

# AN OPINION LETTER & SCOPED HIA 290 City Centre Avenue, Ottawa

---



2012 View Source: West Side Action

---

**Revised, February 2024**

**Prepared for: District Realty Management Limited  
Prepared By: John Stewart Commonwealth Historic Resource Management**





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	Introduction.....	4
1.2	Contact .....	5
1.3	Context - Site Location and Current Conditions.....	6
1.4	Site Character .....	6
1.5	Landscape Features:.....	6
1.6	Architectural Character .....	7
2.0	SITE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY.....	10
2.1	History .....	10
3.0	PERTINENT DOCUMENTS AND PLANS.....	12
3.1	City of Ottawa Official Plan .....	12
3.2	Bayview Station District Community Design Plan, 2013 .....	12
3.3	West Downtown Core Secondary Plan .....	13
3.4	Environmental Issues .....	14
3.5	Structural Issues .....	15
4.0	CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE/INTEREST.....	15
4.1	The property evaluation.....	15
5.0	SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS .....	17
5.1	Observations .....	17
5.2	Conclusions.....	18
APPENDIX A:	ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS .....	19
APPENDIX B:	STRUCTURAL REVIEW OF 290 CITY CENTRE AVE.....	21
APPENDIX C	DRAFT STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE for 290 CITY CENTRE AVENUE.....	23

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

---

## 1.1 Introduction

On January 24, 2024, the City issued a Notice of Intention to Designate 290 City Centre Avenue under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA).

This scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) response to the City of Ottawa's Notice of Intention. The building, completed in 1925, served as the local sales and administration headquarters to the sprawling lumberyard, woodworking shops and planing mills operated by W.C. Edwards Company at City Centre until 1962. The building was then vacant until 2014 when it was leased to the Orange Art Gallery. The lease terminated on December 31, 2023.

An active groundwater remediation program at the 250/270/290 City Centre property has been underway since 2010. Cleland Jardine Structural Engineers and Arcadis Canada Inc. have been retained to review options and provide direction on the most practical and best ways to complete the remediation program. They recommend demolition or temporary relocation (lifting the building off its foundations and moving it.) Appendix A and B include the full discussion of their recommendations.

The stated reasons for this approach include:

- Since 2010, Arcadis Canada Inc. has carried out a program of bioremediation to address dry-cleaning solvents in groundwater associated with the former Browns Cleaners facility at the 270 City Centre property, which was demolished. The demolition of the dry-cleaner's facility provided unobstructed access below the building and allowed for a full cleanup.
- It was determined that the prevailing direction of groundwater flow is inferred to be towards the east, with a slight component towards the southeast, i.e., from the source area of the former dry-cleaning facility towards the 290 City Centre Ave. building. Ongoing monitoring has determined that groundwater contaminant levels remain elevated at monitoring well MW2105, located approximately 5m. to the west of the subject building.
- The presence and use of the 290 City Centre Ave. building has prohibited direct groundwater testing, installation of injection wells and injection of bio-remediation product below the building footprint.
- Environmental remediation of the site may require excavation around the perimeter of the building to facilitate the removal of contaminated soils.
- The structural condition of the cast-in-place concrete foundation and brick cladding is fair to good. The exterior brick walls and brickwork are in good/sound condition, except for portions of the walls along the north-east corner of the building where the footings have settled. Step cracking in the brick walls and concrete foundation is evident at the two most northerly windows on the

east elevation and above the basement access door on the north elevation. All of which suggest that the building could be lifted. The cost is a factor that will escalate with designation.

The Arcadis Canada Inc. report concludes with the following statement:

*“It is important for the remediation program to continue and engage in direct groundwater testing and remediation below the building footprint of 290 City Centre Ave. This will require unhindered access to the area in the vicinity of MW2105 and underneath the 290 City Centre Ave. building itself to complete a more thorough and expansive injection of bioremediation product. Until remediation is complete, every snow melt and rain event could affect the location and extent of CVOC contamination.”*

Accompanying the environmental assessment, a structural report prepared by Cleland Jardine concludes:

*“As noted, it is our understanding that a major site remediation is planned to address environmental contamination. While the extent and depth of excavation will not be known until the project commences, the work will require that the entire structure be temporarily supported. Based on our site observations, it is our opinion that extensive repairs and/or replacement of the foundation walls and lower sections of brick cladding will be necessary in order to accommodate any temporary shoring system. It is anticipated that the value of this repair work will be slightly less than \$1m cost, and it is our opinion that demolition of the structure will therefore likely be required to accommodate any major site remediation.”*

The following documents were reviewed in the preparation of this report:

- Letter of Intent Re: Designation of 290 City Centre Avenue under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. September 7, 2023. City of Ottawa Heritage Planning Branch;
- Draft Statement of Cultural Heritage Value, 290 City Centre. City of Ottawa Heritage Planning Branch;
- 290 City Centre Avenue – Structural Review. Cleland Jardine Engineering Ltd. Reference Number: 23-1342. December 20, 2023;
- Letter Dated 24 November 2023 Subject: 290 City Centre building; Building demolition review - Arcadis Canada Inc. T. Austrins, P. Eng. Project Engineer;
- Bayview Station District Community Design Plan, May 2013, MMM Group and the City of Ottawa; and,
- West Downtown Core Area, Secondary Plan, Chapter 2A, Bayview Station District – Area A. New Official Plan, City of Ottawa.
- David Jeanes (Heritage Ottawa) in a 2015 comment to an article (Somerset Street Viaduct in History) appearing in the West Side Action blog, suggests that John Pritchard MacLaren was responsible for the design

