

Heritage Impact Assessment Memo

Proposed Development of 625 Mornington Avenue, Adjacent to 955 Highbury Avenue North, a Heritage Listed Property

City of London

60695363

December 2022

Proposed Development of 625 Mornington Avenue, Adjacent to 955 Highbury Avenue North, a Heritage Listed Property

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1. Project Summary

1.1 Introduction

AECOM Canada Ltd. (AECOM) was retained by Oxbury Centre Inc. to prepare a scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Memo to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Site Plan for the development of an 18-storey residential tower at 625 Mornington Avenue, which is adjacent to 955 Highbury Avenue North, a listed property on the City of London *Register of Cultural Heritage Resources*.

For the purpose of this HIA Memo, the Study Area consists of the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North, and the Development Area consists of the municipal address of 625 Mornington Avenue within the parcel of land at 1299 Oxford Street East, known as Oxbury Centre (see **Appendix 1**).

1.2 Project Summary

Given the Study Area is adjacent to the Development Area, the City of London confirmed that the completion of an HIA in a scoped, memo format is a condition of Site Plan Approval. Per Policy 565 of *The London Plan*, a HIA is required for new development on and adjacent to heritage designated properties and properties listed on the Register, to assess potential impacts and explore alternative development approaches and mitigation measures to address any impacts to the cultural heritage resource and its heritage attributes. Note that adjacent means sites that are contiguous and sites that are directly opposite a cultural heritage resource separated by a laneway, easement, right-of-way, or street (Glossary, *The London Plan*). This is applicable to 955 Highbury Avenue North, which is directly adjacent to 625 Mornington Avenue.

This HIA Memo will fulfill the cultural heritage requirements per the City of London for the proposed Development Area. It was prepared by a Qualified Person with expertise in heritage studies in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM) Ontario Heritage Toolkit (2006), including Infosheet #5 Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Plans.

1.3 Site Description

A field visit was conducted by AECOM's Cultural Heritage Specialist, Tara Jenkins, MA, CAHP, to document the existing conditions of the Study Area and Development Area on November 24, 2022. During the field visit, site photos were taken and have been included in **Appendix 2**.

The Study Area that consists of the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North has an area of 5.55 acres, and frontage of approximately 108 metres on Highbury Avenue North (**Photo 6** and **Photo 7**). The east end of the property contains the extant Canada Post building, which is set back approximately 32 metres from the right-of-way and is surrounded by manicured lawn, landscaping features, and concrete pathways (**Photo 8**). To the west of the structure is a warehouse and separate auxiliary building, followed by a parking lot, which comprises most of the property. A one-way private asphalt road leads from the parking lot to Mornington Avenue (**Photo 2**). The Study Area is directly adjacent to 1299 Oxford Street East (which contains the Development Area) to the north and west, Highbury Avenue to the east (**Photo 9**), and another Canada Post Facility to the south, at the address of 951 Highbury Avenue North. **Appendix 1** provides the location of the Study Area and Development Area on a current aerial photograph, with an overlay of the Site Plan.

The parcel of land at 1299 Oxford Street East that encompasses the Development Area (625 Mornington Avenue) is at the southwest intersection of Oxford Street East and Highbury Avenue North. The property is 10.70 acres in size and contains Oxbury Centre, a shopping mall, and associated parking lots (**Photo 3** and **Photo 4**). The Development Area is at the southwestern corner of 1299 Oxford Street East, in the location of an existing parking garage with roof parking south of Oxbury Centre (**Photo 5**). Mornington Avenue borders the parcel of land containing the Development Area to the west (**Photo 1**), whereas a landscaped area and private asphalt road associated with 955 Highbury Avenue North marks its southern boundary. Across Mornington Avenue from the Development Area are residential properties containing vernacular brick bungalows built in the mid-1960s. East of the portion of 1299 Oxford Street East containing the Development Area is an area of dirt and gravel (as described on the Site Plan in **Appendix 3**), within the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North.

2. Historical Context

The property at 955 Highbury Avenue North contains a building that dates to the 1960s that was originally a warehouse and administration building for Canada Post, now a Canada Post facility. The following historical context, including a preliminary heritage evaluation of 955 Highbury Avenue North according to the criteria outlined in Ontario Regulation 9/06 have been adapted from a previous HIA for 1299 Oxford Street East, which was prepared by AECOM for Oxbury Centre Inc. in 2019:

The property at 955 Highbury Avenue North is listed on the City of London's Register of Cultural Heritage Resources; however, the property has not been given a Priority number within the Register.

