

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

FHBRO Number 96-24

DFRP Number 32086

Recognized Federal Heritage Building

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia

Searchlight Emplacement #16

Fort McNab, Halifax Defence Complex

Searchlight Emplacement #16 was constructed in 1940, one of four searchlight emplacements (#14, 15, 16 and 17) built at Fort McNab during World War Two to replace obsolete or damaged World War One emplacements. It was designed by the Royal Canadian Corps of Engineers. The structure has remained unused since Fort McNab was closed in 1960. It is now part of Fort McNab National Historic Site. The custodian is Parks Canada.

Reasons for Designation

Searchlight Emplacement #16 has been designated “Recognized” because of its historical, architectural and environmental significance.

Historical Significance

Searchlight Emplacement #16 is directly associated with the defence of Canada during World War II and the postwar period. Searchlights were essential components of coastal defence fortifications, enabling night operation of the principal guns and examination service by illuminating the fields of fire. Searchlight emplacements protected and camouflaged the light. Searchlight Emplacement #16 was controlled from the Battery Command Post at Fort McNab during World War Two. It was reactivated during the early 1950s in response to the Cold War threat.

Architectural Significance

Searchlight Emplacement #16 is a one-storey, box-like, concrete structure with a semi-circular seaward front, sitting on a raised concrete base. Some interior fittings (rails, brackets and wooden components) remain in place.

Environmental Significance

Searchlight Emplacement #16 is comparable in materials and scale with other concrete military structures at Fort McNab. It is situated outside the trace of the fort and close to the shoreline, and is visible from Halifax Harbour.

Character-defining Elements

The heritage character of Searchlight Emplacement #16 resides in the following character-defining elements:

Its one-storey, box-like, concrete construction, and the extant interior fittings, including rails, brackets and wooden components.

Its shoreline location and visibility from Halifax Harbour.

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*.