

## REPORT

### Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: August 8, 2022

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** July 26, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Bronte Harbour and Bluffs Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation Plan

**LOCATION:** Bronte Harbour and Bluffs

**WARD:** Ward 1

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the draft cultural heritage landscape conservation plan for the cultural heritage landscape of the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs, as attached in Appendix A to the report dated July 26, 2022 from Planning Services, be approved.

#### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- On February 10, 2020, Council resolved to issue Notice of Intention to Designate the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs under s.29, Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. An objection was received and referred to the Conservation Review Board.
- A resolution to the objection was reached through Minutes of Settlement and the objection was withdrawn on January 27, 2022.
- On April 4, 2022, Council passed By-law 2022-027 to designate the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs as a cultural heritage landscape under s.29, Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- In accordance with By-law 2018-019 (a by-law to govern cultural heritage landscape conservation plans within the Town of Oakville and to delegate certain powers to designated officials), a Conservation Plan for a Cultural Heritage Landscape is required for the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs. The project consultants, led by Archaeological Research Associates Inc., working with staff have prepared the draft conservation plan.

## BACKGROUND:

In January 2014, the Town of Oakville endorsed the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy (the Strategy), which set the foundation to identify, inventory and assess candidate cultural heritage landscapes and to conserve significant cultural heritage landscapes. It also developed a formal process for addressing the conservation of cultural heritage landscape resources in the Town of Oakville.

The Strategy is being implemented in three phases: Phase One: Inventory; Phase Two: Research and Assessment; and, Phase Three: Implementation of Protection Measures.

### Phases One and Two of the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy

On February 16, 2016, Council endorsed the recommendations of the Phase One inventory and directed that those properties identified as 'high priority' within the inventory proceed immediately to Phase Two: Research and Assessment.

The Phase Two assessment of the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs was completed by Letourneau Heritage Consulting. On October 1, 2018, Council approved the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs, recognized the area as a significant cultural heritage landscape and directed staff to move into Phase Three: Implementation of Protection Measures.

### Designation and Objection

On February 10, 2020, Council resolved to issue Notice of Intention to Designate the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs cultural heritage landscape (CHL) under s.29, Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The CHL contains land owned by the Town of Oakville and a single private property owner. An objection was received to the Notice and the matter was referred to the Conservation Review Board. The objection was based on the owners concern that the view lines, as described in the Notice of Intention to Designate, would prohibit a potential development on their property in the future.

Through extensive discussions, a resolution was reached by the Town of Oakville and property owner. Minutes of Settlement (MOS) were agreed upon to make a minor revision to the origin point of the view lines to provide clarity to the owner, which still protected the cultural heritage value of the view. The property owner withdrew their notice of objection to the proposed designation on January 27, 2022.

On April 4, 2022, Council passed By-law 2022-027 to designate the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs as a cultural heritage landscape under s.29, Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

### Conservation Plans

As per By-law 2018-019, (a by-law to govern cultural heritage landscape conservation plans within the Town of Oakville and to delegate certain powers to designated officials), a conservation plan is required for all protected cultural heritage landscapes in the Town of Oakville. By-law 2018-019 recognizes that significant cultural heritage landscapes should be conserved such that their cultural heritage value or interest pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act* is retained, and recognizes conservation plans as a means of achieving conservation.

Conservation plans for cultural heritage landscapes are not intended to be a management plan for a property or guidance tool for a specific development. The conservation plan provides staff, Council and the property owner with information on how to evaluate the potential impact on the cultural heritage value or interest and the heritage attributes from proposed changes to the property.

### **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

#### Contents of the Conservation Plan

The purpose of the conservation plan is to guide those alterations to the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs that are likely to affect its cultural heritage value or interest, and/or its heritage attributes. The conservation plan provides direction ensuring that alterations can be made while conserving the property as a significant CHL. This will help to ensure that the stated cultural heritage value or interest is retained through the protection of its heritage attributes.

The conservation plan includes descriptions of the alterations that are exempt from heritage permit approval (Category A) and those that would require heritage permit approval (Category B and C). The conservation plan is not a maintenance plan, nor is it an operational or business management plan. Maintenance, meaning routine non-destructive actions that preserve the existing form and operations are exempt from Town heritage review and have been listed in Category A. Other activities may also be exempt from heritage review because they would not affect the heritage attributes of the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs.

The conservation plan describes the heritage permit application process and provides direction on how to manage future changes to the property while conserving the cultural heritage value of the CHL.

The draft conservation plan has been shared with various stakeholders, including: Town departments, the private property owner, the Bronte Historical Society and the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation. The resulting conservation plan satisfies the Town's requirements for CHLs and provides a helpful tool for the Town and private property owner to use in managing future changes to the area.

### Conclusion

At its meeting on July 26, 2022, the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee endorsed the conservation plan for the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs to Planning and Development Council for approval.

The conservation plan for the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs cultural heritage landscape will assist with appropriately managing change within this significant cultural heritage landscape. Staff recommend approval of the conservation plan as attached in Appendix A.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **(A) PUBLIC**

Members of the public are welcome to provide feedback on the draft conservation plan through Planning and Development Council.

#### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no new costs associated with the draft conservation plan.

#### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

Planning Services staff has worked with impacted departments, including Parks and Open Space and Legal, to review the conservation plan.

#### **(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- be accountable
- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

#### **(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

A climate emergency was declared by Council in June 2019 to raise awareness of the critical need to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions and increase the town's resiliency to extreme weather.

The conservation of the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs as a cultural heritage landscape protects a valuable natural space that includes mature trees, vegetation and habitat for wildlife. The protection of this significant area through the cultural heritage landscape conservation plan therefore supports the town's climate initiatives.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Draft Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation Plan for the Bronte Harbour and Bluffs

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