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Natural Heritage Features Screening and Delineation in Support of Ministerial Zoning Order

Northeast, Northwest and Southeast Dundalk Parcels
Township of Southgate

Flato Developments Inc.

February 2022

SLR Project No.: 209.40827.00000

Natural Heritage Features Screening and Delineation In Support Of a Ministerial Zoning Order

Northeast Dundalk, Northwest Dundalk and Southeast Dundalk, Township of Southgate, ON

SLR Project No.: 209.40827.00000

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for

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1.0 Introduction

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Steve Clark wrote "to ensure that we continue to meet our commitment to build more homes faster, our government has taken the position that municipalities may choose to take a phased approach to their municipal comprehensive review through multiple official plan amendments, providing municipalities with the choice of phasing their municipal comprehensive review or achieving conformity as part of one single new official plan or plan amendment is responsive to the needs of local communities." (Letter to Council, 12 Nov. 2019 provided by BILD).

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Minister Clark also wrote, A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe as part of the More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan to increase housing supply, create more jobs, attract business investments and better align our infrastructure.

The proposed Ministerial Order is to permit focused development on 3 parcels of land in the Township of Southgate:

- Northeast Dundalk (Carriage House Phase 3) (Part of Lots 223, 224, and 227, Range 1 West of Toronto and Sydenham Road Proton, and Parts of Lots 225 and 226, Range 1 and 2 West of Toronto and Sydenham Road Proton)
- Northwest Dundalk (Ida Street) (Part of Lots 229 and 230, Range 3 West of Toronto and Sydenham Road Proton)
- Southeast Dundalk (Parcel 6) (Part of Lots 238, 239, 240, Range 1 West of Toronto and Sydenham Road Proton)

SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd. (SLR) was retained by Flato Developments Inc. to undertake a compilation and review of existing natural heritage features based on secondary source materials and limited site reconnaissance in support of the application.

The objective of the exercise was to identify the appropriate level of Environmental Protection (EP) for natural heritage features on and adjacent to the subject lands using a constraints trace overlay method and estimated set-back determination approach. The set-backs reflect the regulatory and policy framework that applies to these lands.

While this report will form the basis for more detailed Environmental Impact Studies upon approval of the Ministerial Zoning Order, it does not include a detailed analysis of potential impacts. This study has been scoped to a level of investigation that provides a large scale understanding of the principal constraints and opportunities at each site. In the absence of an agreement for the re-zoning of the land, detailed natural heritage studies and impact assessments are premature. Following re-zoning, we anticipate that further study and reporting will optimize opportunities for enhancement while respecting and refining the constraints identified below.

1.1 Planning context

Development on each of the 3 sites is subject to several federal, provincial, and local environmental *Acts*, regulations, and policies. These documents provide direction and guidance regarding proposed changes in land use and the protection of natural heritage features and functions and guide the scope of investigation required to support the application.

The applicable natural heritage regulatory and policy framework that applies to the site includes:

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- The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS, 2020)
- Ontario's Endangered Species Act (ESA, 2007)
- Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA, 1994)
- Fisheries Act (2019)
- Ontario Regulation 150/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (GRCA)
- Ontario Regulation 169/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (SVCA)
- County of Grey Official Plan (2019)
- Township of Southgate Official Plan (2006)

2.0 Methodology

Based on a review of the above instruments and associated on-line databases, preliminary constraints analysis and mapping was undertaken to identify and address the regulatory and policy issues, and scope additional field programs that may be needed to fill gaps for each site. This mapping included overlay of the natural heritage features and other potential constraining features under the Conservation Authority, County and Township plans (Figures 1, 2 and 3).

Aerial imagery identifies headwater drainage features, wetlands, and woodlands as features that may pose the greatest constraints. These features are presented on environmental constraint overlay figures (Figures 1-3). Table 1 outlines the policy constraints associated with the sites.

