

AGRICULTURAL EXISTING CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

W12A Landfill Expansion Environmental Assessment

DRAFT

3502 Manning Drive
London

Date:

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Prepared for:

City of London

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Existing Conditions.....	1
2.1	Agricultural Characteristics in Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area	1
3.0	Project Description	3
3.1	General Description	3
4.0	Impact Assessment	4
4.1	Methodology	4
4.1.1	Policy Overview.....	5
4.1.1.1	Provincial Policy Statement, 2020	5
4.1.1.2	City of London Official Plan (1989)	8
4.1.1.3	City of London Official Plan (The London Plan)	11
4.2	Agricultural Lands and Operations.....	15
4.2.1	Assessment of Effects on Agricultural Lands and Operations.....	15
4.2.1.1	Degree of Investment/Infrastructure	15
4.2.1.2	Soil Capability (CLI rating)	15
4.2.1.3	Potential Impacts on Agricultural Land within Site Area	15
4.2.1.4	Potential Impacts on Agricultural Land within Site-Vicinity Study Area.....	16
4.2.1.5	Impact on Agricultural System.....	17
4.3	Conclusion.....	18
5.0	Mitigation and Monitoring	18
6.0	Other Approvals	18
7.0	Conclusion	18
8.0	References	20

List of Figures

Figure 1	Location Map	2
Figure 2	City of London Official Plan (1989) Designations.....	9
Figure 3	The London Plan Place Types	12

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Soil Mapping

Abbreviations

ToR	Terms of Reference
EA	Environment Assessment
EASR	Environmental Assessment Study Report
PPS	Provincial Policy Statement
OMAFRA	Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs
CLI	Canada Land Inventory
MDS	Minimum Distance Separation
ha	Hectares
m	Metre
m³	Cubic Metres
masl	Metres Above Sea Level
MRF	Material Recovery Facility

1.0 Introduction

The City of London is proposing an expansion of the existing W12A Landfill site (the Project) located at 3502 Manning Drive, London. The existing landfill lands are described as part of Lots 18, 19 and 20, Concession 6 in the former Township of Westminster. Generally, these lands are located in a predominately agricultural area of London, south of the City's Urban Growth Boundary.

The environment is considered in broad terms to include the natural, social, cultural, and economic aspects of the environment. This Report presents the existing conditions and impact assessment for the agricultural component of the Environment Assessment (EA) being carried out for the proposed W12A Landfill expansion. This assessment has been conducted in accordance with the requirements set out in the approved Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EA, dated February 2019.

This Report is a supporting document to the Environmental Assessment Study Report (EASR). As discussed in Section 3.0 of this Report, the preferred expansion alternative identified through the EA process is the vertical expansion above the existing landfill footprint.

2.0 Existing Conditions

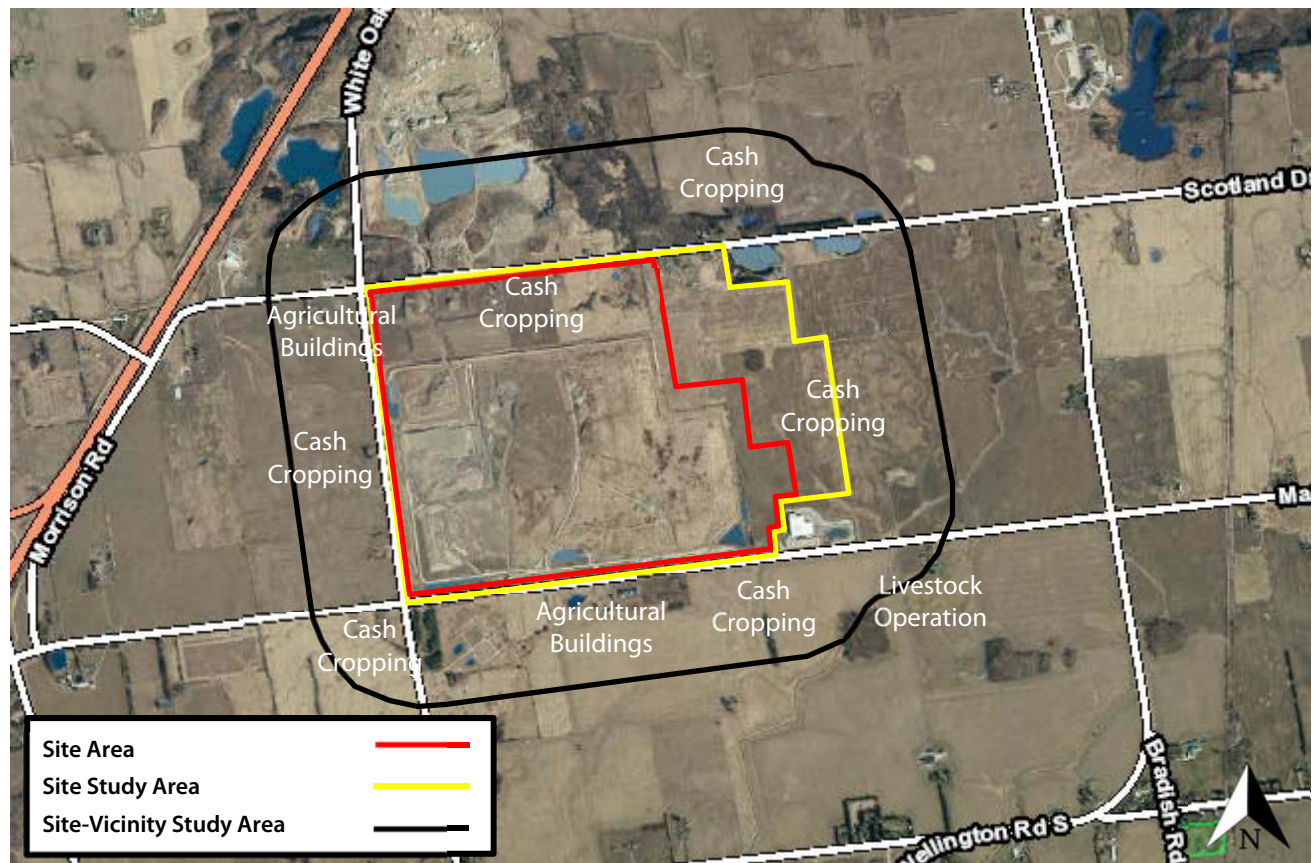
2.1 Agricultural Characteristics in Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area

