



### **Existing Policy:**

The Ambleside Apartment Area is designated a Development Permit Area in the Official Community Plan (OCP) under Policy BF-B4. The OCP contains policies to support the provision of rental housing through Policy H9, including:

- not supporting conversion of rental apartments to strata in buildings greater than four units; and
- considering amenity zoning (bonuses) for rental housing.

### *Housing Action Plan*

Council adopted “A Housing Action Plan for West Vancouver” on February 18, 2013. This document builds on the OCP and the 2007-2008 Community Dialogue on Neighbourhood Character and Housing.

The plan establishes five actions for improving housing choice and diversity in West Vancouver:

1. Continue established practices for supporting development of seniors’ and rental housing, accessible/adaptable units, and variations in unit size in new developments;
2. Consider Coach Houses following an informed community discussion;
3. Identify, consider and engage the community in a discussion of opportunities to retain and add purpose-built rental housing;
4. Strengthen OCP Policies on housing diversity to provide a framework for consideration of innovative housing proposals; and
5. Monitor and report on annually on the Housing Action Plan.

This proposal presents an opportunity for increasing the supply of purpose-built rental housing in an established area, via infill development on underutilized sites.

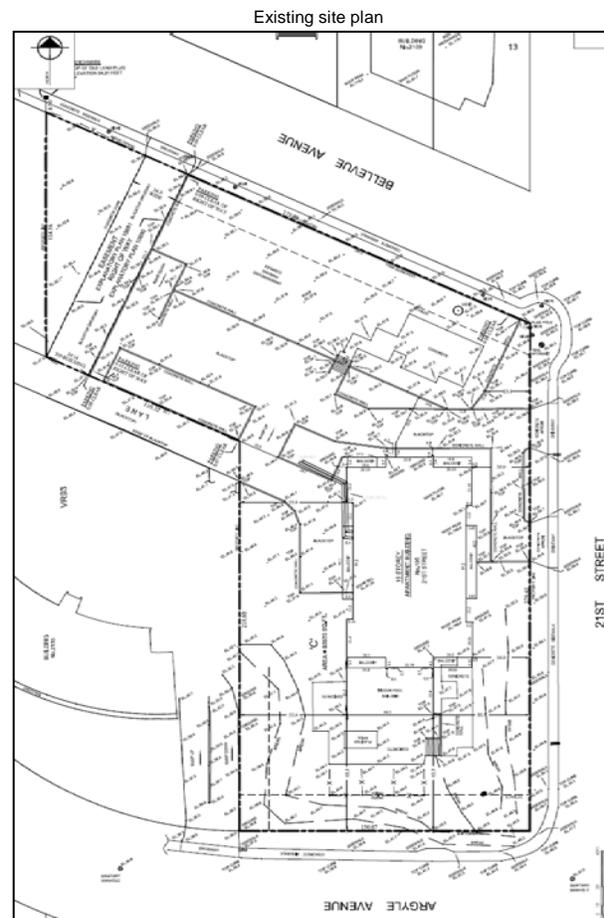
### The Site & Zoning:

The site consists of a 60,660 sq ft (5,635.5 sq m) “L” shaped lot. It is bounded by Argyle Avenue to the south, Bellevue Avenue to the north, 21st Street to the east and a multifamily strata building (“The Crescent”) to the west. Vehicular access is from a lane to the west, which connects through the site to Bellevue Avenue. There is driveway access through the site from 21st Street.

The site is currently developed with a 16-storey tower containing 126 rental apartments. The tower will be retained; the proposal does not involve eliminating any of the existing units. The driveway access through the site from 21st Street to the rear lane will remain open.

The property is zoned RM2 (Multiple Dwelling Zone 2) which allows apartment buildings.

The maximum FAR (Floor Area Ratio) permitted in the RM2 zone for apartment buildings is 1.75.



