INTRODUCTION:

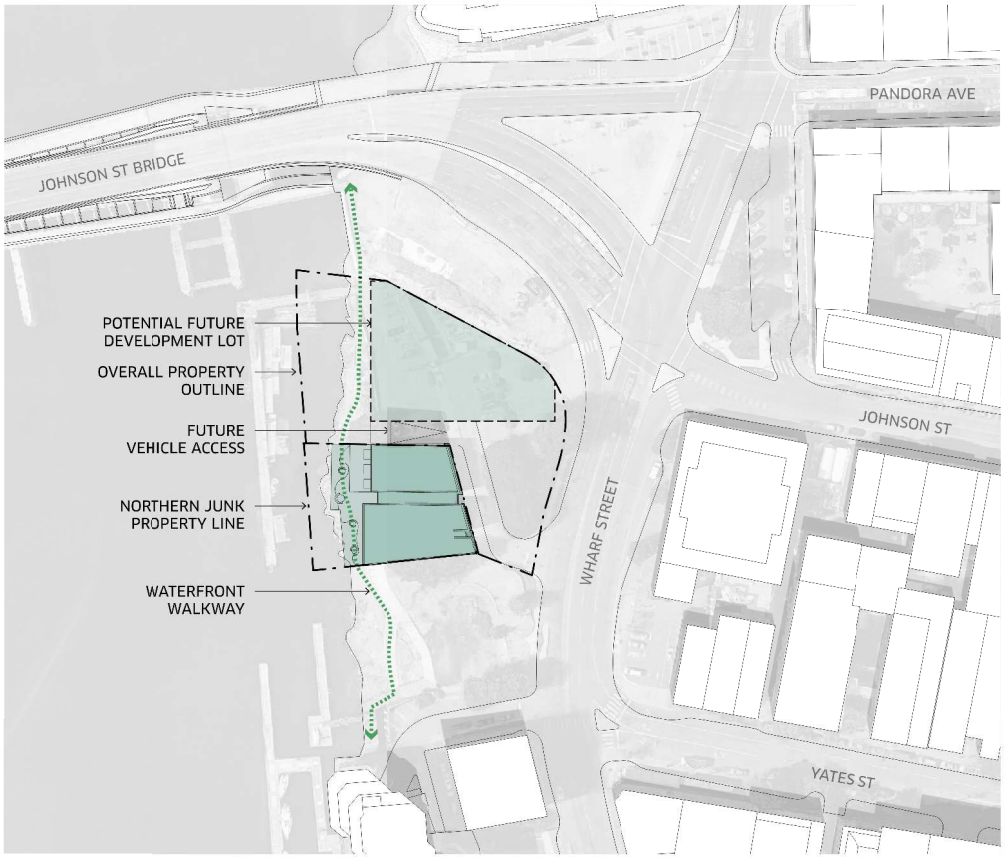
To Mayor & Council,

The Northern Junk site at the head of the Johnson Street Bridge presents unique set of opportunities and challenges. The site is in a prominent position in the City between Old-Town and Inner-harbour. Currently isolated between Reeson Park to the south and the as-yet undefined Bridgehead Green park to the North, the site offers the potential to complete a key piece of the public realm and neighbourhood revitalization through its design and development.

The proposed development responds to a number of planning and urban design objectives set forth in the OCP and Core Area Plans. In particular, it will provide housing diversity in the form of new rental apartments, an upgrade of two heritage buildings, improve public access to the waterfront and support economic and social vitality in the area, all within a built-form that is in keeping with the goals of area design guidelines.

The project consists of a multi-unit residential apartment building set atop the existing Northern Junk warehouse buildings (Caire & Grancini Warehouse and Fraser Warehouse) that are to be rehabilitated and incorporated into a mixed-use development. The project brings together active ground level uses, new housing options, and an integrated public access and extension of the public waterfront walkway.

Previous iterations of the project envisioned a comprehensive redevelopment of City-owned lands to the East and North of the site; the current proposal seeks -within a much smaller footprint- to still deliver public realm and heritage preservation and rehabilitation, and contribute to the economic, social, and architectural vitality of the neighbourhood. The nature of the development however becomes less about a landmark structure marking a gateway, but rather an extension of built patterns in the area leaving the City-owned lands with potential for future development.



DESIGN RATIONALE REVIEW:

The design of the project has three primary drivers: the existing heritage warehouse buildings, response to public realm and response to the patterns and character of Harbour and Old-town.

