



## HERITAGE Impact Statement

February 15, 2016 (April 21 rev.)

London Roundhouse, Phase 2 — 240 Waterloo St.  
London, Ontario

### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

As part of the current development approval process, the City of London is requiring a brief heritage impact statement (HIS) for an addition to the London Roundhouse located at 240 Waterloo St.<sup>2</sup> This addition contains multi-tenant commercial office space and is part of a phased project; this phase being Phase 2 of three phases [Figure 1]. The primary intent of this statement is to meet basic requirements for the adaptation of this significant heritage property in London. The heritage impact statement will refer to “InfoSheet #5, Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans” suggested by the Ministry in terms of its content, and will use, where appropriate, headings contained within.



Fig. 1 Roundhouse adaptive re-use showing Phase 1 side additions  
(credit: <<http://www.ellipsis.digital/blog/2015/11/4/repurposing-train-stations-for-modern-business-how-canadian-business-is-connection-our-future-to-our-past>>)

<sup>1</sup> For full description of development proposal, see “Proposal Summary Statement” for 240 Waterloo St.

<sup>2</sup> Phase 2 of this project also includes adapting and inclusion of existing adjacent property (358 Horton St.) in an addition to the Roundhouse property.

The London Roundhouse property is not located within any of London's Heritage Conservation Districts [Figure 2]. It is also not a Part IV heritage designated property. It is, however, one of the few remaining roundhouses still standing in southwestern Ontario, and as such, is extremely significant and one of London's most well-known landmarks. It is listed on London's Inventory of Heritage Resources as a **priority 1** property.<sup>3</sup>

The Hisatement that follows *briefly*<sup>4</sup> comments on the following:<sup>5</sup>

1. Historical research, site analysis and evaluation
2. Identification of the significance and heritage attributes
3. Description of the proposed development and site alteration
4. Measurement of development and site alteration
5. Consideration of alternatives, mitigation and conservation methods
6. Implementation and monitoring
7. Summary statement and conservation recommendations



Fig. 2 Roundhouse property location outside of downtown HCD

<sup>3</sup> See "City of London-Inventory of Heritage Resources," by the City of London, 2006, p47.

<sup>4</sup> Direction was set from a discussion on February 7, 2016 between Jim Sheffield (project architect, Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.) and Jim Yanchula (city planning department).

<sup>5</sup> See "Info Sheet #5, Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans" in *Heritage Resources in the Land Use Planning Process*, Winter 2006, Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

## 1. HISTORICAL RESEARCH, SITE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

London's Roundhouse is located at 240 Waterloo Street (at the corner of Waterloo and Horton streets) in London's SOHO District. Built in 1887—originally a locomotive repair shop for the Michigan and Central Railway—the 7,500 square foot (697 sq. m.) building has gone through several functions since its original use; from a wholesale fruit distribution centre to a restaurant since the early 1970s [Figure 3]. In 2013, plans began by *Creative Property Developments* to transform the building into an open, innovative office space for two tech companies—Ellipsis Digital and Engine SevenFour. Development of the project has been planned to take place over three phases and includes renovation and new construction. The first phase was completed in 2015 and focused mainly on restoring the existing roundhouse structure; respecting the heritage character while adapting it for a new function. Phase 1 also included the creation of new office space attached to the original structure. Many of the building's original features were restored. Phase 2, which is the subject of this **H**statement, has been designed by Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc., and is currently undergoing a development review process by the city.

Since the start of the project in late 2013, the community has been encouraged to follow along as the Roundhouse's history and transformation has been captured in an interactive blog. The blog has been spearheaded by representatives from Ellipsis Digital and key people in London's heritage community.<sup>6</sup> For further historical information and archival photos see:

<http://londonroundhouse.com/> and <http://www.ellipsis.digital/blog/2015/11/4/repurposing-train-stations-for-modern-business-how-canadian-business-is-connection-our-future-to-our-past>



Fig. 3 Archival illustration of Roundhouse as fruit distribution centre  
(credit: <http://londonroundhouse.com/>)

<sup>6</sup> The blog also contains press, videos, 360 degree view clips & in-progress construction photos of Phase 1.

