

Fact Sheet

Wedgewood Ventures: Braemar Surplus Land Development

Over the past eight years, Wedgewood Ventures has designed and refined its plans for a residential development on the north end of Calder Avenue, adjacent to Braemar Elementary School.

Wedgewood's vision is for four single-family homes surrounded by a significant buffer of landscaped trees and plants that offer privacy from the school and surrounding neighbours. *(Aerial view below notes proposed residential development in yellow.)*

A long history of commitment and consultation

The Braemar development project began in 2007, when the North Vancouver School District (NVSD) put up for sale an unused parcel of surplus land on the Braemar Elementary School property. Wedgewood was named the successful bidder, with the sale conditional on Wedgewood receiving District of North Vancouver (DNV) approval to change zoning from 'public assembly' to 'residential.'

Since that time, Wedgewood and NVSD have had ongoing discussions with community residents to shape the proposal, and have consulted regularly with the DNV. Wedgewood has hired independent experts to conduct assessments of traffic and the environment, including land, habitat, and vegetation. A proposal was submitted to the DNV Council in 2014, and was narrowly defeated.

Over the past year, Wedgewood has addressed the additional feedback raised by the DNV and through public consultation, and has submitted a new application.

2015 proposal blends feedback and improvements

The new proposal is a culmination of feedback from community residents and the DNV, as well as recommendations from environmental, traffic and land use experts. A summary of the changes that have been made since the 2014 submission follows:

On-site improvements

- The number of homes to be built have been reduced from seven to four
- The amount of land proposed for purchase has been reduced by approximately 30%
- The new homes will be located further away from the school
- A large landscaped buffer will create privacy between the new homes and the school, and between the new homes and adjacent neighbours
- A safe automobile turnaround will be built at the north end of Calder Avenue



Off-site improvements

In addition to the changes made to the proposed development site, the project will benefit the school and surrounding neighbourhood by incorporating child safety measures and improving traffic and parking. Some of the improvements include:

- Traffic calming bulges to channel drivers to designated drop off and pick up zones at the intersection of Mahon Avenue and Evergreen Place
- Raised crosswalk across Mahon Avenue, improving safety and discouraging drivers from entering into the Mahon Avenue cul-de-sac
- New outdoor staircase linking Calder Avenue to Braemar school
- New sidewalk on Calder Avenue connecting Evergreen Place to the new staircase
- Added signage to direct appropriate traffic flow and improve child safety
- Removal of invasive species and planting of indigenous plant species on the east side of school property
- An additional \$100,000 Community Amenity Contribution to be used as agreed upon by the DNV and community

Benefits beyond Braemar: NVSD to fund critical improvements

Pending rezoning approval, Wedgewood will purchase the land for \$2.4 million, and the North Vancouver School District will use the proceeds to help fund the necessary replacement of Argyle Secondary School. Argyle has been deemed high priority for seismic upgrade since 2005, and the replacement project will allow for additional enhancements to benefit students and the community.

Upcoming Milestones

The updated rezoning proposal was submitted to the DNV in mid-2015, and a Public Information Meeting was held in September. It is anticipated that it will go to Council for Introduction and First Reading in January. Pending outcome and timing of First Reading, a Public Hearing would follow (likely in February).

About Wedgewood Ventures

Wedgewood Ventures Ltd. is a North Vancouver-based boutique property development company. Since 1994, Wedgewood has brought to life residential properties—primarily on the North Shore—that make a statement while treading lightly on the earth.

Wedgewood founder, James Fox, was born and raised on the North Shore and lives in the Grand Boulevard neighbourhood with his wife Julie and their three children.

The Wedgewood team has been widely recognized for leadership in environmental initiatives, excellence in design, respect for existing heritage character, and incorporation of public art into the community.

Find out more

To learn more about the Braemar project, please visit wedgewoodventures.com. Additional information is available on the NVSD website (sd44.ca/Board/LandLearningLivability/LandManagement/Braemar/Pages/default.aspx). Please continue to share your feedback with us at wedgewoodventures@shaw.ca.

Q & A

Braemar Surplus Land Development

Over the course of this project, we have been fortunate to hear from residents in communities across North Vancouver as well as other interested stakeholders. Community feedback has helped us explore new ideas, address concerns, clarify speculation, and identify opportunities for increased consultation. Following are the topics most frequently raised.

