

10.0 Architectural Design Rationale

The Design Brief and our Response

We start every design concept by asking our Client for a maximum of ten words that best describe their vision for the project. This is a mechanism we use to help explain some of the more emotional and subjective parts of a brief by distilling them down to one word. It is especially useful if the Client does not have English as their first language — the process sounds easy, but in reality often proves to be quite difficult. The Henson team produced the following words:

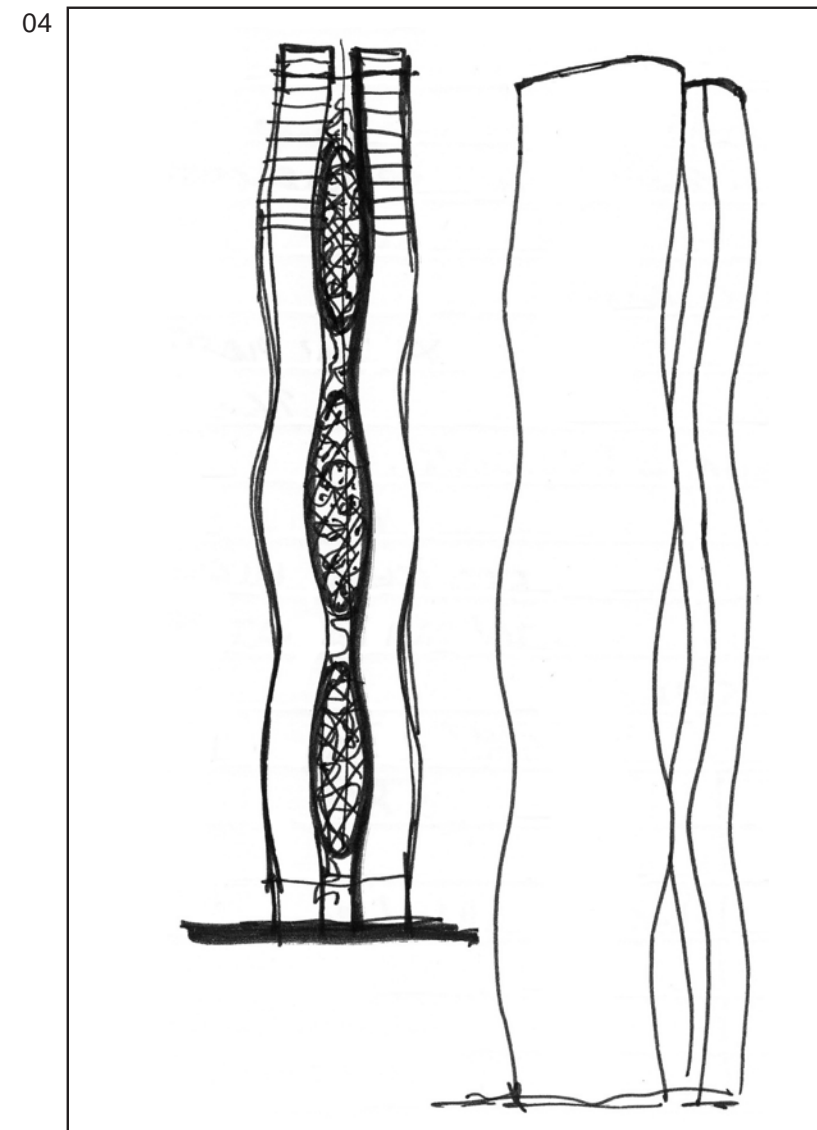
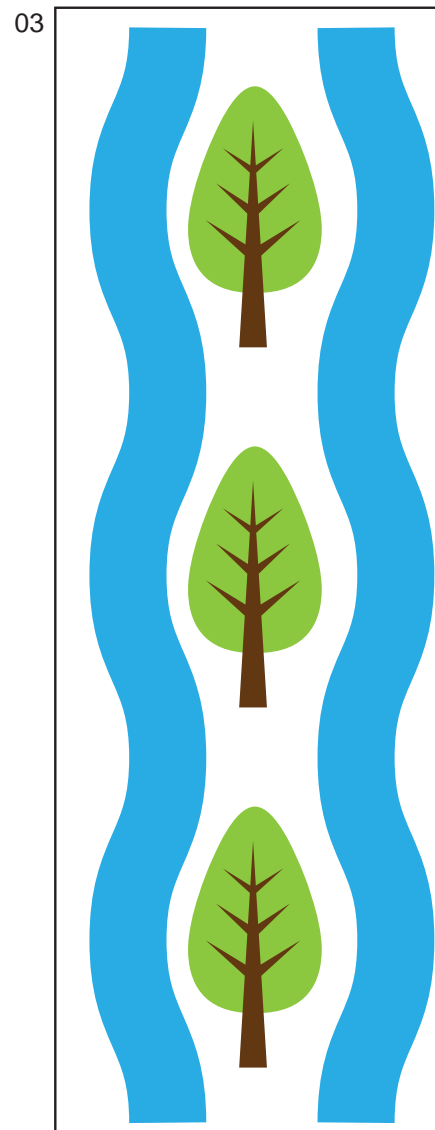
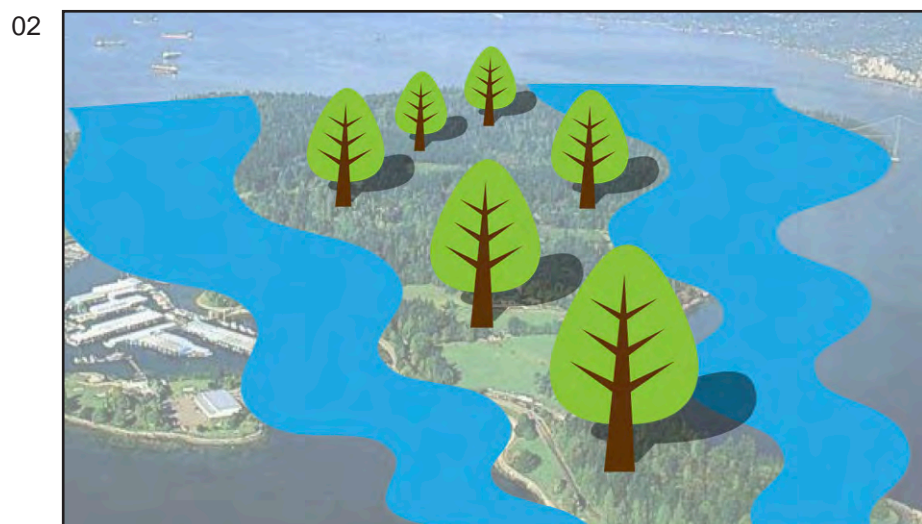
- Orthogonal – square plan
- Maximize – floor plate net to gross
- Curtain Wall – glass looking building
- Creative – more than just a square building, something the city wants
- Landmark – a signature building
- Quality – product
- Economic – but not in a way that prevents the creation of a landmark
- Passive – Built to Passive House standard, the tallest in the world

