

To: Mayor and Members of Township of Norwich Council

From: Dustin Robson, Development Planner, Community Planning

Application for Zone Change **ZN 3-26-06 – A & A Farms Ltd.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The zone change application proposes to rezone the retained lot resulting from consent application B26-02-3 from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Rural Residential Zone (RR).'
- The zone change application also proposes to rezone the lot to be severed from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)'. A special provision would be included to limit residential uses on the lot to one single detached dwelling.
- Planning staff are recommending the application be approved as it is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement and maintains the intent of the Official Plan with respect to farm consolidations and non-farm rural residential development in prime agricultural areas.

DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND

OWNERS: A & A Farms Limited (c/o Cecil Andrew)
774033 Oxford Road 14, Burgessville, ON N0J 1C0

LOCATION:

The subject lands are described as Part of Lot 5, Concession 7 (East Oxford), in the Township of Norwich. The lands are located on the north side of Substation Road, lying between Vandecar Line and Oxford Road 14, and are municipally known as 425799 Substation Road.

COUNTY OF OXFORD OFFICIAL PLAN:

Existing:

Schedule "N-1"	Township of Norwich Land Use Plan	'Agricultural Reserve'
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TOWNSHIP OF NORWICH ZONING BY-LAW 07-2003-Z:

Lot to be Severed:

Existing Zoning: 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)'

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

Lot to be Retained:

Existing Zoning: 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)'

Proposed Zoning: 'Rural Residential Zone (RR)'

PROPOSAL:

The zone change application proposes to rezone the retained lot resulting from consent application B26-02-3 from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Rural Residential Zone (RR)', and the lot to be severed is proposed to be rezoned from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)'. A special provision is proposed on the lot to be severed that would restrict new residential dwellings from being built. The zoning would still retain the ability to have one single detached dwelling accessory to a farm on the lot to be severed.

The related consent application, B26-02-3, was approved by the Land Division Committee (LDC) on May 7, 2026. The subject zone change application is required to fulfill a condition of the related consent. The LDC also approved a variance (A26-01-3) to permit a reduced minimum lot frontage from 35 m (114.8 ft) to 29 m (36 ft).

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

Plate 1B, Close-up of Subject Lands with Existing Zoning, shows a close-up of the subject lands and the existing zoning in the immediate area.

Plate 2A, Aerial Map (2025) with Existing Zoning, provides an aerial view of the subject lands and surrounding uses as existing in the Spring of 2025.

Plate 2B, Close-up of Aerial Map (2025) with Existing Zoning, provides a close-up aerial view of the subject lands and surrounding uses as existing in the spring of 2025.

Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch, identifies the general site area as provided by the applicant.

APPLICATION REVIEW

2024 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT

The 2024 Provincial Planning 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. The following outlines the key PPS policies that have been considered but is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Section 4.3 of the PPS directs that prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long term agricultural use. In prime agricultural areas, permitted uses include agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses. All types, sizes, and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards. New land uses, including the creation of new lots, shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae (MDS I).

Furthermore, Section 4.3.3 (Lot Creation and Lot Adjustments) discourages the creation of new lots in prime agricultural areas and provides only four instances where such lot creation may be permitted, as summarized below:

- For agricultural uses, provided the lots are of a sufficient size for the type of production common in the area and are sufficiently large enough to maintain flexibility in adapting the operation in the future;
- For agricultural-related uses;
- For a surplus farm residence resulting from a farm consolidation, provided that:
 - The new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services; and,
 - The planning authority ensures that new residential dwellings are prohibited on any remnant parcel of farmland created by the severance. The approach used to ensure that no new residential dwellings are permitted on the remnant parcel may be recommended by the Province, or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective; and,
- For infrastructure facilities and corridors in lieu of an easement or right-of-way.

The creation of new residential lots in prime agricultural areas shall not be permitted, except in accordance with policy 4.3.3.1(c), which permits a lot for a surplus residence subject to the area of the new lot being limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the uses and appropriate sewage and water services.

OFFICIAL PLAN

The subject lands are located within the 'Agricultural Reserve' designation according to the Township of Norwich Land Use Plan in the Official Plan.

According to Section 3.1.1, 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 complementary to, and supportive of, agriculture.

