

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 27 Lugard Road
The Peak, H.K.

N18

Many roads in Hong Kong recall former governors, colonial secretaries and commanding generals and this road on the Peak, constructed in the early 20th century and named after Sir Frederick Lugard (governor from 1907-1912) is an example. The Peak (Victoria Peak) towers over Central district on Hong Kong Island, attracting locals and visitors with cool breezes and stunning views over the harbour. Many aspired to live here, deterred only by lofty prices and the blanket of fog. With the construction of the Peak Tram in 1888, more people moved there to live.

*Historical
Interest*

The house in No. 27 Lugard Road was initially associated with a family of architects from England, surnamed Bird, who started living in Hong Kong from 1904. Constructed in 1914, the house was designed by Lennox Godfrey Bird (1878-1956), who was commandant of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps (香港義勇防衛軍), president of the Royal Society of St. George (聖喬治皇家學會), president of the Hong Kong Hockey Club (香港曲棍球會), and a senior partner of the architectural practice of Palmer & Bird – now Palmer & Turner (still a prominent firm to this day). Being a director of the Shek O Development Co. Ltd. (石澳道業主委員會), Lennox Godfrey Bird was the architect of many older bungalows in Shek O. The first owner of No. 27 Lugard Road was Herbert William Bird (1872-?), Lennox's elder brother, who bought the land at a price of \$2,160 on 27 July 1914 in public auction.

This two-storey dwelling was bought by the Taikoo Dockyard and Engineering Company of Hong Kong Limited 太古船塢 (a branch of the Swire Group) in 1930 and since then became a residence of the company's staff and their family. A former occupant of the house, Mrs Jean Mackie (nee Finnie) whose father was employed by the Company, was actually born in the house because, after her mother fell down the enormous staircase when heavily overdue with her, the sedan chair bearers could not get to the house in time to take her mother to the Matilda Hospital (明德醫院) at Mount Kellett which was opened in 1907 and is still one of Hong Kong's most popular private hospitals.

The house has a fascinating history encompassing lost silver, typhoons and a bomb blast. It was once damaged by a typhoon in November 1939, when the roof cracked very badly in the storm. When the Japanese invaded Hong Kong just before Christmas 1941, the old tennis court of No. 27 Lugard Road was hit by a bomb. This tennis court, which is now the site of a swimming pool, was where Miss Finnie's mother had buried some of the family silver. While still a toddler, Miss Finnie (later Mrs Jean Mackie) was evacuated to Canada with her

mother to avoid the war. After the war, the new owner Butterfield & Swire (太古洋行) turned the house into a mess for their bachelor staff.

The house is built to an asymmetrical roughly rectangular plan on a north-south axis. The house is two storeys high with a raised terrace on two sides. Servants' quarters and utility rooms are contained in an annex at the north-west corner of the house which gives an L-shaped footprint on the site. *Architectural Merit*

The site is served by a long uphill driveway off Lugard Road. The ironwork entrance gates are flanked by low rubble walls and ornamental pillars. The slope to the Lugard Road side of the driveway (Reg. No. 11 SW-A/CR702) is a cut slope featuring exposed rock and flourishing vegetation and nature tree. The other side of the driveway is flanked by a massive masonry retaining wall (Reg. No. 11SW-A/R1054) built of squared granite buttresses with planters in between. The upper part of the retaining wall features an ornamental arch and ornamental concrete balustrading. At the top of the driveway another pair of gates gives access to the site which features a small garden and a swimming pool. The north side of the site has a rubble retaining wall and the west side has a cut rockface finished with chunam. The hillside above the site is covered with think afforestation on one side of the site.

The architectural style of the house is an elegant neo-classical colonial style with painted rough cast rendered walls raised off rubble plinths, tall transomed casement windows, and a moulded string course at first floor level. The front elevation was built with loggias at both floor levels featuring stilted segmental arches, slender classical style coupled or paired columns, and ornamental balustrading at first floor level. The side elevation was built with a segmental bow window at ground floor level and a balcony roof over the bow window at first floor level. Decorative stacco features include neo-classical mouldings and capitals, ornamental panels, and vertical pendant drops or strings of stylized bell-flowers or nut-shell husks. The edge of the roof has a wide overhang with ornamental coupled supporting brackets.

Internally the ground floor rooms are arranged around a central entrance hall which contains the main staircase. The Drawing Room and Breakfast Room have windows facing south to catch the morning sun. On the first floor, the two main bedrooms have sun rooms with windows facing south. The bedrooms are mostly en-suite with bathrooms and some have adjoining dressing rooms. All rooms are decorated in neo-classical style with moulded skirting, cornices, fireplace surrounds and paneled doors. The study room on the ground floor has hardwood paneling to the walls. All floors are boarded and varnished. The bathrooms and kitchens have been modernized. Glass or crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling in the hall and over the main staircase.

In the early colonial days, the Peak was reserved for Europeans who built lavish houses on the slopes of the Peak. Most of the old houses have gone, and modern apartment blocks stand in their place today. This particular house is a rare example of a colonial hill residence built before the First World War.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

The late Mr. Robert F. Luster who bought the house in 1977 attempted to restore the house to its original look. A parapet was added back to the roof and the steel window frames was replaced by teak. The banisters of the main staircase were replaced with wood taken from the old Hong Kong Club and an old house in Kennedy Road. Three new chimneys were added and two old chimneys were still in use. The ceilings were lowered for incorporating concealed plumbing and central conditioning system. The floors and backstairs were also replaced.

