

**MEMORANDUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE AAB IN 2005-06

PURPOSE

To report on the work of the AAB for the term 2005-2006.

BACKGROUND

2. The present term of the AAB will expire on 31 December 2006. An overview on the work of the AAB for the term 2005-2006 is prepared below for Members' information.

BOARD MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

3. In the 2005-06 term, the AAB held 10 regular meetings and 1 special meeting and considered a total of 82 board papers. In addition, the AAB conducted a 5-day overseas heritage study tour to Shanxi (山西) in the Mainland in May 2005, and attended 5 site visits to historical and archaeological sites in Hong Kong. The AAB also participated in a number of major heritage-related functions such as soft opening of the AMO's Heritage Discovery Centre (HDC) in Kowloon Park in October 2005, adjudication and awards presentation ceremony of the 2004 Hong Kong Heritage Awards in November 2005, and awards presentation ceremony for Liu Ying Lung Study Hall, Sheung Shui in December 2006, which won the 2006 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards for Culture Heritage Conservation.

MAJOR WORK AND ISSUES DISCUSSED

Historical Buildings and Structures

Declaration of Historical Buildings

4. The AAB also offered useful advice on declaration of buildings for statutory protection. Two buildings have been declared as historical buildings under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Chapter 53), namely the Cape D' Aguilar Lighthouse and Leung Ancestral Hall in Pat Heung, Yuen Long.

Preservation of Historical Buildings

5. The Board offered views on the conservation proposals of declared monuments including the former Marine Police Headquarters Compound and the Morrison Building of Hoh Fuk Tong Centre, Tuen Mun. The Board also advised on the conservation approaches of the old stone walls at Hollywood Road Former Police Married Quarters and the former Central Market.

6. With regards to urban renewal projects, the Board was consulted on the holistic approach to the future regeneration of the Wan Chai district, which was presented by the Urban Renewal Authority at the meeting on 29 November 2005.

Restoration and Maintenance of Historical Buildings

7. The Board was informed of the restoration and maintenance projects of historical buildings undertaken by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO). During 2005-06, a restoration project was carried out to Leung Ancestral Hall in Pat Heung, Yuen Long. Major repair works were carried out to historical buildings on the heritage trails including Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall and Tin Hau Temple in Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling and Tang Ancestral Hall in Ping Shan. Besides, The Board also advised on AMO's annual maintenance programme of declared monuments.

Archaeology

Licences

8. Members considered and recommended 26 applications for licences to excavate and search for antiquities, including 22 for archaeological surveys and excavations, 2 for marine archaeological investigations and 2 for fossil searches were granted by the Authority. Site inspections were conducted by AMO to monitor the archaeological projects to ensure that they comply with the agreed field standards.

Development and Archaeological projects

9. The Board offered views on the archaeological heritage affected by the Zhuhai-HongKong-Macao Bridge and was informed of the proposed mitigations measures of the Liquefied Natural Gas Receiving Terminal and Associated Facilities under the statutory environmental impact assessment process. Members also advised on the rescue excavation at Cheung Shue Tan, Tai Po and were informed of the major archaeological projects undertaken by the AMO.

The Central Archaeological Repository (CAR)

10. Following the advice of the former Archaeological Committee in 2004 on the management and development of CAR, collection documentations were arranged at the newly established Hong Kong Archaeological Archives at Kwun Chung Municipal Services Building and other collection stores. Selected artefacts from the CAR collection were displayed at the exhibition of Archaeological Discoveries in Sha Ha, Sai Kung at the HDC from October 2005 to March 2006.

Cooperation with Mainland China

11. Following the advice of the former Archaeological Committee on appointment of Mainland Archaeological Advisors in 2004, the Visiting Research Fellow programme in collaboration with Guangdong Provincial Institute of Relics and Archaeology was completed in mid November 2005. Research projects for Tung Wan Tsai North 1997 excavation and So Kwun Wat 2000 excavation, jointly conducted by the AMO and mainland archaeological institutes, were carried out in 2005 and 2006 respectively.

Education and Publicity

Education and Publicity Strategy

12. Members assisted in drawing up and endorsed the Education and Publicity Strategy (the Strategy) vide Board Paper AAB/1/2005-06. The Strategy has served as a guiding principle for the Education and Publicity Unit of the AMO in planning educational and publicity programmes.

13. The education and publicity programme plan for 2006, which included exhibitions, publications, lectures, guided visits, seminars, voluntary works of Friends of Heritage and Young Friends of Heritage, and the Hong Kong Heritage Awards Scheme, was endorsed by Members at the meeting on 29 November 2005 vide Board Paper AAB/42/2005-06.

