

# Memo

**To:** Brenda Guy, Manager of Community Development, Town of Gananoque  
**From:** Carl Bray, Bray Heritage  
**Date:** Monday, April 7, 2014  
**RE:** Mill Street (Riverstone) Heritage Impact Statement: Revisions Relating to Revised Planning Submission

Dear Brenda,

My client, Brennan Custom Homes Inc., has prepared revised drawings of the proposed development (dated March 13, 2014) that provide greater detail and show slight changes from those reviewed in the Heritage Impact Statement my firm submitted with their initial development application. This memo updates my Heritage Impact Statement of March, 2014. It outlines the changes that have a potential impact on the property's cultural heritage resources and provides commentary and recommendations for conservation and mitigation actions.

## *Site Plan*

The revised site plan contains several changes from the plan reviewed previously. As they potentially affect heritage attributes, they are:

- Replacement of the "wire shed" with new townhouses
- Alterations to the building parking access locations
- Alterations to the Mill Street streetscape treatment
- Construction of a new 5 storey residential building immediately north of the stone building

The wire shed building is a metal-clad one storey frame structure that is presently vacant. It has not been assessed as having heritage significance although it appears to be an early 20<sup>th</sup> century structure with intact wood structural framing. However, in terms of the overall development, its replacement is acceptable providing that the key heritage resources of the entire property are conserved, these being the three subject buildings. It is recommended that the structure be recorded during demolition and that materials be salvaged for reuse in other parts of the proposed development or for re-sale. The proposed townhouses provide a varied streetscape along Clarence Street that is compatible with, though distinct from, the scale and architectural styles of the existing heritage industrial buildings.

Parking is to be provided under a proposed new building north of the stone building and also under the riverside portions of the brick building. Parking access drives have been relocated to address concerns from the Conservation Authority. The proposed access ramp located immediately south of the brick building does not appear to have a negative impact on the building's heritage attributes and thus is acceptable.

Revised front yards and surface parking arrangements on Mill Street appear to provide an appropriate treatment to the facades of 185 Mill Street and 15 Clarence Street and are thus acceptable. The enlarged front yards at 185 Mill Street offer opportunities for interpreting of the former canal that was located in the vicinity of the front sidewalk, an opportunity noted in the Lowertown Master Plan.

Development of a new residential building north of the stone building will not impact the physical fabric of the stone building, assuming that excavation and construction do not cause undue vibration to the stone structure and the north wall of the stone structure is secured against potential damage from construction equipment. The massing of the new building will block some views of the stone building from the north but the staggered setbacks of the façade will permit views of the stone building façade to the south, along the angled alignment of Mill Street. The proposed tower element will be located north of the front yards of the stone building, not the building itself, and the fifth storey of the main block of the new building will be set back and heavily glazed so as to appear to be closer in height to the ridge line of the stone building. Entrance to the parking under the proposed building is to be located on the north and east sides of the building, out of view from the stone building.

#### *Stone Building (185 Mill Street)*

Rehabilitation of this building for residential use is intended to be the first phase of development within the proposed development. Drawings submitted with the revised planning application indicate the locations and types of interventions proposed for this building. They include:

- Revisions to the east elevation
- Enlarged existing, and re-opened former, window openings
- Removal of the elevated link and restoration of stone walls
- Structural changes to the interior floors and roof

The revised east elevation improves the design of this building face by more closely matching the fenestration pattern established in the upper floors and thus offering a more accurate interpretation of the Georgian architectural treatment of the original building and enabling conservation of much of the existing ground floor windows pattern.

The proposed conversion to residential allows an overall rationalization of the fenestration pattern, not only on the east wall but on all sides. In instances where original openings have been blocked, or where later openings created, the proposed design in most cases restores the original pattern. In places where an enlarged original opening is required, these openings extend the existing sill down to floor level in order to permit installation of a patio door. In these cases, the dimensions of the original window openings remain the same except for lowering the sill depth and are thus acceptable (and reversible, if necessary).

Removal of the elevated link permits restoration of two original window openings and re-instates the symmetry of the south building elevation, both of which are desirable heritage conservation actions.

The details of changes to the interior are not fully indicated but it is assumed that the existing floor and roof structures will have to be altered to some extent in order to insert structural walls between each of the new units and to repair or bolster existing structural components. Although the former mill race located beneath the north end of the ground floor will most likely have to be removed, it is recommended that its surviving elements be recorded prior to demolition and components salvaged, where feasible, for storage and display in situ (in the landscape) or in the local museum. Should it be

possible to build over the former mill race and have it visible beneath a transparent portion of the new floor, this opportunity should be investigated.

Overall, the proposed rehabilitation treatment of the stone building is a good response to conservation of a built heritage resource and provides numerous instances where original features are restored. I suggest that consideration be given to restoring the former cupola that was once located approximately in the centre of the roof ridgeline. The graphic image shown in the property history accompanying the Heritage Impact Assessment provides sufficient detail to permit an accurate replication of that important skyline feature. In addition, the cupola could have a functional purpose as the location for any rooftop mechanical or ventilation structures that would otherwise be exposed to view.

*Brick Building (185 Mill Street)*

This building is intended to be developed in a later phase and its design is still preliminary and contingent upon the results of a structural engineer's report. From the drawings submitted with this application, it appears that the exterior will be restored, with removal of the elevated link, and restoration of the roof and windows, as part of an overall rehabilitation of the building for residential use. There will be balconies added to the exterior which appear to have a minimal impact on the fabric of the building exterior and rehabilitation for residential use is a desirable adaptive re-use of this former industrial building.

The structural issue relates to a lengthy crack in the northeast corner of the ground floor, apparently the result of settlement. In any event, this lowermost portion of the building, essentially including the easternmost five bays, appears to be within the flood plain and thus is proposed to be substantially altered to house parking within open bays supported by new columns clad with salvaged stone from the former foundation walls. Also of concern is the condition of the upper floor structures due to exposure to the elements following failure of portions of the roof structure. Should partial demolition be required, this should be contingent upon preparation of a conservation plan that details the elements to be retained and outlines the methods by which the removed portions are to be reconstructed, according to good conservation practice, and replicating as much as possible the portions of the building to be replaced.

*Textron Building (15 Clarence Street)*

Also intended for a later phase, this building will have interventions in the four ground floor walls that will be more extensive due to the removal of later additions. Exposure of the original ground floor walls will reveal the extent to which these walls have been altered since the original design. Conversion of the building to residential use will require creation of new entrances and windows on the ground floor. The proposed elevations for the ground floor appear to restore or respect the fenestration pattern and style of the original upper floors, which appear to be retained and conserved. The proposed fourth floor is shown as being heavily glazed and set back from the north and south cornices of the original building, in order to lessen the visual impact and to highlight the existing structure. It is recommended that the original lettering on the third storey parapet of the south wall be conserved and, if possible, restored.

Removal of the additions allows redevelopment of the area at grade around the building. Parking is provided in surface spaces along the east and south sides while the west side has a covered parking structure. None of these have a direct impact on the existing building and removal of the additions is

a desirable conservation action. A new residential and parking structure is shown occupying the Clarence Street frontage north of the existing building but no information regarding its height or exterior design is provided at this time. It is assumed to be a secondary structure that will only partially obscure the north face of the existing building.