

KITCHENER WOODBRIDGE LONDON KINGSTON BARRIE BURLINGTON

PLANNING JUSTIFICATION **REPORT** ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

7450 Middlebrook Road Township of Centre Wellington

Date:

November 2022

Prepared for:

Melinda and Tim Croft

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Our File 21161A

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited (MHBC Planning) has been retained by Melinda and Tim Croft to assist with the planning applications to permit an on-farm business at 7450 Middlebrook Road in the Township of Centre Wellington (the "subject lands").

The subject lands are designated Prime Agricultural, Core Greenlands and Greenlands in the Wellington County Official Plan. The subject lands are zoned Agricultural (A), Environmental Protection (EP) and Environmental Protection Overlay (EP Overlay) in the Township of Centre Wellington Zoning By-law 2009-045. Development is not proposed in areas designated Core Greenlands or zoned EP.

To permit the redevelopment of the subject lands with an agri-tourism use, an amendment to the Township of Centre Wellington Zoning By-law is required. The Zoning Bylaw Amendment proposes to establish a site specific Agricultural zone (A.XX.X) to permit the on-farm business and introduce site specific zoning standards to implement the proposed use.

This Planning Justification Report has been prepared for submission to the Township of Centre Wellington and includes the following:

- An introduction and general description of the subject lands and surrounding uses to provide an understanding of the site context;
- A description of the existing conditions and proposed development;
- A review of the provincial and municipal planning framework in relation to the existing and proposed development and an assessment of consistency and conformity with the applicable policies and plans; and
- A justification for the proposed amendment to the Township Zoning By-law.

The subject lands comprise a total of 6.82 hectares, and contain a single detached dwelling, a barn, a car port, a shed, and a greenhouse. The balance of the lands are currently farmed or forested, save for the driveway that provides access to the house and other existing buildings. The forested area of the site is regulated by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and includes a regulated watercourse and wetland. There is no development proposed within the features.

The Zoning By-law Amendment application is intended to allow for a site specific amendment to permit onfarm businesses, being a seasonal special events venue in the existing barn on the subject lands, and a sales outlet for agricultural products, also within the barn. The Zoning By-law Amendment proposes site specific standards for the use including area limits for the proposed seasonal special events venue.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

2.1 Site Description

The subject property is located on the north-west corner of Middlebrook Road and Wellington Road 7, west of the Elora urban boundary. The lands front onto Middlebrook Road and Wellington Road 7, and contain an existing driveway that leads to the barn, single detached dwelling, car port and other buildings on the site. All of these buildings are accessed from the same driveway. The balance of the property is currently farmed or forested. The location of the subject lands is illustrated on **Figure 1**.

2.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The lands are located in the western portion of the Township, west of Elora and are generally surrounded by a mixture of agricultural uses, rural residential, retained natural areas and urban uses as illustrated on **Figure 2.** More specifically, the following describes the surrounding land uses:

North:	To the north of the subject lands are agricultural operations, occupied by farm fields and small clusters of supporting agricultural or residential buildings. Further north is a cluster of commercial and industrial uses which are located in the Elora urban area.
West:	West of the subject lands are additional rural residential parcels and agricultural operations accessed from Middlebrook Road.
South:	To the south of the subject lands is the Elora Lions Park (which includes sports fields) and the Elora Gorge Conservation Area. The Conservation Area includes the Grand River, forested areas, structures associated with the conservation area, camp sites and trails.
East:	East of the subject lands is the boundary of the Elora urban area. On the east side of Wellington Road 7 are low density residential parcels. Further south-east of the subject lands is the commercial core of Elora which includes various commercial businesses including restaurants, shops, and the Elora Mill Hotel.



2.3 Pre-Consultation

A pre-application consultation application was submitted to the Township in May of 2021 to outline the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to permit an agri-tourism use at 7450 Middlebrook Road, Elora. Preconsultation comments from Township staff were received on June 25, 2021 and comments from the County were received on June 24, 2021. The following materials were identified during the pre-consultation to form a complete application for the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment, and are included with the submission of this application:

- Planning Justification Report;
- Heritage Impact Assessment (Scoped);
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Transportation Impact Study;
- Environmental Impact Study; and,
- Site Plan with existing and proposed buildings and uses identified.

The submission does not include the following studies:

• Servicing Feasibility Report – The proposal discussed at the pre-consultation meeting included guest rooms in the barn. The proposal has been revised to remove the request for guess rooms, and only two additional bathrooms are proposed as part of the proposed agri-tourism use. Due to the minimal servicing impacts of the proposed agri-tourism use, the Servicing Feasibility Report will form part of the future Site Plan application, if required.

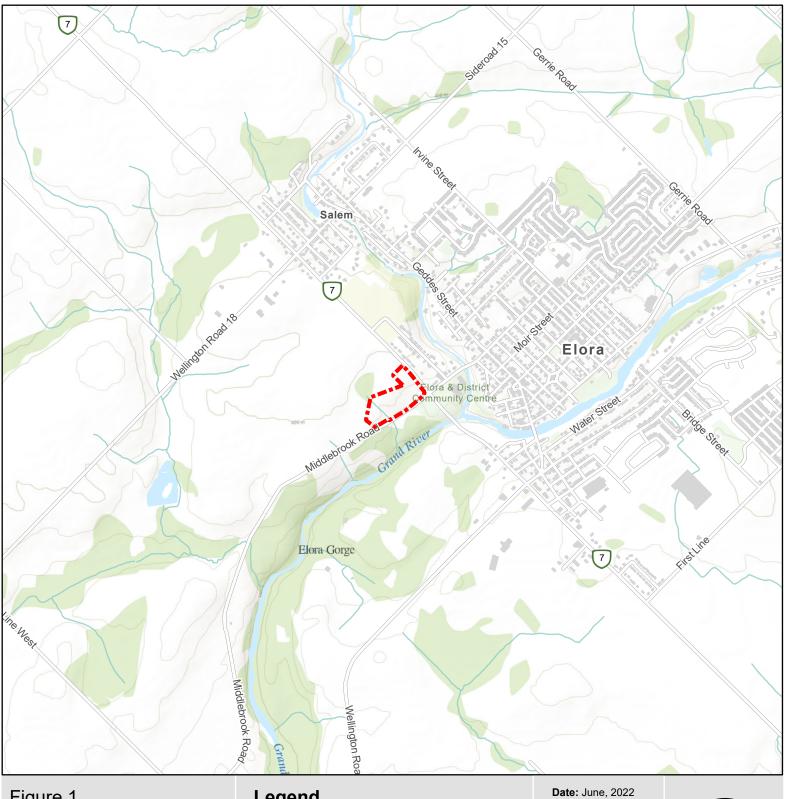


Figure 1 Location Map

Legend

Subject Lands

Scale: 1: 25,000

File: 21161A

Drawn: PL

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PLANNING URBAN DESIGN & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