Table 1: Buffers and Setbacks

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Policy	Woodland	Wetland	Watercourse	Floodplain/Hazard Lands
Grey County OP	If significance criteria are met – development is prohibited within 120 m (adjacent lands width), but can be reduced when supported by an EIS	30 m, can be reduced based on site-specific circumstances	Buffers not identified in the OP	Buffers not identified in the OP
Township of Southgate OP	Buffers not identified in the OP	PSW – 120 m unless mitigation and no negative impacts in EIS	30 m from a cold water stream or 15 m from a warm water stream	Buffers not identified in the OP
GRCA	Buffers not identified	30 m and 120 m from PSWs – can be less if no negative impacts proven through an EIS	15 m from either bank (flood hazard limit)	Determined through an EIS and subsequent studies
SVCA	Buffers not identified	30 m and 120 m from PSWs— can be less if no negative impacts proven through an EIS	15 m from either bank	Determined through an EIS and subsequent studies

3.0 Existing Conditions

Geologically, all 3 of the Dundalk properties lie within the Dundalk Till Plan and have glaciofluvial deposits within them. The till is classified as stone-poor, sandy silt to silty sand-textured. Potential drainage areas are evident on aerial imagery throughout all the properties.

None of the properties are in the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM), Greenbelt, or Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) areas.

3.1.1 Dundalk Northeast

Quaternary geology indicates that this property is located on a moderately stony, silt to silty matrix. Drumlins are located along the western and eastern sides of the property. Unevaluated wetlands and woodlands are present throughout property. Most notably there is a large wetland and woodland feature located in the center of the Site. There is another unevaluated wetland and woodland pocket in the north adjacent to Highway 10. There are multiple watercourses bisecting the Site; 1 from Todd Crescent in the south to a naturalized area to the north, another 2 located within the eastern portion of the Site. Aside from the naturalized areas, the majority of the property is agricultural lands. There are 2 residential properties present which are located along Highway 10.

3.1.2 Dundalk Northwest

Quaternary geology indicates that this property is also located on a moderately stony, silt to silty matrix. A drumlin is present running through the centre of the property. There is unevaluated wetlands and woodlands present in the southwestern extent of the property. The portion of property to the northeast, adjacent to Ida Street contains residential properties and is within the settlement area boundary of Dundalk. The remainder of the property is agricultural lands. A potential headwater drainage feature and a constructed pond are observed on the site.

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3.1.3 Dundalk Southeast

Quaternary geology indicates that this property is located on a sandy to silt to silty clay soil matrix. The Provincially Significant Melanchthon Wetland Complex # 1 is located immediately along the southeastern property boundary but is also present to the south and west. Mapped unevaluated wetlands are also present within the property boundary adjacent to the Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) edge. There are also mapped woodland pockets present within the property boundary. Most of the property is agricultural lands.

3.2 Aquatic Habitat

There is aquatic habitat associated with each of the Sites. The following sections will describe the available habitat at each location. Further assessment of these features will be completed during the site specific EIS work. Based on mapping the thermal regimes of the drainage features at all sites is unknown. It is assumed based on the aerial imagery of these features that these are warm water systems.

3.2.1 Dundalk Northeast

Based on aerial imagery there are multiple drainage features located throughout the Site. Most of the features appear to be hydrologically connected to the swamp northwest of the Site. There is a drainage feature located just north of the southern residential property on the Site as well as another wetland pocket (Provincially Significant Wetland – Melancthon Wetland Complex) located north east of Highway 10. Regulation mapping shows that there are small open water ponds along the most southern drainage feature. A Site walk was completed on November 10, 2021 that noted this drainage feature is tile drained due to the active agricultural use at the Site and there was no evidence of open water features. A headwater drainage feature assessment will be completed as a component of the EIS for the Site.

Available aquatic habitat is assumed to be limited at the Site based on the current land use and tile drainage.

3.2.2 Dundalk Northwest

There are 2 drainage features located within the Site boundaries; 1 is located within the northeastern portion and is within the settlement boundary while the other is located on the north portion of the Site, west of the settlement boundary. There is a dug pond associated with the eastern drainage feature that is used recreationally by the current landowners of that part of the Site.

The aquatic habitat of the pond is assumed to be limited to stocked fish (if any) based on the origin and use of the pond. There is potential for reptiles and amphibians so further assessment is required to determine presence/absence of aquatic wildlife. The remaining aquatic features

will be assessed as headwater drainage and are not anticipated to provide direct aquatic habitat. All the features will be assessed in greater detail during the EIS.

3.2.3 Dundalk Southeast

There is 1 mapped drainage feature that bisects the Site and is associated with the Melancthon Wetland Complex to the south. Aerial imagery indicates no open water features that appear at the Site. Direct aquatic habitat is assumed to be limited to the area shown as the constraint area. The feature will be assessed during the EIS.

