

**Proposed Redevelopment – Uganda High Commission Chancery Building,
231 Cobourg Street, Ottawa, K1N 8J2**

PLANNING RATIONALE – Zoning Amendment and Site Plan Control Applications.



May 25th, 2017



May 25, 2017

City of Ottawa,
Development Review, Urban Services
Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department,
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, ON. K1P 1J1

Attention: **Mr. Simon Deiaico**, *MCIP, RPP, Planner*

Re: 231 Cobourg Street, Ottawa, Ontario. K1N 8J2
Site Plan Control and Zoning By-law Amendment Application
Our File No.: A14014

Mr. Deaico,

This Planning Rationale has been prepared to substantiate the planning justification in support of an application for Site Plan Control and Zoning By-law Amendment for the property located at 239 Cobourg Street in the City of Ottawa to permit a three storey diplomatic use building for the Uganda High Commission.

The subject property is designated as General Urban Area in "Schedule B" of the City of Ottawa Official Plan (OPA 150) and is located within the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan.

The Zoning By-Law Amendment seeks to rezone the subject property to lift the residential 4th Density designation and permit a new land use to allow for construction of a three-storey consulate office building (Diplomatic Mission use). The Zoning By-law Amendment also seeks relief from the following zoning requirements of the R4M [481] - Residential Fourth Density Subzone M, exception 481, and subject to the heritage overlay provisions of Section 60.

The redevelopment proposal for 231 Cobourg Street has been prepared pursuant to By-law 2014-289, Part 5 - Residential Provisions, Section 130, Non-Residential Uses in Residential Zones, which states that where a non-residential use is permitted in a residential zone, the non-residential use must comply with the residential zone regulations that apply to the highest density residential use permitted in that zone (By-law 2014-289).

Kindly contact me should you have any questions regarding this application.

Yours Sincerely,

Judah Mulalu, M. Arch., TSA, MRAIC, OAA
Principal



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1.0 Introduction.

Ten-2-Four Architecture Inc. has prepared this Planning Rationale on behalf of Uganda High Commission Ottawa in support of a Zoning By-law Amendment and an application for Site Plan Control for the proposed redevelopment of the property located at 231 Cobourg Street for a three-storey consulate building. The Zoning By-law Amendment is to seek relief for allowable use by lifting the Residential Use zoning designation and related exception 481. A Site Plan Control Application is being submitted concurrently.

We intend to demonstrate through this Planning Rationale that the proposed redevelopment and proposed Zoning By-law Amendment are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and in conformance with the policies of the Official Plan of the City of Ottawa.

2.0 Property Information, Zoning Information, Background and Context.

Pursuant to the Planning Act, Ontario Regulation 545/06 the subject property, legal description PIN 04212-0206, Registered Plan 6PT LOT 43 is located at municipal street address of 231 Cobourg Street (at the corner of Cobourg And Wilbrod Streets) in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood. It has a lot frontage of 30.17 meters and a lot depth of 12.8 meters. The property is bordered by residential uses to the east, west and north and has frontage on Cobourg Street. To the south is the Embassy of France and Consular Section. The existing two parking spots on the north side of the building are accessed off a Right of Way Instrument No. N414187 also owned by the Uganda High Commission according to the Transfer/Deed of Land records from the Land Registry Office. It is designated "General Urban Area" under the Official Plan, and "Low Profile" within the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan. In accordance with Zoning By-law 2008-250, the property is zoned R4M[481] - Residential Fourth Density Subzone M, exception 481 and subject to the Heritage Overlay Provisions of Section 60. The property is also subject to the requirements of the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay.

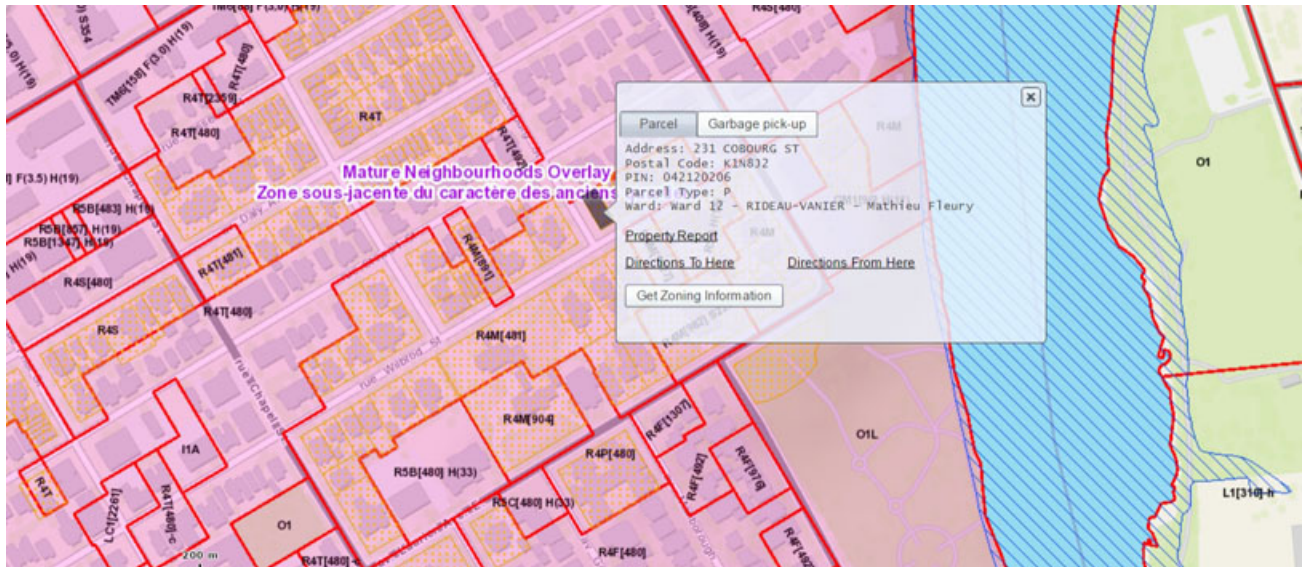


Location Map – 231 Cobourg Street (GeoOttawa Image).



Exception 481 of the Zoning By-law, permits an office limited to a diplomatic mission subject to that office being restricted to a dwelling converted for that use.

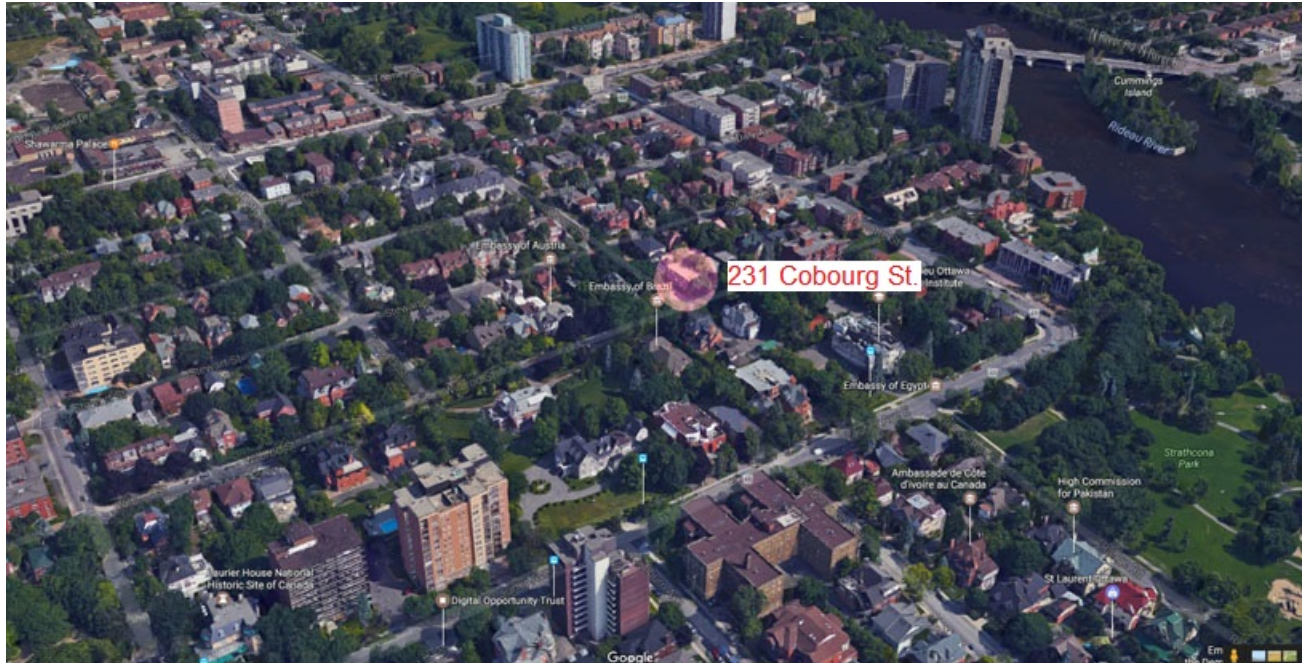
Heritage Overlay provisions of Section 60 dictates that "where a building in an area to which an heritage overlay applies is removed or destroyed it must be rebuilt with the same character and at the same scale, massing, volume, floor area and in the same location as existed prior to its removal or destruction."



Zoning Map (GeoOttawa Image).

