

Kingston, Ontario  
Kingston Penitentiary  
**North Lodge (A-2)**

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The North Lodge was erected between 1841 and 1846 to a design prepared by William Coverdale, master builder of the Provincial Penitentiary. A tall lantern, designed by prison architect James Adams, was added in 1895. External modifications include the addition of two matching side wings (1896-1919), the substitution of louvres for windows in the lantern (1966), and the breaking of a door opening to serve an adjoining Visitor and Correspondence Building at the east elevation (1988). Internal modifications include the laying of concrete floors (1902) and the renovation of rooms on the second floor (1956). The North Lodge is currently operated by Correctional Services Canada as the main pedestrian entry, a standby vehicular entry, guard facility and visitor access to the Visitor and Correspondence Building (A-5).

See FHBRO Building Report 89-32.

### **Reason for Designation**

The North Lodge was designated Classified because of its historical associations, its architectural design and its environmental importance.

The North Lodge is associated with the establishment and evolution of the penitentiary. Symbolically and functionally, the lodge has been the contact point between the institution and the surrounding community since its completion in 1846. As such it illustrates better than any other element within the institution the socio-economic impact of locating a federal prison in Portsmouth/Kingston.

Architecturally the building is a highly original interpretation of the Classical Revival style, with bold yet academically correct detailing of its parts. The continued use of the building for pedestrian access and control demonstrates the excellent functional qualities embodied in the design. The excellence of the craftsmanship and materials is demonstrated in the stone masonry, by the challenging moulded cut-stone work and the variety of stone dressing. The skill of the joiners is evident in the custom designed medieval-like doors. The quality of the wrought metal work is demonstrated by the various grilles and heavy wrought iron hardware.

Of the various projects undertaken by the master builder, William Coverdale at the Penitentiary, this is the only building which can be attributed solely to him. It must

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also be ranked as one of his most successful commissions in combination with the walls and guard towers, the North Lodge establishes the character of the area. The building is a prominent and well-known landmark in the Kingston area.

**Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the North Lodge resides in its status as an excellent example of monumental Classical Revival architecture. At the exterior, the characteristic features of this style are: the symmetrical and originally rectilinear plan, the "temple-with-wings" form of the principal elevation, the Tuscan Order treatment of the loggia and wings, and the lofty helm-crested lantern. The rear wall of the loggia, also distinctive of the style, has three semicircular arched doorways, modelled on the pattern of a Roman town gateway - a central great door for vehicles flanked by two smaller doors for pedestrians surmounted by circular windows. All of the openings are architecturally enframed.

Internally the building is notable for the brick vaulting spanning the passageways joining the front and back walls of the Lodge (a central semicircular vault flanked by parabolic vaults with three intersecting parabolic vaults).

The presence of so much original fabric and so many architectural details which are characteristic of the Classical Revival style, means the Classified designation applies to the whole exterior and interior of the building with the exception of building fabric which post-dates the addition of the side wings at the south elevation.

The reinstatement of key architectural elements such as the rustic stone blocking beneath the string course intersecting the window recess of the west wing at the front elevation, the semicircular windows above the string course intersecting the window recesses of the rear elevation, and the framed and ledged screen and superimposed spindle grille at the arched doorway west of the great door at the same elevation would greatly enhance the aesthetic qualities of the building. The removal of the suspended ceiling of the passageways and the use of suspended or bracketed incandescent fixtures for task lighting of the space, would recover the original character and proportions of the interior as well as admit more natural light from the circular windows.

The historic relationship between the original building and its associated landscape within the institution derived, in part, from the formal, built site elements such as the

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low stone garden walls, granular surfaced paths and driveway with stone curbing and the soft landscape elements such as the grassed areas and garden planting established by 1895. The ground interpretation or restoration of all or a portion of these landscape features, which complemented the perfect symmetry of the building, would strengthen the relationship between the North Lodge and its immediate environment.

1993.04.29