

## **Amendment of a Designating By-Law, Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement - 197 King Street East**

**Date:** January 6, 2020

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board  
Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** Ward 13 - Toronto Centre

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve alterations proposed for the heritage property located at 197 King Street East, the Nealon House, in connection with a proposed redevelopment of the subject property, state its intention to amend former City of Toronto By-law 91-91 and in so doing, update the Statement of Significance, and that Council grant authority to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement for the subject property.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council amend City of Toronto By-law 91-91, designating the property at 197 King Street East under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, to update and revise the Reasons for Designation in accordance with the Reasons for Designation: 197 King Street East attached as Attachment 4 to this report.
2. If there are no objections to the amendment of the by-law in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bill in Council.
3. If there are objections to the amendment of the by-law in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the amendment of the by-law and the designation to the Conservation Review Board.

4. If the amendment of the by-law is referred to the Conservation Review Board, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend any hearing held by the Conservation Review Board in support of Council's decision.

5. City Council approve the alterations to the heritage property at 197 King Street East, in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to allow for the rehabilitation of the existing building into an eight storey hotel (plus mechanical penthouse) on the lands known municipally in the year 2020 as 197 King Street East, with such alterations substantially in accordance with plans and drawings dated February 12, 2019 and revised September 30, 2019, prepared by Studio JCI, and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services; and the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prepared by GBCA Architects, dated December 12, 2019, and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and subject to the following additional conditions:

a. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 197 King Street East, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, the owner shall:

1. Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the property at 197 King Street East in accordance with the plans and drawings dated February 12, 2019 and revised September 30, 2019, prepared by Studio JCI, and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by GBCA Architects, dated December 12, 2019, and in accordance with the Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 5.a.2, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services including registration of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;

2. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant, that is consistent with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for 197 King Street East prepared by GBCA Architects, dated December 12, 2019, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

3. Provide a Heritage Lighting Plan that describes how the exterior of the heritage property will be sensitively illuminated to enhance its heritage character to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager Heritage Preservation Services;

4. Provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject property, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

5. Submit a Signage Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

6. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 5.a.2, including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

7. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing, in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to secure all work included in the approved Conservation, Lighting, and Interpretation Plan.

b. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit required in Recommendation 5.a.7 above, City Planning Division, the owner shall:

1. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the required conservation work, the required interpretive work, and the required heritage lighting work has been completed in accordance with the Conservation Plan, Interpretation Plan and Heritage Lighting Plan, and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

2. Provide replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

6. City Council authorize the entering into of a heritage easement agreement under Section 37 of the Ontario Heritage Act with the owner of 197 King Street East in a form and content satisfactory to the City Solicitor and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.

7. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bill in Council authorizing the entering into a heritage easement agreement for the property at 197 King Street East.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On December 9, 2015, City Council amended and adopted Item TE12.11 to enact the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan under Part V of By-Law Amendment, Alterations and HEA - 197 King St E

the Ontario Heritage Act. The subject property is located within the boundaries of the HCD. The Decision Document can be accessed here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE12.11>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Proposal**

The development proposal is to rehabilitate the property at 197 King Street East, the Nealon House, as a new mixed use hotel and commercial building. The project will involve the addition of four storeys plus a mechanical penthouse above the existing four storey building. The ground floor and basement of the building will be modified to allow for the construction of a new restaurant and hotel lobby. The restaurant will be accessed from the building's primary entrance on King Street East while the hotel lobby will be accessed off of King Street East through the existing carriageway. An elevator tower and circulation stair will be constructed behind the carriageway within an existing light well. In addition to approval under the Ontario Heritage Act the proposal will also require variances to the zoning by-law. Application No. #A1124/19TEY has been submitted to the City of Toronto with respect to the minor variance.

### **Heritage Property**

The property at 197 King Street East has cultural heritage value for its design, historical associations and context. Located on the south side of the street between George and Frederick streets, the Nealon House (1888) is a well-designed example of a purpose-built hotel with decorative elements from the popular styles of the late Victorian era, including the Romanesque Revival. The property contributes contextually to the character of King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is historically, visually and physically linked to its setting on an important "main street" and within the 10-block townsite that comprised the original Town of York.

### **Adjacent Heritage Properties**

The property at 200 King Street East is located immediately north of the development site on the north side of King Street East and contains the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory. Filling the city block bounded by King Street East, George Street, Adelaide Street East and Frederick Street, the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory (1874) has additions dating to 1883, 1892-93, 1899, 1907 and 1914. The late 19th and early 20th century buildings that are well-designed and representative examples of industrial architecture that share complementary cladding and classical styling from the period. Contextually, the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory is a landmark in the Town of York neighbourhood, where it is highly visible and fills the city block between King Street East and Adelaide Street East. The complex is historically, physically and visually linked to its surroundings in Old Town. The property was included on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties (now the Heritage

Register) on April 24, 1978. It was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage on December 1, 2011 by By-law 1321-2011.

## **St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District**

The development site is located within the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District. City Council adopted the HCD Plan on December 9, 2015. The designation and HCD Plan were appealed to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT) and as such is not currently in force, pending a decision arising from a hearing held in November 2019. Despite the HCD Plan not yet being in force, the policies and guidelines provided in the Plan are the outcome of a thorough heritage planning analysis for the area, and as such they are relevant to the evaluation of the development proposal.

The overall objective of the HCD Plan is to protect and conserve the heritage value of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood. The Plan seeks to manage change within the neighbourhood in order to conserve its heritage attributes. The policies and guidelines contained within the Plan assist property owners in ensuring that proposed alterations support the HCD Plan's objectives and respect the neighbourhood's heritage context.

The Nealon House is identified as a contributing building within the HCD Plan. The adjacent Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory is also identified as contributing building.

## **Policy Framework**

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province. The Act states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to “the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.”

The Provincial Policy Statement (the "PPS") issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The Planning Act requires that City Council’s decisions affecting land use planning matters be "consistent with" the PPS.

Policy 2.6.1 of the PPS directs that “Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.” Properties included on the City’s Heritage Register are considered to be significant in this context. “Conserved” is defined in the PPS as “the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act.”

Policy 2.6.3 states that "Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed

development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved."

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2019) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform with the Growth Plan. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform with the Growth Plan.

Policy 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that "Cultural Heritage Resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas."

The City of Toronto's Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed alterations:

3.1.5.4: "Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and adopted by Council."

3.1.5.5: "Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City."

3.1.5.6: "The adaptive re-use of properties on the Heritage Register is encouraged for new uses permitted in the applicable Official Plan land use designation, consistent with the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada."

3.1.5.16: "Properties on the Heritage Register and publicly known archaeological sites and artifacts will be promoted through educational programs, museums, local celebrations and other programming opportunities."

3.1.5.26: "New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it."

3.1.5.27: "Where it is supported by the cultural heritage values and attributes of a property on the Heritage Register, the conservation of whole or substantial portions of buildings, structures and landscapes on those properties is desirable and encouraged. The retention of façades alone is discouraged."

3.1.5.32: "Impacts of site alterations, developments, municipal improvements, and/or public works within or adjacent to Heritage Conservation Districts will be assessed to ensure that the integrity of the districts' heritage values, attributes, and character are conserved. This assessment will be achieved through a Heritage Impact Assessment, consistent with Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, to the satisfaction of the City."

33.1.5.32: "Heritage Conservation Districts should be managed and conserved by approving only those alterations, additions, new development, demolitions, removals and public works in accordance with respective Heritage Conservation District plans."

## **The Standards and Guidelines**

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the "Standards and Guidelines") is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and the conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project. The Standards and Guidelines can be accessed here:

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

## **COMMENTS**

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### **Proposed Conservation Strategy**

Heritage Preservation Services has reviewed the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) submitted in support of the development proposal. The HIA concludes that the proposed development meets the intent of the in-force heritage policy and that it conserves the heritage property. Overall staff agree with this assessment.

### **Massing**

The proposed addition above the Nealon House will be stepped back from the building's primary façade (north elevation) on King Street East. Levels 5 and 6 of the new hotel addition (the first two floors) will be stepped back approximately 4.5 metres from the north elevation. Levels 7, 8, and the mechanical penthouse will be stepped back approximately 7.5 metres from the north elevation. The addition has also been designed to be stepped in from the sides of the existing building. The step from the west elevation will be approximately 1.5 metres. On the east elevation, the new addition will be inset from the existing brick wall that is built to the property line.

With the proposed 4.5 metre step back the new addition will be constructed behind the existing stair tower. Combined with the proposed 1.5 metre step back from the existing west elevation, the massing of the proposal will ensure that the building's historic stair tower continues to remain a dominant feature on the street. These step backs will also reinforce the existing streetwall established by the heritage building and will ensure that the new addition will not have a significant impact on the adjacent Christie, Brown and

Company Biscuit Factory on the north side of the street. The additional step back above the seventh floor will further ensure that the new addition does not subordinate the heritage building

## **Design**

The sides of the new addition are proposed to be clad in a combination of brick, metal panels, vision glazing, and spandrel panels. This material palette will contrast with the existing red brick masonry and allow the volume to be read as distinct from the existing building. Above the sixth level, the addition will primarily be clad in tinted reflective glazing. The change in materiality above the sixth level will serve to break up the massing of the new addition and should help to lighten its appearance where it is visible from the street above the heritage building. As it is anticipated that the proposal will not require site plan approval, should Council approve the conservation strategy staff will review material samples for the exterior cladding prior the issuance of a heritage permit.

## **Restoration Work**

As part of their conservation strategy the applicant is proposing to repair the building's existing exterior masonry. The scope of work includes remedying buff brick installed at the storefront level by a previous owner in the 1990s with new red brick that is more in keeping with the building's original appearance. The applicant is also proposing to replace of all of the windows on the primary elevation with new wood windows consistent with the configuration of the original window pattern. The majority of these windows have previously been replaced with new windows that are unsympathetic to the character of the building. Those original windows that remain are in poor condition. In some cases window openings have also been partially over clad with metal panels. These panels will be removed and the original openings will be restored. The applicant is also proposing to repair and restore the building's existing front doors.

## **St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District**

Staff have reviewed the application against the heritage policies of the Official Plan and in the context of the emerging policy framework for the area including the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District Plan (The HCD Plan). The proposal satisfies certain policies of the HCD Plan but falls short on others. For example, the Plan calls for additions and alterations to contributing properties to be designed so that whole or substantial portions of heritage buildings are retained. The proposal meets this policy. The HCD Plan also requires additions and new development on this block to be built within a 45 degree angular plane as measured from the height of the streetwall. The applicant has worked with staff and the resulting proposal largely fits within this angular plane. At the same time the proposal falls short on meeting the Plan's requirement for step backs above contributing heritage buildings. The HCD Plan calls for vertical additions to be stepped back ten metres from the streetwall on King Street East. The first two floors of the proposed addition will be stepped back approximately 4.5 metres from this streetwall.



While staff would strongly prefer to see the policies of the adopted HCD Plan met, and are of the opinion that a proposal on the site can be achieved that adheres to the Plan, as the Plan is under appeal and is not determinative, and as the proposal is responsive to many of the heritage issues raised, including the policy that requires whole building retention and the protection an angular plane, staff are supportive of the proposal.

### **Conservation Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to the issuance of the first permit for the development the owner should be required to submit a conservation plan for the work described in the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified heritage professional to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services. The conservation plan should detail all of the recommended interventions and conservation work including: any recommended restoration work; required repair work to the exterior walls; a detailed plan describing how the heritage building will be protected during construction; a schedule of short and long-term maintenance requirements; and estimated costs for all conservation work. The Plan should also detail the proposal to insert new windows within the existing carriageway in a way that is sensitive to the heritage character of the property.

