

Meeting Date: November 21, 2023

Subject: Potential Employment Land Conversion of the Dry Industrial Area
Near the Future Bolton GO Station
File: Major Transit Station Areas Study

Submitted By: Lesley E. Gill Woods, Senior Planner/Secondary Plans Lead

RECOMMENDATION

That Council support in principle the employment land conversion of the Dry Industrial area near the future Bolton GO Station, which would be subject to a subsequent public engagement process, and the approval of future amendments to the Region of Peel Official Plan and Town of Caledon Official Plan; and

That staff be directed to provide copies of Staff Report 2023-0631, any supporting materials and the related Planning and Development Committee meeting minutes to the Region of Peel's Chief Planner/Director, Planning and Development Services.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of this report is to receive Council direction about a potential employment land conversion of the Dry Industrial area near the future Bolton GO Station (see Schedule A – Maps). An employment land conversion would remove the lands from the Employment Area designation in the Peel Official Plan and enable the area to transition to a broader mix of land uses over the long term, including housing.
- The Dry Industrial area in northwest Bolton, currently at the periphery of the community, will eventually be surrounded by residential communities, which will increase the potential for land use conflicts.
- The Town has been working with the Region to determine whether the properties could be converted. Meridian Planning prepared the conversion and land use compatibility analysis on behalf of the Town as a component of the Caledon Major Transit Station Areas Study. The memo attached as Schedule B recommends the conversion of the Dry Industrial employment area to a residential/mixed use area, to complement the adjacent Caledon GO Station area (i.e. Major Transit Station Area).
- It is recognized that Dry Industrial lands are currently in limited supply, and support specialized employment uses in Caledon. It is expected that such uses will be accommodated at appropriate locations within the Town's new Employment Areas over the 2051 planning horizon.
- The affected Dry Industrial property owners were invited to an information meeting about the MTSA Study and conversion analysis in May 2023. Limited but positive feedback has been received to date.

- On November 15, 2023, further consultation meetings were held with Dry Industrial landowners and the public to share the Meridian Planning analysis and recommendation. On November 21, 2023, Town staff can provide the Planning and Development Committee with a verbal update and/or memo describing the feedback received.
- On December 7, 2023, Region staff will be reporting to Regional Council on this matter and potential employment land conversions in the City of Mississauga.
- Regional Council will decide whether to direct Region staff to propose an amendment to the Region of Peel Official Plan to remove the subject lands from the Region's Employment Area.
- Any future Region/Town official plan amendments or zoning by-law amendments would be subject to the processes and requirements set out in the *Planning Act*, and Region/Town policies and procedures, including public notice and consultation and the potential for appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

DISCUSSION

The competing land use objectives and policies currently applying to lands in northwest Bolton must be addressed – particularly as they relate to planning the Bolton GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA). A portion of the subject Dry Industrial area is within the Bolton GO MTSA, which is being planned as a higher density community with a mix of uses and housing types, including apartment buildings, to support transit ridership.

The Dry Industrial land use designation in the Town's Official Plan has been applied to employment lands that provide for "dry type" industrial uses, meaning they do not require large amounts of water (e.g., transportation terminals, open storage, contractor's yards, and certain manufacturing operations). Properties in this designation are developed with private water and sanitary sewage services or partial Regional piped services.

Significant growth is now being planned for south Caledon to the year 2051. As shown on Schedule A, the Dry Industrial lands in northwest Bolton, which are currently at the periphery of the community, will eventually be surrounded by community areas, including the Bolton GO MTSA. These primarily residential areas will also have a mix of housing types as well as commercial uses (e.g., stores and restaurants), community uses (e.g., parks and schools) and non-industrial employment uses (e.g., offices). This urban development will increase the potential for land use conflicts – meaning negative impacts or nuisance to both sensitive uses (e.g., homes and schools) and Dry Industrial operations.

The Town's July 12, 2022 report, *Expanding Bolton: A Roadmap to Planning and Development in Bolton*, indicated that the future use of the Dry Industrial employment area in and around the Bolton GO MTSA would be determined through the MTSA Study. The Dry Industrial property closest to the future Bolton GO Station is already subject to a Minister's Zoning Order (O. Reg. 171/21) that permits a mix of uses, including residential uses.

Coordination with the Region of Peel

Prior to the adoption of the Region of Peel Official Plan, Region staff advised that it would be appropriate for the Town to evaluate the potential employment land conversion as part of the Caledon Major Transit Station Areas Study.

Currently, employment land conversions may only be considered through a Municipal Comprehensive Review undertaken by the Region of Peel. As such, Regional Council Resolution Number 2022-376 provided for a further phase of its Municipal Comprehensive Review (Official Plan Review) to consider potential employment land conversions that warrant further analysis and collaboration with local municipalities.

The Caledon lands in question are identified as Employment Area on Schedule E-4, Employment Areas, of the Region of Peel Official Plan (RPOP), south of the Bolton GO Major Transit Station Area (identified as HUB-1).

