

New High Commission building announced for Ottawa

Today, British High Commissioner to Canada Susan le Jeune d'Allegeershecque announced the UK government's plans to construct a new High Commission building in Ottawa.

The modern building will be built on a lot adjacent to the High Commissioner's residence, Earnscliffe, on land currently occupied by a decommissioned building once used for staff accommodation.

British High Commissioner Susan le Jeune d'Allegeershecque said:

This new building will allow us to consolidate our staff presence in Ottawa whilst providing us with a modern, accessible, and sustainable building that better suits our current priorities in Canada and our ambitions for developing the relationship with one of our closest partners.

At the same time, as trustees of Earnscliffe for almost 90 years, we are well aware of its special place in Ottawa's history. We want to assure the public that we are working closely with architects, the City of Ottawa, National Capital Commission, and other community partners to ensure this new building respects and complements this historic home's design and surrounding grounds.

The planning process with the City of Ottawa is currently underway. It includes the completion of a Cultural Heritage Impact Statement which along with community feedback will be used to refine elements of the project over the coming months.

Subject to this and final approval in the United Kingdom, it is expected work on the new building will start in mid-2020.

Photo: A depiction of the proposed design as seen from adjacent to the residence

An aerial depiction of the proposed design as seen from the East

Background

The current British High Commission building is located at 80 Elgin Street and was opened in 1964.

The UK government currently employs approximately 60 staff in Ottawa, including UK diplomats and local staff.

The British High Commission in Ottawa, is the UK government's main diplomatic mission in Canada. Along with Consulates-General in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver, we work closely with the Canadian government and partners across the country to develop and maintain a wide range of substantive partnerships of real value to both countries. These partnerships cover business, defence, climate change, science and innovation, education, and culture.