



PLANWELL^{OM}

Wellington County
Official Plan Review

OPA 131 Rural Area Policies and Growth

Public Meeting
February 12, 2026



Purpose of Public Meeting

- Hosted by County Planning Committee to receive input from the public on Official Plan Amendment 131
- A virtual Open House hosted by Planning and Development Department was also held February 5, 2026
- Both meetings are required under Section 26 of Planning Act and the staff presentations are essentially the same

OPA 131

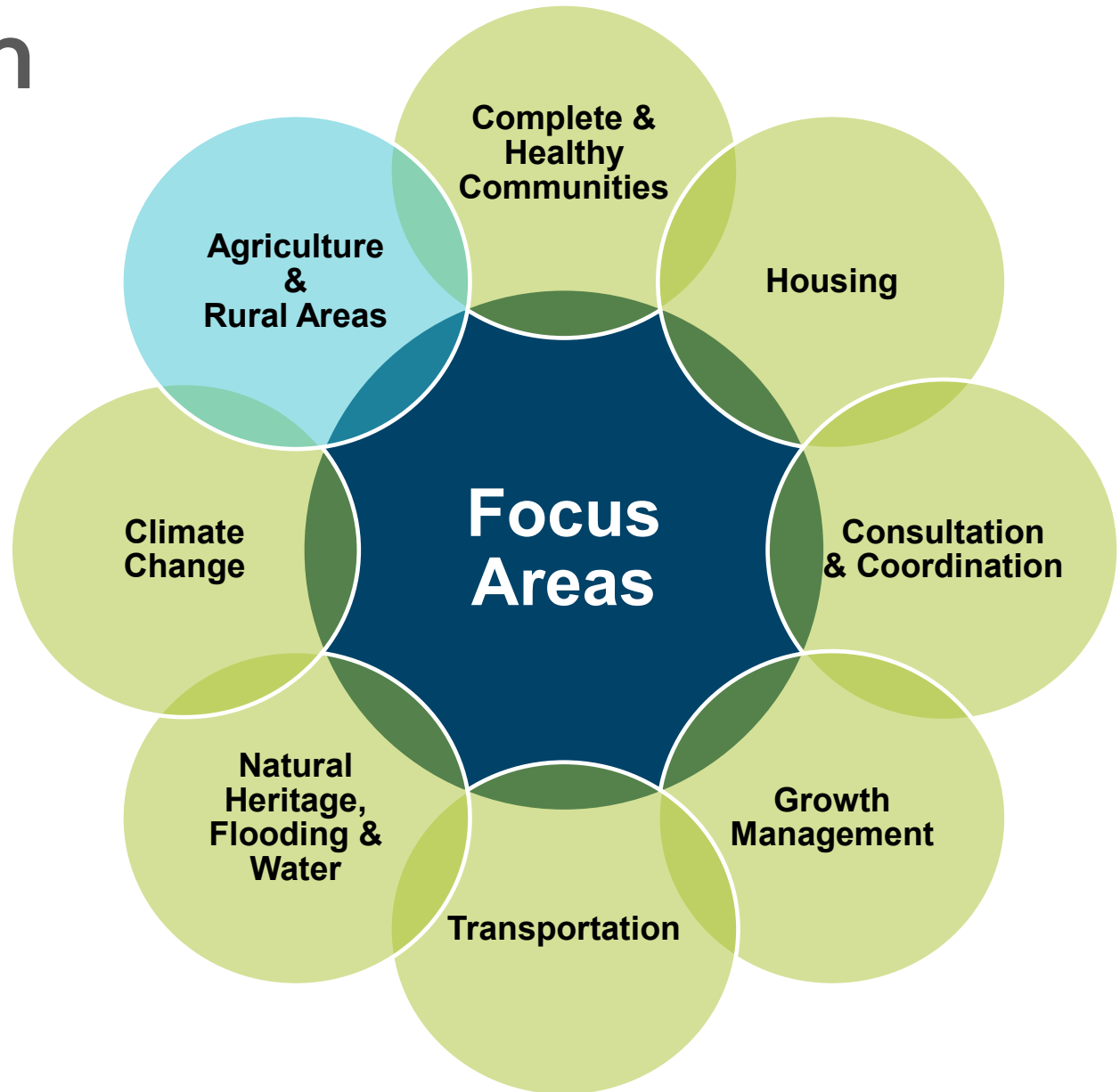
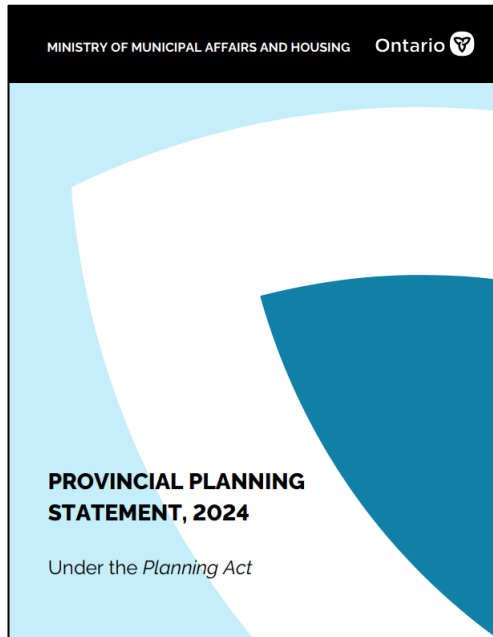
Official Plan

Review Context

Official Plan Review

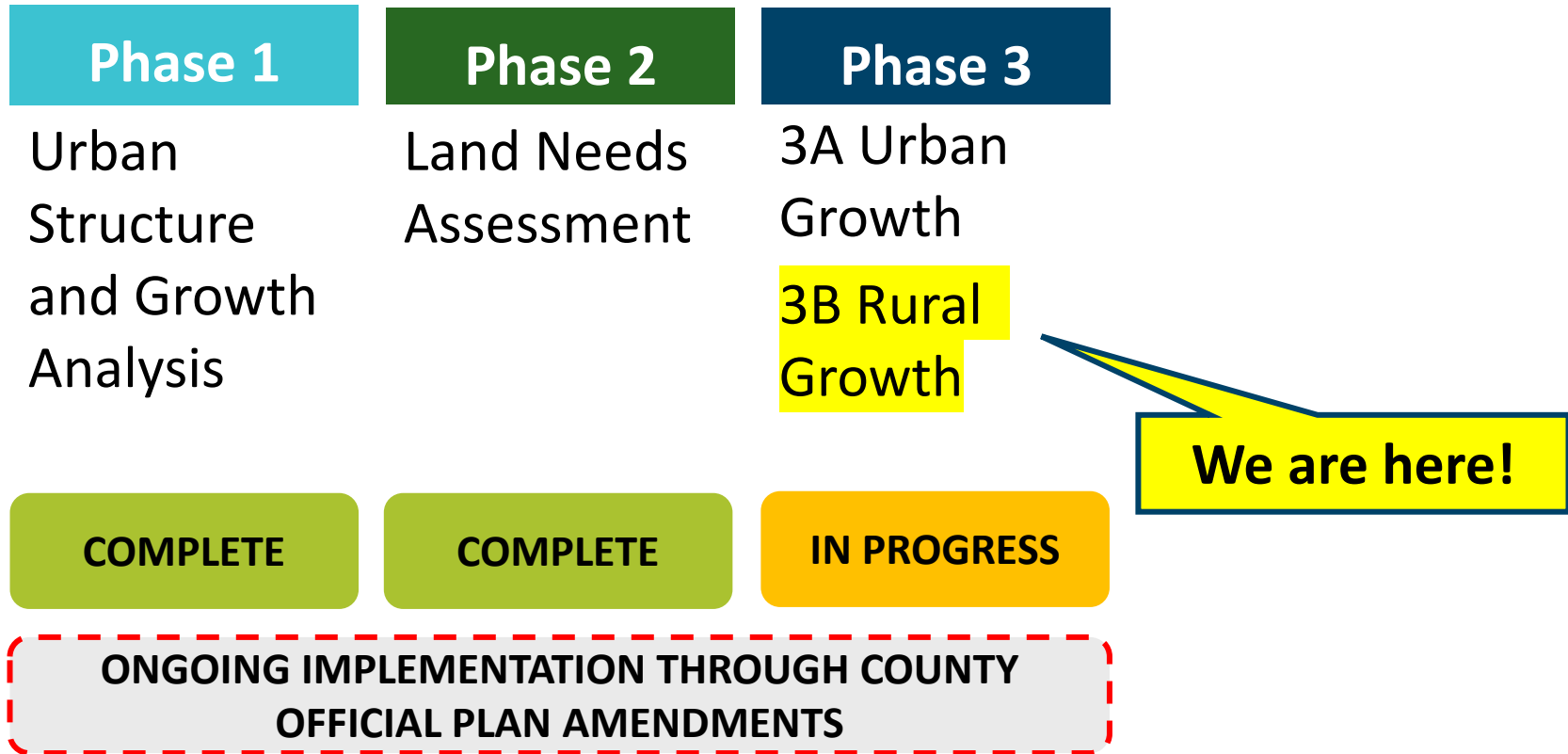


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Official Plan Review

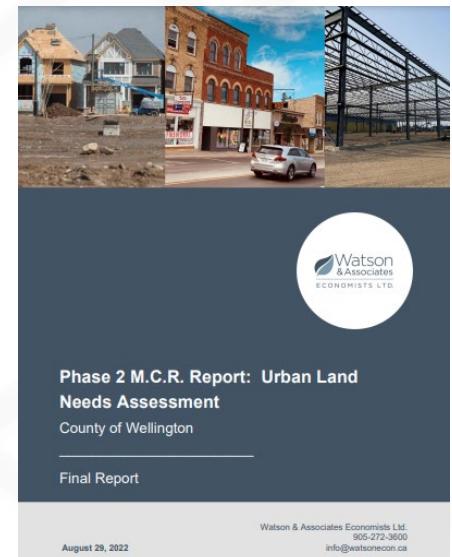
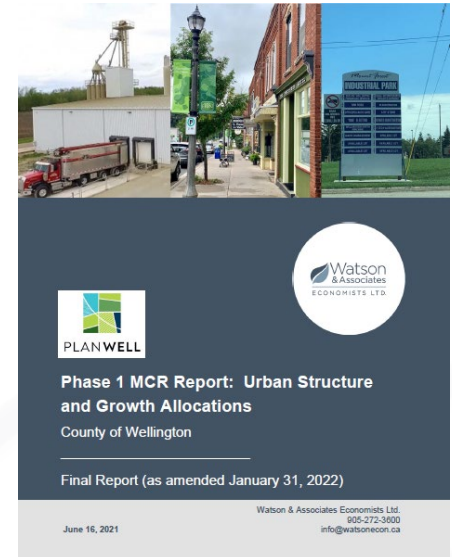
Three key phases of technical work to date:



Implementation

Technical work implemented through a series of Official Plan Amendments:

1. **OPA 119 (County Growth Structure)**
Approved
2. **OPA 120 (County Growth Forecast)**
Approved
3. **OPA 123 (Future Development Lands)**
Approved
4. **OPA 126 (Urban Boundary Expansions)**
Approved
5. **OPA 131 (Rural Area Policies and Growth)**
In Progress



OPA 131

Rural Growth and Policy Updates



Purpose of Amendment

- To align the rural area policies with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)
- Complete Rural Phase 3B of the Official Plan Review

Key Areas of Policy Change

- Targeted County-wide Provincial Planning Statement updates
- Erin rural residential growth re-allocation to Puslinch
- Puslinch rural residential growth
- Puslinch rural employment growth
- Other policy and mapping changes



Beyond the Scope of OPA 131

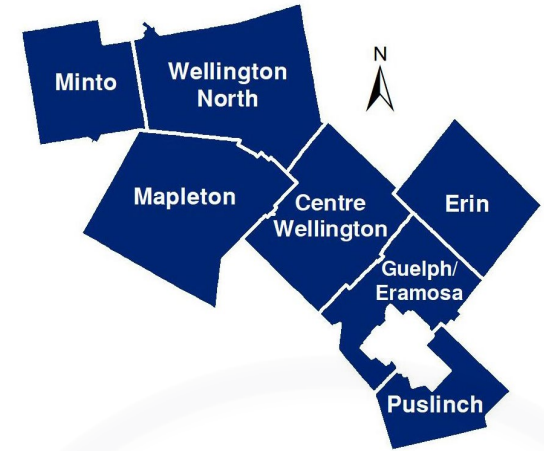
The following matters are **NOT** part of OPA 131:

- Site-specific Hamlet expansions
- Expansion of Morriston in Puslinch
- Redesignation of Prime Agricultural Area lands to other site-specific uses
- Redesignation of Secondary Agricultural Area lands to other site-specific uses (beyond those included in draft OPA 131)
- No Greenbelt Plan related changes

County-wide Changes

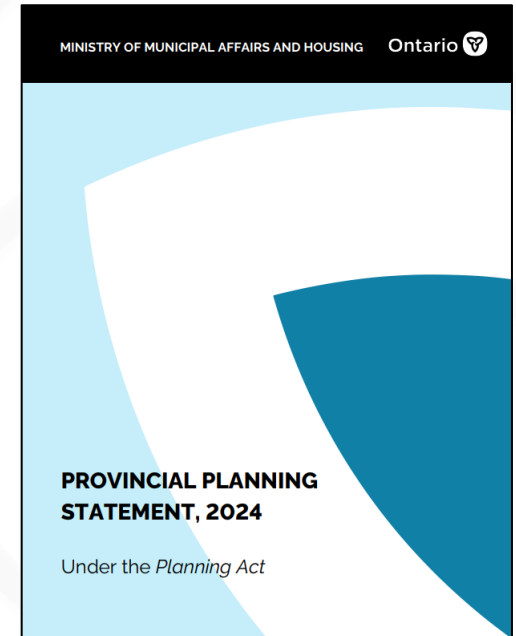


2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)

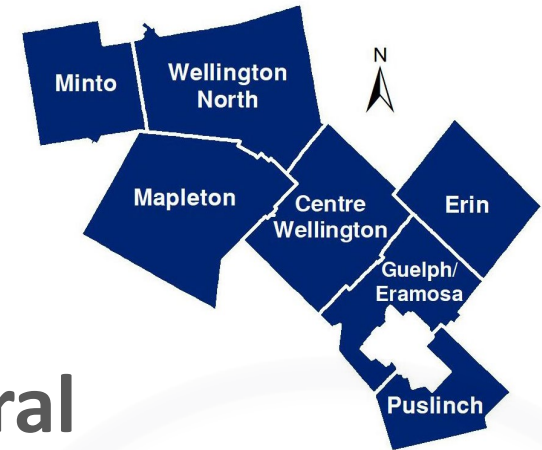


Focus of Changes:

- Align permitted uses in the Prime Agricultural Area with PPS
- Incorporate an Agricultural Systems approach to rural planning in the County
- Update Lot Creation policies in the Prime Agricultural Area
- Other changes to clarify and improve consistency with the PPS

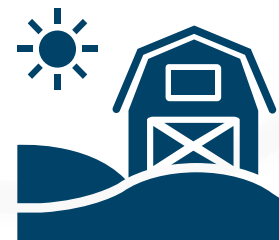
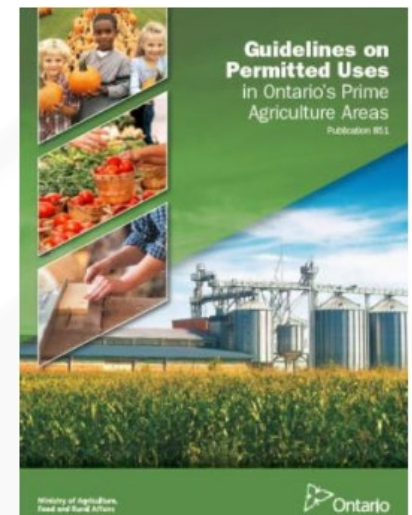


2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)

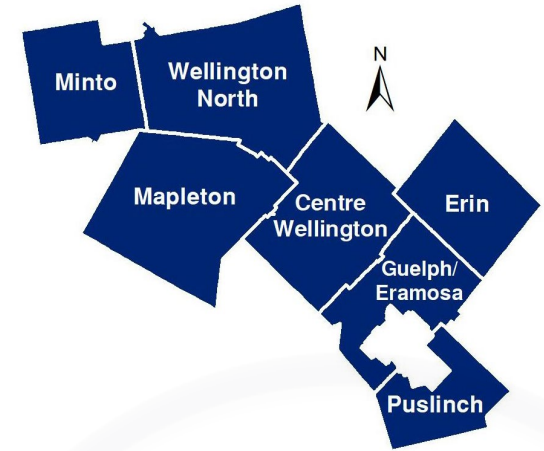


Permitted uses - Prime Agricultural Area

- Align permitted uses with the PPS and Provincial guidance
- Establish a new framework to support:
 - Agricultural-related uses
 - On-farm diversified uses

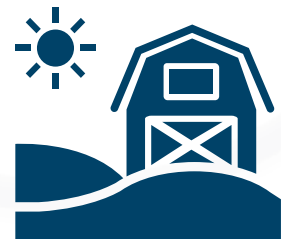


2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)

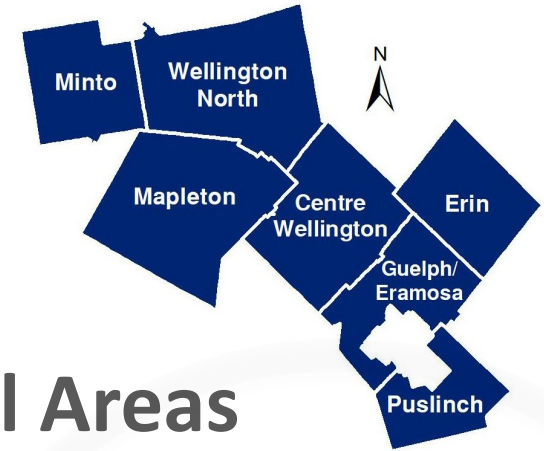


Agricultural System Approach

- Recognize an Agricultural System in Wellington County consisting of:
 - Agricultural land base (Prime and Secondary Agricultural Areas)
 - Agri-food network
- Establish policies to protect and support the Agricultural System

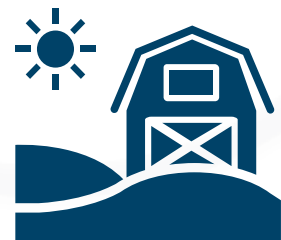


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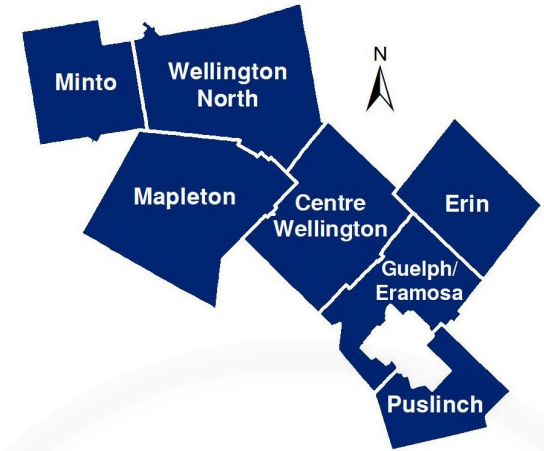


