

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT  
Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut**

Public Services and Procurement Canada

Permit Number: 2021-22A

Final Report



Prepared for:  
Northern Contaminated Sites Group, Public  
Services and Procurement Canada

Prepared by:  
Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
Calgary, Alberta

Project Number: 121417087

February 2022



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## **Executive Summary**

*This report is intended to represent a summary of the final Archaeological Impact Assessment Report prepared as required under the conditions of the Archaeological Permit. This summary report can be made public as it does not contain detailed archaeological site information. The complete confidential Archaeological Impact Assessment Report has been provided to the Department of Culture and Heritage, Government of Nunavut, as required.*

At the request of Public Services and Procurement Canada, Stantec Consulting Ltd. conducted an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) under Nunavut Archaeological Permit 2021-22A for the Coral Harbour Site as part of an Environmental Site Assessment of contaminated areas in Coral Harbour, Nunavut.

The objective of the AIA was to assess Areas of Potential Concern (APECs), borrow sources, and additional areas as requested to identify archaeological sites that could be impacted by remediation or borrow activities. The program was initiated by desktop review followed by field studies to inspect the project components to identify and document archaeological sites. The archaeological field program was conducted in August 2021.

Multiple project components were subject to assessment during the current study, including five APECs associated with former military activity, five proposed non-hazardous waste landfill location options, several potential borrow sources, some very extensive in size, the Former Tank Farm Area, and areas surrounding Airport Road Quarry #1. Assessment included ground traverse by two archaeologists to inspect for and document archaeological sites. Shovel tests were not conducted at archaeological sites as identified sites will be avoided, and thus impact from shovel testing was not warranted.

During the studies, three archaeological sites were newly identified. Two sites were identified relative to the assessment completed within the APEC study areas; this includes a precontact stone feature that may represent a cache or collapsed inuksuk, and a historic tent ring. The third site identified was recorded fortuitously during supplemental assessment, and is not within proximity of Project components. This site consists of multiple stone features, both precontact and historic, on a bedrock hill overlooking the South Bay.

Ongoing avoidance of all three archaeological sites is recommended. Should remediation activities be proposed in close proximity to identified archaeological sites, fencing of sites to facilitate avoidance could be considered. Site locations and descriptions have been provided to Public Services and Procurement Canada to facilitate long-term avoidance of these archaeological features.



## **Study Limitations**

This document was prepared by Stantec Consulting Ltd. at the request of the proponent relative to their obligations under the Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations (Nunavut Government 2001). The material in it reflects Stantec's best judgment in light of the information available at the time of preparation. Any use that a third party makes of this report, or any reliance on or decisions made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Stantec is not responsible for any unauthorized use or modification of this document.

The findings of this study pertain only to the Project as outlined within this report. Any changes or additions to the Project must be reviewed in terms of archaeological concerns and the potential need for further assessment.





**ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT**  
**Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut**

**Project Personnel**

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Inuit Participants	Inuapik Eli, Coral Harbour (Wildlife Monitor) Jeffrey Keenainak, Coral Harbour (Wildlife Monitor)



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

Introduction  
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) conducted an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) under Nunavut Archaeological Permit 2021-22A for the Coral Harbour Site as part of an Environmental Site Assessment of contaminated areas in Coral Harbour, Nunavut (the Project). The archaeological field program was conducted in August 2021.

This report is intended to represent a public summary of the final AIA technical report prepared as required under the conditions of the Archaeological Permit. This summary report can be made public as it does not contain detailed archaeological site information. The complete AIA Report (Tischer 2022) has been submitted to the Department of Culture and Heritage, Government of Nunavut, as required, but must remain confidential and cannot be shared publicly as it contains confidential information about archaeological sites.

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Coral Harbour Site is a series of contaminated areas associated with the former military base which was used by Canadian and American forces between the 1940s and 1970s during the construction of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line and other northern operations (PSPC 2021). The Environmental Site Assessment requested for the Project included an AIA to identify and assess archaeological sites.

