URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

70 and 76 Edgehill Drive

City of Barrie
70 and 76 Edgehill Drive

CITY OF BARRIE
COUNTY OF SIMCOE

URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

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1.0 PURPOSE

This Urban Design Brief addresses the various guidelines and policies developed to guide urban design within the City of Barrie. The guidelines and policies have been reviewed against the proposed development to demonstrate that the proposed built form is consistent with the intent and objectives of the City’s direction for Urban Design. This brief is part of a submission for Zoning By-law Amendment application which includes:

- Planning Justification Report – Innovative Planning Solutions
- Affordable Housing Report – Innovative Planning Solutions
- Tree Preservation Plan/Inventory Report – Landmark Environmental Group Ltd.
- Traffic Noise Study – R. Bouwmeester & Associates
- Hydrogeological Assessment – Cambium Inc.
- Environmental Impact Study – Azimuth Environmental Group
- Traffic Impact Study – CC Tatham
- Stage 1-2 Archaeological Assessment – AMICK
- Edge Management Plan – Azimuth Environmental Group

2.0 CONTENT

This brief will review the Official Plan Urban Design Guidelines (Section 6.5), the City of Barrie Urban Design Manual, and City of Barrie Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines relative to the proposed development. The scale and design of the proposed development will increase the range and type of housing options and increase the stock of units in an area that is currently comprised of low density, single detached dwellings to the north and west, and apartment buildings to the south-west. A variety of commercial uses are located farther south along Anne Street and Cedar Pointe Drive/Wellington Street. The proposed development will create a comfortable yet compact built form of housing in keeping with the intensification objectives of the City of Barrie and Province.

This Urban Design Brief relative to 70 and 76 Edgehill Drive addresses issues of urban design relating to:

- Land use
- Urban built form, housing types and densities
- Building placement
• High quality design and materials
• Streetscape and landscaping
• Pedestrian scale and walkability

2.1 Contextual Analysis
The subject lands are located at 70 & 76 Edgehill Drive, somewhat centrally located geographically in the City of Barrie. The subject property is located within the Sunnidale Planning Area, as identified on Schedule ‘B’, and is located within the Built-up Area as identified on Schedule ‘I’ of the City of Barrie Official Plan. The subject land is comprised of two independent lots, possessing a combined total area of 2.173 hectares (5.37 acres), with approximately 112.5 metres (369.09 feet) of frontage along Edgehill Drive. Edgehill Drive is a local road as identified on Schedule ‘D’ of the Official Plan, however Edgehill Drive west of Anne Street North is identified as a Minor Collector.

The site is currently serviced by municipal water and sewer. 70 Edgehill Drive is the easterly property, which contains one existing single detached residential dwelling unit and accessory use (shed), all structures will be demolished prior to development occurring. 76 Edgehill is the larger westerly property and is currently vacant of structure. The subject lands slope significantly from high elevations towards the northwest (rear) to low points approaching the southeast (front) of the site. There is significant tree coverage towards the rear of the properties (can be seen in Figures 1 and 2).

The abutting lands to the north is an existing established residential neighbourhood, characterized by primarily single detached residential dwellings. Provincial Highway 400 is located to the south. Environmentally protected lands are located toward the east, and beyond is Highway 400. To the west is an eleven-storey residential apartment building and high density residential dwellings further beyond.
Figure 1: View of 70 Edgehill Drive  
Source: Google Streetview  

Figure 2: View of 76 Edgehill Drive  
Source: Google Streetview
The subject lands are near several local bus routes which provide convenient access to Downtown Barrie, Regional Transit opportunities, and other major local destinations. The City of Barrie bus routes 8 and 5 stop near the subject lots at the intersection of Anne Street and Edgehill Drive. Both routes provide direct and convenient access to the downtown transit terminal, which provides connections to several other local bus routes as well as regional transit opportunity. Route 5 is primarily a local collection route in the north end, providing access to the downtown. Route 8 travels along more major streets in the City, connecting residents to key areas in both the north and south ends of the City. Local bus route 6 is also located within proximity to the subject lands, with a stop located one block further west at the intersection of Edgehill Drive and Cedar Pointe Drive. This route provides additional coverage throughout north end neighbourhoods.

