
Region of Peel

Phase 2: Agricultural Impact Assessment

Conducted to inform the

Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE)

FINAL
December 24, 2021

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The Region of Peel

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PLANSCAPE



BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH PLANNING

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List of Acronyms

Ag System Publication 856 - Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System, in Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe, Supplementary Direction to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Publication 856

AIA - focused agricultural impact assessment

AIA Guidelines (2018) - Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document

AIA Guidelines - 2021 Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document (OMAFRA) (to date, not yet released)

AU -Assessment Unit

COP - Town of Caledon Official Plan

FSA - Focused Study Area

SABE - Settlement Area Boundary Expansion

GGH – Greater Golden Horseshoe

Growth Plan – A Place to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019

GTAWHC - Greater Toronto Area West Highway Corridor

GGHAS – Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System

Hemson – Hemson Consulting Ltd.

LEAR - the Regional **Land Assessment Area Review**

MDS - Minimum Distance Separation Formulae

NHS – Natural Heritage System

Phase 1 AIA – Preliminary Agricultural Impact Assessment

OMAFRA – Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs

ORMCP - Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017

PAA – Prime Agricultural Area

PAAWG – the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group

PPS – Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

Province - Province of Ontario

Region – Region of Peel

ROP - Regional Official Plan

Town -Town of Caledon

REGION OF PEEL

Phase 2: Agricultural Impact Assessment

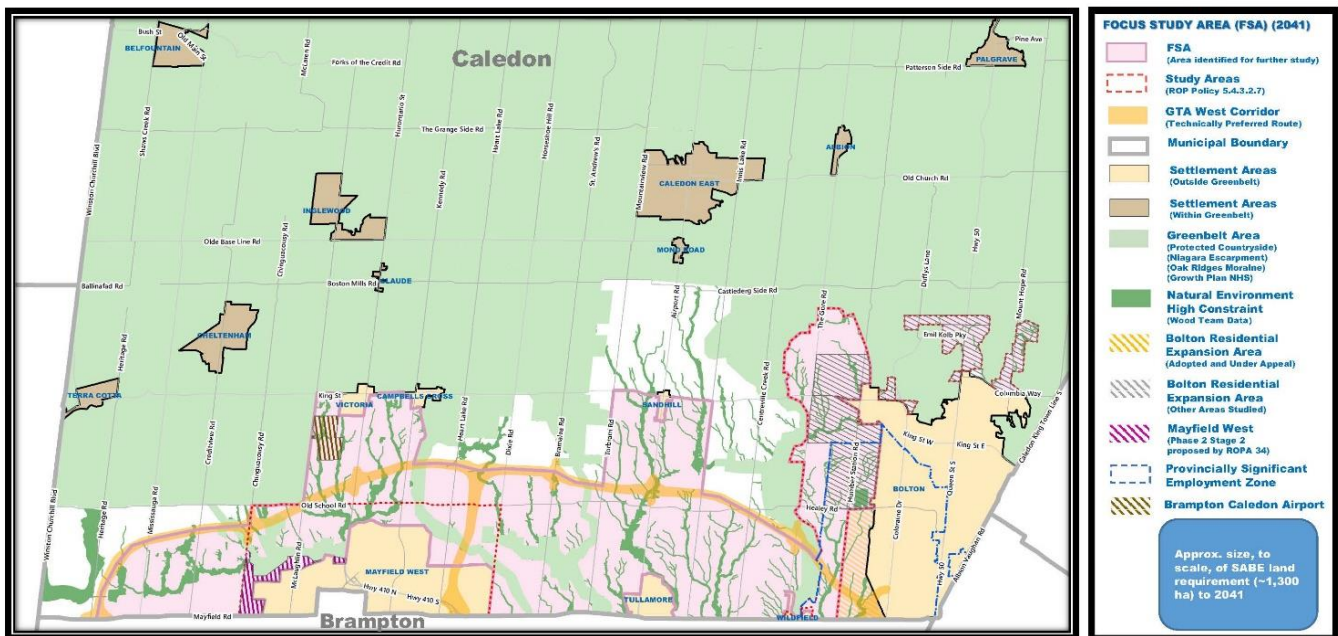
1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Region of Peel is currently undertaking a series of studies to inform the future Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) for growth allocated to the Region of Peel in “A Place to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” 2019” (Growth Plan 2019). After accounting for intensification opportunities across Peel, a municipal comprehensive review process has confirmed there will be a need for new lands to accommodate population and employment growth in the Town of Caledon to 2051. The SABE study, being undertaken by Hemson Consulting, (Hemson) will recommend the appropriate location(s) for the additional community (residential) and employment lands in the Town of Caledon, based on the results of a series of technical studies.

In the initial phase of the SABE study, Hemson identified an area of approximately 8,000 hectares as the most appropriate area for expansion to occur. This area, referred to as the Focus Study Area (FSA), is shown on **Figure 1**.

Figure 1 - Focus Study Area (source: Hemson February 2020)

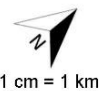


Disclaimer: This map has been developed for the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) Study and represents an area to be studied for the purpose of identifying a SABE. For additional information, please refer to the *Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Study Phase A: Focus Study Area* report.

Note:

- (1) There may be opportunities to expand rural settlements outside the FSA as part of the SABE Study.
- (2) Other natural environmental constraints not identified on this map, including features not captured through existing mapping and potential buffers, will be identified through further analysis and may further limit development.
- (3) ROP Policy 5.4.3.2.7 as it relates to the area surrounding Bolton is under appeal.
- (4) The ~1,300 ha SABE is based on a draft land needs assessment which is under review.

NOTE: Note (2) is replaced with the following, “Other natural constraints as identified through the Scoped Watershed Study process”



Under Provincial policy, settlement area boundary expansions are allowed at the time of a municipal **comprehensive review**¹, where it can be demonstrated that certain conditions as laid out in provincial policy, are addressed. Amongst the criteria to be met are a number related to the protection of agricultural land. Therefore, as input into the SABE study, a “Phase 1 Agricultural Impact Assessment” (Phase 1 AIA) was completed by Planscape to assist in determining the most appropriate location for the preliminary conceptual SABE, in conformity with provincial policy.

As part of this process a comprehensive analysis was undertaken of provincial policies. The FSA was divided into eight (8) assessment units² as shown on **Figure 2**, and each was analyzed in reference to provincial policy and the criteria in the provincial “Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document” (2018 AIA Guidelines) dated March 2018. This analysis provided guidance on where growth could occur to accommodate locations for settlement expansion to meet land need requirements for growth while minimizing the impact on Regional agricultural resources.

Shortly after the technical studies were completed, Schedule 3 to the Growth Plan was amended to extend the required growth horizon to 2051. In response to this amendment, a revised land needs assessment was completed. This resulted in an increase in the size of the SABE that would be required to accommodate the projected growth for the extended timeframe. This analysis was factored into identification of a preliminary conceptual SABE as shown on **Figure 3** as of December 10th, 2020. Given that the Phase 1 AIA did not recommend a specific land area to accommodate projected growth to 2041, but rather provided input on options for accommodating growth that would minimize impacts, the analysis undertaken remains relevant to the expanded growth horizon of 2051.

Given the ongoing requirements and the iterative process associated with identifying the final SABE, the AIA process continues to evolve. At their March 11, 2021 meeting, Regional Council passed several resolutions, including a resolution opposing construction of any transportation corridor traversing the Region of Peel, and specifically the currently proposed GTA West Highway and Transmission Corridor (GTAWHC). This corridor had been proposed as the northern boundary of the FSA and preliminary SABE concept in December 2020. The implications of the Council direction has required further analysis to be included in the AIA to finalize the study inputs informing the SABE. This work includes the consideration of alternative transportation solutions in policy recommendations and further refinements to the SABE concept in response to the direction and input received to date. These implications have been reviewed in the AIA.

¹ All bolded terms in this report are defined terms in the Provincial Policy Study 2020 or the Growth Plan 2019 with the exception of the figure names.

² Throughout this report, reference to specific assessment units as shown on Figures 6A & B will be referenced as AU1, 2,3,3B etc.

Figure 2 - FSA Assessment Units

FIGURE 2 - FSA ASSESSMENT UNITS

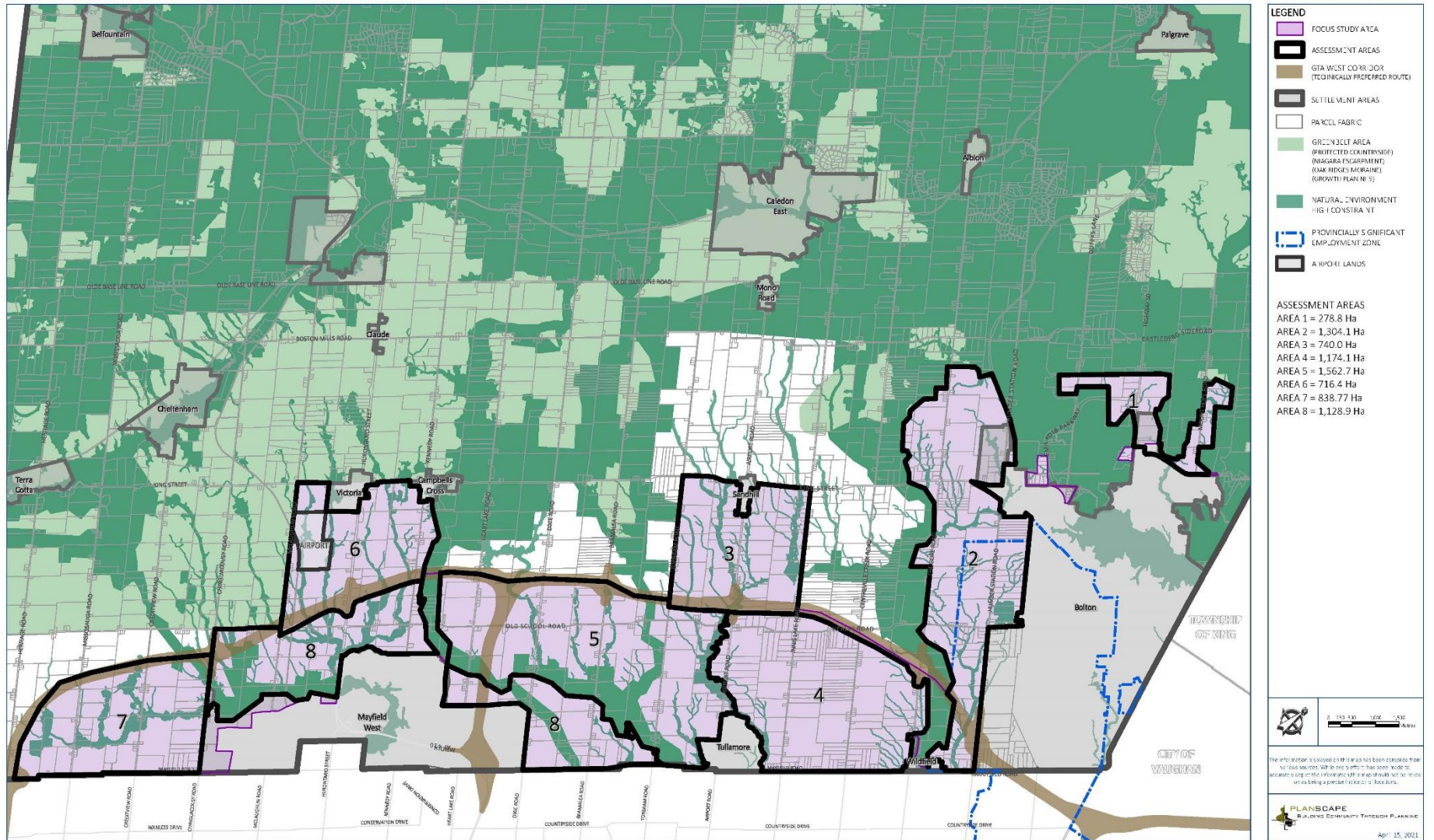
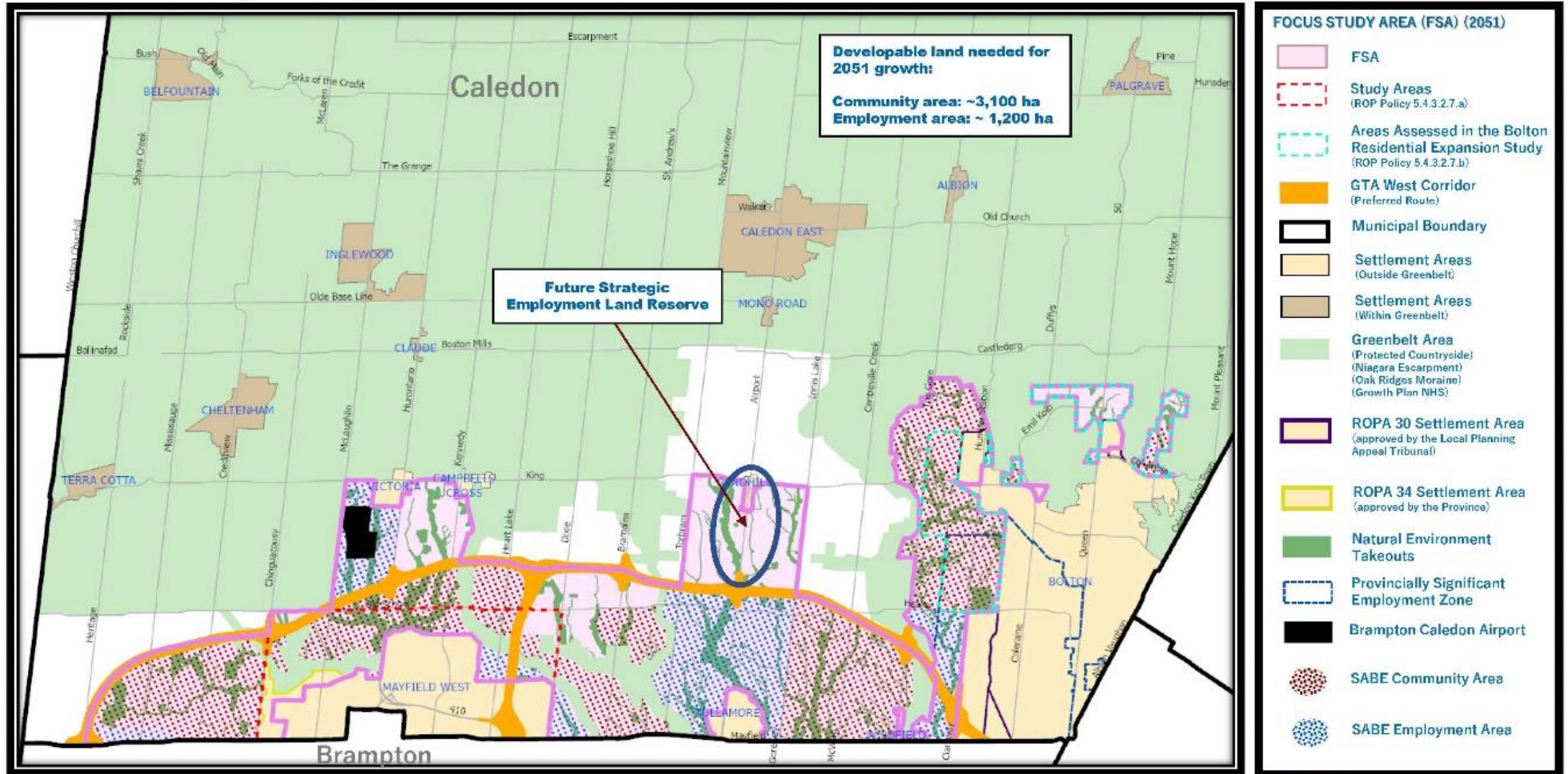


Figure 3 - Preliminary conceptual SABE Concept December 2020 Updated with ROPA 30 (source: Hemson, December 2020)

SABE Concept Map (December 2020 version updated with ROPA 30 LPAT Settlement & Approved ROPA 34)

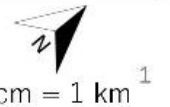


WARNING TO USERS: This map represents a conceptual area for the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion and is being provided for information purposes only. Users are advised that this mapping is currently in draft and may change. The Region of Peel does not certify the accuracy of the information provided nor does it provide any assurance that the mapping will remain unchanged. Any reliance placed by the user on the information provided herein is strictly at the risk of the user, and the Region of Peel does not assume responsibility for any loss or damages resulting to the user or any third party by reliance on this information.

- Notes:**
- 1) Other natural environmental constraints not identified on this map, including potential restoration lands, will be identified through further analysis and may further limit development.
 - 2) The ~4,300 ha SABE is based on a draft land needs assessment which is under review.

NOTE: Note (1) is replaced with the following, "Other natural constraints as identified through the Scoped Watershed Study process"

DISCLAIMER
 Mapping is **DRAFT**
 only for further study
 and discussion.



Further analysis of employment areas within the FSA has also been required in response to comments received following presentation of a preliminary SABE concept area in December 2020.

As the work continues to refine the recommended SABE, a more focused agricultural impact assessment (AIA) is required. This Phase 2 Agricultural Assessment (Phase 2 AIA) builds on the analysis in the Phase 1 AIA, considers the preliminary conceptual SABE presented in December 2020 and provides guidance to support the refinement of the December 2020 SABE concept by staff in response to input received. The analysis addresses how impacts on the remaining regional agricultural system can be mitigated as growth proceeds. It factors in the expanded growth projections resulting from the provincial timeline and forecasts as updated in 2019.

2 Background

2.1 Policy Context

As noted in the previous section, the policy analysis completed in the Phase 1 AIA remains the context for the Phase 2 AIA. This detailed analysis is summarized in Section 2 of the Phase 1 AIA.

The analysis in the Phase 1 AIA provided input into the process required to identify the appropriate SABE in conformity with the applicable planning policies. The purpose of this Phase 2 AIA is to address how, now that a preliminary conceptual SABE has been identified, the potential impacts on the agricultural resource can be managed and mitigated in response to the policies of the Provincial Policy Study (PPS) 2020 and the Growth Plan 2019.

Briefly, in summary³, the main policies that are of specific application include Section 1.1.3.8 of the PPS:

“1.1.3.8 A planning authority may identify a **settlement area** or allow the expansion of a **settlement area** boundary only at the time of a **comprehensive review** and only where it has been demonstrated that:

- c) in **prime agricultural areas**:
 - 1. the lands do not comprise specialty crop areas;
 - 2. alternative locations have been evaluated, and
 - i. there are no reasonable alternatives which avoid **prime agricultural areas**; and
 - ii. there are no reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in **prime agricultural areas**;

³ See Section 22 of the Phase 1 “Preliminary Agricultural Impact Assessment” for a comprehensive policy review.

- d) the new or expanding settlement area is in compliance with the minimum distance separation formulae; and
- e) impacts from new or expanding **settlement areas** on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to the settlement area are mitigated to the extent feasible.”⁴

Section 1.1.3.8c) was addressed in the Phase 1 AIA where it was concluded that given the extent of prime agricultural area in Peel, identifying a settlement boundary expansion that avoids it would not be possible. The analysis in this report addresses where in the FSA, impacts on agricultural operations could be best mitigated in accommodating boundary expansion. Areas are assessed as most/least preferred from an agricultural perspective.

A detailed response to Section 2.2.8 f) of the Growth Plan 2019 is also addressed.

“f) **Prime agricultural areas** should be avoided where possible. To support the **Agricultural System**, alternative locations across the upper or single – tier municipality will be evaluated and prioritized and determined based on avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the impact on the **Agricultural System** and in accordance with the following:

- i. expansion into specialty crop areas is prohibited;
 - ii. reasonable alternatives that avoid **prime agricultural areas** are evaluated; and
 - iii. where **prime agricultural areas** cannot be avoided, lower priority agricultural lands are used;
- i) the settlement area to be expanded is in compliance with the **minimum distance separation formulae**;
 - j) any adverse impacts on agricultural operations and on the **agri-food network** from expanding **settlement areas** would be avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated as determined through an **agricultural impact assessment**”.⁵

The specific requirements to be addressed with respect to the **Agricultural System** are identified in Section 4.2.6 of the Growth Plan 2019. Linkages, preservation of large contiguous area of active production, maintenance and access to agricultural infrastructure and management of the Regional agri-food system are all required to be addressed.

“4.2.6 **Agricultural System**

- 1. (...)
- 2. (...)

⁴ Ibid., pg. 10

⁵ Growth Plan 2019, Section 2.2.8, 3.f) p. 25.