The building at 955 Highbury Avenue North has cultural heritage value or interest as a representative example of the Mid-Century Modern style in the City of London. The original structure dates to c. 1964 and is utilitarian in design with little ornamentation, aside from the large concrete wall that rises above the entryway and forms a juxtaposition between the red brick and glazing of the building.

The property has historic associations with its former use as a Central Ordnance Depot and as part of the expansive technological improvements to postal services in Canada. The preliminary research completed for this HIA indicate that the property may have an important military history in London; however, this association would require further research for the purposes of designation.

The following portions of the property at 955 Highbury Avenue North were considered heritage attributes for the purposes of the previous HIA (AECOM 2019), and have been directly excerpted below:

- Canada Post administration building including:
 - 2 storey office building;
 - Red brick cladding;
 - Large groupings of windows located on the north, east, and south facades:
 - Glazed front entryway;
 - Decorative concrete panel rising above the entryway.

(AECOM, 2019)

3. Heritage Planning Framework

3.1 The Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement

The *Planning Act* (1990) and the associated Provincial Policy Statement (2020) provide a legislative framework for land use planning in Ontario. Both documents identify matters of provincial interest, which include the conservation of significant features of architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, or scientific interest. The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters "shall be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement. In general, the Provincial Policy Statement recognizes that Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being depend on protecting natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral, cultural heritage, and archaeological resources for their economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* makes a series of provisions regarding cultural heritage. Section 2 of the *Planning Act* identifies various provincial interests that must be considered by the relevant authorities during the planning process. Specific to cultural heritage, subsection 2(d) of the *Planning Act* states 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, matter of provincial interest such as.. the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest."

As one of 18 interests to be considered, cultural heritage resources are to be considered within the framework of varying provincial interests throughout the land use planning process.

Pursuant to Section 3 of the *Planning Act* the Provincial Policy Statement 2020, Policy 2.6.1 states "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved."

Further policy in Section 3, Policy 2.6.3 states "Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it had been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved."

3.2 Ontario Heritage Act

The Ontario Heritage Act enables municipalities and the province to designate individual properties and/or districts as being of cultural heritage value or interest. The province or municipality may also "list" a property or include a property on a municipal register that has not been designated but is believed to be of cultural heritage value or interest. Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (O. Reg. 9/06) under the Ontario Heritage Act provides criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest. If a property meets one or more of the following criteria it may be designated under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

3.3 The London Plan

The London Plan is the City of London's new Official Plan. The London Plan sets out a new approach for planning in London which emphasizes growing inward and upward, so that the City can reduce the costs of growth, create walkable communities, revitalize urban neighbourhoods and business areas, protect farmlands, and reduce greenhouse gases and energy consumption. The plan sets out to conserve the City's cultural heritage and protect environmental areas, hazard lands, and natural resources.

Specifically related to heritage conservation, the *London Plan* outlines a number of policies related to the conservation of cultural heritage resources within the city. The following General Cultural Heritage Policies are applicable to this project:

(565_) New development, redevelopment, and all civic works and projects on and adjacent to heritage designated properties and properties listed on the Register will be designed to protect the heritage attributes and character of those resources, to minimize visual and physical impact on these resources. A heritage impact assessment will be required for new development on and adjacent to heritage designated properties and properties listed on the Register to assess potential impacts and explore alternative development approaches and mitigation measures to address any impact to the cultural heritage resource and its heritage attributes.

(586_) The City shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to heritage designated properties or properties listed on the Register except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the heritage designated properties or properties listed on the Register will be conserved.

3.4 City of London Register of Cultural Heritage Resources

The Register of Cultural Heritage Resources (the Register) is used by the public and City staff to identify the cultural heritage status of properties in the City of London. The Register includes heritage listed properties (Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act), individually designated heritage properties (under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act), and properties designated as part of a Heritage Conservation District (under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act). With the recommendation of London's Community Advisory Committee on Planning (CACP, formerly London's Advisory Committee on Heritage [LACH]), Municipal Council added 347 potential cultural heritage resources to the Register ("listed" status). All listed properties included on the Register are believed to have potential cultural heritage value or interest (City of London, 2020).

4. Impact Assessment

4.1 Proposed Development

Based on the Proposed Site Plan revised in 2022, Oxbury Centre Inc. aims to construct an 18-storey residential tower within the Development Area. The extent of the existing parking structure will be removed to make way for the apartment complex and a new asphalt entrance to an enclosed parking garage will be constructed. A concrete walkway will lead from the existing sidewalk to the principal entrance of the proposed structure. The Proposed Site Plan is part of a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) application.

