



Memorandum

March 15, 2018

Memo To: Mayor and Council

Copy To: Neil Garbe, Chief Administrative Officer
Antonio Dimilta, Town Solicitor
Stephen Huycke, Town Clerk

From: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner
Planning and Regulatory Services

Subject: **Request for Approval – Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision Applications - Country Wide Homes (Jefferson Inc.) and Giuseppina Brunetto – 196 and 210 and 226 to 288 and 307 Harris Avenue, 211 and 223 to 305 Jefferson Sideroad, and 30 Beech Avenue - File Numbers D02-14024 and D03-14008, D02-14025 and D03-14009, and D02-16001 and D03-16002**

Recommendation:

That the memorandum from the Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services dated March 15, 2018 be received.

Background:

At the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 20, 2018, Council considered staff report SRPRS.18.044 respecting a request for approval of various Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Plan of Subdivision applications submitted by Country Wide Homes in the Harris-Beech Infill Area. As part of these approvals, staff has recommended that Beech Avenue be extended southerly to connect with Wicker Drive to complete a planned local road network. Council and a number of area residents expressed concerns with the proposed connection of these two streets, particularly with respect to need, traffic, safety and environmental impacts. In response, Council adopted the following motion:

“That staff report SRPRS.18.044 regarding the Request for Approval for the Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision Applications submitted by Country Wide Homes (Jefferson Inc.) and Giuseppina Brunetto for 196 and 210 and 226 to 288 and 307 Harris Avenue, 211 and 223 to 305 Jefferson Sideroad, and 30 Beech Avenue be referred back to staff for a further report at Committee of the Whole meeting on March 19, 2018, to permit Planning and Regulatory Services staff to consider and report on a revised plan that does not include the proposed Wicker Drive Beech Avenue road connection contained in File Numbers D02-14025 and D03-14009.”

Staff has prepared this memorandum in response to Council's direction.

History:

The extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive was the subject of testimony and expert evidence at Ontario Municipal Board hearings held in 2002 respecting various development application appeals in the Yonge East, Yonge West and Jefferson Planning Districts. The Board heard testimony from a representative for the Harris-Beech neighbourhood expressing concerns about the planned future connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive in the (then) proposed Autumn Grove subdivision to the south. The residents' concerns related to a lack of demonstrated need, safety, noise, increased traffic and impacts to current lifestyle.

The Board also heard rebuttal evidence from Town transportation staff with respect to the future need for the road connection given the planned (re)development of the Harris-Beech area, as well as to provide access to/for schools and bus routes, fire and ambulance services, and commercial areas along Yonge Street. In its ruling, the Board preferred the evidence of Town staff and found *"that the provision for the future connection of Beech Avenue and Wicker Road is good transportation planning"*. On this basis, the Town secured land for the future road connection as part of the Autumn Grove subdivision approvals. The current development applications by Country Wide Homes represent the first opportunity to implement the planned road connection.

Richmond Hill Official Plan:

In 2010, Council adopted a new Official Plan with "Connectivity and Mobility" as one of five guiding principles that promote connectivity, mobility and accessibility within and between neighbourhoods, employment lands, parks and open spaces. The extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive is specifically identified as one of three new local streets forming part of the Town's planned street network on Schedule A8 (Street Classification) of the OP. The OP states that it is the policy of Council that:

- "The Town shall promote a safe, balanced, efficient, accessible and well-connected transportation system in accordance with the planned Transportation System as shown on Schedule A8 (Street Classification), Appendix 5 (Public Rapid Transit) and Appendix 6 (Active Transportation) to this Plan." (Section 3.5.1.1)
- "The Town shall reinforce connectivity in the transportation system to increase pedestrian and vehicular movements." (Section 3.5.1.18)
- "The street network be planned and implemented in accordance with the street hierarchy shown on Schedule A8 (Street Classification) to this Plan." (Section 3.5.6.1)
- "The Town shall discourage local streets ending in cul-de-sacs in order to promote a well-connected public street network. Cul-de-sacs may only be permitted where:
 - i. the topography and natural features prevent the construction or logical extension of a through street;
 - ii. the street extension would have to cross a railway right-of-way or any other utility corridor; or
 - iii. safe and convenient pedestrian connections can be made between the cul-de-sac and other existing streets (i.e. pedestrian bridge)." (Section 3.5.6.5 f.)

In considering the approval of draft plans of subdivision, Council must have regard for whether the proposal conforms to the policies of the Official Plan and provides the services and facilities required by the Plan. Staff is of the opinion that the extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive is a policy requirement and that any decision which would preclude its implementation would not be in conformity with the Town's Official Plan and would not represent good planning.