### **Interpretation and Lighting Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, prior to the issuance of a heritage permit for the proposed development the applicant should be required to submit a lighting plan and an interpretation plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager of Heritage Preservation Services. This plan should provide details of how the exterior of the hotel will be lit such that its unique heritage character is highlighted. The interpretation plan should serve to communicate the cultural heritage values of the property to users and visitors of the property and should reference the Heritage Interpretation Plan for Old Town Toronto.

### **Heritage Easement Agreement**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, staff are recommending that the owner enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement to secure the long-term protection of the heritage property at 197 King Street East.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Staff are supportive of the proposal to alter the property at 197 King Street East, the Nealon House, to allow for its rehabilitation back to its original use as a hotel. The proposal conserves the property and adjacent heritage property consistent with Section 3.1.5 of the City's Official Plan while also satisfying many of the policies within the St.

Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District Plan, including the policy that calls for the retention of whole or substantial portions of whole buildings, and largely conforms with the policy that calls for the protection of a 45 degree angular plane on King Street East.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services  
Urban Design, City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment No. 1 - Location Plan - 197 King Street East  
Attachment No. 2 - Photographs - 197 King Street East  
Attachment No. 3 - Proposal - 197 King Street East  
Attachment No. 4 - Statement of Significance (Revised Reasons for Designation) 197 King Street East  
Attachment No. 5 - Research and Evaluation Report - 197 King Street East  
Attachment No. 6 - City of Toronto By-Law 91-91



This location map is for information purposes only and is oriented with North at the top. The exact boundaries of the property are not shown. The arrow marks the south boundary of the property at 197 King Street East.



North Elevation of the Nealon House as viewed from the opposite side of King Street East

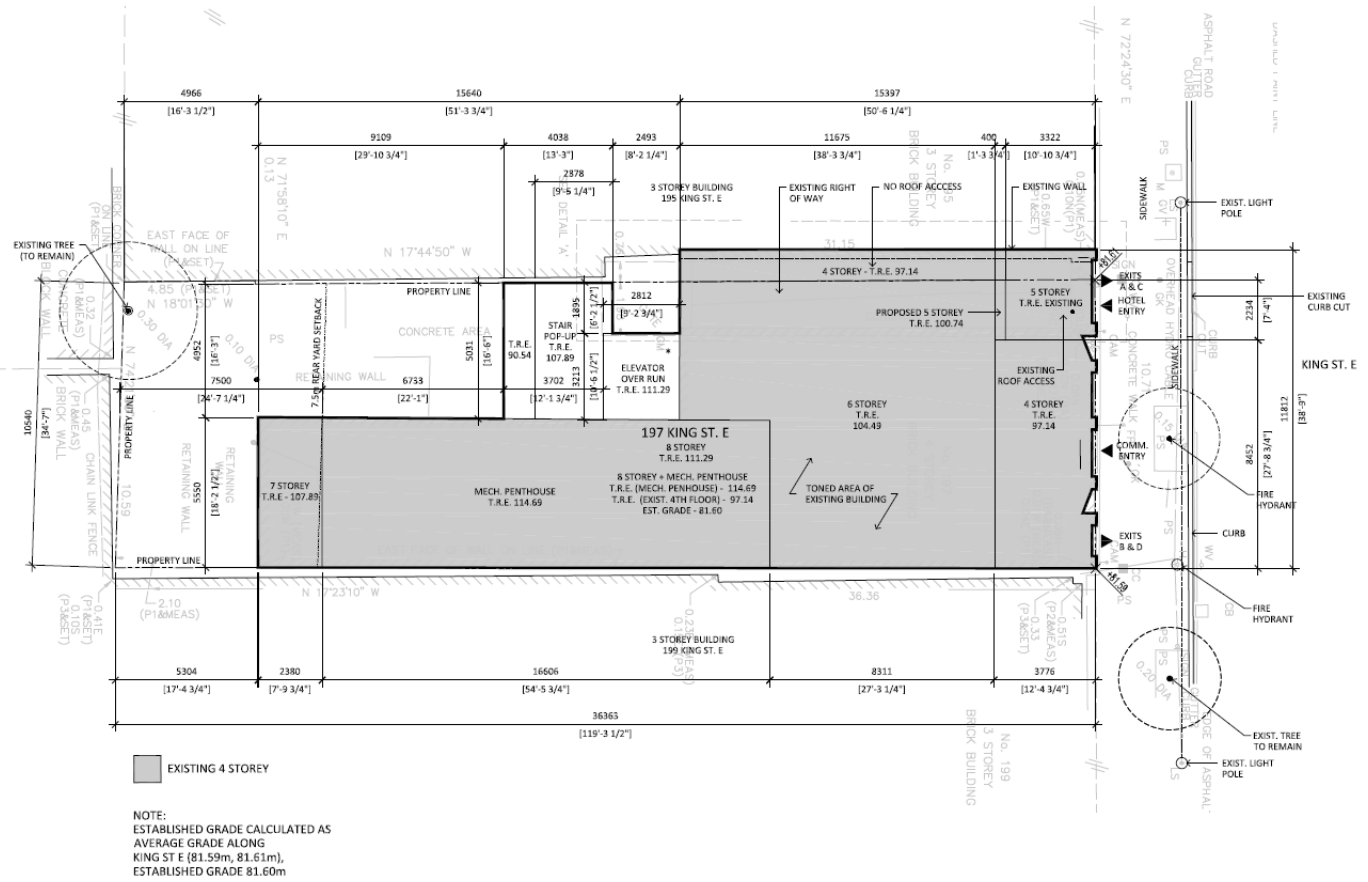




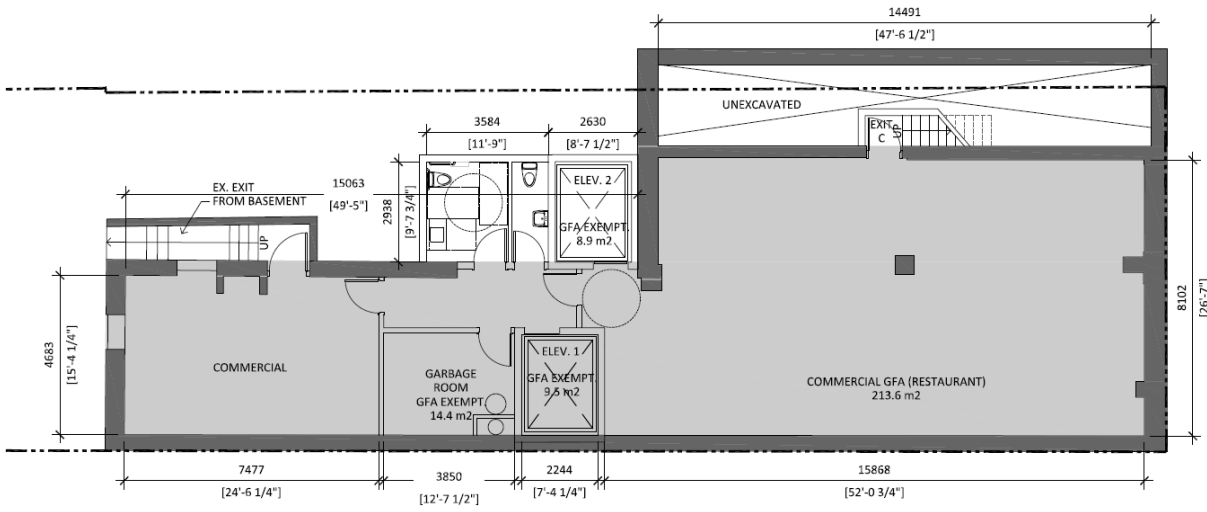
The Nealon House as viewed from the north side of King Street East (looking southwest)



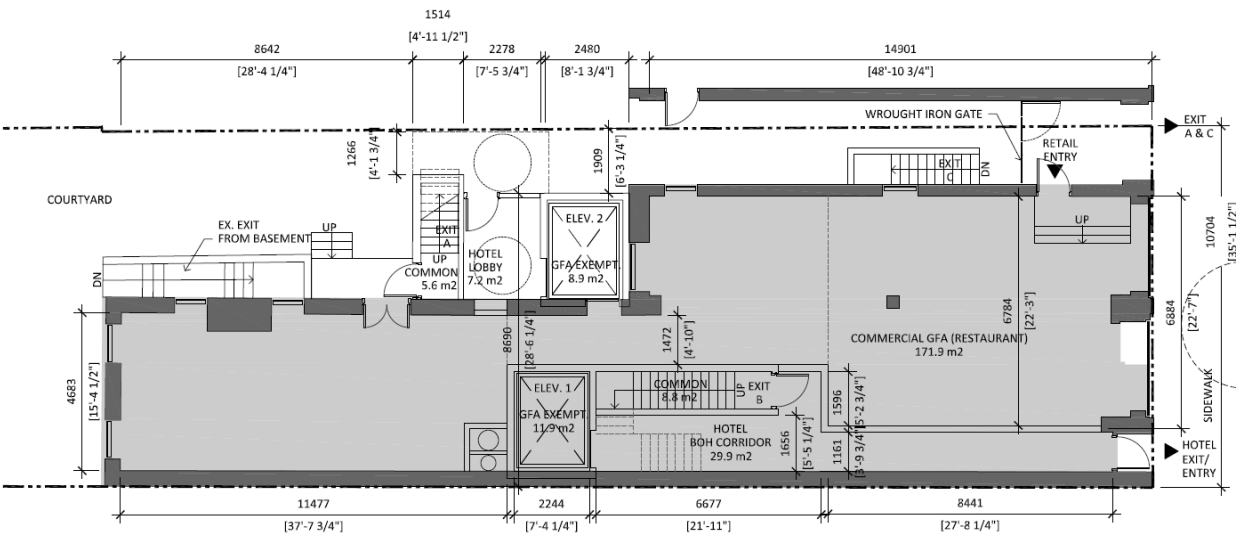
The Nealon House as viewed from the intersection of George Street and King Street East (looking southeast)



