



Agricultural Impact Assessment

Dakota's Truck Services Limited

SUBJECT PROPERTY

Parcel 1 – Proposed New Dakota's Truck Service Site
#8051 Wellington County Road 109, Arthur
Part of Lot 36 Con 1, East Garafraxa, Wellington North
PIN 71124-0048

Parcel 2 – Existing Shawridge Farms Ltd Site
#7556 1st Line, Arthur
Part of Lots 35, Con 1, East Garafraxa, Wellington North
PIN 71124-0099

Completed: October 28, 2025

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File 33999-24

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Methods.....	6
3. Land Use Survey.....	6
4. Detailed Overview of Agricultural System.....	8
5. Assessment of Impacts.....	14
6. Evaluation of Alternative Sites.....	18
7. Recommendations & Conclusion.....	21
8. References.....	23

List of Figures

Figure 1: Location of subject property. Source - GRCA Mapping.....	3
Figure 2: Conceptual site plan for Dakota's Truck Service. Full site plan submitted as part of the OPA application.....	4
Figure 3: Location of subject site in relation to other rural employment sites.....	5
Figure 4: Surrounding land use pattern - graphic created by Chris Corosky.....	7
Figure 5: Agricultural Land Base Post Removal of Subject Site & Addition of 2.8 ha.....	8
Figure 6: Map showing the location of Municipal Drains, Tile Drainage and the quality of Controlled Drainage.....	10
Figure 7: Canada Land Inventory Map - Source: OMAFA GIS Portal.....	11
Figure 8: Existing access points to the property. Source Google Earth Imagery 2025.....	12
Figure 9: Remaining block of agricultural land post site removal – Source GRCA Aerial Imagery.....	13
Figure 10: Type of farm by percentage within Wellington County based on 2021 census data. Source: Wellington Federation of Agriculture's Agrifood Systems Report.....	14
Figure 11: MDS I Map - where red = barn, orange = non-agricultural use (i.e. residential/business), blue = proposed building footprint.....	16
Figure 12: Properties listed for sale in and near Arthur as of October 17th, 2025.....	20

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Van Harten Surveying Inc was retained by Dakota's Truck Service's Limited (DTS) to prepare an Agricultural Impact Assessment for the proposed development of a new farm and heavy vehicle repair and service station at #8051 County Road 109, located just outside of the Town of Arthur. The land is described as being Part of Lot 36 Concession 1, East Garafraxa, Wellington North (PIN 71124-0048) see Figure 1.

Dakota's Truck Services is a family owned and operated farm and heavy vehicle repair and service operation founded in 2012. There is currently only one location at #7831 6th Line in Centre Wellington. The business has been successful and now requires a second location to accommodate the growth of its customer base. DTS provides repair for both agricultural equipment such as tractors and grain trucks, as well as trucks and other types of diesel equipment. The operation of such a business is important to the agricultural operations in North Wellington.

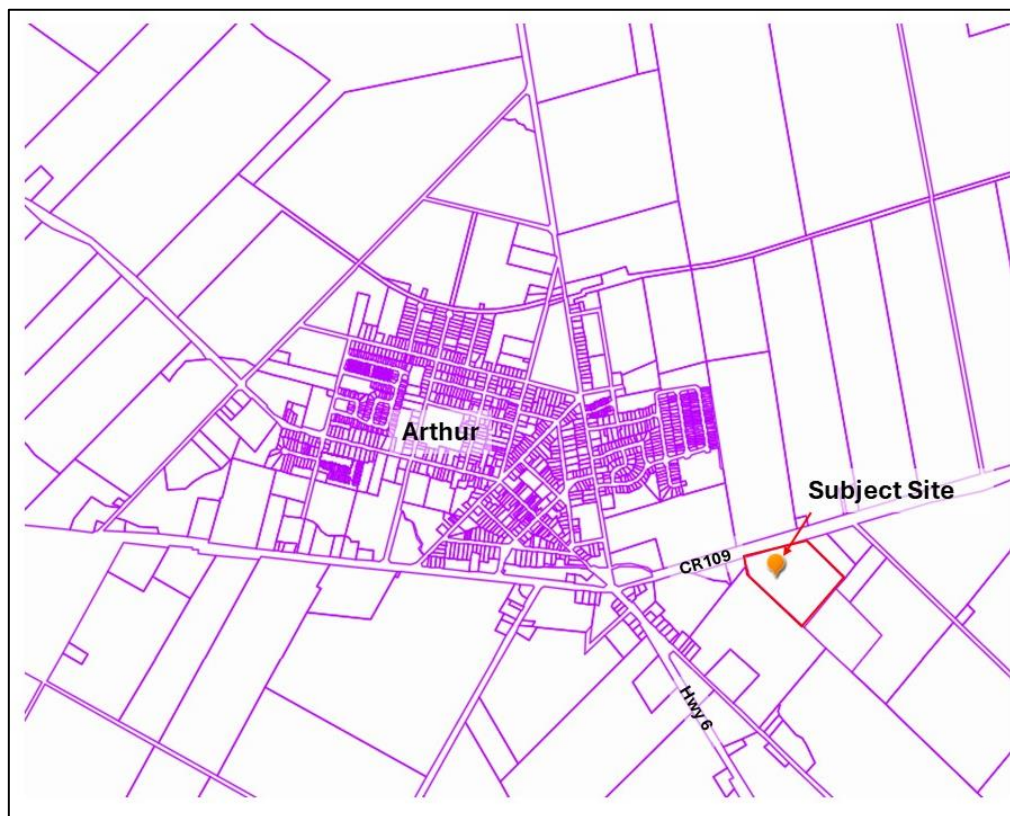


Figure 1: Location of subject property. Source - GRCA Mapping

1.2 Development Area and Onsite Uses

The proposed site is located at #8051 Wellington County Road 109 near Arthur. The site was selected because of its size, the frontage along CR109, the two entrances – one from CR109 and the second from 1st Line via an easement, the proximity to the urban center of Arthur, and the for the fact it sits outside of the urban boundary off a major road so that large equipment can easily access the site without having to navigate small urban streets and associated traffic.