4.2 Potential Impacts from the Proposed Development

The proposed Site Plan for 625 Mornington Avenue will not directly impact the heritage attributes of the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North as noted in **Section 2**. The proposed development does not alter the contextual setting of the area in which the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North is situated. Approximately 173 metres, including an area of gravel and dirt, parking lot, and manicured lawn, separates the proposed 18-storey residential tower from the heritage structure within the listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North. As such, it is not anticipated to impact the structure, obstruct views from within or of the property at 955 Highbury Avenue North, or isolate the Study Area from its surrounding environment. The existing parking garage that will be removed to make way for the apartment complex already obscures the view of the structure at 955 Highbury Avenue North from Mornington Avenue, though it will still be visible from the end of the one-way asphalt drive.

The results of a shadow study conducted for the proposed development at 625 Mornington Avenue determined that the structure would cast shadow in the afternoon throughout the year on part of the area of gravel and dirt and parking lot within 955 Highbury Avenue North, but not any of the heritage attributes of the property.

4.3 Mitigation and Conservation

Based on the impact assessment completed for this HIA Memo, no mitigation measures are required since the heritage attributes of listed property at 955 Highbury Avenue North will not be impacted by the proposed development at 625 Mornington Avenue.

5. Conclusion

The property at 955 Highbury Avenue North contains a building that dates to the 1960s that was originally a warehouse and administration building for Canada Post, now a Canada Post facility. It is listed on the City of London's *Register of Cultural Heritage Resources*.

AECOM's assessment of the anticipated impacts to 955 Highbury Avenue North from the proposed development at 625 Mornington Avenue was informed by a review of the Proposed Site Plan, an examination of the HIA for 1299 Oxford Street East (AECOM, 2019), and a field visit conducted on November 24, 2022. In conclusion, the Site Plan for the proposed development at 625 Mornington Avenue will not have any direct or indirect impacts on the heritage attributes of 955 Highbury Avenue North, due to the location of the proposed development and its separation.

6. Sources

Primary and Secondary Sources:

City of London, 2016:

The London Plan (Official Plan). Available online at: https://london.ca/business-development/official-plan

City of London, 2020:

"Register of Cultural Heritage Resources." Available online at:

https://london.ca/sites/default/files/2021-

04/Register%20of%20Cultural%20Heritage%20Resources.pdf

AECOM Canada Ltd., 2019:

Heritage Impact Assessment: 1299 Oxford Street East, City of London Ontario. June, 2019.

Provincial Standards and Resources:

Government of Ontario, 2006:

O. Reg. 9/06: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest; made under the Ontario Heritage Act. Available online at: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009

Government of Ontario, 2017:

Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.0.18. Available online at: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18

Government of Ontario, 2017:

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13. Available online at: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13

https://www.ontano.ca/iaws/statute/

Government of Ontario, 2020:

Provincial Policy Statement. Available online at:

https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM), 2006:

Ontario Heritage Tool Kit. Available online at:

http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_toolkit.shtml

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM), 2007:

Heritage Conservation Principles for Land Use Planning. Available online at: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/InfoSheet_Principles_Land use_Planning.pdf

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM), 2014:

