



# Committee Report

**To:** Councillor Steve Hammell, Chair and  
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

**From:** Mark Paoli  
Director of Planning and Development

**Date:** April 21, 2022

**Re:** Local Official Plan Amendment L-2021-012 (Lord Elgin)

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## Staff Recommendation:

That Local Official Plan Amendment L-2021-012 (Lord Elgin) be approved; and

That the Director or Manager of Land Use Planning be authorized to sign the Decision Sheet.

## Summary:

The purpose of the application is to amend the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan to add a site-specific provision to the Highway Commercial designation to permit high density residential uses. If approved, the amendment would facilitate high density residential uses in addition to commercial uses on the subject lands.

## 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

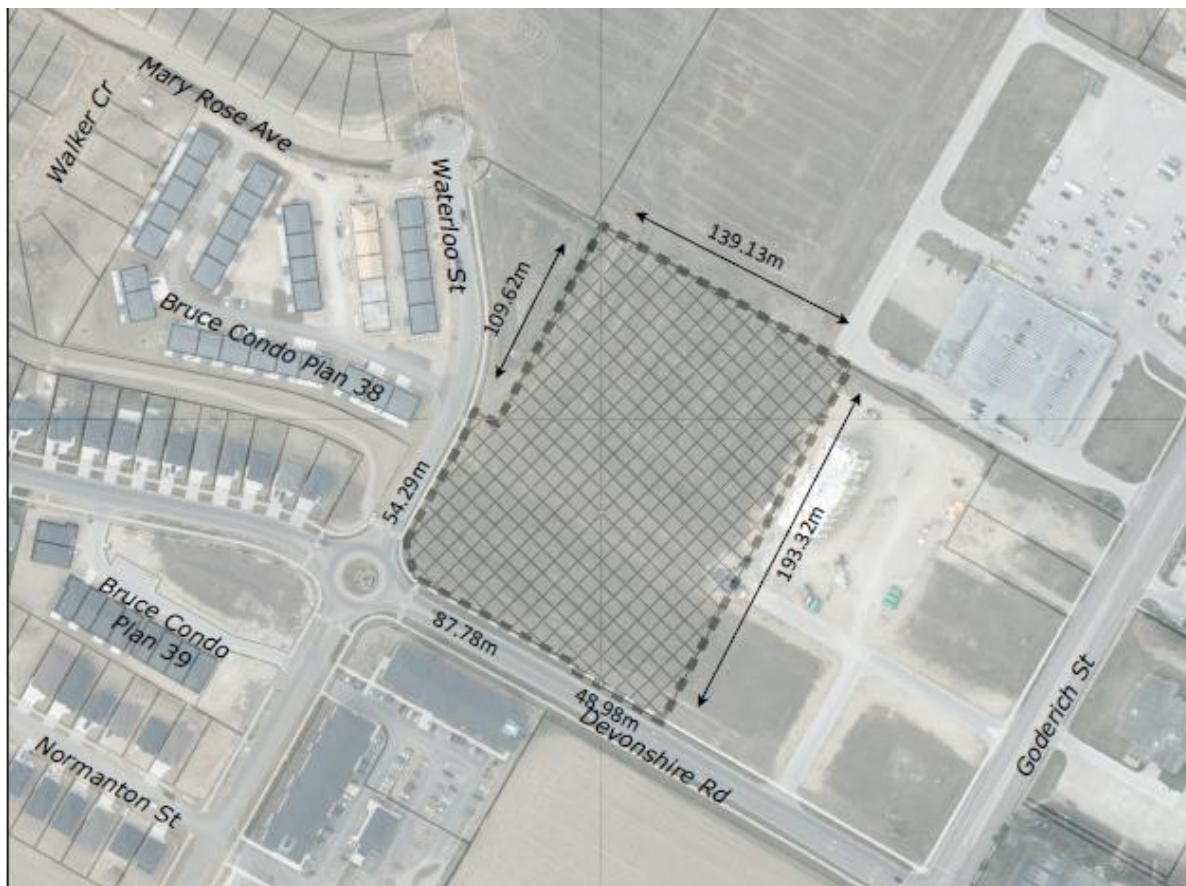
The +/-2.77 hectare site is situated at the northeast intersection of Waterloo Street and Devonshire Road in Port Elgin. The lands are designated Highway Commercial and are currently vacant. The addition of high density apartment dwellings to this designation creates a mixed use opportunity that makes efficient use of land and infrastructure. Therefore, the plan is aligned with the Good Growth guiding principle.

