

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN RESPECT OF
RENOVATION OF BLOCK P IN KOWLOON HOSPITAL**

BACKGROUND

Block P constitutes one of the earliest extant structures within Kowloon Hospital located at No. 147A Argyle Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon, which holds the distinction of being Kowloon's inaugural government-funded medical facility. Erected in 1925, this two-storey, rectangular edifice was built on level ground to accommodate nursing sisters. Over time, it has experienced several modifications and upgrades to align with the hospital's shifting functional demands. Block P has been graded as a Grade 2 historic building since 2009 and is currently vacant. The Hospital Authority (HA), as the property's custodian, seeks to renovate it by converting it into administration offices to support daily operations at Kowloon Hospital. This renovation effort will encompass internal enhancements and the restoration and upkeep of the external façade.

2. Pursuant to the Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 1/2022, Block P's heritage designation necessitates a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). The approval from the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) and the subsequent endorsement from the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) must be secured prior to the initiation of substantial works. The HIA will delineate the conservation methodology, examine the potential consequences of the renovation activities, and suggest protective measures to preserve the building's façades and notable architectural characteristics, in accordance with established HIA protocols.

3. Kowloon Hospital is a historic complex with graded buildings that evolved incrementally, with some demolitions for modern structures. Block P served as Sisters' Quarters, reflecting the hospital's foundational role in Hong Kong's healthcare amid Kowloon's population growth. Key events include 1920s construction, WWII Japanese occupation, 1964 shift to tuberculosis/convalescent facility, and shifting to nurse changing, office and rest areas in 1991.

4. The scope of the Project is to adaptively reuse Block P for administration offices, including renovation works for the site and existing building, and setting up of office and related supporting facilities. Adjacent historic buildings (Blocks B, M, R) are within 50m.

5. The HIA is based on secondary research, site evaluations, and international standards (e.g., Burra Charter, ICOMOS guidelines). Impacts are analyzed from initial blueprints with mitigation measures guided by the primary principle of “avoidance”.

6. Over the years, Block P has been renovated and altered to suit changing operational needs. The Project aims to refurbish it for administrative use.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

A. Historic / Historical Significance

7. Block P is an important structure in Kowloon Hospital and one of the landmark buildings in the area. Originally built in 1925 as Sisters’ Quarters, it has remained tied to healthcare services since its completion nearly 100 years ago. It is part of the historic development of public healthcare in Hong Kong and represents the early 20th-century urban planning in Kowloon amid rapid population growth.

8. Kowloon’s original development in the early 1900s saw increasing population demands for medical facilities. The hospital was established in 1925 to address this, providing inpatient and outpatient services. Block P, as nurses’ accommodation, supported this mission.

9. The site is part of a heritage cluster within Kowloon Hospital, enhancing its collective significance as a historic complex. Further adopting post-WWII modern facilities, the site supports healthcare, residential, and community uses.

10. There are many historic buildings in the vicinity, such as Blocks B, M, and R within the hospital, contributing to the area’s layered history from early 20th century medicine to contemporary public health services.

B. Aesthetic / Architectural / Artistic Significance

11. Block P exemplifies early 20th-century architecture with functional design for natural ventilation and light, featuring Chinese tiled roof, grey brickwork, verandahs, timber doors, and steel windows. It is one of the few surviving pre-war structures in the hospital from the 1920s. It employs a rectangular form with symmetrical elevation, forming an elegant exterior. External features include brick columns and arches; internal include staircases, fireplaces, and ceramic tiles. It completes Hong Kong's story of early modern architectural development in public facilities.

C. Social Significance

12. Block P derives social value from its century-long association with Kowloon Hospital, Kowloon's first government-funded medical facility. As original Sisters' Quarters built in 1925, it housed nursing staff essential to healthcare delivery, supporting patient care through the hospital's early decades, WWII Japanese occupation, 1964 transition to tuberculosis and convalescent services (including nurse training), and post-1991 use as changing rooms, offices, and rest areas under HA. This enduring role fostered communal bonds and shared experiences among staff and the local community.

