

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION REPORT
Application for Site Plan Approval submitted by Livante Holdings (BG Phase V) Inc. on Block 94, Registered Plan 65M-4328 (north side of Vetmar Avenue, west of Victoria Square Boulevard and south of Woodbine Avenue) to facilitate a mixed use development (Ward 2)
File No. SPC 19 114746

PREPARED BY: Marty Rokos, MCIP, RPP, ext. 2980, Senior Planner

REVIEWED BY: Ron Blake, MCIP, RPP, ext. 2600, Senior Manager, Development

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled “Application for Site Plan Approval submitted by Livante Holdings (BG Phase V) Inc. on Block 94, Registered Plan 65M-4328 (north side of Vetmar Avenue, west of Victoria Square Boulevard and south of Woodbine Avenue) to facilitate a mixed use development (Ward 2)” be received;
2. That the Site Plan application (SPC 19 114746) submitted by Livante Holdings (BG Phase V) Inc., to facilitate the development of an 8 storey building and 3 storey stacked townhouses with a total of 224 residential units and 1680 m² of commercial space (Ward 2) be endorsed in principle, subject to the conditions in Appendix ‘A’, and that Site Plan Approval be delegated to the Director of Planning and Urban Design or designate;
3. That Site Plan Endorsement shall lapse and site plan approval will not be issued, after a period of three (3) years from the date of endorsement in the event that the site plan agreement is not executed within that time period;
4. That Council assign servicing allocation for a maximum of 224 dwelling units; and
5. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The site has an area of approximately 0.81 hectares (1.98 acres). It is located on the north side of Vetmar Avenue and is also bounded by Victoria Square Boulevard to the east and Woodbine Avenue to the north (the “subject lands”). This report recommends the approval of an application for Site Plan Control for the development of an 8 storey building and 3 storey stacked townhouses with a total of 224 residential units, 1,680 m² (18,083 ft²) of

commercial space, and 360 parking spaces. Approval of minor variances will be required for parking, setbacks, and building height prior to issuance of Site Plan Endorsement. Staff are satisfied with the site plan application subject to the conditions outlined in Appendix 'A'.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview, evaluation and recommendation of the site plan control application (the "Application") submitted by Livante Holdings Inc. (the "Owner").

Process to Date

The site plan application was submitted on March 11, 2019 for a mixed use development with an 8 storey building with commercial uses on the ground floor and stacked townhouses. The application has undergone revisions in response to staff and agency comments

Next Steps

Should the site plan application be endorsed in principle by the Development Services Committee, the owner will need to satisfy the site plan conditions outlined in Appendix 'A' prior to issuance of site plan endorsement, and following that enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the City. Approval of an application for minor variance, as described in Table 2, will be required prior to issuance of site plan endorsement.

BACKGROUND:**Location and Area Context**

The lands subject to the proposed site plan are located on the north side of Vetmar Avenue and are also bounded by Victoria Square Boulevard to the east and Woodbine Avenue to the north (see Figure 1). The lands have an area of approximately 0.8 ha (1.98 acres) with a frontage of approximately 103 m (338 ft) on Vetmar Avenue, 100 m (328 ft) on Victoria Square Boulevard, and 74 m (243 ft) on Woodbine Avenue. The site is currently vacant (see Figure 3).

The surrounding land uses are as follows (see Figure 2):

North: Woodbine Avenue and vacant lands designated "Business Corridor Area";

West: Existing low rise residential development;

South: Vetmar Avenue and vacant lands designated "Community Amenity Area" which are subject to Official Plan amendment, Zoning By-law amendment, and site plan applications;

East: Victoria Square Boulevard and vacant and low rise residential lands

Proposed Development

The owner proposes a mixed residential and commercial development, including an 8 storey building (the “main building”) and stacked townhouses as summarized in Table 1 below (see Figure 5):

TABLE 1

Building	Residential Units	Commercial GFA
Main building, 8 storeys	194	1,515 m ² (16,307 ft ²)
Stacked townhouses, 3 storeys	32	165 m ² (1,776 ft ²)
Total	224	1,680 m² (18,083 ft²)

