

**Draft
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
(FONSI)**

**Demolition of Buildings 165 and 166
National Cemetery Administration
Department of Veteran Affairs
St Albans, Queens County, New York**

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Michael Roth, Director
Design and Construction Services
National Cemetery Administration

Date

SITE-SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ABSTRACT

LEAD AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

COOPERATING AGENCIES: None

TITLE OF PROPOSED ACTION: Draft Environmental Assessment for the Demolition of Buildings 165 and 166 National Cemetery Administration St Albans, Queens County, New York

AFFECTED JURISDICTION: Queens County, New York

PROPONENTS: NY

POINT OF CONTACT: Mr. Steven Davis, Department of Veterans Affairs, Design & Construction Service, 425 I Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001; Telephone: 202-632-4833; Email: Steve.Davis@va.gov

DOCUMENT DESIGNATION: Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)

ABSTRACT: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has obtained 5.25 acres of land from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) located at the VHA's St Albans Community Living Center in St Albans, Queens County, New York. The site is situated in the southeast corner of the St Albans facility and consists of two unoccupied buildings, Buildings 165 and 166, and a parking lot. This EA evaluates the demolition of the two buildings and the parking lot. The EA also analyzes the No Action Alternative in which no demolition would occur. The purpose of the Proposed Action for the EA is to continue to enable the VA to develop a Master Plan to provide eligible veterans and their families in the Queens area with a national cemetery of sufficient size and capacity to serve the projected needs in this region over the next ten years in compliance with the Service Members Civil Relief Act.

This EA identifies, analyzes, and documents the potential physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the VA's proposed action. Technical resource areas that do not require further detailed analysis in this EA, include: community services, environmental justice, floodplains, land use and zoning, recreation, utilities and vegetation. Resource areas that were evaluated in further detail in the EA include aesthetics; air quality; geology, topography, and soils; water resources; wildlife and habitat; threatened and endangered species, noise; hazardous, toxic, and radioactive waste; cultural resources; socioeconomics, transportation and parking, and cumulative impacts.

This EA concludes that no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse effects on the human environment would result from implementing the Preferred Alternative. Therefore, this EA concludes that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This EA has been prepared to analyze and evaluate the potential effects of the demolition of Buildings 165 and 166. This EA is prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 United States Code [U.S.C] 4321 et seq.), the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 - 1508), 38 CFR Part 26 (Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions), and the VA's NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects (VA 2010).

PURPOSE AND NEED

The VA is considering options to provide enhanced service to the New York metropolitan area by providing burial options, specifically cremated remains, to eligible veterans nearer to New York City and the projected needs of Veterans in Queens. The VA is exploring options to build small National Veterans Burial Grounds in certain areas underserved by other options, such as State or National Veterans Cemeteries. The VA will be developing a Master Plan for these services utilizing this property. Buildings 165 and 166, considering their size, massing and configuration on the site, would not be suitable to support this mission. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to remove unused, deteriorating buildings from the landscape to allow for the continued planning for a potential National Veterans Burial Ground.

ALTERNATIVES

Preferred Alternative - The Proposed Action would demolish Buildings 165 and 166, as well as remove paved areas, and water, utility and sanitary sewer lines that extend from the buildings to the main lines. As part of the demolition, abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint would be removed in one hazardous waste stream in accordance with the US Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and other federal and state laws and regulations. Trees and ornamental vegetation planted as part of the original construction will be removed to facilitate demolition.

Abatement and demolition is currently planned to start in spring 2017 and is estimated to require six months to complete. This work will be accomplished on lands currently owned and managed by the VA; no additional land acquisition is required.

No Action Alternative -Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented. Demolition of the buildings would not be undertaken and the buildings would remain vacant and continue to deteriorate. There is no plan for the future use of these buildings by the VA and no further planning for the site's potential use within the VA's National Cemetery program would not be undertaken, potentially leaving veterans and their families in Queens underserved.

Although the No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose of and need of the project, this alternative was retained, because it reflects the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which the effects of the Proposed Action can be evaluated, as required under the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR Part 1502.14).

Alternative 2 Reuse Buildings 165 and 166 - Under this alternative, the buildings and paved areas would be rehabilitated for use. This alternative would also include the abatement of the asbestos-containing material and lead-paint from the buildings. While this action would improve the current condition and prevent the buildings from continued deterioration, it would not meet the purpose and need of VA.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The Affected Environment of the Proposed Action or the Region of influence, is discussed in Section 3 of this EA as it pertains to respective environmental and cultural resources. The Preferred Alternative, the No Action Alternative and Alternative 2 are evaluated in this EA to determine their potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effect(s) on the physical, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic aspects of the Region of Influence.

Section 3 contains in-depth analyses of the Proposed Action's potential effects on the following resource areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Geology, Topography, and Soils
- Water Resources

- Wildlife and Habitat
- Threatened and Endangered Species and Bald Eagle Determination
- Noise
- Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste
- Cultural Resources
- Socioeconomics
- Transportation and Parking

The Preferred Alternative would result in no significant adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on these resources as identified below and detailed in Section 3 of this EA. Potential benefits would occur with the removal of unused, deteriorated buildings from the site. In addition, any potential adverse effects on the technical resource areas discussed below would be further reduced or avoided through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP) or optional management measures, as discussed in Section 3 of this EA.

- **Aesthetics** – There will be minor, short-term adverse temporary impacts to the visual quality of the sites for St. Albans Campus with its numerous medical, administrative and support buildings during demolition.
- **Air Quality** – Negligible to minor, short-term impacts are anticipated to result from the implementation of the Preferred Alternative. Demolition activities would generate fugitive dust emissions and exhaust emissions from heavy equipment.
- **Geology, Topography, and Soils** – Minor, short-term adverse erosion and sedimentation impacts is anticipated with implementation of the Preferred Alternative. Implementation of stormwater management BMPs will substantially reduce erosion and sedimentation impacts. Although soils will be temporarily impacted by implementation of the Preferred Alternative, this would not affect the subsurface geology of the site.
- **Water Resources** – Short-term adverse effects on the area's surface waters will be largely reduced through implementation of BMPs, and no long-term effects would be expected. Impacts to surface water are anticipated to be adverse, minor impacts. The Preferred Alternative would result in no impacts to groundwater.
- **Wildlife and Habitat** – Construction of the Preferred Alternative would have short-term to long-term, minor adverse impacts from the permanent and temporary loss of habitats.

- **Threatened and Endangered Species** – The US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) indicate that there are no threatened or endangered species within the St Albans campus, including in the area of Buildings 165 and 166.
- **Noise** – Short-term, minor adverse impacts from general construction noise would potentially occur due to construction vehicles’ entering and exiting the site, demolition activities and site grading.
- **Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste (HTRW)** – Short-term, minor adverse impacts from removal of asbestos containing materials (ACM) found in both buildings as well as lead based paint.
- **Cultural Resources** – Removal of these Buildings 165 and 166 and the other activities associated with the Proposed Action would not have an adverse effect on the St Albans Community Living Center historic district. In addition, the construction of these buildings, including the water, steam, and sanitary sewer connections and lines to the buildings would have disturbed any archaeological remains of either the temporary buildings that existed on this site any remains of historic and prehistoric activities in this area.
- **Socioeconomics** – This alternative may have negligible, positive effect on the socioeconomic environment with the potential availability of temporary jobs in support of demolition activities.
- **Transportation and Parking** – Short term temporary, minor effects associated with demolition activities and an increase in traffic in the vicinity of the Preferred Alternative. Travel to and from the site will be limited to daylight, work hours and utilize main truck access routes as much as possible. Construction and worker vehicles would be parked within the site boundaries.

AGENCY AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The VA, as the Federal proponent of the Proposed Action, will publish and distribute the Draft EA for a 30-day public comment period, as announced by a Notice of Availability (NOA) published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Review copies will also be made available at the Veterans Health Administration’s St Albans Community Living Center and the Queens Library at St Albans. As part of the public review process, letters will be distributed to local, state and federal agencies and Tribal entities as identified in Section 4 that describe how to locate the Draft EA and submit comments to the Draft EA. Comments received during this process will be reviewed and addressed accordingly in the Final EA. The VA will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), if appropriate.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the analysis of impacts in this EA, summarized and incorporated by reference herein, it is the conclusion of the VA that, with the implementation of appropriate BMPs and avoidance measures included in Section 3, the Proposed Action would not generate significant public controversy nor have a significant adverse impact the quality of the natural or human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2c) of the NEPA. Therefore, preparation of an EIS is not required based on the initial findings of this Draft EA and assuming no significant issues are identified during the Draft EA review process.

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1. Introduction

The US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), National Cemetery Administration, (NCA) has obtained 5.25 acres of land from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) located at the VHA's St Albans Community Living Center in St Albans, Queens County, New York. The site is situated in the southeast corner of the St Albans facility and consists of two unoccupied buildings, Buildings 165 and 166, and a parking lot. Two sides of the site are bordered by a chain link fence separating the property from the surrounding neighborhood to the east and the Roy Wilkens Park to the south. The remainder of the property is within the St Albans campus. The entire St Albans complex is located on 55 acres surrounded by a residential neighborhood, consisting of two- and three-story single and multiple family homes. Most of the buildings within the facility were built as part of the Naval Hospital after World War II, although a number of buildings, including Buildings 165 and 166, were built in the late 20th century. Originally serving as Enlisted Men and Waves Barracks, respectively, the buildings were later used as part of the New York State Drug Treatment Center and Jamaica Community Adolescent Program. The buildings have been unused since 2010.

The main facility of the St Albans Community Living Center was determined to be eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places as a historic district. The District includes the central hospital buildings, the guardhouse and entry drives, and associated landscaping. Buildings 165 and 166 were determined to not be eligible as part of the historic district.

The US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposes to remove Buildings 165 and 166, and surrounding paved areas to create an open space for the development of a Master Plan to provide eligible veterans and their families in the Queens area with a National Cemetery. The removal of the buildings would remove deteriorating structures from the landscape.

1.1 Background

The VA proposes to remove Buildings 165 and 166, and paved areas to create an open space for potential future use. The removal of the buildings would remove deteriorating structures from the landscape. The entire St Albans complex is located on 55 acres surrounded by a residential neighborhood, consisting of two- and three-story single and multiple family homes. Most of the buildings within the facility were built as part of the Naval Hospital after World War II, although a number of buildings, including Buildings 165 and 166, were built in the late 20th century. Originally serving as Enlisted Men and Waves Barracks, respectively, the buildings were later used as part of the

New York State Drug Treatment Center and Jamaica Community Adolescent Program. The buildings have been unused since 2010.

The central facility of the St Albans was determined to be eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places as a historic district. The District includes the central hospital buildings, the guardhouse and entry drives, and associated landscaping. Buildings 165 and 166 were determined to not be eligible as part of the historic district.

This EA has been prepared to analyze and evaluate the potential effects of demolition of Buildings 165 and 166 to the St. Albans property. This EA is prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 United States Code [U.S.C] 4321 et seq.), the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 - 1508), 38 CFR Part 26 (Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions), and the VA's NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects (VA 2010).

This section presents introductory and background information concerning the Proposed Action for proper analytical context; identifies the purpose of, and need for, the Proposed Action; describes the federal decision to be made concerning the Proposed Action; identifies relevant environmental documents; and identifies federal, state, and local regulations and permits that are applicable to the Proposed Action.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The VA is considering options to provide enhanced service to the New York metropolitan area by providing burial options, specifically cremated remains, to eligible veterans nearer to New York City and areas underserved by other options, such as State or National Veterans Cemeteries. The VA will be developing a Master Plan for these services utilizing this property. Buildings 165 and 166, considering their size, massing and configuration on the site, would not be suitable to support this mission. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to remove unused, deteriorating buildings from the landscape to allow for the continued planning for a National Veterans Burial Ground.

1.3 Scope of the Analysis

The CEQ regulations require NEPA documents to be "analytic rather than encyclopedic" (40 CFR Part 1502.2a). In addition, the level of analysis should be commensurate with the anticipated level of environmental impact. In consideration of these regulations and guidance, the following topics, described in Table 1-1 were dismissed from further consideration as environmental impacts were determined to be negligible or not relevant to the analysis. Resource topic areas that will be considered

in further detail in the EA include aesthetics; air quality; geology, topography, and soils; water resources; wildlife and habitat; threatened and endangered species, noise; hazardous, toxic, cultural resources, socioeconomics, and transportation and parking.

Table 1-1. Impact Topics Eliminated from Further Analysis in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Impact Topic	Reason for Dismissal from Detailed Analysis
Community Services	This topic is not relevant as there are no anticipated impacts to community services anticipated with implementation of the Preferred Alternative.
Environmental Justice	Impacts to specific concentrations minority or low-income populations are not anticipated.
Floodplains, Wetlands and Coastal Zones	This topic is not relevant as there are no anticipated impacts to floodplains.
Land Use and Zoning	Compliance with all Queens County lands use and zoning requirements will be achieved and this topic does not warrant further discussion.
Recreation	This topic is not relevant as there are no anticipated impacts to recreational activities in areas adjacent to St Albans
Utilities	Because all utility systems have adequate capacity to support current and future operations, this topic is not relevant.
Vegetation	There are no threatened and endangered plants or critical habitats within the Proposed Action. Approximately 12 trees, ornamental plantings and non-native species will be removed from the area around the buildings.

