

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN RESPECT OF THE REVITALISATION OF THE LUEN WO MARKET

BACKGROUND

Under Batch V of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (the “Revitalisation Scheme”), the Secretary for Development granted approval-in-principle in 2018 for the proposed conservation and adaptive re-use of Luen Wo Market at Luen Wo Hui (please refer to Figure 1 for the location plan) as “Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living” submitted by Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service, LC-HKS.

2. Luen Wo Market (“LWM”) is a single-storey market building constructed in 1951. The market ceased operation in 2002 and was accorded a Grade 3 status in January 2010 by the Antiquities Advisory Board. The site will be converted and revitalised to comprise of A) a heritage interpretation area, B) market stalls, C) a restaurant, D) public open spaces (East and West Plazas) and E) a new annex block. The new annex block will be constructed to house supporting facilities in the East Plaza (please refer to Figure 2 for the general views of LWM).

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

A. Historic Significance

3. LWM was built in 1951 as part of Luen Wo Hui, the first planned town development in the New Territories after the Second World War, which was considered as a pioneer modernised market town in its time.

4. The establishment of Luen Wo Hui by Luen Wo Land Investment Company Limited was to introduce a well-planned self-contained commercial and residential hub in Fanling. The intention was to establish great variety of shops and stalls, to provide water and electricity supply, and to improve transportation infrastructure. The works earned recognition from the public and the Government for its high standard.

5. Luen Wo Hui adopted traditional trading practices which could be reflected through the designation of market date (墟期) for agricultural products trading during its establishment and the running of Dawn Market (天光墟) around LWM until the 1980s, which were common in the New Territories.

B. Architectural Significance

6. LWM is the first privately built market in the post-war Hong Kong, which was governed by the New Territories Ordinance and was reflected through the design of the building, namely the categorisation of stalls according to the goods to be sold, and to ensure sanitary standard. It is rare as the only surviving example of a historic private market building in Hong Kong.

7. LWM is a modern architecture, which adopted a functional form with the characterised E-shaped plan. The clearstory and the courtyard facilitate natural cross ventilation and natural lighting for better hygiene. The key features are deep canopies, overhangs, entrance rounded corners and uniform window fenestrations.

8. LWM is comparatively decorative to other post-war markets with the distinctive Art Deco feature above the main entrance.

C. Social Significance

9. LWM was of great social value to the local community, which facilitated social connections through the commercial activities that took place in the building and in the outdoor bazaar. It has been a landmark to the local community as the centre of their daily activities in Luen Wo Hui since it was built.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10. In accordance with the Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 6/2009, a Heritage Impact Assessment (“HIA”) has been carried out with the objective of drawing up a Conservation Management Plan and assessing the heritage impact of the proposed project scope and design. Based on AMO’s

Conservation Guidelines contained in the Resource Kit of the Revitalisation Scheme, the HIA sets out the mitigation measures to avoid adverse impact on the historic building in the course of revitalisation works and outlines the future interpretation, maintenance and management strategies.

A. Project Proposal

11. Under the Consolidated Project Proposal submitted by Lutheran Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living Limited, LWM will be revitalised into Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living, including stalls to collaborate with local farmers to sell local vegetables and agricultural products. The following revitalisation works and programmes are proposed:

- (a) An indoor heritage interpretation area will be set up at the East Wing to showcase rural-urban transformation of Fanling, agricultural history and records of the revitalisation process. Original market stalls setting will be re-interpreted to reveal the history and memory of the market;
- (b) An outdoor display area will be set up at the East Courtyard to display exhibits with a theme of Luen Wo Hui as an agricultural hub in the New Territories;
- (c) Stalls and shops will be provided at the Middle Wing for selling local agricultural products and traditional craftsmanship to support regional economy;
- (d) A restaurant will be operated at the West Wing and West Courtyard to provide local cuisine;
- (e) Open plazas will provide public gathering place for local community, such as holiday bazaar, outdoor screening, music performance, cultural festival etc.; and
- (f) Educational programmes will be organised for the community to understand the urban-rural relationship through guided tour at LWM. A bicycle store will be provided at the new annex block

at the East Plaza to facilitate guided bike tours (please refer to Figure 3 for proposed ground floor plan of LWM).

