

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Built Heritage Sub-Committee / Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti
April 13, 2017 / 13 avril 2017**

and / et

**Planning Committee / Comité de l'urbanisme
April 25, 2017 / 25 avril 2017**

**and Council / et au Conseil
May 10, 2017 / 10 mai 2017**

**Submitted on March 28, 2017
Soumis le 28 mars 2017**

Submitted by

Soumis par:

Court Curry,

Manager / Gestionnaire,

**Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services / Services des emprises, du
patrimoine et du design urbain**

**Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department / Direction
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Contact Person

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Ward: SOMERSET (14)

File Number: ACS2017-PIE-RHU-0003

**SUBJECT: Application to Alter the Somerset House, 352 Somerset Street West,
a property designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and
located in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District**

OBJET: Demande de modification de la maison Somerset, sise au 352, rue Somerset Ouest, propriété désignée en vertu de la partie V de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* et située dans le district de conservation du patrimoine du centre-ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Built Heritage Sub-Committee recommend that Planning Committee recommend that Council:

1. Approve the application to alter Somerset House, 352 Somerset Street West, according to plans by Richard Chmiel, Richard Chmiel Architects, received on March 1, 2017;
2. Approve the restoration of the historic portion of the Somerset House, including the reconstruction of the corner tower based on historic photographs, the re-installation of the northerly bay window, the restoration of decorative metal work, including the cornice, according to plans received on March 1, 2017;
3. Delegate the authority for minor design changes to the approved plans to the General Manager, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development;
4. Issue the Heritage Permit with an expiry date of two years, unless otherwise extended by City Council; and
5. Approve the deletion of Recommendation 10, passed by City Council on July 13, 2016, which required that the fourth bay of the north wall be reconstructed.

(Note: The statutory 90-day timeline for consideration of this application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* will expire on May 30, 2017.)

(Note: Approval to alter this property under the *Ontario Heritage Act* must not be construed to meet the requirements for the issuance of a building permit.)

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Sous-comité du patrimoine bâti recommande au Comité de l'urbanisme de recommander à son tour au Conseil :

1. d'approuver la demande de modification de la maison Somerset, sise au 352, rue Somerset Ouest, conformément aux plans de Richard Chmiel, de Richard Chmiel Architects, reçus le 1^{er} mars 2017;
2. d'approuver la restauration de la partie historique de la maison Somerset, y compris la reconstruction de la tour du coin à l'aide de photographies historiques, la réinstallation de la fenêtre en baie sur la façade nord et la restauration de ferronnerie, dont la corniche, conformément aux plans reçus le 1^{er} mars 2017;
3. de déléguer au directeur général de la planification, de l'infrastructure et du développement économique le pouvoir d'apporter des modifications mineures aux plans approuvés;
4. de délivrer un permis en matière de patrimoine valable pendant deux ans à moins d'une reconduction par le Conseil municipal.
5. d'approuver l'abrogation de la recommandation 10, adoptée par le Conseil municipal le 13 juillet 2016, exigeant que la quatrième baie du mur nord soit reconstruite.

(N.B. : Le délai de 90 jours prévu dans la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* pour l'examen de la demande prend fin le 30 mai 2017.)

(N.B. : L'approbation de la demande de modification d'un bâtiment en vertu de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* ne signifie pas pour autant qu'elle satisfait aux conditions de délivrance d'un permis de construire.)

BACKGROUND

Somerset House, 352 Somerset Street West, is located at the south east corner of Bank and Somerset Streets in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District. (See Location Map, Document 1). In 2005, a building permit was issued for extensive interior alterations to this structure. As the proposed project did not involve exterior work that would affect the building's cultural heritage value, an "Application to Alter" under the *Ontario Heritage Act* was not required at that time. Work proceeded on the project until October 2007 when the building suffered a partial collapse and work on it ceased.

The building was braced, stabilized and surrounded by a hoarding until the summer of 2016, when its physical condition had deteriorated to the point that the removal of the three most easterly bays of the north wall, and the potential removal of the fourth bay of

the north wall was determined to be necessary for health and safety reasons. An application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* to allow the partial demolition was submitted in June 2016 and after consideration by the Built Heritage Sub-Committee (BHSC), Planning Committee and City Council, a heritage permit was issued to allow the partial demolition.

