

**Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of
the Revitalisation of the Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters
at No. 141 Pok Fu Lam Road**

BACKGROUND

Under Batch IV of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme), the Secretary for Development granted approval-in-principle in 2015 for the proposed conservation and adaptive re-use of the Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters (SSQ) at No. 141 Pok Fu Lam Road (please refer to Figure 1 for the location plan) as “The Pokfulam Farm” submitted by The Pokfulam Farm Company Limited.

2. The SSQ comprises the Main Building, the Servants’ Quarters and the Garage Block. It was constructed in 1887 as residence for the Farm Manager of the Old Dairy Farm. The three existing buildings have been left vacant since 1987 and were accorded a Grade 1 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board in December 2009. The SSQ will be converted and revitalised to provide services including a living museum, an eco-historical learning centre, a dairy and bakery workshop, a book and souvenir store, a community farm and outdoor event space (please refer to Figure 2 for the general view of the SSQ).

3. Statement of Cultural Significance

(a) Historical Significance

- (i) The SSQ was built in 1887 and is the oldest of the remaining Dairy Farm buildings in Hong Kong. It used to be the dwelling house of the Farm Manager. The Dairy Farm Co., Ltd. was founded in 1886 by Sir Patrick Manson, a Scottish surgeon, which was the first local hygienic milk supply company in Hong Kong. Its goal was to produce a hygienic supply of milk and dairy products at affordable prices for the growing population of Hong Kong. Pokfulam was selected as the site for dairy farmland due to its reliable water supply for livestock husbandry and its geographical location to benefit from every breeze in summer time. The establishment of the farm not only brought

new population and breeding techniques, but also made contribution to the industrial cultural landscape and heritage to the locality. Meanwhile, a large number of staff quarters, cowboy quarters, paddocks, manure pits and silos were erected here. The SSQ is one of those staff quarters which survived throughout the years;

- (ii) The company expanded its business from cattle raising to food supply industry, including piggery, poultry and cheese, and ice manufacturing industry in Asia Pacific. Dairy Farm acquired large ambit of land and imported more cattles in Pokfulam due to this large expansion; and
- (iii) In recent decades, vast new housing estates such as Baguio Villas, Wah Fu, and Chi Fu Fa Yuen were built on the original farmlands of some 300 acres. As a result, most of the Dairy Farm premises were demolished. Those still in existence include a Main Office Building, a Senior Staff Quarters, and a Cowshed. They serve as reminders of the success story of a Hong Kong enterprise.

(b) Architectural Significance

- (i) The SSQ, formerly known as “Braemar”, comprises the Main Building, the Servants’ Quarters and the Garage Block. The Main Building is a two-storey building. The lower or ground floor storey, which corresponds to a basement, has thick granite block walls pierced at regular intervals by circular bull’s eye windows for ventilation. These granite walls act as a plinth to support the principal storey at first floor level which has simple classical architectural features. Each elevation is different but the main feature is a bay window on the north-east side. The main features of the interior, which suffered from vandalism and decay, are period fireplaces in the main rooms, panelled doors, and heavily moulded architraves to windows and door frames;
- (ii) The Servants’ Quarters and Garage Block are single storey buildings in simple classical architectural style. Both buildings have Chinese styled pitched roofs with double-layered pan and

roll tiles; and

- (iii) The SSQ is the only surviving senior staff quarters and one of the oldest of the remaining Dairy Farm buildings in Hong Kong. It represents the style of the residential house in the period of late 19th to early 20th century, which is now rare in Hong Kong. Despite some alterations, most of the architectural features of the SSQ have survived throughout the years. It is of considerable built heritage value and it remains fairly authentic.

