



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council

From: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

Date: April 23, 2025

Subject: 5229 Cordova Bay Road - Development Permit Amendment

File: DPA01077

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Development Permit Amendment DPA01077 be approved.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council's decision on an application to amend Development Permit DPR00761 for the addition of a fence and gate surrounding the development's parking area. The applicant is GRG Properties Ltd. (Graeme Mann).

BACKGROUND

On August 23, 2021, Council gave final reading to the Rezoning application and issued Development Permit DPR00761 for a residential development with a commercial unit at grade. On November 20, 2023, Council approved a Development Permit Amendment that altered the approved building height in response to emerging engineering requirements.

The applicant has requested this change because potential buyers of the residential units may prefer a more secure parking area.

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Context

The subject property is located on Cordova Bay Road, at the southeast corner of Cordova Bay Road and Fenn Avenue (see Figure 1). The subject parcel is designated as a Village in the OCP and designated within the Cordova Bay Village Plan as Commercial Mixed-Use.

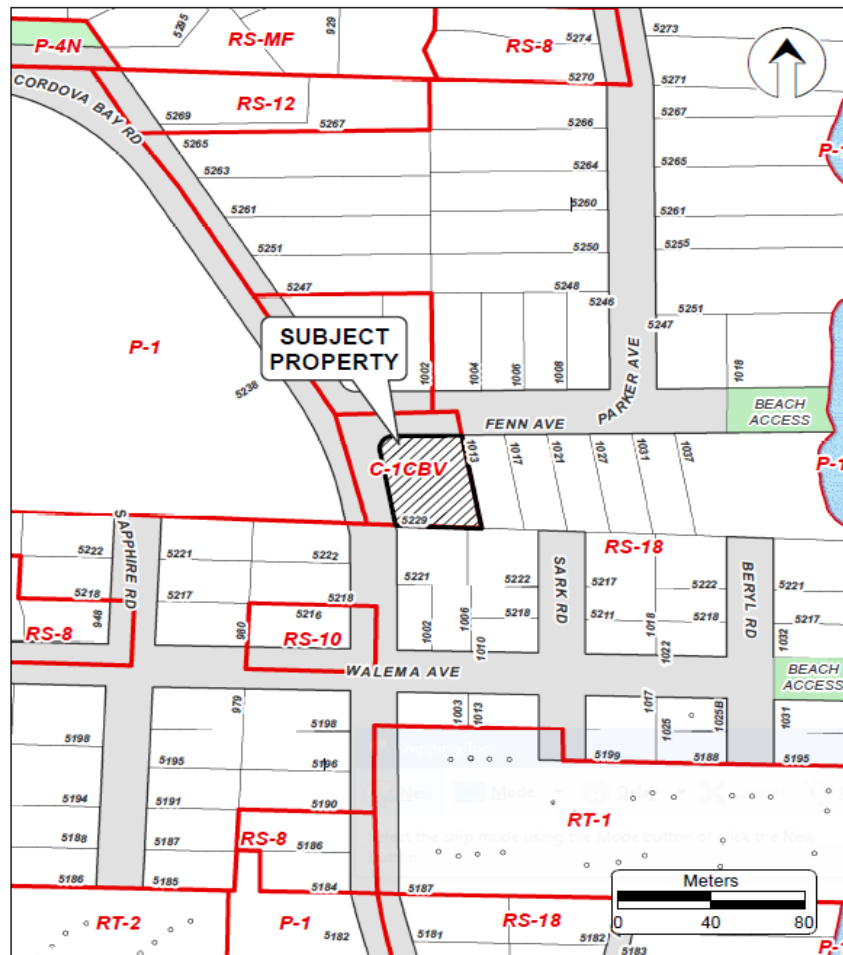


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Context

Proposed Change

This application is proposing the addition of an overhead vehicle gate, and a fence with pedestrian gates, to provide secured access to the building's parking area. This change would affect the Form and Character of the development and has been referred to Council for decision. The Site Plan (changes in red bubbled areas) and before-and-after elevations are shown below in Figures 2 through 6.

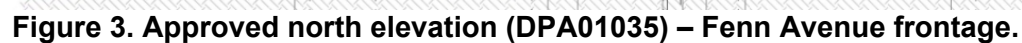




Figure 4. Proposed north elevation – Fenn Avenue frontage.

