Board Minutes
AAB/1/2007-08

ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF THE 128th MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007 AT 4:40 P.M. IN CONFERENCE ROOM, HERITAGE DISCOVERY CENTRE KOWLOON PARK, HAIPHONG ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI, KOWLOON

Present:	Mr Edward Ho, SBS, JP	(Chairman)
	The Hon Bernard Charnwut Chan, GBS, JP	
	Prof Leslie Chen Hung-chi	
	Mrs Mariana Cheng Cho Chi-on, BBS, JP	
	Mr David Cheung Ching-leung	
	Ms Susanna Chiu Lai-kuen	
	Mr Patrick Fung Pak-tung, SC	
	Mr James Hong Shu-kin	
	Mr Philip Kan Siu-lun	
	Mr Kwong Hoi-ying	
	Mr Billy Lam Chung-lun, SBS, JP	
	Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo	
	Prof Lau Chi-pang	
	The Hon Patrick Lau Sau-shing, SBS, JP	
	Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen	
	Prof Bernard Lim Wan-fung	
	Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung, JP	
	Prof Simon Shen Xu-hui	
	Ms Miranda Szeto Siu-ching	
	Dr Linda Tsui Yee-wan	
	Ir Dr Greg Wong Chak-yan, JP	
	Mr Bryan Wong Kim-yeung	
	Ms Lisa Yip Sau-wah	
	Ms Heidi Kwok	(Secretary)
	Senior Executive Officer (Antiquities and Monuments) Leisure and Cultural Services Department	

Absent with Apologies:

Mr Raymond Cheung Man-to
Dr Ng Cho-nam
Mr Ng Yat-cheung
Mr Yeung Yiu-chung, BBS, JP
Miss Vivian Yu Yuk-ying

In Attendance: *Home Affairs Bureau*

Ms Esther Leung
Deputy Secretary (3)

Miss Polly Kwok
Principal Assistant Secretary (Culture)2

Ms Elsa Wong
Chief Executive Officer (Heritage)

Miss Susanna Siu
Assistant Secretary (Western Kowloon Cultural District)1

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr Chung Ling-hoi
Deputy Director (Culture)

Dr Louis Ng
Assistant Director (Heritage and Museums)

Ms Esa Leung
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mrs Ada Yau
Curator (Education and Publicity)

Ms Cissy Ho
Curator (Historical Buildings)

Mr Kevin Sun
Curator (Archaeology)

Mr Richie Lam
Senior Manager (Antiquities and Monuments)

Mrs June Tong
Principal Marketing Coordinator (Heritage and Museums)

Miss Addy Wong
Senior Marketing Coordinator (Heritage and Museums)

Ms Yvonne Chan
Executive Officer I (Antiquities and Monuments)

Planning Department

Mr Anthony Kwan
Assistant Director/Metro
Architectural Services Department

Mr K K Ng
Assistant Director (Property Services)

Mr S L Lam
Senior Property Services Manager/Eastern and Antiquities

Opening Remarks

The Chairman started the meeting at 4:40 p.m. He welcomed the media and members of the public for attending the open meeting and apologized for having them to wait due to the closed meeting which had overrun. He reported that at the closed meeting, Members had discussed at great length the AAB's operation mode to make it more transparent and receptive to public views. He said that while the declaration and grading of built heritage would continue to be handled by the AAB, Government would undertake to collect public views, e.g. through the District Councils for the AAB's reference and consideration. In addition, public hearing sessions would be arranged for exchange of views on issues of public concern. Two committees namely Education and Publicity Committee and Standards and Legislation Committee will also be set up possibly with co-opted members to gauge views from different sectors of society. He noted that in order not to hold up the open meeting, outstanding issues concerning written submissions from concern groups on the Queen's Pier and the Former Married Police Quarters Site at Hollywood Road would be discussed after the open meeting.

Item 3 Public Opinion Survey on Built Heritage Conservation Policy (Board Paper AAB/7/2007-08)

Presentation Session

2. The Chairman introduced Ms Josephine Tse from the Central Policy Unit, Dr Louis Leung and Mr Siu Yue-hei from CUHK, who were in attendance for discussion of this item.

3. Miss Polly Kwok briefed Members on the background and purpose of the public opinion survey to be jointly conducted by the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the Central Policy Unit (CPU) in April 2007. She sought Members' views on the opinion survey and the draft questionnaire at Annex, saying that the result of the survey, which included the data of about 1,000 respondents and expected to be available in May 2007, would be reported to the AAB in due course.

4. Dr Louis Leung sought Members' views on the draft questionnaire especially on the wordings of Q5 to Q8, which would likely yield the expected answer 「視乎情況」 from respondents, and on his suggestions of stating the 1% budget for 「文化、藝術及文物保護」in dollar terms to make Q17 more lucid or simply deleting this question.

5. Ms Esther Leung added that the purpose of the survey was to provide the community with an opportunity to understand and express views on the current policy

and measures on built heritage conservation before finalizing the policy review. As the opinion survey would be conducted through a telephone poll, they had to convert complicated and abstract ideas into simple and easily understandable questions to solicit views of the general public on the basic principles of heritage conservation policy, the assessment criteria, methods, and cost of heritage conservation whereas the points raised by Dr Louis Leung concerned the technical aspect.