3. Where agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses interface outside of **settlement areas**, land use compatibility will be achieved by avoiding or where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts on the **Agricultural System**. Where mitigation is required, measures should be incorporated as part of the non-agricultural uses, as appropriate, within the area being developed. Where appropriate, this should be based on an **agricultural impact assessment**.
4. The geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the **agri-food network** will be maintained and enhanced.
5. (...)
6. Integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning, will consider opportunities to support and enhance the **Agricultural System**.
7. Municipalities are encouraged to implement regional agri-food strategies and other approaches to sustain and enhance the **Agricultural System** and the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector, including the maintenance and improvement of the **agri-food network** by:
 - a) providing opportunities to support access to healthy, local, and affordable food, urban and near-urban agriculture, food system planning and promoting the sustainability of agricultural, agri-food, and agri-product businesses while protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts;
 - b) protecting, enhancing, or supporting opportunities for infrastructure, services, and assets. Where negative impacts on the **agri-food network** are unavoidable, they will be assessed, minimized, and mitigated to the extent feasible; and
 - c) establishing or consulting with agricultural advisory committees or liaison officers.”⁶

With respect to the Greenbelt Plan 2017, the preliminary conceptual SABE does not encroach into the Greenbelt Plan area. However, in certain locations it is proposed to abut the area. If there is a direct interface with the Greenbelt Plan area once the SABE is finalized, that interface will need to be addressed to mitigate potential impacts.

The **Agricultural System** is connected both functionally and economically to the agricultural land base and agri-food sector across municipal boundaries and beyond the boundaries of the Greenbelt. Agriculture is the predominant land use in the Greenbelt and is an important economic factor in the quality of life for communities in and beyond the Greenbelt.

⁶ Growth Plan 2019, pgs. 46, 47.

To strengthen the connections between the **Agricultural Systems** of the Greenbelt and the rest of the GGH, municipalities, farming organizations and other agencies and levels of government are encouraged to collaborate with each other to support the **Agricultural System**. As well, consideration should be given to activities and changes in land use, both within and in proximity to the Greenbelt, and how they relate to the broader **agricultural system** and economy of southern Ontario. Municipalities should plan appropriately to ensure both functional and economic connections are maintained and strengthened in conjunction with natural heritage systems, water resources, growth management and infrastructure to maximize synergies and support a viable agri-food sector.⁷

2.2 Provincial Guidelines

In the intervening time between when the Phase 1 Preliminary AIA was completed and the Phase 2 AIA was undertaken, there were some changes to the provincial policy framework.

On August 28, 2020, the time frame under which growth was to be addressed in the Growth Plan was extended to 2051 and the provincial growth projections were changed. Under these updated policies, the Region of Peel is required to accommodate an additional 702,000 people and 330,00 jobs during the period from 2021 to 2051. In response to these revisions, a preliminary analysis of land needs responding to the expanded provincial growth horizon to 2051, was undertaken between the completion of the Phase 1 AIA and initiation of this Phase 2 study. The preliminary land needs assessment indicated that of that 702,000, 529,000 people and 295,000 jobs could be accommodated in existing built-up areas.

This assessment determined that the expansion of the growth horizon to 2051 increased the projected land needs outside the existing urban settlement boundaries from the 1300 ha estimated for the 2041 horizon.

In December 2020, the preliminary land needs analysis indicated that the SABE would need to accommodate an additional population of 183,000 and additional employment of 67,700 by 2051. This translated into a land need of about 3,100 hectares to accommodate residential development in new Community Areas and about 1,200 hectares to support employment uses in new Employment Areas. This would represent a total combined land need of approximately 4,300 hectares of net developable land excluding environmental and non-environmental constraints⁸.

While this is a significant increase in the amount of area required to accommodate growth and will result in the loss agricultural operations and the conversion of prime agricultural land in south Caledon, it should be noted that the calculation of land needs focused on establishing a balanced budget that incorporated significant intensification within the existing built boundary.

⁷ Greenbelt Plan (2017), Section 3.1.6, pgs.19-20.

⁸ Hemson Planning Justification Report Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Concept map and Technical Study Findings Dec 10th, 2020. Pg. 42.43.

An intensification target of 55% and a greenfield density of 65 people and jobs per hectare for the new settlement area are recommended in the Region's land need assessment. This is an increase from the cumulative intensification rate of 46%, achieved between 2006 and 2020. It is also noted that the Region will be finalizing the land needs assessment. This process includes a review of employment land supply and conversions in existing settlement areas to confirm land needs for the SABE Study. If substantive changes to the land needs are identified as a result of ongoing work, these can be addressed in a supplementary analysis based on the findings and recommendations in this AIA.

The "Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System, in Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe, Supplementary Direction to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" Publication 856 (Ag System Publication 856) was released in March 2020. This publication updated the February 2018 version to align with the Growth Plan 2019. The Phase 1 AIA was based on the direction in the 2018 publication.

The conclusions reached in the Phase 1 AIA regarding the regional component of the GGH agricultural system remain valid under the updated guidelines. The process of rationalizing the provincial system with a proposed regional system is addressed in Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 of the Phase 1 AIA. It summarizes the comprehensive process undertaken by the Region in consultation with Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) upon completion of the Regional Land Assessment Area Review (LEAR). The Region worked with OMAFRA to rationalize the location of the provincial Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System (GGHAS) with the findings of the Regional LEAR. That process led to the development of draft Official Plan Schedule X12 that proposed a revised Prime Agricultural Area (PAA).

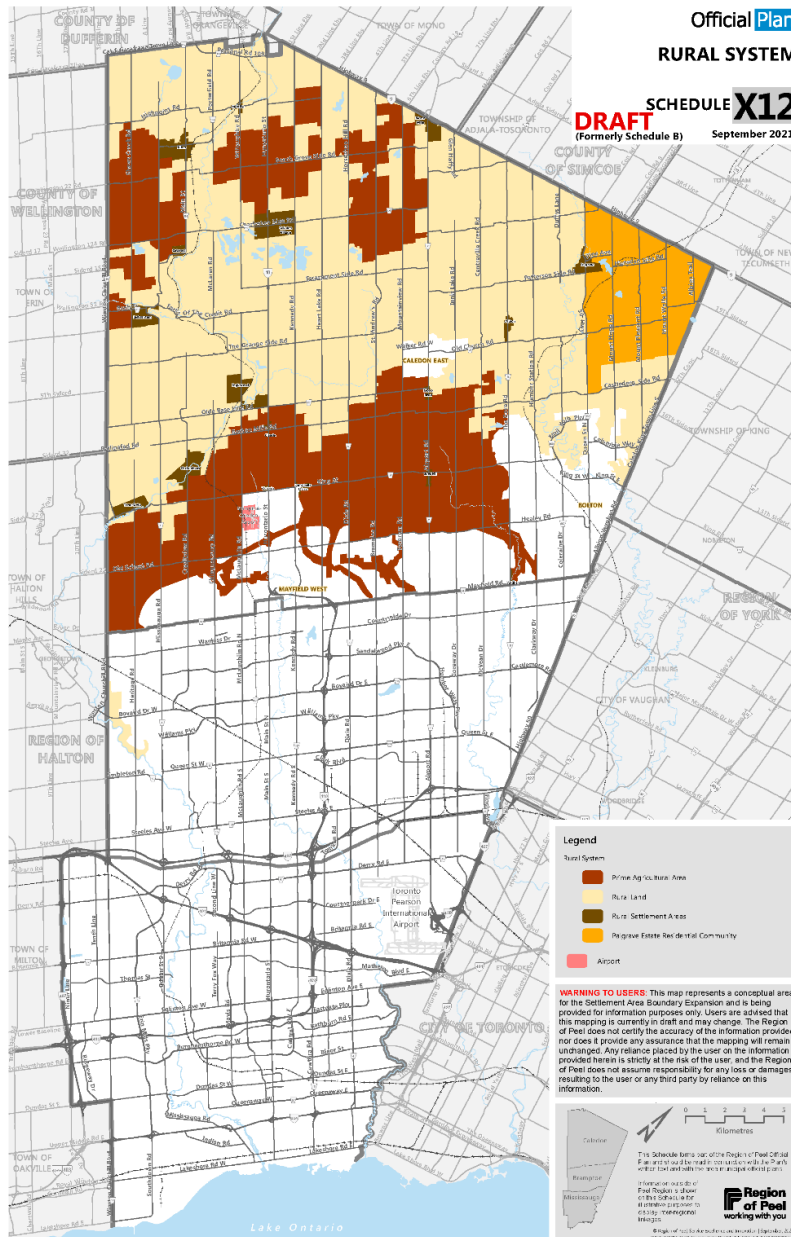
Now that a preliminary conceptual SABE has been identified, the impact on the proposed Regional PAA and the provincial system must be considered as part of this review. Measures are required to protect the integrity of the provincial system in compliance with the February 2018 Ag System Publication 856.

As noted in the Phase 1 AIA, the Region had previously worked with the OMAFRA to rationalize the location of the GGH Agricultural System (GGHAS) based on the findings of the Regional LEAR. This process led to preparation of a preliminary draft official plan Schedule X12 (dated December 2019) proposing a possible revised Regional PAA. In the period since completion of the Phase 1 AIA, ROPAs 30 and 34 have been approved finalizing expansion of the Bolton and Mayfield West urban boundaries. Draft Schedule X12 was updated in September 2021, as shown on **Figure 4A** to include the approved ROPA 30 and 34 settlement expansion and factor in the updated growth forecast to 2051. **Figure 4B** superimposes the staff recommended SABE concept on Schedule X12. The updated draft schedule is considered as part of the analysis contained in this report.

Although the settlement expansion is a significant conversion of farmland over the period to 2051, Peel will continue to have a robust agricultural sector after the SABE is established. Through the work done as part of the regional LEAR and the process to rationalize the conclusions reached in that study with implementation of the GGHAS, the prime agricultural

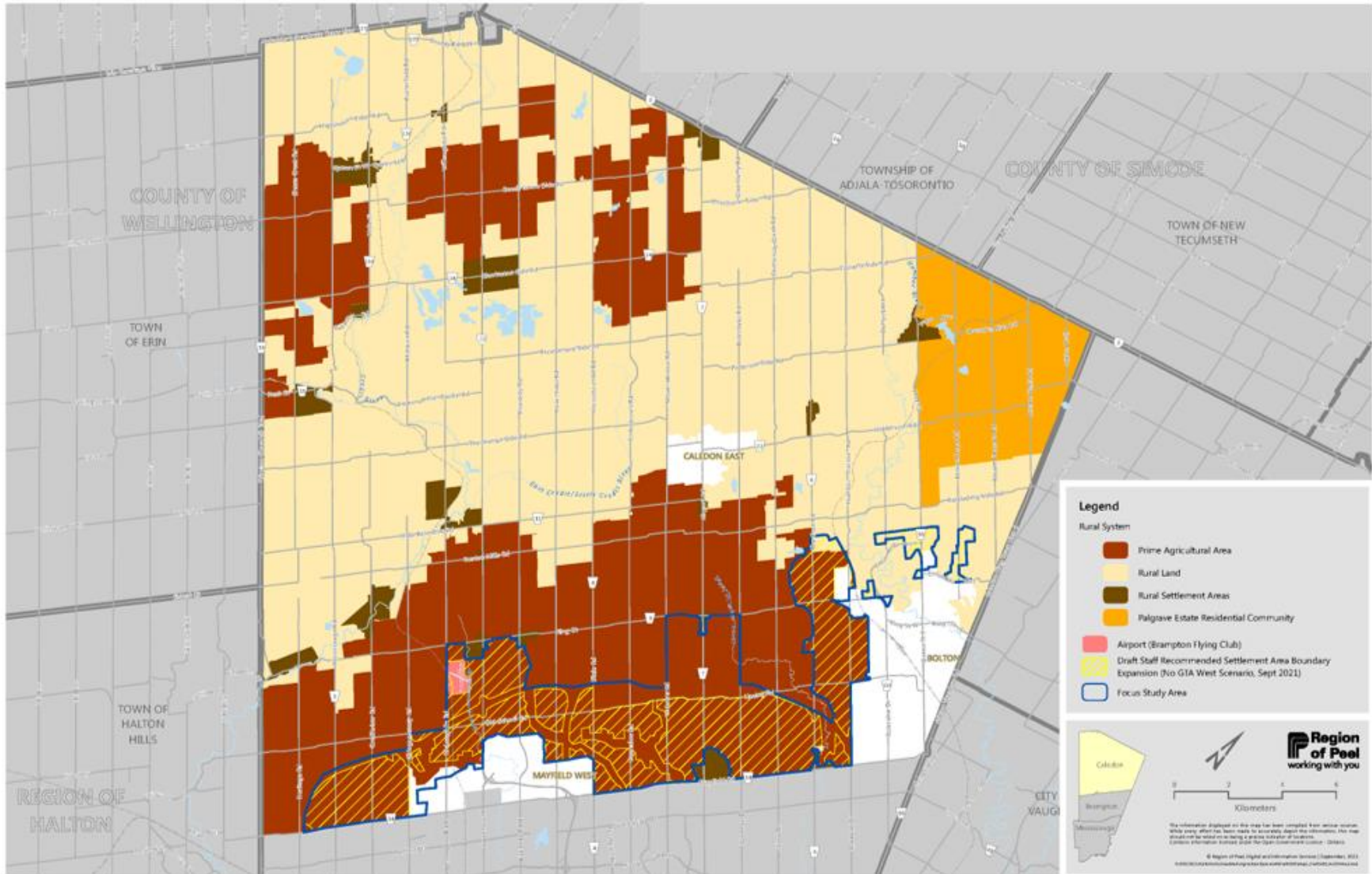
area (PAA) in Peel was proposed to be increased by 2,006 ha from 22,144 ha to 24,150 ha. With the 4,400 ha⁹ required to accommodate the SABE as recommended by staff in September 2021 removed, the remaining Regional PAA area will be 18,851 ha or 15% of the area of Peel Region. As presently proposed, the Rural System agricultural land base, with growth to 2051 accounted for, will represent 79% of the land area of Caledon. Growth will be phased and occur over time thereby ensuring that until it is needed, land designated for future growth can continue to be farmed.

Figure 4A Draft Official Plan Rural System Schedule X12 (source: Region of Peel)



⁹ Additional analysis between September and December 2021, confirmed the need to increase the draft SABE area from 4,300 ha to 4,400 ha.

Figure 4B Draft Schedule X12 overlay with Staff recommended SABE (source: Region of Peel)



To ensure that the remaining PAA and Regional Rural system will continue to support a strong agricultural sector, the implications of this additional growth and measures to mitigate the impact on the remaining agricultural area are addressed in this report. As phasing in the area within the SABE proceeds, measures can be implemented to ensure land in future phases continues to be in production.

At the time of writing, OMAFRA staff confirmed that a “2021 Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document” (AIA Guidelines) had been finalized but not released. The work done in the Phase 1 report was in accordance with the 2018 March “Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document” Guidelines. OMAFRA staff assisted in ensuring the work done for this report would be consistent with the anticipated final 2021 AIA Guidelines, but it was not possible to confirm.

As the process for updating policy proceeds, adherence to all relevant policies and guidelines will be confirmed.

2.3 Regional Process

The FSA, (**Figure 1**), established by Hemson as part of the initial phase of the SABE process, was the basis for the Phase 1 AIA. The findings from that assessment were factored into a comprehensive analysis based on the AIA and 15 other technical reports that resulted in the preliminary December 2020 SABE concept shown on **Figure 3**. Other studies considered in establishing the SABE addressed:

- climate change mitigation,
- energy and emissions reductions,
- archeological assessment,
- mineral aggregate resources,
- public health,
- Regional fiscal impact,
- demand for public facilities,
- employment and commercial factors,
- transportation,
- water & wastewater assessment, and
- environmental screening & scoped sub-watershed study.

3 Study Methodology

3.1 Context

For the Phase 2 AIA, the draft SABE concept as recommended to Regional Council for future inclusion in the Rural Settlement Area boundaries on December 10, 2020, is the primary study area. While it is acknowledged that this area is preliminary and conceptual and will be revised in response to the findings of other ongoing technical studies, the focus in this report is on how to manage the impact of the preliminary conceptual SABE being re-designated to accommodate urban development. Given the 30-year time frame over which growth will occur, the progression of the associated development will be phased. Although it is acknowledged that the designation of a future growth area will ultimately remove land from the agricultural designation, phasing and timelines for development can assist in maximizing ongoing agricultural production in the interim. Consideration of appropriate phasing and sequencing of development will be addressed with respect to this phasing and the primary and secondary study areas.

3.2 Study Area

The study area is currently comprised of two components. The preliminary conceptual SABE area and the additional SABE employment and community testing areas subsequently identified for additional consideration, comprise the primary study area. The 1.5 km buffer zone around the primary study area is the secondary study area.

The additional SABE employment and community testing areas are lands that may or may not be included in the SABE. These areas are labelled as C (Community) and E (Employment) on **Figures 5 A** and **B**. The analysis of these scenario testing areas will initially address the impacts if the SABE is expanded or reconfigured to include them. As the process moves forward and their status is confirmed, the employment and community scenario testing areas will be assessed as primary to address impacts if these areas are ultimately included in the SABE and as secondary if they are not included.

As previously noted, the secondary study area is a 1.5 km buffer area around the recommended SABE and the employment and community scenario testing areas. The focus in this area will be on the management and mitigation of impacts on the agricultural sector in proximity to future urban boundaries.

For the purposes of continuity, the eight assessment units established for evaluation purposes in the Phase 1 AIA are the basis for the assessment units analyzed in this Phase 2 AIA. The eight areas have been expanded where necessary to include the secondary area around it. The primary portion of the assessment unit is labeled as **A** and the secondary area as **B** for the balance of this report. The assessment units are mapped on **Figures 6A** and **B**. The evaluation conducted in the Phase 1 AIA has been expanded and updated to include these additional areas. The expanded evaluation is summarized in **Table 1** in Section 3.10 of this report.

Figure 5A – SABE with Community and Employment Scenario Areas

FIGURE 5A - SABE with COMMUNITY & EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO AREAS

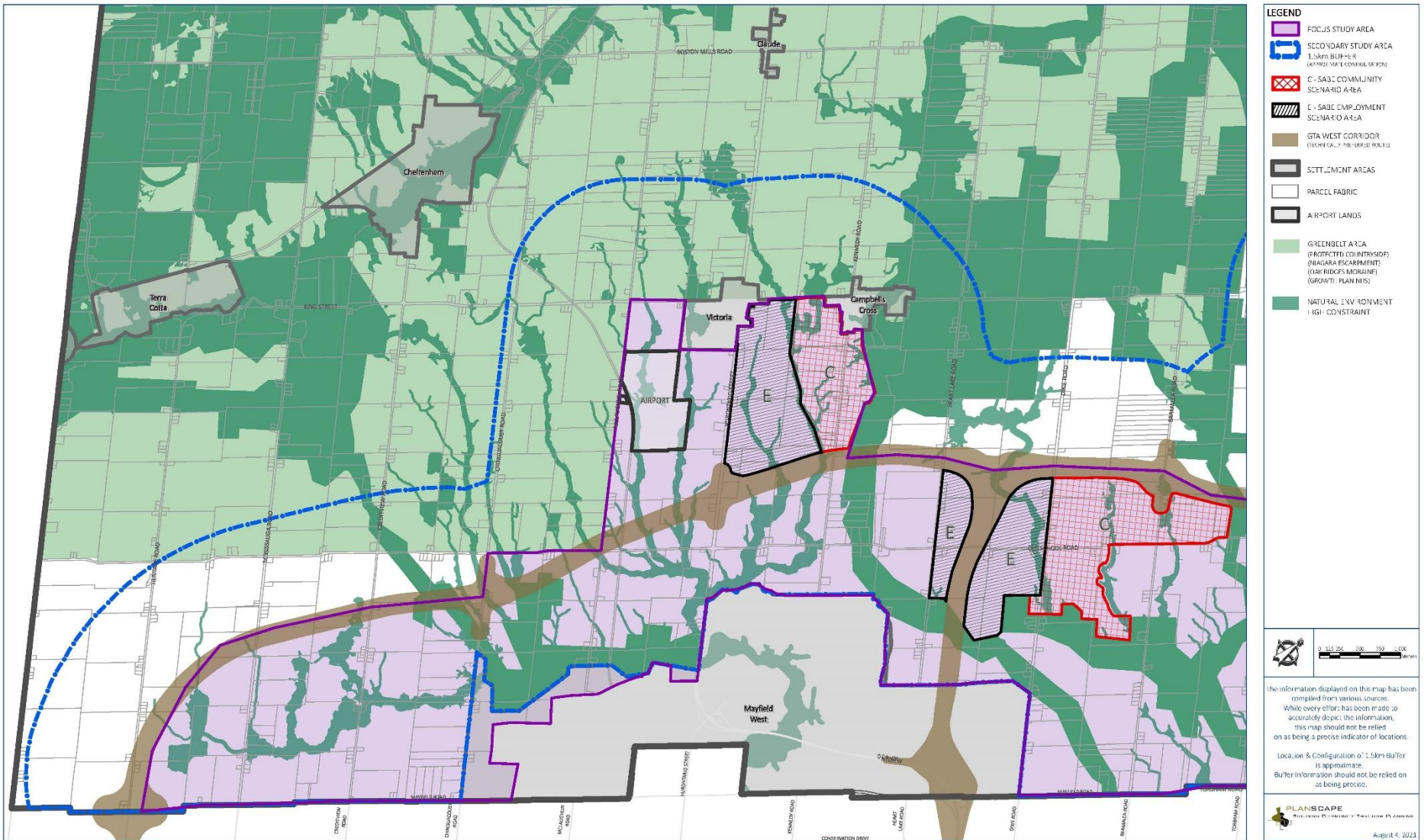


Figure 5B – SABE with Community & Employment Areas

FIGURE 5B - SABE with COMMUNITY & EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO AREAS