Harris-Beech Infill Study:

In 2013, Council approved the Harris-Beech Infill Study and directed that applications for development in that area be assessed on the basis of conformity with the provisions of the Study. One of the guiding principles of the Harris-Beech Infill Study is to enhance connectivity and mobility between neighbourhoods and to community amenities. All of the development scenarios approved by Council as part of the Infill Study contemplate the extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive. On this basis, staff is of the opinion that any decision which would preclude its implementation would be inconsistent with the Harris-Beech Infill Study.

Alternative Options – Beech Avenue/Wicker Drive Connection:

Staff has met with Country Wide Homes and consulted with relevant Town departments respecting Council's request for staff to consider and report on a revised plan(s) that does not include the proposed Beech Avenue/Wicker Drive road connection. On the basis of Council's direction, 5 alternative options have been prepared, along with a list of some advantages and disadvantages to each option.

Staff emphasizes that each of these options are rooted in the underlying principle and expectation that in the absence of a through-connection, Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive will need to be terminated in accordance with the Town's approved design standards and specifications. Any option which requires TRCA land in order to properly terminate Beech Avenue and/or Wicker Drive will not be an obligation on Country Wide Homes and will ultimately become the Town's responsibility through a future land acquisition and construction project.

The alternative options described below and attached to this memorandum are in no particular order of preference and are presented without prejudice to staff's overall position and recommendations as outlined in staff report SRPRS.18.044.

Option #1 – Cul-de-Sac on the Country Wide Homes Lands

This option terminates Beech Avenue with a cul-de-sac entirely on the Country Wide Homes lands and Wicker Drive with a cul-de-sac on the Town and TRCA lands, connected by a 6-metre wide pedestrian walkway. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this option including the following:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The proposed cul-de-sacs comply with Town design standards and specifications- No phasing or third-party cooperation is required to complete the Beech Avenue cul-de-sac- Operational efficiencies for snow removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Significant impacts to the Country Wide Homes development proposal- Country Wide Homes must absorb all the impacts of extending and terminating Beech Avenue- Inefficient local road pattern with potential

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and waste collection (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) - Improved safety as vehicles are able to turn around with a continuous forward movement (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> of 4 cul-de-sacs within a radius of 75 metres - Completion of the Wicker Drive cul-de-sac requires land acquisition (approx. 674 m²) and approvals from the TRCA - Increased area of disturbance within the east-west natural linkage - Potential of increased response times for fire and emergency services

Option #2 – Cul-de-Sac on the Town and TRCA Lands

This option terminates Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive with cul-de-sacs on the Town and TRCA lands. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this option including the following:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed cul-de-sacs comply with Town design standards and specifications - Operational efficiencies for snow removal and waste collection (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) - Improved safety as vehicles are able to turn around with a continuous forward movement (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) - Limited impacts to the Country Wide Homes development proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phasing and temporary turnarounds may be required depending on the timing of land acquisition - Inefficient local road pattern with potential of 4 cul-de-sacs within a radius of 75 metres and 2 cul-de-sacs adjacent to one another - Completion of the Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive cul-de-sacs requires land acquisition (approx. 1,674 m²) and approvals from the TRCA - Significantly increased area of disturbance within the east-west natural linkage - Potential of increased response times for fire and emergency services

Option #3 –Cul-de-Sac Partially on the Country Wide Homes Lands

This option terminates Beech Avenue with a cul-de-sac partially on the Country Wide Homes lands and primarily on the adjacent lands to the west. Wicker Drive terminates with a cul-de-sac on the Town and TRCA lands, and the two cul-de-sacs are connected with a 6-metre wide pedestrian walkway. A cul-de-sac terminating on the adjacent lands to the west is also one of two options presented to staff by Country Wide Homes. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this option including the following:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed cul-de-sacs comply with Town design standards and specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phasing and temporary turnarounds will likely be required

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational efficiencies for snow removal and waste collection (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) - Improved safety as vehicles are able to turn around with a continuous forward movement (as compared to a substandard permanent bulb or temporary bulb) - Limited impacts to the Country Wide Homes development proposal - More equitable distribution of the impacts of extending and terminating Beech Avenue between benefitting landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Third-Party cooperation is required - Adjacent landowner to the west has not been involved in the decision making process - Inefficient local road pattern with potential of 4 cul-de-sacs within a radius of 75 metres - Completion of the Wicker Drive cul-de-sac requires land acquisition (approx. 674 m²) and approvals from the TRCA - Increased area of disturbance within the east-west natural linkage - Potential of increased response times for fire and emergency services