Lot Creation in Prime Agricultural Areas

- Remove consideration of smaller agricultural lots in Prime Agricultural Areas
- Strengthen Residence Surplus to a Farming Operation severance policies
- Permit lot creation for infrastructure in Prime Agricultural Areas



2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)



Other PPS Changes

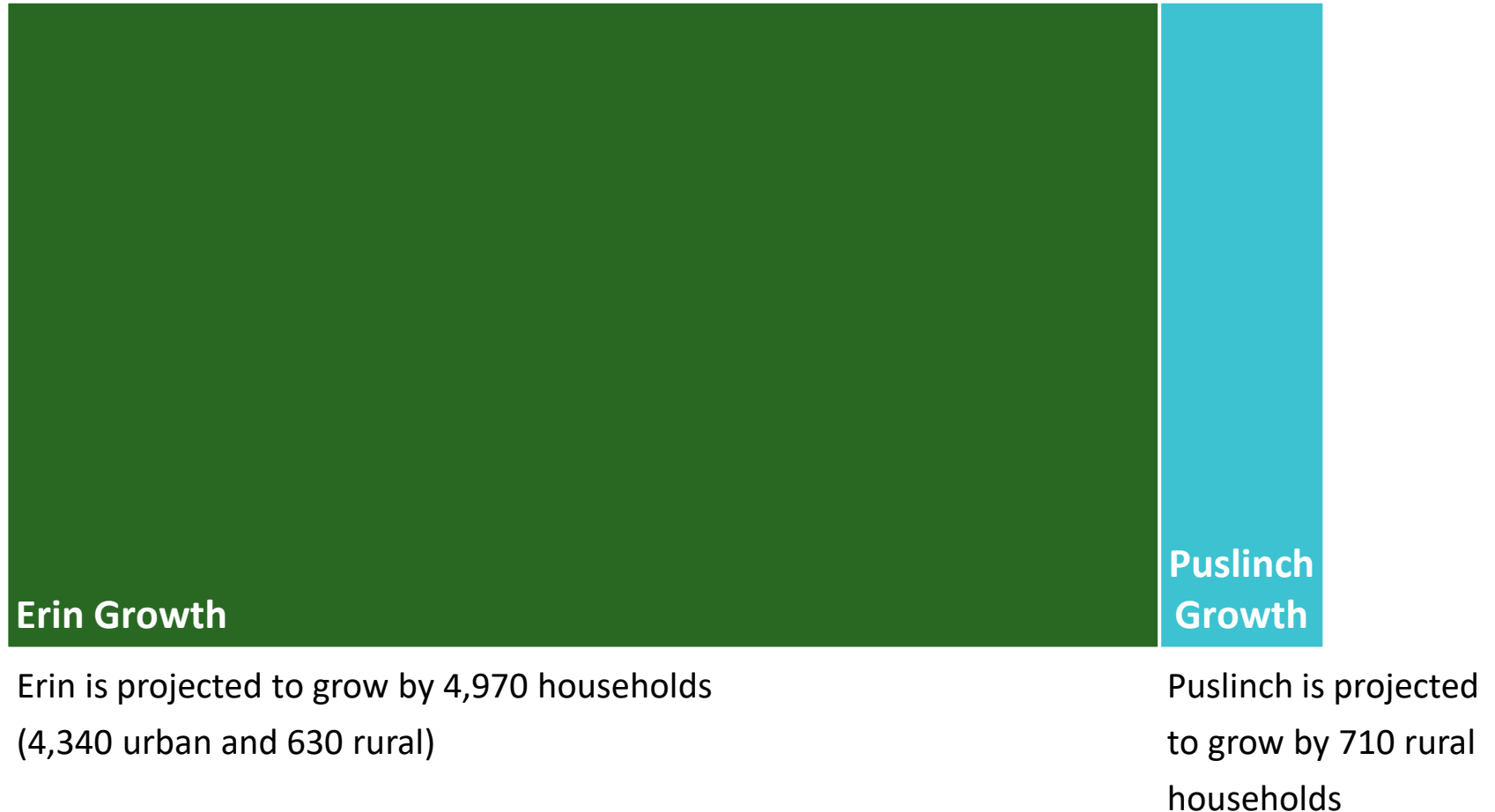
- Align the Rural System policies with the Rural Area policies of the PPS
- Update definitions related to agriculture
- Remove outdated policies related to the expansion of rural employment areas
- Clarify that County amendments to Schedule A are not required for employment removals where a local Official Plan Amendment has been approved

Rural Residential Growth Re-allocation



Where we are now...

Projected Household Growth in Erin and Puslinch from 2021 to 2051



Erin Growth

Erin is projected to grow by 4,970 households
(4,340 urban and 630 rural)

**Puslinch
Growth**

Puslinch is projected
to grow by 710 rural
households

What OPA 131 proposes...

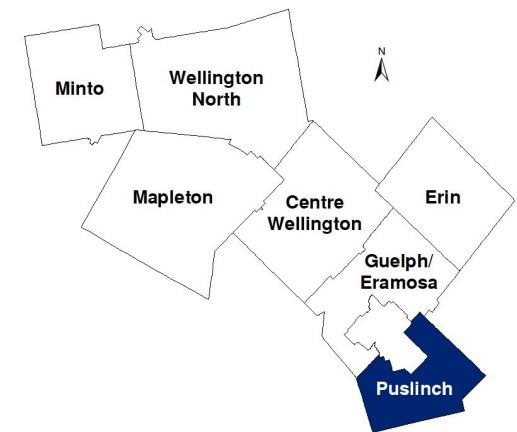
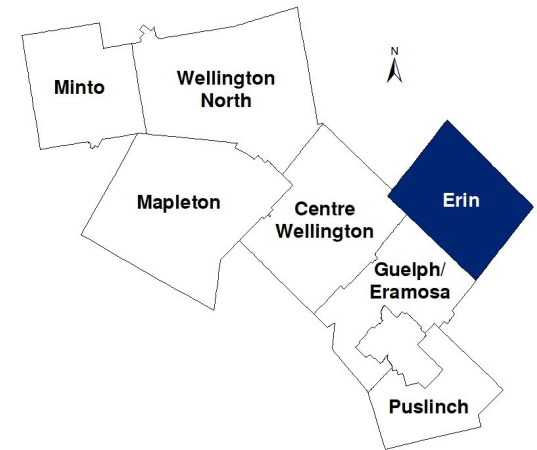
Changes to re-allocate a portion of the Town of Erin's projected rural growth to 2051 to the Township of Puslinch



300 people



120 households





How we got there...

Report #1 - 2024 Rural Residential Growth Analysis

When	What
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reported to County Planning Committee and Council (PD2024-29)• Direction to consult with Puslinch, Erin and Wellington North (only municipalities with a shortfall)• Report distributed to all Member Municipalities• Report posted to project website• Notification through email distribution list
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Received municipal feedback from Puslinch Council
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town of Erin Workshop with Policy Planning Presentation by County staff• Included content about rural residential growth and need for feedback from the Town about how to address the 120 household shortfall
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Received municipal feedback from Erin Council

Rural Residential Supply and Shortfall

Erin



460 Unit Supply Breakdown

- 112 units on vacant designated rural lands
- 70 existing vacant rural lots
- 278 potential new severances under current policies

Rural Residential Supply and Shortfall

Erin



- 120 additional units needed in Erin's rural area to meet 2051 household forecast
- Feedback from the Town about how to address the 120 household shortfall

Rural Residential Supply and Shortfall

Puslinch



350 Unit Supply Breakdown

- 73 units on vacant designated rural lands
- 73 existing vacant rural lots
- 204 potential new severances under current policies

Rural Residential Supply and Shortfall

Puslinch



- 250 additional units are needed in Puslinch's rural area to meet 2051 household forecast
- Feedback from the Township about how to address the 250 household shortfall

Municipal Feedback

Erin

April 10, 2025 Erin Council:

- Request to use Additional Residential Units (ARUs) to make up 120 unit shortfall
- Did not support Hamlet expansions or amending the severance policies for Secondary Agricultural Areas (e.g. change to severance date of March 1, 2005)

Puslinch

November 27, 2024 Puslinch Council:

Request to remove rural residential severance date of March 1, 2005 and replace it with a policy allowing one severance every 5 years subject to review every 5 years



How we got there...