Sandy Hill West architectural character is diverse, non-uniform and the collectivity of its buildings reflects the evolving nature of this area through scale, date of construction, design or architectural style and materiality dating back to the 19th century. According to the Sandy Hill Heritage Study, the building located at 231 Cobourg Street was constructed between 1935 and 1947 and is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act in the Wilbrod – Laurier Conservation District. According to the heritage report on the property the existing building makes a modest contribution to the heritage landscape (Group 3 according to the Sandy Hill East Heritage Study). It is significantly different in its muted federal stylistic architectural style to the many late-Victorian mansions with more heritage significance that have been converted for diplomatic use in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood. The property was purchased by the Uganda High Commission in 1985 and was converted from residential to office use for a diplomatic mission according to the zoning provisions. This use continued for 29 years until 2014 when a decision was made to vacate the building due to deteriorating structural and environmental conditions jeopardizing health and safety. The building has been vacant since then and the consulate currently leases office space at 350 Sparks Street.

This quiet enclave of Sandy Hill is primarily residential, interspersed with many embassy properties including Bulgaria, the Republic of Sudan, the Republic of Guinea, France, Brazil and Austria, all within a hundred metre radius of 231 Cobourg Street. Other embassies in the immediate vicinity include Algeria and the Russian Federation east of Charlotte Street by the Rideau River.



Aerial View – North-East (Google Image).

The subject property is on a very narrow block at the southern end where Cobourg Street terminates at Wilbrod Street. Across the street is the side yard of 455 Wilbrod screened by tall cedar hedges and to the northwest at 228 Wilbrod, a 1920s red brick residence. To its immediate north at 225 Wilbrod, there is a non-descript 1970s two-storey stone residence which is out of character with the context of the neighborhood. The existing two-storey flat roofed building sits tight to the west property line of the relatively flat site, out of alignment with the buildings to the north of it along Cobourg Street with minimal landscaping along the front yard. A wooden entrance canopy extends over the property line. Along Wilbrod, two mature street trees screen the building, whose setback matches the adjacent properties. The eastern side abutting the neighbor has a sparse cedar hedge screen. The south side of Wilbrod Street in the immediate vicinity of 231 Cobourg Street has an inconsistent and incoherent character with a mixture of three to four storey urban fabric highlighted by lots of varying sizes and setbacks. A mix of converted Victorian-style mansion are home to diplomatic missions as noted previously. Of particular note is an imposing ten-storey apartment building to the south-east which highlights the varying urban fabric.



Aerial View – South-East (Google Images).

By contrast, the north side of Wilbrod Street has a much tighter architectural character with similar lot sizes, setbacks and two-three storey massing and building styles. Typical of this area, there are a lot of converted large heritage homes for apartment and embassy uses.



Streetscape – Cobourg Street East Side from Daly Avenue to Wilbrod Street.



Streetscape – Cobourg Street West Side from Wilbrod Street to Daly Avenue.



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Augusta St.

231 Cobourg St.

Charlotte St.



Streetscape – Wilbrod Street North-Side from Augusta Street to Charlotte Street.

Charlotte St.

Augusta St.



Streetscape – Wilbrod Street South-Side from Charlotte Street to Augusta Street.



View from North-West Along Wilbrod Street.

View from South-West at Wilbrod Street.



West (Main) Elevation at Cobourg Street.



3.0 Commentary on Existing Conditions.

Given the age of the building, structural issues from foundation settlement and subsequent breach of the building envelope resulting in extensive water penetration and development of mold throughout the building renders it unsuitable for habitation. It is precisely in light of these health and safety concerns that the Uganda High Commission (UHC) made a decision to vacate the building four years ago.

Although rehabilitation of the building is a theoretical possibility, given the scale and complexity of the required structural stabilization and structural rehabilitation, the extent of abatement to remediate hazardous materials and substances, repairs and replacements of interior building components, upgrades to electrical and mechanical systems and the unquantifiable complications of all these processes, the costs by all indications would be extremely prohibitive. As indicated in the structural report prepared by Stephenson Engineering Limited, the quantifiable estimated costs for rehabilitation are in excess of \$1.5 million dollars not including mechanical and electrical upgrades.

The recently completed geotechnical report by AA Scientific Inc. (ASI) illustrates the difficulty that would be encountered for the scope of the structural undertaking that would be required for stabilizing the basement slab and restoring the foundations. In the test boreholes that were drilled, no bedrock was encountered even at a depth of 19.5 metres (approximately 64 feet). The report indicates that enough resistance was encountered at this depth and concludes that consistent with ASI experience in the Ottawa region, refusal depth can be considered as bedrock with a thin layer of weathered bedrock (or clay fill) overlain. Structural stabilization would require the use of drilled piles to at least this depth of refusal which would be an extremely complicated and costly undertaking with side-effects that can't even be anticipated and would further complicate the process. This is further compounded by a very high water table measured at 3m (approximately 10 feet) off season in winter meaning that it will be even higher in the spring and summer from melting snow and precipitation. This would make repair and waterproofing of the severely cracked basement foundation walls and slab an extremely difficult not to mention costly undertaking.

Deflection of structural members due to settlement and extensive water penetration means that structural rehabilitation will also be substantial because of the compromised structural integrity of the framing members. In all likelihood, significant sections of the structure, if not all of it would have to be replaced. The amount of temporary shoring and bracing alone would be a significant cost.

We have also had a Designated Substance Survey (environmental) Report completed. Given the age of the building, it is no surprise that asbestos, lead, mercury and other hazardous materials are present. Essentially this means that full abatement will be required and will have to precede all other rehabilitation operations. In addition to this being a significant cost in and of itself (estimated at \$150,000.00 according to our environmental engineer), it will affect the following items if rehabilitation was to be considered:

Plaster Repair/Replacement - complete interior refinishing with drywall will be required because all interior finishes will have to be removed during the abatement process.



Contaminated sections of the structure primarily due to mold infestation will have to be replaced. A time intensive and exhaustive assessment of the extent of mold infestation would have to be carried out through destructive investigation. An inventory of the affected structural items would then have to be catalogued and assessment made to determine which sections would require replacement. Major temporary structural intervention would be required to ensure that the building remains structurally safe. The time and expense associated with this exercise cannot be reasonably estimated due in large part to the concealed conditions requiring destructive investigation as previously mentioned but suffice to say that it would be prohibitive. The estimate from the structural report prepared by Stephenson Engineering Limited is approximately \$1.6 million not including electrical or mechanical upgrades.

In all likelihood, mold has developed behind in the cavities of most of the interior partitions and exterior walls. This means that the entire building envelope – sheathing, insulation, vapour barrier, interior drywall finishes, etc. - would have to be completely replaced. Again, the scope of this in light of the aforementioned structural interventions would be significant.

The challenges at hand can be summarized as follows;

1. Through a combination of structural deficiencies and deferred or inadequate maintenance over the past few decades typical of buildings in the heritage significance category, the building has, unfortunately fallen into a terrible state of disrepair beyond the possibility of rehabilitation, largely due to the former issue of a failing structure (largely due to differential settlement), compounded by a compromised building envelope which is largely responsible for the maintenance challenges due to prohibitive costs. To reiterate, the unstable foundation situation has led to settling which is responsible for the severely cracked basement slab and foundation walls. The corresponding stresses manifested through significant deflection of structural members and the ensuing breach of the building envelope. The results of the breach in the building envelope are water penetration into the building which has resulted in significant development of mold, especially in the basement areas and some wall cavities as evidenced through areas where wall finishes and plaster ceilings have collapsed. The other, more hidden danger is that of the possibility of radon gas infiltration into the building through the severely cracked basement slab and block foundation walls. Of paramount importance here are health and safety concerns that cannot be simply remediated due to astronomical costs and the primary reason for vacating the building.
2. The requirements of the diplomatic mission for adequate space to accommodate their program of functions necessitates a solution beyond the limitations of the existing structure given its challenges, especially the prohibitive costs for rehabilitation clearly demonstrated in the structural report.



Evidence of repairs and water infiltration at cracked basement slab. Note new slab infill on the left side.



Typical cracked basement slab and water infiltration.



Evidence of repairs at extensive cracking in basement foundation wall.



History of crack repairs at basement foundation wall indicates ongoing problem of settlement. Note the concrete block replacements at different periods.



Exposed floor joists at collapsed drywall ceiling due to water infiltration.



Collapsed drywall ceiling due to water infiltration.



Evidence of water soaked exterior and interior walls. Structural settling and cracking of basement slab, foundation walls and subsequent breach of the building envelope has led to this condition.

Evidence of extensive cracking and repairs in exterior brick masonry due to failing structure. Also note that window openings have been compromised as the structure settles leading to severe water infiltration.

4.0 Redevelopment Proposal.

4.1 Zoning By-Law Amendment

The Zoning By-Law Amendment seeks to rezone the subject property to lift the residential 4th Density designation and permit a new land use to allow for construction of a three-storey consulate office building (Diplomatic Mission use). The Zoning By-law Amendment also seeks relief from the following zoning requirements of the R4M [481] - Residential Fourth Density Subzone M, exception 481, and subject to the heritage overlay provisions of Section 60:

- Lot Area Required Min. 450m², Existing 386m²;
- Front Yard Setback Required 3m, Proposed 1.4m
- Rear Yard Setback Required 4m, Proposed 1m

The redevelopment proposal for 231 Cobourg Street has been prepared pursuant to By-law 2014-289, Part 5 - Residential Provisions, Section 130, Non-Residential Uses in Residential Zones, which states that where a non-residential use is permitted in a residential zone, the non-residential use must comply with the residential zone regulations that apply to the highest density residential use permitted in that zone. (By-law 2014-289)

Proposed demolition of the existing converted building and proposed construction of a new consulate building for the Uganda High Commission will no longer meet the provision regarding conversion as allowed under Exception 481 and requires relief from these provisions by way of a minor zoning amendment.