The following provides an overview of agricultural and non-agricultural uses surrounding the W12A Landfill within the Site Area, Site Study Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area, as defined through the EA process. The boundaries of each of these study areas are described below and illustrated on Figure 1 of this Report:

- The Site Area encompasses the existing W12A Landfill site and adjacent lands required for the proposed landfill expansion;
- The Site Study Area represents the limit of property considered in conjunction with the evaluation of EA study alternatives; and
- The Site-Vicinity Study Area includes an area with a radius of 500 m around the Site Study Area.

Figure 1 also illustrates the general agricultural land uses in the vicinity of the existing landfill site.

Figure 1: Location and Context Map



Source: City of London Maps, 2020

Land uses within the Site-Vicinity Study Area are summarized in the following discussion. The characterization of land use activities in the Site-Vicinity Study Area was based primarily on a field survey undertaken by vehicle (i.e., 'windshield survey') on October 8, 2019, an examination of aerial imagery, and discussions with the City of London.

Existing Land Uses (Site-Vicinity Study Area):

North: A portion of the land base between the existing landfill berm and Scotland Drive is actively cultivated for cash crop production (soybeans). The remaining lands are considered fallow with hilly topography observed between the berm and Scotland Drive. These lands do not appear to have been used for agricultural production. Westcliff Pit, operated by AAROC Aggregates, and the Bre-Ex Gravel Pit, operated by Brekemens Holdings, are located on the north side of Scotland Drive (gravel pit). Soybean and corn production were also observed on the north side of Scotland Drive. Further, storage for non-agricultural activities was visible at 3405 Scotland Drive, and rural residential dwellings are located at that property, as well as 3465, 3561, 3465 and 3801 Scotland

Drive. The property at 3405 Scotland Drive includes a large pond; the property at 3465 Scotland Drive includes a demolished barn.

East: Lands east of the proposed landfill expansion are under active cultivation for conventional cash crop production (corn, soybeans, wheat rotation). There is a vacant industrial storage building at the intersection of Scotland Drive and Wellington Road South. In terms of crops, typical cash crops (corn and soybeans) are found along Wellington Road South. A rural residential dwelling at 5751 Wellington Road South shows evidence of a previous farmstead (bank barn foundation and roofless silo). Rural residential dwellings are also located at 5595, 5615 and 5751 Wellington Road South.

South: A livestock operation (beef) is located at 3243 Manning Drive, approximately 400 m southeast of the Material Recovery Facility (MRF), which is situated at 3438 Manning Drive. The house on the property is vacant. Large agricultural parcels were in conventional cash crop production (corn). There is also an agricultural operation located at 3691 Manning Drive, which includes a large driving shed with solar panels, a bank barn, roofless silo and rural residential dwelling surrounded by cash crop production (corn). Livestock was not visible at this location. The Islamic Cemetery of London (6100 White Oak Road) is also located south of the existing landfill.

West: There is a dilapidated barn/storage building located at 4025 Manning Drive. Large agricultural parcels were in cash crop production (soybeans). There is evidence of a farmstead at 5861 White Oak Road (treeline, foundation of buildings). There is also an existing farmstead at 4067 Scotland Drive, which includes a small barn, Quonset hut, ancillary structures and a rural residential dwelling. This property appears to be used for storage rather than active agricultural production. A rural residential dwelling is located at 5435 White Oak Road with evidence of a previous farmstead (stand-alone silo, barn foundation).

In summary, the Site-Vicinity Study Area is largely comprised of conventional agricultural production (e.g., cash crop production, livestock operations). A review of census of agriculture data (2016) confirms that the characterization of the Site-Vicinity Study Area is consistent with regional and provincial agricultural production practices, as nearly half (47%) of recorded farms are oilseed and grain operations. The surrounding context is illustrated on Figure 1.

3.0 Project Description

3.1 General Description

The Project incorporates a vertical expansion over 106.3 ha of the existing landfill footprint, which has a total approved footprint area of 107 ha. In effect, implementation of this Project would

result in 13.8 million m³ of additional airspace for waste and daily cover, with a highest ridge elevation of waste of 318.43 masl (approximately 43 m above ground elevation).

Additionally, the boundary of the existing landfill site is proposed to be expanded to accommodate additional on-site buffering and additional waste management activities. In comparison to existing conditions, the following modifications are proposed within this expanded boundary (Site Area):

- The northern boundary of the landfill property would be extended approximately 310 m to the Scotland Drive corridor for buffering purposes, with the eastern buffer width extended approximately 60 m. At this time, with the exception of a boundary fence, no infrastructure is proposed for these buffer areas. These lands would be seeded and left fallow, unless there is a future need for contingency measures or other infrastructure within these areas; and
- An eastern expansion of the existing landfill adjacent along the Manning Drive frontage to interface with the adjacent MRF property (approximately extension width: 145 m). Lands in this expansion area would accommodate a new small vehicle Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. It is anticipated that this new facility would include a new scale and scalehouse, a grade-separated small vehicle drop-off for waste, a grade-separated small vehicle drop-off for recyclable materials, an area for drop-off of brush, tires and large items, and a new Household Special Waste depot.

