Urban Design Report

354 King Street West
King West Crossing Ltd.

City of Hamilton
Official Plan Amendment & Zoning By-law Amendment
December 2019

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1. Background

Purpose

This Urban Design Report has been prepared for an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment for 354 King Street West in Hamilton (referred to as the "site") to permit additional building height above the previous Site Plan Approval for the site.

This Urban Design Report is further to the Scoped Urban Design Brief for the site prepared in May 2019 as part of a Site Plan Approval process. The Site Plan Approval was granted in October 2019. Subsequently, a foundation building permit was issued and the owner has initiated construction on the foundation for the approved 10-storey hotel and 6-storey apartment building. The proposed development for the subject Amendments utilizes the same site organization and building footprints as that in the approved plans, but with taller buildings.

Contents

This Urban Design Report is a requirement of a complete application for the proposed Amendments. The Report’s organization and content follow the guidance from the City of Hamilton’s terms of reference for Urban Design Briefs (January 2013) with the following sections:

- Section 2 outlines of the site’s existing conditions;
- Section 3 outlines the site’s contextual relationships with the city and surrounding area;
- Section 4 summarizes the applicable design-related policy and guideline documents;
- Section 5 describes the proposed development and how its design responds to the specific design policies and guidelines; and
- Section 6 provides a conclusion of the findings.
Proposal

The new proposal subject to the Amendments continues to be an integrated development with apartment units, “townhouse” units and a hotel. Although the proposed development is an integrated development with a shared building footprint through the parking garage, this Urban Design Report describes three buildings for the site (the hotel building, the apartment building, and the “townhouse” building). The proposed design now has 154 suites in a 12-storey hotel building at the corner of Queen Street and King Street, 316 units in a 25-storey apartment building along King Street and 8 street-lining “townhouse” units along Market Street. Three commercial units are located on the ground floor of the apartment building and two commercial units are located on the ground floor of the hotel building facing Queen Street and nearest the intersection with King Street. There are 255 parking spaces on site in a two-level parking garage and a small surface parking lot for residents, hotel guests and visitors.
2. Existing Conditions

Site Description
The site sits at the northwest corner of King Street West and Queen Street North. The site forms most the eastern two thirds of the block bounded by King, Queen, Market and Ray, except for the property containing a one-storey duplex at the corner of the Queen Street and Market Street. The site is approximately 0.7 hectares in area with approximately 95 metres of street frontage on King Street, 57 metres on Queen Street and 70 metres on Market Street. These are all post-widened site dimensions, subsequent to a road widening and daylighting triangle that were transferred to the City for LRT and road widening purposes.
Existing Topography and Vegetation

The proposed design picks up the falling grades from King Street to Market Street through the parking garage, which sits below grade at King Street and is exposed by one storey at Market Street. The lining the Market Street frontage are specifically meant to hide views to the above-grade portion of the parking structure.

Existing Buildings or Structures

There are no existing building or structure on the site. The site has been undeveloped vacant since 2015 following the demolition of the former Mount St. Joseph orphanage.

Constraints

Two existing constraints most influence the site’s design. First, the existing topography of the site drops generally from King Street to Market Street as well as around the King Street and Queen Street intersection. This presents challenges related to site and building design and interconnections on the site. Second, the existing building at the corner of the Queen Street and Market Street not included in the development parcel presents challenges for the full block integration and development scheme, particularly concerning the layout and interface of the parking garage.
3. Site Context

City Context

The site sits on the doorstep of Downtown Hamilton, formally which begins on the east side of the Queen Street. The site forms part of the strategic entryway as part of the Strathcona neighbourhood into the City with access points from Highway 403 at Main Street West, King Street West and York Boulevard. This area is adjacent to Downtown and its mixed-use composition and employment and cultural centre and is close to the significant neighbourhoods including the West Harbour neighbourhood along the waterfront and the West Hamilton Innovation District. The site is within walking distance to the mixed-use corridors of King Street West, Main Street West, and Dundurn Street South, and particularly Hess Village and its eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, and bars. On the doorstep of Downtown Hamilton, the site is close to several landmarks and places of significance within the Downtown (i.e. Jackson Square Mall, Hamilton City Hall, Art Gallery of Hamilton, First Ontario Centre and Concert Hall).

