

# 979 WELLINGTON STREET WEST CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

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December 2021 Revised V3

Prepared For: M. L. Wellington Realty Investments Inc. C/O Devco Inc.

By: John Stewart, Commonwealth Historic Resource Management

Cover image: View looking north from Wellington Street. Source: rla Architecture 2021

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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The City of Ottawa have requested this Cultural Heritage Impact Statement (CHIS). The purpose of the CHIS is to identify the cultural heritage resources and values that may be impacted by the construction of a twenty-three-storey mixed-use development at 979 Wellington Street West. The proposed development is adjacent to the Armstrong House a property designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-law 289-76). The development site contains a property at 40 Armstrong that is listed on the City's Heritage Register and will be demolished. A Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) will be prepared in order to assess its potential for designation.

This CHIS follows the content outline recommended by the City of Ottawa for Cultural Heritage Impact Statements. The following documents were used in the preparation of this report:

Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act;

Official Plan, Traditional Mainstreet;

Reason for Designation, 35 Armstrong St., By-law 289-76;

Property Information Sheet, Heritage Inventory Project, 40 Armstrong;

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Second Edition, 2010;

Wellington West Secondary Plan and Community Design Plan (2011), Somerset Square; and,

Plans, elevations, perspectives, Roderick Lahey Architect Inc., 2020.

979 Wellington Street West Development UDRP Submission September 2020.

OUDRP Recommendations September 2, 2020

## **Owner and Contact Information**

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## **1.1 Site Location, Current Conditions, and Introduction to Development Site**

The development site is in the Hintonburg/Mechanicsville neighbourhood and is bound by Hilda Street to the east, Armstrong to the north, Garland to the west, and Wellington Street to the south. The site is located to the north of Somerset Square that is envisioned as a node of activity in the Wellington West CDP.

The development site consists of eight properties with a municipal address on Armstrong (40, 36 and 26) and Wellington Street (961, 967, 969, 973, and 979). The properties within the block were developed between circa 1899 and 1912. The proposal is to demolish all the buildings within the development site and to construct two linked 13-storey residential towers with ground floor commercial.

The development site is located across the street from the Armstrong House (35 Armstrong Street) that is designated under Part IV of the OHA, and one property within the development site (40 Armstrong Street), listed on the City of Ottawa Heritage Register. Somerset Square is to the south and spans the width of the proposed development site.



Figure 1: Aerial view illustrating the built context within the block and adjacent to the development site. Source: Geottawa



Figure 2: Block plan illustrating the built context surrounding the development site. Site encircled in red. Source: Geottawa

## 1.2 Street Characteristics (Neighbourhood Character)

Wellington Street West is a designated Traditional Mainstreet in the Official Plan. Detached two and three storey flat roofed commercial and residential buildings with surface parking define the character of the north side of Wellington Street between Hilda and Garland Streets. The front yard setbacks vary considerably. Buildings dating from an early phase of the street's development (973 and 967) are set well back, later buildings are set at the property line (979, 969, and 961). The flat roofed, brick clad, two and three storey row house at 26 Armstrong and the brick and stucco clad residence at 967 Wellington help establish the heritage character of the block. Both Hilda and Garland Streets are characterized with minimal pedestrian interface, narrow sidewalks and buildings with no public entrances set on the lot line.

On the north side of Armstrong Street is the three-storey mansard roofed limestone residence known as the Armstrong House. It is set centrally within the block flanked by surface parking lots, and a three-storey brick clad flat roofed building set behind the house fronting onto O'Meara Street.

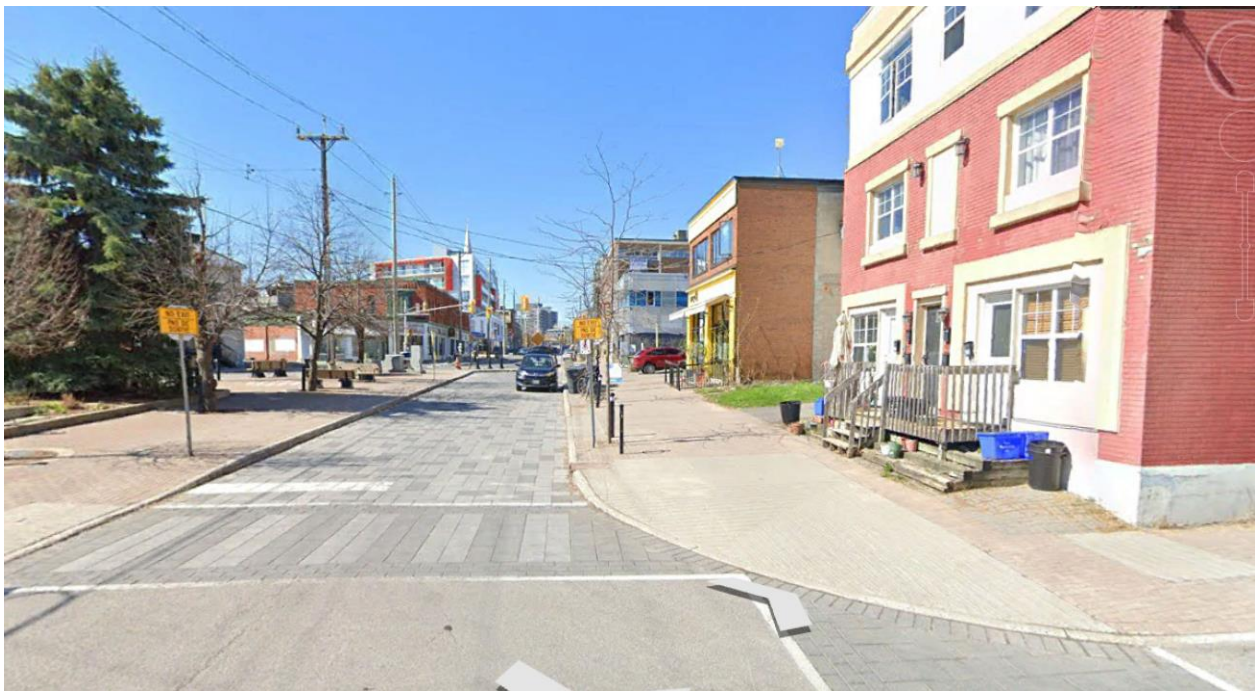
The character of the streetscape to the east of the development site on Wellington is dominated by mid-rise residential towers developed in the early 1990s with a uniform setback on wide lots ranging from 30m to 60m with surface parking to the rear. Directly west of the site is Garland Street, adjacent to this is the Wellington West corridor, an east-west Traditional Mainstreet characterized by mixed-use, low- to mid-rises buildings most of which were developed post 1945. The streetscape character consists of two and four storey concrete clad flat roofed buildings set at the property line with ground floor commercial and office uses.