1.4 Decision Making

The VA, as a federal agency, is required to incorporate environmental considerations into its decision-making process for the actions it proposes to undertake.

The purpose of this EA is to inform federal decision makers and the public of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and its considered alternatives, prior to making a federal decision to implement the Proposed Action. In this manner, the federal decision makers can make a fully informed decision, aware of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action. Overall, the EA's purpose is to:

- inform decision-makers and the public of the anticipated environmental effects of the Proposed Action and its considered alternatives, as well as methods to reduce these effects;
- document the NEPA process;

- allow for federal, state, and local agency, tribal government, and public input to the decision-making process; and
- allow for informed decision-making by the federal government.

This federal decision making includes identifying the actions that the federal government would commit to undertake to minimize environmental effects, as required under the NEPA, CEQ regulations, and 38 CFR Part 26.

The decision to be made is whether, having taken into account potential environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects the VA should implement the Proposed Action, and as appropriate, carry out measures to reduce its effects on resources. Implementation of BMPs identified throughout the EA, as described in Section 3 and incorporated into the Proposed Action, would ensure that direct, indirect, and significant cumulative effects would not occur.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

This section provides the reader with necessary background information and a description of the Proposed Action, and alternatives considered by the VA for this EA, including the Preferred Alternative and the No Action Alternative and Alternative 2.

2.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would demolish Buildings 165 and 166 as well as remove paved areas, and water, utility and sanitary sewer lines from the buildings to the main lines (Appendix A). As part of the demolition, abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint would be one hazardous waste stream accomplished in accordance with the US Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and other federal and state laws and regulations. Trees and ornamental vegetation planted as part of the original construction will be removed to facilitate demolition.

2.1.1 Environmental Best Management Practices, Permits and Approvals

Prior to constructing any component of the Proposed Action, the VA would obtain all required federal, state, and local permits and approvals necessary to comply with applicable laws. In addition, the VA would implement the BMPs listed in Section 3 as part of the Proposed Action. These include design measures that serve to proactively minimize adverse environmental effects, as identified through the EA and NEPA process.

2.2 Alternatives Analysis

The NEPA, CEQ Regulations, and 38 CFR Part 26 require that all reasonable project alternatives be rigorously explored and objectively evaluated. Alternatives that are eliminated from detailed study must be identified along with a brief discussion of the reasons for eliminating them. For the purposes of this analysis, an alternative was considered “reasonable” only if it would enable the VA to accomplish the purpose and need enabling master plan activities; thus meeting the stated purpose and need for the Proposed Action.

“Unreasonable” alternatives would not enable the VA to meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. Further, although the No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action, this alternative was retained, because it reflects the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which the effects of the Proposed Action can be evaluated, as required under the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR Part 1502.14).

2.2.1 Evaluated Alternatives

Preferred Alternative.

The Proposed Action would demolish Buildings 165 and 166 as well as remove paved areas, and water, utility and sanitary sewer lines from the buildings to the main lines (see Appendix A). As part of the demolition, abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint would be one hazardous waste stream accomplished in accordance with the US Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and other federal and state laws and regulations. Trees and ornamental vegetation planted as part of the original construction will be removed to facilitate demolition.

No Action Alternative.

Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not be implemented and demolition of the buildings would not be undertaken. The buildings would remain vacant. There is no plan for the future use of these buildings by the VA. Under the no action alternative, the buildings would continue to deteriorate.

Although the No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose of and need of the project, this alternative was retained, because it reflects the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which the effects of the Proposed Action can be evaluated, as required under the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR Part 1502.14).

Alternative Reuse Buildings 165 and 166

Under this alternative, the buildings, and paved areas, would be renovated for use. This would also include the abatement of the asbestos-containing material and lead-paint from the buildings. While this action would improve the current condition and prevent the buildings from continued deterioration, it would not meet the purpose and need of the VA.

3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

Implementation of the Proposed Action would have no or negligible impacts on the natural and human environments such as air quality, hazardous, toxic and radioactive wastes (HTRW), cultural resources, noise, transportation and parking and wildlife with the implementation of best management practices, adherence to seasonal windows, and other controls. No impacts are anticipated to: floodplains, wetlands, and coastal zones; geology and soils; groundwater; land use and zoning; surface water and water quality; vegetation; and threatened and endangered species. Potential benefits would occur with the removal of unused, deteriorated buildings from the site.

This section describes the baseline (existing) environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions of the site of the Proposed Action and its general vicinity, with emphasis on those resources potentially affected by implementation of the Preferred Alternative. In this EA, effects are identified as either “significant” (i.e., common effects that would not be of the context or intensity to be considered significant under the NEPA or CEQ Regulations), “minor effect” (an effect that is detectable but would not significantly impact the resource), “negligible effect” (an effect that is not easily detectable and would have little effect to the resource), or “no effect.” Where appropriate and clearly discernible, each effect is identified as either adverse or beneficial. CEQ Regulations specify that in determining the significance of effects, consideration must be given to both “context” and “intensity” (40 CFR Part 1508.27). Context means the geographic, social, and environmental contexts within which the project may have effects. The regulations refer to:

- society as a whole, defined as including all human society and the society of the nation;
- the affected region;
- affected interests, such as those of a community, Indian tribe, or other group; and
- the immediate locality.

Intensity is the severity of the potential impact considered in context. The regulations direct agencies to consider:

- both beneficial and adverse impacts;
- impacts on human health and safety; and
- impacts on an area's unique characteristics, such as cultural or historic resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, and ecologically critical areas. In this EA, the significance of potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects has been determined through a systematic evaluation of each considered alternative in terms of its effects on each individual resource area.

Significance criteria for resource areas considered in depth in this EA are as follows:

- **Aesthetics** – A project could have a significant aesthetics impact if it would result in a substantial shift in the planned architectural or landscaping; or the site would not be in visual accordance with adjacent developed areas. Visitor perception would substantially shift.
- **Air quality** – A project could have a significant air quality effect if it would result in emissions that exceed applicability thresholds, be regionally significant, or contribute to a violation of any federal, state, or local air regulation.
- **Geology, Topography and Soils** – If a project would result in an increased geologic hazard or a substantial change in the availability of a geologic resource, it could have a significant effect. If a project would cause a substantial shift in the regional topography or soil type in an area it could have a significant effect.
- **Water Resources** – If a project would result in a substantial reduction in the quantity of water for existing or potential future use; if the project resulted in the violation of federal or state water quality standards or permits; if the demand exceeded the capacity of the potable water system; if it would cause substantial flooding or erosion; if it would subject people or property to flooding or erosion; if it would adversely affect a significant water body, such as a stream, lake, floodplain, or coastal zone; or if it would cause unavoidable impacts to wetlands that could not be mitigated, it could have a significant effect.
- **Wildlife and Habitat** – The loss of a substantial number of individuals of any plant or animal species (sensitive or non-sensitive species) or its habitat that could affect the abundance or diversity of a population beyond normal variability could have a significant effect.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species** - The effect of an alternative on biological resources and ecosystems could be significant if it would adversely affect any endangered or threatened species, its habitat or designated critical habitat.

- **Noise** – If a project could result in significantly adverse increases in ambient noise levels at sensitive receptors, or result in excessive ground-borne vibration to persons, property, or natural resources it could have a significant effect.
- **Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Materials** – A significant, adverse effect could occur if a project resulted in a spill or release of a hazardous, toxic, or radioactive material to the natural environment that could not be readily mitigated.
- **Cultural Resources** – An adverse effect on historic properties occurs when an undertaking alters (directly or indirectly) any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register in a manner that diminishes the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. An adverse effect is not considered significant, if the federal agency, in consultation with the SHPO, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and other consulting parties mitigates the adverse effect.
- **Socioeconomics** – An adverse, significant effect on socioeconomics could result if a project resulted in a substantial negative impact to local, regional, national, and/or economies.
- **Transportation and Parking** – An adverse, significant effect on transportation and parking could result if a project generated vehicular trips that resulted in a substantial negative impact to local traffic, changes to traffic patterns or traffic volume that could put other drivers or pedestrians at risk, required truck trips during overnight or non-working hours, or greatly increases the number of vehicles requiring access to existing or limited parking.

3.1 Aesthetics

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas visible to the public affected by the proposed action. The affected environment for aesthetic and visual resources includes all areas visible to the public that will be affected by the abatement, demolition and re-grading of the site. The area of the Proposed Action consists of both undeveloped and previously disturbed landscape surrounding two buildings. Buildings 165 and 166 are close to Baisley Boulevard and Roy Wilkens Park. The remainder of the site is open space with several trees and ornamental plantings, The St Albans Campus, with its numerous medical, administrative and support buildings, including the National Register-eligible historic district. A significant impact on aesthetic and visual resources would result if any of the following were to occur from the proposed action:

Visual changes in the landscape that can be seen from locations with special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized through legislation or some other official declaration

3.1.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

In addition to the abatement and demolition, all existing paved areas will be removed. Approximately 12 trees, ornamental plantings and vegetation along Baisley Boulevard and the New York City Department of Parks property will be removed. During construction, the site will be screened from the surrounding neighbors through the use of construction fence curtain to minimize the visual impact. The cellar hole under Building 166 will be filled in with clean fill material and re-graded to the existing ground surface. The entire site will be reseeded with grass.

3.1.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Long term, adverse impacts to the St Albans campus and the neighborhood visual character would occur with implementation of the No Action Alternative. The buildings would continue to deteriorate causing in adverse impact to the St Albans Campus and local neighborhood aesthetic.

3.1.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

Long term, positive impacts to the St Albans campus and the neighborhood visual character would with implementation of the No Action Alternative. This alternative would renovate the buildings, halting their deterioration and improving the aesthetic of the neighborhood and St Albans campus.

3.2 Air Quality

3.2.1 Affected Environment

Based on the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) established by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Queens County is located in: 1) an ozone nonattainment area; 2) a marginal nonattainment area for 2008 8-hour ozone standard; 3) a maintenance of the 2006 particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}) standard and 4) the 1971 carbon monoxide standard (40 CFR Part 81.333).

The General Conformity Rule of the Clean Air Act applies to all Federal actions in nonattainment and/or maintenance areas and requires that any Federal action meeting the requirements of a State Implementation Plan or Federal Implementation Plan. Compliance with the Clean Air Act is achieved when a Federal action will not cause a violation of the NAAQS or contribute to an increase in severity of air quality. The *de minimis* thresholds for General Conformity have been identified by regulated pollutant. The *de minimis* thresholds for O₃, CO, and PM_{2.5} are 100 tons per year each.

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are emissions that trap heat in the atmosphere. While GHGs occur naturally in the atmosphere, increases in their concentration result from human activities, including the burning of fossil fuels. Executive Order (EO) 13514, *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance*, outlines policies to evaluate climate-change risks and manage effects of climate change. In particular, the EO requires Federal agencies to measure, report and reduce GHGs from their direct and indirect activities. Current guidance includes presumptive effects threshold of 27,563 tons per year of CO₂ equivalent emissions from a Federal action (CEQ 2010).

3.2.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

Demolition, including the abatement of asbestos-containing material, will be accomplished in approximately six months. Based on project work estimates for the project, the Proposed Action will be below the *de minimis* levels (100 tons/year). In addition, no idling of equipment will be permitted. Demolition of the two buildings would result in short-term, adverse effects on air quality; however, the effects would not be significant. Emissions from the demolition would only last the duration of these activities.

3.2.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

No work would be undertaken and therefore, there would be no impact on air quality.

3.2.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings, which would require extensive renovation to include abatement of asbestos-containing material, would likely be below the *de minimis* levels (100 tons/year) for all criteria. There would be no impact to air quality.

3.2.5 Minimization and Best Management Practices

Fugitive dust associated with construction could be greatly minimized by using appropriate dust control measures such as applying water, dust palliative, soil stabilizers, enclosures, covers, and silt fences, and re-vegetating disturbed areas as soon as possible.

3.3 Geology, Topography, and Soils

3.3.1 Affected Environment

The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas where soil will be physically disturbed by construction activities or otherwise disturbed indirectly by erosional impacts and includes all areas of temporary and permanent impact including the staging area as well as the limits of construction and delivery vehicle egress/ingress to St Albans campus.

