



March 13, 2026

Jeff Brick
Director of Planning & Development Services
Municipality of Thames Centre
4305 Hamilton Road
Dorchester, Ontario N0L 1G3

**DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION (39T-TC2501), OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT O3-25) & ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT (Z20-25)
83 CHRISTIE DRIVE, DORCHESTER (ACORN VALLEY)**

Dear Mr. Brick:

In response to the staff, agency, peer review, and additional neighbourhood feedback and comments we received on the first resubmission of our Draft Plan of Subdivision, Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications and the second public meeting, we provide the following:

Planning

Prepared by Zelinka Priamo & Doug. Tarry Limited

Phasing, Unit Counts, and Future Development

The current draft plan includes three (3) initial phases of development.

Phase	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouse	TOTAL
1	71	30	0	101
2	26	0	0	26
3	50	16	21	87
TOTAL	147	46	21	214

The High-Density Block will be registered in Phase 1, to create the legal property boundary and allow for servicing to the property line to be completed as part of the Christie Drive construction, but the construction of the buildings will not occur for some time in the future.

It is proposed that the High-Density Block will have a density of 100 units per hectare. The High-Density block is 3.93ha in size which results in a maximum of 393 units on the block. It is noted that for purposes of engineering and traffic design a density of

150 units per hectare (589 units) was used to ensure there were no capacity constraints.

The two (2) Future Development blocks to the north are likely to include a mix of single detached, semi-detached, and medium density (block townhouse) residential development. For purposes of ensuring there is adequate capacity in the proposed municipal infrastructure these lands have been assigned a density of 30 units per gross hectare. The combined area for the future residential blocks to the north is 18ha. At 30 units per gross hectare, a maximum of 540 units are proposed on the future development lands.

The design of these lands has not been detailed at this time and will be reviewed for approval through future development applications. Lot sizing and type will be determined at a later date based on market conditions.

High Density Block – Density, Height, & Timing

As noted, the requested maximum density for the high-density block is 100 units per hectare. This results in a maximum of 393 units being permitted on these lands. Although we have not started detailed designs for this block, it is anticipated that this block will be made up of multiple buildings and built out in phases, allowing controlled growth. This will also allow for the ability to adjust to market conditions. The requested maximum height of 6 storeys for the high-density block does not mean all buildings will be 6-storeys in height but rather will allow for the ability to scale the development, to integrate with the proposed community.

The proposed high-density block provides for a form of housing that is generally more affordable than low-density forms of housing found in the subdivision and in the broader Dorchester area. Providing this block also provides for a variety of housing forms (i.e. smaller units rather than multi-family homes) which is generally supported by Provincial legislation. The proposed additional increase in height from the current permitted 3-storey height in the Official Plan is not considered a significant deviation and is still considered a relatively low-rise form of apartment building but provides flexibility in the size and configuration of units. It is also noted that in the council approved Official Plan the permitted building height has increased to 4 storeys from 3 storeys.

It is proposed that the block will be registered in the first phase of the development. This does not mean that we will be building this block immediately. Strategically this block is being registered in Phase 1 to create the legal property boundary and to allow for servicing stub installation to proceed during the servicing of Christie Drive. It should also be noted that this block will be subject to Site Plan Control in the future, which will be a separate application further into the project timeline to ensure compliance with the Municipality of Thames Centre Zoning By-law.

Zoning Flexibility

The proposed zones that have been outlined through our submissions are intended to implement the proposed Draft Plan of Subdivision and subsequent land uses. A large portion of the property is proposed to be zoned *Residential Second Density* (R2), with site-specific regulations applied where necessary to permit the specific forms of housing and lot configurations. The base R2 zone in the Thames Centre Zoning By-law permits single-detached and semi-detached dwellings. Townhouses have been added to this zone through this application to permit greater flexibility and permit the townhouses being proposed within the low-density portion of the subdivision. Townhouses are currently only permitted in the *Residential Third Density* (R3) zone in the Thames Centre Zoning By-law, which is a zone that also permits apartments and greater density housing forms. Through this application we believed it was more appropriate to add the Townhouse use to the R2 zone to better fit within the character of the subdivision and be permitted in addition to the single-detached and semi-detached dwellings.

An institutional zone has been proposed on two (2) blocks within the provided subdivision, and this zone applies to lands with archaeological potential. This zone has been applied so that only a cemetery use will be permitted on those blocks. No buildings or development will be permitted within the Institutional zone.

