

| Comment # | Section                                  | NSE Comment – June 2023   | Wills' Response   |
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| 1.        | Executive Summary                        | Please update Executive summary following a revision to the EIS to address the comments provided below.   | The Executive Summary has been removed from the EIS as this is not a requirement under the MPH OP.  |
| 2.        | 1.0 – Introduction                       | It is noted that “under the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) can request an EIS to help guide recommendations for applications for development within, or adjacent to, natural heritage features and areas”. Please note that the PPS makes no reference to conservation authorities ability to request an EIS. It is through the Municipality of Port Hope (MPH) Official Plan (OP), s. C5.2.2 that identifies the requirement to complete an EIS, with guidance for an EIS identified in s. C20.3 of the MPH OP. Please update this section of the EIS to provide the correct reference to the requirement for an EIS.                | This has been updated in the EIS.   |
| 3.        | 1.0 – Introduction                       | The third paragraph makes reference to the EIS demonstrating that “there will be no negative ecological or hydrological impacts on the natural heritage system, connectivity, and linkages associated with the site and surrounding area.” Please review s. C20.3 of the MPH OP regarding the purpose and requirements of an EIS and update the references in the EIS accordingly.  | This has been updated in the EIS.   |
| 4.        | 1.1 – Subject Property / Project Details | The study area should be identified on all figures and illustrate all natural features and areas within 120 m (i.e., adjacent lands as identified on Table 1 in the MPH OP) of the proposed development / subject property. Please update all figures accordingly, including showing the boundary of the Osaca Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW), Osaca – Ganaraska River Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (LS – ANSI) and watercourses.   | All figures have been updated to include the addition of 120 m of adjacent lands.   |
| 5.        | 2.1 – Background Review                  | Please provide a list of all background material reviewed.  | A list of reviewed background material has been included in Section 2.1.  |
| 6.        | 2.1 – Background Review                  | The term Valued Ecosystem Services is noted in the “Designated Areas” section. The Natural Heritage Information Centre does not make reference to Valued Ecosystem Services. This is not a term used in natural heritage planning in Ontario or is a term used to describe natural heritage features and areas . Furthermore, the term “Designated Areas” is not used in the PPS, Natural Heritage Reference Manual or municipal OP. Please replace the term “Designated Areas” with “natural heritage features and areas”, which is a defined term in the PPS and more accurately refers to features that may be found to be “significant” and to which natural heritage policies apply. | The EIS has been updated to remove language referring to “Valued Ecosystem Components” and “Designated Areas”. The report now references “Natural Heritage Features and Areas”. |
| 7.        | 2.1 – Background Review                  | Appendix C includes an e-mail to the MECP regarding species at risk known from the general area. There is no reply from the MECP in the EIS. Please include the reply from the MECP regarding the request for information regarding species at risk.  | The MECP response has now been included in Appendix C.  |
| 8.        | 2.2 – Field Investigations               | Please provide a table of field investigations, noting date, survey undertaken, weather, time of start and finish of survey.  | The summary of field investigations that were completed has been updated to include the date, start and end times, as well as weather conditions for each survey type.          |

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| 9.        | 2.2 – Field Investigations             | There appears to only be one vegetation survey completed to inform the Ecological Land Classification on June 21, 2022. No spring or fall vegetation survey was completed. A spring and summer vegetation inventory should be completed. Alternatively, follow a precautionary approach and protect vegetation to ensure the development will not result in a negative impact.   | A 5 m buffer has been proposed on the woodlands, and a 30 m buffer has been proposed on the wetlands where no development or site alteration can occur. Vegetation removal will be restricted to minor tree removal as noted in the Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan from November 2023, produced by Kuntz Forestry Consulting Inc. In addition, minor vegetation removal is required outside of the woodlands and wetlands, in areas that have been previously impacted by agricultural activities.  |
| 10.       | 2.2 – Field Investigations             | Please note, the first and second round of the amphibian surveys were completed outside of the recommended dates for these surveys (e.g., 1 <sup>st</sup> round for amphibian surveys in Central Region should take place between April 15 <sup>th</sup> and April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> round between May 15 <sup>th</sup> and May 30 <sup>th</sup> ). Missing the early survey period could result in an under-representation of amphibian use of the habitat within the study area. Amphibian surveys should be completed during the appropriate time. If surveys are not undertaken at the appropriate time, a precautionary approach should be applied. Please see comment below regarding Significant Wildlife Habitat for Woodland and Wetland Amphibian Breeding Habitat. | The timing of the Amphibian Call Surveys was based on the minimum nighttime air temperatures that are outlined in the Marsh Monitoring Protocol. While the recommended survey dates were not met for the first two surveys, the minimum nighttime air temperature requirements were met (5°C and 10°C). The Marsh Monitoring Program notes that The dates are only a guideline and that air temperature is the most important factor (along with lack of wind) as it elicits calling activity. Both of these variables were followed during the surveys. In addition, no development is proposed within 5 m of the woodlands and within 30 m of the wetlands. Therefore, impacts to any amphibian breeding habitat will be avoided. |