## **1.2 Contact**

**District Realty Management Inc.**

50 Bayswater Avenue

Ottawa, ON K1Y 2E9

**Attention: Mr. Michael Morin**

### 1.3 Context - Site Location and Current Conditions

The property at 290 City Centre Avenue is located in the Bayview neighbourhood in the block bound by City Centre Avenue (east), Somerset Street West Bridge (south), the Trillium Line (west) and Wellington Street (north). The building is located at the southeast corner of the City Centre site (250 City Centre Avenue) that was redeveloped in 1962-63. Historically, the original address was 991 Somerset Avenue, later it was Champagne Avenue, and today it is 290 City Centre Avenue. The building is the last structure remaining on the City Centre site that dates to the period when W. C. Edwards Co. operated a wholesale lumber, planing, and milling operation. The building was purpose-built as a sales and administrative office from 1925 through to 1962 when the site was sold and redeveloped.



Figure 1: Block diagram of the City Centre site, with the building at 290 City Centre Avenue located at the southeast corner of the larger site identified as 250 City Centre Avenue (Arrowed). Source: Geoottawa.

### 1.4 Site Character

The building is set adjacent to the property line extending along City Centre Avenue and approximately 30m (100') from the property line extending along the Somerset Street Bridge. The main entrance to the building fronts onto the Somerset Street West bridge. The building is obscured from views from automobile traffic on the raised bridge. City Centre Avenue extends under the Somerset Street bridge, although blocked to traffic with jersey barriers. The building is visible to pedestrians and cyclists using the north side of the bridge, as well as from the underpass that is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.

### 1.5 Landscape Features:

Landscape features are limited to a grassed edge extending along City Centre Avenue and wrapping around the south elevation at the main entrance, and a strip of grass extending west along a portion of the north elevation to form an edge to the west side parking area. The north edge of the site is defined



by a raised curb with a tubular metal railing. A mature Manitoba Maple is located at the southeast corner of the building and a shrub/tree at the north-west corner. Around the building there has been a series of grade changes, with fill material and retaining walls added, most likely in association with the bridge construction. With construction of the Somerset bridge, access shifted west of the bridge with a service lane. (see Figure 10). The address shifted to Champagne Street and with changes to the street names, it became 290 City Centre Avenue.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the City Centre site and surrounding context. 290 City Centre Avenue arrowed. Source: Geotowna 2022



Figure 3: View looking north-west of the principal façades - south and east elevations illustrating the landscape character surrounding the building. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.

## 1.6 Architectural Character

There is no evidence as to who may have designed or built the building. A review of the BDCA database using the architects listed in the 1923 Might Business Directory produced no results. The architectural design - quality of the materials and their arrangement – suggests a professional or competent builder or both were involved in its design and construction. The quality of the architectural character is reinforced by the integrity of the milled wood window and door assemblies that were supplied by the sash and door millworks on the site. The building is a one-and-a-half storey brick structure set on a cast-in-place concrete foundation with wood floor (assumed) and roof structures. The rectangular plan measures approximately 14.6m (48') by 21m (68') (Geotowa). A small basement access enclosure at the main entrance and a small shed roofed structure located on the west elevation are outside the building footprint. The building completed in 1925 (1928 Aerial Geotowa Figure 10) would appear to have been designed to be fireproof, being set adjacent to a lumber and milling operation with stacked lumber piles. The roof (either slate or a composite material) is not original. Within the building, asbestos containing materials would be expected. A more detailed evaluation will be required to confirm these assumptions.

The exterior walls are brick construction, either 2 or 3 wythes of brick set up in a Common American Bond with a header course every six courses with flush mortar joints. Decorative brick detailing includes rusticated brick quoins at the external corners, rusticated brick walls below the level of the first floor string course and above the concrete foundation walls, and gauged brick arches above windows and doors. Decorative detailing includes architectural pre-cast stone string course at the first floor with decorative architectural pre-cast stone windowsills with keystones, semicircular door heads, and knee wall cap stones flanking the entrance steps. Due to elevation changes of the exterior grade, the brick cladding on the front and side walls is partially below grade.

The moderately pitched hipped roof is clad in slate, with exposed eaves and rafter tails. A hipped roofed dormer is located centrally on the north elevation. The entrance features a curvilinear brick Dutch gable pediment extending above the roof level, with architectural pre-cast stone caps. The entrance door features a semicircular transom with flanking sidelights. A small flat roofed brick basement access enclosure is set to the east of the entrance steps and features a semicircular architectural pre-cast stone lintel. The only alteration evident are a modern wood deck supported on wood piers set on sono-tube footings extending from the entrance steps on the south elevation and wrapping around the west elevation, and a window in the brick bump out on the west elevation has been bricked-in.



Figure 4: View of the principal façade / south elevation. The set of steps and wood deck to the left of the entrance steps were introduced within the last 10 years as part of an art gallery and event space. Source: Commonwealth; December 2023





Figure 5: View looking north-east to the south and west elevations. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.



