

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
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1300 Block Broad Street - The Duck's Building Redevelopment

Dear Mayor Helps and Members of Council;

On behalf of our client, Chard Development, we are pleased to be able to present this proposal to rehabilitate and redevelop the 1300 Block of Broad Street with a new purpose-built hotel development that includes commercial lease space along Johnson and Broad Streets. This proposal is centred around the rehabilitation of the Heritage registered Duck's Building (1892) at 1314 Broad Street, including the front and rear façades , and the west facing rubble stone wall of the original Duck's Carriage Factory, also known as the Broad Building (Canada Hotel), at 615-625 Johnson Street - one of the oldest rubble stone foundation walls remaining in the City.

You will have read the letter from the Owner and Chard Development which outlines some of the history of the project partnership and the social and economic drivers and benefits that this project brings. This letter is intended to describe the architectural and urban planning features of the development and explain the rationale for the requested variances.

Background Information

The existing lots are owned by the University of Victoria and managed by UVic Properties. They span from Yates Street to Johnson Street on the west side of Broad Street. There are two commercial buildings on the Yates Street properties , including the Legacy Gallery (formerly Starfish Glassworks) , a small commercial building and surface parking on Broad Street south of the Duck's Building, the Duck's Building with a mix of leased and vacant commercial space on three levels (including a large ballroom space at the rear on level three) , and the Johnson Street building with one and two level commercial spaces In an historic but severely altered structure. To the west there exists a City owned parcel that serves as a de facto laneway for the majority of properties on the block.

Proposed Lot Consolidation

This proposal intends to consolidate and sub-divide the existing patchwork of five separate properties to create four distinct lots. The smallest of the existing lots facing Yates Street will be subdivided to remove the portion of the lot that juts into the adjacent parking lot. The corner lot facing Yates and Broad (Legacy Gallery) will have the portion of the lot that projects past the north building line subdivided as well. These subdivided parcels will be



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consolidated with Lot 2 (the parking lot) and the two lots north of the parking lot (Duck's and Broad Buildings) to create a single lot. A long-term lease agreement between UVic Properties and Chard Development will ensure ownership of the lands remains with the University of Victoria.

These lot subdivisions and consolidations set the stage for the redevelopment of the site. The Yates Street buildings will remain as they are today. The single storey commercial building appended to the north end of the Legacy Gallery will be demolished. The Duck's and Broad Buildings will be rehabilitated and the entire site redeveloped to provide 139 suites of hotel accommodation. Commercial lease space is provided at the ground floor level facing Johnson and Broad Streets, with the hotel entrance facing Broad Street in the historic Duck's Building façade. Lane access is provided for services, deliveries, loading, and valet parking drop-off with a separate public lobby access from the lane located steps away from the end of the historic rubble wall. Long-term vehicle parking is provided in one level of below grade parking accessed by full-time valet parking attendants using car elevators. Parking areas and below-grade structures are located to minimize impacts on the existing structures below grade.

Concurrently with this application a 2.97m wide strip of land along the west boundary of the consolidated properties will be provided to the City by way of a Statutory Right of Way. This will allow the City to convert to a proper Public Right of Way the property that is currently being used as a lane.

Architectural Design Features

The starting point for the redevelopment is the rehabilitation of the Ducks building and the Duck's Carriage Factory rubble wall. The primary façades of the Duck's Building (Broad Street and the Lane) are generally in good repair and are an excellent example of the evolution of larger Victorian Era commercial structures in Victoria. While recent changes to the BC Building Code seismic design requirements have made it more challenging to fully retain the unreinforced masonry walls of the Duck's Building, we have developed an approach that allows for the full retention of the front and rear (East and West) walls in their entirety without any new window openings on the upper floor levels.

Through this approach, a high proportion of the existing character defining heritage building structure is retained and continues to function in the rehabilitated buildings.

