

40 King St.
Dartmouth, NS
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Cumberland Street Development Agreement Application (PID 40127003)

Dear Dean,

Thanks for your input so far on the Cumberland Street project. This letter details our Development Agreement submission and the many considerations which were weighed in preparing the attached design proposal. This site represents a massively underutilized piece of land that could be transformed into desperately-needed housing for HRM while improving the surrounding streetscape and pedestrian realm.

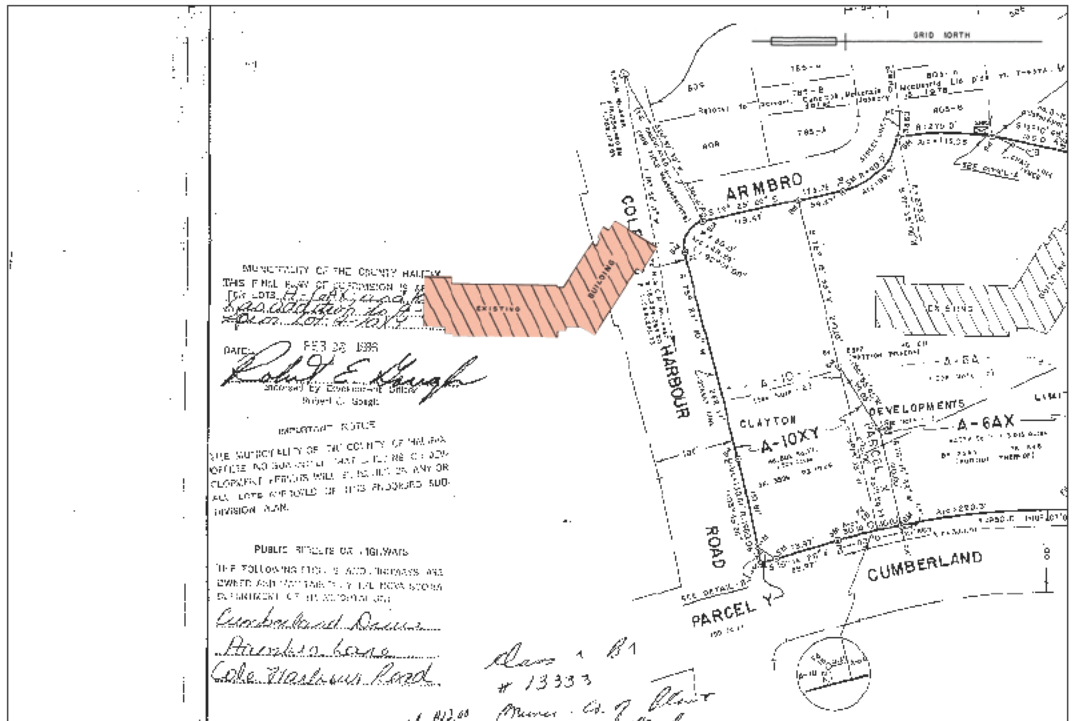
The Site

The development site is located in the centre of Cole Harbour near the busy commercial intersection of Cumberland Drive and Cole Harbour Road. The site is situated opposite of a community shopping centre that has a Sobeys grocery store and pharmacy, RBC bank, Home hardware, Canadian Tire, Wendy's/Tim Hortons and a wide range of other commercial businesses. There is a bus stop directly in front of the site and another around the corner on Cole Harbour Road which services the 59 and 79 transit routes. The site is a short walk from Cole Harbour Place sportsplex, and only 1.3km from the Portland Hills park and ride stop; just slightly outside the 800m radius for the Portland Hills rapid transit red line. Sites within the 800m of a rapid transit station are enabled for moderate density development as per the Rapid Transit Strategy. The site also includes a shared use AT trail right on Cumberland in front of the site connecting a to a wider AT network currently

