

Whitehall Site: *Observations and Considerations from the Interagency Transportation Assistance Group (TAG)*

FINAL REPORT



Images Source: U.S. DOT Volpe Center

*Prepared by the U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe National
Transportation Systems Center for the National Park Service*

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The Brandywine Foundation is a family led non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the historic home and grounds of Whitehall. The Brandywine Foundation's mission is to sustain and preserve this Historic Landmark for future generations, and to continually develop as a resource for community, education and the arts through exploring Whitehalls' unlimited potential as a cultural and natural backdrop for conservation, education, historical research, environmental sustainability, artistic exploration, recreation and celebration. The Foundation's work ensures that all can enjoy and experience the rich history and beauty of this unique place.



Financial and technical assistance for this study was provided by the National Park Service Chesapeake Gateways Office, Chesapeake Gateways Program.

Through Chesapeake Gateways, the NPS Chesapeake Gateways Office inspires and helps people discover, experience, and connect with the natural and cultural heritage and recreational opportunities of the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers, landscapes, and communities across its watershed. NPS Chesapeake Gateways works with people and partners to conserve and steward special places important to communities, visitors, and the nation, for this and future generations. Support through this program is typically in the form of collaborative partnerships, technical assistance, and grants. NPS Chesapeake Gateways provides technical assistance through staff expertise to aid the managers and partners of Chesapeake places and programmatic partners in conserving, restoring, interpreting, and providing access to cultural, natural, and recreational resources within the watershed.



The U.S. DOT Volpe Center was established within U.S. DOT in 1970 to bring technical capability and a future-oriented outlook to pressing national transportation issues. The DOT Volpe Center provides technical expertise and develops solutions to complex transportation challenges in support of U.S. DOT, other Federal, State, and local agencies, non-profit organizations, private entities, and others. NPS Chesapeake Gateways funds an interagency agreement with the DOT Volpe Center to bring transportation and access expertise and technical assistance to aid Chesapeake places and partners.

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Introduction

Project Purpose

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Volpe Center facilitated this Transportation Assistance Group (TAG) project as part of its technical assistance to the National Park Service Chesapeake Gateways office (NPS Chesapeake Gateways). The TAG was conducted in response to a request received for assistance from the Brandywine Foundation which owns and manages the Whitehall estate located in Anne Arundel County, near Annapolis, Maryland. The small family foundation sought support from NPS Chesapeake Gateways to evaluate the viability of the Whitehall site, a historic, coastal property to become a “Chesapeake Gateway Site,” a specifically defined place within the framework of the Chesapeake Gateways program.

NPS Chesapeake Gateways administers the Chesapeake Gateways program, a National Park Service community assistance program and partnership network. The program provides technical and financial assistance to improve education about and public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. The core network, coordinated by NPS Chesapeake Gateways, is a partnership network of places providing opportunities to enjoy, learn about and help conserve the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. The core network consists of hundreds of Chesapeake Gateways Places that are largely not owned nor managed by the NPS; they are owned and managed by core network members, such as other federal agencies, state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. For a place to be part of the core network, a primary attribute is public access.

NPS Chesapeake Gateways funds an interagency agreement with the DOT Volpe Center for the Volpe Center to provide multimodal transportation and access consultations and technical assistance to Chesapeake Gateways places, communities and partners. This TAG report is intended only as a rapid assessment with general observation and potential actions or alternatives for the Brandywine Foundation to consider related to transportation and access to and within the Whitehall property.

The issuance of this TAG report concludes the 2022 technical assistance from the NPS Chesapeake Gateways and DOT Volpe Center to the Brandywine Foundation. This TAG report does not represent nor indicate a commitment for any additional financial nor technical assistance from NPS Chesapeake Gateways or DOT Volpe Center.

As is true with any prospective Chesapeake Gateways Site, the Brandywine Foundation may apply and competitively compete under the annual NPS Chesapeake Gateways grants and technical assistance offerings in the future.

Project Approach

The Volpe Center facilitated this rapid TAG assessment, which included:

- Review of previous and concurrent studies and planning documents;
- Field investigations on September 19 – 21, 2022;
- Stakeholder discussions on September 19 – 21, 2022; and
- Documentation of observations and considerations.

This TAG report documents the observations, conditions, issues, and opportunities arising from the TAG’s analysis. It includes a list of potential actions that could benefit the Whitehall site and packages some of these actions into potential alternatives for public access. The evaluation considers many factors, most important being avoiding adverse impacts of crowding, traffic, or neighborhood disruption. The alternatives also balance issues of historic and cultural resource preservation, environmental protection, visitor experience and safety, maintenance logistics, and access.

