

To: panel_dev@legco.gov.hk
From: Katty Law
Date: 11/09/2014 11:38AM
Subject: Objection to the proposed pumping station at the Flagstaff House Monument, Hong Kong Park

(See attached file: Flagstaff house paper.pdf)

(See attached file: Flagstaff House Paper Appendices.pdf)

(See attached file: photo2.jpg)

(See attached file: photo7.jpg)

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(PLEASE CIRCULATE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PANEL)

Legislative Councillors
Members of the Panel on Development
Legislative Council
Hong Kong

Dear Councillors,

On behalf of the Central & Western Concern Group and Heritage Watch, I would like to bring to your attention the serious threat posed to the Flagstaff House monument at Hong Kong Park by the proposed repositioning of the Harcourt Road Freshwater pumping station. Our consultant conservation architect Mr Ken Borthwick has written a detailed assessment of this proposed scheme and the paper is attached herewith for your consideration.

In his assessment (which closely examines aspects of WSD's HIA) Mr Borthwick looks at the original positioning of Flagstaff House on the crest of the slope, as well as at what he assesses to be its original grounds based on historical plans and early pictures of Flagstaff House in the HIA. He has made an assessment of an historic, rubble stone, fortified defensive wall with loopholes for firing through, which he opines may be the earliest example of British military fortification surviving in Hong Kong and a vital piece of historic evidence. WSD's HIA totally fails to identify this feature for what it is, nor assess its historical and cultural importance. Under WSD's proposals most of this historic feature (as well as a significant portion of its adjoining classical balustrade) would be destroyed and the context and meaning of the wall would be completely lost. He further cites clauses in the 'Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China', including Article 12 which stipulates the requirement to demarcate the boundaries of an historic site and that a

"buffer zone should also be established to control development around the site's boundary and to preserve the natural and cultural landscape." As he points out, the WSD proposal is in total contravention of Article 12 of the China Principles in that the pumping station site straddles the slope below Flagstaff House (which feature was vital to the positioning of the House) and extends right under what were the original grounds for the Monument. He opines that this is outrageous treatment for a Hong Kong Declared Monument and completely in contravention to Chinese and International conservation practice.

The proposed scheme was discussed in the Development Panel of the Legislative Council in May this year and legislators had raised serious questions. The matter was first reported in the media on 21 May 2014 (Ming Pao), when heritage advisors of the Antiquities Advisory Board warned of the threat posed by the construction of the pumping station on the grounds of the Flagstaff House monument to the integrity of the building, and the destruction of the associated historic defense wall. Upon detailed study of the matter, we opine that the construction will have an adverse and irreversible impact on this important monument and it should be avoided at all costs.

Our group also questions the need of moving the pumping station. The change of use of the pumping station site (to commercial) has never been properly discussed and it is currently a GIC site which serves the public well. The pumping station is in good working order and its relocation will require the use of over HK\$700 million of taxpayers' money plus a high cost in terms of loss of heritage, destruction of the amenity of Hong Kong Park as well as the huge disturbances created by the road works etc. There is indeed very little justification in moving the pumping station, from fiscal, environmental, heritage and social points of view.

We hope you can review our submission in detail, consider the immense social and economic cost of the scheme and ask the relevant department to withdraw the proposal.

Thank you for your kind attention and we look forward to receiving your prompt reply.

Best regards,

Katty Law

for an on behalf of Central & Western Concern Group and Heritage Watch

Assessment of Proposed Reprovisioning of Harcourt Road Fresh Water Pumping Station at Flagstaff House Declared Monument, Hong Kong Park

Ken Borthwick RIBA, RIAS, HKIA

Conservation Architect

29 August 2014

Introduction

It has been recently reported that a proposal has been submitted to Development Panel of Legislative Council (LegCo) by Water Supplies Department (WSD) for the Re-provisioning of Harcourt Road Fresh Water Pumping Station to the area of Flagstaff House Declared Monument at Hong Kong Park. The contents of WSD's HIA have been noted in this regard, which can be accessed on the Antiquities and Monuments Office's (AMO's) website. It is reminded that Flagstaff House (now Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware), which was gazetted as a Monument in 1989, is the oldest western building in Hong Kong, being formerly the residence of the British military commanders in Hong Kong and which was completed in 1846 (5 years after the British acquisition of Hong Kong) for Major General D'Aguilar.

Given below is consideration and views on Water Supply Department's proposal, including comment/assessment given by mark-up on certain of the Figures in WSD's HIA. These were on the basis of consideration of the original site of Flagstaff House, the importance of the topography or setting of Flagstaff House and Hong Kong Park, historic features on the site and their relevance to Conservation Guidelines, in particular the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China :-

(1) The WSD Proposal and its Damage to the Site of Declared Monument Flagstaff House

(a) General Description

The site for the Pumping Station is described in WSD's Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) as 'adjacent to the Central Fire Station at Cotton Tree Drive', being shown on Fig. 2 of the HIA (Copy attached as **Appendix A**). However, from examination of the HIA it can be seen that the site straddles the existing slope above Cotton Tree Drive, to the western side of the hillock, or elevated site (which gave Flagstaff House its strong defensive position overlooking the harbour) and extends underground to the east into what will have been Flagstaff House's original grounds, or garden, as delineated by a historic rubble masonry defensive wall, where its roof would be under the level of the grounds/ garden of the house. This historic wall sits on the crest of the slope up from Cotton Tree Drive. Roughly half way down the western boundary of the house, approximately level with the northern end of the Fire Station Compound, the barrier changes to a classical balustrade, whose lower part at that point acts as a retaining wall to support the garden of Flagstaff House above. The balustrade continues round to the north of Flagstaff House, where it reverts to being a masonry wall. It is considered that the original grounds, or garden, of Flagstaff House can be determined as being the masonry defensive wall and classical balustrade, by viewing an 1847 Lithograph of Flagstaff House, as well as an 1874 map which are included in the HIA as Fig. 22 and Fig. 23 on page 20 (Copy attached at **Appendix B**). The line of the wall/ balustrade can be clearly seen on the latter.

As stated above, the part of the Pumping Station site inside the historic masonry wall is allowed to be below ground level of the original area of grounds or garden of Flagstaff House, with only a shallow depth of soil over it to permit some planting over it. The existing historic slope within the Pumping Station site to the west of Flagstaff House

would be destroyed by the works, becoming a vertical, or largely vertical, face to the Pumping Station, with the part behind the Fire Station compound having only a small slope, much lower than its present level. Small trees in planters are shown on the concrete façade of the Pumping Station.

