

FHBRO Number 95-043

Elk Island National Park, Alberta

Farm Headquarters Horse Barn

Tawayik Warden Station, Elk Island National Park

The Farm Headquarters Horse Barn was built in 1938, likely to a standard plan advocated by the Central Experimental Farm. There have been no significant alterations to the barn, which continues to function as a horse barn for the Park Warden. Parks Canada is custodian. See FHBRO Report no. 95-43.

Reasons For Designation

The Farm Headquarters Horse Barn was designated Recognized for the integrity of its environment, for its architectural design and for its historical associations.

The Farm Headquarters Horse Barn's site has not changed since its construction in 1938, and retains the original utilitarian character established by the simple configuration of fence lines and paddocks. Although located away from the public areas of the Park, the barn is a landmark due to its size, age, function and relationship to the other buildings of the Warden Station.

The structure is a good example of the gambrel-roof plank construction barns which were common on private farms and within the National Parks and Experimental Farm Systems. The longitudinal plan, with stalls on the ground floor and a hay loft above was promoted in farmers' manuals and periodicals as early as the 1890s, and was advocated by the Canadian Experimental Farm in 1913. This design reflects the technological improvements that allowed the use of less wood to achieve the same structural strength, and therefore eliminating the need for heavy beams and posts and allowing for larger open spaces in the hay loft.

The Farm Headquarters Horse Barn is associated with the role of the Park Warden in the National Park System, which required the patrolling of remote areas of the park on horseback. The Horse Barn is also associated with the interpretive and public relations activities of the Elk Island National Park Wardens.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Farm Headquarters Horse Barn resides in the quality of its distinctive architectural and functional design, in the integrity of its site, and in its contribution to the functional character of its setting.

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The Farm Headquarters Horse Barn is characterized by the well-proportioned medium-pitched gambrel roof. The distinctive form and profile of the barn are highlighted by the evenly-spaced roof ventilators and by the extended roof line which protects the hay sling. The current cedar shingle roofing is also typical of this barn type and contributes to the functional character of the building. Any interventions that take away from the roof profile or texture, or the simple massing of the barn, should be avoided.

The wood sash windows, spaced evenly on the broad sides of the barn, and symmetrically positioned on the ends, provide the necessary natural light into the stalls and hay loft, and contribute to the well-ordered exterior appearance of the structure. The multi-paned windows and the profile and texture of the wood siding, reflect the functional character of the building. The on-going maintenance of the windows and wood siding should be assured, and they should be replaced in kind only when severely damaged. The wood blocks attached to the barn's east facade for rock climbing practice detract from the heritage character of the barn and, when not required, should be removed. The current exterior doors to the ground level do not match the plank doors of the hay loft, and when their replacement is considered, they should be replaced with new doors based on historic precedent. Although the hay loft is no longer in use and some stalls were removed to allow for a tack room, the barn's interior has retained its original layout and function.

The siting of the barn has retained its original configuration of fence lines and paddocks, reflecting the functional relationship of the structure and its site. This unassuming relationship should be respected, and the on-going maintenance of these landscape elements should be continued.

97.07.10

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