



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: Thursday, October 14, 2021
Subject: County Official Plan Review – OPA 119 County Growth Structure



PLANWELL

1.0 Purpose

This report provides an overview of a draft Official Plan Amendment for a revised County Growth Structure. This is the first Amendment of the County’s phased municipal comprehensive review.

2.0 Background

When the County launched the Official Plan Review in September 2019 (report PD2019-17), staff kept the option open to do phased official plan amendments to complete the work if there were shifting Provincial, County and local priorities. This has been the case. Since that time, the Province has released the following major growth-related initiatives:

- Amending the 2019 Growth Plan and extending the planning horizon to 2051;
- New land needs assessment methodology;
- Amending the Provincial Policy Statement; and
- Proposing a major Greenbelt Plan expansion into Wellington.

Our consultants, Watson & Associates, have prepared a “Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations” in keeping with the amended Growth Plan and new methodology. In it, Watson recommends changes to the County structure (including a revised settlement area hierarchy) and the proposed Amendment implements that work. The Amendment also addresses County and local priorities to ensure that Puslinch remains a stable community into the future.

3.0 Purpose of the Official Plan Amendment

The purpose of Official Plan Amendment 119 (OPA 119) is to:

- Add new policies for complete communities;
- Revise the County Growth Structure and settlement hierarchy based on servicing;
- Add new policies for a Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch;
- Recognize the existing historic rural settlement of Puslinch as a Hamlet; and
- Other technical and formatting changes.

4.0 Main Changes to Official Plan

4.1 Complete Communities

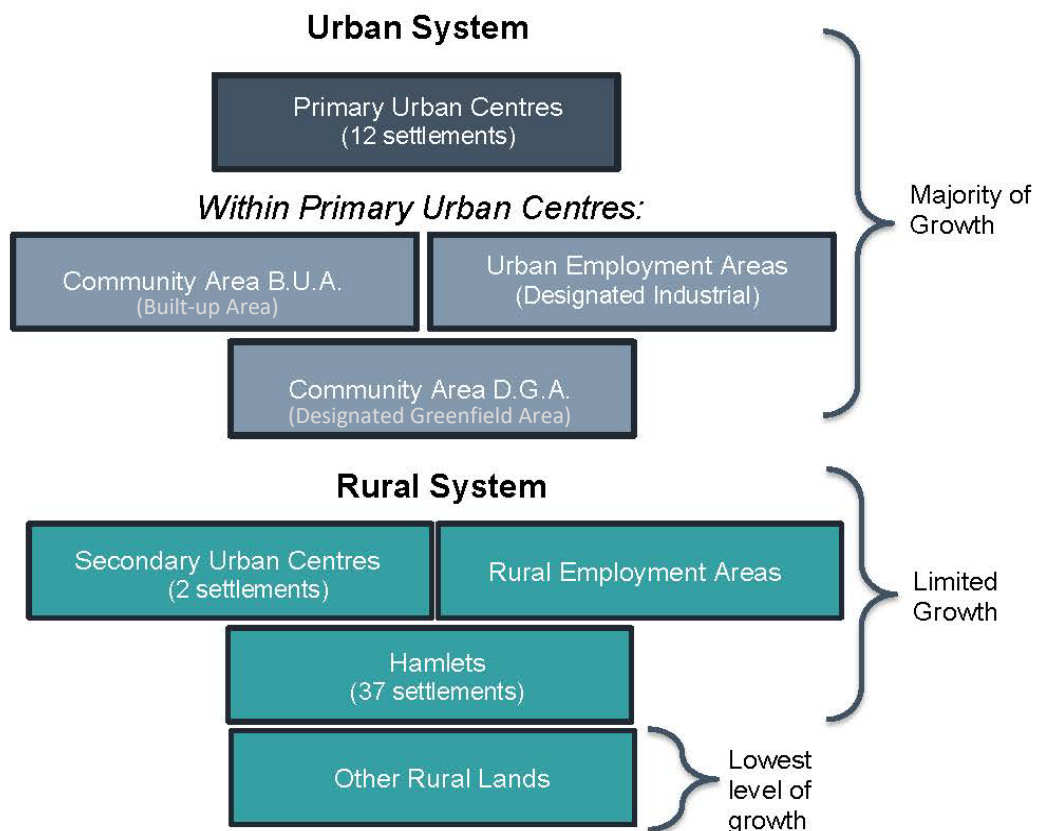
One of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to support the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living to meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime. The draft amendment introduces complete communities as a key planning concept and objective of the Official Plan.

4.2 Growth Structure

Structural changes to the Urban System and Rural System are needed to reflect that privately serviced urban centres and hamlets in Wellington meet the definition of a rural settlement in the Growth Plan. There are 14 urban centres and 37 hamlets designated and delineated in the Official Plan. All are currently included in the Urban System. The growth structure recommended by the Phase 1 MCR Report and reflected in OPA 119 is shown below.

Figure 1 County Growth Structure and Settlement Area Hierarchy

Source: Watson & Associates



The main changes to the Official Plan that are needed to support the above County Growth Structure include the following:

Main Changes	Reason for Change
Urban Centres → Primary Urban Centres	
Re-classify 12 urban centres with existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems as “primary urban centres” and keep them in the Urban System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to distinguish serviced from unserved urban centres to recognize Provincial Growth Plan requirement that majority of forecast growth to be allocated to areas with water and wastewater servicing
Urban Centres → Secondary Urban Centres	
Re-classify 2 urban centres without municipal services (Aberfoyle and Morriston) as “secondary urban centres” and move them to the Rural System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to distinguish serviced from unserved urban centres to recognize Provincial Growth Plan requirement that growth be limited in areas without water and wastewater servicing retain the “urban centre” status to recognize importance as community hubs
Hamlets	
Continue to recognize existing hamlets, but move them to the Rural System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hamlets are an integral component of the County’s rural area
Rural Settlement Areas – Outside Greenbelt Area	
Establish that secondary urban centres and Hamlets will constitute rural settlement areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to recognize Provincial Growth Plan definition of rural settlements, which are existing hamlets or similar existing small settlement areas long-established and identified in official plans
Rural Settlement Areas – Inside Greenbelt Area	
Establish that hamlets, but not secondary urban centres are considered rural settlement areas in the Greenbelt Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to allow for Morriston to continue to be considered a Town/Village in the Greenbelt

In addition to the above, staff notes that the Official Plan currently contains policy 6.4.7 which provides for limited residential infilling in unmapped rural settlements in prime agricultural and secondary agricultural areas:

“Rural settlements are existing small communities that form part of the rural fabric of Wellington. These settlements are primarily small clusters of housing with occasional commercial, industrial or institutional uses. These areas are not designated on Schedule “A” and are not expected to grow but they may be recognized in the zoning by-law and limited residential infilling may be allowed.”

This policy is proposed to be removed in the Amendment because:

- it does not conform with the Provincial Policy Statement which prohibits lot creation for new residences in the prime agricultural area;
- it isn't necessary in the secondary agricultural area as current policies provide for residential lot creation (subject to criteria) which isn't limited to infilling; and
- the revised County Growth Structure supports hamlets and secondary urban centres as rural settlement areas.

4.3 Regionally Significant Economic Development Area

In May 2021, County Council approved submission of a request to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for a Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) in Puslinch prior to finalization of a boundary for Greenbelt Plan expansion (report PD2021-17). Staff have had meetings with Provincial staff and we appreciate these discussions. However, the economic stability of Puslinch is important to the County as a whole for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- the Township carries a 15% share of the County tax levy, but only an 8% share of the population;
- Puslinch accounts for 19% of the County's commercial tax base and assessment base, and 30% of the County's industrial tax base and assessment base; and
- Puslinch is home to 7 of the top 20 corporate taxpayers and some of the County's largest employers.

Historically, a lack of municipal serviced land has not been an impediment to successful and sustainable employment land development in Puslinch.

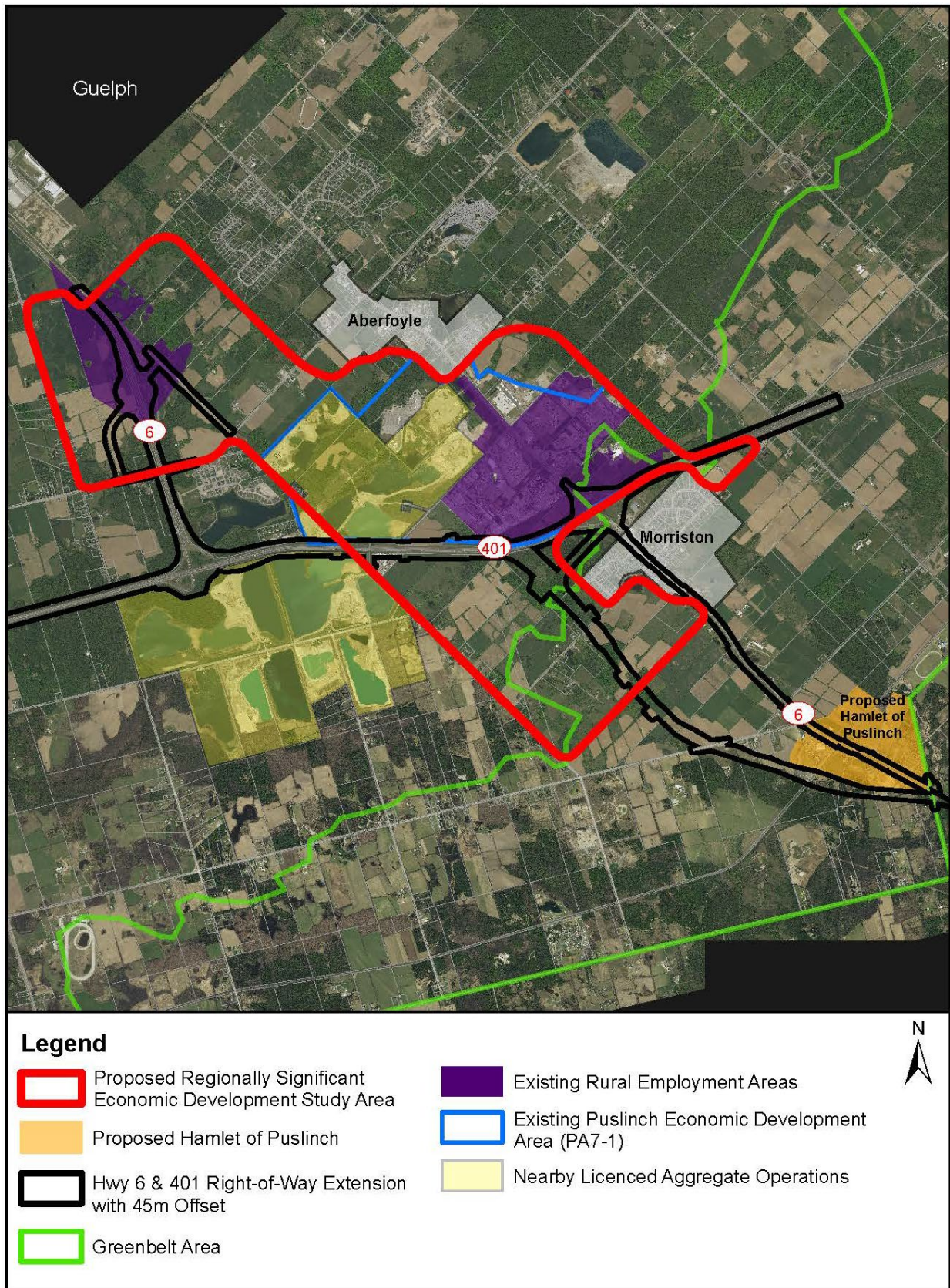
Further justification for a RSEDA is found in the June 2021 Ministry of Transportation discussion paper called "Towards a Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan". One key goal is to keep goods moving, including to:

"Work with municipalities to plan for and protect the capacity of the routes, corridors and facilities identified in the Strategic Goods Movement Network (SGMN) by integrating consideration of the SGMN into relevant municipal land use plans and transportation studies."

Highways 401 and 6 are identified as part of the Strategic Goods Movement Network and land should be designated and preserved near such major goods moving facilities and corridors.

The current Provincial Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan policies make it difficult to plan for growth in a small, rural municipality which depends on private services, such as Puslinch. As a result, we continue to seek support from MMAH to address such matters, including through a proposed Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area (Figure 2) in the draft amendment for employment and other uses. This municipal comprehensive review is an opportunity to examine new options for South Wellington. Accordingly, staff recommend that the MMAH consider exclusion of the Study Area as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion at this time.

Figure 2 Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and Hamlet of Puslinch



4.4 Historic Hamlet of Puslinch

Notwithstanding the removal of policy 6.4.7, staff propose to identify the existing historic Hamlet of Puslinch in the Official Plan (Figure 2). There are diminishing opportunities for Puslinch to accommodate growth due to a fixed supply of available land in the following existing areas designated in the Official Plan:

- Aberfoyle Urban Centre
- Morriston Urban Centre
- Arkell Hamlet
- Country Residential Areas (expansion is prohibited by Official Plan)
- Lifestyle communities (expansion is prohibited by Official Plan)
- Secondary Agricultural Area
- Rural Employment Areas (Provincial policy limits expansion)
- Existing Greenbelt Plan Area and proposed expansion

Growth potential is limited primarily due to servicing constraints. Aberfoyle and Morriston are limited by the lack of availability of a receiving stream, a necessary element in a municipal sewage treatment system.

While the 1988 Puslinch Official Plan is no longer in effect, we note that there were five hamlets in Puslinch at that time: Aberfoyle and Morriston and the smaller areas of Arkell, Puslinch and Crieff. Policy 9.1 in the Plan dealing with Hamlets stated the following:

“A separate land use schedule for the Hamlet of Puslinch is not included within the Official Plan at this time and will not be added until after the construction of the Highway 6 realignment.”

As a result, a separate land use schedule was not included in the Official Plan for the Hamlet of Puslinch due to uncertainty around the construction of the Highway 6 By-pass. Since then, the construction of the Highway 6 and 401 Morriston By-pass expansion project has commenced. Phase 1 was completed last year when the replacement of the Puslinch Concession Road 7 bridge over Highway 401 was completed.

The historic Hamlet of Puslinch is a long standing small community in the Township with existing residential, institutional and commercial uses and should be recognized in the County Official Plan.

4.5 Other Formatting and Technical Changes

The Amendment updates terminology; updates map and text formatting; adds, removes and revises definitions; italicizes defined terms; and makes housekeeping revisions related to the above changes.

Planning and communications staff are working together to update the appearance of the existing schedules in the Official Plan. This will primarily involve the layout and colour, but not content. Staff expect to have the full Official Plan map series in a new format for consideration at the open house and public meeting.

5.0 Conclusion

This Amendment is of strategic importance to the successful implementation of a growth strategy which conforms with the Provincial Growth Plan. Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed Amendment should be circulated to County departments, local municipalities, Indigenous communities, commenting agencies, and individuals or organizations on the mailing list, and should be made available to the public for comment and discussion at a public meeting.

The Draft Growth Structure Amendment (OPA 119) is posted online at:

<https://www.wellington.ca/en/resident-services/pl-official-plan-review.aspx>

6.0 Recommendations

That the report “County Official Plan Review – County Growth Structure Amendment (OPA 119)” be received for information.

That the County Clerk circulate this report to Member Municipalities for information.

That the draft County Growth Structure Amendment (OPA 119) be circulated for comments.

That staff be directed to schedule and hold an open house(s) under the Planning Act to provide the public with opportunities to review and comment on the amendment.

That the Planning Committee be authorized to hold a public meeting under the Planning Act at the appropriate time.

