

Site formation for Hopewell 2

Understanding that the Hopewell 2 project will soon be commenced in full-scale, Raymond Wong, a causal researcher in Hong Kong's studies, visited the site in early 2013 before all the old things will soon be removed for the development.

Raymond was born in Wanchai not far away from the site more than half a Century ago. He can still remember the nearby areas well in his heart. This visit seems to be a final good-bye to his past memory of this place. Soon he can find nothing that he had once seen before in this area as the Hopewell 2 project gradually materialized. With the exception, may be, the Hung Shing Temple on the side of Queen's Road East.

Some brief information about the Hopewell 2 development project

合和中心二期發位於香港灣仔堅尼地道和船街之間，鄰近為合和中心，發展總樓面面積約**172,700**平方米；設有**2000**多間豪華客房、零售商店、戲院、多用途會議室及演講廳等各種配套設施的大型酒店項目。倘若建成，預期為全港最大酒店。城市規劃委員會於**1994** 年批准擬建合和中心二期之地段作酒店發展用途。於**2008** 年**11**月中，發展商合和實業宣佈大幅削減合和中心二期的發展規模，預計完工期為**2016**年。

合和中心二期原計劃與「荃灣悅來酒店」同步發展，並稱為「香港悅來酒店」，但由於計劃龐大，投資額達45億港元，以約15倍地積比率作高密度發展，其中更改規劃用途的涵蓋土地一半為政府官地，並牽涉到交通改道需要，然而計劃提出至今超過20年，進展並不如意。

1982至1993年間，合和實業曾8次向城規會申請合和中心二期（當時稱為Mega Tower）的發展計劃，其中6次獲准，2次遭否決。1994年，合和再度提出申請，項目提出興建樓高93層的大樓，該方案獲城規會批准。這個方案會包括108萬呎酒店，共2197個房間及68.7萬呎寫字樓。然而當時因為地產市道很好，合和一直未能完成收購地皮上所有私人物業，因此一直未有動工。

2004年，合和終完成收購土地程序，並於同年4月修訂合和中心二期的計劃，但被城規會以5大理由第3次否決，合和提出上訴。同年7月，合和將原93層的大樓興建計劃，改為2幢樓高61層的大樓，以免其高度遮蔽港島的山脊線，但城規會於2005年2月第4次否決計劃。

2006年中，合和再度向城規會提出上訴，然而由於城規會內有香港中文大學及香港城市大學教授擔任委員。瓜田李下，合和主席胡應湘為事避嫌疑，堅持辭去城大校董會主席一職及中大工商管理系榮譽教授名銜。目前合和仍致力推動合和中心二期計劃發展，並繼續向城規會之決定提出上訴，聆訊日期已定於2007年1月，但在部份社會人士反對之下，上訴再度失敗。

因為2幢樓高61層的大樓的計劃屢遭反對，合和於2008年初決定唯有改回使用1994年已獲城規會批准的93層大樓方案，但這再度引起部份社會人士的不滿。

2008年8月，合和實業正式把Mega Tower改名為「合和中心二期」，而圖則會有微調。其後，合和決定大幅修改，使總樓面面積減少31%，樓宇層數由93層減至55層，地積比率由15倍減至10.3倍，而樓宇層數由93層減至55層。酒店房間由2197間減至1024間，而發展商承諾提供的休憩空間，沒有改變。

2012年6月26日合和終與政府達成補地價協議，補地價涉及37.2593億元，計劃興建成港島區首個會議酒店，提供1024間酒店房，並設有商場和寫字樓 項目以可建樓面約109.36萬方呎計，每呎補地價金額約3407元，由於合和將同時進行道路改善和建設6萬多方呎休憩公園，總投資額料達90億元

Wanchai is one of the oldest districts in Hong Kong being developed since late 1840s. Dating back to the end of the 19th Century, the existing Johnston Road/Hennessy Road was once the coastline along Wanchai. From that to the south (hillward) crossing Queen's Road East up to Kennedy Road, was fully built-up with row houses of traditional Cantonese style, as well as some detached houses for richer families, some with gardens, especially on the foot-hill along Queen's Road East.