7450 Middlebrook Rd Centre Wellington Wellington County

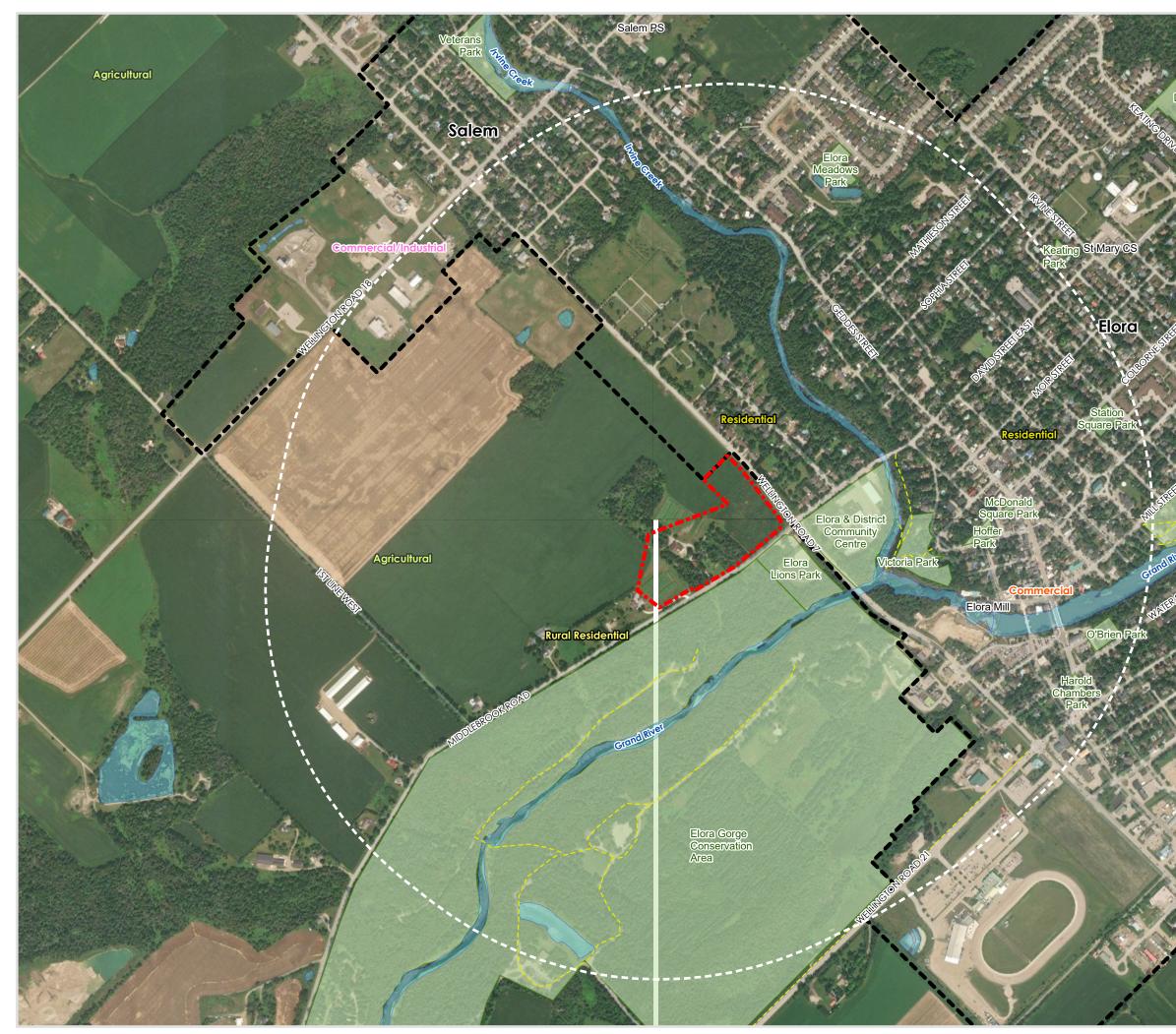


Figure 2 **Context map**

7450 Middlebrook Rd Centre Wellington Wellington County

LEGEND



Subject Lands 1km Buffer Urban Centres and Hamlets Trails Waterbody

Parks

Sources:

- Contains information licensed under the Open Government Licence – Ontario.

DATE: June, 2022

FILE: 21161A

SCALE: 1:10,000

DRAWN: PL



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3.0 description of proposal

The following is an outline of the proposed development for 7450 Middlebrook Road in Centre Wellington, Ontario.

3.1 Proposed Development

The development proposal includes the establishment of two farm business uses in the form of a seasonal special events venue and a sales outlet for agricultural products, both uses are proposed to be located in a portion of the existing barn. The event space would be utilized for a variety of events such as weddings, receptions, corporate events, music/concerts, theatre, seasonal farm dinners and workshops. The use is proposed to be seasonal operating from May to October, with one holiday themed event in November.

The subject lands are listed on the Township's Municipal Heritage Register as a non-designated property, due mainly to the significance of the site's barn. The proposed event space would operate in the upper level and mezzanine of the barn, and the lower level would continue to support the agriculture use on the subject lands, in addition to the sales outlet for agricultural products. The two areas of the barn will be separated by a locked door, which will always be kept locked during events. The second floor of the barn, proposed to be used for the special event venue, has accessible access at grade at the north end of the building, which acts as the main entrance to the event space and is immediately adjacent to the proposed accessible parking spaces.

The subject lands currently include agricultural fields which are used for crops including cut flowers, corn, produce, apiaries and pumpkins. The proposed development does not propose to remove any lands from agricultural production and the existing agricultural fields are proposed to continue to be farmed. An undeveloped portion of the subject lands, which is not farmed, is proposed to be converted into a parking area for the proposed event space use. This undeveloped area is not in agricultural production and currently provides access to the shed and greenhouse.

The existing barn building has a first floor area of 452.2 square metres. The first floor is proposed to continue to support the existing agricultural operations on the site. The second floor area is 246.3 square metres and the mezzanine area is 74.3 square metres. The second floor and mezzanine are proposed to be utilized as a seasonal special event venue with a total floor area of 320.6 square metres. The proposed development will not alter the number or size of buildings on the property.

The existing site contains a single detached dwelling, the aforementioned barn, car port, shed and a greenhouse. The existing barn is not proposed to be expanded and the only building works proposed are internal renovations to the existing building. The internal renovations are being conducted to convert the second floor and mezzanine into an event space, and to repair the existing barn to ensure that it can continue to be used safely in the future, including for the agriculture uses on the ground floor. No other changes are proposed.

The property has one existing driveway from Middlebrook Road which provides access to the farm building cluster as well as the crop field, greenhouse and shed on the west side of the property. The existing driveway provides a vehicular connection across the existing culvert to access the west side of the subject lands (shown above in a photo taken at the site). The existing driveway is gravel, and a gravel surface parking area is proposed in the undeveloped area on the west side of the property between the existing crop field and the existing greenhouse and shed. A concrete surface parking area is proposed at the north end of the property adjacent to the main entrance/exit to the second floor of the barn. The concrete surface parking area will act as barrier free parking and access to the event venue. A site plan application will be advanced at a later date to delineate additional technical site design requirements. Please see the enclosed Concept Site Plan (**Figure 3**).



4.0 planning analysis

This section of the report reviews the applicable land use policy framework as it applies to the subject lands and how the proposal is consistent with and/or conforms to, this framework.

4.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement ("PPS") provides a vision for land use planning in Ontario that encourages the efficient use of land, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities. Development growth is directed to urban and rural settlement areas while supporting the economic vitality of rural communities. The wise use, management, and preservation of natural heritage resources and agricultural resources are key provincial interests. Generally, the PPS encourages development that will provide long term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being. The following is an analysis of the proposed development in the context of the policies of the PPS.

Section 1.1.4 of the PPS states that rural areas are a system of lands made up of rural settlement areas, rural lands, prime agricultural areas, natural heritage features and areas, and other resources and amenities. This policy also highlights the interdependent relationship between rural areas and urban areas in terms of markets and the foundation of a sustainable economy.

