

**Montrose Pit**  
**Category 1 – Class “A” Licence, Pit Below Water**  
**For Capital Paving Inc.**

**Visual Impact Assessment Report**  
**July 2008**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Proposed Montrose Pit Property is owned by two landowners and consists of a total of approximately 41.72 hectares (102.7 acres) located south of the village of West Montrose in Part of Lots 71, 74 and 75, Concession German Company Tract (GCT), in the Township of Woolwich, Regional Municipality of Waterloo. This visual impact assessment report has been prepared in support of the required planning approvals to allow a Category 1 – Class “A” licence, pit below water under the Aggregate Resources Act.

An inventory and analysis of the site was prepared to understand the context and existing landscape character of the site and its surroundings. Views into the property from neighbouring properties and public roadways were then identified and assessed for potential negative visual impacts. Using the information collected, mitigation measures were recommended to minimize these visual impacts of the pit operations while changing the landscape character and experience of the property as minimally as possible. The following mitigation measures are recommended to be implemented during the following phases of the operations plan:

### **Phase A**

1. Install a vegetated berm minimum 3m high along the south licence boundary west of Letson Drive. The existing trees along the south licence boundary will soften the impact of the berm within the existing landscape.
2. Install a vegetated berm minimum 3m high between the western edge of Letson Drive and Areas 2 and 5.

### **Phase F**

1. Install a vegetated berm minimum 3m high along the south licence boundary east of Letson Drive.
2. Install a vegetated berm minimum 3m high between the Martin Property and the Limit of Extraction.

Berms are recommended as temporary visual barriers to obstruct direct views of the extraction process. Once extraction is complete, open views into the property may be restored by removing the temporary berms. The rehabilitated property can then be returned to its existing use. The recommended visual mitigation measures will minimize the negative visual impacts of the extraction operations, while allowing the property to be compatible with its surroundings upon its rehabilitation.

## BACKGROUND

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The Proposed Montrose Pit Property is located to the south of the village of West Montrose and the Township of Woolwich designates the proposed property as Agricultural.

As stated in the Official Plan of the Corporation of the Township of Woolwich:

*11.1 The establishment of a pit or quarry within the areas designated by this Plan, as Rural Land Use shall be considered as an interim use, which may be permitted after consideration and evaluation of the following:*

- f) ii) that Council has considered the impacts of the proposed pit or quarry on adjacent land uses and has concluded that the need for the use of the specific site for sand and gravel extraction outweighs the impacts associated with it, including its impact on the continued operation of adjacent lands for food production; and*

Therefore, in support of an Official Plan Amendment to allow a Category 1 – Class “A” licence, pit below water by Capital Paving Inc., a visual impact assessment report has been prepared by Harrington and Hoyle Ltd. This report shall be read in conjunction with the Montrose Pit Site Plans.



## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

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### **Context**

The proposed property to be licenced is owned by two landowners and consists of a total of approximately 41.72 hectares (102.7 acres) located in Part of Lots 71, 74 and 75, Concession German Company Tract (GCT), in the Township of Woolwich, Regional Municipality of Waterloo. The site is located to the south of the village of West Montrose. Access to the site is proposed to be from the east off of Regional Road #23 using an existing laneway that will be upgraded to an access road in Lot 74. Letson Drive runs north-south dividing the property into two (2) and serves as part of the Grand Valley Trail. There are three (3) trails which run through and near the proposed property: Grand Valley Trail, Kissing Bridge Trail, and the Trans Canada Trail. Refer to the Location Map (Figure 1).

### **Vegetation**

The existing property is composed of agricultural fields separated by deciduous hedgerows consisting of black cherry, basswood, elm, hackberry, and maple trees. A larger block of forested lands with an unevaluated wetland associated with the Grand River floodplain is found within these properties along the western and northwestern proposed boundaries but is excluded from the area to be licenced. A small woodlot is located east of the site.

### **Topography**

The majority of the proposed area to be licenced consists of gently to moderately rolling farmland presently in crop, hay production, and pasture. The lands generally slope from east to west with topography generally ranging from 341m above sea level (asl) in the east to 325m above sea level (asl) in the southwest.

