



REVISED MARCH 2021

# NEPEAN & LISGAR STREETS RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Cover illustration: Perspective rendering looking south west on Nepean. *Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects*

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## INTRODUCTION

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This Cultural Heritage Impact Statement (CHIS) has been requested by the City of Ottawa as part of the Site Plan and Re-Zoning applications for the Lisgar Nepean Streets development. The purpose of the CHIS is to identify the cultural heritage resources and values that may be impacted by the proposed development of two high-rise buildings located mid-block west of Bank on Nepean and Lisgar Streets in the Centretown neighbourhood of Ottawa. The rezoning includes a request for additional height and relief on requirements for front yard and side yard setbacks.

A CHIS is consistent with the City of Ottawa Official Plan Section 4.6 dealing with a development adjacent to the Centretown Heritage Conservation District. The CHCD Study provides the heritage context for the area, while the applicable sections of the Centretown Community Design Plan (CCDP) include sections: 2.4 Heritage; 6.4 Built Form Guidelines; and, 6.5 Heritage Approach, addressing the development in the context of heritage. The following narrative provides the heritage context surrounding the proposed development using the guidelines contained in the Centretown Community Design Plan (CCDP) in order to assess the impact.

Documents consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Guidelines for the Preparation of Cultural Heritage Impact Statements, City of Ottawa;
- Centretown Heritage Conservation District (CHCD) Study, Julian Smith & Associates 1997;
- Ottawa Centretown Community Design Plan (CCDP), Urban Strategies Inc., Delcan, ERA Architects, City of Ottawa. May 2013;
- Centretown Secondary Plan, Official Plan, City of Ottawa;
- Heritage Survey and Evaluation Forms – 211-213 Bank St., 231 Bank St., and 311-315 Lisgar St.;
- Site Plan and Streetscape Analysis Graziani & Corazza Architect, October 2020;
- Floor Plans, Elevations and Renderings, Graziani & Corazza Architects, October 2020;
- OUDRP Informal Pre-Consultation, January 2020;
- Pre-application Consultation Meeting Minutes Address Formal Pre-consultation File No.: PC2019-0241
- Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Second Edition, 2010.

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## 1.2 Description of Context

Richcraft is proposing to construct two towers, 25 and 27 storeys high, located on a large, irregularly shaped site, currently used as a surface parking lot. The proposed development site is a through-lot between Lisgar and Nepean Streets, just east of Bank Street in the Centretown neighbourhood of the City of Ottawa.



Figure 1: Block plan of the area surrounding the site illustrating the context and lot divisions. Bank St. is to the left. The building at 176 Nepean and 293 Lisgar shown on the plan have been demolished, and the buildings at 307 will be demolished. Source: Google Earth.



Figure 2: View looking east with Bank Street in the foreground. The site is indicated in orange. Source: Richcraft Commonwealth Historic Resource Management







Figure 4: View looking east on Nepean St. from Bank St. Source: Google Earth



Figure 5: Looking west along Nepean Street is a context view of 178 Nepean, 211-213 Bank. Located within the boundary of the HCD, the building is designated under Part V OHA and is categorized as compatible heritage resource. A through-block laneway separates the development site. Source: Google Earth

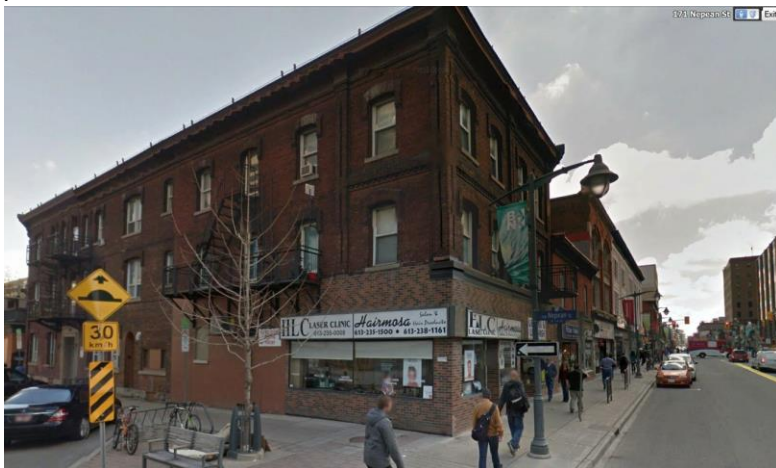


Figure 6: Context view of 211-213 Bank with the Nepean Street façade. Character defining features include the traditional red brick, 3-storey height, the vertical profile and repetition of fenestration Source: Google Earth.





Figure 7: Street view of the west edge of the development site on Nepean. The driveway to the left of the building is a 3m easement to provide access to the back of buildings fronting on Bank Street. Soho condominium tower on Lisgar Street is in the background. Source: Google Earth.



