
3.0 METHODS

3.1 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Background research for the Plantation Road project included a literature review of relevant geological, ecological, archeological, and historical sources. Library research was conducted at the University of Delaware, Newark, with additional, project-specific historical research conducted online and at the Delaware State Archives in Dover. Review of previous archeological and architectural research relied on the report files maintained at the SHPO in Dover. The SHPO also maintains the state archeological site files referenced to a set of aerial photography mosaic maps (SPO maps).

Regarding historical archeological research, the *Management Plan for Delaware's Historical Archaeological Resources* (De Cunzo and Catts 1990), and the historical context developed for examining the archeology of agriculture and rural life in Sussex County (De Cunzo and Garcia 1993), provided the basis for the investigation and delineation of property types. Map sources (both published and manuscript) for Sussex County are extremely limited. Historic maps examined for the project included D.G. Beers *Atlas of the State of Delaware* (1868), an early USGS topographic quadrangle (USGS 1901), the *Sussex County Farm Directory* (Sussex County 1913), and R.O. Bausman's *Map of Land Use in Sussex County* (1941).

3.2 FIELD RESEARCH

Archeological field investigations consisted of a pedestrian reconnaissance of one cultivated field and the excavation of shovel test units (STUs). The cultivated field was plowed and disked prior to the fieldwork. Rainfall immediately before the fieldwork helped to expose surface artifacts.

The STUs were excavated at 15 meter intervals in all testable areas within the project area. Additional shovel tests were excavated to bracket positive ones at intervals of 7.5 meters. The locations of STUs and surface artifacts were recorded using a GPS unit with real-time sub-meter accuracy and the soil profile of each STU was recorded on standardized forms. Soil texture and Munsell color were recorded along with information on the location and setting of the excavations. All excavated soils were passed through one-quarter-inch hardware cloth to ensure uniform recovery of cultural material. All excavations were backfilled upon completion. All cultural material was retained in bags marked with standard provenience information. Color digital images were taken to document the setting of the study area and to illustrate the study findings.

The project area adjacent to the Ebenezer Methodist Church cemetery was carefully examined for the possibility of grave shafts lying outside the presently-identifiable boundaries of the burial ground. The plowzone soils within two trenches were mechanically stripped using a Gradall with a toothless bucket. The stripped areas were shovel skimmed and trowelled to remove residual soils and to identify and define any subsurface features. Features were recorded but not excavated.

Artifacts recovered in the course of the field investigations were processed in the JMA laboratory. Materials were cleaned and inventoried following guidelines established by the SHPO. To the extent possible, the recovered artifacts were identified as to material, temporal or cultural/chronological association, style, and function. Background and field data were evaluated, synthesized, and placed in a broader perspective based on knowledge of local and regional archeological resources. All

cultural material resulting from the project and the associated documentation will be submitted to the Delaware State Museum for curation at an approved facility.