

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Community Planning

Application for Official Plan Amendment OP 22-09-3 – Winzen Norwich Homes Ltd.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Oxford County Council approve Application No. OP 22-09-3, submitted by Girard Engineering on behalf of Norwich Winzen Homes Ltd. for lands described as Part of Lot 9, Concession 5 (North Norwich), Lot 109 and Part of Lots 108 & 110, Plan 226 in the Village of Norwich, to re-designate the subject lands from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' to facilitate the construction of 22 street fronting townhouses;
2. And further, that Council approve the attached Amendment No. 283 to the County of Oxford Official Plan;
3. And further, that the necessary by-law to approve Amendment No. 283 be raised.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Official Plan amendment proposes to re-designate the subject lands from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential' to facilitate the development of 22 street fronting townhouses on lands that have been draft approved for residential development.
- Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with the relevant policies of the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the County 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 impacts 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 June 22, 2022 and notice of public meeting was issued on July 25, 2022. At the time of writing this report, two letters have been received (Attachment 4), stating concerns with respect to lack of greenspace and the potential for future residents to trespass on private property, as well as concerns with the proposed increase in density which may impact the character of the existing neighbourhood and result in traffic issues.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
<i>WORKS WELL TOGETHER</i>	<i>WELL CONNECTED</i>	<i>SHAPES THE FUTURE</i>	<i>INFORMS & ENGAGES</i>	<i>PERFORMS & DELIVERS</i>	<i>POSITIVE IMPACT</i>
		3.ii.			

DISCUSSION

Background

Owners: Winzen Norwich Homes Ltd.
 30 Algje Avenue, Toronto ON, M8Z 5J8

Agent: Girard Engineering
 212 Main Street West, Otterville ON, N0J 1R0

Location:

The subject lands are described as Part of Lot 9, Concession 5 (North Norwich), Lot 109 and Part Lots 108 & 110, Plan 226 in the Township of Norwich. The subject lands are located on the west side of Dufferin Street, between Carman Street and Sunview Drive and are municipally known as 18 Dufferin Street in the Village of Norwich.

County of Oxford Official Plan:

Existing:	Schedule 'N-2'	Township of Norwich Land Use Plan	'Low Density Residential'
Proposed:	Schedule 'N-2'	Township of Norwich Land Use Plan	'Medium Density Residential'

Township of Norwich Zoning By-law 07-2003-Z:

Existing Zoning:	'Special Residential Type 2 Zone (R2-22)'
Proposed Zoning:	'Special Residential Type 3 Zone (R3-sp)'

Proposal:

The County of Oxford and the Township of Norwich have received applications for Official Plan amendment and zone change to facilitate the construction of 22 street fronting townhouse units on lands that have been draft approved for a residential plan of subdivision. It is proposed that the townhouse units will be accessed by one new local road and will be developed as part of a future phase of the draft approved plan of subdivision, which consists of semi-detached and single detached dwellings.

The first phase of the draft approved plan of subdivision was registered in 2006, with several extensions to the draft approval granted since that time. The lands subject to this application, being identified as Blocks 43 and 45 on Plate 3, are currently zoned to permit the development of street fronting townhouses, however, the current zoning also limits the density of development to not more than 15 units/ha (6 units/ac).

Review of the detailed engineered plans for the proposed subdivision indicate that the proposed density exceeds the density limits established in the Low Density Residential designation of the Official Plan, including those established through the site specific 'Special Residential Type 2 Zone (R2-2)' Zone. As such the applicant is now applying to increase the permitted density to facilitate the future construction of 22 street fronting townhouses. An additional request has been received to permit an increase to the maximum lot coverage allowance of the Township's Zoning By-law from 35% to 40% lot area.

The subject lands are approximately 0.97 ha (2.4 ac) in area and are currently vacant. Surrounding land uses are mainly comprised of low density residential uses, with lands planned for future single detached and semi-detached dwellings to the west, stormwater management facilities to the northwest and northeast of the subject lands, and Emily Stowe Public School to the immediate east.

Plate 1, Location Map with Existing Zoning, identifies the location of the subject lands, as well as the zoning of the lands within the surrounding area.

Plate 2, Aerial Map (2020 Air Photo), provides an aerial image of the subject lands and the surrounding area.

Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch, shows the proposed configuration of the lots to be subdivided.

Comments

2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

The policies of Section 1.1 of the PPS state 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. These policies also promote an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential uses to meet long-term needs. 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. Within settlement areas, sufficient land shall be made available through intensification and redevelopment.

Section 1.1.3 directs that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration is critical to the long-term economic prosperity of our communities and it is in the interest of all communities to use land and resources wisely. Land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities; and, land use patterns within settlement areas shall also be based on a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment.