Figure 6: View of the west elevation. The architectural pre-cast stone string course and rusticated brick finish below extends to the small brick basement bump out. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.



Figure 7: View looking southeast to the west and north façades. The retaining wall and tubular metal railing would appear to date to the early 1960s site development. Note the grassed area. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.



Figure 8: View of the north façade. Note the step cracking in the brickwork above the window at the north-east corner above the basement entrance. Note the grassed edge and tree. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.



Figure 9: View of the east elevation. Note: The deflection/settlement in the string course extending from the second window from the right to the north-east corner (right corner). Stepped cracking is evident in the foundation, extending up to the windowsills through to the roof. The gauged brick forming the header above one window is missing, and brickwork at the north-east corner is displaced below the roof. Source: Commonwealth, December 2023.

## 2.0 SITE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

---

### 2.1 History



The history of the site is outlined in the SCHV. The following aerial views and fire insurance plans provide a sense of the physical development of the City Centre site during the period when the W. C. Edwards Company operated a wholesale lumber and planing mill business on the site through to 1920-22 and subsequently under different ownership through to 1962. In 1962, the site was subdivided and a 6 acre parcel on the west side was sold, and the present City Centre building completed in 1964. Fire Insurance maps from 1901 document the earliest bridge. Over time, the bridge was extended, and the iron superstructure replaced with reinforced concrete. The Somerset Street Bridge was completed circa 1959.

Figure 10: 1928 aerial view of the W. C. Edwards Co. lumberyard. The building fronted on to Somerset Street, with



the original address of 991 Somerset Avenue. By 1928, the Somerset bridge blocked direct access from Somerset, with the entrance coming off a laneway that connected with City Centre Avenue. (arrowed). Note the piled lumber surrounding the building at 290 City Centre Avenue, formally 128 Champagne Avenue (Arrowed). The planing mill is to the west, Source: Geottawa

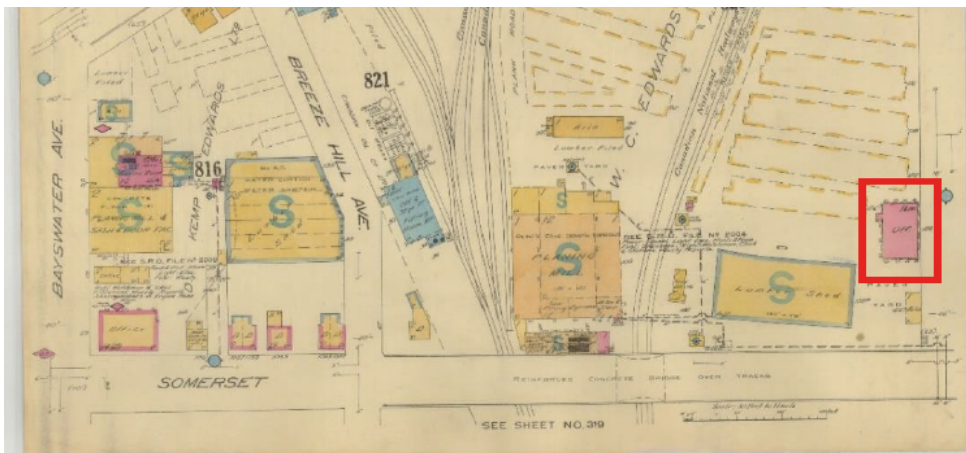


Figure 11: A portion of the 1948 Fire Insurance Plan, with company office highlighted in red. The pink tone indicates a brick building. The former CPR tracks, and Champagne Street (now City Centre Avenue).



Figure 12: 1965 aerial view of the City Centre site after the site was redeveloped in 1963-64. The Somerset Bridge was completed in 1959. Source: Geottawa.

## 3.0 PERTINENT DOCUMENTS AND PLANS

---

### 3.1 City of Ottawa Official Plan

In 1925, the building at 290 City Centre was constructed as the W.C. Edwards Co. sales and administration office (also referred to as a bank and in later years as a workshop) where business was conducted until 1962. The Freedman Brothers purchased the property and W.C. Edwards shifted operations to Davidson, Quebec. Development Plans for the 'City Centre Terminal' were developed by the brothers, which were never fully realized. The Ottawa Official Plan, the Bayview District Community Plan and the Bayview Station District Plan set out a block design and outline, which references the building as part of future development.

### 3.2 Bayview Station District Community Design Plan, 2013

The Bayview Station District Community Design Plan provides the overall design direction, and the West Downtown Core Area Secondary Plan Area (WDCASP) provides the legal basis for the implementation of the direction provided in BSDCDP. The building located at 290 City Centre Avenue is referenced in both planning documents, excerpts follow.

Section 2.1.8 Historical Evolution notes: Two properties near the City Centre lands are not designated but still notable: 255 City Centre Avenue, recently converted to a self-storage warehouse, is the last surviving

streetcar barn from the Ottawa Electric Railway and dates from 1925, and a small bungalow at 290 City Centre Avenue is believed to have been built around 1902 to serve as a woodworking shop.

