

Architectural and Urban Design – Summary & Assessment

The applicant included a revised Urban Design Brief and Architectural Plan Set with the most recent submission of the Zoning By-law Amendment Application. A review of these materials was completed by the Township's architectural and urban design peer review consultant in the context of the applicable Township Village Urban Design and Official Plan Urban Design Policies. The comments provided with respect to matters related to architectural and urban design are summarized below.

Site Design & Public Realm Interface

Section 2.1 (Context and Objectives) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines states that Village Centres are anticipated to accommodate the majority of intensification and growth in the Township through redevelopment to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure. It is anticipated that this be achieved in conjunction with establishing a high development standard of architecture and design, incorporating principles such as accessibility and streetscape enhancement (i.e. pedestrian-scale) and development transition between low-rise/low density development and more intensive forms of development to mitigate land use impact, where possible (i.e. visual/aesthetic, noise, light/shadow, odour and privacy) using design techniques such as setbacks, step-backs and landscaping. The conservation of heritage resources through adaptive re-use of heritage buildings is also an identified objective.

The Township's architectural and peer review consultant has assessed the existing built-form context as well as anticipated future development in the immediate area and has concluded that the overall scale and placement of the proposed building along this key street frontage and intersection (i.e. King Road and King Boulevard) is appropriate with the existing and evolving character of the site and surrounding context.

Section 2.2.1 (General Building Location and Orientation) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines provides some general principles with respect to building location and orientation to the street, such as the concept of providing a continuous street wall and prominently siting buildings where the promotion of the pedestrian realm can be promoted (i.e. front yard setbacks). One such technique is to provide required parking within a building or below grade where otherwise that parking may be located at grade. Building transition can also be supported through increased setbacks, where appropriate to context.

Enhanced landscaping and accessibility with the public realm has been proposed with the revised design. This has been achieved with the relocation of the main building entrance and connectivity to the street via a 3.0 metre wide path and demarcated with at-grade amenity space. The use of clear glazing at ground level provides additional interaction between the private (i.e. building) and public realms (i.e. streetscape).

Building Massing & Transitions (and Visual Impact)

Section 2.2.2 (Height and Massing) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines provide some general principles with respect to building height and massing to ensure appropriate gradients in building heights and massing between lower- and higher- density development; particularly, where adjacent to neighbourhoods of predominantly low-rise built form. To mitigate potential land use

conflict, techniques such as establishing an angular plane of 45° to ensure appropriate lateral distance between buildings of taller form and building step backs on upper floors are to be considered. To establish a continuous street wall along the lot frontage, a minimum height of two (2) storeys is required.

The Township's architectural and peer review consultant has concluded that the proposed building height and massing are generally appropriate and consistent with the Village Core designation in the Official Plan and related design policies, particularly in the context of a future full build-out of the King Square Block Plan. In particular, elements such as the reduced proposed building height and massing (and mechanical penthouse height); increased building step-backs; addition of a 6th Floor terrace area; and, the relocation of rooftop mechanical equipment to the central portion of the roof contribute to the enhancement of the overall design in terms of proportionality relative to earlier design proposals of the building.

In terms of overall visual impact, the architectural and urban design peer review comments conclude that the overall massing approach generally aligns with the planned and emerging intensification along the King Road corridor. A combination of setbacks along the north, south and east elevations, building step backs, terraced amenity area and selection of light exterior cladding materials assist in mitigating visual impact and perceived bulk, relative to existing and proposed adjacent and surrounding development.

Common Amenity Space & Landscaped Open Space

Section 2.5.2 (Community Streetscapes) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines provide some general principles with respect to designing and maintaining common areas within the public realm. These include enhancements to the streetscape through the use and placement of amenity zones (i.e. landscaped boulevards, furnishings and other public amenities). These initiatives should be complementary and have regard to adjacent open space and built form.

Section 2.3.9 (Sustainability) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines encourages the use of green roofs for incorporation into amenity spaces, where feasible. The proposed development contemplates the installation of a green roof.

Landscaped Areas

The applicant resubmitted revised Site and Landscape Plans illustrating new common outdoor areas at the northeast corner of the building as well as increased landscaped area along the east property line. These elements have added to the 'gateway' function of the building at this intersection and are intended to accent the placement of the building at a minimum setback to the corner.

Amenity Space

Other revisions to the proposed amenity areas include the relocation of the 6th Floor terrace to the northeast corner of the building and addition of a green roof in connection with the use of this area. The specific dimensions and type of green roof (i.e. intensive or extensive) will need to be confirmed as part of final design.

In general, the Township's architectural and urban design peer reviewer has recommended that these areas be made fully accessible to all occupants and visitors to the building (including clear indication of defined and direct points of access). The use of universally accessible site furnishings in the amenity areas has been provided as a recommendation.

Site Access & Circulation

Section 2.2.1 (General Building Location and Orientation) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines provide some general principles with respect to the orientation of building massing to the street and use of direct connections to the pedestrian boulevard. These include provisions for barrier-free walkways with a minimum width of 2.0 metres between a unit and a sidewalk.

Pedestrian pathways with a minimum width of 2.0 metres have been provided around the perimeter of the proposed building at the south elevation (3.0 metres), west elevation (2.1 metres), and, north elevation (2.0 metres).

The Township's architectural and peer review consultant has reviewed these access points and finds them acceptable and notes that they are anticipated to improve overall pedestrian accessibility.

Other pedestrian-focused design elements such as the removal of bollards where interfacing with areas of high pedestrian use and the addition of sidewalks/pedestrian infrastructure to the rear (north) of the proposed building along the future private road, will or may enhance the use of this area for pedestrians and other modes of active transportation.

On-Site Vehicle Parking

Proposed surface parking (14 parking spaces) is to be located at the rear (north) of the property and screened from view from King Road by the proposed development. This design is generally consistent with Section 2.2.1 (I) (General Building Location and Orientation) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines.

Bicycle Parking Spaces

Secured bicycle parking and locker areas have been proposed internal to the building. Bicycle parking to accommodate visitors to the building and general public are proposed adjacent to the main lobby entrance and at-grade amenity area. Parking for four (4) additional bicycles is provided with the addition of these short-term parking spaces.

Building Façade Design & Materials

Section 2.3.1 (Building Facades) of the Village Urban Design Guidelines provide general design principles for the incorporation of architectural and façade design treatments that may contribute to land use compatibility and visual interest and creating a sense of community design continuity. Some of these principles include building articulation (as well as 'breaks' in the façade, avoiding large expanses of blank wall, and using a variety and blend of exterior cladding materials and colour), wall plane changes, deep wall recesses or pronounced piers and canopies.

Architectural Materials

High-quality exterior cladding materials should be used to complement the surrounding character of existing buildings and their architectural styles. The Township's architectural and urban design peer reviewer has noted that the revised/simplified material and colour palette of the building design and the addition of a curtain wall feature on the south and east facades contribute to the proposed development as a gateway to the Village Core.

Building articulation, including the addition of architectural features such as window frames and fenestration and strategic placement of upper-level windows (particularly on the west façade) where abutting existing low density residential development mitigates land use impacts such as potential overlook and privacy concerns. The intermittent use of a darker colour palette where accenting specific architectural features and elements is effective while not contributing to greater massing of the building.

Further review of sample cladding materials and colour palette will be provided through the Site Plan Application process with the potential requirement for submission of a material sample board and/or materials specifications.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The Township's peer review consultant has concluded that the proposed development aligns with the overall vision for King City's Village Core from an architectural and urban design perspective.