

Urban Design Brief

Proposed Apartment Building Development 6179 Lundy's Lane, Niagara Falls

November 2024

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A. Introduction

I am a Registered Professional Planner (RPP) and full member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI). I am the President and Founder of MB1 Development Consulting Inc. (“MB1”) and a highly qualified land use planning and real estate development professional with extensive and diverse experience in all aspects of commercial and residential real estate development. I have practiced land use planning for over 20 years in communities across Ontario and Canada. I have been qualified as an expert in land use planning by the Ontario Land Tribunal (formerly Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) and Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)), as well as the Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB).

I have been retained to prepare this Urban Design Brief with respect to the proposed redevelopment of 6179 Lundy’s Lane in the City of Niagara Falls (the “Subject Property”). The proposal for the Subject Property includes redevelopment of the existing two-storey motel and surface parking area for a 10-storey mixed use building with at-grade commercial uses.

B. Site Context

B.1 Site Location and Existing Context

The Subject Property is located at 6179 Lundy’s Lane in the City of Niagara Falls as illustrated in **Figure 1**. This location is immediately adjacent to the northeast corner of the intersection of Lundy’s Lane and Drummond Road. An aerial map of the Subject Property is included in **Figure 2**. The property is approximately 0.315 hectares (0.78 acres) in area with frontage of 38.3 metres (125.62 feet) on Lundy’s Lane. The Subject Property is currently occupied by a 2-storey motel and surface parking lot with one driveway access to Lundy’s Lane. **Figure 3** and **Figure 4** include street views of the property from Lundy’s Lane.

The Subject Property is located immediately adjacent to existing transit service, including Niagara Region Transit route 116/216 along Lundy’s Lane and route 110/210 along Drummond Road. There are existing transit stops on both Lundy’s Lane and Drummond Road within convenient walking distance of the Subject Property. There are also sidewalks on both sides of Lundy’s Lane and Drummond Road to allow for convenient and safe access to these transit stops and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The Subject Property is designated “Built-Up Area” on Schedule A (Regional Structure) of the Region of Niagara Official Plan and is not located within any of the following areas: Agricultural Land Base (Schedule B); Core Natural Heritage (Schedule C); Potential Resource Areas (Schedules D1 – D3); and Mineral Resources (Schedule D4).

The majority of the Subject Property is designated “Tourist Commercial” on Schedule A of the City of Niagara Falls Official Plan with a portion towards the rear designated “Residential”. The Subject Property is located in the Drummondville Node as illustrated on Schedule A2, with no height strategy identified on Schedule A.2 (b) for the Subject Property and surrounding areas within the boundary of the Drummondville node. The Subject Property is also located within the Lundy’s Lane Tourism District and the Historic Drummondville Community Improvement Area.

The majority of the Subject Property is currently zoned “General Commercial (GC) Zone” under Zoning By-Law No. 79-200, with a portion towards the rear designated “Residential (R1E)”. The surrounding properties to the west and south are also zoned GC while the lands to the north and east are zoned “OS (Open Space)”. The single detached dwellings to the northwest of the Subject Property are zoned “Residential 1E (R1E) Density Zone”.

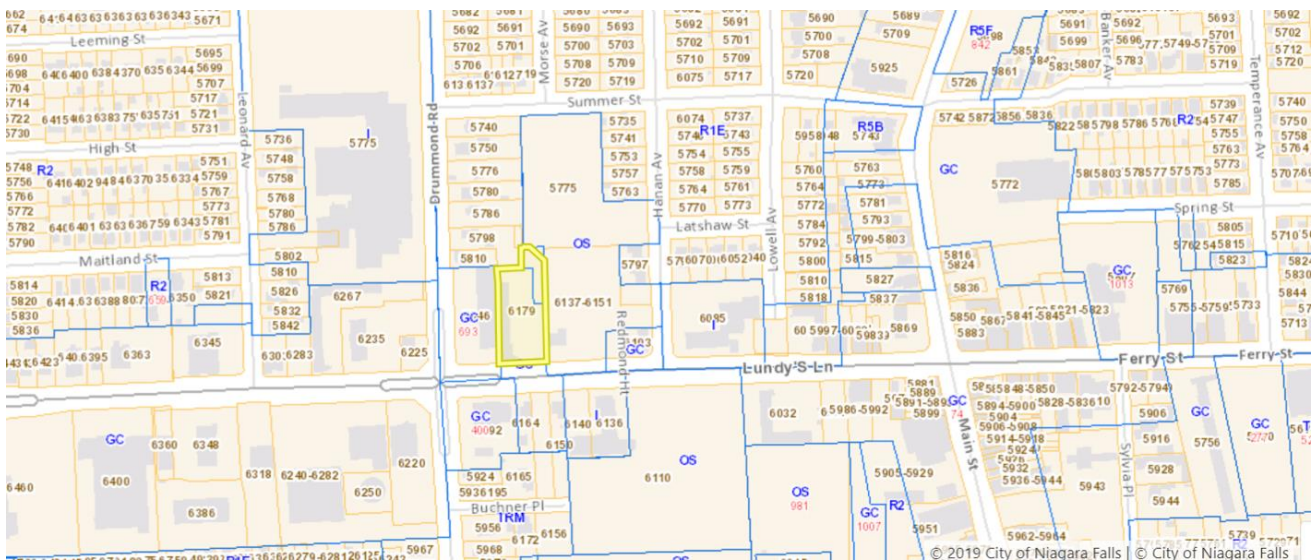


Figure 1 – Site Location



Figure 2 – Aerial Map of Subject Property and Surrounding Properties



Figure 3 – Street View of Subject Property from Lundy's Lane (east of motel)



