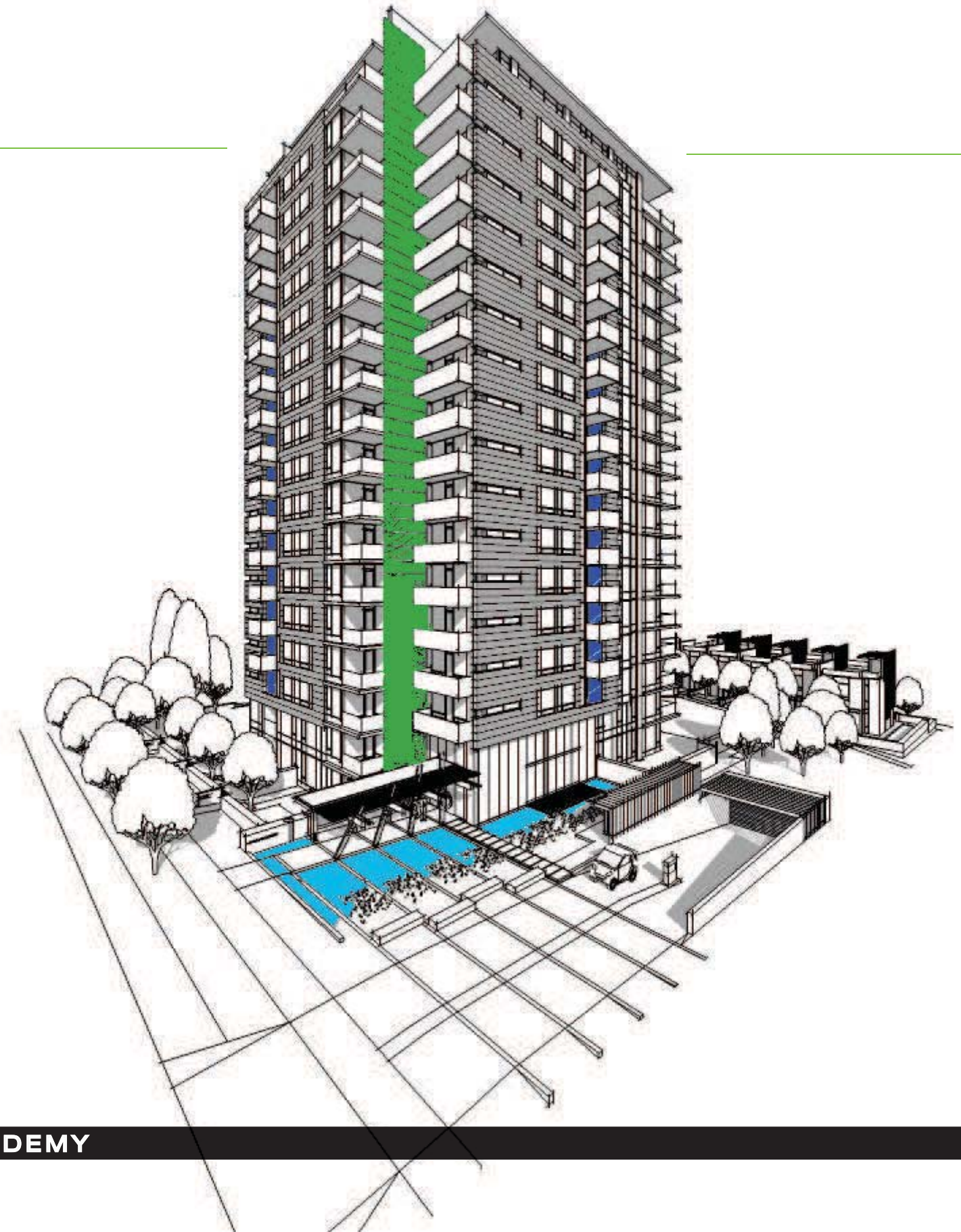




NIGEL BALDWIN ARCHITECTS



NOVEMBER 14, 2011

DP APPLICATION

ACADEMY

DESIGN RATIONALE

Academy

Lot 3, Wesbrook Village, UBC

Site

The five-sided, 1.1 acre site fronts on Berton Avenue to the north and Village Lane to the south. It is flanked by the Sage project now complete to the west, and by Khorana Park to the east. The site slopes down 14 feet from the north-east corner to its southern point.

Context

Academy will be the third in a group of five high-rise residential towers that will frame the north-east corner of Wesbrook Village, set against the equally tall forested edge of Pacific Spirit Park.