A large commercial/retail plaza is located just south-east of the subject lands including a No Frills grocery store, Shoppers Drug Mart and a number of additional retail stores and eateries. Beyond the above, other important community uses are nearby. This includes several schools and religious institutions within walking distance, as well as numerous parks with a range of recreational facilities.

### 2.2 Site Design

The Site Plan proposes to introduce 109 dwelling units in the form of primarily back to back townhouse dwellings and a small number of traditional block/cluster townhouses. The proposed site plan can be seen in Figure 3.

The back to back townhouse dwellings would be within five buildings of 20 units (10 units in length). In addition, 9 block/cluster townhouses are proposed towards the northeast of the site. Four of the back to back townhouse structures are arranged towards the west of the site, separated by 12.2 metres of space where the grade has been raised to reduce the structured parking and make the site a more human scale. Within this raised area are internal pathways connecting to individual units and naturalized areas.
Figure 3: Site Plan
Source: Innovative Planning Solutions
Within the site, a total of 136 parking spaces are provided to service the dwelling units. Each block/cluster townhouse are provided with two parking spaces, in tandem, one in the garage and one in the driveway. A total of 100 parking spaces are provided under the back to back townhouses, 20 spaces per building. In addition, there are 23 at grade visitor parking spaces, with 1 Type 'A' and 1 Type 'B' barrier free parking spaces.

Access to the site for pedestrians is conveniently provided by internal sidewalks throughout, primarily located along the internal laneway. The proposed walkways connect Edgehill Drive to the primary entrance of all 109 dwelling units.

The concept plan provides amenity area in several forms throughout the site. A consolidated amenity area is provided towards the rear of the property, adjacent to the environmentally protected lands, providing logical access to this natural feature and adding buffer space towards the residential component of the site. The 1,136 square metre area provides a functional space for residents to utilize. In addition to the consolidated amenity space, the townhouse dwellings are provided private amenity space in the form of balconies and rooftop patios. These areas provide additional functional outdoor use that is separate from the consolidated area, in a more private format. These areas would be ideal for outdoor dining/living opportunities.

A stormwater pond has been located towards the southeast of the site, with a total area of approximately 754 square metres. This is a proposed dry-pond which will service the units within the site to manage stormwater runoff.

The design of the units will incorporate unique aesthetic properties while utilizing high quality building materials to ensure a façade and structure that promote a distinctive urban character. Several elevations and perspective renderings have been provided to demonstrate the potential built form for the development.

Overall the proposal delivers a medium density development within the built-up area along an intensification corridor, contributing to the range of housing options in a compact urban form. The design maximizes the site’s efficiency, and therefore maximizes the use of existing municipal infrastructure.
Conceptual Renderings
3.0 URBAN DESIGN

The City of Barrie has developed a series of policies and guidelines to direct development throughout the City. Three documents were reviewed relative to this application. The City of Barrie Official Plan policies found in Section 6.5 provide guidance for urban design throughout the City. The City of Barrie Urban Design Manual was implemented in 2007, and revised in 2014 with the intention of guiding development and identifying the desired built form for new development throughout the City. Finally, as part of the City’s Intensification Strategy, the Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines have been implemented to guide development in identified Intensification Areas. This section will review the urban design policies found in these three sources as they pertain to the subject development, and how they have been incorporated within the overall design of the site.

3.1 City of Barrie Official Plan

The City of Barrie has developed Urban Design Guidelines, which are found in Section 6.5 of the Official Plan. Policies and guidelines are provided to be a framework for development and maintenance of a healthy, safe, convenient, efficient and aesthetically pleasing urban environment. They intend to improve the appearance of developments across the City incorporating boulevard landscaping, street furniture, lighting, signage, sidewalks and park/plaza development.

