



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Demolition and Alteration of Buildings in the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District - 365-367 Queen Street West

Date:	February 9, 2012
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto East York Community Council
From:	Acting Director, Policy & Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	P:\2012\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\TEYCC\March 20 2012\teHPS11

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval, with conditions, of the demolition of the one-storey non-contributing building at 365 Queen Street West, the construction of a replacement building on that same property and alterations to the contributing building at 367 Queen Street West.

The proposed development involves the construction of a new building with the existing facade at 367 Queen Street West to be retained and restored. The approval of the demolition and alteration is conditional upon the applicant revising the design of the new building's facade to be more consistent with the guidelines for new construction contained in the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District Plan (District Plan) as well as reducing the proposed height from 17.4 metres to 16 metres to meet the District's height requirements.

The project also requires site plan approval and minor variances from the Committee of Adjustment for height, parking relief and change of use. Heritage Preservation Services have supported the parking and use variances as requested but have advised the Committee of Adjustment that additional height is contrary to the District Plan. Should the height variance be granted by the Committee, heritage staff have asked that it be conditional upon receiving a heritage permit from Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve the demolition of the building and its replacement at 365 Queen Street West and the alterations to 367 Queen Street West as a part of the same development, in accordance with the plans and drawings prepared by Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc., dated December 14, 2011, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Prior to Site Plan Approval the owner shall:
 - (i) Eliminate 1.4 metres of height to bring the project into compliance with the existing Zoning By-law and the Heritage Conservation District Plan;
 - (ii) Continue to work with Heritage Preservation Services to refine the final façade design of the replacement building including, but not limited to, incorporating the following design elements:

Provide horizontal articulation to distinguish the top of the second storey from the parapet to reduce the perceived height of the second storey by introducing a change in material, adding a cornice or string course or other architectural detailing;

Maintain the rhythm of solids and voids by reducing the size of the second storey window opening and designing smaller openings that are characteristic of the district;
 - (iii) Provide a Conservation Plan, based on the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by William Greer dated September 2011, that details the proposed in situ stabilization, shoring and restoration of the existing facade to be retained at 367 Queen Street West and detailed drawings, including material and finishes, of all new construction, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services; and
 - (iv) Provide an estimate of all costs associated with the retention and restoration of the facade at 367 Queen Street West, to be used as the basis for a Letter of Credit to be supplied prior to the issuance of any heritage permit.
 - b. Prior to the issuance of any heritage permit for the replacement structure at 365 Queen Street West, including a permit for the demolition, excavation and/or shoring of the subject property, and for the alterations to 367 Queen Street West, the owner shall provide the following:

- (i) Provide a Letter of Credit in a form and amount satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to secure the retention and restoration of the facade at 367 Queen Street West; and
- (ii) Provide final drawings, including all dimensions, materials, finishes and specifications for the restoration work and new construction, to be cross referenced to the approved Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District was approved by City Council in 2007 by By-law No. 979-2007. In designating the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District, Council adopted an evaluation of all buildings within the District and a District Plan to manage change.

The building at 365 Queen Street West is currently a two-storey contemporary structure that does not contribute to the heritage character of the District. The three-storey building at 367 Queen Street West is constructed in the Second Empire style and contributes to the distinct heritage character of the District.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The site at 365-367 Queen Street West is comprised of two adjacent properties, on the south side of Queen Street West, located opposite the south end of Soho Street.

The demolition of all of 365 Queen Street West and the majority of 367 Queen Street West is proposed to construct a new three-storey retail building on the site. The façade of the contributing building at 367 Queen Street West will be retained in situ, rehabilitated and incorporated into the new building. A Heritage Impact Assessment, dated September 2011, was prepared by William N. Greer in support of the development. The report reviewed the proposed development at 365-367 Queen Street West in regard to its compliance with the District Plan. It did not include any information with respect to additional height requirements.

The owner has submitted a site plan and has applied to the Committee of Adjustment for minor variances to allow for an increase in the maximum allowable building height of 16 metres to a new height of 17.4 metres for the site, to obtain parking relief and to support a change of use. The additional height is being asked for to facilitate raising the parapet height to incorporate a snow screen.