Policy 5.8.36 of the RPOP states that, “Retail, residential, commercial and non-ancillary uses may be permitted” in the Bolton GO Major Transit Station Area, and that the introduction of residential uses would be subject to a planning study completed by the Town of Caledon to the satisfaction of the Region. The matters required to be addressed by the study include land use compatibility in accordance with provincial standards, guidelines and procedures, and how the viability of adjacent Employment Areas will be protected from sensitive land uses (e.g. potential future residential uses).

The RPOP, as modified, already requires that major facilities (e.g., the railway and existing or potential future industries and manufacturing uses) and sensitive land uses (e.g. existing and potential future residential uses) be appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

The RPOP provides for significant population and employment growth in south Caledon to 2051 within large new Community Areas and Employment Areas. Dry Industrial type uses could be accommodated within the new Employment Areas over the long term, subject to more detailed secondary planning.

Region of Peel Conversion Project

On December 7, 2023, Region staff will be reporting to Regional Council on Council Resolution Number 2022-376 related to the potential employment land conversion of three sites in the City of Mississauga and the Dry Industrial area near the future Bolton GO Station in Caledon. The Region’s analysis has been coordinated with the local municipalities but focused on potential impacts to Regional transportation and servicing infrastructure and the Regional employment land supply.

Bolton GO Station Area Dry Industrial Lands Review

In April 2023, Meridian Planning was retained to complete the Caledon Major Transit Station Areas Study related to the Bolton GO Primary MTSA and Mayfield West Planned MTSA. The scope of work includes an analysis of the potential employment land conversion of the Dry Industrial area in and around the Bolton GO MTSA to recommend a land use option: the Bolton GO Station Area Dry Industrial Lands Review.

The memo from Meridian Planning attached as Schedule B outlines the findings of the Bolton GO Station Area Dry Industrial Lands Review and recommends that the entire Dry Industrial employment area near the future Bolton GO station be converted (i.e. removed from the Regional Employment Area designation) to facilitate a transition to a residential/mixed use area to complement the development of the community focused on the Bolton GO Station lands (i.e. MTSA).

The recommendation is based on:

- a review of the existing land uses, which support approximately 258 jobs, and other permitted uses;
- a review of the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks' D-Series Guidelines related to potentially incompatible land uses and adverse impacts, including influence areas and separation distances for the existing businesses;
- a demonstration plan to show a potential redevelopment scenario that would accommodate approximately 4,248 residents and 2,382 jobs;
- a review of existing Provincial and Regional policies, including an evaluation and justification for conversion; and,
- an initial consultation with Dry Industrial and Bolton GO MTSA landowners.

While only a few areas of the Town allow for specialized “dry type” industrial uses, and they are typically edge sites not internal to communities, an overall employment strategy for Caledon, incorporated into the Future Caledon Official Plan, and implemented through detailed secondary planning, will address the accommodation of such uses at appropriate locations within the Town’s new Employment Areas over the 2051 planning horizon.

As described in Schedule B, the affected Dry Industrial property owners were invited to an information meeting about the MTSA Study and conversion analysis in May 2023. Limited but positive feedback has been received to date.

On November 15, 2023, further consultation meetings were held with Dry Industrial landowners and the public to share the Meridian Planning analysis and recommendation. Dry Industrial landowners were invited to an in-person meeting in the afternoon, and the public was invited to a virtual meeting in the evening. Notices were sent by mail to owners of property within the Dry Industrial area and within a 500 metre radius (approx. 816 contacts), and by email to the Bolton GO Station area contact list (approximately 11 contacts). Notice of the virtual public information meeting was also published in the Caledon Enterprise.

Next Steps

This report recommends that the potential employment land conversion be supported in principle based on the Meridian Planning Bolton GO Station Area Dry Industrial Lands Review. It also seeks authorization to provide the Town's report and supporting information to the Region of Peel, in advance of a report to Regional Council on December 7, 2023.

Regional Council will decide whether to direct Region staff to propose an amendment to the Region of Peel Official Plan to remove the lands from the Region's Employment Area.

Any future Region/Town Official Plan Amendments or Zoning By-law amendments would be subject to the processes and requirements set out in the *Planning Act*, and Region/Town policies and procedures, including public notice and consultation and the potential for appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If an amendment to the Region of Peel Official Plan is approved to remove the subject Dry Industrial area lands from the Region's Employment Area, Town staff would proceed with a corresponding amendment to the Town of Caledon Official Plan. This work would be undertaken as part of the Planning and Development department budget and work plan.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Strategic Plan 2023-2035

Community Vitality and Livability

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: Maps – Bolton GO Station Major Transit Station Area and Dry Industrial Lands, New Community Area, and Existing Official Plan Designations

Schedule B: Memo – Dry Industrial Lands Conversion (Meridian Planning)