

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. Your File/V/Réf.	43-00-0131
DATE	24 August 2000
TO/DEST.	Co-ordinator Planning and Environment Committee
FROM/EXP.	Commissioner Planning and Development Approvals Committee
SUBJECT/OBJET	PUBLIC MEETING TO CONSIDER DRAFT REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 15 - WEST CARLETON ESTATES RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That, subject to the public meeting, Planning and Environment Committee recommend to Council that draft Regional Official Plan Amendment 15, attached as Annex A to this report, be refused.

SUMMARY

The owner of the property located in part Lots 1 and 2, Concession II of the Township of West Carleton (former Huntley Township) has applied to amend the 1997 Regional Official Plan (ROP) to permit the connection of his property to the Region's central water system.

The water connection would service a proposed 185 acre (75 hectare) subdivision of 60 country lots developed around a nine hole golf course. The connection would be made to the existing watermain located along Carp Road. The watermain was built in the late 1980's to respond to concerns regarding the risk of groundwater contamination from the nearby landfill site. The watermain was installed by Canadian Waste Services Inc (Laidlaw). Water service was provided to most residential properties in the area, including the two homes located on the subject property. The Region now owns and operates the watermain.

The current ROP designation of the site, “General Rural Area”, permits the proposed country lot subdivision if serviced by private services or public communal services. It does not permit a connection to central services nor to partial services. A Regional Official Plan amendment is required to provide piped water to a rural property. More specifically, the requested Official Plan Amendment would amend Section 10.3.3 General Policies for Communal or Central Sewer and Water Services by adding a new policy as outlined in draft Amendment 15 attached as Annex A to this report.

Council’s policy is that development in the General Rural Area is to be serviced on private services unless a public health problem arises in an existing development or an exception is made specifically in the Official Plan. In this case, no household is currently experiencing a health problem. Partial servicing combined with poor drainage conditions on site would likely lead to septic systems failure and eventually require a connection to the central sewer service which is already constrained. The identification of low levels of contamination at the only test well location on the site suggests the need for further investigation across the site prior to using the site for residential development. The watermain along Carp Road was built to correct an existing problem in 1988 and it was not meant to accommodate future development. Any decision to access water and eventually sewage services in Stittsville reduces the capacity allocated to the adjacent urban area. For all the above reasons staff recommend refusal to amend the Regional Official Plan to permit a water connection to the site.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The 185 acre (75 hectare) site is vacant except for two rented residential units along Carp Road connected to the Carp Road watermain. The site is shown as Environmental Feature on Schedule K of the Regional Official Plan, based on the presence of a regionally valuable hydrological feature (small open water marsh), and regionally rare forest stand types. The site contains an area of organic soil as well as potential for archaeological resources.

The current ROP designation of the site, “General Rural Area”, permits the proposed country lot subdivision serviced by private services or public communal services subject to certain conditions. West Carleton’s Official Plan designates the site as a Marginal Resource Area.

The site is adjacent to the northern boundary of the village of Stittsville. It is also adjacent to a rural residential development to the west, a snow disposal site and vacant land to the north, vacant land to the east (being considered as part of the Corel Area expansion), and a vacant urban business park to the south. As indicated in the Key Map in Annex B, the proposed development would also be close to a major landfill site (670m), two major quarries (680m and 1.4k), and a rural industrial park to the west.

COMMENTS FROM THE CIRCULATION

Information about the application to permit a connection to the Region’s central water system was circulated in June 2000 to owners of properties within 120 metres of the site, the Ministry of Municipal

Affairs and Housing, the Townships of West Carleton and Goulbourn, the City of Kanata, technical agencies and community groups.

Owners of adjacent properties, community groups, the Townships of West Carleton and Goulbourn and the City of Kanata did not provide comments. The following agencies responded that they have no comments nor concerns: the Mississippi Valley Conservation, Enbridge Consumer Gas and Rogers Ottawa.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing responded that partial services should be discouraged as outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement. The Ministry noted a history of complaints from local residents related to the two quarries located nearby. It recommended that the applicant be required to submit sufficient supporting documentation to demonstrate that the proposed development would not preclude or hinder the quarry expansion or continued use for reasons of public health, public safety and environmental impact. The Ministry also indicated that the issues related to the potential for archaeological resources and the impact to fish habitat in the Feedmill Creek, north of the site, must be addressed before any development approval.

The Environmental Health Advisory Group does not support the application on the basis that the land is poorly drained and because the proximity of the proposed residential development to the landfill could cause stress and health risks for homeowners who could hold the Region liable for approving the development.

DISCUSSION

The option of approving a rural development on the basis of central water is not permitted by the Regional Official Plan unless “a public health problem arises and Council determines that the installation of regional water and/or wastewater services (rather than private services connection program) is the best solution” (Policy 10.3.7.1). Council would consider an amendment to the Plan if a public health problem arises in an existing development. In this case, no household on the site is currently experiencing a health problem.

Also the ROP (Policy 10.3.3 3) and the Provincial Policy Statement (Policy 1.3.1.1.d) do not permit partial central servicing unless there is a compelling reason to the contrary. These policies recognize the tendency to increase water consumption when supplied with central water, leading to failure of private sewage systems. The Terrain Analysis Report for the site identifies areas of poor drainage (wetland conditions as well as bedrock) indicating poor drainage conditions unsuitable for private sewage systems. Poor drainage combined with additional water consumption raises the possibility that the site would eventually require a connection to adjacent sewer service already under constraints.

