

Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIS) – Addendum

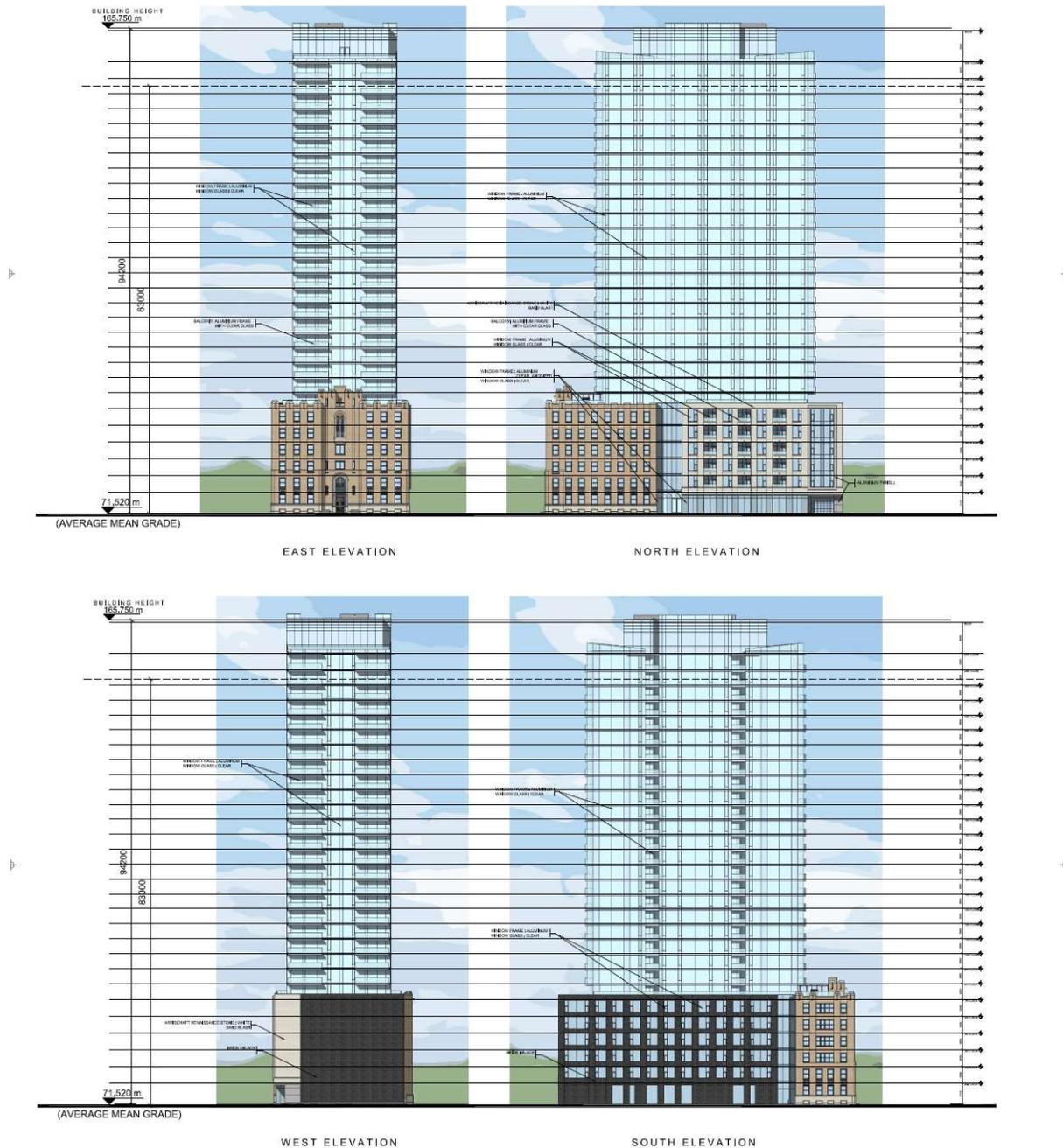


Figure 1: All elevations of 2020 proposed design (images courtesy of Roderick Lahey Architect).

Robertson Martin Architects (RMA) was retained in May 2020 by Fotenn Planning Consultants to submit an update/ addendum to the *Cultural Heritage Impact Statement* (CHIS), prepared by RMA in May 2018, for the redevelopment of the Medical Arts Building Development (the site), at 180 Metcalfe Street, Ottawa. This addendum is written as part of an Application to the City of Ottawa for changes to the originally conceived and approved design (approved June 2019). It includes an increase in building height resulting in OPA, ZBA and Site Plan revision applications for 180 Metcalfe Street. This addendum will

address all changes to the design, including changes based on the recommendations made in the previous CHIS. RMA has reviewed the revised design drawings as supplied by the Client and prepared the following abbreviated report to provide any revisions to impacts and/or mitigation measures as were presented in the original CHIS.

