

PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT

3640 Dingman Drive

City of London

July 2024



Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Subject Lands	Page 3
Proposed Development	Page 5
Proposed London Plan Amendment	Page 5
Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment	Page 5
Planning Policy Analysis	Page 6
London Plan (Official Plan)	Page 9
City of London Zoning	Page 11
Conclusion	Page 13
Appendix	Page 14

Introduction

Parks and Forestry, on behalf of the City of London, commits to providing the highest quality parks, recreation programs, sports services, and facilities for all residents of the City of London, visitors, and for all ages and abilities. The City of London Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the comprehensive guideline that identifies needs and future opportunities to achieve this commitment. In 2021, Council for the City of London approved the acquisition of 3460 Dingman Drive to provide for a needed regional sports park in south London, as identified in the Master Plan.

The proposed amendments to the London Plan and Zoning By-law Z.-1 will permit an exceptional opportunity to continue Council's commitment of providing the highest levels of recreational facilities and programs to the City of London.

Subject Lands

The subject site is located on the north side of Dingman Drive just west of the 401. The land is rectangular in shape and has a lot frontage of approx. 178 meters and an area of 13.5 hectares. The property is currently being used agriculturally. The front portion of the lands to the east are industrial (Tri-recycling) with the rear portion being used agriculturally. The lands to the west and south are agricultural and the lands to the north are industrial uses.

There is a woodlot and wetland located on the northerly portion of the property and there are further wetland areas interspersed. The City has completed a Subject Land Status Report (SLSR) and has identified ecological features on the property (see Figure 5).

The subject property is located in the Dingman watershed and is in the regulatory limits of the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA). The City will continue to work with the UTRCA to ensure all applicable permits are obtained.

The site is also bisected on the southerly portion by a Hydro One corridor and the lands are within 800 meters of the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Control Area. Parks and Forestry has started the process of obtaining permissions from Hydro One and the MTO to permit the proposed use.