CURRENT CONTEXT

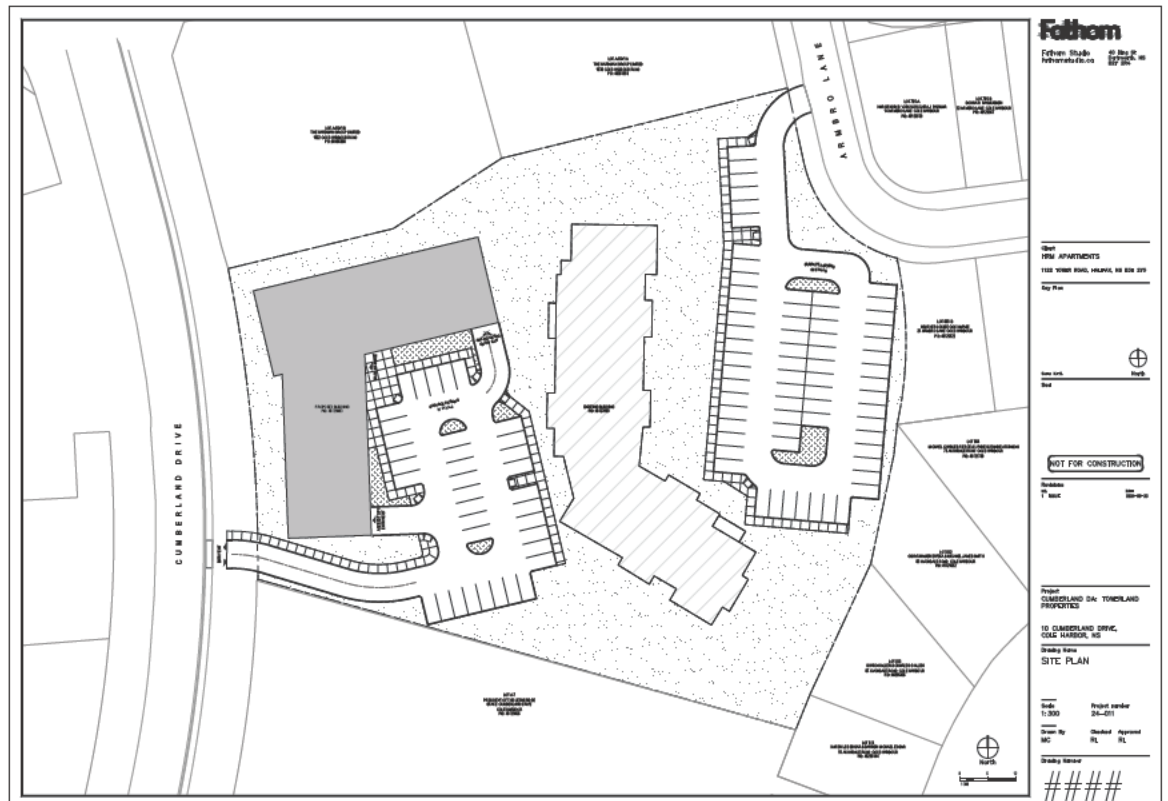
The subject site is zoned C-2 and comprises 3.51 acres (153,039 ft²) over a single property. The two adjacent properties are also zoned C-2 while the remaining abutting properties are zoned R-1 and R-2 in the east and P-2 in the south.

Neighbouring buildings include single-detached residences, low-rise commercial buildings, and a religious temple.



evolving around the city.

The site currently features a three and 1/2 storey apartment building with 66 dwelling units and two surface parking lots (61 spaces on the west side of the building and 34 spaces on the east side, for a total of 94 spaces for the 66 units). The east parking lot has 34 spaces and could easily be expanded to fully meet the needs of the current building at a 1:1 parking ratio; expanding to 68 spaces. The existing parking lot fronting onto Cumberland Drive will be redesigned as a smaller 37 car lot to service the new building. The existing building has entrances that front on both lots now and there are no expected changes to the existing apartment building as part of this plan (except moving the parking lot).



The Proposed Plan

The proposed Development Plan envisions a 8-storey multi-unit building fronting onto Cumberland Drive with 2.5 levels of underground parking. In reviewing the siting options for this building, the architects elected to move the building closer to Portland Street and away from the Mormon temple to the south of this property. While the north end of the Cumberland frontage is about 2m lower than the south end, the driveway into the development was sited on the higher south end of the property. There is a roughly 4.5m drop down to the new parking lot behind the new building. This driveway provides access to 108 underground parking spaces and the 37 surface parking spaces. This location from the driveway is about 110m from the Portland/Cumberland intersection which is much safer than the north end of the site where the existing driveway is only about 70m from this busy intersection. The landscape architects decided to push the driveway further away from the intersection, freeing up the main lobby entrance to be closer to this busy intersection and much closer to the commercial uses on Portland Street.

The First floor of the building will front directly onto Cumberland Drive with a lobby close to the

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RBC Bank end. This lobby will be just 1m below the AT sidewalk on Cumberland making it very accessible. A 800 SF amenity room is located near the main entrance on the first floor, although the developer is considering converting this into a retail space that fronts Cumberland Drive. The P1 parking level just below the first floor is a mix of 18 underground parking spaces, a 1,200 SF gym, several bike parking rooms and 6 units in the back that front onto the lower parking lot. This floor has 2 parking garage entries; one to the 18 spaces tucked in below Cumberland Street, and a 2-storey parking garage beneath the entire building.

The proposed building has 37 surface parking spaces and 108 underground spaces for a total of 145 spaces for the 144 units (ratio of 1:1). While there may be potential to reduce the number of spaces to a ratio of 0.8, the developer would like the flexibility of retaining a 1:1 ratio.

