

## **THE CLARIDGE TEAM**

Inspired by the vision of the LeBreton Flats Master Plan and the desire to be part of the historic redevelopment of the site, the Claridge team has been carefully chosen to include industry leaders with the necessary expertise to take on the challenge and to realize the opportunity.

<b>DEVELOPER :</b>	Claridge Homes (LeBreton) Inc.
<b>ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN :</b>	Dan S. Hanganu Architects and Daoust Lestage inc. architecture-design urbain
<b>SUSTAINABLE DESIGN</b>	
<b>MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING :</b>	Keen Engineering
<b>LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE :</b>	PLA Consultants

## **VISION FOR THE SITE**

The Claridge team's vision for the LeBreton Flats Phase 1 embraces both the fundamentals of the National Capital Commission's Master Plan and the philosophy of the City of Ottawa's 20/20 Growth Management Strategy, of which the Official Plan is a vital component. This is a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate the importance and relevance of the Smart Growth principles in the initial phase of such a significant community and validate the fundamental vision of the NCC that unifies this site with the central core and existing neighbourhoods.

With particular attention to high quality architecture, urban planning and landscape architecture, complemented by sustainable development design, this site will become one of the healthiest communities in the National Capital Region, with a very high quality of life. The integrated and comprehensive ensemble of form, space, function will allow the residents to live, work and play within a few blocks of home. As an integral part of the LeBreton Flats Master Plan, this new vibrant urban community will serve to fortify the image and character of the National Capital Region.

LeBreton Flats Phase 1 will have a variety and range of housing options - in size, of type, of affordability and of tenure. Claridge Homes can rely on its considerable experience of building several projects of affordable non-profit housing, and numerous communities for middle income earners up to the most exclusive executive residences.

The incorporation of green engineering into all aspects of the project design will provide both the satisfaction of environmental responsibility, but also significant improvements to the quality of life of the residents. The design will stress resource conservation, economy for the ultimate users and the municipality and the appropriate use of landscaping.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Claridge Homes has specific goals and objectives for the project that complement and enhance those of the National Capital Commission and the City of Ottawa. These are:

- To take full advantage of the site's unique features, qualities and opportunities through excellence in design to create an environment that fosters a physical and emotional sense of place and pride of residence
- To achieve high quality design in form, space and landscaping throughout all parts of the project to ensure a consistency amongst a family of buildings, clarity of design, vitality and beauty
- To utilise an environmental strategy that embraces the green building technology with a goal of achieving a minimum of LEED Silver qualification for this project
- To introduce innovative housing forms like the courtyard units that will provide more housing options for the consumers of the marketplace
- To offer broad levels of affordability and a variety of housing choices in order to achieve the desired social and cultural diversity needed for a healthy community
- To create a contemporary community that is enriched with the interplay of nature and urbanism; of public and private realms; of national culture and individual living; and of history/heritage and vision for the future.

## **CONCEPTUAL APPROACH**

Inspired by the site's intrinsic qualities, the LeBreton Flats project banks on the creation of a residential development where the interfaces are defined in harmonious relation with the project's surrounding environment.

### **PENINSULA**

The LeBreton Flats lie at the meeting point of the aqueduct's canal and the Ottawa River. While connected to the city by vehicular roads and pedestrian pathways, such as Booth and Wellington Streets as well as Pooley's Bridge, the site takes on the character of a peninsula, partly surrounded by natural or more formalized waterways.

### **GREEN HERITAGE**

In addition to existing buildings on the site, the LeBreton Flats' heritage comprises a significant green component that percolates to the shores of the canal on the site's eastern edge and to the Ottawa River along its western border, forming a crown of vegetation along the water.

### **THE SITE'S TECTONICS**

The enclosures of the aqueduct are defined by stone walls created in some places by the carving of the canal into the rock and in others by handmade stratified works of masonry, both in visual reference to the tectonics of the limestone cliffs in the park to the northeast of the site.

## **BUILT HERITAGE**

One can currently find within this peninsula and along its edges high-quality buildings and spaces such as the Common, the future War Museum, the canal of the aqueduct and the former pumping station; elements that shape the site's historical and contemporary built heritage.

## **WELLINGTON AXIS**

Connected to the surrounding neighbourhoods by an intricate network of streets, the LeBreton Flats are anchored visually to Parliament Hill and its institutional buildings by the axial perspective along Wellington Street.

## **STREETSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE**

### **THE EXTENSION OF THE NATURAL FRINGE INTO THE HEART OF THE PROJECT**

The concept is based on the creation of an indigenous landscape structure that infiltrates the residential blocks deep into the courtyards. This extension of the forest into the heart of the project creates a green high-quality living environment which, by imbuing the project's urban structure with a feeling of pleasant wilderness, favours a character of intimacy for each unit. The residential buildings' inner courtyards become small forests, acting as functional and visual filters between the various housing units.

### **PUBLIC SPACES**

Two outdoor spaces become stages for the public display of urban life within this inhabited forest; Canal Square and Pooley's Bridge Mews shape the project's connection with the bicycle path, the surrounding neighbourhoods and the natural fringe along the aqueduct and the ravine of the tailrace.

