

January 24, 2020

Re: 1294 Granville Street  
Attn: Carl Stanford  
Development Planner,  
Planning and Development Services

## DESIGN RATIONALE

### Site Context

This 6,000 sq. ft. site is located on the south east corner of the intersection between Granville Street and Drake Street. Current zoning designation is DD, with the prescribed building design adhering to the Granville Street (Downtown South) Guidelines. The neighbourhood is currently characterized by an eclectic mix of retail, commercial, and residential buildings. The intent is to reinforce the retail integrity along Granville Street at street level, while developing high quality livable residential units above.

### Granville Street Guidelines

The proposed development is situated in the Granville Street sub-area of the Downtown South planning area, and careful consideration has been given to the Granville Street guidelines, complying with recommended height, setback, and frontage requirements as prescribed in the policy. The proposal is aligned with the guidelines intention for providing appropriately scaled density along the Granville Street corridor, and creating a continuation of active commercial frontage at grade. The programmatic arrangement for the site helps meet the primary key objectives of the guidelines; ensuring that the predominant residential uses are oriented away from the busier Granville Street side, maximising opportunities for south and west natural light. Collectively, the compact building program and physical massing have been carefully arranged to provide a dynamic contribution to this vibrant sector of Vancouver's city core.

### Overview

The proposal seeks to develop a single linear corner site to accommodate a stacked 6-storey building comprising of a single level of commercial use on the ground floor and five levels of residential units above. The building will be serviced by a single basement level housing bicycle parking, bulk-storage lockers, and service rooms.

The site at 1294 Granville Street adjoins an existing 10-storey mixed-use rental building to the northeast. This building steps down along its flanking edges, allowing for a balanced massing transition to the proposed neighbouring six-storey form. As per the guidelines,

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there is zero building setback along the Granville and Drake Street sides, and a 15' building setback along the lane edge.

The main commercial space on the ground floor is located on the corner of Granville and Drake, allowing for continuous commercial continuity along Granville and a strong anchoring exposure to the corner of the street intersection. This commercial space is serviced by a Class B loading bay at the lane side, connected via a loading corridor that runs along the firewall edge of the building.

The residential entry is accessed off the quieter Drake Street side, providing clear visual identity away from the commercial corner. The five residential levels above house a total of 29 units consisting of junior one bedroom unit, regular one bedroom units, and larger two bedroom units. Each unit has access to a private balcony and a designated bulk-storage locker in the basement.

The building benefits from an abundance of amenity space, located both at grade and on the uppermost floor level. The ground floor amenity space is accessed off the main residential lobby and fronts onto both Drake Street and the lane. The uppermost amenity space is contiguous to a large outdoor south facing amenity area with excellent exposure to views and natural light. The two amenity spaces collectively provide a valuable extension of useable space for the buildings residents, particularly for those living in smaller units.

In compliance with the latest parking by-law for downtown, we are proposing to reduce the parking provisions to an absolute minimum. A TDM strategy to allow for a select number of wheelchair accessible stalls and car share stalls adjacent to the lane has been developed by our transportation consultant and submitted as part our application. The Class B loading bay will service the commercial component of the building. All Class A bicycle parking will be securely housed below grade in the basement level.

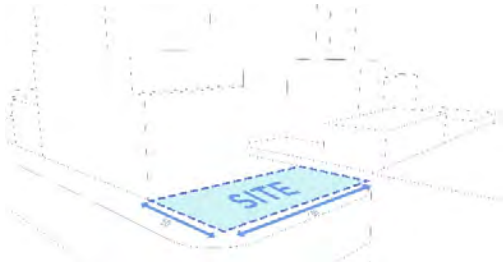
### **Form of Development**

The proposed form of development is consistent with objectives outlined in the Granville Street Guidelines, providing downtown residential densification in close relationship with commercial space at grade. The proposed built form presents a highly rationalized massing, clearly identifying uses and wayfinding objectives.

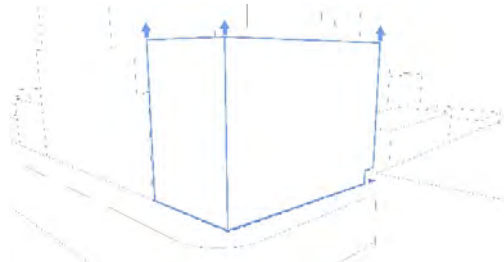
The building form is a simple sculptural element that has been 'morphed' in response to several key contextual influences. Firstly, the linear box component that fronts Drake Street has been raised up and undercut by a glazed commercial level. Secondly the underside of the raised box has been 'folded' upwards in response to the Granville Street exposure, allowing for a visually more prominent commercial edge and corner. Thirdly, the roof level 'folds' down to allow for a dropped outdoor amenity shoulder that opens up to southern exposure. These two angled chamfers subtly align with the sloping change in grade down Drake Street.