Geology and Topography

Unconsolidated strata of clay, silt, sand and gravel of Late Cretaceous and pre-Wisconsin Pleistocene ages lies between crystalline basement rocks (bedrock) of Precambrian age and unconsolidated deposits of late Pleistocene Wisconsin and Holocene ages in Queens County. Bedrock, generally absent from Long Island and only slightly evident on Staten Island, is buried under glacial deposits. Data from wells indicate that bedrock is unconsolidated sand, gravel and clay of Cretaceous age. Topography on Long Island is the result of two moraines and their associated outwash aprons. The moraines are hilly areas and the outwash areas are flat and slope south to the sea. The soils are sandy with varying amounts of gravel. In the glacial tills on the moraines, the granular soils are somewhat more compact and less stratified than on the outwash.

Queens County, situated on the western end of Long Island is within the Atlantic Coastal Plain physiographic province of the United States, which includes Pleistocene glacial and terrace deposits resulting from the advance and retreat of the glaciers as part of the Wisconsin Ice Age and Laurentide Ice Sheet, approximately 10,000 years ago. Glacial advances caused the island to be covered with glacial till, stratified drift and outwash deposits consisting of clay, silt, sand, gravel and boulders. The north shore of Long Island is comprised of stratified glacial drift and till while the south shore is covered by outwash deposits. These deposits lie atop metamorphic Paleozoic or Precambrian-age rocks. (USACE 2016; USGS 2003)

Soils within this area include Big apple sandy loam (iAn) and Urban land, Flatbush complex with low impervious surface (UFBIO; both soils fine sandy loams with in urban settings (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2016).

3.3.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

The majority of the soils have not been previously graded so there will be some new soil disturbance throughout this site. However, grading in the remaining project site areas would be minimized because construction will occur on sites that have been already been previously disturbed and graded.

Construction of the Preferred Alternative would include vegetative clearing, regrading and stabilization of exposed soil surfaces. Construction will result in the temporary disturbed of approximately five acres of soil. Construction activities would remove vegetative cover and disturb soils, increasing susceptibility to wind and surface runoff. However, implementation of stormwater management BMPs will be used to largely control potential erosion and sedimentation issues during construction and following construction. Exposed soils would be susceptible to wind erosion, temporarily increasing particulate

matter in the area, creating short-term visibility, and aesthetic impacts. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative is not anticipated to affect the subsurface geology of the site.

The use of construction BMPs described in Section 3.3.5 and adherence to the New York Stormwater Management Handbook will reduce adverse soil impacts. Soil erosion and sedimentation impacts would be a minor, adverse impact as a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and an erosion and sedimentation plan will be developed as required per the New York State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NYSDES) General Construction Permit. The use of construction BMPs will ensure compliance with state and federal water quality standards and minimize short- and long-term adverse impacts to soils and water quality.

3.3.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would result in no new impacts to geology, topography, or soils as no work would be completed.

3.3.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings, would not result in impacts to geology, topography, or soils.

3.3.5 Minimization and Best Management Practices

The use of stormwater management BMPs to reduce erosion and sedimentation impacts will help minimize short-term and long-term impacts to soils as well as water quality. Prior to construction, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention approved by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) as authorized under the New York Stormwater Management Program that includes erosion control practices, inspection procedures, and other BMPs will be required. An erosion and sediment control plan approved by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation shall be developed that minimizes soil exposure and compaction during construction and controls stormwater discharges to minimize soil erosion.

Specific measures to minimize soil exposure and compaction and reduce potential impacts to stormwater that the contractor will be required to follow during construction will consist of the following:

- Install and monitor erosion-prevention BMPs, such as silt fences, sediment berms, and/or other equivalent sediment control measures as appropriate and in accordance with the approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan;

- Apply permanent or temporary soil stabilization to denuded areas within seven days after final grade is reached on any portion of the site;
- Apply nutrients shall to landscaping areas in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations or on an approved nutrient management plan and do not apply nutrient during rainfall events;
- Inspect stormwater water BMPs and potential risks to stormwater (e.g. material stockpiles, silt fences, etc.) (i) at least once every four business days or (ii) at least once every five business days and no later than 48 hours following a measurable storm event. In the event that a measurable storm event occurs when there are more than 48 hours between business days, the inspection shall be conducted on the next business day; and
- Stabilize disturbed areas immediately whenever any clearing, grading, excavating, or other land-disturbing activities have permanently ceased on any portion of the site, or temporarily ceased on any portion of the site and will not resume for a period exceeding 14 days.

3.4 Water Resources

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Surface Waters and Wetlands. The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas physically disturbed by construction activities or otherwise disturbed indirectly by erosional impacts and includes all areas of temporary and permanent impact including the staging area as well as the limits of construction and delivery vehicle egress/ingress to St. Albans.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New York District (District), conducted a site visit to the anticipated construction limits of the Preferred Alternative. Results of this site visit indicated that no jurisdictional wetlands exist within the limits of construction within the site area. In addition, no wetlands have been identified in the National Wetlands Inventory (Appendix B).

3.4.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

Surface Waters, Wetlands, and Groundwater. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to have no adverse impacts on wetlands as no jurisdictional wetlands are located within the area of effect for the Preferred Alternative. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would have minor, short-term adverse effects to surface waters from discharge of stormwater because removal of vegetation for site preparation would increase overland flow. Adherence to the conditions of the NPDES permit, discussed in Section 3.3.2, would help reduce stormwater impacts associated with new

construction. Implementation of the stormwater management structures and other stormwater BMPs will ensure that post-development stormwater discharge would not exceed current conditions. Several relevant BMPs are discussed in Section 3.3.2.

Overall, construction of proposed expansion and improvements coupled with BMPs and adherence to local, state, and applicable federal permitting requirements precludes major disruption of the site's surface water resources. Therefore, overall impacts on water resources resulting from the Preferred Alternative would be adverse, minor, and short-term.

The District determined that the Preferred Alternative would not result in adverse impacts on jurisdictional wetlands of the United States. This conclusion was based on a determination that the Preferred Alternative would not result in the discharge of dredge or fill material into jurisdictional waters of the United States. Subsequently, the Preferred Alternative would not be subject to regulations pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, and no USACE permit would be required.

Groundwater

There are three aquifers, separated by clay layers, which run through Kings and Queens Counties eastward along the length of Long Island. Queens County is served by the New York City Water Distribution System from the Catskill/Delaware water supply. From the late 19th century to the mid 1990's, a portion of southeastern Queens and Nassau Counties was served by the Jamaica Water Supply Company using a groundwater supply system of 68 wells, 44 well stations and several water storage tanks. New York City purchased the system in 1996 and supplied drinking water to these communities. The groundwater supply system continued to provide water to a limited portion of Queens until 2007. None of the wells are currently used for drinking water.

The Preferred Alternative is anticipated to have no adverse impacts on groundwater. Appropriate groundwater engineering controls would be necessary, were excavation to occur in shallow groundwater areas.

3.4.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would result in no impact on water resources, because the buildings would not be demolished.

3.4.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings, would result in no new impacts to water resource.

3.4.5 Effects of Minimization and Best Management Practices

Please refer to Section 3.4.2 for an applicable listing of stormwater BMPs.

3.5 Wildlife and Habitat

The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas physically disturbed by construction activities or otherwise disturbed indirectly by erosional impacts and includes all areas of temporary and permanent impact including the staging area as well as the limits of construction and delivery vehicle egress/ingress to the site.

Because of the relatively undisturbed urban oasis that dominates the St Albans site a diversity of wildlife inhabits the area of effect. Birds found throughout the project area would include the rock dove.

Acorns provide a food source for a variety of wildlife including eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), and eastern chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*). A variety of mammals that would typically occur in the area include raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*). A listing of wildlife species with the potential to occur in and/or near the Study Area was compiled from the US Fish and Wildlife and is provided in Appendix B.

3.5.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

The construction will result in temporary to permanent, adverse, minor effects to wildlife and wildlife habitat in the Study Area. Most motile wildlife will be disturbed and flushed by construction noise and disturbance and will move away from the construction sites. Mobile species such as raccoons and squirrels would move away from the construction impacts and utilize other comparable habitats at the St. Albans. However, impacts to these species would be minor as ample amounts of comparable habitats are found nearby at the St. Albans. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative will permanent impact approximately five acres of wildlife habitat at St. Albans. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative will also result in the approximately five acres of temporary construction impacts. Following construction these areas will be regraded and reseeded.

3.5.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

With implementation of the No Action Alternative there would be no impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitat.

3.5.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings, would result in no new impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitat.

3.5.5 Effects of Minimization and Best Management Practices

To avoid the adverse impacts to migratory birds, removal of vegetation would be accomplished outside the migratory bird nesting season from 1 August through 1 March. If tree-cutting and other vegetation removal cannot be accomplished in this window, surveys for nesting birds' prior vegetation removal would be required. If active nests are encountered, the nests would be protected until the young have fledged.

3.6 Noise

3.6.1 Affected Environment

Sound is defined as a particular auditory effect produced by a given source, for example the sound of rain on a rooftop. Noise and sound share the same physical aspects, but noise is considered a disturbance while sound is defined as an auditory effect. Noise is defined as any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with communication, is intense enough to damage hearing, or is otherwise annoying. Noise can be intermittent or continuous, steady or impulsive, and can involve any number of sources and frequencies. It can be readily identifiable or generally nondescript. Human response to increased sound levels varies according to the source type, characteristics of the sound source, distance between source and receptor, receptor sensitivity, and time of day. How an individual responds to the sound source determines if the sound is viewed as music to one's ears or as an annoying noise. Affected receptors are specific (e.g., schools, churches, or hospitals) or broad areas (e.g., nature preserves or designated districts) in which occasional or persistent sensitivity to noise above ambient levels exists.

Noise Metrics and Regulations. Although human response to noise varies, measurements can be calculated with instruments that record instantaneous sound levels in decibels. "A-weighted" denotes the adjustment of the frequency range to what the average human ear can sense when experiencing an audible event. The threshold of audibility is generally within the range of 10 to 25 dBA for normal hearing. The threshold of pain occurs at the upper boundary of audibility, which is normally in the region of 135 dBA (USEPA 1981). A whisper is normally 30 dBA and considered to be very quiet while an air conditioning unit 20 feet away is considered an intrusive noise at 60 dBA. Noise levels can become

annoying at 90 dBA. To the human ear, a change in noise levels of 5 dBA is generally discernible while a change of 10 dBA is perceived by the human ear as either a doubling or halving of noise levels (USEPA 1981).

Federal Regulations. Sound levels, resulting from the multiple single events, are used to characterize noise effects from vehicle activity and are measured in Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). The DNL noise metric incorporates a “penalty” for nighttime noise events to account for increased annoyance. DNL is the energy-averaged sound level measured over a 24-hour period, with a 10-dBA penalty assigned to noise events occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. DNL values are obtained by averaging sound exposure levels over a given 24-hour period. DNL is the designated metric of the Federal government for measuring noise and its impacts on humans. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development criteria, residential units and other noise-sensitive land uses are “clearly unacceptable” in areas where the noise exposure exceeds 75 dBA DNL, “normally unacceptable” in regions exposed to noise between 65 and 75 dBA DNL, and “normally acceptable” in areas exposed to noise of 65 dBA DNL or less. The Federal Interagency Committee on Noise developed land use compatibility guidelines for noise in terms of DNL (FICON 1992). For outdoor activities, the USEPA recommends 55 dBA DNL as the sound level below which there is no reason to suspect that the general population would be at risk from any of the effects of noise (USEPA 1974).

State Regulations. On October 6, 2000, NYSDEC issued a program guidance document: Assessing and Mitigating Noise Impacts. The guidance document discusses noise generation and propagation, offers methodology for performing noise assessments, and suggests ways to evaluate whether increases in noise levels are environmentally significant. An increase in noise levels of 10 dBA is perceived by most individuals to be twice as loud. The guidance document recommends that for non-industrial settings, the noise level should not exceed existing ambient noise levels by more than 6 dBA at a given receptor; however, this limit should be used as a general guideline as opposed to a regulatory limit. For example, in rural settings with low existing ambient noise levels, an increase of more than 6 dBA could be deemed acceptable because the baseline ambient noise level is low. However, the addition of any new noise source in a non-industrial setting should not raise the noise level above a maximum of 65 dBA, as 65 dBA allows for undisturbed speech at a distance of approximately 3 feet (0.9 meters) and is considered the “upper end” non-industrial ambient limit. Ambient noise levels in industrial or commercial areas should not exceed 79 dBA (NYDEC 2001).

City Regulations. The New York City Noise Control Code (NYC Code 24-232), which was revised in 2005 and went into effect in July 2007, regulates noise emissions in New York City. The code limits construction activities to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The code also contains sound-level standards for various sources of ambient noise and construction noise, and prohibits unnecessary noise near hospitals, schools, and courthouses. The sound-level standards limit noise levels, as they would be measured in the interior of buildings, not outdoors.