Collectively, the proposed modifications would increase the landfill boundary from approximately 140.0 ha to approximately 192.4 ha.

4.0 Impact Assessment

4.1 Methodology

The assessment of Project-related impacts on agricultural land and operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area was predicated on the Province's draft Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines (released March 2018).

Considerations applied in the assessment include: the degree of investment and agricultural infrastructure (e.g. tile drainage, fencing); soil capability; and potential impacts on agricultural land, surrounding uses and the wider agricultural system. These considerations were evaluated to assess the potential loss of agricultural lands and production, as well as the potential impact of the landfill expansion on the broader agricultural system.

Predicted impacts on agricultural lands were based on a site visit, which occurred on October 8, 2019, to identify and verify existing conditions, and analysis of the following data sources:

- Relevant provincial land use plans (Provincial Policy Statement, 2020);
- Municipal planning documents and land use maps (1989 Official Plan, The London Plan);
- OMAFRA constructed and agricultural artificial drainage mapping (OMAFRA Agricultural Information Atlas);
- Soil and Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Capability mapping (OMAFRA Agricultural Information Atlas);
- Aerial imagery (historic and recent);
- Agricultural crop statistics (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Agriculture); and
- Parcel mapping from City of London.

4.1.1 Policy Overview

MHBC completed a land use assessment for the Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area in conjunction with the EA process. The findings of this evaluation are detailed in the Land Use Existing Conditions and Impact Assessment: W12A Landfill Expansion Environmental Assessment, dated November 2020 (Land Use Assessment Report).

The following provides an overview of the agricultural policy framework applicable to the Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area, as presented in the aforementioned Land Use Assessment Report. Specifically, this overview addresses how, in our opinion, the Project is in keeping with the agricultural policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, the City of London's Official Plan (1989) and the City's new Official Plan (The London Plan).

4.1.1.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) came into effect on May 1, 2020 under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*. The PPS provides overall policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. In this respect, Section 3 of the Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements issued under the Planning Act.

Policy Context

In the context of the 2020 PPS, in our opinion, the activities associated with the W12A Landfill and the Project would be considered a 'waste management system'. It is also our opinion that a landfill would be classified as a 'major facility' under the terms of the PPS. Section 6.0 of the PPS defines these relevant terms as follows:

“Waste management system: means sites and facilities to accommodate solid waste from one or more municipalities and includes recycling facilities, transfer stations, processing sites and disposal sites.

Major facilities: means facilities which may require separation from sensitive land uses, including but not limited to airports, manufacturing uses, transportation infrastructure and corridors, rail facilities, marine facilities, sewage treatment facilities, waste management systems, oil and gas pipelines, industries, energy generation facilities and transmission systems, and resource extraction activities.”

Additionally, in the context of the PPS, in our opinion, the Site-Vicinity Study Area would be classified as a prime agricultural area. Prime agricultural areas are defined as follows in Section 6:

“Prime agricultural area: means areas where prime agricultural lands predominate. This includes areas of prime agricultural lands in associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through 7 Lands, and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. Prime agricultural areas may be identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food using guidelines developed by the Province as amended from time to time. A prime agricultural area may also be identified through an alternative agricultural land evaluation system approved by the Province.”

Further, Section 6 defines prime agricultural land as:

“Prime agricultural land: means specialty crop areas and/or Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2 and 3 lands, as amended from time to time, in this order of priority for protection.”

A review of the Site-Vicinity Study Area’s soil capability confirms that surrounding agricultural lands are identified as prime agricultural lands comprised predominantly of Class 2 and 3 soils. Class 5 and unclassified soils are also identified within the southern and northern portions of the Site-Vicinity Study Area, respectively (refer to Soil Mapping provided in **Appendix A**).

The PPS defines specialty crop areas as follows:

“Specialty crop area: means areas designated using guidelines developed by the province, as amended from time to time. In these areas, specialty crops are the predominantly grown, such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, and plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil, usually resulting from:

- a) Soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;
- b) Farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and
- c) A long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, infrastructure and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.”

The Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area have not been identified or designated as a specialty crop area by the Province or the City of London and, in our opinion, these lands do not exhibit characteristics of a specialty crop production as defined by the PPS.

Policy Review (Agricultural Policies)

The Project has been evaluated with regard to the policy direction and provisions of the PPS. In our opinion, specific policies contained within Section 2.0 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) are particularly relevant to the evaluation of potential agricultural impacts associated with this Project. These policies form part of Policy 2.3 (Agriculture) and are identified below:

1. Policy 2.3.1 states that prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.
2. Policy 2.3.3 addresses permitted land uses in prime agricultural areas:
 - Policy 2.3.3.1 states that, “In prime agricultural areas, permitted uses and activities are: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses”;
 - Policy 2.3.3.2 prescribes that all types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices shall be promoted and protected in prime agricultural areas, in accordance with provincial standards; and
 - Policy 2.3.3 states that new land uses shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formulae developed by the Province.

Respecting Policies 2.3.1, 2.3.3.1 and 2.3.3.2, the Project integrates vertical expansion over the existing landfill footprint, as well as a boundary expansion to accommodate additional buffer areas and a Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. As detailed in the following Official Plan discussion, the expansion area is located within the defined boundary of the site-specific W12A Landfill policy area. In our opinion, the proposed boundary expansion would be accommodated on lands specifically designated for a waste management system. Accordingly, in the context of the PPS, the Project would not introduce a new non-agricultural use into a prime agricultural area. Further, in our opinion, the components of the Project would not specifically constrain, or compromise, existing agricultural uses and normal farm practices within the prime agricultural area proximate to the Site Area.