The proposed zoning for the high-density block seeks to permit a maximum density of 100 uph. While this density is beyond what is currently permitted in the Official Plan, it is a more appropriate density for modern developments with mid-rise apartment forms.

Traffic

Prepared by: Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited

Modal Split

It is noted that there is no public transit system in Thames Centre or the community of Dorchester. We also note that the Thames Centre is a rural community, which is generally car dependent for the day-to-day needs of residents.

The number of trips per unit, as utilized in the Traffic Impact Study (TIS), are standardized in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual. It is noted that the trips per unit are not typically adjusted to account for whether there are other modes of transit readily available. For example, in a TIS for a development in the City of London, where transit is readily available, transit modal share is not adjusted when



assessing vehicular traffic impacts of new developments. The same approach has been used in the TIS for the subject development.

Traffic Distribution

The TIS presents a snapshot picture of future total traffic conditions in 2030 corresponding to full development, as a worst-case scenario for traffic. The traffic distribution is based on existing directional distribution of AM/PM peak hour road traffic volumes in the surrounding area of the proposed development.

The distribution as summarized in Table 3.2 of the TIS, indicates an equal distribution of AM/PM peak hour traffic (approximately one third), towards each of east (Woodstock), west (London) and south (Hwy 401).

The development is proposed to be implemented in multiple phases, and as each phase proceeds there will be changes in traffic distribution and the usage of roads.

The future traffic volumes projected in the TIS will not be experienced on roadways all in at once but will increase incrementally as each phase of development proceeds. The changes to the road system along with development will also redistribute traffic from existing pinch points to alternative routes to eventually spread out traffic through additional connections to existing roadways.

For example, the extension of Christie Drive from Wheeler Avenue to Harris Road, which will be undertaken as part of the initial phase of the subject development, will also provide an alternative route to residents in the Tiner community to go west on Hamilton Road, or south to Donnybrook Drive, via Christie Drive/Harris Road connection.

Further to the TIS, Doug Tarry Developments has looked at the option to provide a future east-west connection between Harris Road and Mill Road south of the proposed subdivision, working with adjacent landowners. At this time, there appears to be the ability to provide a connection to Boardwalk Way, creating a more direct east-west corridor. However, any future east-west connection from Mill Road to Harris Road would require a settlement boundary expansion, as well as cooperation from adjacent landowners to support this connection. A future east-west connection would further redistribute traffic from the development lands away from the Tiner Subdivision. We anticipate further discussions will be pursued by the Municipality with all landowners the roadway would need to cross, to try and ensure as much connectivity as possible to mitigate traffic impacts to all roadways.

Overall, it is reasonable to expect a more balanced redistribution of traffic in the areas south of Hamilton Road and west of Mill Creek in the future, with the development of these lands and the addition of new road connections.

Commercial Delivery Vehicles

The use of commercial delivery vehicles is a frequent occurrence in residential developments. However, subdivision roads in residential developments, and internal roads in high density blocks, are designed to accommodate the circulation of fire, garbage and delivery trucks in accordance with applicable design standards.

Any apartment buildings constructed would contain internal parking lots and pick-up/drop-off points, which would also facilitate temporary parking for delivery vehicles, keeping them off internal roadways.

It should be noted that the trip generations used for this study were based on ITE Trip Generation Rates, which generally account for these uses.

Site Servicing

Prepared by Cyril J. Demeyere Limited

The proposed Acorn Valley Subdivision has been designed to ensure adequate municipal water and sanitary supply can be provided for all proposed stages of the subdivision build-out, including the future northern development blocks. Municipal Staff have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the water and wastewater systems for the entirety of the development.

The proposed stormwater wet pond will provide quantity control to restrict post-development outflows to pre-development levels for all rainfall events up to the 1-in-250-year storm, while providing enhanced level quality control (80% total suspended solids removal) for the entirety of the proposed development.

The proposed open channel stormwater feature, along with individual lot-level infiltration features, will encourage groundwater recharge to maintain a pre-to-post-development water balance, to ensure no adverse hydrologic effects to the surrounding wetland features.