- HERITAGE RESPONSE
- PUBLIC REALM RESPONSE
- ARCHITECTURE, MASSING & MATERIALS

HERITAGE RESPONSE:

(See also conservation plans & heritage consultant's rationale)

The existing architecture of the two Northern Junk warehouse buildings is to be rehabilitated by careful revealing of original facade elements now obscured by previous alterations and additions and rehabilitating the exterior masonry facade. Alterations including new openings are to be added to improve the functionality of the buildings. The key goal has been to maintain as many elements of the existing buildings as possible while giving them a new life as active commercial spaces accessible to the public. As much as possible, the new elements of the project have been devised to maximize visibility and retention of the existing buildings and bring new value to them for present and future generations. The new structure and spaces are fused with or enveloping of the heritage elements allowing users to come in contact with and be able to appreciate the heritage elements in new ways. All principal facades, interior masonry walls and openings are retained in the proposed design.

Whereas, a typical addition to a heritage building might be smaller in scale, the context of the buildings within the generally 5-storey Old-town fabric suggests that a one or two-storey addition would seem out of scale with the surroundings. The increased height of the additions delivers an integrated streetscape using the heritage buildings as its foundation. The resulting tripartite composition of each facade reinforces the classical pattern of base (heritage buildings), middle (new residential building), and top (contemporary cornice elements).

Glass treatment enclosing the south and west facades of the Caire & Grancini building offers another view of building preservation as part of the overall conservation of the two buildings, and enables the heritage building to become, in part, an artifact within a controlled environment.

The patterns of glazing and masonry piers of the new elements above the two heritage buildings are guided by the existing proportions and details of their facades, rendered in a simpler more contemporary articulation so as to not compete with the existing facades, but be sympathetic and complementary.

Design responds to the new Draft Old Town Design Guidelines as follows:

- Locate and site new buildings and additions to create a continuous 'street wall edge'.
- Design new buildings and additions to reflect the established proportions, composition and spatial organization of adjacent historic facades.
- Include a distinct roof line in the building design, through such measures as a simplified or contemporary cornice or parapet.
- Modulate the overall horizontal and/or vertical building mass on large buildings to achieve a scale that is compatible with adjacent buildings.
- For buildings over 30m in width, incorporate an articulated vertical break in the facade with a patio, courtyard, recessed entryway or other features to help break up the expanse of the facade.
- Avoid buildings with a dominant horizontal expression in favour of more compact buildings that reflect the smaller scale vertical expression of existing heritage buildings.
- Locate and design new buildings along the waterfront to provide direct pedestrian access to the Harbour Pathway where appropriate.
- Design new rooftop additions with contemporary materials and finishes.
- Use a slightly different ratio of solid to transparent materials than the historic building.
- Incorporate setbacks from street-facing elevations to maintain the distinction between old and new construction.

- **OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES:** INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT

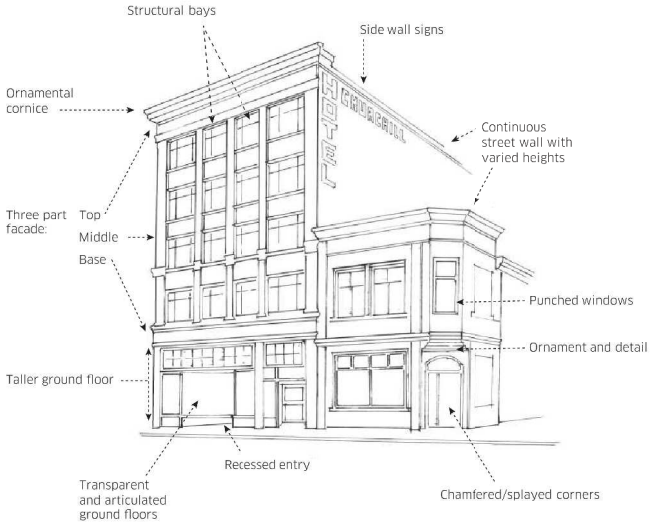
Project addresses several Old Town Guidelines objectives such as:

