

To: Mayor and Members of Township of South West Oxford Council
From: Spencer McDonald, Development Planner, Community Planning

Application for Zone Change ZN4-23-01 – Tina & Reynold Jansen / Bethany Tout

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The application for zone change proposes to rezone a portion of the subject lands from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to permit the establishment of a petting zoo/therapy farm as an on-farm diversified use.
- It is the opinion of this Office that the proposal is consistent with the PPS and maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan policies regarding small-scale agriculturally-oriented uses within the Agricultural Reserve.

DISCUSSION

Background

OWNERS: Tina & Reynold Jansen
344283 Ebenezer Road, Mount Elgin, ON, N0J 1N0

APPLICANT: Bethany Tout
333624 Plank Line, Salford, ON, N0J 1W0

LOCATION:

The subject property is described as Part Lot 12-13, Concession 2 (Dereham), Township of South-West Oxford. The lands are located at the northeast corner of Plank Line and McBeth Road and are municipally known as 333624 Plank Line, Township of South-West Oxford.

COUNTY OF OXFORD OFFICIAL PLAN:

Schedule "Z-1"	Township of South-West Oxford Land Use Plan	'Agricultural Reserve'
----------------	--	------------------------

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH-WEST OXFORD ZONING BY-LAW 25-98:

Existing Zoning: General Agricultural Zone (A2)

Proposed Zoning: Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)

PROPOSAL:

The application for zone change proposes to rezone a portion of the subject lands comprising approximately 0.8 ha (2 ac) from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to permit a petting zoo/therapy farm as an on-farm diversified use. The proposed area dedicated to the petting zoo/therapy farm consists of fenced in pasture areas and open space areas for other activities (i.e. bouncy castle, photography and birthday celebrations. The proposed areas of the site dedicated to various activities are generally as shown on Plate 4 of this report. The animals that will be included in the proposed petting zoo/therapy farm are ponies, alpacas, goats, pigs, chickens, ducks, rabbits and guinea pigs.

The subject lands are approximately 40 ha (100 ac) in area, with approximately 731 m (2,400 ft) of frontage on Plank Line. The subject lands contain an existing single detached dwelling (c. 1851), and an existing out-building. The lands are serviced by a private well and septic system.

Surrounding land uses are predominately agricultural, with some existing non-farm rural residential lots to the immediate west, and the Village of Salford approximately 600 m (1,968 ft) to the north. In addition, Oxford County has a waste management facility located to the immediate northeast of the subject lands.

Plate 1, Location Map & Existing Zoning, shows the location of the subject property and the existing zoning in the immediate vicinity.

Plate 2a, Aerial Map (2020), provides an aerial view of the subject lands and the surrounding lands, as they existed in 2020.

Plate 2b, Aerial Map (2020), Close-Up, provides a closer look at the area proposed to be rezoned for the petting zoo/therapy farm.

Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch, identifies the location of the existing structures and pasture areas on the subject lands.

Application Review

PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT:

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Under Section 3 of the Planning Act, where a municipality is exercising its authority affecting a planning matter, such decisions shall be consistent with all policy statements issued under the Act.

Section 2.3 of the PPS directs that prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long term agricultural use. In prime agricultural areas, permitted uses and activities include agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses.

Proposed agricultural-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 (e.g. Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas) or municipal approaches, as set out in municipal planning documents, which achieve the same objectives. New land uses, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities shall also comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae.

According to the PPS, agricultural-related uses are farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.

Alternatively, on-farm diversified uses are defined as being limited in area and secondary to the principle agricultural use of the property. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products.

The province has published a guideline document on permitted uses in prime agricultural areas which details appropriate types of on-farm diversified uses and provides further direction on their review criteria, in accordance with the PPS.

This review criteria provides that such uses shall be located on a farm that is actively in agricultural use, and shall be secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, meaning that the agricultural use of the property must continue to be the dominant use of the property.