Sanitary Servicing Alignment

The two potential sanitary servicing alignments from Dorchester Sanitary Pumping Station (SPS) No. 3 to the Acorn Valley site have been discussed with the representatives of the Boardwalk Development, Municipal Staff, and the Upper Thames Region Conservation Authority (UTRCA). All parties agree that both options are possible and must be reviewed in detail before one solution is chosen.

Doug Tarry Limited has heard the public feedback regarding the proposed alignments and will be actively pursuing Alignment 2 (across the Rath-Harris Drain) as the preferred alternative, rather than installing the deep sanitary sewer along Mill Road.



This is being pursued to both mitigate construction impacts to the travelled roadway, and to mitigate concerns relating to dewatering efforts required in the vicinity of the sewer installation. Discussions will be furthered with the Municipality, UTRCA, & Boardwalk Subdivision development to confirm all parties are in agreement.

Watermain Interconnection

Phase 1 of the Acorn Valley Subdivision will not require any external watermain connections or extensions.

In the future, the watermain currently stubbed at the Boardwalk Way & Mill Road intersection will need to be extended north and west along Mill Road to the Acorn Valley Subdivision, to provide adequate looping and fire flow before Phase 2 of the subdivision can be developed. Watermain installation is at shallow depths and has been reviewed by Englobe to confirm dewatering is not anticipated to be required for installation. This was verified to confirm no impact to existing private wells around Mill Road.

The Municipality had already planned to complete this watermain installation project along Mill Road, prior to the Acorn Valley development being proposed, but the work was put on hold based on efficiencies of completing the work concurrent with the subdivision process. Any connections to new watermains in the future are governed by the requirements of the Municipality. Doug Tarry Limited does not require any residents to connect upon extension, and any questions regarding requirements for future connections should be directed to the Municipality.

Mill Road & Christie Drive Construction

Doug Tarry Limited will be restricting construction impacts to Mill Road and Christie Drive as much as possible. The Rath-Harris Drain crossing (Alignment 2) is being pursued for sanitary sewer installation, for this reason, among others. Future watermain installation is shallow and would typically be within the boulevard of the roadway, minimizing construction impacts.

The Municipality has expressed a desire to evaluate upgrades to the existing portions of Mill Road & Christie Drive to bring the roadway to an urban design standard for safety and traffic calming (ie. Curbs, sidewalks and storm sewers).

While Doug Tarry Limited does not require the road to be upgraded to develop the Acorn Valley Subdivision, there are efficiencies to the Municipality to sequence the work concurrent with the future watermain extension in the boulevard. Further discussions will be conducted with the Municipality to understand the desired scope of this work.



Christie Drive Extension – Servicing

Doug Tarry Limited has heard the public feedback regarding the concerns with extension of Christie Drive west to Harris Road. Through discussions with the Municipality, it is understood that the Master Servicing Plan completed by the Municipal Consultant for this area of Dorchester requires extension of sanitary and water to Harris Road to service other lands within the settlement boundary. It is further understood through discussions with the Municipality that sanitary and water services would be required to be extended west to Harris Road in this area, regardless of whether the Christie Drive roadway was extended.

With the area required to be disturbed to satisfy Municipal sanitary and water servicing requirements, the extension of the Christie Drive roadway itself should not create a greater impact to the natural environment, beyond what is already required by the Municipality to service other lands within the settlement boundary.

Construction Impacts

Prepared by Englobe

Impacts to Water and Geothermal Wells from Dewatering

A well monitoring plan is recommended to be implemented during dewatering work. A preliminary screening of wells within the area of influence has been completed to identify wells that could be affected by a significant drawdown of the water table. It should be noted that many factors can influence the real impact on these wells, like the distance to the excavation, the available water head in the well and the well design.

Dewatering rates and area of influence will be revisited during the final design stage. The retained servicing contractor will be notified of the risk related to dewatering and will require that they be prepared to deal with any groundwater interference issues to the satisfaction of Englobe, Doug Tarry Developments, and the Municipality. Any issue with groundwater interference during construction work will be required to be promptly handled by a qualified professional.

Work requiring the greatest dewatering (sanitary sewer installation) is being pursued for an alternative alignment across the Rath-Harris Drain to mitigate impact to existing private wells in the area.

Impacts to Foundations and Structures from Construction Vibration

Although we do not anticipate any impacts to foundations and structures, we recognize the concerns about the impacts to homes because of construction activities. As previously noted, we will offer residents within the construction impact

area an interior and exterior home inspection, at no cost to the homeowners, in advance of construction starting.

