

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the 177th Meeting
on Thursday, 9 March 2017 at 2:30 p.m.
in Conference Room, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre,
Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon

Present: Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo, JP (Chairman)
Mr Stephen Chan Chit-kwai, BBS, JP
Mr Chan Ka-kui, BBS, JP
Prof Ching May-bo
Prof Rebecca Chiu Lai-har, JP
Prof Chiu Yu-lok
Mr Peter Lau Man-pong
Mr Lee Ping-kuen, JP
Mr Kenny Lin Ching-pui
Dr Annissa Lui Wai-ling, JP
Ms Theresa Ng Choi-yuk
Ms Yvonne Shing Mo-han, JP
Mr Douglas So Cheung-tak
Ms Karen Tang Shuk-tak
Ms Ava Tse Suk-ying, SBS
Sr Wong Bay
Dr Sharon Wong Wai-yee
Prof Yau Chi-on

Mr Asa Lee (Secretary)
Senior Executive Officer (Antiquities and Monuments)
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Absent with Apologies:
Mr Christopher Law Kin-chung, JP
Mr Ronald Liang

Mr Philip Liao Yi-kang
Dr Winnie Tang Shuk-ming, JP
Mr Rex Wong Siu-han

In Attendance:

Development Bureau

Mr Albert Lam
Deputy Secretary (Works)1

Mr José Yam
Commissioner for Heritage

Mr Ricky Wong
Chief Assistant Secretary (Works)2

Mr Allen Fung
Political Assistant to Secretary for Development

Ms Leonie Lee
Assistant Secretary (Heritage Conservation)3

Mr Eddie Wong
Chief Executive Officer (Heritage Conservation)1

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Dr Louis Ng
Deputy Director (Culture)

Mr Chan Shing-wai
Assistant Director (Heritage & Museum)

Ms Susanna Siu
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)

Ms Lily Chen
Chief Information Officer

Mr Chau Kwun-tong
Senior Architect (Antiquities & Monuments)1

Mr Chin Hoi-fun
Senior Architect (Antiquities & Monuments)2

Mr Kenneth Tam
Chief Heritage Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mr Ng Chi-wo
Curator (Historical Buildings)2

Miss Pauline Poon
Assistant Curator I (Building Survey)

Planning Department

Ms Paulina Kwan
Senior Town Planner / Metro & Urban Renewal

Architectural Services Department

Ms Chan Mei-kuen
Senior Maintenance Surveyor / Heritage

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives of government bureau and departments to this meeting, in particular, the two new Members, i.e. Prof Ching May-bo and Mr Lee Ping-kuen, who attended Board meeting for the first time.

Demolition Threat to Hung Lau and Complaint in relation to the Grading Assessment of the Building Remains at the Site of Cochrane Street

2. Before turning to the scheduled agenda items, the Chairman drew

Members' attention to the imminent demolition threat to Hung Lau. He recapped that the Board decided at the special meeting held on 28 February 2017 that should there be any undesirable works or action that would harm the heritage value of Hung Lau, the mechanism for declaring Hung Lau as proposed monument should be triggered promptly. Given the removal of two windows at Hung Lau on 8 March 2017, he proposed to discuss the declaration of Hung Lau as proposed monument right after the confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2016 and the report on progress of major conservation issues and activities so as to facilitate relevant government bureau/departments to take timely follow-up actions.

3. The Chairman then informed the Board that the Central and Western Concern Group (the "Concern Group") had sent an email requesting the Board to withhold the confirmation of the proposed grading for the building remains at the site of Cochrane Street (the "Building Remains") pending the completion of the investigation by the Legislative Council ("LegCo") in respect of the complaint lodged by the Concern Group against the mishandling of the grading exercise by the Antiquities and Monuments Office ("AMO"). The Concern Group also requested to meet the Board to present its findings in respect of the Building Remains before the item was discussed.

4. At the request of the Chairman, Ms Susanna Siu gave an account of the sequence of events relating to the investigation/case conference by LegCo, as follows:

- (i) having regard to the recommendation of the independent Historic Buildings Assessment Panel (the "Assessment Panel") and after much deliberation, the Board endorsed the proposed Nil Grade to the Building Remains at the meeting on 8 December 2016. Subsequently, a one-month public consultation on the proposed grading commenced;
- (ii) on 13 December 2016, the LegCo Secretariat conveyed a complaint from the Concern Group to the Development Bureau ("DEVB"). The Concern Group alleged that AMO had misled the Board to accord the proposed Nil Grade to the Building Remains on the basis of a Tenancy Tribunal document which was unreliable in dating the construction year of the Building Remains.