Another series of decisions was made to determine the most effective alignment of floor levels between the front and rear elevations of the Duck's Building and to tie those levels into the new construction. The end result is a series of floor levels that work across the entire site. To the south of the Duck's Building (on the parking lot) there are a total of five storeys that align with the existing floor levels / windows of the Duck's Building. The top of this building is within 12 inches of the height of the existing Duck's Building roof. As the grade of the site falls almost 2 metres from the corner of the Legacy Building on Broad Street to the corner of the rubble wall at the lane off Johnson Street, one additional partial floor level has been



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added to the Johnson Street end of the building. The building remains one consistent height from the south end of the property to Johnson Street, with the change in grade resulting in 5 storeys to the south that is called-up as 6 storeys to the north because of the additional partial floor level along Johnson Street.

The rehabilitated Duck's Building includes 4 levels of hotel and one level of commercial lease space contained within the existing shell of the Heritage building. The upper two floors are stepped back from the street 7.5m to create a deep separation between the existing facade and the new work, much the same as the existing ballroom is aligned toward the west side (rear) of the building. This shift will eliminate any effect on the sight lines of the Duck's Building facade from the street. The flanking new construction steps back from the Duck's Building facade in plan at every level and along both street frontages at Level 6. In line with the *Old Town Design Guidelines (2019)* these step backs are used to visually reduce the presence of the upper floor levels and maintain the prominence of the Duck's Building forms and materials.

The form and character of the new construction that flanks the Ducks Building take their cues from the Ducks facade and the *Old Town Design Guidelines (2019)*. A typical 'base-middle-top' typology that is characteristic of larger block and corner buildings in Old Town forms the basis for the design approach. The materials are selected to match the typical materials used in these building types - brick masonry cladding - a different brick type and colour on the north and south portions of the building. The south building takes cues from the adjacent Legacy Gallery building, introducing a double height vertically proportioned window surround as a primary design feature on the main facade, and a glazed window wall adjacent to the Duck's building and across the top level to further distinguish the new construction from the Heritage building. The north portion of the building has a distinct character and re-introduces projecting bays as a primary feature of the composition that echoes the design of the Carriage Works building before it was unsympathetically altered and the bay projections removed. The top level of the north portion facing Broad Street has been setback 3.05m to minimize the visual impact of the top storey from the street views. The composition is intended to read as three distinct buildings with the Duck's Building at the centre and the South and North buildings presenting a similarly scaled and proportioned but clearly distinct street frontage. These variations also extend to the main floor storefronts and canopies with each building having a distinct entrance and canopy composition along the street.

Density and Variances

The proposed uses and setbacks are consistent with the existing Zoning, however, the proposal requires a height variance (3.81m) and an increase in the Density to 4.37 to 1 overall.

The proposed height and density - less than 12 inches higher than the highest portion of the existing Duck's Building and similar density - are generally consistent with existing large-block and corner-site buildings in Old Town that are reflective of the change in

building typology and use as the City developed and matured (Belmont Building ; Yarrow Building). While the base 3:1 density is reflective of the smaller narrow-lot buildings that make up much of the fabric of the historic core of the City, but it is not indicative of these larger corner and whole-block buildings.

We believe that this development is a significant milestone in the rehabilitation and development of an historic part of the City and is in keeping with the examples and precedents that already exist in the area. The project is centred around the rehabilitation and seismic restraint of the historic Duck's Building, including the very handsome brick elevation facing the lane, and the Duck's Carriage Factory rubble wall. In keeping with the *Old Town Design Guidelines (2019)* we have taken steps to mitigate the effect of the upper floors on view lines and streetscape shadowing; we have tailored the building height to be within inches of the height of the existing Duck's Building; and we have designed the project to read as a collection of three distinct buildings rather than a unified single structure. We believe the requested increases in density and height are supportable within the broader goals of the framework of the *Old Town Design Guidelines* and *Official Community Plan*.

The design you see today has been refined and adjusted to respond to feedback and comments received from both the Heritage and Design Advisory Panels after careful consideration by the members of each of those advisory bodies.

We thank you for your consideration of this important redevelopment proposal and look forward to being able to present and discuss it with you in more detail as the process unfolds.

Sincerely Yours,
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Principal



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