

**PHASE I (A&B) CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
PLOTS 41 and 41J REM.
ESTATE ST JOSEPH AND ROSENDAHL
ST THOMAS, US VIRGIN ISLANDS**

Prepared for:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

CocoSol International Inc. (CocoSol) performed a Phase I A & B Cultural Resources Survey (*Survey*) for approximately 10 acres of land located on Plots 41 and 4J Rem., Estate St. Joseph and Rosendahl, St. Thomas, USVI (Figures 1 and 2) on behalf of AC Development of Randallstown, Maryland. The *Survey* was performed during the month of December 2024.

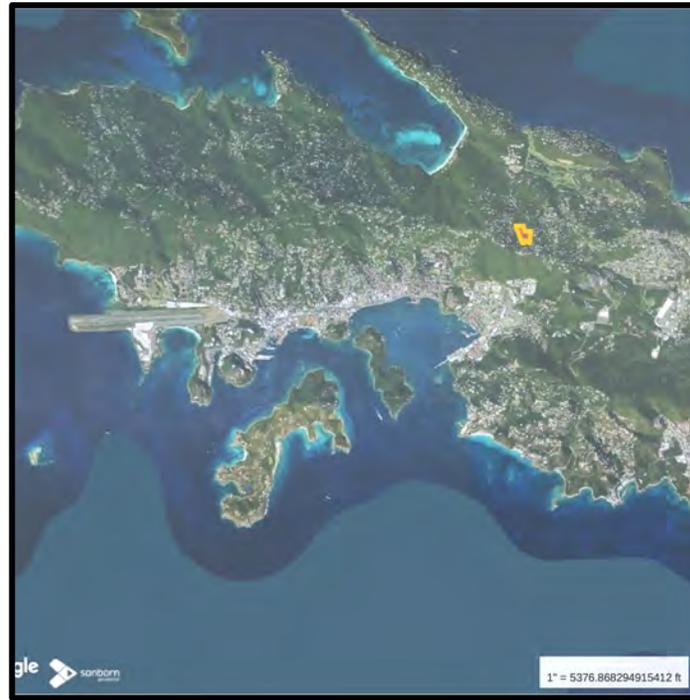


Figure 1: Google Earth image of central St. Thomas depicting the location of the survey area, red polygon.



Figure 2: Google Earth image depicting the location of Plots 41 and 4J Rem.

1.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

AC Development proposes to subdivide the property and develop it for residential purposes. The development will require earth change activities.

1.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Phase I A&B Cultural Resources Survey was performed to comply with Title 29, Chapter 17, Section 959, of the Virgin Islands Code, also known as the Virgin Islands Antiquities and Cultural Properties Act.

1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The topography of the subject property is generally steeply sloping containing 40-70 % of slope gradient, (Figure 3). The soils are assigned to the Dorothea Soil Series. These clay loams are shallow (0-18 centimeters below surface and are underlain by clay loam with ubiquitous pebble and cobble sized rock, and subsequently by weathered rock (saprolite) (Figure 4). The ground surfaces are generally littered by pebble, cobble and boulder size rock and rock outcrops (Figure 5). The vegetation consists of pioneer species with mature trees such as manjack, mampoo, turpentine, and one tamarind noted.

