



# MERRICKVILLE BLOCKHOUSE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
OF CANADA

## *Management Plan*



Parks  
Canada

Parcs  
Canada

Canada

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February, 2007



## Foreword



Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas offer Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast unique opportunities to experience and understand our wonderful country. They are places of learning, recreation and fun where Canadians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Canada.

From our smallest national park to our most visited national historic site to our largest national marine conservation area, each of these places offers Canadians and visitors unique opportunities to experience Canada. These places of beauty, wonder and learning are valued by Canadians - they are part of our past, our present and our future.

Our Government's goal is to ensure that each of these special places is conserved.

We see a future in which these special places will further Canadians' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Canada, the economic well-being of communities, and the vitality of our society.

Our Government's vision is to build a culture of heritage conservation in Canada by offering Canadians exceptional opportunities to experience our natural and cultural heritage.

These values form the foundation of the new management plan for Merrickville Blockhouse National Historic Site of Canada. I offer my appreciation to the many thoughtful Canadians who helped to develop this plan, particularly to our dedicated team from Parks Canada, and to all those local organizations and individuals who have demonstrated their good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In this same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Merrickville Blockhouse National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Baird". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Baird  
*Minister of the Environment*



This Plan has been recommended for approval by:



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Alan Latourelle  
Chief Executive Officer  
Parks Canada Agency



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Gavin Liddy  
Field Unit Superintendent  
Eastern Ontario, Parks Canada Agency





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a management plan for the Merrickville Blockhouse, a National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC), which is located on the Rideau Canal National Historic Site of Canada in the Village of Merrickville-Wolford in the Province of Ontario. The Merrickville Blockhouse was designated a national historic site in 1939 because “it is a fine example of the best type of blockhouses erected for the defense of the Rideau Canal” (HSMBC Minutes, 1939).

The site is administered by Parks Canada as part of the Rideau Canal NHSC. Since 1965, it has been home to the Merrickville Blockhouse Museum, which displays and preserves artifacts and documents related to the Blockhouse and the history of the community. It is operated by the Merrickville and District Historical Society, under an agreement with the Corporation of the Village of Merrickville - Wolford.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Management Plan

A management plan is a strategic guide for future management of a national historic site. It is required by the *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998), guided by public consultation and approved by the Minister of the Environment. The *Act* requires that a management plan be prepared for every national historic site administered by the Agency, to be tabled in Parliament every five years. The management plan directs the long-term conservation, presentation and operation of a national historic site. It constitutes the framework within which subsequent management, work planning, and implementation will take place. The plan identifies the various issues that need to be resolved and presents objectives and actions to resolve them. The Eastern Ontario Field Unit is responsible for the implementation of the management plan.

Although the plan has a 10-15 years life span, it is reviewed every 5 years to reflect new conditions, policy direction and legislation. Amendments

resulting from a review will be tabled in Parliament. This is the first management plan for this site.

The management plan for the Merrickville Blockhouse is a document that constitutes local expression of the general policies of Parks Canada. The goal of this management plan is to ensure the commemorative integrity of the Blockhouse, including the application of cultural resource management principles and practice. While respecting this primary goal, the management plan also guides the provision of appropriate opportunities for public appreciation and enjoyment, and the administration of the site.

### 1.2 Preparation and Scope of this Management Plan

The basis of this management plan is the Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) for the Rideau Canal, which also includes the Merrickville Blockhouse and the evaluation of the state of commemorative integrity of the site. A summary of draft management plan proposals for the Blockhouse NHSC was prepared and then summarized in a public consultation newsletter. The newsletter was distributed to the public in June 2006 and was discussed with the public at an open house on July 6, 2006. Comments received at the open house were recorded and analyzed and considered in the preparation of the management plan.

This management plan will be used by Parks Canada and its partners to plan and implement actions for the protection, presentation, and management of the Merrickville Blockhouse. While the primary focus of the plan is on the Blockhouse, it is recognized that the site is an integral part of the lockstation, especially that portion located in the immediate vicinity. This management plan will therefore also address issues and opportunities on the lands around the Blockhouse extending towards the Lions Club Campground on the west and the south side of the Canal and to St. Lawrence and Main Streets.

### 1.3 Legislative and Policy Context

#### *The Parks Canada Agency Act*

Under the *Parks Canada Agency Act*, Parks Canada has a mandated responsibility for ensuring the commemorative integrity of the national historic sites for which it is responsible. In accordance with the *Act*, the agency must prepare a management plan for these sites, to be tabled in Parliament every five years.

#### *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies (1994)*

This document includes both the “National Historic Sites Policy” and the “Cultural Resource Management Policy”.

“The National Historic Sites Policy” outlines the objectives of a national program of historical commemoration, provides guidelines for the evaluation of the program, including the concept of commemorative integrity, and outlines the roles and responsibilities for the recognition, designation and commemoration of places, persons and events of national significance.

“The Cultural Resource Management Policy” outlines the five principles that should guide the management of cultural resources: value, public benefit, understanding, respect, and integrity. As well, this policy describes the elements of the practice of cultural resource management, including inventory, evaluation, consideration of historic values in actions affecting cultural resources, and monitoring and review.

#### *Parks Canada Guide to Management Planning (2000)*

The guide identifies the certification requirements for a national historic site management plan, roles and responsibilities during the management planning process, as well as requirements for public consultation.

#### *The Policy on Management of Real Property*

A new federal *Policy on Management of Real Property* replaced the former *Federal Heritage Buildings Policy*. The new policy continues to provide for the evaluation of the heritage character of all federal buildings 40 years or older. A building evaluated as a federal heritage building is either *classified* - the highest designation - or *recognized*.