The City’s planned LRT project will have a new 14-kilometre LRT line that will run through downtown Hamilton along Main Street and King Street the core. Altogether the LRT line has 17 stops and connections with local Hamilton Street Railway service, multiple GO bus routes, the Lakeshore West GO train line and a new pedestrian connection to the Hamilton GO Centre. The Hamilton LRT is planned along King Street West with a proposed Queen Station located in the right-of-way in front of the site.

Neighborhood Context

The site sits within the eastern portion of Strathcona neighbourhood. The neighbourhood is comprised of a mix of low-rise residential dwelling types, historical places of worship, mid and high-rise apartment buildings, and commercial uses along the major thoroughfares of King Street West and Main Street West. The neighbourhood is well-served by existing public amenities and parks/open space including Victoria Park (approximately 300 metres west of the subject lands on King Street West) which has tennis courts, a ball diamond, an outdoor pool (Victoria Park Pool), and community garden. Tom Street Park is also located in the north west corner of the Strathcona neighbourhood which contains playground equipment. The Strathcona neighbourhood contains a mix and range of commercial spaces, including restaurants and commercial services found along King Street West, Main Street West, and Dundurn Street South.
Streetscape Context

King Street West is a “Major Arterial” on Schedule C of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. In the immediate vicinity of the site, King Street West is a four-lane, one-way westbound street. On the subject block, the street has sidewalks on both sides of the street separated by a hard surface boulevard that contains street lighting and some amenities. The north side of the street has street trees and on-street parking along certain portions. The King Street West corridor in the surrounding neighbourhood is principally oriented to commercial and community use, 4 storeys or less in height, although there are several taller buildings present.

Queen Street South is a “Minor Arterial” on Schedule C of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. In the immediate vicinity of the site, Queen Street South is a three-lane, one-way southbound street. On the subject block, the street has curb-side sidewalks on both sides of the street. The east side of the street on-street parking along certain portions. The Queen Street South corridor is a mixture of commercial, community, and residential uses along either side of King Street West, 4 storeys or less in height. There are several taller apartment buildings that range between 8 and 26 storeys between Napier Street and Market Street, east of Queen Street South. “Hess Village”, a popular entertainment district containing several restaurants and bars established largely within converted residential dwellings, is situated to the east/southeast of the site.
Immediate Context

The site’s immediate context is characterized by a combination of commercial, residential, and institutional buildings. Immediately to the north there is a surface parking lot on north side of Market Street, a site that has conditional approvals for a 15-storey mixed-use building and low-rise residential dwellings. Further north and north east are two apartment buildings, 18 and 21 storeys in height.

To the east, there is a 1-storey commercial building that contains La Luna restaurants and entertainment uses facing the site. Further east along Market Street are three apartment buildings, 12, 13 and 25 storeys in height, as well as mid- and low-rise commercial and residential uses east along King Street West.

To the south, the Scottish Rite Club faces the site on the west side of Queen Street. The building sits back from the King Street and Queen Street edges within landscaped grounds. At the southeast corner of King Street and Queen Street, the property is approved for a 23-storey mixed-use with residential, commercial and place of worship, which is currently under construction.

To the west, low-rise mixed-use building along King Street abut the site. Past these buildings, the Good Shepherd Square (seniors building, apartment building and women’s shelter) contains two 8-storey buildings. Along Market Street, there are low-rise residential dwellings along the street to Ray Street.
4. Design Policies and Guidelines

The site and proposed development are guided by multiple layers of urban design-related policies and guidelines. The following documents were reviewed and considered in the design commentary and assessment in Section 5 of this Urban Design Brief:

1. Urban Hamilton Official Plan
2. Strathcona Secondary Plan
3. Strathcona Urban Design Guidelines
4. City-Wide Corridor Planning Principles and Design Guidelines
5. Tall Building Guidelines
6. Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines
7. Site Plan Guidelines
5 Proposed Design and Response

Building Base Siting, Massing and Scale

The proposed site organization and building footprints was largely set by the recent approval and permits for the site: the proposed Amendments are based on those building footprints. The building footprints are positioned with smaller setbacks to reinforce and enliven the street edges of King Street, Queen Street and Market Street. Sight line impacts are not expected from the building positioning as the hotel sits in line with the general alignment of the abutting duplex to the north at Queen Street and Market Street while the apartment building sits behind the alignment of the abutting commercial building to the west on King Street.
Hotel

The hotel’s base generally sits parallel to King Street and Queen Street edge and is aligned with the existing duplex dwelling abutting at Queen Street with Market Street. The building is positioned 0.4 metres from the post-widening property line along of Queen Street property line and 2.4 to 3.6 metres (post-widening) from the King Street property line.