The owner is proposing 360 vehicle parking spaces (including 18 accessible spaces) and 94 bicycle parking spaces. The parking spaces are allotted as follows:

- 209 residential spaces for the main building
- 32 residential spaces for the stacked townhouses
- 73 shared spaces for visitors and commercial parking
- 65 long term bicycle spaces
- 24 short term bicycle spaces

The proposed main building is L-shaped, extending east-west along Woodbine Avenue and north-south along Victoria Square Boulevard. The 32 stacked townhouses are located in a single 3 storey block along the west property line, backing onto the existing townhouses on Living Crescent. The proposed townhouses and main building frame a courtyard with outdoor amenity space approximately 260 m² in area that is accessed by a driveway from Vetmar Avenue and walkways to Vetmar Avenue and Woodbine Avenue. The courtyard also contains 19 surface parking spaces including four accessible spaces. The surface parking spaces are shared visitor/commercial spaces. At the northeast corner of the main building, which overlooks the intersection of Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Square Boulevard, a small open plaza is proposed with a combination of hard and soft landscaping and an entrance to one of the commercial units (see Figure 5).

The main building lobby has entrances from the internal courtyard and Woodbine Avenue. The ground floor commercial space extends for the length of the Victoria Square Boulevard frontage and wraps around the northeast corner of the building. These units are accessed from the sidewalk on Victoria Square Boulevard as well as the open plaza area mentioned above.

The stacked townhouses have individual entrances connecting to a walkway, extending from Vetmar Avenue to Woodbine Avenue through the courtyard. The commercial space in the townhouse block is located on the two ground floor units closest to Vetmar Avenue (units 110 and 111, see Figure 6).

Two levels of underground parking are proposed with 342 parking spaces. Vehicle access to the parking garage is from the main driveway in the courtyard. Residents of the ‘main’ building will access the underground parking internally, while residents of the stacked

townhouses will access it via an external stairway near the south end of the townhouse block. Most of the shared parking is proposed on the P1 level. Visitors who park on level P1 can access the elevators via an intercom system. They can also exit through a stairway to the courtyard (see Figures 6 and 7).

Official Plan

The subject lands are designated “Mixed Use Low Rise” by the 2014 Official Plan. The Official Plan states that land use designations and policies in the 404 North Secondary Plan (OPA 149) shall be updated to generally conform to the Official Plan. Until an updated secondary plan is approved, the provisions of the 1987 Official Plan and OPA 149 shall apply to the subject lands.

404 North Secondary Plan (OPA 149)

The subject lands are designated “Community Amenity Area” under OPA 149. The “Community Amenity Area” designation is intended to provide for a multi-use centre offering a diverse range of retail, service, community, institutional, and recreational uses serving nearby residential and business areas and to function as a significant and identifiable focal point. Medium and high-density residential uses may also be permitted above ground related commercial uses subject to a rezoning.

The “Community Amenity Area” designation provides for a wide range of non-residential uses, including retail premises under 1,000 m² of GFA, offices, banks and financial institutions, restaurants, and day care centres.

The proposed uses are provided for by the Official Plan with the exception of the ground floor residential units. These residential units are permitted by the current zoning, which is discussed below and in the Options/Discussion section of this report.

Zoning By-law 177-96

The subject lands are zoned “Community Amenity One *403 (Holding) [CA1*403(H)] Zone” by By-law 177-96, as amended by By-law 2009-207. The CA1*403(H) Zone permits a range of residential and commercial uses including apartment dwellings, townhouse dwellings, retail stores and restaurants in the first storey of a residential or office building, and business offices. Residential units are prohibited on the first storey of a building within 10 metres of Vetmar Avenue.

The proposed site plan does not comply with several performance standards in the zoning and parking by-laws. These are described in Table 2 below. The owner plans to submit an application to the Committee of Adjustment for the following minor variances:

TABLE 2

Zone/Parking Standard	Existing By-law Requirement	Proposed
Minimum front yard setback (Vetmar Ave frontage)	1.8 m	1.2 m
Minimum rear yard setback (Woodbine Ave frontage)	3.0 m	2.5 m

Maximum building height	20 m	26.16 m
Minimum landscaping adjacent to property lines	Front: 6.0 m Exterior side: 6.0 m Rear: 3.0 m	Front: 1.2 m Exterior side: 1.8 m Rear: 2.3 m
Minimum parking spaces	410	360

A Transportation Impact Study has been submitted in support of the reduced number of parking spaces and this is discussed later in this report.

