

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW REPORT

TSAL'ÁLH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
LOTS 6, 7, AND 8 ON EDWARD ROAD

PREPARED FOR: TSAL'ÁLH FIRST NATION

PREPARED BY: GWR HERITAGE CONSULTING LTD

MAY 14, 2024

NOTICE REGARDING USE AND DISTRIBUTION

This report was prepared for Tsal'álh First Nation by GWR Heritage Consulting Ltd. (GWR). The information and recommendations contained herein is consistent with the level of effort involved and based on: i) information available at the time of preparation, ii) data supplied by outside sources and iii) the assumptions, conditions and qualifications set forth in this report. This report is intended to be used by Tsal'álh for project planning purposes. Any other use of this report by any third party is at that party's sole risk.

The information regarding the archaeological sites, including the map provided, is not public information. The information is intended for use in project planning and should not be distributed to external parties without consent of GWR.

Tsal'álh is granted copyright of this work product.

Report Author	Nadine Gray, Archaeologist GWR Heritage Consulting Ltd.
GIS	Talicia Kane, GIS cert.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Project Description	1
2.0 Methods.....	1
2.1 Archaeological Desktop Review Objectives	1
3.0 Archaeological Resource Overview	2
3.1 Study Area	2
3.2 Archaeological Site Types.....	2
3.3 Heritage Resource Protection	2
3.4 Archaeological Resources in the Project Area.....	3
3.5 Evaluation of Archaeological Potential Variables	4
4.0 Archaeological Resource Potential Assessment	4
4.1 Archaeological Resource Potential Assessment Considerations	5
5.0 Recommendations.....	5
6.0 Closing Remarks	5

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Registered Sites near the Project Area

Figure 2. Site Map for Proposed Development

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Registered sites near the Project Area

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This archaeological resource overview for a Tsal'álh Development Project, referred to as Lots 6, 7, and 8 on Edward Road, is based on the archaeology data currently available and does not include St'át'imc cultural knowledge. It is significant to note that the proposed development project is located within St'át'imc territory, specifically on the reserve lands of the Community of Tsal'álh and the information contained in this archaeological resource review does not necessarily reflect the views of the Tsal'álh or a St'át'imc approach to heritage resource management. Specifically, this report only addresses archaeological data from the Provincial databases and is not intended to represent or summarize St'át'imc cultural knowledge of the area.

The archaeology resource overview presented below is designed to address the project area, identify registered archaeology sites, locate areas with high archaeological potential and provide recommendations for ensuring that any archaeological resources encountered during the project are either avoided (not impacted by relocating the work site outside of the archaeological site boundaries) or, are mitigated.

This project is located on Provincial Lands which are subject to the requirements outlined in the B.C. Provincial Legislation (Heritage Conservation Act).

1.1 Project Description

The project area reviewed (see Figure 1 and Figure 2) is located on Edwards Roads in Seton Portage. Specifically, a desktop review of the proposed location for developments was assessed for potential impacts to recorded archaeology sites.

2.0 METHODS

A desktop review of available archaeological information for the study area reviewed the following data sources for this review included:

- Published and unpublished cultural heritage resource reports for the Seton and Anderson Lake area;
- Biophysical and topographical mapping, including contemporary orthophoto imagery available via Google Earth and ESRI data layers;
- The Provincial Heritage Register, via the Remote Access to Archaeological Data (RAAD) on-line application, for geospatial data and information about documented archaeological and historical heritage sites in proximity to the properties;
- The Provincial Heritage Register, to acquire data about archaeological resource potential modelling based on GIS applications, and
- Personal knowledge of the area

2.1 Archaeological Desktop Review Objectives

In accordance with guidelines prepared by the provincial Archaeology Branch, the work conducted for this project is a desktop review to identify archaeological concerns that may arise during the subsequent phases of this project.

The desktop review represents part of an archaeological overview assessment as defined in the *British Columbia Archaeological Impact Assessment Guidelines* (Archaeology Branch 1998). According to these Guidelines, the objectives of an overview are to:

- Identify lands that have potential to contain archaeological resources within the proposed development areas
- Identify possible conflicts between archaeological resources and the proposed development
- Recommend additional studies or other measures to protect archaeological resources, as required.

Because no archaeological field study was conducted for this review, a provincial Heritage Inspection Permit was not required. However, a Provincial Heritage Inspection Permit is recommended for any ground disturbing works. The heritage protocols of Tsal'álh for the collection and storage of artifacts are recommended to be incorporated into the field methodology of any archaeology work.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Study Area

The project area is located at the eastern end of Seton Lake (Figure 2) within an area that has been developed for houses, businesses, as well as road and rail transportation. The project area is located south of Seton River in lands that lie between Seton Lake and Anderson Lake.

