



Planning Rationale in Support of Application for Minor Variance and Site Plan Control

**5506 Manotick Main Street
City of Ottawa**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Holzman Consultants Inc. has been retained to prepare a planning rationale in support of applications for Site Plan Control (SPC) and Minor Variances (MV) at 5506 Manotick Main Street (the “Subject Property”), in the City of Ottawa. The purpose of these applications is to facilitate the client’s proposal to demolish the existing building, and to rebuild a four-unit commercial restaurant/retail/office building on the site. The minor variances required are both minor and desirable in nature, while also conforming to the general intent of the Zoning By-law and the Official Plan. The plans and reports also address the relevant land use planning issues related to the application for Site Plan Control.

1.1 Background

The Subject Property is a rectangular-shaped lot with 30.48m of frontage on the west side of Manotick Main Street, between Maple and Highcroft in Ward 21 (Rideau-Goulbourn), with a site area of 1334.1sqm. Refer to **Exhibit A**. A pre-consultation meeting was also held on October 21, 2019 to discuss submission requirements for the SPC Application. The application was discussed with the local community association on June 24, 2020, while also going to the UDRP for a Formal Review on July 3, 2020. Moving forward, there will be additional opportunities for public comment and stakeholder consultation, including the Committee of Adjustment hearing, and we look forward to additional feedback at these times.

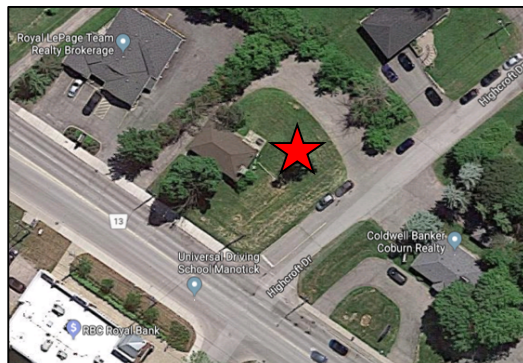


Exhibit A: Google Maps view photo of the Subject Property.

The adjacent land uses are described as follows:

- **East:** A commercial plaza is located to the east.
- **North:** A real estate office is located to the north.
- **West:** Residential single-detached dwellings are located to the west.
- **South:** A real estate office is located to the south.

1.2 Description of Proposed Redevelopment

The applicant’s plan is to demolish the existing structure (with appropriate permit) to develop a four-unit commercial restaurant/retail/office building with access via Highcroft Drive. In order for this proposed redevelopment to proceed, it requires applications for both Site Plan Control and Minor Variances.

The proposed building and main pedestrian entrances are along the Manotick Main Street lot line, which adds to the visually continuous streetscape, and from the rear which is conveniently located near the on-site parking lot. The building is located along the front lot line and will have a total of 494sqm of gross

floor area on two floors with the proposed deli (107sqm of leasable floor area), retail store (53sqm of leasable floor area), and two office units (89sqm and 72sqm of leasable floor area, respectively). An outdoor patio space is also proposed for the deli on the corner of Manotick Main and Highcroft which will add to the lively frontage and support pedestrian activity. Appropriate massing, architectural elements and landscaping have been used to create visual interest for this key location/gateway on a corner lot. More specifically, this will include maintenance of existing greenery along rear and interior side lot lines and new trees along the exterior side lot line and front boulevard. A surface parking lot containing a total of 19 spaces is provided to the rear of the building with a single two-way private approach from Highcroft at the west (rear) end of the Subject Property. An outdoor refuse area is also in the parking lot, located so as to minimize impacts, with screening around this area.

The first set of comments have been issued by the City, and reviewed by the proponent, and the application for minor variance has recently been submitted to the City's Committee of Adjustment and will run parallel with the finalization of the Site Plan Control application process. Refer to **Exhibits B, C, and D** for the preliminary design plans.

