

329 & 331 Richmond Street, London Ontario  
Youth Opportunities Unlimited

# HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT



**Date**  
17 August 2017

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## 1 Introduction

The properties at 329 & 331 Richmond Street, as well as 333 Richmond Street have been recently purchased by Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU), who engaged Cornerstone Architecture Incorporated to assist in redeveloping these properties to facilitate a new YOU mixed use and residential facility.

The project consists of the renovation and five storey addition to the existing one storey structures at 329 & 331 Richmond Street, as well as the minor renovation of and exterior restoration to the existing four storey structure at 333 Richmond Street. Due to the limited scope of work at 333 Richmond St, this property it is not included in the site plan application. However, the impact that the exterior restoration will have on re-establishing the historic and aesthetic appearance of the exterior facade at 333 Richmond Street, is further described in this heritage impact statement.

The renovation and addition project at 329-331 Richmond Street was submitted for Site Plan Consultation at the City of London on October 19, 2016 and an Internal Review Meeting was held on October 27, 2016. After the proposal was reviewed, a Record of Pre-Application Consultation was distributed by Mike Corby of the City of London on November 1, 2016, which outlined a list of additional material submissions required to complete the application. Due to the sites location within the Downtown Conservation District, it was indicated that a Heritage Impact Statement, followed by a Heritage Alteration Permit was required for this application.

This Heritage Impact Report was prepared by Cornerstone Architecture Incorporated to outline the specific ways in which the cultural heritage of the existing buildings at 329-333 Richmond Street will be conserved throughout the Youth Opportunities Unlimited addition and renovation project.

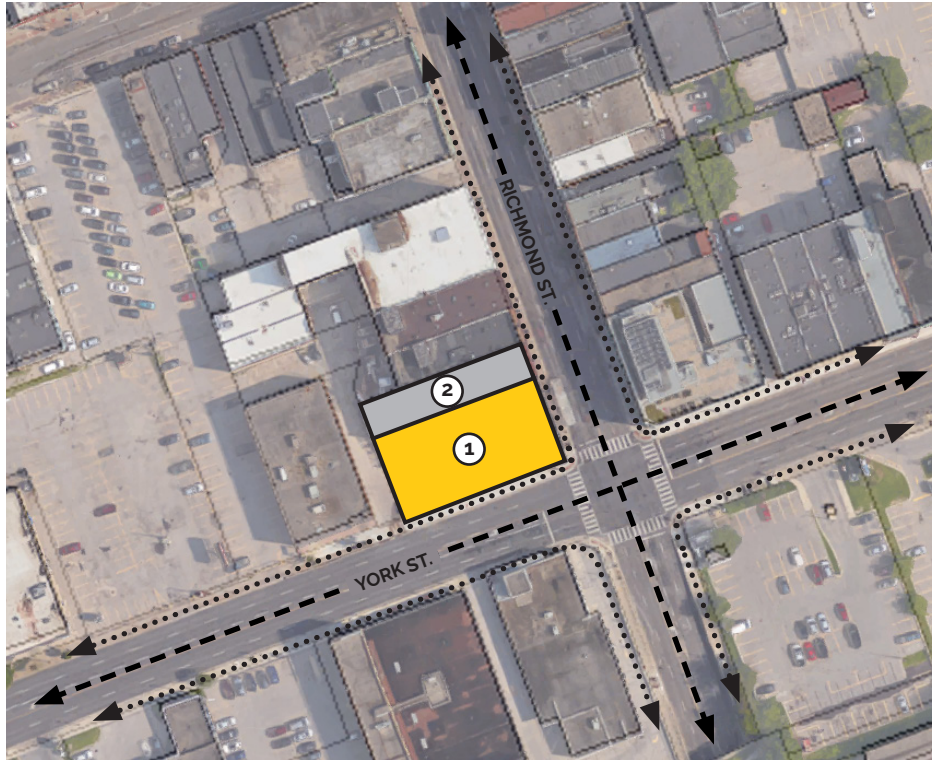
## 2 Site Location and Description

The site is located on the northwest corner of Richmond and York Street, at a prominent intersection of two main thoroughfares in downtown London. The existing buildings at 329 & 331 Richmond St. are both currently unoccupied, contain an existing footprint that covers most of the site and consist of the following:

