

## 2.0 Class EA Process

The Class EA for this project was planned according to the requirements defined by the *Class Environmental Assessment for Minor Transmission Facilities, Revision 6 April 1992*. The purpose of this document is to provide a basis for approval under the *EA Act* of a defined class of projects. The Class EA defines an environmental planning process which meets all the requirements of the *EA Act*. The proposed undertaking falls within the scope of the Class EA. The Class EA study process is illustrated in **Figure 2-1**.

### 2.1 Study Area Identification

The study area was selected based on the following:

- its location at the load centre for Chatham-Kent and West Elgin service area (which is between St. Thomas and Kent TS);
- proximity to an existing 230 kV transmission line, to minimize length of tap line (to minimize footprint of the proposed facilities); and
- proximity to existing distribution feeders in the area.

The study area extends from approximately 1 km east of Blacks Road in West Elgin, to Orford Road in Chatham-Kent. It extends approximately 1 km north and 1km south of the existing transmission line. A closer view of the study area is illustrated in **Figure 1-4**. The description of the study area is provided in **Chapter 3.0**.

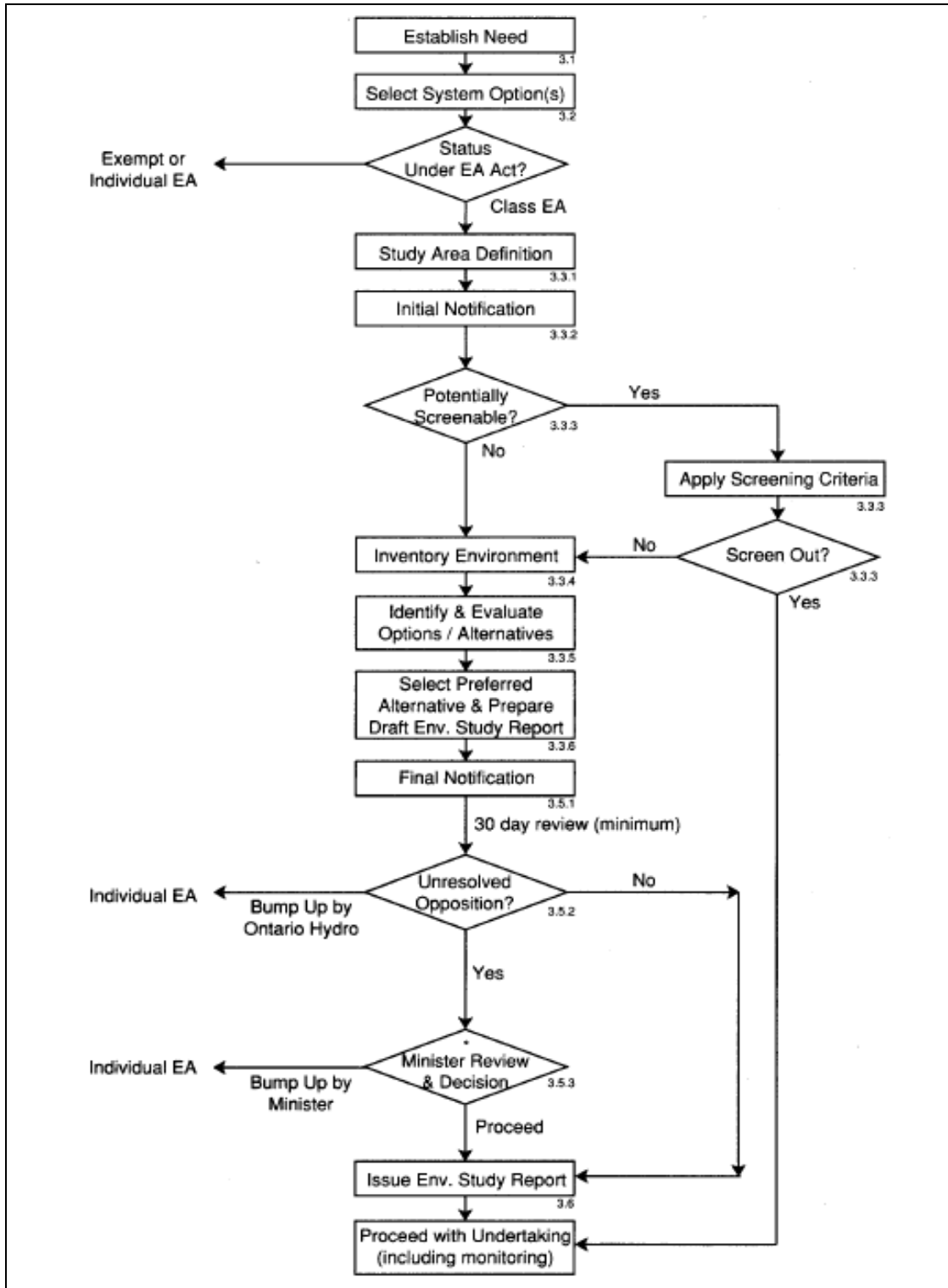


Figure 0-1: Class EA Process

## **2.2 Initial Stakeholder and Public Notification and Ongoing Consultation**

The proposed project was formally announced to the stakeholders on May 8, 2007. Initial notification letters were sent to all relevant provincial ministries, agencies, county and local municipalities, and conservation authorities. A stakeholder consultation list is provided in **Appendix B1**. A copy of the notification letter is provided in **Appendix B2**.

Ongoing consultation was conducted throughout the project with government agencies, municipal officials and the local community. Details of the consultation process are provided in **Chapter 4.0**.

## **2.3 Environmental Inventory**

Information was collected and analysed for the relevant natural and social environment factors. This information is consistent with the requirements set out in Appendix G of the Class EA document and includes the following:

- Biological Resources;
- Forestry Resources;
- Agricultural Resources;
- Mineral Resources;
- Recreational Resources;
- Appearance of the Landscape;
- Human Settlement; and
- Heritage Resources.

Data was compiled from publications, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files from municipal and provincial agencies, and from discussions with the staff from these agencies. A list of references can be found in **Chapter 10.0**. A site survey was conducted in July 2007 to confirm documented data on the environmental inventory. The details of this inventory are provided in **Chapter 3.0**.

