

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT BUILDING #O-109 (NCO QUARTERS), CFB BORDEN

FHBRO number: **94-088**
DFRP number: **11022**
Resource name: **NCO Quarters Building O-109**
Address: **CFB Borden, Ontario**
FHBRO status: **“Recognized” Federal Heritage Building**
Construction : **1952**
Designer : **Department of Public Works, Canada (no individual identified)**
Original function : **Barracks/personnel quarters, with service rooms**
Current function : **Administrative offices**
Modifications : **Addition of pitched roof; minor window, doorway and interior adjustments**
Custodian : **Department of National Defence**

Reasons for Designation

Building O-109, NCO Quarters is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical value:

Constructed in 1952 to plans prepared in 1950, building O-109 at CFB Borden is associated with the massive construction and modernization program undertaken by the Department of National Defence for all military services after the Second World War. The two primary themes for this association are (1) the creation of permanent peacetime armed forces, and (2) the expansion and transformation of the military services to meet specific national commitments in the early years of the Cold War. Originally a barracks block, part of a series of quarters buildings along the western edge of the permanently settled portion of CFB Borden, the building was an early component of the post-WWII expansion of the base to accommodate a wide variety of new housing. Unlike many major structures of the era designed by private architects, this project was developed by DND staff as an exemplar of new standards of improved accommodation, based on prototypes constructed during WWII.

Architectural value:

Building O-109 is a two-storey concrete structure clad in white-painted stucco. The originally flat-roofed mass remains evident beneath an added hipped, shingle-clad roof, whose broad eaves inflect to match the articulated corners of the main elevation, and which terminates in gables over the wings at the rear. A broad half-hipped dormer sits above the original central portico. The principal elevation is a symmetrical composition centered on a double-height, flat-topped portico of six classically-arrayed rectangular pillars between end walls atop a short flight of steps, the whole standing out from the front wall and above the original roof line, protecting a principal entrance recessed from the front wall. Apart from correspondingly recessed southwest and southeast corners, the elevations on all faces comprise two storeys of horizontal window openings on continuous lintels, accented by continuous horizontal box-profile mouldings that wrap around the building. The recessed front corners are set back in plan with a double-height frame that folds around the two corner windows on each floor. The originally multi-paned windows for each barrack room comprised an A-B-A arrangement of a fixed central unit bracketed by two narrower double-hung sash windows, since replaced by similarly dimensioned single-pane units on either side of blank panels.

In plan the building is an elongated U, with a central single-storey pavilion on the half-court (north) side, and stair blocks at its ends, their flat roofs aligning to the upper mouldings of the elevations. The original interior plan comprised double-loaded corridors with four-person rooms on each side, and shared

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT BUILDING #O-109 (NCO QUARTERS), CFB BORDEN

shower- and washrooms at the inside corners of the plan. The rooms have been refitted as offices. Interior finishes are generally terrazzo floors, acoustic-tile ceilings and painted plaster walls. The original high-ceilinged central common room facing the rear half-court has been subdivided and the windows on three sides reduced. The original dominant interior feature, a full-height fieldstone-clad fireplace block projecting into the space from the east, with an off-centered fireplace on a quarry-tile plinth, no longer functions.

The overall effect is a modernist hybrid of neo-classical formalism and Prairie-style accents. The building shares its original architectural character with its adjacent barracks, and others constructed in the early post-WWII period of the expansion of CFB Borden.

Environmental value:

Backing onto flat ground in the northern part of the main settled portion of CFB Borden, the primary formal elevation of Building O-109 is centered on the north frontage of an open parade-square lawn defined by Normandy, Coronel and El Alamein roads. The building is surrounded by cropped lawns, with a paved lay-by at the front entrance. Clusters of mature conifers to the north and east establish a park setting that relieves the formality of the building group. Along with the almost identical structure to its southeast, this building is essential to the formal definition of an ensemble within the larger base plan.

Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of Building O-109 should be respected:

Its role as an illustration of the expansion, modernization and diversification of the Canadian military in peacetime as reflected in:

- its exemplary role for new standards of military accommodation of its period;
- its high standard of robust, durable construction;
- the formal and functional relationship of building elevations to internal arrangements; and
- its formally symmetrical orientation to its parade-ground frontage.

Its combination of architectural modernism and functionalism in a durable and economical form as manifested in:

- the symmetrical plan and horizontally emphasized massing of the building;
- the symmetrical main (south) elevation, with articulated corner accents and the emphasized and elaborated principal frontage, with its projecting portico and recessed entrance;
- the general horizontal emphasis on all elevations, reinforced by the wrap-around continuity of the projecting belt courses; and
- the hybrid modernistic style, a distinctive combination of aspects of both Prairie style and modern neoclassicism.

The manner in which it reinforces the formally planned character of the setting as evidenced in:

- the formal symmetry of its freestanding location and orientation addressing a principal ceremonial quadrangular open space in the overall base plan; and
- its relationship to a functionally and formally allied building group of different periods.

For guidance on interventions, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*. For further information contact FHBRO.

**FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT
BUILDING #O-109 (NCO QUARTERS), CFB BORDEN**

October 2003