



71  
RUSSELL  
AVENUE

Ottawa  
September 14,  
2018

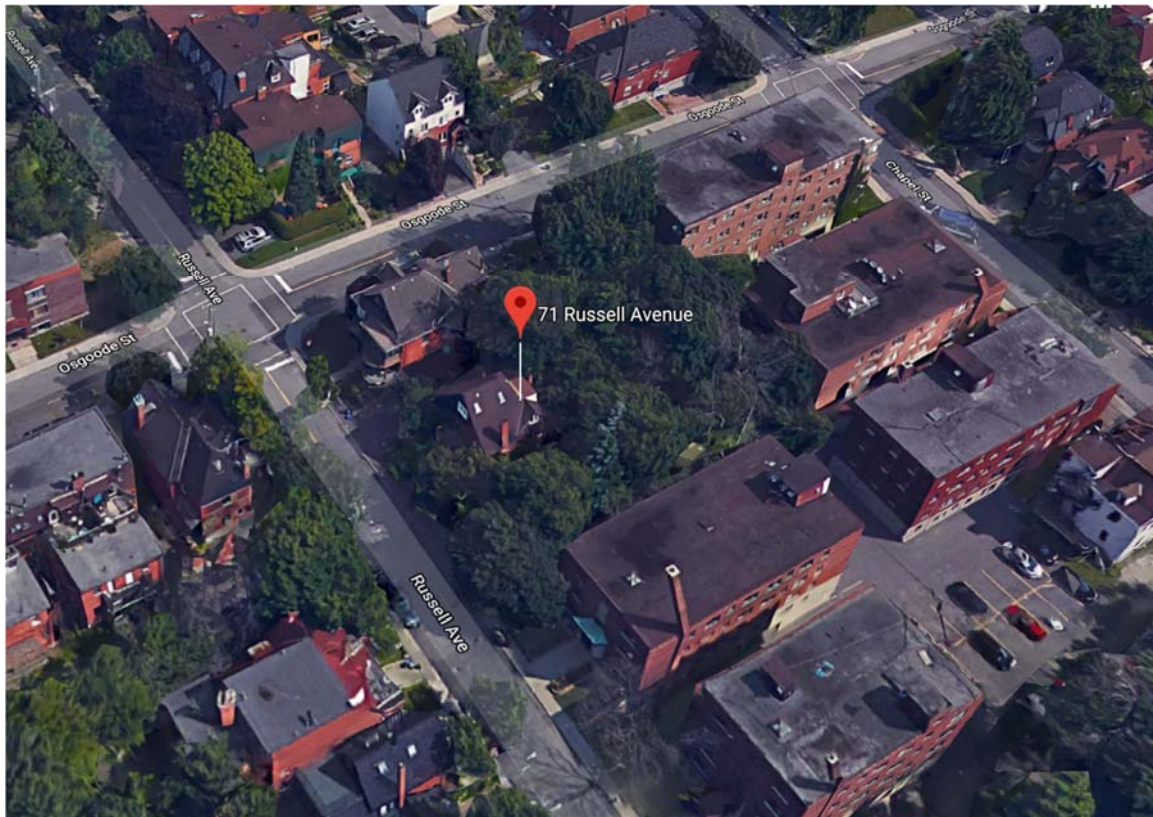
PLANNING RATIONALE  
FOR SITE PLAN CONTROL APPLICATION  
(Design Brief)

## Introduction

The intent of this Planning Rationale and Design Brief is to provide planning justification in support of the site plan control application for the property known municipally as 71 Russell Avenue, and registered as PLAN 58319 LOT 14. This Planning Rationale demonstrates how the proposed development conforms to the policies of both the City of Ottawa Official Plan (OP) and the Sandy Hill Secondary Plan, and complies with requirements of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law 2008-250. The property is 756.4 sq. m, with a frontage of 20.12 m. and a depth of 37.6 m.

This application is to construct a 16 unit residential apartment building at the above address, the existing building on the property will be demolished. The footprint area of the proposed building is 312.8 sq. m. In order to construct this building, an application for Site Plan Control is required but no Minor Variances are required.

