RON DAVIDSON
LAND USE PLANNING CONSULTANT INC.

October 1, 2026

Municipality of West Grey
402813 Grey Road 4
RR 2
Durham, ON
N0G 1R0

Attention: Matt Rapke
Senior Planner

Dear Mr. Rapke

Re: Planning Justification Report
Applications for Consent and Minor Variance
Part Lots 41 and 42, Concession 3, EGR
Geographic Township of Glenelg
Municipality of West Grey
Owner: Amsey Martin

This Planning Justification Report has been prepared in support of the Consent and Minor Variance applications that have been filed with the Municipality of West Grey pertaining to the lot creation involving the above-noted property.

Please consider the following:

Purpose of Application:

Amsey Martin owns a 75.89 hectare farm in the former Township of Glenelg upon which his family residence and farm buildings exist. Mr. Martin proposes to sever a parcel comprising 37 hectares and containing the existing structures and retain a 38.89 hectare lot.

The proposed lot creation is illustrated on the severance sketch submitted with the Consent application.

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Subject Property:

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of the Concession 2 / Concession 4 intersection, in the former Glenelg Township, approximately 4.0 kilometres northeast of Durham.

A house, barn, and four accessory buildings exist on the site. About 39 hectares of the 75.89 hectare farm are currently used for cash-cropping and pasturing cattle. The balance of the property is predominantly forested. A series of wetland features exist within the forested area on the site's east side.

Adjacent Land Uses:

Lands located within the immediate vicinity of the subject property are represented predominantly by a mix of agricultural and forested lands. A few residential lots also exist nearby, including such a parcel that was severed along the west side of the subject property. In addition, an aggregate extraction operation is located approximately 900 metres to the northwest.

Municipality of West Grey Zoning By-law:

The subject lands are zoned 'A1' (Rural) and 'NE' (Natural Environment) in the Municipality of West Grey Zoning By-law.

The 'A1' zone requires a minimum lot area of 40 hectares and a minimum lot frontage of 122 metres. The table below evaluates the size of the proposed severed and retained parcels within the context of the 'A1' zone provisions.

Table 1: Zoning Compliance

Provisions	***A2 Zone Requirement***	***Severed Lot***	***Retained Lot***
Minimum Lot Area	40 ha	37 ha*	38.89 ha*
Minimum Lot Frontage	122 m	117 m and 244 m+/-	778 m+/-

* Relief from Zoning By-law is required

The Minor Variance application is requesting the required relief noted above.

Grey County Official Plan:

The subject lands are designated primarily 'Agricultural' on Schedule A of the Grey County Official Plan. The balance of the site falls within the 'Hazard Lands' designation.

Permitted uses on lands designated 'Agricultural' include agriculture, forestry, agricultural-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses.

The following policies are relevant for severances involving farm splits:

5.2.3 Consent Policies

Lot creation in the Agricultural land use type is generally discouraged and may only be permitted for agricultural uses, agricultural-related uses, surplus farmhouse severances, infrastructure, and conservation lots in accordance with section 5.2.3 of this Plan.

1) A consent for one new lot may be permitted provided the original farm parcel is minimum of 40 hectares. The options for consent would be:

a) One lot severed to create a farm parcel of generally 40 hectares in size, provided both the severed and retained lots are 40 hectares in size and are both intended to be used for agricultural uses. Where a severance is proposed to create a farm lot smaller than 40 hectares, an official plan amendment will not be required, but an Agricultural Report is required by a qualified individual, (which may include an agrologist, agronomist, or a professional agricultural business degree) that addresses the following criteria:

1) Agriculture shall be the proposed use of both the severed and retained lots,

2) A farm business plan is required, demonstrating the viability of the severed and retained uses for the farm operations proposed,

3) Demonstration that both the severed and retained lots will be economically viable and flexible to respond to economic change. The applicant shall provide information necessary to evaluate the viability of the new farming operations on the parcels of land. Information pertaining to the scale and nature of the operation, projected revenue, expenses, financing, soil quality, water quality and quantity, and any other viability criteria relevant to the proposal shall be provided to the satisfaction of the County, in consultation with the Province,

4) Demonstration that nearby lots of similar size and farm capability to the proposed lots are not available and suitable for the intended agricultural use,

5) The suitability of both the severed and retained lots should be assessed based on:

i. The type and size of agricultural operations common in the area or to the type of agricultural operation proposed, or

ii. Demonstration that a new viable form of agriculture is suitable for the area and lot sizes proposed,

6) Demonstration that both the severed and retained lots remain sufficiently large to permit a change; in the agricultural product produced, an adjustment in the scale of operation, or diversification; and,

7) Both the severed and retained lots shall comply with Provincial MDS Formulae.