Figure 8: Context view of a six-storey development on Nepean Street across from the proposed development. Note the building is set 3.0m from the property line. Note the differing architectural and material treatment and the horizontal band, which in the absence of a step back visually at the street level forms a podium.

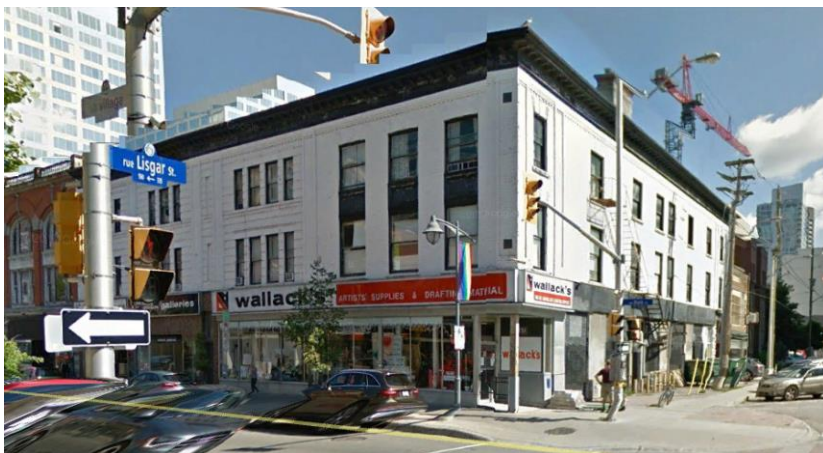


Figure 9: Context view looking north-east from the corner of Bank and Lisgar. Source: Google Earth.





Figure 10: Context view along Lisgar Street. Both 315 and d3111 Lisgar (centre), are outside the HCD. Google Earth.



Figure 11: Context view looking east on Lisgar with the development site to the left and the Soho to the right with no step-back from the street and a lack of a defined podium. Source: Google Earth.

### 1.3 Relevant Information from Council Approved Documents

The proposed development was developed with regard for the following documents including:

#### **City of Ottawa Official Plan and Official Plan Amendment 150 2012.**

The City of Ottawa includes provisions for Cultural Heritage Resources in Section 4.6.1 of the Official Plan, which requires a CHIS when development has the potential to affect heritage resources adjacent to the development site. The development site is located on the eastern edge of the Centretown HCD that was designated under Part V of the OHA By-law 269-97.

#### **Centretown Heritage Conservation District (CHCD)**

The CHCD was designated under Part V of the OHA by the City of Ottawa in 1997 (By-law 269-97). The study includes a Heritage Character Statement for the area. There are guidelines dealing with new building construction within the District but no direction for development adjacent to the CHCD. An update of the plan is underway.

The Centretown Statement of Cultural Heritage Value is included in the appendix as a reference to the overall area. The Nepean Lisgar site is located next to but not within the District.

### **Centretown Community Design Plan (CCDP), 2013**

The CCDP provides a Heritage Approach (Section 6.5), and a heritage context that provides guidance for new buildings that are located adjacent to a heritage building or streetscape. The CCDP also provides guidance on the built form (Section 6.4) for high-rise infill that is adjacent to a low-rise neighbourhood.

### **Mature Neighbourhoods, By-law 2012-147**

The development site is located within the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay and therefore, is affected by the Mature Neighbourhoods By-law. The by-law applies when developing a new dwelling on a new infill lot or on an existing lot, therefore, requiring a Streetscape Character Analysis.

### **Urban Design Guidelines for Tall Buildings**

The Urban Design Guidelines are to be used during the preparation and review of development proposals that include a high-rise building in order to achieve objectives of the Official Plan. These are general guidelines to be used as a checklist for evaluating a proposal.

## **2.0 HERITAGE RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

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### **2.1 Centretown History**

The history of Centretown is outlined in *Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study* completed in 1997. An update the study is underway. The development site is located outside the conservation district on its north-eastern edge, where a finger extending two and a half blocks north, including buildings on both sides of Bank Street, frames the development site. The development abuts two older buildings: a circa 1920 three storey brick clad mixed-use building at 211 Bank; and, a two storey brick clad apartment building with a more recent third floor at 311 Lisgar constructed in the 1920s, that is located outside the limits of the HCD (Figure 10).

A mix of retail activity on the ground floor characterizes the Bank Street streetscape between Lisgar and Nepean, with residential units above. The buildings are designated and identified as contributing. Under the 1997 system of classification, they are described as group 1 and 2 heritage buildings.

The Lisgar streetscape extending to Bank is characterized by two and three storey brick clad buildings set back uniformly from the street with hard surfacing in the front yards. The landscape adjacent to the site at 311 Lisgar consists of a grassed front yard with shrub foundation planting. The Lisgar streetscape to the east of the site consists of a surface parking lot.

