

February 4, 2014

Mr. Ron Scheckenberger
Office Manager
AMEC Environment & Infrastructure
3215 North Service Road,
Burlington, ON L7N 3G2

Dear Sir:

Re: Town of Oakville Merton Tertiary Planning Study
Land Use Options and Evaluation Report Review

We have now had an opportunity to review the Land Use Options and Evaluation Report prepared by Sorenson Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. (SGL).

The SGL report describes the three options (A, B and C) developed for the Merton Tertiary Planning Area and presents a detailed evaluation of each of the options based on criteria, guiding principles/objectives, measures and scale definitions established by the Town. The evaluation measures relate to nine major criteria:

1. Liveable community;
2. Growth management;
3. Employment;
4. Providing choice;
5. Community design;
6. Natural environment;
7. Heritage;
8. Infrastructure; and,
9. Transportation.

The report concludes that Option B is preferred overall, but outlines a number of opportunities to further improve the Option. These changes are designed to better address a number of issues including walkability, impacts on the natural environment and traffic issues.

The review carried out by SGL is detailed and thorough. We have no significant issues with the evaluation which is detailed in Table 1 Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework for the Tertiary Plan Options. Further, we concur with the list of “additional matters to consider through policy” found at the end of the SGL Table.

Our comments with respect to the evaluation are found in Table A attached. We note only the following issues related to the evaluation:

1. One of the measures related to the Guiding Principle/Objective: Preserve, enhance and protect the distinct character, cultural heritage, living environment and sense of community of neighbourhoods is:

“Lands within the study area provide for “variety” which is expressed as the total number of existing uses to be maintained where appropriate, and new land uses proposed.”

The established “Scale Definition” is “Best = most total number of land uses”. It is suggested that this be expanded to include not only total number of land uses but also total area of land uses.

2. The evaluation of the measure “The number of employment designations and the ability to provide for a proper transition to adjacent sensitive land uses through the designations” should be reconsidered. The evaluation does not address the proximity of significant areas of Medium Density Residential with Office Employment uses in the central portion of the development area.
3. The evaluation of the measure “Area of impervious surface provided by the proposed land use option” should be reconsidered. Identification of “No significant differences” appears more appropriate than the ranking currently proposed.
4. The evaluation of the “Enns Property” with respect to the following measure should be reconsidered:

“Cultural heritage has been preserved, enhanced and protected through integration into the draft land use option.”

Option C is ranked as best because surrounding the property with low density is believed to provide a greater opportunity to integrate the use into new development, but it is noted that it also provides the least opportunities for reuse. This compares with Options A and B which are identified as providing a greater opportunity for reuse. In all three cases the surrounding property appears to be designated “Main Street I”. It is not clear how the proximity of low density or medium density to the site will affect its ability to be integrated into the new

development or for reuse. A ranking of “No significant differences” appears more appropriate.

5. With respect to the evaluation of the Apple Orchard regarding the same measure as described in Section 4, it is suggested that the evaluation be clarified. The ranking may be appropriate, but, in our opinion, there is still considerable uncertainty with respect to how the property can be developed without impacting on its cultural heritage attributes. A heritage review would be required to properly evaluate the situation. This caveat should be noted in the discussion.

With respect to the Preferred Option, we generally concur that the proposed modifications to Option B address a number of issues and result in improvements to the Plan. However, we have the following concerns:

1. Bronte Road Node

The functionality of the single sided Main Street designation is a concern. It should be made clear that the High Density Residential designation will also permit commercial and office uses in live-work units or on the ground floor of apartments.

2. Medium Density Residential/Business Employment Interface

Option B has Medium Density Residential abutting Office Employment in the central part of the plan. The Preferred Option has changed the “Office Employment” to “Business Employment”. It is our understanding that this is intended to result in the generation of reduced traffic volumes. The rationale for this change should be discussed. In addition, the potential for impacts at the interface between the two uses is increased with the change in designation. Direction should be provided in the discussion of the Preferred Option with respect to how the interface will be addressed.

