

**For information
on 10 October 2007**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/28/2007-08**

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

**LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF 45 STUBBS ROAD (KING YIN LEI),
WANCHAI MARKET AND NGA TSIN WAI VILLAGE**

PURPOSE

This paper serves to update Members on the latest development of three historic sites/buildings, namely, 45 Stubbs Road (King Yin Lei), Nga Tsin Wai Village and Wanchai Market, the preservation of which has been discussed at previous AAB meetings.

45 STUBBS ROAD (KING YIN LEI)

2. At the special meeting of the AAB held on 14 September 2007, members unanimously supported the Antiquities Authority's intention to declare 45 Stubbs Road as a proposed monument under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the Ordinance). The declaration took effect on 15 September 2007 by notice in the Gazette. Immediately after the declaration, all works at the site have stopped. Staff of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) and the Buildings Department have been monitoring the site situation to ensure strict compliance with the Ordinance.

3. Invoking the relevant provision in the Ordinance, staff of the AMO entered the site on 20 September 2007 for inspection. Preliminary inspections found that most of the roof tiles of the building and the ornaments imitating Chinese imperial style in the interior have been taken down. However, the overall structure, partitions and profile of the building remain intact. Parts of the wall facing Stubbs Road have been defaced while the other walls of red brickworks remain intact. The lintels, brackets sets and ornaments imitating Chinese architectural features have been damaged but their structural form and profile remain intact. Some stonework balustrades, parts of the railings and lighting have been taken down, while the remaining parts including carved rail partition remain largely intact.

4. The AMO has commenced a study on the restoration works required to restore the building to its former appearance. In this connection, the AMO plans to engage experts both locally and from the Mainland to advise on possible restoration options. The Government has recently met with Mr. Stephen Yao, the former owner of the building and his architect, Mr. Philip Liao, both of whom are willing to provide advice and assistance on possible restoration options.

5. The declaration of King Yin Lei as a proposed monument and the action taken by the Government was reported to the Subcommittee on Heritage Conservation of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs on 2 October 2007.

6. The 12-month validity of the proposed monument declaration is intended to give the Authority the time to consider whether the building should be declared a monument and to discuss various options of preservation with the owner. The AMO will accordingly carry out a comprehensive assessment on the historical and architectural significance of the building and will make a recommendation to the Antiquities Authority within this period. If the Authority ultimately decides to declare King Yin Lei as monument, the AAB would be formally consulted in accordance with section 3 of the Ordinance and approval of the Chief Executive would be sought.

7. Separately, initial contacts have been established by the Development Bureau with the lawyer and architect representing the owner. While the lawyer has sought information on the grounds of the proposed monument declaration, the owner's architect has recently indicated in writing the owner's willingness to restore the building to its previous form at his own cost and sought assistance from Government or its experts on the restoration works. Also, at the request of the owner's representative, a meeting with the Development Bureau is being arranged to discuss practicable development and conservation options.

NGA TSIN WAI VILLAGE

8. The AAB first discussed the redevelopment project of Nga Tsin Wai Village in December 1994 and raised no objection to the redevelopment. Since then, Nga Tsin Wai Village had become one of the 25 projects announced by the then Land Development Corporation (LDC) and inherited by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) for redevelopment. The subject was discussed again by AAB and they reaffirmed their decision in 1999 and 2000.

9. In November 2005, the Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC) requested the URA to expedite the redevelopment of the village, subject to the preservation of the three relics (i.e. the Tin Hau Temple, the gatehouse and the stone tablet with the inscription of “慶有餘” embedded over the gatehouse). The AAB was informed of this arrangement in March 2006.

10. To meet the community's wish for conservation, URA has decided to extend its conservation plan beyond the three relics proposed earlier by the villagers and WTSDC.

11. Under URA's conservation plan (at [Annex](#)), the central axis of the village with eight authentic village houses in its path, as well as the overall pattern of pedestrian lanes would be preserved as the core of the village, in addition to preserving the three relics. Around this core area, a conservation village park designed to resurrect the ambience of the village would be constructed. The residential towers to be built would also be pushed outwards towards the northern and southern perimeters as

far as possible. This would mean setting the towers about 40 metres apart, thus leaving at least 60% of the site area open for the conservation park. The residential towers would also be lifted up to provide a vertical clearance of some 15 metres from ground level to achieve “visual relief” for the conservation park.

12. The URA consulted the local villagers and the WTSDC on its conservation plan on 14 and 27 September 2007 respectively. The villagers and the WTSDC generally supported the latest design. The conservation plan was also presented to the Subcommittee on Heritage Conservation of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs on 2 October 2007.

13. The URA formally commenced the Nga Tsin Wai Village project on 2 October 2007.

WANCHAI MARKET

14. The Wanchai Market, which was constructed in 1937, was rated as a Grade III historical building by the AAB in 1990. In 1991, the AAB considered that the Market was not of great historical significance but efforts should be made to salvage useful parts of the building before demolition.

15. In 1991, the then LDC proposed a development scheme to redevelop three sites in the Wan Chai Road/Tai Yuen Street area, which included, among other things, the relocation of the market stalls in the Wanchai Market to a purpose built facility and the demolition and redevelopment of the existing Wanchai Market. The then LDC had entered into a contract with a private developer in 1996 to redevelop the three sites into a new residential development. In 2001, the URA took over the Wan Chai Road/Tai Yuen Street project from the then LDC.

16. The private developer has already completed construction at two of the sites and has launched sales of the flats in these sites which are known as “The Zenith”. The relevant planning approvals have been obtained for redevelopment of the Wanchai Market in the remaining site into a residential block.

17. In response to a letter from the Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) appealing for the preservation of the Wanchai Market, the AAB met in September 2004 and concluded that no Members recommended declaring the Market as a Monument. However, many Members supported the proposal of writing to the developer, appealing to him to consider the community’s view of preserving the Market in whatever way possible. Subsequently, the Chairman of the AAB wrote to the developer accordingly.

18. On 24 September 2007, the HKIA wrote to the AAB again requesting the Board to conduct a reassessment of the current Grade III heritage grading of Wanchai Market and other work necessary for advising the Antiquities Authority for possible declaration of proposed monument for Wanchai Market.

19. In view of community aspirations, the URA has been exploring with the

private developer on feasible options to preserve the Wanchai Market. However, it has to be noted that legally, the URA is obliged to honour the contract which was entered into by the then LDC with the developer in 1996. In considering various options, there is a need to thoroughly examine, among others, the legal implications and contractual obligations of all parties concerned, the financial implications for URA and the technical feasibility of the conservation proposals.

Development Bureau
9 October 2007