Historic Building Appraisal

Old British Military Hospital, Annex Block

Nos. 10-12 Borrett Road, Hong Kong

Historical Interest

Construction work on the Old British Military Hospital (舊英軍醫院) started in 1903. It was officially opened in 1907. During the Japanese Occupation it continued to function, surrounded by a fence and watchtowers and part of the hospital was used for the sick British prisoners-of-war requiring hospital care. After the War it continued to be used by the British Garrison until the new British Military Hospital opened in King's Park in 1967. The detached Annex Block at the north end of the Old British Military Hospital is believed to have been built at the same time as the Main Block. It was used originally as the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess and later as nurses' dormitories. It is now used by an organization known as Mother's Choice.

Architectural Merit

The Annex Block is an asymmetrical two-storey building with white painted brick walls, a pitched roof and several tall chimney stacks. It probably originally had exposed red brick walls and open verandahs. As well as the chimney stacks, architectural features include a moulded cornice at eaves level, moulded capitals to columns between window openings, and original cast iron rainwater pipes and hopper heads. Original doors and windows no longer exist having been replaced with modern units. The appearance of the exterior has been severely disfigured by excessive *ad hoc* accretions such as cables, conduits, room coolers and signage. Internally, original features still exist such as wooden panelled doors, architraves, skirtings, boarded floors, cornices, a wooden staircase and two old cast iron fireplaces.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

As there have been so many alterations to this building it is difficult to envisage what it looked like originally, but it presumably matched the **Edwardian Neo-Classical** style of the Main Block. Although its integrity and authenticity have been destroyed it has built heritage value as part of the old BMH complex.

Social Value & Local Interest

The social value and local interest of the Annex Block have to be less than the Main Block as it only served as a mess and dormitory accommodation.

Group Value

At the rear side, the Old British Military Hospital faces woodland. The surroundings are very quiet with limited traffic, thus creating a peaceful

environment which further enhances the building's splendour. It is situated close to the historic compound of the old Victoria Barracks, including the Former Explosive Magazine (舊域多利軍營軍火庫), Flagstaff House (舊三軍司令官邸), Rawlinson House (羅連信樓), Cassels Block (卡素樓), Wavell Block (華福樓), Roberts Block (羅拔時樓) and Montgomery Block (蒙高瑪利樓), with the Flagstaff House being a declared monument and the others graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board. Together they form a significant group of buildings which served the former British military garrison.

Adaptive Re-use

The best use for the Annex Block would be for it to be properly restored and converted into a residence. Restoration to its original appearance would be quite a challenge in view of the extensive alterations and additions which have been carried out.