

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SEPTEMBER 15, 2003

**ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FILE Z.03.051
THORNRIIDGE DRIVE LAND USE REVIEW
CITY OF VAUGHAN**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

THAT the City-initiated amendment to By-law 1-88 respecting the zone standards for institutional uses, applicable to the lands on Thornridge Drive, west of Charles Street (Attachment '1'), BE APPROVED, and that a by-law be brought forward to Council for enactment to rezone the lands identified on Attachment '2' from A Agricultural Zone to R1V Old Village Residential Zone, with the inclusion of the following:

- i) a maximum lot area of 0.45 ha for institutional uses;
- ii) a maximum gross floor area of 1020m²; and
- iii) exclude storage and/or parking of commercial vehicles, including buses.

Purpose

To review the standards of the Zoning By-law respecting institutional uses for the lands identified on Attachment '1', and provide Council with recommended amendments thereto.

Background - Analysis and Options

On June 23, 2003, Council resolved that Staff commence a review of the By-law 1-88 zone standards for institutional uses, applicable to the lands on Thornridge Drive, west of Charles Street (Attachment '1'), and to report back to the September 2, 2003, Public Hearing on the merits of amending the By-law.

On August 8, 2003, a notice of public hearing was circulated to all property owners within the area bounded by Centre Street to the north, Yonge Street to the east, Clark Avenue to the south, and Atkinson Avenue to the west. The following is a summary of the concerns received to date:

- the school use compromises the residential character of the neighbourhood;
- it is an established pocket of quiet residential uses with higher intensity uses being introduced, straining the area's infrastructure;
- there is potential for the school to expand on-site and through acquisition of the adjacent properties;
- there are safety concerns (traffic, speeding, drop-off/pick-up congestion) that have arisen since the school opened;
- there has been increased and excessive strain on the City's park system since the school opened;
- the diesel buses are very disruptive to day-to-day routines; buses are being stored on-site overnight, and the buses are being started and idling prior to 7:00 am with the buses then returning late in the evening, sometimes after 9:00 pm;

- there are environmental concerns (increased air pollution, noise pollution, and litter) that have arisen since the school opened; and,
- generally, and as a result of the above-noted concerns, the overall quality of life for the community has been negatively impacted.

On September 8, 2003, Council received the public hearing and resolved that this matter be brought back to a Special Committee of the Whole evening meeting on September 15, 2003.

Purpose of the Review

Due to the introduction of a private school in this residential area, several issues, as identified through the public hearing process, have arisen as to the appropriateness and compatibility of this land use within this residential community.

Rezoning from A Agricultural Zone to R1V Old Village Residential Zone

An agricultural zoned property has a minimum lot frontage of 100m and a minimum lot area of 10ha. However, 148 Thornridge Drive is zoned A Agricultural Zone, having a lot frontage of 69m and a lot area of 0.45ha, which zoning predates By-law 1-88

The lands are located within a well-established pocket of quiet residential uses, and it is evident that the A Agricultural Zone is not in keeping with the surrounding residential neighbourhood. Throughout Vaughan, private school sites are typically in a Residential Zone category appropriate for the surrounding neighbourhood

With the exception of the private school located at 148 Thornridge Drive, the residential lots on Thornridge Drive are zoned R1V Old Village Residential Zone. In view of this, Staff is of the opinion that the by-law should be amended to rezone the lands identified on Attachment '2' from A Agricultural Zone to R1V Old Village Residential Zone.

Moreover, on February 24, 2003, Council adopted OPA #589, which added the following Subsection (q) to the "Low Density Residential" policies in Section 2.2.2.4 of OPA #210;

"q) All development in older established residential areas characterized by large lots or by historical, architectural or landscape value, shall be consistent with the overall character of the area."

OPA #589 was appealed to the Ontario Municipal (OMB) and the hearing is to commence on September 15, 2003. Should the OMB approve OPA #589, then the rezoning of 148 Thornridge Drive to the R1V Zone would bring the lands into conformity with the policies of OPA #210, as amended by OPA #589. It would also provide an additional level of development control on the property that would prevent the expansion of the site and building area that could further alter the character of the overall area to be in conformity with the Official Plan. In addition, it would provide the opportunity for future redevelopment of the lands for large lot single detached residential. Implementation of the above would result in the following:

- compatible zoning with the adjacent residential lots on Thornridge Drive;
- conformity with the policies of OPA #210, as amended by OPA #589;
- recognize and protect the future development of this lot for residential uses; and,
- ensure the residential character of Thornridge Drive is maintained.