### **Drainage**

A small tributary (tributary A) of the Grand River flows easterly through the northeast corner of the site before flowing into a constructed pond and then north into the river. A small swale (tributary B) conveys water from the small on-site pond in the northwest west into the wetlands.

### **Land Use**

The lands surrounding the site are mainly in agricultural use and/ or open space associated with the river. There is one house and associated barn and sheds belonging to one owner located on site, on the east side of Letson Drive. The house and buildings which belong to the other landowner are located north of the site and are not within the area to be licenced. There is also a house, barn and shed located on the farm directly south of the site, on the west side of Letson Drive. These houses and buildings are shown in the Landscape Character Map (Figure 3).

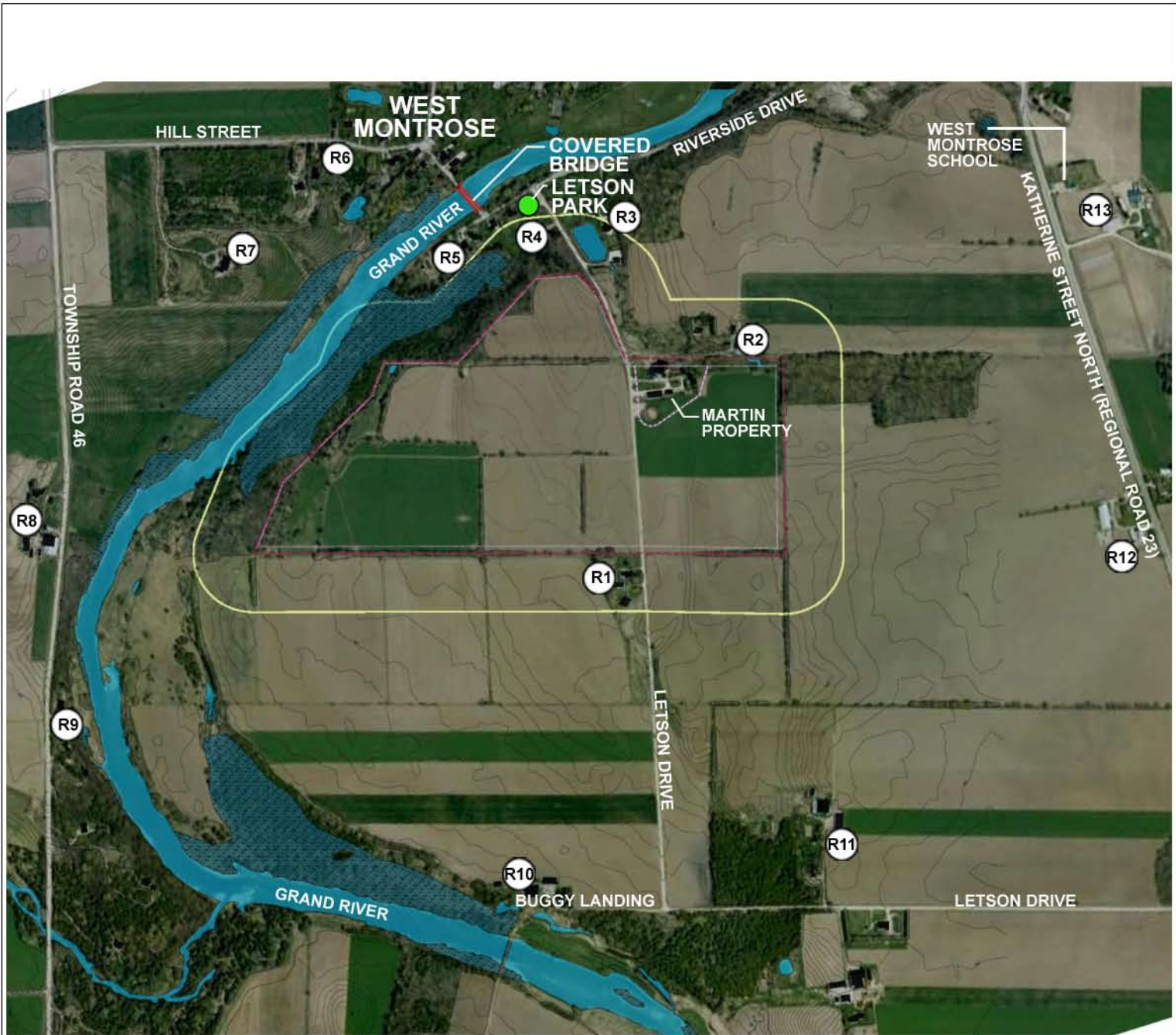
### **Cultural Landscape**

A number of homes and shops are located along Riverside Drive on the east side of the Grand River. The river flows in a southwesterly direction through the village of West Montrose, known for the historic wooden covered bridge which spans the river. The majority of homes, shops and restaurants are located on the west side of the river. West Montrose School is located on Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) east of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. Portions

