

Area Plan 2 The Cliffs Comprehensive Development Plan

1.0 Purpose

This plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 9.1 of the District of North Cowichan's Official Community Plan (OCP) and will be used as a guideline for landowners, Council, and the public in the development of The Cliffs Over Maple Bay (The Cliffs). The Cliffs is a proposed mixed-use community located on the north slope of Mount Tzouhalem. The new community will consist of an 18-hole golf course, single-family and multi-family housing, and a resort style hotel.

The intent of this comprehensive development plan is to:

- Provide existing residents with assurance about the future development of adjacent lands
- Provide Council with objective guidelines for making land use decisions for the development of the lands
- Provide traffic management and road network planning
- Identify public amenities such as green space, trails, and recreational facilities
- Identify future land uses and densities within the development area
- Outline project phasing

The objective of the Comprehensive Development Plan is to create a unique mixed-use neighbourhood utilizing open space, quality architecture, and the site's natural beauty. The Plan is intended to create a safe, pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood that provides amenities for both residents and the larger community. Compatibility with adjacent neighbourhoods and compliance with the District's OCP are further objectives of the Plan. The property covered by this Comprehensive Development Plan is outlined on Figure 1.

2.0 Site Description

The site encompasses the undeveloped residential lands of what was previously known as "The Properties". The site is approximately 123 hectares in area, located on the northern slope of Mt. Tzouhalem. Most of the site has spectacular views to the north across Quamichan Lake. Portions of the property also have east views towards the Strait of Georgia and south to Cowichan Bay.

Previous phases of The Properties are located northwest of The Cliffs site. This single-family neighbourhood was developed with full underground services, including municipal sewer. The area to the north is mainly half acre and larger single-family lots, serviced by in-ground sewage disposal systems. Lands to the east and south of the site are municipal forest reserve. The municipal forest reserve is owned and managed by the District for sustainable forestry as well as for recreational uses such as hiking and mountain biking. The Mt. Tzouhalem ecological reserve is located west of the site, abutting previously developed phases of The Properties.

3.0 Policy Context

The subject lands are identified in the District's OCP as being Urban Expansion Area. This designation is part of the OCP's growth management strategy, which is intended to focus new residential development in Growth Centres, where existing infrastructure and community amenities are available. Urban Expansion Areas are intended to accommodate future growth as the Growth Centres infill. While the OCP designates The Cliffs as Urban Expansion Area, it also recognizes that lands within this designation can be developed under existing development rights.

Section 7.1 of the OCP supports rezoning of lands in Urban Expansion Areas where:

- the property is currently zoned for urban densities
- water and sewer services are available and additional capital cost burden will not be created
- cluster development is used to preserve and protect environmental features, or provide additional public parks and open space
- the number of units do not exceed what would be permitted under current zoning

A Land Use Contract (LUC) was adopted in 1973 to regulate use and development of "The Properties", including the undeveloped lands that are now known as "The Cliffs". It required the developer to provide a school site, recreational facilities, trail networks, and municipal services. Initially, the Land Use Contract allowed for the development of 1,250 single-family lots and a neighbourhood commercial centre. Subsequent amendments modified the LUC to allow 1,130 single-family lots and 120 townhouse units and to create a separate land use contract for the commercial site.

As of June 2005, 425 single-family lots had been developed in The Properties. A further 705 single-family lots could be subdivided from the undeveloped residential lands. In December 2004, the LUC was discharged from the townhouse site and was replaced with R3 zoning. To date the commercial site has not been developed, but is still subject to the terms and conditions of the Land Use Contract.

It is the intent of this Comprehensive Development Plan that the rights and obligations for the undeveloped residential lands specified in The Properties Land Use Contract, including the permitted number of residential units will carry-through to the future development of The Cliffs. Where this Plan substantively differs from the Land Use Contract is that it permits higher density housing and hotel development in specified areas in order that additional open space in the form of an 18-hole golf course and other green space can be provided.

3.1 Land Use

Figure 2 shows the general land use and layout for the site. Permitted uses will include residential housing, an 18-hole golf course and associated uses, and a hotel commercial area.