Buildings set on the property line with parking on the street characterize the Nepean streetscape extending to Bank. The Nepean Streetscape extending to the east in front of the development site consists of a 1.0m strip of grass between the curb and sidewalk to the lot line.

### **2.2 Site Development History**

The first development in the area bound by Lisgar, Nepean, and Bank Streets occurred in the 1870s with the construction of a few single-family detached homes fronting onto Nepean, Lisgar, and Bank Streets.





### 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Design Intent

Richcraft is proposing to construct two (2) residential towers 27 and 25 storeys tall, connected by a structure at the third and fourth storeys, with shared amenity space and six (6) levels of underground parking (Figure 14).

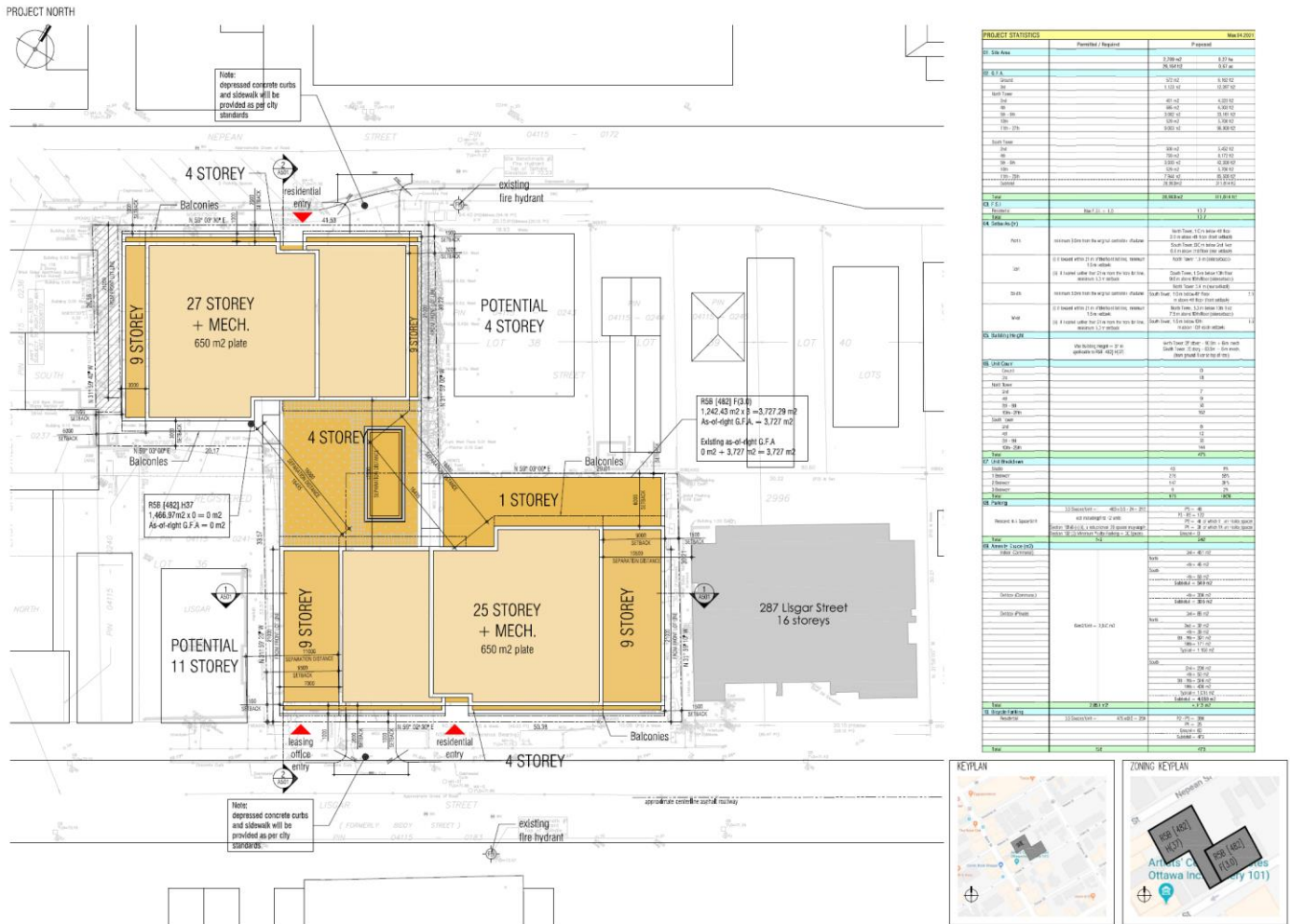


Figure 14: Plan view indicating the number of floors of the two towers, set back from the street and sideyards. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2020

The North Tower along Nepean Street contains 252 residential units in 27 storeys on a floorplate of 650 m<sup>2</sup>. The South Tower along Lisgar Street contains 251 units in 25 storeys on a floorplate of 650 m<sup>2</sup>, while a structure adjoining both towers contains 18 residential units as well as a shared fourth storey rooftop amenity space, for a total of 521 units and a total GFA of 29,161 m<sup>2</sup>. A total of 282 underground parking spaces are proposed on levels P1 through P6. A total of 470 bicycle parking spaces are also proposed. Residential access to the towers will be from lobbies via Lisgar Street and Nepean Street.



