

# Architectural Resources Survey Report

Columbus County Airport Runway Extension

HUA No.: CC 9201

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Prepared for the Division of Aviation, North Carolina Department of Transportation  
By Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates, P. A.  
Southern Pines, NC

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## Management Summary

### Project Summary

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Aviation, in conjunction with Columbus County, North Carolina, proposes to construct an extension to the existing 3,700 foot runway at the Columbus County Airport near the town of Brunswick, approximately four miles south of Whiteville, North Carolina (see Project Map 1). The airport facilities are located near the center of Columbus County and consist of a paved 3,700 foot runway (5-23 runway alignment), 75 feet in width. The project sponsor is the Federal Aviation Administration through the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The Prime Consultant is Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates, P. A. of Southern Pines, NC.

State Clearinghouse Number: 92-E-00000729

### Purpose of the Project:

The proposed project will consist of an extension of the current 3,700 foot runway to an initial length of 5,000 feet and an ultimate length of 5,500 feet. In addition, the runway width will ultimately be expanded from the current 75 foot width to the proposed 100 foot width (see Project Map 2). Various alternatives for this expansion will be investigated and evaluated, including the no-build and improve-existing alternatives.

The project area is located entirely in Columbus County. Land use surrounding the proposed runway extension is primarily farmland or rural residential. It is not anticipated that any relocation of residents and/or businesses will be required.

### Purpose of this Report:

The purpose of this report is to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) and the Regulations of Compliance of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, codified at 36 CFR Part 800. This law requires that Federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on historic properties and seek comments from an independent reviewing agency, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, to avoid

unnecessary harm to historic properties from Federal actions. A program for identification, assistance, and protection of historic properties, Section 106 requires that the effects of an agency's proposed action on historic properties be assessed. If there is an adverse effect, consultation is needed to avoid, reduce, or mitigate that harm (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, *Section 106, Step-by-Step*, October 1986).

Methodology:

In the course of this study, an intensive-level survey was conducted within the area of potential effect (APE, see Project Map 1). It included vertical site file review in the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, photo documentation, field analysis, and document identification and research. There were no potentially eligible properties within reach of effects flowing from the above-referenced project. Hence, no effects that would alter a property's historic environment and integrity (e. g. audible, visible, or atmospheric effects or changes to a property's character or use) were found.

No comprehensive survey of Columbus County had ever been undertaken, but a reconnaissance survey of properties in the county had been done in 1985 by Davyd Foard Hood and records of this work were on file in the Division of Archives and History. A number of potentially eligible residential and commercial buildings were identified within the town of Whiteville along an axis of streets radiating north and south of the Courthouse Square (the Pinckney Street/Washington Street axis). The town of Whiteville is approximately four miles from the site.

Only one property documented in this survey, a property deemed not eligible for the National Register, was found in the vicinity of the airport, the Pentecostal Fire Baptized Holiness Campground 0.5 miles south of SR 1167 near South Whiteville approximately two miles from the airport site. This property is a cluster of pedestrian mid-20th century buildings.

Finally, two properties identified prior to this survey in the general vicinity had been placed on the North Carolina Study List, the Columbus County Courthouse in Whiteville (1914, NC Study-Listed in 1979) and the David George House, two miles north of Whiteville on US 701 (ca. 1835, NC Study-Listed in 1983). Neither of these properties have been listed in the National Register.

Because virtually all of the residential and commercial/industrial material found in the APE was less than 50 years old, it was not necessary to document the any of the buildings photographically. Some contiguous structures were photographed, however, and will become part of the architectural record of the region. This report was prepared as per the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports of Historic Structures Surveys and*



*Evaluations Submitted to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (August, 1989).*

Description of the Area of Potential Effect:

The area of potential effect was determined to include all land within the roadways surrounding the airport property, an area of approximately 2,000 acres. The boundaries of this area extend from the intersection of SR 1170 and NC 130 in Brunswick, along Harrelsonville Road (SR 1171) south and west of the airport to Harrelsonville Crossroads at the intersection of SR 1171 and Pleasant Plains Road (SR 1164). The boundaries then extend north along SR 1164 to its intersection with SR 1170 west of the airport, enclosing the 2,000 acre parcel (see Project Map 1).

