

**PLANNING JUSTIFICATON REPORT  
OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT, ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT & SITE PLAN  
APPROVAL**

**1675 St. John's Sideroad**

Weslie Creek Developments Inc.  
TOWN OF AURORA  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

**HUMPHRIES PLANNING GROUP INC.**

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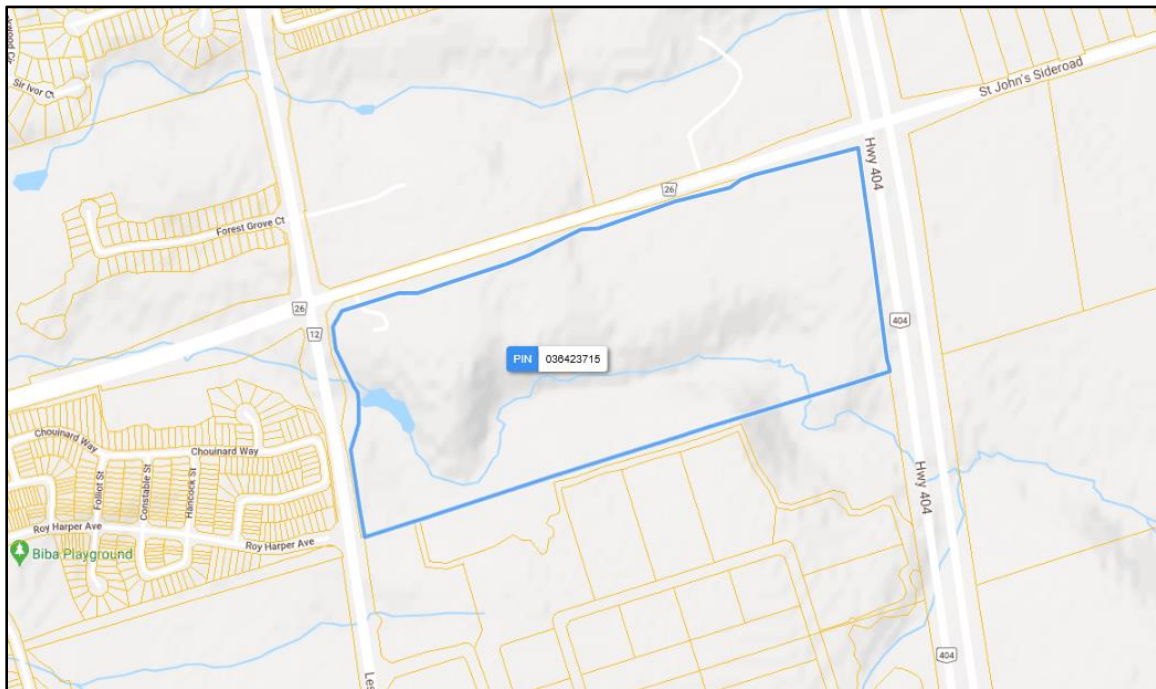
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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Humphries Planning Group Inc. has been retained by Weslie Creek Developments Inc. (the “owner”), with respect to the development of their lands legally described as Part of Lot 25, Concession 3, municipally known as 1675 St. John’s Sideroad, in the Town of Aurora (the “subject site”). The subject site is located within the Aurora 2C Secondary Plan Area and is designated as Business Park 1, Environmental Protection Area and identified as the location for a Stormwater Management Facility. Further, the subject site is currently Zoned Rural (RU) in accordance with in-force and effect Town of Aurora Zoning By-law 6000-17. The applicant has submitted applications for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval in order to facilitate the development of the site for a comprehensive Business Park including an industrial building, office building, gas station, and accessory commercial/retail uses.



**FIGURE 1 – LOCATION & CONTEXT MAP**

The purpose of this report is to provide a planning analysis in support of the proposed development and associated applications, demonstrating how the development implements key Provincial, Regional and Local land use policies and represents good planning.

FIGURE 2 – SITE PLAN

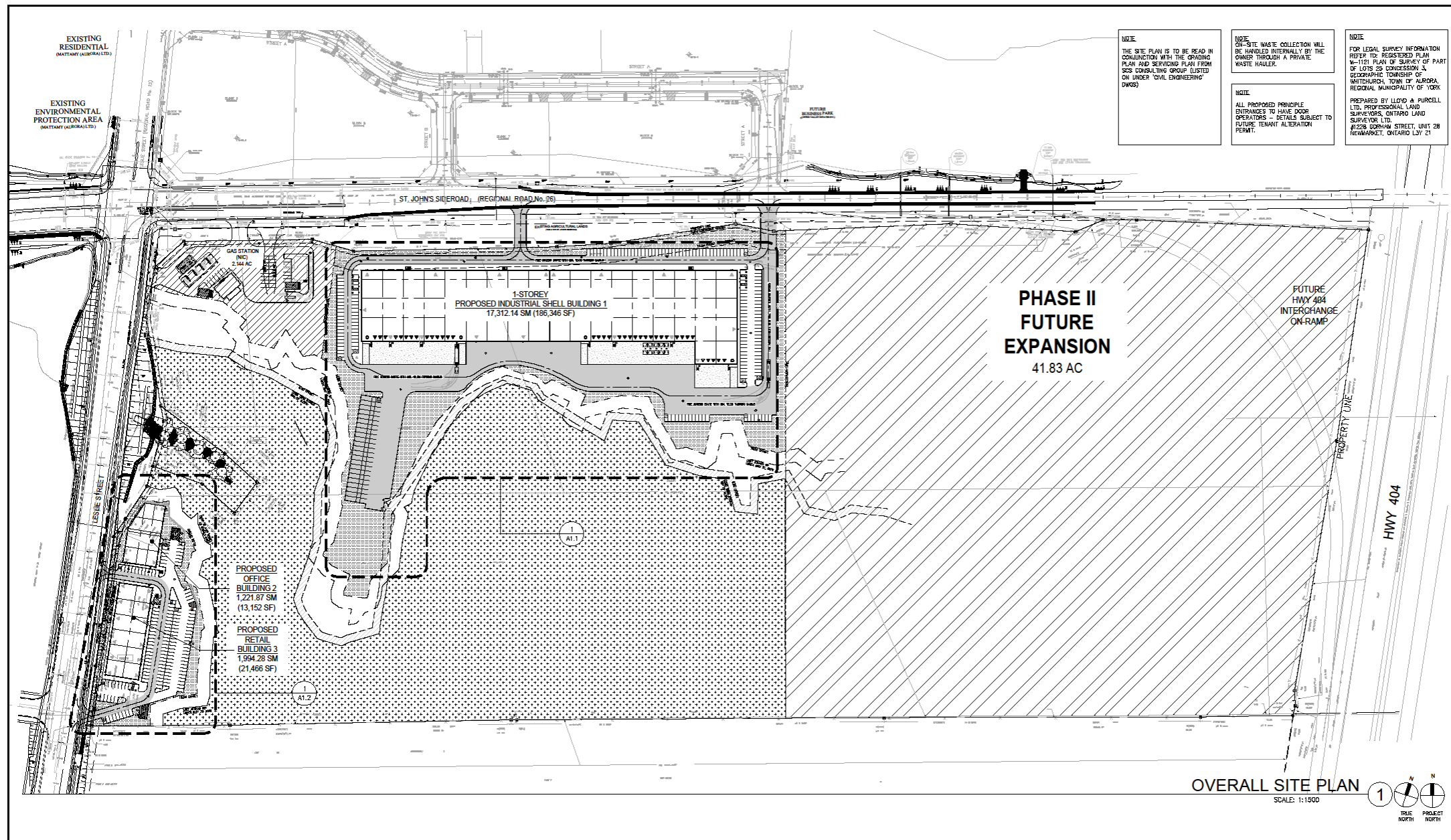


FIGURE 3 – TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY EXTRACT



**2.0 SITE AREA & CONTEXT**

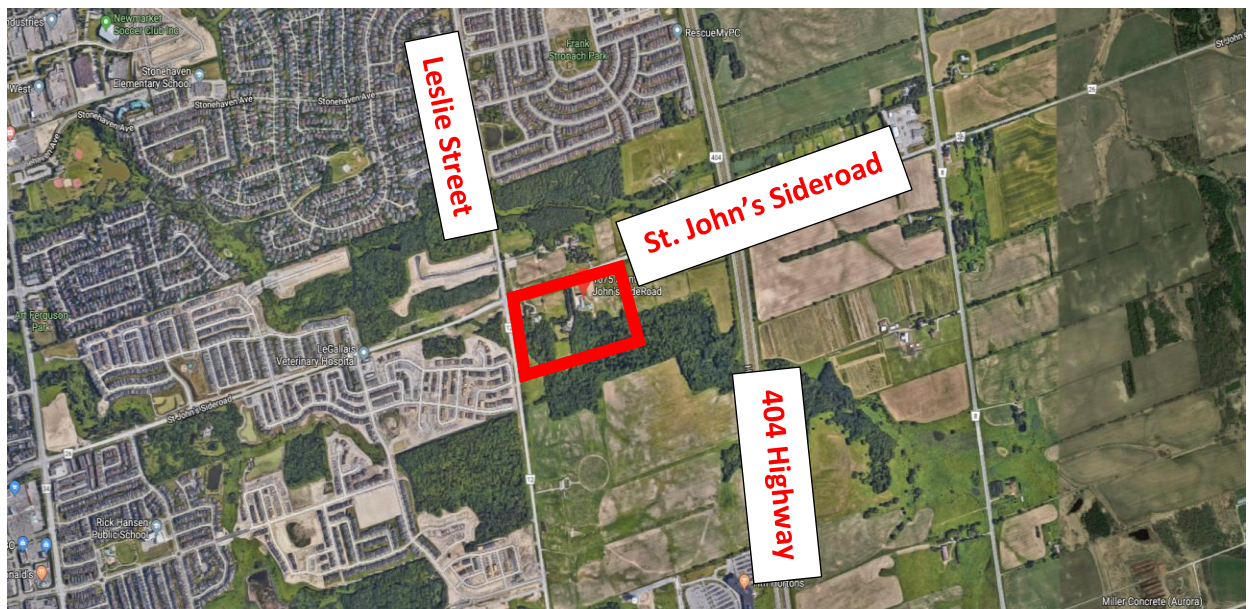
The subject site is located at the southeast corner of St. John’s Sideroad and Leslie Street, approximately 385.5m west of the 404 Highway in the Town of Aurora. The subject site is currently occupied by an existing single detached dwelling as well as various agricultural related buildings and facilities associated with its previous farming use. A Natural Heritage System (woodland, valley land & watercourse) affects most of the southern half of the site and creates a natural divide in development areas. The development limits have been established through consultation and technical evaluation with the LSRCA, as illustrated in Figure 3.

