

# BURGERS ARCHITECTURE

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2025-01-08

Dear Planning Department and Council;

## Re: 3841 Sunridge Drive – Covenant Modification Design Rationale and Additional Supporting Documents

Thank you very much for the opportunity to formally present 3841 Sunridge Drive, a Whistler home that captures the drama of a steep wooded site.

We have a very difficult lot with steep cliffs and a relatively small buildable area that is further restricted by the constraints of the Restrictive Covenant BJ342508 (Appendix A). We are seeking to reduce or remove that restrictive language and have the proposed house governed by the RMOW's RT6 zoning bylaw. With this relaxation, there is little impact from the proposed building as evidenced in this report. We are seeking Planning and Council's support.

We are requesting a relaxation of the following Restrictive Covenant requirement:

1. Reduce the 15 m setback outlined in Schedule C (Figure 1) to 7.6 m as per the RT6 zoning bylaw.

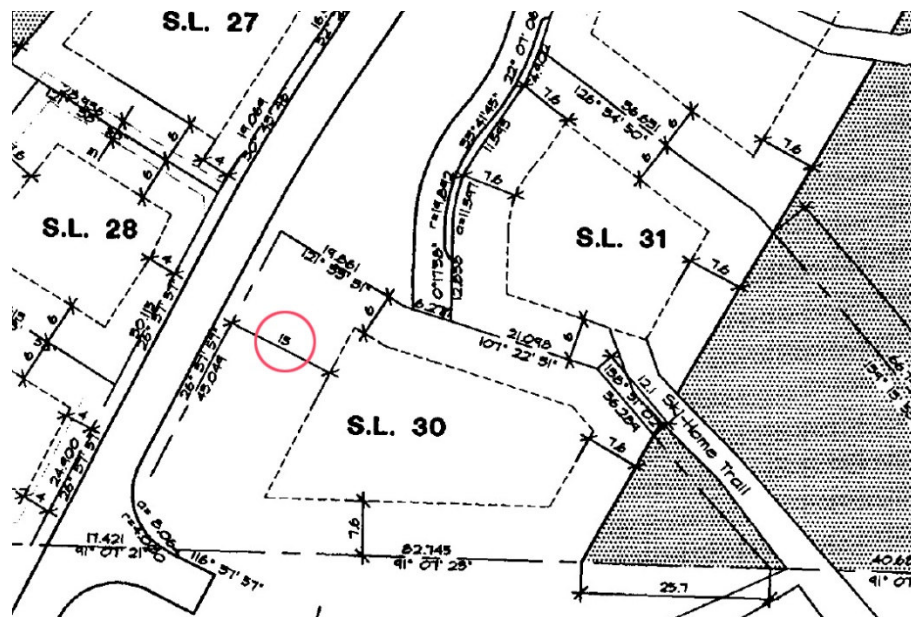


Figure 1. Schedule C of Restrictive Covenant BJ342508

## 1 Background Information

The client and the previously contracted architecture firm, Openspace, received a Development Variance Permit DVP01000 in 2008 for the same reduced front yard setback, but with a different design (See Appendices B and C). The previous team did not commence construction before the permit expired and did not modify the covenant despite RMOW Planning support. Figure 2 shows the requested setback relaxations, an outline of the 2008 proposal by Openspace, and the 2025 proposal by Burgers Architecture.

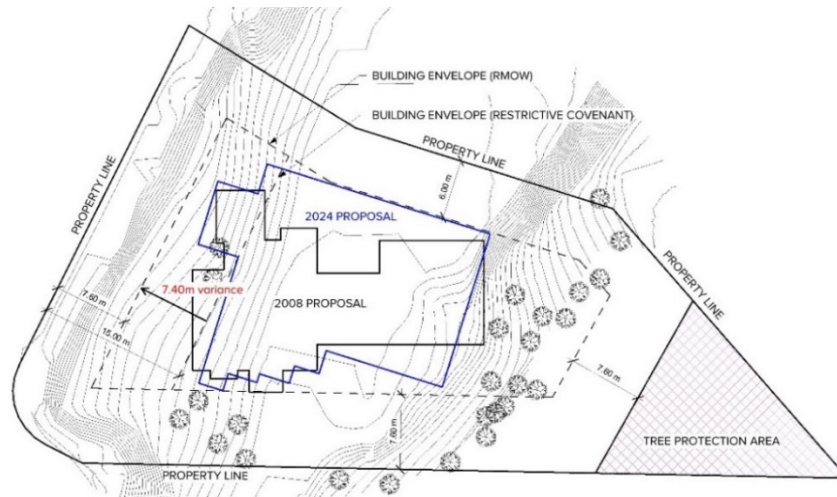


Figure 2. Building outline comparison of the 2008 and 2025 proposals

## 2 Evaluation Criteria

The proposed house location and request for relaxation from the Restrictive Covenant meets the following evaluation criteria:

1. *Works with the topography on a site, reducing the need for major site preparation or earthwork*
2. *Maintains or enhances desirable site features, such as natural vegetation, trees and rock outcrops*

The following sections refer to these two points and address the potential negative aspects, such as the visual impact of the proposed house.

### 2.1 Site

The architecture of this home began with an exploration of its site. The property is situated high on the hillside, facing west, and is a very steep wooded lot. Vehicle access is off a semi-private driveway to the north, with a ski-in trail to the south. With a steep cliff to the west and a steep cliff to the east, the house is sited on a narrow, flat portion of land that only accounts for 25% of the buildable area (based on the RT6 setbacks) and only 10% of the entire site area (See Figures 3, 4 & 5).

