

FHBRO HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT BUILDING 21, 17 WING, CFB WINNIPEG

FHBRO number: **96-75**
DFRP number: **12579**
Resource name: **Building 21, Drill Hall**
Address: **17 Wing, CFB Winnipeg North, Winnipeg, Manitoba**
FHBRO status: **“Recognized” Federal Heritage Building**
Construction: **1941**
Designer: **Department of National Defence**
Original function : **drill hall**
Current function: **drill hall and gymnasium**
Modifications: **new exterior sheathing, windows, doors and roof; new interior partitions**
Custodian: **Department of National Defence**

Reasons for Designation

Building 21 is a “Recognized” Federal Heritage Building because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values:

Historical value:

Building 21 is associated with history of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP), under which 130,000 aircrew members were trained at 107 BCATP schools in Canada during the Second World War. Winnipeg was one of the major centres for the BCATP program. Building 21, erected as a drill hall, was one of more than 1800 BCATP buildings erected across Canada. BCATP buildings at Winnipeg were later transferred to the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and became part of the training facilities for observer training and air navigation.

Architectural value:

Building 21 is a good example of a standard military design in the 1940s rising almost four stories. It was constructed according to a standard design for Second World War drill halls and hangars. A large interior space for the drill floor is flanked on either side by lean-tos to accommodate ancillary functions. The design made use of available materials and cheap, fast construction methods, in the face of wartime restrictions.

Environmental value:

Building 21 reinforces the airfield character of the setting and is located on a large, open site, in the southeast corner of CFB Winnipeg, along the eastern perimeter of the airfield. Stevenson Airfield has become Winnipeg International Airport. While the area continues to serve as an airfield and RCAF base, it has been significantly altered by the demolition of other Second World War structures, and the addition of modern structures as part of the base and airport.

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDING REVIEW OFFICE
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Character-Defining Elements

The following character-defining elements of Building 21 should be respected:

Its role as an illustration of the history of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan is reflected in:

- its conformity to the standard design for World War II drill halls and hangars.

Its standard design for World War II drill halls and hangars as manifested in:

- the large, open, central space, flanked on either side by one-storey lean-tos to accommodate ancillary functions;
- its wood-frame construction using Warren-truss supports for the roof.

The manner in which it reinforces the World War II airfield character of the setting as evidenced in:

- its large size;
- the open area surrounding the building.

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

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