3. Heritage Apple Orchard

The Heritage Apple Orchard is proposed to be designated partially “Office Employment” and partially “Low Density Residential”. However, no final determination can be made without a heritage evaluation. A dual designation should be considered, similar to that found on the isolated site on the south side of Upper Middle Road. The designation should include direction that the ultimate use and form of development will be dependent on the results of the heritage evaluation.

4. Elementary School Site

It is our understanding that a final determination has not been made on whether a school site will be required in this area or not. Given that situation, a conceptual location for the school site should be identified on the plan.

5. Regional Land Swap

Option A identifies a potential Regional land swap. This is ranked as “Best if land swap proceeds”. The land swap will significantly improve the plan. In particular it will, together with the proposed land uses, have significant potential to mitigate any compatibility issues. The Preferred Option should identify the potential for this land swap and identify its benefits.

We trust this is the input you require, however if you have any questions please contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

MACAULAY SHIOMI HOWSON LTD.



Per: Elizabeth Howson, MCIP, RPP
Principal

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
Criteria: Livable Community			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Preserve, enhance and protect the distinct character, cultural heritage, living environment and sense of community of neighbourhoods.			
New proposed land uses near the study area boundary provide for “compatibility” with surrounding land uses in terms of scale, height and density	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Lands within the study area provide for “variety” which is expressed as the total number of existing uses to be maintained where appropriate and new uses proposed <i>Comment: Scale definition should include not just the number of land use designations, but also should consider the area of the different land uses</i>	Concur with evaluation, but criteria should be expanded	Concur with evaluation, but criteria should be expanded	Concur with evaluation, but criteria should be expanded
New proposed land uses within the study area provide for “mix” in terms of distances between destinations and designations. Destinations include neighbourhood park, major intersections, gateways, school site....	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Guiding Principle/Objective: Provide complete and sustainable communities with enhance urban design, required community facilities and parkland			
Area of new proposed residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of a parkette	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation. However, while noting that parkettes are centrally located, evaluation should also note that isolated area in southeast quadrant of Upper Middle and Bronte Road has no parkette.
Area of new proposed	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of a neighbourhood park			
Area of new proposed residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of a school site, if a school site is warranted	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Area of new proposed residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of a commercial designation or commercial use	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Guiding Principle/Objective: Determine the appropriate integration and connection of new development, where possible, with the surrounding communities.			
The number of new proposed public road connections made to the surrounding transportation network.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The number of new proposed public trail connections made to the surrounding parks and open space system.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
New proposed public trail connections are located to minimize potential impacts to the natural heritage system including natural features and functions.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Proposed sensitive land uses are located outside the minimum required separation distances for emitting facilities.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Growth Management			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Direct the majority of growth to identified locations where high density, transit and pedestrian oriented development can be accommodated.			
Area of new proposed higher density residential and mixed use designations located within 400 metres of Bronte Road	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Area of new proposed	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
higher density residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of the proposed main collector passing through the study area			
Area of new proposed employment uses within 400 metres of the North Service Road	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Employment			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Maintain a strong employment corridor along the Queen Elizabeth Way.			
Area of new proposed employment designations located within 400 metres of the QEW	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Guiding Principle/Objective: Achieve long-term economic security within an environment that offers a diverse range of employment opportunities for residents.			
Proportion of new proposed employment designations within the study area, excluding the natural heritage system	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The number of employment designations and the ability to provide for a proper transition to adjacent sensitive land uses through the designations	Evaluation should be reconsidered. Option A is identified as Least Preferred but Office Employment is separated from Low Density Residential by a road and a SWM facility. In addition, the land swap would address compatibility issues with the Regional facility.	Evaluation should be reconsidered. Medium density residential abuts Office Employment in central part of the plan. Potential for impacts should be taken into consideration.	Same comment as Option B.
The area within each employment designation.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Providing Choice			
Guiding Principle/Objective; Enable the availability and accessibility of a wide range of housing, jobs and community resources to meet the diverse needs of the community through all stages of life.			
The number of residential and mixed use designations.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The area within each residential and mixed use designation.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Number and size of required/warranted	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
community facilities including parks, parkettes, schools and other community uses.			
Criteria: Community Design			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Foster the Town's sense of place through excellence in building and community design.			
Number and type of openings, gateways, view corridors, terminating vistas that could be realized through the arrangement of land uses.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Natural Environment			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Minimize the Town's ecological footprint.			
Preserve, enhance and protect the Town's environmental resources, natural features and areas, natural heritage systems and waterfronts.			
Preserve, enhance and protect the town's and region's environmental features, biological communities and natural heritage system, and review connecting east-west corridors between Environmental Sensitive Area (ESA) 10 (Bronte Creek) and ESA 12 (Fourteen Mile Creek).			
The proposed new natural heritage system contains the natural features and functions identified through the technical studies and provides for the required buffers.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The proposed new natural heritage system provides for a linkage area connecting Environmental Sensitive Area (ESA) 10 – Bronte Creek and ESA 12 – Fourteen Mile Creek.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Guiding Principle/Objective: Establish targets with respect to water quality parameters including the thermal regime for stormwater effluents.			
Area of impervious surface provided by the proposed land use option	The difference in imperviousness between the options does not appear to be significant. Rather than ranking the options, identification of "No significant differences" seems more appropriate.		
The proposed land use option provides opportunities for at source storm water management.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Stormwater management for the	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
proposed land use option provides for enhanced (Level 1) protection.			
Guiding Principle/Objective Demonstrate a net benefit to the significant population of Redside Dace within the study area.			
The proposed land use option maintains the naturally vegetated defined valley and riparian corridor surrounding the Fourteen Mile Creek and its tributaries within the study area, as recommended for protection by technical studies in accordance with RSD guidelines.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The extent to which the proposed land use option provides opportunities to enhance the naturally vegetated valley and riparian corridor surrounding the Fourteen Mile Creek and its tributaries within the study area.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Guiding Principle/Objective: Protect all natural hazards through policy and/or dedication to the municipality, and protect new and existing infrastructure from future flooding and erosion concerns.			
Natural hazards, new and existing development, including infrastructure, are protected to the satisfaction of the Conservation Authority under O.Reg. 162/06 and in a manner consistent with 3.1 Natural Hazards of the Provincial Policy Statement.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Heritage			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Preserve, enhance, and protect the distinct character, cultural heritage, living environment, and sense of community of neighbourhoods. Protect cultural heritage resources			
Cultural heritage has been preserved, enhanced and protected through integration into	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of the four properties should include building on Deerfield golf course. Enns Property – Option C is ranked as best because surrounding the property with low density is believed to provide a greater opportunity to integrate the use into new development but the least opportunities for reuse. This 		