## 2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE AND HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

The London Roundhouse property is listed on London's Inventory of Heritage Resources as a **priority 1** property.<sup>7</sup> The building is described as being in the high Victorian style. There are no standards/principles/guidelines associated with this inventory, however priority 1 buildings are considered the City's most important heritage structures.

*"Priority 1 buildings are London's most important heritage structures and all merit designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. They are worthy of protection through whatever incentives may be provided in terms of zoning, bonusing or financial advantage and may be designated without the owner's consent. This group includes not only landmark buildings and buildings in pristine condition, but also lesser well-known structures with major architectural and/or historical significance and important structures that have been obscured by alterations which are reversible." (n.p.)*

Architectural features of the original Roundhouse property that have heritage significance include:

- the uniqueness of the structure as a distinct building typology (e.g. roundhouse)
- views toward the Roundhouse from both Horton and Waterloo street which reinforce its status as a landmark building on the site
- exterior and interior brick walls
- white (buff) coloured brick
- common bond brick pattern
- brick headers in voussoirs
- brick brackets with coursing detail
- existing window openings—12 segmental (now replacement windows)
- rhythm of large windows and door bays (4 bays with dividing pilasters)
- original ceiling beams and interior wood columns
- remnant exhaust fan for venting engine exhausts
- sloped roof

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND SITE ALTERATION—PHASE 2

This project involves phased renovation and new construction to take place over a total of three phases. In Phase 1 (completed in 2015), the Roundhouse was restored and renovated, with related additions constructed for a vestibule, a tenant and exit stair. The renovation left the heritage bones of the original building untouched and has been described as a sympathetic restoration and imaginative repurposing of an existing heritage resource.<sup>8</sup>

Phase 1 has been well recognized nationally, provincially and locally for its heritage and its construction merit, winning several awards including:

- Cornerstone Award for Building Heritage—National Trust for Canada (2015)
- Paul Oberman Award for Adaptive Reuse—Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (2015)

---

<sup>7</sup> See "City of London-Inventory of Heritage Resources," by the City of London, 2006, p47.

<sup>8</sup> "The new design places the entrance at the rear, like when the building was used to service locomotives, the floor will be lowered by five-feet to the original specifications and the windows—long covered—will be restored." (see B. Bicknell. "Past glory returning to London roundhouse to give it a live in the future", *CTV London*, October 1, 2013). "[There is] original interior brick walls on all sides [and] [a]ll wooden beams that made up the original ceiling are exposed." (see P. Maloney. "Historic London Roundhouse is set for a grand opening as the home of tech firm Ellipsis Digital", *London Free Press*, April 19, 2015).

- London Heritage Award (2016)

The site is not fully identified in this **H**statement but is more fully described in the proposal summary statement.

*The site consists of 4 parcels bounded by Horton, Waterloo & Bathurst streets and includes the existing Roundhouse as renovated including an addition and three other buildings. The total site is approximately 70,000 sq. ft. Land uses around the site are identified.*

While there are several buildings on the full site, the current proposal refers to the use of the building at 358 Horton Street and the construction of an addition linking it to the rehabilitated and expanded building at 240 Waterloo (the Roundhouse). A future Phase 3 project is also mentioned in the proposal summary—a multi-storey, mixed use building with underground parking but this is not deemed to be part of this application. The future project will impact Phase 2 with respect to the desire to maintain existing parking and temporary landscaping.

There are several other listed properties in and around the general area of the Roundhouse property, but all are somewhat removed in influence on the site. On the south side of Horton Street, opposite the Roundhouse site, the streetscape is composed of structures of a mixed architectural nature with a converted heritage former residence giving some prominence to the south east corner of Waterloo and Horton. This structure, however, is not identified as a listed heritage property.

### **3.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED USES<sup>9</sup>**

Phase 2 of the Roundhouse includes two principle components, which relate to the office/commercial uses currently housed in Phase 1 [Figure 4]. A proposed new multi-tenant commercial space fronts the new round courtyard off Waterloo Street to the west, and extends to also face Horton Street to the south along the right of way between existing structures. The existing office/commercial building at 358 Horton Street is renovated with an addition (for commercial/office tenant); the building is incorporated into the 240 Waterloo St. Roundhouse building. Phase 2 is a single story building—with mezzanine—similar to space provided in Phase 1. The project is also geared towards office development similar to Phase 1 with a focus on businesses that are looking to be downtown or close to downtown (i.e. high tech companies and other professional organizations).

