

FOTENN

601 Scottsdale Drive, Guelph

Urban Design Peer Review
Proposed Phase 2 Student Housing Development
October 31, 2024



FOTENN

Prepared for City of Guelph

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October 2024

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1.0 Introduction

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Fotenn Planning + Design (Fotenn) has been retained by the City of Guelph Planning and Building Services Department to prepare an Urban Design Peer Review of the proposed Phase 2 student housing development on the property municipally known as 601 Scottsdale Drive, Guelph, Ontario (the subject property). Applications for Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) have been submitted by the Owner/Applicant to facilitate the proposed development which includes two (2) seven-storey residential buildings in addition to the existing student housing building on the property.

This report and the recommendations herein are based on a review of the following documents submitted by the Owner/Applicant in support of the proposed development:

- / Planning Justification Report, prepared by MHBC Planning
- / Urban Design Brief, prepared by MHBC Planning
- / Site Plan, prepared by Sweeny & Co Architects
- / Floor Plans, prepared by Sweeny & Co Architects
- / Building Elevations, prepared by Sweeny & Co Architects
- / Angular Plane Plan & Section, prepared by Sweeny & Co Architects
- / Shadow Studies, prepared by Sweeny & Co Architects
- / Landscape Plans, prepared by Ferris + Associates Inc.
- / Pedestrian Wind Comfort Assessment, prepared by RWDI AIR Inc.

The proposed development has been reviewed in accordance with urban design best practices, as well as the following policies and guidelines:

- / City of Guelph Official Plan (February 2024 Consolidation)
- / City of Guelph Urban Design Manual

1.1 Site Context

The subject property is located at the northwest intersection of Stone Road West and Scottsdale Drive, adjacent to Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) on the west side. The land slopes gently from east to west and currently features a multi-storey residential building with 164 suites (177 bedrooms) for University of Guelph students. Access is presently provided via two entrances on Scottsdale Drive, situated at the north and south ends of the site. A hydro corridor with overhead wires runs through the property within a 20 metre wide easement. The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) manages Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and owns the adjacent land, including the area between the parking lot and Stone Road West.

The subject property is in a developed area with significant commercial activity, including the Stone Road Mall. Stone Road is a major thoroughfare connecting Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) to the University of Guelph, Gordon Street, and downtown Guelph. The area is well-served by public transit, with multiple bus routes providing access to key destinations, including the university. Active transportation routes north of the property connect to College Avenue and downtown via the Speed River or Gordon Street.

The surrounding area to the east and immediate south of the subject property is predominantly low-rise commercial developments with expansive parking lots. It is, however, the City's vision to transform this corridor into a denser, vibrant, and walkable neighbourhood. Existing land uses surrounding the property currently include:

- / **North:** TD Canada Trust bank, Stone Road Mall, various residential buildings, W.E. Hamilton Park, and a proposed multi-unit residential development on Janefield Avenue.
- / **West:** Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway), a divided highway leading to Hwy 401 and Hwy 7, and a Baptist Church.
- / **South:** A commercial plaza with an LCBO and Shoppers Drug Mart, the Stone Lodge Retirement Residence, and a low-rise residential neighborhood.
- / **East:** The Stone Road Mall, offering a wide range of commercial services, and additional commercial properties along Stone Road West.

1.2 Proposed Development

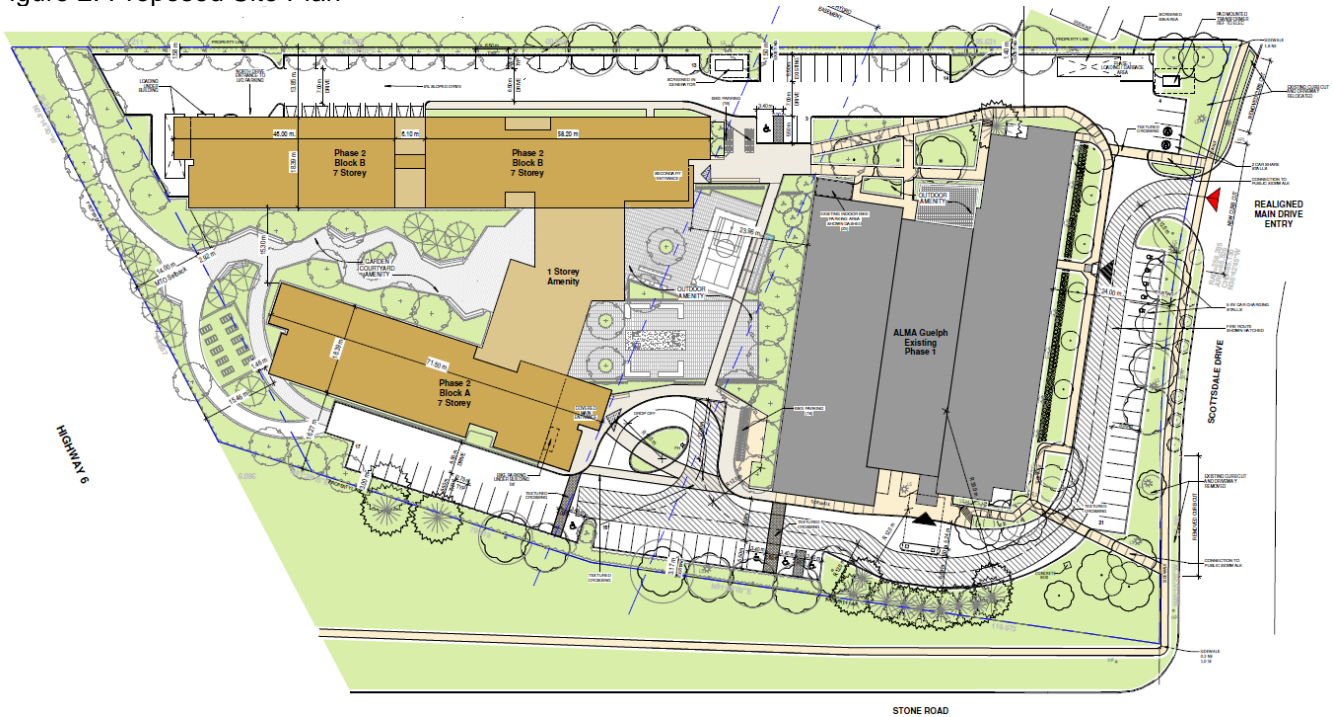
The proposed development entails construction of two (2) seven-storey student housing buildings (Block A and Block B) on the vacant western portion of the subject property. The proposed use is intended to complement and intensify the use of the existing four-storey student housing building on the subject property. The proposed development features a one-storey indoor amenity area physically bridging the new buildings, as well as two additional outdoor amenity areas which accommodate community gardens, seating, fire pits, and a multi-use court to serve the proposed and existing buildings on-site. Parking for the site will be largely accommodated in a partially underground structure below the Phase 2 building, with some surface parking provided along the outer edges of the property abutting the northern, southern and eastern property lines. Bicycle parking is proposed to be located within the below grade parking structure as well as above grade near the existing Phase 1 building.