D. Group Significance

13. Block P possesses notable integration within Kowloon Hospital's heritage complex, a cohesive ensemble of ten graded historic buildings erected between 1925 and 1945. Designed by the Architectural Office of the Public Works Department, these structures—including Blocks A, B, C, M, P, R, Outpatient Block, Isolation Block, and Utility Buildings U1 and U2—share common features such as rendered walls, grey gauged brick accents, and Chinese tiled roofs, contributing to a unified aesthetic and narrative of early 20th-century public healthcare in Hong Kong. Its close spatial and functional links to contemporaneous blocks (e.g., A, B, R from 1925; M from 1934) underscores the hospital's planned operational integrity. Additionally, proximity to nearby graded sites, such as St. Teresa's Church (Grade 1), King George V School

(Grade 2), and Heep Yunn School (Grade 3) further enhances its broader contextual significance in Kowloon's historic landscape.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA)

14. In accordance with the HIA Mechanism stipulated in Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 1/2022, the works agent needs to confirm with AMO whether there are any sites of archaeological interest, declared monuments, proposed monuments, sites and buildings/structures graded by AAB, sites, buildings/structures in the List of New Items pending grading assessment by AAB, or Government historic sites identified by AMO (hereafter together referred to as "Heritage Sites") within or in the vicinity of the Project Site. The HIA aims to identify items with possible heritage value but not included in the list of "Heritage Sites" within or in the vicinity of the Project Site and present the assessment of potential direct and indirect impacts resulting from the construction and operational phases of the Project on them.

A. Conservation Principles

15. The Conservation Principles and Guidelines to conserve and interpret the site are as follows:

(a) Conservation principles

- **Principle 1:** The statement of cultural significance shall serve as a primary basis for all future planning, conservation works, and adaptive reuse decisions for Block P.
- **Principle 2:** Conservation and development activities shall adhere to the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter, 1979, revised 1999), ensuring internationally recognized best practices.
- **Principle 3:** Recommendations for conserving specific heritage fabric, spaces, and qualities of Block P, as detailed in

Annex A

this HIA, shall be endorsed by all parties as a guide for future interventions, consistent with Burra Charter principles.

- **Principle 4:** Areas of exceptional and considerable significance (e.g., Chinese tiled roof, grey gauged brickwork, verandahs) shall only be adapted in ways that do not compromise their character or cultural significance.
- **Principle 5:** Future development shall minimize or avoid adverse impacts on the quality and setting of the surrounding precinct, preserving the historical integrity of Kowloon Hospital's heritage complex.
- **Principle 6:** Adaptive reuse shall balance functional requirements with heritage preservation, ensuring Block P remains a sustainable heritage place for future generations.

(b) Conservation guidelines

- **Guideline 1: Recognize Block P as a heritage place of cultural significance**
Block P is a heritage place of cultural significance with values rooted in its historic role as Sisters' Quarters, architectural rarity, and social importance to Kowloon. Future managers, operators, and users must formally acknowledge this significance, ensuring their roles and responsibilities are understood through regular consultations with HA and AMO to balance objectives and priorities.
- **Guideline 2: Apply internationally recognized conservation principles**
Conservation works shall adhere to principles from the Burra Charter (1979, revised 2013), Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China (2003), and Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2010), ensuring Block P aligns with global best practices.

- **Guideline 3: Ensure health, safety, and risk preparedness**
Implement a risk preparedness regime by complying with health, safety, fire, and structural regulations, including regular inspections of mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and fire service installations and equipment (e.g., sprinkler tanks, hose reels). Periodic reviews should monitor the building's performance, addressing risks like termite presence and ensuring barrier-free access.

- **Guideline 4: Undertake works appropriate to levels of significance**
Works shall correspond to the levels of significance, prioritizing preservation of elements with exceptional significance (e.g., Chinese tiled roof, verandah) through minimal intervention, while allowing reversible adaptations in areas of lesser significance.

- **Guideline 5: Promote sustainable conservation practices**
Renovation works shall emphasize maximum reversibility, minimum intervention, and reuse of salvaged materials (e.g., canton tiles, grey bricks), with immediate treatment of endangered fabric like cracked tiles. Removed materials shall be assessed by a heritage conservation expert for reuse before disposal.

- **Guideline 6: Restrict new development to outside the historic boundary**
New developments, such as the Sprinkler Water Tank, Fire Services, Water Tank, and Pump Room, shall be located outside Block P's historic boundary to minimize physical and visual impact.