Figure 4 – Street View of Subject Property from Lundy's Lane (west of motel)

B.2 Adjacent Properties

The Subject Property is surrounded by the following uses:

- To the north: Open Space (Coronation Park) and rear yards of single detached dwellings fronting onto Drummond Road (**Figure 5**);
- To the south: Service Station, single detached dwellings and church (**Figure 6**);
- To the east: Battle Ground Hotel Museum (**Figure 7**). This property is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) under By-law No. 2014-97. This property is also subject to a heritage easement held by the Ontario Heritage Trust and is federally listed as the Battle of Lundy's Lane National Historic Site and is on the Canadian Register of Historic Places. and
- To the west: 1-storey retail plaza (**Figure 8**).

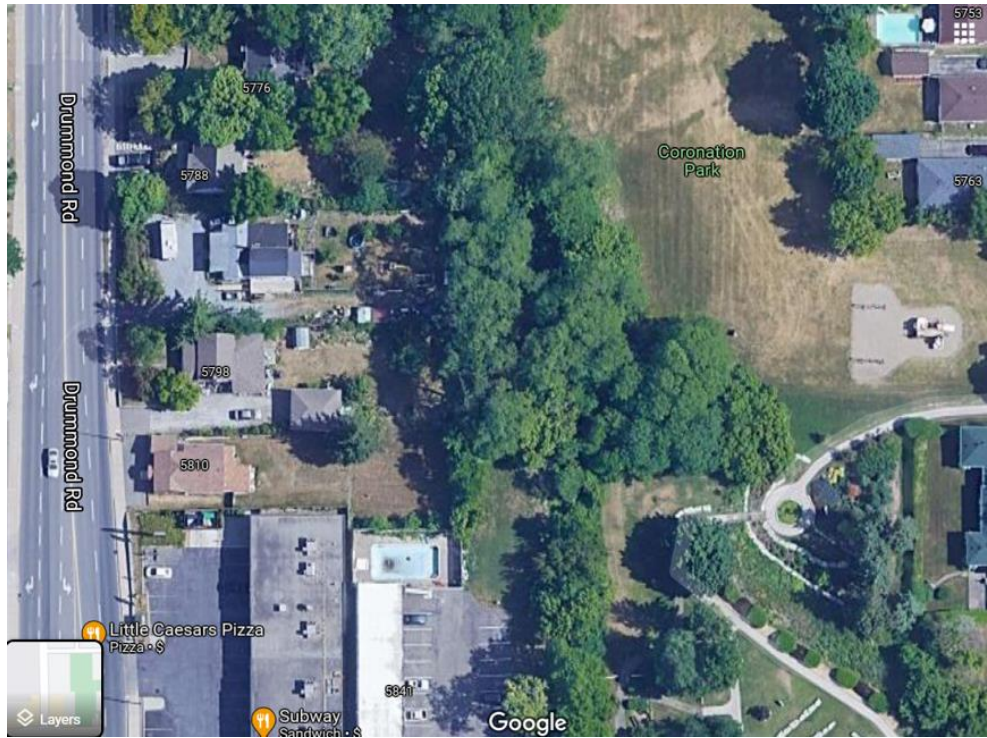


Figure 5 – Open Space and Single Detached Dwellings to North of Subject Property



Figure 6 – Service Station and Single Detached Dwellings to South of Subject Property



Figure 7 – Battleground Hotel Museum to East of Subject Property



Figure 8 – Retail Plaza to West of Subject Property

B.3 Surrounding Neighbourhood

The Subject Property is generally located in the “Built-Up Area” under the Region of Niagara Official Plan and is located in the “Tourist Commercial” designation along Lundy’s Lane under the City of Niagara Falls Official Plan. As illustrated in the excerpt from City of Niagara Falls Official Plan Schedule A.2 (b) in **Figure 9**, the Subject Property is located in the Drummondville Node, which includes properties designated for heights of up to 30 storeys. The Subject Property is not listed on the City of Niagara Falls’ Heritage Properties Register. However, the adjacent property to the east at 6137 Lundy’s Lane is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) under By-law No. 2014-97. This adjacent property is also subject to a heritage easement held by the Ontario Heritage Trust and is federally listed as the Battle of Lundy’s Lane National Historic Site and is on the Canadian Register of Historic Places.

