Historic Building Appraisal

Gough Hill Substation

Gough Hill Road, The Peak, Hong Kong

Historical Interest

The exact year of construction of the Gough Hill Substation (歌賦山變壓站) is uncertain, but according to records and correspondence in the archives of the Hongkong Electric Company it is believed that it was built before the Japanese Occupation (1941-1945). Old-fashioned substations have been either demolished or replaced by transmission stations, which are larger, more powerful and far fewer in number. By 2002, there were 3487 substations run by the Hongkong Electric Company, among which only a handful of them were constructed before the Second World War.

Architectural Merit

The substation is a small square single storey building with a semi-basement at the rear. It consists of two rooms, one to house equipment and one used as a garage. The construction is not known but it is probably a combination of brickwork and reinforced concrete. The walls are rendered and painted. The equipment room has wooden battened double doors and the garage has a roller shutter doors. Strips of wire-glass windows are fitted above the doors which are protected from the weather by a typhoon canopy. The flat roof has a plain parapet wall all around it which is stepped on the front elevation to form a low **Art Deco** style pediment. The roof is accessed by a steel cat ladder at the rear. Perforated air bricks have been built in to ventilate the semi-basement (probably just a void). The architectural style of the substation is **Utilitarian** with **International Modern** features.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

The Gough Hill Substation is one of the few pre-World War II electricity substations which still remain in Hong Kong so that it is something of a rarity with built heritage value as well as historic value. The doorway to the garage appears to have been widened otherwise the building appears to be fairly authentic in appearance.

Social Value & Local Interest

The social value of the substation lies in the role it has played in the provision of an electricity supply, although the area that it serves is small only covering a few streets in the surrounding area. Apparently it has served the local population well without any major breakdowns. Maintenance work is usually carried out in off-peak periods to avoid disruption.

Group Value

Gough Hill Substation is situated in a sparsely populated residential area which enjoys a peaceful environment with its green surroundings. It is located at the junction of Peak Road and Gough Hill Road where the building can be

easily seen from a distant. The vehicle entrance of the Peak Police Station (山頂警署) is off Peak Road adjacent to the Substation.

One room of the substation has already been converted into a garage and the equipment room could probably be converted as well if the substation ever closed down. ***Adaptive Re-use***