

**S16 PLANNING APPLICATION**  
**Approved Stanley OZP No. S/H19/16**

**Proposed Residential Development with Minor Relaxation of Plot Ratio, Building  
Height and Site Coverage Restrictions  
at 44 Stanley Village Road in Stanley**

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**Further Information No. 5**

**(i) Consideration of retaining the cross at the rooftop**

In view of the strong views of the Town Planning Board Members in relation to the treatment of the Cross on the roof, the Applicant confirms that they will maintain the Cross on the roof.

**(ii) Review of the extent and justifications for the proposed increase in plot ratio  
and site coverage**

**Major PUBLIC Planning Gain – Preservation of Maryknoll House**

On 8 December 2016, the Antiquities Advisory Board (“AAB”) confirmed that Maryknoll House at the Application Site is a Grade 1 Historic Building; in other words, it is a “[building] of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible”.

The Historic Building Appraisal prepared by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”) has the following observation on the **architectural merit** of Maryknoll House,

*“The three-storey building has a **handsome red-brick facade** showing the **strong character of Chinese architecture combined with western elements** and details in a style known as **Chinese Eclectic**. This style was purposely chosen by the Maryknoll Fathers according to their vision of spreading the gospel in China. Chinese architectural features include green glazed tiled roofs, green glazed Chinese grilles, octagonal and hexagonal shaped windows, and various decorations and motifs on the façade. The building is **symmetrical in plan** and the façades also exhibit **regular fenestration** with only minor deviations here and there.”*

The Government encourages owners of graded historic building to explore the possibility of **“preservation-cum-development”** options to incorporate their graded buildings in the future development. According to *FAQ on Assessment of Buildings in Hong Kong which May Have Heritage Value* prepared by AMO, “[t]he Government takes proactive approach to discuss with private owners to formulate options for preservation **with possible economic incentives that are commensurate with the heritage value of the graded buildings**”.

In view of the above, the Commission for Heritage’s Office (“CHO”) and AMO have been actively following up with the landowner (also the Applicant of the current planning application) to explore conservation options aiming to **strike a balance between preservation of historic buildings and respect for private property rights**. The Proposed Development Scheme for

residential use with the **preservation of the main building as well as the architectural merit** identified by AMO is a collaborative effort between CHO, AMO and the landowner/Applicant.

The cost of preserving the main building, including the much-needed strengthening works, as well as the lowered building platform to avoid obstruction to showcase the main building is enormous and far outweighs the takings of a residential development at plot ratio 0.75.

### **Challenges and Difficulties that the Applicant is Confronting**

Executing this preservation-cum-development containing a Grade 1 Historic Building is much more demanding and expensive than demolishing and redeveloping the existing building, but the Applicant is still ambitious to combat all challenges and difficulties as highlighted below:

1. Maintaining Architectural Merits of Maryknoll House

After the purchase of the Maryknoll House in October 2016 by the Applicant, AAB confirmed the Maryknoll House as a Grade 1 Historic Building in December 2016, with the status described by AAB and AMO as “buildings of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible”. Instead of demolishing Maryknoll House, which was then statutorily permitted, the Applicant had been sincere to respect the decision and decided to put forward the aspiration for a preservation-cum-development. This subsequently involved a rezoning application (TPB Ref.: Y/H19/1), a planning application (TPB Ref.: A/H19/82) and submission of a Conservation Management Plan (“CMP”). These procedures took the Applicant over 6 years from preparation of the rezoning application (mid 2017) to approval of CMP (Jan 2024). This extra time, effort and resources were spent due to the mission to maintain the architectural merits of Maryknoll House being identified in the Historic Building Appraisal. These lengthy applications and procedures have incurred tremendous financial burden on the Applicant. However, the Applicant is still devoted to achieving a successful preservation-cum-development.

2. Bringing Maryknoll House Up to the Current Building Standards

Maryknoll House was completed in 1935, the preliminary structural survey revealed that the existing beams and slabs are not up to the current building standards. The Applicant thus engaged a professional team to investigate and propose a remedial strategy to upgrade the structural strength to give it a new life, while keeping the overall structural integrity and general external appearance.

3. Maintain the Visibility of Maryknoll House Façade Facing the South

In order to maintain the prominent exposure of the south façade of Maryknoll House, significant site formation works will be required to accommodate the new buildings at lower deck without blocking the public view. Given the profile of the slope and the concern of potential impact to Maryknoll House, such site formation work is extremely complicated, time consuming and costly.