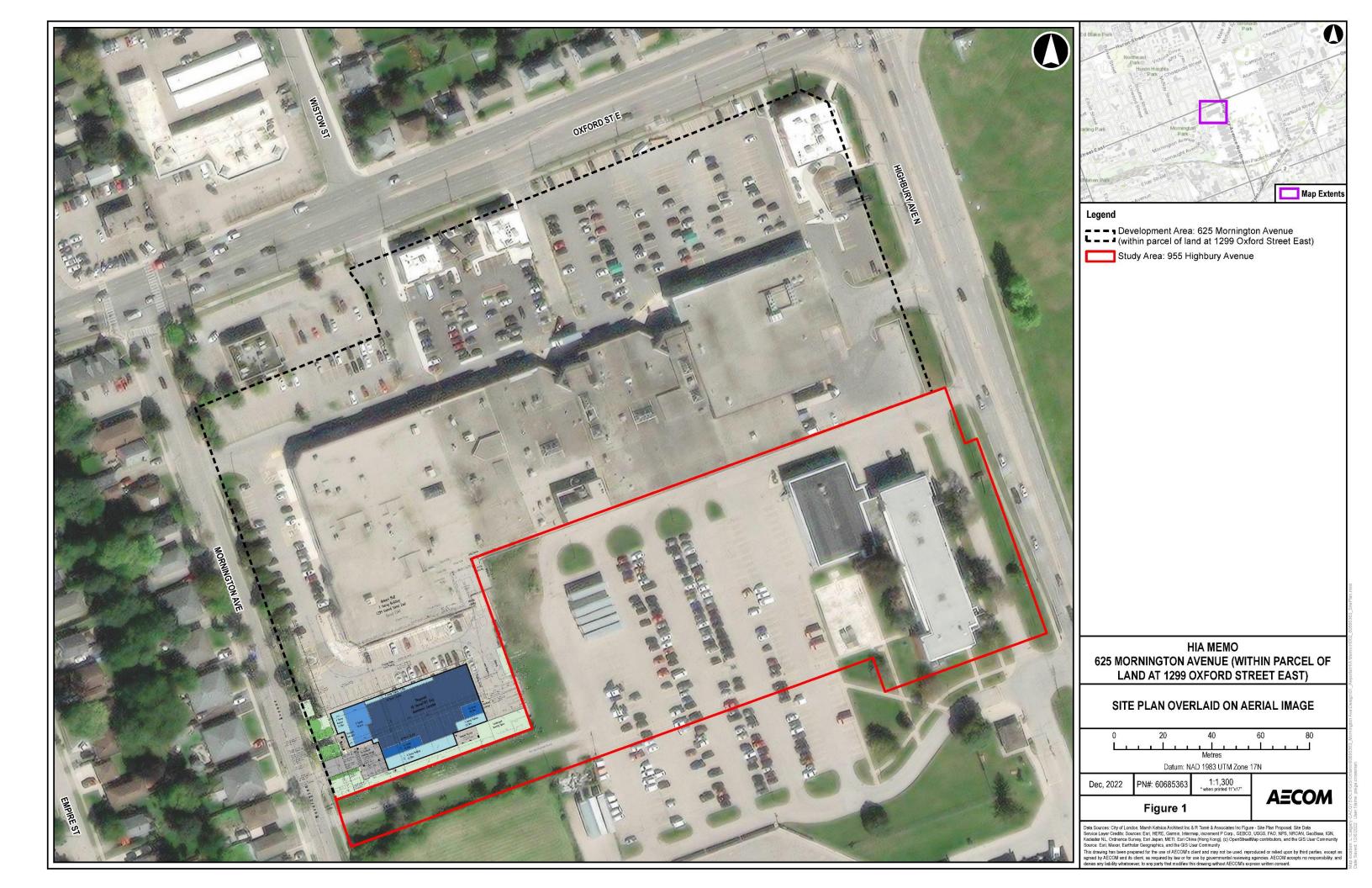
Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties Available online at:

http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/MTCS_Heritage_IE_Process.pdf



Appendix 1

Site Plan Overlaid on Aerial Image





Appendix 2

Site Photographs

Photo 1: View of Mornington Avenue looking north, showing the parking garage within the Development Area across the street (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 2: View of the enclosed parking garage and private asphalt road, with the Study Area (955 Highbury Avenue North) visible in the distance (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 3: View of the Development Area showing Oxbury Centre at 1299 Oxford Street East (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 4: View of the Development Area showing the concrete sidewalk and parking lot, with the Study Area (955 Highbury Avenue North) visible in the background (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 5: View of the Development Area showing the parking lot atop the parking garage (AECOM, November 2022)

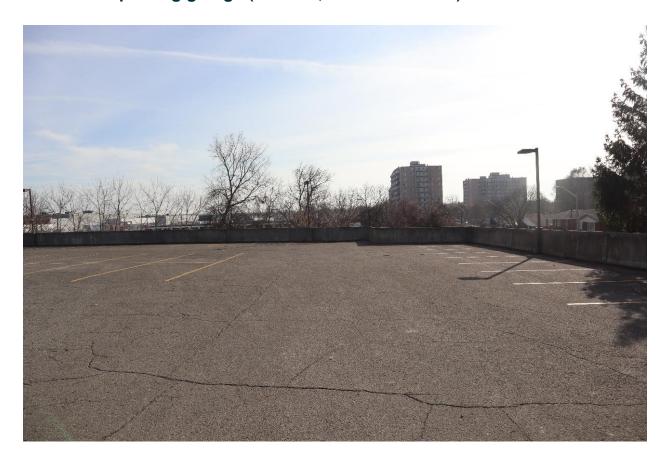


Photo 6: View of the north side of the Study Area (955 Highbury Avenue North) showing the parking area and north entrance (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 7: View of the Study Area (955 Highbury Avenue North) from the south entrance off Highbury Avenue (AECOM, November 2022)



Photo 8: View of the east elevation of the Study Area (955 Highbury Avenue North) from the right-of-way (AECOM, November 2022)



