APPENDIX A

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM

ADDENDUM

to the

MANAGEMENT REPORT
PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY
PORTER ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
(STATE ROUTE 896 TO STATE ROUTE 72)
NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE

Dated September, 1994

January, 1995

Additional Archaeological Testing at Porter Road Site 1

I. Introduction

Porter Road Site 1 is a scatter of nineteenth- and twentieth-century and prehistoric artifacts located near the intersection of Porter Road and US 301/SR 896. The site was discovered during a Phase I survey of the corridor for proposed improvements to Porter Road carried out by Louis Berger & Associates in August, 1994. The site is located in an active agricultural field and an adjacent wooded area. At the time of the initial survey the field was planted in young soybeans and the survey was carried out by surface inspection on transects 50 feet apart. In areas where artifacts were noted on the surface the survey was supplemented by the excavation of shovel test pits. Louis Berger & Associates did not consider the Porter Road Site 1 to be potentially significant and no further work was recommended.

In accordance with a verbal agreement reached during a meeting at DelDOT on November 29, 1993, and a letter sent by Louis Berger & Associates to DelDOT, dated December 9, 1993, LBA has carried out additional work on Porter Road Site 1. Four 3x3 foot test units were excavated in the area of highest artifact concentration, as defined in the Phase I survey. In addition, an additional surface survey of the area was undertaken, and a metal probe was used to search for buried foundations or other cultural features.

II. Archaeological Findings

At the time of the additional fieldwork, Porter Road Site 1 was covered with soybean stubble and surface visibility was approximately 10%. An initial surface inspection revealed that the 20 to 30 feet of the field closest to Porter Road was contaminated by what appeared to be road construction debris: crushed rock gravel, hunks of concrete, and pieces of stone. Several pieces of recent glass and aluminum were also noted in this area. It was decided, therefore, not to excavate a test unit close to Porter Road, but to place all the units in the concentration of

artifacts 50 to 100 feet south of it.

The Phase I shovel tests were easily relocated close to their recorded locations. A grid was established in the field, based on the grid used during the Phase I surface survey. Instead of the letter designations used for the transects in the Phase I, the distance south of Porter Road was measured in feet; transect B will be called 50 feet south, transect C 100 feet south. The first test unit was placed two feet west of STP B-300, in grid location East 298 South 50. Test Unit 2 was placed in grid location East 275 South 100, which was actually 10 feet east of STP C-275. Test Unit 3 was placed in grid location East 225 South 100, and Test Unit 4 on the highest topographic point in the artifact concentration, in grid location East 275 South 65. All test units were excavated .3 feet into the sub-plowzone soil.

A total of 103 cultural artifacts was recovered from the four test units, 101 historic and 2 prehistoric. All the artifacts were recovered from the plowzone. No cultural features or undisturbed cultural strata were encountered. No concentrations of artifactual material were noted on the surface, and no foundations or other features were discovered by probing. The most productive unit was Test Unit 1, which yielded 31 historic artifacts and 2 prehistoric. Twenty-six historic artifacts were recovered from Test Unit 4, 18 from Test Unit 3, and 16 from Test Unit 2. The artifacts recovered during the additional testing are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Artifacts Recovered During the Additional Testing

Unit 1 East 298 South 50
- 1 brass button
- 20 redware sherds
- 9 whiteware sherds
- 4 green glass fragments
- 1 clear glass fragment
- 1 quartz core
- 1 quartz flake

Unit 2 East 275 South 100
- 9 redware sherds
- 5 whiteware sherds
- 1 gray stoneware sherd
- 1 brick fragment

Unit 3 East 225 South 100
- 9 redware sherds
- 5 clear glass fragments
- 4 brick fragments

Unit 4 East 275 South 65
- 12 redware sherds
- 8 whiteware sherds
- 1 porcelain sherd
- 4 clear glass fragments
- 1 green glass fragment

The most common historic artifacts recovered were redware (n=50), whiteware (n=23), clear glass (n=10), green glass (n=5), and brick (n=5). In addition, one sherd of non-Chinese porcelain, one sherd of American gray stoneware, two cut nails, and one brass button were also found. The artifacts suggest a domestic site of the period 1840 to 1880. The absence of

pearlware, cream-colored earthenware, white clay pipestems, edge-decorated whiteware, and other artifacts common in the 1800 to 1840 period argues against earlier occupation, while the relatively small amount of glass recovered, and the absence of milk glass, aqua glass, amber glass, porcelaneous earthenware, and other artifacts common after 1880 argues for abandonment by that date. The finds recorded during the additional testing are more consistent in their dating than those recorded during the initial survey, and these new data suggest that the modern (automatically-manufactured glass) and early nineteenth-century (pearlware) material recovered previously derives from dumping along Porter Road and is not part of the main site. Only two prehistoric artifacts were recovered during the additional testing, neither of them diagnostic.

III. Conclusions

After the initial Phase I survey, LBA investigators decided that historic component of Porter Road Site 1 probably represented a scatter of artifacts in a plowed field and not a dwelling site. This is still possible, but it now appears more likely that a dwelling was present at some point. The substantial quantity of brick recovered argues for the presence of some sort of structure, and the number of artifacts found is equal to that from some dwelling sites in our experience. The small number of nails (two) and the absence of any conclusively identifiable window glass, however, seem to suggest a simple artifact scatter. In any event, Porter Road Site 1 is still not believed to be potentially significant. The number of artifacts recovered was not great, and they were all recovered from plowed contexts. The ceramics and glass recovered were all in very small fragments, too small, in most cases, for their functions to be determined. The artifact exhibited no significant spatial patterning; coarse redware was the most common artifact type in all units, and the other types were not present in sufficient numbers to supply valid results. Because of the disturbance by plowing, the lack of sub-plowzone features, the poor artifact preservation, and the lack of evident spatial patterning, the site does not have the capacity to supply important information on the nineteenth-century inhabitants of the area. Likewise, the prehistoric component is a very thin artifact scatter, with no evidence of sub-plowzone strata or features, unlikely to supply meaningful information on the region's prehistoric inhabitants. The site is not considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D or any other criterion, and no further work is recommended.