

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

HISTORIC PROPERTY FIELD DATA FORM

*INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE*

May 2008

The *NC HPO Historic Property Field Data Form* is designed for use in conjunction with the *Historic Property Data Entry Form* in the NC HPO Survey Database (an Access database structure used for the statewide historic property inventory). It is a simplified version of the old “Yellow Form” formerly used in field surveys. Like all such forms, it serves primarily as a simple checklist of the basic information to be collected about a property in the field. The surveyor is by no means restricted to the different categories of data on the form, and may use additional blank sheets of paper for additional data. ***This form is not required.*** A surveyor may devise and use his or her own form customized for a particular project as long as the data can be translated from the form into the computer database.

The form is designed primarily to record individual historic structures (with or without associated secondary buildings or landscape features), and since the majority of historic structures are houses, it is also weighted towards residential buildings. However, it may be used for any type of property or site, even those where no historic structures are present, such as a historic road bed or cemetery. It may also be used for an isolated historic outbuilding, such as a barn, when the historic house or farm with which it was associated is no longer extant.

As a general rule, if a data field does not have an obvious answer, or you’re not sure how to answer it, *ignore it* – it’s probably not important for that property, or can be determined later. You are not limited to the choices given, and may write in your own response for any field when appropriate.

**County:** For a large project with many properties being recorded, this field may be skipped since it can be automatically entered in the computer data entry form. When using the form to record an individual property, only a few properties, or multiple properties across county lines, write in the county name or two-letter code.

**Survey Site Number:** For a large project where the surveyor or survey team will also be doing the data entry, a block of survey site numbers will be assigned by the HPO in advance. For small projects or individual properties where the surveyor is not doing data entry, assign a temporary number using the two-letter county code, the small letter **t**, and a number, such as **WAt1**. The HPO will assign the permanent numbers and enter the data.

**ER:** If the field work is part of an environmental review project, enter the project number here.

**GIS:** Some projects have a GIS component and may involve establishing a spatial link in the field, such as using a GPS unit to determine XY coordinates, capturing Parcel Identification Numbers from the local GIS website, etc. If such data is collected in the field, enter it here.

**Property Name:** If there is no name by which a property is commonly known, or if it cannot be determined at the time of the site visit (such as William and Alice Blake House; Johnson Family Farm; Watson’s Store; Sweet Hope Baptist Church, Red Oak School), enter the generic name – House, Farm, Store, Church, or School.

**Street Address/location description:** For urban properties, this is almost always the street address. For rural properties, it may be the “911” address if that can be determined. Otherwise, provide a location description with directions and distances, such as “N. side SR 1245, 0.4 mi. W. of NC 150,” estimating the distance off your field map or using your car’s odometer.

**Town:** (*vicinity*) The city, town, or rural community in which the property is located. For rural properties, circle *vicinity* after entering the name of the nearest town.

**Ownership:** *fed state local private non-profit unknown* Circle the appropriate response.

**District/Neighborhood Association:** (*contrib non-contrib*) For large projects involving a single district or neighborhood, this data can be entered globally by the computer and this can be left blank or identified with an abbreviation. This does not necessarily have to be a potential historic district. It may be any neighborhood or area that provides an umbrella identification for a group of associated properties. For National Register, Study List, or DOE districts, circle *contrib* or *non-contrib* to indicate whether in your opinion the property is contributing to the character of the district.

**Surveyor / Date:** Your name and/or company name and date of the field work.

**For Survey Update:** *No substantial change | change by alteration | change by deterioration | outbuilding loss | rehabilitated | removed or destroyed | not found | no access | file missing | newly identified | needs research*

If your project is an update of an older survey and you have access to the original files and are checking on the status of previously recorded properties, circle any of the responses that apply.

**Study List / DOE recommendation:** *eligible | not eligible* If your project scope includes evaluations for National Register eligibility, circle your recommendation. Circle which National Register criterion/criteria you believe would apply. Add any additional comments to the right.

**Material Integrity:** *High Medium Low N/A Gone* This is not the same as condition (next field). This means the historic integrity of the material in the building. It may have high integrity (mostly original materials and features) but be in deteriorated condition, or have low integrity and be in good condition. This is a somewhat subjective judgment. As a rule of thumb, a house that has been covered with artificial siding but otherwise retains its original form, windows, and porches is “medium.” The same house with porch removed or enclosed and with windows replaced is “low.”

**Condition:** *Good Fair Deteriorated Ruinous N/A Gone* See above. This is the condition of the material. A heavily altered house may have low integrity but be in good condition. Also a subjective judgment.

**Location:** *Original Moved (year if known \_\_\_\_\_) Uncertain* This is usually pretty clear, but may not always be for buildings moved in years past.

