



## **2.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

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### 2.1 Introduction

The proposed action is the establishment of an AFM at the Naval Annex site. Conceptually, the Memorial structure and its surrounding environment would combine architecture, landscape, and sculpture in an expression of symbolic themes related to the Air Force, its predecessors, and flight in general. The Air Force and its predecessor organizations are made up of many individuals with diverse responsibilities and accomplishments that strive to support the Force's mission in the air.

This EA analyzes three alternatives: Alternative Concept A, which is the Preferred Alternative, Alternative Concept B, which is a site plan variation of the preferred alternative, and Alternative Concept C, which is the No-Action Alternative. This chapter also discusses the background regarding other potential sites, specifically the Arlington Ridge site, that were previously examined for establishing an AFM.

### 2.2 Alternative Concept A – Preferred Alternative

As authorized by Congress, the site for the proposed Memorial includes the promontory adjacent to, and the land underlying Wing 8 of the FOB #2 (see Figure 1-3). As a design consideration, this site is a hilltop location overlooking the Pentagon and the monumental core of Washington D.C. A feeling of altitude and a sense of the horizon are strong characteristics of the promontory location. Also significant is the spectacular view of Washington D.C. offered from this location.

Memorial Design: The main element of the Memorial would be three vertical spires of varying heights, extending from a proposed height of approximately 200 feet above the base for the shortest spire to approximately 270 feet for the tallest spire. At the base of the monumental spires, complementary elements would include an honor guard sculpture, a contemplation chamber, an Air Force Members Chamber, a seating area, pedestrian walkways, and a parking area. The monumental spires would be located at the edge of the promontory area (See Figures 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3). Wing 8 of FOB #2 and the parking area to its east would be removed to create space for the Memorial. The three spires would rise from the edges of a triangle. Each individual piece would have a different height that, from a distance, would appear as contrails in different stages of dispersion. The width of the monument's spires would be slightly greater than 92 feet at their widest, curving outwards to convey an image of dispersion (see Figures 2-3a and 2-3b). The proportion of the monument, with respect to the ratio between its height and width, has been designed to achieve a sense of soaring, while providing space at the base for complementary functional elements.

The original design that was selected through a competition process had the tallest spire at 322 feet. Through several renditions and drawings, and after discussions with several agencies, this height has subsequently been reduced to 270 feet. The design architect and the Foundation believe that a Memorial at a lower height would not achieve the desired "soaring" effect and would result in a Memorial that appears gravity-laden and earth-bound. As a result, a shorter memorial would be at odds with the nature of the Air Force mission.

The Air Force Members Chamber would be located in the middle of the triangle formed by the bases of the three spires. This chamber would be defined by three nine foot high glass panels that would be open to the sky and would be inscribed with images and text describing the various past, present, and future components of the Air Force. A five-pointed star, the symbol of the Air Force, would be inscribed at the base of this chamber. The chamber would be open to the public and would offer dramatic vistas of Washington, D.C., particularly in the evening.

Another element of the Memorial site is a proposed ceremonial parade ground located to the west of the monumental spires. This space, rectilinear in shape, would include a Contemplation Chamber at the northern end, an honor guard at the southern end, and a seating area. The Contemplation Chamber would be enclosed by 12 foot high glass panels with additional inscriptions and would be open to sky.

Two small service buildings, approximately 1,000 square feet in combined size, including rest rooms, a small office for on-site personnel, information kiosk and space for mechanical equipment, would be located further to the west of the parade ground.

Site Layout and Operations: Vehicular access to the site is proposed from Columbia Pike to the south. A three-lane access driveway would culminate in a bus turnaround at the northern end of the site. Most visitors would be provided a glimpse of the Memorial before reaching the turnaround and parking at the western portion of the site. Based on the visitation levels at other memorials, a total of 24 parking spaces are proposed, including four spaces for persons with disabilities. In addition, parking space for three buses is proposed along the turn-around. A landscaped buffer area that would include a berm and new trees would separate the Memorial area from FOB # 2. The Memorial is anticipated to be open to public by September 2006. During an interim period, from 2006 till 2010, FOB #2 would continue to function as office space. While FOB # 2 is operational, visitors would park in a dedicated parking area to the south of Columbia Pike (see Figure 2-1). It is anticipated that the proposed Memorial would be open to public during the day and evening.

