



# INDEX OF TEXAS ARCHAEOLOGY

*Open Access Gray Literature from the Lone Star State*

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Volume 2017

Article 135

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2017

## Intensive Archeological Survey Of Airport Road - Area 1 City Of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

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Gulihur, Caitlin and Scott, Ann M. (2017) "Intensive Archeological Survey Of Airport Road - Area 1 City Of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas," *Index of Texas Archaeology: Open Access Gray Literature from the Lone Star State*: Vol. 2017, Article 135. ISSN: 2475-9333

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## Intensive Archeological Survey Of Airport Road - Area 1 City Of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

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# Cultural Resources Survey

## INTENSIVE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF AIRPORT ROAD – AREA 1 CITY OF GEORGETOWN, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

October 11, 2017

Final Report – Public Copy

Terracon Project No. 96167734A

Antiquities Permit No. 8031

Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA, Principal Investigator



**Prepared for:**

Kasberg Patrick and Associates LP  
Georgetown, Texas

**Prepared by:**

Caitlin Gulihur, MA, RPA and Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA  
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**Terracon**

Environmental



Facilities



Geotechnical



Materials

## **ABSTRACT**

The City of Georgetown has proposed the Airport Road – Area 1 project, approximately 3,300 linear feet of improvements to Airport Road in north Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas. The project engineer, Kasberg Patrick and Associates LP, retained Terracon Consultants, Inc. to conduct a systematic, intensive pedestrian survey of the approximate 4.76-acre project area. Because the City of Georgetown, a political subdivision of the State of Texas, sponsored the project, the proposed undertaking is subject to compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas and oversight from the Texas Historical Commission. In addition, the survey meets the standards for compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, should a US Army Corps of Engineer permit be necessary or federal funding be utilized for the project. The cultural resources survey was carried out in advance of ground disturbance under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8031, issued to Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA, Principal Investigator. Fieldwork was carried out by Dr. Scott, with assistance from Caitlin Gulihur, MA. Records will be curated at the Center for Archaeological Studies, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

The 3,300-linear-foot by 30- to 50-foot wide alignment (4.76 acres) was considered the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Survey of the APE consisted of systematic pedestrian coverage, including discretionary shovel tests. The work was carried out on May 24, 2017. Several linear feet of the project area were agricultural fields and residential yards with ground visibility of up to 90%. Three shovel tests were excavated in areas that had less than 30 percent ground visibility or placed in areas previously undisturbed; no artifacts were observed in these shovel tests. No archaeological sites were recorded or revisited during the course of this survey. No historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or for designation as a State Antiquities Landmark were identified. It is Terracon's recommendation that no historic properties will be affected and that the proposed project proceed as currently designed. In the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during construction, construction should cease in the vicinity of the remains and Terracon, the Texas Historic Commission's Archeology Division, or other proper authorities should be contacted.

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# **INTENSIVE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF AIRPORT ROAD – AREA 1 CITY OF GEORGETOWN, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS**

Terracon Project No. 96167734A

Antiquities Permit No. 8031

October 11, 2017

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

This report presents the negative findings from an intensive pedestrian survey of an approximate 3,300-linear-foot alignment with a width that varies from 30 to 50 feet, for proposed improvements to Airport Road – Area 1, City of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas (Appendix A, Exhibits 1 and 2). The 4.76-acre survey was performed on behalf of the City of Georgetown, a political subdivision of the State of Texas. Therefore, the project is under the purview of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas. In addition, the survey meets the standards for compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, should a US Army Corps of Engineers permit be necessary or federal funding be utilized for the project. The work described herein was performed under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8031, issued to Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA Principal Investigator, and in adherence to Title 13, Chapter 26 of the Texas Administrative Code.

Abiding by standards set forth by the Council of Texas Archaeologists (CTA) for short reports, this negative findings report includes introduction and management summary, defining the area of potential effects, methods, results, and recommendations. The report was authored by Caitlin Gulihur, Project Archeologist, and Ann M. Scott, Principal Investigator.

