Urban Design Brief

177 Cross Avenue
Town of Oakville
April 11th, 2014
Introduction

“Midtown Oakville is on the verge of dramatic change. In the coming decades, 20,000 people and jobs will come to the area, bringing new development and new life!”\(^1\) The owners of a parcel of land at the North West corner of Cross Avenue and Argus Road, within Midtown Oakville, are making the planning applications necessary to redevelop their lands in order to align with the Town’s plan to “create a completely urban community comprised of a mix of high-density residential and employment uses.”\(^2\)

This Urban Design Brief is a component of the re-zoning application to take the subject lands from their current C3A designation to permit a mixed-use residential and commercial development. The development proposal is for three residential towers and two podium levels of retail and commercial uses, including street-related retail. The following Brief will outline the development proposal and its guiding urban design principles.

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\(^1\) Draft Midtown Oakville Urban Design Guidelines

\(^2\) Liveable Oakville, E1, Sec. 20

Figure 1. Development Concept
Section One

Section 1.a. Contextual Analysis

SWOT Analysis

The Terms of Reference Urban Design Brief prepared by the Town indicate that a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is required as part of the Design Brief. To be meaningful, SWOT analysis begins with defining an end objective. In the case of this application, the objective is to re-zone the subject site to permit a redevelopment in alignment with the Town of Oakville vision for a redeveloped Midtown and to establish site-specific regulations for a future detailed site plan application and ultimate construction of the project.

Strengths: attributes that are helpful in achieving the objective

- The site is not within the context of existing residential uses
- The site is central to the Midtown district with street frontages on two sides
- The site owners are aligned with the Town’s growth objectives for Midtown Oakville and are prepared to redevelop their property
- The site is immediately adjacent to a major transportation hub, and is a desirable location for residential and commercial development

Weaknesses: attributes that are harmful to achieving the objective

- Livable Oakville height restrictions are exceeded by the proposal but allowances for increasing height by bonusing are provided for, with no stated maximum
- Two of the three towers exceed the height of any existing towers in Oakville
- Schematic images of what a development proposal could look like are presented in the re-zoning application, but specific approval for such is neither sought nor required at this stage since building massing is a more critical issue
- The proposal is requesting a reduction in parking ratios, which is based on the existing transit availability and the shared use aspect of a mixed-use development, but which would be the lowest ratio known in the Town
**Opportunities:** external conditions that are helpful to achieving the objective

- Town and Regional policy objectives and goals for Midtown Oakville aligns with the application
- Provincial policy in terms of growth for this location aligns with the application
- The Town of Oakville is perceived as a desirable location to live and conduct business
- The municipal infrastructure is largely in place to service the development

**Threats:** external conditions that are harmful to achieving the objective

- Re-zoning applications are public processes and subject to appeal by any member of the public
- The Town’s concept for growth in the Midtown may not be adequately understood or accepted by members of the public, especially in a Town that is typically very cautious of growth and building height
- Town Council decisions, while anticipated in some cases, cannot be guaranteed as favourable
- The sanitary sewers in the area are scheduled to be upgraded by the Region, and the development timing will depend on the schedule of upgrades

**General Context**

The site is located central to the area known as Midtown Oakville, at the northwest corner of Cross Avenue and Argus Road, known municipally as 177 Cross Avenue. The site currently contains three one-storey commercial buildings, which will be removed at the construction stage of the proposed development. The majority of the surrounding land uses are typical C3A types of retail/commercial uses, including personal services and office uses, for the most part in a sprawled automobile-oriented format. Relatively new four- to five-storey buildings exist to the west and north of the site. Further to the west of the site, a large format retail and car-oriented retail centre exists. To the east of the site, smaller retail/commercial buildings similar to the site itself exist, along with one major car dealership. To the northeast of the site is the Holiday Inn Hotel. To the south of the site are the Go Transit and Via Rail stations, which are currently dominated by a vast amount of surface parking on the south side of Cross Avenue.
Figure 2. Site Context
The site is perhaps unique in terms of a re-zoning application in that the area is anticipated to be redeveloped as outlined in *Livable Oakville*, the Official Plan. With a more typical application, existing local context and items such as overshadowing, viewsheds, and compatibility are applicable, but as Midtown Oakville is in a state of evolution, these issues are of lesser concern.