B. Conservation Principles

12. According to the HIA report, the Conservation Policies to conserve and interpret LWM are as follows:

(a) Building Use

The new use of LWM should be compatible with its original use. The new use should not jeopardise the image of the market building. Unnecessary interventions to the market building should be avoided.

(b) Setting

(i) The setting of the market building with two open spaces on the northeast and southwest should be respected and preserved;

(ii) The proposed new annex block at the East Plaza should be understated in design which should not overwhelm the appearance of the market building. The appearance of the new annex block should be compatible with the heritage site; and

(iii) Holiday outdoor bazaar setups will be temporary and shall not permanently obstruct the views of the market building.

(c) Preservation of Building Fabrics

Authenticity of the heritage of LWM and its architectural merits should be maintained with minimal intervention. The Character Defining Elements (“CDEs”) should be repaired as necessary and preserved in-situ as far as practicable such as:

(i) Luen Wo Market – exterior

- Roof form of middle raised pitched roof for clearstory and flat roof on both sides;
- Front elevation of symmetrical design, including the central entrance parapet design with Art Deco centrepiece and flagpole, and side entrance parapet design with flagpole; rear elevation of symmetrical design, side elevations and plastered characters; and
- Entrance to meat stalls, other entrances, entrances to courtyards, window fenestrations, timber windows (some with metal security bars) and timber board door etc.

(ii) Luen Wo Market – interior

- General spatial organisation and building structure;
- Stall design, including stall ironmongeries and fittings, meat stall design, stall along rear aisle; and
- Timber doorway to former office with fanlight, and terrazzo tiles in the office, etc.

(d) Documentation

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

(e) Interpretation

Interpretation in the form of guided tours and displays should be provided to promote the cultural significance of LWM to the general public.

C. Key Design Proposal

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

- (a) Overall site approach
 - (i) The project is intended to renovate and adaptively re-use the existing market building as House of Urban and Rural Living, with stalls and shops, heritage interpretation area, and restaurant;
 - (ii) A new annex block with climber planting will be constructed at the East Plaza to provide bicycle store, with underground plantroom for fire services, sprinkler tanks, flush water tank and pumps (please refer to Figure 4 for proposed basement plan and Figure 6 and Figure 7 for sections); and
 - (iii) New landscape features will be added to the West Plaza including a rain garden, while new outdoor furniture will be added to the East Plaza where outdoor bazaar will be organised during the holidays.
- (b) Conservation and Conversion Works for transforming the market building into Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living
 - (i) Exterior
 - No major works will be carried out on the façades, except the following:
 - Remove existing later-added temporary steel structure under the main entrance canopy and reinstate the main entrance canopy to its original appearance through recasting of the canopy;

- Enlarge an existing window to form a door opening to the West Courtyard to facilitate operation of the new vegetable stalls and add a new door to it;
- Install a new trough sink at the West Courtyard for the use of restaurant users and market owners;
- Add canvas cover at the open courtyards;
- Replace existing metal gates with new glass doors, add new glass doors to existing doorway to East and West Courtyard, and installation of new metal gates at the entrance to courtyards;
- Replace existing later-added windows by timber windows to match existing windows of period style; restore blocked window openings and install timber windows to match existing of period style;
- Replace existing windows with new metal window and louvre at north façade and courtyard façades where necessary;
- Install new operable windows to clearstory; and
- Replace existing downpipes with new downpipes.

(ii) Interior

- The layout and setting of the interior will be largely retained, except the following:
 - Reinstate removed low wall partitions to reveal the original layout, and form new rooms to suit new use including alteration to existing low wall partitions;

- Convert existing market stalls into interpretation area, including the re-introduction of 4 types of stalls and other displays; and
- Reinstall market surface channels in front of stalls.