The proposal is to build a 30-35,000 square foot building that would house the office, service bays and parts pick-up area. Large vehicle parking areas are proposed at the rear of the site with employee and customer parking located at the front of the building. The existing house and detached garage are proposed to be severed from the property, see Figure 2.

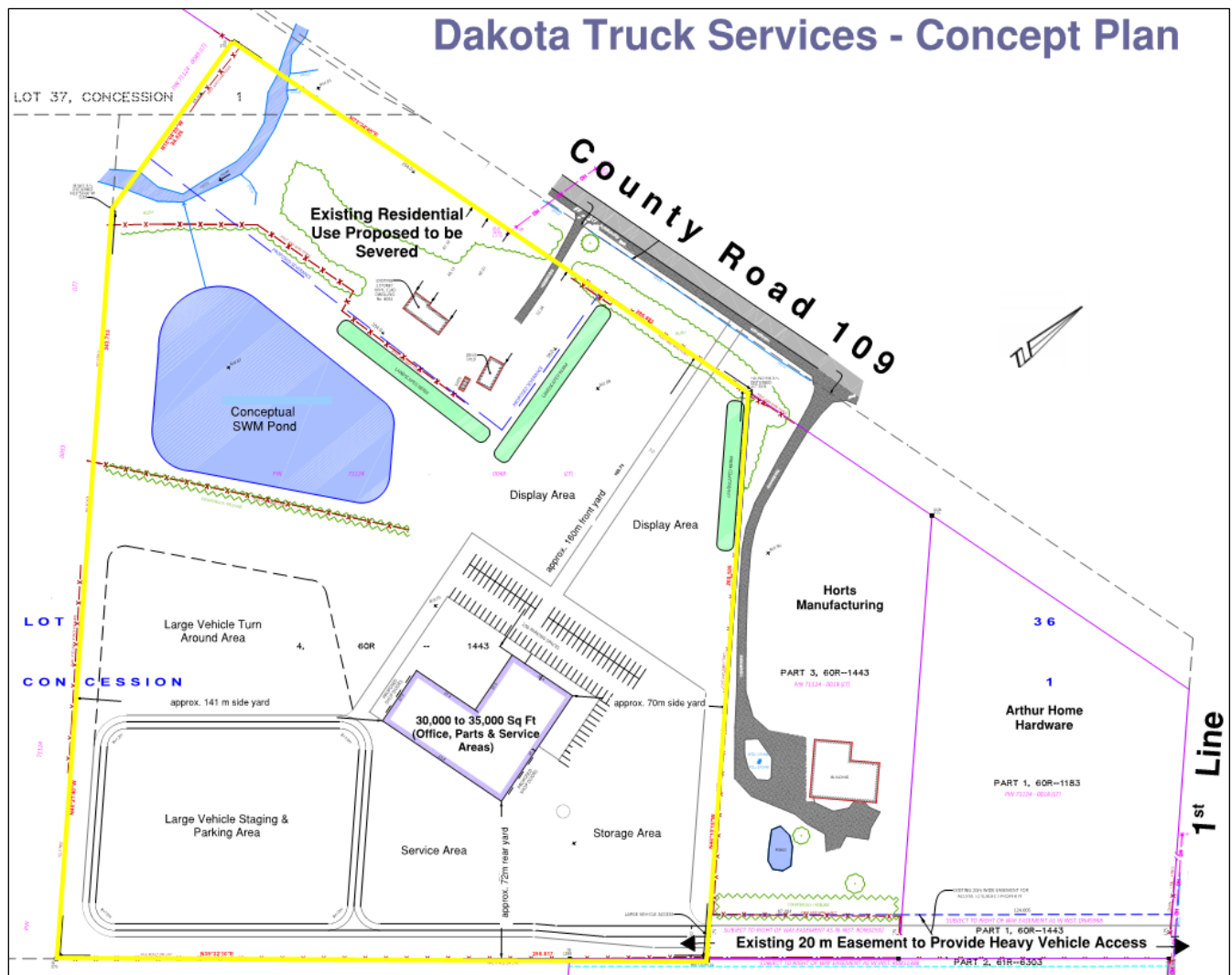


Figure 2: Conceptual site plan for Dakota's Truck Service. Full site plan submitted as part of the OPA application.

The site is currently designated as Prime Agricultural and Environmental Protection but is surrounded by lands designated as Rural Employment, see Figure 3. The Official Plan Amendment is reflective of filling in the 'hole in the donut'. The site currently only contains a single detached house and a detached garage, it does not contain any significant agricultural related infrastructure, as will be demonstrated in this report.

