URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

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The Subject Lands and The Proposed Development:

A 30-unit stacked townhome development, divided into two separate building blocks (24 unit building block; 6 unit building block) has been designed to fit the site. They are both rectangular shaped, and each unit has 2 bedrooms.

The subject lands are located on the south side of Byron Baseline, west of Colonel Talbot Road, and between the intersections of Byron Baseline Road and Griffith Street, and Byron Baseline Road and Colonel Talbot Road. The (now) single, rectangular-shaped parcel of land was previously occupied by three single-dwelling units and have a total lot area (outlined in blue in Figure 2) of approximately 0.54 hectares. The subject lands are currently being used a storage facility for the owner.

Byron Baseline Road has recently been upgraded (2018) to include two (2) wider lanes of traffic, one (1) headed West, and one (1) headed East. In addition, a sidewalk has been included on the side of the subject lands.

The subject lands gently slope from North to South. The topography of the area falls towards Springbank Park and the Thames River approximately 400 metres North of the site.

The subject land is in near proximity to the heart of Byron Village which is designated as a ‘Main Street’ place as defined in the London Plan.

Municipal Address(es): 1148 Byron Baseline Road

1152 Byron Baseline Road

1156 Byron Baseline Road
Current Zoning: R1-(7)
Site Area: 5,400 metres squared [58,125 squared feet]
Site Dimensions: 74 metres +/- x 65 metres +/-
Design Goals and Objectives:

Given the surrounding build form and land use context, the goal of the proposed development is to intensify an underutilized parcel of residential land in a manner that is compatible with surrounding...
built form, contribute and fulfill the planned function of the area, and provide visually attractive residential buildings to serve the traveling public and adjacent neighbourhood. Consequently, the proposed developments’ main design goals are objectives are:

- To make sure the development fits within the surrounding area and context
- To improve the streetscape of Byron Baseline Road and the surrounding area
- To ensure the stacked townhomes are built with high-quality materials that match the architectural and design framework of the surrounding neighbourhood
- To eliminate the current vacant aspect of the site
- The protection of significant site vegetation
- To ensure privacy between the proposed development and the abutting properties
- Appropriately configure the built form into the existing neighbourhood (most notably the height)

Design Response to City Documents:
The current version of The London Plan will be referenced for this proposal and urban design brief.

The London Plan (May 23, 2019):
Policy 907 notes that the new “Main Street Areas” must:

Protect and conserve the significant cultural heritage resources of our historic main streets
• See attached cultural heritage report from independent third party

Allow for appropriate and sensitive infill and intensification within our Main Streets

• The proposed development falls directly in line – in terms of design, architectural style, and setback – with that of the Byron community, while simultaneously offering a modest development to intensify and fill the Main Street area

Ensure our Main Streets are well connected with transit services

• The subject lands – located in the Main Street area of Byron Village, are situated by approximately 9-10 bus routes along an 800 metre radius (See Spatial Analysis Map for more information)

In terms of intensity, Policy 907 also states:

Buildings will be a minimum of either two storeys or eight metres in height and will not exceed four storeys in height. Type 2 Bonus Zoning beyond this limit, up to six storeys, may be permitted in conformity with the Our Tools policies of this Plan.

• The proposed development is neither less than two-storeys nor does it exceed four storeys.

Policy 911 notes that “All the planning and design that is undertaken in the Main Street Place Type will place a priority on the pedestrian experience through site layout, building location, and a design that reinforces pedestrian comfort and safety” and “The public realm should be of a highly urban character and pedestrian and cycling amenities should be integrated into all public works undertaken along main streets”

• Due to the recent roadwork on Byron Baseline Road, pedestrian access is offered right from the city sidewalk to the proposed development’s private walkway and the subsequent parking lot, and each separate unit entrance

• Bicycle racks will be caged for residents of the development to provide safekeeping of their bikes while simultaneously providing another means of transportation

• A clear line of sight is provided from the sidewalk to unit entrances, as well as canopy porches that will protect them from different types of weather

• A park will be added near the rear of the site – decisions have not been made regarding the nature of the park (i.e. – playground, gazebo, sitting area, etc.)

Policy 911 also states “Buildings should be located at or along the front property line in order to create a street wall that sets the context for a comfortable pedestrian environment. Exceptions may be made where guidelines suggest an alternative form of development along a specific main street.”

