

Issues Scoping Report

SUMMARY

Karwood Ontario Ltd. intends to develop the 0.97 ha legal parcel located at Canterbury Place, Belmont ON for 18 single detached residential lots. In our opinion there are no adverse or unalterable impacts on the natural heritage features in the study area provided mitigation measures are followed.

The development envelope is located on an area of open maintained lands with a dozen planted trees and a hedgerow along the southern boundary. The proposed development would require the removal of the anthropogenic vegetation present on-site. Tree removal will not occur between March 31 to October 31 to avoid risk direct impact on protected migratory birds.

The development does not occur within any natural heritage areas and there is no Significant Wildlife Habitat or Species at Risk anticipated on-site. The bulk of the proposed development is >50 m away from Natural Heritage features including Significant Woodland, Significant Valleylands, and Fish Habitat. It is separated from these features via existing residential use and a municipal road. There is an exception of a stormwater outlet to the northern features.

The proposed development complies with federal, provincial, and municipal considerations regarding the disturbance to the environment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

This Issues Scoping Report (ISR) is being prepared for Karwood Ontario Ltd. (the proponent) relating to the Canterbury Place Subdivision. The parcel is located southeast of Belmont and northeast of St. Thomas, in the municipality of Central Elgin.

The development involves transitioning maintained open lands into residential use on full municipal services. The property is identified on the attached figures (Appendix 1).

According to the municipality, an Issues Scoping Report (ISR) and potential Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is required as part of this initiative. This work program is triggered by municipal and provincial requirements related to the proposed development of a residential subdivision occurring on or within 120 m of lands designated "Natural Heritage" or "Natural Hazard" as described on the Municipal Official Plan (OP) Belmont Land Use Plan (Schedule "B").

This issues summary report (ISR) is being sent to the Municipality of Central Elgin ("the municipality"). This report follows the municipal and provincial guidelines for an ISR which is the initial phase of the required environmental impact studies.

Vroom + Leonard attended the site in March and April 2021 to review its attributes in relationship to the work program historically required by the regulatory groups based on our experience within this jurisdiction and others.

In addition to site attendance by Vroom + Leonard, the recommendations of this report are based on the following components:

- Location map;
- Description of project with enough detail to accurately predict impacts;
- Description of the natural area potentially being affected;
- Background information of the site and adjacent lands;
- Relevant municipal or agency requirements;
- Identification of potential issues and ecological linkages, natural processes and study area boundaries;
- Potential cumulative effects of development;
- Determination of information needs and availability of information; and
- Determination of the nature and extent of additional information or studies that may be needed.

Based on these tasks, the ISR is to recommend one of the following options:

- A determination that no further work is required and that the proposed site alteration or development can proceed, or
- Proceed to a full or scoped EIS.

Our conclusion, with reference to the municipal guidelines specifying the purpose of an ISR, is that this proposal does not need to proceed to an EIS for the reasons stated in the following text.

1.2 Proposed Description

The property location is depicted in Figures 1 and 2. The subject lands are located south of Caesar Road and are accessible off Canterbury Place. The entire subject lands are 0.97 ha and made up of 95% maintained land with a hedgerow on the southern boundary.

The study area falls into two categories. Maintained lawns, and a forested valleyland surrounding Kettle Creek. Development involves transitioning the tablelands into residential use. According to the Municipal OP Schedule "B", the tablelands are designated for Residential Use.

The studies have been triggered by the presence of "Natural Heritage" lands to the north and southeast of the subject lands (Figure 3). Based on aerial imagery, sometime after 2018, the forested community to the southeast was removed. The previously forested area is now graded and seeded with turf grass (Figure 6).

The proposed development includes 18 single-detached residential lots within the maintained lands. All of the proposed lots remain outside of Natural Hazard Lands, Significant Woodland, and Fish Habitat to the north. Development is >50 m from these Natural Heritage features and are separated from the features by existing residential and a municipal road.

There is an exception of a stormwater outlet to the northern features.

1.2.1 Activities Associated with the Proposal with Environmental Impacts: Tree-Cutting and Removal of Vegetation, Grading, Post Development Activities

Approximately 12 planted trees within the maintained lawn will be removed from the proposed development. Additionally, the hedgerow, not considered a Natural Heritage Feature, on the southern boundary may also be removed to accommodate the rear yards.

Given the relatively flat grades of the parcel, no significant grade changes are anticipated that would impact Natural Heritage features in the study area.

A stormwater outlet was proposed on the southern bank of the watercourse and valleyland to the north.

All concentrated flows will be collected and transported to the storm water management system. Quantity and quality control will be required prior to leaving the site to the northern watercourse.

Impacts and mitigation related to the proposed vegetation removal are further discussed in Sections 4 and 5.

1.2.2 Timing of Site Alterations

Timing mitigations are required by the Migratory Bird Convention Act 1994 and recommended. These timing mitigations will also address the potential for presence of Species at Risk (SAR) bats with regards to vegetation removal (see Section 5.2).

1.2.3 Servicing

Pipe and cable services will connect to existing municipal services.

1.2.4 Stormwater Management

Based on the preliminary stormwater management plan, a quantity and quality control method will be required. The stormwater is proposed to outlet to the northern watercourse. Sediment and erosion control will be required at the end of the pipe.

1.3 Natural Features Review

As previously noted, there are lands designated Natural Heritage and Natural Hazard on the Municipal OP Schedule "B" within 120m of the development. These border a watercourse at the base of a ravine. The ravine has been highly disturbed as a result of drainage.

This ravine is part of a larger continuum and are >50 m away from the proposed development.

The subject lands are not considered a Significant Natural Area according to the Significant Natural Areas of Elgin County, Ontario 1993 document.