The urban condition of the area remained basically undisturbed even after the Japanese occupation until mid 1960s. During the process of development, old buildings were removed completely, bit by bit, to give way to new developments. Small traces of the old time cannot be found anywhere in Wanchai right now except a very few on the foot-hill inside the Hopewell 2 development.

These traces include the Nam Koo Terrace (a garden house), some sections of old retaining wall, abandoned foot paths and remains of some buttress structures belonged to a few old buildings.

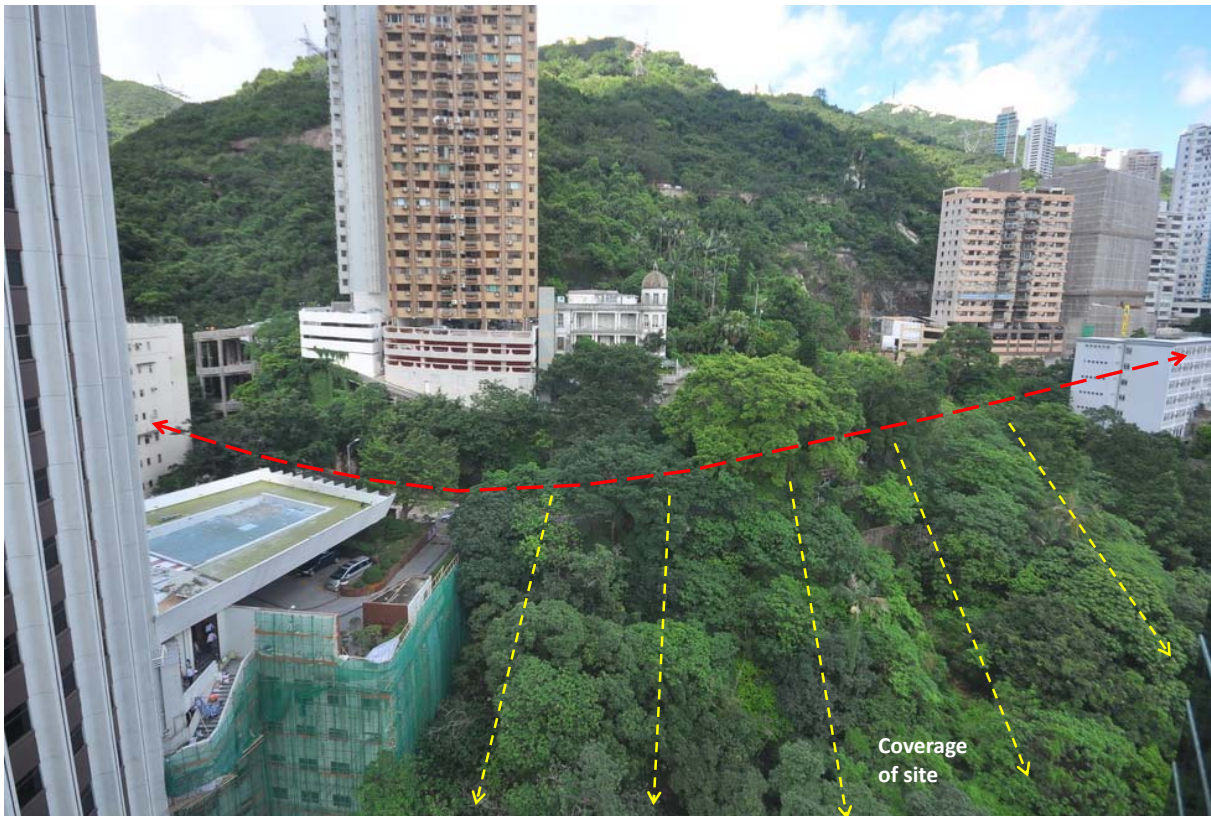
This presentation tries to record visually these remains before they are gone forever after the development.