The Concern Group further accused the Chairman of urging Members to endorse the proposed Nil Grade in a hasty manner;

(iii) DEVB replied to the LegCo Secretariat on 16 December 2016 pointing out that the Tenancy Tribunal document (on Nos. 8 and 10 Gutzlaff Street) was reliable as it comprised an Architect's Report which showed the estimated construction year and the document was retrieved from the Public Records Office, not to mention that the Tenancy Tribunal document was submitted to the then Governor-in-Council as a basis for making relevant decisions. The grading procedures were also in order in that the Assessment Panel had gone through the research findings of AMO and conducted a site visit before assessing the Building Remains in accordance with the six prevailing assessment criteria and recommending a proposed grading for the consideration of the Board. At the meeting on 8 December 2016, the Chairman had first asked Members to consider whether the Tenancy Tribunal document was reliable before the grading proposal was deliberated. Members unanimously accepted the Tenancy Tribunal document as a reliable document and raised no objection to the proposed Nil Grade of the Building Remains after discussions. It should be noted that information/materials submitted by the Concern Group to the Board had also been passed to Members for consideration before the meeting. As per the usual practice, after the Board endorsed the proposed Nil Grade, a one-month public consultation followed;

(iv) on 21 December 2016, the LegCo Secretariat sent another letter to DEVB relaying the concerns and requests of the Concern Group after the Concern Group had met several LegCo Members. The dissatisfactions of the Concern Group included: (a) the Urban Renewal Authority ("URA") had misled the Board on the structural stability of the Building Remains; (b) the Tenancy Tribunal document adopted by AMO was unreliable; and (c) the Chairman rushed Members to endorse the proposed Nil Grade. The Concern Group proposed to adopt scientific methods to date the construction year of the Building Remains, and to engage outside professionals to assess the heritage value of the Building

Remains together with the experts engaged by the Government;

- (v) at the request of the LegCo Secretariat, representatives of DEVB and AMO joined a site visit together with the relevant LegCo Members and the Concern Group, with the participation of the media, on 29 December 2016, followed by a closed-door three-party case conference on 4 January 2017. In response to the letters dated 13 and 20 January 2017 from the LegCo Secretariat, DEVB gave a reply on 24 February 2017 reiterating the reliability of the Tenancy Tribunal document, and with the consent of the Public Records Office, a copy of the Tenancy Tribunal document was furnished to those LegCo Members who took part in the case conference for reference. Apart from stating clearly that the Board would take into account all the public views received during public consultation, including those from the Concern Group, before confirming the grading of the Building Remains, the reply also pointed out that the prevailing scientific methods were not applicable in tracing the construction year of the Building Remains; and
- (vi) on 3 March 2017, the LegCo Secretariat issued a letter conveying the Concern Group's dissatisfaction with DEVB's reply dated 24 February 2017. On 6 March 2017, the LegCo Secretariat further drew DEVB's attention to the email issued on the same day by the Concern Group which was addressed to the Board, the Antiquities Authority, the Commissioner for Heritage and Members of LegCo, amongst others. The Concern Group recapped its position in respect of the grading assessment of the Building Remains, and AMO had accordingly forwarded the Concern Group's email to Members for information.

5. The Chairman wished to clarify whether the Board was required to hold up the discussion on the proposed grading of the Building Remains before the completion of the LegCo's case conference from legal and administrative perspectives. Ms Susanna Siu explained that the Board was a statutory body established under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (the "Ordinance") to advise the Antiquities Authority on heritage conservation matters. While the LegCo's investigation focused on Government's procedural propriety,

the assessment of the value of heritage items rested with the Board.

6. Regarding the enquiries from Ms Ava Tse and Prof Ching May-bo, Mr José Yam and Ms Susanna Siu pointed out that the case conference of LegCo was convened in response to the complaint lodged by the Concern Group after the Board's discussion and endorsement of the proposed grading of the Building Remains in December 2016 and focused on the procedural propriety in handling the grading exercise. Although detailed information and explanations on the procedures to grade the Building Remains had been provided to the LegCo Secretariat, the Concern Group was still not satisfied and further requested the Board to suspend the discussion of this item. Mr José Yam reiterated that the Board was established under the Ordinance to advise the Antiquities Authority on matters related to heritage conservation, including heritage assessment of historic buildings.

7. Mr Kenny Lin opined that it was not necessary to suspend the discussion on the grading assessment for the Building Remains as it was the role of the Board under the Ordinance.

8. After deliberation, Members agreed to proceed with the discussion of the grading of the Building Remains as scheduled.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 176th Meeting held on 8 December 2016 (Board Minutes AAB/8/2015-16)

9. The minutes of the 176th Meeting held on 8 December 2016 were confirmed with the following amendments to paragraph 38 as proposed by Ms Ava Tse:

“38. Ms Yvonne Shing and Ms Ava Tse considered that to facilitate Members' discussion and maintaining consistency, it would be useful to provide further information concerning the detailed scoring among the six prevailing assessment criteria and analysis for the grading proposed by the Assessment Panel, as well as those for comparable precedent cases. Mr Kenny Lin echoed and added that the detailed scoring could help the Board adopt a consistent approach in handling grading assessment.”

**Item 2 Matters Arising and Progress Report
(Board Paper AAB/3/2017-18)**

10. Ms Susanna Siu briefed Members on the progress of major heritage conservation issues and activities during the period from 1 November 2016 to 15 February 2017, including the progress of preservation of historic buildings and structures, restoration and maintenance programmes, archaeological projects, educational and publicity activities as detailed in relevant Annexes of the Board Paper.