This new and comprehensive policy requires that, among their other asset management responsibilities, managers of federal heritage buildings must ensure that:

- Conservation advice is sought from Parks Canada’s Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) for *recognized* heritage buildings;
- Consultations with the FHBRO are undertaken before demolishing, dismantling or selling a recognized heritage building and before taking any action that could affect the heritage character of a *classified* building; and
- Best efforts are made to arrange for appropriate alternative uses of under-utilized or excess *classified* and *recognized* heritage buildings, first within the federal government and then outside the federal government.

The Merrickville Blockhouse has been designated a “classified federal heritage building.” (FHBRO 94-066)

#### *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2003)*

The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* is a comprehensive benchmark of conservation principles and practices. The document sets out a disciplined approach to the assessment of conservation projects and the identification of appropriate interventions. Designed as a common reference point for conservation practice in Canada, it is used by the federal government to guide conservation work and by provincial and

territorial authorities, heritage conservation professionals and individual Canadians.

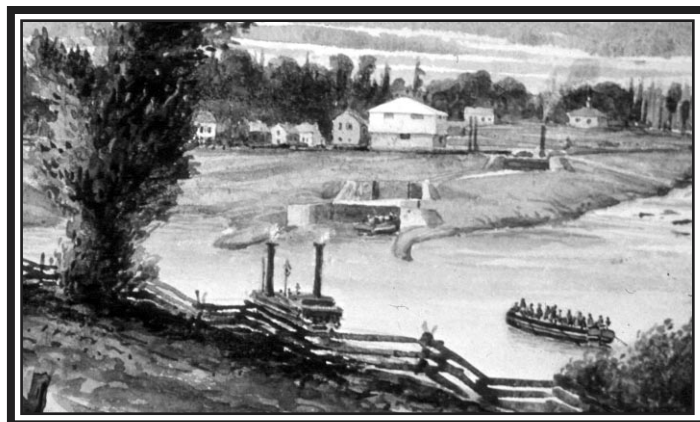
## 1.4 Merrickville Blockhouse NHSC: An Example of Shared Stewardship

The Village of Merrickville has a lease with Parks Canada for the operation of the Blockhouse as a community museum. The Merrickville and District Historical Society, operates the museum on behalf of the village. This volunteer group played a key role in the restoration of the Blockhouse in 1964.

## 1.5 Historical Context

The Merrickville Blockhouse was the largest of the defensible structures built along the Rideau Canal and the most impressive of the four blockhouses. Constructed around 1832, it was the first of the blockhouses built and one which most closely followed Colonel By's own design. A single gun port was built into each wall of the masonry lower storey for mounting a cannon, and all four sides of the timber upper storey had openings for small-arms fire. Loopholes, called machicolations, were also cut in the underside of the overhang to enable the defenders to fire at any attackers reaching the walls. The upper storey of the Blockhouse housed the lockmaster and his family.

In the event of war, the Blockhouse was intended to be a mustering point for local militia, a supply depot where provisions, munition and arms could be stored, and a strong defensive position for repelling anyone attempting to destroy the Canal structures. It served a military function only once, in the aftermath of the 1837 Rebellion, when it was taken over temporarily by the 34th Regiment. Neglected for many years since it was last used as a residence in the 1860's, the building was restored in 1964 as a result of pressure from local residents to preserve this significant building.



*Merrickville, Watercolour*  
Philip John Bainbridge, 1838,  
Library and Archives of Canada

## 1.6 Local and Regional Context (Figure 1 and Figure 2)

The Merrickville Blockhouse is located at the Merrickville Lockstation in the Village of Merrickville-Wolford, which has a population of approximately 2800. The village was originally established as a mill site in the 1790s and became a thriving manufacturing centre with the construction of the Rideau Canal and sustained this growth during the railway expansion era in eastern Ontario. Merrickville declined after the First World War, but was revitalized over the last 20 years as a heritage village, with the lockstation, a wide variety of specialty shops and restaurants drawing visitors from Ottawa and other communities in eastern Ontario. It is one of the most popular tourist destination along the Rideau Canal, outside of Ottawa.

