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FOX-M Station

The Air Terminal Building (building B09A) was constructed in 1960 on the airfield sector of the FOX-M station of the former Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line. It was erected using standard DEW Line plans drawn by the New York architectural firm of LaPierre, Litchfield and Partners under the direction of the American engineering firm Western Electric Company, a subsidiary of Bell System. The Air Terminal Building housed avionic equipment and an office. No alterations have been made to the exterior of the building. The building is currently used to provide air service support. The Department of National Defence is the custodian of the building. See FHBRO Building Report 99-021.

Reasons for Designation

The Air Terminal Building at the FOX-M station has been designated “Classified” because of its important historical associations, its relationship to the environment in a heritage setting, and the qualities of its architectural design.

The primary historical theme identified for the building is its role in continental air-defence programs during the Cold War. As part of one of four main stations constructed for the DEW Line, the Air Terminal Building was part of a joint US-Canada effort to monitor Arctic airspace through an innovative radar and radio system designed to provide advance warning to North American military authorities of a possible air attack from the Soviet Union. As one of four main stations along the DEW Line, FOX-M also served as a regional communications hub, supply centre and administrative base for 8 to 10 auxiliary and intermediate stations in the area. The Air Terminal Building supported air operations critical to the supply and staffing of the DEW Line station.

Secondary themes for the building are its contribution to the opening of the Canadian Arctic to programs and services delivered and managed by the federal government; its status as an example of innovative building technology in the Canadian Arctic; and, its role in establishing and maintaining a Canadian military presence in the Canadian Arctic.

The Air Terminal Building is also part of a military establishment that was a catalyst for the growth of an important Arctic community, namely Hall Beach.

This station is distinguished from other former stations by its relative completeness in terms of the number of original structures that have remained on the site and the survival of the supporting engineering works such as the airfield. The FOX-M DEW Line station retains its technological and military appearance through: the arrangement

FINAL

FOX-M Station

and form of its buildings; the gravel pad that defines the two occupied areas of the station (airfield and operations sectors); and the continuance of associated communications structures such as the radome and radar billboards.

The integrity of the historic relationship between the Air Terminal Building and its immediate landscape continues; it sits upon the gravel bed that covers the entire airfield sector. The building faces the airfield and is located directly adjacent to the Hangar.

As part of the set of pre-1961 structures that have survived on the former DEW Line station, the Air Terminal Building is of strategic value in contributing to the technological/military character of the site as a whole and demonstrating the aviation function of the airfield sector.

The Air Terminal Building exhibits the same competency of construction as seen in other DEW Line station structures. It is a utilitarian, one-storey gable roof structure covered in ribbed steel cladding. Its high-quality materials and tested pre-fabricated components are part of a design program that responded directly to both military considerations and to the remote Arctic location of the site.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Air Terminal building resides in its form, construction and site relationships.

The Air Terminal Building is a utilitarian but well-engineered building characterized by a simple form and the use of a limited number of solid construction materials. The form of the building should be respected. The steel framed structure of rectangular plan is covered by a medium-pitched metal roof. The walls are composed of metal prefabricated panels. A limited number of openings puncture three sides of the structure. The front elevation includes an overhead vehicle door, a personnel door, and one small window. The long side facing the hangar contains two personnel doors and three windows while the rear of the building has one door. All openings are framed in metal and the doors are clad with steel. Future interventions should respect the existing pattern of openings in the structure. The metal components of the exterior walls, framed openings and the roof should be maintained; and, any alterations should incorporate like materials.

The Air Terminal Building is located on a thick layer of gravel that covers the entire airfield sector of the DEW Line station. As the primary landscape feature, the gravel

FINAL

FOX-M Station

pad should be respected. The Air Terminal Building is also set parallel to and even with the Hangar: together these buildings form a row that represents the first line of buildings in the airfield sector; three warehouses and dormitories are located in the next line. This arrangement of buildings reinforces the military character of the station. Any further site development should respect the strict alignment and the established character of the remaining buildings on the station.

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

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