## The Proposal:

The proposal is to:

- Demolish the existing swimming pool on the southern portion of the site (to accommodate Building 'A');
- Construct on top of the existing parkade (for Building 'B') on the northern portion of the site; and
- Retain the existing 16-storey tower.

### Unit Mix:

Building 'A' contains 12 units:

- *Studio*: 1 unit (504 sq ft)
- *1 bedroom + den*: 2 units (734 sq ft)
- *2 bedroom + den*: 8 units (989 to 1243 sq ft)
- *3 bedroom townhouse*: 1 unit (2,937 sq ft)

Building 'B' contains 30 units:

- *Studio*: 1 unit (401 sq ft)
- *1 bedroom*: 5 units (570 to 597 sq ft)
- *1 bedroom + den*: 7 units (636 to 743 sq ft)
- *2 bedroom*: 3 units (772 to 798 sq ft)
- *2 bedrooms + den*: 14 units (874 to 1,243 sq ft)

### Parking:

The proposal results in the loss and addition of parking spaces on the site, resulting in a net increase of 23 spaces for a total of 159, which is 16 spaces short of the required 175.

There are 136 existing spaces on the site, 126 of which are in the parkade. The 10 remainder are surface parking. All parking is accessed from the rear lane or via the driveway from 21st Street.

Some spaces will be lost in the existing parkade to accommodate additional bicycle parking and for the new elevator shaft to Building 'B.' 21 spaces are added underneath Building 'A.' The existing 10 surfaces spaces will be relocated (due to construction of Building 'B') and 8 additional surfaces spaces will be added, for a total of 18.

### Project Quick Stats:

Zoning: RM2 (rezoning required)

FAR: 2.5

Gross Floor Area:

- Existing tower: ±106,155 sq ft
- Proposed infill: 44,279 sq ft
- Total: 150,434 sq ft

Building Site Coverage: 35%

Building Height:

- Existing tower: 149 ft
- Building 'A': 40.4 ft
- Building 'B': 32.4 ft

No. of Storeys:

- Existing tower: 16
- Building A: 4
- Building B: 3

Yards (Setbacks):

- Front (Argyle): 20 ft
- Rear (Bellevue): 16 ft
- East Side (21st): 22.7 ft
- West Side: >25 ft

Parking:

- Existing: 136
- Proposed Additional: 23
- Total: 159\*

\*16 space deficit (requirement is the greater of: 1 per unit or 1 per 900 sq ft)

**Architectural details include:**

- Contemporary architectural language utilizing horizontal lines anchored by stone and glass elements.
- Flat roof to fit in with adjacent flat-roofed apartment buildings and to help preserve views.
- Architecture designed to complement the existing 16-storey tower, which was built in 1971. Much of the buildings in the area were built in the same era, and have similar architectural vocabularies.

**Specific Items to Address:**

1. How appropriate is the proposed infill concept for this site in terms of buildings, landscape character and surrounding context?
2. Please comment on the:
  - a. proposed building locations and massing;
  - b. sustainable building initiatives;
  - c. treatment of the landscape;
  - d. finishing materials and pedestrian connections; and
  - e. parking ratio.

Attachments:

- A- Ambleside Apartment Area DP Guidelines
- B- Applicant cover letter, proposal outlines and sustainability objectives
- C- Architectural & landscape package including applicant Design Brief and Sustainable Features summary.

## AMBLESIDE APARTMENT AREA GUIDELINES BF-B 4

### I. CONTEXT AND SITE DESIGN

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- a. Encourage renovation and conservation of buildings and features of heritage character;
- b. Situate buildings to maximize views while minimizing impacts to surrounding buildings' views.
- c. Minimize obstruction of views from public pedestrian areas, common living areas of other developments, and from existing residential units.
- d. Enhance the quality of streetscapes through the overall design of development.
- e. Encourage pedestrian amenities, such as courtyards, within and adjacent to apartment developments.
- f. Link ground level open spaces to adjacent streets, sidewalks and pathways.
- g. Encourage the use of integrated public art compatible with adjacent development and street patterns to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- h. Bury utility wires underground where economically feasible.

