

DATE OF MEETING | February 1, 2021 |

AUTHORED BY | CALEB HORN, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING |

**SUBJECT | DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1173 –
1421 PRINCESS ROYAL AVENUE |**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration a development permit application for a four-storey multi-family residential building with 16 dwelling units and under-the-building parking. |

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1173 at 1421 Princess Royal Avenue with the following variances:

- reduce the minimum front yard setback from 6m to 1.5m;
- reduce the minimum north side yard setback from 3m to 0.45m;
- reduce the minimum rear yard setback from 10.5m to 7.35m;
- reduce the minimum front yard setback for an underground parking structure from 1.8m to 1.5m;
- increase the maximum allowable combined height of a fence and retaining wall in a side and rear yard from 2.4m to 3.3m; and
- increase the maximum allowable percentage of small car parking from 40% to 50%. |

BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1173, was received from Raymond De Beeld Architect Inc., on behalf of Roche Lookout Holdings Inc., in order to permit a new multi-family residential project at 1421 Princess Royal Avenue.

Subject Property and Site Context

<i>Zoning</i>	R8 – Medium Density Residential
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the west side of Princess Royal Avenue, adjacent to a lane, between Larch Street and Estevan Road.
<i>Total Area</i>	911m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plans – Corridor Map 3 – Development Permit Area – DPA No. 9 – Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential Development.
<i>Neighbourhood Plan</i>	Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan – Mixed Use Corridor
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines; Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan Urban Design Framework and Guidelines

The subject property consists of two existing lots and is located in the Brechin Hill Community. The property slopes significantly downhill from southwest to northeast and provides views towards Departure Bay and Newcastle Channel. There is currently a small single residential dwelling on the property.

The surrounding neighbourhood includes older three- to four-storey multi-family residential buildings to the west and south, and single residential dwellings to the north and east. Terminal Park shopping plaza is located across Estevan Road, 60m west of the subject property.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant is proposing a four-storey infill multi-family residential building with 16 dwelling units and under-the-building parking. The parking level will be mostly underground, but will be exposed above grade at the lowest portion of the subject property. As such, the building will present a five-storey elevation at its northeast corner. The proposed unit composition will include 12 one-bedroom units and 4 two-bedroom units.

The proposed building will have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.56. The R8 zone permits a base density (FAR) of 1.25. An additional 0.21 of FAR is permitted for the portion of parking that is underground and an additional 0.1 of FAR is permitted for meeting the Tier 1 requirements as described in the “City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500” ‘Schedule D – Amenity Requirements for Additional Density’. The applicant is proposing to meet Tier 1 by providing amenities, including the following:

- scooter parking;
- exceeding the BC Energy Step Code requirement by one step;
- a green roof; and
- educational signage regarding sustainable transportation, energy management, and water management.

Site Design

As a smaller rectangular lot, the development’s siting is dictated by sloping topography and vehicle entry points. Vehicle access to the site is proposed from the lane to the north, as required by the City of Nanaimo “Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw 2018 No. 7266”. A portion of the lane will be widened between the vehicle entry and Princess Royal Avenue, and protected by a Statutory Right-of-Way to facility two-way traffic on the lane to the property.

All required vehicle parking and long-term bicycle parking will be provided in the under-the-building parking level. A bike rack for short-term bicycle parking will be installed outside the primary entrance. Garbage and recycling pick-up will be in the parking level.

The primary entrance will be on the south side of the building, accessed via a walkway and entry court from Princess Royal Avenue at the southeast corner of the site. At this location, the grade of the sidewalk will meet the grade of the ground floor for the building. A private walkway will continue around the south and west of the building to connect with the laneway to the north. A common outdoor amenity space is proposed on the west side of the building, in addition to the

individual patios for ground-level units. A secondary entrance at the northeast corner of the site will provide pedestrian access to the parking level and secure bicycle storage.

In order to accommodate fire vehicle access within 15m of the primary building entrance, the applicant will be carrying out frontage works and services in front of both the subject property and the property to the south.

Building Design:

The building design reflects the guidelines for massing, form, and character as expressed in the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan Urban Design Framework and Guidelines. The site is below the minimum lot area for new R8-zoned lots, and as such, a number of variances are requested to accommodate the compact, infill building form. The building is sited to maximize views to the north, and the massing of the building keeps in context with adjacent multi-family residential buildings at 1430 and 1420 Estevan Road, to the west and south respectively. The proposed building is a modern interpretation of the neighbouring flat-roof apartment buildings and is lower in peak elevation than either of these buildings.