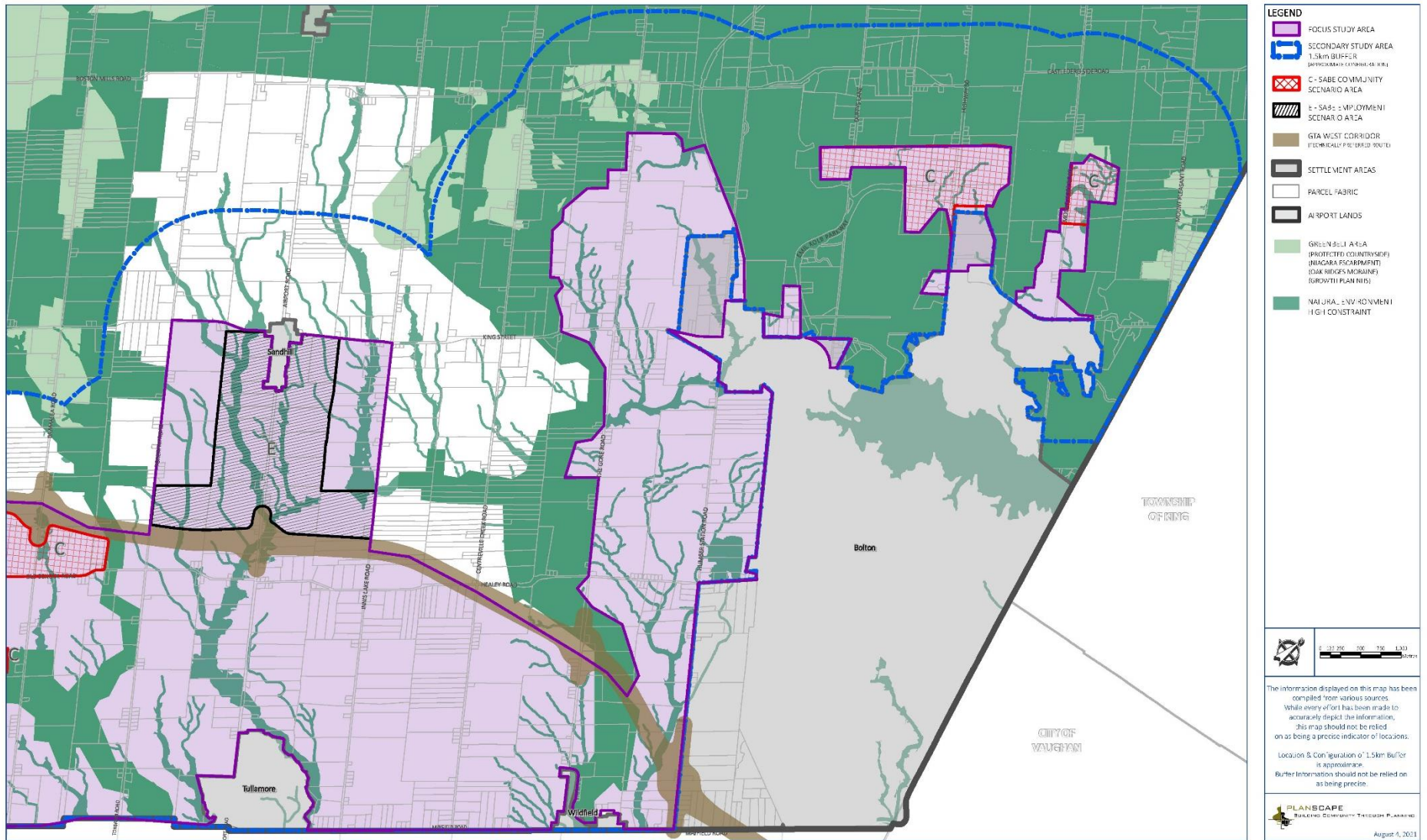
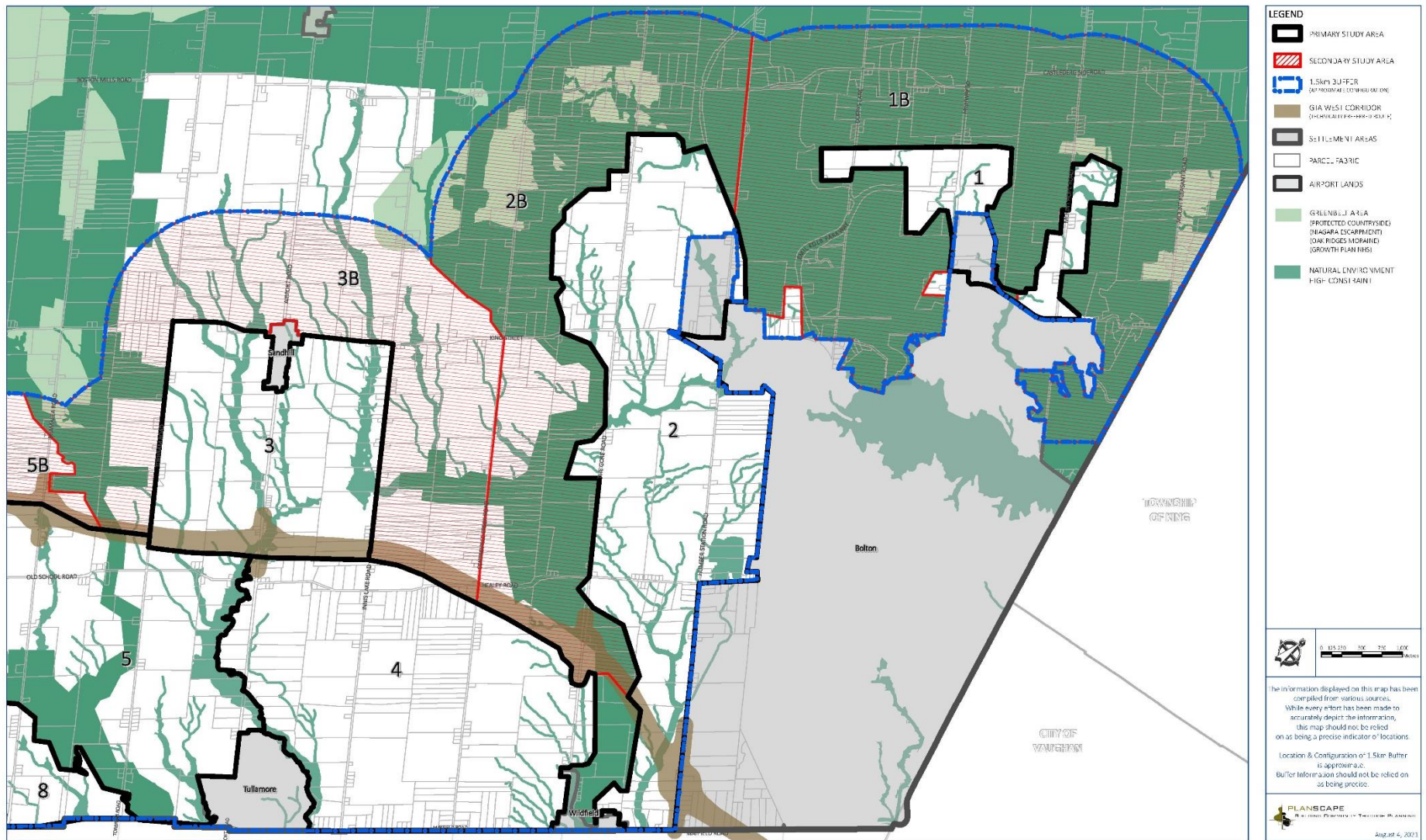


Figure 6B – Assessment Units

FIGURE 6B - ASSESSMENT UNITS



3.3 Study Team

Both Phase 1 and Phase 2 AIAs were completed by PLANSCAPE INC., Margaret Walton, B.A. Hons., M.PL., RPP was the lead on the project. Ms. Walton has a master's degree in Land Use Planning and a B.A.(Hons) in Geography which included study of soils and geomorphology. She is a Registered Professional Planner and has 30 years of experience in planning for rural and agricultural land uses. She has conducted several regional LEAR studies and worked for OMAFRA in developing policies to support planning for the agricultural system. She is experienced with AIA evaluations. Ms. Walton oversaw and was ultimately responsible for all of the work associated with the Phase 2 AIA.

Kelly Hodder, B.E.S., MLA, assisted with the land use surveys and in completing the MDS analysis for the AIA. In addition to having a BA in Environmental Studies and a Master of Landscape Architecture, Ms. Hodder is a provisional member of OPPI. She has worked for PLANSCAPE as a land use planner since 2014 and has worked on numerous agricultural studies. She has completed MDS training modules with OMAFRA and is experienced with implementation of the process.

Jennifer Thomson, B.A. (Hon) is a graduate of the Urban & Regional Planning Technology Program (GIS and CAD) of Fanshawe College managed the mapping and technical aspects of the AIA. Ms. Thomson has extensive experience in agricultural analysis.

Additional assistance was provided by other members of the PLANSCAPE team. Curriculum Vitae for each of the main team members are attached in **Appendix 1**.

3.4 Methodology

The methodology used to assess the proposed SABE from an agricultural perspective, was based on the following steps.

1. Confirmation of the primary study area (the FSA with particular focus on the SABE) and identification of the secondary study area within 1.5 km of the primary study boundary.
2. Background data collection and review.
3. Land use surveys.
4. Consultations with local farmers and farm organizations.
5. Windshield surveys.
6. Aerial photo interpretation.
7. Identification of properties subject to MDS formulae application.
8. Confirmation of criteria for refining potential locations for urban expansion.
9. Locational analysis based on identified criteria.
10. Confirmation of proposed and potential expansion areas.

The timing of the study during the Covid pandemic did restrict the amount of field research and direct interaction with farmers that could be conducted. As the SABE process proceeds, if the Covid pandemic permits, additional field work can be done to confirm any uncertainties.

3.4.1 Data Collection

This step involved the identification and review of material relevant to the Phase 2 AIA. The material included:

- Provincial policy and guidance documents,
- the ROP and Caledon Official Plan and related schedules,
- background reports prepared by the Region and the Town relevant to the **agricultural system**,
- environmental assessment documents which included agricultural analysis, specifically those related to the GTAWHC,
- AIAs prepared for other projects over the past decade,
- Town of Caledon Zoning By-law and Schedules,
- parcel mapping and related assessment information for the FSA,
- aerial imagery of the FSA and surrounding area,
- source water protection mapping,
- background documentation regarding the GGH **Agricultural System** as identified by the province,
- background data from the joint Regional and Town LEAR including LEAR scoring,
- Agricultural Census data related to agricultural crop statistics over the past decade,
- Agri-food asset mapping for Peel Region,
- background information related to the provincial identification of the Peel component of the GGH **agricultural system**,
- mapping related to the Regional / Town LEAR,
- proposed revisions to the Regional PAA designations,
- aerial imaging of crop patterns and farm infrastructure,
- Provincial mapping of systematic and random agricultural drainage systems in the FSA,
- soil capability mapping, and
- related technical studies as listed in Section 2.3.

3.4.2 Land Use Survey

To establish an understanding of the land use in the FSA and areas abutting the boundaries of the FSA, a land use survey based on drive-by site inspections, aerial photography, zoning information, parcel data and consultation with local residents was completed. The results of the land use survey are shown on **Figures 7A** and **B**. Additional information regarding drainage, landownership, property use information from MPAC, zoning and details of recent building permit applications are discussed in the Phase 1 AIA and mapped on Figures 13 through 16 of that report.

Figure 7A – Land Use Information

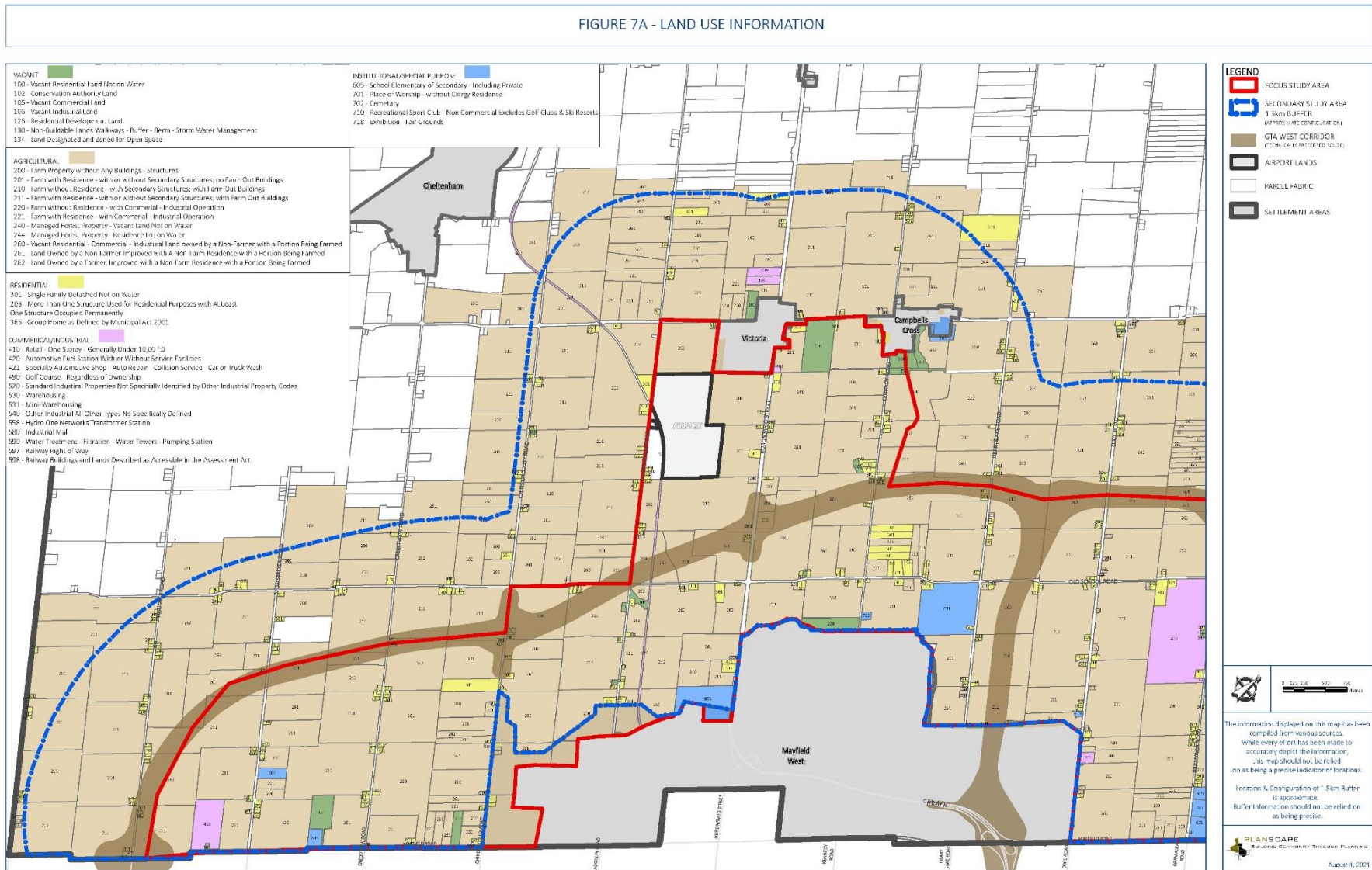
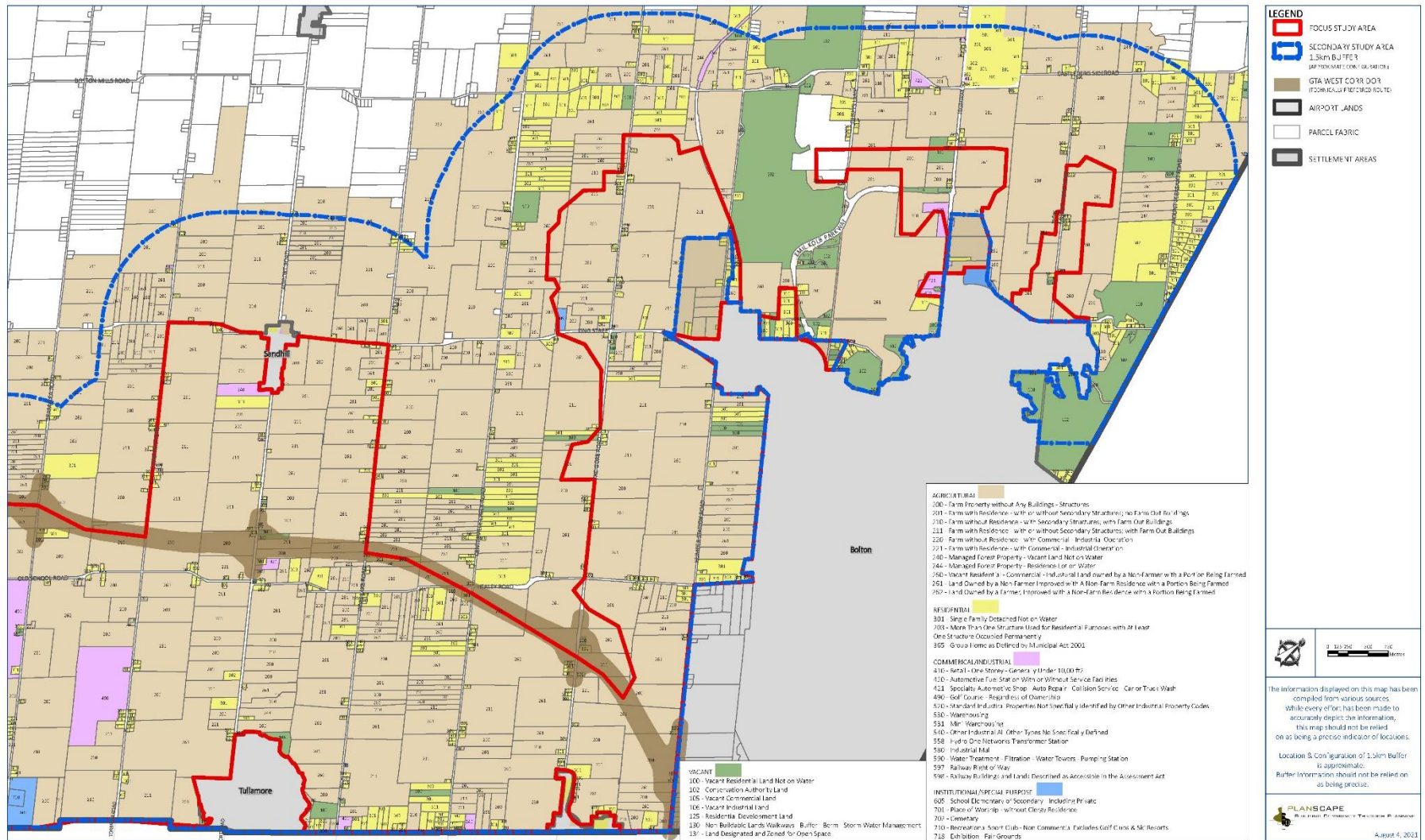


Figure 7B – Land Use Information

FIGURE 7B - LAND USE INFORMATION



3.4.3 Consultations

Throughout the process, consultations were undertaken with Regional and Town staff, other members of the Hemson Consulting team, the Peel Federation of Agriculture, the PAAWG, OMAFRA staff and local residents.

3.4.4 Field Investigations

Field investigations in the form of drive-by site inspections were conducted between October 2019 and March 2021 and subsequently during February 2021. Due to the issues associated with the Covid 19 pandemic, property inspections were not possible for the Phase 2 AIA.

3.4.5 Aerial Photo Interpretation

Aerial photography updated by the Town of Caledon in 2020, was used extensively. It was augmented by parcel data which then allowed for the use of Google maps, specifically the street view option. Historic imagery of the primary and secondary study areas was referenced to assess changes to the production profile and farm infrastructure over time. Current imagery was used to assess the existing situation and as the basis for the MDS analysis.

3.5 Physical Conditions

No soils work was done in support of this AIA. The Region and the Town of Caledon completed a LEAR study in 2016 which included a thorough analysis of soils, slope, topography and climate in the Town. The LEAR was the basis for an Agricultural Mapping Refinement Report in 2019 that compared the results of the LEAR with findings of the Provincial Agricultural System mapping process. Both the Provincial and Regional studies incorporated LEAR analyses to identify recommended prime agricultural areas. Sufficient analysis of soils, slope, topography and climate was completed as part of those processes to provide the basis for the AIA.

3.5.1 Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Formulae Application

A comprehensive MDS analysis was done of properties in the FSA as documented in the Phase 1 AIA. For the Phase 2 AIA the focus was on the primary study area and the 1.5 km secondary area adjacent to the primary study area.

