Planning Justification Report

Proposed Residential Development

514504 Second Line, Amaranth Township

County Official Plan Amendment

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Prepared for:

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background & Context

W.E. Oughtred & Associates Inc. is the planning consultant for The Cellular Connection Ltd. ("Client"), which is proposing to develop the property located at 514504 Second Line in the Township of Amaranth, Dufferin County ("Site"). The lands are legally described as Part of Lot 19, Concession 2 being Parts 2, 5 and 8 Plan 7R-6546. The site, located along the western side of Second Line between 15 Side Road and 20 Side Road, encompasses 33.02 hectares. It is situated north of Dufferin Road 109 and east of Highway 10. The lot is currently developed with an estate-style single-family home, which will remain as part of the proposed development. The southeast corner of the site is leased to Capstone Infrastructure Corporation and is occupied by hydro equipment. Additionally, two residential lots fronting on Second Line were previously severed from the full parcel. The north-east portion of the site is regulated by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the south-west portion is regulated by the Grand River Conservation Authority.

1.2 Proposal

The property owner is proposing to register a plan of subdivision consisting of 24 privately serviced residential estate lots, including a lot for the existing home. The subdivision will have a single access point from Second Line. An existing access from Second Line will continue to serve as the driveway to the existing dwelling. In addition to the proposed 24 residential lots, the plan includes 9.694 ha of lands reserved for the natural heritage system and 1.030 ha for a nature trail. The existing hydro equipment will be retained on a block reserved for that use. The proposed internal road network will consist of two roads, Road A and B. Road B will provide access to Second Line. Road A will provide an internal access to a number of lots and terminates in cul-de-sacs at the northerly and southerly extent of the road. Roadside ditches with permanent pools and infiltration trenches are proposed for stormwater management. The property owner is proposing to provide an easement in favour of the Township of Amaranth for emergency access over the existing driveway which connects to the southern cul-de-sac of Road A. Several open spaces with water features are included in the plan, serving as both stormwater management features and natural spaces, which will contribute to the overall appeal of the subdivision. Two dry hydrants for fire protection have been installed on site with approval from the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The first dry hydrant is located to the west of the existing dwelling. The second dry hydrant was installed in a cistern that was constructed for the existing dwelling. The cistern holds 100,000 U.S. gallons of water and has a dry hydrant connection. Both dry hydrants will be available for fire suppression within the proposed subdivision and for properties in the surrounding

The property is currently designated for agricultural use accommodating one dwelling. A pre-consultation meeting with staff from the County of Dufferin and Township of Amaranth was held on June 1, 2023. At the meeting, staff confirmed that the subdivision proposal will require a County Official Plan Amendment, local Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and a Plan of Subdivision.

1.3 Purpose & Scope

This report has been prepared to support the application for a County Official Plan Amendment. The other required applications will be submitted after the County Official Plan Amendment has been approved. The objective of the report is to provide an overview of the existing property and its current land use designation, offer a detailed description of the proposed development, summarize the required Official Plan Amendments and zoning changes required, and assess the compatibility of the proposed development with the Ontario Planning Act R.S.O. 1990, c P.13, the Provincial Planning Statement 2024, as well as the County of Dufferin and Township of Amaranth Official Plans and the Township of Amaranth Zoning By-law 2-2009. In addition to this Planning Justification, specialized consultants and engineers have completed the required plans and studies for a complete application.

2.0 Location & Context

2.1 Site Description

The subject site is located on the west side of Second Line about 1 km south of 20 Side Road. The site is 33.02 ha in area. Two lots were severed from the original farm property by a previous owner in 2018. The remaining lands are mostly vacant and grass covered. The lands are mildly undulating with a gentle slope toward the south and east. There is an existing single-family dwelling that has been recently constructed within the central portion of the site on an elevated area with mild slopes all around. The southeastern corner of the property is for hydro equipment use. There are existing stormwater management ponds on the lands, located toward the northerly extent of the property, in the centre of the property and at the southerly extent of the lot. An existing gravel trail winds through the site. 7.2 ha of the property were previously leased for agricultural use (hay production). The term of the lease has now expired and will not be renewed. Trees are located along the periphery of the property and in the areas near the stormwater ponds. The lands drain naturally to the existing ponds. An aerial photo of the subject property is provided in Figure 1.

2.2 Surrounding Uses

The property at 514504 Second Line in the Township of Amaranth is surrounded primarily by agricultural and rural residential land uses. The Township of Amaranth is characterized by its agricultural heritage, with a variety of farms producing crops and livestock. The area includes diverse farming activities such as grain and hay production, dairy and beef cattle, organic farming, and other types of agriculture such as sheep and pig farming, as well as horticulture and greenhouse operations.

To the north of the property, there are rural residential properties and open farmland. The western side is similarly composed of agricultural lands. South of the property, there are other agricultural fields and some rural residences. The area around the property is predominantly agricultural.

The nearest urban area is Shelburne, approximately 10 km north of the site. Orangeville is slightly further to the south, approximately 15 km. Both towns provide access to grocery, hardware, banks, recreation, entertainment, and other facilities.

2.3 Transportation Context

The property is situated on Second Line, a local road that provides direct access to the surrounding rural areas. The area is served by a network of local roads, making it accessible by car. These roads are well-maintained but can be subject to rural road conditions, especially in winter. Located to the south, Highway 9 is the nearest major Provincial Highway, providing east-west access. It connects to other County roads and towns. Situated to the east, Highway 10 is a significant north-south route that connects to larger urban centers such as Orangeville and Brampton, and to Highway 401 via Highway 410. To the north, Highway 89 offers another east-west route, providing connection to Shelburne and Alliston. As with most rural areas, public transit does not operate in the Township of Amaranth. Most residents rely on private vehicles for transportation. Public transit is available in Orangeville.

3.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development involves subdividing the existing site into 24 residential lots and 5 blocks. Lots 1-23 will be new residential estate lots. Lot 24 will accommodate the existing dwelling. Blocks 25 and 27 will accommodate natural heritage features and Block 28 is intended as a nature trail. Block 26 will accommodate the existing hydro equipment. Block 29 will provide access to Lot #6. The proposed residential lots will be privately serviced by individual wells and septic tanks. The proposed lot areas average over one and a half acres (0.69 ha). Lot frontages range between 43 metres and 125 metres and proposed lot depths will vary from 55 metres to 332 metres. All lots will have sufficient lot area to accommodate private well and septic service. The proposed lots and blocks have been designed to incorporate existing structures and natural heritage features. The property owner has previously

upgraded the hydro service on Second Line. The upgraded service will be available to all lots within the plan of subdivision.

The access to the subdivision from Second Line will be located at the north end of the property. An existing driveway at the south end of the property will be maintained as the driveway access to Lot 24. The driveway connects to one of the subdivision roads (Road A) at a cul-de-sac and the property owner is proposing to grant an easement to the Township over that driveway for emergency access to the subdivision. Two internal streets will provide access to the lots. It is intended that the internal streets will be assumed and maintained by the municipality. Lot 6 does not have direct access onto a road and access will be provided by an easement over Block 29 which is proposed to remain under the ownership of the Cellular Connection Ltd. A right of way will be granted over Block 29 for driveway access to Lot 6. The proposed plan of subdivision is provided in Figure 2.

4.0 Policy, Regulatory & Guideline Contexts

4.1 Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c P. 1

The Planning Act is the provincial legislation that is the basis for all decisions on land use in Ontario. The purpose of the Act is to promote sustainable economic development in a healthy natural environment within the policy and by the means provided under the Act. The Act provides for a system of land use planning led by Provincial Policy. To that end, the Planning Act requires that all decisions on planning matters be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement as well as conform to, and not conflict with, all other provincial plans.

Section 2 of the Planning Act requires that approval authorities have regard for matters of provincial interest in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. Matters of provincial interest that are relevant to the subject development proposal are:

f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water serves and waste management systems;

The proposed residential lots will have private sewage and water services. Waste collection services will be provided by the County of Dufferin.

g) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;

The proposed development represents orderly development as it makes efficient use of land in a rural location with easy access to nearby urban areas. The development will include public roads within the plan of subdivision that will connect to an existing public road (Second Line).

i) the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing;

The proposed estate lots will help to meet demand for detached dwellings to accommodate larger households.

p) the appropriate location of growth and development;

The subject site is located approximately halfway between the towns of Shelburne and Orangeville. The Town of Shelburne is approximately a 10-minute drive from the subject property and the Town of Orangeville is a 10-to-15-minute drive from the site. Residents of the proposed subdivision will have access to shopping, restaurants, entertainment, local services and amenities within a short driving distance.

the promotion of built form that is well-designed and encourages a sense of place.

Lots in the plan of subdivision will be offered for sale to purchasers who wish to build custom homes to meet the requirements of their household. Architectural controls will be in place to ensure that the subdivision has a coherent appearance and that dwellings are compatible with each other in terms of exterior cladding, roof styles, orientation on the lot, etc. Section 3(5) of the Act requires that decisions made by an approval authority be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conform to other provincial plans. The development application has been reviewed for consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, in Section 4.2 of this report and found to be consistent with the PPS.

