

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Application for Official Plan Amendment OP 25-02-1 Josif and Lidia Catana

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Community Planning

## RECOMMENDATION

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1. That Oxford County Council **not approve** Application No. OP 25-02-1, submitted by Josif and Lidia Catana for lands legally described as Part Lot 7, Concession 7 (Blenheim), except Parts 3 and 6, Registered Plan 41R-3823, in the Township of Blandford-Blenheim, to amend the Official Plan to include a site specific policy to permit a special events facility as an On-Farm Diversified Use on the subject lands.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- The Official Plan Amendment Application proposes to include site-specific policies to recognize an existing special events facility, approximately 960 m<sup>2</sup> (10,333.4 ft<sup>2</sup>) in size, as an On-Farm Diversified Use (OFDU).
- It is the opinion of Planning staff that the proposal is beyond the scale considered reasonable for an OFDU and is not consistent with the policies of the Provincial Planning Statement and does not maintain the intent and purpose of the Official Plan regarding permitted uses in prime agricultural areas.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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This application will be implemented in accordance with the relevant objectives, strategic initiatives and policies in the Official Plan.

## Financial Impact

Consideration of this application will have no financial impacts beyond what has been approved in the current year's budget.

## Communications

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act, notice of complete application regarding this proposal was provided to surrounding property owners on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and notice of public meeting was issued on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025. As of the date of this report, four letters of concern have been received by members of the general public. One letter of support from a member of the general public has also been received. Copies of each letter has been attached to Report CP 2025-136 for Council’s consideration.




## 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council’s vision of “Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future.” These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.

### Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
<b>Promoting community vitality</b>	<b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Fostering progressive government</b>
Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being	Goal 2.2 – Preserve and enhance our natural environment	

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

**Owners:** Josif and Lidia Catana  
935929 Blenheim Road, Drumbo, ON N0J 1G0

**Agent:** MHBC Planning  
540 Bingemans Centre Drive, Kitchener, ON N2B 3X9

### Location:

The subject lands are described as Part Lot 7, Concession 7 (Blenheim), except Parts 3 and 6, Registered Plan 41R-3823. The lands are located at the northwest corner of the Blenheim Road and Oxford Road 29 intersection. The subject lands are municipally addressed as 807417 Oxford Road 29.

### County of Oxford Official Plan:

Schedule "B-1"	Township of Blandford-Blenheim Land Use Plan	Agricultural Reserve and Open Space
Schedule "C-2"	County of Oxford Development Constraints Plan	Erosion Hazard Lands

### Proposal:

For Council's information, the Township of Blandford-Blenheim served the owners of the subject lands with a Notice of Violation identifying the property as being out of compliance with the Township's Zoning By-law in 2024. Specifically, the order identified the fact that a special events facility was operating on property that was zoned 'General Agricultural Zone (A2),' which is not a listed permitted use within the A2 zone.

In response to the Township Notice, the landowners have submitted Official Plan Amendment and Zone Change Applications that propose to recognize the existing facility as an On-Farm Diversified Use (OFDU). According to the information submitted, the facility that the owners are looking to formally recognize consists of three permanent event tents with a combined size of approximately 900 m<sup>2</sup> (9,687.5 ft<sup>2</sup>), a washroom facility approximately 60 m<sup>2</sup> (645.8 ft<sup>2</sup>) in size, a grassed parking area for 100 vehicles, and landscape areas between the parking and event space. The owners have advised that no additional buildings are proposed to be constructed.

The owners have advised that the facility is generally in operation between May and September with the majority of weddings being booked for Saturdays and, occasionally, for Fridays and Sundays. It has been advised that weekday events are currently rare. According to the applications, the facility has a maximum capacity of 250 people, and the owners have advised that the average event has between 160 and 180 attendees. The owners also advise that

weddings are serviced by external vendors, such as caterers and wait staff, and the site only supplies the facility space. In addition to weddings, the proposal for a special events facility would also include permitting retreats/workshops (limited to 50 people or less), corporate events, and milestone celebrations.

The subject lands are approximately 39.3 ha (97.1 ac) and contain two separate building clusters. One building cluster contains a large single detached dwelling (circa 2015), two greenhouses, and the events facility structures (subject to ongoing applications). The dwelling, events facility, and greenhouses share the same driveway access to the subject lands from Blenheim Road. The second cluster is located in the southeast corner of the subject lands, fronting onto Oxford Road 29, and contains numerous older agricultural accessory buildings (i.e. the original farm cluster). The remainder of the lands are utilized for cash-cropping purposes.

The subject lands contain an area of significant woodlands, non-provincially significant wetlands, and areas to the west and south of the events facility that are regulated by Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA). Staff are satisfied that the proposed and existing development would not have any impact on these natural areas. Surrounding land uses are predominantly agricultural in nature.

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

Plate 2, Aerial Photography (2020), provides an aerial view of the subject lands and surrounding uses.

Plate 3, Aerial Photography (2020) – Zoomed In, provides an aerial view of the existing development on the subject lands.

Plate 4, Official Plan Designation Map, shows the designation of the subject lands and surrounding lands in the Official Plan.

Plate 5, Applicants' Sketch, identifies the location of the existing structures on the subject lands as provided by the applicant, as well as the proposed layout for the existing parking area.

## Comments

### 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 policies of the PPS represent minimum standards and planning authorities, and other decision makers may go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of local importance, unless doing so would conflict with any PPS policy. The following outlines the key PPS policies that have been considered but is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

In Oxford County, all lands located outside of designated settlement areas are considered to be a prime agriculture area, with the applicable policies for such areas primarily contained in Section 4.3. of the PPS.

Section 4.3 of the PPS directs that planning authorities are required to use an agricultural system approach, based on provincial guidance, to maintain and enhance a geographically continuous agricultural land base and support and foster the long-term economic prosperity of the 'agri-food network' (i.e. elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector such as agricultural operations and primary processing, infrastructure, agricultural services, farm markets, distributors etc.). Further, that prime agricultural areas shall be designated and protected for long term agricultural use.

The PPS defines agricultural uses to mean the growing of crops, including nursery, biomass and horticulture crops, as well as the raising of livestock and animals for food, fur or fibre including poultry and fish, apiaries, agro-forestry, maple syrup production and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.

Section 4.3.2 (Permitted Uses) of the PPS indicates that permitted uses and activities are: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses. Permitted uses within prime agricultural areas shall be compatible with and shall not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria for these uses may be based on provincial guidance or municipal approaches, as set out in municipal planning documents, which achieve the same objectives.

The PPS provides definitions for both agriculture-related use and on-farm diversified use:

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

*On-farm diversified uses: means uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, uses that produce value-added agricultural products, and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems, and energy storage systems.*

Section 4.3.5 (Non-Agricultural Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas) of the PPS directs that 'non-agricultural uses' in prime agricultural areas may only be permitted for the extraction of minerals, petroleum resources and mineral aggregate resources or limited non-residential uses provided that:

- the land does not comprise a specialty crop area;
- the proposed use complies with MDS;
- there is an identified need for the land to accommodate the proposed use; and
- alternative locations have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations that avoid prime agricultural areas or are on lower priority agricultural land.

Further, impacts from any new or expanding non-agricultural uses on the agricultural system are to be avoided and, where avoidance is not possible, minimized, and mitigated as determined through an agricultural impact assessment.

With respect to the above noted reference to Provincial guidance in 4.3.2 of the PPS, the province has published a document entitled 'Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas' which provides further detail and direction on appropriate types of 'agriculture-related uses' and 'on-farm diversified uses' and associated review criteria, in accordance with the PPS policies. The document is also referred to as Publication 851.

The document contains guidance for agriculture-related uses, being farm-related commercial and/or industrial uses, which may include retailing of agriculture-related products, livestock assembly yards, and farm equipment repair shops, if they meet all the PPS criteria for such uses.

The review criteria for on-farm diversified uses indicate that they shall be located on a farm that is actively in agricultural use and be secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, be limited in area, and be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. Large-scale, repeated or permanent events are not on-farm diversified uses and should be directed to existing facilities such as fairgrounds, parks, community centres and halls, settlement areas or rural lands.

The general intent of the "limited in area" criterion is to minimize the agricultural land taken out of production if any, ensure agriculture remains the main land use, and limit off-site impacts (e.g. traffic and changes to the rural character of the property) to ensure compatibility with surrounding agricultural operations. The approach to the "limited in area" criterion is intended to achieve a balance between farmland protection and economic opportunities for farmers, improve consistency in approach, provide flexibility as such uses and owners change, and simplify implementation.

The guidelines indicate that the "limited in area" criterion should be based on the total area of the farm property occupied by the on-farm diversified use (i.e. buildings, outdoor storage, landscaped areas, well and septic systems, parking, new driveways etc.) and recommend that such area not exceed 2% of the lot area, to a maximum of 1 ha. Municipalities may choose to further scope the scale of on-farm diversified uses by limiting the number or place of residence of employees, number of businesses, percentage of products sold that are produced on the farm, the floor area of buildings and outdoor storage.

The guidelines indicate that, if the area of an on-farm diversified use exceeds these recommended thresholds, consideration should be given to the non-agricultural use policies and, further, that on-farm diversified uses that are proposed to grow beyond these limits, either incrementally or otherwise, are not supported. The guidelines note that some uses that meet other on-farm diversified uses criteria may not meet the compatibility criterion. For example, uses that attract large numbers of people onto the farm for non-farm events could result in soil compaction, or excessive noise and trespass issues that may be incompatible with agricultural operations. Commercial or industrial uses that have a large number of employees or attract a large number of customers may also not be compatible in the prime agricultural area. Finally, some uses may simply be better suited to settlement areas where municipal services are available.

For further clarity, Section 2.3.3 of the guideline document sets out various uses that would typically not be considered OFDUs, including:

- large-scale equipment or vehicle dealerships, hotels, landscape businesses, manufacturing plants, trucking yards;
- uses with high water and sewage needs and/or that generate significant traffic, such as large food processors, distribution centres, full-scale restaurants, banquet halls;
- large-scale recurring events with permanent structures;
- institutional uses (e.g., churches, schools, nursing homes, cemeteries);
- large-scale recreational facilities such as golf courses, soccer fields, ball diamonds or arenas.

Finally, the guidelines indicate that, since the PPS requires settlement areas to be the focus for growth and development, large-scale industrial and commercial buildings that are more appropriate to locate in settlement areas are not permitted in prime agricultural areas and, as such, recommends that municipalities cap the gross floor area of buildings for on-farm diversified uses at a scale appropriate to prime agricultural areas.