Midtown Oakville has been the subject of considerable study by the Town and much long-range planning has been devoted to the area. *Livable Oakville* contains a broad vision for the area and provides direction for the creation of a “vibrant and complete community.” The subject site is within the Lyons District of Midtown Oakville, and the intent is that it “shall evolve from its current focus on strip malls and large format retail uses into a compact, mixed-use neighbourhood.”

*Designing Midtown Oakville* is a draft document, which is intended to be a “forward-looking document aimed at guiding the future look, feel, and functional operation of Midtown Oakville” As such; *Designing Midtown Oakville* has been used as a precursor to the document in hand.

Metrolinx is the provincial agency responsible for providing a modern, efficient, and integrated transportation system for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. *The Big Move* (2008) is Metrolinx’s Regional Transportation Plan, and within it, mobility hubs are identified, one being the Midtown Oakville Mobility Hub. Mobility Hub studies “support creating a system of connected mobility hubs where major transit stations offer seamless mobility and access to the regional transit system, support higher density development, and demonstrate excellence in customer service.”

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1 *Liveable Oakville*, E2., Sec. 20.22.
2 *Liveable Oakville*, E3., Sec. 20.33.
3 *Designing Midtown Oakville*, Draft, p. 9.
4 Midtown Oakville Mobility Hub, Agenda, p. 2.
Section 1.b.  
Goals and Objectives

The subject development proposal stems from the desire on the part of the Town of Oakville to “create a complete urban community comprised of a mix of high-density residential and employment uses.” The Livable Oakville goal for Midtown Oakville is for it to be “a vibrant, transit supportive, mixed-used urban community and employment area.”

The Livable Oakville objectives for Midtown Oakville are as follows:

20.2 Objectives

As Midtown Oakville develops, the Town will, through public actions and in the process of reviewing planning applications, use the following objectives to guide decisions.

20.2.1 To create transit-supportive development by:
   a) ensuring the entire area is developed as a pedestrian-oriented environment focused on access to, and from, transit;

b) improving internal road circulation and connections to, and through, Midtown Oakville for public transit, pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles; and,

c) promoting a compact urban form with higher density and higher intensity land uses.

20.2.2 To create a vibrant and complete new community by:
   a) providing a mix of residential, commercial, employment, civic, institutional, cultural and recreational uses, complemented by public open spaces and public art, to attract different uses throughout the day;

   b) directing major office and appropriate large scale institutional development to Midtown Oakville;

   c) ensuring high quality urban design that complements and contributes to the vitality of both Midtown Oakville and the Town;

   d) providing a transition between the concentration, mix and massing of uses and
buildings in Midtown Oakville and neighbouring areas and properties;

e) facilitating public investment in transit, infrastructure and civic facilities to support future growth; and,
f) promoting district energy facilities and sustainable building practices.

20.2.3 To achieve growth targets by:

a) promoting the evolution of Midtown Oakville as an urban growth centre and the Town’s primary Growth Area;

b) ensuring a minimum gross density of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare – a combined total of approximately 20,000 residents and jobs – by 2031 in accordance with the Growth Plan;

c) providing opportunities for increased height and/or density through Bonusing; and,

d) ensuring that development occurs in a comprehensive and progressive manner by monitoring key development indicators at regular intervals.

The Livable Oakville goals and objectives are incorporated into the following specific goals and objectives for the subject site.

**Project Goal:**

1. To re-zone the subject site to permit a redevelopment in alignment with the Town of Oakville’s vision for a redeveloped Midtown and to establish site-specific regulations towards a future detailed site planning application and ultimate construction of the project.

