

94-67

Fort Langley National Historic Site, British Columbia

Storehouse

22433 Mavis Street, Langley

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Storehouse of the Fort Langley National Historic Site was built circa 1840-1871 as part of the Hudson Bay Company trading post. The storehouse was likely constructed as a cooperage, and subsequently was used as a storefront, a private residence and a barn. The site was declared a National Historic site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1923 and was acquired by the Crown in 1924, with subsequent purchases of adjacent properties to form the current grounds of the fort. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 94-67.

Reasons For Designation

The Storehouse was designated Classified because of its significant historical associations, its local and environmental recognition and its architectural design.

The Storehouse is the only remaining original structure of the Hudsons Bay Company post at Langley, and therefore it stands as a touchstone to the areas period of earliest European settlement. Along with its sister forts along the coast, Fort Langley helped determine the British desire to permanently settle the coast, and spearheaded the first useable all-Canadian route from the coast to the interior along the Fraser river. The Storehouse was the focus of the early commemoration of the “birth of British Columbia” on “Douglas Day” in the 1920s by local historical societies.

The Storehouse has become the central defining feature of the landscape, having been the basis for siting all other buildings and for the fort itself. The Storehouse accurately reflects the form and proportions of a small post building, and is consistent with the reconstructed fort setting.

The building is of modest architectural design, befitting its original functional nature. It is a rare surviving example of a 19th Century pièce-sur-pièce construction, far exceeding its normal life span.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage value of the Storehouse at Fort Langley is derived from its survival as the sole original structure of the fort, and as a valuable example of pièce-sur-pièce construction.

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Storehouse (Continued)

The buildings modest scale and pleasant proportions typify the early buildings of the post. Any changes to the surrounding landscaping that might detract from the structures setting should be avoided. The quality of the pièce-sur-pièce construction and its visual texture, reflects the original utilitarian function of the building, and should be preserved.

Although much original material has been replaced at various times, the surviving early fabric of the building should be preserved, and any further intervention should be predicated on FHBRO policies and sound cultural resource management practices.

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