Section 51 of the Act deals with subdivision of land. As per 51(24), in considering a draft plan of subdivision, regard shall be had, among other matters, to the health, safety, convenience, accessibility for persons with disabilities and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the municipality and to:

	Planning Act Requirement	How the Proposal Conforms	
(a)	The effect of development of the proposed subdivision on matters of provincial interest as referred to in Section 2.	The proposed development is consistent with matters of provincial interest referred to in Section 2, as described above.	
(b)	Whether the proposed subdivision is premature or in the public interest.	The proposed subdivision is in the public interest as it will contribute to the lots available in Amaranth for residential development and will fulfill the housing needs of larger households.	
(c)	Whether the plan conforms to the Official Plan and adjacent plans of subdivision, if any.	A County Official Plan Amendment to redesignate the lands from Countryside Area to Community Settlement Area is being requested. A local Official Plan Amendment to redesignate the lands from Rural to Estate Residential is being requested. There are no adjacent plans of subdivision existing or proposed.	
(d)	The suitability of the land for the purposes for which it is to be subdivided.	Geotechnical and Hydrogeological Investigations have been completed and have confirmed that the lands are suitable for residential development. There are no natural hazards on the lands.	
(d.1)	If any affordable housing units are being proposed, the suitability of the proposed units for affordable housing.	No affordable housing units are being proposed.	
(e)	The number, width, location and proposed grades and elevations of highways and the adequacy of them, and the highways linking the highways to the proposed subdivision with the established highway system in the vicinity and the adequacy of them.	The proposed subdivision will have a single access point from Second Line. An internal road network will provide pedestrian and vehicular access to all lots. The roads within the subdivision will be public roads. An existing driveway that provides access to the existing dwelling on the property will be maintained and the property owner will grant an easement to the Township for emergency access to the subdivision.	
(f)	The dimensions and shapes of the proposed lots.	The proposed lots are generally rectangular with some lots having an irregular shape in order to accommodate natural features. All lots meet the Zoning By-law requirements for area and frontage and are of sufficient size to accommodate individual, private water and sanitary services.	
(g)	The restrictions or proposed restrictions, if any, on the land proposed to be subdivided or the buildings and structures proposed to be erected on it and the restrictions, if any, on adjoining land.	There are Provincially Significant Wetlands, Unevaluated Wetlands and Fish Habitat on the subject site. Development will be located outside the natural features and the associated setbacks.	
(h)	Conservation of natural resources and flood control.	Stormwater quantity and quality controls will be achieved using Low Impact Development techniques as detailed in the Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report.	
(i)	The adequacy of utilities and municipal services.	Water and wastewater services will be private. Each lot will have its own well and septic system.	
(i)	The adequacy of school sites.	The Upper Grand District School Board offers public elementary education at Laurelwood Elementary School located in Amaranth and secondary	

		education at Westside Secondary School in Orangeville. The Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board has an elementary school in Orangeville, St. Benedict's, and a secondary school in Caledon, Robert F. Hall. Students residing in the proposed subdivision would be eligible for bussing to all schools.
(k)	The area of land, if any, within the proposed subdivision that, exclusive of highways, is to be conveyed or dedicated for public purposes.	No lands will be conveyed for public purposes.
(1)	The extent to which the plan's design optimizes the available supply, means of supplying, efficient use and conservation of energy.	The property owner has upgraded hydro services on Second Line for construction of the existing dwelling. The upgrade to hydro services will be available to the subdivision lots and other properties on Second Line.
(m)	The interrelationship between the design of the proposed plan of subdivision and site plan control matters relating to any development on the land, if the land is also located within a site plan control area designed under subsection 41(2) of this Act.	The lands are not subject to site plan control.

4.2 Provincial Planning Statement 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS) went into effect on October 20, 2024. It is a streamlined province -wide framework that replaces the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 as well as the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2020. The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 notes that the Province has set a goal of getting 1.5 million homes built by 2031, increasing housing options and addressing housing affordability needs in order to support a diverse and growing population. The PPS provides overall policy direction to municipalities on growth management and land use planning. Municipal Official Plans and local decisions on planning matters must be consistent with the policies of the PPS. All decisions on land use planning matters that are made after October 20, 2024, must be consistent with the PPS 2024. The goal of the PPS is to regulate the development of land to maintain the long-term prosperity and social well-being of the province while protecting important resources and the quality of the natural environment. The following policies are relevant to the application:

2.2 Housing

- 1. Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:
 - b) permitting and facilitating:
 - all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including additional needs housing and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities.

The proposed plan of subdivision will provide building lots for detached dwellings that will be suitable for larger households. Purchasers of lots will have the opportunity to build custom homes to meet individual household needs including the needs of multi-generational families and those with accessibility requirements. A Market and Socio-Economic Study prepared by Urban Metrics has concluded that the purchasers of the lots will generally be families with children that prefer a detached dwelling in a rural setting over alternative forms of housing in an urban or suburban location.

2.3.2 New Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

- 1. In identifying a new settlement area or allowing a settlement area boundary expansion, planning authorities shall consider the following:
 - a) the need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses;
 - b) if there is sufficient capacity in existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
 - c) whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas;
 - d) the evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and where avoidance is not possible, consider alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;
 - e) whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;
 - f) whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance; and
 - g) the new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.
- 2. Notwithstanding policy 2.3.2.1.b), planning authorities may identify a new settlement area only where it has been demonstrated that the infrastructure and public service facilities to support development are planned or available.

The subject lands are currently designated Countryside Area on Schedule B to the Dufferin County Official Plan. An application to redesignate the lands to Community Settlement Area is being submitted to facilitate subdivision of the lands for residential building lots. Based on the County of Dufferin population projections set out in Section 3.2 of the County Official Plan, the Township of Amaranth population is estimated to increase by 3,800 persons over 30 years, from 4,500 in 2021 to 8,300 in 2051. Based on an average household size of 4 persons, 32 new dwelling will be required each year in Amaranth to accommodate this growth. The proposed plan of subdivision on the subject lands will make building lots available to homebuyers who require larger dwelling sizes. Services for the new dwellings will be private and expansion of public services is not required. Further the subject lands are not within a specialty crop area. The lands have been developed with a detached dwelling and there are natural features on the property which fragment the lot and reduce the area that can be utilized for agriculture. The lands have been previously leased to a farmer for hay production. That lease has expired and the lands are not currently in agricultural production. Further proposed settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae.

2.5 Rural Areas in Municipalities

- 1. Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by:
 - a) building on rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets;
 - c) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of housing in rural settlement areas.
 - g) conserving biodiversity and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature.
- 2. In rural areas, rural settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.
- 3. When directing development in rural settlement areas in accordance with policy 2.3, planning authorities shall consider locally appropriate rural characteristics, the scale of the development and the provision of appropriate service levels.

Growth and development may be directed to rural lands in accordance with policy 2.6, including where a municipality does not have a settlement area.

Approval of an application to designate the subject lands as a Community Settlement Area is required for the proposed subdivision. The proposal will create 23 new lots (24 lots in total) for new detached dwellings on private services. The lots will be able to accommodate large custom dwellings that are sought by homebuyers in Dufferin County. The small size of the development is appropriate for the location in a rural area and proposed lot sizes are sufficient to accommodate private water and private sewer services. The proposal includes conservation, restoration and enhancement the natural features on site and measures to mitigate impacts on the natural features during and after construction will be implemented.

2.6 Rural Lands in Municipalities

- 1. On rural lands within municipalities, permitted uses are:
 - c) residential development, including lot creation, where site conditions are suitable for the provision of appropriate sewage and water services.
- 2. Development that can be sustained by rural service levels shall be promoted.
- 3. Development shall be appropriate to the infrastructure, which is planned or available, and avoid the need for uneconomical expansion of this infrastructure.
- 5. New land uses, including the creation of lots and new or expanding livestock facilities, shall comply with the minimum distance separation formulae.

Private water and sanitary services are proposed. Lot sizes will be sufficient to accommodate private services. The proposed plan of subdivision complies with the minimum distance separation formulae as demonstrated by MDS calculations submitted with the application.

4.1 Natural Heritage

- 1. Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.
- 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.
- 3. Natural heritage systems shall be identified in Ecoregions 6E and 7E, recognizing that natural heritage systems will vary in size and form in settlement areas, rural areas and prime agricultural areas.
- 4. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in:
 - a) significant wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E;
- 5. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in:
- b) significant woodlands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and St. Marys River);
- d) significant wildlife habitat; unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or the ecological functions.
- 6. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in fish habitat except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

8. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas identified in policies 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 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.

Natural features on the site include unevaluated wetlands as well as a Provincially Significant Wetland, fish habitat and significant wildlife habitat. While not present on the subject site, there are significant woodlands and habitat for endangered and threatened species on adjacent properties within 120 metres of the subject property. Natural features on the subject lands except for a small wetland in the northeast corner of the site will be maintained. There will be minor incursions into the recommended development setbacks, in some locations. The property owner is proposing restoration of a previously altered wetland and planting native vegetation to enhance the disturbed buffer zones surrounding the wetland features.

An Environmental Impact Study prepared by GEI Consultants provides details on the natural features on site, direct and potential impacts due to development and proposed measures to mitigate these impacts. Opportunities for restoration and enhancement of the natural features are also identified. The report concludes that the proposed development is expected to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the site by addressing past disturbances, restoring impacted wetlands, enhancing vegetated buffers and implementing mitigation measures during construction. Educational signage is proposed to encourage stewardship of the natural areas and their setbacks by residents of the subdivision.

4.3.1 General Policies for Agriculture

2. As part of the agricultural land base, prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas, shall be designated and protected for long-term use for agriculture.

In October 2024, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) approved an amendment to the Dufferin County Official Plan (OPA 3). One of the effects of the Amendment was to redesignate much of the land in the Township of Amaranth, including the subject property, from Rural Lands to Prime Agricultural Area. The subject property is not included in a Specialty Crop Area. The current use of the property is for a detached dwelling. The property owner has previously leased 7.2 ha to a local farmer for hay production. The term of the lease has expired and the lease will not be renewed. A small area (0.558 ha) at the southeast corner of the property is leased for hydro equipment. The subject property is not currently being utilized for agricultural purposes and fragmentation of lands due to natural features and existing development reduce their capacity for intensive agricultural operations.

4.3.2 Removal of Land from Prime Agricultural Areas

1. Planning authorities may only exclude land from prime agricultural areas for expansions of or identification of settlement areas in accordance with policy 2.3.2.

The criteria in policy 2.3.2 is met.

4.3 County of Dufferin Official Plan, Office Consolidation 2017

The Dufferin County Official Plan was adopted by County Council on September 11, 2014, and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on March 25, 2015. The County is currently conducting a Municipal Comprehensive Review which has resulted in 3 Official Plan Amendments. Two of the amendments (OPA #2 and OPA #3) were approved by the Ministry on October 9, 2024, and have the effect of updating the County's growth projections to 2051 as well as updating the schedules that show the County's settlement areas, land use and natural heritage, amongst other revisions to the Official Plan. The third Amendment (OPA #4) was adopted by County Council on Marh 24, 2024. Approval of OPA #4 from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is pending.

The County's Official Plan provides policies for matters of significance to the entire County including growth management, economic development and preservation of the natural environment and natural resources. Local official plans that provide more detailed land use planning must be in conformity with the County Official Plan.

The subject property is designated Countryside Area with a small area at the south lot line designated Provincially Significant Wetland on Schedule B to the Official Plan (Community Structure), as shown on Figure 3. The property is further designated Prime Agricultural Area on Schedule C (Prime Agricultural Areas and Rural Lands), as show on Figure 4. On Schedule E (Natural Heritage Features), the subject lands are shown as having a Provincially Significant Wetland as well as Woodlands along the southern property line and a watercourse that traverses the northern edge of the property and extends into the middle of the lot (see Figure 5). The property must be redesignated to Community Settlement Area to facilitate subdivision of the lands into 24 lots for residential use, as shown in Figure 6.

