

June 20, 2024

Mr. Michel Bellemare
Secretary-Treasurer
Committee of Adjustment
101 Centrepointe Drive, Fourth Floor
Ottawa, ON K2G 5K7

**RE: Minor Variance Application
788 March Road**

Committee of Adjustment
Received | Reçu le

2024-06-20

City of Ottawa | Ville d'Ottawa
Comité de dérogation

Dear Mr. Bellemare,

Fotenn Planning + Design ("Fotenn") has been retained by SINA ("the Client") to prepare a Planning Rationale for a Minor Variance application to permit two (2) mid-rise apartment buildings at the municipal address of 788 March Road ("subject site") in the city of Ottawa, Ontario.

The subject site is currently vacant, undeveloped land.

Please find enclosed the following material in support of the application:

- / This cover letter explaining the nature of the application (1 copy);
- / Minor Variance application form (1 copy);
- / Architectural materials prepared by Neuf Architects, dated June 4, 2024, including:
 - Site Plan;
 - Elevations;
- / Confirmation e-mail from City Planning Forestry Staff that a Tree Infill Report is not required;
- / Survey: Topographic Detail of Part of Lot 10 Concession 4 Geographic Township of March City of Ottawa prepared by J.D. Barnes Limited, dated May 18, 2018.

Please contact the undersigned at nahal@fotenn.com or church@fotenn.com with any questions or requests for additional material.

Sincerely,



Tamara Nahal MPI
Planner



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FOTENN

Background and Context

Fotenn Planning + Design (“Fotenn”) has been retained by SINA (“the Client”) to prepare a Planning Rationale for a Minor Variance to permit the development of a six (6) storey mid-rise building at 788 March Road in the Kanta North community of the City of Ottawa.

1.1 Overview of Subject Site

The subject site is located on the east corner of March Road and Klondike Road, shown in Figure 1, below. The irregularly shaped corner lot has a total area of 12,210.01 square metres with frontages of approximately 127 metres along March Road and 83.12 metres along Klondike Road.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the subject site and surrounding area

The subject site is currently vacant, with low shrubs, tree cover, and Shirley’s Brook running along the north and east edge of the site (See Figure 2, below). The subject site features a significant change in grade, sloping down from the lot line along March Road toward Shirley’s Brook. There are a number of utility and traffic poles on March Road in front of the subject site and along Klondike Road.

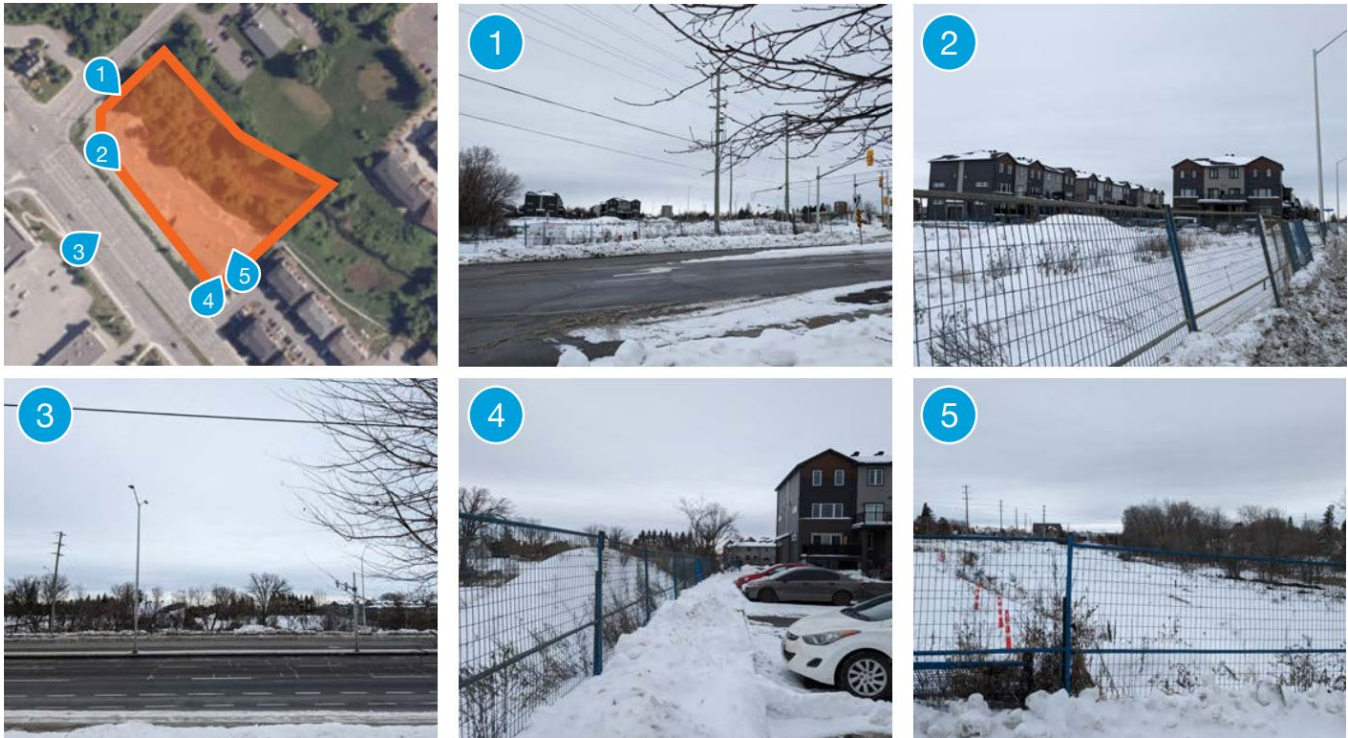


Figure 2: Photographs of the subject site

1.1.1 Surrounding Area

The following provides a brief description of the uses adjacent to the subject site (see Figure 3):

North: To the north of the subject site is Klondike Road. On the other side of which are an individually designated heritage building known as the March House converted to house commercial uses and a retail plaza, both fronting on March Road. Klondike Road leads to a mix of uses including Brookside Baptist Church, South March Public School, a private preschool building, detached dwellings, and a low-rise neighbourhood.