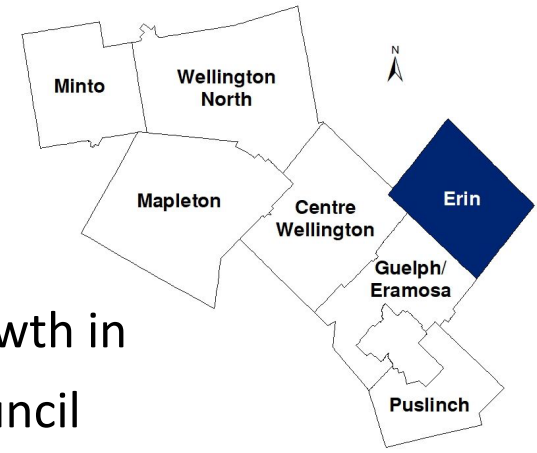
Report #2 - Phase 3B Rural Residential Growth

When	What
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reported to County Planning Committee and Council (PD2025-20) about addressing shortfall of rural residential units in Erin and Puslinch• Staff directed to implement policy considerations in report as a Draft Official Plan Amendment• Report distributed to all Member Municipalities• Report posted to project website• Notification through email distribution list
June 18, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County staff invited to attend and present to Puslinch Council
July 23, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County staff invited to attend and present to Puslinch Council

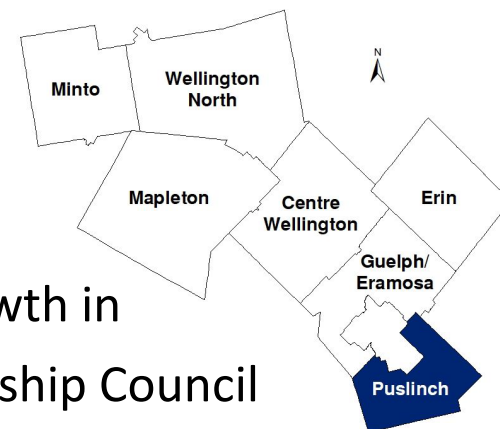
Options for Erin

Staff considered the following options for directing growth in Erin in accordance with applicable policy and Town Council input:

- Additional Residential Units (ARUs)
 - Erin Council preferred to have ARUs to make up 120 unit shortfall
 - Adjustment to forecasts to account for rural ARUs was not recommended by staff at this time
- The Province requires the County of Wellington to identify and allocate population and units to Member Municipalities and therefore:
 - Staff are recommending County Council to redirect surplus to Puslinch



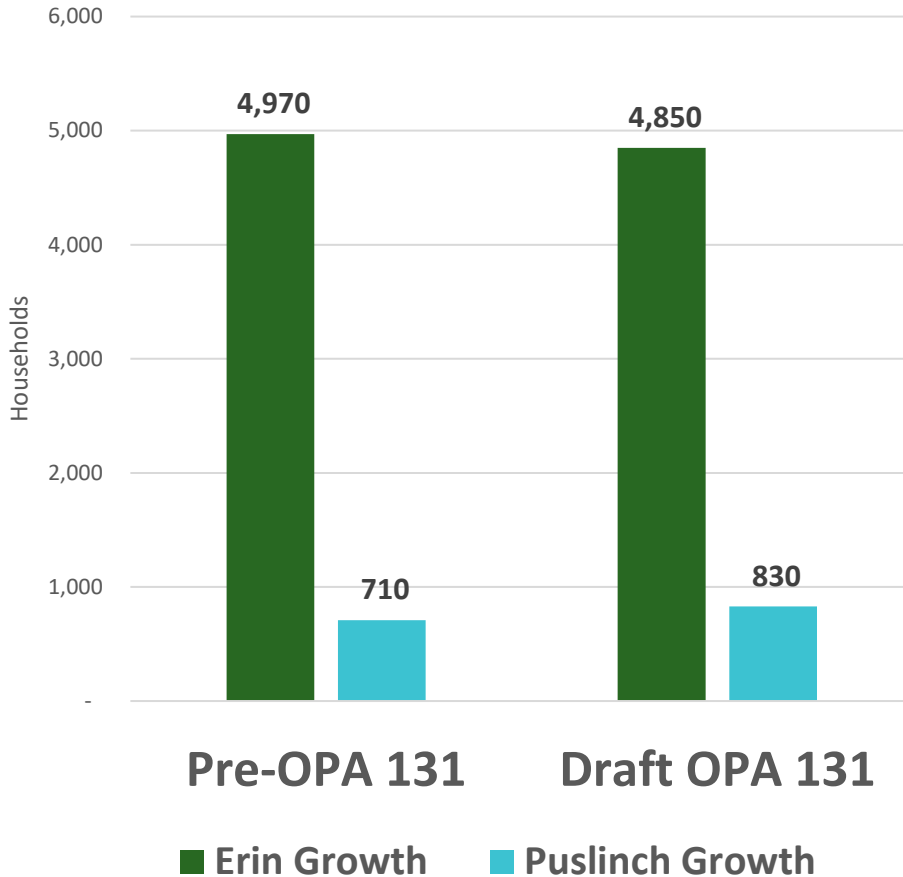
Options for Puslinch



Staff considered the following options for directing growth in Puslinch in accordance with applicable policy and Township Council input:

- That Puslinch assume 120 surplus units to address its rural growth in addition to its 250 unit shortfall
- Expand Aberfoyle by approx. 200 units
- Expand Arkell by approx. 50 units
- Severances :
 - One every 5 years (too many units)
 - Move date to March 1, 2015 (not enough units)
 - Move date to May 1, 2025 (generally in balance)

Draft OPA 131 Revised Rural Growth



Over a 30-year horizon
Draft OPA 131 projects:

- Erin to grow by 4,850 urban and rural households
- Puslinch to grow by 830 rural households

What this means for Severance Policies

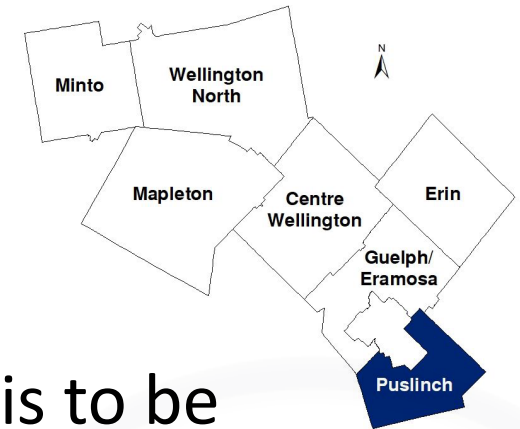
Draft OPA 131

- Modifies the severance cut-off date in Puslinch to May 1, 2025 for rural residential lot creation in Secondary Agricultural Area
- Maintains the March 1, 2005 date in Erin and Minto
- Removal of rural cluster policy 6.5.4 as necessary assessment has been completed

Puslinch Rural Residential Growth



Planning for Residential Growth in Puslinch

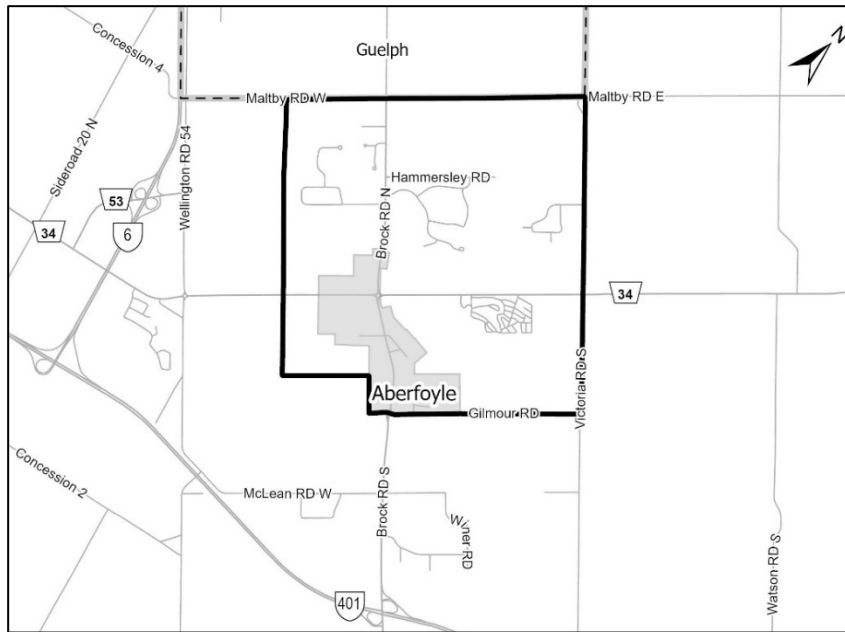


Residential growth shortfall in Puslinch is to be addressed in three areas:

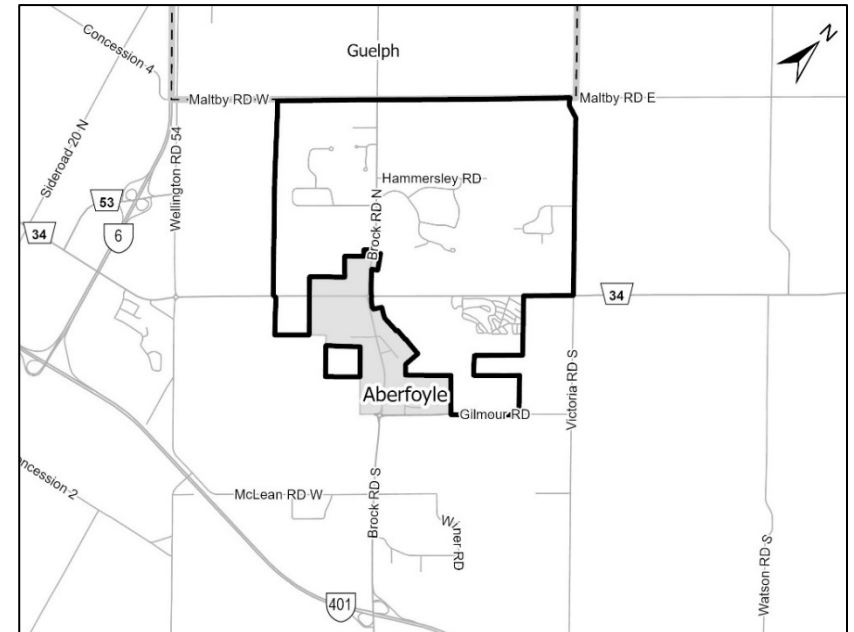
1. **Aberfoyle** expansion for approximately 200 more units
 - Location options and technical analysis was part of OPA 131
2. **Arkell** expansion for approximately 50 more units
 - Location options and technical analysis not part of OPA 131
 - Will need to be considered as part of a privately-initiated planning application(s)
3. **Secondary Agricultural Area** severances
 - Change in severance date to May 1, 2025 for approximately 160 more units

