

HERITAGE IMPACT **ASSESSMENT**

661 – 667 Talbot Street, London
Proposed Residential Development

Date:

May 5th, 2016

Prepared for:

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1.0 Introduction

In February 2016, Drewlo Holdings Inc. retained MHBC to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment related to the properties located at 661-667 Talbot Street in the City of London. The properties are presently vacant and are proposed for a future high-rise residential development. One property (661 Talbot Street) is contained on the City of London's Register of Non-Designated properties, and there are several designated and listed properties in the general vicinity as well.

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared at the request of the City of London in order to assess the impacts of the proposed development on existing heritage resources onsite and in the surrounding area. The HIA includes an assessment of the existing heritage features on the subject site in order to determine their cultural heritage value or interest, and an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on any nearby cultural heritage resources or heritage attributes.

The City of London does not have a formal Terms of Reference to guide the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments. The preparation of this report is therefore guided by the Ontario Ministry of Culture (now the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport) *InfoSheet #5 Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans*, part of the 2006 *Heritage Resources in the Land Use Planning Process* document. As per the guidance in the Ministry document, this report contains the following components:

- Historical research, site analysis and evaluation
- Identification of the significance and attributes of the cultural heritage resources
- Description of the proposed development or site alteration
- Measurement of development or site alteration impact
- Consideration of alternatives, mitigation and conservation methods
- Implementation and monitoring
- Summary statement and conservation recommendations

1.1 Policy Context

The Planning Act

The *Planning Act* makes a number of provisions respecting cultural heritage, either directly in Section 2 of the Act or Section 3 respecting policy statements and provincial plans. In Section 2, the *Planning Act* outlines 18 spheres of provincial interest that must be considered by appropriate authorities in the planning process. One of the intentions of *The Planning Act* is to “encourage the co-operation and co-ordination among the various interests”. Regarding cultural heritage, Subsection 2(d) of the Act provides that:

The Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board and the Municipal Board, in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of provincial interest such as, ...

(d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest;

The *Planning Act* therefore provides for the overall broad consideration of cultural heritage resources through the land use planning process.

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

In support of the provincial interest identified in Subsection 2 (d) of the *Planning Act*, and as provided for in Section 3, the Province has refined policy guidance for land use planning and development matters in the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* (PPS). The PPS is “intended to be read in its entirety and the relevant policy areas are to be applied in each situation”. This provides a weighting and balancing of issues within the planning process. When addressing cultural heritage planning, the PPS provides for the following:

2.6.1 Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.

Significant: e) in regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people.

Built heritage resource: means a building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured remnant that contributes to a property’s cultural heritage value or interest as identified by a community, including an Aboriginal community. Built heritage resources are generally located on property that has been designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act, or included on local, provincial and/or federal registers.

Cultural heritage landscape: means a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Aboriginal community. The area may involve features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act; villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways, viewsheds, natural areas and industrial complexes of heritage significance; and areas recognized by federal or international designation authorities (e.g. a National Historic Site or District designation, or a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Conserved: means the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches can be included in these plans and assessments.

The subject site or built features on the subject area are not considered to be a *protected heritage property* under the consideration of the PPS, as they are not designated under any part of the *Ontario Heritage Act* or subject to conservation easement, and have not been identified by provincial, federal or UNESCO bodies.

2.0 Background history

The subject sites are part of the area of London known as Talbot North, which was initially surveyed in 1826 but developed primarily after the 1850's. The properties immediately adjacent to the Thames River featured several prominent homes that were the residences of prominent community leaders and businessmen. This section summarizes the existing and former features of the subject lands, known as 661 Talbot Street and 667 Talbot Street.

2.1 661 Talbot Street

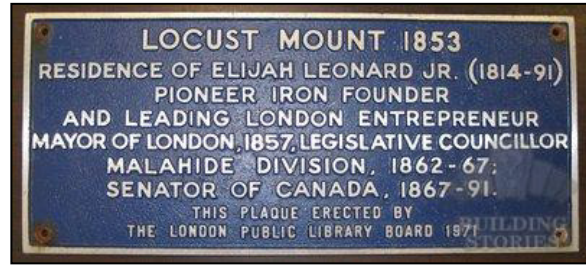
The property known as 661 Talbot Street was initially developed in 1853-1854, and contained a home known as Locust Mount. This building was constructed for Elijah Leonard Jr., who was a successful industrialist who became the mayor of the City of London in 1857 and later a Senator of Canada from 1867 until his death in 1891 (*City of London, 1994*). The grand mansion was of the neo-classical style of architecture and featured a two-storey design with three bays, decorative shutters and trim work. The house was named Locust Mount after the locust trees once planted on the property.



