

May 16, 2025

Development Services Department
City of Kawartha Lakes
180 Kent Street West
Lindsay ON K9V 2Y6

The Kawartha Lakes Municipal Heritage Committee has reviewed the proposed amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act through Bill 5, Protecting Ontario By Unleashing Our Economy Act (2025) and is concerned regarding the implications for the assessment and preservation of archaeological sites in Kawartha Lakes and across Ontario. After review of the proposed amendments, the Committee would like to submit the following comments:

- The Committee is seriously concerned regarding the ability for the province to exempt sites from archaeological assessment. The Committee is extremely concerned that this will result in the lost of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous archaeological resources which is in opposition to provincial policy direction under the PPS that direct the preservation of archaeological sites prior to development occurring. The Committee feels this is a step backwards toward reconciliation with Indigenous communities and building positive, collaborative relationships between the province, municipalities and Indigenous communities with regard to development review.
- The Committee is also concerned how the province will determine which sites are exempt from archaeological assessments and which sites will not be able to be exempted as the provincial priorities identified by the province through the ERO posting are broad and far reaching. The Committee insists that robust and appropriate consultation to determine which sites will and will not be exempt is required, should the province choose to move ahead with this legislation.
- The Committee would like additional clarification on how the proposed legislation will interact with other pieces of provincial planning legislation and actions, such as MZOs regarding how the exemption from archaeological assessments will interplay with other planning processes.
- The Committee would like additional information on assessment orders, inspections, inspectors and investigators, particularly regarding how inspectors/investigators will be qualified as they should be qualified as archaeologists in order to undertake this work, and how inspections should be triggered. The Committee suggests that municipalities be involved in this process and receive any reports generated from inspections or ordered assessments to ensure good communication and data management.

- The Committee would also like additional information to provide additional input regarding the deposit of artifacts after an assessment has been completed and the ability to provide comment regarding the deposition of the artifacts for archaeological sites within the municipality to ensure that artifacts end up in appropriate institutions and with appropriate communities. It is imperative that municipalities have input into where local artifacts are deposited.
- The Committee would also like to voice its support for the shift enforcement from the Provincial Offenses Act into the Ontario Heritage Act and lengthening the time allowed to investigate an offense as it provides municipalities additional tools for enforcement.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Athol Hart".

Athol Hart
Chair, Kawartha Lakes Municipal Heritage Committee.