(c) Contextual Significance

- (i) Due to its reliable water supply for livestock husbandry and its geographical location to benefit from every breeze in summer time, the Mains for dairy farmland was selected in the west of the Pokfulam Village. The SSQ, which used to be the dwelling house of the Farm Manager, was selected to situate in the west of the Mains near the Main Office Building of the Farm; and
- (ii) The SSQ has group value with the other Old Dairy Farm buildings in the vicinity. They include the Main Office Building and the Cowshed. The SSQ has group value with the aforementioned historic buildings and surroundings, which witnessed the Farm's prosperity and decline.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4. According to Technical Circular (Works) No. 6/2009 regarding the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) mechanism introduced by the Development Bureau (DEVB), an HIA is required to be carried out with the objective of drawing up a Conservation Management Plan and assessing the heritage impact based on the proposed project scope and design. The HIA sets out mitigation measures to avoid adverse impact on the buildings in the course of conversion and outlines the future interpretation, maintenance and management strategies, based on the Conservation Guidelines of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) laid down in the Resource Kit of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme. The HIA has been completed and submitted to

the AMO.

A. Project Proposal

5. Under the Consolidated Project Proposal submitted by the The Pokfulam Farm Company Limited, the SSQ and its site will be revitalised into a “living” museum to showcase the history and memory of the Old Dairy Farm with a series of workshops on dairy products to the local community and visitors. The following revitalisation works and programmes are proposed:

- (a) A Living Museum will be set up on the first floor of the Main Building to display the artifacts and historical documents of the Old Dairy Farm, Pokfulam Village and the other constituents of the Pokfulam cultural landscape;
- (b) Thematic workshops on conserving local culture, heritage artifacts and natural environment will be held in the multi-purpose room and activity room;
- (c) The book store will be operated at the Servants’ Quarters to sell local handicrafts and books to visitors for promoting Hong Kong local culture and history and provides job opportunities to the community;
- (d) The Garage Block will become a reception area that visitors could register for guided tours, and get information on points of cultural and heritage interest in the area. This space is good for holding some small thematic exhibitions as well;
- (e) The new annex building will house a dairy and bakery workshop. Visitors could learn and practise traditional ways of food production and also modern sustainable life style. A catering area will be also provided; and
- (f) Outdoor open space includes an amphitheater for visitors to appreciate the historical buildings under a natural setting with similar context to the original one. A community organic farm will also be set up to encourage public participation (please refer to Figure 3 for the landscape plan).

B. Conservation Principles

6. According to the HIA report, the conservation policies to conserve and interpret the SSQ are as follows:

(a) Building Use

The new use of the SSQ should be compatible with its original use, which means that it should not jeopardise the image of the quarters and any unnecessary interventions to the historic building should be avoided.

(b) Preservation of Building Fabrics

Authenticity of the heritage of the SSQ and its architectural merits should be maintained with minimum intervention. The key Character Defining Elements (CDEs) should be repaired and preserved in-situ as far as possible, such as:

(i) Main Building

- External elements such as all elevations with granite block walls, bay window, circular bull's eye ventilation windows, classical architectural features, horizontal moulded bands, and chimney, etc.; and
- Internal elements such as fireplaces, classical architectural features, corbelled mouldings, skirting, granite block walls and timber decking system, etc.

(ii) Servants' Quarters

- External elements such as all elevations, Chinese styled pitched roof laid with double layered pan and roll tiles, moulded copings and horizontal moulded bands, moulded canopies, etc.; and
- Internal elements such as corbelled mouldings, remains of

chimney, etc.

(iii) Garage

- Elements such as all elevations with the moulded pediments and the granite blocks and joints, Chinese styled pitched roof laid with double layered pan and roll tiles and timber roof truss, window hoods and sills, timber windows and metal gate, etc.

(iv) Surroundings

- Elements in the surroundings such as open space.

(c) Setting

- (i) The setting of the SSQ should be respected and preserved;
- (ii) The later-added flat roof structure attaching the Main Building opposite to the Servants' Quarters should be demolished; and
- (iii) New structure to be built should be compatible but distinguishable from the existing buildings and should not confuse the visitors from appreciating the heritage site. The overall mass of the new annex block should be compatible to the SSQ.