The surrounding area is comprised of the following land uses:

- West: Low-rise residential dwellings;
- South: Open space and undeveloped Employment lands;
- North: Draft Plan approved Aurora Mills industrial subdivision; and,
- East: Vacant employment land and Highway 404.

The subject site has variable topography that slopes downwards to the west and south of the site towards the valleyland. From the Leslie Street frontage, on the north side, the land slopes downwards towards the south-west. The two lowest points on the site are located along the edge of the creek and towards the south within the valley systems.

**FIGURE 4 – AERIAL ORTHOGRAPH**



The subject site is comprised of varied terrain with approximately half of the site covered by existing dense forest and a variety of native vegetation. The remaining area is indicative of

overgrown fields with mixed varieties of grasses resulting from the discontinuation of previous farming and agricultural related activities on the site.

### **3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

Applications for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval have been submitted to the Town of Aurora in order to fully implement the development proposal. These applications seek to recognize the site-specific use associated with the gas station as well as address the technical aspects of the development plan. The proposed development contemplates a comprehensive Business Park development that includes a large industrial warehouse building, a gas station and associated retail building, an office building and a commercial/retail building on the site.

The proposed gas station and industrial building are located along the northerly property limit and along St. John's Sideroad frontage. The gas station use has been strategically orientated along the south-east corner of Leslie Street and St. John's Sideroad to take advantage of a high degree of exposure and maximize accessibility for motorists. The proposed retail and office buildings are located along the westerly property limit and fronting onto Leslie street.

The limits of development have been established through detailed environmental analysis and through consultation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. The proposal locates development away from all sensitive natural heritage features and ecological functions. Further, a 10-metre buffer has been provided along the limits of the EPA as determined by the LSRCA and based on the characterization of the corresponding feature (See Figure 2).

A statistical summary of the development is provided below as follows:

<b>Total Area of Subject Site:</b>	<b>36.35 ha (89.83 ac)</b>
Gas Station Area:	8,703.12m <sup>2</sup>
Building 1 Industrial Gross Floor Area:	17,312.14m <sup>2</sup>
Building 2 Office Gross Floor Area:	1,221.87m <sup>2</sup>
Building 3 Retail Gross Floor Area:	1,994.28m <sup>2</sup>
Total Building Area:	22,254.99m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Gross Development Density:</b>	0.06 FSI
Net Development Density:	0.11 FSI
Building 1 Density:	0.092 FSI
Building 2 Density:	0.007 FSI
Building 3 Density:	0.011 FSI
Phase 1 Lot Area:	196,200.57m <sup>2</sup>
Phase 2 Lot Area:	167,357.53m <sup>2</sup>
Gross Site Area:	365,558.10m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Building Height:</b>	

Building 1 – Industrial	14.475m
Building 2 – Office	8.839m
Building 3 – Retail	7.315m
<b>Parking:</b>	
Building 1 – Industrial	177 spaces
Building 2 – Office	33 spaces
Building 3 – Retail	120 spaces
Truck Parking	23
<b>Loading Spaces:</b>	5 spaces
<b>Lot Coverage:</b>	11%
<b>No. of Private Parking Spaces:</b>	330 spaces

Proposed vehicular access to the site is achieved by a number of new entrances/driveways located along Leslie Street and St. John’s Sideroad. A right-in-right-out (RIRO) entrance (west entrance) and a full movement entrance (east entrance) is provided via St. John’s Sideroad to access the proposed industrial building. A total of two (2) RIRO entrances are provided to access the Gas Station via St. John Sideroad and Leslie Street. In addition, a right-in-right-out (RIRO) entrance (north entrance) and a full movement entrance (south entrance) is provided via Leslie Street to access the office and commercial building. The south entrance has been aligned with Roy Harper Avenue in order to optimize access distances and traffic operations.

3.1 Limits of Development:

As indicated above, the limits of development have been established together with the LSRCA. A two-part staking program was undertaken by the LSRCA in order to evaluate, confirm and delineate the boundaries of the dripline and valley feature. Most recently, on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2019, the LSRCA visited the site in order to independently verify the staked development limits. The development plan incorporates theses surveyed boundaries, as required.

3.2 Proposed Grading

Due to a number of challenges related to existing conditions and variable topography on the property, and based on the scale of site grading works proposed to facilitate the development, the approach to site alteration and detailed engineering design has been predicated on the following requirements and principles:

- Satisfy the Town of Aurora lot and road grading criteria including but not limited to:
  - Minimum Road Grade: 0.5%
  - Maximum Road Grade: 8.0%
- Provide continuous road grades for overland flow conveyance;
- Minimize the need for retaining walls;
- Minimize the volume of earth to be moved and minimize cut/fill differential;
- Match existing boundary grades;
- Contain storm drainage on site (where possible); and

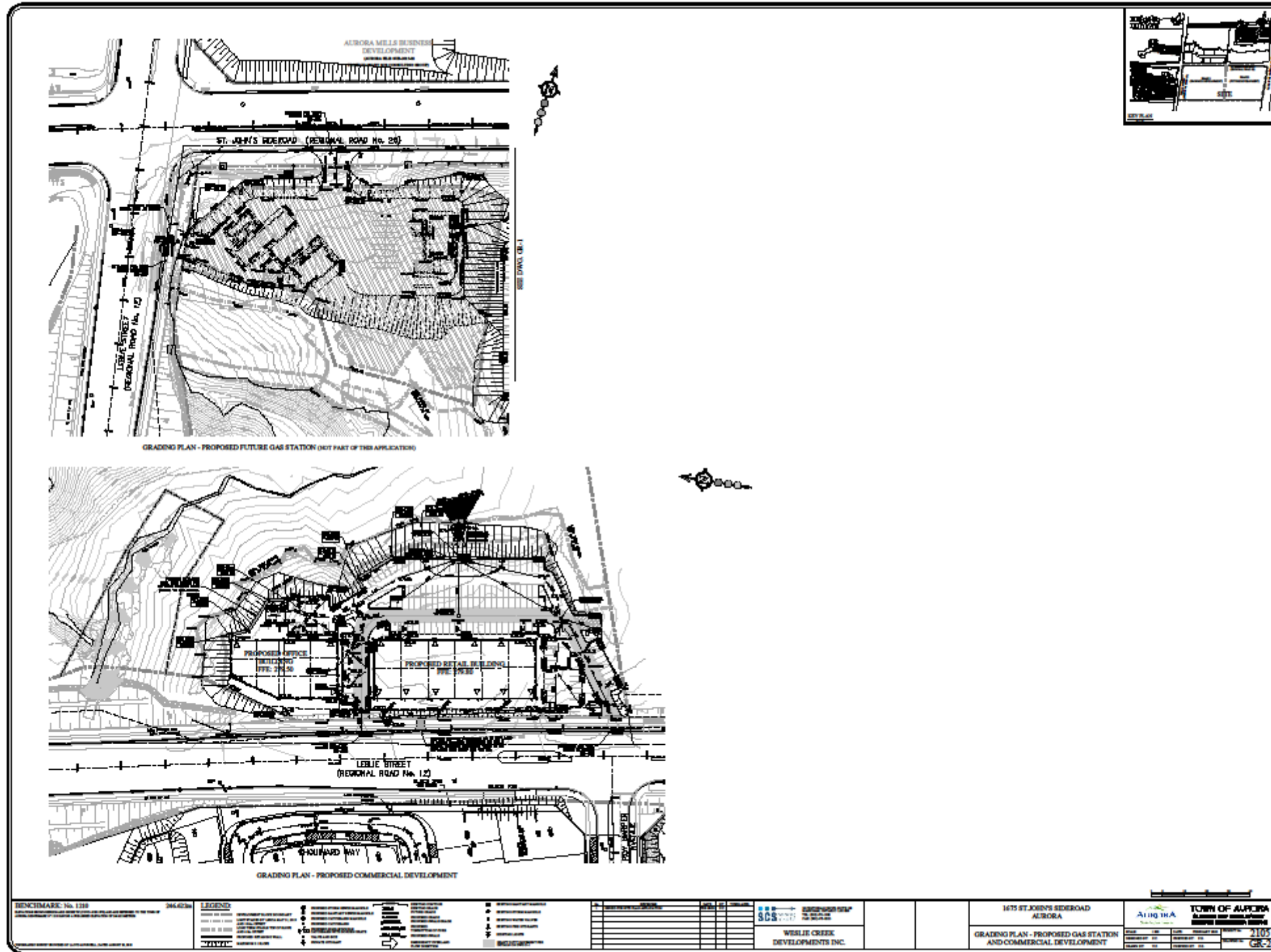
- Achieve the stormwater management objectives required for the site.

A detailed Grading Plan has been prepared by SCS Consulting Group Ltd. which accompanies this Report and forms part of the complete submission.

The proposed grading for the commercial development follows the existing west to east drainage direction and the storm drainage is designed to be contained within the site, with the overland flow directed to the east towards the existing creek. The proposed grading for the industrial component of the development plan drains generally from north to south and the storm drainage is mostly contained within the site, with minor uncontrolled flows draining to the creek and St. John's Sideroad. The overland flow for the industrial development is directed to the south towards the existing creek. Due to large grade differences between the industrial development and the future gas station (approximately 12 m), a 1.5:1 slope is proposed between the two sites. At the rear of the property, retaining walls have been proposed at a few locations to match the existing grades of the valley. Any retaining wall greater than 0.6m shall have guard rails (See Figure 5).



FIGURE 6 – PROPOSED GRADING PLAN (COMMERCIAL + RETAIL BUILDINGS & GAS STATION)



## **4.0 POLICY ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY**

#### **4.1.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (the PPS) is the guiding document providing policy direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development in the Province of Ontario. The PPS sets the policy foundation to regulate land use and development while also supporting the Provincial goal to enhance the quality of life for Ontarians. The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions affecting planning related matters be consistent with the policy statements issued under the Act, including the PPS.

The PPS calls for the building of strong communities as *“Ontario’s long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns”*. The establishment of healthy, livable and safe communities is facilitated through efficient development and land use patterns and the accommodation of an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment, institutional and recreational uses to meet long term needs.

Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns includes policies to sustain healthy, liveable, resilient and safe communities. Policy 1.1.3.2 (a) states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which: *1 “Efficiently use land and resources; 2 Are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion;*

The proposed development introduces a large format industrial warehouse building, an office building a gas bar and complimentary commercial/retail uses in an area that is experiencing significant employment and population growth and is planned to continue to intensify over time. The overall development plan will build upon the range and mix of existing employment type and commercial related uses in the area as well as facilitate improved access to essential public services facilities (i.e. gas station) required to serve local populations, businesses and visitors. The expansion of industrial, office and commercial retail infrastructure at this location represents a unique opportunity to maximize the utility of the site and take advantage of its prominent location at the corner of Leslie Street and St. John’s Sideroad. A high degree of visibility and exposure on a high traffic regional corridor (i.e. Leslie Street and St John’s Sideroad) as well as its proximity to surrounding residential and employment areas will contribute to a well-integrated development that compliments surrounding land uses and fosters synergies between spaces in order to establish complete communities. This pattern of development ensures the stability and viability of the development including the populations that it serves. Additionally, the proposed development will connect to existing municipal infrastructure and will not necessitate unjustified and/or uneconomic expansion of these services. As such, the proposal is consistent with the above noted policy.

Policy 1.3.1 states that planning authorities should promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) *Providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment and institutional uses to meet long-term needs;*
- b) *Providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;*
- c) *Encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities; and,*
- d) *Ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs*

The proposed development is consistent with the objectives of Section 1.3.1 of the PPS in that it is compatible with, and complements the type of employment uses contemplated by the Town. The Town of Aurora has a diverse economy with excellent transportation connections and a highly-evolved technological infrastructure which is likely to continue into the foreseeable future. The proposed development supports the Town's economic development by introducing new traditional employment type uses, complimentary commercial uses as well essential public service facilities that accommodates travel and recognizes the key linkages between economic growth and the uses and/or infrastructure that create the backbone of a healthy economy.

Additionally, the proposed development will facilitate employment growth, increase the available inventory and supply of industrial and business space, and introduces a business park at a scale and intensity that is compatible with other surrounding existing and future planned uses in the area. The development also provides for the necessary public service facilities to support the current and projected needs of the community (i.e. gas station). Therefore, the proposed redevelopment is consistent with Section 1.3.1 of the PPS.

Lastly, Policy 1.7.1 states that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

*"...Optimizing the long-term availability and use of land, resources, infrastructure, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities; ... and e Promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites."*

The proposed development has been organized to make the most efficient use of the site, while supporting the surrounding existing and future planned land uses in the area. It recognizes that the provision of public service facilities, like the proposed gas bar and commercial/retail building, is required to support long-term economic prosperity and aids in the continued evolution and development of the community. These types of service-based land uses are essential building blocks of the economy and improves access to the local infrastructure that workers and populations depend upon.

For the reasons stated above, it is our opinion that the proposed redevelopment is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

#### 4.1.2 GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE (2019)

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the “Growth Plan”), prepared under the *Places to Grow Act*, is a framework document that seeks to implement the Provincial vision for the establishment of strong, prosperous communities, to the year 2041. In May, 2017 a new Growth Plan was released, which builds upon the Growth Plan (2006) and provides an enhanced policy direction to guide development in the Golden Horseshoe region. The plan was more recently amended on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019. All decisions made with respect to any planning matter for lands within the Growth Plan area are required to comply with policies of the Growth Plan (2019).

The Growth Plan guides decisions on a number of matters including: transportation, infrastructure, planning, land-use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage and resource protection. Included in the document are population and employment projections for the entire Golden Horseshoe Area that are to be implemented by the various regional and local municipalities.

Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan outlines the guiding principles for how land is developed, resources are managed and protected, and public dollars are invested. The Growth Plan prioritizes intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and to support transit viability. The subject site is located within the 2C Secondary Plan and along the St. John’s Sideroad Leslie Street regional corridors, which has been planned for intensification and higher-density employment uses.

In 2014, an Environmental Assessment was approved for the widening and reconstruction of St. John’s Sideroad from Bayview Avenue to Highway 404 for a four-lane urban cross-section, including on-street cycling facilities, sidewalk, multi-use path and full illumination. The subject site formed part of the lands required to facilitate the expansion of infrastructure which has now concluded.

Accordingly, the subject site and broader area has been the target of investment through the provision of upgrades to existing infrastructure in order to support and accommodate forecast growth in the area. As such, the subject site and the limits of the 2C Secondary Plan is identified as a “*Strategic Growth Area*” and there has been a direct focus to improve regional infrastructure to prioritize, support and accommodate development in the plan area. The policies of the Growth Plan speak to how strategic growth areas are to facilitate intensification and higher density development, be community hubs containing a variety of public service facilities, and support and be linked by public transit and active transportation. It is recognized that the proposed development will contribute to the continuation of focused growth and intensification in the 2C Secondary Plan recognizing its role as strategic growth area.

Section 2.2.1 of the Growth Plan outlines the policies to guide how growth is managed. With respect to forecasted growth, it is stated that:

1. *Population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 will be used for planning and managing growth in the GGH to the horizon of this Plan in accordance with the policies in subsection 5.2.4.*

The growth forecast policies of Section 5.2.4 of the Growth Plan are to be implemented by the upper and lower tier municipalities through the completion of a municipal comprehensive review (“MCR”). Given that an MCR has not yet been completed by the Region of York or the Town of Aurora, the existing growth forecasts for the Region of York remain in effect for the subject site.

Policy 2.2.1.2 states the vast majority of growth will be directed to settlement areas within the built boundary, have existing or planning municipality water and wastewater systems, and can support the achievement of complete communities. The subject site is located in a designated business park area and within the delineated built boundary of the Town of Aurora. The site has frontage and access onto St. John’s Side Road and Leslie Street, both being regional arterial roads, and is in close proximity to the YRT/VIVA transit routes and passengers stops. The proposed development will support local populations with the provision of additional employment opportunities as well as provide complimentary service and commercial related uses in an area that is growing and intensifying. Lastly, the proposed development is located in an area with access and connections to full municipal services with capacity. As such, the proposed development will help the area function as a complete community, and is therefore, consistent with this policy objective.

Policy 2.2.1.4 adds that complete communities will feature a diverse mix of land uses, including the convenient access to local stores and services. The development concentrates a mix of employment, retail and commercial uses on the site. Together, the overall development framework facilitates the creation of a compact urban form that serves the planned function of the broader business/employment area and complement one another. Specifically, the role of the gas bar provides an essential public service facility and critical piece of infrastructure required to support urban vehicular mobility and serve the everyday needs of people and businesses. The proposed development is expected to improve convenience and access to these types of facilities and increase their frequency along St. John’s Sideroad and Leslie Street, as the area continues to intensify.

Section 2.2.5.1 of the Growth Plan supports economic development and growth through a number of policies including making more efficient use of existing employment areas, ensuring the availability of sufficient land in appropriate locations to accommodate forecasted growth, and integrating and aligning land use planning goals and economic development strategies to attract and retain investment. The proposed development is consistent with the policy objectives of the Growth Plan as it establishes the type of uses contemplated for the employment area. The Region of York and Town of Aurora have both identified the subject site and surrounding area as being primarily employment in nature with secondary

forms of commercial and retail uses permitted to support the overall function of the employment area. The development of the site will help the Region achieve employment targets for the long term and improve the inventory and supply of employment and commercial-related space. The overall development framework and mix of uses supports a variety of business and economic activities. Further, the business park model promotes an efficient land use strategy that contributes to the diversification of the local economy as well as providing suitable locations for business to locate, thrive and leverage one another. Lastly, the proposed gas station is vital in the success of the broader business and employment area as it plays an important role in the rhythm of daily life and establishes a use that is incidental to and supports employment development.

Accordingly, based on the analysis above, it is our opinion that the proposed development is consistent with the growth management, land use and employment policies of the 2019 Growth Plan.

## **4.2 REGIONAL POLICY**

### **4.2.1 REGION OF YORK OFFICIAL PLAN (2010)**

The Region of York Official Plan (2010) (the “ROP”) designates the subject site and surrounding lands as “Urban Area” and “Natural Linkage Area”, per Map 1 – Regional Structure (Refer to Figure 5). The ROP provides a broad policy framework, addressing Provincial direction respecting land use planning and development. This includes the accommodation of population and economic growth through intensification and mixing of uses; providing opportunities for choice amongst modes of transportation and promoting human interaction and the opportunity for physical activity.

*Urban Areas* are planned and developed to be compact in urban form, contain a mixture of uses in appropriate locations, and support intensification, good urban design, increased public transit, and pedestrian mobility. Urban Areas forms an integral part and core of the Regions urban structure which includes the urban settlement area boundaries of a number of local municipalities including the Town of Aurora. The proposed development supports the development criteria of Urban Areas as it establishes uses that will continue to support anticipated population and employment growth and addresses the demand for higher density built forms as the Region matures and evolves into a more compact and diversified community.

Section 4.3 of the YROP articulates the Regions long-term desire to “*protect, maintain and enhance*” the viability of employment designated lands for employment land uses. It establishes a priority for the protection of strategic employment lands, including lands that are located in close proximity to existing or planned 400-series highways and suggests that strategic employment areas should be given priority when considering additional employment land designation. The proposed development recognizes the importance of the employment designated land as it proposes approximately 17,312.14 square metres of industrial space as well as 1,221.07 square metres of new office. These uses are indicative of desirable and high-quality employment uses that support economic growth and prosperity. It should be noted that the complementary commercial/retial use together the gas station make up a small fraction of the overall

development area and have been contemplated to provide the ancillary services needed to support industrial activities. Local retail areas and service commercial uses are key components of mixed-use communities and should be appropriately integrated into the land use fabric in order to serve the needs of the community and support the Region’s urban structure.

