



TOWN OF
HALTON HILLS
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REPORT

TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

FROM: John McMulkin, Planner – Development Review

DATE: November 2, 2021

REPORT NO.: PD-2021-0067

SUBJECT: Public Meeting for a proposed Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment to permit the development of an industrial subdivision at 12635 & 12689 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2021-0067, dated November 2, 2021, regarding the “Public Meeting for a proposed Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment to permit the development of an industrial subdivision at 12635 & 12689 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area)”, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT all agency and public comments be referred to staff for a further report regarding the disposition of this matter.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- QuadReal (the Applicant) has submitted Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications proposing the development of an industrial subdivision consisting of 2 blocks for 5 industrial buildings, a new public road and natural heritage/open space lands at 12635 & 12689 Steeles Avenue (Premier Gateway Employment Area).
- To date, Town and external agency staff have identified comments regarding the omission of a road connecting the site to Sixth Line and a request for outdoor storage as part of the proposal. Further information/measures will also need to be provided by the Applicant to demonstrate how the proposal conforms with the mitigation policies of the Secondary Plan for the abutting residential properties.
- Issues with the submitted Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) have also been identified that have overarching impacts for the proposal and other submission

materials, which will prevent a complete review of the applications from taking place until the SIS has been revised.

- No comments from the public have been received to date.
- The purpose of the Public Meeting is to obtain comments and feedback from the community. Any comments received will be thoroughly reviewed, evaluated, and included in the final Recommendation Report to Council at a later date.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The Town has received Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications to permit the development of an industrial subdivision consisting of 2 blocks for 5 industrial buildings, a new public road and natural heritage/open space lands at 12635 & 12689 Steeles Avenue in the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

1.0 Location & Site Characteristics

The subject lands are located on the north side of Steeles Avenue, west of Hornby Road in the Premier Gateway Phase 1B Employment Area; see **SCHEDULE 1 – LOCATION MAP**. The lands have an approximate area of 51 hectares (~126 acres) and contain 517.7 metres (~1,700 feet) of frontage on Steeles Avenue.

The site includes 2 watercourses (east and west branches of the Middle Sixteen Mile Creek) and 1 headwater drainage feature. The 2 dwellings (12635 & 12689 Steeles Avenue) previously occupying the site have been demolished. In addition, the 3 existing agricultural buildings used to support the former farming operation are also intended to be demolished to accommodate the proposed development.

Surrounding land uses to the subject lands include:

To the North:	Hornby Glen Golf Course and rural residential lands further north
To the East:	Residential properties on Hornby Road, and future employment lands within the Phase 1B Employment Area further east
To the South:	Natural gas conversion power generating facility known as the Halton Hills Generating Station and Hornby Park
To the West:	Rural residential properties, agricultural/natural heritage lands within the Phase 1B Employment Area and industrial warehouse buildings to the southwest

2.0 Development Proposal

On July 14, 2021, the Town deemed complete Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications (File Nos. D12SUB21.006 & D14ZBA21.013) submitted by Glen Schnarr & Associates Inc. (the Agent) on behalf of QuadReal (the Applicant). The applications seek to obtain the necessary land use approvals to allow for the development of 5 industrial buildings containing warehouse and accessory office space;

see **SCHEDULE 2 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN & CONCEPTUAL BUILDING ELEVATIONS.**

Further details regarding the proposed development are outlined below:

Design Elements	Application Proposal
Gross Floor Area	Building 1 – 76,926 m ² (828,025 ft ²) Building 2 – 21,153 m ² (227,689 ft ²) Building 3 – 18,517 m ² (199,315 ft ²) Building 4 – 12,174 m ² (131,040 ft ²) Building 5 – 10,145 m ² (109,200 ft ²)
Height	1 storey (up to 14.4 metres)
Parking	968 spaces
Loading	253 truck parking spaces
Vehicular Access	Steeles Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance for cars to Building 2 • New north-south collector road (Street 'A') Street 'A' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 entrances for cars and 2 entrances for cars/transport trucks to Buildings 2 to 5 • Private access driveway to Building 1 for transport trucks and cars
Commercial Vehicle Waiting Spaces	Building 1 – 296 spaces Total – 296 spaces

The Applicant has provided a conceptual 3D rendering of the proposed industrial buildings and a site plan of the proposed development for illustrative purposes; see Figure 1 and Figure 2 below:



Figure 1

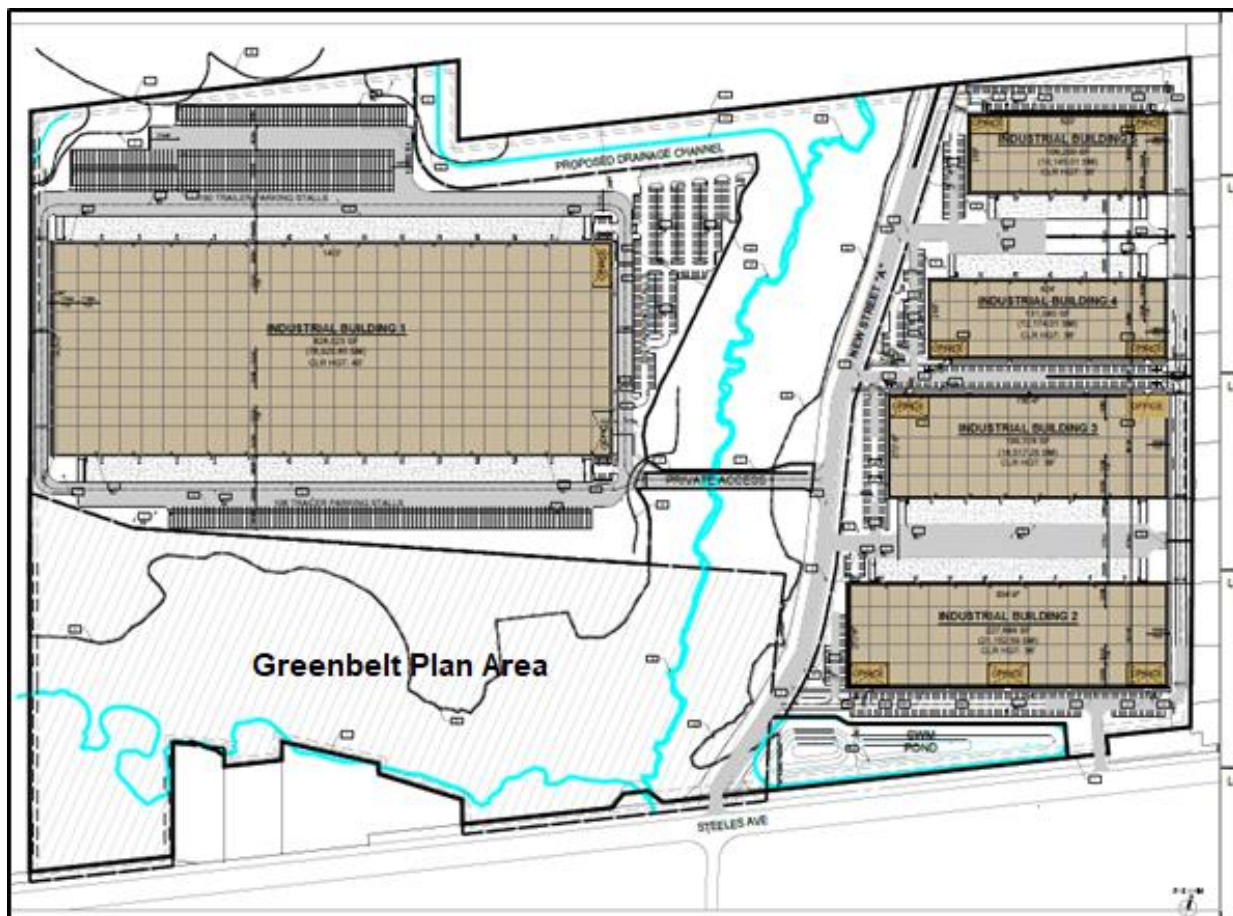


Figure 2

To facilitate the proposed industrial development, a Draft Plan of Subdivision has been submitted; see Figure 3 below. The application seeks to subdivide the lands into 12 blocks and a road allowance:

Block(s)	Use
1 and 2	5 industrial buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Block 1 – Building 1 Block 2 – Buildings 2-5
3	Private access roadway to Block 1
4 and 5	Stormwater management ponds
6, 7 and 8	Open space
9, 10 and 11	Natural heritage system
12	0.3m (1ft.) reserve
Road allowance	North-south collector road (Street 'A')

