

# TREE PRESERVATION REPORT FOR ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

# 1982 COMMISSIONERS ROAD EAST LONDON, ONTARIO

Report prepared by Ron Koudys Landscape Architects Inc

On October, 2023

RKLA Project #23-155



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# **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Ron Koudys Landscape Architects Inc. (RKLA) was retained by Royal Premier Homes (RPH) to prepare a tree assessment report in conjunction with the proposed development at 1982 Commissioners Road East. The intent of this report is to summarize the findings of the tree assessment and make recommendations regarding tree preservation and removal based on tree health, the current site plan, and anticipated site grading for the purpose of application for rezoning.

Note that refinement of these recommendations will be made upon design refinement at the time of application for site plan approval.

#### **1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The inventory captured 18 individual trees. Trees were identified within the subject site, and within 3 meters of the legal property boundary. No species classified as endangered or threatened under the Ontario Endangered Species Act, 2007, S.O. 2007, c. 6 were observed during the tree inventory. All trees observed are common to the current land uses and can be characterized as anthropogenic or opportunistic. The subject site is NOT within or immediately adjacent to a City of London Tree Protection Area.

%	Qty.	Botanical Name	Common Name
22%	4	Picea glauca	White Spurce
22%	4	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine
11%	2	Picea abies	Norway Spurce
6%	1	Acer negundo	Manitoba Maple
6%	1	Acer platanoides	Norway Maple
6%	1	Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
6%	1	Catalpa speciosa	Catalpa
6%	1	<i>Picea pungens</i> var. <i>glauca</i>	Colorado Blue Spruce
6%	1	<i>Pinus</i> spp.	Pine
6%	1	Pinus strobus	White Pine
6%	1	<i>Pyrus</i> spp.	Pear
100%	18	Total	

1.2.1 TREE SPECIES COMPOSITION CHART

The following chart summarizes the amount of each tree species observed.

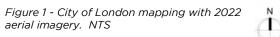
#### 1.2.2 TREE REMOVAL AND PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Removal of 15 trees from subject site due to direct conflict with proposed construction.
- Removal of 1 tree located on the boundary between the subject site and 1964 Commissioners Road East. Tree removal consent is required.
- Removal of 2 trees located within the City ROW of Commissioners Road. Consent from the City of London required.
- Preserve 1 tree located within the subject site and 1 tree located on 1990 Commissioners Road East.
- Follow pre, during, and post construction recommendations outlined in the Construction Impact Mitigation Recommendations in this report.

# 2.0 SUBJECT SITE AND SCOPE OF WORK

The subject site is located at 1982 Commissioners Road East. There is an existing dwelling located on the site. The trees are generally located along the west and site sides of the property.

Refer to Figure 1 for scope of tree inventory.



Red dashed line – Limit of inventory

# 3.0 METHODOLOGY

Field work was completed on June 28th, 2023 by RKLA staff member Kathleen Garrett, ISA certified arborist ON 3009A. A topographic survey provided by Callon Dietz Inc. dated May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 was used as a base for the field work and determined tree location/ownership. All trees with a minimum DBH of 10cm within the given scope were identified and assessed. Note that not all trees assessed were located on the survey. Trees not included on the survey were located approximately via field measurements and aerial imagery. Trees were NOT tagged in the field. Each tree was assigned a number which are identified in the tree data table and on the tree preservation plan. Tree identification numbers include 1-18.

The following information was recorded for each individual tree:

Genus + specific epithet (Species) Diameter at breast height (DBH) (centimetres) Crown radius (metres) Crown Condition (overall general vigour of crown) Structural Form (excellent, good, fair, poor) Structural Integrity (good, fair, poor, hazard) General Comments

#### **3.1 HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

Trees were assessed following accepted arboricultural techniques and best practices using a limited visual inspection. The inspection included a 360-degree visual examination of the above-ground parts of each tree for structural defects including cavities, wounds, scars, external indicators of internal decay, evidence of insect presence, discoloured or deformed foliage, canopy and root distribution, and the overall condition of the tree. Evaluation of tree health was based on visible tree health indicators including live buds, foliage condition, deadwood, structural defects, form,



and signs of disease or insect infestation. If needed, field observations were reviewed against available online imagery of the site to assist in determining tree canopy health. Quantified health assessments included in the inventory are explained here:

Crown Condition Assessment

- 5 Healthy: less than 10% crown decline
- 4 Slight decline: 11% 30% crown decline
- 3 Moderate decline: 31% 60% crown decline
- 2 Severe decline: 61% 90% crown decline
- 1 Dead No visible indication of living foliage or buds in crown

Structural Form Assessment

- Excellent: An ideal expression of a specific tree species, true to form, balanced canopy, good flare, typical internode length, full crown, etc.
- Good: A satisfactory and generally expected expression of a specific tree species, with only minor or typical variances from an ideal form.
- Fair: Nearly satisfactory, with defects or a combination of defects such as codominant leaders, unbalanced crown, poor/no flare, shortened internodes, has been poorly pruned, etc.
- Poor: Significantly flawed expression of a specific tree species

Structural Integrity Assessment

- Good: Defects if present are minor (e.g. twig dieback, small wounds); defective tree part is small (e.g. 5-8 cm diameter limb) providing little if any risk.
- Fair: Defects are numerous or significant (e.g. dead scaffold limbs); defective parts are moderate in size (e.g. limb greater than 5-8 cm in diameter).
- Poor: Defects are severe (trunk cavity in excess of 50%); defective parts are large (e.g. majority of crown).
- Hazard: Defects are severe and acute; defective part or collective defective parts render the tree a high risk threat to potential targets.

#### **3.2 CRITICAL ROOT ZONES**

The critical root zone of a tree is the portion of the root system that is the minimum necessary to maintain tree vitality and stability. Critical root zones are commonly prescribed by municipal bylaws based solely on DBH and/or drip line, and are typically expressed as a circular shape around the tree. There are a number of other factors, however, that are considered when establishing a critical root zone.

Factors that inform location and extent of a tree preservation barriers to protect the critical root zone include: species tolerance to root loss and other construction impacts (as established by authoritative resources and professional experience), tree trunk size (DBH), tree health and vigour, structural condition, landscape context, soil type, moisture availability, topography, ground cover, crown size (drip line) and balance, current physical root restrictions, visible root arrangement, relationship to neighbouring trees, relationship between tree and proposed construction, type of proposed construction, etc.

The City of London Tree Protection By-Law (C.P.-1555-252) defines the Critical Root Zone as *"the area of land within a radius of ten (10) cm from the trunk of a tree for every one (1) cm of trunk diameter"*. The Tree Preservation drawing graphically represents this radius for trees to be preserved.

# 4.0 TREE INVENTORY AND PRESERVATION/REMOVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

# 4.1 TREE DATA TABLE

The following recommendations are based on requirements of the current site plan. Grey indicates recommended removal.

	GENER		SIZ	Έ		HE	ALTH & C	CONDITION	RECOMMENDATIONS			
ID #	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	LOCATION	DBH (cm)	CANOPY RADIUS (m)	CROWN CONDITION	STRUCTURAL FORM	STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	COMMENTS	EXPECTED CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS	PRESERVE OR REMOVE	IMPACT MITIGATION / REMOVAL RATIONALE
1	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	City ROW Commissioners Road	41	3	1			Fully dead	conflict with proposed sidewalk entrance	remove	construction conflict and tree condition
2	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	City ROW Commissioners Road	26	1.5	1			Fully dead	conflict with proposed sidewalk entrance	remove	construction conflict and tree condition
3	<i>Picea pungens</i> var. <i>glauca</i>	Colorado Blue Spurce	Subject Site	35	2	3	Fair	Fair	Sparse, dead branches, limbed up 2 meters	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict and tree condition
4	Acer platanoides	Norway Maple	Subject Site	36	6	5	Fair	Good	Splitting and peeling bark on limbs, major wound on trunk	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict
5	Picea glauca	White Spruce	Subject Site	~30	5	5	Good	Good	Branched to grade	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict
6	Acer negundo	Manitoba Maple	1990 Commissioners Road East	~15, 10	3	5	Fair	Good	Multi-stem 2, low primary union	possible impacts from grading requirements	preserve	tree preservation barrier
7	Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple	Subject Site	34	4.5	4	Good	Good	Full form	possible impacts from grading requirements	preserve	tree preservation barrier
8	Picea abies	Norway Spruce	Subject Site	63	5	4	Good	Good	Branched to grade	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
9	Pinus strobus	White Pine	Subject Site	31	4	3	Fair	Fair	Canopy present only in upper branches	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
10	Picea abies	Norway Spruce	Subject Site	82	5	4	Good	Good	Branched to grade	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
11	<i>Pinus</i> spp.	Pine	Boundary subject site and 1964 Commissioners Road East	30	3	1			Fully dead	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict - consent for removal is required from 1964 Commissioners Road East
12	Picea glauca	White Spruce	Subject Site	45	4	3	Fair	Fair	Sparse crown, epicormic growth, fruiting bodies on trunk	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
13	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	Subject Site	32	3	2	Fair	Fair	Broken lower branches, minor wounds on trunk	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
14	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	Subject Site	28	3	2	Fair	fair	Broken lower branches, minor wounds on trunk	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict

	GENER	SIZ	Έ		HE	ALTH & C	CONDITION	RECOMMENDATIONS				
ID #	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	LOCATION	DBH (cm)	CANOPY RADIUS (m)	CROWN CONDITION	STRUCTURAL FORM	STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	COMMENTS	EXPECTED CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS	PRESERVE OR REMOVE	IMPACT MITIGATION / REMOVAL RATIONALE
15	Picea glauca	White Spruce	Subject Site	35	3	3	Fair	Good	Limbed up 3 meters, sparse	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
16	Picea glauca	White Spruce	Subject Site	34	3	3	Fair	Good	Limbed up 3 meters, sparse	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict
17	<i>Pyrus</i> spp.	Pear	Subject Site	80	4	4	Poor	Fair	Large cavity at base to 1.5 meters, west side of canopy sparse	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict
18	Catalpa speciosa	Catalpa	Subject Site	89	6	3	Poor	Fair	Multiple dead limbs, sparse, sloughing bark	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict

## 5.0 POTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS ON TREES

Most trees have been recommended for removal due to direct conflict with the proposed development. Some trees that have been recommended for preservation may be in proximity to the proposed construction. Trees to be preserved may be affected by the construction process, or by the construction itself. It is imperative that the design team and the construction crew understand the potential for, and the causes of tree damage. Trees recommended for preservation may experience some or all of the following potential construction impacts. Strategies and methods to avoid these impacts are outlined in the Construction Impact Mitigation Recommendations section of this report.

#### **5.1 SOIL COMPACTION**

Soil compaction is caused by heavy or repeated compression or vibration of the soil around the tree. Soil compaction reduces the amount and size of macro and micro pore space that is vital for subsurface movement of air and water. The harmful effects of soil compaction include, but are not limited to: slower water infiltration, poor aeration, reduced root growth and an overall increased susceptibility to biotic and abiotic stressors.

#### 5.2 ROOT LOSS

Root loss occurs when roots are severed. The majority of roots are typically located within the top 60cm of soil and can extend outward up to three times the extent of the tree drip line. Excavation of any kind within the critical root zone\* can sever roots. Two categories of roots need to be considered when evaluating impacts of root loss - small, fibrous absorbing roots, and large structural roots. Significant loss of either or both of these functions can cause stress and/or affect the structural stability of the tree. Note, however, that it is commonly accepted that healthy trees can typically tolerate and recover from the removal of approximately 33% (up to a maximum of 50%) of their root mass. Thorough consideration regarding extent of acceptable root removal is dependent on individual species characteristics, root loss distribution, and site specific conditions (*ref. Trees and Development: A Technical Guide to Preservation of Trees During Land Development by Nelda Matheny and James R. Clark, 1998. Pg 72*).

\* Refer to 'Critical Root Zones" in this report for definition.

#### **5.3 GRADE CHANGES**

Lowering of the grade around trees has immediate and long term effects on trees. Lowering of grade requires immediate root loss from cutting the roots which results in water stress from the root removal and potential reduced structural stability.

