

November 28, 2022

Mr. Scott Shelton  
Rowan EDC  
204 East Innes St. Suite 220  
Salisbury, NC 28144

### **Cultural Resources Assessment, Background and Literature Review for the Brown Site in Rowan County, North Carolina.**

TRC Environmental Corporation (TRC) is pleased to provide the results of this Cultural Resources Assessment, background and literature review as requested by ESP Associates, Inc. (ESP) detailing the potential for cultural resources being located within the boundaries of the above-referenced location. Figure 1 depicts the previously recorded historic resources and cultural resource investigations identified in the vicinity of the project area.

#### **LOCATION AND PROJECT SCOPE**

The study area is immediately outside (west) the city of Cleveland in Rowan County, North Carolina (Figure 1). The study area is comprised of seven contiguous parcels containing approximately 145 acres on the south side of US Hwy 70. The area is a rapidly developing component of the greater Charlotte, North Carolina metropolitan area. Rowan County is home to retail centers, industry, and increasingly serves as a bedroom community for Charlotte. The project tract is in the Piedmont physiographic province. This province is characterized by rolling hills, clayish soils, and numerous named and unnamed drainages. Elevations in the project tract range from 740-ft Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL) to 780 ft AMSL.

The project tract is a pasture with two spring-fed drainages. A manufacturing facility is across the highway to the north and the vicinity is a mix of farms and light industrial development (Figure 1, Figure 2).

The first step in conducting the desktop review was an examination of the North Carolina Archaeological Site Files at the Office of the State Archaeologist (NC-OSA). These were consulted in order to identify resources that have been recorded during archaeological or historic resources surveys that would significantly impede the development of the project. TRC conducted additional background research at the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDCCR) in Raleigh and via the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office database at HPOWEB. The records examined included a review of master archaeological site maps, state archaeological site files, associated archaeological reports, and previous architectural surveys near the project area. TRC also consulted historic maps, aerial photographs, and reports that were available online or contained with TRC's files.

In addition, the Rowan County on-line GIS database was examined for information regarding land-use in the project area, and a web search was conducted for information regarding recorded cemeteries in the vicinity.