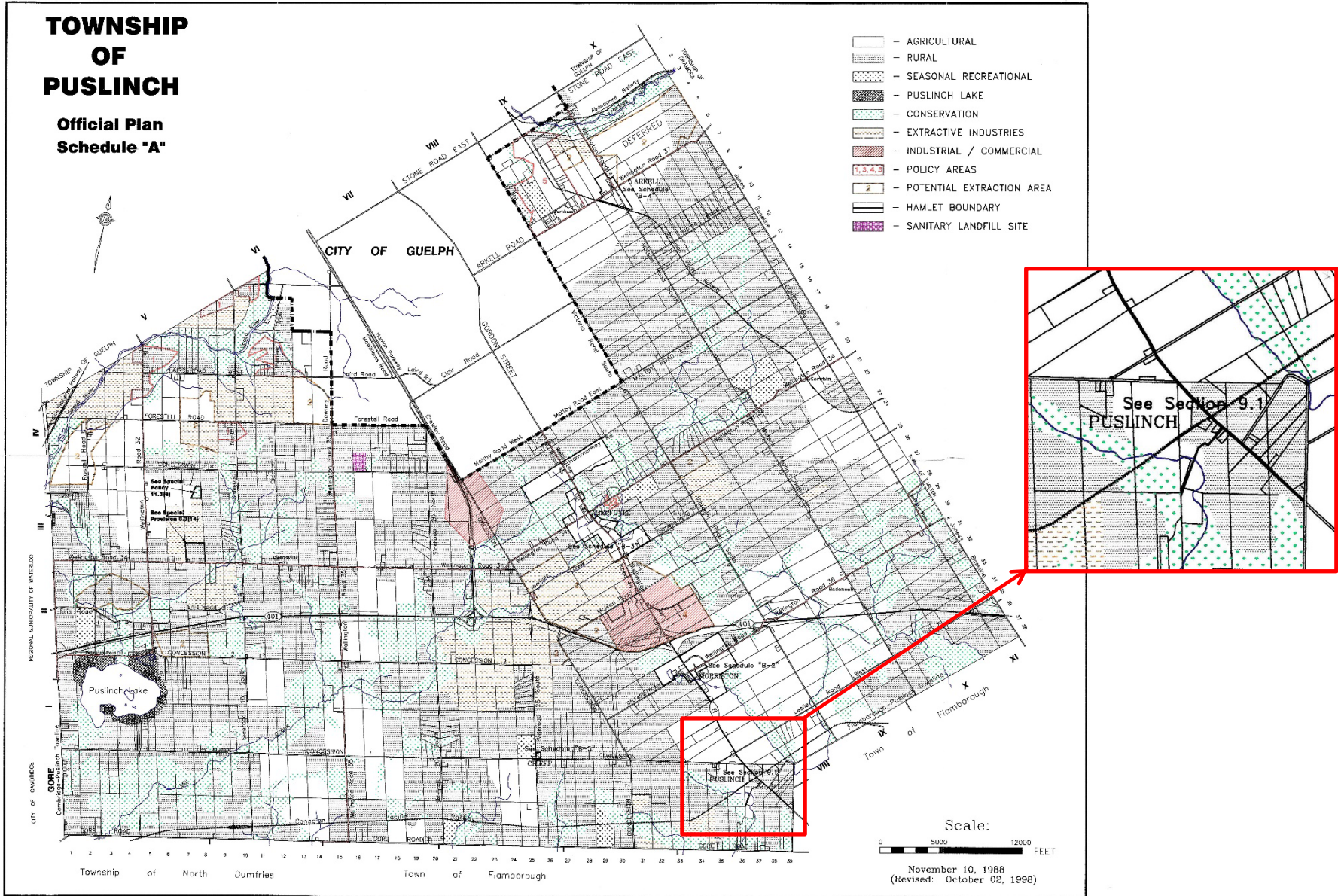
That staff be directed to request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to consider the exclusion of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and the Hamlet of Puslinch identified in the Amendment as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Policy Planning

Appendix A Historic Hamlet of Puslinch





COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee

From: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning

Date: Thursday, January 13, 2022

Subject: County Official Plan Review – OPA 119 Statutory Public Consultation



PLANWELL

1.0 Background

The Draft County Growth Structure Official Plan Amendment (OPA 119) has been circulated for Provincial, Municipal, Indigenous, agency and public comment. Staff have been reviewing the input and will report to Committee following formal public input required under Section 26 of the Planning Act addressed in this report.

In October 2021, County Council authorized staff to hold an open house and Planning Committee to hold a public meeting at the appropriate time (Report PD2021-25). We have scheduled these statutory meetings to be held virtually as follows:

Public Open House Monday, January 31, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Public Meeting Thursday, February 10, 2022 (time to be determined)

The public meeting will be held as part of the regularly scheduled Planning Committee meeting. As a result, the start time will be confirmed once more details are known about the timing of other agenda items, including Land Division.

Combined notice of the open house and public meeting will be given in accordance with the Planning Act. Staff will exceed these requirements by also providing notice through the project's digital mailing list and website, which reaches an additional 145 contacts and subscribers.

2.0 Recommendations

That the report "County Official Plan Review – OPA 119 Statutory Public Consultation" be received for information; and

That the report be forwarded to Member Municipalities.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Policy Planning



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: Thursday, May 12, 2022
Subject: County Official Plan Review – OPA 119 Recommendation Report



PLANWELL

1.0 Executive Summary

- The purpose of this report is to review comments and recommend to County Council the adoption of County Official Plan Amendment No. 119 - “County Growth Structure” ([Link to Final Draft OPA 119 and Companion Document](#)).
- OPA 119 is the first amendment to the County’s Official Plan advanced as part of the County’s Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) under section 26 of the Planning Act.
- The Amendment includes policies for complete communities, and policies and mapping for the County growth structure including: a settlement area hierarchy, employment areas, Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and historic hamlet of Puslinch.
- OPA 119 is informed by technical work presented in the Phase 1 Urban Structure and Growth Allocations Report and associated consultation from June to July 2021 which included a Public Information Centre and circulation for comments (see Planning Committee report PD2021-21 for further detail).
- Consultation for Draft OPA 119 included circulation for comment, a statutory open house on January 31, 2022 and a statutory public meeting on February 10, 2022 in accordance with section 26 of the Planning Act.
- For the reasons outlined in this report, staff recommend that OPA 119 (as amended) be adopted by County Council and forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a decision.

2.0 Background

In September 2019, County Council authorized the Planning and Development Department to proceed with the County Official Plan Review, which includes a Municipal Comprehensive Review component under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019). The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has advised that municipalities may choose to use a phased approach (which includes more than one Official Plan Amendment) to achieve conformity with the Growth Plan. The growth structure in this amendment is based on the Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations prepared by Watson & Associates.

3.0 Summary of OPA 119

The County Growth Structure Amendment outlines where growth and development is to occur within Wellington to achieve the objectives, forecasts and targets required by Provincial policy. The Amendment is comprised of the following key changes:

Complete Communities

Add policies to support “complete communities” as a planning concept and objective of the Official Plan.

Hierarchy of Settlement Areas

Establish a revised hierarchy of settlement areas in the County based on servicing:

Settlement Areas

Consist of 12 primary urban centres:

- with existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems within the Urban System under the existing policy framework; and
- delineated built-up areas and designated greenfield areas.

Rural Settlements

Consist of 2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston):

- without municipal water and wastewater systems; and
- moves them to the Rural System and establishes a corresponding policy framework; and

Consist of 37 existing hamlets:

- continue to be recognized as hamlets, but moved to the Rural System; and
- also identifies the historic Hamlet of Puslinch, a long standing small community in the Township of Puslinch with existing residential, institutional and commercial uses.

Other Changes

- Remove section 6.4.7 policies for un-delineated rural settlement areas in the prime agricultural and secondary agricultural areas, and add a rural cluster policy for secondary agricultural areas.
- Identify urban employment areas in conformity with the Provincial Growth Plan.
- Identify a Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch and a corresponding local policy.

Mapping Updates

- Introduce new mapping schedules to delineate the County Growth Structure.
- Update existing Land Use Schedules to reflect the new settlement area hierarchy, hamlet of Puslinch and Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area.

Technical and Housekeeping Changes

- Update terminology, update map and text formatting, add definitions, italicize defined terms, and make housekeeping revisions related to the above changes.

4.0 Provincial Policy Review

Key applicable policies with respect to this Amendment are those found in:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)
- A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (Growth Plan)
- Greenbelt Plan, 2017

Provincial plans, such as the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan, are to be read in conjunction with the Provincial Policy Statement. Provincial plans normally take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict and where the policies of the Provincial plans are more specific than the general requirements of the PPS. Land use planning decisions by the County must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conform with the policies of the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Official Plan.

The following information highlights how the direction provided by the Provincial plans and policies apply in the context of OPA 119 – County Growth Structure. The comments below generally focus on the more specific Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan policies, however, the PPS policies have also been reviewed.

4.1 Complete Communities

One of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to “Support the achievement of *complete communities* that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.” OPA 119 defines complete communities and adds it to the Plan as a fundamental belief and key objective.

OPA 119 provides the basis for future policy development to meet specific Growth Plan requirements, including for the County to:

- Consider the range and mix of housing options and densities of existing housing stock;
- Plan to diversity the overall housing stock across Wellington; and
- Use available tools to require that multi-unit residential developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes.

See Growth Plan section 2.2.6.2 and 2.2.6.3 for additional detail.

4.2 Managing Growth

The Growth Plan requires that at a minimum, the population and employment forecasts in Schedule 3 will be used for planning and managing growth to 2051. OPA 119 does not implement the 2051 population and employment forecasts on a County-wide or municipal basis because additional consultation with Member Municipalities was required. The population and growth allocations will be implemented through a subsequent amendment to the County Official Plan now that the Phase 1 technical work has been concluded and endorsed by Council.

Section 2.2.1.2 of the Growth Plan sets out specific requirements for a hierarchy for allocating growth:

Growth Plan Section 2.2.1.2	OPA 119
“Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:	
a) the vast majority of growth will be directed to <i>settlement areas</i> that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a <i>delineated built boundary</i>; • have existing or planned <i>municipal water and wastewater systems</i>; and • can support the achievement of <i>complete communities</i>; 	12 primary urban centres meet this criteria
b) growth will be limited in <i>settlement areas</i> that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are <i>rural settlements</i>; • are not serviced by existing or planned <i>municipal water and wastewater systems</i>; or • are in the <i>Greenbelt Area</i>; 	2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston) and 37 hamlets meet this criteria
c) within <i>settlement areas</i> , growth will be focused in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>delineated built-up areas</i>; • <i>strategic growth areas</i>; • locations with existing or planned transit, with a priority on higher order transit where it exists or is planned; and • areas with existing or planned <i>public service facilities</i>; 	12 primary urban centres have delineated built-up areas
d) development will be directed to <i>settlement areas</i> , except where the policies of this Plan permit otherwise;	No change needed
e) development will be generally directed away from <i>hazardous lands</i> ; and	No change needed
f) the establishment of new <i>settlement areas</i> is prohibited.”	See discussion below

With respect to the prohibition of establishing new settlement areas in item f) above, settlement areas mean:

“Urban areas and *rural settlements* within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets) that are:

- a) built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and
- b) lands which have been designated in an official plan for development in accordance with the policies of this Plan. Where there are no lands that have been designated for development, the *settlement area* may be no larger than the area where development is concentrated.”

OPA 119 adapts this definition to include primary urban centres and rural settlements (secondary urban centres and hamlets).

In the Growth Plan, rural settlement areas mean:

“Existing hamlets or similar existing small *settlement areas* that are long-established and identified in official plans. These communities are serviced by individual private on-site water and/or private wastewater systems, contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for development and are subject to official plan policies that limit growth...”

In rural areas, the Growth Plan requires development of more than three units/lots to be in settlement areas (2.2.9.6). Based on OPA 119, development of more than three units/lots would be directed to primary urban centres, secondary urban centres and hamlets.

OPA 119 adds rural settlements as a defined term which supports development of more than three units/lots in the following rural settlements in Wellington:

- 2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston)
- 37 existing hamlets throughout Wellington County
- 1 re-designated existing historic hamlet (Hamlet of Puslinch)

These areas meet the rural settlement area definition as they are existing, small, long-established and identified on the Official Plan land use schedules (maps).

While OPA 119 continues to permit lot creation and a range of uses in Aberfoyle, Morriston and the hamlets, removal of Official Plan section 6.4.7 (rural settlements) is necessary to meet Provincial policy. Unlike existing hamlets to be retained, the rural settlements recognized by policy 6.4.7 are unmapped and unnamed in the Official Plan. Therefore, they do not meet the Growth Plan definition of rural settlement area. An attempt to identify such areas in the Official Plan would not conform with Growth Plan and Official Plan prohibitions on the establishment of new settlement areas.

In a meeting of January 26, 2022, the County re-confirmed with Provincial staff that policy 6.4.7:

- Conflicts with PPS policies which prohibit new residential lots in prime agricultural areas (s. 2.3.4.3); and
- Conflicts with Growth Plan policies which prohibit new settlement areas (s. 2.2.1.2(f)) and limits residential development in rural areas (s. 2.2.9.6).

Section 6.3 of this report outlines Minto Council’s concerns about removal of section 6.4.7. Staff have revised OPA 119 to move policy 6.4.7 to a modified “rural cluster” policy under the Secondary Agricultural Area policies.

4.3 Employment Areas

The Growth Plan requires the County to designate “all employment areas in the Official Plan and protect them for appropriate employment uses over the long-term” (s. 2.2.5.6). New County Growth Structure schedules of OPA 119 ensure that all Employment Areas in Wellington are designated, including those designations in local official plans.

4.4 Puslinch Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area

A guiding principle of the Growth Plan is to “improve the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in *infrastructure*...by all levels of government.” Highways 401 and 6 are identified as part of the Provincial Strategic Goods Movement Network (SGMN)¹ in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which has a goal to integrate the SGMN into relevant municipal land use plans.

The policies of the Growth Plan require municipalities to maintain a sufficient supply of land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment (2.2.5.1(b)). Section 2.2.9.5 allows for the existing rural employment areas in Puslinch to continue to be permitted. Expansions to these areas are limited to those which are necessary to support existing businesses and are compatible with surrounding uses. The Growth Plan places a priority on linking major goods movement corridors and employment areas (s. 3.2.4).

In accordance with Council’s direction through October 2021 Planning Committee Report PD2021-25, staff has requested that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing consider the exclusion of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area from the Greenbelt Area as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion. The justification for the request is set out in report PD2021-25 and PD2021-17.

4.5 Hamlet of Puslinch

Section 2.3.5.1 of the PPS states that “Planning Authorities may only exclude land from *prime agricultural areas* for expansions of or identification of *settlement areas* in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8”. In the Greenbelt Plan, the goals for settlement areas in the Protected Countryside are to support a strong rural economy, maintain the character of rural communities, achieve complete communities and serve as community hubs (s. 1.2.2.4). For lands within Hamlets in the Protected Countryside, limited growth is permitted through infill and intensification subject to appropriate water and sewage services (s. 3.4.4).

In accordance with Council’s direction through October 2021 Planning Committee Report PD2021-25, staff has requested that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing consider the exclusion of the Hamlet of Puslinch identified in the Amendment as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion. The justification for the request is set out in that report.

5.0 Consultation

OPA 119 has been informed by consultation since the release of the draft Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations which includes:

- Technical Resource Team (TRT) meetings through 2021
- Virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) to present Draft Phase 1 Report on June 23, 2021
- Circulation of draft Phase 1 Report for comment from June to July 2021 to Member Municipalities, Indigenous communities, agencies, members of the public and stakeholders
- Results of the PIC and circulation were documented in Planning Committee report PD2021-21
- A statutory special meeting of County for the Official Plan Review held on June 29, 2021

¹ Ministry of Transportation, *Towards a Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan*, June 2021.

The consultation for Draft OPA 119 included:

- October 2021 Circulation to Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- November 2021 Circulation to Member Municipalities, Indigenous communities, agencies, members of the public and stakeholders
- January 31, 2022 statutory public open house for Draft OPA 119
- February 10, 2022 statutory public meeting for Draft OPA 119

In order to obtain public feedback, notification of engagement opportunities was provided through the project email list and website updates. Notice of the statutory public open house and public meeting was provided in accordance with the Planning Act and advertised in the Wellington Advertiser. Meetings were held virtually due to COVID-19.

