

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

Martello Tower #1, on the Plains of Abraham, at Quebec City, was built between 1808 and 1812 to plans prepared by Ralph Henry Bruyère of the Royal Engineers. It has been the property of the Commission des champs de bataille nationaux since 1936. See FHBRO Building Report 89-53.

Reasons for Designation

Martello Tower #1 was designated Classified for its historic associations, its architectural importance and, in particular, its environmental significance.

The tower is one of four constructed to form a first line of defence within the ensemble of the fortifications of Quebec. Their construction constituted an important phase in the military improvements brought to the city by the Royal Engineers at the beginning of the 19th century, during a period of strong military development to strengthen Quebec's key strategic role in defending British North America from water-borne attack.

The architectural significance of the tower lies primarily in its adaptation of a British coastal defence model to inland warfare and the quality of the technical execution of the masonry construction.

The environmental importance of tower #1 derives from several sources. The associated landscape, a hillside overlooking the St. Lawrence within the Plains of Abraham, has altered little from the tower's construction; the tower recalls the limits of Quebec's 19th century urban aspirations; and the tower provides important symbolic references to Canada's military past.

Character-defining Elements

The architectural character of the tower resides as much in its stone and brick construction as in the organization of its external and internal spaces. The vaulted ground floor was designed to enclose a powder magazine and to support soldiers' lodging above; the walls, of greatest thickness facing the direction of expected attack, contained a stairway designed to provide infantry with protected access to the field of battle. Above, an encircling terrace and protective parapet provided for both visual surveillance and mounting artillery.

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structure. Future repairs should endeavour equally to maintain the integrity of the original spaces and the quality of the original masonry work.

Every effort should be made to maintain the integrity of the Battlefield landscape surrounding the tower to maintain it free from unsympathetic development.

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