The proposed development would increase the supply of residential units in Saugeen Shores by an additional 113 to 249 units in an apartment format. This is strongly aligned with the Homes guiding principle.

Given the development is close to commercial, service and recreational amenities, the proposal is aligned with the Communities guiding principle.

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

### Airphoto



Concept Plan (three 4-storey apartments and a hotel expansion)

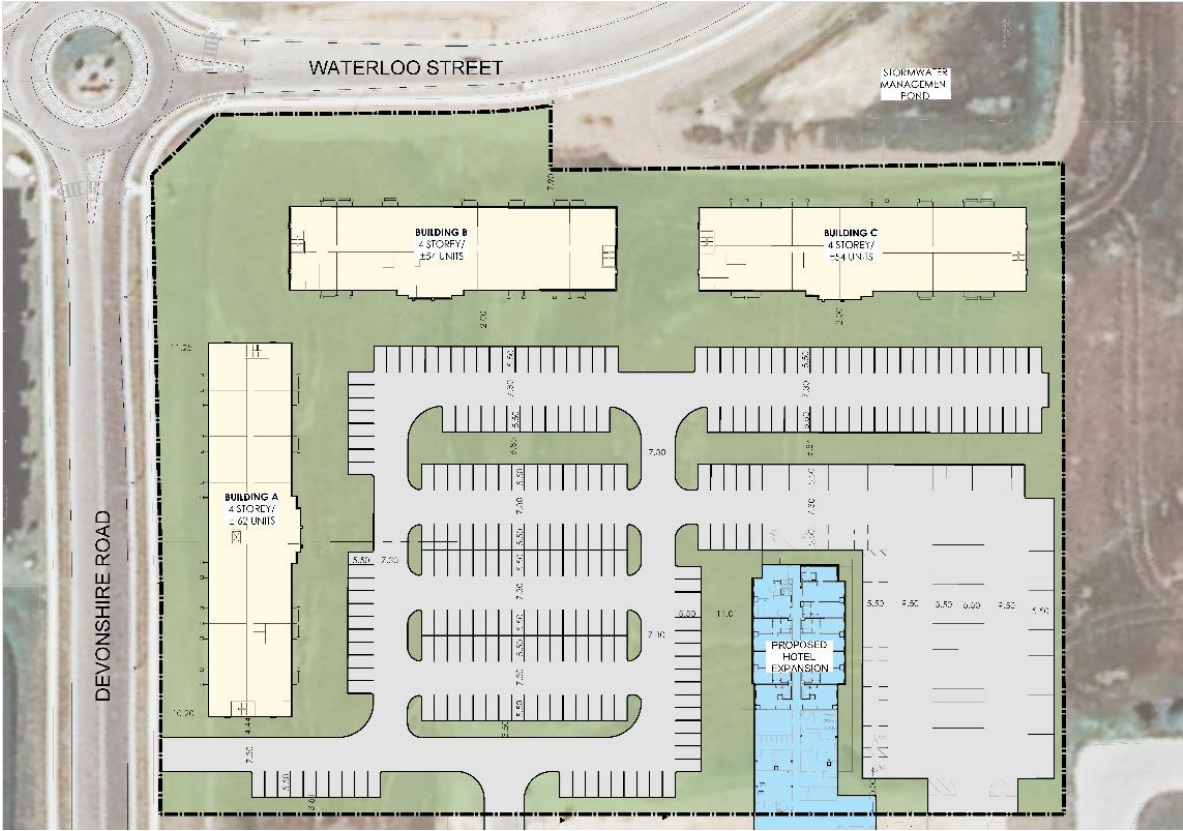


Image of the Existing Site (looking from Waterloo Street to the existing hotel)





## 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), public comments (attached) and planning policy sections.

### Efficient Use of Land and Infrastructure

The lands are designated Primary Urban Communities in the Bruce County Official Plan and Highway Commercial in the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan. The goals and objectives of both the County and local Official Plans direct much of the future growth to Primary Urban Communities, such as Port Elgin. Directing new development and intensification to Settlement Areas is supported to ensure the wise use of land and resources, to promote efficient development patterns, protect resources (e.g., natural and agricultural), ensure effective use of infrastructure and public facilities, and minimize unnecessary public expenditures.

The proposal would permit high density residential uses in the current Highway Commercial designation. These residential uses would be in addition to the commercial uses already permitted in the Highway Commercial designation. These commercial uses generally have larger spatial demands or require greater access / visibility to highway traffic for their existence compared to commercial uses in the downtown core. These uses include but are not limited to retail stores, offices, food stores, restaurants, hotels/motels, outlet stores, home improvement stores and automotive uses.

