



AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, June 5, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Abbotsford City Hall - Room 530

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>ADOPTION OF AGENDA</u>	
Recommendation: That the June 5, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting agenda be adopted.	
3. <u>ADOPTION OF MINUTES</u>	3
Recommendation: That the May 8, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting minutes be adopted.	
4. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>	
None.	
5. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
5.1 Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust	6
6. <u>REPORTS</u>	
6.1 Non-Adhering Residential Use (1444 Clearbrook Road)	23
(Report No. PDS 098-2025)	
Recommendation: That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council (choose one):	
1. Forward the application to the ALC with support, as presented; or	
2. Forward the application to the ALC with support, with changes; or	
3. Forward the application to the ALC with no comments; or	
4. Deny and not forward the application to the ALC.	
7. <u>NEW BUSINESS</u>	
8. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	

Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda - June 5, 2025

Recommendation:

That the June 5, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting be adjourned.



Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2025

Abbotsford City Hall - Room 530

Members Present: P. Ross (Chair), B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, S. Kahlon

Members Absent: T. Kendrick, J. Phulka

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Ross called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by: M. Dykshoorn

Seconded by: B. Driediger

That the May 8, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting agenda be adopted.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by: B. Driediger

Seconded by: M. Dykshoorn

That the April 3, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting minutes be adopted.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

4. PRESENTATIONS

None.

5. DELEGATIONS

None.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Subdivision (Boundary Realignment) in the ALR (27600/27888 King Road)

(Report No. PDS 076-2025)

Moved by: M. Dykshoorn

Seconded by: R. Friesen

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, as presented.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

6.2 Non-Adhering Residential Use application (245 Bradner Road)

(Report No. PDS 038-2025)

Moved by: S. Kahlon

Seconded by: B. Driediger

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, as presented.

Moved by: M. Dykshoorn

Seconded by: R. Friesen

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, with the addition of a restrictive covenant for no secondary residence to be allowed in the future on this property.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

Moved by: M. Dykshoorn

Seconded by: R. Friesen

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, with the addition of a restrictive covenant for no secondary residences to be allowed in the future on this property.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

6.3 Non-Farm Use and Subdivision application (28709 Downes Road)

(Report No. PDS 067-2025)

Moved by: M. Dykshoorn
Seconded by: B. Driediger

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, as presented.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

6.4 ALC Exclusion for Portion of 34252 King Rd, and ALR Inclusion on Lefuevre Road

(Report No. PDS 097-2025)

Moved by: S. Kahlon
Seconded by: B. Driediger

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council forward the application to the ALC with support, as presented.

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: B. Driediger
Seconded by: M. Dykshoorn

That the May 8, 2025, Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned (3:54 p.m.).

In Favour (5): P. Ross, B. Driediger, M. Dykshoorn, R. Friesen, and S. Kahlon

Absent (2): T. Kendrick, and J. Phulka

Carried

Patricia Ross
Chair

Harjit Gill
Acting City Clerk



**Delta Farmland
& Wildlife Trust**

Abbotsford AAC

June 5th, 2025

April Stainsby,
Program Coordinator

Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust

- Non-profit established in 1993
- Mission: Promote the preservation of farmland and wildlife habitat in the Fraser River delta through cooperative stewardship with local farmers
- Cost-share support for farmers for practices that improve soil quality and establish wildlife habitat
 - Since its establishment, over \$10 million in cost-share payments
 - Provide over 4,000 acres of wildlife habitat annually
- Programs extended to Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford



Fraser River Estuary

- Largest estuary on the Pacific coast of Canada (67,000 ha)
- Internationally significant stop-over and wintering area along the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds
- 5 million birds migrate through the Fraser River delta annually
- Supports greatest diversity and abundance of birds over the winter in Canada
- Supports highest density of wintering raptors in all of Canada
- Seasonally home to birds migrating from Asia, the Arctic, and Central and South America



Cost-Share Programs

- Winter Cover Crop
- Grassland Set-Asides
- Blueberry Rest
- Hedgerow and Field Margins

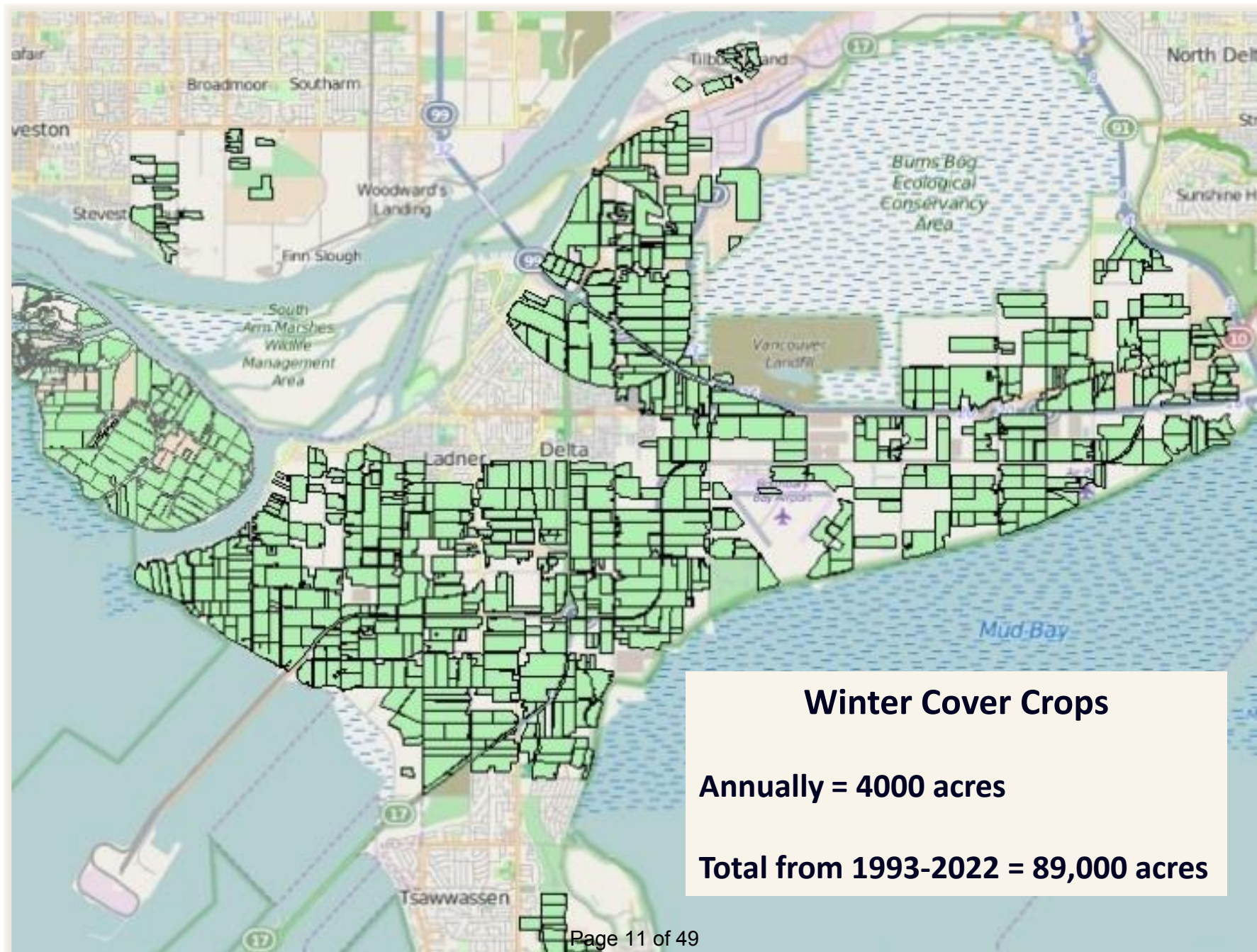




Winter Cover Crops

- Cereals, legumes, and mixes planted after harvest of annual cash crop in late summer
- Benefits for soil health and wildlife habitat
- Cost-share of a set rate per acre per year
- Approximately 4,000 acres enrolled annually (Delta and Richmond)
- 89,000 acres planted since 1993





Grassland Set-asides

- Farmland that is removed from production, seeded to a grass/legume mixture and left for 2-4 years
- Improve soil health and provide habitat for wildlife
- Cost-share of a set rate per acre per year
- Approximately 400-600 acres enrolled annually
- 13,600 acres established since 1993





Pollinator Set-aside

Blueberry Rest Program

- Supports blueberry growers facing losses due to Scorch virus by covering and rebuilding the soil
- Provide cost-share funding on a per acer basis to plant annual cover crops or set-asides following blueberry removal
 - Pollinator-focused grassland set-aside for up to three years
 - Annual cover crop planted in late summer



Hedgerows

- Native trees and shrubs planted along margins of farm fields
- Sequester carbon and provide wildlife habitat
- 16 km of hedgerows have been planted to-date



Field Margin Program

- Grass/wildflower strips along field edges and ditches
- Grass/wildflower patches around remnant trees, hedgerows or other natural features to square up field edges
- Grass/wildflower strips within vegetable or berry fields

\$650/acre enrolled for the establishment year

\$500/acre for up to 2 additional years to maintain the field margin.



