URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

1076 Gainsborough Road
Zoning By-law Amendment
City of London

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A Zoning By-law Amendment application has been submitted to the City of London to amend the Zoning By-law to allow a mixed-use building on lands located at 1076 Gainsborough Road. This Urban Design Brief describes the design details of the proposed four-storey building.

2.0 SECTION 1 – LAND USE PLANNING CONCEPT

2.1 DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PROPERTY

The subject lands are a regular shaped parcel located on the south side of Gainsborough Road, west of Hyde Park Road (Figure 1). The lands have a lot frontage of 38.4 m (126.0 ft) and a lot area of 0.40 ha (0.99 ac). The lands contain an existing single-detached dwelling and a detached garage on the front portion of the property, while the majority of the site is currently vacant. The existing dwelling has recently been utilized as a contractor’s establishment.

Figure 1 – Subject Property
The subject lands are designated “Main Street Commercial Corridor” as per Schedule A – Land Use within the City of London Official Plan (Figure 3). This designation permits mixed use buildings with residential densities ranging from 75UPH to 150 UPH.

Although portions of the London Plan are currently under appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board and not in full force and effect, the proposed development has been reviewed in the context of the Plan policies. The subject lands are identified in the London Plan as being a “Main Street Place Type” (Figure 4). The Main Street Place Type permits a range of residential, retail, service and offices uses, with mixed-use
buildings being encouraged. Buildings within the Main Street Place Type are to be a minimum of two stories in height to a maximum of four stories without bonusing.

Figure 4 – The London Plan

The subject lands are currently zoned “Business District Commercial (BDC/h-17)” in the City of London Zoning By-law (Figure 7). The BDC zone permits a full range of retail and service uses as well as apartment buildings located to the rear of ground floor commercial uses or on the second floor or above.

The proposed mixed-use building is consistent with the intent and purpose of the 1989 Official Plan and the London Plan, however, a Zoning By-law Amendment is required to establish a maximum building height and density under the current BDC zone.
2.2 THE PROPOSAL

The proposed development of the subject lands consists of a four-storey, mixed-use building containing 311 sq.m (3,348 sq.ft) of commercial floor space on the main floor and a total of 32 residential units on the upper three floors of the building. Amenity space for the residential uses is proposed on the main floor, to the rear of the proposed commercial uses. As per Section 3.4.1)a of the City of London Zoning By-law, the proposed development has a density of 90 UPH.

A total of 53 parking spaces are accommodated within the proposed development and are located to the rear of the building, out of street view. Entrances to the commercial units are located facing the street with access to the residential units provided via entrances on the west and south sides of the building.
Figure 5 – Proposed Site Plan

Figure 6 – Conceptual Rendering
2.3 DESIGN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the project is to develop a vacant site in a highly urbanized area in a manner that provides a pedestrian/street-oriented development in a village setting and contributes to the continued revitalization of the Hyde Park Community.

The design objectives of the project include establishing a built form and site design which:

- is functionally integrated into the larger community;
- improves the quality of the existing pedestrian street environment with the introduction of main floor commercial uses and enhanced landscaping;
- maintains the privacy of the adjacent residential land uses to the east and south;
- provides a minimal front yard setback to extend the existing established street wall along Gainsborough Road; and
- locates parking to the rear of the site, out of view from the streetscape.

2.4 DESIGN RESPONSE TO CITY OF LONDON DOCUMENTS

2.4.1 City of London Official Plan

The City of London Official Plan includes design criteria that are to be applied to new developments. Section 11.1.1 lists the design principles that are to be promoted in the preparation of development proposals. The individual principles listed do not always apply to each specific development and are dependent upon the location and characteristics of the proposal. The design principles relevant to this proposed development and how they are addressed is described as follows:

- Natural Features – there are no existing natural features on or near the subject lands (Section 11.1.1.i);

- Trees – There is existing overgrown vegetation on the site. A tree preservation report will be completed with the site plan application to confirm that all trees on surrounding properties will be protected (Section 11.1.1.ii);

