

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the 205th Meeting
on Thursday, 6 June 2024 at 2:30 pm
at Conference Room, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre
Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon

Present: Prof SO Cheung-tak, Douglas, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Mr CHAN Chun-hung, Vincent
Prof CHEUNG Sui-wai
Ms CHEUNG Tih-lin, Vanessa
Prof CHU Hoi-shan
Mr FU Chin-shing, Ivan, MH, JP
Dr IP Chung-man, Tony, MH
Prof LAM Weng-cheong
Dr LEE Ching-yee, Jane, JP
Prof LI Chi-miu, Phyllis, BBS
Ms SEE Sau-mei, Salome
Mr SHUM Ho-kit, BBS, JP
Mr SU Yau-on, Albert, MH, JP
Mr TSANG Chiu-tong, Brian
Mr YAM Ming-ho, Caspar
Dr YEUNG Wai-shing, Frankie, BBS, MH, JP
Miss YEUNG Wing-shan, Theresa
Ms YIP Ka-ming, Alice
Mr YUEN Siu-bun, Edward

Ms Shirley YEUNG (Secretary)
Senior Executive Officer (Antiquities and Monuments) 2
Antiquities and Monuments Office

Absent with Apologies: Prof CHAN Ching, Selina
Mr HO Kui-yip, MH, JP

In Attendance: Development Bureau

Miss Pamela LAM, JP
Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 1 [DS(W)1]

Mr Ivanhoe CHANG
Commissioner for Heritage [C for H]

Mr Sunny LO
Chief Assistant Secretary (Works) 2 [CAS(W)2]

Ms Clarissa WAN
Assistant Secretary (Heritage Conservation) 3

Ms Ella LAM
Chief Executive Officer (Heritage Conservation) 1

Ms Josephine YU
Secretariat Press Officer (Development)

Antiquities and Monuments Office

Ms Fione LO
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)
[ES(AM)]

Ms Susanna SIU, MH
Chief Heritage Executive (Antiquities & Monuments)
[CHE(AM)]

Ms Cecilia SUEN
Senior Architect (Antiquities & Monuments) 1

Mr David HO
Acting Senior Architect (Antiquities & Monuments) 2 /
Maintenance Surveyor (Antiquities & Monuments) 2

Ms Teresa LO
Curator (Historical Buildings) 2 [C(HB)2]

Miss Beatrice WONG
Curator (Historical Buildings) 3 [C(HB)3]

Architectural Services Department

Mr Raymond CHAN
Assistant Director (Property Services)

Planning Department

Ms Winnie LAU
Assistant Director of Planning / Metro

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and government representatives to the meeting.

2. The Chairman reminded Members to declare interest when they perceived that there might be conflict of interest in matters being discussed or to be discussed at the meeting.

**Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 204th Meeting held on 7 March 2024
(Board Minutes AAB/5/2023-24)**

3. The minutes of the 204th meeting held on 7 March 2024 were confirmed with amendments to paragraph 85 proposed by Mr Caspar YAM as follows:

“85. Mr Caspar YAM said that the building of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street was a pre-war concrete tenement building despite the fact that it had undergone substantial alterations. It represented the typology and building technology in around 1930 as the use of concrete in building construction had only become popular from the 1930s onwards. He understood that there were less than 10 pre-war tenement buildings with cantilevered balconies currently existing in Hong Kong among which the building of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street was the only one in Mong Kok. Furthermore, this tenement building, in which

schools once operated, was associated with historical stories and figures compared with other buildings of similar type. He suggested linking up the building of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street with other pre-war tenement buildings (e.g. No. 23 Argyle Street (No Grading) and Nos. 282, 287 and 297 Portland Street in Mong Kok) that were within walking distance in the area in response to the concept of “city walk”.

Item 2 Matters Arising and Progress Report **(Board Paper AAB/30/2023-24)**

4. ES(AM) briefed Members on the progress of the major heritage conservation projects from 1 February to 15 May 2024 as detailed in the Board Paper, including declaration of monuments, major preservation, restoration and maintenance of historic buildings projects.

