



Conceptual Render

PLANNING JUSTIFICATION BRIEF

Municipality of Hastings Highland

1479 Centreview Rd. Combermere
June 14, 2024

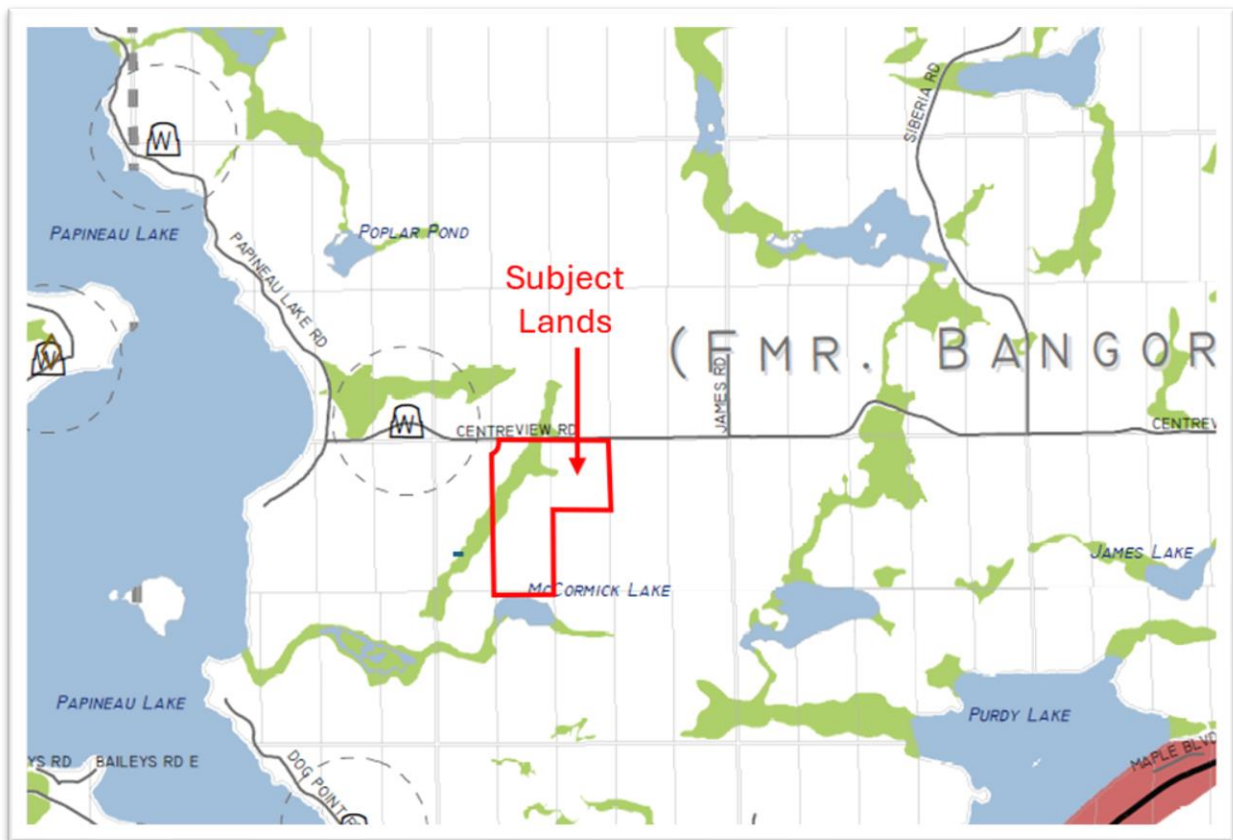
INTRODUCTION

smpl Design Studio has been retained by the registered owner of the lands municipally known as 1479 Centreview Road in Combermere to assist in the coordination and preparation of planning applications necessary to facilitate a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment, and to obtain permits necessary for the construction of the proposed Tourist Establishment use consisting of a main cabin and four sleeping cabins for a commercial hunt camp.

This brief provides an overview of the subject lands and a detailed description of the proposal, a description of the supporting Environmental Impact Statement, and a review of the applicable planning policy framework. This brief also provides the planning justification in support of the proposed commercial development through the evaluation of the planning merits of the Zoning by-law amendment application.

