

6. FARMSTEADS OF FORMER CHINGUACOUSY TOWNSHIP

Note: All lot references are west of Hurontario Street unless otherwise noted.

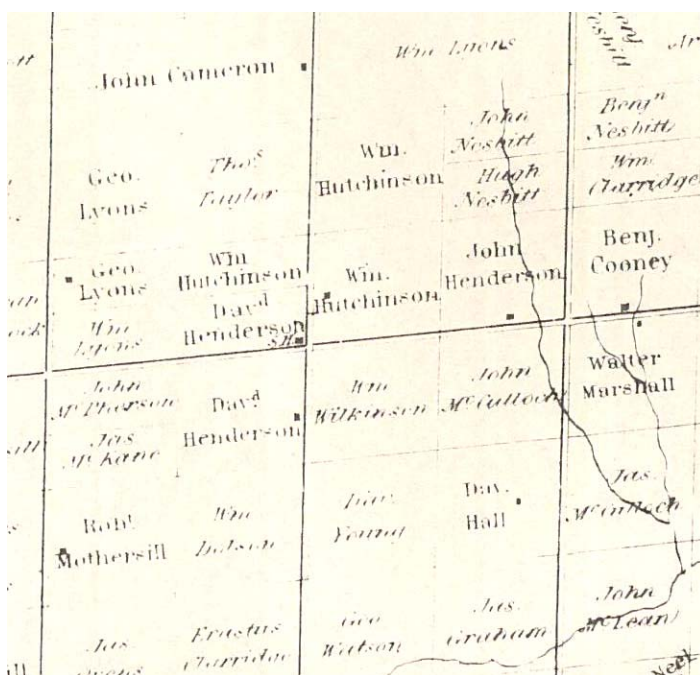
6.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This is an *organically evolved rural landscape*, as described in the *Town of Caledon: Criteria for the Identification of Cultural Heritage Landscapes*, centered on the intersection of Creditview Road and Old School Road. The properties around this crossroads are being considered as a Candidate CHL in that they appear to be representative of the traditional Chinguacousy farmstead community on the Peel Plain – one of Caledon’s key historic themes.

6.2 INVENTORY

1. Physiographic Description

The Candidate CHL area occupies a portion of the Peel Plain. The soils of this area are classified as Class 1, among the best in the Province for the growing of crops. The Peel Plain, an ancient lakebed, is relatively flat though sloping generally toward Lake Ontario. It is composed of till containing large amounts of shale and limestone. In many areas this has been modified by a veneer of clay. The clays within the study area are reddish in colour being influenced by the red Queenston shales, with lower lime content than those to the north and eastern sections of the Plain.



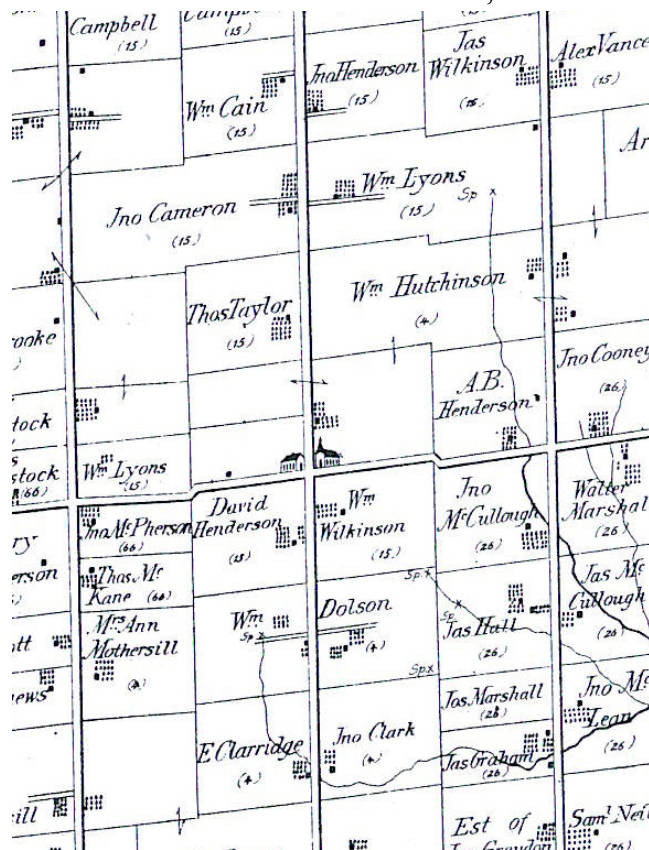
Chinguacousy Farmsteads as illustrated
on the Tremaine Map, 1859