Maximum Lot Area Requirements

The lands at 148 Thornridge Drive are designated “*Institutional*” by OPA #210 (Thornhill-Vaughan Community Plan), recognizing the long-term place of worship use. The designation provides opportunities for elementary public and separate schools, secondary schools, private schools, religious institutions, day-care centres, community centres, voluntary associations, branch colleges, libraries, police stations and fire halls. Should institutional uses cease on the lands, the underlying designation would be “Low Density Residential”.

In addition to the above, the goal in OPA #210 for institutional uses is “to ensure that adequate space is set aside and arranged in an efficient manner in the structure of the plan for the institutional, educational, social, religious and cultural facilities required by a variety of age and interest groups in the future community”.

The intent of the above ‘goals’ statement is to provide opportunities for adequate institutional uses to locate in existing communities, as identified on Schedule ‘A’ of OPA #210, as well as future communities.

As an institutional site, 148 Thornridge Drive appears adequate and well-positioned to address the needs of the community, and further expansion of the use would not be in keeping with the goal to achieve efficiency, as set out in OPA #210.

In light of the above, Staff recommends that the by-law be amended to provide a maximum lot area requirement of 0.45 ha for the lands as identified on Attachment ‘2’. Implementation of the above would result in the following:

- continuing the existing lot area as identified on Attachment ‘2’;
- limiting the potential for expansion of institutional uses onto neighbouring properties; and,
- *maintaining the scale of development, in keeping with the context of the residential neighbourhood.*

Maximum Building Gross Floor Area

The institutional zone standards in By-law 1-88 permit a maximum building height of 11m (36 ft.) and maximum lot coverage of 20%. The maximum building height for the R1 and R1V Residential zones are 9.5m (31 ft.), with no lot coverage requirement.

The private school that currently occupies 148 Thornridge Drive has a building footprint of 662m², or 15.9% lot coverage (662m²/4,155m² = 15.9%), and a building height of 11metres. The total gross floor area of the building (ground floor + mezzanine) is 1011m² (10,883sq.ft.).

There is no maximum gross floor area standard for institutional uses, however building envelopes are controlled by the lot coverage, setback, building height, and parking requirements. Generally, and based on the development control tools identified above, the building currently occupying 148 Thornridge Drive is at its maximum building area.

While the site appears to function properly (i.e. parking and site circulation), any type of building addition will require additional parking spaces, which would include additional asphalt area. The additional parking spaces could impede site circulation and would require the removal of soft landscape area, possibly resulting in an over-development of the site, and negatively impacting the operation of the site. Staff recommend that the by-law be amended to provide a maximum gross floor area of 1020m² for the lands identified on Attachment ‘2’. Implementation of the above would result in the following:

- continuing the existing building gross floor area for the lands identified on Attachment '2'; and,
- limiting the potential for on-site expansion, thereby maintaining the scale of development in keeping with the context of the residential neighbourhood.

Outdoor Storage Area Requirements

Institutional uses are permitted as-of-right in the A Agricultural, R1 and R1V Residential Zones. The institutional zone standards in each zone category (i.e. 15 metre setbacks from all lot lines) require larger lots to properly facilitate an institutional use (i.e. site circulation, parking, setbacks, landscape buffers and screening, etc.), to ensure the use is compatible with the adjacent residential community. The parking of commercial (farm-related) vehicles is permitted in an A Agricultural Zone.

It has been noted through the public hearing process that the diesel buses being used by the private school are very disruptive to the day-to-day routines of the residential community. Buses are being started and idling prior to 7:00 am, with the buses then returning late in the evening to be stored on-site overnight. Moreover, the outdoor storage of diesel buses on-site overnight is visually unattractive and not in keeping with the residential character of this neighbourhood.

By-law 1-88 states that for lands zoned residential, "no commercial vehicle shall be parked or stored on a residential lot, unless that lot is being actively prepared for or undergoing construction for which the equipment is intended, or unless said vehicle is parked in a wholly enclosed building".

It is evident that the overnight parking and storage of buses at 148 Thornridge Drive is extremely disruptive to the residential neighbourhood; as such, Staff suggest that the by-law be reviewed to clarify that the storage and/or parking of commercial vehicles, including buses, on the lands identified on Attachment '2' is not a permitted use. Implementation of the above would result in the following:

- excluding the outdoor storage of commercial vehicles, including buses, on-site;
- securing the integrity of the streetscape; and,
- recognizing and protecting the residential character of the neighbourhood.

On-site Amenity Space (Play Space) Requirements

There is no Ministry of Education or City requirement to provide on-site amenity space (play space) for children attending public, separate, or private schools.

Although there is very little 'green' play space on the private school at 148 Thornridge Drive, the children attending the school have used the adjacent park during recess. The policies of #OPA 210 state that, "where possible, all schools shall be located on a site adjacent to the park system and with access to the pedestrian walkway system".