Figure 1: Proposed Phase 2 Development (Left) and Existing Phase 1 Development (Right)



A total of 489 new units are proposed between the two new buildings, ranging from smaller and larger studio apartments to 2-bedroom apartment units. A proportion of the proposed units have been identified as being accessible units. Future residents of the Phase 2 buildings will also have access to amenity areas within the existing Phase 1 building, intended to create a community campus feel.

Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan



1.3 Development Constraints

As part of the technical review of the proposed development, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) identified the need for enhanced setbacks along Highway 6/the Hanlon Expressway (west) and Stone Road West (south/south-west) property lines for a future highway improvement project. The enhanced setbacks as prescribed by MTO are as follows:

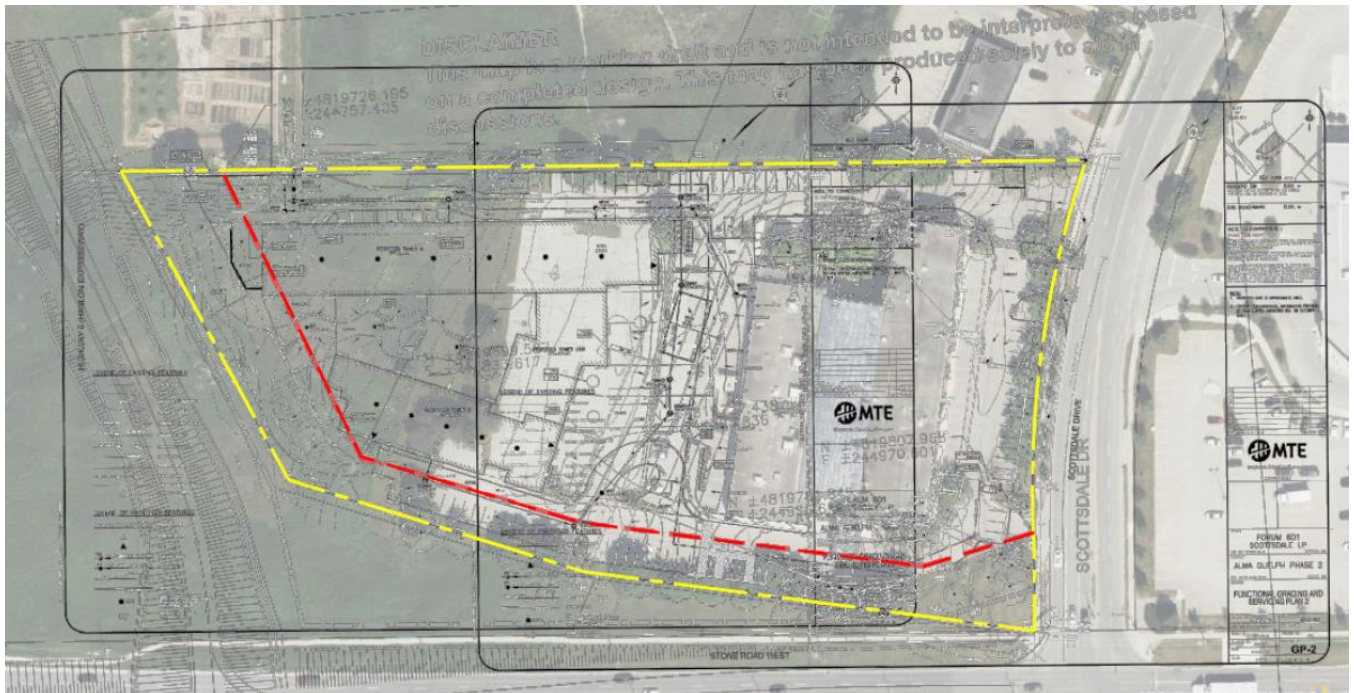
- / 25 metres from the property line abutting Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway), and
- / 14 metres from the property line abutting Stone Road West

Key components of the proposed development, such as the western portions of Blocks A and B, south-side surface parking, and west-side community gardens/outdoor amenity areas, fall within the required MTO setbacks. The proposed development must therefore be reconfigured to account for the enhanced setbacks and to have consideration for how the development will interface with the future street edges along Stone Road West and Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway).

Section 4 of this report includes recommendations regarding site-reconfiguration and building redesign whilst maintaining the proposed density and maximizing the development potential of the site. Recommendations identified under Section 3 of this report further takes into consideration the future property boundaries should lands within the enhanced setbacks be acquired by MTO.

In addition to the MTO setback requirement, development on the subject property is restricted by an existing hydro-easement with overhead wires/cables which bisects the property in half between the Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments. No portion of the building has been proposed within this easement.

Figure 3: Enhanced Setbacks Required by MTO



2.0 Policy Overview

2.1 City of Guelph Official Plan (February 2024 Consolidation)

The City of Guelph Official Plan is a long-term planning and policy framework intended to guide growth and development in the City up to the year 2051. It was originally adopted by City Council in November 1994 and has been subsequently amended to align with changes in Provincial and municipal policies and goals. The Official Plan focuses on planning for a complete and healthy community that is well-designed, compact, and vibrant, and provides an appropriate mix of employment opportunities, housing options, local services, and community infrastructure.

The subject property is identified as being located within the Stone Road West and Edinburgh Road South Strategic Growth Area on Schedule 1a: Urban Structure of the Official Plan. The Official Plan directs development in Strategic Growth Areas to achieve high residential and employment densities with a range of land uses for the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use, and transit-oriented neighbourhoods.

