
Archaeological Assessment

Bell Place Development,

Puyallup, Pierce County, WA

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Introduction

An archaeological survey was conducted on the Bell Place property on April 13, 2024, by Cultural Reconnaissance at the property owner's request. The property is located within city limits at 204 4th Street Southwest, Puyallup, Pierce County, WA, 98372 (Figure 1). The archaeological assessment was necessitated by a request from comments made by two tribes to the developer's preliminary site plan application. The project area for the archaeological survey included the entire parcel, which comprises three contiguous parcels and covers much of one city block (Figure 2).

Project Area Description, Date of Survey, and Personnel

The property is located at T20NR04E, Section 28 of the Willamette Meridian. A Post-war single-family residence is located on the project site (Figures 2 and 3). Besides the residence the property is level lawn with a large Western Red Cedar tree in the middle, an ornamental planting bed south of the residence, and some smaller ornamental bushes around the house. The Bell Place Development is identified in the Pierce County Assessor Treasurer Information Portal with parcel numbers 5745001631; 5745001632; 5745001641. The aggregate of the three parcels is a development that is 0.8 acre in size. The project site is located less than a mile from two perennial sources of fresh water, namely Clark's Creek and the Puyallup River. There is no access to these features from the client's property.

The archaeological survey was conducted on April 13, 2024. The weather was 100% clear and sunny, 60(f)/16(c), and gentle breezes out of the southeast. The project team consisted of Scott Williams, Principal Investigator, who was responsible for directing the survey and is the senior author of this report; Russell Holter, Historian, was responsible for assisting the principal investigator, handling client relations, photography, administration, and secondary source research; Patrick Williams, served as the field technician.

Regulatory Compliance

Both the Puyallup and the Squaxin Island Tribal Cultural Resources office staff requested that the developers conduct a cultural resources survey (CRS). The CRS was made as a condition of the preliminary site plan application. The Bell Place property is located approximately one mile from two perennial sources of freshwater, and within a “high” probability zone for inadvertent discovery. This portion of the project area has been continuously under development for the past 160 years. To date, consultation with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) has not been initiated.

Area of Potential Impact

The Area of Potential Impact (API) for this undertaking are the three residential lots where the Bell Place development is proposed (Figure 2). Ground disturbing activities are planned to accommodate underground utilities and the spread footings for the development's foundations. An API is defined as the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The API is influenced by the scale and nature of a proposed project and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the proposed project.

Survey Method

The principal investigator and team arrived on the site to evaluate the property’s potential for archaeological deposits through surface survey and subsurface investigation. A pedestrian survey over 100% of the parcel was conducted to look for evidence of archaeological materials, in existing soil cuts and mole hills. Subsurface test units were hand dug with shovels around the AI where the project proponent’s development will be constructed (Figures 2 and 4). All excavated material was sieved through ¼” wire mesh screen and examined for artifacts. Dimensions and descriptions of the excavated units are given in the Results section below (Table 1). All test units were backfilled at the completion of fieldwork.

Secondary sources were also identified and researched. These sources include historical narratives, aerial photographs, and cultural resources reports authored by others. This report contains a summary of the findings of the secondary sources.

Archaeological and Historical Context

The project area is situated within the traditional territory of Lushootseed-speaking people living in the Puyallup River valley and Salish Sea region for tens of thousands of years, effectively since time immemorial (Ruby and Brown, 1992). As with other tribes of Puget Sound, maritime resources including shellfish and salmon largely supported traditional lifeways of the people of this portion of the Lower Salish Sea. Upland resources such as bear, deer, elk, and a wide range of plant resources also added significantly to the welfare of local populations. Winter villages were usually located along the shoreline while activities associated with upland environments may have included smaller, seasonal habitations in areas containing habitat favorable to the harvesting of game and the gathering of berries and roots.

First contact with indigenous populations is widely reported to have occurred with the arrival of the Spaniards off the Washington coast in 1775. At their advent came the introduction of previously unknown infectious diseases for which the native inhabitants had no immunity, and population losses were high. While the Spaniards did not roam far from the coast, their diseases spread rapidly inland amongst unsuspecting villagers. With no natural immunity, Native populations suffered high casualty rates.