The project must respond to the requirements of the South Campus Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan calls for a varied setback for the three towers fronting Burton. In response, Sage has been set back significantly more than The Wesbrook to its west. The Plan anticipates Academy will be closer to the street than Sage, creating at an urban design scale a kind of 'alcove' in the Berton Avenue streetscape with Sage at its centre and The Westbrook and Academy serving as bookends.

Program

Academy will provide more modestly sized residential units than its neighbours to the west. The program calls for 155 apartments averaging 912 square feet and seven townhouses at 1,260 square feet each.

The apartments include about 40% loft-like one-bedroom suites, some with dens, targeting graduate students, and about 60% more mainstream two-bedroom units. The top floor has 6 penthouses with larger roof decks.

A generous, double height lobby/amenity space is included at grade.

Architectural Response

Our response stems from an interest in the asymmetry of the context and program, and a belief that the north-west corner is the natural entry point for the project.

The location of tower and townhouses conform to the intentions of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The proposed 18-storey tower is located about 30 feet from Berton Avenue, much closer than Sage but leaving space to the north for street-accessed gardens for the ground floor suites, and for a "public" 8-foot inner landscaped boulevard south of the sidewalk. The building's typical floor-plate is shaped to respond to its two contexts. The north and west sides are flat, formal and urban, responding to Burton Avenue and the "alcove" formed by Sage's setback. The east and south sides are more articulated, responding to their softer park and green-street exposures. The east side steps towards the south, responding to the park's geometry and providing better sun and view to the east-side suites.

Townhouses front Village Lane and the south half of Khorana Park, as envisaged by the Plan. The townhouses are built on the same axes as the tower, creating an interesting streetscape, giving them greater presence for their size, and affording westerly views along Village Lane for their occupants. The two easterly units are treated as park villas, with a deliberately different contextual response to that of the street fronting units. All the townhouses are connected, either by cross-walls or continuous, narrow vine trellises.

For many, the building will be first seen and approached from Wesbrook Mall. Because of the Sage setback, the building is quite visible from this direction, with the north and west facades both prominent, and their intersection the most important corner on the building.

The building's main entry is located on this corner, and the entire north-west corner of the site is developed as an entry forecourt integrating arrival by car or on foot. The forecourt recognizes its urban design role as the completion of the base of the 'alcove', but seeks to generate a distinct character that has formal geometry but is greener, softer, and more complex than the Sage ground plane.

Two distinct vocabularies are proposed, responding to context and program.

The south and east 'park' facades of the tower are largely concrete and window wall. Slab edge extensions are limited to balconies plus the additional length needed to terminate in-slab ducts with a modest extension on the west side to improve sun shading. Sill heights are set at 16" to reduce glazing area.

The north and west 'street' facades are more solid. Floating, metal clad, surfaces define their character, and imply a base and top for the building. Programmatically, these faces contain most of the smaller loft-like suites, whose balconies are given a different expression than the larger suites. These faces correspond to orientations with limited views and with maximum heat gain or loss. Their reduced glazing and thermal bridging and greater insulation result in a significant benefit in skin efficiency for the building.

The townhouses are mostly concrete, with the stair and roof deck access expressed using the same zinc-coated steel cladding used on the tower.

Outside the lobby, a glulam-framed canopy, seen as a landscape element, holds the east edge of the entry forecourt and adds warmth and texture to the arrival experience. A full height planting lattice rises behind the canopy. As well as providing support for vine planting, this venetian-blind-like bar grating set out from a concrete fin will provide a textured, vertical element marking the tower's main entry. Clear finished fir is also used for trellises above the penthouse roof decks and for the townhouse entry doors.

As required by UBC Properties Trust, the project has been designed to meet Vancouver's requirements for Enhanced Accessibility for Multi-Family Residential Buildings.

The Sustainability goal for Academy is REAP Gold. The building systems will be designed to be compatible with the anticipated future Campus District Energy System. Details of building systems as well as overall energy modeling will be finalized during subsequent detailed design. Assisting with achieving sustainability goals is the consulting firm of E3ecogroup (see summary letter).

Landscape Response

The landscape for Academy continues the 'urban green' design vernacular established with the parks and open space of the surrounding residential developments and Wesbrook Village public realm landscape. This 'urban green' design approach employs clean lines, simple geometry and an uncluttered attitude to the landscape elements including planting and the use of water. The contrast to the surrounding forest context creates an interesting dynamic that illustrates UBC past and present.