of an unevaluated wetland that runs adjacent to the eastern shore of the Grand River are found on the surrounding lands west of the site.

As mentioned earlier, there are three (3) trails which run through and near the proposed property: Grand Valley Trail, Kissing Bridge Trail, and the Trans Canada Trail. Refer to the Location Map (Figure 1). These three trails cross paths at the corner of Letson Drive and Riverside Drive. Letson Park provides an area for picnicking and parking at this location. Refer to the Landscape Character Map (Figure 3).

There is an existing licenced pit located about 550m northeast of the proposed site and another located on the west side of the Grand River about 500m to the northwest of West Montrose and to the south of the subject site.



**LEGEND**

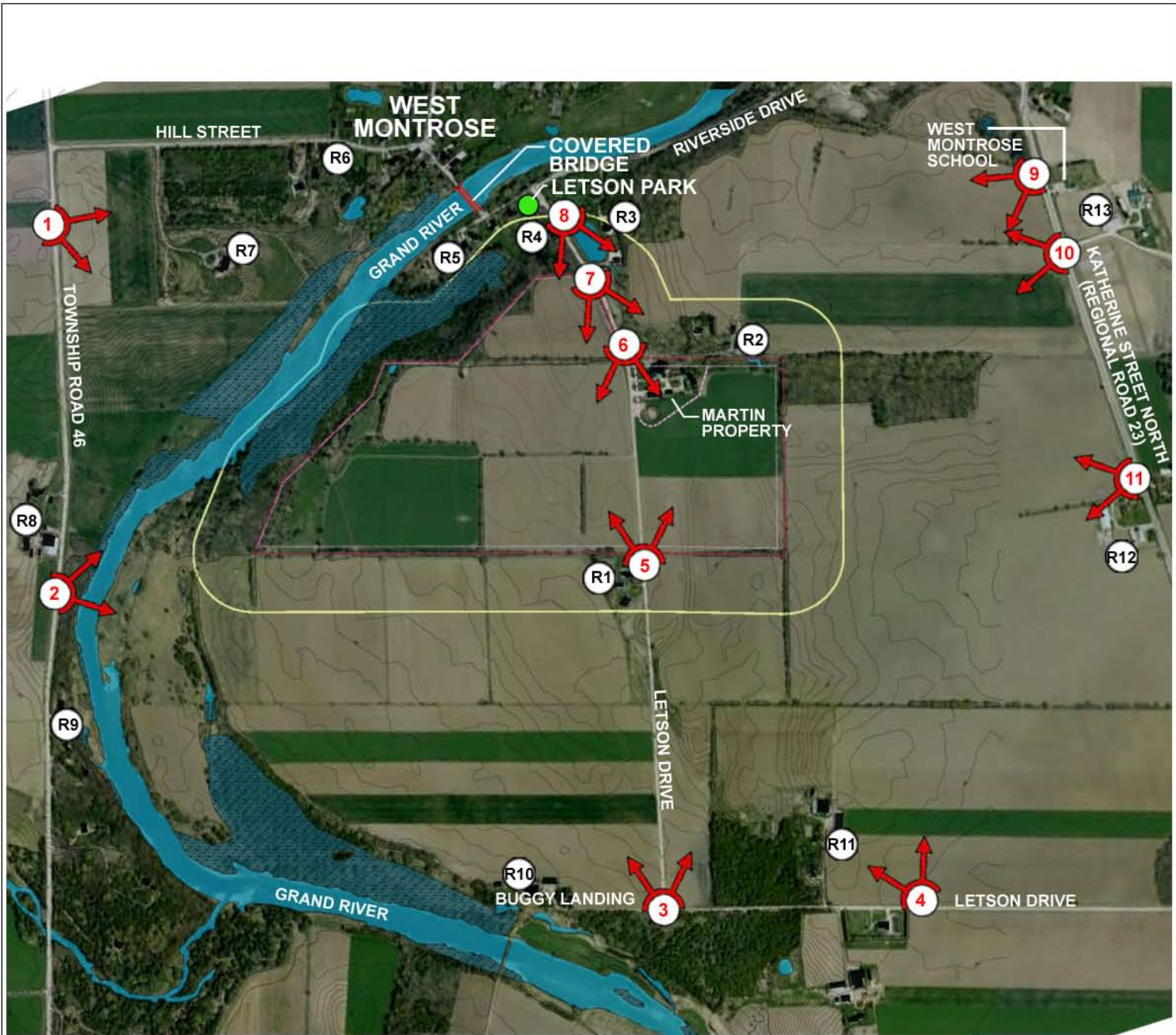
- LICENSE BOUNDARY
- REGULATORY SETBACK
- LIMIT OF EXTRACTION
- 120m SETBACK
- EXISTING CONTOUR
- EXISTING BUILDING
- RESIDENCE

