

7. PHASE I FINDINGS

PHASE I SURVEY IDENTIFIED several sites, some of which are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (FIGURE 2, PAGE 4). In order to determine eligibility, a site must possess demonstrated significance, integrity, and defined boundaries. At the Phase I level it is impossible to assess the integrity and boundaries of most sites. It is possible, however, to define a site's *potential or apparent* significance in terms of the state plan priorities (See page 15 for discussion.). If a site is not archaeologically significant, there is no reason to proceed to the Phase II task of determining integrity and boundaries.

Three prehistoric sites in the northern alignment and one in the southern alignment were identified as candidates for Phase II testing. Also potentially eligible is a site occupied by an identified free black smallholder before the Civil War. A potential area of unmarked human burials was identified, and an industrial site is recommended for recordation.

Findings and recommendations derived from the first phase studies of the prehistoric sites are summarized in the tables below and in the flowchart on page 66 (FIGURE 34).

SOUTHERN ALIGNMENT LOCI

The southern alignment, through the Ford property, traverses at least three sites of obvious importance that require only boundary definition at the Phase II level. These are the Ford Farm prehistoric site and two historic sites: the Williams homestead and the sawmill.

The Williams House Site, 7K-C-389, is an exceptionally rare well-documented house site related to a pre-Civil War free black who was not a landowner. Free black landowners are relatively easy to identify, since they routinely appear in the land records and tax rolls, but there was no legal

compulsion to record tofts and crofts occupied by landless individuals.

In the Williams example, the tenant is known and the period of occupancy can be fairly well circumscribed. The Delaware State Historic Preservation Plan is silent with regard to a priority rank that would be placed upon such a site, but it obviously is significant, if only because it represents a property type too rare to have warranted listing in the plan.

The Ford Farm Prehistoric Site, 7K-C-386, has never been cultivated and lies on a bluff at the confluence of the two principal branches of St. Jones River. Very limited test excavations suggest an intensively occupied site. This is consistent with settlement models which suggest that base camp sites are to be expected at confluence locations.

According to the state management plan for prehistoric resources, any site that has never been disturbed by agriculture is considered to possess a high priority.

Choosing the southern alignment would trigger Phase II and probable Phase III work at these two sites. Choosing the northern alignment would protect them.

The Ford sawmill (FIGURES 2, 27) was not unique; instead, it is an example of an under-studied property type that was common before World War II. The literature of industrial archaeology includes many water-powered vertical sawmills and larger industrial sawmills, but little scholarly attention has been paid to the many farmers' mills that provided the bulk of the lumber used by rural Delawareans early in the twentieth century. These mills typically were powered by a pulley attached to a tractor, and could be moved readily with tools and machinery available on the farm. Although they were theoretically "portable" in design, many of them actually were permanent in use (PLATE 2, PAGE 10).

SUMMARY OF PHASE I PREHISTORIC SITE FINDINGS

MAJOR SITES, WEST TO EAST

	<i>Blueberry Hill</i> 7K-C-107	<i>Ford Farm</i> (<i>Wooded Locus</i>) 7K-C-386	<i>Simon's Savannah</i> 7K-C-387
Field Method	Surface collection one 3' test	Surface collection one 3' test	Surface collection six 3' tests, volunteer dig yes
Boundaries	no	no	yes
Integrity	Probably excellent within wooded fringe	Probably excellent within wooded fringe	Probably excellent within site core that survives
Periods	Woodland II and earlier	Not determined	Woodland I (?) and earlier
Type	Base camp (?)	Base camp (?)	Procurement site
Stratification	Presence determined by Phase I testing (Figure 35)	Not determined	Presence determined by volunteer tests (Figure 36)
Horizontal Patterning	Not determined	Chipping cluster(s) of unknown extent	Apparent center of site has been identified
Pit Features	Not determined	Not determined	Present
Phase I Provisional Conclusions	Additional (Phase II) information will be required if site is affected	Additional (Phase II) information will be required if the site is affected	Potentially eligible but surviving part is outside project area

Exploration of the remains of such a well-preserved mill site might provide documentation that would assist archaeologists who might happen upon examples with less surviving structure and information.

NORTHERN ALIGNMENT LOCI

The northern alignment passes through the Beiser, Blueberry Hill, and White Marsh sites.

