

**ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**Minutes of the 147<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**held on Thursday, 24 June 2010 at 3:00 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)  
Ms Susanna Chiu Lai-kuen  
Mr Patrick Fung Pak-tung, SC  
Mr Philip Kan Siu-lun  
Mr Kwong Hoi-ying  
Ms Lilian Law Suk-kwan  
Dr Lee Ho-yin  
Professor Bernard Lim Wan-fung, JP  
Mr Ng Yat-cheung, JP  
Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung, JP  
Professor Simon Shen Xu-hui  
Professor Billy So Kee-long  
Dr Linda Tsui Yee-wan  
Ir Dr Greg Wong Chak-yan, JP  
Mr Bryan Wong Kim-yeung
- Ms Heaster Cheung (Secretary)  
Chief Administration Manager (Antiquities and  
Monuments)  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
- Absent with Apologies: Dr Anissa Chan Wong Lai-kuen, MH, JP  
Mrs Mariana Cheng Cho Chi-on, BBS, JP  
Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo, JP  
Professor Lau Chi-pang  
Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen  
Dr Tracey Lu Lie-dan  
Dr Ng Cho-nam, BBS, JP  
Mr Yeung Yiu-chung, BBS, JP
- In Attendance: Development Bureau  
  
Mr Jack Chan  
Commissioner for Heritage

Mr Kevin Lee  
Engineer (Heritage Conservation) 3

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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

Mr Tom Ming  
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mr Kenneth Tam  
Chief Heritage Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mrs Ada Yau  
Curator (Education and Publicity)

Ms Fione Lo  
Curator (Historical Buildings)

Miss Addy Wong  
Senior Marketing Coordinator (Heritage and Museums)

Dr Alan Fung  
Assistant Curator I (Building Survey)

Miss Amanda Leung  
Senior Executive Assistant (Antiquities and Monuments)

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

Planning Department

Mr Ling Kar-kan  
Assistant Director/Metro

Architectural Services Department

Mr Fong Siu-wai  
Assistant Director (Property Services)

Mr S L Lam  
Senior Maintenance Surveyor/Heritage

## **Opening Remarks**

The Chairman thanked Members and representatives from Government departments for attending the meeting.

### **Item 1      Review of the Urban Renewal Strategy (Board Paper AAB/45/2009-10)**

2.      The Chairman welcomed Mr Tommy Yuen, Deputy Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands) and Ms Winnie So, Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands) for a briefing to Members on the Review of Urban Renewal Strategy.

3.      Mr Yuen explained to the Board that Mrs Carrie Lam, Secretary for Development (SDEV), intended to give the briefing herself today but was eventually unable to attend this Board meeting as she needed to attend the Legislative Council meeting.

4.      Ms So then updated Members on the Urban Renewal Strategy Review. She said that the review process was structured in three stages, namely “Stage 1 – Envisioning”, “Stage 2 – Public Engagement” and “Stage 3 – Consensus Building”. Since the launch of the review in July 2008, the first two stages had been completed. She also introduced the ten preliminary recommendations on urban renewal as set out in the “Public Views and Future Direction – Paper for the Consensus Building Stage of the Urban Renewal Strategy Review”.

5.      Regarding the role of URA in heritage preservation, Ms So highlighted that URA would in-principle focus on preserving historic buildings in the areas of its redevelopment projects. It would carry out preservation work with due regard to Government’s heritage conservation policy which included providing economic incentives for conserving privately-owned historic buildings, partnering with non-profit making organisations for revitalisation of historic buildings and facilitating public access to revitalised buildings.

6.      In response to the Chairman’s inquiry on the “bottom-up” approach for urban renewal planning, Mr Yuen explained that District Urban Renewal Fora (DURF) were proposed to be set up in old districts to gauge and reflect local views on urban renewal issues.

7.      In reply to the questions raised by some Members about the “flat for flat” compensation option, Mr Yuen further elaborated the preliminary framework of the option as below :

- (i)      it was an additional option other than cash compensation to enable original owner-occupiers to continue to live in the district and maintain the established social network;
- (ii)      owner-occupiers could opt to use the cash compensation to purchase new flats under the redevelopment at the time of acquisition of their old flats at the then prevailing market price;
- (iii)      URA would provide basic information on the new flats to facilitate owner-occupiers make a decision;
- (iv)      owner-occupiers could consider purchasing smaller new flats in the redevelopment at lower price and keeping part of the cash compensation or purchasing flats of a larger size and top up the difference in value if

required.

8. A Member was of the view that the cash compensation might not be sufficient to purchase a new flat under the redevelopment. URA should explore further how to facilitate participation in the “flat for flat” compensation option.