LOCATION

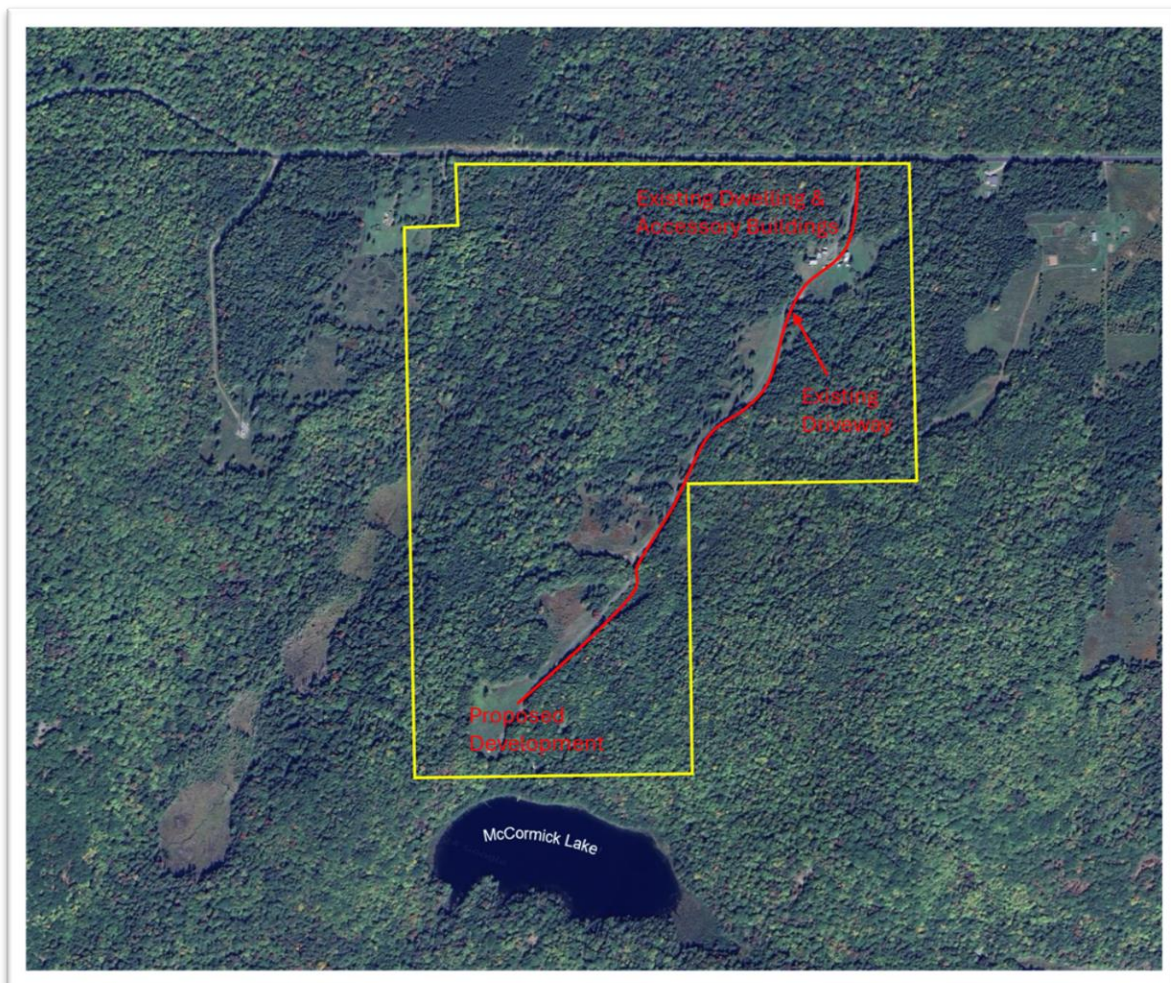
The subject lands consist of a +/- 63.3 hectare parcel of land with frontage on Centreview Road. The lands are east of Papineau Lake and just north of McCormick Lake. The subject lands are heavily treed with existing clearings, and consist of part of lot 7 and part of lot 8, Concession 8.



Much of the site is zoned Marginal Agriculture (MA), with a portion zoned Environmental Protection. The Environmental Protection Zone runs diagonally through a portion of the subject lands at the northwest, and encompasses a watercourse that outlets to McCastle Pond.