• While in discussion with City representatives, the consensus was to push the development back in line with the building to the West to match the setback of the surrounding neighbourhood

• Nonetheless, pushing the development back in line with the abutting built forms allows the opportunity for ample green space and landscaping

“Enhanced street tree planting should be incorporated into new development proposals to provide for a comfortable pedestrian environment.”
• The cedar hedge surrounding the subject lands will be preserved to provide comfort and safety within the development site
• Landscaping will be provided at the front of the site in addition to more landscaping inside of the development area
• See landscape plan and still image renderings for landscaping provided

“Surface parking will be located to the rear or interior side yard of a building. Parking facilities will not be located between the building and the street.”

• Parking has been located on the East side of the two building blocks, with the addition of driveways and garages for the rear townhomes.

As per The London Plan, the subject lands is within a “Neighbourhood Area”. The Policies encourage a high level of design and permit development of up to 4 stories adjacent to civic boulevards. Consequently, The City encourages residential intensification in these neighbourhood areas, as mentioned in their City Building Policies, Sections 79-87 (or in Section 937):

“Residential intensification will play a large role in achieving our goals for growing “inward and upward”. Intensification will be supported, subject to the policies of this Plan, in the following forms:

1. Addition of a secondary dwelling unit.

2. Expansion of existing buildings to accommodate greater residential intensity.

3. Adaptive re-use of existing, non-residential buildings, for residential use.

4. Infill development of vacant and underutilized lots.

5. Severance of existing lots.

6. Redevelopment, at a higher than existing density, on developed lands”

The London Plan encourages “inward and upward” intensification, therefore supporting the stacked townhome structure as it is compact and increases the density on the subject lands. The proposed development will be viewed as an infill development of a [now] vacant lot, as well as a redevelopment at a higher than existing density, on developed lands. Both confirm that the subject lands will be higher in density than what previously existed before and what currently exist.

Furthermore, the London Plan delivers policies for assessing whether a new development is deemed “appropriate” through such things as:

• Parking – the number of parking spaces satisfies the amount needed (44 parking spaces for 30 units). Pedestrian access is provided from the public sidewalk towards the private walkways on the property. The parking lot will have the cedar hedge along the East, and the proposed buildings to the West.

• Lighting – Light posts will be installed for surface parking lot and for the private walkways. All lighting will be required to abide by the City of London Control-By-Law.

• Privacy – The cedar hedge along the whole of the property allows for proper screening and buffering for the abutting parcels of land. Furthermore, since the proposed developments are of
the same height as the abutting lands (bar the low-rise homes across the street), the privacy level for both existing and future (on the proposed development) developments will be upheld.

- **Shadowing** – Although a detailed shadow study has not been done, any sun shadowing would typically be to the North and East. To the East is the significant easement as well as the natural vegetation both on this site and the adjacent lands. This effectively eliminates any potential shadowing. To the North, homes are separated from the proposed development though the width of the arterial road allowance as well as existing front yard setbacks. While there may be shadowing in December onto the front yards, this is not problematic as sunset is typically around 4:30 pm.

- **Visual impact** – High quality finishings and materials will be used for the construction of the proposed townhomes. The architectural framework will be based on existing buildings within the area. Furthermore, new trees and landscaping will be added on top of the already cedar hedge along the property line. The visually stunning front elevation of the buildings, along with the landscaping and site amenity area, will add value to the neighbourhoods’ new and existing residents and surrounding area.

- **Loss of trees and canopy cover** – see still image renderings for reference as all 30 units have covered porches. In addition, see tree preservation report attached as well as landscape plan and rendered images of front yard landscaping.

The London Plan also outlines areas for future growth to take place. One of the most recent notable places happens to be within the 800-metre radius of the subject lands. Section 1168 states

> “Within the Future Community Growth Place Type east of North Street, south of Byron Baseline Road and Commissioners Road West, known as the Byron Gravel Pits, it is anticipated that the long-term land use of this area will be a mix of mid-rise housing types and recreational uses. Redevelopment of this area will be based on a comprehensive rehabilitation and development plan. Expansion of the existing licensed aggregate area and the realignment of North Street may be considered if it can be demonstrated that this will assist in the rehabilitation of the existing gravel pits and that compatibility with surrounding land uses can be achieved.”

The subject lands are near the Byron Gravel Pits. The new long-term goals to rehabilitate and to intensify the gravel pits by The City will give rise to more possible recreational and pedestrian-friendly green spaces that will ultimately attribute to the neighbourhood in a positive way. The addition of residential areas give rise to more medium-density buildings within the area as well. The proposed development can also provide a basis and foundation of the type of rehabilitation the City would expect for North Street in the future.