Archaeological field investigations could not be completed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions. As such, an Archaeological Overview document was prepared for the Project in 2020 (Stantec 2020). The objective of the desktop overview was to assess the potential for occurrence of archaeological sites in the Project area, and to formulate recommendations as to areas that should be avoided during the planned 2020 soil sampling activities.

Eight Areas of Potential Environmental Concern (APEC) were subject to desktop assessment in the Archeological Overview, and potential borrow sources were also considered. The overview included review of previous site assessment reports, primarily to view photos of the areas, as well as a review of topographic and satellite imagery to identify disturbance factors. It was also confirmed with the Department of Culture and Heritage, Government of Nunavut (GN), that no known archaeological sites are on record within proximity of the Project.

The results of the desktop review resulted in recommendations that soil sampling activities in 2020 be restricted to areas of the APECs that have been subject to substantial degrees of disturbance at which the potential for occurrence of archaeological sites is very low. Sampling at potential borrow sources was not recommended except at existing borrow sources in existing disturbance only.

Three of eight APECs (5, 7 and 8) were subsequently removed from the field scope of work as they were determined in 2020 to be actively in use by the Hamlet of Coral Harbour; the remaining five APECs were requested for assessment. In addition, potential borrow sources and potential non-hazardous waste landfill options were requested for assessment, and it was noted that additional areas may be requested for assessment by the community during the field program. As a result, the Former Tank Farm Area and an area around Airport Road Quarry #1 were also subject to assessment during the field program (Figure 1-2).

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT - PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