There currently exists a driveway that runs diagonally through the subject lands from the northeast of the lot to the proposed development at the south of the lot. The existing buildings consist of a 2-storey residential dwelling along with eight accessory buildings, including five storage buildings and three agricultural buildings. There is an existing well and septic system that service the existing development. The existing development and driveway, and the proposed development, are located east of the area zoned Environmental Protection.

Adjacent the subject lands to the north and south are Crown lands, and to the east and west of the lands are residential and agricultural uses, all similarly zoned Marginal Agriculture and Environmental Protection.



APPLICATION HISTORY

A Pre-Consultation Application submission was made to the Planning Department of the County of Hastings Highlands on September 6, 2023 and comments were received on September 27, 2023 authored by John Jardine, Municipal Planner. Following the County's review of the application it was determined that the commercial hunt camp proposal met the definition of a Tourist Establishment use, and that a Zoning By-law Amendment Application would be required to rezone the property to a site-specific Special Recreational/Resort Commercial (RRC-*) Zone to permit the proposed use.

TRANSPORTATION

The subject lands have approximately 755m of frontage on Centreview Road, which is identified as a municipal road according to the Hastings County Official Plan, Land Use Designations, OP-A Schedule, Northern Member Municipalities. This municipally maintained right-of-way provides access to existing uses fronting on Centreview Road, and leads to numerous cottage properties along Papineau Lake to the west of the subject lands. As documented in the Pre-Consultation staff comments, a major increase in tourist traffic is not anticipated due to the small scale of this proposal, and therefore a Traffic Impact Study is not required.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development consists of adding to the existing 2-storey dwelling and eight accessory buildings on the subject lands with the addition of tourist cabins as per the Site Plan. Proposed are four sleeping cabins and a main cabin to facilitate a proposed commercial hunt camp. The 1-storey sleeping cabins will each occupy a footprint of 15.12m² (162.75 ft²) and feature a bedroom, compostable toilet facility, and a covered porch amenity area.

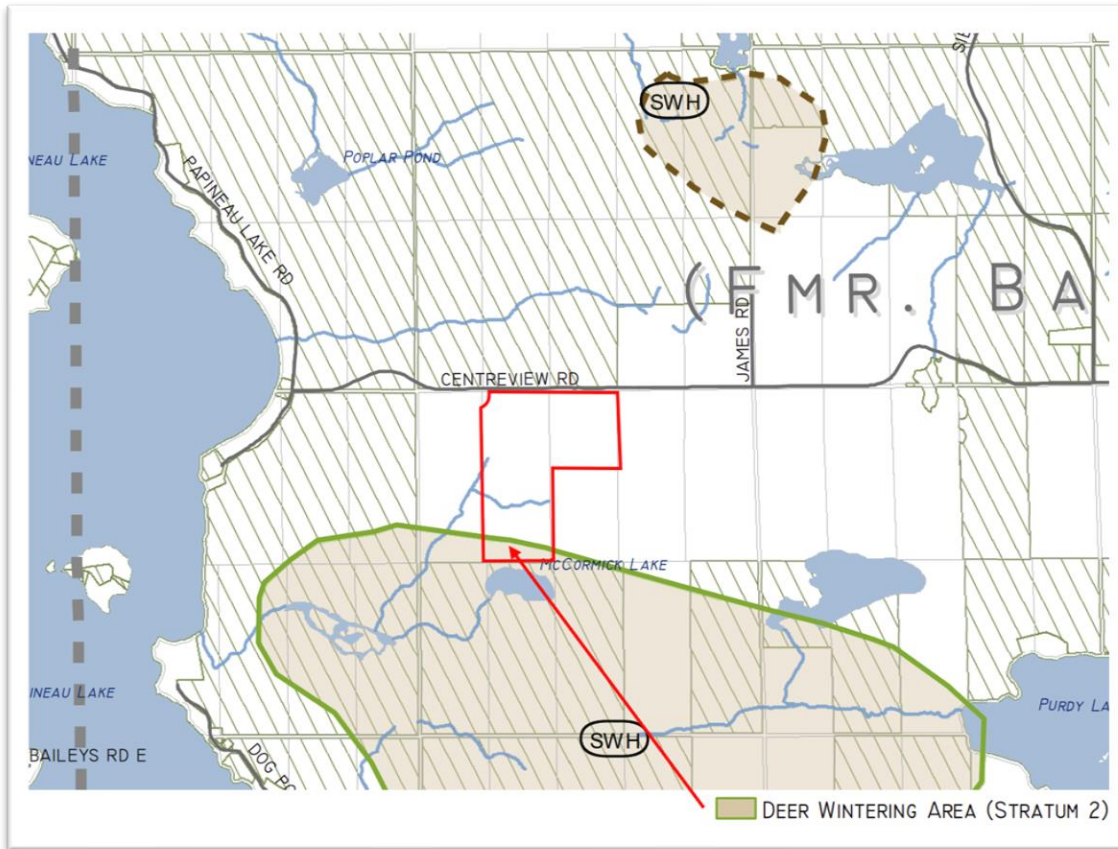
The 1-storey main cabin will occupy a footprint of 135.41m² (1,457.5 ft²) and will function as a gathering space for the sleep cabin occupants. Proposed is an outdoor patio, a large indoor living / dining area, a full kitchen for individual meal preparation by cabin occupants, and two 3-piece bathrooms. The main cabin is proposed to be serviced by a new septic system and drilled well. A Site Plan and architectural plans for the proposed buildings are included with this submission.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