Research and Monitoring

Grassland Set-asides Program

- Raptor and Owl survey
- Breeding bird surveys
- Bumblebee surveys
- Bat surveys

Cover Crop Program

- Snow Goose ARU Research Project
- Waterfowl survey
- Cover crop vegetation surveys
- Soil sampling

Hedgerow Program

- Bat surveys
- Year-round songbird surveys

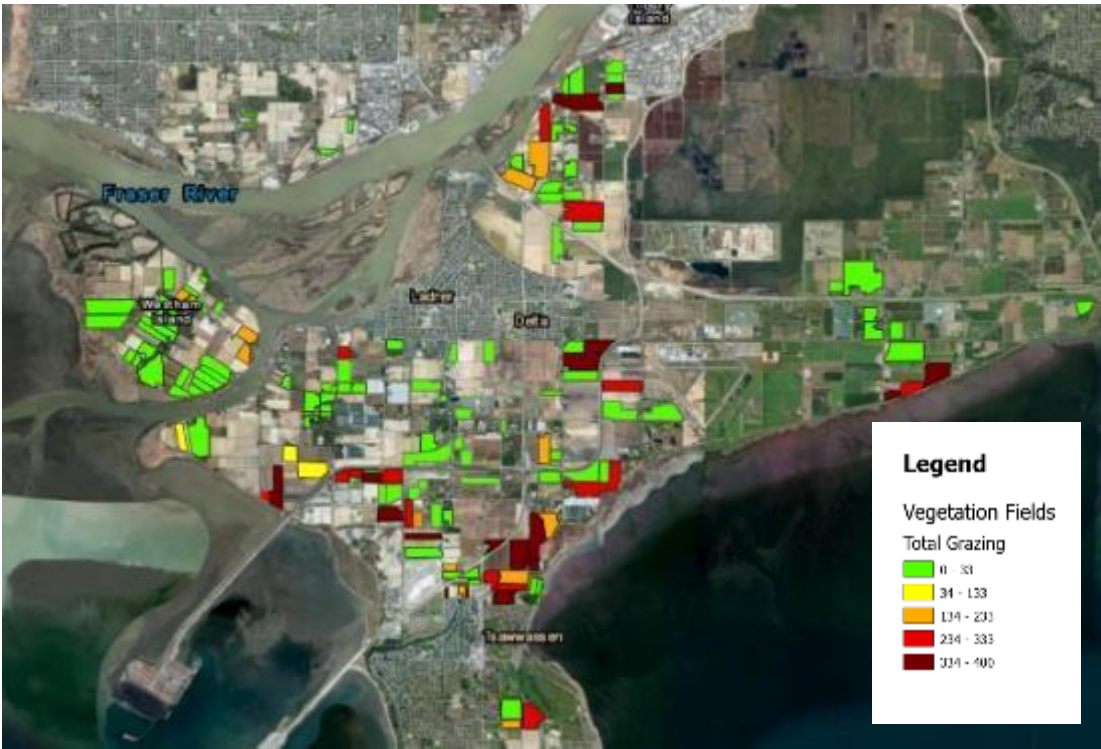
Made possible because of year-round rockstar in-house Field Technicians **Connor Hawey and Patricia Kulikowski**



Monitoring

Winter vegetation and bird surveys,
grassland breeding birds, bats, soil health

Cover Crop fields in
Richmond and
Delta depicting
levels of waterfowl
grazing, November
2023.



Change in waterfowl observations between the 2022-23 and 2023-24 seasons (Delta & Richmond only)

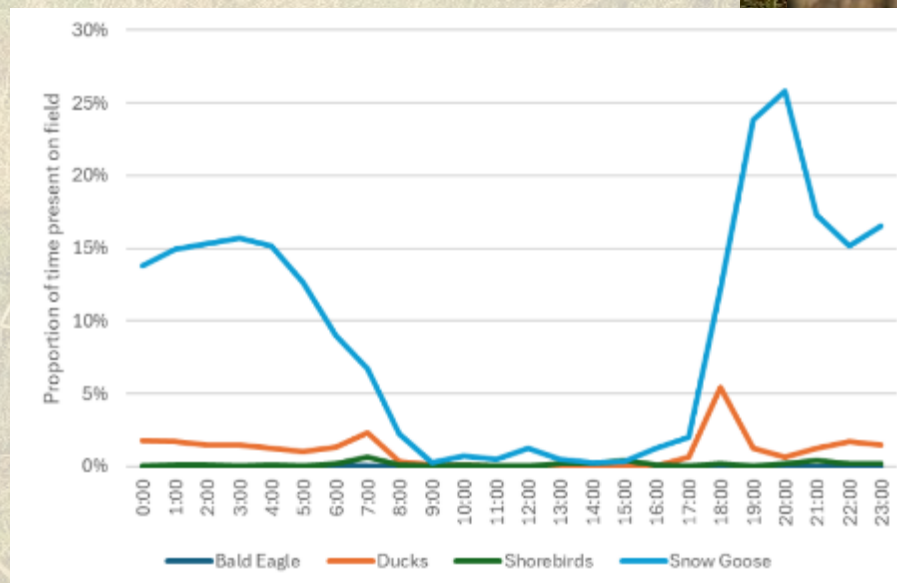
Average weekly waterfowl counts (Delta & Richmond October 2023 - March 2024)								
	All waterfowl	Snow Goose	Mallard	American Wigeon	Trumpeter Swan	Canada Goose	Cackling Goose	All other ducks
2022-2023	1069.3	646.5	222.9	119.3	17.8	3.5	12.3	0.7
2023-2024	2940.7	1151.3	761.3	323.6	27.7	12.3	180.7	6.4
% change	175.0	139.9	241.5	171.1	55.5	249.4	1373.4	818.8

Made possible because of year-round rockstar in-house Field Technicians **Connor Hawey and Patricia Kulikowski**

Snow Goose audio monitoring

- Trial project to track Snow Geese movement and preferred habitats
- Snow Goose activity at night has been difficult to observe with in-person surveys

- Advantages over in-person surveys:
 - 24-hour monitoring
 - Automated species ID



Day at the Farm

September 6th, 2025

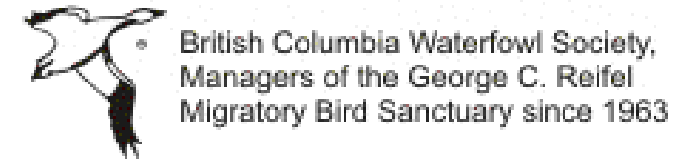


Sponsors and Funders



Environment and
Climate Change Canada
Canadian Wildlife Service

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Service canadien de la faune





Thank you!

programs@dfwt.ca

604-970-7640

www.deltafarmland.ca



COMMITTEE REPORT

AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Report No. PDS 098-2025

Date: June 5, 2025

File No. 3100-05/PRJ24-156

To: Agriculture Advisory Committee
From: Rafid Shadman, Assistant Planner
Subject: Non-Adhering Residential Use (1444 Clearbrook Road)

AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As outlined within the Agriculture Advisory Committee's (AAC) Terms of Reference, the Committee's mandate is to "...*make recommendations on agriculture matters, more specifically:*

- a) provide recommendations to Council on the development of strategies, policies, plans and regulations dealing with agricultural issues, enhancing agriculture and agricultural areas of the City, such as farm 'edge' policies, farm bylaws, and environment, etc.;*
- b) review and provide recommendations to Council on development applications, referred by staff or Council, on the effect of the proposal to agriculture;*
- c) provide recommendations to Council on the operation and maintenance of the City's dyking, drainage and irrigation programs to address the needs of the agriculture industry; and*
- d) provide input on the development on the City's Agriculture Strategy."*

Staff is looking for input from the AAC regarding this application and any comments, concerns or recommendations will be included in staff's report to Council.

PURPOSE

An Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Non-Adhering Residential Use (NARU) application has been received for the property at 1444 Clearbrook Road. The subject property is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The NARU application requests authorization to legitimize an existing unauthorized extension to the principal residence that is greater than 500m².

BACKGROUND

Owner: Jasbir Singh & Kulwinderjit Kaur Banwait

Applicant: Jasbir Banwait

OCP Designation: Agriculture 1 - Uplands

Existing Zoning:	Agricultural One Zone (A1)
Site Area:	4.07 Hectares (10.06 acres)
Legal Description:	LOT B SECTION 8 TOWNSHIP 16 NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT PLAN BCP1774
Current Uses:	Single Family Detached Dwelling and Two Accessory Structures Blueberry Farm
Surrounding Uses:	N: Single-family Detached Dwelling (zoned A1); S: Single-Family Detached Dwelling and Agriculture (zoned A1); E: Single-Family Detached Dwelling (zoned A1) W: Clearbrook Road
Soil Capability:	8 – Gravel and sand (Western half of the Property) 9 – Till (Eastern half of the property)

SITE CONTEXT

1. The subject property is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) on the south side of the King Road and Clearbrook Road intersection, across from Hughes Park (see Figure 2). The 4.07 ha (10.06 ac) parcel contains a 1013 m² (10,901ft²) single-family detached dwelling, an accessory structure, a pool house, and blueberry fields. The subject property is accessed and egressed via a driveway located to the west of the property abutting Clearbrook Road.
2. The single-family dwelling was constructed in 2010 under a City-approved building permit. It is approximately 1,013 m² including an attached garage (923 m² SFD + 90 m² garage). In 2023, the owner completed an unauthorized 53 m² (570ft²) building addition in north-east corner of the second floor (see Figure 6, 7). The extension consists of two bedrooms for family members. With the existing extension, the total floor area of the principal building is approximately 1066 m² (11,474ft²).
3. The extension was constructed without obtaining a building permit and the NARU application was submitted to rectify an active violation/non-compliance on the subject property. The applicant is seeking approval to permit and retain the existing extension to the single detached dwelling.

APPLICANT'S RATIONALE

4. The applicant has provided a letter (see Appendix A), which outlines their rationale in support of this application. The key points of the applicant's rationale are summarized as follows:

- a. Purpose and scope of the extension: The upper floor extension was completed to provide dedicated bedroom space for the property owner's granddaughters, supporting multi-generational family living. Currently, three generations, comprising 11 family members, reside together in the primary house. Although the family owns multiple farmland properties, the subject property is the only one with a residential dwelling. There are no other residences on any of their other lands.
- b. Farm Operation Details: The property owner has been a Canadian farmer since 1976, overseeing a family farming operation that spans 10 properties and hundreds of acres across Deroche and Abbotsford. The farmlands are primarily dedicated to blueberry production. On the subject property, which totals 10 acres, approximately 7 acres are actively farmed for blueberries, with ongoing efforts to expand and improve the farmable areas.
- c. Impact on Farmland and Agricultural Production: The extension is limited in scope, affecting only previously landscaped backyard areas, and not encroaching on any existing or potential farmland. As per the applicant's letter, two pad footings were dug and added into the backyard landscaped area to minimize excavation.
- d. ALC Covenant and Residential Footprint: The property is encumbered by an Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) covenant that restricts the residential footprint to the hillside areas, ensuring the most productive farmland remains available for agriculture. While the current residential footprint may exceed the Ministry of Agriculture's recommended maximum, this application does not propose any further expansion. Additionally, both the primary home and the existing residential footprint were conforming with the regulations at the time of construction in 2010.
- e. Historical and Farm Planning Rationale: As previously mentioned, the residential footprint was deliberately situated on a less productive hillside portion of the property, in alignment with the intent of the ALC's Covenant's to preserve valuable farmland for agricultural use. The owner has further invested significant resources—such as grading, levelling, and installing irrigation systems—to transform these less usable hillside areas into productive farmland, maximizing the agricultural potential of the property.
- f. Farm Status: The property maintains farm status with 70% of the land producing blueberries. There are no additional residences for family or farm workers on this or other properties owned by the family.
- g. BC Building Code Compliance: The owner acknowledges the need for a building permit for the unauthorized extension. They have submitted a building permit application to the City.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

