

# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	May 8, 2025
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	PDR-CW-26-25
<b>Title:</b>	Final Report for Grey County Official Plan Amendment 24, Plume
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Derek McMurdie
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Scott Taylor
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	Municipality of West Grey

## Recommendation

1. That report PDR-CW-26-25 be received; and
2. That all written and oral submissions on Official Plan Amendment Number 24 were considered and helped to make an informed recommendation and decision; and
3. That proposed County Official Plan Amendment number 24 to permit the redesignation of 'Rural' lands to the 'Rural – with Exceptions' designation lands legally described as Part of Lot 29, Concession 1 Division 1, Part of Lot 28, Concession 1 Division 1 to 3, being Part 2 and 5 Reference Plan 16R10695, in the geographic Township of Normanby, now in the Municipality of West Grey be approved, and a by-law to adopt the County Official Plan Amendment be prepared for consideration by County Council.

## Executive Summary

Grey County has processed a County official plan amendment (OPA 24) application to allow for additional lot creation, beyond what the County official plan currently permits in the Rural designation. The subject lands are approximately 27 hectares in size and have frontage on McFarlin Drive and Grey Road 6, which is part of an older rural development known as 'Plumeville' in the Municipality of West Grey. OPA 24 would have the effect of permitting the creation of one additional residential lot, which would otherwise exceed the County official plan's Rural designation lot density policies. The subject property is designated 'Rural' and 'Hazard Lands' on Schedule A of the County's official plan. The applicants are seeking a site-specific redesignation on a portion of the subject lands to facilitate the severance.

This report recommends support for OPA 24, and that a by-law be prepared for consideration by County Council.

# Background and Discussion

Grey County has received and reviewed a County official plan amendment application (OPA 24) for a site-specific amendment on lands legally described as Part of Lot 29, Concession 1 Division 1, Part of Lot 28, Concession 1 Division 1 to 3, being Part 2 and 5 Reference Plan 16R10695, in the geographic Township of Normanby, now in the Municipality of West Grey. These lands are municipally known as 140 McFarlin Drive. The proposed County OPA would re-designate a portion of the lands from 'Rural' and 'Hazard Lands' to 'Rural with Exceptions' and 'Hazard Lands' to permit the creation of one new residential lot that would otherwise exceed the County official plan's Rural lot density policies.

The property is approximately 27 hectares (66.84 acres) in size and contains a single residential dwelling, with access onto McFarlin Drive. This development seeks to sever a vacant 0.24-hectare (0.59 acres) parcel for residential purposes, with access off McFarlin Drive. No new access is proposed on Grey Road 6. The severed lands are in the Rural designation, and no development is proposed in the Hazard Lands. The remaining 26.76 hectares would continue to be used for agricultural purposes and the existing residential dwelling would remain on the retained lands.

The subject lands are located within a rural development locally known as 'Plumeville.' The Plumeville development pre-dates the current County official plan policies. Presently, subdivisions in the Rural designation are not permitted within the County official plan, and the creation of new lots outside of settlement areas is limited by numerous official plan policies.

The proposed severed lot would be of a similar size to surrounding residential lots. Land uses surrounding the subject property include:

- low density rural residential lands to the north,
- active farmlands and forested lands to the west, and
- low-density rural residential lands, forested lands, and active farmland to the east and south.

McFarlin Drive is also the boundary between the Municipality of West Grey and the Township of Southgate in this location. As such, those lands on the northeast side of McFarlin Drive are in Southgate.

The applicant has also submitted a zoning by-law amendment (ZBA) to the Municipality of West Grey (ZA28.2024), which proposes to alter zoning permissions to permit the creation of a new rural residential lot. The zoning for the retained parcel is to remain unchanged. West Grey has recently approved the zoning amendment, and at the time of writing this report, was still in the 20-day appeal period. A consent application (B31.2024) has also been submitted to the Municipality of West Grey.

Map 1 below shows the subject lands highlighted in blue and the surrounding land uses. Map 2 shows Schedule A land use designations from the County Official Plan. The Rural designation is shown in white, and Hazard Lands are shown in green.

Map 3 shows the portion of the property proposed to be severed.