Section 4.2 Preferred Concept notes, pg. 44: The Bayview City Works building at 7 Bayview Road is to be designated as a heritage resource and retained for adaptive re-use within a future development. The feasibility of re-locating or re-using the former woodworking shop at the southeast corner of 250 City Centre Avenue will also be explored. Author's Note: the building at 290 City Centre Avenue has been identified as a woodworking shop in the CDP.

### **3.3 West Downtown Core Secondary Plan**

Section 4.2 Block Layout notes: 4.2.4) An improved grade-to-grade connection to and from City Centre Avenue and Somerset Street West is required, on both sides of City Centre Avenue. This connection shall provide 24-hour accessibility to the public via a visible, well lit, high-quality staircase and accessible path from Somerset Street West to City Centre Drive and an enhanced portal underneath Somerset Street West bridge that addresses horizontal clearance, and adequate width to address vehicular movements, cycling, and improved sidewalk conditions.

Section 4.9.4 Implementation Strategy Subdistricts 250 City Centre Avenue pg. 43 states:

The feasibility of **relocation and adaptive re-use of the building located at 290 City Centre Avenue** should be explored as part of the site plan control application process for the redevelopment of 250 City Centre Avenue. [*emphasis added*]



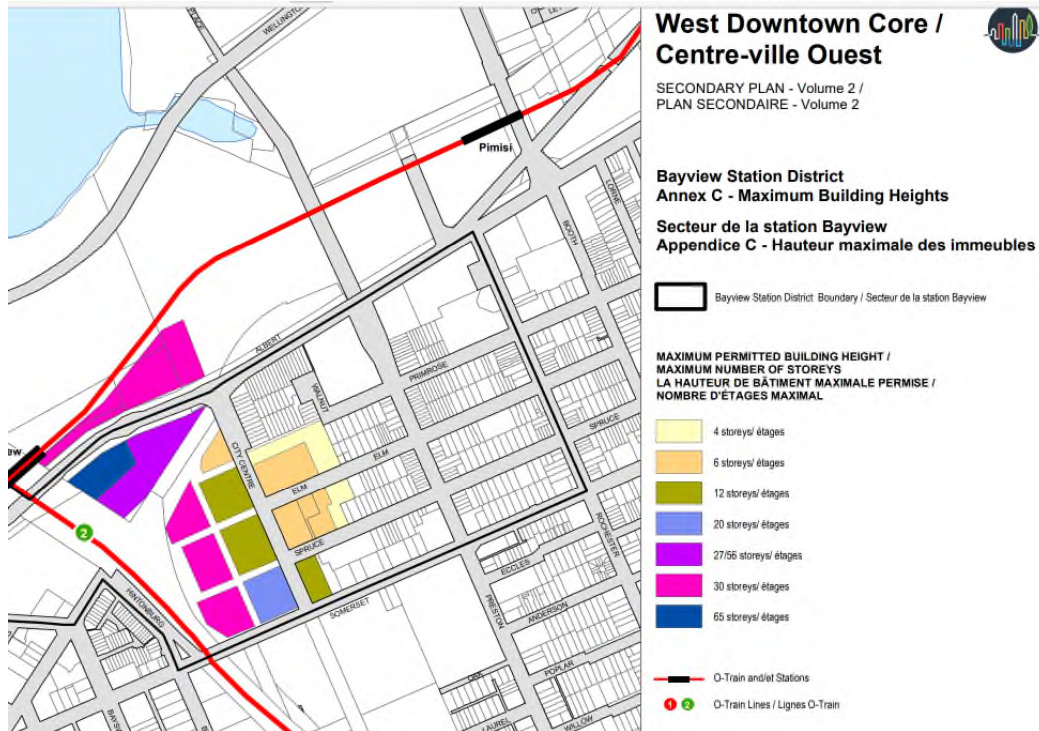


Figure 13:  
 Annex Maps.  
 Map illustrating the maximum allowable heights.  
 Source: West Downtown Core Secondary Plan.

### 3.4 Environmental Issues

The client engaged a structural engineering firm and an environmental engineering and remediation firm to determine the feasibility of accessing below the building and to consider options justifying the demolition of the building.

- A letter Date: 24 November 2023 and revised January 2024 Subject: 290 City Centre building; Building demolition review - Arcadis Canada Inc. T. Austrins, P. Eng. Project Engineer. Appendix B.

In 2010, Arcadis Canada Inc. (formerly Franz) had completed a program of bioremediation to address dry-cleaning solvents in groundwater associated with the former Browns Cleaners facility at the 270 City Centre property. Groundwater monitoring, indoor air and sub slab vapour sampling were also completed. Similar ongoing annual bioremediation and monitoring activities were completed annually by Arcadis at the 250/270 City Centre property up to 2020. Remediation activities were hampered by the presence of the Browns Cleaners building and the inability to obtain unobstructed access to areas of contamination. As a result, the Brown’s building was demolished. Arcadis is recommending a similar strategy to access below 290 City Centre Avenue. Arcadis’s report concludes that:

*“It is important for the remediation program to continue and engage in direct ground water testing and remediation below the building footprint of 290 City Centre Ave. This will require unhindered access to the area in the vicinity of MW2105 and underneath the 290 City Centre Ave. building itself in order to complete a more thorough and expansive injection of bioremediation product. Until remediation is complete, every snow melt and rain event could affect the location and extent of CVOC contamination.*”