The 12-storey hotel building is massed with a defined 2-storey base (8 to 8.5 metres height) as viewed from Queen Street, recognizing the first floor of the base from King Street is below-grade given the site’s topography. The different guidelines vary in terms of preference for different building heights as the base, but a 2-storey base connects well with the lower-rise buildings in the surrounding urban fabric; 3 storeys or even 4 storeys would also be appropriate if so desired.

The 2-storey building base has a sweeping arc at the intersection where setbacks are greater for visibility purposes, which lends to a distinct building frame for this prominent intersection. This distinct sweeping arc is articulated with distinct colouration and glazing and curtain wall glazing accentuated with plantings and landscape treatments.
Apartment

The 25-storey apartment building is massed with a “L” shape. The building’s broad end is oriented parallel to the King Street frontage, approximately 34 metres wide along the street frontage, to maximize street presence. The length of the taller 25-storey portion extending into the site is narrow at 19.5 metres wide and long at approximately 53 metres.

The proposed apartment building has only a single storey base (4.8 metre height) along King Street as the tower starting on the second storey facing King Street pivots from the southwest corner to provide an angled reveal of the tower along King Street. The purpose of this single storey base is meant to align with the base of the hotel as viewed from King Street; good objective but does runs counter to the guidelines seeking a multi-storey building base.

Respecting building positioning, the base sits consistently 2 metres from the post-widened King Street right-of-way. The floors above pivot at the southwest corner of the building base along King Street up to 3 metres from the base at the southeast corner.
Townhouses

The 2-storey townhouses on Market Street are arranged to edge the above-grade portion of the parking garage and provide active uses along the side street, like other detached dwellings along the street. The townhouses are positioned 3 metres from the Market Street property line, in keeping with guidelines, as a balance between street presence and privacy and for ground floor spaces. The units are generally 6.9 metres wide, which provides for a regular rhythm and proportion along Market Street. The second storeys of the townhouse extend beyond the height of the above-grade portion of the parking garage and are visible from both sides.
**Ground Floor Design**

Supporting the street-oriented building positioning, the layout of the ground floor for the apartment building and hotel building facing King Street and Queen Street predominately contains active uses. Three commercial units are located on the apartment building’s ground floor facing King Street with individual entrances facing the public sidewalk. Ground floor residential units in the apartment building are limited to four units in the northeast section of the building, positioned behind the lobby and commercial floor space lining all the building’s King Street face. Two commercial units are located on the hotel building’s ground facing Queen Street and nearest the intersection with King Street. The hotel building’s ground floor has communal rooms and functions only and no hotel suites. Along King Street, the layout has hotel communal areas that provide activity towards the street although with no building entrances given dropping grades in that area at the intersection.

Entrances to the hotel, apartment, and townhouses lead directly from the respective abutting public sidewalks. Building architecture for the first two storeys and entrance design and articulation emphasizes pedestrian access to the buildings. The hotel building addresses both King Street and Queen Street with a refined glazed entry feature for the entirety of the base along Queen and King. This glazing treatment translates to the upper storeys in a similar location and manner. The corner is surrounded by space that can accommodate planted landscape beds that soften the building edge. Both the architectural and landscape details extend around the south and east elevations in a similar fashion and extent.
The proposed exterior design floors supports the interior ground floor functions. The bases of the apartment and hotel buildings are predominately glazed with curtain wall or windows wall treatments offering a transparent relationship between the building interior and the public sidewalk. The apartment building’s main entrance and commercial unit entrances are accessed from the King Street frontage with a hardscaped entranceway providing activity along this principal streetscape. Along the principal frontage of King Street, the hotel and apartment buildings use continuous patterns of curtain wall and window wall glazing systems along the building base along King Street. Transparent glazing and metal frames are expected with accents of spandrel glazing in a vertical, dividing fashion. Glazing provides a high-quality, attractive finish to the buildings. For the apartment building, this treatment extends around the ground floor elevation on the west and east side of the building, the latter including the main building entrance to the residential lobby. For the hotel building, the same treatment extends the length of the Queen Street frontage from King.

