

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the 150th Meeting
held on Wednesday, 10 November 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)
Mrs Mariana Cheng Cho Chi-on, BBS, JP
Mr Philip Kan Siu-lun
Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo, JP
Dr Lau Chi-pang
Ms Lilian Law Suk-kwan, JP
Dr Lee Ho-yin
Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen
Dr Ng Cho-nam, BBS, JP
Mr Ng Yat-cheung, JP
Professor Simon Shen Xu-hui
Professor Billy So Kee-long
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 Anissa Chan Wong Lai-kuen, MH, JP
Ms Susanna Chiu Lai-kuen
Mr Patrick Fung Pak-tung, SC
Mr Kwong Hoi-ying
Professor Bernard Lim Wan-fung, JP
Professor Tracey Lu Lie-dan
Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung, JP
Dr Linda Tsui Yee-wan

In Attendance: Development Bureau

Mrs Jessie Ting, JP
Deputy Secretary (Works)¹

Mrs Laura Aron
Commissioner for Heritage

Mrs Susanne Wong
Assistant Secretary (Heritage Conservation)⁴

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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 Kenneth Tam
Chief Heritage Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mrs Ada Yau
Curator (Education and Publicity)

Mr Kevin Sun
Curator (Archaeology)

Ms Fione Lo
Curator (Historical Buildings)

Mr Esmond Chan
Senior Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)

Ms Wendy Tsang
Principal Marketing Coordinator

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

Mrs Alice Mak
Senior Town Planner/Metro & Urban Renewal

Architectural Services Department

Mr Fong Siu-wai
Assistant Director (Property Services)

Mr Kevin Li
Senior Architect/Heritage

Buildings Department

Miss Mary Chan
Building Surveyor/Heritage Unit 2
(for item 4 only)

Opening Remarks

The Chairman thanked Members and representatives from Government departments for attending the meeting. He remarked that there were a number of issues to be brought up under Matters Arising today and discussion might take time. As such, he proposed with Members' agreement to first discuss agenda item 4, Heritage Impact Assessment of St. Paul's Primary Catholic School so to avoid the presentation team from long waiting.

**Item 4 Heritage Impact Assessment of St. Paul's Primary Catholic School
(Board Paper AAB/55/2009-10)**

2. Mr Tom Ming briefed Members that St. Paul's Primary Catholic School ("the School") was currently a Grade 2 historic building. The School was providing half-day school service to their students, with the morning session for Primary 2, 4 and 6 while the afternoon session for Primary 1, 3 and 5. In order to provide whole-day schooling, the school management proposed an extension project to provide the required facilities in accordance with the standard Schedule of Accommodation as laid down by the Education Bureau. Given the heritage significance of the School, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was required for this Government capital works project.

3. He added that the purpose of the HIA was to examine the extent of the impact of the proposed works on the historic building and recommend any necessary mitigation measures if adverse impact was unavoidable. Other issues not concerning heritage conservation would be dealt with at the relevant fora. For instance, the Education Bureau had advised that the respective District Council would be consulted on the impact of the proposed works on the neighborhood. Members were invited to comment on the preliminary HIA report.

4. The Chairman introduced the presentation team :

Presenter

- (i) Mr Simon Li
Chairman, Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Building and Development Commission;
- (ii) Sister Lily Fung
Supervisor, St. Paul's Primary Catholic School;
- (iii) Mr Dominic Lam
Principal Director, Leigh & Orange Ltd.;
- (iv) Miss Katrina McDougall
Heritage Consultant, McDougall & Vines Conservation and Heritage Consultants

5. Sister Lily Fung started the presentation with the aid of PowerPoint to brief Members on the history of the School and the background of the proposed project. Miss Katrina McDougall carried on highlighting the heritage value of the school building from historical, social and architectural perspectives. She also introduced the character defining elements of the building and significant components of the site such as the granite retaining wall fronting Wong Nai Chung Road and the mature trees.

6. Mr Dominic Lam then took Members through the four design options for the proposed project and deliberated the pros and cons of each option. He concluded that the location identified for the new annex under Option C was the optimal solution, striking a balance between the provision of adequate facilities for the School and the minimizing of adverse impact on the historic building. In response to the Chairman's inquiry, Sister Lily Fung clarified that all three significant trees would be retained under Option C.

7. Prior to the discussion session, the following Members declared interest:

- (i) Dr Ng Cho-nam whose relatives were living nearby;
- (ii) Ms Lilian Law who was residing nearby;
- (iii) Mr Andrew Lam whose wife was a graduate of the School years ago.