Source: Google Earth. West Montrose. Scale undetermined; generated by First Base Solutions, Europa Technologies, & Navteq. Using Google Earth. (May 9, 2008)

NTS

**Montrose Pit**  
Capital Paving INC.

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAP**  
Visual Impact Assessment Report  
May 2008



**LEGEND**

- LICENSE BOUNDARY
- REGULATORY SETBACK
- LIMIT OF EXTRACTION
- 120m SETBACK
- EXISTING CONTOUR
- EXISTING BUILDING
- RESIDENCE
- VIEW LOCATION AND DIRECTION

Source: Google Earth. West Montrose. Scale undetermined; generated by First Base Solutions, Europa Technologies, & Navteq. Using Google Earth. (May 9, 2008)

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**Montrose Pit**  
Capital Paving INC.

**VIEW LOCATION MAP**  
Visual Impact  
Assessment Report  
May 2008

# VIEWS, VISUAL IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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Eleven (11) views were identified and assessed from different angles into the Montrose Pit Property. Mitigation measures were developed to minimize the visual impacts from the proposed pit operations. Refer to Figure 4 for the View Locations Map.

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## 1. View from the Southeast towards R7

The entrance to Residence R7 is located on Hill Street just east of Township Road 46. Residence R7 is approximately 720m northwest of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. This home is located at a much higher elevation than the Proposed Montrose Pit Property and overlooks the Grand River. This home is barely visible from Hill Street due to the surrounding woodlot and coniferous screening, as one can see in Figure 4a. However, looking northwest from within the Proposed Montrose Pit Property one can see Residence R7 in the Far Background. Refer to Figure 4b. Therefore, it is assumed that the Proposed Montrose Pit Property will sit in the far background of the View Southeast from R7.



FIGURE 4a. View 1  
*View from the Southeast towards R7*



FIGURE 4b. View 1  
*View from the Southeast towards R7*

### Visual Impacts

This view will be slightly modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the far background of this view, which means any visual impact caused by the proposed pit operations will be negligible.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 2. View East at R8 and R9

There is a section of Township Road 46 that is at a higher elevation than the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. This section is just north of Residence R8 approximately 420m northwest of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. From this location and from Residence R8 there is an expansive view of an agricultural field, the Grand River, and the woodlot in the background. There is no visual barrier restricting the view to Township Road 46. As a result, the Proposed Montrose Pit Property is visible in the far background along the skyline.



FIGURE 5. View 2  
View East at R8 and R9

Further south on Township Road 46 from Residence R8 sits Residence R9 along with other residences, some still under construction. There is tree screening between these residences and Township Road 46. Since these residences sit along the Grand River, it is expected that the views towards the river from the residences are not screened. Therefore, the Proposed Montrose Pit Property may be visible in the far background along the skyline.

### Visual Impacts

This view will be slightly modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the far background of this view, which means any visual impact caused by the proposed pit operations will be negligible.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

### 3. View North at R10

A portion of the Grand Valley Trail runs by Residence R10 along Buggy Landing and Letson Drive. The lands surrounding Residence R10 are agricultural fields; therefore, there is an unscreened view from this residence towards the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. In the view from the corner of Buggy Landing and Letson Drive the Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the background.