- **Guideline 7: Preserve the setting of Block P**
The setting of Block P, including its relationship with surrounding greenery and other historic blocks (e.g., Blocks A, B, R), shall be preserved by minimizing impacts from new developments, protecting existing trees and external features.

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- **Guideline 8: Extend conservation to current and future interventions**
When feasible, replace unsightly past interventions (e.g., modern window-type air conditioners) with heritage-sensitive solutions, and ensure new additions (e.g., fire protection enclosures, louvres) are designed to harmonize with the historic fabric.

- **Guideline 9: Document Block P thoroughly before and after works**
Conduct a cartographic and photographic survey of Block P's current state before renovation and document all conservation and building works (e.g., roof repairs, window restoration) with as-fitted drawings and photos, archiving records with HA and AMO for future references.

- **Guideline 10: Engage qualified conservation professionals**
All conservation works, including repairs to the Chinese tiled roof (refer to Ch. 8 in the HIA report for the proposed works), timber doors, and steel windows shall be supervised by a qualified architectural conservation consultant (e.g., The Hong Kong Institute of Architectural Conservationists Consultant List), with contractors experienced in heritage techniques, ensuring high-quality preservation aligned with international standards.

- **Guideline 11: Integrate sustainability into conservation practices**
Use sustainable materials (e.g., mineral paints) and methods (e.g., reusing salvaged tiles) to minimize environmental impact while preserving heritage value, ensuring energy efficiency in new office spaces without compromising historic elements.

(c) Proposed new uses

- The proposed new uses as administration offices should be accommodated as far as possible within the existing layout and structure of the historic building. The new use aligns with the

Annex A

building's capacity, but interventions must balance preservation of historic fabric with functional needs, ensuring minimal impact on elements of exceptional significance. Any unnecessary interventions should be avoided and minimized.

(d) Conservation of built fabric through preservation, repair and restoration

- Every effort shall be made to preserve, restore and reveal as much as possible the elements of historic fabric of exceptional and considerable levels of significance based on available historical documents and records. Examples of character-defining elements (“CDEs”) with exceptional and considerable levels of significance are:

(i) Exterior:

- Chinese style hip-and-gable roof;
- Double-roll double-pan roof tiling;
- “Cow’s horn” curling ends to the ridge and corners of the roof;
- Chimney in jointless grey gauged brick stack;
- Timber ridge-batten-purlin roof structure system;
- Rendered and painted external brickwork walls painted in cream colour and grey skirting with jointless grey gauged brick accents;
- Jointless grey gauged brickwork on the G/F verandah columns and chimneys at roof;
- Arches with grey gauged brickwork column shaft and granite base at the verandah on the G/F;
- Verandah on the 1/F;
- Entrance porch with square-section columns and pitched roof supported by brackets;
- Fan-shaped stone steps at the main entrance;
- Arched alcove;
- Circular porthole with ceramic circular grilles in bamboo pattern;
- Multi-paned glass door; and
- Cast iron rainwater downpipe.

(ii) Interior:

- Grand timber staircase with timber railing;
 - Circular wall opening with timber rails next to the grand timber staircase;
 - Fireplace;
 - Teak floor;
 - Timber door;
 - Timber toilet cubicle door;
 - Alcove;
 - Metal letter slot;
 - Built-in storage cabinet;
 - Brick arch in the roof void (above ceiling level); and
 - Timber staircase leading to the roof void.
- Restoration is considered appropriate when solid evidence obtained through desktop research is available, for example, the original windows that were filled up should be restored after detailed study of historical drawings and photos.
- All repair works should be carried out with the principle of repair rather than replacement.
- Intrusive later-additions should be removed to restore the hindered/disturbed CDEs as far as possible or modified to minimize the impact on the CDEs.

