



Heritage Value Statement

Upper and Lower Nicholson's Lockstation Landscape, Lockmaster's House, Dam, and Weir

Rideau Canal NHS

DRAFT July 26, 2017

Context

What is a Statement of Heritage Value?

A Statement of Heritage Value is a record that confirms that a Parks Canada asset, or collection of assets, meets the Agency's requirements to be a cultural resource. It provides a summary history of the cultural resource, its heritage value (why it is important), and its character-defining elements (aspects of the resource that express its heritage value).

Approvals

The statement of heritage value requires approval by the Field Unit Superintendent and the Director of Cultural Heritage Policies and is designed to support decision-making about management of a cultural resource.

Interpretation

Assistance to interpret the Statement of Heritage Value can be sought from a Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Advisor or a CRM specialist.

Assessments of Impacts

When changes or interventions are proposed to cultural resources, the proposed changes and interventions are subject to an assessment of impacts using the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. This is not to preclude changes or interventions, but rather to reduce possible negative impacts to the heritage value of the cultural resources.

Flexibility of Implementation of Changes and Interventions

Sustainable conservation calls for a flexible and integrated approach that balances CRM with other Agency objectives. If negative impacts are expected to the heritage value of a cultural resource, these can often be reduced or eliminated through mitigations developed in consultation with the CRM Advisor. If mitigation is not possible, alternate approaches to certain aspects of a project, or alternative means of preserving heritage value, can be recommended (for example, preservation through heritage recording and subsequent interpretation).

Responsibility for Decision-Making

Decision-making about an intervention on the cultural resource remains with the Field Unit Superintendent.



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Description:

Landscape

An 1838 defensible lockmaster's house is situated overlooking the lower lock. It features a masonry first storey and framed, wood-clad second storey addition from 1900. By the 1840's several buildings were built which stood above the upper lock. These buildings housed the canal workers during the construction period, and another house served as a lock labourer's house. The lock offices at Upper and Lower Nicholson's Lockstation are both identical in terms of general appearance, method of construction and materials. The 1970 office at Lower Nicholson's is situated adjacent to the upper Lock, and the one at Upper Nicholson's is between the swing bridge and upper lock gates.

A manually operated king post swing bridge, a 1980s authentic replacement of the original timber bridge, carries a local road over the upper lock. Upper Nicholson's features one of four remaining King Post Truss wooden swing bridges. The swing bridge weighs 43 tons and yet can be swung merely just by pushing on it.

The wharf at Lower Nicholson's lockstation is approximately 42 metres in length and 2.4 metres in width with a concrete deck. The original wharf was built as a wood-plank surface which was located on the east mainland below the lock. This wharf was capped with concrete between 1964-1974. In some exposed areas it appears that fill used for the crib was composed of a mix between rock pieces and smaller granular particles. There is a CSP culvert and catch basin between the wharf and the lock draining the adjacent park area.

Lock

Nicholson's Lockstation includes two locks, lock 18 (Lower Nicholson's) and lock 19 (Upper Nicholson's), situated 385 metres apart along an excavated channel, a unique configuration on the canal designed to bypass the Rideau River's rapids and shallows. The two locks have a lift of seven feet (Lower Nicholson's), and the other of eight feet and two inches (Upper Nicholson's).

The lower lock is at the eastern entrance of the channel, and the upper lock is located near its middle. The Nicholson's masonry spillway dam extends 76 metres across the river at the western tip of the narrow island created between the excavated channel and the river; it creates a slack water section to Clowes Lockstation to the west. These locks have had some repairs that happened during 1910 which included demolishing and reconstructing the upper wing wall, upper sill, and the gate that recesses of the upper lock all with new stone. The lower sill of the same lock was repaired, cemented and recovered with planking. Two years after Lock 19 had its repairs, similar repairs were made to the downstream lock 18, Lower Nicholson's. During 1933-34 the lower sill of Lock 19, and upper sill of both locks were replaced with reinforced concrete.

Lockmaster's House

The Defensible Lockmaster's House was built at Nicholson's Lockstation in 1838 by the Royal Engineers as a defensible structure in support of the Rideau Canal system. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a single-storey summer kitchen was added to the south side, while a second



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storey was added to the main structure. It is located in a prominent position overlooking the Canal and the area. It is a two-storey building with a truncated hipped roof containing a central dormer window on the main façade and symmetrically placed doors and windows. A set-back, clapboarded summer kitchen extends laterally to the south. The first-storey exterior walls of stone contrast with the clapboard faced second-storey.