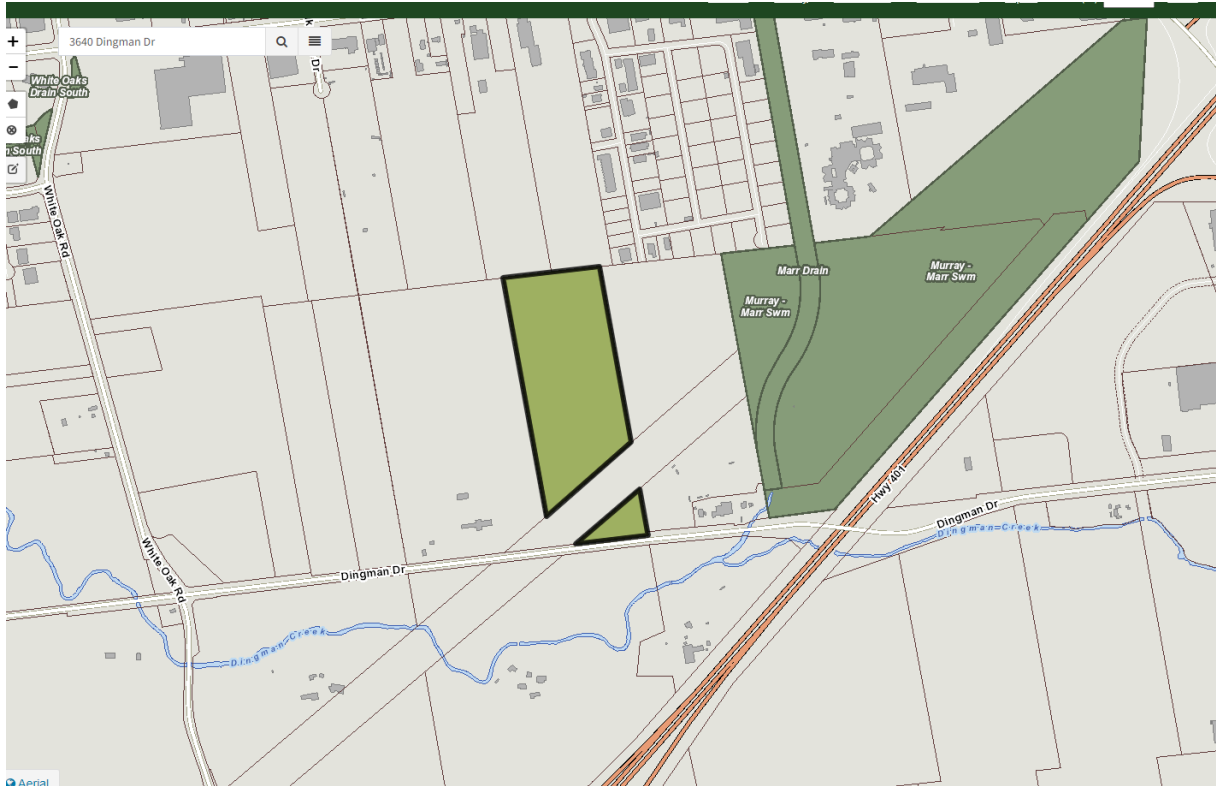


Figure 1: Subject Lands (Outlined in black)



Figure 2: Aerial View with Abutting Properties (Outlined in black)

Proposed Development

This Sports Park is intended to accommodate multiple high-end sports fields and provide services to the Southwest Area and the whole of the City. The Sports Park will generally be programmed by the City to service sports associations and tournaments, which can include fully lit sports fields, parking lots, pathways and washroom facilities. The Sports Park may also serve as a neighbourhood park for the surrounding community and provide neighbourhood amenities as well (See Appendix)

Proposed London Plan Amendment

From Commercial Industrial to Green Space and from Environmental Review to Green Space.

The proposed Green Space Place Type represents an opportunity for the City of London to add multiple high-end sports fields and provide services to the Southwest Area and the whole of the City while protecting identified natural heritage features.

Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment

Currently the land is zoned “Agriculture (AG2), and “Environmental Review (ER)”. The proposed development is requiring a Zoning By-law amendment to zone the lands Open Space (OS1) and Open Space (OS5).

The permitted uses for proposed OS1 zone include:

- Public Parks.
- Recreational buildings associated with conservation lands and public parks.

The permitted uses for proposed OS5 zone include:

- Conservation lands.
- Passive recreation uses which include hiking trails and multi-use pathways.

This amendment will implement the proposed London Plan Land Use Designation of the subject lands. The proposed zoning represents an opportunity for the City of London to add multiple high-end sports fields and provide services to the Southwest Area and the whole of the City and will protect the natural heritage features on site (see figure 3).