It is a challenging lot, calling for an innovative and appropriate design that seeks to reduce extensive site preparation. To move the house further east would require significant blasting/excavation of the hill. To move the house further west would result in more stepped retaining walls that would exceed the exposed height bylaw requirements and the maximum grade change in the Restrictive Covenant.

The neighbouring lot to the north serves as a private driveway for 3837 Sunridge Drive and is unaffected by our proposed location. The proposed house is situated well

above its west neighbours (approximately 50' from the road to the main floor), thus having minimal impact. Services are not impacted by the proposed location.

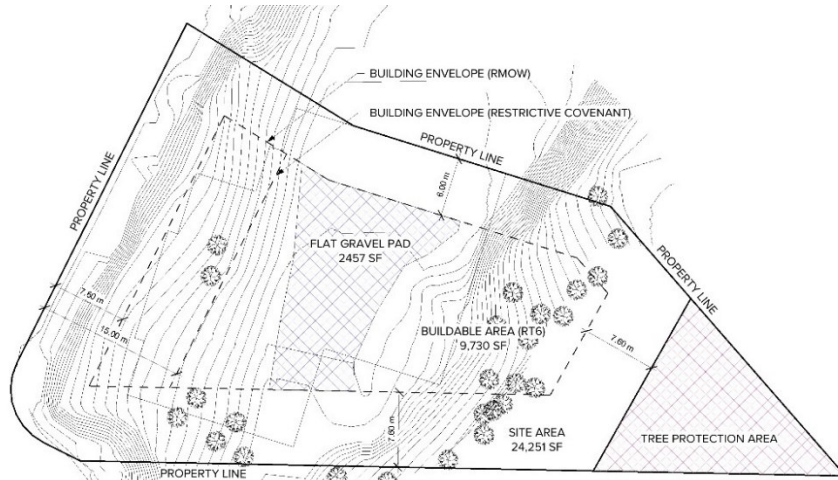


Figure 3. Flat gravel pad vs. buildable area



Figure 4. View south from driveway



Figure 5. View north

## **2.2 Configuration of the plans**

The main floor is accessible directly from the driveway to the north, with a 3-car garage and main floor living amenities (kitchen, dining, lounge, living and mud room). This floor is level with the entry, allowing for easy and unfettered access particularly in snowy conditions. A patio facing west provides much needed covered outdoor area. Moving upstairs, there are 5 children's bedrooms (the owner has a large family) and a primary suite. The upper floor lays crosswise to the main floor, providing a dramatically cantilevered primary bedroom.

The basement contains utility spaces, access to a covered outdoor pool, two guest suites, a home theatre and a sports court.

Floor plans, elevations and sections can be found in Appendix E: Architectural Drawings (2025).

The gross floor area for the upper two floors is 464 m<sup>2</sup> and conforms to Schedule A of the Restrictive Covenant. It should be noted that the RMOW RT6 zoning bylaw allows for a gross floor area of the home to be 35% of the site area, which is 789 m<sup>2</sup>. We are not requesting a variance to the floor area restrictions of the Restrictive Covenant.

## **2.3 Massing, setbacks and roofline**

Given the high snow loads in Whistler, and the need to keep entries and outdoor areas clear of snow, the roof was designed at a minimum 3:12 pitch to shed snow towards the south, away from the garage and front entry. The dramatic roofline and singular slope are in keeping with the sheer scale and massing of the site - tall trees, steep cliffs and sharp angles define both nature and the architectural expression.

The home currently conforms with the RMOW RT6 zoning bylaws for building setbacks. However, the home does not comply with the 15 m front yard setback as outlined on Schedule C of the Restrictive Covenant. We would like to request a relaxation of that setback to the RMOW RT6 zoning requirement of a 7.6 m front yard setback. Please note that only 64.45 m<sup>2</sup> (14% of the floor area) of the proposed house extends beyond the 15 m covenant setback.

The roof height, retaining walls and site coverage conform to the zoning bylaws. On April 9, 2024, Burgers Architecture performed a visual analysis of the approximate peak of the roof using a boom lift. At no point would the proposed building be visible from Highway 99.

## **2.4 Materials**

The lower floors, chimney and entry are clad in locally sourced basalt, with the upper floors clad in dark standing seam metal both on the north-facing vertical walls and sloped roof. Soffits and protected walls are finished in clear tongue and groove cedar siding, oriented vertically and stained to resemble sun-bleached wood. Materials have been selected to conform to the requirements of the wildfire protection zone.

### 3 Summary

There are many challenges associated with this site, including a tree protection zone from which the rear yard setback is measured and steep slopes on either side of the flattened lot that dictate where one could feasibly build. Essentially, the house is situated between a rock and a steep place. As our request is to be held to the RT6 zoning bylaw rather than the Restrictive Covenant, we believe that the requested variance is reasonable, maintains the intent of the regulation, and has minimal impact on neighbours and the streetscape.

The following documents are attached to this letter:

- Appendix A: Restrictive Covenant BJ342508 (1995)
- Appendix B: Development Variance Permit No. DVP01000 (2008)
- Appendix C: Development Variance Permit Drawings (2008)
- Appendix D: Site Survey with Tree Inventory (2023)
- Appendix E: Architectural Drawings (2025)
- Appendix G: Arborist Report (2024)
- Appendix H: Landscape Design Rationale and Drawings (2024)

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, you may reach us at 604-926-6058 ext 204 (Ryan) or ext 202 (Cedric) or via email at [ryan@burgersarchitecture.com](mailto:ryan@burgersarchitecture.com) or [cedric@burgersarchitecture.com](mailto:cedric@burgersarchitecture.com).

Best,



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