5. In February of 2019, the Provincial Government amended the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA). Under Section 20 (1) (b), the maximum floor area for principal residences in the ALR is 500 m² (542 m² with an attached garage). The existing 923 m² residence (1012 m² with an attached garage) was permitted in 2010 prior to ALC's 500 m² maximum floor area regulation. Therefore, a Non-Adhering Residential Use (NARU) approval would be required in order to allow retention of the 2023 unauthorized building addition.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

6. The property is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and is designated Agriculture 1 – Uplands in the Official Community Plan (2016 OCP). Under the policy of Enhance Agricultural Integrity of 2016 OCP, the vision is *"Abbotsford's agricultural areas – which comprise a longstanding pillar of the local economy and form a vital part of Abbotsford's character – will be protected and maintained as places for agricultural growing, production and processing, and a place for a thriving livelihood"*.
7. Furthermore, the big-picture policy of the OCP is to *"Ensure Abbotsford is surrounded and sustained by a thriving and diverse agricultural sector through maintaining agricultural uses in viable agricultural areas and encouraging public support for agriculture"*. The OCP does not specifically address the maximum floor areas for residential buildings in the ALR.

ZONING

8. The subject property is zoned Agriculture One Zone (A1), which is intended to accommodate agriculture and agricultural-related uses. The A1 Zone permits single detached dwellings as a principal use with use and density regulations. However, it does not regulate the floor area, except indirectly through maximum lot coverage. The applicant's proposal will comply with all Zoning Bylaw requirements if approval is granted by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Following ALC approval, a Building Permit will be required to ensure the proposed addition complies with the BC Building Code and addresses all relevant health and safety standards.

COVENANT

9. In 2002, a covenant between the property owner and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) was registered as part of a subdivision on the subject property. This covenant established designated areas on the property, specifying where all residential development must be contained in order to preserve the remainder of the land for agricultural use. All existing structures on the property are located within this designated area. As a result, the proposed Non-Adhering Residential Use (NARU) application is not

impacted by the terms of the covenant, as it does not conflict with the covenant's intent to protect farmland for agricultural purposes.

AGRICULTURAL AREAS POLICY (COUNCIL POLICY C006-11)

10. Council Policy C006-11 provides guidelines for staff to consider Non-Adhering Residential Use (NARU) proposals for large single detached dwellings. Staff have reviewed this application as per Division 1 – ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Large Single Detached Dwelling in Council Policy C006-11, which includes the potential considerations listed below (see also Attachment B – Council Policy C006-11).

Division 1 – ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Large Single Detached Dwellings Application review may consider:	Are the conditions met?
Extent of proposal compliance with Zoning Bylaw, 2014	✓
Whether the principal residence will be the only residence on the property at time of occupancy, excluding secondary suites	✓
Whether the lot is 4.0 ha in area or larger	✓
The extent of farmable area on the lot that is not encumbered by environmental constraints or natural areas that impede agriculture	No environmental constraints exist on the subject property. On the east side of the property, a minor portion of the land is under the Steep Development Permit Area (SSDP). However, those areas are currently being used for blueberry farming.
Whether a high proportion of the lot is being actively farmed and if the farmed commodity typically demands a high labour need	Approximately 70% (i.e. 7 out of 10 acres) of the property is used for blueberry production.
The lot has been assessed as 'farm' under the Assessment Act for the last 3 years; and other unique circumstances relevant to the application	✓

EXTERNAL REFERRALS

11. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has reviewed the NARU application for the existing extension to the principal building. From a land use planning perspective, the Ministry staff provided the following comments:

- The Subject Property is 4.08ha and is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The applicants indicate they have farm status, and approximately 70% of the land is actively producing blueberries.
- The applicant states that the proposed addition is needed to provide adequate housing for their extended family, specifically two small grandchildren. Ministry staff note that the current 923 m² residence is already significantly larger than what is currently permitted on a property in the ALR. Section 20.1(1) (b) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* stipulates that the total floor area of a principal residence must be 500 m² or less.
- The Subject Property's farm residential footprint, or area allotted to the driveway and yard of the principal residence and all residential buildings is over 6,000 m². Again, this is significantly larger than the maximum size recommended in the Ministry's Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas (2,000 m²) for a property in the ALR.
- While the housing addition may not displace any land under active agricultural production, the size of the existing residence and yard is already substantially larger than what is currently permitted in the ALR.
- Ministry staff understand that 11 people live in the existing residence and as such, a large residence is required to accommodate all the inhabitants. Ministry staff note, however, that a substantial area of the residence is devoted to living areas (i.e. dog room, morning room, great room, living room, etc.). Rather than expanding the existing square footage of the residence, the applicant may want to consider converting one of the many living areas into additional bedrooms.
- Generally, very large residences in the ALR increase the speculative pressure on the price of farmland and make it more difficult for current and future farmers to purchase land for farming.
- In conclusion, Ministry staff are concerned with the size of the existing residence and farm residential footprint and do not support further expansion of the residence.

12. NAV Canada provided the following comments on the NARU application:

Since the subject property is located within the Outer Surface of the Airport Flightpath Zoning, NAV CANADA has evaluated the proposal and directly sent a response letter to the property owner. As per the letter, NAV CANADA has no objection regarding the proposed NARU application. The land use evaluation from NAV CANADA is valid for 18 months, and if the applicant decides not to proceed with the project, NAV CANADA should be notified to formally close the file.

AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AAC's comments, concerns and recommendations will be included in an upcoming Council report to assist Council with making a decision on the proposal.

Resolution Options:

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Council (choose one):

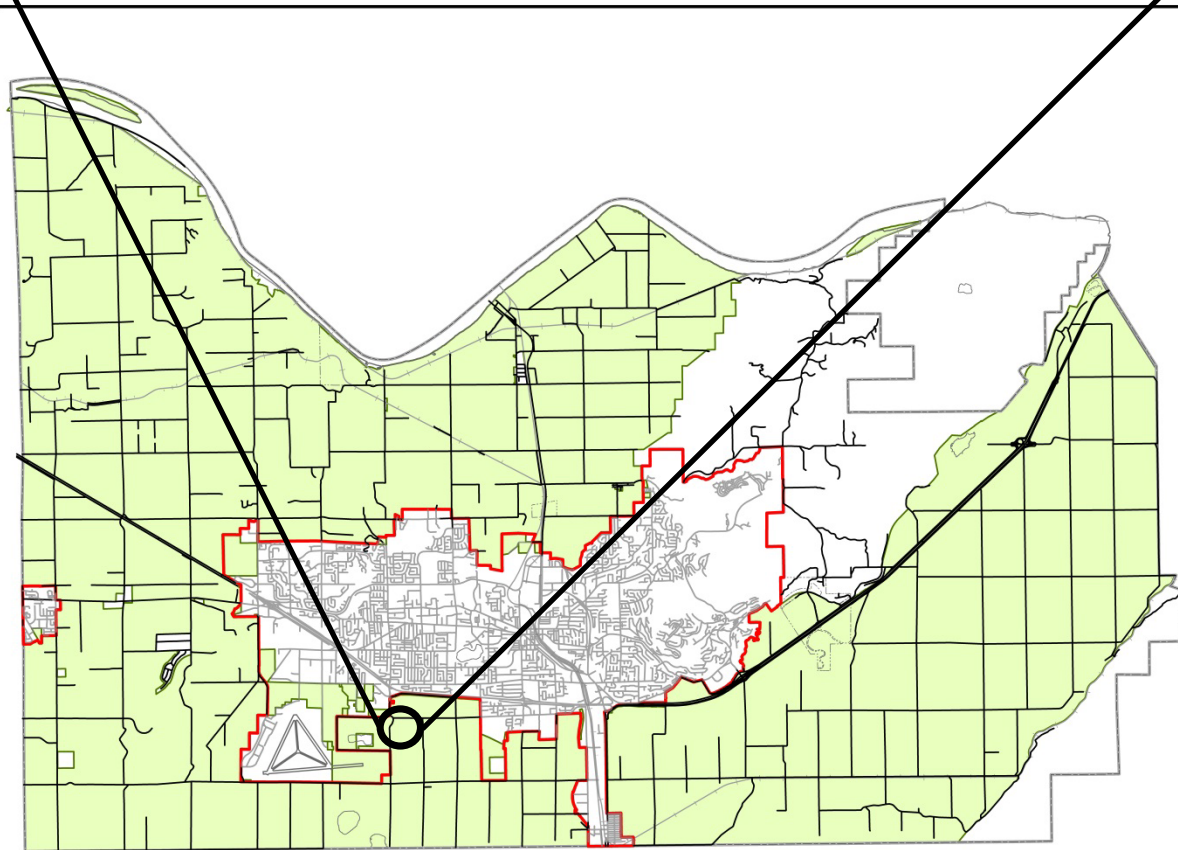
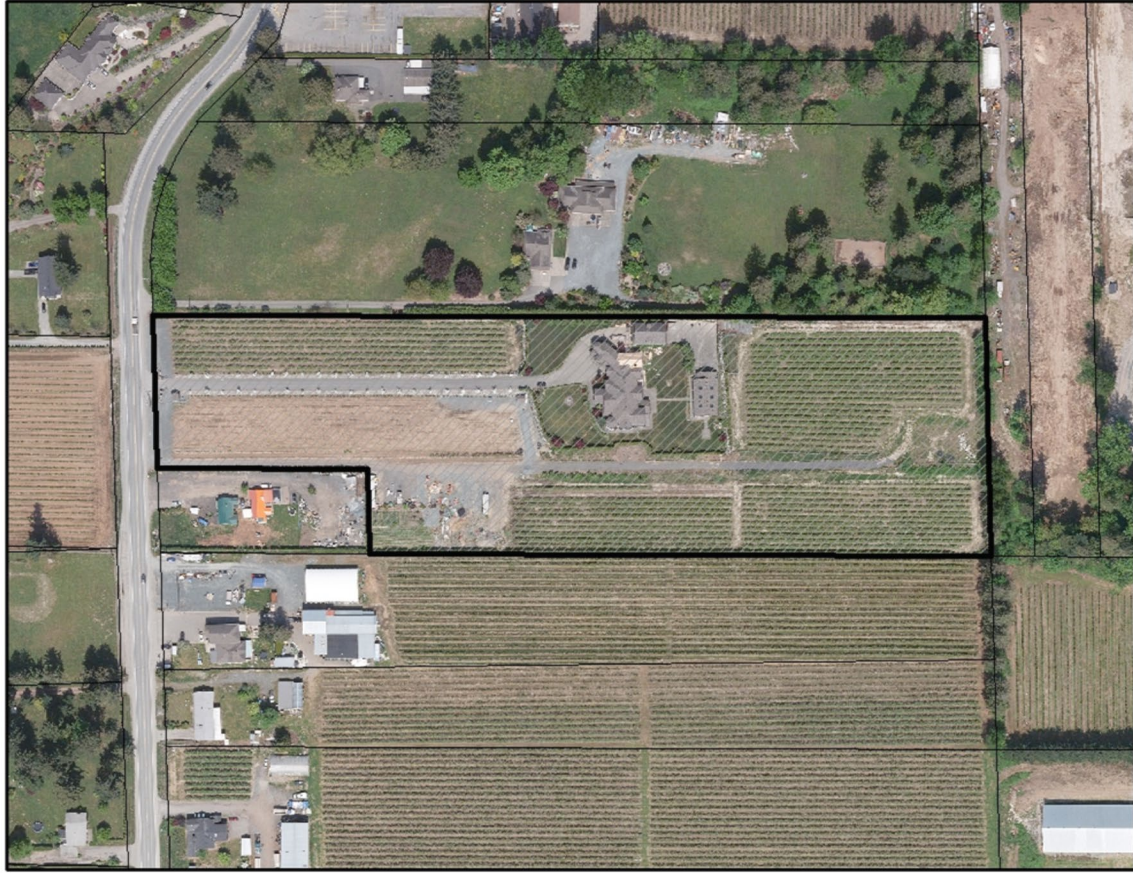
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 3. Forward the application to the ALC with no comments; or
 4. Deny and not forward the application to the ALC.
-