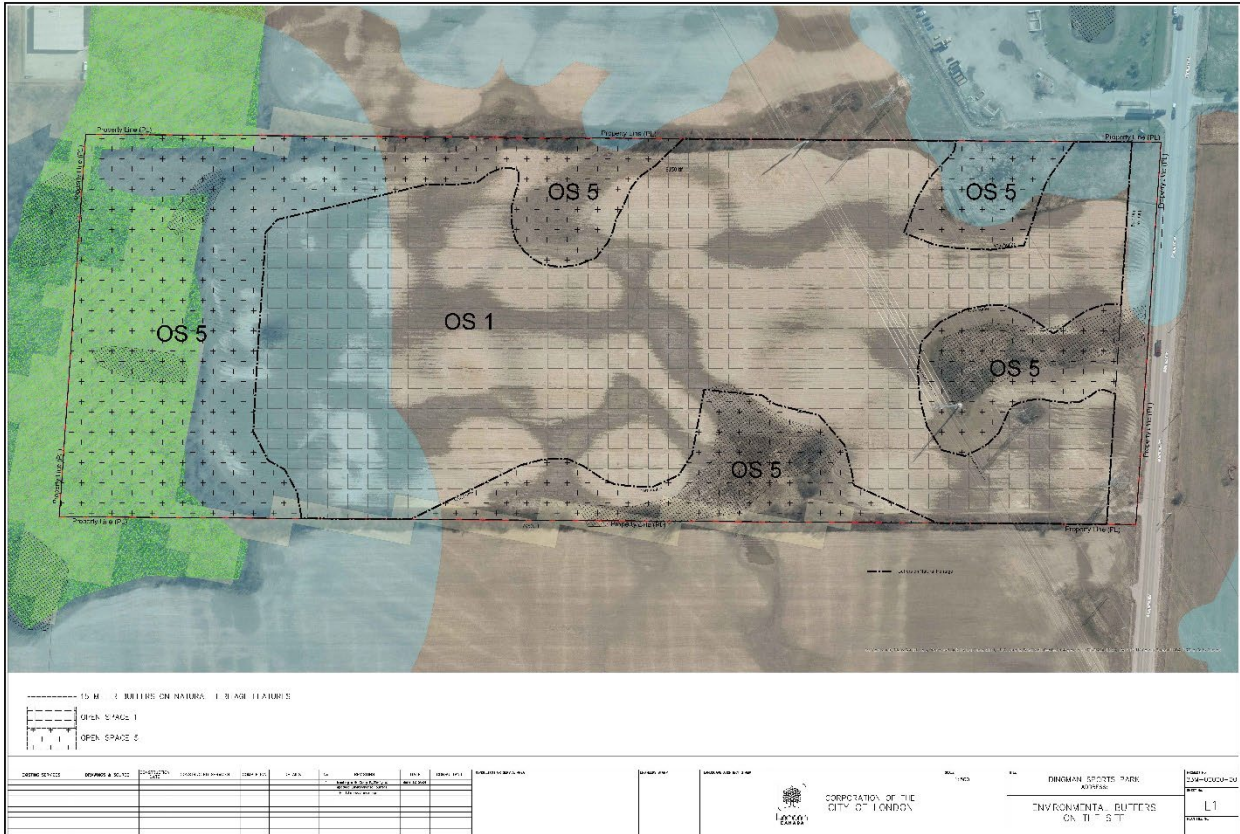


Figure 3; proposed open space zones.

Planning Policy Analysis

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act “provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning” in order to ensure efficient development and the protection of resources. All planning applications are required to be consistent with these policies.

In this analysis section, relevant policies are *bordered and in italics*, with discussion on how the proposed application is consistent with that policy immediately after.

Section 1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by.

a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;

b) accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;

g) ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs;

h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity

Development of the lands as a Sport Park and the protection of the identified natural heritage features is an efficient use of the lands, provides for an appropriate mix of land uses and ensures for the provision of public services facilities.

1.3.2 Employment Areas

1.3.2.4 Planning authorities may permit conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses through a comprehensive review, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion.

Through the Southwest Area Plan, planning process these lands were designated as a Commercial Industrial Place Type in the Dingman Industrial Neighbourhood. Section 13.3 states that Commercial Industrial lands will not constitute employment areas for the purposes of the Provincial Policy Statement and are not included in the City's inventory of industrial lands. These lands can be converted to a Green Space Place Type as the lands are not employment lands as described in the PPS.

1.5.1 Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:
b) planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;

The development of the lands provides for a full range of publicly accessible recreation facilities including pathways and trails and protects natural heritage.

Section 1.6.6.1

Municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas. Intensification and redevelopment within settlement areas on existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services should be promoted, wherever feasible.

Municipal water and sanitary servicing are both available for the subject site. The current use is agricultural and minimal stormwater infrastructure exists on the site, through the site plan process stormwater management will be provided.

Section 2.1.1

Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.

Parsons was retained by the City of London to complete a Subject Land Status assessment of existing natural heritage conditions on these lands. The proposed London Plan and Zoning By-law amendments protect the identified natural heritage features including required buffers land as identified in the City of London Environmental Management Guidelines (see Figure 3).

Section 2.6.1

Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.

