



Committee Report

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	April 28, 2022
Subject / Report No:	County Official Plan Amendment 42-03-540-OPA-14 / Report PDR-CW-16-22
Title:	Hutten Landscaping Co. Official Plan Amendment Merit Report
Prepared by:	Becky Hillyer
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Township of Georgian Bluffs
Status:	

Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-16-22 regarding a proposed County Official Plan Amendment be received; and
2. That the proposal proceeds to a Public Meeting to consider an amendment to the County of Grey Official Plan to re-designate a portion of the lands from the 'Rural' designation to the 'Space Extensive Commercial and Industrial - Site Specific' designation to allow for the establishment of a Landscaping Business on lands legally described as Part Lot 16, Concession 5, Registered Plan 16R10169 Part 3 (geographic Township of Derby), now the Township of Georgian Bluffs, provided the Township is prepared to hold a joint public meeting in consideration of the necessary zoning amendment requirements.

Executive Summary

A proposed County official plan amendment application (42-03-540-OPA-14) has been submitted to re-designate a portion of the subject lands to allow for the establishment of a landscaping business. The subject property is approximately 20.2 hectares (50 acres) in size and designated 'Rural' and 'Wetlands' in the County Official Plan. The purpose and effect of the proposed Official Plan Amendment would be to re-designate approximately 6.83 hectares of the 'Rural' portion of the subject lands to the 'Space Extensive Industrial and Commercial (site specific)' designation. No development would occur within the Provincially Significant Wetlands designation. The proposal includes two buildings (to be used for retail, office space, a shop, storage space and washroom facilities); 89 parking spaces; outdoor storage for landscaping supplies; two plant housing structures; and a stormwater management pond. Landscaping is

proposed throughout the redesignated portion, and one access point is proposed at the northeast corner of the subject lands, from Grey Road 18. A more thorough planning analysis will be presented in a future report following the public and agency review process.

Background and Discussion

The County has received an application from 2765746 Ontario Inc. (Hutten & Co. Land and Shore), represented by Kristine Loft, Loft Planning Inc., to amend the Grey County Official Plan as it applies to the subject lands. The amendment would re-designate approximately 6.83 hectares of the subject property from the 'Rural' designation to the 'Space Extensive Industrial and Commercial (site specific)' designation. The subject lands are approximately 20.2 hectares in extent, with approximately 14 ha designated 'Wetlands.'

The proposed development also requires an amendment to the Township of Georgian Bluffs zoning by-law, in addition to a formal Site Plan Approval Application, both of which have been submitted by the applicant concurrently with the subject County Official Plan Amendment.

The subject property is legally described as Part Lot 16, Concession 5, Registered Plan 16R10169 Part 3 (geographic Township of Derby), now in the Township of Georgian Bluffs. The lands are located along the west side of Grey Road 18, approximately 250 meters south of the Secondary Settlement Area of Springmount. Surrounding land uses include the Coca-Cola facility and Georgian Bluffs municipal office to the north, a contractor's yard to the east, as well as a mix of smaller residential lots, larger agricultural properties, and natural wetland areas. The subject property is currently vacant. This area of the Township is serviced via individual private services. Aerial images would suggest that no farming, development nor substantial changes to the landscape have occurred on the subject lands since at least 2006.

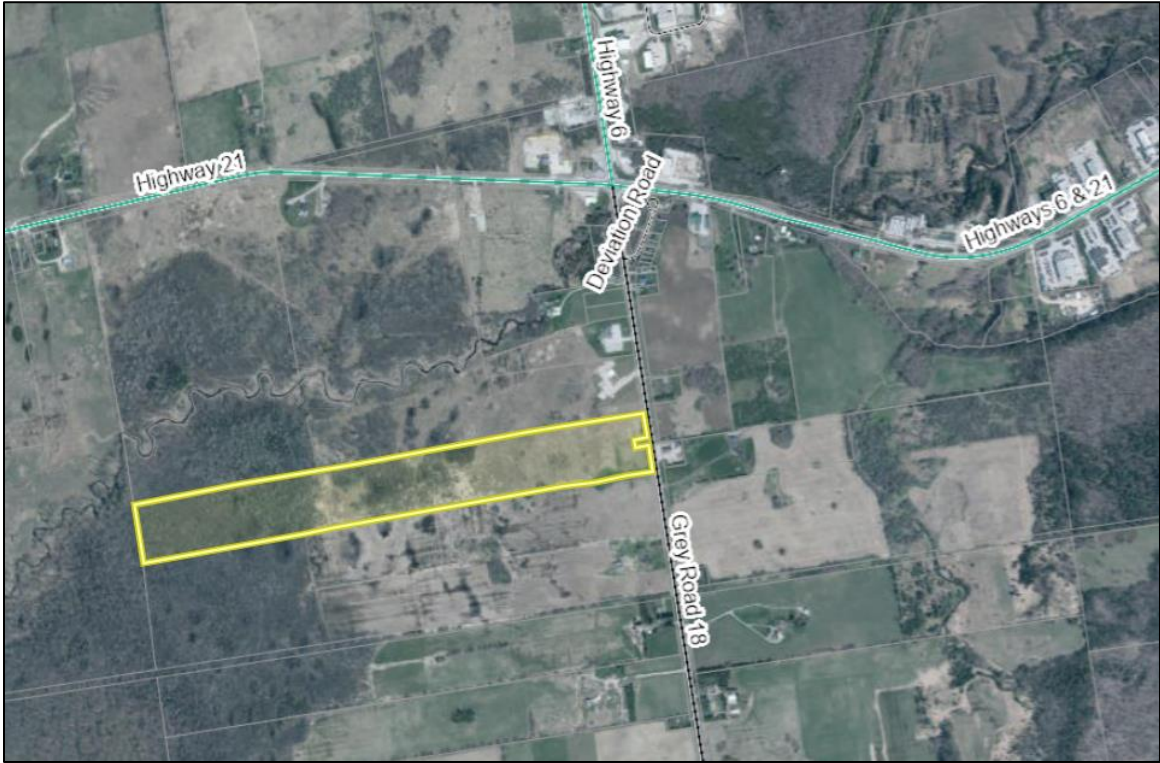
Map 1 below shows an aerial photo of the subject lands, while Map 2 shows the existing County Official Plan designation of the lands. It is anticipated that all or most of the lands currently designated 'Rural' (shown in white) would be redesignated to 'Space Extensive Commercial and Industrial.' Wetlands are shown in blue, Hazard Lands in green, the Niagara Escarpment Plan area in grey, and Secondary Settlement Area in orange.

