

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

Navy Hall is believed to have been built in 1815-17 by the British military. It was relocated once in 1863, then again during the extensive renovations of 1937. The building is now part of Fort George National Historic Park for which it serves as the administrative offices. Environment Canada, Canadian Parks Service is custodian of the building. See FHBRO Building Report 88-147.

Reason for Designation

Navy Hall was designated Recognized because it illustrates changing approaches to the management of important historic buildings over time. In particular, it illustrates the role of visual aesthetics in conservation in the 1930s.

The setting of Navy Hall reflects the beautification and parkway landscaping scheme of the 1930s.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of Navy Hall is defined by its extant original form, fabric and design, and those features pertaining to the 1930s renovation.

In terms of the original c.1815 military building, the authenticity of Navy Hall has been substantially diminished due to deterioration, adaptive re-use, and several major renovations. Heavily altered in detail and material since its original construction, Navy Hall is reminiscent of the original Georgian structure in its long, low, hip-roofed form, points of entry, and elements of its structure, both original and replacement. The building has retained some early fabric and authentic design details through past conservation and restoration action.

Its exterior fabric - stone cladding, copper-clad roof, and the enhanced symmetry of the fenestration are features of the 1930s intervention. These features, clearly of a later era and philosophy, reflect the classical revival tastes of the period and the design idiom of the Niagara Parks Commission.

In this context, any intervention should not endeavor to recover more of the early military character at the expense of those features that pertain to the 1930s' intervention and commemoration. In terms of the exterior this means that the present design should remain. The interior offers greater flexibility with regard to spatial arrangement and planning.

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The building's current use is entirely appropriate, however, return to a more public use would be consistent with its heritage value.

The setting of Navy Hall consists of well-maintained lawns, walls, and walks, all introduced as part of the NPC's parkway landscaping scheme in the 1930s. This approach to site design and maintenance is compatible with the present character of the building and should continue.

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