



October 2015

Phase 1 Discussion Paper

Small Settlements



Prepared by:



Prepared for:



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 SETTLEMENT AREAS IN INNISFIL	5
3 STATUS AND ROLE OF EACH SMALL SETTLEMENT	7
3.1 COOKSTOWN	7
3.2 LEFROY – BELLE EWART	9
3.3 SANDY COVE	11
3.4 STROUD	13
3.5 CHURCHILL	14
3.6 FENNELLS CORNERS	15
3.7 GILFORD	16
4 DISCUSSION ON SMALL SETTLEMENT AREA HIERARCHY	18
4.1 DISCUSSION	18
4.2 CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	21

ABSTRACT

There are eight settlement areas within the Town of Innisfil: Alcona, Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart, Sandy Cove, Stroud, Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford.

The Province and the County of Simcoe have identified Alcona as a “Primary Settlement Area”, where the majority of future growth will be directed. The other settlement areas within the Town are considered to be “small settlements”.

Simcoe County, in their Official Plan, requires local municipalities to identify a hierarchy of settlement areas based on specific criteria, including:

- the range and mix of uses within the settlement area;
- the densities that can be accommodated;
- water and wastewater servicing availability and capacity; and
- the role the settlement area has in providing services to a broader area.

This discussion paper examines each of Innisfil’s small settlements in relation to these criteria and discusses the resultant potential hierarchy of small settlements. The settlement areas of Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove are identified as “Urban Settlements” in the Town’s Official Plan, whereas Stroud, Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford are identified as “Village Settlements”.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This discussion paper looks at the small settlements within Innisfil and examines their role in the greater context of the Town; their potential ability to accommodate growth, and options for the role of these small settlements.

There are eight settlement areas within the Town of Innisfil, including Alcona, Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart, Sandy Cove, Stroud, Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford. Alcona has been identified by the Province and the County of Simcoe as a “Primary Settlement Area”. The seven other settlement areas in Innisfil are referred to as “small settlements” for the purposes of this discussion paper.

The current Official Plan distinguishes between “Urban Settlements” and “Village Settlements”. In the Official Plan, Urban Settlements are identified as the primary focus of and location for urban growth, which are intended to provide for a broad range of housing opportunities, commercial facilities and services, recreation, culture, government facilities and employment opportunities. Urban Settlements include Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart, and Sandy Cove. Village Settlements are identified as being small historic settlement along Yonge Street and Lake Simcoe, which are partially serviced, and include Stroud, Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford.

This discussion paper examines each of the small settlements in Innisfil individually, with respect to the following criteria listed in policy 3.5.8 of the Simcoe County Official Plan:

- Range and mix of uses;
- Density;
- Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity; and
- Role in providing services to a broader area.

An analysis of settlement area character is also provided, listing the elements of each community that contribute to its sense of place. Suggested improvements are also made for each community on how to enhance this sense of place, contributing to an overall, unifying identify for Innisfil.

After consideration of the Simcoe County Official Plan criteria for establishing a settlement area hierarchy, the existing hierarchy for small settlements within the current Official Plan appears to appropriately capture the nature of these small settlements. According to our review, there is merit in classifying the settlements of Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove separately from Stroud, Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford due to the ability of these settlements to accommodate a range and mix of uses, higher residential densities, the potential for municipal water and wastewater servicing and the role of the settlement area in serving the broader community.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Innisfil is undertaking a comprehensive update to its Official Plan, called “Our Place”. “Our Place” will be a visionary Official Plan document, expanding on the existing policies in place today and integrating and embedding the principles of Place Making as identified by the people of Innisfil.

Stage One of the “Our Place” study process involves an extensive public consultation component as well as the preparation of a number of discussion papers to inform the Official Plan Update process.

This discussion paper looks at the small settlements within Innisfil and examines their role in the greater context of the Town; their potential ability to accommodate growth, and options for the role of these small settlements.

2 SETTLEMENT AREAS IN INNISFIL

There are eight settlement areas within the Town of Innisfil. These are:

- Alcona,
- Cookstown,
- Lefroy – Belle Ewart,
- Sandy Cove,
- Stroud,
- Churchill,
- Fennell’s Corners, and
- Gilford.