8. Having regard to the site constraints and the operational requirements of the School, Ir Dr Greg Wong agreed that Option C was the optimal option. However, he opined that consideration should be given to minimize blockage of the rear facade of the old building caused by the new annex.

9. In response to Mr Andrew Lam's questions about Option A, the School provided the following information:

- (i) the construction works was expected to be completed in 2 years
- (ii) the land where the former kindergarten block was situated was not owned by the School, but "Sisters of St. Paul de Charters";
- (iii) the provision of classrooms and other necessary school facilities under this option could not meet the operational requirement of the School.

10. In reply to Ms Lilian Law's question about the wall of the School along Ventris Road, Mr Simon Li explained that the wall was inset with some structures for use as garages

currently. The removal of the wall as suggested in Option C would enable better appreciation of the back elevation of the old building.

11. Dr Lee Ho-yin was of the view that a balance had to be struck between development and preservation and Option C could achieve that balance.

12. The Chairman concluded that the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) was generally supportive of the proposed plan as set out in Option C. Moreover, he recommended the School Management to take into consideration of Ir Dr Greg Wong's comments and try to widen the vista of the elevation of the old building along Ventris Road as far as practicable. AAB also agreed that further consultation with AAB to finalize the HIA report was not required.

(The presentation team left at this juncture.)

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes
(Board Minutes AAB/12/2009-10)
(Board Minutes AAB/13/2009-10)

13. The minutes of the 148th and 149th Meetings respectively on 31 August 2010 and 20 September 2010 were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2 Matters Arising

14. The Chairman recapped that AAB had discussed at its 149th Meeting on 20 September 2010 a complaint lodged by Mr Meacham in respect of AAB's discussion at its 144th Meeting on 2 March 2010. In response to Mr Meacham's suggestion, AAB, at its 149th Meeting, agreed that with immediate effect Members making remarks at all open meetings should be identified with names specified in the minutes of meetings.

15. The Chairman went on to inform Members that Mr Meacham recently wrote to him and the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), emphasising that he found the statement in paragraph 8 of the 144th meeting minutes offensive and defamatory. He opined that the ad hominem remark was unfair to him as he was not present at the meeting to defend himself. Though he considered the new arrangement of identifying Members in the minutes of open meetings was an improvement, he requested to take out the concerned statement from the confirmed minutes. Relevant emails and correspondences with Mr Meacham had been circulated to Members to facilitate their consideration.

16. While reminding Members of the fact that the minutes concerned had already been confirmed by AAB which accurately recorded the views of the Member expressed at the relevant meeting, the Chairman raised for the attention of Members that the names of Members were not identified in the minutes of the meeting. He suggested for Members' consideration that the name of Mr Meacham might be replaced by "a consultant".

17. Ir Dr Greg Wong commented that AAB meeting was an open meeting with the presence of the media and the minutes did accurately record the statement made by the Member, he therefore disagreed with the request to remove the concerned statement. He

opined that the suggestion to replace the name “Mr Meacham” with “a consultant” might not be desirable since more than one consultant had participated in the said consultancy study. To address Mr Meacham’s concern, he suggested that a post-meeting note stating Mr Meacham’s opinions should be added.

18. Dr Lee Ho-yin concurred with the views of Ir Dr Greg Wong that the relevant part of the minutes should remain unchanged. He further identified himself being the Member who made the concerned statement at the 144th meeting and expressed no objection to revealing his name in the minutes. He also opined that it was not part of AAB’s remit to handle any complaints in respect of the contractual arrangement between a consultant and Government. If Mr Meacham disagreed with any of his obligations as stipulated under the contract between himself and his client, he should raise it with the client direct.

19. Mr Andrew Lam concurred that the minutes should remain unchanged as it accurately recorded the views expressed by the Member.

20. Prof Simon Shen did not support the suggestion to add post-meeting notes as it might set a precedent for the handling of similar request in future and the minutes originally intended to record AAB’s discussions might be overloaded with endless post-meeting comments on the issue by other parties. Ms Lilian Law agreed not to amend the confirmed minutes.

21. The Chairman concluded that AAB, after discussion, agreed that the relevant confirmed minutes should remain unchanged. He added that procedures had been in place to bring up any views on AAB’s previous discussion received for AAB’s discussion. These views discussed by AAB would then be properly recorded in the minutes.

22. The Chairman then invited Mr Tom Ming to update Members on the 7 new items listed in Annex D of Board Paper AAB/53/2009-10 which were discussed at the previous meeting on 20 September 2010.

23. Mr Tom Ming recapped that AAB discussed at the previous meeting the proposed gradings of the 7 new items listed in Annex D of the aforesaid paper and agreed that AMO should proceed with the one-month public consultation on the proposed gradings. He then reported the findings of the review of the heritage value of these new items by the Expert Panel following the conclusion of the public consultation ending on 31 October 2010.