The airport facilities lie entirely within this parcel and are screened from their surroundings by buffers of agricultural land and woodlots. Only two clusters of development could conceivably be adversely impacted by the runway extension. The first is a grouping of farm residences, trailers, and outbuildings along the local roadway called "Oscar Peterson Road" immediately south of the airport (see Figures 2 and 3, page 14), and a street of small ca. 1960 residences along Parker Road west of the airport. There are no National Register-eligible properties in either of these clusters, and it is likely that the airport antedates most of this development.

Summary of Results:

No listed or eligible properties were found in the project area.

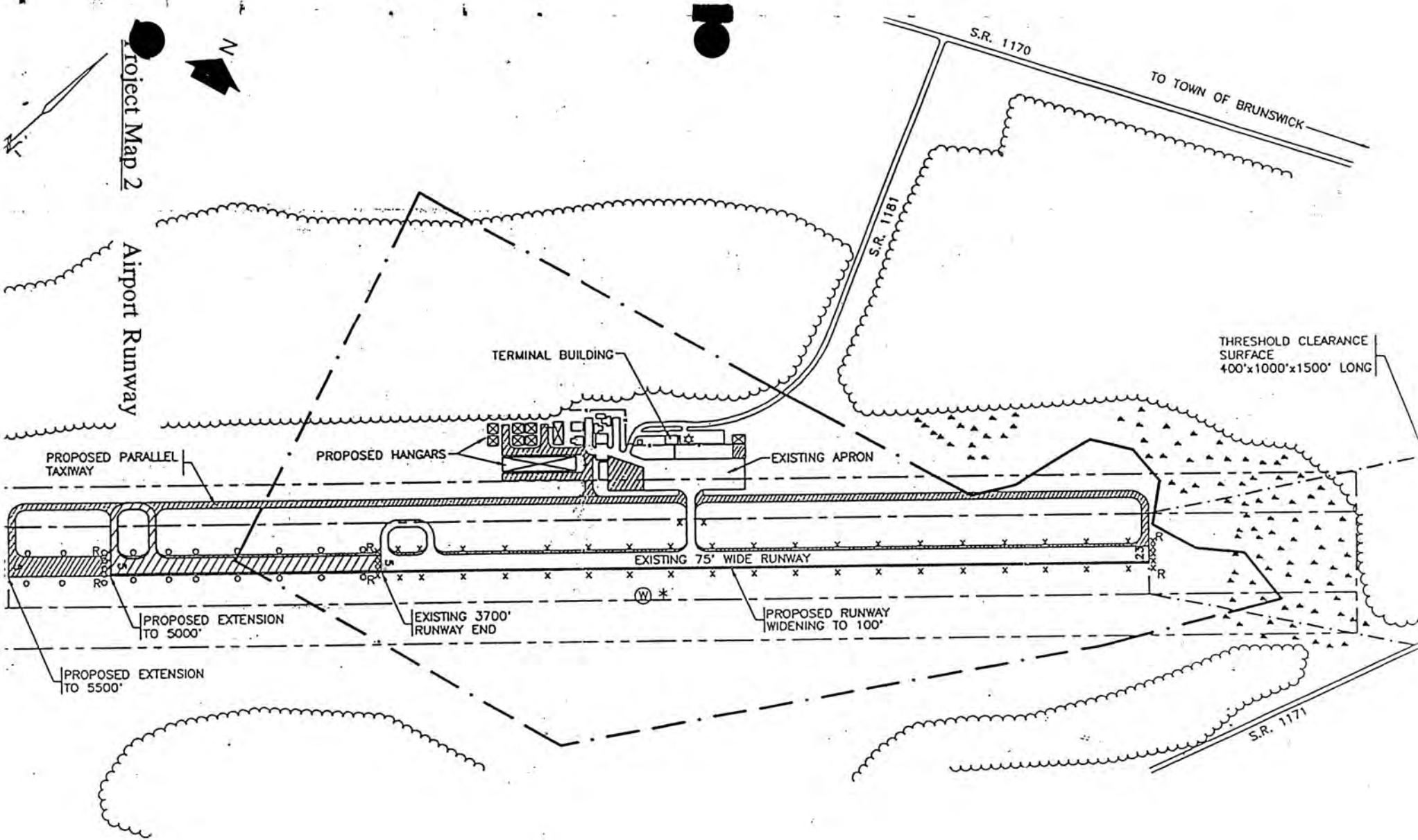
Summary of Potential Effects:

Because no properties listed or eligible for the National Register were identified, no potential effects were noted and were thus moot.