**Project Objectives:**

1. To establish architectural massing that:

   .1 allows for high density residential in keeping with the intent of a redeveloped Midtown
   .2 provides for street-level retail and second floor office/commercial uses within a podium format
   .3 provides for an animated and high-quality streetscape

2. to initiate a high-quality architectural style and flavour for the project that guides and influences the future design
team at the detailed site plan approval and construction phases of the project

3. to reduce the dependence on the automobile and to accommodate all parking below grade

4. to align with the Metrolinx plan for Midtown Oakville as a mobility hub by initiating the planning process for the subject site, which will ultimately create one part of a transit-oriented community where people can live, work, and play

Section 1.c.
Response to Town Documents

1. Livable Oakville Official Plan
The subject lands are designated ‘Growth Area’ as shown on Figure 7 – South East Land Use Plan. The proposed development is subject to the Oakville Midtown Core policies within ‘Part E: Growth Areas, Special Policy Areas and Exceptions’ of the Official Plan. The goal for Midtown Oakville is to create a vibrant, transit-supportive, mixed-use urban community and employment area.

The Midtown Oakville policies are intended to guide the development and intensification of the area. Policies supporting the development include:

“20.2.1 To create transit-supportive development by:
   a) ensuring the entire area is developed as a pedestrian-oriented environment focused on access to, and from, transit;
   b) improving internal road circulation and connections to, and through, Midtown Oakville for public transit, pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; and,
   c) promoting a compact urban form with higher density and higher intensity land uses;

20.2.2 To create a vibrant and complete new community by:
   a) providing a mix of residential, commercial, employment, civic, institutional, cultural and recreational uses, complemented by public open spaces and public art, to attract different users throughout the day;

20.2.3 To achieve required growth targets by:
a) promoting the evolution of Midtown Oakville as an urban growth centre and the Town’s primary growth area;

b) ensuring a minimum gross density of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare—a combined total of approximately 20,000 residents and jobs—by 2031 in accordance with the Growth Plan;

c) providing opportunities for increased building height through bonusing.”

The proposed development is consistent with these policies as it contributes to the evolution of the Midtown Core Area as an Urban Growth Centre through a mix of uses, higher densities and pedestrian oriented design that is strongly transit supportive.

The property falls within the ‘Lyons District’ of Midtown Oakville and is designated ‘Urban Centre’ and ‘Urban Core’. Permitted uses in the ‘Urban Core’ designation include:

“12.4.1/12.5.4 A wide range of retail and service commercial uses, including restaurants, offices, and residential uses may be permitted in the Urban Centre/Urban Core designation. Retail and service commercial uses are to be provided on the ground floor. These uses may also extend to other floors. Entertainment facilities and hotels may also be permitted. Office uses and ancillary residential uses may be provided on the ground floor and/or above the ground floor.”

The proposed residential and commercial uses conform to the permitted uses in Livable Oakville.

Policies for Lyons District include:

“20.3.3 The Lyons District shall evolve from its current focus on strip malls and large format retail uses into a compact mixed use neighbourhood. Cross Avenue is intended to be an attractive central spine animated by at-grade retail uses, cohesive streetscapes and open spaces that
enhance the experience of the public realm. Taller residential buildings shall be located in the vicinity of Sixteen Mile Creek and the railway.”

The proposed redevelopment includes the demolition of the existing strip mall format of one-storey buildings and their replacement with much denser and compact mixed-use buildings. At-grade retail uses are proposed along Cross Avenue in a manner consistent with the objectives for Lyons District. Within the ‘Urban Centre’ designation, the Official Plan permits the development of 6-12-storey buildings and within the ‘Urban Core’ designation, the Official Plan permits the development of 8-20-storey buildings. Livable Oakville does not specify a maximum density for the area. Livable Oakville also includes bonusing policies, which allow for an increase in building height without an amendment to the plan. It is the intention in this development proposal to apply a bonusing factor through the Town’s acquisition of the site area required to accommodate the future north / south and east / west roadways, and to apply the acquisition costs to the increased height being proposed as an offset.

2. Town of Oakville Vision 2057

This document outlines “a path to a more Livable Oakville and sustainable future” and “brings together the entire Town’s Master Plans and other key planning initiatives.”