## **2.0 DEFINING THE AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS**

The project area, which is the same as the area of potential effect (APE), is an approximate 3,300-linear-foot corridor that has a varying width from 30 to 50 feet. The approximate acreage of the APE is 4.76 acres. The project area is located on Airport Road from Halmar Cove to Lakeway Drive in north Georgetown, Texas (See Appendix A, Exhibits 1 and 2). The project begins at the intersection of Airport Road and Lakeway Drive. The alignment crosses several properties, including several agricultural fields, before ending at the intersection of Airport Road and Halmar Cove. The proposed project will widen Airport Road from an existing two-lane paved roadway to a four-lane paved roadway with a center turn lane or median. The sides will be ribbon curb. New right-of-way will be taken on the east side of the existing Airport Road and the intersection at Lakeway Drive will be straightened out to eliminate the curve. A 25-foot-wide drainage easement will be included in the project and as part of the survey area. No improvements are planned for the western side of Airport Road.

### **3.0 RESEARCH AND SURVEY METHODS**

The methods described below were employed to identify and characterize cultural resources present within the APE to the extent practicable. Desktop review focused on identifying previously known cultural materials and understanding the site setting, while fieldwork was used to both search for unknown cultural resources and gather more information based on the desktop review.

#### **3.1 Desktop Review**

Prior to fieldwork, and as part of the Antiquities Code of Texas permit application, background research and a literature search was conducted. This effort included desktop review of mapped geology and soils, search for previously recorded sites and investigations, a review of historic designations such as Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), State Antiquities Landmarks (SALs), National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and historical markers, and an examination of historic maps and aerials for evidence that the APE may have exhibited buildings or other features that may be considered historic (at least 50 years old).

#### **3.2 Intensive Pedestrian Survey**

In order to examine the approximate 4.76-acre APE for previously unknown cultural resources, an intensive pedestrian survey was conducted. The ground surface in the APE was systematically inspected by archeologists walking parallel transects spaced not more than 10 meters (33 feet) apart, for 100 percent coverage. The survey was augmented by shovel testing and three shovel tests were excavated within the APE.

As a general method, shovel tests are excavated to varying depths that target Holocene-aged soils. Sediment was excavated in arbitrary 20-cm levels to depth and passed through ¼-inch hardware mesh. Characteristics and contents of shovel tests are recorded with photographs, forms and notes, and a hand-held global positioning system (GPS) unit; upon completion of excavation and documentation the unit holes and artifacts, if present, are backfilled. Cultural materials encountered through the course of shovel test excavations are described and returned to their approximate origin. Archeological sites, if encountered, would be recorded with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory and be assessed for eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP or designation as a SAL as appropriate. This survey has a “no-collection” policy; therefore, diagnostic artifacts (if encountered) would be documented in the field and not collected. Records will be temporarily housed in Terracon’s office in Austin and will be permanently curated by the Center for Archaeological Studies (CAS) at Texas State University upon completion of the project.

#### **3.3 National Register of Historic Places and State Antiquities Landmark Criteria**

For a historic resource to be deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the resource must be at least 50 years old and must possess significance and integrity. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity

of location design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- a. That are associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d. That have yielded, or may likely to yield, information important in our prehistory or history (36 CFR 60.4).

Additionally, the State of Texas affords important cultural resources a level of protection beyond that of NRHP status if the resource meets the criteria for listing as a SAL. SAL criteria are divided into four categories based on the type of resource: archaeological site, shipwreck, cache and collection, and historic structure. The criteria for archaeological sites are:

- 1) The site has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of the prehistory and/or history of Texas by the addition of new and important information;
- 2) The site's archeological deposits and the artifacts within the site are preserved and intact, thereby supporting the research potential or preservation interest of the site;
- 3) The site possesses unique or rare attributes concerning Texas prehistory and/or history;
- 4) The study of the site offers the opportunity to test theories and methods of preservation, thereby contributing to new scientific knowledge; and
- 5) There is a high likelihood that vandalism and relic collecting has occurred or could occur, and official landmark designation is needed to ensure maximum legal protection, or alternatively, further investigations are needed to mitigate the effects of vandalism and relic collecting when the site cannot be protected (Title 13, Rule 26.10).

