

Hunt Club Community Association
Position Statement

Tudor Hall – Parking Issue

Issue

- How the HCCA should approach the re-zoning application to reduce the minimum parking standard for residents and visitors on the Tudor Hall site at 3750 North Bowesville Road.

Background

- The current zoning for the Tudor Hall site permits apartment buildings of up to 14 storeys in height and requires a minimum number of parking spaces for residents and visitors. The developer, however, is seeking a zoning amendment which would significantly reduce the required number of parking spaces.
- Under the current zoning by-law, the minimum parking standard for 392 residential units would require the developer to provide **552** parking spaces, including 473 for residents (1.2 per unit) and 79 for visitors (0.2 per unit).
- Instead, the developer now proposes to provide only **327** parking spaces, including 287 spaces for residents (0.7 per unit) and 40 spaces for visitors (0.1 per unit). The result is a residential development which will provide **225 fewer parking spaces** than required by the Zoning By-law.

Considerations

- **Housing crisis and climate emergency.** The HCCA recognizes that the City of Ottawa is facing a housing crisis and climate emergency, and that the new Official Plan emphasizes the need for intensification and reduced car usage in the future. As a result, minimum parking standards across the City will likely be reduced when the new Zoning By-law is approved in 2025.
- Nevertheless, the proposed reduction in the minimum parking standard for the Tudor Hall site is **40% lower** than required by the current zoning and is more comparable to the parking standard applied on "Mainstreet Corridors" such as Baseline Road and Carling Avenue (0.5 residential spaces per unit).
- In addition, the potential impact of this development on transit use and transportation flows is compounded by the Taggart re-zoning proposal – due to be heard in early 2024 – for a major development at the corner of Hunt Club Road and Riverside Drive. Together, these two projects will increase congestion at one of the City's worst intersections and will require a re-evaluation of transit service in this area.

- **Parking impact on nearby streets.** The proposed reduction in parking spaces for the Tudor Hall site will likely result in increased “spillover” parking on nearby streets. It is difficult to quantify this spillover since no parking impact studies were submitted by the developer and parking issues will only be addressed during the Site Plan Control process.
- It is likely, however, that many of the residents and visitors who will not be able to find parking spaces on-site will park their cars on North Bowesville Road - which has room for about 30 spaces on one side of the street – or on Uplands Drive and Chatsworth Crescent. Parking regulation and enforcement will need to be reviewed in order to manage this new demand for parking - particularly on nearby Chatsworth Crescent, which currently has no parking restrictions.
- **Fairness and consistency.** This application also raises issues of fairness and consistency in the application of the City’s planning regulations. The core principle of the new Official Plan is that the most intense development – and the lowest parking standards – will take place near rapid transit stations and major roads.
- The Tudor Hall site, by contrast, is some 4 km. away from the nearest LRT stations, in an area designated as a low-rise “Neighbourhood” under the Official Plan. According to the Official Plan, such neighbourhoods are more suited to “missing middle” infill housing than to high-rise apartments.
- The Tudor Hall site, in fact, is located at the very edge of the Outer Urban transect, on the boundary with the Suburban transect. As a result, the level of car ownership is likely to be higher than sites closer to the downtown core or to rapid transit.
- **Alternative approaches.** Other recent developments in River Ward have complied with the current parking standard or have sought more modest reductions. The Brigil development at 729 Ridgewood, which is 2 km closer to the nearest LRT station, includes a 20-storey tower and townhouse complex with an on-site parking ratio of **1.0** spaces per residential unit.
- Even the original application for Tudor Hall, filed in mid-2022, featured a parking ratio of **0.84** spaces per unit. By contrast, the parking standard now sought for Tudor Hall (0.7) is almost identical to those applied on major roadways, such as the **0.6** spaces per unit proposed for a 19-storey tower at 170-200 Isabella Street - just across from the Queensway.
- **Lack of supporting data.** Unfortunately, no data has been provided by the Applicant or the City to justify a dramatic reduction in parking standards for this site under the current requirements. The Zoning By-law review now underway will lead to changes in minimum parking standards across the City, but a new by-law will not be implemented for at least two years.
- In the meantime, the Applicant has confirmed in an interview with the *Ottawa Business Journal* that construction will not commence for “a number of years”, depending on economic conditions. As a result, it could be argued that this application should be withdrawn and re-submitted after the current Zoning By-law review is completed.