The goal of the Agricultural Reserve designation is to minimize conflict with farm operations and non-farm uses, including commercial, industrial, and residential. Further, a strategic aim of the Agricultural Reserve policies is to prevent situations of land use conflict in the agricultural designations by careful management of non-farm uses, including rural residential development, recreational uses, commercial and industrial uses, and aggregate resource extraction.

The policies of Section 3.1.5.3 (Creation of Rural Residential Lots) permit the consideration of non-farm rural residential lots in the following circumstances:

- A proposal to rezone an existing industrial (with the exception of aggregate or limestone industrial), commercial, or institutionally zoned lot to a residential use, provided such lot does not exceed 1 ha (2.5 ac) in area. Where such lot is larger than 1 ha (2.5 ac) in area, consideration may only be given to rezoning for agricultural use, in accordance with the policies of Section 3.1.5.1; or,
- A proposal to create a lot for a residence surplus to a farming operation as a result of farm consolidation, provided that:

- The proposal is to retain an existing permanent, habitable dwelling that was constructed prior to December 13, 1995, where such dwelling is contained on an agricultural lot that is to be legally consolidated with an abutting agricultural lot, to form one larger agricultural lot under identical ownership;
- or,
- The proposal is to retain an existing permanent, habitable dwelling, where the farm owner owns multiple agricultural lots which may or may not abut, and providing:
 - The lot containing the surplus dwelling proposed to be severed contains a minimum of 2 existing dwellings, and all such dwellings were constructed prior to December 13, 1995;
 - The resulting agricultural lot is owned by the farm owner; and,
 - The resulting agricultural lot is rezoned to prohibit the future construction of a new residential dwelling of any type and an agreement for such prohibition is also registered on the property title. The requirement for the Zoning By-law amendment and agreement, as noted above, shall be implemented through conditions imposed by the County's Land Division Committee at the time that provisional consent approval is given.

If the proposal to create a non-farm rural residential lot qualifies under one of the listed scenarios above, then the proposal shall be reviewed against the following criteria:

- The proposal shall not result in the severance of the only dwelling from an agricultural lot, except in the case of a farm consolidation involving the merger of abutting agricultural lots as one larger lot under identical ownership, where one of the agricultural lots to be consolidated is vacant, but the existing zoning would permit the construction of an accessory dwelling on that lot.
- The lands shall be zoned for agricultural use.
- The proposed non-farm rural residential lot shall not be located within a Quarry Area, Limestone Resource, or Sand and Gravel Resource Area.
- The proposed non-farm rural residential lot shall not be located within a Future Urban Growth Area designation.
- The creation of new residential lots in prime agricultural areas shall not be permitted, except in accordance with Section 3.1.5.3, which permits a lot for a surplus residence subject to the area of the new lot being limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the uses and appropriate sewage and water services. Non-farm rural residential lots shall generally not exceed 0.8 ha (2 ac) in size. Proposals to exceed 0.8 ha (2 ac) shall demonstrate the following:
 - The additional area is required to accommodate individual on-site water services and individual on-site sewage services;
 - The lands have topographic limitations for agricultural use;
 - The lands are physically separated from the remainder of the farm by significant natural heritage features/watercourses;
 - The additional area is required to conserve cultural heritage resources;
 - Proposed lots will not exceed 1 ha (2.5 ac) in size;
- The proposal can demonstrate the ability to provide adequate on-site private services;
- Compliance with Minimum Distance Separation formulae (MDS);
- The proposed non-farm rural residential lot shall have direct frontage on a permanent public road maintained year-round and receives approval for access through the appropriate road authority;
- Compliance with relevant Environmental Resource policies;

- Any enlarged agricultural lot that would result from a proposal for non-farm rural residential development through farm consolidation shall comply with the applicable policies of Section 3.1.4.2.4;
- The proposed non-farm rural residential lot may only contain an existing barn or other farm structures where they are suitable to be used as accessory structures to a residential use and have been formally converted such that they are no longer suitable for the housing of livestock or poultry or storage/handling of manure, and/or are protected pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act; and,
- Where a barn or other farm structure exists within the immediate vicinity of a non-farm rural residential lot to be created through a farm consolidation, the demolition or formal conversion of such structure shall be required, to ensure it cannot be used for the housing of livestock or poultry or storage/handling of manure in the future.

