

Historic Building Appraisal

Shek Kwu Chau Treatment & Rehabilitation Centre

Recovery Houses

Operated since 1963, Shek Kwu Chau Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre (石鼓洲康復院) is 20 minutes by ferry from nearby island Cheung Chau. The Centre provides voluntary rehabilitation programmes and residential treatment for male drug abusers who seek treatment on a voluntary basis. It is a building complex of administration blocks, workshops, bungalows, halls and a Western style garden, showing a nice blend of the Modernist and Chinese Renaissance styles. *Historical Interest*

The proposal of setting up Shek Kwu Chau Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre first came up in the late 1950s when the Government was determined to launch a colony-wide full-scale Anti-narcotic Campaign according to a White Paper in 1959. The Centre was set up with the support of the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers – a non-government organization (NGO) established in 1961. The Centre was inaugurated by the Governor, Sir Robert Black, on 23 April 1963.

The five Recovery Houses (康復社) are situated at the west side of the island near the Courtyard Complex. They were built in 1962 and are therefore some of the oldest buildings of the Centre.

The five two-storey blocks all appear to be built to the same basic design. They are all indented rectangular blocks with rendered and painted walls and flat roofs with wide projecting eaves. Each block has an entrance porch with double doors set in an arched doorway, and a projecting balustraded balcony at first floor level. A peculiar feature is the lack of windows. There are only a few small windows at ground floor level and first floor level on the front façade, and some of these windows have been used to fix air-conditioners thereby blocking out natural daylight. As access was apparently not allowed the interior layout is not known. Not much more can be said about these blocks architecturally. The architectural style could be described as **Modern Utilitarian**. The Recovery Houses are arranged in an L-shape around an open courtyard. Planters and flower beds are built outside each block. Between the first two blocks a neo-classical style curved arcade has been built with a globe of the world as a centre piece. Statues and sculptures are mounted on top of the arcade. *Architectural Merit*

The Recovery Houses are not great pieces of architecture, but as part of the Centre they contribute to the overall group value. They are also some of the oldest buildings on the island so they have built heritage value as well. It is *Rarity, Built Heritage Value &*

difficult to say how much they have been altered since they were first built. *Authenticity*

The social value of the Recovery Houses lies in the role they have played in the Centre's rehabilitation activities. As for local interest, as the island is remote and inaccessible, the buildings are unknown and of little interest to anyone but the patients and staff at the Centre. *Social Value & Local Interest*

Without seeing floor plans of the buildings, it is difficult to suggest alternative uses, but the buildings probably could be converted for other purposes. *Adaptive Re-use*