Section 1.1.4.1 states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by:

- a) building upon rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets;
- b) promoting regeneration, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
- c) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of housing in rural settlement areas;
- d) encouraging the conservation and redevelopment of existing rural housing stock on rural lands;
- e) using rural infrastructure and public service facilities efficiently;
- f) promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-added products and the sustainable management or use of resources;
- *g)* providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets;
- h) conserving biodiversity and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature; and
- *i)* Providing opportunities for economic activities in prime agricultural areas, in accordance with Policy 2.3.

The proposed farm businesses will have minimal external impacts and will support the economic wellbeing of the rural area. The uses will leverage an existing historical and operational rural asset and provide for greater economic opportunities in the rural area.

Section 2.1.1 of the PPS states that natural areas and features shall be protected for the long term. Section 2.1.4.a) states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant wetlands and Section 2.1.5.b) states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant woodlands, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological

functions. The subject lands include lands identified by the County of Wellington as significant woodlands and wetlands. There is no development proposed within the areas of the subject lands identified as wetlands and significant woodlands. An Environmental Impact Study has been prepared in support of the development. A summary of the Environmental Impact Study is included in section 5.4 of this report.

Section 2.3.1 of the PPS states that in prime agricultural areas, agricultural lands shall be protected for longterm use with specialty crop areas given the highest priority for protection. The subject lands are not located within a 'specialty crop area'. Although the lands are very small in area for an agricultural use, they are currently farmed and contain a dwelling and several farm related buildings. The agri-tourism use will operate in an unused portion of the existing barn. There are other existing accessory buildings that support the farm operation and no changes to those buildings are proposed. There is also no proposed reduction in the area of land that is being farmed and no new buildings are proposed.

Section 2.3.3.1 lists permitted uses in prime agricultural areas to be: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. The lands contain an agricultural use and the agri-tourism use is considered to be an on-farm diversified use, rather than an agriculture-related use. Section 2.3.3.1 states: "proposed agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria for these uses may be based on guidelines developed by the Province or municipal approaches, as set out in municipal planning documents, which achieve the same objectives."

The agri-tourism use is proposed to operate within an existing building and there is no planned expansion to the building, or any changes to the existing agricultural operation or the buildings associated with the site's farming operations. The farm business use would operate with minimal disruption and impact on the existing farm operation on the subject lands or the abutting properties. The lands front onto a local road that provides excellent access to the site. Additional analysis of the Province of Ontario's Publication 851: Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas is included in section 4.2 of this report.

Section 2.6.1 of the PPS states that significant built heritage resources shall be conserved. The subject lands are listed on the Municipal Heritage Register as a non-designated property due to the significance of the barn on the property. A Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in support of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment. The assessment reviewed the heritage value/attributes of the site, and the potential impacts of the proposed farm business use on the heritage resource and concluded the use of the barn for a farm business use was appropriate. Further information about the Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment is included in section 5.1 of this report.

Based on the above, it is concluded that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

4.2 Publication 851: Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas

In addition to the definition of *on-farm diversified uses* in the PPS, further guidelines for permitted uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas are provided in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' Publication 851: Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas document. Section 2.3 of the Guidelines provides examples of on-farm diversified uses, which include 'Agri-tourism and recreation uses', and provides criteria for municipalities to consider when new uses are proposed within prime agricultural areas. The criteria are summarized in the following table:

Criteria	Provincial Direction	Site Applicability
Located on a farm	The use must be located on a farm property that is actively in agricultural use. The agricultural use must be conducted with the expectation of "gain or reward."	The lands are currently farmed and no change to the farming operation is proposed. The farming operation is conducted with the expectation of gain or reward.
Secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property	Agriculture must remain the dominant use of the lands. Spatially, the use must be secondary to the agricultural use. Temporal considerations apply to uses that are intermittent, such as events. The frequency and timing of events must not interfere with cropping cycles or other agriculture uses on the farm.	Spatially, the farm occupies the majority of the site. The existing farm cluster of buildings is not proposed to change – no new buildings are proposed and no expansions to the existing buildings are proposed. The existing barn on the site is larger than the existing agricultural operations on the site require. Currently, the first floor of the barn is used for the site's agricultural operations and the second floor and mezzanine are vacant. The proposed farm business uses will utilize the vacant second floor and mezzanine area in the barn, and a small portion of the ground floor. New parking areas will be required to accommodate the proposed use, but these areas are outside of the farmed areas of the site. The farm business use is proposed to operate between May and October

Criteria	Provincial Direction	Site Applicability
Limited in area	Minimize the amount of land	with one event in November, with the majority of events taking place from Friday to Sunday. The intermittent nature of the use will ensure that the use remains secondary to the site's primary use as a farm. No land will be removed from
	taken out of agricultural production (if any), ensure agriculture remains the main land use and limiting off-site impacts (e.g. traffic) to ensure compatibility with surrounding agricultural operations. Where available, uses should be within existing agricultural buildings or structures no longer needed to support the agricultural production. General standard is up to 2% of the farm parcel may be used for an on-farm diversified use	agricultural production as a result of this application. The driveway which provides access to the barn and proposed parking area is existing and only minor adjustments to the driveway are proposed. The only proposed physical change to the subject lands is the resurfacing of the parking area near the barn's second floor entrance and the addition of a parking area on the west side of the property. The proposed parking area near the second floor entrance to the barn requires a resurfacing and small expansion to the existing gravel parking area. The proposed parking area on the west side of the lot is proposed in an unused section of the subject lands which is not used for agricultural production (it is currently used as the main access to the shed and greenhouse). The proposed parking area will not remove any lands from agricultural production and will not have any impact on the adjacent agricultural field. The proposed farm business use is within the upper floors of the existing barn in the area

Criteria	Provincial Direction	Site Applicability
		which has not been used to
		support the farm.
		The subject lands were
		severed in 2005, and a large
		portion of the former farm
		was added to the abutting
		property. As a result, the
		subject lands are an
		undersized lot with an area of
		6.82 hectares. The proposed
		area of the site to be utilized
		for the agri-tourism use
		includes the barrier free
		parking near the barn
		entrance, the parking area on
		the west side of the lot and
		the second floor and
		mezzanine area of the barn.
		The total footprint of these
		areas is approximately 1,350
		square metres which equates
		to 1.98% of the site area. This
		area meets the province's
		recommended 2% maximum
		area for on-farm diversified
		uses, and it should be noted
		that almost the entire ground
		floor of the barn will continue
		to be utilized for the site's
		existing agricultural operations and only a small
		portion will be used for the
		sales outlet for agricultural
		products (including products
		produced on the property),
		while a portion of second
		floor and mezzanine will be
		utilized for the seasonal
		special events venue. The
		coverage of the area of the
		site being utilized for the farm
		business use accounts for less
		than 2% of the lot area.
Includes home occupations,	Must be reasonable in scale	The farm business uses are
home industries, agri-tourism		reasonable in scale and will
0		
uses and uses that produce value-		be contained within an

Criteria	Provincial Direction	Site Applicability
		to the other farm buildings that support the agricultural operation are proposed and no expansions to existing buildings are proposed. The total floor area of the use is small (321 square metres). The scale of the farm business uses will not impede the existing agricultural operations on the subject lands and will not impact the adjacent agricultural operations. The proposed farm business
Shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations	Uses that attract large numbers of people onto the farm for non-farm events may result in soil compaction on the farm itself, exceed noise and trespass issues that may be incompatible with surrounding agricultural uses.	The proposed farm business uses have been evaluated for noise and traffic impacts. Further information about these assessments is included in Section 5.0 of this report. Through these studies, it was determined that the proposed agri-tourism use can be appropriately serviced by the surrounding road network. The noise assessment determined that the use is compatible with the surrounding agricultural operations and there are no compatibility concerns. The proposed agri-tourism use will only operate intermittently for 6 months of the year.