The George Vancouver Expedition arrived in 1792. Captain Vancouver dispatched a small flotilla of row boats to survey and record the lower reaches of the area. The person heading this survey was Lieutenant Peter Puget. Lt. Puget charted and named various places along the shores of the sound in Pierce, Thurston, Mason, and Kitsap Counties. Lt. Puget also attempted to trade with various people groups he encountered during his survey (Morgan 1979:9).

Some forty years later, French-Canadian fur trappers began living amongst the indigenous peoples of this area as early as 1833. Native peoples and the trappers brought bulk furs gathered from remote locations to established posts, like Fort Nisqually, which were owned and operated by the Canadian-based Hudson Bay Company (Morgan 1979:30).

The Puyallup Tribe, along with many other south Puget Sound tribes, were compelled to sign away their ancestral rights to lands they occupied (including the subject property) with the ratification of the Medicine Creek treaty of 1854. Disenfranchisement with the terms of the treaty agreement led to an outbreak of hostility the following year which culminated into open warfare between Native Americans and the settlers. Puyallup pioneer, Captain John Carson, erected a blockhouse on the banks of the Puyallup River on the Carson farmstead northeast of the project location. This site was briefly known as Fort Carson during this period of strife (Larsen 2016:15). To the southwest of the survey site was the farmstead of “I. Wright.” (USDOI-BLM 2023)

The 1864 land survey by Henry Stevenson describes the land in the Puyallup River valley broadly with the terms “hops and vegetables.” The land remained relatively unchanged over the decades (USDOI-BLM 2023). An aerial photograph taken in 1940 shows the three parcels as being mostly wooded. Three single family residences were constructed onsite following the Second World War. Aerial photos indicate that the two single family residences located on the two smaller building lots were removed by 1969 (Netro).

GLO and BLM Features

Government Land Office (GLO) features noted in the DAHP WISAARD database include four territorial trails. One of these pioneer trails bisects the API diagonally. Early surveyors noted a road to the east of the API. This road became known as Meridian was a Military Road leading northward from Puyallup to Milton. It is also important to note that the location of the Milwaukee Bridge over the Puyallup River was

once the site of a commonly used Puyallup river ford during the pioneer-era (DAHP). The first Territorial survey in this area was conducted by Henry Stevenson in 1864. Stevenson's map shows the former Fort Carson as the Carson farmstead. This Fort was located approximately one mile north of the client's property. The other notable feature indicated on GLO maps is a farmstead operated by the Wright family which was located approximately one quarter mile to the east of the subject property. Members of the Wright family laid claim to most of Section 28. However, no claim had been made to the API until later. The first person to file a donation land claim on the client's property appears to have been John Meeker, brother of Ezra Meeker who is considered the founding father of Puyallup. For further historical context, please refer to the Puyallup Historic Survey Report authored by Lawrence and Boyle (2007).

Chain of Property Ownership

As stated earlier, John Meeker was the first to file a patent claim on the subject property in 1865. A 1936 Metsker Map shows the subject property having been subdivided by an A. J. Miller. Nothing more about Miller was located. Donna M. Bell sold the parcels to Bell Place LLC in March of 2022.

Historic Properties

According to the WISAARD database maintained by DAHP, there are approximately twenty-seven (27) historic-era structures recorded within 500-feet of the site. Of these properties, two (2) were determined not eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. The remaining stock has yet to be determined. Although it is an historic-era structure, the home found at Bell Place is not included in the WISAARD with an Historic Property Inventory. The house is an early example of a post-war cottage, built to accommodate returning soldiers and sailors in 1946. It is a simple gable structure with attached carport. The cottage rests on a concrete slab foundation. It is a rectangular single-story building with a low sloping gable roof (Figure 3).

Maritime Heritage

The project area is not located within the Maritime Heritage Study area, and no Maritime Heritage Sites were located within a mile of the property.

Previous Archaeological Discoveries

There are two archaeological sites located within one mile of the property. Both sites (45PI001581 and 45PI001582) are located north of the API. Both sites were characterized as containing modern-era refuse. Both sites were determined to be not eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. DAHP staff concurred with these findings.

Burials and Cemeteries

Despite being in a relatively urban environment, there are no burials or cemeteries indicated on the cultural layers within one mile of the subject property.

