



**RON DAVIDSON
LAND USE PLANNING CONSULTANT INC.**

October 3, 2022

Township of Georgian Bluffs
177964 Grey Road 18
R.R. #3
Owen Sound, ON
N4K 5N5

Attention: Jennifer Burnett

Dear Jennifer:

**Re: Application for Consent
Part Lot 1, Concession 2 SCD, Geographic Township of Keppel
Township of Georgian Bluffs
718073 Highway 6
Owner: Heather Currie and Estate of Doug Currie**

Further to our recent pre-consultation discussions regarding the proposed lot creation on the above-noted property, enclosed please find a completed Consent application.

Also enclosed are:

- Township application fees and GSCA review fee;
- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority pre-consultation letter;
- Species At Risk Assessment;
- Karst Assessment; and,
- Bedrock Resources Area Viability Letter of Opinion.

To assist your office with its evaluation of this application, I offer the following:

The Proposal:

Heather Currie owns a 41.42 hectare property located immediately north of Springmount, in the Township of Georgian Bluffs. Situated on the property is a house and three accessory

buildings, all of which are generally clustered on the site and accessed from Provincial Highway 6.

Mrs. Currie proposes to sever a 2.0 hectare, vacant lot, which would be accessed from Grey Road 17. Future development would occur within the existing clearing. Some tree removal will be required in order to construct the driveway. It should be noted that the westerly boundary of the proposed severed parcel is intended to follow an existing stone fence. The proposed lot creation is illustrated on the attached severance sketch. The building envelope proposed for the severed parcel is shown on the attached site plan.

Approvals Required:

The proposed lot creation requires approval of the Consent application by the Municipality's Committee of Adjustment.

A Site Plan Agreement will also be required in order to identify the severed parcel's building envelope and tree retention area. That application will be filed once the severance has been conditionally approved.

Preconsultation Discussions and Submission Requirements:

The proposed lot creation was discussed with the Township Planner, Grey County Planning, Grey County Transportation and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority during the summer of 2021. At that time, the owner and applicant were advised of the following:

- A new entrance in the location proposed could be supported by Grey County Transportation;
- An Environmental Impact Study to address the Significant Woodland feature on the severed parcel is unnecessary if development is confined to the existing clearing, with the understanding that limited tree removal will be permitted in order to construct a driveway; however, a scoped Environmental Impact Study to address Species At Risk is required;
- A report addressing the bedrock shale policies of the Grey County Official Plan is required; and,
- A report addressing the karst topography policies of the Grey County Official Plan is required;

Based on these initial discussions, reports addressing Species At Risk, shale bedrock and karst topography have been prepared. The details of those reports are discussed in *the County of Grey Official Plan* section on this Planning Report.

Subject Lands:

The subject property comprises 41.42 hectares of land. Situated on the property are the existing house and three accessory buildings. The driveway providing access to the subject property from Highway 6 also provides access to the adjacent, residential lot as illustrated on the severance sketch. Approximately 20 hectares of the Currie property are actively farmed. The balance of the site is forested and scrub lands. Of the 2.0 hectares of land to be severed, approximately 0.37 hectares are cleared.

Neighbouring Land Uses:

Lands within the general vicinity of the subject property, which include properties within Springmount to the south, are represented by a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, forested lands, scrublands and limited cash-cropping.

Grey County Official Plan:

The County of Grey Official Plan designates most of the subject property as 'Rural' on Schedule A. Two small areas along the east side of the site are designated 'Hazard Lands'.

Section 5.4.3 *Consent Policies* gives consideration to limited lot creation within the 'Rural' land use designation. The lot density is based on the original Township lot fabric and permits up to six lots per original Crown-surveyed 80 hectare parcel, including the retained lot. In this regard, the subject property forms part of the original 81 hectare Crown-surveyed parcel known as described as Lot 1, Concession 2 SCD, Geographic Township of Keppel, which has been divided into five parcels. As such, the creation of a sixth lot would comply with the above-noted density policy for 'Rural' lot creation.

The 'Rural' policies require new lots to be at least 0.8 hectare in size. Both the severed and retained parcels will exceed this minimum standard.

