



Knowing the Past—Building the Future

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Archaeological Survey and Testing of the Stafford County Public Schools Moncure Elementary School Project Area, Stafford County, Virginia

From June 14 to 17, 2016, Dovetail Cultural Resource Group (Dovetail) conducted archaeological survey and testing on portions of the Moncure Elementary School project area located in Stafford County, Virginia. The project was carried out at the request of Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) in order to locate and define archaeological sites lying within the project area boundaries and which may be adversely impacted by the proposed construction project. Dovetail's investigations were informed by a previous study performed by Circa Cultural Resource Management, LLC (Circa) in 2011 (Frost and Tyrer 2011). During this study, cartographic and documentary research was conducted in order to assess the potential for the area to contain historic period sites, and a pedestrian reconnaissance was conducted of the entire project area. The results of Circa's investigations were used during the current study to identify areas of high, medium, and low probability for containing archaeological sites.

Dovetail's survey included a pedestrian reconnaissance of the entire project area in order to identify above-ground features such as building remains as well as artifact deposits that might be visible on the surface. Areas of exposed soil and the rootballs of downed trees were inspected closely for exposed artifacts. For the subsurface testing program, the project area was divided into three survey areas, designated Areas 1–3, to facilitate data organization and discussion. Areas 1 and 2 were the portions of the project area determined by the Circa study to have a high probability for containing archaeological sites. These areas were tested with shovel test pits (STPs) excavated at 50-foot intervals in all locations that did not contain standing water or extensive visible disturbance. Area 3 included the moderate probability area identified by Circa. This area was inspected visually, and judgmentally placed shovel testing took place at four locations which were felt to warrant subsurface investigations. Additional shovel tests were placed around all artifact-bearing STPs to more fully delineate artifact deposits and determine if those deposits represented archaeological sites or isolated finds. This management summary provides a brief summary of Dovetail's investigations, with a focus on the archaeological sites which were identified and their eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Assessments of NRHP eligibility are based on initial analyses of data and assemblages, and final recommendations will be made when analysis is complete.

Three new archaeological sites and one isolated find were identified during Dovetail's survey. Permanent site numbers for the newly identified sites will be obtained from the Virginia'

Department of Historic Resources (DHR). Temporary site numbers consist of the survey area in which they were identified, followed by a number within that survey area (e.g., Site 2-2 is the second site identified in Area 2). The locations of these sites are shown on aerial imagery in Figure 1 (p. 4). A brief discussion of each site follows and includes recommendations for NRHP eligibility based on the level of analysis conducted to date.

Site 1-1 is a historic building location in the central portion of Area 1 (Figure 1, p. 4). Although no artifacts were recovered in the STPs excavated within the site boundaries, the site was readily identifiable by the presence of a set of brick piers, which once supported a building. A nearby bottle dump is likely associated with the site. All of the bottles observed date to the early- to mid-twentieth century. Recent disturbance by heavy machinery surrounded the building remains and likely obliterated the demarcated planting beds and brick pathways described in the Circa report (Frost and Tyrer 2011). A linear depression was also noted south of the building remains, but is likely associated with the destruction of the building, as noted in the Circa report. Due to the lack of artifacts recovered near the foundation remains and the recent disturbance of much of the site, it is unlikely that additional investigations will yield significant data about the history of the area. As a result, **Site 1-1 is recommended not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP.**

Site 1-2 is located near the center of the project area, just east of the high-probability area delineated by Circa (Figure 1, p. 4). The testing grid was extended beyond the mapped high-probability area in this location because the field director felt that this portion of the landform warranted testing despite being beyond the area identified by Circa. Site 1-2 was identified on the basis of one positive STP along the primary testing grid and two positive radials. Together, these STPs yielded over 40 pieces of quartz debitage dating to an unknown prehistoric period. No features or intact buried ground surfaces were identified, and additional excavations at the site are unlikely to produce significant data on local or regional prehistory. As a result, **Site 1-2 is recommended not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP.**

Site 2-1 is located in the northern portion of Area 2 (Figure 1, p. 4). The site was identified on the basis of one positive STP and two nearby surface collection locations where artifacts were collected from exposed soil near the bases of mature trees. Altogether, a total of 13 pieces of quartz debitage dating to an indeterminate prehistoric period were collected from the site. No features or intact buried ground surfaces were identified, and additional excavations at the site are unlikely to produce significant data on local or regional prehistory. As a result, **Site 2-1 is recommended not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP.**

Site 2-2 is located in the western portion of Area 2 (Figure 1, p. 4). The site was identified on the basis of one positive STP along the primary testing grid and two positive radials, as well as one surface collection location where artifacts were collected from exposed soil near the base of a mature tree. Over 40 pieces of quartz debitage dating to an unknown prehistoric period were collected. The site is located near a large quartz outcrop situated at the end of a small ridge. Prehistoric people were presumably obtaining quartz from this outcrop and reducing it into tools or tool preforms nearby. No features or intact buried ground surfaces were identified, and additional excavations at the site are unlikely to produce significant data on local or regional prehistory. As a result, **Site 2-2 is recommended not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP.**

One isolated find (ISF) was also recovered. ISF 1 was a single quartz flake found in STP 1-D-18 in the northern portion of Area 1 (Figure 1, p. 4). Two radial STPs were excavated around this positive STP, while the other two radials were unexcavated because they fell in an area which was visibly disturbed by a dirt road leading through the project area. This artifact likely represents casual discard or an ephemeral occupation which left only a minute archaeological signature. Isolated finds, by definition, not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP, and no additional archaeological work is warranted in this location.