Site plan of the proposed development

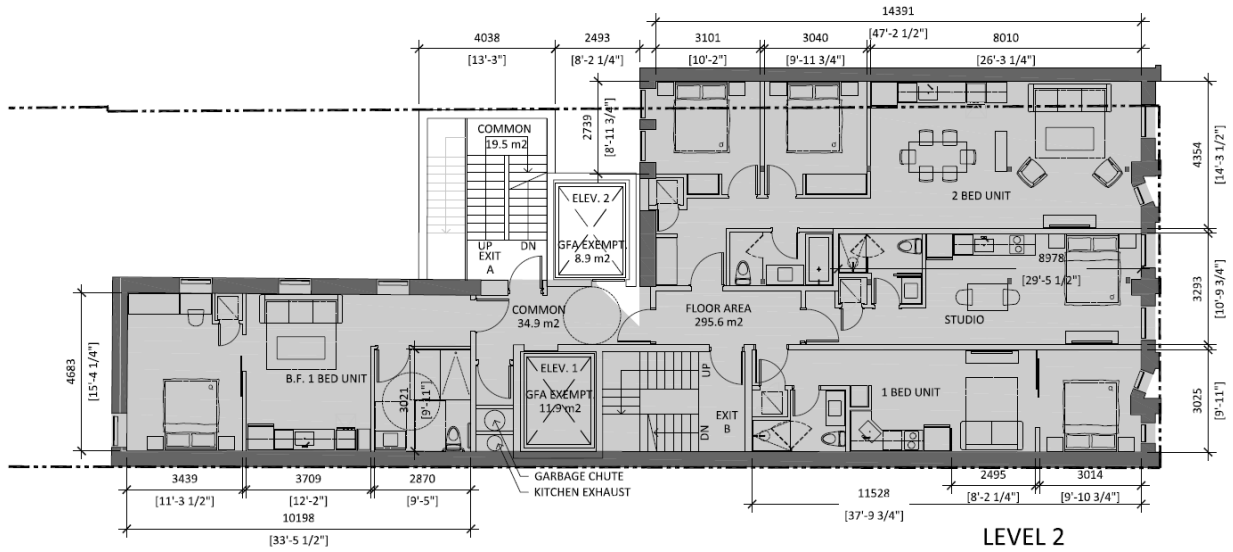


Basement level of the proposed development

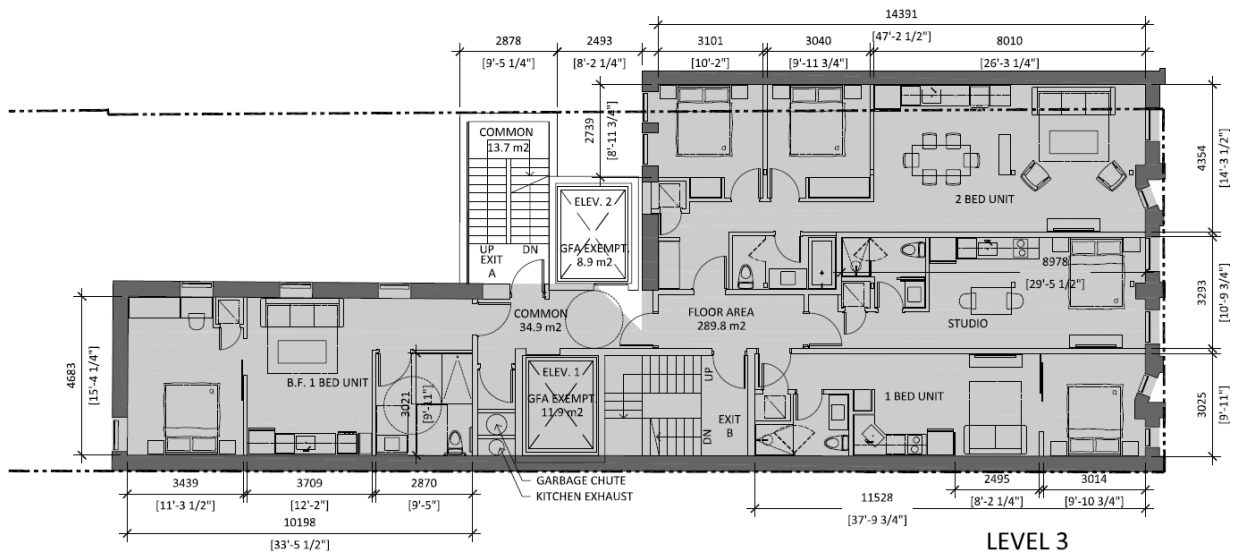


Ground floor plan of the proposed development

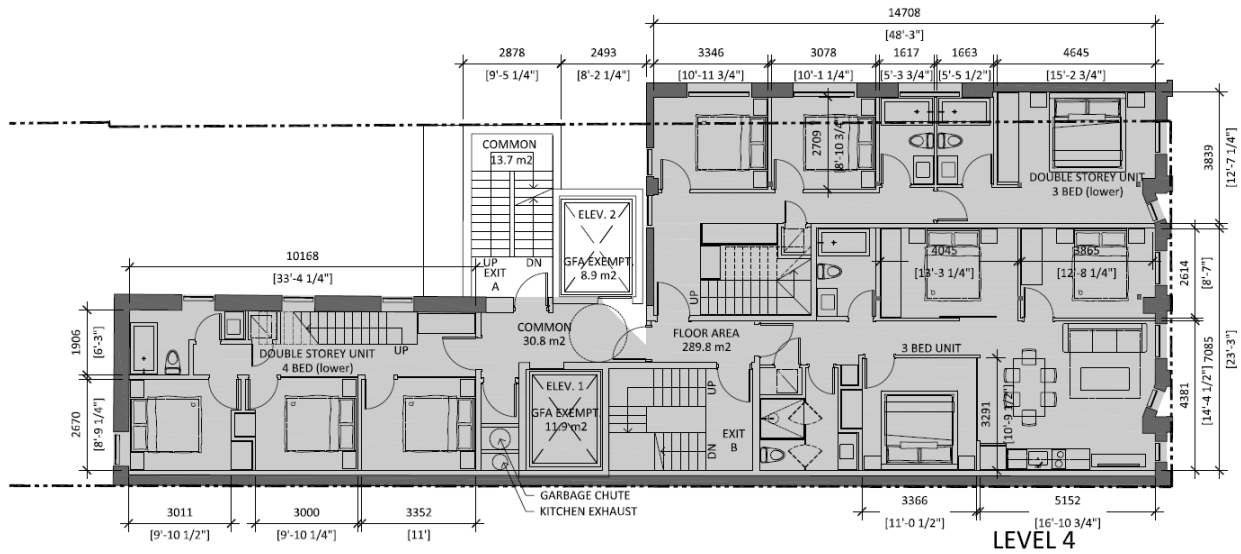




Second floor plan of the proposed development

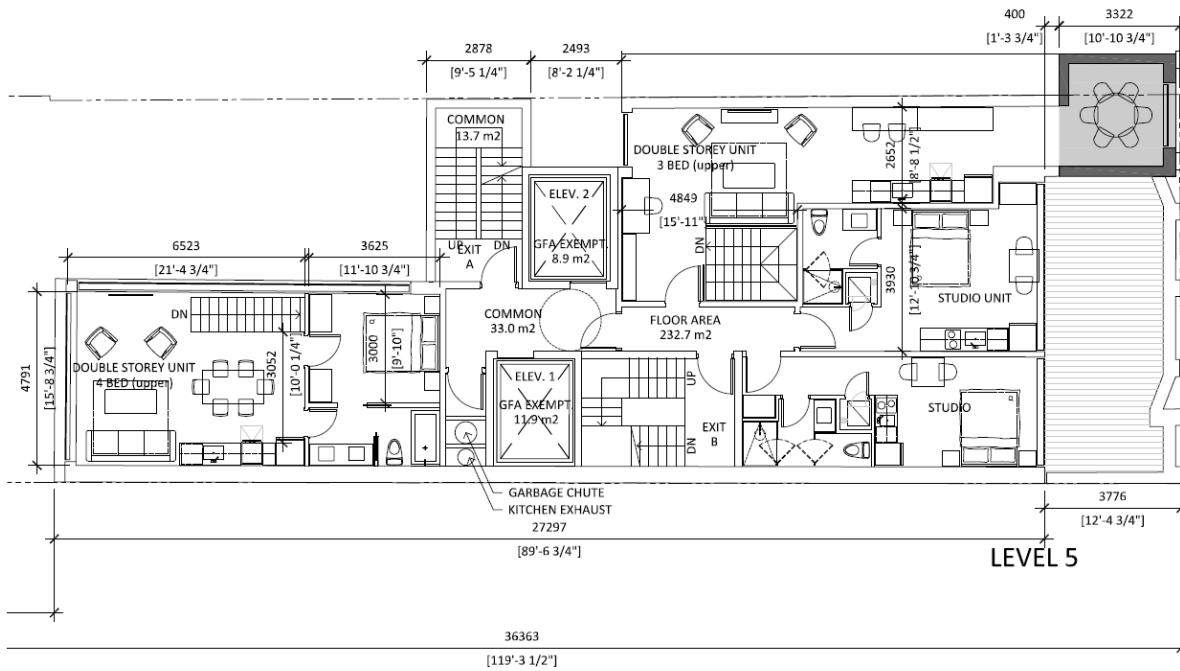


Third floor plan of the proposed development



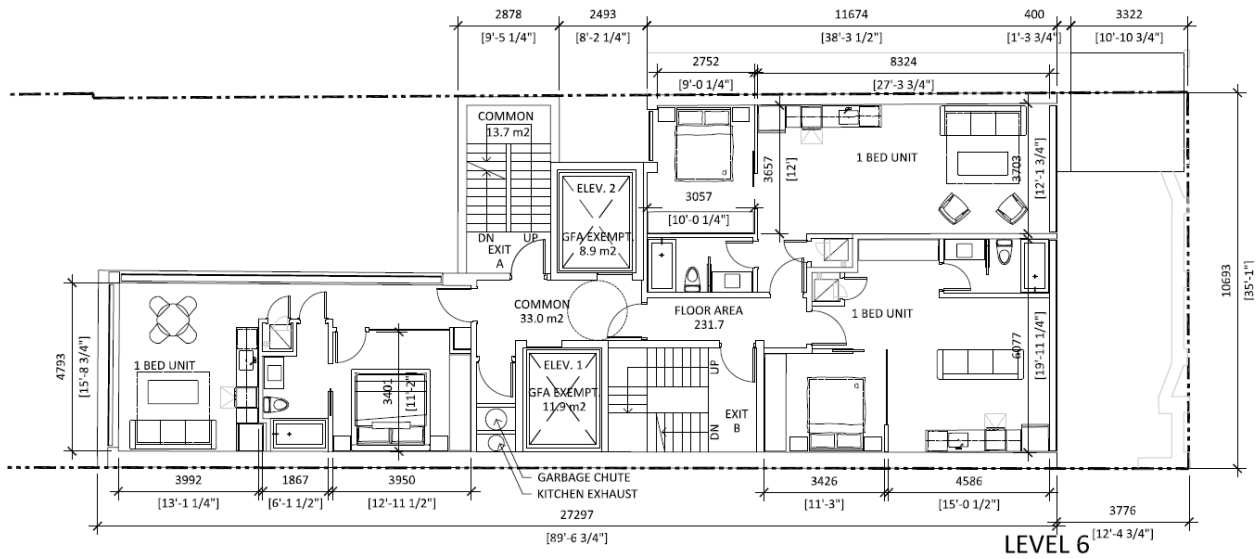
LEVEL 4

