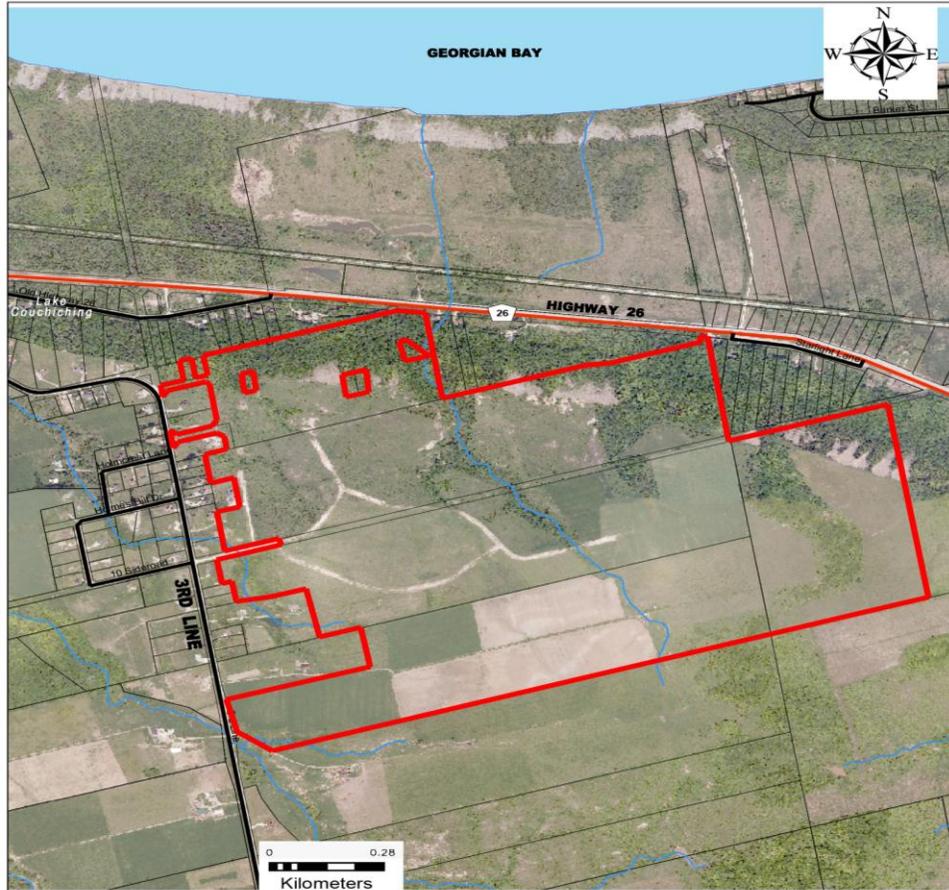


# PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT



**Meaford Highlands Resort  
A2A Meaford Developments Inc.  
Lot 9 & 10, Concession 1 & 2  
July 2012**



Prepared by  
**Weston Consulting Group Inc.**

*"Land Use Planning Through Experience and Innovation"*

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## **1 Introduction**

Weston Consulting Group Inc. (“WCGI”) has prepared the following planning justification report on behalf of Meaford A2A Developments Inc., the proponents and co-owners of a 153.9 ha property located at 3rd Line and Highway 26 (herein referred to as the “subject property”) in the Municipality of Meaford in the County of Grey.

This report is submitted in support of development applications for a resource based recreational development proposed on the subject property, which is known as “Meaford Highlands Resort” (“MHR”). The applications filed concurrently with the County of Grey and Municipality of Meaford for this development include amendments to the County of Grey Official Plan, the Municipality of Meaford Official Plan and Municipality of Meaford Zoning By-law No. 60-2009.

This report provides a review of applicable and emerging planning policies and provides justification of the development applications in support of the MHR. It also is intended to satisfy the Municipality of Meaford and County of Grey’s planning policies regarding the applications. This report has also been prepared in accordance with Provincial policy including the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statements. It also provides an overview of supporting documents and technical studies that have been completed in support of the applications. The required studies and their respective terms of reference, where appropriate, have been prepared following extensive pre-consultation discussions held with Provincial, County, agency and Municipal Staff. This report contains various schedules, diagrams and charts that should be read in conjunction with the text.

This report and technical studies address how the proposed development of the MHR is consistent with the applicable planning documents. MHR will provide a desired resource based recreational use to the Municipality and County. The proposed facilities will be regional amenities, which have been long desired in the Municipality and will attract both residents and visitors to the area. This report outlines how the proposed development is appropriate for the area, how it will be compatible with the Meaford urban, rural and agricultural areas, how it will be serviced and phased and how it will enhance economic prosperity in Meaford and the County.

## **2 Description of Subject Property and Context**

### **2.1 Municipal Context**

The Municipality of Meaford (“Meaford”) is one of nine lower-tier municipalities in the County of Grey and was incorporated in 2001 as a result of restructuring in the County. Meaford is situated on southern Georgian Bay approximately 180 kilometres northwest of Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and is approximately 30 kilometres west of the Town of Collingwood. Meaford is surrounded by the Town of Blue Mountains to the east, Chatsworth and Grey Highlands to the south, Owen Sound and Georgian Bluffs to the west and Georgian Bay to the north.

Meaford has a population of approximately 12,000 people (2011 Census) and is comprised of the Meaford Urban Area (“Town”), which contains the majority of residential, commercial and retail uses, and rural communities and agricultural areas. Civic uses including municipal offices, public uses, the Meaford Harbour and Meaford Hall are also located in the Town. A portion of the Niagara Escarpment extends through the central and western portion of Meaford. Approximately half of the land outside of the Town is used for agricultural uses and the remaining lands not within the Niagara Escarpment are used for rural uses. There is also shoreline residential development along Georgian Bay (Attachment 1 – Area Context Air Photograph).

## 2.2 Subject Property Context

The subject property is located in a mixed rural and agricultural area of Meaford. The property is located between the Town and the eastern municipal boundary and is approximately 600 metres from Georgian Bay. The subject property is approximately 2.5 kilometres from the Town and is approximately 1 kilometre from the Town of Blue Mountains municipal boundary.

Surrounding land uses include predominantly rural, rural residential, open space and agricultural uses. There are clusters of rural residential uses along both Highway 26 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Line. Approximately 18 existing residential dwellings border the subject property along the east side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line. In addition, there are two rural residential subdivisions in close proximity. The first is located west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line south of Highway 26 and the second is south west of the subject property with access from Sideroad 7. These rural residential subdivisions are characterized by low-rise single detached dwellings on large lots. Some of the dwellings are walk-out buildings and are two storeys in height. Many of the lots contain accessory buildings and structures in addition to the residential dwelling (Attachment 2 - Adjacent Uses).

The subject property is in close proximity to the Georgian Trail, which is located north of Highway 26. This trail extends east-west and is parallel to the highway. Commercial uses are located on the north and south side of Highway 26 and Old Highway 26 between the subject property and the Town and Thornbury to the east.

## 2.3 Adjacent Land Uses

The following specific land uses are located adjacent to the subject property:

**North:** Highway 26, Georgian Trail, Algonquin Ridge, rural residential lots on the north and south side of Highway 26, commercial uses, open space

**South:** Open space and agricultural uses, including the “Kingston Farm”, residential uses on the east and west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, rural commercial uses including the “Georgian Well Drilling” company on the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line

**East:** Open space, natural areas, parkette, residential and agricultural uses along 7<sup>th</sup> Line

**West:** Residential uses, along the east and west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line. Open space and agricultural uses on the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Line.

Based on air photography and a site visit of the surrounding area, there are approximately 9 barns on other properties within 1000 metres of the subject property (Attachment 3 – Location of Adjacent Barns). The majority of these barns are abandoned and do not exhibit characteristics of being actively used for farming purposes. Based on our investigations there are two barns (#4 and #5), which appear to be associated with agricultural operations. Although the specific nature of operations is not known, there is evidence of pasture land that may serve farm animals on these two properties. Please refer to Section 9 for additional discussion regarding agricultural operations.

## 2.4 Description of Subject Property and Ownership

The subject property has an area of approximately 153.9 hectares (Attachment 4 – Air Photograph). The subject property has frontage on Highway 26, which is a Provincial highway and 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, which is a local municipal road. The property's topography falls from the south-east to the north-west. The northern portion of the property contains steep slope areas associated with a natural landform or bluff referred to as the Algonquin Ridge. This ridge is a key natural landform on the subject property and extends along the entire northern portion of the property adjacent to Highway 26. This landform resource provides a key basis for the consideration of the MHR as it provides unique physical attributes and provides magnificent views to Georgian Bay and the Meaford Harbour.

The legal description of the subject property is as follows:

PT RDAL BTN LT 9 AND LT 10 ST. VINCENT CLOSED BY R252709; PT LT 9-10 CON 2 ST. VINCENT PT 1 - 16, 18, 31 - 46, 49 - 58, 64 & 65, 67 - 78, 80 - 82, BLK A, GORDON ST, SUZANNE ST, MICHELE AV & BURNETT ST, RD36; PT 6 & 9 16R2726; PT 16 - 37 RD101; PT 38 - 82 & PT 91 RD101; PT 1 - 30 & 34 - 38 RD108; PT 1 - 22 RD111 & AS IN R252710 (FOURTHLY) EXCEPT PT 1, 2 & 3 AS IN R559723; S/T R252710; PT LT 9 CON 1 ST. VINCENT; PT LT 9 CON 2 ST. VINCENT AS IN R253576 EXCEPT PT 1 16R3404 MUNICIPALITY OF MEAFORD

At the present time, there are 2280 fractional ownership interests in the subject property. Meaford A2A Developments Inc. is the owner of 234 of such fractional ownership interests and various other persons own the remaining 2046 fractional ownership interests. Each of the owners of the 2046 fractional ownership interests have executed an agreement and a Power of Attorney pursuant to which each owner has authorized and appointed Meaford A2A Developments Inc. to act on their behalf and in their name with respect to the applications and the management of the Property. Pursuant to the agreement and the Power of Attorney each owner has given Meaford A2A Development Inc. the authority to execute and deliver any and all agreements, documents and instruments pertaining to the zoning, rezoning and / or development of the subject property. Documentation from the proponent's solicitor outlining the above information has been submitted with the development applications.

There are no mortgages, restrictions, easements or covenants on the subject property and there is no ownership interest in any abutting lands.

The subject property contains approximately six depression areas that have been identified as watercourses by Beacon Environmental. Some of these watercourse features are associated with steep slopes areas, particularly in close proximity to the northern portion of the property where the watercourses flow northwards.

The subject property contains a number of wooded areas, which are predominately concentrated around the Algonquin Ridge and the watercourses. The northwest and central portion of the property consists of old field meadows dominated mostly by shrubs and ground cover. The southwest portion of the property is actively cultivated for field crops. The remaining portion of the property is not being cultivated.

The subject property does not contain any buildings or structures. Preliminary site works have been completed in the central portion of the property by a previous owner. This site work consisted of clearing and grading works based on a preliminary road pattern associated with previous planning approvals for the property. There are existing culverts on the property in the areas where grading has occurred. Attachment 5 contains photographs of the various land uses on the subject property.

There are three landholdings adjacent to the subject property, which are not owned by Meaford A2A Developments Inc. (Attachment 6 – Boundary Survey) These three lots are shown on the attached air photo and are essentially “land locked” and within Hazard Lands as they are completely surrounding by the subject property and do not have frontage on a public road. It is also our understanding that these parcels do not have rights of way over the subject property. Accordingly, these three lots are not included in the development concept and do not form part of the development applications. Given that these parcels are land locked and within environmentally protected area and do not exhibit development opportunities based on planning policies, physical constraints and ownership / access constraints, it is expected that an appropriate strategy to address these lots will be implemented through the planning process with Municipal, Legal and Planning Staff, the proponent and the owners of these parcels.

Additional information describing the physical, environmental, and geotechnical properties associated with the subject property is provided in the supporting studies submitted with the development applications.

### **3 Proposed Development**

#### **3.1 Description of Proposed Development**

The proposed MHR development is for a resource based four seasons recreational resort. MHR has been designed and will be programmed as a “healthy lifestyle community” (Attachment 7 – Vision Statement). The MHR is a resort community that promotes health and well-being, while providing a fully integrated development with a wide variety of resort and residential accommodations, features and attractions. As stated in the Vision Statement, MHR “will be a thoughtfully planned resort that will incorporate all the personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of recreation. It will promote physical activity, psychological well-being and healthier lifestyles for its residents and visitors.” MHR is strongly focused on the physical landforms and resources of the subject property and as further states in the Vision Statement “the existing flora and fauna in and around the property will be integrated and enhanced, with educational programming that will focus on the natural heritage resources and landscapes.”

### **3.1.1 Meaford Highlands Resort Philosophy**

The philosophy behind the MHR comes from a focus on the physical attributes of the subject property. The physical resources of the subject property, including the Algonquin Ridge and associated watercourses provide key opportunities for the siting of a four season recreation resort. This resort provides a unique balance between the natural landscape, resort amenities, residential uses, recreational and healthy lifestyle activities.

Of particular significance to the MHR are the views and bluff features on the subject property that provide the unique physical setting for this resort community. The high elevation and expanse of open space and natural areas will support recreation, wellness and healthy lifestyles for residents and visitors.

The integrated trail network will enhance connectivity and promote a connection to Meaford's unique balance between natural, cultural, historic, rural and agricultural environments. The fully integrated development will offer a wide variety of resort and residential accommodations that will respect and reinforce the community.

Another key component to MHR is the provision of a variety of accommodations and residential product types that are affordable. MHR Vision Statement states that "a wide variety of resort accommodation and housing types and styles, tenures and costs will be offered to meet the diverse and changing demographic nature of Meaford and Ontario". This principle was based on the emerging demand for suitable product at an affordable price, which distinguishes MHR from other traditional resort developments.