Setback and height restriction requirements of the zoning bylaw ensure compatibility with surrounding areas in the district.

4.2 Redevelopment Proposal Design Commentary

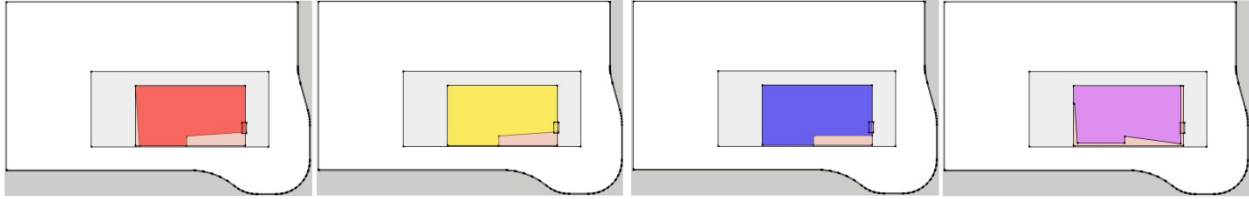
We have adopted an approach that we consider consistent with the evolving cultural heritage landscape of the area as noted in the Sandy Hill Heritage Study, as well as one that aligns with the zoning requirements of the Residential 4th Density Zone within which the 231 Cobourg Street property is situated, that is; to be “compatible with existing land use patterns so that the mixed building form, residential character of a neighbourhood is maintained or enhanced” and “to promote efficient land use and compact form while showcasing newer design approaches”. Our strategy is to not only work within the constraints of the heritage overlay provisions with deference and reference to the existing building to be replaced and its context within the heritage district but also to explore the opportunities presented by the non-homogeneous architectural fabric in reinterpreting the proposed new chancery building to develop an informed structure that although contemporary and true to its time, is also harmonious within the heritage context that it inherits. This approach is also in alignment with the Urban Design Guidelines for infill developments by demonstrating respect for the established scale and pattern of the context and the character of the neighbourhood and at the same time expressing a new and contemporary built form with new technology and ecological strategies that speak to good environmental stewardship.

The first floor datum will be maintained in the proposed building but it is to be noted here that requirement for an accessibility ramp dictates that the main entrance be at the raised level of the first floor instead of street level as is currently the case. This actually works better by establishing a clear delineation between the public realm of the street and the consulate area. However, we are drawing from the location of the original entrance itself and elements associated with it to leave an unmistakable trace that serves to not only mark the location of said entrance, but also serves to highlight the new, elevated entrance. This has been achieved by abstracting said elements as follows;

- The entrance location itself is carved out in the new vertical protruding section of the west façade that mimics the center stack of the original building in which the main entrance is located,
- The octagonal window above the broken pediment is replicated as an opening in a similar size and relative location to the original.

This strategy is an attempt to continue the historic pattern while addressing relevant issue of accessibility and clearly demarcating the boundary between the consulate facility and the public realm without completely divorcing the building from the pedestrian experience as most consulate building are prone to doing through imposing physical barriers.

Materially, the two-storey pattern of brick is maintained but reinterpreted in a contemporary manner by using a Norman format brick with a wider size. To visually reduce the height and mass of the building, the proposed third-storey is treated with a lighter (limestone) material further enhanced by offsetting the third floor walls and the guard rail of the green roof from the edge of the parapet.

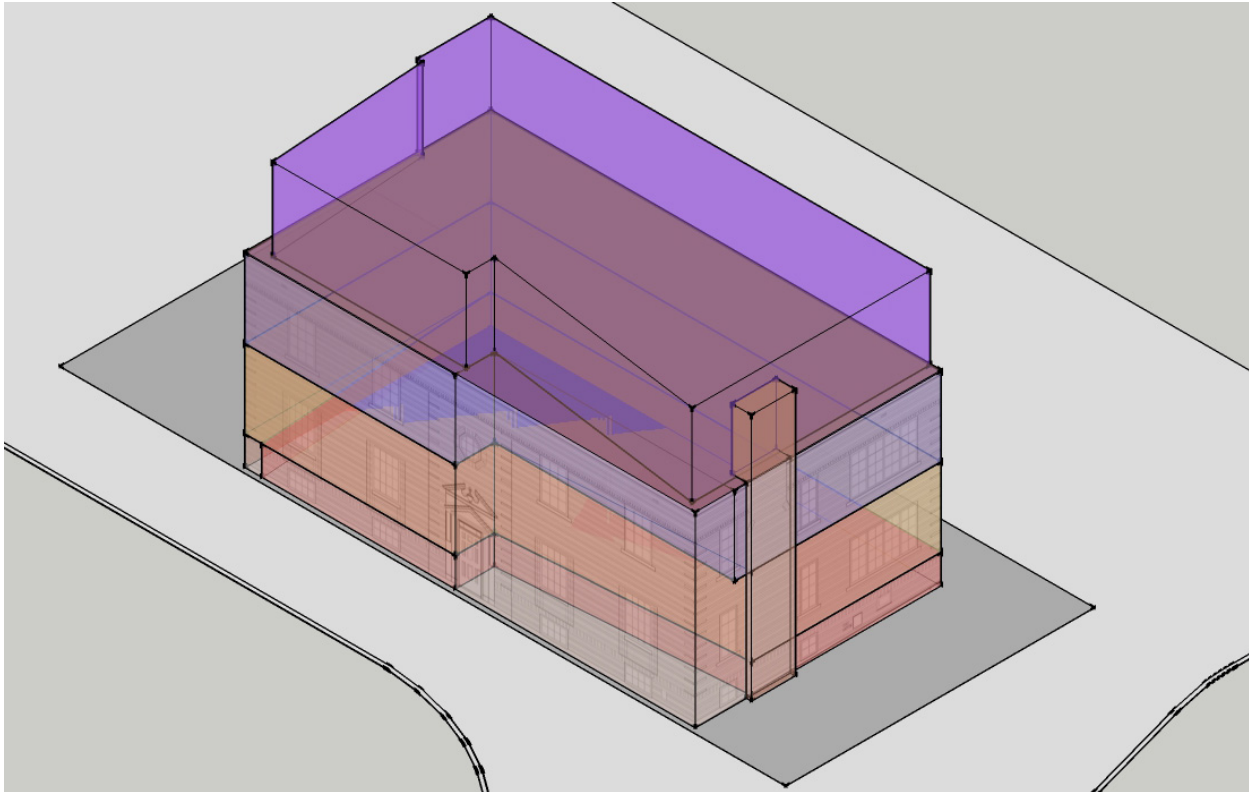


Basement Level

First Floor Level

Second Floor Level

Third Floor Level



Proposed building massing superimposed on existing volume to demonstrate scale and interventions.

Although the overall footprint of the existing building is matched in the proposed building in accordance with the heritage overlay provisions, there are several design interventions that have been introduced in order to give the proposed new building a contemporary look and feel;

- The existing concrete walkway on the south-east corner (to Wilbrod Street) is used to link the accessibility ramp to the main entrance, wrapping around the south façade. A shallow angle is introduced where the ramp turns the corner to focus the ramp on the main entrance as well as expand the view to Wilbrod Street. Essentially, a volume is carved out of the original massing to accommodate this feature at both basement and first floor levels.
- In the earlier proposals reviewed with planning, the proposed building footprint matched that of the existing building (in order to comply with the Heritage Overlay requirements of Section 60) with its tight relationship to the west property line. This meant that part of the entrance stair encroached on the right-of-way. With the understanding that the Minor Zoning Amendment to seek relief for



Exception 481 would offer some flexibility in that regard, the proposed building has been shifted further east to avoid encroachment of the entrance stair over the west property line. This slight shift has the added benefit of bringing the west façade of the proposed building more in alignment with buildings to the north along the east side of Cobourg Street. The south façade along Wilbrod Street maintains the alignment of the existing building.