Figures 1 & 2: Photos of Locust Mount (*Source: City of London staff*).

Locust Mount remained the home of Elijah's wife, Emmeline Woodman, until her death in 1895. The house has since been occupied by several residents, most notably George Tyler Brown, of Beddome and Brown General Insurance Agents, for a time one of the largest insurance companies in London. The building was most recently a fraternity house (*London Public Library*).

A plaque commemorating the subject property was installed in September 1971 on one of the pillars of the stone fence. The plaque was removed in 2008 and is now housed at Ivey Family London Room (Central Library).



Figures 3 & 4: Photos of Locust Mount plaque (Source: *Western Archives and London Public Library*).

Locust Mount was damaged by fire in December 2000, and a demolition application was applied for in 2004. As a result of the application, efforts were undertaken by the applicant and City staff to determine if there were means to reconstruct the building. The home was later considered for designation by the City of London under the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2007, but ultimately Council decided not to pursue designation. The home on the property was once again damaged by fire in 2008, and later demolished by the property owner. The property remains listed on the City's non-designated register as a 'Priority 1' building.

2.2 667 Talbot Street

The property known as 667 Talbot Street initially contained a large red brick home built in the mid-late 19th century. The home was reportedly demolished in 1915. A monastery was later constructed on the property in the early 1920's. The monastery was built for the Precious Blood Sisters to replace a smaller monastery they had in London. The Sisters moved into the new monastery on July 31st, 1923, and it remained their home for several decades (*Precious Blood Sisters*). By the late-1970's, the building no longer met the needs of the monastery and the Precious Blood Sisters moved into a smaller facility within the City of London. The property at 667 Talbot was sold and the building later removed.



Figure 5: Photo of monastery at 667 Talbot Street (Source: *Precious Blood Sisters*).

3.0 Description of site and surrounding features

The subject site is located on the western side of Talbot Street in the City of London, approximately 1 km northwest of Downtown London. The subject site consists of two properties (661 Talbot, 667 Talbot), and is bounded on the south and east by single family dwellings, on the north by apartment buildings, and on the west by the Thames River.

The purpose of this section is to describe the current features contained within the subject site, as well as review adjacent and nearby heritage features.

3.1 Subject site description

As noted earlier in this report, the subject site is located within an area of London known as Talbot North. This area has been previously identified by the City (in 1994) as having merit for further study leading to a potential heritage conservation district. This is due partly to the characteristics of the area that are the result of riverside mansions built for prominent local citizens in the mid-1800's, as well as the general character of streets within the area. To date, such study has not been pursued however the area remains on the City's list of areas to examine in the future.

661 Talbot Street

The subject property is the previous location of Locust Mount, a grand mansion that was demolished in 2008 following a fire. The remains of the house have been removed and the former building site filled in and graded.



Figures 6 & 7: Photos of 661 Talbot Street from across Talbot Street (left) and from rear of former building site (right) (MHBC, March 2016).

The sole built feature located on the subject site is a stone retaining wall which traverses the frontage of the property adjacent to Talbot Street. The retaining wall is constructed of cut stone with capping along the length of the wall. The wall features pillars that are located on either side

of a set of concrete steps leading from the street level to the front yard, and another set of pillars on either side of what would have been the original driveway leading to the house.



Figures 8 - 11: Photos of the stone wall adjacent to Talbot Street (*MHBC, March 2016*).

The site is primarily flat and begins to slope towards the Thames River at the rear of the property. Vegetation includes some specimen trees in the former yard area, as well as the remains of a former fence row along the northern property boundary.

