

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT  
FLINT ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE  
FLINT ISLAND, NOVA SCOTIA**

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FHBRO Number: **05-203**  
DFRP Number: **03685**  
Resource Name: **Flint Island Lighthouse**  
Address: **Flint Island, Nova Scotia**  
FHBRO Status: **"Recognized" Federal Heritage Building**  
Construction: **1961-3**  
Designer: **Department of Transport Canada**  
Original Function: **lighthouse**  
Current Function: **lighthouse**  
Modifications: **light automated (1989)**  
Custodian: **Department of Fisheries and Oceans**

**Description of Historic Place**

The Flint Island Lighthouse consists of a concrete tapered, octagonal tower, 18 metres in height. The tower is painted white and is surmounted by a red octagonal lantern sitting above a flared cornice surrounded by a railed walkway. The lighthouse is situated on the northeast end of Flint Island, a small, flat-topped, grassy island less than two hectares in area, rimmed by steep, sandstone cliffs. Flint Island is located a few kilometers off the eastern coastline of Cape Breton Island. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

**Heritage Value**

The Flint Island Lighthouse is a "Recognized" Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

The Flint Island Lighthouse is a very good illustration of the theme of aids to navigation along the coast of Nova Scotia. It is a significant coastal marker for ships traveling along the shore of Cape Breton Island. The lighthouse is associated with Robert Spears, who tended the present lighthouse and its predecessor at Flint Island from 1960 until it was de-staffed and automated in the late 1980s. The first lighthouse was established on Flint Island in 1856 and the current lighthouse was built in 1963 as a replacement for the third lighthouse, which was in poor structural condition.

Architectural value:

The Flint Island Lighthouse is a good example of a later, concrete tapered, octagonal tower. It is nicely proportioned, with a simple base, a flared cornice and a railed walkway. The lighthouse is notable for the alignment and details of its small windows and the use of traditional red and white colours. Its functional quality is good and it continues to operate as a coastal light. Built to a standard plan prepared by the Department of Transport Canada, its wide base and tapered walls provide great stability in inclement weather. Its concrete construction reveals good quality of craftsmanship and reflects the standards of the time and the concerns for economy and easy maintenance.

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#### Environmental value:

Located on a flat and cleared grassed island bounded by dramatic cliffs, the Flint Island Lighthouse reinforces the maritime character of the area. It stands out remarkably against its rugged natural setting and the surrounding seascape. Several adjacent buildings were removed from the site, thus altering the character and relationship between the lighthouse and its surrounding landscape. The lighthouse is a well-known reference point for commercial ships and tourist boats traveling along the coast. Because of its visual link to the mainland, it is also a familiar landmark for the region.

#### **Character-Defining Elements**

The following character-defining elements of the Flint Island Lighthouse should be respected:

The features that illustrate the theme of aids to navigation along the Nova Scotia coast, notably:

- Its design and materials typical of the later, concrete, octagonal tower type; and,
- Its prominent location and high visibility on a small coastal island.

Its good aesthetic design, good functional design, and good quality of craftsmanship and materials, as manifested in:

- Its nice proportions, characterized by its simple and wide octagonal base, tapered shaft, and a flared cornice supporting a railed walkway and a lantern of modest scale;
- Its small rectangular openings with horizontal drip-mould detailing and their placement directly over one another;
- The use of white colour for the shaft and contrasting red colour for the lantern; and,
- The use of durable materials such as a reinforced-concrete construction, a cast iron lantern and metal railing.

The manner in which it reinforces the maritime character of the area and functions as a reference point from both water and land, as evidenced in:

- Its flat, grassy site, bounded by steep, sandstone cliffs;
- Its continuing use as a coastal light; and,
- The continuing visibility of the lighthouse from water and land.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. For further information contact FHBRO.

August 2007