All aspects of the MHR will be developed to capture the charm and romance of traditional village living, but will feature the amenities of a modern community. The recreation components will provide numerous desired amenities to Meaford and the surrounding area which require large tracts of land. Opportunities for public / private partnership will be encouraged, which will contribute to the economic strength and resilience of the Municipality. The MHR will also promote an active lifestyle for the community including the aging population.

### **3.1.2 Overview of Development Concept and Land Uses**

MHR includes resort recreation and residential components that are fully integrated. The resort recreation area will include the proposed Meaford Highlands Inn, Villas, a golf facility (including clubhouse and indoor practice facility), a wellness centre and spa, an aquatics centre, retail and commercial space, trails, parks and an open space network. The residential area includes a variety of dwelling types, which will be integrated with the recreational components. Development of the MHR is based on the provision of full municipal services and a design that seeks to make efficient use of land.

In accordance with the proposed MHR development concept C10 (Attachment 8), the following table outlines the various uses and land areas proposed for the resort.

**Table 1 – Land Budget**

<b>Land Budget</b>	<b>Hectares</b>
Gross Site Area	153.90
Resort Recreational (MHR Inn & villas, spa, retail, aquatics and wellness centre)	16.53
Executive Nine Hole Golf Course (inc. Practice Facility & Club House)	19.37
Resort Residential (net area, not including roads)	45.83
Environmental Area	40.42
Open Space / Buffer / Trail	1.76
Park	5.14
Stormwater Management	6.06
Roads	18.79

**3.1.3. Resort Recreational**

MHR will consist of resort recreational uses including an Inn, a golf facility (including clubhouse and indoor practice facility), a wellness centre and spa, an aquatics centre, trails, an amphitheater and accessory retail and commercial uses. These features will be regional recreational amenities and their size, services and components have been based on extensive programming opportunities, and an assessment of existing services and market demand input (Attachment 9).

The position and orientation of these resort features on the subject property is based on maximizing exposure of the resort to Georgian Bay and Meaford Harbour. Accordingly, many of these elements have been located along the Algonquin Ridge in the north-west portion of the subject property.

The proposed Inn will contain approximately 60 guest rooms, meeting space, which would accommodate up to 150 seats in three rooms, a restaurant/ lounge with 75 seats and recreation and fitness facilities for guests. The total gross floor area of the Inn is approximately 4,505 square metres.

The development concept illustrates Villas containing approximately 312 dwelling units, which are proposed in various locations throughout the subject property. Approximately 168 dwelling units will be located in close proximity to the Inn. The remaining Villas are proposed in other locations to the south east and south west of the property. A further description of the proposed product is included in Section 3.1.4.2.

The Aquatic Centre is proposed to have a gross floor area of approximately 1,860 square metres and is envisioned as a regional attraction serving resort patronage and the residents of Meaford and the County of Grey. The pool has been programmed to be approximately 465 square metres in area. The facility is also proposed to include approximately 420 square metres of floor area for fitness facilities including a cardio training fitness room, a weight training room and a gym. In addition, the facility is proposed to accommodate four meeting / community rooms and a banquet hall with approximately 80 seats.

The Wellness Centre includes a spa and medical practitioner's offices and is programmed to provide a gross floor area of approximately 1,115 square metres. It is estimated that the treatment rooms, medical and dental facilities will consist of approximately 700 square metres of floor area. In addition, fitness rooms for "wellness" activities including physical therapy, pain clinic and / or yoga and pilates studio are also proposed.

A 9-hole golf course is also proposed along with an indoor golf training facility and club house. The golf course and associated facilities occupy approximately 19.56 hectares of land. The golf course is located centrally within the resort and has been designed to minimize disturbance to the natural landscape. The clubhouse will provide eating and drinking facilities. A pro shop, which is approximately 115 square metres in floor area, is proposed with a dining room / lounge that is planned to accommodate approximately 50 seats. Additional banquet facilities and meeting / community rooms are also proposed in the club house. The golf course also represents a key resource that provides the foundation for MHR.

The commercial / retail area will include a proposed 278 square metre restaurant with 75 seats, and a coffee shop, convenience store, office and retail space all of which will consist of approximately 140 square metres of floor area. The proposed zoning permissions provide opportunities for a variety of uses, which will provide flexibility in the accommodation of commercial uses that will support the resort. The proposed commercial / retail area is intended to service residents, visitors and users of MHR. The commercial space is not intended to compete with the commercial services located in the Meaford commercial core.

The majority of the resort recreational components outlined above have been sited in close proximity to the main entrance to the resort, which is from 3<sup>rd</sup> Line. This will maximize the exposure and accessibility of these components to the public, Meaford residents and tourists. The main entrance will be established as a key gateway to the resort at 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, which will clearly indicate entry to MHR (Attachment 10 - Proposed Entry Feature).

While the resort recreational features mentioned above are based on the current development proposal, MHR has been planned to account for some flexibility in the components. The final resort recreational amenities are intended to be regional amenities; however, it is acknowledged that there may be adjustments to the specific components as the programming is finalized.

#### 3.1.3.1. Trail, Park and Open Space Network

An extensive network of trails, parks and open spaces are proposed on the subject property and represent key components to the resource based recreational use concept of the resort. Once established, the proposed trail plan will connect to external trails in the County of Grey including the Georgian Trail at the northwest corner of the property and the northeast corner of the property via the 10<sup>th</sup> Line road allowance. In addition, the trail will connect to the snow mobile trail south of the property (Attachment 11 – Grey County Trail Plan).

A Trail Plan (Attachment 12) has been prepared and submitted in conjunction with the development applications and illustrates the proposed trail network for MHR. The trail design and layout is based on maximizing the natural areas and landscapes within the property as well as providing connections to adjacent existing uses and trails. The trail plan takes into consideration the property's natural areas, proposed recreation components and pedestrian areas. The trails connect to the proposed parks, stormwater management facilities, golf course and open space areas. Various trail blocks and pathways are provided as green corridors to connect the resort residential and commercial areas. It is acknowledged that the County of Grey

owns lands in proximity to MHR fronting onto Georgian Bay. There may be opportunities to provide trail connections to Georgian Bay through these lands.

The trail network represents a key resource that is part of the foundation of the philosophy of MHR, which is centered on health and wellness, recreation and active lifestyles.

The trail network contains a hierarchy of trails which is outlined in the following Table.

**Table 2 – Trail Network**

Trail Type	Features
Off-Road Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails through wooded / natural areas</li> <li>• Permeable surface</li> <li>• Variable width depending on terrain</li> <li>• For the more experienced user</li> </ul>
Connecting Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated pathways through parks, open spaces and other recreation components</li> <li>• Permeable surface</li> <li>• Contains views of the Algonquin Ridge, Meaford Harbour, Georgian Bay</li> </ul>
On-street Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated 1 metre right-of-way</li> <li>• Provides buffer between uses</li> <li>• Mix of paved and semi-permeable surface, where appropriate</li> </ul>
Sidewalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paved surface</li> <li>• Along higher-order well-travelled pedestrian areas</li> <li>• Connects to other trails</li> </ul>

Connections between the different trails will be demarcated in order to ensure connectivity throughout the subject property. Adequate signage will be posted at appropriate trail connections. It is envisioned that information kiosks will be placed at strategic locations along the trails to provide directional queues and natural heritage information.

A portion of the trail plan extends along the Algonquin Ridge and will offer views, vistas, and gateways to Georgian Bay. In addition to the views, the proposed trail plan contemplates a number of additional recreation opportunities and programming including hiking, walking, running, mountain biking, outdoor fitness stations and classes, birding, natural history walks, orienteering, education classes, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

A number of parks have been provided in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act as part of MHR. Parks have been located adjacent to other open space components to enhance the overall natural heritage network. The proposed parks will also provide further variety of recreational opportunities for existing and proposed area residents, visitors and facility users. Please note that the final parkland dedication will be based on the draft plan of subdivision(s) in accordance with the Planning Act.

It is anticipated that certain lands within the environmental protection, open space and trail network may be conveyed to the Municipality. However, the specific details of any conveyances will be addressed at a later stage of the development process.

#### 3.1.3.2. *Algonquin Ridge*

The Algonquin Ridge feature at the north portion of the property is a key resource that provides the foundation for MHR. Its unique physical attributes provide the framework for the resort components and enhances the programming opportunities for the resort. Furthermore, it will provide a trail along the ridge, which offers views of Georgian Bay and the Meaford Harbour, it enhances the golf course, Inn, Villas and the proposed amphitheater. In addition, it will also provide spectacular views for many of the other residential uses. As discussed below in the report, the various resort residential uses and resort accommodations have been positioned to maximize the views that this resource offers.

#### 3.1.3.3. Programming Opportunities

MHR has been planned to provide additional resort recreational opportunities. At the present time an outdoor amphitheater is proposed in close proximity to the main entrance to MHR. This will be adjacent to a proposed park and the Algonquin Ridge. Concert attendees will be able to attend shows outdoors while taking in views of the Meaford Harbour and Georgian Bay.

It is also recognized that additional programming opportunities within the resort will be provided based on emerging trends in recreation, education, health, wellness and sustainability.

### **3.1.4. *Resort Residential***

#### 3.1.4.1 Overview of Resort Residential

MHR is proposed to accommodate a variety of residential uses and accommodations, which will appeal to a broad population within several distinct demographic groups ranging from families to empty-nesters and retirees. The proposed dwelling types have been developed in accordance with the demographic and market analysis provided in the Market Demand Analysis. In particular MHR includes a wide variety of ground-oriented housing and resort accommodations with a variety of built form, lot size, unit size, price and ownership structure.

In addition to the Inn and Villas described above, the MHR will provide single detached, semi-detached and townhouse units in accordance with the following Table.

**Table 3 – Proposed Resort Residential**

<b>Resort Residential (Frontage in Metres)</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>
Low Density Resort Residential Single Detached (18.3+)	171
<b>Resort Residential Total</b>	<b>588</b>
Resort Residential Single Detached (15.2)	102
Resort Residential Single Detached (12.2)	232
Resort Residential Semi-Detached (9)	170
Resort Residential Townhouse (7)	84
Villas	312
<b>Total</b>	<b>1071</b>

The residential units are proposed to consist of a mix of permanent and seasonal units, which are envisioned as both rental properties and private residences. Ownership type and tenure will be further established through the draft plan of subdivision / condominium application(s); however, may include fractional ownership, time share and/or traditional unit ownership. A complete review of the MHR target demographic is discussed in the Market Demand Analysis prepared by CN Watson and Associates.

#### 3.1.4.2. Product Type

A total of 1071 residential units are currently proposed, which include single-detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and villas (Attachment 13 – Proposed Residential Product).

The low density single-detached dwellings consist of lot frontages of 21 metres and 18.3 metres. These lower density units are to be focused toward the eastern and southern portions of the property. Other single-detached dwellings consist of lot frontages of 15.2 metres and 12.2 metres and are dispersed throughout the resort. The semi-detached dwelling units are proposed to provide lot frontages of 9 metres and the townhouses will have lot frontages of 7 metres. The townhouses and semi-detached dwelling types are located in closer proximity to the key recreational resort components. The low density resort residential product has been sited adjacent to the 12.2 metre and 15.2 metre product and are located in the east portion of the property. The proposed lotting pattern for the resort seeks to provide an appropriate transition between the resort residential uses and adjacent rural residential dwellings. It also seeks to ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling types within each phase of the development, which is discussed further below.

#### 3.1.5. Transportation

An integrated transportation network has been designed for MHR. The proposed road pattern extends through the property from 3<sup>rd</sup> Line in three locations. A local municipal road connects to 3<sup>rd</sup> Line in the north and would service the Inn, Villas, aquatics centre, wellness centre, golf clubhouse and retail space and the residential uses. This portion of the municipal road has a right-of-way width of 26 metres and is considered the main entrance to the resort. A proposed

municipal road continues through the property at a reduced right-of-way width of 20 metres. Three main intersections are proposed in the central area of the resort and there are six cul-de-sacs proposed. The road network has been designed to make use of existing grades, where possible, for roads and crossing of the watercourses where culverts exist. The road network also respects the existing rural road pattern in the area and facilitates the phasing of development.

The local roads are proposed to have a right-of-way of either 20 metres or 18 metres. In addition, a proposed private road, which extends north from the main public road will provide access to the majority of the resort recreational components including the Inn and Villas. This private road is proposed to have a width of 14 metres and will be designed to accommodate an urban cross-section configuration. The remaining public roads are proposed to be built with rural cross-section configuration, which supports the rural character of the area.

Sidewalks are to be provided along the private road and along one side of the main public road adjacent to the resort recreation features. The sidewalks will provide connectivity and pedestrian access to the resort components and will provide connections to other trails throughout the subject property.

It is proposed that some of the roads within MHR will be dedicated to the Municipality as public roads. In particular the main road adjacent to the recreation facilities is proposed to be a public road and will be dedicated to the Municipality. It is anticipated that further discussions will be held regarding dedication of additional roads at the appropriate time.

### **3.1.6. Servicing**

MHR will be serviced by municipal sewage disposal and water supply based on the extension of municipal infrastructure to the subject property. The proposed servicing strategy for water and wastewater and stormwater management is described in detail in the Functional Servicing Report (FSR) prepared by Cole Engineering. Water supply will be provided through construction of a new trunk watermain from the Municipality's proposed St. Vincent booster pumping station to the subject property. A new booster pumping station with an elevated tank or an in-ground reservoir will be required to extend the distribution system to the property. Details and locations of these facilities will be explored through a review of alternatives. Local water mains with service connections for each unit will be constructed within the proposed municipal and private roads as appropriate in accordance with Municipal standards.