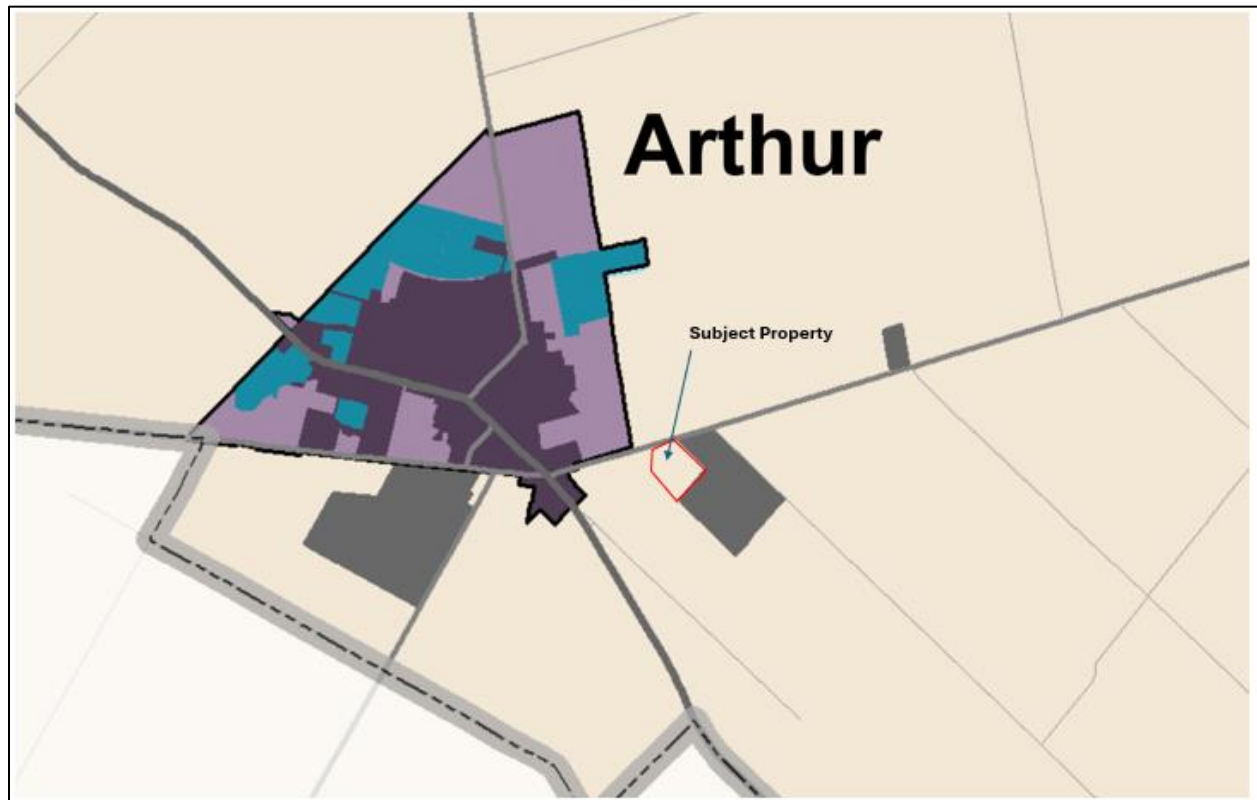


Figure 3: Location of subject site in relation to other rural employment sites.

1.3 Study Objectives

This Agricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared to provide supporting evidence that the removal of these lands from the agricultural land base will not have any impact on the larger agricultural system. This report will include:

- 1) Provide an overview of relevant background information
- 2) Assessment of soils at the site based on past soil survey
- 3) Overview of the current land use patterns
- 4) Overview of the current use of the site
- 5) Evaluation of potential alternative sites
- 6) MDS considerations

2. Methods

2.1 Source Documents

Several background information sources were reviewed during the course of this assessment, sources included:

- Canada Land Inventory – Soil Capability for Agriculture
- Review Wellington County Official Plan
- Review Wellington North Zoning By-law
- Aerial photography & contour mapping
- Municipal Drain & Tile Drainage Maps
- MDS Document
- Wellington County Agri-Food System Study

2.2 Study Area

Primary Study Site: #8051 Wellington County Road 109 & #7556 1st Line

- Portion of 8051 (~8.6 ha) proposed to be removed from the Prime Agricultural Designation
- Portion of #7556 1st Line (~2.8 ha) to be incorporated into the Prime Agricultural Designation

Secondary Study Site: Lands in the immediate vicinity to determine land use patterns and the potential impact on the surrounding agricultural system.

3. Land Use Survey

3.1 Primary Site

The subject site at #8051 CR109 includes a detached house with a garage and is otherwise primarily vacant cropland under a typical corn-soybean rotation. There are no barns, silos, livestock facilities, or tile drainage infrastructure on-site, with drainage managed through existing municipal ditches.

3.2 Surrounding Land Use Pattern

Surrounding infrastructure is a mix of rural industrial and agricultural uses, including Hort's Manufacturing, Home Hardware, and Shawridge Farm Grain Elevator, as well as other nearby workshops, and cash crop operations, see Figure 4.



Figure 4: Surrounding land use pattern - graphic created by Chris Corosky

The area is already fragmented at the north end of the block due to existing development, and the proposed use is not expected to cause further fragmentation, see Figure 5, or negatively impact adjacent farming operations. Importantly, farmland located at the rear of the block will remain intact and in agricultural production.

