

Dawson City, Yukon
Former NWMP Hospital/Jail
Government Reserve, Site 4, Parcel U4

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The NWMP Hospital was built in 1898 and adapted by the NWMP for use as a jail in 1910. In 1972, Parks Canada acquired the building and it underwent major stabilization work in 1982. The building is interpreted by Klondike National Historic Sites as part of the Government Reserve walking tour. Environment Canada is custodian of the property. See FHBRO Building Report 87-68.

Reason for Designation

The building was designated Recognized because of its early and close association with the NWMP and their role in the establishment of law and order and the exercise of Canadian sovereignty in the northern territories and because of its important role in the early development of the community. The building is one of only four surviving structures from the original Fort Herchmer complex. Collectively this small group strongly reinforces and clarifies the character and previous role of the Government Reserve area.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage value of the building resides in its form, massing, the entirety of its exterior elevations, surviving structural and interior elements, and physical evidence of its previous functions. Its setting in the Government Reserve, in close visual proximity to two other early NWMP buildings, is also a significant part of the value of this building. These characteristics should be carefully protected.

The exterior logs are of peeled local spruce logs, sawn on three sides. Roof structure consists of several timber trusses. It is essential that these elements be preserved and great care be exercised in their maintenance.

The setting of the property has been modified by the removal of most of the other NWMP buildings and subsequent development. The Hospital/Jail has been particularly impacted by the adjacent development of the Yukon Territorial Government's compound. Despite this, the setting and the relationship with the other NWMP buildings remains clear. Future site development should endeavor to retain or even strengthen this connection rather than diminish it through the use of historic precedent, compatible circulation and landscaping.

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