

FHBRO Number 90-280

Armoury

60 Broadview Avenue
Saint John, New Brunswick

The Saint John armoury was constructed in 1911-12. It was designed to a standard plan from the Militia Council, as a Class 'A' armoury, by the Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works under T.W. Fuller. It continues in use as an armoury and Battalion headquarters. The Department of National Defence is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 90-280.

Reasons For Designation

The Saint John armoury was designated Recognized because of its architectural importance and environmental significance, and also for its historical associations.

The building features references to medieval military architecture in the horizontal expression of the symmetrical, gabled main facade which includes projecting octagonal, crenellated end pavilions. The few variations in window design and patterned brickwork combined with larger expanses of simple brick work, contribute to the striking design. The large, two-storey drill hall which is the significant feature of the design, is located between two administrative wings reflecting the simple, functional planning of the armoury.

The armoury is a prominent building in the city because of the size and scale of construction and also the high standards of the design. The siting of this armoury, on the hillside above the center of Saint John, makes the building a highly visible landmark.

The construction of the armoury is associated with the pre-World War 1 building campaign and the reform and expansion of the volunteer militia. The building belongs to the largest class of armouries with the most complete range of facilities, and reflects the federal commitment to provide good training facilities for the militias. The construction reflects the prosperity and growth of Saint John and its importance as a military centre.

Character Defining Elements

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

The symmetrical massing consists of a two-storey gable roofed hall paralleled by two-storey, flat-roofed ancillary blocks. The one-storey, crenellated, frontispiece entrance is a significant feature of the massing which should be maintained. The symmetrical

profile is a complex mixture of crenellations, and stepped gables in contrast to the simple profile of the roof. Both should be maintained. The massing and footprint reflect internal functions, and the clarity of this expression should be maintained. The symmetrical, regular pattern of windows and doors contributes to the visual richness of the facades.

The well-scaled red brick facades have carved and smooth sandstone detailing providing subtle colour and textural contrast. Sandstone is used for the copings, castellations and window dressings, horizontal string courses, and carved details. The prominent, rough-faced, limestone base reinforces the solid, compact appearance of the building. The simple detailing is consistently applied on all facades, reflecting changing aesthetic preferences for simpler building ornamentation and should be respected. The masonry requires an ongoing maintenance program, and conservation expertise in the choice of materials and techniques for repair and replacement.

The roof of the armoury is a prominent feature. The current asphalt roofing may not follow original design intentions. Future replacement roof material should be based on research to confirm historical precedent for materials and colours.

The vertical sliding sash windows appear to be modern replacements. The visual richness of the traditional frame and sash profiles are greatly simplified and glazed areas are increased, and the use of screens further obscure details. At the end of the windows life, historic research should be used to determine appropriate replacements. Where windows have been blocked off with exhaust fans, they should be reinstated. Original wood entrance doors should be maintained as they reflect the military character, and any modern doors, when being replaced, should follow historic precedent.

The armoury is characterized by the large open volume of the hall, with exposed steel trusses and extensive glazing. The openness and bright, well lighted character of the hall, and the original interior finishes should be documented and maintained.

A general simplicity of ground plane is characteristic of armouries from this period, and the present day use of asphalt supports this character. Site elements such as garbage containers and stored materials should be relocated to reflect the orderliness characteristic of a military facility.

97.03.03

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