## **4.0 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Desktop Review**

Results of the Desktop Review are detailed below.

#### **4.1.1 Mapped Geology and Soils**

The bedrock geology of the project area is identified as Georgetown Limestone (Phanerozoic | Mesozoic | Cretaceous-Early periods) (Kgt) consisting of limestone, mudstone, and marine mega fossils, which are common (Barnes 1992). Three soils and a quarry, which has been filled in are mapped within the APE (Appendix A, Exhibit 3) (USDA NRCS 2017; Werchan and Coker 1983). Doss silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes (DoC) is a shallow (19 inches to bedrock), well-drained soil located on hillslopes. Eckrant cobbly clay, 1 to 8 percent slopes (EaD) is a shallow (12 inches to



bedrock), well-drained soil located on ridges. Denton silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes (DnB) is a deep (52 inches to bedrock), well-drained soil located on hillslopes.

#### **4.1.2 Previous Investigations, Recorded Sites, and Designations**

Review of the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas) and THC geospatial data using a 0.5-mile search buffer shows that only a portion of the proposed project area has been surveyed. No archeological sites or other cultural resources have been recorded in the project APE. Four archeological sites have been recorded within the 0.5-mile buffer. Site 41WM826, site 41WM827, and site 41WM916 are recorded as prehistoric lithic procurement sites. Site 41WM1218 is recorded as a prehistoric lithic scatter. Site 41WM826, site 41WM827, and site 41WM1218 were determined by the THC to be ineligible for NRHP listing. The eligibility of 41WM916 had not been determined by the THC, and no recommendation was made when the site was recorded. However, the potential research value of the site was noted as low.

No previously designated RTHLs, SALs, or NRHP listed or District properties are present within the 0.5-mile search area.

#### **4.1.3 Historic Imagery and Maps**

Historic-period topographic maps dating back over 100 years cover the project area. Several years were examined including 1885, 1925, 1949, 1976, and 1982. The 7.5-minute quadrangle maps from show several structures near the APE. Historic aerials were also reviewed, the earliest of which was dated 1941. Others were dated 1953, 1964, 1974, 1981, 1988, 1995, 2004, and 2014. One historic structure, which was located adjacent to the APE, was observed in the aerials.

### **4.2 Intensive Pedestrian Survey**

The intensive pedestrian survey of the APE resulted in thorough coverage of the parcel at 5 to 10 m intervals and the excavation of three shovel tests (Appendix A, Exhibit 4). The APE was located east of the existing Airport Road and was relatively flat in topography. The APE was covered in short, local grasses and leaf litter from oak trees; overall ground surface visibility was moderate and averaged 30 to 50 percent (Appendix B, Photos 1 and 2). Three shovel tests were placed in areas that appeared undisturbed and had less than 30 percent visibility (Appendix B, Photo 3) (see Appendix C for shovel test log). No cultural materials were observed during shovel testing.

One historic house, observed on the aerials and topographic maps, was located outside of the project APE (Appendix B, Photo 4). The house and surrounding features could not be closely examined given that they were located outside of the right-of-way (ROW) alignment for the project. A possible historic feature, a hole covered with concrete and limestone blocks, was located west of the house within the APE (Appendix B, Photo 5). The feature, possibly a well, was marked with a GPS unit (See Appendix A, Exhibit 4). The ground surface near the feature and house was carefully inspected for cultural material. Three small glass shards were observed consisting of two clear flat glass fragments that were found near the possible well, and one piece

of blue container glass that was found closer to the existing Airport Road. Due to the low density of cultural material, the lack of diagnostic features and artifacts, and the lack of clear association between the few cultural materials which were found, this location was not recorded as a site. No other cultural materials were observed during the survey.

The northern portion of the alignment, in between Halmar Cove and Aviation Drive, could not be surveyed due to lack of Right of Entry (ROE). A large portion of this area is an abandoned quarry (see Appendix A, Exhibit 3), and thus, would not contain intact cultural materials. In addition, the area without ROE was observed from public roadways. It is clear that it has been heavily disturbed from landscaping activities and would likely not contain intact cultural materials (Appendix B, Photos 6 and 7).