9. A Member expressed his appreciation of Development Bureau’s effort in public engagement and would like to know more about the process of procuring airtime of radio programmes. Ms So replied that the decision on the choice of radio channel and whether it should be in the format of bought programme was determined after considering the recommendations of the public engagement consultant.

10. A Member opined that financial assistance could be provided to owners of privately-owned graded historic buildings for rehabilitation and district revitalisation. In addition, clusters of declared monuments could be zoned as “Conservation Areas” to facilitate preservation, revitalisation and rehabilitation.

11. A Member commented that shop owner-operators should have a chance to purchase a new shop after completion of the redevelopment project. Another Member shared a similar view and proposed that like the “flat for flat” option, shop owner-operators should be given the option to purchase new shops in advance. He also pointed out that URA could make use of the existing resources of the District Councils (DCs) to collect views from local communities.

12. Mr Yuen responded that compared to “flat for flat”, a “shop for shop” option was even more difficult with insurmountable problems. On the need for DURF, he remarked that redevelopment projects might fall within the administrative boundaries of more than one DC. Therefore, an independent platform such as DURF was a preferred option. In addition to District Councilors, DURF would also involve professionals, NGOs, business associations and government departments, etc in the area.

13. A Member supported URA’s suggestion to provide economic incentives, in addition to cash compensation, for conserving privately-owned historic buildings.

14. A Member stressed the importance of maintaining existing social network, historical and cultural characteristics of old districts during urban regeneration. He recommended that stories of district livelihood be recorded before implementation of any redevelopment projects. Mr Jack Chan explained the effort of the Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (CHO) in retaining local community network (e.g. the Blue House Cluster) and recording of oral history (e.g. Old Tai O Police Station and Lai Chi Kok Hospital) of residents in the area under the Revitalising Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme. He commented that the provision of economic incentives and co-operation of private owners / developers appropriately struck a balance between development and heritage conservation.

15. In reply to a Member’s questions, Mr Yuen highlighted that the Buildings Department and its partnering organisations were offering various financial schemes to assist private owners to carry out repair / maintenance works to their buildings. He said that there would be further measures coming on stream later in the year. Ms So added that the URA

had secured the support of a few banks which offered preferential mortgage terms to owners of residential units in buildings that had been rehabilitated through URA's rehabilitation scheme. Mr Yuen and Mr K K Ling both responded that the Planning Department and Town Planning Board were regularly reviewing the relevance of existing zonings with a view to conducting up-zoning or down-zoning exercises to meet changes in planning circumstances.

16. The Chairman thanked Mr Yuen and Ms So for giving Members the briefing and invited them to keep the Board informed of the progress.

(Mr Yuen and Ms So left at this juncture.)

## **Item 2        Matters Arising**

17. The Chairman informed the meeting that one Member had recently received a request that AAB should consider grading a few ancient trails. He then invited the Member to brief the Board on the background of the request.

18. Mr Guy Shirra, a hiker, wrote to express that boulder trackways were evidence of the interconnection between old villages and market towns in the old days of Hong Kong. He opined that these trackways were structures of significant heritage value which should be preserved with care. He had identified 14 boulder trackways in Hong Kong which he thought should be considered for grading.

19. Mr Tom Ming explained that since the commencement of the public consultation on the assessment of 1,444 historic buildings, AMO received a number of suggestions to include new items / categories in the list. One of the suggested new categories was "ancient trails". As agreed earlier, new items / categories proposed by the public for grading would be considered after conclusion of the gradings of the territory-wide 1,444 historic buildings. The 14 boulder trackways suggested by Mr Shirra for grading would be grouped under one category of "ancient trails" and considered for grading by AAB together with other suggested new items / categories in due course.

## **Item 3-4       Confirmation of Minutes (Board Minutes AAB/8/2009-10) (Board Minutes AAB/9/2009-10)**

20. The minutes of the 144<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 2 March 2010 were confirmed with the amendment on paragraph 8 proposed by a Member as follows:

"Some Members opined that the procedures being carried out by LCSD were proper. A Member strongly objected to Mr Meacham's letter, given that he is a consultant hired for the Study, he has the contractual obligation to abide by the requirements of the Agreement which he has signed."

21. The minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 16 April 2010 were confirmed without amendment.

**Item 5      Reaffirmation of the recommendation to declare Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall and Kom Tong Hall as monuments  
(Board Paper AAB/46/2009-10)**

22.      Mr Tom Ming briefed Members that AAB endorsed the recommendation to declare Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall and Kom Tong Hall as monuments in 1994 and 2004 respectively. Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall was subsequently deemed as a monument in 1994 for 15 years until 2009. The two buildings had been accorded with Grade 1 status by the Board earlier under the assessment exercise of grading 1,444 historic buildings in the territory. The two buildings had demonstrated that they had reached the “high threshold” of significant heritage value as detailed in the paper and therefore were proposed to be declared as monuments under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance.