Heritage Impact Assessment

In his report, William Greer provides the following assessment of the development's design:

- A linking area expressing a separation between the ground floor and second floor levels, common to both facades, is shown
- The recessed third floor face of the new building provides an appropriate backdrop to enhance the features and heritage attributes of the heritage building
- Dark coloured buffed artificial stone at lower level and a polished finish on the angled upper face of the new façade complement the adjacent brickwork of the heritage façade
- A metalwork gutter on the new building façade adds form and visual interest that aligns with stone corbels, cornice and eave line of the heritage façade
- The joints and reveals in the artificial stonework of the new façade accentuate the compatible verticality and scale
- A step back from the heritage façade adds to building form and massing and complements its form and heritage attributes
- The single storey vertical bay window form, partially projecting into the inward sloping area of the façade, is a clearly contemporary feature that reflects in its proportions and volumetric expression the mansard roof dormers of the heritage façade
- The storefronts are designed to fulfill the needs of contemporary use and include recessed entrances and each storefront window height and base is appropriately dimensioned. The result meets the solid to glazed void ratio required in the heritage district guidelines
- A metal faced canopy links the contemporary storefront display windows and recessed entrances across the entire development frontage to provide continuity in the street wall and variety in the public realm
- A vertical reveal between the contributing and the new building is introduced to reinforce the narrow nature of the street frontages prevalent in the district

In summary, Greer concludes that the impact on the heritage character of the District by the redevelopment of the property will not be significant. Further, it is suggested that the new replacement building at 365 Queen Street West is a "strong architectural contribution to the heritage character of the district". The 17.4 metre height of the building is not addressed in the report as the additional height was proposed after the Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted.

COMMENTS

Heritage Preservation Services staff have met with the applicant, architects, heritage and planning consultants and City Planning staff on several occasions to consider a progression of design options for the site.

Plans and drawings were submitted with a Site Plan Application dated September 6, 2011, September 13, 2011, and September 14, 2011 prepared by Montgomery Sisam Architects Inc. Revisions dated December 14, 2011 were also submitted and reviewed by staff.

While the applicant has addressed a number of concerns expressed by staff throughout the pre-consultation period, and have re-designed their project accordingly, a few key issues relating to the design of the new building remain outstanding and are not consistent with the Heritage Conservation District Plan. Staff recommend that conditional approval be given and that these issues continue to be discussed in order to be resolved.

New Building at 365 Queen Street West

One of the main objectives of the District Plan is to ensure that new designs contribute to the heritage character of the District.

Section 5.1 of the District Plan, Significant Architecture and Prominent Buildings, states that new and renovated buildings must be designed to be sympathetic to the district heritage attributes through massing, rhythm of solids and voids, significant design features and high quality materials.

In general, the massing and materials proposed for the new building are in keeping with the District Plan. The façade patterns of the proposal, however, do not respect the heritage attributes of the District or the adjacent contributing building. In Section 5.5 of the District Plan, Façade Patterns and Features, new buildings are encouraged to incorporate symmetry at upper levels and maintain a rhythm of solids and voids. While the proportions of the oversized window is similar to those of the contributing building (ie. it has the same shape), its size is out of scale relative to most, if not every, building with punched windows in the district. The single oversized window does not maintain a rhythm of solids & voids and results in an unbroken wall of glazing that predominates the building. This is directly counter to the District Plan's intent to restrict glazing on upper floors.

Section 5.5 also requires that the horizontal rhythm and visual transition between floors be articulated in façade designs. New buildings should respect the significant design features and the horizontal rhythm of adjacent buildings. This allows for the use, height and number of floors to be clearly legible from the street. While the first storey of the new facade of 365 Queen Street is appropriately defined by the height of the adjacent storefront at 367 Queen Street West, there is no definition between the second storey and the parapet of the building, resulting in what visually appears to be an unusually tall second storey. This does not support the heritage attribute of the district that the height of ground floor levels is generally greater than the height of each upper storey. The tall, vertical presence of the second storey, accentuated by the oversized window, appears to vertically span more than one floor which creates visual confusion and contributes to the illegibility of height, number of floors and storey division.

While staff support and encourage contemporary design for new development in this District, the facade pattern of the new building dominate over the adjacent contributing building. This will have an adverse impact on the heritage character of the District.

