

50 King Street, 399 Ridout Street North  
CACP Working Group Notes

At its meeting on July 12, 2023, the CACP referred the Notice of Application and Heritage Impact Assessment for the application at 50 King Street, 399 Ridout Street North (“Courthouse Lands”) to a working group for comment. Considering the significance of the Courthouse property to London’s history and cultural heritage, the committee felt that less than two days was not sufficient time for the committee to review and prepare meaningful comments, so the file was referred to an ad-hoc working group to prepare comments for the CACP to consider at its next meeting.

The working group presents the following comments to the CACP for consideration, and requests that these comments be shared with the file planner as well as Council through the PEC for consideration.

- Four different layers of protection on this property, underlining this as London’s premier historic site and the seed of our City:
  - Downtown Heritage Conservation District
  - Part IV Designation
  - National Historic Site of Canada
  - Heritage Conservation Easement with Ontario Heritage Trust
- The proposed development concept does not acknowledge the importance of the setting to the property’s cultural heritage value. The site was home to London’s first public park, and this should be better reflected in the development concept.
  - The current height does not respect the setting and context, which is an important cultural heritage attribute of the site
  - The design concept runs contrary to the City’s theme of “back to the river”, creating a wall against the river.
- The scale and architectural treatment of the tower podium/podia should be complementary to the courthouse structure.
- Courthouse property and structure:
  - It must be acknowledged that preserving the Courthouse/Gaol property as part of this development is mandatory and not optional.
- Archaeological resources:
  - There are significant known-archaeological resources that exist on this property, including known burials on the former gaol property. All due diligence should be undertaken in completing the necessary archaeological assessments, including consultation with Indigenous communities.
- Commemoration:
  - We recommend that commemoration include the history of the site beyond just the courthouse property, including the context within the redevelopment along King Street in the 1950’s.

The working group also recommends the committee review the attached “position paper” created anonymously, which reflects similar concerns about the development proposal on this site.