Schedule 2: Land Use Plan of the Official Plan designates the subject property as a Mixed-Use Corridor 1 land use. Development in Mixed-Use Corridors are intended to promote the economic viability and revitalization of these designated corridors in a cohesive, complementary and coordinated manner through residential and non-residential intensification. A distinctive and high standard of building and landscape design are also to be achieved for Mixed-Use Corridors through design that integrates individual developments to adjacent lands and the public realm. The Official Plan emphasizes the need for activating streets by fronting multi-storey buildings and ground floor retail onto arterial or collector roads, as well as providing for a rhythm and spacing of building entrances and appropriately sized store fronts to encourage pedestrian activity. Section 9.4.4 of the Official Plan further prescribes a minimum density target and permits buildings heights of up to 14-storeys to achieve the objectives of the Mixed-Use Corridor designation.

Section 8.4 of the Official Plan recognizes the subject property and its surroundings as a Major Gateway considering its proximity to Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway). The Official Plan objectives direct developments in gateways to define a sense of entrance and contribute more broadly to community image and identity through high quality building design, appropriate signage, landscaping, and lighting. In addition, developments in gateways are to be appropriately oriented to the public realm.

Section 8 of the Official Plan details the City's urban design policies which include specific directions relating to sustainable design, the public realm, built form, and site design. The policies aim to achieve a complete community that is enduring, attractive, and well designed to support a high quality of life, as well as flexible and adaptable to accommodate changes in use over time. The objectives promote excellence in urban design by respecting the character of existing distinctive areas, allows for a range of architectural styles, and encourage designs where buildings frame and address public spaces. Signature buildings are required by the Official Plan at corner locations or at the apex of T-intersections to serve as new neighbourhood landmarks. A strong emphasis is placed on enhancing the public realm through site and building design that contributes to vibrant, well-framed, human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly and visually interesting streetscapes.

Key site design guidelines as outlined in the Official Plan include improved pedestrian and cyclist connectivity within and to the site, visually screening parking areas from the public realm, enhanced landscaping and lighting to create visual interest and ensure safety of users through informal surveillance, and accessible design in accordance with AODA standards.

2.2 City of Guelph Urban Design Manual

The City of Guelph's Urban Design Manual is intended to provide guidance on the use of urban design excellence in the creation of a complete and distinctive community that enhances the sense of place enjoyed by the City's citizens. The City's broad urban design vision is to support growth and intensification in the city while simultaneously enhancing existing features and ensuring creation of accessible, inclusive, attractive, and beautiful community spaces.

The subject property is located within the Stone Road Intensification Corridor which is planned to achieve increased densities through residential infill development by virtue of being a regional shopping destination as well as being located close to the university campus and research park. The major objectives for this corridor include reinforcing and revitalizing the established neighbourhood commercial centres while increasing residential densities and introducing pedestrian- and cyclist-oriented infrastructure to create a dense, complete, and mixed-use neighbourhood for all users. The manual further provides guidance on designing developments to engage in placemaking, frame and respond to public spaces, provide diversity and create interest in urban form, and complement the established neighbourhood context and natural heritage.

The Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses, which forms Volume 3 of the Urban Design Manual, provides design guidance for new mid-rise and townhouse developments to appropriately integrate into the city and the site's surrounding context. These guidelines build on contemporary urban design best practices and principles, and are informed by policy direction as outlined in the City's Official Plan. It includes recommendations for site organization and design, massing, height, articulation, street edge and facade design. The Official Plan identifies mid-rise developments as being between four- and six-storeys in height. While the proposed seven-storey development cannot be exclusively classified as a mid-rise building, these standards have been referenced in considering best practices related to site design and massing where appropriate.

3.0 Urban Design Review

3.1 Overview

Based on the submitted plans, it is evident that careful thought has been given to how the proposed Phase 2 development complements and interacts with the existing Phase 1 development. The plan successfully creates a campus environment with the shared amenity areas being the central focal point. Structural elements from the Phase 1 building, specifically the sloped atrium and flat roof, have been mindfully reflected in the Phase 2 massing. Over half of the site's parking is also proposed to be accommodated below grade, efficiently maximizing the site area for buildings and amenities, while the remaining is proposed to be accommodated as surface parking on-site.

Further consideration must be given to how the buildings and overall development interact with the surrounding context, particularly the Highway 6 (Hanlon Expressway) and Stone Road West interfaces. The subject property presents a strategic opportunity to create a landmark that defines the gateway into the City from Highway 6. The subject portion of Stone Road West is designated as Strategic Growth Area and Mixed-Use Corridor, both of which highlight the City's vision for the area as a dense, vibrant and active corridor. Additionally, a major consideration to be addressed is the enhanced setbacks required by MTO along the western and southern property lines, as it would alter the site's surrounding context. The following sections review the merits of the proposed development plan and provide recommendations to enhance the development's presence in relation to its surroundings.

3.2 Land Use and Density

The proposed development makes efficient use of the vacant portion of the subject property through intensification of the existing land use. The two proposed Phase 2 student housing buildings are complementary to the existing Phase 1 student housing building and respond appropriately to the need for student housing near existing transit routes and bike paths which connect to the university. Over 50% of the proposed parking is accommodated within the partially underground parking level thereby maximizing the site for a variety of outdoor and indoor amenity areas.

In terms of density, the proposed development reflects positive intensification along a designated Strategic Growth Area. The proposed Phase 2 development aims to add 489 units to the 2.2-hectare site in addition to the existing 164 units in the Phase 1 building. This would result in a net density of nearly 300 units per hectare. While the proposed residential density is higher than what the Official Plan currently permits, the subject property is adequately sized to accommodate higher residential densities and associated amenity areas without undue impacts on adjacent properties. Additionally, the proposed density responds to the Official Plan's objectives of promoting compact, vibrant, and transit-oriented residential development.

Design Considerations

Considering the subject property's strategic location at the intersection of Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and Stone Road West, opportunities to develop the property as an anchor and gateway to the City should be further explored. The Owner may consider introducing student-oriented ground floor non-residential uses for the exclusive use of future student residents of the proposed development. This would allow the development to respond to the objectives of the Mixed-Use Corridor 1 designation, activate the street front, and serve as a landmark for travelers passing through Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway).

3.3 Building Siting

The proposed development is sited on the vacant western portion of the subject property and is flush with the western edge of the existing hydro easement that divides the property. The two Phase 2 buildings are oriented east-west and are set back from the north and south property lines by the proposed internal driveways and surface parking. Outdoor and indoor amenity areas are located centrally on the subject property and will be framed by the existing and proposed Phase 1 and Phase 2 buildings. Although not indicated on the submitted

site plan, western portions of the two proposed buildings are situated within the required MTO setback. A portion of the proposed outdoor amenity area is also located within the MTO setback. Section 4 of this report provides recommendations to address the impacts of the enhanced MTO setbacks on the proposed development.