Alteration to 367 Queen Street West

The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the ground floor storefront, restore the upper storeys of the façade and incorporate the facade into a new 3-storey building. The new portion of the building would also extend to the property line on the west side. The new storefront respects the heritage character of the District and is consistent with the district guidelines in terms of façade patterns, features and materials. At the second storey level, original window openings will be restored. The wall plane of the new portion of the building steps back and meets the 45-degree angular plane requirement in the District Plan.

The proposal to rehabilitate the building at 367 Queen Street West and incorporate it into the new development meets the guidelines in the Heritage Conservation District Plan.

Request for Additional Height

The application to the Committee of Adjustment for an additional 1.4 m in height exceeds the permitted maximum height of 16 m in the District Plan, which is also consistent with the existing Zoning By-law. Approval of additional height in the Heritage Conservation District would set a precedent that would begin to compromise the historical building heights that have been established along Queen Street West and which have been identified as a heritage attribute. Given that the need for additional height is discretionary, staff believes it is unreasonable to approve a height precedent within an area of strict height control.

CONCLUSION

While the project generally respects the heritage character of the District in terms of scale and treatment of the contributing heritage building, further modifications to the design of the new facade at 365 Queen Street West and adherence to the 16m height limit for the new building would result in a project that is more sympathetic to the district's heritage

attributes and those of the adjacent contributing building. In its current form the building is not in keeping with the District Plan.

Therefore, Heritage Preservation Services staff recommends that the design of 365 Queen Street West be revised to meet the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District Plan. This can be achieved by reducing the impact of the building mass at the second storey level through the introduction of a clear definition between the top of the second storey and the parapet and by designing window openings at a more appropriate scale. The height of 17.4 metres exceeds the maximum height set out in the District Plan and should be removed so as not to set a new height precedent in the District. Without these changes, the new building will have an adverse impact on the heritage character of the Heritage Conservation District.

CONTACT

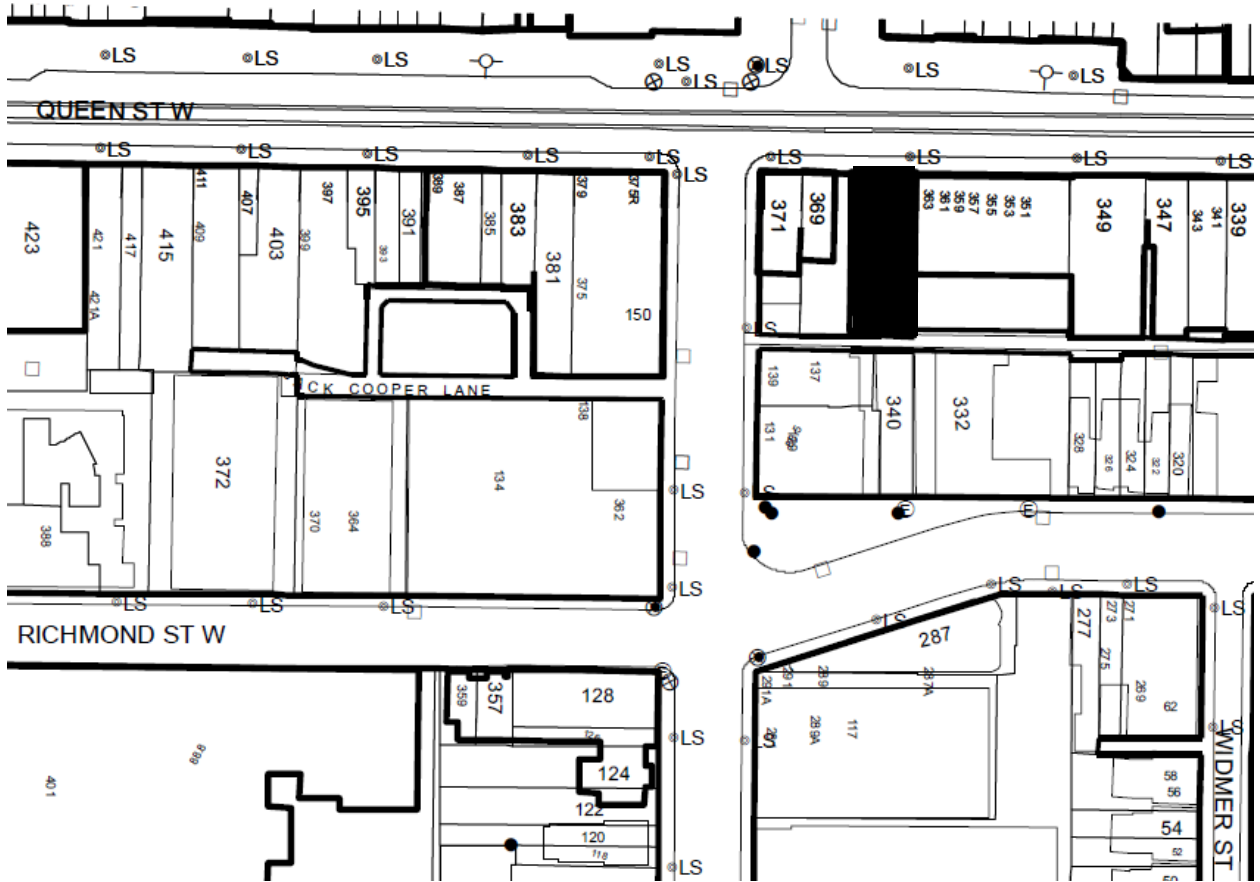
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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment No. 2 – Photograph of Existing Structures
Attachment No. 3 - Rendering of the Proposed Project
Attachment No. 4 – Proposed North Elevation
Attachment No. 5 – Proposed North & South Elevations
Attachment No. 6 – Proposed West Elevation
Attachment No. 7 – Proposed East Elevation
Attachment No. 8 – Proposed Building Section
Attachment No. 9 – Proposed Roof Plan

