

Walnut Lane Area

Development Guidelines -- Table of Contents

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Walnut Lane Area Development Guidelines

The following Walnut Lane Area Development Guidelines were adopted by Pickering Council on June 27, 1994.

H1.1 INTRODUCTION

H1.1.1 Walnut Lane Area

The Walnut Lane Area is bounded by Kingston Road to the south, a low density residential area to the north, Walnut Lane to the west, and Pine Creek to the east. (See Diagram 'A')

H1.1.2 Study Process

The Study Process used in the preparation of the Guidelines is outlined in Appendix No. I.

H1.1.3 Context

The existing development along Kingston Road in the vicinity of the Walnut Lane Area is different on the north and south sides of the street. To the south, is a series of larger retail-commercial uses occupying the large and irregular lots between Highway 401 and Kingston Road. The properties fronting the north side of Kingston Road are much shallower and are either vacant or support detached residential buildings. A few of the residential dwellings are being used for commercial purposes.

H1.1.4 Principles

The standard suburban development pattern is one of large detached houses situated on winding streets. These streets are connected by arterial roads to commercial strip development, characterized by low single use retail buildings, with occasional office buildings interspersed, surrounded by surface parking. These parking lots are usually situated between the buildings and the street, and minimize the opportunity to achieve a pedestrian scale or related activities on the street.

A "new suburban model combines the physical characteristics of traditional towns - intimate scale, through streets, varied housing types, a mixed-use centre within walking distance, clearly defined public space - with the social and environmental concerns of the last few decades, such as reducing the use of automobiles, increasing the use of public transportation, creating a more diverse mix of residents and respecting the natural environment..."(Progressive Architect, 1993).

The form that development takes under these principles favours rectangular street grids, tighter street oriented building configurations, with clear public space and commercial/residential districts well connected by pedestrian and transit links.

While it is clear that the goals of the new model are worthwhile, they are difficult to implement in a piecemeal fashion. In situations of urban infill or redevelopment, such as the Walnut Lane Area, the extent of the land and proximity to existing suburban patterns of development usually result in a hybrid approach to development guidelines that attempt to integrate more street and community oriented new development, with existing arterial commercial development and residential subdivisions.

In the specific case of the Walnut Lane Area, Kingston Road serves as a significant east/west commuter link with large traffic flows. Although Kingston Road is currently regulated by the Ministry of Transportation, it is expected their jurisdiction will be transferred to the Region of Durham effective January 1, 1995. As a result of this anticipated change, guidelines based on reduced building setbacks from Kingston were formulated to develop the Kingston Road street edge as an intimately scaled pedestrian precinct.

The intent of the proposed guidelines is to outline a basis for development that has regard for the low density residential uses to the north and create street oriented development that is focused on Kingston Road. To this end the guidelines establish a build-to-zone along both Kingston Road and Walnut Lane, within which 40% of the face of all buildings must be located. The guidelines also suggest a scaling down of building heights toward the rear to improve the relationship between new developments and existing housing to the north.

Recognizing the potential for the Walnut Lane Area, in conjunction with vacant lands to the west, to be a "gateway" to the Liverpool Neighbourhood to the north, buildings at intersections and major entries are encouraged to be located at the edge of the street to act as marker buildings, giving a distinct character to the area. By encouraging private development to take a more urban form, activity can be concentrated on Kingston Road, enlivening the street and enhancing community identity.

H1.2 SITE STRUCTURE/DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

H1.2.1 Build-to-Zone

To contribute to a more pedestrian scaled precinct, better define the street edges, and retain the historic parallelogram angles of the lot lines, a minimum of 40% of a building face or combined face of a group of related buildings, must be within a Build-to-Zone (BTZ).

For Kingston Road, the BTZ extends 6.0 metres from the property line. The Walnut Lane BTZ is an area not less than 4.5 and not more than 6.0 from the property line. Figure 1 illustrates both BTZ's and how the 40% requirement is determined.

