

# HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT



## Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery 114 Richmond Road, Westboro, Ottawa

**Prepared For:**

1001311448 Ontario Inc.  
c/o Jordan Tannis  
408 Tweedsmuir Avenue  
Ottawa, ON, K1Z 5N5  
613-293-2110  
Jt@concorde-properties.ca

**Prepared By:**

Alex Rowse-Thompson, RPP, MCIP, CAHP  
Heritage Studio  
Kingston, ON  
alex@heritagestudio.ca  
613-305-4877

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## CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	2
1.1 Scope of Work .....	2
1.2 Project Background.....	3
1.3 Address and Owner/Contact Information.....	4
1.4 Property Description & Context .....	5
1.5 Heritage Status.....	10
1.6 Relevant Council-Approved Documents.....	10
2. Property History, Evolution & Analysis.....	11
3. Statement of Significance .....	17
4. Proposed Development .....	19
5. Impact Assessment.....	24
5.1 Impact to Heritage Attributes .....	24
5.2 Potential Negative Impacts .....	27
5.3 Potential Positive Impacts.....	29
6. Alternatives & Mitigation Strategies.....	30
6.1 Alternative Development Approaches.....	30
6.2 Mitigation Strategies .....	31
7. Conclusion.....	36
8. References.....	38
8.1 Sources .....	38
8.2 List of People Contacted .....	39
9. Project Personnel & Qualifications .....	39
10. Appendices.....	40

*Image on cover: Render of proposed redevelopment looking southwest towards the “The Elms” and the east convent wing with new apartment building in background. (Project1 Studio)*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of Work

1001311448 Ontario Inc. (the Owner) retained Heritage Studio to prepare this Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the property municipally known as 114 Richmond Road (subject property). Located in Ottawa's Westboro neighbourhood, the property encompasses the former building and grounds of the Soeurs de la Visitation d'Ottawa Monastery (Figure 1).

The Owner proposes to redevelop the property through partial retention and adaptive reuse of the convent building, alongside the construction of a four-storey apartment building and six three-storey stacked townhouses. The development proposal requires Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan Control, and Heritage Permit applications.

The subject property is designated under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act (OHA)*. In accordance with Section 4.5.2 of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, an HIA is required for any development on a protected heritage property that may adversely impact the heritage resource. The City has also requested that a Conservation Plan be submitted concurrently with the HIA and *Planning Act* applications.

In accordance with the City of Ottawa's Terms of Reference for an HIA, this report provides an overview of the property's history and evolution, outlines the property's cultural heritage value, describes the proposed development, identifies potential adverse and positive impacts of the proposal, assesses alternative development options, describes the mitigations measures implemented to minimize identified adverse impacts, and lastly provides a professional heritage opinion on the proposed development.

In addition to Heritage Studio (heritage consultant), the project team consists of Project1 Studio (architect), Fotenn (planner), Urban Typology (landscape architect), John G. Cooke & Associates (historic masonry expert) and Commonwealth Historic Resource Management (Conservation Plan). A site visit was undertaken by Alex Rowse-Thompson of Heritage Studio on January 22, 2026, and included an interior and exterior tour of the convent building and walking the surrounding property.

The following documents were reviewed in the preparation of this report and form the cultural heritage policy framework: Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the Standards and Guidelines); Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism's Ontario Heritage Tool Kit; *Ontario Heritage Act*; *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*; and the City of Ottawa Official Plan.



Figure 1: Bird's eye aerial photograph of the subject property. (Bing Maps, annotated by Heritage Studio).

### 1.2 Project Background

The nuns of the Soeurs de la Visitation sold the subject property to Ashcroft Homes in 2009. The first phase of the Q-West development at 88-111 Richmond Road was completed in 2015 and included the construction of a nine-storey mixed-use building known as Q-West directly north of the former convent building (Figure 1).



Figure 2: Illustration of nine-storey addition and partially retained and restored convent wings and house. (Roderick Lahey Architect in CHIS R3 by Robertson Martin Architects, August 17, 2018)

The second phase of the Q-West development, which proposed the partial demolition of the convent building, rehabilitation of the house, remaining wings and courtyard, and the construction of a nine-storey residential addition, was approved by City

Council in 2019 (Figure 2). Ashcroft Homes went into receivership in 2024, and the second phase was not completed. Since the sale to Ashcroft Homes, only limited emergency repairs to masonry have been undertaken. Additionally, according to John Cooke, excavation for the Q-West development's parking garage appears to have caused significant damage to the north wing and chapel walls.

Following consultation with City staff, commissioning an updated scope of work for the masonry repairs (Appendix 1 - John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. letter) and assessing the feasibility of various development scenarios, the current owner purchased the property in early 2026.

### 1.3 Address and Owner/Contact Information

**Address:** 114 Richmond Road  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Owner/Contact:** 1001311448 Ontario Inc. c/o Jordan Tannis  
408 Tweedsmuir Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 5N5  
(613) 293-2110  
jt@concorde-properties.ca



Figure 3: Location of subject property shown with dashed red line. The former convent building is marked with a purple triangle. (geoOttawa, annotated by Heritage Studio).



Figure 4: Looking north towards the convent building with the Q-West development in the background. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)

#### **1.4 Property Description & Context**

The subject property at 114 Richmond Road is located south of Richmond Road, north of Byron Avenue, west of Leighton Terrace and east of Hilson Avenue, in the Westboro neighbourhood of Ottawa (Figures 1 & 3). The property is approximately 1.72 hectares and contains the former convent building and grounds of the Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery.

The convent building is located at the north end of the subject property and comprises a circa 1864-1865 Gothic Revival stone house with four stone wing additions constructed circa 1913 (Figures 5, 6, 7 & 8). South of the convent building, the former convent grounds, which historically were organized with gardens and pathways, remain vacant and are now largely overgrown and naturalized (Figures 4 & 9).

To the east and south of the subject property are low-rise residential neighbourhoods and to the west is Hilson Public School (Figures 1 & 3). To the north, Richmond Road, designated a Mainstreet Corridor in the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, is characterized by a mix of older low-rise commercial and residential buildings and contemporary mid to high-rise apartment and mixed-use buildings.



Figure 5: Northeast corner of former convent building including circa 1864-1865 Gothic Revival house on slight rise of land and circa 1913 east and north convent wings. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)



Figure 6: North elevation of Gothic Revival house, north wing and chapel. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)



Figure 7: East elevation of the east wing and Gothic Revival house. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)



Figure 8: West elevation of convent wing and chapel at northwest corner of the complex. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)



Figure 9:  
Looking north  
along the Nun's  
walk with  
convent building  
and Q-West  
development in  
the background.

The property borders the Byron Tramway Park to the south, and a pedestrian pathway running along the east side of the property connects the Byron Tramway Park to the convent building. Known as the "Nun's Walk," this pathway, paved by Ashcroft Homes, traces a portion of the former perimeter path that was historically used by the nuns for recreation (Figure 9). The pathway is lined by an allée of trees, including cedar and maple species.

The Q-West development immediately north of the convent has significantly altered the historic setting of the property. This nine-storey building largely obscures views of the convent from Richmond Road; the only remaining view being of the chapel and west wing when looking southeast (Figure 10). During the summer months, this view is largely screened by tree cover (Figure 11). The construction of the nine-storey building greatly diminished the convent building's contextual legibility and connection to the surrounding streetscape and neighbourhood (Figures 1 & 12).