Construction Sound Levels. Demolition and construction work can cause an increase in sound that is well above the ambient level. A variety of sounds are emitted from loaders, trucks, saws, and other work equipment. Table 3-1 below lists noise levels associated with common types of construction equipment. Construction equipment usually exceeds the ambient sound levels by 20 to 35 dBA in an urban environment and up to 30 to 35 dBA in a quiet suburban area. However, the New York City Noise Control Code also provides noise limits for specific construction equipment within the city. Guidance on quieter available construction equipment and quieter construction procedures are provided in the NYCDEP Notice of Adoption of Rules for Citywide Construction Noise Mitigation (NYCDEP 2007).

3.6.2 Environmental Impacts

Noise impact analyses typically evaluate potential changes to the existing noise environment that would result from implementation of a proposed project. Potential changes in the acoustical environment can be beneficial (i.e., if they reduce the number of sensitive receptors exposed to unacceptable noise levels or reduce the ambient sound level), negligible (i.e., if the total number of sensitive receptors to unacceptable noise levels is essentially unchanged), or adverse (i.e., if they result in increased sound exposure to unacceptable noise levels or ultimately increase the ambient sound level). Projected noise effects were evaluated qualitatively for the alternatives considered and calculated based on proposed construction equipment.

Table 3-1: Predicted Noise Levels for Constructed Equipment

Construction Category and Equipment	Predicted Noise Level at 50 Feet (dBA)	New York City Maximum noise Levels at 50 Feet (dBA)
Clearing and Grading		
Bulldozer	80	85
Grader	80-93	85
Truck	83-94	84
Roller	73-75	85
Excavation		
Backhoe	72-93	
Jackhammer	81-98	
Construction		
Concrete Mixer	74-88	85
Welding Generator	71-82	73
Crane	75-87	85
Paver	86-88	85

Sources NYCDEP 2007, USEPA 1971

Construction Equipment Noise. The proposed project would consist of demolition activities for the proposed demolition of the buildings at St. Albans. Noise from these activities would vary depending on the type of equipment being used, the area the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source. To predict how construction activities would impact adjacent populations, noise from the probable work areas was estimated. Additionally, construction usually involves several pieces of equipment in use simultaneously. The cumulative noise from the construction equipment, during the busiest day, was estimated to determine the total impact of noise from construction activities at a given distance based on typical construction equipment. Examples of expected construction noise, during daytime hours, at specified distances as shown in Table 3-2 below. These sound levels were predicted at 100, 200, 400, 800, 1000, and 1,500 feet from the source of the noise. These sound levels were estimated by calculating the noise from several pieces of equipment and then estimating the decrease in noise levels at various distances from the source of the noise. Noise is a logarithmic function and is not calculated as simply an additive function.

Short-term, minimal-to-moderate, adverse effects on the ambient noise environment would be expected during construction of the proposed project; however, the effects would not be significant. The noise from construction equipment would be localized, short-term, and intermittent during machinery operations. Heavy construction equipment would use periodically during construction; therefore, noise levels from the equipment would fluctuate throughout the day. The proposed construction would be expected to result in noise levels comparable to those indicated in Table 3-2 below.

Populations potentially affected by increased noise levels from the proposed construction activities would include St Albans patients and personnel and the general public accessing buildings and areas in the immediate vicinity of the demolition of the buildings. These individuals would be expected to experience noise levels comparable to those indicated by Table 1 below, depending on their proximity to construction activities. It is anticipated that residents outside the area of Baisley Boulevard and Roy Wilkins Park could experience noise levels of approximately 82 to 87 dBA during construction activities. Typical construction techniques used provide a minimum of approximately 20 dBA of noise reduction from outdoor to indoor areas. However, noise generation would last only for the duration of construction activities and would be isolated to normal working hours (between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 pm).

Construction noise would diminish as the distance between the receptor and the construction activities increased. Generally, noise levels decrease by approximately 6 dBA for every doubling of distance for point sources (such as a single piece of construction equipment), and approximately 3 dBA for every doubling of distance for line sources (such as a stream of motor vehicles on a busy road at a distance). In addition, construction equipment would be equipped with appropriate sound-muffling devices (i.e., from the original equipment manufacturer or better), and would be maintained in good operating condition at all times. Construction workers would be working in close proximity to construction equipment and could be exposed to noise levels above 90 dBA. This is above the permissible noise exposure level defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). These levels would be reduced to permissible levels through feasible administrative or engineering controls, or the use of BMPs such as the use of hearing protection equipment. Therefore, noise effects on construction workers would be in compliance with applicable OSHA standards.

Construction Vehicle Noise. Short-term, minimal-to-moderate, and adverse effects from construction vehicle noise would be expected from implementation of the proposed project; however, the effects

would not be significant. Increases in ambient noise levels would occur intermittently during the construction period. The additional traffic resulting from construction vehicles would likely cause minor increases in noise levels on noise-sensitive populations adjacent to the roadways; however, these effects would not be considered significant.

3.6.3 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

The ambient noise environment for the project site is mainly affected by a high population density and high traffic volumes. Natural sounds from wind, the movement of vegetation, birds, and other natural sources of sound are present but do not have substantial effect on existing noise environment; transportation noise sources and fixed-equipment noise sources are the dominant noise sources. Existing noise sources in this area include noise originating from traffic using Baisley Boulevard, and Linden Boulevard. In an urban environment, noise levels change from moment to moment. Transportation sources, such as automobiles, trucks, trains, and aircraft, are the principal sources of noise in the urban environment. Along major transportation corridors, noise levels can reach 80 dBA DNL, while along arterial streets, noise levels typically range from 65 to 70 dBA DNL (USEPA 1974). Construction of Preferred Alternative would result in minor, short-term adverse noise impacts. Table 3-2 provides the estimated distance the construction noise will reach during the construction phase. During construction, noise from construction vehicles' entering and exiting the site is likely to temporarily increase noise levels. Land preparation, grading, and other construction activities will further contribute to temporary noise impacts above existing ambient noise levels. Construction activities are anticipated to have an average approximate noise level of 86 dBA. Based on a sound dissipation rate of five dBA per doubling of distance, construction noise impacts were estimated to extend to an estimated distance of 0.1 – 0.2 mile from the construction sites (Table 3-2).

3.6.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

With implementation of the No Action Alternative there would be no impact on noise relative to current St Albans operational conditions because no work on the site would be undertaken.

Table 3-2. Estimated distance of construction noise resulting from implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

Distance from noise (ft)	dBA ¹	Distance from noise (mile)
50	86	0.009
100	81	0.019
200	76	0.038
400	71	0.1
800	66	0.2
1,600	61	0.3
3,200	56	0.6
6,400	51	1.2
12,800	46	2.4
25,600	41	4.8
51,200	36	9.7
102,400	31	19.4
204,800	26	38.8
409,600	21	77.6
819,200	16	155.2
1,638,400	11	310.3
3,276,800	6	620.6
6,553,600	1	1,241.2
13,107,200	-4	2,482.4

3.6.4 Effects of Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings, would result in minor impacts as remodeling occurred in the buildings.

3.6.5 Minimization and Best Management Practices

The following minimization measures will be used to reduce the impacts associated with the implementation of the Preferred Alternative:

- Using properly maintained and muffled vehicles and equipment;
- Complying with the Queens County Noise Control Ordinance at all times; and
- Shutting down heavy equipment and other noise emitters when they are not in use.
- Parking equipment and vehicles within the area of the Preferred Alternative

3.7 Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste

3.7.1 Affected Environment

The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas physically disturbed by construction activities including all areas of temporary and permanent impact including the staging area.

According to a 2010 survey, Buildings 165 and 166 have asbestos containing material (ACM). In both buildings, ACM is found in floor tile and mastic, insulation, and roofing and flashing. In addition, both buildings also contain lead-based paint. No other known contaminants have been identified for this part of the campus.

3.7.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

The abatement of asbestos-containing material and lead-based paint will be accomplished in accordance with all US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and other relevant federal regulations. The material generated will be disposed at a facility able to handle this material. There will be no impact from HTRW. Hazardous, radioactive, and/or toxic waste is not anticipated to be generated nor stored onsite with implementation of the Preferred Alternative. Should a spill of gasoline occur from a fuel tank in construction equipment, the spill will be contained and any gasoline and contaminated soil will be placed into a labeled, approved container and be transported to an approved disposal facility. While a gasoline spill could result in minor, temporary, adverse impacts, there is not anticipated to be any long-term adverse impacts resulting from HTRW within the Study Area with implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

3.7.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there is the potential for long-term adverse impacts from HTRW. With no action, no abatement of asbestos and/or lead paint would occur. The buildings would continue to deteriorate, with the potential to release friable asbestos and lead-based paint containing materials into the environment.

3.7.4 Alternative 2

Reuse of the buildings would require undertaking abatement as part of the renovation, in accordance with the EPA, OSHA and other relevant federal regulations. There would be no impact from HTRW.

3.7.5 Minimization and Best Management Practices

If a spill of gasoline occurs from a fuel tank in construction equipment, the spill will be contained and any gasoline and contaminated soil will be placed into a labeled, approved container and be transported to an approved disposal facility.

3.8 Cultural Resources

3.8.1 Affected Environment

The Region of Influence for the Affected Environment consists of all areas disturbed by construction activities including all areas of temporary and permanent impact including the staging area.

Cultural resources are defined by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as historic properties including prehistoric and historic sites, structures, buildings, objects, districts, or any other physical evidence of human activity associated with important historic events, with persons important in history, representing the work of a master or exemplary as a type, or have or may yield information important to history or prehistory. Several federal laws and regulations protect these resources, including the NHPA of 1966, the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.

Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800, requires an assessment of the potential impact of an undertaking on historic properties that are within the proposed project's Area of Potential Effect (APE), which is defined as the geographic area(s) "within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist." The areas of direct and indirect potential effects of the proposed project are the grounds of St Albans.

St Albans was originally part of Jamaica, Queens, and consisted primarily of farmland throughout the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries. With the construction of the Long Island Railroad in the 1870s, roads, such as Linden Boulevard, were built and by the First World War, St Albans was developed beginning with the St Albans Golf Course, and the subsequent residential neighborhoods, consisting of English-style Tudors, Colonial Revivals and others in brick, stucco and stone.

During World War II, the St Albans campus was occupied by a temporary Naval Hospital built to house the wounded naval personnel returning from the War. One of nine throughout the country, it carried the largest patient load by the end of the War. When originally constructed, the hospital was built to accommodate 1,500 patients, 235 civilian employees, 73 officers, 71 nurses and 317 members of the Naval Hospital Corps in 1,000 wooden buildings (Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation 2008).

After the War, the Veterans Administration made the decision to build a 1,000 bed hospital at St Albans to replace the Brooklyn Naval Hospital located at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The Navy determined a portion of the new hospital would be dedicated to the treatment of cancer. Other elements of the hospital included wards, treatment and clinic buildings, an administration building, kitchen, mess hall and patient recreational facilities. The general hospital was designed to handle special treatment in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, neurosurgery, tuberculosis, and tumors. Construction of the new hospital involved the demolition and removal of a number of the World War II-era structures. With the closure of the Brooklyn Naval Hospital, St Albans became the only naval hospital in the New York City area available to all service branches (Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation 2008).

By 1972, a portion of the hospital was given to the Veterans Administration for use as a Veterans Administration Hospital. In 1973, the Government was proposing to close the military hospital, which still included a number of wooden, barrack-like buildings that were being used for storage. The Veterans Administration transitioned the hospital to a nursing home facility in 1974 and upgraded and modernized the facility in 1977. In the same year, the Veterans Administration transferred 53 acres, with several buildings and a swimming pool, to the City of New York for use as a park (Roy Wilkens Park) (Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation 2008).

The Proposed Action would not result in a significant adverse impact on cultural resources.

3.8.2 Architectural Resources

The main facility of the St Albans was determined to be eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places as a historic district. The District includes the central hospital buildings, the guardhouse and entry drives, and associated landscaping and connecting corridors. (Buildings 85, 86, 87,

88, 89, 90, 91, 92, and 93), Buildings 165 and 166, along with Buildings 60, 64, 65, 173, 176 and Structures 95, 154, and 175 are all non-contributing buildings to the historic district.

The New York City Landmarks Commission Addisleigh Park Historic District is adjacent to the St Albans campus on its north and west sides, directly opposite of the project area. This historic district consists of 422 buildings that were built between the 1910s and 1930s, as a planned residential neighborhood with St Albans Park as its anchor. Most of the homes were built in the English Tudor Revival style, with others built in either Colonial Revival or Arts and Crafts styles (New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission 2011).

3.8.3 Archaeological Resources

Native American occupation of Queens County, in general and the Jamaica area, to the west of the area of the Proposed Action, is well documented. In the early 20th century, a village site (New York State Museum #4531) was documented south of the “Village of Jamaica”, adjacent to Baisley Pond Park, just southwest of the Proposed Action. A second site (New York State Museum #4546) exhibited “traces of occupation”, would have been located to the north west of the Proposed Action (Historical Perspectives 1998).

