

Historic Building Appraisal
Clubhouse, Shek O Country Club
No. 5 Shek O Road, Hong Kong

The history of Shek O Country Club (石澳鄉村俱樂部) goes back to 1919 when the land was originally leased from the Government and twelve holes were laid out. Established in 1921, the Shek O Development Company Limited consisted of English shareholders who were architects, accountants, solicitors and medical practitioners. Most shareholders had very well-off backgrounds, such as Godfrey Vernon Bird, Herbert William Bird and Lennox Godfrey Bird, the architects of Palmer and Turner; Cedric Blaker, the Director of the Messrs. Deacons Hong Kong; Frederick Charles Hall, the merchant of the Jardine, Matheson & Company Ltd.; and Colin Cunningham Scott, the merchant of the Butterfield & Swire Hong Kong. In 1922, the company purchased a large piece of paddy and agricultural land from Shek O villagers with the intention to develop a clubhouse (R.B.L. 253), golf courses and other recreational facilities for local foreign residents in Hong Kong. The clubhouse was built in 1924, with Lennox Godfrey Bird, a partner of Palmer and Turner, being the architect.

*Historical
Interest*

The clubhouse was built to an asymmetrical organic plan with varying roof forms and elevations featuring projections, recesses and stepping. The main part of the building is a single-storey bungalow with a steep pitched, hipped and gabled roof of Chinese tiles finished with brick-red colour bitumen paint. Stylised chimney stacks project above the roofline and there are circular windows with brick surrounds in the gables. The bungalow has a colonnaded verandah and an arched granite entrance porch with a wavy sweeping projecting eaves over it. The annex to the bungalow is a two-storey building with various forms of pitched tiled roofs. Walls are roughcast rendered and painted white. Windows are modern aluminium framed units and most have flat heads but a few have segmental arched heads decorated with brick patterns. A semi-circular window and doorway set in a granite arch opens on to a sitting-out terrace which has a classical style balustrade running around it. The design of the clubhouse shows Arts and Crafts, and Neo-Classical influences.

*Architectural
Merit*

The clubhouse is quite a rare piece of architecture in Hong Kong. It appears to have had a number of alterations and additions made to it, with split-type air conditioners, pipework, conduit, ducting, etc. at the side elevation.

*Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity*

The social value of the Shek O Country Club and the clubhouse is limited to the club members and their families. It provides recreation and leisure facilities

*Social Value
& Local*

for these people. Some historic figures and distinguished members of the community have been members of the club. The club is quite well known locally. *Interest*

The Shek O area is mainly a high grade residential resort and integrates with the function and heritage quality of the Country Club. The surroundings are a rural area of nice green hill and sea views remote from the city. This area is mainly low density residential including some buildings of pre-modern or early modern style. This club is famous and part of Shek O area's development that serves as a strong icon in Shek O area.

The clubhouse has group value with No. 3 and No. 7 Shek O Road (all Grade 3). *Group Value*

REFERENCES

Document Records at The Land Registry Office, Hong Kong

Property Particulars of Rural Building Lot 253.

Archives at Public Records Office, Hong Kong

HKRS337-4-78. Shek O Development Co., Ltd. G.L. 81.

HKRS58-1-92-3. Shek O Reservation.

HKRS58-1-92-4. Shek O Lots.

HKRS58-1-92-5. Shek O Reservation.

HKRS58-1-172-50. Shek O Inland Lot.

Information in the Cyber Search Centre of Companies Registry

Company Particulars of “The Shek O Development Company Limited”.

Books, Articles, Newspapers and Other Sources

Wayte, W.G.A. *The Clubs of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Illustrated Magazine Publishing Co., Ltd, 1981.

Wordie, Jason. *Streets: Exploring Hong Kong Island*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2001.