

November 13, 2024

Michael Benner, Director of Development and Infrastructure
Township of Georgian Bluffs
planning@georgianbluffs.ca

**RE: Consent Application B24-24 and B25-24 Bannerman
Part of Lot 23 Concession 18 Keppel
Township of Georgian Bluffs
Roll: 420362000506400 (PIN 370280201)
Owner: Denise Bannerman**

Dear Michael Benner,

This correspondence is in response to the above noted application. We have had an opportunity to review the application in relation to the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) and the County of Grey Official Plan (OP). We offer the following comments.

Proposal

Applications B24/24 and B25/24 propose to sever two 0.8 hectare parcels from an existing 20 ha parcel for future rural residential use. 18.4 hectares will be retained for future rural residential use. The subject lands were previously created in 2023 through applications B04/23 and B05/23. Registration of the subject lands occurred in August of 2024.

The subject lands are identified as the following in the County Official Plan:

- Schedule A – Land Use Types - Rural
- Schedule C - Natural Heritage System Core Areas and Linkages – Core Area
- Appendix A – Constraint Mapping – Karst Area
- Appendix B – Constraint Mapping – Significant Woodland and ANSI (life science)
- Appendix E - Bedrock and Shale Resources - Bedrock Resource (1-8m)

Schedule A of the County OP designates the subject lands as Rural.

1. The size of the original township lot (LOT 23, CON 18) is approximately 40 hectares and contains two lots. The creation of two additional lots would meet County OP lot densities identified in Table 9. The severed lots would also have lot areas of 0.8 hectares and meet the required frontage-to-depth ratio.

Per Section 5.2.2 5), new land uses, including the creation of lots, shall comply with the Provincial MDS formulae.

2. MDS calculations were not submitted with the applications. Additional comments in this regard should be obtained from municipal staff.
3. From a general planning perspective, it should be ensured that the subject property can safely provide on-site water servicing and on-site sewage servicing. Additional comments in this regard should be provided by municipal staff.

Schedule C identified the lands as within the Natural Heritage System Core Area. The intent of the Core Areas is to protect the very large natural areas in the County, while recognizing continued private ownership and encouraging landowners to continue to protect and manage these lands in an environmentally sustainable manner, including for farming and recreational purposes

4. The proposed severed lands are outside of the Core Area, yet remain within 120 metres. Please see ecology staff comments below for more details in this regard

Constraints

Appendix A identifies the subject lands as having potential karst topography. Due to its geological nature, karst topography presents a potential hazard to human safety which must be mitigated through development controls and approvals. As such, it is necessary for the proponent of any planning application to provide an assessment of the proposed area of development. Depending on the site and the scale of the development, an environmental impact study, Hydrogeological or Karst Study, completed by a qualified individual may be required.

5. Staff understand that a karst assessment prepared by GM Blue Plan, dated April 26, 2022, was submitted in support of related consent application in 2023 (files B04.2023 and B05.2023), which created the subject lands. However, the report did not contemplate further lot creation and/or the creation of additional building envelopes. As such, additional assessment of the karst hazards on site, from a qualified individual, will be required to confirm if there are suitable building envelopes on the proposed lots.

Appendix B also indicates that a portion of the subject lands are designated Significant Woodland and ANSI. Section 7.4 states:

- 1) *No development or site alteration may occur within Significant Woodlands or their adjacent lands unless it has been demonstrated through an environmental impact study, as per Section 7.11 of this Plan, that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.*
- 2) *Tree cutting and forestry will be permitted in accordance with the County Forest Management By-law (or successor thereto), and guided by the policies of Section 5.5 of this Plan.*

6. Should the applicant seek to injure or destruct trees on lands that extend more than 15 metres from the outer edge of which a Building Permit has been issued, staff recommend consulting the [County's Forestry Management By-law](#). An exemption to the by-law is required, for example, to injure or destroy trees in order to install and provide utilities to the construction or use of a building, structure or thing for which a Building Permit has *not* been issued or for the cutting of a tree in a forested area 1 hectare in size or larger.

Ecology Comments

County ecology staff have reviewed the proposal and provide the following comments:

Easternmost Severed Parcel

7. **Natural Heritage:** The property contains and/or is adjacent to significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat, potential habitat for threatened and/or endangered species, and natural heritage core area. It is Grey County staffs understanding that the proposed development will be located within and/or adjacent to the features. As such, it is Grey County Staffs opinion that the potential impact to natural heritage needs to be assessed through a scoped Environmental Impact Study (EIS). We recommend the consultant contact this office to develop a Terms of Reference for the study.
8. **Stormwater Management:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that stormwater management infrastructure is not needed for the proposal.
9. **Source Water Protection:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that the property does not contain protection areas that are subject to policies of the Source Water Protection Act.

