

APPENDIX 3

HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Heritage Appraisal

1. Introduction

The applicant, namely, Si Mau Limited, proposes to develop a Social Welfare Facility (Residential Care Home for the Elderly) (RCHE) as a permitted use under the extant Draft Yuen Long Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL/26 (the OZP) at the southern part of the site at Lot Nos.1695 S.E ss. 1 RP, 1695 S.F ss.1, 1695 S.H RP (Part) and adjoining government land in D.D. 120, Tai Kei Leng, Yuen Long, New Territories (hereinafter referred to as “the Site”). The applicant is the sole registered land owner of these lots.

A s.16 planning application is to be submitted to the Town Planning Board (TPB) for proposed minor relaxation of Building Height restriction (BHR) on the Application Site from 3 storeys to 6 storeys for the permitted RCHE development. This Heritage Appraisal provides a thorough understanding of the site and buildings from a heritage point of view to support the s.16 planning application.

2. Project Outline

2.1 Site Particulars



Figure 1. Location of the Application Site

The Site is situated in the southern part of Yuen Long New Town, accessible via Tai Tong Road (Figure 1). It has an area of about 1,877.1 m² and falls within the street block bounded by Tai Tong Road to the east, Shap Pat Heung Road to the south, Tai Shu Ha Road East to the west, and Ma Tong Road to the north. The Site is situated in an area generally occupied by residential and village settlements. The Site, currently used as a temporary public car park, comprises a Grade 3 historic building known as “Siu Lo” (including its main building and annex block). The Main Building of Siu Lo situates on Lot no. 1695 S.E ss.1 RP and the Annex Block of Siu Lo situates partially on Lot no. 1695 S.E ss.1 RP and partially on 1695 S.F ss.1. (Figure 1 of the Planning Statement refers)

2.2 Proposed Development

A Conservation-cum-Development Scheme

The proposed RCHE is in line with the prevailing Hong Kong policies, including the Chief Executive’s Policy Addresses and the “HK2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” (HK2030+), to provide self-financing elderly facilities to address the aging population issues and the severe shortfall in the provision of elderly facilities. It has a gross floor area (GFA) of 6,600m² (excluding the covered car park and internal road), providing a total of 241 beds (or within a range of 220 – 260). As the proposed RCHE development is required to be 6 storeys tall, which exceeds the BHR of 3 storeys under the extant OZP, a s.16 planning application is prepared for submission to the Town Planning Board accordingly.

A conservation-cum-development scheme is proposed as the applicant intends to preserve the architectural and cultural merits of Siu Lo for the benefit of the general public. Siu Lo, including its main building and annex block, will be preserved entirely *in-situ*. To minimize the impact on Siu Lo, the new RCHE building is planned in the southern part of the Site, with no physical connection with the historic building. The new building will have a high headroom on the G/F; part of it (1/F and above) will be built over a portion of Siu Lo’s annex block without adding any structural load to it. The proposed new building will be built in a reversible manner, i.e., it will not affect the historic building when it is to be redeveloped in the future. The objective is to create a win-win situation in which both the public interest and the project’s financial viability could be properly attained.

Conservation of the Historic Building

Siu Lo was a private residence of an overseas Chinese family. In the proposed scheme, Siu Lo will remain as a freestanding building and the original use of Siu Lo as “House” will also be maintained. Siu Lo will be maintained and upkept in sound condition and allowed for free public visits with guided tours for appreciation of Siu Lo from the outside at regular intervals. Some interior areas such as the historic kitchen in the Annex Block of Siu Lo will be open for private tours for non-government organisations and schools. Interpretation panels or other interpretation media will be incorporated in these areas. The detailed arrangement of public visits and tours will be incorporated into the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and to the satisfaction of the Antiquities and Monuments Office. The applicant will check the existing sewerage, drainage, water supply, and electricity systems of Siu Lo and its Annex Block and the potential works required on these aspects to meet the future use of Siu Lo with consideration of the works required for the proposed RCHE building. The detailed works for Siu Lo will be subject to agreement with the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) and Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (CHO) and a CMP will be submitted to the satisfaction of AMO prior to commencement of any works.

Heritage Interpretation for the Public

The following measures, subject to agreement with AMO and CHO, are proposed:

1. The dilapidated parts of Siu Lo will be repaired to a better condition and safer state;
2. To minimize the need for internal alteration and changes, thus to best reflect its historical nature and appearances, Siu Lo will remain as its existing use of “house”;
3. The Applicant would reserve the internal area for private use at this stage and glazed doors/ windows will be partially provided at certain spot(s) to allow see-through of the internal area from outside; and
4. The Heritage Garden is available for free public visits through advance bookings, with display boards to allow public visitors to understand the background of Siu Lo, the original owner’s family life, and the history of the Tai Kei Leng and Yuen Long. Guided visits can be arranged once per month subject to further agreements with CHO and AMO.

2.3 Project Implementation

The project implementation is generally outlined as follows:

Conservation and Management Plan (CMP)

A CMP for the conservation of the main building and the annex block of Siu Lo as required will be prepared and submitted prior to commencement of any works and the CMP will be implemented to the satisfaction of AMO or the TPB. The applicant will engage a heritage consultant to prepare the CMP for submission.

Photographic and Cartographic Records

A full set of photographic and cartographic records of the main building and the annex block of Siu Lo will be submitted prior to the commencement of works to the satisfaction of the AMO or the TPB.

Construction and Repair Works

The whole project will be implemented under the supervision of appropriately qualified and experienced professionals. The necessary construction and repair work for Siu Lo will be carried out by a registered general building contractor/specialist contractor for the repair and restoration of the historic buildings.

3. Methodology

This historical appraisal references several international conservation charters and standards, including the Burra Charter and The Australia ICOMOS Conservation Plan.¹ A background study, baseline research, and field surveys have been conducted. Archival records, literature, old newspapers, historic photos, and maps, are collected and analyzed. The significance of Siu Lo is evaluated in terms of its historical, social, architectural, and group values. Based on these analyses, general recommendations for the appropriate conservation of the significance of Siu Lo and the future use of the Site are proposed in Section 7 of this heritage appraisal.

¹ Australia ICOMOS, “The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance” (Australia ICOMOS, 2013); James Semple Kerr, “Conservation Plan, the 7th Edition: A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance” (Australia ICOMOS, 2013).

