

11.0 Cultural Heritage

11.1 Background

The PPS defines cultural heritage landscapes as geographic areas that may have been modified by human activity, and that has cultural heritage value or interest to a community. These areas may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, or archaeological sites or natural features valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. These landscapes may have been deemed to have cultural heritage value under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or included on a federal and/or international register, and/or are protected through an official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanism.

Built heritage also falls under the realm of cultural heritage and is an important definition for land use planning. The PPS defines built heritage as a building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured or constructed part or remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest to a community. These buildings may have been deemed of cultural heritage value under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or have been included on a local, provincial, federal and/or international register.

Gananoque identified several cultural heritage features, mainly within the Lowertown area along the Gananoque River. These features are largely linked to factories located along the river at the time the town was formed in the 1800s. Gananoque generally grew out from this middle point with residential developments on both sides of the river. The Town has 20 properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and an additional 8 properties identified as properties of interest. Notable designations include Town Hall, the former factories along the river, mansions, hotels, and 19th and 20th century buildings on the main street. Heritage designations are led by the Gananoque Municipal Heritage Committee comprised of one member of Council and Town residents. There are five known archaeological sites in Gananoque.

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the Provincial Government has updated the framework for cultural heritage planning. As part of this process, the Ontario Heritage Act was updated to modify the process for designating heritage properties, and the PPS was updated to require municipalities to consult with indigenous communities when identifying and managing a cultural heritage or archaeological resource.

11.0 The Land Use Planning Framework

11.0.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities have regard to the conservation of features of significant cultural interest, as well as the adequate provision and distribution of cultural facilities in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act.

11.0.2 Ontario Heritage Act

Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act went into on July 1, 2021 and apply to all heritage applications from that day onward. Key changes to the Act include:

- New applications have the benefit of appeals to and binding decisions from the Ontario Land

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- Owners whose properties are designated will be notified and may object to the designation wherein council must consider the objection in moving forward with the designation
- New applications for alteration or demolition are considered approved if council does not decide within a specified time
- Municipalities have 90 days to issue a designation notice upon notice of an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment, or plan of subdivision application
- Designations must occur within 120 days after the issuance of a notice to designate

The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries also updated the toolkits used for implementing the Heritage Act. These toolkits explain step-by-step how municipal councils and planning authorities will implement the new policies laid out in the Act. These toolkits explain how to designate a heritage property, evaluate a potential property, designate a heritage conservation district, create, and maintain a heritage committee, and utilize places of worship while maintaining their heritage value.

Existing policies within Part 4 of the Heritage Act allow for municipalities to designate properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest given they meet the prescribed criteria for heritage designation and the designation is made through the process outlined in the Act. Further, municipalities may appoint heritage committees to advise and assist the council on matters of heritage designation.

Part 5 of the Act allows municipalities to designate heritage conservation districts. These are areas whose cultural heritage value extends beyond that of a single building, structure, or landscape. These districts require permit approval from the municipality for any alternation not considered minor, as well as demolition and any new construction. New developments must go through a review and approval process to ensure they fit in with the existing characteristics of the district.

11.0.3 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 2.6.1 states that significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.

Policy 2.6.2 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved.

Policy 2.6.3 states that planning authorities shall not permit development and site alternation on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected property will be conserved.

Policy 2.6.4 states that planning authorities should consider and promote archaeological management plans and cultural plans in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

Policy 2.6.5 states that planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and

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consider their interests when identifying, protecting, and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

11.0.4 The Official Plan

The Official Plan contains policies to guide cultural heritage and archaeological planning in the community generally, as well as Lowertown. Lowertown policies outline policies for redevelopment of the lands within Lowertown, a built heritage area. The policies promote the development of a mixed-use community within Lowertown while protecting and enhancing existing residential and cultural uses in the area.

When reviewing development proposals, Section 5.4.4. of the OP states that planning authorities and councils should consider the compatibility and appropriateness of development and re-development with conserving natural heritage resources. Further, Section 5.10.3. states that the municipality will maintain a heritage resource database and that heritage resource polices will apply when:

1. conserving heritage buildings, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources that are under municipal ownership and/or stewardship
2. conserving and mitigating impacts to all significant cultural heritage resources, when undertaking public works
3. respecting the heritage resources identified, recognized or designated by federal and provincial agencies

Development and site alteration may be allowed on sites adjacent to heritage properties given a Heritage Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is demonstrated that the heritage property will be conserved.

11.1 Conclusion

Gananoque's cultural heritage features, coupled with its natural environment, are key features of the community and support the tourism economy. Gananoque also has a number of know archaeological sites. The Official Plan should be reviewed and updated to ensure that it can provide a strong policy basis for cultural heritage and archaeological planning in the community.