

NEC Staff Comments – Visual Impact Assessment MHBC - April 2020

December 14, 2020

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Methodology: Detailed methodology for photography was not provided. The following information is required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ camera lens ○ camera height ○ panorama production (i.e. photo overlap, angle of view)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Record: Additional detail is required for each photo as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ direction of view (i.e. NW) ○ GPS coordinates for camera location and description of viewer position (i.e. view from No.2 Sideroad) ○ subject of view (i.e. West Quarry Extension or South Quarry Extension) ○ description of existing view (i.e. existing roadside vegetation, existing golf course buildings)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure 4 Photo Location Map: VIAs must be accurate and replicable. This map is unreliable for determining the exact photo locations as there are a few errors in symbol placement and direction. This can be addressed with minor corrections (i.e. #21, 24, 25, 32) and by adding GPS and other details to the Photo Record. Label quarry extension names, road names, Bruce Trail route, and golf courses for reference on this map.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewpoints: The following additional viewpoints are required to fully assess views from public roads, public lands, and the Bruce Trail. Visibility or lack of visibility must be documented in the Photo Record. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ View from No. 2 Sideroad looking SW into South Quarry Extension ○ View from No. 2 Sideroad looking S into South Quarry Extension ○ View from No. 2 Sideroad looking SE into South Quarry Extension ○ View from the intersection of Cedar Springs Road/No. 2 Sideroad looking N into West Quarry Extension ○ View along Cedar Springs Court access road looking NE into West Quarry Extension ○ View from intersection of Cedar Springs Road/Colling Road looking SE into West Quarry Extension ○ View from Colling Road looking SE into West Quarry Extension ○ View from Colling Road looking S into West Quarry Extension ○ View from Colling Road looking SW into West Quarry Extension ○ View from Bruce Trail/intersection of Colling Road/Blind Line looking W into West Quarry Extension ○ Photo 13 - shift orientation to the north to document more of the existing roadside vegetation at the eastern limit of the West Quarry Extension

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: NEP Policies are noted in the Background Section but there are some errors in the formatting of policy excerpts (see report section 2.4.3, 2.4.4, 2.6). Report should also reference NEP 2.9.3 j), which was not included. Reference should also be made to NEP Definitions relating to visual impact assessment as outlined in the 2019 Draft VIA Technical Criteria.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Character: A more detailed description of existing landscape character is required. Provide this descriptive detail in the Photo Record and/or provide an additional map to document the landscape features that are referred to in the text. Findings from related reports (i.e. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Report) should be considered when describing the landscape character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings: References to speed of travel or traffic levels are not relevant criteria for visual assessment. Any/all views from stationary locations within public lands, public roads and Bruce Trail require consideration in this VIA. Where there are viewing opportunities that extend along linear public routes, it is acceptable to provide a distance measurement along that route where subject lands are visible. This would be useful along Cedar Springs Road where there is limited existing screening and along the frontage of the South Quarry Extension where existing vegetation will be removed opening up a section of the roadside.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Visual Impacts: Identifying and evaluating the physical changes resulting from development is a critical aspect of visual impact assessment. Table 1 summarizes visual impacts in terms of visibility to the subject lands, level of impact, and proposed mitigation but there is insufficient assessment of how the existing views will be changed by the proposed development and quarry operations on the subject lands. For all views with low to high impact, provide further description of the anticipated physical changes (i.e. distant tree line will be removed, vegetation thinned, clubhouse and outbuildings will be removed, proposed noise berm will be visible through roadside vegetation, trees to be planted, etc). Photos may be further annotated to describe these changes. Furthermore, the VIA must consider any visual impact associated with the development of the proposed water feature near Cedar Springs Road.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis: NEP policy was referenced but no analysis has been provided. In addition, scenic ranking per NEC's Landscape Evaluation Study was referenced but there was no analysis of potential impacts on the scenic quality of the landscape unit(s). These analyses are required in the VIA report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations: Supplementary visual screening is referenced in the recommendations but there is no indication of where small or large species are indicated. Vegetation retention is referenced but there is limited detail provided on the extent of tree protection. Future landscape plans and vegetation protection plans will be required to reflect the findings of the VIA.