

Historic Building Appraisal
Old Kowloon Fire Station
Main Block & Accommodation Barrack
No. 33 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon

Old Kowloon Fire Station was built in **1920** and the two-storey barrack block at the rear (used as accommodation barrack for firemen and foreman) was built in **1922**. It served as a fire station, except for the Japanese Occupation period, until 1971 when it was replaced by the new fire station in Canton Road. The buildings then served as a temporary parcel receiving and delivery division of the Post Office until 1985, when the first floor was taken over by the Marine Police and used as changing and locker rooms. In 1991 it was reallocated to the Police Force Catering Office for use as a temporary office and store. In 1986 the ground floor was leased to the Yau Ma Tei and Tsim Sha Tsui Culture and Arts Association (油尖區文化藝術協會) at a peppercorn rent. The Welfare Handicrafts Store (福利工藝社) used to be next to it. All the buildings have now been vacated and will be incorporated into the redevelopment of the Former Marine Police Headquarters compound.

*Historical
Interest*

The buildings are built with red brick walls and imitation stonework ornamentation such as plinths, string courses, cornices, parapets, keystones, lintels, column capitals and cappings to chimney stacks. Some of the windows have flat arches of gauged and rubbed bricks. Original wooden casement windows still exist. The roofs are a mixture of flat roofs and Chinese tiled pitched roofs. The architecture is both utilitarian and stylish at the same time and cannot conveniently be classified into an architectural category. Probably the buildings can best be described as **Colonial Eclectic** meaning Colonial style buildings which adopt some local traditional features, in this case Chinese tiled roofs.

*Architectural
Merit*

Buildings of this style are quite rare and hard to find in Hong Kong. It is unusual to see fair faced brickwork these days as most brick buildings have had their exterior walls painted over. Although the buildings have acquired many excrescences over the years they still manage to retain an authentic appearance. Unfortunately the original Chinese tiled roof to the accommodation block has been replaced with aluminum sheeting but this is reversible. The buildings definitely have built heritage value.

*Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity*

The social value of the old fire station buildings lies in the various functional uses they have been put to in the past which mostly served the needs of the community. With their distinctive red brick appearance and prominent

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*

position on the corner of Kowloon Park Drive and Salisbury Road, the buildings have been well known landmarks in Tsim Sha Tsui for many years.

Old Kowloon Fire Station is situated at the heart of the tourist centre: Tsim Sha Tsui. It is passed by many tourists everyday, especially with its close proximity to a number of declared monuments and historic buildings, namely, Former Kowloon-Canton Railway Terminus Clock Tower (前九廣鐵路鐘樓), Former Marine Police Headquarters Compound (前水警總部), Peninsula Hotel (半島酒店) and Signal Tower (大包米訊號塔). ***Group Value***

The various uses to which the buildings have been put to aptly demonstrate their suitability for adaptive re-use. It is understood that they will be converted into retail outlets in the Former Marine Police headquarters redevelopment project. ***Adaptive Re-use***