#### Official Plan

The subject lands are located within the Agricultural Reserve and Open Space designations according to the Township of Blandford-Blenheim Land Use Plan, as contained in the Official Plan. The Open Space designation represents a strip of land abutting the Nith River and does not impact the lands where the events facility is located. The policies of the Agricultural Reserve designation permit a wide range of agricultural uses and farm buildings and structures necessary to the farming operation, including accessory residential uses required for the farm. Agriculture-related uses and secondary uses, such as On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDUs) and home occupations, may also be permitted, if they comply with all applicable review criteria.

The County, as part of broader agricultural policy updates recently approved by the Province (i.e. in early 2024), has established comprehensive, locally tailored, Official Plan policies and criteria for such uses to further clarify and expand upon the PPS policies and guidelines for such uses. As such, the review criteria for permitted uses in prime agricultural areas specified in these policies serve as the municipal approach, as set out in municipal planning documents, that achieves the same objective as provincial guidance with respect to such uses, as permitted by the PPS.

Section 3.1.4.3 speaks to Secondary Uses, which are comprised of on-farm diversified uses and rural home occupations, together with Agricultural Related Uses, are intended to provide opportunities to strengthen and diversify the rural economy, by allowing for the establishment of businesses and services that support or improve agriculture in the area, supplement and diversify farm incomes, and/or provide home based employment opportunities for farms and other rural residents (i.e. home occupations on rural residential lots). Such uses must be compatible with and not hinder agricultural operations, be appropriate for rural services, not undermine or conflict with the planned function of rural settlements and meet various other development criteria.

Section 3.1.4.3.2 of the Official Plan indicates that OFDUs are intended to provide reasonable opportunities for farmers to diversify their farming operation and/or supplement their income from farming, by allowing for certain small-scale business activities to be established as a secondary use on their farm. The policies further direct that such uses may be permitted on an agricultural lot in accordance with various policy criteria, including limitations on the type, size, scale, and area of such uses, primarily to ensure such uses are:

- clearly secondary to the principal agricultural operation on the lot and limited in area;
- are compatible with, and do not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations;
- protect prime agricultural areas for the long term;
- are appropriate for rural infrastructure and public services; and
- do not undermine or conflict with the planned function of settlements.

Generally, the policies contained in the Official Plan direct that OFDUs will only be permitted on an agricultural lot that is being actively farmed and must be clearly secondary to the agricultural operation on the lot in terms of size, scale, and importance. The policies contained in the Official Plan permit the following uses as an OFDU, provided they meet all applicable policy criteria:

- A rural home industry;
- A value-added agricultural facility serving a number of local area farms;
- A value retaining facility;
- A farm-related tourism use;
- A smaller scale agriculture-related use;
- A farm winery; or
- A ground-mounted solar facility.

Additionally, the Official Plan policies specifically identify the following uses that shall not be permitted as an on-farm diversified use:

- Retail uses, office, medical/dental clinics and restaurants;
- Residential uses or accommodation, except for limited, short-term accommodation, including farm vacation rental or bed and breakfast;
- Institutional uses;
- Recreational uses and special event facilities;
- Large scale commercial and industrial uses; and
- Other uses that may attract large numbers of customers or other people, generate significant traffic or not otherwise be appropriate for rural infrastructure or services, create compatibility or enforcement issues, undermine or conflict with the planned function of rural settlements, or otherwise not be consistent with the applicable policies of the Plan.

Wholesaling or retailing are not permitted, except where it is clearly ancillary to the permitted OFDU and limited to small portion of the total gross floor area, the goods or merchandise offered for sale are produced, processed or fabricated on the farm lot, or it is restricted to the sale of farm inputs (e.g. feed, seeds, or fertilizer) primarily to farm operations in the area.

The area used and/or occupied by an OFDU (including buildings, areas for loading and unloading product, driveways and parking, well and septic systems etc.) will be limited to the minimum area required for the use and will not exceed 2% of the total lot area, to a maximum of 0.8 ha (2 acres).

The policies state that the maximum gross floor area of all buildings and/or structures used for the purposes of an OFDU shall be regulated through the provisions of the Township Zoning By-law, provided that the cumulative gross floor area of all buildings and/or structures used or occupied by an OFDU shall not exceed 557 m<sup>2</sup> (6,000 ft<sup>2</sup>), except for limited, minor exceptions as set out in the policies. Further, proposals for such uses shall include a detailed description of the proposed use and be accompanied by a detailed site plan and such uses shall generally be subject to site plan control.

In addition to the foregoing, the OFDU shall directly involve the farmer living on the same lot as the use and may also involve any other permanent residents on the lot, and up to two employees who do not reside on the lot. A limited number of additional seasonal employees may be permitted for a farm-related tourism use.

Concerning on-site services for OFDUs, existing or proposed individual on-site water services and individual on-site sewage services shall be demonstrated to be adequate or will be made adequate to serve the proposed OFDU and shall be in accordance with the requirements of the County and Area Municipality, including the applicable policies of Sections 3.2.7.2, Water Quality and Quantity and 5.5, County Servicing Policy.

OFDUs that require individual on-site sewage services that have a design capacity in excess of 10,000 litres per day shall generally not be permitted. On-farm diversified uses must also be appropriate for other rural infrastructure and public services (paramedics, fire, etc.).

Proposals for new or expanding OFDUs which would exceed the number of employees, gross floor area, or site area restrictions will not be permitted unless they comply with the agriculture-related use policies. Reasonable exceptions to the gross floor area and/or number of employees may be considered on site specific basis for a value retaining facility, value added agricultural facility, and/or smaller agriculture-related use, where Area Council is satisfied that such use could not reasonably be located within a rural settlement. Proposal that cannot comply with the agriculture-related use policies (Section 3.1.4.3.3) shall be directed to be located, or relocate, in a settlement or must comply with the applicable policies for non-agricultural uses.

Section 3.1.4.3.3 considers the objectives and criteria for agriculture-related uses within the Agricultural Reserve designation. The intent of the policies is to:

- ensure that all agriculture-related uses:
  - are directly related to farm operations in the area,
  - require a location in close proximity to those farm operations,
  - support agriculture, and
  - provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as their primary activity;
- minimize the amount of agricultural land which is developed for agriculture-related uses;
- ensure that new agriculture-related uses are directed to rural settlements wherever feasible to support the planned employment and/or service function of the settlements in the County; and
- ensure that agriculture-related uses are compatible with and do not hinder surrounding agricultural operations and other nearby land uses.

The Official Plan policies outline various uses that shall not be permitted as agriculture-related uses:

- Retail uses, offices, and restaurants, except where explicitly permitted by the Official Plan policies;
- Residential uses or accommodation;
- Institutional uses;
- Recreational uses;
- Banquet halls and special event facilities;
- Mechanics shops, automobile and recreational vehicle dealerships, distilleries, trucking operations, wrecking yards, contractors' yard, landscaper business, well drillers, excavators, building suppliers and other general commercial and industrial uses; and
- Other uses that may attract large numbers of customers or other people, generate significant traffic or not otherwise be appropriate for rural infrastructure or services, create compatibility or enforcement issues, undermine or conflict with the planned function of rural settlements, or otherwise not be consistent with the applicable policies of the Plan.

Further, agriculture-related uses shall not undermine or conflict with the planned employment and/or service functions of settlements in the County. As such, the proponent is required to demonstrate that the proposed agriculture-related use is not suitable for, and/or cannot reasonably be accommodated within a settlement.

According to Section 3.1.5, it is an objective of the Official Plan to only permit new non-agricultural uses where such uses do not conflict with the 'Goal for Agricultural Policies', as set out in Section 3.1.1, to preserve and protect prime agricultural areas for long term viable agricultural use and avoid or minimize potential impacts on agricultural operations, and direct non-agricultural uses to settlements wherever possible.

Non-agricultural uses include commercial, industrial, institutional, infrastructure, public works yards, recreational, and residential uses that are not directly related to, or supportive of agriculture. Within the Agricultural designation, the use of prime agricultural land for agricultural, mineral, petroleum and environmental resources will be given a higher priority in land use decision making than its use for non-agricultural uses.

To maintain the agricultural land resource for agriculture and related uses, and ensure new commercial, industrial and institutional uses develop on an appropriate level of services and are directed to settlements to support their planned service and employment functions, new non-agricultural commercial, industrial and institutional uses will not be permitted within the Agricultural Reserve, except in accordance with the policies of Section 3.1.7.2.

Section 3.1.7.2 directs that proposals to amend the Official Plan to permit the establishment of new non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural Reserve must provide compelling evidence to demonstrate that the proposed non-agricultural use cannot be located within a settlement and that the following considerations have been addressed:

- Justification analysis which shows that:
  - there is a demonstrated need within the planning period for additional land to be removed from agricultural production and re-designated for the proposed use,

- given the nature and capacity of undeveloped lands within settlements and/or within other appropriate land use designations;
  - nature of the proposal and whether the use requires special locational requirements or physical features that are only available in prime agricultural areas;
  - the amount of land proposed for the new development is the minimum required for the immediate needs of the proposed use; and,
- Agricultural impact analysis, which demonstrates:
    - the lands do not comprise a specialty crop area;
    - there are no reasonable alternatives which avoid prime agricultural areas;
    - there are no reasonable alternatives on lands with lesser agricultural capability or on lands left less suitable for agriculture by existing or past development;
    - MDS I is satisfied; and,
    - Impacts from the new use on nearby agricultural operations are mitigated to the extent possible.
  - The level of servicing planned or available is consistent with the servicing hierarchy established in Section 5.5.3 of this Plan for individual on-site water and individual on-site sewage services.
  - The proposed use shall be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations and nearby land uses.
  - The proposed use shall not create traffic hazards, and the road infrastructure shall be capable of accommodating the new use or expansion.
  - The proposal is consistent with Environmental Resource Policies and Cultural Heritage Policies.
  - The proposal will not conflict with Resource Extraction Policies.
  - The proposal is acceptable regarding the ability to achieve the Goal for Agricultural Policies as set out in Section 3.1.1, the precedent to be established for other sites within the County and the ability to implement planned land uses in the vicinity.

The subject lands are located within an identified Sand and Gravel Resource Area. These identified areas are where high-quality sand and gravel deposits exist and where potential future extraction activity is most likely to occur. The intent of the policies within the Official Plan concerning Sand and Gravel Resource Areas is to minimize potential future conflicts between extraction operations and other uses.