Vehicular access is provided along both frontages to account for the one-way nature of the streets. A two-way drive-aisle located between the two towers provides access to the underground parking garage. The entrance to the underground parking garage is located along the northern portion of the South Tower. In addition, a two (2) space drop-off vehicle zone is offset along the western portion of the South Tower as well as one (1) space lay-by along the eastern portion of the North Tower. A screened loading bay is provided behind the North Tower. Storage, including waste removal storage for the proposed development, will be contained within the building to minimize any disruption to adjacent properties.

A combination of common amenity areas and private balconies are proposed for building residents, and a woonerf-designed street between the towers creates a mid block connection between Lisgar and Nepean, as well provides the opportunity for more intimate outdoor space on the ground floor. A total of 4,909 m<sup>2</sup> of amenity space is provided.



Figure 15: Perspective rendering of Lisgar looking west provides context. The facades of the first three storeys treated with a dark-brown brick reference the material and scale of the existing neighbouring buildings. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.



Figure 16: Perspective rendering on Nepean Street looking west with the 6-storey unit ghosted in the foreground of the north tower. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021

## 3.2 Building Design

### Building Massing and Transition

The built form of the proposed development transitions from the North Tower (27 storeys) along Nepean Street to the South Tower (25 storeys) along Lisgar Street (figure 15 and 16). The development is consistent with the overall intent of the Centretown Secondary Plan transitioning from the high-rise building heights of the Central Area just north of the subject site to the more mid-rise buildings towards Somerset Street West.

Both towers have a 1.0m front yard setback with an additional 1.0m at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. In addition to the use of various setbacks, the mass of the building is broken up using contrasting finishes, fenestration and balconies (Figure 15, 16 and 17). The setback at the fourth storey is provided along the Lisgar Street and Nepean Street frontages and is reinforced through the three storey dark-brown brick that complements the existing building along the street. Moreover, a nine-storey podium contributes to a transition between the proposed development and neighbouring residential developments to the east and west.

Both towers have been designed to provide sufficient tower separation distances to the recently constructed building to the east along Lisgar Street as well as any potential developments on the neighbouring properties. In addition to the nine-storey podium, a one storey podium along the northern periphery of the South Tower ensures an increased tower separation distance between the proposed towers, the existing development to the east along Lisgar Street as well as potential developments to the north along Nepean Street. The north and south towers are offset to allow for natural light and maximize balcony space. A 16.5m separation distance, minimizes any impacts related to overlook and shadowing.



*Figure 17: The perspective rendering viewed from the corner of Lisgar and Bank Streets with the existing buildings on Bank Street forming a foreground base to the mid-block development. The 3-storey Wallack building in the foreground is a surprisingly comfortable part of the visual frame. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.*

### **Streetscape and Public Realm**

The proposed development includes improvements along the public right-of-way of both Nepean Street and Lisgar Street. The inclusion of new street trees and active at-grade entrances animate both frontages. The introduction of a continuous wall along both frontages contributes to an enhanced rhythm of the street and pedestrian experience. These elements are in keeping with the character of mid-block development in Centretown.

An increased floor to ceiling height ratio is proposed on the ground floor, and commercial scaled glazing provides visual transparency and improved safety for pedestrians in the area. The design of the access/egress to the parking garage has been located away from Lisgar Street and Nepean Street, avoiding any interruptions in the active frontages.

The placement of the towers allows for natural light and balcony space to be maximized for all units, while allowing for an internal woonerf-designed space in the base of the buildings. This space, which will be linked through the central two-way drive-aisle that is accessed from both frontages offers a mid-block connection. Hardscape materials, directional pavers and spherical bollards will ensure that pedestrians, vehicles and cyclists alike can safely share this proposed amenity space. Softscape materials such as trees, shrubs and raised planter beds provide elements that will further animate the space and create an urban plaza.





Figure 18: Perspective rendering of the Lisgar streetscape Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.



Figure 19: The perspective rendering of the Nepean streetscape features a two storey colonnaded drive isle that helps ground the tower. Carrying the glazing around the north and south facades at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor might define the podium more distinctly. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.