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Terracon archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of an approximately 3,300-linear-foot by 30 to 50-linear-foot wide (4.76-acre) APE in advance of the proposed improvements to Airport Road by the City of Georgetown in Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas. The project area was systematically surveyed by two people and 3 shovel tests were placed within the APE. Isolated historic cultural materials were observed; however, no sites were recorded.

It is Terracon's opinion that there are no historic properties in the APE eligible for listing on the NRHP or for designation as a SAL. Therefore, Terracon recommends that no further work is necessary for the project as currently designed and that the project be allowed to proceed. In the unlikely event that human remains or intact cultural resources are discovered during construction, construction should cease in the vicinity of the discovery and Terracon, the Texas Historical Commission's Archeology Division, or other proper authorities should be contacted.

## **6.0 REFERENCES CITED**

Barnes, Virgil E.

1992 Geologic Map of the Texas. Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin.

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Werchan, Leroy E. and John L. Coker

1983 *Soil Survey of Williamson County, Texas*. Soil Conservation Service. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC.

**Cultural Resources Services**

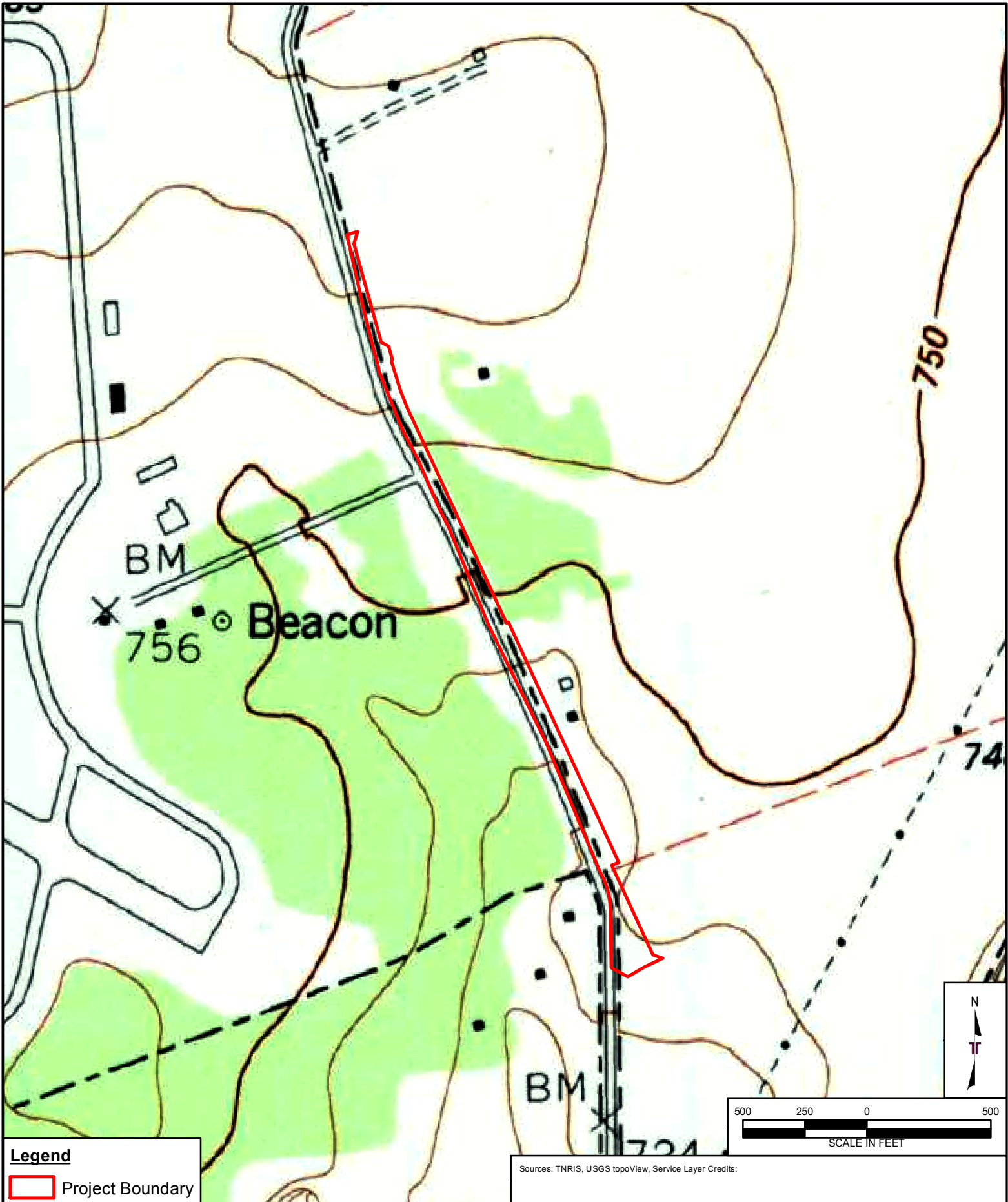
Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96167734A