14. Members suggested that the AMO should report progress on the plan at half-yearly interval. The half-year progress report of the education and publicity plan for 2006 was reviewed at the meeting on 25 September 2006 vide Board Paper AAB/74/2005-06. The education and publicity programmes held by the AMO throughout the past year are reviewed below.

Exhibitions

15. Based on the Strategy developed and endorsed by Members, the AMO has staged/will stage several thematic exhibitions in 2005-06 at the HDC in order to introduce the conservation work to the public. Some exhibitions have been/will be jointly organized with other organizations.

16. The Old Ping Shan Police Station is being converted into a Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre to be open in March/April 2007. The Centre will feature exhibitions on history and rituals of the Tang Clan and introduction of Ping Shan Heritage Trail. Improvement works along the Ping Shan Heritage Trail such as erection of new signages and updating of exhibitions in the monuments along the Trail will also be carried out to complement the opening of the Centre.

Heritage Information and Resources

17. With the support of AAB Members, the AMO is dedicated to enrich the

provision of heritage information and resources to the public and some of the projects are reported below.

18. The Geographical Information System on Heritage maintaining the records of 80 declared monuments has been released for public viewing since late October 2005. An additional 135 records of graded government-owned historic buildings and 138 archaeological sites have been released on the internet for public access since the end of June 2006.

19. The Hong Kong Traditional Chinese Architectural Information System which maintains a database of about 200 traditional Chinese villages and buildings is being developed this year. The database records are created jointly with the Department of Architecture, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. It is estimated that the system will be launched in mid 2007.

20. A Heritage Virtual Tour Programme providing a panoramic view of 60 historic buildings and sites across Hong Kong was developed this year. It is expected that the System will be completed by early 2007.

Hong Kong Heritage Awards (HKHA) Scheme

21. In order to promote heritage preservation and to recognize schools and community achievement in this aspect, the 2nd Hong Kong Heritage Awards (2004) jointly organized by the AMO and the AAB was launched in 2004. Awards presentation ceremony of the HKHA (2004) was held at the HDC in November 2005 with a total of 11 awards presented and 200 guests and winners attended the event. The 2nd Hong Kong Heritage Awards (2004) was well received. It is encouraging to note that increasing number of local schools and community groups have put more resources in heritage promotion. The next Hong Kong Heritage Awards will be launched in early 2007.

Training Courses for Teachers and Tourist Guides

22. The AMO has continued to work with the Education and Manpower Bureau and the Hong Kong Association of Registered Tour Co-ordinators in organizing training courses for teachers and tourist guides respectively.

23. A series of teachers training seminars entitled “Teachers Training – NSS Understanding and Interpreting the History Curriculum” was held in April and July 2006. Another training seminar named “Training Course for Chinese History Teachers” was also held in July 2006, and two tourism training courses were successfully organized in July 2006 for tourism sector personnel.

School and Public Programmes

24. To achieve the objectives of the Strategy, the AMO has continued to organize educational and promotional activities for schools and the public.

25. A series of archaeological workshops was conducted by local archaeologists from January to April 2005. Guided tours on “Ancient Culture of Hong Kong:

Archaeological Discoveries in Sha Ha, Sai Kung” and “Cartographic Survey of Historic Buildings” thematic exhibitions were conducted for schools and non-profit making organizations from December 2005 to April 2006 and from August to October 2006 respectively. In conjunction with the School Culture Day Scheme 2005-6, the AMO organized new workshops and guided tours for the core and affiliated schools.

26. From January 2005 to November 2006, a total of 38 public lectures and seminars on various heritage topics were held. Family programme like Sketch workshops, Treasure Hunt game and archaeological workshops, were also organised on several Sundays at the HDC since 2005.

Friends of Heritage Scheme (FOH Scheme) & Young Friends of Heritage Scheme (YFOH Scheme)

27. The FOH Scheme, endorsed by the AAB previously, has run for the seventh year this year. There are a total of 318 FOHs enrollment this year. FOHs have actively participated in the various services of the AMO, for example, editing the Newsletter, training the YFOH, performing as docents, monuments perfects and conducting family workshops.

28. With the endorsement of Members, the YFOH Scheme 2006 was launched in August and a total of 50 YFOHs were recruited. They have assisted in contributing to the YFOH website, cleaning up the monuments and performing as docent assistants. A cultural exchange visit to Macau for the dedicated YFOHs was organized in August 2005.

Guided Heritage Visits

29. To enrich visitors’ experience at heritage sites, the AMO continues to provide on-site interpretation services at various historic buildings, declared monuments and heritage sites. Beside docent services at the major heritage trails, AMO has recruited docents to provide on site docent services on Sundays and public holidays at Sai Kung Sheung Yiu Folk Museum from April 2005 onwards and Tai Fu Tai from December 2005 onwards.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

December 2006

Ref: LCS AM 22/3