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3.3 Terrestrial Habitat

Terrestrial features at each site are described below; some of these features are regulated and will require protection. Further assessment of each feature described will be completed during a site specific EIS.

3.3.1 Dundalk Northeast

Immediately north adjacent to the Stie is a mapped wetland and woodland. This woodland will need to be assessed for significance in accordance with the Grey County Official Plan. Based on the buffers and setbacks noted in the applicable policies a setback of 15m is anticipated for this feature but further investigation is needed through an EIS.

There are hedgerows and wooded areas that occur throughout the Site. It is assumed that the large mapped wooded area in the center of the Site may provide suitable wildlife habitat related to linkage and therefore may require buffers/setbacks (in accordance with policy the setback would be 10m). A site reconnaissance visit that occurred in November 2021. This visit initially determined that the wooded portion of the Site included deciduous forest dominated by Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) and swamp dominated by Balsam Fir (*Abies balsamea*), White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) and Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*). Other communities noted included cattail marsh and swamp thicket. Further investigations will be conducted during the EIS to confirm and assess the communities and the boundaries.

3.3.2 Dundalk Northwest

The main feature at the Site is located on the west side. This wetland/woodland will require a 10 to 15m setback which will be determined through an EIS. There is an additional small, isolated pocket of wooded area that appears as a potential wetland community approximately 50m east of the main wetland/woodland. This feature will need further investigation during the EIS process, but due to its isolation on the landscape would be assessed for removal and mitigation adjacent to the existing west feature. The remaining features on Site (hedgerows, dug pond and headwater drainage) require further investigation but currently are not anticipated to pose constraints to development.

3.3.3 Dundalk Southeast

A mapped portion of wetland protrudes northwesterly from the southern boundary of the site immediately adjacent to the Melancthon PSW Complex. Based on aerial imagery the mapped portions of wetland are contiguous with the PSW and assumed to be associated with the complex. These areas are denoted as EP and deemed undevelopable. Immediately adjacent to the wetland is a grouping of trees that is not considered EP and will be further assessed for removal and mitigation. Buffers/setbacks to the EP will be determined through the site specific EIS however as shown on the plans zoning already accounts for protection by strategic

placement of the stormwater management (SWM) area. A small hedgerow appears within the area proposed for development and it is anticipated that this feature will meet the requirements for removal and mitigation during further investigation and therefore is not anticipated to pose a constraint to development.

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3.4 Wildlife

At this time there have been no surveys completed at the sites. Wildlife use at each site is unknown and is assumed to at least include species that are typical for rural areas. Further information on wildlife within the area of each Site will be discussed in the detailed EIS reports.

3.5 Species at Risk

Investigations should be undertaken to determine the use of the features on site by SAR bats. If they occur MECP will be contacted to determine a suitable response. The following sections note the potential occurrences of SAR at each Site.

3.5.1 Dundalk Northeast

There are no records of occurrence available for certain sections of this property. Northern sections include records for Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) and Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*).

3.5.2 Dundalk Northwest

No records of occurrence are available for most of the property. There is 1 record for the southeast section of the property which only includes Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*).

3.5.3 Dundalk Southeast

Records of occurrence for this property include Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*), and Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*).

4.0 Proposed Zoning

The following sections describe the proposed conceptual plans and the potential impacts on the natural features.

4.1 Overall Summary Analysis

Figures 1 to 3 provide the extent of features identified in the regional and provincial plans with the conceptual development plan overlaid to demonstrate the relationship of the site plan application to natural features at each Site. Each figure also shows the designated Environmental Protection (EP) areas for zoning. These areas will require buffers or setbacks that will be determined through the EIS conducted for each site. Specific site analysis of the proposed zoning concepts is discussed in sections 4.1.1 to 4.1.3.

4.1.1 Dundalk Northeast

The wetland and woodland features located centrally and along the northern limits of the Site and the watercourse along the southeast corner are proposed to be zoned EP and are not included as developable land within the proposed concept with the exception of the road connection that would bisect the central EP (there is an existing farm laneway in the proposed

road location). The buffer/setback for this feature will need to be determined through an EIS. The northern half of the proposed development adjacent to the feature has been shown as SWM area and therefore provides opportunity for enhancement and mitigation. The remaining natural features that are impacted can be addressed through mitigation measures to be discussed in the EIS.

