

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROJECT BACKGROUND

On behalf of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (Berger), has completed Phase II testing of two separate archaeological sites on one historic property in New Castle County, Delaware (Figures 1 and 2). The goal of the studies was to determine if these sites are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and to plan for mitigation of any resources that are considered significant (NRHP-eligible).

These investigations are part of DelDOT's U.S. Route 301 project, which has been designated a "mega-project" by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). A large amount of archaeological and historical research had already been conducted for this project by several consultants and more was planned. Berger pursued these studies as part of this overall research program, making use of work already done and contributing to future studies.

The three sites investigated for this study were identified during Phase I studies carried out by Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. (A&HC) (A&HC 2009; Diamanti 2010). The sites are collectively known as the Bowman Complex. They consist of:

- The Bowman Tenant Site, 7NC-F-145, a tenant residence dating to circa 1800 to 1880
- The Bowman #3 Site, 7NC-F-85, a domestic site dating to circa 1750 to 1770

A third site on the same property was not considered potentially significant because of disturbance and therefore did not receive Phase II investigation. This was:

- The Mrs. Bowman Site, 7NC-F-144, an owner-occupied residence dating to circa 1840 to 1960.

This report covers all three sites and discusses what they can tell us about the history of the property and of this part of Delaware.

Berger's Phase II investigations were managed by Charles LeeDecker, and the principal investigator was John Bedell. Jason Shellenhamer was the field supervisor and carried out historical research. The field crew consisted of Jackie Maisano, Mary Patton, Paul Stansfield, and Emily Walter. Laboratory analysis was overseen by Susan Butler. Fieldwork was carried out between March 14 and May 26, 2011.

B. PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

1. *The U.S. Route 301 Project*

Early archaeological studies for the U.S. Route 301 project began in the 1980s with a reconnaissance and predictive model (Kellogg 1992). Planning and pre-construction activities for the project apparently remained dormant for more than 20 years but were re-initiated with an updated predictive model (Baublitz et al. 2006). Concurrently with the re-animation of the project, protocols for Section 106 compliance were negotiated and formalized in a Memorandum