Chapter 3 of the Official Plan sets out policies for Growth in the County as well as policies for Urban and Community Settlement Areas. The majority of growth is to be directed to Urban Settlement Areas on full municipal services and, to a lesser extent, to Community Settlement Areas which are able to accommodate additional growth. Growth management objectives are found in Section 3.1. The proposal meets the following objectives:

e) Encourage opportunities for redevelopment, revitalization and intensification in appropriate locations and of a scale and character of development that is compatible with the community.

The proposal to subdivide the subject lands into 24 estate lots serviced by private water and sewer services is compatible with the rural setting in Amaranth.

h) Encourage the provisions of a broad range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of the existing and future residents of the County.

The Market and Socio-Economic Study prepared by Urban Metrics has concluded that the proposed estate residential lots will help to satisfy demand for large lots that can accommodate detached dwellings suitable for larger households including those with children as well as multigenerational households.

The County's population and employment growth forecasts guide planning decisions and help to establish land needs to accommodate growth. The growth projections provided in Section 3.2 have been updated through Official Plan Amendment #2. The projected population for Dufferin County in 2051 is 100,700. The County is responsible for allocating this growth to local municipalities. The Township of Amaranth population is projected to grow to 4,680 by 2031 and 8,300 by 2051. This represents an increase of 1,680 by 2031 and 3,800 by 2051 over the 2021 Amaranth population of 4,500.

The County's settlement structure is discussed in Section 3.3. The settlement structure consists of 3 urban settlement areas, Orangeville, Shelburne and Grand Valley. In addition, each Township has several Community Settlement Areas. Amaranth Township has three Community Settlement Areas: Waldemar, Laurel and Farmington. Policies for Community Settlement Areas are set out in Section 3.3.3. Policies relevant to the proposed Community Settlement Area on the subject lands are:

- d) community settlement areas will maintain a rural character and evolve as service and residential centres for their surrounding countryside areas where appropriate.
- e) expansion of the boundaries of a community settlement will only occur in accordance with the Municipal Comprehensive Review policies in Section 3.5 of this Plan.
- f) growth will be accommodated in accordance with the servicing policies of section 7.3

The owner is proposing to establish a new Community Settlement Area that will be developed at a density that will maintain the rural character of the area. Individual, private water and sewer services will be provided as per Official Plan Section 7.3 c). The establishment of a new Community Settlement Area is being requested outside of a Municipal Comprehensive Review.

The County Official Plan does not provide policies for the establishment of new Community Settlement Areas. Therefore, the policies for Settlement Area expansions, as set out in 3.5.1.1 have been used to evaluate the proposed Community Settlement Area, as follows:

 a) Sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth are not available within the county and within the existing settlement areas within the municipality in which the settlement area is located, through intensification, redevelopment and in designated Greenfield areas, using identified intensification target and density target;

Growth projections provided in Table 3.2 a) forecast that the population of Amaranth will increase to 8300 by 2051. This represents an increase of 3800 residents over 2021 population levels. Based on an average household size of four persons, an additional 950 dwelling units will need to be constructed over this 30-year time horizon or approximately 32 units per year. The proposed development will help to meet the demand for detached homes on large lots in Amaranth.

 the expansion makes sufficient land available to accommodate the forecasted growth not exceeding the horizon of this plan;

The proponent expects to sell approximately 5 lots per year. As such, the subdivision will assist in accommodating growth in Amaranth for approximately 5 years.

 the timing of the expansion and phasing of development will not adversely affect the achievement of the County's intensification target, and policies and the density target and policies for the designated Greenfield areas;

There are no designated Greenfield Areas in Amaranth Township. Further, the Market and Socio-Economic Study prepared by urbanMetrics has concluded that there is demand for estate-style dwellings from purchasers who require larger homes and cannot find appropriate housing in urban or suburban settings.

d) the proposed expansion is an efficient, sustainable, and logical extension of the settlement area and the existing or planned infrastructure, services, and facilities required to accommodate the forecasted growth, are suitable for the development over the long term, are financially viable over their life cycle, and protect public health and safety and the natural environment;

The proposed lots will accommodate private water and sewer services and are suitable for low density residential development in a rural area. Residents of the proposed development will access community services and facilities in Shelburne or Orangeville. Both communities are a 10 to 15 drive from the subject site.

 e) the land is physically suitable for development, considering any constraints to development, including topography, hazard lands, natural heritage features and areas, systems, natural resources and source water considerations, and the protection of prime agricultural areas for the long term;

The proposed plan of subdivision respects the sites natural heritage features and required setbacks with a few minor encroachments into the outer edge of the setbacks. There are no hazard lands on the site. The lands are not suitable for intensive agricultural as they are fragmented due the existing natural features and the existing dwelling.

 f) where applicable, the proposed extension will meet the requirements of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan;

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe has been replaced by the Provincial Planning Statement 2024. The proposal generally meets the policies of the PPS 2024. The subject lands are not within the Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan or Oak Ridges Morain Conservation Plan.

g) where the expansion is considered on agricultural areas, the lands do not comprise specialty crop areas, alternative locations have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternatives which avoids the agricultural areas, and there are no reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas; The subject lands do not comprise a specialty crop area.

h) the expanding settlement area is in compliance with the province's minimum separation distance formulae;

The proposed community settlement area is in compliance with the minimum distance Separation Formulae.

i) the transportation system can accommodate the additional volume of traffic and demand for services;

The Traffic Brief prepared by NexTrans has concluded that the existing road network can accommodate additional traffic volumes from the proposal. These additional volumes will be very light owing to the small number of lots proposed and expected resident population of the subdivision.

 a suitable plan for phasing, financing, and constructing of the infrastructure for the expansion is demonstrated;

Infrastructure including roads and stormwater management system will be constructed by the proponent. Water and sanitary sewer services will be constructed by purchasers of individual lots.

there is an adequate supply of land designated for employment within or in the immediate vicinity of
the settlement area to plan to maintain or move towards accommodating a minimum of one full time job
per three residents within or in the immediate vicinity of the settlement area;

Proposal does not meet this requirement.

I) the proposed expansion will not negatively impact cultural heritage resources;

There are no cultural heritage resources on the subject property or adjacent lands.

m) where appropriate, cross jurisdictional issues are considered;

The subject property is within the jurisdiction of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Grand River Conservation Authority. The proponent is consulting with both agencies on the proposal.

n) impacts from expanding settlement area on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to settlement area are mitigated to the extent feasible; and

The proposal meets the Minimum Distance Separation requirements.

o) in determining the most appropriate direction for expansions to the boundaries of the settlement area the policies of this plan shall be applied.

Not applicable.

An amendment to this plan will be required in conjunction with a local municipal official plan amendment that provides for the settlement area expansion.

An amendment to the County Official Plan to designate the lands as a Community Settlement Area is proposed. Further, an amendment to the Township of Amaranth Official Plan to designate the land Estate Residential is proposed.

Policies for housing and affordability are provided in section 3.7 of the County Official Plan. The following policies applies to the apply to the proposed plan of subdivision:

3.7 .1.1 Supply of Land for Housing

It is the policy of the County that:

- a) Local municipalities are encouraged to provide an appropriate range of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of Dufferin County as outlined below:
 - . Maintaining at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for minimum of 10 years through residential intensification, redevelopment and land which is designated and available for residential development.
 - ii. Maintaining at all times, where new development is to occur, that land with servicing capacity is available to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units in draft approved and registered plans or in cases of residential intensification and redevelopment, land appropriately zoned in the local municipal zoning bylaws and available for development or redevelopment.
 - iii. Working with proponents to ensure that a full range of housing types and densities, where appropriate, are provided to meet the anticipated demand and demographic changes. All forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being of current and future residents, including those with special needs will be encouraged.

The proposed subdivision will provide lots with capacity for private services that will help to meet demand for lots to accommodate estate -style detached dwellings in Amaranth Township.

Section 5.0 of the Official Plan provides policies for natural heritage and water resources. Policies for natural heritage features and their functions are set out in Section 5.3. Schedule E to the Official Plan is intended to identify the following known natural heritage features and areas:

- a) Provincially Significant Wetlands (which are designated on Schedule B);
- Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), including Earth Science and Life Science ANSI's;
- c) Woodlands; and
- d) Unevaluated wetlands and locally or regionally significant wetlands.

The subject property includes a Provincially Significant Wetland, as shown on Schedule B. The property is shown on Schedule E as containing Woodlands. However, mapping carried out by the GEI Consultants in 2024 determined that there are no woodlands on the subject property but there are woodlands located on adjacent properties, within 120 metres of the subject lands. Mapping also confirmed the existence of three unevaluated wetlands on the property and significant woodlands on adjacent lands. Further, the subject property contains fish habitat, habitat for endangered and threatened species and significant wildlife habitat. The County's policies for each of these features are discussed below.

5.3.1 Provincially Significant Wetlands

It is the policy of the County that:

- a) Provincially Significant Wetlands are designated on Schedule B, and will be designated in the local municipal official plans;
- b) No development or site alteration will be permitted within Provincially Significant Wetlands.
- c) The contiguous land adjacent to Provincially Significant Wetlands represents an area where it is likely that development or site alteration would have a negative impact on the feature or area. Development and site alteration will not be permitted on land adjacent to a Provincially Significant Wetland, unless the ecological function of the adjacent land has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions. For the purposes of this policy, the extent of adjacent lands will be defined as 120 meters. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) will be required for all development proposals within 120 meters of a provincially significant wetland. Prior to considering development and/or site alteration, the County and/or local municipality, in consultation with applicable Conservation Authority, will be satisfied that the EIS demonstrates that there will be no negative impacts on the Provincially Significant Wetland and the sustaining ecological and/or hydrological functions.

There are Provincially Significant Wetlands, the Whittington PSW Complex, located on the southern portion of the subject lands. The extent of the PSW was staked with staff from Grand River Conservation Authority in August 2024. An Environmental Impact Study prepared by GEI Consultants recommends a 30-metre development setback from the PSW to provide adequate protection from future development and occupancy. The proposed plan of subdivision respects the 30m development setback except for some very minor encroachments of roads and associated grading into the outer edge of the recommended setback. Six residential lots extend to the edge of the wetlands. The EIS recommends that all building envelopes on these lots, as well as above and below grade infrastructure, are located outside the 30m development setback. Ecological restoration where a lot intersects with a wetland setback is also recommended to enhance vegetative buffers between future dwellings and the wetlands.