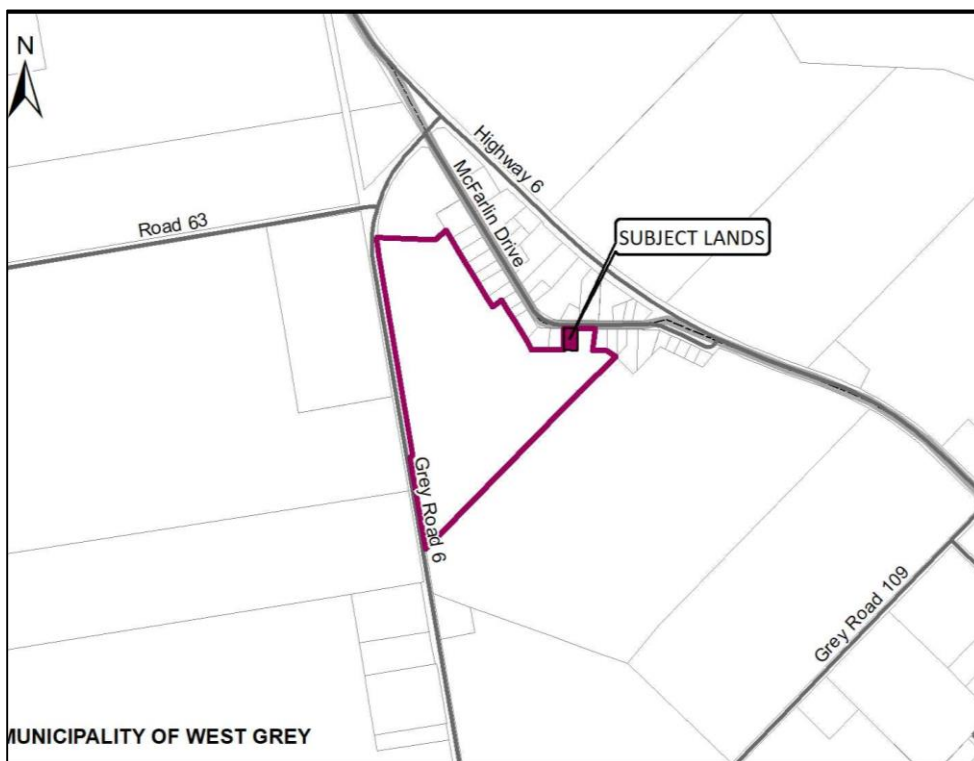
## Map 1: Location of Subject Lands



Map 2: Subject Property with Schedule A Designations from the County Official Plan



Map 3: Proposed Severed Lot Boundaries



Pre-submission consultation between the Municipality of West Grey and the County identified the submission requirements for the County OPA. The draft County OPA is attached to this report. Copies of all background reports and plans, as well as the public meeting minutes, can be found on the [County of Grey Website](#).

## Public/Agency Comments Received

As part of the development application process, County staff received comments on the proposed development. Correspondence was received from the following agencies:

### **Municipality of West Grey:**

The Municipality of West Grey provided comments to indicate no concerns. As noted above, West Grey has recently passed the above-noted zoning by-law amendment associated with this development.

### **Township of Southgate:**

The Township of Southgate provided comments to indicate no concerns.

### **Historic Saugeen Metis:**

The Historic Saugeen Metis provided comments to indicate no objections.

### **Ministry of Transportation:**

The Ministry of Transportation provided comments to indicate the requirements that must be completed before a permit can be issued for a future residence on the severed lot, provided the OPA and ZBA are approved.

### **Public comments:**

A member of public submitted verbal comments by phone on January 16, 2025, to indicate their support for the proposed amendment. No comments were received during the joint public meeting on February 18, 2025.

## *Analysis of Planning Issues*

When rendering a land use planning decision, planning authorities must have regard for matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act*, be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024 and conform to any provincial plans or County / Municipal Official Plans that govern the subject lands. In this case, the County of Grey Official Plan has jurisdiction over the subject property. West Grey's Official Plan only covers Durham and Neustadt, and as such, does not pertain to the subject lands. There are no provincial plans in effect for this area of the County.