11. Ms Susanna Siu went on to report the latest position of the following archeological projects:

- (i) Metal object discovered at the seabed in the reclamation area of Wan Chai Development Phase II

After the discovery of the metal object in the seabed in Wanchai, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”) commissioned a marine archaeologist to conduct a desktop study to ascertain the historical and heritage value of the object. The report, which has been uploaded to the website of CEDD, suggested that the metal object might be the remains of a vessel sunk during World War II but its identity had yet to be confirmed. The metal object was later relocated to a site slightly off the location of discovery under the advice and supervision of the marine archaeologist commissioned by CEDD and with a licence granted by the Antiquities Authority. CEDD would commission a marine archaeologist to conduct a detailed marine archaeological investigation of the metal object to ascertain its identity and heritage value in its second phase of work. Subject to the findings of the marine archaeological investigation, the Government would explore the appropriate preservation options for the metal object. The findings would be reported to the Board at a suitable juncture.

- (ii) Archaeological features discovered at the works site of To Kwa Wan Station of the Shatin to Central Link

The archaeological work conducted by Dr Liu Wensuo, the archaeologist commissioned by the MTR Corporation Limited, commenced in 2012 and was completed in September 2014. After holding a special meeting to discuss the issue and paying a site visit in November 2014, the Board recommended at its meeting on 4 December 2014 that most of the archaeological features unearthed at the site should be preserved *in-situ*, with Well J2 and the water channel dismantled and re-assembled in future whilst archaeological features would be backfilled for the time being. The report of the excavations was being finalised by the licenced archaeologist and would be completed soon. AMO was preparing to receive about 1 800 boxes of archaeological finds unearthed, of which around 8 000 finds were of high archaeological value.

Item 3 The Proposal to Declare Hung Lau, near Shek Lok Tsui Village, Castle Peak, Tuen Mun, New Territories as Proposed Monument under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53)

12. Ms Susanna Siu recapped that since 1981, the Board had discussed Hung Lau several times, including its grading and whether the Board should recommend its declaration as monument or proposed monument. Although there was no concrete evidence to establish the direct relationship between Hung Lau and the 1911 Revolution, the Board accorded Grade 1 status to Hung Lau after taking into account the collective memory associated with the building, which was one of the sub-criteria in assessing heritage value. Yet, the Board did not recommend to declare Hung Lau as monument. At the special meeting held on 28 February 2017, the Board considered it not necessary to declare Hung Lau as proposed monument at that moment given that there was no imminent demolition threat to the building and that the Government had been in discussion with the owner on preservation options. Nevertheless, should there be any undesirable action from the owner or others that would harm the heritage value of Hung Lau, the mechanism for declaring the building as proposed monument would be triggered promptly to accord statutory protection to it for a period of 12 months and to allow the Government to have more time to discuss with the owner on feasible preservation options.

13. Mr José Yam supplemented that the Government was highly concerned about the works carried out on the day before, which involved the taking down of two windows at Hung Lau. It was also widely reported that there could be further demolition works in the pipeline. Against this background, the Buildings Department (“BD”) had ordered the owner to cease any further works to be carried out at the building. Meanwhile, should the Board recommend triggering the declaration of Hung Lau as proposed monument as agreed at the special meeting on 28 February 2017, the Antiquities Authority would follow up accordingly.

14. In response to Sr Wong Bay’s enquiry, Mr José Yam mentioned that the discussion with the owner of Hung Lau on preservation proposals was on-going and BD had been monitoring Hung Lau closely.

15. In view of the undesirable works carried out at Hung Lau recently, the Chairman proposed to recommend to the Antiquities Authority to declare Hung Lau as proposed monument under the Ordinance. Members supported unanimously.

**Item 4 Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of the Revitalisation of the Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre
(Board Paper AAB/4/2017-18)**

16. The Chairman introduced the presentation team comprising the following members:

Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung,
Executive Director,
Spence Robinson Limited

Mr Michael Sin,
Executive Director,
Spence Robinson Limited

Dr James Chan,
Director,
Sik Sik Yuen Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre Eco-Learn Institute Limited

Ms Maggie Siu,
Secretary,
Sik Sik Yuen Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre Eco-Learn Institute Limited

17. Dr James Chan briefed Members on the background of the revitalisation project to convert Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre (“LHTWC”), a grade 2 historic building, into “Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre Eco-Learn Institute”, a unique local ecology discovery centre, to enhance the public awareness of the importance of ecology conservation and to promote the concept of sustainable development, under Batch IV of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme.

18. Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung introduced the history of LHTWC, including its operation as a maternity centre in the early years and later as a welfare centre. LHTWC, after revitalisation, would comprise a heritage interpretation area, an ecology discovery area, a customer service area and an outdoor microcosm of a natural habitat. He then showed the photos and layout plans of LHTWC to Members, and highlighted the historical, architectural and social significance of the site.

19. Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung moved on to introduce the character defining elements of the Main Block and Bungalow of LHTWC, which would be conserved as far as possible. He emphasised that the international standards and conservation principles would be adopted for conserving LHTWC. He also elaborated on the detailed design and the impact of the proposed works on LHTWC, which had been examined in the Heritage Impact Assessment (“HIA”) and explained the proposed mitigation measures.

