



Environmental Assessments & Approvals

April 25, 2017

AEC 14-147

Moco Development
c/o Innovative Planning Solutions
150 Dunlop Street East, Suite 201
Barrie, Ontario L4M 1B2

Attention: Darren Vella, President

**Re: Response to Grand River Conservation Authority Comments Regarding
Future Road Connection to Block 128 at Moco Development, Part of North
Half of Lot 31, Concession 1, Township of East Luther – Grand Valley,
County of Dufferin**

Dear Mr. Vella:

Azimuth Environmental Consulting, Inc. (Azimuth) prepared an Environmental Impact Study (EIS; August 2015) in support of the proposed development application for the abovementioned property. Comments were received from the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA; March 29, 2016). Subsequent to the receipt of these comments, Azimuth prepared an EIS Response Letter (December 20, 2016). GRCA was generally satisfied with Azimuth's 2016 EIS Response Letter but advised that additional studies would be requested by GRCA if and when a future crossing was proposed connecting Block 121 (formerly Block 128) with proposed development to the west of Boyne Creek. GRCA indicated that an EIS of the valley feature should be undertaken to find the preferred crossing location to prevent future conflicts with associated used. Through subsequent discussions with GRCA (Conference call March 29, 2017 with Nathan Garland (GRCA) and subsequent email correspondence (N. Garland, March 31, 2017), it is our understanding that GRCA is requesting information that justifies the proposed access block in the location shown (Figure 3). Therefore, the purpose of this letter is to provide rationale from a Natural Heritage perspective for the location of the proposed access block for potential future connections across the Creek.

The property is currently used for agricultural purposes and is bisected by a stream, Boyne Creek, which drains north to the Grand River. At this time, the design plans



propose residential development on the west side of the property only, leaving the east portion (Block 121) undeveloped (Figure 3).

The design drawings have proposed that Block 114 will serve as the location of a future road allowance that will provide a connection to Block 121. The Town of Grand Valley has selected this location as the most suitable for a future crossing based on an existing culvert crossing that was previously established by the landowner for access purposes.

Azimuth has reviewed the preliminary figure of the proposed crossing at Boyne Creek prepared by Valdor Engineering Inc (appended). Based on our preliminary review of this figure, from a Natural Heritage perspective, Block 114 is an appropriate location for the proposed road crossing over Boyne Creek for the following reasons:

- At this location there is an existing farm access road and culvert crossing therefore, it represents an area that has already been disturbed to accommodate the current agricultural land use;
- Ecological Land Classification for Southern Ontario (ELC; Lee *et al.* 1998) was utilized to identify and map vegetation communities on the property (Figure 2). The riparian corridor that bisects the property is associated with four ELC community classifications: Reed Canary Grass Mineral Meadow Marsh Type (MAM2-2), Dry-Fresh Sugar Maple Deciduous Forest Type (FOD5-1), Dry-Fresh White Cedar Coniferous Forest (FOC2-2) and Dry-Moist Old Field Meadow Type (CUM1-1). None of the communities documented are considered to be unique or rare locally or provincially. There were no plant species of federal or provincial conservation concern documented within these vegetation communities;
- Encroachment into wetland (MAM2-2) habitat would be avoided;
- Encroachment into the woodland habitat would be required. The woodland features on the property are not considered to be significant based on provincial and the Town's criteria. We would recommend that tree removal is minimized to that required for the potential future crossing;
- No amphibian activity was documented during Azimuth's 2015 field investigations. There was no observed evidence of long term ponding of water within the riparian corridor during the daytime spring visits. Therefore, the riparian corridor, and specifically, the location of the proposed road crossing, does not provide breeding amphibian habitat for amphibians;
- Four Species At Risk (SAR) birds were documented during the course of the three breeding bird surveys completed by Azimuth in 2015: Barn Swallow (Threatened, THR), Bobolink (THR), Eastern Meadowlark (THR) and Eastern Wood-pewee (Special Concern, SC):