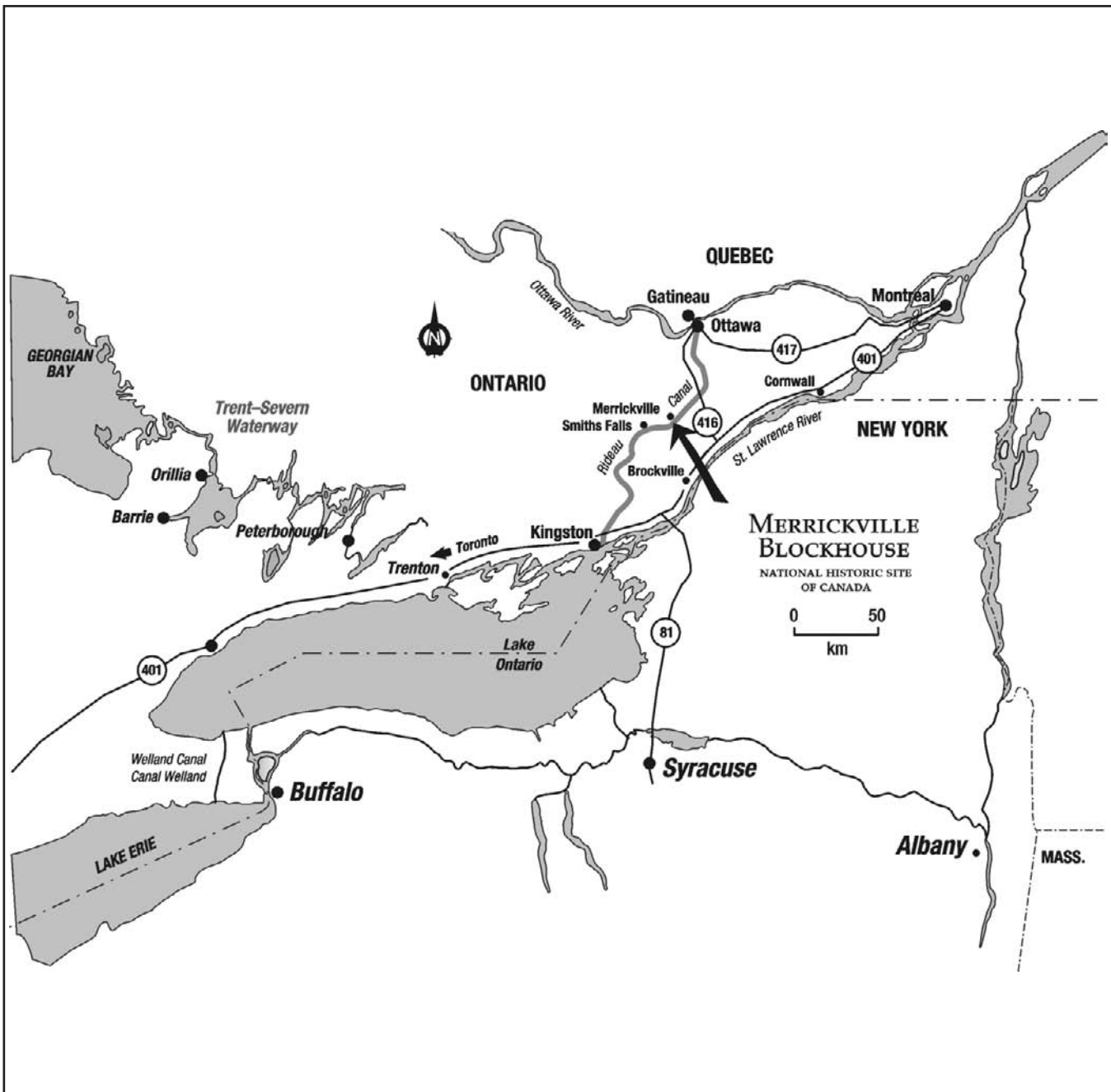
The Blockhouse is located at the corner of St. Lawrence and Main Streets, the main commercial intersection in the village. It occupies the most prominent location in the village and together with the lockstation attracts the largest number of visitors. Land uses immediately adjacent to the site consist of open space around the locks, a church and historic commercial buildings with a variety of shops and restaurants. A parking lot immediately west of the Blockhouse provides parking for visitors.

Figure 1

# MERRICKVILLE BLOCKHOUSE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Regional Context





## **2.0 THE ROLE OF THE MERRICKVILLE BLOCKHOUSE IN THE FAMILY OF NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES**

The Merrickville Blockhouse is part of a nation-wide family of over 900 national historic sites. National historic sites commemorate thousands of years of Canada's human history and a rich variety of themes, including political, economic, intellectual, cultural and social life. They are powerful symbols of Canadian identity and make the nation's history a part of the living present. They are owned by federal, provincial and municipal governments, by businesses and by private citizens, who all share in the stewardship of these important places. In addition to over 900 national historic sites of Canada, over 590 persons and 360 historic events have been commemorated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) as being of national significance.

Parks Canada now administers more than 150 national historic sites across Canada. These national historic sites are a significant, irreplaceable legacy. By protecting them, Parks Canada ensures their preservation for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

### **Role of the Merrickville Blockhouse in the National Historic Sites System**

The National Historic Sites Systems Plan has organized Canadian history into themes. Within this scheme, the Merrickville Blockhouse represents the Military and Defense sub-theme, which is part of the Governing Canada theme.

## **3.0 COMMEMORATIVE INTEGRITY**

### **3.1 CONCEPT OF COMMEMORATIVE INTEGRITY**

A national historic site possesses commemorative integrity when:

- the resources that symbolize or represent its importance are not impaired or under threat;
- the reasons for the site's national historic significance are effectively communicated to the public; and
- the site's heritage values, including those not related to national significance, are respected by all whose decisions or actions affect the site.

### **3.2 The Commemorative Integrity Statement for Merrickville Blockhouse**

A Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) is an elaboration of what is meant by commemorative integrity at a particular national historic site. Providing information about where value lies, it is fundamental to the decision-making process for any national historic site, and is the framework to assess the impact of proposed action.

The commemorative integrity statement for the Merrickville Blockhouse identifies what is commemorated at the site and why. It determines which resources of the site are directly related to the reasons for designation, (known as Level 1 resources); articulates their value and the objectives for their protection; and identifies the messages of national significance and objectives for their effective communication. As well, the CIS identifies other heritage values, cultural resources, (known as Level 2 resources), and messages associated with the site.

### **3.3 Statement of Commemorative Intent**

Commemorative intent refers to the reasons for a site's designation as a national historic site by the

HSMBC. The Merrickville Blockhouse was declared a national historic site of Canada in 1939 because:

*It is a fine example of the best type of blockhouse erected for the defense of the Rideau Canal.*

