



N45 ARCHITECTURE INC.

Holland Cross Design Brief

Site Context/Mixed Use Centre

Holland Cross, 1560 Scott St. is an existing commercial complex that consists of two 7 storey, 100,000 sf office towers sitting on a single storey ground floor/podium of approximately 90,000 sf. Defined as a Mixed-Use Centre, it is a mixture of retail, food service and professional office space. In addition, there are two levels of underground parking which can accommodate approximately 784 vehicles. At the time of development in 1987/8, the project was designed for a future third office tower in the Southeast corner. In the original development the town houses to the south were part of the project, but these have subsequently been severed off.

The site is bound by Holland Ave to the West, Scott Street to the north and Hamilton Ave North/Bullman St. to the East. To the south is the townhouse development.

In lieu of the third office tower, our client is proposing the addition of a 29 storey mixed use tower which is significant in that it adds 337 rental units on a site that is in close proximity to the Tunney's Pasture LRT stop. It will also be supportive of the retail component and contribute to the vitality of the neighbouring Westboro Farmers' Market and the Holland – Parkdale Node.

Existing Streetscape and Urban Edge

As described above, the site's location is situated in a corner facing a residential neighbourhood and currently presents a building face that is unfriendly and not particularly welcoming. This edge of the site is the rear façade of the retail, the complex's shipping and receiving and under separate ownership than the Beer Store with its associated receiving and surface parking. There is a legal joint use agreement between LaSalle Investments and the Beer Store for the use and access through our client's property.

Further to the North East and running through from Scott to Bullman is a vacant industrial building currently used as paid public parking and a few small residences slated to be replaced with a large-scale residential development. The east side of Hamilton and the north edge of Bullman has several low scale apartment buildings.

We recognize that this project is an opportunity to improve the quality of the public realm along Hamilton North and Bullman by enhancing through design and materiality, the street edge and pedestrian experience. It can also, and will add vitality to the mid-block connection starting at Scott, linking through to Hamilton and then across Holland Cross's podium to Holland Ave. With this project, the groundwork is set to improve this inner corner of the neighbourhood. This proposal addresses the weaknesses of the area by focusing on the pedestrian realm facing on podium, Hamilton North/Bullman and the shipping receiving area and endeavors to make a meaningful transition between these nodes.

Design /Streetscapes/Pedestrian Experience

The base of the apartment building at the podium level is 4 ft above grade at Hamilton. To improve the relationship to the street, the East entrance side of the building will be depressed to street level with the transition in elevation occurring within the lobby of the building. This presents a more user-friendly face to the street. On the podium, we have given the base of the residential building a townhouse feeling by articulating the frontage; by creating a two storey residential scale height; and by incorporating brick in the façade reflecting the scale and finishes of the neighbouring residential buildings to the south. The need to further develop this pedestrian/residential experience will be addressed in improving the quality of the environment on the podium and the Hamilton frontage, during the Site Plan Control stage. The design will also rethink and refurbish the landscape treatment of the podium.

Furthermore, we have created a covered walkway along the south side of the podium which is integral to the tower. This provides shelter to the pedestrian from the sun or weather. Behind this brick façade, the inner face of the building is a gently meandering full height curved glass façade which wraps around to the Hamilton Street entrance. This is a feature that we have introduced to create intrigue and to enhance the mid-block connection experience. It is hoped that it will generate interest, and hence entice people onto the podium and into the project, to the retail component, and ultimately lead the public to the Scott/Holland intersection and the LRT station across the street. The design will re-evaluate the Hamilton Street accessibility to the podium [stairs and ramp] with the intent of presenting a more convenient and manageable face to the street.

Above the podium, we have developed a different rhythm in the design of the balconies and windows which is frequently seen recent developments. We have avoided the frequent use of vertical ribbons of curtain wall, cantilevered balconies and have opted for a tighter look of predominately recessed balconies with a combination of horizontal and vertical rectangular fenestration modules. The window pattern is intentionally “punched openings” which is referential to the aesthetic of the two offices and at the same time has a residential quality to them. Other considerations include a balance between indoor and exterior amenity space including the podium level and roof top areas, coupled with an enriched landscape treatment. All with the intent to add life and activity which will be visible from the podium and Hamilton/Bullman pedestrian perspective.

