

24 September 2018

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
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RE: 1400/1402 Quadra Street & 840 Johnson Street - Application for Rezoning and Concurrent Development Permit.

Dear Mayor & Members of Council:

On behalf of our client, Alpha Project Developments Ltd., we are pleased to submit this revised application for rezoning and concurrent development permit for the above named property.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The proposed development is located on the north west corner of the intersection of Quadra Street and Johnson Street. Across Quadra Street to the east is the Victoria Conservatory of Music, a heritage landmark building (previously the Metropolitan United Church). The property to the west is the five storey Portland Hotel Society Residential Outreach building. The property to the north is a two storey retail plaza. A large 21 storey residential project has recently been approved across Johnson Street to the south. A residential building similar in size to our proposal is located beyond the Outreach building to the west at 834 Johnson Street.

The west half of the site is currently zoned R-48—Harris Green. The east half consists of 2 small lots and is zoned S1—Limited Service District. The three individual properties will be amalgamated and the entire site rezoned to a site specific zone. The properties are located within Development Permit Area 4. Previous uses included a drycleaner and used car dealership. The existing single storey buildings have now been demolished and the site is undergoing environmental remediation.

We are requesting a site specific zone that is generally in conformance with the City of Victoria Downtown Core Area Plan and the Official Community Plan. Located in the Core Business District, the maximum permitted FSR is 6.0:1, with a maximum residential component of 3.0:1. We are proposing a 14 storey building with three levels of underground parking and a density of 5.5:1 FSR. This proposal has been reduced from 15 storeys and 6.0:1 FSR as initially proposed. The ground floor includes a commercial/retail component. Levels 2 through 14 are residential use. With total residential exceeding 3.0:1 FSR an amendment to the OCP is requested.

Use & Location of Use

Double-height retail spaces face onto Quadra and Johnson Streets, bisected by the residential lobby entry facing onto Quadra. Underground parking is accessed from Johnson Street. The refuse/recycling room is generously sized to allow for ease of recycling and on-site space is provided adjacent to the garage entrance for bin storage on pickup days.

On the second floor there is a communal amenity space / business centre that opens onto a large shared outdoor patio. The remainder of the second floor is rental suites.

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The upper floors of the building will be market rental apartments with a mix of suites including 12 studios, 10 junior one bedroom units, 46 one bedroom/one bath units, 39 two bedroom/one bath units, 3 two bedroom/two bath, and 3 three bedroom/two bath units for a total of 113 suites. Suites range in size from 38m² to 83m² and have been designed to provide a good mix for downtown living, including accommodation for families.

Density

The OCP identifies base density for mixed use on this site as 4.0:1 with a maximum density of 6.0:1. Residential use is restricted to a maximum FSR of 3.0:1. For commercial viability a predominately residential rental building is proposed, which will provide a variety of housing options in the downtown core and improve the street activity and appeal of the block and surroundings. The proposed building yields a maximum total density of 5.5:1 (5.27:1 Residential + 0.23:1 commercial).

Height

The OCP identifies the maximum height for this site as 45 m and 15 storeys for residential use. The proposed building complies with has a maximum height of 42.7 m and 14 storeys.

Setbacks

Proposed setbacks meet or exceed all requirements of the OCP, and have been refined through collaboration with Planning staff to ensure appropriate "breathing room" around the tower. Additional stepping and increase setbacks at the intersection of Johnson and Quadra Streets to create an open public plaza at the corner and enhance views to the Conservatory of Music building.

Parking

104 parking stalls are proposed. The secure underground parking structure includes eleven visitor stalls, and one accessible stall. A second accessible visitor parking space is at grade next to the sidewalk. Parking is provided at a ratio of 0.92 stalls per suite. Parking is provided in compliance with the new Zoning Bylaw 2018 for the Downtown area.

A total of 142 Class 1 bicycle spaces are provided at the main floor, conveniently accessed directly from Quadra Street. In conformance with the new Zoning bylaw this includes the required 140 residential and 2 commercial spaces. In addition there are 11 residential and 2 commercial Class 2 (short term) spaces located near the residential and retail entries.

Landscape

Street level paving patterns have been selected to highlight the residential entrance and to align with Quadra Street. Six new street trees are proposed for this area and will be of a species selected in consultation with City Parks. Sufficient structural soil will be provided to enable the new trees to thrive. These will replace the five existing trees that are struggling and unlikely to survive construction.