The active playable area of the golf course and practice area will comprise approximately 37 ha (91 ac). Green space within the golf course area totals approximately 30 ha (74 ac) and will be left in a natural state or replanted with native species. The golf course design is dictated by the site topography, the road pattern, and connection points. The course will be a championship calibre, par 72, 18-hole layout with practice facilities. The course is designed to be a destination and will attract tourists to the area. The course will be open to the public.

A variety of housing types and densities will be offered within the project. Townhouses and apartment-type condominiums will be developed on specified areas of the site, and will be targeted to an active retired or "empty nester". Single-family lots similar to the residential lots developed within The Properties will also be provided. These lots are expected to appeal to established families moving up from a first home purchase. Although the comprehensive development zoning for the site will provide some flexibility to accommodate changing market conditions and consumer preferences, the maximum number of residential dwellings on the site shall not exceed 705.

A hotel has been proposed to complement the golf course and to provide a focal point for the neighbourhood. The hotel may have an accessory restaurant and retail space, and is limited to a maximum of 225 rooms. For the purpose of calculating density, one hotel room is equivalent to 0.5 residential dwellings. Much of the multi-tenant housing will be clustered near the hotel to create a village centre for the neighbourhood.

The permitted land uses, densities, and development criteria for the site will be specified by zoning in conformance with this plan.

3.2 Density Allocation

The maximum permitted density on any individual parcel is subject to zoning restrictions and issuance of development permits. It is recognized that the actual density that may be achieved on the site may be less than 705 units. The maximum density allowed on any multi-family or hotel site is shown on Figure 2. Actual density of the multi-family and hotel sites will be established during the development of permit process.

4.0 Recreation facilities, green space and trails

The official community plan supports two primary types of recreational facilities; traditional organized parks and recreational systems and a more informal network of recreational trails and pathways. The Cliffs Over Maple Bay supports this policy by providing a significant network of trails and greenspace and financing the construction of sports fields and support facilities on land that was provided with previous phases of The Properties.

4.1 Recreational facilities

The following recreation facilities will be provided as part of the overall development.

Recreational facilities are to be generally located in the area bounded by Kingsview Road and Donnay Drive. The facilities shall be constructed and located generally in accordance with Figure 3. The location, extent, and type of facilities may be modified by mutual agreement between North Cowichan and The Cliffs Over Maple Bay.

- **All-Weather Playing Field** – 92 m x 46 m including all site works. Perforated pipe at approximately 3 m spacing for drainage, underground irrigation, and turf over approximately 36 cm sand base.
- **Two Softball Diamonds** – Approximately 2,700 m² including all required site works. Portion not included in the all-weather playing field to be soil based turf with surface graded to drain, skinned infield, and chain link backstop to the Municipality's current general standard. One softball diamond will be constructed as an overlap with the all-weather playing field.
- **Sports Field Parking** – Approximately 2,300 m² for 60 parking stalls sized to Municipality's standards. 50 mm of asphalt over gravel base including grading, drainage, and curbs.
- **Landscaping** – Enhancing the boulevard areas of Donnay Drive between the sports field parking and sports fields to the Municipality's standard low ground cover using native species.
- **Change Room Facility** – Architecturally designed concrete block building to include change room facilities for men and women. Approximately 5 m x 10 m, containing ladies' wash/change room with 3 toilet stalls, 2 sinks, benches and hooks; men's wash/change room with 1 toilet stall, 2 urinals, 2 sinks, benches and hooks; storage room approximately 3 m wide, security lighting.

The design and construction of the recreational facilities shall be managed by North Cowichan and paid for by the developer.

4.2 Green Space

Green space shall be provided generally as shown on Figure 2. The green spaces are to be left in a natural state wherever possible. Supplemental planting with native plant material shall be provided as required. Typical native plantings that will be provided within the green space include:

- **Trees and Tall Shrubs** – Shorepine, Arbutus, Douglas Fir, Douglas Maple, Beaked Hazelnut, Baldhip Rose, Thimbleberry, Pacific Willow and Scoulers Willow
- **Low Shrubs** – Common Snowberry, Salal, Oregon Grape, Common Juniper, and Evergreen Huckleberry
- **Ground Cover** – Sword Fern, Bracken Fern and Kinnikinnick

Public green space area totalling approximately 9.8 ha (or 7.9% of the total site area) and as shown on Figure 2 will be dedicated to the municipality. The public green space shall include an area for a tot lot near Nevilane Drive.

