Appendix C

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Terms of Reference Checklist

Appendix C | Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Terms of Reference Checklist

☐ The EIA should describe and illustrate the boundaries of the Project Location and Study Area along with existing land use and details regarding the type of development.

☐ The EIA will include the zoning and all designations of OP's pertaining to the Project Location and Study Area. This includes land use designations from other municipal planning and/or policy documents, such as Secondary Plans.

☐ Land use designations from other applicable planning documents (i.e. Town of LaSalle) will be clearly described and the limits identified in the report mapping.

Biophysical Inventory

☐ The existing conditions, such as natural features and functions located within the Study Area must be clearly described and clearly mapped on the most up-to-date aerial imagery.

☐ All designated environmental features (i.e. natural hazard features or other natural heritage features identified in the OP's) must be identified in the mapping and described in the report. These features include provincial or regional Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs), Provincially and Locally Significant Wetlands (PSW's and LSW's), Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA's), Significant Wildlife Habitat, Significant Woodlands, Significant Valleylands, unevaluated wetlands, etc.

☐ The EIA should identify the extent of natural heritage/hazard features (should they be located within the Study Area, pending access). Boundaries of natural heritage features should be confirmed in the field and mapped on a figure in the report.

☐ A description of the soils, landforms, and surficial geology based on a review of readily-available mapping and literature must be described in the report. Available topographical information will be provided on constraints mapping and will include any staking done to date as well as the calculated hazard limits, if applicable.

☐ Hydrological and hydrogeological resources and issues, including wellhead protection areas, surface water features, recharge/discharge zones, meander belts, groundwater quality and quantity, groundwater elevations and flow directions, and connections between groundwater and surface water features will be identified in the report based on data from the consulting team, if it is available.

☐ The vegetation communities must be identified using the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) System for Southern Ontario protocol (Lee *et al.* 1998) with 2008 updates (Lee 2008) to vegetation type, where possible. The communities will be identified on report mapping using the appropriate ELC codes, as well as described in the text. As a component of the ELC, a plant list, organized by vegetation community must be included. The list will indicate provincially-, regionally-, and/or locally-rare, Threatened or Endangered species. This should include information from the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC).

☐ A two-season vegetation survey (summer and fall) is required. A list of vegetation species observed will be compiled using the Southern Ontario Floral Inventory Analysis, must include plant communities based on ELC, and will indicate each species rarity and/or designations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA; 2007), where applicable. This should include information from the NHIC.

☐ The EER requires a breeding bird survey. The survey must be conducted during the breeding bird season at an appropriate time of day, in appropriate weather conditions, and by a qualified professional. A minimum of two surveys are required and they must follow generally-accepted scientific protocols, such as those outlined in the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Instructions for General Atlassing (Birds Canada 2021). A list of the breeding birds must be included. The list will indicate any provincially-, regionally-, and/or locally-rare, Threatened or Endangered species.

☐ The EER requires a snake survey (both artificial cover object [ACO] and visual encounter surveys [VES]). The survey will be completed based on our experience with requirements related to SAR in the area, where applicable, and conducted in accordance with generally-accepted protocols described within Survey Protocol for Ontario's Species at Risk Snakes (OMNRF 2016).

☐ The EER requires an amphibian breeding survey. The survey must be conducted during the amphibian breeding season and by a qualified professional. Surveys will be conducted in accordance with generally-accepted protocols, such as the Marsh Monitoring Program Participant's Handbook for Surveying Amphibians (Bird Studies Canada 2009). If present, the list will indicate any provincially-, regionally-, and/or locally-rare, Threatened or Endangered species.

☐ An aquatic assessment should be conducted due to the presence of suitable fish habitat as identified in background documents and confirmed on-site. The assessment should include a description of watercourses or other fish habitat on and/or adjacent to the Project Location (where site access is permitted).

☐ Habitat for Species at Risk will be assessed within the Project Location due to the identification of potential SAR in background documents. The assessment should include a description of suitable habitat and associated possible SAR.

☐ All incidental wildlife observed should be reported on and included in the EIA. The list must include an analysis for the presence of federally-, or provincially-rare, Threatened, or Endangered species.

☐ All records of federally-rare or provincially-rare, Threatened, or Endangered species observed during formal surveys or incidentally, will be submitted to the NHIC using the most up to date version of the Ontario Species at Risk Observation Reporting Form.