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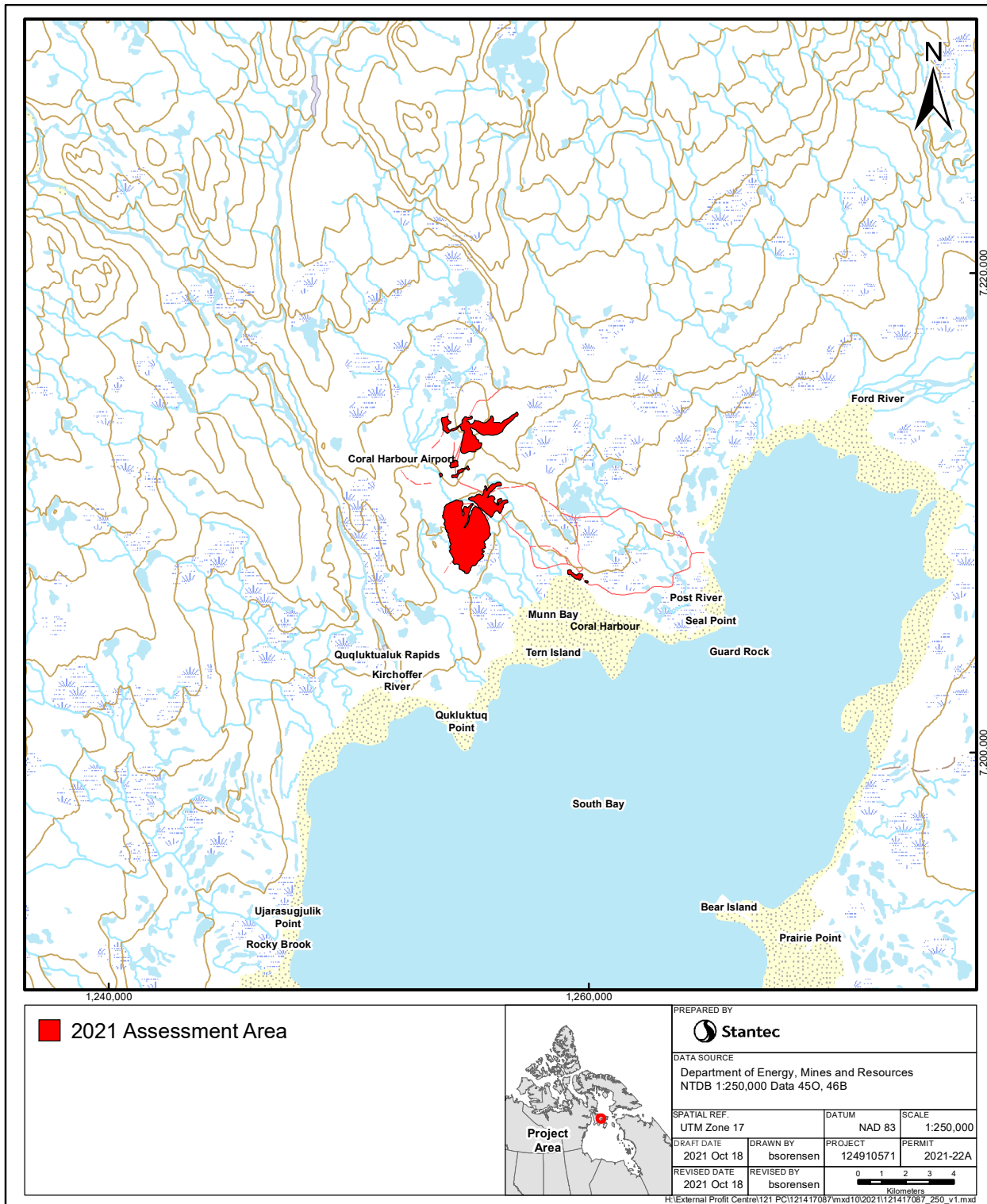
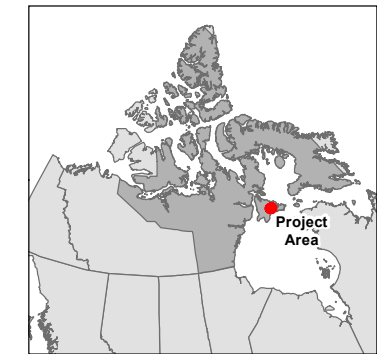
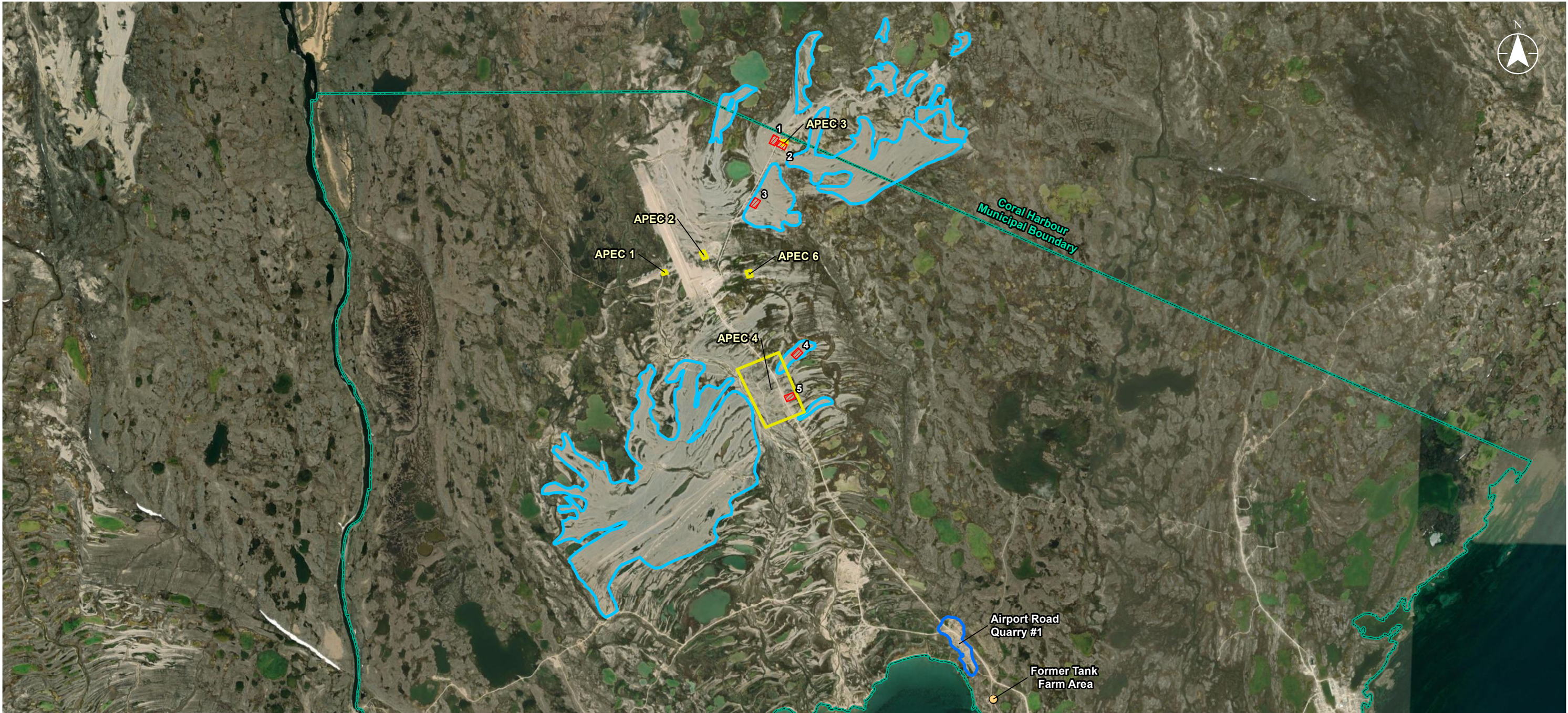