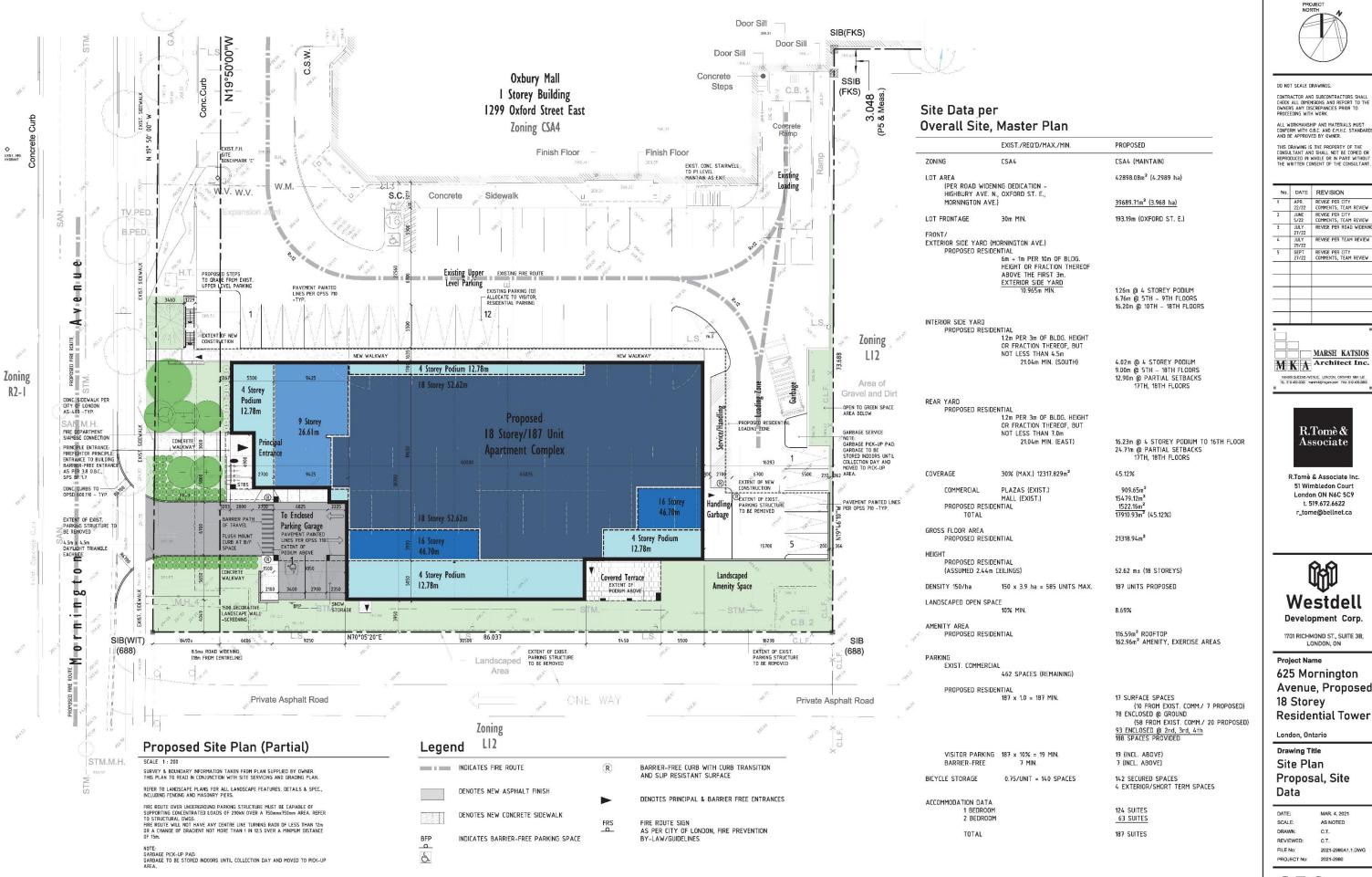
Photo 9: View of Highbury Avenue looking south, and the Old London Barracks Horse Stable across the street (AECOM, November 2022)





Appendix 3

Site Plan





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20	27/22	**************************************
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-	10	





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1701 RICHMOND ST., SUITE 3B. LONDON, ON

Project Name 625 Mornington Avenue, Proposed 18 Storey

London, Ontario

Drawing Title Site Plan Proposal, Site Data

DATE: MAR. 4, 2021 SCALE: AS NOTED C.T. DRAWN: REVIEWED: 2021-2980A1.1.DW0 PROJECT No: 2021-2980

SP2 SPAC