

# A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

229-247 BEECHWOOD AVENUE, OTTAWA



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January 2022 Revised V3

*Cover image: View along Beechwood Avenue with the proposed apartments. Source Woodman Architecture 2022*

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Purpose

The City of Ottawa has 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 two low-rise apartment buildings at the municipal addresses extending from 229 through to 247 Beechwood Avenue. The proposed development is in the Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District (RPHCD), which was designated by the City of Ottawa in 1997 under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) (By-law 97-10).

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.
- Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Study, 1996-1997.
- Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Plan, City of Ottawa, 2016. (By-law # 2016-89).
- Beechwood Avenue Community Design Plan (BCDP), City of Ottawa. 2006.
- Heritage Survey and Evaluation Forms for 229, 231-235, 241, 245, and 247 Beechwood Avenue, City of Ottawa 2010.
- Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Second Edition, 2010.
- Pre-consultation Meeting Proposal for 229-241 Beechwood Avenue Heritage September 27, 2021, Follow Up Comments Responses shown in Red October 15, 2021.
- Revised plans elevations and Renderings, Woodman Architect & Associates, January 2022
- Revised Landscape Plan James Lennox Landscape Architect January 2022.

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## 1.2 Site Location, Current Conditions, and Introduction to Development Site

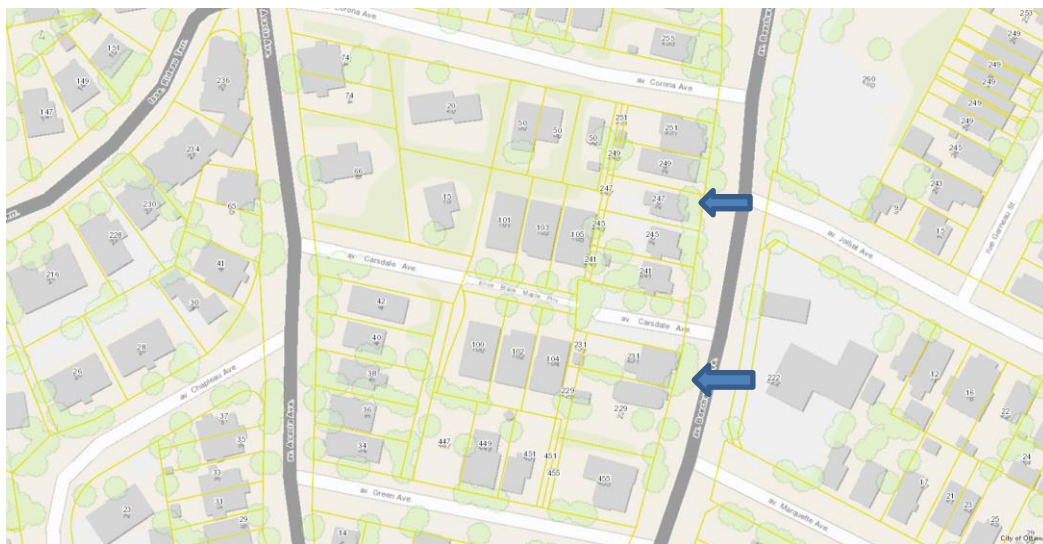
The five properties 229 – 247 Beechwood Avenue are in the Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District in an area known as the ‘Panhandle’. The properties front onto the west side of Beechwood Avenue bound by Corona Avenue to the north, Green Avenue to the south, and Acacia Avenue to the west. Carsdale Avenue bisects the proposed development.

The five detached residential properties are set on discreet lots and contain two storey residences constructed between circa 1930 (229), circa 1905 (231- 235) and circa 1950 (241, 245, 247). The properties sit at the base of the Rockcliffe plateau and grades rise approximately 3m from the Beechwood Avenue property lines to the back of the properties that abuts a retaining wall that encloses lots fronting onto Black Maple Private. Grades rise 1m from south to north along the Beechwood Avenue frontage. The development sites have a frontage of approximately 81m and a depth of 29m to 32m.

Adjacent properties to the north include a one-storey wood frame cottage, and a two-storey detached residence at the corner of Corona Avenue. The property adjacent to the south is a three-storey contemporary detached residence fronting onto Green Avenue. To the west of the site are contemporary three storey detached residences fronting onto Black Maple Private. Across the street from the site is a four to eight storey condominium with commercial uses on the ground floor.



*Figure 1: Aerial view illustrating the built context within the block and adjacent to the development site – 229, 231-235, 241, 245, and 247 Beechwood Avenue. Sites arrowed, north top of image. Source: Geottawa*



*Figure 2: Block plan illustrating the built context surrounding the development sites 229, 231-235, 241, 245, and 247 Beechwood. (Arrowed). Note the new development on Black Maple Private that is accessed via Acacia and Carlsdale Avenue. Source: Geottawa*

### 1.3 Street Characteristics (Neighbourhood Character)

The west side of Beechwood Avenue extending between Green, and Corona Avenues developed between circa 1905 through to the 1950s. Factors that influenced the slow uptake of lots in the area include the availability of lots elsewhere in the village, and the low desirability of the properties sitting at the base of the Rockcliffe plateau and backing onto the public work's yard. The initial development of the properties in the block (229 and 231-235) is more characteristic of the development that occurred to the west of Acacia Avenue in an area known as Clarkston. The two-storey brick clad residences, one detached and the other a side-by-side duplex, are characteristic of the form and type of residences constructed in Vanier. The properties are set back uniformly from the street with small landscaped front yards, with a lawn, plantings, and a low stonewall at the sidewalk, the only street in Rockcliffe Park with a curb and sidewalk.

Beechwood Avenue, an arterial road, will be widened sometime in the future and will reduce the front yards of all properties but most notably the two properties at 229 and 231-235 (June 2017 Topo Survey). Beechwood Avenue is a designated Mainstreet extending through to Corona Avenue to the north. When the arterial is widened, a concrete sidewalk with curb will be installed and street furnishings will be installed to match the furnishings in the St. Charles sector of Beechwood Avenue to the west (CDP 2006). This stretch of Beechwood Avenue has a modest curve, and the grade rises (1m) from the south to the north within the development site. The properties to the north of Carsdale Avenue (241, 245, and 247) have at or near grade entries, whereas the properties to the south of Carsdale (229 and 231-235) are accessed by a series of steps.



*Figure 3: Street view looking south on Beechwood Avenue, 247 Beechwood is to the right and the roof of 231-235 Beechwood is visible above the trees to the left. Note the low stonewall at the sidewalk that will be removed when Beechwood Avenue is widened. Source: Google Earth*



*Figure 4: Street view looking north with 229 Beechwood Avenue to the left. Note the recent mid-rise development on the east side of Beechwood that extends the width of the development sites. Source: Google Earth*



*Figure 5: Street view looking south-west on Beechwood from Green Avenue. The brick clad building to the left is listed on the City's Heritage Register (BACDP 2006). Source: Google Earth*



*Figure 6: Street view looking north. The property at the corner 455 Green Avenue (left) is an example of recent development in the Panhandle of Rockcliffe Park. Source: Google Earth*



Figure 7: Street view looking east on Black Maple Private/Carsdale to the west of the development site. Source: Google Earth



Figure 8: Street view of 259, 261, and 263 Beechwood Avenue to the north of Corona Avenue, a recent development within the HCD. Source: Google Earth

## 1.5 Heritage Context

The five buildings within the development site are categorized as Grade 2 heritage resources within the context of the RPHCD. The landscape setting, although atypical of properties in Rockcliffe Park is the primary heritage attribute. The properties are characterized by narrow, sloping lots, drystone retaining walls along the street frontage and small vernacular architecture. The planned widening of Beechwood will have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the properties, most notably the two properties at 229 and 231-235. The front lawns will be reduced placing the buildings close to the street edge a feature more typical of properties in Vanier. There are no Grade 1 properties adjacent to the development site.