Option #4 – Crescent Street through the Country Wide Homes Lands and Adjacent Lands

This option extends Beech Avenue easterly to form a crescent through the Country Wide Homes lands and adjacent lands, and terminates Wicker Drive with a cul-de-sac on the Town and TRCA lands. The crescent and the cul-de-sac are connected by a 6-metre wide pedestrian walkway. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this option including the following:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed crescent and cul-de-sac comply with Town design standards and specifications - Operational efficiencies for snow removal and waste collection due to continuous street - Improved safety as vehicles are able proceed or turn around with a continuous forward movement (as compared to a substandard or temporary bulb) - More efficient local road pattern with the elimination of 2 potential cul-de-sacs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant impacts to the Country Wide Homes development proposal - Phasing and temporary turnarounds will be required - Third-Party cooperation is required - Adjacent landowners to the east have not been involved in the decision making process - Country Wide Homes must accommodate a significant amount road and municipal services to facilitate limited development on their lands - Completion of the Wicker Drive cul-de-sac requires land acquisition (approx. 674 m²) and approvals from the TRCA - Increased area of disturbance within the east-west natural linkage - Potential of increased response times for fire and emergency services

Option #5 – Temporary Turnaround on the Subject Lands

This option terminates Beech Avenue in a temporary bulb (i.e. hammerhead) on the Country Wide Homes lands and Wicker Drive in a cul-de-sac on the Town and TRCA lands. The temporary bulb and cul-de-sac are connected by a 6-metre wide pedestrian walkway. A bulb on Beech Avenue is the second option presented to staff by Country Wide Homes, albeit the option was put forward as a permanent termination of Beech Avenue. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this option including the following:

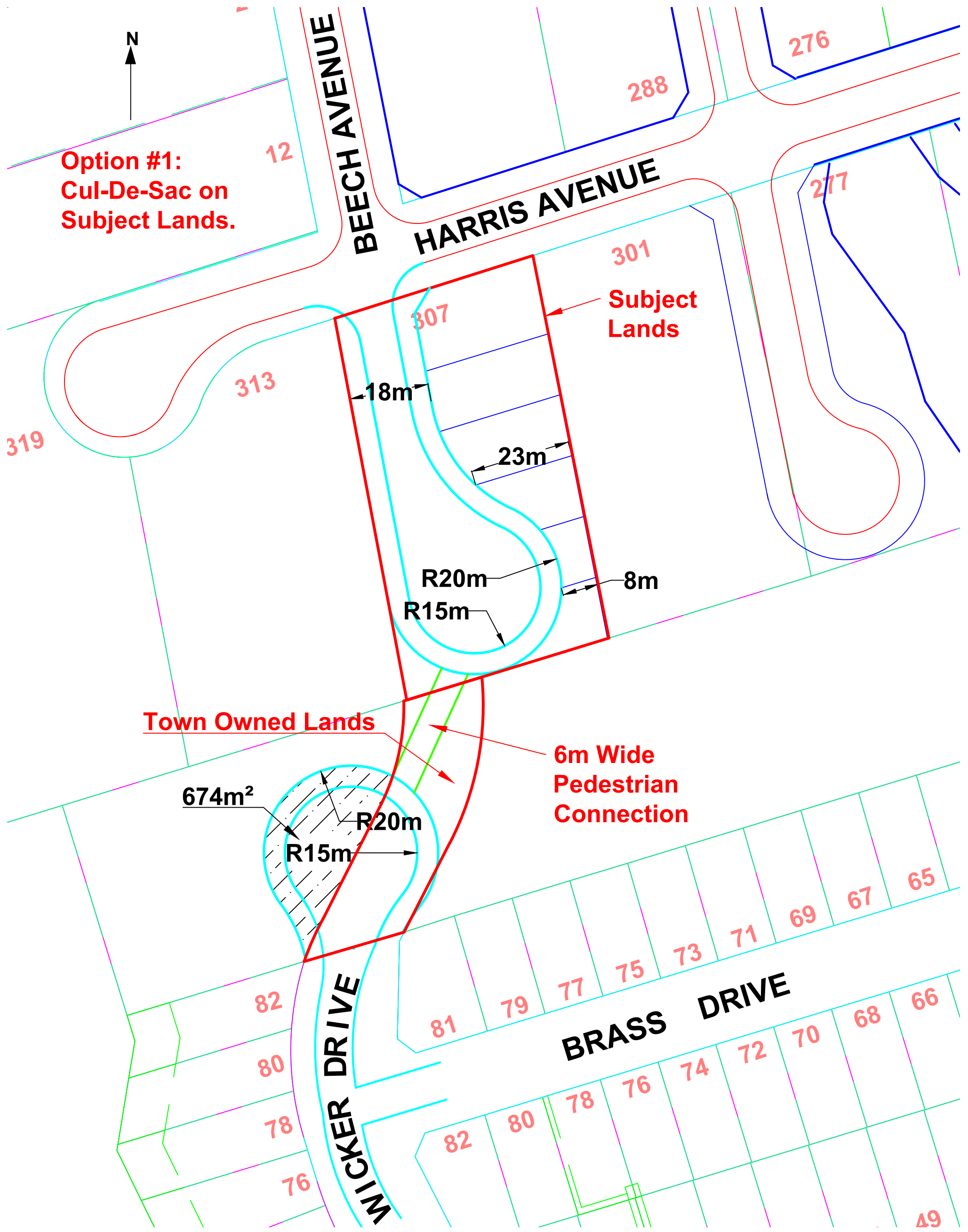
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The proposed cul-de-sac on Wicker Drive complies with Town standards and specifications- The proposed temporary bulb (i.e. hammerhead) on Beech Avenue is generally acceptable as an interim solution, but does not comply with Town standards and specifications as a permanent solution- Limited impacts to the Country Wide Homes development proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Phasing and third-party cooperation will be required to complete the Beech Avenue cul-de-sac- Operational inefficiencies for snow removal and waste collection- Reduced safety as vehicles are unable to turn around with a continuous forward movement- Adjacent landowner to the west has not been involved in the decision making process- Inefficient local road pattern with potentially 4 cul-de-sacs within a radius of approximately 75 metres- Completion of the Wicker Drive cul-de-sac and pedestrian walkway requires land acquisition (approx. 720 m²) and approvals from the TRCA- Increased area of disturbance within the east-west natural linkage- Potential of increased response times for fire and emergency services