#### 4. Engagement of International Designers and Top-tier Consultants

To tackle the above unique difficulties, the Applicant has engaged a team of competent experts to address all the above, including but not limit to a renowned international firm, Studio Milou, who is specializing in adaptive reuse of existing buildings worldwide, including the multiple award-winning National Gallery Singapore, to devise the preservation-cum-development scheme. The top-tier architect, engineer and heritage consultants are also invited to join the consultant team for the best proposal for this challenging task.

#### **Major PUBLIC Planning Gain – Make Maryknoll House Available for Public Appreciation**

Below is the policy statement of CHO,

*“To **protect, conserve and revitalise as appropriate historical and heritage sites and buildings** through relevant and sustainable approaches for the **benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations**. In implementing this policy, due regard should be given to development needs in the **public interest, respect for private property rights, budgetary considerations, cross-sector collaboration and active engagement of stakeholders and the general public.**”*

It is important to reiterate that Maryknoll House was not open to the public during its operation. Although opening part of a private residential development is difficult<sup>1</sup> and there would be potential conflict with the after-use (private residential), the Applicant has tried to make this possible. While addressing the need to protect and conserve the historic building and allowing public appreciation to fulfil the public interest, the Applicant expects the society to also respect private property rights, as emphasized in the policy statement of CHO. There should be a balance between public appreciation and privacy and security of the future residential development.

#### **Major PUBLIC Planning Gain – Investing Extra Cost to Significantly Improve the Interpretation of Maryknoll House**

The improvements to be brought by the proposed Heritage Gallery should not be underestimated. The area, duration and frequency are of course important (these have all been significantly enhanced under the current application), the content and the experience that could not be provided in the Approved Scheme are even more important.

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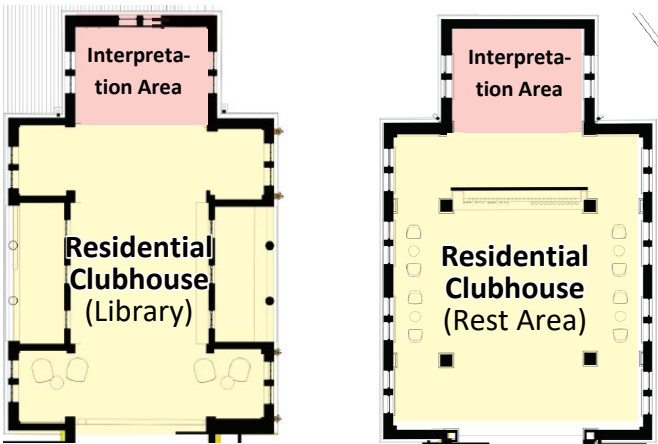
<sup>1</sup> The difficulties include:

- There is no public access to the Site
- The preserved building is a single building, not a separate structure that could be segregated from the after-use
- The preserved building will entirely be used for domestic purpose (taking into account the surrounding landuse and as approved by TPB)

Approved Scheme:

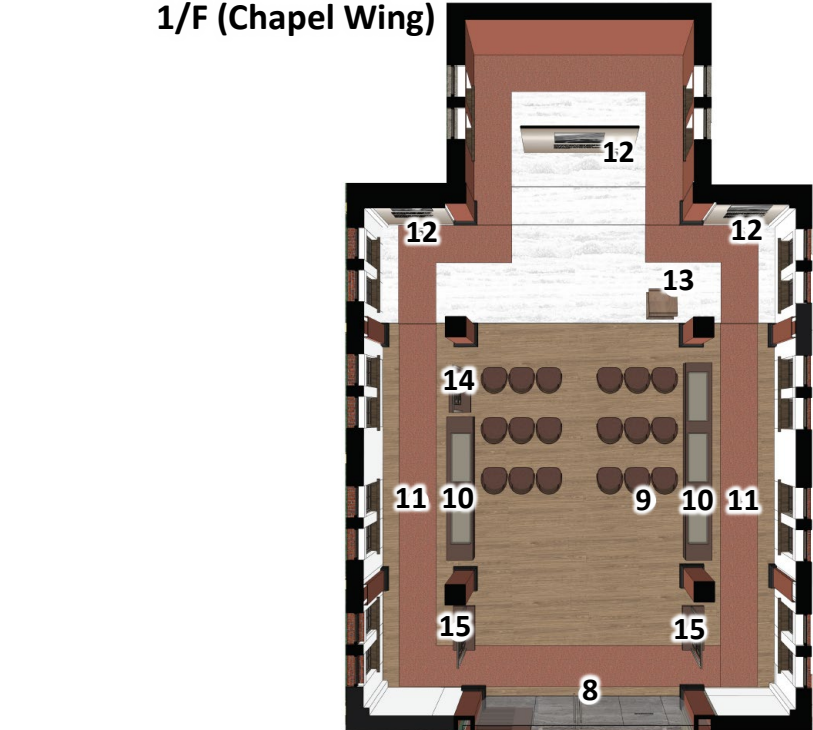
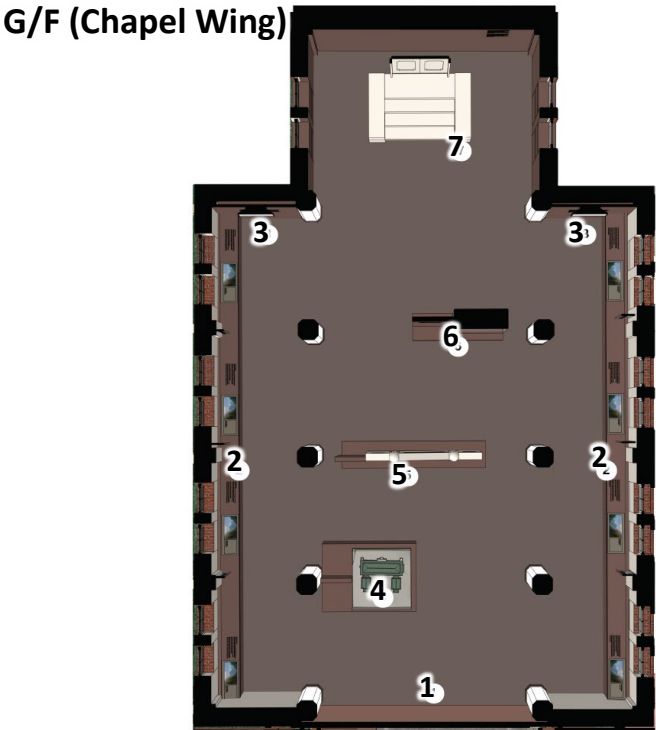
1/F (Library Wing & Chapel Wing)

