

Report to Planning and Environment Committee

To: Chair and Members
Planning & Environment Committee
From: Scott Mathers MPA, P. Eng.,
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development
Subject: 221 Queens Avenue
Public Participation Meeting
City File: TZ-9598 Ward 13
Date: June 12, 2023

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Planning and Development, the following actions be taken with respect to the application of Sifton Properties Limited relating to the property located at 221 Queens Avenue:

- a) the request to amend Zoning By-law No. Z.-1 to change the zoning of the subject property by extending the Temporary Use (T-69) Zone for a temporary period of three (3) years, **BE REFUSED** for the following reasons:
 - i) The request is not consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020;
 - ii) The request does not conform to the established policies of The London Plan regarding temporary commercial parking lots;
 - iii) The request does not implement the goals of Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan; and,
 - iv) The request does not implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Strategy.
- b) the proposed by-law attached hereto as Appendix "A" **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on June 27, 2023, to amend Zoning By-law No. Z.-1, in conformity with the Official Plan, by extending the Temporary Use (T-69) Zone for a period not exceeding one (1) year.

IT BEING NOTED THAT the purpose of the recommended short-term one (1) year extension of the temporary zone is to allow the applicant an opportunity to provide a detailed strategy for the subject site in line with the Downtown Plan policies.

Executive Summary

Summary of Request

The request submitted by the Applicant would permit the continuation of the existing temporary commercial surface parking lot for an additional three (3) years.

Purpose and Effect of Recommended Action

The purpose and effect of the recommended zoning change is to extend the existing Temporary Use (T-69) Zone to allow for the continuation of the existing commercial surface parking lot on the subject lands for one year to allow the applicant an opportunity to provide a detailed strategy for the subject site in line with the Downtown Plan policies.

Rationale of Recommended Action

The request to extend the temporary zone for a period of three (3) years, representing the maximum extension permitted, does not encourage long-term redevelopment of the site in support of achieving London's Housing Pledge target of 47,000 units by 2031.

The recommended one (1) year extension is a balanced approach that allows existing users of the surface commercial parking lot to make alternative parking arrangements while encouraging long-term redevelopment of the site to a more intense, transit-supportive use that is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, and The London Plan. The additional year will also provide an opportunity for Civic Administration to collaborate with the landowner to facilitate a strategy that generates new housing units in the Downtown Core and work towards achieving London's Housing Pledge target of 47,000 units.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

September 5, 1995 – Council approval of first Temporary Use Zone to permit a temporary parking lot use for a period of three (3) years.

Z-5825 – January 10, 2000 – Report to Planning Committee supporting an application by Sifton Properties Limited to permit the temporary parking lot use for a period of three (3) years.

Z-6632 – April 13, 2004 – Report to Planning Committee supporting an application by Sifton Properties Limited to extend the temporary parking lot use for a period of three (3) years.

Z-8312 – April 8, 2014 – Report to the Planning and Environment Committee recommending refusal of an application by Sifton Properties Limited to allow a permanent commercial surface parking lot, and recommending approval of a by-law to re-establish a Temporary Use (T-69) Zone to permit a temporary parking lot use for a period of three (3) years.

TZ-8748 – June 19, 2017 – Report to the Planning and Environment Committee of an application by Sifton Properties to extend the Temporary Use (T-69) Zone for a period not exceeding three (3) years.

TZ-9197 – May 19, 2020 - Report to the Planning and Environment Committee of an application by Sifton Properties to extend the Temporary Use (T-69) Zone for a period not exceeding three (3) years.

1.2 Planning History

In 1995, the commercial building was demolished and in the same year, Council adopted the first Zoning By-law amendment to permit a temporary commercial surface parking lot on the subject property for a period of three (3) years. Between 1995 and now, the property has been subject to periods where the temporary use by-law was expired and not renewed, and has also been the subject of several by-law amendments to re-instate or extend the temporary use zoning.

In 2014, Sifton Properties Limited applied for a rezoning to establish the existing commercial surface parking lot as a permanent use. On City staff's recommendation, Council refused that application and instead approved a new temporary use by-law to permit surface parking for a period of three (3) years. Sifton Properties has since reapplied for the extension of the temporary use (T-69) Zone on two separate occasions (2017/2020) and are seeking another three (3) year extension for the commercial surface parking lot.

1.3 Property Description

The subject site is located on the south side of Queens Avenue, between Clarence Street and Wellington Street, directly west of One London Place in downtown London. The 0.25-hectare site has functioned as a commercial surface parking lot for approximately 28 years. The existing fully paved parking lot contains 65 regular and 2 handicapped parking spaces providing monthly parking space to employees and tenants of surrounding office and commercial premises. Landscaped screening includes deciduous street trees, large bushes, coniferous trees and wrought iron fencing, softening the view of the parking lot from Queens Avenue. Direct vehicular and pedestrian access is provided from and to Queens Avenue.



Figure 1: Subject lands and current use (existing parking lot)

1.4 Current Planning Information (see more detail in Appendix C)

- The London Plan Place Type – Downtown
- Existing Zoning – Holding Downtown Area Temporary Use (h-3•DA2•D350/T-69) Zone