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4.1.2 Dundalk Northwest

The southwestern feature (wetland/woodland) is considered the only EP area at the Site and is shown as non-developable land on the proposed concept. A buffer/setback will be addressed through a site specific EIS. The isolated wetland/woodland pocket approximately 50m east of the EP is intended to be removed to allow for development and reconfigured within the open block space (SWM area) immediately adjacent to the EP area for increased function and connectivity. There are other open block areas (i.e. park) where mitigation of the remaining features could potentially be addressed.

4.1.3 Dundalk Southeast

The southern side of the site includes EP lands associated with the Melancthon Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) Complex. The proposed concept shows these lands as undevelopable and the site specific EIS would address the appropriate buffer/setback. The limits of the EP are influenced by the existing approvals for the main road extension (Eco Parkway) and therefore do not include a small, regulated pocket on the southeast corner of the Site. The small, wooded feature immediately adjacent to the EP, will be assessed for removal and mitigation, along with the remaining features to the north and east. Based interpretation using secondary sources, these features appear to represent minimal natural values and function, however they will be maintained if they do not pose a constraint to development. Placement of the SWM Areas allow for enhancement and mitigation opportunities for natural features.

4.2 Aquatic Habitat

Potential for headwater drainage features exist within all 3 Sites. Once identified, the *Evaluation, Classification and Management of Headwater Drainage Features Guidelines* (CVC and TRCA 2014) will be applied. Observations and evaluation of hydrological function and riparian, fish habitat and terrestrial habitat classification associated with the features in spring and summer will be linked to recommended management options that may include mitigation or relocation of the drainage features.

Additional detailed field investigation of the headwater drainage features will be undertaken using TRCA and CVC guidelines.

4.2.1 Dundalk Northeast

The western headwater drainage feature at the Site has been tile drained to accommodate agricultural land use. The feature is connected to the wetland to the north and therefore a hydrological connection will need to be maintained. The eastern headwater drainage feature has not been observed to date and will require additional investigation. The feature is also connected to a northern pocket of wetland and hydrological connection to the wetland in this location and will also need to be maintained. On the south end of the site there is a watercourse (mapped as the James Foley Drain) and this feature will be maintained and protected.

As part of a draft plan approval submission a feature-based water balance will likely be required for all aquatic features; further scoping and assessment will be addressed at the applicable time in the application process. Based on the concept plan there are blocks (SWM areas and parks) proposed within the vicinity of the features that could be used for maintenance of hydrologic function.

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4.2.2 Dundalk Northwest

The central mapped drainage feature appears to be limited to surface drainage associated with past land uses. Aerial imagery does not indicate that this is a feature that provides a connection to any larger features. The eastern drainage feature is mapped as a connecting feature of the dug pond and southern mapped wetland pockets however aerial imagery does not support a significant connection. If function of the features is maintained through SWM there is no indication that there would be a constraint to zoning.

4.2.3 Dundalk Southeast

The observed drainage feature extends through the centre of the site and is associated with the PSW. The southern half of the feature will be maintained in the EP area and function of the overall feature will be addressed in the site specific EIS. It is likely that a feature-based water balance associated with the headwater drainage feature will be needed.

4.3 Terrestrial Habitat

The features to be removed at all 3 sites are limited to the hedgerows and isolated features that appear to provide limited to no significant function in the overall natural heritage system on the landscape. Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.3 outline the features that will be protected, and those that are proposed to be removed and/or mitigated.

4.3.1 Dundalk Northeast

The only proposed terrestrial features to be removed for development are hedgerows throughout the site. These features will be assessed to determine the appropriate mitigation requirements and methods. The remaining features will be assessed during the site specific EIS in order to provide suitable protection through appropriate mitigation (i.e. buffers/setbacks).

4.3.2 Dundalk Northwest

An isolated woodland/wetland feature currently poses a constraint to development. Based on the current lack of connectivity of this feature to the larger wooded/wetland feature to the west it is proposed to relocate this feature to the open space block (SWM area) along the site boundary. This will allow for overall improved function of the natural heritage system. Assessment of these features will be required during the site specific EIS to determine the most suitable mitigation, and enhancement opportunities. The other feature marked for removal is the small isolated wooded feature adjacent to the dug pond. Further assessment is required to determine suitable mitigation measures. The hedgerows remaining adjacent to the site will be assessed to determined suitable buffers/setbacks.