Figures 10 & 11: Looking southeast from Richmond Road towards the chapel and west wing of the former convent building in winter and early fall. (Heritage Studio, January 2026 and Google Streetview)

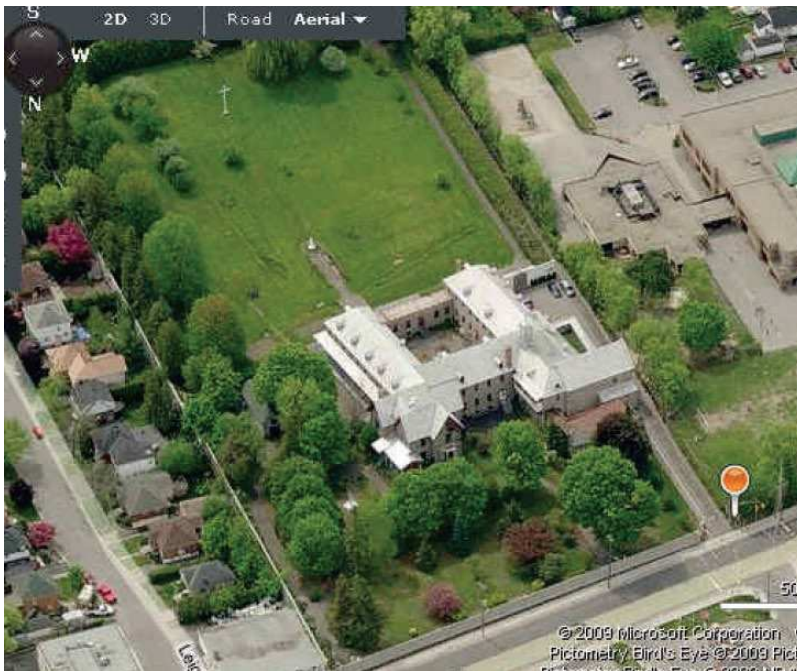


Figure 12: Bird's eye view of the convent building prior to the construction of the Q-West development. (City of Ottawa, Designation Report, 114 Richmond Road, 2010)

## 1.5 Heritage Status

The subject property at 114 Richmond Road was designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2010 through By-Law 2012-48. There are no listed or designated properties adjacent<sup>1</sup> to the subject property; however, there are several listed and designated properties in the surrounding neighbourhood, including:

- 145 Richmond Road (listed)
- 329 Patricia Avenue (listed)
- 150 Richmond Road (designated)
- 70 Richmond Road (designated)
- 369 Island Park Drive (listed)
- 415 Piccadilly Avenue North (listed)

Given the distance to these properties and the scale of the proposed development, the redevelopment of the subject property will not result in any visual impact on these protected heritage properties.

## 1.6 Relevant Council-Approved Documents

### Official Plan

Section 4.5.2 of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan includes policy provisions for the management of built and cultural resources through the development process. Of most relevance to this project are Policies 1), 2) and 3):

1) When reviewing development applications affecting lands and properties on, or adjacent to a designated property, the City will ensure that the proposal is compatible by respecting and conserving the cultural heritage value and attributes of the heritage property, streetscape or Heritage Conservation District as defined by the associated designation bylaw or Heritage Conservation District Plan and having regard for the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

2) Where development or an application under the Ontario Heritage Act is proposed on, adjacent to, across the street from or within 30 metres of a protected heritage property, the City will require a Heritage Impact Assessment, if there is potential to adversely impact the heritage resource. The HIA will be completed according to the Council approved guidelines for HIAs, as amended from time to time.

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<sup>1</sup> Adjacent lands - for the purposes of policy 4.6.3, those lands contiguous to a protected heritage property or as otherwise defined in the municipal official plan. (Provincial Planning Statement 2024)

3) Heritage designation is, in part, intended to ensure contextually appropriate development and is not intended to discourage intensification or limit housing choice. Elements of the built form, including height, scale and massing, of such development shall ensure that the defined cultural heritage value and attributes of the property or HCD will be conserved, while balancing the intensification objectives outlined throughout this Plan.

### **Richmond Road/Westboro Secondary Plan**

The Richmond Road/Westboro Secondary Plan includes policy direction in Section 5: Land Use Strategy and Maximum Building Height Ranges: 5.4 8) Encourage the evolution of the East Village to a Mainstreet Corridor character as an extension to Westboro Village and a link to the West Wellington traditional main street east of Island Park Drive, recognizing the varying character of the existing buildings and lot and block sizes and specifically D: Encourage the retention and adaptive reuse of the designated heritage buildings at...the Soeurs de la Visitation convent at 114 Richmond Road.

### **Richmond Road/Westboro Community Design Plan**

Section 6.7 - Land Use Strategy and Appropriate Building Scale contains site-specific language regarding the subject property: Should the Soeurs de la Visitation Convent site be redeveloped sometime in the future, the convent wall should be taken down and the convent building be adaptively used, with mixed-use/ground floor commercial along Richmond and residential behind, incorporating as much of the existing landscaping as possible and views of the convent building. At that time the existing institutional zoning could be changed to more appropriate zoning (TM along Richmond, maximum six storeys; and residential zoning behind, maximum four storeys, compatible with the adjacent land use).

## **2. PROPERTY HISTORY, EVOLUTION & ANALYSIS**

Long before European settlement, these lands were inhabited by Indigenous peoples. The area that now encompasses the Westboro neighbourhood, including the subject property, lies on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe peoples.

Westboro was originally part of Nepean Township, surveyed in 1792. Settlement in the area accelerated with the establishment of Richmond Road in 1818, primarily supporting agricultural activity. The macadamization of Richmond Road in the early 1850s provided reliable access west of Bytown (present-day Ottawa) and attracted members of Ottawa's elite, including merchants, lumber magnates, and politicians. By

the 1860s, this stretch of Richmond Road was lined with substantial rural estates featuring stone or brick villas set within landscaped grounds, positioned back from the road.

The first structure on the subject property was one of these elite rural villas (Figure 13). The Gothic Revival house, known as “The Elms,” was constructed in 1864-1865 as a private residence for James Dyke, a local hardware merchant. The house was designed by British-born Ottawa architect Sidney Bowles Fripp (1823-1870). James Dyke quickly sold it to George Eaton, a lumberman, in 1865.



Figure 13: “The Elms” circa 1907. (The Ottawa Citizen, March 2, 1907)

George Eaton sold the house to James Skead in 1880. Skead played a pivotal role in the establishment and development of the Westboro area. Around 1870, he built a steam-powered lumber mill on the south shore of the Ottawa River, stimulating settlement and economic activity and forming the community of Skead’s Mills. Skead was also a politician, being elected to Ottawa City Council in 1861 and later becoming a Senator. Skead died in 1884, and his widow continued to reside in the house until 1887, when it was sold to Allison Hilson Holland, the wife of George Holland.

George Holland was a pioneer in communications, introducing innovations such as the typewriter and early Dictaphone to Canada. He was also a long-time publisher of the Senate Hansard and the owner of the *Ottawa Citizen* from 1872 to 1875. The Hollands were the longest-serving private owners of the house. Following its long history as a residence for Ottawa’s elite, the Hollands sold the property to the Soeurs de la Visitation, a cloistered order of nuns, in 1909.

The Visitandine Order was founded in 1610 in Annecy, France, as a contemplative order devoted to prayer. Over the following centuries, the order established monasteries across Europe. In 1910, the nuns moved into the Gothic Revival house, and by 1913, the conversion of the property into a monastery was complete (Figure 14).