The study area itself is within the upper reaches of the Etobicoke Creek drainage area, and includes several small tributaries. Though now treeless but for small woodlots, the area once contained a rich hardwood forest of wide species diversity. Though the soils of the Peel Plain are productive, there have always been issues of water supply and recharge as there are few aquifers in the region and evaporation from the clay soils is rapid. This particular location area along Etobicoke Creek was particularly favourable for farming and settlement.

2. Processes

Land Uses and Activities

Settlement began in the area shortly after the completion of the township survey in 1819. The rich soils of the Peel Plain were quickly recognized for their agricultural potential and greatly coveted by early pioneers. The Peel Plain is remarkably flat relative to the upland character of so much of the Town of Caledon and once the land was cleared, the farms of those who settled here prospered and expanded. While land clearing was a struggle, the soils were stable, much less susceptible to erosion than the sandy soils to the northeast, and able to support a variety of crop types. It was initially wheat farming that brought prosperity to the farmers of the area. Wheat prices skyrocketed in the mid 19th century, pushed by a chain of events which began with the gold rush of 1849. Prices peaked in 1854-1855 when the crop failed in Europe at the same time as the Crimean War cut off the supply of Russian wheat. It was with the wealth generated in this period that many of the area farmers built their 'second' homes, most often choosing the combination of red brick with buff brick detailing which is now considered a characteristic of the architecture of the area. While some residents built new structures in brick, others bricked over existing frame and log structures.



Chinguacousy Farmsteads as illustrated in the 1877 Atlas of Peel County

Beginning in this same period, the signing of the Reciprocity Treaty with the U.S.A. (1854-1865) and the coming of the railway encouraged farmers to diversify including an increase in livestock. In 1861 Thomas Taylor (E ½ Lot 24, Con. 4) had 46 acres in crop of which 27 were in wheat. His two acre orchard was also typical of the area farmsteads. This agriculture diversification in turn changed farm outbuilding requirements. The modest English two bay hay barn was no longer adequate in itself, leading to the construction either of a second barn or the raising of the existing barn on a stone foundation with livestock at that ground storey and hay in the loft above. Thus it was in this period that the barn became the dominant feature of the Peel Plain landscape.

For a time after alfalfa was introduced into Ontario it was an important crop on the Plain, but this diminished quickly after 1926.

A schoolhouse has been located at the northwest corner of the crossroads at Creditview Road and Old School Road since at least the mid 19th century. It was constructed on a corner of the lot owned by David Henderson (E ½ Lot 23, Con. 4) who also owned Lot 22, south of what is now Old School Road, on which he built his house. Schoolhouse S.S. #7 was reconstructed in stone in 1879. On the west half of Lot 23, Con. 3, William Hutchison had a home by mid century and before 1877 had donated land for a church (no longer extant) on the corner of the lot across the road from the schoolhouse. With schoolhouse and church, the crossroads became the community focus of this rural area, though it never grew into a hamlet. Land ownership was stable with the above families, along with those of Thomas Taylor, William Wilkinson, John Cameron and William Lyons, on the land throughout the latter half of the 19th century.



