



Staff Report

Planning & Building Services – Planning Division

Report To: Committee of Adjustment
Meeting Date: July 16, 2025
Report Number: PBS.25.051
Title: Recommendation Report – Minor Variance Application A12-2025 –
Lot 31 Clark Street (Thornbury Industrial Park Inc.)
Prepared by: Manuel Rivera, Planner I

A. Recommendations

THAT the Committee of Adjustment receive Staff Report PBS.25.051, entitled “Recommendation Report – Minor Variance Application A12-2025 – Lot 31 Clark Street (Thornbury Industrial Park Inc.)”;

THAT the Committee of Adjustment GRANT a minor variance for A12-2025 to permit a minimum of 72 parking spaces for the subject lands with 8 parking spaces for the self-storage use and 64 parking spaces for the general industrial uses conditional upon the following:

1. Confirmation from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority that a permit can be obtained (if required);
2. Confirmation from the Ministry of Transportation that a permit can be obtained (if required);
3. That the site development be constructed in a manner substantially in accordance with the submitted site plan; and
4. That this variance to the Zoning By-law is for the purpose of obtaining a building permit and is only valid for a period of two (2) years from the date of decision. Should a building permit not be issued by the Town within two years, the variance shall expire on July 16, 2027.

B. Background

The subject lands are municipality described as Lot 31 Clark Street and legal described as Part of Lot 31, Concession 9 and 10 and Part of the Road Allowance between Concession 8 and 9 in the Town of The Blue Mountains, County of Grey. The property is bound by public utilities to the north, Highway 26 to the east, and general employment and hazard lands to the south and west. The subject lands are currently vacant with dense, mature vegetation throughout the site along with a watercourse. The subject lands are approximately 37,358 m² (9.23 ac) in size with 97.20 m lot frontage on Clark Street. The subject lands are located within the Grey Sauble

Conservation Authority regulated area which a permit may be required prior to site development and site alterations. In addition, the subject lands are within the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) Controlled Area which may require a permit from their office.

The owner is proposing to construct the following:

- i. Two multi-tenant industrial buildings with an area of 4,351 m²;
- ii. Six (6) self-storage buildings with a total area of 4,247 m²;
- iii. One (1) office space located within Building A with an area of 37 m²;
- iv. Stormwater management pond; and
- v. 72 parking spaces to serve both the industrial and self-storage buildings.

The subject lands are currently undergoing a Site Plan Control Application, and is in the final stages of review. It has been noted that the Zoning By-law requires a minimum of 94 parking spaces– 27 for the self-storage buildings and 67 for the industrial buildings. Discussions between the agent and Town Staff have concluded in a request for planning relief through the minor variance process for the proposed total parking spaces. Therefore, the following variances have been requested:

- i. To permit the provision of 8 parking spaces for a self-storage use; whereas By-law 2018-65 requires a total of 27 parking spaces for a self-storage use; and,
- ii. To permit the provision of 64 parking spaces for an industrial use; whereas By-law 2018-65 requires a total of 67 parking spaces for an industrial use.

The intent of the variance is seeking relief from minimum required parking spaces in order to advance the Site Plan Control Application. In support of this variance a traffic brief that was conducted by Tatham Engineering with the revision date of May 8, 2025. This traffic brief outlined the anticipated traffic/parking impact associated with the proposed development along with the requirements from The Town of The Blue Mountains and MTO.

C. Analysis

Pursuant to Section 45(1) of the Planning Act, the Committee of Adjustment is authorized to grant minor variances to by-laws enacted by the Town which are established to implement the Official Plan. Staff have reviewed the proposal against the relevant planning documents, including the four tests of a minor variance, as outlined in the following section.

Does the proposal maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

The subject lands contain the following designations: Hazard lands (H) and Urban Employment Areas (UEA) in the Town of Blue Mountains Official Plan. Only limited site alteration is proposed on the Hazard (H) lands, and will be subject to GSCA permit requirements. The intent of the UEA is to provide lands for the creation of diverse employment opportunities at strategic locations and provide an area where existing and new businesses can grow and develop within the Town (B3.2.1). Permitted uses include the following:

- i. manufacturing, assembly, processing and/or fabrication (B.3.2.3 a));

- ii. office uses (B.3.2. b));
- iii. storage and/or warehousing uses (B3.2.3 c)).

Planning Staff are therefore satisfied that the proposal to provide new industrial units for a variety of purposes is supported and maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

Does the proposal maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?

The subject lands contain General Employment (M1) and Hazard (H) zones in the Town of the Blue Mountains Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2018-65. The variances that are being requested are from Table 5.3 – Non-Residential Parking requirements regarding Commercial Self Storage and Industrial Use:

1. To permit the provision of 8 parking spaces for a self-storage use; whereas By-law 2018-65 requires a total of 27 parking spaces for a self-storage use; and,
2. To permit the provision of 64 parking spaces for an industrial use; whereas By-law 2018-65 requires a total of 67 parking spaces for an industrial use.