5. CHE(AM) briefed Members on the progress of archaeological work as well as educational and publicity activities from 1 February to 15 May 2024 as detailed in the Board Paper. She also took the opportunity to invite Members to the “Harmony of Rites and Music: Exploring the Qilu Culture through Shandong Relics” exhibition currently being staged at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (“HDC”) in Tsim Sha Tsui.

6. Mr SHUM Ho-kit was pleased to see that the “Inseparable Ties: Cohesion as Told by Hong Kong Historic Buildings” exhibition (photo version) had also been staged in the Mainland apart from Hong Kong. He hoped to see more collaborations between the Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”) and the Guangdong Province with a view to promoting Hong Kong’s cultural tourism to the Mainland. He also suggested collaborating with the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and Hong Kong Tourism Board to organise cultural guided tours for overseas celebrities during their stay in Hong Kong so as to promote Hong Kong’s tourism. The Chairman echoed, adding that it would also be good to explore cross-sectoral collaborations for promoting Hong Kong’s culture and history in wider perspectives.

7. Prof LAM Weng-cheong suggested organising educational activities at significant archaeological sites (e.g. Nga Tsin Wai Village) during archaeological excavation for members of the public with a view to enhancing public understanding of Hong Kong history as well as the importance of protection of

archaeological sites and the relevant work.

8. Prof Phyllis LI commented that the “Under the Same Roof: Origin and Art of Lingnan Traditional Architecture” exhibition staged at HDC earlier was an eye-opener, and the delivery of the related lectures were of high standard. She enquired whether the recording of the lectures would be shared with the public. CHE(AM) responded that lectures were conducted with live streaming broadcast online and the respective video records would be uploaded on AMO’s website with consent of the speakers.

9. Ms Alice YIP commented that the “Heritage Run” programme held in different districts of Hong Kong was worth promoting as it linked up built heritage of respective districts which promoted sport in cultural heritage activities and enhanced participants’ knowledge. She suggested further organising cultural heritage activities in the vicinity of Kai Tak Sports Park after its opening. CHE(AM) responded that AMO had been collaborating with the District Offices concerned in promoting public understanding of cultural heritage in the district.

10. The Chairman remarked that the Instagram platform “HK Heritage LIVE” which was launched by the Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (“CHO”) in 2022 for promoting Hong Kong’s historic buildings had been receiving overwhelming response. He suggested also exploring the use of Xiaohongshu or other social media platforms of the Mainland to attract more visitors, especially the youths, to visit Hong Kong’s historic buildings.

Progress Update on Preparatory Work for the Assessment of Post-1950 Buildings

11. The Chairman invited ES(AM) to brief Members on the latest progress of the preparatory work for the assessment of post-1950 buildings.

12. ES(AM) recapped that as reported at the Board’s meeting on 11 March 2021, AMO had set up a task force to carry out a series of preparatory work for the assessment of post-1950 buildings, including compilation of information on the types, numbers and distribution of post-1950 buildings in Hong Kong. The task force also studied the assessment criteria adopted by the Mainland and overseas for assessing historic buildings. Subsequently, AMO updated Members on the progress of the relevant preparatory work at the meetings on 8 September 2022 and 7 September 2023 respectively.

13. ES(AM) reported that after compiling the information on post-1950 buildings obtained from other government departments, it was found that over 2 000 buildings were built between 1950 and 1959 with majority of them located in urban area. The task force completed the preliminary research on these some 2 000 buildings by studying the maps, photos, building plans, government records and academic papers. The task force also conducted site visits at over 980 villages in the New Territories with a view to identifying rural buildings with potential heritage value for further study. After studying the assessment criteria adopted by the Mainland and overseas, it was noted that there was no single or universal framework suitable to all as the jurisdictions under study had formulated their own set of criteria best suit their historical, cultural, social and economic conditions. Notwithstanding this, the established six assessment criteria currently adopted by Hong Kong for assessing the heritage value of buildings from different perspectives were generally the same as those adopted by the countries and cities under study. Furthermore, it was also found that all of the countries and cities under study adopted only one set of assessment criteria for assessing historic buildings without formulating a separate set specifically for post-war buildings. In addition, some of the countries and cities under study emphasised the rigorous selection of post-war buildings given large quantity of such buildings.

14. ES(AM) further briefed that grading assessment of the heritage value of 1 656 buildings had been completed, among which, 207 were post-1950 buildings and 120 of them were accorded Grade 1, 2 or 3 status.