4. Historical Interest

4.1 Tai Kei Leung

Siu Lo is situated in Tai Kei Leng (大旗嶺). Before 1910, the area comprising today’s Tai Kei Leng was a wasteland. The government sold the land to various buyers for cultivation during the 1910s, and since then, a multi-surnamed village comprising mainly non-indigenous inhabitants has been developed there. Nevertheless, the exact year that the name Tai Kei Leng was adopted by villagers was unclear. It was only in the 1950s that the name began to appear on some maps. Records show that Tai Kei Leng became a member village of Shap Pak Heung (十八鄉) between September 1956 and March 1958.² By 1965, Tai Kei Leng became one of the most populated areas in Yuen Long, accommodating more than 10,000 inhabitants.³ It was also the village with the largest area in Yuen Long. Today, Tai Kei Leng is one of the four non-indigenous villages among the 31 “existing villages” (現有鄉村) in Shap Pat Heung.⁴

There are several graded historic buildings in the vicinity of Siu Lo. Most of them are private residences located on the other side of Tai Tong Road. The group values of these buildings are studied in Section 4.4 of this heritage appraisal.

4.2 The Chan Family

The founder of Siu Lo was Chan Mo Tsing (陳慕青), alias Chan Ah Yuk (陳亞旭) or Chan Yuk Hung (陳毓紅).⁵ Chan Mo Tsing originated from Meixian in Guangdong Province. He migrated to Surabaya (泗水), the capital of East Java, Indonesia, and opened a grocery shop there, selling rice, oil, and so forth. Chan Mo Tsing made a fortune from businesses in the South Sea region. He brought back his wealth to Hong Kong and purchased some land and properties in Tai Kei Leng and other parts of Yuen Long. The land registry record shows that Chan Mo Tsing purchased the land lot 1695 S.E ss. 1 in DD120 on 9 September 1937. He then purchased 1695 S.F ss.1 on 7 July 1939. He also purchased 1695 S.H RP but the year of the land transaction was unknown. These three land plots formed the site for Siu Lo. The construction of Siu Lo was completed in 1941.⁶ According to the landowner, the residence’s Chinese name, “筱 (siu)”, has the same pronunciation as the term “小”. The name of the residence reflects the humbleness of Chan Mo Tsing.

Aside from the farmlands and properties he had purchased, Chan Mo Tsing owned a shop in Yuen Long San Hui. He donated thirty dollars for the renovation of Tin Hau Temple at Nga Yiu Tau (瓦窰頭天后廟), also known as Tai Shu Ha Tin Hau Temple (大樹下天后古廟). The Chinese words, “陳慕青捐銀叁拾大元”, were inscribed on a stone tablet dated 1938 inside the temple.⁷

² A record in September 1956 showed that Shap Pat Heung Rural Committee comprised of representatives from 27 villages. Tai Keng Leng was not one of them. Nevertheless, a news report in March 1958 indicated that Tai Kei Leng was a member village of Shap Pak Heung. As such, Tai Kei Leng was likely to be recognised as a member village of Shap Pak Heung between September 1956 and March 1958. See 〈十八鄉鄉事會定期選新主席〉,《香港工商日報》,1958年3月28日。

³ 〈十八鄉大旗嶺將選村代表 官方派流動隊前往登記戶主〉,《華僑日報》,1965年7月21日。

⁴ “Cap. 576 Rural Representative Election Ordinance” (2003), https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap576!en?INDEX_CS=&xpid=ID_1438403479684_001.

⁵ “Chan Mo Tsing (or Ching) Alias Chan Ah Yuk Alias Chan Yuk Hung,” 1956–60, HKRS96-1-5466-1, Public Records Office, Hong Kong.

⁶ Interview with Chan Leung Shan, the grandson of Chan Mo Tsing.

⁷ Antiquities and Monuments Office.

After the end of World War II, at the request of the British who re-occupied Hong Kong, the Hong Kong-Kowloon Brigade of the East River Column (東江縱隊港九獨立大隊) helped maintain social order in the New Territories. Self-defence units were organized during the period from September 1945 to September 1946. According to local inhabitants' reminiscences, Siu Lo was a focal point of activities of the self-defence units at that time.⁸ Nevertheless, Chan Leung Shan, the grandson of Chan Mo Tsing and a former owner of Siu Lo, said this information has never been verified. Neither his grandfather nor anyone in his family has told him that Siu Lo was used by the self-defence units.

Chan Mo Tsing passed away on 9 August 1953 at the age of 71. Following his will, Siu Lo was inherited by his wife, Yau Yin Yin, in 1955.⁹ The Chan family moved out of Siu Lo around the late 1970s. In 2014, they converted the open space of Siu Lo into a temporary rental car park. The ownership of Siu Lo remained in the hands of the Chan family until being sold to a private enterprise in 2017.

4.3 Development of the Site

No building plan is available from the government. The earliest aerial photo of the area from the Lands Department was taken in 1945. It shows that the Site abutted an unnamed alley and was surrounded by farmlands, which were the predominant land use in Yuen Long at the time (Figure 3). The construction of Siu Lo was completed in 1941. There were not many built structures erected nearby, making Siu Lo an outstanding building in the area. Not many roads have been developed to serve the Tai Kei Leng area. Tai Tong Road was yet to be built at that time.



Figure 3. Aerial photo in 1945 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

The historic aerial photo taken in 1956 shows that the areas surrounding Siu Lo continued to be dominated by farmlands. Tai Tong Road had already been completed by 1956 (Figure 4).

⁸ Antiquities and Monuments Office.

⁹ "Chan Mo Tsing (or Ching) Alias Chan Ah Yuk Alias Chan Yuk Hung," 1956-60, HKRS96-1-5466-1, Public Records Office, Hong Kong.



Figure 4. Aerial photo in 1956 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

A series of aerial photos taken in the 1960s and the 1970s show that more and more low-rise houses were erected in the Tai Kei Leng area (Figures 5 & 6). The former Yuen Long Baptist Church was built adjacent to Siu Lo in 1963. The church building was rebuilt in 2003.



Figure 5. Aerial photo in 1961 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)



Figure 6. Aerial photo in 1963 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

The natural stream that flew north to Yuen Long Town was re-diverted into a nullah in the mid-1960s (Figure 7). Most farmlands have vanished since the late 1970s. Low-rise and high-rise residential blocks had emerged in place of the low-rise village houses (Figures 8, 9, & 10).

