

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the 139th Meeting
held on Wednesday, 9 September 2009 at 4:00 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
Mrs Mariana Cheng Cho Chi-on, BBS, JP
Mr Patrick Fung Pak-tung, SC
Mr Philip Kan Siu-lun
Mr Kwong Hoi-ying
Professor Lau Chi-pang
Ms Lilian Law Suk-kwan
Dr Lee Ho-yin
Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen
Dr Tracey Lu Lie-dan
Mr Ng Yat-cheung, JP
Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung, JP
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: Ms Susanna Chiu Lai-kuen;
Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo, JP;
Professor Bernard Lim Wan-fung, JP;
Dr. Ng Cho-nam, BBS, JP;
Professor Simon Shen Xu-hui; and
Professor Billy So Kee-long

In Attendance: Development Bureau

Mr Jack Chan
Commissioner for Heritage

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mrs Betty Fung, 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)

Mrs Ada Yau
Curator (Education and Publicity)

Ms Fione Lo
Curator (Historical Buildings)

Mr Tsang Chi-hung
Acting Curator (Archaeology)

Miss Margaret Chan
Senior Heritage Officer 4

Dr Alan Fung
Assistant Curator I (Building Survey)

Miss Pauline Poon
Assistant Curator II (Building Survey)

Miss Addy Wong
Senior Marketing Coordinator (Heritage and Museums)

Miss Amanda Leung
Senior Executive Assistant (Antiquities and Monuments)

Miss Catherine Chiu
Executive Officer I (Antiquities and Monuments) 2

Planning Department

Mr Raymond Lee Kai-wing
Acting Assistant Director/Metro

Architectural Services Department

Mr Fong Siu-wai
Assistant Director (Property Services)

Mr S L Lam
Senior Maintenance Surveyor/Heritage

Opening Remarks

Mr. Tom Ming reported that owing to the engagement of an unexpected ceremony, the Chairman sent in his apology that he would be late for the meeting at around 4:40 pm. In accordance with Section 17(3) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, Cap. 53, Mr Almon Poon was elected to preside over the meeting as Presiding Member. Presiding Member welcomed Members and representatives from DEVB, LCSD and other government departments to the meeting. He particularly extended his welcome to Mrs Betty Fung, Director of Leisure and Cultural Services who attended the AAB meeting for the first time.

Item 1-8 Confirmation of Minutes
(Board Minutes AAB/2/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C1/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C2/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C3/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C4/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C5/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C6/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/C7/2009-10)

2. The minutes of the following Meeting were confirmed without amendment :
1. The 138th Meeting held on 21 May 2009;
 2. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 8 June 2009;
 3. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 17 June 2009;
 4. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 29 June 2009;
 5. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 6 July 2009;
 6. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 15 July 2009;
 7. The Briefing Session on 1,444 historic buildings cum Consultation Session with District Councils held on 23 July 2009; and
 8. The Forum with The Hong Kong Institute of Architects, The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, The Hong Kong Institute of Planners and The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors held on 30 July 2009.

**Item 9 Matters Arising and Progress Report
(Board Paper AAB/21/2009-10)**

3. Mr Tom Ming briefed Members on the progress of the major heritage issues since the last Board meeting.

4. Mr Tom Ming highlighted that the Chief Executive, with the recommendation of AAB, had given approval for the declaration of the 41 historic waterworks structures scattering over six pre-war reservoirs in Hong Kong, namely Pok Fu Lam Reservoir, Tai Tam Group of Reservoirs, Wong Nai Chung Reservoir, Kowloon Reservoir, Aberdeen Reservoir and Shing Mun (Jubilee) Reservoir. The declaration would be gazetted on 18 September 2009. The Chief Executive had also approved the declaration of the residence of Ip Ting-sz in Sha Tau Kok and Yan Tun Kong Study Hall in Ping Shan for which, the gazettal arrangement was underway.