Section 5.4.2 also states that the Province's Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) policies found in section 5.2.2 of the Official Plan shall apply to 'Rural' lot creation. Please note that no livestock facilities exist within the vicinity of the subject lands.

Appendix A of the Official Plan recognizes the majority of the Currie property, including the entire severed parcel, as a 'Karst Area'. This implies that the lands may exhibit karst topographic features. The Official Plan policies states that development shall generally be directed to areas outside of karst topography unless the effects and risk to public safety are minor so as to be managed or mitigated. For any Planning Act application (e.g., Consent) where the lands are identified as 'Karst Area' on Appendix A, the proponent shall provide an assessment of the proposed area of development. In this regard, GM BluePlan Engineering conducted an onsite investigation which involved six test holes and determined that there is no evidence of hydraulically active karst features or epi-karst features on the severed parcel. A copy of the report has been filed with the Township.

Appendix B of the Official Plan identifies the forested lands along the north portion of the Currie farm, including the entire 2.0 hectare severed parcel, as 'Significant Woodland'. The natural heritage policies of the Official Plan state that development and site alteration is not permitted in a 'Significant Woodland' or within 120 metres unless it can be demonstrated that this feature or its function would not be impacted. On this note, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) advised in their pre-consultation letter (enclosed) that an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is not required to address this feature if development and site alteration is limited to the existing clearing, with the understanding that the removal of trees is necessary in order to construct a driveway. Such tree removal should occur between May 1 to August 15 in order to avoid woodland breeding bird season. To ensure that development is limited to the existing clearing, the Site Plan included in this Planning Report will form the basis of a Site Plan Agreement between Mrs. Currie and the Township.

Notwithstanding the GSCA's comments pertaining to the woodland feature, their office did advise that the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) records indicate occurrences of Eastern Meadowlark, which is a "Threatened Species", within the general vicinity of the property and therefore recommended that Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks be contacted in this regard. At the recommendation of the Township Planner, a scoped EIS pertaining to Species At Risk was conducted by Palmer (Ecologists) to address this particular Species At Risk as well as the possible presence of Bobolink, which also has a "Threatened Species" status. The onsite investigation found no evidence of any Species At Risk habitat on the site. A copy of the report has been filed with the Township.

Appendix E of the Official Plan applies the 'Selected Bedrock Resource Area: Covered by Drift (1 to 8 metres)' constraint to the entire subject property. The mapping is provided to identify where these resources exist, where resource use or extraction could reasonably be predicted in the future, and to guide strategic land use decisions where future development may pose land use incompatibilities within the resource. Within this constraint area, development and activities which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if the resource use would not be feasible or the proposed

land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest, and issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed. In this regard, GM BluePlan Engineering was retained by the owner to conduct the required bedrock review; and, the consultant stated the following in his letter of opinion.

The area of proposed severance and residential development on the property is not considered to be viable for extraction of bedrock resources from an environmental protection, logistical, or economical perspective based on the following:

- *the seasonally saturated feature in the vicinity of the area of proposed residential development,*
- *the shallow groundwater elevation (i.e., estimated 2 to 3 m),*
- *the proximity to EP zoning area and the area regulated under Ontario Regulation 151/06, and*
- *setbacks that would be required from wetland areas, property boundaries, and Grey Road 17, which would considerably limit the potential area of extraction in the area proposed for development.*

The limited area that is proposed for severance and development is inferred to have significant limitations to the viable extraction of bedrock. Further, the development of this northeastern corner of the existing lot is not expected to significantly compromise the potential for future development of bedrock resource extraction options on more ideal locations on the existing 41 ha property or surrounding lands.

A copy of this consultant's letter is enclosed.

In view of foregoing, it is evident that the proposal conforms to the Grey County Official Plan.

Provincial Policy Statement:

Section 3 of the Planning Act (PPS) requires all decisions made under the Act by an approval authority to "be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The PPS provides a number of policies that are designed to protect planning matters of interest to the Ontario Government. The following is an evaluation of the proposed development within the context of the relevant PPS (2020) policies:

The 'Rural' land use designations that applies to the subject property in the Grey County Official Plan acknowledged that the site does not qualify as 'Prime Agricultural Lands' under the PPS but rather as 'Rural Lands'.