4.3 Trails

A comprehensive trail network shall be provided through the development. The trails will be generally located as shown on Figure 2. On-site trails shall be extended and constructed off site to connect to existing trails. The trails shall be constructed generally in accordance with the following or alternate standards as approved by North Cowichan. Detailed trail designs shall be submitted at subdivision approval for the adjacent area.

- **Trails** – Rough grading of trails to be done using native material; 1.5 m wide trail to be constructed of minimum 100 mm depth of 20 mm minus crushed gravel overlain by 75 mm granular material (golf cart mix), maximum slope of trail is 20%. Drainage pipes to convey water across the path installed as required. Steps, if required, will be pressure treated wood. Where the trails cross the public road, landscaped trail heads and signage shall be provided. At areas of potential conflict with the golf course, fences or other appropriate screening shall be provided to protect the public trail user.
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- **Bridge Crossings** – 1.5 m wide deck, single span with engineered steel beam and treated wooden deck, painted steel or aluminium handrails, concrete abutments.
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- **Culvert Crossings** – Minimum top width 2.0 m, concrete sandbag headwalls for inlet and outlet, similar to MNC Std. Drawing No. D7.
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- **Golf Cart and Trail Crossings** – Where practical, golf cart and trail crossings of public roads shall be combined. Paths shall be separated by fencing or other means to define the public path from golf cart path.

4.4 Parks

Approximately 12 ha of land near Kingsview Road and Donnay Drive has been set aside for recreational and school use with previous phases of The Properties. This park land was intended to provide outdoor recreation area for residents of The Properties, including The Cliffs lands that are the subject of this Plan. The recreation area presently accommodates a playground, sports field, and tennis courts.

As parkland has been previously provided, additional park land in accordance with Section 941 of the Local Government Act is not required. In recognition of the recreational facilities provided by the developer, as outlined in Sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, development cost charges for park land or recreational facilities shall not be imposed on lands within the Comprehensive Development Area.

5.0 Alternate development standards

Within this Comprehensive Development Area, alternate design standards will be considered where an environmental or a neighbourhood design benefit can be established. Alternate standards will be considered for road design and street lighting. Proposed alternate development standards shall be reviewed prior to subdivision approval and shall be authorized by Council where necessary through a variance process.

5.1 Roads

Within this Comprehensive Development Area, the North Cowichan road standards may be varied. Horizontal and vertical alignment standards shall generally meet the requirements of the Transportation Association of Canada specification.

Alternate road standards that allow a reduction in impervious area provide an environmental benefit and become a key part of the stormwater management plan. Throughout The Cliffs, reduced impermeable areas and the use of permeable paving materials will be encouraged and allowed. This will allow replenishment of groundwater and reduce downstream drainage impacts. The reduced impermeable areas and creation of pocket parking will visually narrow the street, yet ensure that adequate parking is available for residents. This will provide a visually more attractive development and encourage a reduction in vehicle speeds. The road design must take into account snow removal, driveway access, emergency vehicle and service traffic volumes.

Constructed road widths may be narrower than North Cowichan standards. Road widths shall allow for efficient and safe movement of vehicle traffic while enhancing pedestrian access and safety. Sidewalks and walkways will be on at least one side of the road and may be separated from the road edge. Parking pockets will be provided where required. In order to promote pedestrian safety and control vehicle speeds, traffic calming measures may be used where excessive speeds need to be controlled.

To ensure that the area is attractive and natural, improvements and frontage trees will be incorporated in the street design where possible. The intent of the street design and landscaping will be to enhance the natural environment and soften the development by additional native planting. The concept for alternate road standards is illustrated on Figure 4.

5.2 Lighting

Within this Comprehensive Development Plan area, North Cowichan's street lighting standards may be varied. The street lights and quality of light shall be chosen to enhance the pedestrian routes and other public open spaces. All lighting should be designed and selected to reduce light pollution while providing a basic level of public safety. The average maintained luminance shall meet North Cowichan's standards for residential classification on collector and local roads.