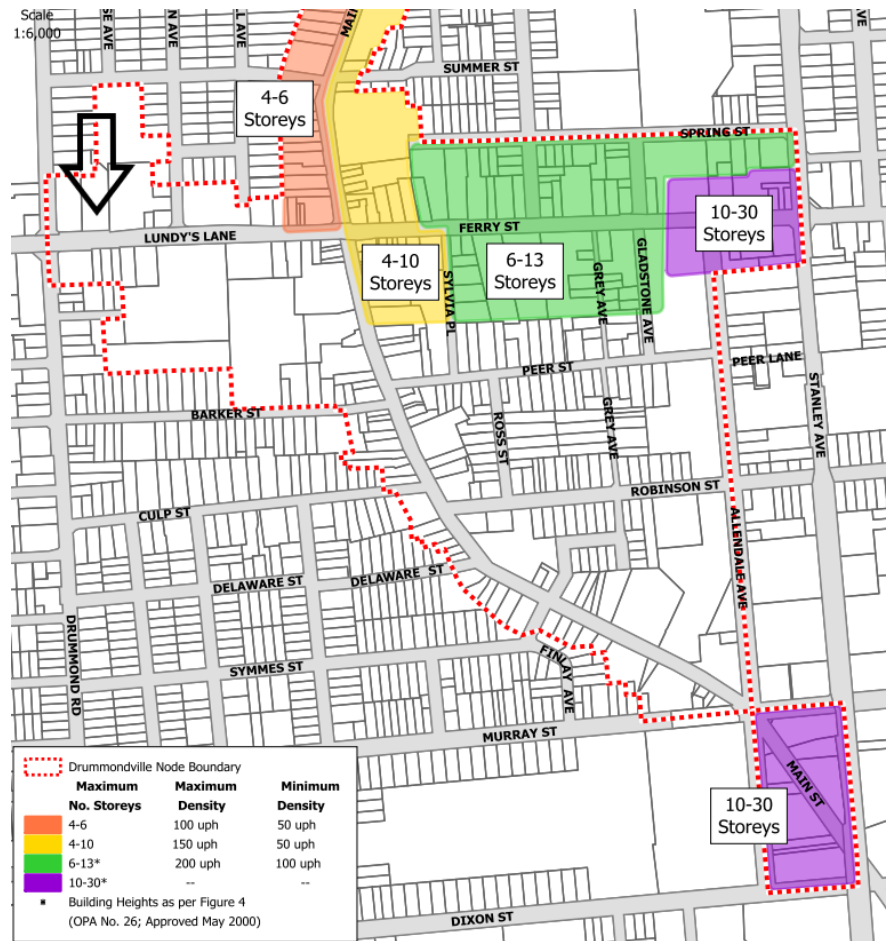


Figure 9 - Excerpt from City of Niagara Falls Official Plan Schedule A.2 (b)

C. Development Proposal

C.1 Proposal Details

The development proposal includes redevelopment of the existing motel for a 10-storey mixed use building with at-grade commercial uses and 144 residential dwelling units above. Parking for the residential units will be provided below grade (147 spaces or 1.02 spaces per unit) with an additional 12 spaces at grade (1 space per 25 m²) to accommodate the at-grade commercial uses. A conceptual building rendering is included in **Figure 10**. The proposed site plan is included in **Figure 11**. The proposed building elevations are provided in **Figures 12 through 14**. The complete preliminary design package is included in **Appendix A**, including architectural floor plans and elevations.

The development proposal requires an amendment to the City of Niagara Falls Official Plan to modify the Tourist Commercial designation on the following basis:

- To permit the proposed height of 10 storeys whereas a maximum of 4 storeys is permitted in the Drummondville node; and
- To permit maximum density of 453 units per hectare where a maximum of 100 units per hectare is permitted.

The development proposal also requires a site-specific amendment to City of Niagara Falls Zoning By-Law 79-200 to modify the “General Commercial (GC)” zoning on the Subject Property as follows:

- To permit a minimum residential parking ratio of 1.02 spaces per unit while 1.4 spaces per unit is required;
- To permit the floor area of the dwelling units above grade to exceed 66% of the total floor area of the building; and
- To permit a maximum building height of greater than 12 metres.



Figure 10 – Conceptual Building Drawing (looking west on Lundy’s Lane)