Further, on-farm diversified uses shall displace little-to-no agricultural land and shall be limited in area and not require any site grading or drainage, unless it improves conditions for agricultural production.

In determining whether an on-farm diversified use is limited in area, consideration is to be given to the amount of land taken out of agricultural production and limiting off-site impacts such as traffic and changes to the rural character of the property to ensure compatibility with surrounding agricultural operations. Municipalities may choose to limit the scale of on-farm diversified uses by limiting the number or place of residence of employees, number of businesses, percentage of products sold that are produced on the farm or the floor area of buildings and/or outdoor storage.

The approach to limiting the area of a proposed on-farm diversified use is to achieve a balance between farmland protection and economic opportunities for farmers and to provide flexibility for change in on-farm diversified uses.

To this end, the Guideline document provides that “limited in area” criteria be relative to the size of the farm property on which the on-farm diversified use is located, and recommends that the standard for the acceptable area occupied by an on-farm diversified use is up to 2% of a farm parcel to a maximum of 1 ha (2.47 ac). The Guideline does note, however, that since the PPS requires settlement areas to be the focus growth and development, large-scale industrial and commercial buildings are more appropriately located in designated settlement areas.

OFFICIAL PLAN:

The subject lands are located within the Agricultural Reserve designation according to the Township of South-West Oxford Land Use Plan, as contained in the County of Oxford Official Plan. The policies of the Agricultural Reserve designation permit a wide range of farming uses together with accessory residential uses required for the farm and farm buildings and structures necessary to the farming operation. Agricultural-related uses and secondary uses, such as home occupations, are also permitted, in accordance with relevant review criteria.

Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan directs that the goal of the Agricultural Reserve policies is to ensure prime agricultural lands are preserved for food and fibre production by avoiding the fragmentation of the land base, by minimizing conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses and by supporting the needs of the agricultural community by permitting land uses which are complimentary to and supportive of agriculture. The on-going goal of the Agricultural Reserve designation is to minimize conflicts between farm operations and commercial, industrial and residential developments.

Section 3.1.4.1.1 of the Official Plan directs that within the Agricultural Reserve, part of a farm residence or accessory structure may be used for the purposes of a home occupation provided that such home occupation is a small scale business activity which is clearly secondary to the agricultural use of the property and is carried on by a resident of the dwelling on the lot.

The Zoning By-law will permit home occupations within the implementing zone category and may contain provisions to regulate the kinds of activities to be allowed, floor area limits, number of employees, open storage, sale of goods or materials, parking, signage or other evidence of business activities.

For Council's information, OPA No. 269 was adopted by County Council on May 25, 2022 and subsequently forwarded to the Province for approval. While the Province has delayed the approval of the amendment pending the review of the new Provincial Planning Statement, it is anticipated that approval will be forthcoming in the near future.

The new policies that were adopted by County Council include changes to the agricultural-related use policies in keeping with the 2020 PPS and the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas. However, until this approval of these policies is given, and any associated amendments are completed, the current Official Plan policies (which reflect the 2005 PPS agricultural related use policies) will continue to technically apply.

Section 3.1.4.3 of OPA No. 269 speaks to Secondary Uses and Agricultural Related Uses which are comprised of on-farm diversified uses and rural home occupations, together with agricultural-related uses, which are intended to provide opportunities to strengthen and diversify the rural economy, by allowing for the establishment of businesses and services that support or improve agriculture in the area, supplement and diversify farm incomes, and/or provide home based employment opportunities for farms and other rural residents.

Such uses must be compatible with and not hinder agricultural operations, be appropriate for rural services, and not undermine or conflict with the planned function of rural settlements and meet various other development criteria.

OPA 269 further directs, under Section 3.1.4.3.2 – On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU), that such uses are intended to provide reasonable opportunities for farmers to diversify their farming operation and/or supplement their income from farming, by allowing for certain small scale business activities to be established as a secondary use on the farm.

