



COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT Planning Staff Report

Meeting date: September 4, 2025
Department: Building, By-law & Planning
Report No.: BBP-2025-82
Submitted by: Alyssa Soldo, Planner, County of Middlesex
Reviewed by: Tim Williams, Manager of Planning, County of Middlesex
Approved by: Jake DeRidder, Manager of Growth & Development
SUBJECT: **Application for Minor Variance (A17-2025) – 54 Pannell Lane, Strathroy**
Owners: Heather Hallet & Charles Middleton

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Application for Minor Variance A17-2025 be approved.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the minor variance application is to seek relief from Section 4.6(5)(a) of the Zoning By-law to permit a secondary suite that is 82.5 m² (888.1 ft²) in size, whereas a maximum of 75 m² (807.3 m²) is permitted. The application will facilitate the construction of a secondary suite within the basement of the existing dwelling.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located on the south side of Pannell Lane, west of Head Street North in Strathroy (see Location Map).

The property is approximately 0.63 ac (2,549.52 m²) in size with approximately 27.44 m (90 ft) of frontage along Pannell Lane. The property contains an existing 313.1 m² (3,370 ft²) single detached dwelling and a 27.56 m² (296.7 ft²) shed. The property is able to accommodate parking for both the primary dwelling and the secondary unit through its existing driveway area.

The applicant is proposing to build a secondary suite within the existing home that is 82.5 m² (888.1 ft²) in size. While the secondary suite will meet the provision regarding its size not being greater than 80% of the gross floor area of the main dwelling (80% of 313.1 m² is 250.48 m² which the proposed secondary suite is well below), it does not meet the provision of being a maximum 75 m².

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The property is connected to municipal water and sanitary services. Pannell Lane is classified as a 'secondary collector road' under the jurisdiction of Strathroy-Caradoc. Surrounding land uses are predominately low density residential. A majority of the property is regulated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and are also identified as 'significant woodlands' within the Middlesex Natural Heritage Systems Study (2014).

POLICY AND REGULATION BACKGROUND:

The Provincial Planning Statement, Middlesex County Official Plan, and Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan all encourage intensification in Settlement Areas provided the development is compatible with the surrounding area and represents an orderly and efficient use of land and infrastructure.

County of Middlesex Official Plan, 2023

The subject lands are located within a 'Settlement Area' according to the Middlesex County Official Plan.

Section 2.3 of the County Official Plan contains the County's growth management framework which directs that the majority of growth is to occur in designated settlement areas. The intent of the growth management framework is to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and to establish future development within settlement areas on full municipal services. The County Official Plan also encourages a wide variety of housing by type, size, and tenure achieved in part by way of intensification and redevelopment of vacant or otherwise underutilized lands.

Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan

The subject lands are located within the Strathroy 'Settlement Area' according to *Schedule B: Land Use & Transportation Plan*, as contained within the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan.

The Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan establishes that development within the Strathroy Settlement Area is intended:

- To accommodate the majority of population growth and the majority of residential and industrial development in the Municipality;
- To ensure development and redevelopment in Strathroy does not have a detrimental effect on the ability of the Municipality to provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate it;
- To maintain at all times an adequate supply of housing in terms of dwelling types, tenure and affordability;
- To maintain the essential qualities of privacy, quiet enjoyment, public health and safety, and land use compatibility in residential areas.

The primary use of lands designated 'Residential' shall be primarily used for residential purposes including a range of housing types and densities from single unit dwellings to high-rise apartment buildings (Section 3.3.4.1).

Section 3.3.4.7.1 states that the establishment of a secondary dwelling unit in a main residential use in the form of a single unit dwelling, semi-detached dwelling or a townhouse dwelling, or located in a building accessory to a main residential use, shall be permitted subject to standards prescribed by the

Zoning By-law with respect to such matters including but not limited to floor area, exterior alterations, servicing, outdoor amenity area and parking.