Future Condition: The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106-65), provides for the transfer of the Naval Annex site to the Arlington National Cemetery. Subsequent to 2010, the remaining portions of FOB #2 are anticipated to be demolished to create space allowing the Cemetery to expand. According to a concept plan (discussed later under Section 3.1.2 of this document) prepared for the Cemetery's expansion, the area to the west of the proposed AFM would be used for ground interments.

Once FOB #2 is demolished, the proposed AFM would be located on land that would become part of the Arlington National Cemetery (see Figure 2-4). Alternative Concept A proposes to retain the proposed access to the Memorial precinct off Columbia Pike, as well as establish internal vehicular and pedestrian connections with proposed streets and sidewalks within the Cemetery. Also, subsequent to the demolition of FOB #2, visitors would be allowed to park at the proposed parking area within the AFM precinct.



Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP



**LEGEND**

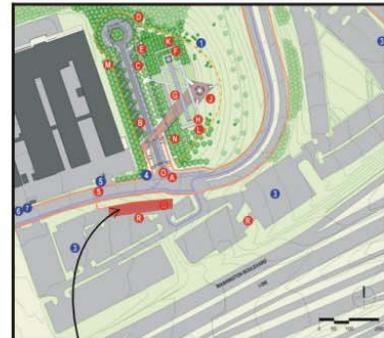
**PROPOSED CONDITIONS**

- A. Memorial Entry
- B. Visitor Parking - Future Condition
- C. Handicap Parking - Future Condition
- D. Bus Parking / Turnaround - Future Condition
- E. Service Building
- F. Contemplation Chamber
- G. Parade Ground
- H. Honor Guard
- J. Monument - Soaring Spires
- K. Chamber Backdrop Wall
- L. Honor Guard Backdrop Wall
- M. New Trees / Landscape Buffer
- N. Demolished Building 8
- O. Memorial Gate
- Q. Visitor/Handicap Parking - Interim Condition
- R. Replacement Parking for Navy Annex
- S. New Crosswalk

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

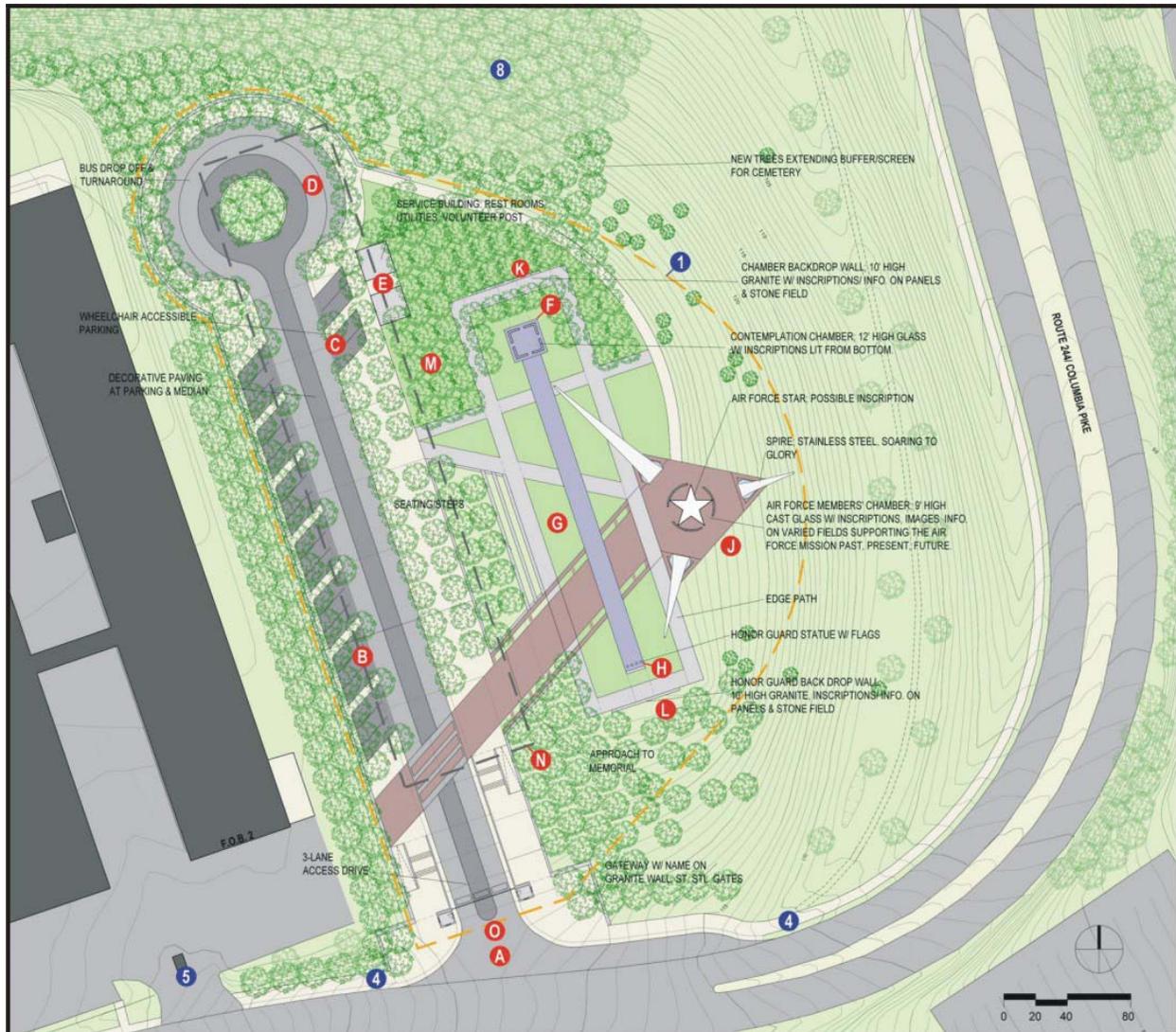
- 1. Project Site - 3 acres
- 2. Existing Parking
- 3. Remote Parking
- 4. Pedestrian Access
- 5. Vehicular Access
- 6. Bus Stop
- 7. Security Checkpoint
- 8. Existing Vegetation
- 9. Existing Crosswalk