The combination of military and domestic elements in this structure reflects the changing function of the Rideau Canal over time. The original defensible design components of the house reflect the military role of the Rideau Canal in the defence of the united Canadas during the nineteenth century. This building, among the earliest of its type constructed, represents the canal's formative period, and that of the local farming community. The second-storey addition, summer kitchen and interior woodwork reflect the emphasis on residential design which resulted from a change in the function of the canal in the twentieth century from defence to recreation and commerce.

The site retains its rural domestic character essentially unchanged since the turn of the century, and contributes to the historic character of the setting.

Overflow Dam and Weir

The stone arch dam, as described in 1852 was reported as 16 feet high and 200 feet long. During the 20th Century was when this dam started to require some major repairs. In the winter of 1902-03 there were a number of stones that were dislodged by the ice. These stones were replaced but then in 1914 a concrete core wall was built along the face of the dam to stop leakage. In 1924, this structure as well as the embankment to the north were reinforced with a concrete facing. Again in 1932-33 the embankment wall of concrete was repaired over a distance of 200 feet. Voids that were created by the ice were then filled with concrete and scrap iron.

A stoplog weir with one bay was built in 1910 adjacent to the dam, connected to it by the tip of the island embankment.

Heritage Value:

Landscape

The Nicholson's Lockstation landscape is a cultural resource of national historic significance that is a fundamental resource of the Canal system and integral to the Rideau's unique historical environment.

The heritage value of the lockstation landscapes of national historic significance of the Rideau Canal derive from:

- associative and physical connection with the construction and early operation of the canal system;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- visual and historic associations with heritage continuity along the canal system such as Chaffey's Locks, Newboro, Merrickville, Burritts Rapids and Ottawa;
- role as landmark and providing a sense of continuity along the canal system;



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- surviving historic layout and configuration including their open spaces and circulation patterns;
- surviving historic views both within and beyond the station boundaries;
- contextual and heritage settings for the station's buildings and engineering works.

Lock

Locks 18 and 19 are identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) as *cultural resources of national historic significance*.

These engineering works are valued for their:

- direct relationship to the original construction achievement;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- integral role in the continuing operation of the navigation system;
- surviving physical attributes of form, material and function;
- manual mode of operation; and
- contribution to knowledge relating to early 19th century engineering and construction techniques.

Lockmaster's House

The Defensible Lockmaster's House at Lower Nicholson's Lockstation is identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) as a *cultural resource of national historic significance*.

The lockmaster's house is valued for its:

- direct association with the construction, operation and maintenance of the canal during the military period;
- direct association with the defence of colonial Canada;
- physical evidence of the original purpose of the canal;
- functional design qualities;
- surviving physical attributes of form and material;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system; and
- contribution to the historic character of their associated lockstations.

The Defensible Lockmaster's House is also a *Recognized Federal Heritage Building* because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

Historical Value: The Defensible Lockmaster's House is a very good example of a building associated with the construction and operation of the Rideau Canal. The house illustrates the theme of military defence for Upper and Lower Canada in the second quarter of the 19th century and exemplifies the Rideau Canal's change from having a military function to that of transportation. This building, among



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the earliest of its type constructed, represents the canal's formative period, and that of the local farming community. The building continues its historic function as a residence for canal staff.

Architectural Value: The Defensible Lockmaster's House is valued for its good aesthetic design. Its appearance is characteristic of a late 19th-century and early 20th-century residence. The second-storey addition, summer kitchen and interior layout reflect increased emphasis on residential design, which resulted from a change in the function of the canal by the 20th century from defence to recreation and commerce and as such, combines both its original military form as well as added residential features. Very good functional design is evidenced in the interior layout. Very good functional design can be seen in the interior layout. Very good craftsmanship can be seen in the thick, ground floor masonry and the interior woodwork.

Environmental Value: The Defensible Lockmaster's House reinforces the historic character of its park-like setting at Nicholson's Lockstation and is a familiar landmark to local residents and to visitors.

Dam and Weir

The dam is identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) as a *cultural resource of national historic significance*.

This engineering work is valued for its:

- direct relationship to the original construction achievement;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- integral role in the continuing operation of the navigation system;
- surviving physical attributes of form, material and function; and
- contribution to knowledge relating to early 19th century engineering and construction techniques.

The weir is a *cultural resource of other heritage value* due to its role in the continuing operation of the Rideau Canal.

The heritage value of the engineering structures of other heritage value of the Rideau Canal derive from:

- association with the commercial and recreational use of the Canal;
- association with corridor communities and expansion of the Canal system;
- role in the continuing operation of the Canal;
- evidence of changing construction technologies;
- manual mode of operation;
- surviving physical attributes of form and material.