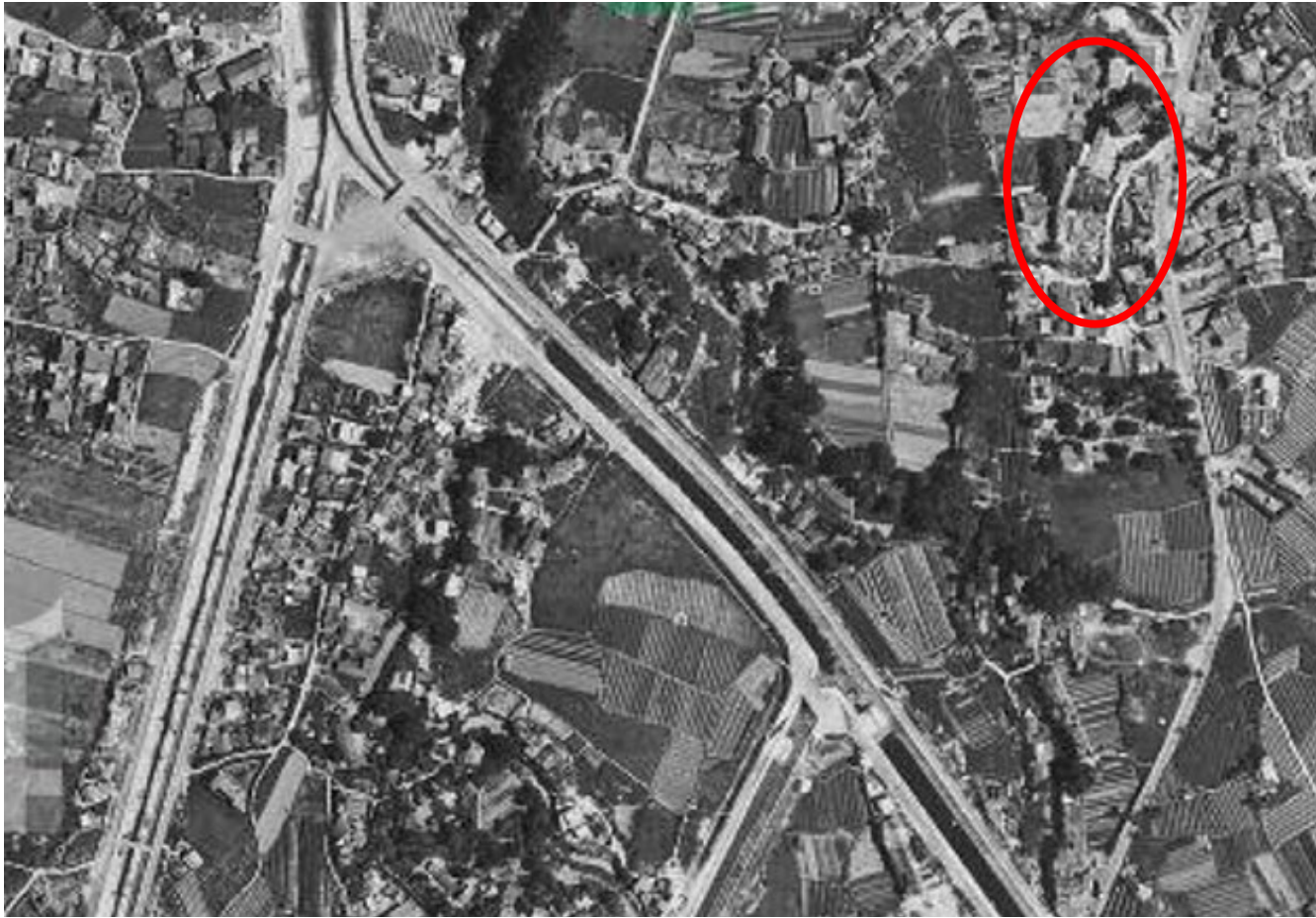


Figure 7. Aerial photo in 1967 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

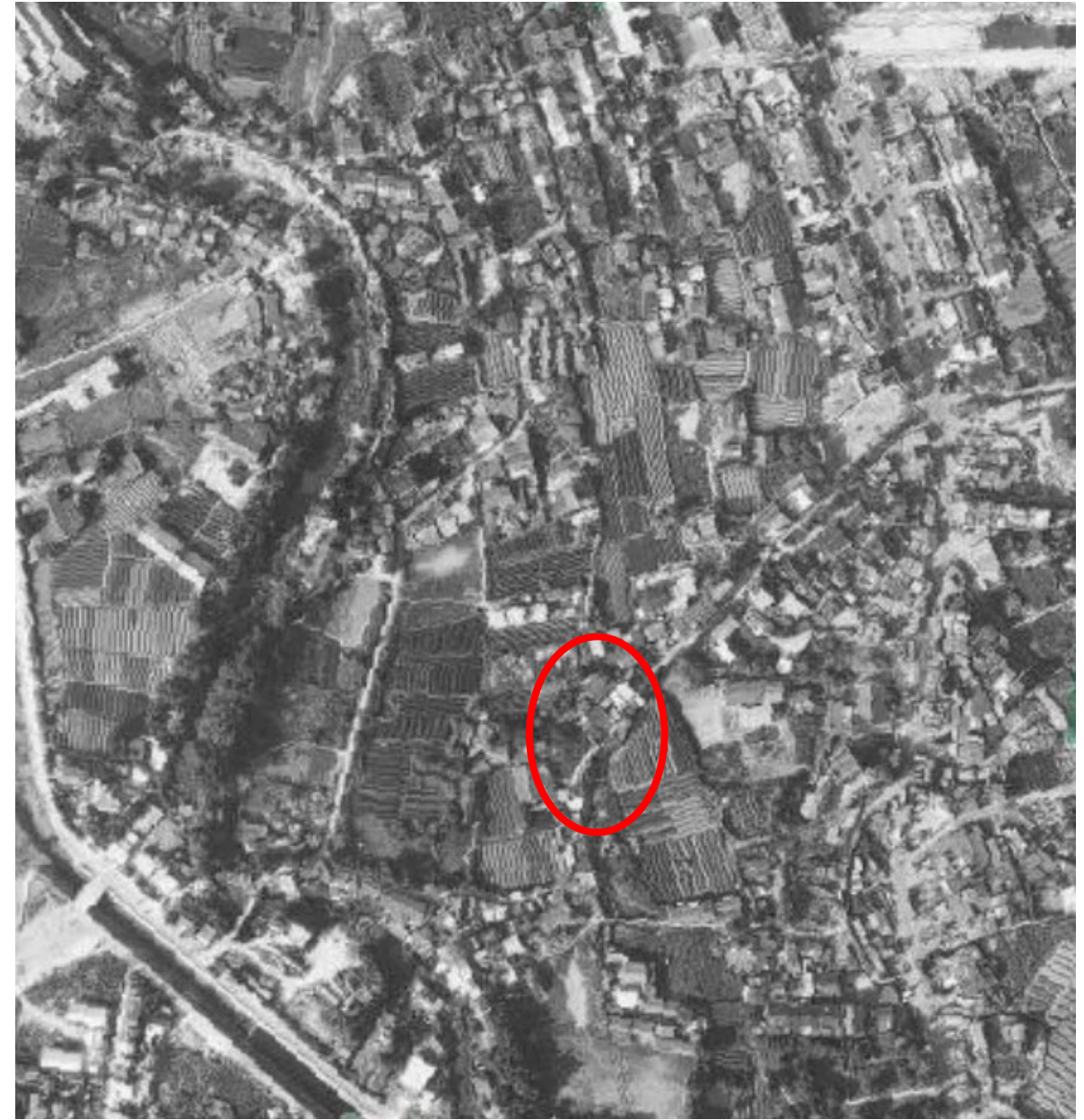


Figure 8. Aerial photo in 1973 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

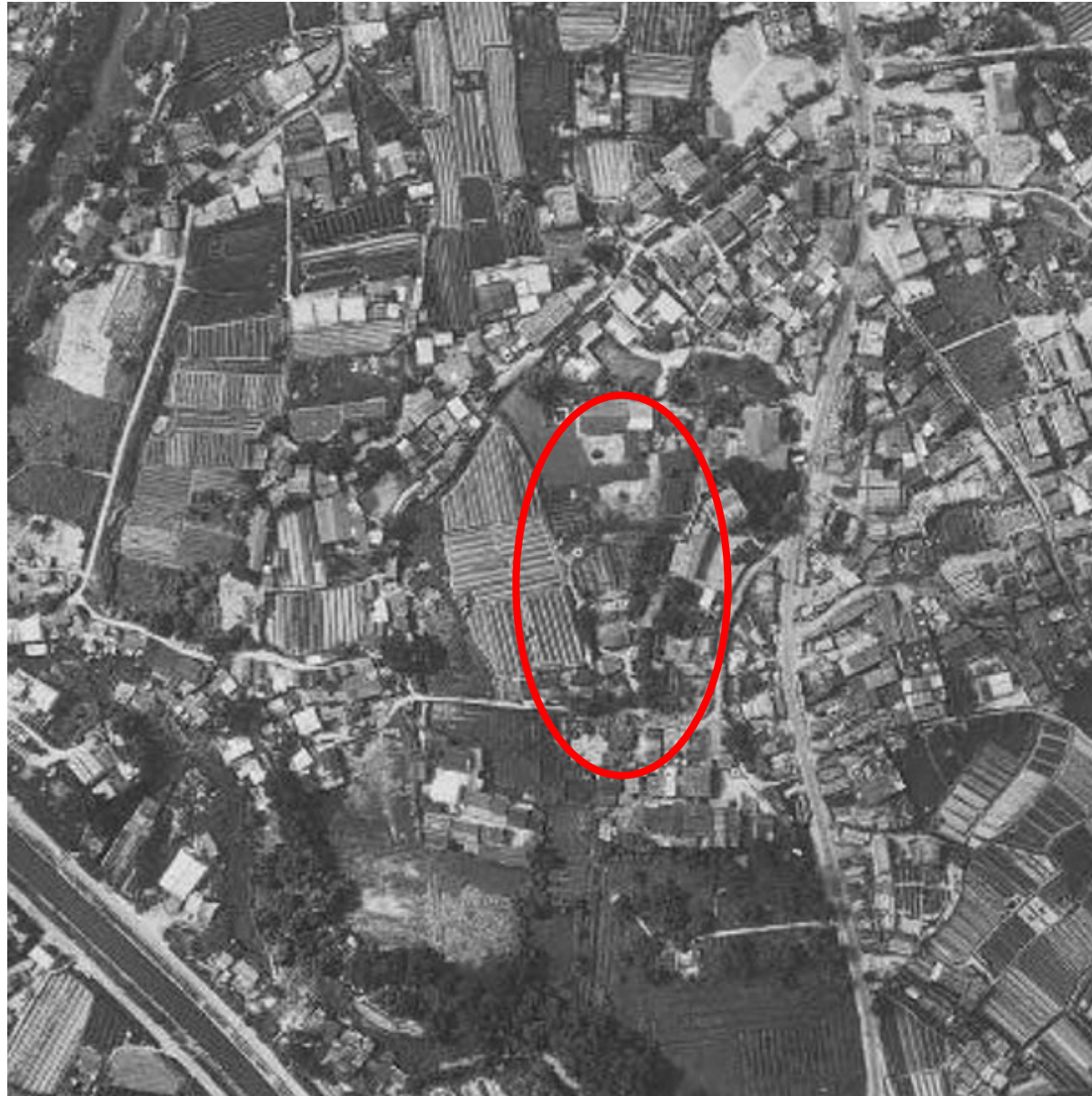


Figure 9. Aerial photo in 1977 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)



Figure 10. Aerial photo in 1979 (Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, HKSAR Government)

4.4 Graded Historic Buildings in the vicinity of Siu Lo

There are several graded historic buildings in the vicinity of Siu Lo (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Graded Historic Buildings in the vicinity of Siu Lo (extracted from GIS on Hong Kong Heritage on July 2021)

	Building	Year of Completion	Grading	Brief Descriptions
1	Ji Yeung Study Hall, No. 23 Tai Kei Leng	1924	Grade 3	The study hall was built by the Leung brothers to commemorate their father. The Leung family originated from Tai Shan, Guangdong.
2	No. 26 Tai Kei Leng	1920-1930	Grade 3	A private residence owned by the Leung brothers, who also built the Ji Yeung Study Hall.

3	No. 27 Tai Kei Leng	1920-1924	Grade 3	A private residence owned by the Leung brothers, who also built the Ji Yeung Study Hall.
4	No. 45 Tai Kei Leng Tsuen (Main Building)	1926	Grade 3	A private residence built by Fung Yin Yiu, an overseas Chinese from Canada.
5	No. 45 Tai Kei Leng (Entrance Gates and Enclosing wall)	1926	Grade 3	The entrance gate and enclosing wall to a private residence of the Fung family.
6	No. 112 Tai Kei Leng	1924-1925	Grade 3	A private residence of the Chung family.
7	No. 119 Tai Kei Leng	1928	Grade 3	A private residence built by Lam Bing Tak, a native of Xinhua, Guangdong. Lam later returned to New York.
8	No. 173 Tai Kei Leng	1927	Grade 3	A private residence of the Lam family originated in Xinhua, Guangdong. Many members of the Lam family later moved to Canada.
9	Nos. 186 & 188 Tai Kei Leng	1931	Grade 3	Private residences built by Li Mau Kei, a native of Shenzhen, Guangdong. Li later moved to Brazil.

Most of these graded historic buildings are private residences located on the eastern side of Tai Tong Road. Many of the original building owners were overseas Chinese or had connections abroad. Together with Siu Lo, this group of domestic architecture can show the life of the village people in the New Territories.

5. Architectural Merit

5.1 Architectural Description

Siu Lo comprises a 2-storey main building and a single-storey annex block attached to the house at an angle (Figure 12). The main building houses living rooms, a dining room, and bedrooms. The annex block, connected to the southwest of the main building at an odd angle, comprises a living room, a dining room, bedrooms, kitchens, and toilets. According to the previous owner and the historic aerial photos, the main building and the annex block were built simultaneously.

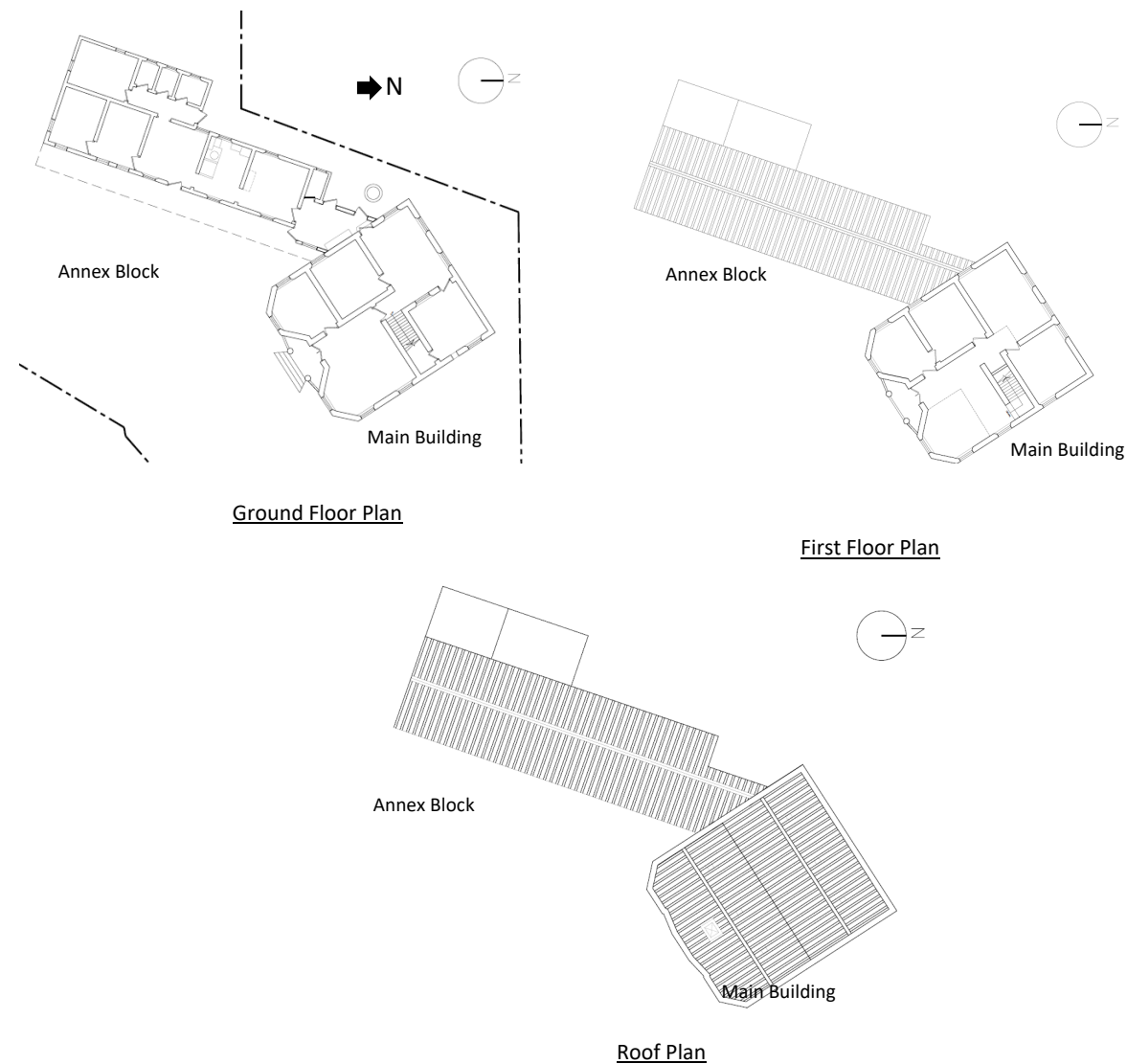


Figure 12. The existing layout of Siu Lo.

Siu Lo is a house of mixed style. The main building is designed in an eclectic style with a mix of Chinese and Western architectural features. The front façade is highlighted by an open porch and the verandah above. Both the porch and the verandah are supported by octagonal columns with capitals. The pitched roofs, covered with Chinese tiles and supported by timber purlins, are surrounded by a low parapet wall with a small decorative pediment in the middle. The corners of the building are splayed, probably for both *feng shui* and decorative reasons. The main building employed traditional and modern materials at the time. The walls are made of grey

bricks covered with plasters, but some building parts, such as the overhang above the windows, are made of reinforced concrete. Windows are fitted with timber shutters and a grid of iron security bars and are shaded by the gently inclined concrete overhang. The residence is built slightly above the ground and can be accessed through the steps to the main entrance.

The annex block is a simple, vernacular structure. The building is L-shaped. The longer part of the building, which accommodates a living room, a dining room, a bedroom, and two kitchens, is covered by a Chinese tiled pitched roof supported by timber purlins. Six brackets are clearly seen from the eastern façades to support the projected eaves. Each of the two kitchens is installed with a brick stove that is connected to a chimney. In contrast, the shorter part of the annex block, which houses a storeroom, a bathroom, and two toilets, is flat-roofed. All the windows are timber-framed with a grid of iron security bars. The location of the doors and windows may have been changed over time.

A low boundary wall was constructed around the lots, with an entrance gate opened at the junction of Tai Tong Road and the unnamed alley (Figure 13). The entrance gate was not facing perfectly to the residence's door for *feng shui* reasons. In practice, this prevents outsiders from viewing directly into the residence for privacy concerns; the boundary wall can also protect the building from floods. At present, the entrance gate and a majority of the boundary wall have been eradicated.



Figure 13. Siu Lo with the original entrance gate and fence wall (left) and Siu Lo in 2021 (right), (left photo: My tour, Old Hong Kong, Yuen Long, <http://blog.terewong.com/archives/6304>).

5.2 Character Defining Elements


According to the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, "Character Defining Elements" (CDEs) are the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses, and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of a historic place.¹⁰ The CDEs of Siu Lo are classified according to three levels of significance¹¹ to help future conservation decisions:




¹⁰ Definition extracted from *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, accessed on August 20, 2020, from Canada's Historic Places, <https://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s-g-eng-web2.pdf>.





¹¹ The definition of terms is developed based on Kerr, "Conservation Plan, the 7th Edition: A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance."




Level of Significance	Meaning
High significance	<p>Elements which make a major contribution to the overall significance of the place.</p> <p>Spaces, elements or fabric originally of substantial intrinsic quality, and exhibit high degree of intactness and quality, though minor alterations or degradation may be evident.</p>
Moderate significance	<p>Elements which make a moderate contribution to the overall significance of the place.</p> <p>Spaces, elements or fabric originally of some intrinsic quality, and may have undergone minor or extensive alteration or degradation.</p>
Low significance	<p>Elements which make a minor contribution to the overall significance of the place.</p> <p>Spaces, elements or fabric originally of little intrinsic quality, and may have undergone alteration or degradation.</p> <p>Original spaces, elements or fabrics of some quality, which have undergone extensive alteration or adaptation to the extent that only isolated remnants survive.</p>


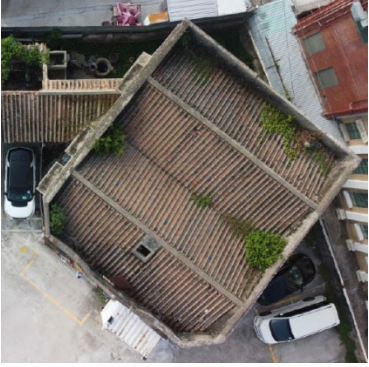


The below table provides a summary of Siu Lo's CDEs and their respective level of significance:




Setting		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
S-01	<p>Sitting behind a boundary wall with an entrance gate</p> 	<p>Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lot was enclosed by a low boundary wall, with an entrance gate opened at the junction of Tai Tong Road and an unnamed alley. The entrance gate and a majority of the boundary wall have already been eradicated

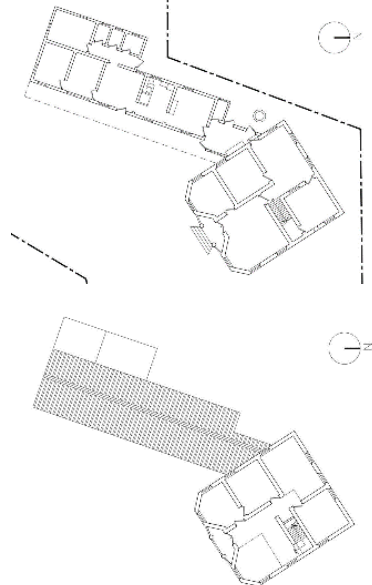


Setting		
		
S-02	<p>The connection between the Main Building and the Annex Block</p> 	<p>High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Main Building and the Annex Block are connected at an odd angle
S-03	<p>Old water well</p> 	<p>High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An old water well is remained in the backyard behind the Annex Block.





Main building		
External		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
ME-01	Eclectic design with a mix of Chinese and Western architectural features 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Main Building with an indented porch and verandah in the central bay of the front façade. Several Western architectural elements, such as the open porch and the verandah and the pediment, can be found in this residence. The residence is covered with a Chinese tiled roof.
ME-02	Decorated pediment and roof parapet  	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small decorative pediment is placed at the centre of the roof parapet, forming the focus of the front façade. Old photos show that there was a plastered relief in the shape of a radiating sun on the pediment. This relief no longer exists today. The roof parapet is plastered with rectangular reliefs with inverted round corners.
ME-03	Indented porch with decorated columns and beams 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The front façade of the residence is dominated by an indented porch, which is a common architectural element in Western buildings The wedge-shaped porch is supported by octagonal columns with decorative capital and column base The beam above the columns is designed with a delicate profile, which adds architectural merits to the entrance porch




Main building		
External		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
ME-04	Verandah on the 1/F with decorated columns and beams 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A verandah is built above the indented porch. The verandah shares a similar design to the porch. It was supported by octagonal columns with decorative capitals The verandah is wedge-shaped The octagonal columns are merged with the parapet. The octagonal column bases partially protruded from the parapet The beam above the octagonal columns is designed with a delicate profile, which adds architectural merits to the front façade design
ME-05	The decorated parapet on the verandah 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The verandah parapet is decorated with a rectangular relief with inverted round corners in the centre and diamond-shaped reliefs on the two sides
ME-06	The name plaques 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name of the residence is carved on plaques that are put on both the porch and the verandah. The Chinese characters are painted in black on a red background.
ME-07	Splayed building corners with decorative patterns	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building has splayed corners on the front façade. The corners are rendered with plastered reliefs with vertical stripes





Main building		
External		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
		
ME-08	Double-gable roof 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building is covered by a double-gable roof with Chinese pan-and-roll tiles. A hatch opening without a cover and six transparent pan tiles are installed on the roof.
ME-09	Arched window heads and overhang 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The windows are topped with segmental-arched window heads and are shaded by the gently inclined concrete overhang.
ME-10	Window shutters, security bars and timber windows 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timber shutters are installed on the windows for shading and ventilation. A grid of metal bars is installed on the window for security reasons. Six-light timber windows are installed at the back, facing the interior for weather protection.

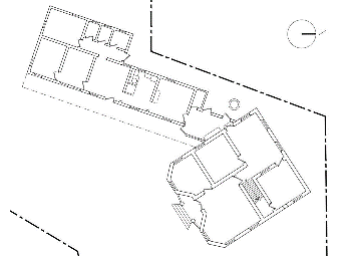

Main building		
External		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
		
ME-11	Painted rainwater downpipe 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rainwater downpipes with plastered covers and hopper heads are installed on the back wall of the building.
ME-12	Address plate at the entrance 	Low <p>An address plate with the Chinese words, “大旗嶺二區 15,” shows the old address of Siu Lo in the 1980s.</p>


Main building		
Internal		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
MI-01	Overall spatial arrangement 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Main Building has two floors with an almost identical layout The ground floor accommodates a living room, a dining room and three bedrooms The first floor accommodates a living room, a family room and three bedrooms A timber cockloft is built on the first floor to make use of the high headroom
MI-02	Main entrance door 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two layers of entrance doors are installed The door facing the exterior is a pair of 6-light timber panelled door. The door facing the interior is installed with a traditional Chinese timber door latch
MI-03	The wall adjacent to the entrance door 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a cutaway on the wall to allow space for the door latch and handle when the door is fully opened.




Main building		
Internal		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
MI-04	Timber floor construction supported by timber joists and boards 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The floor is made of timber joists and floor boards and is finished with a layer of cement flooring Have experienced serious deterioration
MI-05	Decorated concrete beams 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subtle decorations can be found on the edges of the concrete beams, which adds architectural merit to the building structure
MI-06	Timber roof construction supported by timber purlins and battens 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timber roof structure is made of circular timber purlins and battens, finished with Chinese pan-and-roll tiles Have experienced serious deterioration
MI-07	An internal concrete staircase with criss-cross patterns on treads and timber handrail 	Moderate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The threads of the staircase are decorated with string-pressed criss-cross patterns Timber railing is installed along the staircase


Main building		
Internal		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
MI-08	Cement flooring with string-pressed criss-cross or line patterns 	Moderate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cement flooring is red in color. The entrance steps and the cement flooring are finished with string-pressed criss-cross or line pattern. The cement flooring finish with moderate aesthetic value makes a moderate contribution to the overall architectural significance of the place.
MI-09	Timber panelled doors with fanlight above 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timber panelled door with fanlight above at internal rooms
MI-10	Timber cockloft construction above 1/F 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timber cockloft is built on the first floor to make use of the high headroom The cockloft floor is made of timber joists and floor boards, accessible through openings with a ladder Have experienced serious deterioration

Annex block		
External		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
AE-01	A longitudinal building form 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annex Block is a long, single-storeyed vernacular building. The longitudinal building form is dominant and clearly visible.
AE-02	Chinese pitched roof 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most parts of the Annex Block are covered by a Chinese-style pitched roof with pan-and-rolled clay tiles. The part of the pitched roof above the first kitchen has collapsed.
AE-03	Brackets supporting the projected eaves 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pitched roof is protruded from the front external wall and is supported by six brackets
AE-04	Concrete beam supporting the pitched roof 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A concrete beam with subtle edge details is installed on top of the back wall to support the pitched roof

Annex block		
Internal		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
AI-01	Overall spatial arrangement 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rooms are partitioned by load-bearing brick walls. The rooms are connected by a long corridor planned along the frontage of the building.
AI-02	Kitchens 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two kitchens installed with brick stoves and chimneys have remained in the building. Some parts of the stoves and chimneys are damaged.

AI-03	Timber windows with iron security bars 	Low <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some windows have splayed interior window reveals Most of the timber windows were broken and removed from the building by former occupants. Only the timber frames and security metal bars have remained Many windows are severely damaged and have undergone extensive alterations. Some windows facing the front were new additions and they do not have splayed interior window reveals.
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Annex block		
Internal		
No.	CDEs and Photo	Significance and Description
AI-04	Timber ledge and brace doors with metal sheet covers 	Low <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The external doors in the transitional space and the living room are timber ledge and brace doors. The side of the door facing the exterior is clad with metal sheets. Many doors are severely damaged.
AI-05	Cement floor with string-pressed criss-cross or line patterns 	Moderate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cement floor is decorated with string-pressed criss-cross or line patterns. The cement flooring finish with moderate aesthetic value makes a moderate contribution to the overall architectural significance of the place.
AI-06	Timber roof construction supported by timber purlins and battens 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timber roof structure is made of circular timber purlins and battens, finished with Chinese pan-and-roll tiles

AI-07	Timber joists construction 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A layer of circular timber joists at the high level of some rooms and the kitchens.
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6. Statement of Significance

6.1 Historical and Social Value

The historical and social significance of Siu Lo lies in its history as a private residence of an overseas Chinese family in a multi-surnamed Hakka village. The founder of Siu Lo, Chan Mo Tsing, originated from Guangdong and accumulated his wealth doing business in Indonesia. He came to Hong Kong and built a residence in Tai Kei Leng for his family. The history of Siu Lo reflects the high mobility of the people and the complexity of the identity of the so-called Hong Kong people.

When Siu Lo was completed in 1941, Tai Kei Leng was largely filled up by farmlands. There were not many built structures erected in the area, making Siu Lo a prominent building in its vicinity. Siu Lo represents the ways outsiders set foot in the New Territories, an area dominated by indigenous villagers.

6.2 Architectural Value

Siu Lo is designed in an eclectic style with a mix of Chinese and Western architectural features. The hybridity in design was favored particularly by overseas Chinese. Private residences with similar hybrid Chinese and Western styles can be found not only in Hong Kong but also in other hometowns of overseas Chinese in South China. Siu Lo's hybrid design is similar to some other private residences in Yuen Long and other parts of the New Territories. The key examples are Shek Lo, a Grade 1 Historic Building in Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling, and Lim House, a Grade 2 Historic Building in Shun Ching Sun Tsuen, Yuen Long (Figures 14 & 15). Siu Lo's similarity with other private residences in the New Territories hints that this kind of hybrid building design may be commonly adopted by a few builders at that time.



Figure 14. Shek Lo in Fanling (Antiquities and Monuments Office, https://www.amo.gov.hk/en/trails_lunq1.php?tid=10)



Figure 15. Lim House in Yeung Long (Antiquities and Monuments Office, https://www.aab.gov.hk/historicbuilding/photo/571_Photo.pdf)

Siu Lo is a Grade 3 Historic Building with a high level of authenticity. The main building has not been altered at all in the past 80 years. Most of the external architectural features can still be seen clearly. The internal layout also remains unchanged.

6.3 Group Value

Several buildings in Tai Kei Leng are ranked Grade 3 Historical Building status. Most of them are private residences like Siu Lo, and some of them were built by overseas Chinese families. Together, they form a group of domestic architecture that can show the life of the village people as well as the returned overseas Chinese families in the New Territories.

7. Recommendations

A conservation-cum-development scheme is proposed, which involves the conservation of Siu Lo and the construction of a new RCHE facility. This section provides recommendations for this conservation-cum-development approach.

7.1 In Situ Conservation

According to AMO's definition, "Grade 3 Historic Buildings" are "Buildings of some merit; preservation in some form would be desirable and alternative means could be considered if preservation is not practicable." Despite the fact that a relatively less stringent control is imposed on Grade 3 Historic Buildings, the applicant intends to preserve Siu Lo, including its Main Building and Annex Block, entirely in situ.

7.2 Unaltered Building Usage

To minimize the need for internal alteration and changes, Siu Lo will remain to be used as a residential building. In compliance with all relevant statutory requirements, the proposed use of Siu Lo is "House". The detailed works for Siu Lo will be subject to agreement with AMO and CHO, and a CMP will be prepared and submitted to the satisfaction of AMO or the TPB prior to commencement of any works.

7.3 The Annex Block

In the proposed scheme, the annex block of Siu Lo will be partially decked over by the proposed RCHE building. This would facilitate the applicant to preserve the entire Grade 3 historic building and, at the same time, gain the space needed for operating an RCHE in the proposed building. Despite this, the applicant should make sure that the public view from Tai Tong Road to Siu Lo, especially to the main block, will not be obstructed by the new building. The resultant built form should not reduce the visual interest in the existing building façade or generate adverse landscape impact.

Sufficient maintenance space and access should be allowed for the future maintenance of the annex block underneath the new building. In the proposed scheme, the distance between the ceiling of the G/F of the proposed RCHE building and the pitched roof of the annex block will be increased as compared to the last submission scheme, providing a minimum distance of approx. 1.5 m (at the ridge) to the bottom of the beam. More separation space can be provided at the locations without structural beams. This allows enough working space for the workers to re-tile of the pitched roof under the deck-over area of the annex block.

Two numbers of columns to support the proposed RCHE building above would be positioned in front of the annex block. They are sympathetically positioned and are located away from the front façade of the annex block. They allow sufficient buffer distance between the annex block and the columns. In addition, a circular

form is adopted for the column shape to soften the visual impact when looking at the front façade of the annex block from the site entrance. Every effort would also be made to avoid any physical impact arising from the construction works on Siu Lo.

Comparing the last submission scheme, a more open view in front of the annex block of Siu Lo would be achieved without having any staircase or lift core located on the eastern side of the site.

7.4 Interface with the Surrounding

Siu Lo was surrounded by agricultural land in the past. Now, the surrounding area has been redeveloped into modern residential estates. The proposed landscape design at the Site and the appropriate renovations of Siu Lo will blend in with the new-built and connect with the surroundings again. It will improve its appearance from Tai Tong Road and improve the appearance of the site. There is an old water well remaining in the backyard and it will become part of the Heritage Garden, and be preserved for interpretation and public visit.

7.5 Management and Maintenance

Siu Lo has been vacant for a long time. With the proposed conservation-cum-development proposal, Siu Lo (including the main building and annex block) will be duly conserved, maintained, and renovated to higher structural integrity. Siu Lo is one of the iconic buildings in Tai Kei Leng, and the proposed conservation-cum-development will continue the life of Siu Lo and the history of Tai Kei Leng.

7.6 Heritage Garden

A landscaped Heritage Garden will be provided in the external area outside Siu Lo, which allows public appreciation of the exterior of the historic building. This will become the area open for public visits with educational display panels. Free-of-charge guided tours and self-guided tours with audio guidance will be arranged at regular intervals. The public is welcome to visit the external spaces around Siu Lo, including the backyard with the old water well and the Heritage Garden, through advanced booking.

The display panels and interpretation tools will be set up in the Heritage Garden to showcase the historical background of Siu Lo, the founder's family life, the transformation of Tai Kei Leng and Yuen Long, the architectural significance of Siu Lo and the nearby heritage sites/buildings in Yuen Long. The landscaped Heritage Garden will be provided with outdoor seating and plants for the elderly and the public to enjoy and appreciate the exterior of Siu Lo.

The Heritage Garden will be opened on a specific Sunday each month, i.e. 12 Sundays each year. Free-of-charge self-guided tours with an advanced booking will be opened to visitors who would like to visit the Heritage Garden on their own. One guided tour will be arranged during this open Sunday.

Private tours will also be provided for non-government organisations and schools, which would visit some of the internal areas of Siu Lo, including the historic kitchen and the display area of the Annex Block. The guided tour as mentioned above would also visit some of the interior areas of Siu Lo under the docent's guidance.

Key storylines or storytelling can be arranged along the visiting paths in the Heritage Garden. It can be presented in a form of display panels or other media such as QR codes which link to a website. The Heritage Garden will serve the elderly of the site and the public visitors (during open Sundays). Key storylines and themes are suggested in the table below:

	Sight points	Storylines / Themes
1	In front of the Main Building and the Annex Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural essence of Siu Lo, designed in an eclectic style, with characteristic architectural features The hybridity in design and introduction of other residences of Overseas Chinese
2	In front of the Annex Block and between the external columns that support the new RCHE above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old setting of Siu Lo, with hay shed, granary, storage shed for hay and farming tools, vegetable field, cow-and-pig pen, water pond, etc The farming activities of the site in the past
3	At the rear of the Annex Block and between the two columns that support the new RCHE above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Life of Seed" (生命種子) – planting the seed, portable planting corner for the elderly and their family
4	Backyard with the old water well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Life of Water" (生命之水) The story of the founder of Siu Lo, Mr. Chan's family Their shop in Indonesia The old life of Mr. Chan's family in Siu Lo
4a	Interior of the Annex Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transitional area connecting the Main Building and the Annex Block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The story of the founder of Siu Lo, Mr. Chan's family The old drawing shows the original setting of Siu Lo The rattan tray from Chan's grocery shop in Surabaya, with the shop's name Mei Tung written on it The general spatial organisation, the construction of Siu Lo: timber construction and grey brick structure, pitched roof, etc. Interior essence of the Main Building and the Annex Block
4b	New pantry and sitting area (the collapsed historic kitchen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context of Yuen Long, Tai Kei Leng Photos of some festivals, nearby heritage, etc
4c	Historic kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The story of the founder of Siu Lo, Mr. Chan's family The old life of Mr. Chan's family in Siu Lo
5	The rear of the Main Building, with seating and trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Life of Trees" (生命樹下) - quiet seating corner under trees
6	Fruit trees garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Life of Fruit" (生命果子) - planting free trees Mr. Chan's family grew lychee and wampee at this corner in the old days

8. Conclusion

Siu Lo is a Grade 3 Historic Building with a high level of authenticity. Most parts of the buildings remain unaltered in the past 80 years. Unfortunately, the building has been vacant for a long time. The proposed conservation-cum-development scheme provided an opportunity to revitalize Siu Lo. The applicant has committed to conserving Siu Lo (both the main building and the annex block) entirely in situ. Siu Lo will remain to serve a “House” use. It will be repaired to ensure the building’s integrity and safety. The external Heritage Garden will be provided for free public visits with guided tours at regular intervals and interpretational display boards for public benefit.

The proposed RCHE will provide a total of 241 beds (or within a range of 220 – 260) and help solve the shortage of elderly facilities in Hong Kong. It aligns with the governmental policies, including the Policy Addresses and the HK2030+. The proposed building will have no physical connection to Siu Lo to minimize any negative impacts and alternation to the historic building. Siu Lo will remain a freestanding building.

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