The subject lands fall within the Lower Kettle Creek Watershed regulated by the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA). The KCCA 2018 Watershed Report Card has states that this watershed has poor surface water quality, fair forest cover, and very poor wetland cover.

1.4 Planning Considerations

1.4.1 Federal Planning Considerations

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for the conservation,

management, and protection of fish and fish habitat. DFO is given authority to achieve this under the federal Fisheries Act 2019. Fish habitat is defined in the Fisheries Act 2019 as “water frequented by fish and any other areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly to carry out their life processes, including spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply and migration”.

The watercourse to the north “does not contain any critical habitat of aquatic SAR, nor have any aquatic SAR been found (or are potentially found) within the watercourse” (DFO Aquatic Species at Risk Mapping - Figure 5).

The outlet will not require in-water work, the residential construction remains >50 m away from the watercourse and is separated by residential use and a municipal road, and there is a lack of potential aquatic SAR. A fisheries assessment was not completed.

1.4.2 Provincial Planning Considerations

There are several stipulations outlined by the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS, 2020) regarding development within 120m of a Natural Heritage area. The PPS defines seven natural heritage features where development and site alteration are not permitted in or within 120 m unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions. These seven natural heritage features and their applicability to the proposed development include:

Significant Wetlands and Significant Coastal Wetlands	Not Present
Significant Woodlands	Present >50 m north, separated from the proposed development by existing residential and a municipal road
Significant Valleylands	Present >50 m north, separated from the proposed development by existing residential and a municipal road
Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH)	Unlikely
Significant areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI's)	Not Present
Fish Habitat	Present >50 m north, separated from the proposed development by existing residential and a municipal road
Habitat of endangered or threatened species	Unlikely

The related PPS stipulations are fully outlined in Appendix A and is discussed in terms of the proposed development in Section 6 of this report.

Given the maintained cultural landscape on-site no Significant Wildlife Habitat, nor Species at Risk are anticipated on-site.

Our reporting is consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, the Natural Heritage Reference Manual 2010 (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), 2010) and the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) for Southern Ontario 1998 and 2008 (MNR 1998 and 2018).

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) has taken over responsibility of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) 2007. The MECP protocol consists of conducting our own screening and submitting an Information Gathering Form (IGF) if your project is likely to contravene the ESA and require permitting.

A screening and IGF form will not be completed. The vegetation present on site has been highly maintained. We do not anticipate any Species at Risk (SAR) to be directly or indirectly impacted.

1.4.3 Municipal Planning Considerations

The goals of the Municipal Official Plan (OP Section 3.1) include:

- “To protect the natural heritage and biological features of provincial, regional and local significance;
- To protect and maintain existing natural heritage corridors and encourage the identification, restoration or improvement of potential natural corridors and linkages; and,
- To improve the sustainability and long-term health of Central Elgin's ecosystems by protecting and conserving valuable aquatic and terrestrial resources and their biological functions.”

Additionally, “Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) are required to demonstrate that proposed development and/or site alteration will not have a negative impact on natural heritage features and their ecological functions” (OP Section 3.4).

1.4.4 Conservation Authority Planning Considerations

With respect to terrain, the surface grades of the tablelands on-site are relatively flat (0-2%). There is a ravine and surrounding Kettle Creek >50 m to the north of the subject lands. These ravines are considered hazard lands on the Municipal OP. Given the stormwater outlet we assume Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) permits are required.

2.0 PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

The following information and analysis are based on the site visits during Spring 2021 by the authors.

2.1 Soils and Slopes

According to the OMAFRA AgMaps database the soils are Gobles soils. Gobles soils are imperfectly drained and consist of deep fine to very fine textured glacial till material, with silty clay loam and clay loam predominantly. Ontario Well records were retrieved from a 1969 well northeast of the development. The report identified 3.96 m of sandy clay over 0.60 m of clay followed by 0.60 m of gravel and 2.43 m of hard clay.

The subject lands are comprised of relatively flat tablelands. Direct flow is not expected to enter the Natural Heritage area >50 m to the north. The forested ravine the north is four to eight meters in height. As noted, the ravine is separated from the proposed development by existing residential use and a municipal road. Given the distance between the proposed development and ravine to the north, a geotechnical assessment will not be conducted. Significant Valleyland slope stability setbacks will not be required.

2.3 Hydrogeology and Groundwater Conditions

According to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) AgMaps, the subject lands are not designated as significant groundwater recharge, nor a highly vulnerable aquifer area.

According to the Soils of Elgin County, the native soils have moderate permeability and are generally unsuitable for groundwater recharge. Saturated conditions may occur in the upper horizons of the soil periodically. This was not noted during field analysis and given the maintained and surrounding land use, the grades and soils appear to be built up for residential use.

Ontario Well records in the area off-site indicate groundwater level at 12 m below grade.

The slope of the ravine located >100 m from the development is 1 h: 2.5 v. The slope is vegetated and part of a larger continuum that extends east-west >50 m north of the subject lands.

3.0 BIOLOGICAL ATTRIBUTES

The following information and analysis are based on site visits during the spring season of 2021 by the authors and their related sub-consultants.

3.1 Aquatic Attributes

The subject lands fall within the Lower Kettle Creek Watershed regulated by the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA). The KCCA 2018 Watershed Report Card has states that this watershed has poor surface water quality, fair forest cover, and very poor wetland cover.

There is a watercourse at the base of the slope within the 30 m wide floodplain. The watercourse is >100 m north of the parcel. The watercourse has a bank full width of two to four meters. Flow was present and water was 10-30 cm deep.

