



# Technical Memorandum

## Simmonds Hills

Lakeville, Massachusetts

*Cultural Resources Due Diligence*  
*September 6, 2024*  
PAL No. 4724

Submitted to:

**Stonebridge Homes, Inc.**  
12 Norfolk Avenue  
South Easton, MA 02375

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Stonebridge Homes, Inc. is currently planning the development of the Simmonds Hills subdivision in Lakeville, Massachusetts. The 300-acre Project area is bounded on the north by undeveloped land, on the east by Route 140 (Alfred M. Bessette Memorial Highway), to the west by residences on Freetown Street and the Cedar Swamp River and on the south by the Lakeville/Freetown town line (Figure 1).

### **Project Description**

The Project area is wooded and undeveloped with small areas of wetland environment. As currently proposed, the development would consist of 200 housing units (single family, condominium, duplex), roadways and an on-site wastewater treatment plant within an approximately 188.5-acre section of the overall project area. Access to the development would be from Freetown Street. In response to a request by Stonebridge Homes, Inc. PAL conducted a cultural resources due diligence study of the Simmonds Hills subdivision project area.

### **Scope**

As part of the project planning and environmental permitting process, Stonebridge Homes, Inc. is gathering information on the potential impact of the Project on cultural resources. PAL conducted a due diligence and archaeological sensitivity assessment to assist in this process by providing information on known historic and archaeological resources within one quarter and one half-mile study areas surrounding the Simmonds Hills Project area and existing conditions within it.

The goal of the study was to assess the sensitivity of the Project area for historic and archaeological resources and assist Stonebridge Homes, Inc. in complying with federal and state legislation and regulations concerning the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic and/or archaeological resources. The cultural resources due diligence study will also facilitate project review and consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) under applicable regulations including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 USC 306108), and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), M.G. L. Chapter 9, Sections 26-27c (950 CMR 70-71) and the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA; 301 CMR 11).

Research consisted of a search of the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of the Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth (MHC Inventory) and the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) to identify previously recorded

archaeological sites. This inventory search provided information about the types, nature, and distribution of archaeological resources located within the one quarter and one half-mile study areas. This information along with environmental attributes (soil types, topography, wetlands) and the current condition of the Simmonds Hills Project area was used to assess its archaeological sensitivity. Table 1 is a matrix of the factors that contribute to the archaeological sensitivity including these environmental characteristics.

**Table 1. Archaeological Sensitivity Rankings Used.**

Presence of Sites		Proximity to Favorable Cultural/ Environmental Characteristics			Degree of Disturbance			Sensitivity Ranking
Known	Unknown	< 150 m	≥ 150 ≤ 500 m	> 500 m	None/Minimal	Moderate	Extensive	
•		•			•			High
•		•				•		High
•		•					•	Low
•			•		•			High
•			•			•		High
•			•				•	Low
•				•	•			High
•				•		•		High
•				•			•	Low
	•	•			•			High
	•	•				•		Moderate
	•	•					•	Low
	•		•		•			Moderate
	•		•			•		Moderate
	•		•				•	Low
	•			•	•			Moderate
	•			•		•		Low
	•			•			•	Low

## Results

### Environmental Setting

The Simmonds Hills Project area is within the lower Taunton River drainage system. Wetlands in the Project area drain into the Cedar Swamp River which flows northwest to join the Assonet River in the Myricks section of Berkley. The Assonet River then flows south into Assonet Cove and the Taunton River in Freetown. Wetlands in the Project area drain south to the Cedar Swamp River where

it flows under Freetown Street. Located about one-half mile west of Long Pond, the Project area is in proximity to the large freshwater lakes in the Assawompsett Pond complex.

The topography in the Project area varies from flat to slightly sloping terrain at 70 to 90 feet above sea level (asl) in elevation along the margins of wetlands to 130 feet asl on elevated rocky knolls. Surficial deposits in the Project area consist of a thin mantle of ground moraine and glacial till over granitic bedrock (Zen et al 1983). The Project area contains 9 soil types with varying slope, texture and drainage characteristics. Wooded wetlands contain poorly drained Freetown muck (0-1 percent slope), Whitman fine sandy loam (0-3 percent slope), Norwell mucky fine sandy loam (3-8 percent slope), Brockton sandy loam extremely stony (0-3 percent slope) and Mattapoissett loamy sand, extremely stony (0-3 percent slope). The flat to slightly sloping areas bordering wetlands contain Canton-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, very stony (0-8 percent slope) and Newfields fine sandy loam (3-8 percent slope). Elevated rocky knolls and terraces contain Chatfield-Rock outcrop-Canton complex, (8-15 percent and 15-35 percent slopes, very stony).