A simple roofline and striking geometric protruding windows are provided on the west and east elevations. The south elevation will have less articulation, but will include off-set coloured windows and vertical windows above the main lobby. The north elevation will feature large covered balconies for all units on the second to fourth storeys, separated by vibrantly coloured glass screens. Ground-level units will have large patios. The primary cladding on the west, south, and east elevations is vertical fibre cement panels. The exposed exterior of the parking level is proposed to be concrete, with stone cladding to highlight the vehicle entrance.

The internal layout of the building will have common areas, including lobby, elevator, stairs, and storage concentrated on the south side of the building, with all units facing north towards Departure Bay.

Landscape Design

A planter containing boxwood and groundcovers is proposed along the north property line, with vines planted at the base of the parking level wall. A planted boulevard with street trees is proposed along Princess Royal Avenue. Medium evergreen groundcovers in planters will be located next to the entry court and entrance walkway along the south property line. The common outdoor amenity space on the west side of the property will be enclosed and will include a lawn, patio, planters, and small deciduous trees. A grass-and-meadow-mix green roof is proposed on the building, as well as on the roof of the parking level vehicle entrance.

Design Advisory Panel

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP), at its meeting held on 2020-FEB-27, accepted DP1173 as presented and provided the following recommendation:

- Consider ways to enhance the entranceway on the east elevation.

In response to the DAP recommendation, the applicant revised the development plans by proposing wayfinding signage on the east elevation on a covered canopy structure.

Proposed Variances

Minimum Front Yard Setback

The minimum front yard setback in the R8 zone is 6.0m. The proposed front yard setback for a portion of the under-the-building parking level is 1.5m; a requested variance of 4.5m.

The parking level will be primarily underground on the front (east) elevation, but a portion will be exposed above grade closer to north property line adjacent to the lane. The exposed portion of the parking level will include a landscape buffer and will also feature window wells with coloured glass. The remainder of the building above the parking level will be set back 4.5m from the front property line.

Minimum Side Yard Setback

The minimum side yard setback in the R8 zone is 3.00m. The proposed north side yard setback for a portion of the under-the-building parking level is 0.45m; a requested variance of 2.55m.

The building will primarily have a setback of 8.3m from the north side property line; however, a portion of the underground parking level will be exposed above grade 0.45m away from the property line. The parking level is proposed to encroach into the north setback in order to accommodate required parking stall depths and drive aisle widths. An alternative option, to raise the grade surrounding the parking level with retaining walls, would have a greater impact and was discouraged. Vines will be planted to screen the exposed parking level wall on the north elevation, and coloured glass windows are proposed nearest to the vehicle entrance.

The adjacent lane is not anticipated to be adversely impacted by the setback variance, and the lane will be improved to be functional for two-way traffic between the development and Princess Royal Avenue.

Minimum Rear Yard Setback

The minimum rear yard setback in the R8 zone is 10.50m. The proposed rear yard setback is 7.35m, a requested variance of 3.15m.

The rear yard setback variance is requested to accommodate the apartment building form on a smaller R8 lot. The finished grade of the development will be approximately 3m below grade of the neighbouring uphill properties. As such, the building and its encroachment into the rear yard will have less of a visual impact.

Projections Into Yards

The minimum front yard setback for an underground parking structure is 1.8m. The proposed parking structure setback from Princess Royal Avenue is 1.5m; a requested variance of 0.3m.

The parking setback variance is proposed in order to accommodate the required number of parking stalls.

Maximum Fence Height

The maximum allowable fence and retaining wall height in a side or rear yard in the R8 zone is 2.4m. A proposed fence and retaining wall will have a combined a height of 3.3m; a requested variance of 0.9m.

To provide a functional development area, the applicant is proposing to cut into the existing grade and lower the elevation onsite. This will necessitate perimeter retaining walls on the south (side) and west (rear) property lines. The smooth concrete retaining wall will face internally and will be screened by vegetation as part of the common amenity area. A small glass guardrail is proposed on top of the retaining walls for safety.

Small Car Parking

The maximum allowable amount of small car parking spaces is 40% of the required parking spaces (22 spaces). The applicant is proposing 50% of the required parking (11 spaces) to be small car parking; a requested variance of 10% (2 spaces).

The small car parking variance is requested in order to accommodate the required parking. Due to the constrained nature of the lot, providing an additional two full-size vehicle parking spaces would not be feasible.

Staff support the proposed variances.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DP1173 is for a four-storey infill multi-family residential building with 16 dwelling units and under-the-building parking.
- Variances are requested to reduce the minimum front, rear, and side yard setbacks; to increase the maximum allowable combined height of a fence and retaining wall in a side and rear yard; and to increase the maximum allowable percentage of small car parking.
- Staff support the proposed variances.

ATTACHMENTS

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

Submitted by:

Lainya Rowett
Manager, Current Planning

Concurrence by:

Jeremy Holm
Director, Development Approvals

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development Services