

556 Wellington St, proposal of GWLRA

I support the decision of planning staff and LACH to deny a Heritage Alteration Permit for this development. I agree with all the reasons that it does not adhere to West Woodfield HCD guidelines for redevelopment.

With respect to Heritage my major concern is that an HIA was not completed to show how this development will impact Victoria Park. Although Victoria Park is included in WWHCD, it has its own Heritage Designation and this has not been addressed at all in the current HAP application. I feel that a significant portion of the HIA should have discussed Victoria Park and this discussion is missing from the decision making progress. As the City of London feels that Victoria Park is a significant asset to the City, enough to require its own secondary plan, I think this oversight must be addressed. I am particularly concerned with the effects of increased wind due to climate change and taller buildings around the park. A wind study might have provided some answers to my concerns.

I have many concerns with the overall design of the building as it relates to the concept of providing comfortable living space. My comments will relate to pages in the Site Plan Approval Documents, dated April 15, 2020.

It is interesting to note that the larger units have been designated as "saleable" (pg SPA001). This is disappointing, as I originally understood that this would be a 100% rental property owned by GWL. What the city needs is more pure rental units and fewer condo units rented out by absentee owners, that have no stake in the condo or the City, other than their cash flow.

While the proposal meets all planning requirements appropriate to the zoning, it could be improved by being more people friendly, and not so overpowering in its presence. It is unfortunate that the zoning does not reflect the long term goals for this area, as recognized in the 1989 Official Plan and the London Plan. I hope that there are no more anomalies in the City's zoning. If so I hope they have been identified and proposals are in place to realign zoning to match the goals of the London Plan.

— Zero lot line is allowed. Looking at the foot print on pg SPA004, we note that the building extends beyond the site lines of the houses on Wolfe St and beyond the site lines of Centennial Hall to City Hall. This is disappointing, as these site lines were considered very important in the decision making process of the Victoria Park Secondary plan proposals. Improving site lines was one of the areas of agreement by many of the stakeholders in that proposal. Zero lot line will also limit the utility of the retail portion, so that any restaurants would not be able to have viable patio areas.

Outdoor amenity space is non-existent, being limited to terraces or balconies tied to units. Unfortunately 14 of these units will face the solid cement wall of building 2. This will significantly affect the amount of light in these units. Furthermore another 24 units will be looking directly into the lovely windows of the units in building 2. Or rather 16 building 2 units will have a very nice view of building 1 balconies.

I understand that a wind study was not required because this development is not in the downtown area that requires one. This is a bit ironic, as it is in the "downtown" when it comes to zoning, but not when climate is an issue. Because a study was not required, I was told by City staff at the last LACH meeting that it was not asked for. A wind study would have provided much useful information not only for Victoria Park, but on the probable "wind tunnel" effect of building 2 on the 34 units in building 1, with balconies facing building 2. A balcony is not much use if it is too windy to use. I also note that floor 5 of building 2 will not have walls (see SPA 806 & SPA 155). This is the top floor of the parking levels in building 2. I wonder what effect wind will have here, and how they will manage the snow in the winter.

The traffic study does not address 3 important facts:

Wolfe St. is narrower than the "local roads" in the neighborhood.

Wolfe St. has no boulevard to accommodate snow removal.

Wellington St. is closed almost every other weekend between Dufferin and Central between June and September, this summer notwithstanding.

Furthermore, we are in the beginnings of the new age of online commerce. There does not appear to be any consideration given to package delivery, other than by Canada Post. Will Wellington Street be subject to constant lane blockage because deliveries are made to the door facing Wellington? That is where GPS will direct all the drivers!

Lastly I am asking Canada Life, the ultimate owner of the project, to "walk the talk" proudly displayed on its web pages under the banner: Community and Social Responsibility. Their commitments include "supporting our communities" and "committing ourselves to sustainability". This project is exactly what the community of London does not want, in the neighborhood of the West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District, which is supported by the London Plan. It may meet zoning but it certainly does not meet Heritage, and I hope I have illustrated a number of other shortcomings. Furthermore there is nothing to suggest that this project is committed to sustainability. Where are the e-car charging stations? Could there have been green roofs? What are the plans for waste reduction, especially recycling and composting? What is included in this project that is above and beyond what is required by law. I view that as a minimum standard. Canada Life and previously Great West Life have promised more than the minimum standard.

I therefore request that PEC support the WWHCD, the volunteers of LACH, and the recommendation of very skilled and dedicated City staff and reject this proposal. It could have been built 25 years ago, but it does not belong in third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Hazel Elmslie  
63 Arcadia Crescent  
London, ON, N5W 1P5