

Historic Building Appraisal
Po Leung Kuk Main Building
No. 66 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay, H.K.

Founded in 1878, Po Leung Kuk (PLK) is one of the most famous *Historical Interest* social welfare organisations in Hong Kong. The development of its headquarters building not only testifies to the history of PLK but also the changing needs of the community.

Rapid development of shipping and *entrepôt* trade in Hong Kong from the 1860s onwards accelerated the abduction and trafficking of women and children. On 8 November 1878¹, a group of elites and merchants of the local Chinese community, namely Lo Lai Ping (盧禮屏), Fung Ming Shan (馮明珊), Shi Shang Kai (施笙階) and Tse Tat Shing (謝達盛), presented a petition to the Governor, Sir John Pope Hennessy, to set up PLK to assist the Government in carrying out the laws for the protection of women and children. “Po Leung”, which means “to protect the young and the innocent” literally in Chinese, represents PLK’s core mission and vision.²

PLK was initially housed on the upper floor of two buildings of Tung Wah Hospital on Po Yan Street, Sheung Wan. It was not until 1896 that PLK moved across to the other side of Po Yan Street to its own building which was built on the former site of Kwong Fook I Tsz (廣福義祠). Given the lack of space to accommodate the increasing number of women and children in the building, new premises for PLK had to be identified. Subsequently, a parcel of land - I.L.3158 (now known as I.L. 9011) on Leighton Road in Causeway Bay, which was found suitable for PLK’s new headquarters, was granted by the Government to PLK in February 1931.

The new building was designed by Iu Tak Chung (姚得中) (1896-1933). Iu was an authorized architect graduated from the University of Hong Kong, the partner of Clark & Iu Architects and Civil Engineers, as well as the director of PLK from 1930-1931. PLK’s new headquarters (the Main Building

¹ 8 November 1878 was adopted as PLK’s founding date, on which the petition was submitted.

² The *Po Leung Kuk Ordinance* was promulgated on the *Hong Kong Government Gazette* on 5 August 1882 to confirm PLK’s mission, legal status and authority. PLK handled over 2,850 cases in just 5 years (from 1887 to 1891) with 85% of the victims restored to their families.

nowadays) which opened on 4 March 1932³, is more than just a place for operations and shelter use. The provision of garden and enclosing walls as well as rooms for domestic training and education reflect PLK's attention to the living condition and the wellbeing of the female and children residents. In general, the building can be divided into three parts: the Welfare Department (which occupies the left wing and right wing and the whole first floor of the building), Ho Sze Shi Memorial Hall (何東太夫人紀念堂) (located at the centre of the ground floor and facing the entrance of the building, where the most important meetings are usually held) and a waiting room for admission interviews (later converted into a meeting room for board meeting and now the Po Leung Kuk Museum, located on the ground floor of the building).

The construction of Main Building was made possible through fund-raising. Two men were especially prominent among the donors⁴, namely Sir Robert Ho Tung and Mr. J. E. Joseph⁵. Both donors contributed \$30,000 each and supported more than half of the construction fund. To commemorate their donations, the hall on the ground floor of the Main Building was named after Sir Robert's mother – the Ho Sze Shi Memorial Hall (also known as Kwan Ti Hall 關帝廳), while the hall on the first floor of the Main Building was named after Mr. J. E. Joseph's mother – the Mrs. Joseph Memorial Hall (祖雲太夫人紀念堂). To express gratitude to the major benefactors, PLK also displayed commemorative porcelain photos⁶ of donors in Kwan Ti Hall for posterity. These porcelains photos are a symbol of recognitions garnered by the reputable merchants of Hong Kong back in the 1930s.

Since its completion in 1932, the Main Building has been extended gradually to cater the needs of the times. In 1941, the Right Wing Annex was

³ The building was formally opened by Lady Peel on behalf on Sir William Peel who was indisposed and absent from the event.

⁴ Other major philanthropists include Lady Ho Tung and Mrs. Lam Fook-chi, who each donated \$10,000. The kitchen and dining room on the ground floor were named Mrs. Mak Ng Shi Memorial Hall (麥吳氏太夫人紀念廳) and Lau Yu Fong Memorial Room (劉漁訪紀念廳), respectively, to commemorate their generous support.

⁵ Mr. Joseph Edgar Joseph (1882 – 1946) was born in Bombay (present-day Mumbai), India to a Jewish family and came to Hong Kong in 1884. He was an exchange broker and a philanthropist in Hong Kong. In 1954, the "J.E. Joseph Trust Fund", was which named after him was established in Hong Kong. The Fund aims to provide financial assistance to farmers and it is still in operation.

⁶ The majority of the more than 120 porcelain photos on display are products of Jingdezhen, China.

built to provide additional accommodation spaces for the increasing number of residents affected by the Japanese invasion thanks again to a generous donation of \$50,000 from Mr. J. E. Joseph.⁷

After the Second World War, residents' personal development again was the main priority of PLK and the first regular school was therefore established in the Main Building in 1946 to provide formal education to children residing in PLK. A Left Wing Annex dedicated to domestic training was built in 1949. In consideration of the inconveniences that bad weather had brought to the staff and residents with an open air entrance of the Main Building, in 1953 PLK's directors decided for practical reasons to add a portico to the Main Building's entrance to shield off rain and winds, which also added grandeur to the building.

To further optimise PLK's services to the residents and the community, a series of construction projects outside the Main Building were carried out. These included a detached school building built in 1953 for the school opened inside the Main Building in 1946, a Domestic Science Annex built in 1954, a Vocational Training Building built in 1955, a four-storey building built in 1957 that housed a kindergarten on its ground floor and a home for mature ladies on the upper floors, and the West Wing built in 1969 for mentally handicapped children. Nevertheless, the Main Building has maintained its original use for over 90 years.

PLK's identity as a Chinese charity organisation is strongly reflected in their worshipping of Kwan Ti and displaying of commemorative couplets. Although PLK has no religious background, it embraces the loyalty, righteousness and faithfulness of Kwan Ti who was a real person from the Three Kingdoms period (220-265 AD) and an icon of integrity and loyalty in Chinese culture. It has been the traditional practice of PLK that when children leave for their adopted families or women are married off, rites are performed in front of the shrine of Kwan Ti for the sake of solemnity.

