

WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, ON
M7A 2J3

December 4, 2022
File 8003

**RE: Planning Opinion Letter – Greenbelt Removal
The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
11170 Pine Valley Drive, City of Vaughan**

Weston Consulting has been retained by the owners of the property municipally addressed as 11170 Pine Valley Drive in the City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the “subject lands”). We have been monitoring the proposed changes to the Greenbelt Removal (*Ontario Regulation 140/02*). We understand that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is seeking feedback on the proposed removal and redesignation of 15 select areas from the Greenbelt Area (ERO 019-6216, ERO 019-6217 ERO 019-6218). We are in agreement with this proposal and the ultimate objective of removing the regulatory burden from lands that could be suitable for residential development in the near term. In addition to the lands the province is currently considering, this letter provides comments as it relates to the subject properties and why they warrant consideration from the MMAH for residential development in the near future.

Description of the Subject Property

The subject lands are currently a vacant lot located southwest of the Pine Valley Drive and Kirby Road intersection. The subject lands are predominately occupied by farmhouses with agricultural uses. Surrounding land uses include a nursing home (Kristus Darz Latvian Home) and a waste management service (Woodbridge Bin Rental) to the north; low-density residential homes, woodland areas, as well as a gas company (Transcanada Pipelines Ltd.) to the east; woodland areas, farmland, and an adult day care center (Golden Age Village for the Elderly) to the south, and predominately farmhouses with agricultural uses to the west. The subject lands have an approximate area of 18.8 hectares (46.5 acres) and an approximate frontage of 127 metres along Pine Valley Drive.

The City of Vaughan Official Plan (2020 Consolidation) designates the subject lands as *Private Open Spaces* and *Agricultural* under the Land use Schedule. The lands are also designated as *Natural Areas* and *Countryside* under the Urban Structure Schedule. The subject lands are within the Greenbelt Plan Area. The City of Vaughan Comprehensive Zoning By-law 001-2021 and Zoning By-law 1-88 both zone the subject lands A - Agriculture Zone. Permitted uses under this classification include: agricultural uses; residential uses of single family detached dwellings; and home occupation. As well institutional uses such as churches, community centres, day nursery,

public libraries, schools, and more are permitted. Recreational uses which are permitted include tennis courts, curling rinks, skating rinks, and more.

Map 59 of the Greenbelt Plan (refer to Figure 1 below) designates the subject property as *Protected Countryside* and *Natural Heritage System*. The *Protected Countryside* includes three basic land use designations related to agricultural uses: *Specialty Crop Areas*; *Prime Agricultural Lands*; and *Rural Lands*. Neither *Specialty Crop Areas* nor *Prime Agricultural Lands* permit non-agricultural uses. However, *Rural Lands* permit a range of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

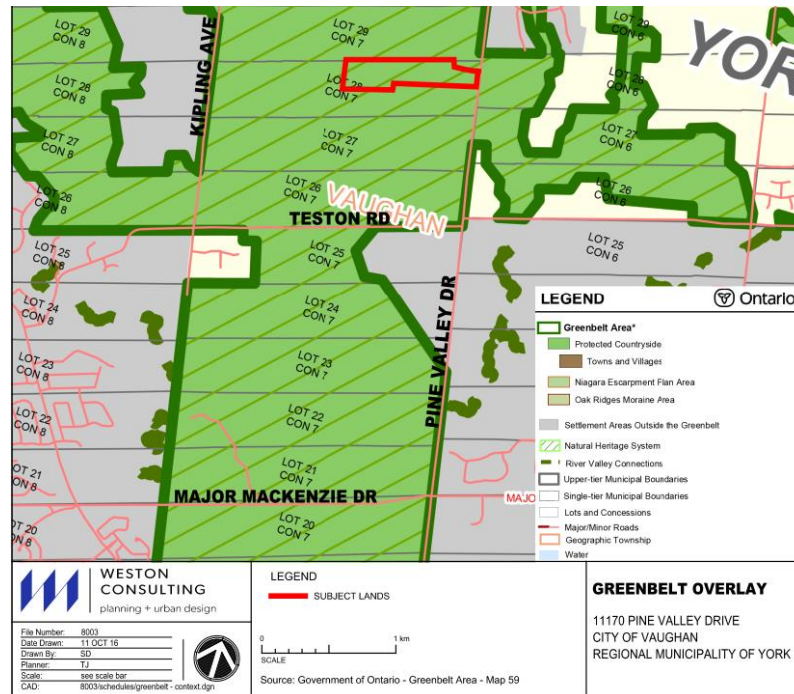


Figure 1: Greenbelt Mapping Overlay

Background

Weston Consulting and the registered owners of the subject properties understand that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is seeking feedback on proposed changes to remove lands from the Greenbelt (Ontario Regulation 140/02) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (O. Reg.140/02) that would:

- Remove lands from the Greenbelt Area that could be suitable for residential development in the near term
- Add lands in the Paris Galt Moraine to the Greenbelt Area, designated as Protected Countryside with a Natural Heritage System
- Redesignate lands in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area that could be suitable for residential development in the near term

We understand that landowners will be expected to develop detailed plans to build housing and move forward with the project quickly. It is the government's expectation that construction of new homes will begin on these lands by no later than 2025, and that significant progress on approvals

and implementation be achieved by the end of 2023. This letter is to provide comments requesting that the lands be removed from the Greenbelt to support residential development in the near future, as the character of the area would be suitable and can provide adequate access to services. We have noted that landowners will be expected to develop detailed plans to build housing and move forward with the project quickly.

Removal of Subject Lands from the Greenbelt

It is our opinion that the subject lands are suitable for residential development. Given the subject lands proximity to the existing settlement area of Vaughan and the current fragmentation of the agricultural land base in the area, it is our opinion that the subject lands would be better suited for residential uses rather than for agricultural uses.

The small size of the lot also makes it inefficient to farm the subject lands as modern agricultural practices tend to utilize larger sized properties in an area where the agricultural land base is relatively intact.

In addition, it is our opinion that the character of the lands is suitable for residential development. A rural estate subdivision is located to the north-east of the subdivision. Further to the west of the subdivision is the Settlement Area of Nashville-Klienburg. It is also important to note that there are no specialty crop areas located nearby as well as no aggregate operations within close proximity to the subject lands. Based on the above, it is our opinion that the subject property would be well suited for residential uses as the agricultural land base in the area is fragmented and the subject lands are not practical for farming purposes.

Summary

Based on the planning analysis conducted and comments provided above, we ask that the following summarized points be considered:

- The surrounding land use context demonstrates that the subject lands are suitable for residential development and will assist the province in achieving their goal to build housing faster.
- A rural estate subdivision is located to the north-east of the subdivision. Further to the west of the subdivision is the Settlement Area of Nashville-Klienburg.
- There are no farm animal operations on the subject properties, hence the requirements of the minimal distance separation are not applicable here.
- The small size of the lot also makes it inefficient to farm the subject lands as modern agricultural practices tend to utilize larger sized properties in an area where the agricultural land base is relatively intact.
- There are no specialty crop areas located nearby as well as no aggregate operations within close proximity to the subject lands.

For the reasons mentioned above, the best use will be residential which will be consistent to the surrounding residential lands. The requested Greenbelt removal represents the efficient use of underutilized vacant lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments. We are open to future discussions regarding this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Katie Pandey at ext. 335.

Yours truly,

Weston Consulting

Per:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Pandey', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Katie Pandey, MAES, MCIP, RPP
Associate