Background and Conditions

Current Site Conditions

The Whitehall site is currently owned by The Brandywine Foundation Inc. (the Foundation), a family-run non-profit organization started by Charles Scarlett, Jr. before his death in 1997. The site comprises approximately 115 acres on a peninsula along the banks of Meredith Creek, Whitehall Creek and Whitehall Bay. The property is currently developed with an Estate House, constructed in 1764 by Governor Sharpe, the next to last British governor of Maryland, now registered as a National Historic Landmark. It is the first property in the state of Maryland to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to the Estate House, there are several out-buildings, such as a historic, if not original, privy (currently used for storage) and a below-grade icehouse that likely dates to the earliest time of the estate. There are three other homes on the property: a home for the caretaker of the property, the “Little House” which is used as a short-term rental, and the Cottage House, a mid-twentieth century kit-style house. The Scarlett family wishes to retain the kit-style house, which is currently uninhabited and in disrepair, located at the point of peninsula.

Additionally, there are barns, fields, and a trail system used for horse boarding and riding. The property is under an easement with the National Trust of Historic Preservation, limiting the development of the property. The property is currently open to the public only by appointment.

The Foundation has established three sources of revenue, based at the property, to support the financial needs of operations and maintenance of the property. These include:

- **Weddings:** Since 2016, the Foundation has rented the property as a wedding and events venue, hosting approximately 12 events per year (in May/June and September/October). For the past several years, the Foundation has entered into a contract with an events company to manage the wedding business. There is an established grass/gravel parking area that can accommodate up to 250 vehicles; anecdotally, the lot typically fills to 80 – 120 vehicles per event. Event guests typically arrive either by private vehicle or shuttle bus. Shuttle buses must be sized as 35-passenger or smaller because of the entrance lane dimensions. The gravel roads have been extended to the parking site and tent site for emergency vehicle access. Tents and other event amenities are put up and taken down for each individual event.
- **Horse boarding:** Approximately 12 horses board at the property, utilizing the barn complex and fields. Horse owners may access the property and ride their horses on the existing trail system (access is restricted during weddings). On occasion, the Foundation has hosted ‘ride in events’, advertised on social media, where individuals can trailer in their horses and ride on the trails for a nominal fee.
- **Short-term rental of Little House:** The Foundation operates a short-term rental property on the estate, named the “Little House.” Access to the house is via the gravel road, with parking on a dirt drive adjacent to the house. The property has a grass lawn running down to Meredith Creek with a small beach front area (with existing erosion and riprap).

Water-based access

There are two existing private wooden docks located on the property. The dock on the southeast corner of the property along Meredith Creek, which formerly served the cottage, is in a state of disrepair and is not usable. The other dock along Meredith Creek is for private use of the property caretaker. The property does not have water access for use during private events or for use by the public.

Land-based access

Land-based access to the Whitehall site is limited to a single, narrow, one-mile country road, Whitehall Road, which runs down the center of the peninsula, and is bisected by a handful of residential roads and drives. There is regular use of the road by equestrians and farm equipment.

Whitehall Road is accessed by Route 50, an often heavily congested interstate highway that extends to Washington, D.C., about 30 miles to the west, and to the coast via the Bay Bridge, which is about two miles to the east. To access Whitehall Road from Route 50, motorists coming off the exit are required to immediately cross a commercial service road, Skidmore Drive, that parallels Route 50. This intersection can be busy and may have safety concerns given the proximity to Route 50 and high-speed traffic on Skidmore Drive.

On the Whitehall site, there is a single-lane dirt driveway providing access from the front gate to the Estate House, caretaker's house, horse barn complex, Little House, and Cottage House, as well as to the areas used for wedding parking (Figure 1; Figure 2). The dirt driveway is in generally good condition and is rated for a 75,000-pound fire truck. Vehicles often must slow down and pull onto the grass to let larger vehicles and trucks pass in the other direction on the driveway. Permanent road signage is minimal, only identifying that the road is a Fire Lane and that no parking is allowed. Temporary signage is used to direct traffic during wedding events.

There are two existing parking areas on the property. One is located immediately adjacent to the Estate House and has capacity for about five cars. The other is located in the fields and can hold up to 250 vehicles for weddings/events, although site staff note that there are typically far fewer than this during events. The parking area is grass and has a gravel access road in the center for firetruck access.