With regard to Policy 2.3.3, MDS setbacks are applied to separate uses to reduce incompatibility concerns relating to odour emissions from livestock facilities. Specific direction on the applicability of MDS formulae is provided in the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document, prepared by OMAFRA (Publication 853). Guideline No. 3 of this Publication states that MDS I and II setbacks are not required for landfills. Accordingly, consistent with Policy 2.3.1 of the PPS, the

existing landfill area and the proposed buffer area should not constrain existing agricultural operations in proximity of this facility, including those within the Site-Vicinity Study Area.

Additionally, noise, odour and air quality studies were conducted to assess the potential impacts of the proposed landfill expansion on adjacent sensitive land uses. Generally, it is concluded in these associated reports that the identified landfill expansion is expected to meet all Provincial criteria with respect to noise, odour and air quality.

In light of these considerations and our broader evaluation of the Project relative to the PPS documented in the associated Land Use Assessment Report, it is our opinion that the Project satisfies, and is consistent with, the Provincial Policy Statement.

4.1.1.2 City of London Official Plan (1989)

The City of London Official Plan was adopted pursuant to approval of Official Plan Amendment No. 438 by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, with modifications, on December 17, 2009. Certain policies incorporated into the update were referred to the Ontario Municipal Board; however, these appeals were subsequently resolved.

Policy Context

Figure 2 of this Report illustrates that the Site-Vicinity Study area contains the following land use designations pursuant to Schedule 'A' (Land Use Plan) of the 1989 Official Plan:

- Agriculture;
- Open Space; and
- Environmental Review.

For the purposes of this assessment, the policies of the Agricultural designation are referenced. As discussed, a more detailed evaluation of adjacent land uses is included in the Land Use Assessment Report.

Policy Review (Agriculture Designation)

The preamble to Chapter 9 of the 1989 Official Plan outlines that the Agriculture designation is applied to lands outside of the urban community. As illustrated on Figure 2, this designation comprises the majority of the Site-Vicinity Study Area including the W12A Landfill site.

Section 9.1.1 sets out a series of objectives for the Agriculture designation. In our opinion, the following objectives are particularly relevant to the Project:

- “i) Protect, maintain and improve the prime agriculture land base for future generations. Prime agricultural land consists of Classes 1, 2, and 3 soils according to the Canada Land Inventory Capability Classification for Agriculture mapping and specialty croplands.

