

June 21, 2022



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City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC
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Attn: Kristal Stevenot, AIBC
Senior Heritage Planner
Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department

Re: 1050 Pandora, 1508-1516, 1518, and 1580 Cook Street -
Parkway Development

On behalf of Primex Investments Ltd (“Primex”), the authorized agent for PANDORA COOK DEVELOPMENT CORP, I am pleased to submit updated information for Council’s consideration of our application for Victoria’s Tax Incentive Program to help offset the costs of seismic upgrading for our heritage restoration and rental housing infill project.

Project Description:

The Parkway Revitalization and Development is located at the site of the now closed Wellburn’s Building. Originally named the Parkway apartments, the two-storey masonry building was constructed in 1911 and designed by William Ridgway-Wilson. At the very southeast corner of the North Park neighbourhood, the restored and enhanced building will be a gateway feature to both the neighbourhood and the centre of Victoria. This proposed development will bring important rental residential units to the neighborhood, strengthen the iconic historic character of the site, and enhance the neighborhood with vibrant new retail spaces.

The new development proposes a four and six- storey volume stepping back from the existing heritage building to the north and west, and from Franklin Green Park to the south and east. It is our intent to preserve this historic building, while adding critical rental housing to the Victoria market. In addition to the 11 existing residential units in the Wellburn’s Building, the proposed development will provide a further 93 residential units, for a total of 104 rental residential units.



A mews separating the historic and modern buildings at street level will serve as the residential entrance to the building and will provide access to a west facing courtyard. Public access to and from Franklin Green Park will be provided through a wide pedestrian walkway along the north edge of the site. There will be one level of underground parking on the property.

A priority of the project is to conserve the heritage value of the Wellburn's Building through keeping 49.5% of the existing volume, including the historic façades facing Pandora Avenue and Cook Street. All character-defining elements in these locations will be preserved along with any in-kind repairs, as required. The original use of the building will remain with opportunities for multiple retail spaces on the ground floor and residential suites above. The building will be Designated Heritage with the Heritage Registry.

The articulation and materiality are focused on providing both physical and visual compatibility between the new and existing volumes. The new development is clad in a monolithic, light-coloured stucco that has a smooth finish that alludes to the materiality and colour of the historic brick façade. The new façade articulation references proportions and angles of the projecting oriel windows on the second floor and the richly coloured banding above the windows.

During communication with the community and with the Heritage Advisory Panel, we received feedback to strengthen the heritage portion making the new addition subordinate in terms of the design. As a result, we revised the design in 2020 so that new volume is set back further than before from the faces of the heritage building along both streets.

Project History:

Primex applied to the City of Victoria for rezoning, heritage alteration permit, and development permit for the site in 2018. Council approved the project at Public Hearing in December 2020.

As of May 2022, Primex and our general contractor, Summit Brooke Construction, have begun to fulfill the complicated demolition requirements and have also established significant structural elements to preserve the heritage portion of the structure. This process to protect and secure the heritage building has been complicated by having to find new and innovative means to structurally support the existing structure. During the selective demolition of the heritage building, the known state of the structure changed, requiring an evolution and rethink in our structural approaches.



Responses to VCHT Comments

<p>1. The application does not sufficiently meet the intent of the Tax Incentive Program with respect to the amount of conservation and the absence of a strong rationale for the significant amount of demolition proposed.</p>
<p><i>The application received approval from the City for the required Heritage Alteration Permit as supported by Donald Luxton and Associates in 2020. To facilitate the integration of new purpose-built rental housing (104 Units) along with the need to address parking requirements below grade, partial demolition of the non-street fronting aspects of the building needed to be removed. This partial removal also facilitated the installation of internal structural elements to preserve the Pandora Avenue and Cook Street facing elements of the heritage building.</i></p> <p><i>As a result, this project will retain up to 49.5% of the original two-storey L-shaped building including the historic façades of Pandora Avenue and Cook Street back to the external face of the new six storey volume, return of west façade and structure (columns, beams, joists) of the existing two-storey building from the retained façades to the new six-storey volume. A section of the north façade back to the new six-storey volume will be disassembled, brick cleaned, and wall rebuilt. All character-defining elements on the retained façades will be preserved along with any in-kind repairs, as required.</i></p>
<p>2. The absence of a professional seismic assessment of the building in advance of the structural design.</p>
<p><i>A seismic assessment was submitted to the VCHT through Sorenson Trilogy Structural Engineers. As the project was entitled to proceed via City Permit, a full seismic assessment of the existing building was redundant considering the planned restoration and resuscitation works to ensure the long-term stability of the remaining 49.5% of the original heritage building.</i></p>
<p>3. The applicant did not make a case for why they did not consider the full retention of the heritage building.</p>
<p><i>The application received approval from the City of Victoria for the selective demolition of the heritage building to facilitate a new six-storey volume related to the development of 104 new purpose-built rental housing units along with a below grade parkade.</i></p>



4. Inconsistencies between the architectural and structural drawings submitted with the application and the plans approved by Council, which have significant implications for the structural and seismic design and the costing information submitted by the applicant.