Figure 1. Whitehall Site Existing Conditions and Points of Interest Map



- A** Whitehall Entrance
- B** Pasture
- C** Informal Parking
- D** Estate House
- E** Holly Walk
- F** Cemetery & Access Easement

- G** Historic Formal Gardens
- H** Parking
- I** Tenting/Event Area
- J** Cottage House
- K** Little House
- L** Barn & Horse Boarding, Caretaker House

--- Horse Trails

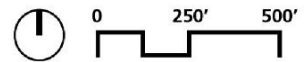


Figure 2. Whitehall Site Points of Interest Images



Historical Ownership and Uses

Historical ownership and uses of the site are important to consider in the evaluation of current transportation needs. For example, from a historical, cultural, and natural resource preservation perspective, it is beneficial to use historic road traces to the maximum extent possible for the creation of any future paths. In addition, if public

access to the site is improved, it is important to strategically plan for site access and circulation that accommodates public use, benefit and stewardship of the overall site while avoiding damage to critical historical, cultural, and natural resource areas.

Although there is a rich history associated with the Whitehall site, it is most well-known as being the estate of the next to last British governor of Maryland, Governor Horatio Sharpe. The Whitehall estate originally comprised about 1,000 acres and covered almost the entire peninsula. The cornerstone of the estate, the historic Whitehall home, was constructed in 1764 for Governor Sharpe. Originally, Governor Sharpe used the home as a retreat from Annapolis and as an entertainment pavilion for invited guests. Guests would arrive by horse and carriage or by boat from Annapolis, most frequently for day trips before returning to Annapolis in the evening.

In 1769, Governor Sharpe was forced into retirement, and Whitehall became his primary residence. He returned to England in 1773 for business and never made it back to Whitehall before his death in 1790. Governor Sharpe willed the property to John Ridout, and the property remained in the hands of the Ridout family until 1895. There remains a family cemetery for the Ridout family on the Whitehall site, still owned and maintained by descendants of the Ridout family.

Throughout the period when Governor Sharpe and the Ridout family owned the property, much of the land was used for farming, and it is known that labor on the farms was provided by enslaved persons. Archeological researchers have excavated various findings on the property that indicate the historical presence of slave quarters, brick kilns, and other former structures. Although the details are still being uncovered by archaeologists, early indications suggest that there may have been a historic “working dock,” likely used by paid and enslaved servants on the western side of the site along the coast of Whitehall Creek.

After the Ridout family, the property went through multiple hands, and the overall estate was divided and sold off many times, before the current approximately 115-acre “Whitehall Site” was acquired by the Scarlett family. After purchasing the property, Charles Scarlett, Jr. worked tirelessly to restore Whitehall to its original 18th-century glory, even going as far as to match the original paint colors, wallpapers, and preserving the original handmade carvings on the ceilings.

Whitehall was the first property in the state of Maryland to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places; Whitehall was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960, with the final nomination form and boundary certified in 1975. An additional conservation easement was placed on the property in 1992 to further protect the site from development. The National Historic Landmark designation and conservation easement help protect the property from future development and alteration. The deed for the additional conservation easement excepts the conservation prohibition on a mapped 10-acre site of waterfront property along Meredith Creek in the vicinity of the Cottage House, allows for the creation of a guest house and allows for the upgrade and maintenance of roads on the site.

Centuries before becoming the “Whitehall estate,” indigenous populations inhabited the area, as evidenced by the shell middens, or oyster shell mounds, on the property. These shell middens, some of which are meters deep and most of which are on the fragile, and quickly eroding, coastline of the property, are valuable to archaeologists as a window into the lifestyles of these people living as long as 3,200 years ago.

Relevant and Concurrent Planning Activities

There are ongoing local and regional planning efforts that are relevant to the challenges and opportunities identified in this study, including:

- Anne Arundel County Scenic and Historic Roads Program
- New Chesapeake Bay Crossing near existing Bay Bridge
- Broadneck Peninsula Trail Project
- Maryland Green Infrastructure Resilience Program
- Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) proposal

- Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Service

Anne Arundel County Scenic and Historic Roads Program

In 2006, the Anne Arundel County Council passed a bill recognizing roads in the County as “scenic and historic” worthy of protection. Whitehall Road is included in the bill as a scenic and historic road and is subject to Anne Arundel County Article 17-6-504 regulations. These regulations limit development along Whitehall Road, and are designed to preserve, maintain, and enhance the scenic and historic character of the landscape viewed from the road. Whitehall Road is designated by the bill as a classification “1” (preservation) road, with the highest level of scenic and historic integrity. Road improvement options are generally limited to minimal improvements required for purposes of safety.