6.0 Site servicing

The site will be serviced with full municipal underground services in accordance with North Cowichan's engineering standards. Off-site water, sewer, drainage, and roads have been developed and constructed to accommodate development at the density proposed for The Cliffs and no additional off-site upgrading is required. Off-site infrastructure and servicing works are in place (with the exception of a new water reservoir, upgrades to the water pumpstation, and the traffic improvements defined in 6.1) and the comprehensive development area shall not pay for additional off-site works other than through the payment of development cost charges.

6.1 Off-site traffic improvements

The development of The Cliffs will require either the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Kingsview Road and Maple Bay Road or the completion of Donnay Drive through to Kingsview Road. Depending on the right-of-way acquisition and registration of lots within The Cliffs, either one of these traffic improvements will accommodate traffic flow from the development and surrounding area.

6.2 Sanitary sewers

The development is within the South End Sewer Area and will be connected into the existing municipal sanitary sewage collection system. The existing municipal sewage collection, treatment, and disposal system has capacity for the proposed development.

6.3 Stormwater

The Official Community Plan supports the development of on-site stormwater detention systems and other groundwater recharge measures to reduce off-site stormwater runoff and infrastructure requirements. A comprehensive stormwater management plan in accordance with the OCP requirements and the Best Management Practices for Urban and Rural Land Development in BC will be designed for the site. Stormwater management techniques such as the retention, detention, quantity reduction, and quality enhancement will be utilized for both the overall site and for individual development parcels. The post-development stormwater flow from the site will not exceed the pre-development flow under a two-year storm event. Major drainage works and natural watercourses shall accommodate a 25-year storm event, and 200-year flood routing will be provided. A comprehensive stormwater management plan for the entire site shall be approved by the District prior to construction approval of the golf course or the first phase of residential development.

6.4 Water distribution

Due to the topography of the site, an additional potable water reservoir is required to provide domestic and fire flow to the development. The reservoir will be located south of the site within the municipal forest reserve. A network of the distribution pipes, pressure reducing valves, and other appurtenances will provide both domestic and fire flow to the development. The existing water pumping station on Kingsview will be upgraded by the developer to accommodate the development.

Water conservation and reduced water consumption will be encouraged. Water consumption shall be reduced within The Cliffs through the installation of water meters on all individual services and the use of native vegetation and drought resistant plant species for landscaping for multi-family and commercial sites. Water reuse will be supported by the use of reclaimed water for irrigation of the golf course.

6.5 Utilities

Full underground utilities in accordance with North Cowichan standards shall be installed. To accommodate the alternate road standards, separate utility corridors may be required for Shaw CATV, Telus, Hydro, or Terasen services.

6.6 Golf course irrigation

The golf course will require irrigation to promote turf grass growth and to allow the course to be used in the summer months. Water from the domestic Municipal water system is not available for irrigation. To irrigate the course, reclaimed water from the Joint Utilities Board sewage treatment plant will be used. The use of reclaimed water for irrigation is supported by the CVRD Central Sector Liquid Waste Management Plan, primarily due to the environmental benefit of reducing the quantity of effluent being discharged to the Cowichan River.

The reclaimed water shall be pumped from the treatment plant in a transport pipe to a storage pond. The reclaimed water shall meet the Municipal Sewage Regulations for unrestricted public access. Additional treatment consisting of filtration and disinfection will be required. The Cliffs will obtain an Operating Certificate for the design, operation, and maintenance of the reclaimed water system.

7.0 Neighbourhood design

The Cliffs will promote pedestrian activity through a network of trail connections and pedestrian routes that will allow residents and visitors to walk through the site. To promote pedestrian activity, the following design principles shall be followed.

- Wherever feasible, pedestrian pathways will follow a different route than the public road.
- Where pedestrian routes are within the road allowance, the sidewalk may be separated from the travelled roadway by a landscaped buffer.
- Architecture will be controlled by the developer's design review process to ensure that structures have a human scale and are visually interesting.
- Gateways, trail crossings, entrances, or arrival points will be defined by built forms, natural features, and significant landscape treatments.

7.1 Parking

This Plan discourages large, unbroken parking lots for commercial, hotel, or multi-family development, particularly when located between buildings and the street. Underground parking for commercial, hotel, and apartment sites is encouraged. Where surface parking is provided, it shall be softened with trees and other landscaping. Pedestrian walkways will also be provided within parking lots. All parking areas shall be screened from streets or other uses by built forms or landscaping.