Figure 1-1 Project Location

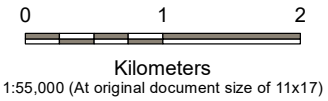






- APEC Area
- Potential Non-Hazardous Waste Landfill Locations
- Potential Borrow Source
- Existing Borrow Source
- Former Tank Farm Area
- Municipal Boundary

**Notes**  
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N  
2. Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



121417087  
Prepared by BSorensen on 2021-10-27  
Revised by BSorensen on 2022-01-27

Client/Project  
Public Services and Procurement Canada  
2021 Coral Harbour Former Base

Figure No.  
**1-2**

Title  
**Coral Harbour Project Components Assessed**

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The following areas were subject to assessment during the 2021 AIA, and are illustrated in Figure 1-2:

- APEC 1 – Tar Barrels
- APEC 2 – Full Barrels
- APEC 3 – Barrel Cache
- APEC 4 – Former Army Base
- APEC 6 – Former Airport Debris
- Potential Non-Hazardous Waste Landfill Location options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Borrow source west of APEC 3 (south of municipal boundary only)
- Borrow source south of APEC 3
- Borrow source east of APEC 3 (south of municipal boundary only)
- Two borrow sources east of APEC 4
- Northern and eastern portion of extensive borrow source west of APEC 4/Fossil Creek
- Former Tank Farm Area
- Airport Road Quarry #1

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the archaeological studies were to document any previously recorded or newly identified archaeological sites relative to the areas listed above and relative to potential future remediation activities. Specifically, the field program was designed to identify archaeological sites, to assess the nature of potential project impacts on identified sites relative to site heritage value, to provide PSPC with information necessary to assist in project planning to avoid archaeological sites, and to formulate recommendations for further site management and mitigation.

## 1.3 SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for the AIA consisted of the following components:

1. **Record Review** - to identify previously recorded sites within proximity of the Project and to determine the nature of the database in the general area.
2. **Ground Reconnaissance** - to re-identify, in the field, any archaeological sites that were previously recorded within proximity of the Project, as well as to identify and document any unrecorded archaeological sites.