This development concept was first presented as part of a Pre-Consultation Application and this process confirmed that a Habitat Assessment in the form of a scoped Environmental Impact Statement would be required as part of a complete application. This is due to the fact that a portion of the property, and the location of the proposal, is within a Dear Wintering Area, Stratum 2, as per The County of Hastings Official Plan, Natural Heritage Features & Areas, OP-B Schedule.

The Pre-Consultation correspondence also confirmed that approval of the following planning applications would be required to facilitate the proposed development:

- Zoning By-law Amendment; and,
- Site Plan Control.



The purpose of the Zoning By-law Amendment is to rezone the subject lands from the Municipality of Hastings Highlands By-law 2004-035 Comprehensive Zoning By-law, as amended, Marginal Agriculture (MA) Zone to a site specific Special Recreational / Resort Commercial (RRC-*) Zone. A future submission of a Site Plan Control application will be required to implement the detailed design of the development concept and any requirements of the County of Hastings Official Plan Section 4.3.3.10 regarding the findings of the Habitat Assessment.

SUPPORTING STUDIES

The County of Hastings has identified that the subject property contains significant wildlife habitat Dear Wintering Area, Stratum 2, which triggered the requirement for an Environmental Impact Study (EIS). A scoped EIS was completed by GeoProcess Research Associates Inc. and a report was received dated June 14, 2024.

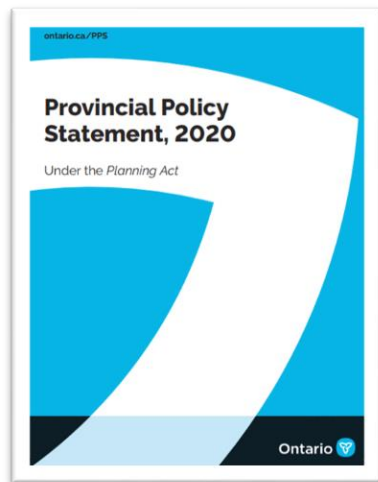
The scope of the EIS was focused on identifying deer wintering habitat around the proposed development and any potential negative impacts. Results indicate that deer make relatively light use of the subject property compared to nearby areas outside of the subject property, and that the recreational use cabins are expected to have minimal impacts on overall deer wintering habitat with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The following is intended to provide a review and highlight the planning policy framework applicable to the subject lands. The applicable documents include the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), the County of Hastings Official Plan (2017), and the Municipality of Hastings Highlands By-law 2004-035 Comprehensive Zoning By-law (office consolidation: March 2023).

PROVINCIAL POLICY

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020



The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The vision of the PPS includes the long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontario which depends on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns.

1.0 Building Strong Healthy Communities

Efficient land use and development patterns are encouraged, which in turn supports sustainability by promoting strong, livable, healthy and resilient communities, protecting the environment and public health and safety, and facilitating economic growth.

Rural areas are important to the economic success of the Province, and our quality of life. Policies in this section note the importance of leveraging rural assets and amenities while protecting the environment as a foundation for a sustainable economy. Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by building upon rural character and leveraging rural amenities and assets, and by providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, among others (1.1.4.1). Recreation, tourism and other economic opportunities should be promoted (1.1.5.3), with the goal of development that is compatible with the rural landscape (1.1.5.4).