(b) Destruction of Section of Historic Rubble Masonry Defensive Wall and Classical Balustrade

As stated in (a) above, the feature aligned along the crest of the slope which runs down to Cotton Tree Drive in the west and Queensway to the north and delineating the historic grounds of Flagstaff House, comprises at its western and northern sides respectively an historic masonry wall, which changes at roughly the line of the northern edge of the Fire Station Compound to a balustrade with pier.

At its southern part, up to the point of transition, this feature comprises an approximately 550mm historic, squared, coursed rubble defensive wall. This wall can be plainly seen in an 1860 photograph included as Fig 14 in the HIA (copy attached at **Appendix C**). The date of this photo was only 14 years after the house was built. The exact date of construction of this wall is not known (and ideally further study on it should be made), however it is considered that this wall may be contemporary with the original construction of Flagstaff House in 1846. In this case it would likely be the earliest example of British defensive fortification existing in Hong Kong. In the background an 1846 lithograph shown on the cover of the Museum of Tea Ware Brochure can be seen a feature which may be this historic wall (Refer **Appendix D**).

WSD's HIA does not properly describe the nature of this historic, defensive wall; however from site observation at a point immediately to the south of the portion of wall scheduled for demolition is a corner of the wall where a group of six loopholes, or firing slits, can be observed. These loopholes are angled to cover the face of the section of wall which they look out over. The group of four loopholes on the section of wall running roughly south-west from the corner would permit defending soldiers armed with muskets, or later rifles, to provide enfilade fire on any enemy attacking the front of the wall running roughly north-east from that point and the other two loopholes on the latter section of wall would permit enfilade fire to be brought on the front of the other section of wall. Photos of the wall with its loopholes can be seen in **Appendix E** to this Paper. This historic rubble masonry fortified defensive wall can be considered to be a historic feature of very great importance and of critical historic interest.

To the north of the transition point and extending round the northern part of the Flagstaff House Garden it has been modified at a later date to a classical style balustrade (See photos also at **Appendix E**), which, at the point of transition and some distance beyond has a retaining wall at the base of the balustrade. This is to retain the ground within the garden area to make the platform of the garden a generally flat area.

The HIA appears to suggest that part of the classical balustrade may be relatively modern, however a 1930s water colour view of Flagstaff House from the north-east, included in the HIA at Fig. 41 (Copy attached at **Appendix F**), depicts a classical balustrade bordering the northern part of the garden. It is likely therefore that when the need for strong defence in the vicinity of Flagstaff House ceased, the defensive wall was altered to a more elegant classical balustrade as befitting the style of the house.

As indicated in the HIA, the construction of the Pumping Station would require the demolition of an approx. 50 metre length of what is described as 'Old Stone Wall'. On closer review of the HIA it can be determined that the part for demolition would comprise a section both of the historic defensive wall to the south, as well as a section of the classical balustrade with the urn-shaped balusters and intermediate piers at the northern part.

WSD's proposal allows for the rebuilding at its southern part of a section of rubble stone wall roughly on the alignment of the existing historic defensive wall. On review, however, of certain of the landscape plans and sections in the HIA, it can be seen that at the northern part of the Pumping Station site, the alignment of the face of the Pumping Station extends some distance inside the historic boundary of Flagstaff House as delineated at that point by the historic classical balustrade to the west of Flagstaff House itself and it appears that only a glass balustrade or similar would be provided at that point as a barrier to the edge of the Pump House below which would now be located well inside the Flagstaff House garden. The historic classical balustrade would cease to exist at that point and the historical context would be entirely lost.

The entire portion of historic Flagstaff House garden on the western side of Flagstaff House from the outer edge of a narrow footpath immediately adjacent to its west façade, up to the classical balustrade on its northern side would now be screened by a 'shrub hedge for screening'. (See copy of landscape plan Fig A2.2 at **Appendix G** on which the line of the existing defensive wall has been highlighted.) This hedge would be an attempt to hide the destruction of the section of balustrade and area of tree covered slope behind, where there would now be inadequate small trees in place of the lush background of trees which can be seen in the 1930s water colour.

With regard to its history, association with Flagstaff House (as forming the boundary of the historic grounds or garden of Flagstaff House and its historic evidence of firing loopholes), it is considered that the historic masonry defensive wall and its setting on the crest of the slope as well as the adjacent historic classical balustrade to be a critical part of the history, meaning and setting of Flagstaff House which should be conserved (See also para. 2 below). In the WSD proposals the context and meaning of the wall and balustrade would be destroyed forever by destroying the slope and replacing it with a reconstructed wall on the roof of the Pumping Station which would in effect be a parapet on the pumping station roof.

(c) Construction of Large Run In/ Service Yard at Section of Existing Slope of High Visual Amenity

Although it is not stated in the text in the HIA, from the 'Landscape Layout Plan' included at Fig. A2.2 in the HIA (**Appendix G**) it can be seen that there would be a sizeable new vehicle run-in from the lower part of Cotton Tree Drive, inside which appears to be a sizeable hard paved service yard (see marked-up copy of the plan at **Appendix G**), which would front what is indicated as the two- step façade of the Pumping Station. At approximately mid point in its height the Pumping Station façade would have a small planter where small trees are indicated (See Fig 2.4 and 2.5 attached as **Appendix H**). At the northern end of this service yard there would be what appears to be a massive masonry- faced retaining wall, again with small trees in planters.

Such a hard service yard with hard face of Pumping Station on its eastern side and high retaining wall on its north side, with only a comparatively small section of much lower height slope being reformed behind the Fire Station Compound would result in the destruction of a sizeable portion of a beautiful historic slope bordering Flagstaff House, with dense tree cover, which at present constitutes an area of very high visual amenity (See photos at **Appendix E**).

(d) Extremely Destructive and Invasive Work to Construct Pumping Station

As indicated in (a) above, the site of the Pumping Station itself is located largely under the historic grounds, or garden, of Flagstaff House as delineated by the historic wall and classical balustrade. At its closest point the site extends almost to a corner of Flagstaff House itself. In order to construct the Pumping Station under the historic grounds of Flagstaff House, as well as at the historic slope down to Cotton Tree Drive, a massive bored pile wall is planned, as shown on Fig. 6 in the HIA, (attached at **Appendix J**). The bored pile wall would be constructed up to a distance of only 10 metres or so from the south west corner of Flagstaff House. Construction of such a massive bored pile, as stated up to a point very close to Flagstaff House itself, as well as the massive excavation works at the slope and within the historic both within the area enclosed by the bored pile wall and likely beyond, would be hugely intrusive and damaging to the site and setting of the Monument. The works would likely involve the use of heavy plant and equipment, both for the massive excavation works and for the construction of the bored pole wall.