**PROPOSED PLAN**



**PARKING LOCATION DURING INTERIM CONDITION**

**Figure 2-1: Alternative Concept A – Preferred Alternative**



Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP



**LEGEND**

**PROPOSED CONDITIONS**

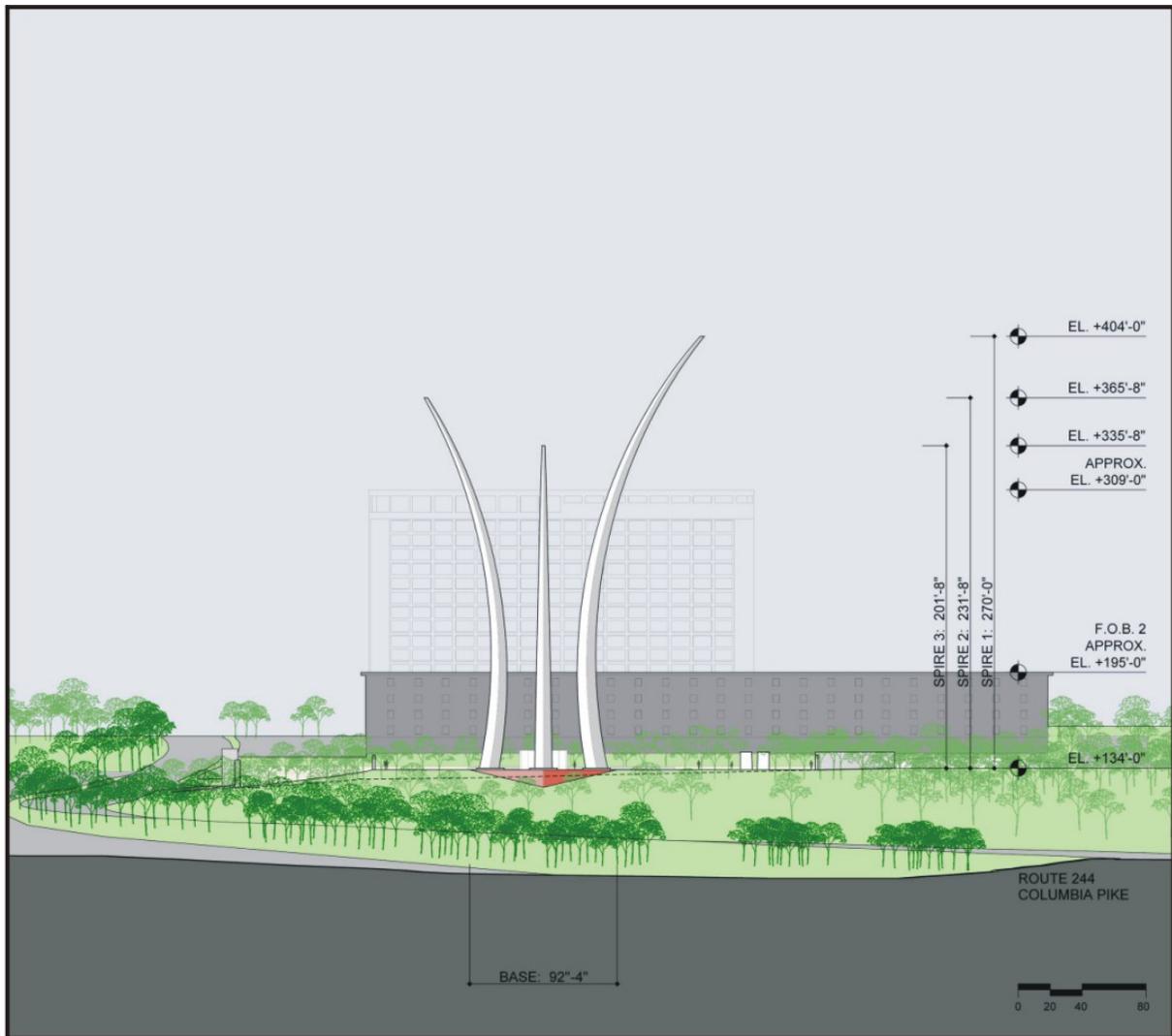
- A. Memorial Entry
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- O. Memorial Gate