(e) Documentation

- Cartographic and photographic surveys to properly record the historic building shall be conducted before any works to Block P. Any future repair works during operation of the new use should be properly documented. All these records should be kept in appropriate means and media.
- Comprehensive documentation is critical for Block P's long-term management and preservation, providing a record for

future reference and ensuring transparency in conservation efforts. Conduct a full photographic and mapping survey of Block P's current state before renovation begins, capturing details of heritage elements like the roof, verandahs, and windows. Prepare final as-fitted drawings, progress photos, and a completion report upon project completion, documenting all changes, including new partitions and fire safety systems. Maintain detailed logs of inspections, repairs, and maintenance activities (e.g., roof repairs, window restoration) to track the condition of heritage elements over time. Store all documentation - this HIA, project details, surveys, drawings, and logs - at the HA's management hub, ensuring accessibility to site supervisors, occupants, technicians, and conservation experts for future references. Create digital backups of all records, including CDs or cloud storage, to ensure long-term preservation and accessibility.

B. Key Design Proposal

16. The key proposed works for the Project are listed below:

(a) Overall approach

- (i) Block P will be renovated for use as administration offices. The appearance and original internal layout will be retained. Restoration works will be carried out in accordance with conservation guidelines, while upgrading works will be implemented to meet current statutory requirements, including improvements to accessibility and fire safety.

(b) Restoration, renovation, and upgrading works

- (i) The following works will be carried out to repair and restore the CDEs:
- Roof works;
 - Facade works; and
 - Internal works.

(ii) The following works will be carried out to comply with statutory requirements and current operational needs:

- Demolition works;
- Builder's works;
- Building services upgrading works; and
- Upgrading works for statutory compliance.

C. Identification of impacts and proposal on mitigation measures

17. The mitigation measures to be and the assessed impacts on the historic fabric are as follows:

(a) Restoration of roof and façades

- Proposed works:
 - Roof repairs;
 - External wall repainting;
 - Replacement of damaged canton tiles;
 - Repair and repainting of metal windows and shutter windows; and
 - Repair of verandah floor tiles and ceilings.
- Key mitigation measures:
 - Match original materials, colours, textures, and profiles;
 - Preserve distinctive roof features; and
 - Apply non-invasive methods when carrying out repairs.
- Overall impact:
 - Generally **Beneficial Impact**. These works restore weatherproofing, structural integrity, and the external historic appearance of Block P with minimal alteration to its character.

(b) Restoration of internal features

- Proposed works:
 - Cleaning and repolishing of grand timber staircase;
 - Plaster repair and repainting of internal walls;
 - Repair and repolishing of teak floors; and
 - Repair of fireplaces, timber doors, and ceramic tiles.

- Key mitigation measures:
 - Match original materials, colours, textures and profiles; and
 - Reusable historic materials shall be salvaged, labelled and properly stored for potential reuse or interpretation purposes.

- Overall impact:
 - Generally **Beneficial Impact**. These works improve condition, functionality, and appearance while preserving historic character.

(c) Demolition works

- Proposed works:
 - Removal of later-added steel posts, partitions, and cubicle doors in toilets; and
 - Removal of existing sanitary fittings, plumbing, and pantry cabinets.

- Key mitigation measures:
 - Demolition shall be carried out carefully to avoid any damage to adjacent historic fabric and CDEs.

- Overall impact:
 - Demolition works are limited to non-heritage and modern elements only. With the above measures implemented, the impact on Block P is considered **negligible**.

(d) Builder's works

- Proposed works:
 - Re-application of roof waterproofing membrane;
 - Installation of new floor tiles, carpet tiles, and false ceilings;
and
 - Construction of new internal partitions, doors, and galvanised mild steel, inspection walkway in roof void.
- Key mitigation measures:
 - Ensure interventions are fully reversible;
 - Use lightweight materials and avoid overloading or damaging original structures;
 - Avoid covering or damaging significant features. Document them before covering if unavoidable;
 - Position new elements to preserve spatial integrity and avoid obstructing historic layouts or features;
 - Engage a Registered Structural Engineer for works affecting structural elements;
 - Minimize disturbance to adjoining historic fabric; design new elements to mimic original style, colour, and material;
and
 - Reuse or repair heritage-significant items where feasible.
- Overall impact:
 - Generally **Acceptable Impact** (often with mitigation measures). These typically involve reversible or removable additions (e.g., false ceilings, floor coverings, inspection walkways) or surface treatments that cause minimal

damage to historic fabric, though some may slightly alter internal layouts or spatial configurations.