Much of the historic development in occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the construction of the St Albans Golf Club and the surrounding neighborhood, followed by the Naval Hospital. The construction of the temporary buildings followed by Buildings 165 and 166, with their associated water and sanitary lines, likely destroyed any archaeological remains within the area of the proposed action.

3.8.4 Native American Consultation / Coordination

The VA maintains a VA Cultural Resource management Checklist, dated December 2009. The checklist was developed by the VA to determine the likelihood that a given cultural resource legal requirement applies to a proposed project or other activity. Based on judicial interpretation, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) requires the federal agency to consult with Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian about agency actions that might interfere with religious practices and to make efforts to avoid or minimize such interference (Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Executive Order 13007). According to the VA Cultural Resource Management Checklist, if the ground surface will not be disturbed as part of

the Proposed Action, consultation under NAGPRA and Section 106 of NHPA with tribes is not necessary as long as the project does not interfere with tribal practices.

3.8.5 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

Buildings 165 and 166 are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places either individually or as part of the St Albans Community Living Center historic district. Removal of these buildings and the other activities associated with the Proposed Action would not have an adverse effect on the historic district. In addition, the construction of these buildings, including the water, steam, and sanitary sewer connections and lines to the buildings would have disturbed any archaeological remains of either the temporary buildings that existed on this site and any remains of historic and prehistoric activities in this area. The Proposed Action would not have an adverse effect on historic properties.

If archaeological features or human remains are inadvertently discovered during construction activities, all work would be halted in that area and the New York State Historic Preservation Office would be contacted. Work would be stopped in the vicinity of the find until appropriate measures would be coordinated and implemented to mitigate any adverse effect.

3.8.6 No Action Alternative

There would be no impact to cultural resources.

3.8.7 Alternative 2

Buildings 165 and 166 are not contributing elements to the historic district and are not individually eligible to the National Register. Any renovation would have to take into account the effect of the renovated buildings' exteriors on the adjacent historic district and avoid adverse effects to the historic district. There would be no impact to historic properties with considered design.

3.8.8 Minimization and Best Management Practices

If archaeological features or human remains are inadvertently discovered during construction activities, all work would be halted in that area and the New York State Historic Preservation Office would be contacted. Work would be stopped in the vicinity of the find until appropriate measures would be coordinated and implemented to mitigate any adverse effect.

3.9 Socioeconomics

3.9.1 Affected Environment

The neighborhood of St. Albans surrounds the portion of the Farmers Boulevard corridor included in this environmental assessment. The neighborhood at the 2010 Census had a population of 48,593, down 2.9 percent from the 2000 census population count of 50,046 (Table 3-3). Losses were counted among the White non-Hispanic and Black/African American non-Hispanic population, while population gains were made most significantly among the Asian and Hispanic populations.

Table 3-3: 2010 Census population for St Albans and New York City

Race/Hispanic Origin among residents in St Albans and NYC	Number	Percent	NYC Number	Percent
Total Population	48,593	100.0%	8,175,133	100.0%
White non-Hispanic	469	1.0%	2,722,904	33.3%
Black/African American Non-Hispanic	43,073	88.6%	1,861,295	22.8%
Asian Non-Hispanic	417	0.9%	1,028,119	12.6%
Some other race Non-Hispanic	403	0.8%	78,063	1.0%
Non-Hispanic of two or more races	1,085	2.2%	148,676	1.8%
Hispanic origin	3,146	6.5%	2,336,076	28.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census, SF1
Population Division- New York City Department of City Planning

3.9.2 Employment

At 10.2 percent in 2008, the unemployment rate in St Albans is higher than the rate for Queens (8.5 percent) and the city as a whole (8.8 percent) according to the 2006-2010 ACS for St Albans and the 2008-2010 ACS for Queens and NYC. The unemployment rate is defined by the Census as “All civilian 16 years old who” were neither ‘at work’ nor ‘with job but not at work’ during the reference week, were looking for work during the last 4 weeks, and were available to start a job.”

Among those employed a greater share of workers living in St. Albans work in Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities and in Social Services than workers living in Queens and New York City as a whole. This is likely due to the presence of two major employment generators in these sectors located in close proximity to the neighborhood: JFK Airport and the St. Albans Community Living Center (St. Albans Veterans Administration Hospital.) Correspondingly, a higher percentage of St Albans residents are government workers than in the borough and the city.

3.9.3 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

This alternative will have a negligible, somewhat positive effect on the socioeconomic environment. Demolitions of the buildings may support temporary jobs or bring workers into Queens County resulting in a minor economic benefit.

3.9.4 Effects of the No Action Alternative

There will be no impacts because no work will be undertaken at the site.

3.9.5 Effects of the Alternative 2

There may be a slight negligible, positive effect on the socioeconomic environment. Remodeling the buildings may support temporary jobs or bring workers into Queens County resulting in a minor economic benefit.

3.9.6 Minimization and Best Management Practices

As the potential effects of the Preferred Alternative to the socioeconomic environment would be negligible, no minimization, mitigation, or BMPs are recommended.

3.10 Transportation and Parking

3.10.1 Affected Environment

Queens is the largest and second most populous borough of New York City with over 2.2 million people, about 27 percent of all New York City residents at the 2010 Census. The borough is bounded to the east by Nassau County on Long Island, and by Kings County, or the borough of Brooklyn, NYC to the southwest. The East River and the Atlantic Ocean form the borough's north and south boundaries.

Queens is home to both of New York City's major airports, John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia.

The neighborhood of St Albans encompasses approximately three square miles in south eastern Queens, between Downtown Jamaica and Cambria Heights, and is in Queens Community District 132.

Residential development began in this area near the turn of the 20th century, and a post- World War I housing boom consequently established this area as a low density middle-income area. Through the 1940's, the neighborhood was home to several Jazz greats, including John Coltrane, Count Basie, and Ella Fitzgerald, and later evolved into a birthplace of hip hop and rap music. The neighborhood remains largely residential and low-scale, with detached single and two-family homes lining most streets. The St Albans facility is bounded by Linden Boulevard to the north, Baisley Boulevard and Roy Wilkens Park to the south, 115th and 116th Avenues along its east side, and the Long Island Railroad on its west. Linden Boulevard, a two-lane street with east- and westbound lanes with on-street parking, provides access to the Van Wyck Expressway to the west and the Cross Island Parkway to the east. Both provide access to the Belt Parkway to the south and the Grand Central and Long Island Expressways to the north.

While there is an extensive subway access in Jamaica, Queens just north of the project area, there is no direct subway service within the proposed project. The Long Island Railroad's West Hempstead Branch, St Alban stop, is located within walking distance of the Proposed Action. There is no direct air or water access within the project area; however, JFK airport is only a few miles to the south. This proposed cemetery is in close proximity to both JFK and the subway and rail network in Downtown Jamaica. Downtown Jamaica, just west of St. Albans, serves as a local transportation hub. The Jamaica Long Island Railroad station serves as a significant transfer point for trains between Long Island, Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn, and Penn Station in Manhattan; ten of the LIRR's eleven commuter trains pass through the Jamaica station. The E, F, J and Z MTA subway lines terminate in or near downtown Jamaica and are used by over 50,000 passengers daily. Over a dozen local and express busses connect Jamaica to St. Albans and the rest of the city. One spur of the JFK Air Train connects Jamaica to JFK airport. Close by the proposed site, the Q3 and Q83 local buses and the X64 express bus run down the Boulevard. The Q83 travels from Jamaica to Cambria Heights, Queens, the X64, running on weekdays only, travels between Cambria Heights to Midtown Manhattan. It takes about 40 minutes from Baisley Boulevard to Midtown on the express bus.

Farmers Boulevard is designated a Queen Local Truck Route Network with no restrictions and is subject to NYC DOT traffic rules outlined in Section 4-13-(b)(2). The NYC DOT defines a local truck route network as "designated for trucks with an origin and destination within a borough. This includes trucks that are traveling to make a delivery or for loading or servicing. Trucks should only use non-designated

routes for the purposes at the beginning or end of a trip when traveling between their origin/destination and a truck route.

Parking and equipment staging is available within the bounds of the current project area, which includes existing paved areas for both employee and equipment parking.

3.10.2 Effects of the Preferred Alternative

There would be temporary adverse effects to transportation and parking. All vehicles will be required to park within the property. Truck traffic will be limited to work hours, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

3.10.3 Effects of the No Action Alternative

No adverse effects on transportation and parking would occur.

3.10.4 Effects of the Alternative 2

There could be temporary moderate adverse effects to transportation and parking. All vehicles will be required to park within the property. Truck traffic will be limited to work hours, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

3.10.5 Minimization and Best Management Practices

As the potential effects of the Preferred Alternative to the transportation and parking would be temporarily adverse. Parking would be within the site boundaries. Traffic would be limited to hours during the work day.

3.11 Cumulative Impacts

As defined by CEQ Regulations in 40 CFR Part 1508.7 cumulative impacts are those which result from the incremental impact of the Proposed Action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, without regard to the agency (Federal or non-Federal) or individual who undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impact analysis captures the effects that result from the Proposed Action in combination with the effects of other actions taken during the duration of the Proposed Action in the same geographic area. Because of extensive influences of multiple forces cumulative effects are the most difficult to analyze.

NEPA and CEQ Regulations require the analysis of cumulative environmental effects of a Proposed Action, or set of actions, on resources that may often be manifested only at the cumulative level, such as traffic congestion, air quality, noise, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic conditions, and others.

3.11.1 Considered Cumulative Actions

Beyond the Proposed Action, some other actions within the region could result in cumulative impacts. Within the same timeframe as the next phase of construction and operation of the cemetery, other actions that may have cumulative impacts on the environment include:

- past, present, and potential future expansions and operations within St Albans
- general construction and development within Queens County due to the high level of growth and development characteristic of Queens County.

3.11.2 Effects of Cumulative Actions on Preferred Alternative

The VA is considering options to provide enhance service to veterans in New York City. Specifically, the VA is exploring ways to expand and accommodate cremated remains in columbaria. In 2017, the VA will be developing a Master Plan to utilize areas within the St Albans campus as a columbarium, which would support appropriate memorials, utilities, walkways and support structures. Potential environmental resources affected by this action would involve aesthetics/visual resources, air quality, noise, transportation and parking, and cultural resources.

Environmental resources affected by the Preferred Alternative that may contribute to potential cumulative impacts with the VA's planning for a proposed columbarium include temporary and long-term to impacts aesthetics/visual resources, and cultural resources, as well as temporary- and long-term impacts to noise and transportation and parking. Any potential alternative would have to take into account the views from the residential neighborhood and Roy Wilkens Park and use vegetation to provide buffers to create privacy for the columbarium. Any proposed design would have to take into account effects to the St Albans historic district to avoid causing an adverse effect. Noise impacts would persist after the completion of the Proposed Action with the construction activities should a project be proposed. The operation of a columbarium would change the type of noise and periodic noise level during its operation and with the conduct of ceremonies. Any proposed columbarium would continue to utilize the Baisley Boulevard gate, bringing additional construction traffic to the site as well as traffic

associated with the operation of the facility. Additional investigations regarding traffic impacts during the operation of the facility would be required. Cumulative impacts resulting from the Proposed Action and the reasonably foreseeable future action could be reduced with the implementation of controls and efforts to provide visual and sound buffers to the neighborhood.

The area surrounding the St Albans Community Living Center, St Albans, Queens, New York is highly developed. In the vicinity of the VA property are occupied by medical facilities and clinics and outside the campus is neighborhoods with residential housing. The environment in which the VA proposed project columbarium is located is best characterized as urban in nature; any additional future development should be consistent with this character.

Any future development within the boundaries of the VA land would conform to local building codes, and would be consistent with existing uses within the VA property. Proposed future Federal actions at the VA also would undergo future, appropriate NEPA analysis to ensure potential environmental effects are proactively identified and minimized to the extent possible.

3.11.3 Effects of Cumulative Actions on the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no cumulative impacts to the area as no work would be conducted.

3.11.4 Effects of Alternative 2

Under the Alternative 2, cumulative effects would be similar to those of the Proposed Action.

3.11.5 Potential for Generating Substantial Public Controversy

No aspect of this Proposed Action, the demolition of Buildings 165 and 166 is anticipated to generate any public controversy. The demolition of the buildings and restoration of the site would remove unused, deteriorating buildings from the landscape and restore the site to open space. There might be controversy if the Proposed Action is not undertaken. The buildings, for which there are no plans for re-use, would continue to deteriorate, creating a neighborhood eyesore.

4.0 Public Involvement

This section describes the public, agency and Native American consultation process associated with development of this Draft EA.

4.1 Public and Agency Involvement

The VA invites public participation in decision-making on new proposals through the NEPA process. Public participation with respect to decision-making on the Proposed Action is guided by 38 CFR Part 26, the VA's policy for implementing the NEPA. Additional guidance is provided in the VA's Environmental Compliance Manual (VA 1998). Consideration of the views and information of all interested persons promotes open communication and enables better Federal decision-making. Agencies, organizations, and members of the public with a potential interest in the proposed Action, including federally recognized Native American tribes and minority, low-income, and disadvantaged persons, are urged to participate. A record of public involvement and agency coordination associated with this EA is provided in Appendix A.