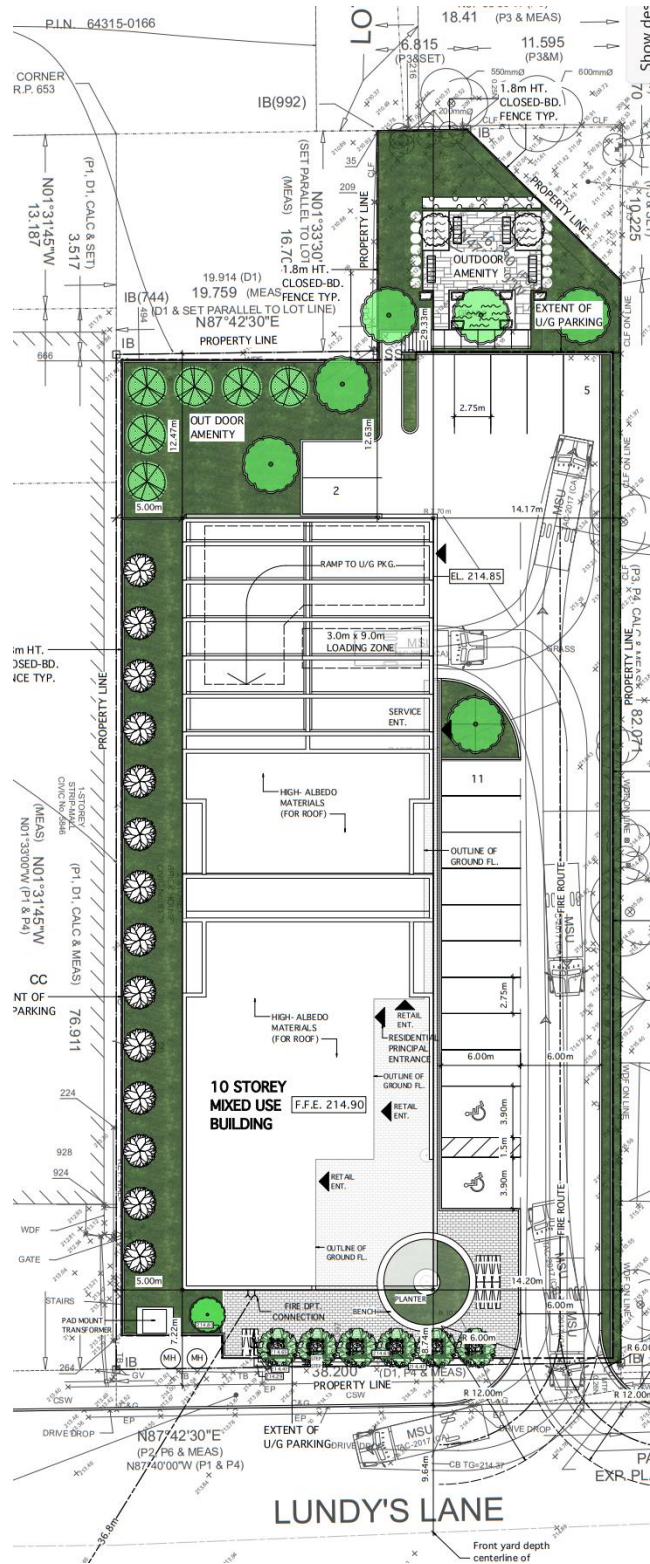


Figure 11 – Proposed Site Plan



Figure 12 – East Elevation



Figure 13 – West Elevation

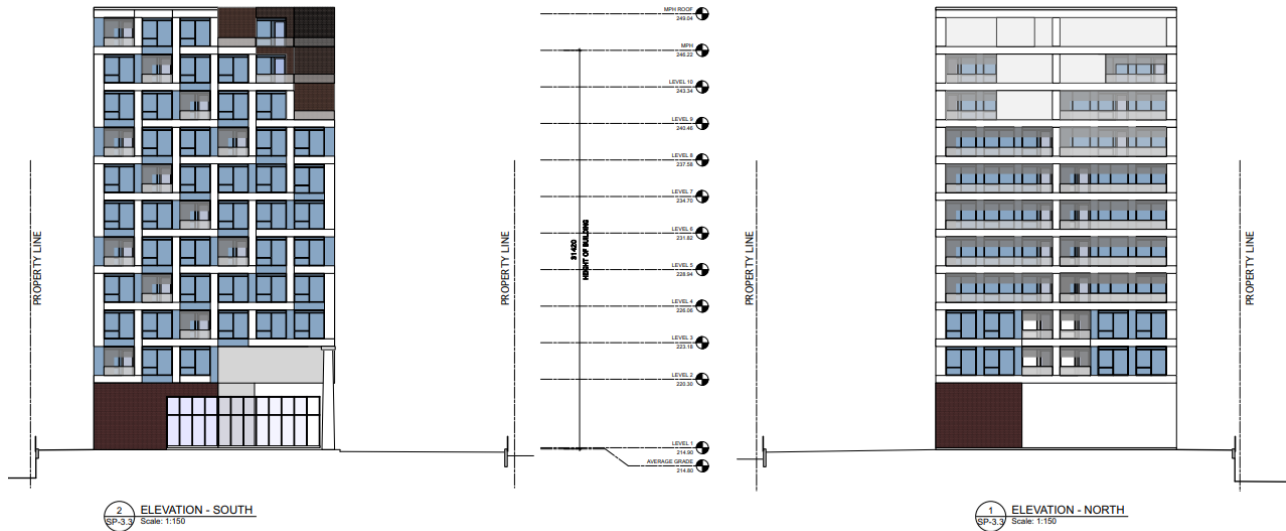


Figure 14 – North and South Elevation

C.2 Supporting Studies

C.2.1 Sun/Shadow Study

C.Y. Lee Architect Inc. completed sun/shadow analysis for the development proposal during different times of the year in order to evaluate the potential for shadow impact on the neighbouring properties. The anticipated shadows on the low-density residential uses to the north will occur only certain times throughout the year and for limited windows of time. The anticipated shadows on the heritage property to the east will generally be limited to later in the afternoon and for limited periods of time. The following sections provide the shadow analysis for each of the study periods.

- C.2.1.1 March and September

As illustrated in **Figure 15**, the shadows in March and September will be cast primarily within the Subject Property and on the commercial property to the west, with shadows being cast on the structure on the heritage property to the east for only approximately 1 hour during the late afternoon after 4 pm. There are no shadow impacts on the low-density residential properties to the north and the commercial properties to the south.



Figure 15 – Sun/Shadow Analysis – March and September

- C.2.1.2 June

As illustrated in **Figure 16**, the shadows in June will be cast primarily within the Subject Property except for limited times throughout the day. The commercial property to the west will experience some shadows for 1 hour after 9 am. The heritage property to the east will experience shadows later in the afternoon after 3 pm. There are no shadow impacts on the low-density residential properties to the north and the commercial properties to the south.



Figure 16 – Sun/Shadow Analysis – June

- C.2.1.3 December

As illustrated in **Figure 17**, the shadows in December will be cast primarily within the Subject Property except for limited times throughout the day. The commercial property to the west and the low-density residential properties to the north will experience some shadows for 2 hours between 9 am and 11 am. The heritage property to the east will only experience shadows later in the afternoon after 4 pm. There are no shadow impacts on the commercial properties to the south.