2.0 Wise Use and Management of Resources

These policies aim to protect the health of our lakes and natural heritage features, noting that development and site alteration is permitted outside of demonstrated significant wetlands, woodlands, valleylands, and wildlife habitats (2.1).

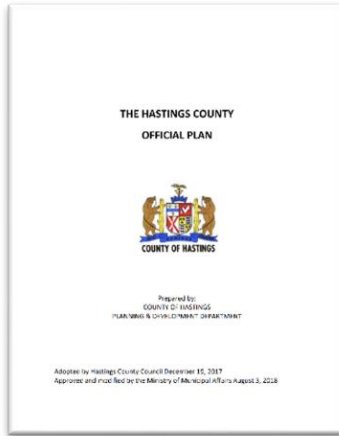
3.0 Protecting Public Health & Safety

Development shall generally be directed to areas outside of hazardous lands adjacent to the shorelines of the great lakes, hazardous lands adjacent to river, stream and small inland lake systems impacted by flooding or erosion, and generally hazardous sites.

The proposed tourist establishment is appropriate within the rural landscape of the County of Hastings. The location of the proposed tourist cabins is outside of demonstrated significant natural heritage, or man-made hazards and will therefore not pose a risk to public health and safety or to property. The proposed tourist establishment use is consistent with the policies promoting sustainable tourism opportunities, and compatibility with the rural landscape.

LOCAL POLICY

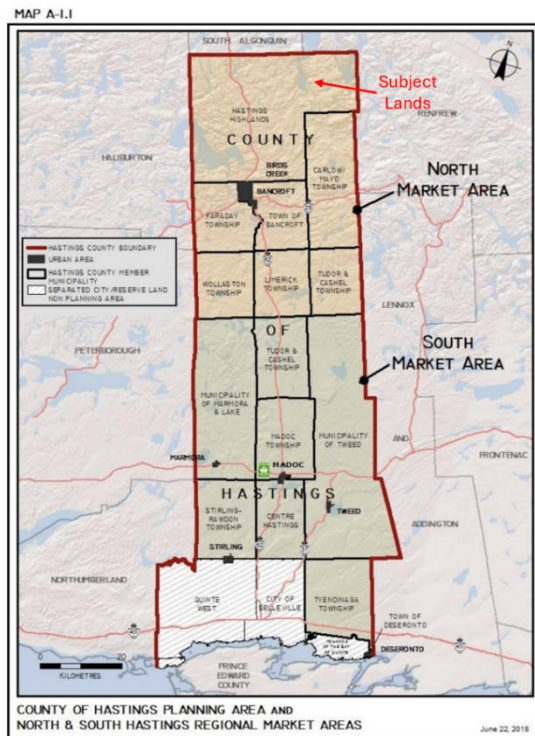
The Hastings County Official Plan, 2017



The Hastings County Official Plan was adopted by Hastings County Council in 2017 and approved and modified by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in 2018. The Plan implements the Provincial Policy Statement through consideration of land use management as well as infrastructure and natural resource factors, while providing economic opportunities and prosperity for residents of the County.

The subject lands are located within the County's Northern Member Municipalities and designated Rural / Waterfront with a small portion of the lands designated Environmental Protection on Schedule OP-A, Land Use Designations, Hastings County Official Plan. Furthermore, a section along the southern extent of the subject lands is designated a Dear Wintering Area, Stratum 2, on Schedule OP-B.

1.2 Member Municipalities Within Regional Market Areas



Hastings County is the second largest geographic county in Ontario and remains predominantly rural in nature. Two distinct market areas have been identified in the County as identified on Map A-1.1. The subject lands are located in the North Hastings Market Area which is characterized by rugged topography associated with the Canadian Shield, small settlement areas and a sparse rural population, and includes large tracts of Crown land. The urban communities and hamlets serve primarily as market service centers for full and part-time residents located in the rural areas of the County, including around its numerous lakes and rivers.

1.6 Economic Prosperity – Quality of Life

Prosperity and quality of life are fueled by a climate that encourages entrepreneurship and investment. Policies on economic prosperity recognize that agricultural uses as well as secondary uses provide for value-added activities and products and contribute to a viable and sustainable rural economy within the County that needs to be promoted and supported. The economy in the North Hastings Market Area is

relatively dependent upon the primary industry sector and tourism, including recreational waterfront development. The utilization of natural resources for forestry, aggregate, and mineral extraction, and recreational uses including fishing and hunting shall be encouraged on lands best suited for the specific purpose, while striving for sustainability.