(d) Documentation

Cartographic and photographic surveys to properly record the historic buildings will be conducted before and after the alteration works.

(e) Interpretation

Interpretation in form of guided tours, workshops and activities should be provided for visitors to appreciate and experience the history and development of the Old Dairy Farm as well as the culture of the Pokfulam Village and the surrounding area.

C. Key Design Proposal

7. The key proposed works for the revitalisation project are listed below:

(a) Overall site approach

- (i) The project is intended to renovate and adaptively reuse the existing SSQ as a “living” museum, an eco-historical learning centre, a dairy and bakery workshop, a book and souvenir store, a community farm and outdoor event space;
- (ii) A new annex block will be constructed for use as a thematic workshop to offer potential to enhance the value of the place without introducing extensive alteration works to the SSQ; and
- (iii) Addition of a glass canopy at the rear side of the Servants’ Quarters to provide protection against weather and give a sense of direction to the historic buildings.

(b) Conservation and conversion works for transforming the SSQ into a “living” museum

(i) Exterior

- The roof form of the Main Building will be restored to hip pitched roof with Chinese styled roofing consisting of pan and roll tiles with reference to old photos;
- Restore demolished chimneys at the Main Building and Servants’ Quarters matching with the existing one and with reference to available information;
- No alteration works will be carried out to the facades, except:
 - Open up the enclosed verandah in the Main Building;
 - Addition of an access ramp to the 1/F of the Main

Building to fulfill Fire Safety Code and Barrier Free Access requirements;

- Demolish the later-added flat roof structure attaching the Main Building; and
- Make use of the existing window to form new door opening at the rear side of the Garage;
- Restore the steel framed windows of the Main Building to timber matching the existing style and subdivision. Restore window awnings and louvres with reference to the old photos and the style of the period; and
- Restore the blocked openings at the Servants' Quarters to timber windows with reference to the old photos and available information.

(ii) Interior

- The layout and setting of the interior will be largely retained, except for removing:
 - Later-added partition walls on the 1/F verandah and G/F storage of the Main Building; and
 - Partition wall of the existing toilet in the Servants' Quarters to accommodate the new use;
- The existing timber floor decking will be restored as far as possible. Reconstruct only if it is beyond restoration; and
- Some of the existing windows and doors will be upgraded in order to fulfill the current statutory requirements on fire escape and barrier free access. The design of the original windows and doors will be followed.

(iii) Preserved features for heritage interpretation

- Circular bull's eye ventilation windows of the Main Building;
- The original fire place and chimney of the Main Building;
- External and internal granite block walls of the Main Building;
- External and internal classical architectural features of the Main Building; and
- Chinese-styled pitched roofs at the Servants' Quarters and the Garage.

(iv) Enhancement works for complying with the statutory requirements of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) or other modern-day requirements

- New access ramp to provide Means of Escape (MOE) and barrier free access to 1/F of the Main Building;
- Upgrade the existing staircase to main entrance by adding handrails to comply with the MOE requirements, subject to the approval by the Buildings Department. In case it is not approved, self-closing fire rated door will have to be installed to the existing staircase;
- New protective barrier to be added behind the existing parapet to comply with the protective barrier requirements;
- Install fire-rated material for the timber decking system;
- Addition of fire-rated glazing to the existing windows at the Main Building to comply with the Fire Safety Code;
- Addition of fire-rated doors to the existing door openings to

verandah to comply with the Fire Safety Code;

- New door openings at Activities Room on 1/F to comply with the Fire Safety Code and at the Archive Storage on G/F to make use of the space and for maintenance purpose;
- Provision of emergency vehicular access and fire services installations and equipment;
- air-conditioning outdoor unit to be sited at the rear of the Main Building;
- Electrical power distribution including associated plant to be sited in the new annex block;
- Water meter, gas control valve and fire services inlet cabinets will be built at the site entrance; and
- Replace the existing fencing for better security.

