

FHBRO Number 96-96

Colwood, British Columbia

Upper Battery - Guardhouse

603 Fort Rodd Hill Road

The Guardhouse of the Upper Battery was constructed between 1895-1898. It was designed as an integral part of the Upper Battery by the British Royal Engineers. Internal modifications include: new wood flooring and the electric fixtures and wiring replaced (1960s), and an exterior latrine was added at the rear of the structure. The guardhouse is currently interpreted as part of the Fort Rodd National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 96-96.

Reasons For Designation

The Guardhouse has been designated Recognized because of its architectural importance and its environmental significance as well as its historical associations.

The functional military structure has a simple, unassuming appearance derived from the horizontal lines of the design. The good craftsmanship of the wood porch and concrete structure which is plastered, as well as the distinct patterned paintings around windows and doors add to the aesthetic appeal.

The slightly rolling, open site which has embankments which integrate the buildings into the terrain is unchanged from its early appearance and continues to reinforce the military character of the site. The park-like open setting and the structures adjacent to earthen embankments are subordinate to the environment and define the low-key appearance of the entrance to the Upper Battery.

The Guardhouse at the Upper Battery is associated with the original planning and construction of Fort Rodd Hill and is illustrative of a pivotal phase of development. The Guardhouse function is illustrative of the typical requirements of the military planning for forts and bases.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Guardhouse resides in the overall massing, profile, construction materials, interior planning and site relationships.

The flat-roofed structure has a low, rectangular massing and a prominent chimney. The structure is integrated with a gate and perimeter wall of similar height as well as a porch roof as part of the footprint which should be maintained. The massing, profile and footprint reflects the simple function of the structure and should be respected.

The concrete formwork with plaster finish features rounded edges at openings and

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projecting sills contributing to the simple expression of the structure. The woodwork of the porch shelter with exposed rafters, roof sheathing and wood posts with chamfered edges is simply detailed reflecting modern military detail preferences and should be respected. The exterior materials should have a regular maintenance program. The wood six-over-six sash windows appear to be original and should be maintained.

The interior planning with three rooms and single access from the porch has been maintained reflecting the functionality of the design. The interiors maintain to a large degree the original fittings (work counters, hutch, hanging cupboards, dry sink) and heavy wooden doors of the bedroom loopholes which contribute to the functional, military character of the interiors. Other finishes include the painted plaster walls and wood flooring which exhibit a deliberately utilitarian, functional character and should be maintained.

The simple, low ground cover of the landscape emphasizes the slightly rolling terrain of the site and should be maintained. Maintenance of the site should include management of tree growth to maintain original sight lines. The park-like setting and the integration of the structures with the natural features is a characteristic feature of coastal defences and should be maintained.

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