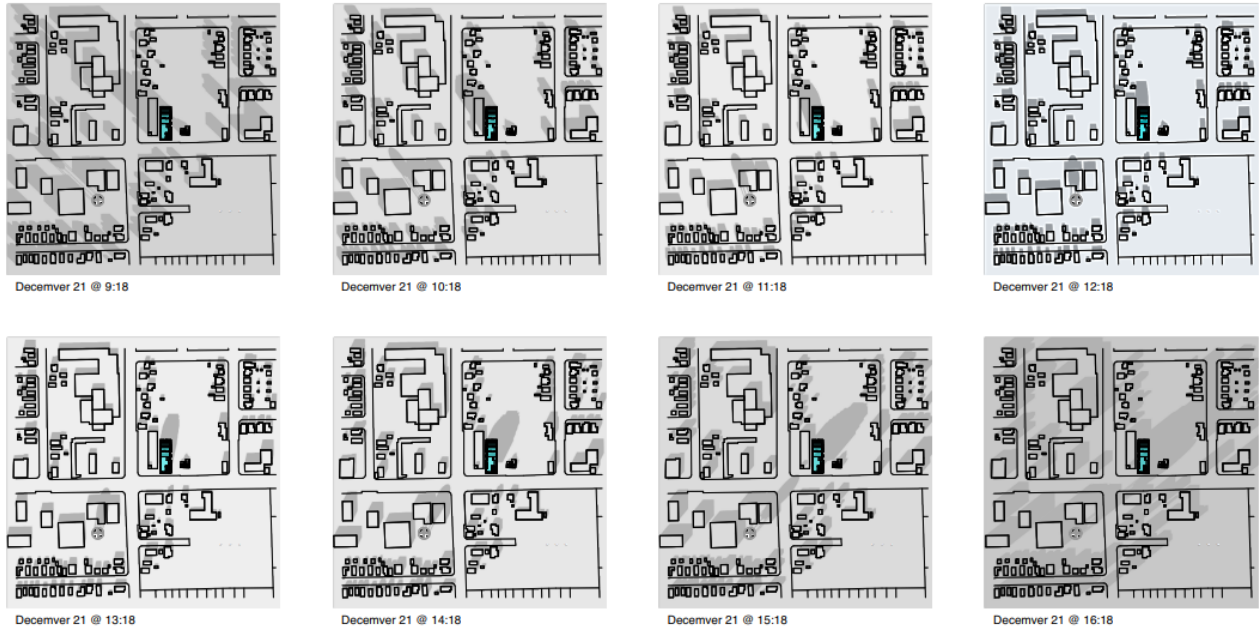


Figure 17 – Sun/Shadow Analysis – December

C.2.2 Heritage Impact Assessment

Archaeological Research Associates Ltd. (ARA) completed a Heritage Impact Assessment for the development proposal. This study confirms that the Subject Property is not listed on the City of Niagara Falls’ Heritage Properties Register but that the adjacent property to the east at 6137 Lundy’s Lane is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) under By-law No. 2014-97. This property is also subject to a heritage easement held by the Ontario Heritage Trust and is federally listed as the Battle of Lundy’s Lane National Historic Site and is on the Canadian Register of Historic Places.

This report recommends the following measures to allow the development proposal to proceed while mitigating potential impacts on the adjacent heritage property:

- Retain a structural engineer prior to starting construction to assess potential structural impact to Fralick’s Tavern as a result of any grade changes along the shared property boundary. This mitigation measure should be implemented during the construction process.
- To protect the adjacent property at 6137 Lundy’s Lane during the construction period of the proposed new building, a Temporary Protection Plan should be developed and distributed to demolition and construction personnel. This mitigation measure should be implemented during the construction process.
- Protect the adjacent building 6137 Lundy’s Lane by completing a Vibration Study to determine the Zone of Influence and if there will be any impacts on Fralick’s Tavern at construction phase. A Zone of Influence study identifies buildings which may require vibration monitoring during the construction

phase to which monitoring strategies can be determined and integrated into the Temporary Protection Plan. This mitigation measure should be implemented during the construction process.

- Move forward with planned landscape screening/buffer and maintain existing tall trees on property line with 6137 Lundy’s Lane as a method of minimizing negative visual impacts and incorporate the installation of concrete planters, fencing, wall and/or bollards into the landscape plan to mitigate the risk of accidental physical vehicular impacts during and after demolition and construction phase.

D. Analysis

D.1 Urban Design Policy Context

D.1.1 Applicable Policy Documents and Guidelines

In preparing this Urban Design Analysis, the following policy documents and guidelines have been taken into consideration:

- City of Niagara Official Plan
 - Part 1 (Plan Overview and Strategic Direction)
 - Section 3.14.1 (Urban Design for the Drummondville Node)
 - Section 3.14.3 (Heritage in the Drummondville Node)
 - Part 2 (Land Use Policies)
 - Section 4 (Tourist Commercial Designation Policies)
 - Part 3 (Environmental Management)
 - Section 5 (Urban Design Strategy)
- Lundy’s Lane Urban Design Guidelines;
- City of Niagara Falls Streetscape Master Plan and Urban Design Guidelines (2003);
- Tourist Area Design Guidelines;
- Tourist Area Architectural Design Guidelines;
- Tourism Policy Review and Implementation handbook;
- Site Plan Design Manual; and
- Region of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines.