Conclusion

It is evident from the strong turn-out at the community meetings and the numerous phone calls received, that the area residents are concerned with the future of their neighbourhood, specifically with respect to maintaining the residential character and overall quality of life.

In view of this, Staff recommends that a by-law be prepared and brought forward to Council for enactment to rezone the lands identified on Attachment '2' from A Agricultural Zone to R1V Old Village Residential, with the following exceptions:

- i) a maximum lot area of 0.45 ha for institutional uses;
- ii) a maximum gross floor area of 1020m²; and
- iii) exclude the storage and/or parking of commercial vehicles, including buses.

Should the Committee concur, the recommendation contained in this report can be adopted.

The above-noted amendments to By-law 1-88, in addition to the policies contained in OPA #589 to protect the character of R1V Zone areas and which is pending approval by the Ontario Municipal Board, will serve to address the concerns of the Community by providing restrictions to control development on the institutional property at 148 Thornridge Drive.

Attachments

- 1. Study Area
- 2. 148 Thornridge Drive

Report prepared by:

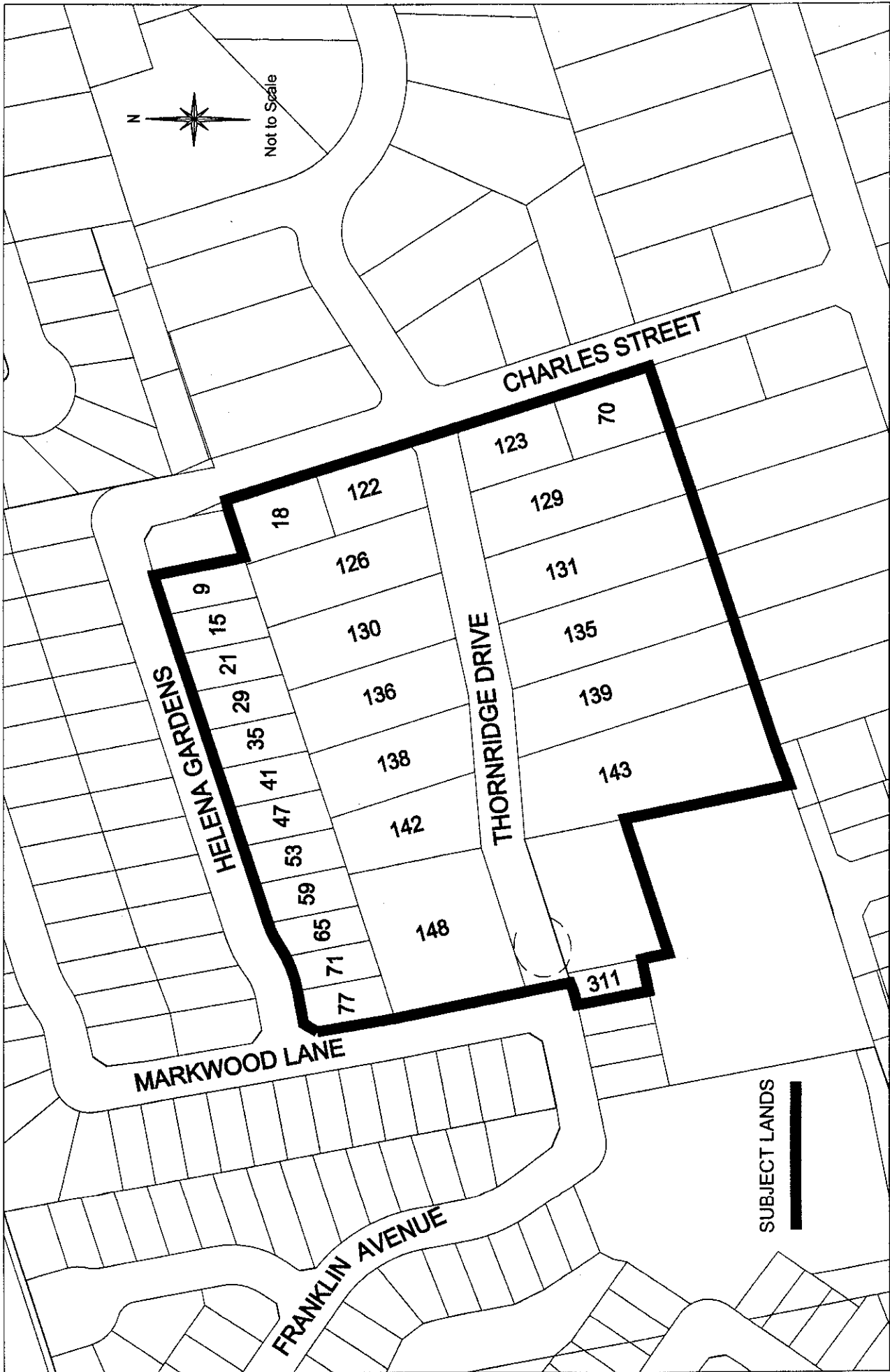
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Respectfully submitted,