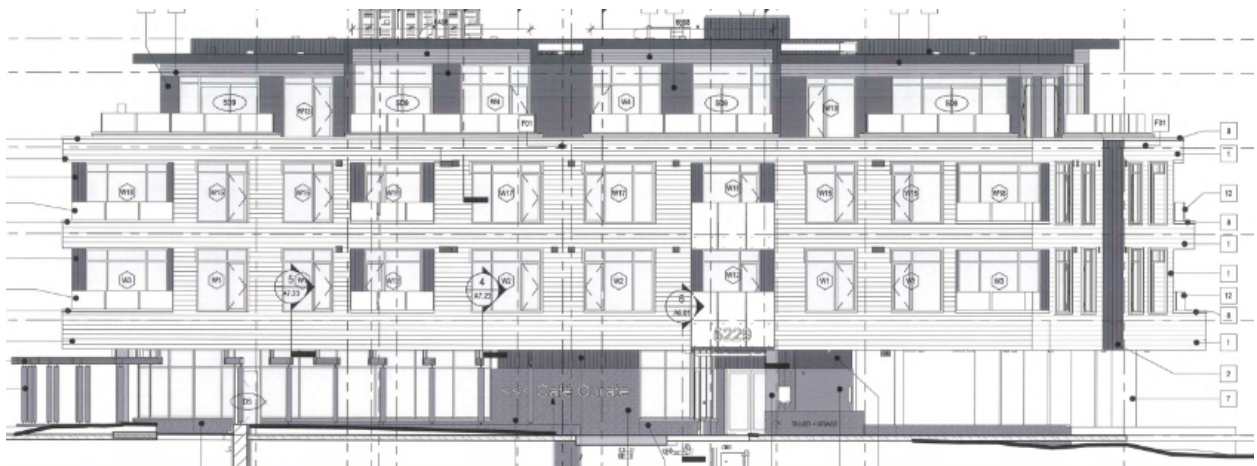


Figure 5. Approved west elevation (DPA01035) – Cordova Bay Road frontage.



Figure 6. Proposed west elevation – Cordova Bay Road frontage.

The overhead vehicle gate will remain open during business hours. Patrons of the commercial space can park in designated spaces in the under-building parking during business hours. Pedestrian gates will be able to open during business hours, and will be equipped with accessible, push-button openers.

After business hours, the overhead gate will close. Residents will be able to enter through the vehicle overhead gate using a remote opener, and visitors with a vehicle will have to coordinate with residents to be granted access through the overhead gate. As well, after business hours, the pedestrian gates will lock. Residents can use these gates with a fob. Visitors on foot can be admitted through the main residential entrance by using a call panel/intercom system, and would not need to access any of the pedestrian gates.

Policy

The following District of Saanich Planning Policies are most applicable to the subject proposal:

Official Community Plan

- 7.3.14 Require active frontages, pedestrian-oriented design, and commercial or institutional uses on the ground-floor of mixed-use buildings within Primary Growth Areas.
- 9.6.5 Require all vehicle parking to be located underground, or in exceptional circumstances, under building. These circumstances could include:
 - a. Areas of high-water table;
 - b. Substantial grade differences;
 - c. Poor soil conditions;
 - d. To support tree retention; and/or;
 - e. For building forms such as townhouses.
- 9.6.6 Further to 9.6.5, under building parking must include adequate screening and landscaping.
- 9.6.7 Notwithstanding Policy 9.6.5, permit limited surface parking, for accessible, visitor parking, and car-share parking.

Cordova Bay Village Plan

- 10.4.6 Building and unit entrances must be oriented to the street rather than parking areas. Parking areas must be sited underneath, to the rear, or to the side of buildings and screened from view Cordova Bay Local Area Plan.

The original DP application incorporates a commercial use at grade as well as several design elements to enhance the building's relationship with the street. Policies indicate that screening at-grade parking is important.

Design Review

Evaluation of this proposal requires balancing Development Permit Area Guidelines (DPAG): a fence may restrict views or access but may also provide screening of less desirable uses like parking.

Staff find the fence more practical than ornamental. Staff note that the fence fits the building's approved material aesthetic, which includes dark stone veneer, dark metal panel siding, and black fascia and trim, even if black metal is a more austere material.

The fence complies with the DPAG in these ways:

- The fencing on the Cordova Bay Road frontage is not prominent. The commercial space at the corner continues to provide an active frontage and is not hindered by the fencing.
- Fencing screens vehicle parking while still providing some visual permeability (3.1.4 m.).
- Enclosing or screening surface parking is encouraged (6.1.4 a. ii.).
- The fence uses high-quality, durable finishes compatible with the architectural treatment of the building (3.1.4 d).

Ways in which the proposed fence does not align with the DPAG include:

- Fencing may slightly occlude the primary entrance (3.1.2 e.).
- Gates would add an additional obstacle for pedestrians navigating the site (3.1.4 q.) even though automatic door opening buttons would be provided.
- Black metal fencing does not relate to or harmonize with the colours and tones of the natural landscape (3.1.6 g.).

On balance, the proposed fence and gate does not negatively impact the Form and Character of the development. Staff find that other design choices serve to make the primary residential entrance legible, and that the gates are not an unreasonable obstacle for pedestrian circulation. The fence, on balance, meets DPAG: it provides a visual barrier from parking while being visually permeable and safe, and is of durable and quality material that matches the existing building.

The proposed change is supported by staff.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. That Council support the application and approve the Development Permit Amendment.
2. That Council reject the application.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.

CONCLUSION

The fence provides more benefit in screening parking while being visually permeable than it provides detriments to pedestrian connectivity, design legibility, or a natural aesthetic. The fence is ultimately more utilitarian than decorative, but it serves a positive purpose without being objectionable or unsafe. Overall, staff support the application.

Prepared by: Eric Joyal, Planner

Reviewed by: Carl Purvis, Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

EJ/kb

Attachments: Attachment 1 – Development Permit
Attachment 2 – Plans – April 14, 2025

ADMINISTRATOR’S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.
Brent Reems, Chief Administrative Officer