5.3.2 Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species

Development and site alteration will not be permitted in or adjacent to habitat of endangered species and threatened species, except in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements.

There is candidate habitat for endangered and threatened species within 120 metres of the subject lands but not on the subject lands. These candidate habitats include breeding habitat for Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark and Eastern Whip-poor-will as well as roosting habitat for species-at-risk bat. As discussed in the EIS, there is no anticipated impact to the candidate habitat for Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark as the habitat is located on the east side of Second Line. The habitat for Eastern Whip-poor-will and species-at-risk bat is within existing woodland communities on adjacent lands. Recommendations to protect the adjacent woodlands will also serve to protect these habitats.

5.3.4 Woodlands

The intent of this Plan is to conserve existing Woodlands and vegetation and prohibit incompatible land uses that deter their long-term benefits. Woodlands are illustrated on Schedule E. Some areas may not be identified since the exact boundaries of mapped areas may change overtime. Development and site alteration will not be permitted within or adjacent to significant woodlands unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions through the preparation of an EIS.

The Environmental Impact Study notes that there is a significant woodland located south of the subject lands. This significant woodland is associated with the Whittington Provincially Significant Wetland. There are also other woodlands present within 120 metres of the subject lands. There are no significant woodlands or woodlands on the subject site and, as such, there are no direct impacts anticipated as a result of future development. The EIS recommends a 10-metre setback to the significant woodlands to the south to provide adequate protection from potential development impacts.

5.3.5 Wildlife Habitat Areas

Development and site alteration will not be permitted within or adjacent to significant wildlife habitat areas unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions through the preparation of an EIS.

Significant wildlife habitat has been confirmed within wetland areas on the subject lands. These include turtle wintering areas and terrestrial crayfish. Measures to protect and enhance the Provincially Significant Wetland and to restore and enhance unevaluated wetlands on site will serve to protect significant wildlife habitat as well.

5.3.6 Unevaluated Wetlands and Locally or Regionally Significant Wetlands

Wetlands that are not classified as Provincially Significant Wetlands are considered unevaluated wetlands or locally or regionally significant wetlands. Unevaluated wetlands and locally or regionally significant wetlands are identified on Schedule E, based on available information. Prior to development or site alteration within or adjacent to any unevaluated wetlands an evaluation will be required to determine its significance. Development and site alteration will not be permitted within any unevaluated wetland or locally or regionally significant wetland or adjacent land unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions through the preparation of an EIS.

There are 3 unevaluated wetlands on site. The Environmental Impact Study recommends a 15-metre setback from unevaluated wetlands and also provides recommendations to mitigate impacts to the wetland during and after construction. A small wetland is proposed for removal and a previously altered wetland is proposed to be restored and enhanced to ensure a net ecological benefit.

5.3.7 Fish Habitat

Development and site alteration will not be permitted in or adjacent to fish habitat except in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements.

There are fish habitat within the subject lands. The EIS identifies replacement of a culvert at the northeast corner of the property as having potential to temporarily disturb the White Whitten Drain and fish within it. Other direct and indirect fish habitat is located within the blocks that are reserved for natural features and no direct impacts on these habitats is expected. Further, the EIS recommends a 15-metre setback from fish habitat and other measures including a storm water management strategy that promotes infiltration and construction management practices that will mitigate potential impacts to fish habitat.

5.3.8 Watercourses

The intent of this Plan is to protect natural watercourses from incompatible development to minimize the impacts of such development on their function.

The White Whiten Drain runs along the northeastern corner of the lands. The proposal includes a crossing of this watercourse for access to the subdivision. Replacement of an existing culvert with a new one designed to municipal standards will be required. Replacement of the culvert may result in temporary disturbance to the channel.

5.3.9 Adjacent Lands

For the purposes of this Official Plan, adjacent lands are determined to include all lands within the specified distance of the boundary of natural heritage features as set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 – Extent of Adjacent Lands			
Natural Heritage Feature	Extent of Adjacent Lands (metres)		
Provincially Significant Wetlands	120		
Significant Habitat of Endangered	120		
Species and Threatened Species			
Significant Woodlands	120		
Significant wildlife habitat	120		
Significant Valleylands	120		
Fish Habitat	120		
Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest – Life Science	120		
Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest – Earth Science	50		
Unevaluated Wetlands	120		
Locally or regionally significant wetlands	120		

The Environmental Impact Study has considered all features on adjacent lands that are within the distances set out in Table 5.1

5.3.11 Environmental Impact Studies

Where the policies of this Plan require an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to be prepared, such an EIS will be prepared in accordance with the policies of the local municipal official plan and the requirements of this Section.

Before development is approved in the area subject to the EIS, the EIS will demonstrate that the relevant policies of this plan and the local official plan are met, and provincial plans where applicable. The EIS should also demonstrate the use will not have a negative impact on significant natural heritage features and related ecological functions.

An EIS will be prepared by a qualified professional and will include identification of the potential impacts from the proposed development and site alteration and will propose mitigation measures to appropriately protect and/or conserve the values of the associated natural features and areas. The EIS should also identify potential linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water and groundwater features to support the implementation of the County's natural heritage system.

An Environmental Impact Study has been prepared by GEI Consultants to evaluate the proposal against provincial policy, the County official plan, local official plan and conservation authority requirements. The report makes recommendations for appropriate development setbacks to the natural features on and off site, for restoration and enhancement of those features and measures to mitigate negative impacts that may result from construction. The EIS concludes that, if recommendations are followed, the ecological integrity of this site will be enhanced.

Policies for servicing of developments are provided in Section 7.3. Policies relevant to the proposed development are:

c) Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services or private communal sewage services and private communal water services are not provided, individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the longterm provision of such services with no negative impacts. In settlement areas, these services may only be used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development.

Municipal water and sanitary services are not available. The property owner is proposing private, individual water and sanitary services.

Stormwater management policies can be found in Section 7.3.2. Applicable policies are:

c) the County and the local municipalities will promote naturalized stormwater management facilities, constructed with gentle slopes. Applications for development will be required to be supported by a storm water quality/quantity management study. The planning and design of stormwater facilities should be undertaken in accordance with the Ministry of the Environment's Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual. Consideration should also be given to any applicable stormwater management guidelines or materials prepared by the applicable conservation authority.

A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report has been prepared for the application. Stormwater management is achieved using Low Impact Development techniques. Overland flow events up to and including the 100-year storm design event will be captured within the site using flat bottom ditches, culverts and existing water features on site. Events exceeding 100-year storm will be directed to the existing ditch on the west side of Second Line using ditches and culverts.

Policies for amendments to the County Official Plan are provided in Section 8.3.1, as follows:

It is the policy of the County that:

- a) applications to amend this plan will include a planning rationale report for the proposed change, prepared by the proponent. This will include, but not limited to, information regarding the proposed use, servicing, density if applicable, floor area if applicable, lot layout, site plans as appropriate and applicable. The county may waive the requirement for a planning rationale report for minor and/or site-specific amendments.
- b) Any specific official plan amendment procedures and supporting information requirements as outlined in the policies of this plan will apply in the consideration of the application and the completeness of the application, in accordance with the requirements of the planning act.

The requirements for a complete application were provided at the pre-consultation meeting. All required plans and studies are being submitted with the application.

- c) The county will consider the following criteria when reviewing applications to amend this plan:
 - i. The manner in which the proposed amendment is consistent with Provincial Policy Statements issued under the planning act, and prevailing provincial policy and regulations, and the policies of this plan;

The proposal is generally consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement 2024 and the policies of the County Official Plan.

ii. the impacts of the proposed amendment on the provision of and local demand for municipal services, infrastructure and facilities;

Private water and sanitary sewer services are proposed thereby not impacting demand for municipal services.

the impact of the proposed amendment on surrounding land uses, the transportation system, municipal services and community amenities and services;

The proposal includes subdividing the lands for 23 new residential lots. A Traffic Brief has concluded that the development will have negligible impact on local roads. Similarly, the small size of the development and projected population should not result in strain on community amenities and services.

iv. the impact of the proposed amendment on cultural heritage resources and or natural heritage features and areas;

The Environmental Impact Study has concluded that with recommended setbacks to the various natural features, appropriate mitigation measures, restoration of a previously removed wetlands and enhancement of natural buffers, there will be a net ecological benefit to the subject property and surrounding environment.

v. the impact of the proposed amendment on prime agricultural areas and agricultural uses;

The subject lands are developed with a single-family home in the central portion of the site, hydro equipment in the south-corner and contain a number of environmental features that impede intensive agriculture on the lands.

vi. the impact of the proposed amendment on the financial sustainability of the County and local municipalities; And

The proposal will have no impact on the financial sustainability of the county and local municipalities.

vii. any other information determined by the county, in consultation with the local municipality, and appropriate agencies, to be relevant and applicable.

All plans and studies identified at the pre-consultation meeting as being required for a complete application have been submitted.

d) where applications to amend both the county official plan and the local municipal official plan are required, the county will encourage the proponent to submit concurrent applications to amend both the county official plan and the local municipal official plan. For county official plan amendments that are determined to be primarily of a local significance, as determined in consultation with the county, the county may request endorsement of the local municipal official plan amendment by the council of the respective local municipality prior to the consideration of a county official plan amendment.

Although both a County Official Plan Amendment and local Official Plan Amendment are required, Township staff have requested that the application to the County be submitted and processed before proceeding with the local Official Plan Amendment.

4.3 Township of Amaranth Official Plan, Office Consolidation June 2018

The Township of Amaranth Official Plan was approved by Township Council on December 15, 2004. The fundamental principles on which the plan is based include accommodating new residential growth at the rate of 30 units per year, preserving quality of life and the quality of the environment and maintaining the economic health of the Township through environmental and growth management policies.

The subject property is designated Rural on Schedule A to the Official Plan (Land Use and Transportation) as shown in Figure 7. A small area at the southerly limit of the property is designated Environmental Protection. On Schedule B (Environmental Features) the property is shown as having a Provincially Significant Wetland and wetlands located at the southern extent of the lot and a water feature along the northern property line, as shown in Figure 8.