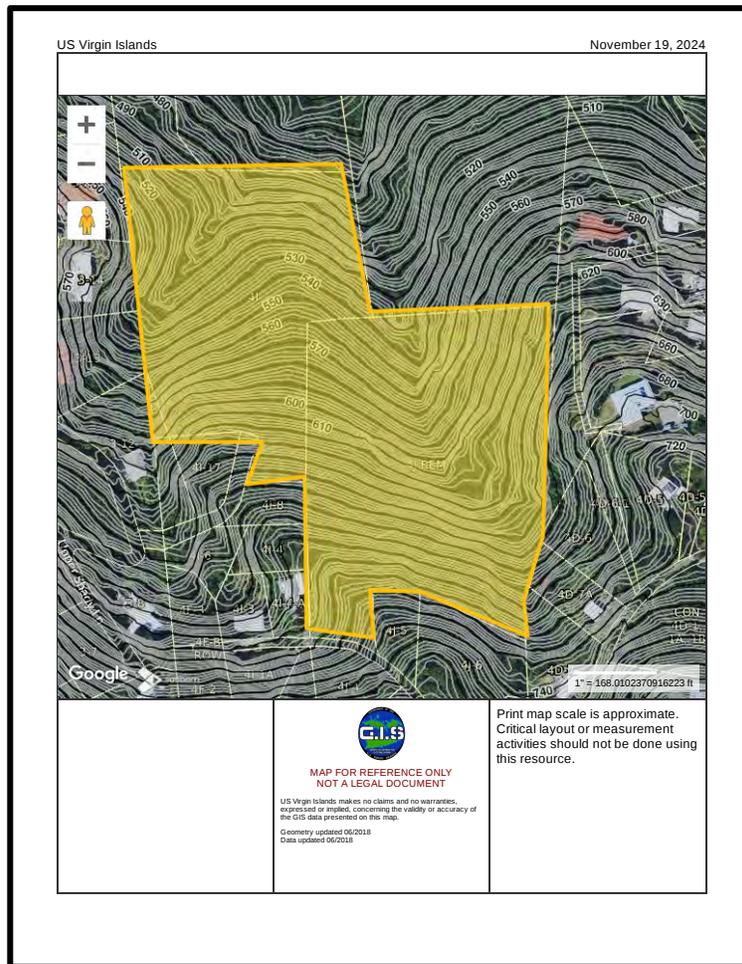


Figure 3: Google Earth image with land elevation contours



Figure 5: Photograph of characteristic ground surface conditions and vegetation.

2.0 SURVEY METHODS

The survey methods are discussed in this section.

2.1 LITERATURE AND RECORDS SEARCH

At CocoSol’s request, the Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office performed a site file search to determine whether any cultural resource of record was listed in their data base. Published and unpublished literature was consulted to gain a general understanding of the archaeology and history of the locality and the region in general. LIDAR images for the subject property were also consulted.

2.2 FIELD SURVEY

A pedestrian survey of the subject property was performed along transects spaced 30 meters or less. Because of the steep terrain, very rocky surface and dense vegetation (Figure 5), the transects were traversed generally following the contours of the land. We initially began to shovel test at 30-meter intervals along the transects however the rocky nature of the surface and/or near surface soil we encountered refusal. The remainder of the steeply sloping property was performed by visual surface inspections along the transects and adjacent areas for surface manifestations of cultural materials and shovel tested at the discretion of the archaeologist. The shovel tests measured approximately 30 by 30 centimeters and excavated to depths no longer considered to have the potential to contain non-random artifact bearing matrices. The excavated soil was screened through ¼ inch hardware cloth to effect artifact recovery. Figure 6 depicts an example shovel test.

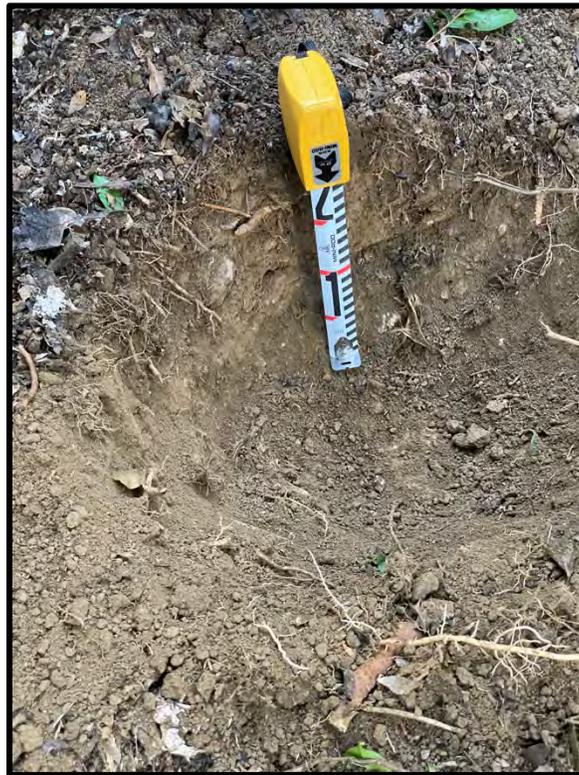


Figure 6: Photograph of example shovel test.