Ground floor heights of the apartment and hotel building support a variety of commercial functions per the design guidance. The apartment building has a ground floor height of 4.8 metres facing King Street providing flexibility for the three commercial units. The hotel building’s ground floor height is 4.5 metres although it is buried below the King Street grade and will not accommodate access to King Street in this location. Nonetheless, the interior use and exterior design along King Street provides for an interesting, transparent and active frontage along King Street.
Tower Height, Massing and Scale

The proposed Amendments are seeking an increase in the maximum permitted building heights for the site, recognizing the prominence of the site’s location, greater than the preferred 4 to 6 storeys in the Strathcona guidelines. Along King Street, the design moves from the 12 storey hotel to 25 storeys on the bulk of the apartment building and drops to 15 storeys moving towards the existing 2-storey commercial building abutting the site to the west. The development form drops to 2 storeys along Market Street consistent with that street’s residential character to the west.

Hotel

The hotel’s 10-storey tower mass (34.6 metres) in height) rising from the 2-storey base is square in shape atop. Its footprint is slender in form generally at 23 metres along King Street by 30 metres along Queen Street. The resulting 672 square metre tower footprint is in keeping with the maximum desired by the Tall Building Guidelines of 750 square metres.

The hotel’s tower mass recedes to the northwest corner of the 2-storey building base, with step-backs from the King and Queen sides. From King Street the tower has a more pronounced step-back of 9 metres at most, which is shallower approaching the King and Queen corner. From Queen Street the tower has step-back between 2.6 and 3.8 metres owing to projections of the tower envelope. Both tower step-backs are in keeping with the intent of the desired minimum of 3 metres in the Tall Building Guidelines.
Apartment

The apartment’s tower mass is principally composed of a 25-storey portion (approximately 80 metres high from finished grade) that runs perpendicular to King Street the length of the building. The tower mass drops to a 15-storey portion (approximately 48 metres high from finished grade) for the western portion of the building facing King Street. There are variations in the rooftop height as viewed from the King Street front or Queen Street side given the mechanical penthouse.

The tower along King Street has a step-back from the ground floor pivoting in an angled fashion from the southwest corner. This step-back is up to 3 metres at its deepest. Except for that angled step-back, the tower mass sits atop the footprint of the building base continuously up the tower’s mass with no additional step-backs.

The 25-storey tower portion is narrow but long, measuring generally 19.5 metres by 53 metres. Coupled with the 15-storey extension, the tower footprint is total approximately 1,300 square metres, or approximately 1,040 square metres for the 25-storey portion on its own. This size of footprint is larger than the maximum desired by the Tall Building Guidelines of 750 square metres. The Tall Building Guidelines do, however, contemplate larger floorplates where the other guidelines can be satisfied.

The apartment building’s 15-storey tower portion is set back 11.7 metres from the western property line shared with the abutting commercial building on King; its 25-storey tower portion is set back in excess of 20 metres where it is shared with the abutting Market Street residential property. This separation in keeping with the guidance of the Tall Building Guidelines.

The tower portions of the hotel and apartment buildings are separated approximately 23.6 metres. This is generally in keeping with the 12.5 metre setback to property lines, or 25 metres total, per the guidelines to ensure sky views. This separation is assisted with the smaller hotel building tower floorplate being slightly offset from the apartment tower in positioning for views to from the Queen and King intersection.
Building Articulation and Materials

The proposed building design uses a contemporary architectural style and expressions to unify the project in a similar, complementary fashion. Generally, the design uses high proportions of transparent glazing and pedestrian scale rhythm of openings and divisions along activity area of ground floor streetscape zone. Moving into the upper building portions, the design uses a balance between masonry-based cladding and windows as a reference to the surrounding context. Balconies are not proposed for either the apartment or hotel building given the nature of the proposed uses (student residence and hotel). Significant proportions of transparent glazing, however, on the base and upper storeys provides for visibility to and from the public streetscapes of King Street and Queen Street.
Hotel

The proposed hotel architecture conveys a residential character through a regular pattern of residential scaled windows and variety and changes in the arrangement of materials and colours. The design uses pre-cast concrete panels as the base material throughout all building elevations, with variation in colours (generally a warmer grey palette) to accentuate and distinguish architectural features and projections.

