

Historic Building Appraisal
S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral
No. 135, Ma Tau Chung Road, Kowloon

428

S.K.H. Holy Trinity Church (聖三一堂), now known as S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral (聖三一座堂), at No. 135 Ma Tau Chung Road was built in 1936/37. In 1890 the Holy Trinity Church was founded by Koo Kai-tak (顧啓德) and his wife of the Anglican Church who preached the gospel in a family format. The congregation grew in the following years. In 1902, with the help of Pastor Kwong Yat-sau (鄺日修牧師), the first church was built at the foothill of Sung Wong Toi (宋王臺). It was relocated and rebuilt on the land next to the Victoria Girls' School in 1905 due to the construction of Sung Wong Toi Park (宋皇臺公園).

*Historical
Interest*

In 1936 the Church moved to the present site to make way for the construction of Kai Tak Airport (啓德機場). Its foundation stone was laid by Bishop Mok Sau Tseng (莫壽增會督), the first Chinese Bishop in Hong Kong, on 21 November 1936. The Church was opened on 4 July 1937. On 31 August 1938, it was blessed by Bishop Ronald Owen Hall (何明華會督) and Bishop Mok Sau Tseng. During the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), the Japanese occupied the church. In 1945, after Hong Kong was liberated, it was found that the church had been used as a detention camp. Extra government land adjacent to the Church was granted in 1948 for the construction of the Holy Trinity Primary School and the Holy Trinity Kindergarten, both completed in 1955.

The design of the church building amalgamates Chinese and Western architectural elements. The plan is cruciform in shape with emphasis on symmetrical balance. At the front of the church there is an entrance porch of quite elaborate design featuring a green glazed Chinese tiled roof, projecting eaves, hip ridges, brackets and various Chinese motifs. The transept also has an elaborate Chinese style roof of similar design. The roof over the main part of the church is a pitched roof with a gable end. It also features elaborate Chinese designs and motifs under the eaves. Windows are rectangular with moulded surrounds and splayed cills. They are divided into small squares with glazing bars and glazed with plain and coloured glass to form crosses and other decorative designs. The external walls are rendered and painted white with horizontal bands painted dark red. Internally there is a central nave with rows of wooden pews on either side. The roof trusses are exposed and columns are decorated with Chinese geometric patterns. The church is decorated with light pastel shades and illuminated by suspended dome shaped

*Architectural
Merit*

light fittings and spotlights around the walls at high level.

Church buildings designed and constructed with a mix of Chinese and Western architecture are quite rare in Hong Kong and the S.K.H. Holy Trinity Church is a good example with obvious built heritage value. The church remains in its authentic condition, the only alteration in recent years being the installation of an air-conditioning system. The church is obviously well maintained and kept in good condition.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

The social value of the church lies in the role it has played in religion and education. It has historical, architectural and cultural value and is of considerable local interest.

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

The church is within walking distance of other historic buildings, such as the doorframe of the old Sheung Tai Temple (前上帝古廟石門框) and the Old Far East Flying Training School (舊遠東飛行學校) (both Grade 3).

Group Value