With regard to these policies, it is important to note that figures used in the Official Plan are generally meant to allow for a minor degree of flexibility. As such, the proposed 38.89 hectare lot has been deemed by the County and West Grey Planners to be "close enough" to the 40-hectare requirement, and therefore the size of this parcel is not being questioned. The Planners, however, have advised that the severed parcel – which would comprise 37 hectares of land – needs to be reviewed within the context of the above-stated policies that allow for a smaller farm lot. As such, please consider the following:

- Mr. Martin will continue to own, reside on, and farm the 37 hectare parcel in question. Agriculture will continue as the principal use of these lands;

- During the pre-consultation discussions, the County advised that a farm business plan is not required, given that the size of the property is close to the required 40 hectares;

- Notwithstanding the exemption from having to conduct a farm business plan, it is still worth noting that Mr. Martin's farm will provide at least 24 hectares of agricultural land for cash-cropping and the pasturing of cattle which, together with the existing livestock operation, should result in this parcel remaining as a viable farming operation. A lot of this size will also be flexible to respond to economic change and provide for various other farming opportunities;

- The proposed 37 hectare severed parcel, as well as the 38.89 hectare retained lot, are generally consistent with the size of most farms within the immediately vicinity. The majority of the farms comprise approximately 40 hectares, although there are also several smaller farm parcels nearby, including lots comprising 9.88 hectares, 10.22 hectares, 20.75 hectares, 23 hectares, and 31 hectares. As such, the size of the severed parcel would be consistent with most farms in the area. Also of relevance to this matter is the fact that the severed parcel would include more land used for agricultural purposes than many of the lots that actually comply with the 40 hectare requirement; and,

- An MDS Report has been prepared demonstrating that sufficient area exists on the vacant retained lot to erect a house outside of the required setback associated with the livestock facility located on severed parcel. No other livestock facilities exist within 750 metres of the vacant, retained parcel.

Based on the forgoing, the severed parcel – despite being slightly smaller than the recommended 40 hectare farm size – is not out of character with the neighbouring properties in terms of lot size or the amount of workable land. There should be no concern with regard to the viability or flexibility of this 37 hectare farm.

Schedule B identifies an area on the retained parcel as 'Mineral Resource Area'. The creation of non-farm sized lots (i.e. lots under 20 hectares) is generally prohibited on lands having this constraint. Given that both the severed and retained parcels are not considered non-farm lots, this policy does not apply.

Furthermore, the forested lands on the subject property are designated 'Significant Woodland' on Appendix B of the Official Plan. Also, portions of this forested area are shown as 'Other Wetlands'. The policies of the Official Plan protect these natural heritage features by limiting development and site alteration in these areas and on the adjacent lands. Any future development (e.g. house, barn, etc.) that occurs on the vacant retained lot can occur well outside of the setbacks recommended by the County Official Plan, and therefore these features will not be harmed.

Based on the foregoing, it is evident that the proposed severance conforms to the County of Grey Official Plan.

Provincial Planning Statement:

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) protects prime agricultural lands by limiting land uses and discouraging the fragmentation of farm parcels. Section 4.3.3 *Lot Creation and Lot Adjustments* states:

1. Lot creation in prime agricultural areas is discouraged and may only be permitted in accordance with provincial guidance for:

a) agricultural uses, provided that the lots are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations;

This policy has been implemented through the Grey County Official Plan, which has established a minimum lot area of approximately 40 hectares in the 'Agricultural' designated areas but does allow for a smaller farm lot where justified. This matter has been addressed in a previous section of this Planning Justification Report.

The PPS also protects areas of known sand and gravel deposits as well as natural heritage features including Significant Woodlands. These policies have also been implemented through the Grey County Official Plan and have been addressed previously in this Report.

Based on the foregoing, the proposed farm split is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

Minor Variance Tests of The Planning Act:

Relief is required from the 'minimum lot area' requirement of the 'A1' zone as it applies to both the severed and retained parcels, as both lots are under 40 hectares in size.

Section 45 of The Planning Act gives the Committee of Adjustment the authority to grant relief from a provision(s) of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law provided such relief passes the following four tests:

1. Does the Minor Variance maintain the intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

Comment: The proposed lot creation conforms with the relevant Grey County Official Plan policies, including those that pertain to farm lots under 40 hectares in size, as explained above.

2. Does the Minor Variance maintain the intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?

Comment: The 40 hectare minimum lot area standard of the Zoning By-law is designed to reflect the same requirement in the Official Plan for lot creation involving prime agricultural land. Given that the severance has been proven to conform to the

Official Plan on this very matter, this lot creation will also maintain the intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.

3. Is the Minor Variance minor in nature?

Comment: This question is generally re-phrased as "what impact will the variance have on the adjacent lands?" A reduction in the lot area requirement from 40 hectares to 37 hectares and 38.89 hectares should not impact on the neighbouring properties because the reduced lot size will not be noticeable.

4. Would the Minor Variance represent an appropriate or desirable use of the land and buildings?

Comment: The proposed relief will allow for this large parcel to be severed into two lots that can serve as separate, viable farms for two families. This is desirable and represents an appropriate use of the subject lands.

Concluding Comments:

The proposed lot creation conforms to the County Official Plan and is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement. The Consent application should be approved.

The Minor Variance passes the four tests listed in the Planning Act and should also be given favourable consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Davidson, BES, RPP, MCIP

c.c. Amsey Martin c/o Eli Sherk