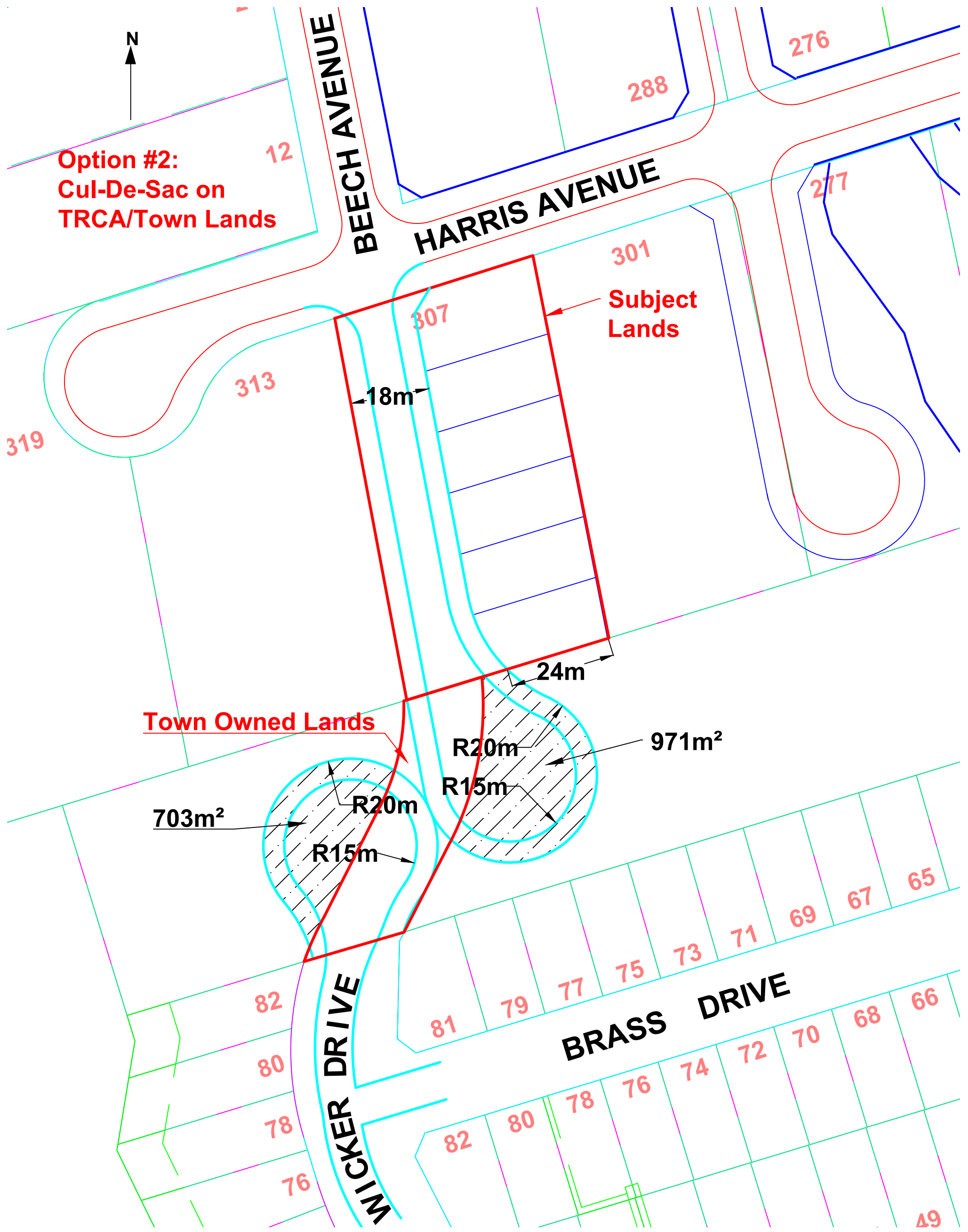
Conclusions:

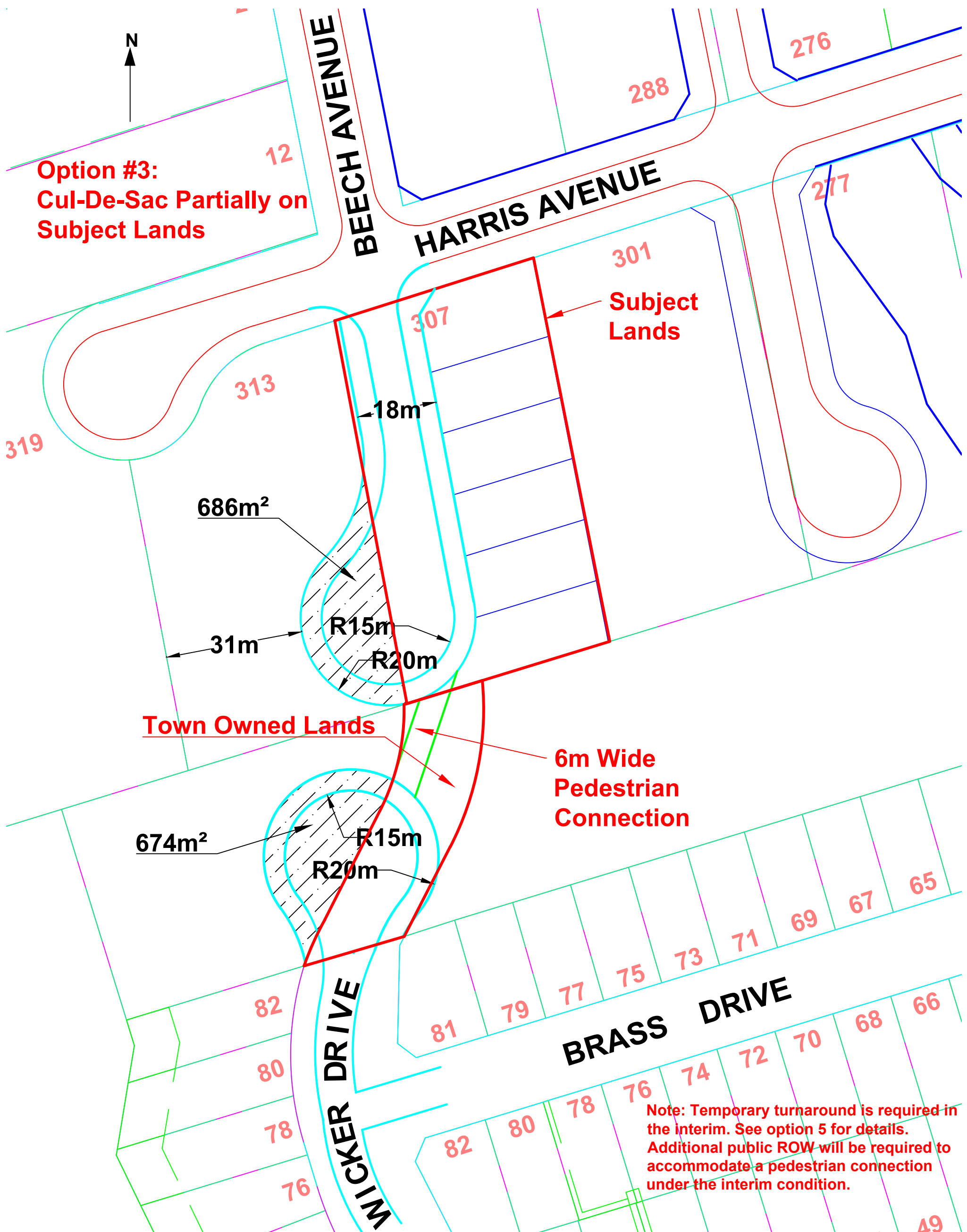
Staff is of the opinion that the extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive represents good planning. In the event that Committee of the Whole does not adopt the recommendations of staff report SRPRS.18.044 in regards to the extension and connection of Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive as part of the Country Wide Homes development approvals, it is recommended that staff report back to Council with revised planning instruments as necessary to implement its direction.