New Chesapeake Bay Crossing near existing Bay Bridge

The State of Maryland is in the planning stages of developing a new Chesapeake Bay crossing alongside the existing two crossings between Anne Arundel and Queen Anne’s counties. In addition to other benefits, the new Chesapeake Bay crossing project, which is just two miles from the Whitehall Site, intends to alleviate traffic congestion on Route 50. The project may also provide better access and connectivity for other transportation modes, such as transit, bicycles and pedestrian travel. Project planning and compliance activities are anticipated to extend into 2026 with design and construction to follow. The historic Whitehall property is within the Study Area for the Bay Crossing Project and impacts to the site from the proposed project will be assessed.

Broadneck Peninsula Trail Project

The Broadneck Peninsula Trail is a proposed multi-use trail under construction in Anne Arundel County. When complete, the trail will ultimately provide a bicycling connection between Sandy Point State Park and Annapolis, with further connections via the Baltimore and Annapolis (B&A) trail. The trail is planned for the north side of US Route 50; a connection to the Whitehall Site is not currently planned.

Maryland Green Infrastructure Resilience Program

The Maryland Green Infrastructure Resilience program provides funding to help local governments perform the evaluations needed to understand their stormwater and riparian flooding risks and plan to effectively address them. The Brandywine Foundation has applied for a grant under this program for the Historic Whitehall Living Shoreline and Restoration Project (Project) located along Whitehall and Meredith Creeks. The site is within the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund “High” priority funding area. The project is explicitly designed to fulfill Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay water quality goals while restoring local shorelines and increasing their resilience to climate impacts while developing a marque Living Shoreline to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. Coastline stabilization at this site would also benefit the State’s cultural and historical resource protection goals, such as by preserving sensitive archaeological resources, including the shell middens located along the eroding coastline.

CNRA proposal

At the time of this report, Senator Chris Van Hollen and Congressman John Sarbanes have released draft legislation that would designate a unified Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) as part of the National Park System. The draft legislation includes a proposed park boundary map identifying four locations that the National Park Service (NPS) would be permitted to acquire from willing sellers or as donation or instead to partner on the management of the sites. The four proposed sites include: the Whitehall property owned by the Brandywine Foundation, the William Burtis House and Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse owned by the City of Annapolis, and the portion of North Beach at Fort Monroe owned by the US Army. As drafted the CNRA would utilize a collection of partnerships with states, localities, and private entities with the intent of highlighting the diverse landscape and national significance of the Chesapeake Bay. The congressional leaders of the proposal indicate a CNRA designation would deliver more federal resources to the Chesapeake region, celebrate its diverse cultural and economic

history, conserve the Bay's environment, and foster public access to this national treasure while also spurring economic growth. The National Park Service acknowledges the Chesapeake Bay is nationally significant, yet as a standard policy, the NPS does not comment on pending legislation unless asked to testify by Congress.

Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Service Feasibility Study

At the time of this report, the Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Conference & Visitors Bureau Inc., doing business as Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, has released a request for proposals to perform a Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study. The Chesapeake Bay has served as a transportation and trade highway and byway for as long as records can be documented. Beginning in the 19th century, the Bay was plied by steamships and boats connecting various cities and towns on it. A ferry system previously connected communities throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. Ferries were the only access to either side of the Bay in Maryland until construction of the Bay Bridge, which shifted the main form of access to vehicular transportation. It is the goal of the feasibility study to explore the feasibility and economic impact of a new passenger ferry system to key destinations in the Chesapeake Bay region. The initiative is not envisioned as a replacement for vehicular travel, but rather as a complimentary way of travel.

Transportation Access Issues and Challenges

As part of the TAG, a core team composed of staff from the participating agencies visited the Whitehall site, met with public and private stakeholders, and discussed each organization's experiences and insights with the site. The team identified the following key challenges to public access at the site. The subsequent Site Access Strategy section intends to consider and address these key challenges to the extent possible.

Water-based Access Challenges

- **Coastline Stabilization:** Sections of Whitehall's 1.7 miles of coastline are experiencing erosion at a high rate, creating unstable property banks and adding sediment to Whitehall Creek, Meredith Creek, and the Chesapeake Bay. On the south end of the property, there is a seawall comprised of concrete as well as erosion control fabric with rip-rap. The seawall is functional but has deferred maintenance. Coastline stabilization, through erosion control and completing the deferred maintenance, is necessary to protect the shorelines against erosion to ensure the conservation, preservation, and resiliency of the historic Whitehall property.
- **Lack of dock infrastructure for ferry service:** Current dock infrastructure at the site is not suitable for a public ferry service; however, there are opportunities to repair or rehabilitate dock infrastructure at the site for this need.
- **Lack of water access opportunities for kayaks and other non-motorized watercraft:** There are not currently any formalized water access opportunities for public kayaks or other non-motorized watercraft.
- **Lack of accessible trail access from the shoreline to key locations on-site:** The site maintains a network of trails that offer scenic, recreational, and water access opportunities. However, there are not currently any accessible trails for public access from the property shoreline to key locations on-site.