### Archival Research

A review of MACRIS and the MHC Inventory found that no pre-contact Native American or post-contact period archaeological sites are recorded within a half mile study area around the Simmonds Hills Project area. There are no archaeological sites or historic structures listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places in the Project area. The East Freetown, Furnace Village (FRE.C) National Register of Historic Places district is outside the southern boundary of the half mile study area for the Simmonds Hills Project area. Two inventoried historic areas, Assonet Cedar Swamp (LAK.D) and Assawompsett Ponds Complex (LAK.F) are partially within the half-mile study area, but do not extend into the Project area (Figure 2; Table 2).

**Table 2. Recorded Historic Areas Within the Half-Mile Study Area for the Simmonds Hills Project Area**

Area Designation	Name	Site Types	Temporal Periods	National Register Eligibility Status
LAK.D	Assonet Cedar Swamp	Domestic, Rural Industry, Agriculture.	Early Industrial Period (circa 1830)	Not evaluated
LAK.F	Assawompsett Ponds Complex	Domestic, Rural Industry, Agriculture, Recreational.	Colonial (1675-1775) through Mid Century Modern (1940-1970) periods.	Not evaluated

Several archaeological investigations were conducted in a different project area between East Howland Road and Route 140, just outside the southern boundary of this half mile study area, in Freetown. An intensive archaeological survey and site examination for a solar field that was conducted by PAL identified two archaeological sites and three small find spots with pre-contact cultural materials (19- BR-744, -745, -746, -747,-748) and a post-contact period granite quarry (FRE. HA. 26). Post-contact cultural materials found in the solar field project area were associated with the William Rounsevelt Jr. House (FRE. 102). King Philip's Cave (FRE. HA.2) is also referenced as being in the vicinity of the solar field project area (Flynn and Doucette 2017) (see Figure 2).

A review of nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century maps of Lakeville revealed no houses, farmsteads or other structures within the Project area or along the section of Freetown Street forming its western boundary. The nearest development was along County Road (Route 140) where several houses were outside the eastern boundary of the Project area in the late nineteenth century. Atlas maps from 1871, 1879 and 1903 indicate these properties were owned by members of the Canedy, Caswell and Stanton families. An unpaved road extending in a north to south orientation through the central portion of the Project area is shown on a 1948 topographic quadrangle map, but no earlier maps (Beers 1871; Bourne 1831; Richards 1903; USGS 1948; Walker 1879).

### **Walkover Survey**

PAL staff conducted a walkover survey to examine and document the current physical condition of the Project area including environmental settings (wetlands, stream drainages, topographic features, etc.) and any previous disturbance of the ground surface. Information on existing conditions and environmental settings was recorded on scaled project plans and with digital photography. A hand-held GPS unit was also used to record specific points and objects during the walkover survey. The location and orientation of fieldstone walls was also recorded, PAL staff also conducted a walkover of portions of the Project area with Bettina Washington, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah (WTGH/A) to identify areas of cultural significance and sensitivity.

The western portion of the Project area contains mostly low terraces adjacent to wetlands and some rocky knolls. The southwest part of the Project area contains a large wetland that is the source of the Cedar Swamp River. Prominent knolls with bedrock outcrops are concentrated in the central, eastern and southern portions of the Project area. The largest knolls have slightly sloping to level upper surfaces at elevations of 100 to 130 feet asl.

The only cultural resource found in the walkover survey was a small fieldstone-lined well located where an access easement between residences at 45 and 47 Freetown Street enters the southwest part of the Project area (Figure 2). The well is not associated with any known Native American occupation. The vicinity of this well was inspected for other associated structural features such as an abandoned foundation or cellar hole, but none were found.

### **Sensitivity**

Information collected during the archival and environmental research and walkover survey were used to assess the archaeological sensitivity of the Simmonds Hills Project area. PAL's predictive model considers various criteria to rank the potential for the project area to contain archaeological sites. The criteria are proximity of recorded and documented sites, local land use history, environmental characteristics and existing conditions. No zones of high archaeological sensitivity were identified and the Project area was stratified into zones of moderate and low archaeological sensitivity as depicted in Figure 3.

All of the soil types in the Project area are either poorly drained or rocky. Soils with better drainage characteristics are on knolls with surface boulders, bedrock outcrops and side slopes ranging from 8 to 35 percent. Wetlands and steeply sloping sides of knolls were zones of low archaeological sensitivity. Knolls with boulders and bedrock outcrops are concentrated in the central, eastern and southern portions of the Project area. Some level to slightly sloping areas adjacent to wetlands and

on the crests of elevated knolls in the central, eastern and southern portions of the Project area were considered to have moderate archaeological sensitivity.