The partial demolition work has now been completed and this application filed. Approval will allow the construction of an addition and the restoration of the Bank and Somerset Street façades. This report has been prepared because all applications to alter designated buildings require the permission of City Council. There are no planning applications associated with this file.

DISCUSSION

The Somerset House is a good example of an early 20th century commercial structure. It was constructed in two phases with the three storey, westerly portion of the building built from 1900-02 and a four storey addition added in 1912. Constructed as a hotel, the building had storefronts with large plate glass windows that predominantly faced Bank Street, with the residential portions of the building on the upper floors. (See current photographs, Document 2, and historic photograph, Document 3).

The current proposal is both a restoration and a new construction project. The remaining walls, cornices and the bays on the Bank Street façade will be restored and features such as the distinctive corner turret and historic storefronts will be reinstated, based on remaining original historic material and historic photographs. The proposed addition will be three storeys in height and will contain a retail or restaurant use at grade, with offices above. It will be contemporary in design and execution and will not only evoke the character of the historic building but also provide a clear distinction between the new and old sections of the building.

Recommendations 1 and 5

On July 11, 2016, when the report regarding the partial demolition of the Somerset House was being considered, BHSC added three new recommendations to the staff report on 352 Somerset Street. Recommendation 10 required that “any application to alter the subject property submitted for reconstruction of the property require the Owner to reconstruct the dismantled façade in an exact replica of the fourth bay as it stands today or, if not feasible, with new matching materials, if deemed necessary through peer review by an independent qualified heritage consultant approved by the City of Ottawa”. This recommendation, as passed by Council, further stipulated that the determination of

whether the bricks could be removed should be undertaken “through peer review by an independent qualified heritage consultant approved by the City of Ottawa.” When a consultant could not be found, the City agreed that the review of the bricks could be undertaken by a heritage mason employed by the engineer for the project. On October 6, 2016, the mason reported that only a small percentage of the bricks were re-usable, meaning that a replica would have to be built.

On November 30, 2016, heritage staff met with the recently-hired project architect to discuss a design option for the addition to the building. Staff, having failed to remember the requirement added by BHSC and approved by Council with respect to the construction of a replica fourth bay, supported in principle the concept presented, which did not include the construction of the replica fourth bay. Once this error was recognized, it was determined that the best way to move the project forward would be to proceed with the proposal without the replica wall, as this approach represents a reasonable means of achieving compatibility with the existing heritage structure and the heritage conservation district through proportion, scale and massing and materials.

This “Application to Alter” the Somerset House is to construct a flat-roofed addition to the rear of the Somerset House. The proposed addition will be three storeys in height, matching the height of the existing Somerset House. A secondary cornice, at the same height as the brick stringcourse below the third floor windows, will roughly divide the north wall into thirds, with the top third being a glass curtain wall, with glazed spandrel panels above, designed to evoke the existing historic roof cornice. The bottom two thirds of this wall will be a mixture of brick and glass, with a stylized, contemporary projecting bay window to echo the bay windows on the front façade. A three storey band of glazing will separate the original north wall of the Somerset House. The remaining section of the north wall will be a two storey brick wall that will feature the main entrance to offices above. It has been designed to evoke the character of the former north wall in this location, and will articulate up the long north façade of the building.

The east (rear) façade of the building will be of similar brick, with simple rectangular window openings, and a glass band to the south. The secondary cornices will wrap around the corner. The south façade will be a plain, undecorated brick wall. (See Renderings, Document 4, and Elevations, Document 5).

Recommendation 2 The front façade of the Somerset House will be restored as part of this project. The work includes the restoration of existing metal roof cornice features, including modillions, dentils, the dentil band etc. The sheet metal work will be removed and restored at the workshop of Heritage Grade, a local company specialized in metal

restoration. It will then be returned to the site and re-installed. If required, there are pieces of the cornice in storage that can be used in the restoration. The south bay window, which remains, will be restored and another replicated and installed in its former location within the opening to the north. The historic storefront, including the stone and cast iron columns, the sign bands and storefront cornice and its decorative brackets will also be restored. (For details of the restoration, see Document 6.)