- Open Views – There are no significant views of natural features or landmarks surrounding the site that the proposed development would obstruct (Section 11.1.1.iii);
• High Design Standards – The proposed development provides a building design that makes use of modern design practices and materials. The building contains a significant amount of glass, in particular the ground floor commercial uses (Section 11.1.1.iv);

• Architectural Continuity – There are a variety of design styles throughout the area given the mix of long-established residential uses and new commercial uses surrounding the site. However, the proposed building design provides a contemporary style that is complimentary to existing structures within the overall Hyde Park Community (Section 11.1.1.v);

• Redevelopment – The proposed apartment building will allow for the efficient use of an underutilized parcel of land intended for development (Section 11.1.1.vi);

• Streetscape – The north elevation has been designed with main floor commercial uses to animate the floor space adjacent to the pedestrian environment. The upper floors include balconies and a variety of materials and articulations to accentuate the building (Section 11.1.1.vii);

• Pedestrian Traffic Areas – direct pedestrian connections have been provided connecting the building entrances to the city sidewalk to create a strong, animated environment along Gainsborough Road (Section 11.1.1.viii);

• Access to Sunlight – The proposed building has been situated as far as possible from the rear yards of adjacent residential lands. In addition, there will be no shadow impacts on adjacent residential properties as shadows cast by the building will be primarily directed to the north and east, given the natural direction of the sun (Section 11.1.1.ix);

• Landscaping – Landscape buffers are provided around the perimeter of the parking area and building, with an urban forecourt to be provided along Gainsborough Road streetscape. Street trees and landscape will break up the hard surfacing between the building and the street (Section 11.1.1.x);

• Building Positioning – The proposed building has been positioned in line with the existing medical building to the east to provide a consistent and comfortable pedestrian environment. The building also serves to screen the parking area from the street (Section 11.1.1.xi);
• Enhances Accessibility Standards – The site accommodates accessible parking spaces as well as barrier free access to and within the building as per the City of London Accessibility and Design Standards (Section 11.1.1.xii);

• Parking and Loading – The proposed parking facilities have been designed to facilitate maneuverability on the site with access from Gainsborough Road (Section 11.1.1.xiii);

• Privacy – The building has been massed towards the northeast corner of the site to limit privacy impacts on residential properties to the west and south. New fencing and tree plantings, in combination with the protection of the existing established vegetation, where possible, will protect the privacy of the adjacent outdoor amenity space (Section 11.1.1.xiv);

• Outdoor Space – Individual balconies have been provided for each unit to offer private outdoor amenity space (Section 11.1.1.xv);

• Play Areas – Outdoor play areas are not warranted as the site is proximate to walking trails that provide linkages to nearby open spaces (Section 11.1.1.xvi);

• Recreational Facilities – Internal facilities will be accommodated for residents of the building (Section 11.1.1.xvii);

• Noise Attenuation – The appropriate air conditioning measures will be put in place to mitigate sound impacts from Gainsborough Road on the proposed residential units (Section 11.1.1.xviii);

• Waste Management – Garbage and recycling is accommodated within the building and in an outdoor collection area (Section 11.1.1.xix);

• Resource Conservation – The building design will incorporate measures to minimize the use of energy, water and resources where possible (Section 11.1.1.xx); and

• Gateways – The building sited at the street acts as a prominent feature to define the streetline as an entrance to the Hyde Park Community (Section 11.1.1.xxi).
2.4.2 The London Plan

Although the London Plan has been adopted by Council, various sections of the document are currently under appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board. That notwithstanding, the London Plan sets out urban design policies that are applicable to the City as a whole as well as to the various place types. The subject lands are located within the “Main Street Place Type”. The proposed apartment building is consistent with the City Design Policies and the policies within the Main Street Place Type as follows:

- The proposed building provides a built form and landscape area that enhances the streetscape and entry way into the Hyde Park Community. The contemporary design of the building, together with the variation in building materials creates a building that fits with both the existing heritage buildings and newer commercial buildings within the overall community (Sections 197, 199 and 202);