In relation to sanitary services, the MHR will be serviced by gravity sanitary sewers and two pumping stations. These pumping stations are required due to the depth of the watercourses traversing the subject property. An outlet for the wastewater generated by the development will be a gravity sewer, which will be designed and constructed and will ultimately connect to the Municipal sewage treatment plant.

Based on the FSR, four new stormwater management ponds are proposed to address stormwater management for the resort. There is one wet facility proposed, which is located in the northwest portion of the subject property. The others facilities are proposed to be dry facilities and are located at the south-west corner and north-east areas of the property. The ponds have been located in suitable locations from a servicing perspective and are adjacent to open space and parks to contribute to the open space areas. The ponds will address the post development flows including quality and quantity control as required for the subject property. Sustainable development practices are proposed for the stormwater management facilities,

where feasible. An additional element of the proposed stormwater management design for MHR includes the accommodation of flows within the roadside ditches within the municipal road allowances. The proposed road pattern and stormwater management design also includes provision for culverts and crossings at certain watercourses within the subject property, which will be designed specifically at the detailed design stage.

### **3.1.7. Slope Stability**

The subject property contains some natural hazards and steep slope areas. An assessment of these features is provided in detail in the Natural Hazard Setback and Slope Stability Requirements Report prepared by Terraprobe. This analysis provides a building setback, which has been considered in the development concept. Terraprobe has identified this setback for all buildings and structures, which is 11 metres from the crest of the main ridge, 6 metres from the northerly 100 to 150 metre of each gully and 0 metres from the crest of the southerly gully slopes, which are generally flatter than 3:1 currently. All structures in close proximity to this limit have been situated to allow for space for swales or grading away from the crest, which would reduce the potential for additional erosion due to stormwater runoff.

## **3.2. Phasing**

MHR will be constructed in five phases in a general progression from north-west to south-east, with the exception of the golf course and clubhouse. Each phase will include extensions to the road network and stormwater management facilities, where appropriate, in order to support the development phase. Generally the resort recreation components and a certain amount of supporting resort residential accommodations will be developed in the initial phase, while the remaining resort residential and other resort components will be constructed in subsequent phases (Attachment 14 – Phasing Plan).

### Phase 1

Development of the golf course and training facility will begin in the first phase. Phase 1 is proposed to consist of approximately 102 low-rise units, consisting mostly of townhouses and semi-detached units. This phase will also include the construction of approximately 36 villas units, a stormwater management pond and three parks. These are important components to be included in the first phase, since a large portion of the resort recreation components and infrastructure will be available for the residents as part of the first phase. The foundations for the trail and certain portions of the trail network and open space areas will be established in Phase 1. Certain components of the trail would develop contemporaneously with further residential and resort development phases.

### Phase 2

The second phase is proposed to consist of approximately 48 Villas and 151 low-rise units, including townhouses, semi-detached and single detached with smaller frontages in the central area, and the Inn. An additional 132 Villa units that are within close proximity to the resort components, will be developed over Phase 2 – 5 as well as the wellness centre, spa and aquatic centre.

Phase 3

The third phase is proposed to include a second component of the resort residential units to be built in the central portion of the site, predominantly surrounding the golf course. Approximately 144 units are proposed within this phase including single detached dwellings (12.2 m & 15.2 m) and low density resort residential dwellings as well as approximately 48 Villa units. In addition, two parks will be constructed in this phase.

Phase 4-5

Phases 4 and 5 consists of approximately 362 further residential accommodations, primarily consisting of low density residential units, which are located in the east and southwest portions of the subject property, as well as 48 additional Villa units. Three stormwater management facilities will be constructed in this phase along with two parks.

In accordance with the above description, the following Table provides a breakdown of residential dwelling units by phase.

**Table 4 – Residential Dwelling Units by Phase**

		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4-5
	total estimated units	estimated units	estimated units	estimated units	estimated units
Single-Detached					
21.0m	110	8	9	25	68
18.3m	61	2		33	26
15.2m	102			49	53
12.2m	232		54	37	141
Semi-Detached	170	30	66		74
9.0m					
Townhomes	84	62	22		
7.0m					
Low Rise Sub-total	759	102	151	144	362
Villas	312	36	48	48	48
			Additional 132 Villa Units Phased from Phsae 2 -5		
<b>Total Unit</b>	<b>1071</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>933</b>		

**3.3. Supporting Studies**

In support of the proposed County Official Plan Amendment, Municipal Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment, the following studies have been completed and are described below. These studies include the requirements as outlined in the correspondence received from the County and Municipality during pre-consultation (Attachment 15). A description of the key findings of each study is included below; however, specific and detailed information is contained

within each report. In addition, more specific statements regarding consistency with applicable policies and regulations are provided in the reports.

### ***3.3.1 Scoped Environmental Impact Study (May 24, 2012) - Beacon Environmental***

A Scoped Environmental Impact Study (EIS) of the subject property was prepared by Beacon Environmental in accordance with EIS Terms of Reference established with the GSCA. The Study includes an assessment of all natural heritage features on the subject property and did not identify any designated features, fish habitat, significant wildlife habitats, habitats threatened or endangered species. The report notes that certain field inventories were not completed at the time of finalization and would be provided upon completion. At the time of writing this PJR, the results of these further inventories were not available. Based on this report the ecological surveys confirmed the existence of significant valleylands and significant woodlands. The EIS confirms that the proposed resort and residential development will avoid impacts to high constraint areas. Furthermore, the EIS concludes that the results of the impact assessment have determined that the proposed development will have a net neutral effect on the natural heritage resources and functions contained within EP designated areas.

### ***3.3.2 Functional Servicing Report (May 2012) - Cole Engineering***

A Functional Servicing Report (FSR), prepared by Cole Engineering, provides recommendations for the services required to accommodate site development. The FSR states that MHR can be serviced by municipal water and wastewater treatment. The Water Treatment Plant located in the Town of Meaford has surplus capacity for the proposal; however, it will be necessary to extend the distribution system from the St. Vincent booster station to the site. In addition, a storage facility, either an in-ground reservoir or elevated tank with another booster station will be constructed. The Water Pollution Control Plant can also accommodate the first phase of development of MHR. Expansion of the facility will be required for further phases of development, which have been explored with the Municipality. The subject property is to be internally serviced by gravity sanitary sewers and two pumping stations. The FSR also contains specific details and analysis concerning the proposed stormwater management plan for the resort, which addresses stormwater management in accordance with best management practices.

### ***3.3.3. Transportation Study (May 2012)- Cole Engineering***

The Transportation Study (TS), prepared by Cole Engineering included an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the boundary road network. The TS finds that the current traffic conditions are generally acceptable with an annual growth rate of 2% to reflect traffic growth from outside the study area. Phased development and "Full Build Out" of the proposed development was analyzed to reflect phasing of development and five and 10 years post occupancy. It is anticipated that the site traffic volumes generated in 2017 will have minimal impact to the study area intersections with the exception of Highway 26 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, which will require signalization. All other future traffic conditions (2022, 2028, 2033 and 2038), all intersections are expected to operate with acceptable levels of service during peak hour periods with no individual movements exceeding capacity.

### ***3.3.4. Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment (November 2010)- Archaeological Assessments***

Archaeological Assessments conducted a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment of the subject property to determine its archaeological potential. The results of the Stage 1 archaeological

assessment indicate that large sections of the subject property do have a moderate to high potential for archaeological resources and the assessment recommended that a Stage 2 archaeological assessment be undertaken. This report will be submitted under separate cover once it is completed. It is also recommended that the conditions of draft plan approval for the development of the subject property stipulate the requirement for a Stage 2 archaeological assessment prior to any soil disturbance.

### **3.3.5. Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (November 23, 2010)- Terraprobe**

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was prepared by Terraprobe to identify obvious or potential environmental liabilities on the subject property. The ESA concluded that no hazardous materials, unidentified substances, above and/or below ground storage tanks, storage containers, or stains or odours were found on the property. The report does note that a *“possible environmental issue was identified regarding the numerous apple trees on the site. Further investigation, and the sampling and testing of soils is recommended based on the historical use of arsenic based pesticides/herbicides in apple orchards”*. The potential presence of arsenic would have no effect on groundwater or deep soils due to its classification as a heavy metal as a result of its location in the upper soil strata.

### **3.3.6. Geotechnical Report (May 17, 2012)- Terraprobe**

Terraprobe prepared a Geotechnical Report of the property and found that the site is underlain with stiff to hard native clayey silt soils over weathered shale bedrock. The drilling suggests that the soil and bedrock encountered in the investigation will require large, mechanical equipment in order to break up the hard conditions. Further test pit investigations are recommended as the design proceeds, which will also assist with understanding of groundwater conditions and conditions during constructions.

### **3.3.7. Karst Analysis (December 13, 2010)- Karst Solutions**

A Karst Analysis was prepared by Karst Solutions based on available geological publications and communication with staff at the Ontario Geological Survey. This analysis determined that given the very limited thickness of limestone interbeds that may occur on the subject property there is no reason to believe that karst-related hazards will exist. Furthermore, the predominance of shale, and the interbedded nature of the limestone beds within the shale, would not permit the development of significant karstic aquifers on the property.

### **3.3.8. Market Demand Analysis (May 23, 2012)- C.N. Watson & Associates**

The Market Demand Analysis prepared by C.N. Watson & Associates discusses the growth management and market demand aspects in support of the MHR. The report anticipates that demographic and socio-economic conditions will drive the market demand for resort-related development in Meaford over the next 20 years. Access to recreational amenities along the southern Georgian Bay waterfront in Grey County has and will continue to be a key draw for seasonal and permanent residents as well as visitors to the area. Furthermore, the report finds that a significantly higher seasonal population forecast is anticipated for Meaford over the next 20 years than what has been contemplated in the County's growth management review. The analysis determined that the proposed development would greatly benefit the Municipality of Meaford from a housing needs and economic development standpoint.

The analysis identifies that at the present time, there are very limited resort developments within the Meaford and surrounding area that provide a comparable residential and recreational product to MHR based on the average price for units in the market.

The analysis also includes a Market Research and Analysis regarding the commercial components of the proposed MHR, which was prepared by PFK Consulting (Appendix 1 of the Market Demand Analysis). The PFK analysis provides the basis for the programming of MHR and quantifies the commercial and resort components based preferred programming and market demand strategies in the hospitality sector. PFK Consulting has reviewed the subject property, proposed resort components, the existing and projected market conditions and have identified a preliminary development program for the commercial and resort components that supports the appropriate balance between the residential uses and resort components. The proposed development concept and MHR components are based on this analysis.

The Market Demand Analysis also addresses key components of the Recreational Resort Area Review, including a review of County growth management policies, an assessment of other resorts and an evaluation and projection of demand for this type of development on a regional basis.

### ***3.3.9 Natural Hazard Setback and Slope Stability Report (May 25, 2012) – Terraprobe***

The Natural Hazard Setback and Slope Stability Report prepared by Terraprobe assesses the characteristics of slopes on the subject property at locations in consultation with GSCA. The analysis provided a delineated building setback for development. Terraprobe also suggests that structures be sited to allow for swales or grading away from the crest such that stormwater / runoff is not directed over the sloped thereby increasing the potential for erosion. The report suggests that final grading of slopes on the property should be set at 2:1 inclination or flatter and landscaping or cutting should be at 3:1 inclinations or flatter. The report states that erosion protection within drainage channels will need to be provided in order to support “the design velocities and scour anticipated.” The considerations of this report have been incorporated into the development concept insofar as the siting of buildings and structures on the subject property.

### ***3.3.10 Recreational Resort Area Review***

In addition to the technical studies, a Recreational Resort Area Review (RRAR) was requested by Staff in our consultations with Ministry, County and Meaford Staff. The Planning Justification Report (specifically S. 9.0) and the Market Demand Analysis provide the RRAR and satisfy the term of reference for this review. This review was determined based on the specific characterization of MHR as resource based recreational uses within a rural area and that MHR was not considered a settlement area.

## **3.4. Consultation**

The development of the MHR has involved extensive consultation with stakeholders in advance of the filing of formal development applications.

The development proposal for MHR was first presented to Meaford Council in April 2011. The presentation included an outline of the developer, components of development and preliminary scheme, project team, work plan and public engagement process.

Since the project's inception, WCGI and the proponents have been working with Municipal and County Staff to understand what components and facilities the Municipality and County desire as part of a resort community. WCGI also met with County and Municipal Staff a number of times to review the project components and establish the requirement for the development applications (Appendix 15). Our consultations also included discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

WCGI, the consultant team and the proponents have undertaken meetings and correspondence with other agencies including Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) and have assisted in the preparation of terms of reference for the supporting studies with the consultant team and GSCA. In addition, GSCA have attended some of the field studies that have been undertaken for preparation of the supporting studies.

Additional discussions with local area residents and members of the community of Meaford were also undertaken at Meaford Hall in 2011. This afforded WCGI and the proponents with the opportunity to present the MHR vision and obtain feedback on the proposed development.

In addition, the proponent has had extensive consultation with the local business community in relation to the resort components and planned facilities.

Many of the resort recreation components have been developed as a response to identified needs from the community of Meaford and the County. Furthermore, the proponents have been working closely with specific individuals from the Meaford area to obtain assistance with programing and identify recreational component needs in the area and region.

#### **4. Proposed County of Grey Official Plan Amendment**

The proposed County of Grey Official Plan Amendment (Appendix 16) application applies to the entire subject property. The purpose of the amendment is to re-designate the subject property from the "Rural" and "Hazard Lands" designations to the proposed site specific "Recreational Resort Area" and "Hazard Land" designations in the County Official Plan. The amendment provides the basis and a policy framework that is to be implemented by the local municipal official plan amendment. The proposed amendment introduces site specific policies for MHR based on the policies in the County Official Plan, as amended by OPA 80. Certain provisions of the County Official Plan have been amended, where appropriate to implement MHR.