20. Prof Ching May-bo and Dr Sharon Wong suggested enriching the historical interpretation of LHTWC from other aspects like the site being formerly utilised as a sanatorium for Indian soldiers and the new species being introduced to the site by Lady Ho Tung, as well as its connection with the other historic buildings being revitalised for the same purpose, such as the Green Hub. Prof Chiu Yu-lok added that the family of Kadoorie had close business connections with Ho Tung, and suggested further beefing up the historical information in this aspect.

21. Prof Yau Chi-on expressed concern on the proposed Chinese name of

the Centre “何東夫人醫局生態研習中心”, as the lintel above the entrance was inscribed “何東麥夫人醫局”. Ms Maggie Siu clarified that the Chinese name of the Centre and the name of the future operator “畵色園何東夫人醫局生態研習中心有限公司” were suggested based on the Chinese name of the historic building “何東夫人醫局”. Dr James Chan noted Members’ concern and supplemented that the name “何東夫人醫局” was used throughout the different stages of the project with DEVB. Mr José Yam said that Members’ views on the project, including the Chinese name of the Centre, were duly noted and the Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (“CHO”) would further discuss with the project team in this respect.

22. In response to the enquiries from the Chairman and Mr Stephen Chan, Ms Maggie Siu said that they would attempt to imitate the farming experience of Lady Ho Tung, including silkworm-raising. The pond would serve as an ecological pool for various kinds and levels of habitat. Dr James Chan added that a range of Chinese herbs, as well as paddy fields, would be planted in the Centre.

23. In response to Ms Karen Tang’s enquiry about the public access and management of the Centre, Ms Maggie Siu said that in order to ensure the financial sustainability of the Centre, an entrance fee of \$10 would be levied and tutorial lessons would be charged though guided tours would be provided free of charge. Teachers, farmers and relevant professionals would be engaged to manage the Centre. Dr James Chan believed that the schools operated by Sik Sik Yuen and other religious groups would contribute to many of the visitors and could well serve as a source of income to support the operation of the Centre.

24. The Chairman concluded that while Members had expressed their concerns on the needs to enrich the historical interpretation of the site as well as the preservation of the existing layout, they were generally supportive to the findings of the HIA and the proposed mitigation measures. As such, further consultation with the Board would not be required.

**Item 5 Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of the Revitalisation of the Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters
(Board Paper AAB/5/2017-18)**

25. Before the project team commenced the presentation, the Chairman invited Mr Ng Chi-wo to brief Members on the history and heritage significance of the remains of the Old Dairy Farm in Pokfulam. Mr Ng Chi-wo reported that the Dairy Farm Co., Ltd. was founded in 1886 by Sir Patrick Manson, a Scottish surgeon, who selected Pokfulam as a dairy farmland owing to its reliable water supply and favourable geographical location for livestock husbandry. Three historic buildings of the Old Dairy Farm had been accorded grading status by the Board, i.e. the Main Office Building (Grade 2), Cowshed (Grade 2) and Senior Staff Quarters (Grade 1). AMO was currently conducting research on the remains of the Old Dairy Farm, and would report the research findings to the Board upon completion of study.

26. The Chairman introduced the presentation team comprising the following members:

Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung,
Executive Director,
Spence Robinson Limited

Mr Michael Sin,
Executive Director,
Spence Robinson Limited

Mr Philip Kwok,
Head of Property,
Caritas-Hong Kong

Mr Benjamin Sin Chiu-hang,
Social Work Supervisor,
Caritas-Hong Kong

27. Mr Philip Kwok informed Members that Caritas-Hong Kong and the Pokfulam Village worked together on the revitalisation of the Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters (“SSQ”). Caritas-Hong Kong was currently conducting oral history interviews with Pokfulam villagers to collect historical information of the Old Dairy Farm, aiming at enhancing the public awareness of the history of the Pokfulam Village and the historic buildings in the surrounding areas.

28. Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung showed the photos and layout plans of SSQ,

and briefed Members on the historical, architectural and contextual significance of the building as well as the key character defining elements.

29. Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung went on to introduce the proposed routing of the guided tour at SSQ, which would cover the service centre, living museum, thematic workshop and open space. He also explained the detailed design and the impact of the proposed works on SSQ and the proposed mitigation measures set out in the HIA. He emphasised that the international standards and conservation principles would be adopted for conserving SSQ.

30. Regarding the concerns of the Chairman about the design of the ramp and the roof of the garage, Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung advised that different proposals had been devised for the ramp and the current one was considered most suitable with nominal maintenance cost. The roof of the garage, on the other hand, had been repaired by Architectural Services Department when the site was under the Government's management.