Consultation at a Glance	
58	Public Open House Participants
31	Public Meeting Participants
43	Written Submissions

6.0 Key OPA 119 Comments and Changes

A summary of the key comments and a description of changes made to OPA 119 as a result of feedback is provided below. For further details on these and other comments, see Appendix A (Open House Meeting Summary), Appendix B (Public Meeting Minutes) and Appendix C (Summary of Comments and Responses). Full written comments are available in the project file.

6.1 Public Open House

Many of the comments at the open house related to OPA 119 focused on the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch. There were environmental impact concerns, including ponds, wetlands, endangered species and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs). The impact on agricultural lands was also raised. There were also questions about how this relates to the existing industrial area in the Township's zoning by-law, about servicing and the impact of the boundary extending further west of Highway 6 North on nearby residents. The policy for the Study Area requires future study of transportation, servicing, agricultural and environmental matters.

6.2 Public Meeting

Comments at the public meeting also focused on the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area. The comments emphasized agricultural concerns about the current economic benefits of farm lands, loss of food production lands and impacts on farming. There were also site-specific requests/concerns:

- To include additional lands owned by Bryan's Farm Equipment in the hamlet of Puslinch;
- To expand rural employment designation onto 4952 Seventh Line, Guelph/Eramosa and adjacent lands; and
- To support proposed Audrey Meadows subdivision in northern Puslinch.

6.3 Municipal

Town of Minto comments are the only municipal comments that were received for OPA 119. The Town opposes removal of section 6.4.7 (rural settlements) from the County Official Plan because Council prefers that they continue to be recognized and to allow for minor infilling and rounding out. County staff met with Town staff and their consultant to review their concerns. In considering the Town’s comments and concerns, staff propose that OPA 119 continue to remove section 6.4.7, but that it be moved, modified and renamed “rural clusters” as shown in the comparison below.

CURRENT POLICY TO BE REMOVED from Prime Agricultural and Secondary Agricultural Area Policies	PROPOSED POLICY TO BE ADDED to Secondary Agricultural Area Policies
<p>6.4.7 Rural Settlements Rural settlements are existing small communities that form part of the rural fabric of Wellington. These settlements are primarily small clusters of housing with occasional commercial, industrial or institutional uses. These areas are not designated on Schedule “A” and are not expected to grow but they may be recognized in the zoning by-law and limited residential infilling may be allowed.</p>	<p>6.5.4 Rural Clusters Rural clusters are long-established small groups of housing with occasional commercial, industrial or institutional uses located in the Secondary Agricultural Area designation. These areas are not designated on Schedule “A” or “B” and are not expected to grow but they may be recognized in the zoning by-law. New lots may only be allowed in rural clusters in accordance with section 10.4.</p> <p>As part of a <i>municipal comprehensive review</i>, the County will assess the impact of constraints such as the Provincial Agricultural Land Base, Natural Heritage System and Greenbelt Plan on the potential future supply of rural residential lots in the Secondary Agricultural Area, including rural clusters. This assessment will consider, among other things, whether changes to the rural residential lot creation policies are needed.</p>

The above changes would only apply to Minto, Puslinch and Erin as these are the only municipalities with the Secondary Agricultural Area designation. The policy provides for further review of the rural residential lot creation policies to potentially address any rural growth shortfalls through the Municipal Comprehensive Review. We feel this approach would address the concerns of Minto yet remain consistent with Provincial planning policy.

6.4 Indigenous Communities

Our office received comments from the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, requesting that we contact the Environment Office immediately with anything of archaeological interest.

6.5 Agencies – Conservation Authorities

Our office received comments from the following conservation authorities:

Conservation Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues raised
Saugeen Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues raised
Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCA staff are not supportive of removal of Regionally Significant Economic Development Area from the Greenbelt Plan and request to be advised of any related proposal. If OPA 119 is approved, request to be circulated proposed terms of reference for study.

6.6 Agencies – Other

Our office received comments from the following legislated authorities:

Upper Grand District School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments to be considered in transportation policy component of Official Plan Review
City of Guelph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to OPA 119 text recommended to clarify that section 4.7.1 (Distinct Urban-Rural Boundary) applies to adjacent cities, as well as the settlement areas within Wellington County. Other comments included in Appendices.
Wellington Source Water Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of comments will be considered as part of source water/ water policy component of Official Plan Review

6.7 Public and Stakeholder Comments

The public and stakeholder comments received and the staff responses are included as Appendix C. The majority of the comments deal with matters in future phases of the growth management technical work (settlement area boundary expansions, rural employment area expansions, etc.), requests for additional information about OPA 119 and the overall Official Plan Review. Staff also received several requests to be added to the notice list which have been noted, but are not included in the table. The discussion below provides more details about key comments on OPA 119.

Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area (RSEDSA)

Comments filed both support and raise concerns/objections to the RSEDSA. The key matters include agricultural, environmental and compatibility issues. If the RSEDSA is approved by the Province as part of OPA 119, detailed terms of reference will need to be prepared for the subsequent study which will be required to include a transportation analysis, a servicing strategy, an agricultural and environmental review. Future uses will need to be compatible with the surrounding area.

Rural Settlement Policy 6.4.7

There are two public objections to the proposed removal of rural settlement policy 6.4.7 for Puslinch. The first is from Jeffrey Wilker of Thomson Rogers on behalf of Audrey Meadows Ltd. His position is that the removal of policy 6.4.7 will be far more restrictive than Provincial policy and that his client's proposed Official Plan Amendment (file OP2021-02) should be written into OPA 119.

The applicant's proposal is for a rural residential development on vacant agricultural lands owned by Audrey Meadows which are adjacent to the existing Audrey Meadows subdivision south of Guelph on the west side of Victoria Road S in Puslinch. The vacant lands are currently designated Secondary

Agricultural, Core Greenlands and Greenlands in the Official Plan. The developed Audrey Meadows subdivision is designated Country Residential and Greenlands.

The proposal is based on the applicant's interpretation that the existing adjacent 48 lot subdivision is a rural settlement and that additional development of approximately 29 units on adjacent land would represent infilling. No changes to OPA 119 are recommended to provide for the above proposal as the OPA application is in process and it will be assessed based on existing planning policies (including section 6.4.7).

The second is from Dave Bouck (DRS Inc./Meran Holdings) who objects to the Provincial emphasis on growth in serviced urban centres, the local emphasis on severances for growth, and asks for the following additional historic rural settlements in Puslinch to be recognized: Crieff, Fielding Lane, Puslinch Lake and Corwhin. Section 6.3 of this report recommends changes that would allow for future review of historic rural settlements for additional severance potential. No further changes to OPA 119 are recommended.

Historic Hamlet of Puslinch

Public comments were generally supportive of the re-designation of the historic Hamlet of Puslinch. In addition, (1) Neal DeRuyter, MHBC for Bryan's Farm and Industrial Supply; and (2) Dave Bouck, Meran Holdings made requests to expand the proposed Hamlet boundary (see Figure 1).

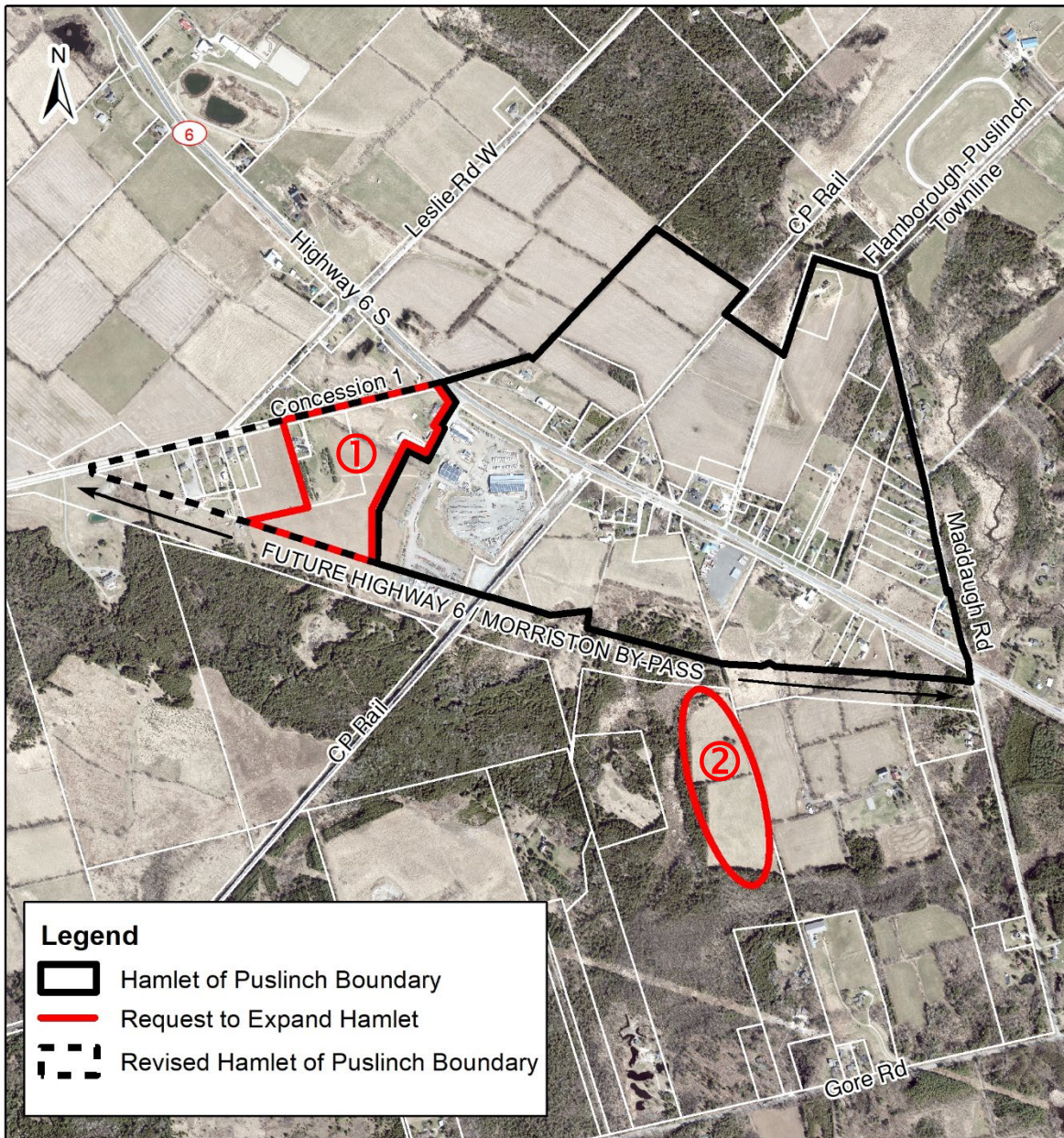
The proposal for Bryan's Farm and Industrial Supply is to expand the hamlet boundary to the west of the existing business to include additional lands under the same ownership. The existing operation is within the original draft hamlet boundary and the area outlined in red is proposed to be added (Figure 1). Staff recommends that the boundary be extended to include the additional lands for the reasons set out in the MHBC planning justification:

- Would provide for future expansion of a long-standing employment use
- Expansion would follow right-of-way of proposed Highway 6 By-pass
- Lands are considered prime agricultural but constrained due to MTO expropriation, existing non-agricultural uses, existing roads, irregular shape
- Would provide for potential residential severances
- Represents a minor increase of the total area of hamlet

Staff also recommends that the hamlet boundary be further extended westerly to include lands up to the intersection of Concession 1 Road and the Highway 6 By-pass, which are largely comprised of rural residential lots. The hamlet boundary in the final draft of OPA 119 has been revised to reflect these changes.

The second request is to add lands south of the proposed Highway 6 By-pass. Staff are not recommending that the proposed Hamlet of Puslinch be extended southerly to include the northern fields of Part of Lot 27, Gore Concession as the future Highway 6 By-pass represents a logical southerly limit of the Hamlet.

Figure 1 Requests to Expand Hamlet of Puslinch



Centre Wellington Heritage

Public comments seek to introduce detailed mapping and text changes to OPA 119 which would appear to have the effect of prohibiting intensification of any kind in the Fergus and Elora-Salem heritage area overlays. While the Growth Plan requires conservation of cultural heritage resources, this is not the same as a development prohibition.

There are policies already in place in the County Official Plan setting out requirements for heritage impact assessment and conservation plans. This type of study determines if any significant cultural heritage resources are impacted by a development proposal, whether the impacts can be mitigated and by what means. This allows for residential intensification requests requiring planning approvals to

be evaluated on a case by case basis within the context of the proposal and local cultural heritage resources.

The Provincial Growth Plan is based on an “intensification first” approach and a minimum residential intensification target of 20% has been in place in the County Official Plan since 2009. Largely due to cultural heritage resources in Centre Wellington, County Council has supported a request for an alternative intensification target of 15%. If approved by the Province, the reduced target will be implemented through a subsequent amendment to the County Official Plan.

Centre Wellington Natural Heritage System

Public comments raise concerns that the Official Plan and OPA 119 do not define and map a County Growth Structure with a Natural Heritage System. The County Official Plan currently identifies a Natural Heritage System on Greenbelt Plan schedules for Puslinch and Erin. The identification of a Natural Heritage System for the remainder of the County will be part of future technical work through the MCR and these comments will be considered at that time.

Natural heritage features and areas are currently identified on the land use schedules for each municipality in the Official Plan. The policy protections (and restrictions in local Zoning By-laws) for such areas continue regardless of whether or not they are shown on the new Growth Structure Schedules. The terms “natural heritage features and areas” and “Natural Heritage System” do not appear in OPA 119 because they are already defined terms contained in the Official Plan.

7.0 Provincial Comments

As legislatively required, our office circulated Draft OPA 119 to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 4, 2021. The statutory 90-day minimum window was satisfied in early January 2022. While staff would always prefer to work with Ministry staff to address any potential policy matters, to date we have not received input and prefer not to delay this Amendment any further. As the approval authority for the Amendment, the Province is in a position to make changes to OPA 119, if necessary.

8.0 Final Draft Official Plan Amendment

The final draft County Growth Structure Official Plan Amendment being recommended in this report may be found at the following link: [Link to Final Draft OPA 119 and Companion Document](#)

Changes made to the Final Draft are highlighted in the companion document.

9.0 Conclusion

Staff are satisfied that OPA 119 is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), has regard for matters of provincial interest, and is in conformity with the Growth Plan (2019) and Greenbelt Plan (2017) subject to Provincial acceptance of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and the Hamlet of Puslinch. Public concerns have been considered and addressed. In our opinion, OPA 119 represents good planning and is in the public interest.

10.0 Recommendations

That pursuant to section 26 of the Planning Act, County Council declares that Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure (a) conforms with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Greenbelt Plan, subject to Provincial acceptance of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and the Hamlet of Puslinch; (b) has regard for matters of provincial interest in section 2 of the Planning Act; and (c) is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

That a by-law adopting County of Wellington Official Plan Amendment 119 be approved.

That the County Clerk forward the report to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to Member Municipalities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Wilhelm', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Policy Planning

- Appendix A Public Open House Meeting Summary
- Appendix B Public Meeting Minutes
- Appendix C Summary of Comments and Responses

Appendix A

OPA 119 Public Open House Meeting Summary

Wellington County Official Plan Review

OPA 119 Virtual Public Open House Meeting Summary

Prepared by LURA Consulting

Background

The County of Wellington is currently reviewing its Official Plan (OP) to complete a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and a 5-year review of its Official Plan as specified under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. An MCR is part of the OP review process. It establishes a long-term vision and planning framework for a municipality that fosters a sustainable approach to future growth and economic development. The County is doing this to prepare for additional population and employment growth and ensure that the updated OP supports healthy, compact, and complete communities in Wellington as directed through *A Place to Growth: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

In June 2021, the County released its MCR Phase 1 Report ([review the report](#)). It held a virtual public open house ([review the presentation](#) and [read the consultation summary](#)) to discuss the recommendations prepared by consultants Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. relating to Urban Structure and Growth Analysis. Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119 implements part of the growth management technical work from Phase 1, including:

- Adding new policies for complete communities
- Revising and mapping the County growth structure based on servicing
- Adding new policies for the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area in Puslinch
- Re-designating the existing historic rural settlement of Puslinch as a Hamlet
- Other technical and formatting changes

Meeting Promotion

Members of the public who wished to join the Virtual Public Open House were requested to register in advance. Individuals could also join the meeting by phone.

