

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Application for Official Plan Amendment OP 23-07-7 Thames Valley District School Board

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Community Planning

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Oxford County Council approve Application OP 23-07-7, submitted by the Thames Valley District School Board for lands described as Part Lot 8, Concession 12 (Dereham), Part 1 of 41R-6017, Town of Tillsonburg, to redesignate the site from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' to facilitate the development of two 4-storey apartments and up to 21 townhouse dwellings on the subject lands.
2. And further, that Council approve the attached Amendment No. 308 to the County of Oxford Official Plan, and that the necessary By-law to Approve Amendment No. 308 be raised.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of the Official Plan Amendment is to redesignate the subject lands from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' to permit the development of two 4-storey apartments and up to 21 townhouse dwellings on the subject lands.
- The proposal is consistent with the relevant policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the Official Plan and can be supported from a planning perspective.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

This application will be implemented in accordance with the relevant objectives, strategic initiatives and policies contained in the Official Plan.

Financial Impact

The approval of this application will have no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year’s budget.

Communications


In accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act, Notice of Complete Application regarding this proposal was provided to surrounding property owners on September 19, 2023, and Notice of Public Meeting was issued on October 23, 2023. At its meeting of November 13, 2023, Town of Tillsonburg Council deferred the proposal and requested that County staff hold a Public Open House to further explain the proposed development and answer questions regarding the proposal before further considering the applications. The Public Open House was held on November 30, 2023 and Town Council subsequently considered the matter at their regular meeting of January 23, 2024. As of the writing of this report, three letters of objection were received; they have been included as Attachment 6 to this report.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council’s vision of “Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future.” These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report support the following strategic goals:

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
<p>Goal 1.1 – 100% Housed</p> <p>Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being</p>		<p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p>

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Owner: Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB)
951 Leathrone Street, London, ON N5Z 3M7

Applicant: County of Oxford
21 Reeve Street, Woodstock, ON N4S 7Y3

Location:

The subject lands are legally identified as Part Lot 8, Concession 12 (Dereham), Part 1 of 41R-6017, Town of Tillsonburg, Town of Tillsonburg. The subject lands are located on the north side of the proposed extension of Dereham Drive, west of Quarter Town Line, and municipally known as 102 Dereham Drive, Tillsonburg.

County of Oxford Official Plan:

Existing:

Schedule "T-1"	Tillsonburg Land Use Plan	Residential
Schedule "T-2"	Tillsonburg Residential Density Plan	Low Density Residential

Proposed:

Schedule "T-2"	Tillsonburg Residential Density Plan	Medium Density Residential
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Town of Tillsonburg Zoning By-Law No. 3295:

Existing Zoning: Minor Institutional Zone (IN1)

Requested Zoning: Special Medium Density Residential Zone (RM-sp)

Proposal

The Official Plan Amendment application proposes to redesignate the subject lands from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' to facilitate the development of two 4-storey apartment buildings and up to 21 townhouse units. Attachments 3 and 4 to this report illustrate the proposed concept for the subject lands, which includes the following:

- Block 1: 4-storey apartment – up to 39 units served by 64 surface parking spaces;
- Block 2: 4-storey apartment building – up to 39 units served by 61 surface parking spaces; and,
- Block 3: Up to 21 townhouses on an internal, private access; served by 50 parking spaces.

The subject property is approximately 1.89 ha (4.66 ac) in area and is currently vacant. The lands were deemed surplus by the Thames Valley District School Board. Surrounding land uses include institutional and residential land uses to the south (Westfield Public School, single detached dwellings), and residential land uses to the east (single detached dwellings). The lands to the north and west of the subject property are part of the Victoria Wood Subdivision and are planned for residential uses, with a mix of low, medium and high density residential development. Lands abutting the subject property to the north comprise a storm water management block for the planned plan of subdivision.

A Transportation Impact Study (TIS) was prepared in support of the proposed development and concluded that the study area intersections are operating with acceptable levels of service and are forecast to operate with acceptable levels of service under 2028 background and total traffic conditions. The study included the forecasted traffic from the draft approved plan of subdivision (Victoria Wood) and the operation of the Westfield Public School.

Plate 1 – Location Map and Existing Zoning illustrates the location of the subject property and the existing zoning in the immediate vicinity.

Plate 2 – Aerial Map (2020), provides an aerial view of the subject lands.

Plate 3 – Applicant’s Sketch: Aerial Concept, provides the proposed development of the subject lands including the future extension of Dereham Drive.

Plate 4 – Applicant’s Drawings: Proposed Development Concepts (Blocks 1, 2, 3) provides the proposed concepts for each block.

Plate 5 – Victoria Wood Draft Plan illustrates the location of the subject lands relative to the Victoria Wood Subdivision to the west and north of the subject lands.

Comments

Provincial Policy Statement

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Under Section 3 of the Planning Act, where a municipality is exercising its authority affecting a planning matter, such decisions “shall be consistent with” all policy statements issued under the Act.