Design Considerations

While the proposed development successfully frames the internal amenity areas shared with the Phase 1 building, due consideration must be given to how the buildings address abutting streetscapes as well as accentuate the corner of Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and Stone Road West. Of note is the context of the subject property as being a through lot with frontage onto three streets. Block A may be sited closer to the southern property line, as adjusted for the MTO setback, and southside surface parking and driveway should also be relocated away from Stone Road West such that it is buffered from the street front by the building. Along the western property line, it is important to incorporate elements that frame and activate the future edge of Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) as well as reflects the high-density urban residential character of the development. An L-shaped building footprint may be considered for Block B with the amenity areas serving as an inner courtyard. Alternatively, the proposed one-storey indoor amenity area structure may be moved to the western side of the property.

3.4 Height and Massing

The proposed buildings have a height of approximately 30 metres which is acceptable for the site's location within a Strategic Growth Area. From east to west, the buildings present an appropriate transition in building height from the existing 4-storey Phase 1 building on the property. The building height is comparable to the approved multi-storey residential buildings at 233-237 Janefield Avenue to the north-east side of the subject property.

The ground floor features a double-storey height of 6.5 metres which contributes to a distinguishable ground floor presence. On the eastern corner of the proposed Block A is an accentuated main building entrance with an overhead canopy for year-round pedestrian comfort and a dedicated pick-up/drop-off turnaround circle. The proposed Block B is connected to Block A and the main entrance via a one-storey indoor amenity area at ground level. Other uses on the ground floor include residential units as well as dedicated service/amenity areas and lobbies for residents of each block.

Design Considerations

While the proposed building height is acceptable, the Owner/Applicant may consider further increasing the heights of Blocks A and B, particularly considering the MTO setback requirements of the Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and Stone Road West intersection. The Official Plan currently permits building heights of up to 14-storeys on the subject property to encourage high-density and landmark developments along an intensification corridor. Increasing the building height can help better frame and define the street corner, as well as create a more desirable sense of enclosure along the street frontages. Should the building heights be further increased, a stronger building height transition must be provided to the existing church on the northwest corner of the subject property through step backs or reduced building height at the corner.

Although the double-storeyed ground floor is aligned with the main building wall, the proposed facade treatment creates the illusion that the ground floor is recessed from the main building wall. This diminishes the prominence of the building base, skewing the massing of the building from a pedestrian scale. A stronger and more well-defined podium would be preferable to establish the buildings presence at street level, contributing to a human scale and comfortable pedestrian experience. Additionally, it may be feasible for student-oriented non-residential uses be incorporated along street frontages, particularly the Stone Road West frontage, and alternate entrances to the building be provided at regular intervals to enhance the public realm interface.

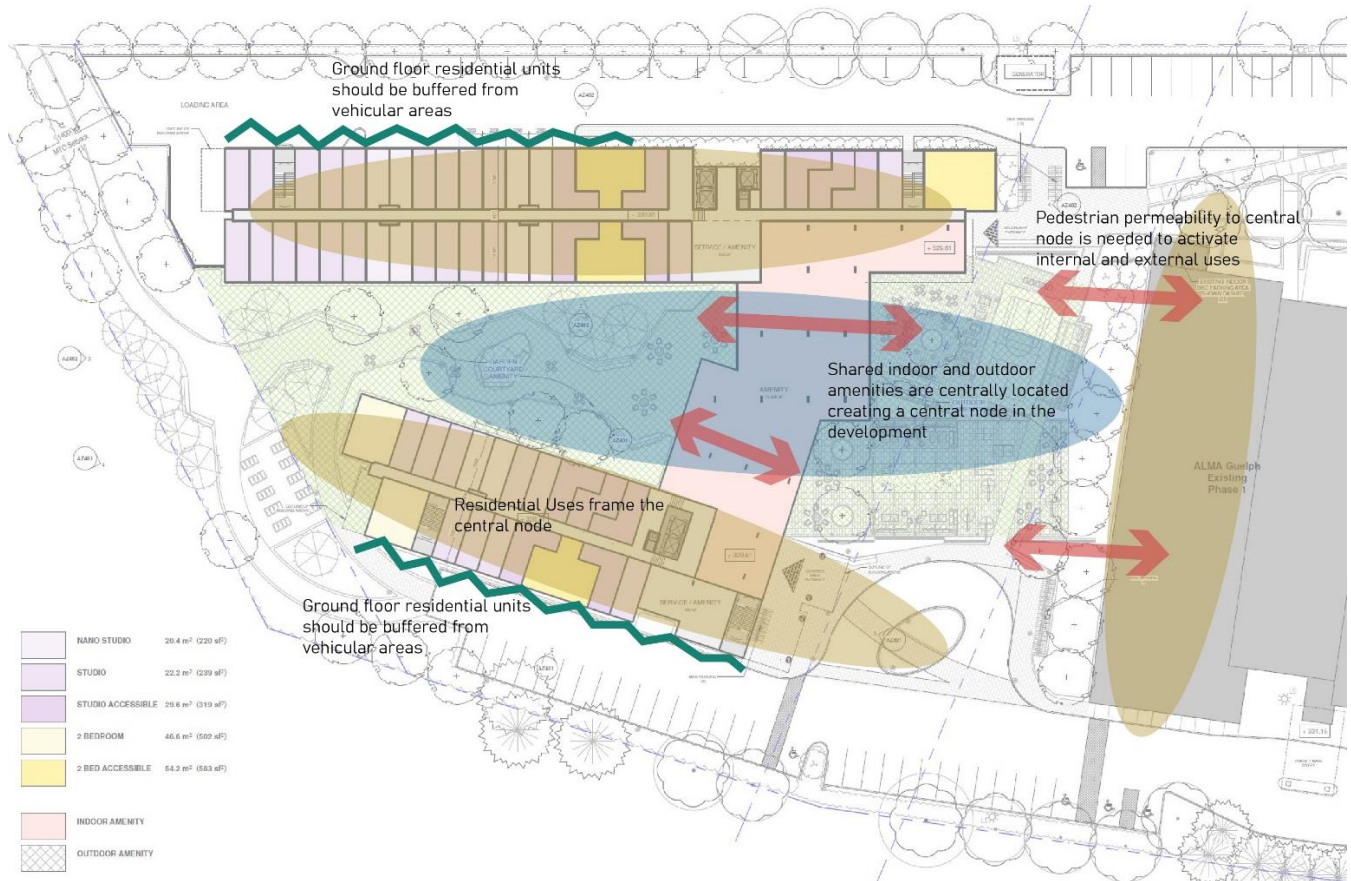
With respect to the building massing, both buildings feature a double-loaded corridor design on each floor which lends itself to a building mass that is longer than it is wide. Block A is approximately 71.50 metres long and Block B is approximately 110.30 metres long. As a rule of thumb, building lengths should be limited to 60 metres to avoid an overwhelming street wall and to establish a visually and experientially appealing rhythm for pedestrians both inside and outside the property. While the building design incorporates vertical recesses to