To proactively plan for the protection of known aggregate deposits, including Sand and Gravel Resource Areas, the Official Plan discourages incompatible land uses, such as non-agricultural uses. Section 3.4.1.3.1.3 of the Official Plan outlines that new non-agricultural commercial, industrial, or institutional non-farm rural residential and/or active recreational uses shall not be permitted within the Quarry Area designation, and within the Limestone Resource Area and the Sand and Gravel Resource Area.

## Zoning By-law

The subject lands are currently zoned 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' according to the Township of Blandford-Blenheim Zoning By-law, which permits a wide range of agricultural uses, including farm buildings and an accessory dwelling, and requires a minimum lot area of 30 ha (74.1 ac) and a minimum lot frontage of 100 m (328.1 ft). The current zoning does not list a special events facility as a permitted use.

While the Township of Blandford-Blenheim Zoning By-law does not specifically list a special events facility in Table 5.18.2.1 – Parking Standards, a reasonable comparative would be an assembly hall, which requires one parking space per 10 m<sup>2</sup> (107.6 ft<sup>2</sup>) of gross floor area or one parking space per four seats, whichever is greater. At a capacity of 250 people, assuming 250 seats would result in the need for 62.5 parking spaces. At a size of 960 m<sup>2</sup> (10,333.4 ft<sup>2</sup>) the parking calculation would result in the need for 96.6 parking spaces. As the gross floor area calculation is the greater of the two, 96 parking spaces would be required.

## Agency Comments

The Township Chief Building Official has indicated that the Township only has record of a building permit for the single detached dwelling. Any detached structures over 15 m<sup>2</sup> (161.4 ft<sup>2</sup>), septic system, and/or tents over 60 m<sup>2</sup> (646 ft<sup>2</sup>) require building permits.

The Township Director of Public Works has indicated they have reviewed the submitted Traffic Impact Study and have no concerns. It was indicated that traffic will typically be at off peak times and the driveway is visible in both directions.

The Township Director of Protective Services has advised that the following will be required:

- Fire inspection
  - Fire safety plan
    - Including posting of emergency procedures throughout all public buildings
  - Fire route signage – including no parking signs to ensure no parking in laneway
  - Fire route-ensure proper turning radius for fire apparatus
  - Fire extinguishers
    - Including training of all staff
    - Monthly checks of extinguishers along with annual inspections
  - Emergency lighting
  - Water supply
    - With dry hydrant connection
    - Size of water storage to be determined by owner's engineer
  - Routine fire inspections scheduled with Township Fire Prevention Officer
  - Please inform the applicant that this operation is subject to compliance with the township noise by-law 2357-2023
  - Please inform the applicant that any use of fireworks must comply with the township fireworks by-law 2423-2024

The Oxford County Public Works Department, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), Rogers Canada, and Canada Post have indicated no concerns with the proposal.

## Township of Blandford-Blenheim Council

Township of Blandford-Blenheim Council recommended denial of the proposed Official Plan Amendment Application and voted to deny the accompanying Zone Change Application (ZN 1-25-01) at the Township's regular meeting of Council on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

During the Public Meeting held on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, two members of the general public spoke about concerns that they had with the proposal which included, but were not limited to, noise, traffic, and the impact of the use on their property value.

Township Council also raised a number of questions with the applicants and the applicant's agent, ranging from an apparent discrepancy between the venue capacity stated in the applications (250 person maximum) and the facility's website (500 person maximum), to who farms the lands (the owner or a renter), and whether the existing single detached dwelling and greenhouses, were utilized as part of the venue or not (note: this would substantially impact the land area indicated in the application as being used for the purposes of the special events facility).

## Planning Analysis

### 2024 Provincial Planning Statement

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

Planning staff have assessed the proposed recognition of the existing events facility in accordance with the PPS policies and provincial guidelines pertaining to permitted uses in prime agricultural areas. The subject lands do not comprise a specialty crop area as defined by the PPS but are actively farmed and the majority of lands are located within a prime agricultural area consisting of Class 2 type soil based on the Canada Land Inventory. The existing events facility appears to comply with the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) requirements and the continuation of the facility in the existing location is not anticipated to hinder surrounding livestock operations with respect to MDS.

The PPS policies pertaining to OFDUs require, along with meeting other criteria, that such uses be secondary to the principal agricultural use and limited in area in order to minimize the amount of land taken out of agricultural production, ensure agriculture remains the main land use, and limit off-site impacts. The related provincial guidance indicates that the area required for the OFDU shall include all land occupied by, or no longer available for agricultural production as a result of, the OFDU, including buildings, outdoor storage, landscaped areas, private services, and parking. However, it is noted that, as permitted by the PPS, the County of Oxford Official Plan sets out more specific, locally developed and Provincially approved, size/area and other scale criteria for such uses, which are reviewed below.

Based on the site plan and information submitted by the applicant, the existing site area associated with the events facility (i.e. buildings, parking, landscaped areas etc.) is approximately 0.7 ha (1.7 ac), which equates to 1.8% of the total lot area. This would meet both the recommended maximum site area criteria set out for such uses in the provincial guidance

document (i.e. 2% of lot area to a maximum of 1 ha), as well as the locally established maximum site area criteria for such uses set out in the Official Plan (i.e. 2% of lot area to a maximum of 0.8 ha). However, it is noted that questions were raised by Township Council at the public meeting as to whether all areas utilized and/or available for special events (e.g. dwelling/grounds and greenhouses) are reflected in the application. For comparison, the area of the property occupied by the entire building cluster (i.e. dwelling, greenhouses, proposed special event facility, parking and landscaped areas etc.) is approximately 2 ha (4.9 ac). Regardless, other scale related aspects of the event facility (e.g. building size, number of employees patrons, and guest) are beyond the scale intended for an OFDU by provincial policy and guidelines, as more specifically addressed by the locally developed and Provincially approved Official Plan criteria. It is also unclear as to whether agriculture remains the principal use of the property and to what extent the landowners are involved in the farm operation/farming. Some questions with respect to land use compatibility (e.g. off-site noise concerns) have also been raised. Further, it is the opinion of staff that an event facility, such as that being proposed, would fall into the same categories as a banquet hall or large-scale recurring event with permanent structures, which are identified in Provincial guidelines as uses that would typically not be permitted as an OFDU. In keeping with this direction, similar OFDU use restrictions are also contained in the County Official Plan.

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

Considering the overall nature and scale of the existing special events facility, it is the opinion of Planning staff that the use does not enhance or support the agri-food network, is not limited in scale, could successfully operate within a settlement area, and would not meet the definition and applicable criteria for an On-Farm Diversified Use or Agricultural Related Use, as set out in the PPS and associated Provincial guidelines and locally developed criteria. As such, the use is not consistent with the PPS policies for permitted uses in a prime agricultural area and, therefore, would be considered a non-agricultural use in a prime agricultural area. Provincial policy directs that Planning authorities may only permit non-agricultural uses within prime agricultural areas for extraction of aggregates and resources or limited non-residential uses that meet specific policy criteria.

### Official Plan

Staff have evaluated the proposal in accordance with the review criteria in the Official Plan for OFDUs. The intent of the Official Plan policies for OFDUs is to ensure that the use is clearly secondary to the principal agricultural operation, compatible with and does not hinder surrounding agricultural uses, protects prime agricultural areas, is appropriate for rural infrastructure, and does not undermine or conflict with the planned function of settlements.

In this case, the events facility is located on an agricultural property, within the same building cluster as the existing single detached dwelling and making use of the same driveway, which are some of the basic locational requirements to be considered as an OFDU.

However, in keeping with both provincial guidelines and local policy objectives, the Official Plan policies specifically prohibit 'special events facilities' as an OFDU. As such, it is clear that such facilities are not considered to be an OFDU. Even other uses that may be permitted as OFDUs (i.e. are not prohibited), can only be considered if they meet all applicable policy criteria, including various specific and very intentional limitations on size and scale (e.g. maximum site area, building size, number of employees, patrons, and guests etc.). For comparison purposes, this proposal has also been reviewed in relation to a number of these criteria, as follows.

Based on the site plan and information submitted by the applicant, the total area associated with the existing events facility is approximately 0.7 ha (1.7 ac) or 1.7% of the total parcel size, which is below the maximum of 0.8 ha (2 ac), or 2% of total lot area, permitted by the OP. However, the policies also require that the area be limited to the minimum area required for the proposed OFDU. Further, the gross floor area of all buildings used for the events facility is approximately 960 m<sup>2</sup> (10,333.4 ft<sup>2</sup>), which exceeds the permitted maximum gross floor area of 557 m<sup>2</sup> (6,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) by 403 m<sup>2</sup> (4,333.4 ft<sup>2</sup>), or over 70%.

The Official Plan policies also state that the OFDU shall directly involve the farmer living on the same lot as the OFDU and may also involve any other permanent residents on the lot and up to two employees who do not reside on the lot. In this case, other than owning the event facility, it is not clear to what extent those living on the lot will be directly involved in farming and the running of the event facility. It is noted that the applicant has advised that the event facility business would limit permanent employees to those who reside on-site, while those renting the facility would be responsible for contracting workers for the event (caterers, photographers, etc.). While the majority of additional staff working on-site would be on contract through the party renting the facility, the number of staff that would be required for the average event could be considerable. It is not unreasonable to expect a typical wedding event to have a considerable number of additional contract staff (e.g. caterer, wait staff, bar staff, photographer, officiant, event coordinator, decorator, music provider etc.). While not permanent staff, these contract workers will have a similar impact as permanent staff, considering that the events are recurring weekly from May to September. As such, Planning staff are of the opinion that the number of off-site employees that could attend the site for a typical special event would not be in keeping with the intent and purpose of the OFDU policies in the Official Plan.

Further, it is the opinion of planning staff that the proposed use would attract large numbers of customers/guests and other people (i.e. up to 250 customers/guests and contracted services) to the site, which could create compatibility or enforcement issues, undermine or conflict with the planned function of rural settlements, and not otherwise be consistent with the objectives of the plan, which are also identified in the policies as reasons for a use not being permitted as an OFDU.

For the above reasons, it is the opinion of planning staff that the proposed event facility use and scale are clearly not intended to be permitted as an OFDU. Further, the OP policies specifically state that uses that would exceed the scale restrictions for an OFDU shall not be permitted unless they comply with the agriculture-related use policies. Proposals that cannot meet those policies shall be directed to locate or relocate in a settlement or must comply with the applicable policies for non-agricultural uses.