The upper floors of the building proposes a 4-storey streetwall with a 2m stepback for up to 70% of the frontage length. Above the streetwall, the midrise (floors 5-8) is highly articulated to provide architectural interest for the urban design of the building. The rooftop includes a 4,000 SF rooftop amenity space or green roof. The developer is not yet certain if a fully useable amenity space or a green roof would be better suited for this development. The DA should provide for both options.

The developer is also looking to retrofit the existing building with an outdoor community garden, that will provide existing residents with the ability to grow food, and make social connections with their fellow residents.

The proposed new building will include:

- 24 (17%) @ 1-Bedroom units*
- 84 (58%) @ 2-bedroom units*
- 36 (25%) @ 3-bedroom units*
- 144 total units*
- Total GFA = 157,680 SF (excluding P2/P3 underground parking)*
- 2,000 SF indoor Amenity Space*
- At least 44 SF of patio space per unit with many units upwards of 100 SF.*
- 400 SF of bike storage*
- 4,000 SF of rooftop amenity or green roof (to be determined)*
- 13,200 SF total amenity space including patios (90 sf/unit)*
- 145 parking spaces (37 surface, 108 underground)*

The developer would appropriate some flexibility in the unit mix from the estimates above with room to vary the unit count up to 160 units and the unit mix up to 50% 1-bedroom and 50% 2 or more bedrooms; though they believe the former unit mix is the right mix for this area.

Similarly, the developer would appreciate being able to reduce the parking ratio from 1 down to 0.8, although their recent experience during the housing crisis is that more and more people are starting to live together. For example, they used to have 1 or 2 people living in a two bedroom apartment but are now seeing 2, 3 and sometimes 4 people living in the same unit, which increases the likelihood of there being a car.

The design meets bicycle parking requirements with 80 Class "A" bicycle parking spaces.

All driveways for underground parking and loading are located on Cumberland Street,

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where the existing 61 car parking lot is already located. The accompanying traffic impact study shows the development to have very little impacts on the surrounding traffic network.

The developer believes there may be a market for a small commercial business to service both buildings on the ground floor of the new building, though they do not want to be bound to providing commercial space. We would appreciate the DA allowing for upwards of 1500 SF of commercial space on the groundfloor.

Policy Background and Rationale

Policy UR-10 of the Cole Harbour/Westphal Municipal Planning Strategy sets out the ability to consider multiple unit dwellings (over 6 units) by Development Agreement.

UR-10 Notwithstanding Policies UR-2 and UR-9, within the Urban Residential Designation, it shall be the intention of Council to consider multiple unit dwellings over six (6) dwelling units, according to the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act. In considering such an agreement, Council shall have regard to the following:

(a) the adequacy of separation distances from low density residential developments;

The existing 3.5 storey apartment building backs onto one duplex on Armbro Lane and 3 single family homes on Avondale Road. The new 8-storey building does not front on any low density housing, but instead fronts on the busy Cumberland Drive which already has a number of 3-4 storey apartment buildings, commercial strip mall, a bank and 2 churches. This building should have very little shading impacts on neighbouring low density homes with the exception of an extra hour or two of shade near the winter solstice.

(b) that the height, bulk, lot coverage and appearance of any building is compatible with adjacent land uses;

The existing 3 apartment buildings on Cumberland Drive range in height from 3-4 storeys plus an additional storey for the sloped roofs. These buildings are now 40 years old, and we believe that the additional height (from 5 storeys to 8 storeys) in the intervening years is an acceptable trade off given the housing shortage and nature of the growing community. The stepbacks above the 4th storey will reduce the scale of the upper midrise storeys, as well as any potential impacts from the building on the surroundings.

(c) that site design features, including landscaping, amenity areas, parking areas and driveways, are of an adequate size and design to address potential impacts on adjacent development and to provide for the needs of residents of the development;

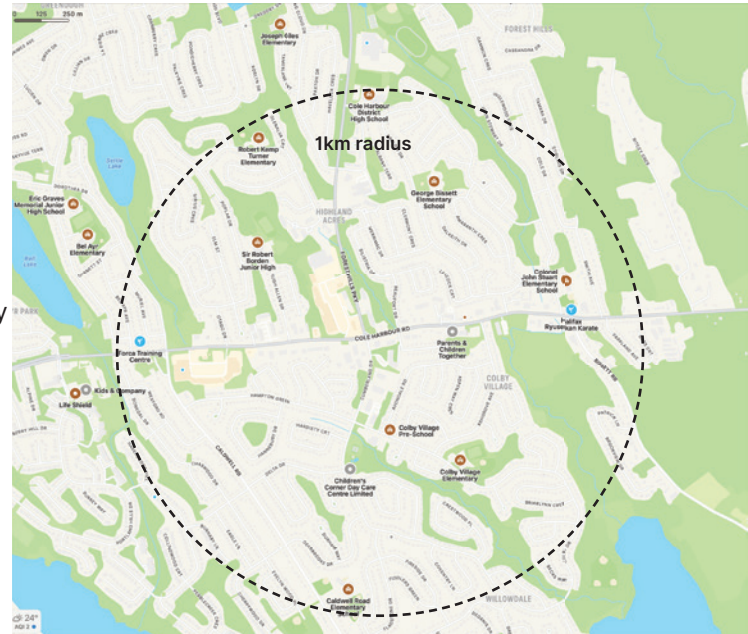
The site design makes room for a new community garden (primarily for existing residents), preserves many stands of large trees, and provides groundfloor patio space for all groundfloor units. The amenity space provided by the new building ranges from 6-9 sm per unit which exceeds the 5 sm amenity requirements in the centre plan.