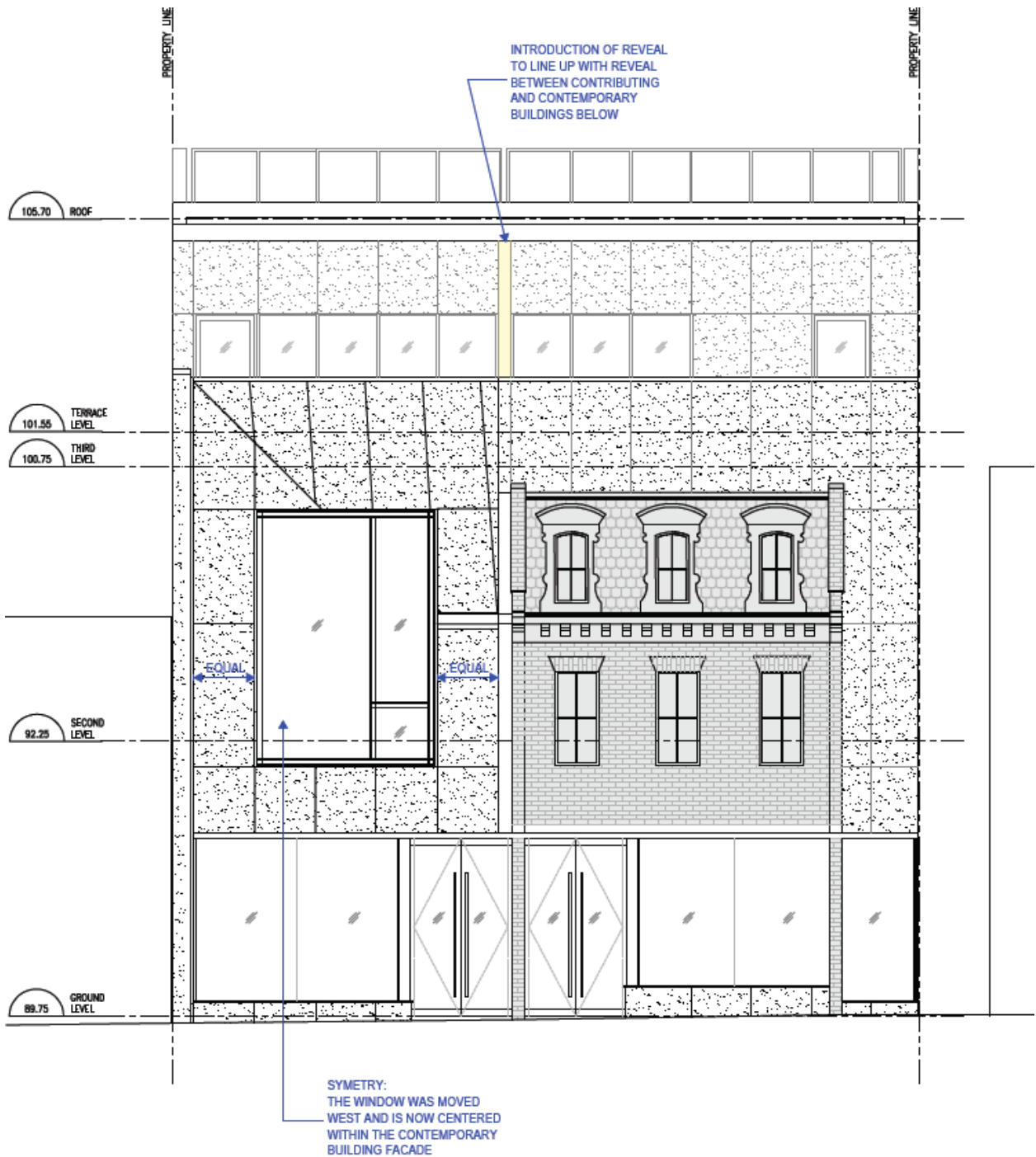






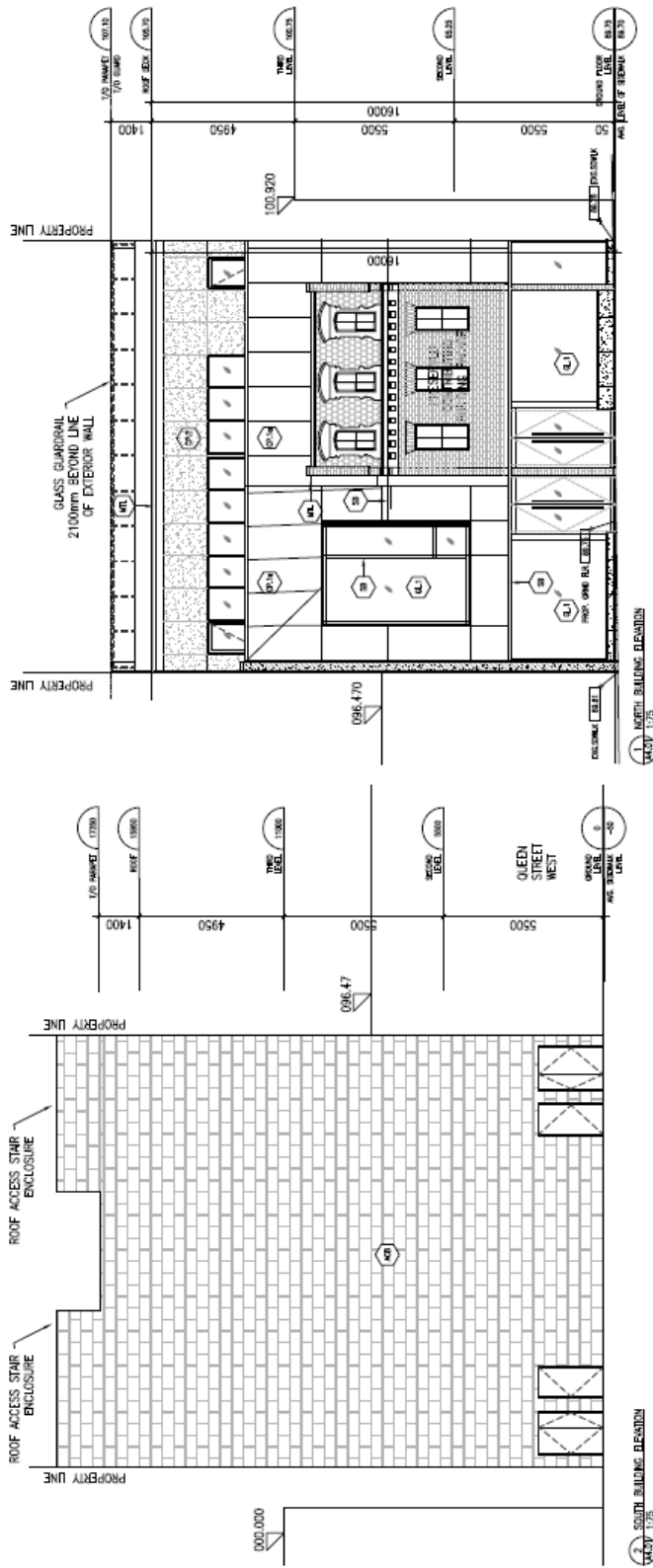
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NORTH ELEVATION: 365-367 QUEEN STREET WEST ATTACHMENT NO. 4