31. Mr Chan Ka-kui, Mr Douglas So, Mr Stephen Chan and Prof Ching May-bo raised questions on the paving of the courtyard and visitor capacity of the site. They suggested enriching the historical interpretation of the site in respect of the contributions of Sir Patrick Manson in the medical field, the operational procedures of milk production, as well as the social hierarchy shown by the architectural features of the Servant's Quarters. In response, the presentation team elaborated on the followings:

- (i) regarding the paving of the courtyard, Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung responded that the entrance and the area on the left side of the Main Building would be paved by tiles, whereas the areas near the Thematic Workshop and the right side of Main Building would be turfed and turned into a plantation area. Mr Benjamin Sin supplemented that the original level of the platform of the site, as well as the farming area on the right side of the Main Building, would be restored;
- (ii) Mr Philip Kwok stated that the site could accommodate around 200 visitors at a time;
- (iii) in order to enrich the historical interpretation of the site, Mr

Benjamin Sin explained that it was proposed to name the new Annex Building after Sir Patrick Manson as “Manson Building” where the Main Building should retain its original name as the Braemar House. Besides, in collaboration with Pokfulam Village and Dairy Farm Co., Ltd., a permanent exhibition would be staged at the Main Building to display the history and development of the company and the contributions of Sir Patrick Manson. It would also explain the milk production procedures adopted by the Old Dairy Farm through the display of the machines and equipment on loan from the museums in United Kingdom, as well as the Dairy Farm milk bottles used in 1920s owned by the project team members. Ex-cowboys of the Old Dairy Farm might also share their experiences in taking care of the cows at that time; and

- (iv) Mr Benjamin Sin pointed out that the provision of a narrow staircase leading from the Main Building to the Servants’ Quarters, as well as the accommodation of the servants under the floor slab, had showed the social hierarchy at that time.

32. Mr Kenny Lin asked why the Chinese translation of Pokfulam Farm was “薄鳧林牧場” instead of “薄扶林牧場”. Prof Rebecca Chiu explained that “薄鳧” was the Chinese name of a kind of bird commonly lived in the Pokfulam area.

33. In response to the enquiry of Prof Rebecca Chiu on the design of the new annex block and the proposal of Dr Sharon Wong to consider displaying the historical significance of the site in connection with the Béthanie, Mr Yuen Kwok-cheung pointed out that the design of the new annex block would be as simple as possible with its size kept to the minimal. Lightweight materials, such as glass, would be used for the construction. Mr Benjamin Sin furthered that the new annex block was crucial for providing catering facilities, which were not available in the nearby areas. Visitors to the site would be invited to follow the heritage trails to appreciate the other historic sites around the Pokfulam area. Re-provisioning of a dairy farmland near the site for demonstrating the milk production process would also be explored.

34. Mr Lee Ping-kuen proposed to study the historical significance of the

site together with the reservoirs in Pokfulam area. Mr Benjamin Sin said that the site would also serve as an eco-historical learning centre by connecting the history of the site with the reservoirs in Pokfulam area.

35. Sr Wong Bay declared that he was the Chairman of the Hong Kong Green Building Council and suggested the project team to consider applying for BEAM Plus label.

36. Ms Yvonne Shing declared that she was the Treasurer of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and advised the project team to consider approaching the Academy regarding the proposed use of the cattle depot at the Béthanie.

37. Based on the presentation by the project team and views expressed by Members, the Chairman concluded that the Board was generally supportive to the findings of the HIA and the proposed mitigation measures. Further consultation with the Board would not be required.

Item 6 Assessment of Historic Buildings (Board Paper AAB/6/2017-18)

Building Remains at the Site of Cochrane Street, Central (Serial No. N262)

38. Before the discussion of the agenda item commenced, the Chairman drew Members' attention again to the views of the Concern Group mentioned in paragraph 3 above, and extended his thanks to the Concern Group for providing information on the Building Remains to the Board. He emphasised that as a statutory body, all meetings of the Board were conducted with due regard to the provisions under the Ordinance, and the Board was not subject to the pressure from outside parties. Members could express their views freely based on their own judgement and all public views collected would be passed to Members for information.

39. Mr Ng Chi-wo reported that the Board agreed to accord a proposed Nil Grade for the Building Remains at the meeting on 8 December 2016, having regard to the recommendation of the Assessment Panel. He then recapped the main points covered at the last meeting:

- (i) based on the historical information and records available, the historical figures mentioned by the Concern Group had no direct relationship with the Building Remains (i.e. some already died before the fire disaster in 1878; some did not have any residence records after the fire disaster in 1878; and some only owned the tenement houses for a very short period of time);
- (ii) the tenement houses of the site had been demolished and the Building Remains only comprised some portions of back walls and incomplete partition walls, which were unable to reveal the back-to-back construction style of tenement houses;
- (iii) it was considered not appropriate to deduce the construction date of the tenement houses based on the enactment years of certain ordinances, as non-compliance of ordinances was not uncommon during those eras according to concrete historical information; and
- (iv) the Board disagreed that a photo (allegedly showing the buildings in 1894) provided by the Concern Group was taken at Gutzlaff Street (or subsequently claimed to be taken at Graham Street by the Concern Group) as the landscape shown on the photo did not match the topology of the street.

40. Mr Ng Chi-wo further reported that during the public consultation period, 500 written submissions were received, with 497 objections (comprising 473 standard petition letters), two supports and one without indicating its preference. The objection views were mainly related to the reliability of the Tenancy Tribunal document and the construction year of the Building Remains. The two public views supporting the proposed grading opined that the Building Remains were incomplete and could not show the original appearance of the buildings as well as the old livelihood in Hong Kong. The heritage value of Building Remains was also far from those confirmed Grade 1 historic buildings.