Address	Street	Date of Construction	Group	OHA Designation
229	Beechwood	c. 1930		Part V
231 - 235	Beechwood	c. 1905	Grade 2	Part V
241	Beechwood			Part V
245	Beechwood	c. 1950	Grade 2	Part V
247	Beechwood	c. 1950	Grade 2	Part V

Table 1: Development site properties heritage resource categorization or grouping. Source: Heritage Survey Forms 2010



Figure 9: Detail plan of the Panhandle of the Rockcliffe Park HCD illustrating Grade 1 (red) properties. There are no Grade 1 properties adjacent to the development sites (Arrowed). Source: City of Ottawa 2010



Figure 10: Detail plan of Beechwood Avenue illustrating properties that are listed on the Heritage Register (red), and the panhandle of the Rockcliffe Park HCD (green). Source: Beechwood Avenue CDP

*City of Ottawa 2006.*

## 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.

### **Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan (1993)**

The area is zoned multi-family residential in the Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan.

### **Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Study (1997) and Plan (2016) (RPHCD)**

The development sites are within the boundaries of the RPHCD, which was designated under Part V of the OHA (By-law 97-10). A District Plan was completed in 2016 (By-law # 2016-89).

Beechwood is southern edge of Rockcliffe Park's Panhandle; a distinct area characterized by small lots, and multi-unit dwellings. The (CDF) listed in the Conservation District Plan acknowledges the difference from other parts of the district as, "the multi-unit buildings, small lots, and more modest houses in the area referred to as the "Panhandle," that characterize the south and west boundaries of the District."

This section of Rockcliffe Park has traditionally and continues to serve as a transitional zone to the surrounding neighbourhoods of Vanier and Lindenlea. The Rockcliffe Park HCD Plan acknowledges that properties along Beechwood have a different character from other streets in the core of the HCD but does not provide specific guidelines for new construction in this area known as the "Panhandle."

Accordingly, Heritage staff, in consultation with the community, need to assess this proposal as a situation not contemplated by the Plan.

Beechwood Avenue is a Traditional Mainstreet Zone that permits intensification and offers greater flexibility than other parts of the HCD. The street is in flux, representative of the main street revitalization that is underway and encourages this latitude without significantly altering the heritage values and character defining elements of the Rockcliffe Heritage District.

### **Beechwood Avenue Community Design Plan (BACDP), 2006**

The BACDP divided Beechwood Avenue into three distinct sectors. The development site is located within the Rockcliffe Park Sector extending from Beechwood Cemetery to Acacia Avenue. The development strategy for the Rockcliffe Sector noted that the area is not as well defined in character as the St. Charles Sector to the west. The north (west) side of Beechwood Avenue has few recognizable buildings and large trees that screen the buildings from the street.

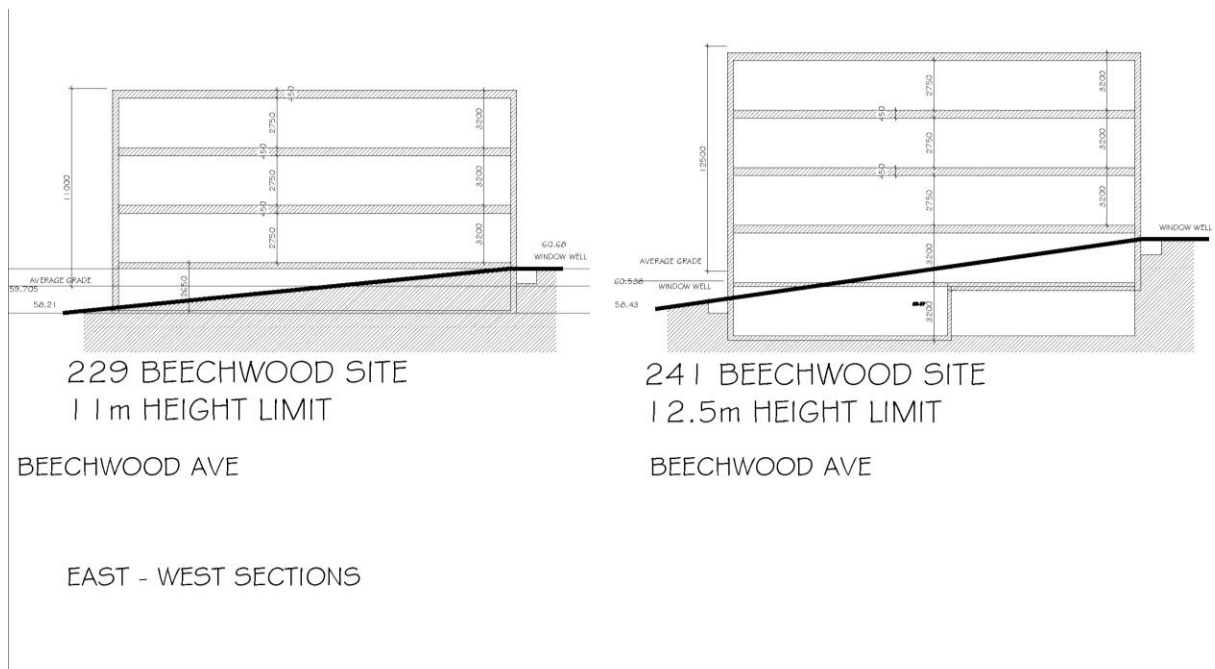
In the future, two elements are needed to link the sector with the others:

- First, a comprehensive streetscape design should be implemented along the entire length of the street, and the Rockcliffe Sector streetscape should contain the same elements as the design of the St. Charles Sector; and,
- Secondly, a minor development node should be established at the Jolliet/Corona intersection. Infill to low-rise mixed-use buildings should be allowed to develop on the south (east) side of the avenue and infill residential buildings on the north (west) side.

Development intensity and building height should gradually rise from the east to the west. On the north side of the street, all developments should be residential in nature and all buildings should have a residential setback to match the existing patterns of development. Larger buildings should be designed as a collection of smaller buildings. The Mainstreet designation is deemed to end on the south side of Beechwood at the entrance to Beechwood Cemetery, and on the north side at the eastern property line of 255 Beechwood Avenue.

**229-231 Beechwood Avenue (Report to Planning and Environment Committee, and Council. 14 Oct. 2008. Beechwood Cemetery View Official Plan Ref. No. ACS-2008-ICS-PLA-0216)**

The maximum building height will be increased from approximately three and one-half storeys (11.0m) to four storeys (12.5m). This is being done because it has been determined that the maximum building height, as described in the Beechwood Avenue Community Design Plan, can be achieved without encroaching into the view shed.



1 SCHEMATIC SECTIONS  
A2 1:200

Figure 11: Schematic sections of the two buildings. The upper height limit for both buildings is 12.5m or four storeys. Source: Woodman Architects April 2020

## 2.0 HERITAGE RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

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### 2.1 Neighbourhood and Development Site History

The history of Rockcliffe Park is outlined in detail in the 1997 Heritage Conservation District Study. The development sites are in an area known as the 'Panhandle' encompassing lots to the south of Corona Avenue bound by Beechwood Avenue and Acacia Street. The first development along Beechwood Avenue in Rockcliffe Park occurred prior to the establishment of the Rockcliffe Park Police Village in 1908. The brick clad two-storey side-by-side duplex at 231 – 235 Beechwood is an example. The Rockcliffe Park Police Village passed several by-laws relating to land use and required setbacks from the street that applied to development within the 'Panhandle' where the Public Works yard was located.

In 1922, the Police village council declared a restricted area prohibiting the use of land for any purpose other than detached private residences establishing a twenty-five-foot setback for buildings excluding the 'Panhandle' south of Corona Avenue. A fifteen-foot setback was required for new houses built elsewhere in the Police Village, excepting Beechwood Avenue.<sup>1</sup> The property at 229 Beechwood was constructed circa 1930 and set back from the street matching the setback of the adjacent property at 231–235 Beechwood.

