

Historic Building Appraisal
Old Victoria Hospital Maternity Block,
No. 17 Barker Road, The Peak

The Old Victoria Hospital (舊域多利醫院), also known as the Victoria Jubilee Hospital, was constructed in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign. The Hospital specialized in medical care for women and children. The Hospital closed down in 1947. In 1950, the original main block at No. 15 Barker Road was demolished to make way for erecting the present Victoria House, now Chief Secretary's residence (政務司司長公館). The subject building now under assessment was erected in **1921** and originally used as Maternity Block (產科翼樓) of the Old Victoria Hospital, but it has been utilized as government staff quarters since 1947 and is so-called Victoria Flats nowadays.

**Historical
Interest**

A design competition was held for the hospital and the awarded architect, Palmer and Turner, is still one of the outstanding offices now in Hong Kong. The old Maternity Block is built in **Neo-Classical** style with **Italian Renaissance** and **Georgian** influences. The building is three stories high with an impressive front façade of red brickwork and imitation masonry. The ground floor storey has an open arcaded verandah with impressive arches of voussoirs and keystones. The upper two storeys consist of regularly spaced bands of windows separated by red brick columns. The centrally placed pediment over the Venetian style window and the faux masonry arches give the façade the appearance of an Italian Renaissance palazzo. A projecting moulded cornice at parapet level runs around the building adding to the Italianate look. The side elevations repeat the red brick and stonework treatment, but the rear elevation is a painted brick façade with no ornamentation, more in the Georgian style. The roof is pitched and gabled.

**Architectural
Merit**

It appears that the building was modified and altered considerably when it was converted into government quarters so that its authenticity has been compromised. The building does have built heritage value, however, as it was part of the old hospital complex.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

The social value of the building lies in the role it played as a maternity block and later as quarters for civil servants. The block is set in pleasant surroundings, in a quiet environment with a splendid sea view. A plaque nearby recalls the old hospital which used to be on the site behind Victoria Flats, which is now occupied by the Chief Secretary's Residence.

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

The Peak is mainly made up of high grade residence. The Old Victoria Hospital is surrounded by trees and enjoying a nice sea view. **Group Value**

Once a maternity block and then government quarters, the building has shown that it is adaptable, however at some cost to its original appearance. No doubt other suitable uses could be found for the building if need be. **Adaptive Re-use**