4.3.3 Dundalk Southeast

The only terrestrial feature that poses a constraint to development and is shown to be removed is a hedgerow connecting the central drainage feature associated with the PSW to another drainage feature to the west. Further assessment of all terrestrial features will be conducted

during the site specific EIS. There are opportunities for mitigation within the open block spaces (SWM areas and park).

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4.4 Wildlife

Additional screening for species of conservation concern will be completed as part of the subsequent studies. The approvals process to address the management and protection of Species At Risk, if they occur, under the *Provincial Policy Statement*, 2020 (PPS) and provincial *Endangered Species Act*, 2007 (ESA) will be also completed as part of the future land use planning process. Significant Wildlife Habitat will be addressed during the site specific EIS investigations and appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended to protect and enhance wildlife habitat in the landscape.

4.5 Synthesis

The principal constraints to the application include wetlands and woodlands. While the delineation of features and interpretation of natural values are based on existing mapped information, aerial imagery and site reconnaissance, the findings do not represent an impediment to approval for this or a modified plan on these lands. Additional constraints include the headwater drainage features, hedgerows and isolated pockets of wetland/woodlands. All features will be further assessed during site specific EIS work.

4.5.1 Dundalk Northeast

The current proposed zoning for the Site includes components of EP that will maintain the natural heritage system and existing connectivity of the overall landscape. The features will be assessed and mitigation measures will be discussed to maintain function of the natural heritage features across the site while still maintaining development opportunities in accordance with the County and Township planning goals. A road connection is proposed through the EP within the area of an existing laneway used for farming vehicles. This connection and area of disturbance will require additional investigation and mitigation through completion of an EIS.

4.5.2 Dundalk Northwest

Proposed zoning at the Site has protected the main natural feature and provides opportunities for enhancement of ecological function in the landscape. With further assessment suitable mitigation and enhancement can be discussed to provide an opportunity for planning objectives to be met through a sustainable approach.

4.5.3 Dundalk Southeast

The focus of the zoning at this Site maintains the EP area and provides opportunities for suitable protection through placement of open space and stormwater blocks. The proposed plan includes incorporation of the approved road extension and the Townships plans for industrial zoning.

5.0 Conclusion

The site analysis demonstrates that the natural features and functions on the landscape that are of most importance are being protected and further assessment will determine the most appropriate buffers and setbacks. The remaining features to be documented and further assessed include hedgerow trees, headwater drainage features, an open water pond and isolated pockets of wetlands/woodlands. Their functions will be assessed, and any potential for

preservation will be determined on a more detailed analysis of landscape function. Detailed vegetation, fish and wildlife habitat and species at risk surveys will occur during appropriate seasons. If required, feature removals will be subject to mitigation guidelines using a variety of techniques well known to the County, Township, GRCA and SVCA. The existing features do not represent an impediment to the re-zoning of the lands.

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6.0 Next Steps

The compilation of the natural heritage and physical features constraints discussed above relied on secondary source materials and some site observations. Only limited field investigations (site reconnaissance during November 2021 at the western portion of the Dundalk Northeast Site) were undertaken. While this approach was appropriate to support the re-zoning application in order to establish feature limits and appropriate set-backs we anticipate that a Scoped EIS for each site will provide further detail and confirmation of this approach.

Anticipated Terms of Reference for a Scoped EIS at each site include:

- Ecological Land Classification and vegetation survey
- Targeted amphibian and migratory breeding bird (and possibly bat) surveys to satisfy the PPS and due diligence under the ESA, 2007
- Significant Wildlife Habitat Assessment and incidental wildlife observations
- A headwater drainage feature assessment in accordance with TRCA guidelines
- · Aquatic habitat surveys and potential fish collections if suitable conditions observed
- Feature based water balance
- Wetland boundary and dripline delineation exercise with GRCA/SVCA representatives
- An arborist survey, Tree Preservation Plan and Protection Plan
- Restoration and Enhancement Plan

Results of these targeted surveys will also be used to evaluate the potential for Significant Wildlife Habitat under the PPS of the *Planning Act*.