Alcona has been identified by the Province and the County of Simcoe as a “Primary Settlement Area”. According to the County Official Plan, Primary Settlement Areas “*are larger settlements suitable for high intensification targets, public transit services, and high density targets for designated Greenfield areas and have full municipal water services and municipal sewage services*” (Simcoe County OP, Policy 3.5.6). Alcona is the only Primary Settlement Area within Innisfil.

As discussed in the Policy Gap Analysis Discussion Paper, the Town’s Official Plan must be updated to identify Alcona as a Primary Settlement Area, to which a significant portion of population and employment growth must be directed.

The seven other settlement areas in Innisfil are referred to as “small settlements” for the purposes of this discussion paper. While the majority of growth is to be directed to Alcona, policy 3.5.7 of the Simcoe County Official Plan recognizes that growth may occur in other settlement areas. Policy 3.5.8 of the County Official Plan requires local municipalities with more than one settlement area to undertake growth management strategies to identify a hierarchy of settlement areas based on criteria such as servicing availability and capacity, density and intensification targets, range and mix of uses within each settlement area, and the settlement area role in providing services to a broader area.

The current Official Plan distinguishes between “Urban Settlements” and “Village Settlements”.

Urban Settlements

Urban Settlements are identified as the primary focus of and location for urban growth, which are intended to provide for a broad range of housing opportunities, commercial facilities and services, recreation, culture, government facilities and employment opportunities. The policies require Urban Settlements to be “spatially and functionally

separated from one another” in order to maintain the vision for Innisfil as a “community of communities”.

The Updated Official Plan is moving away from the notion of Innisfil being a “community of communities”, and rather, moving towards the notion of being one community, known as “Our Place”.

Village Settlements

Village Settlements are identified as being small historic settlement along Yonge Street and Lake Simcoe, which are partially serviced. The intent is that these villages retain their small village character and accommodate limited new development.

The next section of this discussion paper describes Innisfil’s small settlements in greater detail with respect to the criteria in Simcoe County Official Plan policy 3.5.8.

3 STATUS AND ROLE OF EACH SMALL SETTLEMENT

This section of the paper examines each of the small settlements in Innisfil individually, with respect to the criteria listed in policy 3.5.8 of the Simcoe County Official Plan:

- Range and mix of uses;
- Density;
- Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity; and
- Role in providing services to a broader area.

The information in this discussion paper related to servicing availability and capacity has been directly obtained from the Town-Wide Water & Wastewater Master Servicing Plan.

Based on discussion in this section, the following section of this paper discusses a potential hierarchy for Innisfil's small settlements.

3.1 COOKSTOWN

Range and mix of uses

- Cookstown is a small, picturesque and historic community in the southwest corner of Innisfil. It is currently identified as an "Urban Settlement" in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- The community has a downtown area comprised of a mix of uses including residential, commercial and institutional.
- Most of the commercial uses in the community are found along Highway 89, on both sides of the street west of Highway 27. A commercial plaza and home hardware are located at the western edge of the settlement area.
- A community centre, park and public library are located north of Highway 89 at Cook Street.
- There is one public school within Cookstown (Cookstown Central Public School). The school is located on the west side of King Street North (Highway 27) at the north end of the settlement area.
- In terms of residential dwelling types, there are currently only single detached dwellings within Cookstown. The registered, draft approved, and pending plans of subdivision within Cookstown are all for single detached dwellings.
- The northeastern quadrant of Cookstown is designated "Rural" in the Town's Official Plan.
- There are also two blocks along Highway 27, one on the east side and one on the west side, south of Highway 89, designated as Residential Medium Density.

