

Hishiya Building

This building was constructed in 1868 to house a large shipping and wholesale business called Hishiya, which played an important part in the trade-based economy of Kumagawa-juku post town for generations. Hishiya was one of the locations where cargo was unloaded and picked up for transportation from Kumagawa-juku to the next destination. Porters and horses could also be rented there. At the height of success, approximately 27,000 tons of cargo moved through Hishiya per year. The thriving business was representative of the town's role as a major shipping hub along the Wakasa Kaido road, a key trade route that connected the Wakasa region with the capital in Kyoto.

The late nineteenth-century architecture of Hishiya is a notable element of the townscape of Kumagawa-juku, which is a nationally designated Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings. The two-story structure is one of the largest in the area and has a wide facade that looks over the main road and the flowing water of the Maegawa channel. The exterior features deep red and white walls, latticed windows, and a tiled roof. At present, the building is used as shared office space and a location for conferences, lectures, pop-up shops, and community events, continuing to support the livelihood of Kumagawa-juku residents in a new, modern way.