break up the building length, the Owner/Applicant may consider further breaking up the horizontal massing, particularly for Block B, by implementing an L-shaped building footprint or dividing Block B into two separate buildings. It is anticipated that the length of Block A will be reduced to approximately 60 metres once the enhanced MTO setbacks are applied to the development plan.

3.5 Site Articulation and Internal Programming

The site articulation and internal programming of the proposed development is simple and legible, demonstrating a clear site hierarchy. Gathering areas, such as the shared indoor and outdoor amenity areas, main and secondary building entrances, and building lobbies, are clearly defined as the node of the development. Residential uses in the Phase 1 and proposed Phase 2 buildings are anchored around this node. The plan effectively communicates a vision of community and collaboration, similar to a campus environment.

Figure 4: Residential Uses Anchored to the Central Shared Amenity Spaces



Design Considerations

The proposed development generally anchors residential uses to shared uses in a central location within the property. This connection can be further enhanced by increasing permeability through additional entrances and defined pathways between the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces, as well as between Phase 1 and Phase 2.

While the development plan has considered the internal functioning of the property and the various proposed uses, it does not respond to or integrate well with the site's surrounding context. The proposed floor plans locate residential units along double-loaded corridors on the ground floor, directly facing high traffic areas like Stone Road West, Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway), and surface parking. This placement and layout could lead to reduced privacy and higher noise levels for ground floor residents. Moreover, the proposed ground floor residential use fails to activate the Stone Road West and Highway 6 street fronts, which is crucial for the site's location. It is therefore recommended that ground floor residential uses be relocated to the first floor and above.

Additionally, active ground floor uses such as cafes, restaurants, co-working spaces, gym, etc. for the exclusive use of future student residents of the development could be incorporated in the ground floor plan, particularly facing Stone Road West and Highway 6.

With respect to internal programming, the internal double-loaded corridor of Block B is longer than the recommended length of 60 metres. This would create a sense of enclosure and tunneling that is not desirable. Breaking up the length of Block B by staggering sections of the building or through an L-shaped building footprint can help mitigate the issues of very long internal corridors.

3.6 Parking, Access and Loading

Over 50% of parking for the proposed development is located within the partially underground parking structure which forms a below grade podium shared by the two Phase 2 buildings. The remainder of the provided 191 parking spaces have been accommodated at surface level along the proposed driveways which separate the three buildings from the north, south, and east property lines. In addition to vehicular parking, the proposed parking area accommodates bicycle parking and a bike repair area. Access to the parking area is located at the northwest corner of the subject property at the terminus of the northside driveway from Scottsdale Drive. Two loading spaces have also been provided at the northwest corner of the subject property, adjacent to the proposed parking area entrance.

Design Considerations

The proposed below grade parking area and parking entrance allows for the bulk of the parking to be visually screened from the street. By locating the driveways and surface parking between the buildings and corresponding property lines, the proposed development plan hides these spaces from the central shared amenity areas. Nonetheless, the proposed surface parking is highly visible from the street and detracts from the development's potential to create a visually appealing street frontage and public realm. Although it is desirable that all parking is accommodated below grade, the existing Hydro easement bisecting the subject property limits the ability of the parking area to be extended east towards the existing Phase 1 building. It is important to note that surface parking provided along the southern property line falls within the required MTO setback and will need to be relocated. To address the above two issues, it is recommended that a second parking level, either below grade or within a ground floor podium be provided. This will also allow for the introduction of additional parking spaces to serve residents of the existing and two proposed buildings on-site.

Additionally, suitability of the internal programming to promote active transportation must also be reviewed. It is our understanding that the proposed indoor bicycle parking area is intended to serve residents of both Phase 1 and Phase 2. Firstly, the current proposed bicycle parking location is in the southwest corner of the subject property. It is recommended that the proposed bicycle parking area be moved closer to the eastern side of the parking floor such that it may be centrally located in relation to the property and the existing Phase 1 building. Secondly, entrance to the parking area is located at the northwest corner of the subject property, resulting in longer travel distances which is undesirable for bicycle users. Alternate entryways closer to the eastern side of Phase 2 (such as the east side of Block B) are recommended for shorter travel paths to serve cyclists. Further defining the proposed secondary entrance along Block B may also facilitate better distribution between Blocks A and B for cyclists using the elevator to access the parking area. These measures would allow for reduced travel times and easier access, contributing positively to increasing cycling.

The proposed site plan does not identify a legible and delineated pedestrian or bicycle path through the property from Scottsdale Drive. A clearly defined pathway is crucial to promoting pedestrian and bicycle activity. It is strongly recommended that a wider and distinct pedestrian pathway be provided on-site, improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from Scottsdale Drive. Should the proposed south side parking spaces be relocated in response to the MTO's required setbacks, the Owner/Applicant may consider introducing a pedestrian/bicycle corridor with enhanced landscaping and seating along the southern side of the subject property, connecting users to the Phase 1 and Phase 2 main entrances. Such an orientation will allow for high visibility from the street thereby facilitating informal surveillance and enhancing safety.

Figure 5: Bicycle parking to be relocated to the eastern side of the parking level



3.7 Common Amenity Areas and Open Spaces

The proposed development incorporates a variety of indoor and outdoor common amenity areas. A key feature of the proposed Phase 2 development is the one-storey indoor amenity structure that bridges Blocks A and B. The structure further boasts a green roof which creates a sense of additional landscaped open space for residents on upper storeys of the two buildings. On either side of the one-storey indoor amenity area are two landscaped open spaces equipped with a multi-use court, ample seating, firepits, and a community garden. Additional service/amenity areas have been provided on the ground floor of the proposed Blocks A and B. Residents of the proposed two buildings will also have access to the gym and other amenities within the existing Phase 1 building. Similarly, residents of the Phase 1 building will have access to the newly proposed Phase 2 amenity areas.