Density

- The Cookstown settlement area is low density in character. Most of the residential areas within the community are currently designated Residential Low Density 1 in the Town's Official Plan. There are primarily only single detached dwellings in the settlement area, and all future approved and proposed units are also single detached dwellings.
- The Cookstown Secondary Plan does permit a variety of residential dwelling types, including triplexes, double duplexes, apartment dwellings and townhouses in the Residential Medium Density designation, however there are only two properties designated as such.
- Cookstown is one of two settlement areas within Innisfil that have a built-up area, as determined by the Province in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As such, Cookstown has both a built-up area and a designated greenfield area (DGA). The DGA is to be developed at a higher density than currently exists within the built-up area of Cookstown. The Simcoe County Official Plan requires a minimum DGA density of 32 persons and jobs per hectare.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - The community of Cookstown is currently serviced with drinking water from the Lakeshore WTP, through a connection to the Innisfil-BWG water transmission main.
 - The wastewater servicing for the community is provided through a municipal system to the Cookstown Water Pollution Control Plant.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to continue to service the community of Cookstown by the Lakeshore WTP, as exists today,
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service Cookstown through a new Cookstown WPCP on the existing site.
 - These recommended improvements would increase the water and wastewater servicing capacity in Cookstown.
- The Cookstown Secondary Plan requires that new development within the community be constructed on full municipal services. However, it is understood that the Cookstown Water Pollution Control Plant is currently at full capacity until recommendations for servicing improvements are implemented. Until that happens, no new development is possible in Cookstown.
- In the interim, the Town of Innisfil will be faced with the choice of how best to treat undeveloped lands within the settlement area. With the prospect of wastewater servicing improvements in the future, the Town must decide on how best to balance future and planned growth potential in the Cookstown

community. As it stands now, a number of lots could be permitted on vacant, undeveloped lands on private services, particularly in the northeast part of Cookstown where there are larger vacant properties. However, if all of these lands were built out on the provision of private services, this would have an impact on the future unit potential in Cookstown. As Provincial, County and Town policies require new development to be compact and make efficient use of infrastructure, the Town must take this into consideration. The Town may consider allowing only a certain number of lots on private services and reserving the rest of the land for future development once servicing capacity is improved.

- The Policy Directions report in the next phase of the Our Place study will address the issue of servicing constraints in Cookstown.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- According to the Cookstown Secondary Plan, the role of the community is to serve as a *“local centre in the Simcoe-Georgian Area, providing for day-to-day needs of residents and the surrounding agricultural community”*.
- Given the geographic location of Cookstown in relation to other settlement areas, the size of the downtown, the public service facilities available in Cookstown (school, library, arena, curling club), the surrounding agricultural community, as well as its location along a major road linking many communities, it is expected that the role of Cookstown will remain as currently stated in the Secondary Plan and functions today, and it will continue to provide services to a broader area.

3.2 LEFROY – BELLE EWART

Range and mix of uses

- The Lefroy – Belle Ewart settlement area can be characterized as a lakeside community, comprised of a newer, developing residential area in the west and an older, established residential area in the east, adjacent to Lake Simcoe. It is currently identified as an “Urban Settlement” in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- There is a small historic commercial core area along Killarney Beach Road, centred more or less at the rail road crossing. The commercial core area is small in scale and is composed mostly of small restaurant and convenience retail uses.
- The newly developing “Lefroy” community in the west half of the settlement area falls within the Lefroy Secondary Plan area. The Secondary Plan contemplates a mix of residential uses ranging from single and semi detached dwellings to townhouses and other ground related multiple unit housing forms (excluding stacked townhouses). Mid-rise, mixed use buildings in the core are also contemplated in the Secondary Plan.
- The more established Belle-Ewart community is located in the east half of the settlement area. The vast majority of homes here, if not all, are single detached dwellings many of them functioning as second homes.

- There is a community centre located north of Killarney Beach Road, east of the rail tracks, as well as Killarney Beach Public School on 20th Sideroad, and a future school is contemplated for the settlement area. There is also a place of worship within the community, as well, a future place of worship site is reserved in the Secondary Plan.
- There are also significant environmental features throughout the community