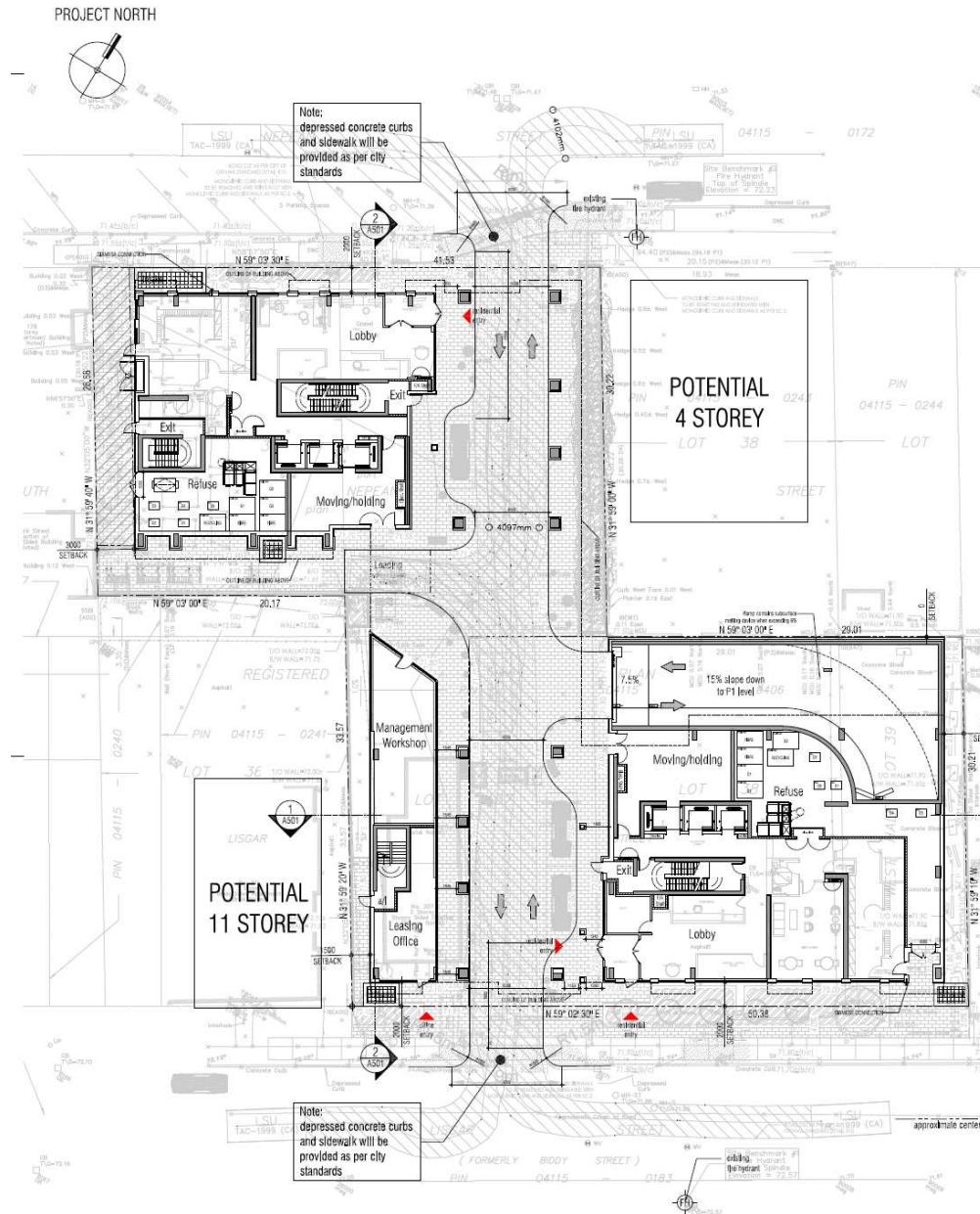


Figure 20: Landscape Plan View of the two towers with two-way drive isle and an internal woonerf-designed courtyard. The open two-lane drive isle that links Lisgar and Nepean helps mitigate the restricted front yard setback of the towers. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects

# IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

## 4.0 Heritage Context

This section specifically addresses how the development site impacts the heritage context of neighbourhood. The north tower is adjacent to the Centretown HCD, abutting 178 Nepean and 211-213 Bank Street. Neither 315 nor 311 Lisgar are designated. Both were included in the study area, however the HCD boundary was set between 223 Bank Street and 315 Lisgar. The mapping/information in the Centretown CDP and in GeoOttawa is incorrect.

## 4.1 Heritage Integration

### Form and Mass

The primary consideration relates to the transition of the proposed development with the adjacent heritage context of Bank Street and neighbouring sites along Nepean and Lisgar Streets.

The heritage buildings along Bank Street create a cohesive grouping, wrapping around Nepean and Lisgar to create a defining streetscape, with the north tower abutting a Group 1 heritage resource located at 178 Nepean and 211-213 Bank Street. The south tower on Lisgar is next to two buildings located to the west at 311 and 315 Lisgar Street.