15. To take the work forward, the task force would systematically review the aforesaid some 2 000 buildings built between 1950 and 1959 in order to select those with higher heritage value for further study and consideration for grading. In the meantime, the task force was reviewing the pre-1950 buildings among some 8 800 items recorded during the territory-wide survey conducted between 1996 and 2000 but not included in the “List of the 1 444 Historic Buildings” with a view to selecting the remaining items suitable for grading assessment. To conclude, AMO would continue the grading assessment of buildings under the prevailing mechanism in accordance with the established six assessment criteria by assessing pre-1950 buildings first followed by post-1950 buildings, while buildings subject to demolition threat or redevelopment plans would be handled with priority.

16. Prof Phyllis LI enquired about the expected timeline of bringing up the first batch of buildings built between 1950 and 1959 for the Board’s consideration for grading as well as the list of these buildings. ES(AM) replied that the Board

had all along been reviewing the grading of post-1950 buildings with cogent needs. Upon completion of systematically reviewing the aforesaid some 2 000 buildings built between 1950 and 1959, those with higher heritage value would be selected for in-depth study and brought up for Members' discussion in due course.

17. The Chairman said that under the current grading mechanism, members of the public were welcome to suggest items which might have heritage value to AMO for inclusion in the "List of New Items for Grading Assessment". Hence, the Board had in fact been dealing with the grading of some post-1950 buildings in the course of assessing the items from the list. Following the same practice, he expected that AMO could include post-1950 buildings with higher heritage value in the list when the research work on these buildings was completed.

18. Dr Tony IP enquired about the rationale for setting 1959 as a watershed for post-1950 buildings, and asked if more elaboration on the rigorous selection of post-war buildings by other countries could be provided. In response, ES(AM) explained that the information on post-1950 buildings collected from other government departments did not limit to those built between 1950 and 1959. However, given the large quantity, AMO adopted a step-by-step approach when dealing with the post-1950 buildings according to their year of construction. In fact, some of the buildings built after 1959 that had already been put on the "List of New Items for Grading Assessment" and had been assessed by the Board before. Besides, although the jurisdictions under study by AMO emphasised the rigorous selection of post-war buildings, all of them used the same set of assessment criteria for assessing both pre-war and post-war buildings.

19. The Chairman supplemented that the most important factor in grading assessment was whether or not the historic buildings were of high heritage value, irrespective of their age, as in the recent case of declaring the Hong Kong City Hall as a monument, which was a multipurpose cultural complex built in 1962.

Progress Update on Block 4 of the Revitalised Central Police Station Compound

20. The Chairman invited CAS(W)2 to brief Members on the latest progress of Block 4 of the revitalised Central Police Station Compound.

21. CAS(W)2 recapped that AMO reported at the meeting on 8 December 2022 the technical update on the building structures of Block 4 prepared by The Hong Kong Jockey Club ("HKJC"). At that meeting, AMO also briefed

Members that HKJC would remove parts of the extant building fabrics of Block 4 on a strictly necessary basis for the sake of public safety. Subsequently, HKJC had carried out in-depth study and site investigation. In the course of site investigation, more structural integrity issues had been revealed. For example, there were structural cracks at the key brickwork structures and many voids in the masonry walls, and the bricks were powdery and weak. The site investigation was completed in February 2024. It was assessed that Block 4 was structurally unstable and that there was a risk of collapse. Hence, HKJC was in the process of removing the first and second floors of Block 4 for the sake of public safety. The removal work on the first floor was expected to complete in mid-June 2024. HKJC would preserve the ground floor of Block 4 as far as practicable while ensuring safety, and salvage the historic building fabrics for possible reuse in future revitalisation and conservation proposals of Block 4. During the removal work, HKJC had conducted digital recording of Block 4 for its future revitalisation use. Besides, CHO, AMO and relevant government departments had been monitoring the process in the course of site investigation and the removal work, and CHO had regularly kept the Board updated on the latest situation of Block 4. Lastly, he shared with Members that HKJC expected to submit a revitalisation proposal on Block 4 to the Board for Members' comment in the second half of the year.