Section 1.1.3.3 further states that planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for transit-supportive development, accommodating a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.

Section 1.4.3 directs that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs 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 housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents;
- all types of residential intensification, including additional residential units;
- directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available;
- promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities and support the use of active transportation; 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 1.6.6.2 also states that intensification and redevelopment within settlement areas on existing municipal sewage and water services should be promoted, wherever feasible.

Official Plan

The subject lands are located within the Village of Norwich, which is identified as a 'Serviced Village' according to Schedule 'C-3', County of Oxford Settlement Strategy Plan, as contained in the Official Plan. The lands are designated 'Low Density Residential' according to Schedule "N-2", Village of Norwich Land Use Plan.

Serviced Villages are settlements characterized by a broad range of uses and activities which have been developed or are proposed for development on centralized water and wastewater facilities and new development in the Serviced Village designation shall generally be fully serviced by both water and wastewater facilities.

According to Section 2.1.1 (Growth Management), in order to manage growth, it is a strategic initiative of the Official Plan to ensure designated growth settlements are developed with efficient land use patterns and densities to minimize land consumption, to control infrastructure costs, and to limit growth pressure in rural areas. Further, Section 4.1 (Strategic Approach) states that the County shall aim to ensure existing designated land supplies and infrastructure will be efficiently utilized, including achievement of intensification targets, prior to designating new areas for growth.

In recognition of the importance of efficient land use and development patterns, Section 2.1.1 of the Official Plan directs that County Council shall proactively plan, co-ordinate and stage growth and the provision of public service facilities and infrastructure to sustain financial well-being over the long-term.

The application proposes to re-designate Blocks 43 and 45 of the current draft approved plan of subdivision from 'Low Density Residential' to 'Medium Density Residential'. Medium Density Residential areas are those lands within the Serviced Village designation that are primarily developed or planned for low profile multiple unit development that exceed densities established in Low Density areas. Permitted uses in the Medium Density Residential areas include all forms of townhouse development, cluster houses, converted dwellings, and low rise apartment buildings.

The maximum net residential density for development in the Medium Density Residential designation within a Serviced Village will typically exceed 22 units per hectare (9 units per acre) to a maximum of 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre) and no building shall exceed four (4) stories in height.

According to Section 6.2.3 of the Official Plan, the following locational criteria are to be satisfied when considering a designation of land for Medium Density Residential use:

- sites will abut major roads, County Roads or Provincial Highways or will be situated such that movements from the site do not flow through any adjoining Low Density Residential Area;
- sites will be in close proximity to community serving facilities such as schools, shopping facilities; and, recreational and open space areas which serve as community activity nodes.

The criteria for the evaluation of a proposed re-designation to Medium Density Residential will also include the following:

- the proposal will be fully serviced by centralized water supply, wastewater treatment facilities and storm sewers, and power and gas distribution facilities will be available to accommodate the proposed development;
- stormwater run-off from the proposal will be adequately controlled in accordance with the stormwater management policies of Section 3.2.7.2.1 and will not negatively affect adjacent properties;
- the size, configuration and topography of the site is such that there is sufficient flexibility in site design to mitigate adverse impacts on the amenities and character of any adjacent Low Density Residential areas through adequate buffering and screening;
- the location of vehicular access points and the likely impacts of traffic generated by the proposal on adjacent streets has been assessed and is acceptable;
- adequate off-street parking and outdoor amenity areas can be provided;
- the availability of, and proximity to, existing or proposed services and amenities such as schools, leisure facilities and parks to serve the new development;
- 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

In addition, all proposals for Medium Density Residential will be subject to site plan control.

Zoning By-law

The subject lands are currently zoned 'Special Residential Type 2 Zone (R2-2)' which permits the proposed street fronting townhouses, but limits the density of development to 15 units/ha (6 units/ac). The 'R2-2' zone also provides a minimum lot area requirement of 150 m² (1,614.6 ft²) per dwelling unit or 240 m² (2,583.4 ft²) for an end unit, and requires a minimum lot area of 420 m² (4,521 ft²) for a corner lot. The 'R2-2' zone also requires a minimum 8 m (26.2 ft) lot frontage (or 11 m (36.1 ft) for an end unit and 18 m (59.1 ft) for a corner lot), and requires a minimum 3 m interior side yard width for end dwelling units.

The applicant is proposing to rezone Blocks 43 and 45 of the approved draft plan from 'R2-2' to 'Special Residential Type 3 Zone (R3-sp)' to facilitate the proposed 22 street fronting townhouses which will result in an overall net density of 23 units/ha (10 units/ac). A site specific provision has also been requested to permit an increase to the maximum lot coverage allowance for the proposed street fronting townhouses.