A Stage 1-2 Archaeological Assessment was completed by TMHC Heritage Planning and Consultation Services for this property on December 20, 2022, and it was entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports. No further archaeological assessment of the property is required.

London Plan



Figure 4: Existing London Plan Place Types of subject land and surrounding lands (subject lands outlined)

The London Plan has developed Policies that guide how the City will be built and changed to achieve its vision to be exciting, exceptional, and connected by 2035.

In this analysis section, relevant policies are *bordered and in italics*, with discussion on how the proposed application is consistent with that policy immediately after.

Key Direction

55_ Direction #1 Plan strategically for a prosperous city

3. Create a strong civic image by improving the downtown, creating, and sustaining great neighbourhoods, and offering quality recreational opportunities.

58_ Direction #4 Become one of the greenest cities in Canada

4. Protect and enhance the health of our Natural Heritage System
10. Continually expand, improve, and connect our parks resources.

61_ Direction #7 Build strong, healthy, and attractive neighbourhoods for everyone

8. Distribute educational, health, social, cultural, and recreational facilities, and services throughout the city so that all neighbourhoods are well-served.

9. Integrate well-designed public spaces and recreational facilities into all of our neighbourhoods

The proposed London Plan supports the creation of an exceptionally designed and integrated regional sports park which supports the City's direction to provide quality recreational opportunities, enhance the natural heritage system and to provide open space linkages and connectivity in the City of London.

759_ Our vision is to protect the Green Space Place Type, create new green linkages throughout the city and increase our tree cover. Our Green Space policies together with our Environmental Policies will protect and conserve our natural areas and their delicate ecosystems, keep development an appropriate distance from our hazard lands, and offer a variety of parks that contribute significantly to the quality of life for Londoners.

762_ The following uses may be permitted within the Green Space Place Type:

- 1. Permitted uses on the lands identified on Map 5 and Map 6, are contained in the Environmental Policies part of this Plan.*
- 2. Lands within the Green Space Place Type vary considerably, and the uses that are permitted within these areas will be dependent upon the natural heritage features and areas contained on the subject lands, the hazards that are present, and the presence of natural resources which are to be protected.*
- 3. District, city-wide, and regional parks. Some neighbourhood parks, urban parks and civic spaces are not shown on Map 1, but are included as uses allowed within the Neighbourhoods Place Type*

The proposed amendment to designate the lands as Green Space permits the lands to be developed as a Sports Park that supports the provision of a variety of recreational opportunities as identified in the City of London Recreation Master Plan. The Green Space Place Type also ensures that the identified natural heritage features are protected and enhanced.

782_ Environmental Review Place Type lands, or portions thereof, that are determined to satisfy the criteria for significance in conformity with the Environmental Policies part of this Plan will be included in the Green Space Place Type on Map 1.

In conformity with the City of London Environmental Policies, a Subject Land Status Report was completed that determined the type and extent of the natural heritage features on the lands. The identified significant natural heritage features are to be included in the Green Space Place Type.

1129_ The conversion of lands in an Industrial Place Type to another place type shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement

The Southwest Area Plan, Dingman Industrial Neighbourhood. Section 13.3 states that Commercial Industrial lands do not constitute employment areas for the purposes of the Provincial Policy Statement and are not included in the City's inventory of industrial lands. The industrial employment lands need policies do not apply to these lands.

