



Pebble Beach Aggregate

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Erin Pitkethly

204 Taillefer Road, Corbeil, ON, P0H 1K0
(via e-mail)

September 02, 2022

RE: APPLICATION FOR AGGREGATE LICENCE, EAST FERRIS TOWNSHIP

Dear Erin:

Thank you for your e-mail dated August 05, 2022 expressing concerns with the proposed "A" Licence (quarry) in East Ferris Township.

I would like to provide the following comments (in red) on the items that you mentioned in your letter. I have also provided some comments in a separate e-mail to all residents.

Some of the concerns that I have received from the residents are related to the existing quarry and have only relevant bearing on the application. This said, I will make it clear that the applicant will take into consideration all of the concerns submitted, as well as the operation of the existing pit/quarry wrt the proposed operation.

Background:

There is currently a Class 'B' licence (69.5Ha.) on the site that allows for extraction of a total of 20,000tpa of sand/gravel below the water table and/or rock to within 2 metres of the water table. The Grandfathered Licence was issued in 2007 when this part of Ontario was designated under the Aggregate Resources Act. Prior to 2007, the extraction operation had been around for many years. The new Licence is for a Class 'A' quarry and is 26.13 Ha. in size and is superimposed over the north part of the B.

The current pit/quarry is the only one Licensed by MNR in the Municipality of East Ferris

As I understand it, East Ferris is a growing community with new housing and aggregate is a fundamental part of the construction industry. **If it does not come from a local source then it must be trucked in.** The closest quarries to Corbeil outside the Municipality are north of North Bay (approximately 20 km), Nipissing Junction (approximately 15 km) and Hughes quarry in Powassan (approximately 24km) and the availability of quarried stone from the quarries at Nipissing Junction is subject to supply and the quarry being open.

A local pit/quarry:

- Reduces the cost of aggregate for both the public and the private sector

- A plus for the environment
 - Reduces the amount of fuel consumed by the trucks
 - Reduces truck emissions
- Reduces overall road maintenance
- A guaranteed source of aggregate

I am concerned about the scale of increase at this industrial site. The area has supported the extraction of 20 000 tonnes per year but the applicant has requested a maximum of 350 000 tonnes which is a *one thousand, seven hundred and fifty percent increase* .

The annual tonnage has been reduced to 250,000 tonnes.

I am concerned about increase in damage to roads, at the expense of taxpayers, with a significant increase in dump truck traffic. I am concerned about the safety for drivers, cyclists and people walking. Recently when biking on Lavigne road, a dump truck would pass me approximately once every 3 minutes (this is likely an underestimate). Imagine a 2000% increase. Or even the “modest” 750% increase they are claiming will be their maximum.

The site is located on a Municipal road that was constructed for both non-commercial and commercial traffic use. The road is the responsibility of the Municipality and any concerns that you have regarding road maintenance and truck traffic should be addressed to the Municipality.

Truck traffic will increase but will be totally dependent on the demand. As mentioned above, there will be trucks on the municipal roads whether they come from this source or from outside the municipality.

The Municipality and the applicant plan to meet to discuss this concern. We are not aware of any road studies that have been carried out by the Municipality.

The applicant will make a solid effort to educate the truck drivers utilizing the source so that safety is of prime importance on the roads. Dan & Marcel Degagne believe in strong driving safety policies for all drivers to ensure the upmost safety on the roads. The drivers must have due concern and respect for others that share the roads, including: cars, trucks, bicyclists, pedestrians and small motorized vehicles. They intend to install a sign at the exit to the site to remind truck drivers regarding safety on the roads.

The MNR lists the following documents as having been submitted: site plan; summary statement; natural environment report; (NOT and environmental impact report); cultural heritage report; maximum predicted water table report.

There is no reference to water quality, air pollution, effects on human health and the environment, nor potential damage to local buildings, wells, septic systems and roads. Possible health effects may occur do to air pollution and water contamination, none of which has been assessed or accounted for.

The application included all of the information required by MNRF.