The key strategic direction in the document section entitled “Create it” outlines the Midtown Strategy as one element in the creation of this new community. The vision of the Midtown Strategy is “to encourage investment in this area’s transformation into a vibrant urban centre for people to live and work.”

It goes on to summarize:

“Midtown Oakville, the urban growth centre that surrounds the Oakville GO Station, will be home to about 12,000 people and 8,000 jobs by 2031. In 2008, the Livable Oakville Plan set out the land use policies; now, under the Midtown Strategy, a number of projects will be created such as a new urban design strategy and plan, and new zoning regulations. In the longer term, a community

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9 Town of Oakville Vision 2057, p. 1
10 Town of Oakville Vision 2057, p. 9
improvement plan may be drafted. The Midtown Oakville Class EA will also define the many infrastructure improvements needed. All of these projects aim to secure Midtown Oakville as a premier locale for intensification for many years.”

The proposed development is aligned with the Midtown Strategy and can be seen as a catalyst for its implementation.

3. **Designing Midtown Oakville (Draft), April 2013**

This draft document, prepared by Urban Strategies Inc. for the Town of Oakville, is aimed at “guiding the future look, feel, and functional operation of Midtown Oakville.”

Relevant extracts from the document are as follows:

1. **New development should be set back from the front property line to accommodate street-animating activities like patios, restaurants, seating, and landscaping.**

   The proposed development complies.

2. **Tall buildings should have 3 main elements: the podium (base), tower, and top floors.**

   The proposed development complies.

3. **Tall buildings may have the podium integrated into the middle portion (tower) of the building if they are located on landmark and key locations.**

   The proposed development is not intended to be fully explored architecturally, but the intent is not for the built form to be 2 distinct elements, but to be clearly attached to the podium rather than giving the appearance of simply sitting on it.

4. **Podium heights will be a minimum of 2 storeys.**

   The proposed development includes a podium height equivalent to 3 storeys but in a 2-storey format. The ground floor retail is of exaggerated height.

5. **Podiums facing main streets should allow permeability and be built with transparent materials.**

   The proposed development complies.

6. **Podiums should provide the entrance to tall buildings with a clear and well-defined access from a public street.**

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11 ibid.
12 *Designing Midtown Oakville (Draft),* p.7
The proposed development complies.

7 Tower floor plates must fit within a 40-metre diameter circle.

The proposed development complies.

8 Towers should be set back a minimum of 5 metres from the edge of the podium.

In general, the proposed development provides a setback, although in order to achieve the desired unified appearance of podium and tower, the tower is pulled to the edge of the podium in sections.

9 There should be a minimum separation of 30 metres between any two tower elements with less than 30 storeys and 50 metres between towers over 30 storeys.

The proposed development positions the three towers in a diamond pattern, with corners of the buildings opposing each other, rather than walls of opposing buildings creating a canyon effect. Where two towers do face each other, a separation in excess of 50 metres is achieved. The separation distance in the proposed development should be judged on its own site-specific merits.

10 Tall buildings should have a minimum 15-metre setback from adjacent properties if they are below 30 storeys, and 25 metres if they are above 30 storeys.

The proposed development provides a setback to the adjacent property fronting onto Argus Road, known as the “garage property,” of approximately 10 metres, to the corner point of the respective towers. The intent of Midtown Oakville is to allow for a more intensive built form, and as such, these setbacks should be judged on their own site-specific merits. The garage property will ultimately be redeveloped, but due to its small size, it is highly unlikely to be able to accommodate a high-rise built form, and therefore, reduced setbacks to the property are justifiable.

11 Top floors should be designed to achieve a distinctive skyline profile with architectural highlight methods.

The proposed development complies, showing in principle an architectural style that would be further explored at the future detailed stages.
4. *Livable Oakville*, Part C, Section 6, Urban Design

This section of *Livable Oakville* outlines the general methodology for achieving good urban design. Specific and relevant extracts are as follows:

.1 6.1.1 d) *to promote the creation of distinctive places and locales, including Midtown Oakville...*

   The proposed development is intended to be a “distinctive place.”