Only the exterior elements of the design have been reviewed for this study as the previous submission understood that the interior of the heritage building would be fully demolished, retaining only the exterior façades. The primary change to the design is the addition of three storeys, taking the building from the previous 27 storeys to a total of 30 storeys in height. The revised design also presents changes to the exterior cladding on the new podium structure.

For clarity purposes, this report will begin by addressing major changes made to the exterior façades between the 2018 CHIS review and the 2019 approved design, including changes based on the recommendations made in the previous CHIS.

2018 CHIS review – 2019 Approved Design

In review of the suggested areas of refinement from the previous CHIS, no changes were noted in the historic penthouse area. The design for this feature is presumably unchanged from the previous submission and previous comments and recommendations for this element withstands. The recommendations made in the previous CHIS for items to be refined includes infill at the basement windows. This area has been refined in the preliminary tender package for the masonry work. These areas are to be infilled with a recessed masonry panel, which will allow the ‘memory of the opening’ to still be legible. At this time, we also want to reinforce the importance of integrating architectural lighting into the main redevelopment project to properly design the lighting and conduits into the building rather than adding at a later date. Integrating lighting as a later project will ultimately cause greater destruction to the historic façade. All other previous recommendations have been addressed in the revised design and subsequent heritage impacts are detailed below.

The following list summarizes major changes made to the design between the 2018 CHIS review and the 2019 approved design, followed by a brief assessment of the impacts to the heritage value of the site as a result of such changes. Note, all discussed changes/assessment still apply to the most recent design proposal:

- Elimination of the proposed new canopy feature over the front entrance door;
- Elimination of the soft-shell awning features over ground-floor windows on the heritage façades;
- Use of clear anodized aluminum panels between glazing on the tower instead of previously proposed bronze coloured aluminum panels;
- Redesign of tower penthouse, including elimination of bronze coloured frame feature, change in massing, and change in cladding material;
- Use of lighter stone veneer (*Arriscraft Renaissance Stone*: white sand blast) on the north façade (2nd floor to 6th floor) instead of previously proposed black stone veneer;
- Redesign of lower levels and overall street presence on the north façade;
- Change in fenestration pattern at west corner of north façade; and,

- Elimination of the differential treatment of the ground floor as compared to the upper storeys of the podium on the south elevation.

Elimination of Entrance Canopy and Soft-Shell Awnings

The design decision to eliminate the free-standing metal canopy at the main entrance and the soft-shell awnings over the first-floor windows on the historic façades has a positive impact on the heritage building. These previously proposed features would obstruct the views of heritage elements including the limestone entryway and the decorative metal friezes between the first and second-floor windows.



Figure 2: Metcalfe Street elevation (main entrance) of proposed design (image courtesy of Roderick Lahey Architects).

Material Finishes and Colour

The proposed changes to material finishes and colour choices at both the tower and the podium level pose minor impacts to our previous assessment and are generally compatible with the heritage resource.

Tower - For the new tower element, the proposed colour of the aluminum panel cladding between windows was changed from a medium bronze finish to clear anodized aluminum. The revised design maintains the recessed glazed “gasket” used to both visually and physically isolate the heritage façades from the new façades at the podium level. This proposed change maintains a clear distinction between the heritage building and new components. The change in colour is acceptable and the visual lightness of the tower places greater public realm focus on the podium portion. The execution of the new construction should prioritize quality of materials and craft to compliment the quality of the heritage building.

Tower Penthouse – The cladding of the new tower penthouse is a continuation of the tower as opposed to the material distinction proposed in the original 2018 design. This design choice is supported as it reduces the visual distraction from the heritage façades at the podium level.

Podium – See discussion of podium finishes under the review of the 2020 design revisions below as further updates were made to such finishes between the 2019 approved design and the 2020 revisions.

Fenestration and Massing

As noted in the previous CHIS, “*The new development does not mimic the existing building, but rather takes cues from the building in terms of datum lines, patterns, geometry, heights, and massing*”.

Tower - The tower element remains stepped back from the heritage façade on all elevations. As such, the impact is unchanged.

Penthouse - The revised penthouse design was set-back from lower levels of the tower on the east and west facades, but not the north and south. The colour and uniformity of the material between the tower and the penthouse reduces the visual heaviness of this element. Thus, the lack of set-back on the north and south elevations poses no impact on the heritage site.

Podium - The approved design maintains the six-storey podium which speaks to the original building height. The design also maintains the glazed vertical “gasket” on the north elevation to physically and visually separate the new and old components of the façades. The façade strategy presented in the approved design shows efforts to draw inspiration from the heritage building with continuation of horizontal datum lines and use of strong vertical piers between windows. The design team is encouraged to create a more *intentional dialogue*, focusing on the proportions and rhythm of the fenestration of the heritage building, such as the height of horizontal datum lines and the width and rhythm of window spacing. Particularly on the south façade, the placement and rhythm of the windows should be refined with more intentional design that speaks to both the historic façade and the tower above.