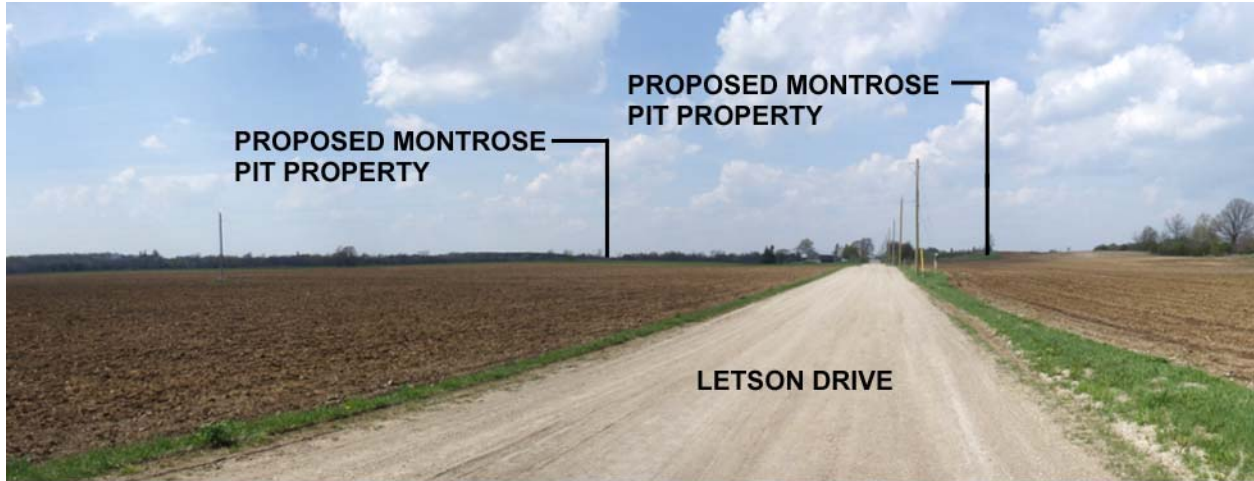


FIGURE 6. View 3  
View North at R10

#### Visual Impacts

This view will be modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the background and there is a lack of an existing visual barrier. Therefore, all proposed pit operations will be left exposed to users of Letson Drive and the Grand Valley Trail.

#### Mitigation Measures

It is recommended that before the operations of **Phase A** commence a minimum 3m high vegetated berm be installed along the south licence boundary west of Letson Drive as a temporary visual barrier. The existing trees along this boundary will soften the dominant impact of the berm within the landscape. Upon rehabilitation of the site the berms will have been removed and the property will be compatible with its surrounding landscape.

#### 4. View from the Northwest towards R11

The entrance to Residence R11 is on Letson Drive east of Residence R10. This residence is located at a slightly higher elevation approximately 765m southeast of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property; therefore, from Letson Drive one would not be able to make out the Proposed Montrose Pit Property in the background. Refer to Figure 7a. However, looking southeast from within the property one can see Residence R11 in the far background. Refer to Figure 7b. Therefore, it is assumed that the Proposed Montrose Pit Property will lie in the far background of the View Northwest from R11.

