

Kingston, Ontario  
**Former Post Office**  
86 Clarence Street

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The former Kingston Post Office was built in 1856-59 by the Province of Canada to designs by the Montreal firm of Hopkins, Lawford and Nelson. It is now owned by Public Works Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 85-36.

### **Reason for Designation**

On May 23, 1986, the building was designated Classified, primarily for its fine design and execution and for the survival intact of its historical siting. In 1972 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated the former post office a national architectural site. It has been designated a heritage structure by the City of Kingston, under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The former Post Office is a well-designed Neoclassical public building, executed in Kingston limestone and much enlivened on its exterior by stone detailing. This simple, nearly square block was given a most sympathetic addition in 1912. It shares its site with the contemporary and visually similar Custom House (also classified by FHBRO, designated a national architectural site by the HSMBC, and designated a heritage structure by the City of Kingston); and with a stone stable constructed in 1868 for postal deliveries and later converted to a caretaker's residence.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the building lies particularly in the composition of its public façades and in their well-executed limestone detail. While at least one doorway has been converted to a window, and while the 1912 addition has elongated the west façade to a rectangle, the balance and rhythm of the original composition have been preserved, and the original detailing reproduced exactly in the addition. All exterior detailing on the two public façades should be minutely respected, and that on the other façades treated with care. While the building has been used continuously as a public building, interior spaces have been greatly altered.

Because the former Post Office continues to share this federal property with two contemporary public structures and a public park (leased to the city since 1903), elements that relate the building to its site, like fences and gates, are of importance and should be retained. Missing elements should be replaced.

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While the stone stable, now a caretaker's residence, has not been recognized by FHBRO, its importance to the former Post Office site is considerable and it should be treated with respect in that context.

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