Section 6.5.2.2 of the Urban Design Guidelines provides the following recommendations, which provide guidelines for the subject site:

- Building and Siting:
  - The massing and conceptual design of buildings should complement and contribute to a desirable community character;
  - All visible sides of buildings should be finished and treated with a high quality of architectural design. Landscaping can be used as additional screening of exposed blank walls;
  - Pedestrian links should be designed to ensure safety and provide accessibility between buildings and properties;
- Parking Areas:
  - Parking areas and driveways should be linked, to reduce the number of turns onto and off a major road;
  - Adequate disability parking shall be provided;
  - The visual impact of parking areas should be buffered through landscaping;
- Landscaping:
o Planting strips shall be provided along the street frontage;

- Environmental Features:
  o The protection of trees, where possible, is encouraged;

- Signage:
  o Signs shall complement the architectural design and materials of the buildings;

- Utilities:
  o Utilities shall be clustered or grouped, and provide appropriate easements where possible;

- Energy Efficient Urban Design:
  o Energy efficiency shall be encouraged through site and building design including building materials, energy conserving landscaping, building orientation etc.; and
  o Energy efficiency is promoted through the development of a compact urban form that encourages the use of transit, cycling and walking, a mix of housing uses, and focusing major developments on transit routes.

These recommendations provide a guideline to designing sites within the City of Barrie. They have been reviewed and considered in the design of the subject lands.

### 3.2 City of Barrie Urban Design Guidelines

The City of Barrie’s Urban Design Manual was revised in 2014 and provides direction for many design elements within urban developments. The proposed concept attempts to incorporate many of the design directives found within this document specifically relative to: the physical environment and building siting; pedestrian and vehicular circulation; site servicing; architectural design; and public transit accessibility.

#### 3.2.1 Physical environment and building siting

- The proposed townhouse built form and associated densities are considered to be appropriate for the subject lands given their location within the built-up area of the City. In addition, the subject lands are isolated on all sides from lower density development, with a high density apartment to the west, and the environmentally protection lands sloping north of the property the lands provide a suitable location for increased density and the proposed built form.
- The environmental protection lands sloping north of the property are being maintained within the site design and development, creating a buffer and privacy to the dwellings and parking areas.
- The proposed townhouses have been situated 3.0 metres from Edgehill Drive.
• Several vertical architectural elements including varied shading and materials help to reduce a lengthy building façade, and diversify the visual presentation of the structure.
• The requisite number of parking spaces are provided and internal to the site, primarily located below the units screened completely from public view.
• Windows and entrances on buildings fronting onto Edgehill Drive will be oriented towards the street to enhance surveillance (eyes on the street).
• The proposed consolidated amenity area has been positioned towards the rear of the site adjacent to the environmental area. In addition to this consolidated amenity space, units are provided private amenity space in the form of balconies and rooftop patios. This provides residents ample recreational and living opportunity.

3.2.2 Site circulation
• Pedestrian access has been incorporated into the design in order to provide safe and convenient access from Edgehill Drive. The sidewalk loops through the property, providing access to internal parking and dwellings. Given the scale of the proposed development, the provided sidewalk network is considered appropriate.
• Adequate parking has been provided in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw at a ratio of just over 1.5 spaces per unit.
• Five barrier free parking spaces have been provided.

3.2.3 Site services
• Garbage collection is planned to be private and towards the rear of the site, potentially located underground.
• All utilities are currently proposed to be located underground.