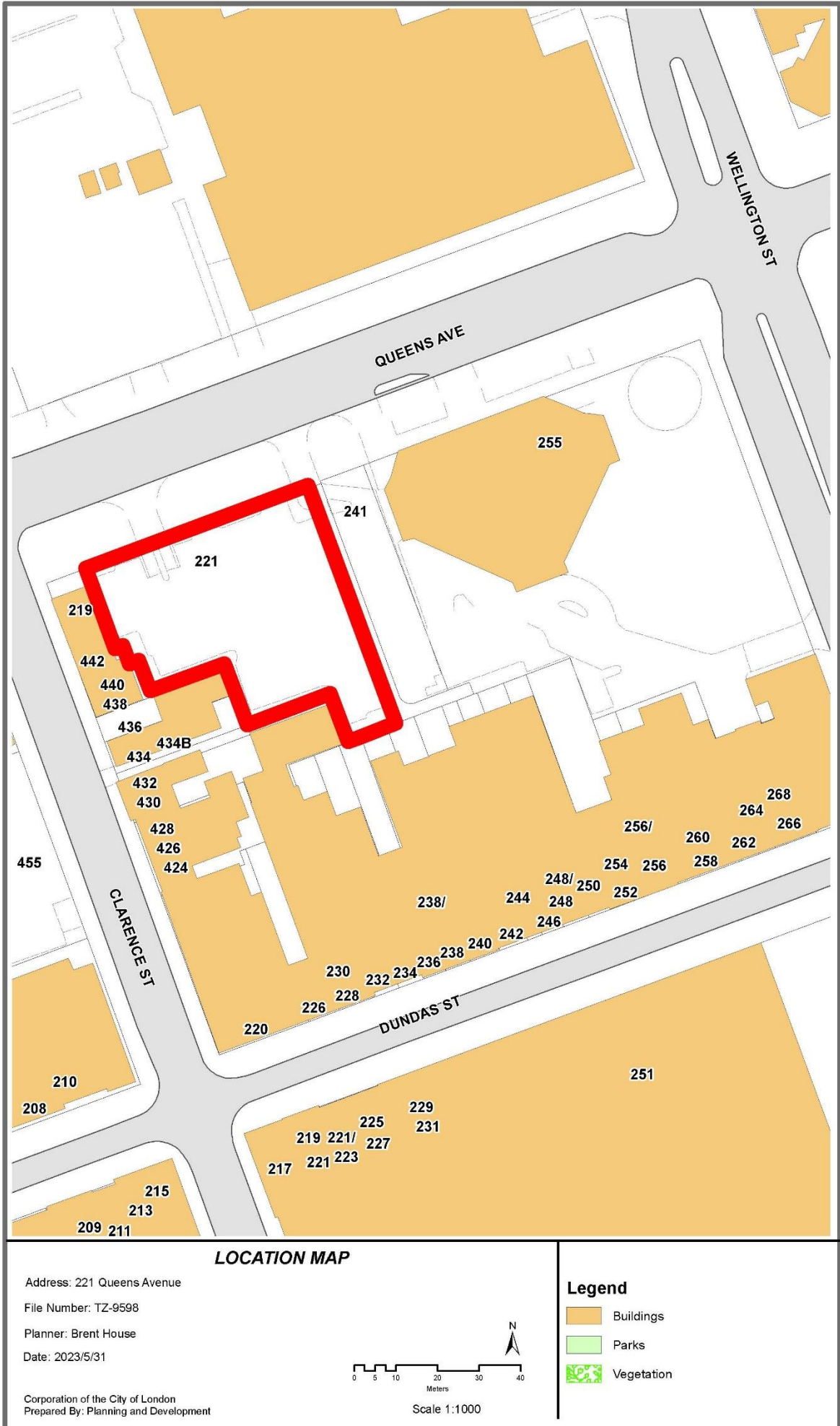
1.5 Site Characteristics

- Current Land Use – temporary commercial surface parking lot
- Frontage – 56.9 metres
- Depth – 20 to 60 metres (varies)
- Area – 0.25 hectares
- Shape – Irregular

1.6 Surrounding Land Uses

- North – London Life office building and parking lot.
- East – One London Place office building and underground parking lot.
- South – Office, retail and restaurant uses with residential uses above.
- West – Office, retail and restaurant uses with residential above.

1.7 Location Map



2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Development Proposal

The applicant is not proposing any new development as part of this amendment. The request is to permit the continuation of the existing commercial surface parking lot for an additional three (3) years.

2.2 Requested Amendment

The applicant is requesting a continuation of the temporary use provisions of the existing Holding Downtown Area Temporary Use (h-3*DA2*D350/T69) to EXTEND the temporary commercial parking lot for an additional three (3) years. The existing range of permitted uses would continue to apply to the site, including retail, office, cultural and entertainment uses, restaurants, apartments, schools, hotels, and commercial parking structures. The holding provision requires a wind impact assessment for any building over 15 meters in height.

2.3 Community Engagement (see more detail in Appendix B)

On April 5, 2023, Notice of Application was sent to all property owners within 120 metres of the subject lands. Notice of Application was also published in the *Public Notices and Bidding Opportunities* section of *The Londoner* on April 13, 2023.

Nature of Liaison: Possible continuation of the temporary use provisions of the existing Holding Downtown Area Temporary Use (h-3*DA2*D350/T69) to EXTEND the temporary commercial parking lot for an additional three (3) years. The existing range of permitted uses would continue to apply to the site, including retail, office, cultural and entertainment uses, restaurants, apartments, schools, hotels, and commercial parking structures.

There were no major concerns raised by internal staff or agencies. No members of the public made comment on the proposed extension. Details about agency and departmental comments can be found in Appendix 'B'.

2.4 Policy Context

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020, provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. All decisions affecting land use planning matters shall be “consistent with” the policies of the PPS. Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns of the PPS encourages healthy, livable and safe communities which are sustained by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment and institutional uses to meet long-term needs. It directs cities to make sufficient land available to accommodate this range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years.

The PPS also directs planning authorities to promote economic development, the vitality and viability of Downtowns by providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses. Ensuring that sufficient parking is provided in the Downtown supports existing economic activities and businesses that currently rely on this parking supply for visitors and workers.

The London Plan

The subject site is in the Downtown Place Type of The London Plan fronting onto a Civic Boulevard, as identified on Map 1 – Place Types and Map 3 – Street Classifications. The vision for the Downtown allows for the broadest range of uses and the most intense forms of development in the City, with highly-urban, transit oriented

environments (798_). Queens avenue is also identified as part of the Downtown Transit Loop, which will enhance Downtown as a critical hub for local transit and will serve as a connection point for bus service across the City.

Temporary Use Provisions (General)

The Our Tools policies of The London Plan provide guidance for temporary uses, in general, and provides criteria for the evaluation of all temporary uses (1672_). This criteria is carried over from the 1989 Official Plan with the addition of two additional considerations.