### Somerset Square

Somerset Square is the triangular piece of public right-of-way bounded by three public streets. It is the first public space greeting westbound visitors to the broader Wellington Street West community and anchors the eastern part of the neighbourhood. While the City of Ottawa own it, it has been adopted and jointly cared for by the community since its creation in the 1980s as part of the NIP program. It is a unique resting and gathering place for the community – the only one located directly on the main street.

The Wellington Street Secondary Plan provides insights into the City’s vision for this site next to Somerset Square. The area is identified as the node of community activity with a prominent vista terminus from several directions. New development that will animate and support activity-generating land uses, with architecture exhibiting gateway architectural design is encouraged.

Directly east of the site, is a high-rise building currently owned and operated by Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization. The Tom Brown Arena is to the east, and further east are connections to Bayview Station.



*Figure 3: Street view looking west on Wellington Street from Hilda Street, 967 Wellington to the right, is part of the proposed development lands and the building is planned for demolition. Note the irregular street setbacks, brick cladding and flat roofs. Source: Google Earth*



Figure 4: Street view looking northeast from the corner of Wellington and Garland Streets. The building on the corner 979 Wellington is within the development site and will be demolished. Source: Google Earth



Figure 5: Directly south of the properties is Wellington Street West and the terminus of Somerset Street. This is the location of a small triangle Somerset Square a hardscaped park. South of Somerset Street are mixed-use frontage along the Traditional Mainstreet. Source: Google Earth

### 1.3 Heritage Context

A History of Westboro by Michael Davidson <sup>1</sup>provides an overview of the development of Westboro and its relationship as it evolves. The development site is located along Richmond Road (Wellington Street) one of the oldest roads in Ottawa originally laid out in 1818. By the mid-19th century properties along Richmond Road included farms and estates one of which was the Armstrong House. The block bound by Hilda, Wellington, Garland and Armstrong Streets was the front lawn of the Armstrong Estate (c. 1845) fronting onto Richmond Road. The block was sub-divided and developed between circa 1899 and 1912. 40 Armstrong is listed on the Heritage Register as a property of potential cultural heritage interest.

<sup>1</sup> [The History of Westboro](#), by Michael Davidson



The Armstrong House 35 Armstrong Street occupies the entire block to the north of the development site. It is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. This house was built about 1845 for Judge Christopher Armstrong, (1801-1874), an Irishman who came to Canada in 1819, and studied law in Toronto. In 1842, he was appointed Judge of the District and Surrogate Courts in the new district of Dalhousie, which became in 1850 the County of Carleton. The Grey Sisters occupied it in the 1950. This house was once set back from Richmond Road in spacious grounds. The property was subdivided at Armstrong Street with the block fronting onto Wellington and framed by Hilda and Garland Streets created. The M. L. Devco Inc. development has reassembled this block. Further north of this historic site is O’Meara Street and the Hintonburg-Mechanicsville neighbourhood.



*Figure 6: View the Armstrong House designated under Part IV of the OHA. Note the mansard roof, a feature that dates to the conversion of the building to a convent. Banfield Marketing Agency presently occupy it. Source: Google Earth*



*Figure 7: View of the row house at 26 Armstrong (right) and 967 Wellington (left) with no accessible frontage on Hilda Street. The building is typical of the area’s character– two and three storey brick clad building, masonry foundation with flat roofs set on the property line. Both buildings on this block of Hilda Street are slated for demolition. Source: Google*



Figure 8: View looking east on Armstrong from Garland Street, 35 Armstrong is to the left and 40 Armstrong, which is part of the development site, is to the right. Source: Google Earth



Figure 9: View of 36 Armstrong with 40 Armstrong to the right. Source: Google Earth

## 1.4 Relevant Information from Council Approved Documents

### Official Plan

The City of Ottawa includes provisions for Cultural Heritage Resources in Section 4.6 of the Official Plan. The area is zoned 'Traditional Mainstreet' except for the properties fronting onto Armstrong.

### Wellington West Secondary Plan and Community Design Plan (2011) *Official Plan Consolidation for the City of Ottawa*

The Wellington Street West Secondary Plan is a guide to the long-term design and development of both the Wellington main street corridor in general, and four specific areas within it, including direction on issues of: land use, built form, sidewalks, plazas and open spaces, and heritage. The Secondary Plan provides a framework for change that will see this area develop towards the vision that the community desires while meeting the planning objectives of the City's Official Plan. Specific policies were

established in the document in reference to Somerset Square Area.

### **11.3.5 Somerset Square Area Policies**

The Somerset Square area is envisioned as the node of community activity, particularly given the presence of an existing public open space, its eastern gateway location, its proximity to a future light rail transit station, and the opportunity for redevelopment. New development will be encouraged to incorporate animated and activity-generating land uses, buildings and spaces that take advantage of convenient access to transit.