The purpose of the parking provision is to ensure that any new development has sufficient parking for the property’s users and prevent congestion. Table 1 provides the minimum parking space required for commercial self-storage facilities based on the net floor area and proposed parking spaces requirements based on the parking provisions for commercial storage facilities.

Table 1: Commercial Self-Storage Parking Requirement

Building Area (Net Floor Area)	Parking Rate	Minimum Parking Requirement	Proposal Parking Requirement
Self-storage office: 37 m ²	1 space per 5 m ²	8 parking spaces	8 parking spaces
Self-storage storage units: 1,817 m ² (½ of Building D, All of Building E & ½ of Building F)	1 space per 100 m ²	19 parking spaces	
Total		27 parking spaces	8 parking spaces

As noted in Table 1, the minimum required total parking spaces for self-storage facility is 27 parking spaces while the variance proposes to provide 8 parking spaces. The traffic brief noted that the omitted 19 parking spaces would not be considered an issue as self-storage facilities rarely generate a high parking demand. The traffic brief also referenced the Institute of Transportation Engineer (ITE) Parking Generation Manual 6th Edition noted that the peak parking demand of five (5) cars is to be anticipated. Also, the traffic brief reviewed other municipalities in Ontario regarding the minimum required parking spaces and from their

analysis it ranged between one (1) to nine (9) parking spaces. They concluded that the proposed 8 parking spaces would be considered appropriate and acceptable for self-storage facilities.

The second variance is to permit the provision of 64 parking spaces for an industrial use; whereas By-law 2018-65 requires a total of 67 parking spaces for an industrial use. Table 5.3 for industrial use states *1/30 m² for the first 1,000 m², 1/100 m² for the floor area between 1,000 and 5,000 m² plus 1/200 m² in excess of 5,000 m²*. The proposed parking is requesting planning relief for three (3) parking spaces for the industrial uses. Table 2 illustrates the minimum required number of parking spaces for industrial use, based on the net floor area of the building. It also outlines the proposed number of parking spaces to be provided, calculated in accordance with the parking provisions applicable to industrial uses.

Table 2: Industrial Parking Requirement

Building Area (Net Floor Area)	Parking Rate	Minimum Parking Requirement	Proposed Parking Requirement
Industrial – 1,000 m ²	1 space per 30 m ²	33 parking spaces	64 parking spaces
Industrial – 3,351 m ²	1 space per 100 m ²	34 parking spaces	
Total		67 parking spaces	64 parking spaces

The traffic brief identified that the required parking as per the ITE Parking Generation Manual noted that 42 parking spaces would be minimum required parking spaces appropriate for the proposed industrial buildings with an area of 4,351 m². Based on their expert analysis on this specific proposal, and that 64 parking spaces would be sufficient for proposed industrial buildings.

Through the Minor Variance process, Comments have been received from the County of Grey indicating that the watercourse on site is identified as contributing to downstream coldwater watercourse containing fish habitat. As part of the Site Plan Approval process care will be needed during site alteration and building construction to not negatively impact the watercourse, and rehabilitation plantings should be provided. The County has specifically requested:

- a. A 10-metre vegetated setback from the watercourse to maintain drainage and contribute to fish habitat downstream. Minor grading will be required in the setback during construction;
- b. Silt fencing to be installed at the limit of grading until construction and landscaping is completed. Any disturbed areas within the setback shall be restored;
- c. Notes stating that clearing of vegetation shall not occur between April 1 – August 31st per Environment Canada’s general nesting periods of migratory birds;

Although not required as a condition to this minor variance, Planning Staff have received these comments and will ensure these items are addressed through the finalization of the Site Plan Approval.

Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposal maintains the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.

Is the proposal Minor in nature?

A variance may be considered “minor” where the scale of the request is marginal and the proposed relief will not result in a greater than minor adverse impact on adjacent properties, uses, or area. The proposed parking space reduction for the self-storage buildings does not anticipate a high demand for parking as noted in the traffic brief that the peak parking demand of 5 cars are to be anticipated according to the ITE standards. In addition, the minimum parking requirement for other Ontario municipalities appears to be consistent with the proposed parking spaces. For the proposed parking reduction for the industrial buildings that the proposed parking of 64 parking spaces would be sufficient in accordance with ITE standards.

Planning Staff are satisfied that this proposal is minor in nature.

Is the proposal desirable for the development and use of the lands?

Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposal is desirable for the development and use of the lands. The proposed use on the vacant land will fit the surrounding area. In addition, the development will create employment opportunities on these lands which intend to support local businesses within the Town. The reduced number of parking stalls will improve the overall design of the site while not creating parking congestion. In addition, the property will include a vegetative buffer that will provide long-term protection to the environment along with screening the property.

Based on the above comments, Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposal can meet all four tests for minor variance.

D. Attached

1. Draft Decision

Respectfully submitted,

Manuel Rivera
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	PBS.25.051 Recommendation Report - Minor Variance A12-2025 - Lot 31 Clark Street (Thornbury Industrial Park Inc.).docx
Attachments:	- A12-2025 Draft Decision.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jul 10, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Shawn Postma - Jul 10, 2025 - 1:11 PM