In 1936, the restricted area was extended into the 'Panhandle' to include the streets bounded by Corona Avenue, lower Acacia, and Beechwood, as well as land east of McKay Lake. A fifteen-foot setback was required on lots within these boundaries. In 1946, further land-use restrictions were introduced including a minimum square footage and a minimum value for all new buildings. In the area south of Corona, the figures were reduced to 1000 sq. ft. A setback of fifteen feet was required for accessory or outbuildings.<sup>2</sup> Following the Second World War, the housing shortage became increasingly apparent. To address this, the National Housing Act was passed, and standard plans were created to encourage quick construction. The properties at 241, 245, and 247 were built to these standardized plans.<sup>3</sup>

Following municipal amalgamation in 2003, the public work's yard was sub-divided into residential lots and the area redeveloped with single detached residences fronting onto Black Maple Private that is accessed off Acacia Avenue. The lot at 455 Green Avenue adjacent to 229 Beechwood was redeveloped, and a new single detached residence constructed similar in the design, form, and materiality to the development fronting onto Black Maple Private. In 2006, the Beechwood Community Design Plan was approved, and density provisions were removed from the two sites to align with the 1993 Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan in which the two sites are zoned multi-family residential.

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<sup>1</sup> Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Study 1997 pg. 25

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pgs. 25-26.

<sup>3</sup> Heritage Survey Forms 241, 245, and 247 Beechwood Avenue. City of Ottawa 2010.



Figure 12: 1928 aerial view of the Panhandle. Note that Corona Avenue had not been laid out, and the scattered nature of development. Development sites arrowed. Source: Geottawa



Figure 13: 1965 aerial view of the Panhandle. Note the Public Works yard in the centre of the block. Development sites arrowed. Source: Geottawa

## 2.2 Built Heritage

The five existing residences within the development site can be grouped into two general categories. The three residences at 229 and 231-235 Beechwood are representative examples of two storey brick clad buildings constructed during the 1900 – 1930 period in Vanier. The two-storey brick clad building at

449 Green Avenue is similar in design and style constructed during the same period and would be the only building within the 'Panhandle' comparable with Rockcliffe Park.

The second group of residences 241, 245, and 247 Beechwood Avenue are representative examples of post war housing constructed to the standardized designs developed by CMHC.

### 2.3 Environment Streetscape/Landscape

The 'Panhandle' has a distinct character and is the only area in Rockcliffe Park with smaller lots that are more characteristic of properties developed in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Vanier and Lindenlea. A factor for the atypical development pattern was that the Villages public work's yard was located centrally within the block bound by Green, Corona, and Beechwood Avenues and properties backed onto the yard. Beechwood Avenue developed gradually to become a commercial thoroughfare in the area with mixed commercial and residential on the south side, and residential properties on the north side. The buildings are characterized by limited setbacks from the street, higher density, modest front and side yards, sidewalks and curbs at the street, small stone retaining walls at the sidewalk, and random street trees. The combination of features relates the properties to one another. Although atypical for Rockcliffe Park, create a continuous streetscape. This section of Rockcliffe Park has and continues to serve as a transitional zone to the surrounding neighbourhoods of Vanier and Lindenlea.

#### Character

The character of Beechwood Avenue, which is a designated arterial roadway in the City's Official Plan and the only so-designated roadway in Rockcliffe Park, can be described as a mix of old and new development, predominantly residential in nature but with an evolving commercial street environment. Development along the north side of the street has more modest architecture, including a mixture of traditional cladding including brick, stucco, and siding, and is set back from the street. The lot pattern is defined by simple landscapes with the specific use of soft landscaping to screen the street.

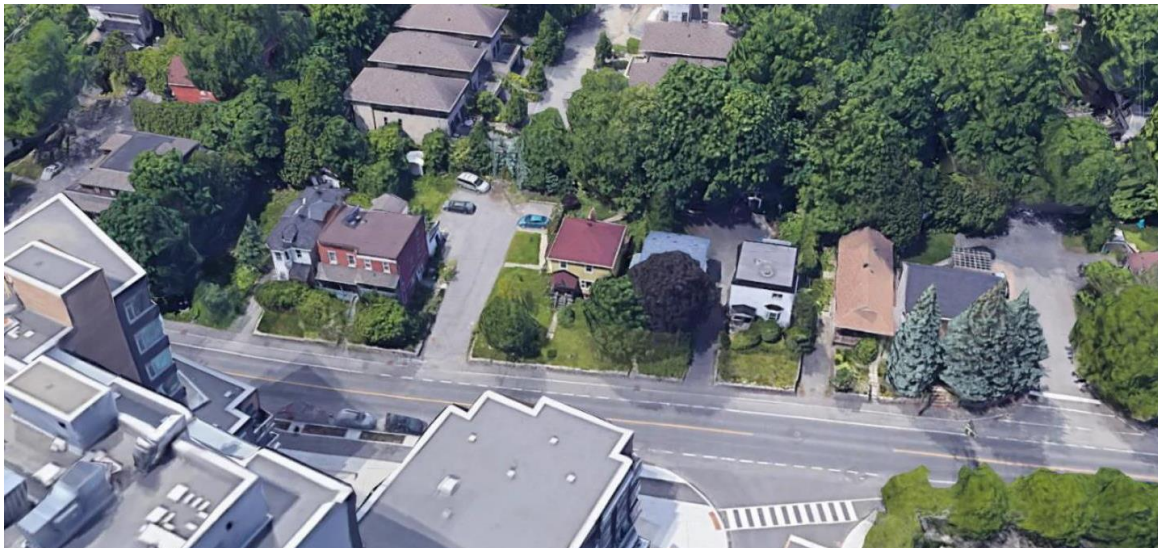


Figure 14: Aerial view of the five properties along Beechwood Avenue. Google Maps



*Figure 15: Street view of the circa 1930 two storey single detached property at 229 Beechwood (left), and the circa 1905 two-storey side-by-side duplex at 231 - 235 Beechwood. Both buildings are clad in brick with entrances and porches fronting onto the street. Note the stone retaining wall at the street, and the shrub planting in the front yard. Source: Google Earth*



*Figure 16: Street view of the circa 1950 two-storey single detached properties at 245 (left), and 247 (centre) Beechwood Avenue built to standard plans developed by the CMHC. The small cottage-style residence at 249 (right) Beechwood is not part of the proposed development. Note the stone retaining wall at the street, and the simple landscape treatment. Source: Google Earth*



Figure 17: Street view looking south on Beechwood. 247 Beechwood is to the right, and the roof of 231-235 Beechwood is visible to left. Note the stone retaining wall at the street, and the simple landscape treatment. Source: Google Earth

## 3.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

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### 3.1 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

A “Statement of Cultural Heritage Value” is the foundation of all heritage conservation district plans. The statement below is based on the original statement in the 1997 Rockcliffe HCD Study but has been shortened and adapted in consultation with the author of the original Rockcliffe Park study to reflect the current requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Heritage Attributes**

Rockcliffe Park is a rare and significant approach to estate layout and landscape design adapted to Canada’s natural landscape from 18th-century English precedents. Originally purchased from the Crown by Thomas McKay, it was laid out according to the principles of the Picturesque Tradition in a series of “Park and Villa” lots by his son-in-law Thomas Keefer in 1864. The historical associations of the village with the McKay/Keefer family, who were influential in the economic, social, cultural, and political development of Ottawa, continue and the heritage conservation district is a testament to the ideas and initiatives of various key members of this extended family, and their influence in shaping this area.

Rockcliffe Park today is a remarkably consistent reflection of Keefer’s original design intentions. Although development of the residential lots has taken place very gradually, the ideas of estate management, of individual lots as part of a larger whole, of picturesque design, of residential focus, have survived. This continuity of vision is rare in a community where development has occurred on a relatively large scale over such a long time.