The house has undergone conversions, renovations and interventions over the years; however, it still retains, at least externally, much of its authentic appearance and should be considered a piece of built heritage.

The historical past of No. 27 Lugard Road, and the fact that it is the oldest house on Lugard Road, gives it historic role and importance in the development of Hong Kong. Its association with historic figures such as Lennox Godfrey Bird and Herbert William Bird, and other owners/ occupants such as Butterfield & Swire and the Finnie family also contribute to its local interest.

Social Value & Local Interest

Lugard Road, which encircles Victoria Peak and links with the Peak Tram, station, is a popular walking path. A stroll around it offers breathtaking views over lush green tropical vegetation and stunning vistas of Hong Kong's famous harbour and distant islands. The graded buildings nearby include: Peak Lookout, a bungalow-style building (Grade 2), Peak Tramways Co. Ltd. at No. 1 Lugard Road (Grade 2), Victoria Gap Substation at No. 35 Lugard Road (Grade 3) and a house at No. 34 Lugard Road (Grade 3).

Group Value

The house is still in residential use. Lugard Road is to this day too narrow for cars to pass for much of its length, and the cliff sides are too steep to build anything on. The site condition would seem to pose a challenge to any adaptation of the house to public use.

Adaptive Re-use

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 28 Lugard Road
The Peak, H.K.

N19

Many roads in Hong Kong recall former governors, colonial secretaries and commanding generals and this road on the Peak, constructed in the early 20th century and named after Sir Frederick Lugard (governor from 1907-1912) is an example. The Peak (Victoria Peak) towers over Central district on Hong Kong Island, attracting locals and visitors with cool breezes and stunning views over the harbour. Many aspired to live here, deterred only by lofty prices and the blanket of fog. With the construction of the Peak Tram in 1888, more people moved there to live.

*Historical
Interest*

The house in No. 28 Lugard Road was initially associated with a family of architects from England, surnamed Bird, who started living in Hong Kong from 1904. The house was built in **1924**. Its first owner was Lennox Godfrey Bird (1878-1956), who was commandant of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps (香港義勇防衛軍), president of the Royal Society of St. George (聖喬治皇家學會), president of the Hong Kong Hockey Club (香港曲棍球會), and a senior partner of the architectural practice of Palmer & Bird – now Palmer & Turner (still a prominent firm to this day). Being a director of the Shek O Development Co. Ltd. (石澳道業主委員會), Lennox Godfrey Bird was the architect of many older bungalows in Shek O.

The house in No. 28 Lugard Road was first assessed for rates in the financial year 1923/24. Between the years 1947/48 and 1950/51, it was not rated, because the house had been wrecked by looters during the Japanese occupation period and was not rehabilitated until 1950/51. The war-damaged house was rehabilitated by the then owner of “**Kelly & Walsh**” which began as a publisher and retailer in Shanghai in the 1870s and grew to having offices in many world cities, establishing itself as a retailer in Hong Kong in the 1950s. The then owner of “Kelly and Walsh” was a bachelor with a gift for gardening, and some of the trees planted by him are still doing well.

No. 28 Lugard Road is a pitched roof colonial bungalow. The bungalow walls are raised off a stepped masonry plinth built of squared granite blocks laid to courses. It is reached from Lugard Road by a narrow pathway and a flight of steps. Several smaller pitched roof buildings or outhouses at the rear presumably were originally used as servants’ quarters. A swimming pool has been built behind the bungalow which takes up most of the garden space.

*Architectural
Merit*

Architectural features of the bungalow include two **arched window openings** with masonry voussoirs, a half-room **cantilevered viewing platform**

off the terrace in front of the house, and there is a flat roofed canopy over the front entrance door. The delicate **arched roof**, handmade by local craftsmen, is covered with Chinese tiles and the walls made of bricks and granite stones are roughed rendered. Windows are metal framed casements with horizontal glazing bars and wavy typhoon bars. The roof is punctuated by three sturdily built **chimney stacks**.

Internally, notable architectural features include the **arched openings** between rooms, **ornamental fireplaces surrounds** in brickwork and rubble masonry, and **exposed rafters** to the underside of the roof.

The bungalow is similar in some respects but not identical, to bungalows also built by Palmer & Turner for the Shek O Development Co. Ltd. (1920s) where the Bird family had a week-end home. There is also similarity to the bungalows built on army camps in the New Territories after the Second World War for use as barrack buildings and as quarters for army families.

In the early colonial days, the Peak was reserved for Europeans who built lavish houses on the slopes of the Peak. Most of the old houses have gone, and modern apartment blocks stand in their place today. This particular house is a rare example of a colonial hill residence built between the two World Wars.

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

So has as can be seen the bungalow has not been radically altered since it was built and therefore it retains, at least externally, much of its authentic appearance and should be considered a piece of built heritage.

Its historical past and the fact that it is a pre-Second World War house on Lugard Road, gives it historic role and importance in the development of Hong Kong. Its association with Lennox Godfrey Bird, a Hong Kong celebrity and an architect with Palmer & Turner also contribute to its local interest.

Social Value & Local Interest

Lugard Road, which encircles Victoria Peak and links with the Peak Tram, station, is a popular walking path. A stroll around it offers breathtaking views over lush green tropical vegetation and stunning vistas of Hong Kong's famous harbour and distant islands. The graded buildings nearby include: Peak Lookout, a bungalow-style building (Grade 2), Peak Tramways Co. Ltd. at No. 1 Lugard Road (Grade 2), Victoria Gap Substation at No. 35 Lugard Road (Grade 3) and a house at No. 34 Lugard Road (Grade 3).

