



## REPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT BOARD

**Agenda Item:** 3.1

**Forwarded to:** Development Permit Board on Recommendation of the  
Director, Campus & Community Planning

**Approved for Submission:**

Manager of Development Services, Campus and Community Planning

**Date:** July 4, 2024

**Subject:** File # DP 24018 Lot BCR7, Wesbrook Place  
Market Rental Residential and Faculty/Staff Residential Project

---

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Development Permit Board recommend that the Director of Planning, Campus and Community Planning issue a Development Permit for a market rental residential high rise and four 6 storey faculty/staff residential buildings on Lot BCR7 in Wesbrook Place. The project comprises 303 dwelling units: 189 in a 14-storey high rise apartment building and 114 dwelling units for faculty/staff in four 6 storey midrise buildings, as detailed in the attached drawings prepared by DYS Architecture and Perry and Associates Landscape Architecture (Attachment A), subject to the following conditions:

- 1) That SC4C.5d of the *Development Handbook* be relaxed for this project to permit the height of a portion of the roof on the high rise building to project 1.5 m above the permitted maximum height (43.0m);
- 2) That Section 7.6 in the *Development Handbook* be relaxed to reduce the required number of Class I (interior) bicycle parking stalls from 689 to 675; and to reduce the required number of Class II (outdoor visitor) bicycle parking stalls from 152 to 70.
- 3) That Plan P-10 in the *Wesbrook Neighbourhood Plan* be relaxed to permit a section of the building street wall frontage facing Wesbrook Mall to be 14 storeys rather than 6 storeys or less.



## INTRODUCTION

On May 28, 2024, UBC Properties Trust submitted a Development Permit application for a residential development on Lot BCR7 in Wesbrook Place. The Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan clearly prescribes the floor area and building height permitted on individual development sites. However, large sloping sites such as BCR7 can require minor height relaxation to support an efficient site plan which accommodates multiple building elements. The project comprises a 14 storey high rise market rental apartment building and four 6-storey midrise buildings for faculty/staff. The gross floor area of the development is 11455.1 m<sup>2</sup> (123,302 sf) in the high rise building (Building A) and 11779.2 m<sup>2</sup> (126,791 sf) in the four midrise buildings (Buildings B and C1-3) as shown in Attachment A. The floor space ratio (FSR) of the development is 3.5.

## LOCATION

BCR7 is a 6,229 m<sup>2</sup> (67,047 sf) lot located in the southeast quadrant of Wesbrook Place in the former BC Research Lands on the east side of Wesbrook Mall. The lot is located midway between Gray Avenue and Binning Road (coloured red in Figure 1). The lot is bordered by BCR6 to the south (18 storey market rental building and two 6 storey faculty staff buildings currently under construction), Magnolia (a 6-storey faculty/staff residential building) to the west across Wesbrook Mall, and two recently completed 6 storey faculty staff buildings to the north facing Gray Avenue (Evolve and Echo). A greenway runs along the south side of BCR7 and connects to the adjacent neighbourhood park (yet unnamed). The park is centrally located in the BCR neighbourhood and is expected to be completed later this year. The remainder of the BCR area to the east of the park is undeveloped.



**Figure 1.** Location Map for BCR7 site in the Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site Condition

The project site slopes up to 3.6 metres from the west to east. Most of the site has been previously cleared and has been recently used for staging for adjacent construction projects. Twenty-four small trees on the eastern side of the site have already been removed and relocated. Two of these will be relocated to the boulevard on Wesbrook Mall at the completion of the project.

The arborist report by Diamond Head Consulting inventories 11 boulevard trees along Wesbrook Mall (Attachment B). All are red maples and range in size from 19 to 28 dbh (diameter in cms at breast height). Of these 6 will be removed due to conflicts with the access to the garage entry and a layby for parking. The remainder will be retained on site.

### Project Design

The project plans prepared by DYS Architecture and Perry and Associates Landscape Architecture are included in Attachment A and provide details on the urban design, architecture, landscape and unit layouts for the project.

The proposed residential project comprises 5 residential buildings. A 14-storey high rise market rental apartment building anchors the site on the southwest corner of the site facing Wesbrook Mall. Directly to the north across a fire lane is Building B – a 6 storey faculty staff rental building. Three more 6-storey faculty staff rental buildings (Buildings C1, 2 and 3) ring the remainder of the eastern end of the site and frame a landscaped amenity space for the residents. Buildings C1-3 are individual buildings but are linked from floors 2 to 6 by exterior walkways. These exterior walkways are a generous width at 10 feet and are designed to encourage social interaction between residents as well as for usable outdoor open space.