The proposed indoor and outdoor amenity areas and open spaces are adequately screened from Stone Road West, which creates a sense of intimacy and privacy for users of the space. The central location successfully responds to the developments vision of creating a campus environment. These areas are located within direct view of common indoor areas as well as windows of residential units, thus facilitating informal surveillance of the spaces and enhancing safety for users.

Design Considerations

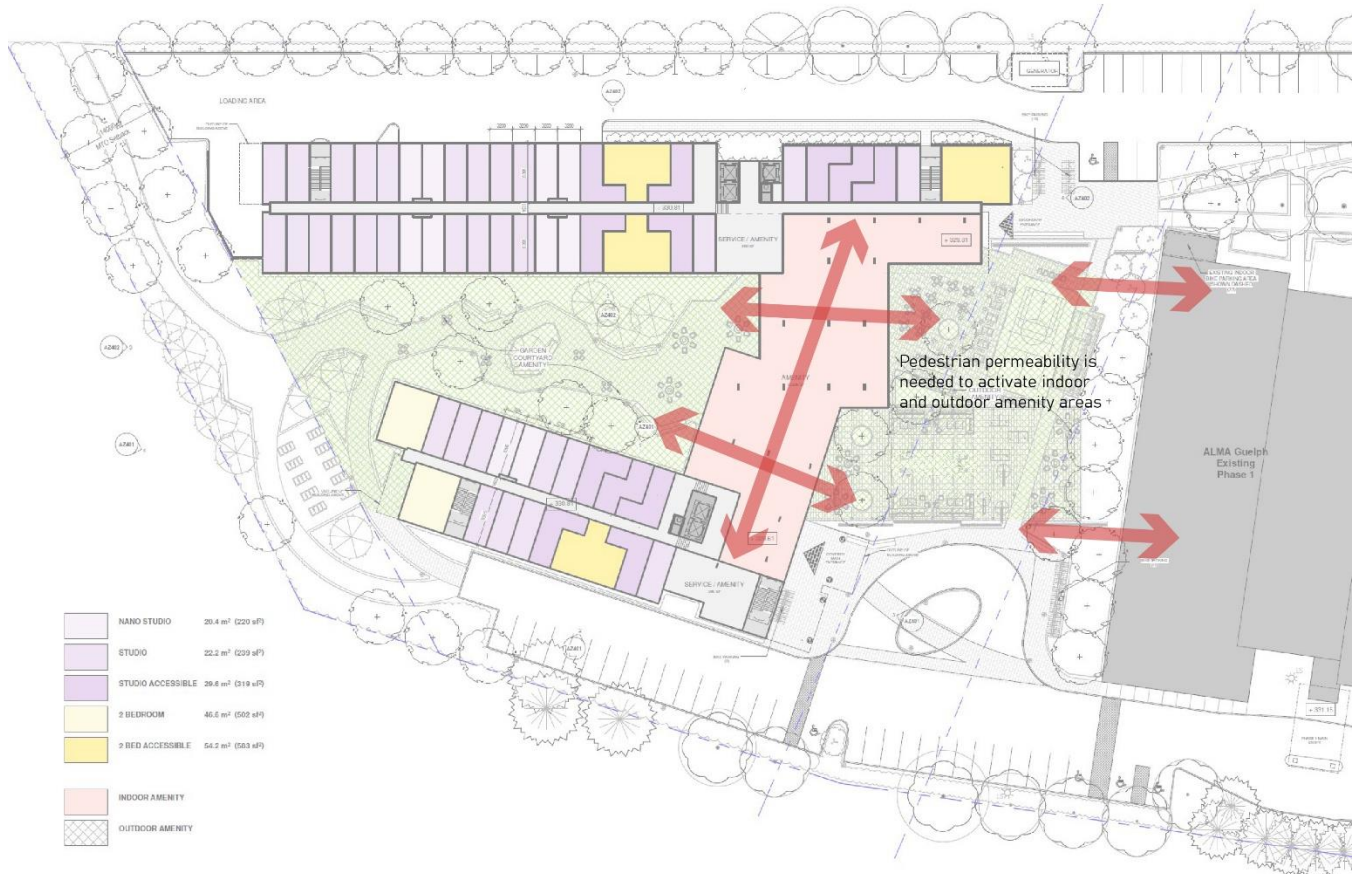
As mentioned above, the one-storey indoor amenity area divides the outdoor amenity areas/open space into two segments. The submitted drawings do not provide sufficient detail regarding entrances to the proposed indoor amenity area. However, doorways on both sides are recommended to facilitate pedestrian permeability and improved connectivity between the outdoor and indoor amenity areas, as well as the two proposed outdoor amenity areas.

Based on the submitted Pedestrian Wind Comfort Assessment, the west side amenity area appears to be unsuitable for passive uses / prolonged seating. It is recommended that the Owner/Applicant work with a microclimate consultant to add mitigation measures such as coniferous trees, dense shrubs or hedges, structural elements, etc. for improved wind attenuation and comfort of users of the amenity areas. Tall hedges, closely planted coniferous trees, and/or a mural wall along the western property line is also recommended to serve as a noise, pollution and visual buffer between Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and the proposed outdoor amenity area. Alternatively, the proposed one-storey indoor amenity structure may be relocated to the western side of the property to create one central outdoor amenity space screened from Highway 6.

Figure 6: Informal Surveillance of Central Amenity Areas



Figure 7: Pedestrian permeability within the site to be improved



3.8 Facade Design and Articulation

The proposed facade design is generally well articulated with recesses to break up the building length and fin-like facade treatment along the top floors to distinguish the upper floors of the building from the double-storeyed ground floor. Structural elements from the Phase 1 building, specifically the sloped atrium and flat roof, have been mindfully reflected in the Phase 2 plan, structurally creating a sense of harmony and cohesion. Nonetheless, the facade design and articulation can be further improved, particularly for Block B which is longer than is recommended.