South: To the south of the subject site is March Road, on the other side of which is a predominantly residential neighbourhood known as Morgan's Grant, consisting of low-rise dwelling types ranging from detached dwellings to stacked townhouse dwellings. Low-rise residential developments in the form of an apartment building, townhouses, and stacked townhouses are located along March Road to the southeast of the subject site.

East: Immediately to the east of (and adjacent to) the subject site, across Shirley's Brook, are a mix of uses in low-rise built forms including a place of worship and associated cemetery, a school, and detached and townhouse dwellings. Further east is a predominantly low-rise residential neighbourhood, consisting of dwelling types ranging from detached dwellings to low-rise apartments. Further southeast of the neighbourhood is the Kanata North Business Park.

West: To the west of the subject site is March Road. The intersection of Klondike and March Roads is a signalized full-movement intersection. On the west side of March Road is a retail plaza known as Klondike Crossing. Further west is the Morgan's Grant neighbourhood. It should be noted that further northwest of the subject site is the Kanata North Community Design Plan area, an expansion area planned for development.

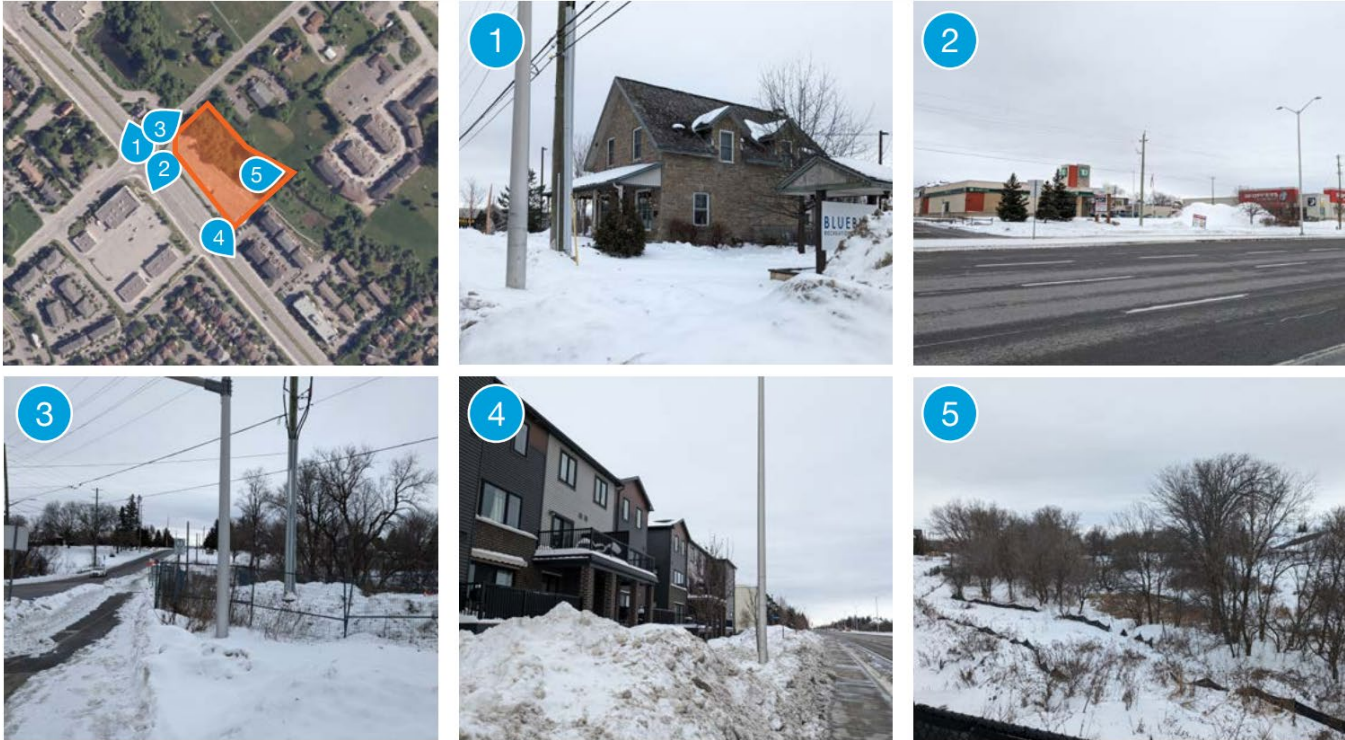


Figure 3: Photographs of the surrounding context

2.0 Overview of Application

A Minor Variance application is required to permit the proposed development, which consists of two (2) mid-rise buildings. The requested minor variances are as follows:

- / **Reduced Rear Yard Setback**
A rear yard setback of 3.2 metres is proposed whereas 7.5 metres is required.
- / **Increased Maximum Building Height**
A maximum building height of 21.3 metres is proposed whereas 18 metres is required.

2.1 Application Context

The proposed development represents a revision to a previous Site Plan Control approval granted by the City for the subject site. Fotenn submitted a Site Plan Control application on behalf of a previous developer, Omnipex, for the development of the subject site with a six (6) storey mid-rise apartment building on August 24, 2018 (file no. D07-12-18-0128). Following two (2) rounds of technical review comments from the City, the proponent undertook significant revisions to the design. On May 29, 2020, Fotenn submitted revised materials in support of a four (4) storey, low-rise apartment building. The City approved the Site Plan Control application for the revised design on June 9, 2021, with approval being extended through a Site Plan extension application on July 5, 2022 (file no. D07-12-22-0098). Omnipex later sold the subject site and the original six (6) storey design to SINA. The original design has since undergone minor revisions.

Fotenn has submitted two (2) separate Phase 3 pre-consultation submissions on behalf of SINA, on November 20th, 2023, and on March 22nd, 2024. As the present design has now been subject to two (2) separate reviews as part of the Phase 3 Pre-Consultation process, major issues have been resolved and comments have largely been addressed. Minor Variances are now a required step in the process as the final Site Plan Control application must be compliant with the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250), therefore necessitating this submission.