**Official Plan (1989):**
The site is designated as on the cusp of low density and medium density residential. The City of London Official plan provides urban design principles that need to be addressed when preparing for new developments. The principles (Section 11.1) relevant to the proposed development are outlined below:

**Trees** – A large amount of site vegetation (in the form of a cedar hedge) surrounds the subject lands, along the property line. All trees (that are not considered hazardous) will be preserved during the construction of the proposed developments. Tree retention details are outlined in Figure _____
High Design Standards – The proposed development will be built using a combination of high-quality materials (stone, brick, stucco) that will correspond with the surrounding neighbourhood. The design will use earth tones to blend well with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Pedestrian Traffic Areas – Due to the recent roadwork of Byron Baseline Road, pedestrian traffic to and from the proposed development will be connected to the public sidewalk towards the private walkways. Due to the far setback of the building, landscaping will be provided at the front of the property to maximize a positive pedestrian experience. Furthermore, all units have canopies above their entrances and a site park will be added to the rear of the development.

Landscaping – The primary landscaping objective is to preserve and maintain the natural cedar hedge surrounding the site. Landscaping in front of the three-storey townhomes along the setback will be added to create strong curb appeal and to create a positive pedestrian experience. In addition, landscaping will be placed along the front of each individual unit – where applicable. See landscape plan and still image renderings for more details.

Building Positioning – The three-storey building will be aligned to have the same setback as the three-storey building to the West. Although this does not present as strong of a streetscape as having the building close to the street, retaining the same setback as the other homes along the street offers an overall nicer street landscape and provides the opportunity to use the green space as a means to offer more landscaping at the front of the building. All things considered, both building blocks are located at a reasonable distance from abutting lands.

Privacy – The natural site vegetation/cedar hedge provides as a screen and buffer for the two-storey towns at the back of the site, backing onto homes on September Lane. In addition, the two-storey townhomes will be of similar height as the single-family dwellings and will be well-below the heights of the cedar hedge. The three-storey townhomes are humbly taller than the low-rise low-density homes to the North. However, a major arterial road – in Byron Baseline – that has just been recently widened will allow existing residents and new residents of the development to maintain privacy. Furthermore, the setback of the three-storey townhomes will be far enough back to minimize any sorts of problems dealing with privacy.

Figure 7 - aerial rendering of proposed development to show natural cedar hedge with no privacy concerns
Parking and Loading – Parking will be located on the East side of the buildings, as well between buildings. There will be sufficient parking spaces, and the lot will be screened from the house to the East by the natural site vegetation.

Noise Attenuation – The setback is far enough from the road to deal with any noise issues regarding the low-rise homes to the North, as well as noise from the Byron Baseline Road. The cedar hedge along the property line will act as a noise buffer between all abutting properties.

Waste Management – A waste management plan is being proposed. There will be one large waste bin at the southern most side of the parking lot. It will sit on a concrete pad two feet below grade, with six-foot brick/stone walls along the sides and the back. The front will have a wooden gate. See image rendering for a visual.

Figure 8 - Waste bin proposal
As per Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan – General Objectives for all Residential Designations, the main objectives that are relevant to this proposal would be:
“Encourage infill residential development in residential areas where existing land uses are not adversely affected and where development can efficiently utilize existing municipal services and facilities.”

The proposed development is considered infill and fits the criteria in terms of compatibility with the existing land uses. Its height matches many of the homes in the surrounding area. The two-storey towns match the same height as the single-family dwellings to the South on September Lane. The three-storeys match the same height as the single-family dwelling to the West. The only discrepancy in height would be the low-rise on the other side of Byron Baseline Road. However, the setback of the proposed development falls back so far that there will not be a noticeable difference.

“Encourage the maintenance and preservation of buildings and/or areas considered by Council to be architecturally and/or historically significant to the community.”

The house directly to the West of the subject lands is listed as a Heritage home. Please see the Heritage Package attached for all information regarding the property from an independent third party.

As per 3.7.2 – Scope of Planning Impact Analysis General Proposals, where an amendment and/or zone change application is being considered, the following criteria may be considered:

“compatibility of proposed uses with surrounding land uses, and the likely impact of the proposed development on present and future land uses in the area.”

The proposed development provides an architectural framework and a built form that is generally viewed as compatible with all other forms of low- to medium-density residential development. The setback of the three-storey townhome is far enough away to combat any privacy and noise issues regarding the development. Lastly, providing low-rise building heights of 2- and 3-storey townhomes provides compatibility within the context of mainly low- to mid-rise single unit dwellings.