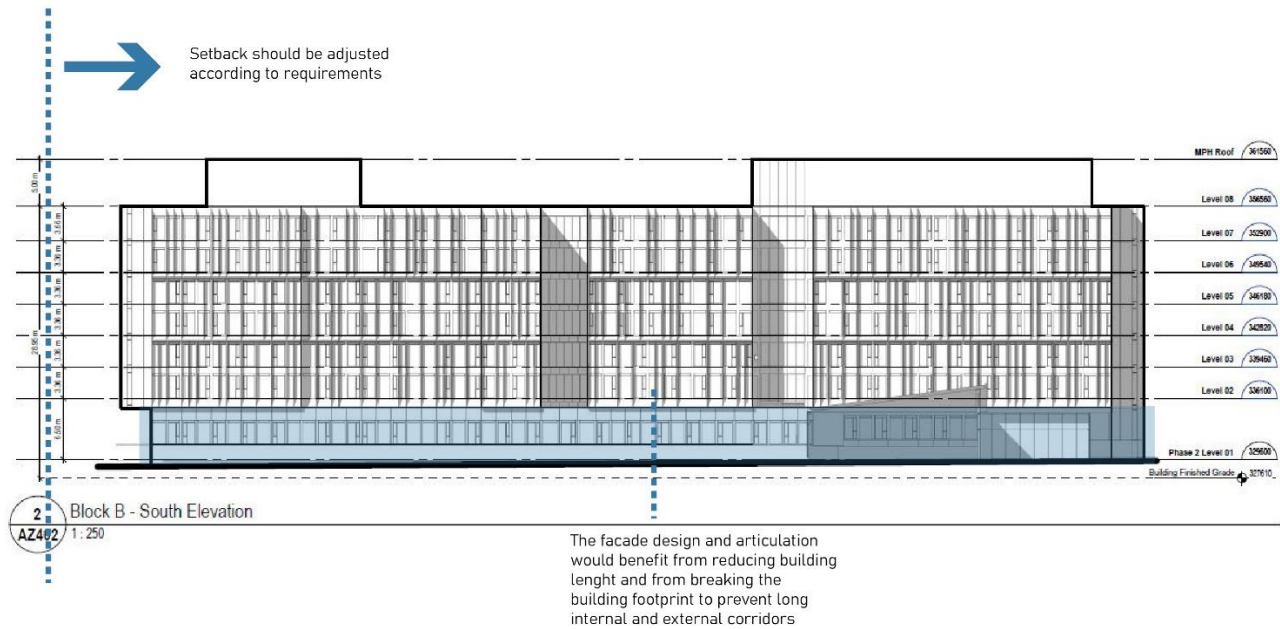
Design Considerations

As mentioned in previous sections of this report, Block B is greater than 60 metres in length, which is the recommended length based on urban design best practices. While the proposed recesses contribute to visually breaking up the length of Block B, the facade articulation can be improved by breaking Block B into separate sections through staggering or an L-shaped building footprint.

The submitted architectural renderings indicate that the proposed Phase 2 buildings will have a brown brick/stone facade finish with glazed window treatments, whereas the existing Phase 1 building features a light and dark gray facade with a colorful and distinctive mural along the southern wall. While the proposed brown brick facade creates a sense of warmth and separation from the surrounding wide thoroughfares and parking lots, it lacks cohesion with the colour scheme of the existing Phase 1 building. As proposed, the building facade creates the impression of multiple buildings on a property that have been designed and developed separately and in an uncoordinated manner. It is suggested that the proposed development reflect, or at least draw from, the colour scheme of the existing building. Elements should be incorporated to visually tie the two phases

together, including a mural wall similar to that provided along the Phase 1 building's southern wall. Phase 1 and Phase 2 together provides the opportunity to define a new residential urban character for this intersection and neighbourhood; similarly colored buildings can contribute to that goal.

Figure 8: Block B is longer than is generally recommended



3.9 Streetscape

Despite being a through lot with three lot frontages, the subject property poses several challenges to establishing a strong streetscape with new development. The eastern portion of the property abutting Scottsdale Drive is already developed with a four-storey building. The southern and western property lines abut Stone Road West and Highway 6 (Hanlon Expressway), respectively, however, significant segments of these interfaces have been earmarked for a future highway improvement project.

Design Considerations

In the absence of the above challenges, it would have been recommended that the proposed Block A be pulled closer to the southern property line to frame the streetscape. However, considering the site constraints, non-residential uses serving future student residents may be introduced on the ground floor of Block A, facing Stone Road West. This will allow the proposed development to respond to the objectives of the Mixed-Use Corridor 1 and the urban design policies and guidelines for Gateways. Additional measures as discussed above must also be incorporated to assert a strong presence along the Highway 6 (Hanlon Expressway) frontage.

4.0 MTO Setback Considerations

As discussed under Section 1.3 of this report, the subject property is required to maintain enhanced MTO setbacks of 25 metres along the western property line abutting Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway), and 14 metres along the southern property line abutting Stone Road West for a future proposed highway improvement project. It is noted that the proposed development plan has not entirely accounted for the enhanced setbacks required by the MTO. It is further noted that portions of the proposed buildings, as well as some surface and structured parking, outdoor amenity areas, portions of the driveway and fire route, and pedestrian walkway, would fall within the required MTO enhanced setbacks.

Figure 9 Setbacks as indicated on the submitted site plan to be revised



Based on the MTO comments, dated February 26, 2024, alternate site configurations must be explored to meet the required enhanced setbacks. As part of this peer review, Fotenn explored alternative site configurations using the submitted site plan and floor plans and applying the required MTO enhanced setbacks. The intent of this exercise was to identify ways in which the proposed development plan can respond to the MTO requirements with minimal modifications to the submitted plans.

As such, Fotenn presents the following revisions to the proposed plans (as show in Figure 10 and Figure 11) for the Owner/Applicant's consideration:

- / Scale back western portions of the proposed Blocks A and B to achieve a 25 metre setback from the western property line;
- / Scale back the western side of the partially underground parking structure to achieve a 25 metre setback from the western property line;
- / Shift the proposed loading area and parking entry further east;

- / Resize the proposed bicycle parking area to fit within the new parking floor plan;
- / Relocate western staircases of Blocks A and B to fit within the new floor plans;
- / Eliminate the proposed extension to the south-side driveway to achieve a 14 metre setback from the southern property line(s);
- / Relocate the proposed main entrance from the east side of Block A to the east side of Block B.