For the purpose of considering the creation of a non-farm rural residential lot where a landowner owns multiple non-abutting farms in Oxford County, staff are to ensure that the owner is a bona fide farmer. The Official Plan contains a definition of a “farm owner” which is defined as:

An individual, partnership, or corporation which:

- a) Owns, is employed on, and manages an agricultural operation consisting of one or more agricultural lots;
- b) Earns a majority of their income from farming (the scale of the agricultural operation should be capable of generating reasonable operating profit under "normal" economic conditions);
- c) Spends a majority of their workday in the day-to-day operation of the farm on a full-time, year-round or extended seasonal basis;
- d) Demonstrates a continuing commitment to the farm operation and long-term farming, such as through sustainable farming practices, on-going farm maintenance and improvement (i.e., drainage, erosion control, soil improvement, fencing etc.), and direct investment in equipment, buildings, and crops; and,
- e) Must have a valid Farm Business Registration Number.

ZONING BY-LAW

The subject lands are currently zoned ‘General Agricultural Zone (A2)’ in the Township of Norwich Zoning By-law. The ‘A2’ zone permits a variety of agricultural uses including a farm and a regulated farm. The ‘A2’ zone requires a minimum lot area of 20 ha (49.4 ac) and a minimum lot frontage of 100 m (328.1 ft). The lot to be severed would be approximately 40.5 ha (100.3 ac) in area, with a frontage of approximately 211.5 m (694 ft) on Substation Road.

The lot to be retained is proposed to be used for non-farm rural residential purposes and will be rezoned to recognize the use of the lands accordingly. The ‘Rural Residential Zone (RR)’ requires a minimum lot area of 2,800 m² (30, 139 ft²), a minimum frontage of 35 m (114.8 ft), and a minimum lot depth of 80 m (262.5 ft). The lot to be retained is proposed to have an approximate area of 2,833 m² (30,494 ft²) and a depth of 80 m (263 ft). A variance was approved by the Land Division Committee to permit a reduced minimum lot frontage from 35 m (114.8 ft) to 29 m (96 ft).

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Oxford County Public Works Department, the Township Fire Chief, the Township Building Department, Canada Post, and Enbridge have indicated no concerns with the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Notice of complete application and notice of the public meeting were circulated to neighbouring landowners on July 23, 2026 and August 25, 2026, respectively, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act. As of the date of this report, no comments or concerns had been received from the public.

Planning Analysis

The zone change application and the associated application for consent and variance, which proposes the severance of agricultural lands and the retention of a lot for non-farm rural residential use containing an existing dwelling, have been reviewed under the policy direction of the PPS and the Official Plan.

The creation of a lot for a surplus farm residence is permitted provided that the owner owns multiple farms within Oxford County. The applicant has provided documentation confirming ownership of two non-abutting farms in the County. Given the farm ownership and proposed lot size of the non-farm rural residential lot, staff are generally satisfied that the proposal is consistent with the policies of the PPS regarding non-farm rural residential uses and lot creation in prime agricultural areas.

The subject lands contain two single detached dwellings, both of which were constructed prior to December 13, 1995, and which are accessory to a cash crop operation. Staff are satisfied that the applicant complies with the definition of a farm owner as per the Official Plan.

It is proposed that approximately 40.5 ha (100.5 ac) of agricultural land will be severed and would contain one single detached dwelling and a residential accessory building. The lot to be severed will continue to be used for agricultural purposes, will not result in further fragmentation of agricultural land, and will allow flexibility for future changes in the type of operation beyond its current use. The resulting lot size and configuration is consistent with the PPS and Official Plan direction of maintaining farm parcels of adequate size to adapt to changing agricultural conditions.

The zone change application proposes to rezone the lot to be retained from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Rural Residential Zone (RR)' to recognize the proposed use as a non-farm rural residential lot. The zone change application also proposes to rezone the lot to be severed from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp).' A special provision is required to prohibit additional dwellings on the lands and would apply to all dwellings, including a second single detached dwelling, an additional residential unit, and a bunkhouse. The lands would retain the ability to have one single detached dwelling that is accessory to the farm and would allow the existing single detached dwelling to be replaced, if required.

