



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of September 17, 2020

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** August 31, 2020

From: Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Subject: Development Permit Application No. 000561 for 777 Douglas Street

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorize the issuance of development permit application No.000561 for 777 Douglas Street, in accordance with:

1. Plans date stamped July 3, 2020.
2. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements.
3. The Development Permit lapsing two years from the date of this resolution.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 489 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a development permit in accordance with the applicable guidelines specified in the community plan. A development permit may vary or supplement the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* but may not vary the use or density of the land from that specified in the bylaw.

Pursuant to Section 491 of the *Local Government Act*, where the purpose of the designation is the revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted, a development permit may include requirements respecting the character of the development, including landscaping, and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and other structures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a development permit application for the property located at 777 Douglas Street. The proposal is for exterior renovations to an existing building and the addition of a balcony area (deck).

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- the proposal is generally consistent with the massing and scale design guidelines in the *Downtown Core Area Plan*, 2011 (DCAP) and offers a simplified and deferential architectural response to the 90m heritage landmark building radius objectives in DCAP
- a complementary form and character per the Development Permit Area 9 (Heritage Conservation area objectives).

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is for exterior renovations to an existing building and the addition of a balcony area (deck). The proposed alterations are located on a visually prominent corner of the building at the intersections of Humboldt Street, Burdett Avenue and Douglas Street. Specific details include:

- cladding replacement and window changes
- removal of existing parapet, cornices and bay windows
- balcony addition.

Form and character considerations are the chief focus of this application. Typically, smaller renovations such as this would not go before Council, however, being located within Development Permit Area 9, Inner Harbour, the City's *Land Use Procedures Bylaw* mandates Council consideration because a structure (deck) is being added.

Sustainability

The applicant has not identified any sustainability features associated with this proposal.

Active Transportation

The applicant has not identified any active transportation impacts associated with this application.

Public Realm

No public realm improvements beyond City standard requirements are proposed in association with this development permit application.

Accessibility

The British Columbia Building Code regulates accessibility as it pertains to buildings. The proposed accessibility access is through the main hotel lobby entrance, which provides barrier free access to the proposed café interior.

Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The site is presently a restaurant. The proposed changes would convert its use to a café, which the existing zoning permits.

Data Table

A data table is not included as the proposal reflects changes to an existing building only and does not trigger any variances. The proposal is in the existing CA-11 zone, Central Area (Executive House) District, which permits buildings up to 43m with floor space ratios up to 5.35:1.

Community Consultation

Consistent with the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) procedures, development permits without variances are not circulated to the relevant CALUC.

ANALYSIS

Official Community Plan

The subject property is located within the Core Inner Harbour Legislative Urban Place Designation within the *Official Community Plan*, 2012 (OCP). Form and character considerations under this designation envision formal building arrangements and a formal public realm. Few changes from the existing building massing are proposed with this application, however, where changes have been made, they have been made to be consistent with this objective.

The OCP also identifies this property within Development Permit Area 9, (Heritage Conservation): Inner Harbour. Objectives for this designation generally aim to avoid diminishing the historic character of the area while promoting quality architecture and urban design that is complementary to nearby heritage buildings. The simplified building composition, cohesion to the connected 1960s era hotel and the dark colour pallet employed all help to address the existing lack of cohesion in the area and respectfully respond to the context.

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

Downtown Core Area Plan

The key design guideline applicable to this application is the *Downtown Core Area Plan*, 2011 (DCAP). Notably, this application falls within the 90m heritage landmark building radius identified in DCAP. Applications within this radius are subject to special consideration with regards to their form and character. This typically means ensuring that they are consistent with the general form and character of the area, do not infringe on the visual prominence of heritage buildings and are of a high architectural and urban design standard. The proposed balcony is also situated in a visually prominent location on the corner of the lot, and terminated vistas require special consideration under the design guidelines.

As indicated in the response to the advisory design panel motion below, special consideration was taken with this application. Numerous changes and renditions were made, which in staff's opinion have resulted in a contextually appropriate proposal that neither diminishes nor detracts from heritage landmark building considerations.

Additional policies within the DCAP speak to creating and fostering outdoor dining areas on both private as well as public lands. Specific policies promote integrating dining areas into the building design, enhancing the public realm, providing access to sunlight and generally improving the vitality and aesthetic appearance of outdoor dining areas. The proposed deck provides an outdoor amenity to the subject property and is stepped back and up from the sidewalk to maintain a transition from public to private space.

Advisory Design Panel

This application was presented to the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) on February 12, 2020. At that time, the panel recommended that the application did not sufficiently meet the applicable

design guidelines and policies and should therefore be declined. The Panel motion included a recommendation to reconsider the proposed materials, proportions and the relationship to the building and its urban context (ADP minutes attached).

In response to the ADP's recommendation, two rounds of revisions were presented to staff. The final rendition, being advanced in this report, responds to ADP's and staff's recommendations in a number of ways:

- materials have been revised and simplified
- window composition has been simplified and formally arranged and proportioned
- intersecting roof planes and fascia widths have been removed and simplified
- street relationship has been softened with the use of planters, widened stairs and a stepped back, reduced balcony.

Overall, the revisions presented by the applicant adequately address the concerns raised by the ADP and the design creates a well considered renovation.

CONCLUSIONS

Form and character considerations are the chief focus of this application. The subject site falls within Development Permit Area 9, Inner Harbour, and as such the City's Land Use Procedures Bylaw mandates Council consideration because a structure (deck) is being added. Following the ADP review and multiple iterations in response, staff recommend that the proposal is consistent with the relevant guidelines and policies and is a fitting addition to the area.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline development permit application No.000561 for the property located at 777 Douglas Street.

Respectfully submitted,



Miko Betanzo
Senior Planner, Urban Design
Development Services Division

JH



Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date: September 9, 2020

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Plans dated/date stamped July 3, 2020
- Attachment D: Letter from applicant to Mayor and Council dated July 19, 2019
- Attachment E: Advisory Design Panel Minutes dated February 12, 2020.