

You can help us to conserve an important heritage site!

National Trust of Queensland encourages members and friends to support the campaign to conserve some of the state's most important military heritage sites. Your letters and emails will make a difference.

Townsville has been a centre for the defence of the north (and therefore for Australia) almost since its white settlement. This means that there are some extremely important military heritage sites in the town. Possibly the most crucial are the Fort at Kissing Point and Jezzine Barracks. Both of these sites have now been declared surplus to Defence requirements and the Department is seeking to dispose of them.

Kissing Point is on the Register of the National Estate and the Commonwealth Heritage List, but it has been moved from the Queensland Heritage Register. The Heritage Council did this on the advice of Crown Law. We accept the Heritage Council's assurance that fast track procedures are in place to put it back on the Queensland Heritage Register as soon as it moves to private ownership.

We also accept that if Kissing Point is sold, covenants will be put in place to protect its future use. However, we should all be aware that the new Commonwealth legislation has yet to build up a body of case law that would guarantee that such covenants will be effective.

Jezzine Barracks, the site of some of Townsville's military operations since 1889, are not on any Register or List. National Trust of Queensland listed them as an "endangered place" and nominated them to the Commonwealth Heritage List - but no-one knows how long it will take to process the nomination. We believe that Jezzine Barracks are currently without any protection.

Jezzine Barracks have been used for defence purposes since the late 1880s. They are an integral part of Kissing Point, whose value has already been established. For twelve years from 1889, the Barracks (then known as Norman Park) were the site of annual encampments of the Queensland Defence Force (including the Kennedy Regiment). The Townsville Cadet Corps, formed in 1889, was also associated with Norman Park.

The Kennedy Regiment continued to use Norman Park as its main training area during the construction of Kissing Point Fort. Volunteers who deployed with the first Queensland contingents to the War in South Africa (Boer War) trained here and, at the outbreak of World War One, the Kennedy Regiment was moved from here to Thursday Island. It was the first Australian unit deployed in this war.

Both Australian and American forces used the site extensively during World War Two. After the war, Norman Park was renamed Jezzine Barracks to commemorate a battle involving the Australian 7th Division in Syria in June 1941. The site also has a long association with the 11th Brigade which includes our local 31st Battalion, whose lineage goes back to the original Kennedy Regiment. The 11th still occupy the site.

We believe that the whole site has strong heritage values. The Parade Ground is crucial to the history of the place. To the right of the Parade Ground there are some standard "P" series barracks surviving from WW2. The rare (for North Queensland) Bellman prefabricated hanger must surely be preserved, though it would be permissible to move it to another part of the site given its post-war erection at Jezzine. One of the old tennis courts is reputed to have been the site of a very early dump - and should be excavated. All through the site, informal road patterns demonstrate Jezzine's days as a camp and the haste with which it was adapted for WW2.

In short, Jezzine is important to Australian (especially North Queensland's) military history; it has potential to yield further information; it has a strong association with the Townsville community for reasons related to defence and it has a special association with the lives of those who have served in the defence forces in this region since 1889 and their descendants. Townsville has long been a military town, and we should take all possible steps to preserve its military history.

The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Teresa Gambaro, has directed her department to commission a study to develop future options for the two sites. It has already established a Jezzine Barracks Consultative Forum to bring together key community stakeholders and senior Defence personnel to receive reports on the progress of the study and provide input into the planning process. This will not be a decision-making body. Vice-President Diane Menghetti will represent the Trust on this forum.

In the end, however, public opinion on the social, community and heritage values of these places is likely to play an important part in the Minister's decision making. This is where you can help. Please consider making your voice heard by contacting the company that is providing the final report. Either write your own message (no matter how short) or follow [this link](#) to a form letter.

Submissions can be made by:

Phone- 1300 739 959 *or by*

Email- Jezzine@phillipsgroup.com.au *or by*

Mail- Reply Paid 105, Fortitude Valley, Qld 4006