Although the above changes would help address the MTO requirements, it could potentially result in the loss of:

- / Approximately 84 units (Block A - 8 units x 7 storeys, and Block B – 4 units x 7 storeys);
- / Approximately 34 surface parking spaces;
- / Approximately 19 spaces in the partially underground parking structure;
- / Approximately 30-40% of proposed bicycle parking spaces;
- / A portion of landscaped amenity area.

To mitigate these losses while maintaining a similar building footprint, unit count, and parking ratio, the following measures were reviewed and are deemed acceptable from an urban design and policy perspective:

- / Increase the building heights for Blocks A and B to at least 9-storeys but no greater than 14-storeys;
- / Extend the partially underground structured parking level to two (2) levels of parking either below ground or within a podium parking level.

While the modifications to the proposed development plan as detailed above demonstrates one possible approach, the Owner/Applicant is encouraged to explore alternative methods to revise the development plan in response to the MTO setback requirements.

Figure 10: Conceptually Revised Parking Floor Plan

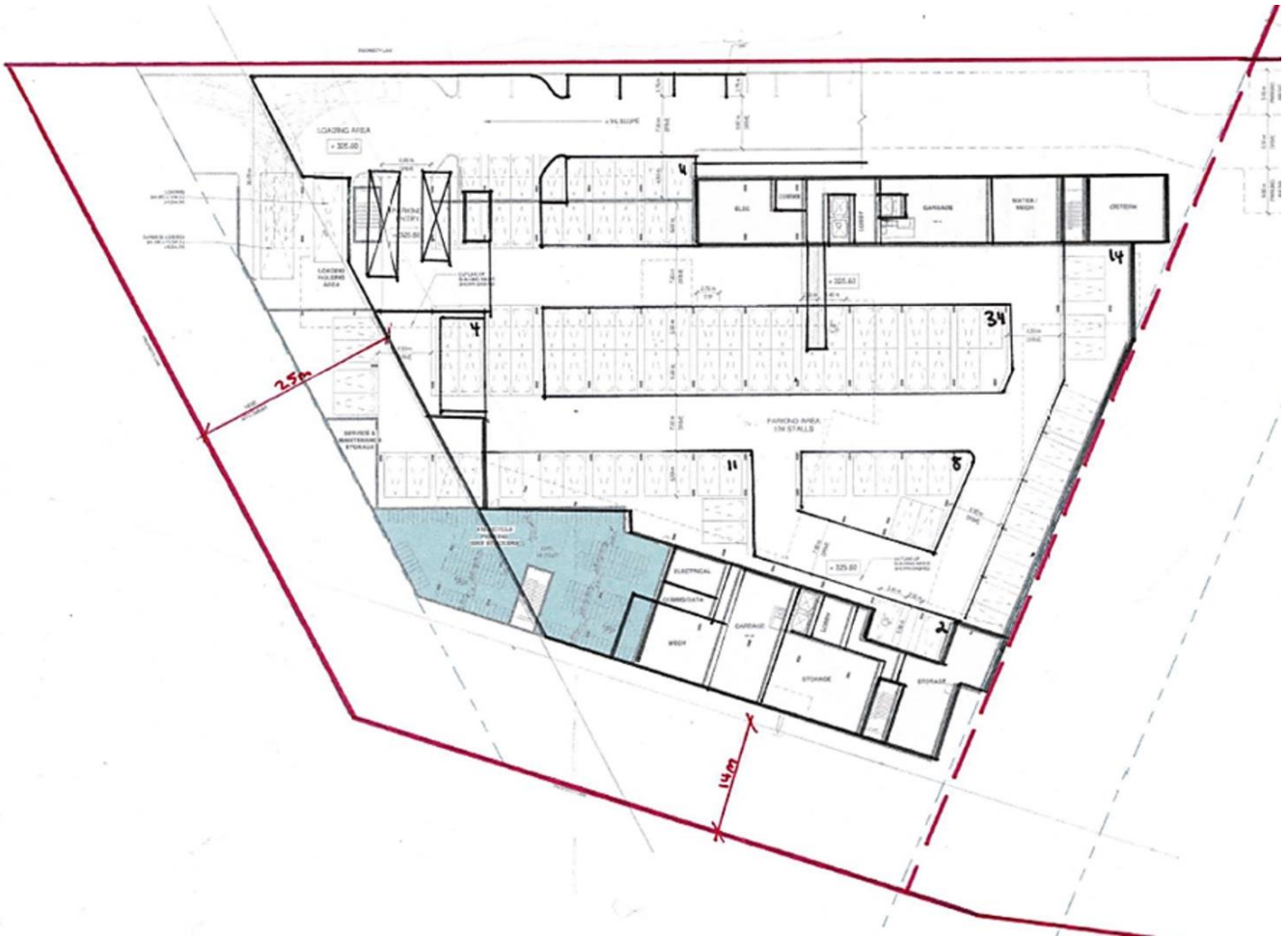


Figure 11: Conceptually Revised Typical Floor Plan and Site Plan



5.0 Conclusion

This Urban Design Review has evaluated the proposed Phase 2 development of 601 Scottsdale Drive, Guelph, in accordance with the City of Guelph Official Plan, City of Guelph Urban Design Guidelines, and urban design best practices. The proposed development represents efficient use of land and complementary intensification of the existing use of the property as student housing. The review finds that the proposed development successfully emulates a campus environment with shared amenity areas centered between residential buildings.

The review however finds that further consideration must be given to how the proposed development interacts with the surrounding neighbourhood. Recommendations have been made in previous sections of this report, including introduction of some student-oriented ground floor non-residential uses within a well-defined podium and activating the abutting street frontages, to respond to the City's vision for the neighbourhood as a dense, vibrant, mixed-use and active corridor that is capable of accommodating a significant proportion of the City's growth.

A key issue that must be addressed is the enhanced setbacks required by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) along the western and southern property lines. These sides of the subject property abut Highway 6 (the Hanlon Expressway) and Stone Road West, respectively, and the intersection has been earmarked for a future highway improvement project. As discussed in Section 4 of this report, the proposed site plan and floor plans will need to be revised so as to achieve the required 25 metre and 14 metre setbacks along the western and southern property lines, respectively. From an urban design and planning perspective, the Owner/Applicant may consider increasing the building height up to a maximum of 14-storeys to accommodate units, parking, and/or amenity areas that may be lost as a result of the enhanced setback requirements.

Overall, the proposed development has the potential of being a landmark within this corridor. Incorporation of this report's recommendations will allow the proposed development to better respond to the City's urban design goals.