HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

FHBRO Number 96-128
DFRP Number 08625

Recognized Federal Heritage Building
OTTAWA, Ontario
Laboratory Services Building #22
Central Experimental Farm

Building #22 was constructed in 1954-7 as the Plant Products Laboratory for the Science Service Branch of the Department of Agriculture. The building was designed by the Department of Public Works staff under the direction of Chief Architect E.A. Gardner. The interior of the building and its mechanical services have been repeatedly renovated to ensure that laboratory facilities remain up-to-date. The exterior of the building has been altered by the 1 980s addition of a one-storey chemical storage area, the 1990 addition of a three-storey structure to accommodate mechanical services, and the 1996 addition of a one-storey structure to accommodate staff during interior renovations. The latter addition, while intended to be temporary, has become permanent. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAF) is the custodian. The building has been in continuous use as laboratories and offices since 1957. The structure is a Level 1 cultural resource located within the Central Experimental Farm National Historic Site.

Reasons for Designation

Building #22 has been designated "Recognized" because of its historical, architectural, and environmental significance:

Historical Significance

Building #22 is associated with the expanded building program of the federal government during the post war period, and the high level of public and governmental support for scientific research during the postwar period. Building #22 also illustrates the postwar development phase at the Central Experimental Farm (CEF), during which large research buildings, constructed in the International or Modern styles, were oriented towards the northern perimeter.

Architectural Significance

Building #22 typifies mid-20th-century Federal Modern building design. A classically-based symmetrical facade with centrally-placed monumental entrance is combined with a modern horizontal emphasis in the overall massing and window treatment. The use of brick cladding with concrete accents, and the fairly conservative treatment of the main entrance and fenestration, were typical design elements used by the Department of Public Works during the 1950s. The building's original layout of corridors, office space and laboratories has been largely preserved. Building #22 incorporated standard construction materials for postwar federal buildings. After extensive and repeated interior renovations, the interior construction remains, but is no longer visible.

Environmental Significance

Building #22 has maintained its original orientation towards Carling Avenue and the northern perimeter of the CEF despite many minor site changes. With the K.W. Neatby building, it is part of a distinctive pair of research buildings facing Carling Avenue. While Building #22 is not open to the public, its Modern style, highly visible location on the edge of open fields, together with the unusual proliferation of laboratory exhaust pipes on its roof, give it a certain landmark value to the numerous passersby.

Character-defining Elements

The heritage character of Building #22 resides in the following character-defining elements:

- Its adherence to the Federal Modern style of architecture, as expressed through its symmetrical facade, horizontal massing and monumental entrance. The high, central entrance is a two-storey, brick-clad projection, with a recessed steel and glass entry wall, etched with a coat of arms and framed with precast concrete trim and paneling. The entrance is flanked by horizontal bands of windows, each contained within precast concrete surrounds and linked by precast concrete panels. At either end of the building, stair towers feature square, punched, window openings and precast concrete surrounds.

- The use of multi-chromatic brick cladding with precast concrete accents.

- The straightforward layout, with central corridors providing access to laboratories and offices on either side.

- The use of reinforced concrete for the structure, terra cotta for the interior divider walls, terrazzo flooring in the entrance and corridors, and aluminum handrails on the front entrance stairs.

- Its orientation towards the northern perimeter of the CEF, so that its front entrance faces Carling Avenue.

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 ofPractice*.