Group Value

The house is still in residential use. Lugard Road is to this day too narrow for cars to pass for much of its length, and the cliff sides are too steep to build anything on. The site condition would seem to pose a challenge to any adaptation of the house to public use.

Adaptive Re-use

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 1 Tai O Market Street,
Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

Tai O Market Street (大澳街市街) has been, and still is, the busiest economic centre of Tai O. Several old buildings still remain along the Street, with Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17 lying on the west side, and Nos. 2, 4 and 14 along its east side. The one at No. 1 stands on a land lot (D.D. 302 Lot 338 Section A) at the front of the Street. The part of Tai O Market Street near the creek was built on the land reclaimed in 1930. Although it is not known when the lot was first built on, judging from their appearance the existing building is believed to have been constructed in the **early 1930s**. Thus, it was one of the first buildings ever constructed on the reclaimed land of Tai O Market Street.

The land lot on which this building stands is held under New Grant Lease which can be dated to the early 1930s. The early lessees of the lot were **Yun Wing Kin** (阮永堅) and **Yun Wing Nin** (阮永年) as beneficiaries with **Yun Lam Shi** (阮林氏) – possibly their mother – as trustee. Interestingly, the lot and the premises thereon have been owned by the Yun/Yuen (阮) family throughout. Photographs from the 1950s show that it was the site of a timber yard, and a Chinese signboard reading “海安杉桿” was hung on its elevation facing the creek, showing that it was for the manufacture of oars and paddles for fishing boats. In later times, it was used as a restaurant and a dried seafood stall called “Shun Lee Ho” (順利號).

The building at No. 1 Tai O Market Street is a **Balcony Type Shophouse** at the end of a row of 13 shophouses on the west side of Tai O Market Street. It is a two stories high pitched roof building with a balustraded cantilevered balcony at first floor level on the front elevation facing the street and on the south elevation facing the footbridge over the creek. It has a narrow frontage and an elongated plan to suit the building lot. Architectural features include a pedimented style gable end, grille pattern balcony balustrading and shaped balcony brackets. The walls are rendered and painted with regularly spaced metal framed windows. The cantilevered balcony and canopy with curved corners are rather typical of the use of reinforced concrete in the 1930s.

Tai O is one of the oldest and formerly most prosperous fishing villages in Hong Kong. This type of building is quite rare in such a remote rural area and it is becoming very rare now as older property makes way for redevelopment. Therefore, it is a piece of built heritage.

**Historical
Interest**

**Architectural
Merit**

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

No significant alterations to the exterior appear to have been made since the 1950s (when photographic evidence of this building is obtainable) so that the building retains its architectural authenticity. The elevations facing the creek and Tai O Market Street give character to the locality and harmonize with the adjacent buildings.

The building is located at a site where the reclaimed land merges into the muddy bank of the creek. It is in close proximity to the former hand-pulled ferry (橫水渡), now the Tai O Chung Footbridge (大澳涌行人橋) which was opened in 1996. Its prominent location has made it a local landmark and has appeared in many tourist photos of Tai O.

The building has been used as a timber yard (a small-scale industry, boat repair) and then a restaurant and dried seafood shop, all of which made economic and social contributions to Tai O. The sale of dried seafood products is popular amongst local tourists who visit Tai O on weekends from other parts of Hong Kong. Therefore, it has social and economic value. It is well known in Tai O and has local interest.

The building is geographically close to a number of other old buildings within easy walking distance, e.g. Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 17 Tai O Market Street, Kwan Tai Temple (吉慶後街關帝古廟) (Grade 2), Tin Hau Temple in Kat Hing Back Street (吉慶後街天后古廟) (Grade 3) and Shek Lun Kok (吉慶後街石麟閣) (Grade 3) in Kat Hing Back Street.

The building was intended for commercial-cum-residential use and it is still used for these purposes. It is fairly adaptable though and could be converted for other purposes without too much alteration.

Social Value & Local Interest

Group Value

Adaptive Re-use

Historic Building Appraisal
Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13 Tai O Market Street,
Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

Tai O Market Street (大澳街市街) has been, and still is, the busiest economic centre of Tai O. Several old buildings still remain along the Street, with Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17 lying on the west side, and Nos. 2, 4 and 14 along its east side. Among them, Nos. 7, 9, 11 and 13 are four adjacent buildings, whose geographical concentration makes them more valuable as a built heritage cluster. The ground floor of these four buildings are now used as shops which sell products that reflect the unique culture of Tai O, for example, dried seafood, groceries and traditional snacks.

The land lots on which the buildings stand (No. 7 at D.D. 302 Lot 338 Section D; No. 9 at D.D. 302 Lot 338 Section D; No. 11 at D.D. 302 Lot 338 Section F; No. 13 at D.D. 302 Lot 338 Remaining Portion and D.D. 302 Lot 338 Remaining Portion) are held under New Grant Lease which can be dated to the early 1930s. The first lessees of the lots came from three families surnamed **Chan** (陳), **Yun/Yuen** (阮) and **Fan** (樊). Some of the land lots have changed hands among the three families over the years.

The part of Tai O Market Street near the creek was built on land reclaimed in 1930. Although it is not known when the lots were first built on, judging from their appearance the buildings at Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13 Tai O Market Street are believed to have been constructed in the **early 1930s**. No. 7 was once a gold trading shop known as “Wo Cheong” (和昌金舖), whilst No. 11 was once the office of Tai O Chinese Chamber of Commerce (大澳華商會) which is still located elsewhere in the Street.

