

Agricultural Impact Assessment

Part Lots 1 and 2 Concession II Nepean
4386 Rideau Valley Drive
City of Ottawa

Prepared for:

Uniform Developments

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1. Introduction

Uniform Developments owns a 6.77-hectare parcel of land located on Part Lots 1 and 2 Concession II Nepean in the City of Ottawa at 4386 Rideau Valley Drive. They have applied to the City of Ottawa to amend the Official Plan to change the designation of the parcel from Agricultural Resource Area to Rural Countryside. The City of Ottawa Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) stipulates that applications for non-agricultural uses on agricultural land be supported by an Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). This AIA has also been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Policy 4.3.5(2) of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Apedaile Environmental has been retained to conduct the AIA for the parcel to study the impact of removing the parcel from the Agricultural Resource Area of the City of Ottawa and on the impact of non-agricultural uses within a 250-hectare buffer around the parcel.

Farmland accounts for approximately 40 percent of the rural area of the City of Ottawa. This land, designated as Agricultural Resource Area, is primarily Canada Land Inventory Class 1 to 3. The Ottawa agricultural industry is made up of approximately 1000 individual farms, consisting of cash crop, dairy and other livestock operations.

An agrology and soil capability study was conducted for the property by Apedaile Environmental Inc. in June 2025 and found that it was 67 percent Class 3, 16 percent Class 4 and 17 percent Class 7. The parcel is currently zoned AG3 – Agricultural zone and has a LEAR score of 87, which is relatively low when compared with other property parcels in the City of Ottawa and falls within the lowest LEAR score category. It is an orphaned parcel because it is not contiguous with any other agricultural land. The parcel is surrounded by Rural Institutional, Parks and Open Space, Development Reserve and Rural Countryside Zones.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

An AIA is a tool to identify and evaluate the impacts to agriculture of non-agricultural uses on agricultural land, to avoid, and where it is not possible to avoid, minimize and mitigate the impacts on agriculture. The City of Ottawa uses a Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) system to identify and protect prime agricultural land in the city. The LEAR is a tool to quantitatively evaluate the capability of the soils, the land use and surrounding influences for each parcel of land to assess the suitability of the parcel for agricultural use or not. The LEAR also contains direction on non-agricultural uses on land in the Agricultural Resource Area. The LEAR states that applications for non-agricultural uses be supported by an AIA and that the assessment address the tests in the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).

The PPS contains policies that direct municipalities to protect prime agricultural land. This includes avoiding fragmentation of agricultural land by severance and subdivision and preventing new uses that conflict with agricultural land uses. Prime agricultural areas are defined in the PPS as:

“...areas where prime agricultural lands predominate. This includes areas of prime agricultural lands and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 to 7 lands, and additional areas with a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture.”



This AIA is being prepared to identify and evaluate the potential impact(s) of removing the subject parcel from the Agricultural Resource Area.

1.2 Review of Background Information

The following were reviewed as a part of this AIA:

- Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document – Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
- Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 – Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) for Agriculture Volume 1 – City of Ottawa
- Official Plan Volume 1 Section 9 Rural Designations – City of Ottawa
- Zone mapping accessed through geoOttawa (<https://maps.ottawa.ca/geoottawa/>) – City of Ottawa



Figure 1 Parcel Location



1.3 Parcel Description

The parcel is located at Part Lots 1 and 2 Concession II Nepean, 4386 Rideau Valley Drive in the City of Ottawa, northwest of the Village of Manotick (Figure 1). The parcel is approximately 6.77 hectares, where approximately 2 hectares is open field, and 4.6 hectares is bush. The parcel is bordered to the north by a City of Ottawa public works yard, to the west by Mud Creek and subdivisions, to the south by Mud Creek and to the east by Rideau Valley Drive and the Rideau River. The parcel surrounds two residential lots located at 4306 and 4314 Rideau Valley Drive. The parcel is accessed from Rideau Valley Drive.

1.4 Description of Proposed Land Use

Uniform Developments has proposed to amend the Official Plan designation of the parcel from Agricultural Resource Area to Rural Countryside. At this time, there is no planned use for the parcel. According to Section 9.2.2(1) of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan, the following uses are permitted in the Rural Countryside Zone:

- a) Forestry, conservation and natural resource management activities;
- b) Agriculture, agricultural-related and on-farm diversified uses;
- c) Residential uses according to policies of the Official Plan;
- d) Animal services boarding, breeding and training and equestrian establishments;
- e) Bed and breakfasts;
- f) Utility installation;
- g) Cemeteries; and
- h) Sand and gravel pits.

1.5 Policy and regulatory requirements

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest to land use planning and development. Section 4.3 of the PPS contains general policies for agriculture and for non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas. In Section 4.3.5 of the PPS, non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas may be permitted for:

- a) Extraction of minerals, petroleum resources and mineral aggregate resources; or
- b) Limited non-agricultural uses, provided that the following are demonstrated:
 - 1. The land does not comprise a speciality crop area;
 - 2. The proposed use complies with minimum distance separation formulae;
 - 3. There is an identified need within the planning horizon for additional land to accommodate the proposed use; and
 - 4. Alternative locations have been evaluated, and
 - i. There are non-reasonable alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas; and
 - ii. There are no reasonable alternative locations in prime agricultural areas with lower priority agricultural lands.

While the policy further states that impacts from any new non-agricultural uses on the agricultural system are to be avoided, or where avoidance is not possible to be minimized and mitigated as



determined through an AIA it is noted that the proponent is not seeking non-agricultural uses on the subject parcel, rather a change in designation of the parcel to Rural Countryside.