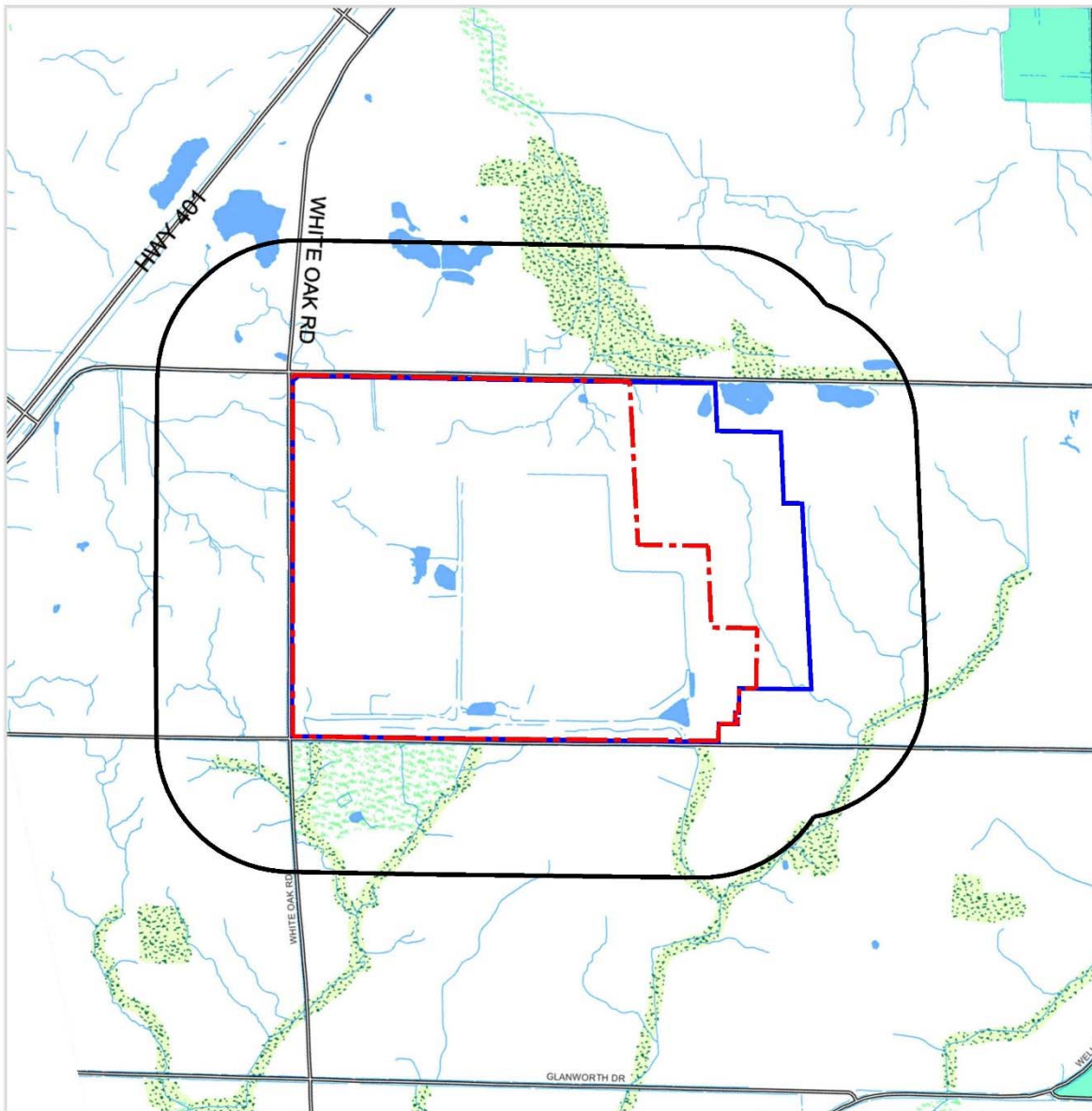


Figure 2
Schedule A - Land Use
 Map 11 & 14 - City of London Official Plan, 1989

Legend

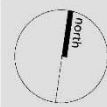
- Site Area
- Site Study Area
- Site-Vicinity Study Area
- Regional Facility
- Community Facility
- Open Space
- Urban Reserve
- Community Growth
- Industrial Growth
- Agricultural
- Rural Settlement
- Environmental Review
- Urban Growth Boundary

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- ii) Promote and support a healthy and productive agricultural industry as a key component of the City's economic base and heritage.
- iii) Promote farm practices which encourage the conservation of surface and ground water resources, aquatic habitat, woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitat and other natural features, where such practices do not impose undue limitations on the farming community.
- ix) Mitigate impacts from any new non-agricultural uses on surrounding agricultural operations and lands to the extent feasible."

In accordance with Section 9.2.1 of this Official Plan, the primary permitted use of land in the Agriculture designation is the cultivation of land and the raising of livestock. Further, a full range of farm-related activities are permitted in this designation including general farming, livestock farming, cash crop farming, market gardening, specialty crops, nurseries, forestry, aquaculture and agricultural research. Farm residences are also permitted in this designation, as are home occupations and secondary farm occupations subject to specific provisions set out in the Official Plan.

Notwithstanding the permissions set out for the Agricultural designation, specific policies for landfill sites are provided under Section 9.2.15 'Waste Management and Resource Recovery Area' and Section 17.4 'Operating and Closed Landfill Sites' of this Official Plan.

Section 9.2.15 specifically pertains to the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area which encompasses the W12A Landfill site and the lands generally located within the block bounded by Wellington Road South, Manning Drive, White Oak Road and Scotland Drive. In accordance with Section 9.2.15.1, properties addressed as 3137 and 3405 Scotland Drive and 5529, 5595, 5615, 5751 and 5879 Wellington Road South, which are located within this block, do not form part of this specific policy area.

Section 9.2.15.2 addresses the planned function of the W12A Landfill and the adjacent MRF site:

"The City of London recognizes the importance of the existing W12A landfill and the suitability of the existing location to minimize environmental and social impact while providing the important economic function of waste management. The adjacent site is also a suitable location for landfill expansion and the development of an integrated Resource Recovery Centre for municipally managed waste reduction, waste disposal, waste diversion and waste processing, using principles of sustainability which are socially, environmentally and fiscally responsible."

In accordance with Section 9.2.15.3, a variety of waste management/resource recovery uses may be permitted within this defined area subject to site-specific zoning. Among the permitted uses in this defined area are municipal waste disposal facilities, as well as other waste disposal facilities

such as material recovery facilities, yard waste composting facilities, and source separated organic composting facilities. It is further noted in this Section that waste management and resource recovery uses should be planned to minimize disruption to existing agricultural uses and facilities.

As discussed, the Project integrates a boundary expansion to accommodate additional lands for buffering and a Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. This expansion would be contained within the existing boundary of the defined Waste Management Resource Recovery Area. In our opinion, the Project supports the planned function of the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area to accommodate additional waste management facilities planned with consideration for sustainable design principles (as discussed in the Land Use Assessment Report). It is also our opinion that the Project would (1) comply with existing permissions for the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area and (2) align with the identified objectives of the Agricultural designation. In particular, as discussed in relation to the PPS, the Project should not adversely impact on existing agricultural uses and normal farm practices proximate to the Site Area.

Based on the foregoing and our broader evaluation of the proposed landfill expansion relative to the 1989 Official Plan as discussed in the Land Use Assessment Report, in our opinion the Project conforms with the policy direction and development permissions of this Official Plan.

4.1.1.3 City of London Official Plan (The London Plan)

The City of London Council adopted a new City of London Official Plan ('The London Plan') on June 23, 2016 and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA) issued its approval of the new Official Plan, with modifications, on December 28, 2016. Several parties subsequently appealed policies and schedules of the MMA-approved Official Plan to the Ontario Municipal Board, now the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

At this time, a number of policies and schedules applicable to the Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area remain under appeal and are not currently in effect. Notwithstanding, the following discussion describes how the Project aligns with the policy direction and development provisions of The London Plan as approved by the MMA.

Policy Context

Figure 3 of this Report illustrates that the Site Area and Site-Vicinity Study Area contain the following designations pursuant to Map 1 (Place Types) of The London Plan:

- Waste Management Resource Recovery Area;
- Farmland;
- Green Space; and
- Environmental Review.

