

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

**Minutes of the Open Session of the 137th Meeting
Held on Wednesday 25 February 2009 at 2:30 p.m.
In Conference Room, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre
Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon**

Present: Mr Bernard Charnwut Chan, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Dr Anissa Chan Wong Lai-kuen, MH, JP
Ms Susanna Chiu Lai-kuen
Mr Patrick Fung Pak-tung, SC
Mr Philip Kan Siu-lun
Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo
Professor Lau Chi-pang
Ms Lilian Law Suk-kwan
Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen
Professor Bernard Lim Wan-fung, JP
Dr Tracey Lu Lie-dan
Dr Ng Cho-nam, BBS
Mr Ng Yat-cheung, JP
Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung, JP
Professor Simon Shen Xu-hui
Dr Linda Tsui Yee-wan
Ir Dr Greg Wong Chak-yan, JP
Mr Bryan Wong Kim-yeung
Mr Yeung Yiu-chung, BBS, JP
Ms Heaster Cheung (Secretary)
Chief Administration Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Absent with Apologies:

Dr Lee Ho-yin
Professor Billy So Kee-long
Mr Kwong Hoi-ying
Mrs Mariana Cheng Cho Chi-on, BBS, JP

In Attendance: Development Bureau
Mrs Carrie Lam, JP
Secretary for Development

Miss Janet Wong, JP
Deputy Secretary (Works)¹

Mr Jack Chan
Commissioner for Heritage

Mr Edwin Tong
Chief Assistant Secretary (Works)³

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr Thomas Chow, JP
Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Mr Chung Ling-hoi, JP
Deputy Director (Culture)

Dr Louis Ng
Assistant Director (Heritage and Museums)

Mr Tom Ming
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mr Kevin Sun
Curator (Archaeology)

Mrs Ada Yau
Curator (Education and Publicity)

Ms Fione Lo
Curator (Historical Buildings)

Miss Addy Wong
Senior Marketing Coordinator (Heritage and Museums)

Ms Becky Lam
Senior Executive Officer (Antiquities and Monuments)

Ms Yvonne Chan
Executive Officer I (Antiquities and Monuments)

Planning Department

Mr Anthony Kwan
Assistant Director/Metro

Architectural Services Department

Mr S L Lam
Senior Maintenance Surveyor/Heritage

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed the new members, Dr Anissa Chan, Ms Lilian Law and Dr Tracey Lu, who attended the meeting for the first time. He informed the meeting that Professor Billy So was currently on sabbatical leave in the United States and could not join the AAB meetings until 16 July 2009. The Chairman also welcomed Mrs Carrie Lam, Secretary for Development, for attending the meeting. Since Mrs Lam would only join the discussion on the Revitalisation Scheme, the meeting agreed to first deliberate Item 4 of the agenda.

2. Mrs Carrie Lam welcomed old and new members for joining the AAB. She highlighted some of the main points related to heritage conservation in the Financial Secretary's Budget Speech. Mrs Lam told the meeting that a total of \$1 billion had been earmarked for the Development Bureau to strengthen its works on the revitalisation of historic buildings.

Item 4 Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Board Paper AAB/4/2009-10)

Presentation Session

3. Mrs Carrie Lam briefed members on the selection results of the seven buildings under Batch I of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (the Revitalisation Scheme). Upon the launching of the Revitalisation Scheme in February 2008, a total of 114 applications were received from 102 organisations before the application deadline. An Advisory Committee on Revitalisation of Historic Buildings (the Advisory Committee) was formed to vet the applications in accordance with a marking scheme. Based on the Advisory Committee's thorough assessment and careful consideration of the merits of all shortlisted applications, she had accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendations for six historic buildings under the Revitalisation Scheme. However, the Advisory Committee did not recommend any applications in respect of the Old Tai Po Police Station as all the applications had failed to meet the high threshold. This site would be put into the next batch to be launched around the middle of the year. Mrs Lam said that all the projects selected were able to deliver the dual objectives of the Revitalisation Scheme, i.e. preserving the historic buildings and at the same time putting them for use in the best interest of the community. Public access to these revitalised historic buildings was assured. Moreover, these revitalisation projects would bring benefits to other policy objectives in the fields of arts and culture, creative industries, tourism, traditional Chinese medicine, etc. She anticipated that these heritage projects would create about 1,000 jobs during the construction stage and 500 jobs upon commissioning, inclusive of full time and part time positions.