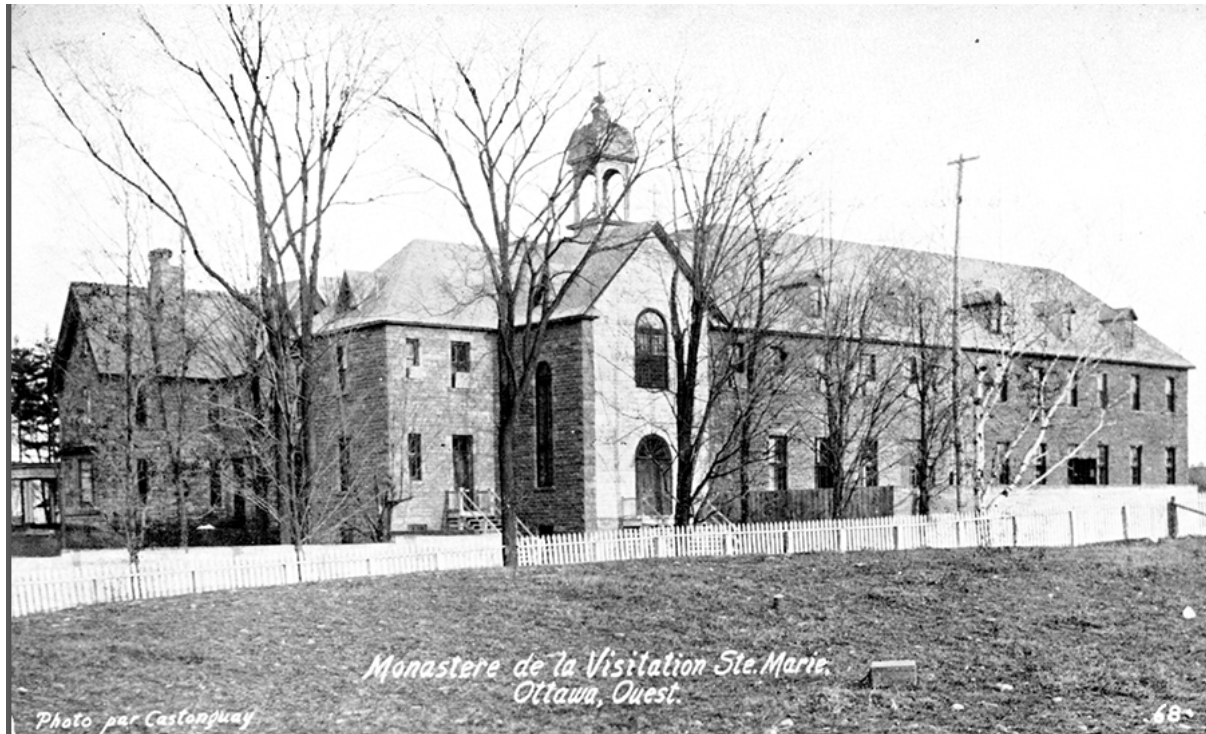


Figure 14: Circa 1916 postcard of the completed monastery. (Jules-Alexandre Castonguay/Ken Elder collection)

The complex consisted of four wings and chapel arranged around a central courtyard or cloister. This plan was used by the monasteries of Medieval Europe, and by Roman Catholic convents and monasteries around the world. The Gothic Revival house was incorporated into the four wings, forming the northeastern corner of the complex (Figure 15). The large four wing addition was constructed by Ottawa builders, Nazaire and Oscar Poirier.

Three of the wings are tall two-and-a-half storey (with attic) stone structures with the southernmost wing being a single storey connection. The Monastery's functions included a Chapel (the only public space where local Catholics attended Sunday worship), an Infirmary, a Refectory, rooms for the sisters, an office for the Mother Superior, and workrooms. A wall was constructed to enclose the property sometime after 1916, and the extensive grounds were used for food production and later recreation (Figures 16 & 17).

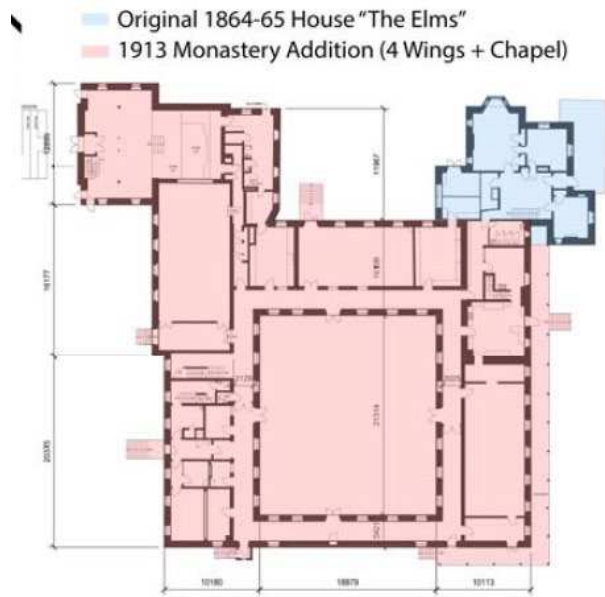


Figure 15: Convent complex following the addition of four stone wings circa 1913. (CHIS Report by Robertson Martin Architects, August 2018)



Figure 16: Aerial photograph of the convent building and grounds, May 5, 1933. (National Air Photo Library)

The distinctive flowerbed pattern within the central courtyard is evident in a 1933 aerial photograph and remained largely intact at the time of the Q-West development (Figures 15 & 19). The beds appear to form a floral motif, with individual beds arranged as petals around a central sculpture or monument, while small crescent shapes (possibly moons) occupy the four corners of the courtyard. In Christian symbolism, flowers often represent divine love, purity, beauty, and resurrection, while crescent moons may signify the church, the human body, or the interconnectedness of all creation. The distinctive flower beds reinforce the spiritual and contemplative function of the courtyard landscape.

The arrival of the streetcar service along Byron Avenue and Richmond Road in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century further improved transportation between Westboro and Ottawa, making this area a desirable location for middle-class families. Large estates were gradually subdivided into smaller residential lots for detached homes and Richmond Road became a main street. The Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery was largely unaffected by the surrounding urbanization.



Figure 17: Aerial photograph of the convent building and grounds, September 25, 1938. (National Air Photo Library)

In 1947, Ottawa hosted a Roman Catholic conference called the Marian Congress, which marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Archdiocese of Bytown-Ottawa. The event drew hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholics and was regarded as the largest religious gathering in North America at the time. A pilgrim statue of Our Lady of the Cape was brought to Ottawa as part of the celebrations. This statue was paraded to the Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery, highlighting the importance of the site to Ottawa's Catholic community.

In 1959, the monastery reached its peak membership with 35 nuns. By the 1960s, the number of nuns had shrunk to 16 and by 2010 was down to 8. In 2010, the sisters moved to another monastery in Pembroke and sold the property to Ashcroft Homes.



Figures 18 & 19: Aerial views of the courtyard, date unknown and circa 2015. (Flickr - Kawauso-fan and CHIS Report by Robertson Martin Architects, August 2018)



Figure 20: Looking into the courtyard from the second floor of the west wing. (Heritage Studio, January 2026)

A key component of the subject property's cultural heritage value is the spatial organization of its four wings around a central courtyard or cloister. This layout reflects the traditional cloister plan historically associated with contemplative religious orders, in which buildings enclose a central garden or courtyard used for reflection and private circulation (Figures 18,19 & 20). While cloistered courtyards are common in historic European monastic architecture, they are comparatively rare in Ontario, where many convents and monasteries were designed with more open, institutional layouts. For example, the former Monastère du Précieux-Sang in Ottawa is organized around a central courtyard but not fully enclosed as a traditional cloister. In this context, the enclosed courtyard at the Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery represents an unusually intact example of a traditional cloister plan in Ontario, contributing substantially to the property's cultural heritage value.

### **3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The following Statement of Significance was prepared by the City of Ottawa and is included in the property's designation by-law. If this development proposal is approved by the City of Ottawa, the Statement of Significance will require updating.

#### **Description of Property**

The Soeurs de la Visitation d'Ottawa Monastery is a large stone structure, located on Richmond Road in the Westboro neighbourhood of Ottawa.

#### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The Soeurs de la Visitation d'Ottawa Monastery is comprised of two parts, a Gothic Revival house built in 1864-1865 and the large stone addition constructed in 1913 to transform the structure into a monastery. Its cultural heritage value lies in its being an excellent example of both an 1860s Gothic Revival House designed for and occupied by members of the elite and an early 20th century monastery. The complex has historical value for its association with James Skead (owner 1880 until his death in 1884, whose widow lived there until 1887), a lumberman, senator, Ottawa booster and founder of Skead's Mills and George Holland, (owner 1887-1910), a successful publisher and innovator, and with the Soeurs de la Visitation d'Ottawa. It is also a rare surviving example of a property that housed a cloistered religious community for over 100 years and functioned as a self-sustaining entity for much of that time.

The original two and a half storey stone house was built in 1864-1865. It was designed by English architect Sidney Bowles Fripp for James Dyke, a local merchant, who quickly sold it to George Eaton, a gentleman farmer. It was one of a number of properties built

on larger lots laid out along Richmond Road after its macadamization that were intended for members of Ottawa's emerging elite class. The longest owner of the building prior to its purchase and conversion to a monastery in the early 20th century was George Holland, a prominent local newspaperman, and, with his brother Andrew, a communications entrepreneur.

