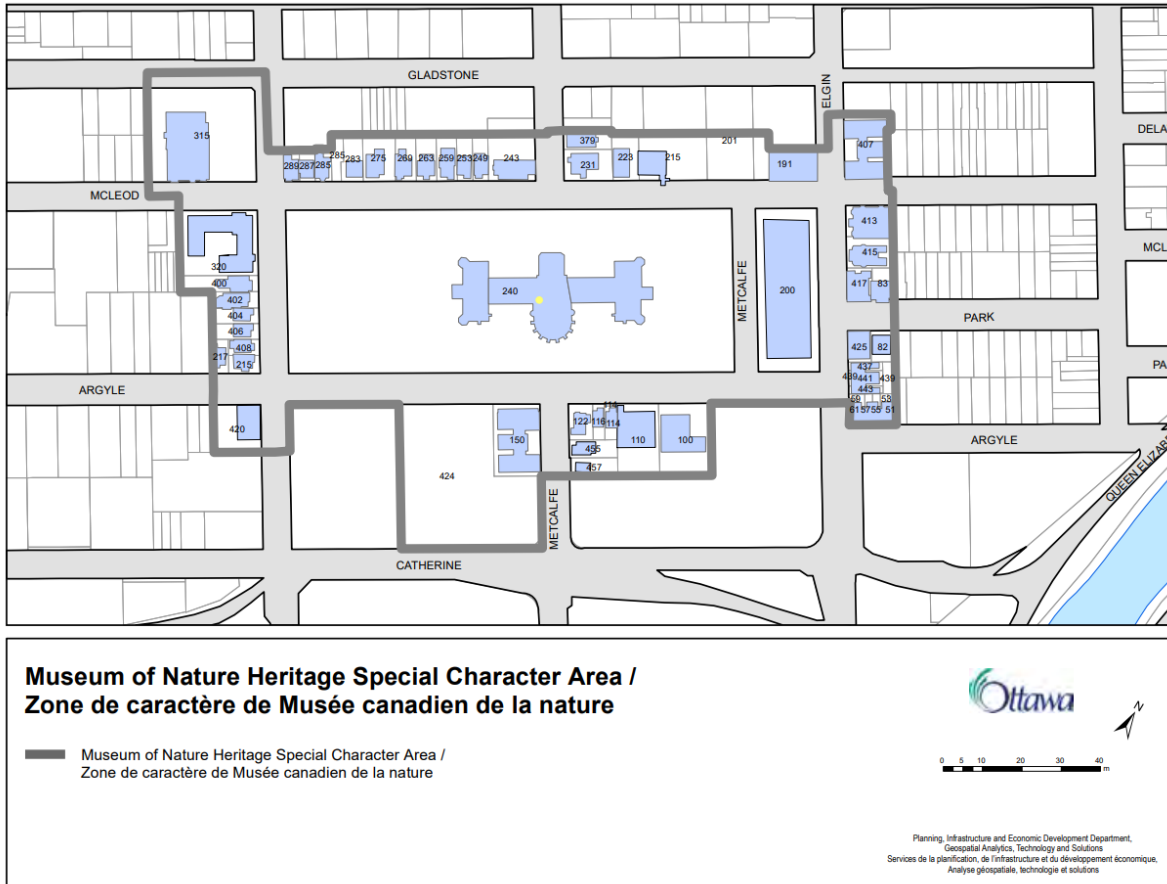


Figure 4: Museum of Nature Heritage Special Character Area (HCD Plan, Figure 27)

Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for the Subject Properties

The accompanying CHERs conducted by GBCA Architects examined the five Contributing buildings identified in the HCD Plan. They conclude that, of the five buildings, only 377 Metcalfe Street has heritage value the City may wish to conserve, as it is “a representative example of a style of architecture in Centretown, it maintains/supports the residential character of the area, and it is functionally and visually linked to its surroundings.” Of the Contributing buildings on the Subject Site, “only 377 Metcalfe Street retains its original design intent and integrity.”

The criteria for evaluating the value of identified heritage properties are grouped into three categories: Design/Physical Value; Historical/Associative Value; and Contextual Value. A property may be deemed to have cultural heritage value if it meets one or more of the criteria, and to be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, it must meet two or more criteria.

GBCA assessed the five studied properties as follows:

- *222 Gladstone Avenue meets two criteria as it is a representative example of a style of architecture in Centretown and it maintains/supports the residential character of the area;*
- *224 Gladstone Avenue does not meet any of the criteria;*
- *377 Metcalfe Street meets three criteria as it is a representative example of a style of architecture in Centretown, it maintains/supports the residential character of the area, and it is functionally and visually linked to its surroundings;*
- *231 McLeod Street meets two criteria as it is a representative example of Second- Empire style architecture and it maintains/supports the residential character of the area;*
- *223 McLeod Street meets one criteria as it is a representative example of a style of architecture in Centretown.*

The CHER further concludes:

While the properties at 222 Gladstone Avenue, 377 Metcalfe Street and 223 McLeod Street are all related to a characteristic pattern in the area - that being the modest gable front house - it should be noted that only 377 Metcalfe Street retains its original design intent and integrity. Both 222 Gladstone Avenue and 223 McLeod Street have undergone alterations that greatly compromise their original design intent. And while all five properties historically supported the residential character of the area, the properties at 231 McLeod and 223 McLeod were early on converted to commercial use and the alterations to those buildings have similarly compromised their design value...It is thus our conclusion that the City of Ottawa may consider that 377 Metcalfe Street has heritage value and therefore should be conserved in order to maintain the character of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District.