In addition, local residents are concerned about quality of life, which is what people move to East Ferris to enjoy. The constant noise of a large industrial operation, in addition to the effects of quality of air and water are detrimental to overall quality of life.

The applicant is aware of these concerns and will adhere to all aspects of the Environmental Protection Act.

This property has been in operation for many years and is zoned to allow aggregate extraction and any possible expansion, if approved.

Although the applicants claim they would only extract 150 000 tonnes a year (**a 700% increase**), let's be clear: if the quarry is approved for 350 000 tonnes there is absolutely nothing stopping them from extracting at that level each and every year. The applicants stated that there is enough rock to do so for decades. And even if higher levels of extraction only occurred occasionally- as Mr. Villard suggested might be the case, for example one in five years, that's still one in five years where residents have their lives severely impacted by poor air quality, noise, dangerous road conditions, etc...

It has been suggested that the high end for annual production could be approximately 150,000 tonnes, although this is not based on anything substantial as the applicant cannot predict the yearly demand. Public sector contracts could also result in higher production. A map with accompanying data shows the annual production (includes sand, gravel and quarried rock) for the past 10 years from East Ferris and the neighboring Municipalities, Townships and the City of North Bay and is included in a follow-up e-mail.

A recent blast in May shook homes in the area and deposited a thick blanket of debris on residents' property, including vegetable gardens and vehicles. Such blasting is likely to create particulate matter such as silica which, with repeated exposure, can cause silicosis, a fatal lung disease.

An examination of the video taken of the blast appeared to indicate that the dust cloud dissipated very quickly as it moved from east to west. As mentioned above, the applicant is subject to all aspects of the Environmental Protection Act.

Blasting will need to increase significantly if the quarry is expanded 700%. There has been one major blast in the past year, which took place in May, and rules and guidelines were broken. The blasting took place at 6:30 pm when the permit states it must take place by 6 pm. Mr. Villard stated that the blast had a greater impact because of the low cloud ceiling that day. However, this should have been taken into account and calculated before blast was discharged. If these infractions occurred this one instance, there is nothing to say such things won't happen repeatedly.

The blast did occur after 6 p.m. and the reason for this was explained by the applicant. This occurred on the current Licence and will not occur on the new one, if issued.

In summary the problems with the quarry are as follows:

COST TO TAX PAYERS: The cost to repair and maintain roads which has heavy truck traffic is much greater than the cost to repair and maintain roads which has personal use vehicles on it

only. As tax payers WE will be paying for this quarry with our taxes. The revenue from this quarry at 13 cents a tonne with a 700% increase in tonnage is \$18 000 per year. **See above**

NOISE- even if the noise is not at a level that damages hearing, the continuous sounds of industrial equipment being used- from 7 am to 9 pm- in an area where people bought homes for the peace and quiet of country life, significantly impacts quality of life.

The area is zoned for extraction and also subject to the Environmental Protection Act.

Municipal BY-LAW NUMBER 2015-33 BEING A BY-LAW TO PROHIBIT EXCESSIVE NOISE

Any noise which disturbs or is likely to disturb inhabitants when inside their dwelling arising between the hours of 11:00 p.m. of any day and 6:00 a.m. of the next day due to the use of power tools, equipment or machinery.

ROAD SAFETY- The number of dump trucks on the road coming from that quarry right now is significant. I do not feel safe walking or biking on that road, and that should be my right do so as a member of this community. More trucks= more danger. 700% more trucks= 700% more danger.

See above

WATER QUALITY- There has been no water QUALITY impact assessment. All of the residents rely on wells. If our water is contaminated it affects our health, it affects us financially when we have to purchase water, and it affects our property values. We have no way of knowing if our water is safe to drink after each large blast. In addition effluent from day to day operations will increase, which will make its way into our water.

In studies of similar quarry applications in the Precambrian rocks, the hydrogeologists have interpreted that the proposed aggregate quarry development, which is to remain above the water table, will have minimal impact on the underlying groundwater flow system or potential nearby groundwater users. If there is no calculated impact on the local groundwater system, because the water table is not being encountered by the site activities, then the groundwater discharges to downgradient areas should not be negatively affected by the proposed operation.

