

Ottawa, Ontario  
**Royal Canadian Mint**  
320 Sussex Drive

## **HERITAGE VALUE**

The main part of the Mint was constructed between 1905 and 1908 to plans drawn up at the Department of Public Works under the direction of chief architect David Ewart. The guard house was built at the same time. Small additions were made to the south side of the main building in 1909, 1916 and 1951. The nearly separate refinery on the north was constructed in 1935 to plans by the architect H.G. Hughes. The building will be transferred from Public Works to the Royal Canadian Mint Corporation. See FHBRO Building Report 84-06.

## **Reasons for Designation**

In July 1984, the Royal Canadian Mint was classified because of its historical interest, its important role in the prospect of Sussex Drive, and the quality of its architectural design. In 1979, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board designated the Mint a National Historic Site, as it is one of the most important financial institutions of the country.

The evolution of the Mint was indicative of Canada's growing monetary independence. Its founding in 1905 was a late response to the Klondike gold rush. Its position in a series of federal buildings whose construction was planned along Sussex Drive, as well as its style, were an apt reflection of David Ewart's response to Laurier's ambition to make Ottawa "the Washington of the North". Architecturally, it is a pleasing example of the combination of Late Gothic decorative treatment and beaux-arts-inspired design, which is characteristic of Ewart's buildings in Ottawa.

## **Character-Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Mint resides in the main facades of all of its buildings, particularly the very successful refinery which dates from 1935. The wing added in 1951, which although now clearly dated is compatible with the whole, does not detract from the visual value of the site and is integral to its historical interest.

The building's plan gives clear expression to the dual function of the Mint. The massive three-storey structure looking onto Sussex Drive, with its central tower containing a rotunda and its main staircase lit from above, represents the administrative and institutional functions of the building; the lower rear wing and auxiliary buildings express its industrial aspect, i.e. the striking of coins. This clear distinction must be preserved.

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