A LAND USE PLAN FOR THE GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL LANDS

Prepared by the George Derby Study Group 1980 November
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

In 1945, approximately 220 acres of land were expropriated from the Corporation of the District of Burnaby by the Federal Government for the Department of Veterans Affairs to construct a Health and Occupational Centre. Twenty-nine (29.0) acres were utilized for this purpose.

Following protracted negotiations between the Federal Government and Burnaby for the return of the surplus lands, the Federal Government in 1976 stated that the determination of the future use of the George Derby lands by all affected parties irrespective of who implements them was a necessary first step in ultimately determining the disposition of the lands. Accordingly, the Federal Government convened a meeting on 1976 September 22 with Federal, Provincial and Municipal representatives to explore ways and means of initiating a consultative process between Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels of Government to undertake the proposed land use study.

Resulting from the above meeting, a Study Group consisting of Municipal, Provincial and Federal representatives was formed and charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating and undertaking the study. The Study Group was to utilize staff from the various government departments and special consultants as required. All consultant costs were to be funded by the Federal Government.

This report describes the approach undertaken by the Study Group in its deliberations, and then outlines the land use options that were unanimously endorsed for the George Derby lands by the Study Group. It is the opinion of the Study Group that the land use alternatives satisfy the prerequisite for settling the disposition of the George Derby lands.

Regional and Municipal Setting

The George Derby Hospital lands are located in the Greater Vancouver area in the Municipality of Burnaby. Figure 1 illustrates the location of the site in the Region, while Figure 2 illustrates its location within the Municipality.

Burnaby is bounded by Vancouver on the west, Burrard Inlet on the north, the Fraser River on the south and Port Moody, Coquitlam and New Westminster on the east. It has an area of approximately 34.2 square miles and the population as of 1979 December was estimated to be 136,000, making it the second most populated Municipality in British Columbia.

The Site

The George Derby Hospital site is located in the eastern sector of the Municipality and occupies an area of approximately 198 acres. The site, which is shown on Figure 2, is divided by Highway No. 1. Thirty-seven (37) acres of the site lie between the Freeway and Burnaby Lake; while one hundred and sixty-one (161) acres lie south of the Freeway.
REGIONAL SETTING

FIGURE 1
THE STUDY APPROACH

Site Planning Principles

In considering a land use concept for the George Derby lands, the Study Group developed three site planning principles against which to evaluate any proposal.

1. The first principle is to be guided by the physical and environmental factors within the site. By determining these factors, it will be possible to determine constraints on the use of the site and the sensitivity of the site and study area to potential impacts. In this way, unique site features will be preserved, and areas designated where development can only occur under specific conditions, or where development would have little or no impact.

2. The second principle is to ensure that proposed uses for the site are complementary to adjacent and existing uses.

3. The third principle must recognize broader Municipal land use and transportation policies that have a bearing on the ultimate development of the George Derby lands. These latter two principles will ensure that any proposed use for the George Derby lands will be compatible with existing and proposed uses on and adjacent to the site.

The Planning Process

To effectively analyze the site and to develop a land use concept based on the three site planning principles, the Study Group initially undertook the task of assembling necessary information about the site and its surrounding areas.

The firm of William Graham Consultants/Willis Cunliffe Tait and Co. Ltd. was commissioned to assemble and analyze the physical and environmental features of the site. Other information about the surrounding areas, the hospital itself and Municipal policies applicable to the study were assembled by the Study Group.

Following consideration of all the factors, the Study Group prepared four land use options for review by the Consultants to determine the potential environmental impacts each of the land use options may have on the site and surrounding areas.

Only after reviewing the Consultants reports and being satisfied that the land use options were satisfactory in terms of the site planning principles did the Study Group endorse the four land use options outlined in this report.
INFLUENCES

1. Physical and Environmental Site Features

At the commencement of the study, the Federal Government indicated that it was prepared to transfer the north 37 acre parcel between Highway No. 1 and Burnaby Lake to Burnaby for park development without further study, with the terms and conditions for any such transfer to be the subject of a future consideration. Consequently, the present study is only concerned with the southerly 161 acres.

Figure 3 illustrates the key physical and environmental influences on land use for the site and designates those areas considered suitable for development. The constraints as outlined by the Consultants in their report entitled, “An Environmental Study of the George Derby Hospital Lands” (1978 May), were identified as follows:

(a) noise levels greater than $L_{DN60}$;
(b) areas of high visual importance and stream corridors that should be preserved;
(c) steep terrain;
(d) areas of poor soil and geologic conditions.

