



Planning Advisory Committee Report

To: To the Chair and Members of the Planning Advisory Committee

From: Ruchika Angrish, Senior Planner
Bobby Gauthier, Project Manager - WSP

Date: November 7, 2017

Report: PA-17-50

Subject: Official Plan Amendment Application OPA-A16-RA and Addendum to the St. George Area Study

Purpose: **Public Information Report** to amend the Council adopted St. George Area Study and amend the Official Plan (Amendment no. 8) to implement those policies.

Recommendation

That, Application OPA-A16 and addendum to the St. George Area Study from WSP on behalf of County of Brant, **BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION.**

Key Strategic Priority

4.1 To utilize the Community Visioning input to develop and implement a long term growth strategy

4.2 To undertake specific actions that elevate the effectiveness of the working relationship within Council, between Council and Staff and the level of customer service we provide to those we serve

Financial Considerations

None

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information about the proposed addendum report to the St. George Area Study and the proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 8. The Official Plan Amendment was initially brought forward in draft to the Committee on June 7, 2016 for public consultation purposes. The original OPA application was largely technical in nature and intended to implement the findings of the Area Study, which was endorsed by Council on May 24, 2014. A need for an addendum report to the adopted St. George Area Study was identified following further staff discussions. The proposed Official Plan Amendment has been updated and the new draft Addendum Report are attached to this report.

The Addendum Report to the Area Study and the revised OPA are subject to consultation with County departments, members of the public, landowners and other agencies. This report is to be received for information purposes, after allowing feedback from both Committee and members of the public.

Background

Staff report PA-15-65 with respect to the initiation of the Official Plan Amendment was presented on December 1, 2015. WSP Canada Group Limited (formerly MMM Group) was hired to complete the OPA exercise.

On June 7, 2016, a public information report PA-16-30 with details on the proposed amendment was presented to the Planning Advisory Committee.

Numerous staff discussions have taken place to determine best approach for the orderly development of St. George and to set out clearer expectations for road networks, trails/parks, land use and densities, phasing/staging of development and infrastructure, and other matters. The concepts for development including land uses, transportation corridors, recreational uses, infrastructure phasing and strategies were not included in the Area Study recommendations. On October 3, 2017, a report to Planning Advisory Committee with a change in scope of work was presented. Staff recommended an addendum to the St. George Area Study which will include the missing details noted above, followed by an update to the proposed Official Plan Amendment with the addendum attached as a new appendix in the Official Plan.

Report

The St. George Area Study was adopted by Council on May 24, 2014. One of the key recommendations of the 2014 St. George Area Study was to initiate an OPA to implement the proposed servicing strategy in St. George. There is a limitation on the amount of land and population that can be provided with full County services over the horizon of the Official Plan. This is due to an environmental limit on the ability of Fairchild Creek to assimilate wastewater effluent. Accordingly, there is a need to delineate the limited area that can be developed for urban uses. The 2014 Area Study accordingly recommended that the Official Plan be amended to implement this servicing strategy and consider other opportunities to update the policy framework for managing growth in St. George.

Note that separate Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) processes are currently underway to advance the water and wastewater servicing strategy as recommended in the Area Study. Through the Municipal Class EA processes, long-term servicing capacity will be better understood. The 2014 Area Study provided an estimate of potential servicing capacity and population, but this will need to be confirmed through further analysis.

Preliminary consultation with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of Environmental and Climate Change has taken place and initial comments have been incorporated into this draft OPA. Subsequent written comments on this revised draft may be forthcoming from these agencies.

Proposal

The proposal comprises of an addendum to the St. George Area Study along with an Official Plan Amendment to incorporate those policies and appendices.

The Area Study Addendum Report provides a comprehensive analysis and rationale for preparing an Official Plan Amendment for St. George. The various issues, opportunities and

options and needs for policy changes are based principally upon the recommendations of the 2014 Area Study, which contemplated an Official Plan Amendment to provide a servicing strategy, along with providing guidance on other specific planning issues. Further, the Addendum Report considers recently updated information, such as updated development application information and more recent studies and plans that are applicable to St. George. In particular, it is noted that the 2014 Area Study was prepared largely as a technical study by the three landowners. These three landowners only represented a portion of lands that could be developed in St. George. Since completing the Area Study in 2014, other landowners have brought forward development proposals, and the number of proposed units has significantly increased. There has therefore been a need to more comprehensively understand proposed and potential development in St. George and develop a policy framework that comprehensively manages growth and development in a manner that is fiscally responsible, appropriately serviced/phased, and is generally desirable for the growth and development of the community. This will help to provide better guidance on the implementation of phasing and timing of development, provision of a coordinated road network, the logical extension of services, development of trails, and other matters.