The preservation of the natural landscape, the deliberately curved roads, lined with mature trees, and without curbs or sidewalks, the careful landscaping of the public spaces and corridors, together with the strong landscaping of the individual properties, create the apparently casual and informal style so



integral to the Picturesque tradition. The preservation and enhancement of topographical features, including the lake and pond, the internal ridges and slopes, and the various rock outcroppings, has reinforced the original design intentions. The views to and from the Ottawa River, the Beechwood escarpment, and the other park areas are integral to the Picturesque quality of Rockcliffe Park. Beechwood Cemetery and the Rockeries serve as a compatible landscaped boundary from the earliest period of settlement through to the present. The various border lands create important gateways to the area and help establish its character.

The architectural design of the buildings and associated institutional facilities is similarly deliberate and careful and reflects the casual elegance and asymmetry of the English country revival styles, such as the Georgian Revival, Tudor Revival and Arts and Crafts. Many of the houses were designed by architects in these styles. The generosity of space around the houses, and the flow of this space from one property to the next by continuous planting rather than hard fence lines, has maintained the estate qualities and park setting envisioned by Keefer.

### **Statement of Heritage Attributes**

The Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District comprises the entire former village of Rockcliffe Park, an independent municipality until amalgamation with the City of Ottawa in 2001. Section 41.1 (5) c of the Ontario Heritage Act requires the Heritage District Plan to include a “description of the heritage attributes of the heritage conservation district and of properties in the district.” A “Heritage Survey Form” outlining the heritage attributes for every property in the HCD has been compiled and evaluated. The forms are held on file with the City of Ottawa.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The attributes of the Rockcliffe Park HCD are outlined here. Several of the attributes (highlighted) related specifically to the Panhandle.

- The natural features that distinguish the HCD, including McKay Lake and its shoreline, the varied terrain, and topography.
- The unobtrusive siting of the houses on streets and the generous spacing relative to the neighbouring buildings.
- The variety of mature street trees and the dense forested character that they create.
- The profusion of trees, hedges, and shrubs on private property.
- Varied lot sizes and irregularly shaped lots.
- Generous spacing and setbacks of the buildings.
- Cedar hedges planted to demarcate property lines and to create privacy.
- The dominance of soft landscaping over hard landscaping.
- Wide publicly owned verges.
- The remaining Villa lots laid out in McKay’s original plan.
- The high concentration of buildings by architect Allan Keefer, including 725 and 741 Acacia, 11 Crescent Road.
- The rich mix of building types and styles from all eras, with the Tudor Revival and Georgian Revival styles forming a large proportion of the total building stock.
- The predominance of stucco and stone houses over and the relative rarity of brick buildings.
- The narrow width of many streets, such as McKinnon and Kinzua Roads.

- The historic road pattern that still reflects the original design established by Thomas Keefer.
- The low, dry-stone walls in certain areas of the Village, including around Ashbury College.
- The existing garden features that enhance the public realm and distinguish certain private properties, including the garden gate at 585 Manor Ave, and the white picket fence at 190 Coltrin Road.
- **Informal landscape character with simple walkways, driveways, stone retaining walls and flowerbeds.**
- The “dog walk,” a public footpath that extends from Old Prospect Road to corner of Lansdowne Road and Mariposa Avenue.
- The public open spaces including the Village Green and its associated Jubilee Garden.
- Institutional and recreational buildings including the three schools, Rockcliffe Park Public School, Ashbury College and Elmwood School for Girls and the Rockcliffe Park Tennis Club.
- The significant amenities of the Caldwell-Carver Conservation Area, McKay Lake, and the Pond,
- **The multi-unit buildings, small lots, and more modest houses in the area bounded by Oakhill to the east, Beechwood to the south, and Acacia to the west and north, referred to as the “Panhandle,” that characterize the south and west boundaries of the District.**
- The regular front yard setbacks on some streets such as Sir Guy Carleton Street, Blenheim Drive and Birch Avenue
- The irregular front yard setbacks on some streets, such as Mariposa Avenue between Springfield and Lisgar Roads, Crescent Road, Acacia Avenue and Buena Vista between Springfield and Cloverdale Roads

## 4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1 Design Intent

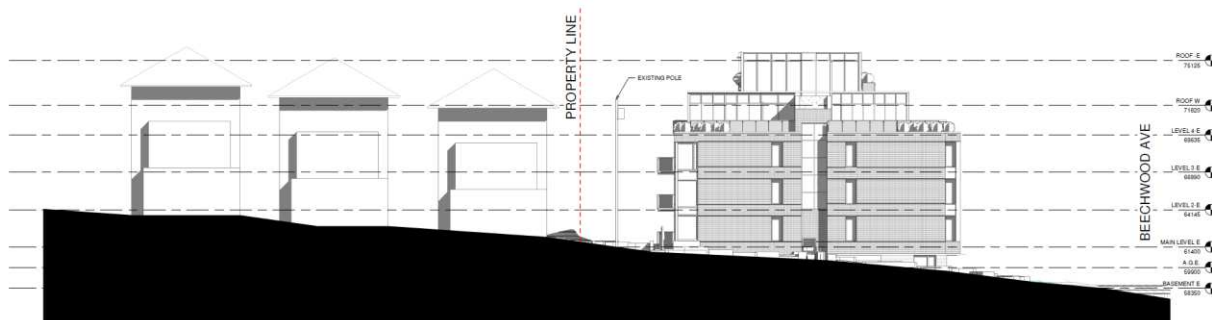
#### Context

The proposal is to construct two apartments, one three storey block to the south and the second a four-storey block to the north of Carsdale Avenue fronting onto Beechwood Avenue. The project has gone through at least four revisions. Features of the revised design include, underground parking, the removal of parking on Carsdale, the unit count is reduced, more two-bedroom units have been introduced, and the amenity area on the roof relocated and reduced in size.

The topography rises steeply from Beechwood to Acacia Avenue resulting in views from the towns along Black Maple Lane not being apparent and minimal overlook (as the picture below illustrates.) The new development will not be visible from the interior of the Panhandle.



Figure 18: View from Black Maple Lane and Acacia Avenue with the 3-storey units framing the view of the tower across Beechwood Avenue. The two proposed multi- units are not visible. They are both in line and set lower than the towns.



SECTION LOOKING AT 241 BEECHWOOD

Figure 18: Sections illustrating the relationship of the towns to the proposed apartments. The section also illustrates the generous front yards extending from Beechwood to the facades of the units. Source Woodman Architect 2021.

## The Architectural Expression

### 1. Form and Massing

The proposed development of two multi-unit buildings at 3 and 4-storeys is not a building typology found elsewhere within the HCD. However, its location on Beechwood Avenue (at the extreme edge of the HCD) functions as transitional elements. Beechwood Avenue is a traditional mainstreet zone that permits intensification and offers greater flexibility than other parts of the HCD. The street is representative of the main street revitalization that is underway and encourages this latitude without challenging the heritage values and character defining elements of the district.