Aberfoyle Expansion

Study Area



Proposed Expansion Area



Aberfoyle Expansion











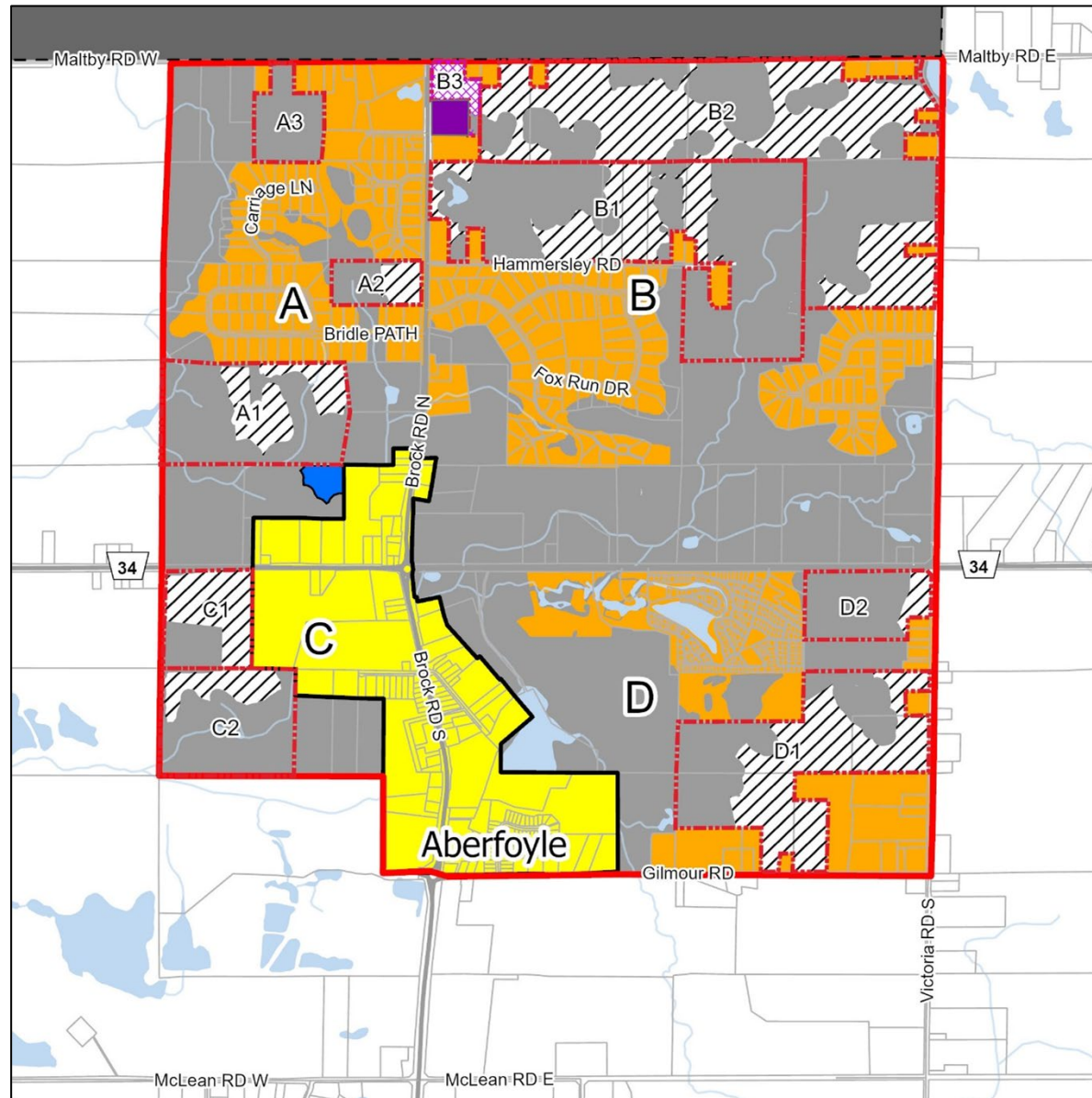
Basis for Draft OPA 131 Boundaries

- Provincial and County Official Plan policy tests for boundary expansion
- County-led Agricultural Impact Assessment with consultant support
- County-led Aggregate Impact Assessment
- County-led Planning Impact Assessment

Aberfoyle Expansion

Study Area Development Constraints











-  Aberfoyle Expansion Study Area
- A** Quadrants
-  Focus Areas
-  Current Aberfoyle Boundary
-  Potential Residential Areas
-  Potential Commercial Area
-  All Constraints
-  Existing Residential
-  Existing Commercial
-  County Owned Land
-  City of Guelph Boundary

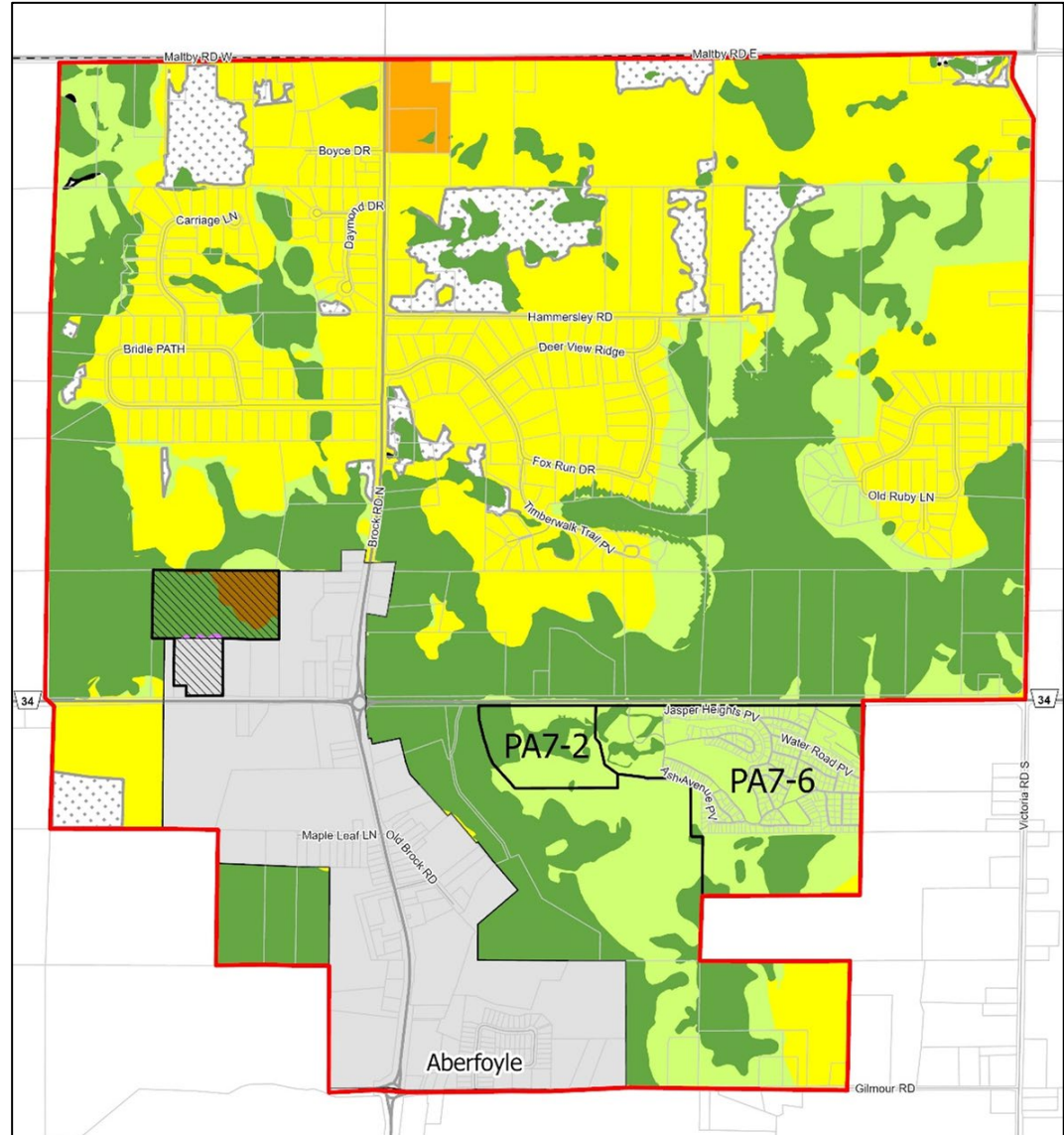


Aberfoyle Expansion

Draft OPA 131

- New Residential, Highway Commercial, Industrial, Core Greenlands and Greenlands
- Correction of PA7-2 (Mill Creek) and PA7-6 (Mini Lakes) limit