The proposed development will be accessed from Devonshire Road, or alternatively from Goderich Street through the existing commercial lands to the east. The development will utilize the existing municipal street network and has highway exposure.

Similarly, the lands will be connected to existing municipal water and sewer services through extension of these services to the site. Stormwater will also be addressed through an on-site stormwater management pond and connections to the existing storm sewer system. The applicant's consultant has shown there is adequate capacity in the water, sewer and stormwater systems to accommodate the proposed development in accordance with the policies of the local Official Plan. This will be further confirmed at the site plan approval stage once the development format is finalized. Full municipal services are the preferred form of servicing in Port Elgin.

The subject lands represent the potential to develop to a higher density than currently exists with a potential mix of uses. This proposal represents an efficient use of the land, resources and services.

### Mixed Uses

In the local Official Plan, a high density development may be permitted by rezoning locations within or adjacent to the Core Commercial designation without an amendment to the Official Plan. In those situations, a mixed residential and commercial form of development is encouraged.

The subject lands are designated Highway Commercial. Residential uses in the Highway Commercial designation are limited to those accessory to the main commercial use. Unlike in the Core Commercial area, a high density mixed use development in the Highway Commercial designation requires an amendment to the local Official Plan. The applicant is seeking such an amendment. The Town has approved similar mixed use proposals in other Highway Commercial locations (e.g., 1020 Goderich Street in Port Elgin and 221 Adelaide Street in Southampton).

The current concept plan illustrates three, 4-storey apartment buildings with parking and landscaped areas. A proposed expansion of the existing hotel to the east is also shown. This concept plan is preliminary and included for illustrative purposes. The plan demonstrates how both residential and commercial uses could be accommodated on the site. Alternative layouts may be brought forward for the Town's consideration through the site plan approval process. The hotel expansion is currently under review.

The applicant had requested that apartment dwellings, townhouse dwellings and accessory dwelling units be permitted on the site in addition to the permitted commercial uses. This was later revised to apartment dwellings only to facilitate a residential density and format desired in the community to reflect current housing demands.

To address public concerns that the proposal would eliminate commercial opportunities entirely, the applicant has agreed to a minimum combined gross floor area of 929m<sup>2</sup> for commercial uses. The proposed hotel expansion accounts for approximately 1028m<sup>2</sup> and is currently under review by the Town as noted above. Furthermore, the amendment applies only to a portion of the lands between Goderich Street and Waterloo Street. The area between the existing hotel and Goderich Street will remain designated and zoned strictly for highway commercial purposes.

Town staff have also advised that, if approved, the property is subject to site plan control. The site plan approval process can be used to ensure the residential and commercial uses are provided in an integrated and cohesive manner through, for example, building design and landscaping. In response to public comments, the applicant has advised that the current concept plan has given consideration to integration with the adjacent existing residential uses by:

- Creating a landscape strip on Devonshire Road;
- Proposing a landscape feature at the roundabout that will extend the appearance of the greenspace associated with the stormwater management pond in the northwest;
- Establishing landscape areas to exceed the minimum 30% required in the Zoning By-law;
- Locating parking behind the proposed buildings to limit lighting impacts to adjacent lands; and
- Locating the site entrance to the east of the existing apartment building on the south side of Devonshire Road to minimize traffic associated with the new development and ensure vehicle lights are not directed at the existing apartment building.

On-site amenities would also be required to serve the new residential users in accordance with the high density policies of the local Official Plan, which had also been raised as a concern by members of the public. These matters would be discussed and further refined through the site plan approval stage.

The applicant has also agreed to restrict certain commercial uses, including but not limited to automobile gas bars, car washes and bulks sales establishments, in the amendment area. These measures would address potential compatibility issues within and external to the site.

### Range and Mix of Housing Types

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) identifies that an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities shall be provided to meet the projected requirements of current and future residents, as do the policies of the County and local Official Plans. The proposed development is seeking to add a high density residential development format, offering a potential additional housing choice in the community within walking distance of nearby commercial, service and recreational amenities which is required per the high density policies of the local Official Plan. The proposal also meets the County and Municipal target requiring 30% of proposed dwelling units to be medium density or higher.