The areas considered unsuitable for development are generally located between the proposed Stormont/McBride Connector and Highway No. 1, and along the southern perimeter of the site. Approximately 40 per cent of the site is considered suitable for development purposes. Figure 3 was utilized by the Study Group in broadly defining those areas considered appropriate for development, and those areas which should be preserved. This designation was utilized by the Study Group as a basis for its land use analysis.

2. Existing Land Use and Municipal Policies

Because of the inter-relationship of existing land uses and Municipal policies, the influence of these factors will be considered together in this section.

(a) The Hospital

The existing George Derby Hospital, Health and Occupational Centre site is utilized as an intermediate care facility and comprises a total of eight pavilions, an administration-central facilities building, a therapy unit and power plant. The hospital site proper which is illustrated on Figure 4 is 28.91 acres and was recently transferred to the Provincial Government. The Ministry of Health has indicated that it has no plans in the foreseeable future to either redevelop the hospital buildings or the site.

Notwithstanding the Ministry’s stated intentions, two of the alternatives proposed by the Study Group have made provision for either the total or partial redevelopment of the site in the event of possible changes to the Ministry’s plans.

(b) The Surrounding Area

The development of the four land-use options for the George Derby site was influenced by the following land-use considerations surrounding the site, as shown on Figure 5:

i) To the west and south is the established Robert Burnaby Park and the Second Street and Crest Residential neighbourhoods. These land uses, together with the Cariboo Hill Junior High School, are components of the low density, single family Eastburn residential community.

ii) To the east is the Cariboo Hill land assembly area. This area, approximately 300 acres in extent, was designated by Council on 1968 December 16 as a land assembly area. The Municipality is now the major land owner. Existing Municipal policies provide for a low density residential and public open space designation for these lands.

iii) To the north is Burnaby Lake Regional Nature Park. It is a 994 acre park area, the large majority of which is administered by the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The northern 37 acres of the George Derby lands are within the boundaries of this Regional Park.
GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL LANDS.
KEY PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES FIGURE 3
THE GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL, HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL CENTRE SITE
SURROUNDING LAND USE INFLUENCES

FIGURE 5
(c) The Burnaby Linear Park System

The Municipality has adopted a Linear Park Concept which, over time, will provide a continuous link with parks, schools and natural features throughout the Municipality. The system is designed to serve a variety of user groups including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

One of the important components of this Linear Park is a connection between the Brunette River system and Robert Burnaby Park. This is diagrammatically illustrated on Figure 5. The proposed Linear Park alignment through the George Derby site is situated within the area considered unsuitable for building by the Consultants study.

(d) The Stormont/McBride Connector

This proposed arterial connection is regarded as an important link in the regional arterial network in providing a connection between the Patullo Bridge/McBride route, Highway No. 1 and the proposed Gagliardi Way/Hastings Street connector, as shown on Figure 6. In its assessment of the Stormont/McBride Connector, the Consultants study concluded that, in general, the land use related impacts of the proposed arterial (including traffic noise) will be more significant than impacts from possible residential, institutional or recreational uses of the study area. Of particular concern to the Consultants was the possible disruptive effects this roadway could have on the surrounding residential neighbourhoods and on the patients at the existing George Derby hospital facilities.

The design plan for the Stormont/McBride connector utilized by the Consultants related to a four lane, 44-foot median roadway with a minimum 150-foot right-of-way through the George Derby site. Soon after the completion of the Consultants study, the Burnaby Municipal Council adopted in principle a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the Municipality. This Comprehensive Plan was comprised of a set of policies guiding transportation improvements in the Municipality as well as a Conceptual Transportation Plan. With respect to the Stormont/McBride Connector, the Plan provides for a “cut and cover” concept (see Figure 7) between 11th Avenue and 17th Avenue. This Concept reflects the Plan’s stated policies pertaining to environmental considerations and residential neighbourhoods which indicate that every effort must be made to minimize the disruptive affects of proposed arterial routes in those instances where these routes will be adjacent to residential development. When this or a similar proposal, reflecting Council’s goal of ensuring that commuter traffic does not have an adverse affect on residential neighbourhoods is implemented on Newcombe Street, the detrimental affect on the adjacent neighbourhood as suggested by the Consultants would be eliminated.

Cross section illustrating Newcombe Street “Cut & Cover” concept.  

FIGURE 7
With respect to the Stormont/McBride Connector through the George Derby lands, one of the Council adopted transportation policies relates to environmental protection and states:

"That in the development of arterial routes within the Municipality, every effort will be made to help minimize those particular problems associated with abutting land uses and identified in the environmental impact assessment by such possible means as cuts, berming, fencing, acquisition of additional rights-of-way widths, purchase of property."