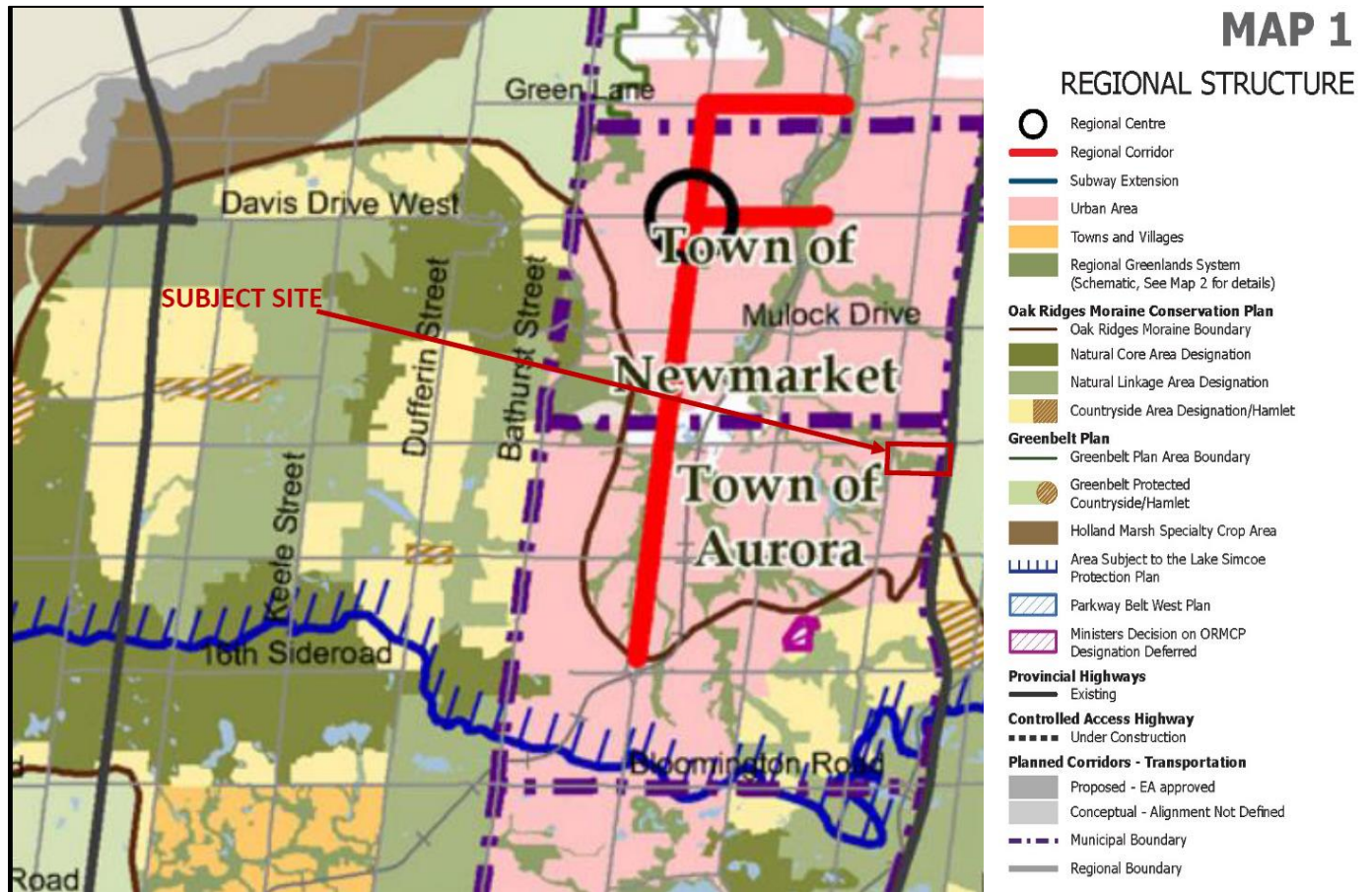


FIGURE 7 – REGION OF YORK OFFICIAL PLAN MAP 1 – REGIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 4.3.11 of the Regional Official Plan provides policies relating to ancillary uses on employment lands.

*“4.3.11 To allow a limited amount of ancillary uses on employment lands, provided that the proposed uses are intended to primarily service businesses in the employment lands and that ancillary uses collectively do not exceed 15 per cent of an employment area as defined in the local official plan.”*

The proposed development provides for a total of 1994.28m<sup>2</sup> of retail space (Building 3), whereas the site area is 196,200.57m<sup>2</sup>, creating a total of 1.02% of ancillary coverage. As such, the proposed development provides for limited retailing and commercial uses that are comparatively small in scale with respect to the overall development plan. It is important to note that the proposed retail component of the plan has been contemplated at a size and scale threshold for which it would be subordinate to the primary

industrial and office uses proposed for the site. Further, the proposed commercial and service-related uses, including the gas bar, have the purpose of providing complimentary uses that directly support the planned function of the broader employment area and offer small scale services that are incidental to a wide range of economic activities. The co-location of these secondary uses is seen to be appropriate and are deemed to provide ancillary functions to the employment area. They are not expected to destabilize or adversely affect the current and future viability and/or identity of the employment area.

Section 5.1.2 of the Regional Official Plan promotes meeting the needs of the Region's projected population & employment forecasts outlined in Table 1.

*"5.1.2 That the population and employment forecasts in Table 1 be used as the basis for planning of new development."*

**Table 1 – York Region Official Plan**

Municipality	2006	2016	2021	2026	2031
<b>Aurora</b> Population Employment	49,700 20,300	63,700 29,000	68,100 32,400	69,600 33,500	70,200 34,200
<b>East Gwillimbury</b> Population Employment	22,000 5,900	34,700 11,600	48,100 18,700	66,300 26,700	86,500 34,400
<b>Georgina</b> Population Employment	44,600 8,000	52,800 11,000	57,900 13,900	63,900 17,400	70,300 21,200
<b>King</b> Population Employment	20,300 7,100	27,000 9,700	29,900 11,000	32,500 11,400	34,900 11,900
<b>Markham</b> Population Employment	273,000 144,800	337,800 200,300	370,300 221,500	398,300 231,200	421,600 240,400
<b>Newmarket</b> Population Employment	77,600 42,100	88,700 47,600	91,900 48,700	94,500 49,000	97,100 49,400
<b>Richmond Hill</b> Population Employment	169,800 61,100	216,900 86,100	231,400 94,300	239,100 97,400	242,200 99,400
<b>Vaughan</b> Population Employment	249,300 162,200	329,100 226,000	360,400 248,900	388,800 257,600	416,600 266,100
<b>Whitchurch-Stouffville</b> Population Employment	25,500 10,900	49,400 19,200	55,800 21,900	59,100 22,700	60,600 23,000
<b>York Region</b> Population Employment	931,900 462,300	1,200,100 640,500	1,313,800 711,200	1,412,100 746,900	1,500,000 780,000

The proposed development seeks to introduce office and industrial uses to an otherwise underutilized parcel of land identified as located with the Region’s Urban Area and where the majority of the Regions growth is to be directed. The proposed development will contribute to the Region’s employment target by providing a range of employment opportunities within the business park development as well as ancillary commercial uses. The proposed development supports the long-term viability of the employment area and increases the availability and supply of employment land in the Urban Area recognizing the projected demand for the anticipated employment growth in York Region over the planning horizon.

Section 5.2 of the YROP emphasizes a number of principles and policies that set a high standard for new development and growth within its Urban Area. It is the Regions policy that the highest standard of urban

design be applied for new development projects based on a number of built-form criteria including compatibility with and transition to surrounding land uses. The relevant policies are provided as follows:

*“5.2.9 That retail, commercial, office, and institutional structures be carefully designed in a compact form and be pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive, and multi-storey where appropriate.”*

*5.3.10 That retail, commercial, office, and institutional structures shall be well designed, street-oriented and pedestrian scaled, and shall include, wherever appropriate as determined by the local municipality, mixed-use, multi-storey buildings, and public meeting spaces in order to support the planned urban structure and density targets of this Plan.*

The proposed development will take advantage of proximity to existing transportation corridors and major public road systems including Highway 404 to the west and YRT/VIVA transit along Leslie Street. The development introduces a compact, urban built form that strategically distributes a variety of employment uses and business-supportive secondary uses in order to create a well-integrated and vibrant business park and encourages density in a transit-supportive area. Further, the development introduces a number of buildings that have been designed with a high standard of urban design in order to complement and enhance the surrounding employment area. The massing and scale of the development has been deployed in a deliberate manner that is appropriate with respect to existing and future planned context of the area and provides for an appropriate height at a prominent intersection in the Town. Pedestrian connections are provided throughout the plan which improve access, permeability and creates a high-quality public realm. Through these design interventions and land use considerations, the proposed development supports the urban structure policies and density targets outlined in the Regional Official Plan.

In summary, the proposed business park development supports these policies of the YROP as it provides for employment growth in the Region and in an area intended for employment development. The lands are in close proximity to the inter-regional transportation network, public transit and introduces land uses that are compatible with the future objectives for the surrounding lands. Based on the above analysis, it is our opinion that the proposed development conforms to the relevant policies of the YROP.

### **4.3 LOCAL POLICY**

#### **4.3.1 TOWN OF AURORA OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Town of Aurora Official Plan was adopted by Aurora Council on September 27, 2010 and approved by the Region of York on June 28, 2012. The purpose of this Official Plan is to direct change in accordance with Provincial and the Region of York policy and manage growth in the short and long term.

Schedule 'A' – Structure Plan (Figure 7) indicates that the subject lands are subject to the policies of OPA 73 – the Aurora 2C Secondary Plan. The land use designations contained in Schedule 'A' correspond to what is provided for in OPA 73. Schedule 'A' also identifies a proposed full interchange at St. John's Sideroad and Highway #404.

Section 10 of the Official Plan outlines policies related to economic development and outlines the objective of ensuring that all employment lands are protected to accommodate future employment growth.

*"10.1 Economic Development Objectives*

- a. *Promote sustainable economic growth, local employment opportunities and diversification of the employment base.*
- b. *Promote the continued evolution of full and viable range of commercial centres, at the regional, community and convenience level and service commercial areas to help meet the material, social and employment needs of the people in Aurora.*
- c. *Promote opportunities for residents and employees to live, work and shop in Aurora.*
- d. *Ensure that employment lands are protected to accommodate projected employment growth.*
- e. *Recognize the important relationship between planning, economic development, and environmental preservation in sustainable development and healthy communities.*
  
- f. *Ensure that employment lands are used to their fullest and highest potential.*
- g. *Encourage private/public partnerships as a vehicle for achieving economic goals.*
- h. *Utilize the Town's Economic Development Strategy as an important tool to implement key policy goals and objectives."*

In accordance with Section 10 of the Official Plan, the proposed development will expand local employment opportunities and utilize an existing employment designated parcel by comprehensively developing it for business park development. The size of the subject site will allow for a type of development which will integrate a number of complimentary land uses in an efficient pattern to ensure that the site is used to its highest potential. Additionally, the co-location of uses on the site will allow for the diversification the local economy and promotes a variety of business activities in order enhance the viability of the employment area and sustain and attract investment. It should be noted that the development appropriately introduces limited retail and service commercial uses in order to support the everyday needs of the employment area and the people who work there.