The level 2 and level 5 terraces are proposed as extensive green roofs. They are designed as a proprietary sedum mat system inter-dispersed with grasses, ferns and

bulbs suitable to the micro-climatic conditions over a shallow layer of growing medium. The proposed green roof areas cover approximately 30% of the total site area. Some benefits include; impervious cover reduction, supports biodiversity, promotes building energy conservation and reduces urban heat island effect.

Building Design

The fundamental design revisions from the previous submission are the increased stepping back of the building progressively with height and the creation of a taller, more substantial street-oriented podium.

In accordance with the DCAP the primary podium facing Johnson and Quadra Street is four storeys and 14.5 meters tall. Clad in dark grey/brown brick the podium conveys a sense of weight and permanence, a counterpoint to the lighter tower rising above. Large expanses of storefront glazing with pairs of tall windows above set within a hierarchy of brick pilasters create a familiar, traditional backdrop to city life. Glass and steel weather protection extends over all street fronting commercial.

Secondary building faces set back from the podium along Quadra and Johnson extend from the 5th to the 12th and 14th floors. Clad in a lighter brick and punctuated by the larger glazing of living rooms and bedrooms, these faces echo the quality of the podium, but with more contemporary proportions.

The upper North and West floors have window wall cladding combining clear glass and warm grey spandrel. The same system carries across the top two floors facing Quadra and Johnson, and differentiates where the building steps back at the 12th floor. This third exterior treatment completes the sequence of traditional to modern as the building rises.

Entrances are clearly identified, visible and accessible from the principal frontage streets. Entrances open directly onto a public plaza area and sidewalk. The plaza space allows for seasonal street furniture and space for activities to animate the pedestrian environment. A café owner may choose to place outdoor tables and chairs to take advantage of the sunny exposure of this corner location.

The siting of the building relative to the street grid produces minimal shadowing of public spaces. Setting the slender tower back from the corner minimizes the shadowing effect on the conservatory building.

High quality, durable, and timeless building materials are proposed including carefully detailed brick cladding and clear glass/spandrel panel aluminum window wall.

Sustainability Features

Demolition of existing buildings has been controlled to maximize re-use and recycling of construction products. The contaminated site is fully remediated.

A construction waste management plan will be followed during construction. The new building will have a comprehensive and generously sized recycling facility for tenants.

The building design will utilize materials with recycled content and sourced regionally wherever possible. Low emitting materials, specifically adhesives and sealants, paints and coatings, flooring systems, and composite wood and agrifibre products will be specified.

The building will be designed to the requirements of BC Energy Step Code 1 and for



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water efficiency, water use will be minimized by using low flow fixtures, water efficient landscaping and planting native and adaptive species that utilize storm water for irrigation.

The heat island effect will be minimized with a high reflectance and green roofs. Green roofs are proposed for level 2 and level 5 roof areas. Total green roof area is 273 m² which is approximately 20% of the total site area.

The existing 5 street trees will be replaced with 6 new trees of a species selected in consultation with City Parks. Trees will be provided with sufficient structural soil for optimum growth.

Light pollution will be reduced by minimizing light trespass from the building and site.

CPTED

All outdoor spaces have been designed in accordance with CPTED guidelines to ensure that safety and security requirements are effectively addressed. There are no hidden, private, or covered spaces at the street level. The minimal surface parking is open to the street. There are no hidden alcoves in the transitions between uses and access to the building is secure and observable. Continuous glazing at the street level maximizes visibility and entrances are well-lit.

Conclusion

This revised application represents a high quality residential and commercial building that conforms to the OCP and DCAP requirements, entirely redesigned to fully comply with with height-related setback requirements.

This project is a significant step in the realization of the goals of the OCP and DCAP. It will improve the vitality and safety of this area and expand the available rental housing options in the downtown area by providing a good mix of rental suites. The project is of an appropriate scale to its location and has been designed to minimize the impact of the building on the street and adjacent building sites and will compliment the Victoria Conservatory of Music heritage landmark building by highlighting access, and maintaining viewscales.

Sincerely yours,

Charles Kierulf Architect AIBC MRAIC

de Hoog & Kierulf architects