

MEMORANDUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD

DISCOVERY OF LONGJIN BRIDGE IN KAI TAK AREA

PURPOSE

To inform Members of the discovery of the remains of Longjin Bridge (龍津橋) and the plan of conducting further archaeological investigations with a view to devising a conservation plan.

BACKGROUND

2. The Longjin Bridge, first constructed between 1873 and 1875, was a landing-pier linking the main gate (east gate) of the Kowloon Walled City and the coast (Photo at Annex A). The stone bridge was originally about 213 metres long and 2 metres wide. Later, a wooden extension of about 83 metres was added in 1892 to its seaward end (Location plan at Annex B), and was then replaced by a concrete extension in 1910.

3. The stone bridge was buried underground during the Kai Tak reclamation in 1924. Segment of the 1910 concrete extension continued to be used by the local steam-ferries. In 1930, it was removed and replaced by a new Government pier, which in turn disappeared when the Japanese reclaimed the fore-shore during the Japanese Occupation. Two stone inscriptions (Annex C) recording the construction of the Bridge were relocated to a nearby small garden but were later destroyed during the Japanese Occupation.

4. At the landward end of the Bridge, there was a pavilion called “Pavilion for Greeting Officials” for greeting new officials sent to man the *yamen* in Kowloon Walled City during the Qing dynasty. The pavilion was demolished to make way for the new Kai Tak residential development in 1930s. The stone tablet inscribed with “龍津 (Longjin)”, probably a remain of the pavilion, is now erected at the back of the Lok Sin Tong Primary School entrance in Kowloon City District (Annex D).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

5. The Kai Tak Airport was relocated to Chek Lap Kok in 1998, offering an opportunity for major development in the Kai Tak area. Under the Comprehensive Feasibility Study for the Revised Scheme of South East Kowloon Development in 2001,

an Archaeological Investigation (AI) including two machine-dug trenches and one hand-dug trench was conducted but no remain of the Longjin Bridge was discovered. A further AI was carried out in 2003 but only the 1924 seawall was identified, which can be regarded as a reference point for refining the likely location of the Longjin Bridge. The AI report in 2003 recommended that further archaeological action would be required for any future development in the Kai Tak Area.

6. In 2004, a Comprehensive Planning and Engineering Review of South East Kowloon Development, including formulating a Preliminary Outline Development Plan and conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Kai Tak area, was arranged. The EIA comprised, among other things, an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) at the area which was conducted by a qualified archaeologist commissioned by the project proponent.

7. On 5 April 2008, AMO was informed of the discovery of the remains of Longjin Bridge in a test trench. Stone planks of the Bridge were recovered (Annex E). Subsequent extension of the test trench (areas in red on the plan at Annex F) unearthed Bridge remains of about 80m long.

8. The report of the AIA is being prepared by the EIA consultant, which will form part of the EIA report for public inspection. The consultant has advised AMO that the report would recommend a further archaeological investigation to determine the extent of the Bridge remains in particular the southern segment although the northern segment as shown at Annex F might have been damaged by the former Kai Tak Airport.

WAY FORWARD

9. In view of the influx of underground water into the test trench, the excavated area will be backfilled after proper field recording for the sake of site safety and the Bridge's structural stability. Further archaeological investigation under AMO's monitoring will commence in late 2008 during the dry season. Subject to further archaeological findings, a conservation plan for the remains of Longjin Bridge will be formulated.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
June 2008

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Annex A - Photo showing the Longjin Bridge in c.1910**Annex B - Location plan showing the Longjin Bridge in 1903****Annex C - Two stone inscriptions recording the construction of the Longjin Bridge**

摘自:《九龍城區風物志》，167 頁，香港：九龍城區議會，2005 年。

Extracted from *Heritage of Kowloon City District* [*Jiulongcheng Qu feng wu zhi*], Hong Kong: Kowloon City District Council, 2005, P 167.

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Annex D - Photos showing the front view of Pavilion and the Longjin inscription at the back of Lok Sin Tong Primary School entrance**Annex E - Photo showing the stone planks and pier of Longjin Bridge in May 2008****Annex F - Location of Test Trench (area in green), extension of test trench (areas in red) and predicted alignment of the Longjin Bridge (blue line)**