The Old School House

Patterns of Spatial Organization

The survey of Chinguacousy Township was completed by Samuel Rykman in 1819 and was one of the first to be undertaken using the double-front system. In this system the common unit of concession is the half-lot of 100 acres with each half of the 200 acre lot fronting on a different concession line road. These half lots are almost square. Concessions run essentially north-south. At every five lots there was an allowance for a side road.

Through the candidate CHL area, the original survey layout is still generally reflected in the road and lot patterns today. By 1859, as seen on the Tremaine Map, Lot 23, Con. 4 had been divided into north and south parcels, with a smaller lot containing the school. While there have been a number of further residential severances in recent times, the original lot configuration remains relatively intact through the area

Circulation Networks

The area conforms to the typical rural pattern with homes either fronting on to Creditview Road (originally 3rd Line) or to the sideroad now known as Old School Road. The farmhouses were typically accessed off these roads by a dirt or gravel lane, often extending as a cart track to the barns and fields.

Boundary Demarcations

Currently properties are demarcated with a variety of fencing types including cedar split rail, and cedar post with wire. The school property is bounded by evergreen shrubbery.

The boundary consists of the four lots (lots 22 and 23, Con. 3 and 4) adjacent the crossroads with the addition of the south section of Lot 24, Con. 4, which includes the Taylor House.

Vegetation Related to Land Use

The farm properties are shown as having orchards in the late 19th century (1877 Historical Atlas of Peel County) of which vestiges remain today. Evergreen windrows sheltering the lane, and evergreen and/or deciduous trees protecting the house are common on the heritage properties. There are few hedgerows marking field layouts, and no remnant or regenerating woodlots within the Candidate CHL boundaries, suggesting a higher intensity and success with farming than in other areas of the Town.



12911 Creditview Road

There is evidence of some historic tree rows along Creditview Road, although few mature trees remain today. There have been recent efforts by some landowners in the area to replant farm frontages with young trees to replenish the lost canopy.

Most of the fields appear to be in cultivation within the area. A minor tributary of the Etobicoke Creek meanders eastward through the Candidate CHL area, crossing Creditview Road just to the south of the farmstead at 13089. The creek is confined to a drainage course and has limited riparian vegetation through the agricultural fields. There is evidence of small springs and seasonal streams in the field drainage patterns, characteristic of headwaters tributaries.

Buildings, Structures and Objects

*Note * denotes properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.*

While the schoolhouse is constructed of stone, as are several of the late 19th century schools in the broader region, all the farmhouses within the area are of brick construction. These are all at least second houses on the respective properties, and range in age from c.1850 to the early 20th century. Brick became the building material of choice in the area with the establishment and expansion of local production from Cheltenham to Terra Cotta (named

for the colour of the native clay) from c.1840 into the early 20th century. Terra Cotta was formerly known as Salmonville, named for the proliferation of salmon in the Credit River.

The farmhouses of this area have gained ‘tails’, porches and other additions, and the farmsteads themselves have outbuildings of varied age ranging from early timber frame barns to metal silos. Each house has been carefully sited on a rise allowing drainage away from the building foundations.

**13089 Creditview Road
(W ½ Lot 23, Con. 3)**

Possibly the oldest surviving farmhouse in the Candidate area, the three-bay, 1 ½ storey brick building has side gables, medium pitched roof, end chimneys, returned cornice, and dentillated eave typical of the vernacular classicism of the first half of the 19th century. An unfortunate addition has been placed on the front obscuring the original entrance, which may have included a transom. This building was built likely c.1850 by William Hutchison.