Character Defining Elements – Old Commercial District

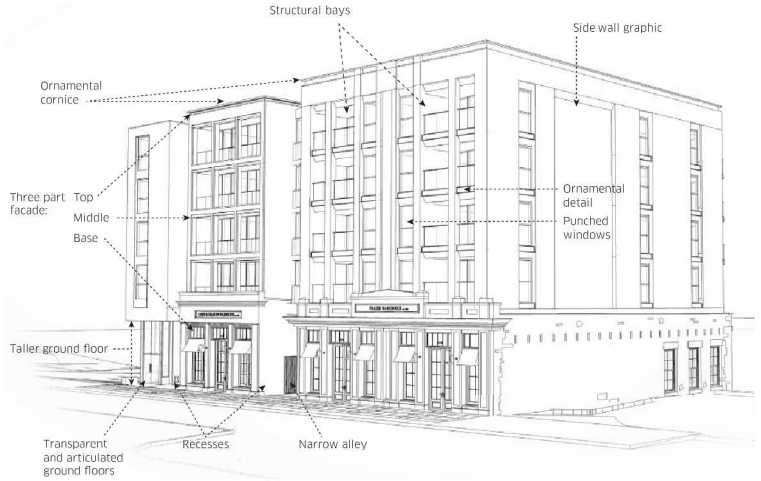
• Classically inspired three part building facades with a clearly defined base, middle and top;
• Vertical facade expressed by use of structural bays, vertical elements and proportions, and punched openings, including upper storey double-hung windows;
• Use of high quality materials such as wood, metal, brick, natural stone and glass;
• Well crafted facade ornamentation and detailing;
• Varied range of low to mid -scale building heights generally ranging from three to five storeys;
• Varied and attractive roof lines along each street that are accented by architectural features such as parapets and cornice lines;
• The prominent use of brick masonry construction
• Prefabricated structural and decorative components of exterior facades of commercial buildings such as wood brackets and tin cornices;
• The presence of pedestrian paths, mews, alleys and courtyards within and through blocks

Character Defining Elements – Waterfront

• Building types and spaces associated with the functions of a commercial harbour;
• Buildings over the water, vessels, float planes, buoys and marks, wharves, pontoons, piles, boat ramps, davits and ladders, hawsers, bollards, and mooring rings;
• Random rubble stonework, brick masonry, and iron shutters and doors;
• Stone and brick retaining walls;
• Buildings with an industrial aesthetic;
• Dual-aspect structures that present a commercial frontage to Wharf Street and a harbour frontage to the water;
• The rich texture of the land/water edge resulting from conditions including inter-tidal beaches, projecting structures, inundations and reclamations;
• Load-bearing masonry buildings and details and forms that accompany load-bearing masonry surrounded by subordinate lighter wood and metal structures;
• The glimpses of water seen between buildings, down alleyways and slips and on street axes.
• The view of Old Town from the water; defined by a concentration of small scale historic buildings tiering up from the waterfront with a distinct rhythm and rich design quality.

