

**AMENDMENT NO. 36  
TO THE  
OFFICIAL PLAN  
OF THE  
MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE**

**SUBJECT: ACORN VALLEY SUBDIVISION  
DOUG TARRY LIMITED**

**Part Lots 19 and 20, North Dorchester Concession B, S.R.T.; and Part 1 of RP  
33R19961, Municipality of Thames Centre, County of Middlesex**

**AMEND OFFICIAL PLAN TO REDESIGNATE PART OF THE SUBJECT LANDS  
FROM "RESIDENTIAL" TO "RESIDENTIAL- SPECIAL POLICY AREA 3"**

## **THE CONSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT**

PART A - THE PREAMBLE does not constitute part of this amendment. The Preamble provides an explanation of the proposed amendment including the purpose, location, and background information, but does not form part of this amendment.

PART B - THE AMENDMENT, consisting of the following text and schedule constitutes Amendment No. 36 to the Official Plan for the Municipality of Thames Centre.

## **PART A - THE PREAMBLE**

### **1. PURPOSE AND EFFECT**

The purpose and effect of this Official Plan Amendment is to redesignate a portion of the subject lands to implement a proposed draft plan of subdivision (County File No. 39T-TC2501). This Amendment would redesignate certain lands located within the proposed subdivision from “Residential” to “Residential - Special Policy Area 3” to permit high-density residential uses, including apartment dwellings, up to a maximum height of 4-storeys with limited commercial and office uses permitted at grade and an increased density of 95 units per hectare on Block 175 of the proposed draft plan. The lands are also subject to Application for Zoning By-law Amendment (Z20-25). An Application for Draft Plan of Subdivision (39T-TC2501) has also been submitted to facilitate the development of the lands.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

The proposed draft plan of subdivision (File No. 39T-TC2501) as a whole is comprised of approximately 44.28 ha (109.4ac) located on the north and south side of the unopened Christie Drive road allowance within the Dorchester Settlement Area. The lands are located within the ‘Residential’, ‘Protection Area’ and ‘Environmental Area’ designations of the Thames Centre Official Plan, and within the ‘Future Development (FD) Zone’ and ‘Environmental Protection (EP) Zone’ of the Thames Centre Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

The Provincial Planning Statement, the County of Middlesex Official Plan, and the Thames Centre Official Plan all support the comprehensive and coordinated development of lands within fully serviced settlement areas that provide a broad range of densities, housing types, and tenures. In this context, a portion of the subject lands (Block 175 of the draft plan of subdivision) is proposed to be redesignated from ‘Residential’ to ‘Residential – Special Policy Area 3’ to permit high-density residential uses. While such uses are not contemplated within the parent ‘Residential’ designation of the in-force Official Plan, the proposed redesignation would also permit small-scale commercial uses located on the ground floor of the residential apartment building(s). In addition, the special policy area would permit an increase in the maximum building height for apartment dwellings from three storeys to four storeys, as well as an increase in the maximum density from 35 units per hectare to 95 units per hectare.

### **3. BASIS**

The rationale for amending the Official Plan of the Municipality of Thames Centre is based on the following evaluation criteria provided under Section 7.20 of the Official Plan.

*(1) The Provincial Policy Statement (now the Provincial Planning Statement (2024)) as amended from time to time;*

The PPS states that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Dorchester is a designated Urban Settlement Area according to both the County and Municipal Official Plans. The PPS also states that municipal water and municipal sanitary sewage services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas. The subject property is located in Dorchester where full municipal services are proposed to accommodate this development.

To sustain healthy, liveable and safe communities, efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term are encouraged according to the PPS. The proposed subdivision reflects an efficient development and land use pattern as it would yield 9.2 units per hectare for the low and medium density areas, and 95 units per hectare for the high-density block.

The PPS also states that new development taking place in designated growth areas should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and should have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land,

infrastructure and public service facilities. This proposed subdivision is situated in a designated growth area and adjacent to the existing built-up area with road connectivity to existing residential uses and future connection to an arterial road (County Road 79). It also offers a mix of housing types in an area earmarked for residential development.