Density

- The Lefroy Secondary Plan permits a variety of dwelling types at a density not to exceed 12.6 units per net hectare in the Residential Low Density 1 designation and 23 units per net hectare in the Residential Low Density 2 designation. Medium density residential uses are permitted within these designations, provided that the densities do not exceed 40 units per net hectare.
- The east half of the community, the Belle-Ewart area, permits low density residential uses, including single detached dwellings, not to exceed a density of 12.5 units per net hectare.
- The majority of registered, draft approved and proposed residential units in Lefroy are single detached dwellings, however there are a number of semi-detached and townhouse dwellings units as well.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - The eastern half of the Lefroy-Belle Ewart community is currently not serviced by the municipal water system. Existing residents on this side of the community are currently serviced by private water wells. The western half of the community, within the Lefroy Secondary Plan, is being constructed on municipal water services.
 - Some of the areas of the Lefroy-Belle Ewart community are serviced by the Lakeshore WPCP (the western half within the Lefroy Secondary Plan), while the rest of the Lefroy-Belle Ewart community is serviced by private septic systems.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to service Lefroy-Belle-Ewart through the watermain from St. John's Road along Belle Aire Beach Road and Maple Road to the Lefroy Reservoir.
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service the Lefroy-Belle Ewart community by the Lakeshore WPCP.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- Historically, the Lefroy – Belle Ewart community has functioned as a small primarily residential and cottage residential village. For the east half of the community, this is largely still true.
- Since the approval of the Lefroy Secondary Plan, the west half of the community has begun to develop with new residential dwellings, and the role of the community is also shifting to be a bedroom community where people leave everyday to work elsewhere.
- While at the moment the community has small local serving retail uses, future retail is contemplated, both in the Killarney Beach Road core and at a Neighbourhood Commercial Centre at Killarney Beach Road and the 20th Sideroad.
- Lefroy – Belle Ewart is anticipated to function in a similar way in the future as it does today and is not anticipated to provide a great deal of services to the broader area.

3.3 SANDY COVE

Range and mix of uses

- Sandy Cove is located north of Alcona, and is centred at the intersection of Lockhart Road and 25th Sideroad. It is primarily a residential community made up largely of retirement residential dwellings, including modular homes and single detached dwellings. It is currently identified as an “Urban Settlement” in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- There is a small plaza located on the north side of Lockhart Road, west of 25th Sideroad, that provides local serving retail and personal service uses to the community. This commercial plaza likely serves predominantly the residents of Sandy Cove.
- There are two draft approved plans of subdivision in Sandy Cove consisting of 317 single detached dwellings and 465 apartment units.

Density

- Within Sandy Cove, the majority of the lands are designated Retirement Residential Area and Residential Low Density 1.
- For the most part, the undeveloped portions of Sandy Cove are designated Retirement Residential Area, which has a maximum density of 10 units per hectare permitting residential lifestyle housing.
- The Residential Low Density 1 designation permits a maximum of 12.5 units per net hectare permitting primarily single detached dwellings.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:

- Existing residents of Sandy Cove are currently not serviced by the municipal water system, but the retirement community is serviced by a private communal water well system. The existing residents outside of the retirement community are currently serviced by private water wells.
- The Sandy Cove community does not have a municipal wastewater system. Existing residents within Sandy Cove are currently serviced by private septic systems with the exception of the retirement community whose flows are collected through a private wastewater network and is treated at the Lakeshore Water Pollution Control Plant.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to service the Sandy Cove community via the Lakeshore WTP.
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service the community via the Lakeshore WPCP.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- As noted above, Sandy Cove is primarily designated as Retirement Residential Area in the Innisfil Official Plan on the east side of 25th Sideroad. According to the Official Plan, the intent of this land use designation is to provide for special social and housing needs for seniors, most of whom are retired. The Retirement Residential Area designation permits residential lifestyle housing, and accessory or complementary uses, such as small scale personal service and convenience commercial uses. Recreational uses are also permitted.
- On the east side of 25th Sideroad, lands are largely designated as Residential Low Density 1, made up of both permanent and seasonal dwellings, with some large vacant properties that are subject to development proposals to permit a broader range of uses.
- Alcona is located directly to the south of Sandy Cove. Alcona is Innisfil's Primary Settlement Area, and offers many of the recreational, cultural, institutional and commercial services that Sandy Cove does not.
- There is an area along the 25th Sideroad that could be designated and designed to function as a small downtown serving Sandy Cove.
- The function and role of Sandy Cove will likely not change from what it is today, as a primarily retirement residential community. However, the range of housing in Sandy Cove is likely to increase with the development of the large vacant parcels of land. Since the commercial uses permitted within the community are meant to serve the local population, and the community is located in close proximity to Alcona, Sandy Cove has a limited role in providing services to a broader area.