While, inappropriately the western part of the historic grounds of Flagstaff House is at this time used as a plant nursery it is considered that the permanent and temporary destruction caused to the area within the historic grounds of the house to be utterly unacceptable for a Declared Monument and in contravention to conservation charters and any kind of acceptable conservation practice. It is also considered that the entire area of the historic grounds of Flagstaff House up to its historic boundary wall/ balustrade should be opened up as a garden area for the enjoyment of the public and to provide access to the historic fortified wall and balustrade.

(e) Destruction/ Loss of Trees in the Proposed Pumping Station Site at the Declared Monument/ Hong Kong Park Site, including Slope Area

As stated in the HIA, the proposed construction of the Pumping Station would necessitate the felling of 91 trees (as well as one dead one) of the 135 trees in the site area and transplanting 26 others. From review of the HIA, these trees would be both on the slope flanking the western side of Flagstaff House and within the area of historic grounds of Flagstaff House itself, both within the area used as plant nursery as well apparently as at the edge of the present western lawn area at the front of Flagstaff House.

Within the sizeable area of the Pumping Station which is proposed to be constructed under the historic grounds/ garden area of Flagstaff House there would only be a relatively shallow depth of soil covering the roof structure of the pumping station which would prevent the growing of good replacement trees in the area concerned. As indicated in the landscape plans contained within the HIA, it would appear that no replacement trees are proposed to be planted in the area over the Pumping Station in an area which would presumably remain a plant nursery (where there are trees at present) and only small trees would be provided in concrete planters at the edge of the roof of the Pumping Station and at an intermediate level on the façade. Such tree planting could not compensate for the present lush tree planting which creates an area of very high visual amenity. This is considered to be unacceptable destruction of trees and environmental degradation.

(2) **Views of the Victoria Barracks Planning Committee Prior to Handing over of Victoria Barracks Area to Hong Kong**

Before the area was handed over from military use, the Victoria Barracks Planning Committee stated in their 1977 Report on the Future Development of the Barracks that “the high public amenity value which the house and its grounds possess led the Committee to decide that Flagstaff House and its grounds be preserved as a specialized museum in a park setting for the enjoyment of the public (Refer to **Appendix K**). They further recommended, “In view of the importance of the area”, that it be “designated a Special Planning Area”, with “any development within the area to be subject to special approval of the Governor-in-Council”.

It is considered that the inappropriate use selection of an important part of the site of Flagstaff House is completely in contravention to the advanced and informed views of the Victoria Barracks Planning Committee before the handover of the area to the people of Hong Kong. This proposal is considered to be a breach of trust to the people of Hong Kong and an unacceptable destruction of the Monument’s setting. It is further considered that it is completely beyond the remit of infrastructure engineers to make such a proposal, which should have been rejected at high level by Government at the outset.

(3) **Hong Kong, Chinese and International Practice in Protection of Historic Buildings and their Sites**

Under Cap. 53, Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, Section 6, acts prohibited to certain monuments except under permit, subject to subsection (4), no person shall – (a) excavate, carry on building or other works, plant or fell trees or deposit earth on or in a proposed monument or monument; or (b) demolish, remove obstruct or deface or interfere with a proposed monument or monument, except in accordance with a permit granted by the Authority.

Under Article 2 of the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China it is stipulated that “*The aim of conservation is to preserve the authenticity of all the elements of the entire heritage site and to retain for the future its historic information and all its values*” and under Article 12 stipulates the requirement to demarcate the boundaries of a historic site and as well as that a “*buffer zone should also be established to control development around the site’s boundary and to preserve the natural and cultural landscape*”.

Other International Charters such as the Burra and Venice Charters emphasize the importance of sites and setting of historic buildings, Article 8 of the former stating: “*Conservation requires the retention of an appropriate setting. This includes retention of the visual and sensory setting, as well as the retention of spiritual and other cultural relationships that contribute to the cultural significance of the place. New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes which would adversely affect the setting or relationships are not appropriate.*”

It can be seen that the WSD proposal for the Reprovisioning of Harcourt Road Fresh Water Pumping Station to the area of Flagstaff House Declared Monument is contrary to the stipulations in the Hong Kong ordinance, as well as critical China and international practice.

(4) Conclusion

In consideration of the foregoing, in particular the concluding comments of each item or sub-sections above, it is considered that the use of part of the site of Declared Monument, Flagstaff House and Hong Kong Park, as shown in the HIA, to be unacceptable and incompatible with the site and setting of the Monument and with Chinese and International heritage principles.

It is also considered to be in contravention to the aims and intentions of the Victoria Barracks Planning Committee for Flagstaff House and Hong Kong Park as given in their 1977 Report before the creation of Hong Kong Park. Accordingly Government is urged to cancel this proposal with immediate effect.

The strongest concern is raised at the process involved, whereby an infrastructure project such as this was able to proceed beyond inception stage without due and proper consideration being given to all relevant issues, in particular heritage and the environment.

It is opined that a proper Heritage Impact Assessment on site selection should have been carried out at inception stage. It is unacceptable that heritage issues only be considered, and HIA prepared, at a very late stage, when only minor cosmetic improvements can be made. It is further urged that in future informed expert independent expert heritage opinion should be sought relating to projects of critical heritage importance.