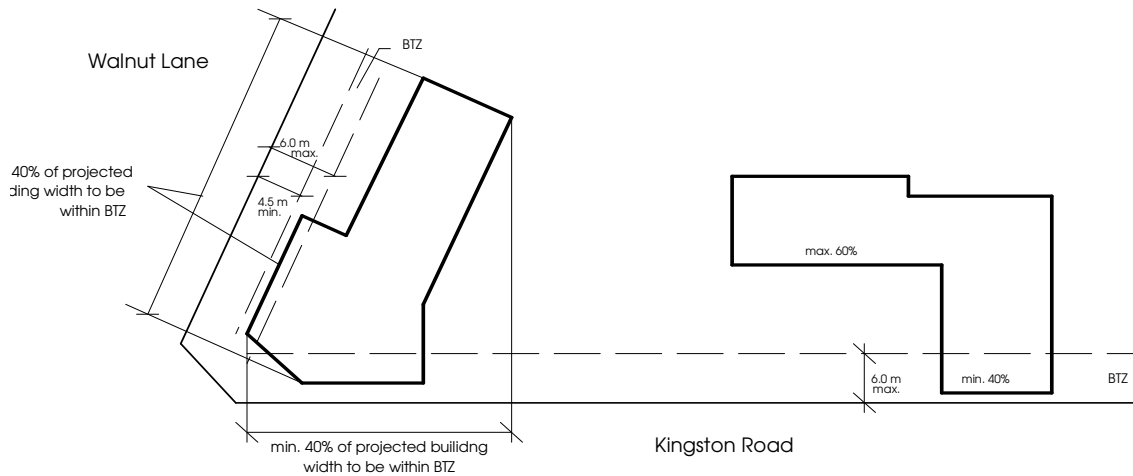


Figure 1

H1.2.2 Building Setback, Height, and Length

Buildings should be of an appropriate height and setback from the north property line to prevent overshadowing and loss of privacy to abutting residences.

No building shall exceed a height of three storeys and 12.0 metres, inclusive of the roof.

Building setbacks from the north property line are established by an imaginary 17 degree angular plane extending from a point 7.5 metres into the rear yard of the lots that abut the Walnut Lane Area. Buildings must be set back from the north property line so that no part of the structure projects above the 17 degree angular plane. For example, a 12.0 metre high building would touch the angular plane at a point 26 metres from the north property line (see Figure 2.), which becomes the minimum setback for that building from the north property line.

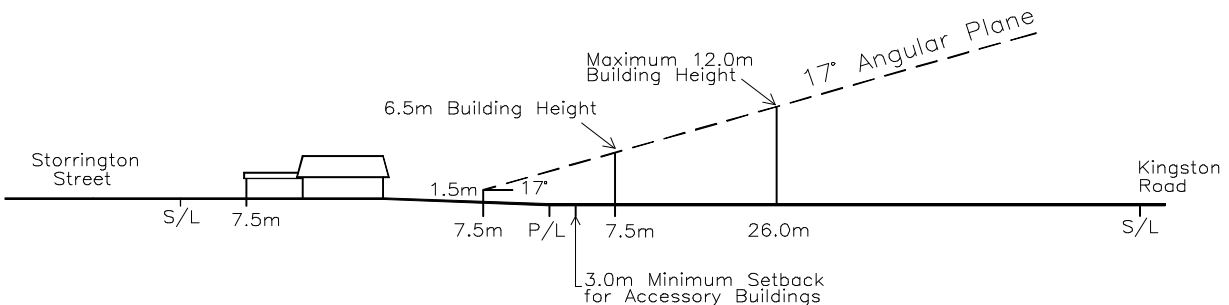


Figure 2

Notwithstanding the above setback provision, no building other than an accessory building or parts thereof, shall be closer than 7.5 metres to the north property line. Accessory buildings, or parts thereof, can be setback a minimum of 3.0 metres from the north property line, provided they do not exceed one storey in height.

To contribute to the pedestrian scale environment, and help create a focal point at Walnut Lane and Kingston Road, buildings adjacent to both Walnut Lane and Kingston Road shall be a minimum of 2 storeys in height.

New development at the west end of the Area should not overshadow, nor result in the loss of privacy for the existing detached dwellings on Walnut Lane. In this regard, the opportunity to locate built form that is compatible with the existing dwellings (height and massing) should be examined through the City's site plan review process.

To ensure that a reasonable living environment shall be maintained for existing residents in the Walnut Lane Area as redevelopment occurs, matters such as building heights, and setbacks from side lot lines will be examined through the City's site plan review process.