The buildings at Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13 Tai O Market Street are typical **Balcony Type Shophouses** forming part of a row of 13 shophouses on the west side of Tai O Market Street. They are two stories high with balustraded cantilevered balconies at first floor level on the front elevations facing the street. They have narrow frontages and elongated plans to suit the building lots. Architectural features include grille pattern balcony balustrading and shaped balcony brackets. The walls are rendered and painted with regularly spaced windows, some of which are wooden and some are aluminium framed replacements. The cantilevered balconies and canopies are rather typical of the use of reinforced concrete of the 1930s.

Tai O is one of the oldest and formerly most prosperous fishing villages in Hong Kong. This type of pre-war buildings is quite rare in such a remote rural

Historical Interest

Architectural Merit

Rarity, Built Heritage

area and this built cluster is becoming very rare now as older property makes way for redevelopment. Therefore, it is a piece of built heritage. **Value & Authenticity**

As far as can be seen, only little alteration to the doors at Nos. 7, 11 and 13 has been made since the 1980s, so the buildings retain a certain extent of architectural authenticity. The elevation facing Tai O Market Street gives character to the locality and harmonizes with the adjacent buildings.

Tai O is seen as a tourist attraction and shopping area with a diversity of retail options. The buildings are located at the busiest economic centre at Tai O. The shops at the street level have been contributing to the area's economic activities for decades, and the Tai O Chinese Chamber of Commerce has been locating its office on this street for decades, too. Therefore, the buildings have social value and local interest. **Social Value & Local Interest**

These buildings are geographically close to a number of historic buildings and structures within easy walking distance, e.g. Nos. 1, 14 and 17 Tai O Market Street, and Kwan Tai Temple (吉慶後街關帝古廟) (Grade 2), Tin Hau Temple in Kat Jing back Street (吉慶後街天后古廟) (Grade 3) and Shek Lun Kok (吉慶後街石麟閣) (Grade 3) in Kat Hing Back Street. **Group Value**

The buildings were intended for commercial-cum-residential use and most of them are still used for these purposes. They are fairly adaptable though and could be converted for other purposes without too much alteration. **Adaptive Re-use**

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 14 Tai O Market Street,
Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

Tai O Market Street (大澳街市街) has been, and still is, the busiest economic centre of Tai O. Several old buildings still remain along the Street, with Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17 lying on the west side, and Nos. 2, 4 and 14 along its east side. The part of Tai O Market Street near the creek was built on land reclaimed in 1930. Land records show that the lease on this landed property (No. 14 Tai O Market Street) commenced on 1 July 1898, but it is not known when the lot was first built on. Possibly, there may have been an earlier house on site which it replaced. Judging from its appearance, No. 14 Tai O Market Street was constructed in the **early 1930s**.

The first registered lessee of the lot was **Chan Fuk Lung** (陳福隆), a prominent community leader in Tai O and successful businessman who had a finger in different kinds of profitable pie – e.g. dried seafood (海味), cigarette (洋煙), wine (洋酒), kerosene (火水) and liquefied petroleum gas (石油氣). In the 1930s, the ownership of the lot was transferred to a Cheung family. Further transactions and transfer of land ownership took place in the post-World War II years. The ground floor of the building is now used as a grocery provision shop. There is no information about the mode of its business in the past.

The building is a typical **Balcony Type Shophouse** forming the end of a row of seven shophouses on the east side of Tai O Market Street. It is two stories high with a pitched roof and a balustraded cantilevered balcony at first floor level. The shop has a narrow frontage and an elongated plan to suit the building lot. Architectural features include ornamental ironwork balcony balustrading and shaped balcony brackets. The elevations are rendered and painted but the windows are casement windows.

Tai O is one of the oldest and formerly most prosperous fishing villages in Hong Kong. This type of building is quite rare in such a remote rural area and it is becoming very rare now as older property makes way for redevelopment. Therefore, it is a piece of built heritage.

No significant alteration to the exterior appears to have been made since the 1950s so that the building retains its architectural authenticity. The elevation facing Tai O Market Street gives character to the locality and harmonizes with the adjacent buildings.

*Historical
Interest*

*Architectural
Merit*
*Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity*

The building is located at Tai O Market Street, the busiest economic centre at Tai O. Many shops at the street level like this one cater to locals and tourists, contributing to the district's economic activities for decades. Therefore it has social value to the community. *Social Value & Local Interest*

This building is geographically close to a number of historic buildings and structures within easy walking distance, e.g. Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17 Tai O Market Street, and Kwan Tai Temple (吉慶後街關帝古廟) (Grade 2), Tin Hau Temple in Kat Hing Back Street (吉慶後街天后古廟) (Grade 3) and Shek Lun Kok (吉慶後街石麟閣) (Grade 3) in Kat Hing Back Street. *Group Value*

The building was intended for commercial-cum-residential use and most it is still used for these purposes. It is fairly adaptable though and could be converted for other purposes without too much alteration. *Adaptive Re-use*

Historic Building Appraisal

No. 17 Tai O Market Street,

Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

Tai O Market Street (大澳街市街) has been, and still is, the busiest economic centre of Tai O. Several old buildings still remain along the Street, with Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 17 lying on the west side, and Nos. 2, 4 and 14 along its east side. **No. 17 Tai O Market Street**, which is at a distance from the riverside of Tai O Creek, had already been in place before Tai O Market Street was constructed on reclaimed land in 1930. The land registration record of the subject site (D.D. 302 Lot 316 3rd Extension) could be chased back to 1 July 1898, when **Tang Chuk Pan** of Ying Lung Wai, Yuen Long (元朗英龍圍) was the first registered lessee.