- Another revision based on feedback from planning was the consolidation of the previously separate two volumes for the roof access stair and the central elevator machine into one volume at the north-east corner to reduce the visual impact of these volumes as viewed from street level at the prominent corner of Cobourg and Wilbrod streets.
- The north façade gets a corresponding shift to similarly expand the view towards Stewart Street.
- The straightening out of the west elevation at the second floor is a visual strategy to echo the relationship with the pedestrian realm previously demonstrated by the porch over the main entrance. The introduction of the canopy overhang further serves to breakdown the mass of the building to a scale that is harmonious with the neighbourhood.
- The third floor sees a reverse of the façade angle on the first floor through a cantilevered section of the west floor plate essentially to reference the historical corner of the existing building while also providing a logical transition datum for the change in materiality in an attempt to clearly delineate and maintain the historical two storey brick datum. An added advantage to this move is an extension of views north along Cobourg Street and increased daylighting angle through a closer alignment with a west solar orientation.
- The introduction of a generous planter at the main entrance serves as an element to mitigate the mass of the entrance stair and ramp by establishing human scale, animating the street while also serving as a transition and boundary to the public realm.
- Another suggestion from both planning and heritage sees the walls of both the entrance stair on the west elevation (along Cobourg Street) and the accessible ramp (along Wilbrod Street) treated with a light limestone cladding material to further integrate the proposed building into the established materiality context of its surrounding.
- In addition to proven ecological strategies such as providing daylighting to virtually all of the floor levels including circulation corridors (through the use of punched windows that are consistent with the pattern of the neighbourhood) and having parts of those same windows operable (for non-mechanical cross-ventilation), the proposed development further adds a landscaped green roof that adds function and aesthetic value to the property while also providing an environmental benefit of reducing the HVAC load of the building.
- Off-setting the guard-rail for the green roof and deck area not only serves to mitigate the overall height of the building as perceived from the street but also serves to limit visual access down to neighbouring properties to respect their privacy as well as comply with codal requirements for green roof areas with a perimeter of non-combustible concrete pavers.
- Landscape upgrades, consistent with Urban Design Guidelines further add to ideas of human scale and animating the street while simultaneously defining the boundary between the consulate building and the pedestrian realm. The ground-level landscaping is comprised of functional hardscape areas whose character bridges the established neighbourhood texture and the more

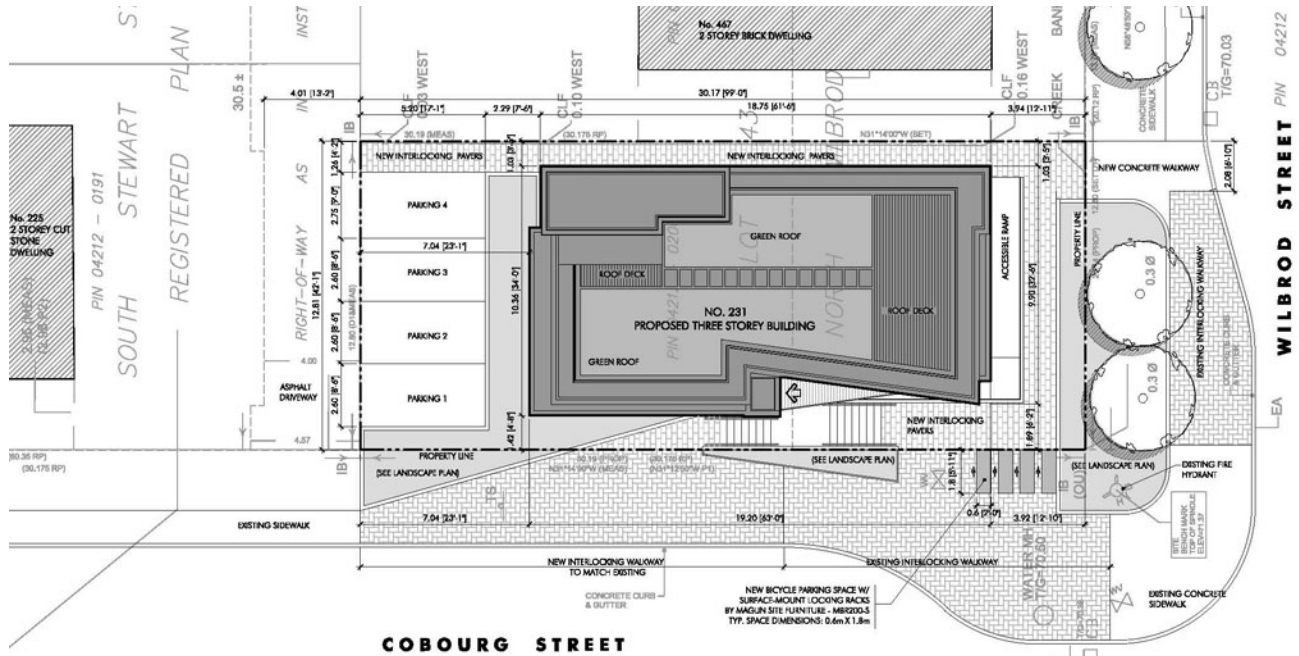


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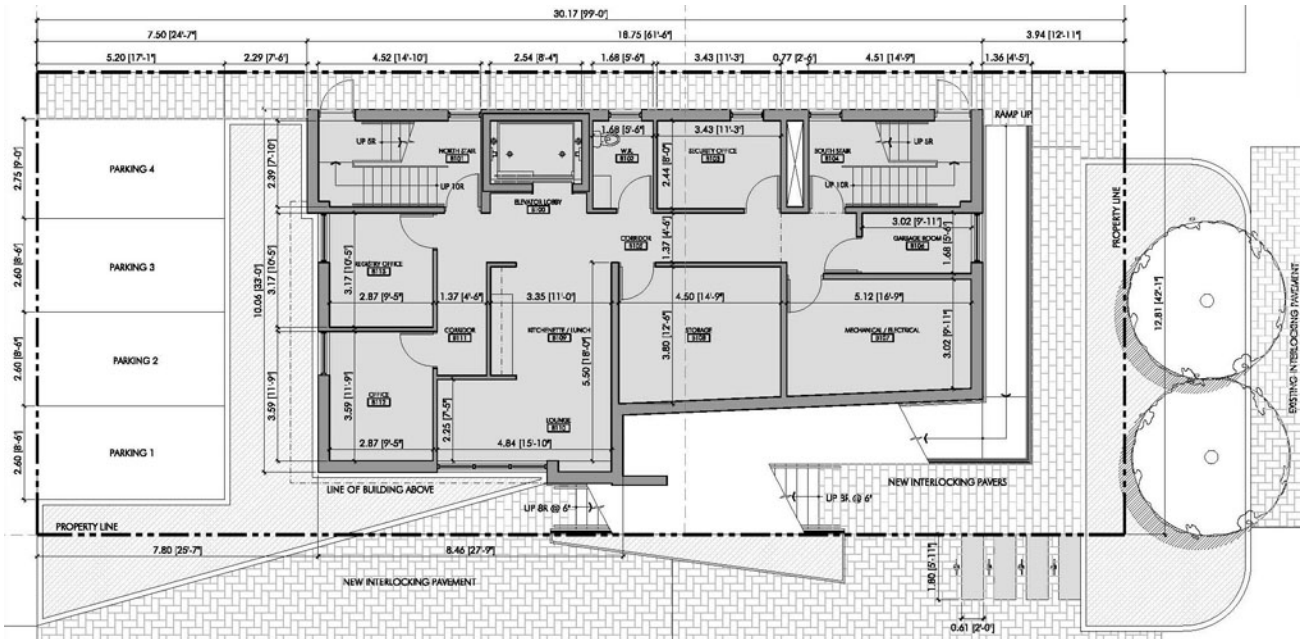
contemporary design of the new building. Planting areas are small and designed to complement the building. Extensive, dark-coloured groundcovers are accented with plants of contrasting colours and textures, in a variety of sizes. A few seasonal treats are included in the scheme—drifts of colourful early spring bulbs, and fragrant mock orange. The rooftop landscape is kept back from the parapets to reduce visibility from the street, but is otherwise open and sunny. A large deck area is set to the south for potential views towards the Rideau River. It is set away from the stairs and connected by a short path through the green roof. Spaces here are defined additionally by a variety of planting pots with bold plantings for height, form, fragrance and colour.



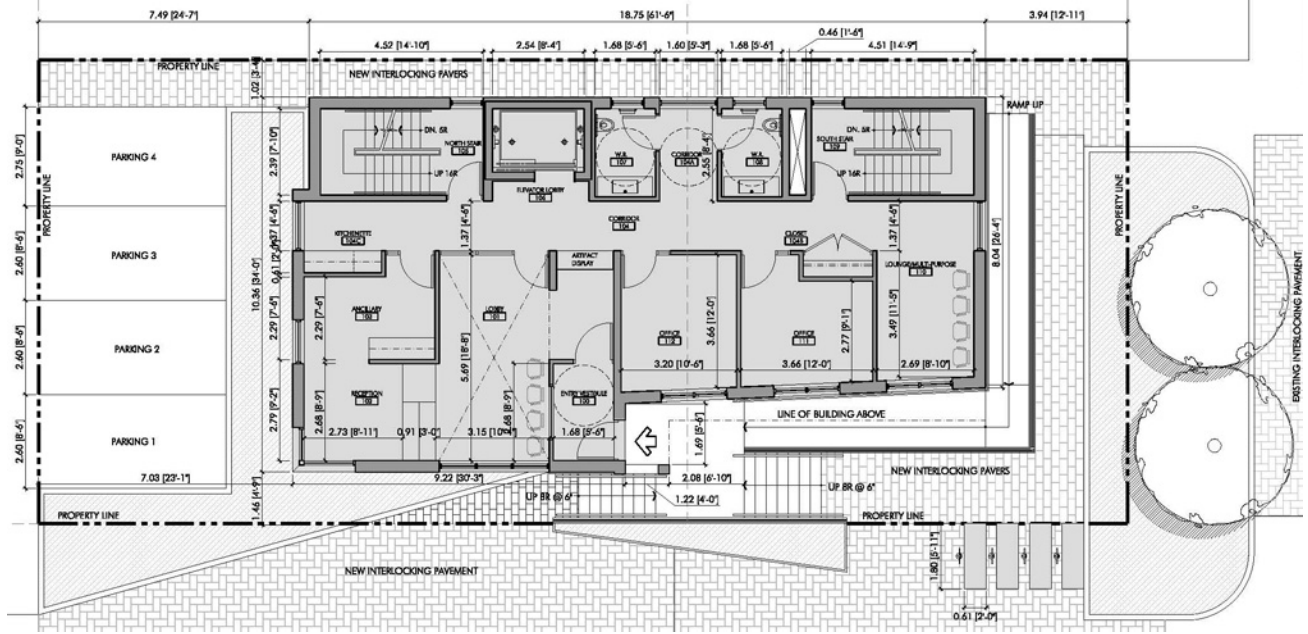
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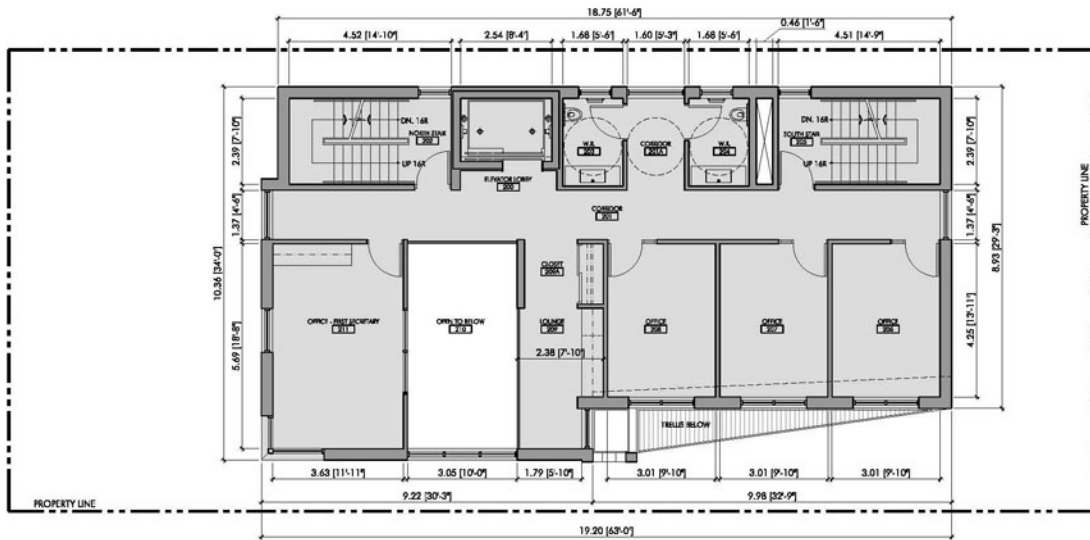
Site Plan – 231 Cobourg Street.



