

850 and 858 York Mills Road – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Application – Decision Report – Approval

Date: October 2, 2025

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, North York District

Ward: 16 – Don Valley East

Planning Application Number: 18 270584 NNY 16 OZ

Related Planning Application Number: 18 270588 NNY 16 SA

SUMMARY

This Report recommends approval of the application to amend the former North York Zoning By-law to permit an 8 storey mixed use building (35 metres in height) containing retail uses on the ground floor and self-storage space and office uses on the floors above at 850 and 858 York Mills Road. The building would have three marquees (two marquees at the northern corners at a height of 38.24 metres and a taller marquee at the southern elevation with a height of 46.4 metres). Two levels of underground vehicular parking with 679 total spaces are proposed below the building.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Community Planning, North York District recommends that:

1. City Council amend City of North York Zoning By-law 7625, for the lands municipally known as 850 and 858 York Mills Road substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment included as Attachment 5 to this Report.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Zoning By-law Amendment as may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Development Review Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this Report in the current budget year or in future years.

DECISION HISTORY

OPA 231

On December 16, 17 and 18, 2013, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 231 for *Employment Areas* as part of the five-year Official Plan (OP) and Municipal Comprehensive Review for Employment Lands. Council's decision on OPA 231 can be accessed at this link:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.PG28.2>

In July 2014, OPA 231 was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It was subsequently appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). Over the years, the Tribunal brought portions of OPA 231 into effect including the designations and associated land use policies.

Among the various policy changes, OPA 231 introduced two new *Employment Areas* designations (*Core Employment Areas* and *General Employment Areas*) and allowed restaurants and all types of retail and service uses up to a size of 6,000 square metres in the *General Employment Areas* designation. OPA 231 also continued to permit office uses in both the *Core Employment Areas* and *General Employment Areas*.

Bill 97 & Provincial Planning Statement 2024

On April 6, 2023, the *Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act* ("Bill 97") was introduced to the legislature that would make changes to statutes including the *Planning Act*. The Province also released the proposed Provincial Planning Statement ("PPS 2023") that would combine the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Growth Plan (2020) into a single document.

As part of Bill 97, the Province changed the definition of "area of employment" in the *Planning Act* by narrowing the scope of uses to: i) manufacturing, ii) warehousing, iii) research and development in connection with manufacturing, iv) retail and office uses associated with the above, and v) facilities ancillary to all of the above. The new definition excludes commercial—including retail and office not associated with the primary employment uses—and institutional uses.

Bill 97 also introduced a transition provision to allow municipalities to authorize the continuation of "lawfully established" uses that have been excluded from the new definition. A municipality can continue to permit such uses through the adoption of Official Plan policies.

On October 20, 2024, the Provincial changes were proclaimed and the amended definitions of "area of employment" in the *Planning Act*, which was reproduced in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 ("PPS 2024"), came into effect. The PPS 2024 also states that it applies to all decisions in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter made on or after October 20, 2024.

In response to these changes, on May 21 and 22, 2025, Council adopted OPA 804, with the purpose of:

- Ensuring “lawfully established” uses in *General Employment Areas* and *Core Employment Areas* are permitted through the transition provision introduced by Bill 97;
- Aligning employment policies and land use permissions in the Official Plan to conform with the new definition of “area of employment” in the *Planning Act* and “employment areas” in the PPS 2024; and,
- Identifying 255 hectares within *Employment Areas* across the City for redesignation to *Regeneration Areas* and *Institutional Areas*

OPA 804 was adopted under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. Under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, the Minister is the approval authority for the OPA and their decision is not subject to appeal. At this time, the Minister has not made a decision on OPA 804 and it is not in force and effect.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDS

Description

The subject site is located on the north side of York Mills Road between Leslie Street and Don Mills Road. It is a corner lot located northwest of the intersection of Lesmill Road and York Mills Road. The site has a lot area of 14,051 square metres and a lot frontage of 111.5 metres on Lesmill Road and 127.3 metres on York Mills Road. The east half of the site is vacant, vegetated land and the west half of the site is used as open storage and surface parking. See Attachment 2 for the Location Map.

Surrounding Uses

North: vacant land and low to mid-rise employment buildings.

South: York Mills Road bridge and underpass, beyond which are low rise employment and retail buildings. A parking area is located under the underpass.

East: Lesmill Road, beyond which are retail and employment uses and a hotel.

West: Vacant lands, beyond which is a GO rail line and retail uses.

THE APPLICATION

Description

The application proposes an 8 storey mixed use building (35 metres in height) containing retail uses on the ground floor and self-storage space and office uses on the floors above at 850 and 858 York Mills Road. The building would have three marquees (two marquees at the northern corners at a height of 38.24 metres and a taller marquee

at the southern elevation with a height of 46.4 metres). Two levels of underground vehicular parking with 679 spaces are proposed below the building.

Density

The proposal has a density of 3.8 times the area of the lot.

Residential Component

The proposal does not include a residential component.

Non-Residential Component

The proposal includes 53,413 square metres of GFA, which is broken down as follows:

- Retail – 5,082 square metres
- Office – 16,817 square metres
- Self Storage – 31,514 square metres

Access, Parking and Loading

The proposal includes a total of 679 vehicular parking spaces and 7 loading spaces. Five parking spaces are provided at grade, while the balance of the parking spaces would be contained in a 2-storey underground parking garage. Vehicular access is proposed via a right-in-right-out private driveway at the northeast corner of the site onto Lesmill Road and a full moves access at the southwest corner of the site onto the York Mills Road underpass.

Additional Information

See the attachments of this Report for the Application Data Sheet, Location Map, site plan, elevations, and 3D massing views of the proposal. Detailed project information including all plans and reports submitted as part of the application can be found on the City's Application Information Centre at: www.toronto.ca/850YorkMillsRd

Reasons for Application

A Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) is required to permit the proposed self storage use, amount of retail gross floor area, total gross floor area, yard setbacks, and other appropriate development standards.

At the time the subject application was submitted, OPA 231 was partially under appeal and the policies permitting restaurants and all types of retail and service uses in the *General Employment Areas* designation were not in force and effect. As such, the application required an OPA to permit the proposed retail uses. OPA 231 is now in force and effect and an OPA is no longer required to facilitate the proposal.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

A pre-application consultation (PAC) meeting was held on July 31, 2018. The Planning Application Checklist Package resulting from the PAC meeting is available on the Application Information Centre.