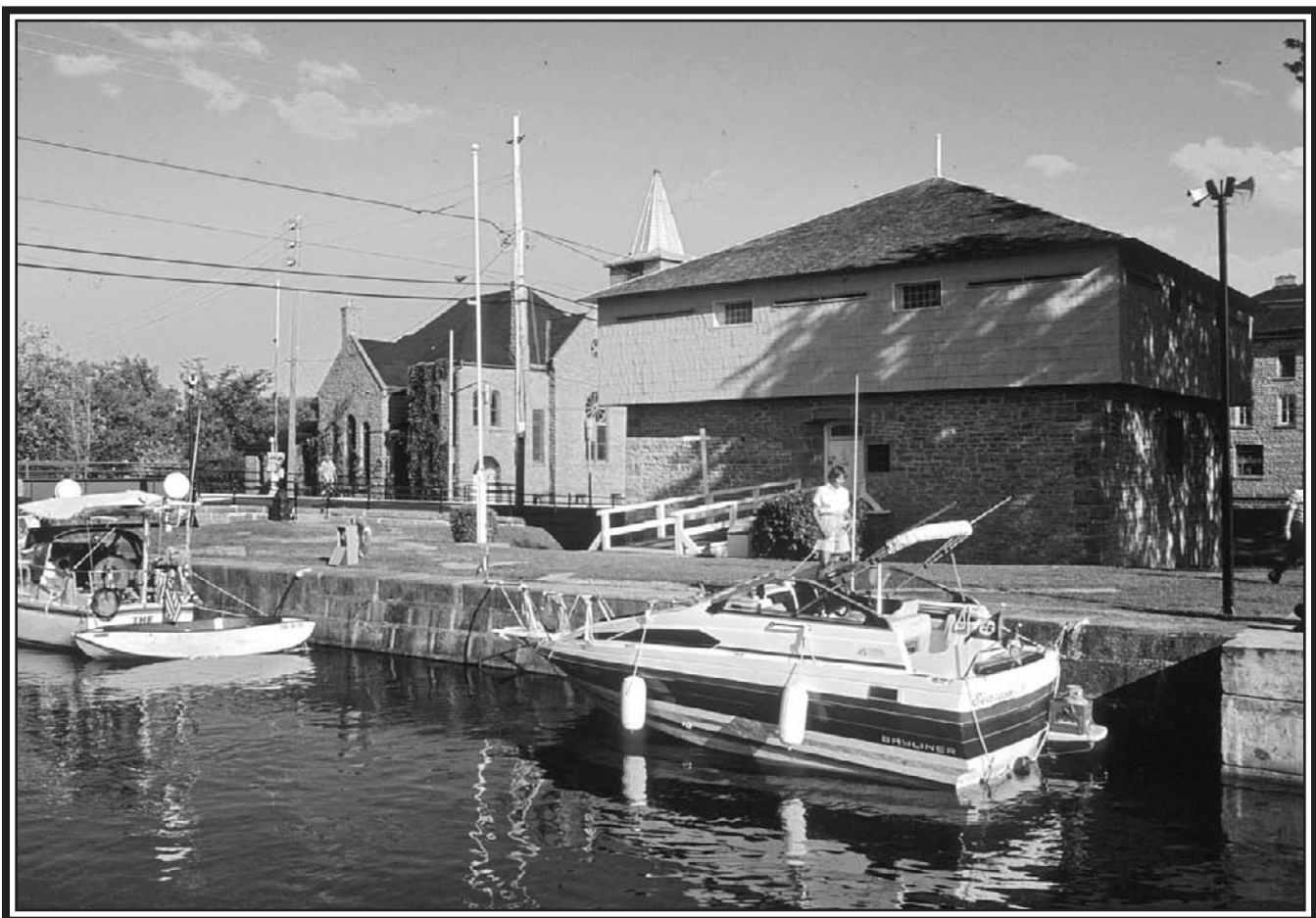
### 3.4 Designated Place (Figure 2)

The 1939 minutes of the HSMBC clearly focused on the Blockhouse as the designated place. The designated place is thus the Blockhouse as delineated by the footprint of the building.

### 3.5 Administered Place (Figure 2)

Merrickville Blockhouse and the surrounding property is owned by the federal government and

managed as part of the Rideau Canal. The administered place consists of the entire Merrickville Lockstation and includes the lockstation lands on the south and north side of the Canal cut, the island north of the waste weir and a small parcel on the north side of the river.