A public notice regarding the Virtual Public Open House was published in the Wellington Advertiser two weeks before the meeting. The meeting was also promoted through the County's social media platforms.

Meeting Overview

The Virtual Public Open House was held on January 31, 2022, with a purpose to:

- Provide an update on the County of Wellington's Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119
- Gather feedback and answer questions about Wellington County's OPA 119

The meeting presentation was posted in advance on [Plan Well](#), the County of Wellington's Official Plan Review website, to allow participants to review it beforehand or follow along if they joined the meeting by phone.

In total, 58 participants joined the meeting.

Susan Hall (Facilitator from LURA Consulting) began the meeting with an introduction and overview of the meeting agenda. Sarah Wilhelm (Manager of Policy Planning at the County of Wellington) provided introductory remarks and delivered a presentation on the following areas of the County of Wellington's OPA 119:

- Policy Context and Provincial Planning Policy Structure
- Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and Work Plan
- Complete Communities
- County Growth Structure
- Revised Settlement Hierarchy
- Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA)
- Re-designating Puslinch as Hamlet
- Consultation to Date

Susan Hall facilitated a discussion to receive feedback and comments from participants. A summary of the facilitated discussion is provided below.

What We Heard

General OP Review and MCR process

Participants were invited to ask questions and share their comments regarding the County of Wellington's Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119.

The questions, answers, and comments are included as follows. Questions are marked by a 'Q', comments are marked with a 'C', and answers and responses are noted with an 'A'.

General

Q: Is more detailed information, such as technical reports, available online?

A: Yes. Information about the MCR process can be found on the County's MCR webpage, [visit the PlanWell webpage](#) – this webpage includes presentations, summaries, and technical reports under the "Public Consultation" tab. If any questions

are not addressed on the website, individuals can contact Sarah Wilhelm or Jameson Pickard by emailing planwell@wellington.ca.

Q: When do you expect to have final approval from the Province?

A: The deadline is July 1, 2022. So far, no comments have been received from the Province regarding the Official Plan Amendment, but the goal is to have this fully approved before the July 1 deadline. However, the final approval for the Official Plan review will require additional technical work and other phased amendments after July 1.

Q: Will the current economic benefits of the land be examined, such as produced food and carbon sequestered?

A: This is something that the County can take away and look at in more detail. This gets into the intersection of climate change policies and will be a component of the work done through the overall Official Plan review. At this point, the study areas must first be determined.

Q: How do we file our concerns about the ponds and wetland areas classified under Primary Agriculture?

A: If there are wetlands mapped in the current Official Plan, those would be considered part of the environmental review of the study area. If there are any specific concerns, individuals can mention them during the meeting or reach out to Sarah Wilhelm or Jameson Pickard at the County, so these can be captured in future reports.

Q: Does the Township know when environmental sensitivity studies will be completed for the study area?

A: Provincial approval of the OPA is required first to establish a study area. Once this is defined, the Township and County can proceed with studying the area. It would be premature to start doing any detailed technical work until the study area is determined.

C: All future maps should show the Areas of Natural Scientific Interest (ANSI) so that these areas are not forgotten when doing reviews by various agencies. There are significant ANSIs in the southwest section of the study area, and one large area is included in the study area. ANSIs must be preserved into the future under the provincial Heritage and Conservation Act.

A: Currently, the ANSIs are shown on the Puslinch land use schedule in the County Official Plan. A future environmental review will examine natural features within the study area.

Q: When will the excess lands designated within the Wellington North Township be reviewed and declared so the public knows which lands are impacted? Is this part of OPA 119?

A: This is not part of OPA 119. The concept of excess lands is part of the Phase 2 work currently being undertaken by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. County staff are scheduled to present at the Wellington North Township Council meeting on February 7, where they will discuss the implications of excess lands.

Q: Why is Morriston being moved to a secondary urban settlement?

A: Re-classifying Morriston to the secondary urban settlement category relates to servicing, its small size, and the Province's methodology for determining land needs. The Highway 6 By-pass will happen regardless of how Morriston is categorized. There is an area of land between the Morriston boundary and the Highway 6 By-pass within the study area where the appropriate land use has not been fully identified yet. This area might allow for a small amount of residential development or other types of development. It is also possible to have some limited development on private services for industrial employment uses if it's a dry industrial use. Additionally, the study area includes a servicing strategy, which would be looked at in detail at the study stage.

Q: How far down the line are discussions about bringing new employment lands into the inventory to make up for those lost to the highway?

A: The study area must first be selected before new employment lands can be determined. This will require a more detailed study.

Hamlet

Q: Why are Hamlets being moved to a different designation? What does this mean?

A: Hamlets are being re-assigned from the urban system to the rural system. This is to recognize that the amount of growth allocated to these areas is a low level of growth. This aligns with provincial policies defined in the Growth Plan. The land use policies applicable to the hamlet designation remain the same, but they will be treated differently in the context of the Growth Plan.

Q: What is the driver behind recognizing the Historic Hamlet of Puslinch? Is there an active interest in residential or commercial subdivision plans?

A: The driver behind recognizing this area was the historic policy in the 1988 Official Plan. Currently, there is no information on whether there is any interest in residential or commercial development. This is not considered under the current designation. The County has received some comments related to the Hamlet's boundary, which will be acknowledged in subsequent County reports.

Greenfield Areas

Q: Will Greenfield Areas receive a designation, and when will they be implemented?

A: The Designated Greenfield Areas are already in effect as a policy area within the Official Plan. When looking at the land use schedules, there are designations in place for each urban centre within the Official Plan for Greenfield Areas.

Q: What are the odds of Greenfield Areas being reviewed and rezoned? What would be the likelihood of future development areas being modified?

A: The settlement area boundary review is included in the technical work for Phase 3 - future development areas will likely be a part of that work. The land needs assessment assesses how future development areas can add to the land supply. The review and re-designation of future development areas would follow the land needs assessment and would be something that the County undertakes as part of Phase 3.

Regionally Significant Economic Development Area

Q: The Township of Puslinch established industrial development areas in their 2018 Zoning Bylaw. Why does the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study look at a much larger area than what the Township had identified?

A: The Township of Puslinch did some work in their Zoning By-Law which identified the industrial parcels that have not yet been developed and discovered that there aren't many left. There are forecasts in the Official Plan for residential and employment growth. In 2016, Puslinch exceeded its 2041 forecasts for employment growth. This indicates rapid rural employment growth, which is why the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study looks at a much larger area.

Q: What is the purpose or reason behind extending the northwestern boundary of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study further west of Highway 6?

A: The existing rural employment areas on the west side include a right-of-way with a 45-meter offset which takes away a lot of the designated land. In addition to that, some access constraints will happen based on the interchange's design. This means that the land would not be developed for employment purposes and requires closer analysis from the project team. Comments have been received from residential properties, opposite the westerly limit, about the prospect of having employment uses extended. As this study continues, the project team will be engaging again to discuss this in more detail.

Q: Changing the boundary of the Regionally Significant Economic Area Study to the west of Highway 6 cuts through primary agricultural land. This area already has a mid-block added to the area, and some residents are not comfortable with this additional potential change. When will this change be announced, and if it goes through, will the area no longer be classified as Primary Agriculture?

A: There is no certainty on whether the boundary would be changed, but all comments received to date will be considered when making recommendations to the planning committee and County Council. Whether that area will continue to be classified as Primary Agriculture requires further study. These decisions would be made in the future and will require public input.

C: Many people have moved to Puslinch for rural living. Many people live in this area because they want to find a rural landscape close to the city. That is one of the reasons why there are not as many residential developments in the area.

Q: If the land is within the Regionally Economic Development Area study but not within the Highway 6 extension study, can land use amendments be submitted before the final decision on OPA19?

A: If an individual wants to proceed with a particular proposal, they can contact County staff. However, if the proposal is not permitted under the current rural designation, it is suggested that the proponent wait until the study is completed. Individuals cannot be prevented from applying, but they are encouraged to reach out to policy or development staff to discuss the nature of their proposal before they file.

Q: What are the plans to manage the existing endangered species in the Greenbelt Areas within the context of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study?

A: Environmental concerns would need to be looked at on a site-specific basis and would have to be reviewed in more detail through the study.

Wellington 36

Q: What effect can the OPA have on a property located in Wellington 36? Do you plan on having any industrial development in the near future? Is there any potential of having a lot severance or a full-on development of Wellington 36?

A: As it stands, the intention is not to make any changes outside of the study area. However, anyone is welcome to share any comments related to their property. County staff will review these comments.

Q: Does the Settlement Area Boundary Review include Wellington 36?

A: A triangular piece of land north of Wellington 36 is included within the study area and will be reviewed further in the study. If there are any comments about the boundary, individuals should reach out to County staff.

Puslinch

Q: There's a minimal supply for residential development in the Puslinch area. Why aren't more lands being added to this type of land use? Is the County waiting for the landowners to come forward and say that this is what they would like to do?

A: Landowners are always welcome to provide their comments and feedback. However, the provincial policy environment is highly restrictive, and new estate residential subdivisions are no longer permitted. The Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan do not allow residential developments to be expanded or newly developed unless it has an existing designation. The County Official Plan also prohibits this kind of development.

Q: Caledon has multiple developments within their boundary. Why is Puslinch not allowing residential developments?

A: It isn't easy to compare the policies of two different Official Plans. Caledon might already have existing designations in their Official Plan that allow for that type of development, whereas Puslinch does not.

Q: Is there a plan for bringing services like sewer and water to Puslinch? If so, are there reports on how this will be served to the area we can review?

A: There was a study completed about the feasibility of municipal services for certain areas within the Township of Puslinch, and this information is available on the [Township of Puslinch's website](#).

Applications and Process

Q: Can planning applications (i.e. zoning, site plan, etc.) still be submitted for properties identified within the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) before the area has been officially studied?

A: The point of identifying the study area is to study it comprehensively and then look at what areas require land-use changes. It is not ideal to start initiating planning applications in advance of this study as its findings may require alterations to the application. The identification of the study area is not meant to prohibit development that is in keeping with current land use designations and zoning.

Written Feedback

Following the meeting, the County of Wellington received one submission by email. The following key points were raised through written feedback:

- Ensure that Planning Impact Assessments also include exterior design factors and support these assessments with Urban Design Guidelines.
- Develop planning policies for Secondary Urban Centres that take exterior built form into account, and ensure similar policies exist for major centres.
- Adjust the intensification criteria in residential land use designations to emphasize high quality of architectural design.
- Implement deconstruction policies that discourage outright demolition and encourage recycling of preservable materials.
- Consider using Model Urban Design Guidelines to steer the process for smaller lower-tier municipalities without the resources to develop their guidelines.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Susan Hall of LURA Consulting provided participants with the project team's contact information for any additional feedback and wrapped up the meeting. Participants can provide their feedback and comments until February 13, 2022. Members of the public can contact the project team by email or by phone at:

Contact: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager Policy Planning

Phone: 519-837-2600 ex 2130

Email: planwell@wellington.ca

Mailing Address: ATTN Planning Department

74 Woolwich Street

Guelph, ON

N1H 3T9

Appendix B

OPA 119 Public Meeting Minutes



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

OPA 119

10:30 am, Thursday February 10, 2022

County Administration Centre

Zoom

Planning Committee Members: Warden Kelly Linton, Planning Chair Allan Alls, Councillors Davidson, Lloyd and McKay

Also in Attendance: Councillors Campbell, Cork, O'Neill and Seeley; Puslinch Township Councillors Bailey, Goyda and Sepulis

County Staff:

Scott Wilson, CAO

Ken DeHart, Treasurer

Donna Bryce, County Clerk

Nicole Cardow, Deputy Clerk

Mark Montgomery, IT

Aldo Salis, Director, Planning and Development Department

Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning

Curtis Marshall, Manager of Development Planning

Meagan Ferris, Manager of Planning and Environment

Karen Chisholme, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager

Jameson Pickard, Senior Planner (Policy)

Zach Prince, Senior Planner (Development)

Matthieu Daoust, Planner

Members of the Public: There were 31 members of the public who attended the online meeting. Staff have recorded their names in the project file as part of the public record.

OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Alls welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

STATEMENT READ BY CHAIR

Chair Alls read the following statement:

This meeting is to provide information, comments and input for Planning Committee and Council. County Council has not taken a position on the matter; County Council's decision will come after full consideration of input from the meeting, submissions from the public and comments from agencies.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Corporation of the County of Wellington in respect of the adoption of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, you must make a written request to the Director, Planning and Development Department, County of Wellington, 74 Woolwich Street, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 3T9.

Official Plan Amendment 119 requires approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Pursuant to Section 17(36.4) of the Planning Act there is no appeal in respect of a decision of the approval authority if the approval authority is the Minister.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Chair Alls invited Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning to make a presentation about the proposed amendment. Ms. Wilhelm's presentation covered the following points:

- Purpose of meeting
- Provincial, County and local planning policy context
- Municipal Comprehensive Review context and work plan
- Purpose of Official Plan Amendment 119 (OPA 119)
- Complete communities, County structure and County growth structure
- Regionally significant economic development area (RSEDA)
- Re-designating Hamlet of Puslinch
- Other minor OPA 119 changes
- Future implementation matters, consultation to date and next steps

Presentation slides are available at www.wellington.ca/planwell.

PUBLIC INPUT

Janet Harrop had no comments to provide on the Amendment at this time.

Barclay Nap raised four main concerns:

1. The subjects being looked at in the Amendment that should be separated in two: part 1) the identification of the Hamlet of Puslinch and part 2) the identification of lands in the Township for future growth.
2. The economics being looked at in the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) should include the current economic benefits of farm lands.
3. Large amounts of land included in the RSEDA.
4. Loss of food production lands which should not be simply viewed as empty space.

Neal DeRuyter, planning consultant representing Bryan's Farm Equipment in south Puslinch, indicated support for the proposed Hamlet of Puslinch. He requested that the proposed boundary be adjusted to include additional lands owned by his client to provide additional opportunity for expansion of the business.

Steven Pham, planning consultant for 492 Seventh Line in the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, requested expansion of the Rural Employment Area designation onto his client's lands. He also supports retention of policies in the Official Plan allowing for expansion of Rural Employment Areas.

Jeffrey Wilker, legal representative for George Good in northern Puslinch, advised of his client's active development applications for a 22 lot expansion to the existing Audrey Meadows subdivision. His opinion is that this would be an infilling and rounding out of an existing rural settlement area.

He urged the Committee to review his various written submissions detailing his client's concerns regarding this Amendment. He expressed his client's objections to the County's Municipal Comprehensive Review process and to deleting existing Official Plan policy 6.4.7 dealing with rural settlements.

He recommended that the County either defer OPA 119; delete part 6, number 29 from OPA 119; or recognize his client's proposal within OPA 119.

Linda Barkovsky support the comments offered by Mr. Nap. She expressed her concerns with the impact of additional industrial development on water supply.

Councillor Lloyd noted receiving letters about the amount of land needed to expand settlement areas (approximately 1,200 ac, 1,000 ac of which is in the Centre Wellington Area) and the impact on prime agricultural land. She noted this is a big concern for the agricultural community.

Councillor Lloyd also asked (1) Whether heritage matters are guided by local municipalities or is it something the County Official Plan deals with? and (2) Does the County Official Plan have heritage areas outlined that can or cannot be intensified for housing?

Sarah Wilhelm advised that the Township of Centre Wellington has its own Official Plan and the heritage area overlays are identified within it and clarified that the County looks to the local municipalities to largely deal with heritage matters. Centre Wellington has a heritage planner on staff, a local heritage committee and maintains the heritage register. There are also heritage policies in the County Official Plan.