“the size and shape of the parcel of land on which a proposal is to be located, and the ability of the site to accommodate the intensity of the proposed use;”

The size of the parcel of land could fit well over the amount proposed if not for the easement along the eastern side of the subject lands. Consequently, the ability for the site to accommodate the intensity of the proposed development could have been even greater.

“the proximity of any proposal for medium or high density residential development to public open space and recreational facilities, community facilities, and transit services, and the adequacy of these facilities and services.”

The proposed development will have a lot of open green space within the site. In addition, Springbank park and the riverine is within a ten-minute walk from the subject lands. Approximately 9-10 bus routes are available within the ten-minute walk as well.

“the need for affordable housing in the area, and in the City as a whole, as determined by the policies of Chapter 12 – Housing”

In terms of affordable housing, the proposed development will be much more affordable than both the low-rise and mid-rise single-family dwellings in the area which will allow families that previously
were not able to afford a single-family dwelling in the area to purchase a unit in the stacked townhomes.

“the extent to which the proposed development provides for the retention of any desirable vegetation or natural features that contribute to the visual character of the surrounding area;”

All of the current natural site vegetation (cedar hedge) will be preserved for the proposed development, providing a natural noise and privacy barrier for the abutting parcels of land.

“the location of vehicular access points and their compliance with the City’s road access policies and Site Plan Control By-law, and the likely impact of traffic generated by the proposal on City streets, on pedestrian and vehicular safety, and on surrounding properties;”

Due to the recent roadwork done in 2017, sidewalks are present on both the North and South sides of Byron Baseline. A simple single lane driveway going in and going out of the proposed development is proposed. Furthermore, enough parking is available for all residents of the proposed development. Private walkways will be all around the townhomes and bike racks will be installed on the grounds to encourage green modes of transportation.

“the exterior design in terms of the bulk, scale, and layout of buildings, and the integration of these uses with present and future land uses in the area;”

The goal is to use earth tones and traditional styles of exterior cladding (siding, stone, stucco) to help the building blend into the neighbourhood. In addition, having two buildings as apposed to one large block decreases the bulk and scale of the development and allows the ability to clearly define each individual unit within each block. The setback will also match the existing neighbours to the west and east and will help in terms of the perspective of the developments bulk and scale and will fit into the neighbourhood accordingly.

Spatial Analysis and Neighbourhood Character Statement:

Figure 10 shows the subject lands, notable features, and land uses within 400m and 800m radii. The two radii represent walking distances of approximately 5 and 10 minutes, respectively.

The property is located with frontage on a designated arterial road. The development forms immediately adjacent are mostly low-density residential buildings with heights similar as that proposed (house immediately to West, houses to the South on September Lane). Homes to the immediate North across Byron Baseline are low profile buildings that have been built approximately 50 years ago.
Within the 5-minute walking radius exists medium-density low-rise condominiums at 1100 Byron Baseline Road. Just on the cusp of the 400m radius also exists three-storey apartment buildings to the East of the subject lands, on the corner of Byron Baseline and North Street at 1066 Byron Baseline Road.

*Figure 12 - spatial analysis*

*Figure 13 - two-storey homes abutting the South side of the property on September Lane*
Furthermore, the proposed development is looking to use the architectural layout of the three-storey apartment buildings as a foundation of the type of building that will be proposed.

A five-storey apartment building is located just outside the 400m radius, located on 1024 Commissioners Road West. This five-storey building is located on an arterial road – similar to that of the proposed townhomes – and also located around low-density low-rise single detached dwellings.

Many bus routes fall along Byron Baseline Road within the 5-10-minute radii. The most notable bus route is on Byron Baseline and Griffith Street, heading to downtown. Other notable routes are #275, #276, #278, #316, #317, #480, #1733, #1734. Just at the edge of the 400m radius are two significant non-residential uses being Springbank Park to the South and its connections to the riverine open space system and the Byron Gravel Pit.
Section Two: Conceptual Design

Site Design:
During the Pre-Consultation process, the City noted four major setbacks to the design of the overall proposed development. All these setbacks have been accounted for in the design. The most notable setback was the height. The proposed stacked townhomes were lowered from three and a half storeys to three. In addition, the rear row townhomes are now two storeys.

The setback of the townhomes is in line with the three-storey single detached dwelling to the West of the property at approximately 8 metres. This will allow for ample green space and the opportunity for landscaping at the front of the townhomes.