Land-based Access Challenges

- **Traffic congestion:** Route 50, which for most visitors, would be a required route to access Whitehall Road and the Whitehall site, can be heavily congested due to traffic at the Bay Bridge. Although visitation to the Whitehall site would be limited to a level that would not significantly impact current traffic, visitor experience for visitors accessing the site would be impacted.
- **Entrance road:** Although scenic, the current entrance road to the Whitehall Site, Whitehall Road, and the driveway on the site are very narrow, often requiring vehicles to pull onto the driveway shoulder to let larger vehicles and trucks pass. Whitehall Road is currently protected through the Anne Arundel County Scenic and Historic Roads Program, and the Whitehall site is a National Historic Landmark with conservation easements, limiting improvements that may be made.

- **Parking:** Parking is limited on the property and the creation of any new parking areas would need to be balanced with preserving the historic, cultural, and natural resources on-site. Although parking is currently provided for up to 250 vehicles during private events, the location of this temporary parking area within the viewshed is not conducive to day visitor parking.
- **Trails:** The network of trails on the Whitehall Site is a scenic and recreational asset; however, signage and wayfinding improvements are needed for proper public access. In addition, in order for the public to access these trails, either additional parking or connectivity to regional trail networks or public transportation networks would likely be needed.

Site Access Strategy

The Brandywine Foundation's primary interest is to establish and articulate the public benefit of the site, including public access, to enable the Foundation to secure additional resources to restore and maintain the property and strategically expand public access over time. The shorter-term goal is to become a Chesapeake Gateways Site as part of the Chesapeake Gateways core network by providing public access, primarily by water access, limiting traffic impacts along Whitehall Road and on-site parking to about 15 spaces. Additionally, the Foundation has an interest in developing a long-term ownership/partnership model for public access, recognizing the limited capacity of the Foundation's board.

The site access strategy considers a range of actions that advance the Foundation's interests while considering the water- and land-based access issues and challenges outlined in the previous section. The potential actions, advantages, and disadvantages are noted in the tables below.

The strategy is organized around the following three goals:

1. Establish Public Benefit and Access
 - Articulate the public benefit and need to preserve the archeological value of the site
 - Establish limited public access opportunity
2. Strategically expand public access
 - Phase 1A archeological survey
 - Coastline stabilization
 - Water-based access options
 - Parking capacity and siting options
 - Road and trail condition improvement options
 - Staffing considerations
3. Develop long-term ownership/partnership model for public access

Establish Public Benefit and Access

Public Benefit

As described earlier in this report, there are significant natural resources, historic and cultural resources, including archeological sites, and recreational resources associated with the Whitehall Site. Preservation, conservation, and interpretation of these resources has the potential to have immense public benefit. This is especially true at a time when growth and development pressure across the Broadneck Peninsula put the historically rural character of the area at risk and negatively impact the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Demonstrating the public benefit of the property will assist in securing outside resources for preservation, conservation, and interpretation of the site.

Public Access

Physical access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries is very limited, with real consequences for quality of life, local economies and long-term conservation. Increasing public access to local waterways for fishing, swimming, boating and other activities fosters a shared sense of responsibility and increased stewardship that supports watershed restoration goals.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is rapidly urbanizing. More than eleven million people live in metropolitan areas, but few have the chance to interact with the region's waters, forests and open lands. Despite this trend—or perhaps because of it—residents increasingly seek opportunities to connect with the outdoors. Multiple studies continue to document this high public demand for public access points, and meeting this demand will foster a feeling of shared responsibility for the region's resources among its residents.

Public access to Whitehall would enable local communities and visitors to encounter a notable historic Chesapeake landscape and buildings and provide the chance to learn specific stories and information pertaining to the Chesapeake themes to which the site relates. The public would find interpretive materials, exhibits or programs telling these stories and placing them in broader context, including noting other related or nearby public access sites. The caretakers of Whitehall would provide direct, physical public access to their resources and welcoming orientation materials to facilitate that use. Many sites have on-going conservation and restoration missions and programs and at times provide opportunities for people to engage in stewardship activities.

Providing public access to Whitehall and becoming a Chesapeake Gateways Site will demonstrate a long-term commitment to sharing the property's significant natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources with the visiting public.

