

Fact sheet

Heritage

Queensland Heritage Register – Site assessment visit

This fact sheet explains what is involved when a site assessment visit is undertaken at a place that is the subject of an application for entry in or removal from the Queensland Heritage Register

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

As part of the 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 officers from the department to record the physical evidence of the cultural heritage significance of a place.

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

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

When is a site assessment required?

A site assessment visit is required if the owner of a place has been given notice under the Heritage Act that an application to enter the place in the Heritage Register has been received by the department.

Who undertakes the site assessment?


Heritage officers from the department undertake site assessment visits. These officers are heritage professionals, such as architects, historians or archaeologists with expertise and experience in historic heritage assessments.

How is the site assessment visit arranged?

A 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 the department 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 the individual outside the department to attend the site assessment.

The officers who attend the site visit 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 matters with the department's heritage officers, including:

- the heritage assessment process and the implications of the place being entered in the Heritage Register
- any questions or concerns about the process of entering the place in the Heritage Register
- the possibility of an Exemption Certificate issued at the time of entry in the Heritage Register. This certificate provides approval 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 Heritage 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 Heritage Register. It enables owners to undertake specific minor work and maintenance on their properties without applying to the department, 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 recommended for entry 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.



Reviewing all of these features helps heritage officers assess whether the place should be recommended for entry in the 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?

The department keeps the information collected during site assessment visits in site-specific research files.

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

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 about the process of assessing a place for entry in the Heritage Register:

- Email heritage@detsi.qld.gov.au
- call 13 QGOV (13 74 68) and ask to speak to a heritage officer in the Planning and Heritage Branch
- visit www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/heritage/