August 2014

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR REPROVISIONING OF HARCOURT ROAD FRESH WATER PUMPING STATION

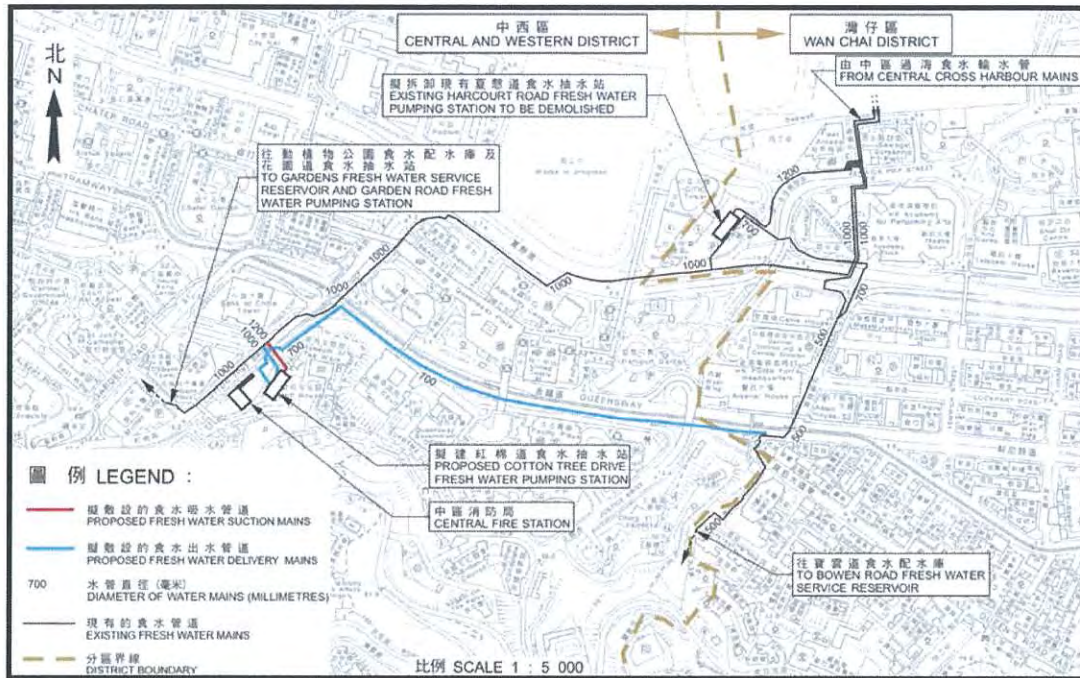


Figure 1: Layout Plan of the Project
Source: provided by WSD, modified by author

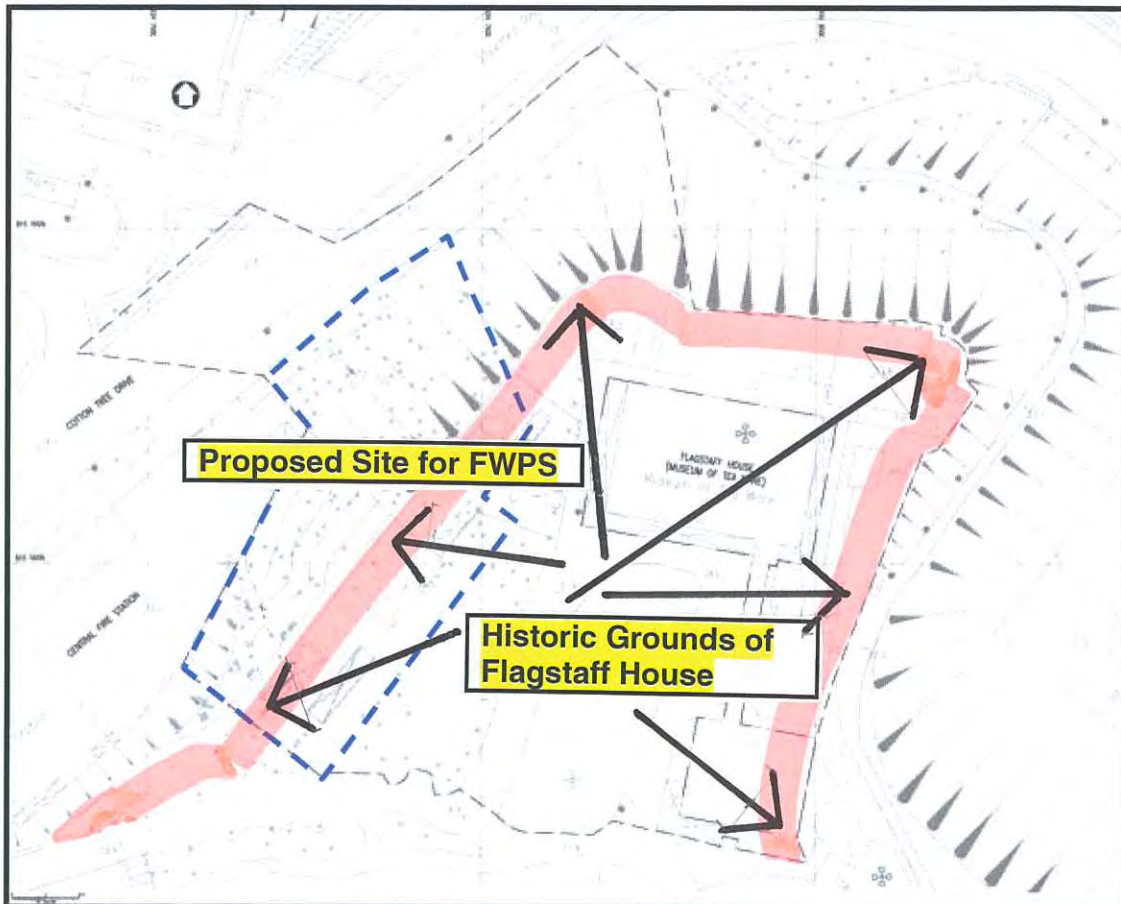


Figure 2: Site for proposed Cotton Tree Drive FWPS and Study Area for HIA
Source: provided by WSD, modified by author

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
REPROVISIONING OF HARCOURT ROAD FRESH WATER PUMPING STATION

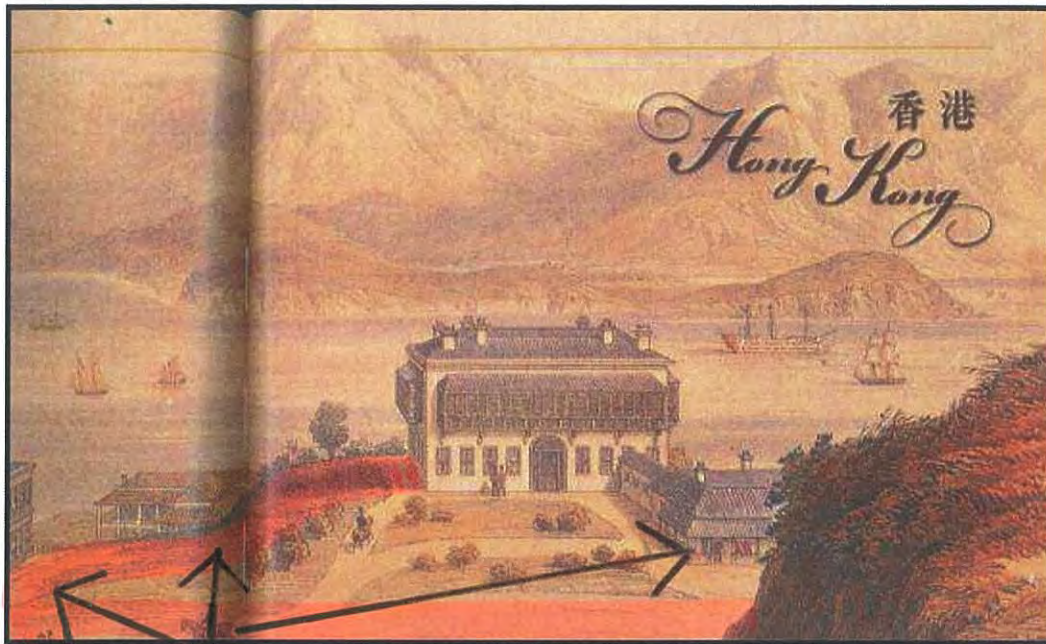
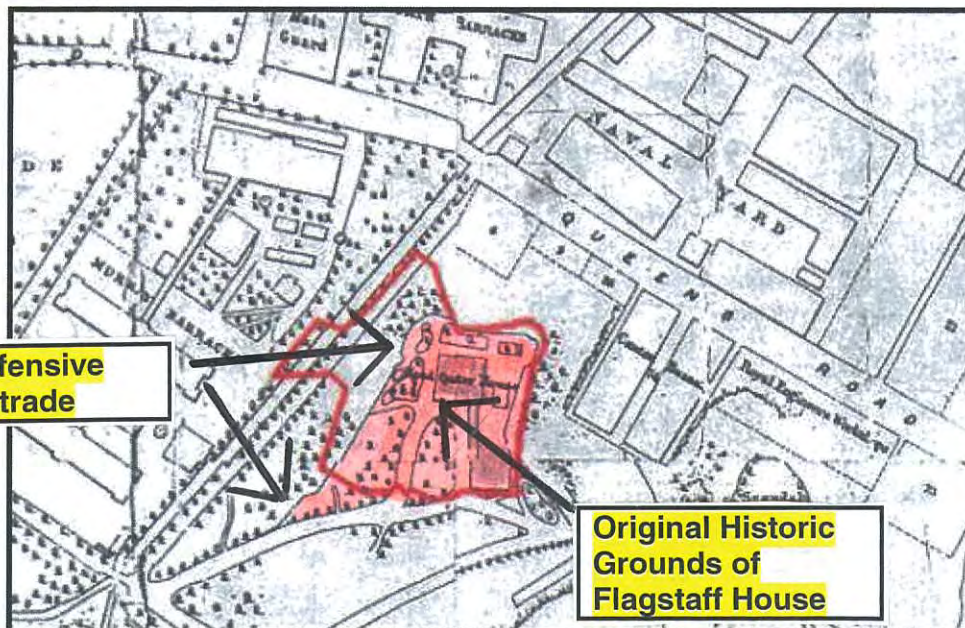


