Section 1 - Land Use Planning Context

1.1 Subject Lands

The subject lands are located on the southeast corner of Sunningdale Road East and Blackwater Road, west of Adelaide Street North. Garibaldi Avenue runs parallel south of the site, servicing a single family residential block, and bends south directly adjacent to the southeast portion of the property. The subject lands include three rectangular shaped parcels with a total area of 4.21 ha (10.40 acres). The frontage along Blackwater Road is approximately 80 m and the depth is approximately 290 m at the centre of the property. The current use of the surrounding land is low density single-family residential to the south, multi-family medium density residential to the southeast (including the Chateau Gardens long-term care residence), and neighbourhood commercial to the northeast. Although the current use of the lands north of Sunningdale Road are open pasture and agricultural, multi-family medium density and low density residential blocks are proposed for future development. The subject lands are designated medium density residential and under an application for Zoning By-law Amendment to facilitate the added height and density.
Currently the subject lands are undeveloped former pasture land, with large variation in topography across the property. The change in elevation across the site from the northwest corner to the southeast corner is approximately 23 m (75 ft.). Vegetation is limited to native mixed grasses, scrubland, and a small grouping shrubs.
Looking southeast from Blackwater Road / Sunningdale Road intersection

Looking northeast from Blackwater Road near Garibaldi intersection.
Looking west from Adelaide Street, south of commercial development

Looking southwest from Adelaide Street, south of commercial development
1.2 Proposed Development

The Official Plan land use designation on the subject property is Multi-Family, Medium Density Residential. The site is currently zoned Residential R6 Special Provision / Residential R7 (R6-5(5)/R7*D35*H12) with a 12m maximum building height and a 35 u/ha maximum density. Drewlo Holdings Inc., the owner of the subject property, is proposing to amend the current zoning to an R6 Special Provision / Residential R7 (R6-5(5)/R7*D75*H18) to permit three (3) 18 metre tall, five storey, apartment buildings with 314 total dwelling units (75 u/ha).

Block 62 sits between Adelaide Street and Garibaldi Avenue, south of the existing commercial development and north of the long-term care residence. The apartment building has been located in close proximity to Adelaide with surface parking internal to the site and accessed off of Garibaldi Avenue. Blocks 64 and 65 are situated on the south side of Sunningdale Road with the existing commercial development defining the east side and Blackwater Road the west. Both blocks are planned to have 5-storey apartment buildings located near Sunningdale Road. As with Block 62, surface parking lots have been placed internal to the development and behind the buildings screening them from the adjacent arterial roads.

Proposed Site Plan
All three buildings will incorporate a walk-out component to work with the natural topography of the sites. Building 1 on the north and west sides will be recessed from the centerline elevation of both Sunningdale Road and Blackwater Road by upwards of 3.0 m or 1 storey. A 3:1 slope will climb back up
to the property line in these locations prohibiting direct pedestrian access from these units to the road frontage.

Sunningdale Profile

Cross section north – south across Building 1

An additional 3.0+ m will be gained on the south and east sides through the incorporation of retaining walls and walk-out design. Under this approach, the surface parking lot will sit in excess of 6.0 m below the elevation of Sunningdale Road and +/- 2.0m above the grade of the backyards fronting Garibaldi Avenue. A similar 3:1 slope will transition the grade from backyard to parking lot surface improving sightlines and noise concerns from those yards.

The transition between Building 2 and the existing single-family homes lessens with the differential between Sunningdale Road and the site being approximately 1.0 m at the east limits of building 2. The walk-out design internal to the site has been maintained to give both buildings a balanced look from the south and building 2 sits at a lower elevation than building 1 in keeping with the natural grade change from east to west.
Building 3 fronting Adelaide Street addresses the existing grade in the opposite manner with a walk-out configuration out to Adelaide and the parking surface level with the second floor units.

The placement of the buildings on the perimeter of the blocks and closer to the respective arterials supports the City’s urban design objectives while reducing the impact on the existing single-family residential development. The separation between the single-family lots and building is in excess of 35m at the closest to over 54m for the portion of buildings running east-west.