In light of the foregoing, it is the opinion of this Office that the proposal is consistent with the policies of the PPS and maintains the intent of the Official Plan and staff recommend the application be approved-in-principle. The amending zoning by-law will be brought forward to Council once the associated reference plan has been received to generate the appropriate by-law schedules.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council of the Township of Norwich approve-in-principle the zone change application submitted by A & A Farms Ltd. (ZN 3-26-06) whereby the lands described as Part of Lot 5, Concession 7 (East Oxford), in the Township of Norwich are to be rezoned from ‘General Agricultural Zone (A2)’ to ‘Special General Agricultural Zone (A2-sp)’ and ‘Rural Residential Zone (RR).’

SIGNATURES

Authored by:	Original Signed By	Dustin Robson, MCIP, RPP Development Planner
Approved for submission:	Original Signed By	Eric Gilbert, MCIP, RPP Manager of Development Planning



Legend

- Parcel Lines**
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Property Boundary
 - Assessment Boundary
 - Road
 - Unit
- 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



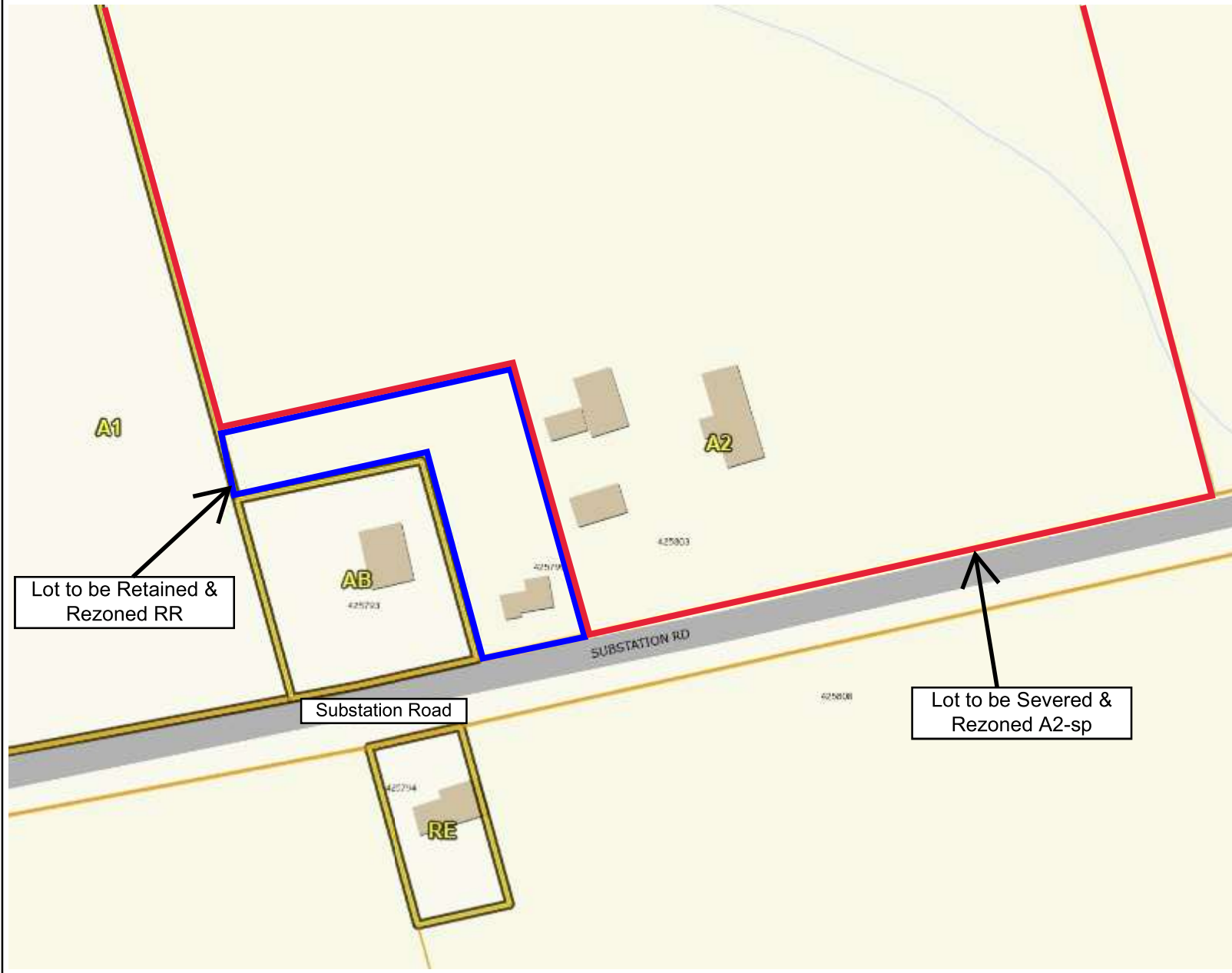
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NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_17N