On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) may be permitted on an agricultural lot in accordance with the policies of the Plan, subject to limitations to the type, size, scale and area to ensure that such uses are clearly secondary to the principal agricultural operation, compatible with surrounding agricultural operations, protect prime agricultural areas for the long term and do not undermine or otherwise conflict with the planned function of settlements.

OFDUs include, among other uses, farm-related tourism uses and are generally only permitted on an agricultural lot that is being actively farmed and the use is clearly secondary to the agricultural operation on the lot in terms of size, scale and importance. All proposals for OFDUs shall include a detailed description of the proposed use and be accompanied by a detailed site plan that clearly identifies all pertinent information required to consider the use and any other information deemed necessary by the approval authority.

Further, OFDUs will generally be limited to the minimum area required for the proposed use, not exceed 2% of the total lot area or 0.8 ha (2.0 acres), and avoid locating on productive agricultural land to the extent possible, with first priority being the re-use of existing agricultural buildings. The maximum gross floor area of all buildings and structures used for an OFDU shall be regulated via the Area Municipal Zoning By-law, however, in no case shall the cumulative gross floor area of all buildings and structures exceed 557 m² (6,000 ft²).

The newly adopted policies contained in OPA 269 direct that OFDUs shall directly involve the farmer living on the same lot as the use and may also involve any other permanent residents on the lot and up to two employees who do not reside on the lot.

OFDUs shall be compatible with, and not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations and such uses shall be reviewed to ensure that potential compatibility issues with respect to traffic, noise, dust, odour, spraying and other agricultural activities and normal farm practices can be prevented and/or effectively mitigated. OFDUs shall be located in conformity with MDS I.

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH-WEST OXFORD ZONING BY-LAW:

The subject lands are currently zoned 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' according to the Township of South-West Oxford Zoning By-law, which permits a wide range of agricultural uses, including farm buildings and an accessory dwelling.

The applicant is proposing to rezone the subject lands to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to permit a petting zoo/therapy farm as an on-farm diversified use.

According to the current provisions of the Zoning By-law, an on-farm diversified use is defined as any use on a farm that is conducted for gain or profit, and is secondary and incidental to the principle use of the property for primary agriculture. The Zoning By-law also provides that such uses require an amendment to the Zoning By-law prior to their establishment.

It is important to note that while the Zoning By-law contains provisions respecting on-farm diversified uses, these provisions are reflective of the secondary use policies of the 2005 PPS and policies that existed in the Official Plan in support of those policies.

The on-farm diversified use policies that existed in the Official Plan were removed in January, 2009, and the Township's Zoning By-law was not updated to reflect that policy change. As such, the current zoning provisions related to on-farm diversified uses, while employing similar language, do not reflect the on-farm diversified use policies that were introduced in the 2020 PPS or the recently adopted Official Plan policies as per OPA 269.

In addition to the foregoing, it is noted that the applicant's proposal would not require any new buildings or structures at this time. However, if approved, it is recommended that the Zoning By-law amendment required to facilitate this proposal include site-specific provisions to limit the size of the petting zoo/therapy farm and ensure that it remains secondary and ancillary to the farm operation.

AGENCY COMMENTS:

The Township of South-West Oxford Septic Division, Township of South-West Oxford Public Works Department, the County of Oxford Public Works Department, Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) provided comments to advise that they have no objections or concerns regarding proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

Notice of complete application and notice of public meeting regarding this application were circulated to surrounding property owners on June 20, 2023. At the time this report was written, several comments have been received by phone and email. A copy of emailed correspondence has been included as an attachment to this report for Council's consideration.

Planning Analysis

The applicants are proposing to rezone a portion of an existing agricultural parcel comprising approximately 0.8 ha (2 ac) from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to permit a petting zoo/therapy farm as an on-farm diversified use (OFDU). The applicants have indicated that the proposed petting zoo/therapy farm would enable them to be able to offer animal therapy services in an effort to promote agri-tourism while also offering services which they believe can have positive mental health benefits. The applicants have further advised that their business "Little Hobby Hill Farm" hires staff and volunteers who are trained to work with a variety of animals and ensure safe interactions between customers/visitors and the animals. In addition, the applicants plan to offer family-type events where small groups can gather for workshops, photo shoots and a bouncy-castle during birthday party events.

