

# STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

## DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. DP001133 – 930 TERMINAL AVENUE

***Applicant/Architect:*** JOYCE REID TROOST ARCHITECTURE

***Owner:*** RED HARE REALTY DEVELOPMENT LTD.

***Landscape Architect:*** 4 SITE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

***Subject Property:***

<i>Zoning</i>	COR2- Mixed Use Corridor
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the northeast side of Terminal Avenue, abutting St. George Ravine Park to the north.
<i>Lot Area</i>	2,746m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Corridor Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 1 - Watercourses; Development Permit Area No. 9 - Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential development
<i>Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan</i>	Mixed Use Corridor
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines

## BACKGROUND

The development permit is required to consider the development near the watercourse and the overall form and character of the proposed development. The Design Advisory Panel is requested to comment on the form and character of the development only.

The subject property is located within the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan area. The neighbourhood plan encourages mixed use developments with ground floor uses that invite public activity and residential uses above in four to six-storey building forms along Terminal Avenue North.

### Site Context

The subject property is located on the corner of Terminal Avenue North and Cypress Street. The site is currently undeveloped, the majority of the lot is cleared, with a natural area abutting the rear and both side property lines. St. George Creek runs behind the property, in a west to east direction. The site is somewhat constrained by the watercourse setback from the top of the creek bank and the unique property shape. The site slopes approximately 4m from the northeast to southwest.

The property is bordered by St. George Ravine Park to the north, the Colonial Motel to the west, a three storey apartment building on Cypress Street to the east and Terminal Avenue to the southwest. A number of other multi-unit residential and commercial uses exist within the surrounding area.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The proposed development includes 32 residential units, a café restaurant and two levels of under-building parking. Residential units include three-storey townhouse live/work units along Terminal Avenue with the remaining condominium units located above the first storey. The café will be located on the corner of Terminal Avenue and Cypress Street. The development also includes a rooftop garden and club room for the residents.

The applicant is proposing to use Tier 1 of Schedule D in Zoning Bylaw 4500 in order to achieve additional density including amenities such as:

- Public art;
- A green roof;
- Street trees and on site tree planting;
- A rain garden; and
- Plumbing features which use 35% or more less water than the BC Building Code.

### Site Design

The proposed development celebrates the site's prominent location by including a pedestrian level plaza to support the café use on the corner. Access to the partially in-ground parking will be provided from Terminal Avenue. Commercial parking spaces are provided outside of a controlled access gate that leads to the secure residential parking area. Garbage is enclosed within a separate room between the commercial and residential parking.

The majority of the building is setback 3m, the minimum required setback in the zone, from Terminal Avenue. The 3m front yard setback addresses the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan which encourages a minimum 1m setback in Corridors in order to provide opportunities for landscaping, canopies, street furniture and other street side accessories.

Individual patio entries are provided from the three townhouses on Terminal Avenue, while the primary building entrance is identified by a stairway which connects directly to the sidewalk. The prominence of the four separate pedestrian entryways adds street presence to the building and encourages pedestrian activity along Terminal Avenue.

A portion of rear of the property will remain undeveloped due to the proposed 7.5m watercourse setback.

### **Staff Comments:**

- The commercial parking area is located on the opposite side of the site area as the proposed commercial use. Access from the parking area to the commercial unit is inconvenient. Consider opportunities to enhance wayfinding and connectivity from the parking area to the public sidewalk and commercial unit.
- Consider accessibility of refuse receptacles.

### Building Design

The Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan encourages:

- a strong overall building form with a simple material palette emphasizing natural materials;

- texture, rhythm and visual interest on large scale building facades using balconies, awnings, overhangs and glazing patterns;
- architectural elements and detailing which contribute to the overall building massing; and
- weather protection, landscaping and architectural detail at the street level to maintain a pedestrian scale and interest for taller building forms.

The proposed five-storey building responds well to the design guidelines. The majority of the building is clad with Hardie Panel. Stonework is used to define the lower floors of the townhouse units and the café entrance. The townhouse units are further defined by projecting wood elements which add visual interest to the building, provide separation between the units, and create a visual setback between the lower townhouse units and the upper apartment storey above the units. All balconies are covered and the corner balconies are recessed and enhanced with a canopy element.

Colour is used to highlight principal entry points to the building, and a canopy is provided above the principal building entrance and the proposed café. Due to site grading the primary residential entrance is accessed from a prominent stairway which projects to the property line.

The east elevation (facing Cypress Street) includes a raised outdoor amenity area for building tenants which has a direct connection to the street. The stone treatment wraps around the commercial unit and is replaced by the exposed wall of the parkade. Balconies and a mixture of material treatments add variety to the remaining façades.

#### Staff Comments:

- The Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan recommends the upper storeys of the building be setback 2.2m from the lower four storeys in order to provide variety along the street, opportunities for outdoor spaces and landscaping and reduce shadowing. The upper storey is not technically setback; however the projecting wood elements create the appearance of an upper storey setback. Consider if the building design meets the intent of the design guidelines.
- Consider adding architectural detailing, continuing the stone cladding or public art to address the exposed parkade wall face.

#### Landscape Design

The principal landscape feature on the site is the hardscape patio established to support the proposed café at the corner of Terminal Avenue and Cypress Street. The patio can be accessed from Terminal Avenue by way of a wooden bridge located over a narrow raingarden which separates the patio from Terminal Avenue. The patio area includes a semi-circular coffee bar feature which focuses on a planted rose garden, raised planter beds and a small existing tree to be retained. A large deciduous shade tree highlights the corner of the property. Three other similar sized shade trees are to be provided along the street frontage in front of the townhouse units. The Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan encourages street furniture, in addition to the café seating in the patio area, the landscape plan includes a bench in front of the building near the principal building entrance.

A rear portion of the yard will remain in its natural state and be fenced with a 1.2m high split rail fence to protect the riparian area adjacent to the watercourse. A softscape path connects the rear of the property from the loading bay to the west to the patio in the southeast corner of the site. A second larger raingarden will be located to the rear behind the access drive aisle. A raised

landscape area is located behind the building which includes lawn space, raised planters, seating and a rooftop pavilion. The rear portion of the western side yard will be separated from the patio area and adjacent property by a gated 1.6m high solid-wood fence.

**Staff Comments:**

- The site plan includes a door from the underground commercial parking area to the sidewalk. The landscape plan does not show the doorway and includes heavy planting adjacent to the proposed doorway location. Consider connectivity from the parking area to the sidewalk, café and patio area.
- Consider a larger use of native plants within the rear property to further support species habitat within the riparian area.
- Public art will be included within the patio space, but a public art design concept has not yet been submitted. Consider providing recommendations for how public art may be incorporated into the landscape plan and building design.

## **PROPOSED VARIANCES**

### *Maximum Building Height*

The maximum allowable building height is 18m. The proposed building height is 18.6m, a proposed variance of 0.6m.

Due to the site grading, the limited building footprint and the two levels of under building parking provided the applicant is requesting a minor height variance of 0.6m

### *Watercourse Setback*

The required setback from the top of bank of the creek is 15m. The proposed watercourse leave strip setback is 7.5m, a proposed variance of 7.5m

### *Off-street Parking*

The required parking is 56 parking spaces. The proposed parking is 54 parking spaces, a proposed variance of 2 parking spaces.

The maximum percentage of small car parking spaces is 40% of the required parking. The applicant is proposing 46% of the parking as small car spaces, a proposed variance of 6%.

The Watercourse Setback and Off-Street Parking variances are technical in nature and are not part of the form and character design discussion.