According to Section 1.1.5.2 of the PPS, permitted uses of rural lands include:

c) *residential development, including lot creation, that is locally appropriate;*

In other words, the County and local Official Plan (where applicable) are to determine the appropriate policies for lot creation in the rural areas of the municipality. This policy has been implemented through the County Official Plan. No local Official Plan exists for this area of the Township.

Section 2.1 *Natural Heritage* states (edited for relevancy):

2.1.5 *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in:*

b) *significant woodlands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River);*

unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.

2.1.7 *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in habitat of endangered species and threatened species, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.*

2.1.8 *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas identified in policies 2.1.4, 2.1.5, and .1.6 unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.*

As explained earlier in this Planning Report, the severed parcel is recognized in the County Official Plan as 'Significant Woodlands'. GSCA has advised that an EIS is not required to address the woodland feature if the development is contained to the existing clearing, with the allowance for some trees to be removed in order to construct a driveway.

As well, a bird type having a "Threatened Species" status had been identified in the general area of the subject lands in the past and therefore a scoped EIS to address this matter has been prepared. No signs of any Species At Risk were found on the site.

Section 2.5 *Mineral Aggregate Resources* states (edited for relevancy):

2.5.2.5 *In known deposits of mineral aggregate resources and on adjacent lands, development and activities which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:*

- a) *resource use would not be feasible; or*
- b) *the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and*
- c) *issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.*

In this regard, the definition on "mineral aggregate resources" includes shale. As noted above, the County Official Plan identifies the severed parcel as possibly having a shale deposit. A study has been conducted on this matter and has determined that the severed parcel is not considered to be viable for extraction of bedrock resources from an environmental protection, logistical, or economical perspective

Section 3.1 *Natural Hazards* states (edited for relevancy):

3.1.1 *Development shall generally be directed, in accordance with guidance developed by the Province (as amended from time to time), to areas outside of:*

- a) *hazardous lands adjacent to the shorelines of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System and large inland lakes which are impacted by flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards;*
- b) *hazardous lands adjacent to river, stream and small inland lake systems which are impacted by flooding hazards and/or erosion hazards; and*
- c) *hazardous sites.*

In this regard, the definition of "hazardous sites" in the PPS includes lands exhibiting karst topographic features. As noted above, the County Official Plan identifies the severed parcel as possibly having karst topography; however, the expert has determined after visiting the site and conducting test pitting that karst does not exist on the severed parcel.

Based on the foregoing, the proposal would be consistent with the natural heritage policies of the PPS.

Township of Georgian Bluffs Zoning By-law:

The subject lands are zoned primarily 'RU' (Rural), with two small 'EP' zoned areas along the east side of the property.

The 'RU' zone requires a 'minimum lot area' and 'minimum lot frontage' of 20 hectares and 200 metres respectively for agricultural uses and 0.8 hectares and 100 metres respectively for residential uses. The severed parcel, which is intended to be used for residential purposes, and the retained parcel, which will continue to be farmed, will conform to these minimum standards. The Consent application is deemed to conform to the Zoning By-law.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

The proposed lot creation conforms to the policies of the County Official Plan, complies with the provisions of the Township's Zoning By-law, and is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. As such, the Consent should be given favourable consideration.

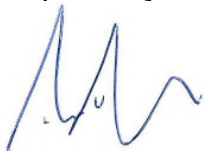
As a condition of severance, Mrs. Currie will need to enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the Township. The site plan included in this Planning Report will form the basis of such agreement. The Site Plan Agreement will also address the timing of tree removal for the driveway (i.e., not between May 1 to August 15) and will also stipulate that the future owner is required to submit a Lot Grading and Drainage Plan at the Building Permit stage.

Final Comments:

I trust this application package is sufficient and will allow your office to deem the application complete. Should you require any additional information, please contact the undersigned.