1.6.6 In an effort to stimulate economic activities and opportunities, the Hastings County Economic Development Action Plan identifies the following four key goals:

- a) *Provide support to the agriculture and forestry sectors;*
- b) *Utilize the “Communities with Opportunities” brand and investment marketing strategy to attract new entrepreneurs and investment;*
- c) *Support new entrepreneurs and existing businesses through the practice of small business coaching; and,*
- d) *Create a more attractive place to live, visit, work and invest through place based development initiatives.*

Significant action items identified within and / or developed from the County’s Economic Development Action Plan include promoting Hastings County to “Lone Eagles” as a place to grow their business dreams, among others.

3.4 Private Sewer and Water Servicing

Policy 3.4.1 allows that where municipal sewage and water services are not provided, individual on-site sewage and water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts.

4.5 Environmental Protection & Land Use Designation

The Environmental Protection (EP) designation comprises natural features to be protected for future generations. Specifically, the EP designation captures locally and regionally significant wetlands, coastal wetlands, floodplains, water bodies, water courses, escarpments and other natural hazard lands. The erection of new buildings or structures or the removal or placement of fill in areas designated Environmental Protection shall not be permitted without the prior approval of the appropriate authority.

5.0 Emerging Rural Economy

The goals for the emerging rural economy in the County include encouraging and accommodating a range of economic activities that contribute to the diversity of the economic base, including tourism facilities; maintaining the natural and scenic qualities of rural landscapes; and maintaining and enhancing the high quality of life in the County which will provide a strong incentive for the County’s young people to remain and attract new and former residents as a place to live, work, recreate, rest and invest (5.1.1).

In order to facilitate and achieve the emerging rural economy, objectives include permitting limited residential development, including tourist accommodations in the County’s rural areas as long as they are compatible with the rural landscape, are appropriately serviced, and do no negatively impact on the natural heritage features and areas noted in Part 4 of the Plan; and continuing to facilitate the establishment and expansion of a variety of commercial, industrial and recreational businesses, including home-based businesses, among others (5.1.2).

5.4 Rural and Waterfront land Use Designation

The Rural and Waterfront land use designation includes those lands located outside any other land use designation identified in Land Use Designation Schedule OP-A of this Plan, and includes the subject lands. Development is generally to be serviced by private individual water and sewage systems (5.4.1.4), permitted uses include commercial and tourism development, as well as Crown land activities (5.4.2.1), and new development wherever possible shall have frontage on and access from a year-round maintained public road (5.4.3.1).

5.4.5.3 The following planning principles are intended to guide future development in the Rural and Waterfront designation:

- a) *Development should not take place on lands having environmental constraints and is discouraged in areas possessing important natural characteristics unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the feature or its ecological function in accordance with the policies of this Plan;*
- b) *The natural landscape should prevail with built form blending into the landscape;*
- c) *Lot lines should respect traditional features of the landscape, such as historic fence lines, treelines and topography, and generally maintain the rural character of the area;*
- d) *Natural shorelines and vegetative buffers will be retained, maintained and/or restored;*
- e) *Native species should be used for buffers and where vegetation is being restored;*
- f) *Measures such as changes to proposed lot lines and increased setbacks should be utilized to help address potential negative impacts to natural heritage features and the environment;*
- g) *Structural development will maintain a low structural profile and will not create a new skyline or ridgeline above the existing tree canopy;*
- h) *Building mass and coverage should be limited in relation to the size and frontage of the property and be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area; and,*
- i) *Building envelopes, including the careful siting of shoreline structures, and the associated activity area should be defined and located in the most appropriate locations on the property, leaving the remainder of the property generally in its natural state.*

5.6 Commercial and Tourism Development

Permitted uses in the Rural and Waterfront designation shall include small scale commercial uses which relate to the rural economy, and include tourist establishments in accordance with the policies of this Plan. The County is committed to promoting Hastings County as a tourist destination and continues implementation of its Tourism Master Plan, in addition to its various cultural facilities and amenities. These projects help further coordinate, define and promote the unique tourism and cultural facilities and quality of place available within the County of Hastings. In addition, the implementation of the County's Tourism Master Plan helps to enhance the unique sense of place available in the County and further network and stimulate the local tourism economies (5.6.1.3).

