

Ottawa, Ontario
Horticulture Building / Botanical Laboratory
Central Experimental Farm, Building No. 74

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

Building No. 74 of the Central Experimental Farm was built as a botanical laboratory and research center in 1924, to designs produced in the office of the chief architect of the Department of Public Works, R.C. Wright. It was more than doubled in size in 1929, using the same design vocabulary. It continues to serve as a research center, currently used by the Agro-Meteorology and Engineering Divisions. The custodial department is Agriculture Canada; the property is managed by Public Works Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 87-57.

Reasons for Designation

The Botanical Laboratory has been designated a Recognized heritage building because of its historical associations with the increasing scale and scope of the farm's activities and the changing, increasingly scientific approach toward agricultural disciplines in the 1910s and 1920s. It is of satisfying architectural design and contributes to the picturesque quality of its setting.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of this property is defined by the building's exterior, and by its siting.

The building is a subdued but attractive example of Queen Anne architecture, employing the decorative half-timbering and textural contrasts associated with the style. The foundation walls are of random coursed stone; the first storey is clad in brick, with some decorative treatment of the entryways; and the upper storey is stuccoed, with a contrasting half-timbered gable above the main entrance. The steeply pitched, gable hip roof was redone at the time of the expansion to create a unified appearance for the building. It is punctuated at regular intervals with flat-topped dormers. The various finishes and decorative treatments should be maintained, to preserve the rustic quality of the building.

The Botanical Laboratory is visually isolated from surrounding buildings, except for the unobtrusive greenhouses to the rear, by carefully manicured grounds on all sides. In light of the rural associations of the Queen Anne style, the character of the building and associated landscape can be seen as mutually enhancing. As far as possible, this relationship should be maintained, reflecting as it does the aesthetic vocabulary established at the farm over the years.

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