D. Mitigation Measures for the Conversion Works

8. For areas where impact of the conversion works could not be avoided, the following mitigation measures are to be implemented based on the conservation principles stated above:

- (a) A new outdoor ramp to the 1/F of the Main Building for barrier free access will be located away from the historic building at a less prominent location to minimise visual impact on the open space and the historic buildings. The ramp is structurally independent to enhance reversibility and to minimise impact on the historic building fabric. It will be constructed of materials in compatible design but to be distinguishable from the original buildings;
- (b) The design of the protective barrier at the verandah in the Main Building will be simple and distinguishable from the existing fabrics;
- (c) In case the timber decking needs to be re-constructed, it will follow

the existing structural system and make use of the existing load bearing brick/granite block walls to avoid additional columns. The fire-rated materials will be installed in such a way that they could be easily distinguishable from the existing structural system;

- (d) The fire-rated glazing will be installed internally, which will not affect the general appearance of the original metal framed windows;
- (e) The proposed new annex block will be designed in such a way that it will not overwhelm the original appearance of the SSQ. The new block will be located away from the SSQ to minimise the visual impact to the historic building fabric. The appearance of the new annex block will be compatible with and distinguishable from the existing building fabrics of the SSQ. The height of the new annex block will not exceed the eaves line of the Main Building;
- (f) The glass canopy at the rear side of the Servants' Quarters will be of light weight structure which is structurally independent to minimise the visual impact and the disturbance to the rear façade of the Servants' Quarters;
- (g) New building services pipelines should be grouped together when entering the building so that minimum number of holes will be made on the external walls. Any internal service ductworks and machinery will be placed at inconspicuous locations;
- (h) New electrical and mechanical (E&M) services will be partially installed in an underground structure to reduce the space for accommodating such services at the SSQ. The location of the E&M services will be chosen to maintain the openness of the open area and to minimise the visual impact to the SSQ;
- (i) The water meter, gas control valve and fire services inlet cabinets should be kept away from the historic buildings and avoid imposing visual impact. The height and mass of the cabinets will be kept to a minimum and the design to be compatible to the historic buildings;
- (j) The design of the new fencing will be understated in character and

will not induce any serious visual impact to the historic buildings. The installation will not block the vista from SSQ to the Main Office Building and the Cowshed of the Old Dairy Farm, the Bethanie and the East Lamma Channel;

- (k) Cartographic and photographic surveys to record the SSQ site will be conducted before the commencement of conversion works. A set of record drawings will be prepared and furnished to the AMO after completion of the conversion works;
- (l) Provision for the protection of CDEs will be incorporated into the contract documents for the construction works, followed by regular monitoring of the protection measures by site supervisory staff during the construction; and
- (m) Any renovation, alteration and maintenance works during the conversion and future operation of the buildings should follow the principles set out in the HIA.

CONCLUSION

9. The HIA concludes that the impact of the proposed works is considered acceptable and manageable with the proposed mitigation measures. The Pokfulam Farm Company Limited will ensure that all works carried out for heritage conservation are to strictly comply with the requirements stipulated in the HIA as endorsed by the AMO.