The entry to the high rise (Building A) and Building B are from Wesbrook Mall while the parkade entrance serving the entire residential development is accessed from Wesbrook Mall near the north property line under Building B.

A fire lane enters the site from Wesbrook Mall and functions as a linear open space leading to a landscaped courtyard occupying the centre of the site. Openings between the buildings provide pedestrian access between the buildings including a triangular outdoor amenity area between Buildings C1 and C2. The outdoor gathering spaces feature planted gardens, a central lawn, and seating areas. Catenary lighting provides visual interest and activates the space in the evenings. Access to the east-west greenway on the south side of the site, future community gardens and the neighbourhood park are provided by way of pathways between the buildings.

Within the 303 residential units, a mix of unit sizes will be provided ranging from studio to four-bedroom units (56% studio, one or two bedrooms; 44% three or four bedrooms). 2-storey townhomes are located at the base of buildings A, C-1 and C-3 with at-grade access to the outdoor patios.

Amenity areas provided in the buildings include meeting rooms and social spaces in Buildings A and B. These amenity areas as well as areas for storage and mechanical elements are excluded from building area calculations in accordance with the Development Handbook.

The project has been designed to adhere to the urban design principles of the Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal deviates from the Neighbourhood Plan with respect to the location of the high rise on Wesbrook Mall. The architecture and landscaping abide by the requirements of the SC3C High Density Residential – High rise/Townhouses development area in the Development Handbook with the exception of a proposed variance for height in the high rise for a portion of the roof that extends 1.5m beyond the 43.0 meter maximum permitted height. Variances to the required



number of accessible parking and bicycle spaces are also being requested by the applicant. These variances and rationales are explained in greater detail later in this report.

### **Sustainability**

The project is targeting Residential Environmental Assessment Program (REAP) 3.3 Gold (53 credits). The REAP summary is provided in Attachment C. Sustainability elements over and above the required credits include: 2050 Energy Efficient Climate Ready Design, Domestic Hot Water Metering, Planting for Biodiversity, Exemplary Community Amenity Spaces, and Innovation.

### **Parking and Access**

Vehicle access to a three level underground garage will be provided from Wesbrook Mall under Building B. The garage contains 240 resident vehicle parking stalls that are equipped for EV. 32 visitor stalls (including 4 EV and 4 accessible) and 31 stalls for people with disabilities are also provided. Also included in the parkade are elevator lobby access, areas for storage, garbage and recycling, mechanical rooms, a Level 2 EV charging station, 2 car wash stalls and 675 Class I bicycle storage spaces. Class 2 outdoor bicycle racks for 70 visitors are located in various areas within the landscaped project area.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION and ADVISORY BODY REVIEW**

### **Public Notification and Consultation**

The project plans were posted on the project website and the public was invited to complete online feedback forms from June 12 – 26, 2024. A Public Open House was held from 5:30 to 7:00pm on June 19 in the Wesbrook Community Centre Social Room.

Notifications of the open house were posted on-site on the Development Permit notification signs and the Campus and Community Planning website. An advertisement was posted online in the Ubyyssey running from June 12 to 19, 2022. Notifications were emailed to the University Neighbourhood Association (UNA), the Alma Mater Society (AMS), and Graduate Student Society (GSS). Notification letters for residents within 30 m of the site were emailed to Village Gate Homes for distribution to residents of the Nobel, Magnolia, and Dahlia Houses and to the residents of Evolve and Echo (BCR 8 and 9 respectively).

Campus & Community Planning staff and representatives from UBC Properties Trust, the project architecture consultant, and landscape architecture consultant were available to welcome attendees and answer questions about the project.

### **Consultation Summary:**

Approximately 12 people attended the open house and 22 online feedback forms and one email were submitted. Feedback received from the consultations focused on concerns about increased traffic congestion on Wesbrook Mall, shadowing or loss of views due to the high rise, construction noise, and lack of child care and commercial uses. A more detailed consultation summary is provided in Attachment D.

### **Advisory Urban Design Panel (AUDP)**

The project received formal Advisory Urban Design Panel (AUDP) consideration on June 6, 2024. The AUDP Minutes from this meeting are attached (Attachment E). The Panel unanimously supported the project.