24. AAB endorsed the gradings of the following new items with which no submission was received during the public consultation period :

- (i) S/N¹ 1 (Gatekeeper’s Lodge of Marble Hall, Mid-levels);
- (ii) S/N 4 (Pioneer Memorial Church of Seventh-day Adventists, Happy Valley);
- (iii) S/N 6 (Eastern Cotton Mills Ltd., Kowloon City).

25. Mr Tom Ming then briefed Members on the background of the historic building

¹ This numbering of the historic buildings mentioned in the minutes follows that listed in Annex D to AAB Board Paper AAB/53/2009-10.

S/N 3, Former Police Married Quarters, Hollywood Road, Central (“PMQ”). He remarked that PMQ were situated atop of the site where the Central School had once stood. An archaeological investigation was carried out in 2007 and the investigation report was submitted to AAB for information and had been made available from AMO’s website since November 2007. Archaeological remains and historic buildings are dealt with separately following the respective procedures in place. While historic buildings are given a grading under an administrative grading system on the basis of its heritage value, the former Central School archaeological site, like other archaeological remains of archaeological value, had been put in the list of Sites of Archaeological Interest. Both graded historic buildings and Sites of Archaeological Interests are protected under the HIA mechanism and the administrative monitoring mechanism established to monitor any application for works at these sites.

26. Mr Tom Ming supplemented that representatives of the “Central and Western Concern Group” (“the Concern Group”) and other concerned individuals had met with the Chairman and individual Board Members and representatives of Development Bureau and AMO on 29 September 2010 to present their written submissions and views. Submissions from the Concern Group and the representatives attending the said informal meeting had been circulated to Members for reference.

27. He added that the Expert Panel Meeting at its meeting on 4 November 2010 had reviewed the grading of PMQ in the light of the new information and comments submitted by the Concern Group and other individuals. The views of the Expert Panel were summarised as below :

- (i) the buildings of PMQ and the archaeological finds underground should be separately assessed under the corresponding mechanisms in place. It was inappropriate to apply a grading to both of them because the underground remains of the Central School were archaeological features and should be and had been dealt with under the arrangement of the list of archaeological sites for protection of the underground remains;
- (ii) the Expert Panel had already considered the fact that PMQ as the first quarters for non-ranking staff of the Hong Kong Police Force which was mentioned in the appraisal. The Grade 3 status recommended based on the assessment of the Expert Panel had taken the above fact into account;
- (iii) PMQ could not qualify as a unique example of modernist and functionalist building type. Its architectural features could not justify a grading higher than Grade 3. Besides, there was no evidence to prove that the earliest public housing blocks were modeled on the two police housing blocks of the PMQ. PMQ was associated with the Police’s history while Mei Ho House, as the first design of Mark I type public housing, was associated with an important stage of territory-wide social history of Hong Kong. Judging from the social value, it is reasonable that PMQ had a lower grading than that of Mei Ho House which was a Grade 2 building; and
- (iv) the group value of the cluster of historic buildings nearby had been taken into consideration by the Expert Panel in its last assessment. The group value did not warrant a higher grading.

28. Having regard to the above, the Expert Panel maintained their recommendation

that only the buildings on site should be considered for grading. The Expert Panel saw no justification for any change to the last assessment on the buildings of PMQ and therefore PMQ buildings should continue to be given a proposed Grade 3 status.

29. The Chairman briefed Members that the Concern Group had requested at the informal meeting on 29 September 2010 that the PMQ including the underground remains of the former Central School and all the buildings within the site should be collectively granted a Grade 1 status and then declared as a monument. He invited Members to express their views.

30. Mr Laurence Li commented that the grading assessment should be based on the established six criteria including historical value, architectural merit, group value, social value and local interest, authenticity and rarity. He agreed that the historic buildings of PMQ should be accorded a Grade 3 status. Mr Ng Yat-cheung also expressed similar views.

31. Dr Lee Ho-yin was of the view that the assessment made by the Expert Panel formed an objective basis for Members' consideration and he therefore supported the proposed grading.

32. Dr Lau Chi-pang concurred that the buildings of PMQ and the archaeological finds underground should be separately assessed. He considered that a Grade 3 status could accurately reflect the historic value of the buildings as the first quarters for married police officers.

33. Noting that there being no evidence to substantiate the argument that the earliest public housing blocks were modeled on the two police housing blocks, Ms Lilian Law supported that the buildings should be accorded a Grade 3 status. She suggested that AMO should make this point clear in the information on the PMQ buildings for public education purpose.