Discussion Session

6. Major views and suggestions, and questions raised Members were summarised as follows:

(a) It might be preferable if the interviewer could first identify the suitable target respondent (i.e. those who have some knowledge of built heritage conservation) first before starting the interview with the respondent who meets the age criterion of 18 or above;

(b) the general public or the respondents might find it difficult to understand or grasp the meaning of 文物建築 which might be open to different interpretations and yield different responses;

(c) Q2, which attempted to get public views on Government's performance in heritage conservation, should be further elaborated to find out the expected areas of improvement by Government;

(d) the concept of「集體回憶」in Option (e) of Q3 was too abstract. Perhaps more colloquial language similar to that adopted for Options (a) to ((d) should be used to enable the general public to grasp the meaning of this term;

(e) In academic field, concepts like「應保護文物」 and「接管文物」in Q4 were difficult to interpret and understand in a telephone poll.

(f) to make Q4 more specific and easy to understand, Option (c)「要付出經濟代價」could be revised to「嘅金錢問題;

(g) the respondent might pick different options such as Option 1 in-situ preservation 「原地保留」 instead of Option 3 「視乎情況」for Q5;

(h) it was suggested to give more options such as 「局部保留」or 「立面保留」for Q5 rather than the options of 「兩樣都好／無所謂」or「唔知道」;

(i) it was not sure if Option 1 「繼續原有用途」 of Q7 was feasible for all historic buildings;

(j) to gauge public views, Q9 should pinpoint the crux of the issue that the costs of heritage conservation met from public funds mainly came from the taxpayers the extent of which depended on how much one was willing to pay. It was also suggested that reference should be made to the surveys conducted by Australia in 2001 and the English Heritage as to how to frame questions on the costs of heritage conservation.

(k) since Option 1 of Q14 went without saying, it was suggested to quantify 「信託基金」after asking Q13 so that the respondent could have some idea of the size of private donation in answering Q14;

(l) consideration might be given to include one or two questions on assessing Government's performance in heritage conservation for reference and to prevent giving the respondent the impression that it was a one-sided opinion survey outsourced by Government;

(m) the options of 「視乎情況」and 「一半半」, which appeared in many questions, should be avoided as far as possible in order to gauge the specific views or inclination of the respondents and should be revised to「其他」if appropriate ;

(n) it was suggested to replace Options such as 「上層」,「中層」 and 「下層」in Q18 by income bracket to avoid labelling the respondents;

(o) the questionnaire should gear at improving public participation in various aspects such as publicity, channel of participation and questions on financial arrangements such as heritage trust should be simplified to make it easily understood by the general public;

(p) consideration might also be given to include a few questions to seek public views on whether they support the idea of encouraging private participation in heritage conservation through Government initiated incentives;

(q) perhaps the alternative approach of the Focus Interview Group adopted by the commercial sector could be considered whereby a group of respondents representing a particular sector is selected for a briefing before conducting the opinion survey to avoid being influenced by the media;

(r) perhaps it would yield better response to conduct the telephone survey after the audience had watched the ATV Series on 香港築蹟 and the idea of conducting the survey through radio programme and completion of the questionnaire through the internet after broadcasting of the ATV programme on 香港築蹟

could be considered;

(s) it was more important to educate the public on the cost of heritage conservation, and who to pay for it rather than asking specific /technical questions which might be difficult to answer and the data so collected might not help in the policy review;

(t) it would be more appropriate to consult the AAB on broad issues such as whether the public opinion survey should be conducted rather than on the presentation and wordings of the questionnaire as such consultation might lead to the misconception that the whole plan was endorsed by the AAB;

7. Ms Esther Leung thanked Members' for their views and suggestions, which would be taken into account in revising the questionnaire. She noted that technically there were inherent inadequacies in this telephone survey. However, HAB would like to attempt the telephone poll through random sampling as a pilot scheme to collect the views of those who did not participate in the public forums, as the data collected from 1,000 were considered quite representative. She explained that the reason for including the options of「視乎情況」or「無所謂」in many questions was to give the respondent one more choice instead of somewhat forcing him to choose Option 1「原地保留」or Option 2「搬去另外一個地點重建」. She did not rule out the possibility of conducting further survey through other modes in future, noting that the proposal of extending the use of the questionnaire on other suitable occasions would also be considered. She explained that the purpose of the paper was to seek Members' views on the scope and content rather than on the technical aspect of the questionnaire.

Item 2 Built Heritage Conservation Policy Review – Recent Public Engagement Exercise
(Board Paper AAB/6/2007-08)

Presentation Session

8. Miss Polly Kwok briefed Members on the outcome of the public forums organized in January and February 2007 including the types of forums held, the number of participants, and a summary of views initially received, as detailed in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the paper. She added that HAB was making use of other channels (e.g. radio and television programmes, website forum and e-mail) to disseminate information and collect public views, which would be reported to the AAB after they had been consolidated.

