

FHBRO Number 92-017

Longview, Alberta

**Feed Mill (Building 3)*****FINAL***

Bar U Ranch

The Feed Mill at the Bar U Ranch is estimated to have been constructed ca. 1909-1910, as part of the second phase of development (ca. 1902-05 to the 1940s). The building has been modified and added to several times over the years. It was built as a conventional rectangular-shaped granary, and had a gas-powered feed mill added to it by 1927. An elevator system with a tower structure was added after this date. The Feed Mill is a component of the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 92-17.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The Feed Mill, as a component of the Bar U Ranch complex, was designated “Classified” primarily for its historical associations, and also for its environmental values and architectural qualities.

As part of the Bar U complex, the Feed Mill is associated with numerous events and people that contributed to the development of ranching in Alberta. It is believed that the original structure was built to process and store grain for the horses in the nearby Stud-Horse Barn and Mare Barn. As the ranch developed, the gas-powered mill was added. An elevator system for transferring grain to the storage bins was installed during Patrick Burns’ ownership, reflecting his well-known interest in efficiency and economy.

The Feed Mill sits on a flat, grassy area at the base of the valley’s eastern slope, close to and in direct line with the Stud-Horse Barn. It is the first building encountered when entering the complex and is distinguished by the large head house which projects through its roof. As part of a cohesive complex of buildings arranged to great functional effect in a simple and beautiful natural setting, the Feed Mill contributes significantly to the character of the Bar U Ranch. The Feed Mill is also a component of the collection of pre-1927 buildings which contribute to the landmark value of the complex, as one of the region’s most important early ranch sites. This landmark value is reinforced by the designation of the complex as a National Historic Site.

The Feed Mill is the product of a simple, function-oriented design and yet has a strong aesthetic impact due to its scale, massing and patina. The evolutionary nature of the building’s design is characteristic of many buildings on the site.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the Feed Mill resides in the utilitarian nature of its materials and construction, its form, the history of its use as evoked by interior features and fixtures, and its setting.

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The Feed Mill's general form and architectural detailing is typical of light timber framed agricultural outbuildings. The structural system should be respected. Features specific to this building type include the shiplap siding, which provides a tight finish against water, wind and vermin; the concrete engine base, which gives evidence of the power source located in the mill by 1927; the large head house on the main building's roof; the interior elevator; the system of hopper-bottom bins; and the wales-and-cablings support system added to the building early in the Burns era. All of these features contribute to the building's heritage character and should be protected in any future modifications or maintenance work. Structural deficiencies, such as wood decay, foundation weaknesses, lower-wall rotting and roof sagging should be addressed with sound conservation practices which maximize retention of original fabric.

The grain handling and feed processing operations were accommodated through a number of interior fittings and fixtures, including grain bins and hoppers, a sub-floor grain hopper and access pit, and an elevator/bucket conveyor, gerber spout and prime mover. These are integral to the function of the building and to its heritage character. Patina reflects the use and history of the building, particularly the grain-washed walls of the bins and the evidence of graffiti within the central passageway. Windows and door openings were deleted or added as internal uses evolved. All evidence of this evolution should be respected. The Feed Mill's colour scheme (red walls and white trim) is in keeping with tradition across the Prairies and visually links it to the other buildings on the site.

Any development should seek to retain the functional quality of the site and respect existing patterns of access and circulation. Any changes to circulation or access should consider historic patterns related to the movement of grain tanks, wagons and motorized vehicles. The relationship of the Feed Mill to the complex's entrance and to the Stud-Horse Barn is important to its heritage character and should be protected.

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

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