(e) Building services upgrading works

- Proposed works:
 - Installation of new air-conditioning systems;
 - Replacement of drainpipes and electrical fittings;
 - Installation of new light fittings; and
 - Installation of mechanical ventilation louvres.

- Key mitigation measures:
 - Position equipment and services discreetly to minimize visual impact on façades, walls, and grey brick accents;
 - Match colours and finishes to existing elements;
 - Conceal services above false ceilings wherever possible; route ducts at fanlight level only;
 - Use surface-mounted installations only for conduits and fittings; prohibit wall chasing or concealed conduits within historic walls;
 - Install louvres or ducts on glass areas only to avoid permanent changes to window frames; and
 - Avoid structural alterations to CDEs.

- Overall impact:
 - **Acceptable Impact with mitigation measures** in most cases. These building services upgrading works have minimal direct impact on historic fabric because they are typically surface-mounted, concealed, or installed on non-structural parts.

(f) Upgrading works for statutory compliance

- Proposed works:
 - Staircase upgrades;
 - Installation of sprinkler system and hose reels; and
 - Reversal of main entrance door swing.

- Key mitigation measures:
 - Engage Authorized Person and Registered Structural Engineer to ensure that the design and works comply with statutory requirements;
 - Staircase upgrades: Make new additions distinguishable and fully reversible. Avoid structural changes to the original timber staircase and preserve its historic appearance;
 - Sprinkler system: Conceal pipes above false ceilings and route at fanlight level. Avoid attaching to grey gauged brick columns;
 - Hose reels: Install in non-prominent locations to minimise visual impact; and
 - Use minimal intervention. Prioritise retention of higher-significant heritage elements and ensure reversibility.

- Overall impact:
 - **Acceptable Impact with mitigation measures** in most cases. These upgrading works are mostly reversible or minimally invasive, resulting in limited impact on historic fabric and character.

(g) Upgrading works for statutory compliance

- Proposed works:
 - Construction of new flush water tank, fire services water tank and pump room outside the building; and
 - Construction of new fire safety control cabinets.

- Key mitigation measures:
 - Engage Authorized Person and Registered Structural Engineer to ensure that the design and the works comply with statutory requirements;
 - The new flush water tank, fire services water tank and pump room shall be constructed outside Block P's historic boundary at a sufficient distance to avoid physical impact; and
 - The design, materials, colour and finishes shall be compatible with the surrounding historic buildings while remaining distinguishable as new additions.

- Overall impact:
 - With the above measures implemented, there will be no physical impact on Block P's historic fabric. The residual visual impact on the setting is considered **negligible**.

(h) Other mitigation measures

- All works shall be carried out under the supervision of a heritage conservation expert. Full adherence to the Conservation Guidelines is required to ensure the proper conservation of the historic fabric and CDEs.

- The detailed design proposals and method statements for any works that may affect the key CDEs of Block P shall be submitted to AMO for agreement prior to the commencement of the works.

CONCLUSION

18. The HIA has concluded that the proposal will mitigate the potential impacts arising from the Project on Block P at Kowloon Hospital, a “Heritage Site” as defined under the HIA mechanism. The HA will ensure that all works carried out for heritage conservation strictly comply with the requirements stipulated in the HIA as endorsed by AAB.

