

89-40

Kingston, Ontario

Heating Plant (Former Commissariat Storehouse)

Fort Frontenac

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Heating Plant, formerly the Commissariat Storehouse, was constructed in the mid 1820s to designs by the Royal Engineers of the British Military. In the 1960s it was gutted and a one-storey addition was constructed. A club room was created in the upper storey. The Department of National Defense is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 89-40.

Reasons for Designation

The Heating Plant was designated Recognized because of its environmental and local significance, its architectural importance, and its historical associations.

The Heating Plant was constructed as the Commissariat Storehouse within the walled complex. The height and domestic scale of the building are compatible with the adjacent stone barracks. It is familiar as one of several buildings comprising Fort Frontenac.

The Heating Plant is a very good example of military architecture of the 1820s. Its simplicity of design, robust use of materials, high standard of workmanship and spare utility are typical of British military construction.

Fort Frontenac, originally the Tête de Pont barracks, was the first of four British military complexes in Kingston. The construction of the Storehouse illustrates the fort's important role as a center for Britain's defense of its colony.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Heating Plant resides in the building's form, its overall proportions, construction materials, architectural details, surviving interior layout, and its relationship to the site and setting.

The Heating Plant is a simple two-storey rectangular structure with load-bearing limestone walls and a low hipped roof. The addition to the south side altered the symmetry and simple massing of the building, and its materials and detailing are not compatible with the design of the original building. When the opportunity presents

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The Heating Plant (cont'd)

itself, it should be modified to be more sympathetic in form and materials. Further modification of the building's massing should be resisted.

The design is characterized by balance and order, with windows arranged symmetrically around a central doorway. The masonry construction is also character-defining: rough-hewn limestone blocks laid in irregular courses, with simple details such as projecting window sills, dressed stone quoins, and flat arches above the windows and doors. These details should be maintained. The building materials merit appropriate conservation expertise and regular maintenance.

The six-over-six wood double-hung windows and wood door with multi-pane transom are consistent with the original character of the design and should be maintained. The sash replaced by louvers on the main facade should be re-instated if possible. The rear facade has been greatly modified, with windows blocked or altered and large service doors installed, reflecting the new use as a heating plant. The surviving windows and the "ghosting" of earlier opening sizes (arches with masonry infill) should be maintained as evidence for possible future reinstatement.

The building interior was radically altered for use as a heating plant and club meeting space upstairs. Any extant original interior finishes should be identified and re-used in further alterations. Re-design of the interior should respect the location of windows and doors.

The current planter at the front of the building should be modified to reflect a formal small-scale planting scheme. Directional signage and security lighting should be redesigned or relocated as they detract from the symmetry and simple expression of materials characteristic of the style.

1996.08.26

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.