---



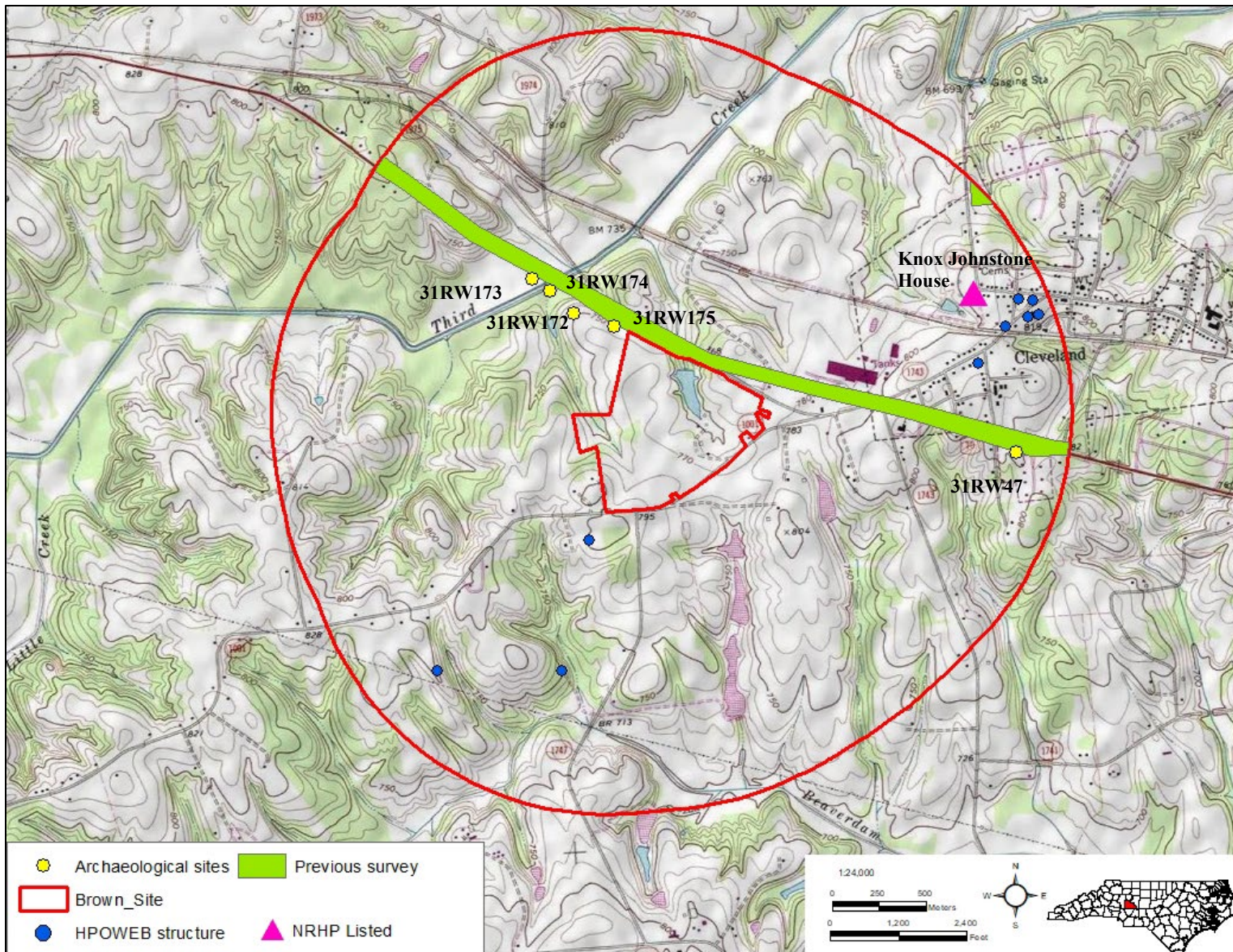


Figure 1. USGS topographic quadrangle showing the project area and cultural resources within a 1.0-mile radius.



Figure 2. Aerial view of the Brown Site property.

## Results

Background research indicated that there are five archaeological sites recorded with NC-OSA within a one-mile radius of the project area, none of which are within the project boundary. Examination of the Rowan County, North Carolina GIS database shows that there are no cemeteries recorded within the project boundaries.

## Previous Investigations

There have been two archaeological surveys conducted within a one-mile radius of the project tract (see Figure 1). One was a linear survey along Hwy 70 that did not locate any sites in or near the project boundaries, the other was north of Cleveland, one mile from the Brown site.

## Archaeological Sites

A review of the files and the records at NC-OSA revealed that there are five previously recorded sites in the 1.0-mile radius of the project tract (Figure 1).

**Table 1. Archaeological sites within a 1.0-mile radius of the project tract.**

Site No.	Resource	NRHP Status
31RW47	Prehistoric scatter	Not Eligible
31RW172	Prehistoric scatter	Not Eligible
31RW173	Prehistoric isolate	Not Eligible
31RW174	Bridge abutment	Not Eligible
31RW175	Prehistoric scatter	Not Eligible

## Surveyed Resources

A review of the Rowan County, North Carolina GIS database shows no cemeteries or historic structures within the project tract (see Figure 1). The HPOWEB database shows 16 resources in the one-mile APE. Of those, five are no longer extant and one is a structure that was moved to a nearby location. No assessment has been made for nine of the ten remaining structures, none of which are in or near the project site. According to the available online data there are no Traditional Cultural Properties or Historic Landmarks within the project boundaries.

## National Register Listed Properties, Traditional Cultural Properties, Historic Landmarks

A review of the National Register files revealed that there is one NRHP Listed property within a 1.0-mile radius of the project tract. The Knox-Johnstone House is 0.8 miles northeast of the project area within Cleveland city limits.

## Historic Map Review

A review of historic maps and aerial photographs indicate that the project area has been woodlands and fields throughout the twentieth century. A 1903 map shows settlement along what is now Amity Hill Road, but none in the tract (Figure 3) and a 1914 map is similar (Figure 4). By 1930 Hwy 70 is in place, and the project tract is ascribed to “C. A. Brown” (Figure 5).

A 1970 topographic map shows two abandoned structures on the property (Figure 6). Based on historic maps it appears that the structures were occupied and abandoned in the mid-twentieth century. However, a 1990 aerial photograph indicates an active farm complex (Figure 7).

---



Figure 3. Approximate location of the project tract 1903.

