Historic Building Appraisal

No. 35 Bonham Road, Hong Kong

Historical Interest

The residential building at No. 35 Bonham Road (般含道) already existed and was occupied before the Japanese invasion of Hong Kong in 1941. During the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975, the G/F of the building was occupied by a bakery which provided quality bread to American soldiers arriving in Hong Kong. Later on, the building was used as a stationery store and a real estate agent. Now a "slim beauty centre" is occupying the ground floor.

Architectural Merit

No. 35 Bonham Road is a four-stories high building which originally may have been part of a terrace but now stands on its own. The ground floor is a shop occupied by a beauty parlour, but the upper floors appear to be residential. The front façade facing Bonham Road is a nice **Neo-Classical** composition featuring a pedimented entrance at street level and open colonnaded and balustraded balconies at each upper floor level. The parapet features a semi-circular pediment with a cartouche in the tynpanum and a classical style urn at the apex. The balcony balustrades are cross-braced in the Regency style and the columns are in the Doric Order. An unusual feature is the triangular shape of the balconies, a device to suit the splayed frontage. Internally, some original patterned encaustic floor tiles still remain.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

Most of the old Western style buildings along Bonham Road have been replaced with high-rise blocks so that No. 35 is now a rare surviving historic example with obvious built heritage value. Modern window replacements, air conditioners, the shop front, signage and roof top structures have affected the building's authenticity, but it still manages to retain an elegant appearance.

Social Value & Local Interest

Only the ground floor shop would have social value to the community, the upper floors being used for residential purposes. As a surviving example of historic Western classical style architecture in Bonham Road it has local interest.

Group Value

Four tenement buildings are found not further away at **Nos. 9-10 Yu Lok Lane** (餘樂里) and **Nos. 2 and 19 Hing Hon Road** (興漢道). A number of famous historic buildings are also found nearby, such as the Main Building of St. Stephen's Girls' College (聖士提反女校主樓) (Declared Monument), King's College (英皇書院), Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital (舊贊育醫院) and the Main Building of the University of Hong Kong 香港大學本部大樓 (Declared Monument).

The internal layout of each floor is not known so that it is difficult to suggest a suitable adaptive re-use. The best use is probably that for which it is being used at present. ***Adaptive Re-use***