

Historic Building Appraisal
Former Quarry Bay School
No. 986 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

The Former Quarry Bay School (前鰂魚涌學校), later known as Pui Chi Boys' Home (培志男童院), was one of the Government primary schools designated for British residents in the early 20th century. The School was a co-educational school built in **1924-1926**. The unveiling ceremony was held in November 1926, when the Principal, Miss Cotton, moved into the new premises in King's Road, with 41 students. Staff were entirely British, nearly all the teachers were either graduates or holders of National Froebel Union higher Certificates. Situated on a balustraded platformed terrace high above King's Road, the building once overlooked the **Taikoo Sugar Refinery** but the view is now blocked by multi-storey buildings.

*Historical
Interest*

Several British schools had been erected in the 19th century, but none succeeded in surviving due to the high running costs. A petition was raised in 1901 by the British, requesting the setting up of separate education for their children. The Committee of Education conceded that such arrangement was indeed necessary and desirable. As such, an Education Committee of Enquiry was set up and a report was issued in May 1902 investigating the circumstances of education in Hong Kong. The demand of the British was soon responded to by the establishment of a British school for their children, Central British School (later named Kowloon British School), at Nathan Road in 1902.

In 1980 the Former Quarry Bay School moved out to new premises and the King's Road building was taken over by the Social Welfare Department as the Pui Chi Boy's Home. From 1994 onwards, the nature of service was changed from a probation home to a place of refuge for children and juveniles aged from 8 to 18 in need of care or protection cum a place of detention for young illegal immigrants. In recent years, the Social Welfare Department has amalgamated the homes under their management into one in Tuen Mun, and the Former Quarry Bay School is vacant.

Former Quarry Bay School is a **Neo –Classical** rectangular building with a strictly symmetrical plan comprising a two-storey central section and three-storey wings at each end. The front elevation is rendered and painted with six courses of ashlar masonry forming a plinth. There are two main entrances with arched masonry surrounds on either side of a colonnaded open verandah. The first floor verandah has been enclosed with windows. The windows in the end wings are rectangular and regularly spaced. Situated on the flat roof in the centre of the front elevation there is a small classical style tower resembling a Roman temple featuring pilasters, arched openings, and triangular pediments

*Architectural
Merit*

with a flagstaff mounted on the roof of the tower. The rear and side elevations have had the verandahs enclosed and the facades are much encumbered by ugly pipework, room coolers, etc. Internally, the staircases with their **Regency** style ornamental balustrading are noteworthy. The internal appearance of the rooms is marred by exposed conduit for building services installations, ducting, cable trays, fans, fluorescent light fittings and ceiling mounted air-conditioning units.

The building is a rare example of **Neo-Classical** architecture from the 1920s and has built heritage value. Unfortunately the authenticity of the building has been undermined by thoughtless and uncaring modern building services installations and by enclosure of verandahs.

*Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity*

The social value of the building lies in the historical role it has played in the field of education and social welfare.

*Social Value
& Local Interest*

Although situated at one of the busiest roads, Former Quarry Bay School enjoys a very cozy and peaceful environment on the elevated terrace. There is a Yee Pak Kung Temple (二伯公廟) at the top of the staircase on the northwest of the School. The School is adjacent to the entrance of Tai Tam Country Park where a lot of people go hiking on holidays. Woodside (林邊屋) is just twenty minutes' walk from the entrance.

Group Value

A new Social Welfare Department home has been constructed in Tuen Mun. And, the site has been allocated to the Hong Kong Association of Youth Development for use.

*Adaptive
Re-use*