The incorporation of the above noise mitigating features into the design of the Stormont/McBride Connector should considerably minimize the possible impacts mentioned by the Consultants with respect to the hospital facility and the surrounding area.

THE LAND USE PLAN

The Organizing Framework

Based on the three site planning principles and the various influences previously outlined, the Study Group concluded that the land use plan for the George Derby site should be developed within the framework as diagrammatically illustrated on Figure 8.

Essentially, the framework recognizes building constraints and the sensitivity of those areas along the southern edge of the site and between the Stormont/McBride Connector and Highway No. 1. These areas would form part of the Linear Park system and conservation areas. Appropriate development is only to occur in the area designated as being suitable for building and in accordance with the site planning principles outlined earlier.

The Four Land Use Options

Four land use options are outlined for the George Derby site. Each one is developed in accordance with the framework illustrated on Figure 8. Their major differences relate to the use of the lands considered suitable for development. Common to all the options is the public open space/conservation area south of Highway No. 1; the proposed Stormont/McBride Connector, and the retention of natural vegetation along the southern edge of the site.
THE LAND USE ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 8
GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL LANDS.
SCHEMATIC LAND USE CONCEPT - OPTION 1

Figure 9 illustrates Option 1. This option permits the development of two low density, single family residential pockets (of 5.0 and 14.0 acres respectively), with retention of the existing health care facility for the present, and the possibility of it being redeveloped at a future date.
If at some future date the health care facility is relocated then the 29.0 acre site can be redeveloped with either a non-commercial institutional and/or research facility or a low density residential development. The residential alternative is outlined in Option 3. The types of non-commercial institutional and/or research uses considered appropriate are non major generators of traffic that would benefit from the quiet, natural surroundings of the general area. For example, it was suggested that the George Derby Hospital could be redeveloped as a low intensity health care facility; or alternatively, some form of specialized government research laboratories could be appropriate. Under Options 1, 2 or 4, any proposed non-commercial institutional and/or research facility such as these would have to be carefully assessed against the site planning principles and other influences to determine its appropriateness to this area.
Figure 10 illustrates Option 2. This Option also assumes the continuation of the existing health care facility for the present with the option of relocating part of the existing health care facility to the five acre developable site at the southwest portion of the George Derby lands should the existing facilities be relocated as part of the construction of the Stormont/McBride Connector. The remaining pocket of developable land of 14 acres would be utilized for low density, single family residential.

Should the health care facility be relocated in the future, then the site can be utilized for a non-commercial institutional and/or research use under the same guidelines as Option 1 or be utilized solely for low density residential as outlined in Option 3.
GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL LANDS
SCHEMATIC LAND USE CONCEPT - OPTION 3

Figure 11 illustrates Option 3. This Option visualizes the relocation of the George Derby Hospital site to another location at a future date with the redevelopment of the site to low density, single family residential. The area involved with this redevelopment involves approximately 48 acres.
GEORGE DERBY HOSPITAL LANDS
SCHEMATIC LAND USE CONCEPT - OPTION 4

Figure 12 illustrates Option 4. Like Option 3, this Option visualizes the relocation of the George Derby Hospital. However, in this instance, redevelopment is to a non-commercial institutional and/or research use for the 48 acre site with conditions as referred to in Option 1.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As a first stage in the study process, the Consultants assembled physical and environmental information about the site to determine constraints on the use of the site, and sensitivity of the site and study area to potential impacts. This culminated in the division of the site into developable and non-developable areas. The Study Group adopted this division and subsequently prepared four land use options for the developable areas in recognition of existing Municipal policies and surrounding land uses. The non-developable segments of the site were designated for public open space/conservation in each of the four options prepared.

The four land use options were then analyzed by the Consultants to assess possible environmental impact. It was determined that the impact of these options would only be at the micro level, and thereby not preclude the development of any one of the options for the site. The Consultants concluded that the critical factor is the manner in which any one of the land uses proposed is developed rather than the land use itself. Accordingly, the consultant has recommended a number of mitigating measures for each option that should be incorporated into the detailed site planning when development is to occur. The Study Group supports this approach.

Having satisfactorily reached a joint agreement on an appropriate range of land use options for the site, the Study Group is pleased to hereby submit this report in fulfillment of its mandate to jointly recommend a future land use plan for the George Derby lands as a prerequisite for settling the ultimate disposition of the subject lands.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended:

1. THAT the Burnaby Municipal Council, the Provincial Government as represented by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Federal Government as represented by Public Works Canada accept the land use options as outlined in this report as the prerequisite for settling the disposition of the George Derby Hospital lands.