Section 1.1.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) directs that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term, accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment, institutional, recreation, park and open space and other uses to meet long-term needs.

Section 1.1.2 of the PPS directs that sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years, informed by provincial guidelines.

Section 1.1.3.4 directs that appropriate development standards shall be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment, and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.

Section 1.4, Housing, and specifically Subsection 1.4.3 states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

- Establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households;
- Permitting and facilitating all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents;
- Permitting and facilitating all types of residential intensification, including additional residential units and redevelopment, in accordance with policy 1.3.3.3;
- Directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs;
- Promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed; and,
- Establishing development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

Section 1.7.1 directs that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by, among other measures, encouraging residential uses to respond to dynamic market-based needs and providing necessary housing supply and range of housing options for a diverse workforce, optimizing the long-term availability and use of land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities.

Official Plan

The subject lands are designated 'Residential' according to the Land Use Plan for the Town of Tillsonburg, and 'Low Density Residential' according to the Residential Density Plan. The subject application proposes to redesignate the lands to facilitate medium density residential development.

Section 8.24 identifies that Low Density Residential areas are intended to provide a variety of low-rise, low density housing forms (e.g. single detached, semi-detached, duplex, converted dwellings, quadraplexes, townhouses and low-density cluster development). It is intended that there will be a mixing and integration of different forms of housing in these areas to achieve a low overall density of use.

The maximum net residential density for an individual development in the Low Density Residential area is 30 units per hectare (12 units per acre) and the minimum net residential density shall be 22 units per hectare (9 units per acre), and no building shall exceed three stories in height at street elevation.

Section 8.25 identifies that Medium Density Residential areas are lands that are primarily developed or planned for low to medium profile multiple unit development that exceeds densities established for Low Density Residential Districts. These areas are intended to include townhouses, medium density cluster development, converted dwellings and low-rise apartments. It is intended that there will be a mixing and integration of different forms of housing to achieve an overall medium density in these areas.

The maximum net residential density in the Medium Density Residential area is 62 units per hectare (25 units per acre) and no building shall exceed four storeys in height at street elevation. The proposed development would have a net residential density of approximately 53 units per hectare, which is within the maximum permitted density in Medium Density Residential areas.

When considering proposals to designate lands for medium density residential development, Town Council and County Council will be guided by the following site-specific criteria:

- The size, configuration and topography of the site is such that there is sufficient flexibility in site design to mitigate adverse effects on the amenities and character of any adjacent Low Density Residential area through adequate buffering and screening;
- The location of vehicular access points and the likely effects of traffic generated by the proposal on Town streets has been assessed and is acceptable;
- Adequate hard service capacity including water distribution, sanitary and storm sewers, power, and gas distribution facilities is or will be available to accommodate the proposed development;
- Off-street parking and outdoor amenity areas can be provided;
- The effect of the proposed development on environmental resources or the effect of environmental constraints on the proposed development will be addressed and mitigated as outlined in Section 3.2.

Compact urban form is supported in appropriate locations within Residential and Central Areas of the Town, subject to complying with the policies of the associated land use designations pertaining to the density, form and scale of residential development being proposed.

Agency Comments

The Town of Tillsonburg Engineering Services Department provided the following comments:

- If approved, site plan approval will be required.
- The Engineering Services Department has reviewed the submitted Traffic Impact Study and concurs with the findings.
- The Engineering Services Department has no concerns with the proposed applications.

Town of Tillsonburg Building Services provided the following comments:

- No comments/concerns from Building Services.

- By-Law Services notes the following concerns in this area related to Westfield Public School for consideration as it relates to the development of this parcel, future development of the subdivision and particularly the extension and design of Dereham Drive.
- Based on current use/patterns, vehicular traffic is busy before and after school (i.e. drop off and pick up).
- Determine if Westfield PS has plans for an addition or just portables based on projected population and the proposed subdivision.
- Suggest that Westfield PS parking lot is extended to the west along Dereham Drive to deal with before and after school parking pressures.
- Recommend the installation of a PXO for future Crossing Guard location which will need to be analyzed for proximity to the Quarter Town Line/Dereham Drive intersection and provide ample width of Dereham Dr.

Tillsonburg Hydro Inc. provided the following comments:

- There is an existing easement in favor of THI that will need to be adjusted as part of the property changes.
- There is an existing high voltage duct bank along the proposed right of way that will need to be relocated as per Town of Tillsonburg road cross sectional requirements.
- New Blocks 1, 2 & 3 will require easements for future high voltage and transformer infrastructure located on the property.
- THI will need to extend additional high voltage electrical feeders to the west limits of the Dereham Drive Road extension for future consideration of residential development.

Oxford County Public Works Department provided the following comments:

- No concerns with the proposed Zone change and Official Plan Amendment; further comments will be provided with the Site Plan Application.
- A capacity analysis will be completed for the site regarding sanitary and water requirements based on the FSR provided during Site Plan Application.