In 1924, the ownership of No. 17 Tai O Market Street was transferred from Tang Chuk Pan of Ying Lung Wai, Yuen Long, to a businessman called **Chan Fuk Iu** (陳福耀). **Chan Fuk Iu** was a brother of **Chan Fuk Lung** (陳福隆), a prominent community leader in Tai O and successful businessman who had a finger in different kinds of profitable pie – e.g. dried seafood (海味), cigarette (洋煙), wine (洋酒), kerosene (火水) and liquefied petroleum gas (石油氣). Further transactions and transfer of ownership of No. 17 among several families took place before and after the Second World War.

Although the lease on the land lot commenced in 1898, it is not known when the lot was first built on. There may have been an earlier house on site which it replaced. Judging from its appearance, the building was constructed in the 1930s. Its ground floor is used as shop selling souvenirs and traditional snacks. There is no information about the mode of business in the past.

The building in No. 17 Tai O Market Street is a typical **Balcony Type Shophouse** forming part of a row of 13 shophouses on the west side of Tai O Market Street. It is two stories high with a balustraded cantilevered balcony at first floor level with an ornamental canopy with flattened arches and keystone patterns supported on columns. It has a narrow frontage and an elongated plan to suit the building lot. Architectural features include grille pattern balcony balustrading and shaped balcony brackets. The wall of the façade at the first floor level is finished with white glazed tiles, while the remaining parts of the building rendered and painted.

Tai O is one of the oldest and formerly most prosperous fishing villages in Hong Kong. This type of building is quite rare in such a remote rural area and it is becoming very rare now as older property makes way for redevelopment.

Historical Interest

Architectural Merit

Rarity, Built Heritage Value &

Therefore, it is a piece of built heritage.

Authenticity

Little alteration to the exterior has been made since the 1980s (when photographic evidence of the building is obtainable) so the building retains to a certain extent its architectural authenticity. The elevation facing Tai O Market Street gives character to the locality and harmonizes with the adjacent buildings.

It is historically interesting that the building was constructed on land (D.D. 302 Lot 316 3rd Extension) originally owned by the Tang clan in Yuen Long. The building is located at the busiest economic centre at Tai O. The shop at the street level has been contributing to the district's economic activities for decades. Therefore it has social value and local interest to the community.

Social Value & Local Interest

This building is geographically close to a number of historic buildings within easy walking distance, e.g. Nos. 1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 14 Tai O Market Street, and Kwan Tai Temple (吉慶後街關帝古廟) (Grade 2), Tin Hau Temple in Kat Hing Back Street (吉慶後街天后古廟) (Grade 3) and Shek Lun Kok (吉慶後街石麟閣) (Grade 3) in Kat Hing Back Street.

Group Value

The building was intended for commercial-cum-residential use and most it is still used for these purposes. It is fairly adaptable though and could be converted for other purposes without too much alteration.

Adaptive Re-use

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 60 Kat Hing Street,
Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

The building at No. 60 Kat Hing Street, Tai O (大澳吉慶街) is a two-storey structure. Its first owner was Chan Shue-nam 陳樹南 (also known as Laye Chan 陳勵予) who originated from Xinhui county in Guangdong province (廣東省新會縣) and came to Tai O in the 1920s. After having got married with a Tai O inhabitant, Chan joined his brother to work at a general store in Cuba (古巴) in the Caribbean between late 1920s and early 1930s. And, Chan's wife used the money he sent home to construct the building at No. 60 Kat Hing Street. The construction works was completed in **1933** when the couple's son Chan Chang-ka (陳贊嘉) was still a three-year-old little boy.

It is a pre-World War II building used for commercial-cum-residential purposes. The ground floor was once used as a clothing fabric shop (布匹店) called “Sang Tao Ho” (生泰號) between 1930s and 1950s. The shop also got involved in salt trade. The upstairs level was used by the owner/ shopkeeper for living accommodation. After the clothing fabric shop ceased operation, the ground floor was rented to a tenant for use as a shop selling daily accessories (士多) and the second floor became vacant after Chan and his wife passed away. The shop business also ended some years ago.

Nowadays, the building is maintained by Chan's granddaughter Chan Wai-chi Veronica (陳慧之) together with her elder sister Chan Ching-chi Anita (陳靜之) and younger brother Chan Yun-lock Luke (陳恩聰).

The building is a **Balcony Style Shophouse** of two stories high with a first floor balcony. It has a narrow frontage and elongated plan to suit the building lot. Architectural features include grille patterned balcony balustrades, shaped balcony brackets, regularly spaced folding doors and fanlights, and a pitched roof of Chinese tiles. The walls are rendered and painted with regularly spaced wooden casement windows, some fitted with iron burglar bars. A drainage stack in the internal corner is built up of short sections of spigot and socketed drain-pipes. The cantilevered balcony and canopy with curved corners are rather typical of the use of reinforced concrete in the 1930s. The interior of the house has a wooden staircase and balustraded landing at first floor level. The architectural style is difficult to determine but as it appears to combine local vernacular elements with Western colonial features it can be described as mixed style or **Chinese Eclectic**.

Tai O is one of the oldest and formerly most prosperous fishing villages in Hong Kong. The house was built 80 years ago. This type of building is becoming very rare now as older property makes way for redevelopment; therefore, it is a piece of built heritage.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

The house has undergone some restoration works, such as replacing the roof tiles and wooden beams, cleaning the exposed rusty steel bars, patching the concrete wall and adding a flushing toilet. However, the historic wooden doors, window frames, room partitions and internal staircase are kept. Besides the interior setting and timber furniture has remained unchanged, so that the building retains its authentic elements.