During the Phase 1 AIA, interviews were conducted with local farmers to obtain input regarding the current status of these properties and other area livestock operations. Site inspections were conducted, and air photo analysis was undertaken to identify properties that housed or appeared to have the potential to house livestock. Ongoing efforts were made to contact property owners. Detailed notes were kept of the process followed, efforts to contact property owners, and discussions that took place. Where the property owner did not respond, air photos and street view mapping were used to determine if barns were located on the property and to assess their state of repair. In conducting this analysis, the process laid out in the Provincial

guidelines regarding application of the MDS formula was followed. OMAFRA staff were consulted for direction on how to deal with situations where information could not be confirmed with the owner. If livestock or evidence of livestock was observed, it was noted. If barns appeared to be in a good state of repair, it was noted.

A similar process was followed for the Phase 2 AIA. Work done for the Phase 1 AIA was reviewed, updated, and confirmed. Submissions that were made in response to the Phase 1 AIA regarding MDS analysis were reviewed. Where properties had changed status since the completion of the Phase 1 AIA, the MDS analysis was removed. Additional properties identified as having potential to house livestock, specifically in the extended secondary study area were added and evaluated. A review was done to confirm that all eligible properties had been included. Ongoing efforts were made to contact property owners and operators to confirm details. OMAFRA staff were consulted regarding treatment of properties where there was uncertainty.

The properties evaluated are mapped on **Figures 8A and B**. MDS arcs for identified properties are mapped on **Figures 9A and B** with detailed mapping for each assessment unit shown on **Figures 10A to H**. A spreadsheet documenting details, and the nature of the analysis is attached is **Appendix 2**. The worksheets for each MDS analysis conducted are included in **Appendix 3**. Additional mapping of the MDS arcs for each of the 8 assessment units that comprise the primary and secondary study areas is contained in **Appendix 4**.

During the period leading to finalization of the AIA, continuing efforts will be made to verify the status of the properties with the owners. Over time, as development progresses in the SABE, the direction in the ROP, the Caledon Official Plan and provincial regulations will be relied on to update MDS requirements to confirm the status of properties.

3.5.2 Assessment Process

There are three elements to be addressed as part of the assessment process.

1. Management and mitigation of impacts on farming operations as development progresses in the primary study area.
2. Management and mitigation of impact on farming operations in the secondary study area with particular focus on the interface between the SABE and the rural area
3. A description and assessment of the net impact on the **agricultural system** addressing the agricultural land base, agri-food system and connectivity of the system.

Figure 8 – MDS Locations

FIGURE 8A - MDS LOCATIONS

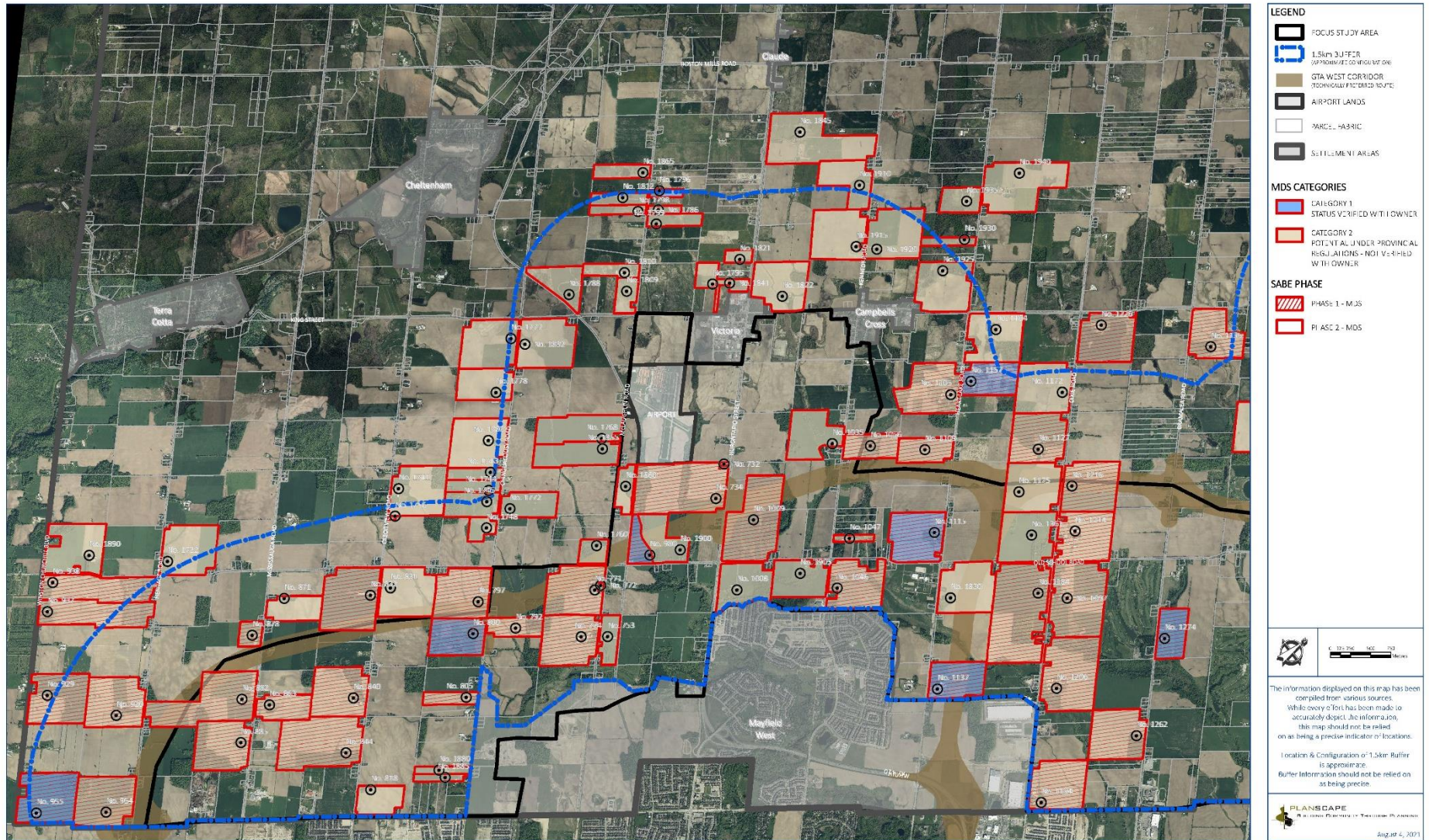


Figure 8B – MDS Locations

FIGURE 8B - MDS LOCATIONS

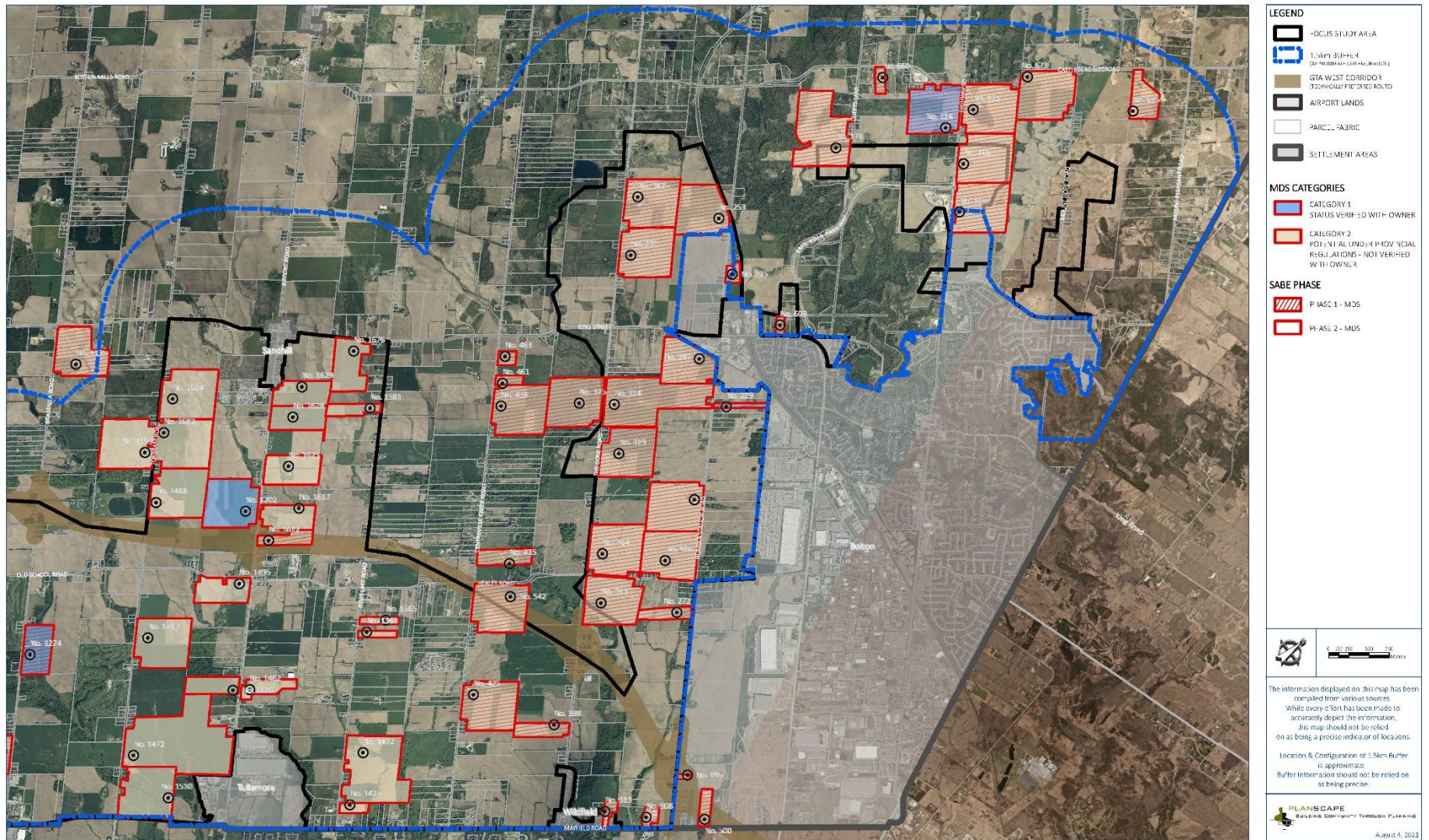


Figure 9A - MDS Analysis

FIGURE 9A - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

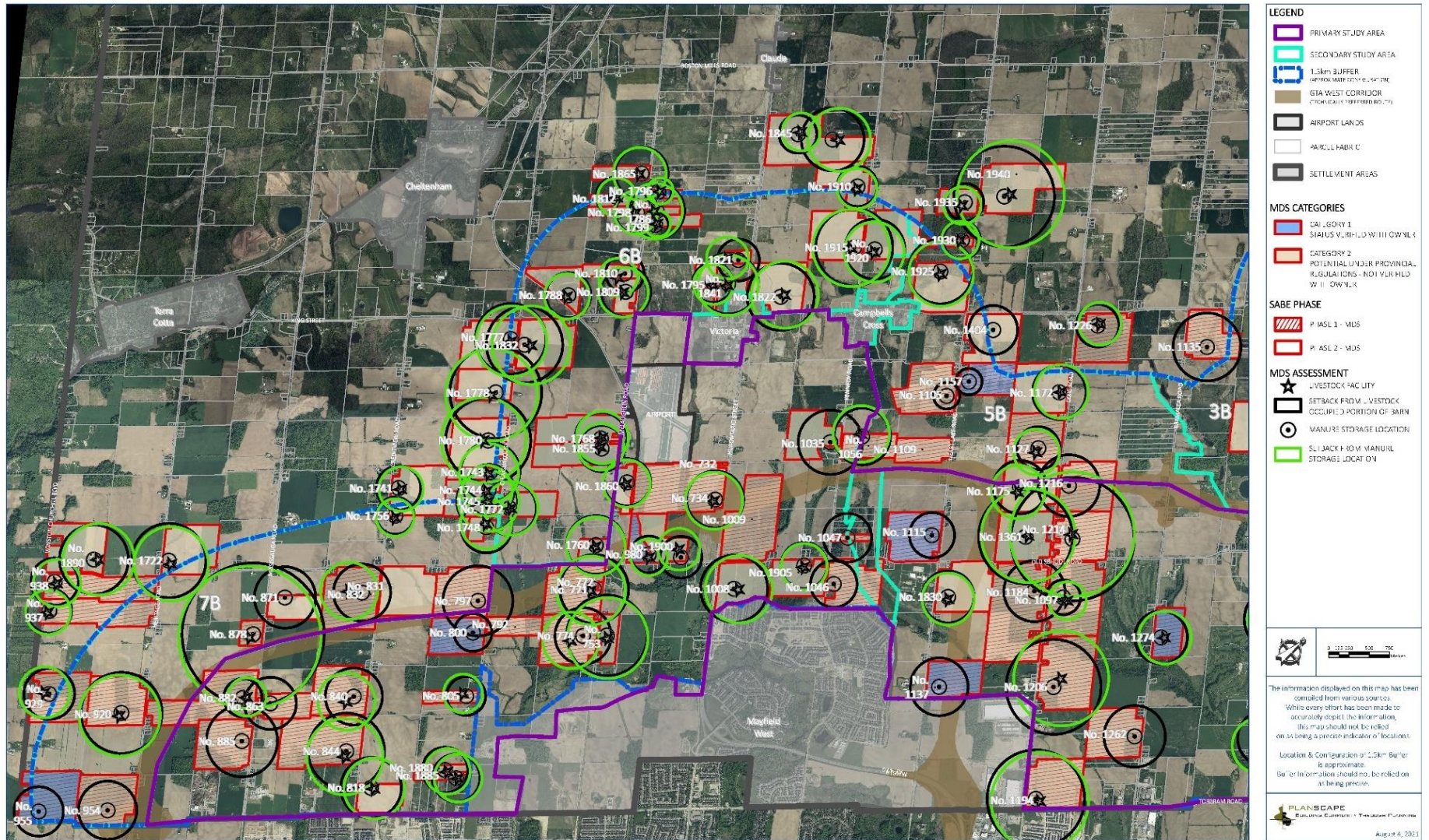


Figure 9B – MDS Analysis

FIGURE 9B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

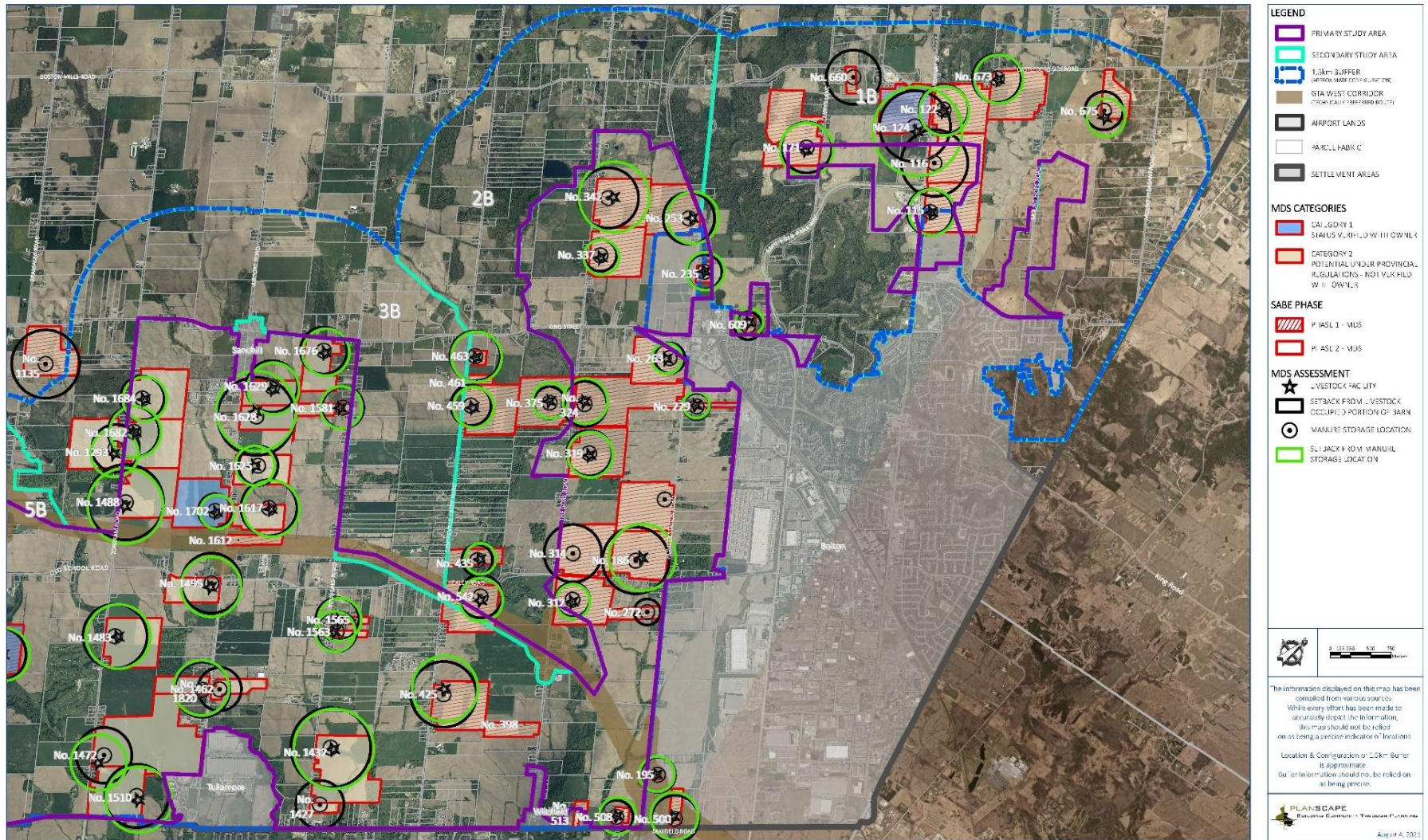


Figure 10A – Assessment Areas 1 / 1B

FIGURE 10A - ASSESSMENT AREAS 1 / 1B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

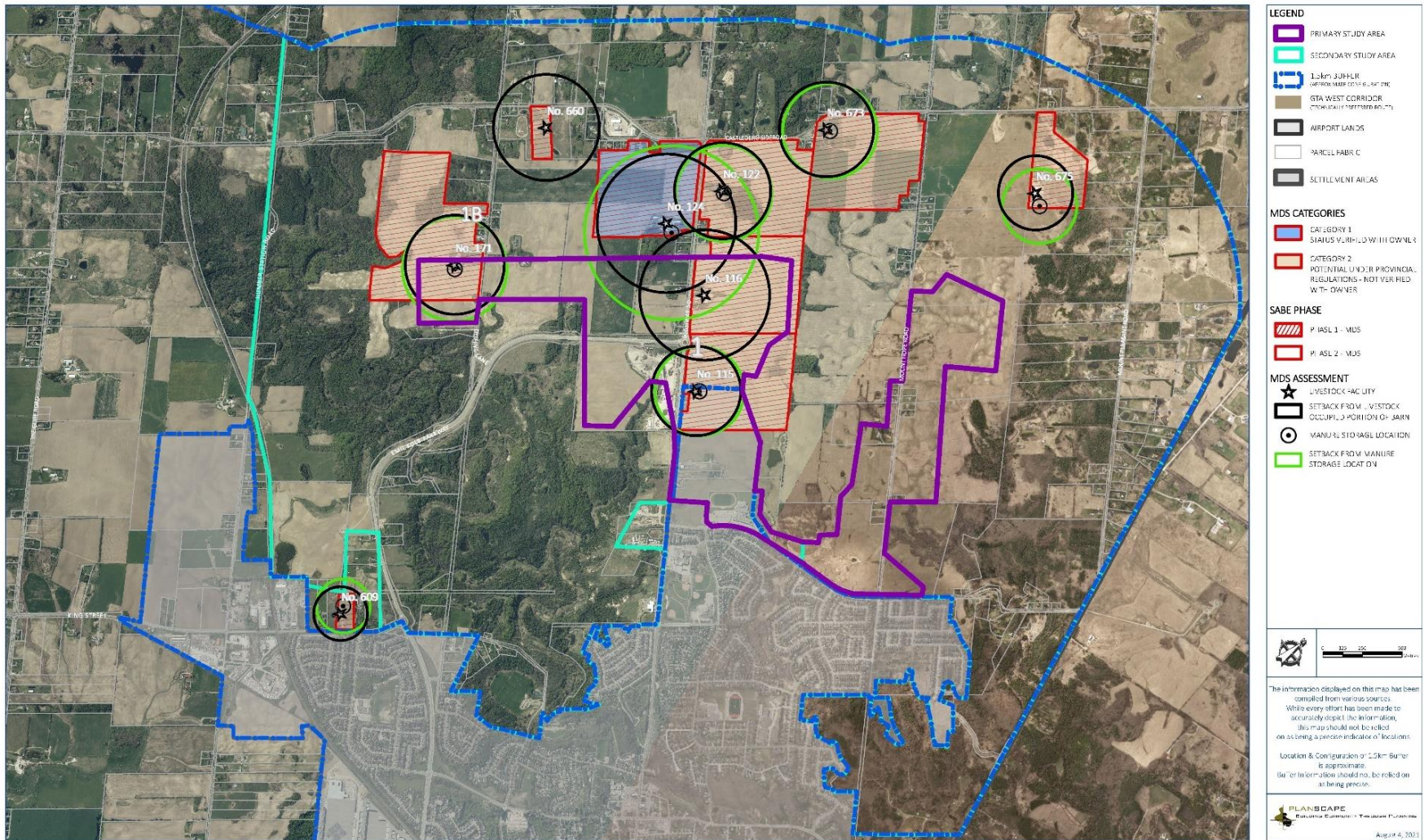


Figure 10B – Assessment Areas 2 / 2B

FIGURE 10B - ASSESSMENT AREAS 2 / 2B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