The following criteria is provided to evaluate the appropriateness of a temporary use:

1. *Compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding land uses.*
2. *Any requirement for temporary buildings or structures in association with the proposed use.*
3. *Any requirement for temporary connection to municipal services and utilities.*
4. *The potential impact of the proposed use on mobility facilities and traffic in the immediate area.*
5. *Access requirements for the proposed use.*
6. *Parking required for the proposed use, and the ability to provide adequate parking on-site.*
7. *The potential long-term use of the temporary use.*
8. *In the case of temporary commercial surface parking lots in the Downtown, the impact on the pedestrian environment in the Downtown.*
9. *The degree to which the temporary use may be frustrating the viability of the intended long-term use of the lands.*

Temporary Use Provisions (Downtown)

Similar to the Policies outlined in Section 1672_ of The London Plan, the Our Tools policies (1673A_) also outlines criteria for lands within the Downtown Place Type that have temporary zoning provisions. The following criteria will be used to evaluate both applications for temporary zoning to permit surface commercial parking lots and applications for extensions to temporary zoning to permit surface commercial parking lots, in the Downtown:

1. *The demonstrated need for surface parking in the area surrounding the subject site. Utilization rates for sub-areas of the Downtown may be used to evaluate this need.*
2. *The importance of any pedestrian streetscapes that are impacted by the surface commercial parking lot and the degree to which these streetscapes are impacted.*
3. *The size of the parking lot, recognizing a goal of avoiding the underutilization of Downtown lands.*
4. *The length of time that the surface commercial parking lot has been in place, recognizing it is not intended that temporary uses will be permitted on a long-term basis.*
5. *Applicable guideline documents may be used to provide further, more detailed, guidance in applying these policies.*
6. *Site plan approval will be required for all temporary surface commercial parking lots in the Downtown.*

7. *Where Council does not wish to extend the temporary zoning for a surface commercial parking lot a short-term extension of the temporary zone may be permitted for the purpose of allowing users of the lot to find alternative parking arrangements.*

Evaluation and analysis of the subject site using the above criteria is provided below in section 4.0 Key Issues and Considerations.

Temporary Surface Parking in the Downtown

The Downtown Place Type polices discourage the extension of temporary surface commercial parking lots that have been in place for an extended period of time, where an adequate supply of parking exists in the vicinity of the subject lot (800_5).

The intent of the Place Type policy in section 800_5 is to point to Our Tools for criteria to aid in the evaluation of applications for temporary commercial surface parking lots in the Downtown. The evaluation and analysis of the subject site is provided below in section 4.0 Key Issues and Considerations.

Our Move Forward – London’s Downtown Plan

London’s City Council adopted Our Move Forward: London’s Downtown Plan, on April 14, 2015 as a guideline document under Chapter 19 of London’s 1989 Official Plan and has been carried forward in Our Tools policy 1717_ of The London Plan. The document identifies a number of strategic directions and “transformational projects”, along with implementation tools to assist in retaining and attracting businesses and investment to the downtown. Planning objective 5: “Build a great neighbourhood” encourages the redevelopment of vacant sites to increase the resident and worker population downtown by discontinuing temporary-use zoning on these sites (5.2, p. 63).

On May 8, 2018, Council resolved to add additional guidance to the Downtown Plan in regards to temporary surface parking lots, which included criteria for the evaluation of planning and development applications, as well as design considerations.

The following criteria is provided to evaluate the physical design of surface parking lots in the downtown:

1. *Site plan approval will be required for all temporary surface commercial parking lots in the Downtown.*
2. *The importance of any pedestrian streetscapes that are impacted by the surface commercial parking lot and the degree to which these streetscapes are impacted.*
3. *The location, configuration and size of the parking area will be designed to support the provision of, and enhance the experience of pedestrians, transit users, cyclists and drivers.*
4. *The impact of parking facilities on the public realm will be minimized by strategically locating and screening these parking areas. Surface parking should be located in the rear yard or interior side yard.*
5. *Surface parking lots should be designed to include a sustainable tree canopy with a target of 30% canopy coverage at 20 years of anticipated tree growth.*
6. *Surface parking located in highly-visible areas should be screened by low walls and landscape treatments.*
7. *Lighting of parking areas will be designed to avoid negative light impacts on adjacent properties.*
8. *Large surface parking lots shall be designed with areas dedicated for pedestrian priority including landscaping to ensure safe pedestrian connectivity throughout the site. Surface parking areas will be designed to incorporate landscape/tree*

islands for visual amenity and to help convey stormwater and reduce the heat island effect.

9. *Large surface parking areas will be designed to incorporate low impact development measures to address stormwater management.*

The evaluation of the subject site against the Downtown Plan design criteria is provided below in 4.0 Key Issues and Considerations.

The Downtown Parking Strategy, 2017

The provision, management and supply of parking was identified as an area of special relevance to the successful implementation of Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan. The Downtown Parking Strategy was completed in 2017 and included a review of existing parking conditions and future development potential based upon the direction of The London Plan, the 2030 Transportation Master Plan and other relevant policy documents. The long-term goals of the abovementioned plans are to achieve a decrease in single occupant vehicle travel into the Downtown that will in turn reduce the long term need for parking, particularly employee and commuter related parking. The key to the future success of the downtown will be the replacement of existing surface parking lots with new developments.

Determining how much parking is necessary for the functional and economic viability of downtown, as well as the manner and location in which the parking is provided, are key considerations coming out of the Downtown Parking Strategy study. Determining how much parking is required, how it is provided, what role the City should play in meeting future parking demand, the financial implications associated with providing new parking and the most appropriate municipal service delivery model to employ in order to maximize the return on investment of public funds are critical considerations in the development of a future Parking Management Strategy for the downtown.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

None.