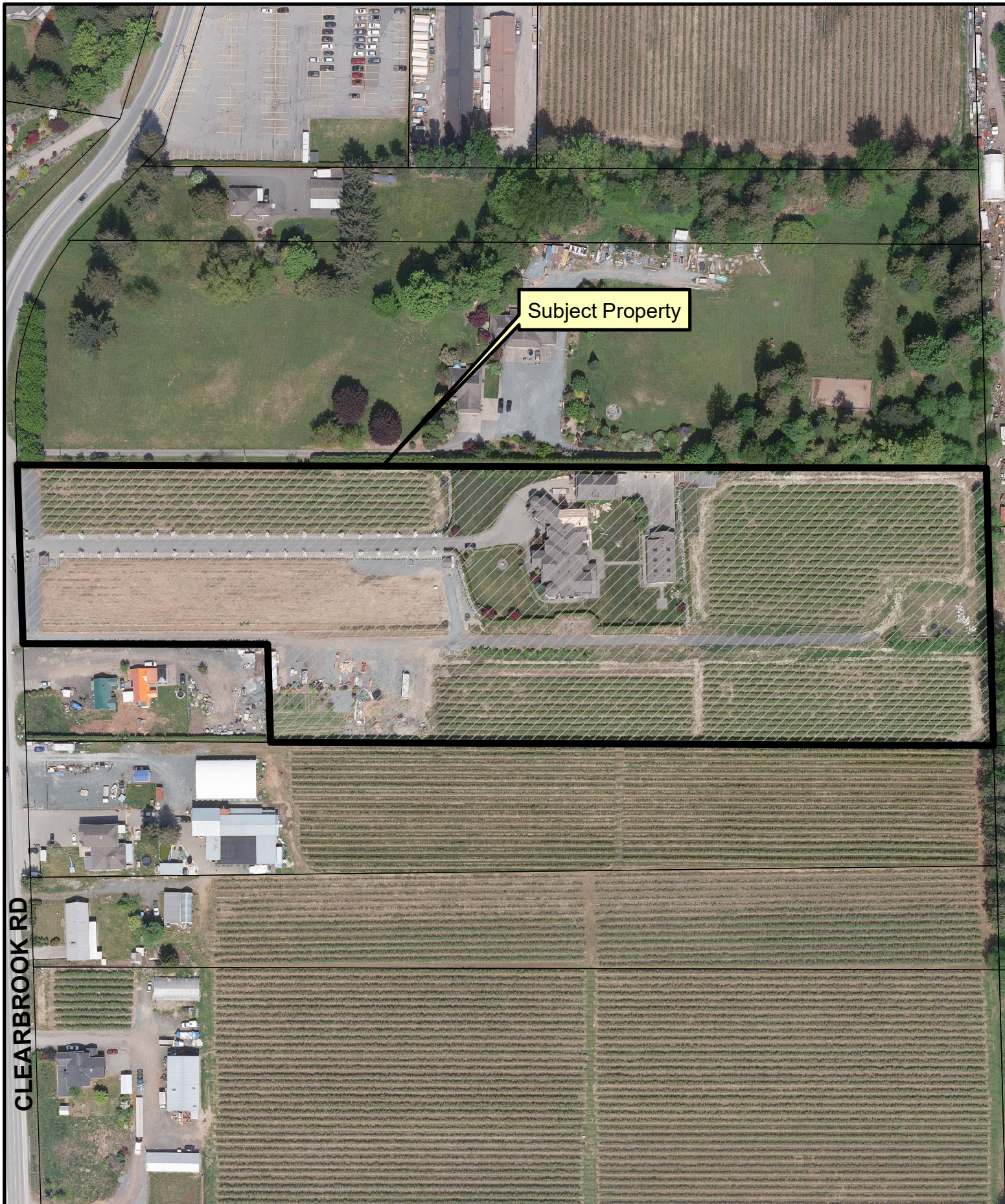
APPROVALS

Mark Neill, General Manager of Planning and Development Services
Komal Basatia, Chief Financial Officer

ATTACHMENTS

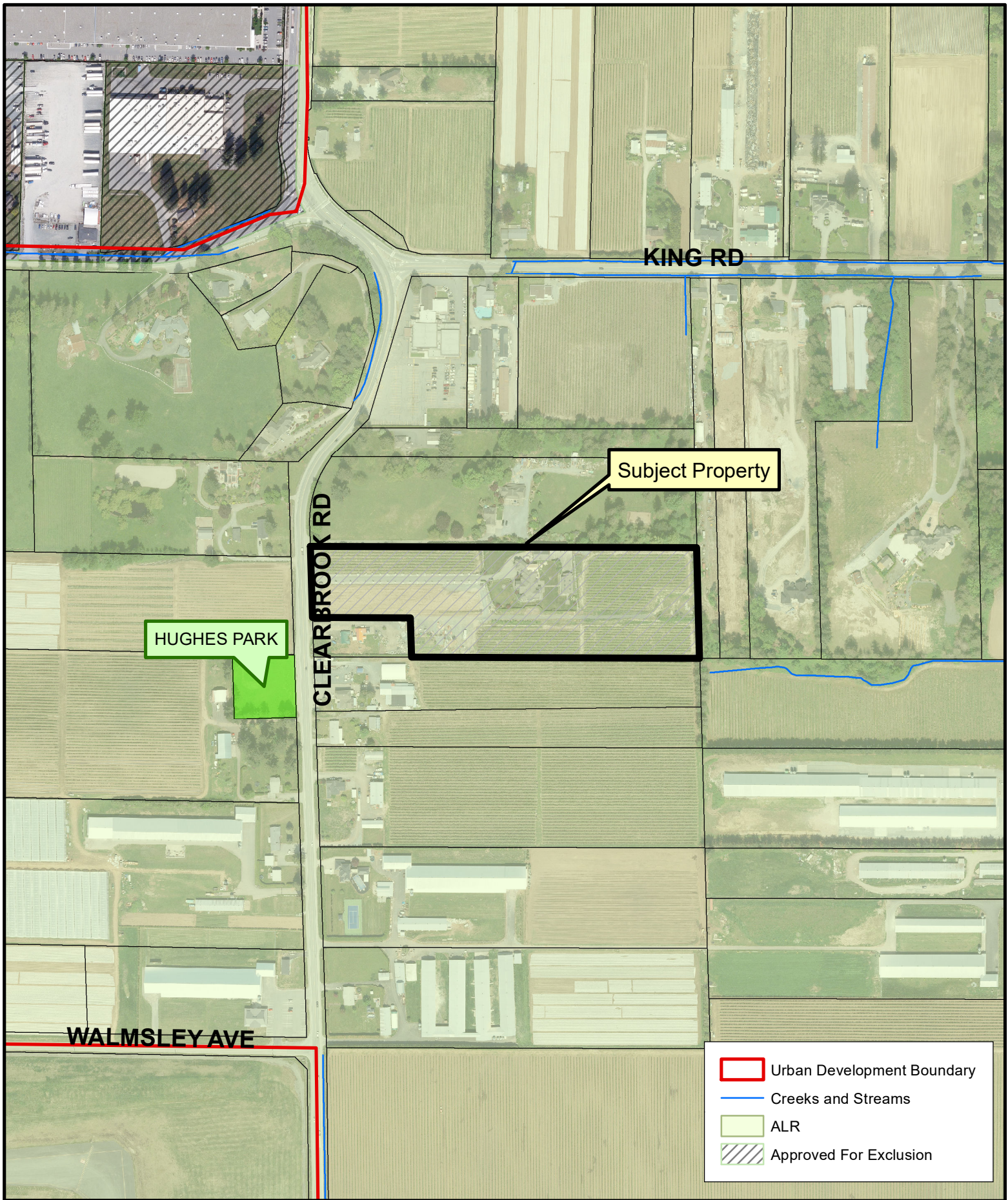
AAC Figures 0-7
Appendix A – Applicant's Response to the First Review Letter
Appendix B – Council Policy C006-11
Appendix C – Ministry of Agriculture Comments