The house, built by a Tai O inhabitant and previously used as a salt shop and then a fabric shop between 1930s and 1950s, forms a part of the social and economic history of Tai O. It should be regarded as part of Tai O's historic fabric. It has some distinctive features which make them of local interest to the inhabitants of Tai O. The building enjoys the beautiful village sceneries of Tai O with the backyard facing the creek.

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

The house is geographically close to a number of historic buildings within easy walking distance. They include, for example, the shophouses at Nos. 46 and 48 Kat Hing Street (Proposed Grade 3), and the shophouses at Nos. 2 and 4 Tai O Market Street (Proposed Grade 2) and a very famous residential unit, Shek Lun Kok (石麟閣) (Proposed Grade 3) at No. 33 Kay Hing Back Street (吉慶後街) which is also known as *Sun Lau* (新樓) in Tai O.

**Group Value
Adaptive
Re-use**

The building was intended for commercial-cum-residential use and it is still used for these purposes. It is fairly adaptable though and could be converted for other purposes without too much alteration.

Historic Building Appraisal

Shrine with Stone Dog

Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O, Lantau Island, N.T.

At the western side of Kat Hing Back Street in Tai O (大澳吉慶後街), adjacent to the northern wall of the temporary structure of No. 75, there is a shrine with a granite statue fashioned in the shape of a dog. This shrine is locally known as “Shrine with Stone Dog” (石狗神壇). There is a lack of documentary information on when the dog worshipping ritual was started in Tai O and whether the shrine was erected *in-situ* or had been displaced from its original location elsewhere; however, it is believed that the shrine was laid here **before 1899**. There are many legends about the stone dog statue. One says that it might be related to the dog-worshipping tradition of the Yao tribe (僚族) or the She tribe (畲 or 肇) whose legend was that their ancestor Pun-hu (盤瓠) was a dog married to the daughter of a ruler in ancient times.

History records that the Yao tribe originated from Hunan (湖南) and moved to Guangdong (廣東). Members of the She tribe, a branch of the Yao tribe, lived in Guangdong, Fujian (福建), Jiangxi (江西) and Zhejiang (浙江). Both of them were the aborigines of the Hong Kong region who had been living here before the arrival of the “Five Big Clans” to the New Territories. It was believed that the dog-worshipping ritual also came with these aborigines. However when southern China absorbed more culture of central China due to population migration since Tang (唐) and Song (宋) dynasties, the aborigines became assimilated into the Han culture, so as their religious ritual.

In this shrine with joss sticks smouldering at its base, apart from the granite dog statue, there are also a triangular-shaped stone and a rectangular-shaped granite tablet bearing Chinese characters “南無阿彌陀佛” (meaning “Namo Amitābhā”). The triangular-shaped stone symbolizes the local Earth God (To Tei 土地), a patron deity maintaining peace and keeping evil and trouble away. There are several earth god shrines in Tai O who receive from their flock offerings of food and drink, fruit, incense and so on, which means that there is not just one Earth God, but rather a whole hierarchy of Earth Gods.

The shrine sits on a small platform raised up about one foot high from Kat Hing Back Street. The front of the platform serves as a flat altar for putting the offerings. Then there is a pit filled with sand for erecting joss sticks.

At the rear part of the platform is the **granite dog statue**, about one foot tall, in a pose of sitting on its back legs, but the head and the neck are missing. The triangular-shaped “earth god” stone is at the right of the dog statue, and the granite tablet roughly inscribed with Chinese “南無阿彌陀佛” is behind the “earth god”. A

Historical Interest

Architectural Merit

parapet of about one foot tall surrounds three sides of those items worshipped. A canopy is erected on the top to shelter the worshipped from sun and rainfall.

At the immediate right hand side of the altar there is an incense burner for the villagers to burn their paper money. The surrounds of the shrine are seemingly made of concrete and painted in red, except that the canopy is made of metal sheeting supported by metal wire and wood slabs. Similar to other vernacular religious structures, the shrine is in primitive style, functionally made and is bare of ornamentation.

There is a saying that this shrine is the only remaining one of its kind in Hong Kong connected with dog worshipping. It would seem that the shrine's function has evolved from "dog" worshipping into "earth god" worshipping, which is common in Tai O. The granite tablet inscribed with "南無阿彌陀佛" implies that Buddhism has made its way into local worshipping. As the shrine's surrounds are made of concrete, it is believed that repairs to the shrine might have been undertaken in the 20th century.

The shrine is a seemingly familiar everything object in the Tai O area that reflects the people's traditional Chinese religious culture. Many people set up small shrines in their apartments to pay tribute to their ancestors. Small shrines can be found outside, too, in alleyways and at corners of buildings. For most people nowadays, the worshipping of the stone dog statue has nothing to do with Yao or She tribe rituals; rather the shrine now serves as a "public" earth god shrine which is widely worshipped by those living nearby. This is similar to the worshipping activities attached to stones and landmarks where people pray for good fortune.

This shrine has some group value when observing with other "public" earth god shrines scattered along the streets in Tai O. Besides it also sheds light on the religious diversity of Tai O when observing with other temples nearby, e.g. Yeung Hau Temple at Po Chue Tam (寶珠潭陽侯古廟) (Grade 1), Kwan Tai Temple (吉慶後街關帝古廟) (Grade 2) and Tin Hau Temple (吉慶後街天后古廟) (Grade 3) at Kat Hing Back Street.