Public participation is important in the NEPA process. Consideration of the views and information of all interested parties promotes open communication and enables better decision-making. All agencies, organizations, and members of the public having a potential interest in the Proposed Action, including minority, low-income, disadvantaged, and Native American groups, are encouraged to participate in the decision-making process.

4.1.1 Agency Coordination

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning (IICEP) is a federally mandated process for informing and coordinating with other governmental agencies regarding Federal Proposed Actions. CEQ Regulations require intergovernmental notifications prior to making any detailed statements of environmental impacts.

Through the IICEP process, the VA modifies relevant Federal, State and local agencies and allows them sufficient time to make known their environmental concerns specific to a proposed Action. Comments and concerns submitted by these agencies during the IICEP process are subsequently incorporated into the analysis of potential environmental impacts conducted as part of the EA. This coordination fulfills requirements under EO 12372 which requires Federal agencies to cooperate with and consider State and local view in implementing a Federal proposal. It also constitutes the IICEP process for this EA. A full listing of agencies consulted during the preparation of this EA can be found in Section 4.1.3.

4.1.2 Public Review

The VA, as the Federal proponent of the Proposed Action, will publish and distribute the Draft EA for a 30-day public comment period, as announced by a Notice of Availability (NOA) published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Review copies will also be made available at the Veterans Affairs St Albans Living Community Center and the Queens Library at St Albans. Based on comments received from the public review of the Draft EA, the VA will respond to provided substantive comments within the Final EA and will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), if appropriate.

Should substantive public comments be provided, the VA will consider these comments carefully, address these comments, and determine whether or not a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is the appropriate NEPA decision document, per the specified regulation.

Appendix B contains the distribution list, copies of coordination letters and agency correspondence.

4.1.3 Native American Consultation

For federal proposed actions, federal agencies are required to consult with federally recognized Native American tribes in accordance with the NEPA, the NHPA, the NAGPRA, and EO 13175. The VA has identified Native American tribes as having possible ancestral ties to the Proposed Action's ROI (i.e., Queens County, New York), and will invite each tribe to consult on this Proposed Action. Tribal correspondence will be provided in Appendix B.

Public participation opportunities with respect to this EA, as well as decision-making on the Proposed Action, are guided by 38 CFR Part 26. Coordination letters will be sent to various stakeholders including, but not limited to, the following:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- New York State Department of State, Coastal Zone Management
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, State Historic Preservation Office
- Shinnecock Indian Nation
- Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican Indians

Appendix B contains the distribution list, copies of coordination letters and agency correspondence.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

This EA analyzed the potential environmental effects of the VA's Proposed Action to demolish two buildings in St Albans, NY for preparation of a new rural initiative to create a National Cemetery. .

This EA evaluated three alternatives: (1) the Preferred Alternative, to perform the demolition of two buildings at St Albans; and (2) the No Action Alternative, to not demo the two buildings; and (3) Alternative 2, to reuse the buildings.

This EA evaluated possible effects on aesthetics; air quality; geology, topography and soils; water resources; wildlife and habitat; threatened and endangered species; noise; hazardous, toxic, and radioactive materials; cultural resources; and socioeconomics. Implementation of the BMPs/environmental protection measures discussed in Section 3 can further reduce the minor adverse effects identified in the EA. Table 5-1 presents a summary of impacts expected to occur under each alternative.

As a result of the analysis of impacts in the EA summarized and incorporated by reference herein, it is the conclusion of the VA that, with the implementation of appropriate management and avoidance measures described in Section 3, the Proposed Action would not generate significant public controversy nor have a significant adverse impact on the quality of the natural or human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the NEPA of 1969. The Proposed Action would result in beneficial impacts on the human environment with the removal of unused buildings that have been steadily deteriorating. Therefore, preparation of an EIS is not required.

Table 5-1: Summary of Impacts

Resource	No Action Alternative	Alternative 1: Preferred Alternative	Alternative 2: Reuse of Buildings
Aesthetics	Long-term, adverse effects of deteriorating structures on the landscape	Minor, temporary impacts resulting from the demolition activities	Minor, temporary impacts resulting from the demolition activities
Air Quality	No adverse effects on air quality would occur.	No adverse effects on air quality would occur.	No adverse effects on air quality are anticipated.
Geology, Topography, and Soils	No adverse effects would occur.	Negligible, temporary effects resulting from demolition activities minimized with the implementation of BMPs.	No adverse effects are anticipated.
Water Resources	No adverse effects would occur.	Temporary, negligible or minor with the implementation of BMPs.	No adverse effects would occur.
Wildlife and habitat	No adverse effects on wildlife would occur.	Tree and vegetation clearing will be accomplished outside the nesting season (1 August – 1 March) to avoid adverse effects to migratory birds.	No adverse effects to wildlife are anticipated.
Threatened and Endangered Species	No adverse effects on threatened and endangered species.	Tree and vegetation clearing will be accomplished outside the nesting season (1 August – 1 March) to avoid adverse effects to migratory birds.	No adverse effects are anticipated.
Noise	No adverse effect on noise would occur.	There would be temporary adverse effects, particularly during the completion of demolition activities. No equipment idling, retention of vegetation along the site boundaries, BMPs and other controls would minimize these effects.	There would be negligible, temporary adverse effects from renovation activities that could be minimized with BMPs and other controls.

Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Wastes	There may be permanent adverse effects. As the buildings deteriorate, asbestos- and lead-based paint could be released into the air and soil surrounding the area.	Abatement of asbestos- and lead-based paint material would remove potentially harmful contaminants from the environment. All work will be completed in accordance with the appropriate laws, BMPs, etc.	Abatement of asbestos- and lead-based paint material would remove potentially harmful contaminants from the environment. All work will be completed in accordance with the appropriate laws, BMPs, etc.
Cultural Resources	No adverse effects on cultural resources would occur.	No adverse effects on cultural resources would occur.	No adverse effects on cultural resources would occur.
Socioeconomics	No adverse effect would occur.	Temporary, minor positive effect with the potential to support temporary jobs.	No adverse effects would occur.
Transportation and Parking	No adverse effects on transportation and parking would occur.	There would be temporary adverse effects to transportation and parking. All vehicles will be required to park within the property. Truck traffic will be limited to work hours, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.	There could be temporary moderate adverse effects to transportation and parking. All vehicles will be required to park within the property. Truck traffic will be limited to work hours, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Department of Veterans Affairs
Design and Construction Service

Steven Davis
Landscape Architect

Jill Schattel
Environmental Engineer

US Army Corps of Engineers, New York District
Environmental Analysis Branch, Planning Division

Nancy J. Brighton
Archaeologist

7.0 References Cited

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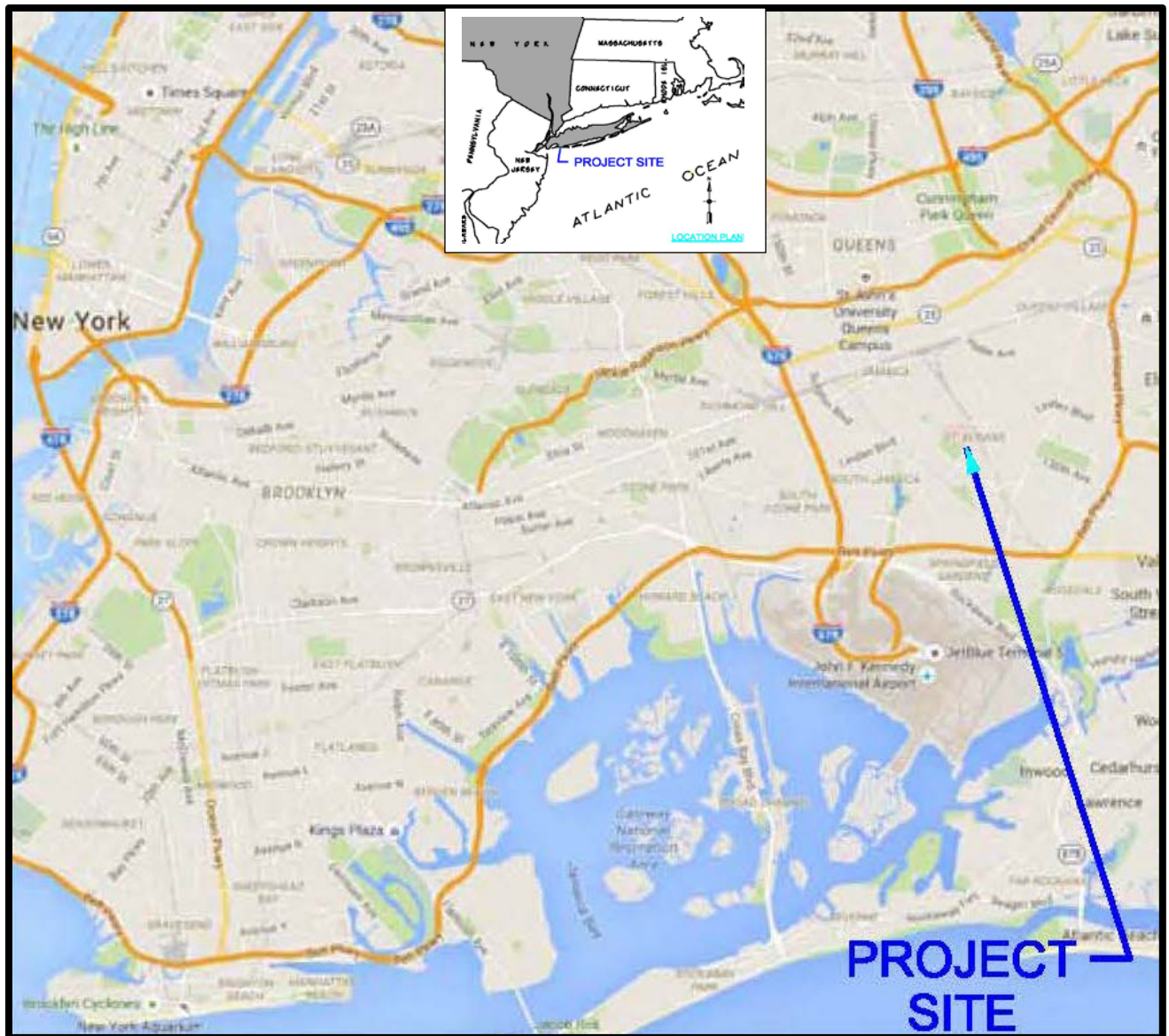
US Fish and Wildlife Service. 2016. St Albans Demolition Buildings 165 and 166, IPaC Trust Resources Report.

8.0 List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

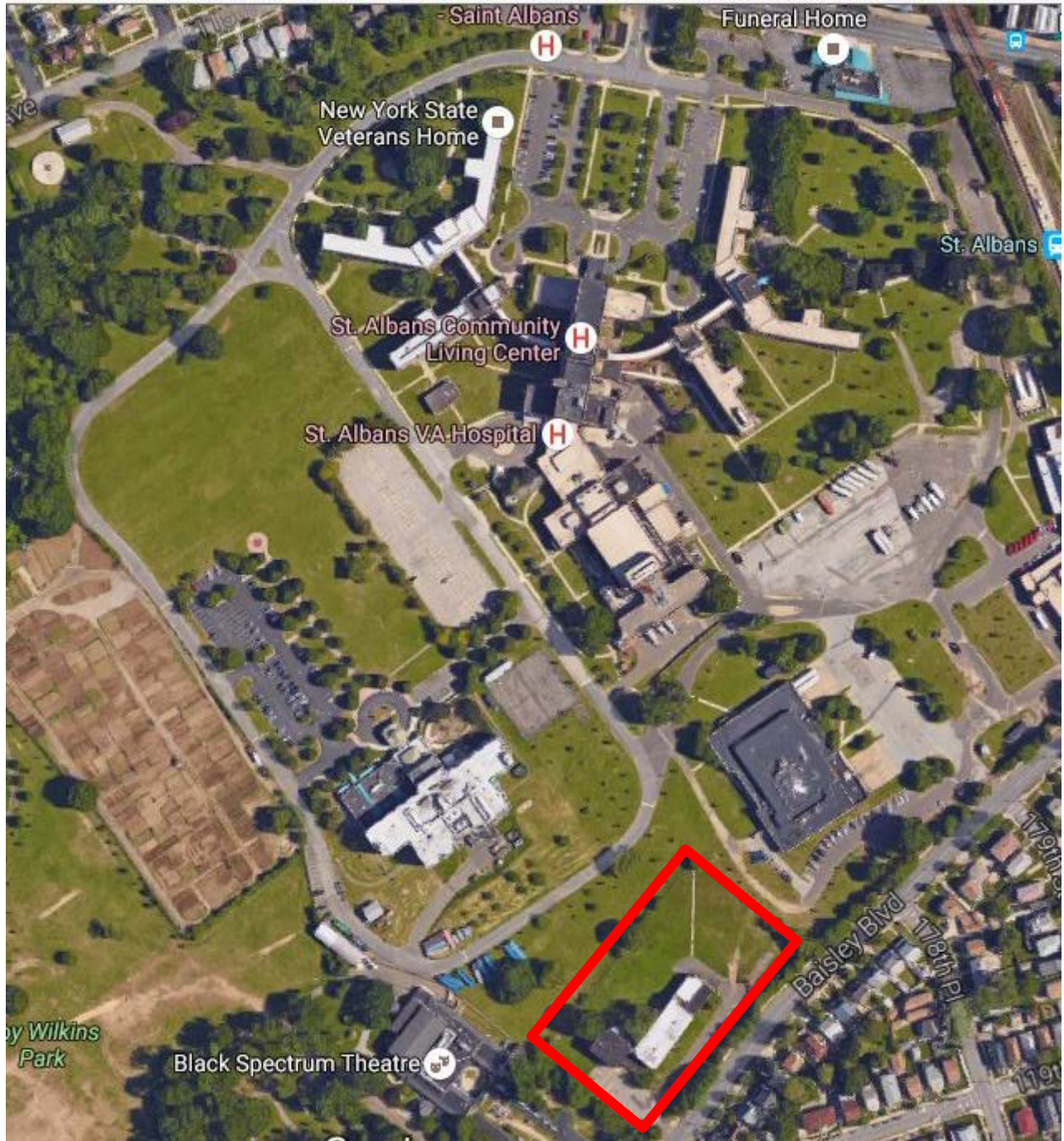
ACM	Asbestos Containing Material
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
NCA	National Cemetery Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historical Preservation Act
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
VA	US Department of Veterans Affairs

APPENDIX A

PROJECT MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND PLAN SHEETS



Vicinity Map, Buildings 165 and 166, St Albans, Queens, New York.