#### *Built form*

1. Redevelopment of properties fronting the corners of Bayswater Avenue at Wellington and Somerset Streets shall exhibit gateway architectural design that responds to a location with a prominent vista terminus from several directions. The City may consider a zoning by-law amendment to increase the maximum building height pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act where one or more community benefits identified in the Community Design Plan are secured through agreement with the City and will be provided at the time of development.
2. Infill redevelopments on through lots, on blocks bounded by Wellington and Armstrong Streets and Bayswater and Merton Avenue, shall re-establish the traditional urban grain where open spaces run through the centre of the block(s) and buildings are built around the perimeter of the block close to the street. This creates a space and buffer from the distinct forms, characters and uses found on main street properties versus the existing residential neighbourhood to the north.
3. At the time of redevelopment, a publicly accessible pathway shall be encouraged at 999 Wellington Street to provide a pedestrian connection to and from the neighbourhood blocks to the north of Armstrong Street.
4. Despite Section 11.3.1, the property at 979 Wellington Street West is permitted a maximum building height of nine storeys pursuant to Section 37 of the *Planning Act* where one or more community benefits identified in the Community Design Plan are secured through agreement with the City and will be provided at the time of development. [Amendment #204, April 25, 2018]

#### *Public open space*

5. Somerset Square shall be protected in perpetuity in design and use as a public park for the community to balance intensification and quality of life needs.

### **Wellington Street West Community Design Plan April 2011**

(WSWCDP) is a planning tool that details a comprehensive community vision for physical development over a specified area. It is used as a guide when contemplating public or private development. The CDP examines and guides the future of buildings, spaces, and their uses in particular area.

## 2.0 HERITAGE RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

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### 2.1 Neighbourhood and Development Site History

The development site is located along Richmond Road (Wellington Street) one of the oldest roads in Ottawa originally laid out in 1818. By the mid-19th century properties along Richmond Road included farms and estates one of which was the Armstrong House built by Christopher Armstrong a Carleton County judge. By 1879, the Bayswater and Mechanicsville neighbourhoods were being sub-divided for residential development, and in 1874, a plan for the sub-division of the Armstrong Estate was filed in Nepean Township. In 1893, the growing suburb of Hintonburg was incorporated as a village, and subsequently annexed in 1907 by the City of Ottawa.

The development that occurred by 1899 is illustrated on an 1899 Fire Insurance Plan of the area (Figure 13).<sup>2</sup> The block was fully developed by 1912 (Figure 14).

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<sup>2</sup> History of Hilda Street, Kitchissippi Museum Blog Spot 1998



Figure 10: 1879 Belden Atlas Detail Nepean Township. The areas shaded in brown are areas that had been subdivided for future development. The development site and Armstrong House are arrowed. Source: McGill University Digital Atlas Project.

Figure 11: 1894 Plan of the Armstrong Estate laid out in residential lots. Block A is the site of the Armstrong House and the area above is the location of the development site. Note that Armstrong (Caroline) Street did not extend through the block. Street names were changed in 1907 after the city annexed the area. Wellington Street is to the top of the image and Scott Street at the bottom. Source: Kitchissippi Museum Blog History of Hilda Street. <sup>3</sup>

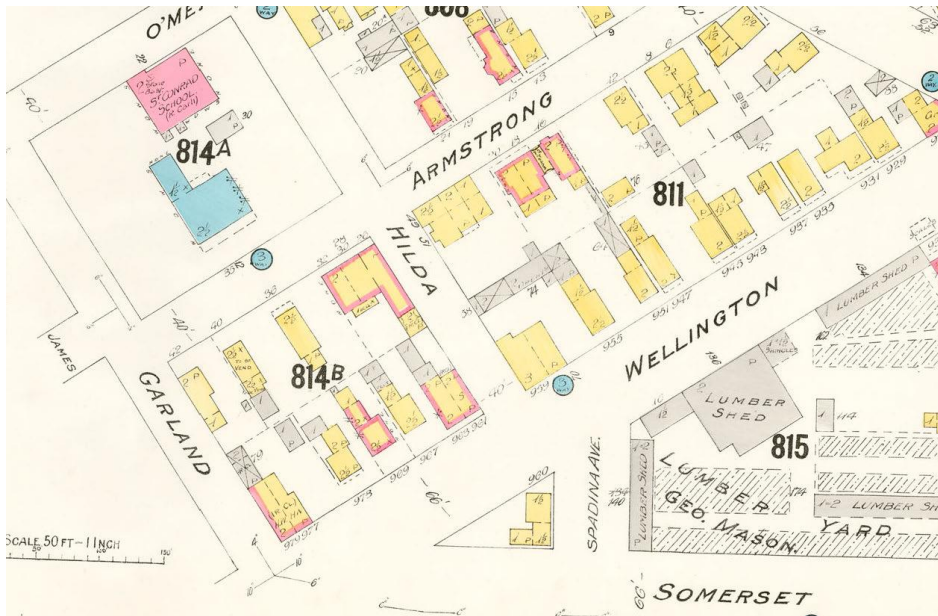


<sup>3</sup> <http://kitchissippimuseum.blogspot.com/2020/04/street-profile-history-of-hilda-street.html>

Figure 12: 1899 Fire Insurance Plan (Hintonburg) of the area of the development site. Armstrong House is the building in block 814A, and the block 814B is the block of the proposed development. Note the scattered development in the block fronting onto Wellington. Source: Kitchissippi Museum Blog Spot.



Figure 13: (Below): Detail 1912 FIP Volume II Sheet 111. Fire Insurance Plan of the area adjacent to the development site – block identified as 814B. Armstrong House is the building in block 814A, and the block 814B is the location of the development site. The house at 40 Armstrong had just been constructed and is noted to be for sale. Note St. Conrad's Roman Catholic School on the Armstrong Estate that was associated with the convent of St. Francis D'Assisi. Source: LAC



## 2.2 Cultural Heritage Evaluation 40 Armstrong Street

40 Armstrong Street was recently added to the City of Ottawa's Heritage Register. The assessment of the potential cultural heritage value or interest of the property against O. Reg 9/06 provides an overview, which may be subject to further research; however, the historical patterns are typical of other residential properties developed circa 1912 in the area.