Fourth floor plan of the proposed development

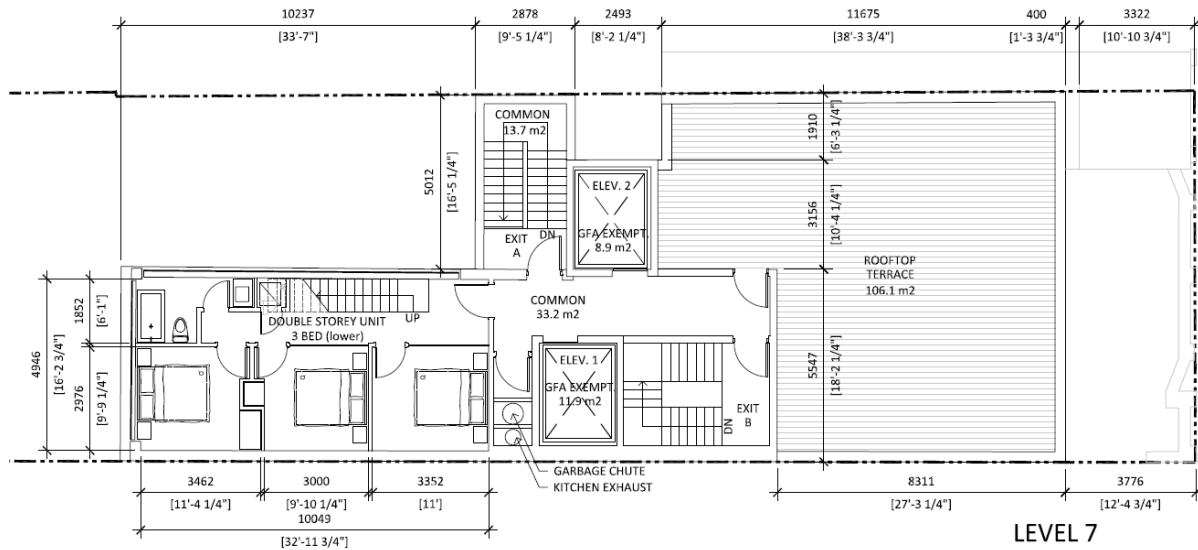


LEVEL 5

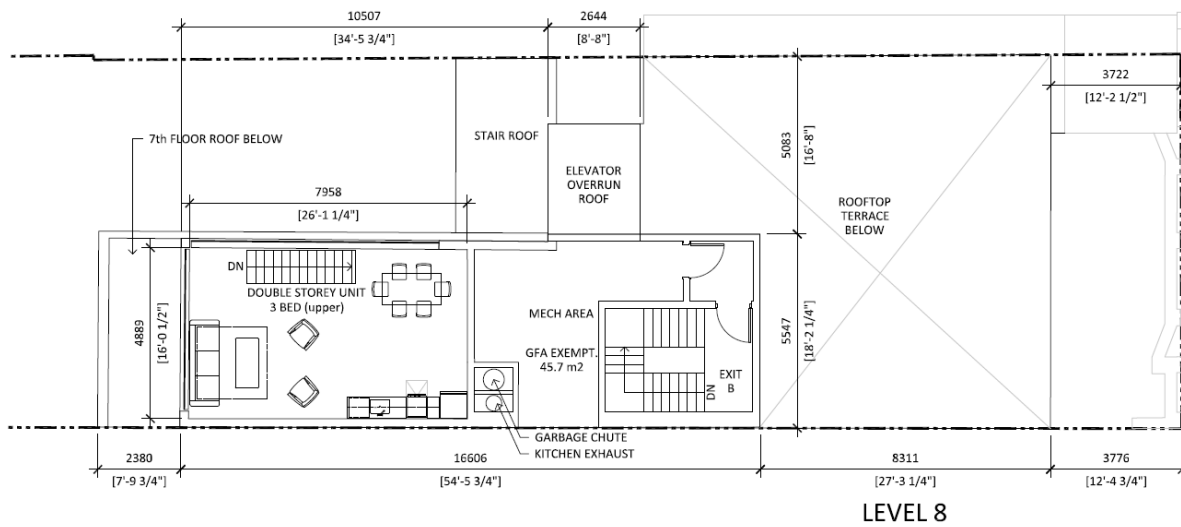
Fifth floor plan of the proposed development



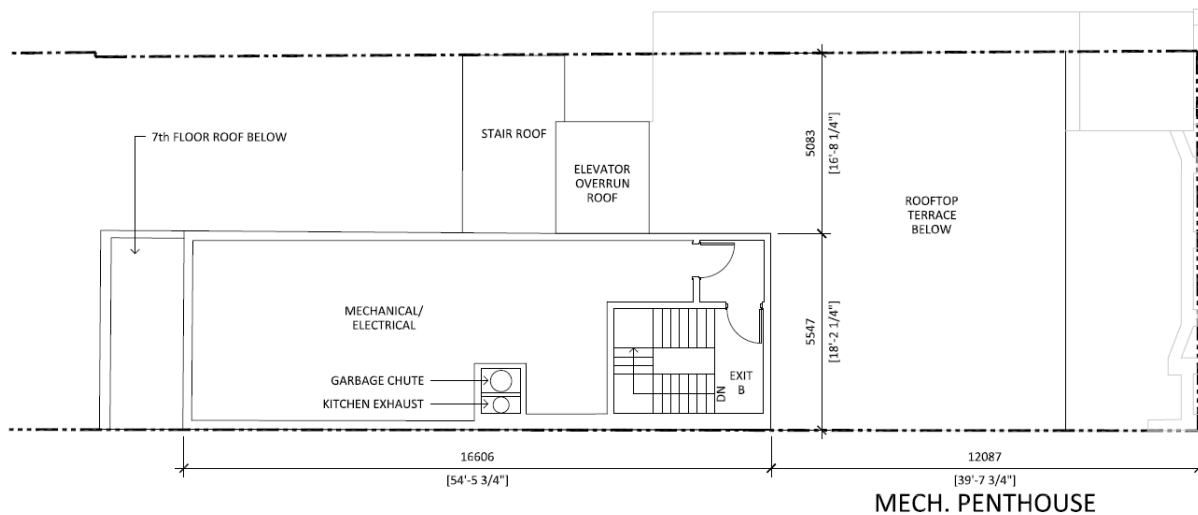
Sixth floor plan of the proposed development



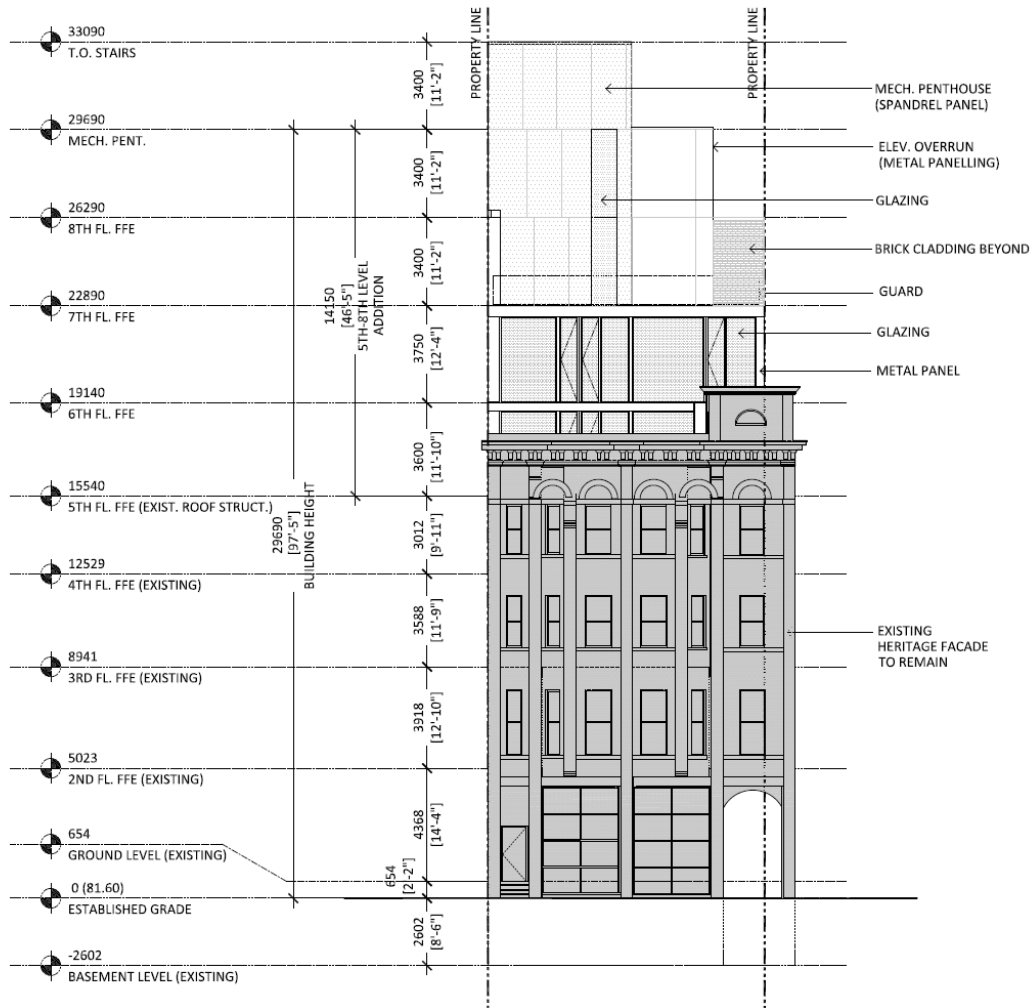
Seventh floor plan of the proposed development



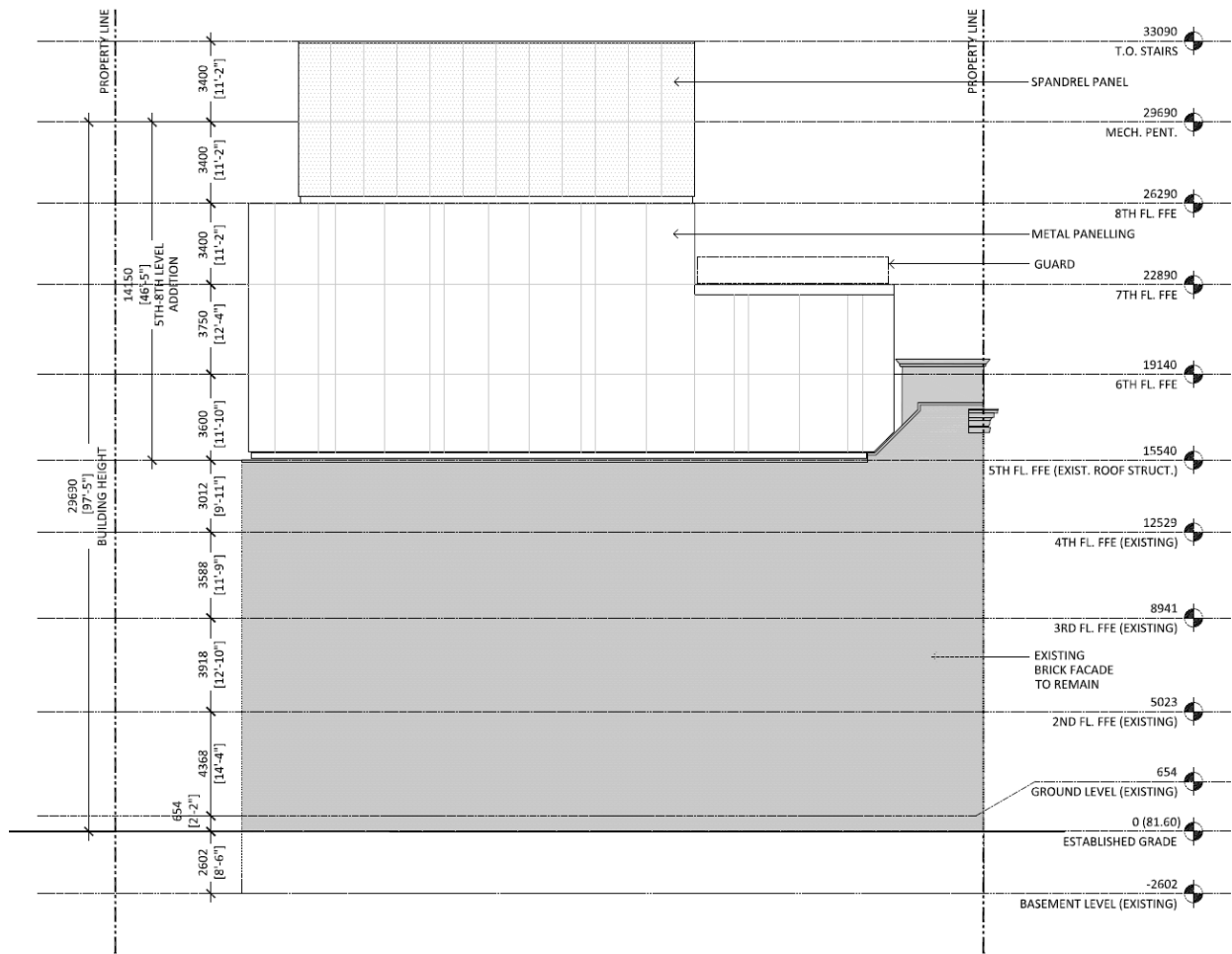
Eighth floor plan of the proposed development