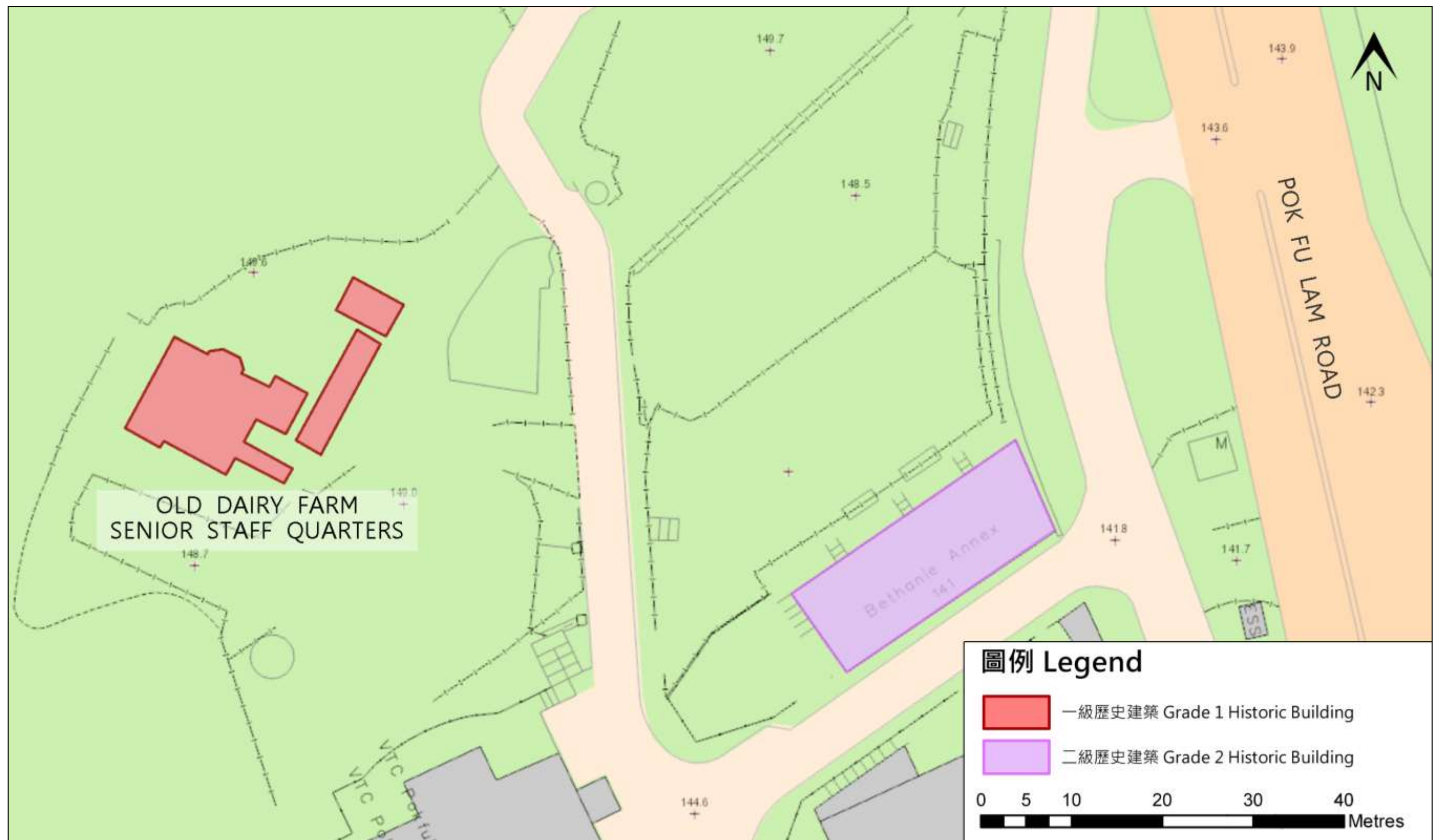


Figure 1: Location Plan



MAIN BUILDING



MAIN BUILDING



SERVANTS' QUARTERS

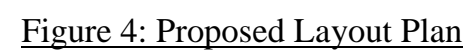