4. Mrs Carrie Lam informed Members that the following five historic buildings had been identified for Batch II of the Revitalisation Scheme:

- (a) Old Tai Po Police Station;

- (b) Blue House Cluster, Wanchai;
- (c) Stone House at Hau Wong Temple New Village, Kowloon City;
- (d) Old House at Wong Uk Village, Shatin; and
- (e) Former Fanling Magistracy, Fanling.

5. In the light of the community's rising expectation for heritage conservation, Mrs Lam recognised the importance of public engagement on heritage conservation and would take note of the public's views when reviewing the Revitalisation Scheme.

Discussion Session

6. The major views, suggestions and questions on the subject matter raised by the members were summarised as follows:

- (a) merits might be accorded to those proposals with emphasis on the preservation of intangible heritage in future selection process;
- (b) financial assistance might be given to those shortlisted applicants in the preparation of proposals involving substantial cost ;
- (c) apart from giving out report on the selection results of the seven buildings, consideration might be given to publish reports to explain the reasons why the other applicants failed in the selection process, subject to the consent of the applicants;
- (d) reasons for bearing the capital cost of around \$64.9 million for the Old Tai O Police Station and the government subsidy required for social enterprise operation of around \$2 million for the Lai Chi Kok Hospital;
- (e) consideration might also be given to include local community views and participation on the conservation plans in future;
- (f) to facilitate the applicants in drawing up proposal in Batch II, clarification should be made to those newly established organizations on the rationale for stating "past experience of the applicants" which was regarded as one of the assessment criteria in the selection process;
- (g) in order to strengthen the promotion on heritage conservation, consideration should be given to cooperate with other government departments to enhance the social awareness of the Scheme;
- (h) de-briefings should be arranged for those NGOs with no experience in operating a social enterprise while serving the purpose of heritage conservation;
- (i) the selection criteria should be adjusted according to the prevailing environment, such as human factors, public views and non-material cultural heritage in Batch II; and
- (j) consideration should be given to ensure that public accessibility to these revitalised historic buildings would be guaranteed.

7. Mrs Carrie Lam thanked members for their valuable views and suggestions. She explained that successful applicants under the Revitalisation Scheme would act as an agent of the Government to revitalise these selected historic buildings. Under the Scheme, non-profit making organisations as defined under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance were invited to apply for adaptive re-use of selected government-owned historic buildings in the form of social enterprise. The social enterprises would operate the business under tenancy and service agreements with the Government. All profits generated from the operation should be injected into the stated purpose of the social enterprise. Since the Government remained as the owner of these historic buildings, there was a strong justification for the Government to provide capital grants to meet the renovation cost if these government-owned historic buildings were to be put to good use. As in the case of Lai Chi Kok Hospital, since the social enterprise anticipated that there would be a loss of \$2 million incurred at the beginning years of operation, it had also applied for government subsidy in this regard.

8. Notwithstanding that the existing government regulations did not allow reimbursement for subsidizing the applicants in preparing proposals, Mrs Carrie Lam was pleased to inform members that government funding was now made available for the successful applicants to prepare the pre-construction consultancy studies. As a step forward to assist the applicants financially, Mrs Lam said that more support, such as training workshops and briefings on the preparation of proposals, would be arranged for potential applicants in future.

9. Having regard to the intellectual property rights of the proposals, Mrs Carrie Lam expressed difficulty in releasing the details of the proposals without the prior consent of the applicants. However, she would not object the applicants disclosing their proposals to the public at their own discretion.

10. Miss Janet Wong explained that track record of an organisation would be regarded as one of the assessment criteria in the selection process. The objective, core services provided, sources of income, institutional set-up, management capabilities were equally important factors in the selection process. Nevertheless, Miss Wong would take note of members' views in the subsequent review on the eligibility criteria in Batch II. She reiterated that all cases of successful applications should comply with the various required administrative and statutory procedures similar to other capital works projects. Public engagement exercises had been extensively launched before the application deadlines with an aim to arouse the interest of potential applicants to apply. To relief the financial burden of the NGOs, Government would take the initiatives to undertake some pre-tender works including, for example, the examination of the loading capacity of these selected historic buildings. She said that there was no preconceived plan in the selection process, and that the most feasible proposals would be chosen after considering all applications against the five aspects of assessment criteria stated in the selection process.