2.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of two (2) six (6) storey mid-rise residential apartment buildings consisting of a total of 196 units. Building A, which will consist of 95 units, is proposed to be built at the intersection of Klondike and March Roads, in the western corner of the subject site. Building B is proposed to be built further south and will consist of 101 units. The proposed development is designed in a “U” shape, allowing it to maintain an active street frontage along both Klondike and March Roads. The buildings share a common underground parking garage and will be developed concurrently.

The proposed development will offer a varied unit composition, as follows:

- / 48 one (1) bedroom units;
- / 49 one (1) bedroom + den units;
- / 65 two (2) bedroom units;
- / 22 two (2) bedroom + den units; and
- / 12 three (3) bedroom units.

Two (2) vehicular accesses are proposed:

- / The first is a full-movement access at the north of the subject site, from Klondike Road. The driveway from this access into the site leads to a proposed two (2) storey underground parking garage.
- / The second is a right-in/right-out access from March Road. The access is centrally located between the two buildings. A driveway from the access leads to a surface parking lot at the rear of the proposed development.

A total of 275 vehicle parking spaces are proposed to be provided as part of the development, 252 of which will be provided in a two (2) storey underground parking garage. The remaining 23 spaces will be provided in the surface parking lot at the rear of the development.

The parking garage also features storage lockers, bicycle parking, amenity space for residents consisting of a lounge, gym and showers/ washrooms, garbage rooms, and mechanical rooms (Figure 5, below). The proposed development will provide 194 bicycle parking spaces, the majority of which will be located in the parking garage. 29 bicycle parking spaces will be provided in the surface parking lot at the rear of the development.



Figure 4: Perspective from March Road

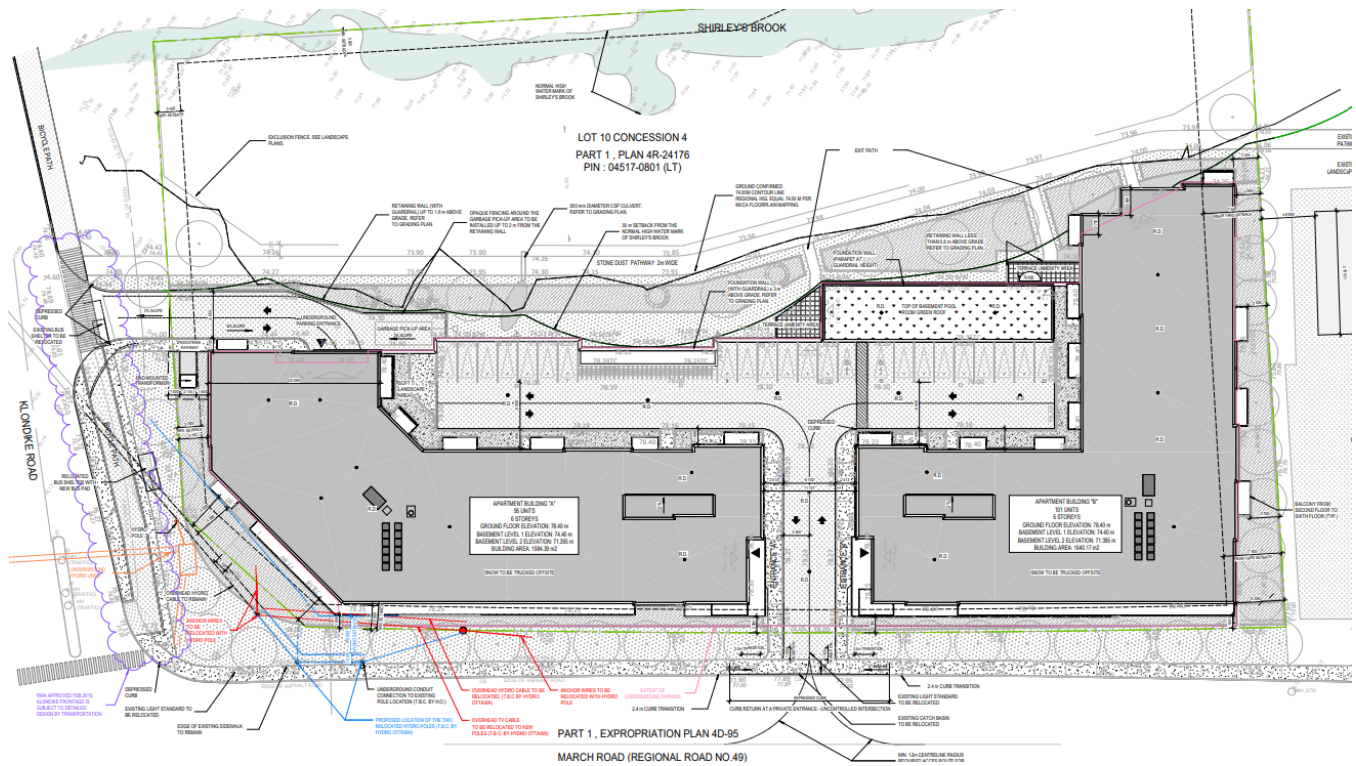


Figure 5: Excerpt from the Site Plan of the proposed development

3.0 Policy and Regulatory Context

3.1 Provincial Policy Statement

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is a high-level guiding policy document issued by the Province of Ontario under the Planning Act which promotes direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. All decisions on planning matters “shall be consistent with” the PPS. The PPS recognizes that “land use must be carefully managed to accommodate appropriate development to meet the full range of current and future needs, while achieving efficient development patterns”. To respond to current and future needs, a range of housing options is encouraged in the PPS through new residential development and intensification.

The proposed development meets the policies of the PPS as it contributes to providing an appropriate range of housing options and efficiently uses land within a settlement area, resources and the infrastructure/ public service facilities which are either planned or currently available.

3.2 City of Ottawa Official Plan (2022)

The City of Ottawa’s Official Plan (OP) was approved on November 4, 2022, to provide a framework for the way that Ottawa is envisioned to develop until 2046 when the City’s population is expected to surpass 1.4 million people. The OP directs how growth will be accommodated over time and sets out policy direction to guide development and change over time.