667 Talbot Street

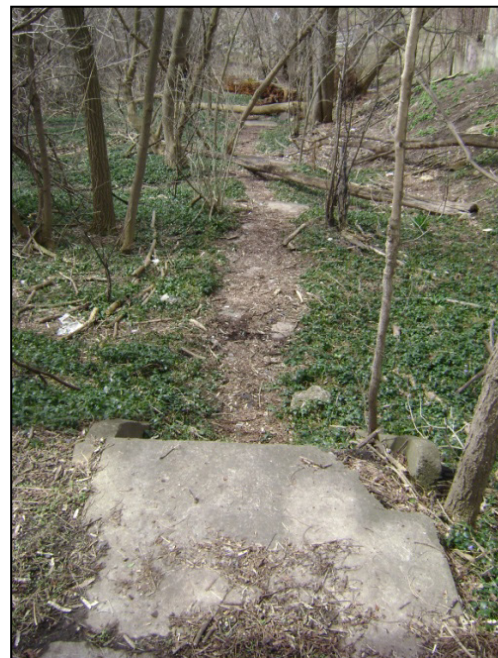
The subject property is the previous location of a monastery that was constructed for the Precious Blood Sisters in 1923. The site is currently vacant.



Figures 12 & 13: Photos of 667 Talbot Street from Talbot Street (left) and from rear of flat portion of site (right) (MHBC, March 2016).

The property at 667 Talbot Street is quite deep and includes much of the slope towards the river. The slope is vegetated and contains a mix of sizes of various tree species, as well as informal trails.

Contained within this slope are the remains of tiered concrete steps that provided access to the water's edge beyond the property boundary. These steps likely date from the time the monastery was constructed on the site. The condition of the steps and entrance gates is poor.



Figures 14 & 15: Photos concrete steps at 667 Talbot Street from bottom of slope (left) and top of slope (right), (MHBC, March 2016).

3.2 Adjacent heritage properties

The subject lands at 661 Talbot and 667 Talbot are located within close proximity to several properties that are either designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Part IV) or contained within the City of London's register of non-designated properties. This sub-section reviews adjacent heritage properties the properties and their reasons for designation or listing (where applicable). For the purposes of heritage impact assessment, adjacent is defined in the City of London Official Plan to include lands that are contiguous or directly opposite a protected heritage property, separated only by a laneway or municipal road.

Adjacent designated properties

There are four designated properties located immediately across Talbot Street from the subject site. These include: 672 Talbot Street, 674 Talbot Street, 678 Talbot Street, and 680 Talbot Street.

672-674 Talbot Street was designated by the City of London on September 7th, 2004, and the designation by-law lists historical, contextual and architectural reasons for designation. The building is described as a two-storey Italianate semi-detached building and one of four similar structures on the east side of Talbot Street. Notable architectural features are mentioned, such as brick quoins, wide first floor window with stained glass transom, triple-arch 'London' door, doorstep, decorative brackets, and chimneys. The dwellings' relation to Talbot Street is mentioned, as well as the relation of the property to the early industrial entrepreneurs in London.

678 Talbot Street was designated by the City of London on July 24th, 2012, and the designation by-law lists historical, contextual and architectural (interior / exterior) reasons for designation. The building is described as a two-and-one-half storey residence designed in the Queen Anne style of architecture. The roof shape, gable, brickwork, and windows are listed as exterior features of note, and a variety of interior features are also listed. The building's relationship to the original development of one of London's elite residential neighbourhoods is mentioned, as well as the ties to Elijah Leonard Jr. And his business partners.

680 Talbot Street was designated by the City of London on February 5th, 1980, and the designation by-law lists a variety of architectural reasons for designation. The house is described as a particularly interesting vernacular example of a traditional farmhouse plan adapted to an urban setting, combining Italianate and High Victorian Gothic elements. The building is one-and-one-half storeys in height. The roof, bargeboard, cornice, windows, shutters, brickwork, and house plan are all described as notable architectural features.

The following page includes photos of each of the above buildings.



Figures 16 - 18: Photos of 672-674 Talbot Street (top left), 678 Talbot Street (top right), and 680 Talbot Street (bottom), (MHBC, March 2016).

Adjacent listed properties

There are two listed properties that are considered to be adjacent to the subject lands. These include 653 Talbot Street (located immediately south of 661 Talbot Street), and 116 Mill Street (located at the intersection of Mill Street and Talbot Street).

653 Talbot Street is listed as a Priority 1 property and is identified as the 'Cuddy property'. The building is identified as being constructed c. 1908 in the Georgian Revival style of architecture. It is understood that this property is one of the residences of another of London's mayors.

116 Mill Street is listed as a Priority 2 property and is identified as the "Churchdown Enterpr's" property. The building is identified as being constructed in 1875 in the Italianate style of architecture.