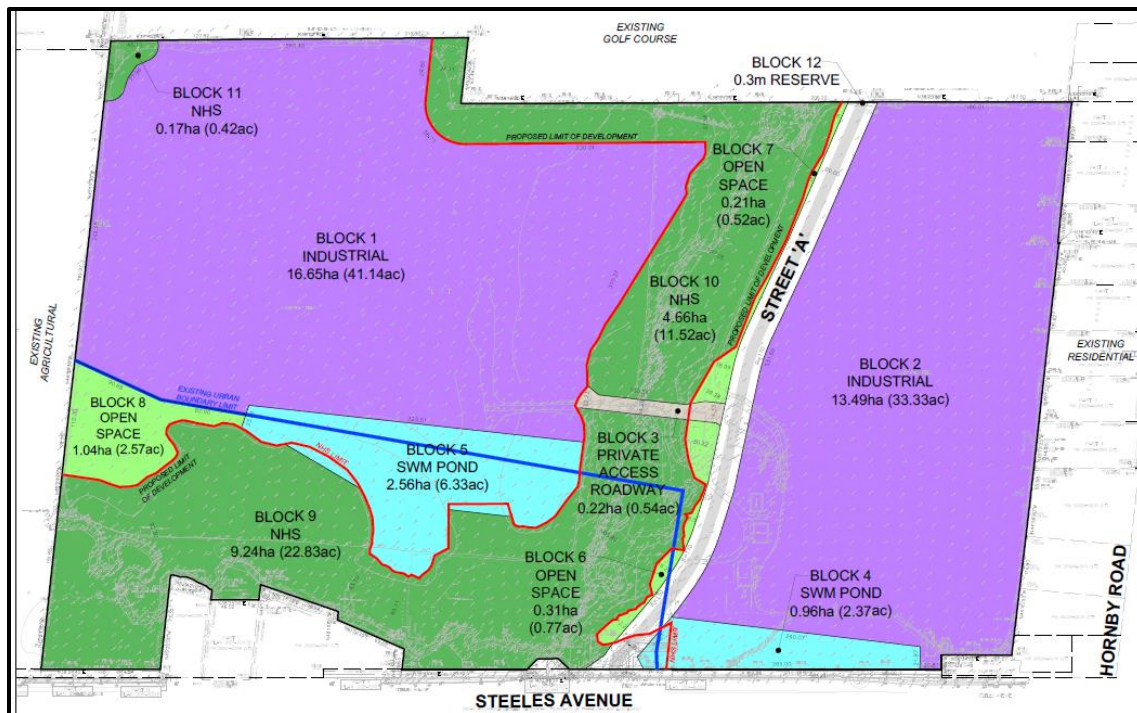


Figure 3

Under Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law 2010-0050 the lands are subject to multiple zones: Agricultural (A), Environmental Protection One (EP1), Protected Countryside-Natural Heritage System One (PC-NHS1)(H2) and Protected Countryside-Natural Heritage System Two (PC-NHS2). None of these zones permit industrial uses. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to rezone the portion of the site proposed for industrial uses from Agricultural (A) to the 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone with special provisions, which include:

- Add outdoor storage, accessory outdoor storage and self-storage facilities as additional permitted uses;
- Increase the maximum building height from 14.0 metres to 14.4 metres;
- Reduce the minimum lot frontage for Block 1 from 45.0 metres to 19.33 metres;
- Reduce the minimum landscaped open space for Block 1 from 20% to 13%;
- Reduce the minimum parking requirement for warehouse uses on Block 1 from 503 to 331 parking spaces; and
- Increase the maximum number of commercial vehicle waiting spaces on Block 1 from 136 to 296.

The portions of the property proposed for open space, storm water management and natural heritage protection are proposed to be rezoned to the Open Space Two (OS2), Open Space Three (OS3) and Environmental Protection One (EP1) Zones respectively; see **SCHEDULE 3 – DRAFT ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT**.

A list of reports and drawings submitted in support of the applications is attached as **SCHEDULE 4 – SUBMISSION MATERIALS** to this report.

Should the Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications be approved, the proposed buildings would require the submission of a Site Plan Control application for approval.

3.0 Planning Context

In Ontario, when reviewing applications looking to subdivide land and to amend Zoning By-laws, development proposals are expected to conform with and meet the intent of all applicable Provincial, Regional and Municipal policy documents. This section discusses the relevant policy framework that applies to the subject site and proposal.

Provincial Policy Statement

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides broad based policies that promote an appropriate mix and range of employment, including industrial and commercial uses, to meet long-term needs of residents and make appropriate use of infrastructure to support the development of healthy communities. Policy direction pertaining to employment areas is set out in Section 1.3 of the PPS.

Section 2.1 of the PPS addresses the protection of natural heritage features including a requirement that development not be permitted on adjacent land without studies to determine that there would be no negative impact on the feature.

The proposal is required to be consistent with the relevant policies of the PPS in accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act.

Greenbelt Plan

The portion of the subject lands located outside of the boundary of the Premier Gateway Employment Area Phase 1B Secondary Plan falls within the Greenbelt and is designated Protected Countryside with a Natural System overlay under the 2017 Plan. Section 3.2.2 of the Greenbelt Plan states that new development or site alteration in the Natural Heritage System shall demonstrate that there will be no negative impacts on key natural heritage features or key hydrologic features or their functions, among other requirements.