(iii) Preserved features for heritage interpretation

The following will be preserved and interpreted by guided tours:

- Roof form of middle raised pitched roof for clearstory and flat roof on both sides;
- Front elevation of symmetrical design, including the central entrance parapet design and side entrance parapet design; rear elevation of symmetrical design, side elevations, and plastered characters including ‘聯和市場’, ‘魚市場’, ‘菜市場’ and ‘LUEN WO MARKET’;
- Entrance to meat stalls, other entrances, entrances to courtyards, window fenestrations, timber windows (some with metal security bars); and
- General spatial organisation, stall design, including stall ironmongeries and fittings, meat stall design, stall along rear aisle.

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

- Introduce underground building services routing which will be restricted to the area with new recast slab;
- Upgrade the interior to meet the current statutory requirements of the Building Regulations, such as barrier free access, including levelling of the interior,

forming new ramps and adding tactile warning strip at side entrances, and addition of cover over surface channel etc.;

- Add dog houses, access hatches with cat ladders with localised strengthening works for the provision of new building services and maintenance access to the roof (refer to Figure 5 for roof plan);
- Add guard rails along the roof parapet to achieve work-at-height safety requirements but will be invisible from the main street elevation;
- Add lightning protection;
- Add split-type air conditioning unit and pipe works to enhance the comfort of visitors and users;
- Install building services such as electrical system, fire services system, air conditioning system, plumbing and drainage system, irrigation system etc.;
- Add new male and female toilets, kid's toilet, accessible toilet and babycare room; and
- Add food preparation room, store rooms and meter room.

D. Mitigation Measures for the Conversion Works

14. 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) The proposed new annex block with climber planting and the underground plantroom will be located away from the market building to minimise visual impact. The ultimate height of the annex block including all installations will be kept equal to or

below the top parapet level of the market building for the least visual impact in the perception of the overall setting. The appearance will be compatible with the heritage site, which will be understated in design and should not overwhelm the appearance of market building;

- (b) The excavation for the new annex block and underground trench shall be carried out by a non-percussive method to minimise the disturbance to existing market building. Precautionary measures such as monitoring point for settlement and tilting etc. shall be provided during the excavation work;
- (c) The recast of the entrance canopy will affect the flagpole, the stepped parapet, the Art Deco centrepiece, the plastered characters and signage. Detailed cartographic and photographic surveys should be carried out to the affected elements prior to recasting. The affected elements will be taken down with due care and salvaged for re-installation to original location as far as technically feasible. For elements where re-installation is not feasible, replica of the affected elements will be produced to match with original material, texture, colour and details, and properly recorded. Salvaged affected elements shall be displayed for interpretation within the site as far as technically feasible;
- (d) New rooms to be formed at the interior are located at less prominent area, which will not affect the perception of the general spatial organisation. The new block walls shall be added in a way where the original structure of the market building could still be readable;
- (e) The existing window to be enlarged to form new door will be at a less prominent location. The width will be limited to that of the existing window to minimise impact to the existing historic fabric and building structure. The openings shall be formed by removal of bricks and shall be subject to the advice from Registered Structural Engineer;

- (f) The new trough sink will be installed at a less prominent location. The new trough sink will be understated in design which should not overwhelm the appearance of the West Courtyard. The appearance of the new trough sink should be compatible with the market building;
- (g) New glass installation at the clearstory is designed to be openable with clear glass pane to allow natural cross ventilation and natural lighting to the interior;
- (h) New canvas cover to meet operational needs shall be added in a reversible manner that the setting of the E-shaped plan and open courtyards could still be generally readable. Disturbance to the historic fabric shall be kept minimum as far as possible. The design shall be minimal, subtle, lightweight and to be installed at an elevated level where sunlight could still penetrate to the courtyards and shall not hinder natural ventilation to the interior;
- (i) New doors and new gates to be installed will be minimal and subtle, which could be readily distinguishable and will not overwhelm the existing historic fabrics. The installation should allow the existing metal grilles and ironmongeries to be preserved in-situ as far as practicable;
- (j) Surface channels will be covered by a translucent cover such that the surface channels could still be generally readable;
- (k) New ramps will be located at less prominent locations away from the front elevation. The slope of the ramps will be 1:21 which will not require addition of handrail. The design of the new ramps should be simple and minimal which will not overwhelm the original interior;
- (l) New dog houses, access hatches with cat ladders will be located at less prominent locations, where the additions will not be visible to visitors at street level. Localised strengthening works at roof slabs will be at less prominent locations which could only be visible inside ancillary offices, food preparation room and

toilets. The structure of the dog houses shall not impose extra loading to the roof. The top level of the dog houses will not exceed the height of the nearby roof parapet walls;

