

October 31st, 2019

Mayor and Council

City of Victoria
c/o Leanne Taylor, Senior Planner
Sustainable Planning and Community Development

1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC
V8W 1P6

RE: Rezoning for the Scott Building Mixed-Use Development Post ADP

Dear Mayor Helps, City Council,

We are pleased to present to you our revised application for the revitalization and addition to the Scott Building, the prominent heritage building located at the southeast corner of Hillside Ave and Douglas St in the Burnside Gorge Neighborhood.

At the Advisory Design Panel earlier this month, the project received unanimous approval of the motion to approve the design as is, without any additional recommendations. At the ADP meeting, further improvements to the project were proposed by the architect in response to comments outlined in the ADP Report, and other suggested improvements were discussed. The proposed changes were supported by the panel, though were not a condition of the motion to approve.

Each revision and refinement to the design since drawings were issued to the Panel are outlined below:

Advisory Design Panel | October 23, 2019

- *Suggested area for improvement: ground level of the 6-storey building*

Response: In response to the planning department's request to study the presence of the lobby toward Hillside Avenue, we extended the chamfer of the recessed entry out to the corner of the building. This results in a reduction of dark cladding around the entry and an increase in the light wood cladding, widening the entry and improving its prominence from Hillside Ave and the pedestrian plaza/forecourt linking the two separate volumes. The lobby entrance now has a much stronger, announced presence toward the central plaza as well as Hillside Avenue.

- *Suggested area for improvement: relationship between the existing building and south addition to the west-facing Douglas St*

Response: Following discussions with city planners including the heritage planner, it was agreed that window configurations within the new addition could remain consistent with that seen throughout the project, rather than mimicking heritage proportions on one atypical elevation. By creating some separation between the existing and new fenestrations, we introduced more openings towards the highly-prominent south-west corner of the building, as viewed heading north on Douglas St. This language was carried down to the ground floor where the entry to the retail/restaurant tenancy was reconfigured to open up the corner, improving the relationship to the pedestrian laneway along the south property line. The retail entry carries similar language to the other new entries and retail spaces in the development, incorporating light wood materiality and tapered walls and soffits that announce the retail space and draw people toward the entry.

- *Changes in repose to site servicing coordination: Additional street tree to be provided on Hillside Ave*

Response: In recent coordination discussions, it was recommended that a proposed street tree beside an existing BC Hydro pole in front of the 6-storey building be relocated, meaning we would no longer be able to achieve the design objective of providing street trees at equal spacing (due to conflict with curb letdowns and transit stop clearances). In response to this, we propose a revised street tree arrangement where each curb letdown is now framed by 2 trees. This increases the proposed number of street trees along Hillside Ave from 4 to 5, which is closer to the recommended spacing in City guidelines

and helps to soften the streetscape and evoke a more residential/pedestrian experience in the transition from busy commercial Douglas St to the quieter Hillside Ave.

- *Rationale to support parking variance*

Response: The project is extremely well connected being serviced by rapid transit bike and bus only lanes, within walking distance of the downtown core and providing a new transit stop in close proximity to Douglas St, greatly improving connections for BC Transit patrons. Additionally, the development will provide 2 dedicated Modo carshare stalls in the underground parkade. With Modo carshare stalls being longer than typical parking stalls, the parkade wall was extended 2'1" south to accommodate the new parking requirements.

- *Improve amenity for residents and users of Level 2 courtyard*

Response: In response to the request to improve this amenity space at the Level 2 courtyard, modifications to planter shape and location are proposed in order to provide better solar access to major plantings, more functional space for residents' use, and improved soil capacity of planters to sustain vegetation.

- *Changes to improve amenity for residents and users of the central courtyard*

Response: In coordinating with the landscape plan it became evident that one of the trees in the central courtyard conflicted with the overhang of Level 2 around the café. Upon review of the courtyard in 3D, the landscape design was revised to reconfigure the trees in a way that provides 1 less tree, but larger trees instead, increasing the openness of the space below the canopy for more versatile functionality. With the additional street tree proposed on Hillside Ave and opportunity for more substantial plantings in front of the revised Douglas St extension, there is no reduction in the total number of trees proposed in the development.

Thank you for reviewing our submission. We are grateful to have the opportunity to present improvements to the design as approved by the ADP and look forward to further communication with you as the project continues its path.

Sincerely,

MGA | MICHAEL GREEN ARCHITECTURE INC



Michael Green
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