7.2 Aboveground utilities and mailboxes

Large utility buildings or structures shall be designed to a standard that is similar to the design of principal structures with the neighbourhood. The location of utility cabinets at intersections or in open spaces is discouraged and shall be avoided wherever possible. Community mailboxes shall be located to serve as a community gathering spot, and shall be designed to complement the neighbourhood. Public utilities shall be designed and located to complement the surrounding housing, landscape, or natural forms so as to not interrupt views.

7.3 Interface fire hazard and municipal forest reserve

The southern and the easterly boundaries of the site abut North Cowichan's municipal forest reserve. The proximity of urban development at The Cliffs to Municipal Forest creates a potential hazard risk due to fire spread. The risk of interface fire at the proposed residential and commercial lots bordering the North Cowichan forest reserve has been evaluated and is considered extreme. In order to minimize the risk of interface fire, a fuel free zone of 10 metres from the boundary of the forest reserve shall be established at the time of subdivision and shall be maintained by future property owners. A covenant shall be registered over the fuel free zone to ensure its preservation. The developer shall be responsible for ensuring that exterior construction material on lots and buildings bordering the forest reserve on the east and south boundaries of the property shall meet or exceed Class B fire rating. The 10 m fuel free zone at the Municipal forest boundary shall be fully sprinklered with an underground system.

All construction and development along the municipal forest interface and landscaping within the fuel free zones shall generally conform to the recommendations in the BC FireSmart manual and the Strathcona Forestry Consulting Interface Fire Hazard Assessment.

The District of North Cowichan supports the reduction of fire risk and spread at the interface with urban development. To reduce fire spread risk, a trail will be constructed along the south and east boundaries of the site through the municipal forest reserve, generally as outlined on Figure 6 and to the trail standards outlined in Section 4.3. The trail will also include an area of thinning to reduce fuels and create a firebreak. The trail and firebreak through the municipal forest reserve will be constructed and paid for by the developer. The developer shall install fencing and gates to North Cowichan's approval to restrict vehicle access to the municipal forest reserve and the trail network.

The municipal forest reserve is a well used recreational area. Public users of the municipal forest reserve need a place to park and the developer shall construct a gravel parking area on the access road to the upper reservoir. This parking area will be for public use and will discourage on-street parking.

7.4 Building design

Building design within The Cliffs will be controlled by the developer through a comprehensive set of building and landscape design guidelines and a statutory building scheme. The intent and objectives of the design guidelines and building scheme will be to:

- Complement the natural beauty of the site by requiring designers to utilize natural features such as terrain, vegetation, sunlight, and views
- Identify and protect view corridors to ensure every lot and dwelling optimal views
- Achieve varied and interesting building designs
- Establish a high standard for exterior finishing and landscaping
- Discourage blasting and grade manipulation for residential sites

In addition to the developer's design review process, the District of North Cowichan will require design review and development permits for all multi-family and commercial development, in accordance with the District's Multi-Family Housing and General Commercial Development Permit Design Guidelines.

8.0 Environmental

The property is characterised by shallow, rapidly draining soils with rock outcrops and irregular surfaces of up to 60% slope. There are numerous drainage courses running through the property, the majority of which are directed towards the Quamichan Lake. Some drainage courses near the east boundary of the site flow towards Bird's Eye Cove. There are no fish-bearing streams within the property although water discharged from the property is directed downstream to aquatic habitat. It is therefore important that quality of water and existing flow patterns be maintained. The following objectives for protection of habitat have been established:

- Maintain pre-development surface flow patterns including the base flows to Quamichan Lake
- Maintain pre-development flows and discharge points from the property
- Maintain pre-development water quality discharge to Quamichan Lake and protect against potential sedimentation, accidental spills, and fertilizer use
- Develop a sedimentation, spill prevention, and tree protection plan
- Develop an environmental monitoring and sampling program
- Develop a pesticide and fertilizer management plan
- Provide habitat compensation and enhancement consisting of re-constructed channels and ponds, additional native planting, and the development of riparian zones

The development of the golf course and residential lots will require filling of many of the existing ravines and drainage courses. Permits will be required from Land and Water BC for all proposed works and changes under Section 9 of the Water Act.