The Strathroy Caradoc Official Plan has been updated through OPA 14 in 2022. The purpose of this Amendment is to update the Official Plan to ensure that the land use planning policies are current, reflect Provincial legislation and policy, have regard for matters of Provincial interest and any guideline documents, are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and reflect changing community needs for the next 25-years. The most significant relevant update to the Plan was the change in designation title from 'Residential' to 'Neighbourhoods'. OPA 14 is currently under appeal and, while generally in line with the proposal, the updated policies are not determinative for this application.

Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law

The subject property is currently zoned 'Low Density Residential (R1) Zone' according to the Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law.

The 'R1' zone permits single detached dwellings, secondary suites, and group homes and requires (for lots on full municipal services) a minimum lot area of 460 m², minimum lot frontage of 15 m, minimum front yard depth/exterior side yard width of 5 m, minimum side yard width of 1.2 m, minimum rear yard depth of 8 m, maximum lot coverage of 40%, and minimum landscaped open space of 40%.

Section 4.23(20j) of the Zoning By-law states single detached dwellings are required to provide 3 spaces per dwelling unit. Section 4.23(20h) of the Zoning By-law states that secondary suite dwellings are required to provide 1 space per dwelling unit. The proposed uses on the property would require a total of 4 parking spaces.

Section 4.6(5)(a) of the Zoning By-law states that when located in a main dwelling, the gross floor area of the secondary suite shall not be greater than 80% of the gross floor area of the main dwelling to a maximum of 75 m².

CONSULTATION:

The application has been circulated to agencies and the public in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*.

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has noted that they have no concerns with the minor variance. Portions of the subject property are regulated under Ontario Regulation 41/24. The applicant will require written permission from the Authority prior to any construction or site alteration.

No comments have been received from the public on the application at the time of preparing this report.

ANALYSIS:

Section 45 of the *Planning Act* allows a municipality to grant a minor variance to a Zoning By-law based on four tests, as follows:

1. Is the variance considered minor in nature? YES

In regard to the increase to the permitted size of the secondary suite, staff note that the requested increase is from 75 m² (807.3 m²) to 82.5 m² (888.1 ft²), which is a difference of 7.5 m² (80.8 ft²). This area maximum is based off the size of the existing dwelling and is limited to 80% of the gross floor area of the dwelling, to a maximum of 75 m² (807.3 ft²). Staff are of the opinion that this increase is minor in nature as it is still under the maximum 80% threshold and will not be noticeable from neighbouring properties as it is part of the main dwelling structure. Additionally, the secondary suite will not compromise the existing home's functionality. Therefore, the variance can be considered minor in nature.

2. Is the variance an appropriate use of the land? YES

The Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan and Zoning By-law permit residential uses such as single detached dwellings, secondary suites, and accessory structures. The proposed addition of a secondary suite will allow for the property to be used for residential purposes to its full potential, contributing to the housing market of the Municipality. The secondary suite will require interior changes to the existing dwelling but the overall visual of the existing dwelling will remain. The additional residential use requires an additional parking space which can easily be accommodated in the large existing driveway. Therefore, staff are of the opinion that the variance is an appropriate use of the land.

3. Does the variance maintain the intent of the Official Plan? YES

The property is within the 'Residential' designation of the Official Plan, which permits a range of housing types and densities, including low-density single detached dwellings and accessory structures. Low-density development within this neighbourhood compliments and re-enforces the neighbourhood identity and residential character of Strathroy. Staff are of the opinion that the requested variance will maintain the intent of the Official Plan.

4. Does the variance maintain the intent of the Zoning By-law? YES

The intent of restricting the size of secondary suites is to ensure that the unit remains ancillary to the primary dwelling unit. As the secondary suite is proposed to be located within the existing footprint of the dwelling and is only 26% of the gross floor area of the main dwelling, there will be no visual impacts as the structure is seen as one unit rather than its separate residential uses. Therefore, it is staff's opinion that the intent of the Zoning By-law is maintained.

Further, secondary suites are required to provide one (1) parking space per residential unit. Single detached dwellings are required to provide three (3) parking spaces. The property can accommodate both of these parking requirements for both residential units through the parking spaces provided in the existing driveway.

In summary, it is staff's opinion that the application meets the four tests of the *Planning Act* required in order to grant a minor variance.