Perspective looking northwest from southeast limits of subject site
1.3 Project Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the proposed development include establishing an overall site design that respects the urban design principles for this area by:

- Providing a residential development that through the combination of its massing, orientation, pedestrian entrances, architectural detailing and material selection will improve the visual streetscape along these portions of Sunningdale Road and Adelaide Street;
- Locating the buildings closer to the street, within the limits of the existing grades, to support an urban image for the streetscape;
- Creating an attractive interface between the buildings and the streets by designing an enhanced landscape that compliments the building and transitions the activity within the units to the public realm;
- Locating the common areas for the buildings on the ground floor to capitalize on the walkout features of these sites;
- Adopting a land use plan that places taller structures along the arterial roads and surface parking and landscaped areas adjacent to the proposed single family residential area;
- Maintaining the privacy of the adjacent land owners to the south and west by orienting the buildings nearest the property boundary on the north and east; and
- Adopting a land use plan that is compatible with the Official Plan and direction provided in the Uplands Community Plan.
1.4 Design Response to City Documents

The design policies relevant to the proposed development are taken from the City of London Official Plan (Chapter 11), as amended by Official Plan Amendment No. 438 and the Uplands Community Plan (1998). The subject lands are currently designated Medium Density under the City of London Official Plan (Schedule A). The policies that are relevant to the proposed development are outlined below.

1.4.1 Medium Density Residential Policies

The Official Plan establishes the following policies with regard to Multi-family, Medium Density residential development:

i) Support the development of multi-family, medium density residential uses at locations which enhance the character and amenity of a residential area, and where there is safe and convenient access to public transit, shopping and other urban amenities.

ii) Encourage the development of well-designed and visually attractive forms of multi-family, medium density housing.

iii) Promote the retention of desirable natural habitat features through the appropriate location of buildings and parking areas.

The Uplands Community Plan establishes the following recommendations with regard to Multi-family, Medium Density residential:

- The medium density residential portions are focused primarily along Sunningdale Road East and Adelaide Street North;

- These locations have been selected for the medium density residential development for several reasons:
  - These locations are along the arterial road system surrounding the community area plan;
  - Allows easy access to the main traffic carrying roads without having to travel through lower density residential neighbourhoods;
  - Makes more efficient use of the infrastructure in these areas;
  - Site planning provides a greater opportunity to incorporate design elements which reduce the necessity for the installation of noise attenuation walls along arterial roads;
  - Transit routes along arterial roads can be more effectively used when there are higher densities along those routes.
1.4.2 Urban Design Principles

The urban design principles, as set out under Section 11.1 of the Official Plan, that are relevant to the subject site are discussed below:

a) Natural Features
There are no significant natural features associated with the subject site. The grade drops approximately 23 m (75 ft.) from the northwest corner to the southeast boundary. No mass grading is proposed, as the development is designed to correspond within the existing grading and respecting the existing development to the south and west.

b) High Design Standards
With the proposed development at the intersection of arterial roads, and near a major gateway to the city, it is anticipated that a high standard of design will be implemented for the proposed development. Such design standards include, but are not limited to providing access to transit, safe access for pedestrians, public space amenities for interaction, best practices for built form design (contributes to public realm with active living areas, visually coherent, appropriate massing), and a landscape plan designed to enhance connectivity, proximity and synergy with adjacent land uses and built form.

c) Streetscape
The design of the streetscapes around the proposed development will be sympathetic to the pedestrian environment and will include landscaped open space, visible and at-grade patios, and street trees.

d) Access to Sunlight
The site will benefit from a large amount of sunlight as two of the buildings have been located along the northern edge, and one along the eastern edge of the property. Shade and shadows will be projected predominantly along Sunningdale Road and west of the eastern building, leaving the open green space to receive an abundance of sunlight year round. The proposed location of the buildings will not result in shade and shadows on the adjacent single-detached dwellings south of the subject site.

e) Landscaping
Two large open space areas are proposed to be created between blocks 64 and 65, and between blocks 65 and 62. Additional landscaped areas are proposed along pathways between the buildings and adjacent streets, and around each building. The open space areas will be programmed with a number of landscape features that will complement the ultimate build out of the proposed apartment blocks. Screening of undesirable elements will be provided together with enhanced landscaping for outdoor amenity areas.

f) Building Positioning
The buildings have been positioned to create defined usable and secure open space areas.

g) Parking and Loading
Surface parking will be provided in the interior of the lot. A total of 477 parking spots are proposed for the three blocks, which are in excess of the requirements outlined in the bylaw to avoid street parking. Loading will occur in the designated drop off area located directly in
front of the main building entrances and will be used for moving and deliveries. An additional service/handling area is located adjacent to the drop off area. Garbage storage will be handled internally in each building and brought out on garbage day.