Surface water drainage for the new Licenced quarry should be similar as for the existing pit and quarry with very few modifications and minimal impact on the surface water flow.

This application is for a quarry where the floor can be no lower than 2 metres above the water table but much higher than what is currently allowed for the current licence.

A spills contingency program is a requirement of all permits and will be prepared prior to the commencement of operations.

Please see the additional e-mail for additional comments on water.

AIR QUALITY- Both blasting (which happens occasionally) and rock crushing (which happens daily) cause particle matter to be released into the air. Some of this (such as silica) is very dangerous to health. This is not how we want to raise our children, keeping them indoors so they won't get sick.

The applicant is required to meet the provisions set out in of the Environmental Protection Act regarding this application.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS- These have not been assessed, and include loss of habitat, impacts to natural habitats as per the Municipality of East Ferris' Official Plan and detriment to local wildlife (such as turtles, deer, bear, moose, waterfowl and wild turkeys – all of which we have seen on our property);

It is difficult to determine the impact on wildlife with the addition of a quarry. The wildlife that exists in proximity to the planned operation would be expected to still frequent the area. In many cases of quarries in northern and southern Ontario, there would appear to be an abundance of wildlife, particularly for those quarries that operate intermittently. One only has to walk through these operations to see the tracks of deer, moose, fox, etc. and to hear the songs of many different birds. We are working closely with MNR/MECP to address concerns related to the natural environment and in particular, those dealing with species at risk.

Progressive rehabilitation is required to ensure the restoration of the site to a suitable use.

DECREASE IN PROPERTY VALUE

I am not able to comment as to whether the quarry will impact real estate values. Since there is currently an Aggregate Licence on the site it would be difficult to determine what impact there will be on property values with the expansion of the quarry. I do not know whether MPAC has factored in the existing operation during their determination of Current Value Assessment for neighbouring properties.

DAMAGE TO PERSONAL PROPERTY- blasting can damage wells, septic system and house foundations.

On May 19 there was a blast at the existing quarry. The blast was monitored at Lavigne Road for both ground vibration and overpressure. Based on overcast conditions at the time and the fact that it was a blast to open up a 10 m. face for the quarry, the driller/blaster was quite satisfied with the results and he expects that subsequent blasts will have lower values for the overpressure. Overpressure is greatest when blasting towards structures. Orientation of the aggregate extraction operation will be designed so that the direction of the overpressure propagation will be away from any structures as much as possible. Accordingly, operations have been designed to generally follow a west to east retreat.

The Aggregate Resources Act requires that the licensee monitor all blasts for ground vibrations and blast overpressure and will operate to ensure compliance with current provincial guidelines.

Orientation of the aggregate extraction operation will be designed so that the direction of the overpressure propagation will be away from any structures as much as possible.

The applicant believes that the operation will not cause any damage to your house, septic system or your well. The applicant will not cover any expenses related to these systems.

A general comment re blasting:

BLAST VIBRATION AND OVERPRESSURE LIMITS (Provided by EXPLOTECH)

The Ontario MECP guidelines for blasting in quarries are among the most stringent in North America.

A DISREGARD FOR RULES- At the meeting there were many infringements cited. Vehicles and entering and exiting the quarry beyond the permitted hours of operation of 7 am to 9 pm, dump trucks driving too fast and driving dangerously, blasts outside of permitted hours. What other rules are being broken?

The blasting outside of the stipulated hours has been explained and will not occur on the new Licence, if issued. The other comments referring to the trucks have been noted.

We feel that that adequate measures will be taken and that there will be a minimal, if any, negative impact on the values you refer to.

For you information, at the Special meeting of Council that we were invited to, I made the offer to attend a public meeting if organized by the residents.

If you have any questions, would like to discuss this application or would like to withdraw some or all of your objections, please contact David Villard at (705) 840-0733 by September 14, 2022 – e-mail is preferable to mail due to the slowness of Canada Post at times

Sincerely,

David Villard, MSc.