A Holding (H) symbol was placed on the subject property by By-law 2009-207 to ensure that the Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant expansion project and YDSS Flow Control Structures project would be completed before development. York Region has confirmed that this requirement has been met and the H symbol can be removed. A by-law to remove the H symbol will be enacted at an upcoming Council meeting.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Provincial policy conformity

The proposed development conforms to the applicable provincial policy framework, including the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Provincial Planning Statement as well as the land use designation and policies of the Regional Official Plan.

Staff are satisfied with the overall site design

The proposed 8 storey midrise building effectively addresses the corner of Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Square Boulevard and includes the use of modern materials, colour, and form to visually enhance the building elevations. Balconies and windows overlook the surrounding streets. The 1,680 m² of commercial space will line the length of the Victoria Square Boulevard frontage of the site and is well positioned to serve the surrounding residential and employment area. The building is designed to address the surrounding streets and the retail and commercial entrances face the municipal sidewalks. Retail customers who park underground would access the commercial space by exiting to the courtyard and then going around the building (see Figures 5-7).

The proposed stacked townhouse units frame the west side of the courtyard and provide an appropriate transition to the existing residences on Living Crescent by providing a rear yard to rear yard relationship and a gradated height transition across the site.

The site and building design reinforces the pedestrian oriented character of the neighbourhood while also accommodating vehicle parking. The walkways through the courtyard provide direct pedestrian access into the site from multiple streets. The limited amount of surface parking in the courtyard behind the main building will be hidden from Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Square Boulevard and the placement of buildings adjacent to these street frontages creates a strong street edge and allows the establishment of pedestrian supportive uses particularly along Victoria Square Boulevard.

The proposed site plan includes extensive landscaping. The street edges are proposed to be planted with a variety of street trees and deciduous and coniferous shrubs. The landscaped

plaza at the northeast corner of the building includes an open area with concrete paving leading to the retail entrance, planting beds with shrubs, and benches. The courtyard includes an outdoor amenity space with unit paving, tables and chairs, benches, and shade structures surrounded by planting beds. Additional landscaping is located in front of each townhouse unit. Each ground floor townhouse unit has an amenity space with a patio at the rear approximately 7.0 m in depth (see Figure 9).

Staff have advised the owner that a more direct pedestrian connection from the underground parking to the retail and commercial space on Victoria Square Boulevard would improve access to those units. The townhouse units with commercial space next to Vetmar Avenue have been enhanced to highlight the commercial uses through the use of entrances directly onto Vetmar Avenue, signage, and revised elevation treatments. Staff will continue to work with the owner to refine the site plan details before issuance of site plan endorsement.

Height and setbacks are compatible with the neighbourhood

The owner proposes to increase the maximum height of the main building from 20.0 m to 26.16 m, or from 6 to 8 storeys (see Figure 8). The height is concentrated towards Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Square Boulevard, which will be the commercial heart of the neighbourhood. Another 8 storey mixed use development is proposed on the south side of Vetmar Avenue (Block 95, Registered Plan 65M-4328, file no. PLAN 20 112387) and the vacant lands across Victoria Square Boulevard are also within the “Community Amenity Area” designation. The height transition down towards the low rise area on Living Crescent is mediated by the placement of 3 storey stacked townhouses along the western boundary of the site. The height of the proposed main building falls within a 45 degree angular plane measured from the southwest property line. Based on the proposed site plan and surrounding area, staff have no concerns with the proposed building heights and setbacks from existing residential to the west.

In addition to the proposed height increase, the owner also proposes to reduce the minimum setbacks and landscaping along Vetmar Avenue, Woodbine Avenue and Victoria Square Boulevard (see Table 2). The area is intended to develop as a pedestrian oriented mixed use community with buildings close to the street line and commercial units on the ground floor accessed from the street. Reducing the required yards and landscaping at the street lines enables retail uses to have a stronger relationship with the street and increases the overall street presence of the building. As noted above, the site plan includes extensive landscaping in other areas of the site including the courtyard and at the corner of Victoria Square and Woodbine. Staff have no concerns with the proposed building setbacks along the perimeter roads.