The eastern, open, part of the White Marsh site, which was extensively tested by

test squares, Gradall trenching, and shovel test pits, is crossed by both proposed alignments. While artifactual material was found throughout this open field, no concentrations were apparent (FIGURE 21).

The well-preserved western portion of the White Marsh Site is located on a narrow neck projecting into the floodplain. A small borrow pit has been excavated into the top of this ridge, but the majority of the site is intact, and has never been cultivated. Test excavations indicated the presence of buried, probably stratified, cultural material, with moderate occupation intensity.

SUMMARY OF PHASE I PREHISTORIC SITE FINDINGS

MINOR SITES, WEST TO EAST

	<i>Beiser Site</i> 7K-C-391	<i>Ford Farm</i> <i>Open Field Loci</i> 7K-C-386	<i>White Marsh</i> <i>West End</i> 7K-C-390	<i>White Marsh</i> <i>Open Field</i> 7K-C-390
Field Method	One 3' test square in fallow field	Surface collection in plowed fields	One 3' test square seven shovel test pits	27 shovel tests three 3' tests two Gradall cuts
Boundaries	Not determined	Not determined	Defined by disturbances	Not determined
Integrity	Not determined	Not determined	Apparently excellent within wooded fringe	Not determined
Periods	Not determined	Not determined	Woodland II?	Prehistoric and historic
Type	Procurement site	Procurement site	Procurement site	Procurement site
Stratification	Not determined	Not determined	Not determined	Not determined
Horizontal Patterning	May be associated with bay/basin	Not apparent	Not determined	Not determined
Pit Features	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen	Probably present
Phase I Provisional Conclusions	Phase II tests recommended to find extent.	Small, scattered, sporadic utilization, no testing recommended.	Peninsular section appears undisturbed; Phase II recommended.	Small, scattered, sporadic utilization; no testing recommended.

The wooded part of the White Marsh Site, 7K-C-390 (ER 42 - 49; FIGURE 22), is not impacted by either alignment. Instead, the northerly right-of-way passes immediately south of the peninsula through a former open field that is now in old-field succession.

In view of the high quality of prehistoric remains in the tested portion, Phase II testing was indicated. This Phase II test program was designed to determine if well-preserved parts of the site lay directly in the path of the northern alignment.

This alignment will destroy the surviving portion of 7K - C - 107, Blueberry Hill (FIGURE 31). Although some of the site has been destroyed by a variety of processes,

including railroad construction, borrow pitting, and off-road vehicle use, limited Phase I test excavations indicated that the site is stratified and has the potential to provide important data, despite the loss of portions of the site.

Stratification of 7K-C-107 is demonstrated in Figure 36, below, which is a table based upon a single excavation square. Demonstration of stratification is sufficient justification to call for Phase II testing.

The Beiser Site, located on a sand ridge next to a bay/basin feature, is in a location that has a high probability of yielding significant sites. On the basis of predictive models, and in spite of the fact that few artifacts were found in the single test square, Phase II testing was indicated.

BUNGALOW ON THE GEISER TOFT

The Geiser toft contains one standing structure, a bungalow (PLATES 4, 7, 8) built as the residence of the tenant farmer around 1938-1939 (K-6486). All the associated farm outbuildings have been destroyed, leaving the house stripped of its original historical context. The present bungalow replaced the nineteenth-century Geiser house. It is a standard design, typical of Kent County houses of the period, in a moderately good state of preservation.

Bungalows of this style and age have received the local nickname of "Highway Department houses" because they are easily and cheaply relocated when they fall in the way of road construction. Recently moved examples of nearly identical houses can be seen in Cheswold, Wyoming, and even in the new Tamarac subdivision, in Camden.

The northern alignment does not encroach upon the toft, including the below-ground elements, and no further investigations are recommended.

The bay/basin feature adjacent to the toft, on the other hand, might contain information that could be extracted by other disciplines.

TRAILER SALES SITE

The trailer sales area along Route 13 revealed a large number of agricultural features, including drainage ditches and planting beds (FIGURE 12). Three Gradall trenches contributed to the agriculture data (chapter 9, pages 80-97), but there is no evidence that additional information would be obtained through further excavation.