3.2 Archaeological Site Types

The area reviewed is located within the territory of the St'át'imc Nation which has a cultural chronology extending back thousands of years. The seasonal use of available resources observed ethnographically provides an opportunity to understand the variety of site types represented archaeologically. Each part of the province exhibits archaeological site types particular to that region. In the study area, these may include, but not be limited to: habitation sites, villages, seasonal camps, fishing sites, subsistence features (for storage, cooking and roasting), artifact scatters, rock art, forest utilization sites (CMTs), burial places, ceremonial/spiritual sites, trails and historic sites.

Archaeological sites are the result of certain discrete human activities occurring at a specific location on the physical landscape. Evidence for more than one type of cultural activity can take place at a single location. In mapping and recording archaeological sites, archaeologists use site boundaries to indicate the known extent of physical remains at a particular location. These boundaries are necessary to delineate the physical remains of archaeological sites to ensure their protection from proposed development activities. While boundaries are placed around archaeological sites for management purposes, it should be recognized that indigenous use of the landscape may extend beyond archaeological site boundaries. Some indigenous use activities leave no physical archaeological evidence, such as berry gathering, medicinal plant collecting, and spiritual practices. These significant activities are best documented in a Land Use or Occupancy Study and are not addressed in this report.

3.3 Heritage Resource Protection

Archaeological sites in British Columbia are protected by the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA) which states that no site on public or provincial land may be altered or disturbed in any way without a Permit issued by the Archaeology Branch. Archaeological sites are protected if they have been designated as "provincial heritage sites" in accordance with Section 9 of the HCA, or through automatic protection under Section 13 by virtue of particular historic or archaeological values. Sites automatically protected in BC include:

- Archaeological sites occupied or used before AD 1846
- Aboriginal rock art with historical or archaeological value
- Burial places with historical or archaeological value
- Heritage ship and aircraft wrecks
- Sites of unknown attribution, that could have been occupied prior to AD 1846.

Protected archaeological sites may not be altered or disturbed in any manner without a Permit issued under Sections 12 of the HCA. Furthermore, heritage sites of Aboriginal origin not automatically protected by the HCA may be subject to legal interpretation of the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Delgamuukw vs. British Columbia* (1997), regarding

the fiduciary responsibility of provincial governments for protecting First Nations' cultural heritage. Additionally, cultural heritage resources, defined as objects, sites, or the locations of societal practices that are of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance to the Province, a community, or an Aboriginal people, require assessment and management in accordance with the Protocol Agreement with the Ministry of Forests (Archaeology Branch 1996).

3.4 Archaeological Resources in the Project Area

A total of 4 archaeological sites are recorded in the Provincial Heritage Registry within 200 metres of the project area.

These registered sites are summarized in Table 1 with Figure 1 providing their locations in relations to the proposed works.

It is important to note that the Provincial Heritage Register may not capture all the heritage resources within a given area and should not be regarded as a complete registry of heritage and archaeological sites. If there has been no archaeology work conducted within the project area, there may be unknown archaeological resources in this area.

Table 1: Registered sites near the Project Area.

Site	Site Type	Date Recorded	In Conflict with Project
EeRn 28	PRECONTACT – Cultural Depression (storage pit),	1974 by Wales	No – Archaeology Branch notes the site is too vaguely described to plot (accurately) and could not be relocated. It would appear south of the Seton Portage right of way.
EeRn-71	PRECONTACT – Forest Utilization, Aboriginally Logged, Canoe	1974 Wales	No – site could not be relocated but appears to have been within the right of way of BC rail, about 50m north of the Seton Portage Road
EeRn -72	PRECONTACT - Cultural Depression, Housepit (2), large chipped projectile point was collected and may be associated with the cultural depressions	1957 by Abbott	No – the remarks from 1957 example the lands are part of xlu-us (housepits) according the Peters Family of Shalalth. Abbott reported 2 housepits in 1957 and considered the site a sub site of EeRn-4, a large village of xlu-us dispersed across the central part of Seton Portage
EeRn-73	PRECONTACT - Cultural Depression, Housepit	1991 by Stryd and Brolly	No - Part of ethnographic village of xlu-us (housepits) according to Peters family in Shalalth. One housepit undisturbed, 2 others reported disturbed 1991. EeRn-73 was originally recorded by Abbott in 1957 as EeRn-4, a subset of the much larger village of xlu-us dispersed across the central part of Seton Portage

Although no registered sites are located within the project footprint of the proposed developments, the precise location of archaeology sites in the vicinity are vague. Therefore, the location of the archaeology sites may require additional survey work to locate the sites and re-plot.