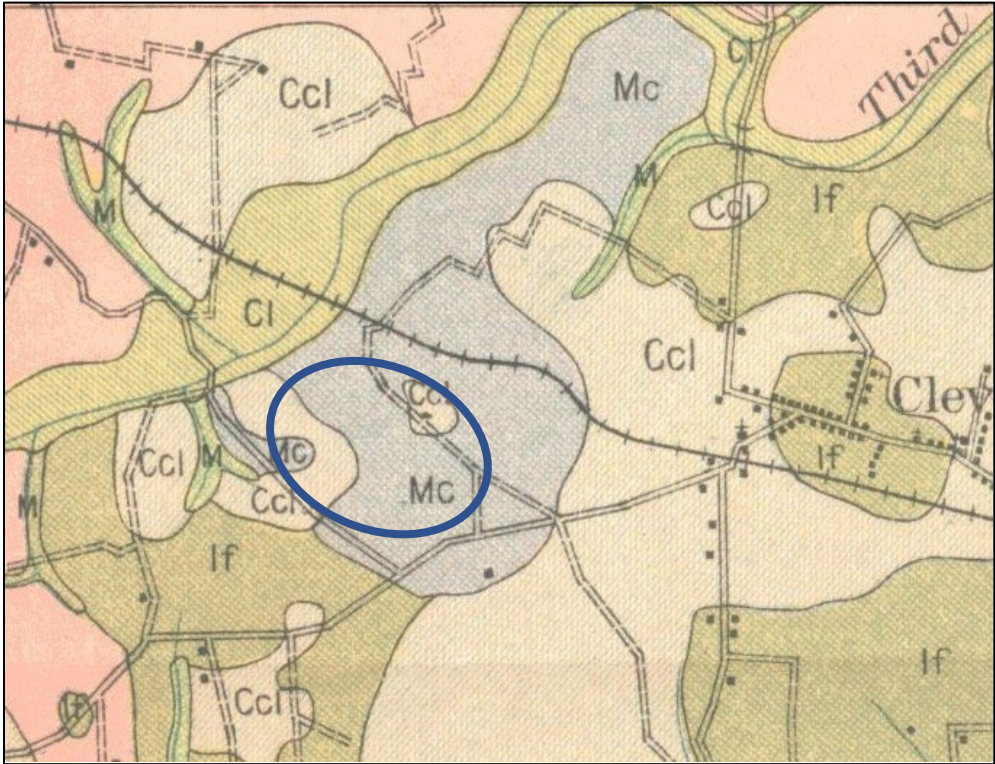


Figure 4. 1914 map of the project area.

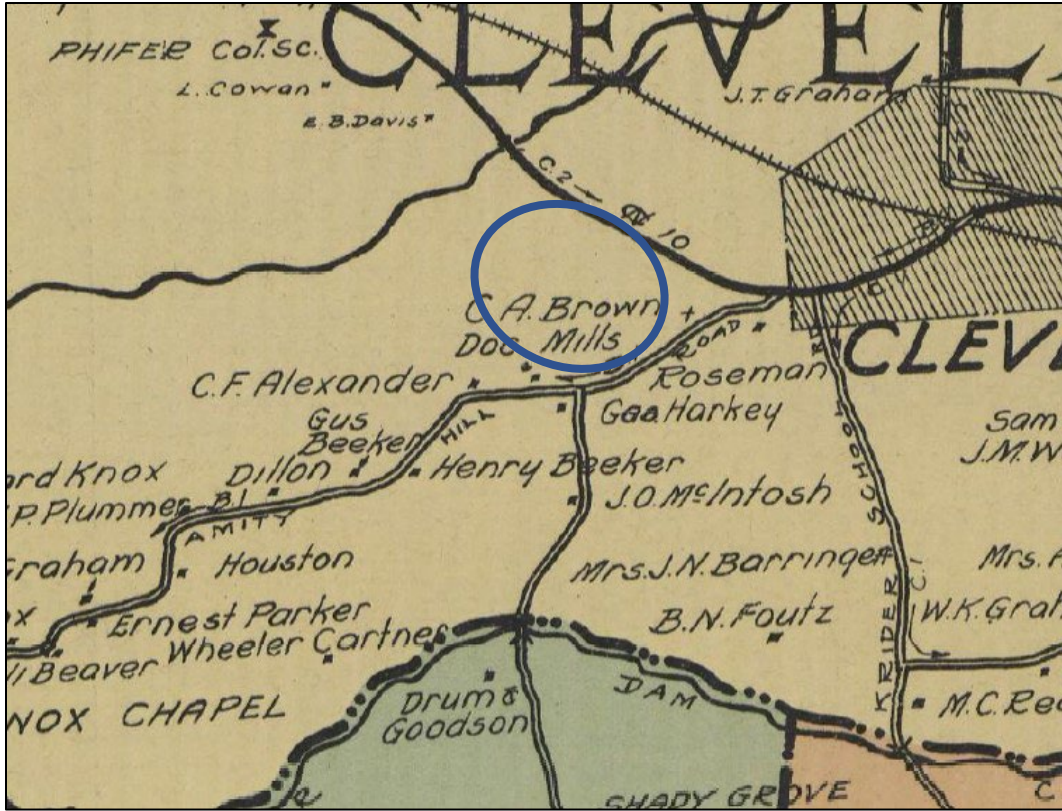


Figure 5. 1930 map of the project area.