SIMON'S SAVANNAH SITE

The Simon's Savannah site, 7K-C-387, has been destroyed within the proposed right-of-way. The southern and western edges of the site have been disturbed by gas line construction and by the construction of the parking lot for DelTech.

Fortunately, a significant fraction, including the highest part of the sand ridge on which the site is located, remains undisturbed and outside the present project area. A Phase II investigation of this remnant would have been outside the scope of the present project,

but was undertaken by the Kent County Archæological Society.

Their tests defined the site limits and provided location data that can inform future development of the college entry corridor. In particular, these excavations confirmed our expectations that cultural material would be most dense close to the highest part of the site, which survives.

The site is located on a sand ridge adjoining a bay/basin feature, an environment with a high potential for Archaic Period occupation. Although no temporally diagnostic artifacts were recovered, there is evidence of buried cultural material.

A shallow pit feature was also identified. Evidence for stratification is shown in figure 35, which illustrates changed lithic contents through the arbitrary levels.

Confirmed stratification and the potential for Archaic Period settlement identify Simon's Savannah as an archæologically significant site. Additional testing by the local society indicates that it is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. No further investigations are recommended in connection with this project.

DELTECH ATHLETIC FIELD

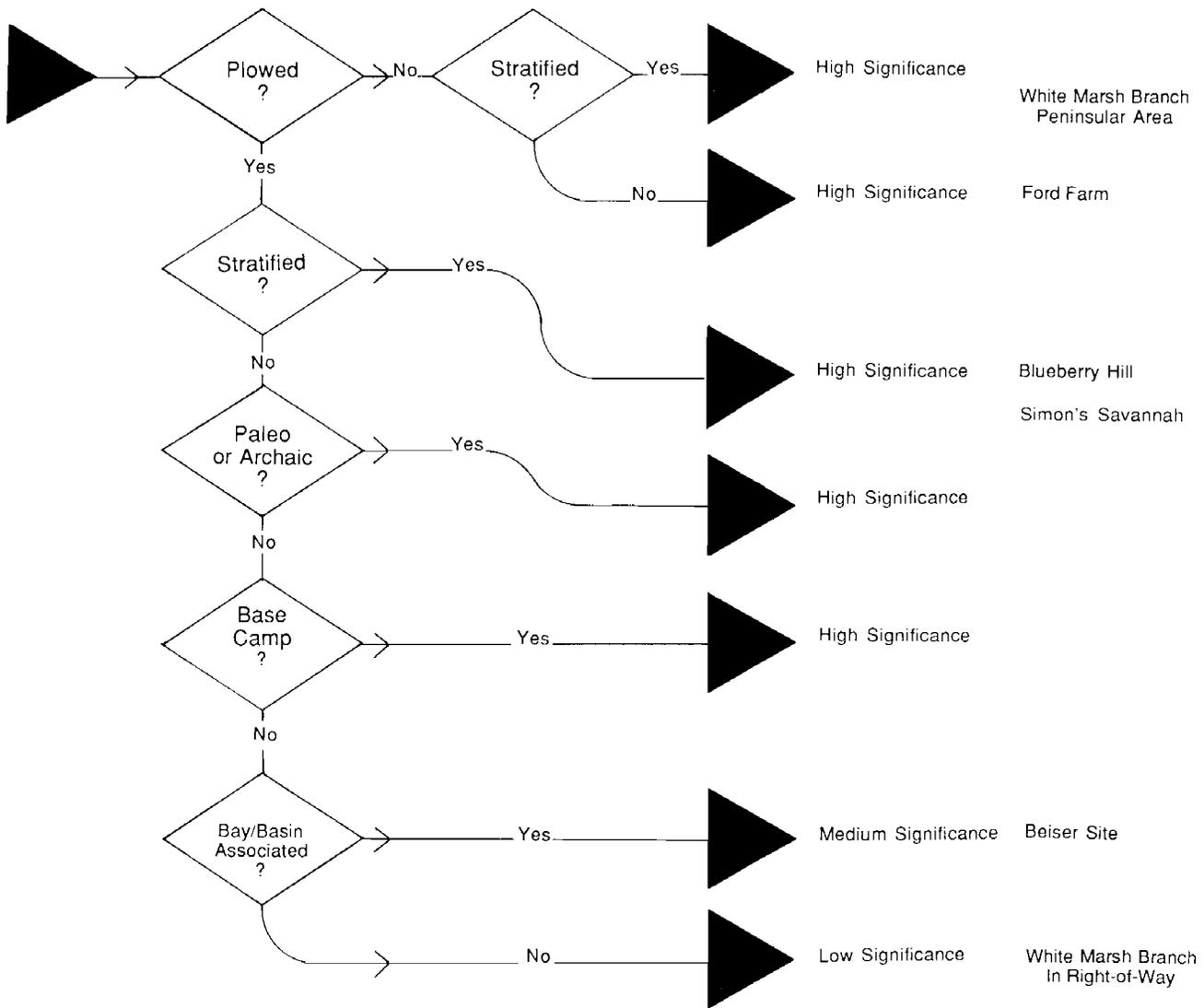
Tests in the athletic field, 7K-C-388, contain evidence for manuring during the nineteenth century, when farmers spread household garbage on fields together with barnyard waste.