In 1909 George and Alison Holland sold the entire property to the Soeurs de la Visitation, a cloistered order of nuns whose members devote their lives to prayer. Founded in Annecy, France in 1610, the order established monasteries across Europe in the centuries following its establishment. The order's founders, St. Francis de Sales and Ste. Jeanne Francois de Chantal, have both been beatified. The nuns moved into the house in 1910 and, by 1913, its conversion to a monastery was complete. A tall, two storey building with an attic, it consists of four wings, arranged around a central courtyard or cloister, a plan followed by the monasteries of medieval Europe, and used for Roman Catholic convents and monasteries around the world. Soon after its acquisition by the Soeurs de la Visitation, the property was encircled by high walls which shielded the monastery from the exterior world, although the Chapel was used by the community throughout its history. In the years following its establishment, the grounds evolved from food production into a contemplative space, also used by the nuns for recreation.

### **Heritage Attributes**

Key attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the Soeurs de la Visitation d'Ottawa Monastery as an excellent example of both a large Gothic Revival house built for and inhabited by members of Ottawa's elite and a monastery housing a contemplative order of nuns include:

#### **House**

- steeply pitched roof with narrow gable-roofed dormers
- location of the east facing veranda
- bay window with wooden pointed arch details decorative bargeboard
- tall chimneys
- stone quoins and voussoirs
- Distinctive "pinwheel plan" and central staircase
- Stone construction

## Monastery

- tall, two storey stone construction with regularly spaced rectangular windows
- inward-facing plan with the wings arranged around a central courtyard or cloister, enclosed on four sides
- Pattern of the flowerbeds within central courtyard or cloister
- high hipped metal-clad roof with gable and triangular dormers
- bellcote
- first and second floor galleries overlooking the grounds
- Chapel, its interior volume and pointed arch windows

## Grounds

- Picturesque gardens associated with the Gothic Revival house, with the layout of pathways, flowerbeds and mature trees
- Pathway around the periphery of the site to the south of the monastery used by the nuns for recreation, including the allée of trees that defines the pathway on the east side of the property
- The trees and shrubs along the walls planted to buffer the site from the outside world
- The strategic placement of the house on a slight rise

The flat roofed addition to the north of the chapel, the enclosed passageway to the west of the building, the metal barrier wall, the former garage to the east of the building and the small shed-roofed addition to the south of the building are not included in the designation.

## 4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed redevelopment of the subject property includes the construction of a four-storey apartment building, the adaptive reuse of the Gothic Revival house, east convent wing and portion of the north convent wing for commercial/office use, and the construction of six stacked townhouses in the grounds south of the convent building (Figure 21). In response to the condition assessment of the masonry walls by John G. Cooke & Associates and to facilitate the development, the demolition of the chapel, west wing, south wing and portion of the north wing, representing approximately 61% of the 1913 convent addition, is proposed (Figure 22).

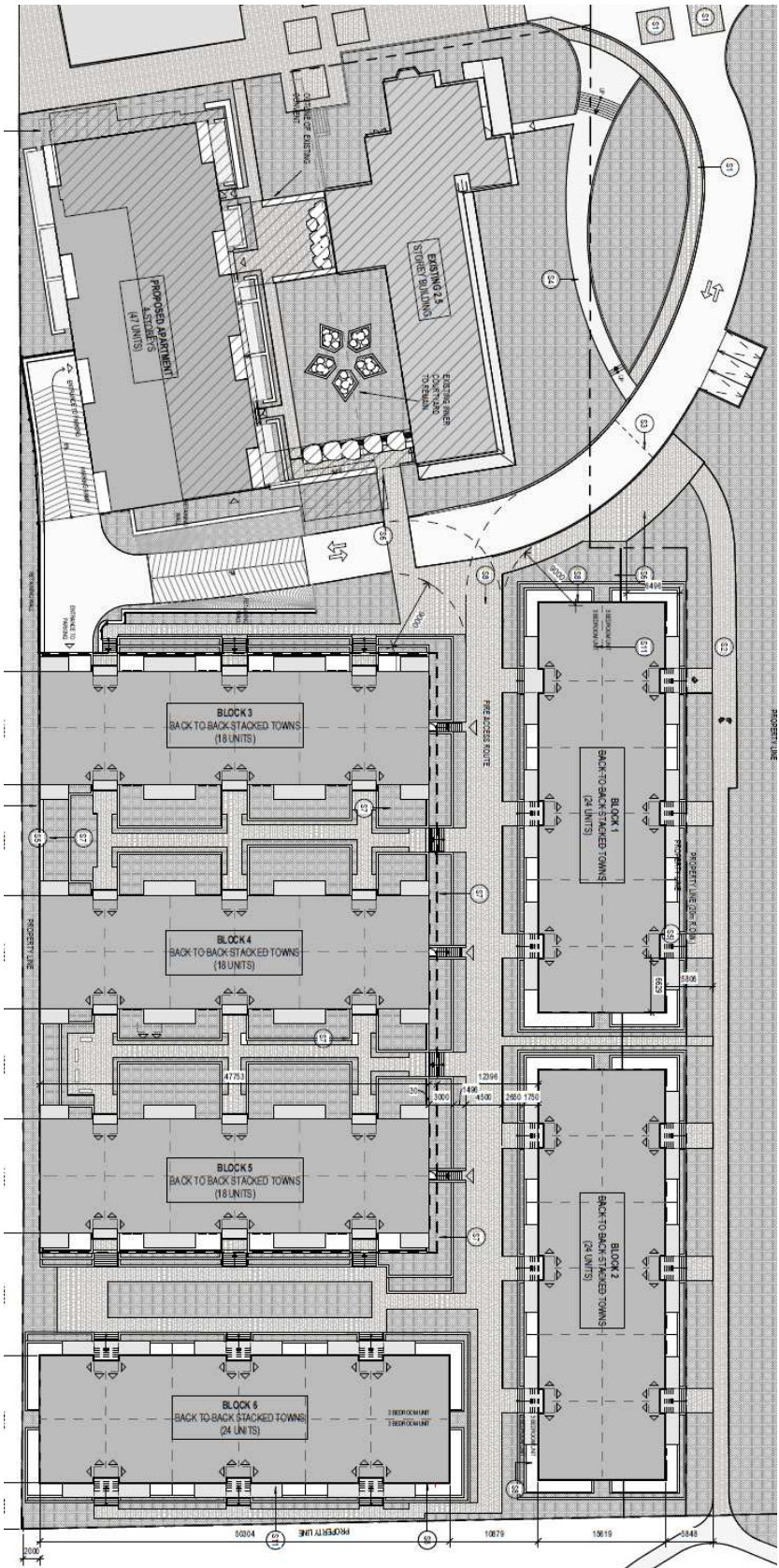


Figure 21: Proposed site plan. (Project1 Studio)

The extent of the proposed demolition is based on the masonry assessment by John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. (Appendix 1) which establishes that in many of the mortar joints, there is no bond left between the mortar and the stone. This means that beyond surface tension, there is little left within the masonry walls to bond the stone units. Therefore, the rehabilitation of the walls, particularly the convent and chapel walls, would involve a slower and more expensive process as compared to typical repair and maintenance masonry such as raking out and repointing joints. Furthermore, the chapel and north convent wing suffered additional damage from excavation works associated with the Q-West development.

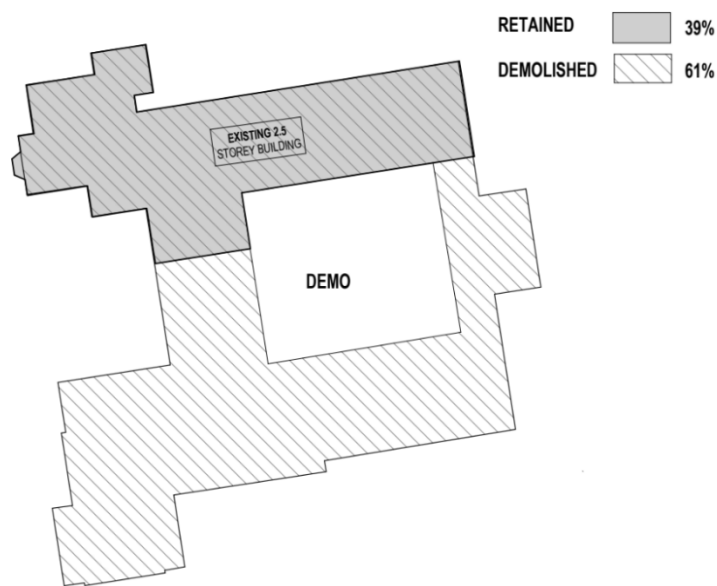


Figure 22: Extent of proposed demolition. (Project1 Studio)

The proposal retains the courtyard in its existing proportions with a reinterpretation of the historic pattern of flower beds. The open space and landscaping to the east of the Gothic Revival house is retained and enhanced. The Nun's Walk, including the allée of trees, is retained, and continues to provide a north-south pedestrian connection from Byron Tramway Park through the site to Richmond Road and Leighton Terrace.