The current application was submitted on December 20, 2018 and deemed complete on January 10, 2019, satisfying the City's minimum application requirements. The reports and studies submitted in support of this application are available on the Application Information Centre: www.toronto.ca/850YorkMillsRd

Agency Circulation Outcomes

The application together with the applicable reports noted above, have been circulated to all appropriate agencies and City Divisions. Responses received have been used to assist in evaluating the application and to formulate an appropriate Zoning By-law Amendment.

POLICY & REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Land-Use Policies

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024) and shall conform to provincial plans.

Official Plan

Map 2 Urban Structure of the Official Plan identifies the site as *Employment Areas*, and Map 19 Land Use Plan of the Official Plan designates the site as *General Employment Areas*. See Attachment 3 of this Report for the Land Use Map. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making.

Zoning

The subject site is zoned Industrial-Office Business Park Zone MO(6) under former North York Zoning By-law 7625. The MO(6) zoning category permits offices, financial institutions, fitness centres, and restaurants. It also permits retail stores and personal service shops within the first floor of an office building. Self-storage is not a permitted use in the MO(6) zone.

The MO(6) zone permits a maximum gross floor area of 35,510 square metres. In the MO(6) zone, the first floor area of the ground floor excluding any portion that is covered by a roof of glass or other translucent material is not to exceed 3,500 square metres. The maximum gross floor area of each retail store is not to exceed 400 square metres.

The MO(6) exception requires specific setbacks for any proposed building on the subject lands.

See Attachment 4 of this Report for the existing Zoning By-law Map.

Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines have been used in the evaluation of this application:

- Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards
- Retail Design Manual

Toronto Green Standard

The Toronto Green Standard (TGS) is a set of performance measures for green development. Applications for Zoning By-law Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision and Site Plan Control are required to meet and demonstrate compliance with Tier 1 of the TGS. Tiers 2 and above are voluntary, higher levels of performance with financial incentives (partial development charges refund). Tier 1 performance measures are secured on site plan drawings and through a Site Plan Agreement or Registered Plan of Subdivision.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Consultation

On April 3, 2019, a community consultation meeting took place. The meeting was attended by Community Planning Staff, the applicant, and eight (8) members of the public. The following issues were raised with respect to the proposal:

- Original proposed height of building at 9 storeys and marquees being too tall;
- Functionality of the subject site as it relates to the abutting property that wraps around the subject property on the north and west;
- Whether the proposed parking configuration is sufficient for the proposed use; and
- Traffic and safety concerns with respect to proposed site design and configuration.

The issues raised through the community consultation process have been considered through the review of the application and commented on as necessary in the body of this Report.

Statutory Public Meeting Comments

In making their decision with regard to this application, Council members have an opportunity to hear the oral submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by the North York Community Council for this application, as these submissions are broadcast live over the internet and recorded for review.

COMMENTS

Provincial Planning Statement 2024

On October 20, 2024, amendments to the *Planning Act* were proclaimed in force that changed the definition of “area of employment” by narrowing the scope of uses to i) manufacturing, ii) warehousing, iii) research and development in connection with manufacturing anything, iv) retail and office uses associated with the above, and v) facilities ancillary to all of the above. The new definition excludes commercial – including retail and office not associated with the primary employment uses – and institutional uses. The same changes were made to the definition of “employment areas” in the PPS 2024.

The PPS 2024 states that it applies to all decisions in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter made on or after October 20, 2024. Council’s decision on this application must be consistent with the PPS 2024.

The subject application proposes self-storage, retail and office uses within the proposed building. The self-storage use is consistent with the provincial policy permissions for all types of warehousing in employment areas. Staff recommend that office and retail uses be restricted to those associated with manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, or warehousing in order to be consistent with the PPS 2024. Additionally, the retail uses would be restricted in size to ensure smaller-scale uses that primarily serve the surrounding employment area. The uses and size requirements have been secured in the draft Zoning By-law Amendment in Attachment 5.

In addition to these uses above, the applicant has requested expanding the uses permitted on the lot to include additional uses (manufacturing, custom workshop, artist studio, etc.) that are consistent with updated provincial policy as it pertains to Employment Areas. These additional uses are included as part of the draft Zoning By-law Amendment found at Attachment 5.

Staff’s review of this application has had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the *Planning Act*. Staff has reviewed the proposal for consistency with the PPS 2024. Staff find the proposed uses as described above to be consistent with the PPS 2024.

Official Plan Policies and Design Guidelines

This application has been reviewed against the Official Plan policies and design guidelines described in the Policy and Regulation Considerations Section of this Report.

Land Use

The subject site is designated *General Employment Areas* on Map 19 – Land Use Plan of the Official Plan.

As OPA 804 is currently not in force and effect, the current Official Plan policies permit office and all types of retail and services uses in the *General Employment Areas* designation. These permitted uses are not aligned with recent Provincial changes to the definition of “areas of employment” in the *Planning Act* nor the definition of “employment area” in PPS 2024. In order to align with Provincial changes, Staff recommend the proposed range of uses be amended as described in the “Provincial Planning Statement 2024” section of this Report. Subject to the proposed amendments, the proposed land use is appropriate contingent on addressing the balance of the comments of this Report.

Height, Massing, Density

The application proposes an 8 storey building with a metric height of 35 metres. Two marquee fins are proposed on the north corners of the building (height of 38.24 metres) and a taller marquee fin is proposed on the south elevation (height of 46.4 metres). The building is setback a minimum of 11.4 metres on the north, 18.6 metres on the west, 2.1 metres on the south and 4.8 metres on the east property lines. Building stepbacks are provided along the west, south and east elevations. The proposed total gross floor area is 53,413 square metres, which results in a proposed density of 3.8 times the lot area. A green roof is provided above the 5th floor on the southwest corner of the building and above the 6th floor on the southeast corner of the building.

Staff have reviewed the proposed development against the development policies of the Official Plan and the relevant design guidelines. The proposal is a midrise built form located within an employment area, setback appropriately from surrounding properties and is not in close proximity to residential neighbourhoods. Staff are of the opinion the proposed height, massing and density are appropriate for the site.

Public Realm

The public realm is comprised of all public and private spaces to which the public has access. It is a network that includes, but is not limited to, streets and lanes, parks and open spaces, and the parts of private and public buildings that the public is invited into.

The proposed development proposes landscaping and tree planting along the perimeter of the site. A public sidewalk will be provided on the east boundary and private pedestrian walkways that will be connected to the public sidewalks will be provided along the west and south boundaries of the site. Staff have reviewed the proposal and are of the opinion the proposed landscaping and public realm is appropriate for the employment lands.