*Merrickville Blockhouse, Parks Canada*

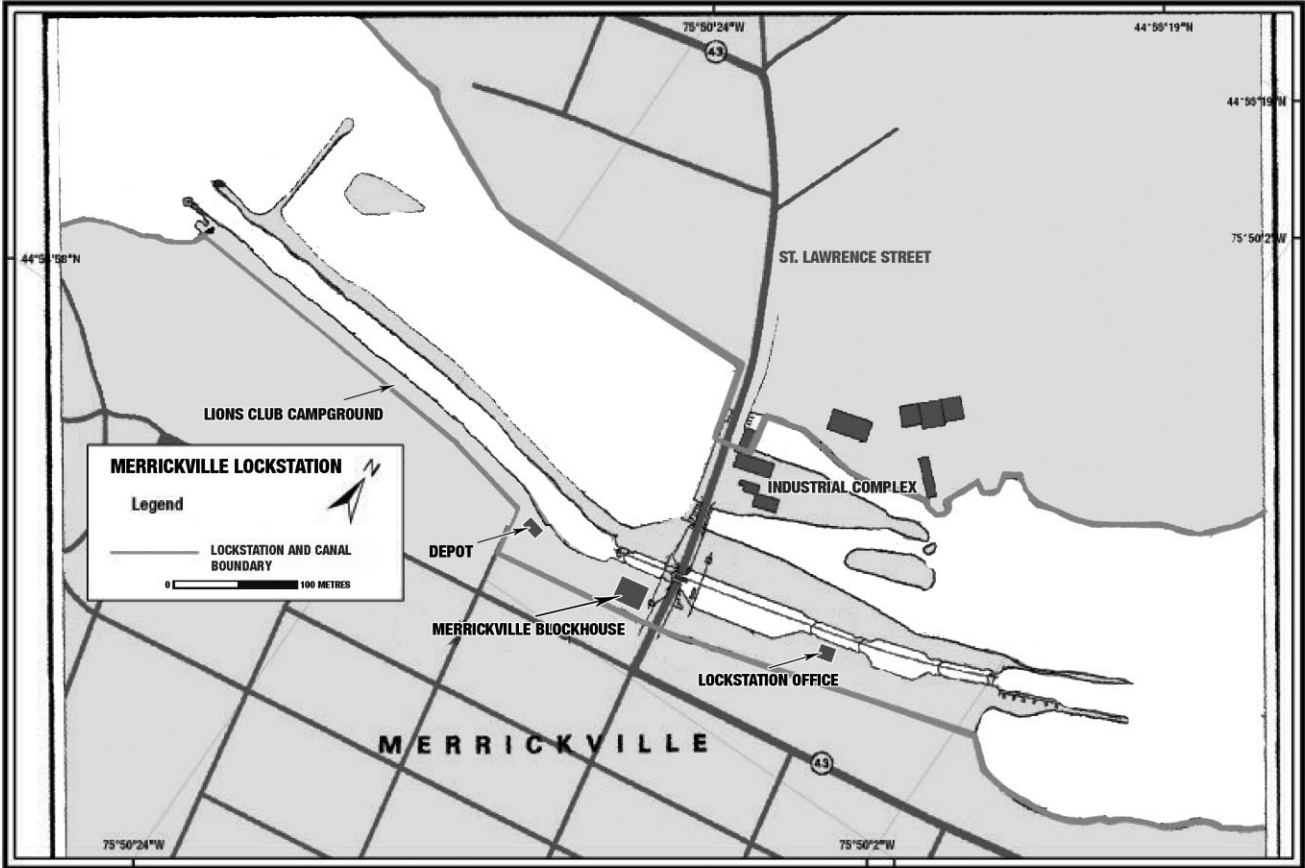


Figure 2

# MERRICKVILLE BLOCKHOUSE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

## Local Context



## **4.0 CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS**

This section presents the issues to be resolved in the management plan. Impairments and threats to the cultural resources at the site are examined in some detail, as well as the state of heritage presentation.

Parks Canada systematically evaluates the state of commemorative integrity for the sites it administers. The evaluation of Commemorative Integrity for Merrickville Blockhouse took place in 2005. The evaluation concluded that the structure is sound, but inadequate presentation of the reasons for its designation and its historic values constitutes a significant impairment to its overall commemorative integrity. Addressing this commemorative integrity issue constitutes the primary challenge for this site.

### **4.1 Heritage Protection**

#### **4.1.1 Nationally Significant Cultural Resources**

Nationally significant cultural resources, or Level 1 resources, are those which are directly related to the reasons for designation. These consist of the Blockhouse and surrounding landscape.

The Blockhouse has retained a high degree of integrity owing to restoration work undertaken in 1984 and 1996 that addressed pressing structural issues. The overall condition of the building is good and there is no appreciable deterioration of critical components of the structure. While a fire detection system has been installed, there is no automated fire suppression system.

Parks Canada maintenance staff visit the site periodically throughout the year as required for operational requirements and as requested by the Merrickville and District Historical Society. Parks Canada maintenance staff perform minor maintenance as required and identify major maintenance requirements to the asset management team as a result of these visits. There is, however, no formal

checklist and inspection protocol in place to ensure that the building is monitored and maintained according to the principles and practices of cultural resource management. The Merrickville and District Historical Society also has no clearly stated role in monitoring the condition of the building.

The lockstation landscape is considered to be a nationally significant or Level 1 cultural resource in the context of the Rideau Canal. The values as identified in the CIS for this cultural landscape include historic layout and configuration, including open spaces, circulation patterns, visual and historic associations with the community, and surviving historic views both within and beyond the lockstation boundaries. All of these values contribute to the unique historical environment of the Blockhouse.

These values remain intact and are still legible in the landscape. However, incremental changes in the form of the parking lot, tree planting and recreational facilities have obscured the military function of the Blockhouse and the surrounding landscape.

#### **4.1.2 Other Cultural Resources**

These consist of cultural resources, known as level two resources, which are related to the historical use of the Blockhouse. They include archaeological material found in the basement and in the moat, which have not yet been evaluated for historical association and level of significance. They are therefore presumed to be Level 2 resources until classified otherwise.

Several buildings were previously located near the Blockhouse. No archaeological research has been undertaken to determine if these resources have survived. An archaeological resource inventory is required to locate potential archaeological sites and objects so that these features can be identified and protected.

The Merrickville and District Historical Society owns a large collection of objects on display in the museum. Some of these objects may have potential association

with the Canal, but until they are systematically inventoried and evaluated, their historic value cannot be determined.

## **4.2 Heritage Presentation**

### **4.2.1 Messages of National Significance**

The HSMBC plaque located adjacent to the entrance door provides the visitor with a brief explanation of the national historic significance of the Merrickville Blockhouse. The historic values of the Blockhouse are not communicated adequately to visitors either in terms of nationally significant messages or contextual messages. The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation report for the Blockhouse has identified this presentation deficiency as a major impairment to the site's commemorative integrity.