Figure 22: 1847 lithograph
Source: *The Chater Legacy*, a section of the Chater Collection

Historic Grounds of
Flagstaff House



Historic Defensive
Wall/ Balustrade

Original Historic
Grounds of
Flagstaff House

Figure 23: 1874 map
Source: *Victoria Barracks, 1842-1979*, modified by the author

Just at the southern boundary of the Study Area, a statue, a fountain and a navy stone (see Figure 24) can be found within the landscape area of the HK Park.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
 REPROVISIONING OF HARCOURT ROAD FRESH WATER PUMPING STATION

wall and was a part of the Victoria Barracks (see Figure 18). From the article by Clive Lucas in 1981, the encircling stone wall has been there since at least 1889. With reference to the photo in the 1860s (see Figure 14), there was a stone boundary wall along the crest of the slopes. The wall was much longer than the existing one. It had the same height throughout its length, but the existing wall has sections with different heights. It is lower in height especially at the junction with the balustrade and the stone wall outside the Site (see Appendix I). Thus, it is assumed that the upper part of the stone wall might be damaged over the years and was subsequently repaired, resulting in a lower height of the wall.

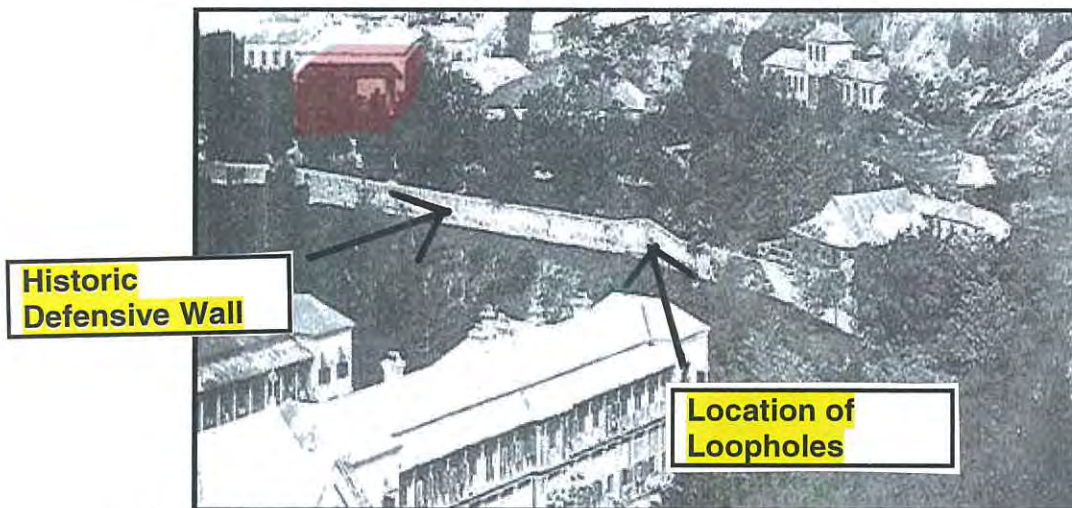


Figure 14: 1860 photo of the neighboring site, from where the stone wall is clearly seen (with Flagstaff House highlighted in red)
 Source: *Victoria Barracks, 1842-1979*

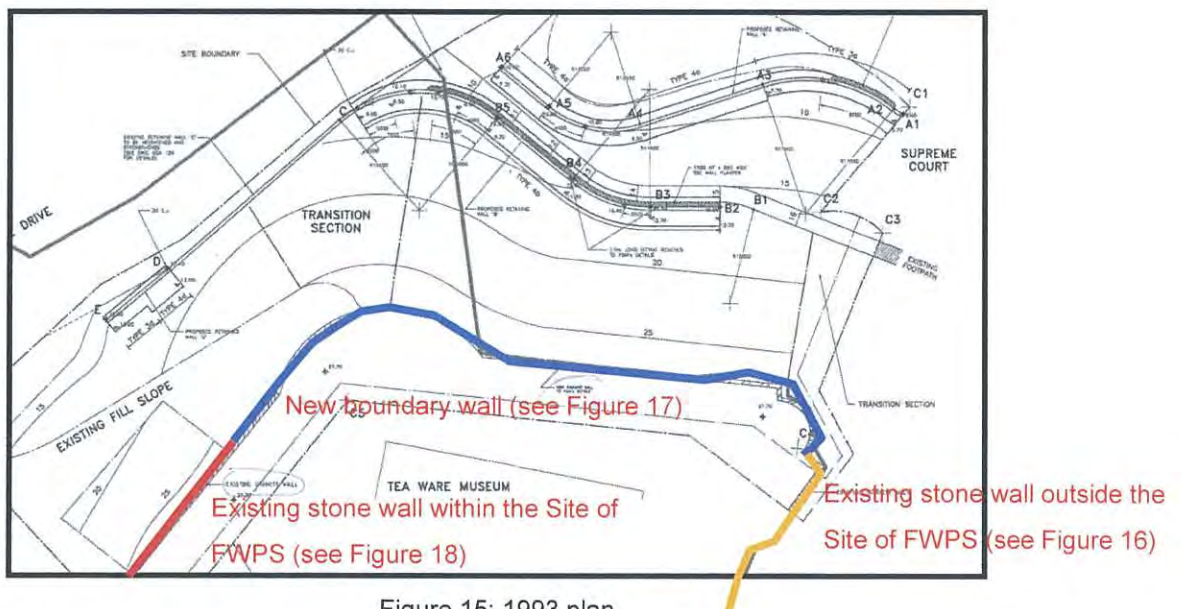


Figure 15: 1993 plan
 Source: provided by WSD, modified by the author



Possible Historic
Masonry
Defensive Wall

Appendix E Photos of Flagstaff House Museum of Teaware and its Setting



E.1 Flagstaff House from south seen from across the eastern section of its front lawn area.



E.2 Western part of lawn area in front of Flagstaff House. Beyond some clutter of plant nurseries behind the trees to the left lies an historic rubble masonry defensive wall which demarcated the edge of the garden area as well as formed a defence to the Flagstaff House hillock/ outcrop which overlooked the harbour.



E.3 View of hillock/ outcrop on which Flagstaff House is situated from Cotton Tree Drive, showing its strong position. Flagstaff House is behind the trees at the top right corner of the photo.



E.4 View from Cotton Tree Drive of slope on north- western side of Flagstaff House at the area where the pumping station is proposed.



E.5 Corner of historic fortified, defensive squared rubble masonry wall with loopholes for firing can be seen from Cotton Tree Drive above Fire Station compound. Flagstaff House garden area is behind.



E.6 South-western end of historic defensive squared rubble masonry wall in Hong Kong Park to the south-west of Flagstaff House.



E.7 View from outside, of group of four generally north- east facing loopholes for firing in the historic defensive squared rubble masonry wall.



E.8 View from outside of corner of historic defensive wall showing the two loopholes that face in a roughly westerly direction.



E.9 View from inside of the historic defensive wall of the group of two loopholes facing in a roughly westerly direction. These loopholes would enable enfilade fire to be brought on any attacking soldier approaching the section of wall running approximately west from the corner.



E.10 View looking south along historic rubble masonry wall flanking the north-western side of the Flagstaff House garden area, which would have been protected by the four loopholes which can be seen in the part of the wall ahead.



E.11 View looking north of historic defensive wall at the crest of the slope at the north-western side of the Flagstaff House garden.



E.12 Existing plant nursery in an area shown as lawn area in an 1847 lithograph of Flagstaff House from the Chater collection shown as Fig 22 of the HIA. Preferably the clutter of huts, etc. should be removed from this area to permit the garden area to be extended to the historic wall.



E.13 Point (alongside present plant nursery area to west of Flagstaff House) at which the historic defensive masonry wall changes to a retaining wall with balustrade. It is surmised that the defensive wall might have simply been lowered slightly and modified at its upper part to form the balustrade.



E.14 View from northern part of historic retaining wall with balustrade looking south- west along towards the historic stone defensive wall. The height of the retaining wall at this point can be clearly seen.



E.15 View looking down slope from north- west part of Flagstaff House garden area looking down over Cotton Tree Drive towards ICBC Tower.



E.16 Balustrade at north end of Flagstaff House garden, at crest of slope above Queensway.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
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**Historic Classical
Balustrade**

Figure 41: 1930s drawing after cast-iron posts were renewed to concrete
Source: <http://hkas.org.uk/membership-offers>



Figure 42: 1981 photo
Source: http://sc.archsd.gov.hk/b5/www.archsd.gov.hk/archsd/html/teachingkits/TK3/central/accessibleversion/tc/acc_flagstaff/1981.html

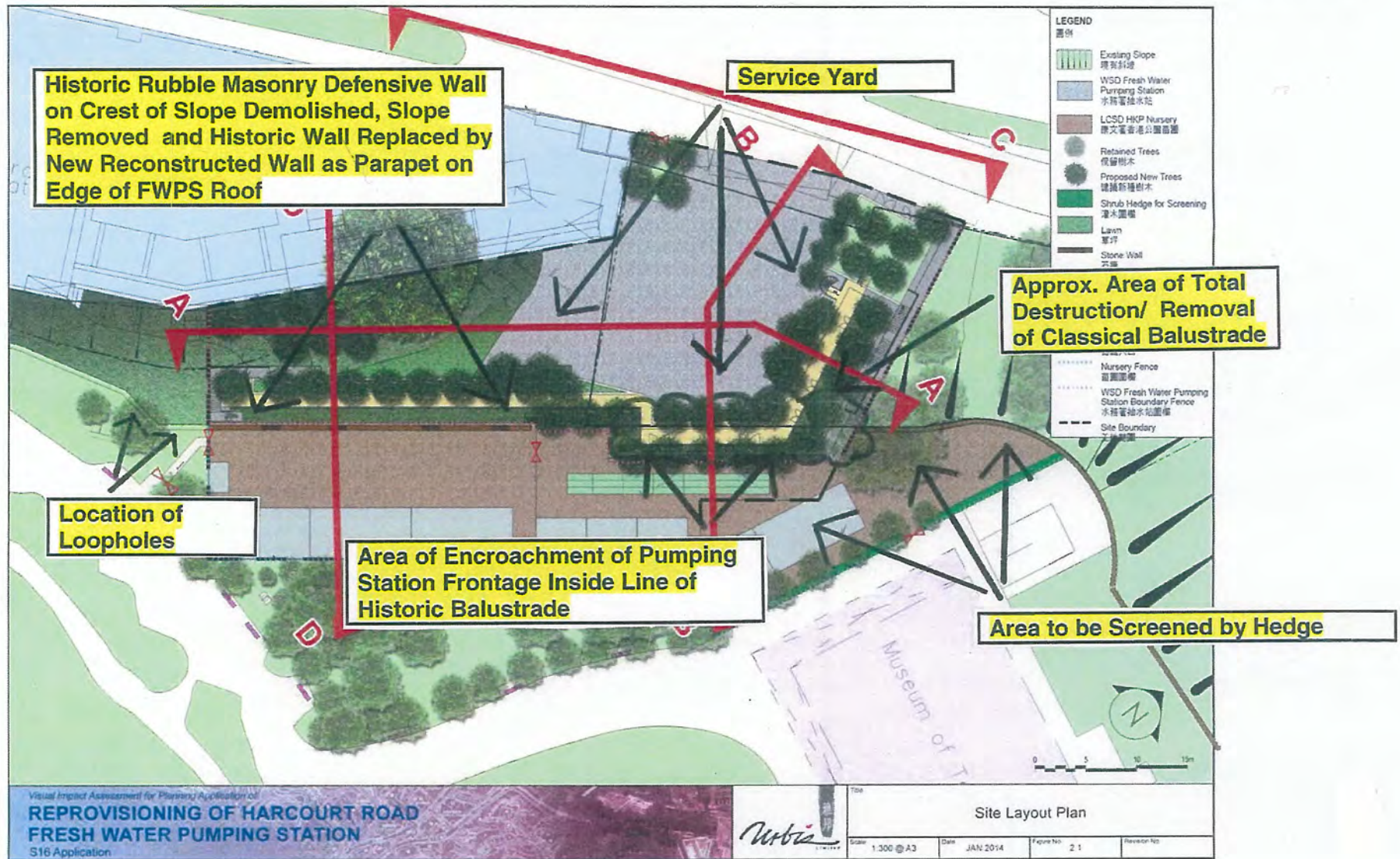


Figure A2.2: Proposed landscape layout plan
Source: provided by URBIS

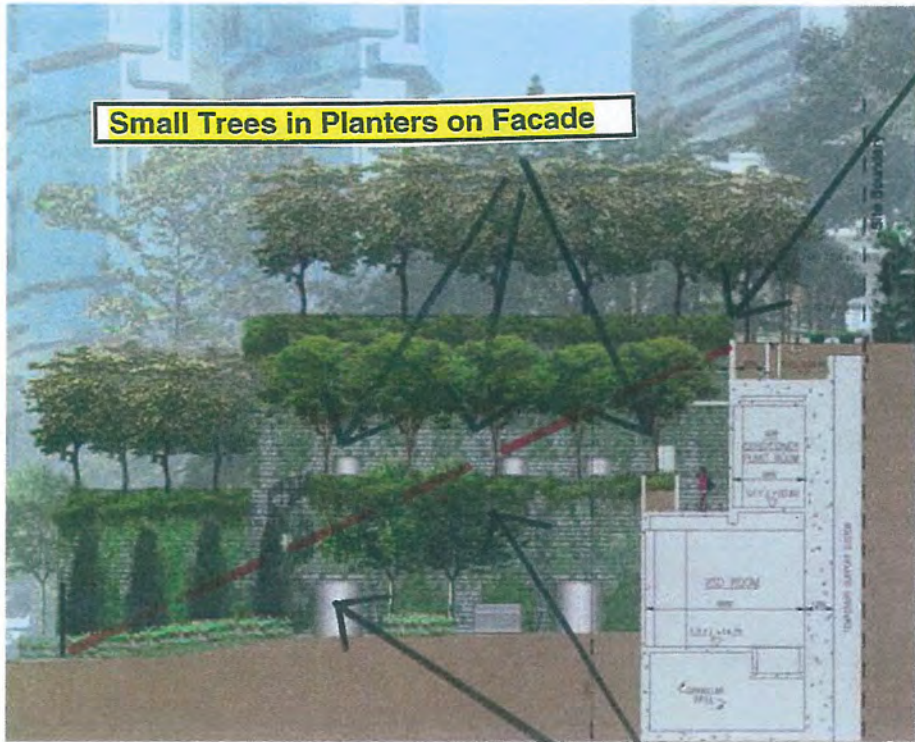


Figure A2.4: Proposed Section B
Source: provided by URBIS

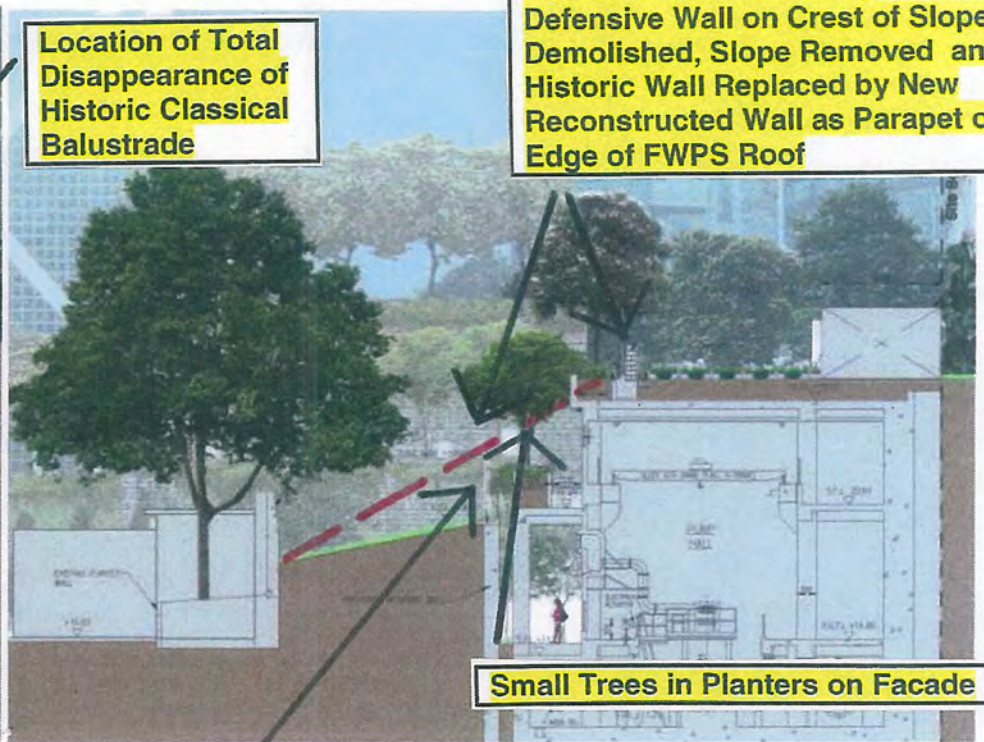


Figure A2.5: Proposed Section D
Source: provided by URBIS

Approx. Area of Cut Slope

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR REPROVISIONING OF HARCOURT ROAD FRESH WATER PUMPING STATION

overall visual impact of the propose pumping station. The photomontages for the existing views and future views for the proposed pumping station at the key public viewing points are given in Appendix III.

In order to minimise the ground movement at the Flagstaff House during the construction work for the pumping station, a bored pile wall is proposed to be constructed along the boundary of the Site as shown in Figure 6.

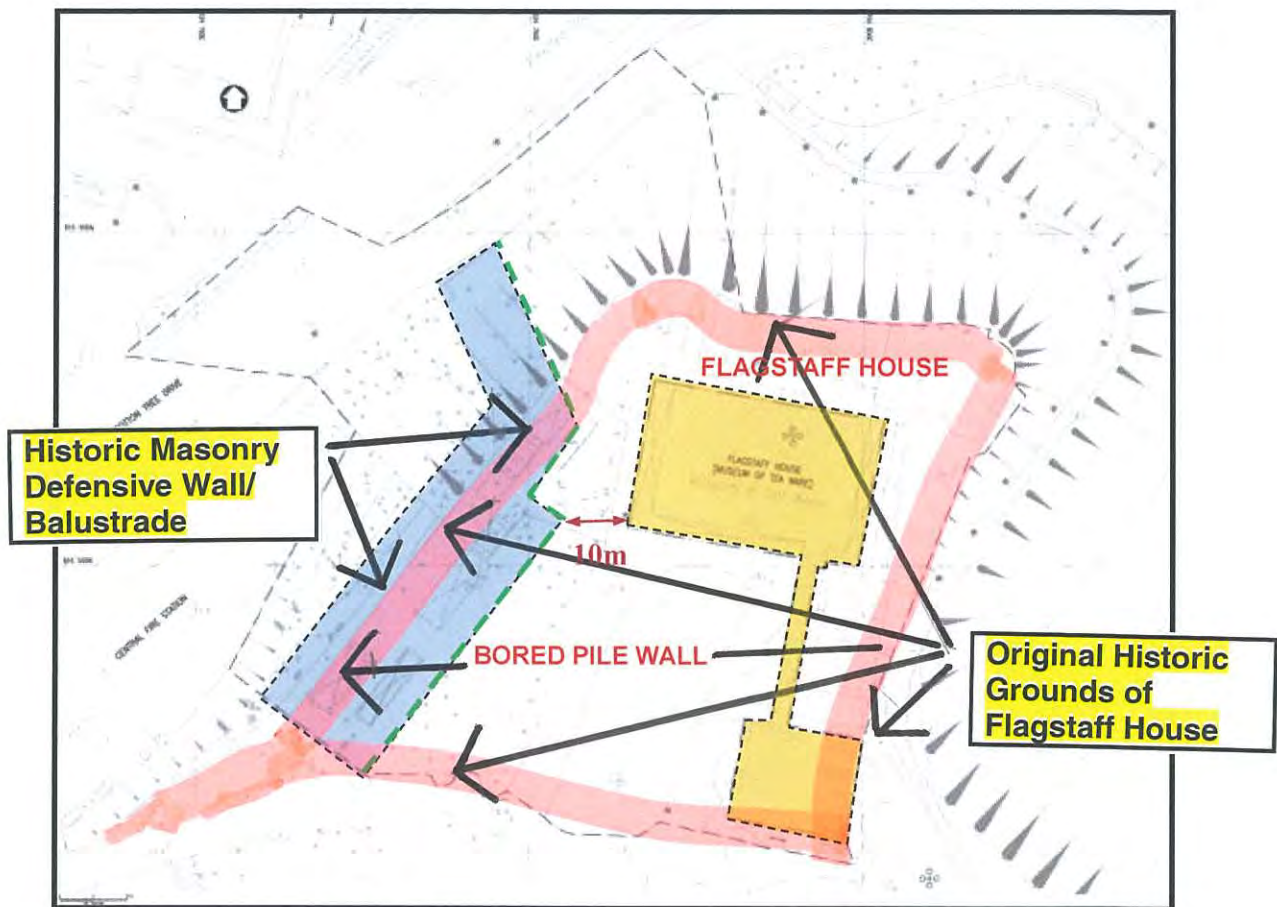


Figure 6: Separation between pumping station and monument
Source: provided by WSD, modified by author

REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL
ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF VICTORIA BARRACKS AREA

I. INTRODUCTION

In March 1977, His Excellency the Governor, acting on the advice of the Executive Council appointed a special committee known as the Victoria Barracks Planning Committee to advise the Governor-in-Council on the planning of the Victoria Barracks area which is due to be released by the Army during the financial year 1978/79. The membership of the Committee comprised :-

The Honourable Szeto Wai, CBE, JP (Chairman)
Dr. S.M. Bard, OBE, ED, JP
Mr. William L. Chan, JP
Professor K.C. Lye
The Honourable D.W. McDonald, JP
Mr. G.R. Ross, CBE, JP
Mr. George C. Tso
Mr. G.L. Mortimer (Secretary until 27th June 1977)
Mr. D.K. Dowding (Secretary from 28th June 1977)

2. The Committee's terms of reference stipulated that the Committee should, by the end of September 1977, submit to the Governor-in-Council broad proposals of land use for the redevelopment

/of ...

account the open space provisions already zoned and planned in the adjoining areas. A plan showing the open spaces zoned and planned for Central District in relation to Victoria Barracks is at

Annex 4

Annex 4.

9. In the process of planning, it was found that the future of Flagstaff House and its grounds held the key to the proposed use of the remainder of the area and until this basic question was settled it was not possible to plan a balanced development.

10. The Committee spent considerable time in its deliberations and considered that Flagstaff House was of sufficient merit both architecturally and historically to warrant its retention.

11. The Committee then proceeded to consider its most suitable use taking into account its design and structural condition, as well as the capital and recurrent expenditure which would be involved in rendering it suitable for the recommended use. In this exercise, the Committee has considered in detail a total of eleven alternative uses. However, the quality of the structure, the

/distinctive ...

distinctive character of the interior and the high public amenity value which the house and its grounds possess led the Committee to decide that Flagstaff House and its grounds should be preserved as a specialized museum in a park setting for the enjoyment of the public.

12. The Committee has considered the following factors in its recommendation to retain Flagstaff House as a specialised museum and was assisted in its deliberations by the Curator of the Hong Kong Museum of History:

(a) General Suitability

Flagstaff House, being a nineteenth century building, would be ideal for displaying exhibits of that period and it would not duplicate the museum in the proposed cultural centre at Tsim Sha Tsui. The size of the building, the limitation of floor loadings and the need to protect the fabric of the building pointed to the necessity of limiting the number of people visiting the House at any one time. The main exhibit should be the building itself with historical

/documents, ...

planning area should be maintained at the Queensway level and this can be achieved only by control written into the lease conditions in respect of building height, coverage, plot ratios, disposition, massing, etc. The Committee is fully aware of the implications of the restrictions proposed on revenue from land sales but feels that what may be lost in revenue will be gained in social value and civic pride.

28.2. In view of the importance of the area, the Committee recommends it to be designated a "Special Planning Area" and any development within the area to be subject to special approval of the Governor-in-Council.

28.3. To ensure good planning and architecture along the Queensway frontage, the Committee further recommends that the development of the commercial zone be undertaken by a single developer; to achieve this end,

/tendering ...