3.0 FINDINGS

No potentially significant cultural resources were identified during the Phase I A&B Cultural Resources Survey for Plots 41 and 4J Rem.

3.1 LITERATURE AND RECORDS SEARCH

The VISHPO informed CocoSol that their review of the archaeological site files does not indicate the presence of cultural resources of record within Plots 41 and 4J Rem., Estate St. Joseph and Rosendahl, St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. Our review of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listings for St. Thomas does not indicate any NRHP properties on the subject property. A summary of the culture history of the Virgin Islands follows.

3.1.1 Precolonial Cultural Setting

The U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) contains a rich milieu of cultural resources that offer testimony to over three thousand years of human experience. These cultural resources range from habitation sites established during the Archaic Period at Krum Bay and the Magens Bay Arboretum Complex on St. Thomas approximately three thousand years ago, to the multiple village and farmstead sites on all the islands, to chiefly ceremonial centers such as the Salt River Site on St. Croix, which is the site of the first encounter between the Taino and Europeans.

After the Archaic Period, the indigenous people of the Virgin Islands participated in a geographically vast network of social and economic relationships. Recent archaeological research indicates that the insular landscapes were dotted with small and large villages along the coastal section fringes of the islands as well as the uplands. Additionally, small settlements herein characterized as farmsteads are now being discovered in the uplands. These small upland farmsteads have mostly been unrecognized in the archaeological record; however, recent cultural resources surveys for large development projects have resulted in the identification of such sites.

The indigenous people of the Virgin Islands participated within a larger social, religious, and economic network (s), as evidenced by shared stylistic attributes of ceramics from the Saladoid, Ostionan and Chican culture periods across a significant part of the Antilles. Shared cosmological ideas are also evidenced by the presence of cemís and other religious paraphernalia in the Virgin Islands and across large areas of the Caribbean Archipelago.

Long distance trade is evidenced by the presence of jadeite artifacts manufactured from raw lithic sources found in Central America and chert from Puerto Rico and down island. A whole host of cultigens with origins in the continent became part of the quotidian diet; more exotic items such as guinea pig, an Andean domesticate, have been found in Puerto Rico and are likely to be documented by future archaeological studies as also present in Virgin Island archaeological contexts.

Because of the steep topography of the subject property, it is considered to have been an unattractive location for a permanent or temporary settlement.

3.1.2 Colonial Cultural Setting

Following the brief European incursion on St. Croix in 1493, the islands came to be in the possession of several European nations including Spain, England, Malta, the Netherlands, and France. The colonies that these nations attempted to establish largely failed. Not until Denmark's Danish West Indies Company

settled in St. Thomas in 1672 and on St. John in 1694, did these colonies become viable enterprises. The Danes purchased St. Croix from the French in 1733 and the island, with its larger size, gentler topography, fertile soils, and surface streams, became a dynamic sugarcane-based enterprise that lasted for a century.

The Danes divided the islands into estates that were largely dedicated to agriculture. Although largely owned by Danes, British managers often administered the estates. The early plantations, particularly on St. Thomas and St. John were primarily dedicated to the production of cotton and indigo, but because of competition from the continent, particularly the southern United States, these two agricultural pursuits were largely abandoned in favor of sugar cane. The economies of St. Croix and St. John were primarily based on sugar cane agriculture and the production of muscovado sugar and rum. In contrast, the economy of St. Thomas was primarily based on trade, although agricultural pursuits also formed an integral part of its economy.

3.1.3 Estate St. Joseph and Rosendahl

Our review of readily available literature and cartographic sources does not indicate the presence of settlements or buildings on the plots during the 18th and 19th centuries (Figures 7-10). The 1922 USCGS map of St. Thomas (Figure 10) does not depict settlements or buildings in the general area of the subject property, nor does the 1955 USGS map (Figure 11). The 1982 USGS map does however evidence numerous buildings in central St. Thomas (Figure 12).



Figure 7: Bredal map (1719) depicting the general survey area.

