

90-67

Point Atkinson, British Columbia
Lighthouse
West Vancouver

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Point Atkinson lighthouse, erected in 1912 by the contractor W.H. Rourke, was built to designs by William P. Anderson, Chief Engineer at the Department of Marine. The building is currently the responsibility of the Canadian Coast Guard. See FHBRO Building Report 90-67.

Reasons for Designation

The Point Atkinson lighthouse was designated a Recognized federal heritage building for its importance in its environment and for its architectural design, and also for historical associations.

Located at the outer edge of Lighthouse Park, an urban park within the community of West Vancouver, the lighthouse benefits from the wilderness character of its setting and from its position on one of the country's most spectacular seascapes. The tower has significant landmark value and is highly visible from various points, including the Lion's Gate Bridge.

A 60-foot hexagonal concrete tower embraced by six buttresses, the tower combines aesthetics and function in a spare, elegant form. An example of engineer Anderson's talents in reinforced concrete, towers of this type represent early modern uses for what was then a new building medium. Historically, the replacement of an earlier structure by the current Point Atkinson tower embodied federal efforts to placate CPR officials and mollify important shipping interests in the burgeoning port of Vancouver.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Point Atkinson tower resides in its smooth tapered form and overall profile, and in the rugged setting.

The tower bears the distinctive stamp of an Anderson design, notably in the ribbed buttresses which support the smooth upward sweep of the walls and flare at the top to support the generous platform. Executed in concrete, the detailing is spare and sleek, with the only decorative detail found in the subtle corbelling under the platform. The surface is punctuated by simple rectangular openings with no adornment. The focus of the design (and indeed of the structure's function) is the glazed circular lantern with a large hemispherical cap.

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Point Atkinson, British Columbia
Lighthouse (Continued)

The tower retains the characteristic form and materials of its original construction. The profile, footprint, surface texture and colour should not be compromised. Continued regular maintenance of the interior and exterior is recommended.

The site has a rugged wilderness character that contributes to the ensemble and provides an appropriate counterpoint to the urban setting. The simple stairs built of concrete and pipe rails conform to the utilitarian character of the lightstation. Attempts to manicure or embellish the site should be resisted. The nearby Stores building, also built of smooth cast concrete, contributes to the utilitarian, defensible character of the site.

1996.07.25

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