#### **5. Proposed Municipality of Meaford Official Plan Amendment**

The proposed Meaford Official Plan Amendment (Appendix 17) application also applies to the entire subject property and proposes to re-designate the subject property from the "Rural" and "Environmental Protection" designations to site specific "Special Policy Area - Meaford Highlands Resort Recreational", "Special Policy Area - Meaford Highlands Resort Residential" and "Environmental Protection" designations. This proposed amendment provides more detailed policies, which implement the MHR and provide the basis for a site specific zoning by-law amendment and further development applications.

## **6. Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment**

In order to accommodate the proposed development a Zoning By-law Amendment is required. The Zoning By-law Amendment application (Appendix 18) is to rezone the subject property from “County Residential”, “Development”, “Rural” and “Environmental Protection” Zone to “Major Recreational Zone - Exception (MR\*WWW)”, “Residential One Zone – Exception (R1\*XXX)”, “Residential Four Zone – Exception (R4\*YYY)”, “Environmental Protection Zone – Exception (EP\*ZZZ)” and Open Space. Although the proposed zoning by-law contemplates a series of exceptions, many of the Municipality’s zoning regulations have been maintained. Certain modifications have been introduced based on specific proposed uses and dwelling unit designs. The by-law also considers the potential for development through draft plan of subdivision and/or condominium.

## **7. Planning Policy Framework**

The following section provides an overview of applicable planning policy and justification as to how the proposed development applications conform to policy. Applicable Provincial, County and Municipal policies have been considered with respect to the proposed development. Where appropriate other technical studies address conformity with applicable policies and regulations.

### **7.1. Provincial Policy Statement (2005)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (“PPS”) is issued under Section 3(1) of the Ontario Planning Act and provides direction on matters of provincial interest regarding land use planning. All applications considered under the Planning Act “shall be consistent with” the Provincial Policy Statement.

Policy 1.1.1 states that “healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:

- a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of both the Province and municipalities over the long term;
- b) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long-term needs;
- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;
- d) promoting cost-effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
- g) ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.”

In addition, sufficient land is to be made available through intensification, redevelopment and if necessary designated growth areas, to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, housing and other land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years (Policy 1.1.2).

MHR seeks to provide a healthy, livable and safe resort community that accommodates a range of uses based on an efficient and orderly development pattern in accordance with Section 1.1.1 of the PPS.

### *Settlement Areas*

The PPS defines “Settlement Areas” as urban areas and rural settlement areas within municipalities that are built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses and lands which have been designated in an official plan for development over the long term planning horizon provided for in Policy 1.1.2.

Policy 1.1.3.1 and 1.1.3.2 of the PPS state that Settlement Areas shall be the focus of growth and that land use patterns within Settlement Areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land use patterns which:

1. Efficiently use land and resources;
2. Efficiently use existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion; and
3. Minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency.

Within Settlement Areas, appropriate development standards should be promoted to facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form (Policy 1.1.3.4). Furthermore, planning authorities shall establish and implement phasing policies to ensure the orderly progression of development within designated growth areas and the timely provision of the infrastructure and public service facilities to meet both current and projected needs (Policy 1.1.3.8).

Section 1.1.3.9 states that a planning authority may identify a new settlement area only at the time of a comprehensive review and only if there has been demonstrated that sufficient opportunities for growth are not available through intensification, redevelopment and designated growth areas to accommodate projected need, that infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available are suitable for the development over the long term and protect public health and safety and the impacts from new settlement areas on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to the settlement area are mitigated to the extent feasible.

In determining the most appropriate location for the identification of a settlement area by a planning authority, a planning authority shall apply the policies of Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources and Section 3: Protecting Public Safety (Policy 1.1.3.9).

MHR is not considered a settlement area as defined by the PPS. Resorts are typically not considered settlement areas as they exhibit different characteristics than traditional urban and rural settlement areas insofar as occupancy, tenure, function and land use distribution. This characterization is described in the hierarchy of settlements in the County of Grey Official Plan Amendment No. 80. However, discussions with County Staff have determined that the proposed MHR would be considered a site specific resort area designation due to the scale of development proposed, the method of servicing and the proposed function of the resort. In recognition of the uniqueness of the MHR in relation to the policies of the PPS certain provisions of Sections 1.1.3.9 and 1.1.4 are considered applicable and are described below. A modified comprehensive review (RARR) has been provided comprised of the analysis herein and the Market Demand Analysis prepared by CN Watson and Associates, which addresses the applicable provisions of Section 1.1.3.9 and 1.1.4 of the PPS as described below.

It is recognized that MHR is permitted within the rural area policies of Section 1.1.4 of the PPS and is not contributing to the accommodation of growth in the settlement areas of the

Municipality of Meaford according to Section 1.1.2 of the PPS. Notwithstanding, certain provisions of Section 1.1.3.9 have been considered and are discussed below.

With respect to Section 1.1.3.9 the proposed MHR will provide opportunities to accommodate residential development for both seasonal and year-round occupancy based on identified demand in the County. Furthermore, MHR is based on an infrastructure strategy that is based on full municipal services, which is available to accommodate the proposed resort. This opportunity afforded by MHR cannot be accommodated through intensification, redevelopment and designated growth areas in accordance with Section 1.1.2 of the PPS. Furthermore, the lands are not considered prime agricultural areas. Based on the assessment contained in the County's OPA 80, impacts to surrounding agricultural uses have been mitigated to the extent feasible due to the fact that there is limited agriculture potential in the area based on existing development patterns in the area, intervening residential land uses, and soil classification in the area. The establishment of MHR on the subject property, with its associated municipal-wide benefits is supported by market demand and a growth management analysis, which demonstrates that opportunities do not exist elsewhere within the County of Grey to accommodate this particular resort demand.

#### *Rural Areas*

Section 1.1.4 of the PPS states that Rural Areas shall permit uses and activities that relate to management or use of resources, resource-based recreational activities, limited residential development and other rural land uses. In particular recreational, tourism and other economic opportunities are to be promoted (S. 1.1.4.1. g)).

In rural areas, development shall be appropriate to the infrastructure that is planned or available and new lands uses and the creation of new lots shall comply with the minimum distance separation formulae (S. 1.1.4.1. b), c)).

MHR is proposing resource-based recreational activities with a specific focus on tourism and economic activities, which are promoted in the Rural Area policies of the PPS. These uses are compatible with the existing rural residential and open space uses in the surrounding area. Given the requirement to address certain provisions of Section 1.1.3.9 of the PPS as articulated in the RRAR, which address agricultural potential, it is our opinion that the provisions relating to minimum distance separation do not apply. Section 1.1.3.9, which is applicable in part to the MHR stipulates that agricultural impacts should be addressed to the extent feasible.

This principle is further established in the County of Grey Official Plan Amendment No. 80, which is discussed further below.

#### *Coordination*

The PPS requires a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive planning approach when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, or which cross lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries including matters related to growth, development, natural heritage, agriculture, population, and housing and employment projections. MHR has considered cross-jurisdictional issues in the analysis of demand and growth as discussed in the Market Demand Analysis.

### *Housing Policies*

The housing policies contained in Section 1.4 of the PPS directs municipalities “to provide an appropriate range of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area identified in Section 1.4.3, planning authorities shall:

- a) Maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development;
- b) Maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a 3 year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

Section 1.4.3 stipulates that “Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

- a) Establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households;
- b) Permitting and facilitating all forms of housing required to meet requirements of current and future residents;
- c) Directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs;
- d) Promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities; and
- e) Establishing development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.”

Consistent with these policies, MHR proposed housing mix provides an appropriate supply and variety of dwelling types and supports the County and Municipal initiatives for affordable housing based on the anticipated price of the product. MHR will meet anticipated demand for this product and will serve the recreational needs of the Municipality and County for current and future residents and visitors. Through proposed extensions of municipal infrastructure to the subject property, appropriate levels of infrastructure can support the level of development proposed. Furthermore, the design of MHR provides for compact form and maintains public health and safety in accordance with the PPS.

### *Parks and Open Space*

With regards to the provision of public spaces, parks and open space, Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states, “healthy, active communities should be promoted by:

- a) Planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, and facilitate pedestrian and non-motorized movement, including but not limited to, walking and cycling;

- b) Providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources;
- c) Providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and
- d) Considering the impacts of planning decisions on provincial parks, conservation reserves and conservation areas”

MHR provides for extensive open space, which includes parks, natural areas and public spaces, which will be open to the general public. A trail system will promote safe pedestrian and non-motorized movement within the subject property, which demonstrates consistency with the above policies.

### *Infrastructure*

All infrastructure and public service facilities in Ontario are to be provided in a coordinated, efficient and cost-effective manner to accommodate projected needs. Planning for these services shall be integrated with planning for growth (Policy 1.6.1). The use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities should be optimized wherever feasible before consideration is given to developing new infrastructure and public service facilities (Policy 1.6.2).

Section 1.6.4.1 states, “Planning for sewage and water services shall:

- a) Direct and accommodate expected growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use of existing:
  - 1. Municipal sewage services and municipal water services; and
  - 2. Private communal sewage services and municipal water services are not available;
- b) Ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
  - 1. Can be sustained by the water resources upon which they rely;
  - 2. Is financially viable and complies with all regulatory requirements; and
  - 3. Protects human health and the natural environment
- c) Promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- d) Integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
- e) Subject to the hierarchy of services provided in policies 1.6.4.2, 1.6.4.3 and 1.6.4.4 allow lot creation only if there is confirmation of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity and reserve water system capacity within municipal sewage services and private communal water services. The determination of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity shall include treatment capacity for hauled sewage from private communal sewage services and individual on-site sewage services”

MHR is to be fully serviced through an expansion to the existing municipal services from the Meaford Urban Area. The development of the MHR on full municipal services would be consistent with the PPS policies, which state that full municipal services are the servicing method in municipalities as opposed to communal or individual services. The proposed servicing strategy is based on the optimization of the existing municipal infrastructure as well as extensions to these systems. The FSR contains additional discussion in relation to the

proposed servicing strategy, which addresses consistency with the infrastructure policies of the PPS.

### *Transportation*

According to the PPS, transportation systems should provide for that which are safe, energy efficient and facilitate the movement of people and goods. Efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure, which provides for connectivity within and among transportation systems should be promoted (Policy 1.6.5). The road network proposed for MHR is based on appropriate municipal standards, is safe and promotes pedestrian movement through a series of trails. Furthermore, the roads and trails proposed facilitate connections to areas beyond the subject property which supports the PPS policies in relation to connectivity among transportation systems. The TS contains further information which demonstrates consistency with the transportation policies of the PPS.

### *Long Term Economic Prosperity*

It is a policy of the PPS to support long-term economic prosperity by optimizing the long-term availability and use of land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, maintaining and where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtown main streets, providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development and promoting the sustainability of the agri-food sector by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts (Policy 1.7.1 a), b), f), g)). MHR is consistent with these policies as it provides for significant benefits to various economic sectors including tourism, of the local and regional economies.

### *Energy and Air Quality*

The PPS states that planning authorities are required to support energy efficiency and improved air quality through appropriate development patterns which promote compact form, a structure of nodes and corridors and promote design and orientation which maximize the use of alternative or renewable energy, and the mitigating effects of vegetation. MHR proposes a nodal development pattern that promotes a compact nodal form of development and supports the retention of existing vegetation, which is consistent with the PPS policies in this regard.

### *Natural Heritage*

The PPS protects natural heritage by ensuring that natural features and the long term economic function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems are maintained, restored and where possible improved (S. 2.1). Development is not permitted in significant natural heritage and hydrological features or areas. Development and site alteration is not permitted on lands adjacent to natural heritage and hydrological features 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 their ecological function (S. 2.1.6). The demonstration of consistency with the natural heritage policies of the PPS is contained in the EIS as described above.

The PPS also states that planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by minimizing potential negative impacts, identifying features which are necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the watershed, implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration, maintaining linkages within and

among features and ensuring stormwater management practices minimize stormwater volumes and contaminant loads (Policy 2.2.1).

Planning Authorities are also required to protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by maintaining linkages and related functions among surface water features, ground water features, hydrologic functions and natural heritage features and areas. Stormwater management practices shall maintain or increase the extent of vegetative and pervious surfaces. Development and site alteration shall be restricted in and near sensitive surface and ground water features and their related hydrological functions shall be protected, improved or restored (Policy 2.2.2).

MHR has been designed to respect and reinforce the natural features on the subject property and their ecological functions and is consistent with the above policies. In accordance with the EIS prepared by Beacon Environmental, natural features including woodlands and watercourses have been identified and the necessary restrictions on development and site alteration have been considered in the design. Based on the EIS, no significant features and / or areas have been identified on the property; however, it is recognized that the results of further inventories are pending and that the conclusions of such further analysis are not available at the time of writing of this report. Furthermore, appropriate buffers have been applied to lands adjacent to natural heritage, steep slope areas and hydrological features. In addition, development has been restricted in or near all sensitive surface and ground water features and their related functions. The matter of consistency with the natural heritage policies of the PPS is identified in the EIS, which acknowledges that consistency with certain policies is pending completion of certain inventories and analysis.

#### *Cultural Heritage*

With regards to cultural heritage and archaeology policies of the PPS, Section 2.6 only permits development and site alteration on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential if the significant archaeological resources have been conserved by removal and documentation or by preservation on site. The proponent is currently undertaking a Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment to demonstrate consistency with these policies.

#### *Natural Hazards*

The PPS directs development and site alteration away from hazardous lands adjacent to rivers and streams which are impacted by flooding hazards and erosion hazards (Section 3.1.1). The EIS and Natural Hazard Setback and Slope Stability Requirements submitted with the development applications for MHR have addressed the proposed development in relation to these policies. These studies demonstrate the appropriate consideration for hazardous lands and demonstrate that the proposed applications are consistent with the PPS policies in this regard. Furthermore, the proposed development layout and building siting has been directed away from areas that may be impacted by flooding hazards and/or erosion hazards, which include the watercourses and steep slope areas.

