

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Felix Villas & Garage**  
**No. 61 Mount Davis Road, Hong Kong**

Built between 1922 and 1924, Felix Villas (福利別墅), with a garage, is named after an Englishman Felix Joseph Alexander (1890-1949).<sup>1</sup> Felix was an exchange and bullion broker. He was a sheer investor who bought land, built on it, leased the premises out and sold them at good price. Felix Villas was just one of his many properties in Hong Kong. In 1949 when he passed away, his legacies included a number of houses in Chi Wo Street (志和街) and several land lots in Yau Ma Tei. *Historical Interest*

The architect of the Villas was Messrs. Abdoolrahim and Co. At that time, the Government imposed many restrictions on the development projects around Mount Davis. According to the Government Lease issued in 1926, any construction projects on these land lots had two main requirements: (1) they should be built in Western style, and (2) they should not exceed the height limit of 35 feet.

Originally there were two blocks with a total of 18 semi-detached houses on opposite sides of Mount Davis Road. The 10-house upper block had been demolished. The lower block, situated between Victoria Road and Mount Davis Road, comprises eight houses. As part of the development, a two-storey garage was built at the west end of the lower block. In 1957, Felix Villas, together with the garage, was acquired by The University of Hong Kong for residential use.

Felix Villas features the influences of Classical Revival architecture. The front facade has a classical palazzo or palace appearance featuring a *piano nobile* floor served by balustraded double-entry staircases, columnaded and balustraded open balconies or verandahs, and a balustraded and pedimented parapet. The building is of three-storey high, with two upper floors set on a basement floor. The walls are stuccoed and painted. The roof is flat with projecting chimney stacks. The eight houses are arranged in pairs with adjacent entrance doors. Ornamentation is sparse and stylised featuring swags, festoons, tassels, scrolls, keystones and moulded string courses and cornices. The rear and side elevations are plainer but in the same architectural style. The rear elevation has *Architectural Merit*

---

<sup>1</sup> The name of Felix Alexander Joseph was adopted in the Government Lease of IL 2353 dated 1926. The name was changed to Felix Joseph Alexander in 1942. The same name was used in his last will of 1950.

regularly spaced windows and projecting rear annexes. The end elevations have interesting cantilevered semi-circular bay windows. A balustrade of pseudo-classical design with classical style lamp-posts forms a parapet to the forecourt or terrace in front of the building.

The garage is a rectangular block built to a simple Neo-Classical design with plain rendered and painted walls and a flat roof. Ornamentation is confined to projecting hood mouldings over the garage openings and a moulded projecting eaves at roof level. Windows are regularly spaced and divided into small glazing squares with concrete cills. The garage openings are fitted with metal gates constructed of tubular steel framing and chain link netting. There is a rainwater downpipe at the southeast corner. At the west end of the garage block there is a raised planter containing flowering trees and shrubs with a coursed granite retaining wall.

As a row of eight houses with classical ornamentation, the external *Rarity*, appearance of Felix Villas looks quite rare and contributes to the visual quality of *Built Heritage* its vicinity. Apart from some modern window replacements, no major alterations *Value &* which may have diminished the authenticity of the exterior of Felix Villas and its *Authenticity* garage can be identified.

Felix Villas is probably one of the earliest luxury residential developments in *Social Value* the Mount Davis area. The classical appearance has attracted some press *& Local Interest* coverage.

Felix Villas and the garage has group value with other historic buildings, such *Group Value* as Mount Davis Battery (摩星嶺炮台) (Grade 2) and the Victoria Detention Centre (域多利道扣押中心) (Grade 3).

## REFERENCES

### Document Records at The Land Registry Office, Hong Kong

Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2352.  
 Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2352 Section A sub-section 1.  
 Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2352 Section A sub-section 2.  
 Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2352 Section A R.P.  
 Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2352 R.P.  
 Property Particulars of Inland Lot No. 2353.

### Aerial Photo of the Hong Kong Government

Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department. Aerial photos dated 14 Nov 1924 (Ref. No. 0019 H-25).

### Hong Kong Government Reports Online

*Hong Kong Government Gazette (Supplement)* dated 19 August 1921, Notification No. S. 255.

### Archives at Public Records Office, Hong Kong

HKRS58-1-100-40. *Building Sites at Mount Davis. Application of Mr. F.A. Joseph for Purchase Inland Lot Nos. 2348 to 2353.*  
 HKRS156-1-1209. *Nos. 1-8, Mt Davis Road (Lower Terrence Felix Villas, Pokfulam), ILS Nos. 2352, SEC A & 2353 - Offer to Sell, covering date 19th August 1948 to 27<sup>th</sup> September 1948.*  
 HKRS144-6A-814. *Felix Joseph Alexander @ Felix J. Alexander or F. Joseph Alexander or F.J. Alexander, dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 1949.*

### Books, Articles, and Other Sources

高添強，《香港戰地指南》(香港：三聯，1995)。  
 Chan, Hon Yin et al.. *Measured Drawing Report of Felix Villa.* Hong Kong: Department of Architecture, the University of Hong Kong, 1995-1996.  
 HKU Estates Office: Felix Villas (built in 1922),  
 <<https://www.estates.hku.hk/campus-information/hku-buildings-and-developments/1912-1979.felix-villas>>, accessed on 29 August 2019.