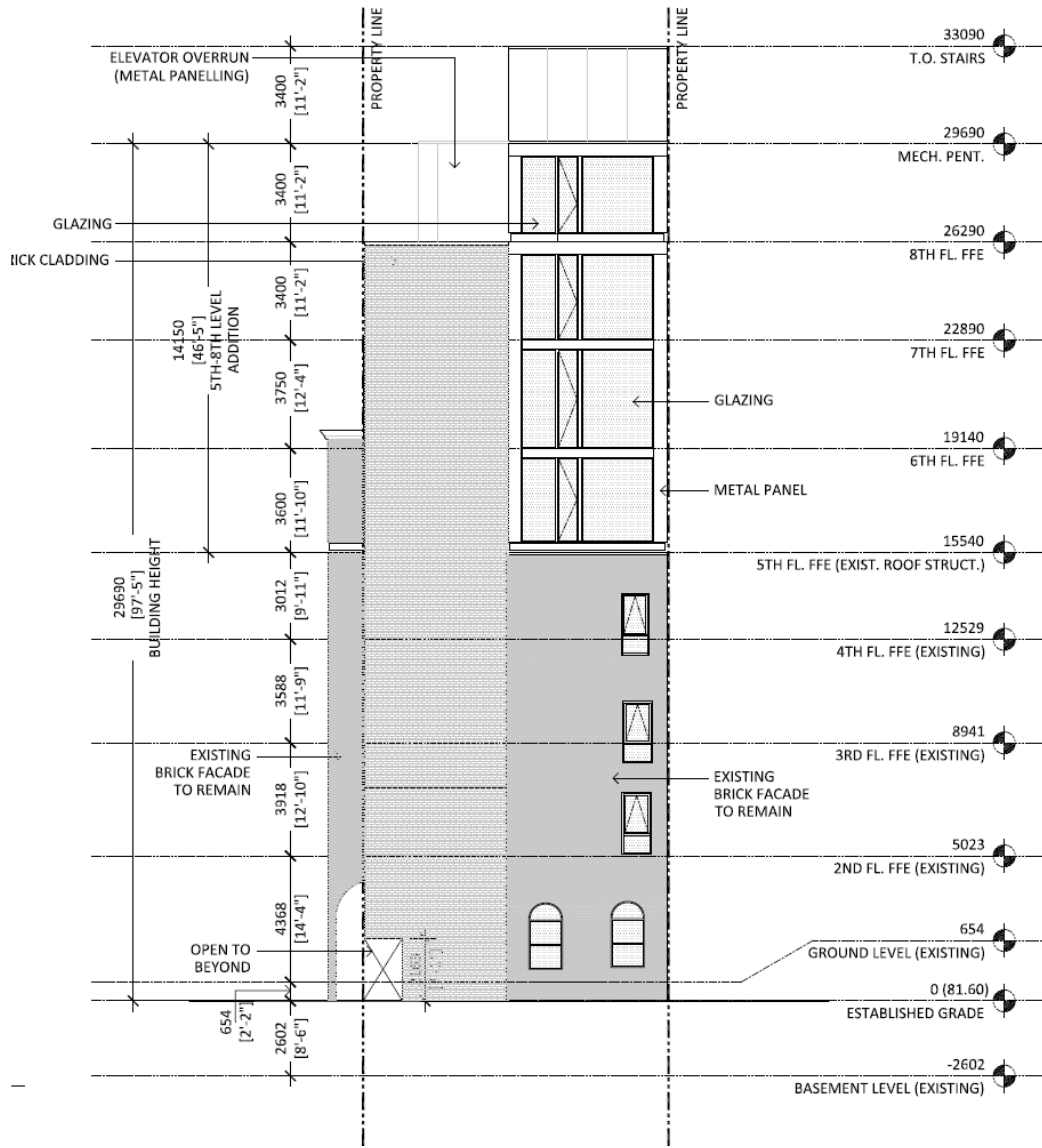
Mechanical Penthouse level of the proposed development



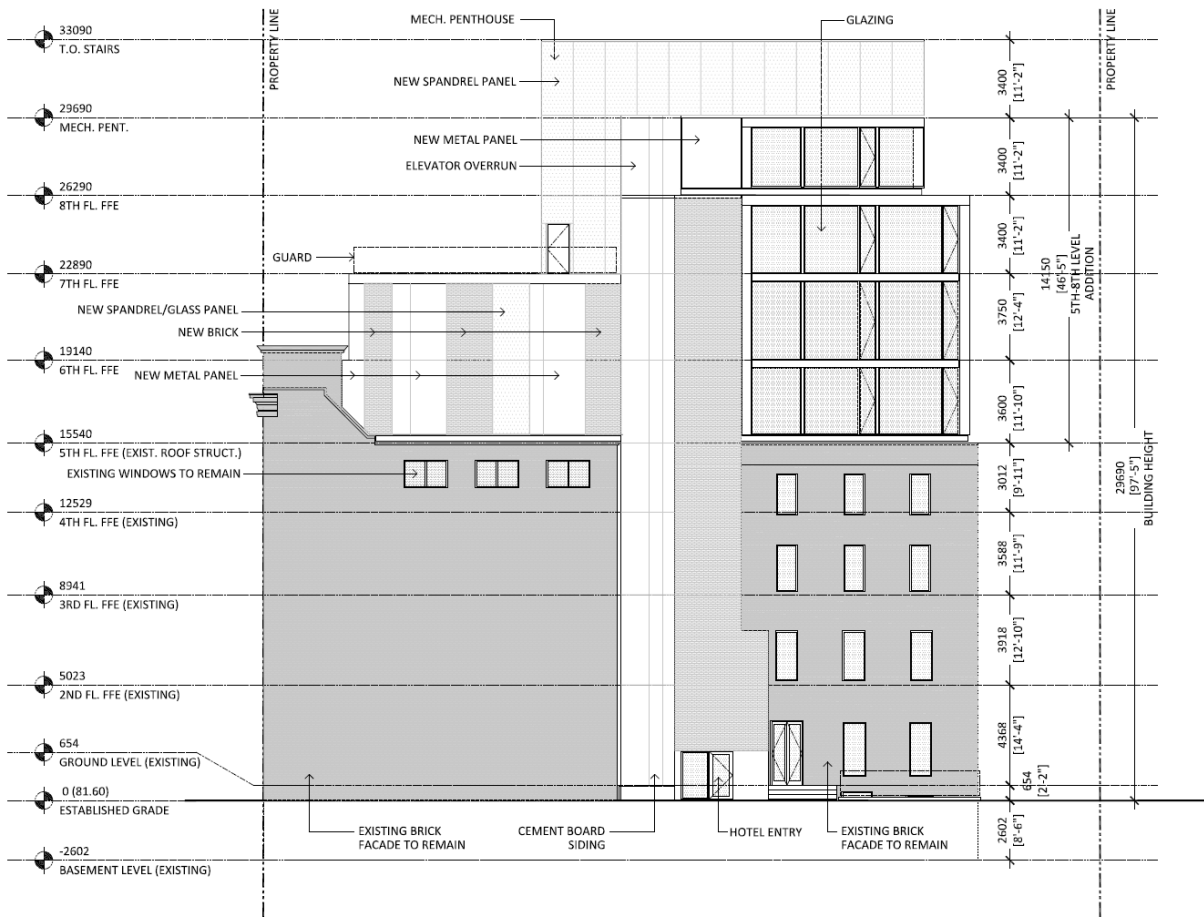
North elevation of the proposed development



East elevation of the proposed development

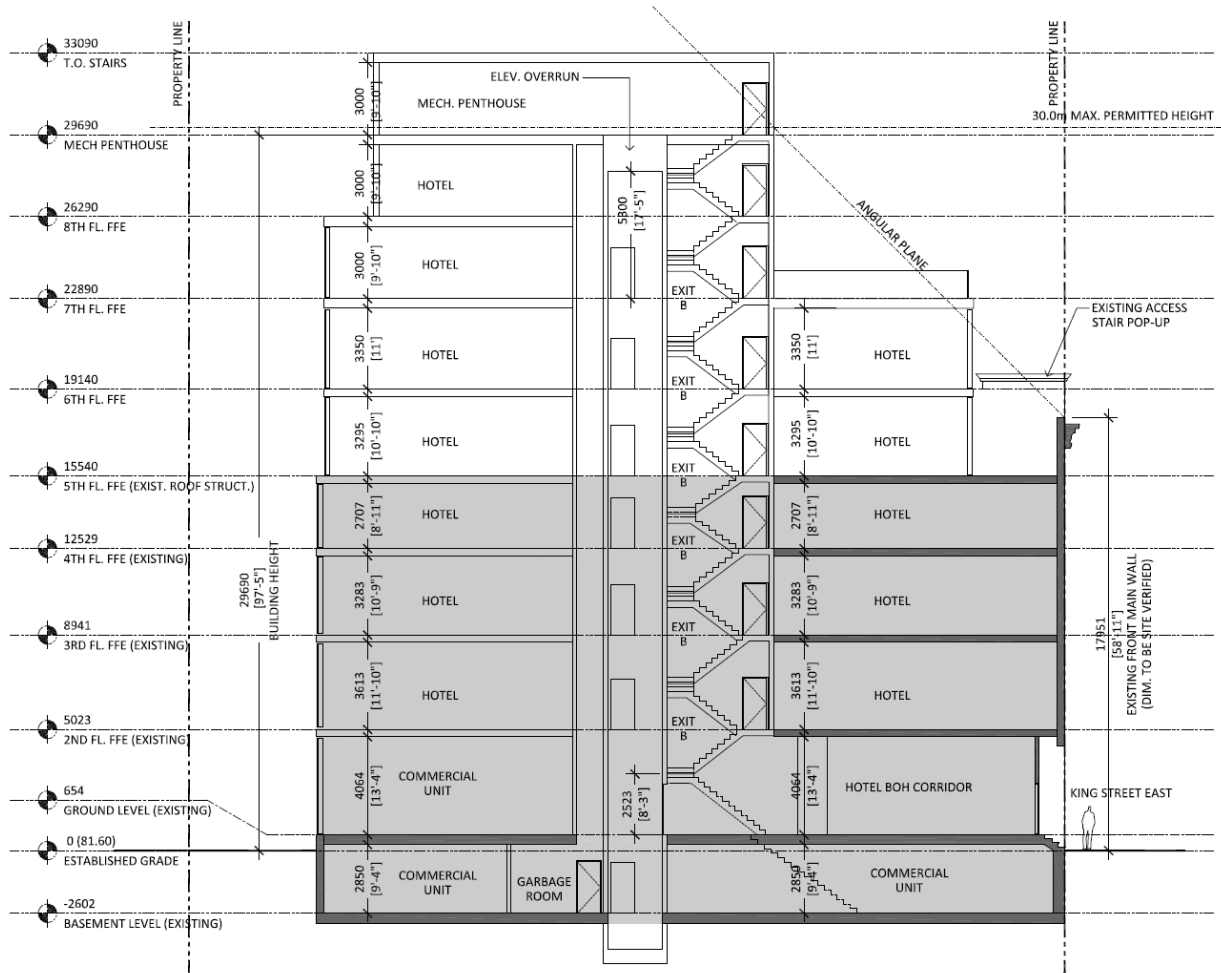


South elevation of the proposed development



West elevation of the proposed development





Section drawing showing the 45 degree angular plane from King Street East



Rendering of the proposed development



Rendering of the proposed development

## Nealon House

City of Toronto By-law 91-91 designating the property at 197 King Street East under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act is revised to update the cultural heritage values and attributes according to the 2005 amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The property containing the building known historically as the Nealon House meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation, under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

## Description

Located on the south side of the street between Frederick Street (east) and George Street (west), the property at 197 King Street East contains a four-storey commercial building that was constructed in 1888 as a hotel named the Nealon House after its owner, grocer James Nealon. Following Nealon's untimely death, the property was acquired in 1890 by Daniel and John Kennedy, who continued to operate the hotel. The property remained in continuous use as a hotel and a tavern for nearly a century.

