

Response # 2 to Peer Review of Sarjeant Waverley Pit # 2

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November 5, 2007

The following is in response to the memo # 2 dated December 21, 2006, file No. MCG 10299 from Vincent Deschamps, MCIP, RPP, Senior Environmental Planner to C. Gratrix, Collingwood, both of R. J. Burnside and Associates Limited. The memo is regarding the December 11, 2006 “Response to peer review Comments of the report “Environmental Impact Statement and Natural Environment Study – Sarjeant Waverley Pit # 2, Township of Tiny, County of Simcoe, April, 2006. Mr. Deschamps was of the opinion that most of the points in the December 11 response memo were resolved except issues pertaining to the significant woodland. He requests a letter addendum providing additional information on the outstanding points before he can support the application.

The additional information is detailed below as requested.

- Sections B14.4.2 Assessment of Added Impact to natural features – woodlands
 - a) Existing pit or quarry operations in the immediate area

Immediately north-east and adjacent to the proposal in part lots 79 and 80, Concession 1 WPR, Tiny Township there is currently one operating gravel pit known as the “Teedon Pit”. This pit was first licensed in 1993 and is owned by Cedarhurst Quarries and Crushing Limited. The pit operation was inactive for many years but in 2004 gravel extraction resumed. Much of the land to be extracted is former agricultural lands but there is about 15 .5 ha of woodlands at the western boundary of the property. This is part of a much larger 226.4 ha woodland that includes Sarjeant-Waverley Pit #2. The existing site plans for Cedarhurst indicate that extraction will occur down to the 253.5 masl contour in the area along the east boundary of the woodland. This will result in a loss of the 3.2 ha of woodland leaving about 12.3 ha of the original 15.5 ha intact. The rehabilitation plans for the pit include planting trees along side slopes of the pit adjacent to the restored agricultural lands. Tree planting is also planned for the 3.2 ha of woodland that will be lost during the extraction process. The combined impact of the Teedon Pit and SW Pit # 2 will be $3.2 + 30.2 = 33.4$ ha of woodland lost. The loss will only be temporary because rehabilitation plans include allowing most of the lost woodland areas in the Teedon Pit to re-establish as forest when operations are completed and some additional areas will be planted along the side slopes that are unsuitable for return to agriculture.

- b) Future Pit or quarry operations in the general area

Immediately east and adjacent to the proposal in part lots 78 and 79, Concession 1 WPR, Tiny Township there is a proposal for an aggregate operation known as Sarjeant-Waverley (SW) Pit # 1. Approval of SW Pit # 1 will only slightly change the potential impact of Pit # 2 on the woodland. The narrow 20 – 40 m wide area (1.2 ha) of woodland along the west boundary of Pit #1, within the least significant forest edge zone will be lost because the operations of the two pits will

be combined by extending the extraction process west from Pit # 1 into the lands of Pit # 2 thus ensuring the efficient use of existing aggregate. The combined loss of woodland in Pit # 1 and Pit # 2 will be $1.2 + 30.2 = 31.4$ ha.

Combined Impacts

About 3.2 ha of woodland will be lost in the Teedon Pit, 1.2 ha will be lost in the SW Pit #1 and 30.2 ha will be lost in the SW Pit # 2 for a total loss of woodland of 34.6 ha. The woodland will not be removed all at once, however. To mitigate impacts, operations in SW Pit # 2 will be phased over time. The forested areas in Pit # 2 will be cut at times of the year to minimize impacts to other natural features such as wildlife and will only involve enough area to accommodate immediate extraction needs. To further mitigate impacts on the woodland planting and natural regeneration of native species will be carried out where feasible. Forested buffers (15M wide) will be left around the extraction zone to provide material for natural regeneration in the future. Livestock will be removed from the 3-4 ha of pasture in the north-west area allowing the forest to regenerate from existing sources. This will also be augmented with strategic planting of trees in areas furthest from natural sources. Livestock will also be removed from a 2-3 ha area south of the proposed license on lands owned by the proponent and a similar plan of natural regeneration and planting will be implemented. This will replace 5-7 ha of woodland lost in the proposed extraction zone. The reforestation plan will be developed and implemented by knowledgeable experts. Some areas will not be reforested, however, but will be within a pond created by the extraction process below the water table and will be restored to wetland habitat in conjunction with wetland creation experts, such as Ducks Unlimited Canada. All pit side slopes and other areas not within the ponds created by the extraction activities will be covered with saved topsoil and allowed to regenerate from native trees left in the surrounding buffer areas. As much land as possible will be returned to woodland. These “new” wetlands will add to the diversity of the natural features of the area. The haul road through the woodland area of Pit # 2 will become part of the side slope of the future pit but will ultimately regenerate into forested land when final rehabilitation is complete.

- Section 14.6 Relationship between Environmental Protection Two and Mineral Aggregate Resources Two Overlay Designations

There are currently (1998 data) 7272.7 ha of woodland area in the Wye River watershed (Severn Sound Environmental Association, 2005). This represents 34.3 % of the total land area of the watershed. The loss of 34.6 ha of woodland (Teedon Pit + SW Pit # 1 + SW Pit # 2) would reduce the total wooded area to 7238.1 ha or 34.2 % of the watershed. Experts believe that retaining 30 % of a watershed in woodland will ensure that all forest natural heritage values are represented and protected (Environment Canada, 2004, OMNR, 2000). This new lower value (34.2%) for woodland area in the Wye River watershed is still well above the recommended minimum; therefore, the loss of woodland because of the three described pits will not have a negative impact on the significant woodland feature in the Wye River watershed or the landscape of Tiny Township. Mitigation described above will also be implemented to restore as much woodland as possible and create new wetland habitat on site.

References

Environment Canada, 2004. How Much Habitat is Enough? Second Edition.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1999. Natural Heritage Reference Manual For Policy 2.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2000. Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide.

Severn Sound Environmental Association. 2005. Forest Cover Analysis, Proposed Sarjeant Pit.