

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT  
HANGAR 6  
LABAIE, QUEBEC**

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FHBRO Number: **06-002**  
DFRP Number: **07930**  
Resource Name: **Hangar 6**  
Address: **6 Edmonton Street, CFB Bagotville, La Baie, Quebec**  
FHBRO Status: **“Recognized” Federal Heritage Building**  
Construction: **1958**  
Designer: **Standard plan produced by Ross Patterson Townsend & Fish, architects**  
Original Function: **Aviation hangar**  
Current Function: **Aviation hangar**  
Modifications: **Exterior siding replaced (1997), office wings expanded, parachute tower added (date unknown)**  
Custodian: **Department of National Defence**

**Description of Historic Place**

Hangar 6 is a building of colossal proportions made up of steel polygonal arches with a span of 160 feet covering a vast clear space with a pair of giant sliding doors at either end that stack into niches at the four corners of the building. Two-storey office wings extend along the sides of the hangar. The exterior has grey and blue sheet steel siding and horizontal bands of windows. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

**Heritage Value**

Hangar 6 was designated a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

Constructed in 1958 – at the time an agreement was signed on the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) – to house the new supersonic aircraft, Hangar 6 is a good example of the theme of continental aviation at the start of the Cold War, when CFB Bagotville was designated as the main fighter plane base in eastern Canada. For more than four decades, Hangar 6 was home to 425 “Alouette” Squadron, the Canadian Air Force’s first and only Francophone unit. Made up of fighter pilots, the highest-profile job in aviation, 425 Squadron has symbolic value in Quebec related to affirmation of the presence of Francophones among elite forces. More than any other building, Hangar 6 bears witness to the squadron’s activity on the base and is one of the most important structures at CFB Bagotville. It is one of only two buildings constructed on the base during the Cold War and is the best example of the second phase of development at the base in the 1950s. Its construction reflects the revival of the base after the Second World War as a quick-response air base.

Architectural value:

Hangar 6 is a good example of the standard plan produced for 160-foot arched hangars, about two dozen of which were constructed on military bases across the country, and is one of the major achievements of the well-known Montreal architectural firm of Ross Patterson Townsend & Fish. The design of the building reflects

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a modernist approach driven primarily by functional concerns. The hangar stands out because of its imposing size, the construction technology used and the functions associated with the building, which dictate the form. The end result is a series of juxtaposed masses with clean lines. The continuous use of Hangar 6 for fighter planes and the fact that there have been no substantial changes to the structure are testament to the fine functional quality of the design. Lastly, the building's materials and craftsmanship are of good quality.

Environmental value:

Because it stands in a very prominent location at the end of a row of hangars and is positioned at an angle in order to facilitate aircraft movement in the vicinity, Hangar 6 accentuates the enormous scale of the runway and training ground. Despite the addition of a parachute tower at one corner of the building, the character of the site is unchanged. Owing to its high profile and its symbolic and functional importance, Hangar 6 is a familiar landmark at CFB Bagotville.

**Character-Defining Elements**

The following character-defining elements of Hangar 6 should be respected:

Its role as witness to the expansion of the Canadian Armed Forces at the start of the Cold War in order to meet Canada's commitments to international military preparedness under the NORAD agreement is reflected in:

- The use of the standard plan for hangars with a 160-foot clear span, a simple, elegant and efficient technical solution that provides an enormous workspace perfectly suited to the functional requirements of aircraft storage and maintenance; and,
- The hangar's historic association with the 425 "Alouette" Squadron, whose offices and aircrafts it houses.

Its aesthetic design, which conveys a modern utilitarian approach, its well-adapted functional design and the quality of craftsmanship and materials, as illustrated by:

- The juxtaposition of separate masses with clean lines that make up the hangar and express its primary functions, including, but not limited to, the arched roof covering the main central space, the huge sliding doors that allow aircraft to move in and out and have a horizontal band of small windows at eye level, the door niches at the four corners of the building and the office wings along the sides, which have long horizontal bands of windows;
- The efficiency of the I-beam steel frame forming polygonal arches that support the roof over the central area and create a large, completely unobstructed space; and,
- The use of economical but durable materials in neutral colours, put together using proven construction methods.

The way Hangar 6 reinforces the character of the site, which comprises a runway and training ground, and serves as a visual and symbolic landmark is reflected in:

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- The prominent position of the building on an angle at the end of a row of hangars, and its direct relation with the runways that surround it on three sides.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. For further information contact FHBRO.

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