Centretown Heritage Conservation District Guidelines

The “Heritage Conservation District Management Plan” of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study contains guidelines to manage change in the District and is applicable to Recommendations 1 and 2. The preservation of existing storefronts is addressed in Section VII.5.2. “Guideline 1.1 states, “Where possible original proportions should be re-established.” The current proposal involves bringing back the historic Bank Street storefronts to recreate its former character, which is consistent with this Guideline.

Guideline 2.3 further state that, “Consideration should be given to restoration of the upper façades in conjunction with any storefront alterations or improvements.” The current proposal includes the restoration of the upper storeys of the remaining building including the reinstatement of lost elements such as the finial and the northerly bay window on the Bank Street façade.

The Centretown HCD Guidelines also address commercial infill within the District, although there is no specific Guideline that addresses additions to commercial buildings. Generally, the Guidelines acknowledge that there will be infill development within the District and that “This infill must respect the existing heritage character by providing sympathetic contemporary design.” Guideline VII.5.5 1), further states:

All infill should be of contemporary design, distinguishable as being of its own time. However, it must be sympathetic to the heritage character of the area, and designed to enhance these existing properties rather than calling attention to itself.

The proposed three storey glass and brick box addition to Somerset House meets this Guideline. It is contemporary in design, and modest in proportion.

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada” were adopted by City Council in 2008 and are used to evaluate all applications under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The following Standard is applicable to this application:

Standard 11: Conserve the heritage value and character defining elements when creating any new additions to an historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.

The new addition conserves the heritage value and heritage attributes of the Somerset House. The addition is physically and visually compatible with the historic building in terms of massing and scale. In addition, the strong horizontal expression of the brick element reflects the horizontal articulation of the original building. Finally, the three storey glazed band to the east of the historic building and the addition creates a clear distinction between new and old.

In addition, the project respects Standard 13, of the “Standards and Guidelines:”

Repair rather than replace character-defining elements from the restoration period,

And Guideline 26, “Additional guidelines for Restoration Projects” that recommends:

Recreating missing features of the exterior form ...based on physical or documentary evidence.

Recommendations 3 and 4

Minor changes to a building sometimes emerge during the working drawing phase. This recommendation is included to allow the General Manager, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development, to approve these changes.

The *Ontario Heritage Act* does not provide any timelines for the expiry of heritage permits. In this instance, a two-year expiry date, unless otherwise extended by Council, is recommended to ensure that the project is completed in a timely fashion.

Conclusion

Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services supports the proposed addition to the building and the restoration of the Bank and Somerset Street façades. The proposal respects the Centretown Heritage Conservation District Guidelines and the “Standards

and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.” It will result in the restoration of the distinctive front façade and storefront facing Bank Street, and the construction of an addition that reflects the scale and massing of the original building. The proposed retail uses at grade with offices above will revitalize this important corner within the Centretown Heritage Conservation District.

Provincial Policy Statement

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

Notification

Neighbours within 30 metres of the property were notified of the application by letter and offered the opportunity to provide comments directly to the Built Heritage Sub-Committee or Planning Committee

Heritage Ottawa and the Centretown Citizens Community Association (CCCA) were notified of proposed application and submitted the following comments:

Heritage Ottawa

Heritage Ottawa would be pleased to see Somerset House finally restored after years of neglect and inaction. This heritage building is an important landmark and gateway in the centre of Ottawa. Continuing to allow it to remain in the current derelict condition is intolerable.

We have two main areas on which we wish to comment: 1) the restoration of the portion that still exists following progressive demolitions of the rear portion, and 2) the new section proposed for the rear.

1. We are very encouraged by the plans for restoring the original heritage section and support the proposal for this part of the building. In particular, the proposal to restore the original corner tower is exemplary. Also of note are the plans to restore the metalwork and cornice. Overall, we are very pleased with the plans for restoring the existing portion of the heritage structure.