In consideration of the above, the following summary is provided:

- The lands are currently farmed and no changes to the farming operation are proposed;
- The farm business uses are proposed to operate in an existing underutilized building;
- The addition of a new parking area to the site will occur within a vacant underutilized area of the site with access from the existing driveway;
- The farm cluster includes an existing dwelling, the barn and a car port. A greenhouse and shed are located on the west side of the site and are accessed via the same driveway, which will continue to provide access to all of the buildings and parking areas. No changes to the driveway or other gravel areas in front of the buildings are proposed;

- No reduction in the area of land currently farmed is proposed; and
- The farm business uses are self-contained operations that can be supported by local service levels see Section 5.0 of this report and the enclosed supporting studies related to noise and traffic. There will be no additional impacts on the adjacent lands as a result of the new uses within an existing building.

In summary, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to permit two farm businesses on the subject lands will not hinder the surrounding agricultural operations and can be supported by existing rural services and infrastructure. The proposed development will remain contained within an existing building on the subject lands and will not remove any lands from agricultural production. The cumulative impact of the farm business uses on the agricultural area will be limited and the primary use of the subject lands will be agriculture. As such it is concluded that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with Ontario Publication 851.

4.3 A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020

The 2020 A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ('A Place to Grow') came into effect on August 28, 2020. This Plan is the framework for implementing the Provincial Government's initiative to plan for growth and development in a way that supports the economic prosperity, protects the environment, and helps communities achieve a high quality of life.

A Place to Grow establishes a vision for the Greater Golden Horseshoe based on the principles of: building compact, vibrant and complete communities; economic competitiveness; protecting natural heritage resources and employment areas; wise use of land and resources; optimizing infrastructure and transit and directing growth to and intensifying existing Built-up Areas. The *Planning Act* requires that decisions respecting planning matters conform to the Growth Plan.

Section 2.2.1.2.d) of A Place to Grow directs growth to settlement areas, except where policies permit otherwise. Section 2.2.9.3 allows for *other rural land uses* on lands outside of settlement areas provided the uses are compatible with the surrounding uses, are sustained by rural service levels and will not adversely affect the protection of agricultural uses and other resource-based uses.

Section 4.2.4.1 includes policies for lands adjacent to Key Natural Heritage Features and requires that new development outside of settlement areas, and within 120 metres of a key natural heritage feature, must provide a natural heritage evaluation. Section 4.2.6.5 identifies the importance of retaining existing lots of record for *agricultural uses* and Section 4.2.7 identifies that *cultural heritage resources* will be *conserved*.

The subject lands contain an existing agricultural operation and the proposed farm business uses are proposed to operate in the unused portion of the site's existing barn. The farm businesses will be contained within the building footprint of the existing building that also contains sufficient area to support the site's ongoing agricultural operations. The existing farming operation will continue, without any reduction in the land area that is currently farmed. An Environmental Impact Study was prepared for the subject lands in support of the proposed development and determined that the farm business use would not impact the natural heritage features on the subject lands. Further information about the Environmental Impact Study is included in Section 5.4 of this report. A Heritage Impact Assessment was also conducted to assess the heritage impacts of the proposed development. A discussion on the Heritage Impact Assessment is included in Section 5.1 of this report.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment will establish regulations regarding the location of the farm business uses, their size, frequency and timing of events, and will include regulations that limit the use of the remainder of the lands for agricultural uses (including the existing single detached dwelling).

In light of these considerations and the supporting studies that address other Growth Plan policies, it is our opinion that the proposed development conforms to the Growth Plan.

4.4 County of Wellington Official Plan, 1999

The County of Wellington Official Plan (the "Official Plan") was passed by County Council on September 24, 1998, approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on April 13, 1999 and came into effect on May 6, 1999. The County Official Plan provides high level policy direction for the area municipalities within the County, including the Township of Centre Wellington. The following includes an assessment of the County's Official Plan as it relates to the subject lands and the proposed development.

The subject lands are designated Prime Agricultural, Core Greenlands and Greenlands on Schedule A1 of the County of Wellington Official Plan, as shown on **Figure 4**.

Section 4.3.1 of the Official Plan notes that Prime Agricultural areas will be identified and protected to ensure that normal farming operations are not hindered by conflicting development. Section 4.3.3.c) permits non-residential uses if the need for the use can be demonstrated and there are no reasonable alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas with lower priority agricultural lands.

Section 5 of the Official Plan includes policies related to the Greenlands System. The Greenlands System includes, among other features, wetlands and woodlands both of which are present on the subject lands. Section 5.4.1 applies to wetlands in the Core Greenlands designation and notes that development and site alteration will not be permitted in wetlands which are considered provincially significant. All other wetlands will also be protected from development which would seriously impair their future ecological functions. The subject lands do not include lands identified as provincially significant wetland as per Appendix 3 of the Official Plan, but do include a wetland at the north edge of the property. Section 5.5 of the Official Plan states that other significant natural heritage features including woodlands are intended to be protected from development that would have negative impacts on the feature. Section 5.5.4 identifies that woodlands over 4 hectares and plantations over 10 hectares are considered to be significant by the County. The Official Plan identifies that an Environmental Impact Assessment may be used to identify, delineate and evaluate the significance of woodlands based on other criteria. Significant woodlands or their ecological functions.

There is no development proposed in the wetland or woodlands on the subject lands, and the impacts of the adjacent development on the wetland and woodlands have been evaluated through the Environmental Impact Study prepared by NRSI. Based on the findings of the Environmental Impact Study, the proposed development is located outside of the limits of the features and will not negatively impact the features or their ecological functions.

Section 6.3 of the Official Plan identifies that prime agricultural areas will be protected for farming uses and land uses which support agriculture are encouraged. Permitted uses include agricultural uses, secondary uses including home businesses and farm businesses, agriculture-related uses, existing uses, single detached homes, additional residential units, garden suites, accessory residence, forestry uses, wayside pits and guarries, licenced aggregate operations, community service facilities, group homes, and kennels.

Section 6.4.4 of the Official Plan provides policies for Home Businesses and Farm Businesses. Farm businesses are described as "small scale businesses that provide value-added products from the farm and may be allowed subject to zoning provisions."

The subject lands are proposed to include two Farm Business components:

- 1. The sales outlet for agricultural products, within the lower floor of the existing barn; and
- 2. The use of the upper floor and mezzanine of the same barn, for a seasonal event centre.

The proposed Zoning By-law amendment proposes to permit two farm businesses on the subject lands. The proposed sales outlet for agricultural products will remain small in scale and will allow the owner to sell products produced on the subject lands as well as a small amount (25%) of supplementary products produced on other local farms. Products produced on the subject lands to be sold may include, but are not limited to, flowers, honey and pumpkins. By restricting the area of sales for other local farms to 25%, the intent of the County Official Plan is met – the majority of the products sold would be produced on the farm.