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

April 13, 2026

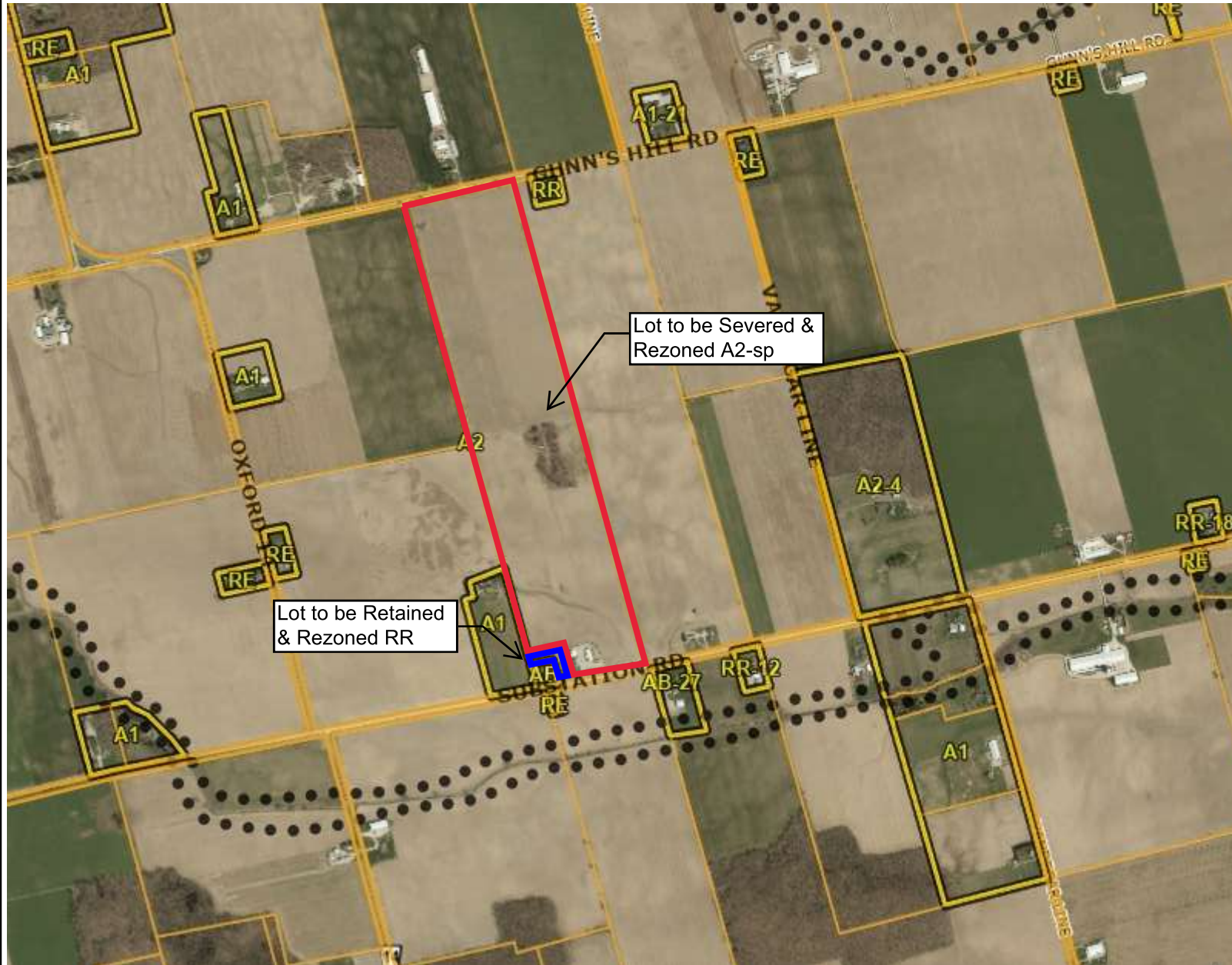


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- Land Use Zoning (Displays 1:16000 to 1:500)
- Road Section