While the drawings did show some inconsistencies, this can be attributed to the need to evolve our structural design as more information on the condition of the existing building was discovered. (i.e.: structural elements that were identified as being critical to the heritage building were discovered to be in dis-repair upon the removal of various veneers in the heritage volume to be protected.)

Level 1 Floor Slab

With the structural requirement to upgrade the perimeter with a total of 33 pad footings plus the addition of the under-slab plumbing, the retention of the ground floor slab is not feasible for the construction team. The decision was made to demolish the existing concrete slab and rebuild to match existing.

Figure 1: Existing Ground Floor Slab

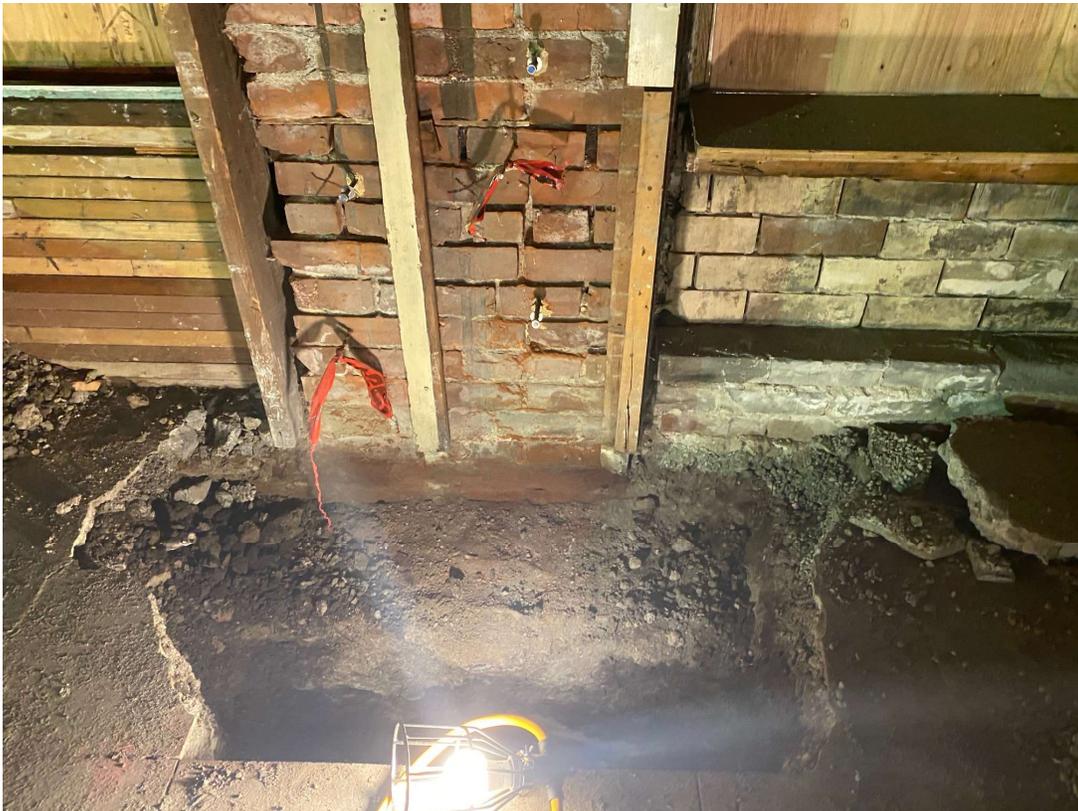
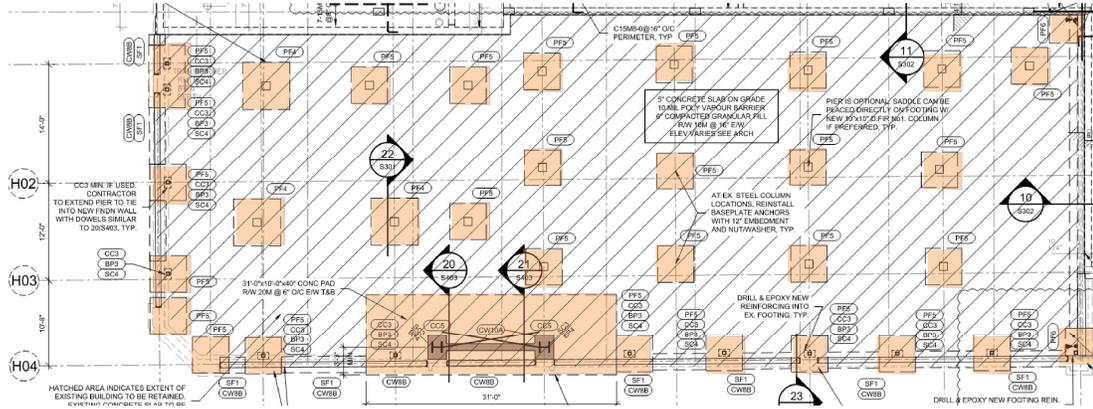




Figure 2: Level 1 suspended slab plan showing a total of 33 pad footings



Level 2 Windows

Most Level 2 sashes were found to be intact although some sashes and glazing have been altered. Paint failure is present throughout all windows. The initial approach was to make good existing heritage windows, remove damaged single glazing and install new single glazing as required. This approach was revised to install new clear double glazing thermal unit in place of single glazing to avoid condensation on the interior glass face and improve thermal and sound insulation performance.