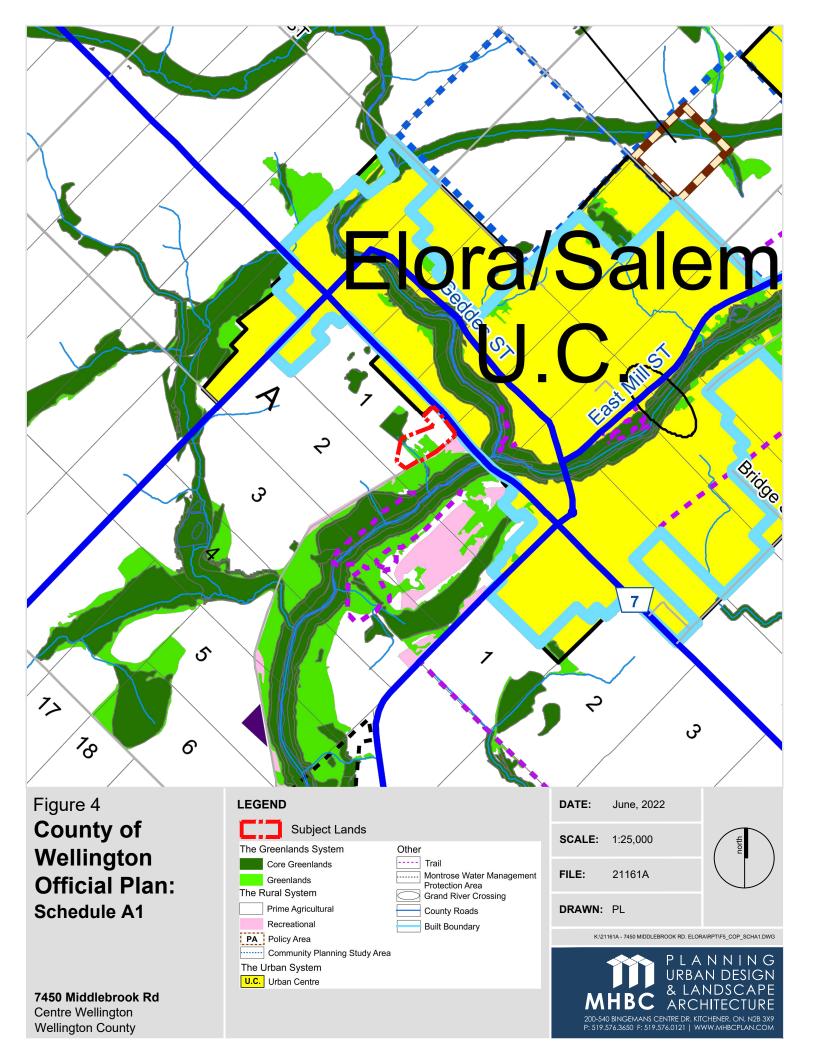
The seasonal special event venue will remain small scale and is akin to a vacation enterprise. The event space will be utilized for events, including special occasions (weddings) and other cultural events that support the community. Although no accommodation is provided within the barn as part of the event centre, it is similar to a rural tourism use or vacation enterprise. The event space will be located on the second floor and mezzanine of the barn which is currently unused. The active farm operation on the site will continue to utilize the first floor of the barn. There is no proposed expansion to the footprint of the barn and no new buildings are proposed. The proposed development will not remove any lands from agricultural production.

The subject lands already contain existing on site services. The addition of the farm businesses on the subject lands are not anticipated to require any changes to the site's existing private services. If required, a Servicing Feasibility Report could be required as part of a future site plan application to confirm the capacity of existing services on the subject lands to accommodate the proposed development.

The subject lands front Middlebrook Road which is a Local Road. No changes to the existing access is proposed. The driveway already provides access to the existing buildings onsite and the proposed parking areas associated with the event space. The proposed agriculture-related use is anticipated to increase traffic to the subject lands during the months of operation and a Transportation Impact Study has been prepared to assess the traffic impact of the seasonal special event venue.

Section 6.5.6 of the Official Plan notes that the Minimum Distance Formula (MDS) will be applied to new land uses. There is no overnight accommodation associated with the proposed event space. The surrounding lands are farmed with crops and do not contain livestock facilities. There are several single detached dwellings to the west of the subject lands, which are closer to the nearest livestock buildings, located more than 800 metres to the west of the subject lands.

Overall, the proposed development involves a new farm business use within an existing building, with minimal impact on the subject lands, its existing agricultural operation or adjacent lands. The Zoning By-law Amendment conforms to the County Official Plan.



4.5 **Township of Centre Wellington Zoning By-law**

The Township of Centre Wellington Zoning By-law (2009-045) was approved in 2009 and regulates land uses throughout the Township, implementing the County and Township Official Plan. The Township Official Plan only applies to lands within the Elora and Fergus Urban Centres, and as such does not apply to the subject lands. The following discussion considers the existing zoning, as well as the most appropriate zone and any specific performance standards to ensure the coordinated development of the subject lands.

The subject lands are zoned 'Agricultural (A)', 'Environmental Protection (EP)', and Environmental Protection Overlay (EP Overlay) (See **Figure 5**). The EP zone permits agricultural uses, conservation and resource management, fish and wildlife management, flood or erosion control facilities, passive recreation, existing uses and structures, and uses, buildings and structures accessory to the permitted uses noted above with the written approval of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) where applicable. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment does not propose any change to the boundary of the EP zone and does not propose any development in the EP zone. The driveway already exists on the subject lands and is located between the existing barn and the limit of the woodlot zoned EP.

The EP Overlay is not a zone, but an overlay that represents natural heritage features included in the Greenlands designation of the County or Township Official Plans. Section 9.2.3.2 of the Zoning By-law allows the permitted uses and regulations of the underlying zone, provided the special provisions of section 9.2.3.2 can be met. In cases where the identified natural feature is a significant woodland, development is not permitted unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the woodland or its ecological functions. Further, the by-law notes that if the natural feature is a regulated area according to the GRCA, the erection of a building or structure is not permitted without the written approval of the GRCA. The subject lands contain significant woodlands and a portion of the lands are regulated by the GRCA as noted on **Figure 6**.

In this regard, an Environmental Impact Study was prepared in support of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment. The EIS concludes that the proposed farm business uses will not negatively impact the significant woodlands.

The Agricultural 'A' zone permits farming and farm related uses and includes different provisions for different sized lots. The subject lands have a lot frontage of over 200 metres and area of 6.82 hectares. Therefore, the lands are subject to Section 6.1.3 of the By-law, which regulates lots with an area of less than 10 hectares. Section 6.1.3.1 permits:

- agricultural uses,
- a single detached dwelling,
- a group home,
- a commercial kennel,
- existing institutional uses, and
- accessory uses such as a bed and breakfast, accessory apartment, farm business, home occupation, home business-tradesperson and micro wind energy systems.

Provisions for Farm Business are included in section 4.13 of the zoning by-law. Section 4.13 permits a Farm Business within a single detached dwelling or building accessory to a single detached dwelling, provided

the farm business is only permitted on a lot having an area greater than or equal to 6.0 hectares. Farm business uses include:

- Carpentry shop
- Contractor's yard
- Welding shop
- Machine shop
- Plumbing shop
- Electrical shop
- Furniture fabrication
- Assembly and repair
- Tool and equipment repair shop
- Small engine repair
- Farm implement repair
- Or similar uses to those noted above

Section 4.13 requires that the farm business shall be clearly secondary to the main agricultural use of the lot and/or building, or part thereof and shall not change the agricultural character of the area. Where the farm business is located within an accessory building, not more than 158.8 square metres shall be devoted to such use and the farm business shall be conducted only by members of the family residing on the premises except for two employees who may not reside on the property. There shall be no external storage of goods or equipment unless fully enclosed and the farm business shall not create or become a nuisance in regard to noise, odors, vibrations or parking.

