



Committee Report

To: Warden Janice Jackson
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Mark Paoli
Director of Planning and Development

Date: August 12, 2021

Re: Bruce County Official Plan Amendment C-2021-012 (Georgedale Farms Ltd.)

Staff Recommendation:

That Bruce County Official Plan Amendment C-2021-012 (Georgedale Farms Ltd.) be approved; and,

That the By-law be forwarded to County Council for adoption.

Summary:

The purpose of the application is to facilitate the severance of a +/- 0.56 ha surplus farm dwelling lot from a +/- 51.20 ha agricultural parcel at 1100 Bruce Road 20, in the Municipality of Brockton. An amendment to the County Official Plan is required to allow a third parcel to be created from an original Crown surveyed lot.

Alignment with Guiding Principles:



GOOD GROWTH
To put growth in the right locations with the right services



AGRICULTURE
To support our key economies, including supporting a thriving agriculture community



CONNECTING
To improve our ability to move people, goods, and information between communities



HOMES
To increase the supply and mix of homes



BUSINESS
To create opportunities for a diversity of businesses, jobs, and employers



COMMUNITIES
To create wellbeing through access to healthy complete communities



HERITAGE
To identify and manage our cultural heritage resources



NATURAL LEGACY
To manage natural resources wisely for future generations

● Not applicable
● Not aligned
● Aligned
● Strongly aligned

The proposed farm consolidation is strongly aligned with the Bruce County Guiding Principle on Agriculture. Farm consolidations support the agricultural sector by enabling farms to become more efficient and better integrated and encourage alternative methods of production such as implementation of agri-environmental measures and good agricultural practices.

The proposal is aligned with the Homes Guiding Principle by maintaining the existing residential use on the severed lot.

The proposal is aligned with the Natural Legacy Guiding Principle as the severance of the surplus dwelling will not introduce any new impacts to the existing aggregate licence on the site as the dwelling is already in existence.

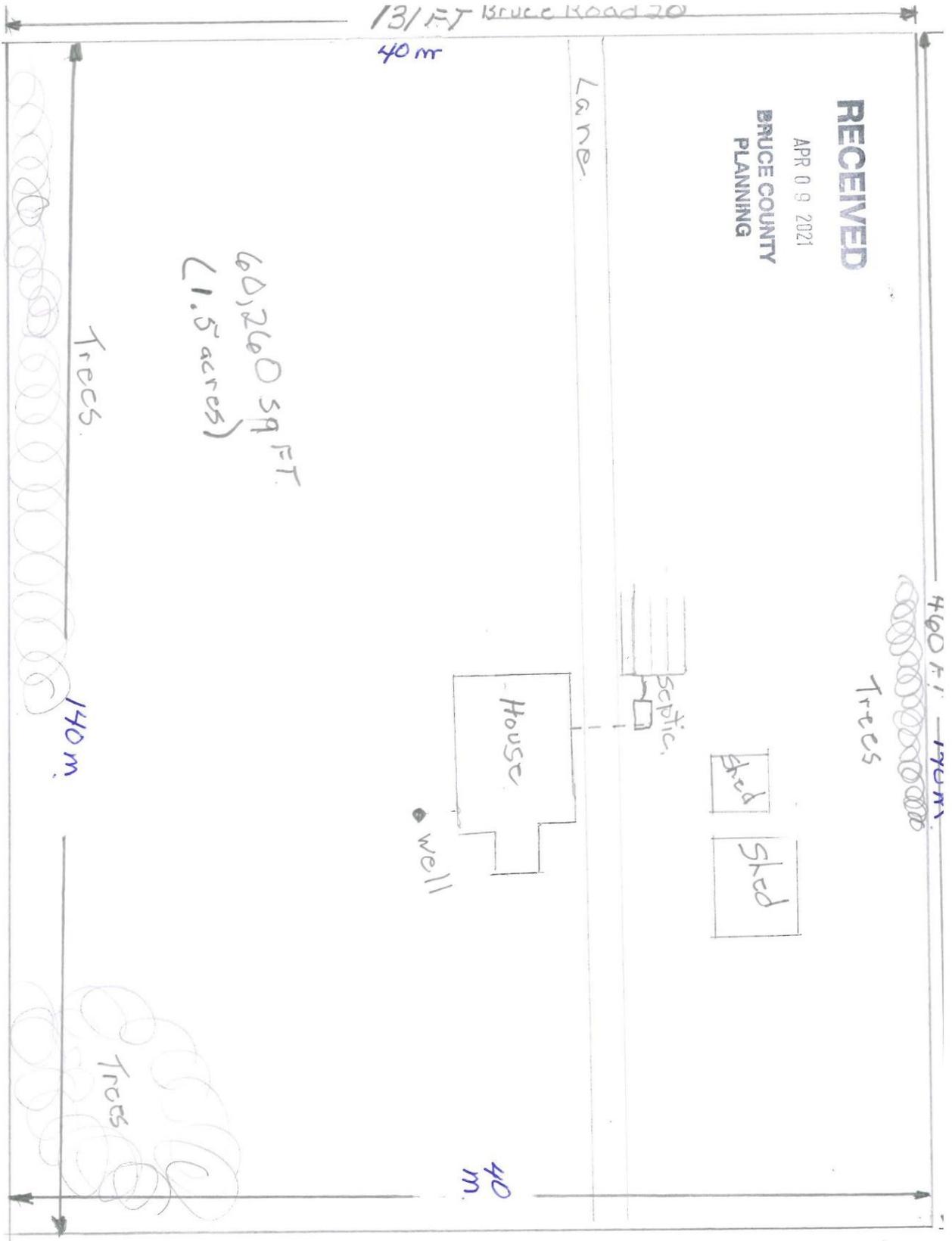
Regarding the Heritage Guiding Principle, the archeological potential on the property will be assessed before any site alteration and development are proposed in areas having high potential.