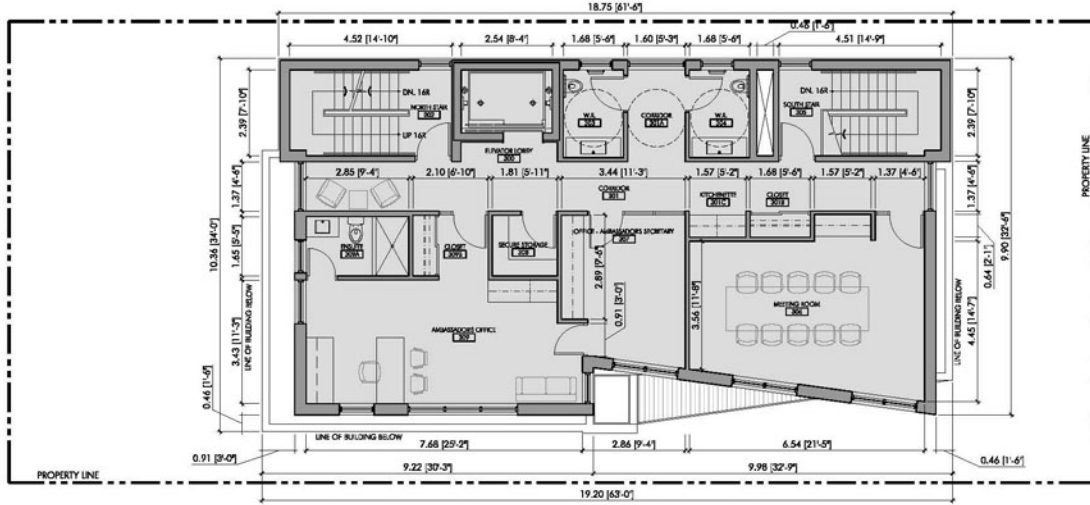
Basement Plan.



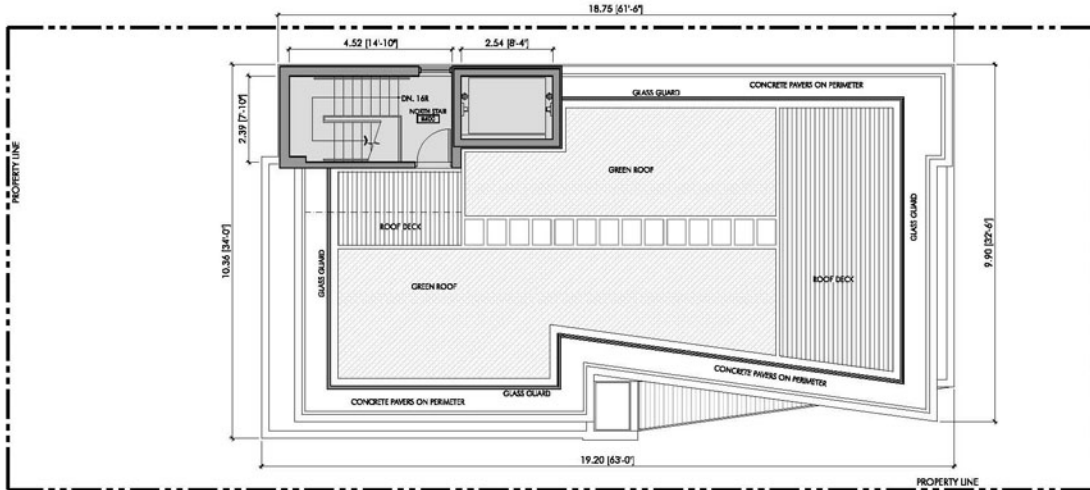
Ground Floor Plan.



Second Floor Plan.



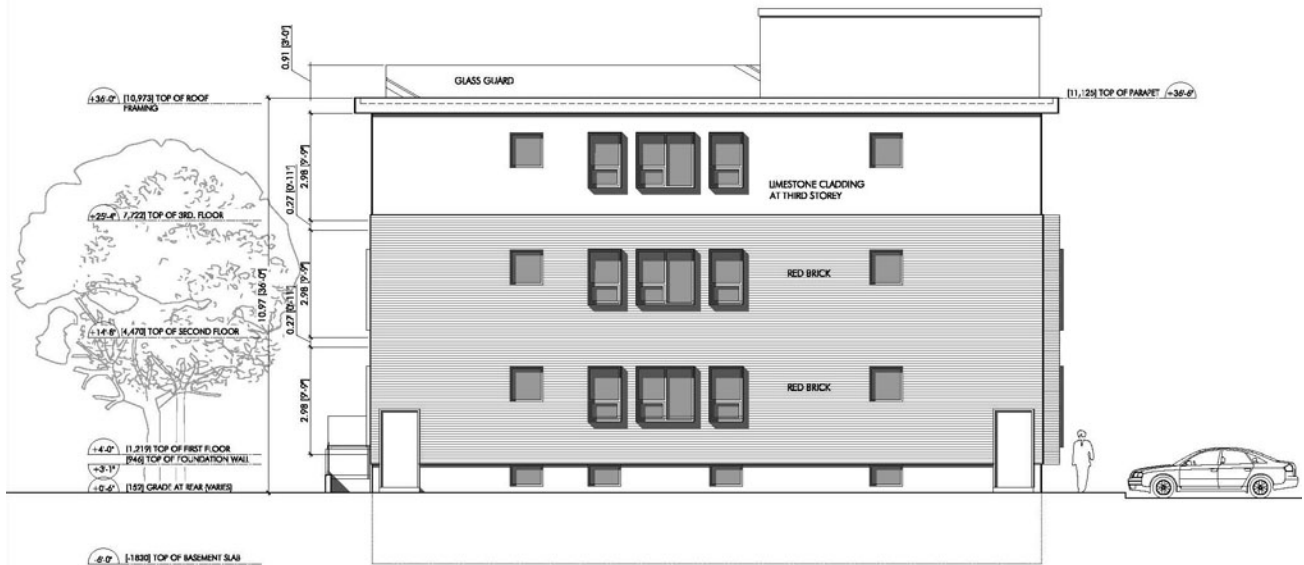
Third Floor Plan



Roof Plan.



West Elevation – Cobourg Street.



East Elevation – Rear.