		AIRPORT DATA	
NG	ULTIMATE	EXISTING	ULTIMATE
	5,500'	AIRPORT ELEVATION 88.9'	90.9'
	0.45%	OPERATIONAL ROLE GEN. UTILITY	BASIC TRANS.
	100'	NAVIGATIONAL AIDES ROT. BEACON	ROT. BEACON
	0:1 20:1 20:1	SEG. CIRCLE	SEG. CIRCLE
	SW 25,000# SW	WIND CONE	WIND CONE
	M.I.	VASI-II	VASI-II
	N.P.I.	NDB	NDB
	400'	NORMAL MAX. TEMP.	92°F/33°C 92°F/33°C

LEGEND			
DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL
THRESHOLD SURFACE	---	EXISTING RUNWAY LIGHTING	x
SAFETY AREA	---	PROPOSED RUNWAY LIGHTING	o
OBJECT FREE AREA	---	WETLAND	▲
EXISTING PROPERTY LINE	---	EXISTING BUILDING	▭
AIRPORT BEACON	☆	PROPOSED BUILDING:	▭
NON-DIRECTIONAL BEACON	*	PROPOSED PAVEMENT	▨
R.E.I.L.	Rx	SEGMENTED CIRCLE/WINDSOCK	(W)
WOODED AREA	☁	CHAIN LINK FENCE	-x-x-

SCALE:  
1" = 50'

**HU** HOBBS, UPCHURCH & ASSOCIATES, P  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS  
SOUTHERN PINE, NORTH CAROLINA 28387

**FIGURE 2**  
**COLUMBUS COUNTY AIRPORT**  
AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN  
AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT

## Introduction

This project, the Columbus County Airport Runway Extension Project, (HUA No. CC 9201, State Clearinghouse Number 92-E-00000729) is located in central Columbus County North Carolina, 2,000 feet southwest of Brunswick and four miles south of Whiteville, the seat of Columbus County. The airport parcel is found within an area of land of approximately 2,000 acres in extent containing two small clusters of residential parcels and/or farmlots, most of which appear to have occurred after the airport was built.

The airport facilities include a paved 3,700 foot runway (5-23 alignment), 75 feet in width. The project will initially consist of an extension of the runway length some 1,300 feet, and eventual extension of an additional 500 feet to a total length of 5,500 feet. The eventual width of the runway will eventually be 100 feet. Various alternatives for this expansion are being investigated, including the no-build and improve-existing alternatives.

Determination of the area of potential effect (APE) was made in the field after a preliminary examination of USGS maps of the project area, cross-referenced with existing maps and other records on file in the North Carolina Division of Archives and History to pinpoint known historic structures likely to be within reach of effects of this project. No historic architectural resources were on record as occurring in the APE of this project, nor were any found in the field.

### Personnel and Contract Specification:

Sponsoring Agency: NC Department of Transportation, Division of Aviation, acting for the Federal Aviation Administration.

Prime Consultant: Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates, P. A., 290 S. W. Broad Street, Southern Pines, NC 28388.

Sub-Consultant and Principal Investigator: Mary L. Reeb, Ph.D., Historic Preservation Services, 608 Laurel Hill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Date of Survey: 2 December 1992.

The Project requirements are specified in the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports of Historic Structures Surveys and Evaluations Submitted to the North Carolina State Historic*

*Preservation Office* (August, 1989). Contract specifications and scope of work are contained in the Appendix of this document.