According to the current DFO aquatic SAR mapping the watercourse to the north does not contain any critical habitat of aquatic SAR. Nor have any SAR been found/are likely to be found (Figure 5).

No designated wetlands occur on or within 120 m of the proposed development. The subject lands are not within 5 km from the north shore of Lake Erie.

3.2 Terrestrial Attributes

The plant assessment and reporting were conducted by the authors of this report in Spring 2021.

The subject lands are entirely cultural as they are maintained lands. According to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Ecological Land Classification (ELC) protocol, none of the communities found within the subject lands qualify as a community. The communities

present are of anthropogenic sources consisting of maintained lawn and hedgerow vegetation. The vegetation on-site supports very marginal biodiversity and habitat for at risk species.

The hedgerow to the south consists of White Pine, White Cedar, and fruit trees. The planted trees within the maintained lawn include a dozen Silver Maples approximately 25 years old.

Previously, a 1.54 ha woodlot existed northeast of the parcel. The woodlot was cut, graded, and seeded in turf grass. The remaining vegetation provides little habitat and biodiversity.

The banks of the Kettle Creek to the north can be described as WODM4-4 Dry - Fresh Black Walnut Deciduous Woodland Type according to the 2008 ELC. The edges are highly disturbed with invasive Buckthorn and other weedy species.

Significant Species

Self-screening as recommended by the MECP/MNRF including a NHIC 1km² grid data search identified the following species have been historically recorded in the general area;

Species	Provincial Ranking	General Habitat	Habitat within Study
Wood Thrush	Threatened	Prefers mature deciduous and conifer-deciduous forests, typically those larger in size. Tall trees with well-developed undergrowth are preferred.	There is marginal suitable habitat for this species in the forested ravine to the north. The tree'd areas do not support large, mature trees with developed undergrowth.

In our opinion, there is no compelling need to file a SAR Stage One Information Request with MNRF/MECP. Within the proposed development envelope, no SAR are anticipated given the cultural nature of these lands in comparison to the habitat requirements of the SAR.

Significant Wildlife Habitat

The proposed new parcel does not contain any candidate or confirmed Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH). The development envelope contains no natural heritage features, and it is maintained. The northern woodlot may contain marginal, if any, SWH given the high disturbance in the past.

Self-screening as recommended by the MECP/MNRF including a NHIC 1km² grid data search identified Mixed Wader Nesting Colony – Wildlife Concentration Area. This is not a SWH under the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Technical Guide 2000. Within the vegetated floodplain attribute to the north, no significant wading bird habitat is present to the north.

Diversity

Vegetation within the subject lands is cultural and provides little diversity in comparison to natural areas. There are minimal amounts of vegetation present on-site, with no significant habitat to support biodiversity.

The adjacent forested community provides a variety of landforms including flood-plain/bottomlands, valleylands, and tableland woodland. The nature of the landforms present provides an array of abiotic conditions which can support a variety of associated species.

Landforms and Soils

The OMAFRA AgMaps indicate that the landforms and soils on site are common in the regional landscape.

Linkage and Size

Given the size and shape of the Significant Woodland to the north, there is no interior habitat present that would support area sensitive species. However, the creek and its riparian vegetation and valleylands are connected to the broader landscape identified on the OP. That system provides a corridor for wildlife movement.

Naturalness and Disturbance

With respect to naturalness and disturbance, the woodlot to the southeast was previously removed. The ravine in the north has been highly disturbed because of drainage. There is very little naturalness present on-site and in the study area. All vegetation in the development envelope is cultural. The parcel is maintained through grass cutting.

3.2.1 Proposed Vegetation Removal for Stormwater Management

In the northern portion of the study area, across Avon Drive, the existing vegetation community can be described according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Ecological Land Classification (ELC) protocol as a Cultural Woodland, CUM. Upon our site visit in August 2021, it was noted that the dominant canopy species present is Black Walnut. This patch also contains Basswood, Trembling Aspen, Yellow Birch, Norway Maple, Apple spp., Catalpa, and hybrid Hawthorn spp. The average Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) is 5 cm – 30 cm. There is no mid-canopy layer present. The shrublayer features European Buckthorn and Wild Grape. The groundlayer consists of Eurasian grasses, featuring Aster composite spp. and Poison Ivy.

Within the proposed excavation path there are no canopy species present, and little to no shrublayer or groundlayer. The species noted include: Hawthorn spp., Baltic Ivy, Tree of Heaven, and Manitoba Maple along the center line of the proposed excavation. All of these groundlayer and shrublayer species are considered invasive.

4.0 Impact Assessment of the Proposal

4.1 Potential Development Impacts

Vegetation Removal: All vegetation will be removed from the 0.97 ha tablelands to accommodate structures, pavement, and pipe and cable services. This vegetation removal is limited to the cultural vegetation on-site which offers little value to the natural heritage area. Additionally, there will be a path excavated on the streambank of the watercourse to the north of the subject lands to facilitate the SWM system. As noted above, the vegetation in this path is largely invasive species, and features no hardwood canopy species, therefore, will have only incidental impacts.

Migratory Breeding Bird Act 1994: The Migratory Breeding Bird Act (MBBA 1994), protects 386 migratory bird species in Canada. It states that "No person shall disturb, destroy, or take a nest, egg,...." (SOR/80-577, s. 4.). Birds protected under the MBBA 1994 may be present on-site. Tree cutting should occur outside of the nesting season for the region (see Section 5). If it were to occur, trees should be checked 30 days and 48 hours ahead of tree removal.

Grading: The lands are currently relatively flat and minimal grade changes are required for the proposed development. Additionally, the development envelope is disconnected from the natural heritage features to the north, and surface runoff will be contained within the in-pipe SWM system. For these reasons we do not anticipate and direct or incidental impacts as a result of grading.