22. With no comment from Members, the Chairman asked CAS(W)2 to keep the Board updated on the matter.

Item 3 Assessment of Historic Buildings (Board Paper AAB/31/2023-24)

Confirmation of Proposed Grading Endorsed at the Last Meeting

23. The Chairman said that Mr Albert SU had declared interest before the meeting that he was the Chief Executive of Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, the organisation which owned and managed Kwong Fook Tsz. The Chairman noted Mr SU's declaration and said that Mr SU would abstain from discussion and voting on the item.

24. ES(AM) recapped that the Board endorsed the proposed grading of the following three items at the meeting on 7 March 2024:

- (i) Kwong Fook Tsz, No. 40 Tai Ping Shan Street, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong, Proposed Grade 1 (Serial No. 1092);
- (ii) Nos. 386 and 388 Lai Chi Kok Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon, Proposed Grade 3 (Serial No. N365); and
- (iii) Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon, Proposed No Grading (Serial No. N366).

25. ES(AM) reported that a one-month public consultation on the proposed grading of the above three items was conducted from 26 March to 26 April 2024. No written submissions on Kwong Fook Tsz and Nos. 386 and 388 Lai Chi Kok Road but five on Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street had been received during the public consultation period, all opined that Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street should deserve a grading status. All written submissions had been provided to Members before the meeting.

26. ES(AM) briefed that after reviewing and deliberating on all the submissions and supplementary information, the independent Historic Buildings Assessment Panel (the “Assessment Panel”) unanimously considered that the proposed no grading of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street should be maintained as the views raised in the submissions had already been taken into account when the proposed grading of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street was discussed. Furthermore, the Assessment Panel considered that, among others, the “Chinese Children’s School” and the “Chinese Sparetime Institute” as mentioned in the submissions had only been run for a relatively short period (i.e. about seven years for the “Chinese Children’s School” and less than one year for the “Chinese Sparetime Institute”), and the building of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street had been substantially altered over the years which seriously undermined its authenticity.

27. Mr Caspar YAM opined that each of the established six assessment criteria was of importance when assessing the heritage value of historic buildings. Hence, taking into account the high historical value of the building of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street as reflected in the public views, he wondered if the building would deserve a grading despite its substantial alterations for striking a balance. In response, ES(AM) said that the grading assessment was based on a holistic approach. She added that the Assessment Panel had analysed each public view and reviewed each assessment criterion thoroughly and comprehensively. After deliberation, the Assessment Panel unanimously

considered no grading for Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street.

28. In response to Mr Edward YUEN's enquiry on how the Government would handle and respond to the public views, ES(AM) replied that the public views were shared to and discussed by Members at the Board's meeting which was opened to the public.

29. Mr Ivan FU reckoned that the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the "Ordinance") (Cap. 53) was formulated for preservation of objects of historical interest, among others. In light of this, if an object could not be preserved physically due to its incompleteness, its stories behind could be preserved by other means.

30. The Chairman said that the Board welcomed public views and attached great importance to all views received during the public consultation period. He understood that the Assessment Panel would study thoroughly all written submissions and supplementary information received from the public, and would re-inspect items for further review if considered necessary. He thanked for the public views received, and stressed the importance of assessing historic buildings by using the same yardstick by the Assessment Panel.

31. Prof LAM Weng-cheong suggested sharing online similar cases of items with no grading accorded for reference by the public.

32. C for H thanked Members for their comments. He remarked that the process of assessment of historic buildings had all along been open and transparent, and explained that many of the public views received for Nos. 53 and 55 Shangtung Street had in fact been reflected in the appraisal of the item and had also been briefed at the last meeting, whereas the new information provided by the public had been considered thoroughly by the Assessment Panel which then concluded that the proposed no grading for Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street should be maintained. Nevertheless, the confirmation of the proposed grading of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street was at the Board's discretion. He added that all information gathered by AMO relating to Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street had been summarised in the appraisal of the item, and the appraisal would be uploaded on AAB's website so that the public could easily access the related information on the one hand and information so collected could be recorded on the other hand.

33. Dr Tony IP suggested enhancing the Geographical Information System on Hong Kong Heritage (“GISH”) for proper recording the stories of historic buildings on this virtual platform. For example, appraisals of buildings with no grading accorded might also be uploaded on GISH, in addition to those of declared monuments and graded buildings which were already available on the system. C for H thanked Dr IP for his suggestion, sharing that ways were being explored to include information on historic buildings as well as buildings with no grading accorded on GISH.