2. We have some concerns about the proposed new structure to be added to the east of the heritage structure. First, it is our understanding that it was a condition of permitting the demolition of the brick wall and bays along Somerset last year that the brick and bays be rebuilt to match what was there originally. We strongly believe that this should be done and incorporated into the proposed façade, and that a glass connector not replace those bays. Second, the proposed new portion should be more compatible. In particular, the horizontal features in the new addition should correspond to those in the heritage building. Echoing the vertical brick features and their ornaments is a positive feature. However, there appear to be horizontal bands above the first and second floors. If they are to be used, then they should be brick and align exactly with the horizontal elements in the heritage building. More importantly, the cornice shown on the new portion is overwhelming and detracts from the heritage building. It should be reduced in height. We note that the use of a vertical brick column at the rear corner, and in the inset on the glass façade is a positive feature of the design, as is the general echoing of the placement and size of the window openings in the inset.

Centretown Citizens Community Association

None received.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR

Councillor McKenney provided the following comments:

“It is encouraging to finally receive some movement towards a restored building on this site. Notwithstanding the importance of heritage preservation and restoration it is also essential to ensure our vibrant streets and neighbourhoods are kept in good repair and cornerstone properties such as this contribute to a high level of civic pride and community vibrancy.

I am however, disappointed that the building has been allowed to deteriorate to this point. The degree to which this building has declined and the structural deficiencies highlighted within previous reports has unfortunately rendered much of the original material unusable for restoration purposes.

With respect to the submitted proposal, although not a full heritage restoration I believe that the proposal in its current state does a fair job reflecting the heritage elements of the property. If this is the design which will enable us to finally move forward with this project and allow the construction of a completed building on the lot, then I see this as a

worthwhile initiative. Of specific note is the inclusion of the prominent ornamental turret, red brick, cornice, and bay window treatments. The design also includes a reminder of the smaller windows' design on the modern part of the building. These elements honour the former design of the building and contribute positively to the streetscape esthetic.

I do have some reservation regarding the cornice. It appears on the renderings that the rear portion of the building is ornamented with a remarkably different style of cornice. This inconsistency would be apparent from Bank St., as well as from Somerset St. and would contribute to the discontinuity between both parts of the building.

I frequently hear from residents who are frustrated with the state of this building and with the lack of action. I believe that an owner has a responsibility to properly maintain their property and begin development within a reasonable timeline. That being said, if progress is not made in a timely manner, I will begin to push for commencement of the municipal land expropriation process to facilitate expedited and appropriate improvements on this site.”

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Pursuant to the provisions the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the “Act”), within 90 days after the receipt of the application to alter, City Council shall: (i) consent to the application; (ii) consent to the application on terms and conditions; or (iii) refuse the application. Council shall give notice of its decision to the owner of the property. A decision by Council to refuse the application or a decision to impose terms and conditions by Council may be appealed by the property owner to Ontario Municipal Board within 30 days of such decision. Should Council fail to consider the application within 90 days of receipt of the application, the Act provides that Council is deemed to have consented to the application.

In the event, Council were to refuse the application and the matter is appealed to the Board, it would be necessary to retain an external heritage consultant and possible an external planner.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications association with the recommendation in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The proposed addition will make the Somerset House accessible at grade and an elevator will be added to access all floors.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This project addresses the following Term of Council Priorities: HC4: Support Arts, Heritage and Culture (Healthy and Caring Communities)

APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS

The application was processed within the 90 day statutory requirement under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Location Map

