

## VII. FIELD METHODOLOGY

Archaeological involvement with the backhoe excavations for the street improvement project in the New Bern National Register Historic District consisted of the documenting stratigraphic changes and features exposed in the excavated trench profiles. This work included scaled mapping and photographing, as well as recovering a sample of cultural material from features and soil horizons that were exposed during backhoe excavations. In addition, six 2 x 2 feet shovel tests were excavated along the west profile of the Eden Street trench to retrieve a controlled sample of cultural material.

A total of 940 linear feet of trenching was excavated by backhoe during this project (Figure 23). All field measurements were taken in English units (feet and tenths). Horizontal control was referenced to the pavement. Vertical control was tied to datum points established at selected locations in the study area. All distances reported in the following text are referenced to distances from datum points. Recognized soil deposition zones were identified by comparison with *Munsell Soil Color Charts* (1975). Munsell notations appear in parenthesis after the color name.

Work started along the east edge of pavement at the intersection of Eden Street and Tryon Palace Drive (datum point 1). A backhoe excavated a 5.5-foot wide trench that extended northward to the intersection of Eden Street and Pollock Street, a distance of 680 feet (datum point 2). For the first 240 feet of this street improvement project, archaeological monitoring of the backhoe excavations consisted of line drawings of the east and west profiles of the trench taken at 20 foot intervals. The plan and profile of features or other anomalies were also documented. (Note: Linear measurements pertaining to specific areas of archaeological inspection are reported relative to the datum point established for each trench.)

Field methodology was modified 240 feet north of datum point 1. These changes consisted of separating the archaeological activities from the utility construction. Rather than monitoring during construction, the plan was changed to perform a mechanically assisted clearance prior to construction. This work required having the backhoe operator first remove a section of asphalt and then excavate 0.5-0.7 foot of soil. Then selectively placed shovel tests were excavated on Eden Street to sample the exposed section. Shovel testing was initiated at 430 feet north of datum 1 and was discontinued at 560 feet north of datum 1. Excavation was by recognizable deposition zones into sterile subsoil. All fill from shovel tests was dry-screened through ¼-inch mesh hardware cloth and soil profiles were noted.

For the remaining 70 feet of the Eden Street trench, archaeological monitoring during backhoe excavation was resumed. No archaeological features were exposed and documentation of the exposed stratigraphy consisted of the documentation of a representative trench profile 575 feet north of datum 1. As there were no observable stratigraphic changes in the last 105 feet of the Eden Street trench, with the exception of discontinuities associated with a storm sewer drain box and a catch basin at the intersection of Eden Street and Pollock Street, no further documentation was conducted on Eden Street.

Mechanical excavation continued east from datum point 2 following the southern edge of the pavement on Pollock Street for 118 feet, terminating at datum point 3. Within this section of the project archaeological involvement consisted of monitoring during backhoe excavations. The stratigraphy of the Pollock Street trench was documented in two profile cuts, at 30 feet and 45 feet east of datum point 2. North and south profiles in this trench were recorded. Two cultural features (Features 8 and 9) were documented in the Pollock Street trench. In order to photograph, map and excavate them, construction associated with the street improvement project was halted.

Mechanical excavation of the trench was then re-oriented north to cross the 32-foot width of Pollock Street and converge with the storm drain on George Street. Exposed in the profile were the nineteenth- to early twentieth-century trolley tracks, as well as the main sewer and water lines.

The last section of the street improvements consisted of the excavation of approximately 100 feet of trench along the west curb of George Street. This section of work began at the drain box located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Pollock and George streets, approximately 40 feet north of datum

point 3. The width of this trench was reduced to three feet in order to avoid unforeseen difficulties that may have resulted from the removal of concrete paving.