GARAGE

Figure 2: Site Overview Photos



Figure 3: Proposed Landscape Plan



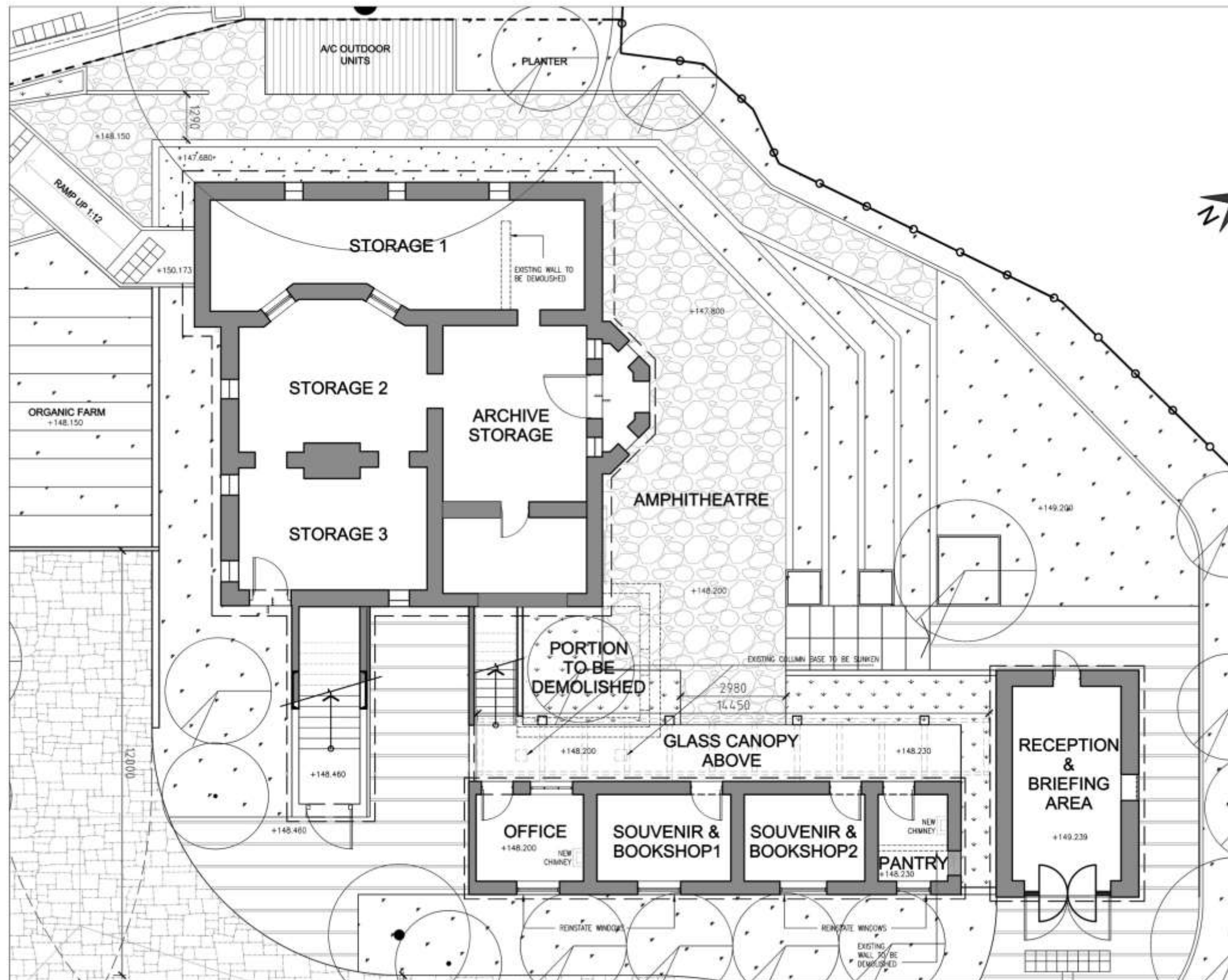


Figure 5: Proposed G/F Plan

