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February 23, 2022

Monica Walker-Bolton
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
Corporation of the County of Bruce
30 Park Street
Walkerton ON N0G 2V0
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**Re: Draft County of Bruce Official Plan Amendment C25 (Agriculture)
Provincial One Window Comments
MMAH File: 41-EOPA-213586**

Dear Monica Walker-Bolton,

Thank you for circulating the draft Bruce County Official Plan Amendment C25 (OPA C25) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for review and comment. MMAH staff appreciate the collaborative approach taken by the county throughout its development. It is understood that this draft OPA is intended to update the county's agricultural land use policies to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) and to better align with provincial guidelines in order to reduce the need for amendments for routine planning applications. It is recognized that this OPA is exempt from the Minister's approval and the following One Window comments are provided to the County for its consideration in making decisions on these matters.

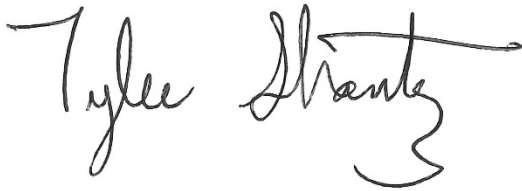
The draft OPA C25 was circulated to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) through the One Window Planning Service. Please find enclosed a table that is a consolidation of One Window comments for your consideration.

It is understood that the County of Bruce is currently working on a new official plan, including a comprehensive review to ensure the plan is consistent with the PPS. Typically, amendments of the scope and scale of OPA C25 that propose county-wide agricultural land use policy changes would be completed as part of this comprehensive review.

These comments are based on provincial interests in agriculture as articulated by the PPS. Please note while some specific changes have been suggested, we are open to discussing different policy approaches that achieve the same objectives in some circumstances.

We trust that these comments are helpful to the County in its consideration of the OPA. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this and future phases of the county's new official plan project, Plan the Bruce. Ministry staff would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience to discuss these draft OPA C25 comments and additional suggestions for future phases. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the undersigned. By copy of this letter, MMAH requests the County provide the undersigned with the notice of decision for this OPA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyler Shantz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Tyler Shantz, RPP, MCIP
Planner
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Municipal Services Office – Western Ontario

c: bcplwa@brucecounty.on.ca

Provincial One-Window Comment Table

Draft County of Bruce Official Plan Amendment C25 (Agriculture)

MMAH File: 41-EOPA-213586

Date: February 23, 2022

Revisions to Draft Official Plan/Official Plan Amendment Suggested to Implement the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and Provincial Plans					
Item	OP Policy Number	Comments/Concerns	Related Provincial Ministries	Reference to Planning Act, PPS or Provincial Plan Section or Policy	Proposed Revision
1	5.5.2 iv)	OP policy 5.5.2 iv) appears to outline some but not all of the PPS criteria for agriculture-related uses. Agriculture-related uses can also include farm-related commercial uses, as described in OP policy 5.5.4(2)(2). OP policy 5.5.2 iv) also appears to direct that agriculture-related uses be small scale and demonstrate that they cannot be located in a settlement area, as a first priority. In comparison, the PPS generally permits these uses in prime agricultural areas, provided the applicable criteria are met.	OMAFRA	PPS Policy 2.3.3.1 and definitions (Agriculture-related uses)	Suggest revising policy 5.5.2 iv) to ensure that all potential types of agriculture-related uses are addressed. This could be achieved in-part by referencing agriculture-related uses or including both farm-related commercial and industrial uses in the policy. Suggest reviewing the current criteria in policy 5.5.2 iv) and including in the policy some of the PPS criteria for agriculture-related uses, such as “benefits from being in close proximity to farm operations.”
2	5.5.4(1) and 5.5.4(2)(1)	Certain uses that are included in the PPS definition for agricultural uses do not appear to be addressed in OP policy 5.5.4(2)(1) (e.g., associated on-farm buildings and structures, growing of crops for biomass, etc.). In addition, other uses referenced in this policy do not appear to be consistent with the PPS definition (e.g., the use of lands or buildings for raising animals).	OMAFRA	PPS policy 2.3.3.1 and definitions (Agricultural uses)	Suggest consolidating what represents an agricultural use into one policy, consistent with the PPS definition. This could be accomplished by deleting policy 5.5.4(1) and revising policy 5.5.4(2)(1) to be consistent with the PPS definition for agricultural uses, by incorporating the PPS definition for agricultural uses into this policy.
3	5.5.4(2)(2), 5.5.4.1 and 5.5.9	The term “agriculture-related uses”, as defined in OP policy 5.5.4(2)(2), does not appear to be consistent with the PPS definition for “agriculture-related uses”. OP policies 5.5.4(2)(2), 5.5.4.1, and 5.5.9 appear to provide different criteria for agriculture-related uses, in part based on the location of the proposed use (e.g., located on or off a farm). The PPS criteria that agriculture-related uses must be compatible with, and must	OMAFRA	PPS Policy 2.3.3.1 and definitions (Agriculture-related Uses)	Suggest revising policy 5.5.4(2)(2) to ensure a clear description of agriculture-related uses is provided, consistent with the PPS. For example, the terminology in this policy could be aligned with the PPS definitions for farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses. Suggest revising the criteria for agriculture-related uses in policies 5.5.4(2)(2), 5.5.4.1, and 5.5.9 to ensure the applicable PPS criteria are applied for these uses consistently.