The question of adaptive re-use does not arise.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

Group Value

**Adaptive
Reuse**

Historic Building Appraisal**Zonta White House,****No. 4010 Tai Po Road–Yuen Chau Tsai, Tai Po, N.T.**

Zonta White House (崇德家福軒) is a western house standing on the summit of a hill overlooking Tai Po Road. It was constructed in **1906** for the accommodation of the managerial staff engaged on the construction of the **Kowloon-Canton Railway** (九廣鐵路). The house and the adjacent guest bungalow and servants' quarters sit in six acres of grounds close to the railway and some 167 steps lead up to the site from the old railway station of Tai Po Kau (大埔滘). After the completion of the Railway work, the house was no longer required for that original purpose and it was taken over by the Government to become quarters for civil servants. At first the house was named **White Cottage**. It was renamed as **White House** around 1935.

Contrary to its original use for accommodating the Kowloon and Canton Railway's managerial staff, in the early 1920s the house was used as quarters for the **Inspector of Vernacular Schools in Tai Po**. At one time during the pre-WWII times, it was leased to the **Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society** (BCMS, 聖經差會), an evangelical Protestant (Anglican) missionary society which was founded in 1922 and commenced work in the following year in China, including Tai Po in the New Territories. In the early 1930s, it became the mess for the accommodation of **private individuals** such as Henry Jemson Tebbutt (an architect with Palmer & Turner) and Ernest Oswald Schroeter (an assistant of H.K. Land Investment & Agency Co. Ltd).

The White House was left vacant for many years in the late 1930s. In government records it was described as a “white elephant” as the repairing and maintenance caused financial burden. The government once tried to put it for auction in 1939 to get rid of this burden but no prospective buyer turned up and the auction failed. During the Japanese occupation (1941-45), the White House became a Japanese military police headquarters where interrogation and torture took place. And, as part of a policy of subjugation and control the Japanese would pick out villagers and execute them in the grounds of the site. It is believed that the White House suffered from looting or bombing and was in ruin during the wartime.

After World War II, the White House was renovated to become government staff quarters and since then many civil servants and their families have lived there. They included, chronologically from the 1950s to the 1980s: **Pat Dodge** (Assistant Director of Commerce & Industry Department), **Paddy Richardson** (Deputy Director of Urban Services), **Jack Cater** 姬達 (Chief Secretary), **Denis Bray** 黎敦義 (Secretary of Home Affairs), **S. J. Chan** 陳瑞璋 (District

Commissioner of Tsuen Wan), **Dennis Wraggett** (Land Surveyor for Shatin District office), **Peter Pelham** (Assistant District Commissioner of Tai Po) and **Toby Jenkyn-Jones** (Government barrister).

The White House is now no longer used as government quarters and for a number of years has been let to a non-governmental organisation (NGO) offering social services to the community. Since 1999, it has been used by the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society (香港家庭福利會) as a family retreat centre and given the name of “Zonta White House”.

Zonta White House is situated on a flat site formed on a hillside facing Tolo Harbour (吐露港). The house is surrounded by a lawn and trees. Access is via a footpath only. There is no vehicular access. The kitchen, utility areas, and servants' quarters are detached from the main part of the house, which was the usual practice in those days to afford a certain degree of privacy during off-duty hours for both employer and employee alike.

The House is an asymmetrical **two-storey detached villa** with white painted walls set off by a deep plinth and topped by a wide projecting cornice and parapet above. The tall transom windows are regularly spaced and protected from the weather by hood mouldings. The front entrance, which is protected by a simple porch, is situated in an angled or canted two-storey projecting bay, a typical architectural feature of English Victorian and Edwardian suburban villas. There is a front verandah at ground floor level which has been enclosed with security bars. The roof is partly pitched and partly flat with projecting chimney stacks. The architectural style may be described as a stripped neo-classical colonial style.

Internally the rooms have high ceilings, painted walls and ceilings, modest ceiling coves or cornices, tall windows, glazed and paneled doors, wood block floors and wooden skirting boards. The wooden staircase has kite-shaped winders at the turn. The walls are thick for warmth in winter and coolness in summer. Some of the rooms have simple blocky fireplace mantelpieces in the so-called modern Cubist style quite innovative for 1906 when the house was built.

This type of old colonial style house and its luxurious setting are now quite rare, not only for the New Territories but also for Hong Kong. It is certainly part of the built heritage of Tai Po. As far as can be seen, the house **remains authentic** in spite of the various interventions, which include an external fire escape, a cat ladder to the flat roof, security bars, and surface mounted conduits and cables on walls. It is suspected that the wood block floors, wooden staircase, and some doors and windows are replacements under war reparation works for

Architectural Merit

Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

items looted for firewood during the Japanese occupation. Bathroom and kitchen fittings are modern.

It has been well known as ‘Tai Po White House’ (大埔白屋) by the Tai Po residents, especially those who have long been living in nearby villages. The house was not only a place for the civil servants to live in, but also a venue for gatherings. In the early 1970s, B.B.Q. and meals after the Tuen Ng Festival dragon boat competitions were routinely held in the White House open grounds, where the villagers from Sze Heung (四鄉) – namely, Sheung Shui (上水), Fanling (粉嶺), Sha Tau Kok (沙頭角) and Ta Kwun Ling (打鼓嶺) - would be invited to join. Being a nice place for re-union, the White House was nicknamed by some of the guests as ‘Tai Po Hilton’.

