

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
IN RESPECT OF THE REAR PORTION
OF THE CATTLE DEPOT**

BACKGROUND

As promulgated in the 2013 Policy Address, each district would be allocated \$100 million to undertake at most two signature projects of a large scale that will bring a significant and lasting positive impact on the district, and be able to address district needs or highlight the characteristics of the district. This project is initiated and endorsed by the Kowloon City District Council at its special meeting held on 24 January 2013.

2. The project site, a major part of the rear portion of the Cattle Depot, is located at the corner of San Shan Road and East Kowloon Corridor, To Kwa Wan, Kowloon. The site area is of approximately 6,033 square metres (sq.m.) and the proposed new building is of approximately 230 sq.m. construction floor area. The rear portion was an extension of the former Cattle Depot from 1950s to 1980s and has been disused since 1999 when the Ex-Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot was decommissioned. The front portion has been in use as an Artist Village since 2001.

3. The construction work of the original Cattle Depot was completed in November 1908. The rear portion of the Cattle Depot was not included in the original design. The sheds within this latter area were constructed in different periods of time. The earliest development is called the PB630-PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone), where the sheds were constructed with red brick columns in 1956. The other area with concrete column structure is called PB623-PB628 (Concrete Column Zone) which was constructed in 1965. Two more sheds PB828-PB829 (Concrete Sheds) adjacent to the PB630-PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone) were constructed in 1980s. The building structures within the rear portion either have collapsed or have been removed over the years since 1999. The roof structures of all the sheds no longer exist. Only the setting of the site, columns of the sheds and the feeding troughs remain on site. The project site at the rear portion of the Cattle Depot is currently a

closed area but the trees growing over the place have become one of the major features of the site.

4. The project site, together with the front portion of the Cattle Depot, Ma Tau Kok Refuse Collection Point and a closed factory, were confirmed as a whole a Grade 2 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board in 2009.

5. A plan showing the location of the project site is at **Figure 1**.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

6. The project site is culturally significant for the following reasons:

i) Historic Value

After World War II (WWII) due to an increase in population, the market demand for food increased. The rear portion was developed as an extension of the Cattle Depot in 1950s and 1960s. Due to the development of Cheung Sha Wan slaughter house, the use of the whole Cattle Depot was changed to quarantine and trading of cattle in 1969. The Cattle Depot was closed down in 1999 and the front portion was converted to an Artist Village in 2001. The Cattle Depot is the only surviving depot in Hong Kong built before WWII.

ii) Architectural Value

The building structures of the sheds in the rear portion were simple and primitive shelters. The sheds erected in 1956 were constructed in red brick columns, timber roof trusses and corrugated asbestos cement sheeting without enclosure (**Figure 2**). Those erected in 1965 were constructed with concrete columns, timber roof trusses and corrugated asbestos cement sheeting without enclosure (**Figure 3**). The latest ones erected in 1986 were constructed with concrete bearing walls (**Figure 4**). The roofs of all these sheds no longer exist.

iii) Social Value

The Cattle Depot had a direct bearing on the industrial development of the neighbourhood before and after WWII. The surrounding residents were closely related to the Cattle Depot and the relevant trades in this area. The Cattle Depot including the rear portion was closed down in 1999, but the people living around still remember the old Cattle Depot as a slaughter house and quarantine depot. The front portion of the Cattle Depot was then converted to an Artist Village in 2001 and the rear portion was closed down. The conversion to an Artist Village still plays a role in the transformation of the district.

iv) Authenticity and Rarity

The project site forms part of the whole heritage site of the Cattle Depot. It took part in the whole development history of the Cattle Depot. It is the only surviving depot built before WWII. The setting of the whole site including the rear portion shows the operation of the Cattle Depot in the past. The ruins and vegetation at the project site over the years impart a strong characteristic to the place. It reflects the power of nature over the built environment for human needs.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA)

7. In accordance with the Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 06/2009 and Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO)'s Guidance Note to HIA submission, an HIA has been carried out to assess the possible impact of the proposed works on the Cattle Depot site (Grade 2) with an objective to avoid or minimise the adverse impact, and to devise mitigation measures if adverse impact is unavoidable as well as proposing enhancement measures to the identified heritage items.