34. With no further views from Members, the Board supported the confirmation of the proposed grading status for the three items listed in paragraph 24 above.

35. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Tung Wah Group of Hospitals for recommending a grading review for Kwong Fook Tsz with the supplementary information provided.

Review of Grading

Hong Kong Red Swastika Society Building, No. 25 Dragon Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong, Proposed Grade 1 (Serial No. 399)

36. The Chairman said that Mr Caspar YAM had declared interest before the meeting that he involved in the preparation of the conservation proposal for the Hong Kong Red Swastika Society Building (the “HKRSS Building”) as part of the building’s application for the “Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage” in 2020 and the application was approved in the financial year 2021-22, yet he did not follow up with the actual maintenance works. The Chairman advised Mr YAM to continue to join the discussion.

37. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Hong Kong Red Swastika Society (“HKRSS”), the owner of the HKRSS Building, for accommodating the Board’s site visit to the HKRSS Building on 31 May 2024. He briefed that HKRSS submitted a written request with supplementary information on the HKRSS Building to AMO in August 2022, appealing for upgrading the grading of the building (currently Grade 2) as they considered that AMO did not have a chance to inspect the interior of the building during the time when the building was first assessed for grading.

38. C(HB)2 reported that after scrutinising the supplementary information provided by HKRSS, AMO had conducted site inspections at the HKRSS Building. AMO considered the information was reliable and had not been taken into account when the building was graded. Hence, AMO had carried out further research on the building in accordance with the established grading mechanism. After inspecting the building and reviewing its heritage value, the Assessment Panel recommended adjusting the grading of the building from Grade 2 to proposed Grade 1.

39. C(HB)2 briefed Members on the heritage value, the current condition and the proposed grading of the HKRSS Building.

40. The Chairman enquired about the Assessment Panel's views in the course of deliberations on the grading review of the HKRSS Building. C(HB)2 replied that according to the supplementary information provided by HKRSS, AMO's subsequent findings of the in-depth research and interviews with HKRSS, as well as the site inspection at the HKRSS Building conducted by the Assessment Panel, the Assessment Panel had made upward adjustment to the aspects on the architectural merit, social and local interest, and authenticity of the HKRSS Building, taking into account that (i) the charity services provided by HKRSS during wartime period and in the HKRSS Building after its inauguration in 1940 were not known to them in the past; (ii) many notables of Hong Kong had involved in the work of HKRSS before, such as Mr TSOI Po-tin (then prominent figure and leader in Yuen Long), Dr TSEUNG Fat-im (then renowned local doctor and philanthropist), and Mr WANG Cheng-ting (then politician and diplomat); and (iii) the interior details and design concept of the HKRSS Building had been illustrated in the supplementary information provided by HKRSS. The Assessment Panel therefore recommended adjusting the grading of the HKRSS Building from Grade 2 to proposed Grade 1.

41. Ms Salome SEE supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1, considering that the advocacy of religious harmony by HKRSS was all-embracing and had been reflected in the Chinese and western architectural elements of the HKRSS Building (e.g. religious signage and decorative motifs could be seen in many parts of the building). Also, she was amazed by the well-maintained condition of the building together with its settings and furniture despite the 84-year history of the building.

42. Mr Albert SU supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. He commented that apart from the building's good condition and high authenticity that were rarely seen in Hong Kong, the building was still performing its social function of serving the people until now. He considered that the building had even already reached the threshold of being a declared monument. The Chairman supplemented that all Grade 1 historic buildings would form a pool for consideration by the Authority under the Ordinance (i.e. the Secretary for Development) as to whether some of these buildings might have reached the "high threshold" of monuments for further consideration of monument declaration.

43. Miss Theresa YEUNG supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. She shared Members' views, especially appreciating HKRSS's initiating the grading review, and encouraged the public to have the same positive attitude towards conservation of historic buildings.

44. Dr Frankie YEUNG supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. He pointed out that apart from the building's historical value, authenticity and persistent operation to serve people, the advocacy of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Mohammedanism (the "Five Religions") by HKRSS represented the inclusiveness that the Hong Kong community needed.