A seasonal special event venue is not included as an example of a Farm Based business and the use is not similar to the uses noted as examples in section 4.13 of the by-law. Although the type of use is not similar, the same types of regulations are proposed to ensure that the proposed seasonal special events venue maintains the intent of the Agricultural zone. The subject lands are over 6 hectares in area and the farm business will remain secondary to the main agricultural use of the lot. The proposed use will not change the agricultural character of the area and the floor area of the use will be limited through the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment. The Zoning By-law Amendment will also limit the number of employees and guests associated with the seasonal special events venue. The proposed farm business will not include any external storage and there are no anticipated odours associated with the use.

A sales outlet for agricultural products is permitted in the 'A' zone, but not on lots with an area of less than 10 hectares. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to permit a sales outlet for agricultural products in accordance with Section 4.34 of the Zoning By-law, with site specific provisions on the subject lands. Section 4.34 requires that the goods being offered for sale must have been produced on the same property, or on another property or properties within the owner's holding. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to permit 25% of the sales outlet area to be devoted to the sale of goods produced on other local farms. The proposed amendment will maintain the intent of the Zoning By-law and County Official Plan by ensuring that the majority of the sales outlet is devoted to products produced on the subject lands, but will allow for the use to also support the local farming community more broadly. The proposed amendment does not propose any change in the maximum floor area of 50m² for the sales outlet for agricultural products, and the use will remain secondary to the agricultural operations on the site by limiting the size of the use.

The purpose of the Zoning By-law Amendment is to permit a sales outlet for agricultural products and a seasonal special events venue on the lands, and to regulate the size and scale of these accessory uses, as shown on **Figure 7**. As such, the preferred approach for the lands is to retain the existing Agricultural zoning, and to add a new exception to the lands to permit a sales outlet for agricultural products in accordance with section 4.34 of the Zoning by-law, and to permit a seasonal special event venue up to 330 square metres in ground floor area. The remainder of the uses which already exist on the subject lands would continue to be permitted, and/or recognized under the existing zoning.

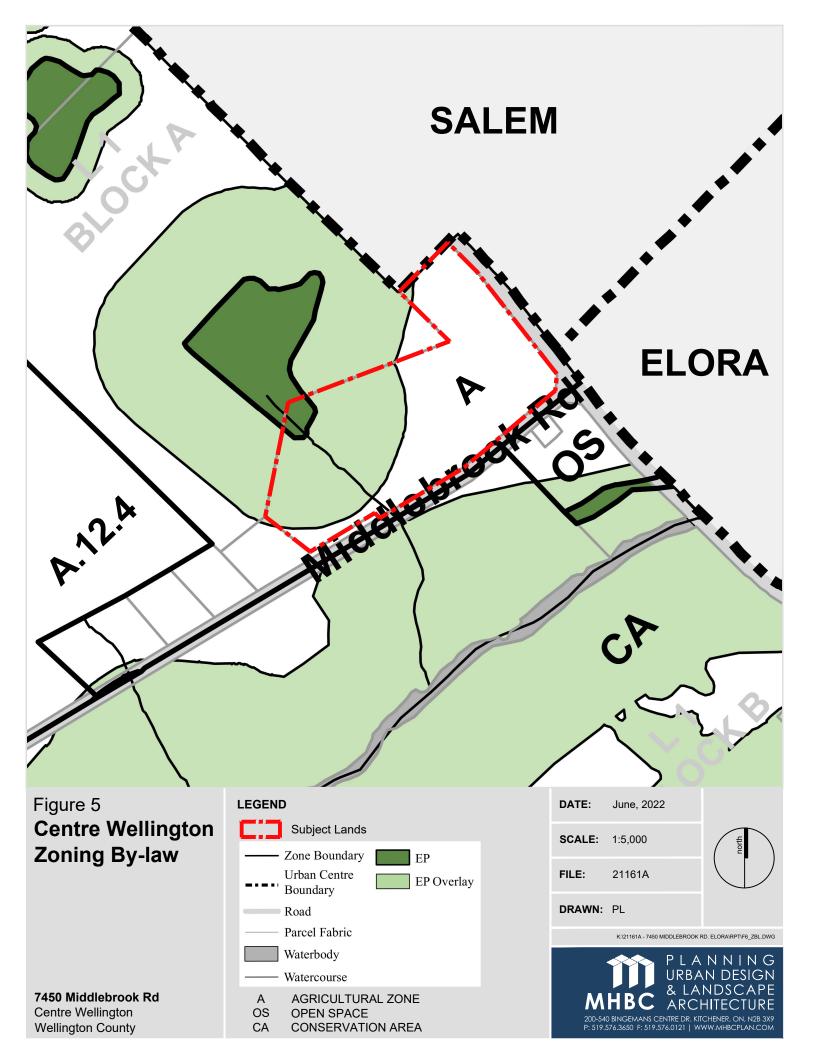
Section 5.5 of the Zoning by-law provides parking calculations for non-residential uses and notes a parking rate of 1 space per 4 person capacity; or 1 space per 10 m² gross leasable area (GLA), whichever is greater. The seasonal special event venue would be subject to this parking rate and will include a capacity of 150 people and 330 m² of GLA. Based on the proposed size of the special events venue, a minimum of 38 parking spaces are required, and 43 parking spaces are proposed as noted on Figure 3. Section 5.6 of the Zoning by-law provides standards for barrier free parking, and based on a total required parking space count of 38 spaces, three accessible spaces are required and proposed on the concept plan. Section 4.34 of the zoning by-law requires one parking space per 25m² of sales outlet, therefore 2 off-street parking spaces would be required to support the 50m² sales outlet. When accounting for the proposed seasonal special event venue and sales outlet, a maximum of 40 off street parking spaces would be required, and more than 40 spaces have been proposed.

The proposed Zoning Bylaw	Amendment and site specific regulations are outlined below:
The proposed zorning bylaw	Amenament and site specific regulations are obtimical below.

22.XX.XX	A.XX.X	illustrat	hstanding any other provisions of this By-law, on land zoned A and red on the attached Map forming Schedule "A" of this By-law, the following provisions shall apply:
		In addi [.] permiti	tion to the permitted uses in the A zone, the following shall also be ted:
		a) b)	a seasonal special events venue located within an existing barn a sales outlet for agricultural products in accordance with section 4.34 located on the lower floor of the existing barn
		Subjec ⁻ i.	t to the following: Minimum lot area: The lot area that existed as of the date of passing of this by-law.
		ii.	Maximum ground floor area: 330 m ² for a <i>special events venue</i>
		iii.	That the special events venue be located in the existing barn
		iv.	A special events venue is defined as:
			"a building or structure, or portion thereof, that is used for gatherings of persons for weddings, receptions, corporate events, music/concerts, theatre, day retreats, seasonal farm dinners, workshops, or similar functions and may include the consumption of food and beverages, but that shall not include overnight accommodation"

V.	That for the purpose of this by-law, <i>seasonal</i> shall mean from May 1 st to October 31 st and one (1) event in November, exclusively.
vi.	A maximum occupancy of 150 people is permitted for a special event.
vii.	A sales outlet for agricultural products, located within the existing barn, shall be permitted to retail products produced on the subject property and a limited amount of products from other properties, provided that the sale of products produced on other properties does not exceed 25% of total floor area of the sales outlet.
viii.	That a minimum of 40 parking spaces be required for the special event venue and sales outlet.