The emphasis on simple, understandable form allows the landscape to take on a calm, unhurried expression. The genesis of this is the recognition of the open space created by the adjacent Sage development. The Academy front court references the geometry and volume of open space created by Sage. The orthogonal organization of the Sage entry court, specifically the vertical east west walls and corresponding ground plane bands form the geometry of the water feature, planting areas and walkways of Academy. The water feature, entry drive 'court' and adjacent landscape identify the Academy entry and create the transition from the public realm to building and the semi-private landscape beyond. The strong east-west organization ties these elements together in an urban garden expression running against the grain of movement. This purposeful arrangement slows the approach to the building and reinforces the 'pause'. The water feature steps as the grade falls to the south allowing for visual and auditory interest and subtly taking up grade. The mass of Iris extending north south along the edge of the water feature allows the landscape to break from the urbanity of Sage and create an identity unique to Academy.

The urban feel of this organization ends in a bosque of trees located on the east side of the entry plinth adjacent to the public sidewalk. From this point the expression of the park to the east informs the Academy landscape design. The emphasis is on a soft, green expression that engages the underlying formality and arrangement of plants found in the park planting.

The front entry court connects both visually and physically to the south courtyard. The visual connection is particularly important as a design element to draw the eye to the green landscape beyond. The south, sunny rear courtyard takes advantage of the grade change by introducing a gently sloped panel of lawn surrounded by mass planting which soften the edges and creates visual interest. The strong geometry of the south tower patios directs the energy to the adjacent park to the east where a garden like landscape space creates a transition from the public to private realm.

The townhouse landscape picks up on the Wesbrook greenway expression reinforcing the edges of the open space and creating privacy and visual interest.

REAP goals include an irrigation strategy that reduces the water usage by a minimum of 50%, adaptive planting that is drought tolerant where possible, growing medium with high capacity to hold storm water and materials that are locally manufactured and durable.

Conformance to Guidelines

As described in the text above, the project complies with the spirit and intent of the South Campus Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines. We are seeking one relaxation to the built form controls for the project, a building height relaxation of approximately six feet to accommodate the ducting for the in-suite heat pumps while maintaining minimum 8 feet ceiling heights.



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DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS

Legal Description: Lot 3, District Lot 6494, Group 1, N.W.D., Plan BCP26848

Site Area	0.458 ha.	49,299 sq. ft.		
FSR		2.80	(Allowed)	2.80 (Proposed)
FSR Area		138,036 sq. ft.	(Allowed)	137,970 sq. ft. (Proposed)
Site Coverage	45%	22,184 sq. ft.		

	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Setbacks		
North Elevation	(2.5m) 8.20 ft.	8.20 ft.
South Elevation	(2.5m) 8.20 ft.	8.20 ft.
East Elevation	(2.5m) 8.20 ft.	8.20 ft.
West Elevation	(2.5m) 8.20 ft.	8.20 ft.
Building Height	(Max. 53.0m) 173.88 ft.	179.88 ft.
Number of Storeys	18	18

Parking	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Regular Spaces		
Townhouses - max. 2 per unit	14	14
Apartments - max. 1 per 753 sq. ft.	173	173
TOTAL	187	187
Small Car Spaces (included in above total) - max. 25%		(47)
Electric Car Spaces (included in above total)		(10)

Disabled Spaces	17	17
Visitor Spaces	17	17
COMBINED TOTAL	221	221
Bicycle Storage / Parking		
Residential - 1.5 per suite	243 bikes	244 bikes
Visitor - one 16-bike rack per 35 suites	5 racks	5 racks

SUITE COUNT BY BEDROOM TYPE

TYPE	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
One Bedroom	33	
One Bedroom + Den	32	
Two Bedrooms	84	
Penthouses	6	
Townhouses	7	
TOTAL	162	

AREA BREAKDOWN

LEVEL	GROSS	EXCLUSIONS WALLS (7")	STORAGE	HEAT PUMP	MECH/ ELEC.	AMENITY	DOUBLE HEIGHT	BUILDING AREA	SUITES
18	7,106	224	229	-	50	-	-	6,603	6
17	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
16	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
15	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
14	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
13	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
12	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
11	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
10	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
9	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
8	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
7	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
6	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
5	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
4	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
3	8,033	252	314	65	50	-	-	7,352	9
2	7,918	242	245	51	50	-	983	6,347	7
1	7,918	242	257	50	50	460	-	6,858	7
Townhouses	8,987	827	280	-	-	-	-	7,880	7
TOTAL	152,407	5,315	5,726	1,076	900	460	983	137,970	162