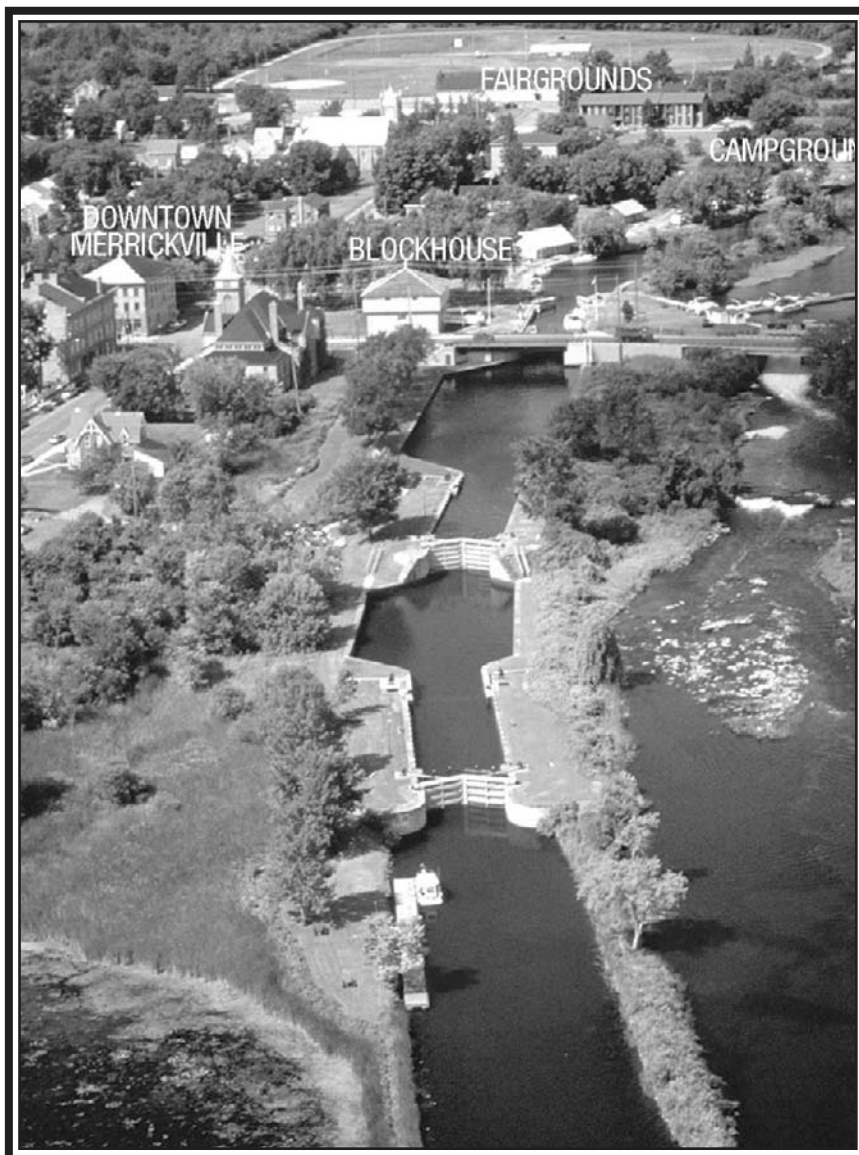
### **4.2.2 Other Messages**

The Merrickville and District Historical Society staff operates the museum and is available to answer questions regarding the collection and interpretive displays. The building allows for self-guided tours, with an average duration of 15-20 minutes. The typical visitor experience at the site is essentially the same as that provided by a traditional pioneer museum.

The displays in the Blockhouse convey the lifestyles of agrarian and urban settlers in the Merrickville area in the 19th century. There is no presentation of other site messages or of the family of national historic sites.

## **4.3 Site Operation and Visitor Facilities**

The museum is open from the end of June until Labour Day. Admission to the Blockhouse is free although donations are accepted. The Blockhouse is a relatively popular tourist attraction, receiving approximately 10,000 visitors per year. Not much is known about visitor preferences and expectations, but visitor registration books in the museum tend to indicate that a significant segment of visitors to the



*Merrickville Lockstation, Simon Lunn*

community and the Blockhouse come from larger urban centres in eastern Ontario, such as Ottawa and Kingston.

The grounds adjacent to the Blockhouse are very popular among visitors and are heavily used for picnicking and boat watching. This area is also the venue for a number of special events such as Canalfest, Harvest Days and other community activities. Most visitors to the village park at the lockstation parking lot as part of their tour of the village. The parking lot is virtually always full during the visitor season owing to its proximity to the downtown area.

Visitor service deficiencies include the lack of information/orientation material on the canal and French language services and signage. Although no complaints have been received from the public on the issue of bilingual services, this is a policy requirement, which needs to be addressed. There are no washroom facilities in the Blockhouse. The nearest public washrooms are in the lockstation office east of the site and in the depot, both of which are limited in capacity and not ideally located for site visitors.

Merrickville's attractions are relatively easy to find, owing to informative community signage, directional information on Highways 401, 416, 15 and 43.

#### **4.4 Management Agreement**

The occupation of the Blockhouse under the terms of the 1965 lease agreement has been beneficial to all parties. Both Parks Canada and the Village remain satisfied with the mutual benefits that are derived from the agreement and are committed to a renewed agreement along the same lines.

Both parties recognize, however, the need to update the agreement to incorporate commemorative integrity requirements into all aspects of site programming, to enhance Parks Canada's presence and visibility at the site and to encourage the museum

to explore avenues to generate additional visitation and revenue to support its operation.

## **5.0 SITE VISION, MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This vision statement provides a description of the desired future state of the site in the year 2017. This forms the foundation for management objectives and actions for the site and these in turn comprise the substance of the management plan for the Blockhouse.

### **5.2 Shared Site Vision**

The Merrickville Blockhouse is protected and presented as a national historic site in partnership with the Merrickville and District Historical Society. The Blockhouse is appreciated for its significance as a national historic site of the 1830's, as an integral part of the Rideau Canal and as a treasured local museum.

The use of the Blockhouse as a community museum is a beneficial, successful partnership between Parks Canada and the Merrickville and District Historical Society, based on shared values and mutual respect. As a local museum, it also presents nationally significant messages and contributes to Merrickville's heritage-based economy and growth in tourism. A sense of stewardship of the Blockhouse and an appreciation of its values as a national historic site are exemplified in the Village's commitment with Parks Canada to protect and operate the Blockhouse.

### **5.3 Management Objectives**

The goal of this plan is to provide strategic direction to ensure the commemorative integrity of the Merrickville Blockhouse and promote a memorable visitor experience. The objectives of the management plan are:

- To manage the cultural resources of Merrickville Blockhouse National Historic Site of Canada and its historical environment in a manner consistent with the site's commemorative integrity and the principles and practices of cultural resource

management and to communicate their value to visitors;

- To continue the lease of the Blockhouse by the Village of Merrickville-Wolford for the operation of a museum, with a provision that both the Village and Parks Canada act as joint stewards for the site, responsible for the protection of its commemorative integrity;
- To provide a memorable visitor experience at the Blockhouse, thereby effectively conveying messages of national significance to the public as well as the place of the site within the Rideau Canal system and within the family of National Historic Sites; and
- To evaluate periodically the effectiveness of heritage presentation programming to visitors and off-site audiences.