Significant Valleylands: Given the distance between the subject lands and the Natural Hazard lands to the north, no direct or incidental impacts on slope stability is anticipated.

Fish Habitat: The distance to the watercourse is over 100 m from the development envelope. A municipal road physically separates the site. With regards to the SWM outlet a sediment and erosion plan will be required ensuring no impact fish habitat. Given the early stages of the project detailed design of the outlet are not available for our review. However, given the steep banks, we recommend the SWM outlet incorporate an erosion control mat that allows for vegetation growth, and the vegetation be specified to complement the surrounding natural heritage feature.

Tree Root Disturbance: Generally, construction practices and grade alteration can potentially impact roots of adjacent trees to be retained. In this case, Significant Woodland features are >50 m to the north, therefore will not be impacted by the proposed on-site construction.

Groundwater Recharge: The soils on-site include clay components and do not contribute to groundwater recharge. Therefore, the subject lands do not contribute to the function of natural heritage features to the north.

Significant Species: No SAR or rare species are anticipated within the cultural landscape on-site, nor within the adjacent lands given the prior disturbance and surrounding land use.

Human Use: The potential post-development impacts are not a factor given the surrounding land use and separation from the Natural Heritage Area to the north.

5.0 IMPACT AVOIDANCE, ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Tree-cutting should not occur between March 31 and October 31 to avoid the risk of removing trees used by potential roosting SAR bats. Following these timing recommendations would also include the regional nesting period of migratory birds (March 31- August 25).

All disturbed areas on site should be subject to sediment and erosion control measures, as dictated in the Ontario Provincial Standard Details (OPSD) and the Ontario Provincial Standard Specifications (OPSS) as well as the sediment and erosion control measures that are dictated by the municipality.

A sediment and erosion control plan in regard to the stormwater outlet will be required.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

Federal Considerations:

As long as no in-water work is proposed, a DFO filing is not required.

Provincial Considerations:

Given our site investigation, it is our opinion that the proposed development will not contravene the ESA and an IGF is not required to be submitted to the MECP.

The *Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020*, states that:

"2.1.1 Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.

2.1.2 The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term *ecological function* and biodiversity of *natural heritage systems*, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among *natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features*.

2.1.3 *Natural heritage systems* shall be identified in Ecoregions 6E & 7E1, recognizing that *natural heritage systems* will vary in size and form in *settlement areas, rural areas, and prime agricultural areas*.

2.1.4 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

- a. *significant wetlands* in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1; and
- b. *significant coastal wetlands*.

2.1.5 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

- a. *significant wetlands* in the Canadian Shield north of Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1;
- b. *significant woodlands* in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River)¹;
- c. *significant valleylands* in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River)¹;
- d. *significant wildlife habitat*;
- e. *significant areas of natural and scientific interest*; and
- f. coastal wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1 that are not subject to policy

2.1.4(b)

unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no *negative impacts* on the natural features or their *ecological functions*.

2.1.6 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in *fish habitat* except in accordance with *provincial and federal requirements*.

2.1.7 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in *habitat of endangered species* and *threatened species*, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

2.1.8 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the *natural heritage features* and *areas* identified in policies 2.1.4, 2.1.5, and 2.1.6 unless the *ecological function* of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the *natural features* or on their *ecological functions*.

2.1.9 Nothing in policy 2.1 is intended to limit the ability of *agricultural uses* to continue.”

No Areas of Natural or Significant Interest (ANSI) nor Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) occur on or within 120 m of the subject lands.

Significant Woodlands, Significant Valleylands, and Fish Habitat are present >50 m to the north and area separated from the proposed development by existing residential and a municipal road. There is an exception of a stormwater outlet to the northern features. This outlet will require sediment and erosion mitigation, and there must be quality and quantity control of effluent.

Additionally, given the maintained cultural landscape on-site no Significant Wildlife Habitat, nor Species at Risk are anticipated on-site.

There would be no negative effects on the natural heritage features and areas because:

- The area slated for development is open maintained land with anthropogenic vegetation that contributes minimally to floral and faunal biodiversity.
- The area adjacent to the proposed severance and development has been highly disturbed in the past.
- The watercourse and slope is located >50 m from the development envelope. A municipal road separates the development from the water course. No impacts are expected, and no setbacks are required.
- Development will not have an impact on groundwater recharge of the tablelands given the current clay soils do not promote infiltration.
- Given the vegetation removal will be limited to the open maintained lands and a small area for the SWM outlet in the north which can be revegetated, the forested community to the north will continue to provide linkage and corridor functions.

Conservation Authority Considerations:

The proposed SWM outlet in the Natural Hazard lands of the watercourse to the north will require KCCA permits.

Municipal Considerations:

The proposed development conforms with the OP of Central Elgin.

In reference to the Central Elgin's OP, which outlines the requirements for an ISR per Section 3.2.1, this report is consistent with these requirements, as demonstrated below:

_ A location map is provided in Figures 1 and 2, found on page 14 and 15 of this report.

_ As per Section 1 of this report, the subject lands are 0.97 ha. Development involves transitioning the residentially zoned tablelands into residential use. The proposed development includes 18 single-detached residential lots within the maintained lands.

_ The subject lands are made up of 95% maintained land with a hedgerow on the southern boundary. They consist of maintained lawns, and a forested valleyland surrounding Kettle Creek. All of the proposed lots remain outside of Natural Hazard Lands, Significant Woodland, and Fish Habitat to the north

_ The tablelands of the subject lands are zoned for residential use. Based on aerial imagery, sometime after 2018, the forested community was removed. The previously forested area to the southeast is now graded and seeded with turf grass. Development is >50 m from these Natural Heritage features and are separated from the features by existing residential and a municipal road.