- **Lack of planning rationale.** The Applicant's *Planning Rationale* is 34 pages in length, but contains only a few paragraphs which provide a rationale for providing relief from the existing parking requirements. It argues that the reduction in vehicle parking on the Tudor Hall site is justified by its proximity to a nearby bus stop and cycling routes (p.29), and that the proposed parking rate "*will not create undue negative impacts on the community or surrounding properties*" (p. 33)¹.
- In fact, the City's minimum parking requirements were reviewed in 2016 and resulted in reductions for the downtown core (Areas X/Y) and near rapid transit stations (Area Z). By contrast, the parking requirements for "Suburban" areas (Area C) were not reduced at that time. On the Tudor Hall site, which is located in Area C, the parking requirement remains **1.2** residential spaces per unit for "mid-high rise" apartments².
- The Applicant's rationale for relief from the 1.2 parking standard is based largely on a comparison with apartment dwellings in rural areas (Area D) and with other dwelling types in Area C (such as townhouses and detached dwellings) which only require parking to be provided at a rate of **1.0** per unit for residents. These dwellings, however, generally contain garages and driveways which can accommodate **at least 2.0** parking spaces per unit.
- **Lack of transparency.** As noted above, the City's policy framework for parking requirements is based on distinct locations ("Suburban" vs. "Inner Urban") and dwelling types ("apartments" vs. "townhouses"), as well as Official Plan designations ("Neighbourhood" vs. "Hub" or "Mainstreet") and transect policy areas ("Outer Urban" vs. "Downtown"). In effect, the proposed zoning amendment would do away with these distinctions.
- The City of Ottawa may well decide to reduce or eliminate parking rates in the new Zoning By-law, which will not be implemented for two years, but it will do so through an open consultative process. The proposed zoning amendment seeks to pre-empt this process through a 40% reduction in parking rates for residents and a 50% reduction in rates for visitors – without a clear rationale or supporting evidence.

¹ <https://devapps.ottawa.ca/en/applications/D02-02-22-0032/details>

² See City of Ottawa, *Zoning By-Law, 2008-250 Consolidation*, Section 101, Table 101. Schedule 1A to the Zoning By-Law contains a map showing the designated areas for minimum parking requirements. <https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/laws-licences-and-permits/laws/laws-z/zoning-law-no-2008-250/zoning-law-2008-250-consolidation>

Recommendations

In light of the above considerations, it is recommended that the HCCA's position on the Tudor Hall development should be as shown below.

WHEREAS the HCCA notes that:

- The City of Ottawa is facing a housing crisis and climate emergency;
- The potential addition of new residential units to the housing supply is welcome, including high-rise apartments near rapid transit and “missing middle” housing in existing low-rise communities;
- The proposed development at 3750 North Bowesville Road (“Tudor Hall”) is located within a “Neighbourhood” designation at the edge of the Outer Urban transect, some 4 kilometres away from the nearest rapid transit station;
- The Applicant's proposed parking standard of 0.7 residential spaces per unit is much lower than the standard applied to other recent developments in River Ward (such as 729 Ridgewood Avenue), and is almost identical to those applied to proposed developments close to rapid transit or on “Mainstreet Corridors”;
- Under current conditions, the proposed reduction in the minimum parking standard for residents and visitors at Tudor Hall will likely create excessive spillover parking on nearby streets, such as Uplands Drive and Chatsworth Crescent;

IT IS RESOLVED THAT the HCCA:

1. Oppose the proposed reduction in the minimum parking standard for the Tudor Hall site from 1.2 to 0.7 residential spaces and from 0.2 to 0.1 visitor spaces per unit;
2. Send representatives from the HCCA's Affordable Housing and Urban Planning Committee to address the City of Ottawa Planning and Housing Committee meeting on this matter.
3. Request the City of Ottawa to conduct a parking impact study to assess the risk of spillover parking and the need for new parking regulation on the nearby streets;
4. Request Councillor Brockington to work with the Applicant and with City colleagues to identify a more appropriate parking standard for the Tudor Hall site or to seek alternative solutions to address the lack of parking;
5. Request Councillor Brockington to ask OC Transpo to conduct a transit needs assessment once the buildout is complete;
6. Support expediting the Zoning By-law review in order to implement fair and consistent standards for neighbourhood developments such as this one;