In Section 9.1.1(3) of the City of Ottawa Official Plan, removal of land from the Agricultural Resource Area designation, outside of a comprehensive review and that does not constitute urban or village expansion shall be considered if it is demonstrated that the land does not meet the requirements for an Agricultural Resource Area through an area-specific assessment, where the area is equal to or greater than 250 hectares. The assessment will demonstrate that:

- i. Based upon new information, related to one or more of the LEAR factors, the lands are not part of a prime agricultural area; and
- ii. Any redesignation avoids the potential for adverse impacts to any adjacent agricultural land and operations, or, if unavoidable, such adverse impacts are mitigated to the extent feasible.



Figure 2 Study Area



2. Study Area and Methodology

2.1 Study Area

The study area for the AIA includes the subject parcel, located at Part Lots 1 and 2 Concession II Nepean, City of Ottawa along with an area of 258 hectares surrounding the subject parcel (Figure 2). This additional surrounding area comprises the area within approximately 760 meters from the parcel boundary.

There is no agricultural land adjoining the parcel. Immediately surrounding the parcel is a City works yard, existing country estate residential, and planned serviced residential. Within the secondary study area, 20.5 percent of the land is agricultural, and 79.5 percent is zoned other than agriculture.

2.2 Study Methodology

This AIA follows the methodology outlined in the Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document published by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness in March 2018. This involves a review of background information, including agricultural policy requirements and Official Plan policies, and site-specific information, including zoning and surrounding land use as well as field specific data reported in the soil capability study.

3. Assessment of Impacts to Agriculture

The PPS requires an AIA to assess the impacts of non-agricultural uses within an agricultural area to ensure the area does not incorporate a speciality crop area, that proposed uses respect the minimum distance separation formulae, that alternative locations have been evaluated and that the impact of non-agricultural uses on agriculture are avoided or minimized and mitigated. The OP requires an assessment to demonstrate that any redesignation of agricultural land avoids adverse impacts to area agricultural land.

3.1 Speciality Crop Area

Speciality crop area is defined in the PPS as an area within the agricultural land base where speciality crops predominate. Speciality crops are tender fruits, grapes, other fruits, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops and crops from agriculturally developed organic soils. Neither the subject parcel nor any land in the 250-hectare buffer around the subject parcel are designated as speciality crop area.

3.2 Loss of Agricultural Resources

The subject parcel includes a 2-hectare field with the remainder being forested and bush. The field had not been recently cropped, based upon observations taken during the agrology and soil capability study. The field is too small to be viably cropped as a part of a commercial cash crop operation and the removal of the parcel from the agricultural resource area would not reasonably impact the agricultural resource area of the City of Ottawa.



3.3 Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands

3.4 Impacts to Agricultural Operations

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hectares of the site. Section 1.4 above lists the permitted uses for land zoned as Rural Countryside. None of these uses are predicted to interfere with agricultural operations within 250 hectares of the parcel. Figure 3 shows the zoning of land surrounding the parcel. Within the 258-hectare buffer surrounding the parcel, 46 hectares or 18 percent of the land is agricultural. The remainder is zoned as Rural Industrial, Village Residential, Development Reserve, Village Mixed Use, Rural Commercial, Rural Countryside and Parks and Open Space. A discussion of Minimum Distance Separation setbacks is provided below in Section 3.5.

3.5 Minimum Distance Separation

The Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness) contains a set of formulae and a series of Implementation Guidelines that are designed to minimize the conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. The MDS I formula pertain to setbacks of new, non-agricultural developments from existing livestock operations, including barns, manure storage and anaerobic digestors. The MDS II formula pertain to setbacks for new livestock operations from existing non-agricultural land uses. Typically, a MDS calculation is required for approval of a building permit application or prior to approval of lot creation in rural areas.

There is an existing dairy barn and manure storage approximately 460 meters northwest of the parcel. Using the most restrictive conditions for a Type B land use, the MDS I setback would be 415 meters, therefore the presence of the dairy barn and manure storage would not constrain any of the permitted uses in Rural Countryside zoning. There are no other livestock operations within the 250-hectare buffer surrounding the parcel.

None of the permitted uses under the Rural Countryside Zone would require a MDS II calculation, with the possible exception of equestrian establishment. The parcel could host an equestrian facility with a barn and solid manure storage for 10 horses with setbacks of 102 meters from Type A land uses and 204 meters from Type B land uses. Such a facility would also require a Nutrient Management Strategy and Plan prior to approval. Otherwise, MDS II does not constrain Rural Countryside uses.

4. Recommendations

Based upon the analysis presented in this report it is recommended that the Official Plan designation of subject parcel may be amended to change it from Agricultural Resource Area to Rural Countryside without having a negative impact on surrounding agricultural uses. The parcel is too small to be viable for commercial agriculture and is fragmented from other agricultural land in the vicinity.

5. Summary and Conclusions

Uniform Developments has proposed amending the Official Plan designation of a 6.77-hectare parcel from Agricultural Resource Area to Rural Countryside. The parcel is located at Part Lots 1



and 2 Concession II Nepean, 4386 Rideau Valley Drive, City of Ottawa. This Agricultural Impact Assessment was carried out to study the impacts on surrounding agricultural uses of amending the Agricultural Resource Area to Rural Countryside.

The parcel is not contiguous with any other agricultural land, is too small for commercial agricultural production and is surrounded by land zoned as Rural Industrial, Village Residential, Development Reserve, Village Mixed Use, Rural Commercial, Rural Countryside and Parks and Open Space. Permitted uses in the Rural Countryside zone will not constrain agricultural activity within 250 hectares of the parcel.

Respectfully submitted,



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