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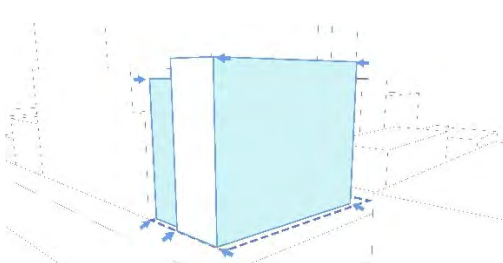
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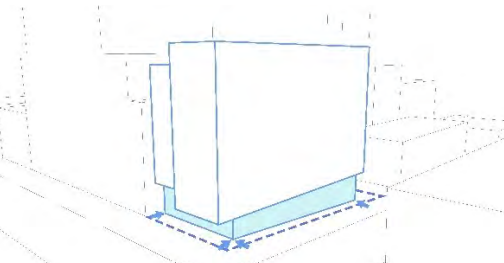
**Phase 1:** Site measures 50'x120' totaling 6,000sf of gross area.



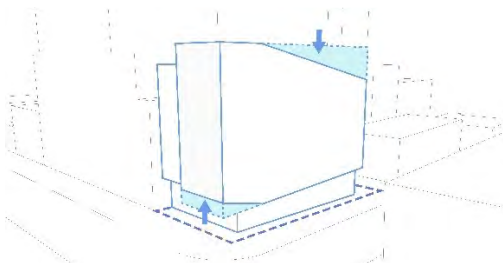
**Phase 2:** Base massing extruded up approximately 70'.



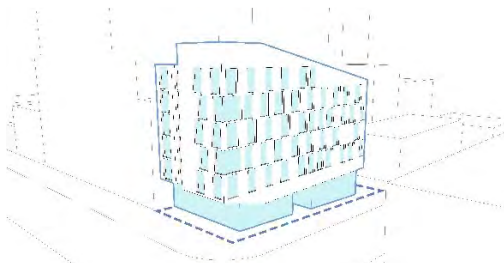
**Phase 3:** Building facades setback along Granville Street, Drake Street and the lane.



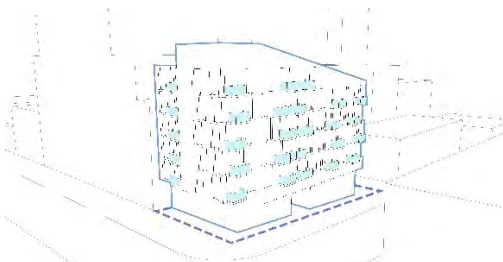
**Phase 4:** Glazed ground floor undercut to allow for a more generous public realm.



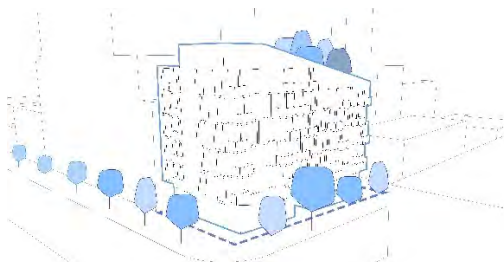
**Phase 5:** Building form sculpted for stronger commercial expression on ground floor and open outdoor amenity space on top floor.



**Phase 6:** Building façade articulated by layers of stacked offset punched windows.



**Phase 7:** The facades are further textured through the application of thermally broken projecting balconies.



**Phase 8:** The buildings street edge and roofline are softened through the careful integration of landscaping elements.

The street adjacencies and unique site geometry of the site gives rise to the distinct massing of the building; two contrasting street elevation treatments visibly responding to each of their contextual influences.

- The Granville Street edge is a narrow frontage that bookends the larger existing development to the northeast. The frontage massing is broken into three distinct elements; an undercut commercial component, a recessed 'spine' adjacent to the neighbouring building, and a more expressive punched block massing that houses the stacked residential units.
- The long frontage along Drake Street is more monolithic in character, a continuation of the punched block massing. The alternating window placements help accentuate a sense of rhythm across the façade which is further enhanced by the playful distribution of hanging balconies. The glazed commercial and amenity frontage remains undercut at street level, providing continuous weather protection and give a sense of weightlessness to the massing above.

### Exterior Expression

The material palette for the building has been developed in harmony with the existing neighbourhood with a façade treatment that respects the massing, scale and quality of the existing heritage structures. A modern interpretation of the punched brick has been applied, with a familiar façade articulation subverted through a more contemporary use of colour, window staggering, and balcony application. The brick faces dissolve at various locations around the building form, diffusing the edges of the roofline and residential base, to further lighten the visual perception of the overall building mass.

With regard to energy performance, the combination of punched windows and thermally broken balconies result in a highly sustainable building envelope. Additionally, the low window to wall ratio provides significant acoustical benefits to the residential units fronting Granville Street and Drake Street.

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