45. Mr SHUM Ho-kit supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. He was curious about how the Five Religions could be practised harmoniously at the building. C(HB)2 explained that the followers believed that the Five Religions shared the same origin, i.e. *Zhisheng Xiantian Laozu* (至聖先天老祖) (literally meaning "Holiest Venerable Patriarch of the Primordial Heaven"), from whom came the Five Religions and thus believed that the Five Religions were on equal footing. The wooden tablets set in the worship chambers of the building represented the five gods of the Five Religions before which the followers would perform religious ritual.

46. Mr Caspar YAM supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. Considering that Wing Yick & Co., which was set up by Mr TSOI Po-tin, was the building contractor of the HKRSS Building as well as some other graded buildings including Yu Yuen, the clubhouse of Shek O Country Club and Matilda and War Memorial Hospital at the Peak, he suggested also taking prominent figure or building contractor into account apart from the geographical perspective when assessing the group value of the HKRSS Building in this case.

ES(AM) supplemented that a holistic assessment of the group value of the HKRSS Building had in fact been conducted. For example, the typology, the association with buildings of similar type, and the representativeness of the building among its type had also been taken into account.

47. Prof Phyllis LI supported upgrading the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1. As noted during the Board's visit, the furnishings and architectural decorations of the building were very well maintained and the continual operation of the building to serve people contributed to its architectural merit and rarity as well as the social and historical values which made it deserve a high grading status. Although the ground floor of the building was used as a clinic opened to the public, she considered that it would add value to the building if public access to the upper floors could be allowed so as to deepen public understanding of the Five Religions and this historic building. The Chairman echoed, adding that the clinic on the ground floor was currently providing free ophthalmological, dental and general out-patient services for the public and wished to serve more people in need. ES(AM) said that AMO had communicated with HKRSS to explore ways for public appreciation of the HKRSS Building. While HKRSS welcomed members of the public to visit the ground floor of the HKRSS Building, it had also been arranging guided tours to the upper floors of the building over the past few years. HKRSS was also exploring the feasibility to organise more guided tours on special dates.

48. Prof CHEUNG Sui-wai said that the HKRSS Building bore resemblance to Wong Tai Sin Temple which was owned by Sik Sik Yuen (a religious charitable organisation) and advocated Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism.

49. Prof CHU Hoi-shan enquired if religious education would be provided for students studying at HKRSS's affiliated schools, which might contribute to some part of the group value of the HKRSS Building. In response, C(HB)2 said that religious ideas were not taught but charity work was promoted at the school.

50. With no further views from Members, the Board endorsed the upgrading of the HKRSS Building to proposed Grade 1.

Review of Proposed Grading

Nos. 8-9 Tai Pak Terrace, Kennedy Town, Hong Kong, Proposed No Grading (Serial No. 314)

51. C(HB)2 reported that Nos. 8-9 Tai Pak Terrace (“TPT”) was on the “List of the 1 444 Historic Buildings” with a proposed Grade 2 status as announced in March 2009. However, the grading assessment of this pair of buildings was put on hold because of its large-scale alteration and addition works in 2010. Recently, AMO noted that the related works of the buildings had been substantially completed. Hence, the Assessment Panel had conducted a site inspection at Nos. 8-9 TPT to review its current condition and its proposed grading. After deliberation, the Assessment Panel recommended adjusting the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT from proposed Grade 2 to proposed no grading.

52. C(HB)2 briefed Members on the heritage value, the current condition and the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT.

53. Ms Alice YIP supported adjusting the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT to proposed no grading in view of the substantial alteration. She enquired about the circumstances under which AMO would review the grading of historic buildings. ES(AM) said that AMO would conduct grading review upon requests with provision of new information.

54. Prof Phyllis LI expressed reservations about the adjustment of the proposed grading for Nos. 8-9 TPT. She said that although substantial alteration had been made to the pair of buildings, their historical significance should remain unchanged. Also, Nos. 8-9 TPT was of place value given its proximity to Lo Pan Temple as well as the pair of buildings themselves and the other terraces in the vicinity reflected the traditional Chinese community setting in the early days. Furthermore, she considered that unlike the case of Nos. 53 and 55 Shantung Street in Mong Kok discussed earlier of which the building had been altered and become a contemporary architecture, she considered that Nos. 8-9 TPT still maintained features of the 1980s without drastic change on its external appearance.