## *Planning Act*

Section 1.1 of the *Planning Act* outlines the purpose of the Act. The purpose of the Act is to promote sustainable economic development in a healthy, natural environment within a land use planning system, led by provincial policy and matters of provincial interest.

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* outlines matters of provincial interest which planning authorities must have regard for. Amongst other considerations, the *Planning Act* speaks to the need to have regard for (a) the protection of ecological systems; (b) the protection of agricultural resources; (f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems; (h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities; (o) the protection of public health and safety; and (p) the appropriate location of growth and development. Staff comments on each of these matters are provided below.

*(a) the protection of ecological systems*

The proposed residential lot will be located in a previously disturbed and cleared area. The retained lot already contains an existing house, and it is not anticipated that there will be further impact on any natural heritage features on site.

*(b) the protection of agricultural resources*

The proposed residential lot will be located on a portion of the property that is not farmed and will not remove farmland from the subject property. Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) calculations were not deemed necessary due to the proximity of surrounding residential land uses; therefore, the creation of a new lot will not negatively impact nearby farming operations.

*(f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems*

A Hydrogeological Study was submitted and determined that the subject property can be adequately serviced by on-site water and sewage servicing. Further, the proposed development is located within a developed area and with little impacts on waste management services. The severed parcel would have access onto McFarlin Drive, an existing municipal road, which can accommodate the additional residential lot.

*(h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities*

The proposed development is located within a developed rural residential area and would be serviced by private individual on-site servicing, which is the same as the surrounding residential uses. As Plumeville is in a rural area north of Mount Forest, there are presently no parks, commercial uses (with the exception of a farm implement dealer on the east side of Highway 6), etc. within the immediate area. County Planning policies place limits on new lot creation in the Rural designation i.e., outside of what is permitted within the Rural consent and lot density policies. However, the subject application would utilize existing infrastructure in a residential enclave, without further impacts to surrounding agricultural lands, aggregate resources, etc.

*(o) the protection of public health and safety*

As stated previously, the proposed development will be serviced by private on-site servicing and would not negatively impact the surrounding residential uses. The ability to appropriately service the severed lot has been demonstrated by the supporting materials. The proposed severed lands would be accessed from McFarlin Drive, which is an existing residential municipally maintained street.

*(p) the appropriate location of growth and development*

Both the County Official Plan and the Provincial Planning Statement support limited growth within the Rural designation, provided the development can be adequately serviced by rural service levels. While the County's lot density policies would be further exceeded by the proposal, the existing lots already greatly exceed the lot density. In addition, the location of the proposed lot is within an existing cluster of rural residential lots, with existing frontage on a 50 kilometre per hour street. The proposed lot would also be a similar size to the surrounding residential lots and would not remove any farmland or impact natural heritage features. County staff would however not support additional residential lot creation on the retained lands, which are outside the existing residential cluster. These retained lands will remain farm-sized and contain both farmlands and lands mapped with aggregate resources.

The proposal generally has regard for matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act*.

### *Provincial Planning Statement (2024)*

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024 was issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and came into effect on October 20, 2024. The PPS is based on four fundamental planning themes, specifically, "Building Homes, Sustaining Strong and Competitive Communities", "Infrastructure and Facilities", "Wise Use and Management of Resources" and "Protecting Public Health and Safety."

Chapter 2.3.1 of the PPS notes that '*Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development*', while chapters 2.5 and 2.6 of the PPS provide guidance on land uses and economic growth within Rural Areas and Rural Lands within municipalities. Chapter 2.5(2) of the PPS states that in Rural Areas:

*"In rural areas, rural settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted."*

The subject lands are not within a designated rural settlement area, however section 2.6(1) of the PPS states:

*"On rural lands located in municipalities, permitted uses are:*

*(c) residential development, including lot creation, where site conditions are suitable for the provision of appropriate sewage and water services."*

Based on the above, the PPS generally directs growth toward settlement areas. Plumeville is not a designated settlement area. However, the PPS does support limited residential development on Rural lands, including lot creation, provided the lot can be serviced adequately. A Hydrogeological Study was submitted with the application and determined that the subject site, with the lot size proposed, can be adequately serviced by private on-site sewage and water servicing.