Having asked many clients over the years to undertake the same exercise, this is a fairly typical list that shows a desire for a quality landmark building that is simple to construct and economically efficient. The stand-out word is 'passive', and this Client's desire to create a prototype sixty storey passive house tower that will be the first of its kind in the world is truly admirable. The passive house brief will make the tower the most efficient structure of its type ever built and will quickly become a blueprint for future towers in cities around the world. The idea of a super-tall passive house tower is especially fitting in a city with such high environmental aspirations, as it will create great interest throughout the world and will become an environmental landmark for Vancouver.

It seems appropriate that the architecture of the tower lives up to its environmental credentials and that the building also has a recognizable form, making it a visual landmark as well.

Form Inspiration

We were inspired by the Peninsula, the Inlet, and the Green forests that still dominates this landmass, and wanted to develop a form that distilled the place into a few simple gestures. Two sinuous waved bands with greenery in between; a simple parti echoing the forest between two coastal edges. The resulting architectural form will provide a range of homes for a diverse population at varying income levels; along with places of encounter both at the street and in the amenities to help stimulate interaction and inclusion between residents. Careful attention to internal systems, cladding and connections, under supervision of Passive House certified professionals will make this a showcase of sustainable design; while its vertical forest hints at Vancouver's past and sets it as a Green icon for the City's future.



Parti

Sketch of Form