60 Birmingham FAQs

Transportation

Q: Could we move the entrance to Dwight Street to lower traffic impact on Symons?
A: Relocating the passenger vehicle entrance on Dwight Street won't necessarily reduce traffic on Symons Street, but it would potentially increase collisions. If a vehicle approaching from the east wishes to access the site, they may still elect to use Symons Street, even if the driveway is relocated. By providing 3 passenger vehicle access points on different streets (New Toronto, Dwight, and Birmingham) the project aims to spread the parking and vehicular demand around the site to minimize the impacts on any one street, intersection, or driveway. Loading and service vehicles only have access to the northwest driveway on New Toronto Street. A study of the anticipated arrival patterns of drivers who would use the site indicates that the quickest and easiest way to reach the site is from the northwest, with little demand for drivers anticipated to use the eastern local roads. With respect to safety, standard 4-legged intersections typically result in less driver-driver and driver-pedestrians collisions than staggered or offset intersections. This type of intersection arrangement also avoids vehicular headlights shining into private properties.

Q: If this ends up being a last-mile distribution centre, how will delivery vehicles gain access to the site? How will we address the community concerns of these types of mid-size vehicles using residential streets day and night? How will this be controlled and enforced?
A: Delivery vehicles only have access to the driveway at the northwest corner of the site along New Toronto Street. As the fastest and easiest way for drivers to serve the potential catchment area is to use the Gardiner / QEW, it is expected that drivers will travel to and from the northwest via Islington Avenue and New Toronto Street. Drivers are typically dispatched using algorithms, reducing the chances of a driver 'freelancing' a route through the residential neighbourhood.

Q: How will we mitigate speeding, wrong-way drivers, and traffic on the street for the safety of the community given proximity to residential neighbourhoods and schools?
The best way to reduce the impacts of external drivers on local residential streets is through site design. By directing delivery and service vehicles to the northwest of the site much of the impacts on the adjacent residential streets can be mitigated. By providing parking and driveways for passenger vehicles spread around the site it avoids over concentrating the impacts of these vehicles on any one access point, road, or intersection.

Q: How can we ensure employees of the facility are not cutting across Symons to get to work?
A review of the anticipated arrival and departure patterns of future employees and visitors to the site indicates that the vast majority of traffic would arrive and depart from the west and north, via New Toronto Street and Islington Avenue. There is no need for drivers to use the local roads near the site unless they themselves live in the neighbourhood or an adjacent community.

Q: Is there enough parking for employees on site to ensure they are not parking on neighbourhood streets?

A: Yes. A comprehensive review of the anticipated parking demands and proposed parking supply for the site was included in the submitted Transportation Study.

Q: How will you move the trucks efficiently on New Toronto Street when it's already backed up on the mornings?

A: A detailed study of the Islington Avenue / New Toronto Street intersection was included within the Transportation Study and found that the anticipated impacts of the project to be acceptable and manageable.

Q: How can we predict traffic flow without knowing the tenant?

A: As part of the Transportation Study, a number of inputs were reviewed to determine the potential traffic impacts of different types of site users. This included reviewing existing comparable facilities in Toronto and the GTA, and a fulsome review of published industry guidance on these types of facilities gathered from sources across North America. To ensure that a reasonable assessment of traffic was undertaken, it was assumed that the site would be a blend of different users, including those that generate higher volumes of traffic and those that generate lower volumes.

Noise

Q: Since the plan is to remove the existing sound barrier along Dwight Ave, how will noise be mitigated from the loading areas? Can Building 1 be connected to Buildings 2 & 3?

A: The existing sound barrier will be removed as part of the new construction, with new measures incorporated to improve the public realm, including a landscaped buffer and green space. Buildings 2 and 3 will be connected at the east side, providing a large barrier between these truck courts and the residential neighbourhood. Due to changing grades across the site (New Toronto is much higher than Birmingham, sloping from north to south), Building 1 cannot be connected to Buildings 2 & 3. However, at Building 1, a 5.7m high combination retaining wall/acoustic barrier will provide similar shielding from the truck court. The layout of the site is such that only employee vehicles will be able to use the drive aisles that are outside of these screen walls; all heavy vehicles will use the New Toronto Street entrance and be will be well-shielded from the residential areas while on site.

