

To: Mayor Josh Morgan and London City Councillors

I have just heard about the very recently introduced motion coming before Council on Tuesday October 17<sup>th</sup> asking Councillors to approve the abolition of the Urban Design Peer Review Panel.

I urge Council to defeat this motion. The Urban Design panel is a gift to London, and its **expert volunteers** do valuable work. If there are delays in the planning process in London it seems to me it most often comes from the planning department's own slow processes, and I know of at least one occasion where there has been an automatic appeal to the LPAT made due to a delayed response from the Planning Department.

It seems to me that all the response times for decisions across the board could be tightened to improve the speed with which planning applications can be granted; this should not stop public comment and participation in the process, and we should not lose the advice of experts in the architectural and design fields that helps to make our buildings better than they might otherwise have been.

Tighten up all the response times including the response time of the Urban Design Panel itself.

There seems to be an atmosphere around the albeit very real housing crisis that is amounting to panic. As a result, some very bad decisions have already been made by the province, and the effects will be felt much further down the road. Protections for heritage buildings have been weakened, for example, and many avenues for participation and protest have been cut off. The results in terms of design excellence, overcrowding and general cutting-of-corners could well lead to an urban nightmare.

Please reject this motion – while made for the best of reasons it could result in the worst of scenarios.

**Respectfully submitted by:**  
**Susan Bentley.**