In addition to the tablets commemorating the inauguration of the Main Building in 1932, after directors completed their terms in office, it became a

⁷ The average number of persons admitted to PLK between the period from 1932 to 1937 was 517 and grew to 650 and 787 in the years of 1938 and 1939 respectively. As such, the extension work of the Main Building was inevitable. PLK remained in service during the period of Japanese Occupation (1941-1945).

tradition for PLK to invite renowned scholars and calligraphists to compose couplets and inscribe them on the granite columns inside the Main Building as commemoration. Calligraphies of famous former-Qing Hanlin (前清翰林) scholars like Wan Suk (溫肅), Chu U Chun (朱汝珍), Au Tai Yuen (區大原), Kwai Dim (桂玷) and Shum Kwong Yuet (岑光樾), the renowned local Chinese calligraphist Au Kin Kung (區建公) are seen in the main entrance lobby, corridors and Kwan Ti Hall on the ground floor. From 1950 onwards, when directors completed their terms in office, porcelain photos of them together with a tablet containing their major contributions would be displayed on the ground floor. Couplets, tablets and porcelain photos have become PLK's unique tradition and culture and can be seen as the embodiment of PLK's history.

Formally established as the Society for the Protection of Women and Children in 1882, PLK has gradually evolved from initially rescuing the kidnapped and protecting and offering a safe environment to destitute women and children into a welfare organisation providing a variety of social services and charity support in Hong Kong.

Built in 1932 and 1941, respectively, by Iu Tak Chung and Iu Tak Lam (姚德霖)⁸, the Main Building and its Right Wing Annex are ornamented with various decorative elements showing the influence of Art Deco on the exterior and interior which create a sense of Neo-Classicism as well as a juxtaposition of Chinese and Western elements. *Architectural Merit*

The front façade has a central tower capped by a dome at the center of the flat roof. The surface, which features uniformly cut and divided horizontal groove lines, helps decorate the façade of the building. Mouldings in form of fascies can be found at the two sides and the bottom of the dome and in the upper left and right sections of doorway entrance.

At the two adjoining sides of the doorway entrance are two rows of windows arranged with clean geometrical and symmetrical lines. Resonating with the classical design of the entablature along the roofline, the architrave with matching design emphasizes consistency and regularity of the overall architectural style. The moulding of the architrave is made of Shanghai plaster. They were originally wooden windows before the replacement in 1971, yet now

⁸ IU Tak-lam was also a graduate of the University of Hong Kong. From 1935-1936, he also partnered with John Caer Clark and continued his practice subsequent to the end of their partnership.

they are complimented with metal grills.

The semi-circular fanlight at the main entrance is embellished with a set of geometric shaped glazing segmented to imitate rays of sunbeams radiating out from the central disk to form a sunburst. Transom lights can be found above most doors in the building providing cross-ventilation and lighting across the interior. Usually found in sets of four, six or eight divisions of parallel rectangles glazing, transom light is a common feature adopted before electric lighting and air-conditioning were brought to practical usage.

The largest room in the Main Building, Kwan Ti Hall is built without columns and pillars and there are only four beams supporting the structure to provide a spacious room for massive events and high-population gatherings, complementing the high headroom of the hall.

The ceiling and stone couplets are decorated with traditional Chinese culture elements, such as the bat-shaped relief which represents “blessing” according to Chinese tradition. The interior of the ground floor is also seen finished with colourful terrazzo patterns, ranging from the floors to walls. The use of various colours including yellow, green and red for the terrazzo finishes can be found, which are examples of the building’s Art Deco design.

The Main Building is a good example of 1930s Neo-Classical architecture with Art Deco influence. It does not appear to have undergone many alterations and retains its authentic appearance as the expansion of other blocks have been utilised for its diverted usage. It is the most historical building within the headquarters. Its use and cultural association have also been retained and continued to serve the local community over the past century.

***Authenticity
& Rarity***

PLK is a major organisation in Hong Kong providing a wide range of social services, from child care to education, medical services and care for the elderly. Thanks to the diverse services and fund raising activities over the years, PLK has created a strong connection with the people of Hong Kong.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***

In 1998, PLK set up a museum within the building for recording and passing on the history and achievements of the organisation. Lectures, workshops and guided tours in relation to the building’s history and traditions were organised over the years on site and online during the time of pandemic,

most notably would be the “Po Leung Heritage”, an online virtual tour for members of the public to understand the architectural and cultural heritage of the Main Building. To celebrate the building’s 90th anniversary, an “Open Day” was held in 2022 by PLK which attracted up to 1,700 visitors. The building represents the spirit of PLK’s dedication to serving the community throughout the years since its establishment and is a well-known landmark in Causeway Bay.

The Main Building does not only share group value with the nearby Tung Wah Eastern Hospital (Grade 2), which is also founded by a Chinese charitable organisation, but also with the surrounding buildings of different natures. These include St. Paul’s Convent Church (Grade 1), St. Paul’s Primary Catholic School (Grade 2), St. Margaret’s Church (Grade 1), Confucius Hall (Grade 1), Race Course Fire Memorial (Declared Monument), Shing Kwong Church, The Church of Christ in China (Grade 2), and S.K.H. St. Mary’s Church (Grade 1). Most of the above-mentioned buildings are historical imprints of various religious and charitable organisations settling in Causeway Bay.

Group Value

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Historic Building Appraisal

Stone Steps of Shing Wong Street

Sheung Wan, H.K.

Shing Wong Street (城皇街) is one of the streets constructed in the hilly urban areas on Hong Kong Island. It extends from Gough Street (歌賦街), rising all the way to Caine Road (堅道) in the Mid-Levels. The steps start from Wa Hing Lane (華興里) near Hollywood Road (荷李活道) and ends at Caine Road. While the uppermost section of the street has been replaced with concrete, many of the old steps constructed of granite slabs still exist along the street between Wa Hing Lane and the portion near Wa In Fong East (華賢坊東) in spite of the passage of time. **Historical Interest**

Shing Wong Street is thought to have been given this name because a Shing Wong Temple (城隍廟) once stood here. The temple, likely the first temple erected after the British takeover of Hong Kong Island,¹ is believed to have been erected at No. 10 Shing Wong Street (the site of the present-day PMQ) around 1843,² and remained there until 1877, when the Government purchased the buildings on several plots of land, including the site of Shing Wong Temple, for the construction of a new campus of Central School (中央書院, which was renamed “Queen’s College” 皇仁書院 in 1894).³ Although the temple is long gone, it left its mark on the street name. It is especially worth noting that while the surrounding streets were all named after British administrators in the past, this street is the only one which was derived from the Chinese deity. Hence, it is believed that, in its days, the Shing Wong Temple was an important landmark in the area.