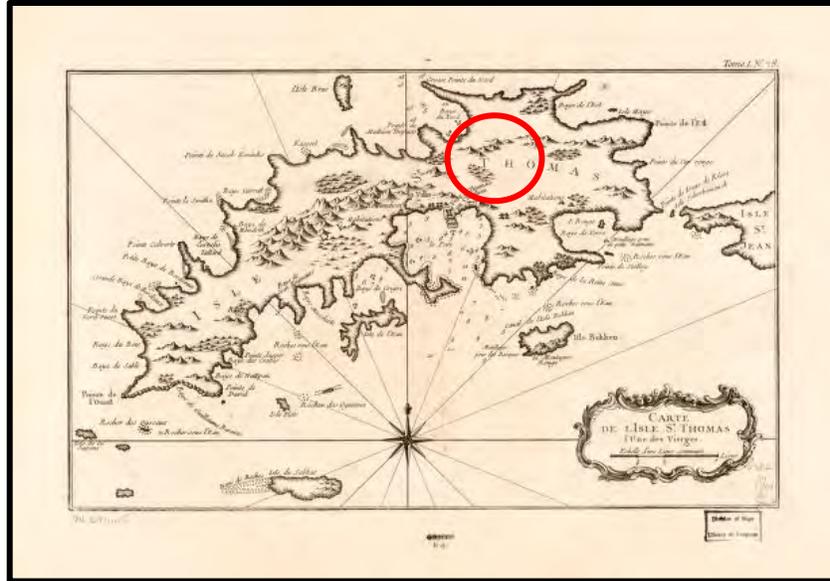


Figure 8: Map of St. Thomas: (1764 Carte de l'isle St. Thomas l'une des Vierges)



Figure 9: Hornebeck map (1834-1839) depicting the general area of the subject properties, circled in red.

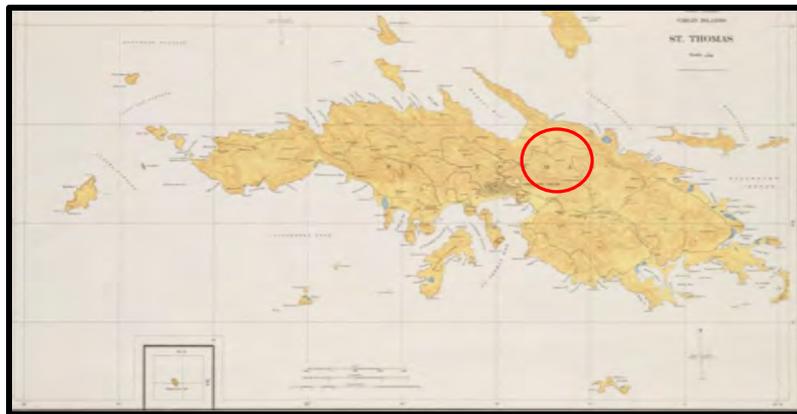


Figure 10: 1922 USCGS map of St. Thomas depicting the general survey area.



Figure 11: USGS quadrangle (1955) of Central St. Thomas depicting the general area for the subject properties

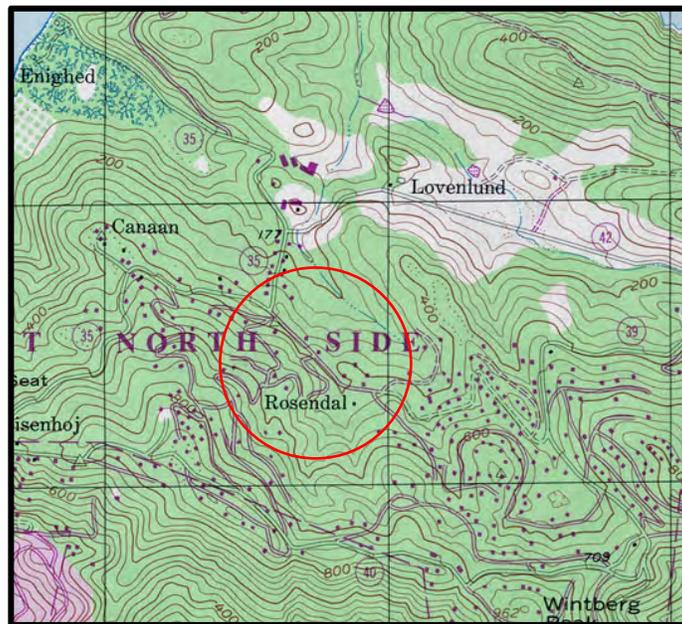


Figure 12: USGS (1982) map of Central St. Thomas depicting the general area of the subject properties.

