

Chapter 5

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD ASSESSMENT

A. PROJECT CORRIDOR DESCRIPTION

Section 2 exhibits topography typical of the Mid-Peninsula Divide, with gently rolling landscapes punctuated by occasional headwater areas and draws. Plates 5.1 through 5.19 provide a visual commentary on the project area from south to north, using vertical satellite, oblique aerial, and ground photography. The following description is derived from these images and from field observations in November 2008.

Plate 5.1 covers an area from the beginning of Section 2 at Station 255+60 to about Station 305 just south of Bunker Hill Road (visible at the extreme top right of the photograph). Immediately to the northwest of the alignment is the location of the recent geoarchaeological survey (Hayes 2009). As far as the northern of the two headwaters of the Sandy Branch of the Bohemia River the land use is still agricultural. U.S. Route 301 construction will impact much of the area south of the drainage, including southwest-northeast and northwest-southeast farm roads, the former possibly on an early alignment of Choptank Road. Plate 5.2 shows ground conditions on the south side of the southern headwater of Sandy Branch. Areas like this, adjacent to drainages, could have been attractive to prehistoric populations, especially if lithic sources were exposed in the valley sides. The only prehistoric artifact identified during the November 2008 survey, a jasper reduction flake (Plate 5.3), was located in this area, exposed on the surface of a slight knoll.

The two headwater branches of the Sandy Branch have steep heavily overgrown sides, but the valley bottom showed clear signs of impoundment (Plate 5.4). Investigation downstream to the northwest, outside the APE, located a dam or impoundment

feature just below the confluence of the two branches (Plate 5.5). The flat upland plain interfluvial landform between the two branches (Stations 266 to 271) was identified as an area of moderate to high archaeological potential.

North of this headwater area the landscape is being drastically modified by development (Plates 5.6, 5.7), with modern housing tracts to the east and Appoquinimink High School to the west. An 18th century route of Choptank Road crosses the alignment at around Station 290-295, although no surface traces were apparent. Bunker Hill Road, at Station 308, is a road of possibly 17th century origin that intersects with Choptank Road a short distance west of the APE. Low-density scatters of prehistoric material have been found in the area of the Choptank/Bunker Hill Road intersection (see Figure 5.1 and Table 3.1).

North of Bunker Hill Road the alignment parallels Choptank Road for some distance, running across cultivated fields (Plates 5.8 and 5.9). Between Stations 317 and 323 the alignment crosses a heavily disturbed property, historically part of the Black Marsh/Ash Farm tract. From approximately Station 338 northwards to about Station 365 the alignment skirts a wooded area of hydric soils around the headwaters of the east-flowing Dove Nest Branch. This area is an upland swamp environment of the type identified by Custer and others as potential foci of prehistoric activity. The area around Station 370 is the site of a house related to the Holton Farm (Plates 5.10 and 5.11 and see below).

From Station 375 to Armstrong Corner Road (Station 410) the alignment continues to cross chiefly upland agricultural land (Plates 5.12 and 5.13), although there



Plate 5.2. View looking north between Stations 200 and 207 in the locations of proposed retention basins associated with Ramp 1 of U.S. Route 301 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:022].



Plate 5.3. Prehistoric jasper reduction flake found on knoll overlooking the location of the proposed retention basins associated with Ramp 1. Flake lies immediately to the left of the left end of the pen. Pen is 5.5 inches long (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:024].



Plate 5.4. View looking southeast of impoundment/possible millpond, northwest of Station 265 and Ramp 4 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:025].



Plate 5.5. View looking northeast of earthen dam/causeway and impoundment /possible millpond, northwest of Station 265 and Ramp 4 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:027].



Plate 5.6. View looking northeast of location of proposed basin northwest of Station 275 across Ap-
poquinimink High School baseball fields. Approximate centerline indicated (Photographer: William
B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:031].



Plate 5.9. View looking southeast of S. Holton Farm (National Register N00107) from Choptank Road with the proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 between Stations 360 and 370 in the background (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:010].



Plate 5.10. Close up view looking southeast of S. Holton Farm (National Register N00107) with the proposed route of U.S. Route 301 Station 365 in the background (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:011].



Plate 5.13. View looking south of proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 between Stations 384 and 390 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:033].

is an area of wetlands between Stations 390 and 400 that gives adjacent portions of the alignment a slightly higher potential for prehistoric sites. Armstrong Corner Road is another early road alignment with a settlement focus to the east of the alignment at Armstrong Corner itself (Plate 5.14). The area of the alignment crossing remains largely agricultural in 2009 (Plates 5.15 and 5.16).