*(2) The desirability and appropriateness of changing the Official Plan to accommodate the proposed use in light of the basic objectives and intent of the Official Plan;*

The basic objectives and intent of the Official Plan with respect to the proposed use are to provide a policy framework that encourages growth and prosperity in the Municipality and promotes the Municipality as a desirable place to live. The Plan also recognizes the need to provide a range of housing types in appropriate designated locations to accommodate a broad demographic. The proposed draft plan of subdivision and Official Plan Amendment achieve these objectives by facilitating a greater range of housing options within the Dorchester Settlement Area.

*(2) The goals and policies of this Plan;*

Under the Thames Centre Official Plan, one of the themes repeated throughout the document calls for development to accommodate a mix of housing types to cater to all stages of life. More specifically, the Plan encourages a broad range of housing types which are suitable for different age groups, lifestyles, and household structures of existing and future residents. In particular, housing types that promote continuum of lifestyle and allow residents to remain within the community throughout the course of their lives shall be encouraged. The proposed development follows that policy direction by offering housing options in the form singles, semis, townhouse and apartment dwellings as well as both freehold and rental housing tenure. More housing choices, to which this development demonstrates, means fostering a more sustainable community and encouraging existing residents to stay in the area.

*(4) conformity with County policy;*

The County of Middlesex Official Plan encourages a range of housing types, densities, and options to meet the needs of current and future residents. The proposed high-density residential development on Block 175 implements this policy direction by introducing apartment dwellings within the Dorchester Settlement Area and expanding the range of housing forms available within a fully serviced settlement area.

The County of Middlesex Official Plan, consistent with the Thames Centre Official Plan and the Provincial Planning Statement, also promotes land use patterns that make efficient use of existing and planned municipal services and infrastructure. The proposed high-density residential development supports this policy direction by concentrating residential intensity on lands within a designated settlement area that are intended to be fully serviced. In this regard, the proposal contributes to the Municipality's long-term housing supply and increases housing choice through a compact form of residential development.

*(5) the need for the proposed use, including justification for the amount of land proposed for a change in designation based on existing undeveloped lands available for development;*

The Province of Ontario is experiencing a housing shortage with impacts being felt both regionally and locally, due to a limited supply of housing combined with a significant surge in housing demand. Simply put, the demand for housing has significantly outpaced supply resulting in escalating housing prices. The proposed high-density residential uses will provide a more affordable housing opportunity for the community compared to single detached dwellings which is largely the predominant housing type in the Municipality.

- (6) *whether the subject lands are within 120 metres of lands designated “Natural Area” and the results of an Environmental Impact Study as outlined in Section 3.2.3.1 of this Plan;*

Although no part of the property is designated “Natural Area”, the subject lands are adjacent to areas designated “Protection Area” and “Environmental Area”. As such, the undertaking of an EIS was required to support the development, and all recommendations from the study and Conservation Authority were included in the list of draft plan conditions.

- (7) *the effect on the economy and financial position of the Municipality;*

The proposed development will provide employment opportunities for the area in the small-scale commercial uses proposed within the high-density block, as well as provide an opportunity for additional tax assessment. Due to the density and form of development, it will demonstrate an efficient use of infrastructure.

- (8) *the compatibility of the proposed use with existing uses or potential uses in adjoining areas and the effect of such use on the surrounding area including the natural environment;*

The proposed high-density residential block is generally compatible with existing and planned development in the surrounding area. It is located on the south side of the Christie Drive extension and positioned away from the existing low-density dwellings within the Tiner subdivision, thereby reducing potential land use conflicts and providing an appropriate transition in built form. The proposed subdivision also places lower-density housing closer to the existing neighbourhood and locates higher-density forms more internally and toward the western portion of the site, which helps maintain compatibility with the established character of adjacent residential areas.

With respect to the natural environment, the proposal has been supported by an Environmental Impact Study and reviewed by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. Subject to the recommended draft plan conditions and implementation of the mitigation measures identified through the review process, staff are satisfied that the development can proceed without unacceptable adverse impacts on adjacent natural heritage features or their ecological functions.