North Elevation



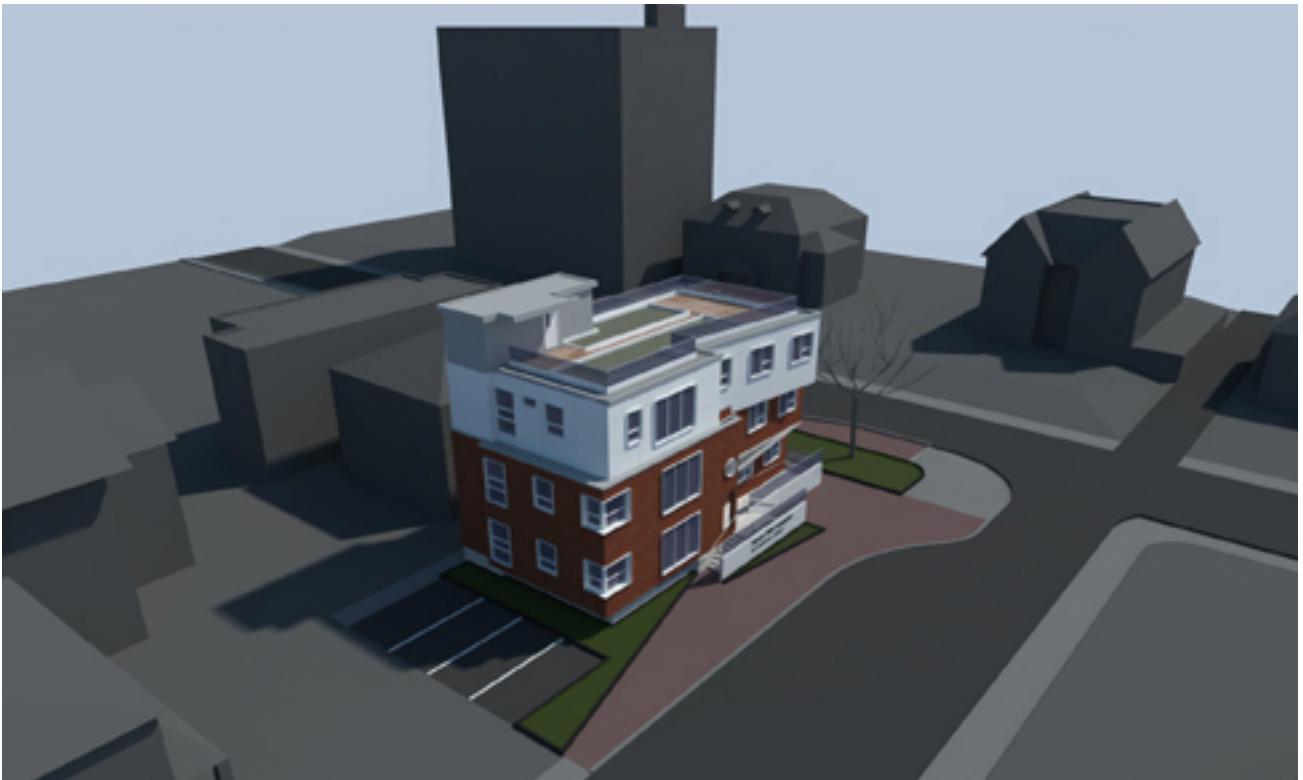
South Elevation – Wilbrod Street.



Aerial Perspective at Cobourg and Wilbrod Streets.



Perspective View from North-West along Cobourg Street.



Aerial Perspective from North-West Along Wilbrod Street.



Perspective View from North-East.



Aerial Perspective from South West.



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Main Elevation at Cobourg Street.



Aerial Perspective Looking North East from the Intersection of Cobourg and Wilbrod Streets.



Streetscape Composite with Proposed Chancery Building – Daly Avenue to Wilbrod Street.



Streetscape Composite with Proposed Chancery Building – Augusta to Charlotte Streets.



5.0 Planning and Regulatory Framework

5.1 Provincial Policy Statement 2014

The Provincial Policy Statement provides comprehensive policy direction for appropriate development that is balanced with provincial interest, public health and safety as well as the quality of natural and built environments. It is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act and came into effect on April 30, 2014.

The proposed redevelopment at 231 Cobourg Street is consistent with Section 1 of the PPS which speaks to building strong, safe and healthy communities. Specifically, the proposal adheres to the following policies;

1.1.1 (a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;

1.1.1 (b) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential (including second units, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;

1.1.1 (c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

1.1.1 (e) promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;

1.1.1 (f) improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;

1.1.1 (h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of a changing climate.

The Provincial Policy Statement also speaks to the vitality of settlement areas being critical to the long-term economic prosperity of communities in Ontario, particularly that it is in the interest of all communities to use land and resources wisely, promote efficient development patterns, protect resources, promote green spaces, ensure effective use of infrastructure and public service facilities and consequently minimize unnecessary public expenditures;

1.1.3.1 Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.

The redevelopment proposal for 231 Cobourg Street clearly evinces this as it will revitalize what is currently and increasingly becoming a derelict, abandoned site with a structurally and environmentally challenged



building that threatens public safety and health. Indeed, the proposal strictly adheres to the land use policies of Section 1.1.3.2 which are based on;

a) densities and a mix of land uses which:

1. efficiently use land and resources;
2. are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion;
3. minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency;
4. support active transportation;
5. are transit-supportive, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed; and
6. are freight-supportive; and

b) a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment in accordance with the criteria in policy 1.1.3.3, which states that - Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.

Section 1.1.3.4 essentially emphasizes the idea of redevelopment with which our proposal is in alignment - Appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.

Consistent with the policies of Section 1.6 (Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities), the proposed development is on a municipal street served by existing municipal infrastructure (sewage, water and stormwater) and an urban road and pedestrian network including paved sidewalks and east-west cycling paths along Stewart and Wilbord Streets and north along Cobourg Street to the Downtown Rideau Business Improvement Area. A **Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report** prepared by **Lithos Group Inc.** and dated March 2017 confirm this. Other amenities in the area include Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park and Strathcona Park both of which are within a few minutes walking distance.

The proposed redevelopment is also in alignment with the policies of Section 1.7 - Long Term Economic Prosperity;

d) encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes;

e) promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites;



i) promoting energy conservation and providing opportunities for development of renewable energy systems and alternative energy systems, including district energy; and

j) minimizing negative impacts from a changing climate and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature;

The design of the proposed chancery building draws from well established ecological principles for natural daylighting and cross ventilation to virtually all floor areas, which in addition to the green roof are consistent with the following policies of Section 1.8 Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change;

1.8.1 f) promote design and orientation which 1. maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating effects of vegetation; and

g) maximize vegetation within settlement areas.

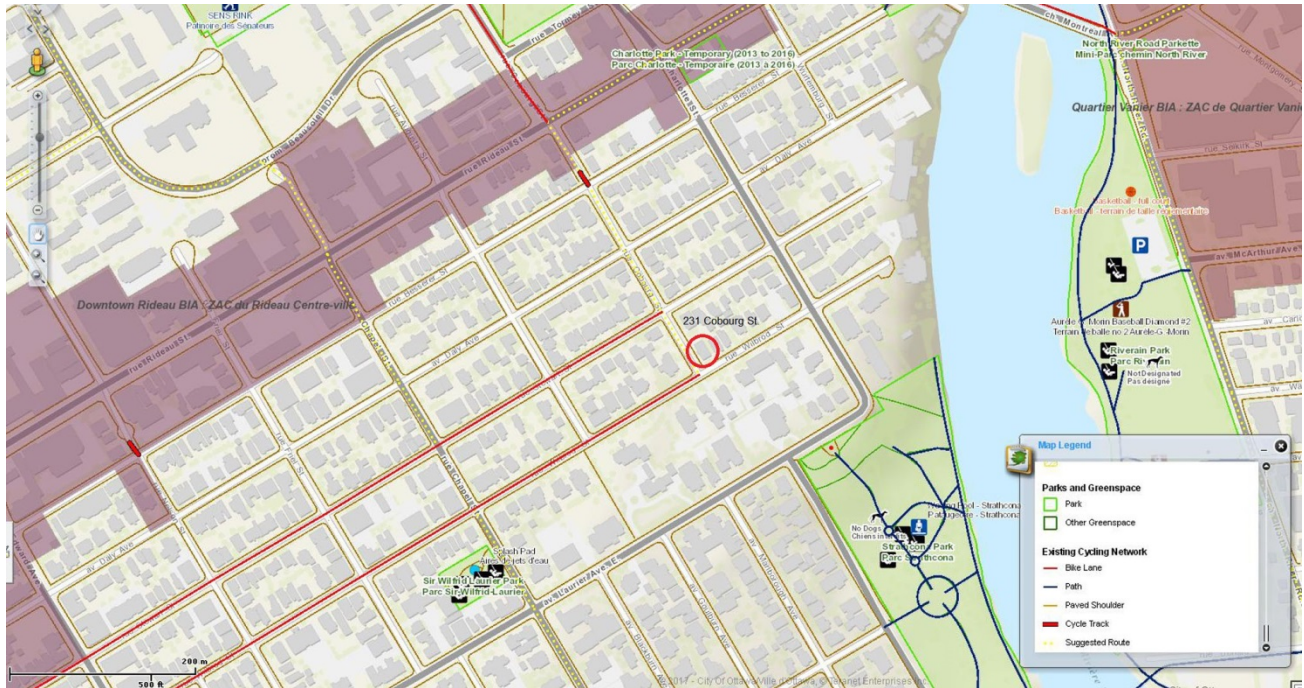
5.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan (OPA 150)

5.2.1 General Urban Area Designation

Schedule B of the City of Ottawa Official Plan designates the subject site as General Urban Area which permits all types and densities of housing, as well as employment, retail uses, service, industrial, cultural, leisure, greenspace, entertainment and institutional uses 3.6.1.1 The City encourages the provision of a variety of small, locally-oriented convenience and service uses that complement adjacent residential land uses, and are of a size and scale consistent with the needs of nearby residential areas. Although not a residential redevelopment, the proposal for 231 Cobourg Street has been prepared pursuant to By-law 2014-289, Part 5 - Residential Provisions, Section 130, Non-Residential Uses in Residential Zones, which states that where a non-residential use is permitted in a residential zone, the non-residential use must comply with the residential zone regulations that apply to the highest density residential use permitted in that zone. (By-law 2014-289) and is consistent with 3.6.1.3.a. as it relates to existing community character and enhances and builds upon desirable established patterns and built form.