Shadow Impact

A Sun/Shadow Study was submitted in support of the proposal. Staff are satisfied that the proposed development will not negatively impact the surrounding employment area with shadows.

Wind Impact

A Wind Study was submitted in support of the proposal, which concluded that wind conditions over all pedestrian sensitive grade-level locations within and surrounding the site will be acceptable for the intended uses on a seasonal basis.

Servicing

The applicant submitted a Functional Servicing Report, Stormwater Management Report, Hydrogeological Assessment report, and other supporting documents and drawings to support the proposed development. Engineering and Construction Services Staff have reviewed and accepted the submitted materials.

Road Widening

In order to satisfy the Official Plan requirement of a 23 metre right-of-way for this segment of Lesmill Road, a 1.44 metre road widening dedication along the Lesmill Road frontage of the site is required and is proposed to be conveyed to the City. This road widening dedication has been illustrated on Schedule 3 of the Draft Zoning By-law Amendment (Attachment 5) and will be conveyed to the City through the Site Plan Application.

No road widening is required for York Mills Road.

Traffic Impact

The applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) dated February 2021, which estimates that the proposal will generate 271, 375, and 294 two-way trips during the morning, afternoon and Saturday peak hours, respectively. The TIS concludes that with the addition of a left-turn protected permissive phase at the intersection of York Mills Road and Lesmill Road during morning, afternoon, and Saturday peak hours, the proposed development can be accommodated with minor impacts on the area road network.

Transportation Review Staff have reviewed the submitted materials and find them acceptable for the Zoning By-law application. However, as part of the Site Plan Application, the TIS must be revised to include Synchro and Sim Traffic files for review and to address comments related to queue analysis, capacity analysis, optimized signal timing, traffic signal drawing and cost estimate, and on-site signage and wayfinding. In addition, as agreed to between Transportation Review and the applicant, the TIS submitted at the Site Plan Application stage will also include a fully detailed review of the following intersections:

- York Mills Road / Lesmill Road
- Lesmill Road / Valleybrook Drive
- Lesmill Road / proposed site access

Access, Vehicular and Bicycle Parking and Loading

The application proposes a right-in-right-out vehicular access onto Lesmill Road at the northeast corner of the site and a full-moves vehicular access onto the York Mills Road underpass at the southwest corner of the site.

The application will contain a total of 679 vehicular parking spaces, 5 of which will be provided at grade and the balance of the spaces will be contained within a 2 storey underground parking garage. Sixteen (16) of the 679 vehicular parking spaces will be accessible parking spaces. The proposal also includes 134 bicycle parking spaces (73 long-term and 61 short-term) and 7 loading spaces (2 Type 'A', 3 Type 'B' and 2 Type 'C'). Transportation Review Staff have reviewed the proposal and have accepted the general site design. Specific details of the access, parking, and site circulation design will be addressed through the Site Plan Approval process.

Parkland

In accordance with Section 42 of the *Planning Act*, the Owner is required to satisfy the parkland dedication requirement through cash-in-lieu. As per *Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 415-29*, the appraisal of the cash-in-lieu will be determined under the direction of the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management. Additionally, the *Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 415-28* requires that the payment be made prior to the issuance of the first above-ground building permit for the land to be developed.

The industrial (self-storage) component of the development proposal is exempt from the parkland dedication requirement under Chapter 415, Article III, Section 415-30. A.(8) of the *Toronto Municipal Code*. The retail and office components of the development are subject to the parkland dedication rate of 2%.

Tree Preservation

Urban Forestry Staff have reviewed the application and do not have concerns with the Zoning By-law Amendment application.

The application is subject to the provisions of the *City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813 Articles II* (Street Tree by-law) and *III* (Private Tree by-law). The submitted Arborist Report identifies 35 by-law protected trees on site. The applicant proposes to remove all 35 of these trees (10 City owned trees and 25 privately owned trees). The applicant is to submit a tree planting deposit to ensure the planting and survival of 13 new City trees. In addition, Urban Forestry requires the planting of 67 new trees to replace the 25 private trees proposed for removal. Planting opportunities for the replacement trees will be determined through the Site Plan Approval process. Cash-in-lieu of planting may be acceptable for some of the replacement trees.

Noise and Vibration Mitigation

The proposed development is within 300 metres of Metrolinx's Bala Subdivision, which carries the Richmond Hill GO Train service. To facilitate the proposal, the applicant submitted a Noise and Vibration Impact Study as requested by Metrolinx. Metrolinx has reviewed the Noise and Vibration Impact Study and requested revisions as the data in

the Study is out of date. Metrolinx has advised that since the site is not directly adjacent to the Metrolinx rail line, the Noise and Vibration Impact Study can be finalized at the Site Plan Application stage.

Toronto Green Standard

The applicant is required to meet Tier 1 of the TGS in force at the time of a complete application for Site Plan Control. The applicant is encouraged to achieve Tier 2 or higher to advance the City's objectives for resilience and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040 or sooner.

The Zoning By-law Amendment will secure performance standards related to bicycle parking rates and location of bicycle parking spaces. Other applicable TGS performance measures will be secured through the Site Plan Approval process.

Conclusion

The proposed application has been reviewed against the policies of the PPS 2024 and the City of Toronto's Official Plan. Staff are of the opinion that the application is consistent with the PPS 2024 and the proposal conforms to the Official Plan. The proposal represents an appropriate form of intensification on the subject site within an employment area that preserves and expands the employment uses of the City. Staff recommend that Council support approval of the application.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

David Sit, MCIP, RPP
Director, Community Planning
North York District

ATTACHMENTS

City of Toronto Information/Drawings

Attachment 1: Application Data Sheet

Attachment 2: Location Map

Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map

Attachment 4: Existing Zoning By-law Map
Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Applicant Submitted Drawings

Attachment 6: Site Plan
Attachment 7: Elevations
Attachment 8: 3D Massing Model

Attachment 1: Application Data Sheet

Municipal Address: 850 and 858 York Mills Road **Date Received:** December 20, 2018

Application Number: 18 270584 NNY 16 OZ

Application Type: Rezoning

Project Description: 8 storey mixed use building consisting of retail uses on the ground floor, and offices uses and self-storage uses throughout the building above the ground floor. The site will be serviced by two levels of underground parking. A right-in-right-out vehicular access onto Lesmill Road is proposed at the northeast corner of the site and a full-moves vehicular access onto the York Mills Road underpass is proposed at the southwest corner of the site.