Bill Sims noted that the OPA 119 maps do not show any of the ANSIs (Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest) in the area under review in Puslinch and that these areas should be protected.

Aldo Salis clarified that OPA 119 does not remove any ANSIs and these features will need to be considered if and when the Township proceeds with the review of the study area.

CLOSING

There being no further comments or questions from the public, Chair Alls encouraged those in attendance to put their comments in writing to record their interest in the matter and/or request a notice of decision.

Chair Alls thanked everyone for attending the meeting and declared the public meeting closed at 11:36 am.



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: Thursday, May 12, 2022
Subject: County Official Plan Review – OPA 119 Recommendation Report



PLANWELL

1.0 Executive Summary

- The purpose of this report is to review comments and recommend to County Council the adoption of County Official Plan Amendment No. 119 - “County Growth Structure” ([Link to Final Draft OPA 119 and Companion Document](#)).
- OPA 119 is the first amendment to the County’s Official Plan advanced as part of the County’s Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) under section 26 of the Planning Act.
- The Amendment includes policies for complete communities, and policies and mapping for the County growth structure including: a settlement area hierarchy, employment areas, Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and historic hamlet of Puslinch.
- OPA 119 is informed by technical work presented in the Phase 1 Urban Structure and Growth Allocations Report and associated consultation from June to July 2021 which included a Public Information Centre and circulation for comments (see Planning Committee report PD2021-21 for further detail).
- Consultation for Draft OPA 119 included circulation for comment, a statutory open house on January 31, 2022 and a statutory public meeting on February 10, 2022 in accordance with section 26 of the Planning Act.
- For the reasons outlined in this report, staff recommend that OPA 119 (as amended) be adopted by County Council and forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a decision.

2.0 Background

In September 2019, County Council authorized the Planning and Development Department to proceed with the County Official Plan Review, which includes a Municipal Comprehensive Review component under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019). The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has advised that municipalities may choose to use a phased approach (which includes more than one Official Plan Amendment) to achieve conformity with the Growth Plan. The growth structure in this amendment is based on the Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations prepared by Watson & Associates.

3.0 Summary of OPA 119

The County Growth Structure Amendment outlines where growth and development is to occur within Wellington to achieve the objectives, forecasts and targets required by Provincial policy. The Amendment is comprised of the following key changes:

Complete Communities

Add policies to support “complete communities” as a planning concept and objective of the Official Plan.

Hierarchy of Settlement Areas

Establish a revised hierarchy of settlement areas in the County based on servicing:

Settlement Areas

Consist of 12 primary urban centres:

- with existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems within the Urban System under the existing policy framework; and
- delineated built-up areas and designated greenfield areas.

Rural Settlements

Consist of 2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston):

- without municipal water and wastewater systems; and
- moves them to the Rural System and establishes a corresponding policy framework; and

Consist of 37 existing hamlets:

- continue to be recognized as hamlets, but moved to the Rural System; and
- also identifies the historic Hamlet of Puslinch, a long standing small community in the Township of Puslinch with existing residential, institutional and commercial uses.

Other Changes

- Remove section 6.4.7 policies for un-delineated rural settlement areas in the prime agricultural and secondary agricultural areas, and add a rural cluster policy for secondary agricultural areas.
- Identify urban employment areas in conformity with the Provincial Growth Plan.
- Identify a Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch and a corresponding local policy.

Mapping Updates

- Introduce new mapping schedules to delineate the County Growth Structure.
- Update existing Land Use Schedules to reflect the new settlement area hierarchy, hamlet of Puslinch and Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area.

Technical and Housekeeping Changes

- Update terminology, update map and text formatting, add definitions, italicize defined terms, and make housekeeping revisions related to the above changes.

4.0 Provincial Policy Review

Key applicable policies with respect to this Amendment are those found in:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)
- A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (Growth Plan)
- Greenbelt Plan, 2017

Provincial plans, such as the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan, are to be read in conjunction with the Provincial Policy Statement. Provincial plans normally take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict and where the policies of the Provincial plans are more specific than the general requirements of the PPS. Land use planning decisions by the County must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conform with the policies of the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Official Plan.

The following information highlights how the direction provided by the Provincial plans and policies apply in the context of OPA 119 – County Growth Structure. The comments below generally focus on the more specific Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan policies, however, the PPS policies have also been reviewed.

4.1 Complete Communities

One of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to “Support the achievement of *complete communities* that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.” OPA 119 defines complete communities and adds it to the Plan as a fundamental belief and key objective.

OPA 119 provides the basis for future policy development to meet specific Growth Plan requirements, including for the County to:

- Consider the range and mix of housing options and densities of existing housing stock;
- Plan to diversity the overall housing stock across Wellington; and
- Use available tools to require that multi-unit residential developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes.

See Growth Plan section 2.2.6.2 and 2.2.6.3 for additional detail.

4.2 Managing Growth

The Growth Plan requires that at a minimum, the population and employment forecasts in Schedule 3 will be used for planning and managing growth to 2051. OPA 119 does not implement the 2051 population and employment forecasts on a County-wide or municipal basis because additional consultation with Member Municipalities was required. The population and growth allocations will be implemented through a subsequent amendment to the County Official Plan now that the Phase 1 technical work has been concluded and endorsed by Council.

Section 2.2.1.2 of the Growth Plan sets out specific requirements for a hierarchy for allocating growth:

Growth Plan Section 2.2.1.2	OPA 119
“Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:	
a) the vast majority of growth will be directed to <i>settlement areas</i> that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a <i>delineated built boundary</i>; • have existing or planned <i>municipal water and wastewater systems</i>; and • can support the achievement of <i>complete communities</i>; 	12 primary urban centres meet this criteria
b) growth will be limited in <i>settlement areas</i> that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are <i>rural settlements</i>; • are not serviced by existing or planned <i>municipal water and wastewater systems</i>; or • are in the <i>Greenbelt Area</i>; 	2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston) and 37 hamlets meet this criteria
c) within <i>settlement areas</i> , growth will be focused in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>delineated built-up areas</i>; • <i>strategic growth areas</i>; • locations with existing or planned transit, with a priority on higher order transit where it exists or is planned; and • areas with existing or planned <i>public service facilities</i>; 	12 primary urban centres have delineated built-up areas
d) development will be directed to <i>settlement areas</i> , except where the policies of this Plan permit otherwise;	No change needed
e) development will be generally directed away from <i>hazardous lands</i> ; and	No change needed
f) the establishment of new <i>settlement areas</i> is prohibited.”	See discussion below

With respect to the prohibition of establishing new settlement areas in item f) above, settlement areas mean:

“Urban areas and *rural settlements* within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets) that are:

- a) built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and
- b) lands which have been designated in an official plan for development in accordance with the policies of this Plan. Where there are no lands that have been designated for development, the *settlement area* may be no larger than the area where development is concentrated.”

OPA 119 adapts this definition to include primary urban centres and rural settlements (secondary urban centres and hamlets).

In the Growth Plan, rural settlement areas mean:

“Existing hamlets or similar existing small *settlement areas* that are long-established and identified in official plans. These communities are serviced by individual private on-site water and/or private wastewater systems, contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for development and are subject to official plan policies that limit growth...”

In rural areas, the Growth Plan requires development of more than three units/lots to be in settlement areas (2.2.9.6). Based on OPA 119, development of more than three units/lots would be directed to primary urban centres, secondary urban centres and hamlets.

OPA 119 adds rural settlements as a defined term which supports development of more than three units/lots in the following rural settlements in Wellington:

- 2 secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle and Morriston)
- 37 existing hamlets throughout Wellington County
- 1 re-designated existing historic hamlet (Hamlet of Puslinch)

These areas meet the rural settlement area definition as they are existing, small, long-established and identified on the Official Plan land use schedules (maps).

While OPA 119 continues to permit lot creation and a range of uses in Aberfoyle, Morriston and the hamlets, removal of Official Plan section 6.4.7 (rural settlements) is necessary to meet Provincial policy. Unlike existing hamlets to be retained, the rural settlements recognized by policy 6.4.7 are unmapped and unnamed in the Official Plan. Therefore, they do not meet the Growth Plan definition of rural settlement area. An attempt to identify such areas in the Official Plan would not conform with Growth Plan and Official Plan prohibitions on the establishment of new settlement areas.

In a meeting of January 26, 2022, the County re-confirmed with Provincial staff that policy 6.4.7:

- Conflicts with PPS policies which prohibit new residential lots in prime agricultural areas (s. 2.3.4.3); and
- Conflicts with Growth Plan policies which prohibit new settlement areas (s. 2.2.1.2(f)) and limits residential development in rural areas (s. 2.2.9.6).

Section 6.3 of this report outlines Minto Council’s concerns about removal of section 6.4.7. Staff have revised OPA 119 to move policy 6.4.7 to a modified “rural cluster” policy under the Secondary Agricultural Area policies.

4.3 Employment Areas

The Growth Plan requires the County to designate “all employment areas in the Official Plan and protect them for appropriate employment uses over the long-term” (s. 2.2.5.6). New County Growth Structure schedules of OPA 119 ensure that all Employment Areas in Wellington are designated, including those designations in local official plans.

4.4 Puslinch Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area

A guiding principle of the Growth Plan is to “improve the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in *infrastructure*...by all levels of government.” Highways 401 and 6 are identified as part of the Provincial Strategic Goods Movement Network (SGMN)¹ in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which has a goal to integrate the SGMN into relevant municipal land use plans.

The policies of the Growth Plan require municipalities to maintain a sufficient supply of land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment (2.2.5.1(b)). Section 2.2.9.5 allows for the existing rural employment areas in Puslinch to continue to be permitted. Expansions to these areas are limited to those which are necessary to support existing businesses and are compatible with surrounding uses. The Growth Plan places a priority on linking major goods movement corridors and employment areas (s. 3.2.4).

In accordance with Council’s direction through October 2021 Planning Committee Report PD2021-25, staff has requested that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing consider the exclusion of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area from the Greenbelt Area as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion. The justification for the request is set out in report PD2021-25 and PD2021-17.

4.5 Hamlet of Puslinch

Section 2.3.5.1 of the PPS states that “Planning Authorities may only exclude land from *prime agricultural areas* for expansions of or identification of *settlement areas* in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8”. In the Greenbelt Plan, the goals for settlement areas in the Protected Countryside are to support a strong rural economy, maintain the character of rural communities, achieve complete communities and serve as community hubs (s. 1.2.2.4). For lands within Hamlets in the Protected Countryside, limited growth is permitted through infill and intensification subject to appropriate water and sewage services (s. 3.4.4).

In accordance with Council’s direction through October 2021 Planning Committee Report PD2021-25, staff has requested that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing consider the exclusion of the Hamlet of Puslinch identified in the Amendment as part of the proposed Greenbelt Plan expansion. The justification for the request is set out in that report.

5.0 Consultation

OPA 119 has been informed by consultation since the release of the draft Phase 1 MCR Report: Urban Structure and Growth Allocations which includes:

- Technical Resource Team (TRT) meetings through 2021
- Virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) to present Draft Phase 1 Report on June 23, 2021
- Circulation of draft Phase 1 Report for comment from June to July 2021 to Member Municipalities, Indigenous communities, agencies, members of the public and stakeholders
- Results of the PIC and circulation were documented in Planning Committee report PD2021-21
- A statutory special meeting of County for the Official Plan Review held on June 29, 2021

¹ Ministry of Transportation, *Towards a Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan*, June 2021.

The consultation for Draft OPA 119 included:

- October 2021 Circulation to Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- November 2021 Circulation to Member Municipalities, Indigenous communities, agencies, members of the public and stakeholders
- January 31, 2022 statutory public open house for Draft OPA 119
- February 10, 2022 statutory public meeting for Draft OPA 119

In order to obtain public feedback, notification of engagement opportunities was provided through the project email list and website updates. Notice of the statutory public open house and public meeting was provided in accordance with the Planning Act and advertised in the Wellington Advertiser. Meetings were held virtually due to COVID-19.

Consultation at a Glance	
58	Public Open House Participants
31	Public Meeting Participants
43	Written Submissions

6.0 Key OPA 119 Comments and Changes

A summary of the key comments and a description of changes made to OPA 119 as a result of feedback is provided below. For further details on these and other comments, see Appendix A (Open House Meeting Summary), Appendix B (Public Meeting Minutes) and Appendix C (Summary of Comments and Responses). Full written comments are available in the project file.

6.1 Public Open House

Many of the comments at the open house related to OPA 119 focused on the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch. There were environmental impact concerns, including ponds, wetlands, endangered species and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs). The impact on agricultural lands was also raised. There were also questions about how this relates to the existing industrial area in the Township's zoning by-law, about servicing and the impact of the boundary extending further west of Highway 6 North on nearby residents. The policy for the Study Area requires future study of transportation, servicing, agricultural and environmental matters.

6.2 Public Meeting

Comments at the public meeting also focused on the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area. The comments emphasized agricultural concerns about the current economic benefits of farm lands, loss of food production lands and impacts on farming. There were also site-specific requests/concerns:

- To include additional lands owned by Bryan's Farm Equipment in the hamlet of Puslinch;
- To expand rural employment designation onto 4952 Seventh Line, Guelph/Eramosa and adjacent lands; and
- To support proposed Audrey Meadows subdivision in northern Puslinch.

6.3 Municipal

Town of Minto comments are the only municipal comments that were received for OPA 119. The Town opposes removal of section 6.4.7 (rural settlements) from the County Official Plan because Council prefers that they continue to be recognized and to allow for minor infilling and rounding out. County staff met with Town staff and their consultant to review their concerns. In considering the Town’s comments and concerns, staff propose that OPA 119 continue to remove section 6.4.7, but that it be moved, modified and renamed “rural clusters” as shown in the comparison below.

CURRENT POLICY TO BE REMOVED from Prime Agricultural and Secondary Agricultural Area Policies	PROPOSED POLICY TO BE ADDED to Secondary Agricultural Area Policies
<p>6.4.7 Rural Settlements Rural settlements are existing small communities that form part of the rural fabric of Wellington. These settlements are primarily small clusters of housing with occasional commercial, industrial or institutional uses. These areas are not designated on Schedule “A” and are not expected to grow but they may be recognized in the zoning by-law and limited residential infilling may be allowed.</p>	<p>6.5.4 Rural Clusters Rural clusters are long-established small groups of housing with occasional commercial, industrial or institutional uses located in the Secondary Agricultural Area designation. These areas are not designated on Schedule “A” or “B” and are not expected to grow but they may be recognized in the zoning by-law. New lots may only be allowed in rural clusters in accordance with section 10.4.</p> <p>As part of a <i>municipal comprehensive review</i>, the County will assess the impact of constraints such as the Provincial Agricultural Land Base, Natural Heritage System and Greenbelt Plan on the potential future supply of rural residential lots in the Secondary Agricultural Area, including rural clusters. This assessment will consider, among other things, whether changes to the rural residential lot creation policies are needed.</p>

The above changes would only apply to Minto, Puslinch and Erin as these are the only municipalities with the Secondary Agricultural Area designation. The policy provides for further review of the rural residential lot creation policies to potentially address any rural growth shortfalls through the Municipal Comprehensive Review. We feel this approach would address the concerns of Minto yet remain consistent with Provincial planning policy.

6.4 Indigenous Communities

Our office received comments from the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, requesting that we contact the Environment Office immediately with anything of archaeological interest.

6.5 Agencies – Conservation Authorities

Our office received comments from the following conservation authorities:

Conservation Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issues raised
Saugeen Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issues raised
Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCA staff are not supportive of removal of Regionally Significant Economic Development Area from the Greenbelt Plan and request to be advised of any related proposal. If OPA 119 is approved, request to be circulated proposed terms of reference for study.