A number of reports and studies have been submitted to support the application, including a Planning Justification Report, a Site Plan, architectural concept sketches, a Karst Assessment, Environmental Impact Study, Stormwater Management Report, and Letters of Opinion regarding proposed servicing requirements and mapped bedrock resources.

[Link to Background Materials](#)

A joint public meeting has been scheduled with Township of Georgian Bluffs for May 4th, 2022.

Map 1: Aerial Photo of the Subject Lands



Map 2: Current Official Plan Land Use Designations



Analysis of Planning Issues

In rendering decisions, planning authorities must have regard to matters of Provincial interest under the *Planning Act* and be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Decisions within the County must also conform to the County of Grey Official Plan and any Provincial plans in force and effect. The subject lands are not within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area.

A detailed planning analysis has not been undertaken at this stage. Following the public process, and agency comments, a thorough analysis and staff recommendation will be provided. Key Provincial and County policies have been flagged below for consideration.

Provincial Legislation – The Planning Act

Most notable to this proposed official plan amendment are the following clauses from the *Planning Act*, which will need to be considered.

- (a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions,
- (b) the protection of agricultural resources of the Province,
- (k) the adequate provision of employment opportunities,
- (m) the co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies,
- (o) the protection of public health and safety, and
- (p) the appropriate location of growth and development.

The above matters have been reviewed in the background reports accompanying this development. Following public and agency review, County staff will offer a thorough analysis of these matters.

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2020)

While Section 1.1.3 of the PPS notes that “settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development,” Sections 1.1.4 and 1.1.5 of the PPS provide guidance on land uses and economic growth within Rural Areas and Rural Lands within municipalities. These sections provide particular focus on encouraging “Development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels” and which is appropriate for rural infrastructure. Section 1.1.4.1 (f) notes that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by “promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities through goods and services...”.

Of further relevance, Section 2.1 of the PPS speaks to the importance of preserving Natural Heritage features and limiting development around wetlands, within fish habitats, etc. Section 3.1 encourages land use that considers Natural Hazards in relation to human safety and the potential implications of climate change.

County of Grey Official Plan

Similar to the PPS, the County Plan contains policies to direct the majority of new development to settlement areas, but does permit some new development within the Countryside, where such uses can be supported by rural services and are compatible with surrounding natural heritage features and existing rural land uses. While the Rural land-use designation permits a “contractor’s yard” and “nurseries” by-right, through pre-consultation discussions with the applicant, County staff suggested that the proposal may be beyond the scale of what would be considered within the standard Rural designation, and therefore suggested that an application to redesignate to Space Extensive Industrial and Commercial may be more appropriate in this instance.

As per Section 5.7 of the OP, the Space Extensive Industrial and Commercial designation outlines a number of criteria that would need to be considered with any new use proposed under this designation. Criteria include the need for an accessible site to serve their market; demand from highway traffic; and a requirement for a large parking/building and/or outdoor storage facilities typically beyond what would be feasible within a general industrial block.

It is noted that portions of the subject lands are part of a ‘Core Area’ as per Schedule C of the County’s Official Plan. Per Schedule A, the lands fall within a Wellhead Protection Zone and a potential Karst Area. Appendix B shows Significant Woodlands towards the western portion of the property, while Appendix E shows the potential for Bedrock across the eastern portion of the lands.

As noted above, following the public and agency processes, a thorough planning analysis and staff recommendation will be provided.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

The application will be processed in accordance with the Planning Act.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no anticipated financial, staffing, or legal considerations associated with the proposed official plan amendment, beyond those normally encountered in processing an amendment. The County has collected the requisite application fee and peer review deposit for this application.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: Planning, Transportation Services, and Economic Development Staff
- External: Township of Georgian Bluffs, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, required agencies under the *Planning Act*, and the public

Appendices and Attachments

None