### Affordability

The affordability policies of the County Official Plan are intended to provide overall direction for growth and development, and guidance to local Official Plans. These policies include that housing should be affordable to residents of the County, with 30% of new residential development and residential intensification affordable to family incomes up to the 60th percentile, and that local plans should require 30% of new development to be available as rental housing. This is a target for all of development in Bruce County and is not expected to be met through every site-specific development. Similarly, the local Official Plan also sets a target of 30% of new housing to be provided as affordable housing. As with the County Plan target, this is for all development and is not expected to be met through every site-specific development. The County Official Plan also supports affordability by applying minimum densities and requiring a medium or high-density component for serviced projects with more than 10 units. The Bruce County Official Plan and local Official Plan require the residential portion of all multi-unit developments that will be serviced with municipal sewer and water to achieve a density of 15 units per gross developable hectare.

The current proposal will permit residential uses in the context of the High Density Development policies of the local Official Plan with a density of more than 40 units per gross hectare up to a maximum of 90 units per gross hectare.

The minimum number of residential units permitted on the site will be around 113 while the maximum will be 249. There are approximately 170 units shown on the current concept plan. The final design, number of units and tenure of the residential uses will be confirmed at the site plan approval stage. The Town will be looking to ensure the future development of these lands satisfies the targets noted above.

Opportunities to include rental units will be among the matters pursued through the site plan control process.

The local Official Plan also permits mixed use development as an affordable housing initiative, although more so directed to the Core Commercial designation as previously discussed. However, the more recent policies of the PPS encourage mixed use development more broadly to support compact and livable communities. These objectives can be accommodated on this site and in the immediate surrounding area.

## Transportation

The Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan requires high density residential development and highway commercial development to have frontage or access to an arterial or collector road, which is achieved for this site with the proposed access onto Devonshire Road and its proximity to Goderich Street. Access points should be limited through the use of combined entrance points and service roads, which are also proposed in this instance.

One of the other objectives of the local Official Plan is to ensure new development does not create traffic hazards. The efficient movement of traffic is supported. Many public comments expressed concerns over the anticipated increased traffic and congestion that would result if the high density development were approved.

As part of the original Draft Plan approval of the subdivision in which these lands were located, a traffic impact study was prepared to support the approval of the subdivision. The study estimated the total trips that would be generated by the subdivision including this commercial block. The applicant's consultant has reevaluated that original assessment given the potential change in use. By changing the land use categories on the commercial block from a commercial plaza to apartment residential and a hotel expansion, it was concluded that there would be fewer total trips generated in the PM peak hour. It was concluded that there will be no adverse impact in the subdivision due to the proposed re-development, and no impact on the Town's existing transportation network in vicinity of the property. Town staff indicated that no further traffic review would be required in support of the current local Official Plan Amendment and related Zoning By-law Amendment applications.

In regard to active transportation, sidewalks have already been constructed around the perimeter of the site. Cycling facilities (i.e., designated shared bike lanes) have also been incorporated into the original design of Devonshire Road from Goderich Street to Bruce Street.

Internal vehicle / pedestrian movement routes and adequate off-street parking will be required for both the residential and commercial uses in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning By-law and will be addressed through the site plan approval process.

## Recent Approvals

The local Official Plan Amendment was adopted by the Town of Saugeen Shores on March 28, 2022. The Town also passed the related Zoning by-law Amendment (File Z-2021-066) which added a site-specific provision to the Highway Commercial Holding (HC-h-5) zone to permit residential uses in accordance with the Residential Fourth Density (R4) zone. The Town does not currently have a mixed use zone category.