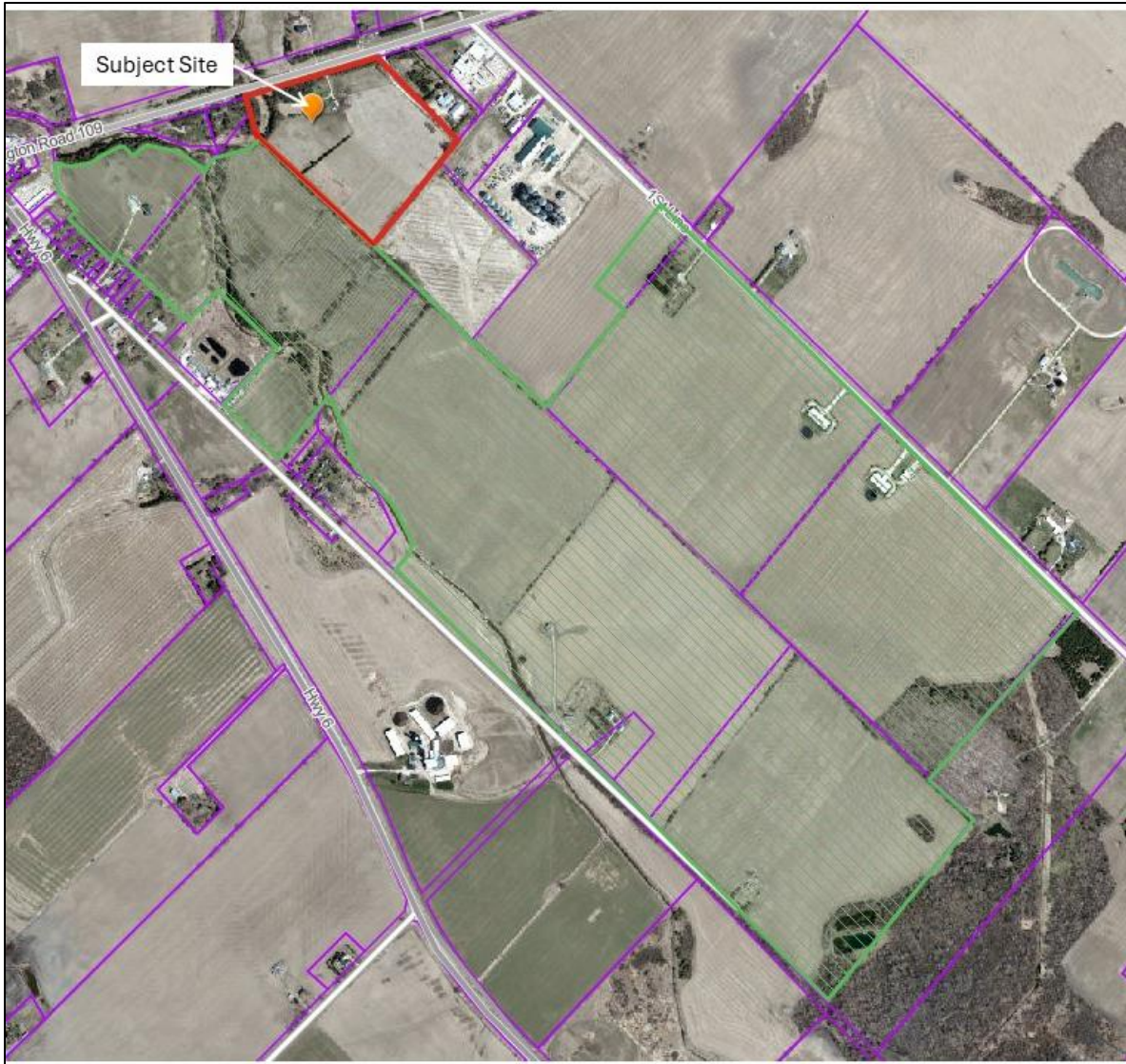


Figure 5: Agricultural Land Base Post Removal of Subject Site & Addition of 2.8 ha

4. Detailed Overview of Agricultural System

4.1 Agricultural Activities on Site

The farmable portion of the property makes up about ~8.7 ha of the total ~10.8 ha. The remaining ~1.7 ha is comprised of natural features and the residential area. The natural features include a wooded area along the bank of the Conestogo River. This portion of the property has been excluded from the Official Plan Amendment application and will be left designated as Environmental Protection. There are a few tree rows boarding the property, and one that cuts partway into the farm field.

Based on historical aerial imagery going back to 2006, it was determined that the land has been historically used for cash crops including hay and soybeans. It was hard to discern the type of crop as the imagery could be very grainy at times. The fields appear to have been used to grow mainly hay or some variety of forage crops from 2006 to 2021 and then were switched to soybean corn rotation thereafter.

The land is currently rented to a farmer as part of a larger operation, who is aware of the intention to designate as Rural Employment Lands and develop the site in the future. The property was never a large farming operation as is evidenced by the infrastructure – smaller house and detached garage. There are no barns, grain bins or silos that would indicate this as being a significant operation. The house and garage are dated, but in livable condition and have been proposed to remain within the Prime Agricultural designation and will be severed from the remainder of the property. There is a portion of the farmed area that is systematically tiled and there is a municipal drain that runs near the property – Municipal Drain #23 – see Figure 6. According to the Canada Land Inventory mapping the site is comprised of Class 1 soils, see Figure 7. These soils are defined as being soils that *have no significant limitations in use for crops*.

Figure 6: Map showing the location of Municipal Drains, Tile Drainage and the quality of Controlled Drainage.