Aerial view of the St Albans Community Living Facility with Buildings 165 and 166 in the lower center of the figure.



Building 165 (on left) and 166 (on right) north facade (facing south; April 2016).



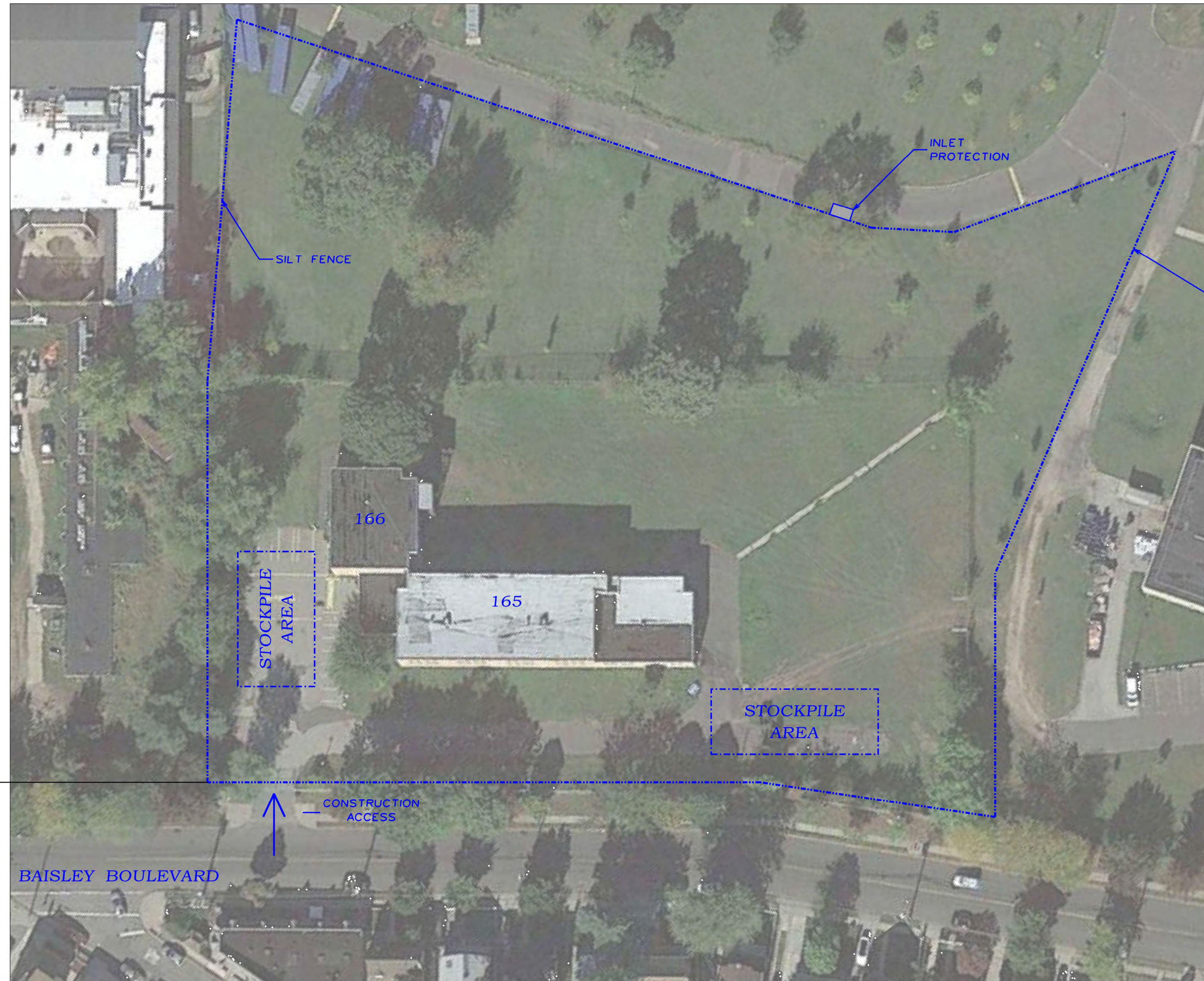
Building 165 (on left) and 166 (on right), west facade (facing east April 2016).



Buildings 165 (right) and 166 (left), south facade (facing north; April 2016).



Utility Building on the northeast portion of the property (facing northeast, April 2016).



MERRICK BLVD.

BAISLEY BOULEVARD

STOCKPILE
AREA

CONSTRUCTION
ACCESS

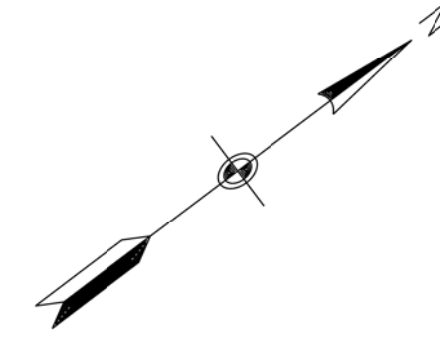
166

165

STOCKPILE
AREA

INLET
PROTECTION

— SILT FENCE



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New York District

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	U. S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT NEW YORK http://www.nan.usace.army.mil		DESIGNED BY: ksaw DWN BY: ksaw SUBMITTED BY:	DATE: SOLICITATION NO.: CONTRACT NO.:
			FILE NAME:	
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				PLOT DATE:

DEMOLITION #165 + #166
NY URBAN INITIATIVE - PHASE 1
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMIN.
QUEENS, NY

EROSION + SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN

Sheet
Reference
Number
C-102

SEE NOTE 21

BAISLEY BOULEVARD

166

165

A

B

C

D

E

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BAISLEY BOULEVARD

SEE NOTE 21

165

166

A

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- BAISLEY BOULEVARD
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- 166
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BAISLEY BOULEVARD

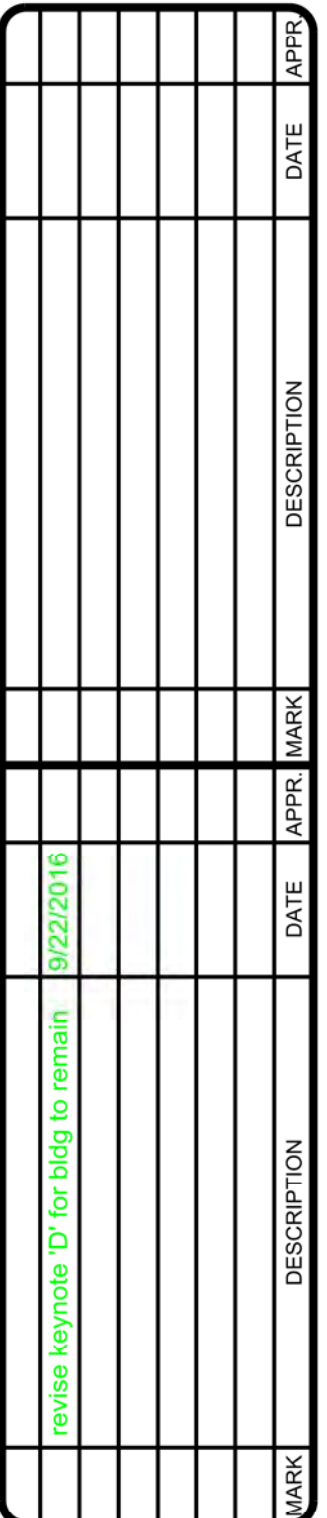
SEE NOTE 21

165

166

A, B, C, D, E, F

2. CHAIN-LINK FENCE ALONG BAISLEY BOULEVARD AND ALONG THE NYC PARKS DEPARTMENT PROPERTY IS ASSUMED TO BE THE PROPERTY LINES AND THE EXTENT OF THE CONTRACTORS WORKING LIMITS.



S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT NEW YORK http://www.nan.usace.army.mil	DESIGNED BY: kaw	DATE: July 2016
	DWN BY: kaw	SOLICITATION NO.:
	SUBMITTED BY:	CONTRACT NO.:

DEMOLITION #165 + #166
NY URBAN INITIATIVE - PHASE 1
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMIN.
QUEENS, NY

DEMOLITION #165 + #166
NY URBAN INITIATIVE - PHASE 1
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMIN.
QUEENS, NY

Sheet
Reference
Number
C-103

APPENDIX B
AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE

Public Venue Availability of the Draft EA / FNSI

Queens Library at St Albans 191-05 Linden Blvd St Albans, New York 11412	
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Mailing List for Agency and Stakeholder Review of Draft EA / FNSI

Congressman Gregory W. Meeks 153-01 Jamaica Avenue 2nd Floor Jamaica, New York 11432 Joseph Edwards Executive Assistant 153-01 Jamaica Avenue 2nd Floor Jamaica, New York 11432	
City, State, County, and Local Agencies	
Adrienne E. Adams, Chair Queens Community Board 12 90-28 161st Street Jamaica, NY 11432	Gina Santucci Director Environmental Review Unit New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Municipal Building 1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North New York, New York 10007 Amanda Sutphin Director of Archaeology New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Municipal Building 1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North New York, New York 10007
Vincent Sapienza Commissioner New York City Department of Environmental Protection 59-17 Junction Boulevard Flushing, New York 11373	Mr. Nicholas B. Conrad Information Services New York Natural Heritage Program 625 Broadway, 5th Floor. Albany, NY 12233-4757 (518) 402-8935

Olivia Brazee Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation New York State Office of Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau Peebles Island P.O. Box 189 Waterford, NY 12188-0189 Jeffrey Zappieri Supervisor New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources 41 State Street Albany, NY 12231-0001	Steven Zahn Regional Director New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Region 2 1 Hunter's Point Plaza 47-40 21st Street Long Island City, New York 11101-5401
Federal Agencies	
Ms. Grace Musumeci, Chief Environmental Review Section Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch USEPA-Region II 290 Broadway New York, NY 10007-1866 (212) 637-7343	Mr. David Stilwell Field Office Supervisory US Fish and Wildlife Service NY Field Office 3817 Luker Road Cortland, NY 13045
Federally Recognized Tribes	
Ms. Sherry White Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican Indians W13447 Camp 14 Road PO Box 70 Bowler, WI 54416,	Blair Fink Delaware Tribe of Indians Historic Preservation Representative Department of Anthropology Gladfelter Hall Temple University 1115 West Polett Walk Philadelphia, PA 19122
Daniel S. Collins, Sr. Shinnecock Indian Nation Tribal Office PO Box 5006 Southampton, New York 11968	Nekole Alligood Delaware Nation Cultural Preservation Director PO Box 825 Anadarko, Oklahoma
State Recognized Tribes	
Harry B. Wallace Chief Unkechaug Indian Nation 151 Poospatuck Lane Mastic, New York 11950	

St Albans Demolition Buildings 165 and 166

IPaC Trust Resources Report

Generated August 02, 2016 08:17 PM MDT, IPaC v3.0.8

This report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts. For project reviews that require U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service review or concurrence, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents page.