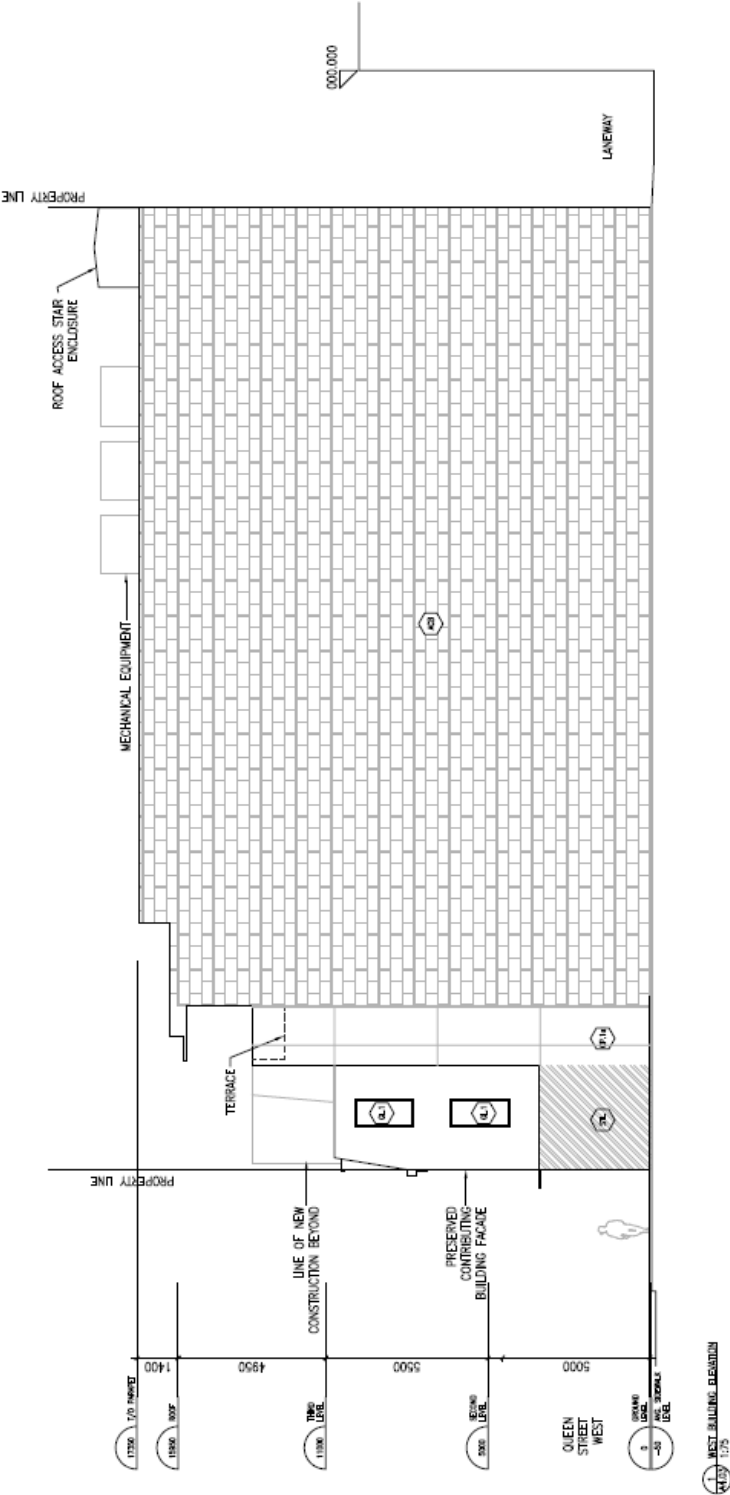
NORTH & SOUTH ELEVATIONS
 365-367 QUEEN STREET WEST

