

City of Kelowna  
Planning Department  
1435 Water Street  
Kelowna BC, V1Y 1J4

Sep 7, 2022

To whomever it may concern,

**RE: Kasian Architecture Infill Proposal at 520 Clement Ave. (aka 1177 Clement St.) - Kelowna**

This report is to comment on the appropriateness of two new proposed infill buildings and an extension to the existing liquor store, at the corner of Clement Avenue and Ellis Street, the site of the CN Station, a listed property on the Kelowna Heritage Register which received municipal heritage designation (bylaw 10268) in 2009. The below observations consider the proposal's alignment with *additions to historic places* in the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and with Kelowna's Heritage Objectives as outlined in Chapter 11 of the OCP.



**Render of the proposed Building B on the CN Station site.** source: Kasian Architecture.

I have worked with the architects to create a site proposal that positively contributes to the evolution of this intersection, and that preserves and celebrates the special character and quality both of the CN Station and the North End industrial district. The overall proposed development does not negatively impact the heritage value of the historic place nor its character defining elements, but rather enhances it. This development proposal represents a thoughtful evolution of what is currently an under-built site (with an unsightly area at the northeast corner) to include higher density, new, relevant and ongoing uses and the further enhancement of the CN Station building. I see this proposal as a general improvement of the site to become a cohesive, complete complex, inspired by and centred around the heritage asset - the CN Station building.

The proposed drawing set in the Kasian Architecture application is a result of our collaboration.

### **Heritage status**

Before the City of Kelowna protected the building with a municipal heritage designation by-law in 2009, the building had already been identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in the early 1990s as one of over 100 Heritage Railway Station across Canada, protected through the Federal Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act.

### **Evaluating heritage values and significance**

The CN train station's historic heritage value is extremely high. It not only represents the final stage in the transformation of Kelowna's economy from water-based to land-based access, connecting Kelowna directly to a national rail system, but also the significant economic growth for Kelowna and the entire Okanagan region sparked by the arrival of the CNR. The new railway connection created the impetus for the construction of packing houses, canneries and numerous other industrial facilities in the in the North End in late 1920s, shifting Kelowna's main industrial district from the waterfront to this northeast section of the city.

Its architectural value lies in its representation of an example of the CNR Architectural Division's modest interwar station designs. Its practical scale and simple design reflect the small population (approximately 3000 residents) and estimated cargo activity of Kelowna in the mid-1920s. Notwithstanding its modest scale, the combination of masonry materials (stone, brick and stucco), brick quoined corners and trim, elegant wood doors and windows, prominent roof with eyebrow dormers and deep overhang, give it a harmonious and handsome appearance.

Its conversion into a restaurant has returned what was a relatively underused building with limited public access to being a well-loved gathering place, as perhaps it was perceived when it still served as a passenger train station in its first 4 decades. Its social and historic value have been acknowledged through both federal and municipal protection and through its popularity today as the Train Station Pub.

## Identification of the character defining elements of the property

The Kelowna Heritage Register Statement of Significance lists the following CDEs:

- Good example of an historic train station, unique in Kelowna
- Characteristic many CN railway stations built between the wars
- Large roof proportions in relation to the building mass
- Steeply pitched hipped roof with small gables cut into the ends, and with deep, bellcast eaves and six eyebrow dormers
- Long, thin building form
- Projecting bay window for the operator on the north side
- Loading doors at the east end
- Red brick quoins at the corners
- Fieldstone lower walls, with battered (tapered) elevation, capped by a string course
- Stucco walls (painted cream) above the fieldstone / string course
- Wood, double-hung one-over-one window sash, brick framed

Given the heritage values articulated in the previous section, it would be appropriate to also include its original corner location on Clement and Ellis, the gateway to the 'new' North End industrial area, as a character defining element, and well as its high visibility and status as a landmark. I'd also clarify the character of the original windows which are mostly large, commercial/industrial assemblies spanning from just below the roof eaves to the stone foundation (the most visible window on the Ellis elevation is a triple assembly). The railway garden and large Ginkgo tree are also considered contributors to the heritage value of the site.