Biophysical Analysis

☐ The biophysical analysis will address current policy, technical documents, and legislation including, but not limited to, the Species Conservation Act (SCA; 2025), the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS; 2024), Natural Heritage Reference Manual (2010), Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide (2000), Significant Wildlife Habitat Ecoregion 7E Criteria Schedules (2015), etc.

☐ The staking of significant natural features (e.g. woodlots, PSW's, etc.) may be required. Staking will generally occur between the end of May and the end of October. Any staking that occurs outside of this time may require a confirmatory visit between May and October.

☐ The EIA will include a biophysical analysis that identifies the significance of natural features and functions.

☐ A functional assessment of the Study Area describing the ecology of the natural heritage features and functions within the Study Area should be provided. The functional assessment may include ecological function, wetland function, natural heritage features and landscapes, benefits of importance to humans, and corridors and linkages, as required.

Development Proposal Description

☐ The EIA will, at a minimum, include a preliminary site plan showing the type(s) and location(s) of the proposed development overlaid on a recent orthophoto. The site plan will clearly show setbacks and/or buffers, including distance from proposed development areas and proposed structures to lot lines and/or to environmental features and functions designated for protection, where applicable.

☐ The EIA will describe other relevant issues (e.g. servicing, stormwater management, municipal drainage, open space dedication, hazards, etc.) from an ecological perspective, pending receipt of relevant reports from other disciplines, should they have the potential to impact the identified natural hazard/heritage features. These can be highlighted within the proposed development description, or, where applicable, under the potential impact assessment.

Potential Impact Assessment

☐ Mapping (at a minimum) shall consist of the following:

a) All mapping must have a title, figure number, north arrow, legend, and scale or scale bar.
b) A site location map that provides the regional or watershed context of the Study Area.
c) The extent of the natural heritage system and its components must be clearly demarcated on an air photo base, if applicable.
d) The locations of all watercourses and waterbodies.
e) Vegetation communities must be delineated and identified using ELC.
f) The location of any rare, Threatened, or Endangered species and/or populations may be referenced in the EIA, where appropriate.
g) The location of any important wildlife features (e.g. hibernacula, den, stick nest, etc.) may be identified pending sensitivity to public information.

☐ The potential impacts to the features and functions of natural areas should be identified and discussed.

☐ An assessment of the potential impact on significant wildlife habitat at a local, watershed, and provincial (if applicable) level should be provided using the Ecoregion 7E criteria schedules.

☐ In the case of significant natural heritage features and other significant natural features (as confirmed through field studies), the EIA must demonstrate that there is no development or site alteration within the feature with the exception of uses as specified in the OP and/or prior approvals. The EIA must determine appropriate buffers from significant natural features.

☐ The EIA should include one or more figures which overlays the proposed development on the ecological constraints of the site. The analysis should determine the area(s) and type(s) of natural features and function that may be directly and/or indirectly impacted by the proposed development. Proposed buffers which will protect natural features and functions should be clearly shown on figures. Rationale for proposed buffers will also be provided.

Mitigation Strategies

☐ Avoidance of any natural heritage feature is the preferred approach to mitigation unless otherwise specified in the OP and/or prior approvals.

☐ Determine adequate buffers through the identification of the critical function and protection zones of any identified natural areas.

☐ Where avoidance of a feature is not feasible or possible, all feasible mitigation measures/approaches should be explored and described in the report. These may include edge management plans, buffer plantings, fencing, low impact designs (LID), etc.

☐ The EIA should provide a detailed outline of mitigation measures intended to eliminate or reduce potential construction-related impacts to areas designated for protection. Recommendations for Best Management Practices during construction should be provided. This may include silt fencing, tree protection, fencing, identification of timing or seasonal constraints to construction or restoration, etc.

☐ Mitigation for negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions (or to achieve no net negative impact) may include, at the discretion of the planning authority, approaches to replace lost areas or functions. If acceptable, replacement shall, to the extent possible, occur within the same watershed as the proposed development or site alteration. The appropriate amount of replacement will be determined through discussions with the Town and will be agreed to by all parties in writing.

☐ If monitoring is required, the details of a monitoring program must be agreed to in writing by the pertinent planning authorities, and other parties (if required).