Buildings shall not have a continuous length of 50.0 m without a break in the building face.

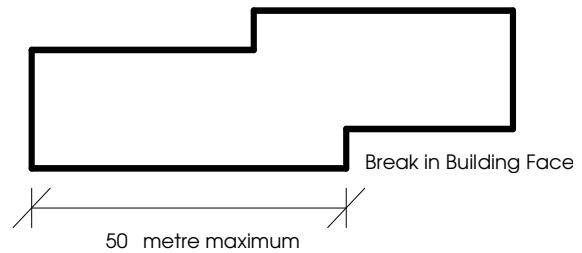


Figure 3

H1.2.3 Building & Orientation

To encourage pedestrian activity at the street edge, developments should have their main building entrance facing Kingston Road. The resulting building pattern should not create "canyons" by siting two higher buildings too close together (see Figure 4), and building orientation should not result in large expanses of surface parking adjacent to Kingston Road.

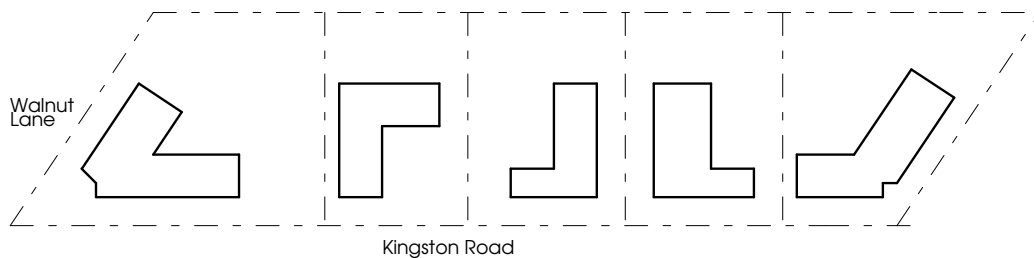


Figure 4

H1.2.4 Pedestrian and Vehicular Systems

A main pedestrian promenade shall be provided on private property adjacent to the street. Logical connections between buildings and the promenade shall be made. Where possible, additional pedestrian connections should be made between sites.

Where the pedestrian promenade crosses a vehicular zone, the walkway should be expressed in a material different than the vehicular zone. Dropped curbs are also required at these locations to ensure full accessibility.

Vehicular access shall primarily be from Kingston Road. Shared access is acceptable. One entrance from Walnut Lane to serve the western end of the Area is permitted. The exact location of the Walnut Lane entrance shall be determined through the City's site plan review process.

Vehicular parking should be underground wherever practicable. However, to avoid large expanses of surface parking adjacent to Kingston Road, parking areas shall be broken up into courts. In any situation where there are more than approximately 10 car parking spaces in a line, a landscape break of approximately 2.5m by the depth of the parking space should be provided. These landscape breaks should be coordinated into a linear arrangement wherever possible.

H1.3 LANDSCAPING

H1.3.1 Kingston Road

To establish the Kingston Road promenade, a minimum 1.5m sidewalk with street tree plantings at approximately 12.0m intervals beside the sidewalk shall be provided on each site in conjunction with the following landscape treatment:

- (a) complementary site landscaping, adjacent to a building; and
- (b) screening measures such as ornamental fences, bollards, low walls, planters, and shrubbery adjacent to a parking area.

Vehicular and pedestrian access points should be easily identifiable through a combination of fencing, masonry features and lighting. These features should be consistent with the building and signage designs.

H1.3.2 Walnut Lane

Planting on this frontage should continue treatment similar to the residential streets to the north, ending in a hard surface court at the intersection. This court should be a prominent and attractive outdoor amenity space for the neighbourhood.

H1.3.3 Pine Creek

Planting should integrate with indigenous planting along the creek edge.

H1.3.4 Adjacent Residential

To accommodate buffering between future development in the Walnut Lane Area and the abutting residential dwellings to the north, a 3.0 metre continuous landscape strip shall be provided along the north property line. Fencing and plantings within this landscape strip shall provide adequate visual screening and noise abatement for the existing dwellings. Existing trees should be protected where possible. Site lighting from developments in the Area should not spill over to the abutting residential area.