Raising the grade around a tree can be equally damaging. The addition of fill over the root zone of a tree alters the roots' ability for normal water and gas exchange that is necessary for healthy root growth and stability. Fill essentially suffocates the roots and can lead to the slow and eventual decline of the tree.

#### **5.4 MECHANICAL DAMAGE**

Mechanical damage is caused by physical contact with a tree that damages the tree to any degree. During land development and construction activities, there is an increased risk of both minor and fatal mechanical damage to trees from construction equipment. Minor damage can create entry points for insects and pathogens, and fatal damage can cause irreparable structural damage.

#### 5.5 CHANGES TO EXPOSURE - SUN AND WIND

Trees can be negatively affected by <u>increased exposure</u> to sun or wind when neighbouring trees are removed. This can be of particular concern when 'interior trees' (trees that have developed surrounded by other trees) are suddenly exposed to forest edge conditions. These trees may experience higher intensity of direct sunlight resulting in leaf scald, and instability due to increased wind and snow loads.

Trees can be negatively affected by <u>decreased exposure</u> to sunlight. Proposed development that includes tall buildings located to the south and west of mature existing trees can greatly reduce the amount of daily direct sunlight. While this change in environment may not cause the immediate or eventual death of a tree, it can certainly slow development and alter growing habits and patterns, and must therefore be a consideration when evaluating trees for potential preservation.

#### **5.6 SOIL CONTAMINATION**

Soil health around a tree can be compromised by contamination from spills or leaks of fuels, solvents, or other construction related fluids.

#### **5.7 WATER AVAILABILITY**

Grading and servicing requirements for development can affect water availability for trees. Trees may experience a loss of available water due to a lowered water table or the capture or redirection of subsurface and/or overland flow. Conversely, trees may experience an increase of available water due to changes in site grading and storm water retention efforts.

The successful survival of the trees to be preserved is largely dependent on adhering to the construction impact mitigation recommendations that follow.

# 6.0 CONSTRUCTION IMPACT MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following general recommendations are provided to guide the removal process, mitigate construction impacts, and ensure compliance with provincial, federal, and

municipal regulatory requirements. Some of the recommendations listed below are noted to be undertaken by an ISA certified arborist.

#### **6.1 PRE-CONSTRUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Prior to any construction activity, tree preservation fencing is to be installed as per the attached tree preservation drawings and detail.
- b) Trees approved for removal are to be clearly indicated in the field (marked with spray paint or other agreed upon method) by the project arborist or landscape architect prior to any tree removal operations. All removals to be undertaken by an ISA certified arborist.
- c) In accordance with the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, all removals must take place between September 1st and March 31st to avoid disturbing nesting migratory birds. If tree removal occurs between April 1st and August 31st, a biologist is required to complete a search for nests. Once cleared, the contractor has 48 hours to remove. If removal does not occur within 48 hours, another search will be required.
- d) Care should be taken during the felling operation to avoid damaging the branches, stems, trunks, and roots of nearby trees to be preserved. Where possible, all trees are to be felled towards the construction zone to minimize impacts on adjacent vegetation. All removals to be undertaken by an ISA certified arborist.
- e) It is recommended that the existing ground-layer vegetation at the base of trees to be preserved remain intact within the critical root zone so as not to disturb the soil around the base of the existing trees.
- f) Final site grading plans should ensure that the existing soil moisture conditions are maintained.

#### **6.2RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS**

- a) Tree preservation fencing is to be maintained in good condition and effective for the duration of construction until all construction activity is complete or as per the project arborist or landscape architect.
- b) Tree preservation fencing is to remain intact as per the tree preservation drawings, and can only be temporarily removed with the express written consent from the project arborist or landscape architect. Should tree preservation fencing be temporarily relocated or moved, it is to be reinstated as per the tree preservation plans as soon as possible.
- c) No construction, excavation, adding of fill, stockpiling of construction material, or heavy equipment is permitted within the critical root zone/within the tree preservation fencing.
- d) When excavation near a tree is required, and it is anticipated that roots will be severed and exposed, duration of exposure is to be minimized to prevent root desiccation.
- e) During the excavation process, roots 25mm or larger that are severed and exposed should be hand pruned to leave a clean-cut surface. To be undertaken by an ISA certified arborist. Exposed severed roots that cannot be covered in soil on the same day as the cuts are made are to be kept moist. Exposed roots are to be kept moist by covering them with water soaked burlap or any other means available to prevent them from drying out.
- f) Avoid idling heavy equipment under or within close proximity to trees to be preserved to prevent canopy damage from exposure to the heat of the exhaust.

