

Historic Building Appraisal
Nos. 117, 119, 121, 123 and 125 Nam Cheong Street,
Sham Shui Po, Kowloon

Nam Cheong Street (南昌街) was laid out in the 1920s. Collectively *Historical Interest* built in 1930s, the shophouses at Nos. 117, 119, 121, 123 and 125 Nam Cheong Street demonstrate a mixture of architectural designs with various building heights, from three to five storeys. Built in 1933, Nos. 119 and 121 was probably the oldest one among the others. The ground of No. 117 was occupied by a pawnshop named Nam Cheong Pawnshop (南昌押). A Chinese teahouse named Tak Hing Teahouse (德興茶樓) occupied No. 125 for over fifty years until its closure in 2002. The upper levels of the shophouses are mainly used for residential, but some of which are converted into warehouse.

These five shophouses all vary in height, design and decoration. One *Architectural Merit* feature that they all have in common is that the front façade juts out over the pavement and is supported by columns thereby creating a covered pedestrian walkway or arcade. This kind of verandah type shophouse is no longer allowed.

The corner shophouse at No. 117 Nam Cheong Street is situated at the junction of Nam Cheong Street and Yu Chau Street (汝州街). It is five storeys high and is built with horizontal architectural features and round porthole windows to the rear staircase enclosure. The facade is finished with plain stucco marked out with faux horizontal joint lines. The front balconies have been enclosed with glazing. The pawnshop has been operating there for decades. Its Chinese name “南昌押” has been painted at the upper levels of the facades facing Nam Cheong Street and Yu Chau Street.

Nos. 119 and 121 are both three stories high and seem to be a pair. They have a nice decorative parapet with Neo-classical influence and entablature comprising a moulded cornice surmounted by a parapet wall of ornamental posts and panels and two semi-circular pediments which each have the year “1933” on them. The remainder of the front facade has unfortunately been spoilt by enclosure of verandahs with modern windows.

Nos. 123 and 125 are a pair of four-storey shophouses which have been much altered by the addition of rooftop structures and verandah enclosures. Originally they seem to have been designed in Neo-Classical character as remnants of Neo-Classical features including a shaped pediment, ornamental balcony balustrading and column capitals still remain.

Shophouses are now becoming rare in Hong Kong because of redevelopment. These five shophouses therefore should be regarded as having built heritage value and group value. Their authenticity has been affected by alterations, but some architectural features remain on the facades.

***Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity***

The social value of the shophouses lies in the role they played in the development of Sham Shui Po and in the lives of the people who lived there. They definitely have historical and local interest.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***

The shophouses are within walking distance of Nos. 269 & 271 Yu Chau Street (汝州街), Sam Tai Tsz Temple (三太子宮, Grade 2), Pak Tai Temple (北帝宮, Grade 3) and No. 58 Pei Ho Street (北河街, Grade 2).

Group Value