13089 Creditview Road

***13278 Creditview Road
(now Pt. E ½ Lot 24, Con. 4) (Taylor-Echlin House)**



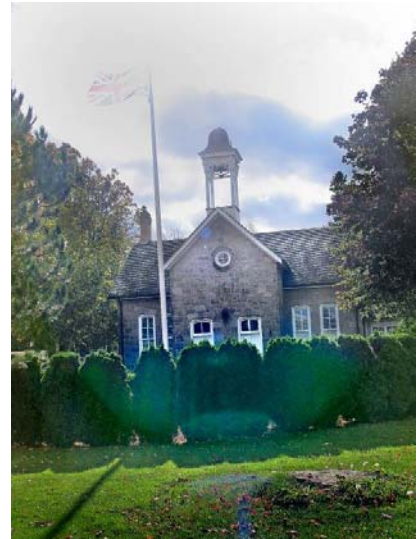
13278 Creditview Road

This is the most intact farmhouse and yard within the Candidate area (though severances have occurred to the north section of the property). The fine three bay, 1 ½ storey brick house has cut stone quoins, six light over six light double hung windows within voussoired openings and a pilastered main entrance with transom and original 6 panel door. While it has a typical medium pitch side gable roof at the front, at the rear the roof extends into a ‘saltbox’ form from which a board and batten carriage house extends. The structure was built c.1863 as the home for Thomas and Jane

Taylor, originally from Scotland. An addition with verandah was built to the north and served as the home for Jane and her daughter Christina when son Peter inherited the property in 1872. The many mature deciduous trees greatly enhance the grounds.

***1488 Old School Road
(Pt. E ½ Lot 23, Con. 4) (Sharpe Schoolhouse)**

This fine stone schoolhouse was built in 1879 to replace an earlier frame school building. Constructed in a “T” plan, a projecting gabled bay fronts on to Creditview Road and carries the belfry with its relatively elaborate ogee shaped roof, as well as an oculus window in the gable, and the segmentally arched door openings for girls and boys respectively. All the openings are segmentally arched, relatively narrow in the Victorian mode, and have fine cut stone labels with projecting keystone motif. The walling of local limestone ashlar is randomly coursed and has a pecked finish. An original rear extension to the building has been further extended and turned into gracious living space incorporating architectural motifs from the original school.



1488 Old School Road

**12911 Creditview Road
(W ½ Lot 22, Con. 3)**

Constructed c.1875, this brick structure has the contrasting brick detailing (here painted), scrollwork verge, bellcast verandah with scrolled ‘gingerbread’, and projecting bay window typical of the later 19th century. A two storey addition with centre gable extends to the east. Unfortunately the window sash has been changed. A working farm, the full range of outbuildings, encompassing a number of generations, is extant. The long lane to the house and the rear yard is lined with conifers.



12911 Creditview Road

**12872 Creditview Road
(E ½ Lot 22, Con. 4)**

This brick ‘four-square’ from the early 20th century either has replaced, or incorporates, the original home of David Henderson already in place in 1859. This property is a working farm with a full complement of barns and sheds spanning the generations, and, except for a small severed section at the northwest corner, retains its full original lot.



Barn Complex at 12872 Creditview Road

Archaeological Sites

Though no archaeological survey has yet been undertaken in the Candidate CHL, its location between the Credit River and Etobicoke Creek, in what was originally a fine hardwood forest, suggests that archaeological potential is high.

3. Site Context

Essentially the Candidate area is part of the broad patchwork of farmsteads (including yards, fields and woodlots) which make up the landscape of the Peel Plain. Though broken by modern residential severances the traditional rural agricultural landscape still pre-dominates in concessions 3 and 4 between Mayfield Road and King Street. Another fine, early (c.1850) brick farmhouse (13496 Creditview Road), unusual in being five bays, is located just north of the Candidate area. The flatness of the land allows distant views of the Escarpment to the north and northwest of the Escarpment. The main natural feature is Etobicoke Creek, several arms of which flow southeast through the Candidate area.

Through the 19th century the area looked to Cheltenham as its main market centre, but the former hamlets of Alloa at Creditview Road and Mayfield Road and Salmonville (now Terra Cotta) were part of its extended universe.



View to the west along Creditview Road

6.3 EVALUATION

To be identified as a CHL an area must clearly embody both heritage significance and integrity.