The property at 197 King Street East was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1984 and designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1991 by By-law 91-91. The property is identified as a contributing heritage property in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District, which is under appeal in 2019.

## Statement of Significance

The property at 197 King Street East has cultural heritage value for its design as a well-crafted late-19th century commercial building with decorative detailing inspired by the most popular architectural styles of the late Victorian era. The Nealon House draws upon the Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival and Italianate styles in a design that is distinguished by the decorative stone and brickwork, oversized bay window, elaborate cornice and distinctive corner tower.

The Nealon House is valued for its association with the development, evolution and significance of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20th century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. Located within the original boundaries of the Town of York on the community's "Main Street" where it replaced an earlier hotel and store, the Nealon House remained in continuous service as a hotel and a tavern for nearly a century.

Contextually, the property at 197 King Street East supports and maintains the historical character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved in the 19th and 20th century from its origins as the Town of York to a mixed-use community highlighted by institutional landmarks that include St. James' Cathedral, St. Lawrence Hall and the St. James' Cathedral. The property is also a contributing heritage property in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District, which is under appeal in 2019.

Lawrence Market. The Nealon House is historically and visually linked to its setting within the original 10-block townsite established in 1793 and on Toronto's original "Main Street" where it is part of the important collection of surviving 19th century commercial buildings on King Street East that are recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. With its scale, vintage and decorative features, the Nealon House complements the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory (1874 with subsequent additions) at 200 King Street East, opposite, which was restored and adaptively reused as George Brown College's St. James Campus and designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Heritage Attributes

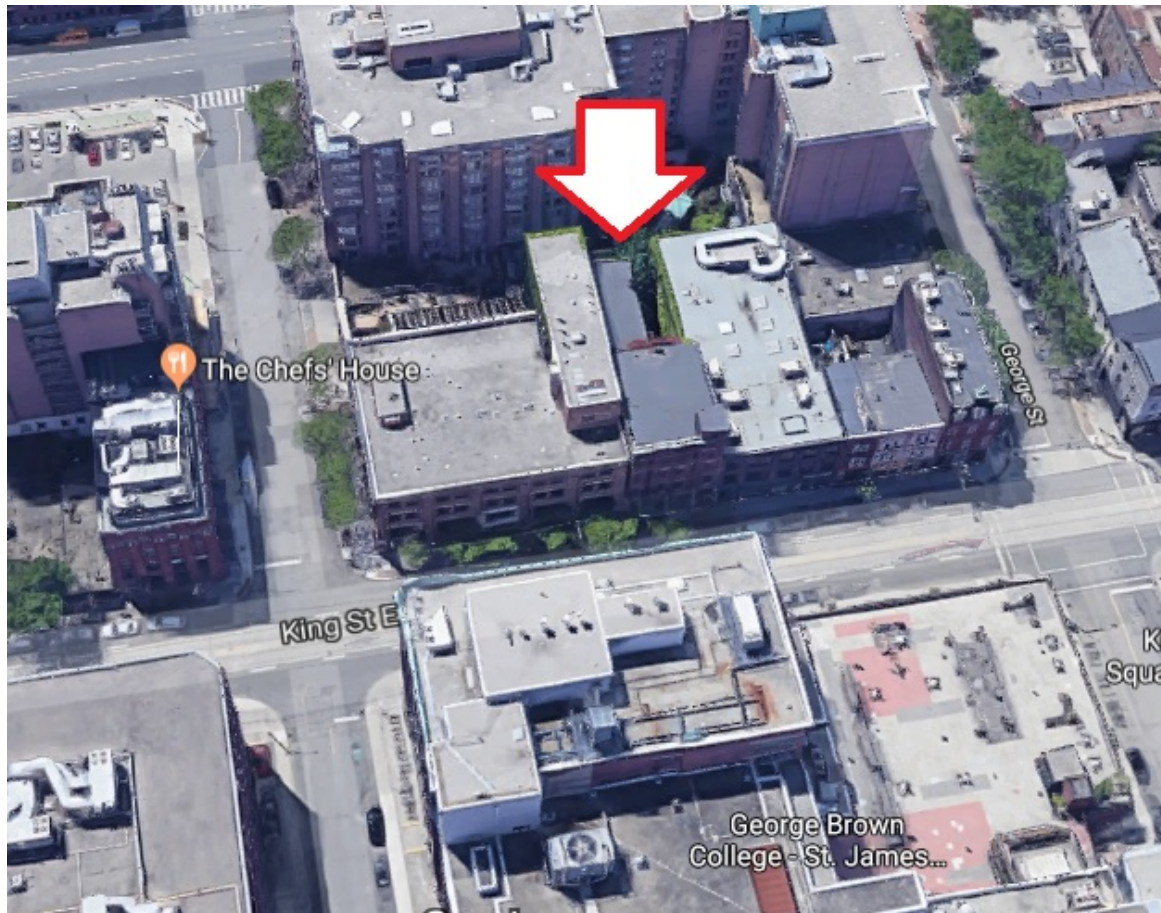
The heritage attributes of the Nealon House at 197 King Street East are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on the south side of King Street East between Frederick (east) and George (west) streets
- The scale, form and massing of the four-storey rectangular-shaped plan
- The brick cladding with the brick, stone, terra cotta, wood and metal detailing
- The roof, which is flat at the north end where the bracketed metal cornice marks the north end of the roof facing King Street East and the flat-roofed tower on the northwest corner has round-arched openings with decorative detailing (north and west) complementing the principal (north) elevation (the original lantern has been removed)
- The principal (north) elevation facing King Street East, which is organized into four bays by brick pilasters with brick and stone detailing (the pilasters have been altered in the first storey)
- On the north elevation, in the first (ground) storey, the main entrance, which is elevated in the second bay from the left (east) and contains a single wood door with glass inserts (the transom above the door and the adjoining storefront to the east and west have been altered), the secondary entrance in the left (east) bay with the wood door, and the open carriageway in the right (west) bay, which is flat-headed at the north end on King Street and round-arched at the south end
- In the upper three stories of the north elevation, the flat-headed window openings, including the oversized recessed bay window that extends across the centre two bays, with the stone lintels and sills, the round-arched tympana over the fourth-storey openings incorporating terra cotta detailing (excluding the opening in the left or east bay), the spandrels with the basketweave brickwork in the fourth storey, the panels with the corbelled and decorative brickwork beneath all of the window openings, and the terra cotta panel with the caricature above the window opening in the fourth storey, left or east bay (some of the openings contain original wood windows)
- On the rear (south) elevation, which is accessed through the carriageway, the round-arched window opening in the first storey (the east half of the south elevation is covered by the four-storey south wing)

The east and west side elevations are concealed by the neighbouring buildings, apart from the fourth storey with the remnants of painted signage. The rear (south) elevation of the main building (apart from the first-storey round-arched opening) and the west and

south elevations of the south wing have round-arched and flat-headed openings, some of which have been altered.





NEALON HOUSE  
19 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

December 2019

1. DESCRIPTION



Above: Nealon House in its context on the south side of King Street East, east of George Street (Heritage Preservation Services, 2019); cover: aerial photograph, which is oriented with north on the bottom [www.google.ca/maps](http://www.google.ca/maps))

197 King Street East: Nealon House	
ADDRESS	197 King Street East (south side between George and Frederick streets)
WARD	Ward 13 (Toronto Centre)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Town of York Plan, Part Lots 18 and 19
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
HISTORICAL NAME	Nealon House
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1888
ORIGINAL OWNER	James Nealon
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial
CURRENT USE*	Vacant * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	None found (building permit does not identify an architect or contractor)
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick and stone cladding with brick, stone, terra cotta, metal and wood detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	See Section 2
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design, Associative and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Designated under Part IV, Section 29, Ontario Heritage Act
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	December 2019

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 197 King Street East, and applies Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation following the 2005 amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1793	Following the establishment of the Town of York (Toronto), a ten-block townsite is established, with the west limit set at George Street
1802	Lots 18 and 19, located on the south side of King Street and surveyed under the Town of York Plan, are individually patented
1805	In separate transactions, Reverent George O’Kill Stuart acquires the latter lots
1817	Aitken’s Plan of York shows the subject site within the 10-block townsite (Image 2a)
1827	James Beaty (sic) acquires the east half of Lot 18 and all adjoining Lot 19, which remain in his family until 1888
1849	James Lesslie (sic) acquires the west half of Lot 18, which is shown as vacant on Cane’s map earlier that decade (Image 2b)
1858	Wooden buildings occupy the subject site according to Boulton’s Atlas (Image 2c)
1862	Thomas O’Connor operates a grocery store at “199” King Street East (according to land records, this property is leased from James Lesslie)
1878	Over a decade later, Thomas O’Connor operates a hotel and a wine and spirits business on the subject property
1880	Goad’s Atlas illustrates the subject property (Image 2c)
1887	O’Connor’s business is shown in an archival photograph (Image 3c)
1887 Apr	Lesslie sells his property to James Nealon, former hotel keeper and current grocer; when the assessment rolls are compiled, O’Connor is Nealon’s tenant in a two-storey frame building
1888 Mar	Nealon purchases the adjoining allotment from Catherine Beaty and receives building permit #38 for a hotel valued at \$12,000 (Image 3d)
1888 Mar and Aug	Nealon mortgages his assembled Lots 18 and 19 for a total of \$12,700, evidently financing his new building
1888	The tax assessment rolls record an “unfinished building” on Nealon’s property
1889	Nealon’s three-storey brick hotel is recorded in the tax assessment rolls and illustrated on the update to Goad’s Atlas (Image 2d)
1890	Following Nealon’s death at age 40, his executors (including Thomas O’Connor) sell the property to Daniel and John Kennedy, who continue to operate the hotel
1906	The Nealon House is shown in an archival photograph with painted signage on the exposed east side elevation (Image 3e)



1943 and 1964	Known as the Riviera Hotel, the subject building is illustrated on the updates to the Underwriters' Survey Bureau atlases (Images 3a-3b)
1972-1973	The subject property, occupied by a tavern and residential hotel, is shown in archival photographs (Images 4a and 4b)
1984	The property at 197 King Street East is listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register); an archival photograph from 1983 shows the Nealon House (Image 3c)
1991	The property is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; a photograph from the era shows the building (Image 3d)
2012	City Council prioritizes the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood for study as a potential Heritage Conservation District (HCD) under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act
2015	The St. Lawrence HCD Plan identifies the subject property at 197 King Street East as contributing to the district <sup>1</sup>