3.2.1 Transect

Schedule A of the OP divides the City into six concentric policy areas called Transects. Each Transect represents a different gradation in the type and evolution of built environment and planned function of the lands within it, from most to least urban. Throughout the Transect policies, references are made to urban and suburban built form and site design. The Transect Policies provide direction on building height based on context through the type of Transect and designation.



Figure 6: Excerpt from Schedule A – Transects of the Official Plan

The subject site is in the Suburban Transect which comprises neighbourhoods within the urban boundary located outside the Greenbelt, per Figure 6 above. These neighbourhoods generally reflect the conventional suburban model which is described in the OP and are characterized by the separation of land uses, stand-alone buildings, generous setbacks and low-rise building forms.

Suburban Transect policies that are relevant to the subject site include:

- / The Suburban Transect is generally characterized by Low-to Mid-density development (5.4.1.2) and shall be mid-rise along Mainstreet Corridors (5.4.1.2(c)), however, the following policy direction applies:
 - Generally not less than 2 storeys (5.4.1.2(c)(i));
 - The stepback requirements for buildings shall be proportionate to the width of the abutting right of way, and consistent with the objectives in the urban design section on Mid-rise [...] built form in Subsection 4.6.6 (5.4.1.2(c)(iii)).
- / In Hubs and on Corridors in the Suburban Transect, this Plan shall support a range of dwelling unit sizes in multi-unit dwellings (5.4.1.3(a)(i)) and a range of housing types to accommodate individuals not forming part of a household (5.4.1.3(b)).
- / Along Mainstreet Corridors, except where a secondary plan or area-specific policy specifies different heights and subject to appropriate height transitions, stepbacks and angular planes, maximum building heights are as follows (5.4.3.3):
 - Generally, not less than 2 storeys (5.4.3.3(a));
 - The wall heights directly adjacent to a street of such buildings, or the podiums of high-rise buildings shall be of a height proportionate to the width of the abutting right of way, and consistent with the objectives in the urban design section on mid-rise and high-rise built form in Subsection 4.6.6, Policies 7), 8) and 9); (5.4.3.3(b); and
 - Such buildings may be limited to 4 storeys on lots too small to accommodate an appropriate height transition (5.4.3.3(c)).

The proposed development meets the policies of the Suburban Transect. The mid-rise built form is appropriate given the subject site's location on a Mainstreet Corridor. Further, March Road has a protected right-of-way width of 44.5 metres where it abuts the subject site. As such, the proposed height is appropriate for the abutting right-of-way.

3.2.2 Land Use Designation

Within each Transect, designations further articulate maximum building heights and minimum densities. The four designations are Hubs, Mainstreet Corridors, Minor Corridors, and Neighbourhoods. Each designation represents a different progression in the type and evolution of built environment and development heights and densities, from taller and denser (Hubs) to lower and less dense (Neighborhoods).

Per Schedule B5 – Suburban (West) Transect of the OP, the subject site is on March Road, which is a designated Mainstreet Corridor, shown in Figure 7, below. The Mainstreet Corridor designation applies to bands of land along specified streets whose planned function combines a higher density of development, a greater degree of mixed uses and a higher level of street transit service than abutting Neighbourhoods, but lower density than nearby Hubs. The Mainstreet Corridor designation applies to any lot abutting the Corridor, subject to specific provisions (6.2.1.1).

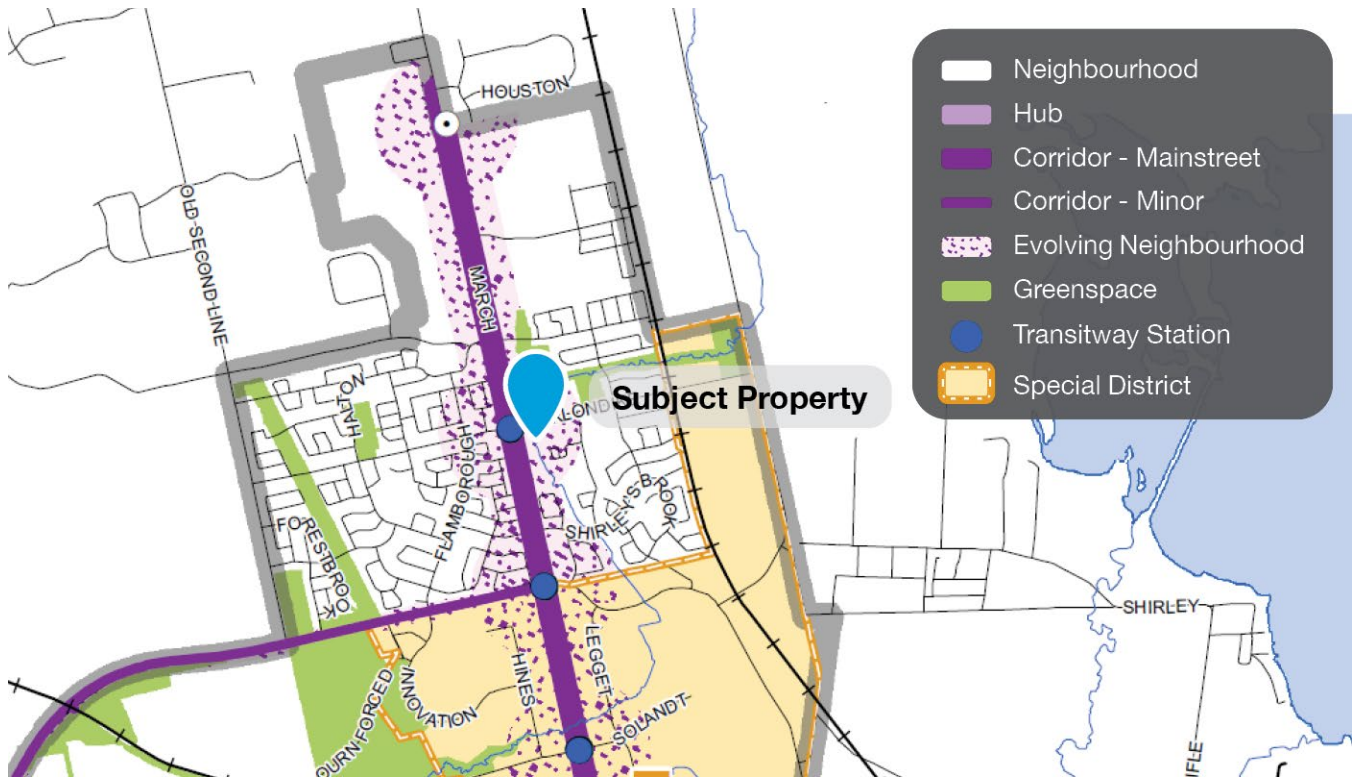


Figure 7: Schedule B5 of the OP - Designation

Corridor policies that are relevant to the subject site and proposed development include:

- / Development within the Corridor designation shall establish buildings that locate the maximum permitted building heights and highest densities close to the Corridor, subject to building stepbacks where appropriate (6.2.1.2). Further, development:
 - shall ensure appropriate transitions in height, use of land, site design and development character through the site, to where the Corridor designation meets abutting designations (6.2.1.2(a)).
 - For sites generally of greater than one hectare in area or 100 metres in depth, development shall be required to establish an enhanced circulation network throughout the site that prioritizes the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and transit users (6.2.1.2(c)(i)).
- / Corridors will generally permit residential uses and such non-residential uses that integrate with a dense, mixed-use urban environment (6.2.1.3).
- / Unless otherwise indicated in an approved secondary plan, the following applies to development of lands with frontage on both a Corridor and a parallel street or side street (6.2.1.4):
 - Development shall address the Corridor as directed by the general policies governing Mainstreet Corridors Minor Corridors, particularly where large parcels or consolidations of multiple smaller parcels are to be redeveloped (6.2.1.4(a)); and
 - Vehicular access shall generally be provided from the parallel street or side street (6.2.1.4(b)).
- / In the Mainstreet Corridor designation, this Plan shall permit a mix of uses including offices. These uses are permitted throughout the designation, however the Zoning By-law may require active commercial or service uses on the ground floor, which include those that support cultural development in order to maintain, extend, or create a continuous stretch of active frontages along a Mainstreet (6.2.2.1).

The proposed development meets the policies of the Mainstreet Corridor designation. The apartment building use is permitted, and the proposed built form addresses the street by locating the buildings in proximity to, and facing, the abutting roadways. The Shirley's Brook corridor and the building's associated setback from Shirley's Brook provide an effective transition from adjacent lands that are not designated as Corridor.

Vehicular access to the proposed development is provided off both March Road and Klondike Road; however, with the majority of the proposed parking being provided underground, it is anticipated that most vehicle trips will travel to and from the subject site via Klondike Road (the side street). Lastly, the proposed pathway at the rear of the proposed development will help enhance the pedestrian network in the area.

3.2.3 Urban Design

Urban Design concerns the design of both the built form and the public realm. Urban design plays an important role in supporting the City's objectives such as building healthy 15-minute neighbourhoods, growing the urban tree canopy and developing resilience to climate change. New development should be designed to make healthier, more environmentally sustainable living accessible for people of all ages, genders and social statuses.

Urban design policies that are relevant to the proposed development and subject site include:

- / Ensure effective site planning that supports the objectives of Corridors, Hubs, Neighbourhoods and the character of our villages and rural landscapes (4.6.5):
 - Development throughout the City shall demonstrate that the intent of applicable Council-approved plans and design guidelines are met (4.6.5.1);
 - Development in Hubs and along Corridors shall respond to context, transect area and overlay policies. The development should generally be located to frame the adjacent street, park or greenspace, and should provide an appropriate setback within the street context, with clearly visible main entrances from public sidewalks. Visual impacts associated with above grade utilities should be mitigated (4.6.5.2);
 - Development shall minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and improve the attractiveness of the public realm by internalizing all servicing, loading areas, mechanical equipment and utilities into the design of the building, and by accommodating space on the site for trees, where possible. Shared service areas, and accesses, should be used to limit interruptions along sidewalks. Where underground parking is not viable, surface parking must be visually screened from the public realm (4.6.5.3); and
 - Development shall demonstrate universal accessibility, in accordance with the City's Accessibility Design Standards. Designing universally accessible places ensures that the built environment addresses the needs of diverse users and provides a healthy, equitable and inclusive environment (4.6.5.4).
- / Enable the sensitive integration of new development of Low-rise, Mid-rise and High-rise buildings to ensure Ottawa meets its intensification targets while considering liveability for all (4.6.6):
 - To minimize impacts on neighbouring properties and on the public realm, transition in building heights shall be designed in accordance with applicable design guidelines (4.6.6.1).
 - Transitions between Mid-rise and High-rise buildings, and adjacent properties designated as Neighbourhood on the B-series of schedules, will be achieved by providing a gradual change in height and massing, through the stepping down of buildings, and setbacks from the Low-rise properties, generally guided by the application of an angular plane as may be set in the Zoning By-law or by other means in accordance with Council-approved Plans and design guidelines (4.6.6.2);

- Amenity areas shall be provided in residential development in accordance with the Zoning By-law and applicable design guidelines. These areas should serve the needs of all age groups, and consider all four seasons, taking into account future climate conditions. The following amenity area requirements apply for mid-rise and high-rise residential:
 - Provide protection from heat, wind, extreme weather, noise and air pollution (4.6.6.4(a)); and
 - With respect to indoor amenity areas, be multi-functional spaces, including some with access to natural light and also designed to support residents during extreme heat events, power outages or other emergencies (4.6.6.4(b)).
- / Mid-rise buildings shall be designed to respond to context, and transect area policies, and should:
 - Frame the street block and provide mid-block connections to break up large blocks (4.6.6.7(a));
 - Include a base with active frontages, and a middle portion that relates to the scale and character of the surrounding buildings, or, planned context (4.6.6.7(b));
 - be generally proportionate in height to the width of the right of way (4.6.6.7(c).);
 - Be generally proportionate in height to the width of the right of way as, with additional height permitted in the Downtown Core Transect (4.6.6.7(d)); and
 - Provide sufficient setbacks and step backs to (4.6.6.7(e)):
 - Provide landscaping and adequate space for tree planting;
 - Avoid a street canyon effect; and
 - Minimize microclimate impacts on the public realm and private amenity areas.