Environmental

Prepared by Vroom + Associates

Endangered Species & Species at Risk

Species at Risk (SAR) screening and targeted habitat assessments were completed as part of the Environmental Impact Study and subsequent Information Gathering Form (IGF) submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). Based on the information provided through the EIS and IGF, the MECP has confirmed that no additional surveys or mitigation measures are required for SAR bats, as suitable habitat will remain, and timing requirements will avoid direct impact. Additionally, Bobolink habitat is no longer present due to regular crop rotation into other crop types unsuitable for the species. Should suitable habitat re-establish prior to construction activities, MECP recommends registering activities in this area under Part IV of O. Reg. 830/21 (if applicable).

The only SAR requiring provincial authorization relates to Black Ash, where two healthy trees will be affected by the proposed road connection. A Black Ash Assessment (BAA) and permit application (CPAF) have been submitted to the MECP to address these impacts.

Numerous Black Ash occur throughout the surrounding wetland and woodland communities within the retained natural heritage system. The proposed road construction represents a small, localized impact within a much larger area of suitable habitat that will remain protected.

As part of the permit process, mitigation and compensation measures are proposed, including transplanting naturally regenerating Black Ash seedlings from the impact area into the wetland compensation area. The proposed compensation strategy therefore focuses on maintaining and enhancing wetland-woodland habitat conditions while supporting the regeneration of Black Ash and associated native species.

Wetland Compensation

The Environmental Impact Study identified approximately 0.33 ha of wetland habitat that will be permanently affected by the proposed Christie Drive Road connection and associated servicing works. While efforts have been made through the design process to minimize impacts to natural features, the road crossing represents a required Municipal infrastructure connection within the approved road, sanitary and

water system. It is understood that regardless of the road connection, there would be a requirement of the Municipality to ensure the sanitary and water services are installed through this corridor to service future lands within the settlement boundary. Addition of the roadway to this corridor already required for servicing will not be a substantial additional impact.

A Wetland Compensation and Restoration Plan will be prepared at the detailed design stage in consultation with the Upper Thames Region Conservation Authority (UTRCA). The plan will focus on restoring and enhancing wetland functions within the retained natural heritage system, including areas adjacent to the southwest woodland and wetland complex.

The compensation approach will prioritize wetland-affinity native species and will be integrated with broader ecological restoration initiatives proposed for the site, including woodland enhancement and Black Ash habitat compensation. A monitoring program will also be implemented to confirm successful establishment and long-term function of restored wetland areas.

Stantec and UTRCA Response

Technical review comments were received from Stantec and the Upper Thames Region Conservation Authority (UTRCA) as part of the agency review process. These comments generally relate to clarification of mitigation measures, wetland compensation details, and items to be addressed through detailed design and Conservation Authority permitting processes.

Responses are currently being prepared and will be incorporated into the next revision of the Environmental Impact Study and supporting documentation. It is understood the only comment from Stantec requiring response before draft plan approval is related to the woodlot dripline buffer adjacent to the high-density block, which will not impact the block limits, just the minimum building setbacks.

Harry Small Trail Relocation

Prepared by Doug. Tarry Limited

We understand the importance of the Harry Small Trail to the community. The intention is to relocate the existing trail to the north along the rear of the residential dwellings along Christie Drive. The long-term proposal is that this area will have dual functionality as a stormwater management channel, as well as a walking trail. Lands out of the trail and the channel will be naturalized with native trees, shrubs, and grasses.

It is proposed that the trail will be constructed in the first stage of servicing to allow for the community to have access to this trail connection throughout the development of the lands. Further, this approach will allow for this area to start to naturalize early on in the development.

Below is an example of a naturalize trail completed by Doug Tarry Limited, located in our Harvest Run subdivision in St. Thomas.



Figure 1: Naturalize Multi-Use Trail, St. Thomas

Below is rendering of the trail with the Stormwater Channel to provide additional context to the vision for this area.



Figure 2: Rendering of Trail with Channel

We note that there are some comments related to the Environment Impact Study that require additional information to be prepared. These updates are underway and will be submitted once completed.

We trust that the above and the additional information being provided along with this letter are satisfactory to address the main outstanding concerns from staff, the peer reviewers and the residents.

Sincerely,

Doug. Tarry Limited

Tracy Tucker
Manager of Land Development