**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:**

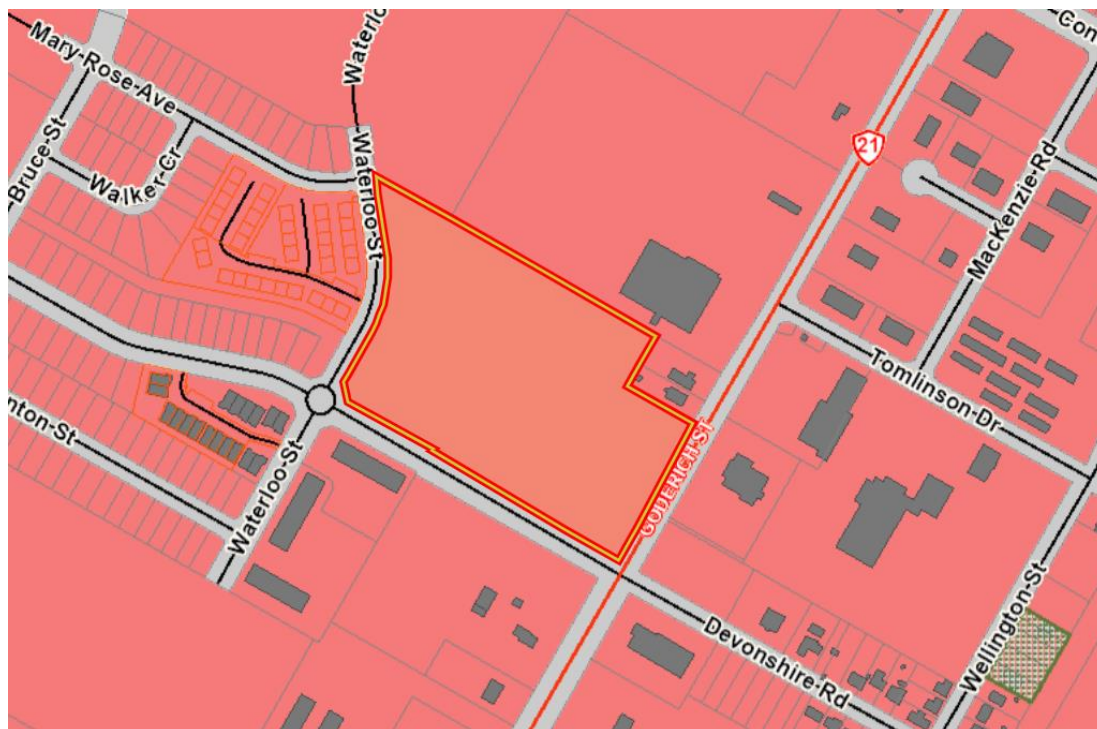
Christine MacDonald  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**Appendices**

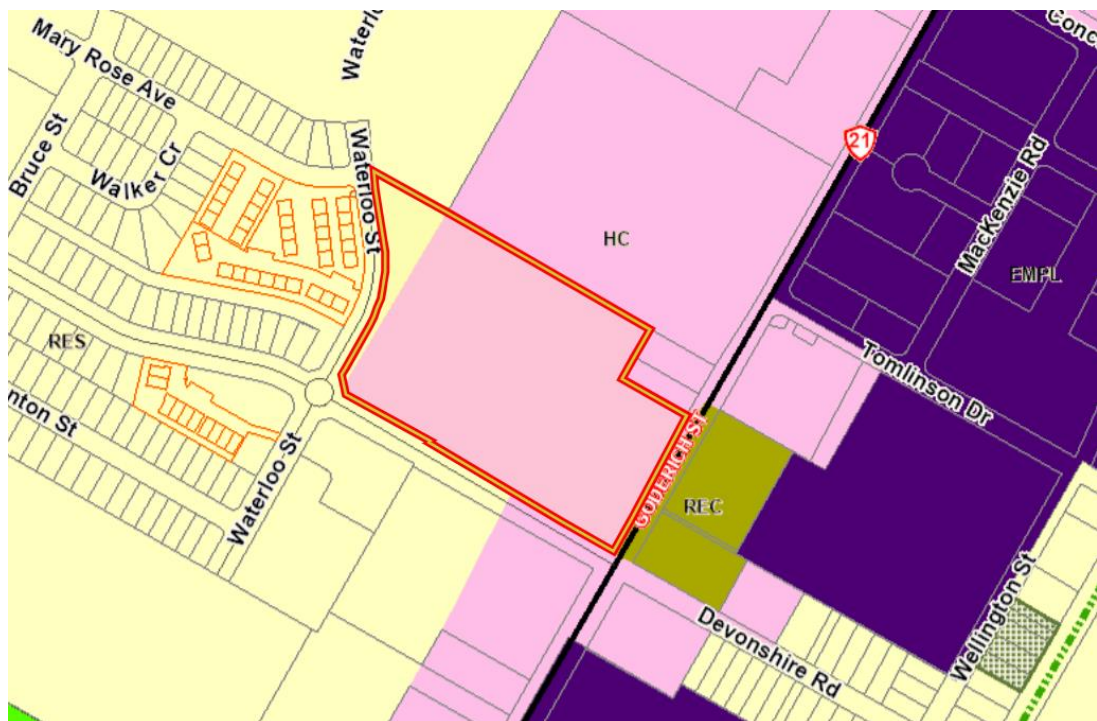
- County Official Plan Map
- Local Official Plan Map
- Local Zoning Map
- List of Supporting Documents and Studies
- Agency Comments
- Public Comments
- Public Notice
- Notice of Adoption
- Decision Sheet