The proposed development meets the applicable urban design policies. In particular:

- / **The proposed development is generally located to frame the adjacent streets, and locates parking at the rear and underground;**
- / **The proposed development's reduced setback from its rear property line will be mitigated through landscaping and placement of windows and balconies;**
- / **Quality indoor and outdoor communal amenity space is proposed to be provided.**
- / **The proposed development's setback from Shirley's Brook ensures an effective transition to adjacent properties with a different land use designation;**
- / **The proposed six (6) storey building height is appropriate for its context along March Road, a very wide right-of-way, and will not result in a canyon-like effect.**
- / **The proposed development is separated into two (2) buildings and characterized by a variety of materials, which will help break up the buildings' massing.**

3.3 City of Ottawa Comprehensive By-law (2008-250)

The subject property is designated General Mixed Use ("GM") in the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250), as shown in Figure 8 below.

The GM zone permits a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses in the General Urban Area. The proposed development is an apartment dwelling, mid-rise, which is a permitted use in the GM zone.

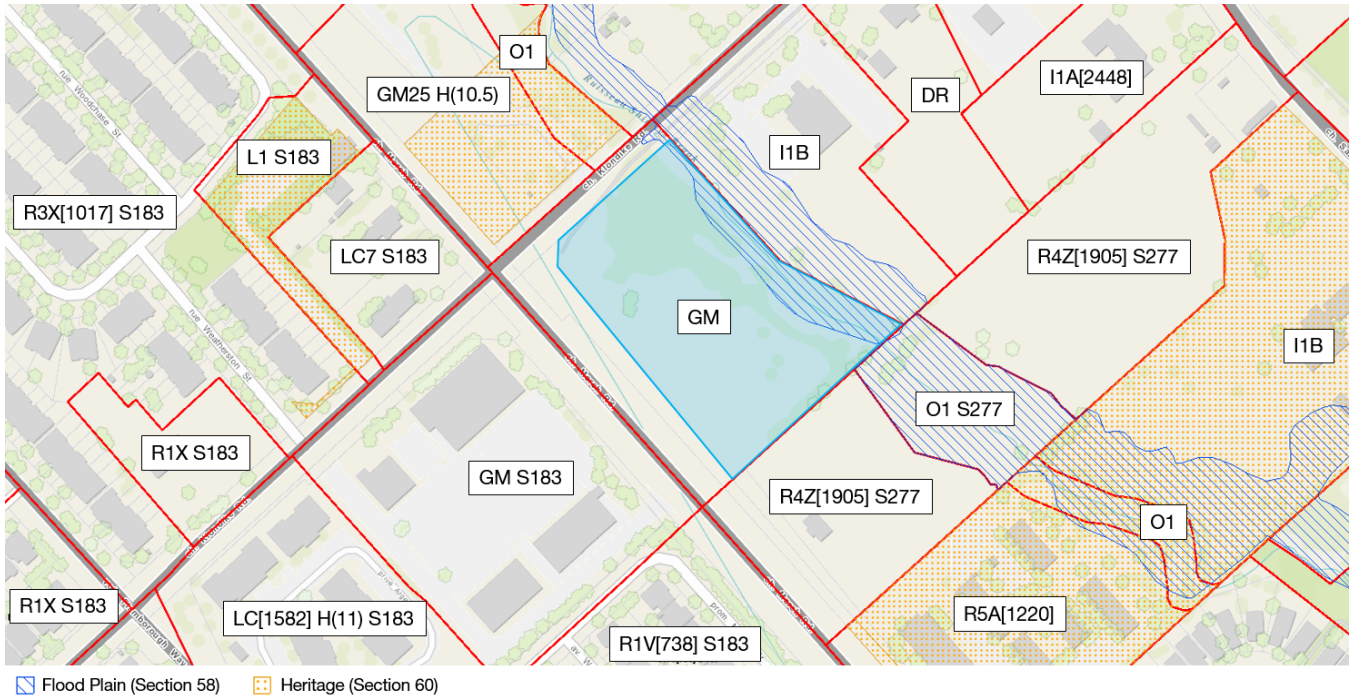


Figure 8: Zoning map of the subject site and surrounding area

The following table summarizes the proposed development’s compliance with the existing GM zoning. Areas of compliance are noted with a green checkmark (✓) and areas of non-compliance are noted with a red ‘x’ (✗).

Table 1: Zoning Table, GM zone

GM Zoning Mechanism	Required	Provided	Compliance
Minimum Lot Area	No minimum	12,210.01 m ²	✓
Minimum Lot Width	No minimum	64.62 m	✓
Minimum Front and Corner Side Yard Setbacks	3 m	Front yard setback (Klondike Road): 3.7 m Corner side yard setback (March Road): 3.17 m	✓
Minimum Interior Side Yard Setback	For a residential building higher than 11 m in height: 3 m	38.91 m	✓
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	For a residential use building: 7.5 m	3.2 m	✗
Maximum Building Height	18 m	21.21 m	✗
Maximum Floor Space Index	2	1.33	✓
Minimum Width of Landscaped Area	Abutting a street, or residential or institutional zone: 3 m	3.1 m	✓