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(d) preference for a site in close proximity to community facilities such as school, recreation areas and transit routes;

The site has 8 schools within 1km and another 4 just outside the 1km radius. The site is only a 1km walk from Cole Harbour Place, and a hundred metres from the Colby pool and tennis courts. There is a Sobeys with 100m and a wide variety of shopping within 200m. There are 2 transit routes our front and the Park and Ride Portland Hills is only 1.2km away. In short, this existing community has all the amenities that a resident could ask for and is a very desirable place for new and existing housing.



(e) that municipal central services are available and capable of supporting the development;

There are central services (water and sewer)

(f) that appropriate controls are established to address environmental concerns, including stormwater controls;

We can maintain the pre- and post development flows with this development as much of the current lot being developed is already a parking lot.

(g) that the development has direct access to a minor or major collector as defined on Map 3 - Transportation.

Cumberland Drive is a Minor Collector on Map 3

(h) the impact on traffic circulation and, in particular, sighting distances and entrances and exits to the site;

See the attached traffic study. There are no major impacts from current conditions.

(i) general maintenance of the development;

The development will be maintained to a high standard.

(j) the effect of the development on the overall housing mixture within the community; and

This development adds another 144 multi-units to Cole Harbour which is heavily oriented to lower

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density housing types. With the thousands of homes in the area, another 144 units will barely change the housing mix. More importantly, the provision of high quality apartments in this centrally located Cole Harbour property will provide long term home owners with the option to stay in their community, as they look at downsizing their lifestyle for retirement (i.e., by selling their home and moving into a high quality apartment).

(k) *the provisions of Policy IM-11.*

we are in conformance with the policies of IM-11

Policy CC-4 of the Cole Harbour/Westphal MPS enables Council to consider multiple unit dwellings over 12 units by DA in community commercial zoned land like this.

CC-4 Notwithstanding Policy CC-2, Council may consider permitting multiple unit residential uses containing more than twelve dwelling units within the Community Commercial Designation in accordance with the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act. In considering such an agreement, Council shall have regard for the following;

(a) *the effects of the proposed development upon the road network;*

This development will increase the number of parking spaces exiting onto Cumberland Drive from 61 to 145 spaces, however the driveway has moved a safer distance 40m south of the existing entrance further away from the busy intersection.

(b) *separation distances from low density residential uses;*

As noted above, the new building does not back onto any low density homes and is buffered by the existing 3.5 storey apartment

(c) *the availability of useable open space*

The plan calls for ample open space inside, around and on top of the building with an amenity rate of about 6-9 m² per unit.

(d) *the location of on site amenity areas;*

The amenity areas are easily accessible from the new development.

(e) *the overall design of the site and structure, including landscaping, parking areas and access;*

We believe this site and landscape design is a marked improvement from the current 61 car parking lot.

(f) *the design of buildings, including roof pitch and finish materials; and*

The building includes a 4-storey brick masonry up to the streetwall height which is consistent with the requirements of Colby Village (a Shaw community). Above the streetwall, the design will be a mix of alumitec panel, glass and metals decks. The roof is flat with no pitch reducing the potential height and scale.

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(g) *the provisions of Policy IM-11.*

we are in conformance with the policies of IM-11

Conclusion

This proposal is an opportune urban infill into an area that already has an apartment building, that is within a short walk of commercial uses, transit routes, several recreational facilities like Cole Harbour place, AT lanes and a dozen schools. The proposal is consistent with the needs for finding additional housing in busy growing suburban areas like Cole Harbour. Its rare to find an underutilized suburban site that is so well positioned to accept additional density. The new building is located next to busy Cumberland Drive and is adjacent to only commercial uses such as the RBC bank, Jamieson's Pub and the Mormon Temple. Although earlier plans considered additional density from Armbro Lane, this approach was rejected in order to ensure that any new building was not adjacent to the single family homes on this street.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



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