

### **Cornwall Armoury**

505 Fourth Street, East  
Cornwall, Ontario

The Cornwall Armoury was constructed in 1938-39. It was designed by the Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works. The building is currently used as a drill hall and armoury. The Department of National Defence is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 94-73.

### **Reasons For Designation**

The Cornwall Armoury was designated Recognized because of its architectural importance and environmental significance as well as its historical associations.

Built to a standard plan, the armoury features Tudor Revival historical style references in the detailing. The main facade has a dominant crenellated frontispiece, centered on the two-storey brick and stone facade. The large, clear-span volume of the gable-roofed drill hall rises behind and is the main part of the building. The exterior massing is dictated by the interior spaces and functional planning.

The armoury contributes significantly the streetscape because of its dominant scale. The generous front lawn and surrounding grounds reinforce the importance of the building. The siting is characteristic of the large, flat sites required for drill exercises.

The armoury is one of twelve constructed between the First and Second World Wars. Its planning and design is associated with the standard plans and designs of the pre-World War One armoury building campaign. The modern structural design, with a concrete floor supporting a steel frame, specifically dates the building to the inter-war years.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Cornwall Armoury resides in its overall form, proportions, construction materials, Tudor Revival architectural details, interior planning and volumes, and site relationships.

The massing of the Cornwall Armoury is dominated by the two-storey, gable roof of the drill hall which is surrounded by flat-roofed, ancillary blocks. The external massing and footprint reflects internal functions; the clarity of this expression should be respected. The two-storey front block has a varied parapet profile and prominent chimneys. The central, twin-towered, crenellated frontispiece with simpler, similarly detailed, side entrances reinforces the symmetrical composition. The profiles and forms should be maintained.

The commanding presence of the building derives in part, from facades executed in buff brick, with white limestone detailing and decorative carving providing subtle colour and textural contrast. The expressive, Tudor Revival detailing is richly layered on the main facade, while the secondary facades have simpler, flatter moulding details reflecting facade hierarchies and modern detail preferences. These details should be respected. Copper is used for flashings and copings of the masonry and contributes to the visual richness of the walls. The masonry and copper requires an ongoing maintenance program.

The roof of the Cornwall Armoury is a prominent feature of the massing. The current asphalt roofing appears to be a recent installation. The buff colour provides minimal contrast to the masonry and may not follow original design intentions. The next replacement roof material should follow historical precedent for colours and materials.

The wood six-over-six sash windows found in the blocks and the large, multi-paned, steel windows of the drill hall end walls appear to be original. The wood sash with their relatively heavy members contribute a prominent, fine-scaled pattern to the walls; the steel windows reflect Tudor Revival stylistic preferences during the 1930s. The rear glazing of the drill hall has been blocked off with wood panels, thereby greatly reducing interior daylighting while introducing an inappropriate material to the building exterior. The glazed openings should be reinstated and the existing wood and steel window units maintained. The Tudor Revival design is expressed in the original wood entrance doors with their panelling, heavy iron hardware and multi-paned glazing. These should be maintained.

The interior has a standard plan, the drill hall is flanked by ancillary spaces for offices, mess halls and classrooms. The large volume of the drill hall with its exposed steel trusses and extensive glazing is an important space. The spatial openness and bright, well lighted character of hall should be maintained. The interiors with exposed brick walls, steel trusses, and concrete floors exhibit a functional design which should be maintained.

The simple planting scheme reinforces the design, function and dignity of building. Important planting elements are: the grassed ground plain, the symmetrically located, large specimen conifers, the clipped hedges used at the foundation, the single deciduous specimen tree between the armoury building and the drill field, and the clump of cedars that screen the parking lot from the front. The symmetrical twin flagpoles at the entrance reflect the symmetry of the building and should be maintained.

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For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.