Location and design considerations for commercial uses in the Rural and Waterfront designation include ensuring the site is suitable for the planned recreational use and that the natural environment, open space character and scenic qualities of the area are protected; ensuring safe access to and from municipal roads; ensuring off-street parking meets the needs to the proposed use; and proposing appropriate water supply and sanitary sewer services (5.6.1.5).

Tourist Establishments include resorts, motels, hotels, tourist inns with four or more guest rooms, rental cabins and other roofed accommodation, including accessory facilities (5.6.2.1).

5.6.2.2 An amendment to the implementing zoning by-law shall be required in order to permit any new tourist establishment or the expansion of an existing one beyond its current commercial zoning. The member municipal Council shall review how the proposed tourist establishment is able to satisfy the following development criteria, in addition to the other relevant sections of the Official Plan, prior to adopting the zoning by-law amendment:

- a) *The minimum lot area should generally be 2 hectares (4 acres);*
- b) *The preferred density should be one unit per .4 hectare (1 acre), subject to the approval of the sewage disposal systems by the appropriate authority;*
- c) *The site should be readily accessible to tourist traffic by public road without passing through residential areas in order to avoid disruption to the residential area. The standard of road shall be adequate for the proposed use or shall be upgraded at the proponent's expense;*

- d) The site is suitable for tourist commercial use and the natural environment, open space character and scenic qualities of the area are protected. An environmental impact statement may be required depending on the location of the site in relation to sensitive wetlands and/or habitats;*
- e) The development shall be subject to site plan control approval and the site design shall be sensitive to existing neighbouring uses, with adequate buffering being provided between the tourist establishment and any adjacent residential uses;*
- f) An internal road system shall be provided which will allow ease of access for emergency vehicles and provide for fire route considerations as necessary;*
- g) No building, structure, septic tank or tile field, except a pump house or marine facility for the launching and/or servicing of boats shall be located closer than 30 metres to the high water mark of any water body.*
- h) All docking and boat launching structures/facilities shall require the approval of the appropriate federal, provincial or public agency; and,*
- i) Required water and sewage works shall receive appropriate approvals.*

5.8 Outdoor Recreational Uses and Parks

The County and its Member Municipalities promote both active and passive recreational uses that provide residents and tourists with a variety of social, educational and wilderness experiences, and permitted uses include hunt camps and other open space activities.

The subject lands are in the North Hastings Market Area, the economy of which is dependent on sectors like tourism, including recreational development. Attracting new entrepreneurs is a goal within the County's Economic Development Action Plan which includes promoting the County as a place to grow small businesses.

The lands are furthermore designated Rural / Waterfront which permits a variety of uses including the proposed tourist establishment use. The proposed tourist cabins will serve to assist the County's goal for the emerging rural economy including accommodating a range of economic activities including tourism facilities.

The subject lands are in excess of 63 ha with frontage on a municipal right of way which is readily accessible to tourist traffic without passing through residential areas. An internal road system is proposed which will provide adequate access for emergency vehicles, and adequate parking facilities are proposed.

The open space character and scenic qualities of the lands are to be maintained, and the lands designated as Environmental Protection are to be protected and will remain outside of the proposed development area. The proposed drilled well and septic system will provide adequate servicing for the tourist establishment use, and the proposed location of the cabins will provide for adequate buffering between the tourist establishment and adjacent residential uses.

The subject lands are deemed suitable for the proposed commercial use and the proposed tourist establishment will serve to implement relevant official plan policies and goals.

The Hastings County Tourism Development Plan: 2020 - 2022



The Hastings County Tourism Development Plan (Plan) replaces the Hastings County Tourism Master Plan. The intent was to create a succinct document that would meet the County's needs, and in 2024 this document will be updated to reflect current trends, challenges, and opportunities within the tourism landscape with the goal of setting the course for future growth in tourism.

Hastings County adopted a destination brand for visitor attraction – *Wildly Authentic Hastings* – meant to convey local opportunities for wilderness experiences and activities. The County is marketed as an ideal destination for wanderers, explorers and those who are looking to connect with Hastings' wildly original nature and authentic experiences.