In terms of water quality, the hydrogeological study is inconsistent and incomplete. It indicates that the water is potable and meets the health criteria defined in the Ontario Drinking Water Objectives for Subdivision Supply but that the aquifer contains toxic elements. It also indicates that the cumulative effect of pumping from a number of wells could alter the direction of the contaminant plume from the

nearby landfill, and the water quality could in turn, be expected to worsen with time. While this is not discussed, using groundwater to irrigate the golf course could also pose health hazards and change the direction of the plume and possibly worsen the problem. The identification of low levels of contamination at the only test well location on the site suggests the need for further investigation across the site prior to using the site for residential development. A thorough understanding of groundwater flow directions, contaminant concentrations, source location and the impact of irrigating a golf course on the direction of the water plume is required.

The applicant has applied to amend Schedule H to permit a connection of his property to the existing watermain located along Carp Road. The watermain does not appear on Schedule H because it was built to correct an existing problem in 1988 and not meant to accommodate future development. The agreement signed on August 1988 by the Region and Canadian Waste (Laidlaw) stipulates that the parties agree “that the extended water supply which is the subject of this Agreement, which shall be extended by the Owner (Laidlaw), is not being installed for the purpose of encouraging any further development”. The 1987 Regional staff report recommending the servicing extension also states that “the extension is not for the purpose of encouraging development, and connections to lands submitted for development after the signing of the Agreement will not be permitted.”

The proximity of the proposed development to a major landfill site, two major quarries, a Regional snow disposal site, an urban business park to the south and a rural industrial park to the west create conditions that are not suitable for residential development. The Region needs to consider the cumulative effects of incompatible land uses surrounding the site to implement Council’s policy that residential and non-residential development in General Rural Areas should not occur on land unsuitable for development (Policy 3.7.4.7).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The application was circulated for comment to adjacent property owners, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Townships of West Carleton and Goulbourn, the City of Kanata, technical agencies and community groups. Responses from the circulation are summarized in this report and are available for viewing in the Corporate Resource Centre. The notice of the public meeting was published in *The Ottawa Citizen*, *Le Droit*, *The Ottawa Sun*, *the Ottawa Business Journal* and community newspapers in West Carleton, Goulbourn and Kanata.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

If the amendment is approved, there may be some impact on the Region’s priorities for the size and timing of infrastructure, specifically if a future connection to the central sewer system, already under constraints, is needed to respond to failing private septic systems.

CONCLUSION

Regional staff do not recommend approval of this application to amend the 1997 Regional Official Plan to permit the connection of the applicant's property to the Region's central water system. The Regional Official Plan is clear that development in the General Rural Area is to be serviced on private services unless a public health problem arises in an existing development. In this case, no household is currently experiencing a health problem. Partial servicing combined with poor drainage conditions would likely require in the future a connection to the central sewer service which is already constrained. The identification of low levels of contamination at the only test well location on the site suggests the need for further investigation across the site prior to using the site for residential development. The watermain along Carp Road was built to correct an existing problem in 1988 and it was not meant to accommodate future development.

An objective of the policies regarding servicing to the rural area is to provide Regional Council with a measure of control over the amount of land committed for planned urban development and with a means of planning and providing affordable, cost-effective urban servicing. Permitting an exception to servicing policies for the rural area, makes achieving Council's objective more difficult and reduces the capacity already allocated to the adjacent urban area.

*Approved by
Nick Tunnacliffe, MCIP, RPP*

SG/

DRAFT
AMENDMENT 15

**OFFICIAL PLAN (1997) OF THE
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON**

PURPOSE

The purpose of Amendment 15 is to permit the connection of the property located in part of Lots 1 and 2, Concession II of the Township of West Carleton (former Huntley Township) to the existing watermain located along Carp Road. The central water connection would service a proposed 185 acre (75 hectare) subdivision of 60 country lots developed around a nine hole golf course.

BASIS

The owner of the subject property has applied for this amendment on the basis that private wells are not recommended because the groundwater contains toxic elements. In support of the application, the owner has submitted a hydrogeological study conducted in October 1999, indicating that while the aquifer meets the Provincial criteria for potable water, it also contains toxic elements which could be associated with the nearby landfill. The report concludes that without the issue of contamination from a nearby source, the site would be capable of supporting the proposed development on private services but that it cannot support the use of private wells as a residential water supply. The report notes that “the cumulative effect of pumping from a number of wells could alter the direction of the contaminant plume, and the water quality could in turn, be expected to worsen with time.”

THE AMENDMENT

1. Section 10.3.3 General Policies for Communal or Central Sewer and Water Services is hereby amended by the addition of the following new policy:

“7. Notwithstanding policies elsewhere in Section 10.3, permit a central water service connection to the property located in part of Lots 1 and 2, Concession II of the Township of West Carleton (former Huntley Township). This water connection shall be only for a potable water supply serving up to 60 residential country lots; it shall not be used for the irrigation of the golf course nor is it intended to provide urban fire protection.”

KEY MAP