As per Section 3 of the Planning Act, the proposal shall conform and not conflict with the Greenbelt Plan.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan directs new growth to locations that make efficient use of transportation and servicing infrastructure and sets out general policies for employment and commercial lands. Under the 2019 Growth Plan (with 2020 amendments), the subject lands fall within the new Provincially Significant Employment Zone, which is considered an area of high economic output that is strategically located to provide stable, reliable employment across the Region.

The Growth Plan also contains policies to support the protection of natural heritage features (although the Natural Heritage System policies only apply to lands outside of urban areas).

As per Section 3 of the Planning Act, the proposal shall conform and not conflict with the Growth Plan.

Region of Halton Official Plan

The portion of the subject lands located within the boundary of the Phase 1B Secondary Plan is designated Urban Area with an Employment Area overlay and Regional Natural Heritage System under the 2009 Regional Official Plan (ROP). The portion of the lands located outside of the area of the Secondary Plan and within the Greenbelt Plan Area is designated Protected Countryside with a Natural Heritage System overlay.

Section 76 of the ROP establishes that the range of permitted uses and the creation of new lots within the Urban Area shall be in accordance with local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. The ROP includes objectives that speak to providing an appropriate range and balance of employment uses including industrial, office and retail, and institutional uses to meet the long-term needs. More detailed policies for Employment Areas are set out in Section 77.1 of the ROP. Section 89 of the ROP requires all development within the Urban Area to be on full municipal services.

For the portion designated Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS), the ROP policies direct that there should be no alteration of any component of the RNHS, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the natural features or their functions. Section 116.1 of the ROP allows for the boundaries of the RNHS to be refined through the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which could result in additions, deletions and/or boundary adjustments.

Town of Halton Hills Official Plan – Phase 1B Secondary Plan

Under the Town's Official Plan, the majority of the subject lands are located within the Premier Gateway Employment Area Phase 1B Secondary Plan area (OPA 31A), which designates the property Prestige Industrial Area and Natural Heritage System. The Applicant's development concept has located the industrial buildings within the portion of the property designated Prestige Industrial Area, which permits industrial uses. As per Section H5A.13 and Schedule H5A, buffering (e.g. increased building setbacks) and other measures (e.g. vegetative screening, fencing, berming) are to be provided in order to mitigate impacts of developing industrial uses adjacent to residential properties (the property abuts the existing residential properties on the west side of Hornby Road).

The portion of the lands located outside of the area of the Secondary Plan and within the Greenbelt Plan Area are designated Protected Countryside Area with a Natural Heritage System overlay under the Town's Official Plan. The Applicant's development concept includes portions of the natural heritage system, open space and stormwater

management pond blocks within the Greenbelt Plan Area, including a small portion of the new collector road (Street 'A') at its intersection with Steeles Avenue.

Section H5A.8 of the Secondary Plan requires the submission of a Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) in support of any development applications. Consistent with Regional policy, the natural heritage system limits are permitted to be refined without an Official Plan Amendment through review of a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment or similar study.

The Natural Heritage System designation of the site includes a “Wetland and Headwater Drainage Feature”, which has the potential to be relocated provided the SIS can demonstrate that the feature can be moved to an area where its form and function can be replicated and is contiguous with other natural features. In addition, the Secondary Plan identifies a new collector road through the centre of the site and one that generally runs along the northern limits of the lands to connect to Sixth Line; see Figure 4 below.



Figure 4

The Applicant's concept proposes to relocate the headwater drainage feature through a “Proposed Drainage Channel” along the northern property line and to connect it back to the east branch of Middle Sixteen Mile Creek. However, the Applicant's concept does not accommodate a proposed collector road to connect to Sixth Line as identified in the Secondary Plan; see Figure 2 above.

The Official Plan states that all new development requiring Planning Act approval shall conform to the Urban Design policies in Section F2 of the Plan (Section D1.4.1). The proposal must also demonstrate conformity with Section H5A.14 of the Secondary Plan and the Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines.

Town of Halton Hills Zoning By-law

Under Zoning By-law 2010-0050 the property is subject to multiple zones:

- Agricultural (A);
- Environmental Protection One (EP1);
- Protected Countryside-Natural Heritage System One (PC-NHS1(H2)); and
- Protected Countryside-Natural Heritage System Two (PC-NHS2).

The proposed buildings would be located within the portion of the property zoned Agricultural (A), which does not permit industrial uses. The Applicant is proposing to rezone the property to a site-specific 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone to permit the proposed industrial buildings, as well as to the Environmental Protection One (EP1), Open Space Two (OS2) and Open Space Three (OS3) Zones.