### **Development Review Committee (DRC)**

The proposal was presented to the Development Review Committee (DRC) on June 13, 2024. The Committee supported the project, subject to the applicant working to address the following technical items:

- Resolution of water service tie-ins
- Confirmation of conditions for sanitary and storm service connections and servicing
- Development of a stormwater detention strategy
- Reconsidering the use of astroturf in the outdoor courtyard amenity space
- Reconsidering use of dark brick on south side of the high rise to mitigate heat gain
- Confirmation that catenary lighting is dark sky compliant

Should this application be supported by the Board, staff will be working with the applicant team to respond to these requirements prior to Development Permit issuance.

### **PROJECT EVALUATION**

#### **Compliance with Applicable Planning Policy Documents**

The proposal has been reviewed for compliance with the University's development controls and land use rules including the *Land Use Plan*, the *Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan*, and the *Development Handbook*. The attached Policy and Regulatory Evaluation Matrix evaluates the project according to relevant planning policies and development regulations (Attachment F).

As noted in the matrix, this development proposal is compliant with the majority of the university's land use development controls and policies. The following identifies the areas the project deviates from these policies and assesses their impacts.

#### **Development Handbook**

##### Height Variance

The applicant is requesting a variance to the maximum permitted height of the high rise apartment building. The maximum height permitted for this lot is regulated in two ways: by the number of storeys (maximum 14 storeys as designated for this site in Map P-10 of the Wesbrook Neighbourhood Plan) and by a height measurement as described in the Development Handbook for this Development Area (43.0 metres as noted in Sec. SC3C.5 d). The variance requested is for additional height projection to a maximum of 1.5 meters for the top plane of the roof. Although the building complies with the maximum number of storeys permitted in the Neighbourhood Plan, a variance to the maximum measured height regulation in the Development Handbook is required.

##### Analysis:

Because the site slopes approximately 3.6 meters from northwest to southeast on this large lot, the applicant is requesting this height variance in order to achieve adequate grades at the entry and for the ground floor units while maintaining sufficient floor to ceiling unit heights within the 14 storey building. Reducing the height to a maximum of 43 metres would result in the loss of a storey. Staff supports this variance due to the site specific sloping site conditions on the lot.

##### Bicycle Parking Variances

The requirements for Bicycle Parking for residents (Class I - interior) and for visitors (Class II - outdoor) are provided in the Development Handbook. The applicants are seeking a variance to



reduce the number of required Class I (indoor) bicycle stalls from 689 to 675 and a reduction in Class II (outdoor) bicycle stalls from 152 to 70.

Analysis:

The number of Class I stalls that are required is calculated based on the number of total bedrooms in a development. Since 44% of the units are 3 or 4 bedroom, the number of required stalls is significant and the reduction of 14 stalls is comparatively minor. Staff supports the reduction of Class I bicycle parking for this development.

The reduction in Class II outdoor stalls is more substantial. While staff recognizes the challenge of providing sufficient outdoor spaces to locate racks without interfering with outdoor amenities, staff will work with the applicants to determine whether there are opportunities for additional outdoor racks.

**Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan**

Street Wall Massing

Plan P-10 in the Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan requires that sections of the street wall (building interface with the street) do not exceed 6 storeys along Wesbrook Mall and Gray Avenue in the BCR area of the neighbourhood. The frontage of BCR7 that faces Wesbrook Mall is located within this area. While Building B complies with this requirement, the high rise at 14 storeys exceeds this maximum.

Analysis

A variance to the requirement for the maximum 6 storey street massing in the Wesbrook Neighbourhood Plan for this frontage is required. Stepping back the tower along Wesbrook Mall to 6 storeys while still respecting the height maximum of 14 storeys would result in a larger floor plate, a bulkier building, and reduce the amount of open space serving the project. For these reasons, staff supports this variance.

**SUMMARY**

Campus and Community Planning has undertaken the steps required for a Development Permit review for the residential proposal for Lot BCR7 in the Wesbrook Place neighbourhood. Campus and Community Planning confirms that the project is consistent with the governance requirements of the University (Land Use Plan, Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Plan and UBC Development Handbook) with the exception of the variances noted above. The applicant team has been receptive and responsive to the recommendations of both the advisory bodies and staff for this project. Staff recommends that the Development Permit Board endorse the recommendations to the Director of Planning on page one of this report.

A Building Permit with detailed construction drawings, consistent with the approved Development Permit, will be required following the issuance of the Development Permit.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A: Project Plans
- Attachment B: Arborist Report, Diamond Head Consulting
- Attachment C: REAP Summary
- Attachment D: Public Consultation Summary
- Attachment E: June 6, 2024 Advisory Urban Design Panel (AUDP) Minutes
- Attachment F: Policy and Regulatory Evaluation Matrix