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Migratory Birds	<u>4</u>
Refuges & Hatcheries	<u>7</u>
Wetlands	<u>8</u>

IPaC Trust Resources Report



LOCATION

DESCRIPTION

IPAC LINK

340 Smith Road
Shirley, NY 11967
(631) 286-0485

Endangered Species

Proposed, candidate, threatened, and endangered species are managed by the [Endangered Species Program](#) of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

This USFWS trust resource report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents section.

[Section 7](#) of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency.

A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can only be obtained by requesting an official species list either from the Regulatory Documents section in IPaC or from the local field office directly.

The list of species below are those that may occur or could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

Birds

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B079

Red Knot *Calidris canutus rufa* Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0DM

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii dougallii* Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B07O

Flowering Plants

Seabeach Amaranth *Amaranthus pumilus*

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=Q2MZ

Critical Habitats

There are no critical habitats in this location

Migratory Birds

Birds are protected by the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) and the [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#).

Any activity that results in the take of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.^[1] There are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in the take of migratory birds is responsible for complying with the appropriate regulations and implementing appropriate conservation measures.

1. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern
<http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php>
- Conservation measures for birds
<http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php>
- Year-round bird occurrence data
<http://www.birdscanada.org/birdmon/default/datasummaries.jsp>

The following species of migratory birds could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*

Bird of conservation concern

On Land Season: Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0G8

American Bittern *Botaurus lentiginosus*

Bird of conservation concern

On Land Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0F3

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Bird of conservation concern

On Land Season: Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B008

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*

Bird of conservation concern

On Land Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0EO

Black-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*

On Land Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HI

Bird of conservation concern

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Canada Warbler *Wilsonia canadensis*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Fox Sparrow *Passerella iliaca*

On Land Season: Wintering

Bird of conservation concern

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

On Land Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JV

Bird of conservation concern

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*

At Sea Season: Migrating

Bird of conservation concern

Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis*

On Land Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B092

Least Tern *Sterna antillarum*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

On Land Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FU

Bird of conservation concern

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

On Land Season: Year-round

Bird of conservation concern

Prairie Warbler *Dendroica discolor*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

On Land Season: Wintering

Bird of conservation concern

Red Knot *Calidris canutus rufa*

On Land Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0DM

Bird of conservation concern

Rusty Blackbird *Euphagus carolinus*

On Land Season: Wintering

Bird of conservation concern

Saltmarsh Sparrow *Ammodramus caudacutus*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Seaside Sparrow *Ammodramus maritimus*

On Land Season: Year-round

Bird of conservation concern

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

On Land Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HD

Bird of conservation concern

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0HC

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?sPCODE=B0F6

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Worm Eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum*

On Land Season: Breeding

Bird of conservation concern

Wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries

There are no refuges or fish hatcheries in this location

Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

DATA LIMITATIONS

The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

DATA EXCLUSIONS

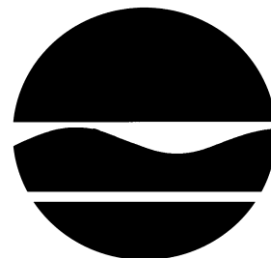
Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters. Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tubercid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

DATA PRECAUTIONS

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

There are no wetlands in this location

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Fish, Wildlife & Marine Resources
New York Natural Heritage Program
625 Broadway, 5th Floor, Albany, New York 12233-4757
Phone: (518) 402-8935 • **Fax:** (518) 402-8925
Website: www.dec.ny.gov



September 02, 2016

Nancy J. Brighton
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District
Jacob K. Javits Federal Building
New York, NY 10278

Re: Demolition of Buildings 165 and 166, St. Albans Community Living Center and VA Center
Town/City: City Of New York. County: Queens.

Dear Nancy J. Brighton:

In response to your recent request, we have reviewed the New York Natural Heritage Program database with respect to the above project.

We have no records of rare or state-listed animals or plants, or significant natural communities at this site or in its immediate vicinity.

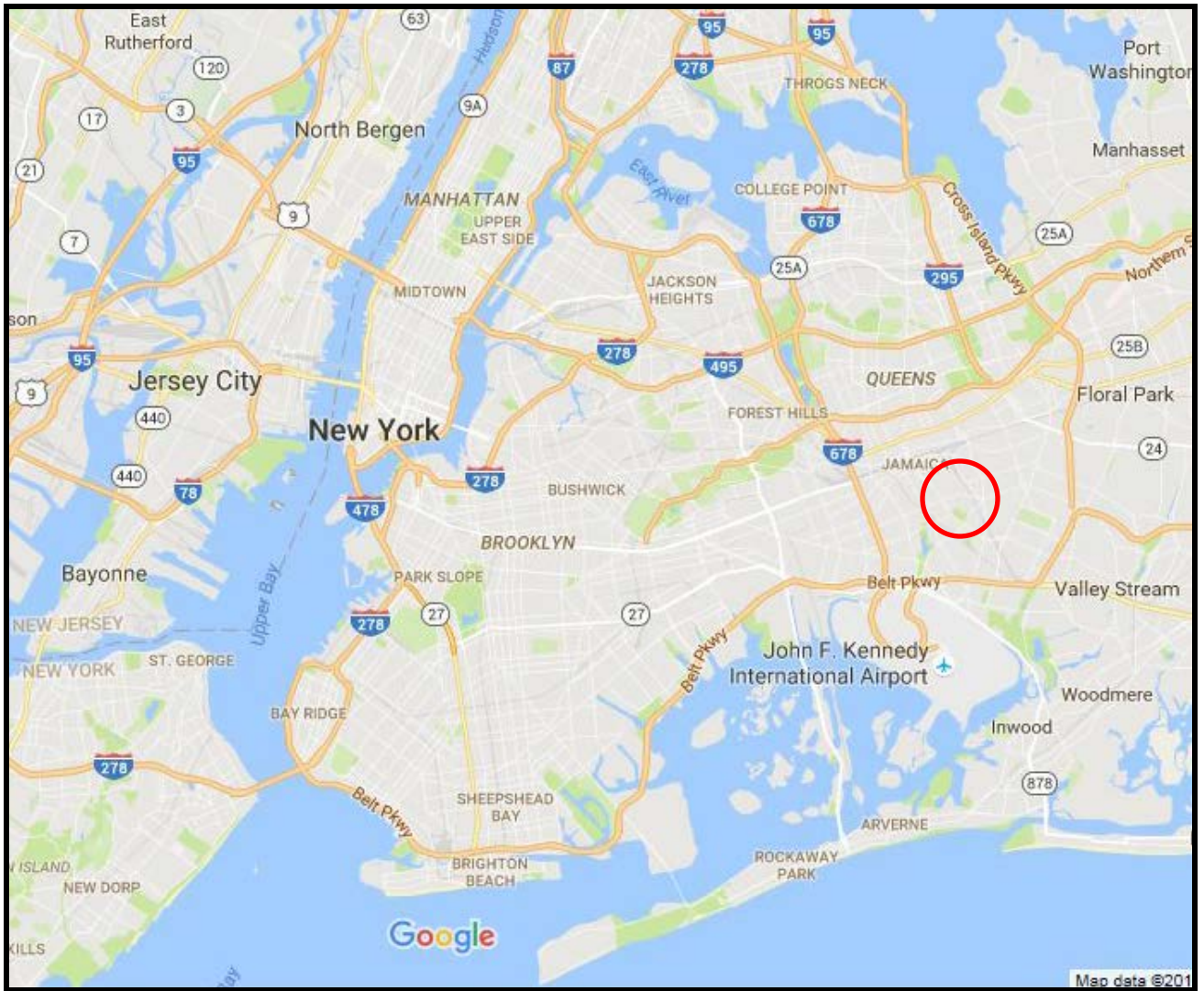
The absence of data does not necessarily mean that rare or state-listed species, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats do not exist on or adjacent to the proposed site. Rather, our files currently do not contain information that indicates their presence. For most sites, comprehensive field surveys have not been conducted. We cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of all rare or state-listed species or significant natural communities. Depending on the nature of the project and the conditions at the project site, further information from on-site surveys or other resources may be required to fully assess impacts on biological resources.

This response applies only to known occurrences of rare or state-listed animals and plants, significant natural communities, and other significant habitats maintained in the Natural Heritage Database. Your project may require additional review or permits; for information regarding other permits that may be required under state law for regulated areas or activities (e.g., regulated wetlands), please contact the NYS DEC Region 2 Office, Division of Environmental Permits, as listed at www.dec.ny.gov/about/39381.html.

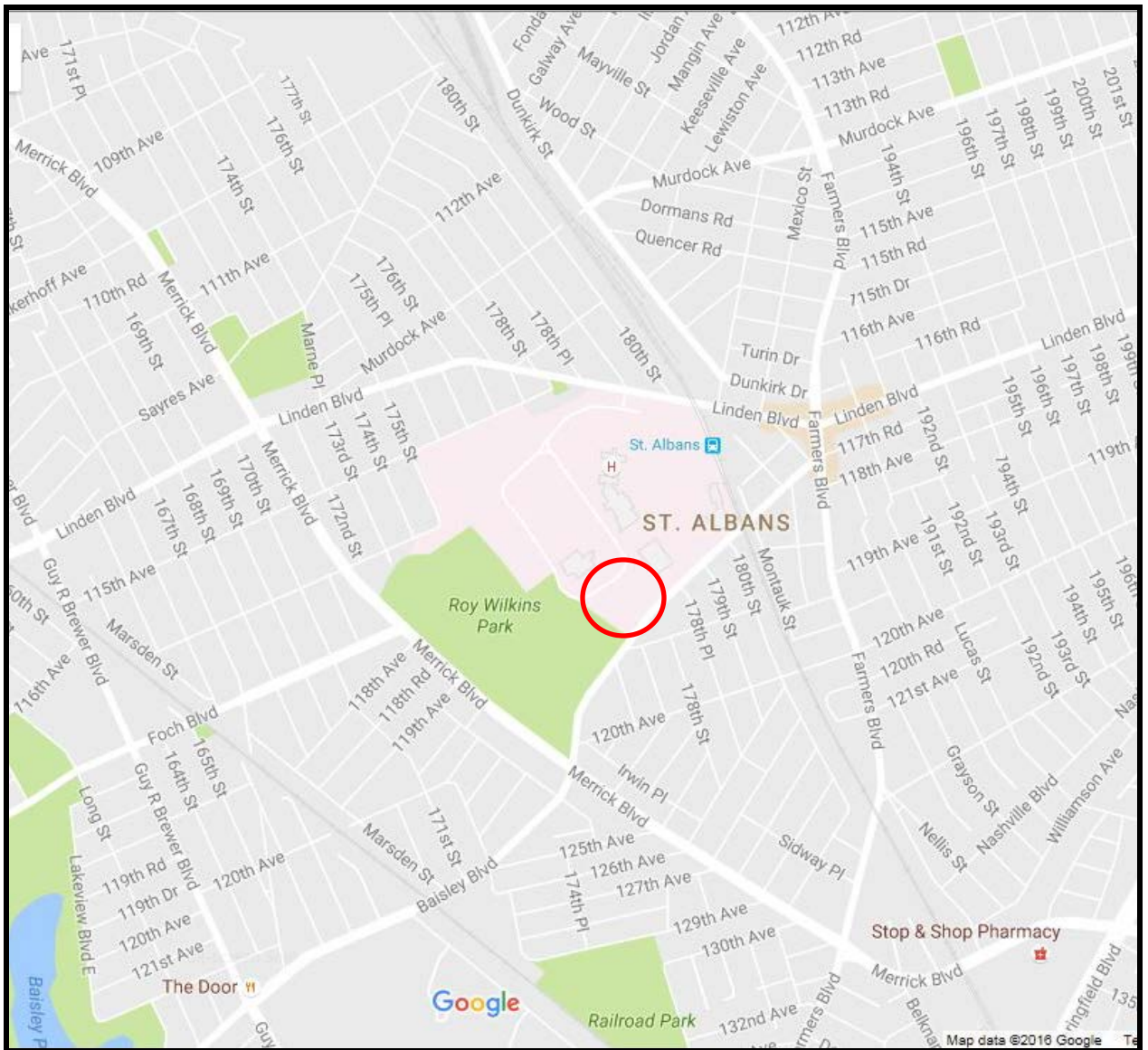
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Conrad", written in a cursive style.

Nicholas Conrad
Information Resources Coordinator
New York Natural Heritage Program



Enclosure 1: Regional map showing the location of the St Albans project site.



Enclosure 2: Detailed location map of St Albans site

1. Identification of any State Regulated Wetlands.
2. The existence and location of PBS (tank removals, tank closure reports), Air or Hazardous Waste permits, dumping, waste sites, site inspection reports, hazardous waste investigations or complaints within the project area. There is one closed landfill adjacent to the site.
3. Effect on wildlife, including the existence of any endangered species.
4. Required permits.
5. Any other information you believe might assist us in assessing the effect this project will have on the environment and should be included in our Environmental Assessment.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me at 917-790-8703 or at Nancy.J.Brighton@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Nancy J. Brighton
Chief, Watershed Section

Enclosures