## Recommendations

Archival research conducted for the due diligence and archaeological sensitivity assessment found that no recorded archaeological resources or inventoried historic properties are within the Simmonds Hills Project area and the one-half study area around it. The zones of moderate sensitivity in the Project area have environmental attributes similar to some recorded pre-contact Native American sites in sections of southeastern Massachusetts.

## References

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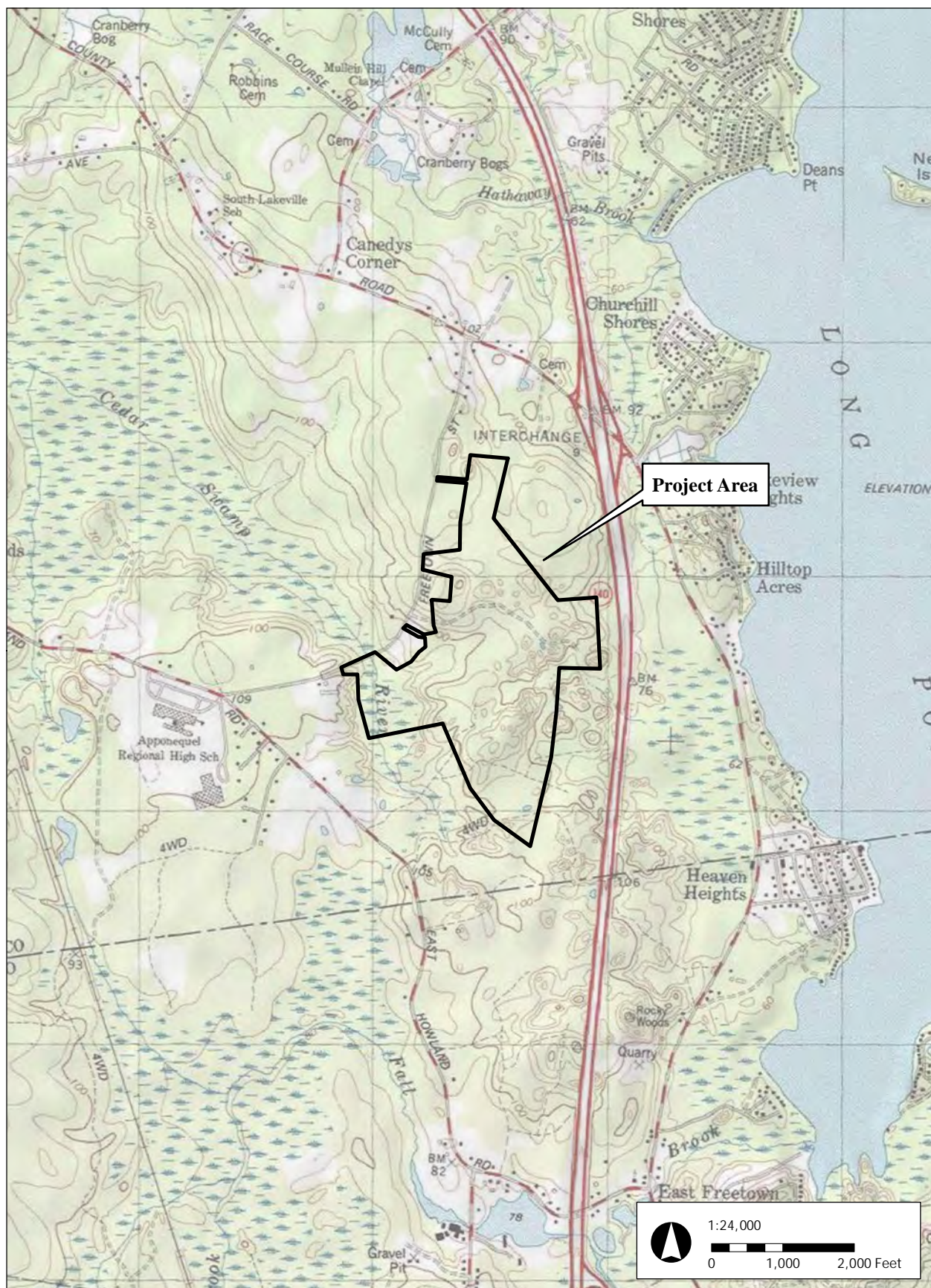


Figure 1. Location of the Rocky Woods project area on the Assawompset Pond USGS topographic quadrangle, 7.5 minute series.