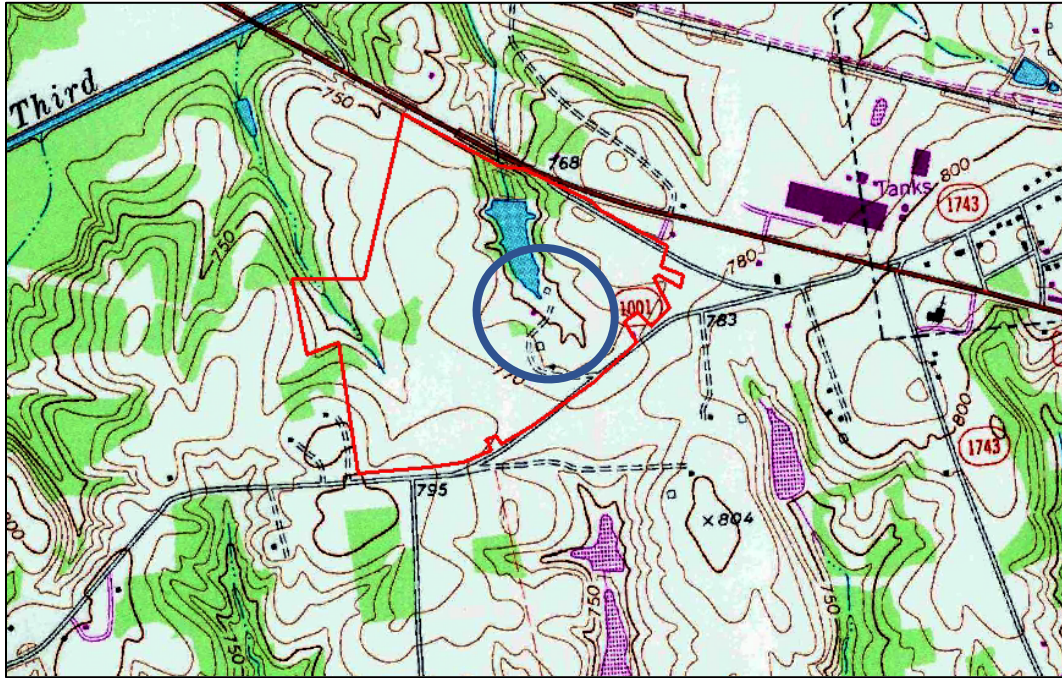


Figure 6. Project tract in 1970, showing abandoned structures.



Figure 7. 1990 aerial view of the project tract showing farmstead.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

Background research indicates that there are no sites or resources recorded in the project tract. There are five sites within a mile of the Brown Site, none of which are eligible for the NRHP. One historic structure within the search radius is listed on the NRHP. The area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources, the areas overlooking water sources are considered to have a high potential for pre-contact Native American sites and historic map research indicates the tract has been occupied as a farmstead for much of the twentieth century. For these reasons, if the project were to require federal permits TRC's believes that the NC SHPO would require an intensive archaeological survey and may require an architectural survey to determine if the project will adversely affect any NRHP eligible resources.

If there is no federal nexus, and during the course of development, human burials are unearthed, work in that area should halt and proper authorities should be notified. Several North Carolina laws protect cemeteries, graveyards, and burial grounds including but not limited to, North Carolina Statutes Chapter 65 Article 12 (Abandoned and Neglected Cemeteries) and Chapter 70 Article 3 (Unmarked Human Burial and Human Skeletal Remains Protection Act). The law provides broad protection to white, black, and Native American graves. It is enforced by the local sheriff, the coroner, and the State Archaeologist.

---



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 803-933-9991 or via e-mail at [snorris@trcsolutions.com](mailto:snorris@trcsolutions.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sean Norris".

Sean Norris, M.A., RPA  
Program Manager, Archaeology