

89-204

Esquimalt, British Columbia  
**Naden Building #50 (former Gunnery School)**  
CFB Esquimalt

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Gunnery School was built in 1943 to designs by the Royal Canadian Navy's Directorate of Works and Buildings. The structure was used by the photography section after the war, but is now occupied by the Communications School. The Department of National Defence is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Report 89-204.

### **Reasons for Designation**

The former Gunnery School was designated Recognized as a result of its association with the development of the Royal Canadian Navy training school at Naden, its simple interpretation of the International Style, and its prominence on the World War II parade ground.

HMCS Naden, opened in 1922, was the first permanent naval training centre established on the west coast. Limited post-war financial resources resulted in a governmental policy based on a small permanent force augmented as needed by naval reserves. Although reserve units were established across the country, training was only provided at Naden on the west coast and Stadacona in the east. The Gunnery School was constructed as part of a rapid expansion of facilities during the Second World War.

The former Gunnery School - an elongated two-storey red brick structure with a parapeted flat roof - demonstrates the general influence of the International Style in its spare functionality of form. The wide stone string course which forms the window lintels combines with the stone window sills to create the effect of ribbon windows, which are characteristic of the International Style.

The building is prominently located on an open site between a former parade ground (now a parking lot) and the shoreline of Pilgrim Cove. The school's highly visible location makes it a well-known local landmark.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the former Gunnery School resides in those features associated with the International Style, and in the integrity of the site.

The former Gunnery School's horizontal emphasis, rectangular repetitions in the front facade, and ribbon-like windows are characteristic components of the style and should

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**Naden Building #50 (former Gunnery School)** (Continued)

be respected. Despite structural modifications during the 1950s, the exterior facades are essentially unchanged. While several loading doors on the main elevation have been closed, the impact of this change on the appearance is negligible. The original sash windows are extant and merit preservation.

The axial organization of the interior is consistent with other similarly-inspired structures at Naden, and may be original. All early interior design elements should be identified and retained.

The former Gunnery School faces the World War II parade square. Behind the school, the ground slopes down toward the water, providing ground-level access to the basement at the rear. While the structure is surrounded by pavement, the rocky terrain between the building and the water is well treed. Any alteration of the landscape should be preceded by an investigation of early configurations.

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