The name Shing Wong Street can be observed on the map for the first time in 1863.⁴ From Government records and Chinese newspapers of the 1880s, the

¹ Carl T. Smith, “Notes on Chinese Temples in Hong Kong”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch*, Vol. 13 (1973), p. 133.

² According to the account of E. J. Eitel, the construction of “Sheng-wong-miu” on the “site of the present Queen’s College” began in 1843. See Ernst J. Eitel, *Europe in China: The History of Hongkong from the Beginning to the Year 1882* (London: Luzac & Company, 1895), p. 190.

³ Central School was opened on Gough Street (Inland Lot 78, the present site of SKH Kei Yan Primary School) in 1862. To accommodate the increasing number of students, the Government bought the properties on Inland Lots 55, 93, 91 (the site of Shing Wong Temple) and 91A at the junction of Hollywood Road and Aberdeen Street (the present site of PMQ) for the construction of a new campus of Central School (the second campus of the School) in 1877. See Government Notification No. 6, *Hong Kong Government Gazette*, 6 January 1877. The school was renamed “Victoria College” in 1889 when it moved in. In 1894, “Victoria College” was renamed “Queen’s College”.

⁴ Plate 2-2 “(1863) The 8 inch map of Victoria and Kowloon (reduced)”, Hal Empson, *Mapping Hong Kong: A Historical Atlas* ([Hong Kong]: Govt. Printer, 1992), pp.132-133.

original Chinese name of the street was 城隍廟街,⁵ which later evolved into 城隍街.⁶ Still later, the word “隍” was replaced by a different character with the same pronunciation, “皇”. The reason for this change is, however, uncertain.⁷ Currently, the Chinese name 城皇街 is still in use.

From the 1850 map, the alignment of Shing Wong Street was completed, and this has remained the same until today. However, it seems that the street was just a slope without steps when it was initially laid out. The steps appeared to have been built in sections. The first section evidently started construction by 1859, when the steps at both ends of the portion between Hollywood Road and Staunton Street/ Bridges Street started to appear,⁸ while the steps in between were in place no later than 1889.⁹ By 1897, the layout of all the steps as they appear today is shown on map.¹⁰ Hence, it can be concluded that the steps of Shing Wong Street were constructed between 1859 and 1897.

Besides being a street with a long history, its location also made Shing Wong Street an administrative boundary between the Taipingshan and Choong Wan districts in the mid-19th century. From a map of Victoria City in 1889,¹¹ it can be seen that to the east of Shing Wong Street is District No. 5 Choong Wan, and to its west is District No. 3 Taipingshan.

⁵ Government Notification No. 21, *Hong Kong Government Gazette*, 20 January 1883; 《循環日報》, 1883 年 1 月 23 日。

⁶ The earliest record of “城隍街” is found in a Chinese Newspaper in 1929, namely 〈昨日城隍街幾遭回祿〉, 《香港工商日報》, 1929 年 6 月 25 日。

⁷ According to the available Chinese newspapers, “隍” was still in use at least in 1962. An example can be found in 〈急救風災災民善長心聲〉, 《華僑日報》, 1962 年 9 月 14 日. A street sign with “城隍街” was also captured in a photo taken in 1961. See Hong Kong Museum of History, Photo captioned “Photo taken by Dutch photographer Michael Rogge, titled ‘Corner of Shing Wong Street’, 1961” (Photo Ref.: P2017.14). While no record about Shing Wong Street during the period of 1963-1966 is found, the change of “皇” is observed since 1967. For example: 〈中區城皇街火警焚燬舊樓一層〉, 《工商晚報》, 1967 年 1 月 15 日。

⁸ National Archives, “Plans of portion of the City – by the Surveyor-General, June 1859”, CO 700/HongKongandChina54, <https://www.hkmaps.hk/map.html?1859> (accessed on 18 July 2023).

⁹ National Archives, “Plan of the City of Victoria, Hong Kong, 1889 160 feet to 1 inch”, CO 700/HongKongandChina7, <https://www.hkmaps.hk/map.html?1889> (accessed on 18 July 2023).

¹⁰ Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, “Hong Kong Map (1897)”, <https://data.gov.hk/en-data/dataset/hk-landsd-openmap-historical-maps> (accessed on 18 July 2023).

¹¹ National Archives, “Plan of the City of Victoria, Hong Kong, 1889 160 feet to 1 inch”, CO 700/HongKongandChina7.

The association of the street and steps with Dr Sun Yat Sen (孫中山) (1866-1925) further adds to the historical interest of Shing Wong Street. No. 2 Bridges Street (adjoining Shing Wong Street), where the Hong Kong News-Expo stands today, used to be the Preaching House of the American Congregational Church (美國公理會, now named as China Congregational Church 中華基督教會公理堂). After Sun arrived in Hong Kong in 1883, he lived on the third floor of the Preaching House. He was also baptised at the American Congregational Church, receiving the baptismal name “Yat Sun” (日新). It was from this name that his later name, “Yat Sen” (逸仙) derives. Between 1884 and 1886, Sun studied at the first-generation Central School, which was located at the junction of Gough Street and the lower section of Shing Wong Street (now the site of SKH Kei Yan Primary School 聖公會基恩小學). Undoubtedly, his daily journey to school and back to his place of residence would involve walking up and down the steps of Shing Wong Street.