The proposed development conforms to the Town of Aurora Official Plan policies as the subject site will be developed for a number of permitted uses that will contribute to the economic structure of the Town and create employment opportunities to accommodate projected growth.

4.3.2 OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT #73 – AURORA 2C SECONDARY PLAN

Official Plan Amendment #73 – Aurora 2C Secondary Plan (OPA 73) was approved by the Town of Aurora on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2010, and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on September 1, 2011. The purpose of this plan was to guide future land use and development decisions for the 2C area in the Town of Aurora. Schedule ‘A’ – Aurora 2C Secondary Land Use Plan (Figure 8) indicates that the subject land is designated Business Park 1 Environmental Protection Area and Stormwater Management Facility.

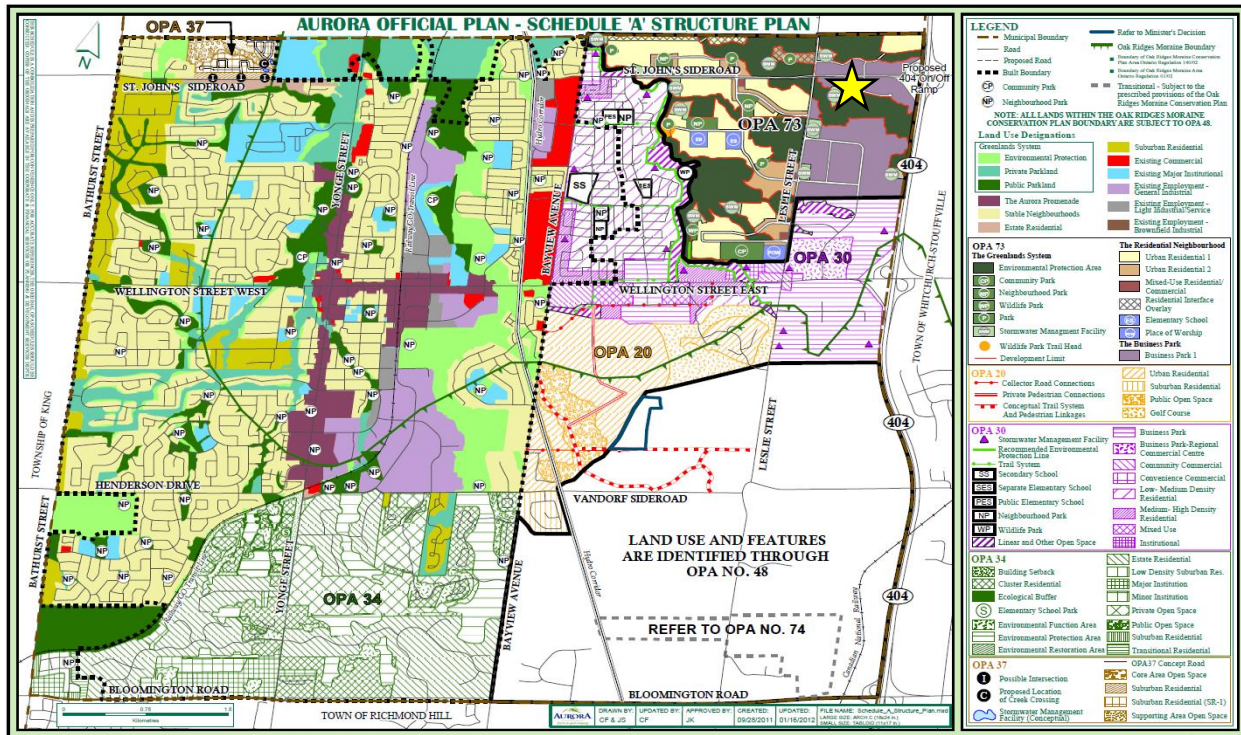


FIGURE 8 – SCHEDULE ‘A’ - STRUCTURE PLAN, TOWN OF AURORA OFFICIAL PLAN Subject Site

It is the intent of the Business Park 1 Designation to provide high quality and prestige employment generating land uses. According to OPA 73:

*“The Business Park represents employment lands as defined by relevant York Region and Provincial legislation and policy directives. The Business Park is considered a crucial component of the Town’s long-term economic development strategy.”*

Section 3.4.1 “Business Park 1” Zone list the following policies:

Intent:

- a) It is the intent of the Business Park 1 Designation to promote high quality and prestigious employment generating land uses. The implementing zoning bylaw shall:

- i. Maximize the advantages of the exposure to Highway 404, and promote business and professional offices in higher density and taller buildings to locate abutting the Highway 404 frontage. Structured parking is preferred in this location, where feasible;
- ii. Accommodate lower order prestige industrial uses, with larger building footprints and larger parking lots and loading facilities within the interior of the Business Park; and,
- iii. Closer to Leslie Street, recognize the challenges for large footprint buildings and large at-grade parking facilities on lands with relatively significant slope conditions by providing for a full array of permitted land uses, including a greater proportion of institutional uses, and of Ancillary Uses in a campus format and/or including smaller footprint buildings and structured parking, where possible.



**FIGURE 9 – SCHEDULE ‘A’ – LAND USES, AURORA 2C SECONDARY PLAN** Subject Site

The proposed development has been deliberately organized to locate Office and Commercial uses closer to the Leslie Street frontage while providing for large-format standalone industrial uses closer to the interior of the site and along St. John’s Sideroad where physical constraints are minimized and lot characteristics are more conducive to large-scale building footprints. Additionally, the proposed gas station use has been strategically placed at the south-east corner of Leslie Street and St. John’s Sideroad which benefits from a high degree of visibility and increased accessibility for motorists.

Multiple access points have been introduced along St. John’s Sideroad as well as Leslie Street in order to maximize the operational aspects of the development as well as to address the EPA lands to ensure their

long-term protection. Each of the proposed uses have been organized throughout the site based on their intensity of operations, hierarchy of land needs and interface with surrounding roadways. The proposed site orientation, layout and building design contributes to a high quality, cohesive and prestigious business park in accordance with Section 3.4.1 of the Official Plan.

Section 3.4.1b of the Official Plan outlines the permitted uses for the Business Park 1 designations as follows:

- i. *“Prestige industrial uses, including enclosed warehousing, limited product distribution services, research and development facilities, communications facilities, and manufacturing and processing operations deemed not to be obnoxious by reason of dust, odour, fumes, particulate matter, noise and/or excessive vibrations;*
- ii. *All types of business and professional offices, including accessory retail, restaurants and service uses where internally integrated as a component of an office building;*
- iii. *Institutional uses of all scales, including post-secondary educational facilities/campuses, government services, research and training facilities;*
- iv. *Hotels and convention centres including accessory retail, restaurants and service uses where internally integrated as a component of an office building;*
- v. *Trails and open spaces;*
- vi. *Buildings, structures and uses that are accessory to any permitted uses;*
  
- vii. *Stormwater management facilities and public and private utilities that serve the Business Park;*
- viii. *Ancillary uses that primarily serve the business functions in the Business Park. These ancillary uses include small scale retail and commercial uses.”*
- ix.

The overall development proposes a number of permitted uses including industrial, manufacturing, medical, day-car/child nursery, office, small scale retail, and associated parking. It is recognized that the proposed gas station use is not identified as a permitted use within the *Business Park 1* designation. As such, the subject OPA has the purpose and effecting of modifying the list of permitted uses to include a gas bar on the basis that it is complimentary use that provides an essential public service and serves as a critical piece of infrastructure required to support the community and employment area. Further, the addition of the gas bar use does not adversely impact the planned function of the business park.

Section 3.4.1 of the Secondary Plan outlines a number of general design standards and development policies intended to be used to guide development in the Business Park 1 Designation. It states:

- d. *Building heights within the Business Park 1 designation shall be as follows:*
  - i. *Within the Business Park 1 designation, the maximum height shall be 7 storeys or 28 metres, whichever is less; and,*

- ii. Council reserves the right to control the height of any development within the Business Park 1 designation. Heights will be implemented through the zoning by-law process.*
- e. Building density shall be a maximum Floor Space Index of 2.5.*
- f. All permitted uses shall be carried out entirely within wholly enclosed buildings.*
- g. The number of access points from individual lots to public roads shall be minimized. Shared access and internal connections between multiple lots is encouraged.*
- h. Parking requirements shall be accommodated within parking structures, wherever possible. Outdoor, at grade parking lots shall be adequately landscaped to ensure the high quality and prestigious character of development within this Designation is maintained or enhanced.*
- i. Where a rear or exterior lot line abuts a public road or Provincial Highway, public open space, special landscaping/building treatments shall be required to ensure that the rear and/or side building facades are attractive and/or appropriately screened from view. Council shall ensure conformity with this policy through the provisions of site plan approval.*
- j. Where any development within the Business Park 1 Designation abuts lands designated Environmental Protection Area, landscaping/building treatments shall be required to ensure that the use is appropriately screened and any undue adverse impacts are appropriately mitigated. In these locations, a landscaped buffer strip shall be included on the Business Park 1 Designation lands, and shall be landscaped to the satisfaction of Council. Council shall ensure conformity with this policy through the provisions of site plan approval.*
- k. All development within the BP1 Designation shall be generally consistent with the Area 2C Urban Design Guidelines which will be prepared, where required, prior to any further development approvals to the satisfaction of Town. Council may utilize the provisions of Site Plan Control to the maximum extent permitted by the Planning Act, including, without limitation, the control of building materials, colour and architectural detail.*
- l. Where possible and feasible, buildings and/or innovative grading/landscaping rather than retaining walls, shall be utilized to accommodate site slope conditions.*
- m. Council shall consider unique and innovative building strategies to facilitate development that accommodates the site slope conditions, and may consider alternative zoning, site plan and engineering standards in order to facilitate desired development.*
- n. No more than 20 percent of the total employment within the Business Park 1 designation shall be allocated for Ancillary Uses that primarily serve the business functions in the Business Park. Ancillary Uses are small-scale retail and commercial uses. These Ancillary Uses are permitted in stand-alone buildings on individual sites, or as part of a development that includes other employment generating land uses. Where these Ancillary Uses are part of a mixed-use development, the contribution to total employment shall be pro-rated as a percentage based on their overall employment contribution to the development. The implementing zoning by-law shall recognize the challenges of the relatively significant slope conditions adjacent to Leslie Street by providing for a full array of permitted land uses, including a greater proportion of the permitted Ancillary Uses, typically with smaller footprint buildings and structured parking, where possible.*

The proposed development conforms to the development policies of the Secondary Plan and *Business Park 1* designation as it contemplates building heights of less than 7 storeys. Additionally, each buildings have been designed to have a F.S.I below the maximum permitted threshold of 2.5 which constitutes an appropriate scale of development for the site and surrounding context. All proposed uses are contained within the buildings with limited outside storage being proposed for the industrial warehouse component.