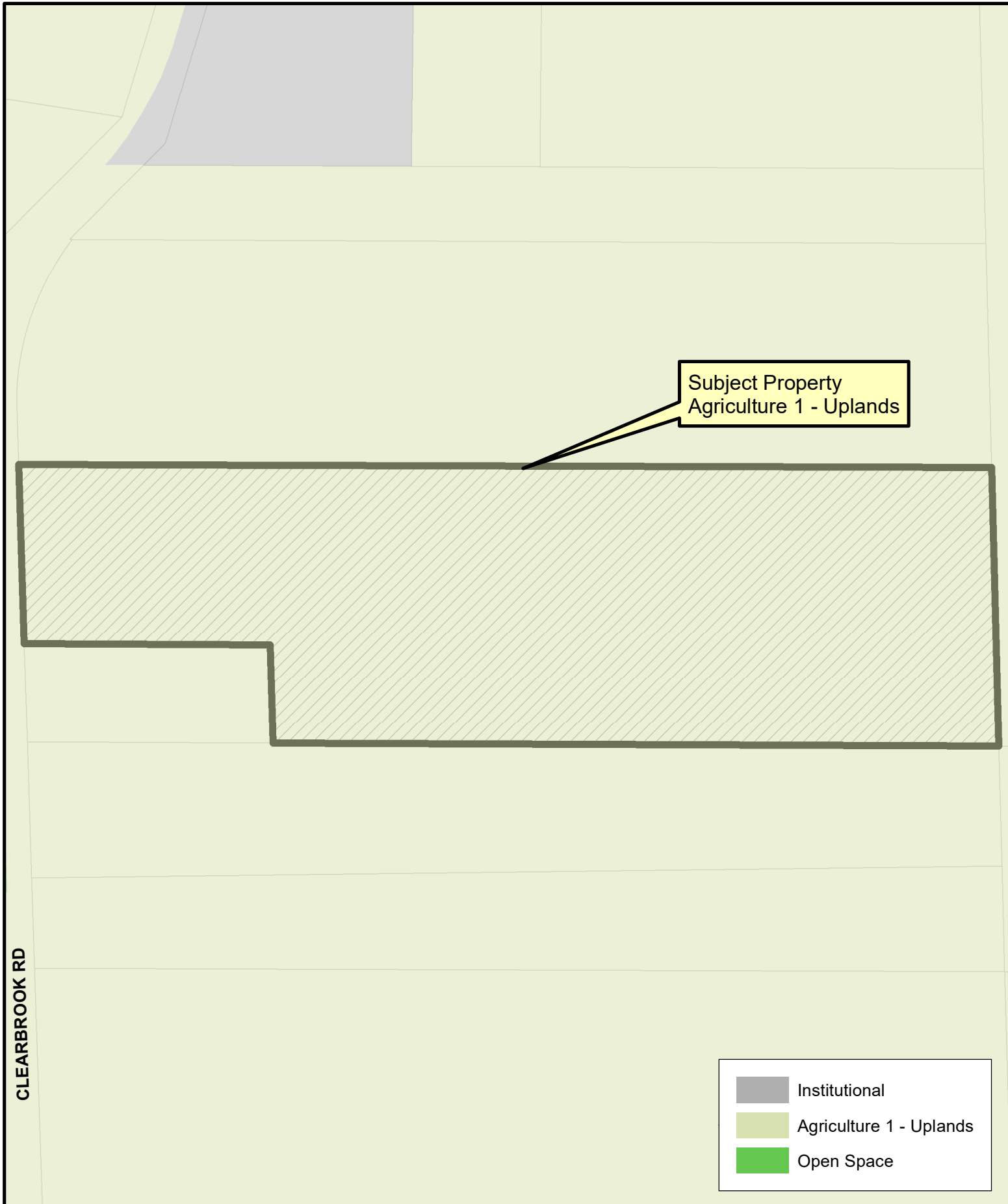




Subject Property

CLEARBROOK RD

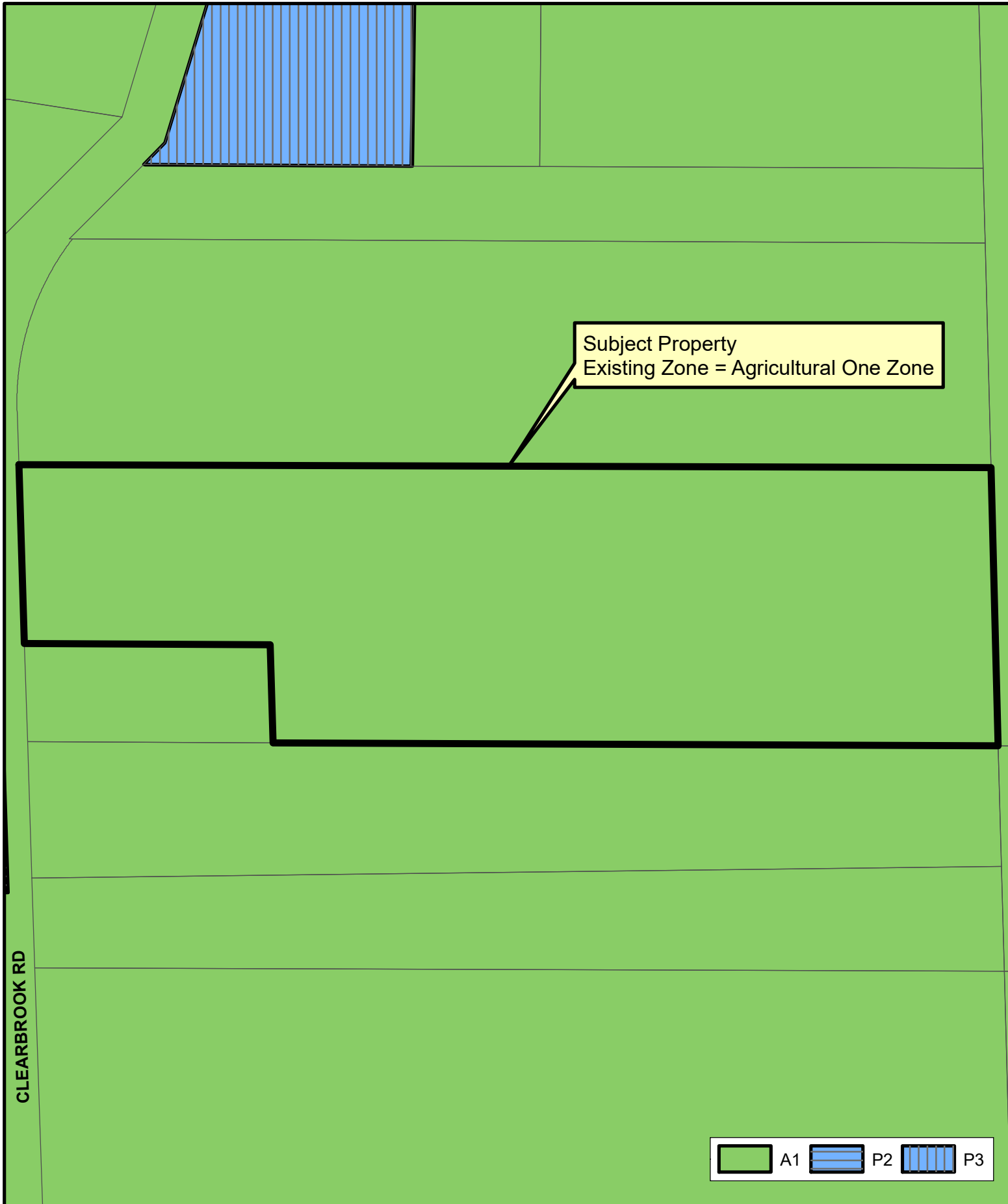


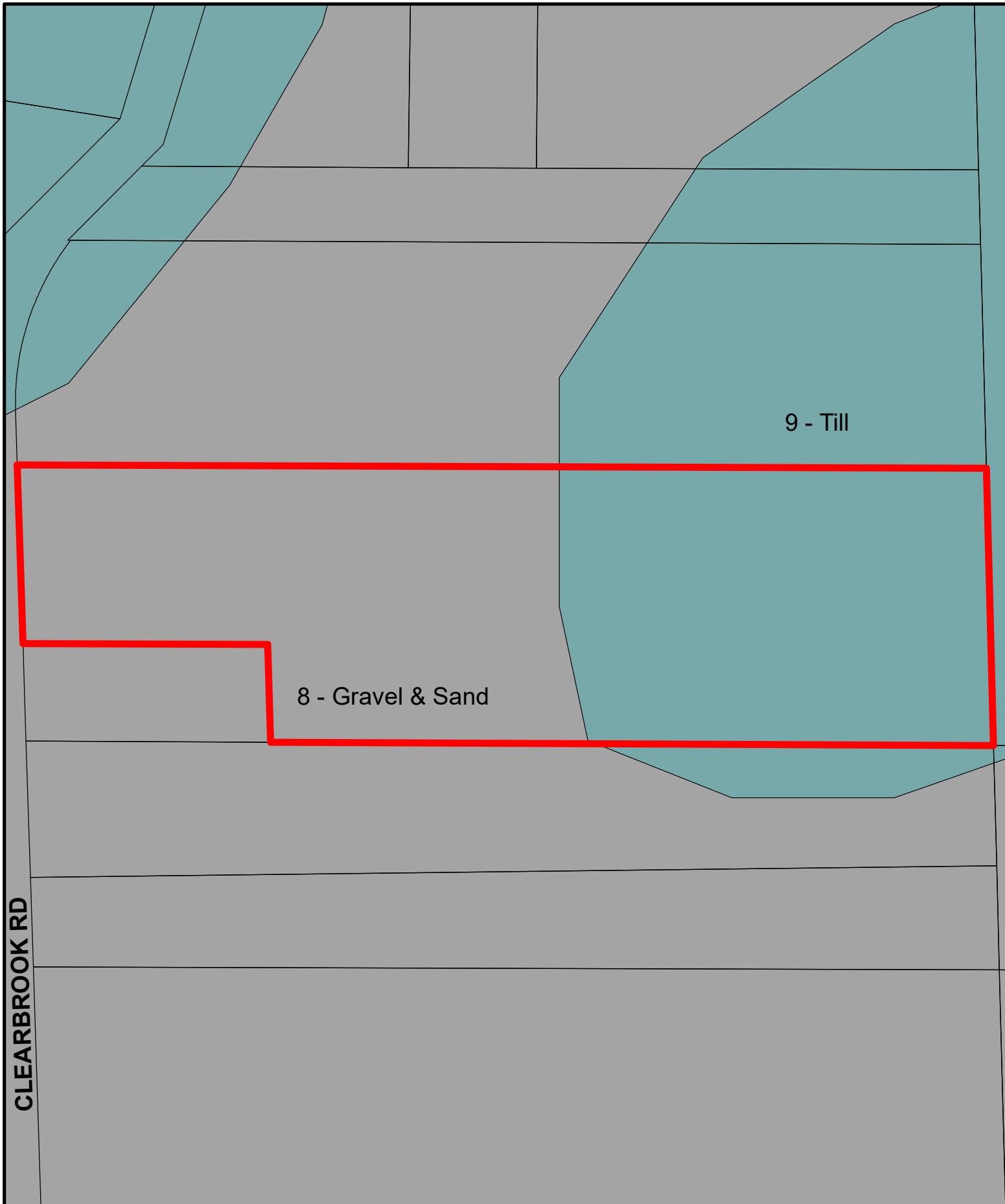