Shing Wong Street is built on a slope consisting of a series of flat halts connected by flights of stone steps. It is a pedestrian street too steep for motor traffic in the early days. The flat halts at various points along the street are believed to be built to allow sedan chairs to proceed more easily on the journey up and down, and to enable the chair coolies to rest and realign their loads, a feature commonly seen in many other uphill streets such as Ladder Street (Grade 1) nearby.¹²

Architectural Merit

The stone steps of Shing Wong Street are constructed with long heavy granite slabs cut and dressed in similar tread width and thickness, except that the five uppermost piers of the steps near Caine Road have been rebuilt with cast-in-place concrete steps and paved with concrete landings. The section between Hollywood Road and Staunton Street / Bridges Street retains many of the original steps and landings paved with granite slabs. For the section which extends from Staunton Street / Bridges Street to the portion near Wa In Fong East, granite steps could still be observed but all landings are covered with concrete. In general, the stone steps bestow tangible evidence of the utilisation of local materials in constructing one of the remaining century-old step streets.

Unlike the steps at Duddell Street (Declared Monument) and Pottinger Street (Grade 1), which are embellished with decorative balustrades and

¹² Jason Wordie, *Streets: Exploring Hong Kong Island* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2002), p. 289.

constructed with special laying methods such as breaking bonds respectively, the stone steps of Shing Wong Street are of a modest design, sharing similarities in terms of the setting, material used and construction methods, with other step streets in the neighbourhood, such as Ladder Street (Grade 1) and Pound Lane (Grade 2).

Shing Wong Street is one of the few exemplary step streets built with granite slabs that retain its authentic appearance, form and setting, in spite of the repair and replacement of some of the steps over the years. Substantial alteration in materials is observed at the top section where granite slabs have been replaced with concrete steps and concrete-paved landings.

Authenticity & Rarity

In 1987, a section of the steps beside the Former Bridges Street Market was demolished for the construction of a single-storey Refuse Collection Point (RCP). Following the revitalisation of the market into the Hong Kong News-Expo, which took place in mid-2010, the RCP was demolished and this section of the steps was reinstated with new granite slabs, re-laid to match the profile of the adjoining old stone steps.

Hong Kong's development as a city on the steep hilly environs of Hong Kong Island has left its traces in the form of step streets. Shing Wong Street is one of these examples. The steps of Shing Wong Street have served as a pedestrian link between Sheung Wan and Mid-Levels for over a century. In spite of many years of urban makeovers, most of the old stone steps still survive today, not only serving residents and visitors alike, but also contributing greatly as a key component of the urban setting in this hilly terrain.

Social Value & Local Interest

The original site of the American Congregational Church adjoining the steps at Bridges Street is one of the spots in the "Sun Yat Sen Historical Trail" (中山史蹟徑), which aims to enhance public understanding of Dr Sun's activities in Hong Kong.

The stone steps of Shing Wong Street have group value with other historic steps and step streets in the Central and Western District, including Duddell Street steps (Declared Monument), Pottinger Street (Grade 1), Ladder Street (Grade 1), steps of Pound Lane (Grade 2) and steps of Prince's Terrace (Grade 3). The street is also located in the area with a high density of historic buildings in the vicinity, such as Man Mo Temple, Kom Tong Hall and Old Pathological Institute (all Declared Monuments).

Group Value

Shing Wong Street runs past the Hollywood Road Former Married Police Quarters (Grade 3), No. 88 and 90 Staunton Street (Grade 2) and Bridges Street Market (Grade 3) which was built in 1953 on the original site of the Preaching House of the American Congregational Church. The adjoining Wing Lee Street has been made famous by the film “Echoes of the Rainbow” (歲月神偷) (2010).

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Historic Building Appraisal

No. 30 Kam Shan, Tai Po, New Territories

N429

Built in the 1920s and located at DD6 Lot 872 Section A, No. 30 Kam Shan, Tai Po (the “Building”) is a private residential building. Its history reflects the development of the Kam Shan area¹. *Historical Interest*

According to the Land Registry, the Government gazetted the auction of DD6 Lot 872 on 24 June 1921, which was sold to Lo Wing Lok (盧永樂), Chu Oi Tin (朱靄鈿) and Ho Tung Ting (何棟亭). In 1924, the lot was mortgaged to Sir Robert Ho Tung (何東爵士) for \$3,400 until 1929. In 1927, Lot 872 was split into Sections A and B. In 1934, the ownership of the land at DD6 Lot 872 Section A changed to a nun named Miu Lin (妙蓮, also known as Sik Sam Wai 釋三慧) at a cost of \$4,000. She designated the Building as a place of meditation and named it as Miu Lin Tong (妙蓮堂).² There were other houses in the Kam Shan area that were used as private retreats or for Buddhist worship prior to and after World War II, including Pun Chun Yuen (半春園), Tai Kwong Yuen (大光園), Mei Chuen Tong (美全堂), etc.

The worshipping hall is located on the top floor of the Building. It was a private retreat for Miu Lin herself and her disciples Miu Tak (妙德) and Lam Koon Tai (林觀帶), as well as her niece Cheung Tin Chan (張天真); it was not open to outsiders. However, Miu Lin Tong had connections and interactions with neighbouring Buddhist halls and retreats. For instance, on every Lunar New Year Day, Master Sik Chi Cheung (釋慈祥法師) of Tai Kwong Yuen went to Miu Lin Tong to greet Miu Lin because of her seniority. Master Sik Chi Cheung stayed behind and gave talks in Miu Lin Tong, and nearby believers were allowed to come listen to the scriptures and enjoy the feast together afterwards. The Buddha statues worshipped by Miu Lin, as well as some Buddhist utensils she used, still retained, including a wooden fish (木魚).

The current owner of the Building learnt from Lam Koon Tai that during the Japanese Occupation, the Japanese army occupied the Building. Miu Lin and her disciples were forced to move out and they took refuge at Pohyea Ching Ser (般若精舍) in Mui Shue Hang (梅樹坑), Tai Po until the war ended.

¹ In 1955, at the decision of Tai Po Tsat Yeuk Rural Committee, the Chinese name of Kam Shan changed from 禁山 (forbidden hill) to 錦山 (beautiful hill).

² Miu Lin and her adopted daughters migrated to Hong Kong from the Mainland in the early 20th century. She later met a master at the Buddhist Ling Yan Monastery (靈隱寺) on Lantau Island, Hong Kong, and became a nun.