## Recommendations and strategies to inform the design of the new development

Thanks to the arrival of the CN Railway in 1926, Kelowna began to grow so rapidly, that the scenario of a lone train station building lasted only a few years, as the initial cohort of late 1920s industrial buildings grew around it, and even more so with the subsequent mid-century buildings added after the loop expansion of the rail lines in 1948. Today, Kelowna's status as the largest city in the Okanagan and the fastest growing in the province, is bringing consistent and rapid change to the built environment, mostly reflected in increases in density and height. The immediate area around the CN train station has been rezoned for higher density and two of the four corners of the subject intersection now house high-rise towers, directly across the street from the CN station.

The proposed infill buildings, Buildings B, C and the extension to Building A, all need to respond to the above mentioned context - that the CN Station is an incredibly significant regional, municipal and local (North End) landmark located at an intersection that may be the fastest and most dramatically transforming intersection in BC. Working with Kasian Architecture we used the following principles to finalize the development proposal:

- The CN Station visibility must not be disrupted

- Its modest scale and design cannot be overshadowed
- The infill buildings represent a transition in height and density between the low and sparsely built industrial area and the high-rise towers
- The infill buildings' design should not be generic, but should take cues from the historic place and the industrial character of the area.

The proposed development incorporates these guidelines through:

- The siting of the new buildings leave ample space around the CN Station building to be visible and remain the feature of the site.
- The largest and most visible of the new buildings, Building B, takes direct cues from the CN Station building by applying a unique treatment to its ground floor and a simplified design and colour scheme for the upper levels, so as to keep passerby's eyes at the street level and on the relationship between Building B and the historic train station, especially on the two prominent elevations - the west and south elevations.
- The infill buildings range from one to five storeys, offering that middle range transition height to higher developments nearby.
- The infill buildings feature references to the historic train station through:
  - Building A and C's modest scale, single storey height, stucco cladding and brick details
  - Building B's unique ground floor design and colour treatment including the use of brick detailing on this first floor only
  - Building B's ground floor Ellis elevation composition mirrors the train station's Ellis elevation by featuring a solid centre with windows on the ends while the train station features a glazed centre with solid ends.
  - All building's industrial-inspired window assemblies with compositions similar to those of the train station's (use of multi assemblies with transoms)

The Standards & Guidelines standard 11 - 'additions to historic places', requires additions to be "physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place<sup>1</sup>."

**Distinguishability** - The infill buildings all read as a clearly contemporary structures, which is both honest (it doesn't create confusion about what is historic and what is new) and traditional (architects in the past never imitated traditional design but applied the trending designs of their time, which allows us to easily read and interpret historic and mixed-era streetscapes).

**Compatibility** - Buildings A and C are compatible with the CN Station in height, scale and the use of stucco and brick cladding. Building B pays homage to the train station through a design emphasis on the ground floor with references to the train station design and composition including a similar ground floor height, vertical brick columns, and southwest canopy cables

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<sup>1</sup> Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada - page 23

that emulate the angle of the station hip roof. All the infill buildings have industrial-inspired window assemblies with compositions similar to those of the train station's. All three buildings read as industrial/commercial buildings as fitting to the historic character of the North End industrial district.

**Subordinate** - Additions can be large, but they must not 'steal the show' from the historic place. All three infill buildings lack the traditional ornamentation of the CN Station as expressed in its brick quoins and in curved architectural details such as the bellcast roof and eyebrow dormers. These three more simply-finished buildings leave the CN Station as the central, most intricate feature on site. The additional 3.5 storeys on Building B are downplayed through a muted colour scheme and simplified finishes keeping the focus on the ground floor and that level's relationship with the CN Station.

Finally, as the railway garden and large Ginkgo tree are also considered contributors to the heritage value of the site, the developments' retention and highlighting of these two assets as focal points, and the development's overall pedestrian-focused approach, help to improve public engagement and animation of this important historic place.

### Summary

It is my professional opinion that the development proposed here by Kasian Architecture is a good model of conservation and evolution for a historic site. Heritage Conservation is a tool for managing change in historic places. Historic properties should be able to thoughtfully change and evolve, especially when these changes include relevant and sustainable uses. In this case, the protected building is not being altered in any way, and ample space is being left between it and the infill buildings. This proposed cohesive development of the site completes a revitalization intent initiated in 2010 and represents thoughtful, sensitive change at a high visibility intersection in Kelowna with high heritage value. The proposal as a whole respects and reflects the heritage values of the property, follows the national Standards for additions to historic places, and meets the objectives articulated in Kelowna's OCP chapter 11 - Heritage.

Yours Truly,



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heritage consultant