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Exhibit Maps**



**Legend**

Project Boundary

Sources: TNRS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	JC
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96167734A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96167734A
Date:	May 3, 2017

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1995 USGS Topographic Maps: Georgetown  
 Airport Road - Area 1  
 Airport Road (Lakeway Drive to Halmar Cove)  
 Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
1



**Legend**

Project Boundary

Sources: TNRIS, USDA WSS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

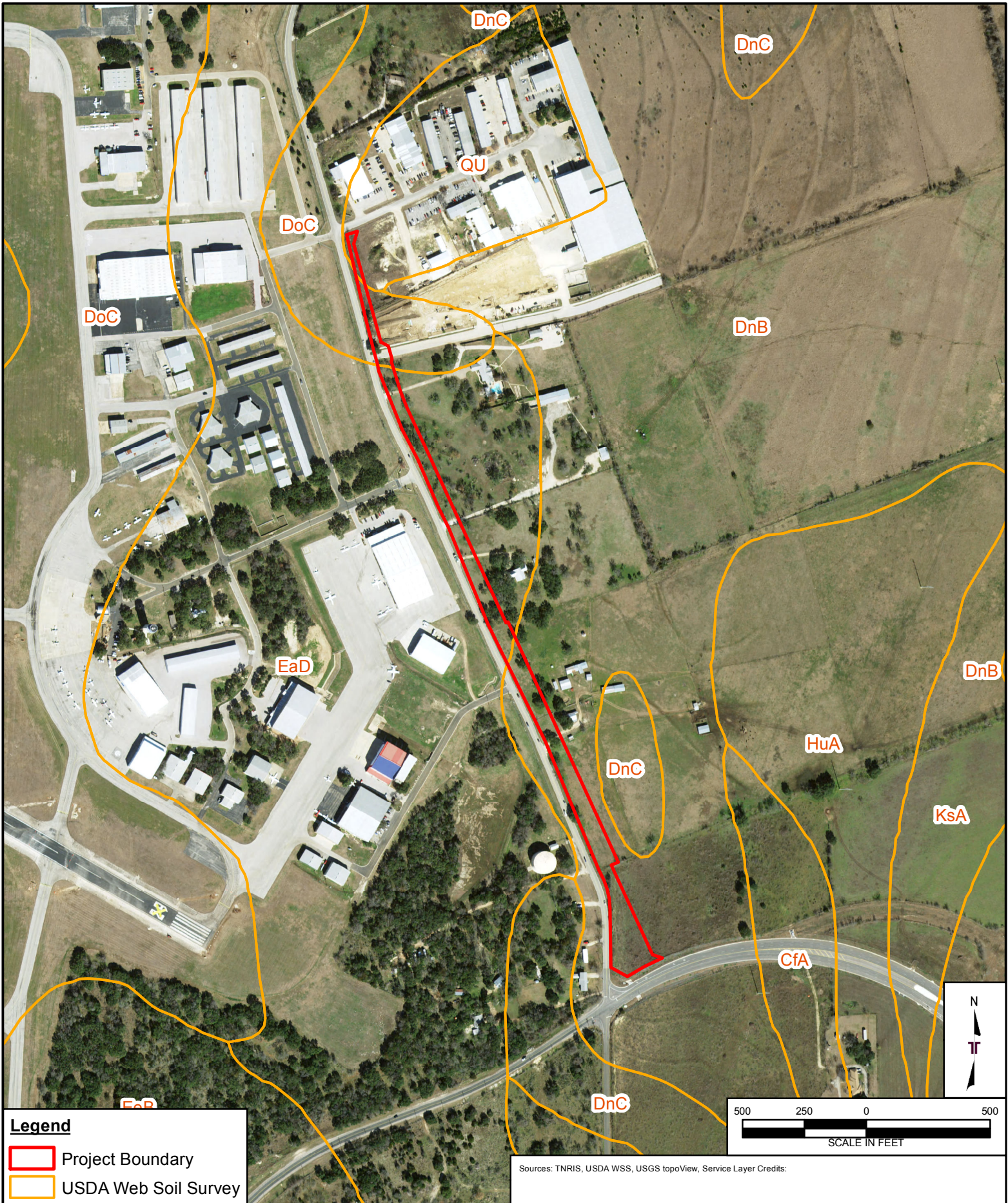
Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	JC
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96167734A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96167734A
Date:	May 3, 2017