3.5 Evaluation of Archaeological Potential Variables

“Archaeological resource potential” as defined by this study refers to the capability of a landscape (or portion of a landscape) to have supported the kinds of past cultural activities that would have resulted in the formation and preservation of archaeological or historical remains. Some kinds of cultural activities (e.g., medicinal plant collecting) did not result in the formation of physical remains, and usually cannot be considered when evaluating archaeological potential. The same applies to places of cultural significance (e.g., spirited places); however, where traditional land use data is available, this information can assist with the assessment of archaeological resource potential.

As used here, potential ratings are not synonymous with probability, which is a quantifiable measure of site occurrence, but simply identify lands that should be examined by qualified archaeologists in advance of land-altering development projects.

Because archaeological site locations are often correlated with landscape attributes, their presence or absence can be used to identify lands with greater or lesser archaeological potential. Thus, the assessment of archaeological resource potential is based upon a consideration of topographical and biophysical characteristics that favour or inhibit the distribution of archaeological resources, in addition to the locations of documented sites, ethnographic and historic settlement information. The attributes considered for this study included:

- Proximity to aquatic features, particularly Seton and Anderson Lake and their tributaries
- Proximity and environmental setting of documented archaeological and historic heritage resources
- Modern vegetation patterns, as a reflection of the extent of current land use
- Integrity of the modern landscape as a reflection of historic land use practices.

Lands that could be affected by proposed development activities are categorized as having high/moderate or low archaeological resource potential. The varying classes of potential ratings affect the scope and level of effort recommended as follow-up actions. In general, the higher the potential class, the greater is the level of effort expected by regulatory authorities. For the present study, the potential values are defined as follows:

- **High/Moderate Potential:** Lands exhibiting topographic and biophysical attributes highly supportive of traditional cultural activities that would have left archaeological evidence. These lands exhibit the highest archaeological sensitivity within a particular landscape, and an archaeological impact assessment is recommended for lands exhibiting such characters.
- **Low Potential:** Lands that exhibit few characteristics supportive of traditional cultural activities. Further field investigations are not normally recommended for lands categorized as having low archaeological potential. Low archaeological potential should not be interpreted to as no archaeological potential.

4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT

The archaeological overview assessment layer on the BC Archaeology Branch RAAD on-line application rates the area as high potential. The landscape in this region typically has higher potential in lands adjacent to Seton Lake, Anderson Lake and Seton River, with lower potential lands occurring on sloping terrain and within marsh/bog lands. The study area is located along the level terrain, adjacent to Seton River within a landscape that has continual use and occupation by St’át’imc.

While the lands in this study area have been developed by modern construction activities. There is the potential that yet unknown archaeological resources could be identified during the project. As the Archaeology Branch notes indicate, the area was ethnographically

described as part of a larger village of *xlu-us* (housepits) dispersed across the central part of Seton Portage

An important caveat to the foregoing statement is that the occurrence of any archaeological remains within the study area is contingent upon the presence of intact, native soils that may still exist beneath fill and other materials of modern, anthropogenic origin.

In general, the project area is considered to have high archaeological potential.

4.1 Archaeological Resource Potential Assessment Considerations

Using a variety of information sources, this review evaluated the archaeological resource potential of the study area. In consideration of the data, there is potential for undiscovered archaeological resources within the project areas. **None of the sites recorded in the Provincial Heritage Registry are in direct conflict with the proposed work locations.** However, the recorded location of the archaeology sites in Table 1 should not be considered as accurate. In addition, the lands models high for archaeological potential. There is potential that unrecorded archaeological resources may be encountered in these lands.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The desktop archaeological review determined that there are no registered archaeology sites in conflict with the project work locations. However, given the questionable accuracy of the plotted locations of the recorded archaeology sites in the area, *further heritage work is recommended. An archaeological impact assessment prior to any ground disturbing work is recommended.* The archaeological impact assessment will require a Provincial Heritage Inspection Permit.

6.0 CLOSING REMARKS

This desktop review of the area indicates there is potential of archaeological resources to be encountered during this project. Further heritage work is recommended to document unrecorded archaeological resources and to avoid potential impacts to protected archaeological resources.

This desktop review is based on the information available at the time of writing and may require additional work should the scope of the project change or new information become available.