D.1.2 Summary of Fundamental Urban Design Policies and Principles

The following fundamental urban design policies and principles are established in the applicable urban design policy documents and guidelines:

- Streetscape Character

- Providing a setback to street that is consistent with adjacent and surrounding properties and provides a strong street edge and pedestrian environment;
- Providing a continuous building face along street with minimal interruptions for elements such as driveway access;
- Incorporating landscaping and street trees to provide an attractive and comfortable pedestrian environment and transition between the public to private realm;
- Building Siting and Orientation:
 - Orienting buildings to the street with clearly defined entrances and animated facades and direct connections to sidewalks;
 - Including surface parking and vehicular circulation areas towards the rear or interior of the property;
- Transition and Buffering
 - Providing appropriate height, scale, massing and setbacks to protect and provide compatibility with, and transition to, adjacent land use and built form, including the provision of a 45-degree angular plane from applicable property lines;
 - Provision of building setbacks to street and adjacent properties above 15 metres of height;
 - Tallest buildings in the Tourist Commercial designation should be located in the Central Tourist District with reduced building heights towards the periphery;
 - Application of landscaping and fencing along property lines shared with residential and other sensitive uses;
- Architectural Design
 - Providing articulated facades with a defined building base to provide building rhythm and avoid large, blank facades;
 - Providing high quality, consistent and complementary colours and materials;
 - Breaking up the roof line to provide overall building articulation and facade variety;
- Preservation and Protection of Heritage Character
 - Careful attention to building design and configuration that is sensitive to heritage features on and adjacent to the property, including building height, massing and scale;
 - Enhancement and retention of the Lundy's Lane Battlefield site;
- Parking and Access
 - Locating parking to be screened and buffered from the street;
 - Providing of structured parking is encouraged;
 - Seeking reductions in required parking supply where it is justified on a site-specific basis;
 - Consolidation of vehicular access points;
- Microclimatic Impacts
 - Adjacent residential and other sensitive uses will be protected from sun/shadow and wind impacts associated with taller buildings;
- Loading and Maintenance
 - Incorporating of garbage, recycling and storage areas within the interior of the building;
 - Appropriately locate loading areas to minimize impacts to adjacent land uses;

- Screen from view in the public realm and upper floors of adjacent properties;
- Amenity Areas
 - Provide amenity areas for residential uses through private on-site green space, balconies and roof-top green space and/or public open space on or in proximity to the site, or through cash-in-lieu provisions;
- Transit-Oriented Development
 - Convenient access to existing and planned transit service; and
 - Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support active modes of transportation.

D.2 Urban Design Analysis

The intent of this development proposal is to more efficiently utilize the Subject Property through transit-oriented development that increases population and employment density along the Lundy's Lane corridor and in the Drummondville node while ensuring compatibility with the adjacent land uses to the north and east.

D.2.1 Streetscape Character

- As illustrated in excerpt from the site plan in **Figure 18**, the proposed building is oriented towards Lundy's Lane with a front yard setback that is consistent with the existing built form on the Subject Property;
- The site plan and ground floor plan included in **Figure 19** illustrate the location of the primary building entrances to the ground floor retail and residential components of the building, both of which are readily accessible by pedestrians from the sidewalks along Lundy's Lane;
- A continuous building face is provided along Lundy's Lane except for the landscaped open space area along the westerly property line and the driveway/vehicular circulation area along the east side of the Subject Property;
- Hard and soft landscaping, including street trees, are provided along the front property line to provide a transition between the private and public realm and to enhance the pedestrian environment along Lundy's Lane; and
- Bicycle parking and street furniture is also provided between the proposed building and the street edge.