55. Dr Tony IP had reservation about the proposed grading adjustment to proposed no grading for Nos. 8-9 TPT. He noted from the photo that the owner or the building contractor had tried to reinstate some of the character-defining elements of the pair of buildings (e.g. the balcony and windows at the right side of

the building).

56. Prof CHU Hoi-shan enquired about the owner's eligibility for the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage ("FAS") upon grading Nos. 8-9 TPT.

57. Mr Caspar YAM also expressed reservations about the proposed no grading for Nos. 8-9 TPT. He believed that the pair of buildings should have certain historical value for being one of the spots in the Central and Western Heritage Trail. Furthermore, he commented that many tenement buildings adopted open plan design. Considering that the open plan design was to allow a certain extent of alterations in spatial layout, and thus this intent should be taken into account when assessing whether the buildings had undergone alterations internally.

58. In response to Members' comments above, C(HB)2 explained that Nos. 8-9 TPT carried some typical features of tenement buildings when it was first assessed in 2009. For example, the staircase in the middle of the pair of the buildings for shared use and the low-rise structure with balconies erected were common features of tenement buildings which added value to the architectural merits of Nos. 8-9 TPT. In addition, the history and work of the Hong Kong Society for the Promotion of Virtue (the then owner of the building) had relative weighting in the first grading assessment of Nos. 8-9 TPT. Hence, a proposed Grade 2 status was recommended for the pair of buildings at that time. However, after the building had undergone substantial renovations, almost all of its original internal decorative features had been removed and its building facades had been altered. For example, the internal staircase had now been demolished while a new one had been constructed at the rear of the buildings. The setting of the front elevation on the ground floor had been altered although the three upper floors still maintained their symmetries. Railings on the balconies had also been replaced. The Assessment Panel therefore considered that the substantial and obvious alterations had greatly compromised the authenticity of Nos. 8-9 TPT, which also significantly diminished its architectural merit, authenticity and rarity among the six assessment criteria. As a result, the proposed grading was adjusted to proposed no grading according to the reviewed rating.

59. ES(AM) supplemented that a one-month public consultation on the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT, among other items with proposed grading discussed at this meeting, would be conducted upon endorsement of its proposed

grading. Public views received, if any, during the public consultation period would be shared with the Assessment Panel for further review on the proposed grading before further deliberation and confirmation of the proposed grading by the Board at the next meeting.

60. Regarding FAS, CAS(W)2 briefed that owners of graded historic buildings were eligible to apply for grants up to HK\$6 million for each successful application under FAS to carry out maintenance works. C for H supplemented that the owner of Nos. 8-9 TPT was not eligible to apply for FAS given the proposed grading status of the building so far, and would also not be eligible for FAS if its proposed no grading was confirmed by the Board eventually.

61. Dr Jane LEE enquired whether the Assessment Panel would further review the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT if a counter-proposed grading came up by the Board at this meeting. The Chairman said that there were several precedents that the Assessment Panel would further review the proposed grading of items upon Members' comments raised at the meetings or public views received during public consultations. ES(AM) echoed, adding that either way was adoptable and the confirmation of the proposed grading was at the Board's discretion.

62. Ms Vanessa CHEUNG reckoned that Nos. 8-9 TPT was originally of potential for preservation. She enquired if the Government had taken any interventions in its alteration and addition works in the past years as it seemed that the owner had no intention to preserve the pair of buildings. ES(AM) responded that the grading system was administrative in nature, and the owner had been informed of the proposed grading together with the implications (including the eligibility for FAS) if Nos. 8-9 TPT was graded.

63. Prof CHU Hoi-shan enquired about the floor plan of Nos. 8-9 TPT as illustrations might be provided in relation to the new staircase for further consideration regarding the owner's intention of heritage conservation as well as deliberation on the proposed grading of the pair of buildings.