Will the sale of Braemar’s surplus land limit the school’s ability to meet future growth and enrolment?

No. The North Vancouver School District (NVSD) anticipates enrolment levels at Braemar to remain stable over the next 15 years, and future capacity needs can be met within the existing site. Due, in part, to its sloped topography and location, NVSD has deemed the unused parcel of land as surplus and not within expansion plans.

What are the impacts to neighbourhood traffic and how will this address child safety?

An independent traffic assessment was conducted and found that the proposed development of four houses will have minimal impact on existing traffic – with an increase of approximately seven cars per hour during peak drive times. Traffic and parking have been cited as an issue in this area for decades, and to help address the problem, Wedgewood’s proposal includes funding of a series of traffic and child safety improvements, including:

- Traffic calming bulges to channel drivers to designated drop off and pick up zones at the intersection of Mahon Avenue and Evergreen Place
- Raised crosswalk across Mahon Avenue, improving safety and discouraging drivers from entering into the Mahon Avenue cul-de-sac
- New outdoor staircase linking Calder Avenue to Braemar school
- New sidewalk on Calder Avenue connecting Evergreen Place to the new staircase
- Added signage to direct appropriate traffic flow and improve child safety
- A safe turn around for cars at the north end of Calder

Will there be enough parking on site for residents and visitors?

Yes. Each of the four residential lots will have three parking spaces, plus the four homes will share an additional four stalls for guest parking.

Will the Braemar development negatively impact the environment?

No. Wedgewood commissioned an independent environmental assessment of the land that determined no environmentally sensitive area would be impacted by this development. The area is not designated as a park or protected space, and is not part of an “Evergreen Park Water Shed.”

Wildlife Habitat: No habitat for species at risk, raptor nests or wetlands was found on or near the site. DNV Environmental Protection staff supports these findings.

Vegetation: The environmental assessment confirmed that the parcel is predominantly composed of invasive species with some existing mature trees. An arborist further examined the small number of mature evergreen trees located on the parcel and identified that all but one are either hazardous or unsuitable for retention. Wedgewood will remove unhealthy, hazardous and invasive species and will create a green screen of native plants – providing a substantial buffer and privacy between the four new homes and the school.

Additionally, both reports identified a stand of trees suitable for retention on school district property located between Braemar and the proposed development site. Wedgewood will support conservation of this stand of trees through tree management and removal of invasive species.

Streamside and stormwater: Because of the distance of this parcel of land to the nearest stream, the DNV does not require a Streamside Protection Development permit. Onsite stormwater management systems will be incorporated into the development.

Will the development eliminate the natural forested area around the school?

No. The sale of this surplus property does not break up the current at-grade ring of green space that surrounds the school. Under the new proposal, NVSD would continue to maintain ownership of treed land between the school and the proposed development. The development also includes a further 18-foot buffer of landscaping creating privacy between the homes and the school and between the homes and the adjacent neighbours.

Will the development limit outdoor learning opportunities for children?

No. The proposed development site has never been used for outdoor education, and the NVSD has stated that the site is “out of bounds” for school purposes. Braemar enjoys a greenbelt of natural land surrounding most of the school, and there are designated natural areas already in place for outdoor learning.

How does the sale of Braemar’s surplus land benefit NVSD, Argyle Secondary and the North Shore community?

Proceeds from the \$2.4 million sale of the Braemar surplus land will help fund the necessary replacement of Argyle Secondary School. Argyle has been deemed high priority for seismic upgrade, and the replacement project will allow for additional enhancements to benefit students and the community.

As outlined above, Wedgewood is funding a number of environmental, traffic and child safety improvements at Braemar. Additionally, Wedgewood will provide a \$100,000 Community Amenity Contribution to be used as agreed upon by the DNV and community.

We are confident that the new application – submitted in mid-2015 – is stronger than ever as a result of extensive input from the District of North Vancouver, the North Vancouver School District, and community residents. Wedgewood’s new application addresses the previous issues raised and includes a variety of new features that will benefit Braemar School, its surrounding neighbourhood and the entire North Vancouver community. Please continue to provide feedback at wedgewoodventures@shaw.ca