34. While noting that the assessment of historic buildings should be separated from archaeological sites, Prof Simon Shen enquired about the respective mechanism in monitoring these two types of heritage items. In addition, he also enquired whether intangible heritage would be included for assessment of heritage value. In response, Mr Tom Ming explained that :

- (i) the PMQ site had been put in the list of Sites of Archaeological Interest and protected under the HIA mechanism and the administrative mechanism established to monitor any application for developments or works in these sites;
- (ii) the grading system was an administrative tool to evaluate the heritage value of historic buildings/structures only; and
- (iii) among the six criteria for grading assessment, intangible heritage would be a factor to consider in the assessment of social value and local interest.

35. Mr Tom Ming then supplemented that under the HIA mechanism, a HIA would be required for the revitalization works for the entire site, including both the archaeological site and the buildings therein. Following the established procedures for HIAs, the HIA report would be submitted to AAB for endorsement.

36. In response to the Concern Group's earlier enquiry about why the site was not opened for public appreciation during the archaeological excavation, Mr Kevin Sun explained that given the steep slope of Aberdeen Road, the lack of information on the stability of the old retaining walls and the depth and extent of the excavated areas, there could be potential hazard to the Site and neighbouring areas. The nature of archaeological excavation was very different from the ordinary excavation at construction sites. For the former, the methods of shoring and sheet piling could not be applied as they could cause irreversible damage to the underground remains. To ensure public safety and integrity of archaeological features identified, backfilling had to be arranged after the excavation as soon as possible. All excavated areas at the PMQ site had been backfilled with a layer of sand, geo-textile sheets and filling materials to protect the structures discovered. This ensured that re-excavating could be made feasible whenever necessary.

37. In response to Prof Simon Shen's questions, Dr Louis Ng responded that generally excavation would not be carried out at archaeological sites unless there were development threats. For a site where excavation was unavoidable and with proof of its meeting a very high threshold of archaeological value, the site might be considered for declaration as a monument under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance for the highest level and permanent protection to the site.

38. Dr Lau Chi-pang echoed the view of minimum intervention to archaeological sites. In view of the misunderstanding of some members of the public about the PMQ site, he suggested that more comprehensive information on the site should be made available.

39. The Chairman concluded that AAB endorsed that the PMQ should be accorded a Grade 3 status.

40. Mr Tom Ming reported that owners of S/N 2 (Ying Was Girls' School – Kindergarten Block, Mid-Levels) and S/N 5 (Nos 2 and 4, Tai O Market Street, Tai O, Lantau) had made enquiries about the proposed grading during the public consultation period. AMO would contact the owners to address their concerns and then put forth their proposed gradings to AAB for discussion in due course.

41. In response to the enquiry of Mr Laurence Li, Mr Tom Ming replied that AMO was following up on AAB's earlier suggestion of including other old buildings along Tai O Market Street in the assessment exercise. AMO was researching into material relevant to the heritage value of other old buildings in the area. This would form an objective basis for the consideration by the Expert Panel and AAB of the need to include them into the new item list for further assessments. The proposed grading of the buildings under S/N 5 could be separately dealt with to facilitate earlier consideration of its preservation need given the owner's plan for development.

42. Lastly, Mr Tom Ming reported that AMO received during the public consultation period 15 written submissions with similar arguments for grading the building S/N 7 (Nos. 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 Observatory Road, Tsim Sha Tsui). On the other hand, two written submissions were received supporting a 'nil grade' for the building. All submissions had been circulated to Members for consideration.

43. At the Expert Panel Meeting held on 4 November 2010, all these submissions were reviewed by the Expert Panel and their views were summarised as below :

- (i) the buildings on Observatory Road were not representative of the works of Mr Robert Fan. For instance, the Chung Chi College buildings of The Chinese University of Hong Kong were more representative of his style. A number of his representative works had been preserved;
- (ii) Framjee Hormusjee, a famous Parsee merchant, owned one of the units of the original buildings at the site which had been demolished long time ago. There was no evidence of any significant relationship between him and the existing buildings;
- (iii) the buildings were inhabited by Chinese and Westerners in the old days due to its proximity to the former Chatham Road Camp. This was common in the entire area, not unique for the buildings;
- (iv) Functionalist design with emphasis on the function of the buildings rather than decoration was widely adopted in all architecture after World War II due to less favourable economic condition and scarcity of building material at that time. It could not be established that the buildings were a typical example of an unique architectural style;
- (v) the group value of the cluster of historic buildings nearby had been taken into account by the Expert Panel in its previous assessment. These historic buildings did not appear to be associated with one another in the history of Hong Kong nor they were of the same architectural style.