.2 6.2.6 b) and c) *streetscapes shall promote a pedestrian-oriented environment that is safe, attractive, accessible, and provide cohesive and seamless transitions between the public and private realm.*

   The proposed development as illustrated in this Design Brief achieves this objective.

.3 6.2.7 a) to c) *new development should contribute to the creation of a cohesive streetscape through the placement of principal building entrances towards the street and corner intersections when applicable; achieving a variation of façade articulation and details; the location of active uses such as patios designed to connect to the public realm to enhance the liveliness and vibrancy of the street, where applicable...*

   The proposed development as illustrated in this Design Brief achieves this objective.

.4 6.5.2 *Buildings located on corner lots shall provide a distinct architectural appearance with a high level of detailing and shall ensure that the design continues around the corner with articulated facades towards both streets.*

   The proposed development as illustrated in this Design Brief achieves this objective.

.5 6.5.4. *Where appropriate, a building’s first storey shall generally be taller in height to accommodate a range of non-residential uses.*

   The proposed development provides for a height of 6 metres to accommodate modern retail formats.
Section Two

Section 2.a.
Conceptual Design Principles and Concept Plan

Specific built-form design principles have been identified to provide guidance to this re-zoning stage of the proposed development and also towards the ultimate achievement of the project. The manner in which the development responds to the design is provided and serves as a description of the development concept. The development proposal has been informed by a combination of Livable Oakville, Draft Midtown Oakville Urban Design Guidelines, and Metrolinx Midtown Oakville Mobility Hub.

The proposal is to allow for three residential towers with varying heights: 20, 26, and 32 storeys, including a two-storey podium. Two of the towers are integrated with the two-storey podium fronting onto Cross Avenue, with the third being a free-standing tower in the northwest corner of the site. The podium levels will contain ground floor retail space and second-storey office/commercial uses.

The net site arrangement has been determined by allowing for the future road configuration in Midtown Oakville, as outlined in principle on Schedule L.3 of Livable Oakville. In essence, a new east / west roadway has been protected for on the north portion of the site, and up to 3-metres of a new north / south roadway has been protected for on the west portion of the site. The configuration for both roadways has not yet been finalized by the Town of Oakville.
1. **Site Design:**

   .1 **Guiding Principle:** The development should be transit oriented.

   *Concept Plan Response:* The context of the site, in immediate proximity to the Oakville Mobility Hub as identified by Metrolinx, provides for a high degree of transit orientation. The Hub provides GO Train Service, Via Rail Service, and Oakville Transit Service. In fact, this proximity allows for a lower parking ratio that is in direct response to the public transit availability.

   ![Figure 3. Image from Metrolinx Oakville Transit Hub](image)

   .2 **Guiding Principle:** The development should create pedestrian-scaled street and block patterns.

   *Concept Plan Response:* Cross Avenue is the major site frontage, turning the corner north on Argus Road. The development is designed to create a retail street-front format along both streets, in a pedestrian-friendly style. The development will eventually be defined on the west and north sides by future municipal roads, which will create a single block. The development will be opened up at grade at the mid-point of Cross Avenue by a pedestrian-scaled passageway to allow mid-block pedestrian movement both within the block and across it from adjacent properties.

   .3 **Guiding Principle:** Large sites should be designed to allow for a master planned approach.

   *Concept Plan Response:* The development consists of three residential towers, each having a relatively small overall footplate. The intent is to allow for a master planned construction phasing of the towers to address market demands.
.4 **Guiding Principle:** The project design should relate to the site and its greater surrounding area.

**Concept Plan Response:** The site as it presently exists is planned to be completely redeveloped and rebuilt to the proposed re-zoned uses and regulations. As such, it will not have any existing built form to which it must relate. However, the proposed development will be appropriate for a block in the newly-established Midtown Oakville and is expected to harmonize with the eventual redevelopment in the balance of Midtown.