Conservation Principles to Conserve the Cultural Significance of the Rear Portion of the Cattle Depot

8. The recommended conservation principles for devising and

implementing necessary mitigation measures to conserve the rear portion of the Cattle Depot are as follows:

i) Historic Fabrics

The key character-defining elements identified should be preserved *in-situ* as far as possible such as:

- The setting of the site including PB630-PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone), PB623-PB628 (Concrete Column Zone) and PB828-PB829 (Concrete Sheds).
- Historic fabrics such as some existing red brick columns and feeding troughs at PB630-PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone), water pond and well.

ii) Minimising New Additional Works

The size of the new Visitor Centre will be kept minimal and be situated at the least prominent and obstructive location from the setting. It will be of compatible design and distinguishable from the existing fabrics.

iii) Documentation and Monitoring

Cartographic, topographic and photographic surveys to record the setting and fabrics will be conducted before the construction works. Site monitoring will be carried out during the construction. Record drawings will be provided after completion of the construction works.

iv) Interpretation

In order to enhance the cultural heritage of the project site for public appreciation, display areas will be provided to showcase the artifacts and history of the site.

v) Enhancement

The conservation works should improve the connectivity to the

existing Cattle Depot Artist Village and accessibility to the public from different directions. It is a living heritage to promote public awareness in heritage conservation and bring social benefits to the local communities.

Key Design Proposals

9. The project aims to convert the disused rear portion of the Cattle Depot site to provide the public with more open space and recreational facilities in Kowloon City District and to facilitate the promotion of arts and culture to the community. It will provide sitting-out area, landscaping, amenity lawn area, outdoor areas and other ancillary facilities (including toilet facilities cum baby care room, a first-aid room and a park office). The Architectural Services Department is the works agent to implement the project.

Conservation Works

10. The key proposed works for conservation are set out below:

PB630 to PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone)

The PB630 to PB632 will be used as a sitting-out area for public appreciation of the historic elements of the sheds. The existing red brick columns and feeding troughs will be made good and preserved *in-situ*. New steel frames will be erected to stabilise the existing columns for safety of the visitors. Since the floor level in this area is uneven, raised wood deck will be provided for the visitors to walk around the sheds (**Figure 8**).

PB623 to PB628 (Concrete Column Zone)

Part of PB623 will be converted into a rain shelter. The feeding troughs at PB624 to PB626 will be removed to form a landscaped open space. Part of the feeding troughs of PB627 and PB628 will be removed to provide room for the necessary circulation space and seating-shelters. The free standing concrete columns with low cultural value are in poor condition and have to be removed for safety reason.

PB828 & PB829 (Concrete Sheds)

The existing concrete shed and feeding troughs will be preserved *in-situ* and be used as outdoor areas which are suitable for display of artistic park features (**Figure 9**).

Remaining Ancillary Facilities of the Cattle Depot

The ancillary facilities of the Cattle Depot such as water pond and well will be preserved *in-situ*. Further investigation will be carried out to determine their restoration proposal (**Figure 10**).

Water tanks and the pump house, which are in poor condition and with low cultural value, will be demolished for public safety reason to make way for a disabled ramp.

Remain of Old Pig Lairages

Only a small portion of the old pig lairages area is within the project site. Planter and seatings following the location of the lairages and the fence wall at the site boundary would show the building profile of the old pig lairages for interpretation. A new disabled ramp will also be added to enhance the circulation (**Figure 11**).

New Ancillary Facilities

A new park entrance, loading/unloading area and a new Visitor Centre will be constructed at the southeast corner of the site which is at the least prominent and obstructive location from the setting. All new ancillary facilities for operational need will be grouped together at the Visitor Centre to minimise the new additional works at the site (**Figure 12**).