This practice caused agricultural fields to be covered with tiny bits of brick and pottery, coal clinkers, and other domestic trash, usually exhibiting wear from repeated encounters with farm machinery (FIGURE 17). A deep drain tile trench (FIGURE 19) indicates efforts to drain low parts of the field.

This was an area of high probability for cemeteries (FIGURE 10, PAGE 36), but no evidence was found. No evidence was found to indicate that this locus contains resources that might be found eligible for listing in the National Register.

While no unmarked burials were detected, there is no assurance that the project area contains no unmarked human remains.

Figure 34
 Sites ranked according to
 Delaware archæological priorities



(SOURCES: Custer and Bachman 1986; Custer, Jehle, Klatka and Eveleigh 1984; Custer, Bachman, and Grettler 1986)

This flowchart illustrates the archæological significance of principal prehistoric sites encountered during Phase I survey, ranked according to accepted priorities. Significance for purposes of the National Register can be assessed only after more extensive Phase II studies determine a site's integrity and boundary.

SUMMARY OF PHASE I HISTORIC SITE FINDINGS

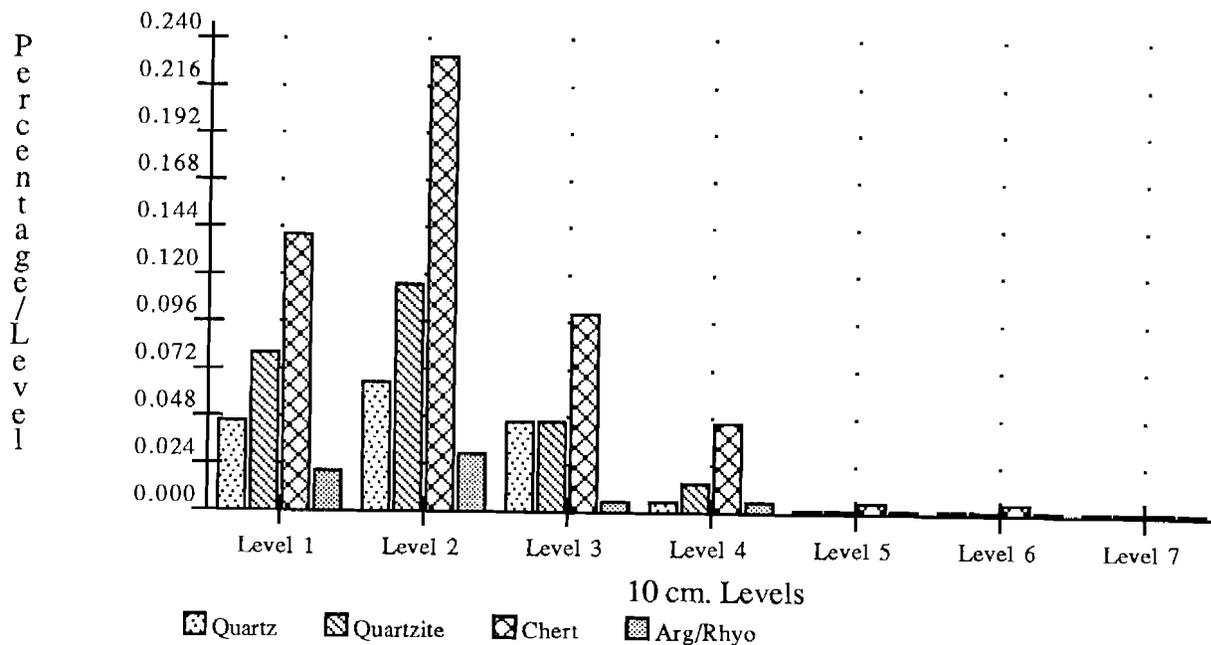
WEST TO EAST

	<i>Nathan Williams</i> 7K-C-389	<i>Sawmill</i>	<i>Athletic Field</i> 7K-C-388	<i>Trailer Sales</i> 7K-C-392
Field Method	Fieldwalk in cultivated field	Observation	Three hand dug units Three Gradall trenches	Three Gradall trenches