In summary, the proposed Area Study Addendum Report and the OPA address the following key issues and opportunities:

1. **Identification of Planning Principles and Objectives:** It is beneficial to identify the key principles and objectives of the specific policy framework for St. George, to clearly articulate what the proposed policies are intended to achieve. Some of the key principles identified include:
 - a. Ensuring that growth and development is fiscally responsible, and that the County's financial interests are protected and that the appropriate financial mechanisms are in place, such as development charges and cost sharing agreements.
 - b. Ensuring that development is logical, contiguous with the existing community and represents an appropriate and efficient extension of services.
 - c. Providing for an appropriate mix of land uses as well as a mix of unit types.
 - d. Ensuring that the core area of St. George continues to be revitalized.
 - e. Ensuring that development is attractive and compatible with the existing community.
 - f. Providing for an efficient and well-connected transportation network that is based upon a comprehensive plan for the community.
 - g. Providing for trail connectivity and active transportation connections to capitalize on St. George's compact form and natural features.
2. **Delineation of Primary and Secondary Urban Settlement Boundaries:** Under the current Official Plan, the entirety of the St. George Settlement Area is designated as a Primary Urban Settlement Area. The proposed OPA divides St. George into a Primary Urban Settlement Area and a Secondary Urban Settlement Area. The Primary Urban Settlement Area includes the existing fully serviced portion of St. George, as well as lands designated for future Urban Residential uses. The Secondary Urban Settlement Area will include the designated Employment area, lands designated Suburban Residential and lands designated for Parks and Recreation and General Commercial uses, all of which are currently either privately serviced or partially serviced (County water and private septic systems).

The rationale for this proposed modification to the Settlement Area is based on the recommendations of the St. George Area Study, which was approved in 2014. The study concluded that there is a fundamental limit to the provision of full County

wastewater services, due to the limitation on the assimilative capacity of Fairchild Creek (i.e., the ability of the Creek to assimilate wastewater effluent). Accordingly, there is a limit to the amount of land that can be utilized for urban development. The Primary Urban Settlement Area is now limited to those lands that will be able to be developed for urban uses under the servicing strategy as recommended in the St. George Area Study. Development of the remaining lands within the Secondary Urban Settlement Area will be in accordance with the policies of the Official Plan.

3. **Growth Management Policies for the St. George Primary Urban Settlement Area (Phasing and Infrastructure Financing):** A range of policies are proposed to ensure that development is logical, contiguous and that it is appropriately phased and serviced. The policies require that developers join the landowners group and participate in cost sharing agreements to ensure the equitable and appropriate distribution of infrastructure costs. Further, the County may require the preparation of Phasing Plans as part of development applications. Policies are proposed to guide the implementation of phasing plans to ensure the logical extension of services and to manage the rate of development in association with market demand.
4. **Phasing Map (refer to Appendix 2):** An overall community phasing map is proposed in Appendix 2 to provide a conceptual illustration of how development could be phased in a manner that supports a logical extension of services and provides for a contiguous and efficient development pattern.
5. **Servicing Allocation:** The 2014 Area Study contemplated the provision of servicing allocation to accommodate a certain amount of infill and intensification. Accordingly, the OPA proposes to ensure that a percentage of servicing capacity be made available to support some intensification and infill development as well as mixed use development, in addition to providing allocation for greenfield development. This policy would be implemented through the County's servicing allocation policies.
6. **Housing Mix Target:** To help support achievement of density requirements, the proposed OPA identifies a target for an overall mix of housing types (e.g., single detached dwellings, townhouses and multiple units), that is based on the housing mix proposed in recent major development proposals. The intent is that this target would be used for monitoring purposes to ensure that an appropriate minimum density is being achieved.
7. **Community Design:** Additional policies are proposed to establish community design criteria, to ensure that development is desirable, compatible and fits within the character of the community. The County may require community design guidelines as a component of a development application, which would be evaluated against the design policies that are outlined in the proposed OPA.
8. **Designation change from Urban Residential to Suburban Residential for lands west of Trillium Lane and North of German School Road:** Lands on the west side of Trillium Lane and located north of German School Road are currently designated for Urban Residential Uses. As these lands are located outside of the new Primary Urban Settlement Boundary described previously, there is a need to re-designate the lands as Suburban Residential.
9. **New Site Specific Policy Area (SSPA) 22:** A new SSPA is proposed to apply to lands designated Employment in the Secondary Urban Settlement Area. The purpose of the SSPA is to inform landowners that full services are not available for these lands, but

that the lands are serviced by private septic systems. Accordingly, permitted uses are limited to “dry” uses where there will be limited amounts of wastewater produced.