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The property at 197 King Street East is in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where the Town of York was established in 1793. A ten-block townsite was laid out on the north shore of Lake Ontario between George and Berkeley streets, with the areas to the west and east reserved for military and government uses, respectively. With the rapid growth of the community, in 1797 a plan for its enlargement set aside large blocks adjoining King Street East for a church, school, market, hospital, jail and courthouse. Although many of these institutional sectors were not developed exactly as envisioned, King remained the “Main Street” for the town and, following its incorporation in 1834, the City of Toronto. With the area partially rebuilt following the Great Fire of 1849, by the close of the 19th century King Street was described as “having the most brilliant and long-extended series of first-class stores of which Toronto can boast, her Palais Royal, her Regent Street.”<sup>2</sup> However, the opening of the city’s inaugural “department stores” by Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson on Yonge Street diverted commercial traffic away from the King Street corridor, a situation that was not reversed with the unveiling of the upscale King Edward Hotel (the first phase of which opened in 1903). By the mid-20th century, the area now known as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood remained a largely commercial and industrial district. The City of Toronto’s restoration of St. Lawrence Hall and the revitalization of the St. Lawrence Market (incorporating the municipality’s second City Hall) in the 1960s were complimented by the conversion of many of the surviving warehouses and stores for restaurants, offices and shops as part of the renaissance of the area. As the location of the original Town of York, as well as city-wide landmarks that include St. James Cathedral and the Flat Iron Building, the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood was authorized for study as a potential Heritage Conservation District (HCD) in 2005, a process that was prioritized in 2012. The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood HCD Plan identified 197 King Street East as a contributing heritage property.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of the writing of this report, the proposed HCD is under appeal and not in effect

<sup>2</sup> Dendy, 95

## 197 King Street East

The development of the property at 197 King Street East is traced in the timeline (Section 1) and illustrated on the historical maps and atlases (Section 6) found in this report. The subject property occupies parts of two adjoining lots that were surveyed under the Town of York Plan in 1797 and patented in 1802. By 1827, James Beatty assembled the east half of Lot 18 and all of Lot 19, which were retained by his family until the 1880s. A modest wood building occupied the site when Cane's map was published in 1842, while the west part of Lot 18 stood vacant. By the end of the decade (1849), James Lesslie (sic) purchased the latter allotment and developed it prior to the publication of Boulton's Atlas in 1858.

By the 1860s, James Lesslie's property was identified as 199 King Street where Thomas O'Connor operated a grocery business. O'Connor remained the tenant in the 1870s as the proprietor of a hotel and a wine and spirits business. In 1887, the site was captured in a photograph showing the modest two-storey wood building with O'Connor's signage (Image 3c). During the same year, James Nealon, a former hotel keeper and a grocer, purchased Lesslie's allotment and acquired the adjoining property from James Beatty's descendants in 1888. Nealon commissioned the subject building, which was in operation in 1889. Following Nealon's untimely death in 1890, his executors (including Thomas O'Connor) sold the property to Daniel and John Kennedy, who continued to operate the hotel. The Nealon House remained in continuous use as a hotel and tavern for nearly a century.

The property at 197 King Street East was included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Inventory (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1984 and designated under Part IV, Section 20 of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1991 by By-law 91-91. This Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report accompanies a recommendation to amend the by-law to update the cultural heritage values and heritage attributes following the evaluation of the property according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation following the amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2005.

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Current photographs of the property at 197 King Street East are found on the cover and in Sections 2 and 6 of this report. The Nealon House is designed with features of the most popular architectural styles of the late Victorian era, including the Romanesque Revival with its distinctive round-arched motif and the Renaissance Revival referenced in the symmetrical organization of the principal (north) elevation on King Street and the decorative embellishments. The design is particularly distinguished by the tower at the northwest corner of the roof, which repeats detailing from the north elevation, as well as the robust metal cornice that surmounts the upper storey with its corbelled brickwork and terra cotta detailing that incorporates a caricature in the east bay.

Rising four stories with a rectangular-shaped plan, the Nealon House is clad with red brick and trimmed with brick, stone, terra cotta, metal and wood. The roof, which is flat at the north end has a flat-roofed tower at the northwest corner. The lantern crowning the tower was removed, but is shown in archival images (including Image 3f, attached).

The principal (north) elevation facing King Street East is organized into four bays by brick pilasters with brick and stone detailing (the pilasters have been altered in the first storey). In the first (ground) floor, the main entrance is elevated in the second bay from the left (east) and contains a single wood door with glass inserts (the transom above the door and the adjoining store front to the east and west have been altered). A secondary entrance with a wood door is placed in the left (east) bay, while the right (west) bay incorporates an open carriageway that is flat-headed at the north end on King Street and round-arched at the south end where it provides access to the south end of the property.

On the north elevation, the upper three stories have flat-headed window openings, including the oversized recessed bay window that extends across the centre two bays and has stone lintels and sills. The fourth-storey openings have round-arched tympana incorporating terra cotta detailing and spandrels with basketweave brickwork, apart from the opening in the left or east bay that is surmounted by a terra cotta caricature. All the window openings have panels beneath the sills with corbelled and decorative brickwork, and many of the openings contain original wood windows.

The rear (south) elevation features a round-arched window opening in the first storey that complements the adjoining carriageway. The remainder of the elevation and the four-storey brick-clad south wing, which covers half of the south wall of the main building, display flat-headed window openings. The east and west side elevations are concealed by the neighbouring buildings. However, throughout most of the 20th century, the east elevation of the Nealon House was exposed, as shown in archival photographs that include those attached as Images 3e and 3f.

#### iv. CONTEXT

The property at 197 King Street East is shown on the attached location map (Image 1). It is located on the south side of the street between Frederick Street (east) and George Street. At the west end of this block, the Little York Inn (1880) at 187 King Street East is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. To the north, the Nealon House faces the complex of buildings constructed between 1874 and 1914 for the Christie, Brown and Company's biscuit business that was adapted for the St. James Campus of George Brown College (identified as 200 King Street East, the latter property is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act).

With its location in the original 10-block townsite comprising the Town of York and as part of the extended St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, the Nealon House among the important collection of heritage properties that range from city-wide landmarks, such as St. James' Cathedral, to individual buildings that reflect the evolution of the community.

### 3. EVALUATION

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the

City of Toronto's Heritage Register. The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	X
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

The property at 197 King Street East has cultural heritage value for its design as a well-crafted late-19th century commercial building with decorative detailing inspired by the most popular architectural styles of the late Victorian era. The Nealon House draws upon the Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival and Italianate styles in a design that is distinguished by the decorative stone and brickwork, oversized bay window, elaborate cornice and distinctive corner tower.

Historical or Associative Value	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	N/A
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	X
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

The Nealon House is valued for its association with the development, evolution and significance of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood as it evolved from its origins as "Old Town," survived the Great Fire of 1849 as the commercial and institutional heart of Toronto, and withstood the economic downturn of the area in the 20th century before it was revitalized in the 1960s. Located within the original boundaries of the Town of York on the community's "Main Street" where it replaced an earlier hotel and store, the Nealon House remained in continuous service as a hotel and a tavern for nearly a century.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	X
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	X
iii. landmark	N/A

Contextually, the property at 197 King Street East supports and maintains the historical character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as it evolved in the 19th and 20th century from its origins as the Town of York to a mixed-use community highlighted by institutional landmarks that include St. James' Cathedral, St. Lawrence Hall and the St. Lawrence Market. The Nealon House is historically and visually linked to its setting within the original 10-block townsite established in 1793 and on Toronto's original "Main Street" where it is part of the important collection of surviving 19th century commercial buildings on King Street East that are recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. With its scale, vintage and decorative features, the Nealon House complements the Christie, Brown and Company Biscuit Factory (1874 with subsequent additions) at 200 King Street East, opposite, which was restored and adaptively reused

as George Brown College's St. James Campus and designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 197 King Street East has cultural heritage value for its design, historical associations and context. Located on the south side of the street between George and Frederick streets, the Nealon House (1888) is a well-designed example of a purpose-built hotel with decorative elements from the popular styles of the late Victorian era, including the Romanesque Revival. The property contributes contextually to the character of King Street East in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood where it is historically, visually and physically linked to its setting on an important "main street" and within the 10-block townsite that comprised the original Town of York.

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources:

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Town of York Plan, South Side of King Street, Lots 18 and 19

Archival Maps and Atlases, <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com/p/index-of-maps.html>

Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Public Library (individual citations in Section 6)

Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Lawrence Ward, 1887-1890

Building Permit 38, March 5, 1888, City of Toronto Archives

Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York

City of Toronto Directories, 1837 ff.

Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlases, 1921 revised to 1943, and 1954 revised to 1964

##### Secondary Sources:

Arthur, Eric, Toronto: No Mean City, 3rd ed., revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986

Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990

Guillet, Edwin C., Pioneer Inns and Taverns, Vol. 1, 1954

Maitland, Leslie, Jacqueline Hucker and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, 1992

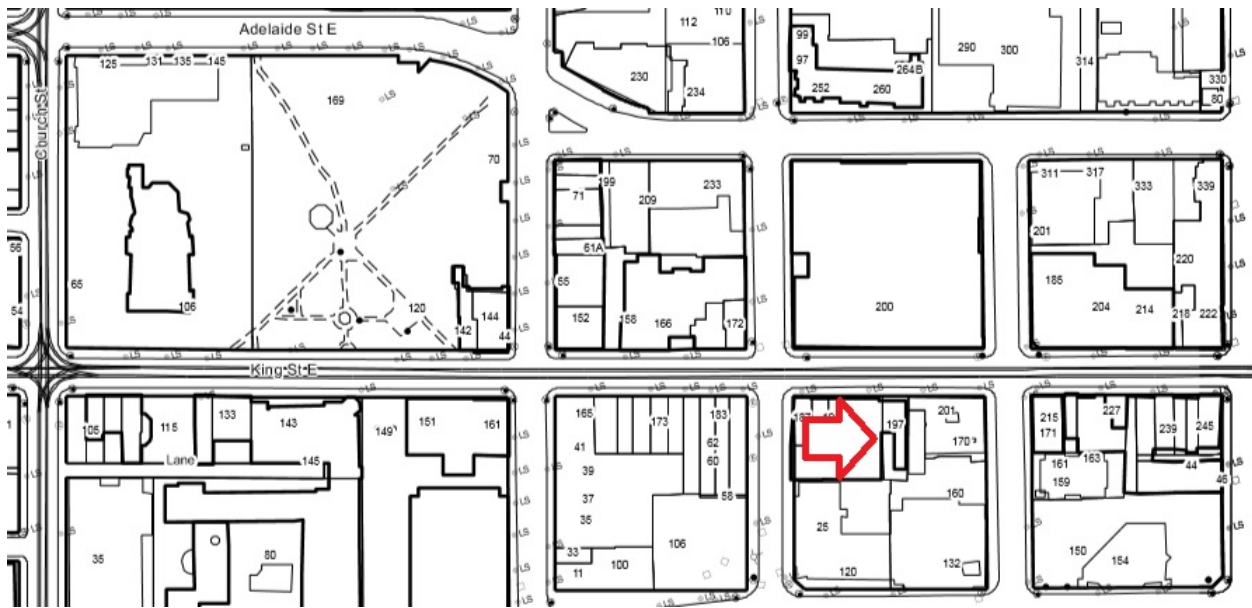
McHugh, Patricia, and Alex Bozikovic, Toronto Architecture: A City Guide, revised ed., 2017

Nealon Family Records, [www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca)

Pevsner, Nikolaus, A History of Building Types, 1976

Scadding, Henry, Toronto of Old, 1873, reprint 1966

6. IMAGES – maps and atlases are followed by other archival images and current photographs. The arrows mark the location of the subject property. All images are oriented with north on the top unless indicated in the captions.