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Character-Defining Elements

Landscape

Key elements contributing to the heritage value of the Nicholson's Lockstation landscape include its:

- Current surviving historic layout (spatial organization) and circulation pattern, including open spaces and circulation routes and pathways, such as the stairs from the lockmaster's house down to Lock 18;
- Functional arrangement, and the relationships and views between the upper and lower locks and lockstation components;
- Landforms in the landscape, such as the island embankment and the stone wall at Lower Nicholson's;
- Design, dimensions, materials, architectural features, and finishes of the lockstation buildings and engineering works, and their footprints and profiles in the landscape, for example, the:
 - Locks 18-19, which contributes to maintaining the original appearance and function of the canal;
 - The 800m long excavated channel;
 - The 76 metre long spillway dam, and its location, form, and function of the masonry, important in the continuing operation of the canal;
 - The location, form and scale of the 1838 lockmaster's house overlooking lock 18, with its truncated hipped roof, thick limestone first floor walls, wood-framed second storey addition and one storey summer kitchen;
 - The 1838 chicken coop adjacent to the lockmaster's house;
 - The manually-operated replica timber swing bridge over lock 19;
 - The 1920 one-bay stoplog weir, important in the continuing operation of the canal;
 - Lock offices, shed, and garage;
 - Wharves at each lock; and
 - The swing bridge.
- Historic views within the lockstation grounds, such as:
 - the unobstructed lines of sight between locks 18 and 19
 - the unobstructed line of sight from lock 19 westward to the stone arch spillway dam at Clowes Lockstation;
- Known and potential terrestrial and submerged archaeological resources pertaining to both indigenous and historical occupations, and evidence of construction and early operation of the canal, such as:
 - Middens,
 - Abutments from previous log boom,
 - Potential remains of mill dam and other dam
 - Any remaining evidence of canal construction dwellings and supporting buildings such as barns, stable, cookhouses, store, contractor's quarters.



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Lock

Key elements contributing to the heritage value of the Nicholsons Locks include:

- their contribution to the integrity of the landscape and the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- their manual mode of operation; and
- the form, dimensions, design and functional qualities and materials of the lock components, for example:
 - its masonry construction;
 - its overall arrangement, including angles and connections;
 - the wooden lock gates at each end of the chamber, including the type of timber as evolved over time to address the operational and durability needs of the Canal;
 - the valves and opening mechanisms;
 - the architectural signature and architectonic details, including but not limited to:
 - coursing patterns;
 - joints and their profiles;
 - iron works; and
 - bollards.

Lockmaster's House

The elements of the lockmaster's house that contribute to its heritage value include:

- its good aesthetic, good functional design and very good quality materials and craftsmanship, for example:
 - the two-storey massing;
 - the truncated hipped roof, and the chimney;
 - the exterior walls, the thick ground-floor walls constructed of limestone masonry, and the frame second-floor clad in clapboard;
 - the placement of the windows and doors on both floors;
 - the heavy timber joists and the stone base of the hearth;
 - the clapboard clad, single-storey summer kitchen appended to the main structure;
 - the interior configuration, the woodwork, including the balustraded staircase.
- The manner in which the Defensible Lockmaster's House reinforces the historic character of its park-like setting at Nicholsons Lockstation and is a familiar local landmark, as evidenced by:
 - its overall scale, design and materials, which harmonize with the surrounding green spaces at the lockstation;
 - its visibility due to its prominent location adjacent to the canal, which makes it a local landmark.

Dam and Weir

Key character-defining elements contributing to the heritage value of the Dam and Weir include their:

- location;