The bicycle path is punctuated along its entire length by various waterside plants and a series of alcoves furnished with benches, conducive to the contemplation of the waterway and the forest.

### **NETWORK OF PUBLIC ART**

A program of public art is proposed in order to animate the project's open air public spaces and highlight the dramatic presence of the former pumping station. This art network is defined by a series of luminous platforms punctuating the spatial movement from the Canal Mews and Canal Square to Pooley's Bridge.

### **TREATMENT OF STREET-FACING SEMI-PUBLIC SPACES**

The planting concept of semi-public spaces in direct contact with public space is in harmony with the urban character of the public spaces. Planting is structured and strictly cultivated in nature. Boxwood is employed in low hedges on top of all the small retaining and landscape walls thus providing a unifying element throughout the new roadway network. Beyond the hedges, planting is varied to allow for distinctive expression of individual properties.

## **INTERIOR COURTYARDS**

The planting selected for interior courtyards symbolises the penetration of the neighbouring woods into the urban development. Cultivated varieties of trees requiring less upkeep and moisture than their naturally occurring equivalents will be randomly distributed to simulate a typical mixed-forest. Below the trees, ground cover will replace grass, eliminating the maintenance it usually requires: mowing, fertilizing, heavy watering, introduction of herbicides, etc., while creating a more woods-like environment.

Shrubs provide privacy screens for the sunken terraces, grouped in the uppermost planters facing the townhouses' courtyard facades. The lowest level of the planters is exclusive to the adjacent unit's residents to use for vegetable or ornamental gardens of their choosing

## **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The architectural massing creates a masonry and glass base of six storeys, a height at which all apartments may have a direct visual relationship with street-level activity. Within the NCC Guidelines, four point towers are permitted, allowing higher densities to benefit from the exceptional views offered towards the aqueduct, Parliament Hill, the Ottawa River and the Gatineau Hills beyond.

### **A LANDMARK BUILDING**

At the northern edge of block 1 adjoining Lett Street and the park, the tower is expressed as a glass sheathed object placed upon a six-storey masonry base. Visible from Wellington Street, it acts as an architectural landmark, in visual connection with the dynamics of Parliament Hill.

### **THE FRAME BUILDINGS**

Based on the NCC's design criteria, the proposed street front elevations on Booth, Fleet and Lett ensure the urban street continuity and the framing of the proposed landscaped and wooded surfaces at the heart of the residential blocks.

### **THE CANAL BUILDINGS**

By punctuating the path along the aqueduct, the canal buildings give a rhythm to the interface on the water. They display their distinctive fritted glass elevations, on which the shore-hugging curtain of greenery is reflected.

### **THE STACKED TOWNHOUSES**

Nestled in the heart of the residential blocks, stacked townhouses unfold on five levels, punctuated by porte-cocheres opening onto the inner courtyards and their random forest plantation.

## LIGHTSCAPING

In order to visually animate the urban elements of the public realm during night time, lightscaping is defined by four main interventions:

the illumination of the pumping station and the northwest tower of Block One, highlighting the historical and visual landmarks; luminous art platforms casting a new light on the public works

of art placed on the ground, on the water or on the roof of the pumping station; the use of light to enhance the interpretative panel in Canal Square, the key element at the heart of the project; Points of light randomly blanket the ground plane in Canal Square and in the courtyards, creating a whimsical background to the softly lit forest.

## PUBLIC REALM AMENITIES

A large day-care able to accommodate more than fifty children is located at ground level of Block 12 adjacent to Booth Street and the aqueduct. A protected exterior play area faces south towards the aqueduct. The day-care benefits from views overlooking the Canal Mews to the north and to Canal Square to the east.

Blocks 1 and 4 offer public landscaped roof terraces to their residents, allowing them to enjoy city-wide views from the seventh floor of their buildings.

## DIVERSITY IN HOUSING TYPES

A wide range of apartment types are provided, ranging from small studios to 3 bedroom apartments, two-storey townhouses, and one and two storey terrace dwellings. Many of the units feature work spaces for home offices. All living spaces have corner windows, creating diagonal views. Sheltered balconies adjoining the bedrooms and living spaces act as exterior spatial pivots for each dwelling unit.

Most ground-floor units have individual entries assuring direct street access via private terraces.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordability in housing is expressed in income percentiles, which corresponds to a low to moderate income household's ability to pay 30% of its gross annual income for housing.

## ENSURING LONG TERM AFFORDABILITY

For the rental housing, located on Block 4, Claridge will formally satisfy the specific City and NCC requirements for LeBreton Flats Phase 1. Secured through an agreement with the City of Ottawa, in accordance with the subdivision conditions, a minimum of 63 units will be rented at levels that are affordable to those at the 20<sup>th</sup> income percentile level (approximately \$754 per month in 2004); another 63 units will be affordable to the 30<sup>th</sup> income percentile level (approximately \$1063 per month in 2004); and another 71 units will be available at the 40<sup>th</sup> income percentile level (approximately \$1362 per month in 2004). These units will be studio,

one and two bedroom apartments in a variety of sizes up to approximately 900 square feet in area. The affordability levels, expressed relative to income percentiles, will be maintained for a minimum 10 year period from initial occupancy. Larger three-bedroom units will also be available, although not necessarily at the affordable levels specified.