4.0 Department and Agency Circulation Comments

The Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications were circulated to Town department and external agencies for review. The below sections outline the comments, issues and concerns identified by staff to date.

Planning

Internal departmental and external agency staff have identified fundamental issues with the Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) submitted in support of the Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications. Given the recommendations of the SIS may impact the locations of different aspects of the development proposal (e.g. buildings, roads, parking areas, stormwater management ponds, etc.), a complete analysis of the development proposal and some of the other submission materials cannot occur until the SIS is revised to address the identified issues; see Conservation Halton comments below for more information.

The proposed site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment for the proposal requests additional permitted uses in the 401 Corridor Prestige Industrial (M7) Zone, including outdoor storage, accessory outdoor storage and self-storage facilities. Given these uses are not permitted within the property's Prestige Industrial Area designation in the Phase 1B Secondary Plan, the Applicant has been advised that an Official Plan Amendment application would be required to consider these additional uses.

As noted, the Secondary Plan requires buffering (e.g. increased building setbacks) and other measures (e.g. vegetative screening, fencing, berming) along the eastern property line to mitigate impacts of the proposed industrial uses to the adjacent residential properties along Hornby Road. The Applicant will need to provide further information/measures to demonstrate how the proposal may conform with the mitigation policies of the Secondary Plan.

Conservation Halton

Conservation Halton (CH) staff has noted that the information submitted with the Subwatershed Impact Study (SIS) is insufficient to meet all the objectives of an SIS as per the Premier Gateway Phase 1B Scoped Subwatershed Study (SWS) and Secondary Plan. Based on the SIS, CH staff cannot confirm the extent of the area available for development.

The SIS will require updates to meet the requirements of the approved Terms of Reference and guidance provided for the review of the Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications. A summary of the preliminary key issues is provided below:

- Hazard and feature limits have not yet been confirmed;
- Submitted plans do not incorporate all the development setbacks prescribed by the Secondary Plan, including CH's regulatory allowances;
- The location of the watercourse crossing cannot yet be confirmed;
- The north-south collector road requires additional assessment, and its alignment cannot yet be confirmed;
- The management and location of Headwater Drainage Feature 1 (HDF-1) identified in the Secondary Plan cannot be supported at this time; and
- The stormwater management (SWM) plans cannot yet be supported.

Transportation

Transportation staff has concerns with the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) submitted in support of the proposal. As noted, the Phase 1B Secondary Plan identifies an east-west road at the north end of the site that is intended to provide a connection from Sixth Line to the new Street A. However, QuadReal's current plan does not accommodate the road and the proposed location of Building 1 and relocated drainage channel would preclude the construction of a road that would align with the placement identified in the Secondary Plan.

Urban Design and Recreation & Parks

Details pertaining to compliance with the Town's Urban Design Guidelines, as well as tree preservation, site plan standards (including landscape) and cash-in-lieu of parkland will be addressed once the Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment applications have progressed further and also as part of Site Plan Control applications for each industrial block.

Halton Region

Halton Region staff has identified that their review is progressing in collaboration with Conservation Halton staff. Their review is focusing on matters of Regional interest such as: the Regional Natural Heritage System; municipal servicing in the context of Regional standards and the approved Area Servicing Plan; potential impacts to groundwater and neighbouring private wells; stormwater management in relation to Steeles Avenue; and transportation implications and proposed accesses to Steeles Avenue.

5.0 Public Comments

As of the date of this report, Planning staff has not received any comments from the public. Staff received one email from a neighbouring property owner requesting information regarding the proposed measures used to mitigate impacts to the residential properties located along the west side of Hornby Road.

The purpose of the Public Meeting is to obtain comments and feedback from the community. Any comments received from the public will be reviewed, evaluated, and included in the final Recommendation Report to Council.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have an impact on the Town's Strategic Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as follows:

July 20, 2021:	New Application Received notice mailed out to all property owners assessed within 120 m of the subject lands
July 27, 2021:	Sign posted on the subject lands explaining the purpose of the proposed applications
October 19, 2021:	Public Meeting notice mailed out to all property owners assessed within 120 m of the subject lands
October 21, 2021:	Notice of Public Meeting published in Independent & Free Press
November 11, 2021:	Courtesy Notice of Public Meeting published in Independent & Free Press

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The proposed Draft Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment were considered at the January 10, 2019, Development Review Committee Pre-Consultation Meeting (File No. D00ENQ19.003). The Applicant was provided with preliminary comments from various Town departments and external agencies at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

Jeff Markowiak, Director of Development Review

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer