

附件一

## **Project : No 1 to 12 Wing Lee Street, Central Report on Preliminary condition survey & structural assessment**

### 1. Introduction

At the request of the Professional Commons, a condition survey and preliminary structural assessment was conducted for the Buildings at No 1 to 12 Wing Lee Street, Central. The buildings were of simple Tong Lau common in Hong Kong about 50 years ago.

### 2. Investigation

A visual inspection of the buildings was conducted on 7 March 2010. Although the inspection was largely focused on the common areas of the buildings such as staircases and external walls, an inspection on the internal structure of No. 10 Wing Lee Street was also carried out, which gave an indication of the internal conditions of this series of buildings since they were built at the same period with similar design.

The buildings are of traditional reinforced concrete structure with columns, beams and slabs forming the structure frame. Under the beams the partitions were formed by brick walls.

From the front view of the buildings, there are some small balconies. It is apparent that these are extra add-on structures which may not fully conform to legal requirements. It can be observed that some of these balconies had been constructed and later removed.

Walking up the staircase of a building at no 3 Wing Lee Street, we can see that the beams supporting the staircase are in good condition and the walls on the side of the staircase are properly maintained. There is neither any crack nor extensive iron stains. At the roof to the staircase, we can observe some patches of repair at the underside of the slab. This may indicate some leakage due to failure of the waterproofing which had been subsequently repaired.

At the entrance to No 5 Wing Lee Street, a vertical crack was found on the wall on the left hand side of the staircase. This is likely to be finishing cracks as there is no trace of a corresponding vertical shear crack on the column. From the feature at first

floor staircase at no 8 Wing Lee Street, a brick wall can be seen at the external wall of the staircase.

From inside no 10 Wing Lee Street, we can find an overhead beam at the middle of the room which is supported on columns on both ends. Both the beam and the columns are in sound condition. On the roof of the buildings, there are also some extra add-on structures.

### 3. Conclusion

It should be noted that not all of the internal areas were accessible for inspection. Hence the conclusion drawn from this inspection is qualified by this limited access. From the visual inspection, we conclude that in general there is no sign to indicate that RC structure of the buildings has fallen into such disrepair that the safety of the buildings are immediately threatened, or that it cannot be repaired and restored into good conditions. Although there are some internal finishing cracks and water leakage signs, they are of a minor nature and can be fixed without affecting the structural integrity or safety of the buildings. This can be further confirmed by carrying out investigative tests on the concrete for the beams and columns.

In essence, there does not seem to exist any insurmountable technical barrier which prevents the buildings to be restored into sound conditions if an appropriate renovation programme is carried out after detailed investigation, planning and design.

### 4. Recommendation

To enhance the use value and the appearance, it is imperative to carry out appropriate maintenance work including the filling of finishing cracks, the reinstallation of waterproofing at selected areas, replacement of deteriorated materials and new finishing with paints. The add-on structures such as certain balconies and rooftop structures should be removed to avoid extra loading. Certain broken or loose windows may also be replaced with aluminum or steel window frames depending on the need for architectural consistency.

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附件二

## **Urban Transformation of Central District as a Place of Living, 1843-2008**

**家在中上環：城市組織的轉化，1843-2008**

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### **Conclusions**

In our studies of Sai Ying Pun and the Central District, we have identified five phases of Hong Kong's urbanization: reconstruction of pre-war tenements into 'ordinary' typical buildings in 1950s; the rise of taller structures with changes in the Buildings Ordinance in 1960s; disintegration of the urban fabric in 1970s and 80s; urban renewal led by government and supported by large private developers beginning in 1990s; and demolition and decay of the typical buildings against public sentiment and outcry in 2000s.

Our findings also reveal good qualities of the city:

- 1) coexistence of the high and low city with a wide range of housing types for people of diverse backgrounds;
- 2) a rich collection of Modern Architecture constructed in the 1950s and 60s including the Central Police Married Quarters, and the Bridges Street Market as built-heritage;
- 3) a variety of architecture designed in response to the topography as in the pre-war tenements on Bridges Street or a tower with a swimming pool looking out at Wing Lee Street;
- 4) a network of pedestrian paths forming a dynamic system of open spaces for chance encounter and as urban enclaves in the dense city;
- 5) a city as an integrated place for living and working such as the printing shop, the silversmith shop, and the gallery on Shing Wong Street; and finally
- 6) an on-going effort to conserve the tenement buildings by individual owners as in Staunton Street suggests a rethinking of the city's demolition-driven and large-development policies.

How should the Central District transform as a place of living? Scholar Ackbar Abbas has argued that Hong Kong is a disappearing city. It is a place where buildings are constantly being erased and replaced by more profitable ones. Among all buildings in Hong Kong, he suggested the anonymous architecture is perhaps most significant. Historian Frank Leeming has argued that tenement buildings represent the physical, social, and intellectual foundation of contemporary housing in Hong Kong.

From our study, we find the coming together of the high and low city most interesting. We concur that much of the low city is under threat, but not all is gone. On Wing Lee Street, we met an old man who has returned in search for his pre-war home, we spoke to a printer who wishes for conservation of the street, we visited a young man who is living and working out of a small tenement flat, and we have made acquaintance with residents living in high-rise towers.

The tenement building- small in scale, flexible in layout, of simple construction- represents an architectural heritage of the city. The high-rise tower- soaring, of great density, economic machines- is symbol of the metropolis. It is the space between them- fluid, diverse, vivacious, and complex- that has given meaning to life in Hong Kong, and demands our utmost attention. In learning from other great cities, we conclude that urban transformation is not the remaking of a historical past, or the building of city as real estate, but to articulate a process of change to foster equity, diversity, and cohesion.

#### 結語

通過我們對西營盤及中環的調研，我們發現香港城市轉變過程中的五個階段：1950年代，把戰前唐樓重建為‘普通’樓宇；1960年代因應建築物條例的改變，見證了較高樓宇的冒升；1970至80年代，城市肌理的解分；1990年代初開始由政府牽頭，私營開發商參與而展開了市區重建計劃；2000年代衝著群眾的情緒及反對聲中，普通的樓宇被拆卸或日漸衰敗。

在我們研究中，亦顯露了這個城市的一些質素：

(一)‘矮城’與‘高城’的共存可為區內不同背景的居民提供各適其式的住宅類別。

- (二) 區內集結了很多屬於‘現代建築’ (Modern Architecture) 的都市文化遺產，如已婚警察宿舍及必列者士街街市等。
- (三) 區內示範了很多因應地勢的巧妙建築手法，如必列者士街的戰前唐樓及永利街上那高層住宅底部的泳池等。
- (四) 一個結合人行道及公共戶外空間的網絡，其既增進了相遇機緣，也在這稀密城市中為居民提供了的休憩駐足點。
- (五) 城市仍可包容居住及工作空間的相互揉合，一如那現存的銀器店及印刷廠。
- (六) 區內居民那連綿不絕為保育舊唐樓的不懈努力，如士丹頓街那案例，就教人對現今那以拆卸舊房，興建體量巨大項目為主的發展模式進行深層反思。

作為一個居住的城市，中環的轉化應何去何從呢？學者 Ackbar Abbas 曾指出香港是一個持續在消失的城市。這個地方的房子不斷地被圖利的項目所取替。在各類建築物當中，他認為那些‘無名的’普通房子才是最有意義的。歷史學家 Frank Leeming 曾經提出他的論點：當代香港各類住宅樓宇類型有關物質的，社群的與及知識的根基都來自唐樓。在這探索中，我們發覺‘矮城’與‘高城’的連融交處是最趣意盎然的。在實地調研時，我們遇上古稀老華僑從海外回港，重遊永利街，尋找他那戰前舊居的痕跡；在與我們傾談中，以印刷為業的居民表達了他對保育這條老街的期盼；我們也探訪了以這些唐樓中的一戶既為家亦為工作間的小伙子，同時我們也結識了一些住在高樓內的居客。唐樓，它細小的體量，靈活的佈局，簡單的構造形式，應是我們城市建築文化遺產的一部份。高層住宅，騰升的勢態，極高的密度，製造經濟效益的機器，就是大都會的象徵。正是處於它們之間那流動，多樣，活潑及複雜的空間為這城市裡的生活帶出了意義，也最應受關注。放眼世上偉大的城市，我們認為有意義的轉化，從不‘重塑’歷史舊物，更非視城市更新為房地產項目，而是要協調及誘發一個有機的演變過程去促進平等，多元與凝聚。