

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. DP001106 – 1900 GRIFFITHS RD (Proposed Lot 4)

Applicant/Designer: ISLAND WEST COAST DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

Owner: BLUE CUBE DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

Landscape Architect: VICTORIA DRAKEFORD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Subject Property:

<i>Zoning</i>	I3 – High Tech Industrial
<i>Location</i>	The subject site is located on the north side of the newly built portion of Boxwood Road (subdivision pending)
<i>Proposed Lot Area</i>	2,370m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Light Industrial; Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 9 –Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential development
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

BACKGROUND

There is an active subdivision application for 1900 Griffiths Road. This development permit application is for proposed Lot 4 of the Green Rock subdivision.

During the subdivision process, it was discovered that a portion of the subject property and adjacent proposed Lot 5 contains a community of Dense Spike Primrose, a Federally-protected Species at Risk. A Section 219 covenant to protect the most environmentally sensitive portion of the lot will be registered at the time of subdivision. A wooden fence has been installed onsite to delineate the area that will be protected via covenant, and the covenant area is indicated on the site plan.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Two industrial buildings are proposed on the site. Building A is a 431.9m² (4,649ft²) electrical/mechanical contractor warehouse with an office, and Building B (605m²/6,603ft²) consists of three light industrial rental units, the specific uses of which are yet to be determined.

Site Context

The subject property is located at the northern end of the Green Rock Industrial Park development. The parent parcel was formerly forested and has now been cleared in preparation for development. A number of other development permit applications are in stream for other proposed lots within this development.

To the north of proposed Lot 4 is a café (Buzz Coffee House) and a yoga studio (Moksha Yoga Nanaimo). Immediately to the south and west is the newly built extension of Griffiths Road.

The Species at Risk protection covenant runs north to south along the lot line separating proposed Lots 4 and 5, and partially overlaps with each proposed lot.

Site Design

Site access will be from Boxwood Road, with a two way drive aisle leading between the two buildings and wrapping around to the rear of Building B.

Building A is located in the northwest corner of the lot and Building B is located in the southeast corner. The frontage along boxwood is landscaped, with parking located at the interior of the lot and along a portion of the rear property line. The garbage enclosure is located at the northeast corner adjacent to the protection covenant.

In accordance with the new parking bylaw, surplus parking spaces are required to be constructed with permeable surfacing. The proposal includes a surplus of 13 regular parking spaces and two loading spaces to allow for more flexibility in determining future uses for the rental units, as the I3 zone permits a range of uses with varying parking requirements. The applicants are proposing to locate the permeable parking spaces on the portion of the site nearest the endangered plant community and will be submitting the revised parking plan in advance of the DAP meeting.

A bike rack is proposed for each building, with long-term bike parking proposed to be located within the buildings. There is a pedestrian access point to each building off the Boxwood Road sidewalk. Sidewalks are located adjacent to each building, with a small courtyard proposed adjacent to Building A and one bench proposed adjacent to Building B.

A retaining wall is proposed along the north property line.

Staff Comments:

- Confirm retaining wall design and height.
- Consider any conflicts with the two southernmost parking spaces, given their proximity to the lot access point off Boxwood Road.
- Consider additional outdoor amenity space.
- Consider adding internal pedestrian connections between the two buildings.
- Consider making the southern pedestrian connection from Boxwood accessible.

Building Design

Each of the buildings features corrugated metal cladding; modern-style angled rooflines; coloured face mount metal channels; a stepped footprint to provide articulation; and glazing on the street-facing elevations.

The elevation plans show surface mount lighting surrounding Building B, but the plans for Building A do not show lighting.

Staff Comments:

- Confirm lighting proposed for Building A to address CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) concerns.
- Consider adding visual interest to south facing wall of Building A.

- The west elevation of Building B faces the onsite parking and will be visible from Boxwood Road (although it is set back). Consideration should be given to visually breaking up the west facing walls to create a human-scale feel at this part of the building, as customers will be approaching the building from this area.
- The north facing (rear) elevations of each building lack visual interest. While these elevations are not visible from most of the site, consideration should be given to the visual impact of bare north facing elevations on properties to the north, which house high-traffic uses (café and yoga studio) and currently contain no landscape screening.
- Consider adding weather protection canopies along the high pedestrian traffic elevations of each building.

Landscape Design

The landscaping plan features a mix of native and non-native ornamental plants, including evergreen and deciduous trees. The landscaping is concentrated along the front property line, with some screening proposed adjacent to the garbage enclosure as required by the Zoning Bylaw. A rain garden is proposed in the northwest corner of the site, and a “bluff area” forms part of the landscape design. The Dense Spike Primrose protected area also contributes to the site’s overall landscape context.

Staff comments:

- Consider adding landscaping between the subject property and the lot to the north as a way to mitigate possible visual impacts of the north facing building elevations.
- Consider further opportunities to honour the site’s past as a Garry oak meadow by incorporating further species that thrive best in this rare ecosystem type.
- Consider relocating the garbage enclosure and eliminating or moving the easternmost surplus loading space to allow for a native landscaping area along the eastern property line to further protect and celebrate the unique plant species in that area.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

There are no proposed variances