A four-storey apartment building is sited in the former location of the west convent wing and chapel. At 12.5 metres tall with a flat roof, it is approximately the same height as the ridge of the gable roofs on the convent wings. The proposed cladding includes masonry cladding with a rough finish to emulate the character of the stone masonry on the retained convent wings on the first, second and third floors. The fourth floor will be clad with aluminum panels with an anodized finish to reference the metal clad roofs of

the retained convent wings. The panels will be installed on an angle to further reference the installation of the metal shingles on the convent roof.

The stacked three-storey townhouses are laid out in a geometric pattern to the south of the convent building with a new north-south connection running parallel to the Nun’s Walk and terminating at the south end of the east convent wing. They are approximately 11 metres tall with flat roof. They will be clad in a masonry cladding similar to the apartment building, with some variation but in the same colour palette, between the blocks. Painted or stained wood siding will be used on the upper floors.

Parking for the development will be provided underground, located beneath the apartment building and central courtyard, as well as beneath the southernmost townhouse blocks.

Commercial and office uses are proposed for the Gothic Revival house and retained convent wings. A Conservation Plan, developed by Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd. with masonry expertise from John G. Cooke and Associates, outlines the specific repair, restoration and rehabilitation works proposed for the adaptive reuse of the house and wings, including the conservation of associated heritage attributes.



Figure 23: Bird’s eye view of proposed redevelopment including the four-story apartment building and rehabilitated Gothic Revival house and convent wings. (Project1 Studio)



Figure 24: View from northern terminus of the new north-south connection between townhouses looking towards the south elevation of east convent wing and new apartment building. (Project1 Studio)



Figure 25: Rehabilitated Gothic Revival house and east convent wing with apartment building in the background. (Project1 Studio)



Figure 26: View looking south from Q-West arcade towards Gothic Revival house and partially retained north convent wing.

## 5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The objective of this section is to identify and assess potential positive or negative impacts that the development proposal will have on the cultural heritage value and attributes of the former Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery as described in the Statement of Significance. The first section identifies impact(s) specific to identified heritage attributes, while the second section speaks to the potential adverse and positive impacts identified in the City of Ottawa’s Terms of Reference for a Heritage Impact Assessment.

### 5.1 Impact to Heritage Attributes

The Gothic Revival House, known as “The Elms,” has cultural heritage value as an excellent example of an 1860s Gothic Revival house and for its associations with James Skead and George Holland.

Heritage Attribute	Discussion
Steeply pitched roof with narrow gable roof dormers	

Location of east-facing veranda	The exterior of the Gothic Revival house will be preserved, restored, and rehabilitated as part of its adaptive reuse.
Bay window with wooden pointed arch details	The Conservation Plan outlines the specific treatment for each identified heritage attribute.
Decorative bargeboard	The identified interior attributes, including the 'pinwheel' plan and central staircase, will be retained and conserved.
Tall chimneys	The house's design value, as an excellent example of Gothic Revival architecture, will be enhanced through the preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of its heritage attributes.
Stone quoins and voussoirs	
Distinctive 'pinwheel plan' and central staircase	Adaptive reuse will support the long-term conservation of the building and maintain its historical associations with 19th-century Ottawa elites James Skead and George Holland.
Stone construction	

The circa 1913 monastery addition has cultural heritage value as a rare surviving example of a property that housed a cloistered religious community for over 100 years.

Heritage Attributes	Discussion
Tall two-storey stone construction with regularly spaced windows	The proposal includes demolition of the west convent wing and large portion of the north convent wing. The retained north and east convent wings will be restored and rehabilitated.
Inward-facing plan with the wings arranged around a central courtyard or cloister, enclosed on four sides	The demolition of the west wing, south wing and portion of the north wing will negatively impact the cloister arrangement. The convent will no longer have a legible cloister plan, and its historic spatial relationship and sense

	<p>of enclosure will be significantly compromised.</p> <p>The courtyard will be retained in the existing dimensions but without the full enclosure provided by inward arrangement of the two-storey and one-storey stone wings.</p>
Pattern of the flowerbeds within central courtyard or cloister	The pattern of the flowerbeds is no longer recognizable. The proposal includes the reinterpretation of the flower beds within the courtyard.
High hipped metal-clad roof with gable and triangular dormers	The proposal includes demolition of the west wing and large portion of the north wing, which inherently entails a partial loss of the hipped metal roof and associated dormers.
Bellcote	The bellcote will be removed as part of the demolition of the west wing.
First and second floor galleries overlooking the grounds	The remaining second floor gallery will be removed as part of the demolition of the chapel.
Chapel, its interior volume and pointed arch windows	The chapel is being removed as part of the demolition of the west wing.

The grounds have cultural heritage value for their contribution to the setting of the Gothic Revival house and of the former monastery.

Heritage Attributes	Discussion
Picturesque gardens associated with the Gothic Revival house, with the layout of pathways, flowerbeds and mature trees	The existing gardens to the east of the Gothic Revival house will be retained and enhanced as part of the adaptive reuse of the house.
Pathway around the periphery of the site to the south of the monastery used by the nuns for recreation, including the allée of trees that	The pathway that previously defined the periphery will not be reinstated, however,

defines the pathway on the east side of the property.	the allée of trees will be retained and enhanced, as necessary.
The trees and shrubs along the walls planted to buffer the site from the outside world	The identified walls and shrubbery were removed previously as part of the Q-West development.
The strategic placement of the house on a slight rise of land	Grading of the site will retain the rise of land where the house is located.

In summary, the proposal will have no negative impact on the heritage attributes of the Gothic Revival house but will have a significant negative impact on the heritage attributes of the 1913 convent addition through the demolition of approximately 61% of the building and associated loss of the cloister plan. The heritage attributes of the grounds have been largely neglected and altered since the Statement of Significance was drafted. The proposal includes the retention and enhancement of the surviving landscape attributes.

## 5.2 Potential Negative Impacts

The following section provides an assessment of the potential negative impacts of the proposed development on the cultural heritage value of the Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery as identified in the City of Ottawa’s Terms of Reference for an HIA.

### ***Demolition of any, or any part of, significant heritage attributes or features.***

The proposed demolition of the chapel, south wing, west wing, and a large portion of the north wing will result in the loss of numerous significant heritage attributes of the 1913 convent addition as identified above. The partial demolition of the convent building results in the loss of a rare surviving cloister-plan monastery complex in Ontario and represents an irreversible negative impact to the property’s cultural heritage value.

### ***Alteration that is not sympathetic, or is incompatible, with the historic fabric and appearance of a building.***

Overall, the design and scale of the proposed residential development is visually compatible with the retained convent wings and Gothic Revival house.

The design of the proposed four-storey apartment building is visually compatible in scale and character with the retained convent wings. Its massing includes a three-storey portion with a height of 9 metres that generally aligns with the height of the eaves on

the tall two-storey convent wings. A change in cladding materiality and a small setback between the third and fourth floors, as well as a flat roof help to decrease its perceived scale. The openings (windows and doors) have a vertical emphasis which visually relates to the regularly spaced rectangular openings on the retained convent wings. The contemporary architectural expression of the building provides an appropriate visual distinction, while the principal cladding material (i.e., masonry with rough texture) helps visually relate the new and old.

The three-storey or 11 metre height and scale of the townhouses ensure they do not visually compete with the retained convent wings and house. The nearest townhouse is set back approximately 20 metres from the south elevation of the east convent wing. Their simple, contemporary architectural expression, with a generally vertical emphasis, establishes a visual connection while maintaining a clear distinction from the historic building. Additionally, the geometric arrangement of the townhouses within the former grounds complements the formal layout of the convent, reinforcing the historic spatial organization.