Transportation and Parking

As described above, the owner has submitted a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) to support the reduction in required parking spaces from 410 to 360. A residential parking rate of 1.18 spaces per unit and a residential visitor parking rate of 0.25 spaces per unit is proposed. The residential visitor parking is proposed to be shared with the customer and employee parking for the commercial space; that takes advantage of the different times of peak parking demand for these uses. Transportation staff support this approach provided

that the amount of floor area used by high parking demand uses such as restaurants is limited. They have indicated that the supply of parking is adequate for the proposed residential and commercial uses, including a limited amount of restaurant uses. The amount of floor space can be limited as part of the minor variance application to reduce the required number of parking spaces.

Vehicle parking demand is proposed to be managed through the supply of 94 bicycle parking spaces and a bike repair station. In addition, staff are working with the owner to establish a car share service for the first two years from occupancy at a minimum. The car share service would be shared between the subject proposal and the proposed 8 storey building at Block 95, which is also proposed by Livante Holdings.

The surrounding area has been planned to encourage a balanced transportation mix including active transportation. This includes sidewalks and cycling infrastructure throughout the community and connecting to the adjacent employment lands. Multi use paths will be developed along the full length of Victoria Square Boulevard in phases starting in 2022. York Region Transit route 24 provides bus service in the area.

Site Plan Endorsement

Other site plan issues to be resolved as part of the ongoing site plan process include:

1. Finalize the location of waste chutes for the townhouses proposed to be located in the courtyard prior to issuance of site plan endorsement
2. Resolve any issues resulting from the review of technical studies including the Hydrogeological Investigation, Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report, Transportation Impact Study, and Noise Control Study. These matters will be addressed in the site plan agreement.
3. York Region requires a Dewatering Plan, cost estimate for works within the Woodbine Avenue right of way, and certificate of insurance.
4. Confirm any outstanding financial obligations, including but not limited to cash in lieu of parkland dedication, development charges, tree replacement/compensation, and financial contribution towards downstream sanitary sewer system upgrade. These matters will be addressed in the site plan agreement.

CONCLUSION:

It is the opinion of staff that the proposed site plan is appropriate and acceptable subject to the technical comments summarized in this report being addressed. It is therefore recommended that the proposed application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in Appendix 'A'.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposed application has been reviewed in the context of the Strategic Priorities of Safe and Sustainable and Complete Community.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The application has been circulated to various City departments and external agencies and no concerns were identified.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Ron Blake, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Senior Development Manager

Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Acting Commissioner of Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Location map
Figure 2: Area Context/Zoning
Figure 3: Aerial Photo (2020)
Figure 4: Proposed Site Plan
Figure 5: Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Figure 6: Proposed Basement Level P1
Figure 7: Perspective Views
Figure 8: Proposed Landscape Plan

APPENDICES:

Appendix 'A': Site Plan Conditions

AGENT:

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APPENDIX 'A'
SITE PLAN CONDITIONS
LIVANTE HOLDINGS (BG PHASE V) INC.
BLOCK 94, REGISTERED PLAN 65M-4328
SPC 19 114746

That prior to site plan endorsement:

1. The Owner satisfy all City departments and Region of York technical requirements to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Urban Design.
2. The Owner resolve any issues resulting from the review of technical studies including the Hydrogeological Investigation, Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report, Transportation Impact Study, and Noise Control Study to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Urban Design.
3. The Owner obtain approval for minor variances from the Committee of Adjustment for all zoning non-compliances to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Urban Design.

That the Owner enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the City, containing all standard and special provisions and requirements of the City and external agencies, including but not limited to:

1. Provisions for the payment by the Owner of all applicable fees, recoveries, development charges, cash in lieu of parkland, tree replacement/compensation, downstream sanitary sewer system upgrades, and any other financial obligations and securities.
2. Provisions to ensure all Region of York requirements are satisfied.