### **5.4 Heritage Protection Management Actions**

#### **5.4.1 Objectives:**

- Cultural resources are not impaired or under threat.
- An ongoing program of monitoring, maintenance and remedial action ensures the long-term protection of the built heritage resources.
- The principles of cultural resource management are applied to all operational programs that affect cultural resources such as visitor services and site operation agreements.
- The military heritage character of the Blockhouse and its setting is preserved.

The above set of management objectives for the Merrickville Blockhouse is broad in scope. The following two sections specify the actions necessary to meet these stated management objectives.

#### **5.4.2 Nationally Significant Cultural Resources**

Parks Canada will:

- establish a monitoring and preventative maintenance program as part of the Rideau Canal



asset management program in cooperation with the Merrickville and District Historical Society;

- conduct a review of the existing landscape to determine which features are not compatible with the military function of the Blockhouse. These features may be relocated or removed if shown to be intrusive or incompatible; and
- protect the current open space character of the lands surrounding the Blockhouse. No new facilities or structures that would compromise historic views, archaeological resources or the undeveloped open space character of the surroundings will be allowed.

#### **5.4.3 Other Cultural Resources**

Parks Canada will:

- evaluate archaeological objects in Parks Canada's collection for level of significance and potential for information as to the material, structural and land use history of the site;
- undertake an inventory and evaluation of in situ archaeological sites and resources, based on an approved research plan, which would provide an improved knowledge base to manage and protect the site's resources; and
- conduct archaeological research where potential impacts on archaeological sites and resources cannot be avoided prior to any disturbance as a result of development, recapitalization, conservation, servicing and maintenance activities.

#### **5.5 Heritage Presentation**

Ensuring the commemorative integrity of the Merrickville Blockhouse requires a heritage presentation program to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the site. The program will communicate the national historic significance of the site and related stories in an interesting, informative and engaging manner while meeting the needs and expectations of the visitors. The overall goal is a memorable and meaningful visitor experience that

engages visitors to create their own, unique connections to this national treasure.

##### **5.5.1 Objectives**

- To present the messages and heritage values of the Merrickville Blockhouse in a creative and innovative manner that will allow diverse audiences, with special needs and personal interests, to gain an understanding and appreciation of its national significance, as well as its regional and local significance.
- To tell visitors why the Blockhouse is a national historic site, to communicate the historic values of its cultural resources and to present the context messages as identified in the Commemorative Integrity Statement for this site.
- To offer a memorable visitor experience and an informative and educational experience for off-site audiences.
- To present other messages as well as its role as part of a nation-wide system of national historic sites and as a component of the Rideau Canal.
- To assess the effectiveness of heritage program delivery and the response to key messages by both on and off-site audiences.

##### **5.5.2 Messages**

Messages identified in the CIS will form the focus of the delivery of national and contextual messages at the Merrickville Blockhouse, with a particular emphasis on conveying the reasons for designation as a national historic site. The architectural values of the structure and the surviving features of the lockstation landscapes are also elements of the key messages.

Other messages at the Blockhouse include the agrarian and industrial history presented in the museum, the history of the industrial ruins located near the locks, and the role of the Merrickville Blockhouse in the family of national historic sites.

### 5.5.3 Audiences

The audience segments that are targeted for heritage presentation include people visiting the site as well as members of the public who will not necessarily visit the Blockhouse but are interested in learning about this nationally significant historical place. This type of segmentation allows for the development of programs suited to the audience's respective needs.

#### **On-Site Audiences**

**Vacation Travelers:** these visitors are on vacation and looking for interesting and informative attractions to visit. These are mainly adults and family groups.

**Day Trip Users:** this is an important visitor segment that makes the short trip to the Blockhouse and Village of Merrickville-Wolford from Ottawa, Brockville, Kingston or other centres in eastern Ontario.

**Boaters Navigating the Rideau Canal:** this is also a significant visitor segment as Merrickville is a major destination point for boaters by virtue of the services available in the Village. Some boaters stay in the community a day or two; others may visit the Museum while mooring briefly near the Merrickville Locks, waiting to be "locked through."

**Educational Groups:** the main education groups consist of school groups in the local area.

**Commercial Tour Groups:** arriving mostly by bus or boat, these groups tend to have minimal advance knowledge of the site, come from diverse backgrounds and have limited time to spend on site.

**Residents of Merrickville and area:** this segment consists of residents, both seasonal and permanent, who may feel a special connection to the site as it is a longtime locally recognized resource and has served as the location of the local museum.

**Special Events Participants:** this group includes potential theme related users of the Blockhouse or the Rideau Canal, such as historical societies or events associated with Canada Day, Heritage Day, etc.

#### **Off-Site Audiences**

**Educational Groups:** this consists mainly of school groups.

**Commercial Groups:** while the actual tour group participant has little contact with the site before arrival, commercial tour operators are a significant off-site audience.

**Virtual Travelers:** these are a potential audience receptive to pre-trip information.

**Stakeholders:** the community and interest groups in Merrickville and surrounding region have an interest in the site for a variety of reasons.

**The Canadian Public:** the broader Canadian public is an audience for messages related to the site's significance to Canada's history and its role in a system of protected heritage areas.