### II. BUILDING DESIGN

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- a. Vary building mass to minimize its scale.
- b. Address the compatibility of scale between new buildings and existing adjacent buildings.
- c. Encourage the use of high quality materials.
- d. Detailing should be designed in keeping with the character of the building and landscape.
- e. Use building mass to emphasize the entrance to buildings.
- f. Entries should be visible, clearly articulated, and accessible.
- g. Encourage terraced buildings adjacent to the shoreline.
- h. Avoid blank or undifferentiated facades at the ground level.
- i. Screen roof top mechanical equipment from neighbouring properties.
- j. Encourage private outdoor living space for each unit.
- k. Design buildings and landscape elements to minimize shading, and intrusion on privacy of adjacent buildings.
- l. Provide detailing and articulation, especially at eye level.
- m. Site and screen garage entrances, mechanical equipment and garbage bins, to minimize visual and acoustical impacts on adjacent properties and the streetscape.

### III. LANDSCAPE DESIGN

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- a. Integrate landscape features and elements with the adjacent streetscape, use established vegetation where feasible, and provide a mature and varied appearance upon construction completion.
- b. Avoid landscaping elements that inhibit pedestrian or barrier free access along sidewalks or towards buildings.
- c. Maximize the use of roof spaces for roof gardens and common areas.
- d. Minimize the scale of apartment buildings at ground level with the use of trelliswork and other landscape features.
- e. Minimize glare and light spill to surrounding properties through design and siting of exterior lighting.

#### IV. CIRCULATION / PARKING

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- a. Locate parking underground to maximize ground level open spaces for landscape elements and treatments.
- b. Encourage underground garage entries to provide an appealing entrance from the streetscape with the use of planters and/or trellis structures.
- c. Discourage large expanses of ground level paved parking, particularly when visible from or directly adjacent to a street. Where ground level parking is needed, provide landscape elements such as fencing or planting to visually break up and screen parking from public streets and neighbouring properties, improve natural drainage, and highlight pedestrian routes.
- d. Design underground residential parking to be readily accessible and easily used by residents.
- e. Ensure that site circulation is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- f. Share access/curb cuts between buildings where possible.
- g. Minimize the width of curb cuts where possible.
- h. Design and situate garage doors so that they are not a dominant feature of the streetscape.
- i. Encourage the use of bicycles and the provision of bicycle storage areas.



November 27, 2014

Ms. Lisa Berg  
Manager of Community Planning  
The Corporation of the District of West Vancouver  
750 17<sup>th</sup> Street, West Vancouver BC V7V 3T3

Dear Ms. Berg

**Re: Bellevue Gardens 195 21<sup>st</sup> Street, West Vancouver  
Rezoning proposal to accommodate new infill rental housing**

Hollyburn Properties Limited (HPL) is pleased to submit this report in support of a rezoning application to permit development of 42 new purpose-built rental apartments in two low-rise buildings. They would be located on two vacant, under-utilized portions of this property at the base of an existing high rise tower.

Bounded by Argyle and Bellevue Avenues and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, the property is extremely well located – close to the West Vancouver Community Centre and Seniors Centre – as well as public transportation and other nearby amenities.

HPL purchased Bellevue Tower approximately four years ago. Since then, considerable investment has been made in upgrading the building which is fully rented. There is a significant waiting list, especially from longtime West Vancouver residents seeking high quality rental housing.

Based on HPL's experience with this and two other West Vancouver rental properties, there is a growing need for new rental housing in Ambleside. This need was reconfirmed in the October 2013 Staff Report to Council which noted that only 20 purpose-built rental units have been added to the inventory in recent years.

Moreover, according to a recent Metro Vancouver report, West Vancouver's existing rental stock is aging and much is at risk. Unfortunately, the economics of rental housing do not make it viable to purchase sites to construct new purpose built rental buildings.

