

Ottawa, Ontario
Main Dairy Barn (CEF No. 88)
Central Experimental Farm

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Main Dairy Barn was built in 1913-14 on the site of the original barn to house continuing experimental work in dairy farming. The design was by the Division of Animal Husbandry. In the 1960s, the stable level layout was altered to house the showcase herd and, in 1983, a museum was installed in the upper level. The two side barns remain virtually unaltered since their construction. The building is currently (1987) under the care of the Department of Public Works. See FHBRO Building Report 86-69.

Reason for Designation

The Main Dairy Barn was designated Classified because of the strong associations it has with several important themes in the history of dairy farming research in Canada. The barn is also architecturally important. Stylistically, it is a picturesque and lively composition that draws from both shingle, and board and batten styles of architecture, as well as the traditional Ontario barn. Materials are well selected and handled. The Main Dairy Barn was built to resemble its predecessor (1887-88) which had set the design and materials patterns for the farm.

The barn, being experimental, was functionally well considered and modern. Aesthetically, the Main Dairy Barn, in combination with the McNeely Residence (1889), the former Dominion Cerealists' and Husbandman's residences and the Horse and Dry Cow Barn 1906, establish the visual character of the farm. The FHBRO believes that Main Dairy Barn as a large, centrally located and often visited structure, is a significant landmark in the National Capital Region.

Character Defining Elements

This designation applies to the entire building and its site.

The massing and form of the Main Dairy Barn is basic, as one would expect of a traditional, functional structure such as this. The long, gable roofed and dormered block is joined at right angles at the east and west by wings. These wings are smaller in scale but well integrated by their form, detailing and materials. Much of the character of the building comes from the handling of the subordinate elements. The ridge-line is broken by the large lantern and ventilators and the eavelines by regularly spaced dormers. The materials - stone, board and batten, wood shingle, and

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Main Dairy Barn (Continued)

asbestos shingle roofing, are arranged in strong horizontal bands uniformly on all elevations. These materials, along with the small multi-paned windows, and paint colours provide the building's ornament and texture. They are fully compatible and contribute to the rural, picturesque yet functional design. All necessary maintenance should be done using the existing vocabulary of materials. Substitutions would severely impact the building's heritage character.

The functions of the building have always been separated by the drive floor. This should continue and no future attempt should be made to functionally integrate the two levels of the building. The surface materials of the site have changed but it remains fundamentally unaltered. The three components of the Main Dairy Barn and the Horse and Dry Cow Barn (FHBRO 86-68) to the south define the barnyard. The slope of the site leading to the highest point of land in the area, facilitates the easy access to the drive floor level of the building and contributes to its landmark status.

1987.07.08