Policies for Rural lands are provided in Section 3.2 of the Plan. Rural areas are described in Section 3.2.1 as being characterized as having soils in classes 4-7 on the Canada Land Inventory. Rural lands have traditionally been utilized for limited agriculture, hobby farms, residential uses on large lots, recreation and conservation uses and resource related uses. In addition, lot fragmentation has resulted in higher quality lands that are no longer capable of being farmed.

Policies for severance of Rural lands, set out in Section 3.2.4 of the Official Plan, limit the number of severances permitted to a maximum of 3 lots from an original Township lot of approximately 40 ha. In order to subdivide the subject lands into 24 lots for construction of new dwelling units, an Official Plan Amendment is required to redesignate the lands to Estate Residential. The lands to be designated Estate Residential include all proposed lots (1-24), the block reserved for the existing hydro equipment (Block 26) and the block that provides access to Lot 6 (Block 29). The area of the lands to be designated Estate Residential represents 19.364 ha of the site. Lands that are currently designated Environmental Protection are proposed to remain as such and additional areas of the site with natural features are proposed to be included in the Environmental Protection designation. Figure 9 sets out the proposed amendment to the Schedule A.

Policies for lands designated Estate Residential are found in Section 3.3 of the Official Plan. Section 3.3.1 states that the Estate Residential areas are intended to recognize existing estate residential lots in plans of subdivision and areas designated Estate Residential prior to June 16, 2006.

A site-specific Official Plan Amendment will be required to permit registration of plan of subdivision for 24 new estate residential lots.

Objectives for lands in the Estate Residential designation are set out 3.3.2. The objectives that apply to the proposed plan of subdivision are:

- b) To direct non-farm residential development to areas where similar development presently exists;
- c) To guide residential growth in the rural area in a manner that will be sustainable and preserve the rural character and natural environment of the Township.

The proposed plan of subdivision will provide opportunities for a neighborhood of new homes on large lots. The proposal will preserve, restore and enhance the natural features on site.

Permitted uses in the Estate Residential designation are single-detached residences on large lots or at low density (Section 3.3.3 a)).

The proposed development will consist of detached homes on large lots at low density.

Subdivision development policies are provided in Section 3.3.4. Polices that are pertinent to the proposed plan of subdivision are:

b) The following design principles shall apply to the development of estate residential subdivisions in Estate Residential areas:

i) Lot size and density shall minimize land consumption and reduce servicing costs while considering the maintenance of the existing character of the Township. In addition to the Development Criteria in Section 4.0, lot size, pattern and density shall be supported and determined by a detailed hydrological study and other studies as determined and completed to the satisfaction of Council to address planning considerations such as design, servicing of the site and stormwater management.

A Geotechnical Study, a Hydrogeological Study and a Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report have been prepared and submitted with the development application.

ii) Lots shall be well proportioned. The depth of any lot should not exceed six times the lot's frontage.

Proposed lot depths do not exceed six times the lot frontage.

v) Existing mature trees shall be preserved wherever possible. Reforestation shall take place so that a substantial portion of the area of each lot is tree covered.

Mature trees around the wetlands and at the periphery of the property will be maintained. A tree inventory and preservation plan has been prepared by Kuntz Forestry and is submitted with the development application.

vii) The natural topography, surface drainage pattern and vegetative cover shall be an essential consideration in the design and layout of roads and lot pattern and shape of proposed lots.

The plan of subdivision, lot shapes and road network have been designed to respect the site's topography, existing drainage pattern and natural features. A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report has been prepared with detailed recommendations for grading and drainage. The proposed stormwater management will generally retain the existing balance of flows between the Nottawasaga and Grand River watersheds.

viii) Access to individual lots or units shall be from internal public roads.

An internal road network consisting of two streets will provide access to all lots. The road network will connect to Second Line at the north end of the site. The existing driveways from second line at the south end of the site will continue to provide access to the existing dwelling. The property owner is proposing to grant an easement to the Township over the driveway for emergency access purposes.

Section 3.3.5 of the Official Plan specifies that Estate Residential lots shall be placed in an Estate Residential Zone which will reflect an appropriate range of uses for these lots. Site specific Zones may be used to reflect the results of the studies prepared in support of the development application.

An application to rezone the lands to Estate Residential will be submitted concurrently with the application for Official Plan Amendment.

Section 4.0 of the Official Plan provides policies for development and land division for all lands within the Township including policies for Environmental Management and Growth Management.

Policies for Environmental Management set out in Section 4.1. Policies which apply to the proposed plan of subdivision are:

4.1.1 General Development Criteria

The uses permitted by this Plan may only be allowed provided that:

- a) The long-term capacity of the site can support the use without a negative impact on the environmental features, functions and attributes such as water quantity and quality, natural vegetation, soil, wildlife, population, visual character and cultural heritage features;
- b) The cumulative impact of development will not have detrimental effects on the environment including air quality, water quality and quantity, vegetation, soil, wildlife, and the natural landscape;

An Environmental Impact Study has been prepared by GEI consultants and concludes that direct and potential impacts from development can be mitigated so that there will be no negative impacts to environmental features and their functions during construction or afterwards.

c) The site is not considered hazardous to life or property due to unstable soil conditions or possible flooding;

There are no hazard lands on the site.

d) Development meets applicable Federal, Provincial, County and municipal requirements including health and servicing requirements;

The proposal meets all requirements as detailed in the studies submitted with the application.

e) Development shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act.

The proposed development is generally consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

- 4.1.2 Stormwater management is to be addressed prior to development with the preparation of a Stormwater Management Report. All major commercial, industrial, institutional and residential development proposals shall be accompanied by a Stormwater Management Report prepared by a qualified professional to the satisfaction of the Township, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the appropriate Conservation Authority. The report shall be prepared in accordance with the Township's design criteria and the following:
 - a) the Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual (March 2003), or its successor, a prepared by the Ministry of Environment;
 - b) Best Management Practices (BMP);
 - c) a Stormwater quantity system which ensures that post-development run-off rates will not be greater than the pre-development run-off rates for storms up to and including the 100-year event;
 - d) the effects of development on watershed flow regimes including the interconnection with groundwater resources.

A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report has been prepared by GEI Consultants in accordance with the Township's design criteria and items a -d. The Low Impact Development techniques that are proposed will ensure that over land flow events, up to and including the 100-year storm design event, will be captured within the site using 0.5m flat bottom ditches, culverts and the existing modified stormwater management ponds. Events exceeding the 100-year storm will be directed using ditches and culverts to the existing ditch running parallel to Second line on the West side.

4.1.13 Environmental Impact Assessment

a) An Environmental Impact Assessment shall be required for any development and site alteration proposed adjacent to Provincially Significant Wetlands and the habitat of threatened and endangered species and within and adjacent to all other Natural Heritage Features as shown on Schedule "B".

Adjacent lands are defined as 120 metres for Provincially Significant Wetlands, 50 metres for the habitat of threatened and endangered species, 50 metres for significant forest, 50 metres for significant wildlife habitat, 50 metres for significant valley lands, 30 meters for fish habitat and 50 meters for Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest. An Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken in accordance with the policies of this plan shall include a description and analysis of the following:

- i) The proposed development;
- ii) The boundaries of the natural features and ecological functions of the area potentially affected directly and indirectly by the development;
- iii) The sensitivity of the features and functions to development;
- iv) The direct and indirect effects to the ecosystem that might be caused by the development;
- v) Any environmental hazards (i.e. slope, flooding, contaminants) that need to be addressed as part of the development;
- vi) Identification and evaluation of measures to avoid and minimize impacts and mitigation measures to be employed before and after development; and
- vii) A management plan identifying:
 - how the adverse effects will be avoided or minimized over the construction. And the life of the undertaking; and,
 - how environmental features and functions will be enhanced where appropriate and describing the net effect of the undertaking after implementing of the Management Plan.

The Management Plan shall establish the limits of buffers and/or setbacks adjacent to components of the *Environmental Protection*.

- viii) Any monitoring that may be required to ensure that mitigating measures are achieving the intended goals;
- b) Proposals for the creation of more than three lots partially within or adjacent to the *Environmental Protection* will require a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment. Three lots or less adjacent to the *Environmental Protection* will require the preparation of a scoped assessment.
- c) Detailed Environmental Impact Assessments shall be undertaken by qualified professionals and shall contain specific detailed information regarding the hydrogeological, hydrological and biological functions and linkages related to the following features:
 - wetlands;
 - portions of the habitat of endangered and threatened species;
 - fish habitat;
 - significant forest areas;
 - valley and stream corridors;
 - significant wildlife habitat;
 - Areas of Natural and Scientific interest and,
 - a key hydrologic feature within the Greenbelt protected countryside.

A detailed Environmental Impact Study has been prepared by GEI consultants based on a Terms of Reference obtained from the Township and the Conservation Authorities. The study identifies all natural features and their functions, wildlife habitat and fish habitat as well as direct and potential impacts from the proposed development. Detailed recommendations for mitigating impacts to natural features and wildlife are provided including recommendations for appropriate development setbacks to the various natural features and natural habitats on site. Additionally, the EIS identifies opportunities to restore a previously removed wetland and enhance the existing natural features with plantings. The EIS also recommends educational signage to encourage environmental stewardship.

e) Prior to approving a development on the basis of an Environmental Impact Assessment, Council, in consultation with the Conservation Authority and other appropriate agencies shall be satisfied that the proposed use will:

- i) not discharge any substance that could harm air quality, groundwater, soil, surface water and plant and animal life or human health:
- ii) be supplied by an adequate supply of water and that the groundwater taking associated with the use will not harm existing water supplies and plant and animal life;
- iii) not cause erosion or siltation of water course or changes to water course morphology;
- iv) not interfere with groundwater recharge to the extent that it would adversely affect groundwater supply for any use;
- v) not cause an increase in flood potential on or off the site;
- vi) maintain, enhance or restore the natural conditions of affected water courses and protect aquatic habitat
- vii) not encourage the demand for further development that would negatively affect wetland function or contiguous wetland areas; and,
- viii) enhance and restore endangered terrestrial and aquatic habitat were appropriate and feasible.

In addition, the Environmental Impact Assessment shall demonstrate that there will be no negative impacts resulting from the proposed use on the significant natural features that are identified on Schedule B to this Plan.