5. Mr Tom Ming further reported the progress of projects with HIA reports supported by AAB. Firstly, conservation work of the Ex-Upper Levels Police Station commenced on 14 July 2009 and was scheduled for completion by March 2011. Secondly, both Yaumatei Theatre and Red Brick Building were handed over to ArchSD on 15 July 2009. The project was expected to complete by September 2011. Thirdly, the revitalization of the Old Tai O Police Station would commence in November 2009 and was scheduled for completion by 2011. Lastly, the revitalisation of Fong Yuen Study Hall would commence in February 2010 and was expected to complete by 2011.

6. In response to a Member's inquiry on the use of the Former Marine Police Headquarters Compound, Mr Jack Chan explained that an open tender approach in commercial operation mode was adopted for conservation of the compound. The developer was offered a land grant for the site. With the launch of Revitalisation Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme, non-profit making organizations were invited to apply for adaptive re-use of selected government-owned historic buildings in the form of social enterprises. Operation of the business would be governed under tenancy and service agreement entered into with the Government who remained as the owner of the land and historic buildings. The Government would have the right to terminate the agreement should the tenant be found in material breach of the tenancy or the agreement.

7. On the alteration of the building compound, Mr Tom Ming supplemented that permission from Antiquities Authority had to be sought as the Compound was a declared monument.

8. Members noted the Progress Report.

**Item 10 Proposed Auditorium within the Compound of St. Andrew's Church
(Board Paper AAB/22/2009-10)**

9. Mr Tom Ming presented to Members the building plans on the construction of an auditorium and a transformer room within the Compound of St. Andrew's Church. He highlighted that the transformer room would be built at the rear of the Christian Centre which

was inconspicuous. The auditorium would be largely built underground; the only visible façade would be the frontage along Nathan Road.

10. He further elaborated that the construction works of the project would involve the excavation of the slope and landscaped area fronting the Church as well as alteration to existing rubble retaining wall and decorative parapet along Nathan Road. The retaining wall would be replaced by openings and canopies. In view of the historic significance of the retaining wall, the decorative parapet would be reconstructed and the rubbles would be reused for a new fence wall on the top of the sloping roof.

(The Chairman turned up at 4:30pm during the presentation.)

11. Two Members were divided on the proposed alteration of the existing retaining wall. A Member expressed that he had no objection to the proposed plan. He further supplemented that the slope where the retaining wall currently situated might need to be demolished ultimately because of safety reason. In response to this, the other Member was of the view that the proposed demolition of the rubble retaining wall was not necessary from the civil engineering point of view. An alternative would be to maintain the existing wall and open an entrance with matching design and materials to the wall. Mr Ming explained that the integrity of the landscaped courtyard would be adversely affected if the main entrance of the auditorium was built within the Compound.

12. A Member concurred on the importance of retaining the existing visual appearance after reconstruction, particularly that the whole Compound was accorded a Grade 1 status.

13. Some other Members shared similar view that the glazing openings were not harmonized with the stone gateway and supported to keep the retaining walls.

14. In response to a Member's question, Mr. Raymond Lee replied that the Church compound located within an area zoned "Government, Institution or Community" ("GIC") on the Tsim Sha Tsui Outline Zoning Plan. Commercial use, such as 'Shop and Services', in "GIC" zone was not permitted as of right and would require obtaining planning permission from the Town Planning Board.

15. A Member expressed his appreciation to the continuous effort of the Church on heritage preservation; especially the Church won a UNESCO Award in 2006. He also stressed the significance of striking the best balance between the requirements for development and heritage conservation.

16. Mr Jack Chan supplemented the need to strike a balance between development and heritage conservation. In this case, for example, the property was owned by the Church which had its development rights. He expressed his appreciation to the Church who took the initiative to preserve the building instead of demolishing it. He also cited some examples in UK and Macau to illustrate successful adaptive reuse of historic buildings. In response to a Member's enquiry, he explained two initiatives for heritage conservation. The first one was the requirement to conduct Heritage Impact Assessment for new capital works projects which might affect historical and archaeological sites or buildings. The second one was the setting

up of an alert system for monitoring privately-owned graded historic buildings. A task force, chaired by himself with members of representatives from Building Department, Lands Department, Planning Department and AMO, was formed to handle redevelopment/demolition proposals of privately-owned graded historic buildings.