ATTACHMENT NO. 5

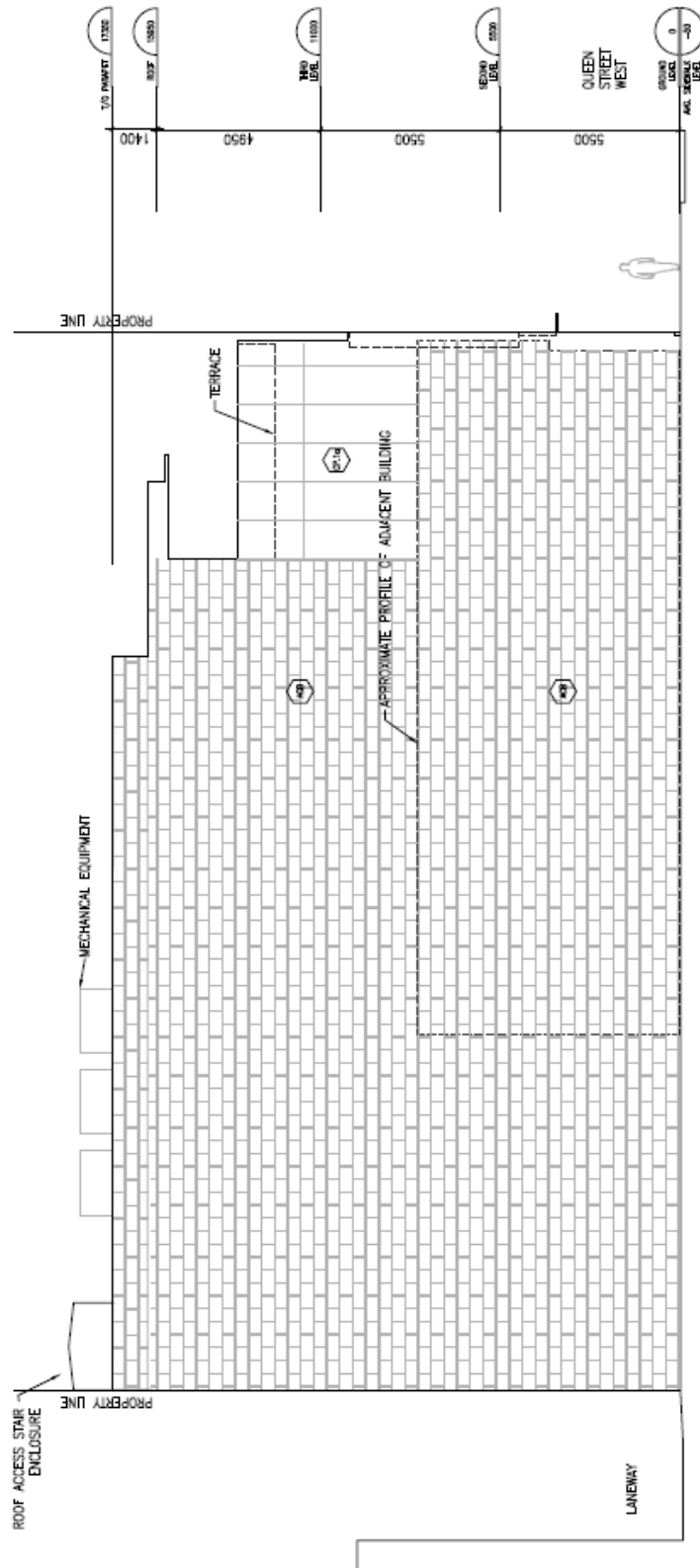


WEST ELEVATION :
365-367 QUEEN STREET WEST

ATTACHMENT NO. 6

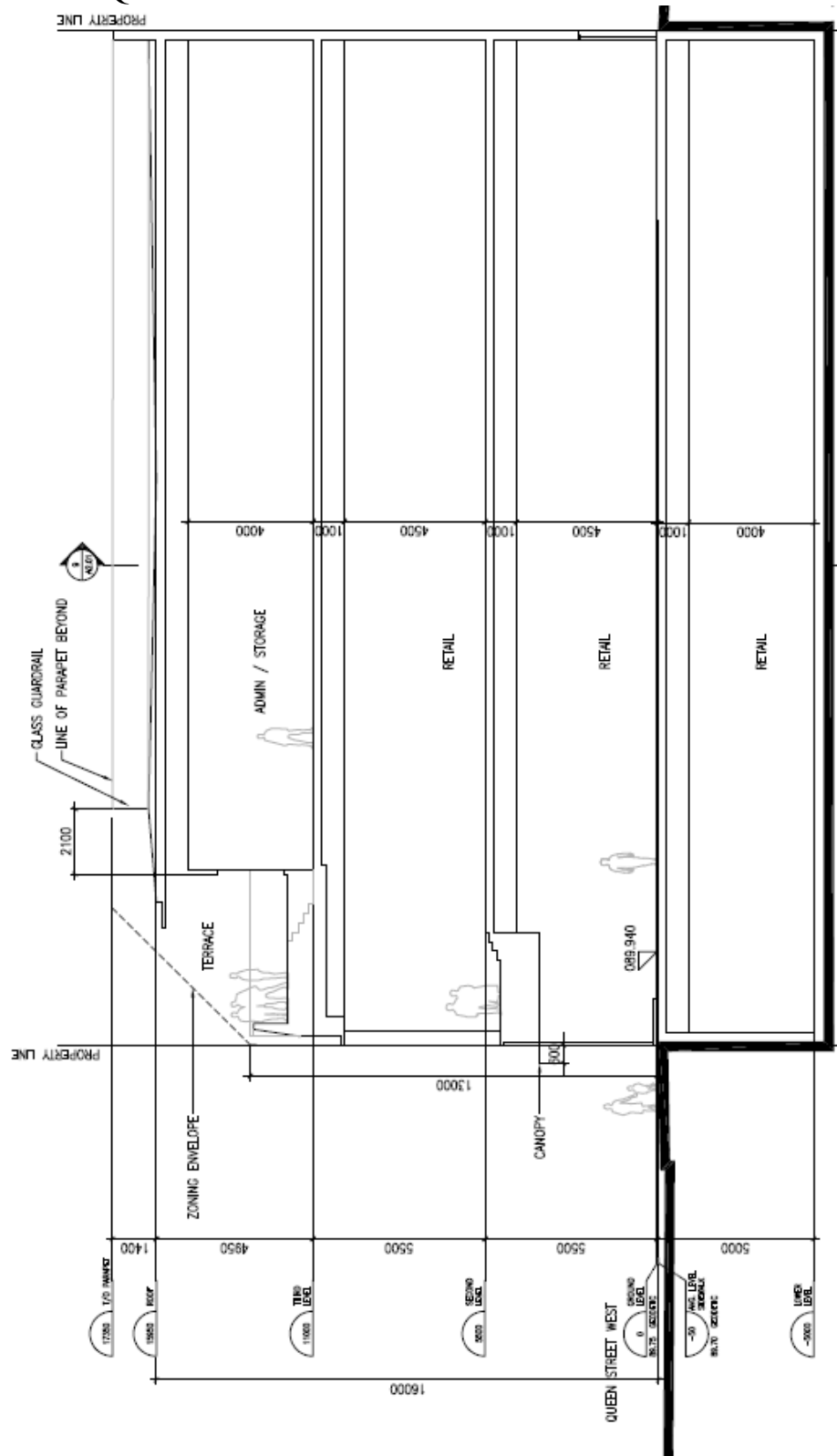


EAST ELEVATION 365-367 QUEEN STREET WEST ATTACHMENT NO. 7



BUILDING SECTION:
365-367 QUEEN STREET

ATTACHMENT NO.8



Demolition and Alteration of Buildings within the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District – 365-367 Queen Street West