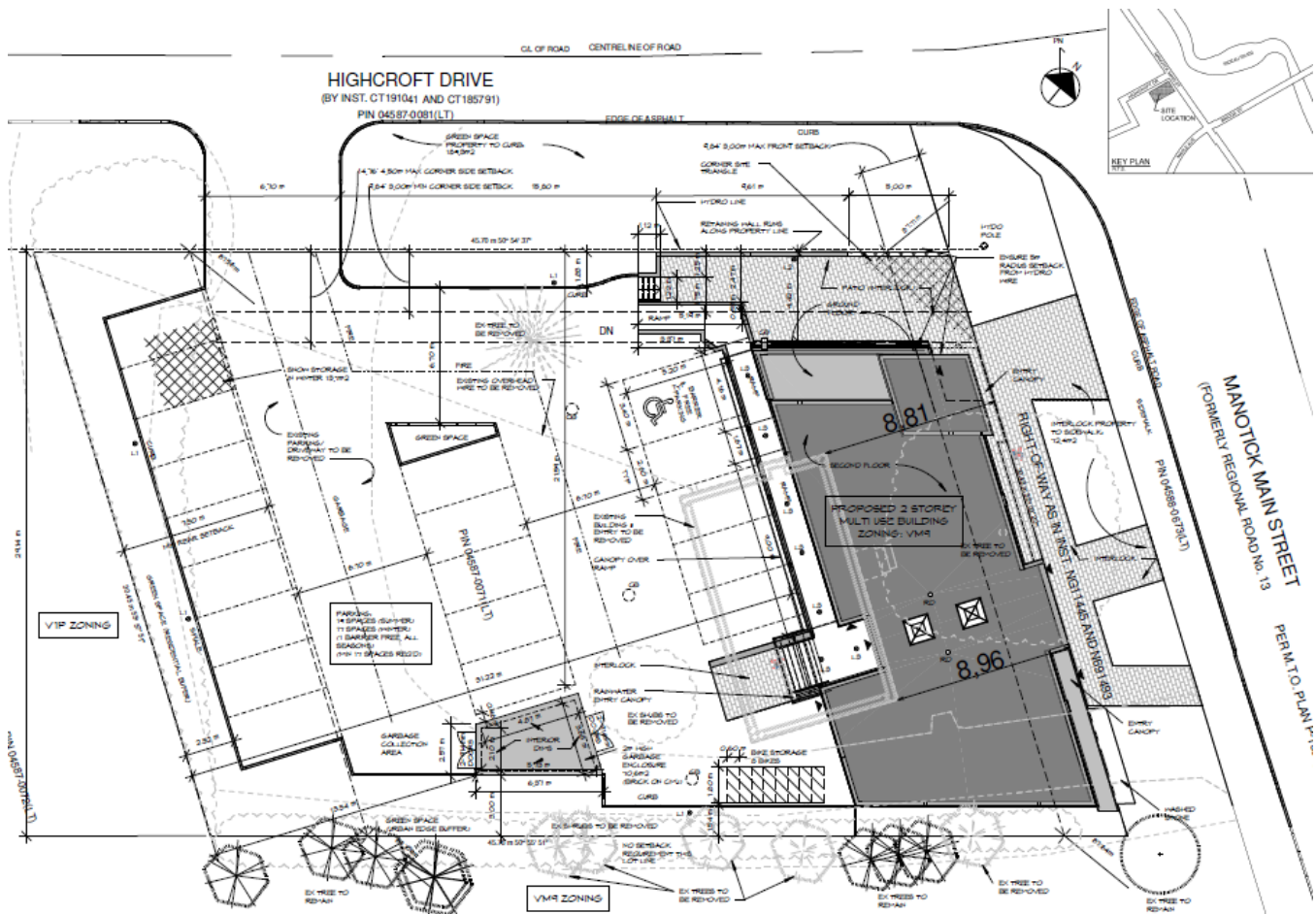


Exhibit B: Site Plan



East Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation



North Elevation

Exhibit C: Building Elevations

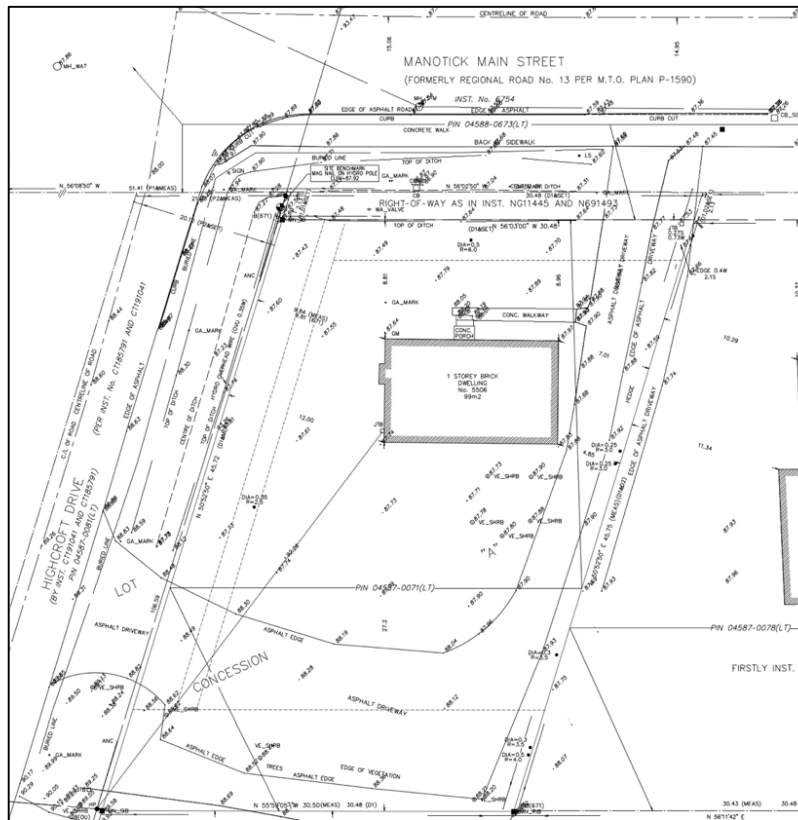


Exhibit D: Cropped topographic survey.

2.0 Minor Variances

2.1 Minor Variances Summary

The Subject Property is zoned VM9, and compliance with the performance provisions is outlined in **Table 1**. Two minor variances are required for the proposed redevelopment to proceed, which are as follows:

Section 229 – Village Mixed-Use Zone – Minimum Lot Area

Required: 1350sqm

Proposed: 1334.1sqm

The existing lot area is 1334.1sqm, while the minimum required lot area is 1350sqm per the Zoning By-law.

Section 110.1 – Landscaping Provisions for Parking Lots – Minimum Landscaping Buffer

Required: 3m landscaping buffer abutting a street

Proposed: 1.83m

The proposed landscaping buffer abutting a street is 1.83m, while the minimum required landscaping buffer abutting a street is 3m per the Zoning By-law.

Table 1: Performance Provisions and Compliance