.5 **Guiding Principle:** Significant views to and from the site should be enhanced and provided for, especially as a view terminus.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development positions of the residential towers at the corner of Cross Avenue and Argus Road to act as a view terminus. The development is opened up at the mid-point along Cross Avenue to not only allow for pedestrian movement, but also to allow for views into the development.

.6 **Guiding Principle:** Vehicular circulation should be clearly accommodated, but should not be dominant and should only be from Argus Road. Pedestrian circulation should not be hindered and should be provided for in a user-friendly, attractive, and safe manner.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development will provide for vehicular access off Argus Road, which will then provide access to the underground garage. At grade, it will provide vehicular drop-off and pick-up via a pedestrian-themed circle. Ultimately, it is anticipated that vehicular access to an ultimate east / west roadway across the top of the site will be provided for.
.7 Guiding Principle: Buildings and their entrances should be located on the site to provide clear accessibility and orientation to the street edge and sidewalk.

Concept Plan Response: The development positions a street-related podium along Cross Avenue and the south frontage of Argus Road, upon which two residential towers are set back and rise. The tower entrances relate to the street via clearly identified entrance treatments. The third residential tower is clearly accessible both visually and physically from Argus Road – for vehicles and pedestrians – and from Cross Avenue, for pedestrians. The two westernmost towers will ultimately front onto municipal streets once the long-range road pattern envisioned by Livable Oakville for Midtown is realized.

Figure 4. Typical Entrances on Building Façade at Street Level
2. **Built Form Elements and Massing**

.1 **Guiding Principle:** The buildings should be positioned in close proximity to the street line to replicate a typical “Main Street” format, and it should consist of a base, a central tower, and a defined top.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development proposes that the Cross Avenue and the Argus Road setback to the base, i.e. podium, be approximately 3 metres, which achieves the “Main Street” format, while allowing for enhanced pedestrian streetscape treatment. The architectural detail of the development is not fully explored as the project is a re-zoning approval rather than a building approval at this stage. The intention is for a contemporary flavour with integration of the tower and podium whereby the tower is visually expressed in part down to street level. The free-standing tower will ultimately have close proximity to the future north/south road on the western edge of the site.

![Figure 5. Cross Avenue Towers and Podium Pulled out to Street Line](image)
\textit{Guiding Principle:} The built form should provide a harmonious transition and relationship to adjacent off- and on-site uses and buildings, including that of scale.

\textit{Concept Plan Response:} The development is at the forefront of a long range redevelopment plan for Midtown Oakville and as such, adjacent uses are expected to be redeveloped. Relatively new office buildings exist to the west and north of the site. Other adjacent uses are considered to be in transition and therefore, current relationship to them is not relevant. The proposed development, meanwhile, will not present any adverse impacts to surrounding uses in the interim. There is no adjacent residential use of any form, to which there might otherwise be an adverse impact. The building form on-site will be considered as one project to be designed with architectural harmony.

\textit{Guiding Principle:} The built form should not produce a canyon effect at street level or within the site; rather, it should step back in height as it rises from the street edge and therefore, retains a proportion that is amenable to pedestrians.

\textit{Concept Plan Response:} The redevelopment proposes a 3-metre setback from the Argus Road and Cross Avenue street lines for the podium, ground, and second floors, with a further setback of 5 metres for the residential towers rising above. From the pedestrian realm of the streetscape, the taller portion of the built form will recede and not be imposing. The proposed orientation of the 3 towers to each other is that of a diamond pattern, with the corners of the buildings opposing each other in the closest positions. In this manner, the canyon effect of flat building faces directly opposite of each other is eliminated, and direct views are not of a building in close proximity. From street level, the view is not of flat faces rising parallel to the street edge, but rather, of building faces that recede at 45° from the street line.
3. **BUILDING ARTICULATION**

1. **Guiding Principle:** The built-form treatment at grade should be highly developed with quality landscaping and a full complement of streetscape furnishings.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development proposes a 3-metre setback at the street line, in order to provide sufficient space for streetscape detailing with the intent of establishing a seamless transition across the pedestrian realm from curb edge to building face. The existing boulevard areas of Cross Avenue and Argus Road would be completely redesigned and developed along with the private realm to provide a unified streetscape. The private realm would contain planter walls, benches, spaces for café-style seating, enhanced lighting, bicycle racks, and all other typical streetscape elements.