### **IMMEDIATE AFFORDABILITY**

For the condominium unit sales, Claridge estimates that approximately 20% of the units will be affordable to the 40<sup>th</sup> income percentile level. (This is in addition to the rental housing described above.) These studio and one-bedroom apartments will range in size from 430 square feet up to 700 square feet. For these residences, this level of affordability (below \$180,000) relates to the initial sale of the unit. The future resale value is not warranted and will be subject to the market conditions at the time of the resale, however, it is expected that many of these units will continue to retain their affordability.

### **OVERALL DISTRIBUTION**

When considered collectively, the Claridge Homes proposal strives to offer approximately 37.5% of the overall total of 850 units as affordable housing, as defined in the Official Plan. The design proposal includes a wide variety of unit types and sizes throughout all buildings of the project, providing the opportunity to offer the broad range of affordability as well. Each Block will have units that qualify as affordable housing as defined by the City. Claridge Homes believes that this strategy will be effective in ensuring that the community is inclusive, integrated and available to as many households as possible.

### **UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY**

All public entrance lobbies of the buildings are at grade level, providing universal accessibility. The lobbies and all underground parking levels are directly linked to upper level residential floors by elevators. Outdoor public spaces and interior courtyards offer universal accessibility through ramps where changes in height occur.

### **ARCHITECTURAL VOCABULARY**

The proposed project favours a resolutely contemporary architectural treatment. Avoiding the pitfall of nostalgia and “passeism” too often seen in recent residential developments, this project’s architecture banks on the acknowledgement of the site’s intrinsic textures and colours and their integration into a contemporary composition allowing various permutations while offering a higher than usual ratio of fenestration.

This approach results in a modulated architecture displaying not only elements common throughout the project but also distinctive details that become landmarks for this particular residential project.

At street level, the proposed modulation reflects the scale of the housing unit and builds recognized urban archetypes (front yards, terrace gardens) into its interface with the public realm.

## **MATERIALITY**

The project's homogeneous yet differentiated character is a result of a fair balance in the selection of materials and their adequate modulation in relation to the various building types. The "frame" buildings display street front elevations based on brick masonry modules (1.3 m) and window units of similar dimensions.

Projecting brise-soleil elements segment the more generously glazed south-facing courtyard elevations. Clear glass is used throughout in order to maximize the transparency effect towards the green environment.

The stacked townhouses offer an intricate play of solids and voids built out of glazing and brick masonry, recalling the limestone stratification characteristic of the natural cliff close by.

The canal buildings, shaped by the bending shoreline, display curved facades mostly built of clear fritted glass that mirror the curtain of greenery along the adjacent waterway.

The landmark building carries the urban image of the project and stands out by its unique architectural treatment and lightscaping.

The development project's unified character demands an overall colour combination inspired by the spirit of the place (genius loci). Hues ranging from sand to earth brown refer both to the site's natural character and the dominating colour of Parliament Hill (limestone). These colours, often used in Nordic countries, confer to residential developments a much appreciated luminosity, especially in the wintertime. They provide an interesting visual contrast against the greenery of the courtyard forests and the canal's vegetation.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES**

The project has been designed to protect and enhance the natural environment in which it is placed. As well, the development will be able to achieve a LEED Canada Silver.

Vegetated roof systems for a large percentage of the roofs will help reduce storm water runoff, reduce solar heat build-up and improve air quality while offering a changing landscape that can be appreciated from neighbouring buildings.

Water use reduction strategies will be incorporated into the design including low or dual flush toilets, low flow lavatories and showers, and front-loading high efficiency washing machines.

The design team will source and specify low-emitting materials including adhesives & sealants, Paints and Coatings, Carpets and Composite Wood and Laminate Adhesives.

Recycling areas will be incorporated into the planning of the buildings to ensure that residents can recycle easily. Regional building materials will be selected to reduce transportation costs and to encourage the local economy.

To reduce solar heat gain within apartments, shading devices will be integrated into south oriented façades to diffuse natural light deep into interiors.

## **PARKING AND DELIVERIES**

Parking for residents is provided in underground parking garages linked directly to the dwellings above via private staircases (for ground floor units) or elevators, ensuring universal accessibility. Due to the restricted site conditions for Block 12, parking for its residents is located within the southern section of the parking garage for Block 4. An underground pedestrian corridor links the residential tower of Block 12 with the adjacent parking garage.

Domestically scaled single lane entries and exits for the parking garages are located at opposite ends of each block to distribute traffic flow and to discretely integrate the entries within the architectural fabric. The roofs of the underground parking garages are landscaped, providing a natural setting within the centre of each residential grouping.

Off-street loading zones for commercial and residential deliveries are provided for Blocks 1, 4 and 12.