The Official Community Plan identifies an environmentally sensitive area of open wood land at the northwest corner of the development. This area is identified as stands of Garry Oak mixed with other species. The area of Garry Oak and open woodland will be part of the golf course and mostly within the non-playable or green space area. A development permit and environmental assessment will be required prior to any excavation or tree removal within the identified area. The Cliffs will endeavour to save and protect as much of the Garry Oak and woodland area as is compatible with the golf course development. Protective measures may consist of buffering, fencing, and other habitat protection and restoration measures.

9.0 Development approval process

This Comprehensive Development Plan establishes land uses, densities, and development responsibilities. All future development approvals to identify housing types, subdivision approvals for servicing and lot layouts, and development permit approvals will be in keeping with the Plan. The following provisions will govern approval processes.

9.1 Approvals

- Council shall only consider applications consistent with this Plan.
- The requirement for a public hearing may be waived for minor changes to the CD Zone where use and density are not affected and the change is in conformance with the Plan.
- Any proposed development contrary to this plan will require an amendment to the Plan before proceeding. Such a process will require a public hearing.
- The "Subdivision Control Bylaw" and the "Zoning Bylaw" may be varied to meet the objectives and guidelines of the Official Community Plan and this Comprehensive Development Plan.

9.2 Development permits

- Development permit applications will be required in accordance with Appendix "D" of the Official Community Plan. All commercial development and multi-family development containing three or more units will require development permits.
- Each application will be assessed in accordance with the applicable guidelines in the Official Community Plan and this Comprehensive Development Plan.
- Zoning requirements for on-site active recreational facilities may be reduced or waived in situations where suitable safe pedestrian connections are provided to nearby or adjacent parks/open space areas.

9.3 Subdivisions and phasing

- Where alternative development standards are proposed, Council may vary current standards to accommodate the alternate.
- Adjustments to the overall development plan are likely as detailed plans are prepared for individual phases. Such adjustments may be accommodated at the subdivision stage provided that public areas are not involved or reduced.
- Trails and re-planted natural green space shall be constructed as a condition of subdivision or development permit approval of adjacent lands.

9.4 Neighbourhood communication

The developer shall undertake to ensure that new property owners are aware of future uses and phases of the project. This may be achieved by a combination of on-site signage, sales information, or notice on title, and/or general information handouts.

9.5 Development cost charges

- In consideration of the recreational facilities provided and as outlined in Section 4.0, the comprehensive development area shall not pay any development cost charge for the provision or development of parkland and recreational facilities.
- If a school site acquisition charge is imposed by the municipality, consideration will be given for the Maple Bay school site dedicated under the Land Use Contract
- The comprehensive development area shall pay all development cost charges levied for water, storm drainage, sanitary sewage, and roads.

9.6 Recreational facility financing

The developer has committed to financing the recreational facilities by providing a contribution of \$6,000 per residential lot and \$2,000 per multi-family unit, payable at the time of final

subdivision approval and building permit respectively. A restrictive covenant will be registered on the property to prohibit further subdivision or building permits for multi-family housing if the entire cost of the facilities has not been paid for or bonded for by January 31, 2007.

9.7 Off-site traffic improvement financing

The developer has committed to a contribution of \$450 per residential lot or multi-family unit to be used for intersection improvements at Kingsview and Maple Bay Roads or the extension of Donnay Drive. The contribution will be payable at the time of subdivision approval for residential lots and at building permit for multi-family units. The maximum contribution by the developer for off-site traffic improvements shall not exceed \$156,000, or payment for 360 lots/units.

9.8 Development schedule

- The golf course shall be completed before 200 residential units are registered within the comprehensive development area.
- All recreational facility upgrading as outlined in Section 4.0 shall be completed before October 31, 2007.
- The stormwater management plan required under Section 6.2 shall be completed and accepted by the municipality before construction of the golf course or construction approval of the first residential phase.

10.0 References

1. Site Servicing Review, Bullock Baur Associates Ltd., dated May 2005
2. Interface Fire Hazard Assessment, Strathcona Forestry Consulting, dated March 31, 2005
3. Traffic Impact Analysis, Evans Engineering, dated July 11, 2005
4. Proposed Instream Works, Enkon Environmental, dated April 2005
5. Building and Landscape Guidelines, RBA Architects, undated
6. Environmental Summary, Enkon Environmental, dated July 18, 2005