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3. **Site Evaluation** - to evaluate the nature of the existing archaeological database, the quantity and quality of observable remains (e.g., site condition, content, uniqueness, and complexity) and the potential of the archaeological site to contribute to the regional archaeological database.
4. **Impact Assessment** - to assess the potential for impacts to the identified archaeological sites, as well as the local and regional database, and to recommend site specific mitigative and avoidance measures commensurate with the assigned value of the site.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

Methods  
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## 2.0 METHODS

To meet the objectives of the AIA, the archaeological studies included a record review of previously recorded archaeological sites in proximity of the Project. Field studies were subsequently conducted on foot to complete ground reconnaissance and inspection to identify archaeological sites. Analysis of findings and reporting were conducted after completion of the field studies, including site evaluation, impact assessment and formulation of recommendations.

### 2.1 RECORD REVIEW

A site file search of the Nunavut Archaeological Sites Database was obtained from the GN Department of Culture and Heritage to review the locations and nature of archaeological sites on record on Southampton Island (GN 2021). In order to obtain records from the database, a data license was submitted to the Department of Culture and Heritage, as required.

As part of the pre-field work, a permit application was submitted to the Department of Culture and Heritage, GN, outlining the study methods and proposed assessment coverage. Archaeological permit 2021-22A was subsequently issued for the field studies.

### 2.2 FIELD STUDIES

During the AIA, archaeological studies were completed at multiple locations as described in Section 1.1, including APECs, landfill options, potential borrow sources, and additional areas. Two Inuit participants were included in the program, Inuapik Eli and Jeffrey Keenainak, both wildlife monitors from Coral Harbour.

Ground reconnaissance included visual inspection to identify stone features such as tent rings, qarmaq or winter houses, caches, hearths, and inuksuit, as well as historic items or prehistoric lithic artifacts. No areas with significant deposition (such as floodplain deposits along major watercourses) were identified that warranted shovel testing. Shovel testing was not conducted at identified archaeological sites pending determination of future potential impacts; currently ongoing avoidance of all identified archaeological sites is planned and thus shovel testing was not conducted to avoid impacting the sites unnecessarily.

### 2.3 SITE EVALUATION

The nature of site assessment completed at each archaeological site identified is largely contingent on the nature of the site and its physical relationship to both previous and proposed disturbance activities. For the current assessment, ongoing avoidance was assumed to be the primary planned mitigation measure at identified sites pending determination of possible future project impacts. As such, detailed site assessment (including shovel testing) was not undertaken, but individual features were documented (UTM location taken with hand-held GPS, site mapping, photography, feature description); site forms and site sketch maps were completed for each site. If identified sites are proposed for impact (i.e., if avoidance is not possible due to design constraints), further assessment and/or mitigation activities would need to be conducted during subsequent studies.

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### 2.4 SITE VALUE AND INTERPRETIVE POTENTIAL

Site values are determined on the basis of the results of the field program as well as the regional archaeological context and Indigenous perspective. Generally, relative site value and interpretive potential is based on the data obtained to date. Factors considered include site type, size, and complexity, presence or absence of subsurface materials and features, and number of artifacts observed. The scientific value of a specific site is deemed to be low if substantial disturbance or exposure has occurred or at sites with single artifacts or single features of limited antiquity. Sites at which large quantities of artifacts or diagnostic artifacts are present, or at which cultural stratification or multiple stone features are present, particularly if they contain unusual features or diagnostic artifacts or have the potential to contain diagnostic artifacts, are classified as having high site value and interpretive potential.

In addition to these tangible variables, each site is viewed from the perspective of the regional data base. Indigenous and public perspective of site value may also an important criterion in evaluating identified sites if available depending on the nature and location of sites.

### 2.5 FORMULATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Site specific recommendations are formulated primarily on the basis of the level of available information and the perceived values within the context of the predicted impact. Because of the non-renewable nature of heritage resources, avoidance as a mitigation measure is recommended as the preferred option at sites with established heritage values. Sites of limited scientific value and of limited ethnic value (for example, isolated artifact finds or fossil fragments) are generally not recommended for further study and are not considered for avoidance mitigation as the data collected at the archaeological impact assessment stage has effectively reduced or eliminated impact from the proposed development.