Flanked by the retained east wing and a portion of the north wing, the Gothic Revival house will be visually separated from new residential development. The proposed residential buildings are modest in height and scale, ensuring they are clearly subordinate and do not visually compete with the Gothic Revival house.

***Shadows created that obscure heritage attributes or change the viability of the associated cultural heritage landscape.***

The four-storey apartment building will impact afternoon and evening sun in the courtyard. The removal of the south wing and partial removal of the north wing will allow additional sunlight into the courtyard. Accordingly, the viability of the reinterpreted flower beds will not be impacted.

The low scale and height of the proposed apartment building and townhouses will not obscure or diminish the visual appreciation or enjoyment of the retained convent wings and house. This is a meaningful improvement upon the previous approval for a nine-storey addition on the west convent wing.

***Isolation of a heritage resource or part thereof from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship.***

The partial demolition of the convent building will result in the retained east wing, and portion of the north wing, being isolated from their historic spatial relationship around the central courtyard.

***Obstruction of significant identified views or vistas within, from individual cultural heritage resources.***

No significant views are identified in the Statement of Significance, and previous views of the convent complex from Richmond Road were largely concealed by the construction of the nine-storey Q-West development. The existing (seasonal) view of the west wing and chapel from Richmond Road will be replaced by views of the four-storey apartment building.

***A change in land use where the change affects the property's cultural heritage value.***

The proposed change in land use, involving partial demolition of the convent building and the introduction of residential development within the former open grounds, will adversely affect the spatial organization and historic relationships of the monastery complex.

***Land disturbances such as a change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect a cultural heritage resource.***

The retained convent building and Gothic Revival house occupy a slightly elevated site sloping southward. A grading and drainage plan prepared by a qualified engineer, should ensure that drainage patterns do not negatively impact the stone foundations of the retained convent wings and Gothic Revival house.

In summary, the principal negative impact resulting from the development proposal is the partial demolition of the convent building and the associated loss of a rare surviving intact cloister-plan monastery complex from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Ontario.

### **5.3 Potential Positive Impacts**

The City of Ottawa's Terms of Reference for a Heritage Impact Assessment identifies potential positive impacts of a development on a cultural heritage resource. In summary, the potential positive impacts of this development proposal include:

- The adaptive reuse of the retained convent wings for office use. Significantly, this will include the repair and restoration of the stone walls, and the repair, restoration and rehabilitation of other identified heritage attributes as specified in the Conservation Plan. The conservation of these wings will help to ensure the long-term viability of an illustrative component of the monastery complex. Active use is essential to the long-term conservation of historic buildings, as it ensures regular maintenance, monitoring, and repair.

- The adaptive reuse of “The Elms” which is a significant component of the property’s cultural heritage value, both as an example of an 1860s Gothic Revival house and for its associational value with Ottawa’s 19<sup>th</sup> century elite. The proposed office/commercial use will help to ensure its long-term conservation and enable the public to engage with the interior of the historic house, including its distinctive “pinwheel plan” and central staircase.
- The reinterpretation of the historic pattern of flower beds within the central courtyard, which have existed since at least 1933 and have degraded significantly in the last 5 years.
- A lower scale of residential development than previously approved. The proposed residential development will not visually overwhelm the retained convent wings and house. The height and arrangement of the new residential buildings and circulation through the site ensures that the retained convent wings and Gothic Revival house remain the primary focal points.
- Increased public access to the site resulting from the new residential development and adaptive reuse of the retained convent building and house for office and commercial uses. Increased public use will provide greater opportunities for residents and visitors to experience, understand, and appreciate the property’s cultural heritage value.

## **6. ALTERNATIVES & MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

### **6.1 Alternative Development Approaches**

Prior to purchasing the property, the Owner explored a range of development options. According to the Owner, the deferred maintenance and deteriorating condition of the masonry, particularly on the chapel and north wing, combined with the complexities of adapting the convent interior for new uses, make the rehabilitation of the entire complex economically unviable without additional development to offset costs.

While Heritage Studio has not reviewed any feasibility studies for alternative development scenarios, the substantial masonry rehabilitation costs for the Gothic Revival house, east convent wing, and portion of the north convent wing (estimated at \$2,080,000), as outlined in the letter from John G. Cooke & Associates, illustrates the economic constraints of fully restoring the complex. The estimate from John G. Cooke & Associates is solely for masonry rehabilitation and does not include costs associated with the conservation of other architectural features, remediation, Building Code upgrades, and the conversion to office/commercial uses, etc. The comprehensive

rehabilitation of the entire complex is therefore unlikely to be undertaken by the private market without significant additional development on the site.

The adjacent Q-West development has effectively severed the convent from Richmond Road, altering its historic relationship to the streetscape and surrounding community. The previous proposal, which included additional high-rise towers to the south of the convent building, would have further diminished its setting and visual prominence. The Owner has also considered feedback from the Community Association expressing a preference for family-oriented dwellings.

The current proposal represents a more contextually responsive approach to the site when compared to the earlier scheme by Ashcroft Homes. The reduced scale and height of the proposed residential development will improve the marketability and support the long-term economic viability of the adaptively reused convent wings and Gothic Revival house. From a cultural heritage perspective, a lower-scale form of development is therefore preferable.

The site has remained vacant for over 15 years, and during this period no viable proposals have emerged from community or not-for-profit groups. Similarly, neither the City of Ottawa nor any other public body has identified a suitable civic use or function for the property. Therefore, while a public-private partnership could theoretically enable the rehabilitation of the entire complex, such an outcome appears highly unlikely.

## **6.2 Mitigation Strategies**

The following strategies have been implemented through the project's design and development to mitigate, as far as possible, the adverse impacts identified in this report:

1. The site plan has been designed and arranged so that the retained house and convent wings are the primary focal points of the site with new development secondary. Public access and circulation are oriented to frame views of the historic buildings from key approaches, including through the Q-West development arcades, from the Leighton Terrace entrance, looking north along the Nun's walk and looking north along the new north-south pedestrian connection (Figures 27, 28, & 29).
2. To maintain a visual connection between the former convent and Richmond Road, the retained portion of the north wing generally aligns with the view framed by the central arcade on the Q-West development (Figures 30 & 31).

3. To ensure the visual prominence of the Gothic Revival house from the Leighton Terrace entrance, the north elevation of the four-storey apartment is set approximately 1 metre behind the north elevation of the Gothic Revival house (Figures 21 & 27).



Figure 27: View from principal entrance into the site from Leighton Terrace. (Project1 Studio)

4. To recreate the sense of enclosure and historic spatial relationship formerly provided by the arrangement of the four inward wings around the central courtyard:
  - The four-storey apartment building is sited such that its alignment and orientation mirror the former west convent wing, i.e., the east elevation of the new apartment building is sited in the exact location of the former east wall of the west wing (Figures 21 & 32).
  - Salvaged stone will be used to construct low walls that demarcate the footprint of the demolished wings. Together with the retained east wing, portion of the north wing, and the alignment of the new apartment building, this will recreate the historic proportions and spatial definition of the former courtyard (Figures 23 & 32).



Figure 28: The south elevation of the east convent wing framing the view looking north along the new north-south connection. (Project1 Studio)



Figure 29: View looking northwest from northern terminus of the Nun's Walk. (Project1 Studio)



Figures 30 & 31: Existing View through the central Q West building arcade and view following partial demolition of the north convent wing. (Heritage Studio, January 2026 and Project1 Studio)



Figure 32: Illustration of the proposed courtyard design with low walls constructed from salvaged stone demarcating the demolished north and south wings, and the alignment of the east elevation of the new apartment building along the former line of the demolished west wing to recreate a sense of enclosure. (Project1 Studio)

5. The masonry cladding on the apartment building will match the colour and texture of the historic stonework as far as possible, while being laid in a different pattern. This approach will help visually connect the new building with the adjacent convent wings and new stone walls while ensuring new construction remains distinguishable. The contemporary architectural expression of the apartment building further reinforces a clear legibility between the historic and new elements (Figure 32).
6. To clearly communicate the extent of demolition on the north wing, the new west elevation will be fully glazed. This treatment reinforces the distinction between original and new construction and provides an interpretive reference to the building's evolution over time (Figure 32).
7. The courtyard design aims to encourage its historic use as a space for contemplation and reflection through the reinterpretation of the historic planting pattern, the provision of seating and the installation of active spaces outside of the courtyard.
8. New tree plantings are proposed around the perimeter of the site to reintroduce a visual buffer to the "outside world" and to soften the impact of new development.
9. Sound stone will be salvaged from the demolished wings for repair and restoration of the retained convent wings.