Document 2 Current photographs

Document 3 Historic photograph

Document 4 Renderings

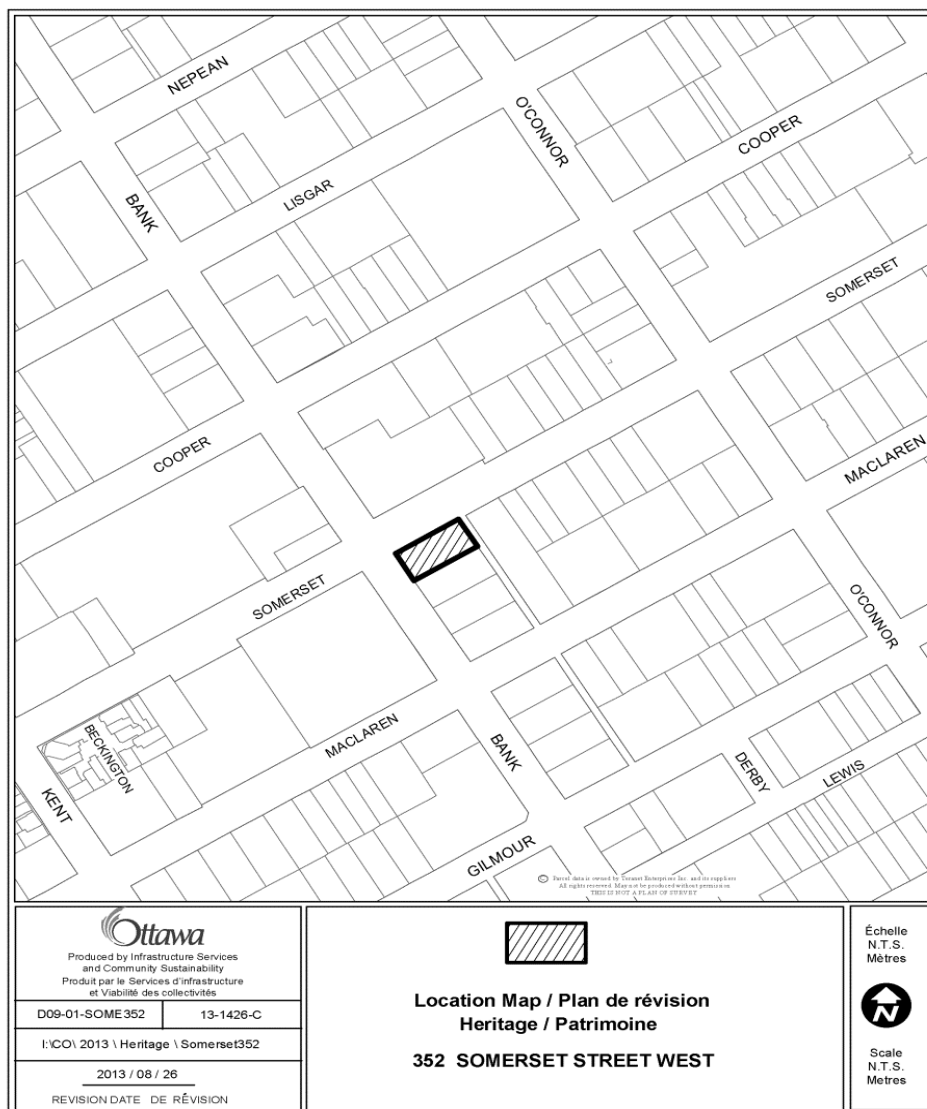
Document 5 Elevations

Document 6 Restoration details

DISPOSITION

City Clerk and Solicitor Department, Legislative Services, to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust (10 Adelaide Street East, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1J3) of Council's decision.

Document 1 – Location Map



Document 2 – Current conditions



View from Somerset Street



View from Intersection at Bank & Somerset Streets



View from Bank Street



Existing structure at Somerset Street

Somerset House - Existing Building Photos

Somerset Street and Bank Street | 2017-02-28 | 16-1432

Document 3 – Historic photograph

Document 4 – Renderings – for illustrative purposes only



Somerset House - West & East Elevation Views - Option 2
Somerset Street and Bank Street | 2017-04-05 | 16-1432

chmielarchitects



Somerset House - North Elevation View - Option 2
Somerset Street and Bank Street | 2017-03-29 | 16-1432