1. Location Map, 197 King Street East (City of Toronto Property Data Map).

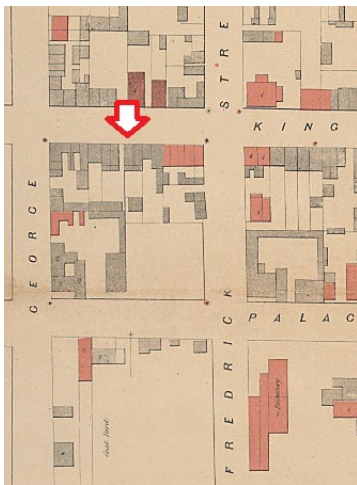




2a. 1817, Phillpotts's Plan



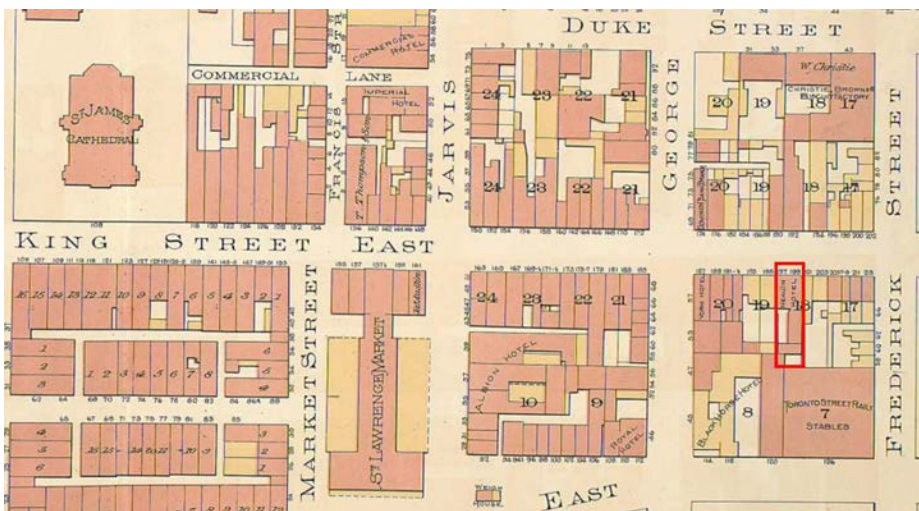
2b. 1842, Cane's Map



2c. 1858, Boulton's Atlas



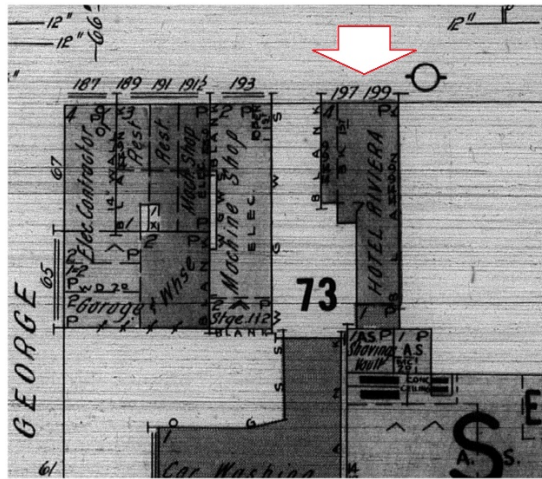
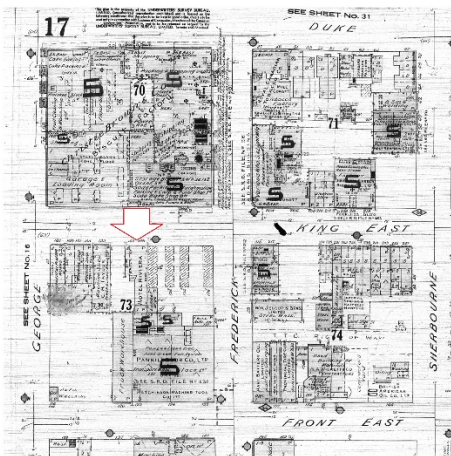
2d. 1880, Goad's Atlas



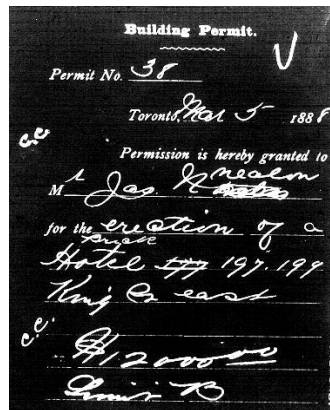
2e. 1889, Goad's Atlas

2. Archival Plan, Maps and Atlases: <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.com/p/index-of-maps.html>

By-Law Amendment, Alterations and HEA - 197 King St E



3a. and 3b. Underwriters' Survey Bureau Atlases, 1921 revised to 1943 (left) and 1954 revised to 1964 (right)



3c. 197 King Street East, 1887

3d. Building Permit #38, 1888



3e. and 3f. Nealon House, 1906 (left) and 1920-1926 (right)

3. Archival Images: City of Toronto Archives, 1888 (microfilm), 1906 (Fonds 1488, Item 93), 1920-1926 (Fonds 1488, Item 2400), 1943 and 1964 (microfilm), and Toronto Public Library, 1887, Item 2714.





4a. 197 King Street East, 1972



4b.-4d. 1973 (left), 1983 (centre) and 1990 (right)

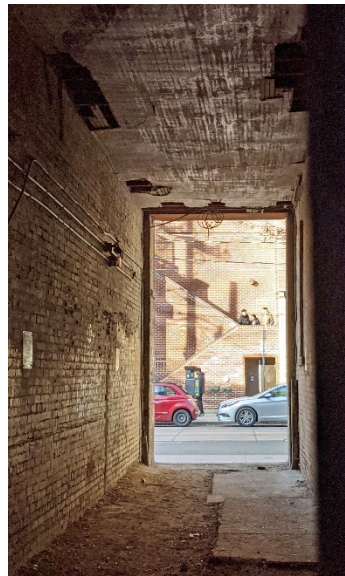
4. Archival Images: City of Toronto Archives, 1972 (Fonds 2032, Item 10) and 1973, 1983 and 1990 (Fonds 2032, Series 2523).



5a.



5b. Principal (north) Elevation



5c. Carriageway looking north to King Street East

5. Current Photographs, 2019: 5a ([https://www.acotoronto.ca/show\\_building.php?BuildingID=2896](https://www.acotoronto.ca/show_building.php?BuildingID=2896)) and 5b-5c (Heritage Preservation Services).

No. 91-91. A BY-LAW

*To designate the property at 197 King Street East  
(Nealon House) of architectural value or interest.*

(Passed February 4, 1991.)

Whereas by Clause 8 of Neighbourhoods Committee Report No. 2, Executive Committee Report No. 3, adopted by Council at its meeting held on February 4, 1991, authority was granted to designate the property at 197 King Street East (Nealon House) of architectural value or interest; and

Whereas the Ontario Heritage Act authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historic or architectural value or interest; and

Whereas the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the lands and premises known as 197 King Street East (Nealon House) and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks; and

Whereas the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" hereto; and

Whereas no notice of objection to the said proposed designation has been served upon the clerk of the municipality;

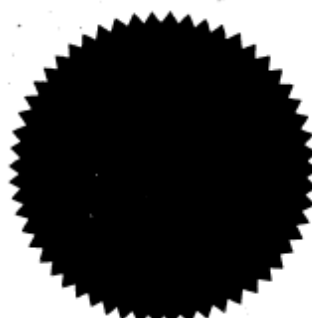
Therefore the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of architectural value or interest the real property more particularly described and shown on Schedules "A" and "C" hereto, known as 197 King Street East (Nealon House).
2. The City Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" hereto in the proper land registry office.
3. The City Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owner of the aforesaid property and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto.

  
ARTHUR C. EGGLETON,  
Mayor

  
SYDNEY K. BAXTER  
Deputy City Clerk

Council Chamber,  
Toronto, February 4, 1991.  
(L.S.)





## SCHEDULE "A"

In the City of Toronto, in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of parts of Town Lots 18 and 19 on the south side of King Street, now King Street East, according to the Town of York Plan registered in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto (No. 63), the boundaries of the said land being described as follows:

PREMISING that the southerly limit of King Street East has a bearing of North 74 degrees and 00 minutes East and relating all bearings herein, thereto, then;

COMMENCING at a point in the southerly limit of King Street East where it is intersected by the easterly face of the easterly wall of an old brick building standing in 1962 upon the herein described land, the said point being distant 33.11 metres more or less measured westerly thereon from the westerly limit of Frederick Street;

THENCE South 74 degrees and 00 minutes West along the said southerly limit of King Street East, 10.81 metres more or less to a point distant 38.61 metres measured easterly thereon from the easterly limit of George Street, and being also distant 17.98 metres measured easterly thereon from the westerly limit of said Town Lot 19;

THENCE South 16 degrees 14 minutes and 50 seconds East parallel to the westerly limit of said Town Lot 19, a distance of 31.36 metres to the site of the north face of the former brick building standing in 1926 on the herein described land;

THENCE South 73 degrees 45 minutes and 10 seconds West, being along the site of the north face of the said old brick building, 0.13 metres to the westerly face of said old brick building;

THENCE South 16 degrees 14 minutes and 30 seconds East along the westerly face of the said old brick building, 4.85 metres to the site of the south face of a former brick building;

THENCE North 75 degrees 56 minutes and 20 seconds East, along the site of the south face of said former brick building, to and along the northerly face of a brick building standing in 1962 upon the land immediately adjacent to the south, 10.67 metres to the southerly production of the easterly face of the easterly wall of the said old brick building standing on the herein described land, said production being the site of the easterly face of an old brick building;

THENCE North 15 degrees 46 minutes and 30 seconds West, to and along the easterly face of the easterly wall of said old brick building, 36.55 metres more or less to the point of commencement.

The southerly limit of King Street East as confirmed under the Boundaries Act by Plan BA-862 registered on June 21, 1976, as Instrument CT182065.

SCHEDULE "B"

The property at 197 King Street East is designated on architectural grounds. The Nealon House was constructed in 1888 as a hotel for James Nealon which replaced an earlier hotel and store on the same site. The four-storey brick building displays stone detailing and decorative features identified with the Romanesque Revival style.

The Nealon House is organized into six bays, with an asymmetrical compression of the first (left) bay. The verticality of the tall, narrow facade is emphasized by incised pilaster strips extending through four stories and decorated with rondelles and corbels. Above the first floor with its large commercial openings and carriageway, the four centre bays form a broad recessed three-storey bay window. Panels with geometrical and floral detailing are introduced above the rectangular openings in the lower three stories. In the fourth floor, the rectangular window in the left bay has a carved caricature above the lintel, while the remaining openings display corbelled round arches. The tympanums contain floral motifs, and the spandrels are decorated in a basketweave pattern. The bracketed roof is defined by a metal cornice which projects in three sections. A square tower rises above the northwest corner of the principal roof. The Nealon House is separated by a narrow passageway from its neighbour to the east, and is attached to a low-scale structure on the west.

The Nealon House is located on the south side of King Street East between George and Frederick Streets in the commercial centre of the Old Town of York. The building, with its rich detailing and mixture of materials, reflects the prosperity of the late Victorian era and is a landmark in the street.