Raymond Wong

Physical condition and
neighborhood environment of
the Hopewell 2 development



The neighborhood environment as seen from the top of Hopewell Centre



← → Kennedy Road, almost concealed by trees covering the entire slope surface







The existing condition of the site
before the commencement of
the site formation process





The existing slope condition along the Kennedy Road pedestrian path.



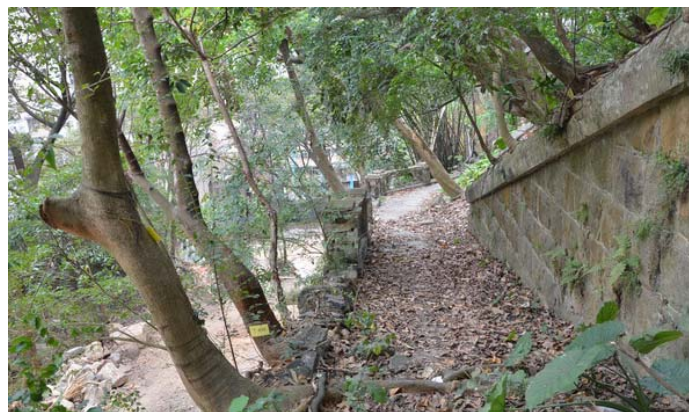
Abandoned foot path leading pedestrian from Kennedy Road down to Queen's Road East







Sections of old footpaths,
abandoned for years,
once providing access for
general public



Sections of old
footpaths, abandoned
for years, once
providing access for
general public











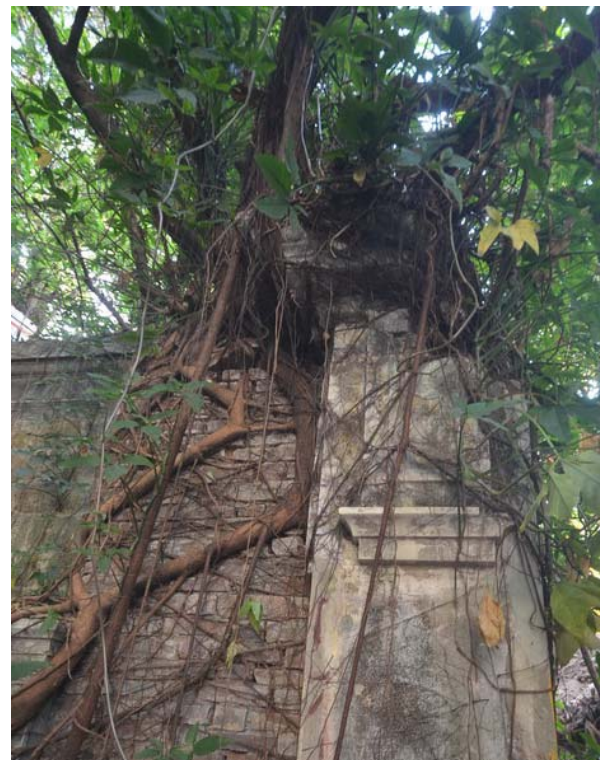


The power of time and the mother nature as shown from the growth of trees and the damages caused to man-made structures through the penetration of their roots





The power of time and the mother nature as shown from the growth of trees and the damages caused to man-made structures through the penetration of their roots