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
the draft land use option.	<p>compares with Options A and B which are identified as providing a greater opportunity for reuse. In all three cases the surrounding property appears to be designated “Main Street I”. It is not clear how the proximity of low density or medium density to the site will affect its ability to be integrated or for use. A ranking of “No significant differences” appears more appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple Orchard – Ranking may be appropriate but there is still considerable uncertainty with respect to how the property can be developed without impacting on its cultural heritage attributes. A heritage review would be required to properly evaluate the situation. This caveat should be noted in the discussion. • Concur with evaluation for other two properties 		
Criteria: Infrastructure			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Provide cost-effective and coordinated infrastructure investment for new growth.			
Cost of new proposed water and wastewater infrastructure to support growth.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Amount of existing infrastructure which can be used	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Criteria: Transportation			
Guiding Principle/Objective: Provide choices for mobility by linking people and places with a sustainable transportation network consisting of roads, transit, walking and cycling trails.			
Recognize the role and function of Bronte Road as a Major Arterial			
Provide a safe, efficient and accessible transportation system with choices in mobility to accommodate new growth.			
The ability of the proposed transportation network to accommodate the traffic volumes from the proposed option.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The new proposed public road network could accommodate transit.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The new proposed public road network provides for connections to the new proposed public trail network.	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
The new proposed active transportation facilities connect with the existing active transportation network	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Area of new proposed residential and mixed use designations within 400	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation

Table A: Review of Merton Planning Study Evaluation Framework			
Measure	Option A	Option B	Option C
metres of a future transit route.			
The proportion of higher density residential and mixed use designations within 400 metres of a future transit route	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation
Number of Pedestrian connections to Bronte Road	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation	Concur with evaluation