More importantly, consistent with 3.6.1.6.

- a. the redevelopment proposal is compatible and complements surrounding land uses,
- b. conveniently located with respect to concentrations of residential development and provide direct access for pedestrians and cyclists from adjacent residential areas;
- c. clusters with other community oriented uses, such as parks, pedestrian linkages, etc. in order to facilitate interaction among residents and contribute to a sense of community;
- d. takes advantage of pedestrian and cycling patterns, and can be developed in accordance with the policies of Section 2.5.1 and 4.11 as shall be clearly demonstrated.



Existing Infrastructure – General Urban Area, 231 Cobourg Street.

5.2.2 Designing Ottawa

Section 2.5 of the City of Ottawa Official Plan - Building Liveable Communities proposes that communities in Ottawa be built on the basics of good housing, employment, ample greenspace, a sense of history and culture. It also proposes to create more livable communities by focusing more on community design and by engaging in collaborative community building. It states further that community design draws attention to how buildings and the spaces around them look and function in their setting. It concludes that since the best urban design is informed by a solid appreciation of the place being built, the people in it, and the community around it, this approach opens doors to creativity and dialogue. It was indeed in this spirit of collaboration and an appreciation for the history and context of 231 Cobourg Street that we approached the proposed redevelopment. We consulted with planning and heritage staff at the City of Ottawa, Ward Councillor Matthew Fleury's office and local community organization Action Sandy Hill.

Separate consultations with City of Ottawa Heritage Section and Action Sandy Hill members both included a site tour to empirically demonstrate adverse existing conditions that were the direct result of the building being vacated. These are discussed in detail in Section 3.0 "Commentary on Existing Conditions".

The position of the heritage section was that demolition of designated buildings is not normally supported and although no formal decision was taken on this, we did receive positive and productive feedback that informed our solution for the proposed redevelopment, especially as it pertains to the Heritage Overlay Provisions of Section 60 (By-law 2014-289) and the Urban Design Guidelines as discussed in detail under the 4.0 Development Proposal section.



Feedback from the planning and building departments addressed issues pertaining to the public realm particularly with regards to the accessible ramp. The initial recommendation was that the accessible ramp be relocated to the north-east corner so as to mitigate its visual impact as seen from both Cobourg and Wilbrod Streets. Our rebuttal to this was that relegating access for people with disabilities to a secondary means was contrary to the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and indeed consequently not consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (Section 4.6 Implementation and Interpretation) and that the ramp had to have direct access to the main entrance. From this dialogue, a compromised solution resulted in a decision to treat the exterior of the ramp with a stone cladding material (as opposed to exposed raw concrete) in order to fit more with the context of the neighbourhood. As well, the front building setback (Cobourg Street) was increased slightly to avoid encroachment on the City right of way as recommended by planning staff. Another modification that was the result of the consultation with both planning and heritage staff was the consolidation of the previously separate stair and elevator machine room volumes on the roof into one volume at the north-east corner of the proposed building again to mitigate the visual impact particularly from Wilbrod Street.

Feedback from Action Sandy Hill was disappointing in its brevity. At least two weeks prior to meeting on site with Action Sandy Hill, we forwarded by email a consultation package that comprised a twenty-five page comprehensive proposed redevelopment brief detailing not only the declining existing condition of the building and the proposed replacement design summary but backup information as well that included the following;

- **Structural Report** prepared by **Stephenson Engineering Limited** (dated January 24, 2017),
- **Designated Substances and Hazardous Materials Survey** prepared by **Arcadis Environmental Engineers** (dated June 12, 2015),
- **Geotechnical Investigation Report** prepared by **AA Tech Scientific Inc.** (dated January 17, 2017), and
- **Cultural Heritage Impact Statement** prepared by **Robertson Martin Architects** (dated April 6, 2017).

At our meeting of April 18th, 2017 with members of Action Sandy Hill, it was very clear that a good majority of them had not reviewed any of the information that had been made available to them and indeed that they were not interested in the meeting at all simply from the fact that except for Mr. Chad Rollins and one other member, they elected to not participate at all. When reference was made to the structural report which clearly illustrates the continuing structural failure of the building (discussed in detail in the aforementioned commentary on existing conditions), they all said they had not seen it to which Mr. Rollins said that he may have forgotten to distribute it. Regardless, the official response from ASH was as follows;

"Thank you for contacting Action Sandy Hill (ASH) on behalf of the Ugandan High Commission regarding the demolition and redevelopment of their Chancery Building located at 231 Cobourg Street.

Since our meeting last week, we have ascertained that 231 Cobourg Street was purchased by the wife of Lester B. Pearson in 1954, and was home to the Pearsons from 1955-1958 inclusive. It is also worth noting that Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957 while he was living at 231 Cobourg. It remains the only Nobel Peace Prize won by a Canadian.



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The above noted information about Pearson's ownership and residency in this building does not seem to have been reflected in either the City's assessment of the heritage value of the building, or the Cultural Heritage Impact Statement prepared for your clients.

Consequently, ASH will vehemently oppose the demolition of this significant heritage building."

In a direct response to Mr. Chad Rollins, our Heritage Architect, Mr. Robert Martin wrote;

"Thank you for the additional information about one of the home's tenants. We based our work on the City heritage survey form, which did not reference this info. Perhaps you could please share the info for our review and incorporation in the CHIS.

We must stress that the home's occupants are only one aspect of a heritage evaluation. In the City's standardized scoring, this might account for only about 20% of the overall maximum score. So even if the 'notable persons score' went up, it would not substantially change the overall score, nor the findings of the CHIS. Simply the fact that Mr. Pearson may have lived here for a period does not necessarily endow the building with importance, any more than if a notable figure stayed at a hotel or cottage and so on. A more nuanced approach might look at whether his tenancy was instrumental in any historic event etc.

We would also appreciate if ASH would pay attention to the other content of the CHIS covering the fact that the subject building and its place in the neighbourhood context is not remarkable. It itself demolished an earlier building and, most importantly, the poor condition of the existing building is valid. ASH's response, if produced in a fair and reasonable manner, should cover a more considered, comprehensive and holistic view of the proposal. We respectfully request a reconsideration of the proposal and ASH's feedback response."

Mr. Rollins' response was;

"With all due respect, given that ASH volunteers were able to find considerable additional information about the history of this building in an afternoon at the public library, we have serious questions about the completeness and validity of both the City's information on this building, and your CHIS. Consequently, ASH has no intention of commenting on a proposed replacement building at this time, as we remained unconvinced that the existing building does not merit and cannot be retained and restored."

The severely deteriorated condition of the existing building clearly brought about by a failing structure seems to be of no concern to ASH even after an empirical demonstration of same. That ASH is dismissive of the results of detailed investigations by professional structural, environmental and geotechnical engineers and indeed deems it unnecessary to comment on the proposed redevelopment is perplexing at best and is not consistent with the tenet of the Official Plan that "the best urban design is informed by a solid appreciation of the place being built, the people in it, and the community around it, and that this approach opens doors to creativity and dialogue." Consequently, it is our opinion that ASH's dismissive position (in light of everything to the contrary pertaining to the documented health and safety risks posed by the existing building and the prohibitive costs for any successful rehabilitation) is not in the best interest of the community.



Section 2.5.1. of the Official Plan speaks of the qualitative objectives that influence the built environment as the city matures and evolves and that these are to be applied with all land use designations.

- The proposed redevelopment enhances the sense of community by being well integrated into the existing context from a scale, built-form and street alignment perspective and consequently enhances the sense of community and identity. Drawing heavily from its context and the existing building, the proposed redevelopment recognizes and reflects on the history of the community albeit in an interpretive manner as opposed to duplication (Objective 1),
- The proposed redevelopment defines quality public and private space and enlivens the quality and character of the street through the use of landscape elements including the entrance stair to clearly demarcate the realms through design as opposed to physical barriers (fences and gates as is typical of most consulate buildings). This fits in with the continuity of street frontages (Objective 2.)
- The proposed redevelopment is fully accessible, safe and easy to get to and move through (Objective 3).
- A reiteration of Objective 1 above, the proposed redevelopment is informed and derived entirely by character of its existing context, is well integrated and complements the massing pattern, rhythm and character of its setting (Objective 4.)
- Although specific to the requirements of the Uganda High Commission, the building program is generic in nature and the variety of spaces in the building on all three levels can be adapted to various uses in the future if so required, especially given that all levels have been designed to be fully accessible (Objective 5.)
- The combination of the green roof and the use of permeable pavers for hard areas of the landscape contribute towards stormwater retention on site (Objective 6.)
- As avid proponents of ecological principles, we have designed the proposed building to take advantage of natural lighting as much as possible and passive cross-ventilation through the use of strategically placed windows that are also operable. This reduces lighting and mechanical loads on the building. The green roof's tempering effect will also contribute to energy conservation thus reducing resource consumption, energy use and the carbon footprint. Green building technologies such as the use of energy efficient fixtures and appliances as well as water conservation measures (high-efficiency low-flow water fixtures, etc.) will also be utilized (Objective 7.)