In general, site-specific mitigative measures recommended reflect the nature and content of each site and the site value ascribed to each site. As such, the site-specific scope of studies recommended at each site represents a professional judgment as to an appropriate balance in compensation for scientific and community information lost through site destruction.

The site-specific recommendation made for an identified site is based primarily on its location relative to proposed disturbance activities. Should disturbance to identified sites be anticipated as a result of the Project, further assessment and/or mitigation studies may be required. Mitigation requirements are determined by the Nunavut Department of Culture and Heritage.

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## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

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### 3.0 RESULTS

#### 3.1 RECORD REVIEW

The record review provided by the Department of Culture and Heritage, GN (2021), covered the entirety of Southampton Island to allow for a review of the regional archaeological site database. A total of 79 sites are on record on the Island. Most of the sites are found along the western coastline of the Island, with a second concentration of sites at the north part of the island, along the coast of Duke of York Bay.

Sites recorded along the western coast of the island were all recorded in 1983, and include campsites with tent rings, cache sites, one site described as a large village that is similar to Native Point (on the south coast and described further below), and two other sites with sod houses (GN 2021); these latter three sites are assumed to represent Thule occupation. The second concentration of sites on the coastline surrounding Duke of York Bay (north part of Island) were investigated between 1922 (by Mathiassen during the Fifth Thule Expedition) and 2010; site types include campsites and burials and one site identified as a village with multiple features and sod houses (GN 2021). A number of the sites are categorized as Indigenous Historic, many with contemporary use as well. Some are prehistoric Thule and/or Sadlermiut.

Known archaeological sites in the southern portion of the Island, within proximity of Coral Harbour and the Project, are more widely spaced, but this is likely due to limited studies, not a lack of sites. Sites on record in this region were investigated between 1934 and 1983 (GN 2021). A number of the sites on the southern portion of the Island are described as campsites, with two sites identified as villages. The sites in this region are listed as belonging to Dorset, Thule, Sadlermiut, and Inuit cultures, with several sites having multiple occupations through time. One of the more significant sites/areas is located approximately 50 km southwest of Coral Harbour, and is known as Native Point. This area includes seven recorded archaeological sites, including the Native Point site with Sadlermiut, Dorset, and Aivilik components, which has 85 stone and sod houses and over 100 graves. The remaining sites in the Native Point area include Thule houses, middens, and two Dorset sites. This site complex has been visited by multiple investigators over the years (GN 2021).

The three known sites closest to the Project, around South Bay, include: one site of unknown affiliation which consisted of a scatter of lithic, bone, shell, wood and glass specimens on a hill above the bay; a site on Prairie Point for which limited information is present in site records except a note that collections were substantial and included lithic, bone, ivory, tooth and shell artifacts; and a site reported as a Sadlermiut campsite with stone, bone and turf houses (GN 2021). This latter site is the closest site to the Project, located approximately 9 km to the southeast of the Coral Harbour airport.

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

Results  
February 2022

### 3.2 FIELD STUDIES

Field studies consisted of ground reconnaissance of the various contaminated site areas and other Project components as previously described. Comprehensive archaeological assessment was undertaken at the APECs and the landfill options to confirm disturbance factors and identify archaeological sites. Two archaeological sites were identified relative to APEC 4. Substantial coverage of potential borrow sources was also completed as time allowed.

### 3.3 SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED SITES

During the studies, three archaeological sites were newly recorded. Two of the sites were investigated relative to the APEC study areas (sites LbHj-1 and LbHj-2), and the third site was fortuitously identified near the Former Tank Farm Area (site LaHj-1). Table 5-1 provides a summary of the sites investigated. Figures illustrating site locations and detailed site descriptions are not included in this Public report, but are provided as required in the confidential AIA report (Tischer 2022).