_ There are no federal, provincial, permits required for the proposed development, but or CA permits for the SWM outlet will be required for the reasons noted above in Section 6 of this report.

_ In our opinion, based on the data presented in this report, there are no potential issues, ecological linkages, or natural processes within the study area boundaries. Due to the cultural nature of the on-site vegetation and the distance from Fish Habitat, Natural Hazard Lands and Significant Woodlands, given the mitigation measures defined in Section 5 of this report, there are no direct nor incidental impacts anticipated.

_ In our opinion, based on the data and mitigation measures presented in this report, there are no potential cumulative effects of development.

_ No further information is required for the proposed development.

_ No further environmental studies relating to the Natural Heritage component of this application under the Planning Act are required.

6.2 Conclusions

With respect to natural heritage considerations it is the opinion of the writers that, as long as the final development plans follow the recommended mitigation measures in this document the proposed development will be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statements 2020 as well as policies of the Municipality of Central Elgin.

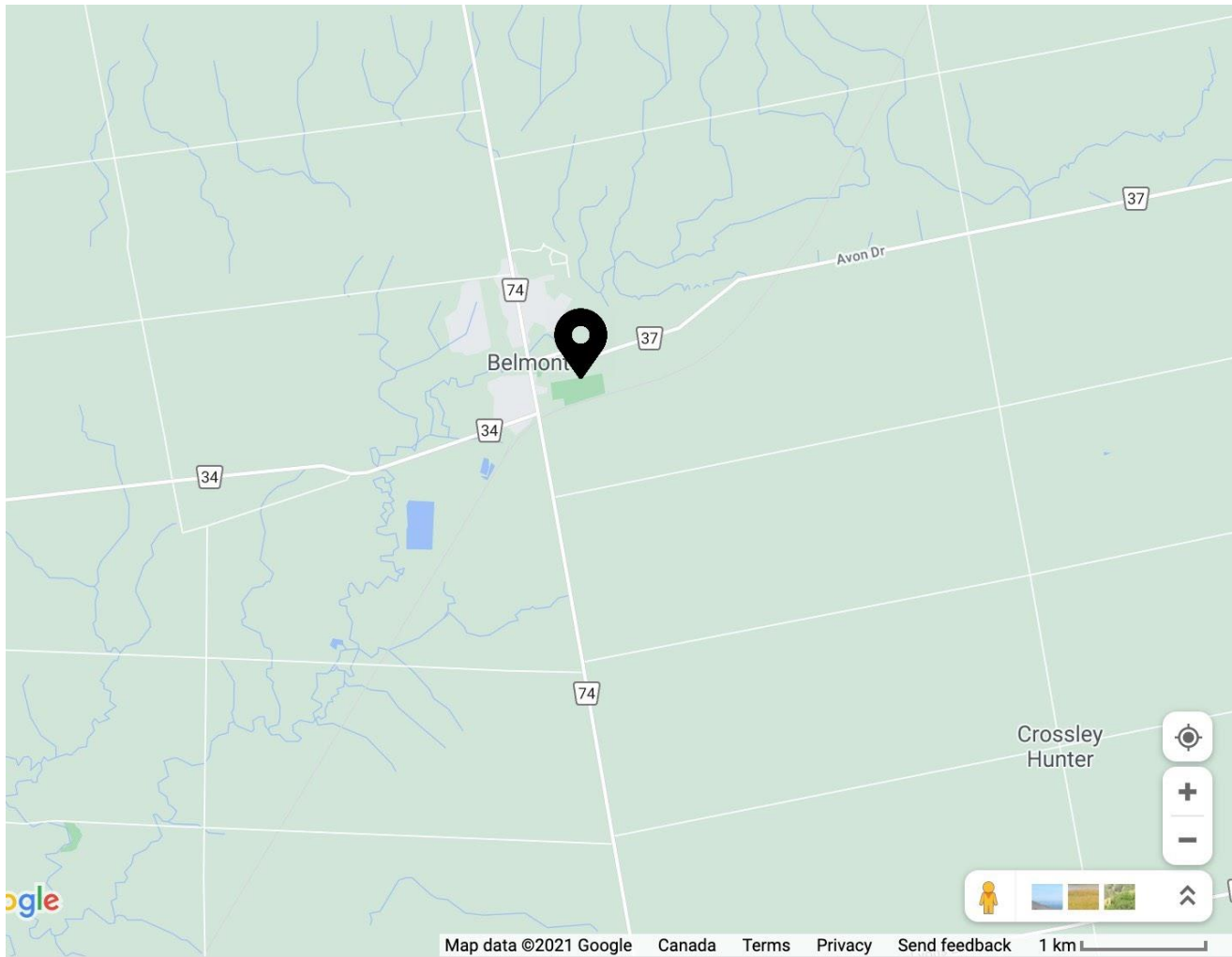
For the reasons outlined in the data presented within this report and the resultant analysis it is our opinion there are no potential issues nor potential cumulative effects of the development proposed.

Consequently, there is no need for a full EIS nor further studies relating to the natural heritage component of this application under the Planning Act. It is our opinion that the development can proceed pending the approval of other documents required by the municipality.

The conclusion of this report is that there are no negative, nor adverse, unalterable impacts on the natural heritage features of the subject lands and the natural heritage landscape identified in the Official Plan, as long as the mitigative measures noted in this report are followed.



Paige Vroom M.Sc (Aquatic)
Rachel Bauer
Shae-Lynn Dehens
Mike Leonard O.A.L.A. C.S.L.A.



