

Historic Building Appraisal
Old Far East Flying Training School
Olympic Avenue, Kowloon City, Kowloon

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The Old Far East Flying Training School (舊遠東飛行學校) is now known as the Hong Kong Aviation Club (香港飛行總會). The idea of forming a flying training school was first mooted in 1933 by Vaughan Fowler who lobbied the Hong Kong Government on the importance of aeronautical airmanship and associated aero engineering training in Hong Kong. The result was the birth of the training school on 7 November 1933. Following the liberation of Hong Kong in 1945, the school returned in full swing at the southwest corner of Kai Tak Airport until 1956 when the proposed construction of a new runway prompted the moving of the school to the present site.

*Historical
Interest*

The site comprises three buildings, namely, the former Far East Training School building constructed in 1958 (now known as Nissen Hut), the former Aero Club building constructed in 1966 (now a hangar), and the former Hong Kong Flying Club building constructed between 1958 and 1968 (now known as Club House). In 1983, the Hong Kong Aviation Club took over the school and operates as a singular light aircraft club in Hong Kong since then.

The Nissen Hut is utilitarian in design. It is constructed of curved corrugated steel sheets fixed to a skeleton steel framework consisting of curved ribs and angle iron purlins. The whole structure is erected on a concrete floor slab. The semi-circular ends are closed with brick walls. Windows are fixed at intervals between the curved ribs.

*Architectural
Merit*

The pitched-roof hangar, being utilitarian in design, is a large steel framed pitched roof structure with a two-storey flat roofed office block on one side. The hangar structure consists of a series of steel roof trusses supported by brick piers. The roof and sides are formed of corrugated steel sheets. One end of the hangar is fitted with long sliding folding steel doors. Internally there is a raised observation area or platform reached by a steel staircase. The floor of the hangar is screeded concrete. The two-storey office block at the side of the hangar, which looks modern in appearance, is a brick built rectangular building with a flat roof and rendered and painted walls. Window openings are regularly spaced and fitted with modern aluminum units.

The Club House is mainly made of reinforced concrete. Other materials include profiled steel sheeting, aluminum sheeting and glass prism blocks. The building has a conventional pitched roof, flat roof annexes and a roof with an upturned profiled edge. It is a combination of various structures of different styles which have been constructed at different periods. The design is so mixed that it can be described as Modern Eclectic.

The Nissen Hut and hangar are quite rare types of structures usually only seen on army camps. They should be regarded as having built heritage value. The other buildings are perhaps not so rare but they do have group value. The Nissen Hut and hangar appear to have retained their authenticity but the Club House has evolved from several different stages of building.

The social value of the Old Far East Flying Training School, and later the Hong Kong Aviation Club buildings lies in the role they have played in local civil aviation. They have historical value as well as considerable local interest to students of aviation history in Hong Kong.

The Club is within walking distance of other historic buildings, such as S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral (聖三一聖堂, Grade 1), and the doorframe of the old Sheung Tai Temple (前上帝古廟石門框, Grade 3).