chmielarchitects



Somerset House - Perspective 01 - Option 2

Somerset Street and Bank Street | 2017-04-06 | 16-1432

chmielarchitects

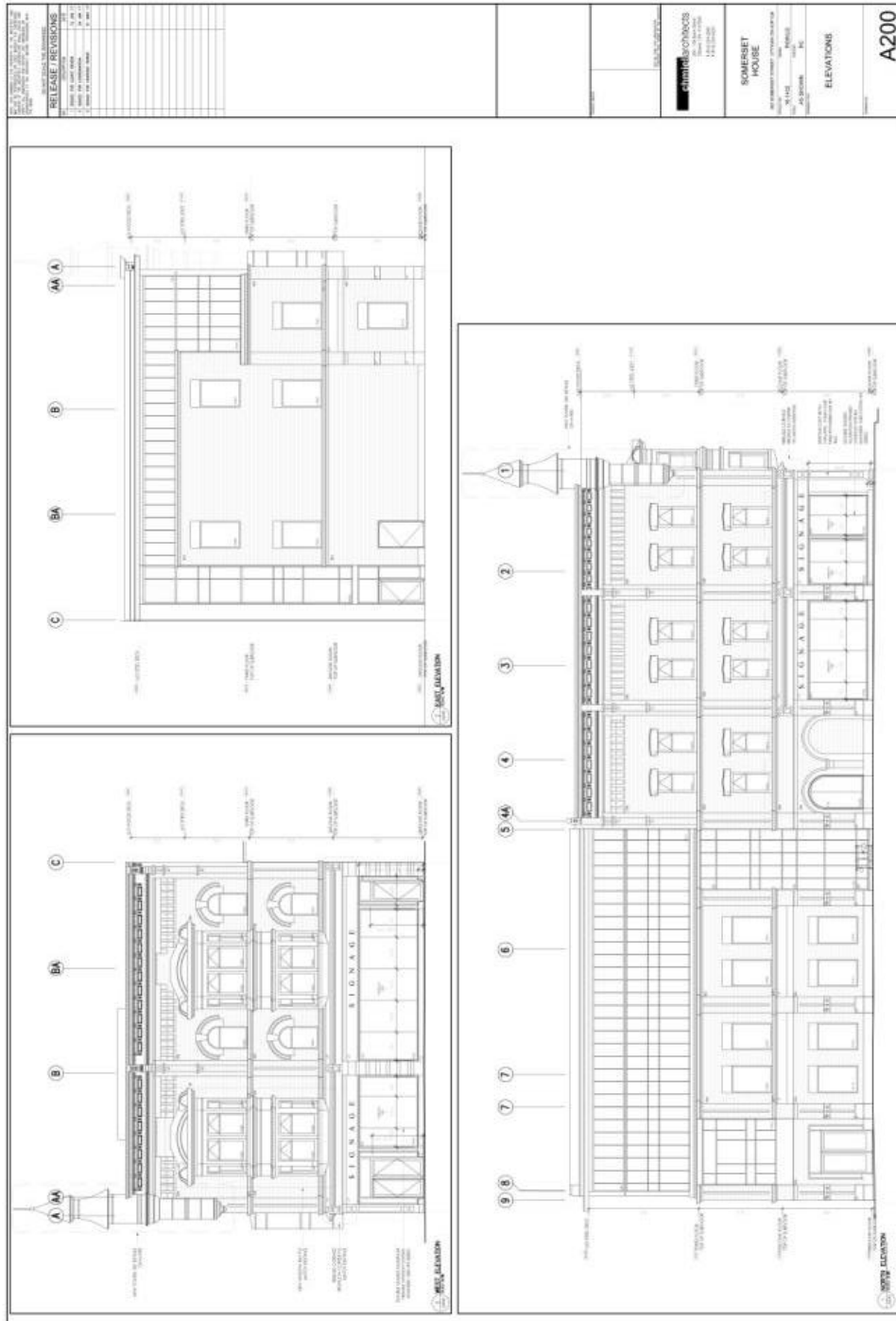


Somerset House - Perspective 02 - Option 2

Somerset Street and Bank Street | 2017-03-31 | 16-1432

chmielarchitects

Document 5 – Elevations



Document 6 – Restoration Details



Cornice Dentils & Modillions to be Removed, Restored & Reinstated



Cornice Brackets



New Bay Window to be Constructed to Match Adjacent Existing Bay Window



Existing Turret to be Restored, Similar to Original Detailing



Precast Stone Window Headers to be Restored



Low Level Cornice to be Replicated



Arched Window Metal Work Details to be Restored



Bay Window Metal Work Relief Details to be Restored



Existing Bay Window Structure to be Reconstructed

Somerset House - Existing Heritage Features for Restoration/Replication

General Street and Bank Street | 2017-2028 | 16-1432