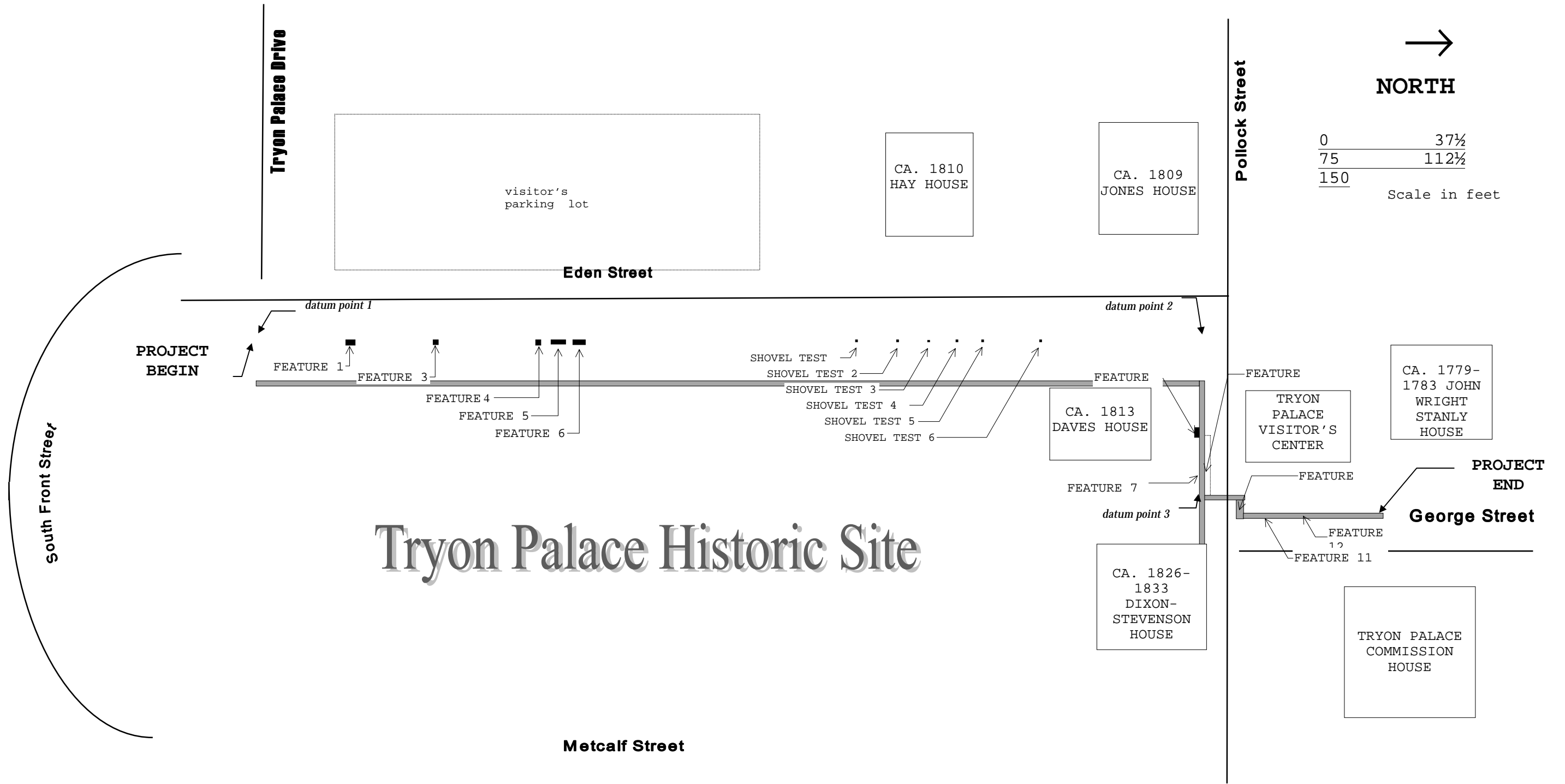


Figure 23. Site plan showing the location of datum points, features and shovel tests.

The last section of the street improvements consisted of the excavation of approximately 100 feet of trench along the west curb of George Street. This work began at the drain box located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Pollock and George streets, approximately 40 feet north of datum point 3. The width of this trench was reduced to three feet in order to avoid unforeseen difficulties that may have resulted from the removal of concrete paving.

This project presented some concern about maintaining control as cultural resources were being rapidly excavated in a highly visible and active tourist, commercial and residential area. As the construction work was planned to ensure that both pedestrian and vehicle traffic would be exposed to minimal interference or risk, it became apparent that construction in more than one area required archaeological monitoring in separate locations at the same time.

To maintain horizontal control, a provenience code was established to correlate materials recovered to a general location. These were designated as follows: Eden Street Trench (EST), Pollock Street Trench (PST), the trench across Pollock Street (XPT) and George Street Trench (GST). Provenience identification is indexed in Appendix A.

Material type and diagnostic attributes (Appendix B) cataloged cultural materials recovered during this project. Ceramic material was the primary artifact type that was used to assign stratigraphic zones and features in a temporal framework. A list of the cultural material associated with each provenience (Appendix A) is included with the documentation of the soil horizons and features. A complete artifact catalog appears in Appendix B. Provenience, material classification, types and diagnostic attributes (Appendix C) categorize artifact tabulation.

Updated site information has been recorded and submitted to the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology. Site dimensions and other location information were derived from field estimates and/or measurements taken from topographic maps and aerial photography. Artifacts and records will be maintained at the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Planning and Environmental Branch in Raleigh.

Fieldwork was conducted between April 10 and June 9, 1995. Monitoring during construction was provided, as needed, by John Clauser, SHPO archaeologist; Anna Gray, Deborah Joy and Megan O'Connell, NCDOT archaeologists; and John Green, curator of archaeology for Tryon Palace. Periodically throughout the project, assistance was provided by Tryon Palace groundskeepers and the NCDOT construction team that included inmates from the Department of Corrections.