3.2.4 Architectural design
• Townhouses fronting along Edgehill Drive will promote a strong urban streetscape with high quality architectural design. All dwellings are coordinated in their design, providing uniformity for the site.
• Parking areas located below the living area of the townhouse structures are accessed from the side of the dwellings.
• Certain design elements will be incorporated (such as porches, stoops, decks, rooftop terraces, etc), which are intended to create an attractive, pedestrian scaled neighbourhood encouraging interaction with passer-by's and enhancing the ‘eyes on the street/amenity space’ principle.
• Detailing of front elevations will make allowances for bay windows, porches, semi-parapets in order to convey a high level of architectural interest. A variety of materials (and colours of materials) will be utilized for the design including, brick and stone.
• Overall, the architectural design, style, massing and material selection will contribute to the high design of the proposal which provides a visual emphasis to each façade.

3.3 City of Barrie Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines

The City of Barrie has adopted Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines, which help to ensure that new development in intensification areas is compatible with the existing built fabric, creates an attractive and safe pedestrian realm, supports alternative modes of transportation, and is environmentally sustainable. These guidelines apply to developments within Intensification Nodes and Corridors, the Urban Growth Centre, and Major Transit Station Areas. They are meant to provide both the private and public sector a series of tools to guide development and intensification in these areas, and have been consulted with throughout the development of the proposed site plan.

The subject lands are not located within the Intensification Area as noted in the guidelines, however, the guidelines have been reviewed and the proposed development uses many of the tools and follows many guidelines.

The design guidelines in this document are not intended to be so prescriptive as to preclude excellent design, or development options that are consistent with the intent of the Guidelines. The proposed development was designed in a way that respects the intent of the Guidelines, and provides a built form that is more human scale, transit supportive, and compact. This brief will outline the conformity of the proposed development with the relevant guidelines and objectives outlined within the City of Barrie Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines.

3.3.1 Parking

Section 4.2 of the Guidelines provides direction for parking in the private realm. In general, the guidelines suggest a transition away from large areas of surface parking, to be replaced by above ground structured parking. The proposed site plan has been designed to minimize the overall impact of parking to the public view, providing a combination of structured and surface parking. The majority of the parking is provided below the units on the ground level for the back to back townhouses. Parking for the standard townhouses is provide in tandem with one garage space and one driveway space, for a total of two parking spaces per dwelling. An additional 23 surface parking spaces are provided for visitors.
In keeping with the direction of the Urban Design Guidelines, minimal surface parking has been provided within this proposal. The following are the relevant policies pertaining to surface parking as outlined in section 4.2.1 of the Guidelines:

- Surface parking should be located at the rear of buildings. If the lot is not deep enough, the parking should be located at the side of the building;
- Where parking areas are adjacent to a public sidewalk, buffers such as landscaping, trees or bollards should be provided between the parking area and the sidewalk. This buffer should be located within the private realm to not reduce the total sidewalk width;
- Planting strips, landscaped traffic islands and/or paving articulation should be used to define vehicle routes and smaller parking courts that provide pedestrian walkways, improve edge conditions and minimize the aesthetic impact of surface parking;
- The amount of landscaping should be proportionate to the overall parking lot size, but generally, 1 tree for every 8 parking spaces is recommended;
- Landscaping, or other parking area screening devices, should not obstruct the primary building façade or total visibility of the parking area; and
- Distinctive pavement and/or markings may be used to indicate pedestrian crossings.

The small amount of surface parking that has been provided as visitor parking, is located to the east of the main access to the site and will be buffered by trees and landscaping coverage. The landscaping for the parking area does not interfere with the building façade.

In order to provide an adequate parking supply, while avoiding large areas of surface parking, 100 parking stalls have been provided at the ground floor below the townhouse dwellings. The parking orientation provided by this proposed development resembles more of a structured parking configuration, a more desirable parking form as outlined within the Guidelines. The policies relevant to structured parking as outlined in the Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines are as follows:

- A vertical mix of parking, residential and/or office above should be considered a preferred development model, with parking on the lower floors and residential or office above. Shallow retail or office units should face the street minimizing the visual impacts of the structured parking lots;
- Vehicular access to parking structures should be located at the rear and/or side of buildings away from main building frontages and major streets; and
• Parking within a structure should be screened from view at sidewalk level and the street-level wall should be enhanced through architectural detailing and landscaping.