**As the detailed design is refined, the following additional mitigation measures are recommended:**

1. Consider the retention and restoration of the existing stone monument in the courtyard for reinstallation at the centre of the reinterpreted flower beds in the courtyard (Figure 20). Alternatively, a new monument, commemorative plaque, or public art installation could be developed and positioned in the centre of the flower beds.
2. Consider reinstating the moon shaped flower beds in the courtyard whether through planting beds or other landscaping strategies.
3. Ensure that the exterior cladding on the new townhouses is sufficiently distinct from, but complementary, to the historic stonework on the retained convent building and the masonry cladding on the apartment building.

4. Explore options for salvage and reuse of physically sound building components, such as the bellcote, interior doors, and windows.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The proposed partial demolition of the former convent building will result in the loss of heritage fabric and numerous attributes and therefore represents a significant adverse impact to the property's cultural heritage value, particularly its importance as a rare surviving cloister-plan monastery complex in Ontario. However, after more than 15 years of vacancy and deferred maintenance, the proposed development presents an opportunity to conserve a meaningful and illustrative portion of the former Soeurs de la Visitation Monastery rather than risk continued deterioration or the eventual loss of the entire complex.

Although the areas proposed for demolition are technically repairable, their retention would necessitate extensive masonry stabilization and reconstruction, making repair and adaptive reuse economically unfeasible from a private development perspective. At this time, without reinvestment in the property, there is a significant risk that the complex will continue to deteriorate, and that structural issues will progress to the point where complete rebuilding of the masonry walls is required, undermining authenticity and presenting substantial financial challenges.

The redevelopment of the site, including the construction of the proposed apartment building and stacked townhouses, will facilitate the adaptive reuse and long-term conservation of the east wing, the Gothic Revival house, and a portion of the north convent wing. The retention and rehabilitation of these buildings will help to maintain the legibility of the former convent within its evolving urban context. Furthermore, the placement, scale, and massing of the proposed residential development have been carefully arranged so that the retained convent wings and the Gothic Revival house remain the primary focal points in key views into and through the site.

The partial retention of the convent building and Gothic Revival house, together with the strategies outlined in Section 6.2, will partially mitigate the adverse impacts associated with the proposed demolition. In particular, the proposed reinterpretation of the courtyard and its sense of enclosure, which is a defining spatial characteristic of the monastery complex, represents a meaningful and evocative design response. The successful execution of this landscape strategy will be an important element in communicating the historic spatial organization and experience of the site.

Overall, while the proposed demolition will result in a significant adverse impact, the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the retained convent wings and Gothic Revival house, together with the implementation of mitigation measures, will ensure that a meaningful and representative portion of the site's cultural heritage value is conserved.

No other studies are recommended at this time; however, recommended next steps include:

1. An Interpretation Plan should be developed to ensure that the site's history and evolution are appropriately conveyed to residents and visitors.
2. Prior to demolition, the measured drawings of the convent building, prepared by Stantec Geomatics, should be provided to the City of Ottawa Archives & Central Library.
3. Prior to demolition, photographic documentation of the convent building should be undertaken and provided to the City of Ottawa Archives & Central Library.
4. A suitable location should be identified for the storage of salvaged stone in good condition for use in future repairs to the retained convent wings.

In summary, the proposal broadly:

- Complies to the extent possible with *Policy 4.6.1 of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*
  - Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved.
- Supports Policy 4.5.2 (3) of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan:
  - Heritage designation is, in part, intended to ensure contextually appropriate development and is not intended to discourage intensification or limit housing choice. Elements of the built form, including height, scale and massing, of such development shall ensure that the defined cultural heritage value and attributes of the property or HCD will be conserved, while balancing the intensification objectives outlined throughout this Plan.
- Achieves Standard 11 of Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada:

- Standard 11 - Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new addition or any related new construction. Make the work compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.
- Achieves Guiding Principle Number 7 of the Ministry's Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Historic Properties:
  - Legibility - New work should be distinguishable from old. Buildings or structures should be recognized as products of their own time.

## 8. REFERENCES

### 8.1 Sources

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## 8.2 List of People Contacted

MacKenzie Kimm, Heritage Planner, Heritage Planning, Development and Building Services Department, City of Ottawa

## 9. PROJECT PERSONNEL & QUALIFICATIONS

### Heritage Studio

Heritage Studio is a consulting firm based in Kingston, Ontario, that specializes in cultural heritage planning. We believe that all planning and design work should be rooted in an understanding of the heritage of a place, whether physical, cultural, environmental, or intangible. Accordingly, we advocate for an integrated approach to heritage conservation and land use planning, an approach that we believe is fundamental to creating, enhancing, and sustaining quality places. To this end, we promote communication and collaboration between our clients and stakeholders with the goal of bringing a pragmatic values-based approach to complex planning challenges. Heritage Studio offers the following core services: cultural heritage evaluations, heritage impact assessments, cultural heritage policy development, and heritage planning support and advice.

### Alex Rowse-Thompson, MEdes, RPP, CIP, CAHP

As principal and founder of Heritage Studio, Alex has more than 16 years of heritage conservation and planning experience that includes both private sector and municipal planning roles. Her experience is rich and varied, from her involvement in large-scale regeneration sites in the UK, to the development of heritage conservation district studies and plans in Ontario municipalities and working with architects to ensure heritage-informed restoration and new construction. Alex is a member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, the Canadian Institute of Planners, and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.

Alex has produced and reviewed numerous Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) throughout her career, giving her a balanced and broad perspective. She is well versed in the application of Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* in Canada and the *Ontario Heritage Tool Kit*, which together form the policy framework for developing HIA reports in Ontario. Alex has worked on both small and large-scale projects, ranging from the adaptive reuse of an historic broom factory to the redevelopment of a former industrial site adjacent to the Rideau Canal in Kingston. Her collaborative approach with municipalities, architects, developers, and

property owners ensures that potential negative impact(s) are identified early in the process, thereby allowing appropriate and practical mitigation strategies to be developed. Alex sees the development of Heritage Impact Assessments as an iterative process, whereby the goal is to leverage the value of cultural heritage resource(s) to improve overall project outcomes.

## **10. APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: Masonry Assessment - John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd.**

Concorde Properties  
408 Tweedsmuir Ave.  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 5N5

March 10, 2026

Project No. 26051

Attn: Jordan Tannis  
jt@concorde-properties.ca

**RE: Sisters of the Visitation (former) Convent, Richmond Rd  
Walk through and Letter update on Building Condition Status**

Dear Jordan,

As per our signed proposal dated Nov 12, 2025, the following is an updated Condition Report on the above property, following our site visit of Nov 05, 2025. A copy of our previous report, dated January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, is attached. Our observations in this letter draw from our previous observations as outlined in the letter of Jan 2023. The building history is outlined in the original letter.

### **Construction methodology**

The 1865 house is a well constructed stone masonry structure. The wall construction consists of a two wythe stone masonry structure with a core filled with weak lime-based mortar and small stone gallets (pieces). The wall thickness is likely in the order of 600 to 700mm thick. The foundation wall would be 100mm thicker with a ledge on the interior to support the timber first floor structure. The outer larger stones would likely vary in thickness from 200mm to 400mm thick, with an inner wythe of small stones likely 150mm to 250mm thick. The variation in stone thickness helps to key the two wythes together. The original mortar would be in the order of 1:3 lime sand mix, using burnt lime from a local kiln. The mortar would be in the order of 2.0 to 4.0 MPa in strength. It would be flexible. This mortar is key to the performance of the wall. It bonds all the stone units together, so the wall functions as a single unit. In addition, the lime mortar facilitates the management of moisture in the wall. The pore size in the lime mortar drew moisture out of the wall by a process of osmosis, and through capillary action, transport the moisture to the surface of the wall where it can evaporate.

