

city of Québec, Québec  
**Connaught Barracks (No. 1)**  
Côte de la Citadelle

Building No. 1 is one of a group of three buildings known as the Connaught Barracks. It was built by the British army between 1808 and 1814. During the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a second storey was added. Building No. 1 is owned by the Department of National Defence and is used as office space. See FHBRO Report 88-162.

### **Reasons for Designation**

Building No. 1 of the Connaught Barracks was designated a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building for its historical significance and environmental qualities.

The Connaught Barracks bear witness to the strategic importance of the city of Québec in the colonial defence system under the British Regime. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a deteriorating political and military situation led authorities to increase the number of personnel in the city of Québec. Construction of the barracks met a pressing need for adequate housing of troops. The barracks were subsequently used for a variety of purposes – military prison, artillery magazine, depot – and later offices, at which time a second floor was added.

The increase of military personnel, which led to the construction of several buildings for their exclusive use, had a major impact on the urban fabric as well as the economic, administrative and social life of the city. Soldiers consumed goods and services and contributed to municipal services that were sometimes lacking. However, they also attracted taverns and brothels that disrupted community peace.

Building No. 1, which stands inside the walls of the Saint-Louis Bastion, Quebec City’s old defence system, is an important part of the military landscape of Upper Town. Due to its location close to the Saint-Louis Gate, the Garrison Club and the entrance to the hill leading to the Citadelle, the building profits from excellent visibility. The Connaught Barracks are also part of the historic district of Old Quebec City, which was created in 1963 and declared a “World Heritage Site” by UNESCO in 1985.

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### **Character-Defining Elements**

The heritage value of Building No. 1 lies in its footprint, which follows the horseshoe shape of the Saint-Louis Bastion, the choice of materials and its architectural details.

The building, designed following the principles of English military classicism, is made-up of three rectangular two-storey wings, which illustrate the grade of the property through their respective heights. The solid masonry walls of the original portion clearly convey the building's defensive function. The upper floor, which was added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contrasts with the rest of the building with its hite stucco finish dotted with exposed stones. Because these forms and materials reveal the building's history, they should be preserved.

The façades overlooking the courtyard are clearly functional. The only decorative touches are the multi-pane windows, the textured stone on the lower floor and the pedimented awnings over the entrances. These architectural details merit protection. However, because the windows are recent additions, which do not closely resemble the original windows, which had shutters and larger panes, it would be best to base the design of new windows on original models once replacement becomes necessary. The limestone walls show a number of signs of repair or modification of the openings. To avoid getting a patchwork effect, replacement stones and new joints should be carefully matched to the construction of the old walls.

The rear elevations are almost entirely below grade; only the upper part of the stone walls is visible. The imitation stone stamped sheet metal sheathing is an intriguing period material which requires special care. These semi-buried walls are especially susceptible to water infiltration, and require a careful maintenance program for their long-term conservation.

The shed roof on Building No. 1 is currently covered in sheet copper assembled with wood batten seams. Any repairs to the roof should be undertaken following recognized traditional techniques.

Inside, only the window frames and the openings in the partition walls that permit horizontal circulation recall the original use. Rooms have been refurbished to meet modern needs; the original layout is gone, and the old finishes have been covered or removed. A careful stripdown may reveal some interesting detailing and restore the

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period feel, but that process would have to be compatible with the viability of the building.

The courtyard is currently needed as a parking lot. However, a buffer zone could be created between the stone walls and the asphalt to permit a better appreciation of the building. The lawns around Building No. 1 are impeccably maintained to support tourism, these good practices are encouraged.

For more information, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.

1997.02.28

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