### 3.4 DISCUSSION

Three newly recorded archaeological sites identified demonstrate use of this area from prehistoric times though to the present. Two archaeological sites identified relative to the APEC study areas appear to represent precontact land use (LbHj-1) and historic land use (LbHj-2), the latter possibly associated with occupation of the military base.

Large areas of terrain were assessed during the archaeological assessment, but just two sites were identified relative to the Project. This indicates that, overall, the archaeological potential in the general Coral Harbour airport area is not high. This is not surprising given the distance from South Bay; coastal areas are almost always of high potential to contain archaeological sites given the resources afforded by the sea, particularly sea mammals and fish. Areas further from the ocean would be expected to be of lower potential to have archaeological sites. In discussions with the Inuit wildlife monitors, it was noted that people from Coral Harbour travel through this area inland to hunt caribou, and this may have taken place in earlier times as well; however, given the relatively short distance (10 km) between Coral Harbour and the Project, overnight stops which would leave evidence of campsite activities would not be common. In addition, there is a large south-north trending ridge to the east of the general project location which may have served as a more commonly traveled route north than traveling through the interspersed beach ridges and wetlands below the ridge.

Well-drained and elevated areas such as glacial deposits are almost always considered to be of high archaeological potential as they provide well drained landforms suitable for camping and relatively easy travel, affording good views of game and surrounding terrain, and often better wind conditions to relieve the presence of insects in the summer. Based on this, the extensive gravel deposits included in the Project area as potential borrow sources were initially suggestive of elevated archaeological potential. However, upon

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Results  
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Table 3-1 Summary of Archaeological Sites

Site	New or Previously Recorded	Site Class and Type	Description	Geographical Setting	Interpretive Potential	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Relationship to Project
LbHj-1	New	Prehistoric Cache or Inuksuk	Single stone feature – possible cache or inuksuk	Low well-drained gravel deposit approximately 5 km inland from South Bay	Moderate	Ongoing avoidance, or further investigation	Within APEC study area
LbHj-2	New	Historic Campsite	Single stone feature – tent ring	Within a largely disturbed area approximately 4 km inland from South Bay	Moderate	Ongoing avoidance, or further investigation	Within APEC study area
LaHj-1	New	Prehistoric Campsite	Multiple stone features – circular stone features (possible winter houses and/or caches), as well as historic and/or contemporary features	Bedrock hill overlooking South Bay to the southwest, north of Coral Harbour	Moderate to High	Ongoing avoidance, or further investigation	Not within Project study area; site was recorded fortuitously



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viewing of these areas, it is clear that the vast nature of some of these areas actually results in a lower determination of archaeological potential. The areas are so vast that, although they are easy to travel across, there would likely be limited reason to stop or camp at these locations. The terrain on the gravel deposits varies from level to undulating. The gravel at these sources is not glacial but is associated with a vast glaciomarine lag deposit, and the material is derived from local frost shattered shale deposits resulting in angular shapes. The material is generally unsuitable for manufacture of stone tools.

As no bone or artifacts were observed during the current study, the age or cultural affiliation of the identified sites is unknown, but further investigation such as excavation could provide information, should ongoing avoidance not be possible. The archaeological sites recorded during the current study will not be impacted by the project, and their locations will be provided to PSPC and consultants involved in the contaminated site remediation activities to facilitate ongoing avoidance. However, if future impacts are planned for any of these archaeological features, further investigation is recommended in the form of shovel testing and archaeological excavation of the features.





# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

Summary and Recommendations  
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### 4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the request of PSPC, Stantec conducted an AIA under Nunavut Archaeological Permit 2021-22A for the Coral Harbour Site as part of an Environmental Site Assessment of contaminated areas in Coral Harbour, Nunavut.