VROOM + LEONARD

Biologists & Landscape Architects

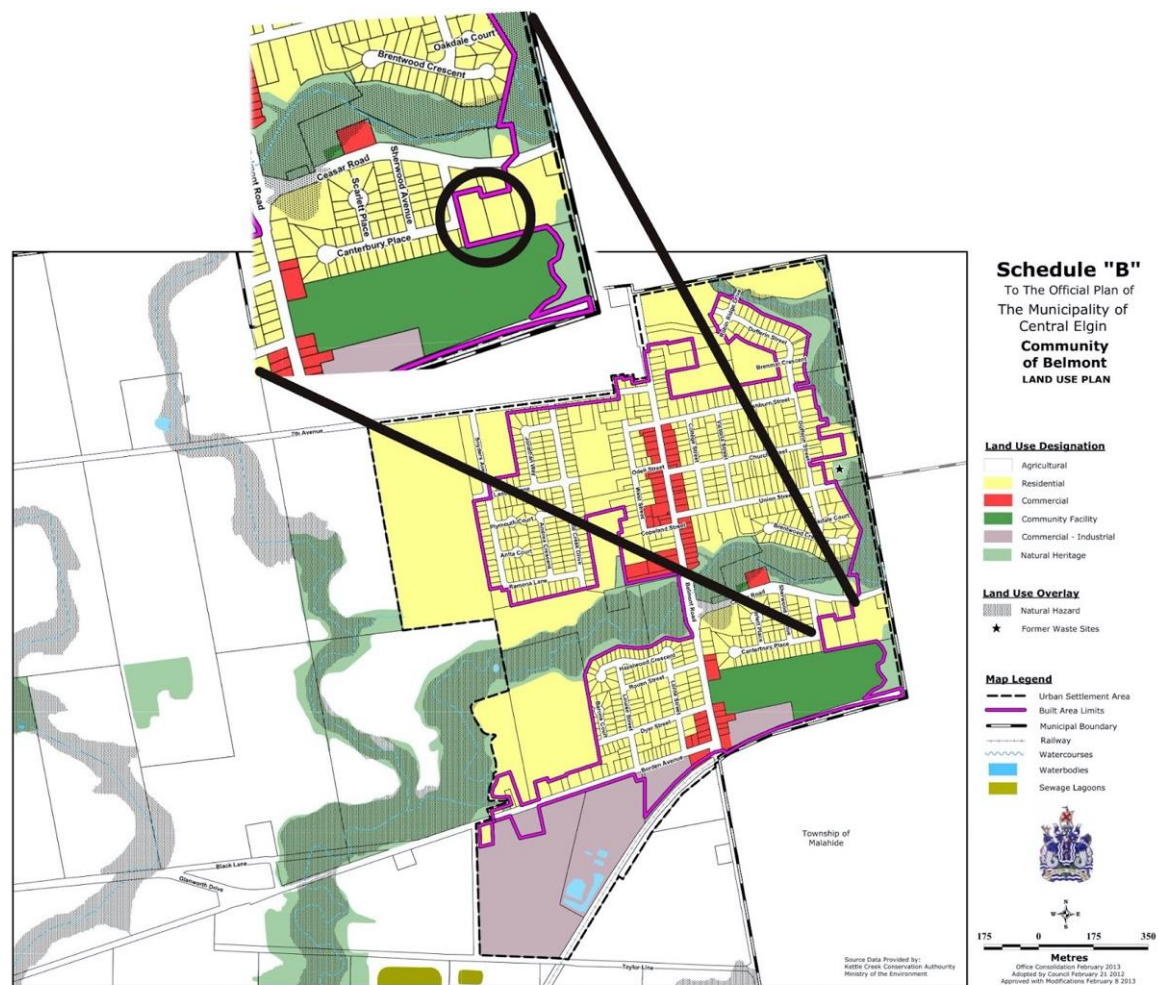
Figure 1: General Site Location



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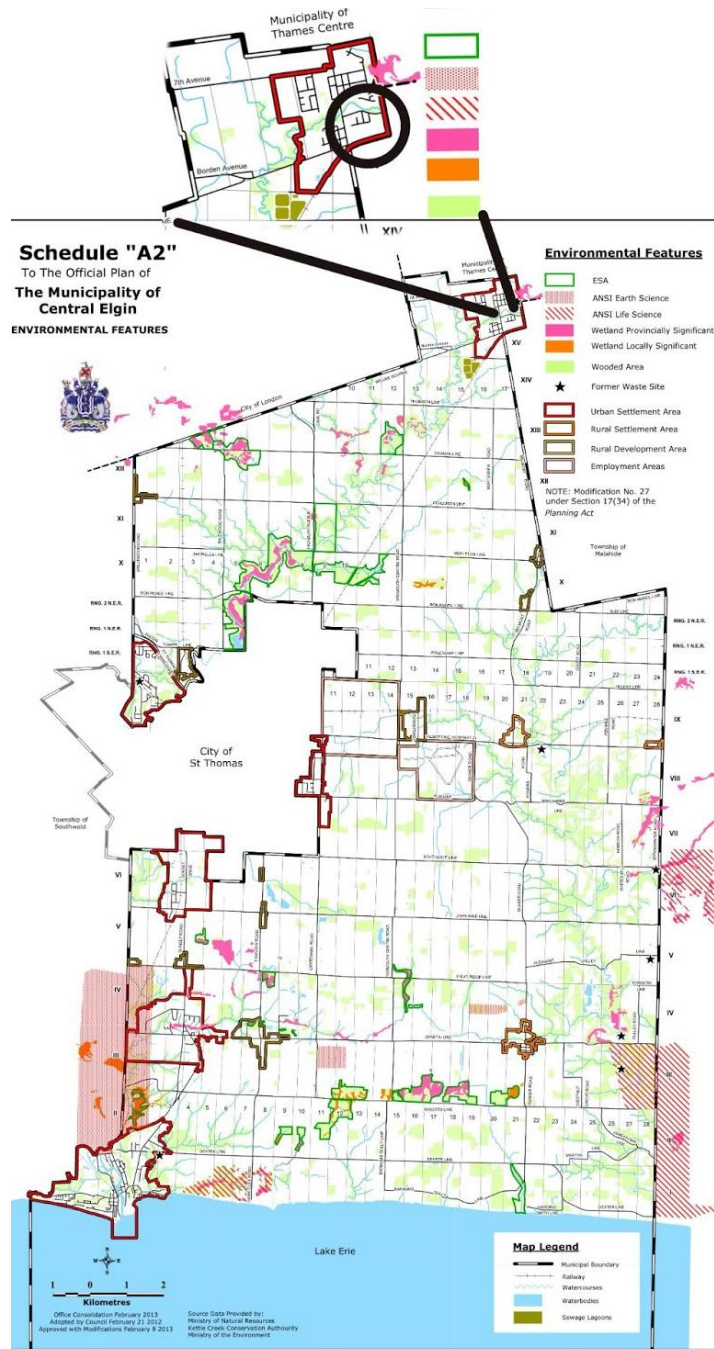
Figure 2: Legal Parcel (red) , Study Area (yellow),
Natural Heritage (green), Cultural Hedgerow (pink) and
Water Course (blue)



