

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Old Dairy Farm Depot,**  
**No. 2 Lower Albert Road, Central, Hong Kong**

The Old Dairy Farm Depot (舊牛奶公司倉庫) was established in 1892 as a central depot for the distribution of milk from the Dairy Farm at Pok Fu Lam founded by Sir Patrick Manson, a Scottish surgeon, and five prominent Hong Kong businessmen in 1886. The Company's declared objectives were threefold: to improve the health of Hong Kong people by supplying them with cow's milk kept free from contamination by means of stringent hygiene; to import a herd of dairy cattle in order to lower the price of milk by more than half; to realize a profit for the Company Shareholders. ***Historical Interest***

The original depot only comprised about half (the southern part) of the present premises. As the business thrived and its enterprises expanded, the Depot was enlarged with further extensions built in 1913, 1917 and 1925. During the Japanese Occupation (1941 – 1945), the Company's property was looted. The depot remained as the company's headquarters until 1970s. Since 1982, the Foreign Correspondent's Club (香港外國記者會) occupied the north block and two years later, Fringe Club (藝穗會) has leased the south block.

Although constructed over a period of time, the building, which now comprises a North Block and a South Block, is built in the same Eclectic architectural style with strong Neo-Classical and some Arts and Crafts influence. The use of polychromatic so-called "bandaged brickwork" gives the building a very striking appearance. Neo-classical features include moulded cornices, bull's eye windows, architraved windows, keystones, pilasters and pediments combined together in eclectic profusion. ***Architectural Merit***

With its unique shape (due to the difficult corner site), it is a piece of architecture of a style now rare in Hong Kong. It is therefore of considerable built heritage value and externally at least remains fairly authentic in appearance. ***Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity***

The historical social value of the building lies in Sir Patrick Manson's original objective to improve the health of Hong Kong people by supplying them with cow's milk kept free from contamination by means of stringent hygiene. The building's local interest stems not only from the current use as the well known FCC and Fringe Club, but also as one of an important group of graded historical buildings in Central. ***Social Value & Local Interest***

The Old Dairy Farm Depot is important both architecturally and historically as ***Group Value***

an integral component of the Central District. Other Western style historic buildings are found nearby, including Bishop's House (會督府) and St. Paul's Church (聖保羅堂) (both Grade 1), and the Former Central Magistracy (前中區裁判司署), Victoria Prison (域多利監獄) and the Central Police Station (中區警署) (Declared Monuments).