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

4.1 Issue and Consideration #1: Demonstrated Need for Parking

The Downtown Parking Strategy, 2017

The Council-approved Downtown Parking Strategy study provides direction on utilization rates of existing surface commercial parking lots operating in six sub-areas of the Downtown (figure 1). The Downtown Parking Strategy provides a number of recommendations for how the City should manage surface commercial parking lots in the downtown. One of these recommendations is a gradual approach to discontinuing temporary zone permissions for surface parking lots where utilization is low. The subject property is in sub-area 4, which has a high utilization rate of 81%.

To put this into perspective, 90% utilization is considered a maximum practical occupancy level at which there is still sufficient available parking across downtown; however, certain areas may require drivers to search more for available parking and accept longer walking distances.

It should be noted that the occupancy rates in the central zones 3 & 4 are at 89% and 81% respectively, which may be making it difficult for visitors to conveniently find parking in these areas.



Figure 1: Parking utilization by sub-area, based on 2014 data.

In order to understand the potential parking implications associated with new development, an estimate of future parking supply and demand across the downtown study area has been created by using future growth estimates based on the 2014 Development Charges study. While the estimates should be viewed as approximate, they do serve to provide an indication of the potential parking challenges associated with meeting the City's desired development goals and objectives for the downtown as described in various planning documents.

An important factor regarding future parking requirements is the expected decrease in auto person trips from the existing level of 73.5% to 64% by year 2034 due to the substantial investment in new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service approved by Council. The expected increase in transit use equates to a decrease in parking demand of approximately 13%. Based on the estimated transportation mode split of 64% auto person use by 2034, subarea 4 will have a projected parking supply deficit of 65 spaces by 2034.

Rapid Transit

The Rapid Transit Environmental Project Report was approved in 2019 and the construction of the Downtown Loop is currently underway. Investment is being made to cycling infrastructure including the implementation of an east-west cycle track on Dundas Street and improved connection to the Thames Valley Parkway. While these projects aim to shift mode-share away from automobiles, they will take time to fully implement. Phase 2 of construction to establish the downtown loop, inclusive of Queens Avenue west of Wellington Street, was substantially completed in December 2022. Detailed design is complete for the Downtown Loop, with the final phase (3) of construction having started this year and is anticipated to be wrapped up with finishing works into next year. This timeline will align with the extension of the commercial parking lot for an additional year, which in turn will give the applicant the time to complete a detailed strategy for the subject lands.

Parking requirements for 221 Queens Avenue

Sifton Properties Limited has provided an estimate of their parking requirements and utilization of the site. The parking lot, located at 221 Queens Avenue, provides parking for three office buildings owned by the applicant: 195 Dufferin Ave., 200 Queens Ave. and 171 Queens Ave. The applicant estimates that the lot assists in providing parking for roughly 10.4% of employees in these three buildings. Overall, less than 30% of all employees are provided with parking on-site or in this lot. The applicant has identified that the temporary zoning is needed to continue to serve these employees and to

maintain contractual obligations. Based on the parking utilization data from 2014, the rationale given by the applicant identifies a need for surface parking in sub-area 4.

Address	# of Employees	On-Site Parking	Parking Provided at 221 Queens	Employees with No Parking on Site or at 221 Queens Ave
200 Queens Ave.	309	96	15	187
171 Queens Ave.	318	27	50	241
TOTAL	627	172	65	428

Although it is not intended to permit temporary uses for a long time, the Parking Strategy recommends a gradual approach to the discontinuation of temporary zone permissions, particularly in sub-areas of high demand. Since additional parking facilities and the implementation of Rapid Transit will not be completed in the short-term, staff is recommending extending the temporary zone until there is an updated strategy for the subject site to develop as a whole in the future. Given that the parking lot has existed since 1995 and continues to operate on a temporary basis, staff is satisfied that the requested extension of the temporary zone on site to allow for an additional one (1) year of surface commercial parking is appropriate to give the applicant the opportunity to find alternative parking arrangements and to provide staff with an updated strategy for the site's future functionality.

4.2 Issue and Consideration #2: Temporary Uses (General)

The London Plan provides Key Directions that must be considered to help the City effectively achieve its vision for a highly urban and transit-oriented Downtown. The following uses may be permitted within the Downtown: a broad range of residential, retail, service, office, cultural, institutional, hospitality, recreational and other related uses may be permitted in the Downtown Place Type (800_).

The London Plan policy 800_4 identifies that new accessory parking lots should not be permitted in the Downtown and new surface commercial parking lots shall not be permitted. Policy 800_5 states that where surface commercial parking lots have previously been established through temporary zoning and have been in place for an extended period of time, further extensions of such temporary uses should be discouraged where an adequate supply of parking exists in the vicinity of the subject lot.

As demonstrated in Consideration #1 above, there is an opportunity for this site to re-develop into a higher form of development. In that case, The London Plan policies allow Council to enact temporary use by-laws, and also generally discourages the long-term extension of temporary uses. An analysis of the subject site in relation to the temporary use provisions criteria (The London Plan, Policy 1672_) is provided below.

1. *Compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding land uses;*

Based on the existing landscaping along the lot frontage the site fits well within the surrounding neighbourhood, adjacent uses in the north and east are also surface parking lots. Though the existing surface commercial parking lot does not conflict with these uses in the short-term, its long-term operation precludes redevelopment of the site to a more compatible land use.

2. *Any requirement for temporary buildings or structures in association with the proposed use;*

The parking lot is existing and no additional buildings or are proposed.

3. *Any requirement for temporary connection to municipal services and utilities;*

The proposed surface commercial parking lot does not require any connection to municipal services and utilities.

4. *The potential impact of the proposed use on transportation facilities and traffic in the immediate area;*

There are no impacts anticipated on transportation facilities or traffic in the immediate area from the recommended short-term one (1) year extension.

5. *Access requirements for the proposed use;*

The applicant is not proposing to provide any additional accesses to the subject site. The main access remains along Queens Avenue.

6. *Parking required for the proposed use, and the ability to provide adequate parking on-site; and,*

As the proposed temporary use is a surface commercial parking lot, there is no concern related to the provision of adequate parking for the temporary use.

