

Historic Building Appraisal

1014

No. 2 York Road

Kowloon Tong, Kowloon

No. 2 York Road (約道) on the corner of York Road and Waterloo Road is believed to have been constructed between 1927 and 1930 for a Portuguese gentleman, Eduardo Jose de Figueiredo, a director of Hughes and Hough Limited. Although many houses on the Kowloon Tong Estate were occupied by the army during the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), No. 2 York Road was not, maybe because Portugal was a neutral country. Since its erection, the house was used as a staff quarters of Hughes and Hough Limited at least until late 1973. It is one of the few surviving original houses of the Kowloon Tong Garden Estate which was founded by Charles Montague Ede (義德) in 1922. *Historical Interest*

Kowloon Tong (九龍塘) was undeveloped before the 1900s. Its first major development was by a foreign building contractor, Charles Montague Ede. He formed the Kowloon Tong and New Territories Development Company Limited (九龍塘及新界建築公司) to handle a project which aimed to develop Kowloon Tong into a high class residential area. On 26 October 1922, the company reached an agreement with the government on this building scheme. The developed area, bounded by Boundary Street (界限街) in the south, Cornwall Street (歌和老街) in the north, the Kowloon Canton Railway (九廣鐵路) tracks in the west and Waterloo Road (窩打老街) in the east, consisted of an area of 74.5 acres (3,231,900 square feet). Formation of land levels, with storm water and sewage system, was carried out by the Public Works Department at the expense of the government agreed on in the development. The whole development was then referred to as the “Kowloon Tong Garden Estate” by the government. The estate was characterized by two-storey detached houses with gardens interspersed with public open spaces.

The two-storey building at No. 2 York Road is in fact two semi-detached houses with separated entrances. Walls are rendered and painted and the roof is flat with a plain parapet wall and projecting cornice all around the building. The use of classical style porches to the entrance doors, arched windows, balconies and shuttered windows give the building a Colonial Neo-Classical appearance. *Architectural Merit*

The architectural style of the two-storey building is different to the other Kowloon Tong Garden Estate houses and in fact is now the only one of this type still remaining. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The villa has been renovated and embellished with additional architectural features. The low garden wall has been replaced with a high concrete wall with massive piers like buttresses between bays or recesses which are being used to display large advertising signs.

The social value of the building lies in the role it played as part of a high class residential development. Due to its prominent corner position and attractive appearance, it is a well-known local landmark.

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*

The building is within walking distance of other historic buildings, such as Maryknoll Convent School (瑪利諾修院學校, Declared Monument), St. Teresa's Church (聖德肋撒堂, Grade 1), No. 13 York Road and No. 7 Norfolk Road (羅福道, both Grade 3).

Group Value