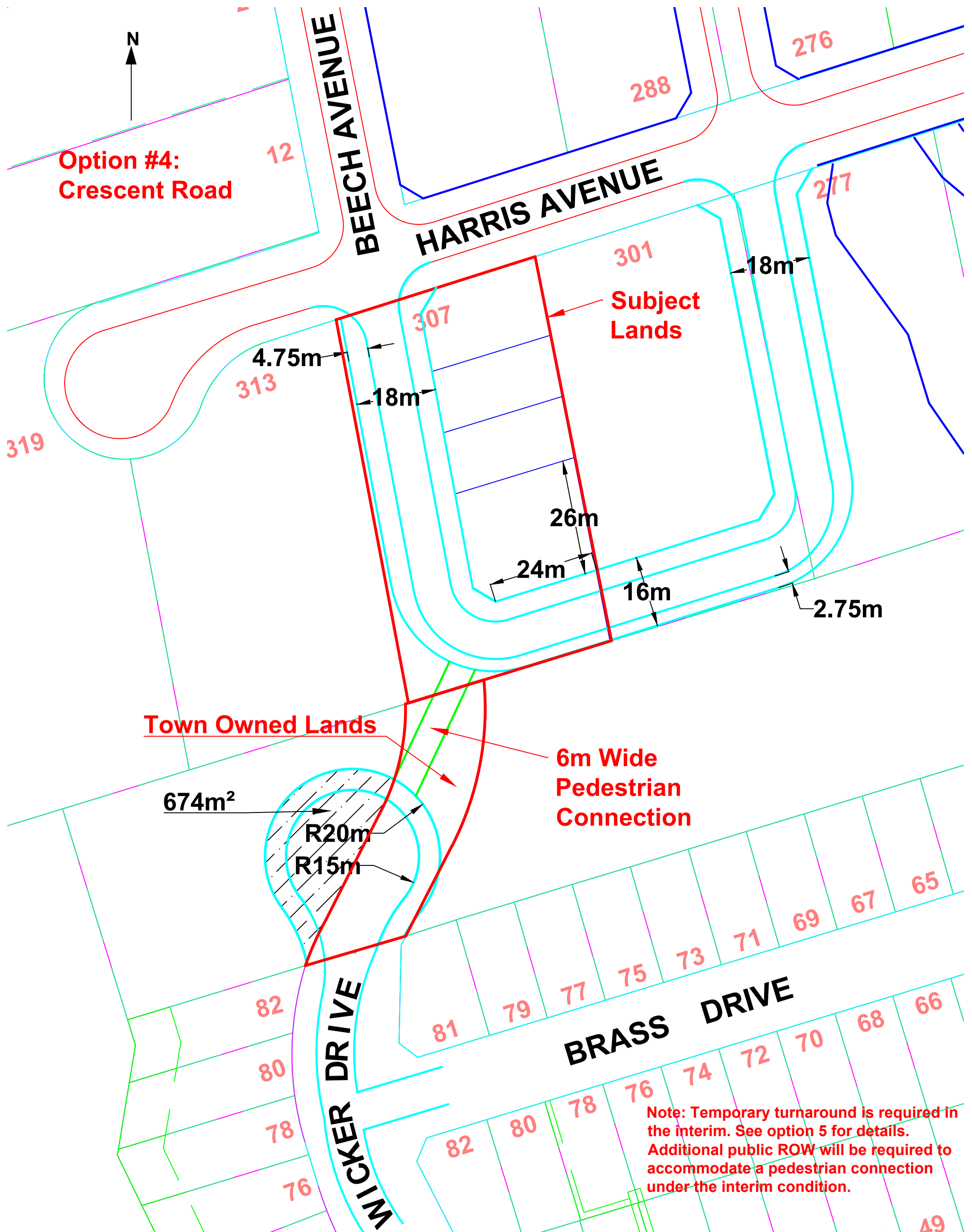
"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Kelvin Kwan
Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services