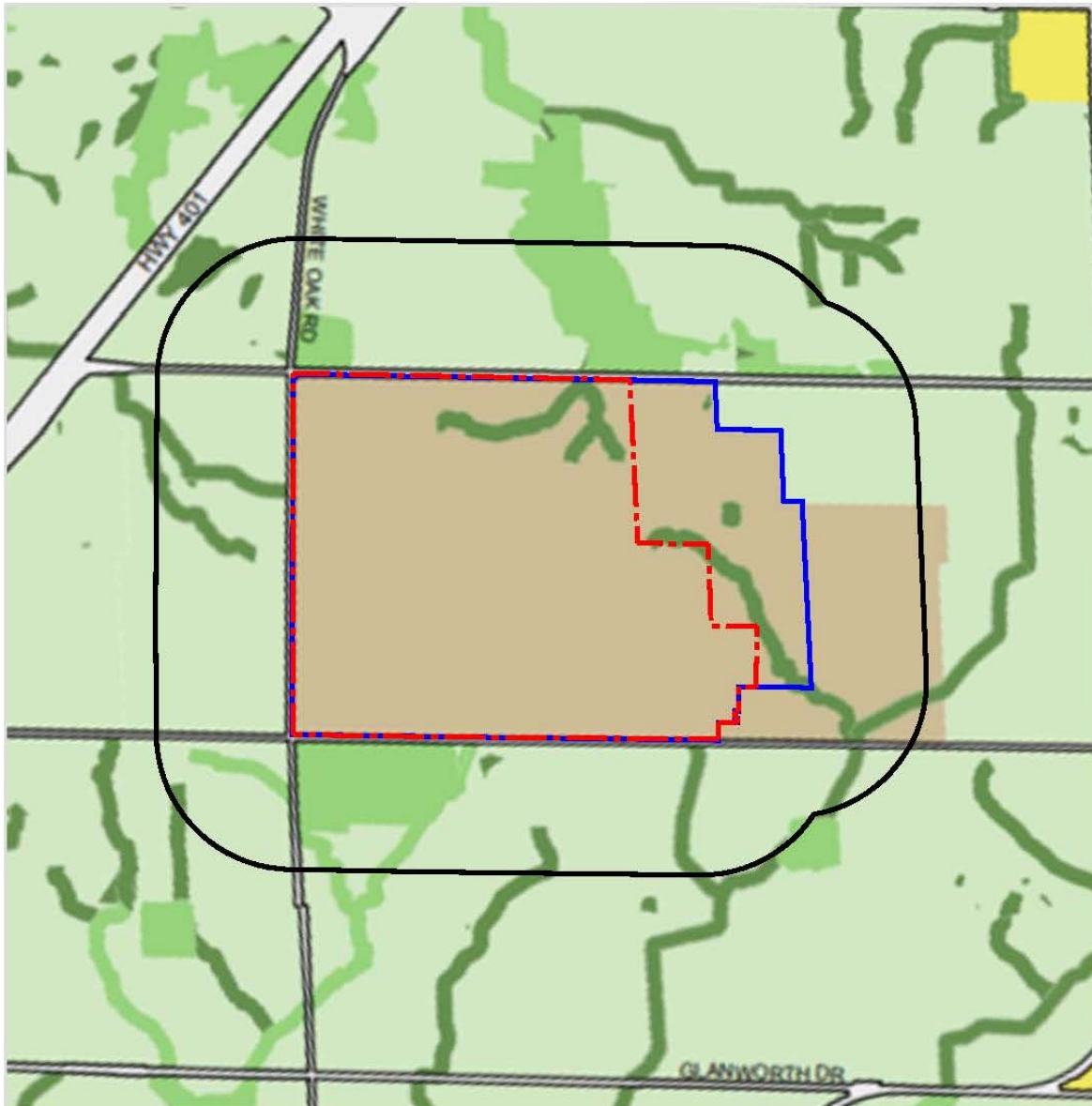


Figure 3
Place Types

Map 1 - The London Plan, 2016

Legend

- Site Area
- Site Study Area
- Site-Vicinity Study Area

PLACE TYPES

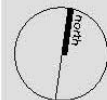
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|--|---|
| Green Space | Heavy Industrial |
| Environmental Reserve | Light Industrial |
| Downtown | Commercial/Industrial |
| Transit Village | Future Community Growth |
| Rapid Transit Corridor | Future Industrial Growth |
| Urban Corridor | Farmland |
| Shopping Area | Rural Heritage/Scenic |
| Main Road | Waste Management Resource Recovery Area |
| Neighbourhood | Urban Growth Boundary |
| Institutional | |

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For the purposes of this assessment, the policies of the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area and Farmland place types are referenced. A more detailed evaluation of adjacent land uses is included in the Land Use Assessment Report.

Waste Management Resource Recovery Area Place Type

The existing W12A Landfill site and adjacent lands are designated Waste Management Resource Recovery Area place type. As set out in Policy 1254 of The London Plan, this place type was developed specifically for the W12A Landfill to provide for the continued evolution of the landfill and surrounding area as an integrated waste management centre.

Policy 1254 also states that, “Landfills are important to the city’s future growth and development, provide a necessary public benefit and the ability to manage the city’s solid waste”. It is further prescribed in this Policy that landfills will be (1) designed to maximize utility and minimize negative impacts and (2) maintained in accordance with all relevant federal, provincial and municipal legislation and regulations.

Pursuant to Policy 1256 of this Official Plan, policies pertaining to the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area place type are intended to address several key objectives, including to:

- Apply to lands that are either currently being used as a landfill, are being considered for expansion, or a landfill in the process of remediation;
- Facilitate the transition into productive use as a landfill; and
- Promote best practices in site selection, site design, operation, and remediation.

In accordance with Policy 1258, the following uses are generally permitted on lands designated Waste Management Resource Recovery Area:

- Landfills;
- Related uses necessary to support waste reduction, re-use, recycling, resource recovery, treatment and waste disposal; and
- Eco-Industrial Parks where industries use materials available from the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area.