- (m) The design of the new guard rails should be simple and minimal which will not overwhelm the original appearance of market building. For location where space could allow, guard rail with a height of 650mm with a distance of 250mm from the existing parapet wall will be provided which could keep the new guard rails invisible when viewing from the street level, and is subject to the approval by Buildings Department;
- (n) The exposed routing of new copper tapes for lightning protection should be carefully designed at less prominent locations and strategically aligned to keep minimal disturbance and visual impact to the historic fabrics. The colour of copper tapes will be matched with the mounting surface paint colour;
- (o) The pipe works for the air conditioning unit and sprinkler system will be placed at less prominent locations on the roof to minimise visual impact to the market building. Variable refrigerant flow air conditioning outdoor units will be placed at the new annex block to minimise visual impact and extra loading to the market building. A limited number of outdoor units with steel supports will be placed on the existing roof at the market building near the higher roof parapet walls, which will not be visible from street level;
- (p) New building services will be grouped together when entering the market building so that minimum number of openings will be made on the walls. Existing openings on walls should be utilised as far as technically feasible;
- (q) The installation of pipe works / duct works should be in such a way that the original high ceiling volume along the middle aisle will still be exposed and readable by visitors;

- (r) Cartographic and photographic surveys to record LWM will be conducted before commencement of the conversion works. A set of record drawings will be prepared and furnished to AMO after completion of the conversion works;
- (s) Provision for 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
- (t) Any renovation, alteration and maintenance works during the conversion and future operation of the building should follow the principles set out in the HIA.

CONCLUSION

15. The HIA has concluded that the impact of the proposed revitalisation works at LWM is considered acceptable and manageable with the proposed mitigation measures. Lutheran Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living Limited will ensure that all works carried out for heritage conservation strictly comply with the requirements stipulated in the HIA as endorsed by AMO.

Lutheran Luen Wo Market – House of Urban and Rural Living Limited

September 2020



Figure 1. Location plan (not to scale).



Front façade of Luen Wo Market



Rear façade of Luen Wo Market



Aerial view of Luen Wo Market

Figure 2. Site overview photos.



Figure 3. Proposed ground floor plan (not to scale).