CONCLUSION:

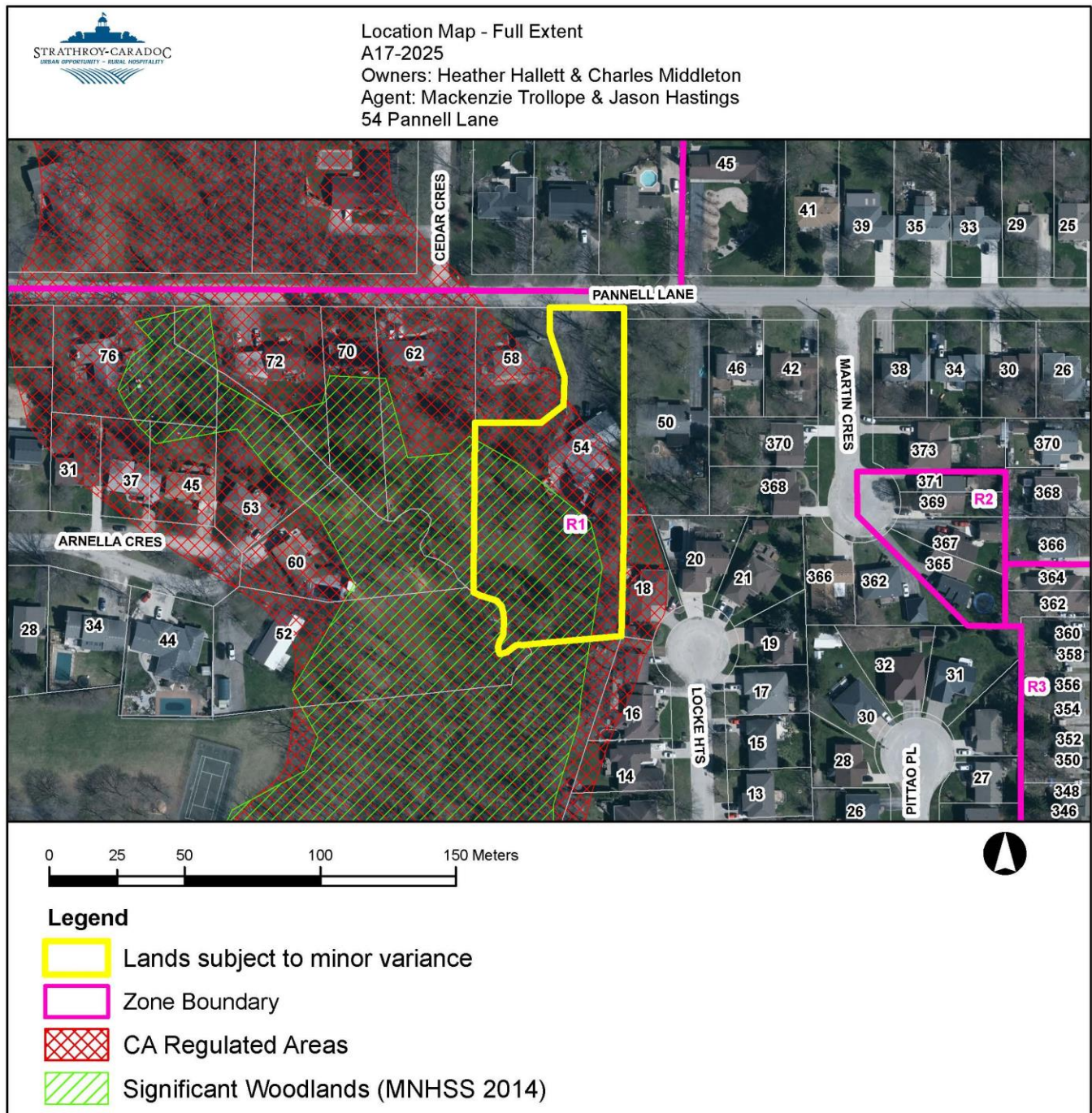
Based on the above analysis, it is recommended that the application to permit a secondary suite that is 82.5 m² (888.1 ft²) in size **be approved**.

ATTACHMENTS

Location Map

Proposed Floor Plan

Location Map



Proposed Floor Plan