*Given the above, it is our opinion that the existing gallery building at 290 City Centre Ave. should be demolished to allow for the recommended delineation tasks and final completion of remaining site remediation activities.”*

### **3.5 Structural Issues**

- 290 City Centre Avenue – Structural Review. Cleland Jardine Engineering Ltd. Reference Number: 23-1342. December 20, 2023, See Appendix B;

Cleland Jardine visited on November 27, 2023, and the following is a summary of observations:

The structure consists of two wythes of brick forming the exterior walls laid up in an American Common Bond set on a concrete foundation. The foundations have settled on portions of the east elevation, as is evident in the step cracking that extends through the concrete foundation walls up through to the roof level in the northern portion of the east foundation wall from approximately the midpoint of the east wall through to the north-east corner of the building. Gauged brick in the window head above one window has been displaced and is missing, exposing the inner brick wythe, and brick is displaced at the north-east corner at the roof level.

The majority of the main floor wood frame structure was concealed by interior finishes and could not be examined. The perimeter foundation walls, where accessible, were visually reviewed. The concrete was found to be in fair to poor condition, particularly at the front (south) walls. The brick bears directly on the foundation walls and was also found to be extensively deteriorated beneath the front entrance area. Due to elevation changes of the exterior grade, the brick cladding on the front and side walls is partially below grade.

## **4.0 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE/INTEREST**

---

A CHER and a statement of significance have been prepared by the City. The following was prepared by Commonwealth to provide an independent look at the Ontario Reg.9/06.1 Heritage Evaluation (5.1) and the Statement of Significance (5.2) and offers suggestions and an independent summary.

### **4.1 The property evaluation**

Commonwealth carried out an evaluation of the property against the nine criteria outlined in Ontario Reg. 9/06 a “property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the nine criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.” Commonwealth takes the position that the building is a candidate for designation as it meets five (5) of the nine (9) criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

**The property has design value or physical value because it is rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method?**

YES

The building has design and physical value as a representative example of a type - office building - in its expression, and materials. The building is an eclectic mix of details associated with Revival architectural styles and could be argued that in the Ottawa context the Arts and Crafts influences are predominant as it relates to the use of materials and detailing.

**The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit?**

YES

The building has design and physical value as it displays a high degree of craftsmanship in the use of materials – brick and architectural precast stone – and their arrangement. The use of interior trim, milled sash and door assemblies fabricated on site provides a unique record.

**The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.**

NO

The building may have been constructed to be fireproof given that it was set beside stacked lumber when constructed, explaining the brick structure, concrete basement, and use of slate on the roof. If a more detailed examination were to determine that the design intent was to construct a fireproof building, it would validate that this criterion should be revised to YES.

**The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community?**

NO

The building has historical and associative value supporting a local company and the fabrication of products that are significant to a community. The building has no direct association with W. C. Edwards, (1844-1921) only an indirect association as the namesake of the Company as it was constructed after his death. The larger site, 250 City Centre Avenue, has a direct association with W. C. Edwards.

**The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture?**

YES

The historical and associative values are well understood, and a broad array of material is available in various archives, as well as published material of the period. As an artifact commemorating the lumber industry and the skill of local carpenters, and joiners, it is a unique bit of local history.

**The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, building, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community?**

NO

No architect or professional builder has been identified for the building, although the quality of the design and the use and arrangement of materials would strongly suggest it.

**The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of the area?**

YES

The building is the only structure remaining on the 250 City Centre site during the period when the W. C. Edwards Company wholesale lumber and milling operation was active through to 1962.

**The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings?**

YES

The building has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to the larger site at 250 City Centre Avenue where the W. C. Edwards Company operated a wholesale lumber and milling operation through to 1962. The draft statement of cultural heritage value developed for 290 City Centre Avenue includes values associated with the broader site at 250 City Centre Avenue, and the larger site known as the Bayview Station District. Some of these values overstate the heritage significance of the subject property.

**The property has contextual value because it is a landmark?**

NO

The building set at the base of the Somerset Street Bridge cannot be considered a landmark in a traditional sense. A more appropriate term for its contextual value would be artifact or relic. Details such as windows, doors, trim, and gauged lumber used in the construction of 290 City Centre would all have come from the W.C. Edwards and serve as a unique record documenting the quality of workmanship. It can also be inferred that the that local architects and contractors would have relied on W. C. Edwards Co. to fulfil specified quality details.

## 5.0 SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

---

### 5.1 Observations

Both the Bayview Station district Community Design Plan and the West Downtown Core Secondary Plan acknowledge the building as a remnant to be explored and possibly commemorated. These planning documents recognize issues of accessibility and suggest the possibility of the relocation of the 290 City Centre as part of future development. There is no reference to environmental issues and/or the need to remove ground contaminants from under the building. The position of the building on the site is not a defining feature. As part of the conceptual designs for a future development the best placement should be delayed as part of the block planning process as noted in Figure 13.