The proposed site specific exception will allow the sales outlet for agricultural products and seasonal special events venue to operate on the subject lands, while also limiting the scale of the uses to ensure that farming remains the site's primary use. There is no expansion to the building proposed and the only alteration to the site is the construction of a new gravel parking area and concrete paved accessible parking area, which will be accessed from the site's existing driveway.



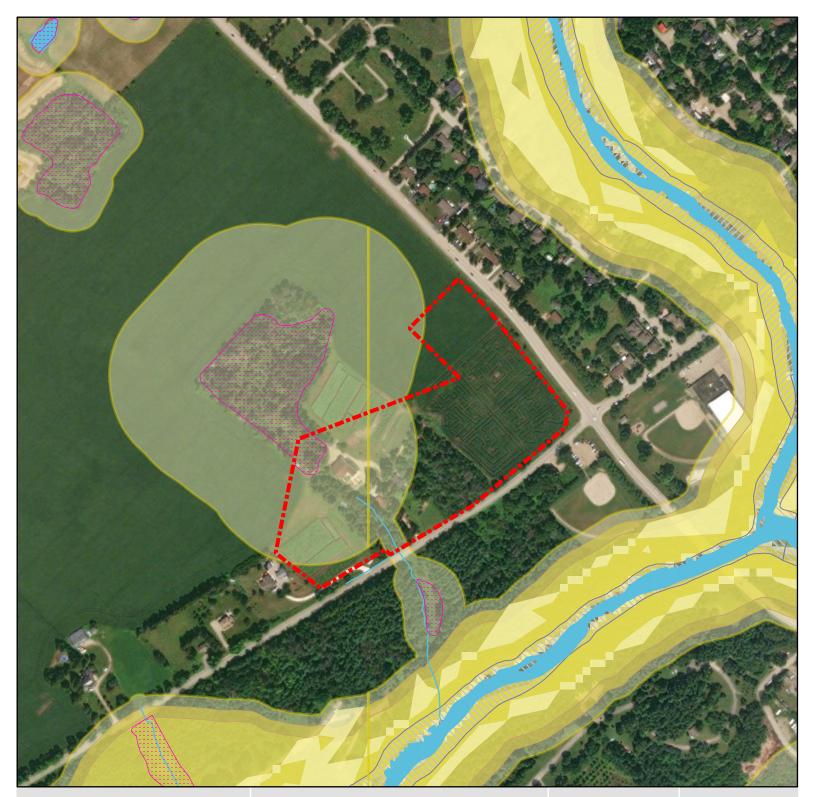
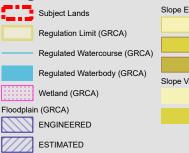


Figure 6 GRCA Map

Legend



APPROXIMATE



Date: June, 2022

- Scale: 1:5,000
- File: 21161A

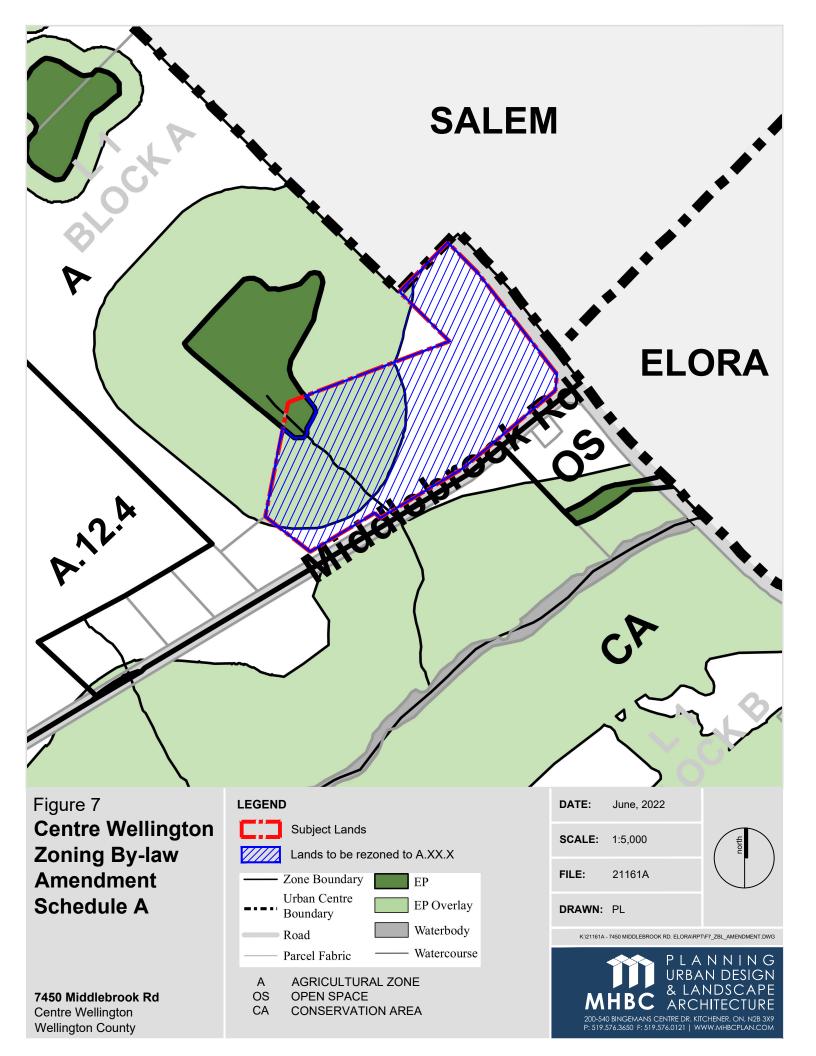
Drawn: PL

K:\21161A - 7450 Middlebrook Rd. Elora\RPT\F3_GRCA.aprx



7450 Middlebrook Rd Centre Wellington Wellington County

Sources: - Contains information licensed under the Open Government Licence – GRCA.



5.0 SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL STUDIES

5.1 Heritage Impact Assessment

The Heritage Impact Assessment dated July 5, 2022 and prepared by MHBC Planning Ltd. concluded that the subject property has significant cultural heritage value or interest for its design/ physical, historical/ associative and contextual values. The property has direct association with the theme of early agricultural euro-Canadian farmsteads and the property supports the agricultural character of the area as it is functionally and historically linked to the surrounding area. The report concludes that the proposal will have a beneficial impact as it will result in an adaptive re-use and long-term conservation of the buildings on-site, particularly the slit fieldstone barn. The report identified a negligible adverse impact as a result of the alterations to the barn, but these alterations are needed for the adaptive re-use of the building and its overall conservation. The proposed commercial use will likely have a positive economic impact allowing a stable form of funding for on-going maintenance of the historic building.

5.2 Noise Impact Assessment

The Noise Impact Assessment dated November 16, 2022 and prepared by SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd. (SLR) examined the noise impacts of the proposed special events venue proposed at 7450 Middlebrook Road, Elora. The impacts of the event venue were assessed against MECP NPC-300 guidelines limits to determine acceptable noise levels for the surrounding noise sensitive points of reception (POR). The report concluded that worst case sound levels associated with the venue are associated with weddings, with would end at 11:00pm at the latest. The sound levels from guest voices, music and vehicles were assessed. Sound levels from guests and vehicles were found to meet MECP NPC-300 guidelines provided the maximum allowable sound pressure level is 81 dBA within the barn, and the proposed sound system will be controlled by the owner to meet this requirement. The Report concludes that the proposed special events venue will meet MECP NPC-300 guideline limits with a maximum sound level applied to the sound system. No further noise control measures are required and adverse noise impacts related to the event space on surrounding residential areas are not anticipated.