Air Quality

Q: Was there any assessment of Air quality as a result of the new development? If so, what is the expected change?

An air quality assessment was performed. Emissions were predicted for a future scenario of trucks and cars operating at the site in the future. The predicted emissions were put into a computer simulation to predict air pollutant concentrations in the surrounding area. The predicted increase in contaminant levels in the surrounding area, compared to present day with no operations at the site, is small - far below levels considered to be acceptable for industrial emissions. The former Campbell Soup factory had not only truck traffic but also emissions from large boilers and a co-gen plant (which burns natural gas to produce electrical and thermal energy) at the site. The emissions from the boilers and co-gen plant were estimated and input to the computer simulation. The estimated historical levels from the boilers and co-gen plant that operated at the site are higher than what is predicted for future trucks and cars at the site.

Heritage

Q: Will the heritage of the site be preserved and will there be any installations/dedications onsite?

A: Yes, the property's cultural heritage value will be preserved. The primary elevation of the original 1930s façade will be retained and conserved in situ. The primary elevation of the 1940s façade will be exposed (it is currently hidden behind an extension built in the 1980s), rebuilt including using reclaimed brick, and restored. An Interpretation Plan for the site, commemorating the site's design, associative and contextual value, will be developed during the next phase of work.

Construction

Q: What is the timeframe for demolition and construction and how will we mitigate impacts on the community?

A: Demolition is anticipated to begin in early 2021, followed by vertical construction commencing in spring 2021. Vertical construction is anticipated to take approximately 12 months. All timelines are subject to change. Every effort will be taken to limit impacts from dust, noise, and dirt tracking. For example, water will be used to suppress dust impacts traveling off site. All City of Toronto by-laws will be followed closely by the contractor and owner.

Sustainability

Q: Will any sustainability measures be implemented into the new development? (in response include reference to roof panels, material disposal, water)

A: QuadReal aims to be a global sustainability leader. On a corporate level, QuadReal has committed to reduce its carbon footprint by 80% by the year 2050. The development of 60 Birmingham will play a large part to encourage energy conservation, promote good air quality, and mitigate impacts to climate change. Specifically, proposed sustainability features include: provision for rooftop solar panels, LED lighting, high-efficiency heaters, provision Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) for vehicles and potentially for logistics fleets, dedicating priority parking spaces for Low Emitting Vehicles, and improved pedestrian and bicycle connections. The project will be compliant with Toronto Green Standards v3 Tier 1 and will be evaluated for LEED certification.

Tenant

Q: What are the expected tenants onsite?

QuadReal is developing 60 Birmingham on a "speculative" basis, meaning there are no pre-existing agreements with a tenant or group of tenants. However, the property is designed to be suitable for typical urban warehousing users. Future tenants may include, but are not limited to: third party logistics (3PL) providers, online retailers, brick-and-mortar retailers, food distributors, etc.

Light

Q: How will we control the excess light emitting from the site?

A: As part of the site plan application, QuadReal submitted a photometric plan completed by our consulting engineers, which outlines the proposed exterior site lighting design and the corresponding light falling on various areas of the site. The photometric plan considered best practices in ensuring an adequately lit site for safety and functionality purposes, while limiting or eliminating light trespass at the property line. The photometric plan adheres to City of Toronto Municipal Code 629, along with the Best Practices for Effective Lighting guidebook.

Design

Q: How many loading docks do we plan to include?

A: The number of docks that will be used will vary by tenant. Although the design allows for a total of 6 drive-in doors and 86 loading docks distributed among the three buildings, only the 6 drive-in doors and 43 loading spaces are planned for construction at this time. The other 37 loading docks are provisions for the future. These will only be completed if and when required by a future tenant. The number of loading spaces that will actually be used will depend on the number, mix, and type of tenants, and the individual tenant's space layouts. The number of available docks doors does not correlate directly to the number of delivery and service vehicles using the truck courts.

Community Space

Q: Are any additional spaces being built for community use? And will there be any improvement to the public realm?

A: The public realm along Birmingham, Dwight, and New Toronto will be significantly improved and enhanced with a new landscape buffer and green space facing the surrounding community. A new amenity area will be created along Birmingham, in front of the retained heritage facade. Furthermore, a road dedication to the City is being provided along the Dwight and New Toronto frontages, which may allow for improved pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks and other connections.