![Figure 6. Typical Streetscape Treatment](image-url)
Guiding Principle: The built-form treatment at grade should be highly developed with quality landscaping and a full complement of streetscape furnishings.

Concept Plan Response: The development proposes a regular pattern of retail units, with individual identities, which will resemble a typical “Main Street” format. The entrances to the two residential towers fronting Cross Avenue will be expressed at grade along the frontage, thus linking the towers directly to the street.

Figure 7. Typical Street-level View
3 Guiding Principle: The building base, mid-section, and top should be distinct but present a unified appearance. The podium should have sufficient height at the ground floor to be suitable for modern retail uses, with the second floor of a lesser height related to office / commercial.

Concept Plan Response: The development proposes a distinct podium format with the ground floor at a 6-metre height and the second floor at a 6-metre height. The architectural details are general at this re-zoning stage, but it is anticipated that the podium will have well-defined base and cornice lines as distinguishing features. The mid-section of the built-form – the towers – would be residential-style with a preponderance of glazing, with balconies in glass used as a modifying element to offset the typically-repetitive horizontal stacking of floors characteristic of many anonymous residential towers. The top floor(s) of the development are afforded specific design input to make them distinctive while being an integral component of the built form.
.4 **Guiding Principle:** Buildings that present themselves to street corners should have a step-back element at grade to provide the semblance of a forecourt, and both faces of corner buildings should be front faces rather than one seeming to be a flankage.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development proposes that one of the towers be located at the intersection of Cross Avenue and Argus Road, and it has equal fenestration and architectural style on both frontages. The podium notches for its full height to allow space at grade for hardscape and building entrance detailing.

**Figure 10.** Corner Treatment
4. Character and Image

.1 Guiding Principle: The built form should respond to the existing street character where that character is of merit and establishes a desirable tone for the area.

Concept Plan Response: Midtown Oakville is an area planned to be in transition in order to create a new community of mixed uses. There is no existing street character of any merit with much of the immediate area presenting a disjointed, small-scale retail / commercial format that is highly-dependent on the automobile, which remains highly visible and unscreened. There is a newer mid-rise office building to the north of the subject site, at 586 Argus Road, which has some architectural merit. Singularly, it is an attractive office building and expected to adequately form part of the newly-developed Midtown.

The office building immediately to the west of the site is anonymous in character. This particular building is within the projected right-of-way for the future north / south road that is called for in Livable Oakville, and as such, it will need to be removed in order to accommodate the new road.

.2 Guiding Principle: The built form should play a supporting role in the context of its neighbourhood and should not be in any way a negative influence on the neighbouring context.

Concept Plan Response: The development is intended to be a front-runner in the new Midtown Oakville and as such, is envisaged as a project that will play an integral role in establishing the new neighbourhood. At present, there is virtually no existing built form that is intended to remain intact in Midtown Oakville, and unlike many typical re-zoning projects, the surrounding lands are ultimately ripe for re-zoning as encouraged by the Town of Oakville.
5. **ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT**

1. **Guiding Principle:** The built form should be of high architectural quality in design, materials, detailing, and eventual construction, so as to create a project with lasting merit. The style should be modern and crisp with clean lines. As the pedestrian environment is so important in the guiding principles, high quality and sufficient site lighting is to be employed.

   **Concept Plan Response:** The project is at a re-zoning stage and the current approvals do not include building approvals. Permitted uses with regulations to determine building massing and basic development criteria / regulations are the objectives. The architectural images presented herein are intended to convey the general spirit of what an ultimate built-form could be and to guide the design team at that future time. Details as to site landscaping, lighting, signage, and site elements would all be determined at the site plan and building permit application stage, in the future.

   ![Figure 11. Typical Architectural Style](image-url)
6. **ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES PERTAINING TO TALL BUILDINGS**

1. **Guiding Principle:** Floor plates for tall buildings should be compact to the extent that an overall slender appearance is achieved.