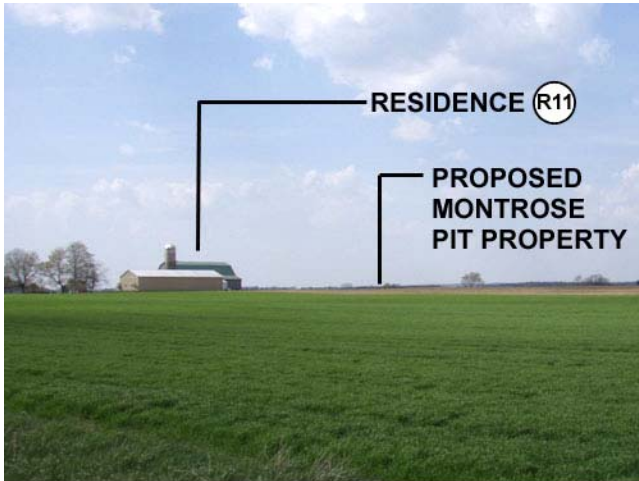


FIGURE 7a. View 4  
*View from the Northwest towards R11*

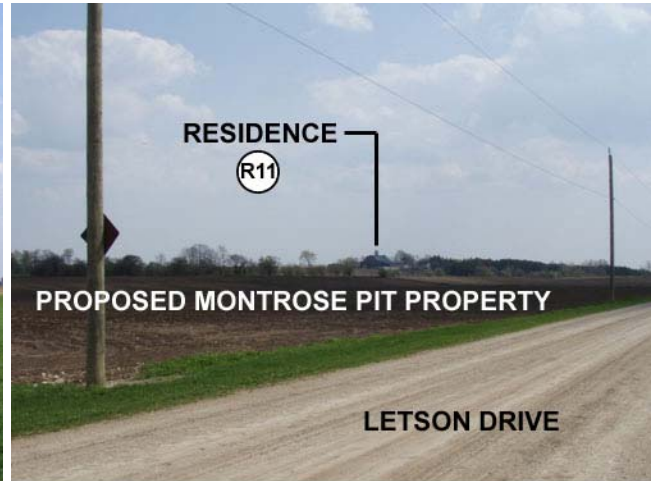


FIGURE 7b. View 4  
*View from the Northwest towards R11*

#### Visual Impacts

This view will be slightly modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the far background of this view, which means any visual impact caused by the proposed pit operations will be negligible.

#### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 5. View North at R1



FIGURE 8a. View 5  
*View North at R1*

Residence R1 is located on Letson Drive adjacent to the south licence boundary of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. There is currently a sparse vegetated visual barrier between the two properties, however, the view of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property is dominant at this residence. Figure 9 is the view west of Letson Drive, while Figure 10 is the view east of Letson Drive.

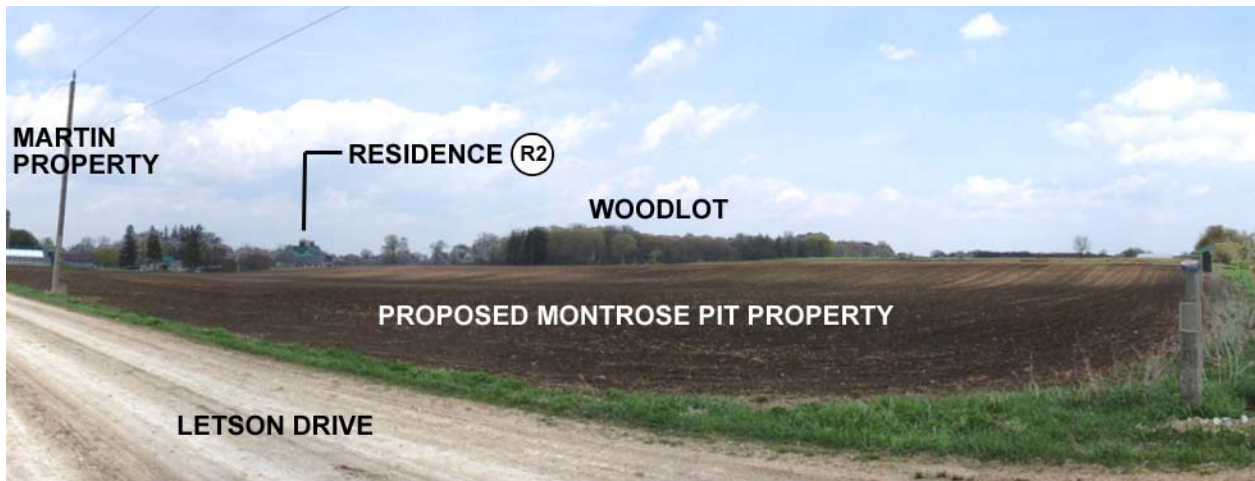


FIGURE 8b. View 5  
*View North at R1*

### Visual Impacts

The view of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property west of Letson Drive will be drastically modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The view of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property east of Letson Drive will begin to be drastically modified during Phase F of the operations plan. There is a lack of an existing visual barrier, so all proposed pit operations will be left exposed to Residence R1 and to users of Letson Drive and the Grand Valley Trail.