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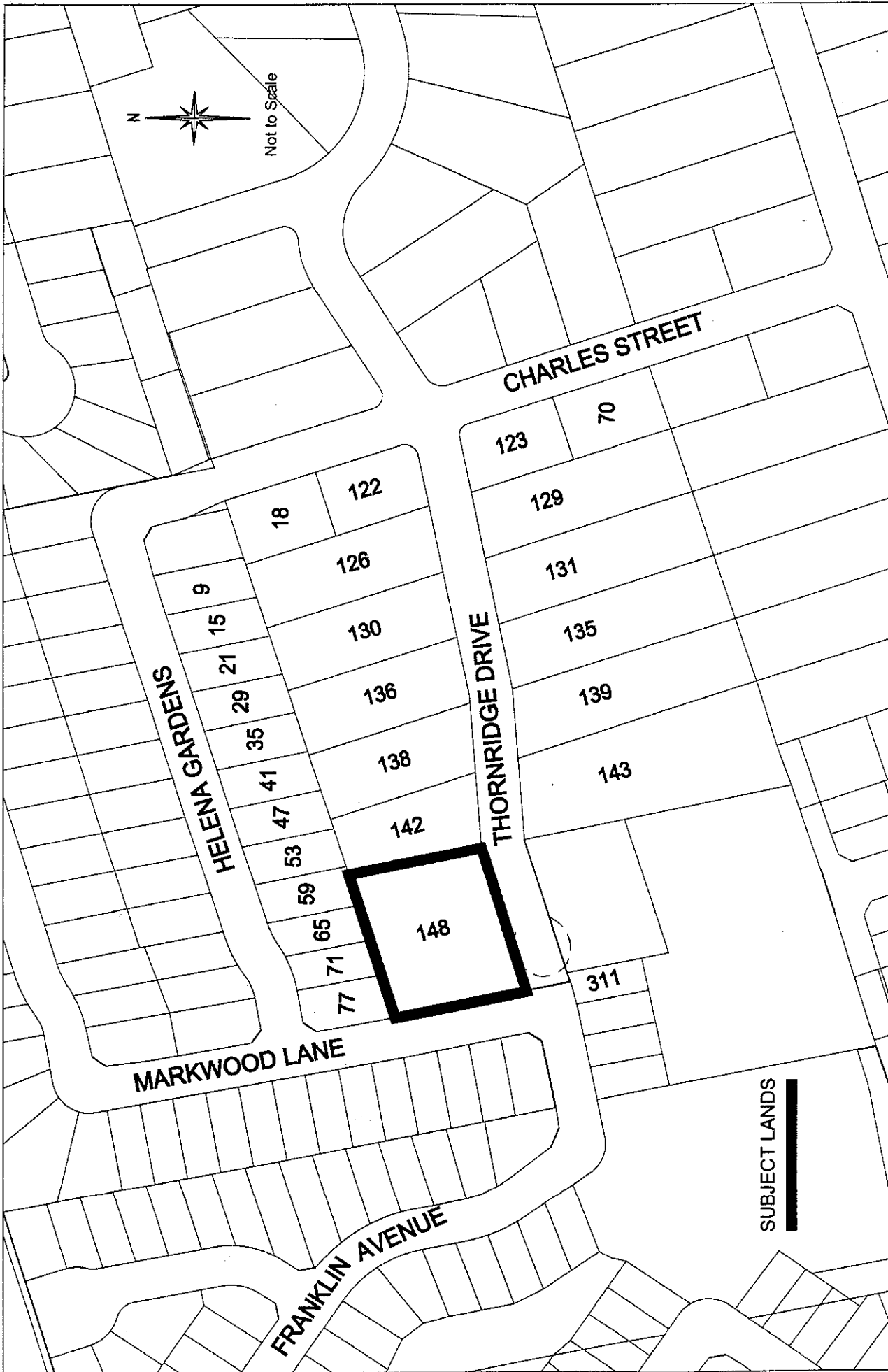
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Thornridge Drive Land Use Review Area

Part of Lot 30,
 Concession 1

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**Thornridge Drive Land
Use Review Area**



Community Planning Department

Attachment 2

FILE No.: Z.03.051
RELATED FILE: 15.93
September 9, 2003

Part of Lot 30,
Concession 1

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