The building base distinguishes the first two floors using light grey in the vertical lines and a horizontal band with curtain wall glazing in between. The window areas are designed with a mosaic of clear glass and a varied pattern of coloured spandrel glass. A strong pre-cast band horizontally divides the lower from upper portions of the elevations. The hotel building’s entrance door is recessed from the main building wall providing for weather protection from Queen Street.

The building middle wraps the corner on the east and south elevations with an accent of lighter grey pre-cast panels bounding a continuous field of curtainwall glazing extending from the ground. Glazing on the building’s upper portions uses a similar “mosaic” pattern to that of the ground floor, although with wider proportions to differentiate from the base. The remainder of the building’s middle provides a distinguished solid-to-glass ratio from that of the corner with grey pre-cast panels and a regular rhythm of glazed windows.

The hotel design encloses mechanical equipment within a mechanical penthouse. The building top uses varied parapet heights with pre-cast concrete caps along the rooftop with taller portions most prominently surrounding the King Street and Queen Street intersection.

Apartment

The proposed apartment building architecture uses a complementary masonry base and similar grey colour pattern to that of the hotel building. The taller ground floor of the building emphasizes the publicly prominent portions (along the King elevation and wrapping the and side elevations on the east and west) with floor to ceiling windows, a combination of transparent glazing and lighter grey spandrel and blue tinted glazing to distinguish the ground floor elevation. A canopy above the ground floor along the King Street frontage and lining the eastern building elevation above the site walkway distinguishes the pedestrian zone from the upper building portions.

Above the ground floor, the publicly prominent portions wrapping the corners of the building’s upper floors continue the ground floor pattern upwards in a consistent fashion with tinted glass and punctuating vertical spandrel bands. A treatment of lighter grey spandrel glazing throughout with blue tinted windows extends the height of the tower along King and wrapping to the 15th storey on the front portions of the east and west elevations. White metal panel accents arranged in vertical lines through the tower and capping the simple cornice line of the building’s tower top. The middle portion of the northern elevation facing Market Street shares a similar treatment extending to the tower top. The remainder of the tower uses vertical extensions of tinted glass windows and spandrel glazing with a backdrop of darker grey pre-cast concrete panels.

Mechanical equipment on the tower is enclosed within a full enclosed mechanical penthouse. The penthouse carries the same architectural treatment as the floor below. The apartment’s tower top is finished with a simple cornice line of white metal material.

Townhouse

The townhouse design provides a defined, regular rhythm that divides up the block’s length through material treatment and building recessions. The design uses larger glazed window walls and light coloured, patterned pre-cast concrete on both storeys, distinguished with building recessions along the length. Complementing the glazing, alternative patterns of wood-grained aluminum panels and dark brick materials are used as vertical accents, as well as horizontal bands for wood-grained panels above the first storey of individual units and the garage entrance to tie the overall elevation.
Note: The following Building Elevations drawings reflect the current proposal respecting materials and architectural treatment. They reflect modifications to the architectural design further to the development renderings throughout this Urban Design Report.
Pedestrian Access and Circulation

A mid-block pedestrian walkway is provided through the site between King Street and Market Street, along the east apartment building’s east side, crossing the site driveway and connecting along both sides of the townhouse building. Main entranceways to the hotel, apartment, and townhouses are provided near the abutting respective public street sidewalks, accessed through hard surfaced entrance plazas or walkways. The apartment building’s surface parking area is linked to the main and secondary building entrances through concrete sidewalks lining the building’s east and west edge and with painted crosswalks for crossing locations. Balconies are not proposed for the apartment or hotel buildings, however, the proposed high degree of transparency of windows and curtain walls on the building elevations provide for adequate visibility to and from the streetscape and pedestrian circulation routes.

The design provides direct accesses from the abutting public sidewalks to the principal building entrances of the hotel, apartment and townhouses. The hotel lobby entrance is accessed from the Queen Street sidewalk, where the grade levels drop and flatten from the King Street and Queen Street intersection.