Notes





Legend

Parcel Lines

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

Zoning Floodlines

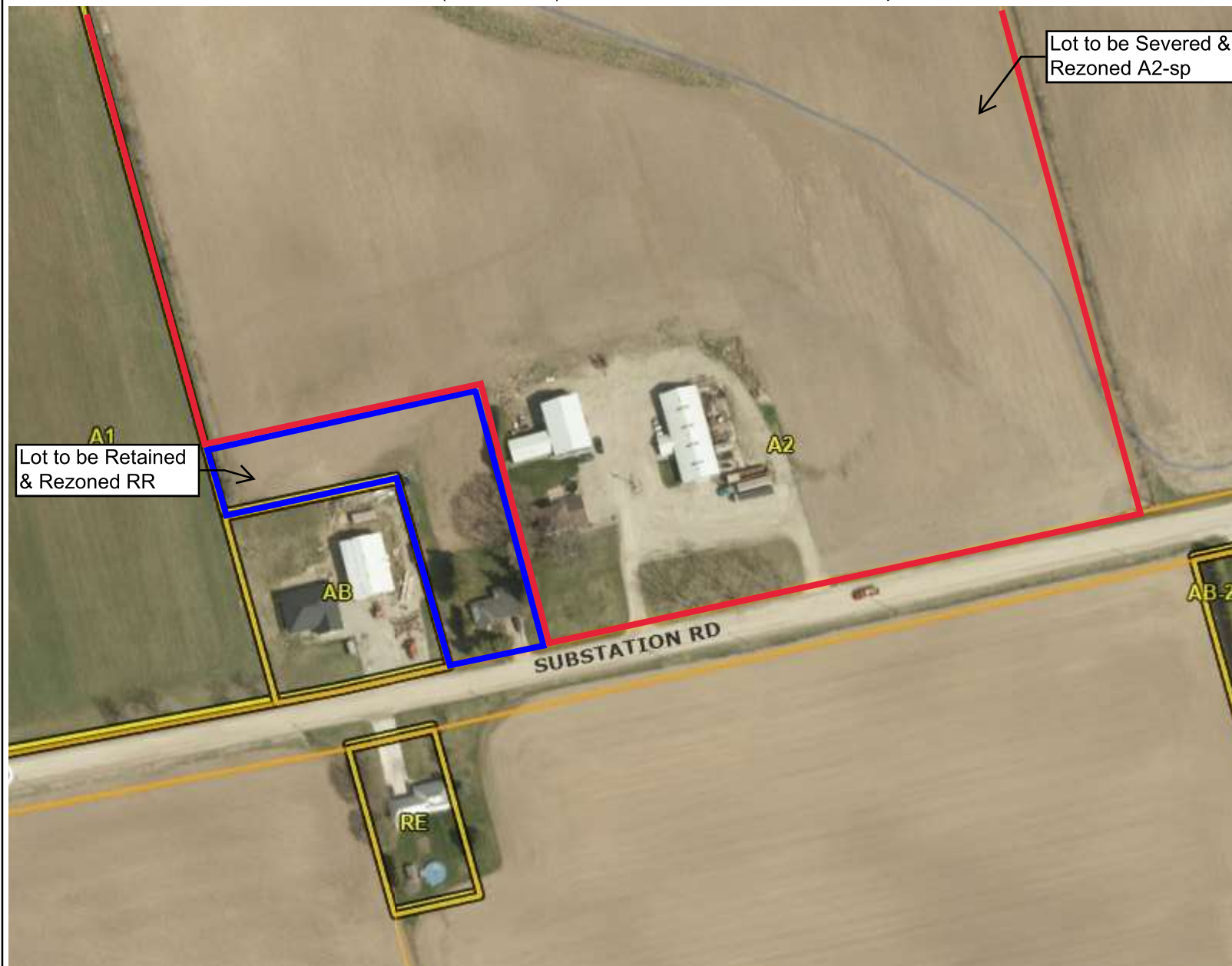
Regulation Limit

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- Conservation Authority Regulation Limit
- ◆◆ Regulatory Flood And Fill Lines