### **3.2 GENERAL APPROACH TO DESIGN | OVERRIDING CONCEPT<sup>10</sup>**

In Phase 1, a significant addition (of poor quality and not part of the historic Roundhouse) was demolished to expose the original face of the Roundhouse, and to reveal the round courtyard area located to the north (front) of the Roundhouse. Phase 2 continues the theme developed in Phase 1 where the construction focuses on a 12-degree radial formation around the centre of the original courtyard train engine turntable. The structure is exposed revealing the historical evolution of materials used in the original roundhouse building to more modern materials such as steel and glass. Interior spaces of Phase 2 feature high ceiling heights and open mezzanines; interior wood structural elements are carried through similar to Phase 1.

---

<sup>9</sup> Taken from e-mail correspondance from Jeff Sheffield (project architect, Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.) to Maneesh Poddar (Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 9, 2016 AND from Nate Fehrman (client) to Laverne Kirkness (planner, Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 10, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Same as above.

### 3.3 SIZE<sup>11</sup>

Phase 1	Phase 2	Total Area Phases 1 + 2
Existing Bldg Area: 478.9 m <sup>2</sup> Additions: 253.7 m <sup>2</sup> Mezzanines: 171.4 m <sup>2</sup> Gross area: 904 m <sup>2</sup> Note: 910 m <sup>2</sup> of building was demolished in Phase 1	Existing Bldg Area: 479 m <sup>2</sup> Additions: 802 m <sup>2</sup> Mezzanines: 313 m <sup>2</sup> Gross area: 1594 m <sup>2</sup>	Existing Bldg Area: 958 m <sup>2</sup> Additions: 1055.7 m <sup>2</sup> Mezzanines: 484.4 m <sup>2</sup> Total area: 2498 m <sup>2</sup>
Number of floors		
1 storey plus mezzanine(s) for both Phase 1 and 2		

### 3.4 MATERIALS | COLOURS<sup>12</sup>

Construction for Phase 2 is primarily curtain wall and composite panel which compliment the new additions to the Phase 1 project. In Phase 1, contemporary butt-joint glazing and porcelain clad panels were used to differentiate new construction. (Similar distinctions were made between old and new in the interior). More specifically in Phase 2, similarly coloured (but slightly lighter), butt-joint glazing between walls of porcelain panels to match Phase 1 will face the courtyard. At the Horton Street renovation, similarly coloured glazing will be installed with charcoal-coloured aluminum caps to differentiate the phase.

In general, the material palette of Phase 2 reflects that used in the renovation and addition to the Roundhouse in Phase 1—where the heritage brick was restored, new windows and doors added to reflect the architectural heritage of the original while considering the new use (e.g. glazing in engine doors). Feature areas of the Phase 2 interior will have structural wood roof beams and deck to compliment Phase 1.

### 3.5 SITE | LANDSCAPE<sup>13</sup>

The landscape design approach respects and interprets the rich history and heritage of the London Roundhouse through authentic landscape interventions. The Roundhouse’s architectural style and rhythm of large windows and door bays provide a framework for the landscape layout. The building’s situation on the site [informs] landscape enhancements to strengthen its relationship to the public realm and seamlessly connect it to the temporary turning circle, future interior courtyard, and phased developments. The landscape design buffers and integrates the parking lot with the site to create a balanced and unified overall landscape composition. Discreet and unique plant types will be considered to reinforce the historical nature of the Roundhouse’s architectural character, form and function, and to rejuvenate its renewed purpose.

<sup>11</sup> Taken from e-mail correspondance from Jeff Sheffield (project architect, Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.) to Maneesh Poddar (Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 9, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Taken from e-mail correspondance from Jeff Sheffield (project architect, Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.) to Maneesh Poddar (Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 9, 2016 AND from Nate Fehrman (client) to Laverne Kirkness (planner, Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 10, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Taken from e-mail correspondance from Art Lierman (landscape architect) to Maneesh Poddar (Kirkness Consulting Inc.), February 9, 2016.