The structure consists of three wythes of brick forming the exterior walls laid up in an American Common Bond set on a concrete foundation. The foundations have settled on portions of the east elevation, as is

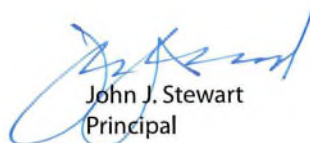
evident in the step cracking that extends through the concrete foundation walls up through to the roof level in the northern portion of the east foundation wall from approximately the midpoint of the east wall through to the north-east corner of the building. Gauged brick in the window head above one window has been displaced and is missing, exposing the inner brick whythe, and brick is displaced at the north-east corner at the roof level. Due to elevation changes of the exterior grade, the brick cladding on the front and side walls is partially below grade and has severely deteriorated. The quality of construction strongly suggests that it was designed by an architect or professional builder.

Final completion of remaining site remediation activities is essential. Given both the environmental and structural concerns, it is the author's opinion that the City should not proceed with designation of the existing building at 290 City Centre Ave at this time, as designation could make full remediation impossible. Furthermore, if the City proceeds with designation, it should be confirmed that the conservation work to dismantle and relocate is eligible for support through programs such as the CIP funding.

## 5.2 Conclusions

At this time, there are no development plans for the property; however, 290 City Centre Avenue is on the Heritage Register and the Official Plan/Secondary Plans highlight the building (in-situ or relocated) as an integral part of future development.

1. Both the Bayview Station District Community Design Plan and the West Downtown Core Secondary Plan acknowledge the building as a remnant to be explored and possibly commemorated. These planning documents recognize issues of accessibility and suggest the possibility of the relocation of the 290 City Centre Avenue as part of future development.
2. The planning documents include as part of the conceptual designs for a future development, the best placement as part of the block planning is noted in Figure 13.
3. The position of the building on the site is not a defining feature.
4. The owners have been committed to a program of soil and groundwater remediation since 2010. Completing the remediation program is a vital part of property stewardship.
5. Both the environmental and structural issues will result in major alterations and potentially demolition and relocation.
6. Designation in advance of remediation may be premature, as:
  - a. Postponing formal commemoration allows for the completion of remaining site remediation activities. It also supports the secondary plan recommendation for positioning the building to best support a new proposal for redevelopment; and.
  - b. In other instances (by example, 70 Richmond Road and Standard Bread) the City delayed formal recognition until after a redevelopment plan has been brought forward.
7. If the City proceeds with designation of the property, the designation should be conditional on the City funding relocation and restoration of the building under the Heritage Community Improvement Plan.

  
John J. Stewart  
Principal



## APPENDIX A: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

---



John Georgakopoulos, M.Sc., LL.B  
Partner, Certified Specialist in Environmental Law  
Willms & Shier Environmental Lawyers LLP  
1 Toronto Street, Suite 900 Toronto, ON M5C 2V8

Arcadis Canada Inc.  
333 Preston Street  
Suite 500  
Ottawa  
Ontario K1S 5N4  
Phone: 613 721 0555  
Fax: 613 721 0029  
[www.arcadis.com](http://www.arcadis.com)

Date: 9 January 2024  
Our Ref: 30088255  
Subject: 290 City Centre building; Building demolition and Remediation review

***Privileged and Confidential***

Dear John,

Arcadis is providing you with the following status update on the active groundwater remediation program at the 250/270 City Centre property and recommended immediate next steps.

In 2010, Arcadis (formerly Franz) had completed a program of bioremediation to address dry-cleaning solvents in groundwater associated with the former Browns Cleaners facility at the 270 City Centre property. Groundwater monitoring, indoor air and subslab vapour sampling were also completed.

Similar ongoing annual bioremediation and monitoring activities were completed annually by Arcadis at the 250/270 City Centre property up to 2020. Remediation activities were hampered by the presence of the Browns Cleaners building and inability to obtain unobstructed access to areas of contamination.

In the summer of 2020, the former Browns Cleaners building was demolished, which provided better access to the property for purposes of contaminant delineation. Delineation was completed using Membrane Interface Probe (MIP) technology in August 2020 across the former building footprint. Additional bioremediation injection wells were then installed beneath the former building footprint to target areas having elevated concentrations of chlorinated volatile organic compounds (cVOCs) and, thereby, improved subsurface bioremediation efficiency.

In May 2022, Arcadis injected 49,600 L of bioaugmentation culture KB1 and Emulsified Vegetable Oil (EVO) to facilitate bioremediation in the vicinity of the former Browns Cleaners building. Substantial decreases in CVOC groundwater contaminant concentrations were observed across the site in late 2022/early 2023 and elevated ethane/methane concentrations in groundwater indicated active bioremediation processes were occurring.

It was determined that the prevailing direction of groundwater flow is inferred to be towards the east, with a slight component towards the southeast, i.e., from the source area of the former dry-cleaning facility towards the 290 City Centre Ave. property.

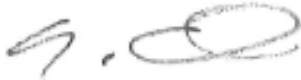
Groundwater contaminant levels remain elevated at monitoring well MW2105, located approximately 5 m to the west of the 290 City Centre building. Arcadis has been conducting ongoing semi-annual indoor air and sub-slab air testing at the building located at 290 City Centre Ave., confirming that the building is safe to be used and occupied. However, the data indicates that there is some contamination below the 290 City Centre Ave. building, which will necessitate on-going indoor air monitoring to assess any potential indoor air risk in future. The presence and use of the 290 City Centre Ave. building has prohibited direct ground water testing, installation of injection wells and injection of bio-remediation product below the building footprint.