7. *The potential long-term use of the temporary use.*

The site has operated as a surface commercial parking lot since 1995 through temporary zoning. Further extensions of the temporary zone will allow the use to continue establishing a longer-term pattern of use. A short-term extension, which does not inhibit or obstruct the redevelopment of the site into a desired commercial, residential or mixed-use form in the future, is recommended to allow users of the lot to make alternative parking arrangements, as well as give the applicant the opportunity to review and provide City Staff with a strategy for the use of the site, or possibly the submission of a development application on the site. Noting, the Downtown Zone permits a full range of commercial, service, and office uses with residential uses permitted above the first floor.

Finally, respecting the degree to which the temporary use may be frustrating the viability of the intended long-term use of the lands, the Planning Justification Report submitted by Sifton Properties states that “redevelopment of the property for other uses such as commercial or residential high-rise is somewhat constrained by both the small size and irregular shape of the lot which would make it challenging to develop when considering setback, access, parking and other zoning and site plan requirements.” In staff’s opinion, the 0.25 ha parcel can be redeveloped to support mixed-use development within the downtown core, which would allow for the future development on the lands.

4.3 Issue and Consideration #3: Criteria for Temporary Commercial Surface Parking Lots in the Downtown

The Downtown Place Type in The London Plan encourages retail and service facilities at street level to contribute to a pedestrian-oriented shopping environment. Surface parking lots are discouraged. However, The London Plan supports the provision of adequate and well-located off-street parking facilities that are sufficient to meet the demand generated by existing and proposed land uses in the Downtown and provide criteria for the evaluation of applications for new or extensions to existing temporary commercial surface parking lots. An analysis of the seven criteria under The London Plan Policy 1673A_ is provided below.

1. *The demonstrated need for surface parking in the area surrounding the subject site. Utilization rates for sub-areas of the Downtown may be used to evaluate this need.*

As noted in Consideration #1 above, the site is located in subarea 4 of the Downtown Parking Strategy study, where the parking utilization rate was the second highest (81%). A healthy utilization rate is 71%. Based on the estimated

transportation mode split by 2034, subarea 4 will have a projected parking supply deficit of 65 spaces by 2034. This demonstrates a need for parking in this area.

2. *The importance of any pedestrian streetscapes that are impacted by the surface commercial parking lot and the degree to which these streetscapes are impacted.*

The site contains enhanced landscaping by way of a grass boulevards, shrubberies, and mature coniferous and deciduous trees, as well as a wrought iron fence. This enhanced landscaping helps to create a street wall and lessen the impacts of the parking lot on the public realm. Continued long-term extension of this temporary zone will further discourage redevelopment of the site and there is currently no plan in place to improve any of the current site functions, which offers little improvement to the streetscape.

The subject site has frontage on Queens Avenue, which is designated as a Rapid Transit Corridor in The London Plan. The Rapid Transit Corridor is one of the higher-order streets within the Official Plan, which designates for mixed-use high-density development. The subject site is in a prime location for development that will improve the pedestrian environment and provide for future residential development within the downtown core.

3. *The size of the parking lot, recognizing a goal of avoiding the underutilization of Downtown lands.*

With a size of roughly 0.25 hectare (2468 sq. m), the parking lot is of an irregular configuration. This shape would make it more challenging to develop for alternative uses without the consolidation of other properties. There is still future potential for a comprehensive development on the subject site in the long-term, and consolidation can allow for the future of the parcel to redevelop.

4. *The length of time that the surface commercial parking lot has been in place, recognizing it is not intended that temporary uses will be permitted on a long-term basis.*

The surface parking lot has been in place for 28 years, since 1995, through multiple extensions to the temporary zoning on the property. Additional long-term extensions begin to allow for a permanent nature of the site as a surface commercial parking lot to manifest, which is not in keeping with the criteria for temporary uses within the downtown core. The applicant provided an estimate of their parking requirements with currently fewer than 30% of employees provided with parking either on-site or in this lot. Although there are few employees provided with parking spaces, the lot can be re-developed to provide mixed-use development on the parcel, while providing alternative parking arrangements such as underground parking.

5. *Applicable guideline documents may be used to provide further, more detailed, guidance in applying these policies.*

Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan was adopted under Chapter 19 of the 1989 Official Plan as a guideline document and has been carried forward in Our Tools policy 1717_ of The London Plan. Policy 803_1 of The London Plan refers to all development applications for lands within the Downtown will conform with the City Design Policies of The London Plan and have regard for Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan. Planning Policy 5.2 in the Tools section of the plan states: "Encourage the redevelopment of vacant sites to increase the resident and worker population downtown by discontinuing temporary-use zoning on these sites". In May 2018, this section was amended to add planning and design criteria specific to create a safe, attractive pedestrian environment.