The 'R3' zone permits a range of medium density residential dwelling types, including street fronting townhouses, and establishes minimum lot frontage and lot area standards in-keeping with the 'R2-2' zone, as outlined above. The 'R3' zone also permits a maximum lot coverage of 35% of lot area and a minimum gross floor area of 70 m² (753.5 ft²) per dwelling unit.

Based on the conceptual plan submitted by the applicant, the future lots on Blocks 43 and 45 will conform to the above noted development standards, excepting the maximum coverage allowance.

Agency Comments

Canada Post has commented that the development will be serviced by centralized community mail boxes. It is noted that the details for the establishment of the centralized community mail boxes will be arranged as a final condition of the associated application for subdivision for the subject lands.

The Township of Norwich Building Department has provided the following comments:

- with respect to the easterly property line for Block 43, notwithstanding the required 3m (9.8 ft) interior side yard width requirement for end units, the presence of the retaining wall and storm easement may result in the need for an increased setback to ensure conformance with the Ontario Building Code requirements and the servicing easement provisions;
- the proposed street fronting townhouses will be required to have two parking spaces per unit;
- the total lot coverage allowance will include covered decks and residential accessory structures, but other structures such as engineered retaining walls should be excluded for the purpose of determining landscaped open space requirements;
- the applicant should be advised that the minimum percentage of landscaped open space required on lands zoned 'R3' is 30% lot area;
- the proposed development will be subject to the Township's site plan control process prior to the issuance of a building permit for street fronting townhouses, and;
- the proposed development does not take additional residential units into account and it should be understood that the each unit would constitute a single unit of occupancy.

The Long Point Region Conservation Authority, the County of Oxford Public Works Department, and the Township of Norwich Director of Fire Services have indicated they have no comments or concerns regarding the proposal.

Township of Norwich Council

At their regular meeting of August 9, 2022, the Council of the Township of Norwich recommended support of the proposed Official Plan amendment, and deferred decision on the requested zone change application, pending the decision by Oxford County Council with respect to the requested Official Plan amendment.

Planning Analysis

The applications for Official Plan amendment and zone change have been submitted to facilitate the development of 22 street fronting townhouse units on two blocks in an existing draft approved plan of subdivision, which are to be developed as part of a future phase of the proposed subdivision.

Planning staff are of the opinion that, generally, the proposal is consistent with the relevant policies of the Provincial Policy Statement. Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed development will assist in achieving an appropriate range and mix of housing types to meet the long-term needs of the Township, and the proposal represents appropriate intensification of existing underutilized lands in a designated settlement area that will make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public services in the area.

With respect to the criteria outlined in the Official Plan, it is recognized that the subject lands are not immediately abutting a major road, but they are situated in close proximity to existing medium density residential uses, and the proposed increase in density exceeds that permitted within the Low Density designation by only one unit. As such, staff are of the opinion that the proposed increase in density is appropriate and will have minimal impact on traffic volumes in the neighbourhood. Further to this, the proposed street fronting townhouses will have immediate access to Dufferin Street, without requiring traffic to utilize the remainder of the subdivision lands for access and no concerns were raised from the Township of Norwich with respect to traffic volumes. The subject lands are also located in close proximity to existing public service facilities within the Village of Norwich, including Emily Stowe Public School, which is located to the immediate east of the property.

Planning staff are also satisfied that the proposal, which will be serviced by centralized municipal water and wastewater services, will comply with the development criteria outlined in the Official Plan and a detailed engineering review has been completed to the satisfaction of the Township.

Further, staff are of the opinion that the moderate increase in density (beyond what would be permitted in the Low Density Residential designation) will have minimal impact on the character of the existing neighbourhood (which consists of recently constructed single detached dwellings and lands planned for future development) and a review of the detailed engineered design has been undertaken to the satisfaction of the Township and the County of Oxford. Additionally, the Township's site plan approval process will apply to this development prior to the issuance of any future building permits to address design considerations such as buffering, screening and landscaping.

Conclusions

In light of the foregoing, Planning staff are recommending in support of the application for Official Plan amendment, as the development of the subject lands for medium density residential purposes is generally consistent with the policy direction of the Provincial Policy Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives the Official Plan.

SIGNATURES

Report Author:

Original Signed By

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Senior Planner

Departmental Approval:

Original Signed By

Gordon K. Hough, RPP
Director of Community Planning

Approved for submission:

Original Signed By

Benjamin R. Addley
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1	Plate 1, Location Map with Existing Zoning
Attachment 2	Plate 2, Aerial Map (2020 Air Photo)
Attachment 3	Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch
Attachment 4	Correspondence Received
Attachment 5	Official Plan Amendment No. 283