

DATE OF MEETING June 17, 2019

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**SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1114 –  
4800 CEDAR RIDGE PLACE**

## OVERVIEW

### **Purpose of Report**

To present for Council's consideration, a development permit application for a 170-unit residential development located at 4800 Cedar Ridge Place.

### **Recommendation**

That Council issue Development Permit DP1114 at 4800 Cedar Ridge Place with the following variances:

- increase the maximum allowable building height for Building A from 14m to 15.75m;
- increase the maximum allowable building height for Building B from 7m to 11.5m;
- increase the maximum allowable building height for Building C from 7m to 10.35m;
- reduce the front yard setback for Building A from 6m to 4.13m;
- increase the height of a retaining wall within the front yard setback from 1.2m to 2.26m; and
- reduce the landscape screening requirements for the proposed refuse receptacles.

## BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1114, was received from Highstreet Ventures Ltd., on behalf of Uplands Place Developments Ltd., in order to permit the construction of a 170-unit purpose-built rental, multi-family development at 4800 Cedar Ridge Place.

The City previously approved a development permit (DP645) in 2010 for a 97-unit multiple-dwelling residential development within the R8-zoned portion of the subject property, including a four-storey apartment building and townhouses, with variances to building height and parking. Council subsequently renewed the development permit in 2012 and construction commenced on a portion of the building foundation.

The current proposal includes three buildings, including one in a similar footprint as the existing remnant foundation.

### **Subject Property:**

<i>Zoning</i>	R6 - Townhouse Residential R8 – Medium Density Residential
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the northwest side of Long Lake off Rutherford Road.

<i>Total Area</i>	35,878.2m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Corridor; Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 5 – Steep Slope Development; 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 Steep Slope Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The subject property is vacant of buildings and is located in the Long Lake neighbourhood. The site is surrounded by a mix of residential uses (single family dwellings, duplexes, fourplexes, and apartment buildings), commercial services, and recreational amenities. The Grand Hotel (4898 Rutherford Road) and Nanaimo North Town Centre (NNTC) are located west of the subject property; single and multi-family residential developments are located to the north; and Salal Drive and Long Lake Heights are located to the east, with Lakeview Park, a multi-use trail, and Long Lake to the south.

The subject property contains exposed rock and sparse vegetation over shallow soils, with stands of mature forests throughout the site where conditions allow. The steeply sloping topography falls approximately 40m from north to south, offering views of Long Lake and greater Nanaimo, including Mount Benson.

The subject property is within walking distance of transit service, including the VIU express bus, and the NNTC site, which is designated as a Commercial Centre and Mobility Hub in the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Master Plan, respectively.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Proposed Development**

The applicant proposes 170 residential units in three residential buildings and one common amenity building:

- Building A – 7,752.0m<sup>2</sup>; 80 units (4 storeys)
- Building B – 4,594.8m<sup>2</sup>; 48 units (3 storeys)
- Building C – 3,984.0m<sup>2</sup>; 42 units (3 storeys)
- Building D (Amenity Building) – 318.8m<sup>2</sup> (2 storeys)

The property is split-zoned R6 (upper and lower portions of the site) and R8 (central portion), which permit a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.45 and 1.25, respectively. The applicant's proposal includes an FAR of 0.5 for the R6 portion of the lot, and an FAR of 0.90 for the R8 portion of the lot. To obtain the required FAR in the R6 zone, the development will achieve Tier 1 of Schedule D – Amenity Requirements for Additional Density. Examples of amenities that will be provided include:

- Sustainable construction practices, including building materials with high levels of recycled content, and a waste management plan (65% landfill diversion target);

- Building performance targeted to exceed ASHRAE 90.1 2010 Energy Standard by 50% to BuiltGreen standard;
- Solar Photovoltaic arrays on the roofs of the buildings and outdoor covered parking;
- Low-flow fixtures through the buildings;
- Dedicated garden space for residents; and
- Permanent educational signage regarding sustainable construction and energy management practices used on site.