10. Bedrock Hazards: The property may contain potential hazardous karstic bedrock that may be unstable and unable to support development. The collapse of bedrock or unconsolidated sediments into underlying bedrock cavities is a potential hazard in karst landscapes. Building upon karst bedrock features has the potential to damage property and infrastructure and put the health and safety of landowners and residents at risk. Staff have reviewed the Karst Hazard Study prepared by GM BluePlan (2022) and understand the site inspection and borehole investigations were only partially conducted within the proposed severed parcel boundaries at the time of study commencement and there is not sufficient developable area on the proposed parcel within the previous karst study boundary limits. Further to the conclusions of the report stating, 'Development of the property beyond the limits of proposed development would be subject to further study and inspection prior to approval', an amendment to the karst hazard study is required. We recommend the consultants contact this office to develop a terms of reference for the required study amendments.

Westernmost Severed Parcel

- 11. Natural Heritage:** The property contains and/or is adjacent to significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat, potential habitat for threatened and/or endangered species, and natural heritage core area. It is Grey County staffs understanding that the proposed development will be located within a previous disturbed area outside of the features. As such, it is Grey County Staffs opinion that the potential impact to natural would be negligible and the requirement for an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) can be waived.
- 12. Stormwater Management:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that stormwater management infrastructure is not needed for the proposal.
- 13. Source Water Protection:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that the property does not contain protection areas that are subject to policies of the Source Water Protection Act.
- 14. Bedrock Hazards:** The property may contain potential hazardous karstic bedrock that may be unstable and unable to support development. The collapse of bedrock or unconsolidated sediments into underlying bedrock cavities is a potential hazard in karst landscapes. Building upon karst bedrock features has the potential to damage property and infrastructure and put the health and safety of landowners and residents at risk. Staff have reviewed the Karst Hazard Study prepared by GM BluePlan (2022) and understand the site inspection and borehole investigations were not conducted in this area of the proposed severed

parcel boundaries at the time of study commencement as it was not listed as a proposed development envelope. Further to the conclusions of the report stating “Development of the property beyond the limits of proposed development would be subject to further study and inspection prior to approval,” an amendment to the karst hazard study is required. We recommend the consultants contact this office to develop a terms of reference for the required study amendments.

Retained Parcel

- 15. Natural Heritage:** The property contains and/or is adjacent to significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat, potential habitat for threatened and/or endangered species, and natural heritage core area. It is Grey County staffs understanding that the proposed development will be located within a previous disturbed area outside of the features. As such, it is Grey County Staffs opinion that the potential impact to natural would be negligible and the requirement for an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) can be waived.
- 16. Stormwater Management:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that stormwater management infrastructure is not needed for the proposal.
- 17. Source Water Protection:** It is Grey County Staffs understanding that the property does not contain protection areas that are subject to policies of the Source Water Protection Act.
- 18. Bedrock Hazards:** The property may contain potential hazardous karstic bedrock that may be unstable and unable to support development. The collapse of bedrock or unconsolidated sediments into underlying bedrock cavities is a potential hazard in karst landscapes. Building upon karst bedrock features has the potential to damage property and infrastructure and put the health and safety of landowners and residents at risk. Staff have reviewed the Karst Hazard Study prepared by GM BluePlan (2022) and find it generally acceptable. Staff recommend the following be listed as conditions of approval as per the conclusions of the report:
 - 1) That at time of construction, the bedrock surface be inspected in areas where it is exposed to confirm the nature of the bedrock and the presence or absence of any additional fractures or dissolution features that would pose structural limitations. Where fractures or crevasses are uncovered during site preparation for foundations, additional support or adjustments to the foundation design may be required. We recommend that such a review be completed by a qualified person (as per the Ontario Building Code).

- 2) That the onsite sewage systems are not constructed on areas with evident karstic features and within the proposed development areas identified on Figures 2 and 3.
- 3) That no structures or servicing be constructed in the area identified as having hydraulically active Karst features.
- 4) Development of the property beyond the limits of proposed development would be subject to further study and inspection prior to approval.

Bedrock Resource Area

Appendix E designates a portion of the subject lands within the Bedrock Resource area. Section 5.6.6.2) states:

...
Within Bedrock and Shale Resource Areas shown on Appendix E and on adjacent lands ... new non-farm sized lot creation, which would significantly prevent or hinder new extraction operations may only be permitted if:

- i. the resource use would not be feasible for extraction as per current industry standards (i.e., resources with greater than 8 m of overburden);*
- ii. or the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest;*
- iii. and issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.*

19. Staff understand that the proposal is to create two new non-farm sized rural residential lots. It is unclear how the proposed severances meet the above noted policy 5.6.6.2). Staff request that further justification be provided, including a letter of opinion from a qualified engineer to determine that extraction of the resource would not be feasible.

Summary

Staff recommend that the applications be deferred until such a time as a Karst Hazard Study has been completed for the two proposed lots, a letter of opinion is provided addressing the Bedrock Resource Area policies, and an Environmental Impact Study is completed for the easternmost proposed lot.

Further to the above, staff recommend that the findings of previous karst study and any further karst and/or environmental assessment be embedded in the zoning for the proposed severed and retained lands by way of a zoning by-law amendment.

The County requests notice of any decision rendered with respect to this file.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me.

Yours Truly,

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