However, by virtue of its size and configuration, the Bellevue Tower property offers an excellent opportunity to create new rental housing with an increase in density from 1.75 to 2.46 FSR.

This report provides a description of the property, the surrounding context and neighbouring buildings, and the proximity to nearby amenities. It includes drawings prepared by Rafii Architects and Sharp Diamond Landscape Architects to illustrate two contemporary low rise buildings,



**HOLLYBURN**  
PROPERTIES LIMITED



designed to complement the existing tower, surrounded by a lush landscape comprising flowering plants and fountains.

We would like to note that over the course of the planning process we have reduced the number of units being proposed and have added an additional six parking stalls to the proposed parking.

While we have noted the concerns raised by staff regarding a potential shortage of parking, we are confident that the additional parking now being provided will be more than sufficient to meet the needs of our residents. However, we are prepared to increase the visitor parking provision and will be pleased to discuss parking management arrangements to ensure that residents do not park overnight on adjacent streets.

We hope you will agree this is a responsible approach to providing much needed rental housing, while demonstrating careful consideration to the context and overall neighbourhood planning.

Yours sincerely,

Hollyburn Properties Limited

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**Proposed Building Designs and Modifications to Existing Building**

The buildings have been designed to fit with the existing tower and neighboring buildings, while incorporating a higher-quality, more contemporary character.

There are a total of 42 suites in two buildings, one facing Bellevue Avenue, and one facing Argyle Avenue. An additional 23 vehicle parking stalls as well as significant new bicycle parking are also being proposed as shown below.

	<b>Residential Units</b>	<b>Parking Stalls</b>	<b>Parking Ratio</b>
<b>Current</b>	126	136	1.06
<b>Proposed Net Additional</b>	42	23	0.55
<b>Total</b>	170	159	0.95

The **Bellevue Building** is just three storeys in height with an attractive single level amenity room and outdoor patio near the corner of Bellevue Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Careful attention has been given to creating an attractive articulated façade along Bellevue with units facing the street and individual patios at grade.

Although the earlier concept plans incorporated a pitched roof, this has been replaced by a flat roof to better respond to concerns of neighbouring property owners.

The Bellevue Building comprises 30 units with one studio, five one-bedrooms, seven one-bedroom and dens, three two-bedrooms, and fourteen two-bedroom and den units all along a double loaded corridor. The elevator provides access to the parking levels for both existing tower residents, and future residents of the Bellevue building.

The **Argyle Building** is three and a half storeys in height with similar architectural character. The building is single loaded to maintain a reasonable separation space from the existing tower, and provides each unit with a south-facing view. The building entrance fronts onto 21<sup>st</sup> Street. An underground garage, providing space for 19 cars and additional bicycle parking, is accessed from Argyle Ave.

The Argyle Building comprises 12 units with one studio, two one bedroom and dens, and eight two bedroom and den units. Additionally, an attractive multi-level townhome is located on the west side of the building at the corner of Argyle and 21<sup>st</sup> Street. The unit sizes vary but average approximately 700 sq. ft. for the one bedroom and den and 900 sq. ft. for the two bedroom and den units.

Both buildings achieve a “West Coast” character through the use of flat roofs with generous overhangs, and extensive use of stone, wood and glass. Durable cementitious panels are proposed instead of stucco. Patios and doors are designed to animate the streets.

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### **Modifications to Existing Building**

As previously noted, a portion of the existing tower, which previously contained an underutilized swimming pool, will be removed. Replacing this amenity is a new wellness centre offering state-of-the-art gym equipment, including some specifically designed for people with mobility issues. New laundry facilities and a furnished lounge have been added.

The somewhat awkward covered area by the tower's main entrance will be enclosed to create a new meeting room for existing and future residents.

Given the current unsightly garbage arrangement and the need for improved recycling facilities, the garbage facilities are being expanded and enclosed to better accommodate recycling and garbage collection.

An existing steam vent is also being concealed with a carefully designed metal screen and landscaping.