The majority of development for the site has been contemplated to accommodate traditional employment uses including industrial and office development with small scale ancillary uses located in appropriate locations to provide additional support and complimentary functions within the business park. The ratio of ancillary commercial/retail in the context of the overall development framework is approximately 1.02% whereas the maximum permitted is 20%. As such, the proposed development has been deployed in a manner that respects the primary functions of the business park and recognizes opportunities for small-scale ancillary uses intended to facilitate the creation of vibrant mixed-use centres.

The Plan has been organized to accommodate a number of alternative access points, and where possible, locates surface parking areas away from high exposure road frontages including Leslie Street and St. John's Sideroad and towards rear and flankage yards. In order to improve the appearance of parking areas, the proposed Site Plan has incorporated a number of landscape and urban design treatments to assess potential visual impacts for pedestrians and motorists. The Site Plan contemplates generous setbacks along the perimeter of the proposed parking areas and proposes continuous planting strips along the road frontages. These design components, in combination with site grading and development setbacks, will minimize the visual impact into and out of the parking areas and along the stretch of roads.

The limits of development have been established through detailed environmental analysis and through consultation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. The proposal locates development away from all sensitive natural heritage features and ecological functions. A staking exercise was undertaken with LSRCA in order to delineate the boundaries of the dripline. Further, appropriate buffers widths have been provided along the limits of the EPA with their width determined by the characterization of the corresponding feature as outlined in the Environmental Impact Study which accompanies this submission.

As it relates to the proposed gas bar, given the subject site's exposure to St. John's Sideroad and Leslie Street, the station will be supported by local and regional traffic. The proposed gas station, including pump island canopy and convenience store are proposed to be located on the northwest portion of the site, closest to Leslie Street and St. John's Sideroad. The proposed reduced setback along the intersection will support an active retail street front and an appropriate interface with the employment buildings to the east and south. The size of the proposed gas station and convenience store is typical of newer gas stations and has been designed to comply all development technical guidelines and safety standards for gas stations in urban areas.

In evaluation of Section 3.4.1 of the Aurora 2C Secondary Plan, the proposed development complies with the general guidelines and building standards for the Business Park 1 designation through its site organization, urban design, landscape features, layout, and land use.

Section 4.1 of OPA 73 provides for urban design considerations for parking as it relates to the Business Park 1 designation. It states that:

*“Within the Mixed-Use Residential/ Commercial and Business Park 1, designations, parking in front shall:*

- be screened by landscaping;*
- allow for visibility of store fronts from the street by limiting the depth of front parking areas;*
- not create large gaps between developments;*
- allow for substantially uniform setbacks from the street;*
- minimize conflict with pedestrian circulation; and,*
- be coordinated with adjacent commercial developments.*

*Within the Business Park 1 designation, above-grade parking structures should be located to the rear of principal buildings and/or within the exterior side yard, although parking structures may be located in the front yard where the principal building is located along the Highway 404 frontage. Where it is not feasible or appropriate to locate parking in structures, either below or above grade, it is preferred that surface parking lots be located to the rear of the principal buildings and/or within the exterior side yard. However, front yard parking may be permitted, subject to appropriate landscaping and screening measures to mitigate the visual impact along the street edge.”*

From a functional perspective, surface parking cannot be completely eliminated along St. John’s Sideroad and Leslie Street frontage due to the location of the Environmental Protection Area’s, industrial parking requirements, the efficiency of land as well challenges related to the corner lot configuration and multiple street frontages. As such, parking areas have been located to the rear and flankage of buildings, to the greatest extent possible, with one row of additional parking area located along St. Johns Sideroad in order to accommodate the industrial warehouse building. To mitigate this situation, only one row of parking has been provided to limit the depth of front parking areas. Additionally, a 3.0 metre landscape buffer along the frontages of road with parking areas has been provided in order to ensure that the parking is adequately screened and to create an attractive visual image for passing vehicles and pedestrians. Detailed design aspects of the development proposal are outlined in Section 3.0 of this Report and in the Urban Design Brief prepared by Ware Malcomb which accompanies this submission.

For the reasons stated above, it is our opinion that the proposed development conforms to the intent and objectives of the land use policies contained within Town of Aurora 2C Secondary Plan pertaining to the proposed development of the subject site.

### 4.3.3 OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Section 4.3.3 of the Town of Aurora Official Plan discusses the intent and strategic directions of the Town's Official Plan document and outlines the basis to amend its policies. The following policies should be considered when Amendments are proposed:

- a) *It is a policy of this Plan that it should only be Amended when the policies of this Plan have been found not to address issues or alternatively, issues have been raised with respect to site specific proposals that must be addressed.*
- b) *When considering an Amendment to this Plan, Council shall understand the following issues:*
  - i. *The need for the proposed change as determined through an analysis of the existing and/or planned supply of similar uses in the market area versus the identified demand for the proposed use in the market area;*
  - ii. *The extent to which the proposed change will affect policies, objectives and principles of this Plan:*
    - *Planning principles and objectives shall not be changed outside of the context of a full review of this Plan; and,*
    - *Planning policies may be changed as long as the principles and objectives are met, and the intent of the Plan is maintained.*
  - iii. *Suitability of the proposed change, with respect to:*
    - *physical characteristics of the area, especially where Environmental Protection Areas are involved;*
    - *adequacy of transportation, utilities and other community services, including water supply and sewage facilities; and,*
    - *technical reports or recommendations from the Province of Ontario, York Region, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, and any other appropriate authority in response to the proposed change.*
  - iv. *Compatibility of proposed use with the surrounding area;*
  - v. *effect on population and employment projections and finances of the municipality;*
  - vi. *conformity with the York Region Official Plan;*
  - vii. *conformity with Provincial legislation and policies; and,*
  - viii. *consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement.*

An Amendment to the Official Plan is required to facilitate the development of the proposed gas station use. The corresponding Official Plan Amendment Application as well as Draft Official Plan Amendment (text and schedule) has been prepared under separate cover and accompanies this submission.

The Aurora 2C Secondary Plan does not explicitly prohibit the development of a gas bar, however, it does exclude the use from the list of permitted uses in the Business Park 1 designation. However, most notably, the Business Park 1 designation does permit for *“ancillary uses that primarily serve the business functions in the Business Park”*

Based on our interpretation of the above noted policy, it is our opinion that the proposed gas bar can be considered as a permitted use in the context of the business park development and represents an appropriate form of development for the subject site for the following reasons:

- The proposed gas station has been strategically located at the intersection of two regional arterial roads (i.e. Leslie Street and St. John’s Sideroad). This prominent intersection has a high degree of visibility and based on existing and future planned traffic volumes, it would benefit from maximum exposure and convenience of access. The proposed gas station will be supported by local and regional traffic.
- The proposed gas station represents a limited type of use in the immediate area and would function to serve the proposed development as well as the broader employment area. The broader area is currently underserved by gas stations with the nearest existing station located at 1175 Mulock Drive approximately 10 kilometres away. Typically, the frequency of gas stations may vary from municipality, however, it is not uncommon for multiple stations to be located at parallel corners of major intersections in suburban areas. As such, the intersection of Leslie Street and St. John’s Sideroads represents an opportunity to improve access to a required public service infrastructure.
- The proposed gas station use is a complimentary and incidental use to the business park development. It provides an essential public service for everyday life and is a critical piece of infrastructure required to support the community and broader area. Further, the additional use does not adversely impact the planned function of the business park. It has been strategically located to directly support the planned function of the business park and employment area and offers a necessary service that is incidental to a wide range of economic activities.
- The size of the proposed gas bar and associated convenience store is typical of newer gas station development. It is limited in scale and intensity with respect to the overall development plan and comparatively smaller than the other primary uses proposed for the site. Additionally, the site is surrounded by lands designated for traditional employment uses and there is a sufficient amount of designated employment lands intended to accommodate the employment forecast over the planning horizon. As such, the proposed gas station would not impact the overall supply of employment designated land.

- The proposed gas station has been properly sited in a compatible manner with the existing and proposed context. Site planning and built form design strategies have been implemented to mitigate any potential impacts associated with noise, traffic, odours and light spillage through the careful placement of buildings and their component parts. Additionally, there is a clear commitment from the proponent to provide for the highest level of safety standards with respect to the operation of the gas stations.

In accordance with Section 4.3.3 of the Official Plan, the proposed development and gas station use meets the criteria for evaluation of amendments to the Official Plan. As such, the proposed gas station use maintains the intent of the policies of the Business Park 1 designation and may be considered in keeping with the spirit of the Official Plan.

4.3.4 TOWN OF AURORA COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW 6000-17

The subject site is currently zone ‘RU – Rural Zone in accordance with the Town of Aurora Comprehensive Zoning By-law 6000-17. In accordance with Section 12.1, the following uses are permitted in the Rural (RU) Zone:

- Agricultural Uses;
- Dwelling, Detached;
- Dwelling, Secondary Suite;
- Greenhouses;
- Home Occupations; and,
- Place of Worship