9. Members noted the paper.

Item 1 Matters Arising and Progress Report
(Board Paper AAB/5/2007-08)

Presentation Session

10. Ms Esa Leung highlighted the declaration of Leung Ancestral Hall as a monument, which was gazetted on 17 November 2006, bringing the total number of declared monuments in Hong Kong to 81 while declaration of Chik Kwai Study Hall in Pat Heung, Yuen Long by notice of Government Gazette was being arranged.

Discussion Session

11. Views and questions raised by Members were summarized as follows:

(a) the general public seemed to have little knowledge of the historic buildings recommended for declaration by the AAB. Better efforts should be made to widely publicise the gazetted declared monuments to enable the public to understand the reasons for their declaration such as through the media; and

(b) the rationale for having separate Progress Report for discussion at the closed and open meetings.

12. Ms Esa Leung responded that currently declared monuments were publicized on AMO's website and consideration was being made to publish a book on all the declared monuments in Hong Kong. She said that AMO would consider stepping up publicity work by issuing press release to the media especially on newly declared monuments. The Chairman hoped that the Education and Publicity Committee could take on this kind of publicity work in future.

13. It was noted that the part of the Progress Report, which was confidential or sensitive in nature, i.e. the AAB's deliberation, would be presented at the closed meeting whereas the part which was not sensitive in nature, i.e. the AAB's decisions, would be presented at the open meeting.

Item 4 Declaration of Interests
(Board Paper AAB/8/2007-08)

Presentation Session

14. Ms Heidi Kwok briefed Members on two systems of declaration of interests drawn up by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) for advisory boards and committees. She said that subject to Members' endorsement of the two-tier reporting system, which had been adopted by the AAB in the past, they were requested to complete the Register of Interest at Annex D and return it to the Board Secretariat.

15. Members endorsed the recommendation to continue adopting the two-tier reporting system for its 2-year term ending 31 December 2008.

Item 5 Archaeological Survey for the Former Mountain Lodge at the Victoria Peak Garden
(Board Paper AAB/9/2007-08)

Presentation Session

16. Mr Kevin Suen gave a brief account of the background of the Former Mountain Lodge at the Victoria Peak Garden, the relics discovered by Arch SD during their investigation work in December 2006, which were believed to be the original foundations of the Lodge, and the subsequent archaeological survey conducted by AMO to assess the heritage value of the site, which was expected to complete by March 2007. He informed that the survey report together with the findings and recommendations would be available for Members and relevant departments' consideration by late April 2007.

17. Members noted the paper.

Item 6 Annual Maintenance Programme for Declared Monuments (2007/08)
(Board Paper AAB/10/2007-08)

Presentation Session

18. Ms Esa Leung briefed Members on the background, the assessment criteria for setting priority for the annual maintenance programme, the maintenance works undertaken by AMO in 2006/07 and the proposed maintenance programme for 2007/08. She noted that the proposed annual maintenance programme for 2007/08 tabled at Annex B of the paper for Members' reference might be subject to review taking into account new and urgent requirements and the availability of funds.

19. Members noted the paper.

Item 7 Commissioning of the Ping Shan Heritage Centre
(Board Paper AAB/11/2007-08)

Presentation Session

20. Ms Esa Leung reported on the commissioning of the Ping Shan Heritage Centre in mid April 2007 and introduced the exhibitions on the history, tradition and rituals of the Tang Clan in the gallery at Block A, the history of the old Ping Shan Police Station and the Ping Shan Heritage Trail in the gallery at Block B, and the exhibitions on local heritage designed and produced by schools especially those in Yuen Long for display at Block C of the Centre.

Discussion Session

21. Question raised by Member was summarized below:

(a) since the Ping Shan Heritage Centre would be open to the public, was there a policy or would consideration be given to declare this building as a monument.

22. Dr Louis Ng replied that the former Ping Shan Police Station was a Grade III historic building and in view of its heritage significance and convenient location, it was converted into the Ping Shan Heritage Centre and opened to the public. He informed that there were a number of former police stations, which had been rated as Grade II or Grade III historic buildings. He said that Members might wish to consider if this police station warranted further consideration for declaration as a monument in the long term.

Item 8 Any Other Business

23. The Chairman inquired about the work progress of Lui Seng Chun. Dr Louis Ng advised that structural repairs and external renovation of the building were completed, and a consultancy study on the adaptive reuse of the building had just been completed. Basically AMO hoped to engage NGOs in the restoration and future management of the building. He said that AMO was finalising the conultancy report and would consult the AAB and the public when more concrete proposals had been drawn up. AMO

24. Other views and question raised by Members were as follows:

(a) the Government budget this year had not reflected Government's support to heritage conservation, should AAB express concern and reflected such observation to relevant officials and departments;

(b) views expressed in (a) above would be reflected to Government at the LegCo meeting when the budget was discussed, noting that in the estimate only one historic building would be declared as monument in 2008 and the long time taken for processing historic buildings for declaration as monuments as recommended by the AAB; and

(c) if Government made a financial commitment in the budget, it would provide the funding basis for heritage conservation instead of asking the public who should pay.

25. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
April 2007

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