Applicant	Agent	Architect	Owner
MHBC Planning Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	MHBC Planning Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	TACT Architecture Inc.	850 York Mills Storage GP Corporation

EXISTING PLANNING CONTROLS

Official Plan Designation:	General Employment Areas	Site Specific Provision:	N/A
Zoning:	MO(6)	Heritage Designation:	No
Height Limit (m):	N/A	Site Plan Control Area:	Y

PROJECT INFORMATION

Site Area (sq m): 14,051 Frontage (m): 112 Depth (m): 127

Building Data	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
Ground Floor Area (sq m):			8,987	8,987
Residential GFA (sq m):				
Non-Residential GFA (sq m):			53,413	53,413
Total GFA (sq m):			53,413	53,413
Height - Storeys:			8	8
Height - Metres:			35	35
Lot Coverage Ratio (%): 63.96		Floor Space Index:	3.8	

Floor Area Breakdown Above Grade (sq m) Below Grade (sq m)

Residential GFA:

Retail GFA: 5,082

Office GFA: 16,817

Industrial GFA: 31,514

Institutional/Other GFA:

Residential Units by Tenure	Existing	Retained	Proposed	Total
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Rental:

Freehold:

Condominium:

Other:

Total Units:

Total Residential Units by Size

	Rooms	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3+ Bedroom
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Retained:

Proposed:

Total Units:

Parking and Loading

Parking Spaces: 679 Bicycle Parking Spaces: 134 Loading Docks: 7

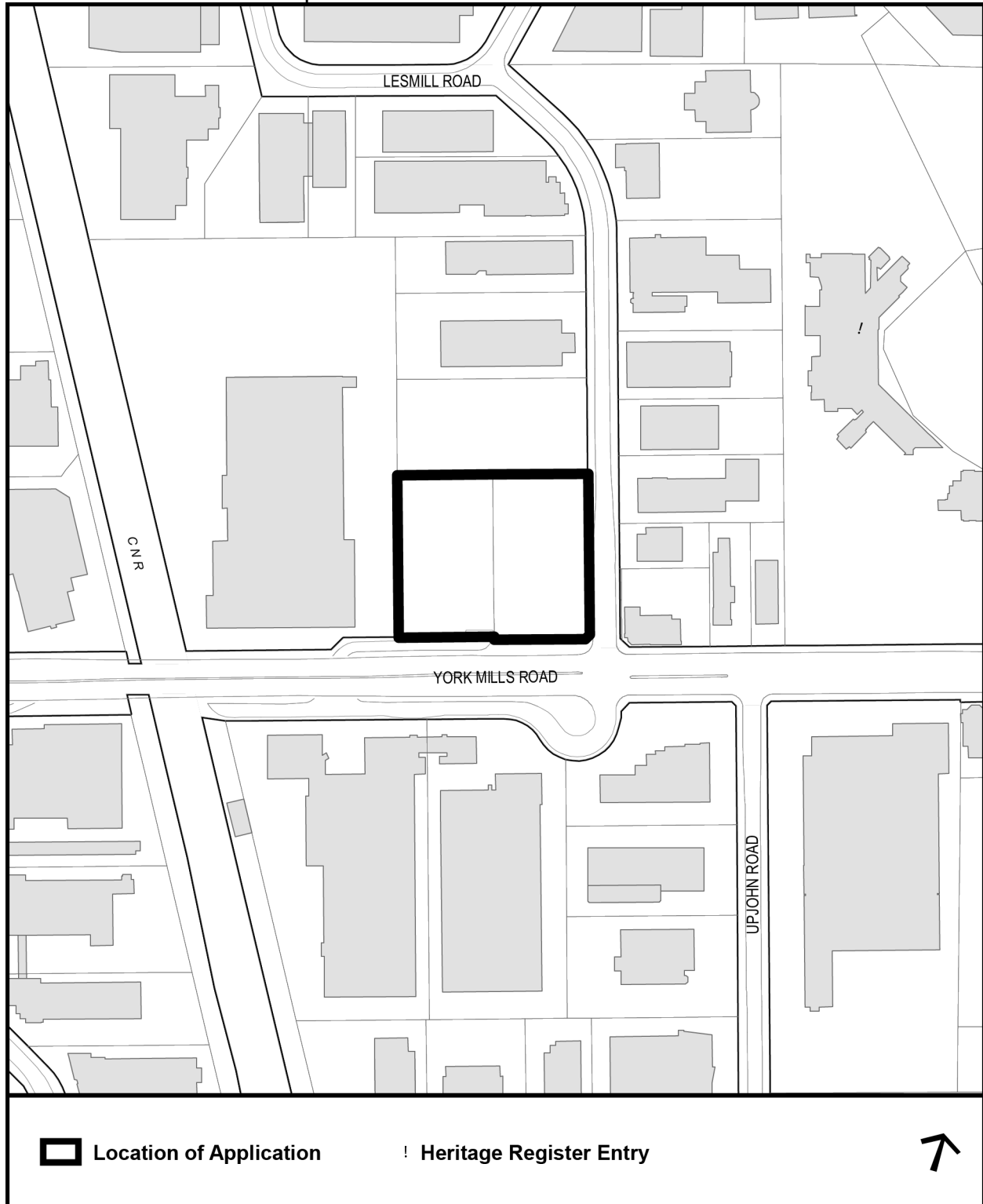
CONTACT:

Ingrid Fung, Planner

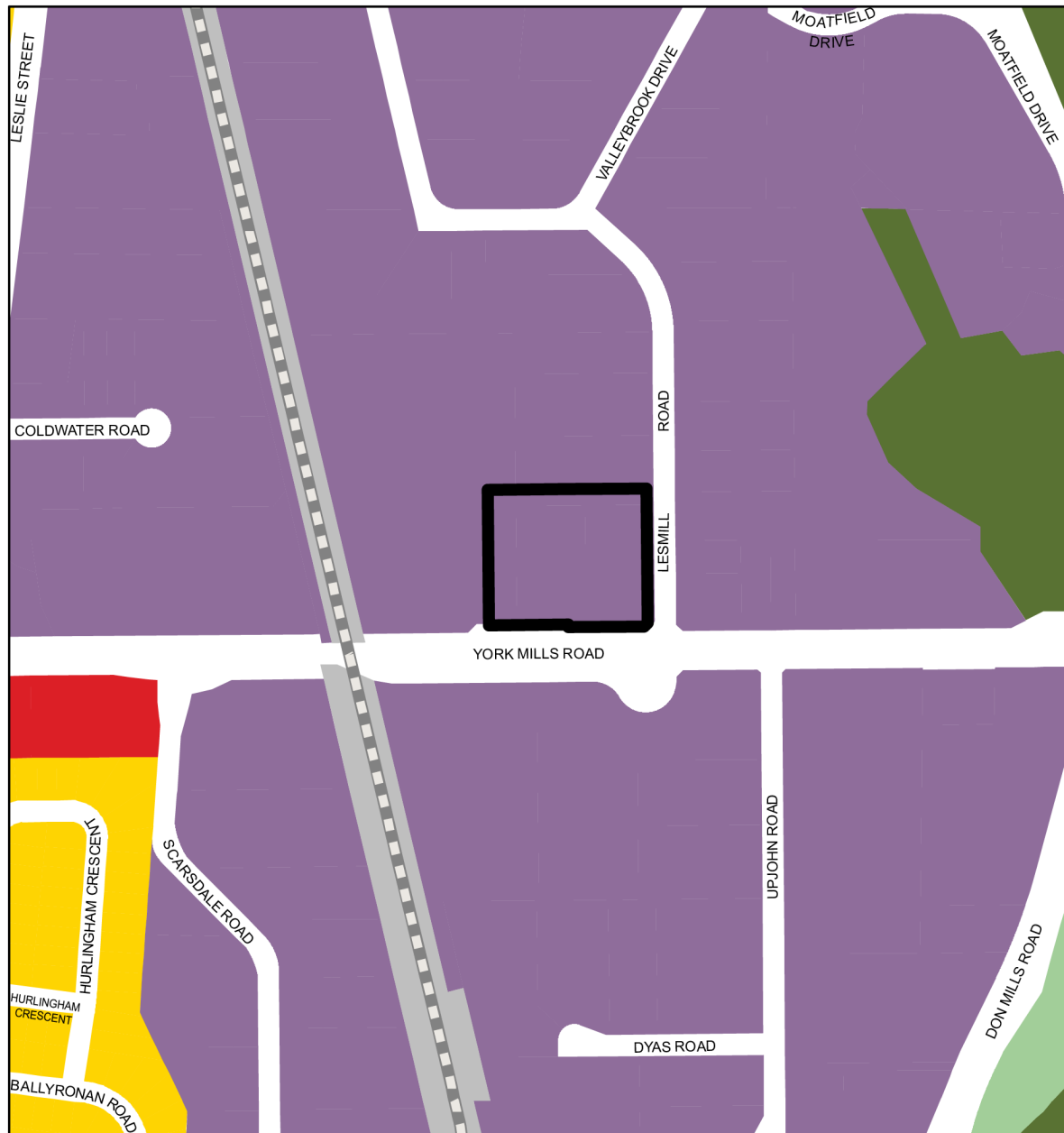
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Attachment 2: Location Map



Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map



Official Plan Land Use Map # 19

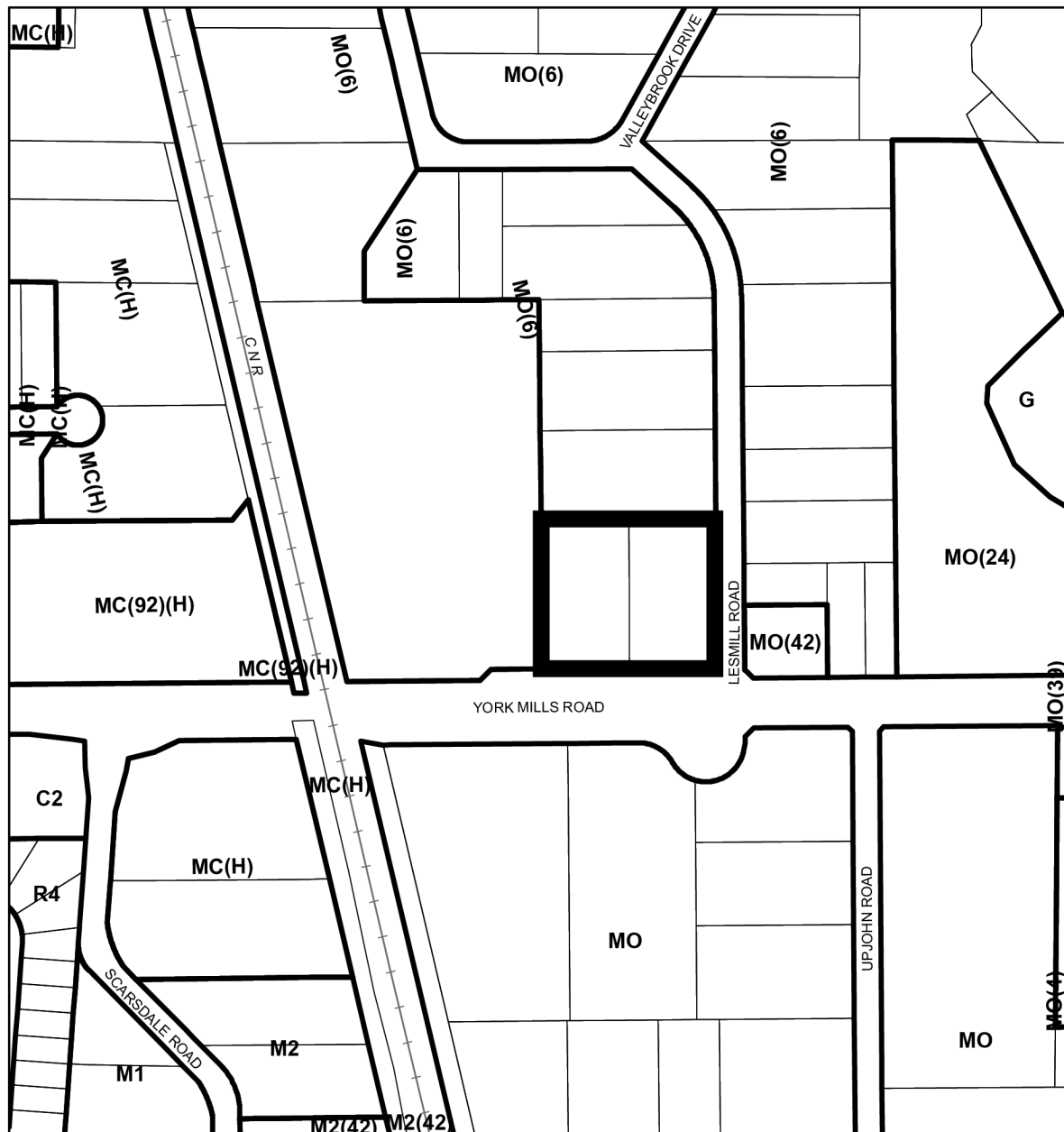
850 - 858 York Mills Road

File # 18 270584 NNY 16 0Z

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|---|--|--|
|  Location of Application |  Neighbourhoods |  Other Open Space Areas |
|  Mixed Use Areas |  General Employment Areas | |
|  Natural Areas |  Utility Corridors | |