In the 1950s, following Miu Lin's deliberation on her old age, the ownership of the Building was changed to Miu Tak and Cheung Tin Chan. Subsequent to this ownership change, a kindergarten was opened on the ground floor of the Building by Cheung Tin Chan, who had previously received teacher training and wished to provide early childhood education for the underprivileged children of the neighbourhood free-of-charge. The living room on the ground floor was turned into a classroom, and equipped with a blackboard and sets of wooden desks and chairs for a dozen students. Simple wooden swings and a slide were also added in the open space at the front of the Building as recreation for the students. The kindergarten was closed in 1966, when Miu Tak and Cheung Tin Chan moved out of the Building, and the ownership of the property was returned to Miu Lin.

The current owner of the Building has been living in the Building since she was a child. She reminisced that they lived self-sufficiently by growing vegetables and fruits in the open space in front of the Building and by raising chickens only for their eggs. Living hard and simple, Miu Lin was very kind-hearted; whenever a typhoon attacked or torrential rain caused flooding, she would let the residents of nearby squatter huts to take temporary shelter on the ground floor of her house and provided them with food.

The Building contributes greatly as a tangible witness of the evolution and development of Kam Shan, and it demonstrates historical continuity as part of the cluster of Buddhist temples, monasteries and private worship residences in the area. In addition, the use of the Building as a kindergarten and as a typhoon shelter displays the virtue of Buddhism to selflessly take care of others.

Built on the northern slope of Kam Shan, No. 30 Kam Shan is a two-storey residence topped with a double-layer Chinese pan-and-roll tiled roof and fronted by a flat-roofed verandah. The Building reflects a mix of Chinese vernacular and Western features and is mainly constructed of granite blocks, which was a comparatively valuable building material in the old days. Its walls support the pitched roof of timber purlins and battens.

***Architectural
Merit***

The Building demonstrated a rather uncommon combination of construction materials used at the time of its construction in Kam Shan. The verandah at its frontage is structured with reinforced concrete slabs and beams supported by green brick-laid columns. It is designed with a set of tripartite openings on the front façade with vase-shaped balusters. The design of the verandah also reflects the cultural association with traditional *feng shui*

considerations, according to the owner: all three sides of the verandah are ornamented with a pair of oculi as the ‘eyes’, which, together with the arched opening as the ‘mouth’ to form a ‘face’ of a beast to counteract inauspicious elements in the surrounding areas. Unlike the external and internal walls of the Building, which are generally rendered and painted, there are dressed granite blocks with ribbon pointing exposed at the portion opening to the verandah.

Demonstrating a typical layout of village houses built in the era, the Building with two storeys has a ground floor, cockloft and upper floor. Encaustic ceramic tiles paved on the ground floor are a typical architectural feature, similar to other residential buildings erected in this period. The cockloft and the first floor are constructed with timber floor planks laid over timber joists.

The cockloft is additionally supported by bearers over regularly spaced granite brackets installed on the gable walls. Different levels of the Building are connected by timber staircases and ladders. The two flights of timber staircase connecting the ground floor with the cockloft and the first floor are complemented with timber balustrades embellished with newel posts with ball tops at the corners and banisters supporting the handrail.

All doors and windows, except the casement windows facing the lightwell, are installed with security bars to protect the Building from burglars. In particular, the timber panel doors with fanlights at the main entrance are equipped with a set of metal sliding gates decorated with volute ornaments.

It appears that no large-scale alterations or additions have been made to the exterior of the Building. Architectural features and elements such as the decorative elements of the verandah and the timber roof system were mostly kept intact and mostly retained in fair condition. Later alterations included the replacement of windows and partitioning of rooms on the ground floor. These additions and alterations are generally reversible.

***Authenticity &
Rarity***

The Building is an uncommon example of granite-built village houses, comparing to many of the brick-built village houses during the era. The uncommon combination of construction materials also adds to the Building’s rarity.

Although the Building was mainly used as a place for retreat by Buddhist followers who lived a simple and quiet life, a kindergarten offering free

***Social Value
& Local***

early childhood education for underprivileged children was in operation on its ground floor for a decade or so. Moreover, the owner of the Building offered temporary shelter and food to people living in the nearby shanties during extreme weather occasions. The Building is meaningful for those who benefitted from such good acts. ***Interest***

No. 30 Kam Shan, together with the neighbouring Residence of Wong Se-wai, Pun Chun Yuen (半春園黃筱煒故居) (Grade 3), another Buddhist retreat, and Chiu Lo (超廬) (Grade 1), are examples of Kam Shan's gradual development as a newly emerged hub, where mixed Chinese and Western style buildings for meditation and retreat were built prior to and following the Second World War. ***Group Value***

The abovementioned buildings, as well as Man Mo Temple, Fu Shin Street (文武二帝廟) (Declared Monument) and the old Tai Po Market Railway Station (舊大埔墟火車站) (Declared Monument), have all witnessed the development of Tai Po Market.

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Historic Building Appraisal

To Kwa Wan Substation

No. 82 To Kwa Wan Road, Kowloon City, Kowloon

To Kwa Wan Substation (土瓜灣變電站) is situated on Kowloon Inland Lot No. 6011 at the junction of Sheung Heung Road (上鄉道) and To Kwa Wan Road (土瓜灣道), which was sold to the China Light & Power Company, Limited (中華電力有限公司), the forerunner of today's CLP Power Hong Kong Limited in 1948. According to the conditions of the land lease, the building erected there was to be used as an electrical transforming and switching substation.¹

**Historical
Interest**

The CLP Power Hong Kong Limited is one of the two main electricity power generation companies in Hong Kong, the other being the Hongkong Electric Company. Its forerunner, the China Light & Power Company, Limited was incorporated in Hong Kong in 1901 with the aim of providing electricity to Kowloon. After the Second World War, the company underwent rapid expansion to meet the ever growing industrial demand for electricity, hence playing a role in Hong Kong's export-driven economic boom.

As the overwhelming majority of the new and expanded industries in the early post-war period were located in Kowloon, the China Light & Power Company, Limited expected that there would be huge potential growth in the demand for electricity in Kowloon.² As such, the company increased the productivity of its power plant in Hok Yuen (鶴園). Between the late 1940s and early 1950s, it built several substations in Kowloon³ including those at Prince Edward Road (the present-day Sai Yee Street Substation, rebuilt in 1986⁴), Kau Pui Shek (built in 1951⁵), Kimberley Road (built in 1950⁶), Rutland Quadrant (rebuilt in 1968⁷) and Anhui Street (the present-day Ma Tau Wai

¹ <九龍電燈公司投得土瓜灣公地一段>，《工商日報》，1948年6月8日；HKRS63-8-2991, *K.I.L.* 6011, dated 2 October 1958 – 28 October 1968.