According to the 2020 PPS, on-farm diversified uses are permitted on prime agricultural lands, provided they are in accordance with guidelines developed by the province. The Province's Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas recognizes farm-related commercial and industrial type operations, as on-farm diversified uses, provided they meet the previously discussed criteria for on-farm diversified uses.

Further direction from these guidelines respecting on both agriculturally-related uses and on-farm diversified uses state that such uses are intended to enable farmers to diversify and supplement their farm income, as well as to accommodate value-added and agri-tourism uses in prime agricultural areas, and requires such uses to be secondary to the main use of the property for agricultural purposes, be limited in area and be compatible with surrounding agricultural operations.

Regarding the OFDU policies noted previously, staff note that the applicants are not farming the subject lands, but rent the approximately 0.8 ha (2 ac) area upon which they propose to operate their business and as such, the use of the lands proposed by the applicants does not meet important criteria contained in OPA 269 regarding the direct involvement of the farmer living on the same lot. However, as OPA 269 has not received final approval by the Province as of the date that this report was drafted, Planning staff are of the opinion that the scale and nature of the use as described by the applicants can be considered generally as a rural home occupation under the current policies of the Official Plan.

Staff are of the opinion that the proposed use of approximately 0.8 ha (2 ac) of the larger farm parcel for a petting zoo/therapy farm represents a specific use which benefits from (and would generally be unable to locate away from) a farm property due largely to the fact that the variety of animals that are present, specifically the livestock, are generally only permitted on agriculturally-zoned properties. Further, the scale of the proposed business is such that the number of patrons attending the site at any given time would be relatively limited. It appears that sufficient parking exists on-site and the location of the lands with direct access to Highway 19 (Plank Line) can reasonably accommodate anticipated traffic flows to and from the site. Ministry of Transportation (MTO) staff have not expressed any concern with the proposal relative to traffic/access, and further, confirmation for Southwest Public Health has been received that they are satisfied with the proposal from the standpoint of interaction between the general public and the animals proposed to comprise the petting zoo/therapy farm.

As noted, the animals involved in the use are housed on the lands and spend time between the existing out-building and the pasture areas (generally as shown on Plate 3) and in light of the agricultural nature of the immediate area, there would appear to be minimal impact on surrounding land uses with respect to compatibility.

The proposed use will generally be in keeping with the spatial criteria outlined in the Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas for OFDUs and further, Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed size and scale of the petting zoo/therapy is appropriate, is located on a portion of the farm where crop production has not historically occurred and will not take farmland out of production.

In light of the foregoing, it is the opinion of this Office that the applicant's request to add a petting zoo/therapy farm as permitted use on the subject lands can reasonably be considered a limited scale home occupation-type use that maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan regarding such development. Further, the use exhibits characteristics which are in-keeping with the proposed policies for OFDUs as contained in OPA 269, which has been adopted by County Council, but not yet approved by the Provincial government.

At this time, the application is being recommended for 'approval-in-principle' subject to obtaining sufficient information to inform the zoning and preparation of a survey and subsequent mapping for the specific area that will be identified for the petting zoo/therapy farm.