 Not to Scale
 Extracted: 08/13/2025

Attachment 4: Existing Zoning By-law Map



Zoning By-law 7625

850 - 858 York Mills Road

File # 18 270584 NNY 16 0Z



Location of Application

R4 One-Family Detached Dwelling Fourth Density Zone
C2 Local Shopping Centre Zone
M1 Industrial Zone One

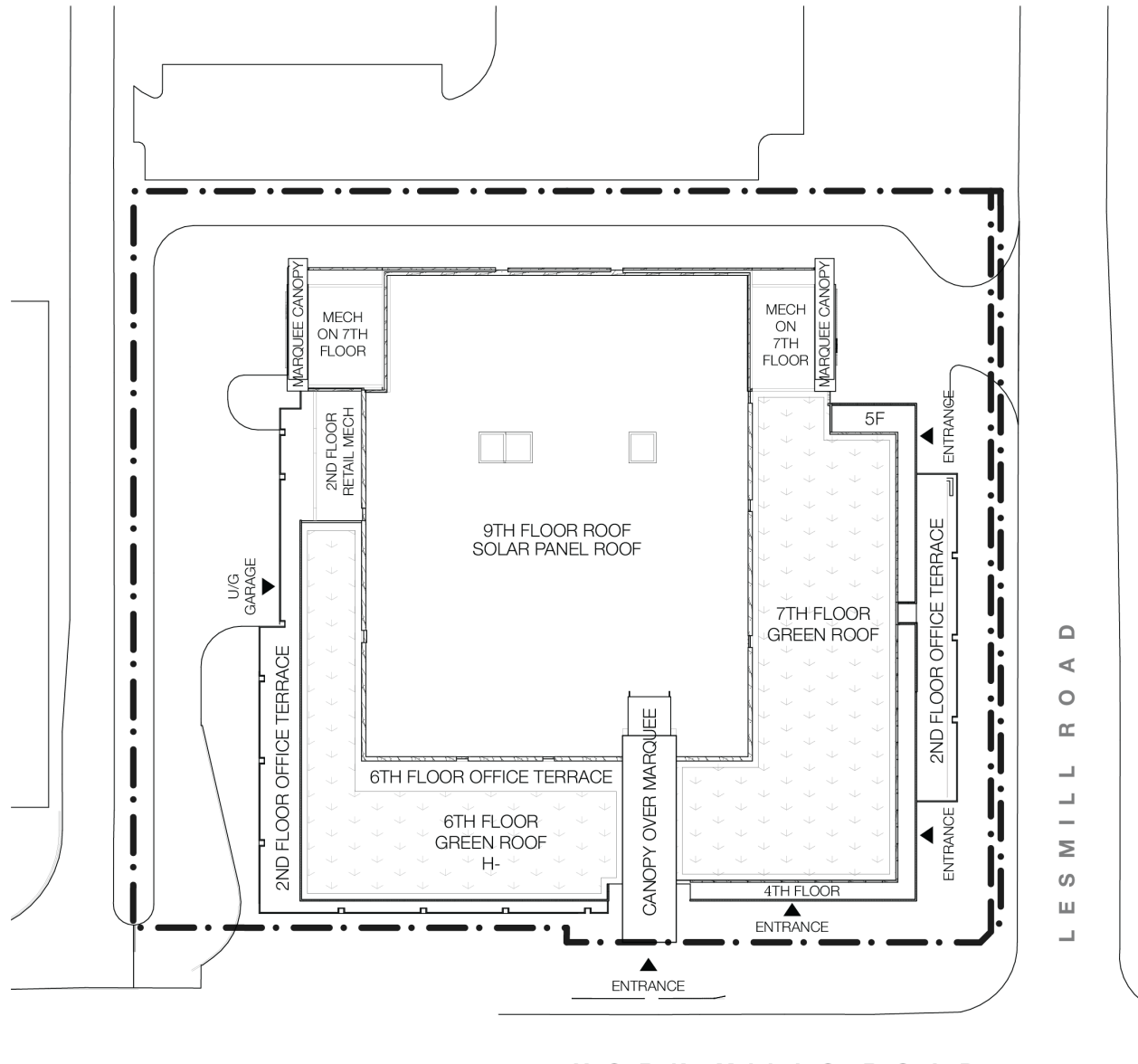
M2 Industrial Zone Two
MC Industrial-Commercial Zone
MO Industrial-Office Business Park Zone
G Greenbelt Zone