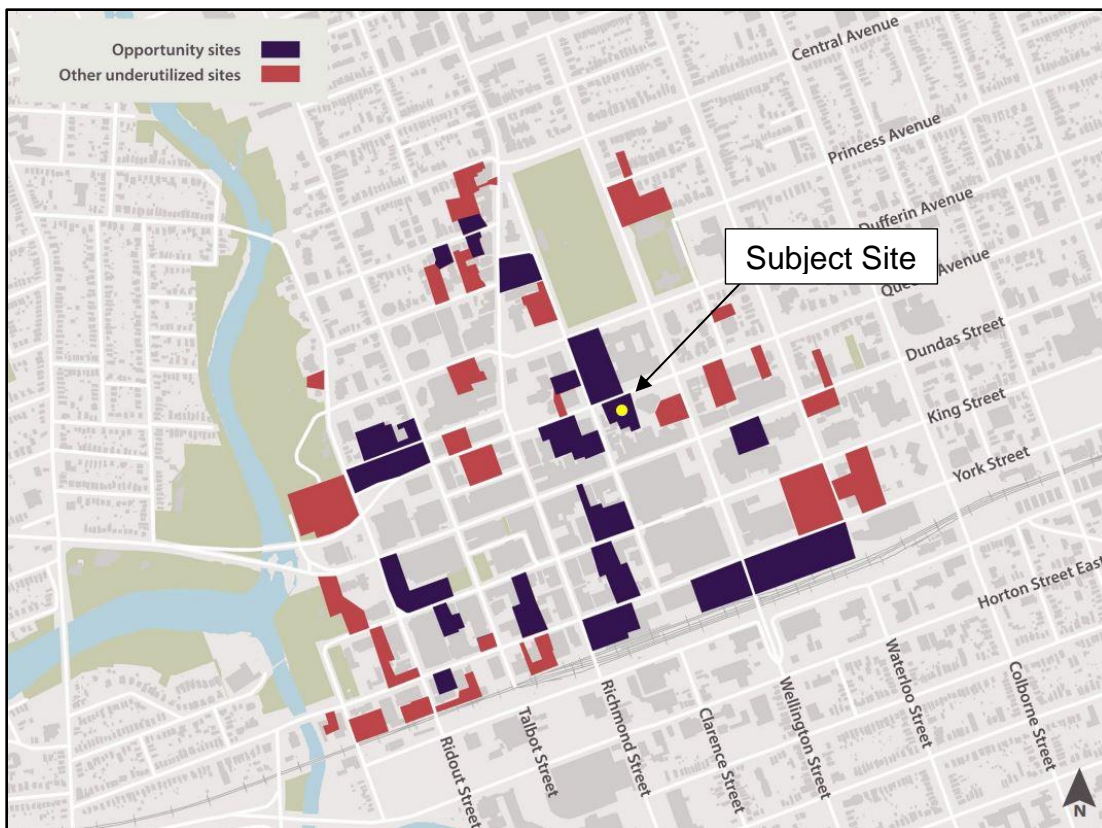


Figure 2: Priority Sites for Redevelopment (Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan)

The site is identified as an "Opportunity Site" in the Downtown Plan, which states that Surface parking lots present ideal conditions for redevelopment, as there is relatively little site work needed before new construction can begin. There is no net loss of the parking anticipated in the redevelopment of these parking lots, as parking can be regained by incorporating underground and structured parking into the design of the new development. Opportunity sites are where new development could bridge street wall gaps and/or link activity generators. These strategic locations are priority sites for redevelopment.

6. *Site plan approval will be required for all temporary surface commercial parking lots in the Downtown.*

A Site Plan approval was obtained in 1995 when the lot was originally established. As this application is to maintain the surface parking lot in its current state, there is no need to alter the existing Site Plan.

7. *Where Council does not wish to extend the temporary zoning for a surface commercial parking lot a short-term extension of the temporary zone may be permitted for the purpose of allowing users of the lot to find alternative parking arrangements*

A short-term, one (1) year extension to the temporary zone is recommended to allow users of the lot to find alternative parking arrangements. This provides a gradual and phased approach to discontinuing the temporary use of the property as a surface commercial parking lot.

4.4 Issue and Consideration # 4: Parking Lot Design

In May 2018, Council resolved that design criteria be added to Our Move Forward: London's Downtown Plan to assist in the planning and design of surface parking lots, when they are deemed to be appropriate in the Downtown, given the other evaluation criteria of the Official Plan listed above (London Plan policy 1673A).

The subject site is a temporary surface commercial parking lot that has been in place for almost 30 years. Site Plan approval was obtained in 1995 when the lot was originally established (#1). The site fits reasonably well within the surrounding neighbourhood,

adjacent uses in the north and east are also surface parking lots. The parking lot is adequately screened from the streetscape by shrubberies, a grass boulevard and mature coniferous and deciduous trees (#2) The parking lot supports all users as it is well screened, is small in size (0.25 ha) and has appropriate signage to direct users, contributing to a positive streetscape environment along Queens Ave (#3).

The site is located mid-block, which allows for the properties and buildings at the street intersections to create a strong street wall or edge, as well as partially screening the parking lot from both the east and west approaches. A wrought iron fence and landscape act as a continuation of the street wall along Queens Ave. (#4 & #6). The existing lighting is directed downward and does not cause negative impacts on surrounding uses (#7).

Convenient pedestrian connections for users have been provided to the parking lot. There are two sidewalk connections that connect the parking lot to Queens Ave. As the parking lot is not large and most parking rows are relatively short, no internal sidewalks are provided. Pedestrians can easily navigate to Queens Ave. as it is visible and only a short distance from all areas of the lot (#8).

The site has not been designed to include a sustainable 30% tree canopy coverage, as no trees were planted when the parking lot was initially constructed (#5). Similarly, the site does not have landscaped islands or other low impact development (LID) measures except a small grass boulevard (#9). The Site Plan approval was given over 20 years ago when these elements were not required. The Applicant also notes that it would be very difficult to plant trees or incorporate LIDs at this time without undertaking a full reconstruction of the parking lot and losing parking spaces. Additionally, the long-term vision is to have this property redeveloped, at which time on-site trees and landscape features would have to be removed.

The existing design of the surface parking lot complies with the criteria from section 5.2 Our Move Forward – London’s Downtown Plan, with the exception of tree canopy cover and low impact development measures for stormwater management. Staff are satisfied that due to the small size and configuration of the property, the existing Site Plan approval, and the long-term intent of the property to be redeveloped, these considerations are not as critical.

Conclusion

Staff are recommending refusal of the requested amendment to change the zoning on the subject site to allow for the continuation of the temporary use for three (3) years of the lands for a surface parking lot for vehicles for an additional three years as it is not consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and the in-force policies of The London Plan discourages long term use of the temporary use. However, staff are recommending approval of a one (1) year extension, which serves as a short-term extension, to allow users of the lot to make alternative parking arrangements, as well as give the applicant the opportunity to review and provide City Staff with a strategy for the use of the site, and/or possibly the submission of a development application on the site, which includes residential units.

