



WELLINGTON FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

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Town of Erin

5684 Trafalgar Rd

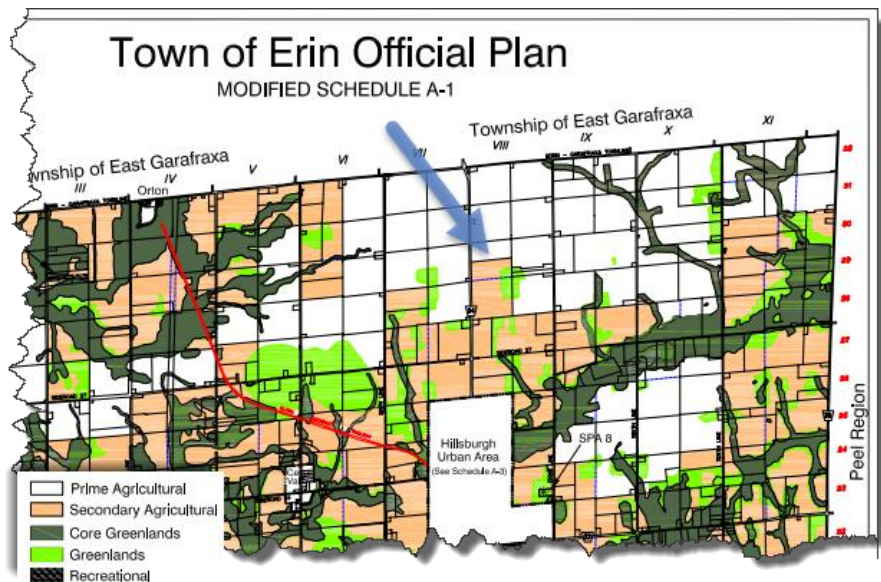
Hillsburgh ON N0B 1Z0

Dear Council and Staff:

The Wellington Federation of Agriculture (WFA) represents the interests of nearly 1,400 farm businesses across the county. These businesses need aggregate to grow and expand and these businesses need well maintained municipal roads. However, these needs must be balanced against the need to protect prime farmland – a fundamental resource for our continued food security.

The Wellington Federation of Agriculture is opposed to the Hillsburgh Pit extension proposed by St. Mary's Cement / CBM.

The Hillsburgh Pit expansion will remove more prime agriculture land from the limited inventory left in the municipality. The WFA worked hard to maintain as much prime agriculture land as possible in the exercise that resulted in large areas being classed as secondary agriculture. There are a hand-full of large contiguous tracts left in the Town of Erin. The Hillsburgh Pit expansion pushes further into one of the large tracts most suited for agriculture.



The WFA works closely with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA.) OFA is the largest farm organization in Ontario representing some 36,000 farm businesses. Input from OFA's extensive membership is an important resource for OFA staff and board to develop sound policies that will keep Ontario's agriculture and food industry strong and vital for generations to come. OFA is the voice of Ontario agriculture.

OFA has raised its voice to make very clear the farm position on the aggregate industry:

“The Aggregate Resources Act, regulations and operating standards need to be amended to acknowledge and protect the vital role of our finite and shrinking agricultural lands. To this end, OFA recommends that aggregate extraction be prohibited on prime agricultural land (classes 1-4), and specialty crop lands.”

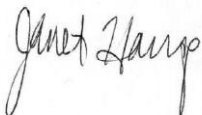
Source: OFA submission regarding Bill 39 - Aggregate Resources and Mining Modernization Act, 2016

Similarly, the WFA must state emphatically that further loss of prime agriculture in Erin for aggregate extraction cannot be supported. The WFA has worked too hard to keep Erin's prime agriculture lands in food production.

The WFA must also be clear that the suggestion of rehabilitation of this site back to agriculture, in whole, or in part, does not improve the case for the pit's expansion. The aggregate industry's overall lack of commitment and actual completion of rehabilitation plans is legendary. Given past practice of the aggregate industry, WFA must assume that any prime agriculture lost to pits will remain lost indefinitely, certainly for several generations. Few rehabilitation plans result in land being returned to a state of producing viable crop yields.

Aggregates are an important commodity but they are not the most intimate commodity. Food is the most intimate commodity and prime farmland is the key ingredient. Without food we would starve. Without virgin aggregate we would have to recycle used aggregate. Food and gravel are not equivalent commodities and in any contest the preservation of farmland must come first.

Kind Regards,



Janet Harrop,
President

cc: Mark Van Patter, Manager of Planning & Environment, County of Wellington
Ted Arnott, MPP Wellington-Halton Hills