64. Dr Tony IP doubted the place-making value of Nos. 8-9 TPT as he noted from the photo that the current appearance of the pair of buildings was completely different from that in the 1980s (e.g. for having different balconies). Notwithstanding this, he wondered whether those balconies and iron windows on the upper floors of the buildings in the 1980s were unauthorized building works as

this might make their reinstatement impossible and result in the loss of their original appearance. This limitation faced by the owner on carrying out alteration works for Nos. 8-9 TPT should also be taken into account in the grading assessment.

65. Prof CHEUNG Sui-wai expressed that a negative implication might be brought to the public if Nos. 8-9 TPT would be graded as this might give a wrong message to the public that historic buildings could still be graded even though they had undergone substantial alteration.

66. Dr Frankie YEUNG understood that reinstatement of long-ago built balconies might not be possible nowadays due to the prevailing regulatory restrictions (e.g. the loading capacity of balconies) or lack of original building material. He viewed that Nos. 8-9 TPT was in harmony with the surrounding buildings. Although the interior condition of Nos. 8-9 TPT could not be verified, he reckoned that the owner had intended to preserve the original appearance of the pair of buildings by maintaining the four-storey structure.

67. The Chairman enquired whether the owner of Nos. 8-9 TPT had engaged any conservation architects in the course of alteration and addition works over the years. C(HB)2 replied that as learnt from the Authorised Person of the alteration works of the pair of buildings, advice from conservation architects had not been sought.

68. In response to Prof CHU Hoi-shan's enquiry above, C(HB)2 replied that the interior walls on the upper three floors separating No.8 from No.9 TPT had already been removed and thus they had been converted into a single unit on each floor currently. As for the ground floor, two separate entrances were used as entries to No. 8 and No. 9 TPT individually while people could use the entrance of No. 9 TPT to go up to the upper floors by the newly constructed staircase at its rear. Regarding the balconies and iron windows on the upper floors in the 1980s, she explained that there were originally some French doors between the interior unit and balcony on each floor of Nos. 8-9 as well as Nos. 10-11 (which was of similar design) TPT as noted from old photos. However, some of the French doors could not be seen at Nos. 8-9 TPT at that time given the installation of the iron windows. As such, those iron windows on the upper floors of Nos. 8-9 TPT were believed to be later-added structures. She said that when assessing the authenticity of Nos. 8-9 TPT, the Assessment Panel had taken into account the absence of the French doors in the pair of buildings, among other things.

69. Mr Ivan FU commented that the front elevation and the interior setting of Nos. 8-9 TPT at present were entirely different from those of other buildings of the same type except that they all had similar “wave-shaped balconies” and balustrades as those seen in Nos. 8-9 TPT. He suggested discussing the proposed grading of Nos. 8-9 TPT again at the next meeting upon further review by the Assessment Panel.

70. Mr Brian TSANG doubted whether the heritage value of Nos. 8-9 TPT could still be interpreted to the public if it would be graded while its authenticity had already been greatly compromised.

71. Mr Edward YUEN viewed that the original appearance of Nos. 8-9 TPT could no longer be reflected at the existing pair of buildings.

72. After deliberations, the Chairman suggested a review of the heritage value of Nos. 8-9 TPT by the Assessment Panel taking Members’ comments into consideration. The proposed grading would be discussed further at the next meeting.

New Items for Grading Assessment

73. The Chairman said that the following three items would be discussed at the meeting:

- (i) Chun On Pawn Shop, No. 91 Wan Chai Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, Proposed Grade 3 (Serial No. N247);
- (ii) Tak Wing Pawn Shop, No. 72 Des Voeux Road Central, Central, Hong Kong, Proposed Grade 3 (Serial No. N248); and
- (iii) Watchtower, Muk Wu Nga Yiu, Man Kam To, New Territories, Proposed Grade 3 (Serial No. N380).

(Prof CHU Hoi-shan and Dr Frankie YEUNG left the meeting at 17:23)

74. C(HB)3 briefed Members on the heritage value, the current conditions and the proposed grading of the above three items respectively.

75. Members had no comment and endorsed the proposed grading of the three items listed in paragraph 73 above.

76. The Chairman suggested inviting the owner of the watchtower at Muk Wu Nga Yiu to apply for FAS for better maintenance of the building upon grading. C(HB)3 said that AMO would convey the suggestion to the owner if the item would be graded.

Item 4 Any Other Business

77. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m..

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