Significance

Significance Criteria

While any landscape upon which humankind has left its imprint is a cultural landscape, only those cultural landscapes that have a deep connection with the history of the jurisdiction can be identified as cultural heritage landscapes. To be considered significant from a heritage perspective it must be demonstrated through the Inventory Report that the Candidate CHL meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Is associated with events that made significant contributions to the broad patterns of area history, i.e., strong association with central themes.*
- B. Is closely associated with the lives of individuals and/or families who are considered significant to the history of the area.*
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular settlement pattern or lifeway whether derived from ethnic background, imposed by the landscape, was the practice of a specific historic period or a combination of the above.*
- D. Manifests a particularly close and harmonious long-standing relationship between the natural and domestic landscape.*
- E. Has yielded or is likely to yield information important to prehistory or history.*
- F. Is strongly associated with the cultural and/or spiritual traditions of First Nations or any other ethnic and/or religious group.*

Integrity

A CHL must be able to be justified as a distinct area of contiguous heritage integrity. Its key individual elements, which constitute the cultural heritage landscape and the way in which their interweaving makes a unique 'place,' must still clearly reflect the historic period and/or organic evolution from which the heritage significance derives.

Conclusions

Based on the preceding examination, the Chinguacousy Farmstead Candidate CHL meets *Significance Criteria C* - reflecting agricultural life on the Peel Plain throughout the 19th and early 20th century when it was the economic backbone of the area.

The farmsteads and the crossroads schoolhouse retain sufficient integrity that the traditional farming landscape/community is still readily perceivable.

6.4 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This crossroads grouping of farmsteads around the fine stone school is representative of rural life throughout the large, fertile Peel Plain. This region was an extremely important agricultural area throughout the 19th and early 20th century being a major producer of wheat during the mid 19th century 'boom' and diversifying in the later 19th century to include a greater variety of crops and an emphasis on livestock. The traditional agricultural landscape of the Plain is shrinking as the number of severances increase and sub-divisions march relentlessly northward.

The farmsteads which make up this Candidate CHL still, for the most part, retain their historic attributes including: original lot size; patchwork of fields, farmyards, and windrows; complement of

widely varied barns and outbuildings; and farmhouses of local brick, the construction of which spans the period c.1850 – c.1910. The presence of the schoolhouse emphasizes the sense of this area as a rural community. The quality of the school's design and stonework is testament to the regard with which education was held.

Character-defining Elements

CF-1 *13278 Creditview Road, 'Taylor-Echlin House' (now Pt. E ½ Lot 24, Con. 4)

CF-2, 4, 8 Seasonal streams and minor tributary of the Etobicoke Creek

CF-3 13089 Creditview Road (W ½ Lot 23, Con. 3)

CF-5 *1488 Old School Road, 'Sharpe Schoolhouse' (Pt. E ½ Lot 23, Con.4)

CF-6 12911 Creditview Road (W ½ Lot 22, Con.3)

CF-7 12872 Creditview Road (E ½ Lot 22, Con. 4)

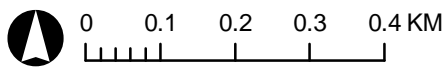
CF-9 Associated lanes, fields, windrows and yard plantings

It is thus recommended that the Candidate CHL, referred to as the Farmsteads of Former Chinguacousy Township, and representing the Peel Plain farmsteads, be identified as a CHL.