Boundaries	Defined on surface	Defined by structures	Not found	Beyond project area
Integrity	Not determined	Good	Indistinct	Good
Periods	Antebellum	20th Century	Settlement to present	Settlement to present
Type	Free Negro house	Forest industry	Scientific farming	Marginal farming
Stratification	Unknown	Not applicable	None	None
Horizontal Patterning	Apparent in surface scatter of artifacts	Well defined functional areas	Scattered	Well defined
Pit Features	Not tested	Not tested	Present	Many
Phase I Provisional Conclusions	Rare example of documented free black antebellum site; Phase II recommended	Relatively intact example of rural industry, Phase II recommended	No definable focus; no further work recommended	No further investigation recommended

Figure 35

Results of Kent County Archæological Society test

Simon's Savannah lithics, sorted by arbitrary level and material, illustrating probable stratification of the site. These materials were excavated by volunteers from the Kent County Archæological Society in August 1990, after Phase I test was conducted by the authors.



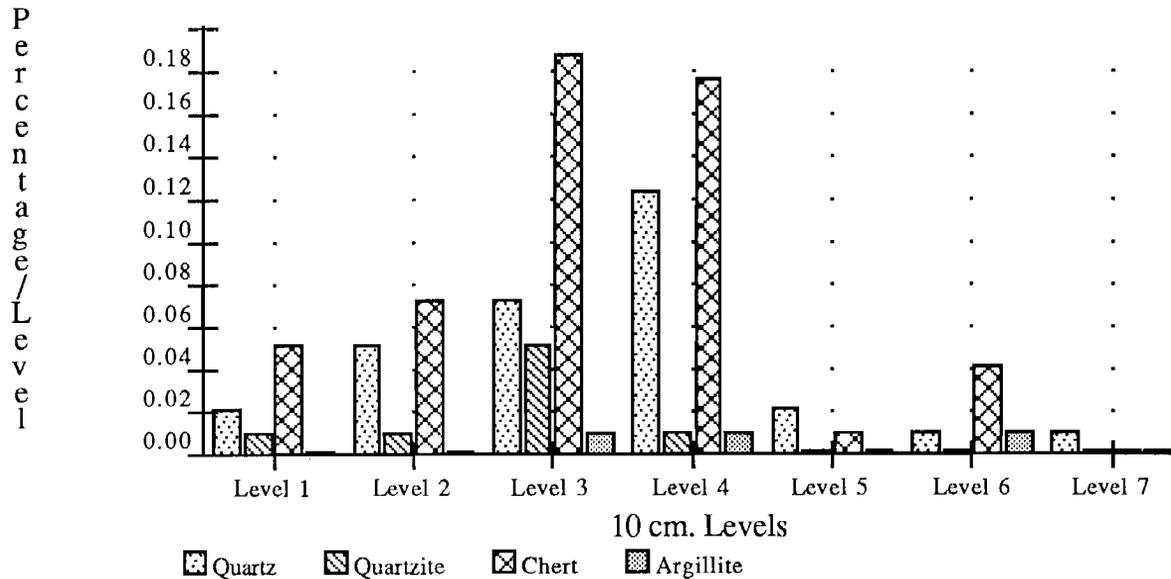


Figure 36

7K-C-107, Blueberry Hill, Lithics

This analysis of the materials from a single Phase I test square at the Blueberry Hill site strongly indicates that stratification is present, in spite of the fact that no diagnostic in situ artifacts were discovered during the course of this testing.