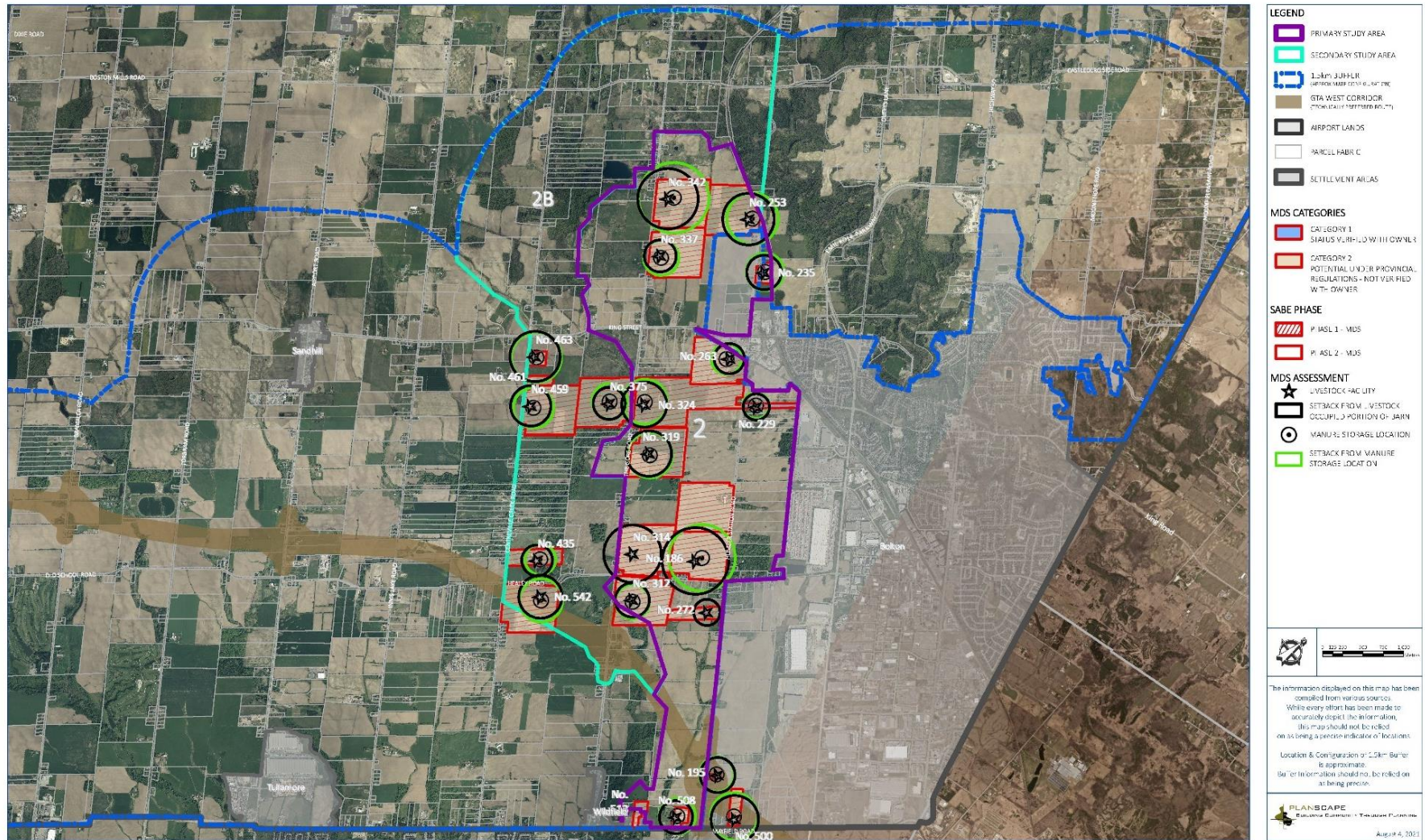


Figure 10C – Assessment Areas 3 / 3B

FIGURE 10C - ASSESSMENT AREAS 3 / 3B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

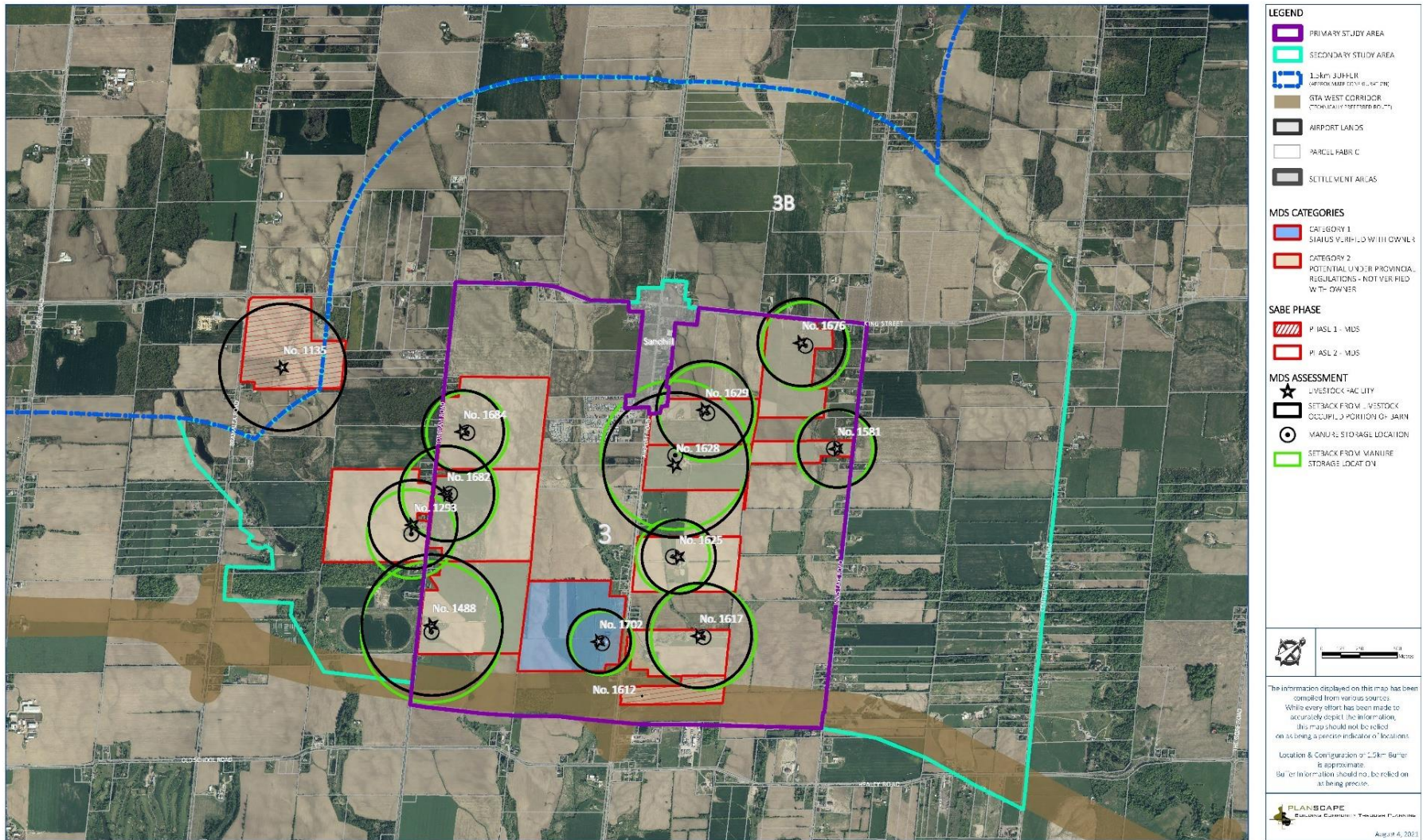


Figure 10D – Assessment Area 4

FIGURE 10D - ASSESSMENT AREA 4 - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

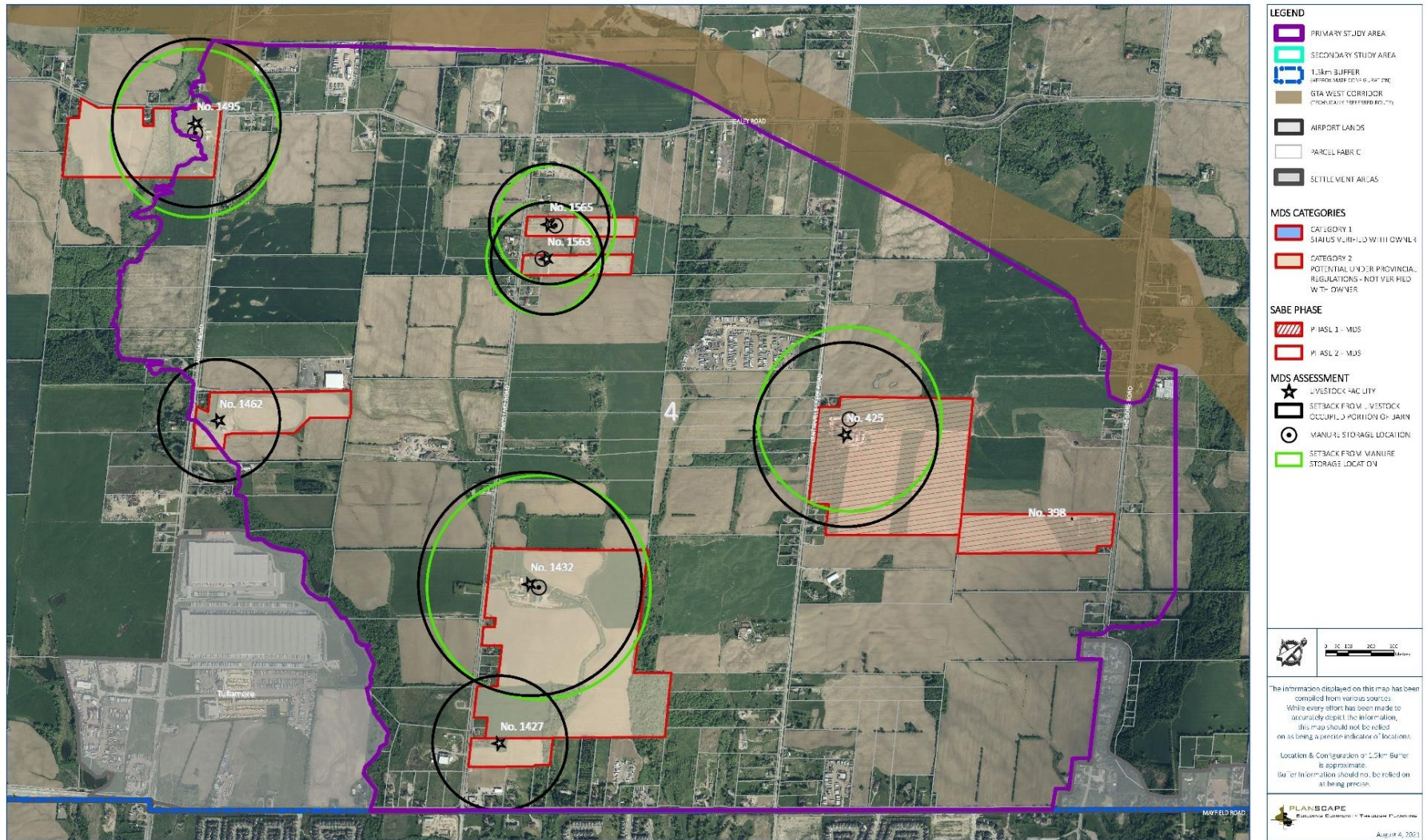


Figure 10E – Assessment Areas 5 / 5B

FIGURE 10E - ASSESSMENT AREAS 5 / 5B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

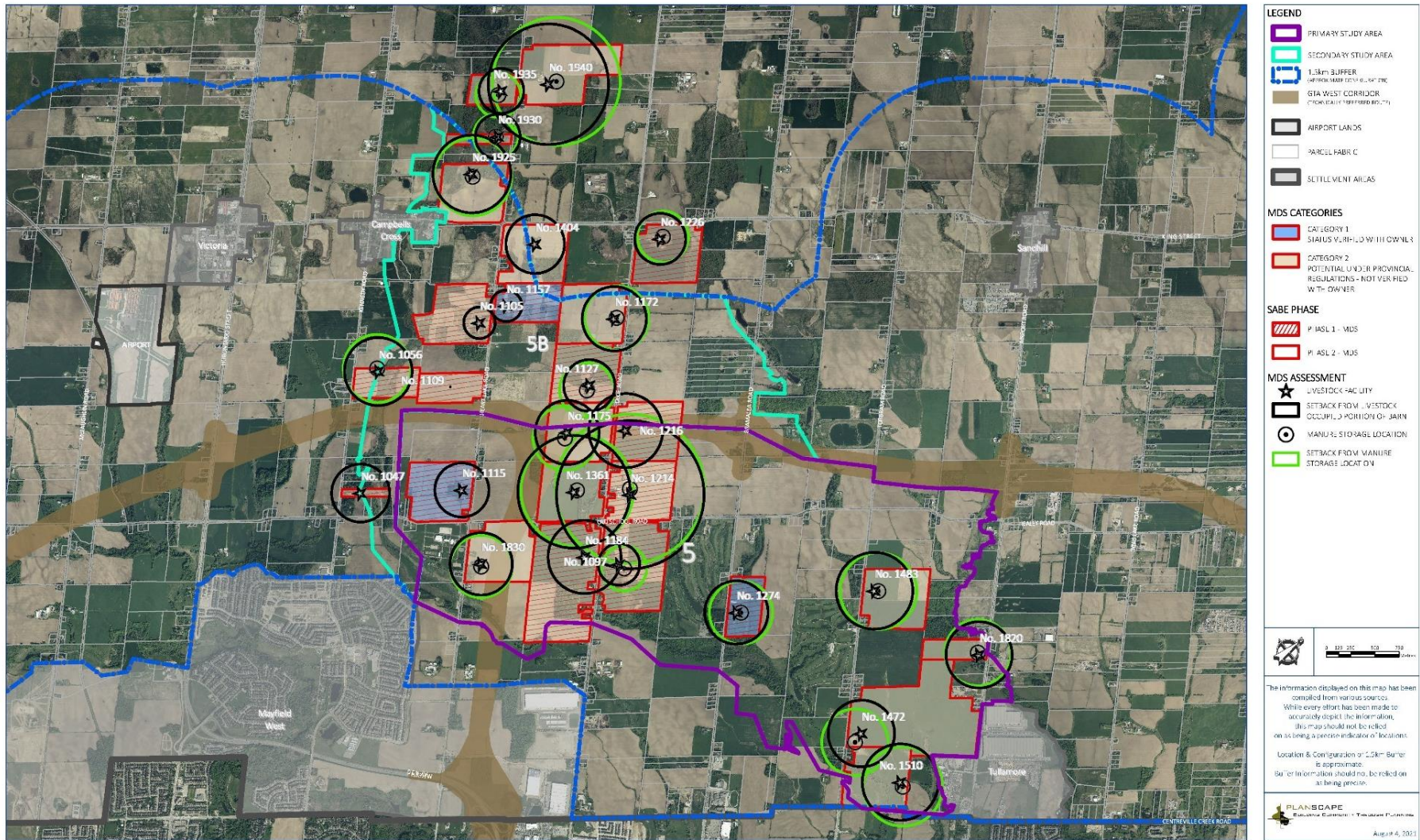


Figure 10F – Assessment Areas 6 / 6B

FIGURE 10F - ASSESSMENT AREAS 6 / 6B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

