

Historic Building Appraisal
Residence of the Chief Secretary for Administration (Victoria House)
No. 15 Barker Road, The Peak, Hong Kong

The building known as Victoria House was built in 1951 on the site of the main block of Old Victoria Hospital (舊域多利醫院, built in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign). The main block was demolished after the Second World War to give way to the house, which has been (and still is) the official residence of the Chief Secretary for Administration (政務司司長公館), a post previously named Colonial Secretary. *Historical Interest*

Victoria House is a **Colonial Neo-Classical** two-storey building with single-storey servants' quarters at the side. The external walls are rendered and painted white. The front façade is symmetrical with a central porterre supported by Neo-Classical style columns. The windows are tall and rectangular divided into small glazing squares. Some are fitted with louvred shutters and two of them have small balconies. The eaves of the roof have a wide projection for sun shading effect. The rear and side façades have single-storey projecting verandahs with arched openings that have been enclosed by French windows and semi-circular fanlights. The glazing is divided into small squares in the classical manner. The upper storey of the house has classical style windows and shutters. The roof appears to have a very low pitch and is covered with glazed pantiles. The classical theme is continued in the garden with a balustraded parapet wall decorated with urns, and a colonnaded screen on the west side of the house. The house is set in beautiful gardens with a swimming pool and tennis court. The house is approached by a driveway from Barker Road (白加道) which also serves the neighbouring Victoria Flats formerly a maternity block. A flight of steps at the rear of the servants' quarters leads down to Barker Road and a kitchen garden. *Architectural Merit*

Victoria House is an attractive looking house in its own grounds which is quite rare in Hong Kong. Its built heritage value and history are rather limited as it is not that old. It has undergone various renovations and alterations over the years to suit the requirements of its occupants. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The social value of Victoria House is that it is an official government residence where official banquets are held also meet the media sessions at Chinese New Year. The Old Victoria Hospital Maternity Block, which was erected in 1921 and now known as Victoria Flats, is preserved *in-situ* at No. 17 Barker Road. *Social Value & Local Interest*

Other historic buildings situated in the Peak district include the Former Gate Lodge (舊總督山頂別墅守衛室, Declared Monument), Former Peak School (前山頂學校), Peak Police Station (山頂警署) and Matilda and War Memorial Hospital (明德醫院). *Group Value*

As far as is known the Government Property Agency has no plans to dispose of the property, and there are no plans for the Chief Secretary to move out. The question of adaptive re-use therefore does not arise. *Adaptive Re-use*