44. In light of the above, the Expert Panel maintained their last assessment on the buildings and considered that the buildings did not justify a grading.

45. The Chairman concluded that AAB confirmed 'nil grade' for this item.

**Item 3 Assessment of 1, 444 Historic Buildings – Finalisation of the Gradings of Proposed Graded Buildings and Results of Assessment of New Items
(Board Paper AAB/53/2009-10 - continued)**

46. The Chairman then invited Dr Alan Fung to take Members through the remaining items starting from the 31st item listed in Annex A, with the aid of PowerPoint.

47. AAB noted that the proposed grading of historic building Number² 1242 (Law Mansion, Nos. 50A, 51 & 51A Cha Kwo Ling Road, Cha Kwo Ling) was upgraded from a proposed nil grade to a proposed Grade 3 based on Expert Panel's re-assessment having regard to the information provided by members of the Kwun Tong District Council. AMO would inform the owners of the proposed grading and seek their comments before confirming the grading.

48. Noting that the old furniture remained at Number 762 (Fat Tat Tong, Nos.1-5 Ha Wo Hang Tsuen, Sha Tau Kok) was not in good condition, Mr Andrew Lam suggested that

² This numbering of the historic buildings mentioned in the minutes follows that adopted for the 1444 territory-wide historic buildings listed in the AAB Board Paper AAB/8/2009-10 on the proposed gradings of all these historic buildings.

Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO) could explore the feasibility of covering maintenance/repair of furniture under the ambit of the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme (FAS). He also proposed that more technical advice should be given to owners of privately owned graded buildings to facilitate the proper maintenance of historic buildings.

49. Mrs Jessie Ting responded that CHO would study Mr Andrew Lam's suggestion concerning the scope of the projects covered by the FAS. She added that CHO and AMO, when being alert of any proposed major maintenance/alternation works, would offer any necessary technical advice to owners.

50. Dr Ng Cho-nam and Mr Ng Yat-cheung were impressed by the historic building Number 762 and its old furniture. Both commented that buildings of this kind of such a high degree of authenticity was rare in Hong Kong and suggested that more resources should be allocated to preserve valuable built heritage such as this building and those historic buildings in Sha Tau Kok as heritage attractions.

51. Dr Lau Chi-pang and Mr Ng Yat-cheung were concerned about the reversibility of the recent alteration to the buildings Number 731-732 (No. 119, 121, Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po). Mr Andrew Lam, Mr Ng Yat-cheung and Mr Laurence Li were concerned about the current use of the buildings. In response, Dr Alan Fung supplemented the following information:

- (i) major architectural features such as semi-circular pediments marked with the year 1933, the verandahs supported by columns, etc were still kept; and
- (ii) the group value was high as they formed a cluster with neighboring shop houses at No. 117, 123, 125 of Nam Cheong Street.

52. The Chairman and Mrs Mariana Cheng were of the view that grading of historic buildings should be assessed based on their heritage significance, irrespective of the current use.

53. Noting that shophouses of this kind were rare in Hong Kong, Dr Lau Chi-pang and Mr Andrew Lam supported that the buildings should be accorded a Grade 3 status though the alteration/renovation was not desirable. Having regard that the alterations caused no substantial change to the building features and the current use was temporary, Mr Laurence Li also supported the Grade 3 status proposed by the Expert Panel.

54. With the above comments, AAB endorsed the proposed grading of the aforesaid buildings.

55. Members noted historic buildings Number 617 (Tin Hau Temple, Leung Shuen Wan, Sai Kung) and Number 707 (Tin Hau Temple, Tap Mun, Tai Po) had undergone extensive alterations thereby diminishing the heritage value and agreed that the buildings should be downgraded.

56. In reply to the Chairman's question, Mr Tom Ming explained that though the architectural merit of Number 508 (Entrance gate, Tai Hong Wai, Kam Tin, Yuen Long) had been undermined by its recent alteration work, the entrance gate was one of the few remains of

Tai Hong Wai which was an important village in Kam Tin. Dr Lau Chi-pang concurred with this view.

57. Having learnt the history of the entrance gate as briefly introduced by Dr Alan Fung, the Chairman and Ms Lilian Law suggested that information plaques setting out the history and the heritage value of the graded buildings should be erected on site to facilitate public appreciation of the buildings.

58. After deliberation of the remaining items of AAB Paper, Members endorsed all the proposed gradings except Number 1242 as explained in paragraph 47 herein mentioned. The gradings of those buildings confirmed at this meeting would be uploaded onto the AMO's website accordingly.

Item 5 Any Other Business

59. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

**Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
February 2011**

Ref: LCS AM 22/3