In addition to the above-noted uses, it is stated in Policy 1259 that a number of related uses are permitted in this place type through a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment. These associated uses include a municipal waste disposal facility, community recycling drop-off depot, material recovery facility, and other similar waste uses.

As illustrated in Figure 3, the proposed landfill boundary expansion would be contained within the existing boundary of the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area place type.

Farmland Place Type

Figure 3 identifies that the majority of lands within the Site-Vicinity Study Area surrounding the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area are designated Farmland place type. In accordance with Policy 1179, this place type is the prime agricultural area of London, and consists of prime agricultural land (Canada Land Inventory Classes 1, 2, and 3 soils) and associated Class 4 through 7 soils. This Policy also prescribes that the prime agricultural area, "...will be protected and maintained for the long term as the base to support a healthy, productive, and innovative agricultural industry as a key component of the city's economic base and cultural heritage."

Policy 1181 provides additional direction regarding the intent of the Farmland place type. In our opinion, the following objectives for this place type are of particular relevance to the Project:

- "9. Discourage uses which are not supportive of agriculture from locating in the Farmland Place Type. Limited non-agricultural uses may be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.
10. Minimize the potential for land use conflicts between residential uses and farm operations.
11. Mitigate impacts from any new or expanding non-agricultural uses on surrounding agricultural operations and lands."

As prescribed in Policy 1182, the Farmland place type permits a variety of agricultural and agricultural-related uses, and certain associated residential uses including principal farm residences, secondary farm dwelling units, and residential uses on existing lots of record.

Policy Review

The Project integrates a proposed vertical expansion to the existing landfill footprint, as well as an expansion to the existing landfill boundary for additional buffering and a Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. As discussed, the Site Area would be encompassed with the existing boundary of the defined Waste Management Resource Recovery Area.

Given the intended use of the proposed expansion area, it is our opinion that the Project would comply with the policy objectives and existing permissions of the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area place type. In this respect, the Project was selected as the preferred alternative for the EA, in part to maximize utility and minimize negative impacts associated with the landfill expansion. Further, activities associated with the expanded landfill would be maintained in accordance with applicable legislation and regulations.

Additionally, it is our opinion that the Project would align with the function and objectives of the Farmland designation. In particular, as discussed in relation to the PPS, the components of the

Project should not conflict with, or compromise, existing agricultural operations and normal farm practices proximate to the Site Area.

In light of these considerations, and our broader evaluation of the proposal relative to The London Plan as discussed in the Land Use Assessment Report, it is our opinion that the Project conforms with the planning direction and development permissions of this Official Plan.

4.2 Agricultural Lands and Operations

Section 2.1 of this Report provides an overview of agricultural and non-agricultural uses within the Site-Vicinity Study Area. Based on the findings of this review, agricultural uses within this defined area is characterized by conventional agricultural production that is in keeping with regional and provincial trends (e.g., cash crop production, livestock operations).

4.2.1 Assessment of Effects on Agricultural Lands and Operations

4.2.1.1 Degree of Investment/Infrastructure

The Project incorporates a vertical expansion over 106.3 ha of the existing landfill footprint with no expansion of the landfill area. The boundary of the existing landfill site is also proposed to be expanded to accommodate additional on-site buffering and a Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. Given the intent to implement vertical landfill expansion and the nature of the activities planned for the Site Area, with the exception of additional perimeter fencing, the Project is not anticipated to require a substantial increase in the existing level of investment and infrastructure servicing agricultural lands in the Site-Vicinity Study Area.

4.2.1.2 Soil Capability (CLI rating)

As discussed, the Project does not propose an expansion to the existing landfill footprint. Given that no additional lands are required for the landfill component of the Project, the proposed expansion to the landfill boundary is not expected to have an adverse impact on the soil capability within either the Site Area or the Site-Vicinity Study Area. Additionally, in our opinion, the activities planned for the expanded landfill (i.e., buffering, Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area) should not adversely impact on the capability of Class 2 and 3 soils located within these delineated areas.

4.2.1.3 Potential Impacts on Agricultural Land within Site Area

Section 3.1 of the Report identifies that the landfill boundary would increase from approximately 140.0 ha to approximately 192.4 ha, with no expansion planned for the landfill footprint. As discussed in this Section:

- The expansion area would be predominantly used for buffering purposes, with limited infrastructure planned for the affected lands (i.e., boundary fencing); and

- A portion of the expansion area fronting Manning Road would be used for a new Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area.

In light of the intended use of the lands contained within the proposed landfill boundary, the potential impacts of the Project on the agricultural land base within the boundary expansion are expected to be minor. Further, as discussed in Section 4.1.1 of this Report, this boundary expansion would occur on lands designated for waste management purposes pursuant to the City's 1989 Official Plan and The London Plan.

4.2.1.4 Potential Impacts on Agricultural Land within Site-Vicinity Study Area

The Land Use Assessment Report referenced in this Report evaluates the Project relative to applicable components of the Land Use Compatibility (D-Series) Guidelines administered by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry). Based on our review of the published D-Series Guidelines, in our opinion, Guideline D-4 (Land Use On or Near Landfills and Dumps) relates most directly to the proposed landfill expansion project. This Guideline identifies restrictions and controls on land use in the vicinity of landfills and dumps, in order to protect the health, safety, convenience and welfare of residents near such facilities.