**Concept Plan Response:** The development proposes floor plates for the residential towers that are 40 metres diagonally, and although not detailed, it is expected that each storey will average 10 units. In general, unit sizes are intended to be modest. The strategy in this design is to minimize the bulk of the towers and to respond to a growing market for small residential high-rise units, especially in conjunction with the extensive transit opportunities provided within the site context.

![Figure 12. Plan View](image)

![Figure 13. Elevation View](image)
.2 Guiding Principle: Shadowing by tall buildings onto adjacent properties should be documented and the effects minimized.

Concept Plan Response: Shadowing in the local context does not include the typical low density residential use component, with private at-grade amenity space, i.e. backyards. The surrounding properties within the shadow field are commercial uses. In the ultimate condition with roads to the west and north, and the existing Argus Road to the east, shadows would fall in large part on roadways.

Figure 14. Shadow Study
Section 2.b.  
Sustainability

The application is to re-zone the subject site to permit mixed uses within the context of a new Midtown Oakville as described in Livable Oakville. Subsequent detailed site and building design will address sustainability more completely. A description of how the proposed development addresses the issue of sustainability at a re-zoning stage is as follows:

1 Redevelopment: The proposed re-zoning has been initiated with the intent of redeveloping existing serviced urban land, which contains uses in a format that is no longer compatible with the Town of Oakville Midtown development plan. The proposal would see the creation of a mixed-use development containing primarily high-density residential, which would take advantage of existing municipal infrastructure. This is a sustainable notion in that development needs are being met without further consumption or drain of greenfield lands.

2 Transit Orientation: The proposed development is strategically positioned to take extreme advantage of the wide range of transit options that are currently available in the immediate vicinity. As well, the high density being proposed aligns with the Metrolinx aim of supporting higher-density development at mobility hubs such as Midtown Oakville. The development proposes to provide for fewer automobiles, both in response to current market trends, as well as in a bid to reduce the reliance on the private automobile and to increase the use of alternative modes of transportation. There are very broad sustainability notions that apply whenever the use of the automobile is reduced, including the reduction of carbon emissions.

3 LEED and Detailed Energy Efficiencies: It is premature to determine if an application for LEED certification will be pursued, but it is certain to say that LEED principles and the latest energy efficiency practices of the day would be applied to the development. The extent and variety of such practices would be appropriately examined in detail at subsequent approval stages of the project.
Section 2.c.
Public Realm

The proposed development will interface with the public realm for the entire frontage of Cross Avenue and for the portion of Argus Road where the corner turns north. These two faces of the development will have street-related retail at the ground floor as the built form. The intention is to treat the space from the building face out to the street curb in unison.

The building face is set back 3 metres from the street line, in order to add this space to the boulevard space and create a width that is sufficient to accommodate pedestrians, bicycle parking, benches, street furnishings, and café-style seating. The entire width will be a carefully-detailed hardscape with soft elements, such as trees and low landscaping, including seasonal treatments, placed in raised planters, or with decorative tree grates. Presently, there is no similar treatment within Midtown Oakville, and it is expected that the proposed project will establish a benchmark.

This Design Brief contains schematic plans, which provide an indication of the extent of treatment that could be realized within the public / private realm of the street fronts. The full details of such treatments would be addressed at the subsequent site plan application stage. The proposed project includes an opening in the built form at the mid-point of the Cross Avenue frontage. The intent is to extent the notion of public realm into the site and to open up the centre of the project to Cross Avenue. This will allow views into the site and will allow a free flow of pedestrians from, to, and through the project.

The proposed built form provides for a cutting back of the building face at the corner of Cross Avenue and Argus Road in order to devote more space to hardscape treatment, and again, a perception of the extension of the public realm up to the building face.
Figure 15. Site Plan

Figure 16. Streetscape Images
Figure 17. Underground Parking Layout
Figure 18. *East Elevation, From Argus Road – Looking West*
Figure 19. South Elevation, From Argus Road – Looking North