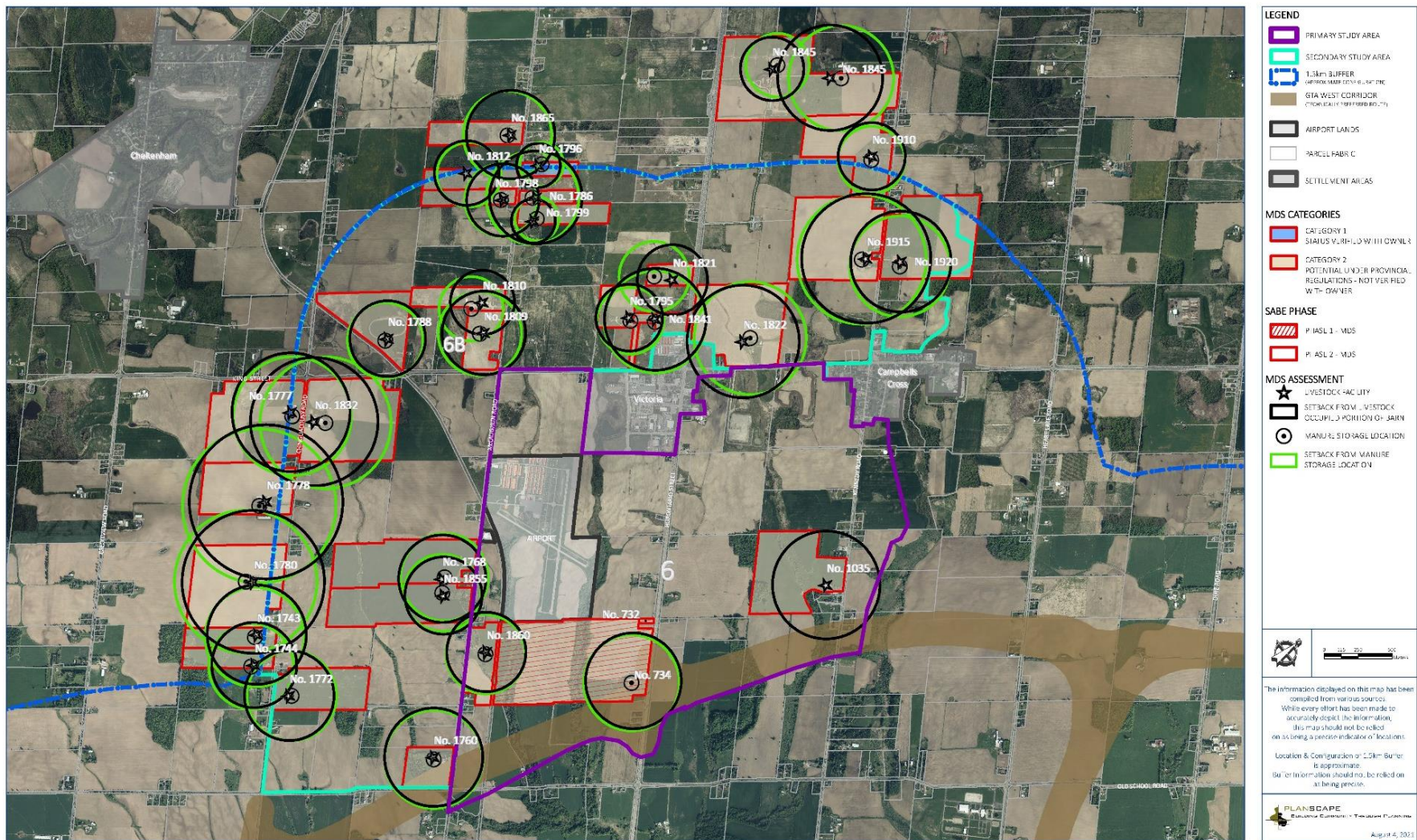


Figure 10G – Assessment Areas 7 / 7B

FIGURE 10G - ASSESSMENT AREAS 7 / 7B - MDS ANALYSIS 2021

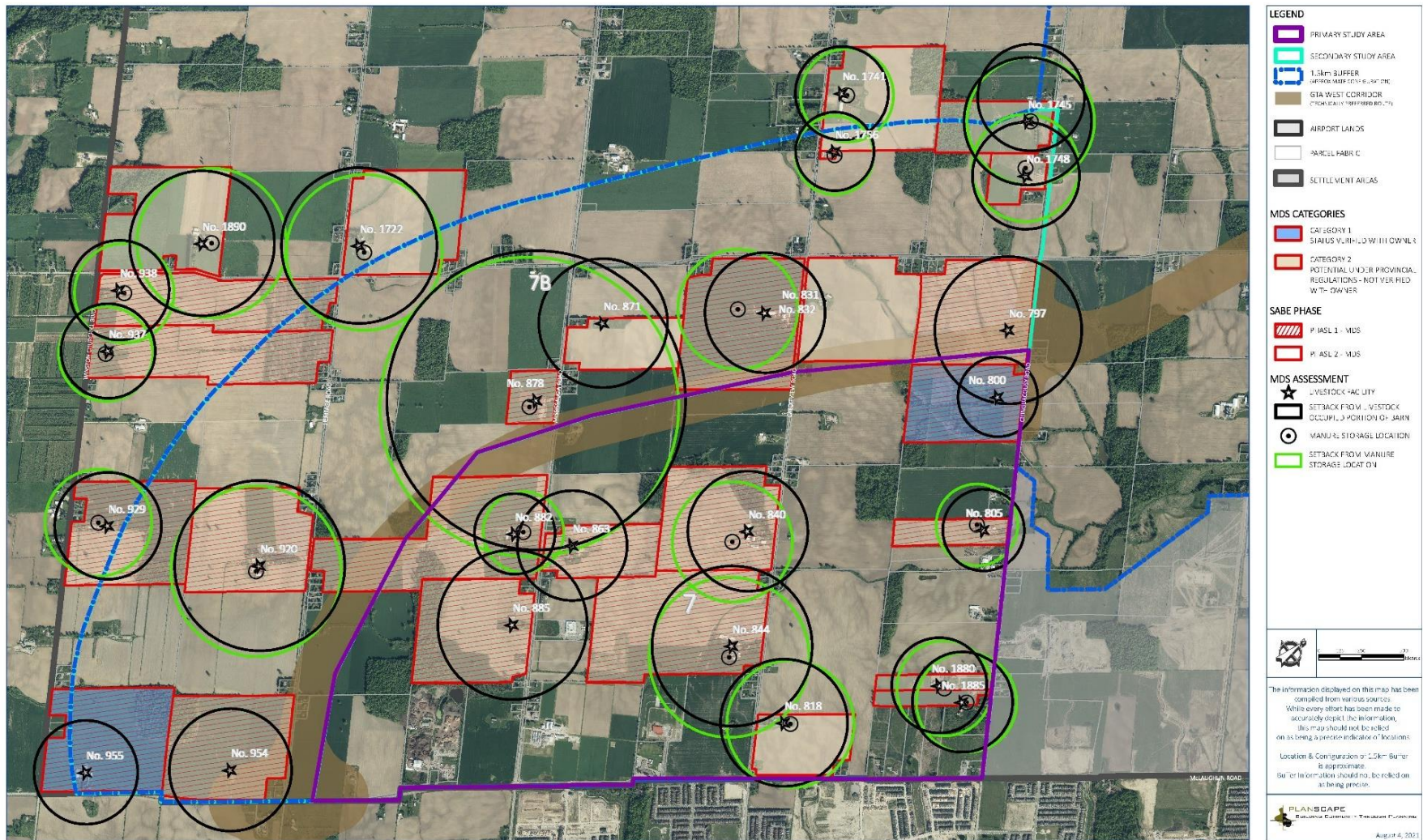
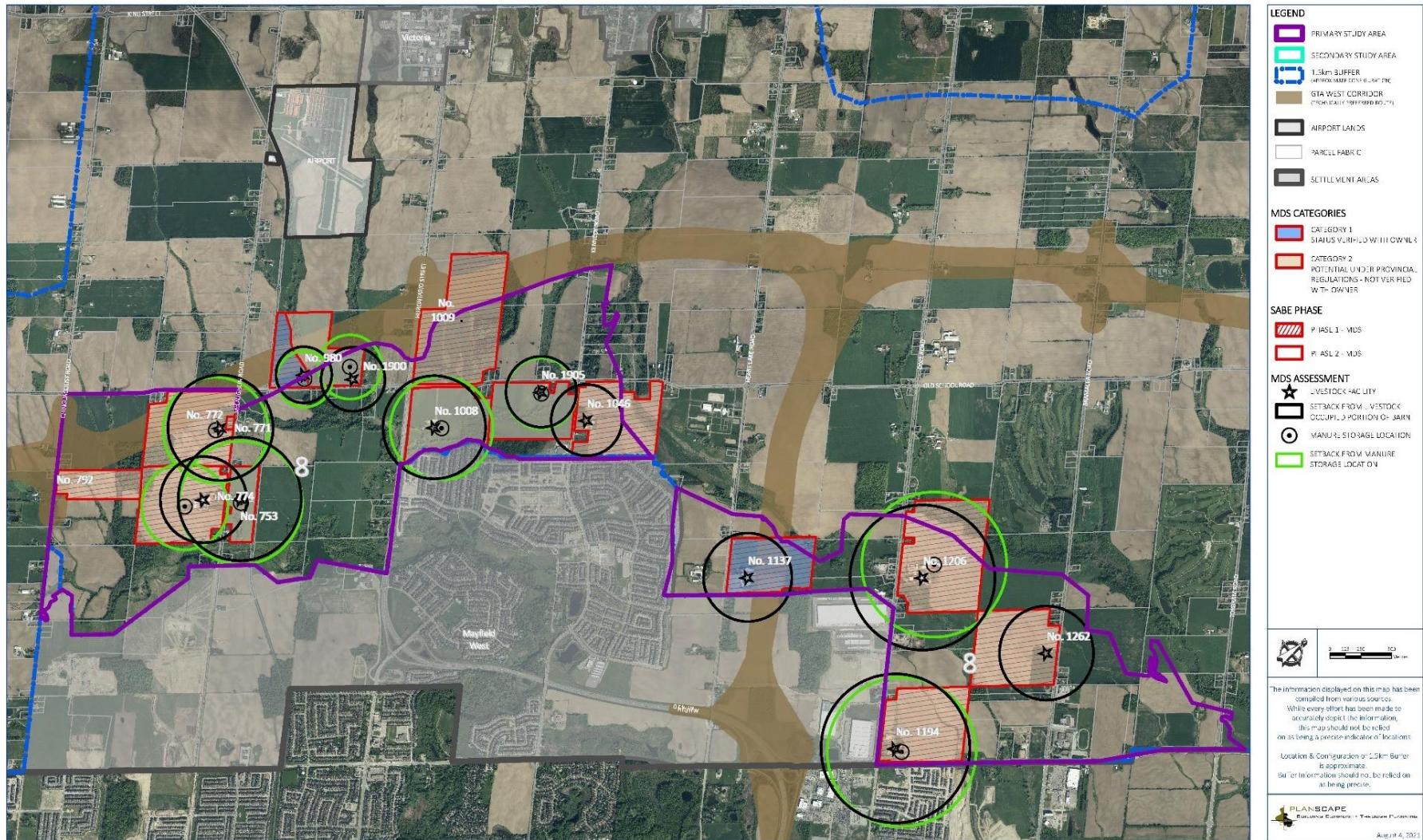


Figure 10H – Assessment Area 8

FIGURE 10H - ASSESSMENT AREA 8 - MDS ANALYSIS 2021



3.6 Mitigating Impacts in the Primary Study Area

The primary study area is the area identified as the most appropriate for urban expansion and therefore, for the purposes of this AIA, includes the entire SABE concept area (December 2020) and the additional SABE employment and community testing areas subsequently identified for additional consideration. All of the land in the primary study area is currently part of the Regionally designated PAA although the land in Assessment Unit 1 north of Bolton (see **Figure 6B**) was proposed to be designated Rural Lands through the Region's Agricultural System land base mapping refinement exercise. Inclusion of this land in the SABE as proposed in the December 2020 SABE concept, would ultimately result in the redesignation of approximately 4,300 ha of prime agricultural land to support projected growth. Although 4,300 ha is a significant conversion of farmland over the period to 2051, Peel will continue to have a robust agricultural sector after the SABE is established. Through the work done as part of the regional LEAR and the process to rationalize the conclusions reached in that study with implementation of the Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System (GGHAS), the prime agricultural area (PAA) in Peel was proposed to be increased by 2,006 ha from 22,144 ha to 24,150 ha. With the 4,300 ha required to accommodate the SABE redesignated, the remaining Regional PAA area will be 19,170 ha or 16% of the area of Peel Region. As presently proposed, the Rural System, with growth to 2051 accounted for, will represent 87% of the land area of Caledon.

It should be noted that due to the interactive nature of the process, the final area of the SABE changed as the analysis progressed. The analysis of changes to the Agricultural System land base has been updated as these changes occurred. The changes made to the revised draft staff recommended SABE (September 2021) are addressed later in the report.

Development of the SABE will progress over a 30-year time frame to 2051. Policies in the ROP will detail the phasing, or progression of development during this period and establish the secondary planning process that will occur to manage the sequencing of development based on growth rates. This phasing and sequencing of future growth has not, to date, been addressed but will be through regional and local policies once the SABE is finalized. These policies will be based on established planning principles to address population growth, capital planning and provision of infrastructure.

Based on assessment data provided by the Region (see Figures 14A and B Phase 1 AIA) it was concluded that there is considerable non-farm ownership in the SABE and that many additional properties are optioned by nonfarm owners. As the phasing progresses and the planning process permits development, the land will likely continue in production either through rental or use agreements with the previous owners or other area farmers. Typically, the type of production in areas under transition switches from commodities such as orchards, greenhouse or livestock that require longer term commitments and investment and that can be subject to conflicts (smell, noise, spraying of herbicides and pesticides) with urban development to cash crops that are better managed on a year-by-year basis with a lower incidence of conflict. This trend is often accompanied by a deterioration in on-farm infrastructure, loss of farm services and agri-related business and a decline in the rural community as rural uses are replaced by

urban development. This trend is already quite apparent in the area west of Bolton, in proximity to Mayfield West and along Mayfield Road north of Brampton. A number of former livestock operations in these areas have ceased to exist and where the land continues to be farmed, it is largely in cash crops.

To mitigate these impacts to the extent possible, careful implementation of phasing and sequencing of development with specific timelines governing when land will be available for development, will be required. To plan, farmers need to know what land will be available for them to farm and for what time frame. Phasing should be based on current land use, the potential for buffering either with natural features or built infrastructure, in conformity with MDS regulations and use patterns. Preservation of large contiguous areas of production should be a major factor in establishing phasing. Criteria to be considered in establishing phasing were examined in depth in Table 1 of the Phase 1 AIA and are updated in reference to the Assessment Units (AUs) that comprise the primary and secondary study areas in Table 1 of this report.

With respect to current land use, areas currently under active production with infrastructure (buildings structures, fences, investment in root stock and agricultural drainage intact) are better positioned to support ongoing agricultural activity. The presence of livestock operations adjacent to the recommended SABE boundary that are subject to MDS setback requirements will require restrictions to be implemented in the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Official Plans to ensure compliance with the provincial minimum distance separation policies and guideline. The configuration of secondary plan boundaries and the staging and phasing of development within the SABE should consider the location of ongoing active livestock operations and their associated MDS requirements as lands are transitioning from agriculture to urban uses.

Being part of a larger established area of production supports agricultural operators. In addition to facilitating custom work and supporting required services, being part of a community of shared interests contributes to the vitality of the sector. As farming practices evolve, individual operators can manage increasingly larger acreages. As non-farm development moves closer issues related to coping with conflicting uses and dealing with increased, commuter traffic can create additional stress for operators and negatively impact the ability to farm efficiently.

A direct interface between urban development and agricultural operations where non-farm uses are directly adjacent to farm operations, can create conflict and impede farming practices. Impacts associated with dust, noise, spraying, smell and hours of operations are typically the issues that raise concern for non-farm neighbours. Minimizing these direct interfaces with buffers created by natural features (water courses, valley lands, wood lots) and built infrastructure (roads, utility corridors, recreational amenities) can help reduce and mitigate potential impacts and support the health and viability of agricultural areas. Where there are no obvious natural or existing built buffers, policies should be implemented at the secondary plan level requiring that detailed AIAs be conducted in compliance with OMAFRA guidelines,

specifying how buffering and other effective mitigation measures will be implemented in areas that will have a permanent interface with adjacent, active, ongoing farm operations.

Areas where property is fragmented and there are pockets of non-farm uses, are less desirable for farming. The issue of fragmentation was one that was addressed as part of the LEAR undertaken by the Region and the Town. As noted in **Table 1** of this report, certain areas of the proposed draft conceptual SABE including much of AU 4 and the area immediately west of Mayfield West in AU 7 are subject to some fragmentation. AU 6 has a higher incidence of non-agricultural uses.

There are high constraint areas and fingers of the Greenbelt extending into the SABE. Agriculture and NHS features can and do coexist. As noted previously, NHS features can be an excellent buffer to separate or provide a transition between urban and rural uses. Many of the Greenbelt valleys are narrow and may not be capable of sustaining large scale agricultural operations as development on abutting lands proceeds. However, these lands can potentially provide opportunities for smaller scale, community-based agriculture or urban agriculture associated with the adjacent settlement areas. Using them as a buffer or transition area can provide a separation of uses thereby protecting agriculture from negative impacts and preserving the rural environment. Potential opportunities for rural uses on these lands can be addressed in secondary plan policies as development progresses. These factors, in addition to the protection of the NHS features, was considered as part of this AIA.

To maximize ongoing agricultural activity in the SABE for as long as possible, the geographical phasing of development from an agricultural perspective should be based on an assessment of:

- Constraints including proximity of non agriculture uses, lack of agricultural services, expanding urban infrastructure that could impact the ability to farm efficiently,
- Fragmentation,
- Production profile,
- MDS constraints,
- Status of farm and non-farm Infrastructure,
- Existing land uses,
- Proximity to urban areas, and
- Buffering opportunities either through edge planning or use of natural buffers.

Additional input on the nature of these factors and their relevance for each of the assessment areas in the SABE, as shown on **Figures 6A** and **B**, is provided in the Phase 1 AIA and in **Table 1** of this report.

Once boundaries and phasing of secondary plans are established, the sequence in which development of each the phase will progress should be addressed as part of the process. Detailed AIAs should be required to address sequencing to encourage ongoing production for as long as is reasonably possible and identify, assess, manage, and mitigate impacts. Based on the focused AIA completed as part of the secondary planning process, measures to address and

protect the interface with abutting agricultural areas and to minimize potential conflicts should be implemented. In 2015, a report¹⁰ addressing edge planning for agriculture, was completed for the Region. This report documented best practises for managing interfaces between farm and non-farm uses. These best practises should be implemented through the secondary plan process as growth expands throughout the SABE.

3.7 Mitigating Impacts in the Secondary Study Area

The secondary study area is the 1.5 km area outside of but immediately adjacent to the primary study area. Much of it is within the Protected Countryside and subject to the policies of Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP). The lands within the secondary study area that are not within the Protected Countryside are not currently proposed to be re-designated for urban development. However, all of the secondary study area could potentially be vulnerable to impacts from abutting or proximate non-agricultural development. The nature of certain operations, livestock for example, may require additional separation from non-farm development. These factors must be identified and addressed in finalizing the boundaries of the SABE and implementing policies to mitigate and minimize potential impacts. Additional analysis of these potential impact for the specific AUs in the secondary study area is summarized in **Table 1**.

Both the Region and the Town have detailed policies to address protection of the agricultural resource as part of the rural system and specifically, in the areas designated PAA. These policies should be carried forward and enhanced in the updated ROP with direction for the Town of Caledon to do the same.

Protecting the integrity of the prime agricultural area surrounding the urban settlements and prohibiting conflicting and non-agricultural uses will continue to be critical. Prohibiting non-agricultural uses in the PAA of the Protected Countryside, except for those uses permitted by the Greenbelt Plan, the Growth Plan and subject to the appropriate Natural Heritage System policies, should be addressed. Policies must also ensure that proposed **agriculture-related uses** and **on-farm diversified uses** are appropriately managed. Guidance to assist in formulating policies addressing appropriate types of uses in the secondary planning area are available in the OMAFRA Publication 851, “Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas”

In finalizing the SABE boundary, steps should be taken to adjust the proposed boundary to maximize the buffers between the SABE area and active agricultural operations in the secondary study area. Where there is potential to create a natural buffer using a natural feature, road, infrastructure corridor or recreation area, this should be done. Specific examples of where opportunities for this type of buffering currently exist include the fingers of the NHS that form the boundaries of AU2 west of Bolton, that run north-south from Tullamore between AU4 and AU5 and between AU5 and AU8 north and east of Mayfield West. Major corridors that could potentially be used as buffers, include the GTAWHC, and existing high traffic routes such

¹⁰ MHBC, “Edge Planning Report – A Review of Implemented Practices to address Planning on the Urban-Rural Fringe: Discussion Paper 2015.

as Mayfield Road, Airport Road, Winston Churchill Blvd, Highway 10 and King Street. These corridors can function as buffers with care and attention to the transition from urban to rural. Policies requiring increased setbacks to allow plantings and berms in conjunction with new development can maximize the separation between urban and farm agricultural land uses.

Care should be taken in establishing urban boundaries to respect agricultural operations and not split or isolate farm properties. Farmers often farm large areas comprised of multiple properties. In 2016, there were 61 farms in Peel that were larger than 162 ha and in excess 18,000 ha of the land under production was rented or share cropped.¹¹ With improved production technology and the need for increased production to be financially successful, farmers are increasingly farming multiple properties. Identifying and respecting operational patterns can protect the integrity of an area and make farming more efficient. Understanding potential impacts on the critical mass of operations is important.

As noted previously, not all the land that will be included in the SABE will be required for development initially. Development will be phased as population and employment growth warrants, over a 30 year period. In establishing the sequence and timing of when land within the final designated SABE will be released for development, the potential impact on agricultural operations in the secondary study area should also be considered. Maintaining connectivity between farming operations by considering the geographical progression of development should be a factor. Detailed AIAs to address connectivity as part of the secondary planning process will be essential. Through the completion of AIAs, opportunities to support the sector by protecting access to fields, supporting appropriate infrastructure design (i.e., roads, over and under passes, bridges, curbs, turn lanes, etc.) to accommodate the movement of large slow moving equipment or accommodating farm services, can be addressed. Consultation with farm organizations and farm operators by both Regional and local staff as policies are being drafted and implemented, will be key to understating the appropriate steps that can be taken to provide “farm friendly” infrastructure.

Linkages between farm operations within the secondary study area and the primary area should also be identified and maintained. One of the criteria for phasing and sequencing of development should be to avoid fragmenting or isolating active farm properties.

Policies should be designed to achieve land use compatibility where agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses interface, to avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts. This can be done by increasing setbacks and separations between uses, requiring berms or extensive landscape buffers of non-invasive, non noxious species, positioning road or service corridors to act as buffers. Where mitigation is required, measures should be incorporated into the non-agricultural use and in accordance with provincial guidelines.

¹¹ Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture 2016.

The configuration of secondary plan boundaries and the staging and phasing of development within the SABE should consider the location of ongoing active livestock operations and their associated MDS requirements as lands are transitioning from agriculture to urban uses. Livestock operations adjacent to the recommended SABE boundary that are subject to MDS setback requirements will require restrictions to be implemented in the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Official Plans to ensure compliance with the provincial minimum distance separation policies and guideline.

For greenfield development where existing buffering opportunities do not exist, with advance planning, edge management measures can be implemented through the secondary planning process at the local level to protect farm operations. Providing greenspace separators and taking advantage of existing natural heritage features as part of the design of urban spaces can increase separation and provide natural buffers. Roads and service corridors should be integrated into edges of the urban area to provide a similar function.

At the Regional level opportunities to use existing natural and built buffers should be included as a criterion for finalizing the boundaries of the SABE. Circumstances where this can occur have been identified in this report and are summarized in reference to the eight assessment units in Table 1, Section 3.10 of this report.

As phasing and sequencing occurs, updating of MDS analysis will be required. The MDS analysis conducted as part of the AIA identified properties where livestock are currently housed and properties where they could be housed. The province has specific requirements regarding setbacks from these properties which are in effect while livestock is present, or the potential for it to be present, exists. In completing the AIA, it was difficult to confirm details on all properties. A conservative approach was taken assuming structures would be able to support livestock if appropriate evidence to the contrary was not provided. It should also be noted that circumstances can change over time as properties are sold or farmers refocus their operations or retire. Therefore, the MDS analysis summarized in this report is a snapshot in time to inform the finalizing of the SABE boundaries. It will need to be updated on an ongoing basis to respond to changing circumstances.

Moving forward, development will take place over a 30-year time frame during which updates of the MDS will be required. As development progresses the analyses done for this AIA can be revisited and updated as required.

The COP contains policies setting out a detailed process for implementing MDS requirements and confirming the status of structures. As the process of finalizing the SABE and the updated ROP proceeds this process can be used to confirm current MDS analysis. It is also the process that should be part of the secondary plan requirements governing the progression of development to ensure a detailed and current analysis of MDS factors is integrated into the planning process.

In planning for development, it will be important to address the potential impacts of agricultural operations on urban development. However, also important, will be consideration and management of the impacts of ongoing urban development on agriculture. Dust, noise, blasting, traffic movements and other potential impacts from construction projects on agriculture need to be mitigated as development progresses.

Potential for and best practises to mitigate impacts between farm and non-farm uses should be addressed in development agreements. New residents of urban areas in proximity to agricultural operations need to be educated about agricultural practises and the right to farm. Registering appropriate notices on title can assist in both educating and advising potential purchasers of the impacts they can expect and will be expected to accept.

