Historic Building Appraisal

No. 3 May Road, The Peak, H.K.

Historical Interest

The building known as "Gladdon" at No. 3 May Road was built in 1929/30. Due to a road expansion scheme from Bowen Road to May Road, the Government considered that it was necessary to build garages to accommodate motor cars which were owned by the nearby residents. In consequence, the Government held a public auction on 18 November 1929 to sell Inland Lot No.2979. The building was composed of 15 garages with chauffeurs' quarters over them. Later, part of the building was used as a residence. For example, in the late 1930s, C.A. da Roza and his family lived in this building. At that time, Roza was the Principal of an accounting firm named Roza Brothers, and served on the Boards of Directors of China and Light Power Co. Ltd., Hong Kong, Canton and Macao Steamboat Co. Ltd., etc. He was also a non-official Justice of the Peace. The building was named "Solar de Rosas" then. In 1946, due to the shortage of housing, permission was formally granted by the Government to convert the quarters into a residence. The building has been renamed by other residents. The name "Gladdon" can be identified from a directory of the year 1948 when a Ballantyne family inhabited there.

Architectural Merit

"Gladdon" is a long curved building built at the foot of a slope next to May Road Peak Tram Station. It consists of a row of fourteen garages and a residence apartment (formerly the chauffeurs' quarters) over them. The building in Neo-classical design is quite elegant displaying classical style columns between the garages supporting a decorated entablature and moulded cornice. The garages are fitted with roller shutter doors which are obviously modern and probably replaced original panelled doors. One of the garages has become the main entrance to the residence since the conversion in 1946. Therefore, "Gladdon" now comprises one residence and 14 garages. Unfortunately a replica antique door has been installed which is not in keeping with the classical style of the building. The residence which extends from Garage No. 3 to Garage No. 8 has white painted rendered walls, modern style windows, and a flat roof with a single chimney stack. Three air-conditioning units have been installed in the front facade. There is a terrace at each end of the residence built over Garages Nos. 1 & 2 and Garages Nos. 9 & 10. The terrace parapets have modern style metal guard rails.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

This elegant building combining garages and a residence with its curved classical facade is a rare piece of architecture with some built heritage value. Modern alterations and additions such as garage doors, air-conditioners and modern windows spoil the original appearance and mar the authenticity.

Social Value & Local Interest

"Gladdon" has social value and local interest as it demonstrates the historical development of the Peak and especially the arrival of motor cars before the Second World War. The building is understood to have strong sentimental associations for local residents.

Group Value

"Gladdon" is situated near the Peak Tramway — the city's oldest mode of public transport in operation since 1888. It is also close to other residential villas in the area. Other historic buildings on the Peak include the Former Chatham English School (前策文書院) (Grade 2), Former Gate Lodge (舊總督山頂別墅守衛室) (Declared Monument), Peak Depot (山頂倉庫) (Grade 2), Old Peak Café (舊山頂餐廳) (Grade 2), Former Peak School (前山頂學校) (Grade 2), Peak Police Station (山頂警署) (Grade 3) and the historic buildings at Matilda and War Memorial Hospital (明德醫院) (Grade 2 and Grade 3).

REFERENCES

Document Records at The Land Registry Office, Hong Kong

Property Particulars of Inland Lot number 2979.

Archives at Public Records Office, Hong Kong

HKRS58-1-150-49. "I.L.s 2979 and 3189 – Application from Messrs. Humphreys Estate Co. to purchase an area at May Road for the erection of garages"

Printed Documents of the Colonial Office and Hong Kong Government

"Land Sale Inland Lot No. 2979, May Road, East of May Road Tram Station." *The Hongkong Government Gazette (Supplement)*, 1st November 1929 from Hong Kong Government Reports Online.