STREETSCAPE DIAGRAM – VERTICAL  
 • Richcraft Homes • Nepean & Lisgar • 1353 110 • MAR 03 2021

HERITAGE DIAGRAM - 02



Figure 21: Nepean and Lisgar Streetscape context illustrating the cadence and rhythm of the vertical expression of existing fenestration being carried into the new building treatment for the first three floors. The shift from the verticality to a horizontal treatment for the body of the towers and the distinct material change helps emphasis the pedestrian realm along both streets. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2020.

The building at 311 Lisgar is outside the boundaries of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District. The heritage context is similar for both the north and south towers at the west property line with three storey heritage buildings. The boundary of the HCD runs between the Wallack’s Building on Bank Street and 315 Lisgar and follows the rear property line through to Nepean Street. The mid-block separation distance from the flat roofed buildings along Bank Street and location next to lots unsuitable for high-rise housing provides visual separation, mitigating the potential that the development overwhelms or diminishes the positive elements of the neighbourhood.

### Materials and Finishes

The finishes and palette of materials and colours of the 3- storey base is a dark red-brown brick that is in keeping with traditional buildings in the neighbourhood. Because of the importance of the Bank Street buildings (as character defining features of the conservation district), the treatment of the base of the two towers respects datum lines (Figure 22). The three storey, predominantly red brick of existing buildings establishes the foreground at the street level that carries along the frontage of the proposed developments for both Lisgar and Nepean Streets (figure 21).



STREETSCAPE DIAGRAM - HEIGHTS  
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HERITAGE DIAGRAM - 01



Figure 22: Street view illustrating the 3-storey base respecting established datum lines from the Bank Street neighbouring buildings. The actual podium is 4-storeys with a material and colour change after the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. A 1m stepback at the 4<sup>th</sup> storey is not a noticeable feature of the streetscape. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2020.

## 4.2 Centretown Community Design Plan

The guidelines contained in the CCDP provide direction for new high-rise infill next to the HCD. The Commonwealth Historic Resource Management

CHCD Study provides the heritage context for the district. The applicable sections of the CCDP include Sections: 2.4 Heritage; 6.4 Built Form Guidelines; and, 6.5 Heritage Approach. Applicable guidelines taken from the CCDP are in *italic* and a discussion follows in the table below.

**CCDP Section 6.4.2 Mid-Rise pg. 53**

Guidelines included in this section are applicable to the ‘podium’ portion of a tall building.

- ii *Extend infill the length of the site on all street frontages.*

**Discussion:** Both towers extend the length of the site and respect an existing 3.0m easement adjacent to the heritage building to the west of the north tower. The south tower extends the length of the site, with a driveway entry to the parking on the east side of the site. Figures 21 and 22 illustrate the analysis of how the base portion of the two towers incorporates defining features as part of their street frontage.

- iv *When higher than 6 storeys, a front (1.5 to 3 m) and sideyard (minimum 3 m) building setback should be introduced to maintain access to light and support a pedestrian scale. The determination of the setback location should be based on context, adjacent building relationships, and building proportion. Generally, the building setback should be introduced above the sixth storey, but can also occur below. To promote well-defined street edges and enclosures, building setbacks directly above the ground floor will not be permitted.*

**Discussion:** Both towers have a 1.0m front yard setback at grade that increases to 2.0m above the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. At the fifth floor of the north tower, the glazed treatment visually breaks down the height (figure 23) and at the ninth floor the building setbacks. The south tower is set 1m further from the street than adjacent older buildings to the west and corresponds with the setback for the adjacent tower to the east. The side yard setback to the north tower, which abuts the heritage building along the west property line, is 3.0m. At the 9<sup>th</sup> floor, the tower steps back an additional 3.0m. The side yard setback from the east property line is 1.5m and increases to 3.0m above the 9<sup>th</sup> floor, which is considered acceptable given the existing and future development potential on the neighbouring property.

- vi *Ground level units should be well articulated to reduce the scale of the building and introduce a finer grained rhythm to the street frontage.*

**Discussion:** Bank Street, with commercial at ground level and residential uses above, articulates the street and provides a pedestrian scale to the neighbourhood. The lower levels (three-storey base) of the towers on both Nepean and Lisgar Streets extend this character along the street. As illustrated in Figure 24, the commercial style glazing at the ground floor references Bank Street retail; the use of unit masonry and a traditional colour palette support the Bank Street character, and the vertical rhythm introduces a distinct character to the frontage.





Figure 23: The 3-storey height of the Bank Street buildings extends around and is picked up with the tower podium on Lisgar Street. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.

Both towers are set on a three storey base, to align with the height of the adjacent heritage buildings. The built context to the north on Nepean Street, across from the development site, consists of five to six storey mid-rise buildings extending from the corner of Bank Street to the east along Nepean Street. The south tower is also set on a similar base.