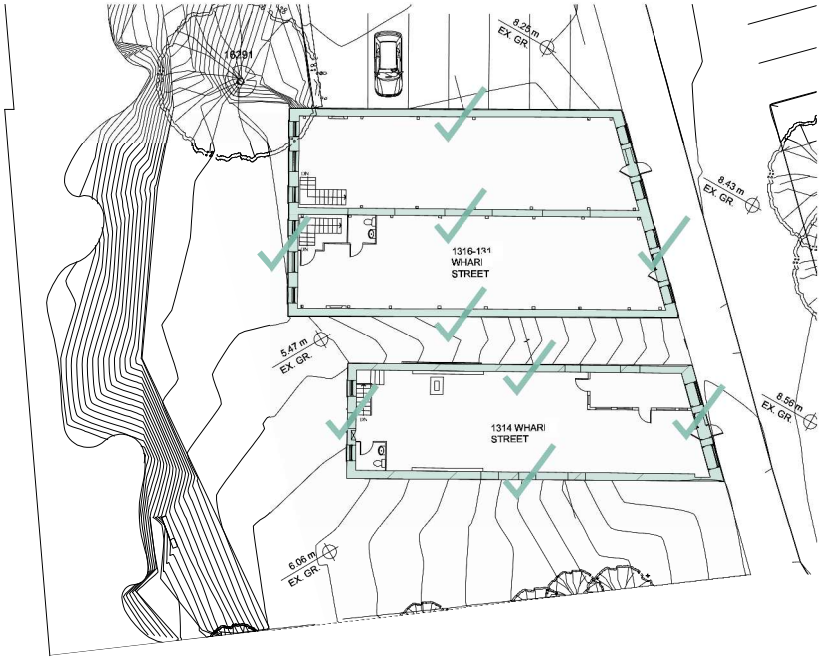


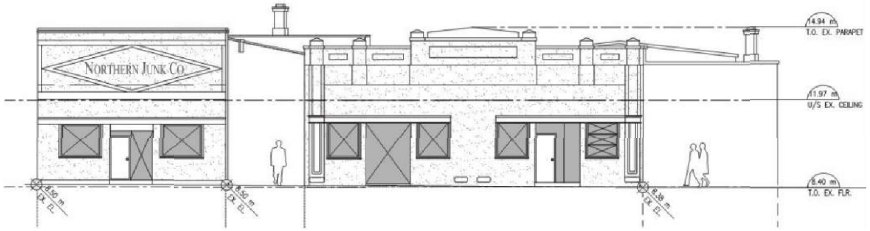
OLD TOWN GUIDELINES



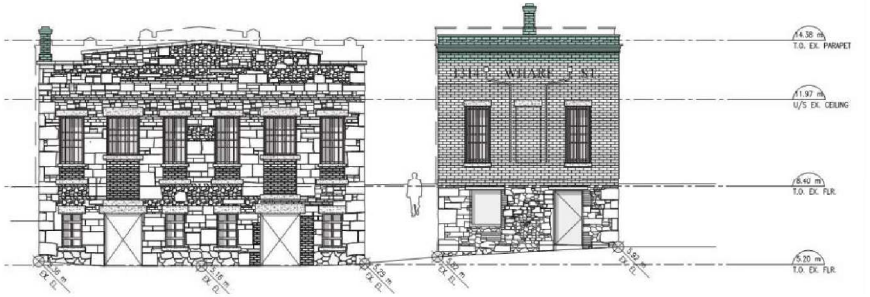
PROPOSED PROJECT

ALL EXTERIOR FACADES RETAINED

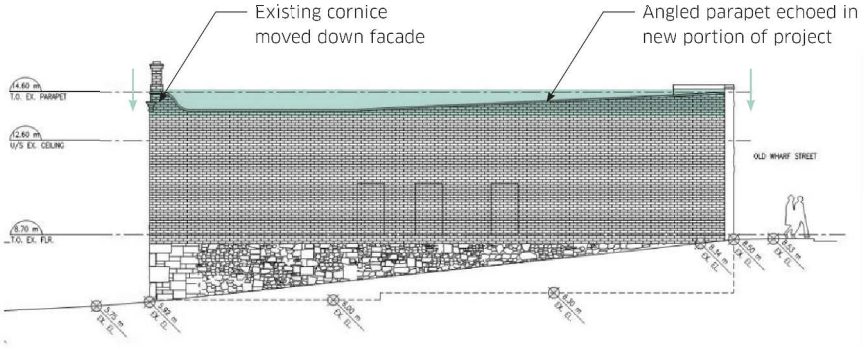