g) Broken branches on trees within the subject site to be preserved should be cleanly cut as soon as possible after the damage has occurred. To be undertaken by an ISA certified arborist.

#### **6.3POST-CONSTRUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Avoid discharging rain water leaders adjacent to retained trees, as this may result in an overly moist environment which can cause root rot.
- b) After all work is completed, tree preservation fences and any other impact mitigation paraphernalia must be removed.
- c) A final review must be undertaken by the project arborist or landscape architect to ensure that all mitigation measures as described above have been met.

# 7.0 DISCLAIMER

The assessment of the trees presented within this report has been made using accepted arboricultural techniques. These include a visual examination of the aboveground parts of each tree for structural defects, scars, external indications of decay, evidence of insect presence, discoloured foliage, the general condition of the trees and the surrounding site, as well as the proximity of property and people. None of the trees examined were dissected, cored, probed, or climbed, and detailed root crown examinations involving excavation were not undertaken.

Notwithstanding the recommendations and conclusions made in this report, it must be realized that trees are living organisms and their health and vigour is constantly changing. They are not immune to changes in site conditions or seasonal variations in the weather.

While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the trees recommended for retention are healthy, no guarantees are offered or implied, that these trees or any part of them will remain standing.

Note that this arborist report has been prepared using the latest drawings and information provided by the client. Any subsequent design or site plan changes affecting trees may require revisions to this report. Any new information or drawings are to be provided to RKLA prior to report submission to planning authorities.