- The existing building at 329 Richmond St. is a 4,100 sq.ft. single storey structure with a full basement level. The main floor structure has been largely maintained, however the roof has been removed as the building was previously used as an open air patio. The structure contains historically designated stone elements on the east and south façade that will be preserved and integrated into the new construction.
- The existing building at 331 Richmond St. is a 2,600 sq.ft. single storey enclosed structure with a full basement level. The main access to the property is on the east façade off Richmond Street with a secondary exit off the west façade onto an elevated wooden patio. The east façade has been renovated to serve its previous commercial use and contains little resemblance to the vertical rhythm or materiality of its historic exterior façade.

The existing building at 333 Richmond St is currently occupied by commercial and residential use, contains a zero lot line on Richmond St. and consists of the following:

- The existing building at 333 Richmond St. is a 3,000 sq.ft. four storey brick structure with a full basement level. The building currently contains commercial space on the basement, ground and second floor with four (4) two storey residential apartments occupying the third and fourth floor.



**Legend**

- 1 329 & 331 Richmond St.
- 2 333 Richmond Street
- ← - - Denotes Vehicular Circulation
- ← ···· Denotes Pedestrian Circulation

*Site Plan - 329, 331 & 333 Richmond Street*



*Current Site Photo - View looking northwest from York Street*



*Current Site Photo - View looking northeast from York Street*



### 3 Historic Background

The properties at 329-333 Richmond Street are all designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act due to their location within the Downtown Heritage Conservation District. The *Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan* further identifies the existing buildings at 329 & 331 Richmond Street as H (Historic) with a Category C ranking, noting that the remaining historic elements at 329 Richmond St. are the 'vertical stone elements along both street elevations each with a decorative panel and an arch over the main entryway on Richmond.' Category C indicates that while the structure contains historical significance, the building has been renovated using inappropriate material or design and requires that restorations should be considered using traditional materials.

The *Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan* identifies 333 Richmond Street as H (Historic) with a Category A ranking, which indicates that most of the building's facade elements are intact and all elements should be retained. However, through referencing the historic photos of this property, it is apparent that the current ground floor storefront at 333 Richmond St. is not original and renovations will be done to restore the style and materiality of the ground floor facade to reflect the original architecture.

According to the *Downtown London Heritage Conservation District Plan*, the original structure located at 329 Richmond Street was constructed in 1890 as a four storey red brick building with decorative windows and an ornamental stone archway on the east façade. The structures at 331 & 333 Richmond Street were constructed in 1880, also as a four storey buildings and continued the architectural language of the adjacent buildings. The historic site photos on the following page capture the existing streetscape from the 1890's to 1942, illustrating the massing of the original buildings as well as the architectural treatment of the existing facades. The photos show that while the 4 storey structure at 331 Richmond St. continued the building height and architectural language of the streetscape, the façade of 329 Richmond St. was historically distinct and the cornice line was raised almost half a storey higher than the adjacent buildings to highlight the corner property.

Evidently the buildings at 329 & 331 Richmond Street have drastically transformed throughout the years, not only in height, but also in exterior appearance. Originally existing as commercial establishments, the ground floor storefronts of both properties have undergone multiple renovations to house numerous commercial tenants. It is suspected that a fire in the 1960's is what destroyed the upper three floors of both properties, leaving the ground floor structures that we see today as the only remains.

Through the design of the new YOU facility, it will be important to preserve the remaining historic architectural features and seamlessly integrate them into the new construction while simultaneously respecting the history of the original streetscape. Referencing the historic site photos to reinterpret the original massing and historic architectural language using modern construction and materials will allow the design to stand as a contemporary interpretation of the past.