The Environmental Impact Study concludes that with proper mitigation measures during construction there will be no negative impacts the natural features on site and those on adjacent lands. Further, by addressing past disturbances, restoring previously altered wetlands and enhancing vegetated buffers, the ecological integrity of the lands will be enhanced.

Additional development policies for lands designated Environmental Protection are found in Section 3.8.4 of the Official Plan. Relevant to the land designated Environmental Protection on the subject lot are:

i) A setback for development will be established for Environmental Protection and areas of physical and environmental hazard such as any areas susceptible to flooding and valley slopes, by the implementing authority wherever it may be determined that such setback is necessary to protect the ecological, educational or interpretive value of such areas.

In addition, a greater set back from the top of bank adjacent to the Grand River will be established to maintain the natural landscape of the valley.

The Environmental Impact Study provides a recommended setback to all natural features. The proposed plan of subdivision respects the recommended setbacks except for very minor encroachments into the out edges of the setback. The total area of the proposed encroachment is 0.14 ha.

j) Natural wetlands that are locally significant or have yet to be evaluated should be protected from development. Development adjacent to natural wetlands show only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it will not result in any negative impact on the wetland.

There will be no development within the Provincially Significant Wetland. One small, unevaluated wetland with an area of 0.03 ha at the northeast property line is proposed for removal. The EIS concludes that there will be no negative impact to the wetlands if all mitigation measures are implemented. Further, restoration of a previously altered wetland is proposed as well as restoration of previously disturbed buffer zones surrounding wetland features to help reinstate the ecological integrity of these features.

Growth Management policies are found in Section 4.2. Policies that are relevant to the proposal are:

4.2.2 Residential Growth in the Township shall occur at a rate of approximately 25 units per year. Plans of subdivision may be phased and creation of lots by consent may be withheld to ensure that this rate of growth is not exceeded and does not occur in one area of the Township. The Township shall prepare an annual report to monitor this policy.

The proposed plan of subdivision will contribute to meeting the Town's growth targets. Individual lots will be offered for sale to purchasers who wish to construct custom homes. The property owner estimates that sale of lots will proceed at the rate of 5 to 6 per year.

4.2.3 New growth in the Township shall be distributed between the settlement areas of Laurel, Waldemar and Farmington, the estate residential areas and the rural areas in the Township in accordance with the following guidelines:

Communities 80 percent
Estate Residential Areas 10 percent
Rural and Agricultural Areas 10 percent

The proposed subdivision will provide new estate residential lots.

- 4.2.4 Within this Plan there are land division policies that apply to the various land use designations. The following policies apply to all land division in the Township:
 - a) Ribbon or strip development shall not be permitted;
 - b) The size and configuration of new lots shall be subject to the requirements of this Plan and the implementing Zoning By-law;
 - c) New lots created by consent and plans of subdivision must satisfy other applicable requirements of this Plan and the following criteria:
 - i) The location, design, size and density of lots shall retain the open rural landscape and protect natural heritage features;
 - ii) The design is in harmony with the natural heritage features, neighbouring development and the landscape.

The proposed plan of subdivision is in the form of a traditional estate residential neighbourhood and does not represent ribbon or strip development. The subdivision will have an internal road network that will connect to Second Line as well as open space and nature trails. The lots have been designed to respect the development setbacks to natural features on the site and on adjacent land. Lot sizes are sufficient to accommodate private water and sewer services and provide sufficient rear yard amenity space outside of the development setbacks. The density of the proposal, lot sizes and subdivision layout will retain the rural landscape. Natural heritage features will be protected by incorporating appropriate development setbacks as identified in the Environmental Impact Study prepared by GEI Consultants.

- d) Consideration of new estate residential development within lands designated residential prior to June 6, 2006, shall include an assessment of:
 - i) the number, distribution and density of vacant lots in the Township;
 - ii) the additional lots that may be created in conformity with this Plan; and
 - iii) the consequences of the development of the lots about the Growth Management Objectives of this Plan.

The proposed plan of subdivision will contribute to meeting the Township's residential growth projections and to the variety of lot types available for sale. A Market and Socioeconomic Study prepared by UrbanMetrics confirms that there is unmet demand in Dufferin County for detached dwellings which are the preferred type of housing for many households, especially households that include children. Further, insufficient supply of detached housing has led to housing affordability issues within the County.

g) New lots will not be permitted on lands containing physical constraints to development such as poor drainage, flood susceptibility, steep slopes or any other physical condition that may jeopardize public health and safety.

The subject property does not contain hazard lands.

4.2.5 a) Private sewer and water supplies will continue to be the preferred form of servicing for small scale development outside of communities.

Private sewage systems and private wells are proposed for each lot.

4.2.6 The Provincial Minimum Distance Separation Formulae (MDS) will be used in determining appropriate minimum separation distances between new development and livestock operations and determining appropriate minimum distance separation for new or expanding livestock operations outside the designated settlement areas. Separation distances between livestock operations and residential uses shall meet the Minimum Distance Separation requirements. The Township's Zoning By-law will incorporate the Minimum Distance Separation Formulae (MDS) as zoning provisions applicable in the Township.

The proposed plan of subdivision complies with the Provincial Minimum Distance Separation Formulae. An MDS calculation has been submitted with the development application.

4.2.10 New development must be compatible with surrounding land uses. Proposals for development shall include an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the adjacent land uses including noise, odour, dust, traffic, the physical form of the development and the visual impact of the development.

The proposal to divide the subject property into 24 estate lots represents low density development that is appropriate in a rural setting. A Traffic Impact Study prepared by Nextrans Consulting Engineers has concluded that the impact of increased traffic from the subdivision will have negligible impact on local roads.

4.4 Township of Amaranth Zoning By-law 2-2009, Township Consolidation December 2010

The subject property is currently zoned RU (Rural) with a small area at the southern property line zoned EP (Environmental Protection). The property owner is proposing to rezone approximately 19.364 ha currently zoned RU to ER (Estate Residential) to correspond with the proposed Official Plan Land Use Designation. A further 10.724 ha will be zoned EP including all areas of the property that are currently zoned EP as well as the ponds/wetland features in the northern and central areas of the site and their associated development setbacks. No buildings or structures including accessory buildings or structures are permitted in the EP zone, apart from pump houses and buildings and structures for flood control.

Permitted uses in the ER (Estate Residential) zone are single detached dwellings and home occupations.

ER Zone regulations are as follows:

Regulation	Requirement	Proposed
Minimum lot area	0.6 ha	0.6 ha
Minimum lot frontage	30 m	43.21 m

All lots meet the minimum lot area and frontage requirements of the ER zone. Further, lots that will be subject to EP zoning on a portion of the lot, are large enough to accommodate a dwelling and accessory structures outside the area zoned EP.

5.0 Public Consultation Strategy

The Planning Act sets out public notice requirements for development applications including installation of public notice signs on the property and holding a statutory public meeting to allow members of the community to comment on the application. Notice of the public meeting is mailed by first class mail to all residents within 120 metres of the subject lands a minimum of 20 days before the Statutory Public Meeting.

If requested, the proponent will hold a Community Information Meeting in advance of the Statutory Public Meeting to present the proposal to neighbouring landowners. Invitations to the Statutory Public Meeting could be mailed by first class to all residents within 120 metres of the property or a larger area, if required. The intent of the Community Information Meeting is to provide information to those residents who could potentially be impacted by the proposal, seek public feedback and answer questions. The proposal may be revised based to address comments and concerns expressed at the Community Information Meeting.

6.0 Technical Report Summaries

6.1 Functional Site Servicing Report & Stormwater Management

A Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report (FSR/SWM), dated December 2024, was prepared by GEI Consultants Ltd. The purpose of the report is to provide site-specific information for the Town's review regarding infrastructure for storm drainage, sanitary sewers and water supply. The report provides a high-level review of the pre and post-development drainage conditions. The proposed development will be designed to meet conservation authority criteria for stormwater management as well as Ministry of Transportation (MT)) Guidelines and comply with Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) 2003 Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual. Low Impact Design (LID) measures are proposed to provide stormwater management controls including quantity, quality and erosion control.

6.2 Grading & Servicing Plan

Conceptual Grading and Servicing Plans, dated December 2024, were prepared by GEI Consultants Ltd. The plans illustrate the proposed lot boundaries, site access, servicing, swales and ditches, and the overland flow routes. The grading of the lands is also illustrated.

6.3 Geotechnical Investigation

A Geotechnical Investigation was completed by Canadian Engineering Services Inc (CESI) on November 4, 2024. CESI advanced 10 boreholes at depths of between 5.0 metres and 9.6 metres. Monitoring wells were installed in 5 of the boreholes. Material from the boreholes was analyzed to provide a general soil profile. The report concludes that conventional strip footings may be utilized for the dwellings. Based on water encountered in the boreholes, there appears to be an aquifer on the site at a depth of 2.0 metres to 8.53 metres and both temporary and permanent dewatering will be required for the proposed dwellings. Dewatering is discussed in detail in the Hydrogeological Investigation.

6.4 Hydrogeological Investigation

A Hydrogeological Investigation was completed by Canadian Engineering Services Inc (CESI) in conjunction with the Geotechnical Investigation. The report finds that most of the proposed development will have excavation depths below the ground water level and temporary and permanent dewatering will be required. There are no water supply wells, streams or creeks within the radius of influence of the dewatering activity. Water from the dewatering

is to be managed in the existing stormwater management ponds on site. As such, no negative impacts to existing groundwater quality or quantity are expected.

6.5 Traffic Impact Statement

A Traffic Brief dated October 24, 2024, was prepared by NexTrans Consulting Engineers. The brief was prepared to evaluate the sufficiency of the existing road network and the potential impacts of increased traffic from the proposed plan of subdivision on the road network. The report concludes that given the number of weekday morning and afternoon trips generated from the proposed subdivision, the development will be sufficiently accommodated by the existing road network and the impact on surrounding roads will be acceptable.

6.6 Environmental Impact Study

An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) dated January 22, 2025, was prepared by GEI Consultants. The purpose of the report is to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed development on the natural features and ecological functions of the subject property and adjacent 120 metres. The EIS addresses the Provincial Planning Statement and other applicable provincial policies and guidelines, the Dufferin County Official Plan, Township of Amaranth Official Plan and policies of the conservation authorities having jurisdiction. A Terms of Reference was approved by the Township, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Grand River Conservation Authority in spring 2024. The consultants carried out background review as well as field surveys and assessments. There were a number of natural features identified on the subject lands and on adjacent properties within 120 metres. These features include a Provincially Significant Wetland, unevaluated wetlands, woodlands, significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat as well as habitat for threatened and endangered species and a water course (White Whitten Drain). The report evaluates the direct and potential impacts of the proposed development on each of the natural features and recommends mitigation measures including appropriate development setbacks. A small unevaluated wetland is proposed for removal and a previously disturbed wetland is proposed be restored. Further, the report recommends enhancement of vegetative buffers with native plantings and concludes that if the recommendations for mitigation, restoration and enhancement are followed, the ecological integrity of the site will be enhanced.