| 11.       | 2.2.1 – Ecological Land Classification | At a site-level ELC should be completed to Vegetation Type. There appears to be a sufficient vegetation description and soil assessment to classify vegetation communities to Vegetation Type. Please identify the Vegetation Type for each community mapped.  | ELC has now been completed to Vegetation Type for all ELC communities, except for the Mineral Cultural Meadow (CUM1). As this community is representative of an active agricultural field, no further classification is required to properly characterize the community.  |
| 12.       | 2.2.1 – Ecological Land Classification | No vegetation list has been provided. Please include a table of vegetation documented during surveys, indicating which vegetation communities each species was recorded in.  | The development is taking place entirely within the agricultural lands. Therefore, Wills is of the opinion that the vegetation species provided in the ELC community descriptions in Section 2.2.1 is sufficient.   |
| 13.       | 2.2.1 – Ecological Land Classification | Within the swamp communities, Black Ash was documented. Black Ash is listed as Endangered in Ontario. That said, the ministry has temporarily suspended protections for Black Ash for a period of two years (January 26, 2022 – January 25, 2024). During this time, proponents will not need to seek authorizations for activities that impact Black Ash and its habitat. However, the EIS should acknowledge the status of Black Ash. Please update appropriate sections of the EIS accordingly.   | Black Ash has been added to the SAR Assessment table, and it is also noted in section 3.4.  |
| 14.       | 2.2.1 – Ecological Land Classification | Please indicate at what depth mottles and gleys were observed in the soil cores, if they were detected.  | The EIS has been updated to state that no mottles or gleys were observed in the soil cores.   |

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| 15.       | 2.2.2 Breeding Bird Surveys              | <p>The point count locations for the breeding bird surveys were located along the edge of the woodland. Bird survey point locations should be located within the habitat to the extent possible (i.e., to the edge of the property) to document birds utilizing that habitat. Point count locations should have been located within the woodland, up to 120 m from the proposed development footprint. This is important to document indicator species of Significant Wildlife Habitat, as well as Species at Risk that have been recorded within the vicinity of the subject property.</p> <p>It is recommended that breeding bird surveys be completed within the woodland up to the edge of the property line (within 120 m of the proposed development) to document species inhabiting the woodland and assess the ecological function of the habitat in order to determine sensitivity to development and inform appropriate buffers.</p> | <p>Since development is no longer proposed within the woodlands, Wills is of the opinion that additional breeding bird surveys are not required.</p>  |
| 16.       | 2.2.3 – Amphibian Call Surveys           | <p>See comment #10 above regarding survey period. This is particularly relevant for early breeding species, such as Chorus Frog, which are known to breed early during the first round of surveys (e.g., early to mid-April) and are much less vocal following their brief breeding period (1-2 weeks). It is recommended surveys be completed during the appropriate time of year.</p>  | <p>See response #10.</p> <p>In addition, the Draft Plan has been updated to include a 30 m buffer on the wetlands. As such, it is Wills' opinion that no further Amphibian Call Surveys are required since no wetlands are being impacted and the 30 m buffer is being adhered to.</p>            |
| 17.       | 2.2.4 – Headwater Drainage Feature       | <p>Please note, the TRCA Evaluation, Classification and Management of Headwaters Drainage Features: Guidelines document identifies that the first survey should be completed during the Spring freshet (late March – mid-April). That said, the outcome of the assessment may not change based on the management recommendation provided in Section 4.2 of the EIS. Please provide an explanation for why the first survey was not completed during the recommended timing window. Please provide rationale to support a position that the first survey did not need to occur during the recommended timing window, if that is the position of the author of the EIS.</p>  | <p>An explanation as to why the first survey was missed and rationale as to why the survey did not impact the results of the assessment has been added to Section 4.2, Step 1.</p>  |
| 18.       | 2.2.4 – Headwater Drainage Feature       | <p>Please note, Figure 3 does not identify the locations of watercourses, including the HDFs as noted in Section 2.2.4 of the EIS. Please update Figure 3 to clearly illustrate the location of the headwater drainage features. Also, please clearly identify the location of all watercourses, including those identified as cold water fish habitat on Figure 3.</p>  | <p>Figure 3 has been updated to include all watercourses and the HDF.</p>   |
