

FHBRO Number 90-268

Rimouski, Québec

Armoury

rue Saint-Jean Baptiste

The armoury at Rimouski was constructed in 1910-11, and was designed by the Department of Public Works to a standard plan developed for the Department of Militia and Defence. Alterations have included removal of the gable vents, addition of new metal roofing with a turbine ventilator, and a large addition at the rear extending substantially beyond the sides. The building continues to be used as an armoury. The Department of National Defence is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 90-268.

Reasons For Designation

The armoury has been designated Recognized because of its architectural importance and its environmental significance, and also for its historical associations.

The compact, solid volume with minimal detailing creates a strong visual presence for the armoury. The small amount of carved stone trim creates textural and colour contrast, and the stone-trimmed pediment adds an appropriate emphasis to the main facade. This two-company armoury is efficiently laid out, with ancillary rooms located around large meeting areas on both floors.

The central location in the town, the scale of the building and the quality of materials contribute to its prominence. The armoury is well known and appreciated in its community.

The construction of this armoury is associated with the reform and expansion of the volunteer militia, and with a pre-World War 1 armoury building campaign.

Character Defining Elements

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

The two-storey structure is characterized by block-like massing and a prominent gabled hipped roof with a semi-circular coping on the main facade. The simple massing and square footprint of the armoury reflect military traditions. The simple character of the building is expressed by the external massing, roof profile and square footprint. The symmetry, shapes, and groupings of the facade window openings contribute to the character and symmetry and should be respected. The original ventilator gables have been blocked off and a prominent, contemporary ventilator unit now dominates the roof

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profile. The character of the roofline would benefit from replacing it with a lower profile, more discreet venting system. The two-storey flat-roofed addition unfortunately overwhelms the armoury building.

The prominence of this building is derived from substantial and well proportioned facades executed in red brick, with carved and smooth- or rough-faced limestone detailing providing colour and textural contrast. The simplicity of detailing reinforces the compact, weighty appearance of the building. The addition uses similar materials but differing stylistic details. The masonry requires conservation expertise for repairs and ongoing maintenance. A steel framed exit stair has been added to the exterior, introducing a new material and altering the symmetry of the side elevation. When life safety issues are under review, alternate measures that still meet requirements should be considered to improve the appearance of the building.

The historic character of the roof is defined by the simple form, and by the colour and texture of the roofing material, fascias, soffits and ventilators. The current material, pre-finished metal with a prominent ribbed texture, appears to be recently installed. When replacement roof material is required, the original design intent and material should be confirmed.

The windows are characterized by the prominent vertical proportions of the wood sash windows and the pattern of the openings. The defensible character of the armouries is expressed in the solidity of the original wood plank entrance doors and metal hardware. These should be maintained.

The interior follows a standard plan, characterized by a large assembly room on the ground floor, and a second floor lecture room. Based on drawings, the interiors exhibit a utilitarian, functional design, with wood wainscotting and plaster finishes. Original materials and finishes of the interiors should be preserved and maintained.

The simple ground plane is characteristic and appropriate. Open views to the building should be protected.

98.03.20

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