The farming community should be consulted in identifying and managing the ongoing relationship between farm and non -farm development. Peel Region has a well established, history of communicating effectively with the farming community. The Peel Agricultural Advisory Committee meets regularly and is consulted on relevant issues. Established farming organizations (Peel Federation of Agriculture, National Farmers Union, Christian Farmers Union, Agricultural Society) are represented in the Region. As the ROP update progresses, these groups will be an important resource in formulating appropriate policy.

Agriculture is a progressive and developing sector. Canadian farmers are international leaders in developing and adopting progressive farming technology. Maintaining strong communication with the agricultural sector will ensure that the Region is aware of, understands and supports progressive farming practises.

3.8 Managing the Agricultural System

The GGHAS includes prime agricultural land, rural lands and the **agri-food network** of infrastructure, services and assets that support the agri-food sector. The province has defined the GGHAS as:

“... the system mapped and issued by the Province ..., comprised of a group of inter-connected elements that collectively create a viable, thriving, agricultural sector. It has two components:

- a. An agricultural land base comprised of prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas, and rural lands that together create a continuous productive land base for agriculture; and
- b. An agri-food network which includes infrastructure, services and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector.”¹²

¹² Growth Plan 2019 Definitions pg. 66

For the land-based component of the GGHAS, provincial policy establishes that connectivity is an important feature. In the 2020 “Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System in Ontario’s Greater Golden Horseshoe,”¹³ the importance of creating a continuous system linking prime agricultural areas, sometimes through inclusion of rural lands as part of the system, is emphasized. Reference is made to the importance of both inter-connected elements and a continuous productive land base. In considering changes to the GGHAS, such as would occur with an urban settlement boundary expansion, maintaining the connectivity of the system both within and between regions, must be addressed.

The Region has worked with OMAFRA to develop a proposed Regional Rural System (RRS) based on the Regional LEAR, and refinement of the Province’s Agricultural System land base mapping of prime agricultural areas. This proposed RRS, as shown on **Figure 4A**, is a land-based link in the provincial GGHAS, connecting the system in Peel to the system in abutting regions and counties.

Obviously, the conversion of the SABE area, as shown on **Figure 4B** and potentially portions of the scenario areas as shown **Figures 6A & B**, will reduce the area of the GGHAS in Peel. Given the provincial requirement for a “continuous” land base, care must be taken in finalizing the boundaries to ensure the continuity of the land-based system is maintained. As noted in the Phase 1 AIA this is particularly important with respect to Assessment Area 1 (**Figure 6**) in the area where the Peel portion of the GGHAS intersects with the York portion. This linkage is bounded on the south by Bolton and the north by Palgrave Estates. The December 2020 SABE concept plan maintained this area as rural land thereby retaining the continuous link to the agricultural system in the abutting Region of York. A reasonable rural corridor along Castlederg Sideroad should be protected in this area to maintain that linkage with consideration of buffering and mitigation of land uses if urban settlement expansion is considered on these lands.

The other component of the agri-food network that needs to be protected and managed is comprised of the infrastructure, services and agri-food assets needed to sustain and enhance agriculture and support the prosperity and viability of the broader **agri-food network**. Infrastructure including the transportation network, goods movement, drainage and irrigation, high speed, broad band internet, access to natural gas and appropriate electrical utilities are all key to a successful agricultural sector. Agri-food businesses linked to primary production both as input providers and output processors, retailers and service based businesses must be fostered.

Information about elements of the agri-food network is mapped in the OMAFRA **Agricultural Systems Portal**. A summary of mapped assets in Peel, enhanced by an inventory done by the Town of Caledon of agri-food assets in the Town, was completed for the Phase 1 AIA and summarized on Figures 30 and 31 of that report. For this review, the inventory was reviewed using the **Agricultural Systems Portal**. This updated inventory of agri-food assets is shown on

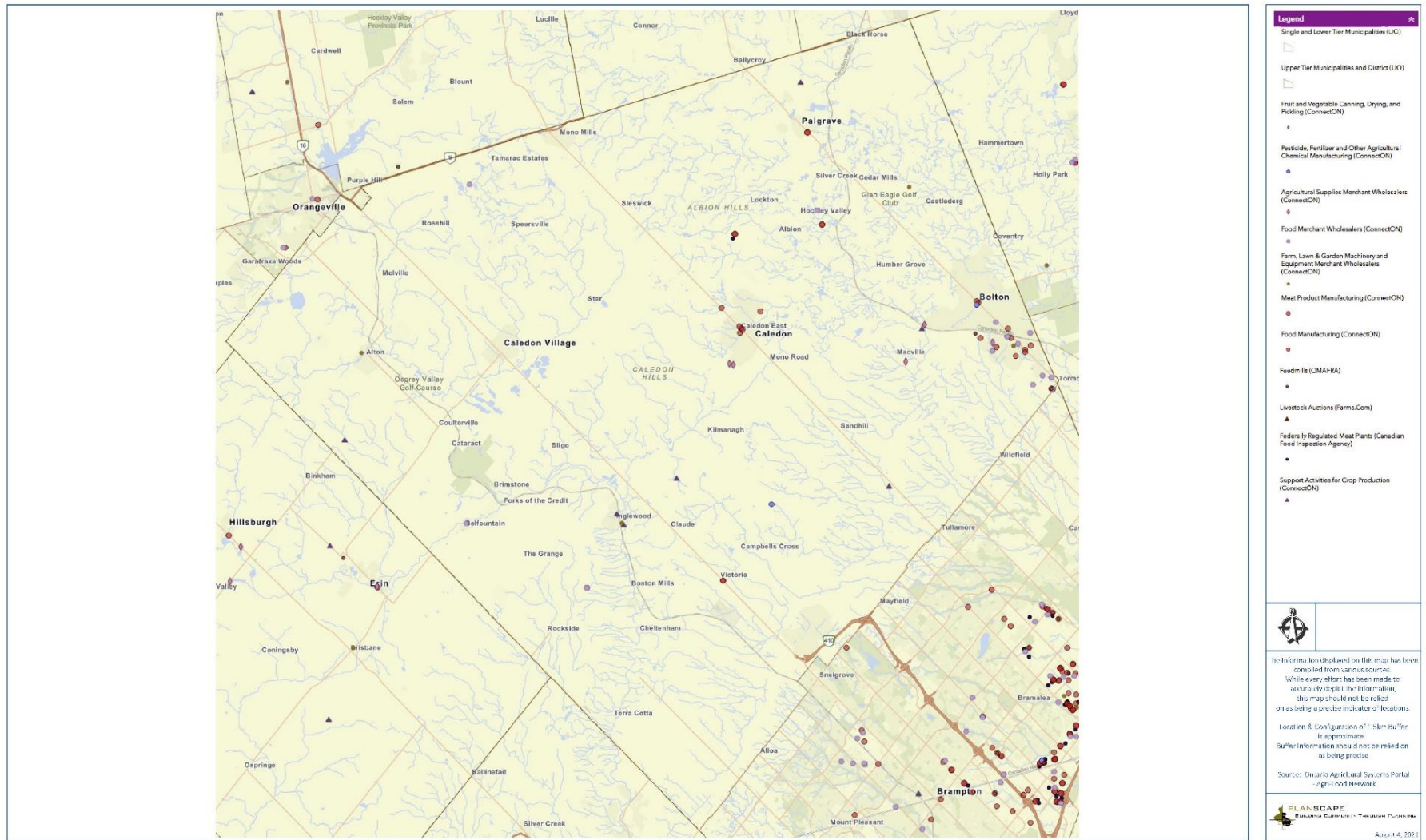
¹³ OMAFRA, Publication 856, March 2020

Figure 11 – Agri-food Assets which is an excerpt from the Provincial portal. A healthy agri-food sector is key to supporting ongoing primary production. The existing system should be monitored on an ongoing basis to determine if existing assets are being maintained or if there are services that are lacking. The importance of a strong agri-food policy at both the regional and local level should be addressed in the updated ROP. Caledon currently has a strong economic development process that recognizes the importance of the agri-food system in Peel and supports it. Moving forward, policies committing to continuing to work with farm organizations and agri-food operations to ensure the agri-food system remains strong, will be consistent with provincial direction.

In sequencing growth, policies should focus on supporting and enhancing the RRS and thereby the GGHAS through the development and implementation of agri-food strategies, food systems planning and other approaches. Appropriate policies regulating **on-farm diversified uses** and **agricultural-related uses** should be implemented through regional and local official plan policies to ensure flexibility and control in managing a strong supportive **agri-food network**. Infrastructure planning should include planning for the agricultural sector as well as urban growth. The Region currently has an agricultural advisory committee (Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group or PAAWG) which advises the Region on agricultural issues, has produced a food charter and is part of the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance implementation of the agri-food action plan for the GGHA. These efforts to foster the regional agri-food sector should continue.

Figure 11 – Agri-Food Network

FIGURE 11 - AGRIFOOD NETWORK



3.9 Net Impacts

As noted previously, the redesignation of the SABE from PAA to community and employment area will reduce the agricultural area in Peel by approximately 4,300 ha (net developable area based on the December 2020 SABE concept) during the projected time frame but is required to meet the Province's established growth projections. The Region is working to minimize the impact of this project growth on the agricultural sector by establishing a balanced land needs budget that incorporates significant intensification within the existing built boundary. An intensification target of 55% and greenfield density of 65 people and jobs per acre are recommended in the Region's land needs assessment. This is an increase from the intensification rate of 46%, currently being achieved.

Through the work done as part of the Regional LEAR and the process to rationalize the conclusions reached in that study with implementation of the GGHAS, the prime agricultural area (PAA) in Peel was proposed to be increased by 2,006 ha from 22,144 ha to 24,150 ha; with the 4,300 ha of net developable land area required to accommodate the SABE removed, the remaining Regional PAA area will be 19,170 ha or 16% of the area of Peel Region. As proposed, based on the December 2020 SABE concept the Rural System, which includes both PAA and Rural Lands, with growth to 2051 accounted for, will represent 87% of the land area of Caledon. Currently, there are approximately 35,037 ha of land remaining in the Rural System in Caledon within the proposed PAA and Rural Lands designations outside of the SABE that are classified properties in agricultural use (both farmer and non-farmer owned). These Agricultural System lands will continue to provide a viable agricultural land base in Peel that should be supported through policy direction in the Regional and Caledon Official Plans. Additionally, within the SABE, growth will be phased and occur over time thereby ensuring that until it is needed, land designated for future growth can continue to be farmed.

This cautious approach will allow the Region to reduce the net impact on the agricultural system while meeting its obligation to conform to provincial policy. Given the provincial requirement for Peel to accommodate a set allotment of community and employment growth to 2051, and the size of that allotment, accommodating this growth cannot be met without the re-designation of prime agricultural land. In response the Region has taken a rigorous approach that focuses on intensification within the existing urban boundary to minimize the amount of agricultural land that will be re-designated.

The growth management strategy being implemented by the Region combined with the significant area of Greenbelt within its boundaries will ensure that the Regional agricultural sector will continue to be robust. 46% of the land area of the Region is Greenbelt, in the Town of Caledon the percentage rises to 81%. The total rural area outside of the Greenbelt in Caledon is 10,097 ha. When combined, there are 67,744 ha of rural area in the Town. The 4,300 ha of the SABE represent just 6% of this area.

While the agricultural land in the SABE is awaiting conversion, the Region can implement policies to encourage ongoing agricultural production and minimize the net impact on the

sector. Factors such as increased land prices, uncertainty about the timing of development, conflicts with non-farm uses and lack of stable access to rental land can be managed to encourage ongoing production.

The current property tax system which reduces the property tax rate on property under production, is an effective tool for ensuring land held by non-farmers is available for rent for agricultural production. Tools, such as definitive phasing timelines combined with reduced property tax rates can be used to encourage non-farmland owners to offer long term rental agreements and reduce the uncertainty about access to land. PAAWG and the agricultural organizations in the Region can be consulted to determine what other tools might be effective in extending rental arrangements. Ensuring access to land held by non farmers through secure, long term rental agreements can facilitate access to land unavailable for purchase because of high prices.

Strong policies that clarify the sequencing, timing, and phasing of development will also support ongoing production. If farmers are aware of the timelines they are working with, they can plan accordingly.

Strategic placement of urban boundaries can increase the separation between farm and non-farm uses and support the ability to farm efficiently. Requirements for robust buffering and separation from phased urban growth are also effective tools that will increase farmers willingness to farm areas designated for future growth.

Creating certainty, implementing clear policies, enforcing them consistently, using available tools to encourage farming, working with non-farmland owners to encourage stable access to land for farmers and maintaining open communication with farmers will support ongoing production in the area outside the SABE and within the SABE prior to development. Use of these tools will reduce the impact of the conversion of the 4,300 ha for urban growth.

One trend that is currently apparent in Peel according to the Agricultural Census produced every five years by Statistics Canada, is a change in the production profile. The Peel profile for agricultural production for 2011 and 2016, shows a decline in livestock operations (dairy, beef, sheep, livestock specialty). This trend was confirmed in discussions with members of the Peel Federation of Agriculture. A shift in production from livestock to oilseed and grain and horticultural products was evident between 2011 and 2016¹⁴.

These ongoing shifts in production trends are not unexpected or atypical. They would occur regardless of the SABE. Agriculture is a dynamic sector and producers will shift production based on circumstances, advances in technology, consumer demand and prices. Areas close to urban markets have a competitive advantage in being able to provide “just in time delivery” for horticulture. These are products that can be viably produced on smaller acreages which reduces the need for access to large land holdings. The ability to connect directly with a large consumer

¹⁴ The most recent agricultural census occurred in recently in 2021. Statistics from this census are not yet available.

market also provide opportunities. Conversely, livestock operations depend on access to extensive areas to produce feed and provide grazing and are subject to larger separation requirements. Therefore, they prefer a larger land base to operate. Orchards have an extensive production timeline so plan over years, not by season. Similarly, greenhouses are capital intensive so operators must have certainty to support long term investments. Factors such as these cause an ongoing shift in production profiles across the province.

The areas where impacts will need to be managed and mitigated are where there is an interface between urban and agricultural land uses. Policies for the interface areas will need to address the issues identified in the previous section of this report. Tools including buffers, increased separation, right to farm protection, education of adjacent urban residents, appropriate infrastructure to support agriculture and fostering of a healthy rural community should be employed to mitigate and minimize impact.

The GGHAS will be reduced in size because of the SABE. However, as noted previously, the reduction has been minimized through implementation of a rigorous growth management process. The preliminary proposed SABE has been configured to maintain the integrity of the system within the Region. Links to agricultural areas in the abutting regions and counties have been maintained.

Potential impacts on the livestock sector will be minimized and mitigated by implementation of the findings of the MDS analysis. The arcs as shown on **Figures 8** through **10** must be considered in finalizing the SABE. The MDS calculations done for this AIA are factored into the analyses of each of the AUs. However as acknowledge previously in this report, the analysis conducted was conservative. Difficulty in connecting with property owners and the limitations on site visits imposed by the Covid pandemic led to assumptions about structures that may be questioned. Over time, circumstances will change. Therefore, consideration of MDS will be an ongoing process. Regardless, application of MDS findings is a requirement of provincial policy and will be an effective tool in protecting livestock operations

3.10 Summary of Findings by Assessment Unit

In the Phase 1 AIA, a series of detailed criteria were identified as the basis for the AIA process. For each criteria the research done was documented and the findings summarized on Table 1. This became the basis for the evaluation of the AUs as summarized in Table 2 of the Phase 1 AIA. With the identification of a preliminary conceptual SABE area and direction that additional SABE employment and community testing areas be considered for inclusion in the SABE, it is appropriate to update the analysis of the AUs and expand it to confirm that:

- the preliminary conceptual SABE considers the identified criteria,
- the updated and expanded MDS analysis is addressed,
- an evaluation of the employment and community testing areas is included, and
- consideration of the secondary study area is included.

This analysis is summarized in the following table.

TABLE 1 - ASSESSMENT AREA ANALYSIS (Units as shown on Figures 6 A & B)	
Assessment Unit¹⁵	Analysis
PAU 1	<p>This area is not included in the preliminary proposed SABE but is identified as a potential community area. It is currently part of the PAA as designated in both the ROP and the Caledon Official Plan and is part of the GGHAS. The LEAR scoring for this area was lower than for the other assessment units and it is proposed as Rural on draft Schedule X12(Figure 4A) as presented for review by the Region. It is part of a narrow band of land that links the Peel and York agricultural systems as identified by the Province. Retaining linkages is critical to sustaining a strong agricultural system. The majority of the area is bounded by Protected Countryside with a relatively small urban /rural interface. The lack of urban/rural interface minimizes potential urban/non urban conflicts. The property fabric is relatively intact, and the majority of the land is under production.</p> <p>MDS - Figure 10A</p> <p>There are MDS restrictions within the AU and one former dairy operation to the north, for which the MDS arcs intrude into the PAU that has infrastructure capable of housing livestock.</p> <p>If this area is to be included as a future community area the issues related to urban/rural interface, connectivity of the GGHAS, and MDS related issues must be addressed.</p>
SAU1B	<p>SAU1B is Protected Countryside. If 1A was redesignated for community development, there would be an extensive interface between rural and urban development. Significant mitigation measures would be required to avoid potential conflicts. There are no MDS issues in SAU1B adjacent to the easterly component of PAU1. There 2 potential MDS conflicts with the westerly component of PAU1.</p>
PAU2	<p>Between the completion of the Phase 1 AIA and this report, the ROPA 30 appeal was settled and the area west of Bolton as shown on Figure 3 was incorporated in the Bolton settlement boundary. This AU is included in the preliminary proposed SABE. Given the configuration, extent of interface with the urban boundary of Bolton, and potential for buffering to the west this is reasonable. The AU is separated from the areas to the west by an extensive finger of the Regional Natural Heritage System in the general vicinity of The Gore Road. Several agricultural input services are located in this area and in Bolton. There are active farming operations in this AU and a number of the properties were identified as being subject to MDS. However, the farm infrastructure on most properties is deteriorating.</p> <p>MDS - Figure 10B</p>

¹⁵ PAU – P indicated the unit is within the primary study area.
SAU – S indicated the unit is within the secondary study area

TABLE 1 - ASSESSMENT AREA ANALYSIS
(Units as shown on Figures 6 A & B)

Assessment Unit ¹⁵	Analysis
	There are properties housing or capable of housing livestock within PAU2 but no potential MDS issues associated with operations in the SAU2B.
SAU2B	The NHS area can be used to provide separation between urban and rural development and where it is insufficient, additional mitigation measures can be imposed as part of the secondary plan process. There are no MDS requirements associated with SAU2B.
PAU3	<p>Area 3, bounded to the south by the future GTA West corridor, is not proposed as part of the preliminary proposed SABE but there is a potential employment area identified running north up Airport Road and incorporating Sandhill. The area is currently isolated from existing urban development and there are active farming operations. The draft Schedule X12 (Figure 4A) proposes it as PAA. There are no urban /rural interfaces impacting this assessment unit. The Industrial/Commercial Centre of Sandhill is located at the north end of this area at the intersection of Airport Road and King Street. Airport Road running north from Tullamore bisects this area and is the spine of the area being considered as an employment area. Depending on the function of Airport Road this may be reasonable. If this area is redesignated the interface between the employment area and the abutting rural area would need to be addressed and steps taken to reinforce the connection to the rural areas to the east and west. There are NHS features running through this area that could be used for buffers and separation.</p> <p>MDS - Figure 10C</p> <p>There are operations subject to MDS in PAU3. One is located in SAU3B with arcs that impact a small area at the westerly boundary. This operation is not within the area being considered as an employment area.</p>
SAU3B	The majority of this unit is located outside the Greenbelt but is rural in character. If the employment area is designated, the interface with the abutting rural areas to the north, east and west will need to be addressed. To the north, King Street would act as a buffer. There is a property on Torbram Road for which the MDS arcs extend into PAU3 but it is not within the proposed employment area.
PAU4	<p>This unit is included in the preliminary proposed SABE. The property fabric in the area between Centreville Road and Airport Road is fragmented as is the southern portion along Mayfield Road. The property fabric between Centreville Road and the Gore Road is less fragmented but there is a high incidence of non-farm ownership. Land use along Mayfield Road is non-farm as are areas on the south side of Healy Road and along the west side of Airport Road.</p> <p>The Hamlet of Wildfield is located in the southeast corner at the intersection of The Gore Road and Mayfield Road. The lot fabric abutting the Hamlet is not fragmented although there is extensive non-farm ownership in the area. There are active farming operations in the area with infrastructure and evidence of recent improvements. The</p>

TABLE 1 - ASSESSMENT AREA ANALYSIS
(Units as shown on Figures 6 A & B)