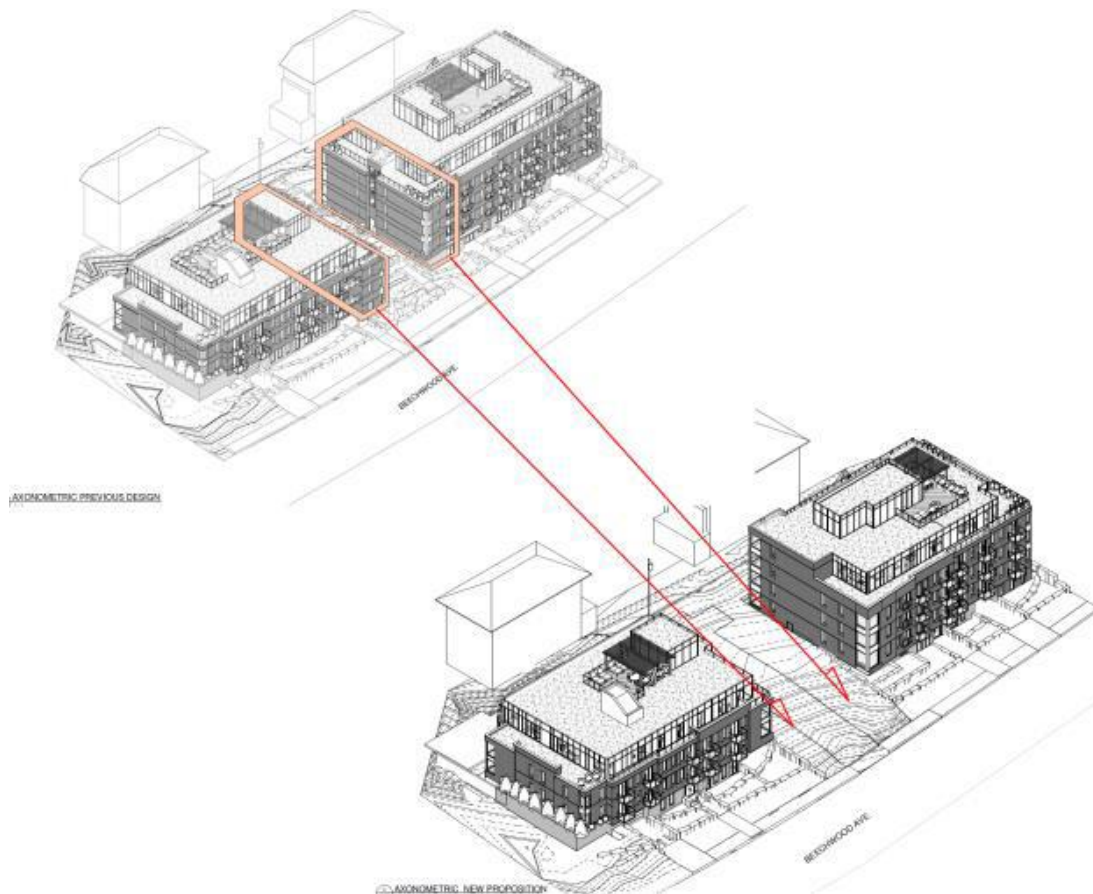


Figure 19: As the illustration shows the revised design significantly reduces the footprint of the previous concept to allow for increased open space adjacent to the proposed buildings. The massing is further reduced by shrinking the floor area of all storeys, accordingly, including the corresponding stepping of upper floors. The visual link between Beechwood and Acacia is an important vista that is maintained.

While the new massing is not a typology consistent with the residential character of the neighborhood of the Rockcliffe HCD, the scale is respectful of the residential neighbourhood along Beechwood. The contemporary apartment design mirrors the development across the street with the three and four storey height visually addressing the podium height.



FRONT ELEVATION MATERIALS

Figure 20: The palette of finishes designed in combination with a staggered setbacks helps to express the buildings as a series of smaller scale units. Woodman Architecture 2022.

## 2. Palette of Finishes

The palette of building materials and the colour palette have been modified and the building design has gone through an extensive overhaul. Recommendations to stagger the building setbacks, adding balcony projections and ground floor street access have been introduced into the plan. The building heights of the two buildings have remained as initially proposed with the massing of the buildings significantly reduced.



Figure 21: Using a variety of compatible exterior cladding materials and architectural elements arranged to break up the façade into vertical elements along with a streetscape that maintains individual entrances and driveways to evoke the former pattern of development.

Using variations in the setbacks, the façades are broken down to suggest the original lots and to maintain the residential character of the site. Due to the fact that the basement is partially exposed along Beechwood the height is consistent with others along the street whereas the 3 and 4 storey height along the rear relate to the residential units along Carsdale. As with a number of Rockcliffe homes, taking advantage of grade changes to allow for walkouts is a common practice.

### 3. Landscape Treatment

The proposed landscaping elements maintain the street edge of the site and its relationship to the surrounding neighborhood. The existing dry stone retaining walls following the public sidewalk are being partially removed and the grade along the street frontage dropped to allow walkout access and connectivity of the basement units, underground parking to both buildings and accessible main entrances. The variety of replacement trees and landscaping elements that have been proposed in landscape plans focus on reinforcing the residential character. Driveway entrances, walkout ground floor units a central green area and street trees, all contribute to the cadence of the street and the pedestrian experience.



Figure 22: Reinforcing the established lot pattern by defining the individual lots with low, dry-stone walls as is common in certain areas of Rockcliffe Park.

### The Conservation Approach

The proposed conservation approach as defined in the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, and given the new construction being planned, is Rehabilitation in that the site is being repurposed for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting heritage character of the district.

The elevations below illustrate the finishes and materials' palette. The traditional rhythm of buildings separated by openings is maintained although not as fine grained it is in keeping with this section of

Beechwood. The building heights mirror the podium height across the street and successfully integrate the streetscape.



Figure 23: Rendered elevation of the proposed development looking along Beechwood Avenue. The buildings’ massing as expressed in the arrangement of materials is successful in mitigating the scale of the building and suggesting a collection of smaller buildings. The balconies enhance the residential expression. Source: Woodman Architect 2022.

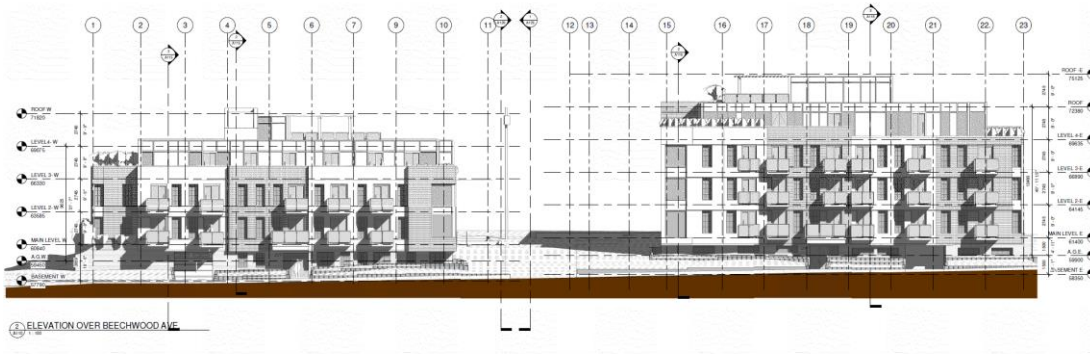


Figure 24: East and west Elevations. Source Woodman Architecture 2022.