Figure 1 Airport Waiting Facility



## Physical Environment

### Geography and Natural Resources

The region surrounding the Columbus County Airport is known as the Southern portion of the Coastal Plain of North Carolina, a sector of the state approximately 100 to 140 miles wide and zero-to-500 feet above sea level between the Tidewater flats and the Piedmont region above the fall line of the state's river systems. The Coastal Plain sector accounts for approximately 45% of the state's geography. The project area lies within the three drainage systems of the Lumber, Waccamaw, and Cape Fear Rivers, primarily within the drainage basin of the Lumber River.<sup>1</sup>

Columbus County contains a land area of 939 square miles bordering the South Carolina line between Pender and Robeson Counties and was represented to be, at the time of settlement "shackled by swamp, bay, and pocosin, mischievously interfering with transportation and settlement."<sup>2</sup> It is, today, largely an agricultural county whose products feature tobacco, peanuts, pecans, cotton, soybeans, sweet potatoes, and livestock, especially poultry. In addition, a lumber and paper industry make use of the local stands of pine forest that were used in earlier years in the naval stores industry of the 18th and 19th century, helping to produce North Carolina's principal exports through 1870.<sup>3</sup>

The soil underlayment consists of the Cretaceous system throughout, with overlying Pee Dee and Black Creek formations of dark-gray to green glauconitic sands, clays, and locally thin impure limestone beds. The surface rocks consist of mixed mica gneisses and shists with lesser amounts of hornblende gness and granitic rocks. The vegetation features swamp forests of gum and cypress, pine flatwoods, or savannas, of scattered pine stands and ground cover grasses and herbs. Trees in these savannas include pond and longleaf pine almost exclusively, and shrubs, including gallberry, wax myrtle, and sweet bay. The county also contains the ground indentations found elsewhere in the state known as pocosins or "swamps on a hill" for the higher elevations found near the center of their elliptical and ridged edges. The most common types of pocosins found in

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<sup>1</sup> *North Carolina Atlas: Portrait of a Changing State*, ed. by James W. Clay, Douglas M. Orr, Jr., and Alfred W. Stuart (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1975) p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Sharpe, *A New Geography of North Carolina*, Vol. II (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 1958) p. 737.

<sup>3</sup> Sharpe, *Op. Cit.*, p. 741.

Columbus County are the Angola Bays and Holly Shelters, versus the "Carolina Bays" of other regions.<sup>4</sup>

The most significant geographical features in the county are the 140 acre Green Swamp and Lake Waccamaw, sometimes called "the largest natural lake between New York and Florida,"<sup>5</sup> a body of water of some 9,000 acres formed by the confluence of four feeder creeks, First, Second, and Third Little Creeks, and Big Creek, and artesian springs. Economic activity around this lake includes an extensive recreational component.

The largest town near the airport is Whiteville (1980 population 5,640) , four miles to the north, the county seat of Columbus County. Whiteville contains a large tobacco market with its attendant warehouses, and light industry. Nearest the airport is Brunswick, once a company town of 600 people formed around a 1925 lumber mill and village, a branch of the Jackson Brothers Lumber Company from Salisbury, Maryland. The lumber mill closed in 1932 and the Jackson Brothers' commissary was sold, becoming the "Brunswick Supply Company," which still exists though the village itself is much smaller (240 people in 1977).<sup>6</sup>

Immediately north of the airport are a North Carolina Department of Transportation facility and the Columbus County Fairgrounds, large properties with assemblages of utilitarian buildings and sheds (see Figures 4 and 5, page 15). The remaining landscape contains groups of residential buildings, trailers and single story houses for the most part, dating from the mid-twentieth century. There are no fast food establishments and other small-scale commercial development in the immediate area, except within the village limits of Brunswick. The airport property itself is bordered by cropland.

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<sup>4</sup> *Atlas, Op. Cit.*, pp. 116, 130-131.

<sup>5</sup> *Columbus County, North Carolina: Recollections and Records*, ed. by Ann Courtney Ward Little (Whiteville: Columbus County Commissioners, 1980) p. viii.

<sup>6</sup> Little, *Op. Cit.*, p. 63.