### Mitigation Measures

It is recommended that before the operations of **Phase A** commence a minimum 3m high vegetated berm be installed along the south licence boundary west of Letson Drive and along the west side of Letson Drive between the road and Area 5 as temporary visual barriers. It is also recommended that a similar vegetated berm be installed along the south licence boundary east of Letson Drive before the operations of **Phase F** commence. The existing trees along this licence boundary will soften the dominant impact of the berm within the landscape. Upon rehabilitation of the site the berms will have been removed and the property will be compatible with its surrounding landscape.

## 6. View South

Travelling south on Letson Drive, once entering the Proposed Montrose Pit Property, one would encounter a sudden change from a dominating naturalized berm on the west side of the road to the open field of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property.

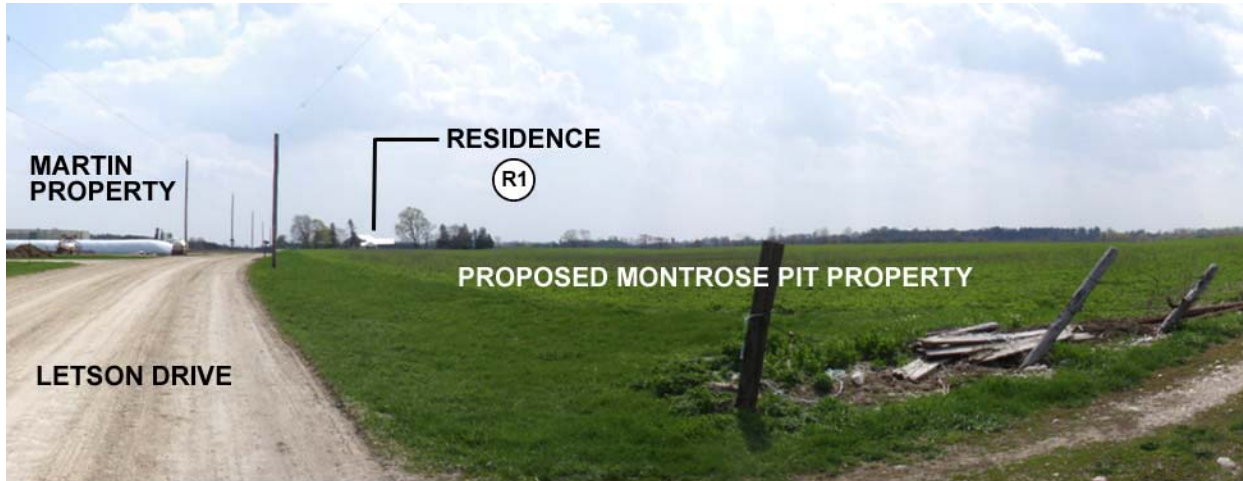


FIGURE 9. View 6  
View South

### Visual Impacts

The view of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property west of Letson Drive will be drastically modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The view of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property east of Letson Drive south of the Martin Property will begin to be modified during Phase F of the operations plan. There is a lack of an existing visual barrier, so all proposed pit operations will be left exposed to Residence R1 and to users of Letson Drive and the Grand Valley Trail.

### Mitigation Measures

It is recommended that before the operations of **Phase A** commence a minimum 3m high vegetated berm be installed along the west side of Letson Drive between the road and Area 2 as a temporary visual barrier. It is also recommended that an identical vegetated berm be installed between the Martin Property and the proposed Limit of Extraction before the operations of **Phase F** commence. Upon rehabilitation of the site the berms will have been removed and the property will be compatible with its surrounding landscape.

## 7. View South at R3

Residence R3 is located north of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property across Letson Drive from Residence R4. One of the residence's entrances is on Letson Drive. From this point one would see Letson Drive, a naturalized berm, and the silos on the Martin Property in the background.



FIGURE 10. View 7  
*View South at R3*

### Visual Impacts

This view will not be modified by the operations of the Proposed Montrose Pit.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 8. View South at R4

Residence R4 is located north of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property on Letson Drive. Just north of this residence is Letson Park. This residence and park sit at a lower elevation than the Proposed Montrose Pit Property and a visual barrier of mature vegetation sits on the hillside at the southern border of Residence R4.



