Introduction I

I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the methods, results, and conclusions of a combined Historic Architecture and Phase I Archaeological Survey at the intersection of DE 37 (Airport Road) and DE 58 (Churchmans Road) in Duross Heights, New Castle County, DE. The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) proposes to make improvements that include providing two through lanes and exclusive turn lanes on all approaches by widening all four approaches to this intersection. As part of federal environmental requirements associated with these improvements, the engineering firm of Whitman, Requardt and Associates, LLP (WRA) hired the Cultural Resources Group of Kise Straw and Kolodner (KSK) to complete this survey on behalf of DelDOT. KSK conducted a survey of historic architectural (above-ground) resources and archaeological (below-ground) resources. Fieldwork was completed in the late fall and winter of 2000 and the spring of 2001.

This Historic Architectural and Archaeological Survey was conducted in accordance with, and pursuant to the requirements of all applicable federal and state regulations, including Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended; the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Department of Transportation Act, as amended; the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), and Title 29 § 8705 and Title 7 § 5302 of the Delaware State Code.

The specific goals of this combined Cultural Resources Survey were to:

1. Document the types and nature of historical and archaeological resources previously recorded in the Project Area vicinity;

2. Identify all unrecorded cultural resources contained within the approved Areas of Potential Effect (APE's) that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;

3. Assess potential impacts to such resources that may be incurred by proposed construction-related activities; and

4. Make recommendations regarding possible construction avoidance strategies and/or the need for additional cultural resources evaluations.

All findings and analyses are documented and assembled in this report according to requirements present in *The Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*. This preliminary report is being submitted for review to WRA, DelDOT, and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO) with the understanding that upon the receipt of comments, the KSK will prepare the final report.

Project Location and Description

The Project Area is located in New Castle County, Delaware, approximately 8.0 kilometers (5.0 miles) southwest of the city of Wilmington (Figure 1-2). The Project Area encompasses the intersection of these two roadways and is situated in a mixed residential, commercial/light industrial, and agricultural setting within the community of Duross Heights. The Airport/Churchmans Road intersection lies immediately adjacent to the southwest corner of the