In this regard, it is also the opinion of staff that the use does not comply with the applicable policies for agricultural related uses, as it has not been demonstrated that the use is directly related to agricultural uses in the area and provides direct support to farm operations as a primary activity. As such, Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposal to recognize the existing events facility would be considered a non-agricultural use, which should generally be directed to locate or relocate in a settlement area (e.g. on lands designated for commercial purposes with appropriate services).

In light on the foregoing, Planning staff are of the opinion that the existing events facility does not meet the definition of an OFDU, as the use is specifically prohibited as an OFDU by the Official Plan policies and is not small scale, in accordance with the applicable criteria. As the use has been proposed as an OFDU, the applicant has not provided justification (i.e. planning justification, agricultural impact analysis etc.) to address the applicable PPS and OP criteria that would apply to consideration of a non-agricultural use in a prime agricultural area. Even so, it is not certain that the proposed event facility would be able to meet all of those applicable criteria, given the fact that the use is located within an identified Sand and Gravel Resource Area and it has not been demonstrated to staff that there are no alternative site options within a designated settlement and that such use could not reasonably be located in a designated settlement.

As such, staff are of the opinion that the proposal is not appropriate from a planning perspective and should not be supported.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

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In light of the foregoing, Planning staff are of the opinion that the nature, size, and scale of the proposed special events facility are not consistent with policies of the PPS and Official Plan with respect to an On-Farm Diversified Use.

As such, it is the opinion of staff that the proposed site-specific amendment to the Official Plan to allow for a special events facility as an On-Farm Diversified Use cannot be supported from a land use planning perspective and should not be approved.

## **SIGNATURES**

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### **Report author:**

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Dustin Robson, MCIP, RPP  
Development Planner

**Departmental approval:**

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Gilbert, MCIP, RPP  
Manager of Development Planning

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Michiels  
Director of Community Planning

**Approved for submission:**

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin R. Addley  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENTS**

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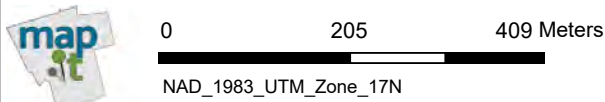
- Attachment 1 – Plate 1, Location Map with Existing Zoning
- Attachment 2 – Plate 2, Aerial Photography (2020)
- Attachment 3 – Plate 3, Aerial Photography (2020) – Zoomed In
- Attachment 4 – Plate 4, Official Plan Designation Map
- Attachment 5 – Plate 5, Applicant’s Sketch
- Attachment 6 – Public Comments



**Legend**

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

**Notes**



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

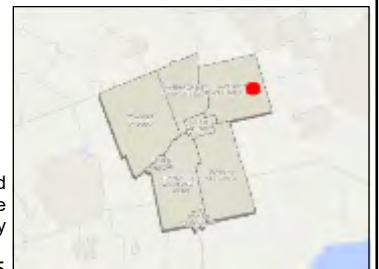
February 14, 2025



**Legend**

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

**Notes**



0 205 409 Meters

NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_17N



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

February 14, 2025



**Legend**

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

**Notes**



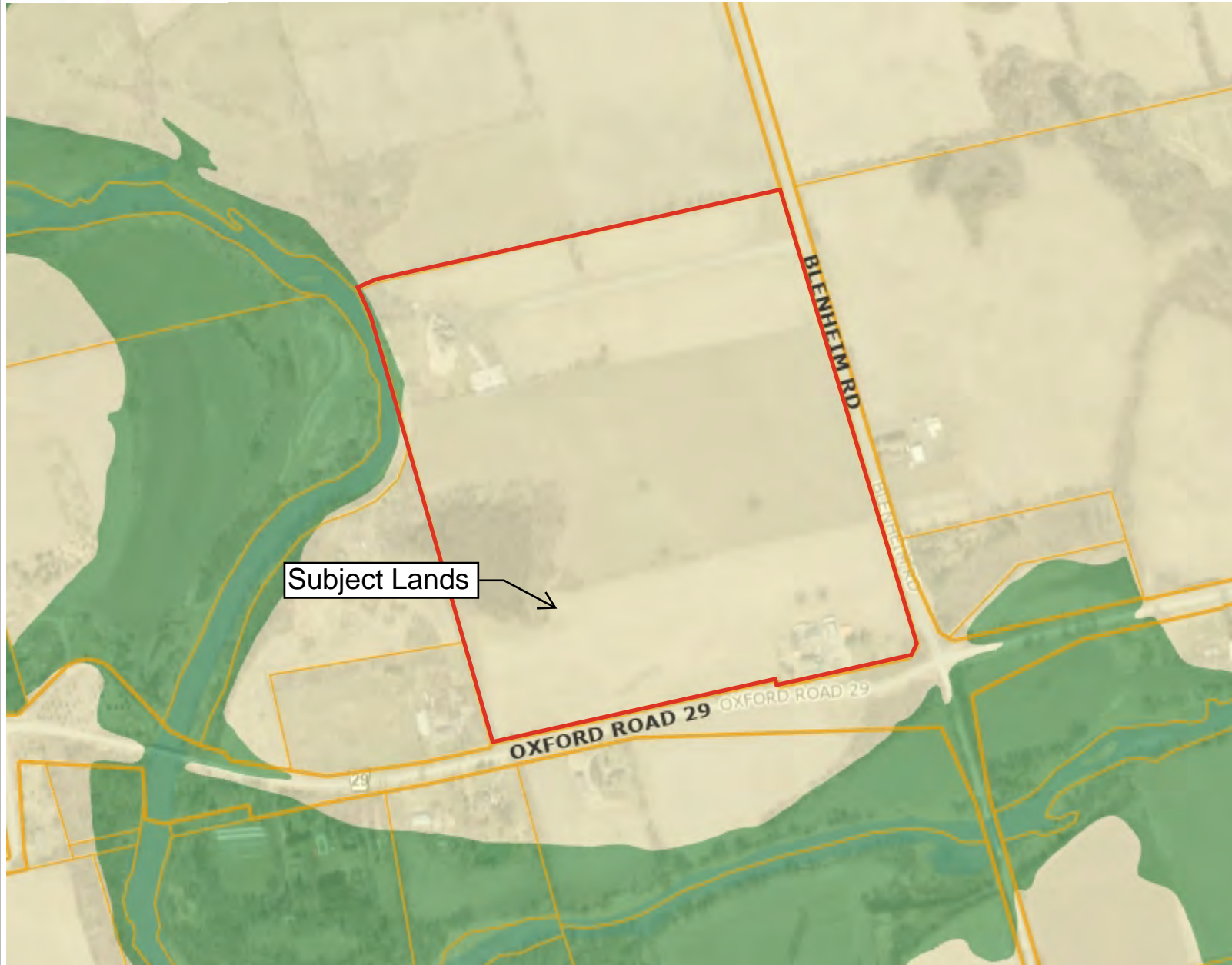
0 51 102 Meters

NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_17N



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

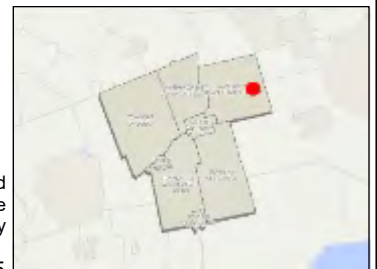
March 28, 2025



### Legend

- Parcel Lines**
  - Property Boundary
  - Assessment Boundary
  - Unit
  - Road
  - Municipal Boundary
  - 100 Metre Buffer Ingersoll
- Land Use Designation**
  - Residential
  - Residential Reserve
  - Central Business District
  - Entrepreneurial District
  - Neighbourhood Shopping Centre
  - Service Commercial
  - Regional Commercial Node
  - Business Park
  - Traditional Industrial
  - Community Facility
  - Open Space
  - Environmental Protection
  - Future Urban Growth
  - Rural Buffer
  - Industrial Site Specific Policy Area
  - Agricultural Reserve
  - Settlement
  - County Biosolid Storage Facility
  - County Landfill Site
  - Quarry Area
  - Industrial
  - Prime Industrial
  - Linear Rural Cluster
  - Pedestrian Predominate Area

### Notes



0 205 409 Meters

NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_17N



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

March 28, 2025

Plate 5: Applicants' Sketch

File No. OP25-02-1 and ZN1-25-1 (Catana)


Part Lot 7, Concession 7 (Blenheim), As In 492273, Except Part 3 and 6, Registered Plan 41R-3823, Township of Blandford-Blenheim, 807417 Oxford Road 29



**Figure #:**  
**Inset Map/ Parking Concept**

**925929 Blenheim Rd**  
Township of Blandford-Blenheim  
County of Oxford

 Subject Lands (39.3ha)

 Total Lands Occupied  
(0.7ha / 1.8%)

Conceptual Parking Area:  
Parking Provided: \*100  
\*Including 4 Accessible Spaces

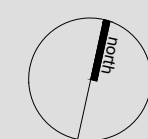
**Notes:**  
• For conceptual purposes only

**DATE:** January, 2025

**FILE:** 24330A

**SCALE:** 1:750

**DRAWN:** GC



K:\24330A- CATANA ESTATE\CP\INSETPLAN\_CP\_29JAN2025.DWG

Iosif and Lidia Catana Zoning Adjustment.

I wanted to write a personal letter regarding my neighbors requesting a change in zoning so they can pursue and expand their wedding venue.

The Catana family have been great neighbors and friends. Me and my family support their request here today. Over the past few years, we have supported and helped them transform their property into an amazing venue for the community. Their hard work, dedication and commitment to the township of Blandford Blenheim and to the town of Drumbo has only led to positive improvements to the other neighboring properties.

This venue proposal reaches further into the community by also supporting many smaller businesses in the area. Restaurants in Drumbo, Variety Stores, local historical business like Morrows. All become attractions and receive an increase in revenue when Catana Estates hosts these events..... attracting hundreds of potential customers.