Rationale for Demolition

As noted above Claridge will be initiating an architectural design competition for the Landmark Site and will prepare a Competition Design Brief setting out parameters and guidelines for the invited design teams. The Brief will clearly outline urban design, planning and heritage considerations, drawing on relevant policies and guidelines in the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, the Centre and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan, the Centretown and Minto Park HCD Plan, the City's Urban Design Guidelines for High-Rise Buildings and the draft High Performance Development Standard. At the same time, the Design Brief will allow each team to explore its unique expression of architectural excellence and innovation.

To ensure that a minimum of 40% of the Landmark Site comprises public open space and give each design team maximum flexibility to optimize the Site, Claridge needs to assure them that all the existing buildings may be demolished, except 377 Metcalfe Street, which the teams will be expected to integrate into their design concepts, and 231 McLeod Street, which the teams will be asked to explore solutions for relocating the building to integrated into their design concepts. For this reason, applications for a permit to demolish 222 Gladstone Avenue, 224 Gladstone Avenue and 223 McLeod are being submitted well in advance of a development application.

As discussed below, there are two principal reasons to permit demolition of the buildings:

- The Contributing buildings do not have significant heritage value;
- The Landmark development that replaces them will support several city building goals and have greater value to Centretown and the larger city.

As stated in the HCD Plan, Contributing properties are considered to have design, historic and/or associative value or contextual value and are classified as Significant Resources, Character-Defining Resources and Character-Supporting Resources. Within this hierarchy, the four properties proposed for demolition are at the bottom, as Character-Supporting Resources. As such, although they may have value, they are not significant. This assessment is supported by the CHERs, which concluded that none of the properties retains its original design intent and integrity. With respect to 222 Gladstone Avenue and 223 McLeod Street, alterations have greatly compromised their original design intent, and in the case of 223 McLeod Street, alterations related to their early conversion to commercial uses “similarly compromised their design value.”

The HCD Plan acknowledges that not all Contributing properties may be worth conserving when it states, “There may be instances when a property classified as a Character-Supporting Resource may be considered for demolition as part of a project that meets other city-building goals.” The CHERs by GBCA satisfy criteria set out in Policies 5.0(3) and 5.0(5) of the HCD Plan with the assessment that the buildings in question have been compromised or altered to the extent they no longer contribute to the cultural heritage value of the HCD.

Furthermore, regarding the last criteria in Policy 5.0(5), Claridge’s Landmark development will meet multiple city-building goals. The Landmark building itself will:

- Significantly improve the Gladstone Avenue streetscape, the south side of which is unattractive, lacks trees or other landscaping, and is partially run down;
- Support the City’s intensification goals, adding housing that will benefit the commercial uses on Elgin Street and generally contribute to a livelier public realm;
- Enhance the Ottawa skyline and improve the character of Centretown and the city as whole through architectural excellence.

The planned public open space at the corner of McLeod Street and Metcalfe Street will:

- Open up and enhance views to the Museum of Nature as one approaches it on Metcalfe Street and improve the arrival experience;
- Complement the Museum with a civic open space that adds to its attraction through design and unique features;
- Add much-needed public green space to Centretown;
- Provide an opportunity to commemorate the history of the site, including the properties proposed for demolition.

Although there is not yet a proposal for the Landmark development to demonstrate how it will achieve the above city-building goals, the process for designing, reviewing and approving the project provides assurance they will be met. First, as noted, a competition will be held to select the design team for the project from among Canada's top architects and landscape architects. The winning concept will be rigorously reviewed by the Museum of Nature, the Centretown Community Association, the broader public, City staff, the City's Urban Design Review Panel and the Built Heritage Sub-Committee, all before development applications are submitted. The statutory application process will require even more consultation and design review.

Our demolition permit applications are one early step in a lengthy and engaging process to develop a Landmark project that will have many public benefits.

We would be pleased to discuss our applications at your convenience. In the meantime, please let us know if you require additional information.

Thank you.

URBAN STRATEGIES INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Tim Smith, RPP, MCIP
Principal

Encl: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports – 222 Gladstone Avenue; 224 Gladstone Avenue, 377 Metcalfe Street; 223 McLeod Street; 231 McLeod Street (also known as 381 Metcalfe Street) – GBCA Architects, October 30, 2023