On balance, this proposal is aligned with the Guiding Principles and the Vision of a healthy, diverse and thriving future.

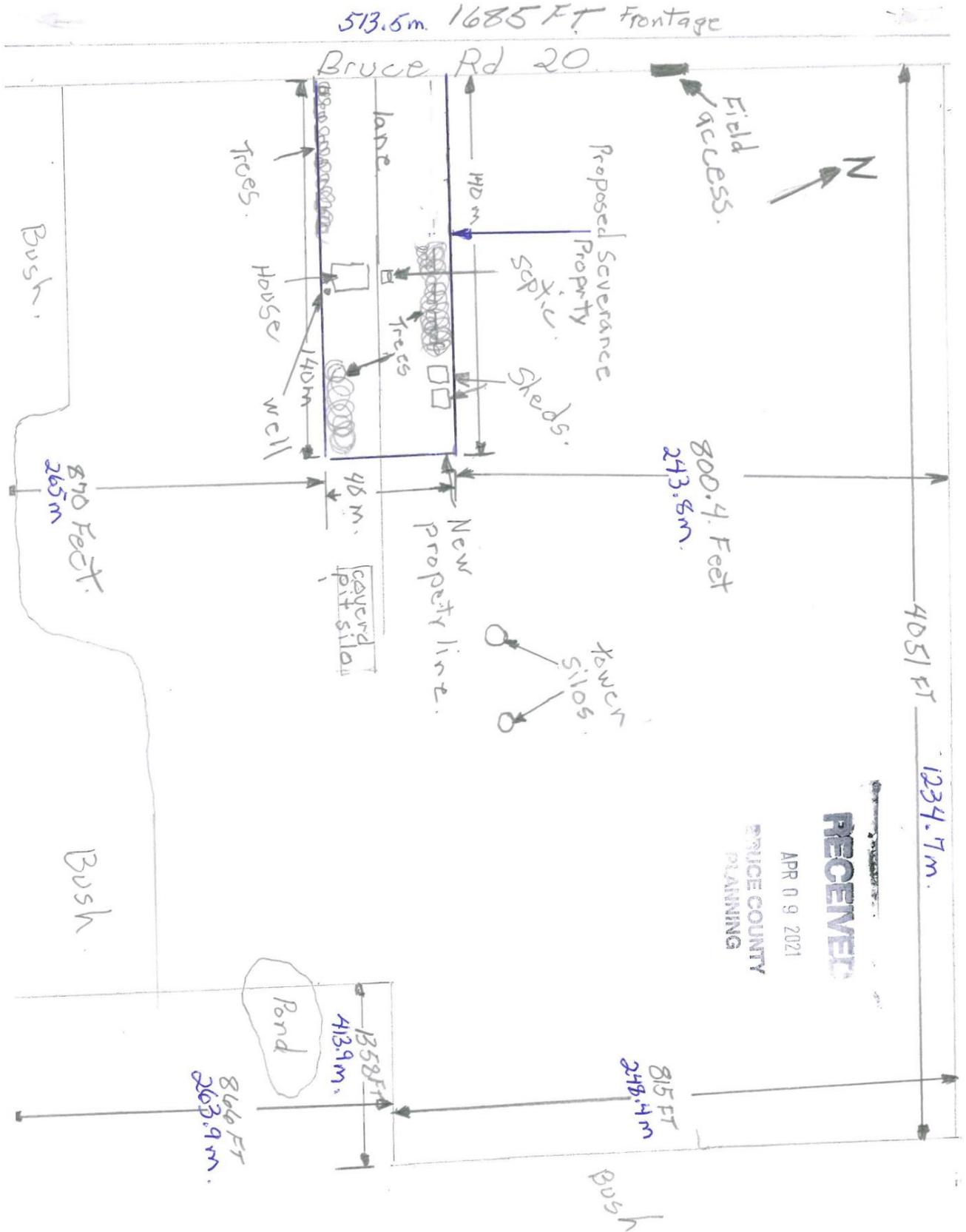
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Site Plan Showing the Proposed New Lot



Site Plan of the Entire Property



Planning Analysis:

The following section provides an overview of the planning considerations that were factored into the staff recommendation for this application, including relevant agency comments (attached) and planning policy sections.

