



Planning & Building Services Department  
Heritage + Urban Design (HUD)

September 11, 2023

**MEMO TO:** Giuliano La Moglie, Planner II – Development  
**FROM:** James Pavlidis, Urban Designer

**SUBJECT: OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT**

**Applicant Name:** Brutto Consulting  
**Municipal Address:** 9947 Leslie Street  
**Legal Description:** Part of Lot 20, Concession 3, E.Y.S.  
**City File No.:** OPA 23-0007  
**Related City File No.:** ZBLA 23-0011

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above noted application circulated to the Heritage and Urban Design Section. Urban Design staff have reviewed the submission in accordance with the City's Official Plan and approved City-wide Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs), and provide the following urban design comments:

**Proposal Summary:**

The subject site is approximately 0.5925 hectares in area and located on the east side of Leslie Street, south of Major Mackenzie Drive. The Official Plan designates the site as "Leslie Street Institutional Area". The applications request approval of an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment to facilitate a 12-storey, mixed-use development comprised of 174 retirement dwelling units, a GFA of 17,452 sq.m of which 1,941 sq.m will be retail/office uses, and 119 below-grade parking stalls. The existing single-detached dwelling is proposed to remain and be repurposed into a 'welcome centre'.

**General Comments:**

Heritage and Urban Design staff acknowledge the applicant's Vision Statement and the design intent for the proposed built form to 'comply with the surrounding context' and reinforce the 'human-scale of the Urban Structure of Richmond Hill'. However, to further improve the proposal in this regard, the following items have been identified for the applicant's consideration.

**Detailed Comments:**

**A) URBAN DESIGN BRIEF**

| Issue                                  | Comments / Recommendations   | Policy / UDG Ref. |
|--|--|-------------------|
| 1. Official Plan Urban Design Policies | The applicant has assessed the specific design policies of the North Leslie Institutional Area in section 4.12.2. However, the applicant should also provide further analysis on section 3.4.1 Urban Design of the Official Plan, indicating how the proposal achieves the relevant design policies. | OP 5.27.1         |

**B) SITE ORGANIZATION**

| Issue | Comments / Recommendations | Policy / UDG Ref. |
|-------|----------------------------|-------------------|
|-------|----------------------------|-------------------|

## 2. Proposed Setbacks

The elevation drawings show a building height of 12-storey (39.25m). The applicant should note that for high-rise buildings (built form taller than 8-storeys), the Transition Policies of the Official Plan must be applied. To ensure adequate facing distances, access to daylight in interior spaces as well as skyviews, and not preclude any future development to the south of the subject lands, the applicant should incorporate a separation distance of 12.5m above the 8<sup>th</sup> storey of the building, measured from the south lot line.

**OP3.4.1.57,  
UDGs 6.2.6,  
6.6.45**

## 3. Amenity Space

It is not evident from the architectural package if any common indoor/outdoor amenity space is proposed. The applicant should clarify and explore opportunities for amenity spaces, which provide a visual/physical connection to the Natural Heritage System.

**OP 3.4.1.33,  
UDG 6.5.19**

### C) BUILT-FORM / MASSING AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

| Issue                  | Comments / Recommendations   | Policy / UDG Ref.                               |
|------------------------|--|---|
| 4. Massing             | The current massing results in a bulky built form, particularly along the Leslie St frontage. The applicant should explore opportunities to sculpt the building with a view to achieve a more slender 'Tower' form and floor plate of approximately 750sq.m. See appended sketch for inspiration.  | <b>OP 3.4.1.57,<br/>UDGs 6.6.42,<br/>6.6.44</b> |
| 5. Articulation        | Staff acknowledge the contemporary vernacular of the proposal. However, attention should be given to the articulation and fenestration, in order to further break up the mass and bulk of the building. Additionally, the design should have a clear and articulated podium, middle and top.       | <b>OP 3.4.1.40,<br/>UDG 6.6.41</b>              |
| 6. Corner Treatment    | The applicant should consider responding to the site context by providing a prominent architectural feature, such as a 'Tower' element, at the north east corner of the site. This would provide a sense of entry into the Leslie Institutional Area modulation and aid in modulating the massing. | <b>UDGs 6.6.32,<br/>6.6.34, 6.6.35</b>          |
| 7. Retail Access       | To foster a pedestrian experience that is visually interesting, active, and comfortable, the applicant should consider providing direct access from the public sidewalk along Leslie Street to the proposed retail components.   | <b>UDG 6.2.2</b>                                |
| 8. Additional Comments | Please note that additional, detailed comments shall be provided at the Site Plan Control stage.   | <b>Note</b>                                     |

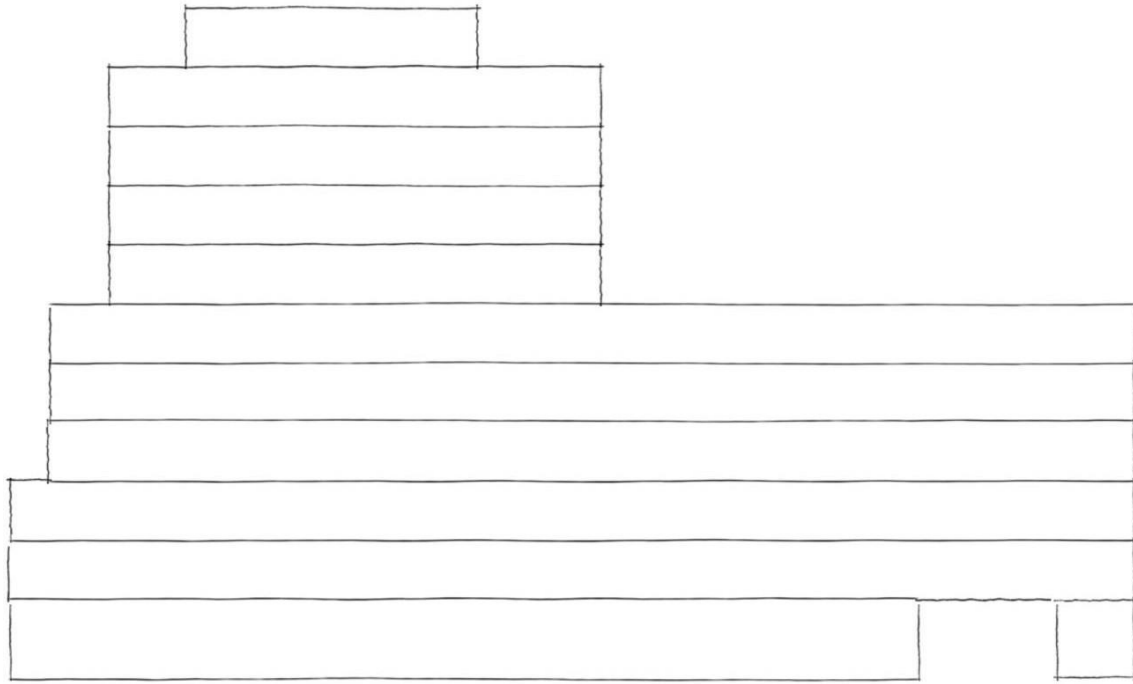
For future submissions, please have the applicant indicate how each of these comments has been addressed using a chart or spreadsheet format with any accompanying drawing packages.

Regards,



**James Pavlidis, B.URPL**

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Explore opportunities to sculpt the building with a view to reduce the appearance of bulky massing and achieve a slender built form, that is appropriately articulated and which complies with the tower separation policies of the Official Plan.