7.0 References

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Township of Southgate (2006). Official Plan. Township of Southgate

8.0 Statement Of Limitations

This report has been prepared and the work referred to in this report has been undertaken by SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd. (SLR) for Flato Developments Inc., hereafter referred to as the "Client". The report has been prepared in accordance with the Scope of Work and agreement between SLR and the Client. It is intended for the sole and exclusive use of Client. Other than by the Client and as set out herein, copying or distribution of this report or use of or reliance on the information contained herein, in whole or in part, is not permitted unless payment for the work has been made in full and express written permission has been obtained from SLR.

This report has been prepared for specific application to this site and site conditions existing at the time work for the report was completed. Any conclusions or recommendations made in this report reflect SLR's professional opinion.

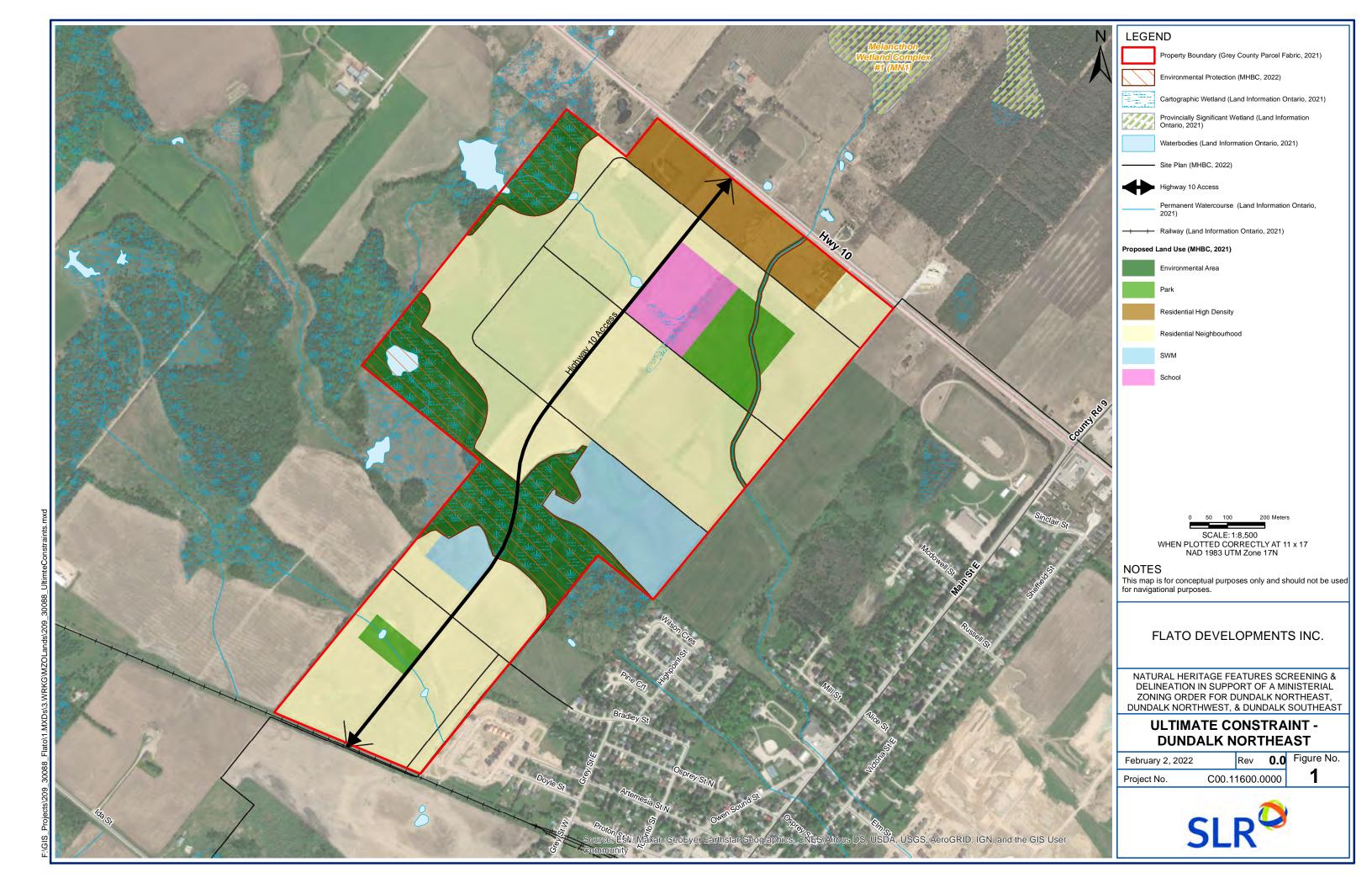
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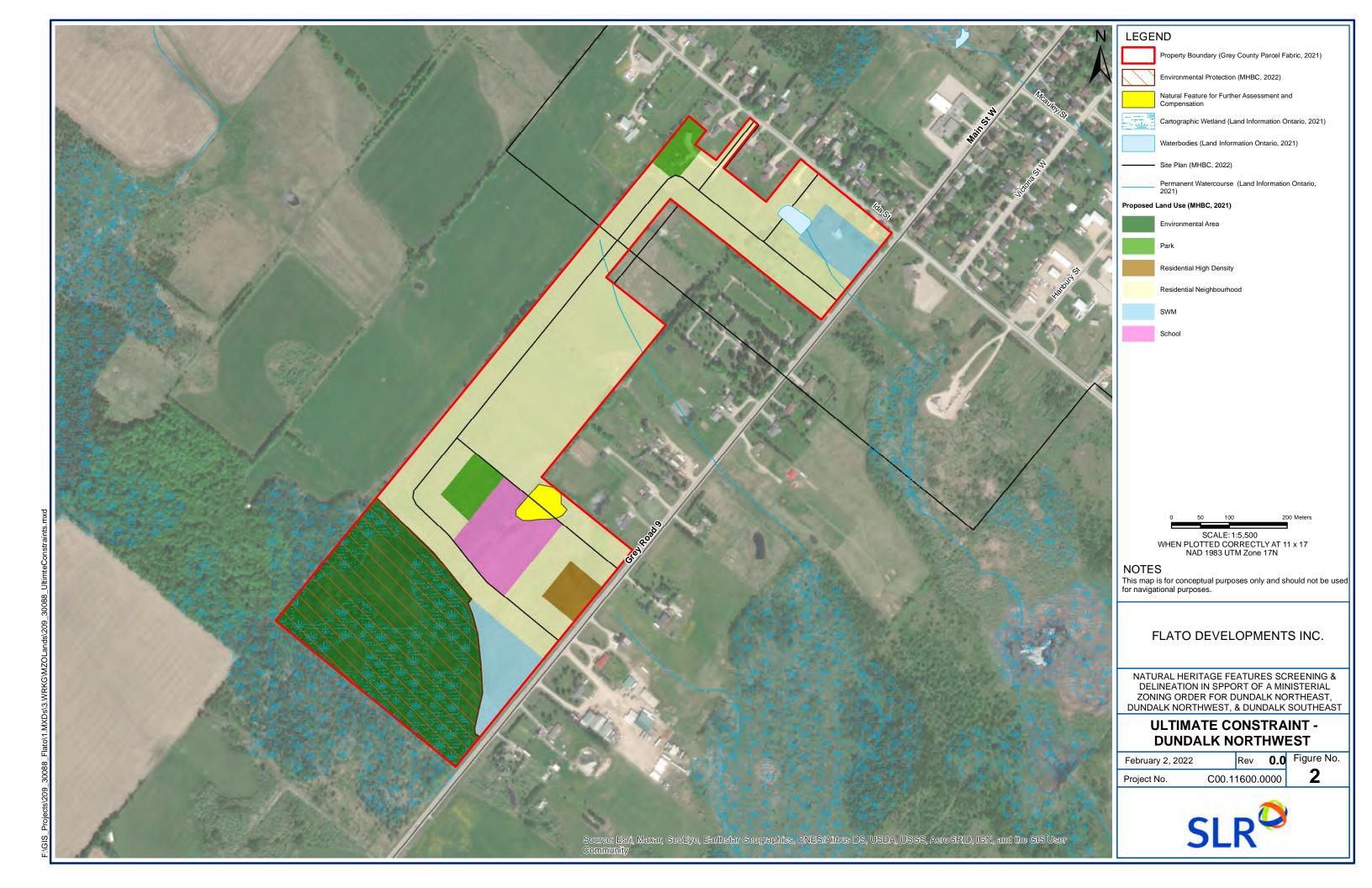
Nothing in this report is intended to constitute or provide a legal opinion. SLR makes no representation as to the requirements of compliance with environmental laws, rules, regulations or policies established by federal, provincial or local government bodies. Revisions to the regulatory standards referred to in this report may be expected over time. As a result, modifications to the findings, conclusions and recommendations in this report may be necessary.