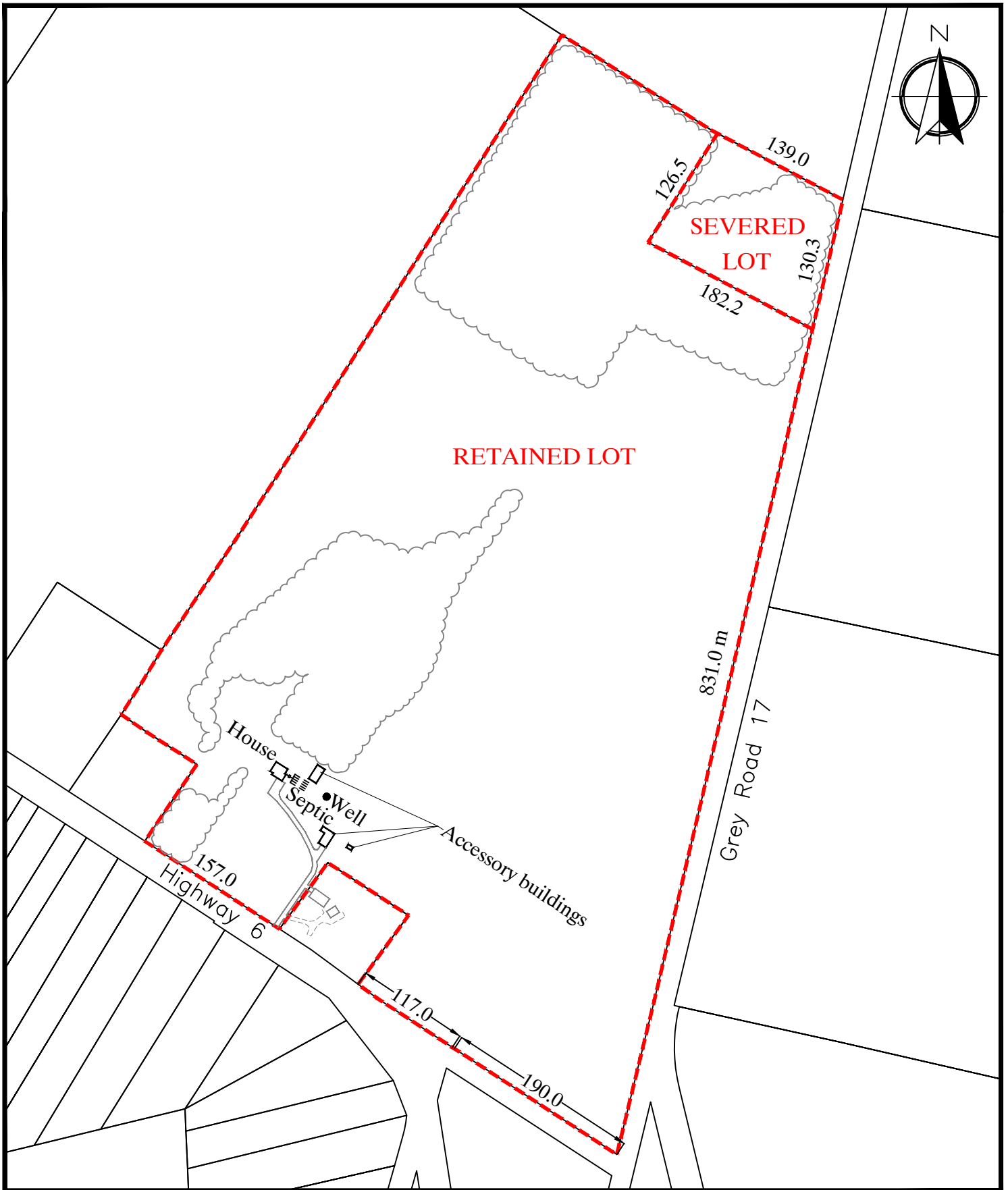
It would be sincerely appreciated if your office could advise of a possible public meeting date before actually scheduling the meeting in order to ensure my availability.