Provincial One-Window Comment Table

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		not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations apply to all proposed uses regardless of location.			
4	5.5.4(2)(3)	OP policy 5.5.4(2)(3) appears to list some uses (e.g., additional residential units, open space, public conservation, etc.) that do not appear to be consistent with the PPS definition for “on-farm diversified uses”. Some of the uses listed in this policy also appear to meet the PPS definition for “agricultural uses” (e.g., primary farm residence and temporary farm accommodation), and are not on-farm diversified uses.	OMAFRA	PPS Policy 2.3.3.1 and definitions (On-farm diversified uses)	<p>Suggest revising the uses listed in policy 5.5.4(2)(3) to ensure they are consistent with the PPS definition for on-farm diversified uses.</p> <p>Suggest revising policy 5.5.4(2)(3) to include: Further on-farm diversified uses, secondary to the principle “agricultural” use of the property...” to be consistent with the PPS definition for on-farm diversified uses.</p>
5	5.5.6.2	PPS policy 2.3.4.1 a) includes criteria that need to be addressed when considering lot creation for an agricultural use. This includes that the proposed retained and severed lots are of a size appropriate for the types of agricultural uses common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations. OP policy 5.5.6.2, which provides the policy framework for lot creation, does not appear to fully address these PPS criteria.	OMAFRA	PPS policy 2.3.4.1 a)	To be consistent with PPS policy 2.3.4.1 a), it is suggested that policy 5.5.6.2 be revised to include: “the proposed retained and severed lots are of a size appropriate for the types of agricultural uses common in the area and are sufficiently large enough to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations.”
6	6.5.3.3.3	OP policy 6.5.3.3.3 iv) directs that MDS setbacks are to be met for the proposed severed lot, only if “barns” exist on the retained farmlands. OP policy 6.5.3.3.3 iv) also references that MDS I setbacks are required to be met “to the surplus house”. Implementation Guideline #41 in the MDS Document provides direction on how MDS I setbacks are to be measured for surplus farm dwelling severances.	OMAFRA	PPS policy 2.3.3.3 and the MDS Formulae (Definitions and Implementation Guidelines)	To be consistent with the PPS and ensure the MDS requirements for proposed surplus farm dwelling severances are fully captured in policy 6.5.3.3.3 iv), it is suggested that “livestock facilities” and “anaerobic digesters” be referenced in this policy instead of barns. It is also suggested that policy 6.5.3.3.3 iv) be revised to align with the MDS requirements under Implementation Guideline #41. This could be accomplished by removing the reference “to the surplus house”, and generally replacing this with “MDS formulae requirements are met for the proposed severed lot...”.