Photos of the above properties are included on the following page.



Figures 19 - 20: Photos of 653 Talbot Street (left), and 116 Mill Street (right) (MHBC, March 2016).

3.3 Other nearby heritage features

Although not 'adjacent' to the subject site per se, the City of London requested that this report include mention of other nearby heritage features. These include the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District, and the designation of the Thames River as a Canadian Heritage River.

The Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District was designated by the City of London on May 6th, 2014 (adopted by Municipal Council) and approved on May 15th, 2015. The area is located on the western side of the Thames River and includes approximately 580 properties. The District contains primarily Ontario Cottage dwellings and similar styles that are modest and representative of working-class settlers. In addition to architectural-related attributes, the heritage attributes for the District include such matters as proximity to the Thames River, views along narrow streets that terminate with views of the Thames River dykes, greenways along the Thames River dyke system, public greenspaces, and Blackfriars Bridge.

The Thames Rivers was formally designated a Canadian Heritage River on August 14th, 2000 and was nominated for the designation in 1999. Canadian Heritage Rivers are recognized for their outstanding contributions to the country's cultural heritage, natural heritage, and recreational opportunities. The management plan for the Thames River lists a number of natural heritage, cultural heritage, and recreational values of the river.

4.0 Identification of the significance of cultural heritage resources onsite

This section of the report reviews the various attributes of the subject properties and includes an identification of the significance of any cultural heritage resources present.

4.1 661 Talbot Street

The property located at 661 Talbot Street is associated with Elijah Leonard Jr., who was a successful industrialist that became the mayor of the City of London in 1857, and later a Senator of Canada from 1867 until his death in 1891. The former house on the property, “Locust Mount” was his residence and a prominent early dwelling in this part of London. The house has since been demolished. A plaque commemorating the house and original owners was previously installed on the property and is now housed at the Ivey Family London Room (Central Library). A stone retaining wall remains along the front of the property and is the only remaining built feature on the property.

As noted earlier in this report, 661 Talbot Street remains on the City of London inventory of non-designated properties and is listed as a ‘Priority 1’ building. As the building is no longer present on the property, the property should be removed from the register.

4.2 667 Talbot Street

The property located at 667 Talbot Street is associated with the Precious Blood Sisters, who resided in a monastery on the property from 1923 to the late-1970’s. The Sisters are now located at another building in London, and the building was later demolished. There are no built features located on the site.

4.3 Cultural Heritage Landscape evaluation

Cultural heritage landscapes are defined in the PPS as:

a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Aboriginal community. The area may involve features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act; villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways, viewsheds, natural areas and industrial complexes of heritage significance; and areas recognized by federal or international designation authorities (e.g. a National Historic Site or District designation, or a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Cultural heritage landscapes may be characterised by three types:

- *Designed landscapes: those which have been intentionally designed e.g. a planned garden or in a more urban setting, a downtown square.*
- *Evolved landscapes: those which have evolved through the use by people and whose activities have directly shaped the landscape or area. This can include a 'continuing' landscape where human activities and uses are still on-going or evolving e.g. residential neighbourhood or mainstreet; or in a 'relict' landscape, where even though an evolutionary process may have come to an end, the landscape remains historically significant e.g. an abandoned mine site or settlement area.*
- *Associative landscapes: those with powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element, as well as with material cultural evidence e.g. a sacred site within a natural environment or a historic battlefield.*

The subject site does not meet the criteria to be classified as a cultural heritage landscape.

5.0 Description of proposed development

The proposed development of the subject site consists of the construction of a 16 storey apartment building that is planned to contain 236 units. The building is proposed to be L-shaped, with the majority of the mass located at the northern end of the property. The building is set back approximately 8 metres from the edge of the Talbot Street road allowance. The proposed development will also feature landscaping, surface parking and underground parking.

The proposed development will result in the removal of the stone retaining wall along the front of the property located at 661 Talbot Street. The wall is required to be removed due to required grading at the site. The applicant proposes to replicate the look of the wall in the design of decorative features onsite.

Renderings of the building are located below, and a site plan is included on the next page.



Figure 21: Talbot Street elevation (Drewlo, March 2016).



Figure 21: Northern building elevation (Drewlo, March 2016).