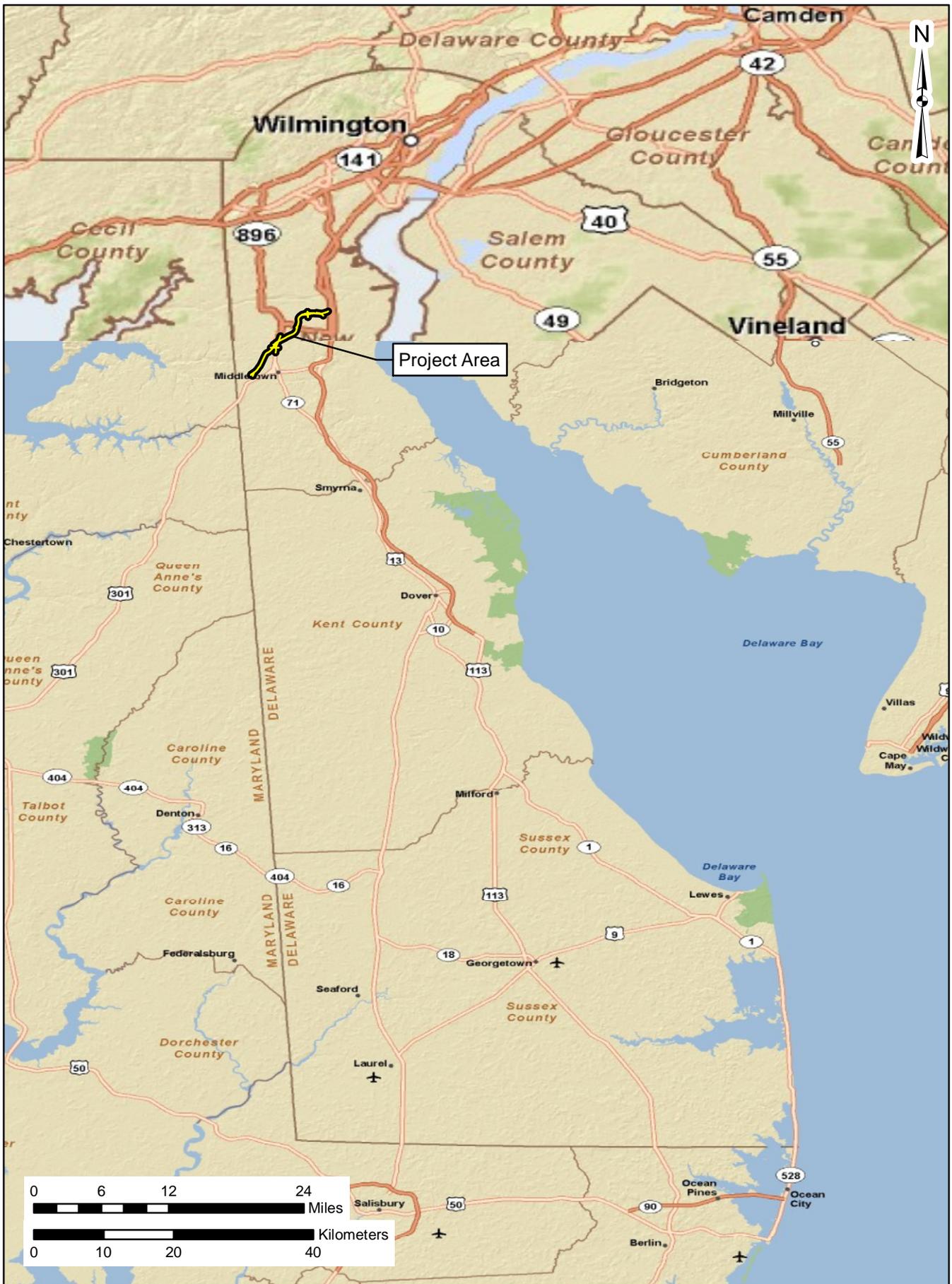
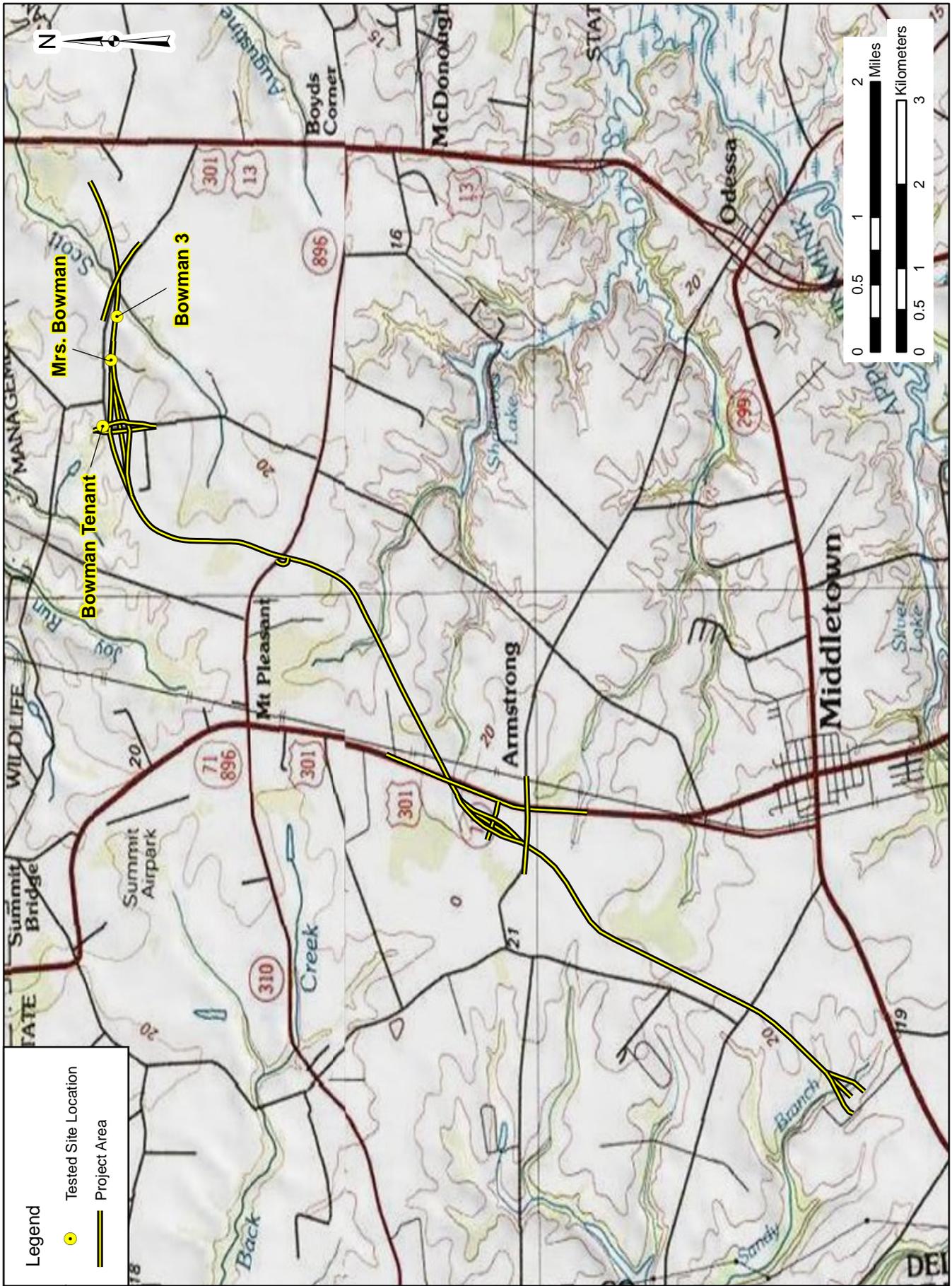