*ix Inset balconies behind the street wall to reinforce the street edge and public realm. Above the setback, projected, balconies are permitted but are not to exceed the setback width.*

**Discussion:** Both Nepean and Lisgar are narrow streets and projecting balconies rising 25/27 storeys would potentially overwhelm the street. The balconies for both towers are part of the north and south facades. They read as continuous, horizontal banding set within a frame extending the entire body of the towers.

*The top portion of a tower or the last few storeys, should contribute to the city skyline with a difference in articulation or special architectural treatment.*

**Discussion:** The towers, as designed, distinguish themselves on the east and west facades through materiality and vertical articulation which contributes to the city skyline.

#### **CCDP Section 6.4.3 High-Rise pg. 99**

*The tower should setback, generally a minimum of 1.5m further from the podium façade. Where blocks are very narrow (less than 63m), instead of a setback, the transition between the base and the tower will be permitted to be achieved through various design techniques such as creating a gap, varying building materials or articulation where the tower meets the podium.*

**Discussion:** Both the north and south towers at 27 and 25 storeys respectively, setback a minimum of 1m from the podium façade along Lisgar and Nepean; furthermore setbacks from the podium of 1.5m and 3.0m are proposed along the east and west facades of the north tower, as well as 9.0m and 7.0m along the east and west facades of the south tower. By comparison, the SOHO tower on Lisgar presents a 16-storey glass wall with minimal articulation along the street with no setback or podium.

*Towers must be set back a minimum 10 metres from side and rear property lines. A slightly reduced setback from the rear property line of 9m minimum may be considered only on narrow blocks north of Lisgar.*

**Discussion:** The side yard setback to the north tower from the west property line is 3.0m or the width of the easement next to the heritage building. At the 9<sup>th</sup> floor, the tower steps back an additional 3.0m. The neighbouring properties to the west are within the Heritage Conservation District and designated under Part V of OHA. Redevelopment of these sites is unlikely; and the significant depth of the sites (34.0m) provides a comfortable visual setback for anyone looking at the tower from Bank Street.

The side yard setback from the east property line is 1.5m increasing to 3.0m above the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. This property is constrained with a total of 500 square meters suggesting that it is too small for a high-rise site. On Lisgar Street the property east of the proposed development is a recently constructed 16-storey residential building. The setback above the second floor of the existing building as well as the proposed one-storey podium along the north side of the South building mitigate possible impacts due to the reduced setback which is 10.5 at the 9<sup>th</sup> floor.

*Towers must be setback 20 metres from adjacent low-rise areas.*

**Discussion:** North Tower: The built context to the north of the development site along Nepean Street consists of 5 to 6 storey mixed-use buildings extending from Bank Street to the east the width of the development's street frontage. The built heritage context to the west of the site consists of a three storey street wall extending to Bank Street and wrapping around the block extending along Bank to Lisgar Street. From a visual perspective, the consistent 3-storey street wall with a significant depth is quite different from a low-rise residential street where buildings are set on individual lots with gaps between buildings. In this instance given the adjacent built context, a setback of 6m (3 m at grade and extending to 6 m at the 9<sup>th</sup> floor) may be acceptable.

South Tower: The side yard set-back to the west is 1.5 m increasing to 8.5 m above the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. The built context consists of two older buildings constructed in the 1920s - one, 2-storeys and the other, 3-storeys in height with a three-storey street wall extending around the corner north on Bank to Nepean Street.

CCDP Section 6.5 Heritage Approach

*Where heritage buildings are low scaled; the podium of a new building will respect and reflect the urban grain and scale, visual relationships, and materials of the surrounding historic building(s).*

**Discussion:** Both the north tower and south tower are setback 1.0m from the property line. The adjacent heritage buildings are set on the property line. The setback helps to visually define the edge of the heritage conservation district from a pedestrian perspective, as the heritage building is more prominent.

**Heritage Context:** *When adding a new building or additions to existing buildings on a site adjacent to a heritage building or streetscape, the following guidelines shall apply:*

*Use compatible materials.*

**Discussion:** The use of red-brown brick for the tower base is a suitable material compatible with neighbouring buildings. The painted white Wallack Building on the corner of Bank and Lisgar Streets offers a striking foreground to the tower as illustrated in Figure 23.

*Minimize the use and height of blank walls. Modulate façades using vertical breaks and setbacks in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding heritage structures.*

**Discussion:** The west and east facades of both towers are well articulated. The north and south facades introduce a very graphic form punctuated by glazed banding.

*Inform new development with adjacent building ground floor heights and heritage character to enhance the public realm.*

**Discussion:** The ground floor heights of adjacent heritage buildings are well articulated in terms of both height, material and active uses in the design of the street wall.

Use setbacks, front and side, to appropriately transition with adjacent building heights.

