

June 17, 2024

Project No. 23068-01

Mr. John Moses  
[REDACTED]

**Subject: *Discussion of Letter from Murow Development Consultants Regarding the Proposed Residential Development of 239 Avenida La Cuesta, San Clemente, California***

In accordance with your request, LGC Geotechnical, Inc. has prepared this letter to discuss the letter prepared by Murow Development Consultants (Murow, 2024) regarding the proposed development of the vacant property located at 239 Avenida La Cuesta in San Clemente, California.

It would appear that Mr. Murow, a “general engineering contractor”, has been retained by the neighbors to the subject property to provide an opinion with regard to the proposed development of the subject property. We have been asked to provide this response to the letter based on our understanding of the project, our experience in the area and our geotechnical evaluation of the subject property relative to the proposed development (LGC Geotechnical, 2023).

It would appear that Mr. Murow’s letter (2023) contending that there are significant constructability issues with the project. It is our professional opinion that from a geotechnical point of view, the project can be developed with typical construction methods.

Mr. Murow has suggested that there would be a benefit for the project to change the orientation of the proposed pool and move it closer to the top of the site descending slope (Murow, 2023). As a general rule in most areas, especially in San Clemente soils, it is better to stay away from slope tops as much as possible to avoid slope stability concerns, slope creep, and the associated need for deepened foundations. As such, moving the structure or improvements, closer to the rear top of slope would be discouraged from a geotechnical point of view.

The letter also suggests that there are concerns regarding the construction of the side-yard retaining wall along the east side of the site. It should be noted that specifics regarding the subject retaining wall were not provided at the time of the preparation of our preliminary report for the project (LGC Geotechnical, 2023). Mr. Murow has suggested that there are constructability concerns for the proposed wall. It is our professional opinion that the proposed retaining wall can be constructed with typical construction methods. Obviously, the neighbor’s property should not be destabilized by the proposed construction or the temporary conditions to enable the proposed construction. If proposed retaining wall heights do not allow for sufficient backcut for select backfill, alternative retaining wall parameters can be provided for less or no backfill. In some cases, a temporary or permanent shoring wall could be constructed with caissons and lagging or caissons and shotcrete, respectively. These would shore the slope and property line before any excavation occurs and would maintain stability thereafter.

Geotechnical recommendations and parameters for design and construction of the proposed retaining wall can be prepared at the grading plan review stage of the project.

We disagree that vibrations from excavation of caissons would be a concern, for the adjacent property (note that the closest point of the adjacent home appears to be 14' away from the proposed wall location). This is only a corner of the structure, the rest of the home is progressively farther away from the property and proposed wall.

Vibrations from dozers, etc. are not likely a concern either. Grading and construction of this sort occurs frequently adjacent to property lines and properties without issue.

If desired/required, vibration monitoring can be performed to measure vibrations during the operations, to make sure they do not exceed threshold levels.

It should be noted that the site remedial grading is only recommended and anticipated to extend between 3 to 5 feet below existing grade (LGC Geotechnical, 2023), not the 18 feet as suggested by Mr. Murow (2024).

No landslides are mapped on the site, and none were encountered in our (LGC Geotechnical, 2023) or the previous site geotechnical evaluations. Slope stability analysis, performed as part of our study, indicates that the proposed development will be suitably stable with regards to potential slope stability issues as currently proposed (LGC Geotechnical, 2023).

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office. We appreciate the opportunity to be of service.

Sincerely,

*LGC Geotechnical, Inc.*



Kevin B. Colson, CEG 2210  
Vice President



KBC

Attachments: Appendix A – References

Distribution: (1) Addressee (1 electronic copy)

## ***APPENDIX A***

### ***References***

LGC Geotechnical, 2023, Geotechnical Evaluation and Preliminary Geotechnical Recommendations for Proposed Development of 239 Avenida La Cuesta, San Clemente, California, Project No. 23068-01, dated October 20, 2023.

Murrow Development Consultants, 2024, Seven M. Murow Letter re: Planned Construction at 239 Avenida La Cuesta, San Clemente, California, dated May 2, 2024.