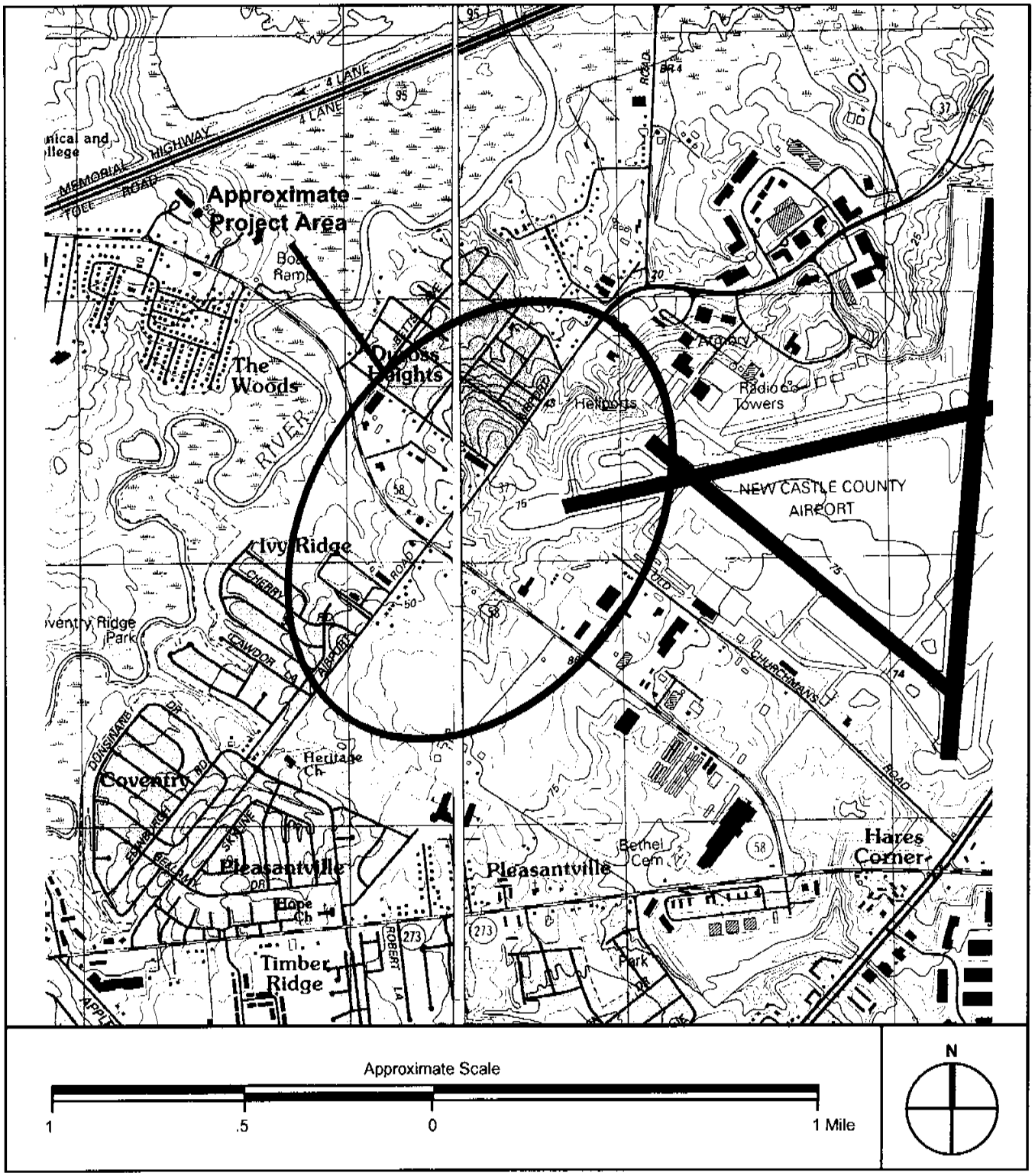

Figure 1. Project Area. (Source, United States Geological Survey, *Wilmington South* and *Newark East Quadrangle 7.5 Minute Series*, 1994).