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Reviewed by: Mike Corby, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Planning Implementation

Recommended by: Heather McNeely, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Development

Submitted by: Scott Mathers MPA, P. Eng
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic
Development

Appendix A

Bill No. (number to be inserted by Clerk's Office)
2022

By-law No. Z.-1-23_____

A by-law to amend By-law No. Z.-1 to extend a temporary zone located at 221 Queens Avenue.

WHEREAS Sifton Properties Limited have applied to extend the Temporary Use (T-69) Zone as it applies to a portion of the property located at 221 Queens Avenue for a period not to exceed three (3) years;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of London, by By-law No. Z.-1-202866 approved the Temporary Use for 221 Queens Avenue for a period not exceeding three (3) years beginning August 25, 2020;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of London deems it advisable to extend the Temporary Use for the said property for a period not exceeding one (1) year;

AND WHEREAS this rezoning conforms to the Official Plan;

THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Section Number 50.2(74) of the Temporary (T) Zone is amended by updating the following subsection for a portion of lands known municipally as 221 Queens Avenue:

74) T-69

This Temporary Use is hereby extended for an additional one (1) year beginning June 27, 2023.

The inclusion in this By-law of imperial measure along with metric measure is for the purpose of convenience only and the metric measure governs in case of any discrepancy between the two measures.

This By-law shall come into force and be deemed to come into force in accordance with Section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P13, either upon the date of the passage of this by-law or as otherwise provided by the said section.

PASSED in Open Council on June 27, 2023.

Josh Morgan
Mayor

Michael Schulthess
City Clerk

First Reading – June 27, 2023
Second Reading – June 27, 2023
Third Reading – June 27, 2023

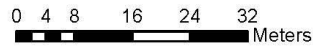
AMENDMENT TO SCHEDULE "A" (BY-LAW NO. Z.-1)



File Number: TZ-9598
Planner: BH
Date Prepared: 2023/5/3
Technician: JI
By-Law No: Z.-1-

SUBJECT SITE 

1:800



Appendix B – Public Engagement

Community Engagement

Public liaison: On March 15, 2023, Notice of Application was sent to 51 property owners in the surrounding area. Notice of Application was also published in the *Public Notices and Bidding Opportunities* section of *The Londoner* on March 16, 2023.

Nature of Liaison: To extend the existing Temporary Use (T-69) Zone to allow for the continuation of the existing commercial parking lot on the subject lands for an additional three (3) years.

Responses: 0 public response was received.

Agency/Departmental Comments

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

The subject lands are not affected by any regulations (Ontario Regulation 157/06) made pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

Engineering Review

Engineering has no comments for the re-zoning.

Heritage Planning

no new development is planned as part of this proposal; continued use of site.

Cultural Heritage Status

221 Queens Avenue is a heritage designated property and is located in the Downtown Heritage Conservation District. It is governed by the principles, goals, objectives, policies and guidelines of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan (March 2012).

Related Policy

Per policy 6.2.6 of the Downtown Heritage Conservation District Plan, property owners in the Downtown area are encouraged to enhance existing parking lots with appropriate landscape materials.

London Hydro

London Hydro has no objection to this proposal or possible official plan and/or zoning amendment. Any new or relocation of the existing service will be at the expense of the owner.

Ecology Planning

No Natural Heritage Features on, or adjacent to the site have been identified on Map 5 of the London Plan or based on current aerial photo interpretation.

There are currently no ecological planning issues related to this property and/or associated study requirements.

Urban Design

Given that Phase 2 of the Downtown Loop Rapid Transit project will be built on Queens Ave (2022-2023), it would be favourable to develop the parcel for a mixed-use, mid- to high-rise, transit-oriented development [TLP_803E_].

Should the temporary continuation of surface parking be justified, the existing landscaping should remain to screen any parking exposed to Queens Ave [TLP 272_, 278_]. Additionally, the following enhancements should be considered:

The parking lot should be designed to incorporate areas for visual amenity, to assist with stormwater management and reduce the heat island effect [TLP 282_].

Ensure safe pedestrian connectivity throughout the site with areas dedicated for pedestrian priority [TLP 281_].

Parks Planning

Temporary use, Parks has no comments.