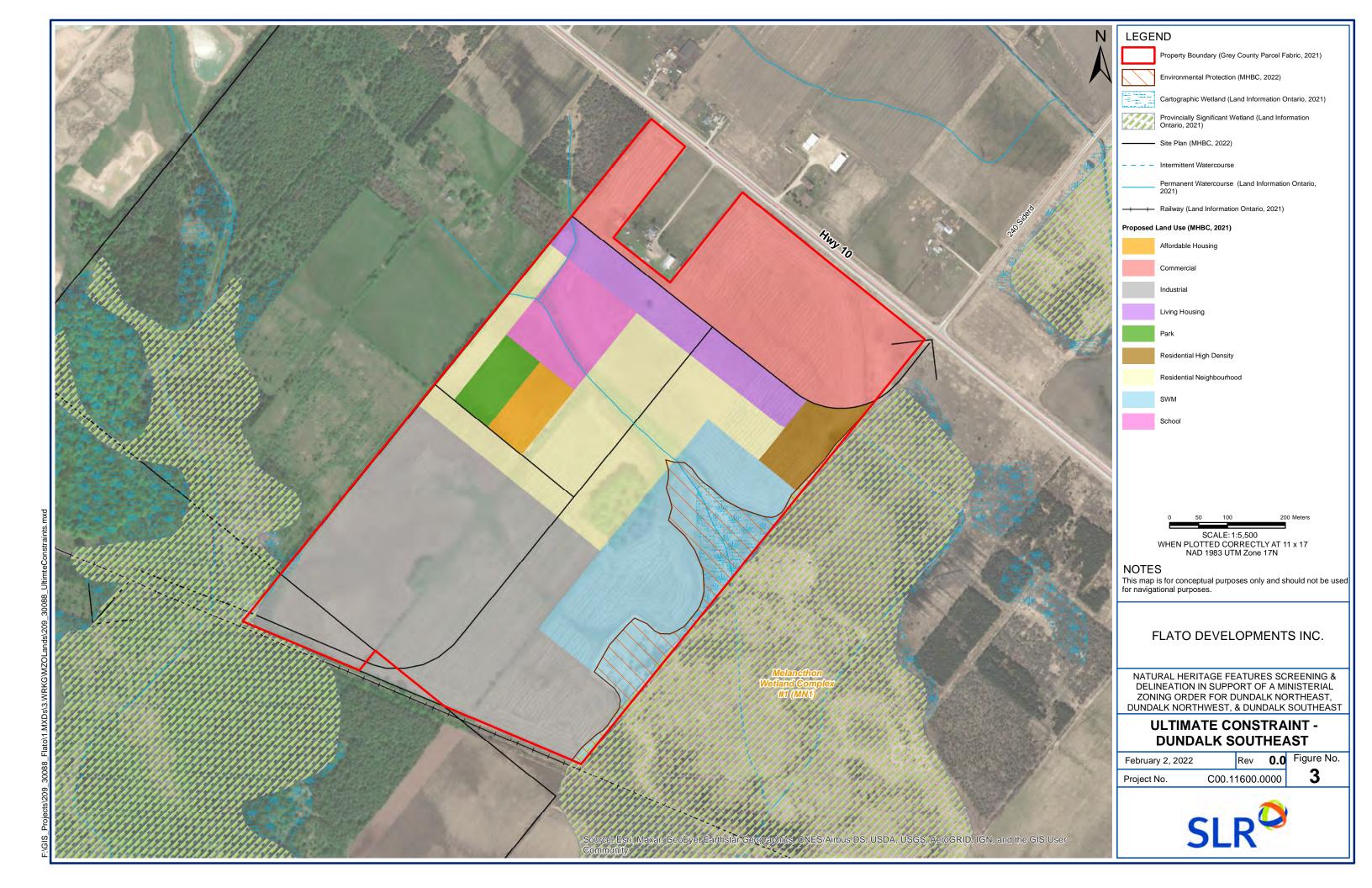
The Client may submit this report to the Township of Southgate and related environmental regulatory authorities or persons for review and comment purposes.

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