**290 City Centre, Ottawa – Remediation Review  
ARCADIS- January 2024**

It is important for the remediation program to continue and engage in direct ground water testing and remediation below the building footprint of 290 City Centre Ave. This will require unhindered access to the area in the vicinity of MW2105 and underneath the 290 City Centre Ave. building itself in order to complete a more thorough and expansive injection of bioremediation product. Until remediation is complete, every snow melt and rain event could affect the location and extent of CVOC contamination.

Given the above, it is our opinion that the existing gallery building at 290 City Centre Ave. should be demolished to allow for the recommended delineation tasks and final completion of remaining site remediation activities.

Sincerely,  
**Arcadis Canada Inc.**



T. Austrins, P.Eng.  
Project Engineer

Email: [troy.austrins@arcadis.com](mailto:troy.austrins@arcadis.com)  
Direct Line: 613-703-3035

## APPENDIX B: STRUCTURAL REVIEW OF 290 CITY CENTRE AVE.

---

January 16, 2024

**District Realty Management Inc.**  
50 Bayswater Avenue  
Ottawa, ON  
K1Y 2E9

**Attention: Mr. Michael Morin**

Dear Sir,

Re: 290 City Centre Avenue – Structural Review  
Our Reference Number: 23-1342

---



As requested, Cleland Jardine Engineering Ltd. has completed a review of the existing structure located at 290 City Centre Avenue, Ottawa.



**Front/West Elevation**



**Rear Elevation**

It is our understanding that extensive excavation is required around the perimeter of the building so as to facilitate the removal of contaminated fill material. The anticipated depth of the excavation will extend beyond the foundations of the building and will also potentially continue beneath the structure.

---

CLELAND JARDINE ENGINEERING LIMITED  
200-580 TERRY FOX DRIVE, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, K2L 4B9 TEL: 613-591-1533 FAX: 613-591-1703 WEB: [WWW.CLELANDJARDINE.COM](http://WWW.CLELANDJARDINE.COM)

The existing structure appears to consist of the following elements:

- 1) The building is a two storey wood frame structure.
- 2) The exterior walls are brick construction 2 wythes of brick set up in a common American bond with header course every six courses. The keystones, sills, door surrounds and string courses are architectural precast concrete units.
- 3) The basement foundation walls are a combination of cast in place concrete with a rusticated brick finish below the first floor string course.
- 4) The basement floor is a cast in place concrete slab on grade.
- 5) The ground floor framing is wood joists and decking.

The site was visited on November 27, 2023, and the following is a summary of our observations:

- The majority of the main floor wood frame structure was concealed by interior finishes and could not be examined.
- The perimeter foundation walls were visually reviewed where accessible. The concrete was found to be in fair to poor condition, particularly at the front (south) walls.
- The brick bears directly on the foundation walls and was also found to be extensively deteriorated beneath the front entrance area. Due to elevation changes of the exterior grade, the brick cladding on the front and side walls is partially below grade.



**Foundation Wall Deterioration**



**Brick Deterioration**



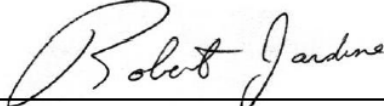
- Settlement of the footings was noted at the north-east corner of the building where grades are at the basement floor level. The settlement is evident at the eaves.

As noted, it is our understanding that a major site remediation is planned to address environmental contamination. While the extent and depth of excavation will not be known until the project commences, the work will require that the entire structure be either temporarily supported or relocated. Based on our site observations, it is our opinion that extensive repairs and/or replacement of the foundation walls and lower sections of brick cladding will be necessary in order to accommodate any temporary shoring or relocation plan. It is anticipated that the value of this work will be cost prohibitive and it is our opinion that demolition of the structure will therefore likely be required to accommodate any major site remediation. The preliminary order of magnitude estimate for temporary relocation and reinstatement of the building is between \$900,000 plus HST and professional fees

We trust the preceding is acceptable. If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

CLELAND JARDINE ENGINEERING LTD.

  
Robert Jardine, P.Eng.



## **APPENDIX C DRAFT STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE for 290 CITY CENTRE AVENUE**

---

The draft statement of cultural heritage value developed for 290 City Centre Avenue includes values associated with the broader site at 250 City Centre Avenue, and the larger site known as the Bayview Station District. Some of these values overstate the heritage significance of 290 City Centre Avenue and may be more appropriately commemorated within the larger site. The building was constructed by the successors of W.C. Edwards Company, Gordon C. Edwards, and Colonel Cameron MacPherson as a corporate sales and office. The draft statement is a bit confusing in that it suggests that that W.C. Edwards constructed the building when he died 4 years before construction. Highlighted in yellow are additional



details referencing the architecture of the building and its context. They are provided as some suggested clarifications.

## **By-Law 2023-XXX Prepared by the Heritage Branch City of Ottawa**

### **Description of Property**

The W.C. Edwards and Company ~~(Delete 'and' it implies that W. C. Edwards was associated with the building. Historic documents refer to W.C. Edwards Company. see Annual Returns for 'W.C. Edwards Company' 1918 -1931. ....)~~ building at 290 City Centre Avenue is a one-and-a-half storey, red-brick (office?) commercial building located on the west side of City Centre Avenue, east of the Trillium Line rail tracks. The building is located at the southeast corner of the property (at 290 City Centre Avenue). Its main entrance faces Somerset Street West and is situated below the Somerset railway overpass.

