

DATE OF MEETING | May 27, 2019

AUTHORED BY | CALEB HORN, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING

SUBJECT | **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1119**
– 4800 UPLANDS DRIVE / 6035 LINLEY VALLEY DRIVE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration, a development permit application for a 251-unit rental housing development consisting of three four-storey buildings at 4800 Uplands Drive and 6035 Linley Valley Drive.

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit DP1119 at 4800 Uplands Drive / 6035 Linley Valley Drive with the following variances to:

- increase the maximum building height from 14m to 16.6m;
- increase the maximum allowable height of retaining walls from 1.2m to 7.49m; and
- reduce the landscape screening requirements for the proposed refuse receptacles.

BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1119, was received from Macdonald Gray Consultants on behalf of NPR GP Inc., in order to permit a 251-unit multi-family residential development at 4800 Uplands Drive and 6035 Linley Valley Drive. The applicant proposes to consolidate the two properties in order to create a cohesive development of three four-storey apartment buildings.

Subject Property:

<i>Zoning</i>	R8 – Medium Density Residential
<i>Location</i>	The subject properties are located on the east side of Uplands Drive, between Turner Road and Oliver Road. A panhandle portion also fronts on Linley Valley Drive.
<i>Total Area</i>	2.79 ha
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Designation – Corridor Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 5 – Steep Slope Development; Development Permit Area No. 9 - Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential Development.
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	Steep Slope Development Permit Area Guidelines General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The subject properties are relatively flat with a steep embankment down to Uplands Drive. Surrounding land uses include a new commercial development (Dodd's Furniture and La-Z-Boy) under construction to the northwest and existing multi-family developments to the northeast and

east. The Longwood Station commercial development and the Longwood residential multi-family complex are located on the opposite side of Uplands Drive to the west. The site is located within walking distance to the Nanaimo North Town Centre and transit stops on the #40 bus route.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The proposed development is a 251-unit residential rental development comprised of three four-storey buildings with the following unit composition:

<i>Building #</i>	<i>One-Bedroom Units</i>	<i>Two-Bedroom Units</i>
1	16	54
2	16	54
3	32	79
Total	64	187

The proposed buildings will have a total gross floor area of 23,909m² and a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.86, below the maximum permitted FAR of 1.25 in the R8 zone. The maximum lot coverage in the R8 zone is 40% and the proposed buildings do not exceed 21%. The proposed unit density is equal to 90 units/ha, within the density range of 50-150 units/ha envisioned by the Official Community Plan (OCP).

Site Design

The proposed development is concentrated toward the centre of the property to maximize outdoor amenity space and respect setback requirements. There are a number of existing covenants registered on title of the subject properties from the time of property creation that dictate the site design, including: building setbacks, retention of trees along the eastern edge of the site, minimum number of parking spaces to be provided underground, building design guidelines, and amount of on-site recreational space to be provided to residents.

The property at 4800 Uplands Drive lies within the Steep Slope Development Permit Area. Most of the property consists of a relatively flat plateau with a steep embankment (approximately 6m high) along Uplands Drive. The embankment contains no rocky knolls, outcrops, or significant environmental features, and will be replaced with terraced landscaped retaining walls to screen the underground parking and provide a vegetated edge to the sidewalk. The reinstatement of a vegetated slope addresses the Development Permit Area guidelines.

The parking provided meets the requirements of the City of Nanaimo “Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw No. 2018 No. 7266” and the majority of the 350 proposed parking spaces will be provided in an underground parking structure below all three buildings. An existing covenant on the subject properties requires that 90% of the required parking be provided underground. The proposed parking layout exceeds this requirement by providing 92% of the required parking underground. Included in the parking count are 17 visitor parking spaces, 9 accessible parking

spaces, 34 parking spaces with access to electric vehicle charging, as well as the required short- and long-term bicycle parking and storage spaces.

Some parking spaces will be provided at-grade, centrally located between the three buildings, and will be screened from the street and neighbouring properties. There are two vehicular access points: from Linley Valley Drive, and from Uplands Drive via a common access driveway that is shared with the adjacent commercial properties (Dodd's Furniture and La-Z-Boy).

Pedestrian connectivity will be provided at the north and south corners of the site from Uplands Drive and Linley Valley Drive. As required by an existing covenant, a public walkway will run along the north property line to connect Linley Valley Drive and Uplands Drive. The proposed site design and location will provide excellent connectivity onsite and to nearby shops and services, transit, and City parks and trails, including Oliver Woods Recreational Centre.

Additional frontage improvements will include a new mid-block crosswalk on Uplands Drive (in front of Building 2) to be completed in conjunction with the City.

Building Design

The rental development is split into three buildings with permeability between the buildings to break up the massing onsite. Buildings 1 and 2 are oriented parallel to Uplands Drive, set back from top of the terraced retaining walls, and will be connected by a covered walkway and amenity space. Building 3 is located at the back of the property in an 'L' shape oriented toward the centre of the site. Each building will include a private gym.

The design of the buildings is consistent with the character of existing developments in the neighbourhood, including a rhythm of gabled roofs grounded by vertical structure bays, covered balconies, and ground-level patios. Building materials include cultured stone on the lower levels and different coloured HardiePlank siding and HardiePlank shingles to distinguish the three buildings. The proposed development meets the General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and complements the existing character of the Longwood neighbourhood.