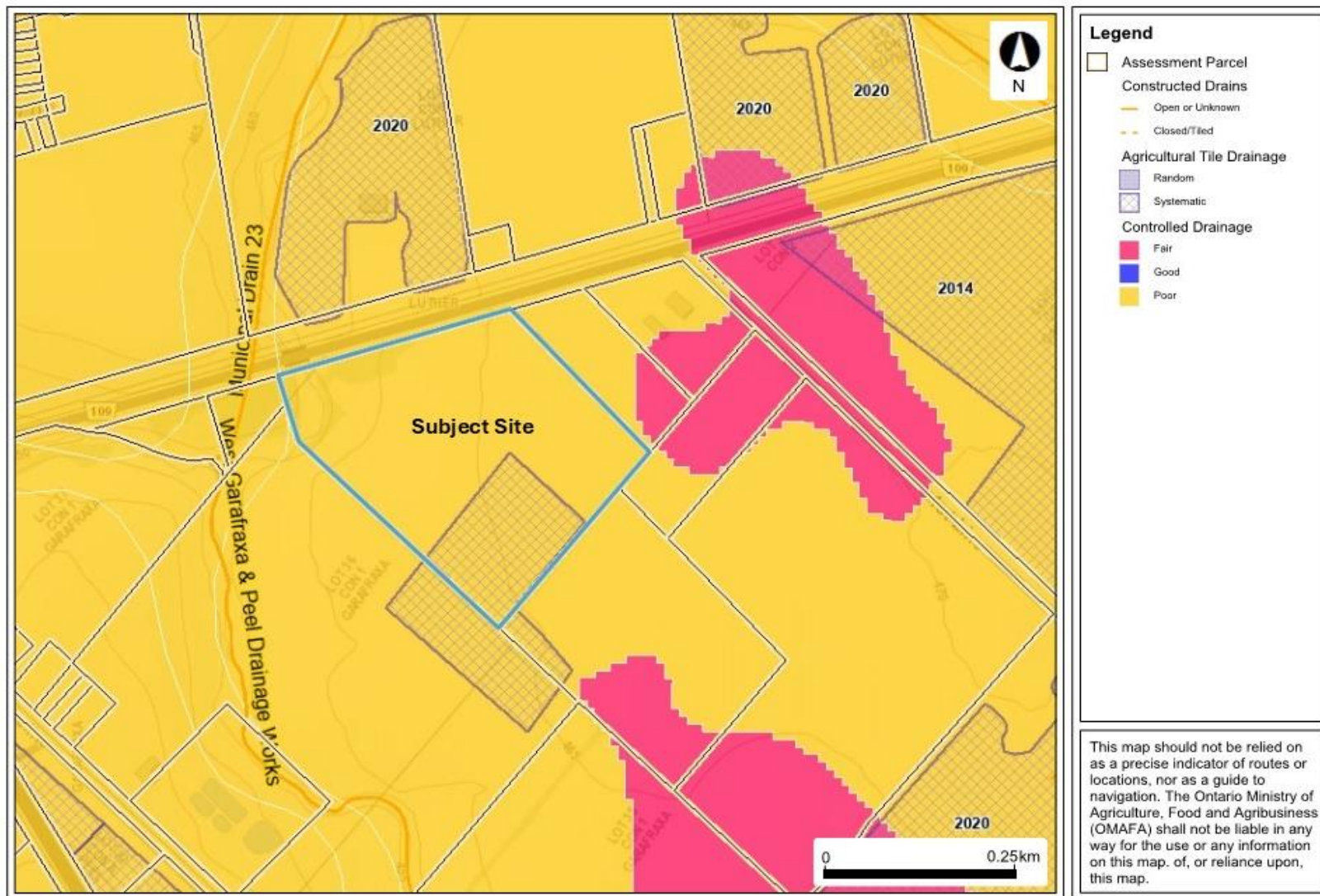


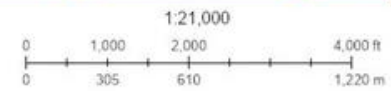
Figure 7: Canada Land Inventory Map - Source: OMAFA GIS Portal

Canada Land Inventory Mapping



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- | | | |
|--------------------|---|----------|
| Roads | Parcels | Class 0 |
| Local Road - Rural | CLI All Soil Classes Differentiated (LIO) | Organics |
| Local Road - Urban | Class 1 | |
| County | Class 2 | |
| Highway | Class 5 | |



There are two access points to the property, one from the main driveway leading from CR109 and one in the form of an easement leading from 1st Line as. There is cleared field entrance towards the rear of the property that is currently used to access the farm fields, see Figure 8.



Figure 8: Existing access points to the property. Source Google Earth Imagery 2025.

4.2 Fragmentation of Agricultural Land

On the localized scale, the removal of this property from the Prime Agricultural land base will not cause any fragmentation, simply because the north end of this block already is. Figure 9 shows the remainder of the connected land base after the removal of this site – there are no gaps created, the larger parcels to the south are still connected with the only interruption being the natural presence of the Conestogo River. On the wider scale, the agricultural land base is continuous beyond the east side of 1st line, made up of large farm parcels that continue on with little fragmentation, this site will not interrupt this pattern.

