

Unit 1A – Introduction

These standards and guidelines are for consultant archaeologists conducting land-based archaeology in Ontario. Consultant archaeologists undertake archaeological work for clients who are required to conduct archaeological assessments, usually as part of the land use planning and development process.

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, anyone wishing to carry out archaeological fieldwork in Ontario must:

- have a licence from the Ministry of Culture
- file a report with the Ministry of Culture containing details of the fieldwork done
- file information about archaeological sites.

Following standards and guidelines set out by the Ministry of Culture is a term and condition of a licence to conduct archaeological fieldwork in Ontario.

O.Reg. 8/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act defines “consultant archaeologist” as:

an archaeologist who enters into an agreement with a client to carry out or supervise archaeological fieldwork on behalf of the client, produce reports for or on behalf of the client and provide technical advice to the client.

What is the purpose of standards and guidelines?

Standards set out the basic technical requirements for conducting archaeological fieldwork; they establish a measurable baseline.

Guidelines give guidance or advice on good practice, often referred to as “best practice” or “best available technology”.

Together, standards and guidelines represent the range of practices that the archaeology profession in Ontario today generally agrees demonstrate competent practice.

These standards and guidelines give consultants:

- a benchmark for performing and documenting archaeological fieldwork in the land use development context, with the goal of ensuring that archaeological conservation in Ontario is carried out at a consistent and appropriate level
- a clear understanding of the Ministry of Culture’s report review process and expectations, with the goal of ensuring that the review process is transparent, efficient and timely.

Non-adherence to these Standards and Guidelines is not acceptable except in a specific undertaking where professional judgement has identified a legitimate justification for use of an alternate strategy. This justification must be reviewed and agreed to by the Ministry before implementation. It may also require engagement with Aboriginal peoples

or communities, and efforts to accommodate any concerns raised with that alternate strategy.

How were the standards and guidelines developed?

These standards and guidelines replace the Ministry of Culture's *Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines (1993)*. The new standards and guidelines are based on:

- the old *Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines (1993)*
- the “Primer” for non-specialists, *Conserving a Future For Our Past: Archaeology, Land Use Planning and Development in Ontario (rev. 1998)*
- responses to a Stage 4 questionnaire circulated by the ministry in 1996
- extensive research into standards and guidelines in other Canadian and international jurisdictions
- input from a technical advisory group representing a cross-section of archaeological consultants with specific technical expertise and understanding of a range of consultant contexts. The group met for a number of intensive day-long workshops throughout 2004 and 2005.
- input from regional information and feedback workshops on draft sections, held in 2004 and 2005
- on-going feedback from archaeologists and archaeological organizations in Ontario

The Ministry of Culture will continue to monitor the practice of archaeology in the land use planning and development context to ensure that the standards and guidelines are current.

For Further Information:

This document is available on the ministry website at <http://www.culture.gov.on.ca>.

Archaeology in the Context of Land Use Planning and Development

Determining Archaeological Potential

Most land use planning and development legislation in Ontario identifies the conservation of archaeological resources as a matter of provincial interest. When a property planned for development is confirmed as likely to contain archaeological resources (has “archaeological potential”), the proponent must ensure that the provincial interest is met.

The property’s archaeological potential is usually determined by someone other than a consultant archaeologist, such as the approval authority or Ministry of Culture staff.

The approval authority or proponent may also hire a consultant archaeologist to conduct a Stage 1 assessment to determine and evaluate archaeological potential.

The non-specialist may have access to these tools to help determine archaeological potential:

- the Ministry of Culture’s *Checklist for Determining Archaeological Potential* identifies land features that indicate where archaeological resources are most likely to be
- the municipality’s archaeological master plan, if it has one (Halton and Waterloo regions, Ottawa, London and Windsor are all examples of municipalities with archaeological master plans).

These tools provide a basic indication of archaeological potential, to determine whether an archaeological condition should be placed on approval of the development project. If there is an archaeological condition, the proponent hires a licensed consultant archaeologist to review the property in detail and develop an assessment and mitigation plan.

The Archaeological Fieldwork Process in Land Use Planning and Development

The archaeological fieldwork process in land use planning and development in Ontario is broken into four stages. The stages may be combined depending on the nature of the archaeological resources and staging of the development project. The purpose of the first three stages is to gather information to identify and assess the archaeological resources and recommend the best approach to their conservation. In the final stage, the consultant archaeologist develops and carries out mitigation strategies. Not all projects require all stages.

Stage 1: Evaluation of Archaeological Potential

This is done only when a detailed evaluation of archaeological potential is needed, to supplement or in place of a determination of archaeological potential by the approval authority or Ministry of Culture. It is also required for urban and brownfield properties. The consultant archaeologist assesses the archaeological potential of the property (all lands that are part of the development proposal) and its surroundings by reviewing geographic, land use and historical information (background study) and by inspecting the property. The consultant archaeologist determines whether the property has archaeological potential and recommends appropriate assessment strategies.

Stage 2: Property Assessment

The consultant archaeologist does a background study or reviews the Stage 1 report (if one was done) and conducts a general survey of the whole property to identify all archaeological resources. The survey consists of walking a ploughed field looking for artifacts lying on the surface of the ground, or test pitting unploughable areas (e.g. woodlots, old pasture) at regular intervals, and screening the soil for artifacts. If archaeological sites with cultural heritage value or interest are identified, the assessment moves on to Stage 3.