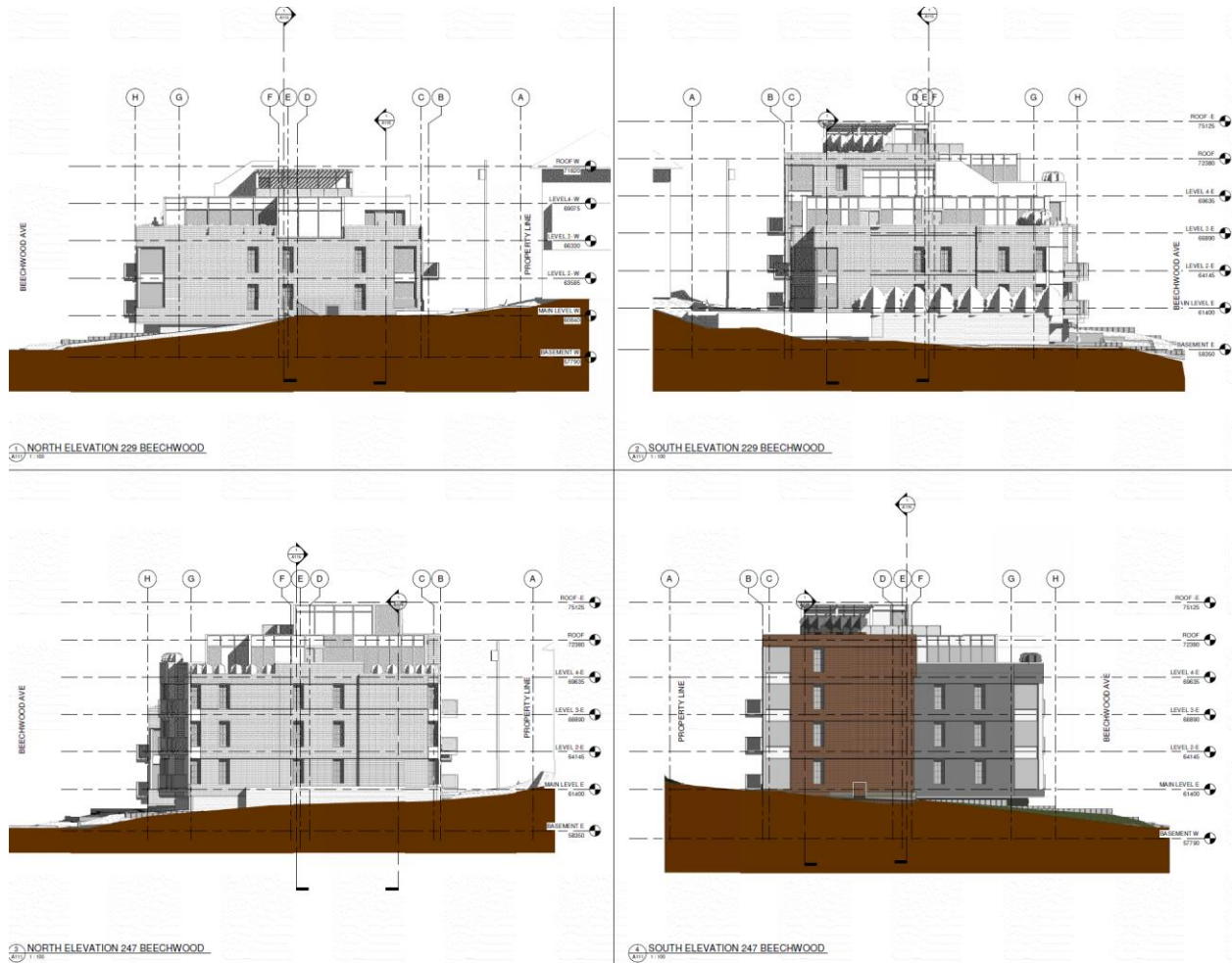


Figure 25: North and South Elevations are well detailed providing well-finished elevations towards neighbouring properties. Source: Woodman Architect 2022.



Figure 26: A view between the two units illustrating the retention of the street at Carlsdale and Beechwood Avenue intersection. The proposed buildings will continue to be set back from the lot line abutting Beechwood Avenue and sited into the slope of the site such that the rear of the buildings will have a lower profile when viewed from the interior of the Panhandle. Source Woodman Architects 2022.





Figure 27: Rendered perspectives detailing the public realm of the proposed development. Using a similar palette of materials with reversed colours helps to provide a modulated facade along the street. Woodman Architect, 2022.



Figure 28: Rendered bird's eye view of the proposed development in its context. The four storey buildings' massing as expressed in the arrangement of materials successfully relates to the neighbouring properties. Portions of the drystone retaining wall interpret the original street edge. Source: Woodman Architect, 2022

## 5.0 IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

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### 5.1 Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District Plan Guidelines

This section specifically addresses the impacts of the development proposal on the cultural heritage values of the Rockcliffe Park Heritage Conservation District (RPHCD). The guidelines contained in the 2016 District Plan are used to assess the impacts. The heritage attributes and character-defining features of the RPHCD are itemized in Section 3.0.

The listed (CHF) identify the Panhandle as a distinct area within Rockcliffe Park, however the 2019 conservation plan does not address the distinctions. The city and the community, need to assess this proposal as a situation not contemplated by the Plan. The following takes each of the relevant guidelines and provides a discussion.

The five properties at 229, 231-235, 241, 245 and 247 Beechwood are categorized as Grade 2 heritage resources. As noted in the comments in the HSF forms for the properties under street characteristics, **Beechwood Avenue is an anomaly in that it is the only street in Rockcliffe Park with a curb and sidewalk, and buildings along the street are characterized by shallow setbacks, high density, and modest yard spaces.** Small yards, modest landscape plantings and shallow lawns characterize the landscape and open space and a clear separation between street, sidewalk and property is characteristic of this stretch of Beechwood. The narrative also notes **that the Panhandle has a distinct character from the rest of Rockcliffe Park, and the area serves as a transitional zone to the adjacent neighbourhoods of Vanier and Lindenlea.**

#### 7.4 Additions and New Construction

##### 7.4.2 Guidelines for New Buildings Lot pattern (7.3.3) and compatibility of /mass/footprint (7.4.2)

2. New buildings shall contribute to and not detract from the heritage character of the HCD and its attributes.
3. Construction of new buildings will only be permitted when the new building does not detract from the historic landscape characteristics of the associated streetscape, the height and mass of the new building are consistent with the Grade I buildings in the associated streetscape, and the siting and materials of the new building are compatible with the Grade I buildings in the associated streetscape. Where there are **no** Grade I buildings in the associated streetscape, the height and mass of the new building shall respect the character of the existing buildings and shall not have a negative impact on the associated streetscape or the cultural heritage value of the HCD.

##### **Massing and Building Design**

The design was reviewed by the UDR Panel, and they suggested picking up on the rhythm and articulation of other buildings on the street and integrating them into the building's articulation. Ensure that the roof amenity is not intrusive for neighbouring sites.

**Response:** *The heritage character of the Panhandle, particularly the interior lots fronting onto Beechwood Avenue is atypical of the HCD. The proposed development is enclosed by recently developed infill housing to the south and west that has a distinct character of its own. Heritage attributes of the Panhandle as stated in the SOS are 'The multi-unit buildings, small lots, and more modest houses in the*

area.' The heritage survey forms note that the area provides a transition to the Lindenlea and Vanier neighbourhoods.

The scale of the proposed buildings has been reduced, with particularly focus on the larger of the two buildings, as follows:

229 Beechwood:

- 8.1% reduction to building length;
- 8.5% reduction to building footprint area; and
- 6 less dwelling units.

241 Beechwood:

- 16.6% reduction to building length;
- 17.3% reduction to building footprint area; and
- The significant reduction in building length and footprint has increased the amount of open space on all sides of the proposed buildings. This will also allow the full width of the Carsdale Avenue right-of-way to remain as it exists. Acquisition of the right-of-way will no longer be pursued, however, the client would propose landscaping upgrades within the right-of-way, with permission from the City, to improve its appearance from the street. The resulting reduced massing, including stepping of upper floors, is compatible with surrounding development and not dissimilar in terms of the proportionality of building footprint to parcel size.



Figure 29: The new massing is consistent with the residential character of the panhandle neighborhood of the Rockcliffe HCD; the scale is respectful of the residential neighbourhood along Beechwood as illustrated below. The contemporary apartment design mirrors the development across the street with the three and four storey height visually addressing its podium height as well as the residence to the left.



*Figure 30: Using variations in the setbacks, the façades are broken down to suggest the original lots and to maintain the residential character of the site. Because the basement is partially exposed along Beechwood the height is consistent with others along the street whereas the 3 and 4 storey height along the rear relates to the residential units along Carsdale. As with a number of Rockcliffe homes, taking advantage of grade changes to allow for walkouts is a common practice.*

4. New buildings shall be of their own time but sympathetic to the character of their historic neighbours in terms of massing, height, and materials. New buildings are not required to replicate historical styles.

**Response:** *Within the HCD, there is a combination of new and old buildings that include period heritage buildings, replica contemporary pieces and contemporary expressions that rely on contrast to express their provenance. Each of these approaches has previously been proven to be acceptable and successfully integrated into the Rockcliffe Park HCD. Documented as-built examples of all three approaches are found within the HCD boundaries. The approach proposed with the planned development is a contemporary expression that draws from the character of Beechwood Avenue and the larger HCD Panhandle.*

6. Existing grades shall be maintained.

The City Heritage Planner and UDRP raised concerns regarding attempts to retain grades along the basement level and conserve the existing dry-stone walls as a method to define the original lot pattern as not being successful and should be reconsidered.