Parking and Access:
The City noted during the Pre-Consultation process that they preferred no parking spaces in front of the setback of the proposed townhomes. Garage spaces (accompanied with driveways) were made for the two-storey rear single townhomes, Unfortunately, some parking will still be needed in front of the setback to cater to the retaining wall on the East and South side of the property to ensure it does not encroach on the surrounding vegetation.

Thirty-six of the forty-four parking spaces available will be located on the east side of the townhomes, situated on the easement. Six will be garage spaces for the rear row single townhomes, and the last four will be between the east side of the rear townhomes and the west side of the parking lot, in front of the gazebo.

Access to the site is proposed at an existing curb cut along the North East property line at the furthermost distance from the intersection of Byron Baseline Road and Griffith Street.

Built Form:
The proposed townhomes have been designed to be compatible with existing residential uses in the surrounding neighbourhood and provide a positive and strong street presence. The proposed stacked...
and single townhouse form – mainly consisting of linear buildings with defined units – is generally an acceptable form of infill development within a low-density residential context. The proposed development situates the stacked townhomes (higher intensity building) towards the street and locates the single rear townhomes in a location that is appropriate to interface with the abutting homes on September Lane on the south side of the development site.

Furthermore, the single detached dwellings that abut the South side of the subject land are blocked by a tall tree hedge that will be preserved and are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development.

Massing and Articulation:
The three-storey stacked townhome will be the same height as the three-storey home to the West of the subject land. The stacked townhomes will be taller than the low-rise single dwelling units to the North. However, there is an arterial road (Byron Baseline) with two lanes and two sidewalks, separating the subject land with the single-unit low-rise homes. The two-storey single townhomes will be the same height as the abutting homes to the South (September Lane). In addition, a tree hedge has been preserved on the East, West, and South sides of the property, allowing the established residents of the abutting lands plenty of privacy from the proposed developments. The greatest massing of the site, being the three-storey townhomes, is located toward the street in a location that is away from most of the abutting parcels of land, and abuts only one property, being 1159 Byron Baseline Road.

The townhomes are articulated by many unique building faces along each elevation. The North and South elevations of both building blocks are defined by covered porches on the lower level and glass railing balconies on the upper levels. The design recognizes the division of many units in each of the buildings with the use of mainly premium cladding such as masonry/brick and stucco moulding designs.

Character and Image:
The primary goal for the design of the buildings is to convey a traditional look that matches with the rest of the surrounding dwellings, while also maintaining a strong curb appeal. Consequently, the townhomes will use some of the features and materials used in dwellings in the surrounding area. Materials and features used in modern day building will also be used to integrate newer (and more energy efficient) construction methods in conjunction with a traditional style of build. This will be done by using earth tones and colours within the design process and with exterior cladding.

Architectural Treatment:
The exterior design of the building provides a well thought out design with traditional architectural details, drawings from existing designs and materials from the surrounding area, while also providing an ‘urban’ feel and being noticeably distinct.

The combination of stone, brick, and stucco create an ideal design with the adjacent single detached dwellings, with an emphasis on using mostly brick to match the materials with the surrounding neighbourhood. The overall design of the building conveys a traditional look while simultaneously being respectful to the older character of the low-density residential component of the neighbourhood.

Lighting:
Lamps will be installed for surface parking lot and for the private walkways. All lighting will be required to abide by the City of London Control-By-Law.
Heritage Impact Assessment:
A report (attached to this document) was written on the evaluation or cultural heritage abutting the subject lands. This property is to the West of the subject lands, at 1158 Byron Baseline Road. It is important to note that although this home is listed on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources, the house is not technically designated as a heritage home.

The report was done by an independent third party. In brief, the evaluation was based off Ontario Regulation (O.Reg) 9/06. As per O.Reg 9/06, the criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI). If one of the criteria are met, then the property is identified as a CHVI:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it:
   a. **Is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method**
   b. Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit
   c. Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement

2. The property has historical value or associative value because it:
   a. **Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community**
   b. Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture
   c. Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community

3. The property has contextual value because it:
   a. Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area
   b. Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings
   c. Is a landmark

Of the nine criteria, two in two different sections are met (bolded). See full report for more information regarding them.

The impacts on the subsequent heritage listing is nil, as per the report attached. No direct impacts were identified for 1158 Byron Baseline Road, specifically the residence and the outbuilding, as the proposed development is restricted to the adjacent property to the East. As described in Section 5 of the report, heritage attributes identified relate exclusively to the buildings form, fabric, materials, and architectural details. Please see the attached report for the full details.