Not to Scale
 Extracted: 08/13/2025

Attachment 5: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

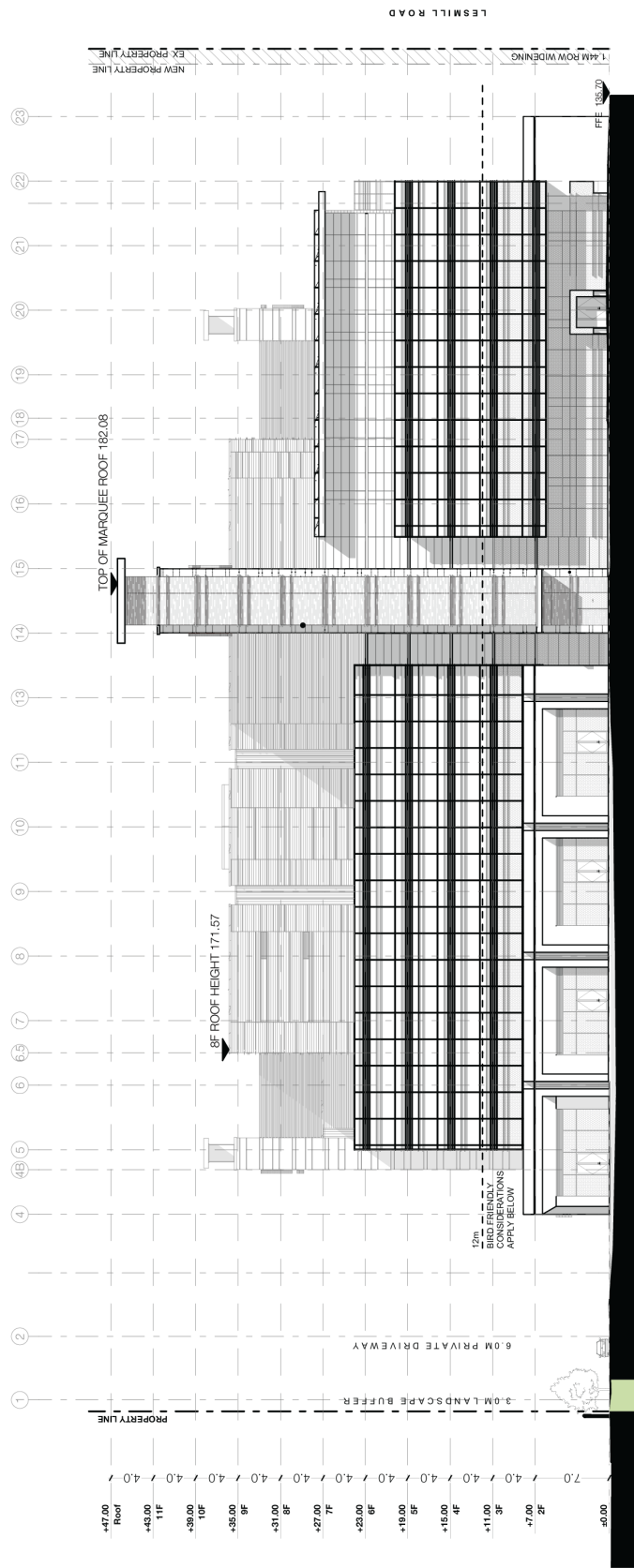
Attachment 6: Site Plan



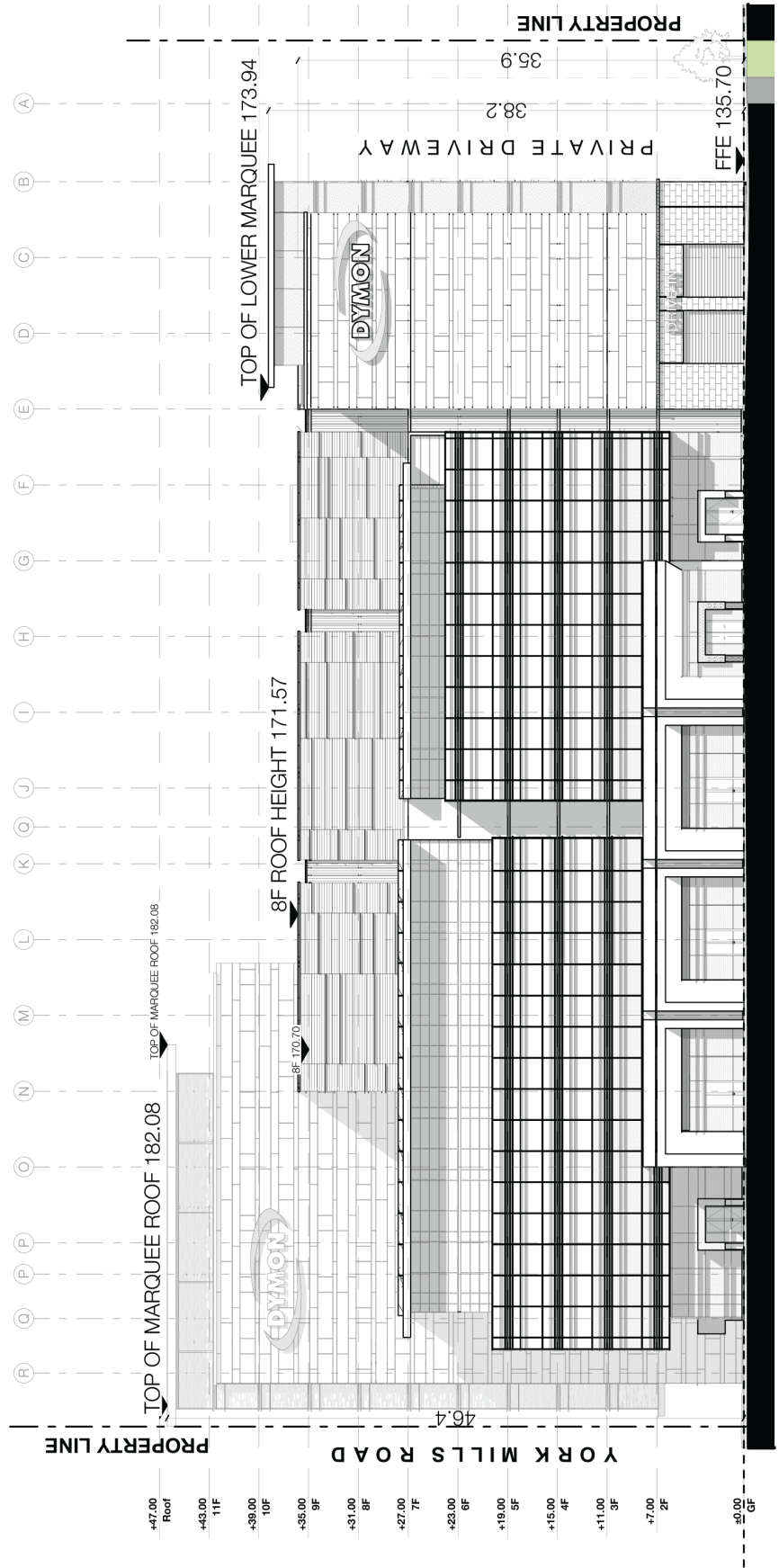
Site Plan



Attachment 7a: South Elevation