Strategically Expand Public Access

Overarching Needs

Phase 1 Archeological Survey

Before providing infrastructure improvements that may be needed to expand public access and use of the site, a Phase 1 archeological survey is needed in partnership with the County to identify and define any archeological sites on the property. Areas for assessment would include any sites identified as potential parking, improved trails, docks, and other watercraft access.

Coastline Stabilization

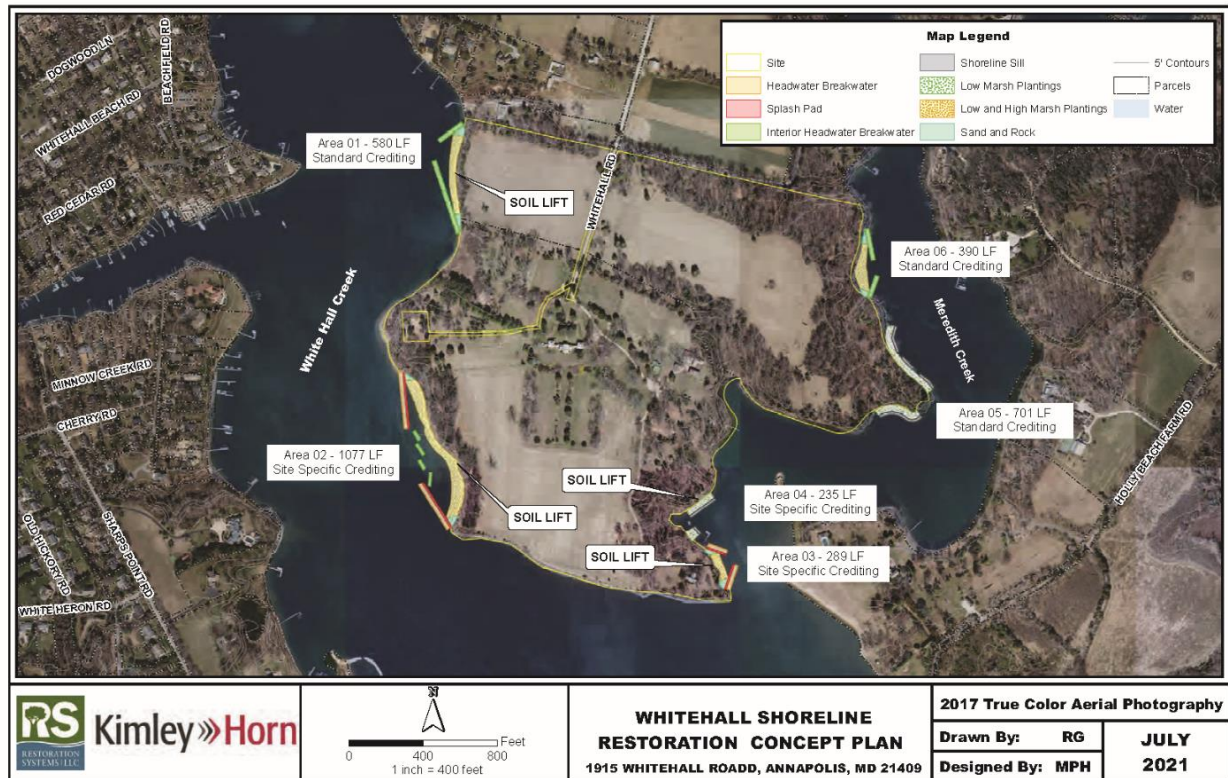
Erosion is impacting the stability of the property's shoreline and has the potential to directly impact archeological sites and buildings on the property, most immediately the Cottage House. The Brandywine Foundation has previously worked with partners to develop a shoreline restoration concept plan, shown in Figure 3. The concept plan should be further developed and implemented to ensure the conservation, preservation, and resiliency of the historic Whitehall site.

Local Community and Public Engagement

Purposeful local community and public engagement and consultation is needed in all future studies and planning. Community and public engagement provides the opportunity for meaningful communication between the Brandywine Foundation and the community, and allows for the community's ideas and concerns to be identified and incorporated into decisions that ultimately affect them.

Figure 3. Whitehall Shoreline Restoration Concept Plan

Source: Brandywine Foundation



The sub-sections and associated tables below summarize water-based and land-based access improvement options.

Water-based Access Improvement Options

Providing water-based public access to the site from Annapolis as the primary form of access could be a unique visitor experience opportunity that is well aligned with the historic access and use of the site, as many of Governor Sharpe’s visitors arrived by boat. Primarily using water-based public access would also minimize any impacts to traffic on Whitehall Road. The TAG team investigated siting options for a future public ferry dock along Whitehall Creek near where the team believes to be the historic working dock location (Figure 4; Figure 5; Appendix A). Using the working dock location could offer historic and cultural value by honoring the enslaved populations that previously inhabited the site. Based on the TAG site visit, a ferry trip from Annapolis City Dock to the Whitehall Site is estimated to take approximately 30 minutes. While on site, the TAG team also investigated siting options for non-motorized craft access areas. Table 1 lists potential actions for water-based access improvement options and notes potential advantages and disadvantages.