6.7 Archaeological Assessment – Stage 1 & 2

A stage 1 & 2 Archaeological Assessment was conducted by Matthew Muttart of Archaeological Consultants Canada (ACC). The report is dated November 23, 2023. ACC conducted Stage 1 background research on the subject lands that indicated that the property has general archaeological potential due to its location on an early transportation routed (Second Line) as well as primary and secondary water sources on and near the property. ACC determined that most of the property had either been previously disturbed or was covered in low-lying, permanently wet marshes. However, 3.49 ha of the site was considered to retain archaeological potential and was subject to a Stage 2 investigation by test pit survey at 5 metre intervals. During the testing, this 3.49 ha was found to be heavily disturbed and no artifacts or other archaeological resources were found. Further assessment of the property was not recommended. The report was submitted to the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism and the Ministry entered it into the Public Register without technical review as evidenced by the Ministry letter dated December 20, 2023.

6.8 Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan

A Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan dated October 31, 2024, was prepared by Kuntz Forestry Consulting Inc. Kuntz carried out an inventory of all trees over 10 cm Diameter Breast Height (DBH) on the subject lands or within 6.0 metres that could potentially be impacted by development. Trees of all sizes within the road allowance were surveyed. Tree saving opportunities were evaluated based on minimum Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) distance. Nine trees on the subject site were identified for removal as they conflict directly with development or the level of encroachment into the TPZ would be intolerable and tree would not recover. The remaining trees (115 individual trees and 3 polygons) will be preserved and protected with tree protection fencing during construction.

6.9 Market & Socioeconomic Study

A Market and Socioeconomic Study was prepared by urbanMetrics and the report is dated October 22, 2024. The purpose of the study is to identify the need for the proposed development. The population and demographics of the subject site have been analyzed as well as the potential impact on soft services. Given Dufferin County growth projections that show the population of Amaranth increasing by 3,800 residents by 2051, the Township will need an average of 38 new dwellings per year between 2021 and 2051. The proposed subdivision of the subject property into 24 estate lots represents less than one year of needed housing supply. The proposed development will help to support growth targets. Since lack of sufficient housing supply is a major factor in housing affordability, the proposed development will increase supply of lots for residential development and help to address housing affordability issues in Dufferin County. The report concludes that the development will have minimal impact on services due to the small population that is anticipated. Further, the residents of the development would be expected to have lower need for social services owing to higher household incomes than the Township average.

7.0 Summary & Conclusion

7.1 Proposed Amendment to Dufferin County Official Plan

Redesignate lands currently designated Countryside Area on Schedule B (Community Structure) to Community Settlement Area. Lands designated Provincially Significant Wetland to remain designated as such.

7.2 Proposed Amendment to Township of Amaranth Official Plan

Redesignate 19.364 ha of land currently designated Rural on Schedule A (Land Use and Transportation) to Estate Residential. Lands to be designated Estate Residential include all proposed residential lots (1-24), the block reserved for existing hydro equipment (Block 26) and the access to Lot 6 (Block 29). Lands currently designated Environmental Protection (Block 27) to remain designated as such. In addition, the area of the lot that includes 2 unevaluated wetlands/stormwater management ponds and the area of the nature trail are proposed to be designated Environmental Protection. In total, 10.724 ha of the site will be designated Environmental Protection.

7.3 Proposed Amendment to Township of Amaranth Zoning By-law 2-2009

The amendment to Zoning By-law 2-2009 will rezone land that are currently zoned RU (Rural) to ER (Estate Residential). Lands to be zoned ER include all proposed residential lots (1-24), the block reserved for hydro equipment (Block 26) and the access to Lot 6 (Block 29). Lands currently zoned EP (Block 27) will remain in the EP zone and an additional 5.409 ha of the site will be placed in the EP zone including 2 unevaluated wetlands/stormwater management ponds and the proposed nature trail. All proposed lots meet the minimum lot frontage and area requirements of the ER zone.

7.4 Plan of Subdivision

Subdivide the subject site into lots and blocks to create a neighbourhood of estate residential dwellings. The development will be comprised of:

- 24 lots for detached dwellings including one lot (Lot 24) for the existing detached dwelling.
 - All lots to have minimum lot areas of 0.60 ha;
 - All lots to have minimum lot frontages of 43.21 metres.
- 1 block (Block 26) reserved for existing hydro equipment.
- 3 blocks (Block 25, 27 and 28) reserved for natural heritage features.
- 1 block (Block 29) to provide access to Lot 6.
- 2 new roads (Road A and B) to be assumed and maintained by the municipality.

7.5 Conclusion

The proposed amendments to the County of Dufferin Official Plan, the Township of Amaranth Official Plan and the Township of Amaranth Zoning By-law to permit subdivision of the existing lands into 24 lots for estate residential development are supported by the policies of the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 and the county and local planning policies. The proposal represents good land use planning because:

- 1. The proposed plan of subdivision will increase the supply of residential lots available for sale and contribute to meeting the County and Township's growth targets.
- The proposed lot sizes, private services for water and sanitary sewers and the density of the development are appropriate for the rural location.
- 3. Natural heritage features on the site and their ecological functions will be protected and enhanced, ensuring a high-quality natural environment for humans and wildlife to coexist.
- 4. The subject lands are of sufficient size and character to accommodate the proposed development.

Based on the foregoing, we recommend approval of the applications.

Yours truly,

William Oughtred

8.0 Figures

514504 2nd Line - Aerial Map 2023



Figure 1- Aerial Photo of the Subject Lands

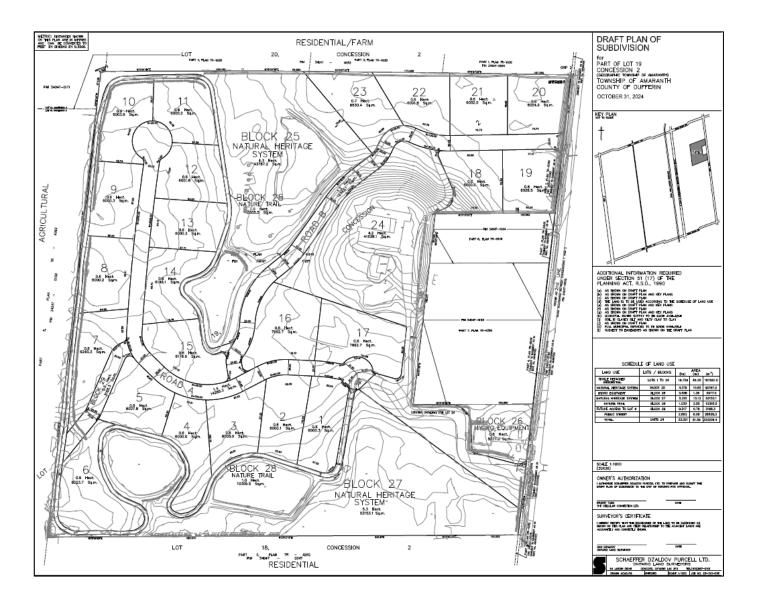


Figure 2 - Proposed Plan of Subdivision

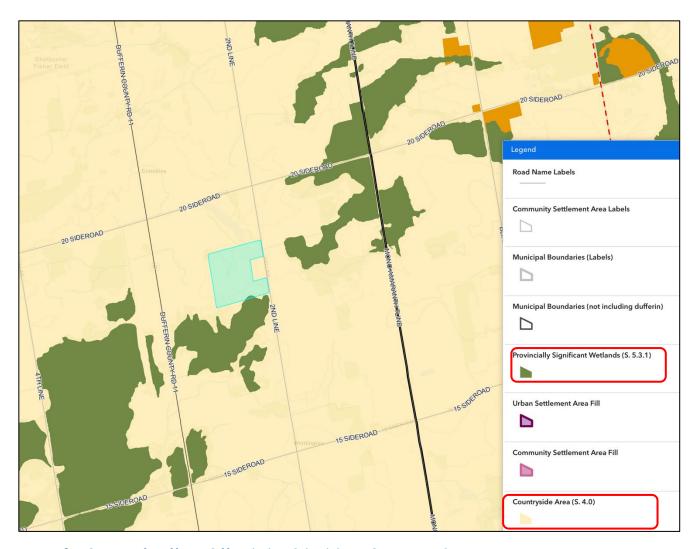


Figure 3 - County of Dufferin Official Plan Schedule B: Community Structure



Figure 4 - County of Dufferin Official Plan Schedule C: Prime Agricultural Areas and Rural Lands

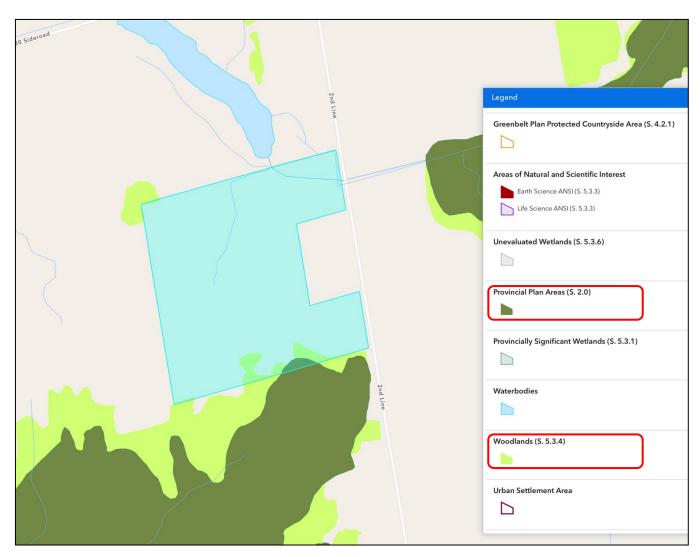


Figure 5 - County of Dufferin Official Plan Schedule E: Natural Heritage Features