**Option #5:
Temporary Turnover
on Subject Lands**

BEECH AVENUE

HARRIS AVENUE

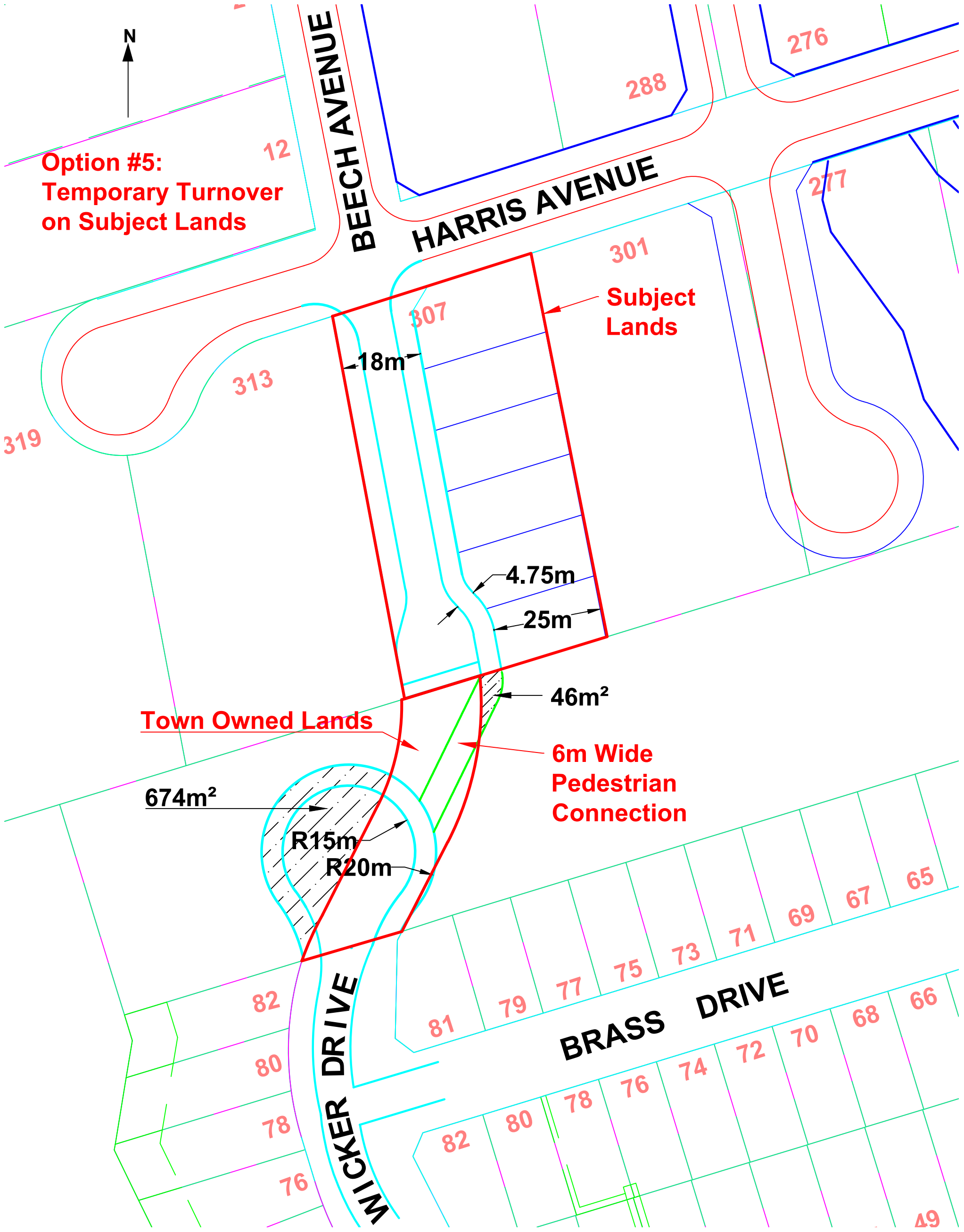
**Subject
Lands**

Town Owned Lands

**6m Wide
Pedestrian
Connection**

WICKER DRIVE

BRASS DRIVE



MAP 1 - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



Copyright J.D.Barnes Limited 2016 Orthophotography
BLOCK 09
File Nos. D02-14024,D03-14008,D02-14025
D02-14025,D03-14009,D02-16001