The apartment lobby entrance is accessed from the King Street public sidewalk at the building’s southeast corner. Additionally, there are secondary entrances to the apartment on the building’s north and west building faces, providing access to surface parking and connections to the Market Street sidewalks. The commercial units facing King Street all have individual entrances leading to the public sidewalk.

The main entrances to the integrated townhouse units are accessed from the Market Street sidewalk, leading directly to individual unit entrances through on-site walkways, and secondary entrances access the surface of the ground level parking area to the rear. As well, there are additional interconnections between the townhouses and the integrated structured parking garage.

The entrances of the apartment and hotel are emphasized with canopies and significant transparent glazing to emphasize their location continuing along lengths of the respective streetscapes of King Street and Queen Street. Building entrances are easily accessible from the public sidewalks and will comply with Ontario Building Code requirements in terms of access and doors. Lighting through building-mounted fixtures in these locations is expected to light these areas to safe levels.

Vehicular Access and Circulation

Four vehicular accesses are proposed to the site, accessing each of the site’s public street frontages and each serving different functions. The driveway on the north side of the hotel building away from the King Street intersection accesses the P2 Level of the parking garage for hotel employees and guests. The driveway from Market Street mid-block on the site provides access to the P1 and P2 Levels of the parking garage for residents and visitors. Two accesses to King Street flanking the apartment building access a looped driveway system with counterclockwise one-way pattern for surface parking and loading/service functions. The widths of these driveways are minimized to the extent possible in keeping with minimum City standards to limited interruptions to the public sidewalks.

Most traffic flows for the apartments and townhouses are from Market Street, a minor street compared to Queen and King, to access the P2 parking garage while for the hotel uses are to Queen Street to access the P1 parking garage. Traffic flows to the King Street access, the highest order public street, is expected to be more minor given the extent of surface parking proposed. The western entrance is a right-in / right-out access and the eastern entrance is right-out turn only, so delays and potential disruptions to pedestrian movements are minimized.

The Market Street garage entrance is offset from the entrance to the parking lot on the north side of Market Street. This facing site is also in the planning process for redevelopment with an access contemplated instead on Napier Street rather than Market Street.
Parking, Loading and Services

An underground parking garage accommodates most of the parking needs for the development (approximately 80% of total provided parking) in keeping with the design policies and guidelines. The parking garage is only accessed from the Queen Street and Market Street driveway entrances.

The remainder of parking is accommodated within a smaller surface parking area surrounding the apartment building. Front yard parking is not proposed. Surface parking spaces are positioned behind the buildings or behind the front edge of the building face in the area between the side of the apartment and hotel buildings. Parking is screened by a combination of the building from King Street and the landscaped edge with deciduous trees and planting beds on the west side of parking spaces. Parking between the apartment and hotel buildings are screened by landscaped peninsulas flanking the driveway entrance from King Street.

The proposed parking supply is less than the minimum requirements in existing zoning. The proposed reduction in minimum parking requirements is supported by a TDM program, per the guidelines, that includes transit proximity, unbundled parking for the apartment building and secure indoor bicycle parking.

Loading, garbage storage and service rooms are internalized within the buildings. The hotel building contains an indoor garbage storage room on the P1 garage level linked to an outdoor collection area along the site’s Market Street frontage, which is bound by solid fencing for screening purposes. The apartment building contains an indoor garbage storage and collection room on the inside bend of the building away from King Street. The room directly leads to the on-site truck access point from the western access of King Street.

Storage areas are distributed throughout the P1 and P2 garage levels for the apartment and hotel buildings. A dedicated loading space is provided on the inside bend of the building away from King Street and connects to the combined garbage and move-in room in the building interior. The storage spaces include long-term bicycle storage rooms for each of the hotel, apartment and townhouse functions.

Transformer locations for the hotel, apartment and townhouse buildings are recessed on the site beyond the building face along Queen, King and Market, respectively.
Streetscape and Public Realm

Building edges tight to street right-of-way set the basis for urban streetscape around the site. Curb-side concrete sidewalks line King Street and Queen Street. The post-widened street rights-of-way of King Street and Queen Street do not provide sufficient space, or space constrained by the visibility triangle at the intersection, to accommodate street trees. Street trees within the public right-of-way are proposed on Market Street along the front face of the townhouses.