#### *Summary*

The proposed MHR is consistent with the PPS with respect to policies concerning rural areas, settlement areas, parks and open space, transportation, infrastructure, long term economic prosperity, energy and air quality, and natural hazards. Consistency with the natural heritage and cultural heritage policies are demonstrated through the EIS and a further Stage 2

Archaeological Assessment, which will be submitted under separate cover. MHR will respect and reinforce the existing resources and natural features while providing for desired residential and resource based recreational uses that are supported by demand, transportation and servicing infrastructure.

## **7.2. County of Grey Official Plan (2000)**

The Grey County Official Plan (“County Plan”) was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) in March 1998. It was approved by the OMB in August 1999 and August 2000 and is currently in-force.

It is a goal of the County Plan to respect the natural, cultural and heritage features of the County by minimizing any adverse impacts on the natural environment, protecting significant environmental features and the water quality of the various watersheds (S. 1.4.3). An additional goal is to ensure sufficient lands have been identified for development to accommodate a variety of housing and employment opportunities to meet current and future needs, while strengthening the role of Grey County as a desirable place to work, live and visit (S. 1.4.7 & 1.4.8). Furthermore, the protection of the land base and agricultural operations, the creation of compatible economic opportunities and the continued presence of social and recreational support facilities within the rural community are key to maintaining the agricultural / rural way of life in the County (S. 1.4.9).

It is an objective of the County Plan to provide for seasonal, tourist and estate type residential development in rural and recreational areas, where it is compatible with the rural landscape and where development will not adversely affect existing or potential agricultural, forestry or mineral aggregate operations or the preservation, conservation and maintenance of natural, cultural or man-made historical or heritage features (S. 1.5.1). A further objective of the County Plan is to encourage the establishment of new facilities, which diversify recreational opportunities within the context of a year-round recreation / tourism community for all possible forms of recreation, in a manner that is consistent with the preservation of the natural environment (S. 1.5.4).

The County Plan guides development in the County to the year 2016. It was anticipated that the Northeast Quadrant consisting of Meaford, Euphrasia and St. Vincent would grow by 1018 units over this planning period (S. 1.6). The County Plan does not further identify where within the Northeast Quadrant this growth is allocated. Furthermore, the plan does not provide an allocation of seasonal or permanent population figures. It is acknowledged that OPA 80 seeks to provide more specific projections based on area, type and timing, which is discussed further in the next section below.

The proposed MHR will support the goals and objectives of the County Plan. The proposed development applications will help ensure the provision of an adequate variety of housing and employment opportunities. The MHR provides for seasonal, tourist and residential development in an area that is compatible with the rural landscape, and will not affect agricultural potential in the County due to the identification of the subject property as lower priority agricultural land and the limited agricultural potential on the property and surrounding area. The MHR will diversify the County’s recreational opportunities by providing for a year-round recreation / tourism community.

Policy 2.1.1 of the County Plan contains a discussion of the process by which the County distinguished agricultural lands from rural lands. Based on the County’s approach, which included land inventory and soil classification analysis, the subject property was identified as

rural and is designated "Rural" on Schedule A (Attachment 19). The wooded area south of Highway 26 is designated Hazard Lands. The constraints mapping in Appendix A of the County Official Plan identifies the property as being within the Special Karst Policy Area (Karst) and illustrates a cold water stream which traverses the subject property.

Section 2.3.2 of the County Plan permits agriculture, forestry, resource based recreational activities and rural activities within the Rural Area designation. Non-farm development within the Rural designation must satisfy the following policies:

- a) Development on improved agricultural land should be discouraged.
- b) Non-farm land use shall impose no operating constraint to an existing farm and an adequate separation distance shall be maintained between non-farm development and existing livestock uses.
- c) Provide adequate justification for alternative services methods if municipal services are not available.
- d) Adequate drainage and outlets are available for storm water runoff.
- e) Access to the site must be from a public highway that is opened and maintained on a year round basis.
- f) If severance is required, conditions of consent must be fulfilled in accordance with Section 6.12 and 2.3.4.
- g) Not be within 300 metres of a settlement area.
- h) On areas identified as primary aggregate resource, additional justification regarding the feasibility of aggregate resource extraction is required.
- i) Non-farm development within 300 metres of areas identified as Mineral Resource Extraction shall be permitted.
- j) No development shall be permitted on lands adjacent to a Wetland as identified on Schedule A, unless an EIS demonstrates no loss of wetland function.
- k) Not result in ribbon development along roadways.
- l) Residential development in the form of a plan of subdivision / condominium shall be developed at a density of development which is based on the level of services to be provided.
- m) Address how the proposed lots would maintain or enhance the rural landscape
- n) Satisfy Section 5.3 and Section 6.12 regarding servicing.
- o) Amendment to the local Zoning By-law be obtained.
- p) Small scale commercial, industrial and institutional uses must be necessary to serve the needs of the immediate area and the agricultural / rural community

The subject applications propose to re-designate the subject property to a new site specific resort designation; therefore the above policies regarding non-farm development do not apply to the development of the MHR based on the proposed County Official Plan Amendment designation.

Notwithstanding the above considerations the following policies above have been considered and a summary is provided below in relation to certain aspects of this section of the County Plan.

Municipal services are to be provided to service MHR, which will include adequate wet and dry ponds for storm water management. Furthermore, safe access from a municipal road is provided. The subject property is not within 300 metres of a settlement area, is not designated primary aggregate resource and not within 300 metres of areas identified as mineral resource extraction or lands adjacent to a Wetland as identified on Schedule A. A zoning by-law amendment application is being submitted in support of this proposed development.

The County Plan defines “resource-based recreational activities” as “those recreational uses where the prime reason for location in Rural, Recreational or Inland Lakes and Shoreline designations by their very nature, require certain natural attributes for their location including the availability of large lots or land areas”. Uses permitted may include passive and active recreational facilities and associated commercial and residential uses” (S. 6.14). MHR exhibits the characteristics of this definition in that its precise location is based on the natural attributes of the subject property, including the Algonquin Ridge, the expansive land that is available and the provision of passive and active recreational uses, commercial and residential uses.

Consents may be permitted for the establishment of non-farm uses for rural designation permitted uses; however residential lots created by consent shall be approximately 0.8 ha in area and no less than 0.4 ha in area and meet servicing requirements (S. 2.3.4).

Section 2.6.2 requires development applications to ensure proper and orderly street patterns, efficient use of services and a variety of housing and development opportunities within designated Settlement Areas. Where development is anticipated to exceed a Settlement Area designation’s boundaries, a County approved Secondary Plan is required that addresses the following:

- a) Expansion areas will be considered primarily in those areas designated Rural;
- b) Demonstration of the ability to service the proposed development area;
- c) Demonstration that the development will not negatively impact on groundwater within approximately 2 kilometres of the ne Settlement Area boundary;
- d) That growth can be accommodated without undue impacts on the natural environment, surrounding land uses and within the constraints imposed by servicing (S. 2.6.2 (4)).

The proposed applications are not considered an expansion to an existing settlement area and MHR is considered a resource based recreational use; however, MHR includes uses which are permitted and compatible in a rural landscape. It is demonstrated through the FSR and the EIS that the subject property has the ability to accommodate growth that can be serviced without any negative impacts on groundwater and other natural heritage features and functions of the subject property and adjacent lands. It is our opinion that a new site specific designation for these “resource-based recreational activities” is more appropriate than an “urban” and / or “settlement area” designation due the scale and nature of the proposed development. As such, a site specific Recreational Resort Area designation is proposed consistent with the provisions of OPA 80, which is described further below.

The County Plan identifies Hazard Lands as lands which have any inherent environmental hazards such as flood susceptibility, erosion susceptibility and hazardous sites that exhibit instability or poor drainage or any other physical condition which is severe enough to pose a risk (S. 2.8.2. (1)). The Hazard Lands designation permits forestry and uses connected with the conservation of water, soil, wildlife and other natural resources. Other uses also permitted are non-intensive agriculture, passive public parks, public utilities and resource based recreational uses (S. 2.8.2 (2)).

Building and structures are generally not permitted in the Hazard Land designation; however non-habitable buildings connected with public parks, such as picnic shelters may be permitted (S. 2.8.2 (3)).

Section 2.8.2 (6) discourages the placing, removing or regarding fill material of any kind within the Hazard Land designation. New development and site alteration within the Hazard Land designation will only be permitted if “the following can be satisfied:

- i) The hazards can be safely addressed and new hazards are not created or existing ones aggravated;
- ii) No adverse environmental impacts will result. The County, in consultation with the Conservation Authority may require an Environmental Impact Study to be prepared at the proponent’s expense, in accordance with this Plan;
- iii) Vehicles and people have a way of safely entering and existing at all times;
- iv) The development does not include institutional uses or emergency services or involve hazardous substances; and
- v) The advice, or approval where required, of the appropriate Conservation Authority shall be obtained. The County and the Conservation Authority will consider the mitigation of effects on vegetation, wildlife and fishery resources and the natural features of the site.” (S. 2.8.2 (9)).

The EIS provides an analysis of the natural features and hazards on the subject property. As noted above, the EIS concludes that no adverse environmental impacts will result to the hazard lands by the proposed development. All proposed vehicle and pedestrian access within hazard lands will be provided in a safe manner and no institutional or emergency services are proposed on hazard lands. Additional policies in the draft official plan amendment are proposed to accommodate certain recreational uses within the hazard land designation, which, in our opinion is appropriate.

The Special Policy Area in the County Plan refers to areas of shallow overburden with karst topography where the depth of the soil is generally less than one metre over fractured bedrock. In areas that have been identified in Appendix A of the County Plan, the proponent of any planning application will be required to address the need of whether or not a study is necessary to determine whether there is karst topography present on the lands. If karst topography is present, a study is required to assess the impacts and mitigation measures on the surface and groundwater supply of the planning application (S. 2.8.4).

As noted above, Karst Solutions undertook an analysis of the potential for karst of the subject property and concluded that based on the physical conditions and soil analysis; there is limited potential for karst-related hazards existing on the subject property.

Section 2.8.5 states that development and site alteration that is incompatible with significant natural features and areas will not be permitted. Due to the absence of specific mapping, Hazard Lands and Wetlands designations shall be used to identify significant natural areas and functions. Section 2.8.5 (1) does permit development and site alteration within significant areas of fish habitat, woodlands, valleylands, wildlife habitat and their adjacent lands, provided an acceptable EIS is completed.

The EIS has considered the provisions of the County Plan policies and provides a discussion as to the identification and evaluation of natural features and areas and consideration of impacts. The EIS notes that development is compatible with the significant natural areas identified and their functions.

It is a policy of the County Plan to develop an economic strategy, in consultation with local municipalities, with the objective of promoting the County as a destination for tourists, as a

location for the establishment of industries and commerce, as a location for agricultural production and as a location for living, raising ones family, and enjoying one's retirement years (S. 4 (1)). The MHR builds on these objectives and will promote the County as a destination for tourist and a place to live, raise a family and retire.

It is a policy of the County Plan that the County and local municipalities to be involved in the development of new transportation and utility corridor based on the following guidelines:

- Avoidance, if possible, and/or minimum disruption of agricultural lands, designated forests and substantial woodlands, drainage patterns, watercourses, open space and recreation lands, unique landforms and topsoil (S. 5.1.2 (5))

The TS prepared in support of the applications outlines the proposed new municipal roads within the MHR and the additional improvements to existing transportation corridors required to support the development. All roads and trails have been designed to avoid the disruption of significant natural features, where possible.

The County Plan states that Provincial Highways are under the sole jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transportation. They are subject to Permit Control and approval under The Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act and are required for access, buildings and structures and signs (S. 5.2.2). The signalization proposed for Highway 26 will be provided in accordance with the above policies.

The County Plan policies indicate a preference for full municipal services for all development (S.5.3.2). The servicing policies promote services that can be provided in a financially feasible manner and where need exists. Feasibility shall be based on the evaluation of the scale and nature of the specific development proposal and the anticipated development, physical or environmental constraints, potential cumulative impacts to ground and surface water resources and a comparison of costs and benefits of the alternatives including costs associated with planning, construction, maintenance, financing, etc. (S. 5.3.2 (3)). MHR is to be serviced by full municipal services based on the most cost efficient and feasible strategy, which supports these County Plan policies. The FSR prepared by Cole Engineering provides a servicing strategy that is based on the consideration of the most efficient and feasible servicing options for MHR.

Section 6.1 of the County Plan regarding implementation states that the precise boundaries of the Hazard Land designation shall be shown on the mapping of the relevant local Zoning By-laws. An amendment to the Official Plan will not be required to permit minor redefining of a boundary of the designation, which may occur through a Zoning By-law amendment (S. 6.1. (2)). The supporting studies have provided re-adjustment of natural hazard boundaries based on field work and site specific technical analysis. Accordingly, the development concept has been based on these defined boundaries. In the event that further field work revises the development boundaries, it is acknowledged that an amendment to the designation boundaries of the County Official Plan Amendment will not be required. This is also addressed for added clarity in the proposed draft County Official Plan Amendment.

Section 6.3 of the County Plan outlines the policies related to proposed Amendments to the County Plan, which include demonstrating:

- The need for the proposed change;
- The effect of the proposed change on the demand for services and facilities;
- The implications the amendment may have on other policies of the Plan;

- The impact of the proposed change on the County's ability to achieve the principles and policies expressed in this Plan or on other County policies, programs and interests;
- The impact of the proposed change on the local Municipalities' ability to achieve the principles and policies expressed in their Official Plans; and
- The information and conclusions provided by the monitoring studies completed under Section 6.4, which include land utilization, growth management, housing, employment, servicing and other studies (S. 6.4).