The original façade strategy differentiated the bottom two storeys on the north and south façades from the upper podium levels, speaking to the double-height street presence of the heritage building. The 2019 design distinguishes only a single storey street presence on the north and eliminates the distinction on the south elevation. Although the double-height street presence speaks truer to the heritage design, the proposed single height strategy of the north façade is acceptable with minimal impact to the understanding of the heritage site. This design change is seen as compatible as the massing aligns the change from glazing to stone with the metal frieze element on the heritage façade. Further discussion can be seen above, under *Material Finishes and Colour*.

In addition, the fenestration at the west corner of the north elevation differs from the rest of the façade; however, the physical distance of this element minimizes the visual impact and the appreciation or understanding of the heritage building.

2019 Approved Design – 2020 Design Revisions

The following list summarizes all changes noted in the design, between the approved 2019 design and the revised architectural drawings as received for this review, followed by our revised assessment of the impacts to the heritage value of the site as a result of such changes:

- Increase in overall height from 27 storeys (84.5m) to 30 storeys (94.2m); and,
- Varied use of light and dark brick on north, west, and south façades of new podium.

Height Increase

The proposed increase in overall building height to 30 storeys or 94.2m exceeds the maximum building height for the site as identified in the Centretown Community Design Plan. This increase is primarily a planning concern and does not impact the heritage character defining features of the site. More importantly, the overall building height falls within the projected angular height control plane of the protected view of Parliament Hill. An earlier iteration of the design proposed an additional four storeys with moderate impact on the line of sight of the Parliament Buildings. However, this revised design reflects the recommendations of RMA and Fotenn to reduce the height of the building and eliminate the impact on the protected view.

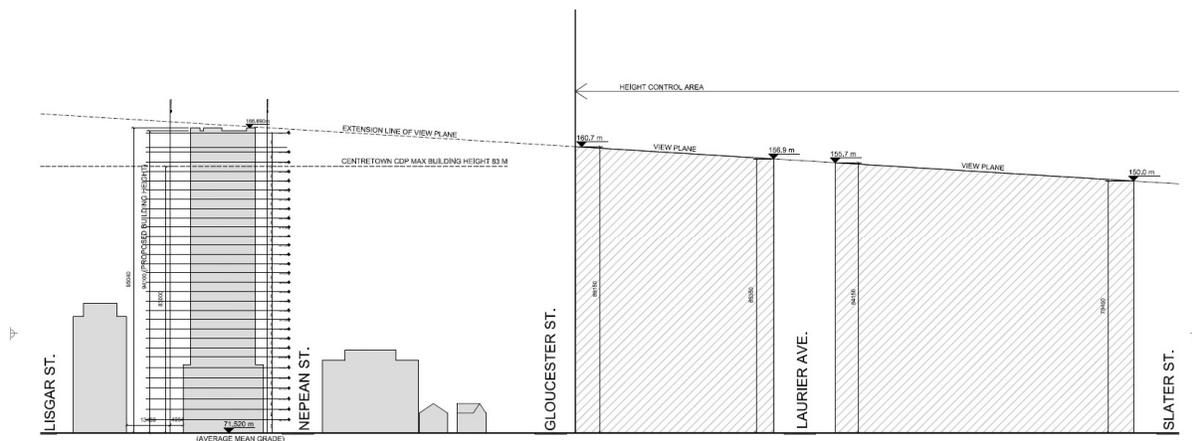


Figure 3: Parliament Hill protected view projection (image courtesy of Roderick Lahey Architect).

Material Finishes and Colour

Podium- The use of lighter brick on the north façade ties nicely with the limestone foundation of the heritage building and creates a more subtle distinction between the historic and new components. However, the design team is encouraged to consider use of a contrasting element, such as the black brick veneer, between the first and second floor levels, to highlight the visual continuation of the datum line created by the heritage metal friezes onto the new façade. This feature will also work to tie together the use of the contrasting brick colours in the new design.

The recommended integration of a black “ribbon” element on the north façade should continue around the north-west corner on the west façade. On the west façade, minimal other changes are proposed to finishes from the original, and as such do not affect the previous impact assessment.

On the south façade, the use of black brick on all podium levels eliminates the distinction between the street level and the upper storeys as was evident in the original design. The design team should consider the use of the lighter brick at the ground floor to create a visual connection between the heritage building and the new façade. See *Fenestration and Massing* section above for further discussion on the street presence of the south elevation.

Summary of Recommendations:

Overall, the proposed design changes to the development at 180 Metcalfe are in general conformity with the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, and do not adversely impact the heritage values of the site as outlined by the City of Ottawa.

- The execution of the new construction should prioritize quality of materials and craft to compliment the quality of the heritage building;
- Consider use of black brick veneer between the first and second floor levels to highlight the continuation of the datum line created by the metal friezes on the heritage façade and to tie together the use of contrasting brick colours on all new podium elevations; and,
- The design team is encouraged to create a more intentional dialogue, between the podium and retained heritage facades, focusing on the proportions and rhythm of the fenestration of the heritage building, particularly on the south elevation.