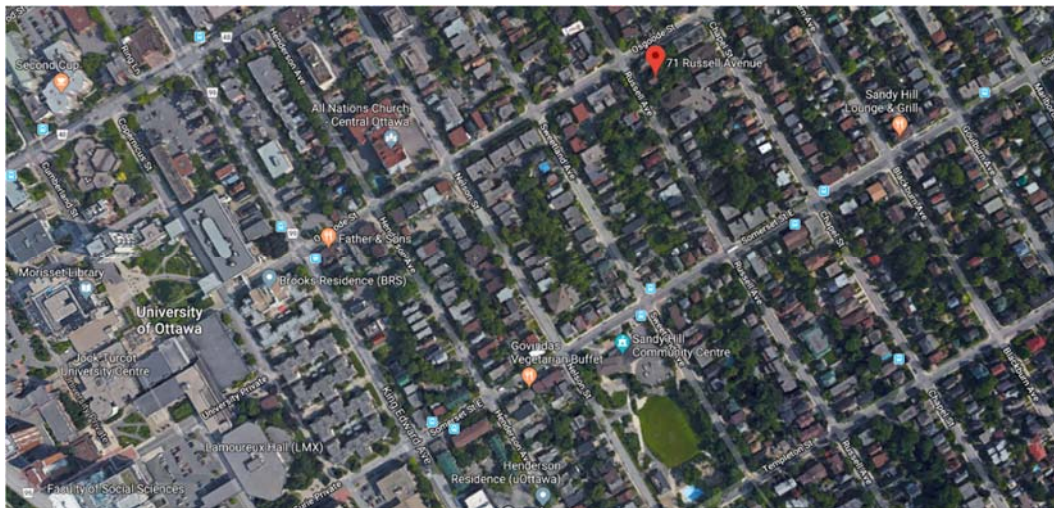
This Planning Rationale provides a description of the existing site conditions and contains a review of the applicable land use planning policies including the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the Official Plan (OP) policies, and Zoning By-law provisions. The conclusions indicate that the proposed use is appropriate given the site context and relevant policy framework; as well, it complies with all the zoning By-law requirements.



71 Russell Avenue







Context - urban amenities, recreational facilities and University of Ottawa.

The property is conveniently located 5 blocks from Strathcona Park and the Rideau River, one block from Somerset St. E., 6 blocks from the Rideau Center, 4 blocks from Ottawa University and approximately one kilometer from the Queensway and the Rideau Canal. It is just over 600 m from the Ottawa University Transit Station. It is one block from both east-west and north-south routes on the existing cycling network. The Sandy Hill Park and Community Center are two blocks away. All amenities are in a walkable distance from the property including a Transit Station and a bus stop Route 16.

The immediate neighbourhood is all zoned R4S. The property is located outside of a Heritage Area.



Map showing heritage overlay & 800 m radius from the Queensway.

#### Location on Russell Avenue

Sandy Hill slopes dramatically from Osgoode to Somerset (approx. 6 m drop). 71 Russell is located almost at the top of this hill. The property also significantly slopes down towards the east, towards Chapel Street at the back. The 2 adjacent properties to the south have 3 storey & 4 storey apartment buildings on them, dealing with similar conditions, in both cases the buildings act as the retaining walls, completed with a fence and retaining wall at the front.





71 Russell Avenue



Neighbouring building to the south – 81 & 91 Russell Avenue



Neighbouring building to the north  
69 Russell Avenue



80 Russell Avenue across the street





70 Russell Avenue

The existing trees on private properties (to the north and south) require pruning within the parcel of #71. Commitments to protect these trees will be made during construction, assuming that the adjacent landowners prefer to keep them.



Existing rear yard showing the existing retaining walls and challenging terrain.





Existing retaining wall, rear yard and unkempt trees.



Shared driveway between 350 & 360 Chapel Street



Existing view looking towards rear yard at 71 Russell Avenue

It is appropriate to redesign the grade at the front of the property in order to make it more appealing for pedestrians as well as to enhance the overall look of Russell Avenue. The steep topography of the site (rear yard) creates an opportunity to plant trees yet still permits sunlight and views. The landscape concept is to reinstate a native ‘urban forest’ with a small outdoor amenity space adjacent the building and to maintain any valuable trees. This urban forest also creates a barrier to the asphalt parking of the neighbours at the back.

## **The Proposal**

The property at 71 Russell Avenue is currently occupied by a 2.5 storey derelict dwelling. All buildings and structures will be removed.

The building has not been extensively renovated since late 30’s, except some interior renovations after a fire in 2010. There are number of existing wood retaining walls behind the existing building, separating the front part of the property facing Russell Avenue from the rear yard, which significantly drops down. There is an awkward connection between the front and rear part of the property and the back yard is not easily accessible by the tenants, since the difference in grade elevations is, at some parts, close to 4 meters.