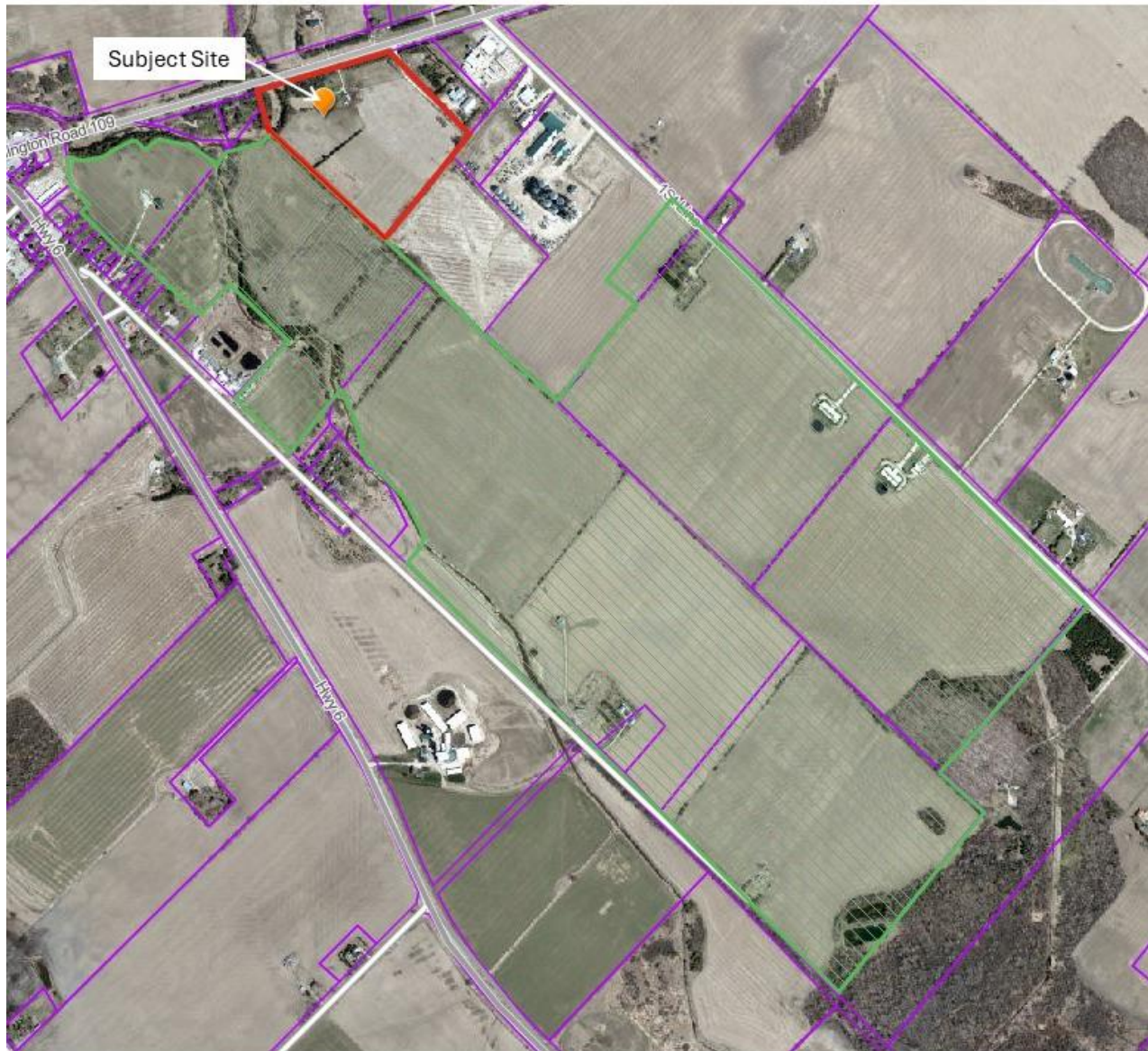


Figure 9: Remaining block of agricultural land post site removal – Source GRCA Aerial Imagery.

4.3 Economic Considerations

Wellington County is one of the most productive agricultural land bases in the province of Ontario, while only covering 0.2% of the province it accounts for 5% of the field crops produced (WFA, 2023.). These farms are a mix of crop and livestock operations. In 2021, 39% of the farms within the County produced crops and 61% of the farms produced livestock. The farming operations within the county increased from 2,212 farms in 2016 to 2,452 in 2021 (WFA, 2023). Figure 10 shows the breakdown of farm types by percentage per the 2021 census data.

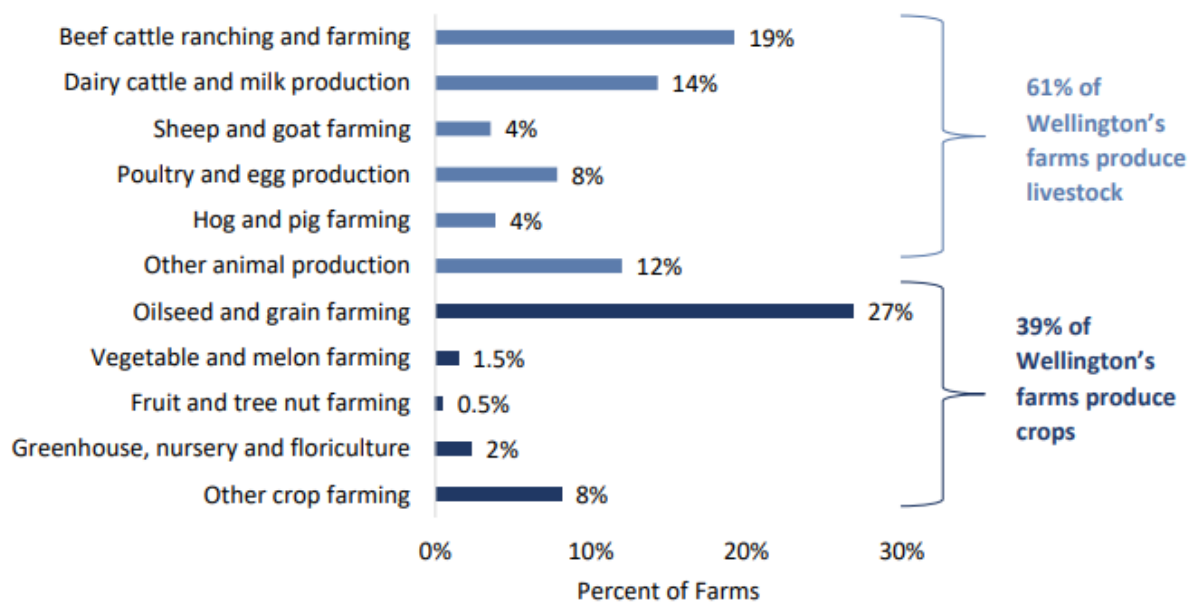


Figure 10: Type of farm by percentage within Wellington County based on 2021 census data. Source: Wellington Federation of Agriculture's Agrifood Systems Report.

There is a considerable agricultural land base within the Township of Wellington North, and, currently, there are few local places to take farm equipment in for repair near Arthur that service all makes and models. The establishment of a farm and heavy equipment service station on this site will not only fill a current service gap but also contribute to the long-term sustainability and efficiency of local farm operations, reinforcing the Township's role in Ontario's vital agricultural sector.

5. Assessment of Impacts

5.1 Loss of Farmland

The proposal will result in the permanent removal of approximately 8.6 hectares of farmland from the Prime Agricultural Area designation. However, this land:

- It is not part of a continuous block of high-functioning farmland, due to existing fragmentation by industrial and commercial uses to the north and east.
- It has not been historically used for intensive agricultural production, as evidenced by the absence of barns, livestock facilities, or significant on-site investment in ag infrastructure.

- Will be partially offset by the incorporation of ~2.8 hectares from #7556 1st Line into the Prime Agricultural Designation.

The farmland is currently rented for cash cropping and was standing hay prior. While productive, the proposed removal is not expected to have a significant impact on the local or regional agricultural land base.