Archeological Predictive Model

The Archaeological Predictive Model indicates the subject property has a ‘high’ potential for archaeological discovery, due to its location near the Puyallup River and being near Clark’s Creek, a perennial source of fresh water. The predictive model does not consider the actual physical conditions on any individual property, which may make it less likely that intact archaeological materials are present.

Cultural Resource Assessments

The closest Cultural Resource Survey to the Bell Place development was conducted by HRA in 2015 for Sound Transit (Beckner 2015). According to the report entitled *Puyallup Station Access Improvements Project* (NADB:1687855), the soil was comprised of 0 to 5-feet of fill material covering upward of 35-feet of recent alluvial river sediments. Despite the depth of sediments, an Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future activities was recommended due to the area being considered a high probability zone by the archaeological predictive model.

Eleven archaeological assessments have taken place within a mile of the subject property (See Table 1). While this seems like an unusually large number given the residential nature of the area, many of these assessments were conducted by the Washington State Department of Transportation for the SR-167 extension project.

Traditional Cultural Properties

There are no recorded Traditional Cultural Properties within a mile of the APE.

Tribal Groups

According to the WISAARD, the site is located near lands historically occupied by the Puyallup Tribe. Tribal governments which have expressed an interest in activities taking place at the project site include the Puyallup, as well as (in alphabetical order) the Muckleshoot Tribe, the Nisqually Tribe, the Samish Tribe, the Snoqualmie Tribe, the Squaxin Island Tribe, the Suquamish Tribe, and the Yakama Tribe.

Table 1--Cultural Resource Surveys within one mile of the study area

NADB	Specialist	Title	Date (YMD)	Study Area	Materials Found	Conclusions	Recommendations
1342152	Shong, Michael & Chris J. Miss	Heritage Resource Investigations for the City of Puyallup Riverfront Trail Project-Phase 3, Pierce Co.,WA	2003-04-11	<5 acres	Historic-era debitage	Unlikely to find cultural materials	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work
1343265	Luttrell, Charles T.	Cultural Resources Investigations for the Washington State Department of Transportation SR-167: Puyallup SR-509 Project, Pierce County, WA	2004-05-01	>100 acres	Historic-era debitage	Chestnut Tree could be considered a cultural resource	Monitoring recommended during ground altering activity
1350128	Lawrence, Rhoda	Puyallup Historic Survey Report, Puyallup, WA	2007-08-01	>640 acres	Historic-era resources	Potentially eligible	Public Policy changes
1354306	Kiers, Roger	Cultural Resource Survey, SR-512, SR-410 and SR-167, Portland Ave to King County Line Flow Improvements, Pierce County, WA	2010-04-20	<1 acre	No evidence of cultural material found	No further investigation warranted	Proponent should proceed
1682967	Kiers, Roger	Cultural Resource Discipline Report, SR-167, Puyallup River/Meridian Street Bridge Phase, SR-167 Extension -- Puyallup to SR-509 Freeway Construction Project, Pierce County, WA	2008-02-12	1 acre	No evidence of cultural material found	Meridian Bridge is Eligible	Mitigation for Adverse Effects to Bridge is necessary
1684106	Cowan, Jason	Cultural Resources Assessment for the Milwaukee Bridge Replacement Project, Puyallup, Pierce Co., WA	2013-07-31	1 acre	No previously unrecorded cultural material found	No further investigation warranted	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work
1689122	Trost, Teresa & Jana Boersema	A Cultural Resources Survey of Dafodil Farms Short Plat, Puyallup, Pierce County, Washington	2017-02-01	4.8 acres	22 test pits: all negative for cultural materials	No further investigation warranted	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work
1690888	Baldwin, Garth, and Jennifer Chambers, et al	Cultural Resources Assessment for the Milwaukee Bridge Rehabilitation Project, Puyallup, Pierce Co., WA	2016-10-10	<10 acres	Milwaukee Bridge is not Eligible to NR	No Historic Properties Affected	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work
1691715	Yamamoto, Christopher, and Stephen Emerson, et al.	Cultural Resources Investigations for the Washington State Department of Transportation SR-167: Tacoma to Puyallup New Freeway, Pierce County, WA	2015-12-01	~240 acres	No previously unrecorded cultural material found	Additional Survey is recommended	Mitigation for Adverse Effects to site is necessary
1692922	Elliott, Patrick and Michael Chidley	Cultural Resources Inventory, Connell Plat, Puyallup, WA	2019-05-08	12.5 acres	48 test pits: all negative for cultural materials	No further investigation warranted	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work
1696838	Elliott, Patrick and Michael Chidley	Cultural Resources Assessment, Cornerstone Estates Development Project, Puyallup, WA	2022-04-01	6.94 acres	No evidence of cultural material found	No further investigation warranted	Inadvertent Discovery Plan for future work