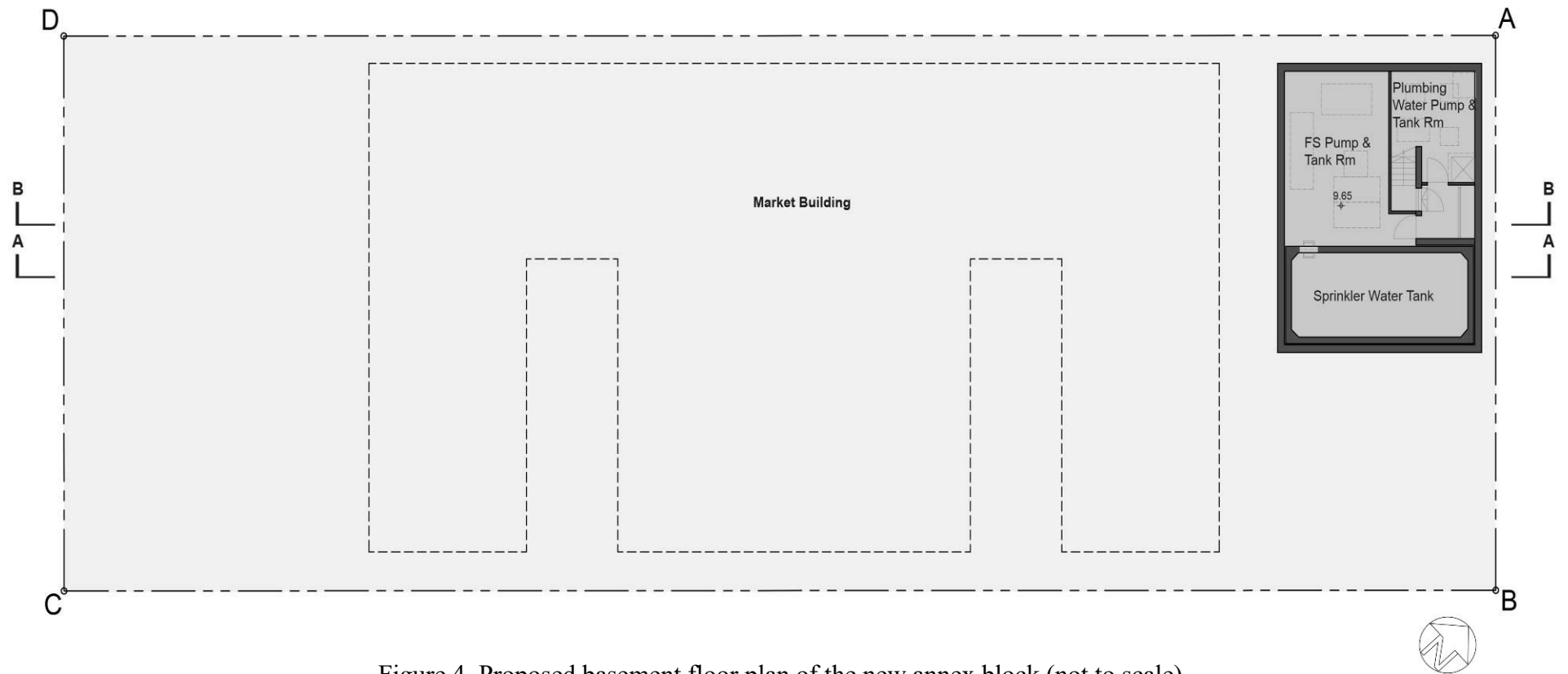


Figure 4. Proposed basement floor plan of the new annex block (not to scale).