Around the White House site, there are several Chinese graves which are unmarked and unattended and may be those of fishermen’s children as Tai Po Kau has always been a fishing village. As said, the house is associated with a grisly history of torture and execution during the wartime. Over the years there are old stories surrounding the house and the strange goings-on that are supposed to happen there. Therefore, the White House has also often been known locally as the ‘Ghost House of Tai Po’.

The White House is one of a group of buildings in the Tai Po area which made up the seat of colonial government administration in the New Territories, including two declared monuments, the Old District Office North (舊北區理民府) in Wan Tau Kok Lane and the Island House (前政務司官邸) in Yuen Chau Tsai, as well as graded buildings such as the Old Police Bungalow (舊警察宿舍) in Nos. 173 & 175 Kwong Fuk Road and the Tai Po Lookout (大埔瞭望台) in No. 11 Lookout Link,

It has been used for a number of years by a NGO providing social services to the community. As a low-rise two-storey building within its own compound, it might be found an adaptive re-use such as a training centre, the only drawbacks being difficulty of access and shortage of car parking space.

**Historic Building Appraisal
Nos. 130 and 132 Portland Street,
Mong Kok, Kowloon**

N178

The lease on this landed property (K.I.L. No. 8220, formerly K.I.L. No. 715 Section F; and K.I.L. No. 8582, formerly K.I.L. No. 715 Section H) was granted on 25 December 1887, but it is not known when the lots were first built on. Possibly, there may have been earlier buildings on site which the existing two buildings replaced. The construction of the two 3-storey shophouses was completed in 1920 as a part of two large blocks containing 33 residential flats.

No. 130 Portland Street was re-registered in 1942, when the occupying Japanese authority set up the House Registration Office to re-register deeds which were previously registered by the British administration and to register subsequent transactions affecting land. A property transaction took place on 12 May 1943 when Mr Ching Hei Kwong (程曦光) – who was living at No. 130 Portland Street – sold the lot and the premises thereon to Mr Fan Yan Po (范仁普) for M¥3,125 (軍票 3,125 圓).

Portland Street was mainly inhabited by Chinese and the shops there usually relate to traditional Chinese trades and livelihood. The pair of buildings at Nos. 130 and 132 are typical Tong Lau 唐樓 (Chinese residences, shophouses) with the ground floors mainly occupied by shops, and the upper floors used for residential use. Nos. 130 and 132 were once occupied by shops for collection of recycled metal and paper, and one of them was named 榮興五金廢紙, but they have been vacant in recent years.

Mong Kok (旺角) is an area in Yau Tsim Mong District in Kowloon. It was originally called 芒角村 or 望角村 with small fields (long built over). By the 1880s, the government constructed a new road (called Station Street 差館街, which was renamed Shanghai Street 上海街 around 1909) to connect Yau Ma Tei with Sham Shui Po through Mong Kok. In the 1930s, the area was renamed 旺角 in Chinese (meaning a point of prosperity), but the English name Mong Kok has been kept until today.

According to typical shophouse design, the plans are elongated rectangular with narrow frontages. The shophouses are open to the street through a small balcony, and at the back opening to a tiny yard accessible from a narrow back alley. They are in the form of **Verandah Type Shophouse** with the upper floor verandahs projecting over the pavement supported on columns to form a covered walkway in front of the ground floor shops. The buildings are designed in an “one-stair for two flats” type (一梯兩伙) of which two shophouses share a stairway in between as access to the upper floors.

*Historical
Interest*

*Architectural
Merit*

The facades are rendered and painted. There are original verandahs and square-shaped granite columns with capitals and plinths preserved on the building façade. There are hexagonal pilasters which rise up the first and second floors of the buildings, a projecting cornice at parapet level, the parapet and decorative column heads at the roof, and some urn-shaped balustrades at the verandah on the first floor. These architectural features give the front façade a Neo-classical appearance which would be worthy of retention if sensitively and sympathetically restored.

This type of Tong Lau (shophouse) is becoming rarer in Mong Kok due to redevelopment and urban renewal, as many of the first-generation Tong Lau were demolished and rebuilt as 5 or 6 storeys, or, especially after the late 1950s and 1960s, 10 or 12 storeys tenement blocks. Nos. 130 and 132 are in fact one of the few remaining examples of typical pre-war Tong Lau once commonly existed in this long-established area. Some alterations have been made over the years such as enclosure of verandahs with windows and rooftop structures, but it seems to retain much of its original appearance.

The buildings' social value lies in their historical role in the commercial development of Kowloon and for the residential accommodation they provided. The shophouse has evolved through several types. These particular shophouses are the early types and are part of the historical urban fabric of Kowloon. Their presence reminds us of the past and serves as an important counterpoint against future development. Although now dilapidated and run down, they give local interest to Portland Street.

The surroundings, bustling with daily activities, include shops and residential blocks which match the shophouses. Historic buildings nearby are the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Museum (東華三院文物館) (Declared Monument), the Former Pumping Station of Water Supplies Department (前水務署抽水站) (Grade 1), the Former Yau Ma Tei Theatre (前油麻地戲院) (Grade 2) and Yau Ma Tei Police Station (油麻地警署) (Grade 2).

The shophouses probably could be restored to their former condition successfully, but upgrading of services such as electricity and water supplies and especially sanitary provisions would need to be undertaken. Adaptive re-use could be found, but the best use of the buildings is probably that for which they were originally used.

**Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

**Social Value
& Local
Interest**

Group Value

**Adaptive
Re-use**