**Building Name & Address:** 40 Armstrong

**Construction Date:** circa 1912 (FIP 1912 Rev. June Volume II Sheet 111)

**Original Owner/Resident:** Henri E. Soubliere (1913 Might Street Directory pg. 39)



Figure 14: Street view of 40 Armstrong Street. Note the handsome wood porch with a second-floor covered balcony  
Source: Google Earth

Criteria / Value	Meets Criteria (Y/N)	Summary
<b>1. The property has design value or physical value because it,</b>		
<i>i. is a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method,</i>	N	The form, materials, and construction method are common for vernacular style detached residences constructed circa 1912 in Ottawa. The two and one-half storey brick clad frame structure with a gable roof set on a limestone foundation with a one storey wood frame porch supporting a second-floor roofed balcony is a common residential building type in Hintonburg. The materials – red-brick veneer with pre-cast window and door lintels, limestone foundation, wood window assemblies, and simple wood eave

		detailing are common features of vernacular Edwardian style buildings constructed during circa 1912 in Ottawa.
ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or	N	The building does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit. The craft in the brick and stonework displays common methods and techniques of the period. The two-storey wood frame porch appears to be a recent restoration.
iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	N	The building does not demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. The building was built using building techniques common for the period.
<b>2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,</b>		
i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community,	N	Themes: Migration of Quebec residents to the growing suburb of Hintonburg. Person: The property has a direct association with Henri E. Soubliere a motorman with the Ottawa Electric Railway (1913 pg. 39 Might Directory Street & Alphabetical listings). 1911 Census: Henri Soubliere b. 1891 in Quebec and his wife Cordilia and daughter are living at the residence. 1921 Census: Soublier his wife and their four daughters were living at the residence, and he is noted to be a labourer associated with a railway.
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or	N	The historical research contained in this document provides a basic understanding of the property from the date of construction circa 1912 - 1923.
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community.	N	No architect, designer or builder have been identified for the vernacular style residence.
<b>3. The property has contextual value because it,</b>		
i. is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area,	Y	The mid-block property is now visible from Garland Street as the residence at 42 Armstrong has been demolished and is presently a surface parking lot. The property supports the character of the area that is presently defined by single detached and side-by-side row houses (26 Armstrong) along Armstrong Street between Hilda and Garland Streets.
ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings, or	Y	The mid-block property is physically, visually, functionally, and historically linked to Armstrong Street and its immediate surroundings. The links



		are similar to other mid-block properties in the area.
iii. is a landmark.	N	The building is not a landmark occurring mid-block and obscured from street views by adjacent buildings.

### Conclusion

The assessment of the potential cultural heritage value or interest of the property against O. Reg 9/06 provides an overview, which may be subject to further research; however, the historical patterns are typical of other residential properties developed circa 1912 in the city. **The cultural heritage indicators – design, history, and context – for the property are all low to moderate.** The property does not meet the criteria contained in the O. Reg. 9/06 for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Although the architectural integrity of the building is relatively high, it is questionable that the recently rebuilt two storey wood porch replicates what was there previously.

## 3.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

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The following text is taken from the designation Bylaw 289-76. It references the Armstrong House at 35 Armstrong Street

### 3.1 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Bylaw 289-76 Plaque

Reasons for designation- Armstrong House, 35 Armstrong Street

The Armstrong House, 35 Armstrong Street, is designated for architectural and historical interest. Erected circa 1845 for Judge Christopher Armstrong (1801-1874), the House is one of a series of outstanding country estates to the west of the city along historic Richmond Road.

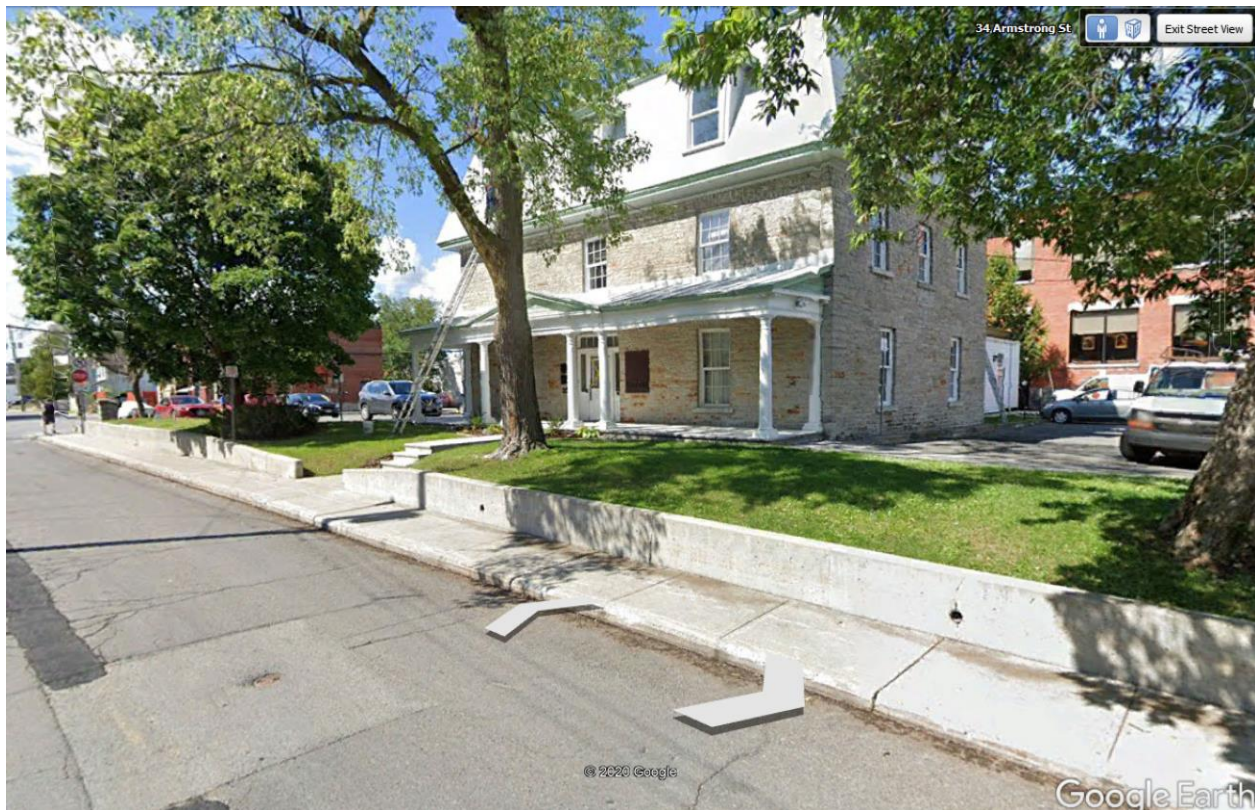


Figure 15: Armstrong House is a Part 4 designated heritage site. Across the street from the subject property, 40 Armstrong is on the City of Ottawa's Heritage Register.