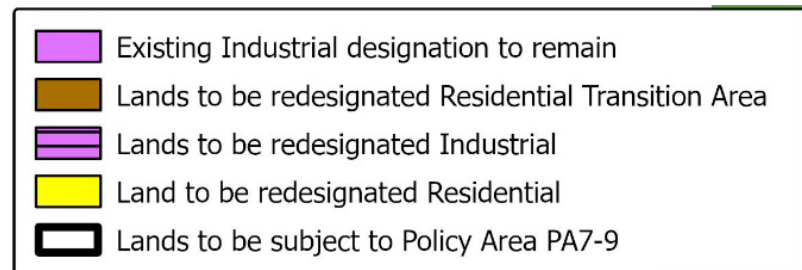
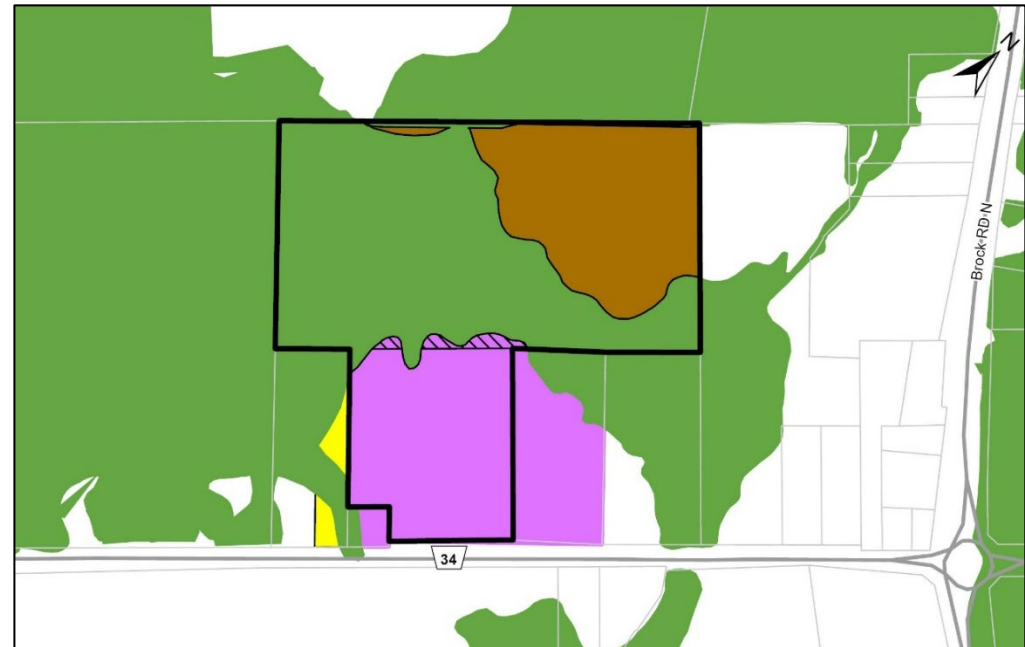
-  Expanded Aberfoyle Boundary
-  Lands to be redesignated Residential
-  Lands to be redesignated Highway Commercial
-  Lands to be redesignated Residential Transition Area
-  Lands to be redesignated Industrial
-  Lands to be redesignated Greenlands
-  Lands to be redesignated Core Greenlands
-  Core Greenlands and Greenlands to remain
-  Current Aberfoyle Boundary
-  Lands to be subject to Policy Area PA7-9



Other Changes

Draft OPA 131

- New Industrial and Residential Transition Area
- New PA7-9 County Aberfoyle Garage Policy Area to consider potential public uses at the back of the property
- Residential parcel correction

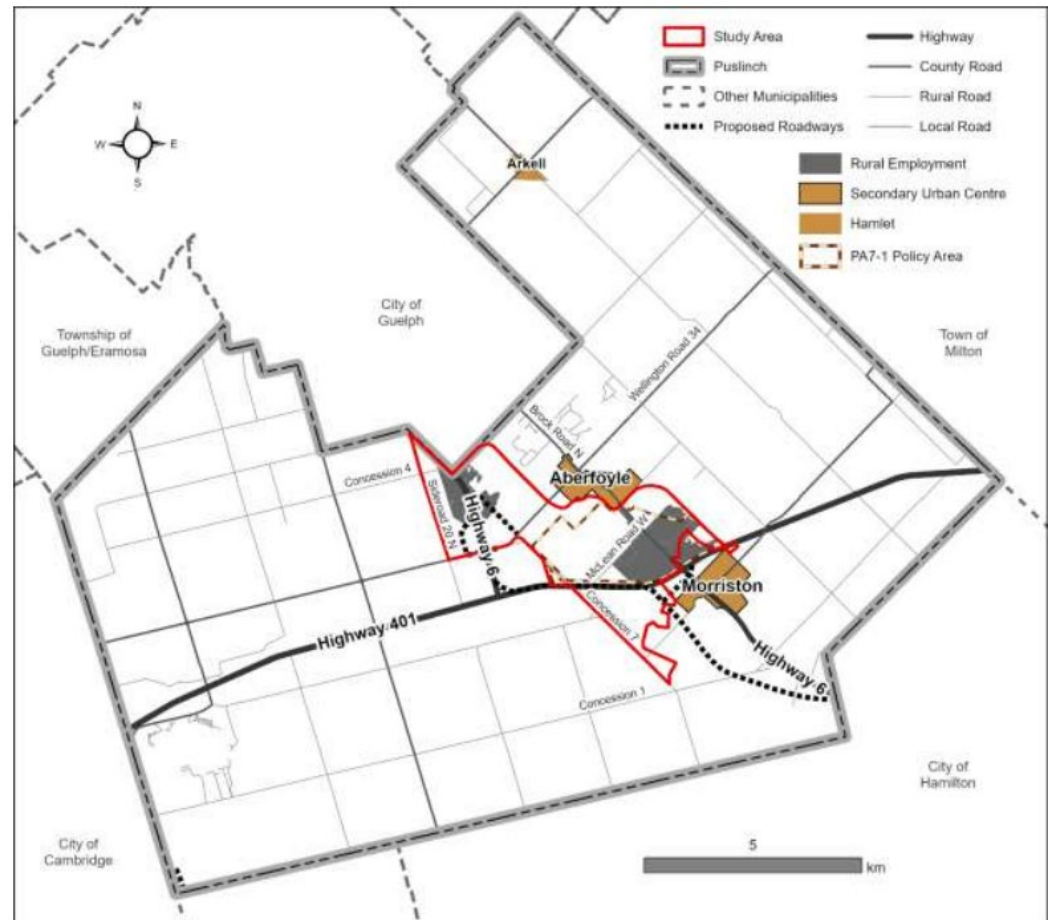


Puslinch Rural Employment Area Growth



Puslinch by Design Employment Land Study

- Township and County partnership
- Study to identify opportunities for employment lands in Puslinch
- 30+ ha need



Source: NPG Planning Solutions. Puslinch by Design – Employment Land Study. Detailed Planning Study Report, February 2025.

Puslinch by Design Employment Land Study

- Background Report
- Detailed Planning Study
- Land Options Report
- Recommended Land Option and Land Use Report
- Addendum Report

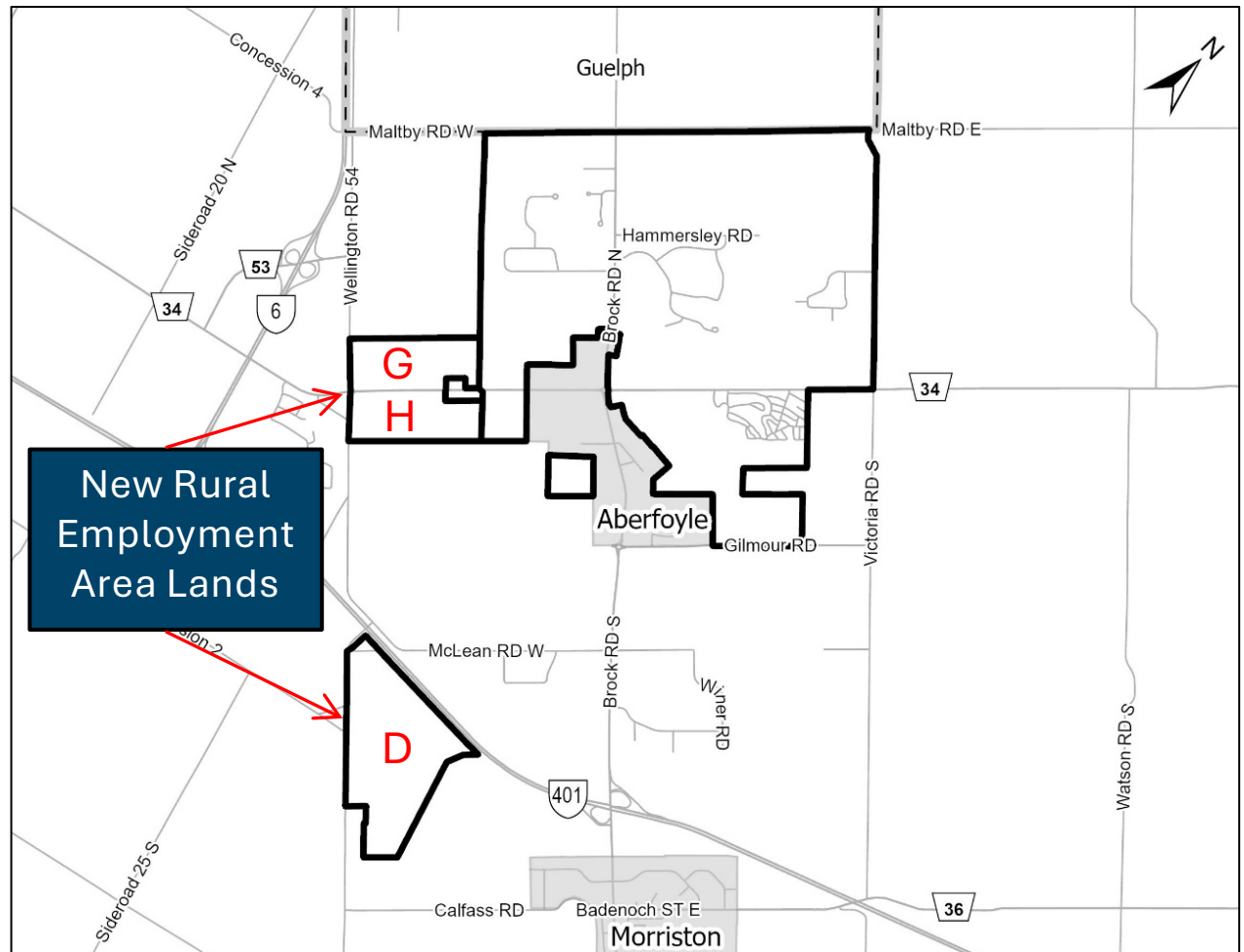


**Construction
of Highway 6 interchange**

Source: County of Wellington

Locations Recommended

Area G and H provide additional development options if potential in Area D isn't fully realized



