

7. Resolution of the detailed items specified in Appendix E;
8. Submission of a final set of Development Permit drawings that incorporate any revisions that result from addressing the conditions specified in this recommendation for Development Permit issuance; and further

That Council authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute the required documents in conjunction with this development permit.

REFERENCES

Owner:	Whistler 2020 Development Corporation
Location:	1340/1360 Mount Fee Road
Legal Description:	BLOCK A DISTRICT LOT 8073 GROUP 1 NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT, EXCEPT: PLAN EPP277
Current Zoning:	UR1 (Urban Reserve 1)
Appendices:	“A” – Project Description and Design Rationale – Applicant Submittals “B” – Site Context/Architectural/ Landscape/ Civil Servicing Plans “C” – OCP Development Permit Guidelines Evaluation “D” – DP Conditions - Detailed Items to Address “E” – Advisory Design Panel Minutes

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents DP1760, a proposed development located at 1340/1360 Mount Fee Road comprised of two 4-storey employee housing apartment buildings with a total of 100 dwelling units and 138 parking spaces, along with the extension of Mount Fee Road, and associated infrastructure, streetscape, trails, public spaces and parking areas. The proposed site, referred to as Parcel A, is a portion of the “Upper Lands” reserved for the planned Phase 2 development of the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood. The proposed use, density and height are all authorized by the existing UR1 zoning for the site.

The proposed development is subject to Council consideration of development permit approval. The subject lands lie within the designed development permit areas specified in the RMOW Official Community Plan, for Multi-family Residential - Form and Character, Protection of Riparian Ecosystems, Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems and Wildfire Protection. The development is subject to the consistency with the applicable guidelines for each of these designations. A small variance is proposed to building setback requirements of the UR1 zone, to achieve building siting objectives.

DISCUSSION

Background

The location of the proposed development is shown on the Site Location and Context (drawing L-0.0) and Existing Site – Aerial Overlay (drawing L-0.1) presented in in Appendix “B”. The development occupies a portion of the lands referred to as the Cheakamus Crossing “Upper Lands”, which represent the Phase 2 development area for the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood. This development is the initial Phase 2 development. The lands were granted to the RMOW under the *Community Land Bank Agreement (October 21, 2005)*, as a lasting legacy of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games for providing needed affordable employee housing. The applicant for the proposed development permit,

the Whistler 2020 Development Corporation, has beneficial interest to the lands to undertake their development for this purpose.

The proposed development site is located at the southeast end of the existing Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood, adjacent to the Cheakamus River and accessed via upper Mount Fee Road. Planning and design for the proposed development has been underway since late 2018. The proposed site was identified as a priority site and catalyst project for the Cheakamus Crossing Phase 2 neighbourhood development, through the Master Planning work that was completed in 2017 and 2018.

Initial site planning, architectural and landscape drawings for the proposed development were submitted at the end of March 2019. At that time the proposal was subject to review relative to the Cheakamus Area Legacy Neighbourhood Design Guidelines, adopted as Council Policy G22, on April 16, 2007. This Council Policy was adopted to guide the design of proposed developments in Cheakamus Crossing, in place of development permit requirements which required an OCP amendment. With the adoption of the municipality’s new OCP, the proposed development became subject to development permit approval, and consistency with the applicable guidelines for Multi-family Residential - Form and Character, Protection of Riparian Ecosystems, Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems and Wildfire Protection.

Through 2019 the project underwent significant design development with reviews conducted by staff, and two reviews of the municipal Advisory Design Panel, on May 22, 2019 and November 20, 2019. Further detailed design, and coordination with the Mount Fee Road Extension, as well as parcelization plans for the Upper Lands, has been completed through the first part of 2020.

The applicant is seeking to initiate construction on the proposed development in October of 2020, subject to development permit and building permit approval.

Description of Proposed Development

A project brief and design rationale prepared by the applicant architect, describing the proposed development and the project, site planning and design objectives, are provided in Appendix “A”. Site context plans, and detailed architectural, landscape and civil servicing drawings are presented in Appendix “B”.

The proposed development is comprised of two four-storey apartment buildings with a total of 100 dwelling units and the Mount Fee Road extension along with the associated infrastructure, roadway and streetscape, trails and public spaces, and hard and soft landscaping. The development lands are located beyond the end of Mount Fee Road extending from the existing Phase 1 neighbourhood area.

The proposed development site has a relative level area adjacent to a new street section extending from Mount Fee Road, while rising in elevation from the north to the south end moving away from the existing developed neighbourhood. The proposed site was cleared and used for temporary use during the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. The terrain of the land across from the new street from the proposed apartment buildings rises sharply from 630 m to 672 m (42 m) through a series of benches to the top of a knoll. This terrain continues to rise even more steeply from 672 metres to approximately 740 metres. Additional Phase 2 development sites have been conceptually delineated on a series of existing benches on this terrain, but are not part of this development permit. On the east side of the proposed apartment buildings is an existing Forest Service road and the Cheakamus River. The development site offers distant views to mountains in three directions with the steeply rising mountainside providing a forested backdrop on the west.