Additional onsite amenities for the residents include fitness and event space, and the purchase of a car-share vehicle for the exclusive use of tenants in the development.

### *Site Design*

The site design integrates the development within the existing hilly topography and natural site features in order to minimize ground and flora alterations. Proposed Buildings B, C, and the amenity building are located on the flattest and least treed areas within the northern (R6-zoned) portion of the site. Proposed Building A is located on the central (R8-zoned) portion of the site, which corresponds roughly to the area of historic site disturbance. The southerly remainder of the slope, below Building A, overlooks Long Lake and drops steeply (more than 20m) to Lakeview Park. To preserve this slope in its natural state, the applicant proposes to voluntarily dedicate this portion of the site (approximately 22%) to the City as parkland as a condition of the Development Permit.

Vehicular access is provided from the end of Cedar Ridge Place, while access to and from Salal Drive will be restricted to emergency vehicles (managed with bollards) to mitigate additional traffic through the adjacent neighbourhood. To satisfy the requirement of an existing covenant registered on the property title, a publicly-accessible connection through the site will be provided along the internal driveway to connect Cedar Ridge Place to Salal Drive. Additional pedestrian pathways are provided between the buildings, parking areas, and amenity spaces to create a walkable, well-connected site for residents.

All of the required parking, including EV charging spaces, short- and long-term bike parking and secure storage are provided on site. Fifty-five percent of the vehicle parking is provided underbuilding.

### *Building Design*

The proposed development is clustered into one four-storey building (Building A) and two three-storey buildings (Buildings B and C), each configured with below-grade parking in order to maximize green space and minimize impermeable surfaces. Building A, being the tallest, is situated downslope to preserve lake views for the buildings above; and the three-storey buildings upslope provide a reduced mass and height to transition to adjacent residences.

The overall unit composition includes a variety of types and sizes:

- 127 one-bedroom units; and
- 43 two-bedroom units.

The buildings incorporate a modern aesthetic with high-quality finishes, such as cement board siding, cultured stone, and heavy timbers. A rhythm of shed roofs, window fenestrations,

balconies, and ground-level decks and patios articulate the roof lines and building massing. The proposed two-storey amenity building is differentiated by a butterfly roof design to complement the residential buildings. This building will contain amenity space for residents and office space for the onsite residential managers.

The developer proposes Buildings B and C in the R6 zone. Ground floor units are oriented towards the internal and common area of the site, with patio doors providing access to individual apartments. The developer proposes ground-oriented elements for each unit, including individual and illuminated pathways, unit numbering, decorative features and materials, and detailed finishings similar to each building's common entrance. Additionally, the proposed landscaping plantings complement the ground-oriented nature of the courtyard units.

The developer proposes residential building designs consistent with Step Three of the BC Building Code, exceeding the energy efficiency standards required by code. The simple building form and detailed design will result in high performance and energy efficiency targeted to meet Built Green Gold or Platinum standards. Attempts to break up the building massing include architectural features and high-quality finishes that do not compromise the energy performance of the building envelope. The developer proposes the community building to be Net Zero, with energy performance consistent with Step Four of the BC Building Code. Additionally, the developer proposes to cover the rooftop of each residential building with solar panels to offset the development's electricity demand.

### *Landscape Design*

The landscape plan has a woodland theme that retains much of the mature vegetation, trees, and rock outcroppings around the perimeter of the site, including the southerly slope. The developer proposes to utilize scale-appropriate trees, and low-growing shrubs and groundcovers to define parking, drive aisles, and amenity areas and to provide screening for neighbours. Seating areas are also placed throughout the site.

A water feature is located on a rock cliff near Building B and adjacent to the main drive aisle. The feature incorporates a native plant palette and bench seating with view opportunities to create a strong site aesthetic and functional storm water management. A rain garden is also proposed southwest of Building A, which complements the adjacent community gardens and a common patio overlooking Long Lake. Gabion baskets of blast rock from the property support the rain garden and preserve the natural character of the slope.