The proposal complements the objective of the neighbourhood of Sandy Hill by providing a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units to appeal to a range of demographic profiles, and promoting an urban lifestyle. Adding density in this location makes efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities. The proposed development minimizes dependency on vehicles (2 parking spaces will be provided) and promotes public transit and cycling as alternative transportation modes to automobiles.

The front entrance is fully accessible to tenants in wheelchairs, as required by the Ontario Building Code. There is a ramp from the proposed driveway sloping up to the main entrance door, in fact the entire ground floor is handicap accessible. There is a proposed walkway at the north-west corner of the property accessing a set of stairs leading to the rear yard. The walkway also provides access to bicycle racks at the north side yard. A generous number of bicycle parking spaces is also provided inside of the building, in the basement. There is a garbage room located in the sub-basement. Proposed seat walls (concrete) are integrated with the retaining wall and concrete urban stairs leading from Russell Avenue to promote ‘eyes on the street’, to create a welcoming/practical entry for tenants and to accommodate the cross-slope of site and sidewalk, together with urban oriented front yard landscaping.





### Proposed landscaping of the front yard.

The proposal is in keeping with the low-profile residential built form along Russell Avenue and the immediate neighbours, which consist of two to four-storey dwellings and multi-unit buildings. These buildings are characterized by a mix of flat and sloped roof designs and a common brick cladding. Horizontal siding has also been traditionally used. To reflect the style of the built form along the street, the proposed building will have 4 storey, brick and masonry components at the front and side facades completed with non-combustible cladding which is of an unobtrusive appearance and a darker colour.



Proposed rendering

The site has been designed such that there will be a strong emphasis on landscaping, pedestrian movement, and minimal focus on vehicular access. The proposed building will have large windows in living areas to interact with the street as well as to provide the south-east units with the exceptional southern view over Sandy Hill. And the generous window openings facing the rear yard connect apartments with the landscaped amenity area in the back yard. The dramatic slope together with large retaining walls create a natural barrier between the front and rear portion of the lot. There is a covered entrance for the convenience of the residents accessible straight from the sidewalk on Russell.

## **Policy Justification**

The Provincial Policy Statement promotes intensification and redevelopment where it can be accommodated by existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities. The project is designed to work with its existing context, to fit with the surroundings and support the overall goals of the Official Plan and Sandy Hill Secondary Plan.

The subject property is zoned R4S[480] (Residential Fourth Density Zone, Subzone S, Exception 480) in the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law and is within the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay. The purpose of the R4 zone is to allow a wide mix of residential building forms ranging from detached to low rise apartment dwellings, in no case more than four storeys, and to regulate development in a manner that is compatible with existing land use patterns so that the mixed building form, residential character of a neighbourhood is maintained or enhanced. The proposed development complies with all provisions of the Zoning By-law.

## **Conclusion**

We believe that the proposed design is compatible to the scale and use of this neighbourhood and complements the surrounding residential buildings. The proposed development represents an opportunity for intensification within this central neighbourhood in a manner which is consistent with the existing scale of development in the area. The proposed development is in keeping with the design guidelines as it enhances the streetscape, respects the character of the existing built form, and provides a strong emphasis on pedestrian access and orientation to the street. The Owners met with a Zoning Development Officer, to verify the minimal required setbacks from the property lines and the amenity space regulations. We also met with the Planner, Steve Gauthier. A pre-consultation meeting was held with the City of Ottawa Planning Services on February 20, 2018, and follow-up comments and the study and plan submission list were provided on March 23, 2018. The feedback provided following the meeting included comments related to urban design considerations. The proposed development has been revised since the time of the pre-consultation meeting and has regard to the design comments provided. We met with the Ward Councillor, Mathieu Fleury on September 10, 2018 to discuss this project and to get his advice.



As per the study and plan identification list and subsequent correspondence, please find the following enclosed:

- Site Plan Control Application Form;
- Survey Plan, Farley, Smith & Denis Surveyors Ltd., dated January 19, 2018;
- Site Plan, Susan D. Smith Architect
- Elevation Drawings, Susan D. Smith Architect
- General Plan of Services, McIntosh Perry
- Grading and Erosion & Sediment Control Plan, McIntosh Perry
- Landscape Plan, WSP
- Development Servicing Study & Stormwater Management Report, McIntosh Perry
- Geotechnical Investigation, WSP
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, WSP
- CD containing PDF copies of all submission material listed above (one disc).

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