- The building’s location at the northeast corner of the site, together with the oversized rear yards of existing residential dwellings, limits impacts from the proposed development on adjacent residential uses (Sections 252, 253 and 298)

- The main floor commercial units contain clear glazing to activate the streetscape (Section 291 and 303);

- The site has been designed to accommodate an urban forecourt with hard surfacing and landscape areas along the streetscape. Trees and fencing are proposed around the perimeter of the site to provide buffering and screening from adjacent uses (Sections 210, 211, 235, 236 and 295);

- Direct pedestrian connections have been provided to and within the site (Sections 255 and 268);

- Existing vegetation will be maintained where possible (Section 258)

- The building has been oriented at the front lot line, consistent with the adjacent property, to maximize building massing along the street frontage and provide direct connections to the City sidewalk (Sections 223, 256, 259 and 288);

- The parking area has been located to the rear of the building, out of view from the street (Sections 222A, 269, 272, 278 and 282); and
A diversity of materials have been provided on the building, including stucco and wood-like, aluminum siding to add visual interest to the building (Section 301).

2.4.3 Hyde Park Community Plan – Community and Urban Design Guidelines

The Hyde Park Community Plan was prepared in 1999 to guide the overall design of the community and the development of individual sites within the area with the goal of creating an intensified, mixed-use environment. The proposed development is consistent with the guidelines as follows:

- The proposed development provides a pedestrian friendly, commercial and residential mixed-use building for the community along an arterial road, close to the commercial node and existing hamlet;
- The proposed development brings a higher density to the area, making efficient use of land and existing infrastructure;
- The highly detailed building is located close to the street to provide a positive contribution to the liveliness of the street, with parking located to the rear of the building;
- A consistent street edge has been maintained with the adjacent, existing building, with primary entrances facing the street to provide a strong architectural edge and define the gateway to the City;
- A change in the building materials helps to break up the roof line; and
- Landscaping will be complimentary to the existing landscaping in the area.

2.5 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The subject lands are located along a major arterial corridor (Gainsborough Road) that serves as a primary entry way into the Hyde Park Community. The north side of the roadway contains small, existing residential dwellings, some of which have been converted to commercial uses. It is anticipated that the majority of these dwellings will redevelop or be repurposed over time given the Main Street designation/place type along the north side of Gainsborough.
On the south side of Gainsborough Road to the east are existing commercial uses in both new and older buildings. The buildings contain a variety of office, service and retail uses to serve the broader Hyde Park community.

At the northwest corner of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads is a large, vacant commercial plaza intended for future development in a village type setting.

The subject lands currently contain an existing single detached dwelling that was converted for commercial uses. The site is relatively flat and contains some trees and overgrown vegetation around the perimeter of the property.

The site is served by public transit with a transit route located along Hyde Park Road.

Figure 7 – Site Spatial Analysis

The 400m radius surrounding the subject lands is shown in (Figure 8). The subject lands are located just west of the central node for the Hyde Park Community at Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads. This node consists of existing commercial buildings containing a variety of office and personal uses with limited retail uses. Lands beyond the commercial node include a variety of single detached dwellings to the north and south, the Hyde Park Industrial Park to the north and commercial lands along the east and west sides of
Hyde Park Road. To the east, along the south side of Gainsborough Road are large, remnant farm parcels intended for future development in a form similar to the proposed development. Several three-storey townhouses and two high-rise apartment towers are located to the southeast of the subject lands. The Rotary walking trail is also within 400m of the subject lands, which provides a linkage to large parklands outside of the immediate radius area.

The broader, 800m radius contains existing and developing residential subdivisions to the northeast and southeast while lands to the southwest and west are agricultural lands located outside of the Urban Growth Boundary. To the north are additional commercial lands containing small retail uses, various restaurant and service uses, as well as vacant industrial park lands intended for future development. At the outer limits of the 800m radius are several City parks. A rail line establishes the southern limit of the radius.