3.4 STROUD

Range and mix of uses

- Stroud is located in the north part of Innisfil, near the Barrie city limits. The community is centred on the intersection of Yonge Street and 10th Line. It is currently identified as a “Village Settlement” in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- 10th Line is primarily a residential street through Stroud, whereas Yonge Street contains a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses. Yonge Street is a major north-south artery through Southern Ontario, serving as a major transportation route through Innisfil and linking the Town to the communities to the north and south.
- The residential lands within the community are designated as Village Residential Area, which permits single detached dwellings.
- The Village Commercial Area designation along Yonge Street permits convenience commercial uses, which are meant to serve the residents of the Village and the surrounding agricultural community. Permitted uses include a range of commercial uses, including convenience retail, personal services, restaurants, automobile service stations, antique stores, gift shops and tourist retail.
- Stroud has the second largest amount of retail space of any of the settlements in Innisfil, only behind Alcona. There is an estimated 145,900 square feet of retail space in Stroud.
- Along Yonge Street, south of 10th Line, there are a few scattered retail uses within the small pockets of Village Commercial Area designation, such as auto shops, a drug store, and a realtor’s office.
- North of 10th Line, along Yonge Street, the Village Commercial Area designation stretches virtually the entire stretch to the northern boundary of the settlement area, with the exception of a few lots at the north end on the east side of Yonge Street. There are three (3) commercial plazas along this stretch of road, with a number of retail units in each, including restaurants, pharmacies, a dance studio, variety stores, among others. The largest of the plazas, located at the north end of the settlement area on the west side of Yonge Street, also contains a Foodland grocery store, a gym and a post office. Other retail uses along this stretch of Yonge Street, outside of retail plazas, include the Beer Store, a garden centre, a Tim Horton’s, offices for Pace Credit Union, a funeral home and a winemaking shop.
- There is also an arena centrally located near the intersection of Yonge Street and Tenth Line within Stroud.

Density

- The residential lands within Stroud fall under the Village Residential Area designation of the Official Plan. The Village Residential Area designation permits a maximum density of 2.5 units per net hectare. This has to do with the servicing constraints in the community.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - The community of Stroud is currently being supplied from groundwater sources on a communal system.
 - The Stroud community is currently not serviced by the municipal wastewater system. Existing residents within Stroud are currently serviced by private septic systems.

- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to continue to service the Stroud community with the existing groundwater supply because it was deemed to have the least impact and more preferred rating.
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service the community of Stroud through the Lakeshore WPCP.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- Stroud has a role in providing services to a broader area; namely the surrounding agricultural community as well as travellers through the community.
- There is a full range of commercial uses that exist and are permitted in Stroud.
- While there are limited traditional employment opportunities in the community, there is an established retail sector as well as the offices for Pace Credit Union, and several other small businesses.

3.5 CHURCHILL

Range and mix of uses

- Churchill is located in the central part of Innisfil, west of Lefroy – Belle Ewart. The community is centred on the intersection of Killarney Beach Road and Yonge Street. It is currently identified as a “Village Settlement” in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- Churchill is a small community, primarily with only residential uses, and a few scattered commercial and institutional uses near the intersection of Killarney Beach Road and Yonge Street. Yonge Street is a major north-south artery through Southern Ontario, serving as a major transportation route through Innisfil and linking the Town to the communities to the north and south.
- The residential lands within the community are designated as Village Residential Area, which permits single detached dwellings. There is one application for a residential subdivision (Churchill Downs) of 20 single detached dwellings.