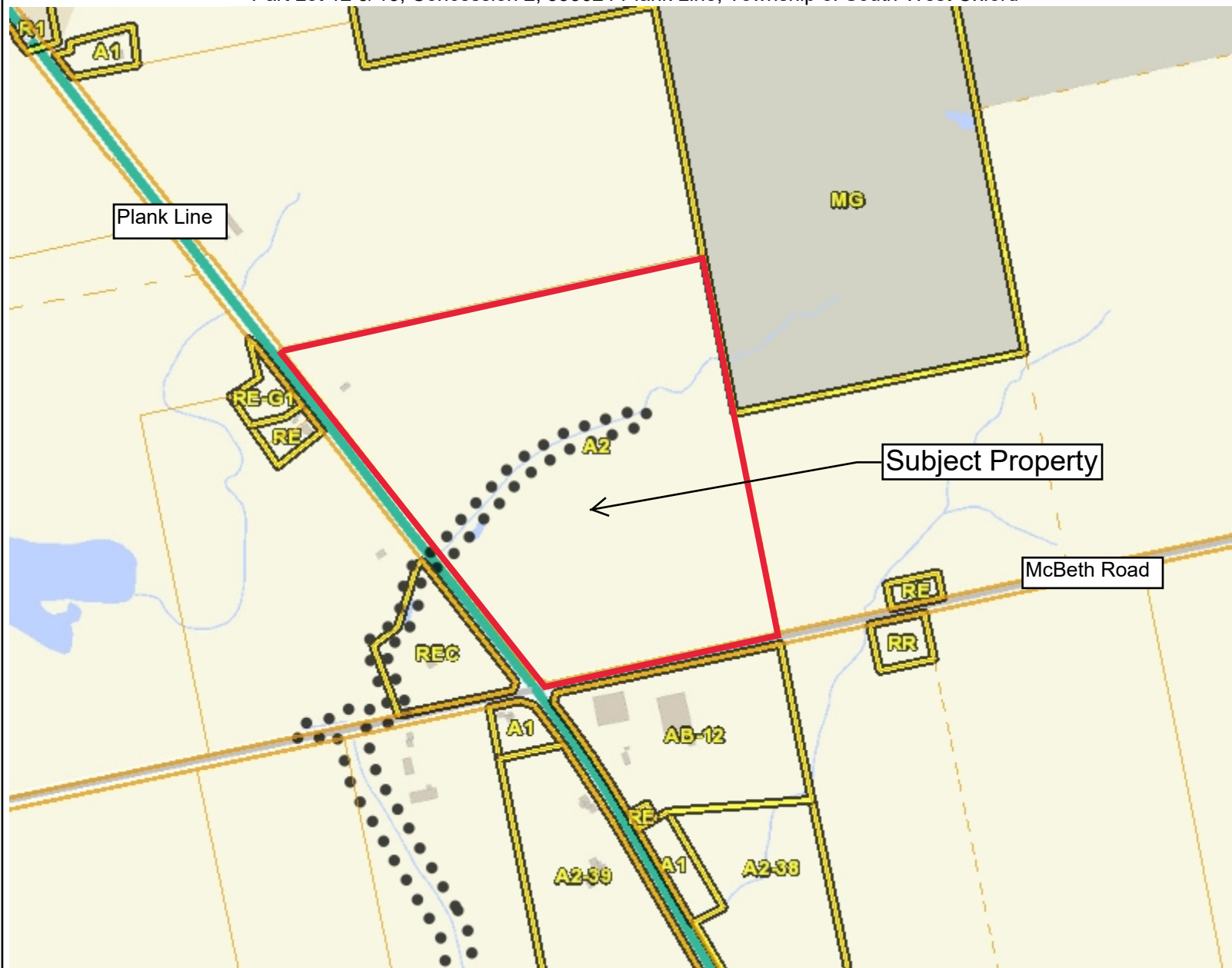
RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford approve-in-principle the zone change application submitted by Bethany Tout, whereby the lands described as Part Lot 12-13, Concession 2, Township of South-West Oxford are to be rezoned from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)' to facilitate the use of the lands as a petting zoo/therapy farm as generally described in Report No CP 2023-203.