Figure 8 – Regional Spatial Analysis
Figure 9 – Surrounding Site Photos

Photo 1 – View of SW corner of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads, looking south
Photo 2 – View of existing medical building to the east of subject lands – looking south

Photo 3 – View of Subject Lands, looking south

Photo 4 – View of lands to the west, looking south
Photo 5 – View of lands farther west, looking south

![Photo 5](image)

Photo 6 – View of new commercial building to the north west

![Photo 6](image)

Photo 7 – View of lands to the north, opposite the site

![Photo 7](image)
Photo 8 – View of the NW corner of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads, looking north

Photo 9 – View of NE and SE corners of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads, looking east

Photo 10 – View of west side of Hyde Park Road south of Gainsborough Road, looking west
Photo 11 – View of east side of Hyde Park Road north of Gainsborough Road, looking north

Photo 12 – View of NW corner of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Roads, looking SW
3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND DESIGN RESPONSES

3.1 SITE DESIGN

The proposed development consists of a four-storey mixed-use building with a contemporary building design positioned at the northeast corner of the site. This location allows the building to continue the established built line along Gainsborough Road and maintain a building setback consistent with the existing building to the east. The building location also provides the utmost separation from the existing residential uses to the west to reduce overlook impacts on the adjacent residential properties.

Access to the site is provided along the westerly property line, off Gainsborough Road with parking provided to the rear of the building.

Primary entrances to the commercial component of the building are located on the north elevation, with direct access to the street. A secondary entrance to the commercial is provided through a joint entrance on the westerly elevation. This entrance provides access to a corridor to the commercial units as well as to a secured entrance to the lobby of the residential units. A controlled access is also provided on the south elevation to the residential units from the rear parking area.

3.2 BUILT FORM

The building form provides for 4-storeys oriented along Gainsborough Road. The main floor commercial space consists predominately of glass to animate the streetscape and encourage a strong relationship between the internal building and public realm.

3.3 MASSING AND ARTICULATION

The overall building form reflects a contemporary design with appropriate vertical and horizontal architectural details and materials to break up the massing on each of the elevations. Recessed balconies are provided to give private outdoor amenity space to each of the units. There will be no shadow impacts on the adjacent residential uses given their locations to the south and west of the proposed building.

3.4 CHARACTER AND IMAGE

The street character of the immediate area consists of a variety of building designs. The lands to the north contain one- to two-storey single detached dwellings on small lots. On
the south side of Gainsborough Road to the west are existing single detached dwellings on large lots. Further west is a two-storey former school house converted into general office space with parking located between the building and street. To the east of the site is a new, one-storey medical building with parking located to the rear and side of the building. The broader Hyde Park Community also has varying building designs with the area comprising of converted single detached dwellings, existing one- and two-storey commercial buildings as well as several converted churches, many having historical significance.

A large parcel of land located at the northwest corner of Hyde Park and Gainsborough Road is also currently vacant with future redevelopment anticipated, however; the ultimate design on the site is yet to be determined. Given the prominence of this corner site in the community, it is anticipated that the final design will deliver an anchor building for the entire area.

3.5 ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT

The proposed building utilizes a variety of materials, including aluminum paneling, stucco, metal balcony railings and wood-like siding to break up each of the building elevations and maintain a pedestrian scale along the streetscape.

3.6 LIGHTING

Lighting will be provided on the building to accentuate the articulations on the exterior façade. Interior lighting will also be provided in the commercial units to provide interaction with the public realm.

3.7 SIGNAGE

Commercial signage on the building will be modest and fit within the vision for the Hyde Park community.

3.8 SERVICING

Access to the site is provided via a vehicular entrance off of Gainsborough Road with sidewalk connections from the City sidewalk to the building entrances.

The site is well served by public transit, with a main bus route running along Hyde Park Road, just 200m east of the site.
3.9 SUSTAINABILITY TECHNIQUES

The proposed development will make use of the “best practice” techniques of current construction practice to ensure the resulting building is energy efficient. No LEED or other certification is currently anticipated.
APPENDIX ‘A’ – Building Elevations