VROOM + LEONARD

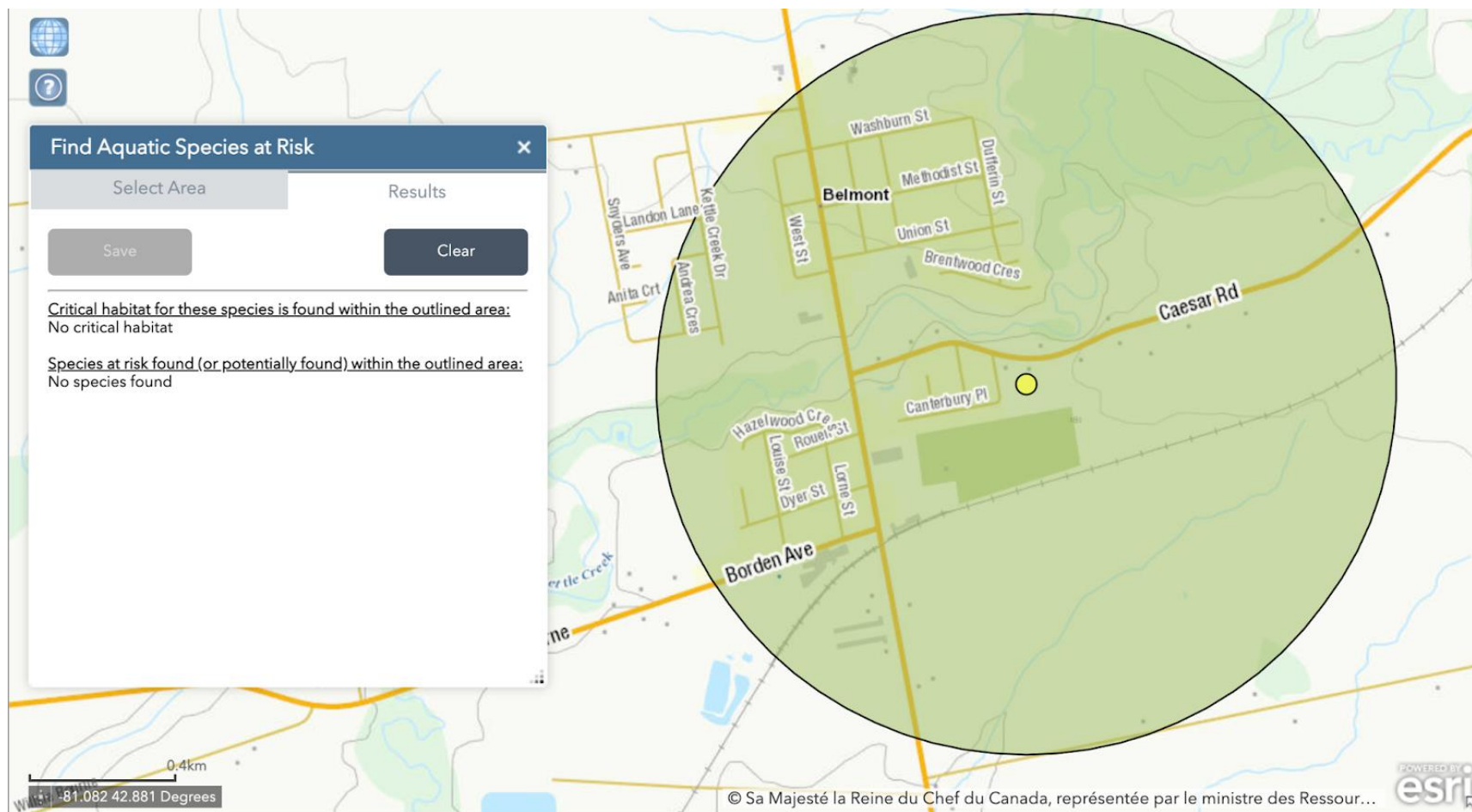
Biologists & Landscape Architects

Figure 3: Municipality of Central Elgin Schedule "B" Land Use Plan



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Figure 4: Municipality of Central Elgin
Schedule "A2" Environmental Features