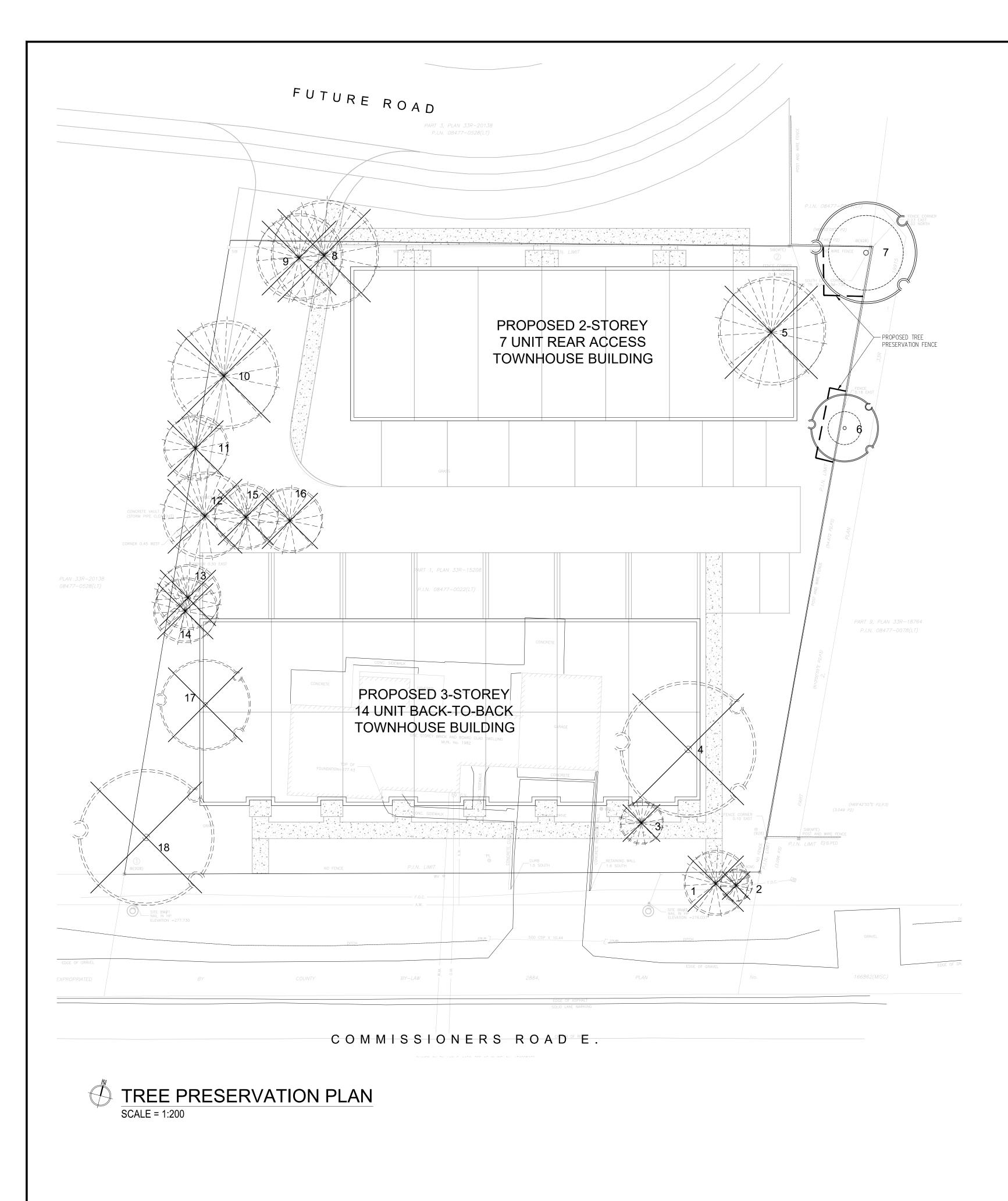
#### **8.0 CONTACT INFORMATION**

Office: Ron Koudys Landscape Architects Inc. 368 Oxford Street East London, Ontario N6A 1V7 Ph: 519-667-3322 Fax: 519-645-2474

Staff:

Field work and report author: Kathleen Garrett, ISA Certified Arborist ON-3009A - <u>Katie@rkla.ca</u>

# 9.0 APPENDIX A - TREE PRESERVATION DRAWINGS



	TREES RECOMMENDED FOR REMOVAL (16)												
TF	REES R	ECOM	MENDE	ED F	-0	R	RE	M	DVAL (16)				
	GENER	AL INFORMATION	ON SIZE HEALTH & CONI						I & CONDITION	RECOMMENDATIONS			
ID #	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	LOCATION	DBH (cm)	(ANOPY RADIUS (m)	CROWN CONDITION	STRUCTURAL FORM	STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	COMMENTS	EXPECTED CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS	PRESERVE OR REMOVE	IMPACT MITIGATION / REMOVAL RATIONALE	
1	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	City ROW Commissioners Road	41	3	1				conflict with proposed sidewalk entrance	remove	construction conflict and tree condition - consent from the City of London Required	
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14	Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine	Subject Site	28	3	2	Fair	fair	Broken lower branches, minor wounds on trunk	conflict with proposed road	remove	construction conflict	
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17	<i>Pyrus</i> spp.	Pear	Subject Site	80	4	4	Poor	Fair	Large cavity at base to 1.5 meters, west side of canopy sparse	conflict with proposed building	remove	construction conflict	
18	Catalpa speciosa	Catalpa	Subject Site	89	6	3	Poor	Fair	Multiple dead limbs, sparse, sloughing bark	conflict with critical root zone and proposed building	remove	tree condition & construction conflict	

TF	TREES RECOMMENDED FOR PRESERVATION (2)												
	GENERAL INFORMATION						ŀ	IEALTH	& CONDITION	RECOMMENDATIONS			
ID #	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	LOCATION	DBH (cm)	(ANOPY RADIUS (m)	CROWN CONDITION	STRUCTURAL FORM	STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY	COMMENTS	EXPECTED CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS	PRESERVE OR REMOVE	IMPACT MITIGATION / REMOVAL RATIONALE	
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