| 19.       | 2.2.6 – Incidental Wildlife Observations | <p>The list of incidental wildlife species includes Common Nighthawk, as species listed as Special Concern. There is no further discussion of this species in the EIS, including within the Species at Risk Assessment (Section 2.2.7). If no suitable habitat is present within the study area (including adjacent lands), please provide an assessment and explanation to support an opinion that dedicated crepuscular bird surveys are not required.</p>   | <p>The SAR table has been updated to include Common Nighthawk.</p>  |
| 20.       | 2.2.7 – Species at Risk Assessment       | <p>Please review the NHIC list for the overlapping and adjacent 1 km squares and note which species were documented in the NHIC list and during what year they were last observed if this information is available.</p>  | <p>The table has been updated to note which species were documented from the NHIC list. However, since no SAR are being impacted by the project, Wills does not feel as though the year in which a species was last observed is relevant. Therefore, this has not been updated in the report.</p> |

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| 21.       | Table 2 – Species at Risk Screening Table | <p>It is not clear why the likelihood of occurrence was noted as “low” or “moderate” for some species for which habitat is present in the study area (including adjacent lands). As an example, Canada Warbler is noted as having a “low” likelihood of occurrence even though there is suitable habitat in the forest/swamp complex and this species was documented in two of the adjacent NHIC squares to the west of the subject property. Please indicate species likelihood of occurrence as “moderate” if there is suitable habitat present, and “high” for species which are more likely to be present (e.g., Wood Thrush).</p> <p>Also, the comment that a forest breeding bird species was not “observed or heard” gives the impression that surveys were undertaken with the forest habitat. Breeding bird survey locations were placed at the edge of the woodland rather than within the woodland where these species are more likely to be on territory (e.g., Wood Thrush territory is further interior from the woodland edge). As such, the lack of observations is not evidence that these species are not breeding within the woodland or that the woodland does not provide suitable habitat for these species.</p>   | <p>To provide more clarity, the table has been updated to indicate whether there is a “Likelihood of Impact” for a given species. The table has also been updated based on the new Draft Plan.</p> <p>The Site Area Suitability/Observations column has been updated for Wood Thrush and Canada Warbler to address the second part of the comment.</p> |
| 22.       | Table 2 – Species at Risk Screening Table | <p>There are SAR bats that have a potential for using the trees on and the subject property as maternity roost habitat. No surveys were completed yet tree removal is proposed. Moreover, there is no correspondence from the MECP regarding proposed removal of trees and potential adverse impacts to SAR habitat. It is recommended that the MECP be consulted to determine if acoustic surveys should be completed for SAR bats and what steps should be taken to avoid contravening the Endangered Species Act.</p>   | <p>The updated Draft Plan does not include the removal of any woodland habitat. Therefore, no impacts to SAR bat habitat or maternity roost habitat will take place.</p>   |
| 23.       | 3.0 – Regulatory Context                  | <p>Please include a section that reviews relevant Federal Legislation, particularly the Fisheries Act, Species at Risk Act, and the Migratory Bird Convention Act.</p>   | <p>These polices have been added to the EIS in sections 3.6 - 3.8.</p>   |
| 24.       | 3.1 – Provincial Policy Context           | <p>There is a direct hydrologic connection between the Osaca PSW located on the east side of County Road 65 and the unevaluated wetland located on the subject property. This is acknowledged in Section 2.1, under “Other Wetlands”. The new Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (2022) manual notes that “there are some cases where very closely grouped wetlands function together as one. For example, areas comprised of very closely spaced small wetland ponds/pools (e.g., within 30 meters from each other) interspersed with small pockets of upland forest (e.g., a ‘mosaic wetland’ or a ‘slough wetland’)”. It should be noted that the wetland on the subject property is not a small wetland separated by an upland forest from the Osaca PSW. Therefore, this guidance would not apply to the unevaluated wetland on the subject property which is directly hydrologically and functionally connected to the Osaca wetland. These wetlands would also have historically been one wetland unit prior to the construction of County Road 65 and the installation of the culvert under County Road 65 that maintains the hydrologic connect between the wetlands. It is therefore recommended that the wetland on the subject property be either formally evaluated on its own merits, or that it be treated as part of the PSW given the hydrologic and functional connection of the unevaluated wetland on the subject property with the Osaca PSW. This includes provision of a 30 m buffer to the wetland.</p> | <p>The report has been updated to indicate that the wetlands on site are assumed to be a PSW. This is noted in sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 5.2.3.</p>   |