6.6 Agencies – Other

Our office received comments from the following legislated authorities:

Upper Grand District School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments to be considered in transportation policy component of Official Plan Review
City of Guelph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to OPA 119 text recommended to clarify that section 4.7.1 (Distinct Urban-Rural Boundary) applies to adjacent cities, as well as the settlement areas within Wellington County. Other comments included in Appendices.
Wellington Source Water Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of comments will be considered as part of source water/ water policy component of Official Plan Review

6.7 Public and Stakeholder Comments

The public and stakeholder comments received and the staff responses are included as Appendix C. The majority of the comments deal with matters in future phases of the growth management technical work (settlement area boundary expansions, rural employment area expansions, etc.), requests for additional information about OPA 119 and the overall Official Plan Review. Staff also received several requests to be added to the notice list which have been noted, but are not included in the table. The discussion below provides more details about key comments on OPA 119.

Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area (RSEDSA)

Comments filed both support and raise concerns/objections to the RSEDSA. The key matters include agricultural, environmental and compatibility issues. If the RSEDSA is approved by the Province as part of OPA 119, detailed terms of reference will need to be prepared for the subsequent study which will be required to include a transportation analysis, a servicing strategy, an agricultural and environmental review. Future uses will need to be compatible with the surrounding area.

Rural Settlement Policy 6.4.7

There are two public objections to the proposed removal of rural settlement policy 6.4.7 for Puslinch. The first is from Jeffrey Wilker of Thomson Rogers on behalf of Audrey Meadows Ltd. His position is that the removal of policy 6.4.7 will be far more restrictive than Provincial policy and that his client's proposed Official Plan Amendment (file OP2021-02) should be written into OPA 119.

The applicant's proposal is for a rural residential development on vacant agricultural lands owned by Audrey Meadows which are adjacent to the existing Audrey Meadows subdivision south of Guelph on the west side of Victoria Road S in Puslinch. The vacant lands are currently designated Secondary

Agricultural, Core Greenlands and Greenlands in the Official Plan. The developed Audrey Meadows subdivision is designated Country Residential and Greenlands.

The proposal is based on the applicant's interpretation that the existing adjacent 48 lot subdivision is a rural settlement and that additional development of approximately 29 units on adjacent land would represent infilling. No changes to OPA 119 are recommended to provide for the above proposal as the OPA application is in process and it will be assessed based on existing planning policies (including section 6.4.7).

The second is from Dave Bouck (DRS Inc./Meran Holdings) who objects to the Provincial emphasis on growth in serviced urban centres, the local emphasis on severances for growth, and asks for the following additional historic rural settlements in Puslinch to be recognized: Crieff, Fielding Lane, Puslinch Lake and Corwhin. Section 6.3 of this report recommends changes that would allow for future review of historic rural settlements for additional severance potential. No further changes to OPA 119 are recommended.

Historic Hamlet of Puslinch

Public comments were generally supportive of the re-designation of the historic Hamlet of Puslinch. In addition, (1) Neal DeRuyter, MHBC for Bryan's Farm and Industrial Supply; and (2) Dave Bouck, Meran Holdings made requests to expand the proposed Hamlet boundary (see Figure 1).

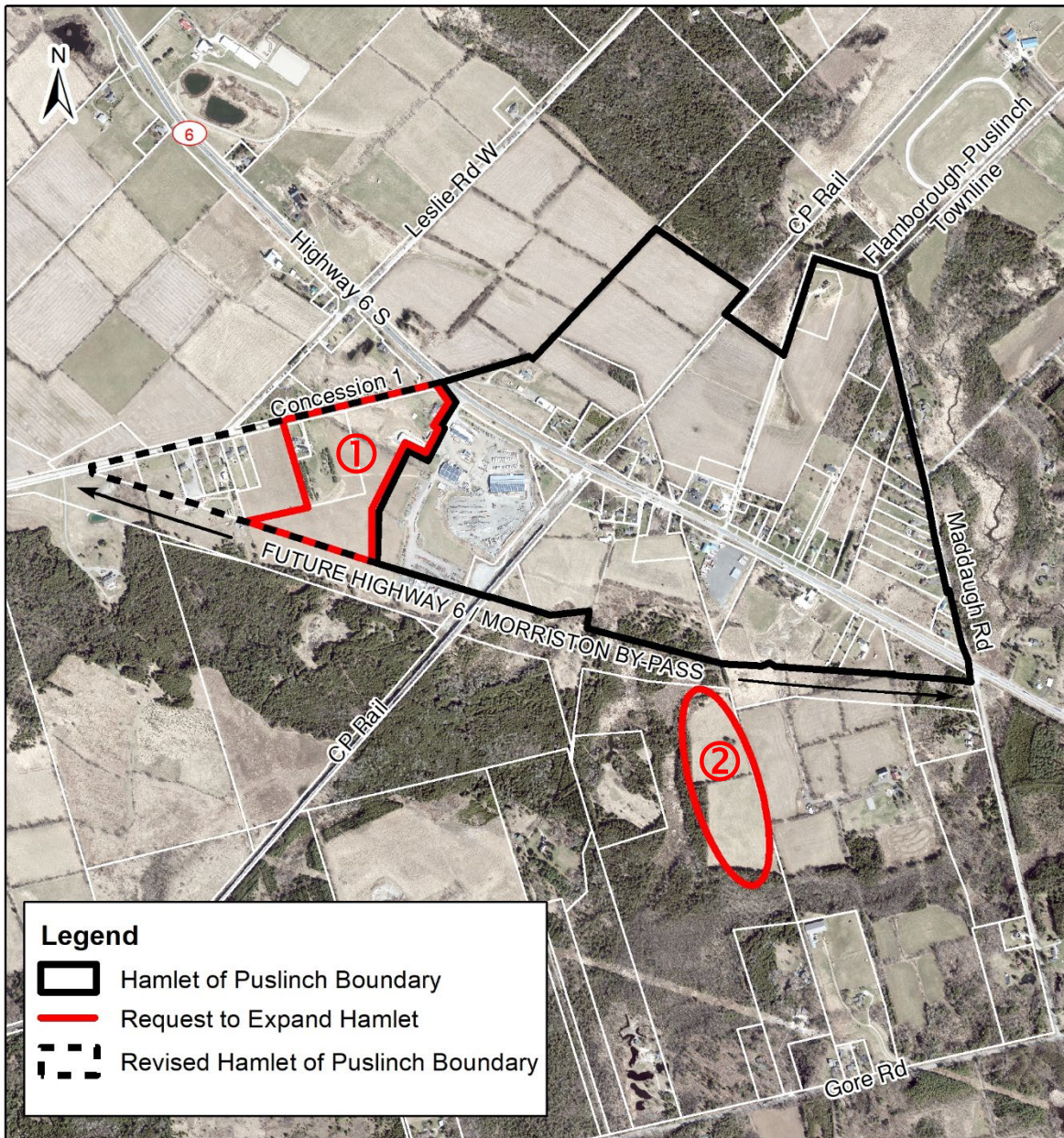
The proposal for Bryan's Farm and Industrial Supply is to expand the hamlet boundary to the west of the existing business to include additional lands under the same ownership. The existing operation is within the original draft hamlet boundary and the area outlined in red is proposed to be added (Figure 1). Staff recommends that the boundary be extended to include the additional lands for the reasons set out in the MHBC planning justification:

- Would provide for future expansion of a long-standing employment use
- Expansion would follow right-of-way of proposed Highway 6 By-pass
- Lands are considered prime agricultural but constrained due to MTO expropriation, existing non-agricultural uses, existing roads, irregular shape
- Would provide for potential residential severances
- Represents a minor increase of the total area of hamlet

Staff also recommends that the hamlet boundary be further extended westerly to include lands up to the intersection of Concession 1 Road and the Highway 6 By-pass, which are largely comprised of rural residential lots. The hamlet boundary in the final draft of OPA 119 has been revised to reflect these changes.

The second request is to add lands south of the proposed Highway 6 By-pass. Staff are not recommending that the proposed Hamlet of Puslinch be extended southerly to include the northern fields of Part of Lot 27, Gore Concession as the future Highway 6 By-pass represents a logical southerly limit of the Hamlet.

Figure 1 Requests to Expand Hamlet of Puslinch



Centre Wellington Heritage

Public comments seek to introduce detailed mapping and text changes to OPA 119 which would appear to have the effect of prohibiting intensification of any kind in the Fergus and Elora-Salem heritage area overlays. While the Growth Plan requires conservation of cultural heritage resources, this is not the same as a development prohibition.

There are policies already in place in the County Official Plan setting out requirements for heritage impact assessment and conservation plans. This type of study determines if any significant cultural heritage resources are impacted by a development proposal, whether the impacts can be mitigated and by what means. This allows for residential intensification requests requiring planning approvals to

be evaluated on a case by case basis within the context of the proposal and local cultural heritage resources.

The Provincial Growth Plan is based on an “intensification first” approach and a minimum residential intensification target of 20% has been in place in the County Official Plan since 2009. Largely due to cultural heritage resources in Centre Wellington, County Council has supported a request for an alternative intensification target of 15%. If approved by the Province, the reduced target will be implemented through a subsequent amendment to the County Official Plan.

Centre Wellington Natural Heritage System

Public comments raise concerns that the Official Plan and OPA 119 do not define and map a County Growth Structure with a Natural Heritage System. The County Official Plan currently identifies a Natural Heritage System on Greenbelt Plan schedules for Puslinch and Erin. The identification of a Natural Heritage System for the remainder of the County will be part of future technical work through the MCR and these comments will be considered at that time.

Natural heritage features and areas are currently identified on the land use schedules for each municipality in the Official Plan. The policy protections (and restrictions in local Zoning By-laws) for such areas continue regardless of whether or not they are shown on the new Growth Structure Schedules. The terms “natural heritage features and areas” and “Natural Heritage System” do not appear in OPA 119 because they are already defined terms contained in the Official Plan.

7.0 Provincial Comments

As legislatively required, our office circulated Draft OPA 119 to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 4, 2021. The statutory 90-day minimum window was satisfied in early January 2022. While staff would always prefer to work with Ministry staff to address any potential policy matters, to date we have not received input and prefer not to delay this Amendment any further. As the approval authority for the Amendment, the Province is in a position to make changes to OPA 119, if necessary.

8.0 Final Draft Official Plan Amendment

The final draft County Growth Structure Official Plan Amendment being recommended in this report may be found at the following link: [Link to Final Draft OPA 119 and Companion Document](#)

Changes made to the Final Draft are highlighted in the companion document.

9.0 Conclusion

Staff are satisfied that OPA 119 is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), has regard for matters of provincial interest, and is in conformity with the Growth Plan (2019) and Greenbelt Plan (2017) subject to Provincial acceptance of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and the Hamlet of Puslinch. Public concerns have been considered and addressed. In our opinion, OPA 119 represents good planning and is in the public interest.

10.0 Recommendations

That pursuant to section 26 of the Planning Act, County Council declares that Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure (a) conforms with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Greenbelt Plan, subject to Provincial acceptance of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and the Hamlet of Puslinch; (b) has regard for matters of provincial interest in section 2 of the Planning Act; and (c) is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

That a by-law adopting County of Wellington Official Plan Amendment 119 be approved.

That the County Clerk forward the report to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to Member Municipalities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Wilhelm', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Policy Planning

- Appendix A Public Open House Meeting Summary
- Appendix B Public Meeting Minutes
- Appendix C Summary of Comments and Responses

Appendix A

OPA 119 Public Open House Meeting Summary

Wellington County Official Plan Review

OPA 119 Virtual Public Open House Meeting Summary

Prepared by LURA Consulting

Background

The County of Wellington is currently reviewing its Official Plan (OP) to complete a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and a 5-year review of its Official Plan as specified under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. An MCR is part of the OP review process. It establishes a long-term vision and planning framework for a municipality that fosters a sustainable approach to future growth and economic development. The County is doing this to prepare for additional population and employment growth and ensure that the updated OP supports healthy, compact, and complete communities in Wellington as directed through *A Place to Growth: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

In June 2021, the County released its MCR Phase 1 Report ([review the report](#)). It held a virtual public open house ([review the presentation](#) and [read the consultation summary](#)) to discuss the recommendations prepared by consultants Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. relating to Urban Structure and Growth Analysis. Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119 implements part of the growth management technical work from Phase 1, including:

- Adding new policies for complete communities
- Revising and mapping the County growth structure based on servicing
- Adding new policies for the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area in Puslinch
- Re-designating the existing historic rural settlement of Puslinch as a Hamlet
- Other technical and formatting changes

Meeting Promotion

Members of the public who wished to join the Virtual Public Open House were requested to register in advance. Individuals could also join the meeting by phone.

A public notice regarding the Virtual Public Open House was published in the Wellington Advertiser two weeks before the meeting. The meeting was also promoted through the County's social media platforms.

Meeting Overview

The Virtual Public Open House was held on January 31, 2022, with a purpose to:

- Provide an update on the County of Wellington's Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119
- Gather feedback and answer questions about Wellington County's OPA 119

The meeting presentation was posted in advance on [Plan Well](#), the County of Wellington's Official Plan Review website, to allow participants to review it beforehand or follow along if they joined the meeting by phone.

In total, 58 participants joined the meeting.

Susan Hall (Facilitator from LURA Consulting) began the meeting with an introduction and overview of the meeting agenda. Sarah Wilhelm (Manager of Policy Planning at the County of Wellington) provided introductory remarks and delivered a presentation on the following areas of the County of Wellington's OPA 119:

- Policy Context and Provincial Planning Policy Structure
- Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and Work Plan
- Complete Communities
- County Growth Structure
- Revised Settlement Hierarchy
- Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA)
- Re-designating Puslinch as Hamlet
- Consultation to Date

Susan Hall facilitated a discussion to receive feedback and comments from participants. A summary of the facilitated discussion is provided below.

What We Heard

General OP Review and MCR process

Participants were invited to ask questions and share their comments regarding the County of Wellington's Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 119.

The questions, answers, and comments are included as follows. Questions are marked by a 'Q', comments are marked with a 'C', and answers and responses are noted with an 'A'.

General

Q: Is more detailed information, such as technical reports, available online?

A: Yes. Information about the MCR process can be found on the County's MCR webpage, [visit the PlanWell webpage](#) – this webpage includes presentations, summaries, and technical reports under the "Public Consultation" tab. If any questions

are not addressed on the website, individuals can contact Sarah Wilhelm or Jameson Pickard by emailing planwell@wellington.ca.

Q: When do you expect to have final approval from the Province?

A: The deadline is July 1, 2022. So far, no comments have been received from the Province regarding the Official Plan Amendment, but the goal is to have this fully approved before the July 1 deadline. However, the final approval for the Official Plan review will require additional technical work and other phased amendments after July 1.

Q: Will the current economic benefits of the land be examined, such as produced food and carbon sequestered?

A: This is something that the County can take away and look at in more detail. This gets into the intersection of climate change policies and will be a component of the work done through the overall Official Plan review. At this point, the study areas must first be determined.

Q: How do we file our concerns about the ponds and wetland areas classified under Primary Agriculture?

A: If there are wetlands mapped in the current Official Plan, those would be considered part of the environmental review of the study area. If there are any specific concerns, individuals can mention them during the meeting or reach out to Sarah Wilhelm or Jameson Pickard at the County, so these can be captured in future reports.

Q: Does the Township know when environmental sensitivity studies will be completed for the study area?

A: Provincial approval of the OPA is required first to establish a study area. Once this is defined, the Township and County can proceed with studying the area. It would be premature to start doing any detailed technical work until the study area is determined.

C: All future maps should show the Areas of Natural Scientific Interest (ANSI) so that these areas are not forgotten when doing reviews by various agencies. There are significant ANSIs in the southwest section of the study area, and one large area is included in the study area. ANSIs must be preserved into the future under the provincial Heritage and Conservation Act.

A: Currently, the ANSIs are shown on the Puslinch land use schedule in the County Official Plan. A future environmental review will examine natural features within the study area.

Q: When will the excess lands designated within the Wellington North Township be reviewed and declared so the public knows which lands are impacted? Is this part of OPA 119?

A: This is not part of OPA 119. The concept of excess lands is part of the Phase 2 work currently being undertaken by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. County staff are scheduled to present at the Wellington North Township Council meeting on February 7, where they will discuss the implications of excess lands.

Q: Why is Morriston being moved to a secondary urban settlement?

