

WESTON CONSULTING

planning + urban design

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

December 4, 2022
File 11242

**RE: Planning Opinion Letter – Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Redesignation
The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
13962 Warden Avenue, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

Weston Consulting has been retained by the owners of the property municipally addressed as 13962 Warden Avenue in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (herein referred to as the “subject lands”). We have been monitoring the proposed changes to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (*Ontario Regulation 140/02*) that would redesignate lands in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area. 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 located at the northwest corner of Warden Avenue and Bloomington Road. The property has a total area of 21.08 hectares (52.1 acres) with an approximate frontage of 148.4 metres on Warden Avenue. The subject properties are currently occupied by a single family dwelling structure and vacant agricultural land. The land uses surrounding the property are as follows:

North: Directly north of the subject lands are vacant agricultural lands. Further north are vacant agricultural lands and single detached dwellings.

East: Directly east of the subject lands are a single detached dwelling and further east is a residential estate subdivision.

South: Directly south of the subject lands are single detached dwellings and vacant agricultural lands. Further south is the Whitchurch Highlands Public School.

West: Directly west of the subject lands are a residential subdivision and further west is Preston Lake.



Figure 1: Aerial Photo

The subject lands are designated *Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area* by the Township of Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Zoning By-law 2010-001-ZO zones the subject lands *Oak Ridges Moraine Linkage (ORM-L)* and *Environmental (ENV)*.

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 the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (Ontario Regulation 140/02) that would redesignate lands in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is seeking feedback on proposed amendments to the [Greenbelt Plan](#), Greenbelt Area boundary regulation ([O. Reg.59/05](#)), 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 redesignated under the ORMCP to support residential development in the near future, as the character of the area would be suitable and can provide adequate access to major highways as needed for future residents, including the Ontario 404 highway. We understand that landowners will be expected to develop detailed plans to build housing and move forward with the project quickly and are in the position to develop these lands by no later than 2025. In addition, we anticipate that significant progress on approvals and implementation be achieved by the end of 2023.

Inclusion of Subject Lands in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

It is our planning opinion that the lands would be suitable for residential development through the redesignation of the ORMCP as a Settlement Area. The subject lands are 4.3km away from the Bloomington GO Station (Figure 2) which provides regional transit connections to the residents of Oak Ridges and the town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The subject lands are also surrounded by residential subdivisions and residential estate subdivisions. The subject lands are also near an institutional facility (Whitchurch Highlands Public School) as noted above.

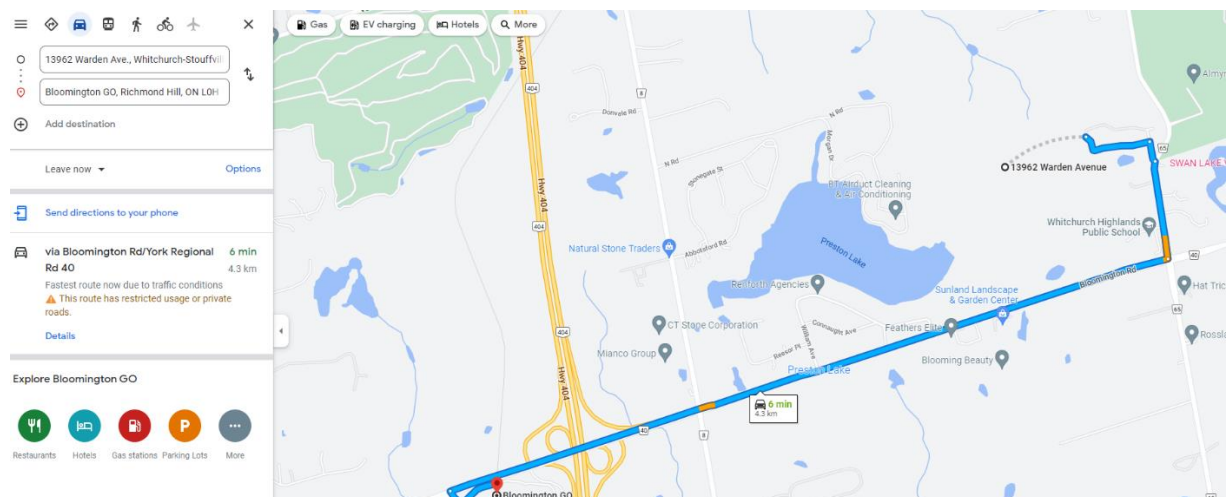


Figure 2: Distance from Bloomington GO Station

Moreover, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks has conditionally exempted the design and construction of a new 16.2 km rural 4-lane controlled access freeway from duplicative requirements, which it has already met, of the Environmental Assessment Act. The Highway 400–404 Connecting Link (also known as the Bradford Bypass) will provide an east west connection between Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury and Highway 404. The Highway 400–404 Connecting Link would reduce congestion and provide a significantly improved

connection between York Region and Simcoe Area thus creating new investment opportunities for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Summary

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

- The subject lands are in **close proximity multiple residential subdivisions** as well as a **institutional facility (Whitchurch Highlands Public School)** as noted above.
- The subject lands are in **close proximity (4.3km)** from the Bloomington GO Station and would be an excellent usage of lands near a significant transit station and transit corridor.
- The **Highway 400–404 Connecting Link** (also known as the Bradford Bypass) will provide an east west connection between Highway 400 and Highway 404. Residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville will be able to leverage this enhanced transportation network connection.
- **This letter is to provide comments requesting that the lands be redesignated under the ORMCP to support residential development in the near future, as the character of the area would be suitable and can provide adequate access to major highways as needed for future residents, including the Ontario 404 highway.**

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:

Katie Pandey, MAES, MCIP, RPP
Associate