Through the erection of scaffolding and the removal of the cap flashing on storefront level cornice, it became evident that most bay windows are sagging. The metal panel at the underside of the bay window is corroded and deformed in areas. The construction team continues to work with structural to stabilize the windows.



Figure 3: Level 2 Bay Windows





<p>5. Discrepancies between the proposed work and the Conservation Plan and the design and plans approved by Council at the public hearing on 10 December 2020.</p>
<p><i>The requested changes and adjustments to the Heritage Restoration Plan were all completed with the engagement of Donald Luxton and Associates Heritage Consultants (DLA)</i></p> <p><i>The intent of the heritage preservation goals was retained; however, as knowledge of the current state of the building became better understood, the approach to the heritage conservation had to adapt and evolve to ensure the building could be successfully retained for the long-term.</i></p>
<p>6. More clarification required on technical aspects of the seismic upgrading design:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether the green roof and planters are to be deleted as they still show on the drawings, which affects seismic design loads. If the green roof is removed, clarification of the impact on gravity versus seismic loads for the roof, and presumed reduction in costs.
<p><i>The Green Roof is being removed, with a small amount of sedum remaining, per the most recently approved Heritage Alteration Permit drawings.</i></p> <p><i>The seismic design has been adjusted to reflect this condition.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether the moment frame proposed on Cook Street is to make up for the modification or the demolition of 50% or more of the heritage building.
<p><i>The heritage building has little to no seismic resistance along Cook Street in the existing condition. The moment frame on Cook Street would be required for both the existing building condition or the modified building condition.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How much of the floor and wall framing upgrades are related to new gravity loads instead of seismic upgrading of the original building.
<p><i>The floor and wall framing upgrades related to new gravity loads include the new steel beams and columns, infill framing, and new walls. The floor and wall framing upgrades related to seismic upgrading include shear walls, moment frame, drag struts, plywood diaphragm sheathing, lateral detailing, brick wall lateral support details. The floor and wall framing upgrades that are shared for gravity and seismic upgrading include the steel channels each side of timber beams and connections to the concrete structure.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether the north wall intervention is related to underground parking.



The North Wall intervention is related to the current poor state of the building and a lack of suitable or safe means to preserve it in-situ. A Delegated Heritage Alteration Permit has been issued allowing the demolition of this wall during the construction process, after which it will be reconstituted in its former location using new brick.

When this application was last submitted to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust, the structural integrity of the existing brick wall was unknown. The construction team has confirmed that to maintain the wall in place, the temporary bracing required to keep the wall safely in place while underpinning is completed, would require to cut through the level 2 wood floor up to 20ft, resulting in localized demolition of the level 2 heritage wood structure we are attempting to retain.

This has required a revised approach to deconstruct the existing masonry wall; salvage the brick and reconstruct the wall back to the new volume. The wall will be reconstructed using salvaged brick and made to match the common bond pattern, mortar mix, joint size and profile of the original wall.

- Resolution of different seismic design approaches and mixed ductility levels.

The seismic design includes ductile systems above the second floor and rigid systems below the second floor.

- Whether the storefront assemblies will be constructed of wood or aluminum.

As a result of on-site investigation, the approach to the store fronts changed. It was originally believed that the storefronts would be remade of aluminum to provide structural supports. This approach has changed to rehabilitate and restore the wood storefront assemblies, referencing the original design as noted in the archival photos.



Background Information:

In addition to information previously submitted we are submitting the following revised information that is updated given current known conditions.

1. Structural Engineer Summary
2. Structural Drawings for Building Permit
3. Current Building Permit Drawings
4. General Contractor Request for Pricing – Summit Brooke
5. Construction Schedule from Summit Brooke



Summary:

The Victoria Civic Heritage Trust (VCHT) has a mandate to:

“...develop, administer, and financially support programs that preserve, promote, interpret and enhance the cultural and natural heritage resources of the City of Victoria and its environs.”

In the case of the Parkway building heritage restoration project, it is unfortunate that the VCHT has chosen NOT to support our application to the City of Victoria for a tax exemption related to the seismic upgrades required to maintain this piece of City heritage.

This project is a complicated, but incredibly important, development for the City of Victoria and should be eligible for the 10-year tax exemption. This project represents a substantial heritage asset that will be restored and protected in the form of the old Wellburn’s Grocery Store façade, but also nearly 50% of the original structural, which will be integrated within a modern, sustainable and environmentally friendly development with 104 new purpose-built market rentals.

This development will stand the test of time thanks to the innovation of the design and construction team and will serve as a community icon at the corner of Pandora Avenue and Cook Street.

If we can provide any additional information or you need clarification of any details, please feel free to reach out to me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Greg Mitchell, M.PL., MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner / Senior Development Manager
Primex Investments for “Pandora Cook Development Corp”
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