H1.3.5 Landscape Features

Consideration should be given to the scale and placement of lighting standards. Within pedestrian zones, such as connections to public transit, retail mews and building entrances, lower pedestrian scale lighting standards should be used. Lighting standards should not exceed approximately 4.5-6.0m in height on the site.

Public seating, bicycle stands and garbage receptacles should also be provided at convenient locations on site.

Tree planters should preferably be constructed of masonry and could incorporate elements such as perimeter benches or terraced planting.

Chain-link fences are discouraged except where an evergreen hedgerow or creeper is planted and maintained along its length.

H1.4 BUILDING CONTROLS

H1.4.1 Building Faces

All buildings should incorporate architectural details, colours and materials that reflect a residential design theme. Building elevations, including roof design, facing the adjacent residential uses should maintain a consistent level of residential architectural detail, colour and materials. Changes in materials on the building elevations should generally happen at inside corners or at major building elements.

H1.4.2 Equipment and Service Area Screening

Roof mounted mechanical equipment should be screened so it is not visible from the road or any adjacent use. Screening methods should be integrated into the building design. Mechanical equipment and service areas at grade should be housed in the main building form where possible, or, where not possible, screened with decorative fences, landscape features or building elements.

Refuse storage must be fully enclosed, and preferably internal to the buildings. Provision must also be made to accommodate waste recycling.

H1.4.3 Commercial and Building Signage

Signage systems should be considered in the overall design of any commercial building. Backlit box signage systems used on a commercial building should not be surface mounted. They should be flush with adjacent materials or integrated into the design in some other way. Ground related signage, instead of vertical and freestanding commercial signage, is encouraged. All commercial signage should be coordinated with the overall building and site design.

APPENDIX NO. I

Walnut Lane Area Development Guidelines

STUDY PROCESS

Pickering retained the services of an urban design consultant, Mr. Alan Hirschfield, of U+D & D Inc. to assist in the preparation of these guidelines. The study process was originally intended to delineate and, to the extent possible, reconcile the concerns of the residents with the objectives of the Municipality and of the private developer of lands at the northeast corner of Kingston Road and Walnut Lane. Subsequently, the process evolved to produce a set of design guidelines for all lands in the Walnut Lane Area.

STAGES

- 1) Stage One consisted of reviewing all current documentation, as well as an analysis of the existing context. Planning staff provided to the consultant a significant amount of information on existing buildings, mapping and previous development applications as well as a record of resident concerns.
- 2) Stage Two comprised a series of preliminary massing and layout studies from U + D & D Inc., intended to better relate developer objectives with Pickering's urban goals and resident concerns for privacy. These sketches and other related ideas were discussed at a meeting with the residents.
- 3) Stage Three utilized computer modeling to assess the impact of various heights and layouts in three dimensions. The two major objectives were to take into account resident issues of overlook, massing and shadowing of houses to the north of the study area and municipal intent to have development with a clear street focus and definable street "edge". This work was presented to staff and some members of council for preliminary review and comment.
- 4) Stage Four consisted of collecting and formatting this information into an urban design guideline document for the entire Walnut Lane Area. This will act as a framework, which together with the zoning by-law, will assist private development to proceed in a manner consistent with the objectives for a new urban focus along major routes in Pickering. A set of Draft Guidelines was submitted to Pickering in March 1994.
- 5) These Draft Guidelines were discussed with the Executive of the Liverpool West Community Association on March 28, 1994. At this meeting they requested the Draft Guidelines be circulated to the broader community for their information and review.
- 6) On April 26, 1994 a Neighbourhood Information Meeting was held to provide area residents with an opportunity to find out more about the Draft Guidelines, and to provide comments. Residents in attendance requested that a "follow-up" meeting be held so that Pickering Staff could present amendments to the Guidelines proposed in response to their concerns
- 7) The "follow-up" meeting was held on May 31, 1994, at which 9 amendments to the Draft Guidelines were presented. Following that meeting the Recommended Urban Design Guidelines were prepared and forwarded for Council's consideration on June 27, 1994.
- 8) Council passed Resolution # 134/94 on June 27, 1994, thereby adopting the Walnut Lane Area Urban Design Guidelines, with revisions, as Amendment No. 11 to the Liverpool Development Plan.

DIAGRAM "A"

Walnut Lane Study Area