23.      The Chairman noted that Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall had been deemed as a monument for 15 years but the consent from the owner for monument declaration was obtained just recently. He inquired about the difficulties encountered when seeking the owner’s support. Mr Tom Ming explained that historic buildings in the New Territories in particular ancestral halls were usually clan properties owned in the name of *cho* ( or *tong* ), it was not uncommon for the managers of the cho or tong concerned to take a long time to consult their clan members for a consensus.

24.      A Member supported the reaffirmation of the declaration recommendation and suggested that more publicity activities be arranged when the two buildings were formally declared as monuments. The other Member shared similar views. Mr Tom Ming supplemented that the Kam Tin Rural Committee was planning for a heritage trail at Kam Tin with support from the Yuen Long District Council and Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall would be one of the attractions along the Trail.

25.      The Chairman concluded that the Board reaffirmed the recommendation to declare Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall and Kom Tong Hall as monuments.

**Item 6      Proposed declaration of Tung Wah Museum and Man Mo Temple Compound as monuments  
(Board Paper AAB/47/2009-10)**

26.      Mr Tom Ming briefed Members that in the current exercise to consider grading 1,444 historic buildings in the territory, the proposed Grade 1 status of both Tung Wah Museum and Man Mo Temple had been endorsed by the Board. The heritage value of the two buildings had reached the “high threshold” required for monuments and thus were proposed to be declared as monuments under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. He remarked that upon the Board’s recommendation, the two buildings were expected to be declared in October this year to tie in with the exhibition to be held at the Hong Kong Museum of History to commemorate the 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals.

27.      Ms Fione Lo gave a presentation to introduce the historical and architectural merits of the two buildings.

28. The Chairman concluded that the Board supported the proposal of declaring the Tung Wah Museum and Man Mo Temple Compound as monuments.

**Item 7      Assessment of 1, 444 Historic Buildings – Finalisation of the Gradings of Proposed Graded Buildings  
(Board Paper AAB/40/2009-10 continued)  
(Board Paper AAB/48/2009-10)**

29. The Chairman invited Dr Alan Fung to take Members through the items listed in Annex B to Paper AAB/40/2009-10, with the aid of Powerpoint.

30. Members agreed that the grading of Number<sup>1</sup> 1242 (Law Mansion, Nos 50A, 51 & 51A, Cha Kwo Ling) and Number 377 (Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall, Sheung Shui) would be considered separately after collecting more information from Kwun Tong District Council and the building owner respectively.

31. Members noted Number 974 (Tin Hau Temple, Sai O, Kat O) had undergone substantial interior alteration thus diminishing the heritage value. They agreed that the building should be downgraded.

32. A Member asked why Number 507 (Mei Ho House, Block 41, Shek Kip Mei Estate) was downgraded. Mr Tom Ming explained that in the current exercise to consider grading of 1,444 historic buildings, the assessments were made more comprehensively based on six criteria including historical interest, architectural merit, group value, social value and local interest, authenticity and rarity. The building was downgraded based on the more comprehensive assessment. He reassured that the change in the grading would not affect the revitalisation proposal of the building which Members had considered earlier.

33. Mr Tom Ming remarked that the representative of the owner of Number 226 (Dragon Garden, Tsuen Wan) had approached CHO to explore the donation of the Garden. Given the background, Members agreed that the grading of the Garden would be discussed upon more information was available.

34. After deliberation of the first 18 items listed in Annex B to Paper No. AAB/40/2009-10, Members endorsed the grading of 15 historic buildings. AMO's website would be updated to reflect the confirmed gradings. The Board would continue to deliberate the remaining 11 and 17 items listed in Annex B and Annex C respectively of the aforesaid paper as well as Paper No. AAB/48/2009-10 at the next meeting.

**Item 8      Any Other Business**

35. The Chairman took the opportunity to discuss the problem that The University of Hong Kong (HKU) encountered in taking forward its revitalisation proposal to convert ex-school buildings of Hon Wah College into a residential hall. The Buildings Department

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<sup>1</sup> The numbering of the historic buildings mentioned in the minutes follows that adopted for the 1,444 territory-wide historic buildings listed in the AAB Board Paper AAB/8/2009-10 on the proposed gradings of all these historic buildings.

had indicated to the owner that the proposal needed revisions to ensure compliance with building requirements under the Buildings Ordinance before it could be approved. The Chairman worried that the works of the building might adversely affect the building next door (No. 9, Ching Lin Terrace, Kennedy Town), which was proposed to be Grade 3. Taking note of the Chairman's views, CHO and AMO would continue keeping in view the development and any possible impact on the nearby historic building.

36. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

**Antiquities and Monuments Office**  
**Leisure and Cultural Services Department**  
**September 2010**

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**Ref: LCS AM 22/3**