



May 26, 2021

Corporation of the County of Grey  
595 9th Ave East  
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 3E3

**Re: Opposition to Proposed Depot Site on Grey Road 14**

Dear Warden Hicks and Grey County Council Members,

On behalf of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS), I am writing to you in support of the Old Durham Road Black Pioneer Cemetery Committee (ODRBPCC), and their opposition of the proposed depot site on Grey Road 14 adjacent to this nationally-significant Black heritage site.

The OHS, founded in 1888, is a not-for-profit corporation and registered charity. The OHS is a non-government group bringing together people of all ages, all walks of life, and all cultural backgrounds interested in preserving and promoting some aspect of Ontario's history.

The OHS has worked closely with ODRBPCC since 1999, when we incorporated them as a not-for-profit corporation, and we have been lucky to follow and help support their work since. In 2015, the OHS attended the dedication of the pavilion that now houses the recovered cemetery headstones, alongside the Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Hon. Dr. Jean Augustine, as well as representatives from Grey County, and descendants who had come from great distances to pay respects to the lives of their ancestors (Please see the attached speaking notes from the Lieutenant Governor's speech). It was clear then how important the Old Durham Road Black Pioneer Cemetery was at a local, provincial, national, and even international level, and how devastating now it would be for the site's integrity to be undermined by the inappropriate development proposed by Council.

The work of the committee members to preserve the beautiful and peaceful cemetery that now exists on the corner of Grey County Road 14 and Durham Road B has been a decades-long example of their dedication to a site that for so long suffered the effects of prejudice, vandalism, and neglect. Grey County holds a unique and privileged position in this province as the home to many important cultural sites that help tell the story of Black pioneers and the role they played in our country's history. It is well past time these sites all receive the protection, dignity, and recognition that these people worked so hard to secure for themselves and their descendants.

Thank you for your consideration. Yours sincerely,

Michel Beaulieu  
President  
Ontario Historical Society

C.C.

Her Honour the Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt

Hon. Dr. Jean Augustine, PC, CM, OOnt, CBE

Dr. Naomi Norquay