The proposed gross floor area for the two apartment buildings is 8,408 square metres (92,139 square feet). There are 46 units in Building A and 54 units in Building B. Apartments are in 1, 2 and 3-bedroom configurations ranging in size from 49 square metres to 95 square metres. The buildings are located on top of a parkade with 129 parking spaces. The parkade entrance at the north end of Building A is to the

parking located below both Buildings A and B. The parkade entrance at the south end of Building B is to parking only located under Building B.

All units have individual interior storage areas and balconies on upper storeys and patios on ground level. Each building has a garbage and recycling room and secure bicycle storage at the underground parking level. Communal spaces are provided on the upper floor at one end of each building, lobby areas, laundry areas at each level, and landing locations, which provide for social interaction and for small gatherings of neighbours. Each building has an elevator and accessible pathways and accesses. Some further resolution of details is recommended as specified in Appendix “D”. Unit layouts are designed to be able to be easily modified to meet universal design guidelines and specific end-user needs.

The site planning provides for a significant outdoor space between the two buildings, with playground, bench and gazebo amenities.

The Mount Fee Road extension provides access to the proposed development and to potential development sites beyond. This extension has been designed to municipal standards and incorporates a Valley Trail extension, sidewalks and cross walks, two transit bus laybys, a roundabout for vehicle turnaround, and a 19 car surface parking area across from the proposed buildings that has been identified for additional parking for recreational and residential use. The project design also proposes decommissioning of the existing Forest Service road through the development site, maintaining the existing road section from the intersection of Mount Fee Road and Cloudburst Drive to the original bridge over the Cheakamus River for emergency access. Landscape plans for the Mount Fee Road extension are under preparation and are identified as a condition of development permit approval.

The Design Rationale provided in Appendix “A” further describes the selected road alignment to address existing topography and environmental conditions, the siting of the buildings and their scale and massing, the architectural form and character, and materials and colour selections, as well as connections to surrounding open space and trails. Further details on the proposed project design are provided in the evaluation of the proposed development relative to the applicable development permit guidelines, which is presented in Appendix “C”.

Staff have identified a number of detailed items to further address as conditions of development permit approval. These are specified in Appendix “D”.

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 2015

The property is zoned UR1 (Urban Reserve 1) zone. The intent of this zone is to provide an area reserved for multifamily residential development for employee housing and associated uses. The proposed development of this site is consistent with the regulations of the UR1 Zone, except for a proposed variance to the rear building setback of Building A, which is described below.

The minimum parcel area under the UR1 zone is 155,000 square metres (15.5 ha) and the maximum permitted gross floor area is 41,850 square metres. As shown on the architectural drawings, the total gross floor area for the proposed development is 8,408 square metres, representing approximately 20 percent of the total maximum for the Upper Lands which corresponds with the UR1 zone boundaries.

The maximum building height for the zone for apartment buildings is 18.0 metres. The calculated building height for Building A is 11.41 metres and for Building B is 11.71 metres.

The maximum size permitted for an apartment dwelling unit is 175 square metres. The proposed dwelling units range in size from 49.1 square metres for one bedroom units and 94.5 square metres for the three bedroom units.

The specified minimum building setback is 6 metres. To accommodate the proposed building siting, and achieve the design objectives related to building articulation, stepping the buildings, breaking down the massing and linear form, and achieving separation and a well-sized open space between the two buildings, a variance is required for the northwest corner of Building A. The proposed setback is reduced to 2.0 metres, as shown drawing A-1.15.

Under the UR1 zone, the number of required off-street parking spaces is 75 percent of the number of parking spaces that would generally be required under the zoning bylaw for apartment units (for this proposal that is $138 \times .75 = 104$ parking spaces). This parking reduction, which had been applied to both the Cheakamus Crossing and Rainbow neighbourhoods, has not met parking needs and has created issues for these existing developments. Direction was provided to achieve typical standards applicable for similar types of development within the community. The drawings show a total of 138 on-site parking spaces, with 129 underground spaces combined at the P1 level of Building A and the P2 level of building B, and 9 surface parking stalls located at the ends of the two buildings. The proposed parking exceeds the zoning requirement by 34 spaces. In addition, a surface parking area is shown across from the proposed development, off of Mountain Fee Road, with 19 parking spaces identified for trailhead access.