5.2.3 Review of Development Applications

Section 4 outlines the policies used by the City of Ottawa to review development applications in order to achieve the objectives of the Official Plan. In accordance with the requirements of the City, the proposed redevelopment is consistent with the following policies to ensure compliance to the official plan and facilitate the requisite review process;

-With regard to Policy 4.1 - Site Specific Policies and Secondary Policy Plans, the redevelopment site is within the boundary of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan which is discussed in detail in Section 4.3.



-With regard to Policy 4.3 - Walking, Cycling, Transit Roads and Parking Lots, the redevelopment site is located in an area designated as General Urban Area in Schedule B. As discussed in detail under *2.0 Property Information, Zoning Information, Background and Context*, the site is well-served by existing infrastructure with municipal roads, cycling and pedestrian networks. The proposed use is not anticipated to generate any more traffic than is usual for the neighbourhood.

-With regard to Policy 4.4 - Water and Wastewater Servicing, the proposed redevelopment will utilize existing services. A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report prepared by Lithos Group Inc. (dated March 2017) confirms that existing municipal services have sufficient capacity to support the proposed redevelopment.

-With regard to Policy 4.5 - Housing, the proposed redevelopment seeks to amend the existing zoning to remove the residential use and allow for construction of a three-storey building for consulate use. Prior to being vacated, the existing building served as offices for the Uganda High Commission under the provisions of Exception 481 of the Zoning By-law, which permits an office limited to a diplomatic mission subject to that office being restricted to a dwelling converted for that use. The demolition and reconstruction of this office does not meet the provision regarding conversion and requires relief from the by-law through a zoning amendment. The redevelopment proposal for 231 Cobourg Street has been prepared pursuant to By-law 2014-289, Part 5 - Residential Provisions, Section 130, Non-Residential Uses in Residential Zones, which states that where a non-residential use is permitted in a residential zone, the non-residential use must comply with the residential zone regulations that apply to the highest density residential use permitted in that zone. (By-law 2014-289). With respect to Policy 2.2.2.15 - Managing Growth Within the Urban Area, the proposed redevelopment has been designed to complement the neighbourhood pattern of built form and open spaces by following the Heritage Overlay provisions of Section 60 to essentially maintain the building footprint even though the front setback has been increased to prevent encroachment of the new entrance stair and accessible ramp. With respect to Policy 2.2.2.16 - Managing Growth Within the Urban Area, the application to amend the zoning by-law within this urban area does not eliminate residential apartments as the previous use for a diplomatic mission will be maintained.

-With regard to Policy 4.6.1 - Heritage Buildings and Areas, the existing building is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act and is within the Wilbrod/Laurier Heritage Conservation District. Although the existing building is not designated under Part IV, existing adverse conditions (structural and environmental) that have rendered the building uninhabitable as previously discussed in detail under the Commentary on Existing Conditions section, the building poses a safety and health risk to the community and it is for this reason alone that permission to demolish is being sought as rehabilitation and reuse is not viable. A Cultural Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Robertson Martin Architects (dated April 6, 2017) supports this application. If approved for demolition, we will thoroughly document the property in accordance with the accepted heritage recording guidelines for deposit in the City of Ottawa archives (4.6.1.7)

-With regard to Policy 4.8.3 - Unstable Soils or Bedrock, the proposed redevelopment seeks to address this issue in particular as it is the direct result of the continually deteriorating condition the existing building. Unstable soil has resulted in severe foundation stress caused by differential settlement and led to severe property damage. The risk to the property is visible and has been demonstrated empirically to both Heritage



Section staff at the City of Ottawa and members of Action Sandy Hill. The building poses an imminent threat of injury and loss of life and is a real hazard despite outward appearances. We would implore those ultimately responsible for sanctioning demolition to visit the site and go through the building to empirically assess the extent of the continuing damage due to structural failure. The geotechnical report prepared by AA Scientific Inc. will definitely inform the new foundation design in order to obviate the possibility of differential settlement for the replacement building.

-With regard to Policy 4.9 - Energy Conservation Through Design, the proposed building is designed on the principles of ecological principles for daylighting and cross-ventilation. The green roof also contributes to energy conservation through its tempering effect and also reduced the urban island heat effect. As previously stated, it also contributes to stormwater retention along with soft landscaped areas of the site and the proposed permeable paving for hard surfaces.

With regard to Policy 4.10 - Greenspace Requirements, although the proposed development is on a tight site, considerable efforts have been made to accommodate areas of soft landscaping, the biggest of which is on the green roof. Landscape Plans prepared by Victor Ford and Associates illustrate this clearly.

-Policy 4.11 - Urban Design and Compatibility, states that issues of compatibility at the scale of the city are addressed through appropriate designations of land and associated policies that inform where and how particular categories of land use should be allowed to develop and consequently isolate uses that have potential to generate negative impacts to appropriate locations, usually at the periphery of neighbourhoods. At the neighbourhood scale, compatibility is determined by context using objective criteria such as height, scale, setbacks, etc. As previously stated, the proposed redevelopment was designed not only with deference to the existing context, particularly that of a heritage conservation district as dictated by the Heritage Overlay provisions of Section 60 but also in accordance with the Urban Design Guidelines (discussed in detail in Section 4.4) to ensure maximum compatibility with minimal adverse impacts.

5.3 Sandy Hill Secondary Plan

The intent of the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan is to guide future growth and change in the neighbourhood of Sandy Hill.

-With respect to Policy 5.3.2 Land Use, Item iv. permits public uses that complement residential ones in type and intensity. The proposed redevelopment echoes that of the plethora of diplomatic missions surrounding the subject site and to reiterate, has been designed with utmost respect and consideration of the existing context.

-Policy 5.3.4 Heritage states that buildings, structures, sites and areas of architectural, historical and cultural significance are to be preserved and restored. Unfortunately, the proposed demolition of the existing building is not consistent with this policy but a convincing and substantiated case for demolition has been put forward for consideration as the building poses a health and safety risk.

-With respect to Policy 5.3.4.c. Means of Carrying Out the Heritage Programme, the proposed redevelopment encompasses a synthesis of information accumulated through a collaborative consultation



process with all relevant parties - with the notable exception of ASH - at the municipal and community level to inform and guide the direction of the redevelopment. It is consistently in alignment with the Provincial Policy Statement and the City of Ottawa Official Plan.

5.4 Urban Design Guidelines

Although this is not a residential redevelopment, the Urban Design Guidelines for infill housing are applied and relevant here because of the residential context and also because they are an extension of, and complement design strategies outlined in the Official Plan.

The proposed redevelopment is consistent with the following objectives of the Urban Design Guidelines;

- Enhance streetscapes. The proposed redevelopment does this successfully with its form and transitions between public and private realms delineated by landscaping elements.
- Support and extend existing landscaping. Containment of existing landscape elements fronting Wilbrod Street is integrated with new landscape elements by containment with new edge elements to define boundaries between soft and hard landscaping elements.
- Be a more compact urban form to consume less land and natural resources. The proposed redevelopment is more or less based on the footprint of the existing building. Even with the addition of a third storey, the building form is still very compact and within the scale of the neighbourhood.
- Achieve a good fit into an existing neighbourhood, respecting its character and its architectural and landscape heritage. As discussed extensively in previous sections, the proposed redevelopment has been designed to precisely do this, through scale, form and materiality.
- Providing new (housing) designs that offer variety, quality and a sense of identity. The proposed building introduces none traditional elements of design like thinly-framed windows to introduce shadow play as well as slight angles in building form for dynamic effect.
- Incorporate environmental innovation and sustainability. Again as previously discussed in detail, the proposed building not only incorporates proven ecological strategies for daylighting and cross-ventilation but also utilizes low energy-fixtures and appliances and has a green roof which reduces heating and cooling loads for the building.

6.0 Conclusion.

The proposed redevelopment of the brownfield site at 231 Cobourg Street fits very well and contributes positively to an established development pattern that clearly optimizes the use of the existing property, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities.

We understand, respect and are in complete agreement with the requirements of Section 2.6 of the Provincial Policy Statement as it relates to conservation of significant built heritage resources and specifically Section 4.6.1. of the City of Ottawa Official Plan as it relates to preservation of structures



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designated under Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act. That being the case, there are provisions that allow for exceptions to allow for demolition of designated structures and we strongly believe the exhaustively documented case for the property located at 231 Cobourg Street warrants this exception as the building poses a serious risk to health and safety. A substantial case has been put forward for consideration to prove that rehabilitation is not a viable option and would be tantamount to putting a band-aid on a compound fracture. The position taken by the local neighbourhood association, Action Sandy Hill, to not engage in the discourse related to this development is, to reiterate, is not in the best interest of the neighbourhood and not consistent with the tenet of the Official Plan that "the best urban design is informed by a solid appreciation of the place being built, the people in it, and the community around it, and that this approach opens doors to creativity and dialogue."

The proposed redevelopment is consistently consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, the Official Plan of the City of Ottawa and the Urban Design Guidelines. The proposal was developed through a collaborative process predicated on not only the context of the site and its history but also by consultations with the City of Ottawa planning and heritage section staff as well as the local councillor's office. Disappointing as ASH's position to not engage fully in the development process, our canvassing of the immediate vicinity and discussions of the proposed redevelopment with the neighbours had a positive response and we are convinced that this redevelopment, informed and designed with the neighbourhood at its core, will not only greatly improve the neighbourhood but will also add a significant and relevant chapter in its evolution.

It is compatible in a manner that looks forward in its design and environmental stewardship, takes its cues from an established heritage context that it inherits and addresses the programming and functional requirements of the Uganda High Commission.