North of Station 434 the alignment crosses a number of smaller properties fronting onto the current Route 301 (Plate 5.17). The late 19th- or early 20th-century house at Station 442, scheduled for removal, may have associated archaeological resources (Plates 5.18 and 5.19). The alignment crosses the present U.S. Route 301 and traverses residential properties as far as the Norfolk Southern Railroad at Station 455 (Plate 5.19).

B. PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (FIGURE 5.1)

Known adjacent prehistoric sites (see Chapter 3) are located near headwater areas and draws similar to those within Section 2. There are no certainly known bay-basin features on the Section, although the hydric soils area east of stations 340 through 370 may reflect a former upland swamp environment, and possible features close to the APE at Armstrong Corner Road have been noted in Chapter 3. The A.D. Marble sensitivity model for Section 2 reflects the presumption, borne out in numerous studies, that prehistoric sites with an identifiable archaeological signature are most commonly found within close proximity of flowing water. Thus, the un-watered uplands between Stations 295 and 320, and 375 through 430, are assessed as having Nil archaeological sensitivity, with areas closer to water having progressively higher sensitivity. The assessment of the steep valley sides and bottoms being highly sensitive in the Marble model seems, however,

unjustified, and it seems reasonable to consider the relatively level areas immediately adjacent to these valleys as having the higher potential.

A total of seven zones of prehistoric archaeological sensitivity have been identified using these criteria. These are mapped on Figure 5.1. The limits have been defined to encompass both high and somewhat lower probability areas in order to provide an opportunity to test the sensitivity models.

C. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (FIGURE 5.2)

The historical archaeological assessment of Section 2 is substantially based on the background historical research presented in Chapter 4, informed by the A.D. Marble sensitivity model, and on field verification of identified locations. In the absence of surface indications, or ground-truth investigations through shovel testing or surface collection, identification of areas of historical archaeological sensitivity is therefore, for the most part, not based on physical site data.

Commencing with the southern end of the Section on the Rumsey Farm tract, the alignment will affect both east-west and north-south farm roads around Station 255. The north-south road crosses the impoundment of Sandy Branch to the north, and there is a possibility that this may be an abandoned course of Choptank Road. While roads provide limited archaeological information, evaluation of the archaeology of these features is considered appropriate.

The impoundment behind the dam feature on Sandy Branch is clearly a cultural feature, although its date remains uncertain.

Crossing into the historic Indian Range tract at about Station 275, potential historic archaeological features are concentrated towards Bunker Hill Road. The



Plate 5.15. View looking south of proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 from Station 410 at Armstrong Corner Road (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg #08052/D1:013].



Plate 5.16. Viewing facing north from Armstrong corner Road along the proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:012].



Plate 5.17. View looking southwest of Station 435 of the proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 in the area of the former William Dale House site (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:016].



Plate 5.18. View looking west of historic property 14380 (the Staat's Property) at Station 442 of the proposed alignment of U.S. Route 301 (Photographer: William B. Liebeknecht, November 2008) [HRI Neg.#08052/D1:015].

18th-century course of Choptank Road crosses the alignment at about Station 292 and is flanked on its northern side by a low but prominent knoll. Given the known early boundaries of Indian Range (see above, Chapter 4) this knoll is a plausible candidate for the location of an early house site. Bunker Hill Road is itself an early route, and the A.D. Marble assessment of the areas north and south as having moderate potential appears justified.

On the Maple Grove Tract, a road documented in the 1740s crosses the centerline at about Station 325. The well-documented Cann/Holton house site lies at about Station 368 and the Gallahan house site on the spur at about Station 97. As with the majority of the identified historic features, there are no surface indications of either site.

The crossing of Armstrong Corner Road at Station 410 is given a similar moderate potential assessment as the Bunker Hill Road crossing. The Bell House site, at about Station 127 on Armstrong Corner Road, may be impacted by a stormwater management pond. In the area of Armstrong Corner itself, on the Armstrong Farm tract, there are two possible historic structure locations. The southern of the two is just outside the current APE, and comprises both the site of a structure owned by the Armstrong family and a documented stone bridge carrying U.S. Route 301 across a minor drainage. A second location to the north is identified in the A.D. Marble study.

The Samuel Dale House site lies within the current APE, at a point west of Station 432 on a part of Parcel 179. Dale, a free black, bought the property in 1854 and it was farmed by members of the family until the late 1800s (see Chapter 4).

Archaeological resources may be associated with the standing Staats House on U.S. Route 301 southeast of Station 443, and with the Rogers House site at about Station 451. The 1850s Norfolk Southern Railroad

alignment is the final identified potential historic resource on Section 2. There are no known former railroad features at this location other than the permanent way.