The apartment building’s setback to King Street accommodates a walkway lining the commercial units and wrapping through the outdoor patio areas on the east side of the building. The hard-surfaced area surrounding the apartment’s building entrance wraps the corner and provides opportunities for sitting areas and outdoor patios to assist with enlivening the street edge. The walkway rises above the public sidewalk grade moving east along King Street to account for the sloping grades along the street; the western half sits flush and the eastern half is edged by a railing.

The hotel building’s sweeping setback around the intersection provide opportunities for planted beds along the building foundation that provides an attractive edge to the street. Planting schemes will be limited in terms of planting heights given the visibility triangle requirements in this location. The grade changes in this location around King Street to Queen Street make public space desired by the Guidelines impractical; however, the landscape design around the corner provides a visual accent supporting the public sidewalk and streetscape aesthetic together with building architecture. Along Queen Street, two concrete walkways lead from the public sidewalk to each of the ground floor hotel lobby and retail units.

Entrances the apartment building and hotel building are either recessed (hotel) or canopied (apartment) as part of the building’s architecture to provide protection from weather. Appropriate lighting levels are expected to be achieved on the site through wall-mounted and site lighting fixtures, emphasizing higher pedestrian activity areas near building entrances, surface parking areas and on-site walkways.

Site Landscaping

The intent for the site’s landscape design focuses on four principal functional areas of the site: building entrances, the King/Queen intersection, the Market Street streetscape, and site edges and building edges.

For building entrances, the apartment entrance from King Street and the hotel entrance from Queen Street are emphasis points in the landscape design. Both are designed with large areas of continuous concrete unit pavers surrounding the entrances extended to the public sidewalk. The area surrounding the apartment building wraps the southeast corner of the building, coinciding with the building’s architectural emphasis and canopy and provides outdoor patio areas and sitting areas with bounding decorative fencing where it abuts internal driveways. Surrounding planted beds soften these hardscaped spaces.

For the King Street and Queen Street intersection, planted beds around the sweeping arc of the hotel at the intersection can emphasize this prominent location and complement the architectural focus. The intervening space between the building and sidewalk will be planted with a concentration of deciduous and coniferous shrubs, perennials and ground cover to provide an attractive edge to the building, recognizing the height limitations in this daylight corner location.
For the Market Street streetscape, the streetscape along the faces of the townhouses are meant to reflect a traditional residential streetscape character for Market Street. A continuous row of deciduous trees is proposed within the public right-of-way shared between interior units and at the end units. Supporting these trees, beds of shrub and ground cover plantings between concrete walkways into the individual units further softens the street edge.

For site and building edges, the site design provides for a wide landscaped edge along the western property line, which is generally at least 5 metres wide at its very narrowest. This space accommodates a 1.8 metre wooden privacy fence along the property line shared with the abutting residential property on Market Street. Inside of the property line, a sodded area, planted beds of shrubs and ground cover lining (and extending into) the edge of the surface parking area, and a continuous row and regularly spaced row of deciduous trees provides an attractive edge and separation to the abutting properties.

Private Amenity Areas

The apartment building has a rooftop terrace atop the 15-storey wing along King Street and a rooftop patio above the 25-storey on its rear portion closest to Market Street. An outdoor patio space is located along the east side of the apartment building adjacent to the King streetscape, rather than the front face of the building as preferred by the guidelines. This is meant to provide a greater level of separation of this outdoor space to the street activity while still providing an interface. These three spaces will provide for seating and dining elements, supporting planters for landscape accent and screening and overhead structures for shade and weather protection. The rooftop space will be lined with noise and/or wind screening elements, as required, for mitigation purposes. These spaces generally lead into indoor amenity rooms and spaces.