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Figure 5: DFO Species At Risk Mapping



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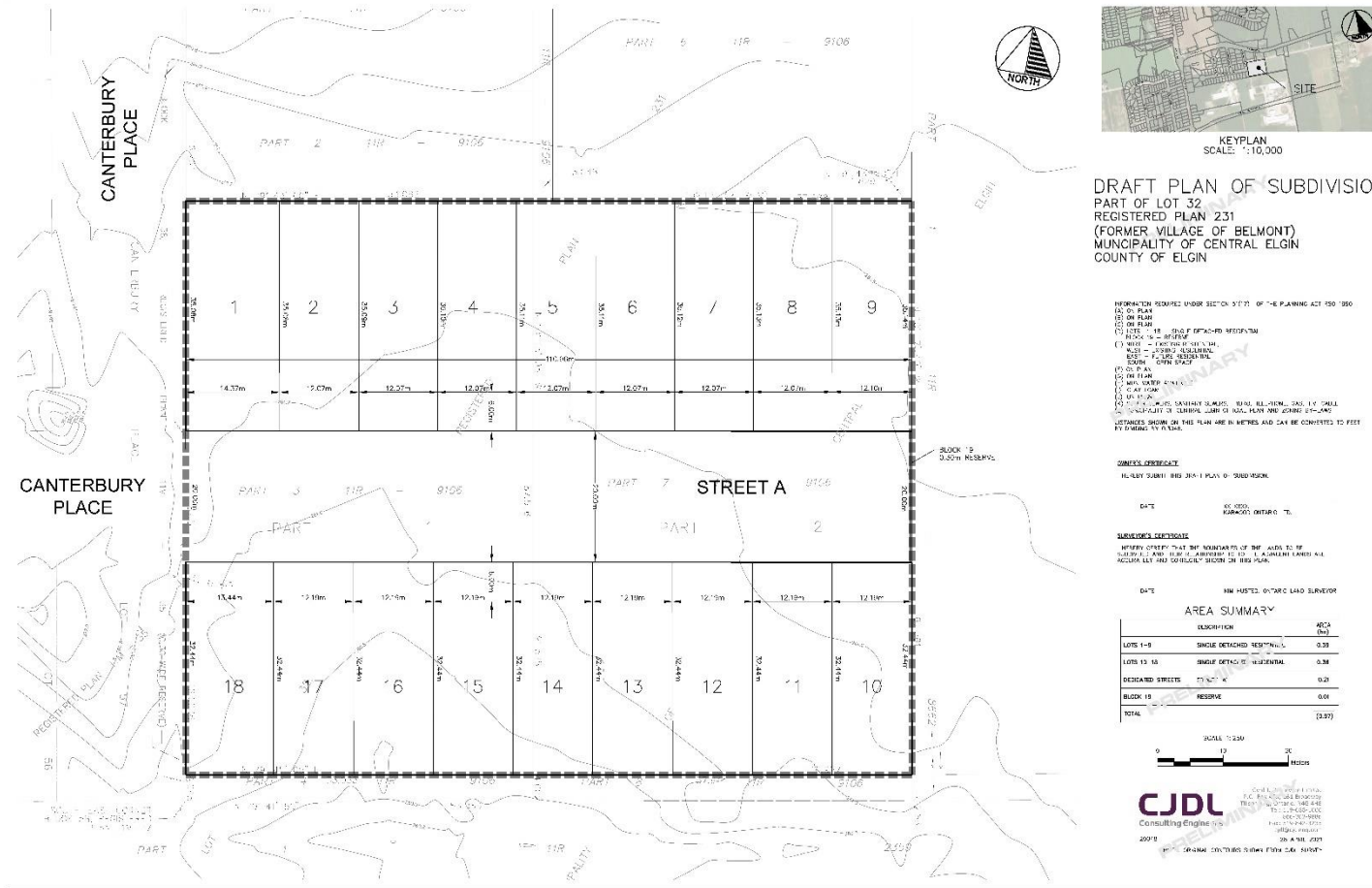
Figure 6: Site Photos
Top Left: subject lands facing west
Bottom Right: previously removed woodlot location southeast of the subject lands



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Figure 7: Site Photos
(Natural Heritage feature to the north)



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Figure 8: Preliminary Concept Plan

APPENDIX A

The *Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020*, states that:

"2.1.1 Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.

2.1.2 The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term *ecological function* and biodiversity of *natural heritage systems*, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among *natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features*.

2.1.3 *Natural heritage systems* shall be identified in Ecoregions 6E & 7E1, recognizing that *natural heritage systems* will vary in size and form in *settlement areas, rural areas, and prime agricultural areas*.

2.1.6 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

- c. *significant wetlands* in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1; and
- d. *significant coastal wetlands*.

2.1.7 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

- g. *significant wetlands* in the Canadian Shield north of Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1;
- h. *significant woodlands* in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River)¹;
- i. *significant valleylands* in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River)¹;
- j. *significant wildlife habitat*;
- k. *significant areas of natural and scientific interest*; and
- l. coastal wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E1 that are not subject to policy 2.1.4(b)

unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no *negative impacts* on the natural features or their *ecological functions*.

2.1.6 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in *fish habitat* except in accordance with *provincial and federal requirements*.

2.1.7 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted in *habitat of endangered species* and *threatened species*, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

2.1.8 *Development and site alteration* shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the *natural heritage features* and *areas* identified in policies 2.1.4, 2.1.5, and 2.1.6 unless the *ecological function* of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the *natural features* or on their *ecological functions*.

2.1.9 Nothing in policy 2.1 is intended to limit the ability of *agricultural uses* to continue."