Landscape Design

The proposed landscape plan has both a residential and natural character. A tree retention and natural restoration area will act as a landscape buffer along the east property line. Landscaping will be included around the buildings, surface parking areas, private patios, and walkways. The plant material selected is primarily native to the site. Where non-native species are used, they will be selected for their drought tolerance and native appearance.

The multiple-tiered Allan block retaining wall along Uplands Drive will be predominantly screened by vegetation that will add year-round interest. Each terrace of the retaining wall will be up to 1.5m high and up to 2m deep for landscaping. The proposed wall incorporates between six small terraces and four large terraces as the slope and building allows, stepping down to meet existing grades. A permeable aluminum railing will be provided along the top of the wall.

The proposed development includes a comprehensive programme of amenity spaces located throughout the site including:

- A children's play and parents' pavilion;
- An open space that is large enough for informal sports and activities;
- A plaza area located in the centre of the site defined by raised planters, planting beds, picnic tables, and other seating options;
- A sheltered plaza space between Buildings 1 and 2 overlooking Uplands Drive; and
- Small seating areas, pergolas, and bollard lighting are provided throughout the site adjacent to hard surface pathways to demarcate points of entry for wayfinding and to identify individual units on the ground levels.

Design Advisory Panel Recommendations

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP) originally considered DP1119 at its meeting held on 2018-NOV-08, but did not support the design as presented at the time and recommended the applicant redesign the buildings to better address the form and character design guidelines. The applicant revised their proposal to be more characteristic of the Longwood neighbourhood.

DAP accepted DP001119 as presented on 2019-JAN-10 and provided recommendations to improve wayfinding to individual building entrances and to review the retaining wall design along Uplands Drive. The applicant addressed these recommendations and is considering individual colour schemes to differentiate the buildings. A residential-style railing has also been added along the top of the retaining walls to provide a safety measure and help articulate the embankment face.

Proposed Variances

Maximum Building Height

"City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" (the "Zoning Bylaw") has a maximum allowable building height of 14m in the R8 zone. The proposed building height is 16.62m; a proposed variance of 2.62m.

The majority of the buildings are within the 14m height requirement, but the dormer portions extend higher as architectural features that punctuate the long horizontal rooflines. The dormers were added in a later iteration of the proposed development based on feedback from DAP to better comply with design guidelines and reflect the character of the surrounding developments. The height variance does not increase the floor area of the buildings but instead, adds visual interest to the buildings.

The building will be separated in grade from Uplands Drive and well separated from other residential developments, so it is not anticipated that the height variance will result in any negative impacts.

Staff support the proposed height variance.

Maximum Fence Height

The Zoning Bylaw has a maximum allowable fence or retaining wall height of 1.2m in the front yard setback and 3m outside of the setbacks in the R8 zone. The proposed Allan block retaining wall along Uplands Drive have a maximum total height of 7.49m; a variance up to 6.29m.

Where a retaining wall is terraced and individual terraces are structurally dependent on each other, total height is measured from the base of the lowermost terrace to the top of the uppermost terrace. The wall depth varies along the Uplands Drive frontage from 1 to 6 terraces with a total maximum depth of approximately 8m. The individual terraces range in height from 0.89m to 1.5m. The total retaining wall height will vary from grade up to a maximum of 7.49m.

The proposed retaining wall will be terraced and landscaped and will provide more visual interest than a single large retaining wall. The terraces will reinforce and stabilize the existing embankment, integrate with the site design, provide a transition in grade from Uplands Drive to the development's grade, and conceal the parkade structure.

Staff support the proposed fence or retaining wall height variance.

Landscaping Regulations

The Zoning Bylaw requires that utility kiosks, dumpsters, containers, and similar large receptacles be fully screened on three sides by masonry walls and landscaping. The proposed Allan Block development does not include masonry walls surrounding its refuse receptacles, but will include landscaping.

Typically, refuse receptacles are dumpsters or garbage bins where permanent screening is desired. The proposed development will include an innovative waste container and disposal system, with waste contained in-ground beneath the receptacle. The container design has an attractive wood panel exterior to alleviate the need for masonry wall. Landscaping will screen the receptacles from the buildings and from adjacent walkways.

Staff support the proposed landscaping variance.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DP1119 proposes a 251-unit rental housing development consisting of three four-storey buildings at 4800 Uplands Drive and 6035 Linley Valley Drive.
- The proposed development meets the General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and complements the existing character of the Longwood neighbourhood.
- All existing covenant requirements have been addressed by this development proposal.
- Staff support the proposed variances.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions
ATTACHMENT B: Location Plan
ATTACHMENT C: Site Plan
ATTACHMENT D: Parking Plans
ATTACHMENT E: Building Elevations
ATTACHMENT F: Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT G: Landscape Plan and Details
ATTACHMENT H: Retaining Wall/Allan Block Detail
ATTACHMENT I: Aerial Photo

Submitted by:

L. Rowett, Manager
Current Planning

Concurrence by:

D. Lindsay, Director
Community Development