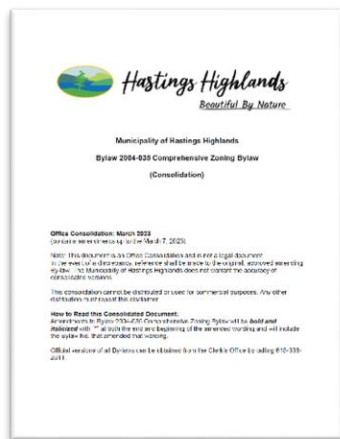
Hastings' municipalities offer a diverse tourism industry, and this Plan sets forth goals for growing the tourism industry in the County and contributing to the economic base by igniting and supporting local industry, driving strategic investment attraction and industry growth, and building tourism-ready communities.

Tourism is noted to be relevant to all parts of the County, with outdoor tourism playing an important role in the Plan. Hastings offers a diverse outdoor experience and has great potential to expand itself as a premier outdoor destination.

With an abundance of natural outdoor assets, and the goals of increasing tourism and providing additional short term tourist accommodation, the proposed tourist establishment aligns with the goals in the Plan and will contribute to the local economy of Hastings Highlands.

ZONING BY-LAW

Municipality of Hastings Highlands Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2004-035 (March 2023)



The subject lands are located in the Marginal Agriculture (MA) Zone and the Environmental Protection (EP) Zone. A Hunt Camp is listed as a permitted use within the Marginal Agriculture Zone, however a Tourist Establishment is not.

The definition of a Tourist Establishment includes:

“A premises operated to provide sleeping accommodation for the travelling public or sleeping accommodation for the use of the public engaging in recreational activities and includes the services and facilities in connection with which sleeping accommodation is provided, and includes a tourist cabin.”



The proposed development requires an amendment to the Municipality of Hastings Highlands By-law 2004-035 Comprehensive Zoning By-law, as amended, to permit the proposed Tourist Establishment use. The subject lands will be removed from the Marginal Agriculture (MA) Zone and placed in a site specific Special Recreational / Resort Commercial (RRC-*) Zone to permit the proposed tourist cabins and commercial hunt camp. The lands zoned Environmental Protection will remain as such.

There is an existing 2-storey dwelling and eight (8) accessory buildings on the subject lands which are proposed to remain. As such, the following site specific zoning regulations are required to facilitate this proposal.

Zoning Provisions

- i) Lot area: +63.3 hectare (156.5 acres)
- ii) Accessory Buildings (accessory to single detached dwelling):
 - a. Front Yard (Minimum) - 10 metres (32.8 ft.)
 - a. Rear Yard (Minimum) - 3.0 metres (9.8 ft.)
 - b. Interior Side Yard (Minimum) - 3.0 metres (9.8 ft.)
 - c. Building Height (Maximum) - 11 metres (36.1 ft.)

ii) Accessory Agricultural Buildings (accessory to single detached dwelling):

- a. Front Yard (Minimum) - 20 metres (65.6 ft.)
- b. Rear Yard (Minimum) - 20 metres (65.6 ft.)
- c. Interior Side Yard (Minimum) - 5 metres (16.4 ft.).
- d. Building Height (Maximum) - 45 metres (147.6 ft.)

Is the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure?

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment will facilitate the Site Plan, which will result in a form of development that is in keeping with the rural character of the surrounding area. The proposal represents a use of land that is permitted in the County of Hastings Official Plan and will serve to impliment key goals and policies related to the rural economy, commercial and tourism development, and outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences. This application is desirable and appropriate for the development of the lands.

CONCLUSION

This proposal has been reviewed against applicable Provincial and County policies, as well as the regulations contained in the Municipality of Hastings Highlands Comprehensive Zoning By-law. This brief provides the justification to support the requested Zoning By-law Amendment, concluding that the proposal is consistent with and conforms to the applicable policy framework as noted below:

- ✓ The proposal is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement;
- ✓ The proposal maintains the general intent and purpose of the Hastings County Official Plan;
- ✓ The proposal maintains the general intent and purpose of the Municipality of Hastings Highlands By-law 2004-035 Comprehensive Zoning By-law, as amended; and,
- ✓ Is desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land.

Based on a review of applicable planning and policy framework in relation to the subject lands and the proposed Tourist Establishment use, this proposal meets the criteria for evaluating Zoning By-law Amendment applications and represents good planning.

Sincerely,



Ava Barnett BA (Hons) CPT
Planning Technician
ava@smpldesignstudio.com