

Quebec City, Quebec
Maillou House
17 St-Louis Street

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Maillou House and its outbuildings, which currently house a cafe called L'Estoc, is located near the Chateau Frontenac, in the heart of Old Quebec City. This stone house had only one storey when it was built in about 1737. Jean-Baptiste Maillou was the architect and first owner of the house. An additional storey was added to the original structure in approximately 1767, the ground floor was expanded in 1799 and extended for the addition of a storey in 1805. In about 1815, the British government acquired the property on behalf of the military intendant and, between 1828 and 1831, built a three-storey addition at the back. The house was restored in 1959-60 to house the Quebec City Chamber of Commerce, which has occupied it ever since. The restaurant was established in the former sheds at the same time. The group of buildings has been officially recognized by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and is currently owned by the Canadian Parks Service. See FHBRO Report 90-33.

Reason for designation

Maillou House was designated Classified for its architectural, aesthetic and functional qualities, and for its contribution to the environment. Despite the successive additions and functional changes to the building, the harmonious and balanced composition of this very fine example of urban residential eighteenth century architecture has been preserved, owing to the expertise of the artisans and workers, who respected the traditions handed down from the French regime. Two important chapters of Quebec City's history are illustrated by this property. First, under the French regime, when Quebec City increasingly became a city of tenants, it is an example of a rich landowner's residence. Second, it represents the administrative and military roles of Quebec City in the nineteenth century.

Maillou House, Kent House to its right and Jacquet House across the street form a group which gives us an idea of what St. Louis Street looked like in the early nineteenth century. Located on one of the best known streets in Old Quebec near the city's most prestigious hotel, the Maillou House, although not strictly speaking, a landmark, is nonetheless a very significant component of the district classified by UNESCO as a world heritage site.

Character defining elements

The heritage value of the Maillou House lies in its French "Canadianized" nature, which is characterized by the following exterior elements: rough cut stone walls which
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were covered with roughcast, while the dressed stone of the door, window frames and string course were left uncovered to set it off; the symmetry of the openings on either

side of the main entrance; steeply, pitched roof; dormer windows; and large chimney shafts placed off-centre in relation to the axis of the roofline.

This house has no fire walls, since it was free-standing, which was unusual at the time. The northeast gable is covered with clapboard in keeping with tradition and should be preserved. However, the masonry of the facade wall should be covered with roughcast to provide greater protection. The current roof is a batten seam metal roof, whereas a number of fragments indicate that the original roof was a metal roof "à la canadienne". Should the roof require replacing, it should be returned to its original style.

Two elements dating from the early nineteenth century should be preserved. They are the very unusual venetian window located on the second floor, on the court side of the house, and the exterior iron shutters, which were installed following a burglary in 1817.

The successive additions resulting from changes of ownership and function have left their mark on the interior layout, on the details and finishing materials. However, they have been done in harmony with the existing layout and the original organization of space is still discernible. Several old partitions, the woodwork of the doors, windows, frames and shutters, are in very good condition. The central staircase reveals different phases of the evolution of the main building. Two magnificent worked stone fireplace provide examples of the skill of the local artisans and embellish the two rooms of the original structure overlooking the street. The extension conserves traits of its initial function with its small vault from 1822, which resulted in the bricking up of the door on the left side of the facade. It is important to conserve the contributions from each period which remain today, regardless of whether they date from the French or British regime, since each represents an important chapter of history.

The house should be adapted to meet modern-day requirements, but this must be done as unobtrusively as possible. The lighting and heating fixtures should be reconsidered. Although a sprinkler system has existed since 1983, efforts should be made to avoid unduly increasing the fire load in the roof space.

This property is one of the few in Quebec City to have a side court and outbuildings dating to the early 19th century. Although the outbuildings have been adapted to their new commercial function, the former structure of the building remains discernible. To

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improve the visual aspect of the roof of the outbuildings, the highly visible gooseneck exhaust outlets should be replaced with more discrete ventilation outlet grills. The outdoor furniture, the signs and the lighting should blend in with the heritage environment. Eventually, the court behind the main buildings could be landscaped to conceal modern elements, such as refrigerators.

Translation