Impact and Mitigation Measures

11. Potential impact during various stages of the conservation works of the project site on the rest of the Cattle Depot outside the project boundary is

assessed and identified as follows:

i) Potential Visual Impact

As the proposed open space is adjacent to the rest of the Cattle Depot site, any new construction within the project site may cause potential visual impact to it.

Mitigation Measures

There will be no new building in substantial size in the project site. The only new ancillary facility – the Visitor Centre, which is of minimal size, will be located at a least obstructive location and will be half sunken in order to minimise the visual impact.

ii) Potential Impact during Construction

Due to the close proximity of the construction works, potential vibration, dust deposition, debris during demolition, excavation, foundation and superstructure construction during different stages of the conservation works may pose potential impact on the rest of the Cattle Depot site.

Mitigation Measures

Vibration/settlement/tilting limit as recommended by the AMO will be fully adopted in the construction works. Corresponding monitoring system will be conducted as required.

Percussive piling would not be used in order to minimise the vibration during the construction works. Excavation and lateral support system along the construction site facing the rest of the Cattle Depot site will be provided to minimise the settlement and ground movement affecting the adjacent structures.

12. For areas where possible impact of the conservation works could not be avoided within the project site boundary, the following mitigation measures at different zones are proposed:

- i) for PB630 to PB632 at Red Brick Column Zone, the new steel frames and wood decks are of compatible design. Both are built to be reversible;
- ii) for PB623 at Concrete Column Zone, the new columns for rain shelter will be at the same location as the old columns to reflect the setting of the shed. Part of the feeding trough and the concrete dividing wall will be preserved *in-situ* for interpretation;
- iii) for PB624 at Concrete Column Zone, the floor pattern reminiscent of previous columns and feeding trough will be placed to interpret the setting. A certain portion of the concrete feeding trough will be preserved. New seating with concrete low walls will be of a design based on the previous feeding trough;
- iv) for PB625 and PB626 at Concrete Column Zone, floor pattern reminiscent of previous columns and feeding troughs will be placed to interpret the location;
- v) for PB627 at Concrete Column Zone, part of the existing feeding trough and brick dividing wall will be preserved. New seating shelters with feature brick walls will be of a design based on the previous feeding trough;
- vi) for PB628 at Concrete Column Zone, most of the continuous feeding trough and brick dividing wall will be preserved. Compensation trees will be planted at the original location of the removed columns at PB628 for interpretation of the setting of the shed (**Figure 7**);
- vii) for the new Visitor Centre, it will be small in size and located at the least prominent and obstructive corner where there is no historic significance. All new ancillary facilities for operational need will be grouped together at the Visitor Centre to minimise the new additional works at the site; and
- viii) all new ancillary facilities, such as ramp and new entrances, will be of compatible design with an aim to benefit the appreciation of the Cattle Depot by enhancing the connectivity of the project site with its

surroundings.

CONCLUSION

13. The HIA concludes that the overall potential impacts on the Cattle Depot site are considered acceptable and manageable with the proposed mitigation measures. The design proposal will minimise any potential impact on the Cattle Depot site and benefit the community at large. The proposed revitalisation of the rear portion of the Cattle Depot is considered technically feasible and acceptable from the heritage conservation perspective.

Architectural Services Department
September 2015



Figure 1 - Site Plan

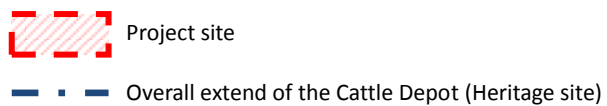


Figure 2 - PB630-PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone)



Figure 3 - PB623-PB628 (Concrete Column Zone)



Figure 4 - Current condition of PB829 (Concrete Shed)



