

## Attachment 2 Planning Implications (Page 1 of 2)

### ***Land Use Implications***

Under the Horne Lake Service Commercial Comprehensive Development 54 Zone (CD54), each business on the property is permitted a 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> fascia sign, and one freestanding sign of 13.5 m<sup>2</sup> is permitted for the entire property. The CD54 zone also permits directional signage necessary for the proposed businesses, which would include the menu board and clearance bar for the drive-through. The CD54 zone signage regulations were anticipated to be more appropriate for a commercial property with multiple businesses rather than “Regional District of Nanaimo Sign Bylaw No. 993, 1995” (Sign Bylaw), which only permits two 11 m<sup>2</sup> signs on the property. Despite the additional fascia signage permitted in the zone for each business, the applicant has requested to vary the standards in the CD54 zone as the maximum sign surface area is not sufficient for the permitted restaurant use.

Each sign is subject to the Rural Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA) requirements, including directional signs and signs that do not require a variance. The DPA guidelines require signage to be visually unobtrusive, grouped and complementary to the scenic qualities of the area with a minimal amount of lighting. For signs that require a variance “Board Policy B1.5 Development Variance Permit, Development Permit with Variance and Floodplain Exemption Application Evaluation” (Policy B1.5) applies and requires an adequate demonstration of an acceptable land use justification prior to the Board’s consideration.

To address Policy B1.5, the applicant provides a justification in their letter that the permitted signage may have an impact on overall branding and business recognition for the restaurant. The applicant identifies that to stay within the character of the rural area and comply with criteria in Policy B1.5 to reduce the variance, A&W is proposing less signage than the brand standard, which would normally include more and larger illuminated fascia signs. The applicant has also made efforts to reduce the impact of the variance by removing several freestanding signs from the original variance request, including two freestanding signs situated along the drive through and an illuminated sign on the clearance bar. See Schedule 4 – Site Plan and Schedule 5 – Sign Elevations of Attachment 3 – Draft Development Permit with Variance for an illustration of the proposed signs. A review of each sign that requires a variance is provided below, including the intended purpose identified by the applicant:

**Freestanding Pylon Sign:** The main visible freestanding pylon sign for the gasoline and electric vehicle service station approved under development permit PL2020-118 will likely be the only sign clearly visible off the premises. The sign was approved with a total surface area of 13.28 m<sup>2</sup> for both sides for the service station and convenience store, though a panel for the permitted restaurant was not anticipated. With the A&W panel, the total surface area for both sides of the pylon will be 16.3 m<sup>2</sup>. Policy B1.5 and the Rural Commercial DPA both support sign consolidation, as proposed in the pylon sign, which will reduce the number of signs visible off the property.

Due to the 7.5 metre height of the pylon sign and proximity to overhead wires, the sign location approved in PL2020-118 will move to a location in front of the parking area on the Horne Lake Road side of the property (see Schedule 2 – Amended Pylon Sign Site Plan and Schedule 3 – Pylon Sign Elevations of Attachment 3 – Draft Development Permit with Variance). The sign must comply with the property line setback of 4.5 metres and with the landscaping requirements of the original development permits. Prior

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to releasing the landscaping security required for the development under development permit PL2020-118, the applicant must demonstrate that all proposed vegetation within the landscaping plan has been established. Any landscaping displaced by the proposed sign will be required to be established elsewhere within the Horne Lake Road landscape buffer area.

**A&W Sign 1, 2 and 3 (Fascia):** The three fascia signs will have a total surface area of 4.35 m<sup>2</sup>, exceeding the maximum of 4.0 m<sup>2</sup>. Two fascia signs display the name and logo for A&W to provide visibility and recognition of the business. These two illuminated signs for the business will not exceed the maximum surface area in the CD54 zone. Sign 3 will contain the A&W slogan “Good Food Makes Good Food” and will be non-illuminated. The applicant identifies that by using multiple fascia signs, the business can maximize the exposure of the restaurant from different angles, allowing for easier navigation of the development by customers. Signs 1, 2, 3 are in Schedules 4 and 5 of Attachment 2 – Draft Development Permit with Variance.

The applicant notes in their letter of rationale that the requested variances consider the overall rural aesthetic and distributes signs in a manner that complements the surrounding area. The proposed sign layout is unobtrusive with little visibility from nearby roads. The signs would improve guest experience and improve visibility on the premises, without taking away from the scenic qualities of the surrounding areas. The applicant identifies that the signage is consistent with the Rural Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA), as there is no ‘animated, flashing, oscillating or moving signs, or rooftop signs’. The signs will only be illuminated in the evenings for greater visibility on the premises and will not be bright enough to pose as a distraction or nuisance to the neighbouring area.

With respect to the CD54 zone, the intention of the zoning amendment was to support development initiatives of the Qualicum First Nation while maintaining the rural character of the surrounding community. To achieve this, the proposed development retains vegetated buffer areas around the perimeter of the property and only incorporates lighting or signage necessary for the commercial use of the property. Generally, the proposed variance request for the A&W restaurant appears consistent with the intent of the zone, DPA, and Board Policy through consolidating freestanding signage and reducing the variances requested. Further the applicant had previously agreed to conditions in Development Permit PL2020-118 that lighting in signage is turned off when the businesses are not in operation and that signage will use automatic dimming hardware to adjust light intensity based on time of day and weather conditions to ensure a lower light output. These conditions are included in the attached draft permit for clarity.