Hospital Authority
June 2026

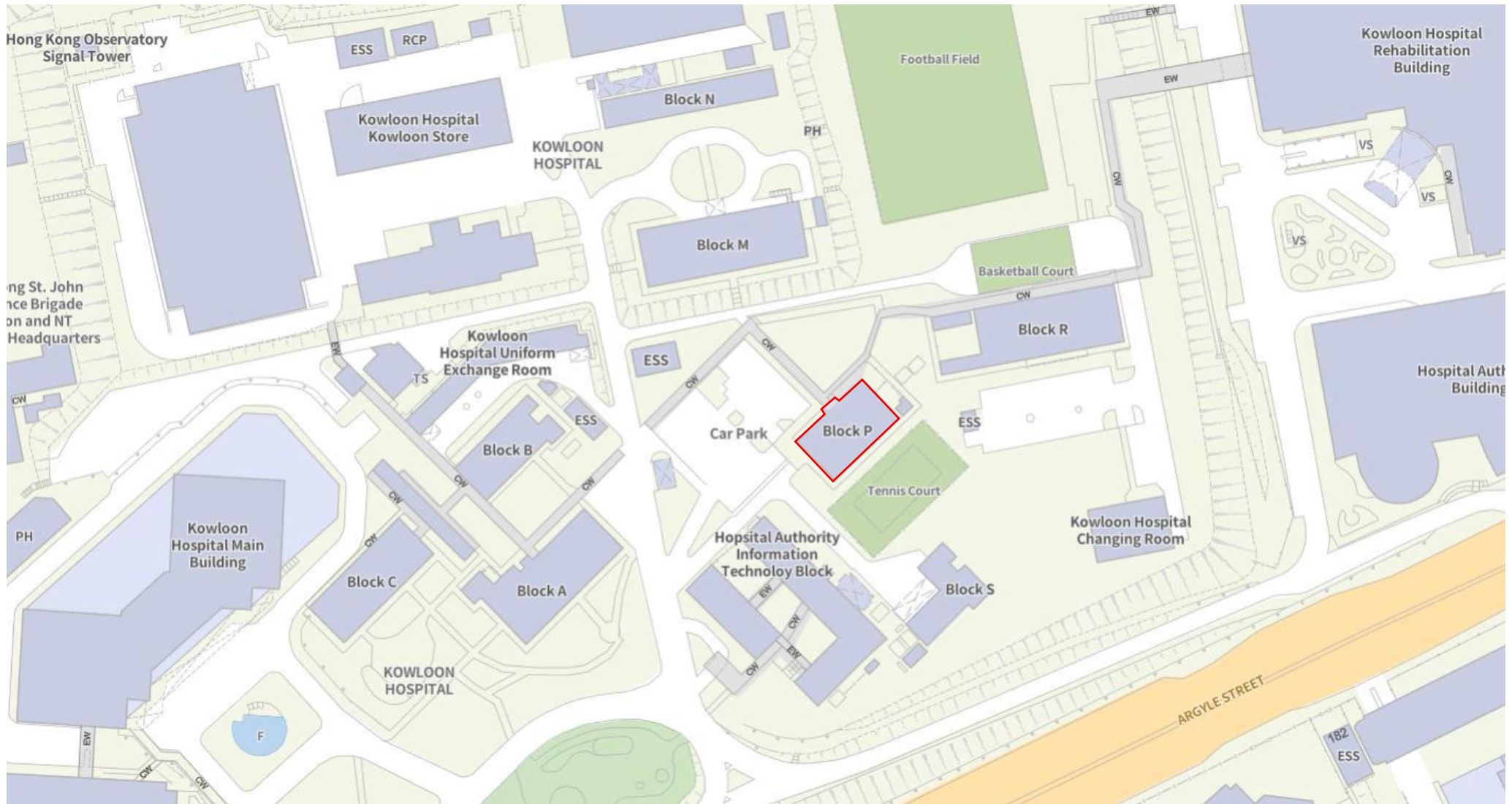


Figure 1: Location Plan (not to scale)

- LEGENDS:
- NEW WORKS
 - NEW 100mm THK. CONCRETE BLOCK WALL (LIGHTWEIGHT)
 - NEW PROPRIETARY FIRE PROTECTION WALL PARTITION SYSTEM W/ -/60/60 F.R.R.
 - NEW PROPRIETARY FIRE PROTECTION BOARD W/ -/60/60 F.R.R.
 - NEW G.M.S. ROD & SKIRTING ON EXISTING TIMBER RAILING
 - NEW TIMBER HANDRAIL
 - NEW PROPRIETARY CLEAR POLYESTER WINDOW FILM
 - NEW CLEAR GLASS ACCESS DOOR W/ GARDE 316 S.S. FRAME
 - TRANSPARENT PANELS TO EXISTING FIREPLACE
 - GRADING BOUNDARY

