



Ontario

Ministry of  
Transportation

Ministère  
des  
Transports

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London, Ontario  
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(519) 649-3030

July 9, 1990

Mr. G. I. Nichols  
Nichols Gravel Limited  
P.O. Box 172  
Delhi, Ontario  
N4B 2W9

Dear Mr. Nichols:

In the Minister's letter to you of March 26, 1990, he promised to correspond with you again when our review of the issues raised in your letter of February 28, 1990 had been completed. This has now been done and the following summarizes this review and our position.

The Ministry of Transportation is satisfied that the Granular 'A' produced in your pit for contract 89-66 was unacceptable due to failure to meet the requirement for "Petrographic Number". The Petrographic Number of the gravel we have tested does not meet the specification because of the large amount of shale and shaley carbonate present in your gravel. I note that testing done for you by private testing laboratories also shows significant amounts of shale and shaley carbonate and that some samples tested by them failed to meet the specification. The discrepancy between your testing and our testing is because our staff have found or recognized more of these poor quality rock types than your testing consultants have shown.

I am satisfied that our sampling and testing of gravel from your pit was done in a forthright and conscientious manner. We gave samples to eight of our most experienced laboratory technicians around the Province, and their analysis shows that your gravel contained more shale and shaley carbonate than allowed by our specifications. No attempt was made to influence their judgement. They were provided with the samples and asked to perform the petrographic test as per MTO test LS-609.

A small quantity of your gravel was used on Contract 89-66 in the south shoulder on Highway 3 from the eastern town limit of Delhi easterly for about two (2) kilometers. In April 1990 my staff excavated three holes through the partial paved shoulder and took samples for testing. They found that there was unusually high break down of the stone, that the fines were plastic indicating the presence of objectionable clay, and that the gravel was not free draining. This supports the conclusion of our earlier testing that this gravel is not suitable for building or maintaining Ontario Provincial Highways. \*

We can understand your concerns and frustrations in the test results you have obtained from various testing laboratories. This Ministry conducts an inter-laboratory testing program for aggregate testing. The purpose of this program is to identify discrepancies, such as you have experienced, between laboratories. The testing laboratories you have used do not participate in these programs. Private laboratories are invited to participate.

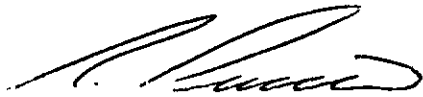
In your letter to the Minister of June 15, 1990 you stated that you were agreeable to further testing in other areas of the pit as the Minister suggested in his letter to you of May 25, 1990.

The London Regional Geotechnical Office is prepared to participate in this testing program. The purpose of this testing would be to determine if your present operations within this source can produce material that meets Ministry requirements. Sampling and testing will be performed in accordance with the current Ministry procedures and specifications under your supervision. I support your suggestion that your testing laboratory co-operate with our staff in solving problems of recognition of shale and shaley carbonate. I have instructed my staff to expedite sampling and testing; however, considering the present workload the testing can not be completed by July 31, 1990.

I would like to point out that our specifications (1001.07.02.03) prohibit the blending of material from two or more sources to improve quality of a final product. Thus your proposal in October 1989 to blend coarse aggregate from your pit #2 is not acceptable to us as a way in which to approve quality.

I trust that we can mutually establish a time frame to carry out the testing to your satisfaction. If you agree with this process, please contact C. M. Bond, Head of our Geotechnical Section in London at 649-3017.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Puccini  
Regional Director  
Southwestern Region  
London

RP/cmb80/cs

cc: Hon. Robert Nixon, MPP Brant  
Gordon Miller, MPP Haldimand Norfolk