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2015 Aerial Photograph  
 Airport Road - Area 1  
 Airport Road (Lakeway Drive to Halmar Cove)  
 Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT  
 2



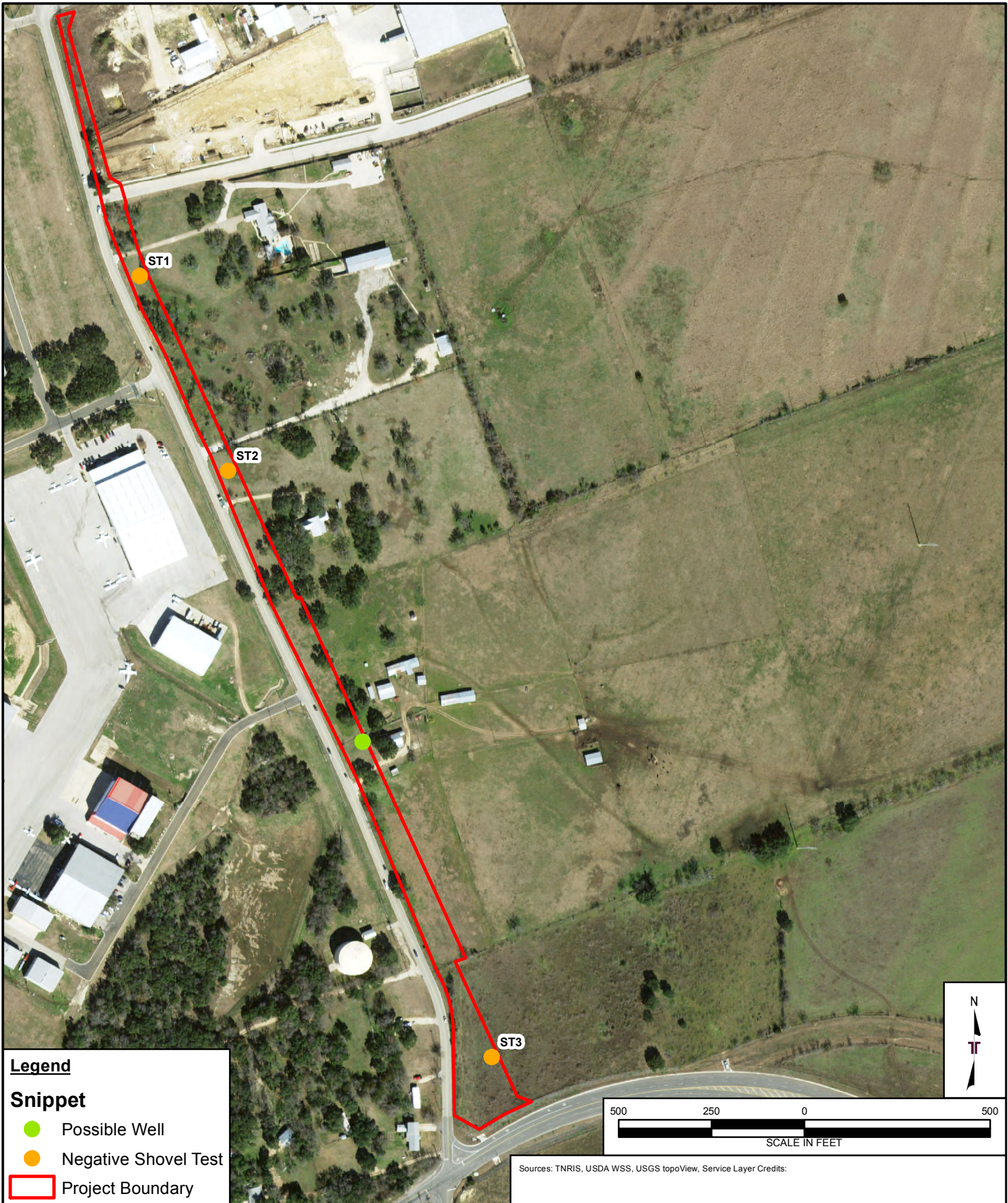
Project Mngnr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	JC
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96167734A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96167734A
Date:	May 3, 2017