The proponent's planner has noted that the proposed lot would be considered 'infill' development as there are several existing rural residential lots surrounding the proposed lot. Both the PPS and Recolour Grey contain policies on infill development within settlement areas, but do not contain any such policies applicable within the Rural or Agricultural designations. The proposed severed lot would be located within an existing cluster of rural residential development; however, the subject property is not located in a designated settlement area. The proposed lot would be generally the same size as most of the other rural residential lots and



does not extend beyond the boundaries of the existing residential cluster (i.e., the severed parcel is not extending the boundaries of the residential cluster into farm or aggregate resource lands). As a recap, this proposed lot is:

- adjacent to other residential lots within an existing cluster,
- would be similar in size to the surrounding residential lots,
- is comparable to an infill severance (to use settlement area terminology), and
- can adequately be serviced by individual private on-site servicing.

As per the above, County staff would suggest that the proposal meets the intent of the chapters 2.5 and 2.6 of PPS in this respect.

Chapter 4.5.2(4) of the PPS states that:

*“Mineral aggregate operations shall be protected from development and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.”*

While the subject property is located partially within an Aggregate Resource Area, the proposed severance will occur outside of the mapped aggregate area. In addition, the proposed lot would be located within a cluster of existing residential properties and the potential radius of impact for future aggregate operations would therefore not expand.

Other sections of the PPS and the *Planning Act* include avoiding development in hazardous areas. The proposed development will be located outside of areas designated as Hazard Lands.

The proposed development is generally consistent with the PPS.

## *County of Grey Official Plan*

Similar to the PPS, the County official plan directs the majority of new growth to fully serviced settlement areas. In this case, the subject lands are designated Rural and Hazard Lands on Schedule A of the County's official plan. The County's official plan permits the limited lot creation within the Rural designation. Depending on the original township lot size, as per Section 5.4.3(1) and Table 9 of the County official plan, a maximum Rural lot density is established for new consent (severance) applications. This Rural lot density is in addition to other site-specific policy and mapping considerations. The minimum lot size newly created lots in the Rural designation is 0.8 hectares.

Through pre-submission consultation discussions with the applicant, County staff determined that the proposed severed lot would exceed the permitted Rural lot density policies, and not meet the minimum lot size requirements (i.e., the proposed severed lot is 0.24 hectares in size). The subject property is located on original Township Lots 28 and 29, with the proposed severance occurring on original township Lot 29. Recolour Grey would currently permit a maximum of 5 parcels on Lot 29, which is approximately 57 hectares in size. Currently, Lot 29 contains 14 parcels of land, with the proposed severed lot constituting parcel number 15. Proposed OPA 24 is seeking site specific exceptions to both the Rural lot density policies as well as the minimum lot size requirements of the County Official Plan.

The Planning Justification Report submitted with the application does not specifically speak to the lot density policies; however, it suggests that the proposal is infill and that 'Plumville'



functions similarly to designated settlement areas elsewhere in the County. County Planning staff would note that neither the PPS nor Recolour Grey contain policies on infill development within the Rural designation. If the proposal was within a designated settlement area, infill policies would apply.

County staff are generally hesitant to recommend approval for residential development that proposes to create new lots in the Rural designation beyond what is permitted in the County official plan. However, as with any *Planning Act* application, it is imperative to consider the specific site context and situation. In this case, County Planning staff would suggest that the proposed lot may still meet the general intent of the County official plan within the Rural designation. As the proposed lot is small and located directly between two existing residential uses, it would have no additional impacts on agricultural operations or aggregate resources. The proposed severed lot is also on an existing 50 kilometre per hour residential street with waste management pick-up, snow clearing, etc. in close proximity to the settlement area of Mount Forest, where residents can meet their day-to-day needs. Importantly, the severance would not extend the development boundaries of the existing residential cluster. A servicing report has demonstrated that the new lot can be serviced without impact to surrounding landowners. Lastly, as there is an existing dwelling on the proposed retained lands, no new sensitive receptor is likely to be created on the farm-sized parcel.

