

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP001322 – 19 NICOL STREET

Applicant: MACDONALD HAGARTY LTD.

Architect: MACDONALD HAGARTY LTD.

Landscape Architect: BIOPHILIA COLLECTIVE

SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SITE CONTEXT

<i>Zoning</i>	Terminal Avenue – DT4
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is southeast of the intersection of Nicol Street and Esplanade.
<i>Total Area</i>	1,080m ²
<i>City Plan</i>	Future Land Use Designation – Primary Urban Centre Development Permit Area DPA 4 – Abandoned Mine Working Development Permit Area DPA 8 – Form and Character
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The subject property is located in the Downtown and is currently developed as the Child and Family Services building and the New Hope Centre, operated by the Salvation Army. Large rock bluffs and a treed slope are located at the rear of the lot. The site is surrounded by commercial and mixed-use developments as well as Pioneer Square Park.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing Child and Family Services building with a new 4-storey personal care facility and social service resource centre. The new building is proposed to include 14 sleeping units, office space, and a kitchen and dining space for residents. The units are single rooms that will range in size from 10m² to 17m². The total proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 1.7, which is below the maximum permitted FAR in the DT4 zone.

Site Design

The proposed building provides street presence along Nicol Street and the building access will be located at grade for pedestrians. To the left of the building entrance, a sunken staircase to the basement is proposed adjacent to the existing sidewalk. The newly constructed portion of the building will include a rear building exit and stairway landing to a proposed outdoor amenity and gathering space.

Staff Comments:

- The proposed building provides strong street presence with more than 75% of the building face being constructed at the minimum setback line, in accordance with the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.

- Consider the addition of short-term bicycle parking at the building entrance for patrons.

Building Design

The proposed development includes a kitchen and large dining room located on the main floor with three restroom facilities and dedicated office space. The second storey includes approximately 83m² of office and meeting space, as well as restrooms, storage, and a staff kitchen. The sleeping units are located on the third and fourth floors.

The proposed addition has a flat roof, and the façade materials include metal cladding with accent hardie panels and window trim in various shades. The building entrance is emphasized using wood toned metal panels and a weather protection canopy. Signage is anticipated on an accent panel facing Nicol Street.

Staff Comments:

- The proposed building entrance is clearly visible from the street frontage, in accordance with the design guidelines.
- Consider the addition of long-term, indoor, and secure bicycle parking for residents and staff.
- Consider additional transparency on the ground-level and for the internal stairwell portion of the building.

Landscape Design

A raised concrete planter is proposed at the front face of the building and will include Eddie's White Wonder Dogwood trees, Rubella Skimmia shrubs, and Lilyturf. A wood bench is attached to the concrete planter to provide a seating area and the surrounding hardscape will include broom finished concrete. Low galvanized picket fencing is proposed along the front and side elevations and a retaining wall designed to match existing grade is proposed along Nicol Street.

Staff Comments:

- Ensure the amenity area is adequately using ambient lighting at the rear of the site.
- Consider the addition of seating within the amenity area.
- Consider opportunities for the amenity space to be designed for accessibility.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

Parking

The "Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw 2018 No. 7266" (the "Parking Bylaw") requires three parking spaces at a rate of 0.2 spaces per bed. The applicant is not proposing any onsite parking, which is consistent with the existing use of the site.

Projections

Section 6.5.1 of the City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw No. 4500 allows steps and landings to project 2.0m into the required front yard setback. The applicant proposes the steps and landing to project a total of 4.22m, a requested variance of 2.22m.