To satisfy the requirements of existing covenants registered on the property title, the developer is required to improve existing public infrastructure supporting active transportation and recreation including:

- construction of an urban hard-surface multi-use trail (over the existing soft-surface trail) with benches and pedestrian-scale lighting along the Lakeview Road frontage;
- frontage improvements along Salal Drive, including road widening, boulevard street trees, and off-set sidewalk; and
- cash-in-lieu for the future construction of a public dock on Long Lake. This contribution will be secured as a condition of the Development Permit.

## Design Advisory Panel Recommendations

The Design Advisory Panel, at its meeting held on 2018-OCT-11, accepted DP001114 as presented and provided the following recommendations:

- Consider ways to identify each building individually;
- Consider alternate ways to break the vertical massing on the ends of the buildings (i.e. remove belly bands and add windows to the end walls);
- Reconsider the scale, proportion, and trim colour of the proposed windows to tone down the white detail and trim on the windows to soften the overall appearance and become more responsive to the views;
- Consider the placement of bollards at the Salal Drive access to limit vehicle movement;
- Give consideration to adding points of interest within the site;
- Consider ways to reduce the massing of the underground parking area;
- Consider ways to ensure a wayfinding strategy for the site; and
- Look at ways to reduce the exposure of the underground parking structures.

The applicant has addressed the recommendations of the DAP. Updated architectural drawings propose unique treatments to identify each building, detailing to soften their appearance, and additional openings to capitalize on views from the site. Updated landscaping drawings improve pedestrian amenities and provide additional plantings and rock features to screen exposed foundation walls from view.

## Community Consultation

The applicant voluntarily hosted a community open house on 2019-APR-23 to present the project to area residents and respond to questions and concerns. While some participants were supportive of the project, a number of the surrounding neighbours raised concerns. The applicant has engaged residents in multiple meetings and revised the proposed development in response to the following key concerns raised by residents:

### 1. *Density*

The proposed development of 170 residential units on this site achieves a density of 50 units per hectare (uph), which complies with the OCP's target density (50-150 uph) for development within the Corridor designation. Residential developments in the Corridor designation are encouraged to achieve medium- to high-level densities, generally in two- to six-storey building forms. The proposed development meets the intent of the OCP to support increased residential densities in close proximity to surrounding services, transit, and recreational amenities.

### 2. *Building Height*

The R6-zoned portion of the site on which Buildings B and C are located has a grade change of approximately 12m, which makes it challenging to construct a townhouse project, including underbuilding parking, without variances to the allowable height. The applicant has revised the initial design of the project to reduce the height variances by raising the grades at the low side of each building and by reducing the interior height of units in Buildings B and C from nine to eight feet.

The applicant also reviewed opportunities to step down the ends of Buildings B and C; however, stepping back the third storey would have compromised the adherence to the proposed energy performance standards. Instead, the developer removed six units from Building C to reduce the overall building size as this building is the closest to adjacent neighbours.

### 3. *Building Setbacks*

Previous iterations of the proposal included a 3m side yard setback for the end of Building C from the north property line. In response to neighbours' concerns about the proximity to adjacent residences, the developer has increased the setback to 12.72m.

### 4. *Building Form*

Residents raised concerns about the proposed apartment building form in the R6 zone. While townhouses are permitted in the R6 zone, other forms of low-density development may be considered. In this proposal, a number of site constraints and rationale led to the proposed clustering of the development into three apartment buildings rather than dispersed townhouses or detached units in order to better respond to the site terrain and address the City's Steep Slope Development Permit Area Guidelines. The Zoning Bylaw permits 40% lot coverage in the R6 and R8 zones; the lot coverage of the R6 and R8-zoned buildings is 16% and 22%, respectively.