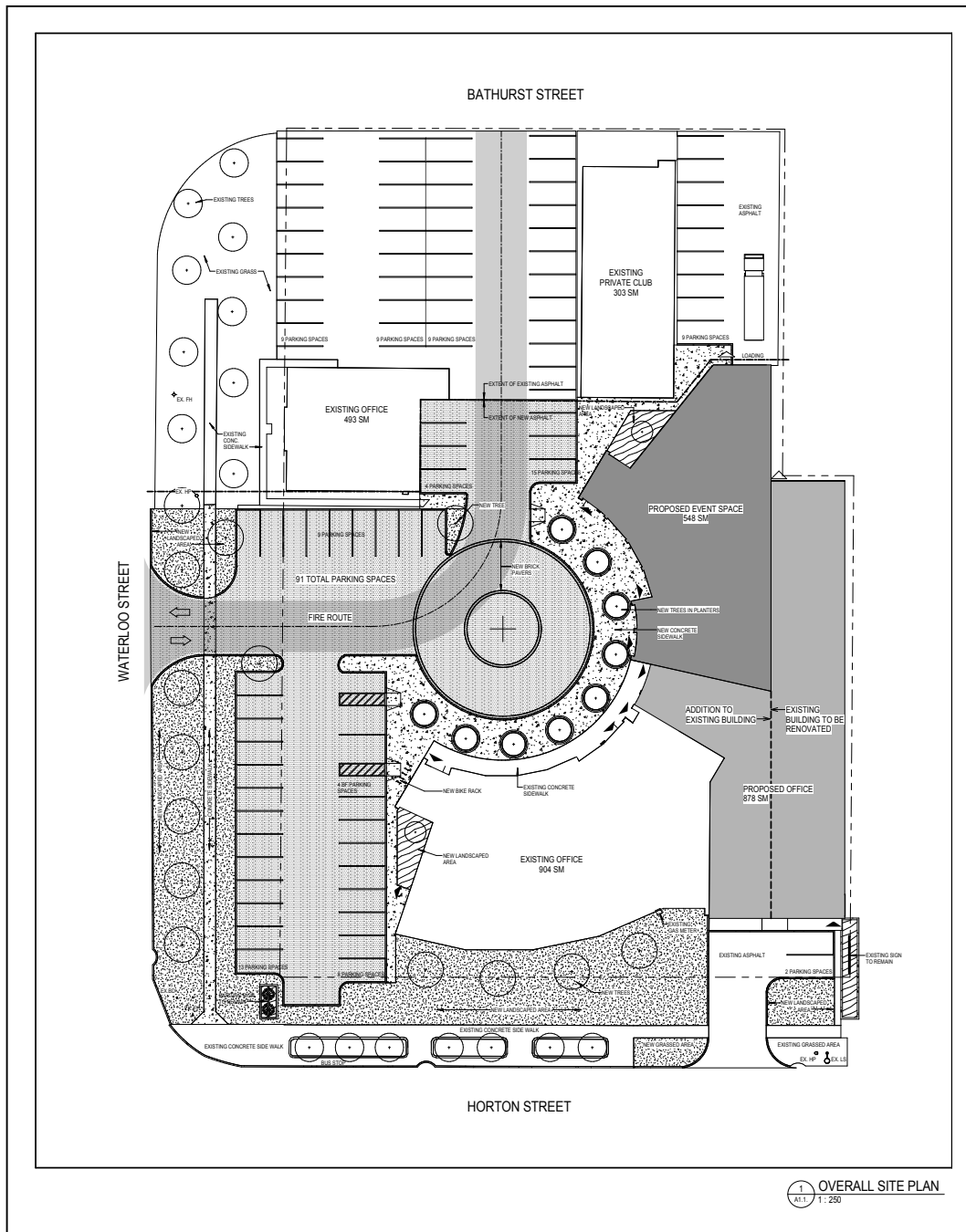


Fig. 4 Site plan indicating Phase 1—existing Roundhouse—Phase 2 addition, landscape and parking concept (credit: Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.)