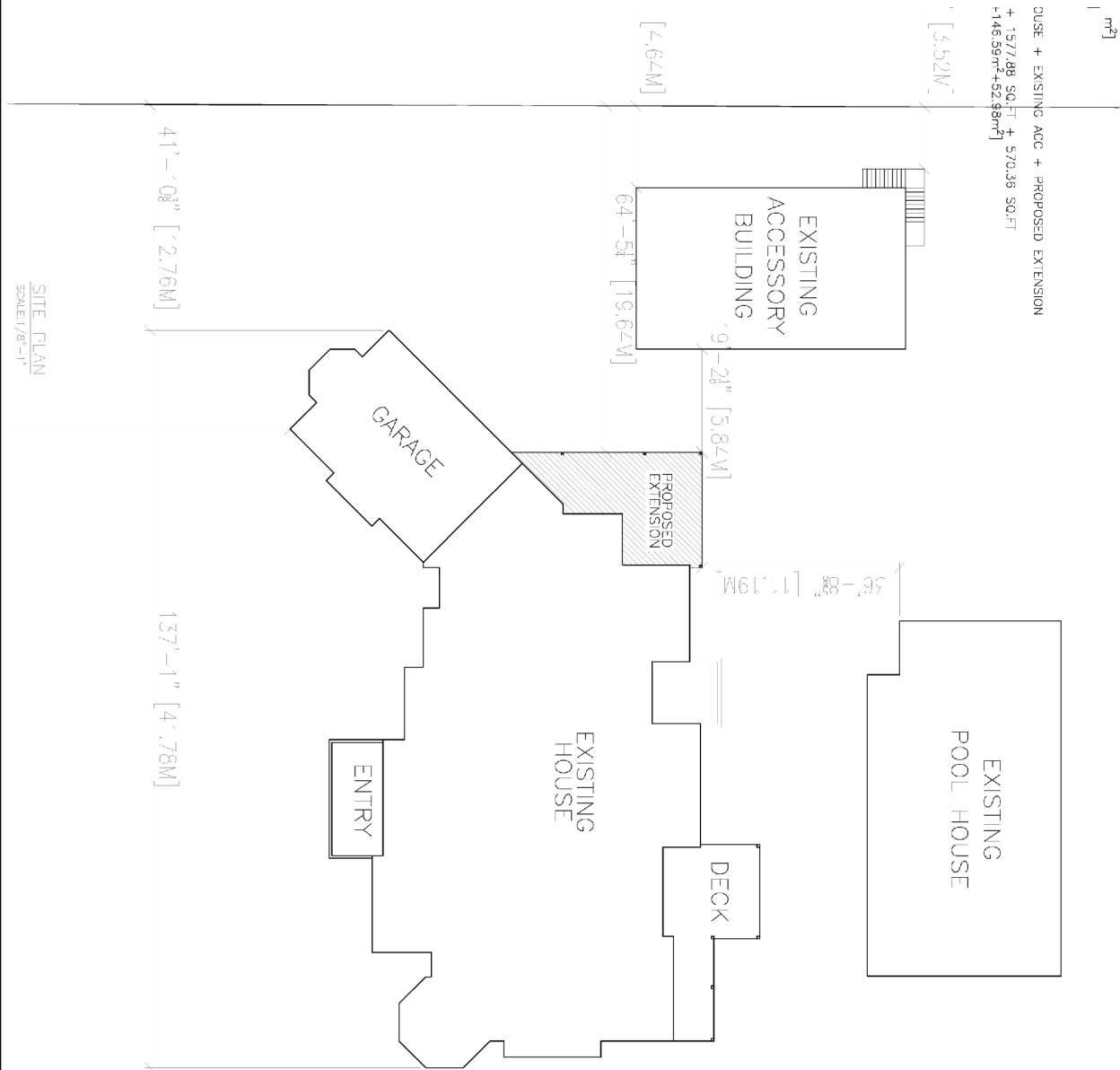
CLEARBROOK RD

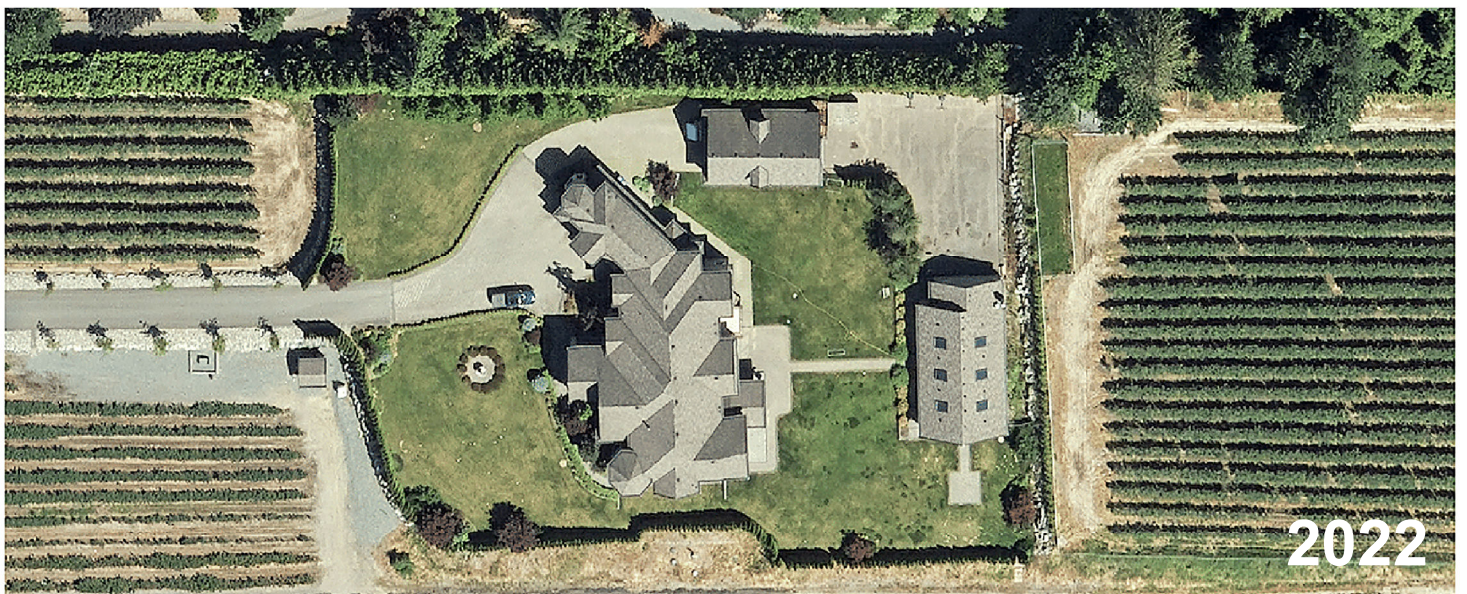
Subject Property
Agriculture 1 - Uplands