## Historic Site Photos



1890's - View looking southwest from Richmond Street\*



1920's - View looking north from Richmond Street\*



1942 - View looking northwest from York Street\*

\*Photo obtained from the holdings of Western Archives at Western University



## 4 Proposed Design

The proposed six storey Youth Opportunities Unlimited facility at 329 & 331 Richmond Street will contain two major occupancies:

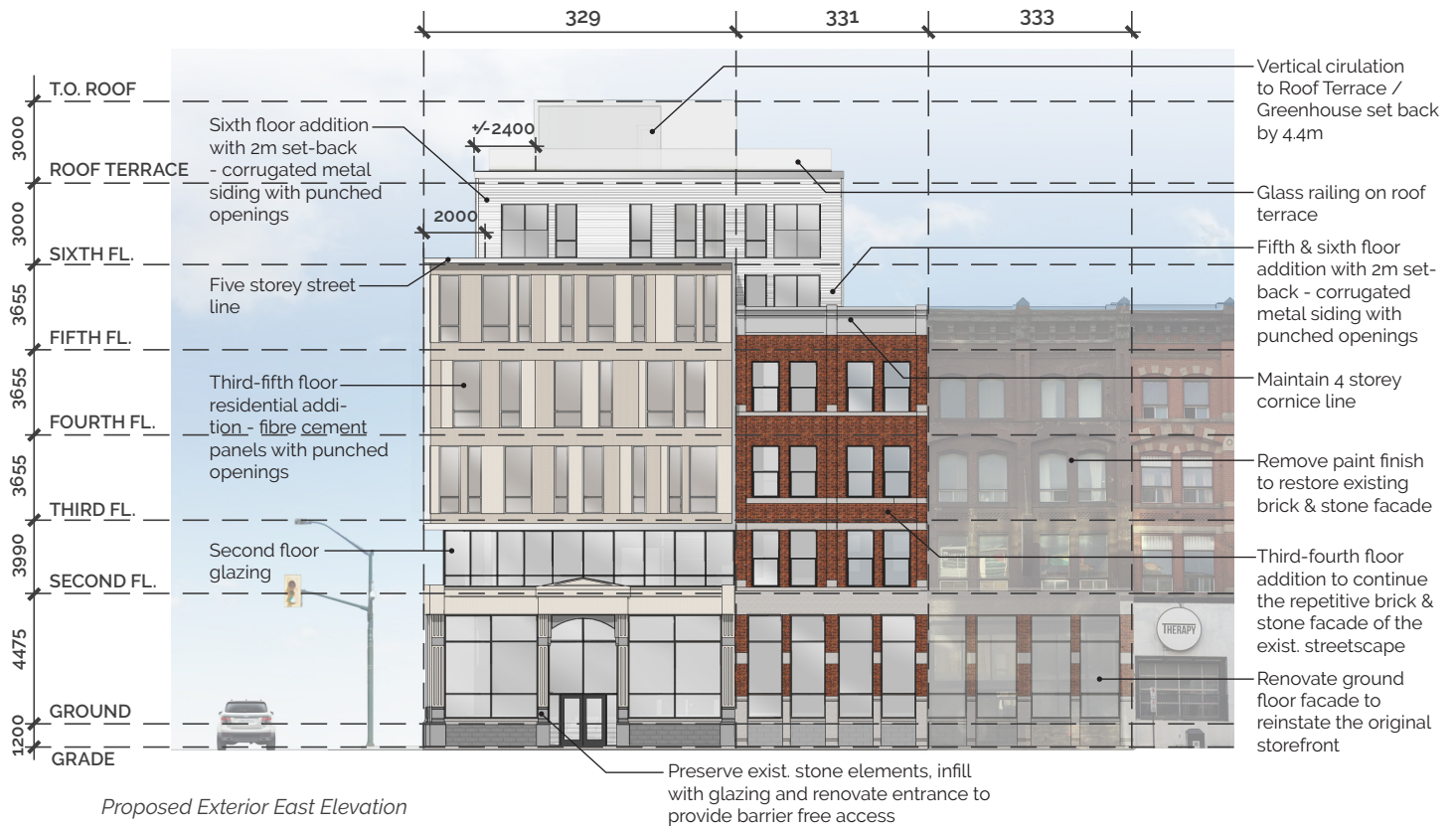
1. A mixed-use commercial facility on the basement, ground and second floor to accommodate community and administrative space for YOU.
2. Residential apartments on the third to sixth floor providing 36 new apartment units including a range of studio, one bedroom, two bedroom and barrier free units that are designed to accommodate young mothers, as well as seniors and students.