Surplus Farm Dwelling Severance

The lands are in a prime agricultural area. The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) restricts severances in prime agricultural areas to limit the impacts to agricultural operations. Lot creation in prime agricultural areas is only permitted in the following circumstances:

- For agricultural uses;
- For agricultural related uses;
- For a dwelling surplus to a farming operation; and,
- For infrastructure.

Further, the PPS states that the surplus residential lots are to be limited in size to accommodate water and sewage, and that new residential dwellings be prohibited on the larger farm parcel (retained lands). An associated application to amend the Municipality of Brockton's Zoning By-law proposes to prohibit future residential uses on the retained farmlands.

The County Official Plan establishes criteria for agricultural severances in addition to the PPS policies. The lands are primarily designated Agricultural Areas, which permits the severance of a surplus farm dwelling subject to the criteria below:

- The applicant must be a bona fide farmer;
- The farmer must own and farm the subject lands;
- They must own and farm other lands;
- They must reside elsewhere;
- The dwelling must be habitable; and,
- Minimal active farmland should be removed from agricultural production.

The applicant meets the definition of a bona fide farmer. They own and rent multiple properties in the area for agricultural purposes. The existing dwelling on the subject lands is surplus to their needs. The proposal meets all the criteria established in the PPS and County Official Plan for agricultural severances, except for the number of parcels that can be created from an original Crown surveyed lot which is discussed below.

Number of Parcels Created

The County Official Plan requires an original Crown surveyed lot to be divided into no more than two parcels including the retained portion.

The intent of the policies is to maintain the viability of Bruce County's agricultural system by ensuring that lots are of sufficient size to support ongoing agricultural uses and limit potential incompatible uses.

The existing property is +/- 51.20 ha and comprises portions of three original Crown surveyed lots. The applicant is proposing to sever the residential dwelling and to retain the remaining farmlands for agricultural purposes. This would divide one of the original Crown surveyed lots (Lot 15, Concession 11) into three parcels (the surplus residential dwelling lot, a portion of the retained farm parcel and the adjacent farm lot to the south).

It is the opinion of County staff that this proposal maintains the overall intent of the agricultural policies. The farmable area will continue to be farmed in the same manner. The amendment will allow the applicant to sever a house that is surplus to their needs while contributing to the ongoing viability of their farm operations.

The lands to be severed are also limited in size to accommodate the residence, accessory buildings, a well and the existing sewage disposal system. As little land as possible is to be removed from the agricultural area. The application will not introduce new impacts to surrounding farm operations.

[Licenced Aggregate Operation and Adjacent Landfill Considerations](#)

There is an existing licenced aggregate operation at the rear of the subject site and a second licence on the adjacent property to the north. The Greenock Landfill is also located on the neighbouring lands to the east.

The County Official Plan generally restricts residential lot creation within specified distances from mineral resource areas, licenced aggregate operations, and sanitary landfill sites to avoid potential land use compatibility issues. However, in the case of a surplus farm dwelling severance, a new dwelling cannot be erected on the retained farm parcel and the surplus dwelling is already within the zone of influence of these uses so no new compatibility issues are anticipated. For this reason, the Official Plan does not require surplus farm dwelling severances to meet the mineral resource area, aggregate operation or sanitary landfill site setback requirements of the Plan.

In addition, aggregate extraction on the current licenced area of the site is over 800 m from the proposed severed lot.