Density

- The residential lands within Churchill fall under the Village Residential Area designation of the Official Plan. The Village Residential Area designation permits a maximum density of 2.5 units per net hectare. This has to do with the servicing constraints in the community.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - The community of Churchill is currently supplied water by a communal groundwater supply system.
 - The Churchill community is currently not serviced by the municipal wastewater system. Existing residents within Churchill are currently serviced by private septic systems.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to continue to service the community by utilizing the existing groundwater supply because it was deemed to have the least impact and more preferred rating. This alternative includes the expansion of the existing reservoir.
 - For wastewater servicing, since there was only one wastewater servicing alternative, the recommended wastewater alternative is to service the community of Churchill through the Lakeshore Water Pollution Control Plant, however the timing of this servicing alternative is in the long-term.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- The community of Churchill has limited potential in terms of additional residential and commercial development, with the exception of the Churchill Downs Draft Approved Plan of Subdivision, which proposed to add 20 single detached dwellings. As the existing commercial sites are already developed, there really is no opportunity for Churchill to provide services to a broader area.

3.6 FENNELL'S CORNERS

Range and mix of uses

- Fennell's Corners is a small community located at the intersection of Highway 89 and Yonge Street. It is currently identified as a "Village Settlement" in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- The community is fully developed, and there are no vacant lands.
- In terms of commercial uses, there are a few stores that likely serve the surrounding community including a pizzeria, a small supermarket, a general store and a convenience store. There is a gas station located outside of the settlement area boundary on the north side of Highway 89.

Density

- The residential lands within Fennell's Corners fall under the Village Residential Area designation of the Official Plan. The Village Residential Area designation permits a maximum density of 2.5 units per net hectare. This very low density is a result of the servicing constraints in the community.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - Fennell's Corners is currently serviced by the municipal groundwater supply system.
 - The community does not have a municipal wastewater system. Existing residents within the Fennell's Corners community are currently serviced by private septic systems.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - The recommended water servicing alternative is to service the Fennell's Corners community via the Innisfil-BWG Watermain along Yonge Street and along County Road 89 and utilizing the Lakeshore WTP.
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service the community via existing individual private septic systems and therefore no additional infrastructure is required.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- The community of Fennell's Corners has very limited potential in terms of additional residential and commercial development. As the existing commercial sites are already developed, there really is no opportunity for Fennell's Corners to provide additional services to a broader area.
- With that said, the commercial uses that do exist in Fennell's Corners today do likely draw a limited number of people from outside of the community.

3.7 GILFORD

Range and mix of uses

- Gilford is located at the end of Highway 89, generally between 20th Sideroad and Lake Simcoe. It is currently identified as a "Village Settlement" in the Innisfil Official Plan.
- Gilford is a community of primarily residential uses, composed of both seasonal and permanent residences. The commercial uses within the community are

related to two marinas one at the end of Gilford Road and the other at the end of Shore Acres Drive. There is also a post office located on the west side of the community on Gilford Road.

- The residential lands within the community are designated as Village Residential Area, which permits single detached dwellings. There is one application for a residential subdivision (End Fields) of 20 single detached dwellings.
- A nearby plan of subdivision (Inisgreen Estates) is located in the rural area, outside of the Gilford Settlement Area, proposing 50 single detached dwellings.

Density

- The residential lands within Gilford fall under the Village Residential Area designation of the Official Plan. The Village Residential Area designation permits a maximum density of 2.5 units per net hectare. This very low density is a result of the servicing constraints in the community.

Type of sewage and water servicing availability and capacity

- Existing Servicing:
 - The Gilford community is currently serviced by municipal water from the Lakeshore WTP. A watermain connecting the BWG-Innisfil Transmission feedermain to the community was recently constructed.
 - The Gilford community does not have a municipal wastewater system. Existing residents within the Gilford community are currently serviced by private septic systems.
- Future Recommended Servicing:
 - There is no change recommended to the water servicing of Gilford.
 - The recommended wastewater servicing alternative is to service the community via a pump station and conveying the wastewater flow to the Lefroy – Belle Ewart community, however the timing of this servicing alternative is in the long-term, so for now, the community remains as partially serviced.

Role in providing services to a broader area

- The two marinas in Gilford attract many people from outside of the Gilford Community. In addition, the Harbourview Golf & Country Club, which is located adjacent to the Gilford Settlement Area, attracts many visitors to the area including to Gilford. There is a restaurant at the marina that is quite popular.
- Gilford, therefore, does have a role in providing services to a broader area, however these services are limited largely to recreational activities.

