

Duff Quarry under cloud...

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The commission could legally lock the gate to the Duff quarry, McMullin said. Other cases in the development control area where persons are trying to get a gravel pit licence won't be going out of business in the next two years, McMullin said.

He said the minister of natural resources, James Auld, was asked to review the case but added there were 16 applications for gravel pit licences in the minister's drawer.

The policy of restricting pits and quarries in the escarpment control area is government policy for the interim period until the plan of the escarpment is completed.

Lee Symmes, NEC commissioner from Terra Cotta, said the minister will have to review the whole policy and not just the one case involving the Duff quarry. The commission should not be involved in the situation other than reviewing the entire policy, he said.

Milton councillor Anne MacArthur said she was "appalled" at the condition of the

Duff quarry which she recently toured. The situation in Halton Hills was "unique" MacArthur said.

She blamed the present situation on the former township of Esquesing which was "...very lax in control of quarries and gravel pits."

MacArthur called for a meeting among Halton Hills council, the NEC, and the planners and policy makers of the Ministry of the Environment.

She said "very, very stringent agreements" in Milton between the town and two aggregate companies resulted in a "terrific impact" on the affected quarries. However, in the case of the Duff situation, she said she favored either a temporary permit or closing the gates to the quarry. The commission cannot countenance an illegal operation as a matter of course, she said.

"If the man walks out," MacArthur said, "you're left with a catastrophe." If the MOE is asked to give Duff a licence, "at least we'll have an area of credibility."

After a lunch break, commission counsel Grace Maitland-Carter told the commis-

sion that legally there is an established government policy in place. To recommend an exemption to the policy "is to promote the destruction of it," she said. If Duff is operating without a licence the ministry of the environment should be enforcing its own legislation, she said.

McMullin said Duff had been to the ministry of environment and the commission as well, several times. The MOE is aware of the problem but sounded reluctant to deal with it because there are 16 applications for licences for pits and quarries, McMullin said.

On a motion by Bruzese that Halton Hills' motion not be endorsed, Booth asked if the commission was in a position to enforce its own laws.

"Duff is still a business man and either he gets a licence or he brings the whole thing out," Booth said, "...All the illegalities that he's been forced to work under."

Commission counsel Maitland-Carter said that if Duff is operating without a licence the Ministry of the Environment should be enforcing its own legislation. "The situation at the pit is ludicrous and insane," Booth said.

The commission moved to accept an amendment which deferred action on the town's resolution until a report by commission staff on pits and quarries in the entire development control area is tabled. Commission staff indicated the report would be about two weeks.



THE MUG WAS A GOOD place to catch up on the news of the day teachers don't let you discuss in class. Donna Robinson, Wendy Stephens and Connie McCristal had a few minutes to themselves at the coffee house's re-opening.

Cabinet OKs Elora Bridge

The final word from the provincial cabinet is build that bridge. The Ontario cabinet last week upheld an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decision to go ahead with the bridge across the Elora Gorge. The battle between the pro-bridge people and environmentalists has been going for nine years. Wellington-Dufferin-Peel MPP Jack Johnson told Wellington Councillors the cabinet rejected an appeal from the environmentalists of the OMB decision. A

spokesman for the Canadian Environmental Law Association, who opposed the bridge, stated cabinet's decision shows contempt for the environment. The bridge is to link Wellington County Road 7 on both sides of the Grand River which passes through the gorge.

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He just can't believe it

"It's just unbelievable." That's the reaction of Mac Duff, owner of J. C. Duff Ltd. as he refers to the chronology of events that has led to a situation at his gravel pit in Limehouse being described by members of the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) as "insane, ludicrous, appalling," and "illegal."

Duff dates his troubles from 1970, the year the provincial government passed Bill 79 which as the Niagara Escarpment Protection Act froze one of two lots of the Fifth Line site in Limehouse because there had been no work done on it for the previous 12 months.

The story of the events which led to the present licensing problems, however, go back to the late 1950s and Duff has a thick file of documents he has gathered in the intervening years.

He said he missed out on getting a licence in 1972 when the Niagara Escarpment Protection Act was replaced by Bill 120, The Pits and Quarries Control Act, because he was negotiating with the new owners of Lot 24 adjacent to the company's Lot 23 upon which had been built a gravel washing plant.

In 1973 the province passed the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act along with a government policy statement that no new licences would be issued in the restricted zone of the escarpment until the master plan is completed and approved, according to Duff's chronology.

By 1975, from when Duff dates the majority of his problems, the 85-acre site originally purchased in 1965 by J. C. Duff Ltd. was worked out.

The company did manage to get a wayside pit permit good for one year from the Ministry of Natural Resources. "But 13 months later, we were back to square one," Duff said. Site plans were being made in 1972, he said. Duff believes a licence is the only way out of his problems. A licence would allow him to mine aggregate, revenue from which could be used to rehabilitate the two sites, a total of about 285 acres, he said.

As for charges of illegality, Duff said they would have to be proved in court. "If I'm taken to court, it will all come out."

He said he was trying to avoid putting more egg on the face of the NEC, which has "screwed it up badly."

He said that 85 percent of the company's business is in Halton Hills and if his pit is closed, aggregate will have to be trucked in from Caledon which will have a high actual, social and environmental cost. "This is just to bring from one part of the escarpment, aggregate to another part."

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