41. Mr Ng Chi-wo further reported that after reviewing all the public views received, the Assessment Panel considered that the proposed Nil Grade to the Building Remains, which had low architectural merit and integrity, should be

maintained, having regard to the prevailing six assessment criteria. The Assessment Panel had taken into account the following in arriving at its conclusion:

- (i) there was no information to support the Building Remains had direct relationship with the historical figures, as maintained by the Concern Group;
- (ii) the report retrieved from the Tenancy Tribunal document was prepared by a reputable authorised architect, i.e. Mr H.Y. Chan (陳洪業) who also participated in the design of Star Ferry Pier and Bridges Street Market, and was based on the then on-site inspections. The report was officially accepted by the Tenancy Tribunal and served as a basis by the then Governor-in-Council to make relevant decisions. It was, therefore, highly reliable and legally valid;
- (iii) the lot plans of different eras of the site, as presented by the Concern Group, could only show the lot boundaries, but not the layout and interiors of the buildings at the site. It was also not appropriate to compare location plans, lot plans and floor plans with each other as different kinds of plans served different functions;
- (iv) the location plans showed that the form of the building at No. 25 Cochrane Street in 1955 changed significantly from that in 1897, indicating that the subject building could have been rebuilt between 1897 and 1955;
- (v) fragmented ownership of the buildings at the site of the Building Remains since 1900 could not prove that re-development in the 1930s was not possible as there was no such restriction in the mortgage agreements, as illustrated in the case of No. 25 Cochrane Street;
- (vi) while the records of 1895 showed that the then tenement houses at Cochrane Street had basements, the Tenancy Tribunal document prepared in the 1960s showed that basements no longer existed. Such difference indicated that the then buildings might have undergone redevelopment after 1895. The Assessment Panel considered that even if there were remains of basements at the site, they would have

been seriously damaged or even ruined due to the redevelopment at Cochrane Street, thus having low heritage value;

- (vii) it was not appropriate to infer that the construction year of the Building Remains was in the 19th Century due to the use of lime sand mortar as building materials as such building materials were still commonly used in the 20th century or even nowadays in repairing historic buildings. The form of brick bonding should also not be taken as a combination of Western and local style as it was more close to Lingnan style; and
- (viii) incidents of non-compliance of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance enacted in 1903, i.e. the provision of scavenging lanes, was not uncommon, as stated in the report commissioned by the then Government in 1907 to review the effectiveness of the revised ordinance.

42. Prof Ching May-bo had read through all the information provided by the Concern Group and totally agreed with the grading assessment of the Assessment Panel. She pointed out that the Assessment Panel's assessment was not solely based on the report of 1963 retrieved from the Tenancy Tribunal document, but on all the available information and after careful consideration of the linkage among the site, the Building Remains and the buildings of different times there.

43. In response to the enquiry from Mr Stephen Chan, Mr Ng Chi-wo explained that the 1907 report was a comprehensive review on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance enacted in 1903. The review was conducted by a commission appointed by the Government, and the report was officially published. Ms Susanna Siu added that the report revealed the practical difficulties in implementing the new policy as provided for under the said ordinance. Exemption on the provision of scavenging lanes was often granted even with no submission of application as the then Government did not want to make any compensation.

44. Prof Chiu Yu-lok opined that when assessing the historical significance of a site, one should focus on how the site could demonstrate the history of human activities. He pointed out that the Building Remains could hardly display the back-to-back construction style of the tenement houses at Cochrane Street and

Gutzlaff Street. The Building Remains, therefore, could not meet the prevailing criteria for according a grading. Sr Wong Bay shared the views of the historians and considered that a balance should be struck.

45. In response to the enquiry of Dr Sharon Wong concerning the building materials and techniques, Sr Wong Bay pointed out that lime sand mortar was still being used nowadays and it was inappropriate to conclude that some kinds of building materials would cease to be used after certain years. He declared that he was a Member of the Construction Industry Council and was employed by the Government before.

46. Mr Douglas So opined that as it was not appropriate to say that the report of 1963 retrieved from the Tenancy Tribunal document was unreliable as it was prepared by an authorised person (an architect in this case) whose professional judgment on the age of the buildings at the subject site, i.e. “built about 30 years ago”, was stated in both the documents submitted to the Tenancy Tribunal and the then Governor-in-Council. The Board should regard this report as reliable and direct evidence on the age of the Building Remains. It was also a fallacy to assume that back-to-back tenement houses no longer existed after the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance was enacted in 1903.

47. Mr Kenny Lin agreed that the Board’s decision on the grading of the Building Remains was not solely based on the report, but also on the other relevant and reliable historical information.

48. The Chairman considered that the Board had undergone a thorough discussion on the grading assessment of the Buildings Remains, and he thanked the Concern Group again for its interaction with the Board in this regard. He then invited Members to consider whether the recommendation of the Assessment Panel, which upheld according a Nil Grade status to the Building Remains after reassessing the heritage value of the site in accordance with the six prevailing assessment criteria, should be endorsed. Members unanimously agreed to confirm the proposed Nil Grade of the Building Remains.