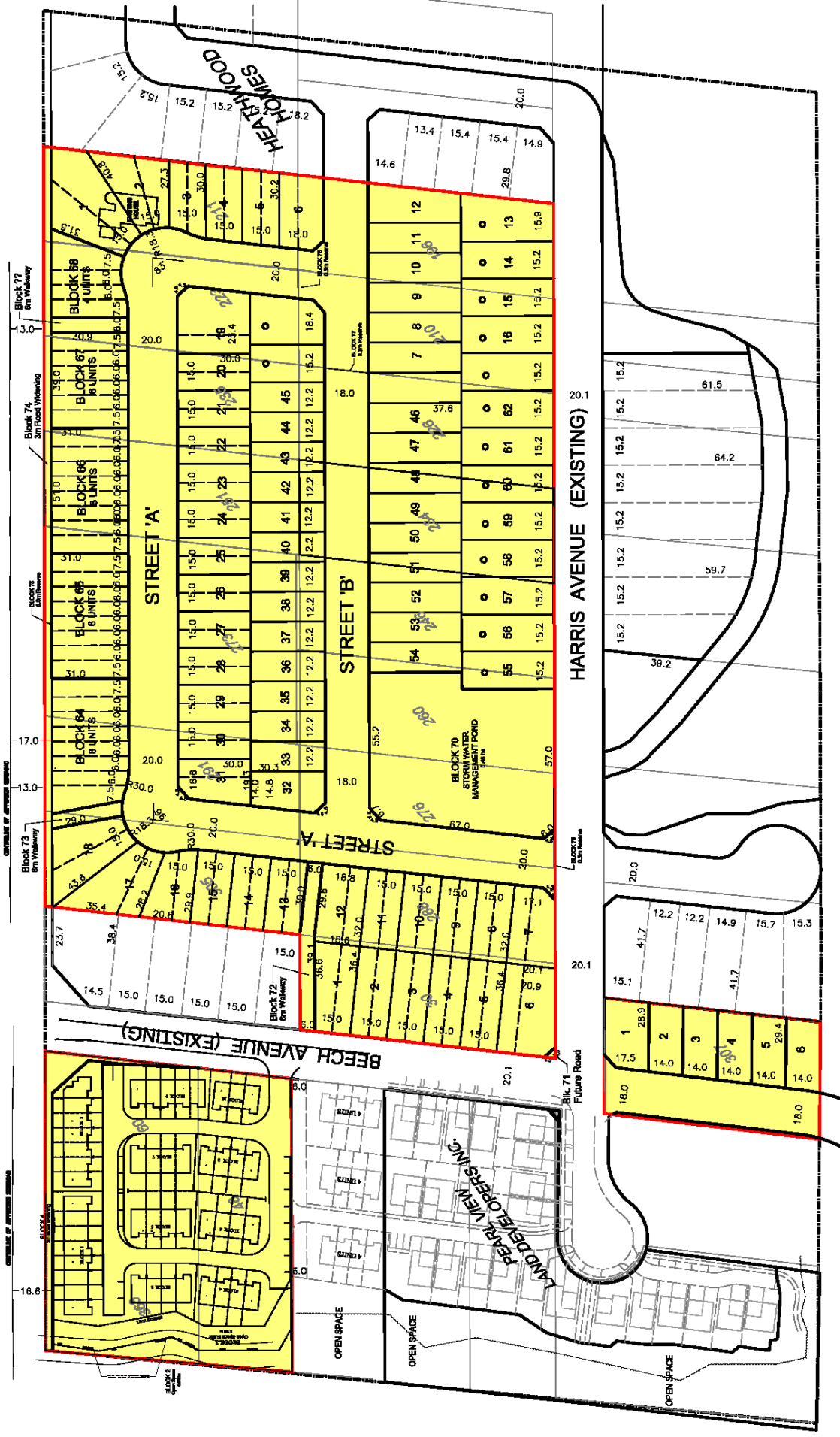
**TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL
PLANNING AND REGULATORY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Legend
 **SUBJECT AREAS**

SC/SS SRPRS.18.044

MAP 10 - CONCEPT PLAN

JEFFERSON SIDEROAD



BLOCK 09 FILE NOS. D02-14024, D03-14008, D02-14025
D03-14009, D02-16001

**TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL
PLANNING AND REGULATORY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

SC/SS SRPRS 18.044