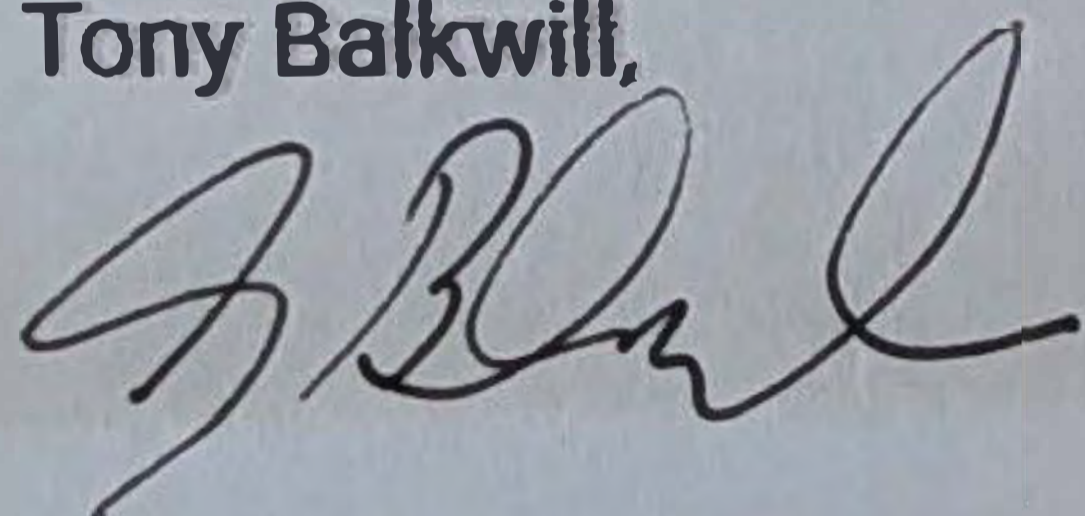
I ask this question to the group present. "What other business in the community have the capacity to bring in hundreds of people to support our other small businesses?"

Any of the past events hosted by Iosif and Lidia Catana have been extremely professional. We have found little to no issue with music and entertainment. Every event that has been hosted has respected all the neighbours in the area by keeping the noise to a minimal. The parking and traffic are never an issue either. They have done an exceptional job of designing their property with very little impact to other neighbouring properties.

We hope to see the Catana Family approved for this zoning change and offer our full support and commitment as neighbour in their business pursuit.

Respectfully,

Tony Balkwill,



Balkwill Farming Company Inc

[Redacted address line]

Drumbo, ON, N0J1G0

Kathy and Wayne Coghlin

████████████████████  
Drumbo, Ont  
April 30, 2025

Re: File No: OP 25-02-1 and ZN 1-25-01

We are grateful that the Township Council voted against the application for the Official Plan Amendment and did not approve the Zone change application. This denial was supported by Dustin Robson's knowledgeable, professional and thorough report detailing that the proposal is not considered reasonable for an OFDU and is not consistent with Provincial Planning policies.

At the Township meeting Kathy and I concentrated on extreme noise problems. The agent's lip service response to this was a suggestion that the noise at its source might be reduced. With a possible crowd of 500 guests we don't see this happening. He also suggested possible abatement. This is only possible with sound insulation, which we don't see happening on the walls and roof in a 9,000 plus square foot "tent".

Mr Catana's agent claims that they have rarely had more than 200 paying guests. With only these "few 200" guests, the noise is unbearable as stated in our previous submission. We cannot even imagine what the noise levels will be if "500 guests", as their website states are allowed to attend.

We feel that the Township Council recognized that the Catana Estates facility has been operating illegally for at least 4 years (our first complaint and call to the police occurred July 2021) and that Mr Catana's agent did not represent the total venue as promoted on the Catana Estates Website and advertised on numerous bridal websites. The Venue was active and had numerous events during the pandemic and COVID Lockdown when other venues were closed.

When Catana Estates started holding events and weddings four (possibly five) years ago we had assumed that the buildings were erected with the legally required permits and that the Venue met zoning laws. We had assumed that the events were being held legally and had legal liquor licenses.

We hope the County Councillors did their homework and reviewed the Catana Estates Website and recognize that there is a lack of relationship from the proposed Plan Amendment and Zone Change to what is advertised on the Catana Estates Website.

They are presenting a fairy tale wedding venue and this fairy tale extended to the presentation by their agent. The agent's presentation deceptively focused on only a small part of the total Venue.

Kathy and Wayne Coghlin, April 30, 2025

The agent repeatedly said a max capacity of 250 in contrast to Catana Estate's professionally prepared website that states 500 guests in numerous places with full access to the complete grounds, not just the restricted area that their agent suggested. Their agent kept repeating 250 guests but past history guarantees they would **not restrict themselves** to 250 guests.

The advertised uses listed and suggested through their pictures include wedding events, concerts (mentioned on facebook), bridal and baby showers, photo events, and dinner parties.

Though the presentation claimed that the Mansion is not part of this Venue, it is listed on their website that the “Bridal suite” and the “Private grooms lounge” are included in both the “Full Day Package” and “Half Day Package”. The package lists additionally state “Exclusive use of estate grounds”, “Access inside estate for bridal party photos”, “Access to all outdoor locations” and more. This is supported by numerous pictures on their website and pictures posted by Catana Estates and past paying guests on Instagram and other social media sites. Photographers have posted numerous interior shots of the bridal group in various rooms on their websites. During a recent open house to promote the wedding venue the Mansion was included in the tour with an emphasis placed on the “grand foyer”, “bridal suite” and “groom lounge” located in the Mansion.

A sample of direct quotes from their website: “Access to All Outdoor Locations: The Courtyard, The Cliff-Side View, The Cobblestone Patio, The Backside Terrace, The Collosum”, “exclusive access to the luxurious property and the tented space“, “accommodate events from 50 to 500 guests”, “luxury outdoor and event venue”, “access to all areas” gives the evidence that no restrictions exist.

In addition the Venue is available for “Photo Shoots” at their “\$20 million Countryside Estate”. A sample of statements from their photo shoot web page “with endless photo opportunities” – showing photo’s from both inside and outside the mansion – and access to “One suite – Tower/West End”. The page also lists “Photo Shoot Costs – Add ons: Inside Estate \$500, Swarovski Room \$500”.

On wedding days we hear kids playing on the playground equipment which we find more pleasant than what is to follow. The extravagant playground is presented on the website as part of the Venue. Has this playground been built to meet all safety standards, not only for the sake of the safety of the children, but also from a liability standpoint for commercial use?

In the agent’s presentation the area presented was limited to the paved and grass parking area, the 3 event tents and the stone washroom. The area is presented as .7ha /1.7 acres. By my amateur use of Google Maps the total area removed from farming is approximately 2.4 hectares / 5.9 acres. This is in addition to the area of the original barns and farm building area

(approximately 1.28ha / 3.16 acres) which is used for storing construction equipment and building materials used in Mr Catana's construction business. There are 2 new structures erected in this area. On the website there is no mention of any restrictions to access the Venue grounds and who is going to enforce 250 guest limit? From the past history of ignoring bylaws, we know that any suggestion of a limit of 250 will be totally ignored.

What was presented was what they hoped would pass, not an honest presentation of the Venue.

The guests are paying for the total grounds presented as the Venue and will demand the full use of the grounds. They will NOT accept being restricted to the area in the presentation.

This is a "20 million dollar wedding venue" running illegally – advertising that they are currently accepting deposits for future weddings in 2026. This is against zoning bylaws, being held in buildings erected without permits, not meeting building codes, or fire regulations. It is evident from the past history that we must have some way to enforce the bylaws and shut down events on the weekends.

What is to stop them from holding these illegal events when they state they have 20 Saturday events booked for the May to October period in 2025. Enforcement is required, they have regularly laughed at the law. How can an illegal venue that does not meet fire or building codes have liability insurance or legal liquor licenses. Should Mr Catana receive a legal order to stop holding events?

Although Mr Catana's agent diminishes the effects that the number of days that are affected to "only 20" from May to September, this is an unrealistic "joke". For us in actuality it means that we have lost the enjoyment of our property, both inside and outside, for most weekends from May to October. There will be no enjoyable, peaceful backyard BBQ's for us or our guests. There will be no peaceful quiet time in the evenings sitting out enjoying the evening sky. Because the noise levels are so bad on Saturdays, this results in us not sleeping and we are like "zombies" on the following Sunday. We are suffering pounding headaches and our ears are still ringing from the previous nights noise.

In addition, still aggravating, but not as noisy as the extreme noises on the actual event day, usually Saturdays, during the week prior, there are noises and constant beeping from equipment further prepping the Venue, trucks dropping off Event and Venue supplies, bands or DJ's practising and doing sound checks. Even today, April 30/2025, we are already seeing equipment further prepping the Venue in the playground and tent area.

Almost 50 years ago, we purchased this property and paid a premium at the time, because it provided us with the peace, quiet and solitude that we desired which is now totally destroyed since this Catana Estates has existed, especially now as an Events Venue. If this is allowed to

continue with our house being only 600 feet from the Catana Estate and Venue, our property's value is greatly diminished.

Does the legal and financial liability for the Township and County increase because they now know that illegal events are happening?

It would be interesting and most informative to know how MPAC has this property assessed. Do they know there is a \$20 million Estate used for commercial events? Catana's themselves state that it is a \$20 Million Estate. Does MPAC know about all of the additional buildings and their values? Do they know that this is a commercial venue that has no relationship to farming and none of the buildings are used for any farm related purpose?

The planning report lists restriction on fireworks (there have been a few occurrences). Are sky lanterns included in fire bans similar to Toronto? A neighbour was very concerned when the sky was full of lit candle sky lanterns drifting over his property from Catana Estates during an extended dry spell.

When we attended the Township Council meeting for the application we had assumed an honest presentation by their agent.

Why are legal representatives of the Township and County not going on Mr Catana's property to do a full and complete inspection to determine what has not been legally erected?

In closing we would once again like to thank the Township Council for their decision to NOT approve this Proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zone change. With the additional submissions that we, who are opposed to these changes are presenting, hope that the County Council are in agreement that this application and request are denied.

