

## 5.7 HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

In accordance with FAA Order 1050.1D, *Policies and Procedures for Determining Environmental Impacts*, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must include an investigation of impacts due to Federal undertakings upon areas of historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance.<sup>1</sup> The importance of these sites is determined in terms of its uniqueness, its association with persons or events of importance to our nation's cultural heritage, or its ability to provide meaningful knowledge concerning events of the past. In addition, such a site might appear or be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose of this section is to identify the archaeological and architectural resources of historical and cultural significance found within the airport environs. Applicable Federal regulations are outlined in this section followed by an assessment of the impacts on the resources due to each of the proposed alternatives.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires an initial review to determine whether any properties in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places are in the area of each of the proposed alternative's potential environmental impact.

The Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 requires the survey, recovery, and preservation of significant scientific, prehistoric, historical, or archaeological data when such data may be destroyed or irreparably lost due to a Federal, Federally licensed, or Federally funded action.

The area impacted by the Proposed Action is defined by the FAA as that geographic area within which direct and indirect impacts generated by the Proposed Action could reasonably be expected to occur and consequently cause a change in the historic, architectural, and/or archaeological qualities possessed by the property. Impacts to historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources would be coordinated through the Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (HPHC) of Rhode Island.

### **Alternative 1: 2003 Baseline Condition (No-Build/No-Action)**

No developments or changes to the airport are proposed under this alternative, therefore there would be no impacts to any historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural resources.

One historic structure, the original terminal building of the Rhode Island State Airport, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and is located on airport property. Flanked on either side of the original terminal building are Hangar #1 and the Air National Guard Hangar, used primarily by air cargo aircraft, which may also be eligible for listing on the NRHP. These structures are an integral part of the original and existing airport infrastructure. They are, however, impacted by all three of the alternatives

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Aviation Administration & U.S. Department of Transportation. *Airport Environmental Handbook*, (Order 5050.4A Section 47 (e)(8)). 1985.

presented in here because they are within the 65+ DNL noise contours. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission determined that the impact would not be greater or lesser under any impact, and that there would be no significant detracting of the historic character or setting of these early transportation buildings. Their letter is included in Appendix B.

**Alternative 2:**  
**2003 Air Traffic Actions from the NCP Update**

The actions proposed under Alternative 2 are modifications to current air traffic procedures and would create noise impacts to the surrounding environment. Any historic structure located within the 65 DNL or greater noise contour created by the proposed air traffic changes would be considered to be impacted.

Upon survey of the area and thorough coordination with the Rhode Island HPHC<sup>2</sup>, it was determined that no historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural structure or resource would be impacted by the actions proposed under this alternative, outside of the three on airport property as described under Alternative 1.

**Alternative 3:**  
**2003 Air Traffic Actions and Increased Utilization of the SWAP Route (Proposed Action)**

The actions proposed under Alternative 3, the Proposed Action, are also modifications to current air traffic procedures that contribute to the noise impacts on the surrounding environment. Any historic structure located within the 65 DNL or greater noise contour created by the Proposed Action would be considered to be impacted. The historic structures on the airport are impacted under this alternative but would not suffer detracting from their historical character.

A survey of the area considering the effects of the Proposed Action does not show any impacts to historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural structure or resources outside of the three on airport property as described under Alternative 1.

<sup>2</sup> Coordination letter from state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission. Signed by Richard Greenwood. August 18, 1999. See Appendix F for letter.