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| 25.       | 3.1 – Provincial Policy Context           | <p>There is acknowledgement that there is “Candidate Special Concern and Rare Wildlife Species – Eastern Wood-pewee SWH”. Please note, the presence of a species of Special Concern is confirmation of SWH for this SWH type. Please change this to “Confirmed Special Concern and Rare Wildlife Species SWH for Eastern Wood- pewee”.</p> <p>Please note, Wood Thrush (listed as Special Concern in Ontario) was heard calling within the woodland in the north western portion of the subject property during the June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 site visit. Please indicate the there is Confirmed Special Concern and Rare Wildlife Species SWH for Wood Thrush.</p> <p>The woodland is also large enough to qualify as candidate SWH for Woodland Area-Sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat. The bird surveys, which were only conducted from the edge of the woodland, recorded three of the indicator wildlife species for this SWH including Ovenbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. During the site visit on June 8, 2023 Veery, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker were heard or observed. A pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were observed entering a cavity as evidence of confirmed breeding. Where there are 3 or more pairs of the listed wildlife species the habitat is confirmed SWH. Due to the size of the woodland it is likely there are more species and higher abundances of area sensitive bird species utilizing the woodland. The woodland should be recognized as “Confirmed Area-Sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat SWH”. Please revise the EIS to recognize this SWH type, including assessing impacts to this type of SWH and ensure adequate mitigation measures (e.g., buffers).</p> | <p>Section 3.1 has been updated to identify that confirmed SWH for both Special Concern and Rare Wildlife Species and Woodland Area-Sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat are present within the woodlands. In addition, Woodland Area-Sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat has been added to the SWH screening in Section 4.3.</p>  |
| 26.       | 3.2 – Northumberland County Official Plan | <p>It should be noted that Northumberland Council adopted the amendment to the Official Plan on December 20, 2021 that updated the Natural Heritage System policies and added mapping to the County's Official Plan. Schedule B-2: Natural Heritage Features and Areas identifies the woodland as a Significant Woodland. While the 2021 OPA may not yet be approved by the Province, the identification of the Significant Woodland in the County's schedules should be acknowledged.</p> <p>Also, while the 2016 County OP does not map Significant Woodlands, the definition of “Significant” in the context of woodlands notes that Significant Woodlands are to be “identified using criteria established by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources”. When applying the criteria/guidance from the Natural Heritage Reference Manual (OMNR 2010), the woodland does qualify as a Significant Woodlands. Please update Section 3.2. to acknowledge that the woodland qualifies as a Significant Woodland per the direction from the County OP to use criteria established by the OMNR.</p>   | <p>This section of the EIS is to address policies that are currently in effect. Typically, a Draft Plan of Subdivision which has been submitted prior to an Official Plan update is required to follow the Official Plan policies for which it was submitted under. Should this change and the province approves the updated NHS policies, we agree that this section would need to be updated.</p> <p>Section 3.2 has been updated to note that Significant Woodlands are present on site as per the guidelines established by the MNRF.</p> |

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| 27.       | 3.2 – Northumberland County Official Plan | <p>This section states that “no fish or fish habitat was found on the Subject Property”. Section 2.1, within the Fish Habitat section of the background review notes that there are two cold water streams documented within or adjacent to the subject property. The tributary of the Ganaraska River, that originates from the wetland and flows east towards the Osaca PSW was identified as one of those watercourses and is located on the subject property. Furthermore, in Section 4.1, under the evaluation of Significant Woodlands, it is noted “multiple watercourses that provide fish habitat are present within the woodland”. While it was noted that during the wetland delineation exercise conducted on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022 the watercourse was observed to have “no flow, and minimal standing water (&lt;5 cm)”, the watercourse may provide direct habitat in the spring if flow is suitable for connection to downstream reaches and/or provides indirect fish habitat throughout the year through the downstream transport of allochthonous material and flow. Since neither fish surveys were or an aquatic habitat assessment were completed earlier in the spring to document conditions and fish presence during higher flow periods, there is not enough evidence to suggest that the watercourse does not provide fish habitat.</p> <p>Please revise this section to acknowledge fish habitat is present on the subject property and adjacent lands (i.e., to the south of the subject property). Please also update Section 5 to assess impacts to fish habitat and if required identify buffers and mitigation measures to protect fish habitat.</p> | <p>This section has been updated to note the potential for fish habitat within the watercourses to the north and south.</p>  |