Table 1. Water-Based Access Improvement Options

Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Planning Level Cost Estimate
Design and construct ferry dock	Instrumental for future public ferry access Ferry service from Annapolis can begin	Funding needed for design and construction of ferry dock	\$150,000+
Improve Holly Walk trail	Adds connection between the Estate House and ferry dock Improves accessibility for visitors arriving by public ferry	Funding needed for making Holly Walk an accessible trail	\$75,000
Implement non-motorized craft area improvements	Public non-motorized craft access for visitors can begin	Funding needed to implement non-motorized craft area improvements	\$25,000

Figure 4. Whitehall Site Water-Based Access Priority Improvement Locations



Figure 5. Whitehall Site Water-based Access Images



Land-based Access Improvement options

Public access to Whitehall is primarily envisioned to be water-based; however, some land-based access accommodations are needed, such as for visitors with accessibility needs. As public access to the site is strategically considered, minimal improvements to parking, road access, and wayfinding for visitors are anticipated (Table 2; Figure 6; Figure 7).

Parking capacity and siting options

To limit traffic along Whitehall Road and on the site, the Foundation can consider limiting the number of general public parking spaces on the property. There is potential to create a new parking area located closer to the entry point of the property. The parking area could be limited to approximately 15 parking spaces, which would have minimal traffic impacts on Whitehall Road.

There is a small parking area immediately adjacent to the Estate House. This parking area could be used for visitors with accessibility needs. The main parking site that is used for weddings and events is not conducive to daily visitor parking due to its location in the viewshed to Chesapeake Bay.

The Foundation may also want to conduct a future study to investigate parking alternatives and traffic relief, such as the use of nearby offsite parking areas with shuttle buses for events

Road improvement options

The Whitehall Site entrance road and onsite dirt driveway are very narrow, often requiring vehicles to pull onto the driveway shoulder to let larger vehicles pass. During events, the Foundation may want to use traffic management personnel to direct traffic and limit vehicle interaction. Temporary signage may be added to direct vehicle traffic to visitor parking areas.

Trail network improvement options

The current network of horse trails are unmapped and unsigned. The Foundation may want to investigate adding trail maps and trail markers to ensure visitors using the trails stay on designated paths and avoid areas of archeological concern.

When the Broadneck Peninsula Trail is completed, it will provide a bicycling connection between Sandy Point State Park and Annapolis, with further connections via the Baltimore and Annapolis (B&A) trail. A connection from the Broadneck Peninsula Trail to the Whitehall site is not currently planned; however, future study of this connection could be useful to consider opportunities to enhance public access by pedestrians and bicyclists.

Table 2. Land-Based Access Improvement Options

Action	Advantages	Disadvantages	Planning Level Cost Estimate
Alternative onsite parking area	Locating parking closer to the entry point of the property would preserve the viewshed	Costs and potential resource impacts; a Phase 1A Archeological Survey would need to be conducted to confirm appropriate use of the site	Phase 1A Archeological Survey and new parking compliance/ design/ construction costs to be determined depending on location(s) and geographic scope and scale.
Traffic Management	Reduces vehicle interactions on the narrow Whitehall Road and Whitehall Site dirt driveway	Using traffic management personnel could be expensive; however, may only be needed during busy times	Approximately \$50 - \$70/hour
Temporary Signage	Provides direction for visitors to onsite parking areas	Temporary signage may have to be put up and removed frequently	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Trail maps and trail markers	Provides directions for visitors on trails Helps visitors stay on designated paths and avoid areas of archeological concern	Requires staff time to map trails and install markers	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Future studies to investigate alternative transportation access to the site, such as regional trail connections and off-site parking with shuttle service	Would allow for public access to and stewardship of the site without increasing personal vehicle traffic on Whitehall Road and the Whitehall property	Implementation would require partnerships and funding	To be determined through future study and potential partnership agreement(s)

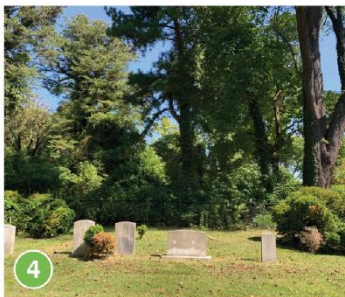
Figure 6. Whitehall Site Land-Based Access Priority Improvement Locations

Whitehall Proposed Improvements: Land



Figure 7. Whitehall Site Land-based Access Images

Whitehall Proposed Improvements: Land



Staffing Considerations

As public access is strategically expanded, considerations need to be made regarding staffing levels for the property. Daily maintenance of the property is currently performed by one property caretaker. Limited additional staff may be needed to support strategic public access, to assist the existing property caretaker with the additional maintenance of a ferry dock, temporary signage, parking areas, and trails.