4 DISCUSSION ON SMALL SETTLEMENT AREA HIERARCHY

As noted earlier in this report, the current Official Plan distinguishes between “Urban Settlements” and “Village Settlements”.

Urban Settlements are identified as the primary focus of and location for urban growth, which are intended to provide for a broad range of housing opportunities, commercial facilities and services, recreation, culture, government facilities and employment opportunities. These currently include:

- Alcona
- Cookstown
- Lefroy – Belle Ewart
- Sandy Cove

Village Settlements are identified as being small historic settlement along Yonge Street and Lake Simcoe, which are partially serviced, and the intent is that these villages retain their small village character and accommodate limited new development. These currently include:

- Stroud
- Churchill
- Fennell’s Corners
- Gilford

As noted earlier, Alcona is not considered a “small settlement”, as the Province and County have identified it as a Primary Settlement Area. The focus of this paper is to discuss the establishment of a hierarchy for the remaining settlements.

4.1 DISCUSSION

Settlement Function

The settlements of Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart, and Sandy Cove have historically been identified and planned for more growth than the other small settlements in Innisfil. One of the main commonalities between these settlement areas is that they are fully serviced or planned to be fully serviced and are therefore currently experiencing residential growth, and they are planned to accommodate further growth. The lands within these settlement areas are also designated to accommodate a wider range of dwelling types than are permitted within the other small settlements, such as townhouses and other forms of multiple dwelling units. While there are servicing constraints in some of these settlement areas, they have the potential to accommodate

servicing improvements, as noted in the Town-Wide Water & Wastewater Master Servicing Plan. Of these three settlements, Cookstown likely has the largest role in serving the surrounding community outside of Cookstown, primarily due to its location along Highways 89 and 27; its historical mainstreet and being located further from other settlement areas. However, Cookstown also has the greatest constraint on its future growth due to the current sanitary treatment plant capacity limitations.

Geographically, the settlements of Stroud, Churchill, Fennell's Corners and Gilford are notably smaller in scale when compared to Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove. They also have limitations on growth and density due to the partial servicing infrastructure. With regards to providing greater a mix of densities and housing types, there is limited or no potential in these settlements due to the nature of private septic services. In looking at the attributes of these settlements described in the previous section, while Fennell's Corners and Gilford have limited commercial uses that do provide some type of service to the broader area to a certain extent, Churchill does not. Of the Village Settlements, Stroud has the largest commercial base and has the potential for commercial expansion if the community had full municipal services.

Settlement Character

Each of these settlement areas has a distinct and unique character that contribute to a sense of place that residents have in each settlement area. Elements that contribute to this sense of place are more often related to public places such as parks, parkettes, trails, community and institutional uses and the public realm along streets. There are opportunities to be explored to enhance the sense of place felt within each community, all the while contributing to a unifying theme that all of these settlements, individually, are an important part of Innisfil. The opportunities identified in this section provide some examples of some potential community improvements to be considered. The Town could also consider applying a common set of improvements to each settlement area, contributing to the theme of a unified Innisfil (an example of this would be the use of "Innisfil" themed signage, or common streetscape elements).

Cookstown

The public realm and streetscape along Highway 89 through the Cookstown core commercial area is likely one the community's defining and most attractive attributes. The street is animated with a mix of uses, inviting sidewalks, attractive street furniture and signage. While visually appealing, there are often complaints that walking along this stretch of a provincial highway can be quite loud, and often vehicles are travelling at higher speeds. Other community elements that contribute to this sense of place are the community park and library, as well as the Trans Canada Trail traversing the west side of the community. These elements, while each individually great, are not directly linked to one another. Providing connections between each of these elements would provide Cookstown with the opportunity for an east-west network of public places through the community, enhancing its sense of place.

Lefroy – Belle Ewart

Lefroy – Belle Ewart has a historic community core, popular marinas, an array of existing and planned institutional uses, community parks and a community centre and arena. While these are all important and popular community elements, connections between them are lacking, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Similar to Cookstown, the provision of connections between each of these elements would provide the community with a unified network of public places, and potentially enhancing the viability and success of the core commercial area in the community.

