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Historic Preservation Office
American Samoa Historic Preservation Office (ASHPO)

September 23, 2002

Re: Letter Report Concerning Survey for Historic Properties for U.S. Army Reserves Complex
Site at Tafuna, American Samoa, prepared by Erika Radewagen, M.A., under supervision of Mike T. Carson, M.A. Mike Carson.

PROJECT SUMMARY

On August 26, 2002, I was asked to examine a 6.04-acre parcel of land controlled by the Federal Aviation Administration located south of the Office of Motor Vehicles track in Tafuna that is the future site of the new Army Reserves Complex in American Samoa (Figures 1 and 2).

The undertaking at the 6.04-acre land parcel was by the US Army Reserve. However, the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office (ASHPO) had already initiated a study of the WWII Tafuna Airbase, of which this 6.04-acre land parcel is a part (Figure 3). The ASHPO study is being conducted under the ASHPO Survey and Inventory Program in accordance with the U.S. National Historic Preservation Act. The purpose of my visit was to conduct an archaeological pedestrian reconnaissance survey of the 6.04 acres, whereas a report on the WWII Tafuna Airbase as a whole will be forthcoming. In addition to fulfilling the ASHPO Survey and Inventory Program needs, the objective of this survey was to assess the presence or absence of any possible cultural properties in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) in order to assist the U.S. Army with its Section 106 responsibilities related to the construction of the U.S. Army Reserve Center.

AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT

The APE is located on the edge of the Tafuna Plain and consists of a Holocene volcanic lava delta which is described as an olivine pahoehoe basalt flow in the Leone Volcanics. The soils of the area are Tafuna soils of the Tafuna Series (Eui, isohypothermic Tropofolists). They are classified as Tafuna stony muck. Vegetation in the area includes a variety of exogenous shrub and grass species. The APE vicinity appears to have been subjected to modern modification including mechanical disturbance such as mechanized clearing (see USDA 1984).

The APE, located beside the modern Pago Pago International Airport taxiway, is part of the World War II era Tafuna airbase which consisted of a variety of facilities including warehouses, short coralline-paved dispersal roads, maintenance facilities, and communication installations. According to the World War II Tafuna Airbase map available from ASHPO, the APE should contain some remnants of World War II era building foundations and possible coralline roadways.

The APE measures approximately 813 ft. by 326 ft. (see Figure 2). The survey was extended to the northeast by approximately 119 ft. outside the APE to include one possible feature and to provide coverage within the airport perimeter fence. This did not add any extra time to the project, due to the APE being cleared of heavy vegetation by local contractors Paramount Builders Inc.
HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Three previous surveys have been conducted in adjacent areas that did not include the present APE. On the northwestern side of the airport runway, Addison (2001) reported no sites of historical significance and only two prehistoric artifacts found in disturbed contexts. Cleghorn (1996) surveyed 47 acres at the southwest end of the runway for the current airport runway extension project and identified one stampond and no World War II features. Best's 1992 report provides coverage of the area northeast of the APE in which 13 sites were identified. One site was a World War II coralline road or taxiway, and all have been partially destroyed as a result of residential use of the area.

Kikuchi (1963:61,68) mentions the existence of several prehistoric platforms on the previous WWII Tafuna airbase as well as several trenches (T-97) that may date to WWII or earlier, according to the memories of Kikuchi's local informants.

Other surveys in the general Tafuna vicinity include Best (1992), Shapiro and Cleghorn (1994), Latinis et al. (1996), Moore and Kennedy (1999), and Taomia (2001, 2002). These surveys have recorded a variety of prehistoric and historic sites such as house foundations, stone platforms, defensive structures, star mounds, and stone walls.

Additional recent survey reports are on file in the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office, currently in draft form and undergoing a review process (D. Herdrich, personal communication).

FINDINGS

The survey occurred on August 26, 2002 (Day One) and August 27, 2002 (Day Two). The survey was conducted by Erika Radewagen, M.A., who was assisted by Mr. David J. Herdrich, M.A., of the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office on Day One.

