

Re York Developments application for 339 Ridout St and 50 King Street.

To: Mayor Josh Morgan and London City Councillors

I was so opposed to the sale of the London's nationally recognized historic courthouse into private hands, and at the time I applauded the City for trying to obtain it for London when it came up for sale.

This is a controversial site and I now hope very much that if the application is approved, our planners and our council will use all their powers to make the proposed development beside the old courthouse as attractive as possible.

The towers (do we really need two??) should be as far away from the Courthouse as possible and there should be as much landscaping and **publicly accessible** green space as possible. Most of this **seems to have been** addressed, and it is hoped that the Site Plan reviews in the future will ensure all this actually happens.

Stepping the buildings back with podium makes a lot of sense, as it would give the Courthouse a chance to be glimpsed among the ever-growing number of high-rise towers. **The podium should not exceed the height of the Courthouse.** I am not sure what the minimum 1 metre step back referred to in the staff report means? - it seems very small, but I do like the idea of the podium's projected edges at ground level offering protection from the elements, something that should be done more often.

As to the height of the towers, I will bow to the expertise of staff, including the City engineer's department, who have calculated the impact of the extra units on the infrastructure downtown, including the waste water system. The various holding provisions **should** be able to ensure that this is all properly taken care of.

I am, as others are, concerned about the **shadowing** the towers will create, as the picture in the Free Press shows a very long shadow cast along King Street and the Arena area. And we all know that very tall towers cause **wind**, so I am dubious about the stated effects on the downtown area which is given in the staff report. Once again, the Site-Plan Review process may help to address these issues.

When considering the very real and urgent need for housing one does need to think about affordability, and I worry that this development will not provide much in the way of affordable housing. Affordable housing is not just needed by the marginalized in our community, (although kudos to York for its willingness to donate to Indwell) but needs to be available to new Canadians too. We are experiencing unprecedented levels of immigration, with little-to-no housing prepared for the new arrivals. Fingers crossed that the final design of the York Developments tower/s' interior space can be reconfigured so the tower/s will include more larger, family-compatible units and that some of these will actually be affordable!!

I am sure that York Developments plans to make the building as green as possible, but it is also my hope that if the proposal is passed by Council it will undergo some design modifications that make it even greener- e.g. by the addition of a green roof? Shrubbery on projecting exterior platforms etc can really help mitigate the heat that will be created by the release of air conditioning exhaust air in the summer months. I do not see surface parking on the publicly shared designs, so far, but if there are any, could they be covered by solar-panelled shelters to provide shade in summer while generating power as has been done by Sifton in its Byron development?

As a development beside an existing downtown landmark and National Historic Site it is to be hoped that this building will be a stunning example of **creative architecture** that, with any luck, references the historic more effectively while looking to the future.

**Much is made in the report about the retention and honouring of the old courthouse structure.**

We are assured the courthouse will be “retained” by York Developments. BRAVO!! However, I did not see any proposed use for it?

At the very least I hope that in any negotiations with the developers our planners and Council are able to ensure that the general public will continue to have direct access to this landmark historic building which is so culturally important that it is often used as a pictorial symbol of the City of London.

Londoners should be able to continue their use of the Courthouse, and I would like to see its use as a public resource for special events, weddings and the like continue into the future. It was built with Government money and maintained over the years with taxpayer dollars and in a moral sense therefore, belongs to Londoners.

I am somewhat comforted by the fact that that the Courthouse seemingly has the highest levels of heritage protection on it, and I trust that Council will ensure that this protection is exercised to the fullest extent possible.

**I trust that our Councillors will carefully weigh all the arguments expressed by the community and do what they believe is best for London.**

**Respectfully submitted by:  
Susan Bentley**