10. **Designation change from Urban Residential to Mixed Use for lands north of Highway No. 5 in the Primary Urban Settlement Area, and new Site Specific Policy Area 23:** A new Mixed Use area has been proposed on the north side of Highway 5. This requires a change in land use designation from Urban Residential to Mixed Use. The SSPA is intended to ensure that any new commercial uses established on the site will not negatively impact Downtown St. George through the completion of a required Retail Market Impact Study.
11. **Transportation (refer to new Schedule B-1):** The proposed transportation policies of the Official Plan seek to guide the development of an efficient and well-coordinated transportation network through the community. This includes providing more guidance regarding the location of collector roads. A future potential connection is proposed at the north end of the County to ensure that a long-term connection can be achieved and will be planned for. The OPA also integrates proposed upgrades to roadway classifications.
12. **Trails Map (refer to new Appendix 3):** Generally the intent of the proposed policies is to ensure the development of an appropriate trail network that best provides for pedestrian connectivity, and where possible, provides passive recreational access to natural heritage corridors throughout the community. Appendix 3 identifies a proposed trail map which identifies these trail opportunities.
13. **Natural Heritage Mapping Updates:** A Natural Heritage Study was completed in association with the St. George Area Study. Schedule C-2 – Natural Heritage System and Features in St. George has been updated to reflect the findings of the Natural Heritage Study. Development will continue to be subject to the policies of the Official Plan with respect to natural heritage protection (e.g., the requirement to complete an Environmental Impact Study in association with a development application, as applicable).
14. **Propane facility hazard distance:** The Addendum Report and proposed policies recognize that there are existing propane storage facilities in St. George, and that development applications will need to be circulated to propane operators.
15. **Other Housekeeping Amendments:** Other minor modifications to the Official Plan text are included in the OPA to recognize that St. George is delineated as both a Primary and Secondary Urban Settlement Area, and to identify the newly added schedules.

Location

The proposed OPA affects the entire Settlement Area of St. George.

Area Land Uses

The St. George Settlement Area consists of a mix of different land uses. The historic core of the community consists of a mix of commercial, residential, institutional and other uses. The remainder of the existing or built-up portion of the community consists of principally low density residential uses, along with some limited commercial and other recreational and institutional uses. Lands fronting on German School Road, Trillium Lane, Brant Road and Highway #5 include single detached dwellings on private services or partial services on relatively large lots. There is also a highway commercial area consisting of existing

commercial uses fronting on Highway #24/Brant Road. An industrial/business park is located to the east of Highway #24/Brant Road and south of Highway #5. Existing employment uses in this area are partially serviced. Lands to the south of the business park, north of Highway #5 are occupied by a golf course/country club. The remainder of the St. George Settlement Area consists of agricultural and open space uses.

Interdepartmental Considerations

The application has been circulated to the following departments and agencies for comments. Their comments will be included in a future staff report to PAC for consideration;

- Development Engineering Review Division
- Public Works
- Building Division
- Zoning Administrator
- Economic Development
- Community Services
- Treasury Division
- Legal Division
- Fire Department
- Grand River Conservation Authority
- Forestry
- Energy Plus Inc.
- Hydro One
- Bell
- Brant Heritage Committee
- Canada Post
- Union Gas
- Six Nation/New Credit
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA)
- Ministry of Transportation

Public Consideration

Any comments received after the generation of this report will be attached to the addendum for Committee's consideration.

Summary and Next Steps

The intent of the proposed Area Study Addendum and the OPA is to provide for a policy framework for the orderly development of St. George. The OPA proposes a solution in which St. George is divided into a Primary Urban Settlement Area and a Secondary Urban Settlement Area. Additionally, supportive policies are proposed to ensure the orderly and fiscally responsible development of the Urban Residential areas. Additional changes are proposed to implement other recommendations of the Area Study and other policy matters as identified in the Addendum Report. The draft reports and by-laws are attached for Committee's consideration.

Next steps will include receiving feedback on the Area Study Addendum Report and the Draft OPA. The date to consider the Committee Report with recommendations has not been scheduled at this time.

Respectfully Submitted,



RUCHIKA ANGRISH, MCIP, RPP
SENIOR PLANNER



BOBBY GAUTHIER, MCIP, RPP
PROJECT MANAGER – WSP

Attachments

1. Aerial Photo
2. Draft Area Study Addendum Report
3. Draft Official Plan Amendment and Proposed Mapping

Copy to:

1. Heather Boyd, Clerk Council Committee Services
2. Rob Trotter, Director of Planning
3. Mark S. Pomponi, General Manager of Development Services
4. Jennifer Mayhew, Planning Administrative Assistant
5. WSP Canada Group Limited

File # St George OPA-A-16-RA

In adopting this report, is a bylaw or agreement required?

By-law required (Yes-at a later date)

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk (No)

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? (No)