

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The lighthouse at Point Riche was built in 1892 to the designs of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Transport Canada is the custodian of the tower, while Parks Canada owns the land and the ancillary station buildings. See FHBRO Building Report 91-36.

Reasons for Designation

The Point Riche Lighthouse was designated Recognized for its thematic associations, its site and setting, its landmark qualities, and its aesthetic and functional design.

Located at the seaward tip of the Point Riche peninsula, the windswept station site makes up part of the outermost edge of Port au Choix National Historic Park, and is a distinct landmark in the province.

The multi-sided tower was a design first developed in the late 18th century in Europe, and used into the 20th century for Canadian lighthouses built of masonry, wood or concrete. The tapered hexagonal wooden tower at Point Riche is grounded in this tradition, and is a good representative example of federal lighthouse design undertaken during the years of Col. William Anderson's tenure as Chief Engineer of the Department of Marine and Fisheries.

This important coastal light station was first established in 1871; the present tower, the second on the site, continues to represent the theme of safe navigation in important shipping lanes through the Strait of Belle Isle.

Character Defining Features

The heritage character of this lighthouse resides in its form, materials, construction details and setting.

The lighthouse is characterized by its tapered, hexagonal shape, rising to a slightly flared lantern base and prominent lantern. The smooth wood-shingled walls are interrupted only by a hooded door and four hooded windows positioned to correspond to the interior staircase. The overall profile, form and textural qualities of the building should be respected. The striking red and white colour scheme provides strong definition to the base, shaft and lantern, and should also be continued.

Its structural system, comprised of timber framing and two solid wood-frame walls set on a concrete foundation, should be respected, and repairs executed with appropriate

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materials and details. The base of the tower should be kept clear of vegetation and decaying matter, and a sound protective paint layer must be maintained. Regular inspection and maintenance are recommended.

Interior features should be investigated, and any remaining early materials and fittings identified and preserved.

The circular gallery with its tubular steel rails replaces an earlier gallery that echoed the tower's hexagonal form. The present version is in keeping with the character of the structure and merits preservation.

Nearby ancillary buildings contribute to the character of the light station; their retention is recommended. The rugged, windswept nature of the site, and its essentially utilitarian landscape treatment, should be protected, as should the tower's prominence and landmark quality.

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