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USDA Soils Map  
 Airport Road - Area 1  
 Airport Road (Lakeway Drive to Halmar Cove)  
 Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
3



**Legend**

**Snippet**

- Possible Well
- Negative Shovel Test
- Project Boundary

Sources: TNRIS, USDA WSS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	JC
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96167734A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96167734A
Date:	Jun 12, 2017

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**Results Map**

Airport Road - Area 1  
 Airport Road (Lakeway Drive to Halmar Cove)  
 Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
4



**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96167734A



# **APPENDIX B**

## **Photographs**

**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas  
Terracon Project No. 96167734A ■ Photos taken May 24, 2017



**Photo 1. Northern end of alignment. Note short grasses and good ground visibility. View to the north.**



**Photo 2. Southern end of alignment. Note excellent ground surface visibility. View to the north.**

**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas  
Terracon Project No. 96167734A ■ Photos taken May 24, 2017



**Photo 3. Shovel Test 1. Note shallow soils.**



**Photo 4. Side view of historic house located outside of the project APE. View to the east.**

**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas  
Terracon Project No. 96167734A ■ Photos taken May 24, 2017



**Photo 5. Possible historic well. Note good ground visibility around feature.**



**Photo 6. View of filled in quarry and no access property from Halmar Cove. View to the south.**

Responsive ■ Resourceful ■ Reliable

**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas  
Terracon Project No. 96167734A ■ Photos taken May 24, 2017



**Photo 7. View of no access property from Aviation Drive. Note ground disturbances from landscaping activities. View to the north.**

**Cultural Resources Services**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96167734A



# APPENDIX C

## Shovel Test Log

**Cultural Resources Services (Shovel Test Log)**

Airport Road – Area 1 ■ Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas

Shovel Tests from May 24, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96167734A



ST ID #	Depth cmbs	+/-	Ground cover	Munsell & Color	Texture	% Gravels	Comments
01	0-25	-	100%	5YR 3/2 Dark reddish brown	Loamy clay	90% large cobbles	Homogeneous. Large gravels started at 10 cmbs. Terminated due to gravel lens.
02	0-30	-	100%	5YR 3/2 Dark reddish brown	Loamy clay	70%	Homogeneous. Gravels from top of ST. Terminated due to gravel lens.
03	0-20	-	70%	10YR 2/2 Very dark brown	Clay	5%	Gradual transition to lower layer. Lower color shows up as mottles in this layer.
03	20-35	-	-	10YR 3/4 Dark yellowish brown	Loamy clay	5%	Layer with lots of fine calcium carbonates. Terminated due to carbonates.