Results

A pedestrian survey was conducted over 100% of the project area. The property is landscaped lawn with a large, mature Western Red Cedar in the middle (Figure 4). Except for the residence and associated utilities, there is little evidence of prior disturbance other than the flat, landscaped lawn and garden, although four monitoring wells have been installed on the parcel. The lawn was cut low and mole hills were examined for any signs of cultural materials (charcoal, shell, artifacts); none were present. No cultural material was seen in any soil exposures, and the property owner said that the family has never found items they thought were Indian artifacts on the property.

Four subsurface shovel probes were excavated (Figures 2). The goal of the subsurface testing was to establish the presence or absence of cultural deposits in the AI, with the four probes placed to avoid utilities while providing broad coverage of the parcel. All excavated material was screened through ¼” wire mesh

screens. Metric data, profile descriptions, and cultural finds are presented for each shovel probe on Table 2, and each is briefly described below. All four shovel probes exhibited similar profiles, varying slightly in layer thicknesses.

The parcel is mapped as Puyallup fine sandy loam and the deposits fit the description. The soil deposit over the parcel was a uniform very dark brown (10YR 2/2) fine sandy loam; moderate medium and coarse granular structure; slightly hard, friable, slightly sticky and slightly plastic; and with many fine and medium roots. This graded to depth to dark brown sandy loam that showed increasing evidence for subsurface water in the form of red oxide staining and gradual increase of clays and grey gleyed coloring. All four units contained a layer of clean yellow sand, in SP1-3 it was between layers of dark loamy sand and in SP4 it was mixed into the upper layer. This layer of clean sand varied in thickness and depth and sharpness of boundary, indicating it is a cultural fill (e.g., to level portions of the parcel or improve the soil conditions).

SP1 was located on the southwest corner of the property; SP2 was placed in the center of the property in the southern half; SP3 was placed in the southeast corner of the property; and SP4 was placed in the center of the northern half (Figure 2). All four shovel probes measured 40 cm square and were excavated to 70 cm below surface (Figures 5-8).

No features (other than the sand fill) were noted in any of the shovel probes. Cultural materials were found in all four shovel probes within 20 cm of the surface and consisted of modern/mid- to late 20th century materials: brown bottle glass, clear drinkware glass, ceramic fragments, and an aluminum pull tab (Figures 9-11). Except for the pull tab, all artifacts were non-diagnostic fragments and could date to any time in the 20th Century. No pre-Contact/Native American artifacts were found.

Conclusion and Recommendations

No prehistoric or historic archaeological deposits were discovered on the property. The sparse 20th century artifacts were not in concentration or within features and are typical roadside and urban scatter materials (small glass and ceramic fragments). No definitive evidence for a historic trail was noted (the lawn was well-watered and green). The sand layer present over the property suggests that it was leveled prior to landscaping, probably to construct the extant house.

Given the location in the historical area of Puyallup and the presence of a former trail across the property, it is recommended that an Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP) be developed for this property and that the contractors involved in developing the property be made aware of and provided copies of the IDP. It is possible that subsurface trash or outhouse pits could be present on the property, and while it is unlikely such deposits would be National Register eligible if found they should be evaluated by a professional archaeologist.

Attestation

Scott S. Williams, RPA, and Russell H. Holter, MAH, are Cultural Resource Specialists meeting all applicable state and federal professional standards, including the qualifications of the Secretary of the Interior for their respective professions. This report meets the Pierce County report guidelines. To the best of our knowledge the report is accurate at the time of its authorship.