Provision	Required	Proposed	Compliance
Min. Lot Area	1,350sqm	1334.1sqm	No
Min. Lot Width	20m	30.48m	Yes
Max. Front Yard Setback	3m	0m	Yes
Corner Side Yard Setbacks	Min. 3m; Max 4.5m	4.42m	Yes
Min. Interior Side Yard Setback	No minimum	1.39m	Yes
Min. Rear Yard Setback	7.5 m	8.97m	Yes
Building Height	Min. 6.7m; Max. 11m	8.24m	Yes
Min. Vehicle Spaces	16	17	Yes
Min. Bicycle Spaces	2	2	Yes
Min. Landscaped Area	15% of parking lot area; 3m buffer abutting street; and, 1.5m buffer not abutting street	21.8%; 1.83m; 1.54m	Yes; No; Yes
Min. Refuse Collection Setbacks	9m from lot lines abutting street; 3m from any other lot line; and, Screened with 2m high opaque fence	23.41m; 3m; 2m	Yes; Yes; Yes
Permitted Projections into Required Yards (Landing/Steps/Ramps)	Wheelchair ramps: No limit; Other features at or below the first floor level in the front or corner side yard: No closer than 0.6m to a lot line	Wheelchair ramps: No limit; Other features at or below the first floor level in the front or corner side yard: No closer than 0.6m to a lot line	Yes