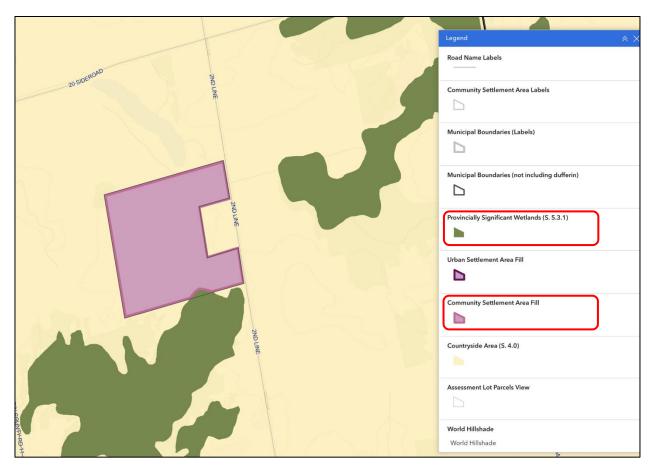


Figure 6 – Proposed Amendment to County of Dufferin Official Plan Schedule B: Community Structure

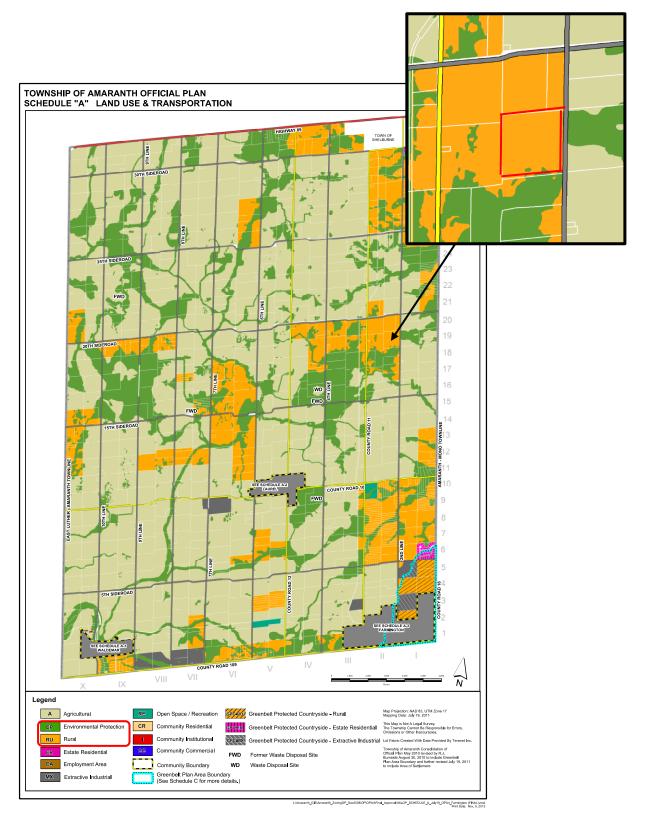


Figure 7 - Township of Amaranth Official Plan Schedule A: Land Use and Transportation

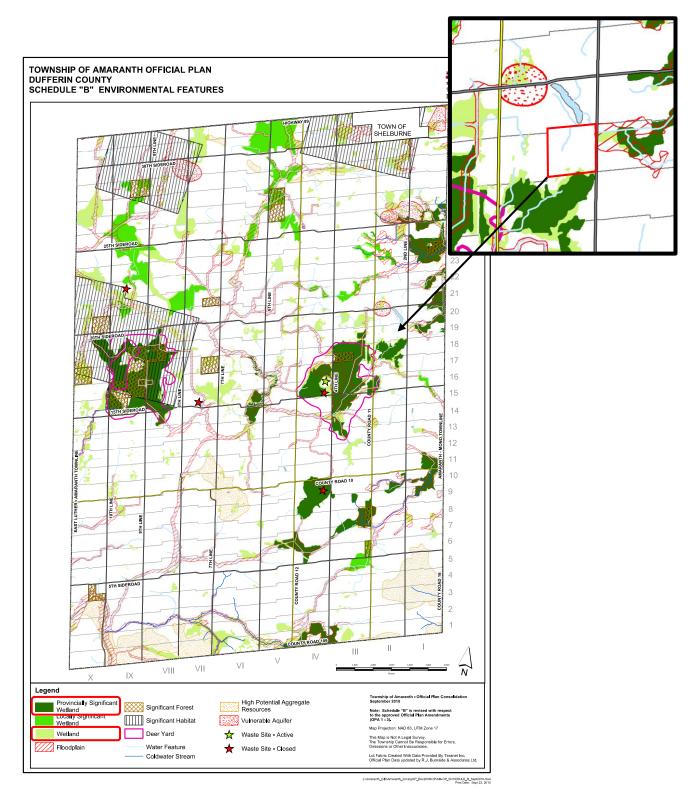


Figure 8 - Township of Amaranth Official Plan Schedule B: Environmental Features

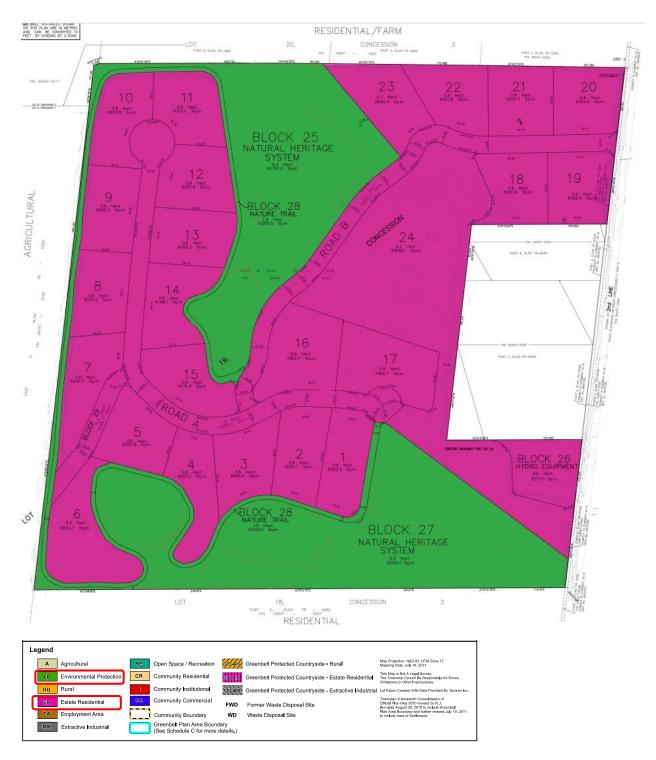


Figure 9 - Proposed Amendment to Amaranth Official Plan Schedule A: Land Use

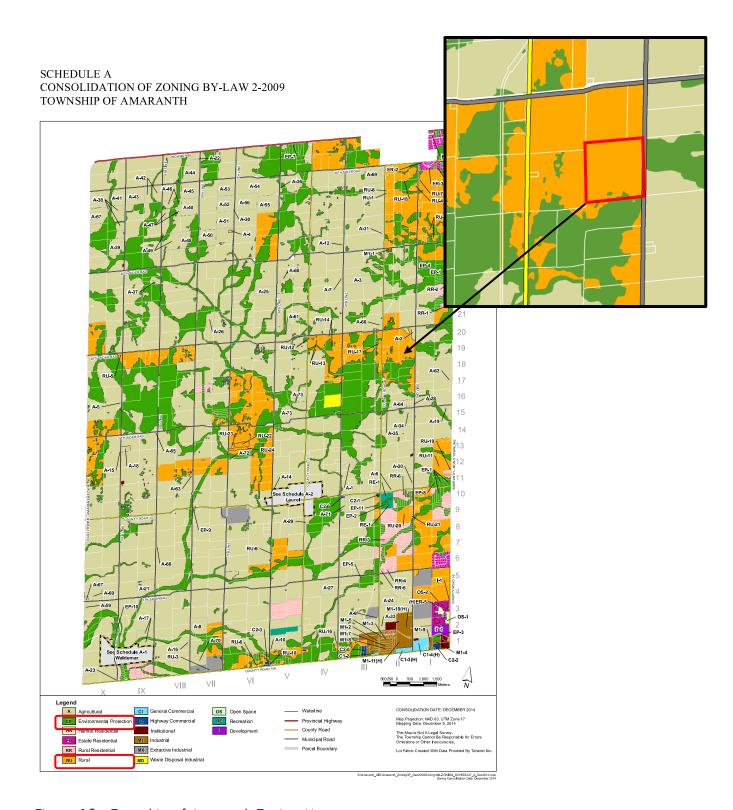


Figure 10 - Township of Amaranth Zoning Map

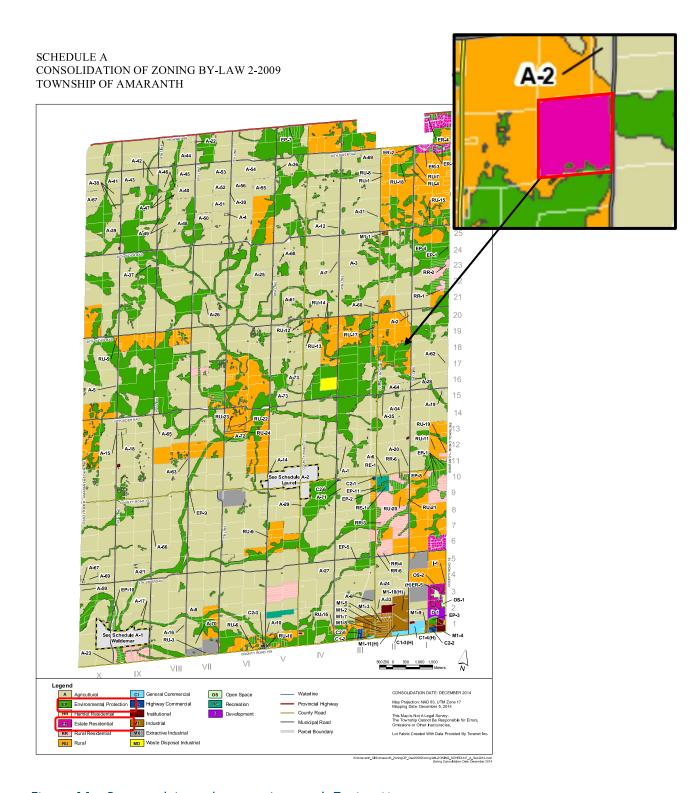


Figure 11 - Proposed Amendment to Amaranth Zoning Map