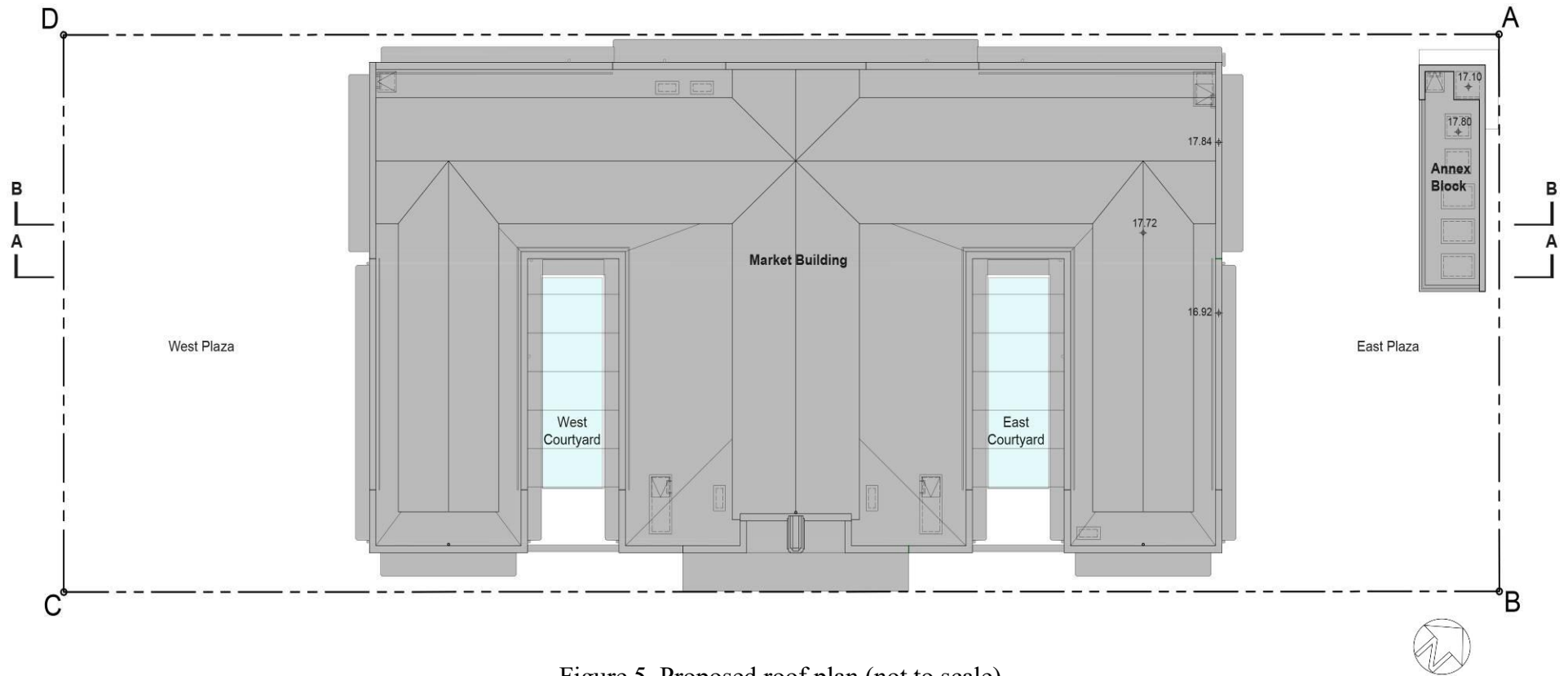


Figure 5. Proposed roof plan (not to scale).

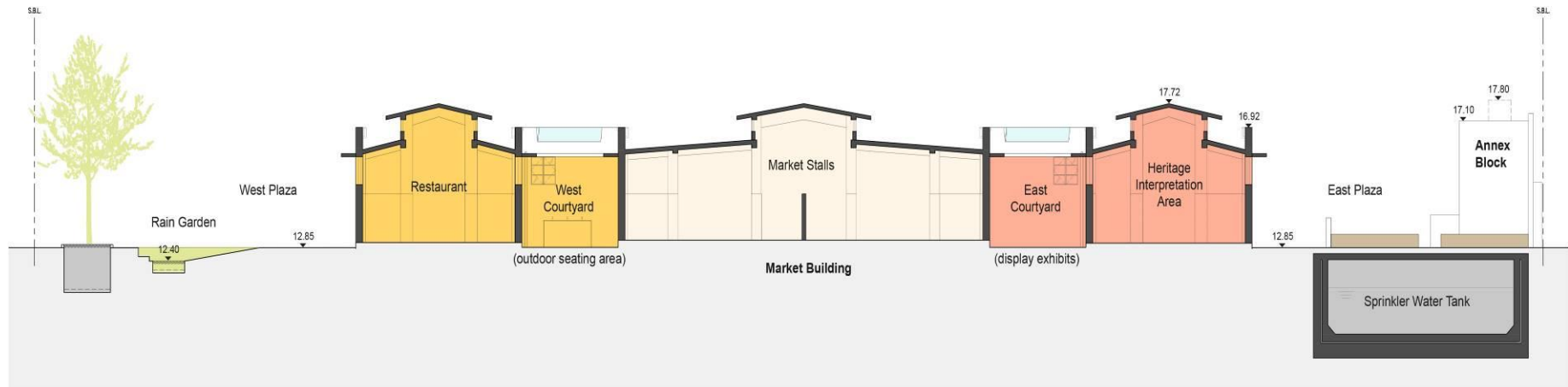


Figure 6. Section AA (not to scale).