Pursuant to Section 5.1.1 of this Guideline, the following are considered sensitive land uses for operating landfills:

"Any existing or committed land use which includes:

- a. a permanent structure used in animal husbandry; or
- b. agricultural land used for pasturing livestock; or
- c. a permanent structure where:
 - i. a person sleeps, or
 - ii. a person is present on a full time basis;
 but not including food or motor vehicle service facilities adjacent to a highway, utility operations, scrap yards, heavy industrial uses, gravel pits, quarries, mining or forestry activities; or
- d. cemeteries"

As an outcome of our land use evaluation, the following sensitive uses were identified within the Site-Vicinity Study Area in proximity to the existing W12A Landfill, including several related to agricultural operations:

North:	Seven residential dwellings; aggregate extraction operation;
West:	Agricultural land;
East:	City of London MRF; agricultural land; and
South:	Islamic Cemetery of London; agricultural land; farm and associated dwelling; cattle farm.

The Project would expand the Site Area approximately 52.4 ha; however, the existing landfill footprint would be retained. The expanded area, which is partially under active cultivation, would be predominately used for buffering purposes.

As identified in the Land Use Assessment Report, several studies have been completed to assess potential impacts of the Project on existing land uses within the Site-Vicinity Study Area, including identified sensitive land uses. Of particular relevance to this assessment are the noise, odour and air assessments completed, as discussed previously in this Report. Mitigation and monitoring programs are recommended in these reports to minimize potential impacts associated with landfill operations following implementation of the Project.

Additionally, as outlined in Section 3.1 of this Report, the proposed landfill expansion does not result in the limits of waste being extended towards any of the sensitive land uses identified above. A residential dwelling is currently located to the north of the existing landfill on lands addressed as 3801 Scotland Drive. This residence is situated within the Site Area. In conjunction with the landfill expansion process, this dwelling will be removed to facilitate additional on-site buffering.

Given these considerations, provided the recommended impact mitigation is implemented, in our opinion the Project should have minimal impact on existing agricultural activities and other sensitive uses in the Site-Vicinity Study Area. Additionally, based on the applicable planning framework for the Site Area and the adjacent agricultural area, in our opinion, the Project would not constrain agricultural activities in the vicinity of this landfill facility.

4.2.1.5 Impact on Agricultural System

In effect, the expansion area associated with the Project would take a limited amount of agricultural land out of active production to accommodate additional on-site buffering and a proposed Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. These lands are currently within City of London ownership and are encompassed with the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area permissions of the 1989 Official Plan and The London Plan. Moreover, with the exception of boundary fencing, no additional investment or infrastructure is planned for those lands intended for buffering purposes.

Given these considerations, in our opinion the proposed expansion to the landfill boundary should not compromise, or constrain, agricultural operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area and should not result in the further fragmentation of agricultural lands in this area. Accordingly, in our opinion, the Project is expected to have minimal impact on the wider agricultural system.

4.3 Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, in our opinion the Project (1) is expected to have minimal land use impacts on existing agricultural land and/or operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area and (2) should not adversely impact on the wider agricultural system.

5.0 Mitigation and Monitoring

As an outcome of the agricultural impact assessment summarized in this Report, in our opinion the Project should have minimal land use impacts on agricultural land and/or operations in the Site-Vicinity Study Area. Notwithstanding, it is also our opinion that mitigation and monitoring programs associated with the expanded landfill operations recommended in conjunction with this Environmental Assessment should be implemented to minimize any potential impacts on local agricultural activities and the larger agricultural system.

6.0 Other Approvals

Based on our evaluation, implementation of the Project should not require any additional approvals related specifically to the agricultural sector.

7.0 Conclusion

The City of London is proposing an expansion of the existing W12A Landfill site (the Project) located at 3502 Manning Drive, London. Generally, this property is located in a predominately agricultural area of London, south of the City's Urban Growth Boundary.

The proposed landfill expansion incorporates a vertical expansion over 106.3 ha of the existing landfill footprint. Additionally, the facility boundary is proposed to be extended to accommodate (1) additional on-site buffering north and east of the existing landfill facility and (2) a new small vehicle Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. Collectively, these site modifications would increase the landfill boundary from approximately 140.0 ha to approximately 192.4 ha.

This Report addresses the existing conditions and impact assessment for the agricultural component of the EA being carried out for the proposed landfill expansion. Generally, the study area (Site-Vicinity Study Area) defined for this EA is largely comprised of conventional agricultural production consistent with regional and provincial agricultural production practices (e.g., oilseed/grain operations).

The assessment of impacts on agricultural land and operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area was predicated on the Province's draft Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines.

Considerations applied in the assessment include: the degree of investment and agricultural infrastructure (e.g., tile drainage, fencing); soil capability; and potential impacts on agricultural land, surrounding uses and the wider agricultural system. These considerations were evaluated to assess the potential loss of agricultural lands and production, as well as the proposed landfill expansion's impact on the broader agricultural system.

In effect, the expansion area associated with the Project would take a limited amount out agricultural land (52.4 ha) out of active production to accommodate additional on-site buffering and a Waste and Resource Material Drop-off Area. These lands are currently within City of London ownership and are encompassed within the Waste Management Resource Recovery Area permissions of the City's 1989 Official Plan and The London Plan. Moreover, with the exception of boundary fencing, no additional investment or infrastructure is planned for those lands intended for buffering purposes.

In light of the intended use of the lands contained within the proposed expansion area, the potential impacts of the Project on local agricultural land and operations are expected to be minor. Further, in our opinion the proposed expansion to the landfill boundary should not compromise, or constrain, agricultural operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area.

Based on the foregoing, in our opinion the Project (1) is expected to have minimal land use impacts on existing agricultural land and operations within the Site-Vicinity Study Area and (2) should not adversely impact on the wider agricultural system.

Respectfully submitted,

MHBC
Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture



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Partner



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Planner

8.0 References

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APPENDIX A

SOIL MAPPING

CLI Soil Mapping - W12A