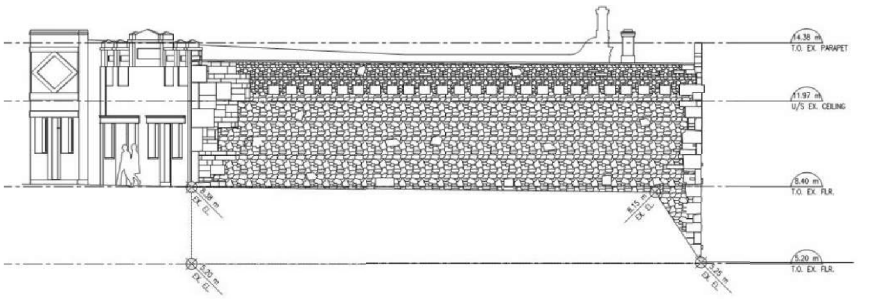
EXISTING EAST ELEVATION



EXISTING WEST ELEVATION



EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION



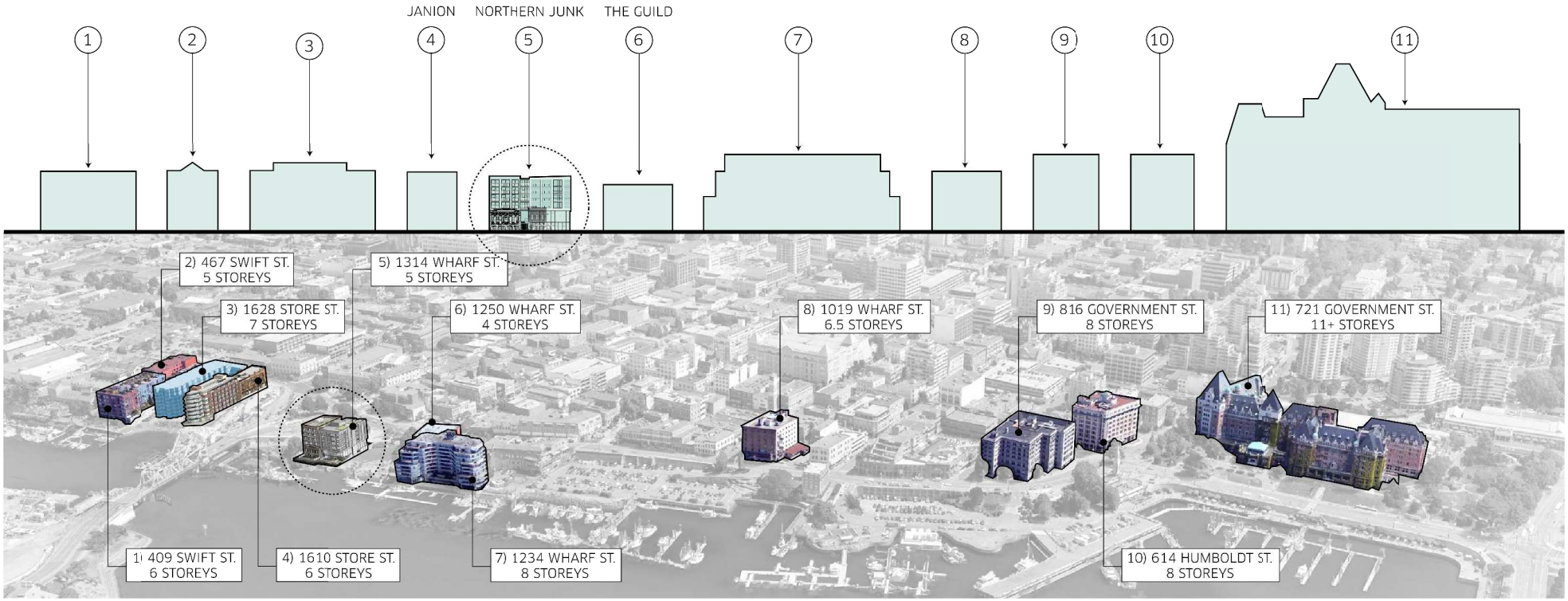
EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION

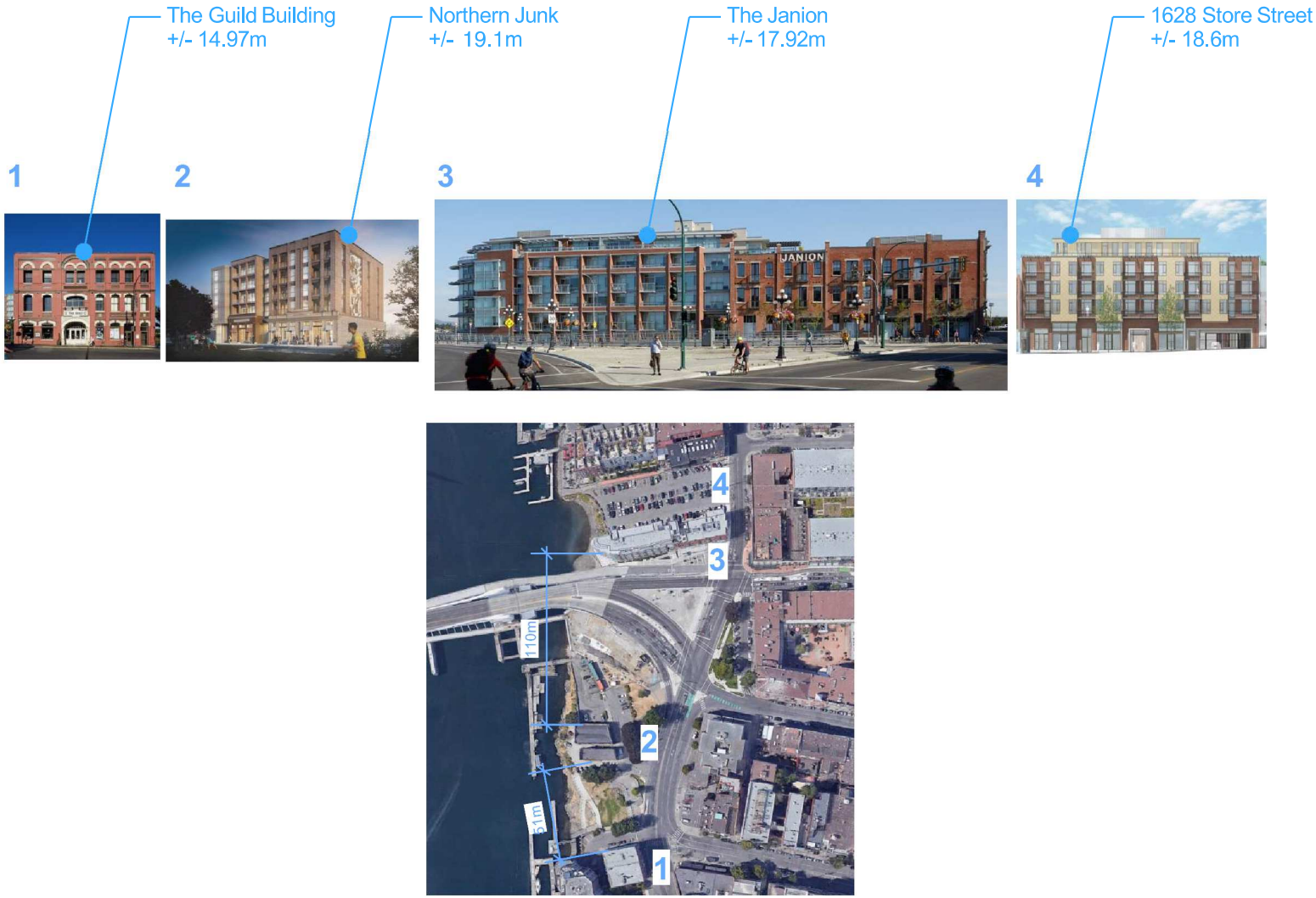
PUBLIC REALM:

With limited new site area in which to add new structure, the footprint of any of the new elements are kept to a minimum, allowing the heritage facades to dominate the pedestrian experience of the project. Where a narrow sloping lane currently separates the two existing warehouse buildings, a new semi-public alleyway is proposed to allow pedestrian connection from Wharf Street to the new extended public waterfront walkway system to the north. This alleyway is in keeping with the old town character of intimate alleys and courtyards. It allows two sides of the existing structures to become exposed over two levels and is activated by new openings to the commercial spaces and an elevator can be accessed by the public to further improve access to the waterfront walk directly through this site. The space will be gated after hours for security. A feature soffit material is proposed to tie together the alley and glazed atrium ceilings using a stamped tin-like panel system rendered in a reflective material to add interest and light to the views upwards below the new structures and draw pedestrians into the new alley space.

At the south side of the project bordering Reeson Park -where the new structure comes down to meet ground level- two highly-glazed active uses (a restaurant and residential lobby) are proposed to directly interface with the park, providing passive surveillance, illumination and an open relationship between new building and park. This highly glazed ground level of the project also allows for views of the south heritage facade through the building. A dramatic glazed atrium wraps the southwest corner of the Caire & Grancini building creating a unique experience of the heritage buildings and protects the heritage facade from the elements and vandalism.

Extension of the David Foster Way waterfront walk along the west edge of the project will continue this public realm asset one step closer to the bridge and future connection to Rock Bay. Providing a public connection in the middle of the project also allows a way to continue the public connection in the interim.




The Guild Building
+/- 14.97m
Northern Junk
+/- 19.1m
The Janion
+/- 17.92m
1628 Store Street
+/- 18.6m
1
2
3
4
JANION
110m
91m


STORE ST.
FISGARD ST.
PANDORA AVE.
JOHNSON ST. BRIDGE
JOHNSON ST.
JOHNSON ST.
YATES ST.
WHARF ST.
LEGEND
PEDESTRIAN PATH
FUTURE PEDESTRIAN PATH
BIKE LANE
FUTURE BIKE LANE
VEHICULAR ACCESS