1.5 Spatial Analysis

The subject lands are comprised of three rectangular blocks located within the Uplands Planning Area, which is currently in a state of transition and ongoing development, and is also located within the urban growth boundary. Although the subject lands north of the Sunningdale Road are currently farmland and open pasture, these lands are designated low and medium density residential, and neighbourhood commercial. The existing development adjacent to the subject lands south of Sunningdale Road is a mixed use community that includes a low density residential and open space to the south and west, and medium density residential and neighbourhood commercial developments east of the site.
1.5.1 Community Context (400m)

The community context within 400m of the subject lands is a mix of developed, undeveloped and open space. The undeveloped lands hold low and medium residential density designations. Existing developments east of the subject lands include medium density residential and a small block of neighborhood commercial, including a gas station, restaurants and auto repair shop. A public library is located to the northeast of the lands, on the edge of the 400m radius. A low density residential subdivision exists south of the subject lands. In addition, at the southwest edge of the 400m radius there is a parcel of land that is zoned open space. This parcel is connected by a tributary of the Thames River, which originates on the northwest side of Sunningdale Road and extends southeast where it empties into a larger tributary.
1.5.2 Community Context (800m)

The community context within 800m of the subject lands is similar in that it contains undeveloped medium density parcels of land, primarily to the north. Medium density residential developments primarily occur along Sunningdale Road to the east and west, and Adelaide Street to the south. Low density residential subdivisions occur within the interior of these arterial streets. One neighbourhood commercial block is present north of Fanshawe Park Road just outside the south edge of the 800m radius and includes a grocery store. In addition, four churches are closely located to the Adelaide and Fanshawe Park Road intersection, just beyond the 800m radius.

1.5.3 SWOT Analysis

An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) presented by the neighbourhood context and the proposed development can be summarized as follows:

Strengths

- The subject lands are currently designated for the proposed land use
- High visibility along a major arterial
- Appropriate location for medium density type of development
- Adjacent to a mixed use development that includes low and medium residential and neighbourhood commercial uses
- Building is located away from low density use to the south
- Minimal shadow impact on surrounding lands
- Transit is currently available along Garibaldi Avenue, with bus stops located at the northwest corner (Sunningdale Road) and southeast corner (Adelaide Street)

Weaknesses

- Retaining walls may be required along a small portion of Sunningdale Road and Blackwater Road due to topography of the landscape which may create a barrier between the public realm and the building. This may be mitigated through the creation of courtyard patios and/or the inclusion of landscaping, such as shrubs or trees.
- Electrical poles and wires detract from streetscape and the overall visual appearance, however it is not feasible to bury or relocate.

Opportunities

- Establish a new visually appealing development along Sunningdale Road
- Provide an enhanced pedestrian oriented landscape streetscape along adjacent roads
- Provide an appropriate street presence through the use of accepted urban design principles
Threats

- There are no perceived threats at this stage of the development

1.5.4 Neighbourhood Character and Compatibility

The neighbourhood character in this area of the city is a mixture of single family subdivisions consisting of curved streets, avenues and crescents (to the south and east) together with medium density apartment buildings, predominantly juxtaposed against open pasture or land being farmed as agricultural. A small block of commercial development occurs directly adjacent to the site.

Adding to this mix is a tributary of the Thames River and associated wooded corridor south and west of the subject site, which provide a large green open space system.

The proposed use on the subject site is medium density apartment style development, which is consistent with the current Official Plan designation. Therefore, the development that is being proposed on the subject site, is considered to be compatible and in keeping with the existing neighbourhood character.
Section 2 - Design Principles and Design Responses

2.1 Conceptual Design

The design objectives for the subject lands are:

a) Medium Density Site (Blocks 62, 64 and 65)
   i. Create a development that is sympathetic to the land uses existing and planned in the neighbourhood.
   ii. Create a development that respects the existing topography.
   iii. Create a development that will employ a high degree of urban design and architectural principles.
   iv. Provide for a pedestrian oriented, well connected, landscape treatment that is respectful of the public realm and employs appropriate landscape architectural design principles.