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

Constructed circa 1925, the W.C. Edwards ~~(and)~~ Company building is a strong representative example of a vernacular interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. (the term vernacular is appropriate).

#### **Suggested additional notes:**

The architectural design - quality of the materials and their arrangement - suggests that an architect or competent builder or both were involved in its design and construction. However, there is no specific evidence to that effect. A review of the BDCA database using the architects listed in the 1923 *Might Business Directory* produced no results. David Jeanes (Heritage Ottawa) in a 2015 comment to an article (*Somerset Street Viaduct in History*) appearing in the *West Side Action* blog, suggests that John Pritchard MacLaren was responsible for the design. This link could not be verified in the list of projects outlined in the *Biographical Dictionary of Canadian Architects* database (BDCA).

(The building has design and heritage value as a representative example of a type - office building - in its expression, and materials. Architecturally, the building is an eclectic mix of details associated with a number of revival styles, and it could be argued that the Arts and Crafts influences are predominant as it relates to the use of materials and detailing.)

A character defining feature supporting the involvement of an architect or professional builder is the brick work. The exterior walls are brick construction, 3 wythes of brick set up in a Common American Bond with a header course every six courses with flush mortar joints. Decorative brick detailing includes rusticated brick quoins at the external corners, rusticated brick walls below the level of the first floor string course and above the concrete foundation walls, and gauged brick arches above windows and doors. Decorative detailing includes architectural pre-cast stone string course at the first floor with decorative architectural pre-cast stone windowsills with keystones, semicircular door heads, and knee wall cap stones flanking the entrance steps.

The architectural features of the building which are characteristic of this style include its wooden door with sidelights and semicircular transom, its decorative gabled dormer with a curvilinear parapet above

the central entrance, and its steeply pitched hipped roof with exposed wooden rafter tails. The Spanish Colonial Revival Style was most common in Canada from the 1910s to the 1940s and was often used for institutional and commercial buildings. (~~Vernacular~~) Examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style in Ottawa include the Rideau Street Library, 377 Rideau Street (1933), Champagne Bath, 321 King Edward Avenue (1924), and the Ottawa South Community Centre, 260 Sunnyside Avenue (1921). The noted Ottawa architect Werner Ernst Noffke incorporated many of the Spanish Revival characteristics in his residential and commercial designs. He was actively practicing in the 1920s, and his design aesthetic would have been an attractive model to emulate (although there is no evidence of any link between the building and Noffke).



*The Noffke designed Ambassador Court apartment on Bank Street is a reference for many of the defining features found at 290 City Centre, including the concrete basement, the limestone banding set above the brick apron and rusticated brick above, the elaborate over scaled entrance and flush pedimented front.*

The building at 290 City Centre Avenue has direct associations with W.C. Edwards (~~Delete and~~) Company, one of the largest early lumber establishments in eastern Ontario. The company was established in 1868 in Rockland, Ontario, and expanded into Ottawa in 1894 with the purchase of the sawmill at the Rideau Falls from the estate of James MacLaren. (~~How did W. C. Edwards acquire the property?, was it in exchange for property acquired by the federal government?~~) In 1912, the company established the Somerset Street sawmill on the land (~~known as 250 City Centre Avenue~~) surrounding 290 City Centre Avenue. The positioning of the building was directly in response to available space, and construction of a fireproof building next to the stacked lumber would have been a logical precaution.

In 1920, the company's holdings were acquired by the Riordon Pulp and Paper Company, except for the Somerset Street sawmill, which continued operation as a wholesale branch. (~~Who acquired the land or was the company retained by his son Cameron and continued to operate? Or was the property acquired by Riordon who continued to operate a profitable wholesale lumber and milling company?~~) The W.C. Edwards (~~and~~) Company building was constructed as the company's administrative offices in 1925 and remained in use until the sawmill's closure in 1962. (~~A description of its function and use would be helpful, it has been described as a bank as well as a woodworking shop, this would explain the side entrance to the basement.~~) The company's namesake, William Cameron Edwards, was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 1903 by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and became one of the founding directors of the Canadian Forestry Association.

The building has historical associations with the industrialization of the area, which grew with the establishment of the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway and the presence of the Canadian Pacific

Railway. Built in 1891, the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway was built by J.R. Booth to support his lumber operations and was a catalyst for the growth of railway dependent industries such as sawmills, lumberyards, and railway yards in the area. (Appropriate for the interpretation of the larger sites?)

The W.C. Edwards ~~and~~ Company building is important in supporting the area's historic character that flourished as railway dependent industries and their associated residential neighbourhoods were established in the early twentieth century. The building, as the administrative office for the industrial operations of W.C. Edwards ~~and~~ Company, is physically and visually linked to the railway, and historically linked to its supporting industrial uses. As one of the few remaining structures in West Centretown (Standard Bread Building? Electric Railway shed?) associated with the industrial rail era, the building is a landmark? in the vicinity. Landmark implies that it is clearly visual. This might be described as a relic, but not a traditional landmark. Building details such as windows, doors, trim, and gauged lumber would all have come from the W.C. Edwards and serve as a unique record documenting the quality of workmanship.