

Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Québec
Administration Building (#24)
Collège Militaire Royal

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Administration Building was constructed as an administrative centre for the Department of National Defence (DND) at St. Jean in 1937-1938. It was designed by an architect in the Engineer Services Branch of the Department of National Defence. Situated within the still visible earthen ramparts of the 1666 and 1757 Fort St. Jean, building #24 is part of a military complex that has a history which spans three centuries. The building became part of the Collège Militaire Royal in 1952 when the first bilingual college was established on the site. The building is owned by the Department of National Defence. See FHBRO Building Report 88-1 75.

Reasons for Designation

The Administration Building was designated Recognized because of its historical associations, its architectural and environmental significance and its landmark value.

The Administration Building is associated with the theme of the reorganization of the militia in 1936. When the bilingual Collège Militaire Royal was established on the site in 1952, the Administration Building served as the administrative centre for the college. Therefore, the building also serves today to represent the integration of French Canadians into the armed forces.

While the aesthetic design of the building is for the most part functionally oriented, the well balanced elevation reflect some classical inspiration.

The Administration Building and surrounding military buildings form an heterogeneous group of military school structures, well known regionally as well as nationally. As part of the grounds of the old Fort St. Jean, the Administration Building benefits from the national renown accorded to the old fort.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Administration Building resides in its proportions, its symmetrical arrangement of openings, its materials, and its interior layout and finishes which reflect the original design. The heritage value also lies in the relationship of the building to its setting.

The Administration Building is a multi-windowed, two storey, hip-roofed, solid brick structure based on a rectangular plan. The main (east) façade has two symmetrically positioned, recessed and pedimented, entrance bays and its roofline is broken by two

Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Québec
Administration Building (#24) (Continued)

small pediments near the centre. The west façade is plain. Originally, the building had

a one-storey service wing extending from the west elevation. The distinction between the formal east façade and the more utilitarian west façade should be respected. If an annex is required in the future, it should be added on the west elevation.

The walls are punctuated with a series of window openings symmetrically arranged. The regular pattern of window openings as well as the two symmetrically positioned entrances should be maintained. Original windows and doors have been replaced. Any future rehabilitation project should attempt to sensitively reinstate windows and doors whose configuration would be inspired from the original design.

The materials used, such as the brick for the walls, the concrete for the raised basement and the stone for the window sills are of good quality. The masonry work warrants careful maintenance, with the use of appropriate expertise for any repair and repointing.

The original interior layout was subject to much alteration in 1957. The floor was subdivided to accommodate more offices. New corridors were created, although the principal entrances and vertical circulation were left intact. Essentially, the current layout reinforces the building's administrative role. Any interior refurbishing should respect the main circulation pattern, and partitioning should not interrupt window openings. Any surviving finishes, such as the terrazzo floors and terra cotta walls, should be preserved.

The Administration Building faces onto a square which is enclosed by three buildings of similar scale and style as the Administration Building. The relationship of the Administration Building to the square and the surrounding buildings should be maintained.

1992.07.10