Former State Theatre, North Point (Serial No. N46)

49. Mr Ng Chi-wo recapped that the Board agreed to accord a proposed Grade 1 status to the Former State Theatre (the “Theatre”) at the last meeting.

During the public consultation period, 133 written submissions were received , with 102 supports (comprising 58 standard petition letters), 23 objections and eight without indicating their preference. He said that the majority of those supporting the proposed grading were based on their personal experiences with the Theatre, the architectural characteristics of the roofs, the social value of the building in demonstrating the development of stage performance and film industry, as well as the post-war developments of Hong Kong. The objections opined that the roof was designed simple and merely for reducing construction cost, and there was no significant heritage value. The interiors of the Theatre had been substantially altered, and the Theatre was in dilapidated condition.

50. The Chairman acknowledged the challenges in assessing the Theatre. The Theatre was a post-war building and the assessment criteria for grading were drawn up mainly for pre-war historic buildings. Yet, before there were resources to conduct thorough research on post-war buildings, the Board would apply the existing assessment criteria.

51. With no further views from Members, the proposed Grade 1 status of the Theatre was confirmed.

52. Regarding the proposal of Ms Ava Tse in updating the assessment report of the Assessment Panel to include the Board's views given, in view of resource constraints, the Chairman proposed to supplement the assessment report by keeping a separate record of the justifications and views of the Board in confirming the grading.

No. 27 Lugard Road, the Peak (Serial No. N18)

53. Mr Ng Chi-wo reported that with the endorsement of the Board on the proposed grading at the last meeting, four written submissions were received, with two supports, one objection and one without indicating its preference during the public consultation period. The supporting views pointed out that No. 27 Lugard Road was historically significant for being the earliest building built in Lugard Road and possessing the respective construction style and function of the buildings at that time.

54. In response to the enquiry of Mr Stephen Chan, Mr José Yam said that the application for hotel development at No. 27 Lugard Road had been approved

by the Town Planning Board (“TPB”) but the owner indicated difficulty in pursuing this development in view of the stringent conditions imposed.

55. After deliberation, Members supported to confirm the grading of No. 27 Lugard Road, the Peak as Grade 1.

The Sanctuary and Bell Tower of Union Church, No. 22A Kennedy Road, Central (Serial No. 646 and No. 669)

56. Mr Ng Chi-wo briefed Members that the proposed Grade 3 status to the Sanctuary and Bell Tower of Union Church was endorsed by the Board in 2009. Objection from the owner was received during public consultation. The owner opined that the historical significance of the Sanctuary and Bell Tower were low as the Church was redeveloped before. With the aid of pictures of the Church, Mr Ng Chi-wo explained that the Church was first built in 1890 and redeveloped in 1955. He pointed out that the Board had already taken into account the redevelopment of the Church in 1955 when it assessed the proposed grading in 2009. He also quoted other churches which were built in similar times and with grading for Members’ reference, such as St. Anthony’s Catholic Church in Pokfulam and All Saints’ Church in Mong Kok. Given that planning approval for redevelopment was granted, which suggested that there might be demolition threat to the two items, Members were invited to confirm their proposed grading.

57. In response to the enquiry from Mr Stephen Chan, the Chairman clarified that the Board was required to confirm the proposed grading, but not to review the proposed grading, as no new information concerning the historical significance of the Sanctuary and Bell Tower of Union Church was received and no architectural alteration works had been carried out so far.

58. Mr José Yam supplemented that TPB imposed a planning condition requiring the owner to preserve the relics or historical building materials of the Church and keep photographic and architectural records of the Church. CHO and AMO had been liaising with the owner to preserve the relics and materials with high heritage value and incorporate them into the new building. The preservation proposal from the owner had been accepted by AMO. CHO and AMO would ensure that the owner would keep records of the building, as required by TPB.

59. After deliberation, Members confirmed the grading of the Sanctuary and Bell Tower of Union Church as Grade 3.

No. 2 First Street, Tai Wai, Sha Tin (Serial No. 749)

60. Mr Ng Chi-wo reported that No. 2 First Street was proposed a Grade 3 status by the Board in 2009. Objection from the owner was received during public consultation, opining that the building was only a simple village house with no significant heritage value. Mr Ng Chi-wo continued to brief Members on the historical significance of No. 2 First Street. Photos of other similar village houses were shown for comparison. In the light of the redevelopment application for the building received by the Lands Department, which suggested that there might be demolition threat, Members were invited to confirm the proposed grading.

61. After deliberation, Members confirmed the grading of No. 2 First Street as Grade 3.

Updating List of 1 444 Historic Buildings and Rationalisation of the List of New Items and New Categories

62. The Chairman briefed Members that given the grading assessment for 1 444 historic buildings, which involved pre-1950 buildings, was almost complete, the focus would be shifted to the assessment of the new items.

63. Ms Susanna Siu reported that after the Board's agreement on the proposed grading of 1 444 historic buildings in 2009, owners were notified. Some of them raised objections to the proposed grading of their respective buildings during public consultation. Up till now, amongst the 184 items met with objections, the proposed grading of 87 items had been confirmed and 97 pending the Board's assessment. AMO would continue to process the grading proposals in respect of the remaining cases.

