

Non-Indigenous cultural heritage—EIS information guideline

Introduction

This guideline advises proponents about the information and assessment requirements in relation to non-Indigenous cultural heritage when preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS). The Department of Environment and Science (the department) has published a separate guideline [EIS information guideline—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages](#) (DES 2022).

What is non-Indigenous cultural heritage?

Non-Indigenous cultural heritage includes all objects or places that have cultural heritage significance unless solely through their association with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples' traditions or customs. The latter objects and places are protected under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* or the *Torres Strait Island Cultural Heritage Act 2003*, while non-Indigenous cultural heritage is protected under the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*. Nevertheless, there may be places that have both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultural heritages and non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance through a shared history.

Archaeological artefacts are physical evidence of past human activity, and tell us much about the lives, behaviour and attitudes of past generations. Queensland's archaeological heritage is non-renewable—once disturbed its ability to tell us about the past is gone forever unless scientific examination and systematic recording has taken place.

What should be addressed in an EIS?

Generally, all projects being assessed by an EIS will require an archaeological investigation due to their complexity and/or size. An archaeological investigation is essential if the site is entered on the Queensland Heritage Register.

Discuss the results of the archaeological investigation in the main part of the EIS, and include the full investigation report as an appendix. If the investigation finds the project site needs an archaeological management plan, provide an outline of the plan in the EIS and include the full plan as an appendix.

Who may undertake an archaeological investigation and prepare the EIS?

The Queensland Heritage Act requires an archaeological investigation to be undertaken by an 'appropriately qualified person'. The department's guideline [Archaeological investigations](#) (EHP 2014) explains who is an appropriately qualified person.

How should an appropriately qualified person undertake an archaeological investigation?

The department has published a series of guidelines about heritage management and protection that include advice to appropriately qualified persons about how to undertake an archaeological investigation. Those publications include:

- [Archaeological investigations](#) (EHP 2014)
- [Archival recording of heritage places](#) (EHP 2013)
- [Assessing cultural heritage significance](#) (EHP 2017)
- [Carrying out a heritage survey](#) (EHP 2015)
- [Conservation management plans](#) (EHP 2015)
- [Developing heritage places—Using the development criteria](#) (EHP 2013)
- [Guideline: State development assessment provisions—State Code 14: Queensland Heritage](#) (EHP 2017).

The following sections provide guidance to the appropriately qualified person undertaking the archaeological investigation and preparing the EIS. As each project will have different circumstances, the appropriately qualified person should adapt the archaeological investigation to suit the site and potential impacts of the project.

Environmental values

Undertake a study of the known and potential historical heritage values of the area potentially affected by the project, including, as a minimum, the following elements:

- a desktop assessment reviewing all sources of information on non-Indigenous historical cultural and landscape heritage values within the region of the project site, including:
 - the Queensland Heritage Register for places already protected under the Queensland Heritage Act
 - local government heritage registers, lists or inventories
 - results of previous cultural and landscape heritage studies conducted in the region
 - appropriate national and international guidelines for the descriptions of sites, places and regions
- a physical archaeological investigation of the area potentially affected by the project (based on the results of the desktop assessment) that addresses:
 - all types of historical heritage places located within the project area including built, archaeological and non-Indigenous cultural landscape values
 - the discovery and protection of any previously unidentified archaeological artefacts or archaeological places during the course of the archaeological investigation in accordance with Part 9 of the Queensland Heritage Act
- an investigation of whether the area potentially affected by the project includes places of possible state or local heritage significance, including:
 - an assessment of places of potential heritage significance against the criteria contained in Division 1 of the Queensland Heritage Act
 - consultation with appropriate academic historians and with local history organisations about the history of the area and potential for physical evidence of this history within the project area
 - notification to the department of any archaeological artefacts, or places that are of potential state or local heritage significance but not currently on the state or local heritage register.

How to notify the department

If you discover an archaeological artefact that you think may be important you must:

- contact the department immediately by email to Archaeology@des.qld.gov.au, or
- phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68) and provide details about the find, or
- submit a [Form: Notification of a discovery](#).

Do not disturb the site of the archaeological find for 20 working days unless we give you written permission.

Potential impacts

Assess the potential impacts on non-Indigenous heritage values. Include impacts caused not only by land clearing and earthworks, but also by vibration from blasting, which may, for example, damage structures (Jordan et al. 2011).

Avoidance and mitigation measures

Propose actions to avoid or mitigate potential impacts. Before proposing them in the EIS, discuss and negotiate such actions with the Heritage Branch of the department, local history organisations, and other relevant groups.

Provide a stand-alone management plan (historical heritage management plan) that includes site-specific mitigation measures and actions. The historical heritage management plan should be succinct, in plain English, and provide an easily understood reference for day-to-day operations at the site. The plan must at least include the following matters:

- processes for mitigating, managing and protecting identified historical cultural heritage values during the construction, operational, rehabilitation and decommissioning phases of the project
- identification and protection of:
 - undiscovered values and artefacts, if they become apparent during development of the project
 - view-lines to and from heritage places including natural features
 - cultural landscapes
- proactive ways of conserving any heritage places

- processes for reporting, as required by section 89 of the Queensland Heritage Act, the discovery of any archaeological artefact not previously identified in the historical cultural heritage study
- procedures for collecting any artefact material, including appropriate storage and conservation
- procedures for training all staff on the legislative requirements and practical measures for the recognition, reporting, and preservation of cultural heritage material
- provision of a plain English summary of the training to all site workers for their future reference.

If the project proceeds, incorporate the management plan into the project's operational management system.

References

Note: These references were correct at the time of publication. Where more recent versions are available, these must be used.

Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 2013, *Archival recording of heritage places*, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Brisbane, Queensland, viewed April 2020, https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/68226/archival-recording-heritage-places.pdf.

Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 2013, *Developing heritage places—Using the development criteria*, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Brisbane, Queensland, viewed April 2020, https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/67114/gl-heritage-development.pdf.

Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 2014, *Archaeological investigations*, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Brisbane, Queensland, viewed April 2020, https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0030/68628/archaeological-investigations-guideline.pdf.

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Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 2017, *Assessing cultural heritage significance*, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Brisbane, Queensland, viewed April 2020, https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0030/66693/using-the-criteria.pdf.

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Department of Environment and Science 2022, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages—EIS information guidelines*, ESR/2020/5296, Queensland Government, Brisbane, Queensland, viewed April 2022, <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/pollution/management/eis-process/about-the-eis-process/developing-an-eis>.

Jordan, B 2011, *Mine blasting vibration and its effects on buildings and structures—implementing a frequency-based approach*, Bill Jordan & Associates Pty Ltd., Newcastle, New South Wales, viewed April 2020, <https://aees.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/29-JORDAN-Bill-MineBlastingVibration.pdf>.