



London City Council  
300 Dufferin Ave,  
London, ON, N6B 1Z2

May 10, 2017

Re: GSP GROUP INC. Proposal for 560 & 562 Wellington Street

I am writing as Vice President of Heritage London Foundation (“HLF”). HLF is a charitable organization whose mission is to preserve our community’s important and historical architecture, and establish viable contemporary uses for local heritage properties, thus maintaining them for the enjoyment of all future Londoners.

The developments proposed by GSP Group Inc. pose a significant threat to London’s built heritage. As you are aware, the planned location straddles Victoria Park, which has been the crowning jewel of downtown London since 1874, and the Historic Woodfield District, one of Canada’s finest and best-preserved Victorian streetscapes. Indeed, both of these areas serve as a binding thread in the cultural fabric of this amazing city.

In the Woodfield District, a new development is typically restricted to a height no greater than one story taller than the structure it is replacing. In this case, the proposed tower (at the reduced height of 17 stories) would exceed the maximum height restriction by 11 stories. At 151 units, it exceeds the area’s permitted density level by more than 116%. If this project were approved, two historical London properties would face demolition, and a building whose style and scale threaten the neighbourhood’s remarkable character would be erected in their place.

It is with this in mind that we formally extend our support for the recommendation of City Planner John M. Fleming to refuse this project (File no. OZ-8462). In his recommendation, Mr. Fleming lists six main arguments for refusing this project. In doing so, he reasons:

*“The proposed development is not consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), which encourages intensification where it is appropriate and can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock and the conservation of heritage resources”*

At HLF, we recognize that infill development is an inevitable trait of a growing city. However, with so many opportunities for tasteful development in other parts of downtown, and because of the serious risk it poses to the cultural integrity of the Woodfield community, we believe that this project is unsupportable.

It is our hope that council will strongly consider these implications, and ultimately endorse the city staff’s recommendations to refuse this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacob McNiven".

Jacob McNiven,  
Vice President,  
Heritage London Foundation