The Tillsonburg Affordable and Attainable Housing Committee reviewed the applications at their July 26, 2023 meeting and adopted the following resolution:

THAT the Affordable and Attainable Housing Committee has expressed concern with the volume of traffic in the Westfield School Area and have identified that the Westfield Surplus lands are not a conducive site for high density development due to safety and traffic concerns which will negatively impact this area. The Affordable and Attainable Housing Committee would encourage looking at housing models that would reduce the volume of traffic. Furthermore, the location of the Westfield property has no short-distance amenities and more ideal affordable locations should take into consideration the access to such amenities.

The Tillsonburg Economic Development Advisory Committee reviewed the applications and their August 15, 2023, meeting and adopted the following resolution:

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends deferral of this application until the results of the following items are known:

- Traffic Study
- Site-specific Traffic Study

- Transportation Study
- Oxford County Transportation Plan
- Town of Tillsonburg Transportation Plan

AND THAT the Committee has concerns with regards to congestion and safety due to the close proximity of the site to an elementary school and with the pending large residential development happening nearby in the near future.

Other circulated agencies, including the Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and Town of Tillsonburg Development Commissioner indicated they had no concerns with respect to the applications.

Town of Tillsonburg Council

Town of Tillsonburg Council recommended support of the proposed Official Plan Amendment and approved the proposed Zoning By-law amendment 'in principle' at the Town's regular meeting of Council on January 23, 2024.

Planning Analysis

The application to amend the Official Plan proposes to redesignate the lands from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' and rezone the lands from 'Minor Institutional Zone (IN1)' to 'Special Medium Density Residential Zone (RM-sp)'. As illustrated in Attachments 3 and 4, the proposal will facilitate the development of housing on the subject property in three blocks. The development on Blocks 1 and 2 would each consist of a 4-storey apartment building with up to 39 units, served by 64 parking spaces (Block 1) and 61 parking spaces (Block 2). Block 3 would consist of up to 21 townhouses served by 50 parking spaces.

Planning Staff are of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with and supports the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Specifically, the proposed development is an efficient use of land and municipal services within a settlement area, efficiently using existing infrastructure and resources. In addition, the development contributes to providing a range of housing types and densities for both the current and future residents of the Town of Tillsonburg and for the broader regional market area.

It is the opinion of Planning staff that the Official Plan criteria respecting the designation of 'Medium Density Residential' lands to provide for increased residential density have been satisfactorily addressed. The proposed net residential density of the subject lands is within the limits permitted in the 'Medium Density Residential' designation, and as per the policies in Section 8.5.2.1 of the Official Plan, the location of the subject lands is appropriate for the proposed uses. The surrounding residential uses are considered compatible with the residential uses proposed in these applications. The proposed residential uses will not only provide additional and new housing opportunities, but also provide a choice of housing tenure and type.

Staff are also of the opinion that, as per the criteria identified in Section 8.2.5 of the Official Plan, the proposed concept for the subject lands, illustrated in Attachment 4, adequately considers compatibility with the adjacent uses. Furthermore, that the size, configuration and topography of the subject lands is such that there is sufficient flexibility in site design(s) to mitigate potential

adverse effects on the amenities and character of any adjacent Low Density Residential areas (e.g. through setbacks, location of parking, buffers, and screening). Staff note that the lands immediately to the north of the subject lands in the Victoria Wood Subdivision, as illustrated in Attachment 5, will be used for storm water management purposes, providing an additional buffer between the proposed apartment on Block 1 of the subject lands and the low-density development within the adjacent Draft Plan of Subdivision. As illustrated in Attachment 4, each block of the proposed development has been designed to provide buffers between each block and between the three blocks and adjacent existing and future development (i.e. through the location of parking lots, driveways, amenity area). Details including, but not limited to, lot grading, access, stormwater management, landscaping and servicing will be addressed through the site plan approval process, to the satisfaction of the Town and County.

CONCLUSIONS

In light of the foregoing, Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the Official Plan respecting meeting the needs for housing options for current and future residents of the Town of Tillsonburg. As such, staff are satisfied that the applications can be given favourable consideration.

SIGNATURES

Report Author:

Original Signed By
Laurel Davies Snyder, RPP, MCIP
Development Planner

Departmental Approval:

Original Signed By
Gordon K. Hough, RPP
Director of Community Planning

Approved for submission:

Original Signed By
Benjamin R. Addley
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1	Plate 1, Location Map with Existing Zoning
Attachment 2	Plate 2, 2020 Aerial Map
Attachment 3	Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch: Aerial Concept
Attachment 4	Plate 4, Applicant's Drawings: Proposed Development Concepts (Blocks 1, 2, 3)
Attachment 5	Victoria Wood Draft Plan
Attachment 6	Letters of Objection
Attachment 7	Official Plan Amendment No. 308