64. Ms Susanna Siu further reported that the public was welcome to suggest new items for grading assessment since 2009. Those suggested items would be put on the list of new items and new categories, among which the proposed grading of 99 items had been confirmed by the Board. With a view to expediting the grading assessment of the remaining items, AMO had critically

reviewed the list of new items and new categories and suggested rationalising them by splitting into two lists, i.e. List (a), a list of new items for grading assessment; and List (b), a list of items not falling under the usual category of “buildings/structures”. In addition to the remaining cases with owners’ objection against the proposed grading under the list of 1 444 historic buildings, it was proposed to focus on processing List (a).

65. With the aid of photos, Mr Ng Chi-wo explained how the 31 new items which were moved to List (b) could not be assessed under the prevailing grading assessment criteria for historic buildings.

66. Mr Stephen Chan and Prof Ching May-bo said that air-raid shelters, old stone walls and boundary stones of historical significance were worthy of further study. The Chairman clarified that List (b) covered items to which the prevailing grading assessment criteria were not applicable as they were non-building / structure items. It did not imply that those items had no heritage value. Separately, the Advisory Committee on Built Heritage Conservation, which was established pursuant to the policy review on the conservation of built heritage, would fund academic researches on built heritage. It might provide financial assistance to study different forms of heritage items such as those on List (b). Ms Susanna Siu supplemented that items like historic boundary stones could be included in the list of items requiring attention and protection in conducting HIAs.

67. In response to Mr Chan Ka-kui’s enquiry concerning the preservation of the remains of old Kai Tak Airport, Ms Susanna Siu reported that archaeological research had been conducted in the surrounding areas of the old Airport, including its runway, and the archaeological finds unearthed were being studied by the licenced archaeologist. The former Royal Air Force Hangar was accorded a Grade 3 status by the Board.

68. Regarding the concern of Dr Sharon Wong and Mr Peter Lau on the research on tunnels, the Chairman opined that it would be difficult in the absence of official plans and proper access. It was also not feasible to decide on the boundaries of tunnels if they were proposed to be declared as monuments. The research might also take years to complete. Ms Susanna Siu pointed out that research on the military facilities faced difficulties in conducting site visits in the absence of proper access to the sites, in addition to safety concern.

69. In response to the enquiry of Mr Douglas So, Mr Ng Chi-wo explained that after the completion of the research on the structures related to the Old Dairy Farm, the findings would first be submitted to the Assessment Panel for assessment according to the prevailing assessment criteria before submitting to the Board for consideration.

70. Dr Louis Ng supplemented that the prevailing grading assessment criteria, designed specifically for pre-1950 buildings / structures, took two years to draw up from 2003. Setting up a standard of assessment and conducting extensive researches on historic items would be prerequisites for establishing a set of grading assessment criteria.

71. The Chairman welcomed Members for further suggestions and views on the two new revised lists. With no further comment from Members, the proposal to split the list of new items and new categories into two new lists (i.e. List (a), a list of new items for grading assessment; and List (b), a list of items not falling under the usual category of “buildings/structures”) was agreed by the Board.

Updating Position of Historic Buildings Demolished and Substantially Altered

72. Mr Ng Chi-wo reported that in the past four years, 17 historic buildings had been demolished and two proposed Grade 3 buildings were substantially altered. The Assessment Panel had reviewed the two substantially altered items and considered that they did not warrant any further grading assessment since their heritage merits had been significantly diminished. As such, it was suggested that the grading assessment of such items should not be proceeded further.

73. Sr Wong Bay opined that proper maintenance was necessary to protect historic buildings from deterioration. Ms Susanna Siu reported that while declared monuments were under statutory protection, a systematic inspection was being planned for all graded buildings although AMO already conducting site visits to graded historic buildings from time to time. Meanwhile, owners of graded historic buildings were encouraged to apply for financial assistance under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme (“FAS”) administered by DEVB. The maintenance of government-owned historic buildings would be overseen by

the Architectural Services Department and other relevant government departments. The Chairman and Ms Susanna Siu added that the ceiling of financial assistance offered by FAS had been increased from \$1 million to \$2 million per approval, which might cover preliminary study and maintenance of historic buildings.

74. Prof Chiu Yu-lok opined that more resources should be allocated to the study of the pre-war historic buildings as they were of higher historical significance and rarity. He also proposed that a benchmark should be established for the grading assessment of the post-war buildings.

75. Mr Douglas So raised concern on the inadequacy of the prevailing system in protecting historic buildings as reflected by the substantial alteration of the two proposed Grade 3 buildings. The Chairman opined that further education to owners of historic buildings could help. He also proposed that the grading of a historic building could be enhanced if it had high group value with other historic buildings/sites in the vicinity.

Item 7 Any Other Business

76. As Mr Kenneth Tam, Chief Heritage Manager (Antiquities and Monuments) of AMO, would proceed on retirement soon, the Chairman, on behalf of the Board, thanked him for his past contributions to the Board.

77. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

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