

**For Discussion
on 22 February 2011**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/4/2011-12**

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

**DECLARATION OF THE FORTIFIED STRUCTURE
AT NO. 55 HA PAK NAI, YUEN LONG AS A MONUMENT**

PURPOSE

To seek Members' advice on the proposal to declare the fortified structure (碉堡) at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai, Yuen Long as a monument under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (the Ordinance).

HERITAGE VALUE

2. The fortified structure at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai in Yuen Long, built around 1910, is the only remaining historic building in Hong Kong with solid evidence of having direct connection with the revolutionary movement under the leadership of Dr. SUN Yat-sen (SUN Yixian, 孫逸仙)(1866-1925) and his compatriots. The movement led to the rise of modern China and marked a turning point in Chinese history. As a testimony to Hong Kong's role in the revolutionary movement, the fortified structure has high historical significance.

3. With the good transportation connections of Hong Kong with other places in the world, during the early decades of the 20th century the revolutionaries made use of Hong Kong as a place to form political partnerships, recruit members and raise funds, and as a haven for disbanded revolutionary members escaping from Manchu vengeance.

4. Soon after the foundation of Hsing Chung Hui (Xing Zhong Hui) (興中會) (literally "Revive China Society") in Hawaii in 1894, Dr. SUN Yat-sen established

the Hong Kong headquarters of Hsing Chung Hui in 1895 under the cover of a commercial firm, known as Kuen Hang Hong (Qian Heng Hang (乾亨行), at 13 Staunton Street in Central. Apart from several places set up in Central as bases for the revolutionary activities, Castle Peak Farm (青山農場) in Tuen Mun was also used by the revolutionaries for meetings as well as hiding and testing firearms between 1901 and 1911.

5. Another place of refuge for the revolutionaries under the cover of a rice mill and sugar refinery was set up around 1910 at Leung Tseuk Hang Hau, Nim Wan (稔灣良雀坑口) (i.e. the present Ha Pak Nai in Yuen Long) after the Mutiny of the New Army in Guangzhou (廣州新軍之役). With its advantageous location overlooking Deep Bay and Shenzhen, the site became another base of operation of the revolutionary movement, in addition to Castle Peak Farm in Tuen Mun. A fortified structure was also built in the site to keep watch on the area across Deep Bay which was then under the administration of the Qing authority. With the intelligence obtained from the surveillance at the fortified structure, the revolutionaries could swiftly flee to the other revolutionary bases if the base in Ha Pak Nai was in danger of being raided.

6. The fortified structure was built by Mr. TANG Yam-nam (DENG Yinnan, 鄧蔭南)(1846-1923), a core member of Hsing Chung Hui¹. TANG originated from Kaiping of Guangdong Province (廣東開平) and once operated farms and sugar plantations in Hawaii. He was a friend of SUN Mei (孫眉)(1845-1915), the elder brother of Dr. SUN Yat-sen. He joined Hsing Chung Hui in Hawaii in 1894 upon its establishment. TANG came to Hong Kong in 1895 to pursue revolutionary activities. The fortified structure he built in Ha Pak Nai is the only remaining building which bears witness to the revolutionary activities in the area in the early 20th century.

7. The fortified structure in Ha Pak Nai is a two-storey rectangular structure built of grey bricks. Architecturally, it is essentially a functional structure for surveillance. There is only a very limited number of this type of fortified structures left in Hong Kong. The fortified structure in Ha Pak Nai is a unique and rare example with its exceptional historical value. It also has high social value as the Hong Kong community shows an increasing interest in local history and the role of Hong Kong in Chinese history, which could be symbolised by this valuable piece of built heritage. An

¹ According to the publication on the research on the activities of Dr. SUN Yat-sen in Hong Kong by Professor LO Hsiang-lin (羅香林教授) (1905-1978). Professor LO is a widely renowned historian in China and the Former Head of the Chinese Department of the University of Hong Kong.

appraisal on the heritage, architectural and social value of the fortified structure is at **Annex A**. A location plan and photographs of the fortified structure is at **Annex B** and **Annex C** respectively. A list of other remaining historic buildings and structures in connection with Dr. SUN Yat-sen and the revolutionaries in Hong Kong recorded by AMO is at **Annex D**.

GRADING AND DECLARATION

8. The fortified structure at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai was accorded a Grade 1 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) at its meeting on 4 February 2010. At the meeting, some members highlighted the outstanding heritage value of the structure and suggested that it should be given broad recognition by the community.

9. At its meeting on 26 November 2008, AAB endorsed the establishment of a formal relationship between the statutory monument declaration system and the administrative grading system for historic buildings. Under the endorsed arrangements, Grade 1 buildings, defined as “building of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible”, will serve as a pool of highly valuable heriage buildings for consideration by the Antiquities Authority as to whether some of these may have reached the “high threshold” of monuments for the statutory protection under the Ordinance.

10. The Antiquities and Monuments Office considered that with its significant heritage value as explained in paragraphs 2-7 above, the fortified structure at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai being a Grade 1 historic structure, has reached the “high threshold” to be declared as a monument and protected permanently under the Ordinance.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are requested to advise on whether the fortified structure at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai should be declared as a monument under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. The proposed boundary of the declaration is shown in **Annex E**.

NEXT STEP

12. If Members support the proposal to declare the fortified structure as a monument, we shall take this forward in accordance with the provisions of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
February 2011

Ref: LCS AM 22/3
LCS AM 52/1/16