As the selected sites are adjacent to a block of existing four storey structures, the new facility will read as a continuation of the existing historic streetscape. The proposed design for the renovation and addition to 329, 331 & 333 Richmond Street will preserve and reference the history of the existing structures and conform to the guidelines outlined in the *Downtown London Heritage District Plan*, specifically section 6.1.4 New Construction and section 6.2.2 Commercial. The massing of the proposed design aims to reference the original massing of the existing buildings, highlight the corner property at this high traffic downtown intersection and optimize the site to maximize the number of residential units provided for young mothers. The massing of the new addition maintains the follow objectives:

- Renovate the ground floor storefront along the east facade at 331 & 333 Richmond St. to reinstate the architectural style based on historic documentation obtained from the holdings of Western Archives at Western University. The design will re-establish the vertical rhythm and materiality of the original building including red brick piers infilled with curtain wall glazing.
- Remove the exiting paint finish from the east facade of 333 Richmond Street, restoring the original brick and stone on the second to fourth floor to match the existing streetscape.
- A five storey addition above the existing ground floor structure at 331 Richmond Street. The addition will continue the 4 storey cornice line and architectural language of the existing streetscape, maintaining all existing horizontal and vertical proportions from the ground to fourth floor. Matching the new brick and stone as close as possible with the existing and continuing the stone pattern of the existing facade will allow the 4 storey structure at 331 Richmond St. to blend into the existing streetscape, leaving the corner property to stand as the contemporary architectural feature and visual focal point at the intersection.
- The fifth and sixth storey addition at 331 Richmond St. will have a reduced floor to floor height and be set back from the east property line by 2 meters allowing the building to read as 4 storeys from the street. The volume will be clad with corrugated metal siding and contain punched openings with juliet balconies.
- The heritage designated stone archway and pilasters along the east and south building face of 329 Richmond St. will be preserved and infilled with curtain wall glazing and the archway will serve as the main entrance to the commercial occupancy of the new facility. The rhythm of the existing brick piers along the York Street façade will remain, however the brick will be replaced and the solid infill walls will be removed and substituted with curtain wall glazing to visually open up the building to the street.
- A five storey addition above the existing ground floor structure at 329 Richmond Street. From the street, the building will appear as a five stories, raising the street line by one storey to reference the massing of the original building and highlight the corner property at this prominent downtown intersection. The residential component from the third to fourth floor will read as a contemporary 'floating' mass separated from the historic ground floor base by a band of curtain wall glazing on the second floor. A composite metal panel exterior shell will surround the 'box' to frame and highlight the south east corner. The inside of the box will consist of an irregular horizontal linear pattern of fibre cement panels and punched openings.
- At 329 Richmond Street, the sixth floor will have a reduced floor to floor height and be set back by 2 meters on both the east and south facades to reduce the scale of the building from the street.
- A 6 storey addition on the west side of the existing structure at 329 Richmond Street, fronting York Street to serve as the main apartment entrance and provide vertical circulation to the residential floors and roof terrace. The volume continues one storey above the roof terrace to accommodate access as well as a greenhouse and has a 4.4m setback from the south property line.



## Proposed Exterior Elevations



*Proposed Exterior East Elevation*



*Proposed Exterior South Elevation*





## 5 Assessment of Potential Impacts to Cultural Heritage Resources

Based on the impacts outlined in the The Ministry of Culture's *Heritage Resources in the Land Use Planning Process Info Sheet #5 - Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans*, the following table identifies the positive effect that the design will have on the existing heritage attributes of the proposed site and the adjacent properties.