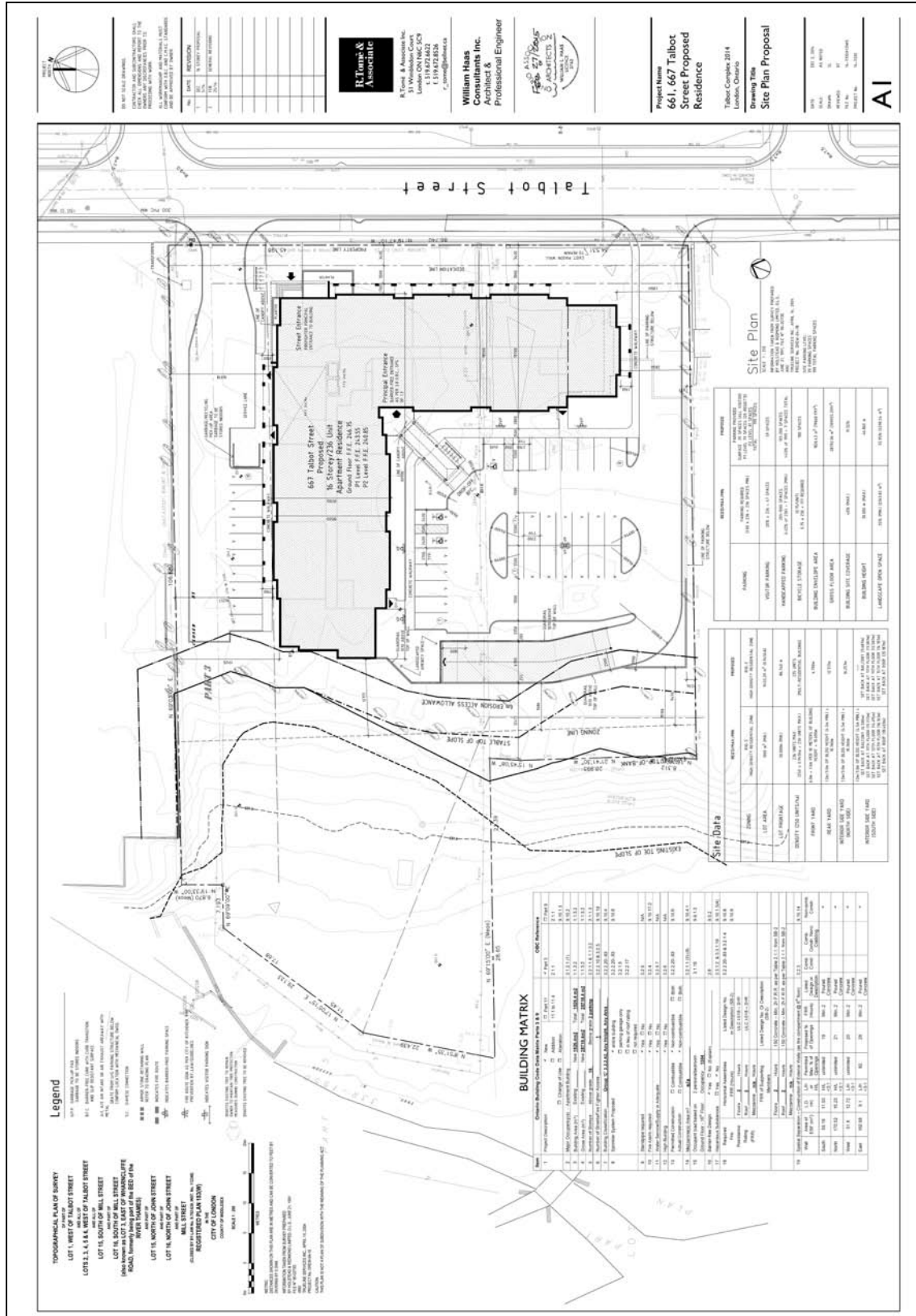


Figure 22: Proposed site plan (Drewlo, March 2016).

6.0 Impacts of proposed development

There are three classifications of changes that the effects of a proposed development may have on an identified cultural heritage resource: beneficial, neutral or adverse. Beneficial effects may include such actions as retaining a property of cultural heritage value, protecting it from loss or removal, maintaining restoring or repairing heritage attributes, or making sympathetic additions or alterations that allow for a continued long-term use and retain heritage building fabric. Neutral effects have neither a markedly positive or negative impact on a cultural heritage resource. Adverse effects may include the loss or removal of a cultural heritage resource, unsympathetic alterations or additions that remove or obstruct heritage attributes, the isolation of a cultural heritage resource from its setting or context, or the addition of other elements that are unsympathetic to the character or heritage attributes of a cultural heritage resource. Adverse effects may require strategies to mitigate their impact on cultural heritage resources.