Multiple project components were subject to assessment during the current study, including five APECs associated with former military activity, five proposed non-hazardous waste landfill location options, several potential borrow sources, some very extensive in size, the Former Tank Farm Area, and areas surrounding Airport Road Quarry #1. Assessment included ground traverse by two archaeologists to inspect for and document archaeological sites. Shovel tests were not conducted at archaeological sites as identified sites will be avoided, and thus impact from shovel testing was not warranted.

During the studies, three archaeological sites were newly identified. Two sites were identified relative to the assessment completed within the APEC study areas. This includes a precontact stone feature that may represent a cache or collapsed inuksuk, and a historic tent ring. The third site identified was recorded fortuitously during supplemental assessment, and is not within proximity of Project components. This site consists of multiple stone features, both precontact and historic, on a bedrock hill overlooking the South Bay.

Ongoing avoidance of all three archaeological sites is recommended. Should remediation activities be proposed in close proximity of identified archaeological sites, fencing of sites to facilitate avoidance could be considered. Site locations and descriptions have been provided to PSPC to facilitate long-term avoidance of these archaeological features.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – PUBLIC REPORT

## Coral Harbour Site, Nunavut

References Cited  
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### 5.0 REFERENCES CITED

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# **APPENDIX A**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERMIT**



**Jennifer Tischer**  
**Stantec Consulting Ltd.**  
**130- 2886 Sunridge Way NE**  
**Calgary T1Y 7H9**

June 9, 2021

**Re: 2021 Nunavut Archaeologist Permit**

Dear Ms. Tischer,

Enclosed please find a Class 2 Nunavut Territory Archaeologist Permit, No. 2021-22A, authorizing archaeological field research in connection with the project entitled: PSPC Coral Harbour near Airport Environmental Site Assessment.

Please note the checklist on the permit, which indicates the requirements for the disposition of artifacts and documentation resulting from your work.

Please note also: (i) permit holders are required to submit artifact/specimen catalogues in electronic (tab-delimited text) format; (ii) permit reports must be submitted in both hard copy and electronic formats; and (iii) permits holders must obtain prior approval for any destructive analysis of specimens or samples, including for radiometric dating purposes. Destructive analysis requests will not be considered until all permit requirements have been met.

The following information concerning the use of GPS for recording the locations of archaeological sites has been attached to all permits and forms part of the requirements of your permit:

All permits issued by the Minister of Culture and Heritage pursuant to the Regulations are subject to Article 33 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Part 7 of this Article provides that title in archaeological specimens is jointly owned by Government and the Inuit Heritage Trust. The written consent of both parties is required prior to any long-term alienation of archaeological specimens found in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

**NAD27 - NAD83**

Please do not translate coordinate information directly to map(s) unless you are certain that the datums used are the same, i.e., current maps were designated using NAD27 while GPS is based on NAD83. Use other points of reference as well or sites may not be properly located. Whenever a GPS unit is used to acquire locational data, the accuracy of the unit must be taken into account. Accuracy can range from +/- 1 cm to 150 metres; the latter represents a sizeable error.

**Wishing you success with your research.**

Sincerely,

  
Alex Stubbing  
Director, Heritage



Department of Culture and Heritage  
Pitquiliqiykkut  
Ministère de la Culture et du Patrimoine

**Permit Class**    **Class 2**

**Permit Holder:** Jennifer Tischer  
**Affiliation:** Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
**Name of Project:** *PSPC Coral Harbour near Airport Environmental Site Assessment.*

**Permit Period:** This Permit is valid from July 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021.

1. The Permittee shall abide by the Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites Regulations
2. The Permittee shall abide by the Guidelines for Nunavut Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites
3. The Permittee shall comply with all conditions attached to this permit.
4. The Permittee shall distribute materials and documentation to the agencies identified below according to this schedule:

**Required by September 30, 2021:**

**Required 60 days after return from field:**

**Required by March 31, 2022:**

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

Minister  
Department of Culture and Heritage  
Government of Nunavut

Issued at: Iqaluit, Nunavut

Date of Issue: June 9, 2021