17. A Member was of the view that the exterior of the Church Compound, including the retaining wall, projected strong nostalgia. He suggested that the Church should do its best to preserve its existing visual impression.

18. Taking into account the Church's need for expansion without compromising the landscape ambience, a Member supported the proposal of constructing an underground auditorium and retaining the stone gateway. He would like AMO to reflect Members' concern about demolition of retaining wall to the Church.

19. The Chairman concluded that the Board was generally in support of retaining the existing rubble retaining wall and requested AMO to convey the comments of the Board to the Church. He further suggested that a site visit could be arranged to equip Members with better understanding of the subject buildings/sites thereby facilitating more fruitful discussion in the meeting in future.

**Item 11 Public Consultation on 1, 444 Historic Buildings Assessment
(Board Paper AAB/23/2009-10)**

20. Mr Tom Ming briefed Members on the result of the public consultation of the proposed grading of 1,444 historic buildings and recommended a three-step action plan.

21. In reply to a Member's question, Mr Tom Ming explained that Item 16 of Annex C of the paper referred to the Queen's Pier to be re-assembled

22. While supporting the recommendation, a Member asked whether the review of existing heritage conservation policy and legislation could be pursued. Mr Jack Chan responded that revamping the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance or introducing a new heritage conservation ordinance would be a lengthy exercise and it would not be conducive to producing early success in heritage conservation work. Hence, a package of administrative measures was introduced. On the other hand, DEVB had started the preparatory work for setting up a heritage trust in the long run.

23. A Member raised the issue of how to strike a balance between development and heritage conservation. Mr Jack Chan replied that appropriate economic incentives such as land exchange, transfer of development rights and extra on-site development were effective administrative measures.

24. A Member worried that it would take a long time to handle those items in Annex B of the paper. Dr. Ng responded that views and new information provided by the public would be carefully studied and verified and then conveyed to Expert Panel and AAB for in-depth deliberation. The assessment would be completed by end of 2009 tentatively.

25. A Member suggested that in light of rising public aspiration, assessment result of

each heritage building could be publicized and illustrated in the form of a hexagon. The Chairman supported and recommended writing a brief explanation on the assessment result for the buildings in particular those with special merits on some aspects. Another Member said that a brief explanation was available on www.amo.gov.hk, however, he suggested AMO to explore more channels to publicize the information.

26. The Chairman proposed sending minutes of the consultation sessions with District Councils and all Annexes of the paper being discussed to all District Councils so that they could check whether all their suggestions had been included.

[Post-meeting note: The Secretariat provided the 18 District Councils with relevant information on 22 September 2009.]

27. A Member reported that Item 81 in Annex C of the paper which was situated on Government land was crashed in a recent car accident. He requested DEVB to look into the matter.

28. The Chairman concluded that the Board supported the paper and AMO should act accordingly.

Item 12 Briefing of 1,444 buildings (continued)

29. Members were briefed on the historic buildings listed in Annex A and D of the paper.

Item 13 Any Other Business

30. In response to a Member's question, Mr. Tom Ming explained the recent works at Maryknoll Convent School were for repair of the historic fabrics. For routine maintenance of the School, funding would mainly come from the Education Bureau

31. Mr Jack Chan invited all Members to attend the following events held by Commissioner for Heritage's Office :

- (i) Faces and Places – Heritage Photo Exhibition held on 11 September 2009;
- (ii) Ceremony for Declaration of Waterworks Monuments cum World Water Monitoring Day 2009 held on 18 September 2009.

32. He also took the opportunity to introduce the new heritage trail in the Tai Tam Group of Reservoirs. Detailed information about the 41 declared waterworks structures are available on www.heritage.gov.hk and www.wsd.gov.hk.

33. To ensure that the information and pictures of all historic buildings were up-to-date, the Chairman requested AMO to carry out a photo-taking and verification exercise for all privately-owned buildings.

34. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7: 00 p.m.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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