- Institutional
- Agriculture 1 - Uplands
- Open Space

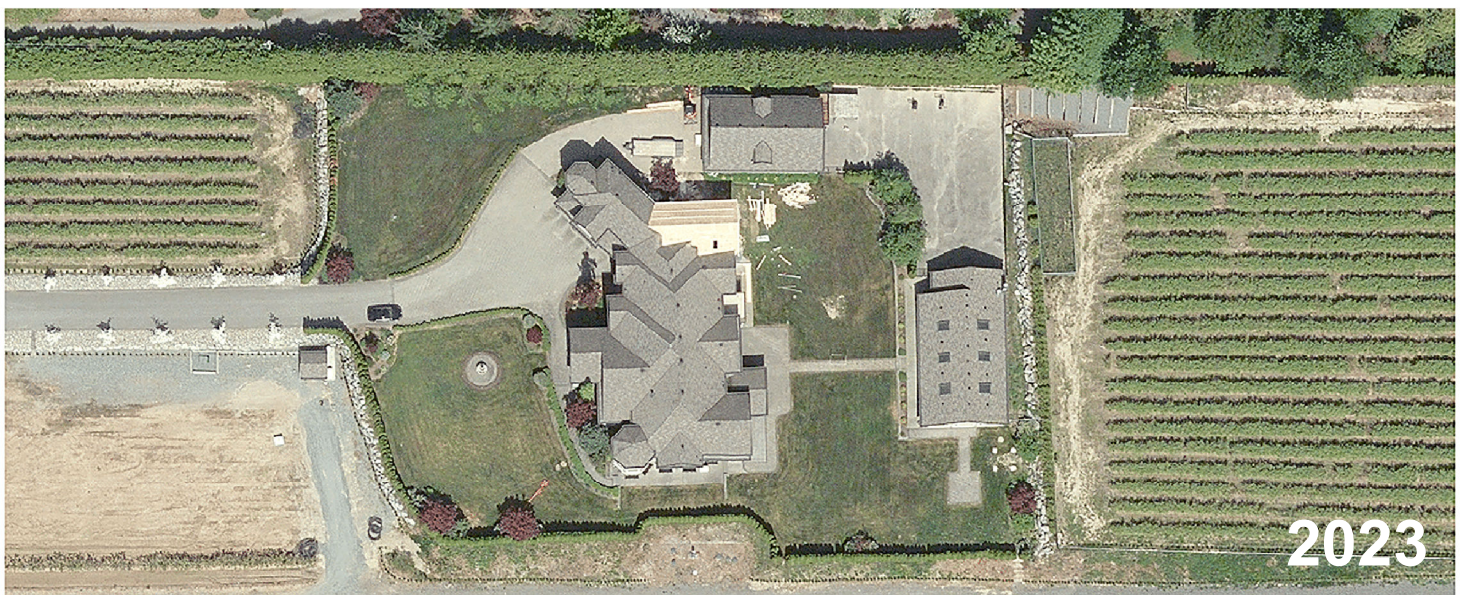




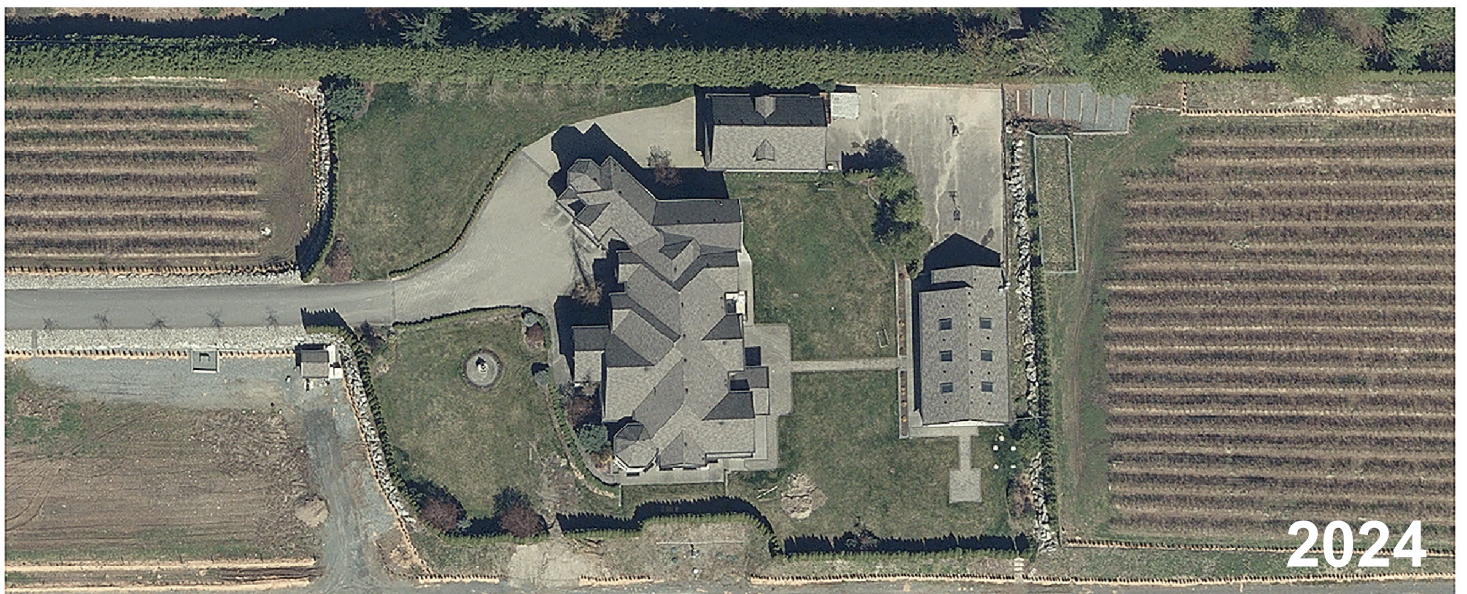




2022



2023



2024

Jasbir Singh Banwait
1444 Clearbrook Road
Abbotsford, BC
V2T 5X3

File: PRJ24-156

Re: Response to First Review Comments Dated January 31, 2025

Dear Respected Council, Advisory Committee members and City of Abbotsford Staff,

This letter is in response to the first review letter I received from City staff in reference to the two bedroom extension located at my home located at 1444 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford BC V2T 5X3.

Our family home construction was completed in 2010. The home is 909.9m² (~9794 sf) as per the staff letter from the City of Abbotsford. The extension that is the subject of this application has a total area of 52.98m² (570 sf).

Since 2010, my entire family has lived together in the same home. Over the last 15 years, our family has grown. Currently my wife and I, our three children, two daughter in laws and our four grandchildren live at our home. Our grandchildren are 13,11,4, and 2 years old. This is a total of 11 family members living together. I built the extension due to my younger son moving back home from California after completing his residency. While he was in California, my daughter in law and son became parents to two daughters (now 4 and 2 years old). When they moved back, my granddaughters did not have bedrooms on the upper floor. One of my granddaughters stayed in my sons room, the other was sleeping in a crib in my sons walk in closet. I did read the suggestion from the Ministry of Agriculture representative that we should accommodate bedrooms for our grandchildren and family in other parts of our home - we do not feel that is appropriate for our joint farming family. In fact the extension is a positive influence on farming as my entire family contributes to this farm and all the others we commercially farm in BC. We work together to make our farming business work.

The following summarizes what I feel is the most important information specifically related to the extension construction/location and why it has no negative effect on farming.

- 1) The extension was only completed on the upper floor as my intention was to give my grand daughters bedroom space of their own.

2) The extension encroaches into only previously landscaped/backyard areas of my property. These areas never have or could have been farmed and represents no loss to farming land or existing farm production.

3) The extension area does not extend past the previous eastern boundary of the existing home.

4) Only two pad footings were dug and added into the backyard landscaped area to minimize excavation.

5) I wanted to outline the prior historical rationale for locating the entire residential footprint of my home on land that was previously never used for farming, poorest soil/ farming area, and was unsuitable for farming.

6) The hill areas on my farm that I have developed into farmable land has cost me more money than the land is actually worth. But I am a farmer and have always done what actual farmers do - maximize the farming activity on their farms.

Since I immigrated to Canada in 1976, I have been a Canadian farmer. Mainly in land based farming in the Fraser Valley. I would also note that in addition to the subject property, my family's total farm operation includes 10 properties, totalling 329 acres of farmland primarily in or being prepared for blueberry production. 231 acres of full production blueberry on three properties in Deroche, BC, 88 acres developing farm on 6 properties in Abbotsford BC and the subject property which is 10 acres (7 acres of Blueberry) in Abbotsford BC. The following summarizes from a farm planning perspective my experience and strategy since purchasing the subject farm and developing it into a productive farm property over the last 20 years.

1) The subject farm has been continually farmed with Blueberries since 2006 (I purchased the property in 2005), prior to that the property was not used for farming by the previous owners.

2) In addition to planting the usable flat areas, I also spent considerable resources grading, levelling and irrigating the hillside areas to the East and South side of my home in order to turn those areas into farmable and farmed areas. The hill areas on my farm that I have developed into farmable land has cost me more money than the land is actually worth. But I am a farmer and have always done what actual farmers do - maximize the farming activity on their farms.

3) There is a covenant on the subject property by the Agricultural Land Commission restricting residential uses to the hill area in order to protect the best farming lands for agriculture. This covenant was registered when the previous owner did a homesite severance for this property through the ALC. The covenant restrictions also matched my desire to build my home on the hill in order to ensure that the best farmable areas on the west and south west sides of our farm were used for farming. Additionally the areas directly to the east of my home were a part of the “hillside area” allowed to be used for residential uses but I spent considerable resources grading those areas to allow for farming there as well.

4) An important consideration for this application is that I currently own and have owned multiple ALR properties over the past 40 plus years and have only ever built one residence for my family.

5) We acknowledge that the existing farm residential footprint is greater than the maximum recommended by the Ministry’s Guide, however, we would like to note that this application does not propose to increase that footprint in any manner, and if approved would permit 3 generations of our family (11 people in total and anticipated to grow) to maintain their quality of life, some semblance of privacy between families at key times of the day/night, and have no adverse impact on the farming operation or productivity of the property.

6) The home and outbuildings are over the current allowed residence size for ALR properties but was conforming at the time of construction in 2010.

7) There are no other additional farm residences for family or workers or anyone else on this farm or any of our other farms.

8) We acknowledge/understand that a building permit will eventually be required for the work completed to ensure alignment with BC Building Code requirements. Permit application with all deficiencies addressed has been submitted to the City.

9) We confirm that the subject property currently has farm status, and 70% of the land is actively producing blueberries.

10) External Agency Referrals – Thank you for this additional detailed information related to BC Hydro and electrical aspects/requirements. Our electrician and other building consultants/engineers have all signed off on the construction.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for spending time on this application. Please refer the application with your support to the Agricultural Land Commission. You all understand that the only way farming is going to prosper in our province is if farmers and farming families are supported. If actual farmers are not given any freedom or flexibility on their own farms and properties we will lose even more young people to other industries and careers.

At times it is easier to make blanket rules and regulations for an entire group of people. In this case - farm owners. This approach ends up hurting farmers and farming in our province. Adding an extension onto my home of 570 sf, in an area that would never have been farmed should be supported. There is no encroachment into any farming areas and no encroachment outside of the home footprint area (extension does not extend in any direction outside of the existing house N/S/E/W borders).

Respectfully, I feel my contributions to farming in BC for almost 50 years should be respected. I would like to provide my children, who have farmed with me since they were young children, and their families adequate housing. In my opinion this should be supported and championed as a method to keep farming alive and prosperous in BC.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

5BB01EBFDB8840E...

Jasbir Singh Banwait

Council Policy C006-11

Agricultural Areas Policy

Part 1 - General

Division 1 - General

Policy Statement

- 1 The City will facilitate and thoughtfully evaluate Agricultural Land Commission applications and proposals involving site-specific Council approvals to support unique agricultural land use needs in farming areas.

Purposes of this Policy

- 2 To establish principles and guidelines that will guide City staff review and recommendations regarding proposals for:
 - (a) large Single Detached Dwellings in the ALR (over 500 m²);
 - (b) Full-Time Farm Worker Residences;
 - (c) Temporary Farm Worker Housing; and
 - (d) Farm Product Processing proposals that exceed the size limit of the Zoning Bylaw.