#### Reference Websites:

[catanaestates.com](http://catanaestates.com)  
[instagram.com/catanaestatevenue/#](https://www.instagram.com/catanaestatevenue/)  
[weddingwire.ca/castle-wedding/catana-estate--e64251](http://weddingwire.ca/castle-wedding/catana-estate--e64251)  
[yelp.ca/biz/catana-estate-drumbo](http://yelp.ca/biz/catana-estate-drumbo)  
[weddinghero.ca/wedding-venue/kitchener/catana-estate](http://weddinghero.ca/wedding-venue/kitchener/catana-estate)  
[facebook.com/catanaestate](https://www.facebook.com/catanaestate)  
[flofoto.ca/story/catana-estate-wedding/](http://flofoto.ca/story/catana-estate-wedding/)

Google Earth Historical Imagery:

Images show on specific dates (month/day/year)

- 05/15/2017 - cement pad approximately 50m x 100m
- 07/08/2018 - first “tent” shown being erected
- 06/07/2019 - 2 “tents” shown erected, gap in centre
- 06/18/2020 - 3 “tents” shown erected
- 04/14/2021 - additional stone washroom building shown erected
- 06/28/2023 - additional kid’s play area shown erected in place of cropland  
- work started in Venue parking area

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Kathy and Wayne Coghlin

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** File No.:OP 25-02-1 & ZN 10-25-01  
**Date:** Friday, April 11, 2025 12:28:35 PM

---

Kathy and Wayne Coghlin

[REDACTED]

Drumbo, Ont

N0J 1G0

RE: File No: OP 25-02-1 and ZN 1-25-01

We have been living quietly in our house on our 13 acre property in the middle of A1 and A2 agricultural farmlands for almost 50 years. We have a farming background. We totally accept the noises that may occur from farm machinery or other farming practices .

By google maps our brick house is approximately 600ft from the permanent commercial event "tent" buildings.

We have been enduring the noise from weddings and other events in the "tents" (permanent structures and a stone washroom building) for a number of years. During the previous year there has been entire days of constant beeping from construction equipment on the site for days on end.

The loud, thumping, pounding music habitually starts at 6pm, but has started as early as 9am. The noise goes regularly to midnight, but has gone to 2am maybe with a break for speeches around 6 when we can hear the names of the bride, groom, wedding party and other speeches. The commercial events are not always on a Saturday. Bands come out and practice during the week and some commercial events start Friday night and run all weekend.

We do not have a multi-million dollar mansion to protect us. Our brick house has the windows shake with the noise. Even with the windows and blinds closed we have a difficult time hearing the TV.

Initially, a number of years ago, we tried to phone Mr Catana to tell him the noise was bothering us, but he would not talk to us. He had a real estate agent call to tell us that he was a

busy man. The agent described him as very abrupt and loses his temper easily. After a number of calls the agent offered us a small amount of money to leave for the night – we declined – why should we be forced to leave our home? The agent finally told us that there were a number of events still booked that year and we would have to put up with the noise. The agent told us that they had permits and could do what they wanted.

We called the police, usually around 11pm or 12pm, a number of times because we could not sleep or even watch TV. We phoned the township office a number of times and complained about the noise and the use of A2 farmland for commercial events. The office said Mr Catana did not have permits and that no one works on weekends to deal with complaints. The township office told us we had to hire a lawyer and go to Toronto to complain. We were told that Mr Catana brings a lot of money into the township and county. Nothing was done and we gave up.

We no longer phone the police to complain because we feel it is a waste of their time and resources because they cannot make changes.

Currently when these commercial events, making 10's of thousands of dollars occur, we try to suffer through it. We shut our doors and windows and close the blinds. We try to calm each other down, but we still must raise the volume on our tv to even hear it. At times our house is shaking from the constant pounding of the music.

I have high blood pressure which increases and my wife has asthma and the increased stress requires numerous extra puffs. We close our windows although she requires fresh air to reduce the asthmatic symptoms. We are not able to sleep.

Why is this application happening now when the events have been held for years? Mr Catana is a professional developer who deals with zoning and bylaws regularly. He knew his A2 farm property was not zoned for commercial use, but has ignored the zoning and bylaws. His website states that there is only 1 Saturday night left to book for the May to October season.

Mr Catana's application proposes uses that in no way relate to farming and shows a total lack of respect for the local rural community. Years previous Mr Catana had offered to buy our property for considerably less than market value, maybe we should have sold.

The community planning website highlights the goal – “resident's overall quality of life” . With the exponential increase in commercial events, all my wife and I can expect is increased health issues, ongoing stress, depression, anxiety and insomnia. The rural community will see a large increase in noise and road traffic.

Kathy and Wayne Coghlin

## County meeting-Catanas

In response to the go ahead on the county meeting after the Township meeting of Blandford Blenheim was a solid no, I would like to add to my previous submission, dated April 15, 2025.

Many issues were brought up at the meeting on April 16th in the township hall.

The obvious deception we were forced to listen to by Catana's agent and then later the daughter was difficult to listen to when their website contradicted what was coming out of both of their mouths.

It is sickeningly obvious that they (Catanas and their agent) have no concern for the wellness and peace of this community they have planted themselves in.

We presented our serious concerns which I have outlined in my previous submission. We became aware of many more - more serious concerns during the council meeting on April 16, 2025. This caused us to dig deeper on the impact this rezoning will have on the Collective, including potential lawsuits in the future. Our concerns as a community include a broad expanse which comprise of many residential properties. As I have mentioned before, and their website states...the location of this business is right up against the cliff which abuts the Nith River valley. I have included a print off from their website which advertises this feature. This 'feature' is where many of our issues lie. The booming of the music and drums and then the speeches as well as other very loud noises which we cannot identify (which happen during the week as well as during the event) - is so disturbing - it pervades our environment so that it is humanly impossible to live our lives peacefully in our homes or on our property. Even with the windows closed tightly.

Add to this harassment is the effect the high powered lighting which they have installed - it has totally violated the sanctity of our countryside and permeates our home. It lights up the sky above their settlement as if it was a city block.

We have neighbours and we ourselves suffer with ill health. We have many elderly who have lived here for decades who cannot attend this meeting, who are affected. Who cannot just up and sell their property to get away from this assault.

I have noticed on their website that they have enough reviews from previous weddings they have entertained. How were they able to carry this out without permits for the buildings they have built? During the Covid era? When all such events were cancelled? Are they above the community, in that the laws, rules, bylaws and just common sense that you do not antagonize your neighbour or your community as a whole? We, as a community would like to see these buildings removed as has been done in the past for community members who have not followed Township rules and bylaws.

We have been approached by neighbours who are saying that they are setting a precedent in this community.

Go ahead and do what you want...ask for forgiveness and carry on.

Disregard building codes..fire codes.. regulations of any sort. ..set in place for the safety and peace of the collective community .. and It was not enough for them to have the council say No to the proposal and allow them to keep their structures.

This brings to the forefront... how will the governing body handle this disrespect and blatant disregard for a community that in the past has been able to appreciate their home and surrounding environment which includes the Nith River Valley. This is an environmental issue. I am including this concern because I am committed to the protection of our neighbourhood and was asked to share this unsettling situation.

There was another concern brought up by the collective neighbours.

That is of the liquor served at such an event as a wedding or other event which could also serve alcohol. I have included an overview of the steps and qualifications required to obtain a liquor license in Blandford Blenheim Township. It is quite clear that the Catanas have been operating illegally for these past years according to the necessary stipulations to acquire said liquor license.

Zoning - their business is not in compliance with the Township bylaws. They have been operating illegally and should suffer repercussions so that others in the community realize that these bylaws are for our safety and well being. They are not above the law.

Pls refer to the entire overview attached.

Further to the above.... Who will monitor these guests who have been drinking at the event (should they get their way)? How many will be driving these country roads inebriated and how many have in the past almost 5 yrs put our community at risk? Their site says they are booked for every weekend except for one Saturday.. from May to October. Yet their agent knowingly fraudulently in his presentation to the township council insisted that their season runs from May to September. It is October-not September. This means that our community is put at risk every single weekend for their season in 2025. We know it only takes one slightly inebriated driver to further destroy our safety on our country roads. With a crowd of 500 people, which is what they advertise on their website - even tho their agent again fraudulently claimed they capped it at 250, there is bound to be a few in that crowd that will slip through. That is a lot of cars for that area.

We have not been able to rely on the police force to stop the harassment of the noise-how can we rely on them to protect our roads from guests leaving the Catana events?

This is egregious behaviour. The liabilities of this type of business in this community could have enormous repercussions.

We are not ok with allowing this.

They advertise their estate house and have a bride and groom portrait in their foyer underneath a chandelier . A bride pictured on their grand staircase inside the home. A place for the groom in the tower suite at the front of the estate. Yet when they were asked if any of the house would be used in these events, the agent said No. Add to that the bridal suite. So much fraud, trickery and illegal activity.

After visiting Catana weddings website and going over what was said at the Council meeting, I attended the meeting but (I also watched the online video), it is vividly clear to us that they think we are a pushover and their 'powerful' influence will indeed grant them their wishes. What was presented by their agent is NOT what is on their public site.

Our group here in this community are prepared to go further to stand up for rights as humans and long standing inhabitants of this community.

We knew that they were planning to push this further. Their behaviour after the meeting at the front steps of the Township Hall was pathetic. It was clear as we walked out of the building, that they had other plans as they were standing there at the front of the doors, laughing and guffawing and eyeing us as we walked out the door and past them to the right.

We are aware that the Balkwills -Jim and Ella, who live across the road from the Catanas, who were the original owners of that property in question - are not bothered by anything they have done or plan to do. Their son Tony rents their farmland. Why would they protest and ruin the business relationship that the Catanas have with their son?

In conclusion, it is painfully obvious that the Catanas are not community minded people. Which in and of itself is just fine.. to each his own... however, this bullish behaviour in pushing past all stops put in place to protect us, the victims is at a scale which They are prepared to push forward on their agenda despite the damage their business and plans for our section of Blandford Blenheim township will have on their neighbours on a broad scope.

Their delusional claims by their agent that they are 'adding' to our community with their business was painfully false. Nothing from that operation gives to the community. The past 4+ yrs are proof. There are no surprises here as to the future with this business..they are not people who abide by the codes the rest of us are happy to follow for the good of all. This rezoning proposal and the very presence of the illegal buildings is proof. This whole issue we are dealing with is is damaging and rapes our neighbours and ourselves of our peace and safe space in our homes and on our properties in so many ways....

As I'm writing this I'm putting up with the backup beeping of construction vehicles coming from [REDACTED] Blenheim Rd. I feel so very sorry for the elderly couple-the Coghlin's who are a mere 600' - [REDACTED]-from where all this is going on. There is no solitude or safety left in this end of our community.

Our town council is elected to protect everyone in our neighbourhood and community. They are doing a great job fulfilling their promise to us. The threat to this longstanding arrangement and system is extreme. Our peace and safety is being threatened and we are prepared to fight back to protect everyone of us.