City of London Zoning By-law

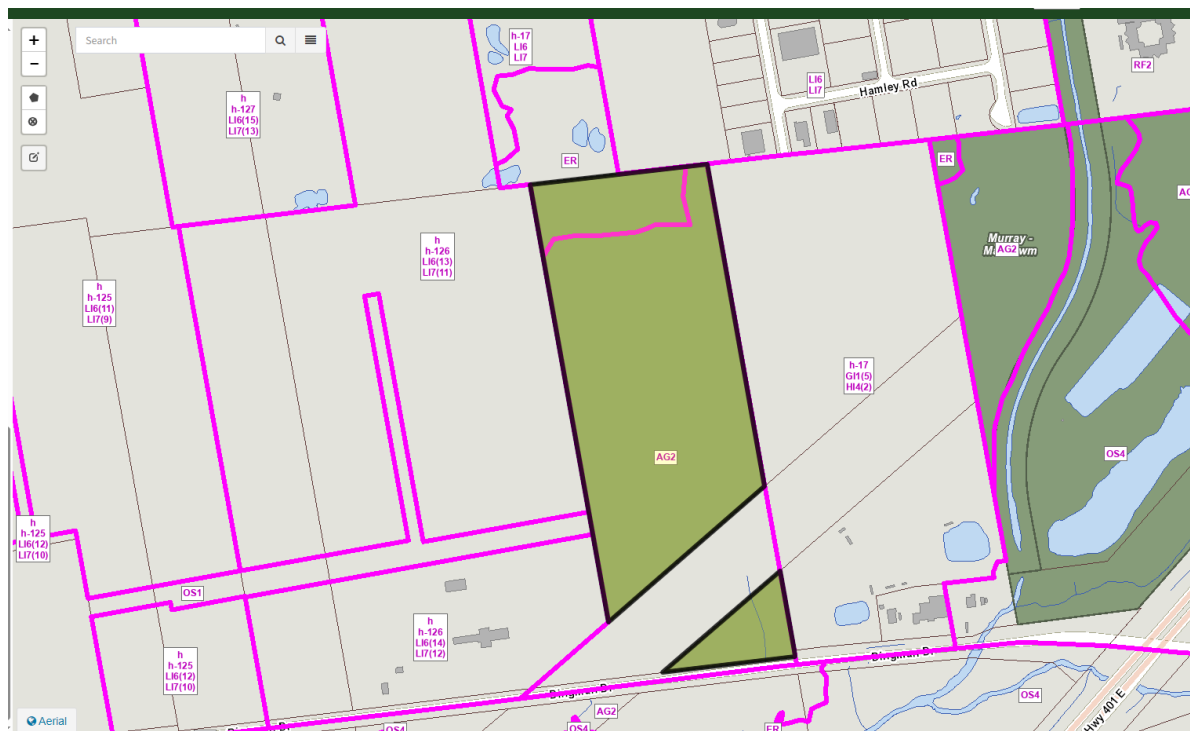


Figure5: Existing zoning of the subject site and surrounding lands (subject lands outlined)

The subject lands are currently zoned Agricultural (AG2) and Environmental Review (ER).

The permitted uses for the existing AG2 zone include:

- Agricultural uses.
- Farm dwelling; and
- Passive recreational uses.