² Nigel Cameron, *Power: The Story of China Light* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 170-177.

³ Nigel Cameron, *Power: The Story of China Light* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.177.

⁴ Building Authority's Office, Non-domestic Permit (File Ref.: K40/86), 15 December 1986.

⁵ Building Authority's Office, Non-domestic Permit (File Ref.: ND125/51), 31 July 1951.

⁶ Building Authority's Office, Non-domestic Permit (File Ref.: ND181/50), 25 September, 1950.

⁷ Building Authority's Office, Permit to occupy a new building (File Ref.: NK53/68), 24 May 1968.

Substation, probably built in 1950⁸). To Kwa Wan Substation was one of those built during the early post-war period to cope with the increased industrial load.⁹

Built in 1949,¹⁰ To Kwa Wan Substation was originally one-storey high. Two storeys were later added in 1959 as the staff quarters of the China Light & Power Company, Limited.¹¹ From 1981 to the 1990s, a portion of the ground floor of the building, facing To Kwa Wan Road, was used as a cashier-cum-customer service centre for the payment of electricity bills and for public enquiries about electricity accounts.¹² The substation on the ground floor is still in use today and distributes electricity to the nearby neighbourhood.

To Kwa Wan Substation is a three-storey building constructed with reinforced concrete. It is U-shaped in plan. The building has curved corners which exhibits the influence of Streamline Moderne. It also demonstrates features of modernist architecture, including a flat roof, decorative and utilitarian elements like horizontal bands running around the building and regular window fenestrations with projecting overhangs. Connecting the three floors is a staircase finished with terrazzo. A chimney stack, connecting to the kitchens of the staff quarters down below, can still be found on the roof. There is a black painted plinth all the way around the building and black coloured marble cladding has been fixed to the street frontage of the substation. **Architectural Merit**

The architect of the building was Faitfone Wong (黃培芬), one of the renowned Chinese architects in Hong Kong. He was an Associate Professor of the Faculty of Architecture in Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou (廣州中山大學建築工程系副教授) before he resided in Hong Kong in the 1940s. He was a founder member of the Hong Kong Society of Architects (香港建築師公會) in 1956, today's Hong Kong Institute of Architects (香港建築師學會) and a Director of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (東華三院) in 1960.¹³

⁸ "China Light Capital Increase Approved", *South China Morning Post*, 18 December 1950.

⁹ "Charges to be Reduced", *South China Morning Post*, 28 November 1948.

¹⁰ Building Authority's Office, Non-domestic Permit (File Ref.: ND45/49), 26 April 1949.

¹¹ "Proposed Addition of Two Storeys to Substation at To Kwa Wan Road on K.I.L. 6011", Drawing No. 3841/C1179/1, File No. 2/4615/58, approved on 1 June 1959.

¹² HKRS808-3-327, *Crown Leases K.I.L.6011, NKIL4741 Conditions 5208, 11184 Memorial No. 2397756 - 2397800 Memorial No. 2398601 - 2398709, 1954-1983*; Memorial UB4171131; "China Light & Power Co., Ltd.", *South China Morning Post*, 23 May 1981; "Layout of Ground Floor and Vertical Drainage Diagram, Addition and Alteration Works for the Existing Cashier / Customer Centre on K.I.L. 6011 J/O To Kwa Wan Road and Sheung Heung Road, Kowloon", Drawing No. A1/2, File No.: 2-3/7615/58, approved on 19 September 1990.

¹³ <東華三院新總理略歷>, 《華僑日報》, 1960年4月1日。

This type of building was once quite common but is now becoming rarer due to redevelopment. The building has built heritage value as a post-war modernist building, adopting a simple and functional approach with little decoration. The substation has undergone several alterations over the years. For instance, some of the original openings on the ground floor have been altered and covered by later-added walls and marble panels. The old metal windows on the exterior have been replaced by aluminium windows, while some old internal windows in the staff quarters are still retained. According to both an old photo from 1960 and the approved Building Plan, the English names of the company and the substation were originally prominently inscribed on the facades facing Sheung Heung Road and To Kwa Wan Road. Each of these has been removed, and replaced with a new standardised brand logo and name, which have been fixed at the lower corner of the Sheung Heung Road elevation. Despite these alterations, the general layout and notable architectural features of the building, including the flat roof, curved corners, long horizontal bands and the position of windows on the first and second floors still remain.

Authenticity & Rarity

The building previously provided multi-purpose spaces to maximise usage, including providing electricity to the community, serving as a cashier-cum-customer service centre and providing quarters for the staff of China Light & Power Company, Limited. As long as the substation is in use, it bears social value by serving the community in the neighbourhood.

Social Value & Local Interest

To Kwa Wan Substation is within walking distance from a number of historic buildings, including Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot (Grade 2), Passenger Pier of Kowloon City Ferry Piers (Grade 2), Kowloon City Vehicular Ferry Pier (Grade 2), Tin Hau Temple of To Kwa Wan (Grade 3) and No. 65 Ha Heung Road (Grade 3). In terms of its function as a power utility, it is also related to the CLP Power Hong Kong Limited Administrative Building (Grade 1), the Gough Hill Substation (Grade 3) and the Victoria Gap Substation (Grade 3).

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Historic Building Appraisal

Dam of the Former Jordan Valley Reservoir

Kwun Tong, Kowloon

Lying across Jordan Valley is a masonry dam (the “Dam”) of the former Jordan Valley Reservoir (佐敦谷水塘) (the “Reservoir”), which was completed in 1961 to supply flushing water to meet growing demand from the residential and industrial development in the nearby areas, including Ngau Tau Kok, Jordan Valley Resettlement Estate in north Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay Reclamation areas.¹ **Historical Interest**

Jordan Valley had been the site of the New Kowloon No. 7 Cemetery since 1935.² There existed the Cemetery Road, which extended to the then future site of the Reservoir.³ After the Second World War, the cemetery site was chosen for the construction of Jordan Valley Reservoir and an order was issued in 1955 to move out the graves and urns.⁴ The construction of the Reservoir, which started in 1958, comprised a 90-feet (about 27.43 metre) high dam. After tackling some geotechnical difficulties, the construction of the Dam proceeded smoothly and completed in 1961.

The Reservoir was designed to impound 54 million gallons (204,412 cubic metres) of water to supply flushing water.⁵ In the rainy season, supplies would come from stream water and rain water collected in the catchment area. During periods of low yield in the dry season, it was supplemented with sea water from the pump house at Ngau Tau Kok, namely Jordan Valley Salt Water Pumping Station and later from Kwun Tong Salt Water Pumping Station.⁶

It is worth noting that Hong Kong suffered keenly from water shortages in the early 1960s and the Government resorted to implementing water rationing. From May 1963, water supply was restricted to four hours in every two days. In less than a month, the restriction was further tightened to four hours of water supply every four days.⁷ To alleviate the water emergency, the Reservoir was

¹ Public Works Department, *Annual Department Reports, 1959-1960*.

² Government Notification No. 784, *Hong Kong Government Gazette*, 11 October 1935.

³ HKRS287-1-652, *Salt Water Flushing System - Jordan Valley Salt Water Pumping Station*, July 1958 – June 1969.

⁴ <牛池灣七號墳場遷葬限期漸迫>，《華僑日報》，1955年10月26日。

⁵ Public Works Department, *Annual Department Reports, 1960-1961*.

⁶ HKRS287-1-652, *Salt Water Flushing System - Jordan Valley Salt Water Pumping Station*, July 1958 – June 1969.

⁷ *Hong Kong Report for the Year 1963*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer, 1964, p.241.

temporarily turned into an emergency potable water source in late 1963.⁸

From the time when the Reservoir was commissioned, silt and rubbish continually washed down from upstream catchments, resulting in siltation and pollution problems. In 1971, the then Water Works Office found that the precipitation of debris due to discharge of waste was so heavy that the Reservoir had lost 15% of its storage volume. By 1981, the Reservoir had silted up to a level above the highest draw-off point that it had to be taken out of service. From time to time, people had been drowned in the Reservoir⁹ and this might also be a reason for its decommissioning.

In 1982, the Reservoir was planned to be converted into a landfill site.¹⁰ The site came into operation in 1986 and the Dam has been remained as the testimony of the Reservoir. Around the same time, a channel was built at the eastern end of the Dam to lead rainwater as well as the effluent from the landfill area to an open nullah downstream.¹¹ To substitute for the decommissioned Jordan Valley Reservoir, a new salt water storage reservoir, i.e. the current Jordan Valley Salt Water Service Reservoir was built.¹² The landfill site was closed in 1990.

Situated at the Reservoir's west end, the Dam is a concrete gravity type dam with boulders as displacer. A concrete walkway with tubular galvanized iron railings on either side, is running along the crest of the Dam. The sloping downstream face of the Dam is faced with stone pitching while the vertical upstream face is lined with a concrete diaphragm wall with higher cement ratio as a watertight element, which is currently not visible because of the landfill. **Architectural Merit**

At one side of the Dam is a later added L-shaped concrete watercourse studded with concrete and masonry blocks to break up the velocity of the

⁸ HKRS287-1-652, *Salt Water Flushing System - Jordan Valley Salt Water Pumping Station*, July 1958 – June 1969.

⁹ <佐敦谷水塘小童遭溺斃>,《工商晚報》,1961年9月9日; <佐敦谷水塘小童捉魚失足溺斃>,《工商日報》,1964年4月22日; <佐敦谷水塘溺斃一小童>,《華僑日報》,1964年7月20日; <佐敦谷水塘遇溺少年屍體昨浮出>,《大公報》,1965年5月24日; <佐敦谷水塘垂釣小童墜入塘中兩日來無踪影>,《華僑日報》,1966年6月1日; <佐敦谷水塘捉魚蝦青年慘遭滅頂>,《大公報》,1966年7月24日; <佐敦谷水塘男童溺斃>,《工商日報》,1968年11月17日。

¹⁰ <觀塘區議會設小組監管撥擻處理問題>,《華僑日報》,1982年2月19日。

¹¹ Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, "Map of March 1985" (Map ref.: 11-NE-13C).

¹² "Reservoir bids sought", *South China Morning Post*, 25 June 1984.

stream's flow. This watercourse discharges via a weir and spillway into an open nullah in front of the Dam.

The Dam shared many similarities to other existing reservoir dams constructed in Hong Kong in the mid-20th century in terms of design and material used. Unlike other fresh water reservoirs, Jordan Valley Reservoir however was part of the flushing water supply system. The authenticity of the Dam has been compromised by the fact that the channel constructed on its eastern end caused the Dam to be deviated from its original form. The earlier conversion of the Reservoir to a landfill site did not involve the demolition of the Dam, but did alter its function and setting.

Authenticity & Rarity

As an integral part of the Reservoir for two decades since 1961, the Dam contributed to meeting the flushing demands of the rapidly-developing residential and industrial town of Kwun Tong area. It is worth mentioning that the Reservoir was used as a source of tap water during the water emergency in 1963. Currently, the Dam becomes a site of local interest visited by hikers.

Social Value & Local Interest

The Dam, which bears witness to the unfolding history of Hong Kong's public water supply, has group value with a number of declared and graded waterworks installations which supply water to Kowloon area, including the main dam, main dam valve house, spillway dam, spillway dam recorder house and recorder house of Kowloon Reservoir (Declared Monuments); the dam and valve house of Kowloon Reception Reservoir (Grade 1); the dam and valve house of Kowloon Byewash Reservoir (Grade 2); the southwest dam, northeast dam and valve house of Shek Lei Pui Reservoir (Grade 2).