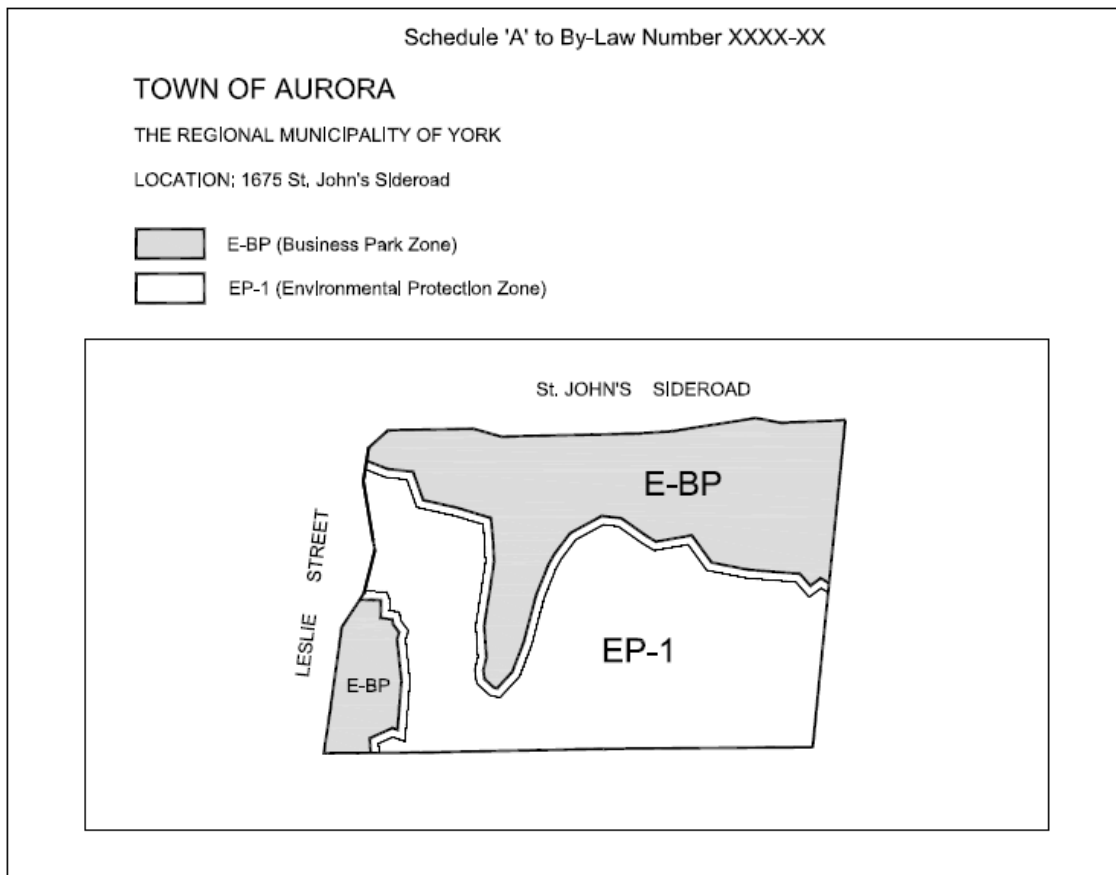
The proposed development will require a Zoning By-law Amendment in order to facilitate the development of the proposed business park and associated uses. The rezoning will replace the current ‘RU’- Rural Zone and replace it to the ‘E-BP’ - Business Pak Zone with site-specific exceptions, a more appropriate zone in recognition of the current and existing Official Plan designation. Additionally, the portions of the site identified as containing natural heritage significant will be zoned Environmental Protection Area and conveyed to the appropriate public authority for their protection in the long-term.

The development proposes the following uses:

Retail	Medical
Office	Industrial
Day Care & Child Nursery	Ancillary Trailer Storage
Warehousing	Gas Station/Gasoline Bar

The propose gas bar uses has been added to the list of permitted uses in recognition of its role as a complementary use and critical piece of infrastructure required to support urban vehicular mobility and serve the everyday needs of people and businesses within the employment area. The proposed redevelopment is expected to improve convenience and access to these types of facilities, addresses the current limitations in existing gas station services in the immediate area as well as increase their frequency along St. John’s Sideroad and Leslie Street as the area continues to intensify.

Lastly, a number of site-specific development standards have been proposed to fully implement the development plan. These provisions include minor reductions to the minimum lot area specifications with respect to various land uses as well as modifications to setback standards and building coverage ratios. Together, these changes represent minor exemptions to the numerical standards of the “E BP” zone category and are appropriate for the development of site. It is also important to note that no exceptions are being proposed for lands identified within the EP Zone and all development permissions continue to represent the prevailing standard and most restrictive policies.



**FIGURE 10 – SCHEDULE ‘A’ – DRAFT ZONING BY-LAW SCHEDULE**

A Draft Zoning By-law Amendment has been prepared and accompanies the application under separate cover. Notwithstanding the introduction of a gas bar to the list permitted uses in the E-BP zone, the development proposes a number of site-specific exceptions to the development standards in the by-law including the following:

<b>Exception</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Required</b>
Minimum Front Yard	5.0m (Buildings 2 & 3)	15.0m
Minimum distance to Environmental Protection Zone	6.0m	10.0m
Minimum distance to St. John's Sideroad	3.0m	9.0m
Minimum distance to Leslie Street	3.0m	9.0m
Landscaping strip adjacent to St. John's Sideroad	3.0m	6.0m
Landscaping strip adjacent to Leslie Street	3.0m	6.0m
Minimum Parking Requirement for an Office Use	33 spaces	43 spaces
Loading Spaces for Retail Use	1 space	2 spaces

## **5.0 SUPPORTING STUDIES**

A number of technical reports have been completed in support of the applications to the Town of Aurora. The main conclusions and recommendations of these studies have been summarized in the subsections below.

### **5.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

A Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment has been completed by ASI. Based on their assessment and findings, it was determined that the footprints of the structures, horse track, laneways, and roadwork related areas are considered to have no archaeological potential. According to the property survey, Standard 2B of the S & G, the disturbances noted at these locations are considered too deep and extensive to warrant further survey. The disturbed areas account for approximately 16% of the subject property. The Tributary of the Holland River East Branch comprises approximately 1% of the subject property, and permanently wet areas are considered to have no or low potential. Additionally, sloping terrain associated with the valley of the Holland River East Branch comprises approximately 3% of the subject property. Slopes greater than 20° are considered to have no or low potential. Finally, the balance of the subject property comprising

the horse paddocks and grassed, and treed areas are found to exhibit archaeological potential. These lands account for approximate 80% of the subject property.

## 5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT

### 5.2.1 PHASE ONE ESA

A Phase One ESA was conducted for the subject property by WSP Canada Inc. The scope of this Phase One ESA conforms to the requirements outlined in O.Reg. 153/04. The objectives of the Phase One ESA were to identify the likelihood of the presence or absence of PCAs on the Phase One Property or within the Phase One Study Area, and to identify the APECs and PCOCs from these PCAs. The results of the Phase One ESA are documented in this report and reflect site conditions observed at the time of the site reconnaissance. Based on the information obtained as part of the Phase One ESA, it is concluded that PCAs on the Site and/or within the Phase One Study Area resulted in the identification APECs on the Phase One Property. Based on the APECs identified during this investigation, associated PCOCs include metals and ORPs, PHCs, VOCs, OCs, PCBs, and PAHs. Based on the findings of the Phase One ESA, historical PCAs which could adversely affect environmental condition of the Site were identified; therefore, a Phase Two ESA would be required to characterize soil and groundwater quality.

### 5.2.2 PHASE TWO ESA

A subsequent Phase Two ESA was conducted on the subject property by WSP Canada Inc. base don the findings from the Phase one ESA. It was noted that soils impacted with elevated selenium and/or SAR are present on the Site at five (5) of the thirty-one (31) borehole locations and were found at depths ranging from near surface to 2.9 mbgs. Groundwater with elevated zinc, chromium, cobalt, lead and vanadium was found in one (1) of the three (3) monitoring wells analyzed. Re-sampling of the monitoring well and testing for metals is recommended. Lastly, all monitoring wells should be decommissioned in accordance with O.Reg 903 when no longer required.

## 5.3 TRANSPORTATION STUDY

A Transportation Study has been completed by Nextrans Engineering. Vehicular access to the proposed land uses are provided via St. John's Sideroad and Leslie Street. As such, a right-in-right-out (RIRO) entrance (west entrance) and a full movement entrance (east entrance) is provided via St. John's Sideroad to access the Industrial Building. A total of two (2) RIRO entrances are provided to access the Gas Station via St. John's Sideroad and Leslie Street. In addition, a RIRO entrance (north entrance) and a full movement entrance (south entrance) is provided via Leslie Street to access the office/commercial buildings. Based on communications with the Region, the typical horizon years to be analyzed are opening year and five (5) year horizon if the site generates less

than 1,000 two-way trips. The proposed development is anticipated to generate 332 trips in the AM and 308 trips in the PM peak hours.

In accordance with the parking provisions in the existing Town of Aurora Zoning By-law No. 6000-17, the proposed development is required to provide 337 vehicle parking spaces. In comparing the proposed parking supply with the By-law requirements, the industrial building has a surplus of three (3) parking spaces, the retail building meets the parking requirements, and the office building has a deficiency of 10 parking spaces. Since the office and retail buildings have a shared parking lot, it is our opinion that the deficiency will be shared between these two (2) uses. Since this combined deficiency is below 10% of the overall parking supply (i.e. 6.5%) it is our opinion the parking supply is sufficient to accommodate the uses on-site.

#### 5.4 HERITAGE IMPACT STUDY

A Heritage Impact Study was prepared by ThisLandArch and based on the review of background materials and review of the property's design and physical condition, the subject site does not satisfy the criteria outlined under *Ontario Regulation 9/06 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Values or Interest under the Ontario Heritage Act (O.Reg 9/06)*. Therefore, the property is not a good candidate for designation under Part IV of the OHA.

#### 5.5 HYDROGEOLOGICAL STUDY

A Hydrogeological Study was prepared by WSP Canada Inc. Based on the findings of the Hydrogeological Investigation; the following conclusions were provided:

- The site is located within the physiographic region identified as the Schomberg Clay Plains;
- The surficial geology at the Site has been described as mainly consisting of fine textured glaciolacustrine deposits (which consist of interbedded silt and clay, and gritty, pebbly flow till and rainout deposits);
- Bedrock of the region corresponds to shale, limestone, dolostone and siltstone of the Georgian Bay Formation;
- The MECP WWR database indicated that there was forty-nine (49) well records within a 500m radius of the Site;
- Water levels at each of the monitoring wells were measured between October 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 and May 29<sup>th</sup> 2019. Most of the monitoring wells were found to be dry, based on the May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 water level readings, groundwater levels were found to be in the range of between 272.52% o 296.69 masl;
- It is expected that the regional groundwater flow will be directed towards Lake Simcoe, located approximately 21kms north of the Study Area;
- The estimated hydraulic conductivity at the Site was estimated to be between  $1.24 \times 10^{-6}$  and  $8.00 \times 10^{-8}$  m/s, which is the expected for this stratigraphy;

- Since underground structures will not be built at the Site, construction dewatering will not be required; therefore, an EASR or PTTW will not be required;
- It is recommended to observe the long-term groundwater within the installed monitoring wells to evaluate seasonal variations of groundwater elevations;
- The proposed redevelopment of the 85,255 m<sup>2</sup> site will result in the following land uses:
  - About 28,925 m<sup>2</sup> (33.9% of total area) will be landscaped area;
  - About 35,384 m<sup>2</sup> (41.5% of total area) will be paved areas; and
  - About 20,946 m<sup>2</sup> (24.6% of total area) will be buildings.
- Under current site conditions, it is estimated that about 12,543 m<sup>3</sup>/year of water infiltrates across the site with 26,335 m<sup>3</sup>/year as runoff;
- Under post-development conditions without mitigation, it is estimated that about 5,122 m<sup>3</sup>/year of water will infiltrate across the site and about 47,725 m<sup>3</sup>/year will be runoff. This is a 59% reduction in infiltration and 81% increase in runoff;
- Under post-development conditions with mitigation (i.e. infiltration systems), it is estimated that about 50,461 m<sup>3</sup>/year of water will infiltrate across the site and about 2,386 m<sup>3</sup>/year will be runoff. This represents about 302% increase in infiltration volumes and a 91% reduction in runoff volumes compared to pre-development conditions; and,
- Field testing of the hydrogeological conditions at the detailed design stage will be required to determine the site-specific opportunities and constraints for final design of LID mitigation measures.