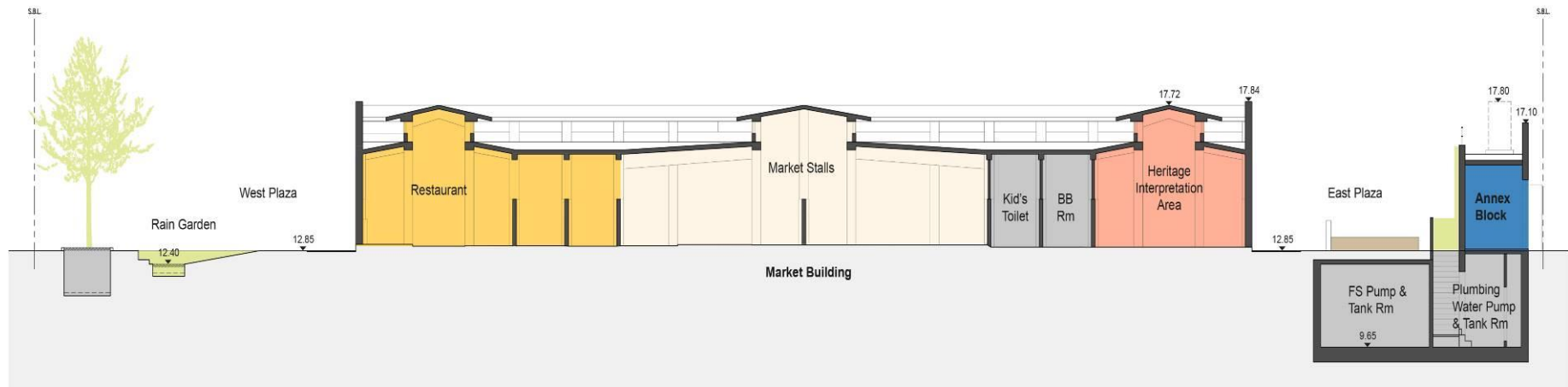


Figure 7. Section BB (not to scale).



Figure 8: Artist impression of the overview of Luen Wo Market and the adjacent open spaces.



Figure 9: Artist impression of Luen Wo Market and the Annex Block.



Figure 10: Artist impression of Luen Wo Market front view.

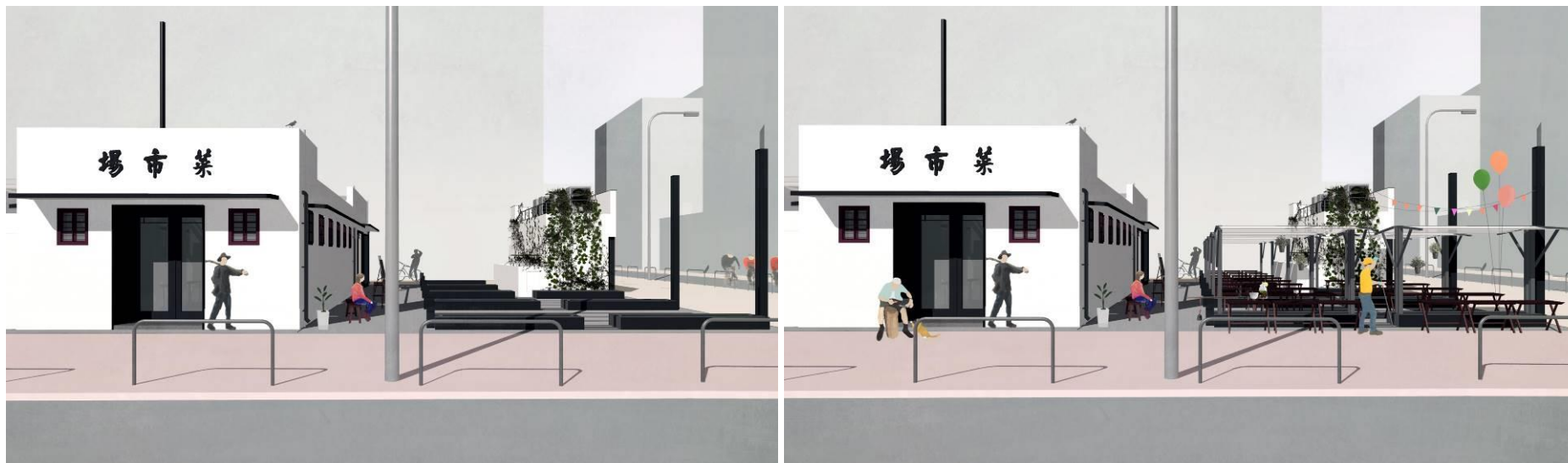


Figure 11: Artist impression of the East Plaza during weekdays (left) and used as holiday bazaar (right).



Figure 12: Artist impression of West Courtyard.



Figure 13: Artist impression of the restaurant at the interior.