11. In response to the concern expressed by a member, the Chairman said that the public would have access to these revitalised historic buildings. The Chairman anticipated that the selection criteria for Batch II would be improved especially on the

aspects of assessment. The Chairman concluded the discussion and emphasized that public engagement and members' views shared in this meeting would be taken into consideration in the review of the Revitalisation Scheme.

(Mrs Carrie Lam left at this juncture.)

**Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 136th Meeting held on 26 November 2008
(Board Minutes AAB/9/2007-08)**

12. The minutes of the 136th Meeting held on 26 November 2008 were confirmed with the incorporation of the proposed amendments.

**Item 2 Matters Arising and Progress Report
(Board Paper AAB/2/2009-10)**

Presentation Session

13. Mr Tom Ming informed members of the progress of the major heritage issues and activities of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) since the last Board meeting.

14. To enable members to have a better understanding of the Former Marine Police Headquarters Compound (FMPHC) project, Mr Ming said that the AAB Secretariat could provide members with the previous papers on the subject. Mr Ming also informed the meeting that a visit to the FMPHC and selected heritage sites in Yau Tsim Mong area would be arranged in March and further details would be given to members by the Secretariat in due course.

15. Mr Ming further reported that the assessment of the 1,440 historic buildings had been completed by the Expert Panel. The results would be presented to the AAB for deliberation in a special meeting to be held in March.

16. Mr Ming reported that the archaeological investigation on Longjin Bridge had been completed. The investigation report was being compiled by the project consultant. AMO was also preparing a Conservation Management Plan setting out conservation guidelines for preservation and display of the Bridge remains. It was anticipated that the two reports would be submitted to the AAB for consideration in April.

Discussion Session

17. With regard to the current practice of seeking AAB's advice on whether a recommendation should be made to the Antiquities Authority for granting an applicant a license under Section 13 of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance to conduct archaeological survey, the Chairman said that not all AAB Members would have expertise in the subject and suggested that a panel be formed to deal with the matters. The issue would be discussed further at the next meeting.

**Item 3 Declaration of Interest
(Board Paper AAB/3/2009-10)**

Presentation Session

18. Ms Heaster Cheung, Secretary for AAB, briefed members on the two systems of declaration of interests drawn up by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) for advisory boards and committees. She said that subject to members' endorsement of the two-tier reporting system, which had been adopted by the AAB in the past, members would be asked to complete the Register of Interest at Annex D and return it to the AAB Secretariat on or before 18 March 2009.

19. Members endorsed the recommendation to continue adopting the two-tier reporting system for its 2-year term ending 31 December 2010.

**Item 5 Public Engagement and Publicity Programmes on Heritage Conservation
(Board Paper AAB/5/2009-10)**

Presentation Session

20. Mr Jack Chan briefed members on the plan of public engagement and publicity programmes related to heritage conservation organised by the Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO) and the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) in 2009. He highlighted some of the major activities which comprised public engagement sessions on revitalisation projects, public awareness campaign on heritage conservation, dedicated heritage website, heritage newsletter, etc. He said that in 2009, the main targets of public engagement and publicity plan would be youths and students. Activities such as survey on youths' and students' opinions on heritage preservation, historic building drawing competition, free post day and audio visual competition would be organised.

Discussion Session

21. The Chairman supported a member's suggestion that the proposals submitted by the successful applicants under the Revitalisation Scheme were beneficial to members of the public if the revitalisation and preservation process of these historic buildings could be documented and recorded properly. Miss Janet Wong thanked members for their valuable views. She would take note of members' comments in the overall review of the Scheme in future.

22. In order to attract more participants, a Member suggested including the selected historic buildings under Batch I of the Revitalisation Scheme in the "Historic Building Drawing Competition" to enhance publicity and arouse the interest of the young people on heritage conservation. Having considered the safety reason for the participants during the drawing competition, Mr Jack Chan explained that only Liu Man Shek Hall in Sheung Shui and Central Police Station Compound were selected in this pilot scheme but he would

explore other historic buildings for organising similar activities in future.

23. A Member suggested that the “Think Award Scheme” organised by the National Geographic Channel could be explored in the coming years for the purpose of promoting awareness on heritage conservation among the young students in Hong Kong.

24. To further strengthen the educational programme on heritage conservation, a Member suggested including the subject in the curriculum of secondary schools and universities.