- Barn Swallow: No structures suitable for nesting were observed on the property. The CUM1-1 and MAM2-2 communities of the property provide potential foraging habitat for Barn Swallow however, the creation of a roadway through the CUM1-1 community does not represent a significant loss and potential foraging habitat for Barn Swallow would remain within the valleylands post-development should a road be constructed;
- Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark: No individuals were confirmed to be nesting or have the central area of their defended territories within the property limits; and
- Eastern Wood-pewee: Singing males were documented on the property. Eastern Wood-pewee is a woodland species. Currently, there is no protection afforded to Eastern Wood-pewee according to Ontario's ESA. We would recommend that the proposed location of the future crossing minimize the necessity to remove woodland habitat.
- No SAR plants (*i.e.* Butternut [END]) were identified on the property during the vegetation inventory; and
- From a fisheries perspective, the proposed location of a future access road represents an area that historically has been disturbed and minimizes the need for vegetation removal. Crossing should be designed such that fish and fish habitat will not be impacted.

Additional SAR studies will be required at the time of potential future works to ensure compliance with the ESA. The forest habitat provides potentially suitable habitat for bats. There are currently three species of bats listed as Endangered according to Ontario's ESA. Should removal of forest habitat be required, consideration must be given to END bats. Given the dynamic character of the natural environment, there is a constant variation in habitat use. Changes to policy, or the natural environment, could result in shifts, removal, or addition of new species that are protected under the ESA.

Future works in proximity to the watercourse (e.g., road construction, culvert installation) must be in compliance with the Federal Fisheries Act. A qualified fisheries biologist should assess the proposed works and determine the need for Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Permitting (*i.e.*, Self Assessment or Request for Review).

As indicated by GRCA, additional studies and a GRCA issued permit would be required if such a crossing is required or proposed within the valley feature.



In conclusion, given the aforementioned reasons, Block 114 is a suitable location for future access to Block 121 from a Natural Heritage perspective. We trust that this summary suits your present requirements. If you require additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,
AZIMUTH ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, INC.

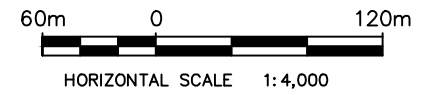
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Moran'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Lisa Moran, B.Sc.Env.
Terrestrial Ecologist

Attach:
Figure 2. Environmental Features
Figure 3. Proposed Development Plan
Valdor Engineering Inc. Draft Proposed Crossing Span



- LEGEND:**
- Approx. Property Boundary
 - Watercourse
 - GRCA Floodplain
 - - - Access Drive
 - Foundation and Silo
 - ⊕ Bird Survey Locations
 - Confirmed Centre of Meadowlark Territory
 - Vegetation Communities
 - CUM* Dry Moist Old Field Cultural Meadow
 - FOC2-2* Dry-Fresh White Cedar Coniferous Forest
 - FOD5-1* Dry Fresh Sugar Maple Deciduous Forest
 - MAM2-2* Reed Canary Grass Meadow Marsh



Environmental Features

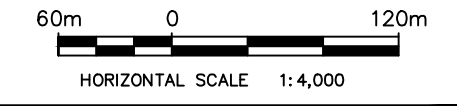
County Rd. 25,
Grand Valley, ON

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| DATE ISSUED: | December 2016 | Figure No. 2 |
| CREATED BY: | JLM | |
| PROJECT NO.: | 14-147 | |
| REFERENCE: | First Base Solutions | |

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LEGEND:
 — Approx. Property Boundary
 — Watercourse
 — GRCA Floodplain