[Archaeological Potential](#)

A portion of the proposed retained farm lot around Meyer Lake is considered to have high archeological potential. An archaeological assessment is required as per the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport, Criteria for Evaluating Archeological Potential checklist. A holding provision will be included in the related Zoning By-law Amendment which will require an archaeological assessment to be completed before any development or site alteration can occur in that area. Normal farm practices can continue.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

Potential Appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Report Author:

Coreena Smith
Senior Development Planner

Departmental Approval:

Mark Paoli
Director, Planning and Development

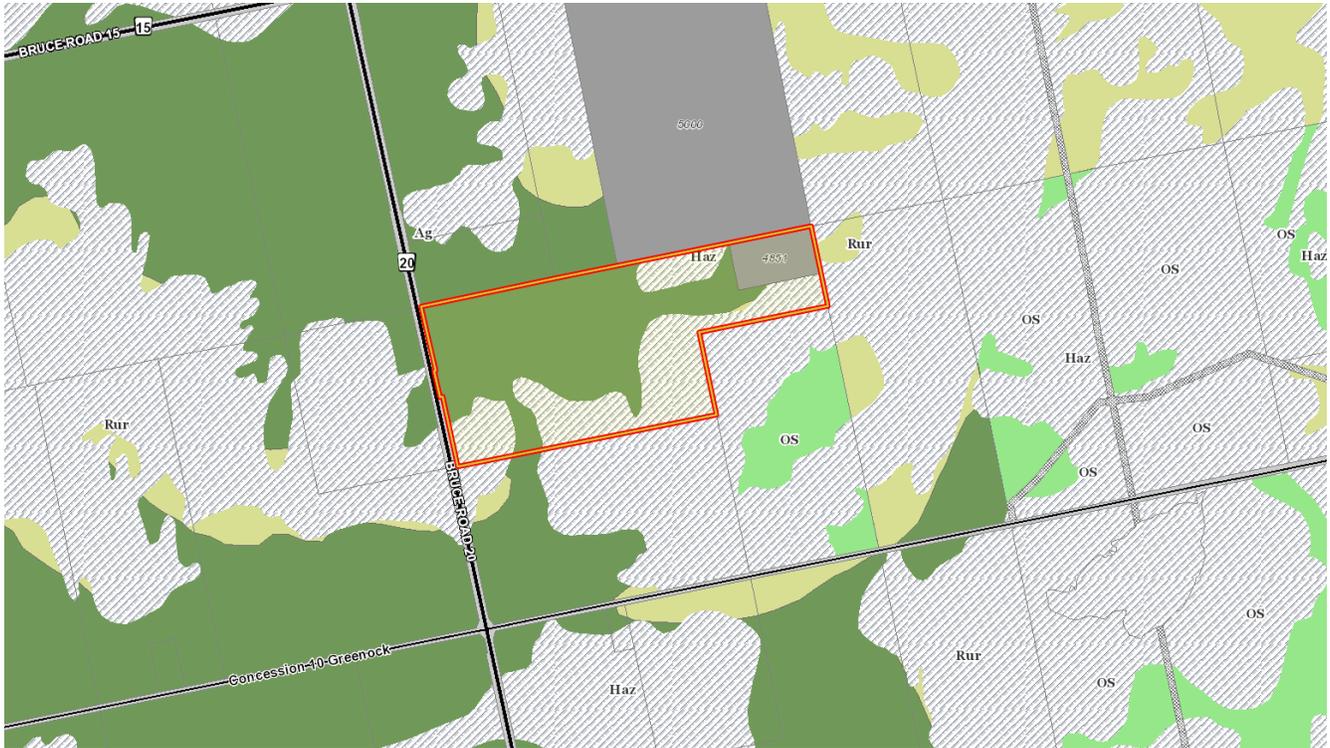
Approved for Submission:

Sandra Datars Bere
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendices

- County Official Plan Map
- Local Zoning Map
- List of Supporting Documents and Studies
- Agency Comments
- Public Notice
- Draft Decision Sheet
- Draft By-law and Schedule

County Official Plan Map (Designated Agricultural Areas, Hazard Land Areas, Rural Areas)



Local Zoning Map (Zoned General Agricultural (A1), Environmental Protection (EP), Environmental Protection (EP-1), Extractive Industrial (M3))



List of Supporting Documents and Studies:

- Site Plans
- Location Plans
- Surplus Farm Dwelling Severance Information Sheet
- Aggregate Access Route E-Mail

Agency Comments:

Municipality of Brockton:

- On the retained farm lot, the proposed distance from the new property line to the three silos (including the bunker silo) is only 15m. The required zoning setback is to be 20m.
- The note on the severed lot pertaining to the on-site sewage system (septic) does not clarify the distance from the septic tank and the distribution pipe to the new property line. The Ontario Building Code requires the septic tank and distribution pipe to be 3m to the property line.
- The 911 number should stay with the severed property.

Note: These comments will be addressed through the related Zoning By-law Amendment and Consent files (Z-2021-042 and B-2021-052).

Bruce County Transportation and Environmental Services: No comment.

Hydro One Networks Inc.: No comments or concerns at this time. This preliminary review considers issues affecting Hydro One's 'High Voltage Facilities and Corridor Lands' only. For proposals affecting 'Low Voltage Distribution Facilities', the applicant must consult the local area Distribution Supplier.

Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board: No comments.

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (attached): The proposed application is acceptable.