5.2 Fragmentation of the Agricultural Land Base

The removal of this site will not cause new fragmentation of farmland. As illustrated in Figure 9, the local agricultural land block to the south and west remains intact, with the Conestogo River already serving as a natural divider. To the east of the site, there are already residential areas and commercial developments. The neighbouring existing commercial and rural employment designations in the surrounding area already interrupt the agricultural land base. This proposal is consistent with the evolving land use pattern, does not sever any existing agricultural operations and will offer support to the ag system.

5.3 Impact on Agricultural Infrastructure and Investments

There are no barns, silos, livestock facilities, grain bins, or intensive drainage networks on the site. A small portion of the field is systematically tiled, and Municipal Drain #23 runs nearby. However:

- The development has will not interfere with the municipal drain;
- Drainage patterns will be maintained or improved through appropriate stormwater management planning, see the full site plan for more details;
- There is no irrigation system or specialized infrastructure whose loss would affect the surrounding farming community.

No agricultural infrastructure relied upon by other farms is being removed or disrupted.

5.4 Minimum Distance Separation (MDS)

While there are a few livestock operations in the area, there are already four existing houses and two businesses that have buildings located closer to those barns than the proposed development. The subject site is set further back from these livestock facilities compared to these existing uses, as shown in Figure 11. As such, the proposal is not expected to introduce any new or greater impacts related to Minimum Distance Separation (MDS).

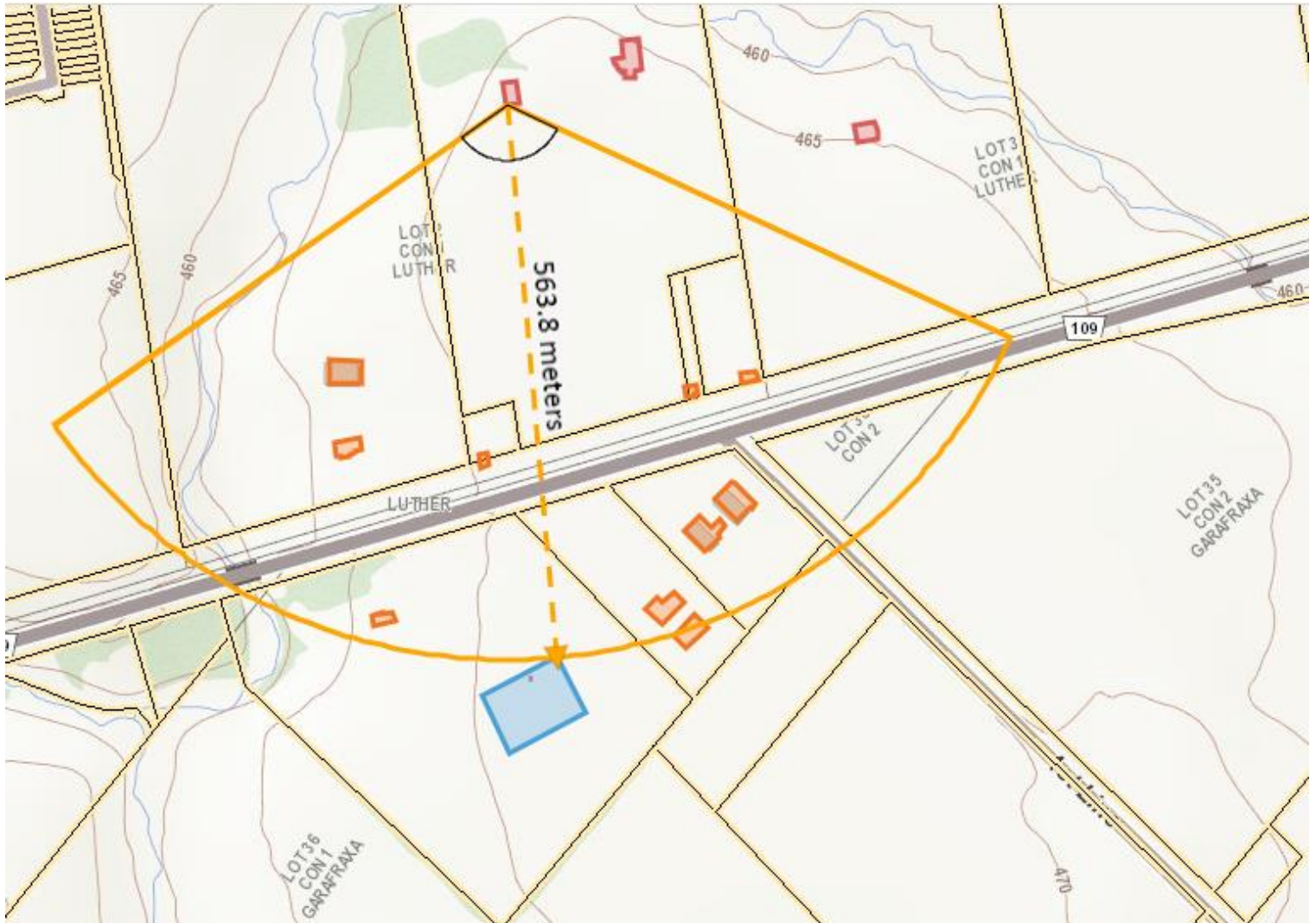


Figure 11: MDS I Map - where red = barn, orange = non-agricultural use (i.e. residential/business), blue = proposed building footprint

5.5 Landform and Drainage Impacts

The subject site will undergo some grading and site preparation, but these activities will be localized and managed through appropriate development controls. There is no anticipated impacts to any of the natural landforms that exist within the Environmental Protection zone. The intention is to sever that portion of the property along with the existing house. A buffer will be left between the proposed development and the natural features, see the full site plan for more details.