A wide variety of data and information sources were used in collecting information to establish the Environmental Inventory. These included:

- Primary data – field data collected for identifying, quantifying, verifying and analyzing natural environment features; field site visits, and windshield surveys to collect natural environmental data; socioeconomic data and archaeological surveys;
- Secondary data – relevant data obtained from numerous agencies, e.g., Statistics Canada, MOE, Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), and local municipalities;
- Data and information obtained through consultations with regulatory agencies including the MOE, Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, MNR, OMAFRA, LTVCA, municipal authorities (local councils and planning departments) within the study area; and
- Information obtained through consultations with the general public by means of PICs and the local media.

Specific data sources are referenced throughout the draft ESR.

## **2.4 Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Sites**

The identification and evaluation of alternative TS sites was based on:

- Consultation on preferred TS site selection criteria with municipal and provincial agencies;
- Consultation on preferred TS site selection criteria with area residents;
- Site selection and evaluation; and
- Final consultation with local stakeholders and governments.

Hydro One sought input on the TS site selection criteria from the community through the PIC and through communication with local and agency officials and other stakeholders.

**Chapter 4.0** provides more details on the consultation process and **Chapter 5.0** provides a description of the TS site selection process.

## **2.5 Draft Environmental Study Report and Notification**

The potential short term and long term residual environmental effects were identified and corresponding mitigation measures were proposed for the preferred TS site. The Notice of Completion of the Draft ESR was sent to the provincial ministries and agencies, and to stakeholder parties that had indicated a continuing interest in the Project. A public notice was placed in local newspapers to announce the start and end of the 60-day public review and comment period as well as the locations where a hard copy of the Draft ESR could be viewed. This Draft ESR can also be downloaded from the Hydro One project website [www.hydroonenetworks.com/newprojects](http://www.hydroonenetworks.com/newprojects)

At the end of the public review period, the comments received and the responses provided by Hydro One will be documented in the Final ESR. The Final ESR will be prepared for the project in accordance with the Class EA process. Upon the completion of the Class EA process, the Final ESR will be filed with the MOE. Copies of the report will also be forwarded to any organization or individual upon request.