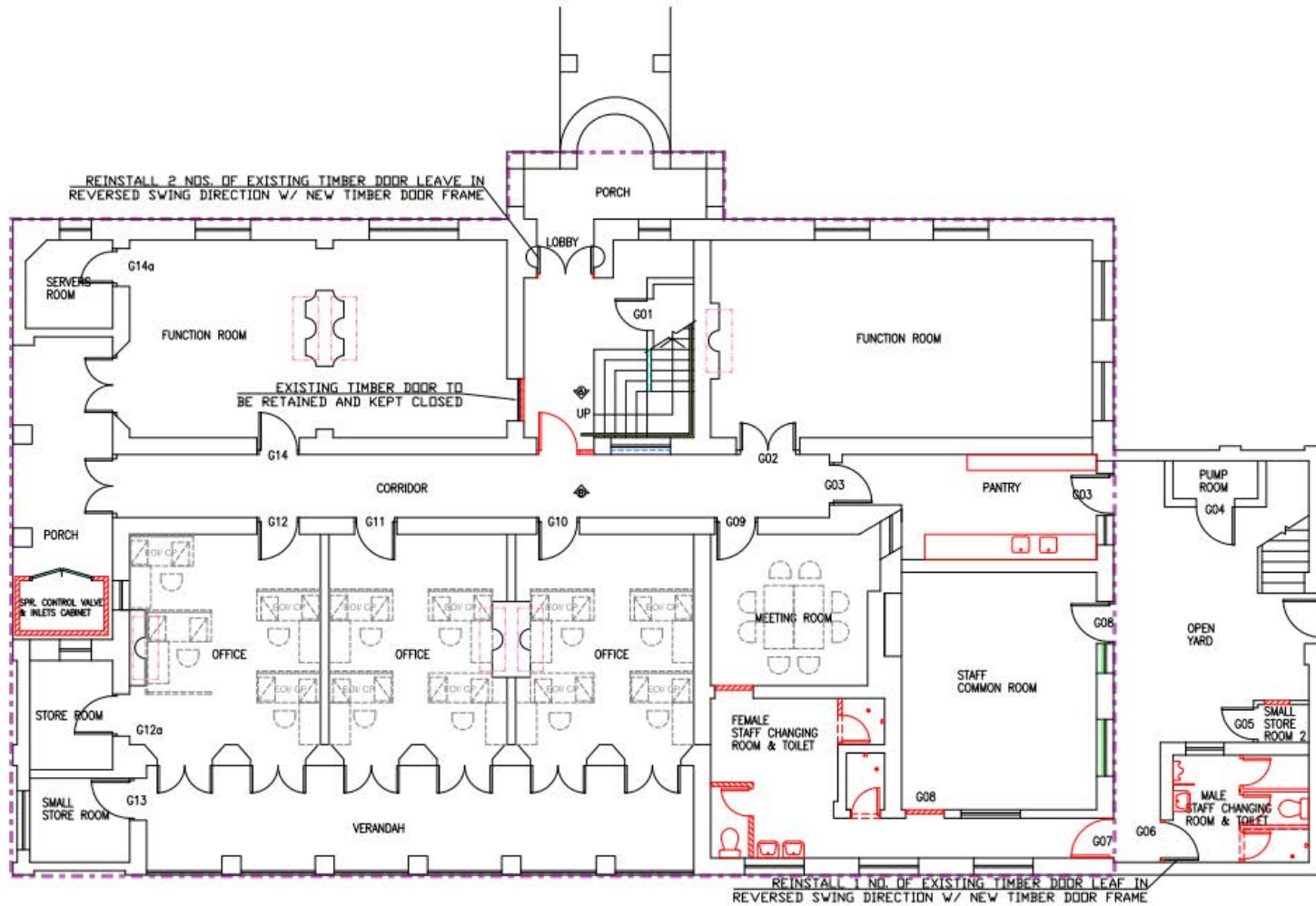


Figure 2: G/F Plan (not to scale)

LEGENDS:

- NEW WORKS
- NEW 100mm THK. CONCRETE BLOCK WALL (LIGHTWEIGHT)
- NEW PROPRIETARY FIRE PROTECTION WALL PARTITION SYSTEM W/ -/60/60 F.R.R.
- NEW G.M.S. ROD & SKIRTING ON EXISTING TIMBER RAILING
- NEW TIMBER HANDRAIL
- NEW PROPRIETARY WATERPROOFING SYSTEM (TYPE B2) ON EXISTING ROOF
- TRANSPARENT PANELS TO EXISTING FIREPLACE
- - - GRADING BOUNDARY