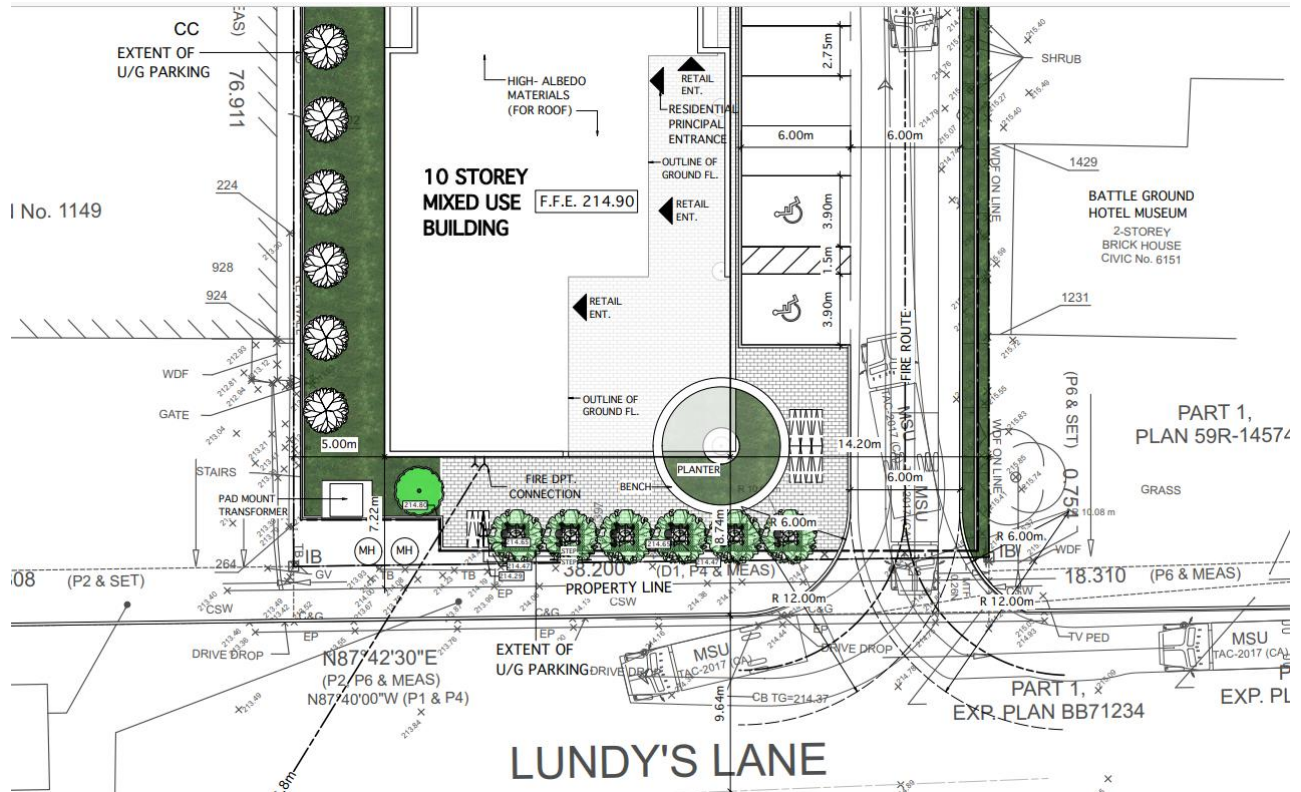


Figure 18 – Excerpt from Proposed Site Plan

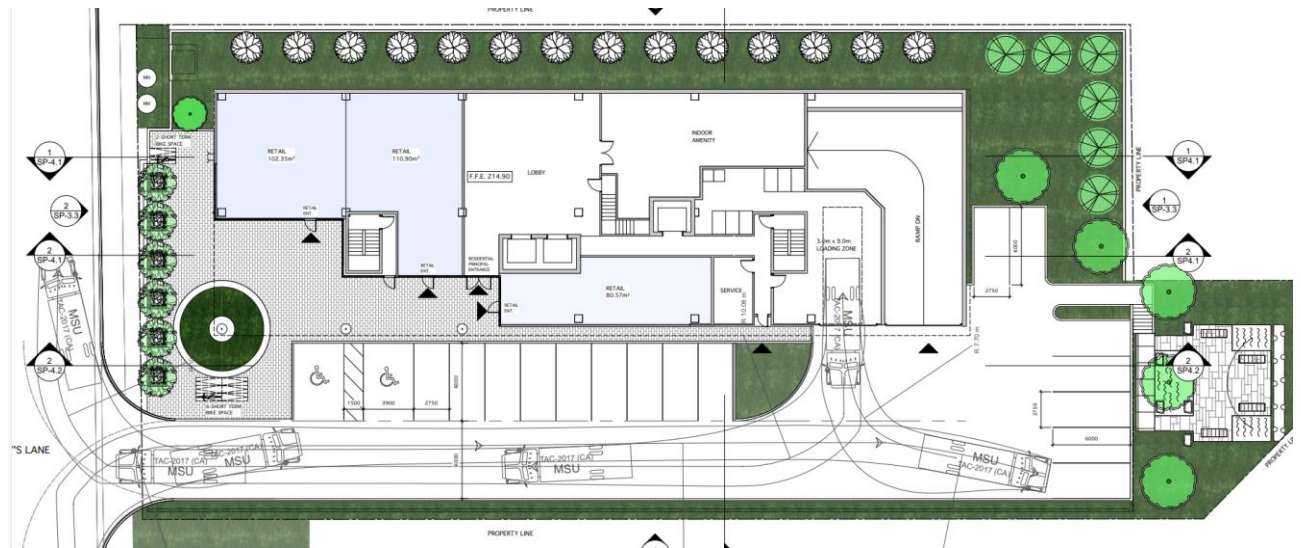


Figure 19 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan

D.2.2 Building Siting and Orientation

- The proposed building has been situated towards the west side of the Subject Property with the drive aisle, surface parking and below grade parking access along the easterly property line to provide spatial separation and buffering from the heritage property to the east;
- The majority of the parking is proposed below grade and completely screened from view with only a small supply of surface parking located along the east side of the Subject Property; and
- The proposed building steps down in height from the maximum of 10 storeys at the front property line to provide a 45-degree angular plane at the rear property line adjacent to the existing low density residential uses.

D.2.3 Transition and Buffering

- The proposed building has been located towards the west side of the Subject Property to maximize the spatial separation from the heritage property to the east;
- The proposed building also incorporates stepbacks in height on the southeast corner of the building adjacent to the heritage property, as illustrated in the perspective in **Figure 20**;
- The proposed building is also located towards Lundy's Lane and incorporates rear building stepbacks in order to provide spatial separation from the low-density residential uses to the north and the 45-degree angular plane measured from the north property line;
- The location of the Subject Property adjacent to a commercial use and the Drummond/Lundy's Lane intersection to the west and the existing commercial uses to the south represents a buffer from sensitive residential land uses; and
- The proposed 10-storey height represents a transition down from the maximum permitted 30-storey height in the core areas of the Tourist Commercial District.



Figure 20 – Perspective View

D.2.3 Architectural Design

The drawings included in this report and the complete architectural design set illustrate the following elements of the proposed building design:

- Building articulation through stepbacks in height, variety in the roof line and the incorporation of balconies;
- A variety of colours and materials, in conjunction with a significant amount of windows, to animate the building facades;
- Increased ceiling height and facade treatments on the ground floor that animate the building facade; and
- A defined ground floor design for the retail units that transitions to the residential units above grade and incorporates stepbacks at the front and rear of the building to break of the scale and massing and provide transition to the street and adjacent properties.

D.2.4 Preservation and Protection of Heritage Character

- The proposed building has been situated on the Subject Property to maximize the spatial separation from the heritage property to the east in order to mitigate impacts associated with the proposed height and massing, including sun/shadow and wind impacts;
- Stepbacks have been provided at the southeast corner of the proposed building to reduced the height and massing adjacent to the Battlefield Museum;
- A Heritage Impact Study has been prepared with recommendations on how the implement the development proposal in a manner that preserves and protects this heritage property.