| 28.       | 3.2 – Northumberland County Official Plan | <p>This section states that “no significant habitat of Endangered or Threatened species was found on the Subject Property. It should be noted that the surveys completed are not thorough enough to conclude that there is no habitat for Endangered or Threatened Species. In particular, no acoustic bat surveys were completed and the breeding bird surveys were not completed within the woodland which may support Species at Risk birds that have been recorded in the vicinity of the subject property. Until such time that surveys are completed for bats and birds within the woodland, the EIS should acknowledge that the woodland may provide habitat for Endangered and Threatened Species. Please revise the EIS accordingly.</p>  | <p>This section has been updated to address this comment.</p>  |
| 29.       | 3.3 – Municipality of Port Hope           | <p>Please update this section following revisions to Section 3.2 – Northumberland County Official Plan, as the same comments apply to Provincially Significant Wetlands, significant habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species, and Fish Habitat. Also, please note that the MPH OP also protects Significant Woodlands and Significant Wildlife Habitat in accordance with meeting the test of no negative impact. Please include a statement acknowledging the protection for these natural heritage features and areas in the MPH OP.</p>   | <p>This section has been updated to address this comment.</p>  |
| 30.       | 3.3 – Municipality of Port Hope           | <p>Please note, Table 1 of the MPH OP notes that a minimum buffer of 30 m shall be applied to the high-water edge of aquatic habitat, or as defined through the EIS. The EIS needs to demonstrate that 15 m is sufficient based on the sensitivity of the feature and an analysis of potential impacts. Please provide a more thorough assessment of sensitivity of features and potential impacts that supports the recommendation for a reduced buffer of 15 m.</p>  | <p>The Draft Plan has been updated to include a 30 m buffer on the wetland features. Therefore, an assessment of sensitivity is not required. This section has been updated to address this comment.</p> |

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| 31.       | 3.4 – Endangered Species Act, 2007               | <p>There are records of Black Ash and Butternut recorded from the subject property. Please map these locations. Furthermore, please discuss the requirements under the ESA regarding protection for these species and the process to allow development to proceed where these species may be removed.</p> <p>As noted in comment #22 above, please consult with the MECP regarding SAR bat habitat and requirements for field surveys and or the process to permit development to proceed where tree removal is proposed. Please provide correspondence with the MECP to the Municipality of Port Hope.</p>   | <p>The Butternut trees have been added to the constraint maps. The exact location of the Black Ash trees identified by Wills' biologists were not recorded during field investigations since there were numerous and they were within the wetland which is not being impacted.</p> <p>This section has been updated to address the Black Ash and Butternut trees as well as SAR bats.</p> |
| 32.       | 3.5.2 - Wetlands                                 | <p>Please note, it is anticipated that the unevaluated wetland on the subject property be treated as part of the Osaca PSW or formally evaluated. Therefore, a minimum buffer of 30 m is recommended from the wetland boundary. Please update the EIS within all sections referencing the wetland buffer to indicate that a 30 m buffer will be provided.</p>   | <p>The report has been updated to indicate that the wetlands on site are assumed to be a PSW. This is noted in sections 3.1 ,3.2, 3.3 and 5.2.3.</p>  |
| 33.       | 4.2 – Headwater Drainage Feature Classification  | <p>Please see comment # 17 and #18 above regarding survey timing and mapping of HDFs on the subject property.</p>   | <p>An explanation as to why the first survey was missed and rationale as to why the survey did not impact the results of the assessment has been added to Section 4.2. The HDF has been added to Figure 3.</p>  |
| 34.       | Table 3 – Significant Wildlife Habitat Screening | <p>Please note, “candidate” SWH should be identified as “yes”, when the habitat exists. When the indicator species and numbers are recorded, the SWH should be identified as “confirmed”. Please update the table accordingly.</p>  | <p>This table has been updated.</p>   |
| 35.       | Table 3 – Significant Wildlife Habitat Screening | <p>In addition to those types of SWH noted as “candidate”, the following types of SWH should also be identified as candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Woodland Raptor Nesting Habitat (there are large fallow fields adjacent to the woodland over 30 ha in size, albeit not on the subject property)</li> <li>- Amphibian Breeding Habitat (Woodland) – the woodland on the subject property and on adjacent lands may contain larger vernal pools.</li> <li>- Woodland Area-sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat – the woodland on/adjacent to the subject property provides interior forest habitat.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to those types of SWH noted as “confirmed”, please add the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Woodland Area-sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat</li> </ul> | <p>Table 3 has been updated to address this comment.</p>  |
| 36.       | Table 3 – Significant Wildlife Habitat Screening | <p>Please add Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager and Winter Wren to the list of “Associated Species” to the Woodland Area-sensitive Bird Breeding Habitat row.</p>   | <p>This has been updated in the EIS.</p>  |