FIGURE 1: Location of the Project Area

BASE MAP: ESRI 2009b



BASE MAP: ESRI 2009a

FIGURE 2: Location of the Tested Sites

of Agreement (MoA) between the FHWA, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DESHPO), DelDOT, and the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office. Executed in November 2007, the MoA contains stipulations for the identification, evaluation, and treatment of archaeological resources, along with specific guidance for the protocols that would follow the unexpected discovery of human remains and for curation of archaeological collections and associated records.

Following the execution of the MoA in November 2007, DelDOT initiated a series of Phase Ia and Phase Ib studies. During the Phase Ia studies a great deal of historical background material was assembled, including some chains of title for important properties. During the Phase Ib studies many archaeological sites were identified, including those investigated for this study.

2. *Bowman Complex*

Phase I survey of the Bowman Property was carried out in 2010 by A&HC, Inc. The U.S. Route 301 corridor across the property consisted mostly of active agricultural fields. These were plowed before the survey so that they could be investigated by surface collection. The surface survey was supplemented by shovel tests wherever sites were defined. Two parts of the property, along Scott Run and at the location of the recently demolished house, were not in active fields and so could not be plowed, so survey of these areas was carried out by shovel testing and test unit excavations. The area within the project Limits of Disturbance (LOD) on the Bowman Tract measured 26.2 acres (10.6 hectares).

Three historic archaeological sites were found on the property, along with a small prehistoric site. Together these sites make up the Bowman Complex. The historic sites, known as the Bowman Tenant Site, 7NC-F-145, the Mrs. Bowman Site, 7NC-F-144, and the Bowman #3 Site, 7NC-F-85, were all within the same historic property. That property was in the Bowman family for around 150 years, bought by Peter Bowman (Sr.) in 1794 and passed down through his family until 1943.

The Bowman Tenant Site, along Hyetts Corner Road, was the remains of a tenant residence dating to circa 1790 to 1870. The Mrs. Bowman Site was a large house, built around 1840 and demolished within the past few decades. The Bowman #3 Site was a small scatter of artifacts dating to the eighteenth century. The Bowman #4 Site was a small concentration of prehistoric artifacts at the eastern end of the property, adjacent to Scott Run; this site was eventually combined with Bowman #3 under the 7NC-F-85 designation.

A thin scatter of historic artifacts, dating mainly to the nineteenth century, was found across the entire Bowman property. In all, 229 non-site historic artifacts were recovered, including 54 sherds of whiteware, 12 sherds of pearlware, 56 sherds of coarse red earthenware, and 44 fragments of brick. This material was recovered from an area of 23.1 acres (9.4 hectares), so the overall density was about 10 artifacts per acre in the non-site areas. The lowest density figure for one of the sites was 63 artifacts per acre. The later non-site artifacts, presumably spread into the fields through manuring or night-soiling, complicates the interpretation of the Bowman #3 Site, as the fieldwork produced nineteenth-century artifacts that appear to be intrusive. There was also a thin scatter of prehistoric material across the property, with three projectile points and 54 other artifacts recovered during the surface survey.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Bowman Complex is in the coastal plain zone of Delaware, situated on land that has been a farm for more than two centuries. The property stretches from Jamison Corner Road to Scott Run, a distance of about 3,500 feet. The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal is about a mile away to the north, Delaware Bay about 4.5 miles to the east. An intermittent stream flows across the property from west to east just south of the highway alignment, in a steep-sided ravine, and its source may have once been a reliable spring. Scott Run is a small, second-order stream, only a few feet across. It currently flows through a swampy floodplain up to 200 feet across, but this floodplain may be largely an artifact of historic alluvium and colluvium.

The soils consist mainly of Matapeake and Reybold silt loams with slopes of 2 to 5 percent. These are well-drained soils highly suitable for agriculture, although the soil survey warns of a danger of erosion on slopes. And, indeed, the slopes overlooking Scott Run on the Bowman property do show evidence of severe erosion. These soils overlie gravel deposits, which in some places are no more than 30 inches from the surface. Because of erosion on those slopes by Scott Run, gravel and cobbles are visible on the surface in the eastern part of the property. At the time of the Phase II investigations, the Bowman Tenant Site was densely covered in wheat, and the Bowman #3 Site was in a fallow field.