At this time, I feel it is appropriate to thank our elected township and county members for following the laws and bylaws the rest of us in this community are pleased to have in place and pleased to follow and abide by. I think this is not said enough. I feel it is our place to protect this governing setup from future potential threats which will arise from rezoning this illegal setup by overseeing the removal of the permanent structures put up without permits and denying the rezoning.

Thank you for hearing us...

Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone  
On behalf of concerned citizens of Blandford Blenheim Township.

## Community Statement Opposing Rezoning of the Catana Property

To the County Officials of Oxford County,

Following the Township of Blandford-Blenheim's clear decision to reject the Catana rezoning proposal, our community finds it both troubling and disheartening that this issue has proceeded to the county level for further consideration. I write this on behalf of concerned residents living near 935929 Blenheim Road, whose lives have been significantly disrupted by the unauthorized and inconsiderate actions of the Catana events business. This letter builds upon my previous submission dated April 15, 2025, and incorporates further insights and concerns shared at the township council meeting on April 16, 2025.

### Lack of Transparency and Deception

The public meeting laid bare a pattern of misrepresentation. Statements made by the Catanas and their agent were directly contradicted by their own website and marketing materials. Claims regarding the seasonal scope of events, the use of buildings, and attendance numbers were all inconsistent with publicly available information. For instance, their website lists bookings every weekend from May through October, while their agent falsely claimed their season ends in September and that their events are capped at 250 people, despite advertising a capacity of 500.

Such discrepancies not only undermine public trust but also indicate a calculated effort to bypass accountability. If the foundation of a business relies on misinformation, how can the community be expected to believe that future operations will be conducted ethically?

## Disruption to Peace and Environmental Integrity

Residents living near the Catana site face persistent, invasive disruptions. Loud music, drumming, amplified speeches, and unidentifiable mechanical noises routinely disturb the community-extending beyond weekends and well into the week. These auditory intrusions make it impossible for residents to enjoy their own homes and properties, even with windows sealed. Compounding this disturbance is the use of intense, high-powered lighting that blankets the night sky, destroying the rural character and tranquility that long-time residents have cherished for decades. This light pollution represents not only a quality-of-life issue but also an environmental concern, given the property's proximity to the Nith River Valley and its sensitive ecosystems.

## Community Health and Vulnerable Populations

Our neighbourhood includes elderly residents and individuals coping with chronic health conditions. These individuals are especially vulnerable to environmental stressors such as noise and light pollution. Many cannot attend public meetings or relocate. The suggestion that they must endure these stressors-or move-is not only inhumane but an affront to the values of community care and inclusion.

## Illegal Activity and Lack of Accountability

Serious legal and regulatory concerns surround the Catanas' operations. Despite having hosted numerous weddings and events-evidenced by reviews and photos on their

website-it appears that no proper permits were obtained for the structures on the property, nor for liquor licensing. This raises disturbing questions: How were events allowed to proceed during the COVID era, when public gatherings were restricted? Why has there been no enforcement of building and zoning bylaws? Many in the community fear the establishment of a dangerous precedent: operate illegally, ask for forgiveness later, and pressure officials into retroactive approval. This approach not only mocks the bylaws designed to protect public safety but sends a message that rules do not apply equally.

### Public Safety and Traffic Risks

The scale of the Catana events-often drawing hundreds of guests-creates clear risks for road safety. Many guests are served alcohol, yet no effective plan exists to monitor or manage impaired driving. Rural roads are ill-equipped to handle the traffic volume, and with a season stretching across six months, the risk becomes chronic and severe. We have already seen a lack of responsiveness from law enforcement in addressing noise complaints. How can we trust that more serious safety concerns-such as drunk driving-will be adequately managed?

### Conclusion and Request

It is painfully clear that the Catana operation has prioritized profit over people, convenience over compliance, and personal ambition over community well-being. Their

repeated violations of township rules and their dismissive attitude toward community concerns cannot be ignored.

We respectfully ask that:

1. The rezoning application be denied.
2. Existing illegal structures be removed, consistent with how bylaws have been enforced for other community members.
3. The county reinforce the principle that no one is above the law-regardless of their resources, connections, or ambitions.

Our elected township and county officials have a solemn duty to protect the integrity of our neighbourhoods, our environment, and our collective peace. We are grateful to the Township of Blandford-Blenheim for standing with us and upholding these values. Now, we call on the County of Oxford to do the same.

Sincerely,

Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone

On behalf of the Concerned Residents of Blandford-Blenheim Township

# Health and Environmental Impacts of Non-Compliant Neighbors

Health and Environmental Impacts of Non-Compliant Neighbors Operating a Wedding Venue in a Residential, River Valley Setting

Key Issues and Their Effects:

1. Chronic Conflict and Stress - Ongoing battles create constant stress leading to sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, hypertension, and heart disease. - Feelings of helplessness and violation of personal rights can cause moral injury and long-term mental health challenges.
2. Noise Pollution from Unauthorized Events - Weddings and amplified music can easily exceed 60-70 decibels at night, far above healthy nighttime limits. - The river valley amplifies sound, making it travel further and affect more homes. - Nighttime noise disrupts sleep, increases stress hormones, and damages cardiovascular health.
3. Light Pollution and Circadian Rhythm Disruption - Industrial-grade lighting floods the area with artificial light, affecting the natural country skyline. - Exposure to high-intensity lighting at night disrupts melatonin production, causing insomnia, immune dysfunction, and mental health deterioration. - Light pollution harms wildlife ecosystems, particularly those dependent on darkness for migration and feeding patterns.
4. Environmental Degradation and Bylaw Violations - Unauthorized construction and operation of a commercial venue violates zoning laws designed to protect residential and rural environments. - Heavy traffic, waste, and land alteration can damage the watershed, contribute to erosion, and contaminate the river ecosystem.

Big Picture: Why This Matters This is not just an inconvenience—it is cumulative harm to residents' health, environmental integrity, and community trust. Allowing such operations without enforcement leads to a failure in governance and devalues rural and residential lifestyles.

Resident Rights Include: - Enforcement of municipal noise bylaws (especially at night). - Protection against excessive and misdirected lighting (dark sky standards). - Upholding of zoning bylaws preventing unauthorized commercial activity. - Safeguarding of rivers, wetlands, and rural ecosystems.

Residents have every right to demand compliance, enforcement, and protection from activities that compromise their health, property value, and natural environment.

**Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone on behalf of concerned citizens of Blandford Blenheim Township.**

# The Erosion of Community Trust

## Introduction

Community health, safety, and trust are built on the collective understanding that all members abide by established bylaws and regulations. When one individual willfully disregards these rules—particularly through deception and unauthorized development—it not only endangers immediate neighbors but also threatens the social fabric of the entire community.

## Deception and Bylaw Evasion: A Serious Breach of Trust

The operation of a commercial wedding venue on land specifically zoned for Agricultural purposes constitutes a direct and knowing violation of Oxford County's zoning regulations. The property owners constructed multiple permanent structures and began hosting large events without any permits, approvals, or environmental considerations. Rather than seeking appropriate permissions beforehand, they operated outside the law since at least 2021, causing repeated disturbances to neighboring residents. Only after several years of continued unauthorized activity—and growing resident frustration—have they now applied for rezoning, attempting to retroactively legitimize their unlawful actions. This approach reflects a clear disregard for community standards and the rule of law.

## Immediate Impacts on Health, Safety, and Peace

The unauthorized wedding venue has already caused serious and measurable impacts, including:

### Noise Pollution

- Loud music and amplified voices, especially in a river valley setting, disturb sleep cycles, increase stress levels, and contribute to long-term health problems such as hypertension and anxiety.

### Light Pollution

- Industrial-grade lighting installed without consideration for environmental or residential impacts disrupts natural circadian rhythms, harms nocturnal wildlife, and degrades the rural

nightscape.

## **Environmental Risk**

- The construction and operation of unregulated facilities near sensitive ecosystems, such as river valleys, risk soil erosion, habitat destruction, and water contamination. These effects are not hypothetical—they are immediate, cumulative, and detrimental to the physical and mental health of nearby residents, who have endured these conditions since 2021.

## **Long-Term Damage to Community Compliance and Civic Culture**

Perhaps even more dangerously, if this unauthorized wedding venue is allowed to continue operations without proper enforcement, it will send a damaging message to the wider community:

## **Erosion of Rule of Law**

- Residents observing the lack of consequences for major bylaw violations will become disillusioned with the fairness and effectiveness of governance structures.

## **Increase in Non-Compliance**

- Other individuals may feel emboldened to disregard zoning laws, building codes, environmental protections, and noise regulations, believing enforcement to be arbitrary or nonexistent.

## **Community Division**

- Perceived favoritism or uneven application of rules fosters resentment, distrust among neighbors, and a breakdown of community solidarity.

## **Decline in Property Values and Residential Appeal**

- A community known for weak enforcement and unregulated commercial activity risks losing its rural residential character, thereby diminishing property values and deterring future responsible residents. The prolonged period since 2021, during which residents have been

forced to endure constant disturbances, has already strained community cohesion and eroded confidence in local governance.

## **Environmental and Ethical Responsibilities**

Beyond civic concerns, there is a moral and environmental responsibility at stake. Rural environments and river valley ecosystems are fragile. They rely on conscious stewardship and regulation to survive human activity. Unregulated commercial operations place unsustainable pressure on these natural systems, degrading resources that all community members depend upon.

## **Conclusion: Why Enforcement Matters**

Allowing such clear and serious violations to persist without strong corrective action would be a grave mistake. Enforcement is not merely about punishing wrongdoing; it is about upholding fairness, protecting the vulnerable, preserving community integrity, and maintaining the delicate balance between human settlement and natural environment. Prompt, decisive action by local officials is necessary to restore trust, protect the health and safety of residents, defend agricultural zoning integrity, and reaffirm the principle that no individual is above the laws that protect us all.

**Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone on behalf of the concerned citizens of Blandford Blenheim Township.**

# Health Repercussions from Construction Equipment Beeping

## Main Health Impacts:

### 1. Stress and anxiety

- Chronic exposure to repetitive, high-pitched beeping can trigger the body's stress response.
- Over time, it can cause constant low-grade stress, irritability, mood swings, trouble concentrating, and even depression or anxiety disorders.

### 2. Sleep disruption

- Persistent beeping during resting hours can seriously disturb sleep patterns.
- Poor sleep weakens immune function, raises blood pressure, and impacts memory and mental health.