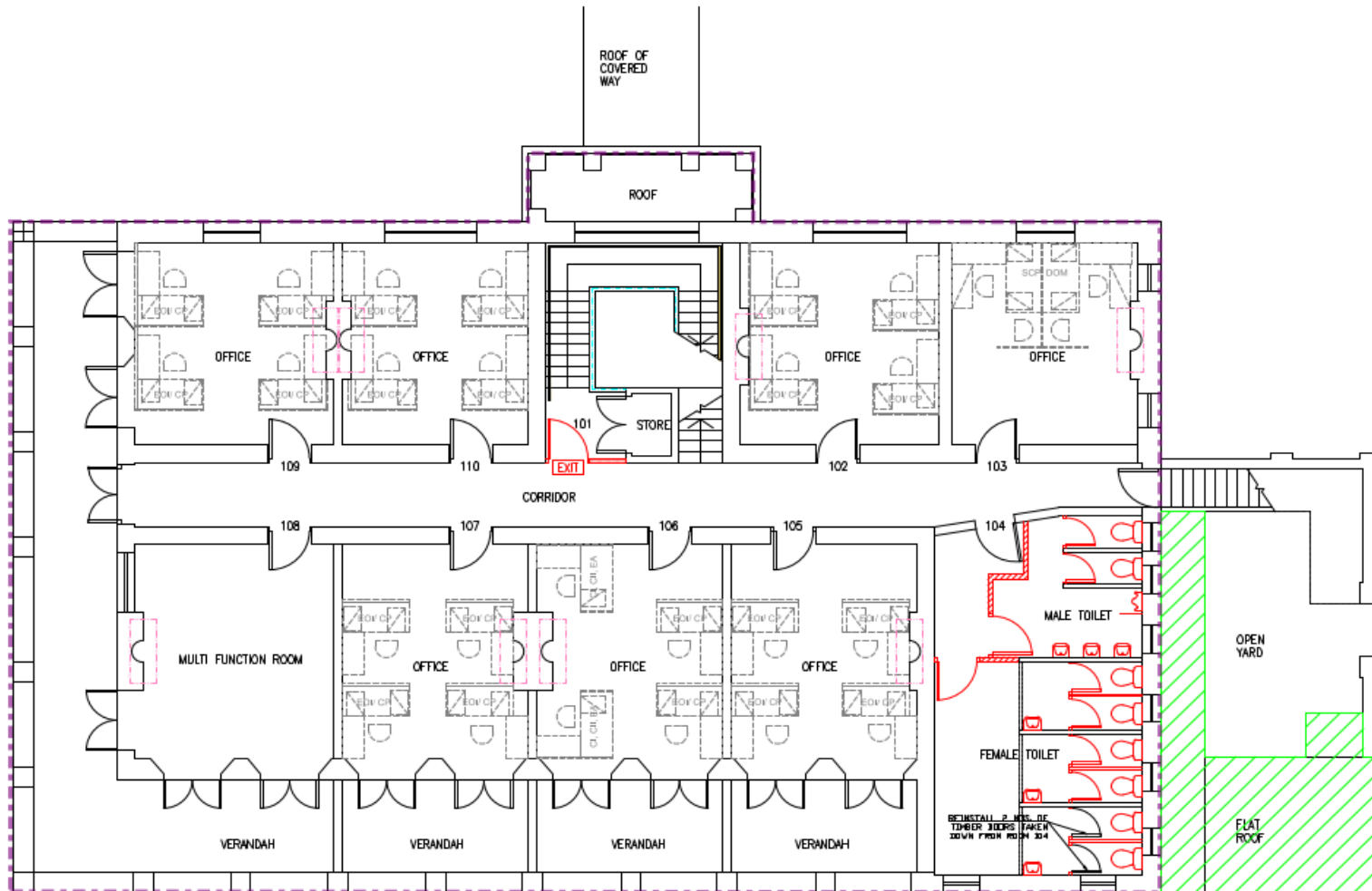


Figure 3: 1/F Plan (not to scale)



Figure 4: Artist Impression (Exterior)



Figure 5: Artist Impression (Interior-Function Room)



Figure 6: Artist Impression (Interior-Main Staircase)