Respectfully submitted,



Ron Davidson, BES, RPP

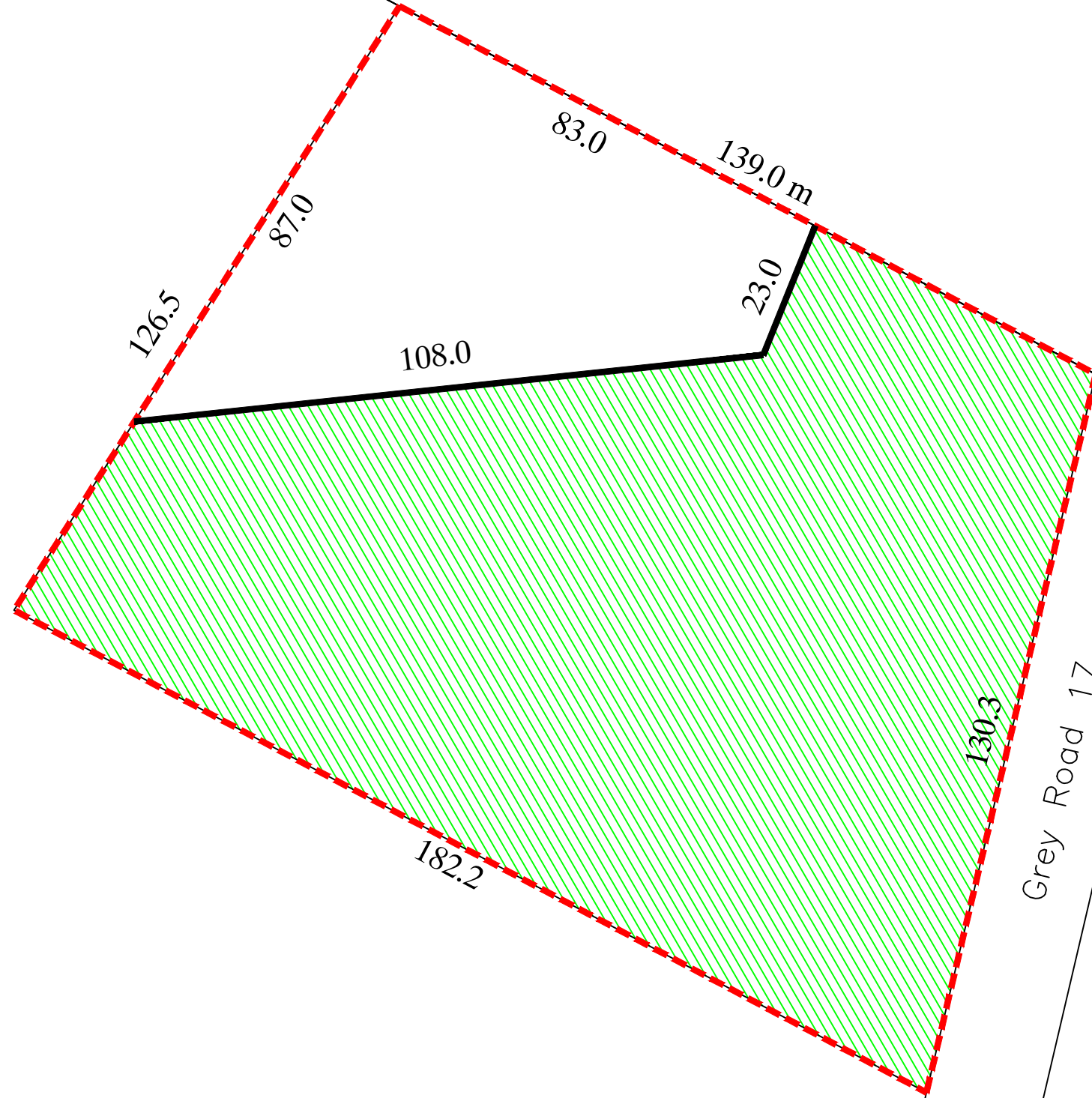
c.c. Heather Currie



Proposed Severance
 718073 Highway 6
 Georgian Bluffs, ON

RD **RON DAVIDSON**
 LAND USE PLANNING CONSULTANT INC
 OWEN SOUND, ONTARIO

SCALE 1:5000



SITE PLAN

Part Lot 1, Concession 2 SCD
Geographic Township of Keppel
Township of Georgian Bluffs

-  Subject Property
-  Development Area
-  Tree Preservation Area

Note: A driveway through the Tree Preservation Area shall be permitted from Grey Road 17 to the Development Area provided tree removal does not exceed a width of 4.0 metres.

August 25, 2022