Landscaped Architecture

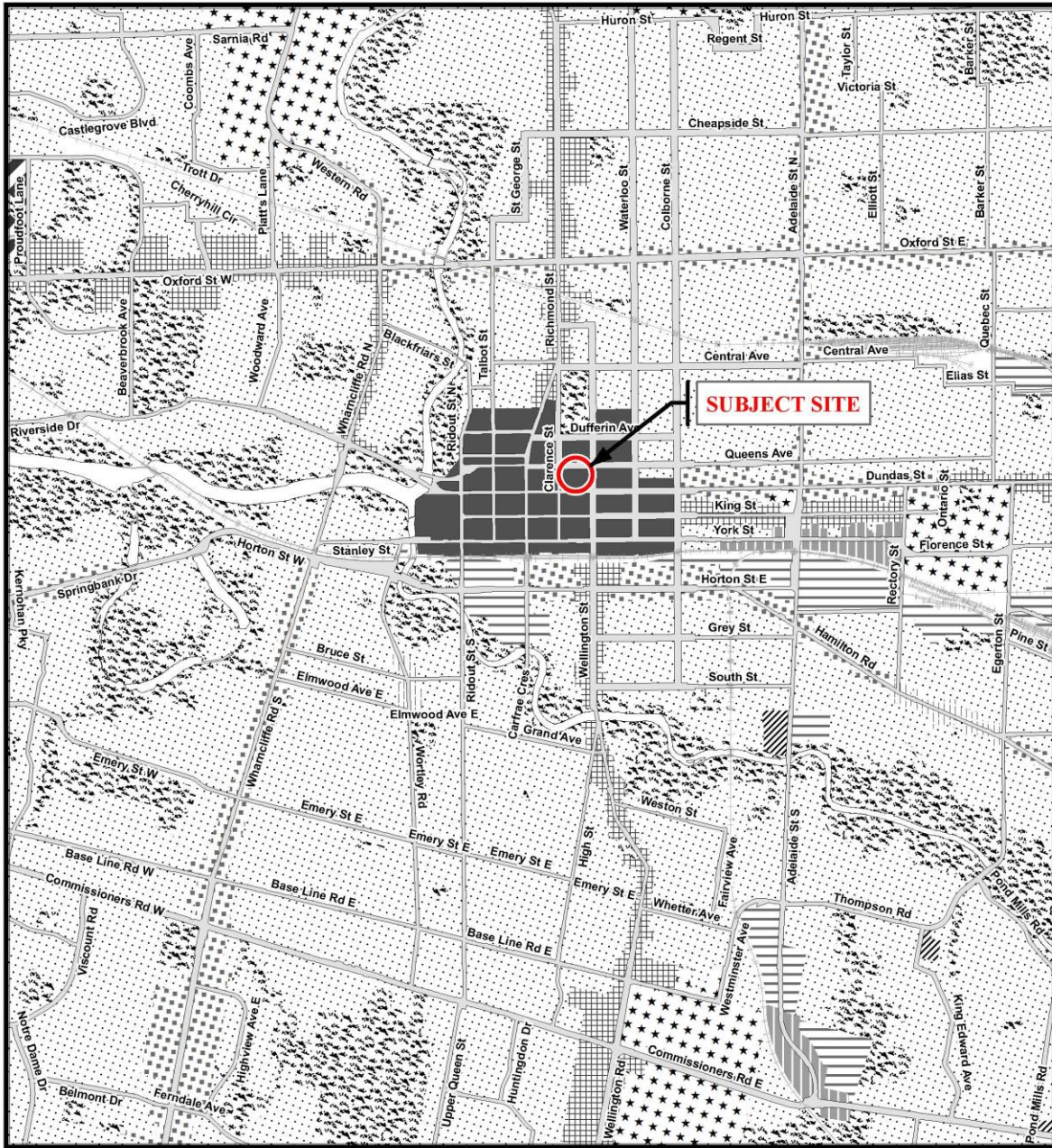
Temporary use, Landscaped Architecture has no comments.

Site Plan

Temporary use, Site Plan has no comments.

Appendix C – Relevant Background

Additional Maps



Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Downtown | Future Community Growth | Environmental Review |
| Transit Village | Heavy Industrial | Farmland |
| Shopping Area | Light Industrial | Rural Neighbourhood |
| Rapid Transit Corridor | Future Industrial Growth | Waste Management Resource Recovery Area |
| Urban Corridor | Commercial Industrial | Urban Growth Boundary |
| Main Street | Institutional | |
| Neighbourhood | Green Space | |

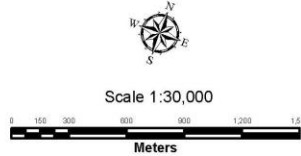
This is an excerpt from Planning & Development's working consolidation of Map 1 - Place Types of the London Plan, with added notations.

CITY OF LONDON

Official Plan

LONDON PLAN MAP 1 - PLACE TYPES -

PREPARED BY: Planning & Development



File Number: TZ-9598

Planner: BH

Technician: JI

Date: 2023/5/3



COUNCIL APPROVED ZONING FOR THE SUBJECT SITE: h-3*DA2*D350*T-69

1) **LEGEND FOR ZONING BY-LAW Z-1**

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| R1 - SINGLE DETACHED DWELLINGS | RF - REGIONAL FACILITY |
| R2 - SINGLE AND TWO UNIT DWELLINGS | CF - COMMUNITY FACILITY |
| R3 - SINGLE TO FOUR UNIT DWELLINGS | NF - NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITY |
| R4 - STREET TOWNHOUSE | HER - HERITAGE |
| R5 - CLUSTER TOWNHOUSE | DC - DAY CARE |
| R6 - CLUSTER HOUSING ALL FORMS | OS - OPEN SPACE |
| R7 - SENIOR'S HOUSING | CR - COMMERCIAL RECREATION |
| R8 - MEDIUM DENSITY/LOW RISE APTS. | ER - ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW |
| R9 - MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY APTS. | OB - OFFICE BUSINESS PARK |
| R10 - HIGH DENSITY APARTMENTS | LI - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL |
| R11 - LODGING HOUSE | GI - GENERAL INDUSTRIAL |
| DA - DOWNTOWN AREA | HI - HEAVY INDUSTRIAL |
| RSA - REGIONAL SHOPPING AREA | EX - RESOURCE EXTRACTIVE |
| CSA - COMMUNITY SHOPPING AREA | UR - URBAN RESERVE |
| NSA - NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING AREA | AG - AGRICULTURAL |
| BDC - BUSINESS DISTRICT COMMERCIAL | AGC - AGRICULTURAL COMMERCIAL |
| AC - ARTERIAL COMMERCIAL | RRC - RURAL SETTLEMENT COMMERCIAL |
| HS - HIGHWAY SERVICE COMMERCIAL | TGS - TEMPORARY GARDEN SUITE |
| RSC - RESTRICTED SERVICE COMMERCIAL | RT - RAIL TRANSPORTATION |
| CC - CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL | "h" - HOLDING SYMBOL |
| SS - AUTOMOBILE SERVICE STATION | "D" - DENSITY SYMBOL |
| ASA - ASSOCIATED SHOPPING AREA COMMERCIAL | "H" - HEIGHT SYMBOL |
| OR - OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL | "B" - BONUS SYMBOL |
| OC - OFFICE CONVERSION | "T" - TEMPORARY USE SYMBOL |
| RO - RESTRICTED OFFICE | |
| OF - OFFICE | |

CITY OF LONDON

PLANNING SERVICES / DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**ZONING
BY-LAW NO. Z-1
SCHEDULE A**



THIS MAP IS AN UNOFFICIAL EXTRACT FROM THE ZONING BY-LAW WITH ADDED NOTATIONS

FILE NO:

TZ-9598

BH

MAP PREPARED:

2023/05/03

JI

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Meters