A: Re-classifying Morriston to the secondary urban settlement category relates to servicing, its small size, and the Province's methodology for determining land needs. The Highway 6 By-pass will happen regardless of how Morriston is categorized. There is an area of land between the Morriston boundary and the Highway 6 By-pass within the study area where the appropriate land use has not been fully identified yet. This area might allow for a small amount of residential development or other types of development. It is also possible to have some limited development on private services for industrial employment uses if it's a dry industrial use. Additionally, the study area includes a servicing strategy, which would be looked at in detail at the study stage.

Q: How far down the line are discussions about bringing new employment lands into the inventory to make up for those lost to the highway?

A: The study area must first be selected before new employment lands can be determined. This will require a more detailed study.

Hamlet

Q: Why are Hamlets being moved to a different designation? What does this mean?

A: Hamlets are being re-assigned from the urban system to the rural system. This is to recognize that the amount of growth allocated to these areas is a low level of growth. This aligns with provincial policies defined in the Growth Plan. The land use policies applicable to the hamlet designation remain the same, but they will be treated differently in the context of the Growth Plan.

Q: What is the driver behind recognizing the Historic Hamlet of Puslinch? Is there an active interest in residential or commercial subdivision plans?

A: The driver behind recognizing this area was the historic policy in the 1988 Official Plan. Currently, there is no information on whether there is any interest in residential or commercial development. This is not considered under the current designation. The County has received some comments related to the Hamlet's boundary, which will be acknowledged in subsequent County reports.

Greenfield Areas

Q: Will Greenfield Areas receive a designation, and when will they be implemented?

A: The Designated Greenfield Areas are already in effect as a policy area within the Official Plan. When looking at the land use schedules, there are designations in place for each urban centre within the Official Plan for Greenfield Areas.

Q: What are the odds of Greenfield Areas being reviewed and rezoned? What would be the likelihood of future development areas being modified?

A: The settlement area boundary review is included in the technical work for Phase 3 - future development areas will likely be a part of that work. The land needs assessment assesses how future development areas can add to the land supply. The review and re-designation of future development areas would follow the land needs assessment and would be something that the County undertakes as part of Phase 3.

Regionally Significant Economic Development Area

Q: The Township of Puslinch established industrial development areas in their 2018 Zoning Bylaw. Why does the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study look at a much larger area than what the Township had identified?

A: The Township of Puslinch did some work in their Zoning By-Law which identified the industrial parcels that have not yet been developed and discovered that there aren't many left. There are forecasts in the Official Plan for residential and employment growth. In 2016, Puslinch exceeded its 2041 forecasts for employment growth. This indicates rapid rural employment growth, which is why the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study looks at a much larger area.

Q: What is the purpose or reason behind extending the northwestern boundary of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study further west of Highway 6?

A: The existing rural employment areas on the west side include a right-of-way with a 45-meter offset which takes away a lot of the designated land. In addition to that, some access constraints will happen based on the interchange's design. This means that the land would not be developed for employment purposes and requires closer analysis from the project team. Comments have been received from residential properties, opposite the westerly limit, about the prospect of having employment uses extended. As this study continues, the project team will be engaging again to discuss this in more detail.

Q: Changing the boundary of the Regionally Significant Economic Area Study to the west of Highway 6 cuts through primary agricultural land. This area already has a mid-block added to the area, and some residents are not comfortable with this additional potential change. When will this change be announced, and if it goes through, will the area no longer be classified as Primary Agriculture?

A: There is no certainty on whether the boundary would be changed, but all comments received to date will be considered when making recommendations to the planning committee and County Council. Whether that area will continue to be classified as Primary Agriculture requires further study. These decisions would be made in the future and will require public input.

C: Many people have moved to Puslinch for rural living. Many people live in this area because they want to find a rural landscape close to the city. That is one of the reasons why there are not as many residential developments in the area.

Q: If the land is within the Regionally Economic Development Area study but not within the Highway 6 extension study, can land use amendments be submitted before the final decision on OPA19?

A: If an individual wants to proceed with a particular proposal, they can contact County staff. However, if the proposal is not permitted under the current rural designation, it is suggested that the proponent wait until the study is completed. Individuals cannot be prevented from applying, but they are encouraged to reach out to policy or development staff to discuss the nature of their proposal before they file.

Q: What are the plans to manage the existing endangered species in the Greenbelt Areas within the context of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study?

A: Environmental concerns would need to be looked at on a site-specific basis and would have to be reviewed in more detail through the study.

Wellington 36

Q: What effect can the OPA have on a property located in Wellington 36? Do you plan on having any industrial development in the near future? Is there any potential of having a lot severance or a full-on development of Wellington 36?

A: As it stands, the intention is not to make any changes outside of the study area. However, anyone is welcome to share any comments related to their property. County staff will review these comments.

Q: Does the Settlement Area Boundary Review include Wellington 36?

A: A triangular piece of land north of Wellington 36 is included within the study area and will be reviewed further in the study. If there are any comments about the boundary, individuals should reach out to County staff.

Puslinch

Q: There's a minimal supply for residential development in the Puslinch area. Why aren't more lands being added to this type of land use? Is the County waiting for the landowners to come forward and say that this is what they would like to do?

A: Landowners are always welcome to provide their comments and feedback. However, the provincial policy environment is highly restrictive, and new estate residential subdivisions are no longer permitted. The Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan do not allow residential developments to be expanded or newly developed unless it has an existing designation. The County Official Plan also prohibits this kind of development.

Q: Caledon has multiple developments within their boundary. Why is Puslinch not allowing residential developments?

A: It isn't easy to compare the policies of two different Official Plans. Caledon might already have existing designations in their Official Plan that allow for that type of development, whereas Puslinch does not.

Q: Is there a plan for bringing services like sewer and water to Puslinch? If so, are there reports on how this will be served to the area we can review?

A: There was a study completed about the feasibility of municipal services for certain areas within the Township of Puslinch, and this information is available on the [Township of Puslinch's website](#).

Applications and Process

Q: Can planning applications (i.e. zoning, site plan, etc.) still be submitted for properties identified within the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) before the area has been officially studied?

A: The point of identifying the study area is to study it comprehensively and then look at what areas require land-use changes. It is not ideal to start initiating planning applications in advance of this study as its findings may require alterations to the application. The identification of the study area is not meant to prohibit development that is in keeping with current land use designations and zoning.

Written Feedback

Following the meeting, the County of Wellington received one submission by email. The following key points were raised through written feedback:

- Ensure that Planning Impact Assessments also include exterior design factors and support these assessments with Urban Design Guidelines.
- Develop planning policies for Secondary Urban Centres that take exterior built form into account, and ensure similar policies exist for major centres.
- Adjust the intensification criteria in residential land use designations to emphasize high quality of architectural design.
- Implement deconstruction policies that discourage outright demolition and encourage recycling of preservable materials.
- Consider using Model Urban Design Guidelines to steer the process for smaller lower-tier municipalities without the resources to develop their guidelines.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Susan Hall of LURA Consulting provided participants with the project team's contact information for any additional feedback and wrapped up the meeting. Participants can provide their feedback and comments until February 13, 2022. Members of the public can contact the project team by email or by phone at:

Contact: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager Policy Planning

Phone: 519-837-2600 ex 2130

Email: planwell@wellington.ca

Mailing Address: ATTN Planning Department

74 Woolwich Street

Guelph, ON

N1H 3T9

Appendix B

OPA 119 Public Meeting Minutes



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

OPA 119

10:30 am, Thursday February 10, 2022

County Administration Centre

Zoom

Planning Committee Members: Warden Kelly Linton, Planning Chair Allan Alls, Councillors Davidson, Lloyd and McKay

Also in Attendance: Councillors Campbell, Cork, O'Neill and Seeley; Puslinch Township Councillors Bailey, Goyda and Sepulis

County Staff:

Scott Wilson, CAO

Ken DeHart, Treasurer

Donna Bryce, County Clerk

Nicole Cardow, Deputy Clerk

Mark Montgomery, IT

Aldo Salis, Director, Planning and Development Department

Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning

Curtis Marshall, Manager of Development Planning

Meagan Ferris, Manager of Planning and Environment

Karen Chisholme, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager

Jameson Pickard, Senior Planner (Policy)

Zach Prince, Senior Planner (Development)

Matthieu Daoust, Planner

Members of the Public: There were 31 members of the public who attended the online meeting. Staff have recorded their names in the project file as part of the public record.

OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Alls welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

STATEMENT READ BY CHAIR

Chair Alls read the following statement:

This meeting is to provide information, comments and input for Planning Committee and Council. County Council has not taken a position on the matter; County Council's decision will come after full consideration of input from the meeting, submissions from the public and comments from agencies.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Corporation of the County of Wellington in respect of the adoption of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, you must make a written request to the Director, Planning and Development Department, County of Wellington, 74 Woolwich Street, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 3T9.

Official Plan Amendment 119 requires approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Pursuant to Section 17(36.4) of the Planning Act there is no appeal in respect of a decision of the approval authority if the approval authority is the Minister.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Chair Alls invited Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning to make a presentation about the proposed amendment. Ms. Wilhelm's presentation covered the following points:

- Purpose of meeting
- Provincial, County and local planning policy context
- Municipal Comprehensive Review context and work plan
- Purpose of Official Plan Amendment 119 (OPA 119)
- Complete communities, County structure and County growth structure
- Regionally significant economic development area (RSEDA)
- Re-designating Hamlet of Puslinch
- Other minor OPA 119 changes
- Future implementation matters, consultation to date and next steps

Presentation slides are available at www.wellington.ca/planwell.

PUBLIC INPUT

Janet Harrop had no comments to provide on the Amendment at this time.

Barclay Nap raised four main concerns:

1. The subjects being looked at in the Amendment that should be separated in two: part 1) the identification of the Hamlet of Puslinch and part 2) the identification of lands in the Township for future growth.
2. The economics being looked at in the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) should include the current economic benefits of farm lands.
3. Large amounts of land included in the RSEDA.
4. Loss of food production lands which should not be simply viewed as empty space.

Neal DeRuyter, planning consultant representing Bryan's Farm Equipment in south Puslinch, indicated support for the proposed Hamlet of Puslinch. He requested that the proposed boundary be adjusted to include additional lands owned by his client to provide additional opportunity for expansion of the business.

Steven Pham, planning consultant for 492 Seventh Line in the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, requested expansion of the Rural Employment Area designation onto his client's lands. He also supports retention of policies in the Official Plan allowing for expansion of Rural Employment Areas.

Jeffrey Wilker, legal representative for George Good in northern Puslinch, advised of his client's active development applications for a 22 lot expansion to the existing Audrey Meadows subdivision. His opinion is that this would be an infilling and rounding out of an existing rural settlement area.

He urged the Committee to review his various written submissions detailing his client's concerns regarding this Amendment. He expressed his client's objections to the County's Municipal Comprehensive Review process and to deleting existing Official Plan policy 6.4.7 dealing with rural settlements.

He recommended that the County either defer OPA 119; delete part 6, number 29 from OPA 119; or recognize his client's proposal within OPA 119.

Linda Barkovsky support the comments offered by Mr. Nap. She expressed her concerns with the impact of additional industrial development on water supply.

Councillor Lloyd noted receiving letters about the amount of land needed to expand settlement areas (approximately 1,200 ac, 1,000 ac of which is in the Centre Wellington Area) and the impact on prime agricultural land. She noted this is a big concern for the agricultural community.

Councillor Lloyd also asked (1) Whether heritage matters are guided by local municipalities or is it something the County Official Plan deals with? and (2) Does the County Official Plan have heritage areas outlined that can or cannot be intensified for housing?

Sarah Wilhelm advised that the Township of Centre Wellington has its own Official Plan and the heritage area overlays are identified within it and clarified that the County looks to the local municipalities to largely deal with heritage matters. Centre Wellington has a heritage planner on staff, a local heritage committee and maintains the heritage register. There are also heritage policies in the County Official Plan.

Bill Sims noted that the OPA 119 maps do not show any of the ANSIs (Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest) in the area under review in Puslinch and that these areas should be protected.

Aldo Salis clarified that OPA 119 does not remove any ANSIs and these features will need to be considered if and when the Township proceeds with the review of the study area.

CLOSING

There being no further comments or questions from the public, Chair Alls encouraged those in attendance to put their comments in writing to record their interest in the matter and/or request a notice of decision.

Chair Alls thanked everyone for attending the meeting and declared the public meeting closed at 11:36 am.

Appendix C

Summary of Comments and Responses

Table C1	MUNICIPAL Comment and Response Table
Table C2	INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY Comment and Response Table
Table C3	AGENCY Comment and Response Table
Table C4	PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER Comment and Response Table (none received for Erin or Mapleton)
Table C4.1	COUNTY-WIDE
Table C4.2	CENTRE WELLINGTON
Table C4.3	GUELPH/ERAMOSA
Table C4.4	MINTO
Table C4.5	PUSLINCH
Table C4.6	WELLINGTON NORTH

Appendix C

Table C1 MUNICIPAL Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
<p>MINTO Council Reports and Recommendations: December 7, 2021 & February 15, 2022 MUN</p>	<p>Council comments of December 7, 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Minto Council oppose removal of section 6.4.7 from the County Official Plan so that existing rural settlements remain recognized as provided for in Provincial Policy and the Growth Plan so that minor infilling and rounding out is permitted under specific conditions. • That Minto Council re-iterate the need for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. clear policies in the comprehensive review around urban boundary expansions up to 40 ha and where there is no net increase in land supply to encourage flexibility, reduce boundary rigidity and to increase land development opportunity; 2. policy to allow urban areas to be expanded, outside the comprehensive review, where population and employment targets are exceeded, including re-allocation of surplus growth from municipalities not meeting targets. <p>Council comments of February 15, 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Council encourage the County to retain Section 6.4.7 of the Official Plan with clarifying policy. 	<p>County staff responded to the December 7, 2021 Town of Minto comments in a letter of February 4, 2022. As part of that correspondence staff committed to review policy 6.4.7 to see if it could be modified to allow it to be retained in the Official Plan.</p> <p>As a result, changes are recommended to OPA 119 to retain a modified version of section 6.4.7 under the secondary agricultural area designation to be named “rural clusters”.</p> <p>See report for additional detail.</p>

Table C2 **INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY Comment and Response Table**
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Saugeen Ojibway Nation November 4, 2021 OPA119-001I	The Saugeen Ojibway Nation’s Environment Office does not have the resources to engage in consultation on this project. If anything of archaeological interest is revealed on site, please contact the SON Environment immediately.	OPA 119 does not require an archaeological assessment, however, this comment is noted for future phases of MCR technical work.

Table C3 **AGENCY Comment and Response Table**
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Conservation Halton November 15, 2021 OPA119-001C	No comments on OPA 119. Will focus feedback on any amendments to natural hazard, source protection, water resource and natural heritage system policies, etc.	Comments noted. No changes to OPA 119 requested.
Saugeen Conservation November 30, 2021 February 2, 2022 OPA119-002C	SVCA finds the changes to the general working and schedules of the Official Plan to be acceptable	No changes to OPA 119 requested.
Hamilton Conservation Authority December 7, 2021 OPA119-003C	HCA staff are not supportive of removal of Regionally Significant Economic Development Area (RSEDA) from the Greenbelt Plan. Request to be advised of any proposal related to Greenbelt Plan in this regard. If OPA 119 is approved, request that the HCA be circulated with the proposed terms of reference for the study area work and to be circulated with any associated environmental studies.	Comments noted. No changes to OPA 119 recommended.