SIGNATURES

Authored by: Original Signed By Spencer McDonald, MCIP, RPP
Development Planner

Approved for submission: Original Signed By Gordon K. Hough, RPP
Director



Legend

Parcel Lines

- Property Boundary
- Assessment Boundary
- Unit
- Road
- Municipal Boundary

Zoning Floodlines

Regulation Limit

- 100 Year Flood Line
- ▲ 30 Metre Setback
- Conservation Authority Regulation Limit
- Regulatory Flood And Fill Lines

- Land Use Zoning (Displays 1:16000 to 1:500)

Notes



0 261 522 Meters

NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_17N



This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. This is not a plan of survey

February 10, 2023



Legend

Parcel Lines

- Property Boundary
- Assessment Boundary
- Unit
- Road
- Municipal Boundary

Notes



0 261 522 Meters

NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_17N



This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. This is not a plan of survey

February 10, 2023



Legend

- Parcel Lines**
 - Property Boundary
 - Assessment Boundary
 - Unit
 - Road
 - Municipal Boundary
- Zoning Floodlines Regulation Limit**
 - 100 Year Flood Line
 - 30 Metre Setback
 - Conservation Authority Regulation Limit
 - Regulatory Flood And Fill Lines
- Land Use Zoning (Displays 1:16000 to 1:500)**

Notes





To: Oxford County Council / Oxford Planning

Re: 333624 Plank Line, Salford

I am writing to lend my support for Little Hobby Hill Farm (LHHF) and their plans to expand and strengthen their programming. In sharing with you my experiences with this excellent small business, I hope you can learn of their value here in the community. Oxford should be proud of the work they have been doing and I encourage you to support their efforts going forward.

As a single mother of two young children, my experience of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions and lockdowns was bleak, stressful, and difficult. Not only was I worried for my children's safety – they were three and six months old when the first lockdown began – but I became increasingly concerned with how the situation impacted their mental health and development. I have little doubt that there were negative effects for them both. However, I was determined to not only keep them safe from the unknowns of the virus but do what I could to mitigate the mental health repercussions too.

As restrictions lessened, some of the earliest social activities I felt comfortable exposing my kids to were all outdoors. I enrolled my son in baseball, he began attending school with extra outdoor instruction (though sporadically as shutdowns continued and sick days piled up), and he had his first experiences at LHHF. The farm became a safe and enriching place for him to work through some of the challenges he was experiencing – anxiety about being away from home, uncertainty in new environments, and difficulty interacting with others. He had so little practice with these things during a crucial period, that it became a focused undertaking to help him catch up in his development. The staff at LHHF were so welcoming and patient with these hurdles while also instilling respect and the need for safety and knowledge regarding the animals to keep them well.

Years ago, I volunteered at the very well-known Sunrise Therapeutic Farm in Puslinch, Ontario. Here, children of all abilities have the opportunity to ride horses as part of their various therapies. It was through experiences there that I learned of the healing value of interactions with animals. I saw the same at LHHF. In putting the focus on reliant animals and celebrating the life and wonder of the natural world, my son was

better able to connect with other people, to soothe his anxiety, and to eventually catch up with his peers socially.

My boy is nearly seven and has continued to attend the farm for summer camps, PA Day camps, Christmas break days, and for various drop ins. We've even attended Goat Yoga together as a family and I truly cherish the time we spend with the programs. He is so proud to share his farm friends and knowledge with his little brother, and now that we have recovered from the mental health impacts of the pandemic, he just has good, clean (and dirty!) fun at the farm.

The staff have always been professional, supportive, and great to work with. I have no concerns for my child's safety while he's onsite. I can't share enough how impactful and wholesome our time on the farm has been. He's looking forward to more time at summer camp in August, and I'm eager to enroll my younger son soon too.

So, from a personal perspective, I urge you to support LHFF and staff in whatever zoning changes are needed to allow them to further expand their programming, the farm footprint, and staffing. Whatever they need to keep making such a positive impact in the county will pay off many times over in the effect they are having by providing an inclusive, healing farm home for children very much in need of mental and social supports in our community. LHFF represents the best of Oxford County.

Respectfully,

Christine Auchinleck

Norwich, Ontario

From: [Christy Juett](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Little Hobby Hill Farm
Date: June 27, 2023 11:35:08 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing this letter to share my families multiple and wonderful experiences at Little Hobby Hill Farm.