A vertical mix for the structures is provided, where logical the parking is on the lower floor and three floors of residential use is located above. The residential units face the street, concealing the parking structure that exists below. Vehicular access to the parking levels is located to the side of each residential structure, concealed from public view to the greatest possible degree. Through the placement of the driveway entrances towards the side of the building and additional trees and landscaping elements that have been included within the site design.

The surface parking for the townhouses is hidden from the street by the block of back to back townhouses located in front of the standard townhouses. The driveways are accessed within the site, off the ‘T’ from the main road coming into the site. Through the placement of the townhouses, the driveways are concealed from public view.

3.3.2 General building guidelines
The Intensification Area Urban Design Guidelines offer several general building guidelines and policies that were considered throughout the design of the subject site. Several elements of the design of buildings are outlined within the guidelines, including the building orientation and site layout, building heights, building step backs, building articulation, and the materials used for construction/design. In regards to the orientation and site layout, buildings are to be positioned to frame abutting streets, sidewalks, and amenity areas. Main building entrances should be directly accessible from public sidewalks, and the front streetwall of the buildings should be built to the front property line or applicable zoning standard. The subject lands have been designed to provide a building that has primary entrances fronting the public road, with minimal setbacks so as to better frame Edgehill Drive.

The Guidelines provide significant direction for the height of buildings and appropriate façade step-backs. The relevant policies indicate that buildings within Intensification Areas should generally be limited to a mid rise-scale, which is defined as ranging between 4 and 8 storeys. Additionally, buildings should achieve a minimum height of 2 storeys, or 7.5 metres. The three proposed buildings meet the intended height of 4 storeys that is suggested by the Guidelines. Above certain heights, the guidelines require step-backs in order to maintain prominent views and ensure sunlight penetration.
The aesthetic qualities of the building including its façade, access points, roof line, and multiple other details are significant factors in determining how the public views the building and their experience on the street. The series of policies pertaining to building articulation are therefore extensive, and have been considered when designing the buildings themselves. The guidelines suggest that larger buildings should provide a façade that is designed to express individual ownership and units through architectural elements. In particular, when a building frontage exceeds 12 metres in width, the building should be divided functionally and visually into smaller units. There should be consistency with the design and quality of materials that are being used within the development, and building finishes should be complimentary. Finally, glass at the lower levels is encouraged, in order to create visual interest for pedestrians. The design of the townhouse buildings have taken these guidelines into consideration, visually providing vertical podiums that architecturally break up the longer frontage of the building, signifying multiple units and ownership. The material is consistent through the various units, primarily relying on stone and brick visuals, providing contrast through the colours selected. Lower floor balconies have been provided, with the entrances to these balconies and the primary building entrances constructed with glass material.

Finally, the building materials that are used have lasting impact on the building, how it is perceived, and how well it is maintained over time. The Guidelines suggest that all new buildings use materials that are chosen for both their functional and aesthetic quality, as well as energy and maintenance efficiency. Materials should demonstrate high quality of workmanship and durability, and materials should be used as intended (not mimicking other materials). Finishes should extend through all sides of the building. These guidelines will be addressed as building design takes place through Site Plan process.

4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment aims to facilitate a medium density residential development within a built-up area of the City. It is intended that the additional residential units will offer a new dwelling type within a primarily single detached residential and apartment building neighbourhood. With a strong urban streetscape, coupled with quality design as required by the City’s Urban Design Guidelines and an appropriate transition in height and built-form to adjacent uses, this development is poised to become a functional component of the urban fabric of the existing and planned neighbourhood. Additional residents will contribute to the vitality of the neighbourhood and its multiple amenities, promote the increased reliance on transit, and provide additional clientele for the many existing businesses in the area.
Respectfully submitted,

Innovative Planning Solutions

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