In summary, a total of four new archaeological sites were identified during Dovetail’s survey of the SCPS Moncure project area. One of the sites is a twentieth century building location with extant foundation remains, but few artifacts except for an associated bottle dump. Much of the site has been disturbed by heavy equipment. The remaining three sites date to unknown prehistoric periods, as does the isolated find. The isolated find is by definition not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP, and all of the sites are recommended as not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. SCPS staff are encouraged to contact Dovetail with any additional questions or concerns regarding the survey or progress of report preparation.

Table 1: Summary of Findings and Preliminary NRHP Recommendations.

Survey Area	Site	Time Period	Description	NRHP Recommendation
1	1-1	20th Century	Domestic site	Not Eligible
1	1-2	Unknown prehistoric	Short-term camp	Not Eligible
2	2-1	Unknown prehistoric	Short-term camp	Not Eligible
2	2-2	Unknown prehistoric	Lithic procurement site	Not Eligible
1	ISF 1	Unknown prehistoric	Isolated find	Not Eligible

REFERENCES CITED

Esri

2016 World Imagery. Electronic document, <http://services.arcgisonline.com/arcgis/services>, accessed November 2016.

Frost, Dawn M. and Carol D. Tyrer

2011 *Current Conditions Assessment of the Stafford County Elementary School Property, Stafford County, Virginia*. Circa Cultural Resource Management, LLC, Williamsburg, Virginia.

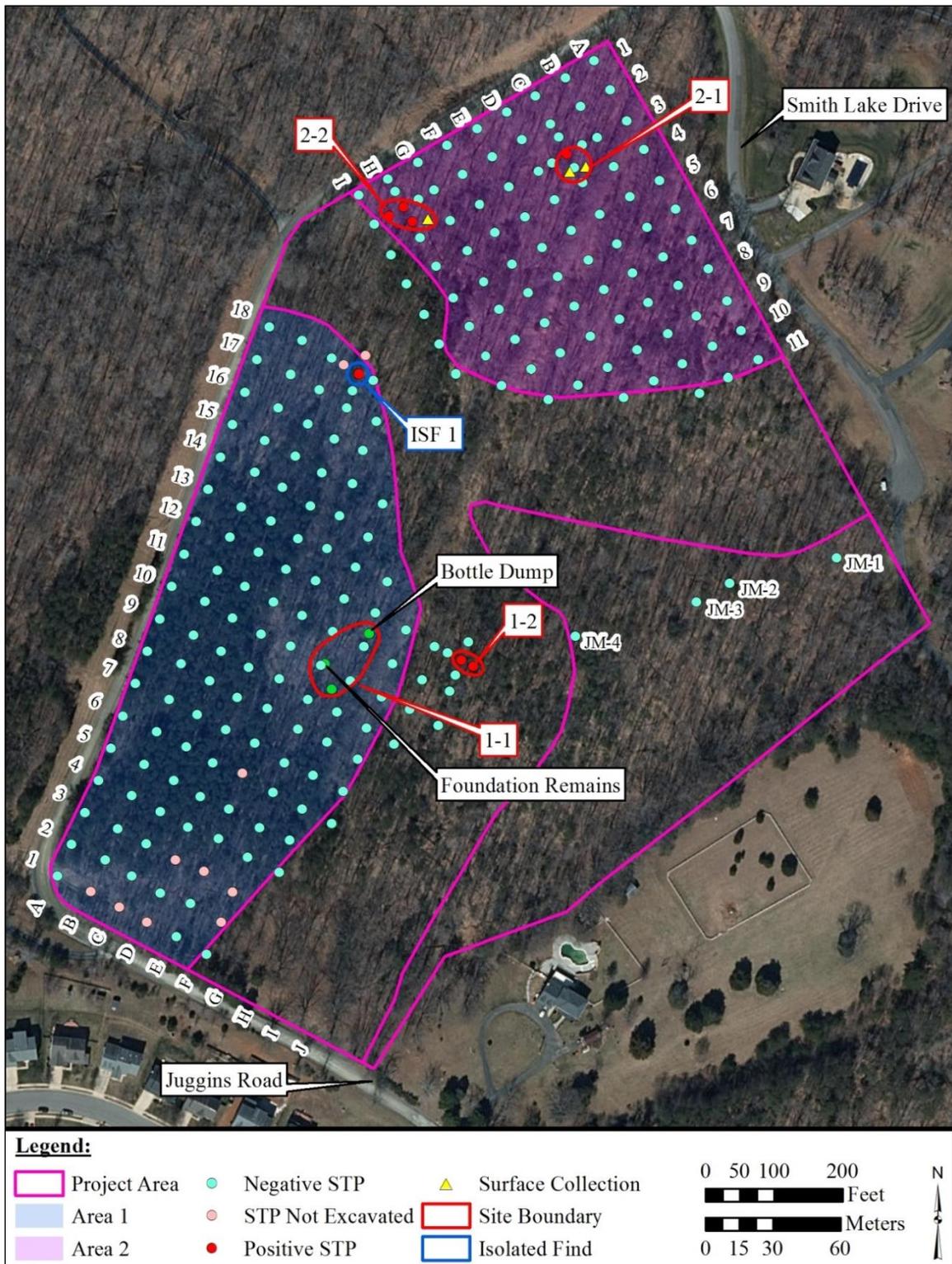


Figure 1: Aerial Image of Project Area, Showing Shovel Testing Grid and Artifact Recovery Locations (Esri 2016). The area containing the judgmental STPs (JM-1 through JM-4) is Area 3, the moderate probability area. The remaining central area is the low-probability area.