

**For discussion  
on 9 September 2009**

**BOARD PAPER  
AAB/23/2009-10**

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

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION  
ON 1,444 HISTORIC BUILDINGS ASSESSMENT**

**PURPOSE**

To report to Members on the outcome of the public consultation exercise regarding the assessment results of the 1,444 historic buildings in Hong Kong, and to seek Members' views on how to handle the submissions received.

**BACKGROUND**

2. The results of the assessment, together with the proposed grading of the 1,444 buildings in Hong Kong which may have heritage value, were announced by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) on 19 March 2009. This was followed by a four-month public consultation until 31 July 2009. During the consultation period, the public was invited by the AAB to give views on the proposed grading for the 1,444 buildings and to provide additional information as appropriate. The AAB also met members of 17 District Councils and four professional bodies, namely, the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, the Hong Kong Institute of Planners and the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, to listen to their views. Up to 31 August 2009, the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) has received about 380 submissions from the public on the assessment results. A breakdown is provided below:

Public	300 (159 written; 141 verbal )
Press	20 (19 written; 1 verbal )
District Councils	28 (19 written; 9 verbal )
Government Departments	41 (30 written; 11 verbal )
<b>Total</b>	<b>389 (227 written; 162 verbal)</b>

## RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3. Of the 1,444 buildings, the proposed gradings for 31 of them have been queried by members of the public, individual organisations and owners of the buildings. In particular, building owners were concerned about the implications of the proposed grading on their property and development rights. Some owners further requested that their buildings be delisted from the list. A list of these 31 buildings/items is set out at **Annex A**.

4. Separately, we have received suggestions, mainly from members of the public, to upgrade the gradings for 83 buildings (at **Annex B**) and to include 92 new buildings/items in the list (at **Annex C**). The new items suggested include village houses, churches and military structures; and the new categories proposed include ancient trails, stone retaining walls with old trees and bus terminuses which have not been considered for grading purpose in the past.

5. AMO also received three requests to divide or combine buildings within the same compounds for re-assessment (**Annex D**).

## WAY FORWARD

6. Following the public consultation exercise, we have sent notification letters to individual owners of all privately-owned historic buildings proposed to be accorded Grade 1 to 3 status. Owners concerned may give their views and provide additional information on their buildings by 30 September 2009. We will report any feedback received to Members in due course.

7. Many of the submissions require extensive follow-up actions. To ascertain the validity of the claims for upgrading or delisting (114 cases at Annexes A and B) as well as the inclusion of new categories/items in the exercise (92 cases at Annex C), tremendous efforts will be required to conduct research, site inspection and photographic recording. The views and new information provided in the submissions would also need to be carefully studied/ verified and be conveyed to the Expert Panel and AAB for in-depth deliberation. All these will have to be done before the completion of the grading exercise scheduled for the end of 2009.

8. Given the large number of buildings involved and the tight schedule, the following way forward is proposed:

- Step 1: (i) to proceed with the grading of the items where no comment have been received after the deadline for submission of further information/views (30 September 2009). The Board will proceed

with the confirmation of the gradings for those items;

(ii) to deal with the three items at Annex D (i.e. items to be combined/divided). This group of buildings is relatively small in number and straightforward. Consultation with the Expert Panel will be arranged immediately. We will then report the findings and recommendations to the Board.

Step 2: (i) to handle the 114 items at Annexes A and B (i.e. items with queries or requests for delisting/upgrading). The views and information received will be studied and verified before a submission is made to the Expert Panel and the Board. Discussions with the owners may also be required in the process. In fact, the Commissioner for Heritage's Office and the AMO have started dialogues with owners of some of the buildings to clear their doubts on the implications of gradings. These will be completed by the end of 2009.

Step 3: (i) to proceed to consider the 92 items at Annex C (i.e. new items or categories). Given the variety of new items/categories proposed, we will need to conduct desk-top research, site inspections and detailed recording. In view of the time and manpower constraints, it is proposed that these new items be considered in a separate exercise after conclusion of the assessment of the current 1,444 historic buildings.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

9. Members' views are sought on the proposed way forward.

Antiquities and Monuments Office  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department  
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