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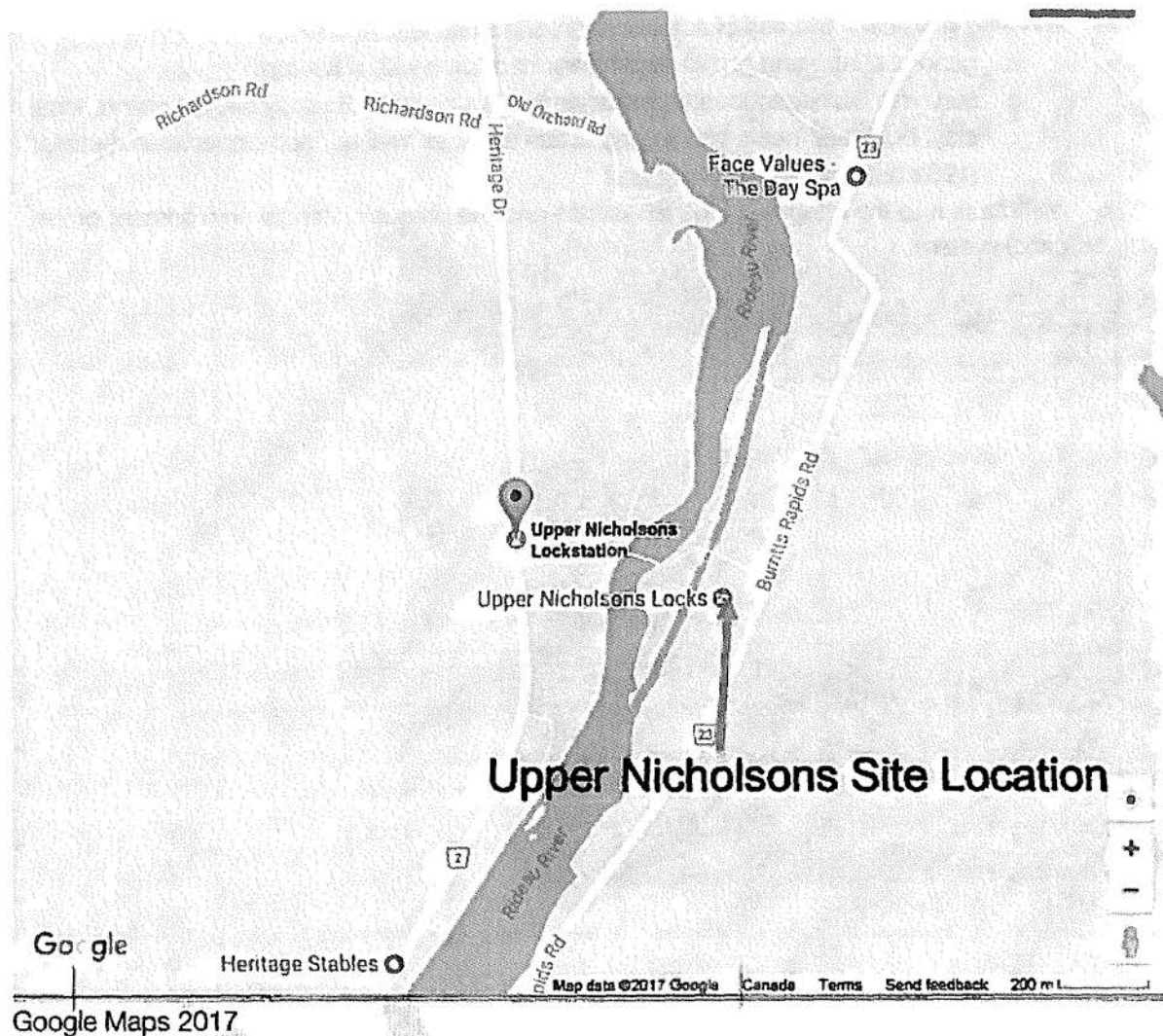
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- relationship to the lock and channel;
- function for water management control;
- surviving physical attributes of scale, design and materials, such as;
 - general shape and profile as embankment dam with a flat top
 - surviving homogeneous fill, including loose to compact sandy silt, silty sand, local clay, boulders' nests and lenses of fine sand, as well as "non-impervious material" (1981 geotechnical survey); and
- contribution to the integrity of the landscape and the unique historical environment of the canal system.



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Appendix 1 - Photos



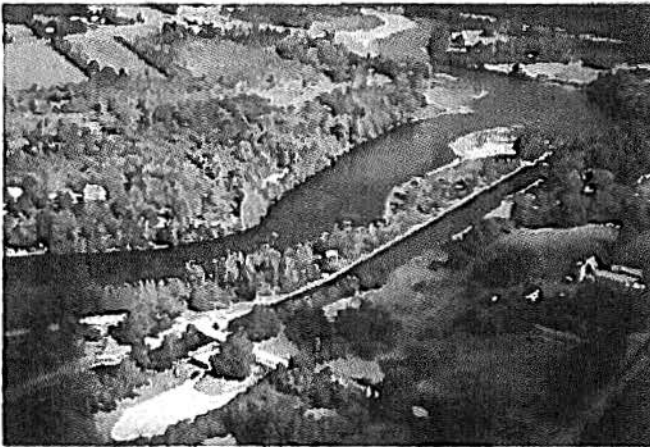


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Aerial photo. Date unknown.



Aerial photo. Date unknown.



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