

St. Catharines, Ontario  
**Armoury**  
Napier and Lake Streets

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The armoury was constructed in 1905, to plans prepared by the Federal Department of Public Works under the direction of architect T.W. Fuller. It was designed to serve as the regimental headquarters of the local militia and continues to function as a drill hall. The custodian is the Department of National Defence. See FHBRO Building Report 90-160.

### **Reason for Designation**

The armoury was designated Recognized because of its historical association with the development of the Active Volunteer Militia during the period preceding the First World War, because of the quality of its architecture, and because of its contextual importance.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of this property is defined by its form, by the richness of its exterior elevations, by those aspects of the interior indicative of its military function, and by its relationship with the site.

The bulky, rectangular shape of the armoury is relieved by an irregular roofline and the stylistic diversity of its two basic constituents. The expansive gable roof and the rhythmic course of arched windows marking the drill hall contrast with the crenellated towers, jutting chimneys, and rigorous fenestration pattern of the street elevations. It is important to respect these distinctions.

The use of consistent materials and continuous horizontal elements unifies the overall composition. Throughout, quarry faced stonework is juxtaposed with fields of flat brickwork, accentuating the visual links afforded by the massive foundation, string courses, and copings. The interplay of colours and textures inherent in the masonry is an essential feature which should be carefully preserved.

The interior was designed to accommodate a variety of military functions. The voluminous drill hall is especially noteworthy, its floor space totally unobstructed owing to the provision of an overhead Fink truss system. The significance of other internal components should be evaluated, as a preliminary to any proposed intervention. Modifications which alter important spatial characteristics, or which affect historic fabric, should be effected in a reversible manner.

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**Armoury** (Continued)

The historic appearance and the scale of the armoury's street facades suit the tree lined, urban setting. Although the former parade square now serves as a parking lot, the existence of flat open grounds adjacent to the drill hall perpetuates a traditional relationship with the site. The resulting vista complements the monumental image of the north facade and favours the building's landmark status.

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