Residential Clubhouse  
Interpretation Area (22m<sup>2</sup> x 2 = 44m<sup>2</sup>)



- Opportunities:
- A few display panels
  - A small physical model
  - Spending majority of time of the 60-min guided tour at the forecourt

Proposed Scheme:



Heritage Gallery (298m<sup>2</sup>)

- Opportunities:
- 1. Heritage gallery entrance (G/F)
  - 2. Half Height display cases on Maryknoll's architectural history (left) and religious roots (right)
  - 3. Video display
  - 4. Scaled physical model
  - 5. Salvaged staircase parapet
  - 6. Salvaged floor tile samples
  - 7. Salvaged entrance porch
  - 8. Heritage gallery entrance (1/F)
  - 9. Seating
  - 10. Display cases
  - 11. Visitor route
  - 12. Information panel
  - 13. Podium
  - 14. Salvaged clear glass windows
  - 15. Salvaged stained glass windows



Comparison between the Approved Scheme and Proposed Scheme:

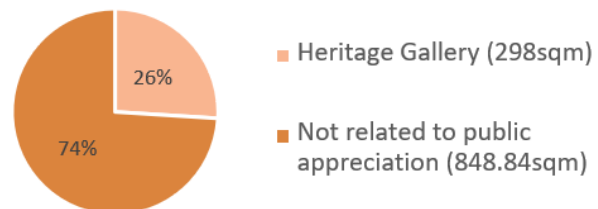
	Approved Scheme	Proposed Scheme
Location of the interpretation area	Within the residential clubhouse	Within the Chapel Wing (exclusive use)
Area	44m <sup>2</sup>	298m <sup>2</sup>
GFA	0m <sup>2</sup> ; GFA non-accountable as this is located within the residential clubhouse	298m <sup>2</sup> ; The entire Heritage Gallery is GFA accountable
Cost of establishing, maintaining and operating the interpretation area	Minimal, to be absorbed into the cost of fitting out and operation of the residential clubhouse	A lot more, will be specially designed to the satisfaction of AMO, with a lot of exhibition items and panels as well as salvaged items
Responsible party	Future residents	Upfront costs: the Applicant Operation: the Applicant to operate in accordance with the DMC

Once again, there will be a substantial increase in the content of the Heritage Gallery in a more peaceful environment for appreciation and interpretation; most importantly, without increasing potential conflict with the future residents. The provision of the Heritage Gallery has cost implications in addition to the enormous construction cost.