The establishment of the proposed MHR requires a more suitable designation under the County Plan consistent with the resource based recreational uses that are proposed. The market demand for the resort, commercial and residential uses has been identified, which demonstrates the need for the proposed land use change. MHR can be serviced by existing transportation and servicing infrastructure and expansions thereto and will support existing facilities in Meaford.

The proposed development and Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendment applications are consistent with the policies of the County Plan as outlined above and would enable development that is consistent with the principles and policies expressed in the Meaford Official Plan, which are outlined in the next section.

#### Summary

The proposed uses are permitted within the Rural Area designation, however due to the scale, type of primary and supporting uses, a new site specific Resort Recreational Area designation is appropriate to implement MHR. The proposed development is compatible with the County's rural and agricultural way of life and will support the tourism and economic development policies in the County Plan. The supporting studies provide specific technical justification in relation to karst topography, natural heritage features and hazard lands, transportation and servicing, which demonstrate consistency with the applicable County Plan policies. Furthermore, the Market Demand Analysis provides a comprehensive analysis of land utilization, growth management and housing and employment demand, which demonstrate that the development applications support County policies insofar as the demonstration of need.

### **7.3. County of Grey Official Plan Amendment 80 (approved by Ministry February 14, 2012, Approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, June 25, 2012)**

Amendment No. 80 to the County of Grey Official Plan (OPA 80) was part of the County's 5 year official plan review and was adopted by County Council in March 2009. OPA 80 was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) on February 14, 2012 and subsequently appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. The contents of the three valid appeals as well as draft policy amendments to OPA 80 were identified in Grey County Planning Report PDR-PCD-06-12, dated January 12, 2012, and provided to the MMAH for review. The Addendum to Report PDR-PCD-06-12, dated May 10, 2012 summarized comments from the MMAH in relation to the three appeals and Planning Report PDR-PCD-06-12 and directed that the County solicitor be authorized to enter into minutes of settlement on OPA 80 those matters contained within the Addendum Report. These minutes will be presented to the Ontario Municipal Board at a future hearing or pre-hearing and do not affect the policies discussed below.

OPA 80 addresses growth in the County to the year 2026. A goal of OPA 80 is to strengthen the role of Grey County as a desirable place to work, live and visit by encouraging the provision of affordable, diverse and accessible housing (S. 1.5.8). Economic objectives of OPA 80 include provision for opportunities for sustainable resource development and outdoor recreation for the social and health benefit of the area residents and visitors. Furthermore, it encourages the maintenance of existing recreation and tourism related activities including the establishment of new facilities which diversify recreational activities within the context of a year-round recreational/tourism community for all possible forms of recreation in a manner consistent with the preservation of the natural environment (S. 1.6.4). It is a fundamental policy of OPA 80 to promote healthy and diverse communities where residents can live, work and enjoy recreational opportunities (S.1.7). The population projections do not address and are not intended to limit seasonal recreational development. However, they do incorporate provisions for permanent occupancy of recreational units (S. 1.7).

The MHR development applications support these policies by the establishment of new facilities as part of the resort, which will diversity the year-round recreational opportunities provided in the County. Furthermore, the resort will offer unique recreational activities centered on the preservation of the natural environment.

According to OPA 80, the population of Meaford will experience a permanent population growth of 1900 people between 2006 and 2026. It is further anticipated that an additional 1100 households will be built in Meaford between 2006 and 2026. Of these households, it is projected that 660 will be within the settlement areas and 440 will be non-settlement area units. Furthermore, an additional 105 seasonal dwelling units are expected during this time period (S. 1.7).

In OPA 80, further distinction is provided in relation to the characterization of settlements. Settlement Areas are divided into Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Settlement Areas based on servicing capabilities, population and function and will be the focus area for growth (S. 1.7). Two other categories include Recreational Resort Areas and Inland Lakes and Shoreline areas, which may experience a larger percentage of seasonal growth. OPA 80 acknowledges that seasonal growth plans an important part in Grey County's economy but it is difficult to quantify from a projection standpoint as growth can result from a specific recreational amenity, which is not repeated in the future (S. 1.7).

The proposed Recreational Resort Area designation would be the appropriate designation for the proposed MHR and is what is proposed in the draft County Official Plan Amendment. It has been determined through the programming of MHR that the projected seasonal growth will be driven by the proposed recreational amenities as well as the demographic and socio-economic conditions of the area, among other factors.

Schedule A of OPA 80 identifies the subject property as being designated "Rural" and "Hazard Land" (Attachment 20). According to Appendix B, the subject property is identified to contain significant woodlands in the northern portion of the property. OPA 80 modifies the existing County Official Plan and introduces new designations and policies and is consistent with the PPS.

It is a policy of OPA 80 to encourage a variety of housing by type, size and tenure to meet projected demographic and market requirements of current and future residents of the County (S. 1.8). The County encourages local municipalities and the building and development industry to develop innovative housing designs that provide flexibility in use, mix of compatible land

uses, good environmental practices and public safety. It is also a policy of OPA 80 to ensure land is designated and available to accommodate population and unit growth projections as well as to provide a range of housing types and densities in accordance with the policies of the PPS. MHR proposed a mix of land uses including a range of housing types and densities in accordance with the policies of OPA 80.

Rural Area policies have modified existing development permissions and introduced new policies for development within this land use designation. Resource based recreational uses and other appropriate rural land uses are permitted in rural areas provided they do not negatively impact on agriculture, forestry or the natural environment. The definition of Resource Based Recreational Uses has been modified to exclude reference to certain land use designations in Section 6.19 of OPA 80. The definition of “Resource Based Recreational Uses” in OPA 80 includes “those recreational uses where the prime reason for location by their very nature, require certain natural attributes for their location including the availability of large lots or land areas. Uses permitted may include passive and active recreational facilities and associated commercial and residential uses. Such uses shall be defined to include golf courses, water based recreation, campgrounds, lodges/resorts and skiing/snowboarding facilities. MHR proposes recreational uses which are based on certain natural attributes, such as the existing natural features and landforms, which provide the views and “open-air concept” of the resort, and is based on proximity to the regional market.

Section 2.3.3. introduces new policies regarding Minimum Distance Separation formulae and will apply to new land uses within the Rural Area. Section 2.6.2 (15) notes that the minimum distance separation formulae shall not apply within the Settlement Area designations of this Plan. This policy does not limit the ability of local municipalities from applying MDS to settlement areas, however, the municipality must clearly identify whether or not MDS is applied within a settlement area designation. Based on the considerations in the PPS in Section 1.1.3.9 and Section 2.6.2 (15) the consideration of agricultural potential has been mitigated to the extent feasible. The mitigation of agricultural potential has been achieved in part due to the limited potential for agricultural uses on the subject property and in the vicinity of the subject property, as discussed previously.

Section 2.3.3. (f) of OPA 80 excludes resource based recreational uses from the lot creation by consent provision of the plan. Lot creation for other land uses must comply with Section 2.3.4, 5.3 and 6.12, which limit consents to farm related uses, requires a minimum area of 0.8 ha and frontage of 100 metres and contain servicing requirements. Furthermore, new non-farm development within 500 metres of a Primary Settlement Area and 300 metres of a Secondary Settlement Area boundary shall be limited to existing lots, where minor infilling and rounding out of existing development shall be considered. Prior to development the applicant must demonstrate that the development is compatible with adjacent uses and would not create or contribute to hard servicing problems or would not prejudice future development (S. 2.3.3 (h)). By virtue of the policy excluding resource based recreational uses, these provisions would not apply to the proposed development applications.

Section 2.3.3 (g) of OPA 80 states that “residential development associated with resource based recreational uses shall require an amendment to this Plan, and may only proceed via plan of subdivision/ condominium. Amendments to permit residential development associated with resource based recreational uses would need to be supported by a planning justification that addresses:

- (i) How the policies of this Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement and the local municipal Official Plan are met;

- (ii) How the location is necessary to support the proposed uses;
- (iii) How the need for the proposed uses cannot be met by approved development in other locations in the County;
- (iv) How the new development is to be serviced in accordance with Section 5.3.2 of the Plan; and
- (v) How the phasing of the new development will ensure the establishment of the resource based recreational use either in advance of or in concert with the residential component.

The matters specifically outlined above are addressed in Section 9 of this Report, which demonstrates how the development applications and the MHR are consistent with this policy.

OPA 80 establishes three main designations for areas of concentrated development including:

- Settlement Areas;
- Recreational Resort Area; and
- Inland Lakes and Shoreline Areas (S. 2.6.1)

OPA 80 further acknowledges that the Recreational Resort Area designation applies to areas within two municipalities; Town of The Blue Mountains and the Municipality of Grey Highlands, which exhibit a mix of seasonal and permanent residential and recreational growth on full municipal services. Section 2.6 further acknowledges that these areas contain development that is fully serviced, they do not contain the same range of uses as a traditional urban centre or Primary Settlement areas and are focused on a recreational component as its basis for development. This characterization is similar to the proposed MHR and acknowledges the distinctive nontraditional nature of these resorts when compared to settlement areas. Based on these considerations the proposed draft County Official Plan Amendment identifies that MHR is considered a resort area designation and is not considered a settlement area, which is intended to provide clarity to the characterization of MHR and recognize that it is permitted within the rural area policies of the PPS. The above noted examples of resort areas reflect existing resort areas that have different characteristics than MHR, which necessitates site specific policies for MHR.

Section 2.6.7 (1) of OPA 80 states that the Recreational Resort Area designation “shall apply to lands which are settlement areas which have developed as a result of site specific amendments to the County of Grey Official Plan and/or local Official Plan consisting of a defined development area, specific recreational amenities, residential development and serviced with full municipal services”. New development is required to service the public interest by contributing to community and recreational amenities, facilitate full municipal service infrastructure and also accommodating existing un-serviced development areas and areas with development potential within the existing designation or settlement area (S. 2.6.7 (2)).

Development within this designation should be focused on “enhancing recreational and tourism related activities by:

- (a) Encouraging the maintenance and expansion of existing recreation and tourism related facilities.
- (b) Encouraging new land uses that will promote existing or require the establishment of new recreation and tourism facilities which diversity opportunities for all possible forms of recreation such as skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, golfing, walking, hiking, biking, equestrian and nature trail uses, water access activities, all in a manner consistent with the preservation of the natural environment.

- (c) Supporting the dedication/acquisition of land for long-term public benefits within the existing designation or settlement area.
- (d) Supporting the creation of public-private partnerships in a fiscally responsible manner.

MHR is proposing site specific amendments to the County of Grey Official Plan and the Meaford Official Plan to introduce a Recreational Resort Area designation, consisting of recreational amenities and residential development that are to be serviced with full municipal services. The proposed development will establish and support new recreation and tourism opportunities and will contribute to other regional recreation and tourism opportunities by providing accommodations for other uses and programs. In addition, certain lands are anticipated to be conveyed to the appropriate public authority, which will provide long-term public benefits to the municipality. Furthermore, MHR will provide many opportunities for public-private partnerships for services programs and facilities, which is consistent with the above policies and will serve the public interest.

With respect to the natural environment, OPA 80 introduces policies that are consistent with the PPS. Section 2.8.1 states that no development or site alteration is permitted within lands adjacent to Hazard Lands unless it has been demonstrated through an Environmental Impact Statement that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.

Significant woodland mapping has been introduced in OPA 80 and stipulates that no development or site alteration is permitted within Significant Woodlands and the associated adjacent lands unless it has been demonstrated through an Environmental Impact Statement that no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions and fragmentation of the woodlands is generally discouraged (S. 2.8.1). In addition, the diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems should be maintained, restored and where possible improved, recognizing the linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and groundwater features (S. 2.8.1).

Uses currently permitted on Hazard Lands within the in-force County Plan will only be permitted where site conditions are suitable and where the relevant hazard impacts have been reviewed (S. 2.8.2. (2)). Any placing, removing or re-grading fill material will not be permitted without written approval of the appropriate conservation authority in the Hazard Lands (S. 2.8.2. (8)).

Section 2.8.4 contains policies regarding Significant Woodlands, which are “woodlands that are greater than or equal to 40 hectares in size outside of settlement areas, or greater than or equal to 4 hectares in size within settlement area boundaries”. No development or site alteration may occur within significant woodlands or their adjacent lands unless it has been demonstrated through and EIS that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.

The subject property contains lands identified as significant woodland on a portion of the property. The EIS prepared in support of the development applications further refines the limits of the woodlands and identified limits to development within and adjacent to these lands. Furthermore the Geotechnical Study and the Natural Hazard Setback and Slope Stability Requirements Report provides setbacks to steep slope areas, which have been incorporated into the proposed development concept.

OPA 80 also introduces specific requirements regarding the determination of Special Policy Areas for karst topography. Section 2.8.5 outlines on-site test requirements and report requirements for this determination.

Additional requirements have been included in OPA 80 regarding the provision of full municipal services. Section 5.3.2 indicates that full municipal services shall be provided on the basis that: “the systems can be sustained by the water resources upon which services rely; is within the financial capabilities of the municipality; complies with all regulatory requirements and protects human health and the natural environment.” Furthermore, municipalities are now required to enter into a responsibility agreement with the owner / operator to ensure perpetual maintenance of these systems in order to avoid adverse human health and environmental impacts.

### Summary

OPA 80 introduces a new site specific Recreational Resort Area designation, which specifically permits the types of uses contemplated for MHR and modifies certain policies, as required. The proposed County Official Plan Amendment proposes a new designation similar to the Recreational Resort Area designation introduced in OPA 80, but is site specific in nature. Planning applications and justification are required for a re-designation to a Recreational Resort Area designation, which demonstrate appropriate planning, servicing, phasing and conformity with the policies of 2.3.3(g). The justification above demonstrates how the proposed development applications in support of MHR are consistent with these policies. In addition, the requirements regarding significant woodlands, karst topography, servicing and phasing and associated impacts have been addressed through the appropriate supporting studies.

