Historic Building Appraisal

Treatment Works Building
Elliot Pumping Station & Filters
Pok Fu Lam Road, Hong Kong

Historical Interest

Water supply on Hong Kong Island relied solely on wells and streams prior to 1860. The first ever reservoir in the territory was completed in 1863 in Pok Fu Lam to meet the needs in the City of Victoria. In the following decades, to cater for the ever increasing demands, much larger reservoirs and more complex water supplies systems, including ancillary pumping stations and distribution mains to convey augmented water supply to higher levels, were constructed. In order to uphold the quality of water, the Government gradually filtered all reservoir water.

The Elliot Pumping Station and Filters (西區抽水站及濾水廠) were first built in the 1910s to meet the increased demand for water in the Western District of Hong Kong Island. The Elliot Pumping Station and Filters later became the auxiliary waterworks of the Aberdeen Reservoir (the fourth reservoir, built in 1931) for filtering and channelling water to the western part of Hong Kong Island in the 1930s. Water was transferred from the Aberdeen Upper Reservoir, through Wanchai Gap Road to Island Road, Victoria Road and via Sandy Bay to the filters situated in the Elliot Pumping Station. Situated in the southwest corner of the Elliot Pumping Station compound, this Treatment Works Building was built between 1930 and 1931 to contain water filtration equipment. With the development of advanced technology, the premises were closed down in 1993.

Architectural Merit

The Treatment Works Building consists of a valve house with a filter bed on either side. The front part of the valve house is a square three-storey high block with a flat roof. The rear part is two-storey high also with flat roof. The structure is reinforced concrete framing with red brick infill panels. Windows are steel framed, regularly spaced of various sizes. The window openings have concrete cills and concrete lintels. The front part of the building has decorative panels all around it below parapet level including one incised “H.K.W.W. 1930-1931”. The whole structure is built in a pit surrounded by fencing. There is an external staircase at the northeast corner. The design is Utilitarian with some Neo-classical influences. Internally, there is little of architectural value, but all the old pipes, pumps, valves, etc. are still there and nothing appears to have been removed.

Rarity, Built

The Treatment Works Building has rarity and built heritage value as a

historical relic. It does not appear to have been altered and seems to have retained its authenticity. ***Heritage Value & Authenticity***

The social value of the Treatment Works Building lies in the role it played in the treatment of our water supply for over 60 years. It is not a well known building being relatively isolated and not seen by the public. ***Social Value & Local Interest***

The Elliot Pumping Station & Filters are quite important as a component of a significant architectural and historical complex. The Treatment Works Building, together with the Senior Staff Quarters (Grade 2) and the Workmen's Quarters (Grade 3), is quite close to the Bungalow (Grade 1) and two Workmen's Quarters (both Grade 2) of the West Point Filters (西環濾水廠) and The University of Hong Kong where declared monuments, namely Main Building (香港大學本部大樓), Hung Hing Ying Building (孔慶熒樓) and Tang Chi Ngong Building (鄧志昂樓), May Hall (梅堂) and Eliot Hall (儀禮堂) stand. Other buildings in the surroundings include the declared monument, King's College (皇仁書院), and Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Kau Yan Church (救恩堂) (Grade 1). ***Group Value***