### Relaxation being Sought is MINOR and REASONABLE

The proposed minor relaxation of Plot Ratio Restriction involves an additional GFA of 1,146.8m<sup>2</sup> only. These GFA do not solely go to the residential portion of the proposed development for profit-making. Out of the additional GFA (1,146.8m<sup>2</sup>), **one-fourth goes to the proposed Heritage Gallery** (298m<sup>2</sup>; equivalent to 26% of the additional GFA). Under the Approved S16 Scheme, the proposed area for public appreciation (i.e. 22m<sup>2</sup> x 2) falls within the residential clubhouse which is GFA non-accountable. On the contrary, the proposed Heritage Gallery in the current Proposed Development Scheme is an exclusive and dedicated area reserved for appreciation purposes, and it is GFA accountable.

Additional GFA  
(Total: 1,146.8sqm)



Understand that there is public aspiration for having historic elements open for public appreciation within preserved historic buildings. This is very common in government properties and commercial portions of private developments. However, the Application Site is different in context. **The Application Site is privately owned, the after use is a private residential development and the historic elements are completely attached to the private residential use;** it is important to strike a balance between public appreciation and potential interference to the future residents.

The Applicant has made an effort to offer some public appreciation elements in the Approved S16 Scheme to meet the public aspirations while limiting the potential disturbance to the future residents. Under the Approved S16 Scheme, the Applicant has committed to arrange pre-arranged, small group guided tours each year to allow visitors to appreciate the preserved

main building and learn more about the history of the Site via the exhibits in the 2 small interpretation areas. In view of the **potential conflict/disturbance of the usage of the residential clubhouse** (as the interpretations areas will be located within the residential clubhouse in the Approved S16 Scheme), the Applicant limits the frequency and duration of the guided tour to only 8 times per year and 60 minutes each tour.

Working upon the aforementioned commitments, the Applicant has devised the current S16 Scheme with an aim to **strike a delicate balance between public appreciation and privacy of the future residents** by designating the entire Chapel Wing as a Heritage Gallery to allow a more frequent and lengthier guided tour with much more interesting and informative content, without increasing the potential conflict with future residents. But then, this incurs additional GFA.

The increase in GFA for heritage proposals will bring significant improvements to the public appreciation of the Site. There will be an **exclusive and dedicated area within the Chapel Wing** for interpretation purposes. Visitors of the Guided Tour will be able to enjoy an immersive experience in a serene environment, without disturbing or being disturbed by the users of the residential clubhouse. Not least, the Heritage Gallery will provide a spacious environment for a variety of modes of interpretation (incl. display of salvaged items, AR/VR, physical model(s), display panels, interactive digital screen, projection screen showing footages), which the former interpretation areas (22m<sup>2</sup> each; smaller than 2 private parking spaces) could not accommodate.

The Applicant is undertaking a serious commitment in this regard, not to mention the cost of preserving the main building and lowering the lower building platform to maintain visibility of the main building. These are nearly going to offset the incentive given to the preservation-cum-development project.

### **Conclusion**

The Applicant's earnest desire to maintain the architectural merits of Maryknoll House, while giving it a suitable after use to inject life and bring it back to its glorious moment. The above has demonstrated that the Proposed Development Scheme under the current S16 Planning Application achieves the purpose of **striking a balance between preservation of historic buildings and respect for private property rights**.

Additionally, the Applicant agrees to commit to the following additional planning gains:

1. Further increase guided tour frequency 12 in current S16 submission to 18 times per year (+50%);
2. The Applicant will be responsible to set up and operate the Heritage Gallery in accordance with the DMC;
3. The Applicant will set aside a sinking fund (amount to be further determined) for the future operation of the Heritage Gallery and guided tours.

The Applicant's effort to improve the proposal for preservation-cum-development and devotion with substantiate cost and time to make this happen have been demonstrated in the above. The Applicant sincerely requests the Town Planning Board Members to give favourable decision to the current S16 Planning Application with the current Proposed Scheme, such that the collaborative effort between CHO, AMO and the landowner/Applicant can soon be realized and bring benefit to the public, thereby achieving a win-win situation.





\*The above rendering is preliminary design proposal only and is subject to further design development.

## Current S16 Scheme Heritage Gallery GF



Key Plan  
149 sqm for Heritage Gallery

**About the architect** - Jean-François Milou is an international heritage architect renowned for the National Gallery Singapore. His firm, StudioMilou, specializes in respectful adaptive reuse of historic buildings worldwide.



**Design Statement** - The Heritage Gallery is conceived as a layered journey through Maryknoll House's architectural and spiritual legacy. Spanning both floors, it weaves salvaged elements, archival material, and contemplative displays into a unified narrative of memory and renewal.





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## Current S16 Scheme Heritage Gallery 1F - Updated Proposal

**Design Statement** - The rooftop cross is preserved in its original location, maintaining its architectural and symbolic significance. The Heritage Gallery now focuses on historical exhibits and narratives, offering a broader interpretation of the Maryknoll legacy.