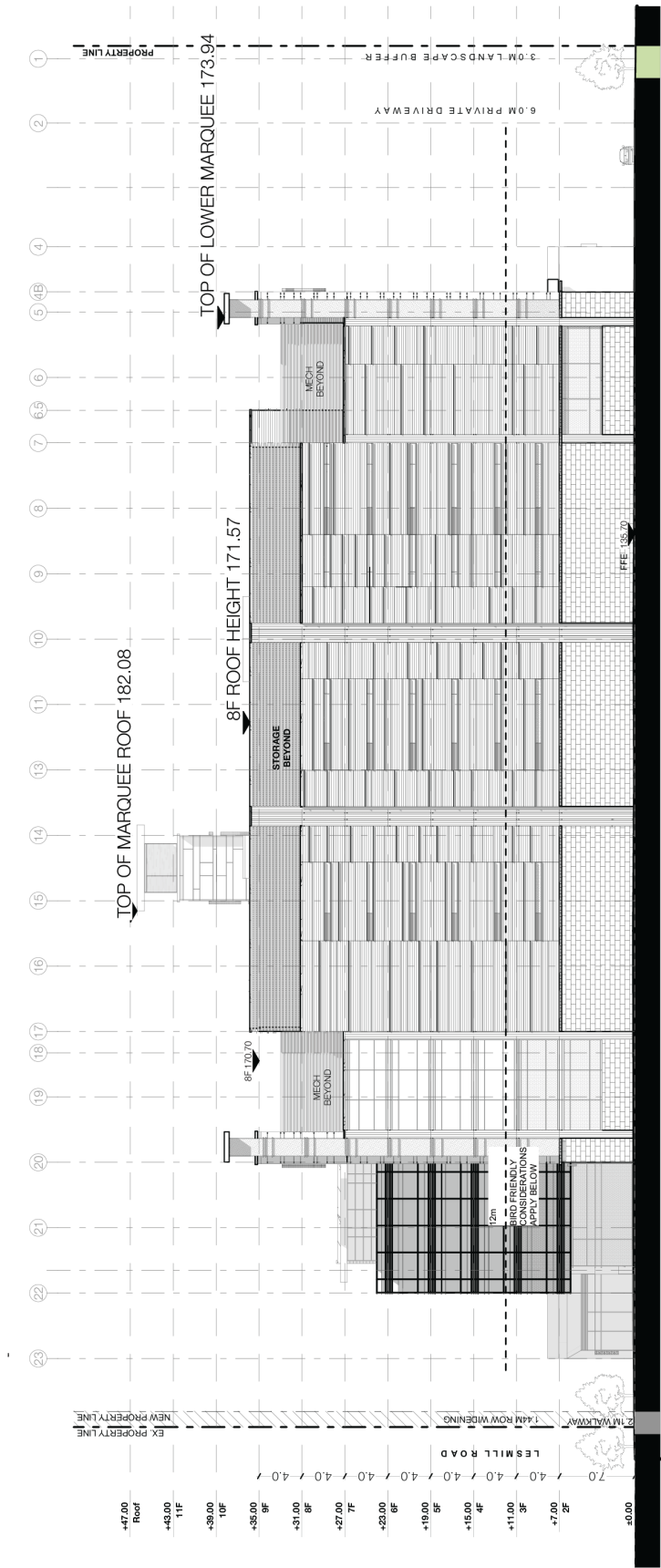


South Elevation



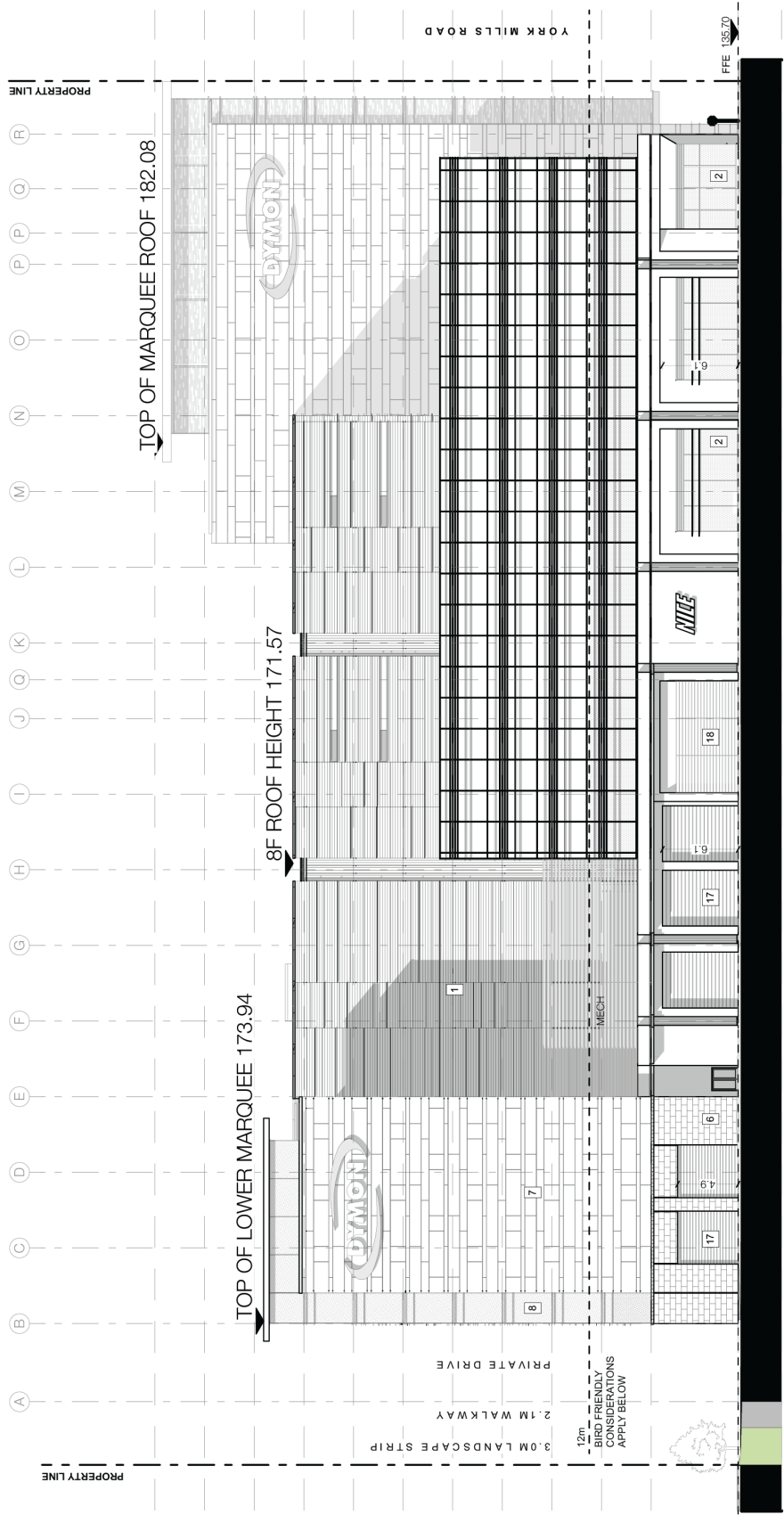
East Elevation

Attachment 7c: North Elevation



North Elevation

Attachment 7d: West Elevation



West Elevation

Attachment 8a: 3D Massing Model



Attachment 8b: 3D Massing Model