### 5.5.4 Management Actions

Parks Canada will:

- develop a presentation and education plan for the Blockhouse and surrounding lands in cooperation with the Merrickville and District Historical Society. This plan will outline specific directions for ensuring the effective communication of messages of national historic significance, and the provision of a memorable visitor experience in a manner that will be responsive to the needs and expectations of the diverse audiences at the site;
- implement the heritage presentation and education plan in cooperation with the Merrickville and District Historical Society and other stakeholders;
- continue to work in partnership with the Merrickville and District Historical Society, with other stakeholders, and the local community on the planning, development and delivery of heritage presentation programming; and
- develop mechanisms through the heritage presentation and education planning process, including visitor surveys and other means, to

evaluate and monitor whether heritage presentation outcomes have been achieved, both in the delivery of the site's key messages and in the response to these messages by a diverse audience.

#### **5.6 Site Operation and Visitor Facilities**

- The site will continue to be leased to the Village of Merrickville-Wolford and operated by the Merrickville and District Historical Society as a museum by virtue of a renewed agreement with Parks Canada. The agreement will provide a statement of the respective roles of the Village and Parks Canada in the operation and maintenance of the Blockhouse.
- Parks Canada will ensure the implementation of all federal policies such as cultural resource management, official languages, visitor risk management, health and safety issues and barrier-free access.



## **6.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND ON-GOING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The primary venue for the public consultation program for the Merrickville Blockhouse was an on-site open house on July 6, 2006. Management proposals for the site were discussed with participants. As well, a shared vision for the Blockhouse, which proposed the continuation of a partnership between Parks Canada and the Village of Merrickville-Wolford, was discussed.

Comments received both at the open house and by mail were recorded and analyzed. The public reacted positively to the management proposals for the Merrickville Blockhouse and particularly to the concept of a shared vision for the site. The only cautionary note was not to cut down the trees in rehabilitating the site's cultural landscape and to treat the existing displays in the existing museum sensitively. As a result, Parks Canada will work closely with the Merrickville and District Historical Society to implement this management plan, utilizing the suggestions received from the public and according to the priorities illustrated below in Section 7.

The completion of this management plan does not mean the end of consultations with the public and the Village. These two parties intend to continue to consult with the community, interested heritage groups and businesses on matters pertaining to the conservation and use of the Blockhouse and the Merrickville Lockstation.

Over the following five years the management actions of this plan will be implemented. After this time period, the plan will be reviewed and revised, as necessary, to ensure its continued relevance. Parks Canada and the Village are committed to ensuring that the public, interested stakeholders and businesses are aware of actions taken toward the implementation

of the plan and will be invited to participate in the review and revision process after the five-year cycle.

Parks Canada will:

- continue consultations with the Village, interested stakeholders, businesses and the general public regarding implementation of this management plan; and
- when required and in cooperation with the Village of Merrickville-Wolford, provide a progress report on implementation of the management plan.

## **7.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

This section describes how the objectives of the plan will be translated into action. Whereas the management plan provides the statement of strategic objectives for a national historic site, Parks Canada's annual business plans define how to meet these objectives. The business plan will identify when and how the management plan will be implemented. It should be noted, however, that approval of this management plan neither constitutes nor guarantees funding for its implementation.

Progress towards the implementation of this management plan will be assessed on an annual basis through the business planning process. The implementation of actions recommended in this management plan is the responsibility of the Historic Sites Manager for Eastern Ontario.

### **Phase I: 2007-2009**

- 1) Renew the agreement with the Village of Merrickville-Wolford which will identify the roles and responsibilities of Parks Canada and the Merrickville and District Historical Society in the operation and maintenance of the Blockhouse.
- 2) Establish a monitoring checklist and maintenance program for the Blockhouse, in cooperation with the Merrickville and District Historical Society.
- 3) Produce a presentation and education plan for the Merrickville Blockhouse, in cooperation with the Merrickville and District Historical Society.
- 4) Provide cultural resource management and other technical and operational training for site guides and volunteers.
- 5) Review the existing historic landscape to identify non-conforming features and prescribe actions, as appropriate.

- 6) Cooperate with the Merrickville and District Historical Society to inventory and assess their collections.
- 7) Continue consultations with the Village, interested stakeholders, businesses and the general public regarding implementation of this management plan.
- 8) Implement federal policies at the Blockhouse.

### **Phase II: 2009-2012**

- 1) Evaluate the archaeological collection managed by Parks Canada and ensure procedures are in place to respond to threats to archaeological resources at the site.
- 2) Implement the presentation and education plan and the results of cultural landscape review for the Blockhouse and surrounding lands.
- 3) Incorporate conclusions of studies on the historic environment review and various collection assessments into the site's presentation offerings.
- 4) Provide progress reports on management plan implementation.

### **Phase III: 2013-2017**

- 1) Conduct an archaeological assessment of the site, based on an approved research plan.
- 2) Complete an electronic inventory and evaluation of the objects recovered during the previous archaeological investigations.
- 3) Develop mechanisms through the heritage presentation and education planning process, including visitor surveys and other means, to evaluate and monitor whether heritage presentation outcomes have been achieved, both in the delivery of the site's key messages and in the response to these messages by a diverse audience.

## **8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The Management Plan for the Merrickville Blockhouse NHSC proposes a number of activities, although no physical developments have been proposed. None of the existing activities/uses on the site represent an impact on the key components of the natural, cultural or socio-economic environments, as long as the integrity of the environment is considered in any decision-making. In addition, there are no identifiable sources of environmental stress in the proposed activities/concepts in the Plan. The activities and concepts, both existing and proposed, can only be looked upon as positive and supportive of the overall goals of the site. Many of these are statements regarding the management and protection of the resources, forward-moving initiatives to enhance the management and protection strategies already in place.

Monitoring in the traditional sense is not required, given the absence of anticipated impacts. While the establishment of a feedback mechanism is likely not required, there is a commitment to ensure that resources on the site not currently under threat remain as such.

The Plan initiatives contribute to the commemorative integrity of the site and clearly demonstrate adherence to Parks Canada's cultural resource management goals and objectives.