



August 17, 2020

Stop Harmful Aggregates Extraction

To the City of Burlington,

This email provides the Cedar Springs Community Club's (CSCC) comments on the proposed quarry application by Nelson Aggregates/ Lafarge at Mount Nemo, North Burlington. We are a community of 85 cottages on a 500 + acre natural property just 2.8 km north of the proposed quarry. We celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2024 so we have been neighbours of the existing quarry for our lifetimes. We have copied our local provincial and regional representatives and relevant Ministers on these comments since we understand that they will participate in the application process.

Our community includes close to 1000 members who are firmly opposed to the proposal to allow the two new quarries. Our founders had a vision of a rustic rural community, which we have worked hard to preserve for 5 generations. We act as custodians of the amazing rural environment that we live in. As a result, we now have one of the most pristine sections of Bronte Creek and a significant natural heritage property under managed forest plans and conservation agreements. The greenspace we own has only become more precious over time. There are other similar recreational communities close to us, which illustrates how popular natural spaces close to Burlington are.

The Nelson proposal has been presented as necessary for economic recovery, but will instead lock Ontario into a less healthy future, rip through forest, prime farmland and environmentally sensitive lands inhabited by endangered species.

We are angry and disappointed to be dealing with a new quarry application. We opposed the former application a few years ago at great financial expense and investment of personal time to our club and community members. We participated in provincially led long term visioning studies that concluded the community did not want a quarry in its future. Why did we bother? To be back fighting the same issue on almost the same site within a few years is ridiculous.

CSCC urges the City of Burlington (COB), its elected representatives and staff to decline Nelson Aggregates application for these two new quarries. We ask that the City allocate sufficient resources to actively oppose this application. We can't bear the cost of opposing a large international corporation on our own.

The proposed new policy for aggregates extraction (Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) section 2.5.2.2) is particularly worrisome. While we recognize the PPS is a provincial policy, we want to go on record with the City of Burlington as opposing these underlying changes.

Our community does not support the Province's amendments to Ontario's primary land use policy, that was slashed after decades of refinement to protect what we value and need as a healthy population. Allowing aggregate extraction to override existing protections for wetlands, woodlands and wildlife habitat, including habitat for threatened and endangered species is absolutely the wrong thing to do in a climate emergency. We are rapidly losing biodiversity in our community, and approving this application will hasten this loss.

Here are the main reasons for our opposition:

1. The quarry will destroy important green spaces and prime farmland. The COB unanimously declared a climate emergency in April 2019. Scientists have just declared we had the hottest July on record. Science, and our own personal experiences, are telling us that climate is an issue. We're not scientists, but we believe that converting productive green space to a quarry will contribute negatively to our local climate issues, not help them. If the COB truly believes we are in an emergency, declining this application is a way to show it.

2. Scientific experts and regulatory bodies determined in 2012, that a quarry application for the very same site was not deemed safe or appropriate

After having their application rejected in 2012, Nelson Aggregates are betting the looser environmental rules now in place, will allow it to move ahead.

The only thing that has changed since Nelson's last application was rejected, is the Ontario government. The basic reasoning remains, and climate issues have gotten worse.

3. People who live along the truck routes will breathe dust, particulate matter i.e. dirtier air and suffer health impacts. A Health Impact Assessment would likely show these findings.

4. Allowing quarry trucks with BOTH Outgoing loads and Incoming fill will mean more greenhouse gas emissions from increased heavy vehicles traffic. Increasing carbon emission pollution from transportation will move Burlington and Halton, farther away from meeting their climate change goals.

5. Not every quarry application is a good application. Location does matter.

The Mount Nemo quarry is very close to a major urban area. This location of course makes this site very economically attractive to Lafarge. But the same principal applies when we recognize the natural area as providing ecosystem and recreational benefits on the doorstep of Burlington's core. The recreational and ecosystem assets of this proposed site, are beneficial to a large population of local and regional residents. Global recognition of the Niagara Escarpment as a UNESCO World

Biosphere Reserve is evidence of the uniqueness of the natural assets that we should be proud stewards of. The sections of the escarpment closest to cities like the Mount Nemo site, benefit the most people. Rather than enriching a single corporation, let's protect the longterm integrity of natural heritage areas and protect people's mental and physical wellbeing. Our natural heritage and rural landscapes should not be sacrificed to the interests of aggregate companies.

6. There is not a shortage of aggregate. Burlington has been home to the 500 acre Mount Nemo Quarry since 1950 and we don't want another one. Halton already has 22 permitted quarries that can supply the region with aggregate for the next 50 years, without permitting the two newly proposed sites.

7. Aquifer and well protection

We are extremely concerned about the preservation of the aquifer and groundwater that supplies our community of hundreds of residents. Blasting eight storeys down into the Escarpment, less than 2.8 km from our homes, will have a negative impact on our community, whose 85 dwellings rely solely on well water.

Specifically, the Ontario government has made potentially devastating amendments to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) which would permit pits and quarries on sensitive landscapes across the province. We look to the COB to protect us from these provincial changes.

There is currently a threat of millions of tonnes of potentially contaminated excess construction soils "waste" being dumped onto the Ontario countryside, and most alarming, into old pits and quarries.

We have grave concerns that Nelson's dumping is not regulated and provides egregious risk to our drinking water and fear greater risk if the new open pit mines are approved.

Conclusion:

We ask that the COB, and both senior levels of government decline the application for the new quarry. Do not allow exploitation of the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. Nature is more important than rock in these unprecedented times of climate and biodiversity crisis.

Listen to the existing evidence that this quarry site will create irreversible damage. Stop and realize that we must enforce overdue environmental restoration of the destruction that Nelson/Lafarge has already inflicted on the Mount Nemo plateau over the past 70 years.

We want to ensure that our elected representatives in Burlington will vote against this application and will likewise allocate hard-earned tax dollars to the hiring of lawyers and experts who will fight to protect Burlington's exceptional escarpment.

The decisions made now by politicians and professionals will impact City of Burlington residents for generations to come. Our club plans to be here for the next

100 years, and our children and grandchildren will be living with the results of your decisions now. Please make the right choice.

On behalf of the Cedar Springs Community Club,

Karen Brock

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