GM Zoning Mechanism	Required	Provided	Compliance
	Other cases: no minimum		
Setback from Watercourses	No building shall be located closer than 30 m to the normal high-water mark of any watercourse unless, as established through conditions of Site Plan approval, a different setback is determined to be appropriate in accordance with the criteria set forth in the Official Plan.	Majority of building is 30 m from normal high-water mark, small portion located closer. This small portion will be resolved through the Site Plan approval (SPA) process. See section 3.3.1 below for more information.	To be confirmed through SPA
Amenity Area	Total: 6 m ² per dwelling unit = 1,176 m ²	Total: 1,823 m ²	✓
	Communal Area: A minimum of 50% of the required total amenity area = 588 m ²	Communal Area: 608 m ²	
	Layout: At least one amenity area must be a minimum of 54 m ²	Layout: 213 m ²	
Minimum Landscaped Area in a Parking Lot	15% (perimeter or interior landscaped area)	29.4 %	✓
Minimum Width of Landscaped Buffer Around a Parking Lot	For a parking lot containing more than 10 but fewer than 100 spaces, and not abutting a street: 1.5 m	3.2 m	✓
Location of Storage	Storage must be completely enclosed within a building	No outdoor storage is proposed	✓
Minimum Setback for Any Wall of a Residential Use Building to a Private Way	1.8m	1.8 m	✓
Minimum Separation Between Buildings in a Planned Unit Development	3 m	11.73 m	✓
Maximum Balcony Projections Into Required Yards	2 m	1.6 m	✓
Minimum Required Vehicle Parking Area C in Schedule 1A	Resident: 1.2 per dwelling unit 196 units: 235 spaces	Resident: 236 spaces	✓
	Visitor: 0.2 per dwelling unit 196 units: 39 spaces	Visitor: 39 spaces	
	Total: 274 spaces	Total: 275 spaces	
Parking Space Dimensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> / Minimum dimensions of 5.2 m by 2.6 m / Up to 40% (117) of required resident parking may be reduced to 4.6 m by 2.4 m 	13 parking spaces are 4.6 m by 2.4 m	✓

GM Zoning Mechanism	Required	Provided	Compliance
Minimum Driveway Width	Parking Lot: 6.0 m Parking Garage: 6.0 m	Parking Lot: 6.7 m Parking Garage: 6 m	✓
Maximum Driveway Width	In the case of an apartment dwelling, mid-rise, the maximum permitted width for a double traffic lane that leads to 20 or more parking spaces is 6.7 m.	6.7 m	✓
Minimum Aisle Width	Parking Lot: 6.0 m Parking Garage: 6.0 m	6.0 m	✓
Minimum Required Bicycle Parking	0.5 per dwelling unit 196 units: 98 spaces	194 spaces *99 spaces are compliant with the Zoning By-law, per the below	✓
Minimum Width for Aisle to access Bicycle Parking	1.5 m	99 spaces: 1.5 m aisle 95 spaces: < 1.5 m aisle, <i>provided in excess of minimum 98 bicycle parking spaces</i>	✓

3.3.1 Cantilever into 30-metre setback of high water mark

Per Section 69(3) of the Zoning By-law, development requiring a plan of subdivision or that is subject to site plan control must provide the watercourse or waterbody setbacks unless, as established through conditions of approval, a different setback is determined to be appropriate in accordance with the criteria set forth in the Official Plan.

A portion of Building B is proposed to cantilever into the 30-metre setback, by a maximum distance of approximately 3.6 metres. Per the Species at Risk (Blanding's Turtle) Permitting Requirements memo provided by Gemtec dated March 10, 2024, the reduced cantilevered setback from the high water mark of Shirley's Brook is deemed to be appropriate as it will not interfere with any Category 1 habitats. As described in the memo, only Category 2 and 3 habitats are proximate to the subject site.

As noted above, it is anticipated that this particular condition will be confirmed through the Site Plan Control process; therefore, per Section 69(3) of the Zoning By-law, relief from the by-law is not required to be sought through a Minor Variance or Zoning By-law Amendment.

3.3.2 Required Minor Variances

Based on the above analysis of the proposed development, the following variances from the Zoning By-law are requested to permit the proposed development:

- / Increased maximum building height, from 18 metres to 21.3 metres
- / Reduced minimum rear yard setback, from 7.5 metres to 3.2 metres

The requested variances are discussed in greater detail in Section 4 below.

4.0

Minor Variance Application: The Four Tests

It is our professional opinion that the proposed minor variances constitute good planning and meet the four (4) tests outlined under Section 45(1) of the Planning Act as discussed below.

4.1 Does the Proposal Maintain the General Intent and Purpose of the Official Plan?

The subject site is located in the Suburban Transect and is designated as Mainstreet Corridor, with an Evolving Neighbourhood Overlay also applying.

4.1.1 Increased Building Height

The Official Plan permits mid-rise building heights along Mainstreet Corridors, except on lots that are too small to accommodate an appropriate height transition.

The increased building height will have no undue adverse impact on adjacent properties. The subject site is quite large, with roadways and Shirley’s Brook providing separation from planned low-rise residential neighbourhoods. Most shadowing impacts will be concentrated toward the north, which is largely occupied by the Shirley’s Brook corridor, a commercial building, and a place of worship, and where there are no immediately abutting low-rise residential properties.

The proposed height increase, which maintains a six (6) storey built form, is therefore appropriate for the subject site and maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

4.1.2 Reduced Rear Yard Setback

The subject site’s (and proposed development’s) main, visual frontage is along March Road. Policy 6.2.1(2) of the Official Plan states that development within the Corridor designation shall establish building heights that locate the maximum permitted building heights and highest densities closest to the Corridor, subject to building setbacks where appropriate. Further, Policy 6.2.1(4)(a) of the Official Plan states that the following applies to development of lands with frontage on both a Corridor and a parallel street or side street:

Development shall address the Corridor as directed by the general policies governing Mainstreet Corridors Minor Corridors, particularly where large parcels or consolidations of multiple smaller parcels are to be redeveloped.

The proposed development has been designed to effectively orient its main building walls toward March Road and provides a shorter rear yard setback of three (3) metres which will help provide a more continuous street wall along the public right-of-way. This design approach responds to the Official Plan’s policy intent that development along Corridors that are on corner lots are to address the Corridors.

Given the above, the proposed variances maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

4.2 Does the Proposal Maintain the General Intent and Purpose of the Zoning By-law?

The subject site is zoned General Mixed Use (“GM”) under the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2008-250). The General Mixed Use zone permits a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses in the General Urban Area. The GM zone permits the proposed apartment dwelling, mid-rise use.

The purpose of the GM zone is to:

- / allow residential, commercial and institutional uses, or mixed use development in the General Urban Area and in the Upper Town, Lowertown and Sandy Hill West Character Areas of the Central Area designations of the Official Plan;

- / limit commercial uses to individual occupancies or in groupings in well defined areas such that they do not affect the development of the designated Traditional and Arterial Mainstreets as viable mixed-use areas;
- / permit uses that are often large and serve or draw from broader areas than the surrounding community and which may generate traffic, noise or other impacts provided the anticipated impacts are adequately mitigated or otherwise addressed; and
- / impose development standards that will ensure that the uses are compatible and complement surrounding land uses.