Note that the event space area indicated on the plan is being built as “shelled space” for flexibility in use for a tenant that has yet to be determined and who can take some or all of the square footage. The zoning being sought allows for multiple uses.

#### 4. MEASUREMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND SITE IMPACT

The majority of the buildings in and around the proposed development site are not designated or high priority heritage properties. As well, there is no dominant, expressed heritage character in the area, and the London Roundhouse property stands alone as a singularly unique landmark and heritage resource.

Phase 1 development impact on the existing Roundhouse building was minimal as it focused mainly on restoring the existing Roundhouse structure; respecting the heritage character while adapting it for a new function.

- many of the building's original features were restored
- Phase 1 "design placed the entrance at the rear, like when the building was used to service locomotives, the floor was lowered by five-feet to the original specifications and the windows—long covered—[were] restored."<sup>14</sup>

Phase 2 has continued to respond to the round courtyard area (radial, rotating function of the original turntable design/dimensions) located to the north (front) of the Roundhouse. A proposed new multi-tenant commercial space fronts the new round courtyard off Waterloo Street to the west

- material palette of Phase 2 reflects that used in the renovation and addition to the Roundhouse in Phase 1
- structure is exposed revealing the historical evolution of materials used in the original roundhouse building to more modern materials such as steel and glass
- interior spaces of Phase 2 feature high ceiling heights and open mezzanines
- Phase 2 interior will have structural wood roof beams and deck to compliment Phase 1
- Roundhouse's architectural style and rhythm of large windows and door bays provide a framework for the landscape layout

Note that the Roundhouse is located within an area identified for study as a future heritage conservation district. Note as well that Phase 1 strengthens the heritage character of this portion, while Phase 2 will have minimal impact given the already varied uses in this part of the neighbourhood.

#### 5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES, MITIGATION AND CONSERVATION METHODS

The following section provides brief responses to potential negative impacts of development referring to those identified in "InfoSheet #5:

- **destruction**—of any, or part of any, of the significant heritage attributes
  - minimal for Phase 1
- **alteration**—that is not compatible with the historic fabric and appearance
  - proposed Phase 2 alteration is sympathetic and complementary to the original Roundhouse
- **shadows**—that alter appearance of heritage attribute or viability of plantings
  - not an impact
- **isolation**—of a heritage attribute from its surrounding context or significant relationship
  - relatively unchanged with proposed Phase 2

---

<sup>14</sup> See B. Bicknell. "Past glory returning to London roundhouse to give it a live in the future", *CTV London*, October 1, 2013.



- **direct or indirect obstruction**—of significant views or vistas
  - Phase 2 does not alter views from Horton or Waterloo Streets
- **change in land use**—rezoning that allows infill of a formally open space
  - not applicable | doesn't apply
- **land disturbances**—change in grade
  - not applicable | doesn't apply

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

For Phase 2 of the project, Section 6 is somewhat redundant as work has already been completed on the original Roundhouse. Implementation could include an application for designation—which is already assumed on the basis of the first rezoning.

## 7. SUMMARY STATEMENT AND CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

London's Roundhouse is one of the few remaining roundhouses still standing in southwestern Ontario and is extremely significant as one of London's most well-known landmarks. Phase 1 of the project (completed in 2015) retained the heritage bones of the original building—respecting the heritage character while adapting it for a new function; many of the building's original features were restored. It has been described as a sympathetic restoration and imaginative repurposing of an existing heritage resource. It has been recognized nationally, provincially and locally (winning several awards) for its heritage and its construction merit.

Phase 2, as describe in this Hlstatement, continues to respond to the overall heritage character and defining features of the original Roundhouse; the approach has been to use compatible interior and exterior materials; reflect the architectural style and rhythm of large windows and door bays to provide a framework for the addition; and, respond to the radial, rotating function of the original turntable for both the massing of the addition and landscaping approach.

While Phase 1 restoration work re-established the heritage character of the property—maintaining and improving its landmark status in the area—implementation of Phase 2 will ensure the longevity of the site and improve the vitality of the area and the City.