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Notes





Legend

- Parcel Lines**
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Notes



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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

August 25, 2026

Lot to be severed 100.38acres

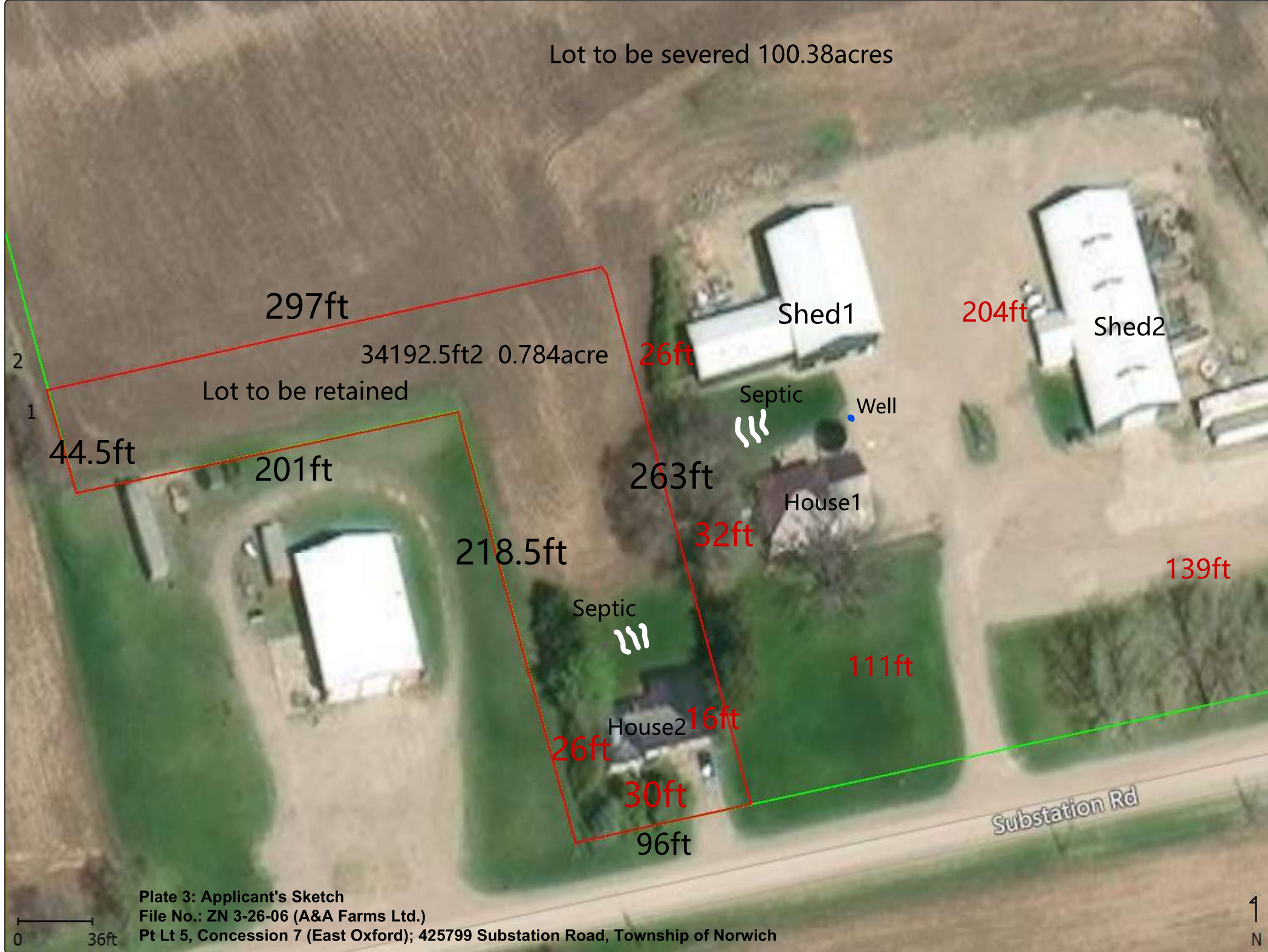


Plate 3: Applicant's Sketch

File No.: ZN 3-26-06 (A&A Farms Ltd.)

Pt Lt 5, Concession 7 (East Oxford); 425799 Substation Road, Township of Norwich

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