FIGURE 11. View 8  
*View South at R4*

### Visual Impacts

This view will not be modified by the operations of the Proposed Montrose Pit.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 9. View West at West Montrose School

West Montrose School is a small building located just north of Residence R13. From the school's entranceway on Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) one would view the Access Road for the Proposed Montrose Pit Property.



FIGURE 12. View 9  
*View West at West Montrose School*

### Visual Impacts

This view will not be modified by the operations of the Proposed Montrose Pit. The proposed Access Road for the Montrose Pit Property will be compatible with the access road located directly across Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) and its surrounding rural landscape.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 10. View West at R13

Residence R13 is located directly across Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) from the entrance to the proposed Access Road for the Proposed Montrose Pit. From this location one would view the entranceway to the proposed Access Road for the Proposed Montrose Pit and Residence R2 in the background.

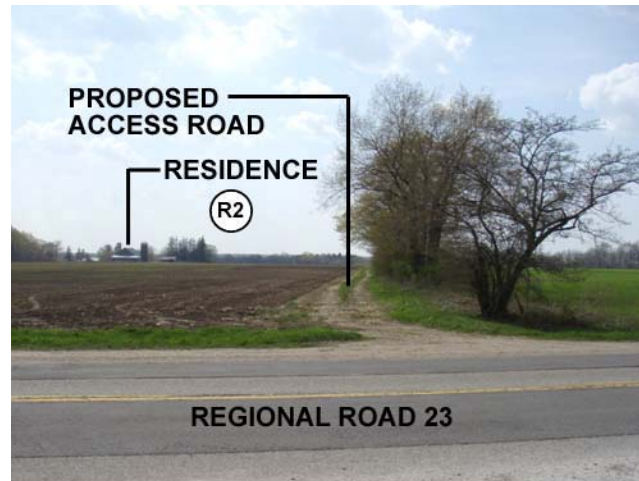


FIGURE 13. View 10  
*View West at R13*

### Visual Impacts

This view will not be modified by the operations of the Proposed Montrose Pit. The proposed Access Road for the Montrose Pit Property will be compatible with the access road located directly across Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) and its surrounding rural landscape.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## 11. View West at R12

Residence R12 is located on Katherine Street North (Regional Road 23) at a slightly higher elevation approximately 775m east of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. There is an existing woodlot northwest of Residence R12 but its location only screens the view of the northern parts of the Proposed Montrose Pit Property. From Residence R12, one would view the Proposed Montrose Pit Property in the far background.



FIGURE 14. View 11  
View West at R12

### Visual Impacts

This view will be slightly modified throughout all the phases of operations proposed for this pit. The Proposed Montrose Pit Property sits in the far background of this view, which means any visual impact caused by the proposed pit operations will be negligible.

### Mitigation Measures

Not required.

## CONCLUSION

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In support of the application for a Category 1 – Class “A” licence, pit below water by Capital Paving Inc., the visual impact assessment report has been completed and prepared by Harrington and Hoyle Ltd. It has been found that the proposal will not have unacceptable visual impacts to its surroundings. As discussed in this report, certain visual barriers are recommended to protect and screen the visual quality of the area from the proposed operations.

Berms are recommended for specific areas along Letson Drive within the licence boundary and along the south licence boundary. The lands surrounding the Proposed Montrose Pit Property are agricultural fields. Therefore, it is recommended to refrain from installing vegetated visual barriers, but rather vegetated berms at least 3m high to screen views into the pit. The berms will be temporary during the operations and will not introduce thick vegetated areas into the rural lands. When the operations are completed the berms will have been removed and the existing site experience will be preserved.

It is recommended that prior to the operations of **Phase A** vegetated berms with a minimum height of 3m be installed along the south licence boundary west of Letson Drive and between the western edge of Letson Drive and Areas 2 and 5. Prior to the operations of **Phase F** it is recommended that vegetated berms with a minimum height of 3m be installed along the south licence boundary east of Letson Drive and between the Martin Property and the Limit of Extraction.

Potential negative visual impacts may be prevented through the above recommended mitigation measures. Upon completion of the final rehabilitation, the property will be returned to agricultural use. Therefore, the views into the Proposed Montrose Pit Property will not be affected unacceptably during and after the pit activity.

## REFERENCES

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Township of Woolwich. (May 31, 2007). *The Corporation of the Township of Woolwich Official Plan – Consolidated Version*.

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