Section 45(1) of the *Planning Act* requires the examination of four tests to determine if each variance is warranted. A central theme in the four tests is whether the proposal is *compatible* with the surrounding area. Being “compatible with” is not the same as being “the same as”. Rather, being “compatible with” means being capable of coexisting in harmony in the same area. The policy review below addresses both the tests under the Planning Act AND the appropriateness of the site plan control application in light of the planning documents.

2.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan (the OP)

The Subject Property is designated Village in the Official Plan (OP). Consistent with the PPS, most of the rural growth should be located within the villages scattered around the City of Ottawa, predominantly in the three serviced villages, including Manotick. The Village designation is designed to permit, “...a variety of land uses to provide for the daily needs of the rural community and to ensure that they remain distinctly rural in character and scale”. In particular, the Subject Property’s location makes it subject to the policies of the Manotick Secondary Plan. Per the Plan, this property is designated Village Core and Main Street. Therefore, it is considered to be within a Design Priority Area and is subject to review by the City’s Urban Design Review Panel. Therefore, in evaluating whether the requested variances meet the intent and purpose of the Official Plan, the test is whether the proposed land uses provide for daily needs in the rural community and in its appropriate scale for the main street. In terms of the site plan control application, the OP supports the development of the Subject Property as proposed.

With respect to the variance for lot area, this proposal is consistent with the intent and purpose of the policy as this variance is for a pre-existing lot; furthermore, with respect to the variance for the parking lot landscaping buffer, this proposal requires the variances to make best use of the pre-existing undersized lot. Together, these variances will permit the redevelopment with retail, restaurant and office uses to meet local needs per the Official Plan. The proposed scale of the redevelopment is also consistent with the community and the proposed height fits within the zoning requirements for the main street. As such, the requested variances conform to the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

2.3 City of Ottawa Zoning By-law (the Zoning By-law)

The Subject Property is zoned VM9 – Village Mixed-Use Subzone 9. Refer to **Exhibit E**. The stated purpose of the VM zone is to “...permit a wide variety of commercial, leisure, institutional and residential uses in areas designated as Village in the Official Plan...” and “...recognize the function of Business Improvement Areas as primary business or shopping areas...”. Therefore, in evaluating whether the requested variances meet the intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law, the test is whether the redevelopment permits business, shopping, and other commercial land uses. From a site plan control perspective, the use is permitted and all but 2 performance standards are being respected, one of which is based on a very slight shortfall in the existing lot size provision.

This proposal is consistent with the intent and purpose of the zoning, as office, restaurant, retail store, and retail food store are permitted uses in the zone. Furthermore, the proposed redevelopment meets all of the zoning performances standards except those variances requested due to the pre-existing undersized lot. With respect to the variances for lot area and parking lot landscaping buffer, the redevelopment is compatible with the existing land use patterns. Together, these variances will permit the redevelopment with business, shopping, and other commercial land uses per the purpose of the Zoning By-law. As such, the proposed variances facilitate a redevelopment that would conform to the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.



Exhibit E: GeoOttawa map identifying zoning for the Subject Property (red star) as VM9.

2.4 Desirable

Evaluating the desirability of a proposal can be a subjective exercise in balancing the interests of the proponent and the community; however, looking to the Provincial Policy Statement and OP for guidance, most of the rural growth should be located within the villages scattered around the City of Ottawa, predominantly in the three serviced villages, including Manotick.

As such, the variances will facilitate the redevelopment of the Subject Property with a four-unit commercial restaurant/retail/office building of considerable architectural quality and merit in the rural village on an underutilized parcel of land in a desirable location. The UDRP noted that this is a gateway location as it frames the entrance with the existing bank building across the street.

With respect to the variances for lot area and parking lot landscaping buffer, the pre-existing undersized lot should not pose an undue hardship towards achieving the goals of targeted rural growth and provision of uses to meet daily needs. Furthermore, the variance for the parking lot landscaping buffer allow for the full provision of the required vehicular parking spaces per the Zoning By-law, which is understandably more important in the rural village community where public transportation options are limited and on-street parking on a residential road should be avoided wherever possible. This thoughtful decision is positive for residents and patrons, while still providing the required percentage of landscaping per the Zoning By-law.

Additionally, per the Private Approach By-law, only one two way private approach is permitted for a commercial property with 20 to 34 metres of frontage; however, for a corner lot, this may apply to each frontage. That said, it is more desirable to limit private approaches, as has been done in the proposed redevelopment for the Subject Property. Furthermore, the Subject Property is also on a village arterial means the private approach is to be 18m from the nearest intersecting street line and 15m from the next closest private approach. As such, the single proposed two-way private approach for the Subject Property is located on the street carrying the lesser volume of traffic.

Looking to the Design Guidelines for Rural Villages, the proposed redevelopment is also desirable as it fulfills the following objectives and guidelines:

- *“To promote development that strengthens Village cores as the focus of where people live, work, play and gather.”*
- *“Concentrate a mix of uses – commercial, residential, recreational and institutional – within the village core. Locating uses within walking distance of each other strengthens community interaction and viability.”*
- *“Provide direct pedestrian connections between adjacent uses within villages to ensure safe and convenient pedestrian movement.”*
- *“Ensure prominent buildings, open spaces, public art and/or other attractive features are developed at highly visible locations. Highly visible locations are corner sites, sites that terminate roadways and sites that frame community gathering places. Height, massing, architectural elements and landscaping should be used to create visual interest.”*
- *“Orient buildings to frame the street. Primary façades should parallel the street and entries should be clearly visible and connect to the public sidewalk.”*
- *“Unless the village core is historically characterized by a wide variety of setbacks, align new building facades to create a visually continuous streetscape.”*
- *“Develop lively frontages along mainstreets to support pedestrian activity. Lively, active frontages may be characterised by a human-scale, reduced building setbacks, visible entries, wide*

sidewalks, highly transparent facades, patios and varied decorative paving. Clearance requirements for at-grade and overhead utility distribution equipment shall be respected."

Therefore, the variances requested are desirable for the appropriate redevelopment of the lands in question, especially given the pre-existing undersized lot, the private approach by-law, and the associated design guidelines.

In terms of the site plan control application, the use of an underutilized parcel of land located in a key area of the Village of Manotick is an important feature and an opportunity for a gateway building, as suggested by the Urban Design Review Panel. This would support the existing RBC building directly across Manotick Main Street.

2.5 Minor in Nature

The OMB has also consistently ruled that "minor" is not a mathematically test but an impact test and, as such, it is our opinion that in evaluating whether a variance is minor in nature, its impacts must be examined.

With respect to the variances for lot area and parking lot landscaping buffer, the pre-existing undersized lot should not pose an undue hardship towards achieving the goals of targeted rural growth and provision of uses to meet daily needs as the impact of the variances is minimal. Furthermore, as a corner lot, the Subject Property is fortunate to be located next to a public right-of-way which minimizes the perceived impact of the reduced landscape buffer. As will be required for all surrounding soft and hard landscaping in the public right-of-way, there will be an encroachment agreement to ensure proper maintenance of said areas. Additionally, despite the undersized lot, all front, rear and side yard setbacks are respected in this redevelopment, indicating a minor impact due to the undersized lot. As such, in our opinion, the application for variance is minor in nature, with minimal impacts for the Subject Property and surrounding community.

3.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is our professional planning opinion that all four tests are met with the application for minor variance for the four-unit commercial restaurant/retail/office building. Furthermore, we take the opinion that the proposed redevelopment, and the associated applications for Site Plan Control and Minor Variances, represents good and defensible land use planning.

We trust that you will process these applications expeditiously but, if you have any questions or require clarification on any matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bill Holzman

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