Table C3 **AGENCY Comment and Response Table (continued)**
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Upper Grand District School Board December 9, 2021 OPA119-002A	Do not object to the proposed OPA. County should encourage complete communities by including pedestrian connections (sidewalks, walkways or trails) to schools, particularly from higher density residential development.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. These comments will be considered as part of the transportation component of the Official Plan Review. The transportation policy review will include development of active transportation policies and will be implemented through a future OPA/OPAs as part of the phased Official Plan Review.
City of Guelph December 10, 2021 OPA119-003A	Preliminary comments of concern with Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and request further consultation with the City (Water Services, Economic Development and Planning Services). Request revision to section 4.7.1 (Distinct Urban-Rural Boundary) to clarify that it applies to the City of Guelph.	County planning staff gave a presentation about OPA 119 and proposed growth allocations at a Guelph Water Supply Master Plan meeting on January 17, 2022. County planning staff also provided the presentation to City planning staff. City planning has made no further requests to meet or follow up comments. Changes to OPA 119 text recommended to clarify that section 4.7.1 applies to adjacent Cities.
Wellington Source Water Protection December 22, 2021 OPA119-005A	Provide detailed edits mostly related to defined terms and acronyms. Expect source protection and water related amendments will mostly occur in future OPAs as part of the County’s phased Official Plan Review.	These comments will be considered as part of the source water/water policy review. The source water/water policy review will include development of revised/ updated policies and will be implemented through a future OPA/OPAs as part of the phased Official Plan Review. Changes to OPA 119 text and mapping recommended to include the following: “Please note that the SPPs are amended from time to time and for up to date vulnerable area mapping the reader should consult the specific SPP.”

Table C4.1 COUNTY-WIDE PUBLIC Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
<p>Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) December 9, 2021 OPA119-004A</p>	<p>WFA emphasized the importance of agriculture and agriculture planning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agriculture requires a systems approach to deal with complexity and work in an integrated manner, so that proposed solutions are fit for both the problem they address, and the main objectives being pursued for the system as a whole. 2. Developing a Regionally Significant Economic Development Area along the Highway 401 and 6 corridors cannot fragment farmland or take land out of agricultural production. 3. Maintain the County of Wellington “Agriculture First” principles that protect and support agricultural uses and normal farm practices. <p>WFA wishes to continue to collaborate with the County through the MCR process.</p>	<p>If approved by the Province, the policies for the study area include a requirement to incorporate an agricultural review.</p> <p>Staff is also in the early stages of the County-wide agricultural mapping and policy review component of the MCR and has retained Planscape Inc. to assist with this work.</p> <p>The County will continue to collaborate with the WFA through the MCR process, including the above matters.</p>

Table C4.2 CENTRE WELLINGTON PUBLIC Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
<p>Member of Public October 26, 2021 OPA119-001P</p>	<p>Concerned that the Official Plan/OPA 119 do not define and identify a County Growth Structure which respects and applies a Natural Heritage System. Draft OPA 119 do not include the term “natural heritage” or “natural heritage systems”. Requests that the County implement a Natural Heritage System together with consideration of policies and targets for growth/intensification through OPA 119.</p>	<p>No changes to OPA 119 recommended.</p> <p>See report for discussion. Also see comments under record OPA119-018P(A) and (B).</p>
<p>Paul Britton, MHBC November 9, 2021 OPA119-003P</p>	<p>Comments on behalf of Cachet Development Partners Inc. regarding lands located to the south of Sideroad 15, west of Gerrie Road, east of Irvine Road in the Township of Centre Wellington. Supportive of hierarchy of settlement areas and identification of Elora as a primary urban centre.</p> <p>Request that County consider deleting the words “build out and eventual” from “The build out and eventual expansion of primary urban centres is therefore a logical outcome of this policy direction....”</p>	<p>No changes to OPA 119 recommended.</p> <p>The text requested to be amended is part of the current section 4.8.1 official plan policies.</p>
<p>Member of Public February 9 & March 9, 2022 OPA119-018P(A)</p>	<p>Comments requesting revisions to OPA 119 to add new schedules to the County Official Plan to duplicate land use plans in the local Official Plan and identify significant cultural heritage landscapes (CHLs) which are not currently identified in the local Official Plan.</p> <p>Various other revisions are also requested, some of which seek to direct the Township to analyze intensification within the heritage area overlay/CHLs in the built-up areas of Fergus and Elora/Salem. Other comments propose restrictive policies for intensification.</p>	<p>No changes to OPA 119 recommended.</p> <p>The Township of Centre Wellington will determine next steps, priorities and approaches for significant cultural heritage resources in the municipality.</p> <p>The County has received no objections to the request for an alternative intensification target of 15% from any Member Municipalities.</p>

Table C4.2 CENTRE WELLINGTON PUBLIC Comment and Response Table (continued)
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
<p>Member of Public February 1, 2 and 17, 2022 OPA119-018P(B)</p>	<p>Comments requesting the revisions to OPA 119 to add a study area for a regionally significant Centre Wellington heritage area and add Fergus and Elora heritage area overlays in Centre Wellington Official Plan to County Official Plan.</p> <p>Concerned that OPA 119 does not address climate change, change Greenlands features mapping or introduce a natural heritage systems approach and that intensification is being fast-tracked in Centre Wellington.</p>	<p>No changes to OPA 119 recommended.</p> <p>The Township of Centre Wellington will determine next steps, priorities and approaches for significant cultural heritage resources in the municipality.</p> <p>The County Official Plan has contained the minimum greenfield density target (40 persons and jobs per hectare) and minimum residential intensification target (20% within the built-up area) since 2009. OPA 119 does not propose to make changes to the targets for any of the municipalities in Wellington County. The County has requested an alternative intensification target of 15% on the basis of technical work completed by Watson & Associates. If approved by the Province, the reduced target will be implemented through a subsequent amendment to the Official Plan.</p> <p>Climate change and natural heritage features/system will be addressed as part of the municipal comprehensive review.</p>
<p>ACO Representative, Wellington Branch February 10, 2022 OPA119-032P</p>	<p>ACO Wellington Branch supports February 9, 2022 submission OPA119-018(A) requesting important revisions necessary in determining appropriate growth and intensification allocation targets for the Township of Centre Wellington.</p>	<p>See comments above under record OPA119-018P(A) and (B).</p>

Table C4.3 GUELPH/ERAMOSIA PUBLIC Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Cam Lang, BGS Homes November 11, 2021 OPA119-005P	5700 Wellington Road 86, Guelph/Eramosa Township Comments regarding their interest in the Ariss Valley Golf and Country Club. Noted that the Recreational designation which applies to the property in the current Official Plan does not appear on the land use schedule in OPA 119.	Recommend correction as suggested.
Caitlin Port, MHBC December 10, 2021 OPA119-013P	Comments on behalf of Barbara Deter regarding lands east of the Highway 124 Hamlet Area, Guelph/Eramosa Township. Request to expand the Highway 124 Hamlet Area or the Rural Employment Area along Highway 124 onto the site and nearby lands. Request to be updated on MCR process.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. The proposal for this site has been filed as a Settlement Area Boundary expansion and Rural Employment Area expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 MCR technical work.
Andrew Walker, GWD December 10, 2021 July 15, 2021 May 12, 2021 OPA119-022P	8531 Highway 7, Guelph/Eramosa Township Comments on behalf of Bala Balasingham (owner). Request to expand Rockwood to include property. Request to be notified.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. The proposal for this site has been filed as a Settlement Area Boundary expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 technical work.
Kevin Bechard, Weston Consulting December 3, 2021 OPA119-011P	4952 Seventh Line, Guelph/Eramosa Township Comments on behalf of Amrinder Mangat (prospective owner). Request to expand a Rural Employment Area onto the site and nearby lands.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. The proposal for this site has been filed as a Rural Employment Area expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 MCR technical work.

Table C4.4 **MINTO Comment and Response Table**
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Steve Wever, GSP December 10, 2021 OPA119-015P	41 Park Street, Clifford, Town of Minto Comments on behalf of prospective owners (Landscouts Investments and Cachet Developments) regarding property at 41 Park Street, partially within the Clifford urban centre. Request to (1) re-designate lands from Future Development to Residential; and (2) expand the Clifford boundary and re-designate the balance of the lands for residential use.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. The proposal for this site has been filed as a Settlement Area Boundary expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 MCR technical work.
Member of Public December 15, 2021 OPA119-020P	Information requests were not related to OPA 119	No changes to OPA 119 requested.

Table C4.5 PUSLINCH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Neal DeRuyter, MHBC November 5, 2021 OPA119-002P	Comments on behalf of CBM Aggregates raising concerns with the proposed Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area policy 9.8.4 which states that the policy allows for other uses “based on need”. Request that the County clarify that the area may also be considered for aggregate uses and/or remove the needs test as it relates to mineral aggregate operations.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. It is already clear that this is the case as PPS section 2.5.2.1 states that “Demonstration of need for <i>mineral aggregate resources</i>shall not be required...”.
Neal DeRuyter, MHBC November 15, 2021 OPA119-004P	4058 Highway 6, Township of Puslinch Comments on behalf of Bryan’s Farm and Industrial Supply (1649511 Ontario Inc.). Supports the identification of the Hamlet of Puslinch but asks for consideration of expanding the proposed boundary to include additional adjacent lands owned by Bryan’s Farm and Industrial Supply.	Recommend change as suggested. See report for discussion.
Member of Public November 16, 2021 OPA119-006P	Has multiple concerns with the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and boundary across from Sideroad 20 N on the west side of the Hanlon Expressway, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to rural lifestyle • Source water protection area • Prime agricultural and candidate areas • Multiple wetlands Mid-block exchange will already increase traffic, noise, reduce agricultural footprint, impact wetlands and reduce rural lifestyle.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. These comments will be considered as part of the subsequent Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study.
Member of Public November 29, 2021 OPA119-009P	Request that OPA 119 be refused.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended.

Table C4.5 PUSLINCH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table (continued)
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
<p>Member of Public December 8, 2021 OPA119-012P</p>	<p>Comments raise concerns with the proposed Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the area is agricultural land which provides many important functions • Puslinch does not offer the type of affordable housing that new workers drawn to the area would need • Increased traffic/pollution, need for road maintenance • Removal of aggregate before potential development • Direct and indirect impacts on agriculture • Impact on natural heritage features <p>Highway 6 restructuring will create some constrained triangular areas that should be looked at as part of the study.</p>	<p>No changes to OPA 119 recommended. These comments will be considered as part of the subsequent Regionally Significant Economic Development Area study.</p>
<p>Dave Bouck, Meran Holdings December 10, 2021 February 9, 2022 OPA119-016P(A)</p>	<p>Part of Lot 27, Gore Concession, Township of Puslinch Comments requesting modifications to OPA 119 to provide for more growth opportunities, particularly in Puslinch. Do not support the restructuring proposal (particularly the removal of limited growth for rural settlements). Supports the establishment of the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area and the re-establishment of the Hamlet of Puslinch. Request that limit of proposed Hamlet be extended to include northern field of lands identified as Part of Lot 27, Gore Concession.</p>	<p>No changes to limit of proposed Hamlet of Puslinch recommended. See report for discussion.</p> <p>See Table C1 (municipal comment and response table) and report discussion of revisions to section 6.4.7 (rural settlements).</p>

Table C4.5 PUSLINCH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table (continued)
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Dave Bouck, DRS Inc. December 10, 2021 February 9, 2022 OPA119-016P(B)	Part of Lot 31, Concession 7, Township of Puslinch Comments support inclusion of lands within Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area but recommend including a mix of employment and residential uses, and a modest expansion to Morrison. Do not support eliminating limited growth opportunities for rural settlements.	The proposed policies for the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area provide for consideration of other uses based on need, in addition to employment uses. The proposal for this site has also been filed as a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 MCR technical work. See Table C1 (municipal comment and response table) and report discussion of revisions to section 6.4.7 (rural settlements).
Jeffrey Wilker, Thomson Rogers January 28, 2022 December 10, 2021 June 23, 2021 OPA119-017P	Part of Lots 17, 18 and 19, Concession 8, Township of Puslinch Comments on behalf of Audrey Meadows Ltd. raise the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc planning for the municipal comprehensive review • Oppose deletion of policy 6.4.7 for rural settlements and inappropriate reliance on severances • Admission by staff that proposal creates a shortfall in Puslinch • Proposed historic hamlet of Puslinch has significant challenges • Request OPA 119 be amended to include proposal for property 	The County’s Official Plan Review has met and exceeded the public consultation requirements of the Planning Act. No changes recommended to OPA 119 for this property. See Table C1 (municipal comment and response table) and report discussion of revisions to section 6.4.7 (rural settlements).

Table C4.5 PUSLINCH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table (continued)
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Eric Davis, Miller Thomson December 23, 2021 OPA119-019P	NE Part of Lot 30, Concession 7, Township of Puslinch Comments on behalf of George Ochrym, Jan Iwaniura and 848838 Ontario Inc. Request that property remain in the proposed Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area so that their client can take part in the pending evaluation of future land use options.	No changes to OPA 119 requested.
Tony Vaccarello, Commercial Focus Realty Inc. January 25, 2022 OPA119-024P	3989 Highway 6, Township of Puslinch Questions about zoning review for Highway 6 properties and hamlet boundaries.	No changes to OPA 119 requested.
Member of Public January 26, 2022 OPA119-025P	4238 Concession 7, Township of Puslinch Comments requesting that the boundaries of ANSIs (Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest) be shown on notice maps and future drawings for discussion or study purposes.	There are no changes to ANSIs identified in the current Official Plan through OPA 119. The study for the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area will include an environmental review.
Members of Public January 30, 2022 OPA119-026P	4020 Maddaugh Road, Township of Puslinch Comments requesting information about the Hamlet of Puslinch.	Staff provided additional information as requested and no further comments received.
Member of Public February 1, 2022 OPA119-028P	West side of Sideroad 20 N, Township of Puslinch Has multiple concerns with the Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area and boundary across from Sideroad 20 N on the west side of the Hanlon Expressway, including: destruction of agricultural land, disruption to wildlife and habitat, maintaining rural lifestyle. Even close to Highway 6 would cause light and noise pollution	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. These comments will be considered as part of the subsequent study for the Regionally Significant Economic Development Area.

Table C4.5 PUSLINCH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table (continued)
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Member of Public February 8, 2022 OPA119-030P	4006 Highway 6, Township of Puslinch Comments in support of proposal to re-designate the Hamlet of Puslinch.	No changes to OPA 119 requested.
John Slood, John Slood Investments & Slood Construction Ltd. February 7, 2022 OPA119-031P	Part of Lots 7, 8 and 9, Concession 10, Township of Puslinch Proposal from 2006 to expand Arkell settlement area boundary for a 36 lot subdivision (subject to County Official Plan Amendment OP-2006-06 and Draft Plan of Subdivision 23T-06003, and Township Zoning By-law Amendment applications). Comments raise the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPA does not address the needs of the Township and the residential construction businesses in the Township. • Request that the Arkell Settlement Area boundary be expanded to include their subdivision application lands. 	No changes to OPA 119 recommended. The proposal for this site has been filed as a Settlement Area Boundary expansion request, which will be considered as part of the future Phase 3 MCR technical work.
Member of Public February 13, 2022 OPA119-033P	7458 Fielding Lane, Township of Puslinch Comments raise the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully supportive of re-designation of Puslinch as a hamlet and in support of OPA 119. • Puslinch is the economic hub of Wellington County Proximity to Hwy 401, Hamilton, central location in province and a gateway from the 401 	No changes to OPA 119 requested.

Table C4.6 WELLINGTON NORTH PUBLIC Comment and Response Table
County Official Plan Amendment 119 – County Growth Structure

Name/Date/ID	Key Comments	Staff Response
Steve Wever, GSP December 10, 2021 OPA119-014P	Comments on behalf of North Arthur Developments Inc. who has submitted a request for an employment area conversion through privately initiated development applications and as part of the MCR process. Seeking confirmation that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Area designation is based on current Industrial designation of the area in the Official Plan; • OPA 119 is not intended to address employment area conversions • Recommended employment area conversions will be implemented through a subsequent OPA later in the MCR process • OPA does not impact client’s ongoing applications and MCR employment conversion request 	No changes to OPA 119 requested. Employment Area conversions are not part of OPA 119. They will be addressed as part of the Phase 2 MCR technical work and if recommended, will be implemented through a future OPA.
Member of Public February 3, 2022 OPA119-029P	Comments pertained to severance application B32/21 at Wells Street E and Wellington Road 14 and the MCR Phase 2 Land Needs Assessment.	No changes to OPA 119 recommended.