## 5.6 GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION

A Geotechnical Investigation was prepared by WSP Canada Inc. Based on the geotechnical conditions encountered at the site, the proposed structures may be supported on spread and strip footings founded on the native soils or engineered fill. Due to the variability in both thickness and characteristics, the existing fill materials are not suitable to support the foundations of the proposed structures. A detailed table identifying the bearing capacities and founding levels of spread footings can be found in Section 4.11 of the Geotechnical Study.

Due to the undulating profile along majority of the site, significant earthwork will be required for the proposed redevelopment. In order to reduce the differential settlements between the footings on native soil and the footings on engineered fill, the engineered fill should consist of Granular B materials compacted to 100% of Standard Proctor Maximum Dry Density (SPMDD). Where engineered fill is used to support the foundations, the floor slab can also be supported by engineered fill.

All temporary excavations must be carried out in accordance with the most recent OHSA. The fill materials can be classified as Type 3. The firm to hard silty clay and clayey silt can be classified as Type 2. The dense to very dense or hard till can be classified as Type 2 above the groundwater level and Type 3 below the groundwater. The native soils free from topsoil, organics and contamination may be used as general construction backfill, provided the moisture content of the

excavated native soil is within 2 percent of its optimum moisture content. Depending on the time of construction and weather, some excavated material may be too wet to compact and will require aeration prior to its use. Loose lifts of soil, which are to be compacted, should not exceed 200mm.

#### 5.7 SLOPE STABILITY & STREAMBANK EROSION ANALYSIS

The Slope Stability Study was prepared by WSP Canada Inc. The Long-term Stable Top of Slope (LTSTOS) location was calculated based on the applicable erosion and stability setbacks in accordance with the LSRCA guidelines. The slope stability analysis completed by WSP concluded that a slope inclination of 2.0 horizontal: 1 vertical or flatter is required for the long-term stability of the slope at this site.

In addition to the stability and erosion setbacks, an allowance/development setback is typically required from the identified slope hazard area (LTSTOS line location) to take into account possible external conditions which could have an adverse effect on the existing natural condition of the slope, and to provide access to the slope in emergencies. This setback generally varies depending upon the policies of individual authorities. The determination of the setback value depends on a number of factors including but not limited to, the watershed classification, type of development, site specific conditions and available access to the slope. The structures may be allowed to be located closer to the Long-term Stable Top of Slope line but only if approved by the conservation authority. The slope at this site generally consisted of dense to very sandy silt/silty sand (till and non-till) and hard clayey soils. WSP recommends that a development setback/access allowance of 6m would be appropriate for the site.

#### 5.8 FUNCTIONAL SERVICING & STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Functional Servicing Report & Stormwater Management Report prepared by SCS Consulting Group notes that the proposed development can be serviced by full municipal services (storm, sanitary & water), and the Site Plan layout supports the stormwater management requirements. The SWM Report has outlined the means by which proposed development at the subject site will meet the objectives of the LSRCA Technical Guidelines through the following measures:

##### Quantity Control:

- Proposed conditions 2 through 100-year storm events for Catchments 501A, 501B, 502A, 502B & 601 will be controlled to existing conditions via three Triton Vault chamber systems and associated orifice plates before out-letting to Weslie Creek.
- Proposed conditions 2 through 100-year storm events for Catchment 701 (gas station) will be controlled to existing conditions via underground storage chambers in conjunction with a downstream orifice. The method of underground storage and all associated details for this catchment will be provided at the Site Plan Approval Stage.

- Runoff from a 25mm rainfall event will be captured and retained on-site via the proposed Triton Vault chamber systems for Catchments 501A, 501B, 502A, 502B and 601.
- Runoff from a 25mm rainfall event will be captured and retained on-site via the proposed underground storage system for 701. The method of underground storage and associated details for this catchment will be provided at the Site Plan Approval Stage.

#### Quality Control:

- “Enhanced” protection (80% TSS removal) for Catchments 501A, 501B, 502A, 502B and 601 will be provided via infiltration in the proposed Triton Vault chamber systems. Additionally, quality control will be provided by the proposed CB shields.
- 80% TSS removal for Catchment 701 (gas station) will be provided via infiltration in underground storage chambers. The method of underground storage and associated details for this catchment will be provided at the Site Plan Approval Stage.

#### Water Balance:

- Existing annual infiltration volumes for the proposed development will be achieved through the proposed Triton Vault chamber systems.
- The water source input to the feature is generally anticipated to be cooler in the proposed condition than in existing conditions.

#### Erosion Control:

- The detention of the 25mm rainfall event for Catchments 501, 502 & 601 will be retained on-site via the proposed Triton Vault chamber systems.
- The detention of the 25mm rainfall event for Catchment 701 (gas station) will be provided via infiltration in underground storage chambers. The method of underground storage and associated details for this catchment will be provided at the Site Plan Approval Stage.

### 5.9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Beacon Environmental has reviewed the existing natural heritage policies as they pertain to the subject property. A field program was developed to understand the site conditions, context and function with respect to natural heritage features. Natural features were described and a feature staking exercise took place to outline the woodland and valleyland, both deemed to be significant based on the applicable policy framework. Natural features on the subject property include:

- Significant woodlands;
- Significant valleylands;
- Seepage areas;
- Mapped provincially significant wetlands (but see discussion);
- Fish habitat and cold-water watercourse;
- Candidate woodland area-sensitive bird breeding habitat SWH; and
- Endangered and Threatened species:
  - Butternut;

- Barn Swallow; and
- Bobolink.

A development plan is proposed consisting of an industrial building, a commercial (retail) building, an office building and associated parking as well as a future gas station. A number of mitigation measures have been provided through this report and should be adhered to in order to minimize impacts of this proposed development on the natural system. Mitigation and enhancements include:

- Mitigation by design and application of natural heritage buffers;
- Use of underground stormwater detention systems and increased topsoil depth to address potential changes in runoff and infiltration;
- Compensation for removal of Barn Swallow nesting habitat through the building of a nesting structure (following O. Reg. 242/08, section 23.5(7));
- Adherence to the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*;
- Consideration of designs to minimize wildlife effects (lighting, glazing etc.);
- Human exclusions (fencing wooded valley and removal of pedestrian bridge);
- Erosion and sediment control plan; and
- Native restoration plantings covering 14,906.3 m<sup>2</sup> / 1.49 ha.

The proposed development of the subject property demonstrates compliance with the relevant policies of PPS, Region of York, Town of Aurora, ESA and the regulations of the LSRCA. An exception to this is that grading is proposed in parts of the natural heritage buffers. Restoration plantings are proposed to compensate for this.

#### 5.10 URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

An Urban Design Brief, prepared by Waremalcomb has been submitted along with the Development Applications. The findings of the report demonstrate that the proposed development is consistent with the urban and architectural design guidelines, prepared by the Town of Aurora. The proposed development maximizes the available land for built form development while respecting the naturalized forest area that exists on the property. The industrial, commercial and office buildings illustrate a high quality of material and design by developing a façade on the streetscape that acknowledges the character of the neighbourhood environment and the heritage of the Town. The proposed buildings are oriented to enhance functionality and access to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic and movement. The overall design is complementary to existing adjacent developments and creates a consistent image and pedestrian friendly space within the neighbourhood context.

## **6.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS & JUSTIFICATION**

### **6.1. POLICY CONFORMITY**

The proposed development represents an opportunity for employment growth, intensification and expansion within the Town of Aurora that conforms to the policies of the Growth Plan, is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and also supports the implementation of the policies contained in the Region of York Official Plan, the Town of Aurora Official Plan and the Aurora 2C Secondary Plan.

The subject development focuses development on an underutilized parcel that is located within an existing *Settlement Area* and *built-up area* with access to existing infrastructure and municipal services. Provincial policy states that these areas are anticipated and encouraged to accommodate future growth and development. Further, the overall development is consistent with the policies of the PPS and is consistent with provincial policies as it will build upon the range and mix of employment and commercial uses in the area as well as facilitate improved access to essential public service infrastructure.

Additionally, the proposed business park development supports the implementation of the policies of the YROP as it provides for employment growth in the Region and in an area intended for focused employment development. The proposal supports the development criteria of Urban Areas as it establishes uses that will continue to support anticipated population and employment growth and addresses the demand for higher-density built forms in urban growth centres. The subject site is also located in close proximity to the inter-regional transportation network, public transit routes and introduces land uses that are compatible with the future objectives for the surrounding lands. Further, the development of these lands will help the Region achieve employment targets and contribute to the availability, inventory and supply of employment and commercial space.

Lastly, with respect to the Town of Aurora Official Plan policies concerning the development, it is our opinion that the proposal has been designed and will function to meet the goals, objectives and policies of the Official Plan and 2C Secondary Plan. The development will expand employment opportunities and utilize the existing employment designated land by comprehensively developing it for a business park. Additionally, the diversity of uses proposed for the site promotes a variety of business activities which in turn will enhance the overall viability of the employment area, sustain and attract investment and contribute to the economic structure and success of the Town. The Town of Aurora encourages the preservation and use of the designated *Business Park* area for their intended uses and recognizes the growing need for employment opportunities to meet employment and population targets reflected in the Official Plan. It is also important to recognize that the built-form proposed is consistent with existing and future planned surrounding context.

**6.2. CONCLUSION**

Based on the planning analysis and justification found herein, and the supporting documentation submitted in support of the Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval applications, the proposed development is supported by the existing planning policy framework. In our professional opinion, the proposed development and associated applications represents good planning, are worthy of approval by Town Council and should proceed through the planning approvals process.