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

- 1. Project Site - 3 acres
- 4. Pedestrian Access
- 5. Vehicular Access
- 8. Existing Vegetation

**Figure 2-2: Detailed Plan, Alternative Concept A, Preferred Plan**



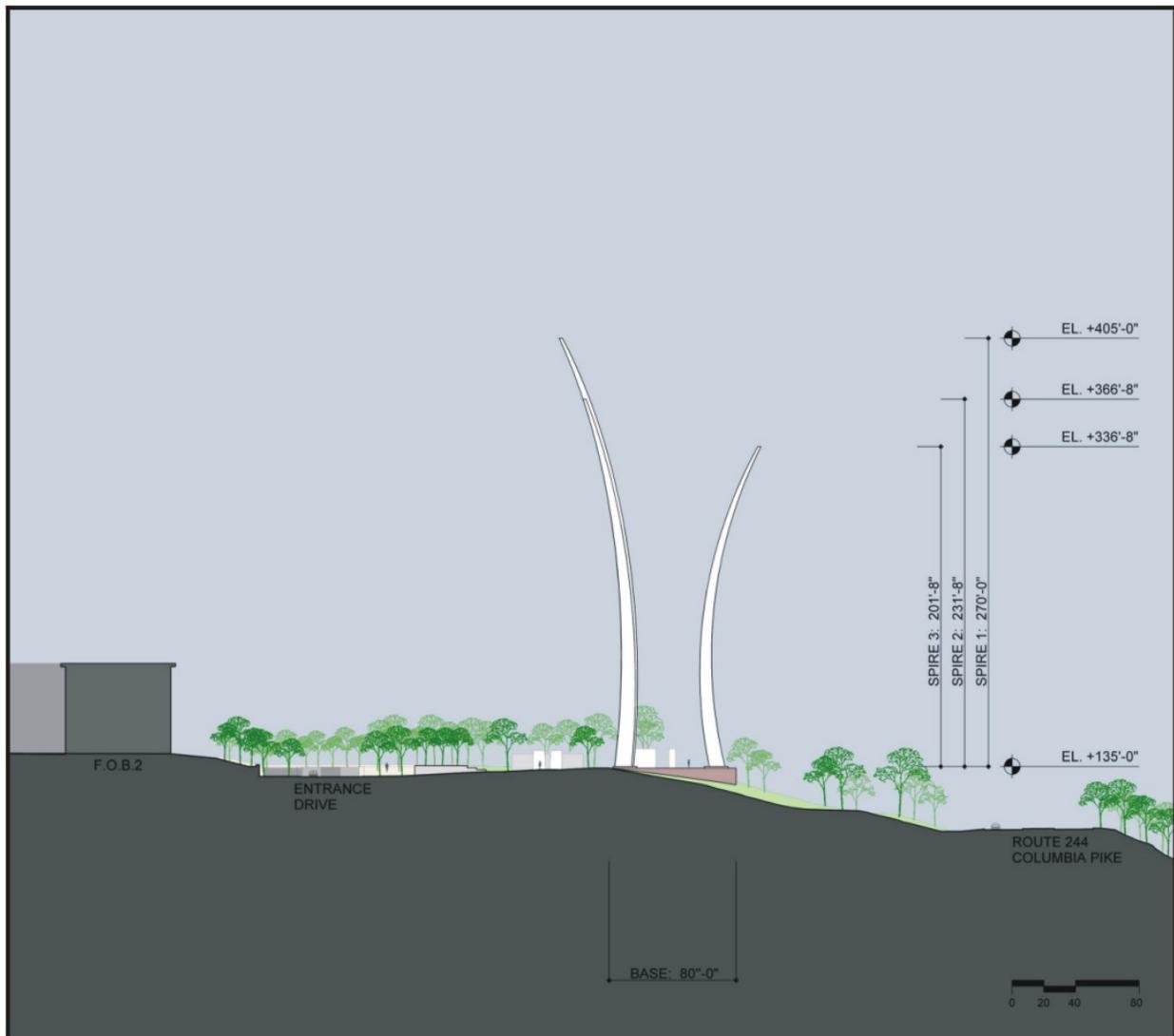
Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP

**EAST ELEVATION**



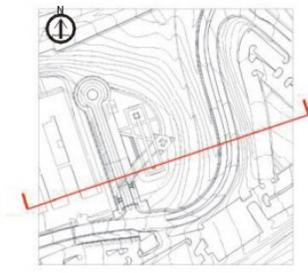
Elevation Location

**Figure 2-3a: East Elevation**



Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP

**SOUTH ELEVATION**



Elevation Location

**Figure 2-3b: South Elevation**



Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP

	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <p><b><u>PROPOSED CONDITIONS</u></b></p> <p>A. Memorial Entry                  B. Visitor Parking - Future Condition                  C. Handicap Parking - Future Condition                  D. Bus Parking / Turnaround - Future Condition                  E. Service Building                  F. Contemplation Chamber                  G. Parade Ground                  H. Honor Guard                  J. Monument - Soaring Spires</p>	<p>K. Chamber Backdrop Wall                  L. Honor Guard Backdrop Wall                  M. New Trees / Landscape Buffer                  N. Demolished Building 8                  O. Memorial Gate                  S. New Crosswalk</p>	<p><b><u>EXISTING CONDITIONS</u></b></p> <p>1. Project Site - 3 acres                  3. Remote Parking                  4. Pedestrian Access                  6. Bus Stop                  7. Security Checkpoint                  8. Existing Vegetation                  9. Existing Crosswalk</p>
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**Figure 2-4: Alternative Concept A – Preferred Alternative, Future Condition**

### **2.3 Alternative Concept B – Remote Parking Alternative**

Alternative Concept B includes the construction of the same AFM structure as the preferred alternative; however, the site improvements would differ from those in the preferred alternative. Under Alternative Concept B, the memorial design would be the same as the preferred alternative and would include the three spires varying in height between approximately 200 to 270 feet, an honor guard sculpture, a Contemplation Chamber, an Air Force Members Chamber, a ceremonial parade ground, a seating area and two service structures.

Unlike the preferred alternative, Alternative B proposes vehicular access and parking to the northeast, off Southgate Road (see Figure 2.5, Alternative Concept B). Also, under Alternative Concept B, vehicular parking, including the bus parking and parking for persons with disabilities, would be located at the lower elevation adjacent to Southside Road. A gradually sloped, pedestrian path would lead visitors from the parking area up to the main portion of the Memorial. The plan eliminates any vehicular access off Columbia Pike. Additional landscaping is proposed to the north and west of the Memorial area. This Alternative locates the parking and the main pedestrian path outside the three acres allocated by Congress.