Day One consisted of walking transects set 40 ft. apart from the airport perimeter fence to the edge of the newly constructed airport perimeter road. Piles from earlier mechanized clearing were observed and noted along each transect. Eight structural pieces of concrete were identified and their current locations were recorded. Each has been provided with a temporary feature number (denoted as TF-1 through TF-8). None of the temporary features identified during the survey are located in their original contexts, as indicated by the separation of the foundation from the natural ground. Table 1 summarizes the location, description, and condition of each identified feature.
Table 1: Temporary Features Identified in the Area of Potential Effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TF-1</td>
<td>185 ft @ 187° from east corner of perimeter fence</td>
<td>Concrete slab with attached partial wall 6 ft x 4 ft x 1 ft; covered with lava rock cobbles and dirt; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-2</td>
<td>412 ft @ 215° from east corner of perimeter fence</td>
<td>Large, “L” shaped concrete slab 9 ft x 5 ft x 1 ft and 9 ft high; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-3</td>
<td>219 ft @ 64° from Gate 13</td>
<td>Partial concrete slab 10 ft x 2 ft x 7 in; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-4</td>
<td>188 ft @ 68° from Gate 13</td>
<td>“L” shaped concrete slab 5 ft x 3.5 ft, located in rubble pile next to TF-5,6,7; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-5</td>
<td>176 ft @ 73° from Gate 13</td>
<td>“L” shaped concrete slab 5 ft x 3.5 ft, located in rubble pile next to TF-4,6,7; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-6</td>
<td>164 ft @ 71° from Gate 13</td>
<td>“L” shaped concrete slab 5 ft x 3.5 ft, located in rubble pile next to TF-4,5,7; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-7</td>
<td>152 ft @ 70° from Gate 13</td>
<td>“U” shaped concrete slab 8 ft x 5 ft, located in rubble pile next to TF-4,5,6; WWII aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF-8</td>
<td>207 ft @ 94° from Gate 13</td>
<td>Circular concrete slab partially buried in dirt; unknown aggregate</td>
<td>Broken; out of original context modern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seven of the eight concrete slabs listed in Table 1 were noted to contain “WWII aggregate.” This assessment was based on the presence of dense concentrations of large angular pieces of basalt inside the cement mixture, typical of concrete constructions in American Samoa dating to the WWII era (J. Taomia and D. Addison, personal communications).

The broken concrete slabs noted in Table 1 are not in their original context, so their integrity is lacking. These objects were described in adequate detail and photographed (Photos 1 through 8), and their locations were plotted on the project area map.

Day Two consisted of clearing and photographing the features and the APE to illustrate the disturbed nature of the parcel. Paramount Builders provided a local worker to assist with the clearing. The concrete cap for the airport runway power cables was discovered during Day Two running at an angle of 64 degrees from the airport perimeter fence along Airport Road. This was partially cleared and photographed but not given a temporary feature number.
All observed landscape modifications are the result of modern mechanical clearing such as bulldozing. Other observations of the APE include: scattered chunks of asphalt, various types of concrete, and coral among modern debris (metal wire, cans, bottles, plastics). This scattered coral may have once been part of an older coralline pavement that no longer exists in the vicinity.

Heavy machinery equipment, metal barrels, and other materials were assessed in the field as less than 50 years in age, associated with recent activities in the area.

No prehistoric artifacts or structural features were observed in the survey area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to 36 CFR 60.4 of the National Park Service's National Register regulations, the "quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials workmanship, feeling, and association" as well as at least one of four other criteria (also listed in 36 CFR 60.4). Integrity is lacking for the objects noted in Table 1, so no properties in the APE are considered eligible to meet the guidelines of significance.

In light of the data presented above, it is my opinion that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed activity within the Area of Potential Effect.

Recommended treatment at this time for the identified features in the APE involves no further archaeological work.
REFERENCES CITED

Addison, D.

Best, S.

Cleghorn, P.

Kikuchi, W.

Latinis, D.K., J. Moore, and J. Kennedy

Moore, J. and J. Kennedy
1999 Results of an Archaeological Cultural Resource Evaluation (Phases I and II) for the Tafuna Plains Sewer System-Phase II(A), Located in Tualauta County, Tutuila Island, American Samoa. Report prepared for the American Samoa Power Authority, on file at the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office.

Shapiro, W. and P. Cleghorn

Taomia, J.M.E.

USDA
Figure 1: Project Area Location on a Portion of USGS Map of Tutuila Island.
Figure 2: Base Map of the Project Area, Showing Area of Potential Effect and Survey Area.
Figure 3: Map of WWII Tafuna Air Base, Showing Approximate Location of Project Area, Map Provided by American Samoa Historic Preservation Office.
APPENDIX B: PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: Temporary Feature 1.

Photo 2: Temporary Feature 2.
Photo 3: Temporary Feature 3.

Photo 4: Temporary Feature 4.
Photo 5: Temporary Feature 5.

Photo 6: Temporary Feature 6.
Photo 7: Temporary Feature 7.

Photo 8: Temporary Feature 8.