A note on the County's recently approved OPA 23. At the time of writing this report, OPA 23 had recently been approved and was in the 20-day appeal period. To be clear OPA 23 is not yet in force and effect and therefore does not apply to the development proposed by OPA 24. While OPA 23 does not alter the Rural lot size/density provisions, it does reinforce the County's policy directive of steering most new residential development to designated settlement areas. Staff believe that as broad policy direction the current County official plan, and OPA 23, represent good land use planning. That said, there are site specific considerations, where individual exceptions to this direction may be appropriate via an official plan amendment process. In this regard, staff believe that proposed OPA 24 provides an example of where the consideration of such an exception may be warranted. Maintaining limitations in the County official plan on Rural lot creation preserves designated Rural lands for farming and resource use. However, having the ability to consider site and context specific exceptions via the amendment process also provides some flexibility for new residential opportunities, without 'opening the door' to widespread Rural residential developments.

The Hazard Lands designation restricts most new forms of development. The proposed lot would be located outside of the Hazard Lands.

Schedule B of the County Plan designates an 'Aggregate Resource Area' on a portion of the subject property (on the proposed retained lands). New lots less than 20 hectares in size are not permitted within the Aggregate Resource Area. The proposed severed lot would be located outside of the Aggregate Resource Area, and the retained lands would be greater than 20 hectares in size. As the proposed lot would be situated within a cluster of existing residential properties, the radius of impact in relation to any future aggregate operation would not expand.

Appendix B of the County Plan identifies 'Other Wetlands' and a watercourse on the subject lands outside of the area proposed to be severed. County Planning Ecology further identified that the subject lands contain and/or are adjacent to 'Significant Woodlands', 'Significant Wildlife Habitat', 'Potential Habitat for Threatened and/or Endangered Species', and 'Fish Habitat'.

County Planning Ecology staff determined that the potential impact to the natural heritage features would be negligible and an Environmental Impact Study would not be required, as the proposed new lot will be located adjacent to the features with sufficient developable area outside of the natural heritage features.

The subject lands are not within any wellhead protection or intake protection zones on Appendix A to the County official plan.

Per Appendix D, the subject lands are located near Highway 6. The Ministry of Transportation provided comments and generally had no concerns with OPA 24. The comments were directed to the permitting stage of the development.

In addition, the subject property borders Grey Road 6. Comments were received from County Transportation Services, who had no concerns.

Section 8.9.1(4) of the County OP lists the servicing hierarchy with full municipal servicing being the preferred option. The proposed severance and subsequent development will be serviced using private on-site water and septic servicing. A Hydrogeological Study was submitted with the application and determined that the subject site could be adequately serviced.

Based on the above, staff would conclude that OPA 24 generally conforms to the goals and objectives of the County official plan.

Similar to Recolour Grey, Going Green in Grey (the County's climate change action plan), supports new non-farm development in mixed use settlement areas, where services and amenities are in place. The proposed development would likely require any future landowner to commute by private vehicle, as this area does not contain any uses to meet day-to-day commercial needs, employment, or community amenities. This area is however in close proximity to Mount Forest, which would generally meet these needs. The proposed lot is in an existing rural residential area, would not negatively impact natural heritage features, remove farmland, or require new roads to be constructed.

## Legislated Requirements

OPA 24 was processed in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

## Financial and Resource Implications

There are no anticipated financial, staffing, or other resource considerations associated with the proposed County Official Plan Amendment, beyond those normally encountered in processing such applications. The County has collected the requisite application fee and peer review deposit for this application.

## Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: Planning, Planning Ecology, Transportation Services
- ☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (contained in the body of the Report)

- ☒ External: The public, Municipality of West Grey, Township of Southgate, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, Ministry of Transportation, and required agencies under the *Planning Act*

## Appendices and Attachments

Appendix 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment 24 By-law

## Appendix 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment 24 By-law

# Corporation of the County of Grey By-Law \_\_-25

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A By-Law to Adopt Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan affecting lands described as Part of Lot 29, Concession 1 Division 1, Part of Lot 28, Concession 1 Division 1 to 3, being Part 2 and 5 Reference Plan 16R10695, geographic Township of Normanby, now in the Municipality of West Grey

The Council of the County of Grey, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 17 and 21 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, hereby enacts as follows:

1. Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan is hereby adopted.
2. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of the final passing thereof, subject to the provisions of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended.