25. Other suggestions of engaging the commercial sectors, educational institutions, local communities, youth groups, district councils and the media with an aim to strengthen public engagement and support for revitalising and heritage conservation were deliberated in details during the meeting.

26. Mr Jack Chan thanked members for their valuable views and suggestions. He reported that liaison with the District Councils was in progress and that he would also try to explore with other relevant parties, such as the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Commissioner for Tourism, to further promote heritage conservation in Hong Kong.

Item 6 Heritage Impact Assessment of the Ex-Upper Levels Police Station (Board Paper AAB/6/2009-10)

Presentation Session

27. The Chairman welcomed the Presentation Team which comprised of the following members:

From MTRCL:

- (a) Mr Stephen Hamill (Design Manager-West Island Line)
- (b) Mr Abdul Rahim (Senior Design Management Architect)
- (c) Mr Keith Tam (Design Management Architect)

From Hospital Authority:

- (a) Ms Cindy Shek, Deputizing Senior Hospital Manager (Planning & Commissioning)
- (b) Ms Brenda Wong, Department Operations Manager (Psychiatry)

From Highways Department:

- (a) Mr Liu Bing-sing, Senior Engineer/ West Island Line 1, Railway Development Office

Consultants:

- (a) Mr Choong Yin Lee, Director In Charge/ AP, LD ASIA
- (b) Mr Victor Lai, Architect, LD ASIA
- (c) Mr Curry Tse, Heritage Architect, China Point Consultants Ltd.
- (d) Mr Floyd Wan, Assistant Landscape Designer, ACLA Ltd.

(e) Mr Mark Lup Fung NG, Senior Landscape Architect, ACLA Ltd.

28. Mr Stephen Hamill, Mr Choong Yin Lin and Mr Curry Tse briefed members with a PowerPoint presentation on the result of the Heritage Impact Assessment Report (HIA) of the heritage site of ex-Upper Levels Police Station (ex-ULPS). They explained to members that, owing to the need of creating space for the future entrance/exit of Sai Yin Pun MTR Station of the West Island Line, the existing David Trench Rehabilitation Centre on Bonham Road would have to be demolished. The ex-ULPS site at High Street would be used for the re-provisioning of the facilities currently provided at the Centre. The purpose of the HIA Study was to identify the significant character-defining elements of the ex-ULPS and to design mitigation measures to safeguard the building from adverse impacts in the course of the conversion works. In brief, the main facades and major architectural features would be retained; and the existing timber windows and doors would be kept, repaired or replaced with similar material and design as per existing ones. New installations and services would be neatly placed and concealed as appropriate.

Discussion Session

29. A Member asked whether there was a need to enclose the balconies with glass panels and whether the interior of the buildings could be seen from the outside after the conversion. He further asked the presentation team to clarify whether the proposed new extension to the southern elevation for the new lift core and staircase might block the old building. Mr Choong Yin Lin confirmed that there was a genuine operational need to enclose the balconies as advised by the user, i.e. the Hospital Authority. Clear glass would be used for maximum transparency. Mr Choong further confirmed that the glass panels would be set-back behind the balcony lines to ensure that the appearance and integrity of the existing balconies. As regards the new lift core and staircase, Mr Choong said that the extension would be a glass block to ensure a high degree of transparency.

30. In response to a member's inquiry on display of the history of the site, Mr Curry Tse confirmed that display board would be provided in the building for that purpose.

31. The Chairman thanked the presentation team.

(The presentation team left at this juncture.)

32. The Chairman suggested AMO to arrange site visits to the HIA sites in future to enable AAB members to have a better understanding of the studies.

Item 7 Any Other Business

Request for softcopy of the AAB meeting papers

33. In response to a member's concern on environmental protection, the Chairman advised individual member to liaise with the AAB Secretariat on their preference for using softcopy of meeting papers.

Financial assistance to owners of privately-owned graded historic buildings

34. Mr Jack Chan reported that to help owners of the privately-owned graded historic buildings to maintain their buildings, a Financial Assistance Scheme for Maintenance was launched in 2008. The ceiling of grant had recently been increased from HK\$600,000 to HK\$1,000,000 for each application.

Open AAB Meetings in future

35. The Chairman suggested that all future meetings should be open unless there were items that warranted special discussion in closed session.

36. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
May 2009

Ref: LCS AM 22/3