D.2.5 Parking and Access

- The significant majority of parking will be accommodated in a below-grade parking structure that screens the parking and vehicular activity from view in the public realm and on adjacent properties;
- The limited surface parking is provided along the east side and rear of the building with no surface parking provided along Lundy's Lane between the building and street;
- The proposal seeks reduction to the minimum parking requirements in order to encourage the use of transit and active modes of transportation;
- Only one driveway access is proposed with a minimal amount of interruption to the landscaping and building facade along Lundy's Lane.

D.2.6 Microclimatic Impacts

- The sun/shadow study prepared for the application indicates that the anticipated shadows on the low-density residential uses to the north will occur only certain times throughout the year and for limited windows of time. The anticipated shadows on the heritage property to the east will generally be limited to later in the afternoon and for limited periods of time. The following sections provide the shadow analysis for each of the study periods.
- The wind impact assessment prepared for the application determined that the moderate height of the building would result in wind impacts that are expected to be relatively low and local. Wind conditions on and around the site are expected to be appropriate for the intended pedestrian usage at all entrances and most sidewalks, walkways, and parking spaces, with some uncomfortable wind speeds expected to occur only near the south and north ends of the proposed building during the winter season.

D.2.7 Loading and Maintenance

- As illustrated in **Figure 21**, the loading and service areas are located at the rear of the building and incorporated within the interior floor area;

- This location is largely screened from view in the public realm and on adjacent properties, and also aligns with the open space area of the heritage property to the east as opposed the Battlefield Museum.

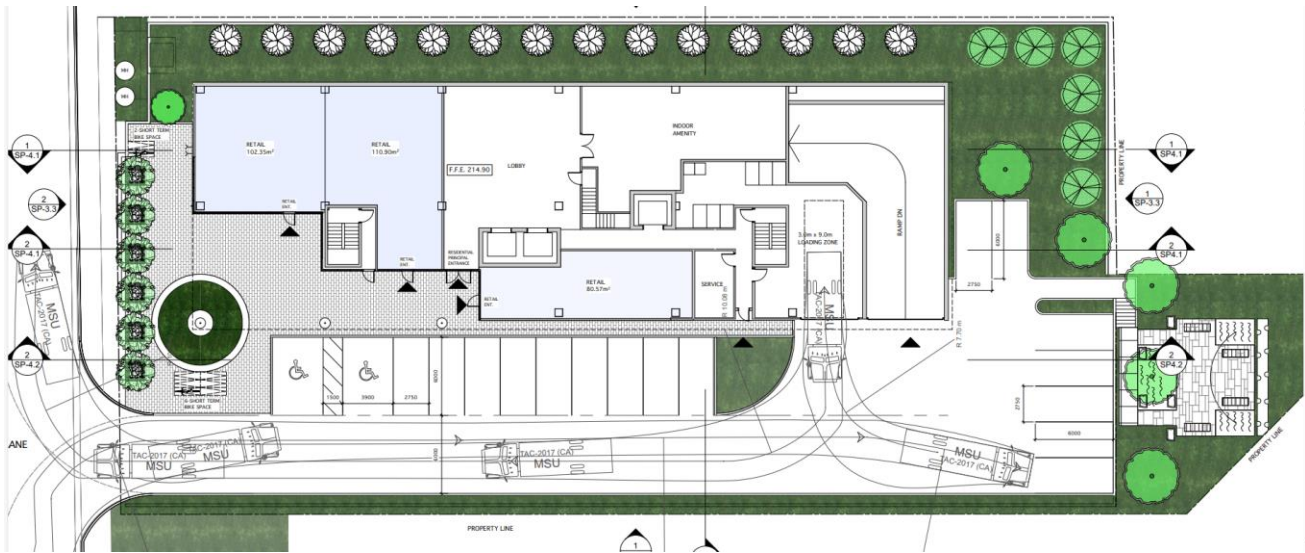


Figure 21 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan

D.2.8 Amenity Areas

- Landscaped outdoor amenity areas are proposed at the rear of the building as illustrated on the proposed site plan and ground floor plan; these areas also provide a spatial, landscaped buffer to the low-density residential uses to the north;
- An interior amenity area is also included on the ground floor directly adjacent to the lobby;
- In addition to balconies provided for individual dwelling units, outdoor terraces are provided at the rear of the building where stepbacks and the 45-degree angular plane are provided.

D.2.9 Transit-Oriented Development

- The proposed building and primary entrances are located to provide convenient and direct pedestrian access to the sidewalks along Lundy's Lane, which also provide convenient access to existing transit stops;
- Street furniture is provided in front of the building to provide comfortable amenity space adjacent to the public realm;
- Ground floor retail uses contribute to the mixed-use character of Lundy's Lane and support complete communities and the use of non-automotive modes of transportation;
- Bicycle parking is provided in front of the building and immediately adjacent to the public realm.

E. Conclusions and Recommendations

It is my opinion that the development proposal for 6179 Lundy's Lane is consistent with, and will appropriately implement, the fundamental urban design policies and principles set out in the following documents:

- City of Niagara Official Plan
- Lundy's Lane Urban Design Guidelines;
- City of Niagara Falls Streetscape Master Plan and Urban Design Guidelines (2003);
- Tourist Area Design Guidelines;
- Tourist Area Architectural Design Guidelines;
- Tourism Policy Review and Implementation handbook;
- Site Plan Design Manual; and
- Region of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines.

Regards,



Michael Barton, MCIP, RPP