Assessment Unit ¹⁵	Analysis
	<p>Industrial/Commercial Centre of Tullamore is located at the intersection of Mayfield and Airport Roads.</p> <p>Although much of PAU4 is farmed, there is extensive non-farm property ownership, a pattern of fragmentation and a high incidence of potentially conflicting uses. In considering the impact on farming, inclusion of this area in the SABE is reasonable. The average LEAR score for this area is relatively high and qualified the area as a PAA.</p> <p>MDS - Figure 10D</p> <p>There are operations in the unit that were identified as being subject to MDS requirements</p>
SAU4B	<p>Inclusion of PAU4 in the SABE as currently proposed would minimize the urban rural interface thereby reducing potential conflicts. The boundaries to the west, south and east abut existing or proposed urban areas. The boundary to the north is defined by the GTAWHC which would act as a buffer. There is a potential MDS arc intrusion on the north boundary but is minor and could potentially be removed with construction of the GTAWHC.</p>
PAU5	<p>A portion of PAU5 has been proposed to be part of the SABE and the remainder has been identified as potential community or employment area. This area contains a significant cluster of active farm operations including large livestock operations. Except for two golf courses, one on the west side of Torbram Road and one at the corner of Bramalea and Old School House Roads, the area is under extensive farm ownership and actively farmed. The average LEAR score for this unit was highest in the Regional LEAR and it is shown as part of the PAA on Schedule X12 (Figure 4A). Much of the area has drainage infrastructure and permits have been issued recently for farm related improvements. The Brampton Fair grounds, an important component of the rural community, is located on a large parcel of agricultural land at the corner of Heart Lake Road and Old School House Road. Area 5 is bordered to the north by the proposed GTAWC. The western side between Heart Lake and Dixie Roads, is bisected by the proposed 410 Extension. To the west and south, the Area is bounded by fingers of Greenbelt. To the east, the boundary with Area 4 is a proposed Natural Environment High Constraint area. These features could act as a natural buffer protecting the integrity of this well-established agricultural area. There is a very small urban / rural interface along Mayfield Road, much of which is occupied by a natural feature.</p> <p>MDS – Figure 10E</p> <p>There are numerous properties within the AU that are currently subject to MDS restriction. There are no MDS intrusions from SAU5.</p>
SAU5B	<p>Given that the GTAWHC is proposed as the northerly boundary of this AU the interface with the secondary study area would be buffered minimizing potential impacts.</p>

TABLE 1 - ASSESSMENT AREA ANALYSIS
(Units as shown on Figures 6 A & B)

Assessment Unit ¹⁵	Analysis
	Although some of the MDS arcs from within PAU5 intrude into SAU5B, there are no MDS issues related to the unit.
PAU6	<p>The westerly portion of PAU6, which contains the Brampton Caledon Airport, is proposed to be part of the SABE as employment area. The easterly portion is identified for consideration as additional or alternative employment and community area. This is the only PAU bounded on 3 sides by the Greenbelt. To the south it is bounded by the proposed GTAWC. There is no urban /rural interface. It is potentially buffered from conflicting uses and removed from urban development. Despite this, the area is fragmented with non-agricultural uses. The Regional LEAR rankings are over the threshold for PAA but lower than for other assessment units. There are 2 settlements in this area, the Hamlet of Campbell's Cross and the Industrial/Commercial Centre of Victoria. The airport occupies a large area south west of Victoria. The predominant land use is agricultural but there are non-farm residential uses scattered throughout the area and there is considerable non-farm ownership. Existing farm infrastructure is limited. It is reasonable to include it in the SABE if the potential impact on the interface with the Greenbelt area mitigated.</p> <p>MDS - Figure 10F</p> <p>Three properties at the south end (including two that straddle the boundary with Area 8 and may be impacted by the GTA West corridor) were identified as potentially being subject to MDS requirements.</p>
SAU6B	All of the area surrounding PAU6 is Greenbelt. The transition between a proposed employment area and the Protected Countryside must be addressed and potential impacts mitigated and minimized at all stages of the planning process. Potential MDS arcs were identified projecting into the PAU on the west and to the north.
PAU7	<p>This assessment unit is proposed to part of the SABE. Except for the area at the corner of Mayfield and Chinguacousy Road and a pocket on Mississauga Road, fragmentation in this area is limited and the agricultural character is well established. Many farms have improvements, and the area to the south in Brampton, although designated for future urban growth, is still rural. There is a canola research facility on a large parcel of land at the corner of Mississauga and Mayfield Roads. The urban interface with Mayfield West is limited to the area along Chinguacousy Road where fragmentation is apparent and shifts in land use are occurring. There are two MDS encroachments that originate from livestock operations outside the SABE boundary at Chinguacousy Rd and a large MDS setback restriction at Mississauga Rd. that will need to be addressed with requirements that mitigation (land use restrictions) to be implemented in the Regional and Caledon Official Plans.</p> <p>The average LEAR score for this area is high. The GTAWHC will form the northerly boundary of this area and will act as a buffer and separator for the area to the north.</p>

TABLE 1 - ASSESSMENT AREA ANALYSIS
(Units as shown on Figures 6 A & B)

Assessment Unit ¹⁵	Analysis
	<p>Given the status of the agricultural activity in this area it could be considered as a future phase with a longer time period before development occurs.</p> <p>MDS – Figure 10G</p> <p>A number of properties within the unit meet the criteria to be subject to MDS. .</p>
SAU7B	<p>These lands, located to the north of the proposed GTA West Corridor, are part of a well-established farming area. As shown on Figure 10G and noted above, there is intrusion into PAU7 from MDS arcs for operations in SAU7B.</p>
PAU8	<p>This area is proposed as part of the SABE. It has an extensive interface with the Mayfield West boundary and Mayfield Road and therefore meets many of the criteria for consideration as a location for boundary expansion. Although there are parcels identified as being in non-farm ownership, the existing land use, except for a school, a parcel of vacant land and a handful of smaller uses, is agricultural. fragmentation is not as apparent as in other parts of the FSA. The average LEAR score is just above the threshold to qualify as a PAA. The center of the northern boundary of PAU8 abuts PAU6. The balance is bounded by NHS features which would buffer agricultural uses from further conflict the GTAWHC to the north. There are properties identified as potentially having MDS requirements located along the route of the proposed GTAWHC.</p> <p>MDS – Figure 10H</p> <p>There are numerous properties identified as being potentially subject to MDS in the assessment unit. Few were verified with the owner. Several are on the route of the proposed GTAWHC.</p>

3.11 Conclusions

The AIA process documented in the Phase 1 and 2 reports has informed the establishment of the SABE. The provincial interest has been addressed in identifying the SABE. From an agricultural perspective, the SABE is in conformity with the policies in the PPS and the Growth Plan. Agriculture was a major part of the technical review process in which a full range of provincial interests were assessed.

The requirements in Sections 1.1.3.8 of the PPS and 2.2.8 f and g of the Growth Plan have been addressed.

- The SABE identification process has proceeded as part of a municipal comprehensive review.
- There is no expansion into a specialty crop area.

- There are no reasonable alternatives that would avoid prime agricultural areas.
- Lower priority agricultural lands including Rural Lands have been considered and incorporated in the SABE where appropriate based on an analysis of factors.
- MDS analysis has been conducted to demonstrate how and where compliance with Minimum Distance Separation requirements will be necessary and to inform the process and provide a basis for sequencing and phasing.

As per Section 2.3.2 of the PPS, “an agricultural systems approach has been used to maintain the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base”. Policies have been recommended “to maintain and enhance ... the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network”.

The specific directions in Section 4.2.6 of the Growth Plan have been reviewed as part of the SABE identification process. Policies to ensure the requirements in the Growth Plan are being addressed will be implemented as the update of the ROP proceeds.

Section 2.2.8 h of the Growth Plan has been addressed with the completion of the Phase 1 and 2 AIA.

While the 4,300 ha of prime agricultural area will be a loss to the Regional agricultural land base, identification of the preliminary conceptual SABE responds to the provincial growth forecasts and direction to accommodate a specified amount of growth to 2051. Care has been taken to implement a detailed growth management strategy with rigorous intensification targets to minimize the re-designation of prime agricultural land. The result will be retention of a vigorous agricultural sector within a Regional Rural System of in excess of 66,000 ha.

4 Addendum December 2021

Upon completion of the Final Draft Agriculture Impact Assessment, dated August 16th, 2021 (Final Draft AIA) and other background reports in support of the SABE process, the Region embarked on a comprehensive public consultation process. During the period between August and December 2021, Regional staff reviewed the technical reports, considered public input, and undertook extensive analysis. Based on this process, it was concluded that an area of 4,400 ha of land was required to accommodate projected development to 2051. By applying the criteria and recommendations in the technical reports, a final recommended SABE area was produced. This concept is shown on **Figure 4B**.

Once a final recommended SABE concept was identified, the analysis of the impact on the proposed Regional PAA system contained in this report, was reviewed. This review focused on any adjustments required to the conclusions and recommendations contained in the AIA in response to changes to and the increased area of the recommended SABE.

The process of establishing a Regional agricultural system that implements provincial policy has been an iterative process. As previously noted, initially, the Region worked with the OMAFRA to rationalize the location of the GGH Agricultural System based on the findings of the Regional

LEAR in 2016. The major factor in that process was consideration of the amount and location of land that would be required to accommodate growth to 2031. When the province extended the growth horizon to 2051, additional area was required. A conceptual SABE was proposed with alternatives to be considered. This conceptual SABE, and the identified alternatives are assessed in the Final Draft AIA in August 2021, and criteria were identified to apply in finalizing the SABE.

This iterative process of finalizing the Regional Rural System is documented by the various versions of a draft official plan Schedule X12 that have been produced. The December 2019 iteration, based on the 2016 rationalization process with the province, is included in the Preliminary Agricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Planscape in July 2020, as Figure 6. The next iteration included the approved ROPA 30 and 34 settlement expansions, factored in the updated growth forecast to 2051, Provincial Policy amendments and technical considerations. This series of proposed draft schedules was considered as part of the analysis contained in this AIA report.

Initially as part of this Phase 2 AIA, the version of Schedule X12 based on a 4,300 ha SABE was analyzed. During the period between August and December 2021, a public consultation program was conducted and the input from that was considered as well as the findings of other technical reports prepared as input to the SABE process. This resulted in an increase in the area of the SABE to 4,400 ha and adjustments in the proposed boundary locations. A revised draft Schedule X12 (**Figure 4A**) was produced for this process.

The current draft Schedule X12 is based on a total net developable land area requirement of 4,400 ha, the figure reached through the comprehensive analysis incorporating the findings of the technical reports and input from the public consultation process. This is 100 ha more than the amount considered in reference to the December 2020 SABE concept. It represents a Regional Agricultural System comprised of 54,566 ha. Of this proposed area, 18,851 ha is prime agricultural area, 35,715 ha is rural lands. The current Schedule X12 with the most recent staff recommended SABE concept overlain on it is shown on **Figure 4B**.

Although 4,400 ha is a significant conversion of farmland over the period to 2051, Peel will continue to have a robust agricultural sector after the SABE is implemented in the ROP. With the 4,400 ha required to accommodate the SABE removed, the remaining Regional PAA area will be 18,815 ha or 15% of the area of Peel Region. As proposed, the Rural System agricultural land base, with growth to 2051 accounted for, will be 54,566 ha representing 79% of the land area of Caledon. Growth will be phased and occur over time thereby ensuring that until it is needed, land designated for future growth can continue to be farmed.

To ensure that the remaining PAA and RRS will continue to support a strong agricultural sector, the implications of this additional growth and measures to mitigate the impact on the remaining agricultural area are addressed in this report and documented in the addendum that forms part of this report. As phasing in the area within the SABE proceeds, measures can be implemented to ensure land in future phases continues to be in production.

5 Conclusions

The AIA process documented in this report confirms that the provincial interest has been addressed in identifying the SABE. From an agricultural perspective, the SABE is in conformity with the policies in the PPS and the Growth Plan. Agriculture was a major part of the technical review process in which a full range of provincial interests were assessed.

The requirements in Sections 1.1.3.8 of the PPS and 2.2.8 f and g of the Growth Plan have been addressed.

- The SABE identification process has proceeded as part of a municipal comprehensive review.
- There is no expansion into a specialty crop area.
- There are no reasonable alternatives that would avoid prime agricultural areas.
- Lower priority agricultural lands including Rural Lands have been considered and incorporated in the SABE where appropriate, based on an analysis of factors.
- MDS analysis has been conducted to demonstrate how and where compliance with Minimum Distance Separation requirements will be required and to inform the process and provide a basis for sequencing and phasing.

As per Section 2.3.2 of the PPS, “an agricultural systems approach has been used to maintain the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base”. Policies have been recommended “to maintain and enhance ... the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network”.

The specific directions in Section 4.2.6 of the Growth Plan have been reviewed as part of the SABE identification process. Policies to ensure the requirements in the Growth Plan are being addressed will be implemented as the update of the ROP proceeds.

Section 2.2.8 h of the Growth Plan has been addressed with the completion of the Phase 1 and 2 AIA.

While the 4,400 ha of prime agricultural area will be a loss to the Regional agricultural land base, identification of the preliminary conceptual SABE responds to the provincial growth forecasts and direction to accommodate a specified amount of growth to 2051. Care has been taken to implement a detailed growth management strategy with rigorous intensification targets to minimize the re-designation of prime agricultural land. The result will be retention of a vigorous agricultural sector within a Regional Rural System of approximately 54,566 ha.

6 Recommendations

6.1 SABE

The proposed SABE as shown on **Figure 4B**, will develop over time. Within the proposed SABE boundary, there are two goals that should be addressed in policy. The first will be to sustain agricultural production within the boundary on lands not immediately needed to accommodate growth. The second goal should be to manage and mitigate, and to the extent possible, avoid impacts on the agricultural land base adjacent to the boundary. Recommendations for achieving these goals are addressed in this section.

Policies should be implemented to direct that specific criterion, including use of natural and man-made buffers be applied as the basis for defining designated areas. Compliance with MDS requirements will also need to be addressed. Consideration must be given as to whether implementing land use restrictions in the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon Official Plans would be appropriate in cases where MDS setback areas extend within the SABE boundary. Care should be taken not to isolate areas of agricultural land. The direction of the Province to maintain a “system” by ensuring agricultural lands are linked and continuous should inform the process.

Within the SABE, sequencing and phasing of development should direct growth to areas:

- in response to MDS analyses,
- in proximity to current urban areas,
- where the lot fabric is fragmented, and
- where non-agricultural uses predominate.

Insight into appropriate areas is addressed in Table 1.

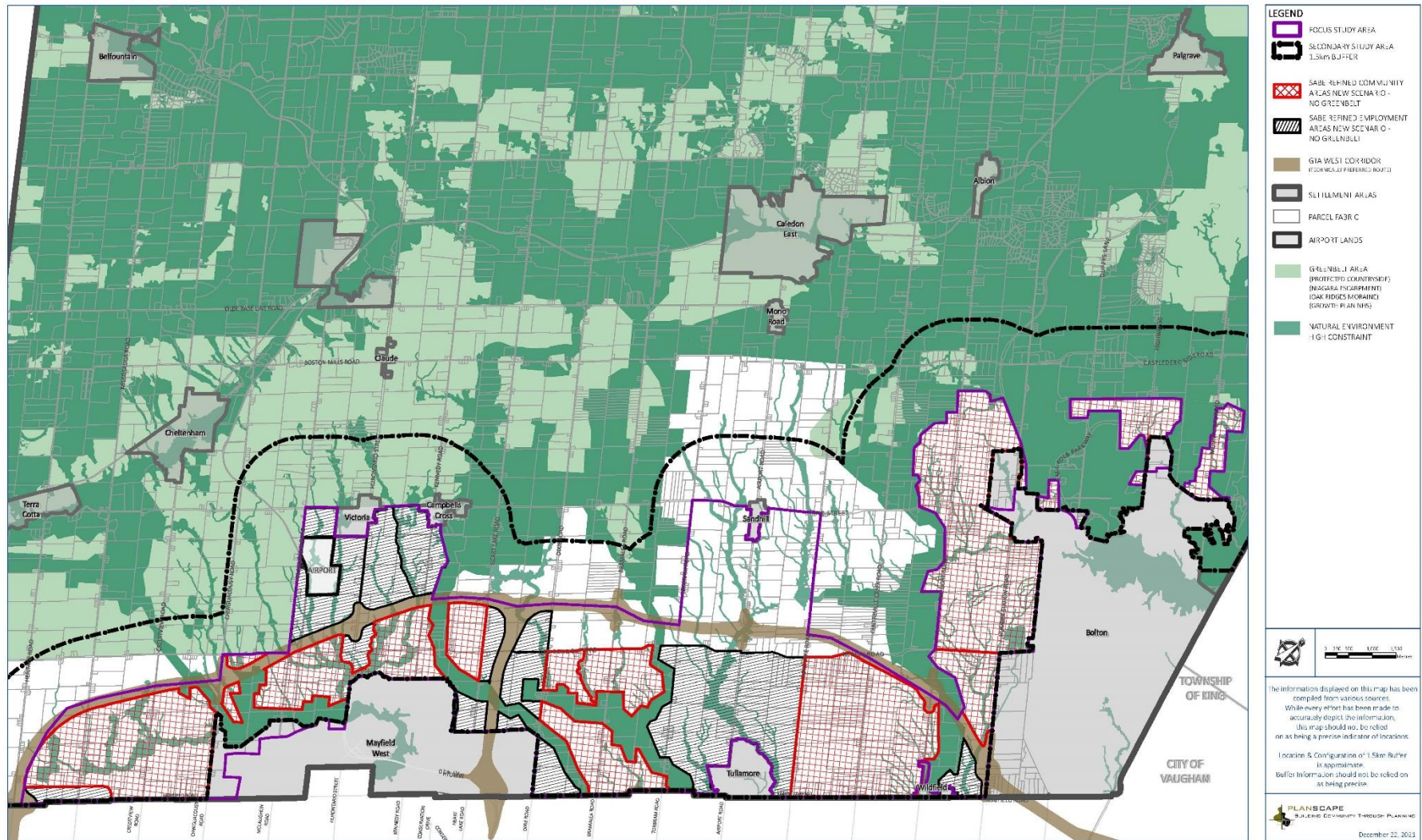
The other factor that will need to be addressed as development of the SABE progresses is sequencing and phasing of development. Phasing should be addressed through Regional policy to establish certainty of where and when development will proceed. This will provide certainty amongst farmers who may wish to work the land in the interim.

Once phasing is established, sequencing of development within the approved phases can be addressed. General policies addressing the need for buffers, separation, implementation of MDS requirements and general management to encourage interim agricultural uses can be addressed. As development proceeds, Regional policy should require secondary planning supported by detailed AIAs and updated MDS analysis to address the details of development. Mitigation and management of impacts on surrounding and abutting agricultural areas should be a focus in the secondary planning process. Natural features, recreational facilities, greenspace and infrastructure corridors are tools to be used to ensure adequate buffering and separation.

6.2 Secondary Area

The Secondary Area includes lands within 1.5 km of the SABE boundary as shown on **Figure 12**.

FIGURE 12 - REFINED SABE with COMMUNITY & EMPLOYMENT AREAS INCLUDING SECONDARY STUDY AREA



Critical to the protection of agriculture in the secondary area surrounding the SABE, will be effective edge planning that implements “best practises” to protect the integrity of the agricultural area and the right to farm.

The length of the direct urban/rural interface should be minimized.

Buffers between urban and rural uses must be significant and effective.

Finalizing the boundary between the primary and secondary study area must be based on an understanding of farm layouts and a focus on protection of the integrity of farm operations.

Consultation with the farm community must be ongoing and comprehensive.

The onus for addressing impacts must be shared between rural and urban. New non rural residents in proximity to agriculture must be aware of and accepting of normal farm practises. Developers must use best practises to reduce the impact of their work on farm operations.

The provisions of the Food and Farming Protection Act should be addressed through best practises.

Within the secondary area, infrastructure development must address the needs of agriculture. Provision of infrastructure that supports agriculture including high speed broadband, access to natural gas and appropriate electrical facilities, roads conducive to the movement of farm equipment and services to service the farm sector are critical.

6.3 Agricultural System

The integrity of the physical land base of the agricultural system including the inter-regional links, must be protected.

The agri-food system is broader than the physical land base. It includes all elements of the agri-food sector, production, inputs, outputs, service, and retail. The health of the sector must be monitored on an ongoing basis, measures put in place that measure its success.

As part of the systems approach, a Regional specific agri-food strategy to manage, support and enhance the agri-food component of the agricultural system should be developed and implemented to support the farming sector.

6.4 Measures of Success

The measure of success will be the ongoing health of the agricultural sector in Peel once the expansion of the SABE is approved and implemented by the Region. Metrics including land under production, rental land rates, production profile, age of operators, and gross farm receipts must be monitored to determine the health of the sector. Working with PAAWG and maintaining close contact and communication with the agricultural community will be key to understanding whether the policies put in place are effective. Support for an engaged Peel

agricultural advisory committee that works with the agri-food sector in Peel will provide a conduit into the state of the sector.

Flexibility in understanding and responding to the changing state of agriculture and evolving trends will assist the sector to thrive. The land in Peel is amongst the best in Canada. The sector has a broad and diverse market at its doorstep with the resources to respond. Creative policies to blend urban and rural and allow the agricultural sector to serve the changing needs of a rapidly evolving urban area can ensure an ongoing agricultural presence if properly managed.

Finally, the health of the agri-food sector should be monitored and supported with strategies to support its strength and diversity through implementation of a Regional agri-food strategy. To be successful, the local network providing inputs to and managing outputs from primary production is key.