## 4.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposal is to construct a thirteen (13) storey residential tower with ground floor retail fronting onto Wellington West, Hilda and Garland Streets with ground floor residential uses extending along Armstrong and Garland Streets. A U-shaped built form fronts onto Wellington Street and opens up along the north façade. Two podiums that step back to a 6-storey low-rise extends the length of Wellington Street and wraps around Hilda and Garland Streets. Along Armstrong Street a series of masonry clad 3-storey podiums project beyond the 6-storey low-rise with the ground floor atrium creating a break in the facade. A through pedestrian midblock link offers a degree of porosity that supports the recognition of this location's role as a community hub.

The development proposal includes below grade parking spaces on two levels of below grade parking and bicycle parking spaces. The development includes residential units in a mix of townhouse, studio, one, two and three-bedroom units, including seven affordable units.

#### Context

The proposed development provides a defined connection to the Wellington Street West Traditional Mainstreet on its south edge, and to the north the residential low-rise neighbourhood is acknowledged with a series of residential units.



*Figure 16: Materiality breaks up the block and creates a streetscape rhythm along the street. Source: rla Architecture 2021.*

The opportunity to revitalize the underutilized area will create a lively urban environment for residents of the new development as well as the existing community. The subject site, occupying an entire municipal block, is strategically located given the geometry of the roadways and important views within the District. The size and configuration of the lot allows for a podium design and tower placement that enhances the Mainstreet, while adding residential density in proximity to the transit station without adverse impacts.



Figure 17 The contextual plan view illustrates the neighbourhood context with the proposed tower as the prominent feature anchoring this part of Wellington Street West. Source: rla Architecture 2021.



Figure 17: A key component of the proposed development of the site will be the redevelopment of Somerset Square and Wellington Street West into a public plaza and gathering space creating a positive interface with the future street-level commercial tenants. Source: rla Architecture 2021.

**Materiality and Design**



Figure 19: Materiality reinforces the angular plan stepping down towards Armstrong Street. Source 20211.

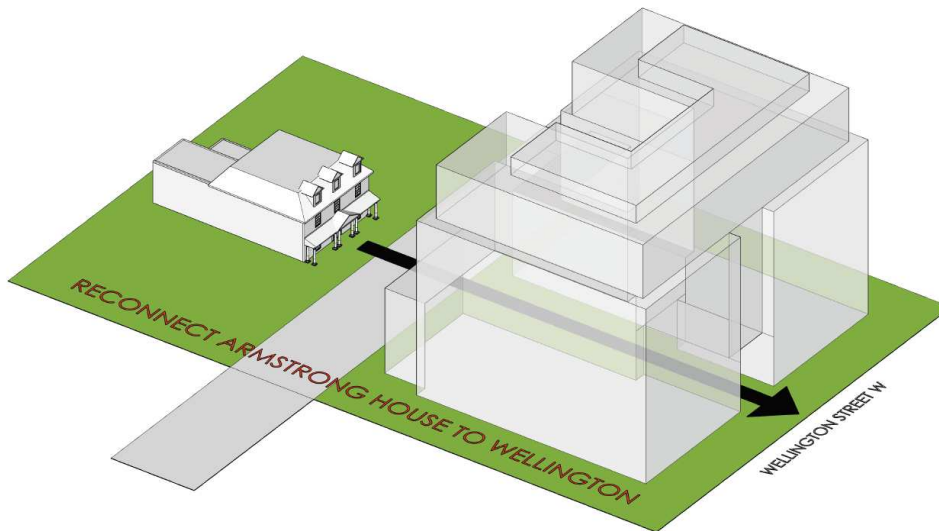


Figure 20: Context site plan of the proposed development. Project north is to the left on Armstrong Street. An attractive feature is the closing of Wellington Street in front of the development and the potential of public park and open space. The courtyard through the site reconnects the Armstrong House to its original front yard on Wellington Street West. Source: Roderick Lahey Architect 2021.



Figure 21: Glass divides the mass into two blocks and lightens the setbacks on the upper floors. Roderick Lahey Architect 2021.



Figure 22: Material section along Armstrong and wrapping around the corner response to the Armstrong House and to the red brick building 26 Armstrong on the corner. (see figure 7). Roderick Lahey Architect. 2021.



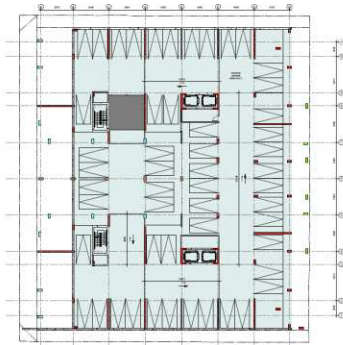
3D VIEW NORTH WEST ON WELLINGTON



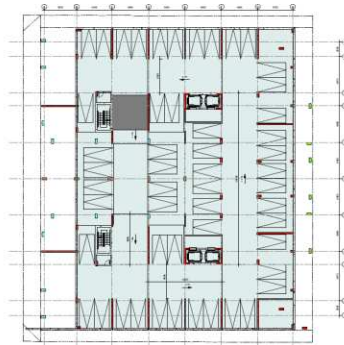
3D VIEW LOOKING TOWARD TOWN HOUSES



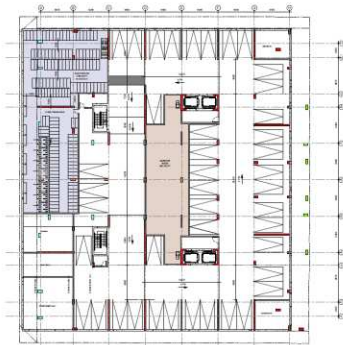
Figure 23: 3D renderings illustrating the pedestrian scale. Roderick Lahey Architect 2021.



LEVEL P3



LEVEL P2



LEVEL P1



LEVEL GROUND FLOOR



Figure 24: Floor plans L1 through to the 13th floor illustrating the retail and residential components. North (Armstrong Street) is to the left of the image. The proposed plan includes a pedestrian link extending from Wellington Street West through to Armstrong Street. Note the ground floor residential units fronting onto Armstrong. Source: rla Architecture 2021.





Figure 25: Perspective looking north through the midblock atrium towards Armstrong House. Source: rla Architecture 2021.

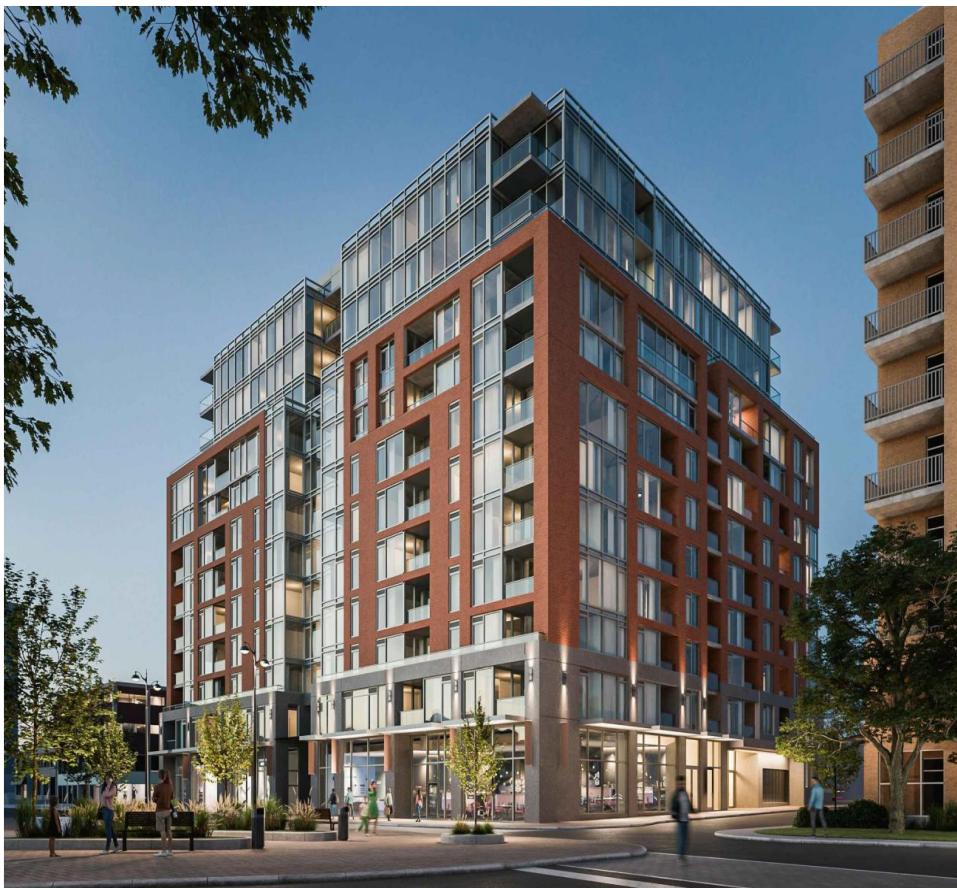


Figure 26: Perspective view illustrating the public realm along Armstrong Street with the textured masonry lower level. The material treatment carrying around into the interior courtyard reinforces the 3D expression. Source: rla Architecture 2021.



Figure 27: Ground floor plan showing the landscape treatment with retail identified in pink and residential in green. Wrapping the retail around the corner onto Garland Street along with the varied setback of the retail reinterpret the original street ambience. Source: Roderick Lahey Architect 2021.

## 5.0 IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This section specifically addresses the impacts of the development proposal on the cultural heritage values of the Armstrong House itemized in Section 3.0. The assessment criteria are outlined in Section 4.6 of the Official Plan, which follows.

### 5.1 Section 4.6.3 Official Plan

4.6.3 Where development is proposed on a property that is adjacent to or within 35 metres of the boundary of; a property containing an individually designated heritage building (Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*), a heritage conservation district (Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*) or a federally recognized heritage property, the City may require that a cultural heritage impact statement be conducted by a qualified professional with expertise in cultural heritage resources.

The Cultural Heritage Impact Statement will do the following: [Amendment #96, February 22, 2012]

1. *Describe the positive and adverse impacts on the heritage resource or heritage conservation district that may be expected to result from the proposed development;*
2. *Describe the actions that may reasonably be required to prevent, minimize, or mitigate the adverse impacts;*
3. *Demonstrate that the proposal will not adversely impact the defined cultural heritage value of the property, Heritage Conservation District, and/or its streetscape/neighbourhood.*

**Positive impacts include:**

- The development proposal includes grade level residential units with access and frontage on Armstrong Street reinforcing the residential character of the street, with residential uses above.
- The proposed grade level residential units approximate the existing residential lot pattern along Armstrong Street and maintains a small residential landscape in the front yards of the units.
- The development proposal establishes a continuous street wall along Wellington Street with a primary entrance reinforcing the 'Traditional Mainstreet' designation. The overall mass is broken down into two volumes. An alternative would be to consider the UDRP recommended for three or four volumes instead of two.
- The proposed development will support the traditional main street designation of Wellington Street with its increase in density.
- The development will increase the exposure of the designated Armstrong House to a wider audience.
- Somerset Square will be integrated and expanded with the closure of Wellington Street and provide a larger public space.
- The porosity of the ground level with public access will benefit the community.
- The revised plan has reduced the height of the development to 13-storeys, which is much more in keeping with neighbouring properties along this portion of Wellington Street.

**Adverse impacts include:**

- The six-storey height challenges the existing context of two to four-storey podiums along Wellington Street West. This is partially mitigated by the fifth and sixth storeys being setback;
- Along Armstrong Street, the fine grain residential character of two and three storey buildings reflective of the residential character is lost. This is mitigated by the residential units with frontage to the street. The introduction of the red brick at the corner of Armstrong and Hilda provides a scaled expression.
- The property at 40 Armstrong Street listed on the City's Heritage Register will be demolished. The CHER determined that it is not considered a significant heritage building but has contextual value defining the neighbourhood;
- Increased shadowing of the Armstrong House during the mornings for a part of the year. This impact has been dramatically reduced with the scale of the building at 13-storeys.
- Both Hilda and Garland Streets are narrow side streets with a poor public interface and challenging the pedestrian experience. A mitigating factor is the setback of the proposed development, which has been significantly increased.

## 6.0 ALTERNATIVES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

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### 6.1 Alternatives

Throughout the course of development process, alternatives have been introduced including:

- Stacked townhouses fronting onto Armstrong reinforce the residential character of the street.
- North Elevation overlooking the Armstrong House. The residential expression of the proposed grade level units (townhouses) along Armstrong Street with the midblock access and use of limestone treatment of the lower levels appears as a collection of smaller buildings reinforcing the traditional rhythm of the street.
- The street view of the planned development with the Armstrong House on the right successfully establishes a handsome street retaining some of the fine grain distinctions of the existing street.
- The proposed design on the corners of Garland and Armstrong Streets and Hilda and Armstrong with the podium that stepping down, the continuation of residential units and variations in the materials, and setback supports the sense of place.

### 6.2 Mitigation measures

#### Mitigation measures include:

The closing of Wellington Street in front of the development, extending Somerset Square and creating additional public open space will be a positive gesture. It will support the intent of the CDP and offers a year-round place for gatherings and reinforces the sense of community. With the entire block under development, there is the potential of wrapping the landscape around the block and reconnecting visually with the Armstrong House.

**Response:** The mid-block link breaks down the monolithic feel to the streetscape with a through-block atrium that opens up and creates a more porous experience. The revised program recognizes the axial relationship and has aligned the courtyard with the historic house.

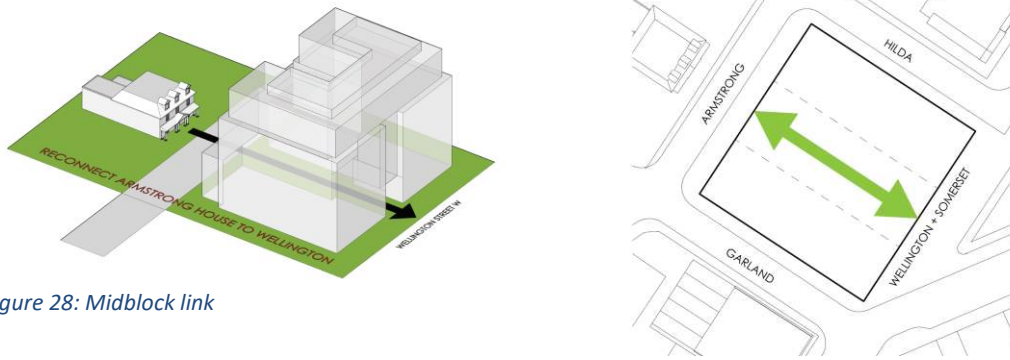


Figure 28: Midblock link

The rendering and plan above through the atrium illustrated the through block connection. With the grade change, there is a requirement to ramp up from Wellington Street to Armstrong Street. Consideration could be given to creating a larger opening at Wellington Street by eliminating the second level glazed overpass and allowing for more of a view and emphasizing two distinct volumes on Wellington Street.

The historic relationship between the development site and the Armstrong House lands can also be interpreted with a landscape plan that pulls together and defines the open spaces to the south with Somerset Square and links them along Hilda and Garland Streets and through the mid-block atrium.

The narrow sidewalks along Armstrong, Garland and Hilda Streets were traditional features along secondary right-of ways. These are short blocks serving as side-yard access for buildings facing either Wellington or Armstrong Streets. Given the scale of existing buildings and the number of pedestrians using the sidewalks, the width was acceptable. The proposed development will introduce more users, who will place demands on the public realm. This increase in density is redefining how the building meets the ground and how the public realm needs to be addressed. If possible; these setbacks should provide, opportunities for street trees and more generous sidewalks with benches introduced.

**Response:** The proposed development has increased the setback and provided a larger public realm than required along all four streets. The landscape plan offers generous, well-designed pedestrian streetscapes that help to strengthen the connections to the residential neighbourhood to the north and the envisioned role of this development as a community hub.

## 6.3 Conclusions

### Context and Scale:

The neighbourhood supports a traditional main street, and to an extent is dependent upon density to enliven the streetscape. The subject site, an entire municipal block, could be more than an extension of the built form. It is strategically located to anchor Wellington Street West and supports additional residential density. Somerset Square is a focus location within the Hintonburg neighbourhood and the only public space on the Street. The proposed development has the potential to become a hub, creating a lively urban environment for the community.

## Public Realm

A key component of the proposed development of the site will be the redevelopment of Somerset Square, the closing of this section of Wellington Street West, and expanding the public plaza and gathering space. As well, the development lands are historically associated with the Armstrong property and to the residential neighbourhood to the north. Introducing a mid-block public courtyard that flows through to Armstrong Street reinstates an interesting interpretative story.

Taking advantage of the geometry of the roadways and the potential for uninterrupted public space represents good town planning on the part of the developer, M. L. Devco. Securing the entire block has strengthened the rationale for why this is a landmark location. Upgrading the streetscape along Armstrong, Garland, and Hilda Streets and visually linking the development with the historic house on Armstrong extends the public plaza into the neighbourhood as well as, west along Wellington Street. The midblock entrance off Wellington Street helps to breakup the façade; and the through retail atrium onto Armstrong Street responds to UDRP suggestions. The residential usage, material selection and height of the podium, ground the development and compliment the heritage site across the street. The ground floor plan allows for the public to transition from Somerset Square through the open atrium alienated with the historic house and to Armstrong Street and the neighbourhood to the north.

## Density Transfer and Creation of Public through-Courtyard.

In response to feedback from the city, community comments, public open house, and UDRP, the plan has gone through significant changes. The critical shift introduces a U-shaped built form with a mid-block pedestrian walkway and central courtyard at grade level and a “bridge” that passes over the glazed *porte cochere* on the Wellington facade.

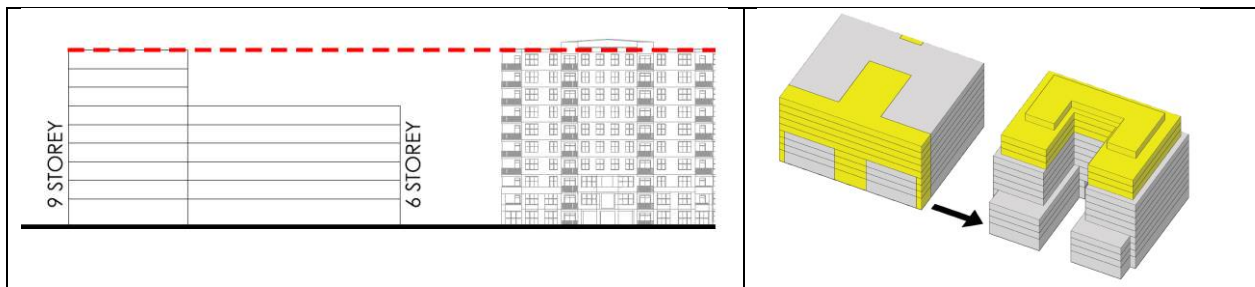


Figure 29: Zoning height relative to existing conditions and a model illustrating transfer of density has resulted in a slightly taller building from 9-storeys to 13-storeys creating a more pedestrian friendly environment. Source: rla Architect 2021.

The latest revision has further enhanced this relationship with the courtyard on axis to the house and a scale of development more in keeping with the neighbourhood. The change shifts the lobby entrance(s) from the corner of Hilda/Wellington to the east and the west sides of the inner courtyard. The retail spaces are split in two and reduced in total size. The Armstrong façade is interrupted mid-block by an open-to-the-sky passageway and the building setback from the property lines on Hilda and Garland Streets provides for a more generous public treatment of the street.

The plan creates a more porous ground floor experience with a publicly accessible link to the north. A more generous pedestrian experience on Hilda and Garland Streets has the sense of extending Central Square into the neighbourhood.

#### Built Form:

The major concern raised by the UDRP at the September 2020 meeting was the height of the tower. Within the Secondary Plan, the City may consider a zoning by-law amendment to increase the maximum building height pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act where one or more community benefits identified in the Community Design Plan are secured. Taking advantage of the potential to close the street, expand and upgrade Somerset Square will be a substantial benefit. The refinement of the architectural expression picks up the fine grain nuances and more of the idiosyncrasies of the neighbourhood such as the irregular street setbacks, the modular size of building lots, cladding and flat roofs. The 12-storey U-shape built form onto Armstrong Street has improved the overall massing and further extends the public realm. Opening up and articulating the Wellington Street façade as two distinct volumes relates well to the continuity of built form along the street.

It is the view of the CHIS that based on early land surveys and road patterns, as well as the site's historic association with the Armstrong Estate, there is a case to be made that it is a landmark location. Combined with the land assembly, potential expansion of Somerset Square, and proximity to public transit, it is reasonable to state the planned development can accommodate the 13-storey height and density. This is a positive development proposal that supports the City's vision for the area. The proposed development will be a good fit as gateway and anchor to the east entrance to Wellington Street West.

## 7.0 AUTHORS QUALIFICATIONS

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**Commonwealth Historic Resource Management** offers services related to conservation, planning, research, design, and interpretation for historical and cultural resources.

**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.

Ian Hunter is an architectural technologist with training in building conservation. He has worked with Commonwealth for over 30 years.

Commonwealth has completed Cultural Heritage Impact Statements (CHIS) and Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) for both private and public sectors including the following:

- 185 Fifth Avenue, Mutchmor Public School Addition, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 2489 Bayview Avenue, CFC Canadian Film Institute, Toronto, Ontario.
- Lansdowne Park 1015 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Algoma District Wind Farm Proposal, Lake Superior Shoreline, Ontario.
- 1040 Somerset Street West, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Laurier Friel Redevelopment Sandy Hill, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Cumberland /Murray Streets, Lowertown West, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 1120 Mill Street, Manotick, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Ontario Place, Waterfront Park and Trail Toronto, Ontario.
- Fort William Historical Park, Thunder Bay, Ontario.
- Allen/Capitol Theatre 223 Princess St., Kingston, Ontario.
- 101-109 Princess Street and 206-208 Wellington Street Kingston, Ontario.
- Greystone Village, Oblate Lands Redevelopment, 175 Main Street Ottawa, Ontario.
- Bradley/Craig Barn 590 Hazeldean Road, Ottawa, Ontario.
- LeBreton Flats, IllumiNATION LeBreton Redevelopment, Ottawa Ontario.
- 41 Beaver Ridge Road, Nepean
- 234 O'Connor Street, Ottawa Ontario
- McLeod Avenue, Ottawa Ontario.
- 445 Green Avenue, Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa Ontario
- 176 Nepean & 307-293 Lisgar Streets Ottawa Ontario
- 551 Fairview Lane, Rockcliffe Park Ottawa Ontario
- 229-247 Beechwood Avenue Rockcliffe Park
- 100 Argyle Avenue Ottawa Ontario
- 951 Gladstone Avenue & 145 Loretta Avenue, Ottawa Ontario
- Tunney's Pasture Redevelopment. Ottawa Ontario
- 540 Manor Avenue Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa.
- 229-247 Beechwood Avenue Ottawa
- Union Park Redevelopment (Former Prison for Women) Kingston Ontario
- 540 Lakehurst Avenue Rockcliffe Park
- 189 Stanley Avenue New Edinburgh, Ottawa
- 207 Clemow Avenue, Ottawa
- 267 O'Connor Avenue Ottawa
- 311 Somerset Street, Ottawa