### 3. Hearing damage (at close distances)

- Beeping alarms often range from 97 to 112 decibels (dB) - very loud!
- Repeated exposure can cause cumulative hearing strain and permanent hearing loss.

### 4. Cardiovascular effects

- Chronic noise exposure is tied to increased risks of hypertension (high blood pressure) and heart disease.

### 5. Cognitive and emotional effects

- Repetitive noise reduces cognitive function and emotional well-being.
- Children exposed to environmental noise show poorer academic performance and behavioral challenges.

## Official Standards and References:

- World Health Organization (WHO): Recommends average daytime noise exposure be below 55 dB and nighttime exposure below 40 dB.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Recognizes construction noise as a harmful environmental stressor.
- Health Canada: Lists environmental noise as a public health risk.

# Health Repercussions from Construction Equipment Beeping

## Summary:

Long-term exposure to loud construction beeping can cause stress, sleep problems, cardiovascular risks, cognitive decline, hearing issues, and mental health struggles.

## Sources for Case Studies and Research:

Sources for Case Studies and Research:

- World Health Organization (WHO) - Environmental Noise Guidelines  
(<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789289053563>)

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Noise Pollution Resources  
(<https://www.epa.gov/noise>)

- Health Canada - Guidance for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/environmental-workplace-health/reports-publications/environmental-noise.html>)

- PubMed Database - Search for "construction noise health impacts"  
(<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>)

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) - Noise and Hearing Loss Prevention  
(<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise/>)

These resources contain scientific studies, public health guidelines, and documented cases examining how noise, including construction beeping, impacts human health.

**Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone on behalf of the concerned citizens of Blandford Blenheim township.**

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** OP 25-02-1 and ZN 1-25-01  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 15, 2025 8:29:21 PM

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## **OP 25-02-1 and ZN 1-25-01**

Josif and Lydia Catana

Application for official plan amendment and zone change Pt Lt 7, Conc Blenheim 492273 was except Pt 3 and 6 Pl 41R-3823  
807417 Oxford Rd 29.

I am responding to the notice of the application for zone change by Mr and Mrs Catana located at 935929 Blenheim Rd, sent out to specific property owners in this community.

We did not receive notice of the proposed zone change. I have since learned that because our property boundaries are not within the specific range, even tho we are very much affected by the business being run by these two neighbours, that we did not 'qualify' to be made aware of the zone change scheduled for April 16, 2025.

It can be assumed that many others who are directly affected by this proposal are also not aware of this event and the process required to address this.

I was contacted by a neighbour.

This matter seems to be pushed thru at a very fast pace. Apparently the letter was received by the select group of property owners within the qualifications required. . We are proposing to have this slowed down to a pace where all involved can have their opinions and rights heard.

We have grown up in this area and in this community. We have many decades of functioning as a close community, where we respect each others properties and lifestyles. After a brief absence of a few years, we came back to this community to build our home in 1991. Many of our neighbors, both on either side and across from us, as well as down in the village of Wolverton have lived here for decades. There have been a few new families who have moved in who have adapted and aligned with the peacefulness of this community.

Approximately 6+ years ago, the Catanas started building their home. There have been many years of construction that has gone on to complete what they now have there. We have, as a community and as close neighbours accepted what goes into building a home. We also have a very good understanding of what agricultural zoning means, we have no issues with accepting what is involved and included in farming.

I have spoken with various neighbours and I would like to address the one question which seemed to stand out.

The Catanas would've had to have building permits for what is going on there on their property. How were those permits authorized if the Township and county were not aware of what their future plans were? The entertainment industry on a commercial scale. .. And if they were, why were they allowed to pursue that when it is not zoned for that particular activity? We heard construction for months which would not be required to set up tents. We have witnessed numerous loads of concrete being delivered to the Catana address. We would like to review the building permits issued to the Catanas for the commercial venue business that they now have set up there. It is advertised as such **WITHOUT THE APPROPRIATE ZONING AND IS NOW ALMOST FULLY BOOKED FROM MAY-OCTOBER**. This is obvious a classic case of **MISLEADING THE PUBLIC AND THEIR CUSTOMERS..**

Who would want to have their event interrupted by the police?? If the police are called to deal with the neighbours who disregard the bylaw put in place to protect ALL members of the community, then this would be a constant issue that would ultimately affect their business.

This past year we have had to put up with constant construction noise and the back up beeping of huge equipment, which would start up before any of us were even awake. We would wake up to it. It would go on late into the night.

At times we have woken up at 12:30 am and 1:30 am to that same beeping.

It was constant. We could not get away from it and even with our windows closed and our AC on we could not escape it.

Over the past years, of non enforced zoning - we have been forced to endure the big parties which Catanas have put on - the sound of the music - the pounding, and then when the speeches start we can hear exactly what they are saying. As if it is happening in our front yard. We are 2 fields over from where their commercial operation is set up. . It is obvious that part of the reason for this is because the sound travels down the cliff to the river and as we are so close to the river, it hits us full force. We are only two small fields to the north of [REDACTED].

I have recordings of the level of noise that comes from their parties. From our front door.

Bylaw#2357-2023 should be protecting us from this onslaught of intrusion and invasion of our once peaceful environment here in Blandford Blenheim.

I have contacted the OPP numerous times to file a report on the harassment. I followed this up with written complaints filed with Mr Dave Robertson. These complaints spanned over 2024. I have copies of these complaints and I'm sure the bylaw officer also has them filed.

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Bylaw #2357-2023 /section 7: ENFORCEMENT.

It is seriously concerning that...

They(Catanas) know we are being affected, yet they continued with no permit or legal right. If they would have had a permit why was the excessive noise allowed to go on so far into the night when these permits would or should have taken into consideration that we, as a community, also have rights. How is it ok to victimize such a large part of the community?

When the peace is being disturbed at such a high level and when it affects such a broad area, **SOMEONE NEEDS TO HAVE THE POWER TO PROTECT THE VICTIMS** . The Catanas are not operating under the construct that the rest of the community lives under. They have not suffered any debilitating penalties or repercussions for their past violations. We **MUST** defend our rights to live in peace in our homes .

I would like to bring to attention that even though I have filed numerous complaint letters to Mr. Dave Robertson, the bylaw officer, following numerous calls after hours to the police, nothing has ever changed. Filing for a zone change is not the solution to this concerning, controversial obvious situation we have been suffering through.

Allowing this illegal activity to continue without zoning and then deceitfully claiming they have permits from the very beginning should be addressed.

I have had numerous conversations with Mr. Dave Robertson, which also included the helicopter which has been flying overhead and down into the valley of the Nith river onto Catanas' property once a week for at least six years. He found this to be suspicious activity. I have recorded footage over the years of this helicopter flying overhead once a week. Dave himself has also seen and heard this same craft and has asked me to try and get the numbers off the helicopter, but it is pretty well impossible without trespassing.

I have had feedback from one of the officers who apparently did show up to the Catana residence during one of their parties and said that when he reached them it was obvious it was a large party by the vehicles parked there but .. that they had stopped the music.

It appeared to me that no follow up was ever done on some of the other calls, as the music just kept going. We have always been careful to quote the bylaw which protects the residents of this community with respect to noise and heavy traffic but nothing has been done to protect our rights in accordance with the bylaw sections included in this letter of concern but can also easily be pulled up online. Yet, the Catanas ignored this.

Through my multiple conversations with Mr. Dave Robertson, he was very gracious, supportive and compassionate with what we were having to live with. He actually informed

me that he has no power and no authority to change anything. That we, in fact, have more power than he does. He is an ex police officer.

This constant battle with the Catanas has affected our health to a degree where we have to abandon our home when they decide that they're going to have their parties and events.

Last summer, when the construction vehicles were constant and continuous, we also had to abandon our home to get relief. This does not align with our rights to have a place of refuge and a place where we can heal. We cannot enjoy our property as is our human right.

Another concern by those informed of this zone change is ~ How will this zone change affect our property value???

It is very obvious that the Catanas are quite confident that they are going to get their zone change. That their financial contribution to sections of the community would serve them well. They have built a huge city block, which includes their commercial business with the confidence that what they have had planned all along would be possible without first applying for a zone change. .. With no regard to the community and how their plans will affect not just agricultural farming residents, but also the residential area surrounding them. Wolverton is just across the river and they can hear the noise so loud that it is like it is in there very living room in the home in which they live.

We are located at [REDACTED] which is just over the bridge and we are surrounded by several properties very close to each other which are all zoned residential.

I have a sister who lives on Oxford Rd 29 [REDACTED]. Their home is over 1 km away from the Catanas. They are unable to be here for the zoning meeting as they are in Holland. They can hear the party from their farm and the noise does not travel along the river to get to them.

The noise levels can be heard with windows closed. The lighting they use lights up the whole section of Blenheim Road and Township Road 7 and 8. It is like a city block lit up with power lights that radiate across the two fields which separate us and light up the entire sky above them. There is no reason why we should have to close our windows to be able to live in our homes and close our blinds to shut out the bright lights to accommodate their business.

I have visited their online website and they offer 100 acres of scenic beauty in the heart of Blandford Blenheim. With room for 100-500 guests. Their proposal for Zone change caps the amount of guests at 250. Quite the discrepancy. Why the need to be deceitful? What else are they being deceitful about? Is it 250 or 500? What other surprises are we going to see?

We will fight to protect the value of our properties in this community as well as the peace and right to enjoy our homes. In accordance with the bylaws.

We are here to oppose this zoning change at every level!

Bylaw #2357-2023

h) Noise means sound that is unusual or excessive, and likely to disturb the quiet enjoyment of

the inhabitants of the municipality.

i) Residential area means an area designated as residential in the zoning by law of the township of Blandford Blenheim, as may be amended from time to time.

#### Section 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

a) No person shall make, cause or permit to be made, any noise or vibration, at any time, which is likely to disturb the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort, or convenience of the inhabitants of the township.

#### Section 3: PROHIBITIONS BY TIME AND PLACE

a) No person shall make, cause or permit to be made those noise or vibrations, specifically listed in scheduled to within the prohibited time shown for residential areas if those noises are vibrations are likely to disturb the quiet, peace, rest enjoyment, comfort, or convenience of the inhabitants of the township.

We are fighting to retain the landscape of our peaceful community. We stand firm on our rights to ensure that each member has peace and a place of refuge in their home and on their property.

Thank you for hearing and taking into consideration our concerns and fears for the future of our community.

Mark, Myra, Deanna, James Livingstone

Sent from my iPad