Group Value

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Historic Building Appraisal

Hung Hom Clinic

No. 22 Station Lane, Hung Hom, Kowloon

Built in 1959, the building where Hung Hom Clinic (紅磡診所) is situated used to be the Hung Hom Maternity Home and Clinic (紅磡三約街坊會留產所) set up by the Hung Hom (Three Districts) Kaifong Association (the “Association”) (紅磡三約街坊福利會). **Historical Interest**

The village of Hung Hom, previously called “赤壠村” (Chik Hom Chuen), was recorded in *Xin'an Gazetteer* (《新安縣志》) published in 1819¹. It was a small agricultural village with inhabitants mainly surnamed Tsang (曾) and Lee (李)². After the establishment of the Union Dock Company in Hung Hom in 1864, which later amalgamated with the Hong Kong and Whampoa Dock Company in 1870, and the opening of the Green Island Cement Company in the area in 1898³, the population grew dramatically due to increased employment opportunities from these large-scale industries and other smaller factories set up in the area.⁴ The construction of Hok Un Power Station between 1919 and 1921 further attracted more Chinese migrants to the area.

Hung Hom Sam Yeuk Kung Sor⁵ (紅磡三約公所) was set up in 1902 to provide welfare services for the residents of three nearby districts, viz. Hung Hom, To Kwa Wan and Hok Un (Yuen) (鶴園⁶). In 1952, the Hung Hom Sam Yeuk Kung Sor was reorganised as the Hung Hom (Three Districts) Kaifong Association. In view of the growing population of the district, the Association decided in 1955 to build a maternity home to provide free delivery services for

¹ Xin'an County roughly followed the administrative boundaries of modern-day Hong Kong and the city of Shenzhen. *The Map of the Sun-On-District* by Simeone Volonteri in 1866 was the first to indicate the word “紅壠”, which is the earliest record of Hung Hom in literature.

² The village was composed of forty-four premises held under thirty-four individuals, of whom eleven bore the surname Tsang and nine bore the surname Lee. Near the village was 31 *mow* (畝) of land under cultivation. These were also largely held by the Tsang and Lee families. (Carl Smith, James Hayes, “Hung Hom: An Early Industrial Village in Old British Kowloon”, *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol.15 (1975), p. 319)

³ The Green Island Cement Company was established in Macao and moved its factory to Hung Hom in 1898. Its huge factory once had a 3,000-member workforce.

⁴ The Whampoa Dock was essential to the development of the Hung Hom community; in its heyday, it employed more than 7,000 people.

⁵ There are two spellings of the English translation for 公所 used by government departments: kung sor and kung sho.

⁶ Also called “鶴圓角”.

the less privileged expectant mothers. After three years of fundraising work by the Association by means of public donations and a Cantonese opera charity performance⁷, the construction of the maternity home started in October 1958. As the Whampoa Dock financially supported \$50,000 for the project, the foundation stone of the building was laid by Mr. Lawrence Kadoorie, the then Director of Whampoa Dock⁸, on 21 February 1959. The Green Island Cement Company also supported the project by supplying cement at a reduced price⁹. The building was completed at a cost of \$160,000 and was formally opened on 30 June 1959 by Dr. D. J. M. MacKenzie (麥敬時醫生), the then Director of Medical and Health Services. At that time, it had an out-patient room, a waiting room, an injection room, a dispensary and an office on the ground floor, a delivery room with 12 beds and an isolation room of two beds on the first floor, and quarters for nurses, midwives and amahs on the second floor.

Nowadays, the building no longer serves as a maternity home. Taken over by the Government in 1984, the building has since housed various medical institutions. The ground floor has become the Hung Hom Clinic under the Hospital Authority providing out-patient service. The first floor was once the Hung Hom Maternal and Child Health Centre under the Department of Health. First housed on the ground floor of the building, the Hung Hom Methadone Clinic, also under the Department of Health, moved to the second floor in 2017. Since the Hung Hom Maternal and Child Health Centre closed in 2013, the first floor has been shared by the Hung Hom Methadone Clinic and the Hung Hom Clinic.

Designed by Hazeland & Co. Architects (希士倫則師行) and constructed by Tai Chung Construction Company, the reinforced concrete building is a Modernist function-oriented three-storey architecture with minimal ornaments and decorative elements. *Architectural Merit*

The front elevation, facing Station Lane, has an austere

⁷ The charity Cantonese opera was performed by Sun Yim Yeung Opera Troupe (新艷陽劇團), starring the famous Cantonese opera performers Sun Ma Sze Tsang (新馬師曾) and Fong Yim Fun (芳艷芬).

⁸ The Kadoories went on to develop commercial interests including electricity and gas, wharves, docks and shipyards, etc. Besides Whampoa Dock, the Kadoories also invested in China Light and Power (CLP). In 1934, Lawrence Kadoorie was appointed as chairman, a position he held for 39 years.

⁹ The Green Island Cement Company sold 3,600 packs of cement at a discounted price.

cement-rendered façade featuring long linear cantilevered balconies with an eave extending from the balcony above the main entrance. Other elevations are plain painted façade with framed windows complementing the window features on the front elevation.

With a simple rectangular plan, the different levels of the building are connected by two flights of staircases, the roof access staircase retains mosaic tile flooring. Mosaic tile flooring is also adopted on the balcony, while other internal spaces are paved with vinyl flooring.

The exterior of the Hung Hom Clinic does not appear to have undergone many alterations, except for the replacement of aluminium frame windows. The internal layout and the interior, however, were extensively modified in its conversion from a maternity home into an outpatient clinic and a methadone clinic. The installation of a lift at the back of the building in 2017 – 2018 has altered the building form.

Authenticity & Rarity

The Hung Hom Clinic shares similarities in its architecture with other clinics constructed in the same period, including the building form, construction method and materials, but its balconies make it distinguishable from other similar buildings of its type.

In the post-war period of the 1940s and 1950s, there was a large number of industrial work and factories within the districts of Hung Hom, To Kwa Wan and Hok Un that attracted many low skilled workers resided in these areas. The distance between Hung Hom and other hospitals operated by the Government or other charitable organisations in Kowloon had made it difficult for expectant mothers to travel to attend obstetrics check-up and to give birth to their babies, and the establishment of a free maternity home in Hung Hom was a great boon for the low wages expectant mothers living in the areas at the time. From a maternity home to a building of various medical institutions, the building served pregnant women, babies and infants for over half a century, and today it serves people from all walks of life in the neighbourhood.

Social Value & Local Interest

Kwun Yam Temple (觀音廟) at Station Lane (Grade 1) is adjacent to the Hung Hom Clinic.

Group Value

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