Develop Long-Term Ownership/Partnership Model for Public Access

Expanding public access at the Whitehall site requires additional resources beyond the current capacity of the Brandywine Foundation. In the short term, the Foundation can pursue grants to support limited public access to the property. The Foundation is interested in identifying a long-term owner and steward of the property to fully realize the longer-term public access vision for the site.

Appendix A: Water-Based Access Siting Options

When the Whitehall property was owned by Governor Sharpe, guests would often arrive by boat from Annapolis. During the site visit, the TAG team investigated multiple siting options for future public ferry docks. The TAG team also investigated opportunities to further expand public access by adding water access by kayaks and other non-motorized crafts.

Historic visitor access is believed to have been via a dock along Whitehall Creek on the southwest corner of the property. However, it is not desired to locate a visitor dock at this location due to severe coastal erosion and wave action caused by common southerly winds. Additionally, historians believe there was a historic “working dock,” likely used by paid and enslaved servants, along Whitehall Creek. The TAG team considered this historic water-based access to the property when looking at the water-based site access strategy. Preferred and backup locations for the ferry dock and non-motorized craft areas are shown in Figure 8. The advantages and disadvantages of the public ferry dock primary and secondary siting options are detailed in Table 3. The advantages and disadvantages for kayaks and other non-motorized crafts primary and secondary siting options are detailed in Table 4.

Figure 8. Water Access Siting Options

Source: Google Maps



Table 3. Ferry Dock Siting Options

Site	Advantages	Disadvantages
Primary: At end of Holly Walk along Whitehall Creek (Site 1 in Figure 8)	<p>Historically, water-based access is believed to have been along Whitehall Creek.</p> <p>Whitehall Creek is surveyed and maintained as a navigable channel by NOAA, USCG, and USACE.</p> <p>Whitehall Creek has existing commercial vessel traffic due to multiple marinas.</p> <p>The selected location is in a calm area protected from common southerly winds.</p> <p>Holly Walk has a gradual grade that can likely be made into an accessible trail in the future.</p> <p>Separation of a ferry dock and non-motorized craft areas improves safety by limiting vessel interactions.</p>	<p>A long dock may be necessary to get into water deep enough for a ferry.</p> <p>Dredging may be required in shallow areas.</p> <p>Construction permitting may be more difficult as there is no documentation of an existing dock in this location.</p>
Secondary: At existing caretaker's house dock location along Meredith Creek (Site 2 in Figure 8)	<p>An existing dock is present at this location.</p>	<p>Meredith Creek is not federally maintained as a navigable channel. Historically, dredging has been performed by private individuals as needed. If not maintained, there is a possibility the channel will become inaccessible to a ferry.</p> <p>Meredith Creek has limited vessel traffic, mostly private boats.</p> <p>Improvements will be needed on the dock and on the access trail to be safe and accessible for visitors.</p> <p>Interaction of ferry and non-motorized craft areas may lead to unsafe vessel interactions.</p>
Not Considered: At existing Cottage House dock location along Meredith Creek (Site 3 in Figure 8)		<p>Cottage House and dock expected to be retained as part of private inholding.</p>

Table 4. Water Access Site Options for Non-motorized Craft

Action	Advantages	Disadvantages
Primary: Sandy Cove along Meredith Creek (Site 4 in Figure 8)	<p>Meredith Creek is calmer and more protected than Whitehall Creek and has limited vessel traffic.</p> <p>The selected location is in a calm area protected from common southerly winds.</p> <p>Shoreline and field are relatively flat near this location, making launching of kayaks easier. Kayak racks/lockers could be located in adjacent field.</p> <p>Located along existing trails.</p>	<p>No existing direct trails from Whitehall Manor to this location.</p>
Secondary: Sandy beach at “Little House” along Meredith Creek (Site 5 in Figure 8)	<p>Meredith Creek is calmer and more protected than Whitehall Creek and has limited vessel traffic.</p> <p>Land-side path already exists between Whitehall Manor and the “Little House.”</p>	<p>More exposed to waves due to common southerly winds.</p> <p>Interactions between public and short-term renters may not be desired.</p>