The impacts of a proposed development or change to a cultural heritage resource may be direct or indirect. They may occur over a short term or long term duration, and may occur during a pre-construction phase, construction phase or post-construction phase. Impacts to a cultural heritage resource may also be site specific or widespread, and may have low, moderate or high levels of physical impact.

The following describes the potential impacts associated with the proposed development plan.

6.1 Potential impacts to onsite features

The proposed development will not have any impacts on onsite buildings due to the fact that there are no buildings located on the subject lands.

The proposed development will have a direct impact on the stone retaining wall due to the removal of the wall as part of the proposed redevelopment. This is considered a negative impact.

6.2 Potential impacts to adjacent buildings and structures

There is the potential for the proposed development to negatively impact existing adjacent dwellings through impacts such as destruction of resources (e.g. vibration), shadow, isolation of heritage resources, and obstruction of significant views.

In order to ensure that vibration impacts are not caused by the proposed development, it is recommended that pre-construction assessments be completed of adjacent built heritage resources, as well as post-construction assessments. This exercise is typically carried out by Drewlo Holdings for projects of this type. Any impacts would be required to be rectified by the property owner.

The applicant (Drewlo Holdings) has prepared a detailed shadow study that evaluated potential impacts at various times of year and times of day. The results show that there are only short-term shadow impacts are expected at certain times of day during certain times of the year, not long-term impacts that could affect adjacent heritage resources.

6.3 Potential impacts to adjacent buildings and structures

There are not expected to be any impacts that would affect the heritage attributes of the Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District, or the designation of the Thames Rivers as a Canadian Heritage River.

7.0 Alternative approaches and mitigation

As outlined earlier in this report, there are no heritage buildings or structures located on the subject lands. There is also a low potential for impacts on adjacent built heritage resources identified by the City. Given these conclusions, alternative development approaches were not examined.

8.0 Implementation and monitoring

As outlined in the guidance provided by the Province, implementation and monitoring recommendations are required in order to assist with the conservation of cultural heritage resources on the subject lands. Based on the proposed development option, the following actions are recommended:

- Site interpretation and commemoration of Locust Mount and Elijah Leonard Jr. is not required in order to recognize the site history and early development of the property. A plaque was previously installed on the property and is now located at the London Public Library.
- The stone retaining wall traversing the frontage of 661 Talbot Street will be removed as part of the redevelopment of the site. As such, appropriate documentation and interpretation should be prepared, and consideration should be given to incorporating complimentary design features into the design of the site.

- Monitoring would be required to ensure that there are no impacts to the integrity of adjacent heritage resources as a result of vibration caused by onsite construction activities. It is recommended that pre-construction assessments be completed, as well as post-construction assessments. Any impacts would be required to be rectified by the property owner.

The above conservation measures will ensure that significant cultural heritage resources are appropriately conserved over the long-term, as well as ensure that resources to be removed are appropriately documented.

9.0 Conclusions

This Heritage Impact Assessment has provided a summary of the background research and historical development of the properties known as 661 Talbot Street and 667 Talbot Street in the City of London. The report includes an assessment of the potential cultural heritage resources present on the site, an evaluation of the potential impacts of development, and recommended mitigation options.

The proposed development of the subject lands includes the construction of a 16-storey apartment building with above-ground and below-ground parking.

It is concluded that the proposed development will have no negative impact on the heritage resources on and adjacent to the subject property. Mitigation, implementation and monitoring recommendations have been included to aid in the conservation of historic resources. These include:

- Appropriate documentation and interpretation of the stone retaining wall traversing the frontage of 661 Talbot Street should be prepared, and consideration should be given to incorporating complimentary design features into the design of the site.
- Monitoring and assessment is required to ensure that there are no impacts to the integrity of adjacent heritage resources as a result of onsite construction activities.

In addition to the above, it is recommended that the property at 661 Talbot Street be removed from the City of London Inventory of Heritage Resources. The listing relates to the building on the property that is no longer present.

Respectfully submitted,



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Partner



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Senior Planner

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Western Libraries – Western Archives. Photo of Locust Mount.



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