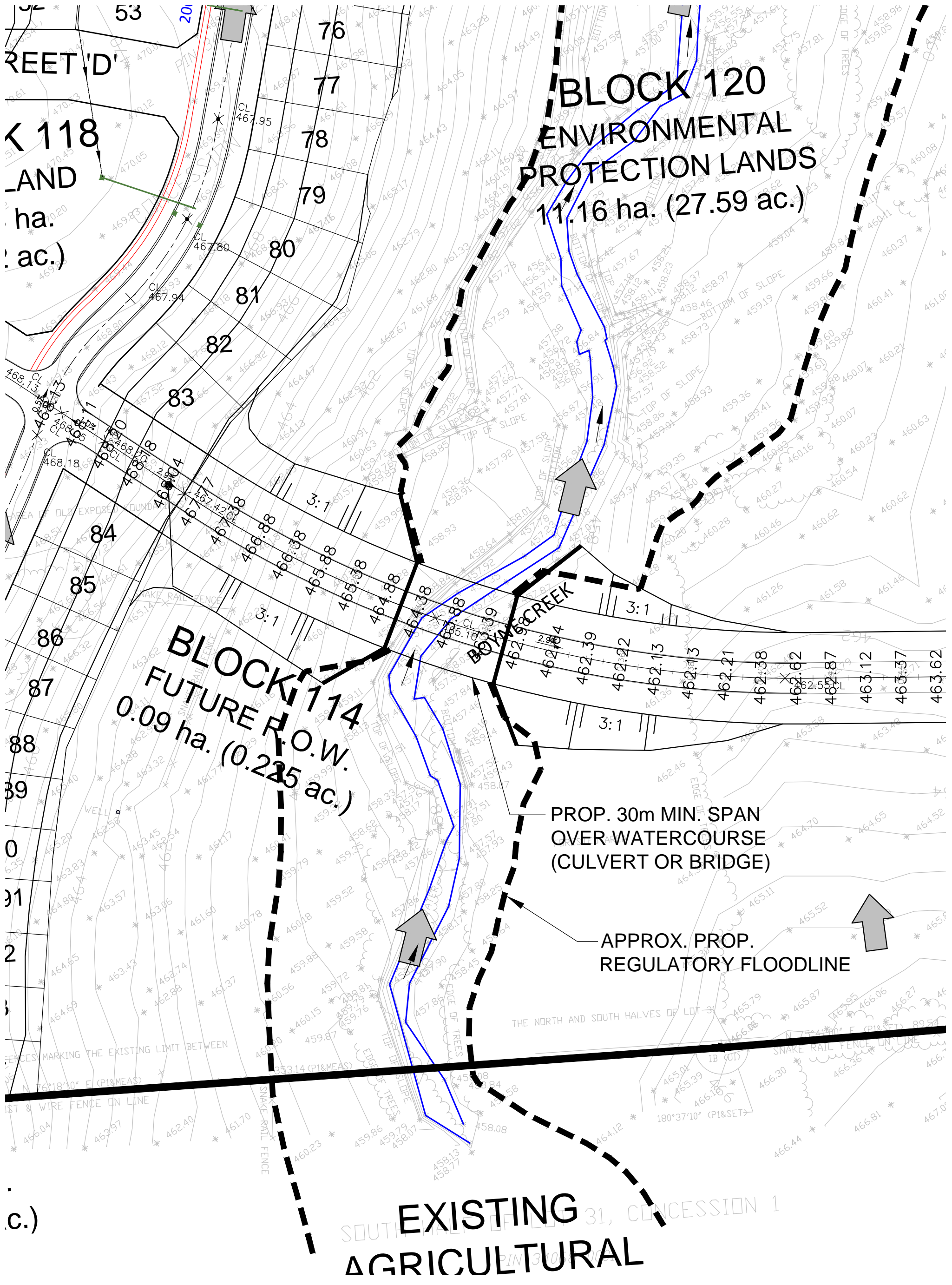


Proposed Development Plan

County Rd. 25,
Grand Valley, ON

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|--------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| DATE ISSUED: | December 2016 | Figure No. 3 |
| CREATED BY: | JLM | |
| PROJECT NO.: | 14-147 | |
| REFERENCE: | First Base Solutions | |

Plotted by: MCCARTNEY on April 5, 2017 at 3:00pm
 File: M:\14 Projects\14-147 Moco EIS\04.0 - Drafting\14-147.dwg Layout: EIS3 Plotcode: 2.5
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REET 'D'
K 118
LAND
ha.
ac.)

**BLOCK 120
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION LANDS**
11.16 ha. (27.59 ac.)

**BLOCK 114
FUTURE R.O.W.**
0.09 ha. (0.225 ac.)

PROP. 30m MIN. SPAN
OVER WATERCOURSE
(CULVERT OR BRIDGE)

APPROX. PROP.
REGULATORY FLOODLINE

**EXISTING
AGRICULTURAL**

c.)