ENACTED AND PASSED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
WARDEN: Andrea Matrosov

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK: Tara Warder

Certified that the above is a true copy of By-Law \_\_-25 as enacted and passed by the Council of the County of Grey on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK: Tara Warder

# Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan

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# Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan

## The Constitutional Statement

**Part A – The Preamble** does not constitute a part of the Amendment.

**Part B – The Amendment** consisting of the following text and Schedule, constitutes Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan

**Part C- The Appendices** attached hereto do not constitute part of this Amendment.

These Appendices contain background data, planning considerations and public involvement associated with this Amendment.

## Part A – The Preamble

### Purpose

The purpose of the County Official Plan Amendment (File #42-05-010-OPA-24) is to redesignate 0.24 hectares (0.59 acres) of the subject lands to permit the creation of one new residential lot in the 'Rural' designation, which would otherwise exceed the County's Rural lot density policies and not meet the minimum lot size policies. A Zoning By-Law Amendment and a Consent application from the Municipality of West Grey are required to permit the proposed severance.

### Location

The lands affected by the proposed Official Plan Amendment are described as Part of Lot 29, Concession 1 Division 1, Part of Lot 28, Concession 1 Division 1 to 3, being Part 2 and 5 Reference Plan 16R10695, in the geographic Township of Normanby, now in the Municipality of West Grey

### Basis

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and Grey County Official Plan both include policies to permit limited residential development within rural areas. The subject lands are located within a rural development known as 'Plumeville', which contains a total of 41 residential lots on private individual servicing. The subject lands are located on original Township Lot 29, which currently contains 14 lots. Through the subject amendment, one new additional lot would be created on the original Township Lot 29, which would exceed the County's Rural designation lot density policies. The 0.24 hectare lot would also fall short of the minimum Rural lot size policies. A Planning Justification Report and a Hydrogeological Study have been provided to support the OPA.

The County and the Municipality held a joint public meeting on February 18, 2025. Oral and written comments were received are summarized in Planning Report PDR-CW-26-25, which can be found at Appendix D.

The minutes from the public meeting are attached as Appendix C.

Based on the supporting material, the Official Plan Amendment was recommended for approval to the Grey County Committee of the Whole. The reports of the Planning Department (PDR-CW-08-25 and PDR-CW-26-25) are included in Appendices B and D.

## Part B – The Amendment

All this part of the document entitled "Part B – The Amendment" consisting of the following text and Schedules constitutes Amendment No. 24 to the County of Grey Official Plan.

### Details of the Amendment

The Official Plan of the County of Grey Planning Area is amended as follows:



1. Schedule A – Rural designation of the County of Grey Official Plan is hereby amended by changing the designation of the lands shown on Schedule ‘A’ affixed hereto to the “Rural with Exception” land use designation.
2. Section 5.4.3(2), Rural Consent Policies is hereby amended by adding a new subsection (d) as follows:
  - d) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 5.4.3, for those lands described as Concession 1 Division 1, Part Lot 29, Concession 1 Division 1 to 3, RP 16R10695 Parts 2 and 5, (geographic Township of Normanby), Municipality of West Grey and indicated on the attached Schedule A to this Plan, the following shall apply:
    - One additional 0.24-hectare Rural lot shall be permitted, for a total of 15 lots within the original Township Lot 29. (OPA #24, Recolour Grey).

## Implementation and Interpretation

The changes to the Official Plan described in this Amendment shall be implemented in accordance with the implementation policy of the Official Plan of the County of Grey as contained in Section 9.3 thereof.

## Part C – The Appendices

The following Appendices do not constitute part of Amendment No. 24 but are included as information supporting the Amendment.

- Appendix A Planning Justification Report and Scoped Hydrogeological Study
- Appendix B Initial Merit Report PDR-CW-08-25
- Appendix C Public Meeting Minutes – February 18, 2025
- Appendix D Planning Report PDR-CW-26-25 and Committee of the Whole Resolution