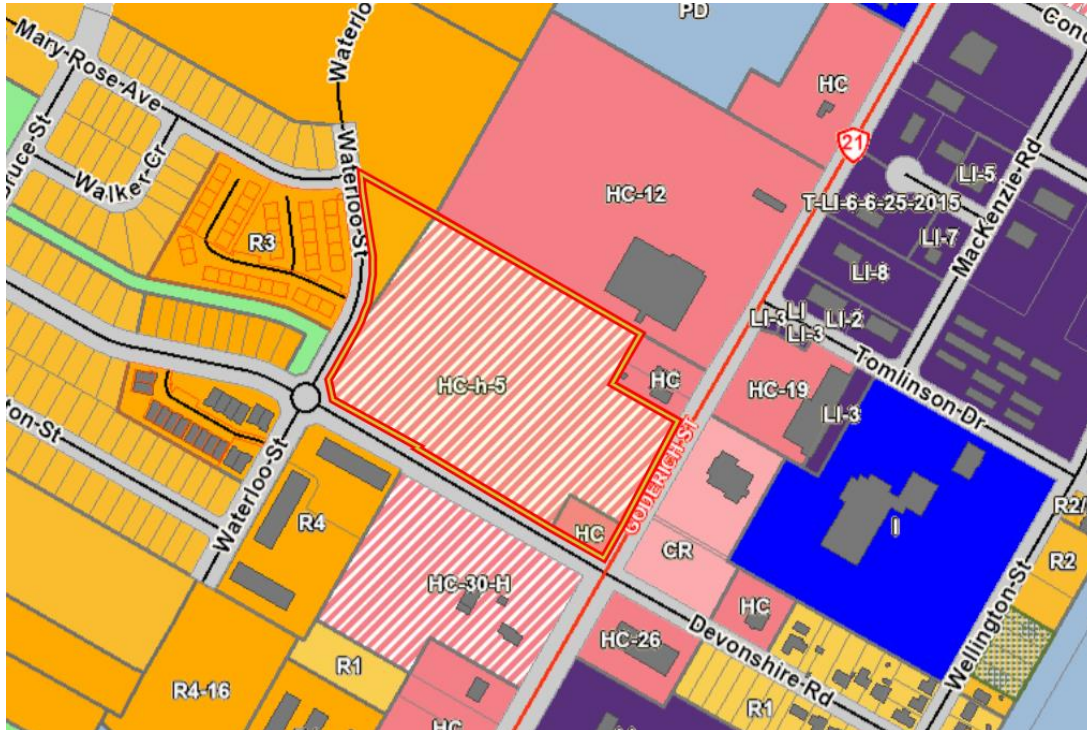
## County Official Plan Map (Designated Primary Urban Communities)



## Local Official Plan Map (Designated Highway Commercial)



## Local Zoning Map (Zoned HC-h-5 - Highway Commercial Holding)



### List of Supporting Documents and Studies

- Cover Letter, prepared by MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, dated June 28, 2021.
- Planning Justification Report, prepared by MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, dated June 15, 2021.
- Servicing Review, prepared by Cobide Engineering, dated August 30, 2021.
- Traffic Review, prepared by Cobide Engineering, dated October 1, 2021.
- Response Letter, prepared by MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, dated February 4, 2022.

### Agency Comments

Town of Saugeen Shores: Town staff have reviewed the noted applications and provide the following comments:

1. We are very supportive of facilitating the types of housing needed in our community. Provided any concerns can be addressed, this application will contribute to our rental housing stock.
2. If approved, the property is subject to site plan control. Matters related to servicing, landscaping, building elevations, etc. will be addressed in detail at that stage.

Historic Saugeen Métis (HSM): The HSM Lands, Resources and Consultation Department has reviewed the relevant documents and have no objection or opposition to the proposed Zoning By-law and Local Official Plan Amendment as presented.

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA): SVCA staff find this proposal acceptable (full letter attached to this report).

Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB): BWDSB has no objection to this development. BWDSB requests that conditions be included as part of the draft plan approval (full letter attached to this report). Note: Town staff have advised that these conditions can be incorporated into the future site plan agreement.

Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board: No comments.

### **Public Comments**

The County received public comments from several neighbouring landowners objecting to the proposal on the basis of increased traffic, increased noise, decreased commercial options, loss of greenspace, increased density, impacts to infrastructure and services, and the development form. Those public comments are attached to this report and are discussed above.