- (9) *the location of the site with respect to the transportation system, the adequacy of the potable water supply, sewage disposal facilities, solid waste disposal, and other municipal services as required, including the ability to provide logical extensions to existing services;*

The subject lands are appropriately located within the Dorchester Settlement Area and are situated such that they can be efficiently integrated with the existing transportation and municipal servicing network. The proposed extension of Christie Drive will provide the primary access to the subdivision and establish a logical road connection between the existing built-up area and future development lands. The supporting Traffic Impact Assessment, as reviewed through the application process, concludes that the surrounding road network and internal street system can accommodate the projected traffic associated with the development.

From a servicing perspective, the proposal is to be developed on full municipal water and sanitary services, consistent with the preferred servicing hierarchy of the Provincial Planning Statement, the Middlesex County Official Plan, and the Thames Centre Official Plan. The proposed watermain and sanitary sewer infrastructure are designed to connect to and extend existing municipal systems in a logical and efficient manner, including the ability to support future phases and potential development lands beyond the subject site.

Stormwater management is also proposed through municipal infrastructure and will be subject to detailed design and agency review to ensure downstream impacts are appropriately addressed. Solid waste disposal and other typical

municipal services can be provided in the same manner as for other urban residential development within Dorchester. Accordingly, staff are satisfied that the site is appropriately located with respect to the transportation system and that adequate municipal services can be provided, including logical extensions to existing infrastructure.

*(10) the physical suitability of the land for the proposed use;*

Block 175 is relatively flat from a topographical standpoint and used historically for agricultural purposes for the cultivation of field crops. Further, the archaeological assessments did not identify the Block as an area of significance; therefore, staff are of the opinion the site is physically suitable for high-density development.

*(11) the effect on the provision of affordable housing in the Municipality; and*

High density residential uses are currently limited in this part of the Municipality. The community will benefit from the introduction of this housing type being a more affordable housing option compared to current housing options limited to single detached dwellings.

*(12) whether the subject lands contain natural features or natural hazard lands that should be subject to an Environmental Impact Study as outlined in Section 3.2.3.1 of this Plan.*

The Block intended to support high-density residential uses does not contain natural heritage features or natural hazards. However, Block 175 is located within 120 metres of a natural heritage feature. As such, the undertaking of an EIS was required in support of the development, and implementation of the recommendations is included as a draft plan approval condition.

Based on the foregoing, the subject proposal is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, conforms to the Middlesex County Official Plan and Thames Centre Official Plan.

## **PART B - THE AMENDMENT**

All of this part of the Amendment entitled 'Part B - The Amendment', including the attached Schedule 'A', constitutes Amendment No. 36 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Thames Centre.

### **DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT**

The Official Plan of the Municipality of Thames Centre is hereby amended:

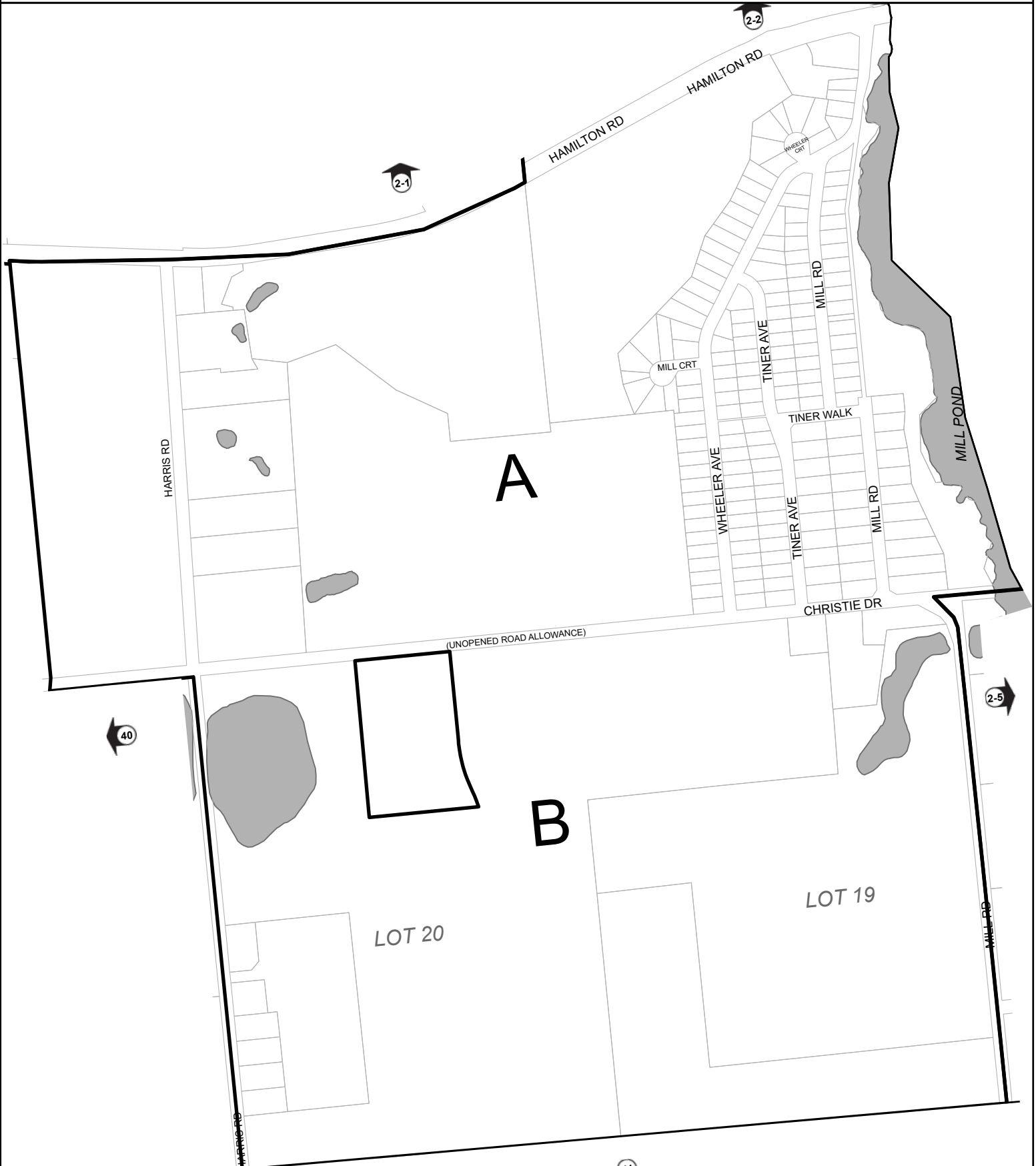
1. That Section 4.3.3.1 of the Official Plan of the Municipality of Thames Centre is hereby amended by the addition of the following:

**(3) Residential - Special Policy Area 3**

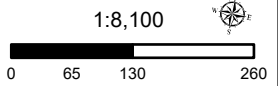
Notwithstanding Section 4.3.3 of the Municipality of Thames Centre Official Plan, the "Residential - Special Policy Area 3" shall permit high-density residential uses, including apartment dwellings and limited commercial and office uses permitted on the ground floor of the apartment building, up to a maximum height of four (4) storeys and an overall density of 95 units per hectare, calculated using the total land area within said Residential Special Policy Area 3 (Block 175).

2. That the Official Plan of the Municipality of Thames Centre is hereby amended by revising "Schedule 'B-1' Land Use Plan – Dorchester Settlement Area" by specifically changing the designation of a portion of certain lands legally described as Part Lots 19 and 20, North Dorchester Concession B S.R.T.; and Part 1 of RP 33R19961, Municipality of Thames Centre and as shown on Schedule 'A' attached hereto to Amendment No. 36, from "Residential" to "Residential - Special Policy Area 3".

# SCHEDULE "A" AMENDMENT NO. 36 TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE OFFICIAL PLAN



**REDESIGNATE FROM 'RESIDENTIAL' TO  
RESIDENTIAL - SPECIAL POLICY AREA 3'**



Metres

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only. Do not rely on it as being a precise indicator of routes, locations of features, nor as a guide to navigation.