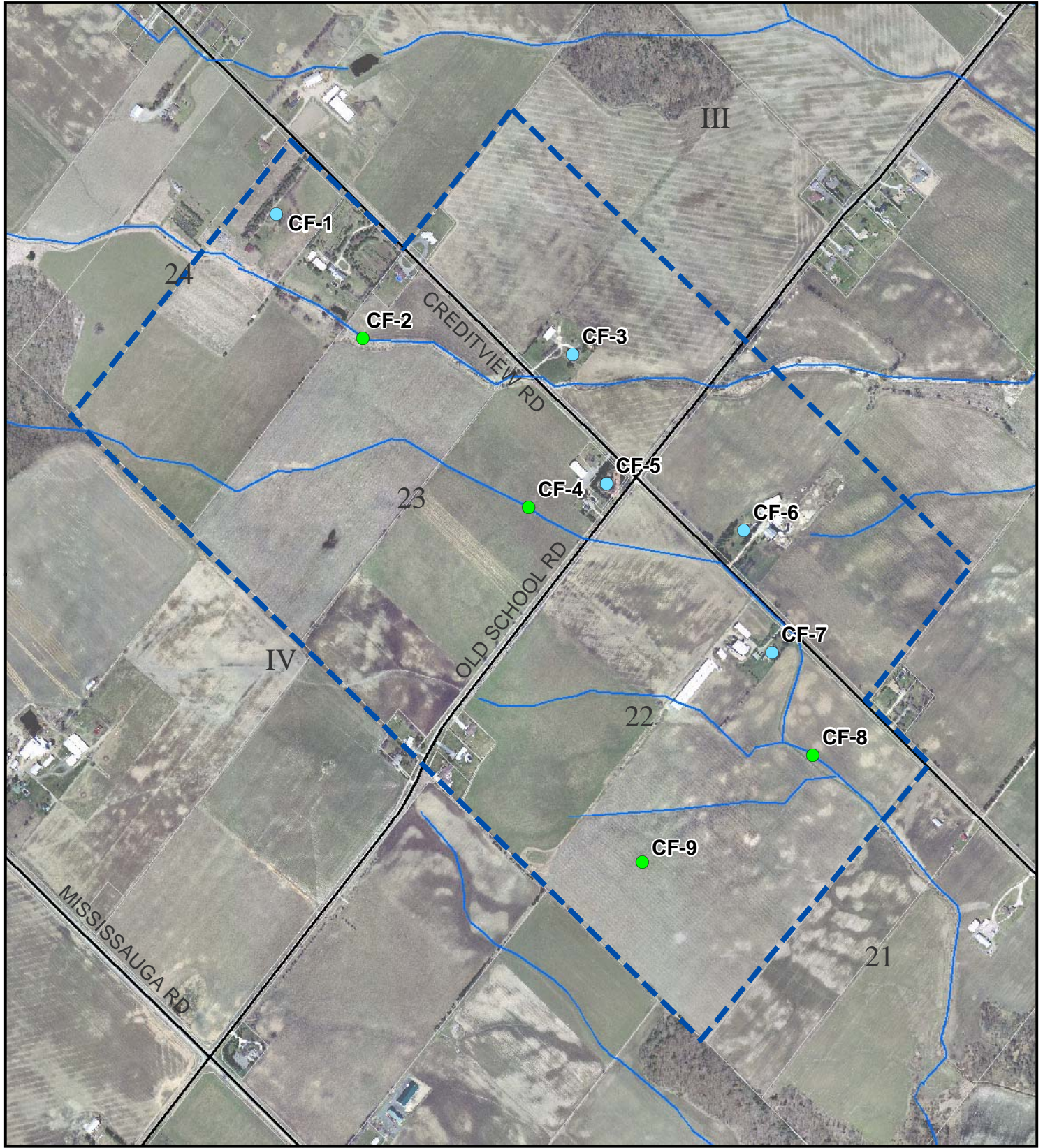
6.5 BOUNDARIES

In general the identified Farmsteads of Former Chinguacousy Township CHL includes the East ½ of Lots 22, 23, 24 (south section) Con. 4 and West ½ of Lots 22 and 23, Con. 3.

Refer to **Figure 7 Farmsteads of Former Chinguacousy Township** for detailed delineation of the boundary.



Farmsteads of Former Chinguacousy Township Figure 6



- Character Defining Elements
- Road
 - Built
 - Landscape
 - CHL Boundary
 - Rivers / Streams
 - Lakes / Ponds
 - Property Boundary (2006)