We found it on Facebook by chance and I immediately reached out and asked questions about their day camps. I was concerned about sending my son alone at the time due to his extreme anxiety and ADHD. I inquired as to whether or not my 17 year old daughter could attend with him and they happily obliged. The first day of camp came and I was extremely nervous about leaving him, knowing that his ADHD has and can cause behavioural issues. The day went by without a text or a phone call and when I went to pick him up, it was like I was looking at completely different child. He was calm, interacting and giggling.

Over the years we have continued to attend camps, him without his big sister, and book visits and birthday parties. The Farm has been very therapeutic for young son and I can't imagine our lives without it.

Not only has it helped my son, but me as well. I have depression, social anxiety, ADHD and CPTSD. When I am at the Farm I have a feeling of calm and relaxation. When I interact with the animals I get a warm, fuzzy feeling that can only be explained as joy. If I'm having a bad day, a high emotions day, I reach out to Bethany and team and make arrangements for a visit. I go home feeling at ease and happy.

I highly recommend and would love to see Little Hobby Hill Farm be recognized as not only a petting farm, but also a therapy farm. I am only one family that I know to have benefited from the services.

Sincerely,

Christy Juett

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Monday, June 26, 2023

To the Salford Zoning Committee,

My name is Alex, I am a resident of Oxford County as well as the mother of a three-year-old named Patrick. I'm writing today to express what a gem *Little Hobby Hill Farm* is in our community!

Our family's first visit to the farm was in 2022. At the time we were just getting out again after a few years of being house-bound due to lockdown restrictions and uncertainty regarding the global health pandemic. I figured an outdoor petting zoo would be both a safe and engaging way to introduce my then two-year-old to the wonders of animals: *Little Hobby Hill Farm* exceeded all of my initial expectations, and we have been visiting continuously since.

For a young child with a developing mind and body, *Little Hobby Hill Farm* is a fantastic way to engage with sensory play, build motor-control skills, and expand the worldview. My husband and I are both animal lovers; although we have two cats at home, they are incredibly skittish and will flee a room when our son Patrick walks in. In contrast, the petting zoo animals are all very calm and accustomed to being touched by little hands. It is a truly magical learning opportunity to be so up-close-and-personal with the different animals that you wouldn't typically find in a household! My little boy enjoys learning the names of the animals (both of the species and what the individual is called), their behaviours, what they eat, and the textures of their furs when touched. His favourite resident of *Little Hobby Hill Farm* is a small goat named Peppercorn. Patrick was first enamoured with Peppercorn when the goat sneezed on me, and my boy thought it was very cute and funny. Now we always check in on our friend Peppercorn during our farm visits and through social media!

As an adult who suffers from anxiety and depression, I really enjoy visiting the farm to restore some of my inner-peace. It is so calming to hold a duckling or rabbit in the palm of your hand. Feeding a group of goats that nudge each-other out of the way for a snack is delightfully whimsical! Being on the farm is, as a whole, an incredibly grounding experience. The location is far-enough out of town that you feel as though your problems don't follow you there; as if real-life is paused while you're away spending time with the animals. If our family had the funds, I would love to keep my own hobby farm! But the next best thing to having it all in your own backyard is the short drive it takes to get to *Little Hobby Hill Farm*.

In addition to the child-development and therapeutic benefits of the petting zoo, it has also helped to enhance the social lives of my family. We have visited the farm with several friends and extended-family at this point, and plan to do so with more in the future. In a community with limited entertainment options, it has been lovely to invite people to meet us out at *Little Hobby Hill Farm* for a few hours of play and animal-interaction! Everyone who has met us there was delighted by the farm and animals, and was also pleased to have spent some quality-time with us. It is a great opportunity to build friendships with other humans as well as the animals that live there!

Little Hobby Hill Farm provides an invaluable experience to Salford and its surrounding communities. My hopes in penning this letter is that I can convey how vital it has become to living a happy and fulfilling lifestyle for us in this area.

Sincerely,
Alex Skinner

(Phone: [REDACTED])