

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

KINGSTON, Ontario

FHBRO Number **93-99**

DFRP Number **09405**

**Former Riding School, Riding Instruction Building**

Building 3, Royal Military College

### **Recognized Federal Heritage Building**

Constructed in 1916, the former Riding Instruction Building is part of a three-structure complex, augmenting the headquarters and living quarters of the Riding School built in 1908, and supplemented in 1930 by an attached stable and hayloft. The group accommodated training for and exhibition of equestrian skills required of almost military officers before World War II. The building now serves as a workshop and storage facility for the Royal Military College (RMC) campus.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The former Riding Instruction Building (R.I.B.) has been designated Recognized for its architectural significance, its historical associations, and its environmental qualities.

#### Historical significance

The R.I.B.'s roles in the program of equestrian training for the officer corps and its associations with, among other things, RMC demonstrations of equitation for the public (including a version of the "Musical Ride"), place the three-building complex and its grounds as a modest but notable component of the RMC's "local" relationships alongside its national military importance.

#### Architectural significance

The building was constructed during World War I as an enhancement of the "RMC Riding Establishment", providing an indoor training space that augmented drills and exercises on the adjacent College grounds. While well within the tradition of the drill hall projects of the period, the R.I.B.'s equestrian program required dirt floors rather than the timber floors of many drill halls or the concrete floor installed later as the building was converted to other purposes.

The R.I.B. sits along an axis defined by the earlier headquarters building, and shares with both neighbouring structures a consistent exterior palette of red brick walls and rusticated gray limestone, with different details befitting the stylistic variations of the three periods.

The long elevations of the shed are faced in red brick, atop a rusticated stone sill of two or three courses at grade, with shallow brick buttresses, defining bays that normally contain a single large multi-paned window. On the south elevation are two large doorways spanned by concrete lintels with smaller glazing above. The brick-clad west-end gable, partly obscured by a subsequent single-storey annex (a former tack shed), includes flat-topped buttresses, a central blind arch and date stone, and a very large multi-paned central window flanked by a smaller pair.

The interior structure is an exposed row of Fink trusses, spanning the full width of the building. It remains a large open space. The former tack shed retains some of the heavy wooden panelling and associated details of its equestrian origin.

### Environmental qualities

The R.I.B., together with the headquarters and living quarters of 1908 (Building 5) and the addition of a stable and hayloft in 1930 (Building 36) comprise a cohesive complex of complementing structures at the north end of the RMC campus. The group is axially aligned, and set in a generous landscape of grass and mature trees, visible from beyond the limits of the campus.

The attractive landscape was not a merely aesthetic setting, but an essential component of the equestrian training environment, from the very beginning of the Riding Establishment.

### **Character-Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the former Riding Instruction Building comprises the following character-defining elements:

- the long, symmetrical, single-volume, pitch-roofed shed.
- the regular fenestration and modulation of the long elevations.
- the elaborated gable ends, with articulated brick walls and glazing.
- the open interior volume, with exposed iron structure, daylit from both sides
- the surviving wooden panelling and details of the former tack shed at the west end.
- the building's central location in an attractive, visible and historically functional setting.

All maintenance and repair work, as well as future interventions, should respect these character-defining elements.

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