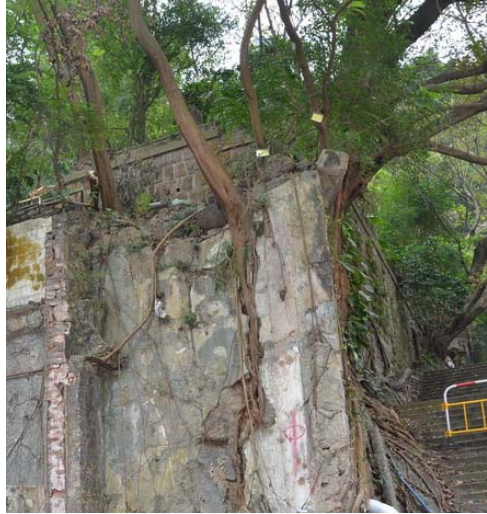


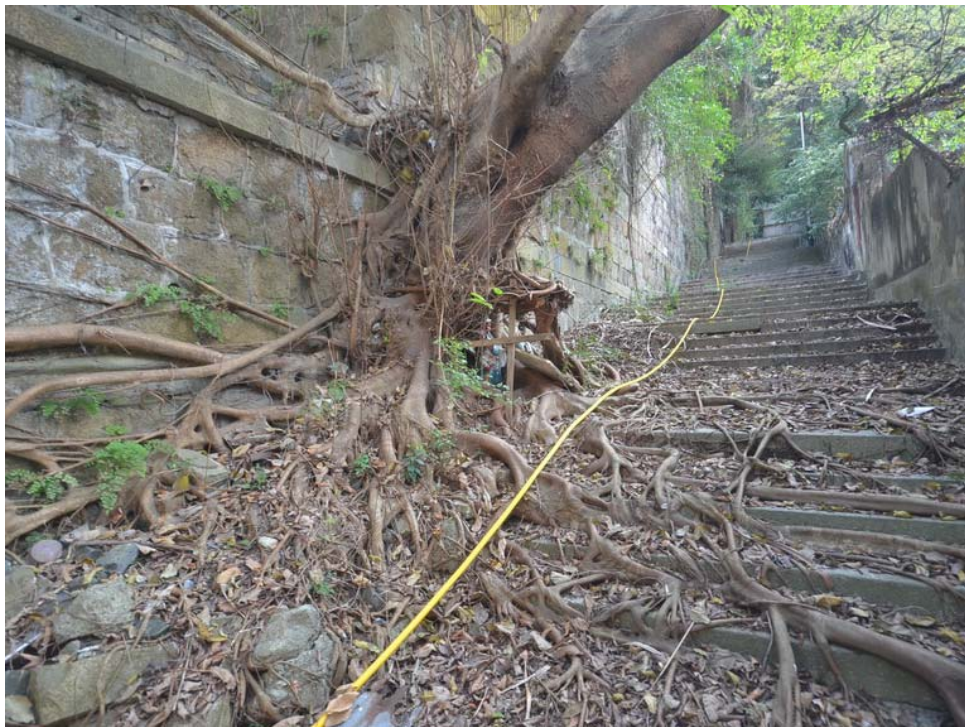


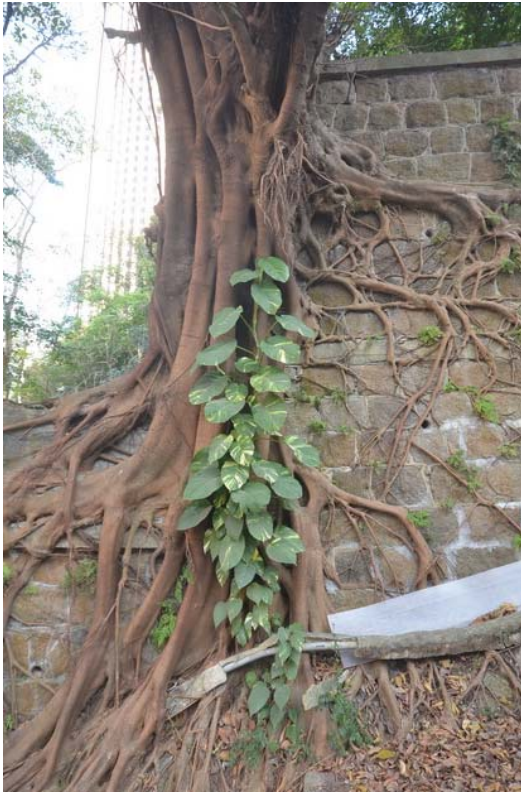
















Remaining sections of old retaining wall and other building portions



Remaining sections of old retaining wall and drain out-fall



Old retaining wall
constructed using
granite blocks forming
the terrace platform



Remaining sections of old retaining wall and other building portions



Remains of an old building
which can be dated back more
than a hundred years







The beginning stage of site formation process, mobilizing equipment for the slope cutting and land leveling.



Temporary ramp formed by cutting open the retaining wall and soil-fill for the accessing of equipment and material to the upper ground for onward site formation works

Old retaining wall being cut to allow excavating machine going up to the higher level to carry out site formation

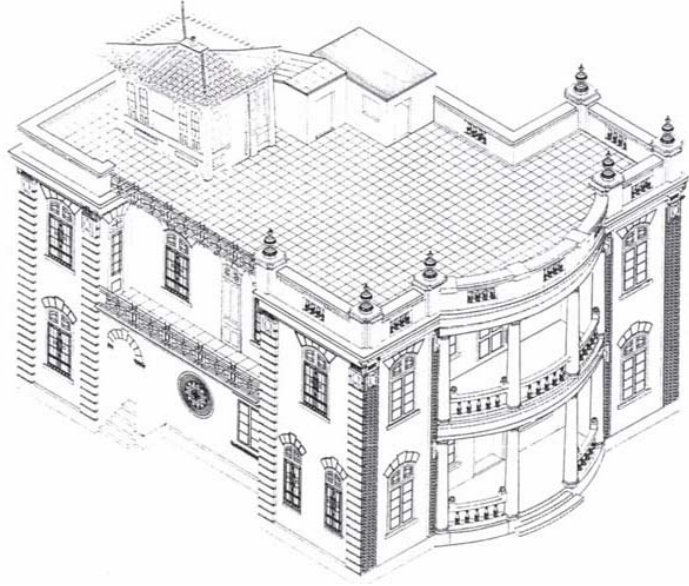




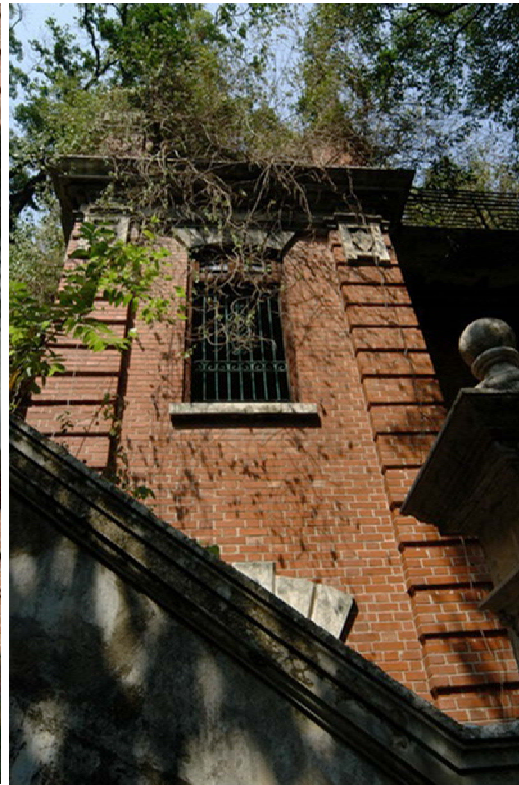
The only survived old building in the redeveloping site, the Nam Koo Terrace

One of the modest houses, the Nam Koo Terrace (南固臺), owned by private family on the western foothill of Hopewell Centre





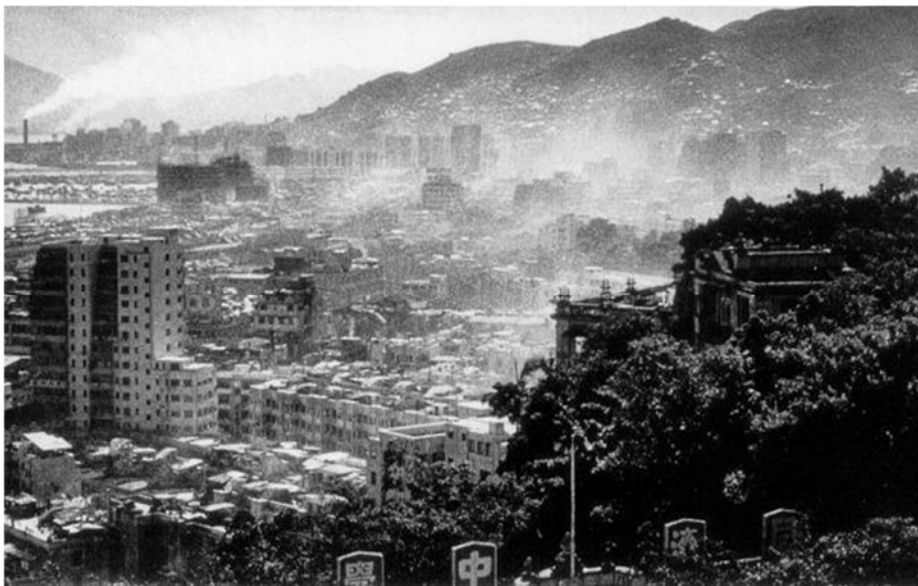
南固臺 hidden in the trees
and bushes within the hillside







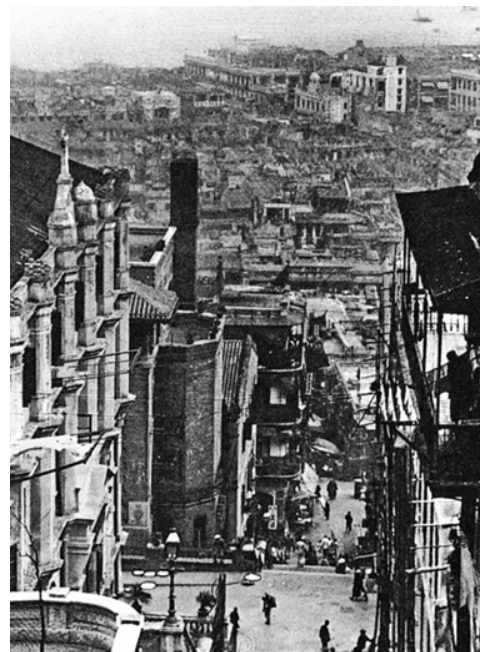
Tracing some images of the surrounding
urban environment from historic photos



Viewing downhill from Kennedy Road toward Wanchai and Causeway Bay



Streetscape of old Wanchai
and the foothill neighborhood



Typical streetscape on the Hong Kong
Island viewing toward downhill



Approximate location of
Hopewell Centre







The look of the Hung Shing Temple with a time difference of almost a hundred years

Boundary cutting-off between
the site and the neighborhood





The slope vicinity

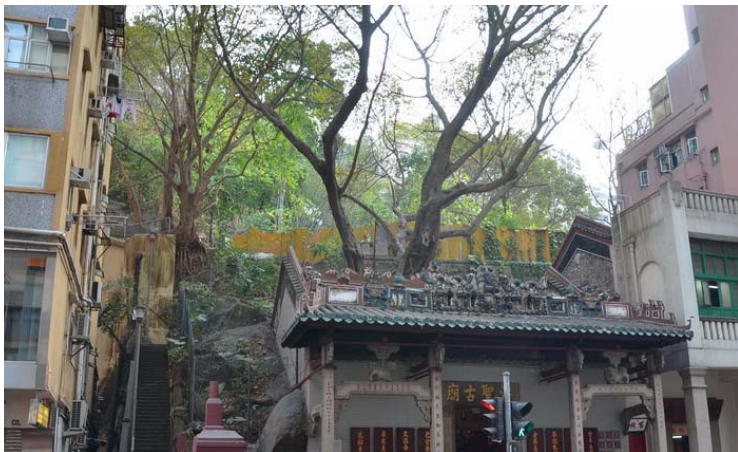




Site for Hopewell 2



Path getting into the back lane





The site entrance ground
at Ship Street



The photos as shown in this presentation documented the final linkage between the old time in the very old district of Wanchai. These traces will soon be gone forever. Though we have already lost almost everything and we do not have anything more to lost in our “modern society”, the scene is still very upsetting.

Raymond Wong
Words from his heart
March 2013