| 37.       | 5.0 - Impact Assessment and Mitigation           | <p>Please note, there is a lack of a thorough description of the proposed development upon which to assess potential impacts. For example, there is no description of how the lots will be serviced, the type of storm water management, where storm water will discharge, waste water management, source of drinking water, etc. Please provide a thorough description of the proposed development prior to the Impact Assessment and Mitigation section. Please consider the potential impacts resulting from the proposed development as part of the mitigation measures including rationale for ecologically appropriate buffers.</p>   | <p>Section 5.0 has been updated to include a more thorough description of the proposed development.</p>   |

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| 38.       | 5.0 – Impact Assessment and Mitigation  | The impact assessment section has not considered the potential impacts resulting from the proposed development that will result in a significant change in land use from existing conditions. Potential impacts include increased human use and presence, increased noise, creation of ad-hoc trails, trampling of vegetation, urban heat island effect resulting from absorption of solar radiation on roof tops, brick, driveways and roads, introduction of invasive species, predatory pets (i.e., cats), pollution from fertilizers and pesticides, etc. Please update the impact assessment section to address the impacts resulting from the proposed subdivision development.  | Sections 5.1 has been updated, including:<br>-providing a recommendation on invasive species.<br>-direct street lighting away from woodlands/wetlands.<br>Section 5.2 has been updated to recommend:<br>-a chain link fence be erected around the entire development to prevent human disturbance on natural heritage features<br>-discuss LID features and buffers relative to fertilizers and pesticides. |
| 39.       | Figure 5 – Natural Heritage Constraints | It appears that all of FOD6 and FOD3, and part of FOM7 will be removed as part of the development of lots overlapping these woodlands. Please quantify the amount of woodland area proposed for removal, including the number of trees, the species and their sizes within the EIS. Please discuss more directly the impact of removing these parts of the woodland on the adjacent woodland (e.g., creating a new edge, exposing the FOM3 vegetation (probably old growth woodland) to a new edge, etc.   | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 40.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                       | Please note, the reference to lot numbers and those identified on Figure 5 is not consistent with the Draft Plan dated February 21, 2023, which postdates the December 2022 figure from the EIS. Please update Figure 5 in the EIS to be consistent with the most recent Draft Plan.   | Figure 5 has been updated to only show the environmental constraints. The Draft Plan contains the proposed development with the woodland and wetland buffers.   |
| 41.       | 5.2.1 – Woodlands                       | The buffers recommended in the EIS have not been justified with sufficient ecological rationale, with a consideration of feature sensitivity (see comments above regarding insufficient field surveys and application of SWH criteria) and potential impacts to the features (see comment #37 above). Please update the EIS to provide a more thorough assessment an evaluation of buffers.  | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 42.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                       | Figure 5, as reference in this section, does not include part of the FOM7 forest community within the Significant Woodland. Please update this figure to accurately depict the entirety of the Significant Woodland including FOM7.<br>In addition, please update Figure 5 to illustrate all natural heritage features and areas within the study area (i.e., within 120 m of the subject property), including the Significant Woodland, the area of the Confirmed SWH, Provincially Significant Wetlands (including the unevaluated wetland), LS-ANSI, watercourses, and headwater drainage features. Figure 5 should also indicate the location of any Species at Risk including Butternut, Black Ash, Eastern Wood-pewee, Eastern Meadowlark, and Common Nighthawk. | Figure 5 has been updated to include all natural heritage features within adjacent lands as well as SAR observations. Since there are no impacts to the woodland feature being proposed, and in order to reduce clutter, Candidate SWH have not been included in Figure 5.  |
| 43.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                       | In the section assessing impacts to 'Woodland Interior', it is suggested that planting the buffer would "offset" the reduction of the woodland resulting from the construction of houses within the lots. Please note, "offsetting" or "compensation" is not considered an acceptable approach to address removal of woodlands than cannot be replaced within an approximately 20-year timeframe (as per the Natural Heritage Reference Manual, 2010, p. 119). It will take decades (50+ years) for the buffer to resemble part of the forest. This time lag is considered too long to be considered an "offset" for the removal of woodland area. Please revise this section to remove reference to "offsetting".   | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |



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| 44.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                   | In the section assessing impacts to 'Uncommon Characteristics' of woodlands, it is stated that "this area [the FOM3 ecosite] will be avoided as part of the proposed development". However, the entirety of the adjacent woodland (FOD6 and FOD3) that currently buffers the FOM3 community from adjacent land uses is proposed for removal. Please assess the impact of removal of the edge woodland and introducing a more impactful land use directly adjacent to the FOM3 vegetation community.   | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 45.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                   | In the discussion on 'Impacts to Form and Function', it is recommended that the impact of removal of "some trees" be "offset by additional plantings and preservation of trees within the 5 m and 15 m buffer areas. First, tree removal should not occur within a buffer and development should not occur within a buffer, as this is counter intuitive to the purpose of a buffer. Second, a buffer should be vegetated as a form of mitigating impacts. Suggesting of planting of trees within the buffer to "offset" tree removal elsewhere does not provide an "offset" when the area is already proposed for planting. As such, the suggestion of "offsetting" by planting trees within the buffer is not considered acceptable as part of mitigating impacts resulting from removal of part of the woodland. | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 46.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                   | In the discussion on 'Impacts to Form and Function', it is suggested that "snags and woodland debris are not to be removed adjacent to the development". While I agree with this recommendation, there is no way to enforce this recommendation when the lots appear to extend into the feature. Moreover, there is no buffer proposed to this part of the woodland to reduce impacts resulting from a new edge. It is recommended an ecologically appropriate buffer be provided that considers the need to allow natural edge processes to occur (i.e., tree fall), and mitigates impacts resulting from the proposed development.  | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 47.       | 5.2.1 - Woodlands                   | In the discussion on 'Impacts to Form and Function', it is recommended that future development should limit the amount of impermeable surfaces and use LID measures to direct water back into the ground. While I agree with this statement, these recommendations should be based on a water balance and the need to maintain surface water inputs to surrounding features, maintain water quality, and maintain ground water infiltration to ensure cold water watercourses and wetlands are not negatively impacted. It is recommended that study of the potential impacts to the hydrology of the wetland and groundwater inputs to the cold water watercourse be completed to ensure there will be no negative impacts to these features and their ecological functions.                                       | This comment does not need to be addressed since the updated Draft Plan is avoiding the woodlands.  |
| 48.       | 5.2.2 – Headwater Drainage Features | This section characterizes a feature based on the results of field surveys and the application of the TRCA Headwater Drainage Features Guidelines (TRCA 2014). Please relocate this section to come before the Impact Assessment section.   | The characterization of the drainage feature is completed in section 4.2. This section addresses the mitigation measures, not the characterization, so we feel as though this is the appropriate section. |

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| 49.       | 5.2.2 – Headwater Drainage Features  | The recommendation is that the HDF, which has been assessed to be managed as 'Conservation – Valued Functions', is to "ditch" the watercourse between Lot 49 and 50" and that the "water that comes from the wetland on the west side of the Subject Property can be conveyed through this ditch into a gutter system associated with the proposed cul-de-sac". This recommendation is not consistent with the management guidance which is to "use natural channel design techniques to maintain or enhance overall productivity of the reach". Also management guidance indicates that features managed as "Conservation – Valued Functions" are also to remain open and have a direct connection to downstream. Please describe how the "ditch" and "gutter system" will use a natural channel design and how the design will keep an open channel and maintain a direct connection downstream to maintain the contribution to the hydrologic function of the wetland and watercourse. | Section 5.2.2 has been updated to be more specific with the requirements for the HDF as they relate to the new Draft Plan and Conceptual Grading and Servicing Plan. Details of the connection, including the natural channel design, will be determined following approval of the Plan of Subdivision.   |
| 50.       | 5.2.3 - Wetlands                     | Please see comment # 24 above regarding the note to either undertake a formal evaluation of the wetland on the subject property or treat it as a PSW that is part of the Osaca PSW. Please update this section accordingly.   | The report has been updated to indicate that the wetlands on site are assumed to be a PSW. This is noted in sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 5.2.3.   |
| 51.       | 5.2.3 - Wetlands                     | The EIS should reference a water balance study that demonstrates both existing surface water and ground water contributions to the adjacent wetlands and watercourses will be maintained and quality of water will either be maintained or improved as part of the design of the subdivision.   | A water balance analysis has been completed as part of the Hydrogeology Report demonstrating that both surface water and groundwater contributions to the adjacent wetland and watercourse will be increased. This is primarily accomplished by the increase in drainage area to this outlet location and the proposed infiltration features. The quality of surface runoff will be appropriately managed by proposed infiltration trench and wet ponds included in the stormwater management design. |