**Const. Date:** *ca. \_\_\_\_\_* Year or range of years of construction. If you don't determine a specific year or range of years (and it is rare to do so), circle *ca.* and enter your estimated year or range of years, such as **ca. 1850, ca. 1875-1900, 1920s** etc. Using years instead of descriptions (1890-1910 instead of “turn of the century”) enables creating chronological lists in the database, with a property listed at its earliest possible year of construction. For properties with a second period of significant additions or alterations, you may enter more than one year or range of years, such as **ca. 1890-1900; 1955**

**Major Style Group:** *Georgian | Geo/Fed | Federal | Fed/GkRev  
Greek Revival | Italianate | Gothic Revival | Queen Anne | Victorian – Other | 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c. traditional-vernacular |  
Neoclassical Revival | Colonial Revival | Southern Colonial | Beaux Arts | Spanish Mission | Tudor Revival |  
Rustic Revival | Craftsman/Bungalow | Period Cottage | International | Moderne | Art Deco | Misc. Modernist |  
Standard Commercial/Industrial | Ranch | Split Level | Other \_\_\_\_\_*

These are the mostly common general style groups. You may circle more than one for a building with a complex history and evidence of more than one period and style.

**Construction:** *Timber frame | Balloon frame | Load bearing masonry | Masonry veneer | Log | Steel frame | Concrete |  
Unknown | Other \_\_\_\_\_*

As a general rule, timber frame applies to older wooden buildings (mostly constructed before the Civil War of hewn timber, post-and-beam construction) and balloon frame to stud-wall construction from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onward.

The same difference holds for load-bearing masonry versus masonry veneer. In 20<sup>th</sup> century neighborhoods, the choices will almost always be balloon frame and masonry veneer.

**Primary Original Ext. Material:** *Weatherboard (plain beaded molded novelty type unk.) / Batten / Wood shingles / Exposed logs / Brick / Stone / Stucco / Pebbledash / Other \_\_\_\_\_*

The primary original exterior material, which may be hidden under a modern covering (see below). If you are recording buildings from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and later, one of the more modern materials, such as asbestos shingles, may be the original material. If so, write that in “other.”

**Covering:** *None / Aluminum / Vinyl / Asbestos Shingle / Later brick veneer / Metal / Paper / Undetermined*

Circle the material that covers or replaces the primary original material.

**Height (stories):** *1 / 1 ½ / 2 / 2 ½ / 3 / more than 3 (enter) \_\_\_\_\_*

Circle the building height or enter the height in stories for taller buildings. “1/2” story generally will mean the presence of dormer windows on the roof.

**Roof:** *Side gable / Front gable / Triple A / Cross gable / Hip / Gambrel / Pyramidal / Mansard / Parapet / Flat Other \_\_\_\_\_*

The choices are the most common roof forms, primarily for houses.

**Plan:** *Not Known / 1-room / Hall-parlor / 3 room / Side passage / Center passage / Saddlebag / Dogtrot / Irregular Shotgun / Other \_\_\_\_\_*

This field is targeted mostly towards older houses of traditional form and plan. The plan refers to the central core of the building and doesn’t address wings, whether or not original.

**Core Form (domestic):** *I-house / Single pile / Double pile / Foursquare / other \_\_\_\_\_*

This field also targets older houses of traditional form.

**Design Source:** \_\_\_\_\_ *attributed / documented*

This may be an architect, builder, carpenter, pattern book plan, magazine plan, Sears or Aladdin design, or other source. This information may sometimes be collected in interviews with property owners or knowledgeable neighbors. When there is no clear documentation for the association, circle “attributed,” as in “My grandmother told me that Sidney Blake built this house for her and Granddad in 1925,” or “They say this is a Sears house.”

**Special Associations / Themes:** This is a catch-all for any special association(s) with a significant person, event, movement, historic theme, ethnic or religious group, or anything else you think should be noted.

**Outbuildings and landscape features** (*continue on back if necessary*). List and briefly describe barns and other outbuildings, family cemeteries, and landscape features such as gardens, orchards, unusual plantings, and other distinctive features associated with the principal resource. Urban properties will often have a garage. Consider age if it can be determined or estimated, function, materials, and condition. Use the back side of the form or additional blank pages if necessary.

**Back side of the form**

*Page 2. Use this side for written description, notes, and sketches of floor plans and/or site plans. Use additional blank sheets if necessary. Indicate character of significant features like porches and chimneys; make note of exceptional features items such as high quality woodwork, masonry work, decorative painting, original storefronts, and special architectural materials.*

Use this space for a general summary, giving attention to distinctive features or associations. This should be the basis for the narrative summary that is entered in the database. Also use this space for field sketches of floor plans or site plans. Use additional blank sheets of paper if necessary.

*N.C. State Historic Preservation Office, April 2008*