Implementation through OPA 131

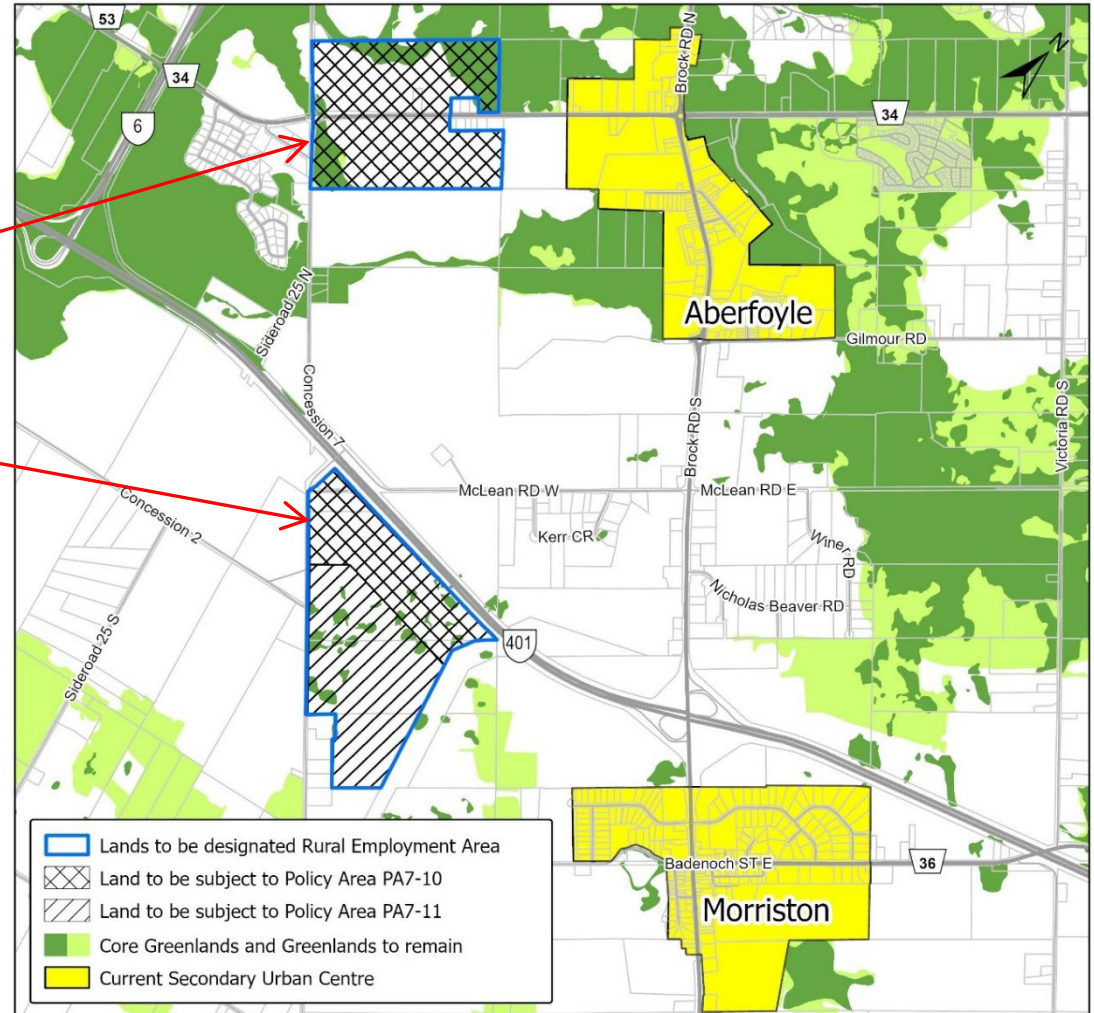
Draft OPA 131 implements
location and policy
recommendations:

1. New Rural Employment Areas
2. New policy area (PA7-10)
3. New policy area (PA7-11)
4. Modifications to 9.8.3 Puslinch
Industrial Policy



Implementation through OPA 131

- 1. Redesignation**
Change land use designation from Secondary Agricultural to Rural Employment Area



 Lands to be designated Rural Employment Area

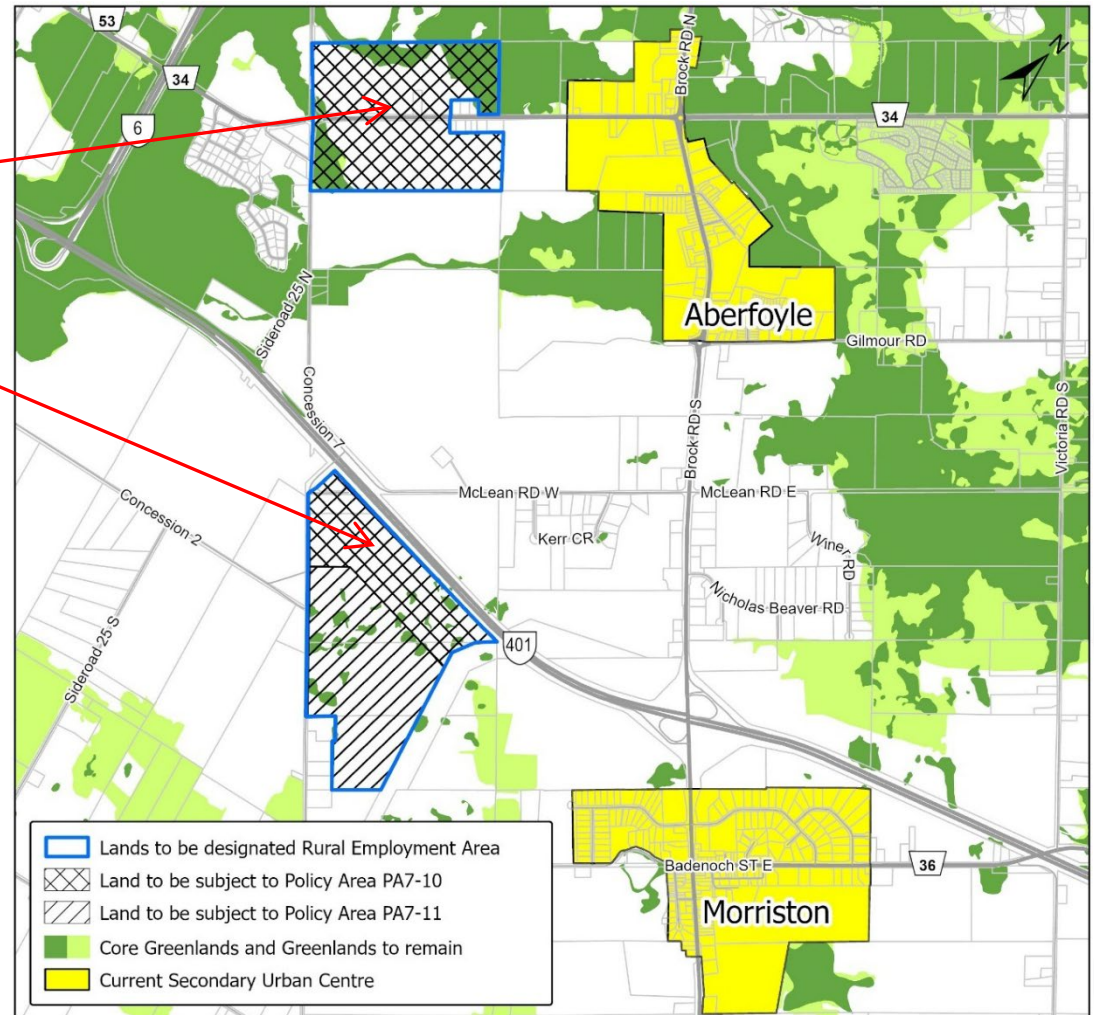
Implementation through OPA 131

2. PA7-10

Add new policy area for newly identified prestige rural employment areas

Intent of PA7-10 Prestige Rural Employment Areas

- Scoped uses
- Higher design standards
- Compatibility
- Buffering
- ...and more