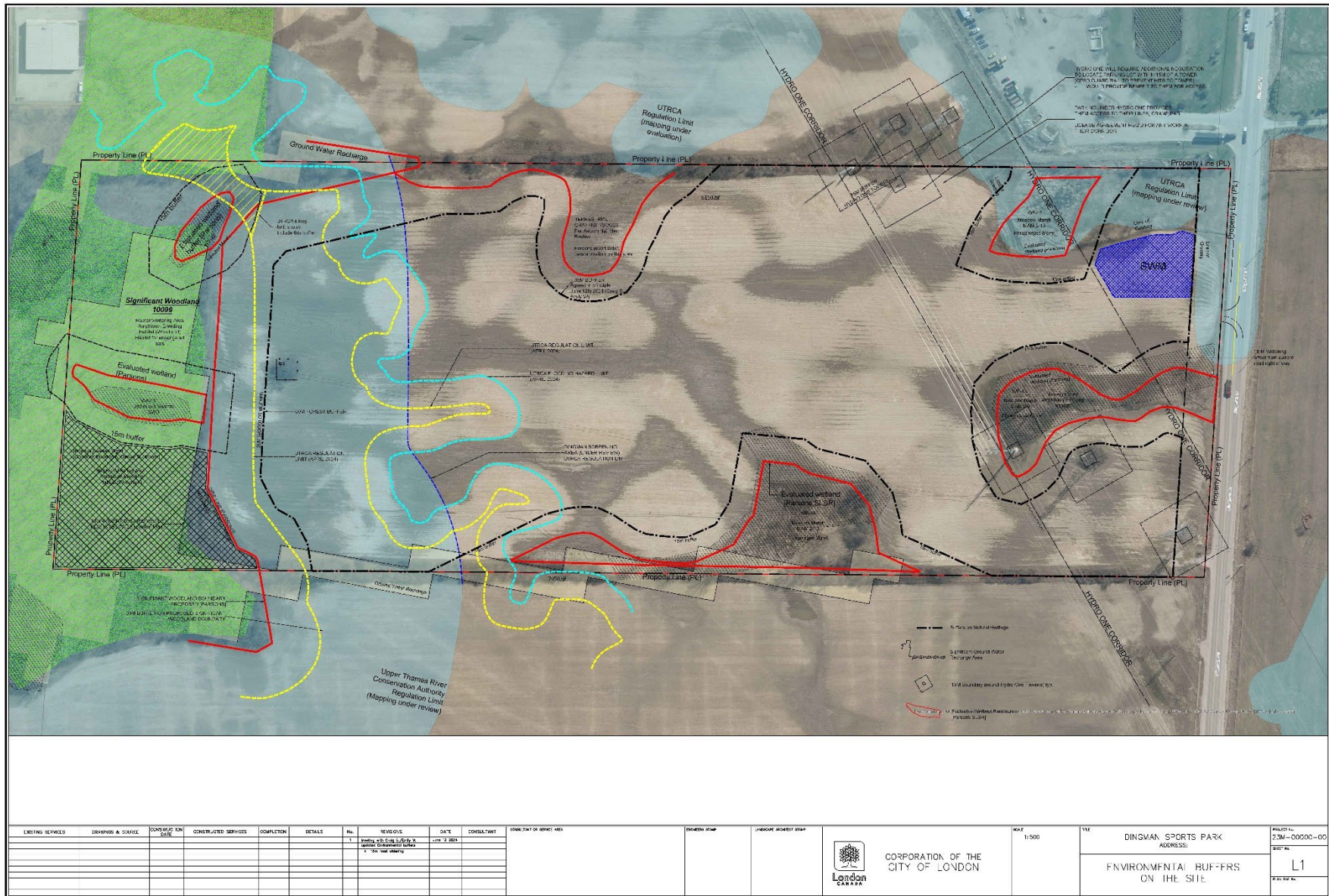
The existing zone recognizes the current use of the property and would permit for some passive recreational uses. The proposed Open Space (OS1) will allow for a full range of recreational uses including the proposed regional sports park. The proposed Open Space (OS1) zone will permit the lands to be developed by the City of London as a regional sport park and is consistent with the PPS and London Plan Policies.

The permitted uses for the existing ER zone include:

- Conservation lands.
- Conservation works.
- Passive recreational uses.

The Environmental Review zone is applied to areas of the Official Plan which are intended to remain in a natural condition until their significance is determined through the completion of more detailed environmental studies. The City of London retained Parsons to complete a Subject Land Status Report (SLSR) of the existing natural heritage conditions on these lands. The SLSR has identified the extent of the natural heritage features and in conjunction with the provision of the maximum required buffers as described in the City of London Environmental Management Guidelines the proposed Open Space (OS5) zone will preserve and protect these features (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: S L S R mapping of natural heritage features and buffers.



Conclusion

The proposed London Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment will provide for an appropriate framework to permit the development of a Sport Park at 3640 Dingman Drive in a manner that supports the City's commitment to provide exceptional recreational opportunities to the residents of London and regionally. The proposed zoning provides an appropriate set of standards and development regulations to ensure the continued protection and enhancement of the existing natural heritage features.

The proposal to amend the London Plan and Zoning By-law Z.-1 to permit the proposed City Sports Park represents good land use planning, is in the public interest and is supported by relevant provincial and local planning objectives.

Appendix

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