**Response:** *The revised plans for the two buildings along Beechwood have lowered the grade and now treat the retaining walls as an accent feature along sections of the street. In combination with at-grade entrances, underground parking for both buildings, and accessible basement units the design provides a much cleaner relationship to the street. The two buildings respond to the cross slope across the depth of the lots, with window wells proposed for the rear of the buildings. There is no indication of the extent of bedrock removal from the two sites to accommodate the two buildings.*

8. Windows may be wood, metal clad wood, steel, or other materials as appropriate. Multi-paned windows should have appropriate muntin bars.

**Response:** *The fenestration pattern and the proposed balconies shown on the renderings is typical of a residential multi-unit expression.*

9. The use of natural materials, such as stone, real stucco, brick, and wood is an important attribute of the HCD, and the use of materials such as vinyl siding, aluminum soffits, synthetic stucco, and manufactured stone will not be supported.

**Response:** *The revised design has introduced the use of brick as the primary material for each of the buildings, aluminum windows and a fiber board on the upper levels. The colour palette is a much more subtle use of grey tones to conform with neighbouring properties. The use of brick pays tribute to the early brick clad buildings in the Panhandle of the HCD.*

10. Terraces on the top storey of buildings do not form part of the heritage character of the HCD; however, a terrace on the top storey may be permitted if it is set back from the roof edge, it and its fixtures are not visible from the surrounding public realm, and the terrace does not have a negative effect on the character of the surrounding cultural heritage landscape.

**Response:** *There is a rooftop terraces on each of the apartments. In response to concerns they have been reduced in size and set back from the edge and enclosed to provide a comfortable space and to discourage overlooking of neighbouring properties.*

11. If brick and stone cladding is proposed, it will extend to all façades and not be used solely on the front façade. Other cladding materials may be appropriate. The use of modern materials such as plastic or fiberglass to replicate architectural details such as columns, balusters or bargeboard is not acceptable and will not be permitted.

**Response:** *See the plans and elevations, which respect this guideline and offer material consistency on all elevations.*

### 7.3 Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Landscapes

#### 7.3.1 Demolition and Relocation (Applicable Guidelines)

5. While acknowledging that the retention of both Grade 1 and Grade 2 buildings in the HCD is an objective of this Plan, the demolition of Grade 2 buildings in the HCD may be considered. Any application to demolish a Grade 2 building in the HCD shall be accompanied by plans for the proposed replacement building.

**Response:** *The development proposal entails the demolition of the five Grade 2 buildings.*

6. Any application to demolish an existing Grade 2 building will be reviewed with consideration of its historical and architectural significance, its contribution to the historic character of the streetscape, and the appropriateness of the proposed redevelopment. Demolition will be permitted only where the existing building is of little significance, and the proposed building is sympathetic to the traditional surrounding natural and cultural environment. All new construction will comply with the relevant guidelines contained within this plan.

**Response:** *The Heritage Survey Form assigns a score to each property for environment, history, and architecture with a total score of 100. The scores for the five properties range from a low of 9 (247 Beechwood) to a high of 40 (229 Beechwood) and the balance of the properties averaging in the range of*

30. All the properties scored low in architecture or design; the landscape setting was identified as the primary heritage attributes of the properties. Based on the low scores, the integrity of the buildings and the appropriateness of the new development a request for demolition is reasonable.

7. When a building is proposed for demolition and replacement, the Environment Section of the heritage survey form and existing conditions shall be reviewed to identify significant landscape features to be retained.

**Response:** Landscape features for all the properties is limited to low stone retaining walls at the sidewalk that mitigates grades as they rise to the back of the properties. A tree survey has been completed as part of the redevelopment. Approximately 11 Trees plus additional shrubs are being removed and will be replaced.

### 7.3.3 Landscape Guidelines

The conservation and enhancement of the HCD's distinctive landscape is pivotal to all projects within it. The Guidelines below provide direction to individual property owners about the conservation and enhancement of the landscape.

#### Front Yards, Plant Material, Trees and Walkways

1. The dominance of soft landscape over hard landscape is an essential heritage attribute of the HCD and shall be retained to maintain a green setting for each property.

**Response:** The retaining walls at the sidewalk are the primary heritage attributes of the five properties and portions are being used effectively to define the original lot patterns and enhance the perception of the two buildings as a collection of smaller buildings.

2. Front yards shall have a generous area of soft landscaping which may include lawns, shrubs and flowerbeds, specimen, or groupings of trees. The tradition of using native plant material is encouraged. Existing elements such as lawns, flower beds, glades of trees, shrubs, rocks, and low stone walls shall be maintained, and hard surfacing shall be kept to a minimum.

**Response:** The proposed landscaping respects the attributes and established character of this stretch of Beechwood Avenue. Depth to bedrock, which is assumed to be close to the finished grade at the sidewalk, may limit the viability of the soft landscape components, including the proposed trees.

#### Lot sizes

The retention of existing lots, large and small, is important to the preservation of the character of the HCD. New lots created through severance or by joining smaller lots together shall be consistent with the general lot sizes within the associated streetscape and the zoning bylaw in force at the time to respect the character of the associated streetscape.

**Response:** The proposal entails the consolidation of two lots to the south and three lots to the north of separated by Carsdale Avenue. As noted in the BACDP, larger buildings should be designed as a collection of smaller buildings, which is the approach that is illustrated in the perspective views.

4. All lots will be large enough to provide generous open space around buildings, thus protecting the continuity and dominance of the soft landscape.

**Response:** *The proposed side yard setbacks are 1.5m to the three-storey building to the south (455 Green) and 2.5m to the one storey property to the north (249 Beechwood). The proposed scale of the two developments at three and four storeys each with a 30m footprint extending along the street.*

#### **Dominance of soft landscaping (7.4.3/7.3.3)**

The footprint/mass of the proposed buildings does not allow for soft landscaping to dominate on the site. A significant reduction of the footprint, and introduction of meaningful, continuous zones of soft landscaping is required.

**Response:** *The proposed buildings are set back in line with the original buildings to maintain the predominantly green front yards. This, together with the significantly greater separation between the proposed buildings, will allow for a dominance of soft landscaping. While the Carsdale Avenue would remain under City ownership, the client is proposing to reinstate soft landscaped areas adjacent to the building, including new tree plantings. This landscaping will continue along the front of the buildings, using a similar approach to that of the PUD along Black Maple Private where focused landscaping treatment is used to help retain the impression of lot pattern. The drystone walls will provide openings for driveways and entrance walks, retaining the street cadence. The main structural walls will be located outside of the future road widening, while the decorative remanent walls and tree plantings are proposed within the road widening to supplement the streetscape. All grassed areas previously proposed on site have been eliminated in favour of ground cover to achieve a lush and garden-like design.*

#### **The RP Secondary Plan is part of Ottawa's Official Plan.**

Accordance with the Rockcliffe Park Secondary Plan:

Mass, height, location, landscaping: When considering Planning Applications, Council shall have regard to such matters as: residential use, density, lot size, lot coverage, building height, massing, parking, landscaping, setbacks and side yards, location, type, and scale of accessory uses and structures, all in order to assess neighbourhood compatibility.

The height, massing, setbacks, and Floor Area Ratio of new Development shall conform to the zoning or interim control regulations in force at the time and new development shall be compatible with the adjacent development in terms of building height, massing, setbacks, and open space.

The lands located on the west side of Beechwood Avenue, between Oakhill Road and Acacia Avenue, are also designated Residential (Multiple Family), and shall permit detached single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, (semi-detached and duplex), row dwellings, apartments and accessory uses at the Residential Density shown on Schedule A. The height, massing, setbacks, and parking areas of any development in this area shall be compatible with the adjacent residential development in the adjacent areas designated Residential.

The character created by the existing lot pattern in the panhandle must not be lost in the built form of the new buildings, regardless of ownership of adjacent lots. The form of the proposed buildings across existing lot lines disregards the historic lot pattern.