Tower Form/750m²/ Solar Shading/Skyline

In our previous UDRP presentation we demonstrated that the “bar” plan could not be replaced with one- or two-point towers of 750m² footprints and achieve the density required for the development. What we heard from the UDRP was the desire for us to explore other options to mitigate the apparent length of the bar. To respond to this, we have implemented a break in the footprint by pulling the west half of the building forward [southward] and cladding that facade in brick which will be complimentary in colour and texture to the original development. For the eastern half of the building we have opted to use a lighter finished material that will be less obtrusive in appearance and to some degree, sympathetic to the white brick apartment building across the street, at 1 Hamilton. By introducing the break in both footprint and material we create the illusion of two-point towers adjacent to each other and yet complimentary in the

detailing. The eastern “tower” is taller, appearing to be 29 stories high and wraps over the top of the western tower [which appears to be 27 stories high] forming a penthouse like level. The building will be topped off with a mechanical penthouse which have a smaller footprint and contribute interest to the silhouette on the skyline.

The new building, being situated in the Southeast corner of the site, is placed it to the north of the adjacent residential buildings. Referring to the Solar Shading Study, there is minimal effect until late afternoon, (during the Summer Solstice), and at which point the office buildings and the apartment buildings on Holland are also casting long shadows. During Equinox, Sept., (again late afternoon) we see longer shadows cast to the east by all buildings. Generally, it’s northern location and East West orientation has marginalized the effects of shadow on adjacent properties.

Transitioning/ Set back

The narrow end of the project faces Hamilton. Here we further reduced the buildings impact by transitioning the building away from the street at the 5th floor. At this level we have created a terrace which reflects the scale of the 5 storey apartment across the street. This terrace will be part of the building amenity space and will feature landscape elements. From a skyline perspective, as mentioned previously we have stepped the 28th and 29th floors back on both the East and West ends and added landscaped terraces to create enliven the architecture and enhance its slender profile.

No Blank Facades Improved Scenic Area

As mentioned previously, both the east and north sides of the *existing* Holland Cross Complex are bleak with minimal fenestration. The proposed design adds a significant amount of clear glazing to both facades and creates visual connections between the street and the interior at the ground floor and the apartments above. Again, the balconies are recessed, which declutters the façade and gives private and quiet amenity space to each unit.

The difficult north side of the building is vastly improved, by the introduction of windows at the grade level amenity space. Equally important, we have reduced the shipping receiving bays from 4 to 2. The two closest to the new construction have been eliminated and the area screened with a decorative wall/sliding gate combination. With the reduction of the S/R we can add a significant amount of dense landscaping in the paved yard to address the inadequacies of this area and extend the Hamilton landscaped edge into the development. Garbage and tenant moving is handled within the building. The welcome design focus on the shipping/receiving court will augment and be a vast and welcome improvement to the mid-block connection and pedestrian experience.

Scott Street Community Design Plan – Vibrant/Diverse/Attractive / Mixed Use/Open Space

From a community design perspective, the new building contributes to the community in several significant ways. By placing the main building entrance on Hamilton, it presents a welcoming and active address to a 300 plus unit building. It improves the landscaping along Hamilton and extends it into the redesigned shipping/receiving area. It creates a safe and welcoming extension to the mid-block

connection from Scott street over the podium, and then improves the environment with additional soft and hard landscape treatment. Finally, it adds a significant residential environment to the Holland-Parkdale Community.

Sustainable Approach

As part of the projects philosophy, the development will incorporate numerous sustainable initiatives that will result in LEED or Green Globes objectives. These include high performance glazing, punched and reduced windows/fenestration, increased insulation, reduction in extensive curtain wall façade features, heat recovery systems, reduced water consumption, vehicle charging stations, thermally broken balconies, as well as landscape elements to “green” the podium and building terraces

Conclusion

The design has taken into consideration several important considerations. It has endeavored to create a new pedestrian focused realm at street level; worked with and built upon residential context and scale at street level; enhanced and made pedestrian friendlier mid-block connection; created a profile that feels more akin to a point tower aesthetic, avoided ribbons of curtainwall and cantilevered balconies; and hopefully contributes to and improved commercial/retail opportunity to the Holland/Parkdale community.