Source: Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects LLP



**LEGEND**

- A. Memorial Entry
- B. Visitor Parking
- C. Handicap Parking
- D. Bus Parking / Turnaround

- E. Service Building
- F. Contemplation Chamber
- G. Parade Ground
- H. Honor Guard

- J. Monument - Soaring Spires
- K. New Trees / Landscape Buffer
- L. Demolished Building 8

**Figure 2-5: Alternative Concept B – Remote Parking Alternative**

## **2.4 Alternative Concept C – No Action Alternative**

The no action alternative assumes that the existing office functions at the Naval Annex site would continue. More specifically, Wing 8 would remain standing and occupied as offices. In addition, the existing parking area and pavement at the promontory location would remain, as would the existing sloped terrain down to Columbia Pike.

Under Alternative C, subsequent to 2010 when the expansion of Arlington Cemetery is planned, the Naval Annex site would be redeveloped and incorporated into the cemetery. However, unlike the proposed action, Wing 8 would remain functioning until then and would be demolished along with the remaining buildings.

Alternative C (the no action alternative) would not result in the establishment of the AFM at the Naval Annex site. Since the establishment of a commemorative work honoring the United States Air Force has been authorized by Congress, implementation of the no action alternative would necessitate further efforts to establish an AFM elsewhere in Washington, D.C., or its environs.

## **2.5 Background of Previous Sites**

### ***2.5.1 Background of Previous Site Selection Studies***

Two site selection studies were conducted by the Foundation in the mid-1990s to determine the best location for the proposed AFM. A study undertaken in early 1994 identified 18 possible locations for the AFM in the National Capital Region. The criteria for site selection included: overall access, visibility and impact, connection to Air Force themes, size, potential for positive impact, need to involve other players, flexibility for expressing memorial theme, and capacity of the site to accommodate a building. Based on these criteria, 15 sites were eliminated from further consideration. The three remaining sites included Maryland Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Banneker Circle, and the Arlington Ridge site. The selection process concluded that the Arlington Ridge site was the most favorable.

Based on feedback from the NCPC, a subsequent site selection study was conducted in the spring of 1995 that examined 12 additional sites for the proposed Memorial. At the end of the study, Arlington Ridge site was designated the preferred site and a conceptual design was prepared for a memorial. Additional background information on the Arlington Ridge site is provided in Section 2.5.2 of this document.

### ***2.5.2 Overview of Arlington Ridge Site***

The Arlington Ridge site is located 1.4 miles to the north of the proposed Naval Annex site (See Figure 1-1). The park area is located in Arlington County, Virginia, within the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP), which is a unit of the National Park Service. The Memorial was proposed in a two-acre area within the 27-acre park that includes the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima statue) and the Netherlands Carillon. This space was designated in the 1950s as a site for a future memorial. The Memorial was proposed at the Arlington Ridge site pursuant to the Commemorative Works Act, 40 U.S.C. 1001, et seq. (the CWA), and specific

Congressional Authorization [Public Law 103-163, 107 Stat. 1993] that authorized the Air Force Memorial Foundation to establish the Memorial.

Between 1992 and 2000, four Congressional hearings and debates, nine meetings open to the public, and numerous meetings with public agencies were held to discuss aspects of the AFM. In 1999, an EA was prepared to assess the potential impacts of a proposed AFM at the Arlington Ridge site.

The EA examined five alternatives that involved varying site plans in terms of access and parking. The proposed above-ground structure consisted of a five-pointed star, open to the sky with a height of 50 feet. At one point, a cylindrical-shaped, below-ground space was proposed beneath the Memorial's base. A perimeter observation walkway where visitors could look down on aerial imagery of the earth was proposed to be included within the underground space. The underground element was later eliminated.

As efforts were underway to establish the AFM at the Arlington Ridge site, there were a number of entities who sought to preserve the area surrounding the Iwo Jima statue from further development. As a result, DOD and the Foundation proposed the Naval Annex site as an alternative location for the establishment of the Memorial. In December 2001, Congress passed the Defense Authorization Bill that made this site available to the Foundation for the proposed AFM.

## **2.6 Cumulative Projects**

Planned projects in the area of the AFM project will be considered in conjunction with the Memorial as part of the evaluation of cumulative impacts. These planned projects include: the proposed use of the remaining portion of the Naval Annex site for the expansion of Arlington Cemetery, the realignment of Route 110, the proposed revitalization of Columbia Pike, the proposed Memorial to the Victims of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 on the grounds of the Pentagon, and Arlington County's proposed September 11 Memorial near the Naval Annex site to the south of Columbia Pike.