2.1.1 Medium Density Block (Blocks 62, 64 and 65)

The goals outlined above have been achieved through appropriate scale and massing of the buildings and by the placement of the structures on the site. The following images included within and forming the appendices are intended to provide an understanding of the proposed heights and massing of the buildings and how they relate to one another as well as illustrate the potential spatial definition that is created for the remainder of the site.

a) Apartment Buildings

The proposed apartment buildings have been designed as three distinct components. Two buildings are located along Sunningdale Road with access along a private drive which exits/enters onto Blackwater Road and Garibaldi Avenue. The third building is located along Adelaide Street North, with access provided from Garibaldi Avenue. The apartment buildings have been brought as close to the arterial street line as possible to create a strong urban connection to the street (Sunningdale Road and Adelaide Street North). These buildings are five storeys with a walk-out component on the interior, nearest the parking.

The selection of cladding materials corresponds to established architectural design principles respecting the idea of a Base and Top. The base will consist of concrete with brick veneer. The Top or Cap will be constructed of a combination of precast panels and coloured architectural steel cladding. Projection and setbacks occur both horizontally and vertically at each elevation. Different colours have been chosen to accentuate those projections and setbacks, and the top portion of the buildings.
In terms of shadowing it has been determined that two of the buildings will cast shadows along Sunningdale Road, and the third will cast shadows onto Adelaide Street North, a portion of the commercial development to the north, and west into the interior of the site. Therefore, there will be no shadow impact on residential developments along Garibaldi Avenue to the south.

The change in elevation across the site from the northwest corner to the southeast corner is approximately 23 m (75 ft.).

b) Landscape Open Space and Streetscape
Two large landscaped amenity areas will be provided, located between the buildings on blocks 64 and 65 and west of block 62 at the bend in Garibaldi Ave. Landscaped open space will surround surface parking lots and driveway access routes. Tree and shrub plantings will complement the open areas for the use and enjoyment of the residents of the complex. All parking lots will be enhanced via deciduous tree plantings along the peripheries, and internal planter islands containing deciduous trees, shrubs, and hardy perennials.

A pedestrian walkway will link the buildings on blocks 64 and 65 in a safe and efficient manner, and pedestrian walkways will allow for connections from all buildings to the City sidewalks on Sunningdale Road, Blackwater Road, Garibaldi Ave, and Adelaide Street. Public access to the commercial block at the corner of Adelaide Street and Sunningdale Road will be provided via a fenced pedestrian walkway and enhanced with tree plantings. Fencing and enhanced landscape screening will also be provided along property lines adjacent to the commercial block and single family homes on Garibaldi Ave.

Additional landscaped areas will be included on the front, rear, and side yards of the buildings adjacent to the Sunningdale Road, Blackwater Road, Garibaldi Ave, and Adelaide Street, and will include deciduous tree plantings to allow filtered views of the buildings from the public realm.
2.2 Public Realm

The public realm areas that will be created in this development will fall within the right of ways of the existing and proposed road systems. These include Sunningdale Road along the northern boundary, Blackwater Road along the western boundary and Adelaide Street North along the southeastern boundary, as well as the interface areas with the existing neighbourhood. All of these public right of ways will include street trees, sidewalks and lighting as required by the City of London subdivision standard details. In addition, opportunities exist to include seating areas along this frontage that would enhance the pedestrian experience.

2.3 Sustainability

At this stage of design development, sustainability measures for the medium density site have not been clearly defined. However, as the project progresses consideration will be given to implementing sustainable strategies for both the buildings and the site. These could include:

- Existing stormwater servicing through SWM pond south of proposed development
- Reduction in the heat island effect through lighter coloured roofing materials
- Low-flow faucets, energy efficient appliances, high efficiency HVAC
- Native and drought tolerant landscaping
- Recycling and waste management
- The use of regional, recycled and/or rapidly renewable building materials
- The use of low V.O.C. emitting materials
- The use of natural light and natural ventilation in the building designs.
Appendix A - Site Plan
Appendix B - Building Perspectives
Appendix C - Landscape Plan