**Discussion:** Figure 22 offers street views illustrating the 3-storey base respecting established datum lines from the Bank Street neighbouring buildings. The actual podium is 4-storeys with a material and colour change above. The setback at the 9th floor will be a defining feature of the new tower and reinforces the transition with the adjacent buildings.



Figure 24: The 2-storey entrance highlighted in the lighter material helps to ground the north tower and creates a comfortable through-block link. The commercial style glazing at the ground floor references Bank Street retail; the use of unit masonry and a traditional colour palette support the Bank Street character by introducing a finer grain rhythm to the street frontage. Source: Graziani & Corazza Architects 2021.

## ALTERNATIVES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

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### 5.0 Alternatives

Throughout the design process, a number of alternatives were considered and the following implemented:

- The building design includes a range of materials and colours intended to create a unique and recognizable character. The façade of the first three storeys uses dark red-brown brick to keep with the existing character of the neighbouring buildings and are heavily fenestrated to create a positive relationship with the public realm. The remainder of the building transitions to lighter material and is heavily fenestrated with balconies and terraces to create visual interest and architectural articulation adding interest to the City skyline.
- Softscape trees, shrubs and raised planter beds along the frontages of both buildings soften the public realm and further emphasizes and animates the woonerf design of the mid-block north south connection.



## 5.1 Mitigation Measures

Throughout the design process, there have been a number of recommendations from the UDRP, the City and the community that have shaped the design and brought about mitigation measures, including:

- Setting both towers on a 3-storey base mitigates the scale and helps to transition to the heritage buildings.
- The mid-block separation distance from the flat roofed buildings along Bank Street and location next to lots unsuitable for high-rise housing provides visual separation, mitigating the potential that the development overwhelms or diminishes the positive elements of the neighbourhood.
- The podium height, the articulated street frontage informed by the built context along the street as well as the height of the adjacent heritage buildings draws the eye away from the tower and mitigates the relationship.
- The grouping of two and three storey, predominantly red brick of existing buildings establishes the foreground of views and in effect, creates a continuous frontage that carries around both Lisgar and Nepean frontages and integrates into the design.
- Retaining the urban grain and scale of the neighbouring heritage buildings, with glazing dark unit masonry finishes, increased ground to ceiling height on the ground floor, commercial glazing and through-street access all contribute to the public realm.

## 5.2 Conclusions

### Architecture

Architecturally, the two towers are striking expressions that will be seen as positive additions to the Ottawa skyline. The heights at 25 and 27-storeys places them as part of the high-rise district of downtown Ottawa and does not challenge view panes. The 9-storey podium reduces massing impacts for neighbouring residents, while ensuring that a sufficient tower separation distance is maintained. Terraces proposed on the tenth floor as well as the fourth floor of the adjoining structure provide an opportunity to animate the exterior facades. The stark and distinctive east-west facades introduce a creative expression. Proposed balconies and terraces provide amenity space, create visual interest, and articulate the north and south facades.

### Context

Both Nepean and Lisgar are narrow streets that could have been overwhelmed. For most of a generation, this has been surface parking. The development fits comfortably into its setting, completes the street, and offers a visual focus to the wider community. Views along Lisgar Street, Nepean Street and Bank Street illustrate how the building stepbacks and materiality complement the existing context and provide transition. The facades of the first three storeys complement the existing character of the neighbouring buildings.

The adjacency of Bank Street buildings within the heritage conservation district presented a design challenge where the intrusiveness of height could have diminished the visual cohesiveness of this block. At the street level, an effort has been made to integrate the development into the mid-block public realm and show respect and sensitive to neighbouring older buildings and the streetscape.

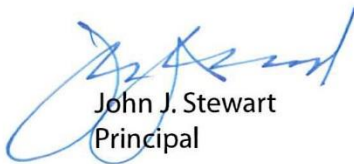
## 6.0 Author

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**Commonwealth Historic Resource Management** is a consulting and management firm that offers professional services related to conservation, planning, research, design, and interpretation for historical and cultural resources. The firm has operated since 1984.

**John J. Stewart**, B.L.A., O.A.L.A., C.S.L.A., CAHP, a principal of Commonwealth is a specialist in the planning and design of cultural resources, building conservation, and commercial area revitalization. A graduate of the University of Guelph, he received additional training at Cornell University (USA) and Oxford University (UK) and holds a diploma in the Conservation of Monuments from Parks Canada, where he worked as Head, Restoration Services Landscape Section. Before Commonwealth's formation, Stewart served for four years as the first director of Heritage Canada's Main Street Program.

Stewart is a founding member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals. He has served as the Canadian representative of the Historic Landscapes and Gardens Committee of ICOMOS and the International Federation of Landscape Architects. Stewart is a panel member with the Ottawa Urban Design Review Panel and a board member of Algonquin College Heritage Carpentry Program.



John J. Stewart  
Principal