| 52.       | 5.2.4 – Significant Wildlife Habitat | Please update this section following completion of field surveys (breeding birds, amphibians, acoustic bat surveys) following acceptable protocol.  | No additional surveys are required based on the updated Draft Plan. The SWH section has been updated to address the change in the Draft Plan.   |
| 53.       | 5.2.4.1 – Bat Maternity Colonies     | Please note, the timing window for removal of trees to avoid impacts to roosting bats is October 1 <sup>st</sup> to March 31 <sup>st</sup> (per most recent correspondence with MECP in May 2023). Please consult with the MECP to confirm tree removal windows for roosting bats, particularly SAR bats.   | The timing window for vegetation clearing has been updated to address this comment.   |
| 54.       | 5.2.4.1 – Bat Maternity Colonies     | There is a recommendation to avoid removal of more than 20% of vegetation from within the woodland within the total developable area. First, please identify what the "total developable area" is. Second, please provide supporting documentation that suggests up to 20% of vegetation removal is acceptable from within the woodland of the total developable area.  | This section has been updated based on the new Draft Plan.  |
| 55.       | 5.2.4.1 – Bat Maternity Colonies     | This section recommends trees greater than 60 cm be preserved. Please provide reference to the document that suggests only trees greater than 60 cm dbh should be preserved.  | This section has been updated based on the new Draft Plan.  |

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| 56.       | 5.2.4.2 – Old Growth Forest | The EIS identifies the removal of the adjacent forest area up to the FOM3 vegetation community. The removal of the adjacent forest will create a new edge and bring the development up to the edge of the FOM3 vegetation community. It is recommended that an adequate buffer be provided to maintain adjacent trees to allow for natural edge processes to occur, including tree fall, without the need for management of trees in the FOM3 vegetation community and direct impacts resulting from a new edge to the FOM3 vegetation community. Please revise the site plan accordingly to provide a buffer equal to the height of the trees in the FOM3 vegetation community. | The new Draft Plan avoids all woodlands.  |
| 57.       | 5.4.2 – Birds and Bats      | Please note, the timing window for removal of trees to avoid impacts to roosting bats is October 1 <sup>st</sup> to March 31 <sup>st</sup> (per most recent correspondence with MECP in May 2023). Please consult with the MECP to confirm tree removal windows for roosting bats, particularly SAR bats.  | The timing window for vegetation clearing has been updated to address this comment.   |
| 58.       | 5.4.2 – Birds and Bats      | Please note, tree removal during the roosting period of April 1 <sup>st</sup> to September 30 <sup>th</sup> has the potential to impact SAR bats and their habitat. There is no acceptable approach to be confident bats are not roosting in trees following a roosting survey. Even trees as small as 10 cm dbh have been found to provide roosting habitat for SAR bats. Should the MECP accept removal of trees, tree removal must avoid the maternity roosting period to avoid contravention of the Endangered Species Act. Please revise this section accordingly.  | This section has been updated to address this comment.  |
| 59.       | 5.4.3 - Butternuts          | Please note, two Butternut have been recorded in the Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan completed by Kuntz Forestry in March 2023. These trees are proposed for removal. A Butternut Health Assessment is required prior to removal these trees. Please also map the location of these trees on Figure 5.  | A Butternut Health Assessment was completed and a 14 m buffer from development is being applied to the trees. Section 5.4.3 has been updated to address this comment. In addition, Figure 5 has been updated to include the location of the Butternut trees.  |
| 60.       | New Section Recommended     | Please include a "Legislation and Policy Review and Conformity" section in the EIS preceding the "Conclusions" that summarizes the key relevant legislation and policies in a table indicating if and how the relevant policies and legislation have been met. There should then be a concluding statement in the "Conclusions" section related to whether or not the proposed development conforms to all relevant regulations and policies.  | Regulatory policy is reviewed in Section 3.0 of the report followed by concluding statements as to how each of the policies have been met. This section has been updated to provide more clarity on how the policies have been addressed. Wills appreciates the recommendation for an additional section to summarize the policy. However, we feel as though our report addresses applicable policy, and this table would be redundant. The conclusion includes a statement about conforming to all regulations and policies. |
| 61.       | General Comment             | The Draft Plan shows the lot lines extending into the feature and proposed buffers. The Draft Plan should be revised to show lot lines ending at the edge of the buffers to the natural features. Lots should not extend into the features or their buffers. In addition, a chain link fence, with no gates permitted, should be erected at the rear lot line to limit encroachment within the buffer and the natural features. Please update the Draft Plan and associated figures accordingly.   | The Draft Plan has been updated and there are no longer any lot lines that extend into any buffers. In addition, a chain link fence has been recommended around the site. This is discussed in sections 5.2 and 5.2.3.  |