Land to be subject to Policy Area PA7-10

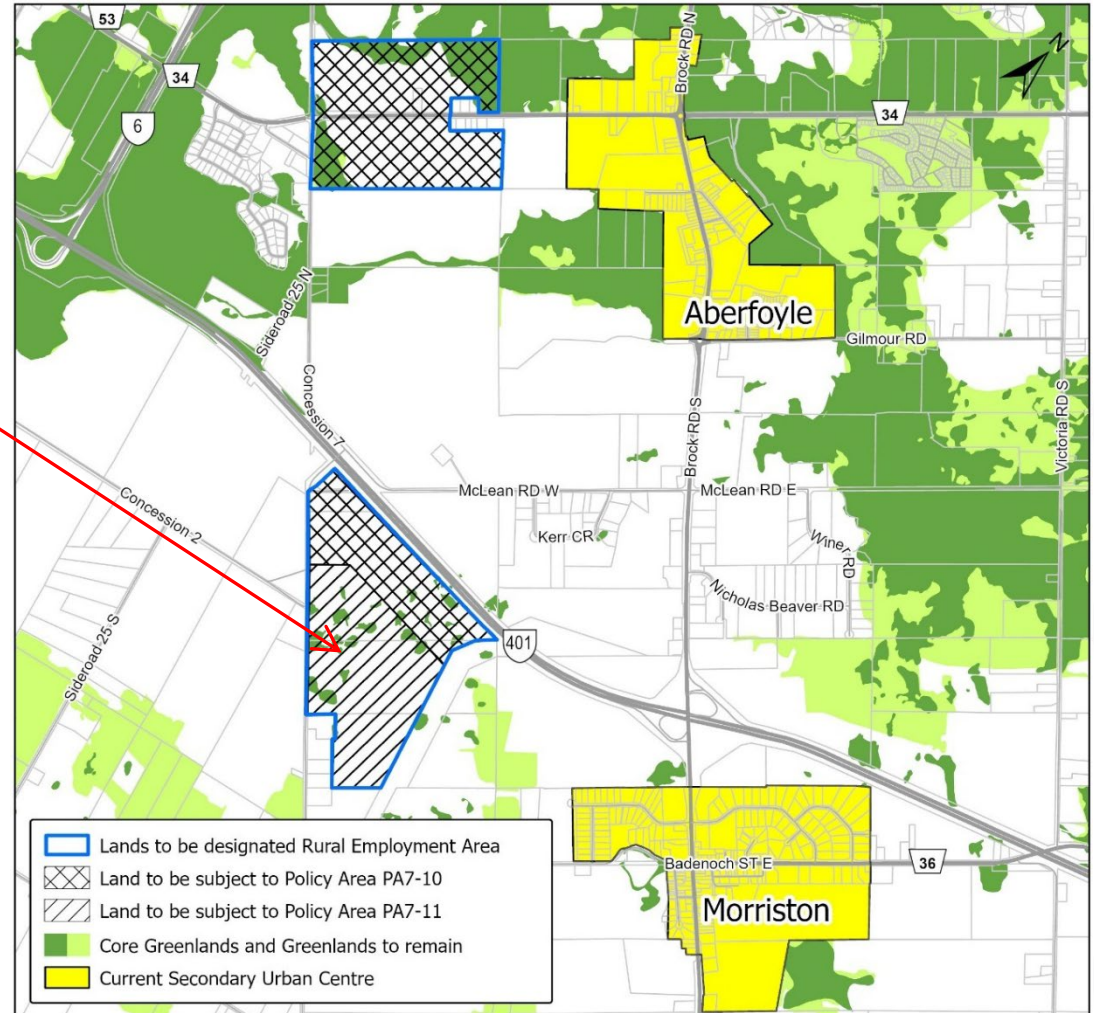
Implementation through OPA 131

3. PA7-11

Add new policy area for newly identified rural employment areas

Intent of PA7-11 Rural Employment Area

- Scoped uses, but less so than PA7-10 area
- Design standards
- Compatibility
- Buffering
- ...and more



 Land to be subject to Policy Area PA7-11

Implementation through OPA 131

4. **Revise Section 9.8.3 Puslinch Industrial Policy** to implement Puslinch by Design Study to address:
 - road infrastructure
 - transportation
 - concept plan
 - communal wells
 - land use compatibility

Applies to large parcels east and west of Highway 6 N (Hanlon Expressway) that are designated Rural Employment.

Consultation to Date

OPA 131



Circulation for Comment

Draft OPA 131 was circulated to:

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for 90-day review
- Municipalities, Agencies and Indigenous Communities with a comment deadline of **November 12, 2025**

Other Consultation

- County has exceeded minimum requirements for public consultation for OPA 131
 - Email broadcast list of approximately 400 subscribers
 - Landowner notices January 2026 (after postal-strike)
 - Ongoing reporting through Planning Committee and County Council
 - Project webpage updates
- Comments have also been recorded through earlier phases of Official Plan Review

Member Municipality Comments

Erin Council

- Received delegations and considered County Draft OPA 131 Report and Town staff report on November 13, 2025
- Erin Council provided no comments or concerns to County

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Puslinch Council

- Considered County Draft OPA 131 Report on October 8, 2025
- Endorsed OPA 131
- Requested that additional areas along Victoria Road S, Wellington Road 34 and Gilmour Road be added to Aberfoyle (Area D1 and D2)

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- Received delegations and considered County Draft OPA 131 Report and Town staff report on November 13, 2025
- Erin Council provided no comments or concerns to County

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- Endorsed OPA 131
- Requested that additional areas along Victoria Road S, Wellington Road 34 and Gilmour Road be added to Aberfoyle (Area D1 and D2)

Wellington North Council

- Considered County Draft OPA 131 Report on November 3, 2025
- Provided comments of support and for further revisions related to County-wide agricultural policy updates.

Provincial and Agency Comments

Province

January 13, 2026 comments mainly related to the following:

- Prime Agricultural Areas, Agricultural System, Agricultural Impact Assessments, MDS, Mineral Aggregate Area Resources and Rural Employment Areas

Conservation Authorities

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA), Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA):

- No objections or revisions to OPA 131 requested

Public Comments

Puslinch

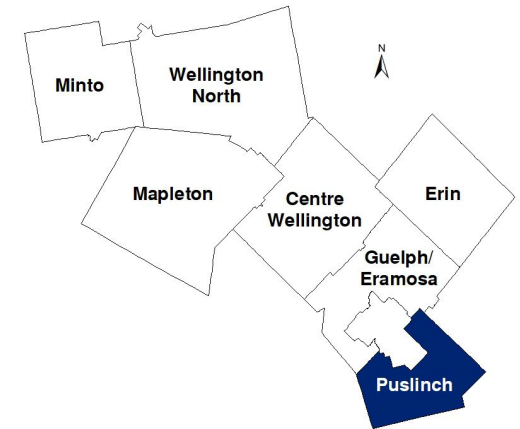
Key Themes

Support for:

- More residential severances in Secondary Agricultural Area
- Expansion of Aberfoyle
- Employment Area H
- More growth in Puslinch
- Changes to designate more Rural Employment Area land and to expand Arkell

Concerns with:

- Impact on future potential mineral aggregate operations
- Employment Area G and H



Public Comments

Erin

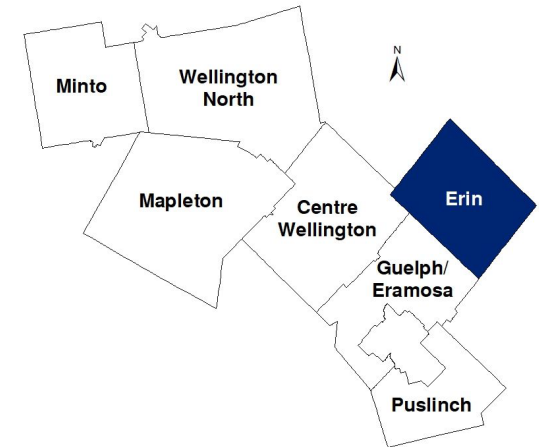
Key Themes

Support for:

- Changing March 1, 2005 severance cut-off date to allow more residential severances in Secondary Agricultural Area in Erin
- Changes to expand Ospringe

Concerns with:

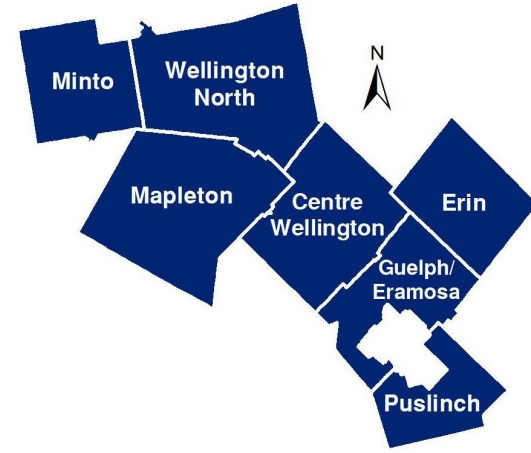
- Potential economic impacts related to the proposed transfer of 120 households from Erin to Puslinch



Public Comments County-wide

Key Themes

- Concerns with rural-urban interface policy
- Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) comments focus on the protection of agricultural lands and suggestions to improve proposed agricultural policies



OPA 131

Next Steps



Next Steps

- Review of all comments and submissions through circulation of OPA, Open House and Public Meeting
- Preparation of final draft OPA
- Recommendation report to County Council for adoption
- Submission to Province for a final decision

Draft OPA 131 may be revised in response to input and further review prior to County Council's consideration.

How to Provide Written Comments

Please send to the County of Wellington Planning and Development Department no later than:

February 19, 2026

By email: planwell@wellington.ca

By regular mail: Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning
Wellington County Planning and
Development Department
Administration Centre
74 Woolwich Street, Guelph, ON N1H 3T9



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Thank you for joining us!

For more information

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Senior Policy Planner
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Project website: www.wellington.ca/planwell

Project email: planwell@wellington.ca