Potential Impacts	On Site	Adjacent Properties	Downtown HCD
<i>Destruction of any, or part of any significant heritage attribute or features.</i>	Heritage features at 329 Richmond St. include the vertical stone elements along Richmond & York Street, which will be preserved and integrated into the proposed design. The rhythm of the existing brick piers will remain, but the brick will be replaced and infill walls will be removed. Exterior building elements at 331 Richmond St. that are proposed to be demolished include, the existing entrance and glazed openings which are not historic architectural features.	Exterior building elements at the adjacent 333 Richmond St. that are proposed to be demolished include the existing entrance and glazed openings on the ground floor which are not historic architectural features.	No Impact
<i>Alteration that is not sympathetic, or is incompatible, with the historic fabric and appearance.</i>	The five storey addition at 329 Richmond St. will be designed to continue major horizontal facade elements, yet will be distinctively contemporary in appearance compared to the historic language of the adjacent buildings. The exterior elevation of the second to fourth floors of the proposed addition at 331 Richmond St. will mimic the architectural language of the existing streetscape. The fifth & sixth floor will appear more contemporary in design, but will be set back from the property line by two meters, reducing its visibility from the street	The renovation to the ground floor east facade at 333 Richmond St. will be sympathetic to the historic fabric and reinterpret the architectural language of the existing streetscape.	The new development will be sympathetic of the character of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District and will complete the missing corner of the streetscape along Richmond Street.
<i>Shadows created that alter the appearance of a heritage attribute or change the viability of a natural feature or plantings, such as a garden.</i>	Shadows are not anticipated to impact historic significant attributes or natural features.	Shadows are not anticipated to impact historic significant attributes or natural features.	Shadows are not anticipated to impact historic significant attributes or natural features.
<i>Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship.</i>	The proposed addition & alterations to 329 & 331 Richmond St. will not isolate heritage attributes. The design will integrate the existing historical features into the new construction to compose a unified building that re-defines the corner of the streetscape.	Removing the paint finish on the east facade of 333 Richmond St. will restore the facade to its existing condition and reintegrate the facade into the rhythm of the existing streetscape.	The addition will rebuild the corner at this prominent downtown intersection, integrating the existing heritage attributes with new construction to create a unified facade along Richmond & York St.
<i>Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of build and natural features.</i>	The proposed addition will enhance views by increasing the height of the building and replacing the solid walls on the south & east facade of the existing ground floor at 329 & 331 Richmond St. with curtain wall glazing.	Renovating the storefront of 333 Richmond St. will increase the amount of glazing on the ground floor and open up the building to the street	The new facility will stand as a prominent visual focal point at the intersection and serve as a gateway for those travelling in and out of the downtown core.
<i>A change in land use such as rezoning a battlefield from open space to residential use, allowing new development or site alteration to fill in the formerly open spaces.</i>	The proposed design will not change the land use of the site.	The proposed design will not change the land use of the site.	No Impact
<i>Land disturbance such as a change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect an archaeological resource.</i>	The new addition will not cause land disturbance to alter soils or significantly impact drainage patterns.	No Impact	No Impact



## 6 Summary Statement

In summary, the proposed renovation and addition to 329, 331 & 333 Richmond Street to accommodate the Youth Opportunities Unlimited multi-purpose and residential facility will serve to rebuild the south corner of the streetscape along Richmond Street and introduce new life into these currently abandoned buildings. The proposed design will preserve existing historic elements, reference the architectural expression of the original buildings and integrate modern architecture through the following techniques:

- Restore the remaining historic architectural elements along York and Richmond Street and integrate them into the renovated ground floor base that maintains the architectural style of the 1880's.
- Restore the original finish of the east facade at 333 Richmond St. and continue the repetitive façade of the four storey street block to fill in the missing piece that was once present at 331 Richmond St.
- Reference the massing of the original building at 329 Richmond St. and highlight the corner property by increasing the building height by one storey and emphasizing the facade using a distinctly contemporary architectural style.

Collectively, these techniques will result in a design that incorporates new construction to both reinterpret the historic style of the original structures and introduce elements of contemporary architecture to contrast and further highlight the existing historic features. The new Youth Opportunities Unlimited facility will merge the old and the new to create a unified design that will evolve the streetscape and stand as a new architectural focal point within London's downtown core.