

Queensland Heritage Register—site assessment visit

Places entered in the Queensland Heritage Register are places of cultural heritage significance to Queensland. To be entered in the Register they must satisfy one or more of the cultural heritage criteria listed in the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*.

As part of the assessment process to determine whether a place meets the criteria, a site assessment visit is undertaken to ascertain the heritage values of the place.

What is a site assessment?

A site assessment visit is an inspection by authorised officers from the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) to record the cultural heritage significance of a place.

For places that are the subject of an application for entry in the Queensland Heritage Register, a site visit will enable heritage officers to better assess whether the place should be recommended to the Queensland Heritage Council (QHC) for entry in the register.

For places that have been identified in a DERM survey, a site visit will help heritage officers assess whether the place is of State significance or of local significance. Only places of State significance can be recommended for entry in the Queensland Heritage Register.

When is a site assessment required?

A site assessment visit is required if:

1. the owner of a place has been given notice under *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* that an application to enter the Place in the Queensland Heritage Register has been received by DERM

OR

2. the place has been identified in a DERM survey as a place of possible cultural heritage importance (local, state or national).

Who undertakes the site assessment?

Heritage officers from DERM are authorised to undertake site assessment visits. These officers are heritage professionals such as architects, historians or archaeologists with expertise and experience in historical cultural heritage assessments.

Heritage officers have an identity card confirming that they are authorised to undertake the site assessment visit and will present this when they meet with you or your representative on site.

How is the site assessment visit arranged?

A DERM heritage officer will contact the owner of the place to arrange a mutually convenient time. The officer will also advise who will undertake the assessment, and approximately how long it will take.

Depending on the size and location of the place, more than one officer may attend the visit. Specialist advice may be required from an individual outside of DERM with expertise in certain types of heritage places or particular knowledge about the history of the place. In this case, the heritage officer will contact the owner in advance to seek permission for this individual to attend the site assessment.

The authorised officers who attend the site are not allowed to enter the premises without the consent of the occupier.

The assessment process continues regardless of whether a site assessment visit is conducted.

The site assessment visit

For the owner of the place, the site assessment visit provides an opportunity to discuss a number of factors with DERM's heritage officers, including:

- the heritage assessment process and the implications of entering the place into the Queensland Heritage Register
- any questions or concerns they may have about the process of entering the place into the Register
- the possibility of an Exemption Certificate issued at the time of entry in the Register. This certificate approves for minor development work to be undertaken at the place. It requires no application by the owner and can help reduce the administrative impact of the property being entered into the register.
- the type of work that can be carried out under a General Exemption Certificate. The General Exemption Certificate applies to all places entered in the Queensland Heritage Register. It enables owners to undertake specific minor work and maintenance on their properties without applying to DERM, providing the work does not harm the cultural heritage significance of a place.

What information is collected?

Information collected during the site visit is used to assess the cultural heritage significance of the place and will form the basis of a written description about its current form.

Information recorded may include details about:

- the location of the place
- its setting
- the nature of the buildings, structures, gardens and other elements that comprise the place
- the materials of which it is constructed
- changes to the place that have occurred over time
- a suitable heritage boundary should the place be entered in the register.

Some aspects of the place that may be of particular interest include:

- the intactness of the early fabric
- distinctive or rare features
- the earliness of the place
- aesthetic qualities.

Looking at all of these features helps heritage officers assess whether the place should be recommended for entry in the Queensland Heritage Register.

With permission from the owner the heritage officer will take interior and exterior photographs of the place.

Officers may make notes about specific areas and ask questions about the history of any changes made to the place.

If early plans are not available officers may sketch a floor plan or site plan of the place.

The amount of information recorded and/or collected will depend on the individual place.

A copy of all photographs and any other information collected during the visit can be sent to the owner upon request.

How is the site visit information stored?

DERM keeps the information collected during site assessment visits in site-specific research files. These files are available for public viewing for research purposes. The owner's contact details are not kept in these files.

If the place is entered in the Queensland Heritage Register some of the exterior photographs taken during the site visit may be used to illustrate the entry in the register, which is published on DERM's website. They may also be used to illustrate other heritage publications, promotional material or media releases produced by DERM.

Interior photographs are not placed on the website or used in heritage publications, promotional material or media releases produced by the department, or released to community or media interests, without owner permission.

Further information

For more information or advice regarding the site assessment visit:

- visit the heritage conservation pages of the DERM website on <www.derm.qld.gov.au>
- contact DERM on 13 74 68 (13 QGOV) and ask to speak to the Site Registrar
- email <heritage.registrar@derm.qld.gov.au>.

The following DERM heritage publications also relate to the Queensland Heritage Register:

- Fact sheet: H1 The Queensland Heritage Register
- Fact sheet: H2 Your property has been proposed for entry as a State Heritage Place in the Queensland Heritage Register
- Fact sheet: H3 Queensland Heritage Register—registering a State Heritage Place
- Fact sheet: H4 Queensland Heritage Register—registering an Archaeological Place

DERM Heritage publications can be found on the Heritage Conservation pages of DERM website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>.

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**For general enquiries contact the
Queensland Government call centre 13 74 68 (13 QGOV)
or visit www.derm.qld.gov.au**