The development:

- minimizes encroachment into setback areas;
- minimizes the required road network and impermeable surfaces;
- maximizes retention of existing mature trees and vegetation for site aesthetics, buffering to adjacent residences, and storm water management; and
- preserves natural rock outcrops and existing sloped terrain.

To create a more ground-oriented design for the three-storey buildings in the R6 zone, the developer updated the elevations of Buildings B and C with ground-floor units to include elements typical of street-oriented townhomes, and materials consistent with principal entryways. Sliding doors to private ground-floor patio spaces were replaced by front doors and individual walkways to identify individual units and private separate accesses.

### 5. *Traffic*

In order to mitigate traffic impacts on the existing single-family neighbourhood on Salal Drive, vehicular access to the site will be restricted to Cedar Ridge Place; only emergency vehicle access will be permitted (with removable bollards) from Salal Drive.

## Proposed Variances

### *Building Height*

The maximum allowable building height is 7m and 14m in the R6 and R8 zones, respectively. The developer proposes portions of the rooflines to be over-height as follows:

- Building A at 15.75m; a variance of 1.75m
- Building B at 11.5m; a variance of 4.5m
- Building C at 10.35m; a variance of 3.35m

Building height is measured from the average grade of the sloping site at the foundation corners to the top of each building's shed roofs. If the shed roofs were removed, the average height of each building would be reduced by approximately 1.0m; however, the proposed elements add visual interest to each building and break up the mass of each structure.

Additionally, the developer proposes to minimize disturbance of existing rock and mature trees by limiting the amount of surface parking on the site by including underbuilding parking in each residential structure. With a limited footprint and underbuilding parking, the developer proposes to achieve the project density by constructing over-height buildings. Due to the orientation of the proposed buildings, the steeply-sloping topography, and the existing trees on the site, the proposed buildings would not limit views of Long Lake from the surrounding properties.

### *Front Yard Setback*

The minimum required front yard setback in the R8 zone is 6m. The developer proposes Building A in the Salal Drive front yard setback at 4.13m; a variance of 1.87m. In order to reduce the size of Building C, four units were relocated to Building A, thereby increasing the length of the building. The developer chose not to extend the building to the west to avoid negatively impacting steeply-sloping terrain. The developer proposes plantings along the face of Building A facing Salal Drive that soften the edge of the building and provide a vegetated transition from public to private space.

### *Retaining Wall Height*

The maximum height of a structure in a front yard, including a retaining wall, is 1.2m. The developer proposes a retaining wall in the front yard of Building A (along Salal Drive) at 2.26m; a variance of 1.06m. The wall is proposed to retain the driveway into the underbuilding parkade. Additionally, the structure is proposed to be constructed of gabion rock reclaimed from site-blasting activities.

### *Landscaping Regulations*

The "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" requires that utility kiosks, dumpsters, containers, and similar large receptacles be fully screened on three sides by masonry walls and landscaping. The proposed 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 a partially below-grade waste container and disposal system. The container design will eliminate the need for masonry walls. Landscaping will screen the receptacles from the buildings and from common areas of the site.

Staff support the proposed variances.

### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Development Permit Application No. DP1114 proposes a 170-unit purpose-built rental residential development at 4800 Cedar Ridge Place.
- The OCP Corridor designation supports the proposed development density and multi-storey building form and densification in this location near a range of services, transit, and recreational amenities.
- The proposed development complies with the intent of the Development Permit Area Design Guidelines.
- Staff support the proposed variances to building height, front yard setback, retaining wall height, and landscape screening.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions  
ATTACHMENT B: Location Plan  
ATTACHMENT C: Site Plans and Sections  
ATTACHMENT D: Building Elevations  
ATTACHMENT E: Building Renderings  
ATTACHMENT F: Landscape Plan and Details  
ATTACHMENT G: Schedule D – Amenity Requirements for Additional Density  
ATTACHMENT H: Aerial Photo

#### **Submitted by:**

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