Application

- 3 This policy applies to the following:
 - (a) Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for:
 - (i) single detached dwellings exceeding the 500 m² size limit of *Agricultural Land Commission Act* section 20.1;
 - (ii) Full Time Farm Worker Residences;
 - (iii) Temporary Farm Worker Housing; and
 - (b) Site specific Zoning Bylaw approval requests for:
 - (i) Farm Product Processing - Level 2;
 - (ii) Farm Product Processing - Intensive;
 - (iii) Temporary Farm Worker Housing proposals exceeding Zoning Bylaw maximums for:
 - (1) the number of Temporary Farm Worker Housing Spaces;
 - (2) permitted floor area in relation to lot size; and
 - (iv) Temporary Farm Worker Housing proposals that propose new permanent buildings.

Division 2 - Interpretation

Definitions

4 In this policy:

“Farm Operation” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“Farm Product Processing - Level 2” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“Farm Product Processing - Intensive” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

Full Time Farm Worker Residence has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“Non-Adhering Residential Use” has the same meaning as in the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

“Single Detached Dwelling” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“Temporary Farm Worker Housing” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“Temporary Farm Worker Housing Space” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

Part 2 - Guidelines for Consideration of Applications

Division 1 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Large Single Detached Dwellings

Principles and Considerations

- 5 Without limiting Council’s discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the principles and guidelines set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Single Detached Dwellings exceeding the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* 500 m² floor area maximum.
- 6 Application review may consider:
 - (a) extent of proposal compliance with Zoning Bylaw, 2014;
 - (b) whether the principal residence will be the only residence on the property at time of occupancy, excluding secondary suites;
 - (c) whether the lot is 4.0 ha in area or larger;
 - (d) the extent of farmable area on the lot that is not encumbered by environmental constraints or natural areas that impede agriculture;
 - (e) whether a high proportion of the lot is being actively farmed and if the farmed commodity typically demands a high labour need;
 - (f) if the lot has been assessed as ‘farm’ under the *Assessment Act* for the last 3 years; and
 - (g) other unique circumstances relevant to the application.
- 7 Proposals are not required to meet all factors in (6).

Division 2 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Full-Time Farm Worker Residences

Principles and Considerations

- 8 Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the guidelines in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Full-Time Farm Worker Residences.
- 9 Application review may consider the following minimum Farm Operation thresholds as an indicator of farm need for a Full-Time Farm Worker Residence:

Farm Type		Minimum Level of Operation
Beef	(a) cow-calf, or cattle grazing	200 at one time
	(b) beef Feedlot	500 at one time
	(c) veal	100 at one time
Berries, including Cranberries	(a) Minimum Farm Operation of 16 ha owned by the farmer and planted in berries. Of this 16 ha Farm Operation, at least one lot must be a at least 8 ha in size and upon which is located a permanent dwelling unit.	
Dairy		60 milking or dry
Fruit or Nut Orchards	(a) 800-1200 trees per 0.4 ha	6 ha
	(b) 250-350 trees per 0.4 ha	14 ha
Goats		300-400 milking
Greenhouses	(a) vegetables, berries, ornamentals	8,000 m ²
Horses	(a) breeding	2 breeding mares and/or 1 stallion
	(b) other than breeding or combined operations	10 horses
Mushrooms		900 m ² of bed area
Nurseries	(a) propagating house	1,860 m ²
	(b) container stock	2 ha
	(c) field growing nursery	8 ha
Poultry	(a) chicken broiler	56,000 birds per 8 week cycle, to equal 364,000 broilers per year
	(a) chicken broiler breeder	12,000 birds per year
	(b) chicken layer, conventional	i. minimum 20,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 40,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination
	(c) chicken layer, free run	i. minimum 10,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 20,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination

Poultry	(d) chicken layer, free range	i. minimum 5,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 10,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination
	(e) heavy turkey	40,000 birds per year
	(f) broiler turkey	80,000 birds per year
Vegetables	(g) field grown potatoes	20 ha in production
	(h) other field vegetables	16 ha in production
Sheep		150 ewes and 5 rams
Swine	(i) farrow to wean	210 sows at one time
	(j) farrow to finish	150 sows at one time
	(k) finishing	5,000 hogs at one time

- 10** Council may consider proposals that do not meet the minimum level of Farm Operation thresholds set-out in (9).
- 11** A restrictive covenant may be required on the title of all lots used to meet the Farm Operation thresholds set out in (9) or referenced in an Agricultural Land Commission approval, prohibiting any further Full-Time Farm Worker Residences on those lots.

Division 3 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Principles and Considerations

- 12** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the guidelines in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Temporary Farm Worker Housing.
- 13** Application review may consider:
- (a) the extent of proposal compliance with Zoning Bylaw, 2014;
 - (b) the extent to which the proposal responds to factors such as productive farmland and the interface with adjacent properties;
 - (c) whether the demand for the proposed Temporary Farm Worker Housing is driven by farming activities within the City of Abbotsford; and
 - (d) the extent to which the applicant owns the land driving the demand for the proposed housing.
- 14** Where an ALC application justifies the farm need for Temporary Farm Worker Housing with more than one lot, a restrictive covenant may be required on the title of all identified lots, prohibiting any further Temporary Farm Worker Housing on those lots.

Division 4 - Zoning Bylaw Related Approvals for Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Principles and Considerations

- 15** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any development application, the principles and considerations set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding site-specific Zoning Bylaw approval requests for Temporary Farm Worker Housing applications that:
- (a) exceed the Temporary Farm Worker Housing Space maximums; or
 - (b) exceed the maximum permitted floor area in relation to lot size; or
 - (c) request construction of new permanent buildings for such use.
- 16** Application review may consider:
- (a) Farm Operation details driving the demand or need for permanent or higher capacity housing facilities;
 - (b) if the farm has been in operation for at least 5 years;
 - (c) the proportion of required employees that will be working on the same lot as the proposed housing;
 - (d) the demand for workers driven by other lots of the Farm Operation that could potentially be removed from the Farm Operation through property sale or lease termination;
 - (e) the availability of other housing options to support the farm need;
 - (f) the extent of other residential uses on the lot and on the other lots that make up the Farm Operation;
 - (g) compatibility of the proposal with adjacent properties and proposed buffering or mitigation measures;
 - (h) infrastructure and servicing demands and capacity; and
 - (i) the impact of the proposed development footprint and siting on productive farmland.

Division 5 - Farm Product Processing Facilities

Principles and Considerations

- 17** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any rezoning application, the principles and guidelines set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding rezoning applications for:
- (a) Farm Product Processing - Level 2; and
 - (b) Farm Product Processing - Intensive.
- 18** Application review may consider:
- (a) the ability of existing transportation infrastructure, and mitigation measures proposed by the applicant, to adequately support the traffic generated by the use and minimize local impacts;
 - (b) the availability and suitability of an adequate water supply for the proposed use and intensity;
 - (c) proposed approaches for managing wastewater on-site, or through connections within the Municipal Service Area;

- (d) the extent to which the proposal is compatible with surrounding uses and existing servicing infrastructure, incorporating mitigation measures as appropriate;
- (e) whether associated outdoor storage exceeds 2,500 m²;
- (f) demonstrated ability to comply with Provincial Ministry and ALC Regulations (i.e., 50% farm product rules)

Additional Information May Be Requested

19 In addition to typical rezoning application requirements, the City may request the following information to support proposal review:

- (a) stormwater management plan, including on-site detention, infiltration, and run-off treatment;
- (b) wastewater management plan, addressing solid, liquid, and odour components; Terms of Reference shall be reviewed and approved by the applicant's engineer, the City, and Provincial Ministries, as appropriate;
- (c) water servicing/supply plan;
- (d) traffic impact assessment;
- (e) fire protection plan; and
- (f) other studies or plans, as deemed necessary.

Division 6 - Related procedures, guidelines, and publications

20 The following documents relate to this policy:

- (a) Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2016
- (b) Zoning Bylaw, 2014
- (c) *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its Regulations

ADOPTED August 29, 2022



December 17, 2024

Rafid Shadman
Assistant Planner, City of Abbotsford
rshadman@abbotsford.ca

Re: ALC File #101165; Local Government File #PRJ24-156 – Non-Adhering Residential Use at 1444 Clearbrook Rd (PID: 025-507-974) – The Subject Property

Dear Rafid Shadman,

Thank you for providing the opportunity for Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Ministry) staff to comment on File #PRJ24-156, that proposes to build a 49.6 m² addition onto a primary residence that is already 909.9 m², on the Subject Property. From a land use planning perspective, Ministry staff offer the following comments:

- The Subject Property is 4.08ha and is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The applicants indicate they have farm status, and approximately 70% of the land is actively producing blueberries.
- The applicant states that the proposed addition is needed to provide adequate housing for their extended family, specifically two small grandchildren. Ministry staff note that the current 909.9m² residence is already significantly larger than what is currently permitted on a property in the ALR. Section 20.1(1)(b) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* stipulates that the total floor area of a principal residence must be 500m² or less.
- The Subject Property's farm residential footprint, or area allotted to the driveway and yard of the principal residence and all residential buildings is over 6,000m². Again, this is significantly larger than the maximum size recommended in the Ministry's Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas (2,000m²) for a property in the ALR.

- While the housing addition may not displace any land under active agricultural production, the size of the existing residence and yard is already substantially larger than what is currently permitted in the ALR.
- Ministry staff understand that 11 people live in the existing residence and as such, a large residence is required to accommodate all the inhabitants. Ministry staff note, however, that a substantial area of the residence is devoted to living areas (i.e. dog room, morning room, great room, living room, etc.). Rather than expanding the existing square footage of the residence, the applicant may want to consider converting one of the many living areas into additional bedrooms.
- Generally, very large residences in the ALR increase the speculative pressure on the price of farmland and make it more difficult for current and future farmers to purchase land for farming.
- In conclusion, Ministry staff are concerned with the size of the existing residence and farm residential footprint and do not support further expansion of the residence.

Please contact Ministry staff if you have any questions regarding the above comments.

Sincerely,



Chelsey Andrews, MCP

Land Use Planner
Strengthening Farming Program
Ministry of Agriculture and Food

chelsey.andrews@gov.bc.ca

Phone: 1 250-850-1854

CC: Agricultural Land Commission – ALC.Referrals@gov.bc.ca