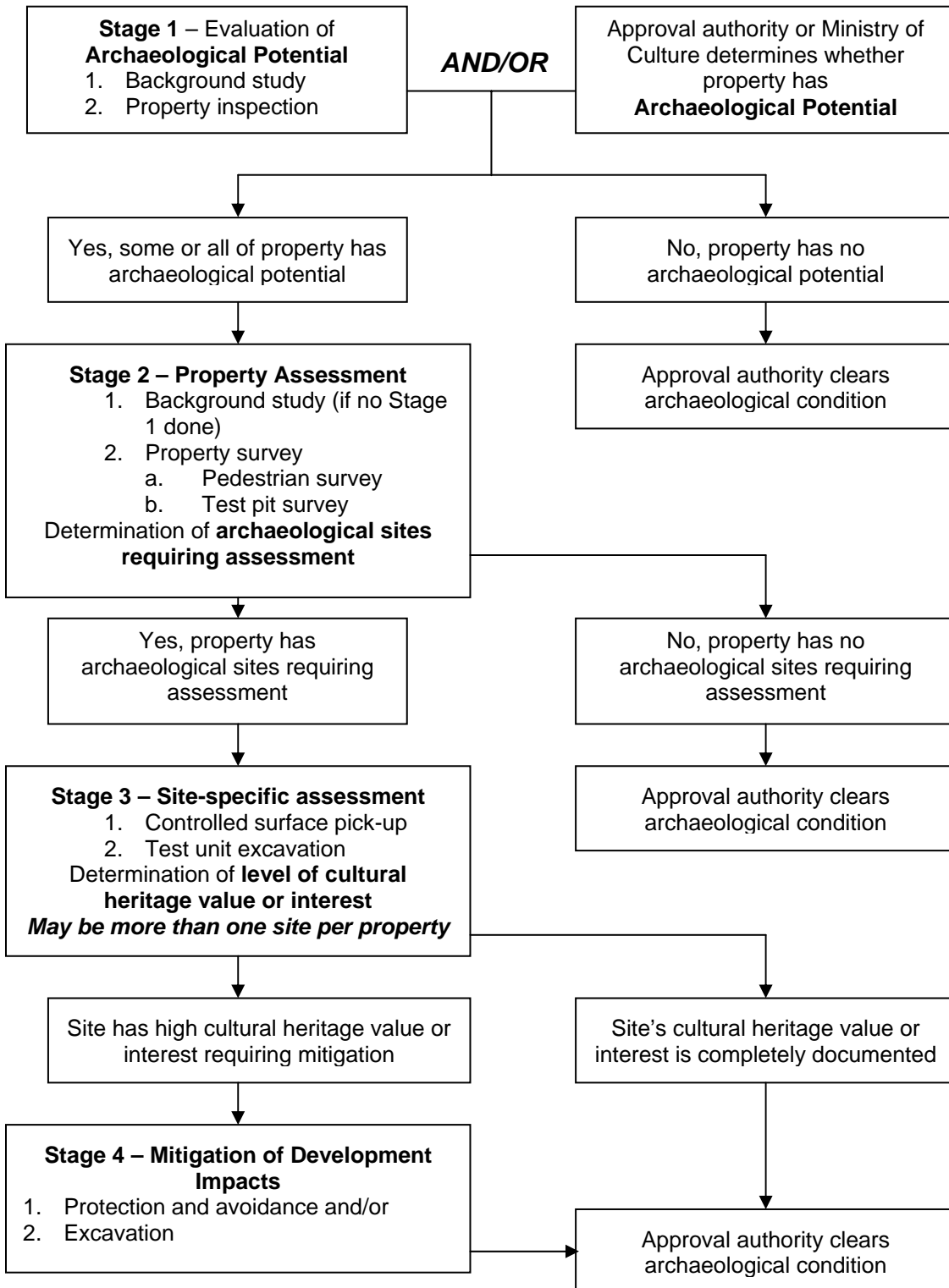
Stage 3: Site-Specific Assessment

The focus of assessment narrows to specific archaeological sites within the property. A property may contain more than one archaeological site. Stage 3 includes mapping the surface extent of the site and excavating a number of test units. The goal of the assessment is to determine the site's level of cultural heritage value or interest. For some sites, this may be sufficiently documented by the end of Stage 3. For sites with high levels of cultural heritage value or interest, the Stage 3 assessment also assists in developing Stage 4 mitigation strategies. The process of evaluating cultural heritage value or interest may require engaging local communities and reviewing a range of mitigation options with the client. This tends to create a pause in the process between Stage 1-3 assessment and Stage 4 mitigation.

Stage 4: Mitigation of Development Impacts

This includes recommending long-term protection strategies for the archaeological site (e.g. by redesigning the project to avoid excavation). If protection of the site is not viable, the consultant archaeologist conducts excavation to document the site and remove the artifacts before construction begins.

The Archaeological Fieldwork Process in Land Use Planning and Development



Role of the Ministry of Culture

The Ontario Heritage Act empowers the Minister of Culture to “determine policies, priorities and programs for the conservation, protection and preservation of the heritage of Ontario.” Part VI of the Act deals with the conservation of archaeological resources.

Ministry reviewers use the standards and guidelines to ensure that licensees have met the terms and conditions for holding an archaeological licence. The development approval authority often takes the ministry’s review of the fieldwork report as an indication that the provincial interest has been addressed, as required under their particular land use planning and development process.

The ministry’s archaeology staff also provides technical advice to stakeholders.