Archaeological Assessment

The purpose of this document is to provide a term of reference for the preparation of an Archaeological Assessment, which may be required as part of the submission of an application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment/Community Planning Permit, Draft Plan of Subdivision/Condominium, Site Plan, Consent and Minor Variance.

An Archaeological Assessment identifies and evaluates the presence of Archaeological resources also known as archaeological sites and outlines measures to mitigate the impact of development on these resources. Archaeological resources or sites include the physical remains and contextual setting of any structure, event, place, feature, or object which, because of the passage of time, is on or below the surface of the land or water and is important to understanding the history of a people or place.

Required by Legislation

The Ontario Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, the District of Muskoka Official Plan and Area Municipal Official Plans.

Who should prepare this study?

An Archaeological Assessment must be completed by a licensed archaeologist in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

Why do we need this study?

An Archaeological Assessment is required on lands that hold archaeological potential to ascertain the presence or absence of archaeological resources. If these resources are present, and a proposed development is likely to impact the resources the archaeological assessment will evaluate the significance of these resources and outline measures to mitigate the impact of development on these resources.

How should this study be prepared?

An Archaeological Assessment divided into stages 1- 4, as per Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries 2011 Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists for land-based archaeology.

An Archaeological Assessment should at a minimum contain:

Introduction

- Address of the subject property
- General site location of the subject property
- Project Name (if applicable)

- Applicant and owner's contact information
- Author name, title, qualifications, company name and appropriate stamp
- Brief description of the proposed development
- Overview of the study area
- Purpose of the study
- Location and context map

Proposal Description and Context

- A description of the proposal, development stats (such as number of units, site area) type of development proposed, height, parking areas, access points, location of amenity areas, specified receptor location(s), proposed phasing
- A description of the existing on-site conditions as well as surrounding areas, roads, natural areas, buildings, parking areas
- Concept Plan for the development including building location, parking, access, amenity area, grading, natural features and any natural hazards, proposed streets

Investigation/Evaluation

The Provincial Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries now has primary responsibility (except in respect of clauses 70 (1) (a) and (e) - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport is responsible in respect of clauses 70 (1) (a) and (e) as they relate to museums) the Ontario Heritage Act for matters relating to cultural heritage, including archaeological resources. Should it be determined that there is potential for impacts resulting from the approval of the development application, the applicant must notify the Ministry and carry out an archaeological assessment to their satisfaction. No grading or other soil disturbances shall take place prior to the Ministry confirming that all archaeological resource concerns have met Provincial licensing and resource conservation requirements, including confirmation that the applicant has satisfied the Ministry's Indigenous Peoples Engagement protocol pursuant to their Technical Bulletin; "Engaging Aboriginal Communities in Archaeology".

Recommendations

- Summary and conclusions of the supporting studies and how they support the development and any special considerations or conditions that should be imposed
- Any recommendations, or conditions that should form part of a decision on the matter

Additional Terms

To be identified by the District and/or Area Municipality where proposed development is located.

Study Submission Instructions

To be identified by the District and/or Area Municipality where proposed development is located.

What other resources are there?

Archaeological Assessments, Ontario
Draft Technical Bulletin Engaging Aboriginal Communities
Professional Engineers of Ontario
District Municipality of Muskoka Design Criteria and Standards Manual
Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) – Hire an RPP
Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS)
Muskoka Official Plan (MOP)
Applicable Area Municipal Official Plans:
Town of Huntsville Official Plan
Town of Bracebridge Official Plan
Town of Gravenhurst Official Plan
Township of Lake of Bays Official Plan
Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan
Township of Georgian Bay Official Plan

About these Terms of Reference

The need and scope for this study will be decided by the District and/or Area Municipality during initial pre-consultation process with input from partner agencies. This pre-consultation process may include:

- Determination if this study is applicable
- Confirmation of criteria within these Terms of Reference that are appropriate for your development project
- Identification of specific technical components that need to be addressed
- Identification of detailed standards to be met

Notes:

If the proposed development is revised, the study/report shall reflect the revisions by an updated report or letter from the author indicating the changes and whether or not the recommendations and conclusions are the same (Note: this is subject to the extent of the revisions).

A peer review may be required. The cost of the peer review will be borne by the applicant.

If the submitted study is incomplete, is authored by an unqualified individual or does not contain adequate analysis, the applications will be considered incomplete and returned to the applicant.