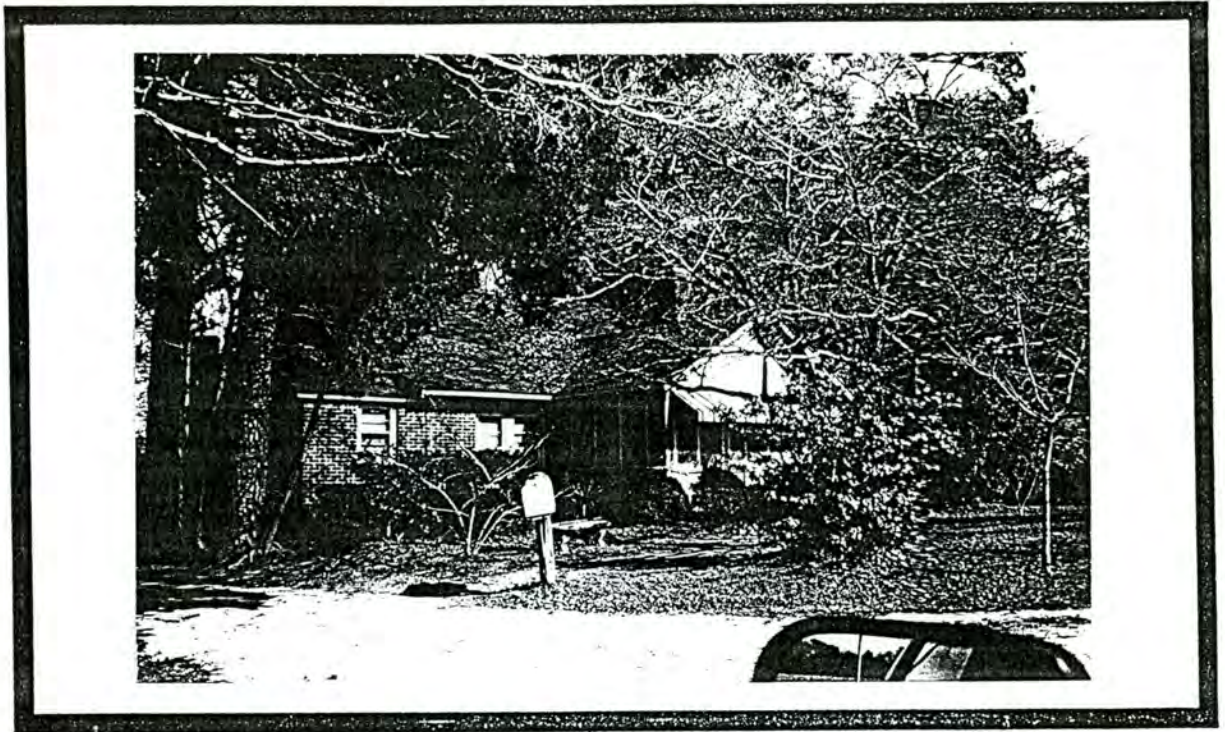


Figure 2 House on Oscar Peterson Road



Figure 3 Barn, Oscar Peterson Road



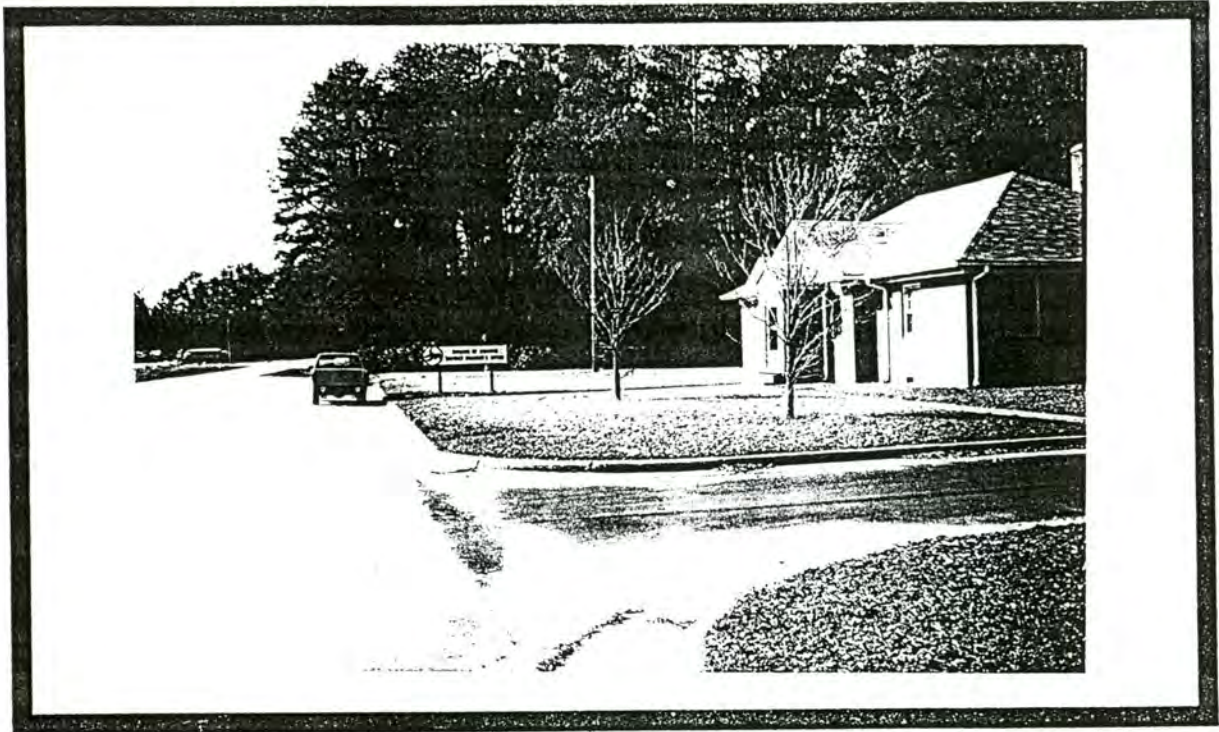


Figure 4 NC DOT Office Building



Figure 5 NC DOT Transportation Facility

### Architectural and Historical Background: Context

The region now known as Columbus County was first settled in the 18th century when English and Welsh settlers began to move north of the Brunswicktown port area at the mouth of the Cape Fear towards its headwaters. The county was formed as a separate entity in 1808 from the larger Bath County, then subdivided into eight townships in 1868.

The largest 18th century landowners were John Swann, who was granted 500 acres in 1730 "on the west side of Wickmaw Swamp adjoining the lands of Joseph Waters,"<sup>7</sup> ("Swann's Point") and Roger Haynes, who received a land grant on White Marsh in 1735, and passed on 1,000 acres of his property on the Cape Fear and 640 acres west of White Marsh to his daughter and son-in-law, John and Margaret Haynes Burgwin. Their property, Marsh Castle Plantation, was built on the site of Whiteville, and was owned, eventually, by James B. White, after whom both the marsh and the town were named.<sup>8</sup>

The region was the site of one Revolutionary War campaign but eventually became "Truce Land" because its swamps between Whiteville and the South Carolina boarder provided hide-a-ways for military renegades and other criminals. Whiteville was laid out on land donated by White in 1810, on which the first (of three) courthouses was built.

Timber was always part of the Columbus County economy, at one time producing "ton timber" or structural timber for shipbuilding in lengths of 50 feet by 24" in girth."<sup>9</sup> The timber planters in the region replaced the Waccamaw Indians, Siouan-speaking tribes that roamed the swamplands and had once inhabited a village on Lake Waccamaw, whose abandoned remains were assumed, even in 1734, to be old, antedating the arrival of whites by fifty years. By the Civil War, much of the region had been cleared for farming, and the 1850 census put the white population at 4,257, with 1,503 slaves.<sup>10</sup>

After the War, tenancy became commonplace, farming cotton and corn. At the instigation of Joseph A. Brown of Chadbourn in Columbus County, a campaign was mounted to entice Midwesterners to the county to produce strawberries, eventually making Chadbourn the "strawberry capital. . . [and] putting Columbus on the map." The

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<sup>7</sup> Little, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Little, *Op. Cit.*, p 14.