5.3 Transportation Impact Study

The Transportation Impact Study dated September 2022 and prepared by Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited reviewed the transportation impacts of the proposed seasonal special event venue on the subject lands. The Study was prepared in accordance with the scope developed in consultation with Township of Centre Wellington Staff in August 2021. The study concluded that the development is anticipated to generate 48 peak hour trips and all intersections within the study area are forecast to operate without problem movements by the 2028 total and background horizons. There is no requirements for a left-turn lane on Middlebrook Road at the site driveway. A northbound left-turn lane is warranted on Wellington Road 19 at Middlebrook Road at the 2028 background horizon, regardless of whether the proposed development proceeds. The study recommends that some trees may need to be removed from the site's Middlebrook Road frontage to provide adequate sight distance to the east from the site driveway. The proposed development is not anticipated to have any significant impacts on the surrounding transportation network.

5.4 Scoped Environmental Impact Study

The Scoped Environmental Impact Study dated March 1, 2022 and prepared by Natural Resource Solutions Inc. identified that the proposed development is not anticipated to have any negative impacts on the natural features within and adjacent to the subject property. Avoidance and mitigation measures were provided to prevent and minimize any potential impacts from the development. Recommendations were also provided to ensure that the operation of the venue does not result in negative effects on species or habitats. The proposed parking, driveway, septic bed and cistern are all located outside of the natural features and buffers and no direct impacts to wetlands, watercourses or woodlands are predicted.

There was no evidence of use of the barn for bats, but the report recommends that precautions be taken when work is conducted in the barn during the active season to avoid potentially harming individual bats. Barn swallow nests were present in the barn and nests will be removed to allow structural reinforcement of the beams which support the second floor of the barn. The report recommends that replacement nests be installed after construction in the same number and locations as removed.

The study noted indirect impacts of the proposed development due to minor adjustments to the driveway, but the crossing over the watercourse will not change. There are no significant impacts from the parking areas expected. The main parking area is setback 3 metres from the dripline of the adjacent woodlands which is considered sufficient to protect the edge trees and their root zones. No tree removal is required and the parking area will utilize gravel which will maintain the infiltration function of the area minimizing surface runoff. There is no tree removal required for the accessible parking area and no expansion of the existing parking area is proposed. The septic system and cistern are not anticipated to have any direct of indirect impacts on the natural features.

6.0 public consulation

STRATEGY

The Planning Act (O. Reg. 545/06) requires that applicants submit a proposed strategy for consulting with the public with respect to an application as part of the 'complete' application requirements. This section summarizes the proposed Public Consultation Strategy.

We propose the following for the public consultation process for the Zoning By-law Amendment:

- Public notice on site sign posted on the property.
- Notice of complete application provided to surrounding property owners by the Township.
- A (statutory) Public Meeting held as part of a Council Meeting, hosted by the Township.
- A written response to comments raised through the public consultation process will be provided to Township Staff for their review and consideration in the preparation of the Township Staff Report.
- Preparation of a Township Staff Report, with the Report to be available to the public in advance of Township Council's decision regarding the application.

The consultation strategy proposed will provide members of the public with opportunities to review, understand, and comment on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application. The consultation strategy will be coordinated with Township Staff.

7.0 conclusion

This Planning Justification Report concludes that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application for 7450 Middlebrook Road in the Township of Centre Wellington to permit a seasonal special events venue and sales outlet for agricultural products represents good planning for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020*. The proposed farm businesses on the lands will be contained within the vacant section of the existing barn on the property, will not impact the continued operation of the farm and will not reduce the amount of lands or other accessory buildings used for farming.
- 2. The proposed farm business development conforms to the *County of Wellington Official Plan*. The new uses will be contained within an existing barn on the lands, and the existing driveway will continue to be used for access. The balance of the lands that are farmed will continue to be farmed.
- **3.** The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment will introduce a site specific exception for the lands, to permit the use, and to regulate its size and scale. The proposed regulations provide clarity in terms of the scale of the use and ensure that the new uses are confined to the existing barn on the site.
- **4.** The Heritage Impact Assessment supports the adaptive re-use of the barn and concludes that the proposed farm business use will have a positive economic impact allowing a stable form of funding for on-going maintenance of the historic building.
- 5. The supporting Transportation and Noise studies conclude that the proposed new uses can be accommodated without improvements to the existing road network and that noise generate from the new uses will not impact adjacent sensitive uses.

Appendix A – Draft Zoning By-law

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CENTRE WELLINGTON

BY-LAW NUMBER 2022-____

"A By-law of the Corporation of the Township of Centre Wellington to amend the Zoning By-law No. 2009-045 to add new regulations to the lands described as Part of Lot 1, Concession A WGR Pilkington Part 1, 61R9984, in the Township of Centre Wellington

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Wellington has received an application to amend the Zoning By-law for Part of Lot 1, Concession A WGR Pilkington Part 1, 61R9984, in the Township of Centre Wellington, and,

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Centre Wellington has reviewed a recommendation to amend the Zoning By-law and has approved the recommendation; and

WHEREAS authority is granted pursuant to section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 to enact such amendments;

NOW THEREFORE Zoning By-law No. 2009-045, is hereby amended follows:

- Schedule "A" Map 13 is hereby amended by adding new exceptions to the existing Agricultural (A) and Agricultural (A) (Environmental Overlay) zone for the lands described as Part of Lot 1, Concession A WGR Pilkington Part 1, 61R9984, in the Township of Centre Wellington as shown on Schedule 'A' attached hereto, and Schedule 'A' attached hereto forms part of this By-law.
- 2. That in addition to the permitted uses of Section 6.1 and 9.2.3, the following uses are permitted on lands zoned A-XX.X:

	1	1	
22.XX.XX	A.XX.X	and illu	hstanding any other provisions of this By-law, on land zoned A Istrated on the attached Map forming Schedule "A" of this By-law, owing special provisions shall apply:
		In addi permit	tion to the permitted uses in the A zone, the following shall also be ted:
		a)	a seasonal special events venue located within an existing barn
		b)	a sales outlet for agricultural products in accordance with section 4.34 located on the lower floor of the existing barn
		Subjec	t to the following:
		i.	Minimum lot area: The lot area that existed as of the date of passing of this by-law.
		ii.	Maximum ground floor area: 330 m ² for a <i>special events venue</i>
		iii.	That the special events venue be located in the existing barn

	iv.	A special events venue is defined as:
		"a building or structure, or portion thereof, that is used for gatherings of persons for weddings, receptions, corporate events, music/concerts, theatre, day retreats, seasonal farm dinners, workshops, or similar functions and may include the consumption of food and beverages, but that shall not include overnight accommodation"
	V.	That for the purpose of this by-law, <i>seasonal</i> shall mean from May 1 st to October 31 st and one (1) event in November, exclusively.
	vi.	A maximum occupancy of 150 people is permitted for a special event.
	vii.	A sales outlet for agricultural products, located within the existing barn, shall be permitted to retail products produced on the subject property and a limited amount of products from other properties, provided that the sale of products produced on other properties does not exceed 25% of total floor area of the sales outlet.
	viii.	That a minimum of 40 parking spaces be required for the special event venue and sales outlet.

3. This By-law shall take force and come into effect pursuant to the provisions and regulations made under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13.

BY-LAW read a FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD time and finally PASSED this _____ day of _____ 2022.

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CENTRE WELLINGTON

MAYOR

CLERK