The hotel only has several indoor amenity areas and functions within the building base and there are no rooftop spaces on the hotel building.
Shadow Impacts

SRM Architects prepared the Shadow Study for the proposed development using the method and criteria of the terms of reference for a Shadow Impact Study for Downtown Hamilton. The Study addresses impacts on the public sidewalks, private amenity areas, public parks and open spaces, and primary gathering spaces. The Study demonstrates that the more significant impacts of the longer tower form occur generally from 3PM on to sunset. With respect to the established criteria, the Study finds that the proposed development:

- Satisfies criteria for impacts on private amenity spaces (greater than 3 hours);
- Satisfies criteria for impacts on primary gathering spaces (no shadows cast on listed downtown gathering spaces).
- Satisfies criteria for impacts on public park and public open spaces, except for one time period (6PM on March 21st) where shadows on Maclaren Park would exceed the maximum (43% sunlight versus 50%); the Study notes that the additional shadows affect the northern, significantly treed portion of the park.
- Fails to satisfy the criteria for impacts on the public sidewalks for March 21st and September 21st, principally concerning impacts on the Market Street sidewalks; the Study notes that even the 2-storey building mass along the site’s market frontage would shadow the southern side sidewalks, minimizing the impact of the tower height.

Wind Impacts

RWDI prepared the Pedestrian Wind Study for the proposed development using the method and criteria of the terms of reference for a Pedestrian Level Wind Impact Study for Downtown Hamilton. The general results of the Study are as follows:

- With the addition of the proposed 354 King Street West development, wind conditions on the project site are expected to increase slightly overall. Appropriate wind conditions are expected at most entrance and sidewalk areas throughout the year. During the winter, uncomfortable wind conditions are expected in the parking areas between the residential building and hotel building, and between the residential building and townhouses. Since these areas are parking lot, pedestrians are not expected to linger for an extended period of time.
- Wind conditions on the roof amenity areas are expected to be appropriate for the intended use in the summer.
- Wind conditions on and immediately around the existing project site are expected to meet the safety criterion. With the addition of the proposed development, the criterion is predicted to be met at all but one location on the project site, in the parking lot between the residential and hotel buildings.
- Of note, the applicant owns the property north of the site (200 Market Street) and a preliminary design concept was incorporated into this study. The preliminary design at 200 Market Street is subject to change and a separate wind study will be conducted should a formal planning application be submitted in the future.

The Study predicts that certain locations have wind conditions that are somewhat higher than that desired for intended functions. For such instances, it provides additional potential wind control strategies that could be addressed at the time of detailed design.
Visual Impacts

GSP Group prepared the Visual Impact Assessment for the proposed development using the Downtown Hamilton terms of reference. This Assessment has been submitted under separate cover.

Signage and Lighting

Lighting plans for the site were approved as part of the previous Site Plan Approval for the lower building heights. Appropriate lighting levels are achieved on the site through wall-mounted and site lighting fixtures, emphasizing higher pedestrian activity areas near building entrances, surface parking areas and on-site walkways.

The hotel building contains wall-mounted illuminated signage in five locations. Four signs are situated on each of the elevations near the roofline while the fifth is positioned above the building entrance on the Queen Street frontage. As well, parking garage entrance signage and municipal address signage is expected. Hotel signage is provided in bands along the roofline of four elevations to visibility and wayfinding for hotel visitors. From the street level, signage is limited to the horizontal band above the entrance to assist with wayfinding. Details for signage for commercial units within the apartment building and hotel building are not known at this point. The expectation is the signage will be placed and designed in keeping with the architectural design of the individual building.
Sustainable Design

At the site level, the proposed development supports several broad sustainability objectives. The site provides inherent sustainability advantages owing to its location. Within larger mixed-use environment of Downtown Hamilton and Strathcona neighbourhood, provide a mix of workplaces, community uses and shops restaurants. These activities can be easily accessed by walking, cycling or taking public transit, reducing reliance on trips by automobile. The site has excellent connections to higher order transit, existing and planned, with a new LRT stop planned on its doorstep and inter-regional GO train and bus services provided at stations, either Downtown or West Harbour stations. Taken together, these factors provide opportunities for car-free or car-reduced lifestyle opportunities, furthering objectives of greenhouse gas reductions.

At the building level, detailed plans have not progressed at this time for the buildings. Certification under a sustainability rating system, LEED or other, is not being pursued for the proposed development. There are several apparent sustainability benefits apparent with the preliminary exterior design, including appropriate window-wall ratios and opportunities for solar gains. Other sustainability construction and building operation methods will be explored at the time of more detailed design.