Historic Building Appraisal

Cheung Chau Police Station

No. 4 Police Station Path, Cheung Chau

Historical Interest

Cheung Chau Police Station (長洲警署) was built in **1913** to replace an earlier police station built in 1899 on Tai Sun Street (大新街) in Cheung Chau, which was previously an Imperial Chinese tax collection station. The decision to build another police station was taken after the murder of three Indian constables and the looting of the police station by a gang of pirates on 19 August 1912. During the period of Japanese Occupation (1941-1945), the police station was closed and the policing of the Island was carried out by the Japanese army with its military headquarters in Cheung Chau Middle School. In January 1947, police officers returned to the island and re-established a permanent police presence, with a strength of one sub-divisional inspector and 12 constables.

Architectural Merit

The rectangular building complex consists of three interconnected blocks with an enclosed internal courtyard in the centre. A new annex block has been built at one side. The police station is set on top of a small hill, surrounded by double fencing for security. The main block is built in **Neo-Classical Colonial** style. It was built to the same layout as Lok Ma Chau Police Station (1915). Two storeys high, it was built with an open verandah in front and a pitched roof of Chinese tiles (now gone). Originally the walls were exposed red bricks but they are now painted white. The verandah on the ground floor has been enclosed with glazing and fitted with security grilles. The single storey building is also built with brick walls and a pitched roof of corrugated sheeting. The two side wings and the new annex block are built in **Modernist** style with white walls, flat roofs and regular bands of windows.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

Cheung Chau Police Station is one of the few police stations on the outlying islands that still exist today. The architectural style is unique on Cheung Chau. Now over 90 years old, it has historical value as well as built heritage value. Inevitably there have been alterations and changes over the years for operational reasons, but the main building still retains much of its colonial charm.

Social Value & Local Interest

The social value of the police station lies in the role it has played in maintaining law and order in Cheung Chau and other outlying islands within its jurisdiction including Hei Ling Chau, Ping Chau and Lamma Island. It has local interest together with a number of other historical buildings on the island.

Group Value

The police station is close to other historic items on Cheung Chau graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board, including Yuk Hui Temple (玉虛宮), Hung Shing Temple (洪聖廟), Tin Hau Temple (長洲灣天后古廟), Cheung Chau Government Secondary School (長洲官立中學), Cheung Chau Fong Pin Hospital (長洲方便醫院) and Shui Yuet Temple (水月宮).

Adaptive Re-use

As far as is known, there are no plans to close down the police station and the question of adaptive re-use does not therefore arise. It will probably continue to be used as a police station for a long time to come.