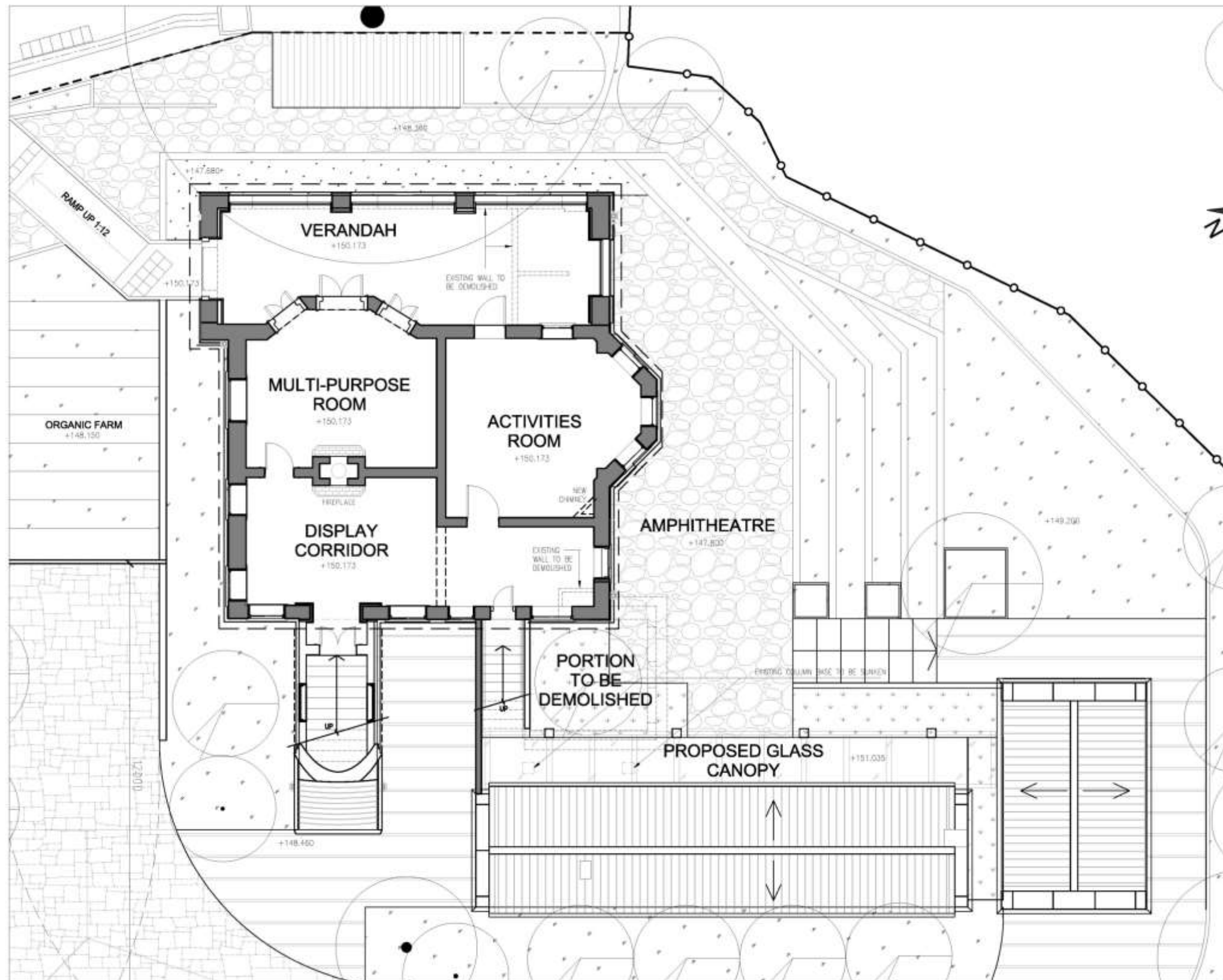


Figure 6: Proposed 1/F Plan



Figure 7: Perspective 1 of SSQ



Figure 8: Perspective 2 of SSQ



Figure 9: Perspective 3 of SSQ