The paved roadway connecting 21<sup>st</sup> Street to the underground parking is being redesigned to add new landscaping. Other paved asphalt areas are being upgraded with new pavers. This is illustrated in the landscape drawings.

### **Community Consultation**

During the planning process leading up to the preparation of this submission, an initial outreach was made to nearby buildings. Eleven letters were sent to the owners or managers of five neighbouring rental buildings, and six letters were sent to Strata Council of Manager of nearby condominium buildings. In the months following the letter two presentations were made to the existing residents of Bellevue Tower as well as five other presentations to the residents and owners of nearby buildings. The project was also included in the Districts' Housing and Neighborhood Fair.

In anticipation of the community consultation a model was built, along with a series of presentation panels.

Primary concerns from nearby residents related to the potential loss of views and negative parking impacts. To address these concerns, the proposed number of units has been decreased, the pitched roofs were replaced by flat roofs and additional parking was added under the Argyle Building along with some additional grade level spaces. A commitment was made to further enhance the landscaping around the buildings with additional plants, fountains and a public seating area.

It is proposed that the comprehensive consultations program be continued with further meetings, engaging nearby residents and the community as a whole.



## Conclusion

At a time when there is a growing need for new rental housing in West Vancouver, the existing rental housing stock is aging and very few new units are being built. However, the Bellevue Tower property offers an excellent opportunity to add new rental units close to a wide range of public amenities, with minimal impacts on the surrounding area.

In submitting this application, it is recognized that there are a few other similar opportunities to infill new rental units, and hopefully this project, if approved, will serve as a catalyst for additional new rental housing.

In preparing this application, careful attention has been given to creating high quality, attractive building designs to address potential concerns from nearby residents. Building heights have been lowered and additional parking has been provided above and beyond the likely need.

The new rental units will be designed with a range of accessibility and sustainability features to make them attractive to a broad range of households. However, it is expected this housing will be particularly attractive to seniors and others seeking to age-in-place, in a location where they do not have to drive to access a broad range of community amenities.

In addition to the new units, a number of modifications are proposed to address some of the less desirable features of the current development. These include the replacement of extensive areas of asphalt with landscaping and decorative pavers; concealing and expanding the recycling and garbage facilities; concealing venting from the new high-efficiency boilers; provision of new elevator access from the parking for existing residents; creation of new lounges and other amenities for existing and future residents; and provision of extensive gardens and fountains.

This proposal is being put forward by Hollyburn Properties, a private family-owned company founded in West Vancouver. Throughout its 40 year history, Hollyburn has provided high-quality, well maintained rental housing in three separate locations in West Vancouver.

Hollyburn Gardens is seen as a flagship property for the company, to be retained as a prized asset indefinitely. It is also seen as a creative way to add new rental housing in a high cost environment. We therefore hope this application will meet with the approval of the Design Review Committee.

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### Proposal Outline, Objectives and Community Benefits

- This project will result in the first new purpose-built rental residential buildings in West Vancouver in over 40 years. As such, these will be the first rental housing units to comply with current seismic and environmental standards.
- With a focus on two bedroom units and accessibility, the new housing is intended to cater to a broad household mix. However, it is expected that it will be particularly attractive to empty-nesters and seniors wanting to move out of single family homes into more accessible, carefree accommodation permitting aging-in-place.
- The development could also serve as a demonstration of how new rental units can be infilled on a limited number of other properties.
- The economics of building new rental housing are challenging, as evidenced by the fact that no new purpose-built units have been constructed in West Vancouver and most other municipalities. For this reason, the proponent is not in a position to offer a significant financial community amenity contribution, as might be the case with a condominium development.

### Sustainability Objectives:

- The new buildings will meet or exceed the Energy and Environmental Design Canada LEED Silver standards including 6 credits in the "Energy and Atmosphere" category.
- During the construction phase, a certified LEED consultant will monitor the project to ensure that upon completion it will comply with this equivalency standard.
- Particular attention will be given to environmental features which contribute to a healthy environment for future residents.