Official Community Plan

The subject lands lie within the designed development permit areas specified in the RMOW OCP for Multi-family Residential - Form and Character, Protection of Riparian Ecosystems, Protection of Sensitive Ecosystems and Wildfire Protection. The development is subject to the consistency with the applicable guidelines for each of these designations. A variance is proposed to the building setback requirements of the UR1 zone, to achieve building siting objectives.

The evaluation of the proposed development relative to the applicable development permit guidelines is presented in Appendix “C”. The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the applicable guidelines as presented.

ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL

This project was reviewed by Whistler’s Advisory Design Panel (ADP) on two occasions, the first on May 22, 2019 and the second on November 2019. The ADP minutes for these two reviews are presented in Appendix “E”.

At the first meeting the project was presented in a workshop format, in which individual Panel members provide comments and there is a more open discussion on design concepts and recommendations. No formal recommendation is made in a workshop format. The summary comments, however, identified support for the size and density of the proposed buildings on the site, given the location and the nature of site separation from the rest of the existing Cheakamus neighbourhood. Comments focused on further breaking down the massing of the buildings, better integration of the development within the surrounding forested landscape, enhancing the sense of place and identity for the building with naturalized landscaping and not a suburban street edge, using building siting to further step the buildings, create space between the buildings, and break their linear form, as well as create better sense of building entry, further develop the design of the public spaces and outdoor areas, consider the addition of 3-bedroom family units to add diversity, and revise the colour scheme, which was considered to be too dark for the site conditions. The Panel also noted that the new street intersection at Mount Fee Road and Cloudburst Drive had not been addressed and asked the applicant to consider addressing this intersection with landscape or architecture as it is the point of entry to the new Phase of the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood.

At the November 20, 2019 meeting of the ADP, the Panel conducted a formal review of the revised plans for the project, which addressed staff’s and Panel’s previous comments. At this meeting the Panel

provided support for the various design considerations including site planning and circulation and the architectural design (massing form and character) and expressed appreciation for the design improvements to the façade articulation, streetscape, communal spaces, breaking down of massing, integration with the forested setting, and extensions of the outdoor areas. At this meeting, the Panel passed the following resolution in support of the project:

That the Advisory Design Panel supports the project as shown and the applicant should work with staff to ensure careful attention to meeting grade on all sides, that the size of social spaces are appropriate and can be programmed in multiple ways, and to consider possibilities in regard to colour and variation between buildings and explore potential for breakdown of colour within buildings.

The applicant has subsequently addressed the Panel’s comments through further detailed design. The applicant response, prepared by the applicant architect is provided in a letter dated August 26, 2020, which is presented in Appendix “A”. Some minor items that require further resolution, including finalizing the building colours, are presented in Appendix “D” – DP Conditions - Detailed Items to Address.

Green Building Policy

The proposed development is being designed to achieve Step 3 of the Energy Step Code. This exceeds both the requirements under the BC Building Code and the anticipated requirements for the municipality’s Green Building Policy, which is currently being updated. Under BC Building Code, the proposed buildings, which are Part 3 – Residential Buildings, are required to meet Step 1. The expected target for the municipality’s requirements under the updated Green Building Policy, is expected to be Step 2. This would be implemented through the Building Bylaw, but is not in force at this time. Achieving Step 3 is typically estimated to achieve a 50 percent reduction in energy consumption beyond the base requirement in the BC Building Code. Achieving Step 3 for the proposed buildings supports the objectives of the municipality’s recent Big Moves Climate Strategy, and the focus area on improving building energy efficiency.

Other Green Building measures that are addressed by the proposed development include optimizing development of an existing disturbed site, connection to the District Energy System, storm-water retention and planting with native vegetation for landscaping, reduced hard surfaces through underground parking, and integration of 10 Electric Vehicle charging stations with parking stalls.

Legal Encumbrances

There are a number of legal notices and charges registered on the title of the lands. Staff review of the documents indicates that the proposed development and use is consistent with covenant requirements for affordable employee housing, and that a Housing Agreement is required to be registered under Section 483 (previously 905) of the *Local Government Act*.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed development is subject to development permit application fees and cost recovery for staff processing and associated direct costs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Consistent with the municipality’s Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw, an information sign describing DP1760 is posted on the site. To date there have been no inquiries or correspondence received for DP1760.

SUMMARY

Development permit DP1760 proposes two new employee housing apartment buildings with a total of 100 dwelling units, and an extension of Mount Fee Road, along with associated infrastructure, streetscape, trail and public spaces. The application has been evaluated relative to applicable development permit requirements and zoning, and staff recommends that Council approve the required development permit including the small variance to building setback requirements, subject to the conditions identified in the staff recommendation and resolution of the detailed items outlined in Appendix “D”.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Kirkegaard
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

for
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INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER OF RESORT EXPERIENCE