Please direct any questions or concerns to:

Nadine Gray, Archaeologist
GWR Heritage Consulting Ltd.
gwrheritage@gmail.com

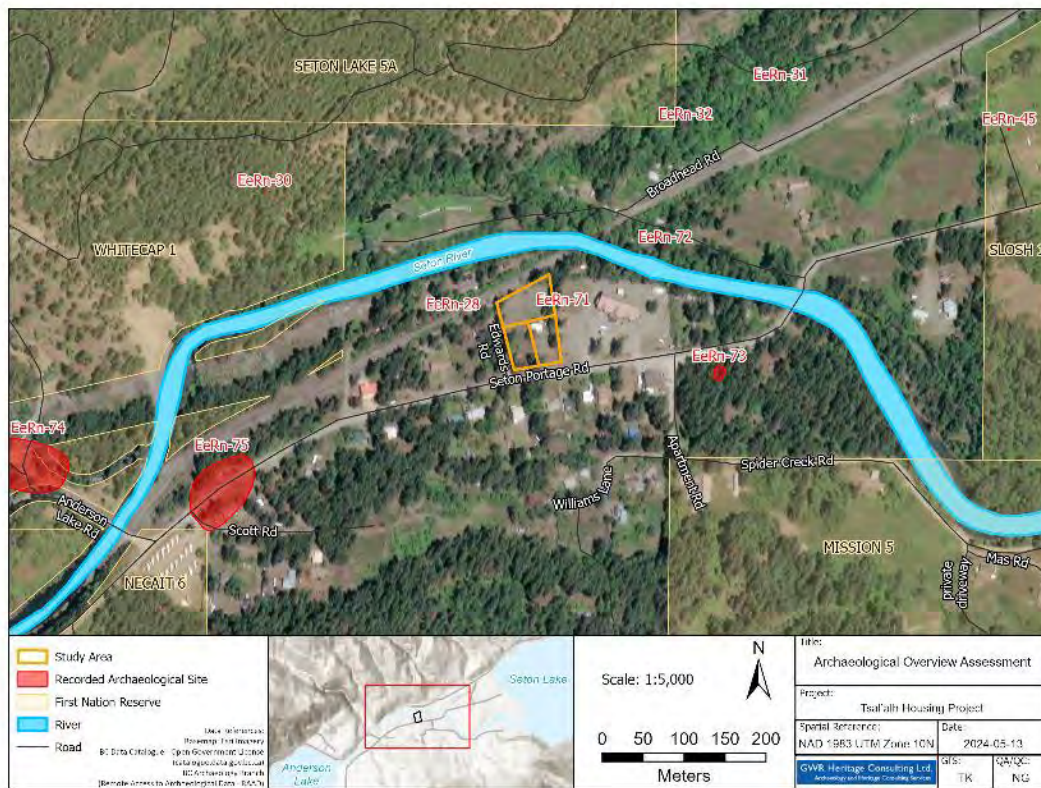


Figure 1: Registered Sites near the Project Area

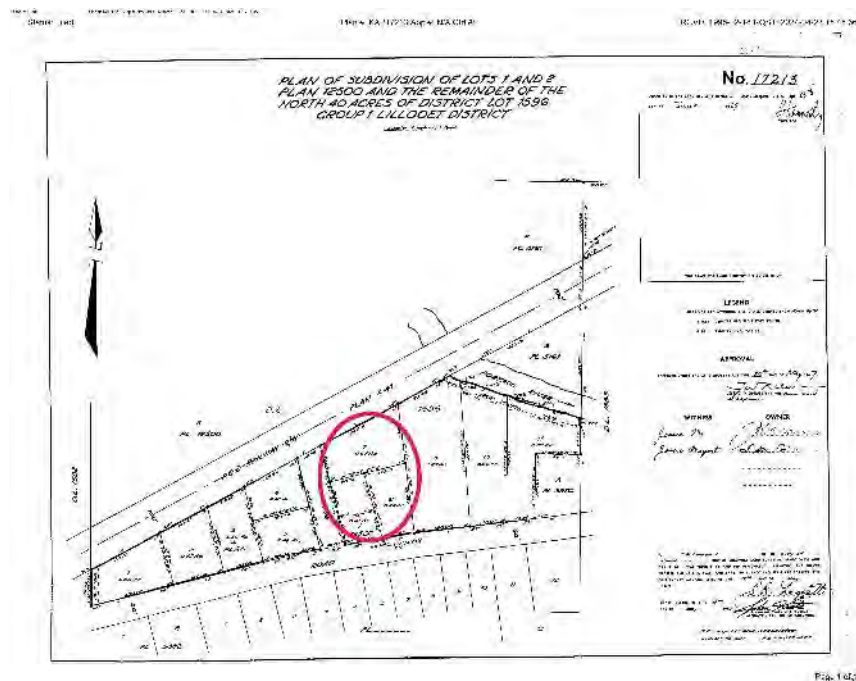


Figure 2: Legal Survey Map for Proposed Development

Provided by David Nairne + Associates