*The significant reduction in building length and footprint has increased the amount of open space on all sides of the proposed buildings. This will also allow the full width of the Carsdale Avenue right-of-way to remain as it exists. The resulting reduced massing, including stepping of upper floors, is compatible with*

surrounding development and not dissimilar in terms of the proportionality of building footprint to parcel size.



Figure 31: Elevations illustrating the reduction on massing with the revised proposal

## 5.7 Development Impacts

**Positive impacts** of the proposed development on the cultural heritage values of the Rockcliffe Park HCD include:

- The proposed development of multi-unit residential buildings on the interior lots fronting onto Beechwood Avenue is a positive impact in that it will support intensification of the traditional Mainstreet.
- The proposed infill development adds to the rich mix of building types and styles from all eras and is in keeping with recent architectural expressions.
- The design approach employs materials to define the buildings as a collection of smaller buildings, and the retention of portions of the low stone retaining walls that define the original lots are positive impacts on the streetscape rhythm.
- The heights are in keeping with the height of the podium across the street.
- Creating a more integrated streetscape by orienting the new development with the development across the street.
- Placing the driveways to the north and south boundaries and introducing below grade parking areas.
- The revised design significantly reduces the footprint of the earlier concepts to allow for increased open space adjacent to the proposed buildings. The massing is further reduced by



shrinking the floor area of all storeys, accordingly, including the corresponding stepping of upper floors.

- The visual link between Beechwood and Acacia along Carsdale and Black Maple Private is an important vista that is maintained.
- Incorporating a design, materials, and finishes that are consistent with contemporary homes in Rockcliffe Park.

**Adverse impacts** of the proposed development include:

- There are no negative impacts.
- There was the potential that the new building would overwhelm the next door cottage.

*Figure 32: The adjacent 1-storey cottage is not overwhelmed. The contrast in scale between the four-storey building and the adjacent one-storey building to the north is visually far less apparent partly because of the grade and retaining wall and also the cottage form is set forward with the new development well separated and set back with mature plantings next to the cottage.*



## 6.0 ALTERNATIVES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

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### 6.1 Alternatives

Throughout the design process, alternatives were explored. The architectural concepts have been revised in response to recommendations by the City and the Rockcliffe community association.

#### **Landscape:**

Low stone retaining walls were retained and rebuilt to define the original lot lines between properties that will add to the visual rhythm of the streetscape and breakup the 30m of frontage.

The same pavers as the ones across the street are being used to emphasize the public realm and sense of community.

Trees have been planted inside the property to prevent the need to remove them if and when the street is widened.

The depth to bedrock, which is assumed to be close to the existing finish grade at the street property line, will necessitate an increased soil volume to support soft landscape features – trees, shrubs, etc. An

increased soil volume could be achieved by raising the height of the proposed retaining wall at the sidewalk.

**Architecture:**

The length and footprint of both apartments has been significantly reduced, which allows for an increased amount of open space on all sides of the proposed buildings.

The full width of the Carsdale Avenue right-of-way will remain as it exists.

The resulting reduced massing, including stepping of upper floors, is compatible with surrounding development and not dissimilar in terms of the proportionality of building footprint to parcel size.

Materiality – A red-brown and tan brick and upper floor set back with a siding are compatible with neighbouring development.

## 6.2 Mitigation measures

Throughout the design process a number of options and mitigation measures have been explored, include:

Adding balconies and a varied façade treatment to mitigate the scale of the building within the streetscape.

The two sites to the north (249 and 251) are zoned for multi-family residences and the Beechwood Avenue CDP envisioned a three storey multi-unit residential building on the site.

Introducing ground floor street access and walk out basement units along Beechwood Avenue where the grade drops off help retain the relationship of individual homes along the street.

Introducing below grade covered parking and removing the parking from Carsdale is a positive improvement as is the street edge landscape along Carsdale.

Reducing the roof amenity space to prevent overlook and reducing the upper floor plate.

## 6.3 Conclusions

The proposed development of 3 and 4-storey multi-unit apartments is not a building typology found elsewhere within the HCD. However, their location on Beechwood Avenue (at the extreme edge of the HCD) functions as transitional elements. Beechwood Avenue is a traditional mainstreet zone that permits intensification and offers greater flexibility than other parts of the HCD. The street is representative of the main street revitalization that is underway and encourages this latitude without negatively impacting the heritage values and character defining elements of the district.

The proposal entails the consolidation of two lots to the south and three lots to the north of Carsdale Avenue. The scale of the proposed development is in keeping with the stand-alone fine grain pattern of traditional lot development in the 'Panhandle.' As noted in the BACDP, larger buildings should be designed as a collection of smaller buildings, which is the approach taken. The separation between buildings and retention of the street rhythm and street access supports neighbourly traditions of the Village. Maintaining the large soft landscape frontage with buildings set back from the street and the drystone retaining walls are in keeping with other parts of Rockcliffe.

Within the HCD, there is a combination of new and old buildings that include period heritage buildings, replica contemporary pieces and contemporary expressions that rely on contrast to express their provenance. Examples of all three approaches are documented as-builts within the HCD boundaries. The approach proposed with the planned development is a contemporary expression that draws from the character of Beechwood Avenue and the larger HCD. Each of these approaches has previously been proven to be acceptable and successfully integrated into the Rockcliffe Park HCD.

Beechwood Avenue extending through to Corona Avenue has been designated a 'Traditional Main Street', and a comprehensive streetscape design will be implemented along the entire length of the street. The building heights relate to the podium across the street where a similar palette of finishes is used. The scale is respectful of the residential neighbourhood that lies adjacent to the site. The landscape treatment, and public amenities such as the same pavers as the courtyard across the street acknowledging the public realm and capitalize on a shared mid-block open space, which is called for in the BACDP.

It is the authors opinion that the development is a fitting inclusion as part of the revitalization of Beechwood Avenue and is respectful of the traditional character of Rockcliffe's Panhandle. The listed (CHF) identity the Panhandle as a distinct area within Rockcliffe Park, however the 2019 conservation plan does not address the distinctions. The city and the community, need to assess this proposal as a situation not contemplated by the Plan but one that can potentially serve as an example.

## **Glossary of Terms Used**

### **Adverse impact**

A project has the potential to "adversely impact" the cultural heritage value of a project if it requires the removal of heritage attributes, requires the destruction of a cultural heritage resource, obscures heritage attributes, is constructed in such a way that it does not respect the defined cultural heritage value of a resource.

### **Built Heritage**

Includes buildings, structures and sites that contribute to an understanding of our heritage and are valued for their representation of that heritage. They may reveal architectural, cultural, or socio-political patterns of our history or may be associated with specific events or people who have shaped that history. Examples include buildings, groups of buildings, dams, and bridges.

### **Cultural Heritage Resources**

Includes four components: Built Heritage, Cultural Heritage Landscapes, Archaeological Resources, and documentary heritage left by people.

### **Cultural Heritage Landscape**

Any geographic area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people and that provides the contextual and spatial information necessary to preserve and interpret the understanding of important historical settings and changes to past patterns of land use. Examples include a burial ground, historical garden or a larger landscape reflecting human intervention.

### **Preservation**

Preservation involves protecting, maintaining, and stabilizing the existing form, material and integrity of an historic place or individual component, while protecting its heritage value.

***Rehabilitation***

Rehabilitation involves the sensitive adaptation of an historic place or individual component for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value.

***Restoration***

Restoration involves accurately revealing, recovering, or representing the state of an historic place or individual component as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value.

## 8.0 AUTHORS QUALIFICATIONS

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**Commonwealth Resource Management** is an integrated consulting and management firm that offers a range of professional services related to conservation, planning, research, design, and interpretation for historical and cultural resources. A key focus of the practice is planning and assessment of heritage resources as part of the development process.

**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 a specialist in the research and assessment of cultural heritage resources and building conservation. Experience in the heritage conservation field extends over 30 years primarily working for Commonwealth Historic Resource Management.