4.2.1 Increased Building Height

The GM zone permits a building height of up to 18 metres, which is roughly equivalent to that of a six (6) storey mid-rise building.

The proposed height increase is requested in part to account for a significant grade change on the subject site. Section 54 of the Zoning By-law defines grades as the average elevation of the finished level of the ground adjoining all the walls of a building. As the subject property slopes down significantly from March Road to Shirley's Brook, the average finished grade of the proposed development is lowered significantly by the northeast (rear) building wall, where a significant portion of the P1 basement level wall is exposed; this condition thereby "increases" the calculated building height to 21.21 metres. For example, along the subject property's frontage on March Road, the building wall is only 19.5 metres in height.



Figure 9: West and Southwest Elevation drawing of the proposed development, showing the change in grade from March Road (right) to Shirley's Brook (left)

The proposed 21.3 metre building height would maintain a six (6) storey mid-rise built form while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses. Further, the planned context along March Road envisions mid- to high-rise built forms in the future; a six (6) storey building with slightly increased building heights is thus appropriate along the Mainstreet Corridor. The increased building height will have no undue adverse impact on adjacent properties, with shadowing impacts to be concentrated towards the north, which is largely occupied by the Shirley's Brook corridor, a commercial building, and a place of worship.

4.2.2 Reduced Rear Yard Setback

Per Section 54 of the Zoning By-law, the front lot line means that lot line, not including a corner lot line, which abuts a street for the shortest distance. As a result, the subject property's frontage along Klondike Road is to be considered the

“front lot line”, and the rear lot line (defined by the Zoning By-law as the lot line furthest from and opposite the front lot line) is to be considered the lot line to the southeast, furthest away from the front lot line along Klondike Road, and abutting the property to the south known as 762 March Road.

Despite the above definition, the subject site’s functional front yard is March Road, with. The proposed development has been designed to be oriented toward and thus “address” the Mainstreet Corridor (March Road), per Official Plan direction, with the main entrances being located adjacent to March Road. The proposed development occupies a greater amount of the subject site’s frontage along March Road, thereby resulting in a minimum rear yard setback of 3.2 metres.

The rear yard will functionally operate as an interior side yard adjacent to the existing development at 762 March Road. The minimum 3.2-metre wide setback is consistent with the minimum required interior side yard setback width for the GM zone (3 metres). Further, the portion of 762 March Road adjacent to the subject site is occupied by surface parking and a mostly blank building wall with limited glazing. Therefore, privacy impacts on existing dwelling units are anticipated to be minimal.

Finally, the 3.2 metre setback only applies to a portion of the proposed development, with the building wall being oriented in a way that sets it back progressively further to 6.2 metres as it approaches the front yard along March Road.

Given the above, the proposed variances maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.

4.3 Is the Proposal Desirable for the Appropriate Development or Use of the Land?

The proposed development represents a compact, dense mid-rise intensification project within the urban boundary, in a location that efficiently uses existing and planned infrastructure and services, including water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities, and future planned public transit improvements. As such, the proposed development is consistent with several policies of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020).

The requested variances will allow for the construction of a denser development along a Mainstreet Corridor, in an area that is planned for intensification in the City’s Official Plan. The proposed development will thus help the City achieve its intensification goals.

The proposed height increase will be sensitive and allow the proponent to maintain a six (6) storey built-form and provide more comfortable floor-to-ceiling heights. The proposed rear yard setback reduction will provide a more continuous street wall along March Road. The height increased and reduced rear yard will thereby provide a more active presence along a very wide mainstreet. The orientation of the proposed development will also help ensure that appropriate setbacks from Shirley’s Brook watercourse and associated riparian corridor are maintained.

The proposed variances will allow for the development of a mid-rise building in an area planned for greater density and provide a more continuous and active street wall along March Road. The proposed variances, which respond positively to provincial and municipal policy direction, are therefore desirable for the appropriate development of the land.

4.4 Is the Proposal Minor in Nature?

4.4.1 Increased Building Height

As previously noted, the proposed building height increase is in part due to significant grade changes on the subject site, with the building wall along March Road being only 19.5 metres in height. The proposed height increase will not cause any undue adverse impacts to adjacent properties, with shadowing impacts largely limited to non-residential lands including a commercial building, a place of worship, and the Shirley’s Brook corridor.



Figure 10: Aerial rendering of the proposed development and surrounding context

4.4.2 Reduced Rear Yard Setback

The proposed development's rear yard setback abuts conditions on the adjacent property at 762 March Road that lessen the impact of a reduced yard setback. The portion of the abutting property that is located closest to the subject property is characterized by a surface parking lot and a mostly blank building wall with very limited glazing. As such, privacy impacts on existing dwelling units at 762 March are anticipated to be minimal.



Figure 11: Rendering of the proposed development and abutting condition at 762 March Road

Additional design considerations for the proposed development, including placement of windows and privacy screens for balconies, are proposed to be incorporated to further lessen the impact of the reduced rear yard setback to future residents' privacy. A variety of trees and shrubs will also be planted in the rear yard to provide a landscaped buffer with some visual screening between the proposed development and the abutting property.

As previously noted, the reduced yard setback will be 3.2 metres at its shortest point, which is wider than the minimum requirement for an interior side yard setback for a building in the GM zone. The rear yard setback will also widen progressively toward the west, to a point where the rear yard setback nearest March Road is 6.3 metres.

Given the above, the proposed variances are minor in nature.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposed variances represent appropriate, orderly development, and function of 788 March Road. It is our professional planning opinion that the proposed Minor Variances constitute good planning as:

- / The variances are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020); and,
- / The variances meet the four tests as set out in Section 45(1) of the Planning Act, including:
 - The variances maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan;
 - The variances maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law;
 - The variances are desirable for the appropriate development of the land; and,
 - The variances are minor in nature.

Sincerely,



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Planner



Nico Church RPP MCIP
Senior Planner