Sandy Cove

Sandy Cove currently does not have any public places that draw or attract the population, except for the commercial plaza along Lockhart Road. This plaza is centrally located within the community, and provides for a gathering place for many residents, with a restaurant and other stores serving the community. Opportunities exist for more public places and enhancements to the commercial plaza to be more pedestrian oriented and accessible. There are also opportunities, in the undeveloped portions of the community, to create public spaces or introduce additional commercial uses that could serve essentially as a “community core” for Sandy Cove thereby enhancing the sense of place within the community. Providing for improved connections to the lake should also be considered.

Stroud

Stroud, while one of Innisfil’s Village Settlements, smaller than Sandy Cove, Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Cookstown, has the second most amount of commercial space in Innisfil only behind Alcona. Therefore, as outlined earlier in this discussion paper, Stroud has a larger role to play in serving the surrounding community outside of Stroud. While important in this regard, the “Village Commercial Area” of the community is for the most part non-descript and is lacking in those defining character elements that contribute to sense of place. With that said, notwithstanding current servicing constraints in the community, there are opportunities to improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience through the development of vacant lands in the future, as well as through improvement of existing commercial sites. As a destination point for residents outside of the Stroud, there is great potential within the community for creating a sense of place, and instilling the unifying “Innisfil” character in the community, but this is largely limited to the Village Commercial Area designation, which could tie in to the Stroud Arena and surrounding lands.

Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford

The communities of Churchill, Fennell’s Corners and Gilford are smaller settlement areas with commonalities. Each of these settlement areas has a limited amount of commercial uses with limited potential for growth, as well as few public places such as parks. With that said, these communities can still maintain their own identities while accommodating certain improvements in the public realm, such as streets that can contribute to the unifying “Innisfil” theme across all communities.

4.2 CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

After consideration of the Simcoe County Official Plan criteria for establishing a settlement area hierarchy, the existing hierarchy for small settlements within the current Official Plan has been reviewed.

Currently, exclusive of Alcona, the Official Plan classifies Innisfil's settlement areas as follows:

- Urban Settlements: Cookstown, Lefroy – Belle Ewart, Sandy Cove
- Village Settlements: Stroud, Churchill, Fennell's Corners and Gilford.

In the review of settlement areas throughout this report, the role of each of these settlement areas has been more clearly defined. As it stands today, the communities of Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove have the greatest potential for future growth due to the large amount of vacant lands within the settlement areas and both have existing and planned water and wastewater servicing capacity, which can service the vacant lands. Further, the two communities have the potential for additional commercial growth to serve the needs of their residents and surrounding residents. Lefroy – Belle Ewart and Sandy Cove are appropriately categorized as "Urban Settlements".

In contrast, Cookstown and Stroud both have strong existing commercial areas that serve the respective community' residents as well as draw residents into the communities to shop. Both communities act as service centres to the broader area. However, Cookstown and Stroud both have limited growth potential due to servicing constraints.

The Town's other communities of Churchill, Fennell's Corners and Gilford are the smallest of the settlement areas. These communities have limited growth potential due to servicing constraints and they will likely maintain their "village" character with smaller commercial areas and a limited role in providing services to the broader area. Churchill, Fennell's Corners and Gilford are appropriately categorized as "Village Settlements".

The Town should consider the possibility of introducing a third category within the settlement area hierarchy, to account for the unique roles of Cookstown and Stroud in servicing the broader communities around them, but recognizing the limited growth potential in these settlements due to current servicing constraints.

The Official Plan policies will have to be restructured to a certain extent, to recognize Alcona as a Primary Settlement Area where the significant majority of growth is to be directed, as well as to recognize Cookstown and Stroud as important service centres with limited growth potential. The population projections for the "Urban Settlements" that are currently in the Official Plan should also be reviewed to recognize the development potential in each settlement and given the direction from the County and Province to direct growth to Alcona. The role of small settlements should also be clarified, in that the direction of the Town is no longer to be a "community of communities", and rather it is now "one" community.