Figure 5 - Master Layout Plan

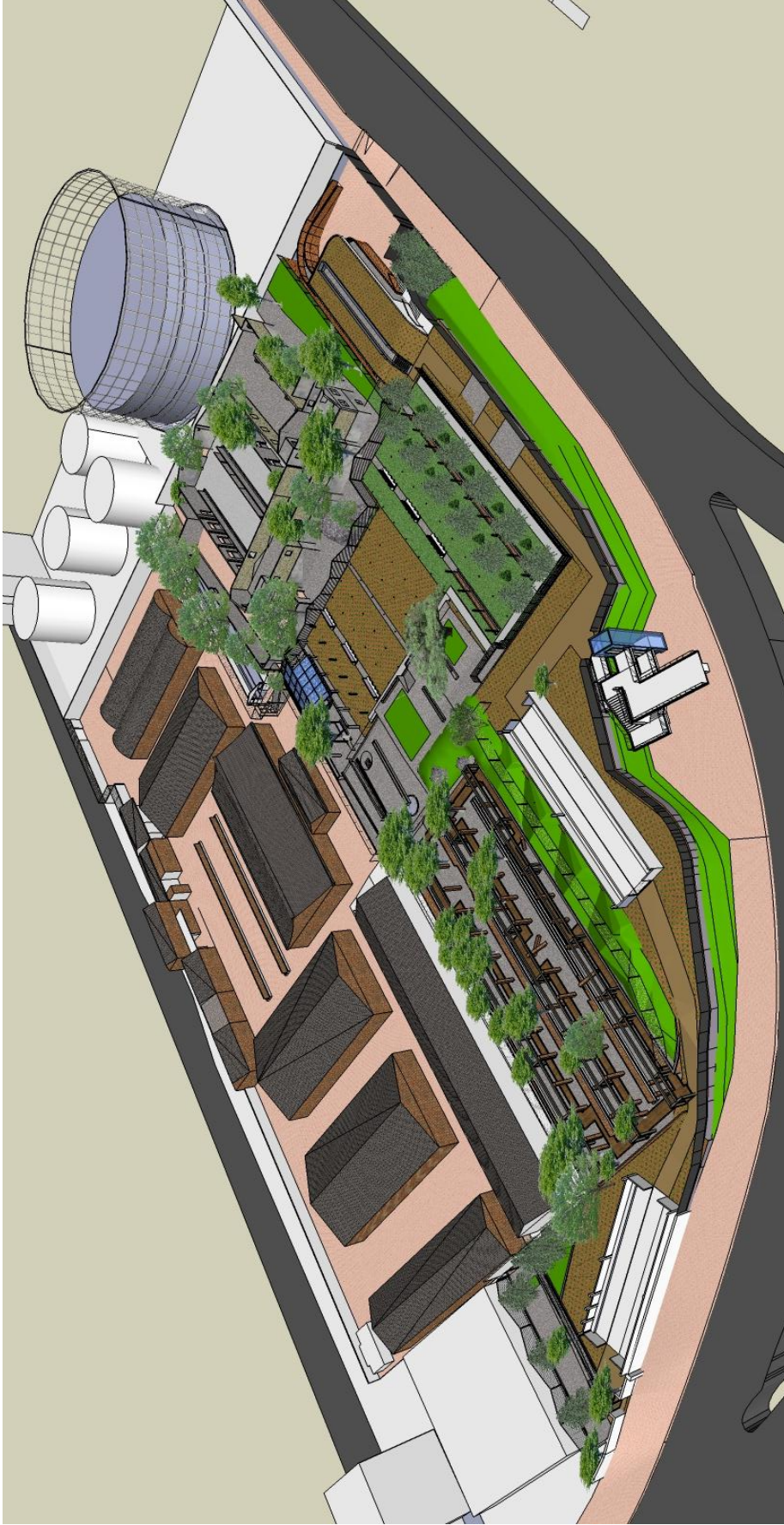


Figure 6 - Aerial Perspective

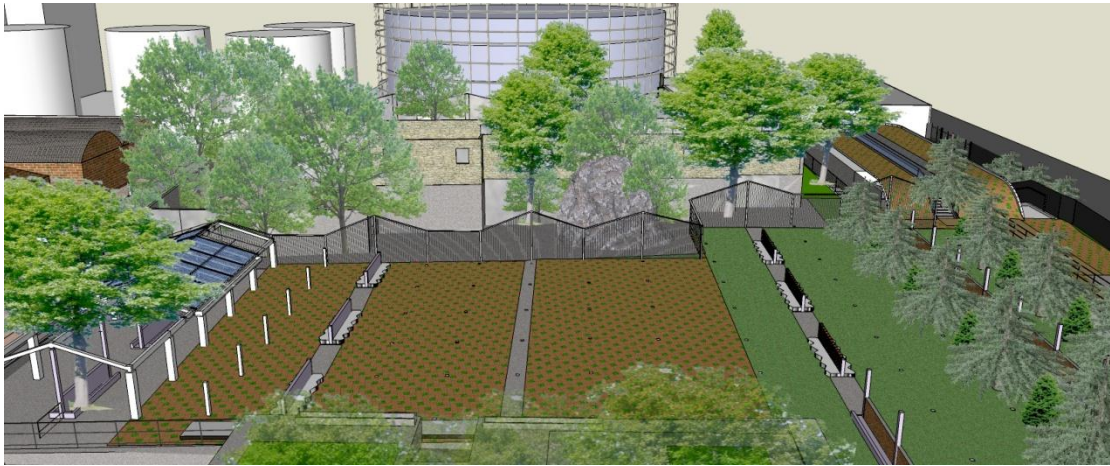


Figure 7 - The current condition of PB623 to PB628 (Concrete Column Zone) and the proposed design



Figure 8 - The current condition of PB630 to PB632 (Red Brick Column Zone) and the proposed design

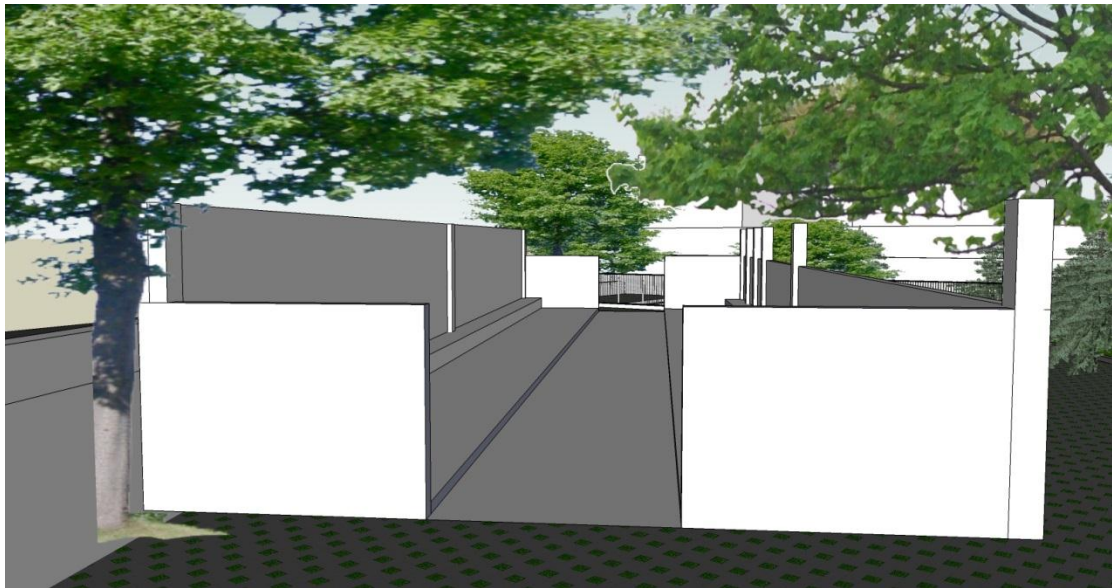


Figure 9 - The current condition of PB828 to PB829 (Concrete Sheds) and the proposed design



Figure 10 - The current condition of the ancillary facilities such as water pond and well and the proposed design



Figure 11 - The current condition of the old pig lairages and the proposed design



Figure 12 - The current condition of the proposed new Visitor Centre location and the proposed design