



## FORCE asks council to reject Carlisle quarry plan

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Flamborough Review

Tougher aggregate development rules enshrined in Ontario's greenbelt protection plan may be enough to halt plans for a 238-acre (96-hectare) quarry in north Flamborough. Members of a citizen-based advocacy group called FORCE (Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment) think so. And so does local MPP Ted McMeekin.

The Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot Queen's Park representative confirmed Monday that he holds the same view as FORCE chairman Graham Flint—namely, that the application for the Carlisle area quarry has little or no chance of proceeding in light of protection given to the local countryside by the recently-passed greenbelt legislation. "Given the policies that have been put in place, given the natural heritage and water source concerns, I honestly can't see it moving forward," McMeekin said.

Flint was equally encouraged by the new rules. "The province has painted the greenbelt landscape green," he said. "With so many key natural and water features embargoed for development and the approvals bar raised so high, the (greenbelt) plan is effectively squeezing the Lowndes Holding quarry proposal out of the greenbelt," he added.

Flint was so encouraged by the new legislation that he fired off an e-mail last week to Hamilton mayor Larry Di Ianni and city councillors suggesting that they throw out an application filed last

September by developer David Lowndes because it doesn't comply with the new rules.

But Stan Holiday, a senior planner at city hall, said the city isn't ready to respond to FORCE's request. "You get something new out and it takes time to review it," he explained. "We're reviewing this with legal and senior staff on how it impacts, if it does impact" the Lowndes's application.

Holiday said he doesn't expect a response until the end of this week.

Despite repeated calls, Lowndes could not be reached for comment.

What Flint and other FORCE members find so encouraging about the new legislation is its more forceful language which "prohibits" development in areas that will impact on water, wildlife and habitat. In addition, there are now extra rehabilitation requirements as well as a requirement to provide additional greenbelt lands to offset the lands used by proposed developments.

"For every acre of quarry, two acres has to be rehabilitated," McMeekin said.

Since last June, members of FORCE have been engaged in an aggressive fight against plans for a quarry on the north side of 11<sup>th</sup> Concession Road East near Milborough Line. They have argued from the start that the proposed quarry should not be built because of environmentally significant features on the site, including woodlots and provincially significant wetlands. Moreover, source water which feeds area wells, including the nearby community of Carlisle, is located on the quarry property, they say.

FORCE maintains that the Lowndes's application clearly violates the Greenbelt Plan and should be rejected immediately. While hopeful that a summary assessment of the quarry application will lead to its rejection, Flint cautioned that FORCE's work is not finished. Members of the group must continue to work with government officials at all levels to make sure that any future prospect of a quarry in their rural community is prohibited, he said.

To that end, FORCE will be continuing its work on technical studies already underway to combat the quarry plan. The reports may still be needed to convince Hamilton officials to reject the current application or if another quarry proposal comes forward in the future, Flint noted.

As for McMeekin, he's confident that the greenbelt law has enough teeth in it to stop the Carlisle area quarry in its tracks. "I would be pleased to have this come to an end and have peace and harmony restored to the countryside where it belongs," he said, adding that other issues, including the farm crisis which has precipitated rallies at Queen's Park this week and last, need to be addressed.