5.6 Impacts from Noise, Dust, Vibration, and Traffic

The new use is compatible with surrounding rural employment uses and will not result in a significant increase in noise, dust, or traffic that would interfere with nearby farming activities. In fact:

- One of the primary clienteles of the business are local farmers;
- The site has been specifically chosen for direct access from either CR109, or 1st Line, allowing large farm equipment to avoid travelling through or near urban areas;
- The business is not a sensitive land use (e.g., residential or institutional) that might generate complaints about surrounding farm operations.

As such, normal farm practices in the area are unlikely to be impacted or restricted. Please see the completed traffic and noise Studies for more information.

5.7 Road Network and Equipment Movement

The proposal includes two existing access points, one from CR109 and one via an easement from 1st Line, ensuring the movement of farm equipment is not hindered. In fact, the new facility may improve services for local farms by offering a nearby, full-service repair and maintenance center for heavy trucks and agricultural vehicles. See the completed traffic study that was submitted as part of the application.

5.8 Economic and Community Impacts

Rather than generating negative economic impacts, the proposal offers positive local benefits:

- It supports the agricultural economy by providing repair services for farm machinery, a critical need in the area.
- The business model is directly tied to supporting farm efficiency and continuity, particularly for smaller operators who may not have in-house mechanical capacity.
- It creates employment opportunities within a rural setting, in a use that is functionally linked to the agricultural community.
- The site's proximity to Arthur minimizes transportation needs while preserving farmland further from existing settlement areas.

The net economic impact is expected to be positive, as it reinforces agricultural operations by reducing service gaps and improving support infrastructure.

Summary of Net Impacts

Impact Category	Assessment
Loss of farmland	~8.6 ha removed, low impact due to fragmentation and limited use / offset by addition of ~2.8 ha of Prime Agricultural land (7556 1 st Line)
Fragmentation of land base	No new fragmentation; existing pattern maintained
MDS constraints	None
Ag infrastructure loss	None
Soil & surface drainage	Localized changes only; mitigated by site engineering
Noise, dust, traffic	Compatible with area; no negative effects on farm practices
Economic impact	Positive; supports local farm operations and job creation
Compatibility with policy	Aligns with 2024 PPS intent to protect agriculture while supporting rural economy

6. Evaluation of Alternative Sites

As part of the Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) process, a thorough evaluation of potential alternative sites was conducted to ensure the proposed development at #8051 CR109 is justified and represents the most appropriate location. This evaluation included a detailed review of active property listings in the Arthur area as of October 17, 2025. The findings revealed that there were **no viable alternative sites** available that could meet the functional and operational requirements of the proposed repair and service facility.

Specifically, the few properties listed for sale were determined to be unsuitable for several reasons: some were too small to accommodate the building size, parking areas, and large vehicle parking spaces required; others were zoned agricultural or rural residential, meaning they would have faced the same policy and designation constraints without offering the same locational advantages; and several were rural residential lots with existing homes, making them impractical or cost-prohibitive for industrial redevelopment. See Figure 12 for an overview of the available listings and zoning constraints.

The selection of this site was not made arbitrarily—it is the result of a targeted search for a location that:

- Is strategically located near the Town of Arthur, with direct access to major transportation routes (CR109) but also in a location that can easily be accessed by large farm equipment;
- Has sufficient size to accommodate large equipment, parts storage, and customer/employee needs;
- Is situated in an area that is already fragmented and primarily composed of commercial and employment uses thereby minimizing potential land use conflict;

In this context, the subject site offers a rare and suitable opportunity for rural employment development that supports the agricultural economy, while minimizing disruption to the broader agricultural land base. The lack of viable alternatives further strengthens the case for the proposed Official Plan Amendment.



Figure 12: Properties listed for sale in and near Arthur as of October 17th, 2025

7. Recommendations & Conclusion

The proposed development of a farm and heavy vehicle repair and service station at #8051 County Road 109 represents a compatible and strategically located rural employment that directly supports the ongoing needs of the local agricultural community. While the project involves the removal of approximately 5.8 hectares of farmland from the Prime Agricultural designation, this Agricultural Impact Assessment has demonstrated that the subject land is not part of a contiguous or high-functioning agricultural block and has not historically supported intensive farming operations.

The surrounding land use pattern is already characterized by a mix of commercial, light industrial, and agricultural related uses, and the area is subject to an established pattern of fragmentation—particularly at the northern end of the block along CR109. The proposed development aligns with this and does not introduce any new fragmentation or conflict with existing agricultural operations. Furthermore, the site lacks significant agricultural infrastructure, does not trigger MDS conflicts, and includes two existing access routes that minimize potential disruption to traffic flow and surrounding land uses.

Importantly, the facility is not only compatible with its surroundings but provides a critical service function, repair and maintenance of farm and heavy equipment, that is currently underrepresented in the Arthur area. By filling this gap, the business enhances the operational capacity and efficiency of local farms. This contributes directly to the resilience and viability of the local agricultural economy and supports the long-term sustainability of rural farming operations in Wellington North.

As part of the AIA process, a comprehensive search for alternative sites was conducted to ensure the proposed location was the most appropriate and least impactful option. A review of current property listings revealed that no suitable alternatives are available. This reinforces the importance of the subject site, which uniquely offers the necessary combination of adequate size, access, and compatible surrounding land uses to support the intended use.

Additionally, the overall impact of removing land from the agricultural land base is partially offset by the proposed incorporation of approximately 2.8 hectares from the adjacent property at #7556 1st Line into the Prime Agricultural designation.

The proposal aligns with the objectives of the 2024 PPS and the Wellington County Official Plan, which both recognize the need to support rural economic development while protecting the broader agricultural system. By maintaining agricultural production on the remaining farmland, preserving natural heritage features, and introducing a supportive rural employment use, the project exemplifies a balanced and well-considered approach to land use planning. The Agricultural Impact Assessment concludes that the proposed development will have minimal negative impact on the local agricultural system.

8. References

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