Abbreviations

AI	Area of Impact
API	Area of Potential Impact
ECY	Washington State Department of Ecology
DAHP	Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
WISAARD	Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data

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Figures

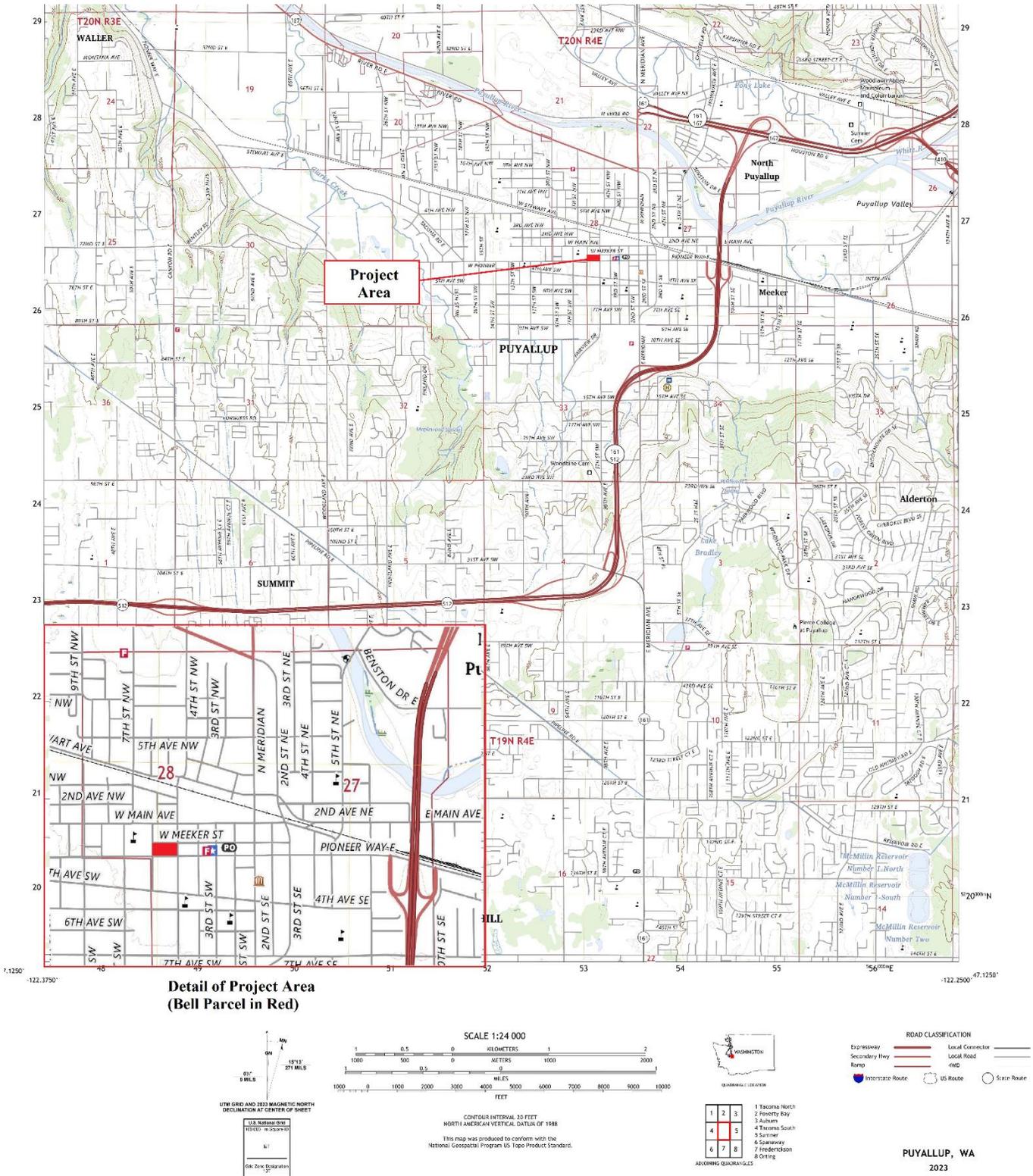


Figure 1. Project location on USGS Puyallup Quad Map, with project area marked by red rectangle.



Figure 2. Bell Place property project area and locations of shovel probe test units.



Figure 3. East facing of residence. View to West.



Figure 4. Overview of Bell property showing flat landscaped lawn. View to North.



Figure 5. Profile of SP1 North wall. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 6. Profile of SP2 East wall. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 7. Profile of SP3 East wall. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 8. Profile of SP4 South wall. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 9. Cultural materials found in SP1. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 10. Cultural materials from SP2. Scale in centimeters.



Figure 11. Cultural materials from SP4. Scale in centimeters