The construction methodology for stone masonry has developed over 3000 years. The long-term performance of the masonry depends on the quality of the stone, the condition of the mortar, and the experience of the stone mason constructing the wall. The pattern of the construction of the exterior stone wythe is sneaked rubble pattern, which intersperses large deep jumper stones at intervals throughout the wall, so the horizontal stone joints are discontinuous at the jumper stones. This is a sign of a well-built wall. The inner wythe consists of rubble random stone construction, covered with a lime parging.

The convent and the chapel were constructed circa 1910. The construction methodology would be similar to that of the house, except that the outer stone wythe was constructed with running bond. The horizontal mortar joints are continuous, so that the stone height is constant for each course of stone. Also, the mortar, while of similar strength to the house, could have a cementitious cement or early Portland cement binder. This is not confirmed.

### **Observations**

During our visit, we observed the general condition of the stone masonry, and the mortar in the joints. We also observed the condition of the major cracking in the chapel, and the house. We also reviewed the bulge in the wall of the north annex to the chapel.

At a number of locations, on the exterior of the house, the north elevation of the convent, and the chapel, the mortar was removed on individual vertical joints, to determine the condition of the backup mortar. In most locations, the finishpointing mortar consists of a 25mm to 30 mm deep hard grey Portland mortar, still well bonded to the stone on either side of the joints. Applied to this mortar, on the convent and chapel walls, there is a bead of pink tuck-pointing mortar. In most locations, the backup mortar was reduced to sand, and it was possible to push a drill 200mm to 250mm into the joint by hand with no resistance. Where the wall core was inspected, the construction methodology of the walls as described above is consistent with our site observations.

It was noted that in general the stone quality is in good condition, with very little fracturing or spalling of stone noted. The origin of the stone masonry for these buildings is unknown.

The major wall fractures and bulging that we previously noted in the house, chapel and convent were inspected from the exterior, while the fractures in the NE corner of the chapel were also inspected from the interior.

There appears to be little sign of additional movement in the stone masonry at the location of these large fractures from what was noted in December 2022, with the exception of some possible movement in the wall bulge on the north addition to the chapel. However, this wall is restrained by timber bracing.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Further to our visual review in December 2022 and based on our recent experience working on stone masonry walls, we can draw the following conclusions.

While the walls, in general, appear to be in good condition, this appearance is deceptive. The last intervention used hard Portland mortar to repoint the mortar joints. We do not have evidence of when this intervention occurred, but given the lack of debonding of this mortar from the stone, it must be assumed that the work was completed circa 1980's. In all of the openings this mortar was found to be in the order of 25mm thick. Given the inflexibility of this mortar, it will fail by debonding from the stone. There is some evidence of this failure mode already occurring. This mortar, while still bonded, creates a surface tension on the wall, which serves to hold the masonry together in the short term.

The larger problem with this mortar is that the high Portland mortar content in the mortar has a small pore size (<100 microns) which prevents the capillary action within the mortar from occurring. The result is that the moisture within the masonry wall is trapped behind the Portland mortar. Moisture within the masonry carries various soluble salts. When the moisture is blocked, the surrounding masonry becomes saturated and deposits these soluble salts. The salts recrystallize, and expand, breaking down the weaker backup lime mortar, and the masonry behind the front pointing mortar. This condition was observed in all joints in the convent and the chapel. The backup mortar at several locations in the house wall appeared to be in better condition.

The structural impact of this condition is that in many of the mortar joints in the stone, there is no bond left between the mortar and stone. Except for the surface tension, there is little left within the masonry walls to bond the stone units together. In addition, apart from keystones within the wall, there is nothing bonding the outer and inner stone wythes together. The result of this condition is that the out of plane bonding resistance of the wall can be reduced by a factor of 10 times or more. It also means that any disturbance in the foundation will result in fracturing through window openings or in separation of the two wall wythes. These are the two conditions already evident on site.

These walls can be rehabilitated by experienced stone masons, following a strict methodology as follows:

- The walls need to be stabilized on the interior first by removing all finishes and plaster to permit raking out and deep repointing of all failed mortar in the stone joints, using a type O mortar.
- Once the interior work is complete, the contractor can scaffold the exterior facades. The Portland mortar must be completely removed. This wall needs to be completed in small sections as it is highly likely that the outer wythe will become loose and need to be dismantled and rebuilt. The

dismantling will depend on the condition of the mortar on the horizontal joints. For the house, given the apparent better condition of the mortar in the core, it is anticipated that the interventions will be less. All loose sand and debonded mortar must be removed deep into the joints and in the core. Deep repointing and grouting will be required in all joints and the wall core. It is critical that the integrity of the wall core is restored to its original condition.

- Once the repointing is complete at locations where the wall is fractured, the stone masonry on each side of the fracture must be dismantled and reconstructed, using larger keystones.

It is clear, from the issues noted above, that the rehabilitation, especially of the convent and chapel walls, will be a slow and more expensive process than would be required for typical maintenance raking out and repointing. It should also be noted that where it is decided to dismantle portions of these buildings for future development, the best stones should be salvaged for the conservation of the walls to remain.

**Budget Estimate**

Based on subsequent discussions with Concorde Properties, JCAL worked with a local stone masonry company to produce a broad scope estimate of the cost to conserve the masonry, including deep consolidation and repointing, with some stone repairs on the portion of the building that is proposed to be conserved as part of the new development. This includes the residence, the entire east wing of the convent, and a 6.5m length of return wall on the North Wing. The budget is as follows:

a) Exterior masonry conservation	\$1,100,000
b) Internal masonry (removal of finishes not included)	\$380,000
c) Foundation wall conservation, interior and exterior (excavation not included)	\$280,000
	\$1,730,000
Total	\$1,730,000
20% Contingency	\$350,000
	\$2,080,000
Total Estimate	

**Photographs**



Photo 1: Crack in east chapel wall – basement level concrete benching.

Photo 2: Cracks at NE corner of chapel in basement concrete benching.



Photo 3: West wall of Convent. Hard pink Portland pointing mortar still bonded to stone. Back up mortar is reduced to sand.



Photo 4: East wall of House. Fracture at window. Hard grey Portland pointing mortar. Sand and voids in fracture.



Photo 5: West wall of House. Core behind small stone has soft lime mortar bonded to adjacent stones.



Photo 6: East chapel wall. Condition as Photo 4. Sand in joints up to 250mm deep.



Photo 8: Large fracture on east wall of north annex at chapel. Large voids, loose stone gallets and sand in wall core.



Photo 9: Bulge on north wall of Annex. Wall is braced. Little evidence of movement in past two years.

**Disclaimer and Limitations:**

This report is based on and limited to information supplied to John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. by Concorde Properties personnel, and by observations made during walk-through inspections of the Sisters of the Visitation (former) Convent. Only those items that are capable of being observed and are reasonably obvious to John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. or have been otherwise identified by other parties and detailed during this investigation can be reported.

The work reflects the Consultant's best judgment in light of the information reviewed by them at the time of preparation. There is no warranty expressed or implied by John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. that this investigation will uncover all potential deficiencies and risks of liabilities associated with the subject property. John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. believes, however, that the level of detail carried out in this investigation is appropriate to meet the objectives as outlined in the [Terms of Reference] [request]. We cannot guarantee the completeness or accuracy of information supplied by any third party.

John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. is not investigating or providing advice about pollutants, contaminants or hazardous materials.

This report has been produced for the sole use of Concorde Properties, and their client, and cannot be reproduced or otherwise used by any third party unless approval is obtained from John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. No portion of this report may be used as a separate entity; it is written to be read in its entirety.

We trust this report covers the scope of work as outlined in our Terms of Reference. Should there be any questions regarding this report, or if we can be of any further assistance to you, please contact us.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned should you have any questions or require clarifications.

Sincerely,

**JOHN G. COOKE & ASSOCIATES LTD.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John G. Cooke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.

John Cooke, P. Eng., RSW, CAHP  
Principal Emeritus

JC/sg/ad  
26051/ltr\_1