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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **QUEENSLAND HERITAGE COUNCIL INDEPENDENCE UNDER THREAT**

Principal Solicitor at Environmental Defenders Office (Qld) Jo-Anne Bragg said yesterday's announcement that Minister for Heritage Protection Andrew Powell had asked expert members of the Queensland Heritage Council to resign and reapply for their jobs had set alarm bells ringing.

"The creation of the Queensland Heritage Council was critical to halting the bad old days in the 80s and early 90s of midnight demolitions of iconic heritage sites for high rise developments. EDO Queensland knows how important it is to Queenslanders that our precious remaining heritage sites are identified and protected," Ms Bragg said

"For example, in the Planning and Environment Court in 2007 we represented determined Yeronga residents who successfully sought to protect the historic trees in Yeronga Park, planted to commemorate fallen WW1 soldiers.

"Minister Powell knows the importance of heritage sites such as the Pattemore pit sawn timber farm house at Maleny.

"An independent expert Heritage Council is essential to consider nominations for and proposed changes to Queensland heritage sites in an unbiased way.

"It is worrying that rather than waiting for the member's term to expire, Minister Powell has put pressure on members by asking several current independent experts to resign for no good reason.

"Our concern is that this request is an attempt to clear the way for reduced independent scrutiny of development by making the council a rubber stamp on government decisions."

**For further information, contact:**

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