## **7.4. Municipality of Meaford Official Plan (2005)**

The Municipality of Meaford Official Plan (Meaford Plan) was modified by the County of Grey in 2005 and provides the basis for managing growth in the Municipality to 2025. The Meaford Plan states that the urban area has enough land to provide for 20 years of employment and residential growth. One of the Meaford Plan’s objectives is to direct properly planned recreational/residential development on full municipal or communal services to the rural area between the Meaford Urban Area and the eastern boundary of the Municipality (S. A2.2.2.2). It is a further objective to discourage further large scale development serviced by private sewage disposal (S.A2.1.2.7). Furthermore, the Meaford Plan encourages the development of passive low-intensity recreational and eco-tourism uses in the rural areas of the Municipality (s. A2.4.2.2). A strategic objective of the Meaford Plan is to protect the Municipality’s natural attributes, such as its rural character and natural heritage systems and ensure that the recreational and tourism uses will continue to thrive (S.A2.5.2.10)

The proposed MHR is to be located between the Meaford Urban Area and the eastern boundary of the Municipality, thereby satisfying the above noted objective. The proposed development contemplates recreational and eco-tourism uses in a manner that will enhance access to and will ensure protection of the Municipality’s natural attributes, including the Algonquin Ridge.

Schedule A and A-1 of the Meaford Plan designates the majority of the property as “Rural” and the remaining portions of the property “Environmental Protection” (Attachment 21). Schedule B designates a portion of the property as “Hazard Land” and identifies a Karst Topography overlay designation for the entire property.

The Rural designation generally includes all land in the rural areas of the Municipality, which do not satisfy the criteria for land in the Agricultural or Specialty Agricultural designation (S. A3.2.3). The Environmental Protection designation includes significant natural heritage features and any other areas that have been determined to be environmentally significant (S. A3.3.2). The Special Policy Areas designation applies to lands that are planned to be the site of new recreational, residential and/or commercial development (S. A3.1.9). As such, a Special Policy Area designation would be the appropriate designation which is site specific to MHR is what is outlined in the draft Meaford Official Plan Amendment.

The Rural designation permits agricultural uses, single detached dwellings, bed and breakfast establishments, home occupations, accessory residential uses and commercial uses on farm properties, passive recreational uses, institutional, forestry and resource management and open air recreational uses such as golf courses, mountain biking facilities, cross country ski facilities subject to B2.3.4.6 of the Meaford Plan and seasonal concert events subject to B2.3.4.7 of the Official Plan (S. B2.3.3). A limited number of new lots for residential purposes may be created in the Rural designation; however, no more than two lots can be created from an original Township Lot, it must be larger than 0.8 ha, generally with 100 metres frontages and more than 300 metres from a Rural Settlement Area (S. B2.3.4.6).

The development of new recreational uses requires a zoning by-law amendment and is subject to site plan control. Applications for new recreational uses shall justify how the proposed use is compatible with the rural character of the area, is designed and sited to blend in with surrounding land uses, is located where it will not impact existing agricultural operations on adjacent lands and is buffered from residential uses. It must also demonstrate that it can be serviced appropriately (S. B2.3.4.6).

Although the MHR proposed uses which are permitted and compatible in a rural landscape, the scale of the proposed development requires a re-designation with site specific policies. The proposed uses are compatible with the rural character of the area, which is characterized by existing rural residential subdivisions, open space uses and recreational uses and some commercial uses that exist in the area. Given that the area is characterized by rural residential and open spaces uses, and limited agricultural operations, the proposed development would not create an unacceptable impact to surrounding agricultural operations in the area. Other impacts have been addressed in the supporting technical studies.

According to the Meaford Plan, permitted uses within the Environmental Protection designation are limited to conservation and passive recreational uses, which does not include golf course or similar land uses. Components of the Environmental Protection designation include wetlands, provincially significant areas of natural and scientific interest, significant portions of habitat of endangered, threatened or vulnerable species, significant wildlife areas, fish habitat and any other areas identified through the planning process. The plan further states that no buildings or site alteration is permitted within the Environmental Protection designation (S. B3.1.3). Adjacent lands to natural heritage feature must be considered and must be compatible with development. No development shall be permitted on these lands unless an Environmental Impact Study and/or subwatershed study and/or a geotechnical study is completed and approved by Council (S. B3.1.4.3).

All rivers and streams are considered environmentally significant and therefore the policies state that no development is permitted below the top of bank of any river or stream (S. C2.1). Furthermore, the Meaford Plan encourages Woodlands to be retained in their natural state, whenever possible (S. C8).

Areas identified as containing Karst Topography will require an investigation of the potential impacts of development on the surface and groundwater supply is required for development applications (S. C15).

The Karst Analysis provides confirmation as to the limited potential for karst topography on the subject property. Proposed uses within the Environmental Protection designation include passive recreational uses, which may include associated structures.

Specific proposed policies within the draft Meaford Official Plan Amendment contain provisions regarding additional permissions within the Environmental Protection designation, including golf course uses, trails and associated structures. The limits of natural heritage features and areas are based on findings as indicated in the supporting studies completed to date.

The preferred method of servicing for lands within Special Policy Areas in the Plan is full municipal services (S. D1.5). A comprehensive servicing analysis is required prior to the consideration of any proposal to extend or provide municipal water or sewage services, which shall evaluate the scale and nature of the specific development and anticipated development, examine the physical or environmental features of the land and their potential impacts to the provision of services, assess the capacity of the existing infrastructure leading to the development and the layout of the proposal servicing system including pipes, pumping stations and emergency structures (S. D1.8).

An FSR and EIS have been submitted in support of the application, which examine the proposed servicing strategy, impacts to environmental features and the effect on the existing servicing system.

The subject property has frontage on Highway 26, which is a Provincial Highway, and 3<sup>rd</sup> line, which is a municipal road. The 10<sup>th</sup> line is an “unopened road allowance”. Section D2.2.1 of the Official Plan indicates that all development abutting Highway 26 is subject to the requirements of the Ministry of Transportation. Access to 3<sup>rd</sup> Line is under the jurisdiction of the Municipality. The creation of new lots on unopened road allowances is not permitted (S. D2.5.1). Exceptions will be considered in areas where development is proposed by way of plan of condominium where multiple accesses over condominium blocks is required to access other condominium blocks.

The Meaford Plan states that it is only to be amended when the policies of the Plan do not address issues or when issues have been raised within respect to site-specific proposals (S. E4 b)). In addition, any amendment must consider the rationale or basis for the change, the direction provided by the PPS, the goals and objective of the Official Plan, the desirability and appropriateness of changing the plan, the impacts the proposed change will have on the character of the area, and conformity with the County of Grey Plan. In addition there must be sufficient documentation to support the proposed amendment including information related to the physical growth of the Municipality, impacts on the economy, the environment, agriculture and social well-being of the community (S. E4 c)). The Meaford Plan recognizes that the boundaries of the Environmental Protection designation may be imprecise and subject to change (S. E5).

## Summary

The proposed MHR would require a re-designation from the Rural designation to a site specific designation, which would appropriately recognize the proposed uses. Based on the above considerations and findings of the technical studies the subject applications are consistent with the applicable goals, objectives and policies as set out in the Meaford Plan. As outlined in Section E4, the current Official Plan policies do not address the proposed site-specific nature of the development proposal, which is the basis for the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment to the Meaford Official Plan seeks to incorporate key policies in the Meaford Plan, where appropriate.

### **7.5. Municipality of Meaford Zoning By-law No. 60-2009**

The Meaford Zoning By-law 60-2009 was last consolidated on August 2, 2010. The subject property has several zone classifications. Lot 10 is zoned County Residential, Development and Environmental Protection. Lot 9 is zoned County Residential, Rural and Environmental Protection (Attachment 22).

The Country Residential Zone applies to developed estate and country residential subdivisions where larger lots and homes are permitted and full multiple services are not provided (S. 4.0). Permitted uses include single detached dwellings, home occupations, bed and breakfast, custom workshop and private home daycares (S. 6.1). The minimum lot area is 8000 sq. m and the minimum lot frontage is 100 m (S. 6.2).

The Development Zone applies to lands that are identified in the Official Plan as being suitable in principle for additional lot creation and new development (S. 4.0). Permitted uses include agricultural, conservation, single detached dwelling, home occupation, private home daycare and any existing legal use as of September 21, 2009 (S. 8.1).

The Rural Zone applies to the majority of remaining rural lands in the municipality. Permitted uses include agricultural, conservation, single detached dwelling, equestrian facility, forestry, home industry/occupation, nursery, private club, residential care facility, veterinary clinic, wood chipping establishment (S. 8.1).

The Environmental Protection Zone applies to all lands that are identified as hazard environmental lands by the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority or the Ministry of Natural Resources (S. 4.0). Permitted uses include anything that existed prior to September 21, 2009 and passive recreation activities.

The draft Zoning By-law Amendment proposes that the subject lands be rezoned to Major Recreational Zone, Residential One, Residential Four and Environmental Protection Zone all with various exceptions and the Open Space Zone.

The Major Recreational Zone applies to lands that are the size of large-scale, privately operated recreational uses such as tourist establishments, hotels, golf related businesses, mountain bike facilities and recreational equipment sales and service (S.4.0).

The Residential One Zone applies to lands that are developed with low-density residential uses and limited accessory uses. The Residential Four Zone is intended to apply to residential lands in new subdivisions within the Urban Living Area in the future. This zone was selected as it

contains reduced minimum lot frontages and lot areas and also permits medium density residential uses as well as low density residential uses (S. 4.0).

## **7.6. Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Regulations**

Ontario Regulation 151/06 mapping identifies portions of the subject property that are within the regulated area (Attachment 23). The regulated area includes the ridge feature along Highway 26 and areas surrounding the watercourses on the property. The supporting studies further define and recognize these regulation limits. The supporting studies have been undertaken in consultation with the GSCA. It is recognized that a development permit pursuant to the applicable regulations may be required as a condition of approval for the draft plan and/or condominium applications.

## **8. Non-Statutory Documents**

The following documents have been prepared by others for the Municipality of Meaford and County of Grey. Although these documents are not applicable planning policy, they have been considered in the development of MHR.

### **8.1. Meaford Economic Development Strategy**

Meaford has developed an Economic Development Strategy (Strategy) (Attachment 24), with an objective to “Develop specific strategies for growing the economic strength and resilience of the Municipality of Meaford”. The Strategy was developed in two phases starting in late 2008 and a final Strategy was produced in February 2010. Specific strategies are focused on growing the municipal tax revenue by focusing its economic development resources on four strategic business sectors: agri-business, tourism, retail and green business. In particular, the Municipality has identified the following strategies for each of the four categories:

*Tourism* – Develop new attractions, especially off-season, market to target audience, support visitors

*Retail* – support new store owners, market Meaford to investors, business registry, implement community improvement plan

*Agri-business* – align municipal plans with promoting agri-business, business registry, integrate agri-business with tourism and green business

*Green Business* – proactively attract green business, market Meaford to green businesses green Meaford

The MHR will support several strategies identified in the Strategy, in particular the development of tourism and recreation, green business and the retail sector.

### **8.2. Healthy Communities Partnership**

In Grey and Bruce County, Planners, the Health Unit and many other organizations are collaborating to create and enhance environments that are supportive of health. This partnership is currently working on a rural model at the Regional and Municipal level, which was initiated in 2010 at a conference. In February 2011, the partnership undertook a report entitled “Grey Bruce Community Picture”, which outlines the priorities for action being supported by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. The key areas of the report explore physical activity,

sport and recreation, injury prevention, healthy eating, tobacco use and exposure, substance and alcohol misuse and mental health promotion. The importance of promoting healthy communities is a key strategy in land use planning, which has garnered the support of County Municipal and provincial representatives. MHR seeks to promote recreation and therefore supports the healthy communities movement.

### **8.3. Housing Study for Grey County**

N. Barry Lyon Consultants prepared a Housing Needs Study (Housing Study) for the County of Grey, which provided the County with a base set of data related to housing in the County. It was also to demonstrate conformity to new housing policies set out under OPA 80. The Housing Study finds that population growth in the County has been relatively limited; however, the overall population is aging and is relatively old in comparison to most other areas in the Province. There are a large amount of non-permanent / seasonal dwellings units in the County and these numbers appear to be decreasing as more of the population moves towards living in the region on a full time basis. Both individual and household income in the County are relatively low compared to other areas in the Province and a large proportion of the residents commute out of the County for jobs.

According to the Housing Study, housing development activity has slowed recently and the majority of new development is low-density units with some medium density units being built. A large portion of rental units in the County are believed to be in poor condition and in need of repair. Phase 2 of the Housing Study recommends that the County take a leadership role on housing issues and develop a comprehensive framework that would result in the co-ordination of the local municipalities. The study recommends that specific programs and projects within the County's communities that assist in focusing the resources of the County be identified. The Housing Study also acknowledges limited supply of short-term housing, affordable housing and variety of housing types in Meaford and the County.

### **8.4. Grey County Growth Management Strategy**

Malone Given Parson Ltd. prepared a Growth Management Strategy to assist in the completion of the 5 year review of the County Plan. The recommended strategy proposed revisions of the County Plan, in particular relating to population growth projections and allocations for the County to 2031. A more detailed review of the strategy is included in the Market Demand Analysis.

## **9. Planning Analysis/Justification**

The section above provides a review of statutory and non-statutory documents as applicable to the proposed MHR and associated development applications. In our opinion, MHR is supported by the planning policy framework and is well positioned to meet the needs of the residents and visitors in Meaford and the County.

