



Heritage and Urban Design

CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PURPOSE

Heritage conservation involves identifying, protecting and promoting the elements that our society values. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) is the primary heritage planning vehicle to assess and review the potential cultural heritage significance of a particular resource, consider the impact of any proposed site development or alteration and recommend an overall approach that best conserves any identified cultural heritage resources.

A CHIA forms an integral part of the municipal planning framework. Its rationale emerges from a range of Provincial and Municipal policies including the:

- Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, Section 4.6
- Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Part I, 2(d)
- Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Part IV, Section 29 and Section 34
- Richmond Hill Official Plan, Section 3.4.2

If the property is deemed to contain cultural heritage value, a Cultural Heritage Conservation Plan (CHCP) is required as part of the CHIA. The CHCP shall be informed by established conservation principles and must provide a recommended conservation approach that mitigates negative impacts to the cultural heritage resources in question. The conservation principles contained in the Parks Canada *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* and the *Appleton Charter*, published by the International Council on Monuments and Sites, must be utilized to inform the recommended conservation strategy. The CHCP must also contain recommendations and provide sufficient detail to make informed decisions regarding any proposed changes or impacts to identified cultural heritage resources.

When is a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Required?

A CHIA is required for the following application types if the application is adjacent to or contains a property that is included on the City of Richmond Hill's municipal Heritage Register:

1. Notice of Intent to Demolish – Section 27(9) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
2. Application to Repeal – Section 32(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
3. Application to Alter – Section 33(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
4. Application to Demolish – Section 34(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
5. Application to Alter or Demolish – Section 42(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*
6. Official Plan Amendment;
7. Zoning By-law Amendment;
8. Plans of Subdivision; and
9. Site Plan Control.

A CHIA may be required by staff for the following additional application types:

1. Consent and/or Minor Variance applications for properties designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and
2. Where properties adjacent to a cultural heritage resource are subject to Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Plans of Subdivision, Site Plan Control and/or Consent and/or Minor Variance applications.

2.0 PROCESS

All CHIAs and other related documents including: CHCP, adaptive reuse plans and security plans shall be submitted by the applicant and must be prepared by a qualified heritage professional such as a heritage planner, heritage architect and/or heritage landscape architect with demonstrated knowledge of accepted heritage conservation standards, and who has undertaken historical research and identification/evaluation of cultural heritage value.

All heritage consultants submitting Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments must be members in good standing of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP)

3.0 CONTENT

The CHIA will include, but is not limited to the following information:

Introduction to Development Site

1. A location plan indicating subject property (Property Data Map and aerial photo);
2. A concise written and visual description of the property identifying significant features, buildings, landscape and vistas;
3. A concise written and visual description of the cultural heritage resource(s) contained within the development site identifying significant features, buildings, landscape, vistas and including any heritage recognition of the property (see the [City of Richmond Hill's Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources](#), Ontario Heritage Properties Database, Parks Canada National Historic Sites of Canada, and/or Canadian Register of Historic Places) with existing heritage descriptions as available;
4. A concise written and visual description of the surrounding context including adjacent heritage properties, their landscapes, and any potential cultural heritage resource(s) that haven't been formally recognized; and,
5. The property owner's contact information.

Background Research and Analysis

1. Comprehensive written and visual research and analysis of the site's cultural heritage value or interest, and an explanation of how the site meets or does not meet the provincial criteria for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
2. A development history of the site including original construction, additions and alterations with substantiated dates of construction; and
3. Research material to include relevant historic maps and atlases, drawings, photographs, sketches/renderings, permit records, land records, assessment rolls, municipal directories, etc.

Statement of Significance

1. A statement of significance identifying the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the cultural heritage resource(s). This statement will be informed by current research and analysis of the site as well as pre-existing heritage descriptions;
2. The statement of significance will be written in a way that does not respond to or anticipate any current or proposed interventions. The City may, at its discretion and upon review, reject or use the statement of significance, in whole or in part, in crafting its own statement of significance for the subject property; and
3. Professional-quality record photographs of the cultural heritage resource in its present state.

Assessment of Existing Condition

1. A comprehensive written description accompanied with high quality color photographic documentation of the cultural heritage resource(s) in its current condition and physical context (location, streetscape, etc).

Description of the Proposed Development or Site Alteration

1. A written and visual description of the proposed development or site alteration.

Impact of Development or Site Alteration

1. An assessment identifying any impact(s) the proposed development or site alteration may have on the cultural heritage resource(s). Impacts on a cultural heritage resource(s) as stated in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* and the *Appleton Charter* include, but are not limited to:
 2. Removal of any, or part of any, significant heritage attributes or features;
 3. Alteration that impacts the historic fabric and appearance;
 4. Shadow impacts that alter the appearance and/or setting of a heritage attribute, or change the viability of an associated natural feature or plantings, such as a garden;
 5. Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship;



6. Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of built and natural features;
7. Land disturbances such as a change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect a cultural heritage resource, including archaeological resources; and
8. Relocation (to be considered under the conditions described in the *Appleton Charter*).

Considered Alternatives and Mitigation Strategies

1. An assessment of alternative options, mitigation measures, and conservation methods that may be considered in order to avoid or limit the negative impact on the cultural heritage resource(s). Methods of minimizing or avoiding a negative impact on a cultural heritage resource(s) include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Alternative development approaches;
 - ii. Isolating development and site alteration from significant built and natural features and vistas;
 - iii. Design guidelines that harmonize mass, setback, setting, and materials;
 - iv. Limiting height and density;
 - v. Allowing only compatible infill and additions;
 - vi. Reversible alterations; and
 - vii. Relocation (to be considered under the conditions described in the *Appleton Charter*).

Conservation Strategy

1. The preferred strategy based on best-practice conservation principles that protect and enhance the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the cultural heritage resource(s) including, but not limited to:
 - i. A mitigation strategy including the proposed methods;
 - ii. A conservation scope of work including the proposed methods;
 - iii. An implementation and monitoring plan;



- iv. Recommendations for additional studies/plans related to, but not limited to conservation, interpretation and/or commemoration.
- v. If removal of the Cultural Heritage Resource is recommended, the CHIA must provide site-specific design guidelines to address lighting, signage, landscaping, site stabilization/sedimentation, and photographic documentation prior to demolition. A commemoration strategy may also be required.
- vi. Referenced conservation principles and precedents.

Appendices

1. A bibliography listing research materials used and sources consulted in preparing the CHIA.