<sup>9</sup> Sharpe, *Op. Cit.*, p. 739.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*



overwhelming crop of choice today is tobacco, which was introduced to the region in 1896, particularly the more popular brightleaf tobacco, the production of which was commonplace in Columbus County, unlike elsewhere in North Carolina, because the County came late to the crop and farmers were thus less committed to the production of burley tobacco, an older form.<sup>11</sup>

Whiteville has been prosperous in its history. The collection of mid-to-late 19th and early 20th century houses, Italianate, Classical Revival, and other such forms found along the Pinckney/Washington Street axis give testimony to the existence of a merchant or managerial class. One of the earliest buildings is the Nicholas-Sledge Cottage on Pinckney Street (ca. 1845, CB--), a one-story, board-and-batten cottage with two end chimneys with stepped shoulders and free-standing stacks. Its two front doors are double-leaved, and it features sheathed siding beneath the porch roof and paneled wainscot., a fairly elaborate building, given its history as a tenant house.<sup>12</sup>

Another early building is the Reuben Brown House (ca. 1830-35, home of the first schoolmaster). The house features a flush-sheathed interior porch, paneled doors, simple late Federal-style mantels, interior plaster, and wood ceilings. The exterior features a plain cornice with simple doric architraves, plain frieze, and 6/6 sash. The house is now being used as the local Fine Arts Center.

Another early house is the Dr. N. M. Culbreth House (ca. 1900) on Washington Street. It is a two-story, double pile Italianate farmhouse with bracketing and a single-story rear ell, a transomed entry with sidelights, a central chimney, and hipped roof. It is said to have been the residence of a series of school principals.

Other later buildings include several built for members of a single family. The Simms-Eli Memory House on Washington Street is a one-story, L-shaped cottage with turned porch members and an advancing right wing with a pedimented roof and bullseye window. It features a two-pile main block, a three-window bay with paneled siding, and a raking roof with bracketed cornice. The Thomas Simms Memory House is an asymmetrical two-story building with an advancing wing, hipped-roof side wing, turned porch columns, returns, a balcony, shutters, and a single-story porch with railings.

Other well-preserved buildings include a house on Madison Street at its intersection with Lewis, a two-to-three-story Colonial Revival building with a large single-story wrap porch with a pedimented entry over a second-story porch element. The house features a bracketed cornice, arched pedimented windows, multiple dormers and window bays, and a

<sup>11</sup> Sharpe, *Op. Cit.*, p. 741.

<sup>12</sup> David Foard Hood, Field notes, 1985 reconnaissance survey of Whiteville and Columbus County.



porch gazebo. The house also features a stained-glass transom. The old Byrne House on French Street features a three-bay single-story aspect with a pedimented entry with sidelights and 9/6 sash. The Coleman-Burns on Pinckney Street is a Queen Anne-style house, locally interpreted, with elaborate shingle siding.

There are no such houses in the vicinity of the airport. This collection of buildings occur within the chief market town of the region, and the airport, in the midst of agricultural surroundings, was obviously built to avoid pockets of development in this relatively under populated county.

## Methodology

This study consisted of an intensive-level survey within the entire APE, including vertical site file review in the North Carolina Division of Archives and History survey, National Register, and Study List files, photo documentation, field analysis, map study, and document identification and research. As there were no listed or potentially eligible properties within the APE, little additional work to identify local residents or resources was necessary.

Where are they?

No comprehensive survey of Columbus County had ever been undertaken, but a reconnaissance survey of properties in the county had been done in 1985 by Davyd Foard Hood, and records of this work were examined. While a number of potentially eligible properties were identified in Whiteville, this town is four miles from the site and the project would have no effect on these properties.

The background research consisted of examining published sources relative to Columbus County history and geography available in various libraries, notably the North Carolina Collection of the Louis Round Wilson Historical Library at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. While there is no *wealth* of information on Columbus County, enough was identified to satisfy to requirements of this project, in which no listed or eligible properties were found, and the parameters of which include a simple expansion of existing facilities, effects from which occur today in the normal course of daily airport use. These effects are not be likely to increase inordinately as a result of this project.

→ no substituting at a simple airport expansion

### Property Inventories and Evaluations

No National Register-listed or -eligible properties were identified in the course of this survey.

Are there any prop. + 504.0? → no per Marcus Jones w/ holds he checked w/ m. Paul.

### Potential Effects on Properties

Because there are no listed or eligible historic architectural resources within reach of this project, no effects are noted.

no



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