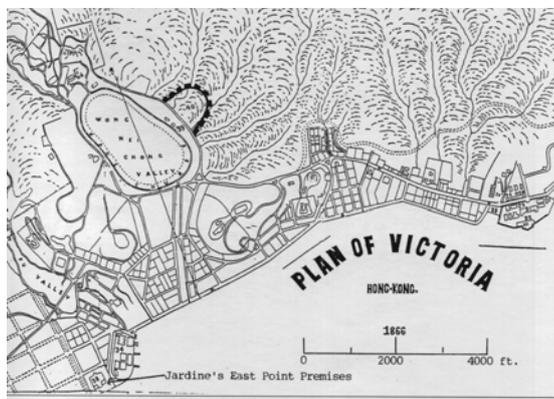


Rozzers Rest Hollywood Road



The First Police Married Rank & File Quarters in Hollywood Road

By Brian Coak



The Cession of Hong Kong Island

Monday 25 January 1841 the British Navy ship the 'HMS Sulphur' landed on Hong Kong Island, a part of Po'An County, as 'the bona fide new possessors' drank the health of Queen Victoria on Possession Mount.

26 January 1841 the following day from a small port on the Pearl River virtue of the Treaty of Nanking, a naval force arrived Commodore J.J. Gordon Bremer, Senior Naval Officer, Charles Elliot Plenipotentiary and other squadron officers aboard 'HMS Calliope' went ashore appropriately called Possession Point 水坑口街 (Shui Hang Ha), a small hill at present-day Hollywood Road Park. There the British Flag was raised with a marine's 'feu-de-joie' followed by a royal salute from the ships of war taking formal possession of Hong Kong Island. Also present at the ceremony were some well known Indian merchants and James Matheson.

The British military went ashore on the steep slopes of Hong Kong island to commence building administrative offices, formation of a fledging thirty two European and Indian green uniformed 'luk yee' police force with a budget of £1,400. A court and prison for convicted pirates and thieves for which there were many. Not forgetting a race course and cemetery for the high death rate among the fever haunted personnel.



Central & Sheung Wan Districts

Central and Sheung Wan districts were among the oldest administrative, financial, political and security hub invested in protection of life and property over all non-Chinese and Chinese inhabitants according to the customs and usages of British law and Daqing luli 大清律例 [Qing Code]. See Government offices, court and prison in 1843 above. Thereafter, the urban infrastructure developed hell pell to what Hong Kong is today but has resulted in many historical buildings falling to the unmerciful wrecking ball.

There is one old urban site near Hollywood Road which has survived with two buildings standing not unique or of great architectural outstanding merit but still of historical and social interest - the First Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road built for local police married rank and file officers in Hong Kong in 1951. These police married quarters represented an innovation of welfare for the force following WW II.

Historical Background

The site of the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road is one of the historic sites along the Central and Western Sheung Wan heritage trail. Since 1841 Sheung Wan during the 19th century and 20th century on the virtual barren rock became a Chinese residential and commercial district.

In 1851 large numbers of Chinese refugees flooded into Hong Kong escaping from the civil unrest caused by the Taiping Rebellion in China 1851-1864. The formative colonial Government commenced developing Sai Ying Pun and Wan Chai for the immigrants by extending the boundary eastwards and westwards. Tai Ping Shan District and Sheung Wan became overcrowded with Chinese simple most unhygienic tenement houses.



In the early 20th century, private brothels developed along Hollywood Road and Aberdeen Street collectively known as Ho Chi Ap Dao 荷池鴨道.

Brothels were also found in Shing Wong Street, Gough Street, Gage Street, Graham Street, Tung Street, West Street and Elgin Street. (Government only prohibited prostitution in 1935)

In 1856, the new boundary of Victoria City was promulgated in the Hong Kong Government Gazette. The City was divided into seven districts, Sei-Ying-Poon, Sheong-Wan, Tai-Ping-Shan, Choong-Wan, Ha-Wan, the village of Wong-Nei-Choong and Soo-Koan Poo.

In 1864 adjacent to Victoria Prison, Central Police Station, the first Police Headquarters in Hong Kong, was constructed. Three other police stations were built in Sheung Wan and Central, including No. 9 Police Station on Shelley Street (1853), No.5 Police Station at the junction of Wellington Street and Queen's Road Central (1857) and No. 8 Police Station at Po Yee Street (1870).

In 1894, Tai Ping Shan District suffered a severe plague epidemic. When the epidemic subsided in 1895, at least 2,500 people had died from the plague. To improve the sanitary conditions in Hong Kong, the government built more public latrines in Victoria City. Some

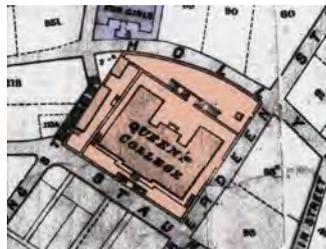
Founded in 1862-1889 at Gough Street, the Central School was the first government school providing upper primary and secondary education for Chinese boys living in colonial Hong Kong.

In 1877, the Board of Education recommended to move the Central School from Gough Street to the site (where the former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters now stands)

The site was encircled by Aberdeen Street, Hollywood Road, Shing Wong Street and Staunton Street, where Rangel's Estate was originally occupied. After all the buildings on the site of Rangel's Estate were torn down in the late 1870s and early 1880s for construction of the new school premises starting in 1884.

On 26th April 1884, the foundation stone was laid by Sir George Bowen, the ninth Hong Kong Governor. The edifice was considered as the largest building costing \$250,000 to build apart from the City Hall. The school building was built by the prisoners of Victoria Gaol. The new building was completed and occupied in August 1889. The Central School was a splendid Victorian neo-classical style structure of the period. In 1889, there were 29 teaching staff and 919 students studying in Victoria College. Five years later, the Government Gazetted a change of name of the school from Victoria College to Queen's College. The old site of Central School was then occupied by Belilios Public School in 1893.

Queen's College Site and Building



1941-1945 Japanese Occupation

The school was temporary closed and occupied by the Japanese as the headquarters of a contingent of Japanese cavalry. The desks were used as feed boxes for horses. Subsequently, the Japanese abandoned the building. The school building caught fire and received bomb damage towards the end of the war.

In 1946, the school was reopened at No. 26 Kennedy Road which was previously used as a primary school by the Japanese since around 1935. The Queen's College building at Hollywood Road was finally torn down in 1948.

After the Japanese Occupation



European officers, families and civilians who were rounded up in 1941 by the Japanese military and interned in Stanley and POW camps, some were able to resume to their former posts in 1945, but many of the internees were too weak to resume normal duties and were repatriated for rehabilitation until they were able return to Hong Kong.

Shortage of Police Quarters

After the Japanese Occupation, the small pre-war accommodation for single men was deficient. Some huts were built to ease the congested situation in 1950 and 1951. Two at Upper Levels Police Station, three at Kowloon Headquarters and one at Sham Shui Po could house four hundred men but accommodation remained inadequate.

In 1946, Duncan MacIntosh was appointed Commissioner of Police and carried out reforms improving police benefits, salaries and new police quarters.

New police quarters were built to improve the living conditions for all ranks. Some of them were attached to police stations, while some were built as individual buildings where no police station was located nearby.

The Chinese Civil War (1947-1949) ended with a communist victory on the mainland and the establishment of the People's Republic of China prompted another refugee exodus into Hong Kong. From 1947 to 1961, the Hong Kong's population increased from 1.8 million to 3.2 million. In order to cope with the burgeoning needs of community, government institutional buildings, market and schools were built near police married quarters. A new market was erected at Bridges Street in 1953, while Sheng Kung Hui Kei Yan Primary School was established in the old site of Belilios Public School in 1955.

First Married Police Quarters Hollywood Road

The Central School damaged by Allied bombing during World War II was demolished in 1948 to make way for the first Police Married Quarters for Chinese married junior police officers. The quarters were built to encourage force recruitment and to raise the morale of local Chinese police officers.

The new quarters were located on the site of the former Government 1889 Central School grand Victorian edifice one of the most expensive buildings in Hong Kong on completion and the site became the Hollywood Road first quarters for police rank and file married quarters in Hong Kong.

The Quarters comprised of two blocks for accommodation and an ancillary recreation building. Architecturally, the design of the three buildings followed post war 1950s resettlement housing style, simple and functional.



In 1950 the construction of the Police Married Quarters (PMQ) on Hollywood Road, No.35 Aberdeen Street, commenced.

The three new structures two living quarters Block A and B, and recreation centre was completed in 1951.

The structures built on the site of the former Central School retained some of the above ground boundary walls on the existing retaining walls above around the site. Some of the granite stairs were retained.

Steps Staunton Street to 1st Plateau



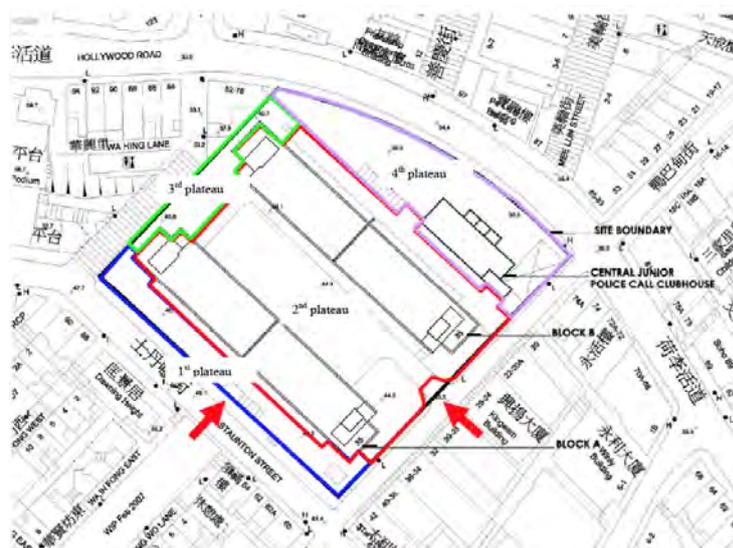
Steps from 2nd and 4th plateau



Rubble retaining walls



Quarters Block A and B Site Formation



Site Setting

The construction of PMQ retained the site of the four plateaus. The compound of three buildings, quarters (Block A and Block B) and the Junior Police Club (JPC) Building. The two quarters were built on the 2nd plateau, while the JPC Building was built on the 4th plateau. The open area between the two blocks on the 2nd plateau was used as a car park. The four plateaus are connected with staircases in the similar manner during the Queen’s College era.

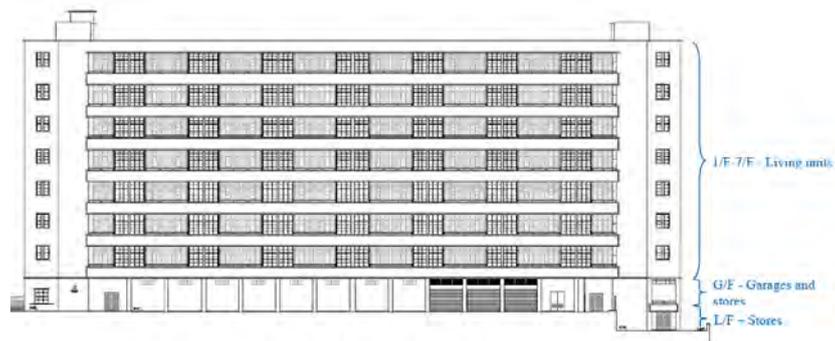
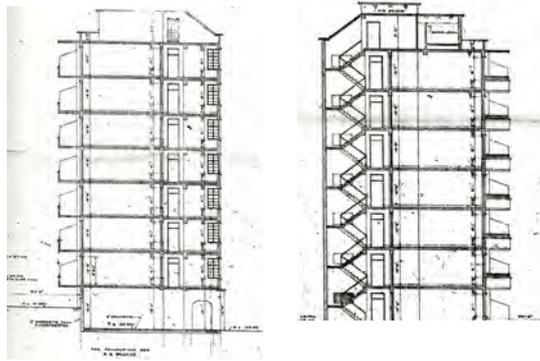


Fig. 134. Elevation of Block A of the former Police Married Quarters.

Cross Section Block A & B



The two quarters comprised (Block A) 8 and (Block B) 7 storeys high. The extra storey of Block A for garages and stores on the ground floor but not in Block B. Both blocks were built in a similar layout and functional. The two blocks are accessible from the car park on the 2nd plateau. Main entrances to the quarters are located on both ends of each block, where staircases and lifts are found accessible to the upper floors. The staircase at the north-western end of Block A and Block B lead down to the 3rd plateau. A staircase can further lead to the roof terrace.

The two quarters were designed for 196 living unit units. A number of the living units were designed so that they could be combined to form a two-roomed unit for senior N.C.O.'s.



Fig. 139. The corridor on the upper floor of Block A.

On the typical floor of both blocks, living units were arranged along a central corridor. Each living unit was provided with a living-bedroom of 23' x 12'8" (7m x 6.6m) size, a private balcony. A yard with drying lines for laundry, and a corresponding kitchen on the other side of the corridor except for two blocks which was used as a store. A communal laundry and latrines were at both ends of each typical floor. There were two staircases for vertical access with a lift at one end for each block.

On the roof, there were water tanks and a motor room above the lift shaft. The roof terrace was accessible by the staircases on each end of the block.

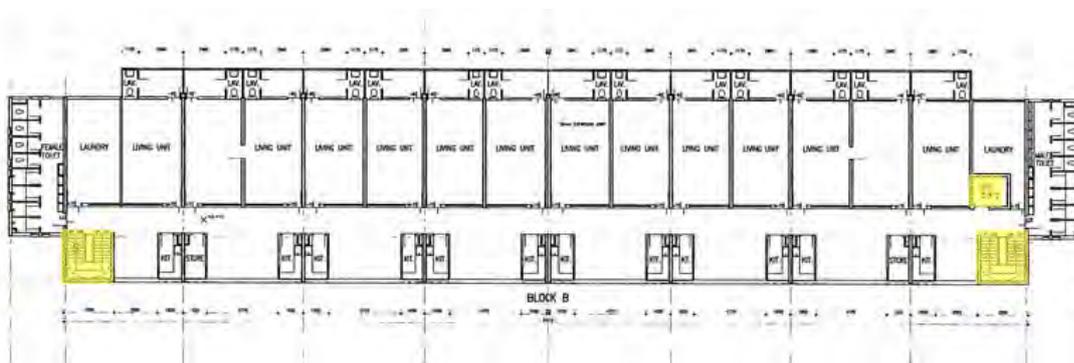


Fig. 195. Typical layout of Blocks A and B.

Functional Design



Fig. 166. The planning with living units arranged along a main circulation corridor

With an increase in population in the 1950s, resulted in buildings constructed quickly with no frills. It resulted in simple designs using reinforced concrete with flat roofs without decoration. The two quarters and the JPC Building are basically in cube form. The functional planning utilised the interior space fully. The interior

of the quarters living units were arranged along a main circulation corridor with common latrines similar to the 1950s public resettlement estates.

Recreation Centre (later became the JPC Building)



Fig. 153. Porch opening to the 4th platform on the front elevation of the JPC Building.

The 1951 two-storey recreation centre original layout of the ground and first floor of the recreation centre floor had a staircase lobby, lavatory and a large room, divided by sliding folding partitions. The big room was opened to a verandah at the front elevation of the building.

Improvement Works to Blocks A and B 1976



Fig. 143. Interior of a typical living unit at Block A.

It took 25 years before improvements for the residents were carried out to the quarters in 1976. A private toilet and shower space of (1.0m x 1.9m) size was installed at the balcony for each living unit. The communal areas were converted into play areas including an upgrade to enlarge the lifts for Block A and Block B. On the ground floor, four garages were enclosed with roller shutters or wall.

Typical Block A Balcony, Kitchen, and Toilet



Fig. 144. The balcony at a typical living unit at Block B.



Fig. 141. Interior of a kitchen on the upper floor of Block A.



Fig. 145. Interior of the toilet at the balcony of the typical living unit at Block B.

Inclusion of the Vacant Site for Sale

All quarter's residents were relocated before the year 2000 and the police married quarters were left vacant from February 2000. Since its vacancy in 2000 the future of the former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters left the interested public guessing like many other potential reuse heritage buildings.

In March 2005 the site was rezoned to "Government, Institution and Community" on the Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan in 1998. The site was included in the List of Sites for Sale by Application.

Disaster! In 2006 the Town Planning Board approved the development of two ghastly 43-storey residential towers with car parks on the site despite public opposition!

Revitalisation of Historic Buildings



To preserve and adaptive use some of the few historic buildings left, the Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam Kuen 曾蔭權 during his third time in office 2006 announced in his 2007-08 Policy Address that the site of the former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters will be removed from the list of sites for sale by application for a year and proposals invited on its reuse. Tsang's father Mr. Tsang

Wan 曾雲 was a member of the police force while his brother Mr. Tsang Yam Pui 曾蔭培 was the Commissioner of Police of Hong Kong between 2001 and 2003. The Tsang family initially lived in Room 408 at Block A and subsequently moved to a larger flat, Room 314 in the same block when the father was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Another prominent person when young who lived in the Hollywood police quarters was the Hon. Leung Chun Ying 梁振英 the current Hong Kong Chief Executive 2015. His father was one of police officers who was recruited from Wei Hai Wei 威海衛 in Shantung 山東 Province in the late 1920s. They lived in Room 603 Block B in the police married quarters.

It took ten years before the outcome of the site was finally settled! The government invited proposals for transforming the married quarters into a 'creative industries' landmark of Hong Kong in 2010.

Public Consultation and Antiquity Investigation

The Government published a three-month public consultation paper. Site investigation by the Antiquities and Monuments office (AMO), revealed valuable remnants on the former Central School. Both above ground and underground remains and relics were identified and excavated. The above ground architectural elements mainly the boundary walls and the retaining walls of the former Central School and foundations were found below.

Car park 2nd plateau excavation between Block A & B



PMQ Project

The project "PMQ" project aimed to revitalise the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road for heritage conservation in support of Hong Kong's creative industries. The conservation and revitalisation works commenced in 2011 and the facility was commissioned and open to the public in 2014.

Hollywood Road Quarters Adaptive Reuse Summary



Fig. 199. Proposed elevation of "PMQ" facing Hollywood Road.

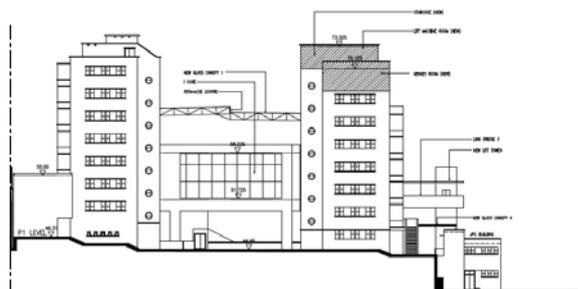
The PMQ project envisioned mainly the conversion of the two quarter residential blocks to meet new functional requirements for creative industries. Such as studios, offices, a creative resource centre, shops, restaurants or cafés. The works included conversion works of building structures to accommodate space for organising events promoting creative industries or similar activities. (See photo Artist's impression as envisioned)

Preservation works included the rubble retaining walls, quoins, granite shafts, plinths, gates, posts, steps of the former Central School and preserving the stone wall trees around the site. The project included the reprovision and construction of the three original openings of the former Central School. A new pedestrian opening at Staunton Street near its junction with Shing Wong Street to improve site public access.

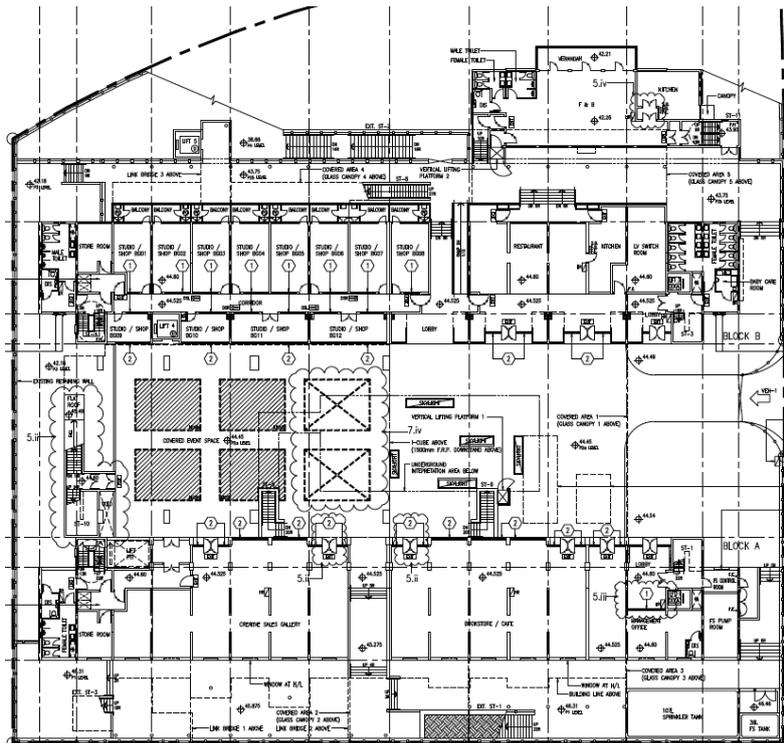
Block A and Block B Retention & Conversion Summary

1. Retain, reinforce and refurbish the two existing building blocks, Block A and Block B.
2. Convert the original residential units on G/F and 1/F into shops and gallery, while those on 2/F and above for studios for creative industries and ancillary facilities including accommodation for visiting artists.
3. Convert the topmost floor of Block B into a roof top restaurant. Mezzanine floor, alterations and additions to the internal structural partition walls to maintain the integrity of the elevation of the building.
4. Connect Block A and Block B on 2/F by an I-cube which is a fully enclosed function hall for public events.

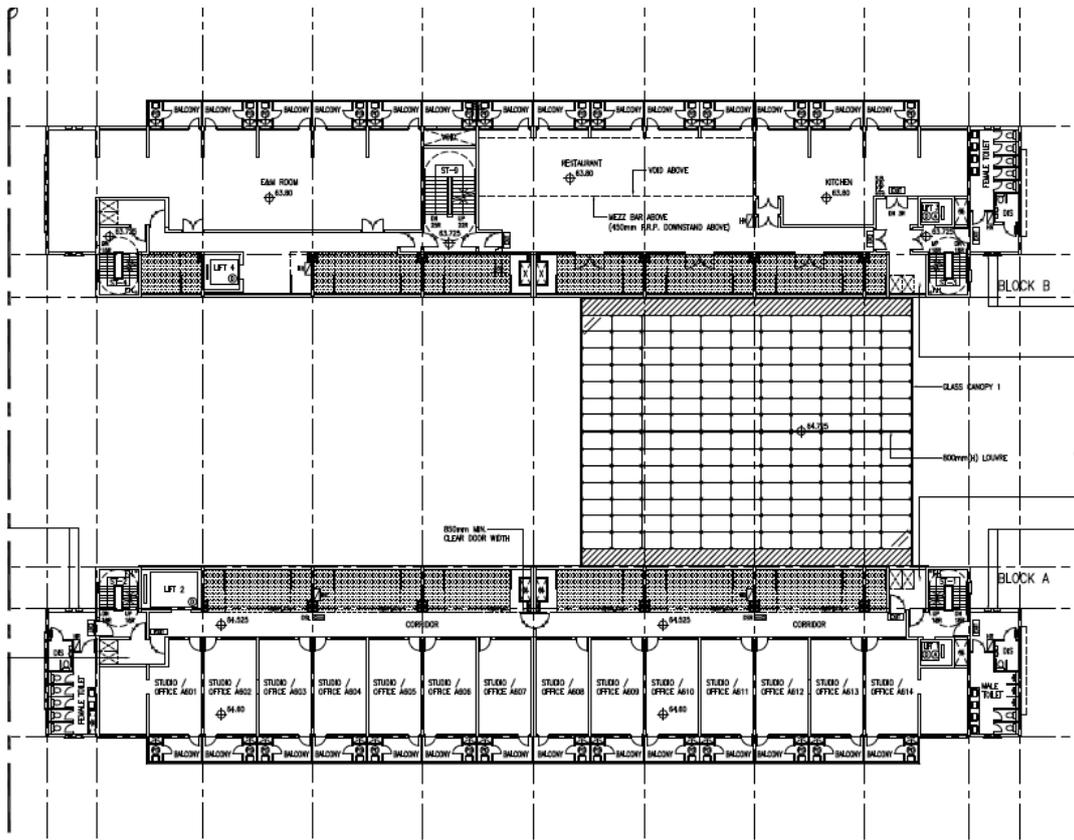
PMQ Sample Architectural Drawings - East Elevation



Ground Floor indicating viewing glass panels of remnants of Central School



Indicating glass canopy shaded and possible unit usage 6 Floor.



On previous walk-about since 2000 passing the old police married quarters at Hollywood Road one noticed the dilapidated state like other historical, social and cultural buildings of significance of public interest, such as the splendid old 1891 Aberdeen Police Station, just left wondering what the government intends to do with the buildings and sites!



On 9 February 2015 one ventured an easy stroll around Sheung Wan around Staunton, Aberdeen Streets and Hollywood Road old brothel area where change is slow but remains full of interest as ever. My main objective was to visit the newly revitalized former police married quarters in its new guise. On first glance from the Staunton Street entrance of the renaissance of the old married quarters Block A with its new white livery layer cake was a pleasant surprise.

Under its new glass cover between the two blocks A & B one was met with a goat!



After inspecting the 4th floor sitting out area then wandering through the renovated central corridors slipped into a number of the newly occupied units of the former living units.





One could not leave without visiting the exhibition showing some of the former quarter denizens.



The writer left the site at the Aberdeen Road exit and down the old street where I had a chat with an 82 year old lovely 'Ah Por' hawker lady as if things had not changed since 1950.



Brian Coak

Email: briancoak@gmail.com

Website www.kernowkid.com