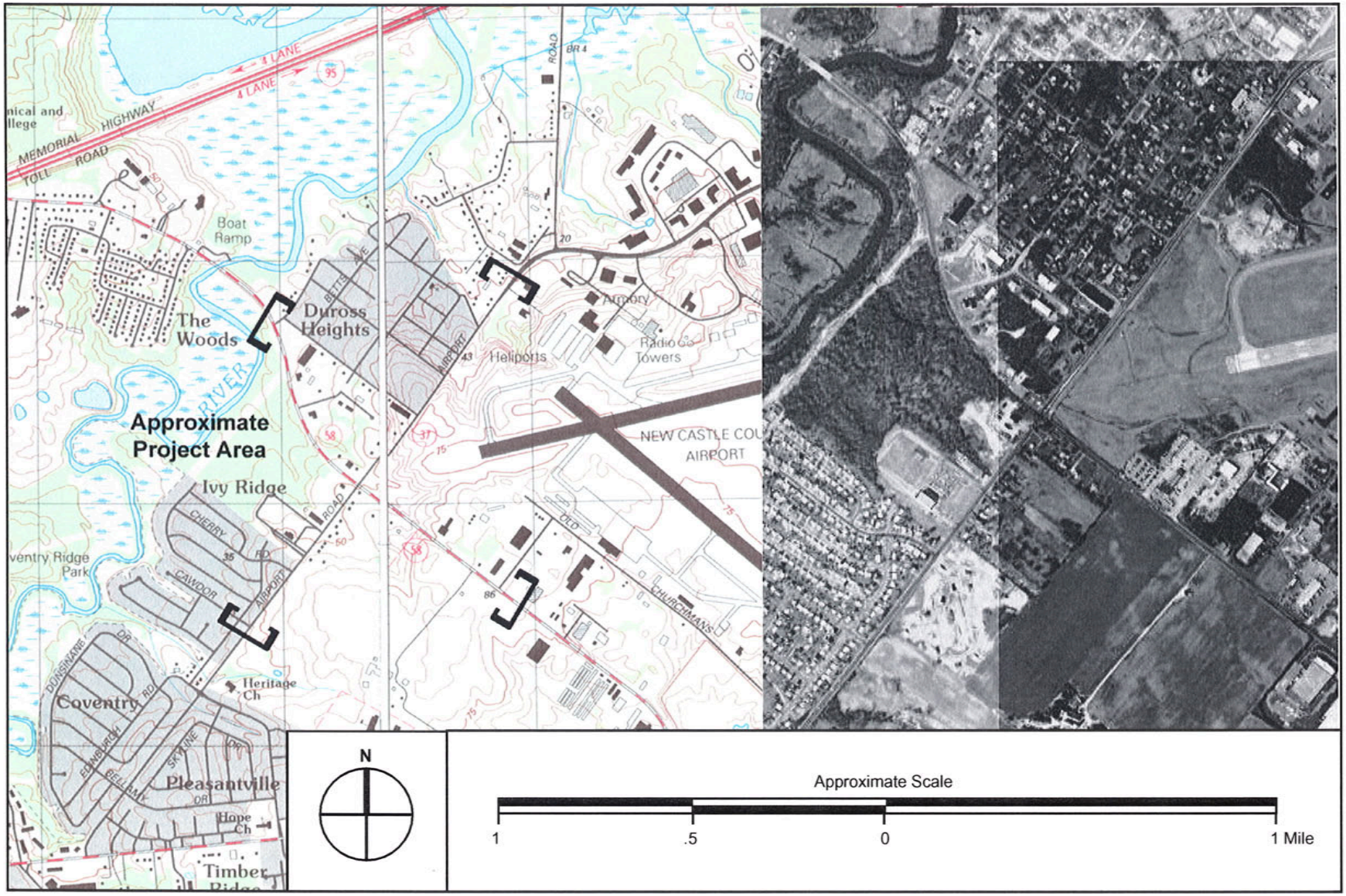

Figure 2. Project Area Location. (Detail, *Wilmington South and Newark East 7.5 Minute Quadrangle*, USGS, 1993 and detail, *Aerial Photograph of Duross Heights*, USGS, 1995).

Greater Wilmington/New Castle County Airport and a short distance southeast of Churchmans Marsh. More specific descriptions of the Project Area and its surrounding environs are presented in the following chapters.

The undertaking that initiated this investigation consists of planned improvements to the Airport/ Churchmans Road intersection and is designed to accommodate increased automobile traffic through the region. Specific proposed improvements include widening both roadways on either side of the intersection to provide two through lanes and exclusive turn lanes on all four approaches. According to plans provided by the client (WRA) impacts associated with the road widening extend out from the intersection approximately 0.78 kilometers (0.48 miles) north along Airport Road and 0.45 kilometers (0.28 miles) east and west along Churchmans Road and south along Airport Road. In addition to the above, proposed improvement also include the planned installation of a single stormwater management area on the west side of Airport Road, south of Churchmans Road.

At the writing of this report WRA was considering three construction options for the proposed roadway improvements at the Airport/Churchmans Road intersection. Variations in these plans pertain to the distance impacts associated with proposed improvements, and will extend out from existing road edges along the various segments of the Project Area. According to these plans, the Project Area will vary in width between approximately 15 and 27 meters (50-90 feet) from extant curb lines. While variations in the three plans did not significantly affect the APE for the historic architectural portion of this investigation (see Chapter II and Figure 3) archaeological investigations were conducted in accordance with design plans incurring the most extensive proposed subsurface disturbance. The adoption of this strategy was intended to provide the client with the most complete data set possible upon which subsequent decisions regarding potential cultural resources avoidance measures may be based.