The materials in support of the proposed MHR and associated development applications have been based on extensive pre-consultations with various stakeholders as noted above and includes a comprehensive analysis of planning matters. As mentioned above, our pre-consultations with Staff identified that it was appropriate to provide a "Recreation Resort Area

Review or modified comprehensive review” in support of the development applications. This review was to include the following components:

- *A review of population and growth projections, included in Grey County’s Growth Management Strategy (GMS), OPA 80 and the Municipality of Meaford Official Plan and growth studies/ strategies including a component which will address permanent vs. seasonal growth.*
- *A review of ‘full build-outs’ of neighbouring recreational developments including Lora Bay (and other County Resorts) with respect to the need for additional recreational and resorts.*
- *Description of the recreational resource, how it will be developed and justification for the size of the associated residential and commercial components.*
- *Description of the linkage between the resort, hotel, wellness centre, spa, sports facilities and residential units.*
- *Why the uses are appropriately located on the subject lands and cannot be accommodated elsewhere (both within and outside settlement areas).*
- *Confirms lands are not unduely constrained by geotechnical hazards, agricultural potential or natural heritage features.*
- *Addresses impacts of the development on a local and regional scale insofar as cross-jurisdictional issues.*
- *How the MHR is to be serviced.*
- *How the phasing of new development will ensure that the establishment of the recourse based recreational use either in advance of or in concert with the residential component.*

Based on the above components, the following review provides a detailed discussion of how each of the items above has been included as part of this review and demonstrates the appropriate justification for the Municipal and County development applications.

## **9.1 Review of Population and Growth Projections**

The Market Demand Analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the current and projected demographic and socio-economic conditions and demand for recreational housing in Ontario. Meaford is located within proximity to one of the largest and fastest growing City-Regions in North America. Relatively strong household income levels and a growing percentage of the 40-64 age group will contribute to the growing demand for recreational-based communities within Ontario. Furthermore, the analysis explores and evaluates the County of Grey OPA 80 projection for seasonal housing growth and indicates that regional demographic and socio-economic conditions indicate that a significantly higher seasonal population forecast can be expected for the Municipality of Meaford over the next 20 years. This analysis provides the demographic and growth management basis for the MHR.

## **9.2 Review of Full Build Out of Neighboring Communities**

The Market Demand Analysis explores current and full build-out of recreational-oriented development in the surrounding market including Lora Bay and the Georgian Bay Club. Furthermore, Appendix A of the Analysis contains a review of commercial development in the area and Ontario. The Appendix explores a wide range of other resort and second home communities and the recent development and social trends in the resort market place, as well as an overview of resort/residential development alternatives. While the Analysis acknowledges that further development opportunities still exist at some of these neighboring communities, these developments do not offer a comparable product to the Meaford Highlands Resort. For

many individuals, home ownership in a recreational-oriented community in Ontario is not obtainable in most communities at the current price levels. One of the unique features of MHR is that it will provide opportunities for home ownership to a different market population. The analysis further identifies market demand for the particular composition of the resort and residential components envisioned for MHR.

### **9.3 Description of Recreational Resource, Development and Justification**

MHR is to be developed as a resort and residential community that promotes health and wellness and provides for a fully integrated development with a wide variety of recreational and residential accommodations, features and attractions. The recreational resource components are comprised of the golf course, which will be established based on the natural terrain, the Algonquin Ridge, which is a significant landform and resource attribute on the subject property and the watercourses, trails and open space areas that will provide other recreational resource opportunities. This will facilitate recreation at MHR based on the physical attributes of the land. A variety of year-round in-door and outdoor recreation opportunities will be provided including a multi-use trail system, wellness centre, golf and practice facility, spa, aquatics centre, outdoor amphitheater and accessory uses. While some of these facilities have in-door components, many of the resort components and residential uses will be integrated and sited to maximize the recreational resource uses on the subject property, including the golf course and the Algonquin Ridge. The recreation facilities will support the protection and conservation of natural heritage features and will provide public access to these features. In addition, new facilities will expand and build upon the type of uses already offered as the resort is constructed in phases.

MHR will be developed through five phases, but has been planned comprehensively. Each phase includes the introduction of additional recreational elements, which have been designed to be integrated with prior phases through physical linkages and connections. The success of the resort requires the provision of both resort recreational components and residential and commercial uses. The recreational resources will provide a draw and attraction factor to support the residential and commercial uses and similarly the provision for residential and commercial uses will provide a draw to the recreational and resort components. The variety of the resort components and recreational facilities envisioned as part of MHR supports the amount and variety of residential uses and the amount of commercial space proposed. The appropriateness of the commercial uses and programming of the resort components are discussed in detail in the PKF analysis as part of the Market Demand Analysis. All components within the MHR are interdependent on each other and have been phased in a specific manner to provide a balance in the distribution of residential and resort components.

The number of residential units is based on the demand findings of the Market Demand Analysis, which provides support for the proposed number of units and the unit types. These findings considered the current demographic, socio-economic conditions, demand for seasonal dwellings, the proximity to recreation uses in an ideal location, price point and the unique MHR vision. The absorption forecasts in the analysis identify a projected absorption of the proposed residential units and notes that the projected absorption rates are supported by the high demand for recreational housing in the southern Georgian Bay area, the great potential for future seasonal housing growth, the unique attractive qualities of the proposed residential product and the resort and recreational features of MHR as well as limited potential housing supply inventory within local and surrounding market area.

The accessory commercial retail space is to be developed in later phases and would support users of the resort, recreation facilities and residential units. The proposed commercial space is

to be complementary to the primary uses on the MHR. The size of the commercial component was considered as part of the overall facilities analysis, which is outlined in Appendix A of the Market Demand Analysis.

#### **9.4 Linkage between Resort and Residential**

The proposed residential development is required to support the resource based recreational components. The proposed resort recreational uses generate the need and desire for residential uses in close proximity to the features. As demonstrated in the Market Demand Analysis, access to recreational amenities has been, and is expected to continue to be a significant draw for both permanent and seasonal residents as well as visitors to the area. Residents and visitors are expected to be attracted to seasonal and permanent dwellings in close proximity to recreational and resort features. At the same time, the resort recreation components require residents and visitors to be in close proximity to support programming opportunities and patronage.

There are also further linkages between the resort and residential components as part of the MHR, which include physical connections between these areas in the form of trails, roads and open space areas. These physical linkages provide further means for integration between the residential, resort, recreational and commercial uses.

#### **9.5 Why is this an Appropriate Location**

As outlined in the Market Demand Analysis, access to recreational amenities along southern Georgian Bay has been a key draw for residents and visitors. There is a demographic and socio-economic demand for recreational amenities and communities in Meaford and Grey County due to the subject property's proximity to the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Meaford Economic Development Strategy (MEDS) states that these proposed uses are desired within the Municipality of Meaford; however, the proposed recreation and resort components require more land than can be provided for such a use within the existing settlement area. Furthermore, these uses cannot be too close to the existing settlement area (either east towards Thornbury, west towards Meaford), as there is concern that such a location would facilitate undesirable development on the fringe of the existing settlement area boundaries. These factors demonstrate the appropriateness of the location for MHR in relation to a settlement context.

Various aspects of the resort programming incorporate the natural environment including the multi-purpose trails, wellness centre, outdoor education and facilities that must exist in a setting that provides accessibility to the environmental features. The "healthy lifestyle" concept envisions both residential and recreational uses in close proximity to these areas, which do not exist elsewhere. As discussed previously, the subject property contains a specific configuration of resources, views and physical attributes that do not exist elsewhere in the area, which support the appropriateness of the location for MHR. The recreational and residential components have been sited and positioned to utilize these resources.

MHR is providing a unique resort development based on the "healthy lifestyle community" concept, which is not yet a common resort development in the County and across North America. The MHR combines unique resort, recreational and residential components, which are based on essentially a healthy lifestyle community theme. Many resorts are focused on a single

resource opportunity; whereas the subject property affords several recreational resource opportunities.

## **9.6 Confirmation of Constraints**

A number of technical studies have confirmed that the subject lands are not unduly constrained by geotechnical hazards, agricultural potential or natural heritage features.

As outlined in this Report, the subject property does not provide significant potential for agricultural operations. The lands have been determined to be “Rural” thereby consisting of land and soil classifications that are lower priority for agricultural purposes.

The EIS includes an assessment of all natural heritage features on the subject property. Based on field inventories completed to date, the EIS did not identify any designated features such as PSW’s or ANSI’s on the property. Areas that exhibit significance, including significant valleylands and significant woodlands have been identified and evaluated in accordance with the policies of the PPS. The results of the impact assessment determined that the proposed development will have a net neutral effect on natural heritage resources.

Natural hazard setbacks and slope stability requirements on the subject property have been assessed by Terraprobe. This analysis has determined an appropriate building setback, which has been considered in the siting of buildings and structures as illustrated on the attached development concept C10. All buildings and structures are proposed beyond the stable top of slope.

## **9.7 Cross Jurisdictional Considerations**

The MHR has been planned and considered in the context of Meaford, the County and within the Greater Toronto Area. The Market Demand Analysis provides a regional market and local market assessment for permanent, seasonal and resort development. As well, the impacts of the proposed development have been assessed based on the local and regional market. Furthermore, Appendix A of the Market Demand Analysis included a review of resort and recreational communities in Ontario.

## **9.8 Servicing**

MHR is to be serviced based on full municipal services. As outlined in Section 3.1.6, water supply will be provided through construction of a new trunk watermain from the Municipality’s proposed St. Vincent booster pumping station to the subject property. Local water mains with service connections for each unit will be constructed within the proposed municipal and private roads as appropriate in accordance with Municipal standards. MHR will be serviced by gravity sanitary sewers and two pumping stations. These pumping stations are required due to the depth of the watercourses bisecting the subject property. An outlet for the wastewater generated by the development will be a gravity sewer, which will be designed and constructed and will ultimately connect to the Municipal sewage treatment plant.

Four new stormwater management ponds are proposed to address stormwater management for the resort. There is one wet facility proposed, which is located in the northwest portion of the subject property. The others facilities are proposed to be dry facilities and are located at the south-west corner and north-east areas of the property. The ponds will address the post development flows including quality and quantity control as required for the subject property. An

additional element of the proposed stormwater management design for the MHR includes the accommodation of flows within the roadside ditches within the municipal road allowances. The FSR demonstrates the appropriateness and feasibility of the servicing strategy for the MHR.

## 9.9 Phasing

MHR is to be developed in 5 phases in accordance with the attached Phasing Plan (Attachment 14). Certain resort and recreational components will be developed in earlier phases, along with appropriate amount of residential uses. Additional residential and resort components will be constructed in subsequent phases. Each phase will include extensions to the road network and stormwater management facilities, where appropriate, in order to support the development phase.

The proposed phasing of the residential units is supported by the Market Demand Analysis. The absorption forecasts display an annual absorption forecast of approximately 40 units per year, with a higher uptake in the first 5 years of construction. The analysis also finds that the market can absorb the resort recreation components in the first two years of construction with some of the accessory commercial and retail space being absorbed after the first five years of construction.

Construction of the recreational resort components will be undertaken together with the residential uses in the first phase to ensure a balanced approach to the development of the resort.

## 10. Conclusion

MHR has been planned, designed and programmed as a “healthy lifestyle community dedicated to wellness”. The foundation of the resort is the subject property’s physical attributes, including the Algonquin Ridge and associated watercourses, which provide opportunities for a four season recreation resort, golf course and residential uses. The fully integrated components of the resort to be serviced by full municipal services and the surrounding transportation infrastructure. Connections through the resort support the integration of recreational and residential uses and provide for an appropriate phasing of development.

It has been determined that current demographic and socio-economic conditions support a strong demand for resort recreational and residential uses in the area. Access to recreational amenities in Meaford in proximity to southern Georgian Bay waterfront is a significant draw for both permanent and seasonal residents. MHR will provide a wide variety of residential and resort accommodations based on the physical attributes and resources of the subject property. The variety of recreational uses that are anticipated and the variety of dwelling types proposed, as well as the anticipated price and ownership structure for MHR is anticipated to appeal to a broad population including families, empty-nesters and retirees.

The amount of residential and commercial uses has been supported by market demand and facility analysis and the recreational components are based on the achievement of a resource based recreational development.

The County Official Plan Amendment, Municipality of Meaford Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications that facilitate the proposed MHR have been prepared

based on a significant amount of technical justification, including various supporting engineering and environmental studies. These studies provide a summary of the technical basis for MHR and address consistency with the PPS, County Plan and the Meaford Plan, where appropriate.

The development applications are consistent with the applicable policies of the PPS as described herein, including the policies concerning growth management, development and land use patterns, housing, infrastructure, economic prosperity, natural hazards, water, and energy and air quality. Consistency with the natural heritage policies of the PPS is discussed in the EIS, which acknowledges that certain inventories are pending completion. It is recognized that this report does not have the benefit of the conclusion of these inventories, which may result in an addendum to this report. Consistency with the cultural heritage policies of the PPS will be considered following the completion further archeological assessments of the subject property.

Given the unique nature of MHR, appropriate consideration has been given to certain policies in the rural area policies of the PPS and other sections of the PPS. A modified comprehensive review (RRAR) has been completed in support of the subject applications, which supports the establishment of MHR in the appropriate planning context. The requirements for this review have been provided herein and in the Market Demand Analysis, thereby fulfilling the requirements outlined by the authorities.

Although amendments to the County Plan and Meaford Plan are required to implement the proposed MHR, the applications respond to an identified need and have appropriate regard to the applicable provisions of the County Plan and Meaford Plan.

The proposed amendments also seek to implement policies of the County Plan, OPA 80 and the Meaford Plan based on good planning principles for this specific development proposal. The requirements for consideration of amendments to the official plans have been considered and are discussed herein. In our opinion, the subject applications have planning merit and should proceed through the public process as prescribed by the Planning Act.

MHR will provide an economic opportunity for the County, Municipality of Meaford and surrounding area by providing an attractive, appropriate, unique and desirable resort development.