3.2 FIELD SURVEY

The Survey resulted in the identification of what appears to have been a dry laid, rubble wall enclosure on Plot 4J Rem. The wall is oriented northwest to southeast for approximately 45 meters (Figure 13) and turns to the south for approximately 15 meters, the rubble wall varies in height from near the ground surface where the wall has collapsed and/or stones robbed to approximately 60 +centimeters above surface and is approximately 45 centimeters in width. Figures 14 and 15 provide views of the wall.

A refuse dump (Figure 16) consisting of numerous bottles and kitchens utensils was found in the inside corner of the dry laid rubble wall, and on top of the wall (Figure 17). The bottles date to the 20th century except for a dark green case bottle (Figure 18) that was found on top of the wall. Areas in the immediate vicinity of the dump were visually surveyed for indications of a house site or other cultural features, none were found. The refuse may have been dumped at this location as part of lot clearing activities for the nearby houses built since 1955.

A 10-fluid ounce, carbonated soft drink bottle bearing the name New Star was also found on top of the dry laid rubble wall. The bottle is partly embossed, and screen printed (Figures 19 and 20). The screen-printing technology appears in the early 20th century and is in use until the 1950's when a thermoplastic wax medium was introduced that eliminated the drying time between color applications. This increased production from 25-30 to 100 to 128 bottles per minute (<http://www.antiquebottles.com/soda/ac/hist.html>). The labels (front and back) read, where discernable, as follows:

Front Label

New Star
Johnstown PA

Back Label

A Pure and Wholesome Beverage
Purest Cane Sugar
Sparkling Carbonated Water
A Beverage of Exceptional Quality

Clear, light green and amber colored bottles were noted present in the dump site, as were what appears to be a tin chamber pot and cooking pots, and one aluminum cooking pot. Apart from the case bottle which likely dates to the 19th century, all other specimens are presently considered to date to the mid- 20th century.



Figure 13: Google Earth image depicting the approximate location of the dry laid, rubble wall remnants.



Figure 14: Photograph of the dry laid, rubble wall alignment, view to the southeast.



Figure 15: Photograph of the dry laid rubble wall, view to the northwest, where significant parts of the wall alignment have collapsed or been robbed.



Figure 16: Photograph of refuse dump



Figure 17: Photograph of bottles on the top of the dry laid, rubble wall



Figure 18: Photograph of case bottle



Figure 19: Photograph of carbonated soft drink bottle



Figure 20: Photograph of the back of the carbonated soft drink bottle

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our concluding remarks and recommendations are presented below.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The *Survey* resulted in the identification of a dry laid, rubble wall on Plot 4J Rem. This wall contains segments that are well preserved, as well as collapsed sections. The rock from the short section of the wall that turns to the south appears to have been robbed of significant parts of the stone. Because of the right angle turn of the wall, it appears as if this was an enclosure for cattle or perhaps an enclosure for horticultural pursuits to keep cattle out. The dry laid rubble wall is not considered to have the potential to meet criteria (Criteria C or D) of eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. The remains of the stone enclosure are however, considered to be significant to the history and archaeology of the USVI as it is a constructed feature likely associated with cattle farming and/or agricultural/horticultural pursuits during the colonial period.

The refuse dump appears to date to the mid 20th century and is considered to represent a modern site intrusion event and is not considered to have the potential to meet criteria of eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

We note that the absence of precolonial and colonial settlements, and/or homesteads on the subject property is attributable to the very steep sloping topography of the subject property.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

CocoSol recommends that the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office issue a conditioned finding of *no objection* to the proposed development of Plots 41 and 4J Rem. We recommend that the remnants of the dry laid rubble wall are documented by exposure of its horizontal extent and documentation by measured line drawings and photography of representative elevations of the wall. The wall alignment should then be followed by the survey of its alignment by a USVI licensed surveyor.

We note that plans for such additional work would need to be submitted to the VISHPO for their review and comment. The additional work should be of a scope sufficient to meet VISHPO's requirements for preservation or to mitigate adverse effects. We understand that the wall may be in the rear of the lot or lots of the future subdivision, as such and if feasible, we recommend preservation of the wall alignment.