

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

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE FORMER POLICE MARRIED
QUARTERS SITE ON HOLLYWOOD ROAD
INTO A CREATIVE INDUSTRIES LANDMARK**

PURPOSE

To present to Members the preliminary findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the transformation of the Former Police Married Quarters (PMQ) Site on Hollywood Road into a creative industries landmark.

HIA MECHANISM

2. The PMQ HIA Studies were conducted in accordance with the HIA Mechanism introduced by the Development Bureau (DEVB) vide Technical Circular (Works) No. 6/2009. Implemented from 1 January 2008, the HIA mechanism for capital works projects emphasizes that every effort should be made to avoid or minimize adverse impact by the proposed work arising from Government's capital works projects on "heritage sites"¹. In the submission to the Public Works Subcommittee of the Legislative Council, the works agent is required to include a "Heritage Implications" paragraph to be cleared by the AMO, stating clearly whether the project will affect any "heritage sites" and if affirmative, what mitigation measures will be taken and whether the public are in support of the proposed measures in the public engagement process.

¹ "Heritage sites" include:

- (i) all declared monuments;
- (ii) all proposed monuments;
- (iii) all sites and buildings graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board;
- (iv) all recorded sites of archaeological interest; and
- (v) Government historic sites identified by AMO.

BACKGROUND

The Site

3. The PMQ Site, also known as Former Central School Site, is located at 35, Aberdeen Street in Central. The Site was the home of the Central School – the first government school which was originally established in 1862 at Gough Street and subsequently moved to the PMQ Site in 1889. The Central School buildings were severely damaged during the Second World War, and were later demolished in 1948 to give way to the development of the Police Married Quarters now occupying the PMQ Site. These quarters, which were the first police married quarters to provide accommodation for married junior police officers, including Chinese police officers, were opened in 1951 and became vacant in 2000.

4. The significance of the PMQ Site relates primarily to its history associated with the Former Central School and the Police Married Quarters. In 2007, AMO conducted an archaeological investigation at the PMQ Site to record some of the remains of the Former Central School and to ascertain the archaeological potential of the Site. After the investigation and in accordance with the prevailing mechanism for protecting archaeological and historic heritage, the Former Central School Site was listed as a Site of Archaeological Interest by AMO while the Former Police Married Quarters buildings were accorded a Grade 3 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board at its meeting held on 10 November 2010.

The Project

5. The revitalisation project for the PMQ Site is one of the projects under the “Conserving Central” initiative announced in the Chief Executive’s 2009-10 Policy Address. On 19 March 2010, DEVB and the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau invited proposals from non-profit making organizations for the conservation and revitalisation of the Site into a Creative Industries Landmark. Following a competitive selection process, and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Revitalisation of Historical Buildings, the Secretary for Development granted approval-in-principle for the proposal submitted by the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation Limited, Hong Kong Design Centre, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Vocational Training Council’s Hong Kong Design Institute, to transform the PMQ Site into a creative industries landmark named “PMQ” (原創坊).

6. The selected proposal of “PMQ” (原創坊) aims to conserve the heritage site, transform it into a creative industries landmark and provide landscaped open space for the neighbourhood. The foundation remains of the former Central School as well as the history of the PMQ Site will be displayed in the underground interpretation area for public appreciation.

7. The Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will carry out the revitalisation works under the Public Works Programme. The Commissioner for Heritage’s Office of DEVB and ArchSD are working closely with the operator to finalise the project design and seek funding approval from the Legislative Council within the 2010-11 legislative session. Subject to funding approval, the project aims to commence in early 2012 and the government works are expected to be completed by end of 2013.

THE HIA

8. Given the heritage significance of the Former Central School Site (a Site of Archaeological Interest) and the Former Police Married Quarters (Grade 3 status), AMO confirmed that an HIA comprising an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) and a Built Heritage Impact Assessment (BHIA) was required for the conservation and revitalization project of the PMQ Site. ArchSD has therefore engaged a heritage consultant to conduct an HIA with a view to examining to what extent the proposed works would affect the historic buildings and underground remains and if adverse impact is unavoidable, devising mitigation measures based on AMO’s Conservation Guidelines contained in the Resource Kit of the Invitation For Proposals (IFP).

9. On behalf of ArchSD, the heritage consultant, Centre for Architectural Heritage Research of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, has submitted the HIA to AMO for consideration and AMO has subsequently commented on the report findings. A copy of the HIA report is provided in the compact-disc attached and its main points are set out at **Annex A**.

10. In the proposal, all the character defining elements are preserved in-situ. The features of the Former Central School surrounding the 4 plateaux will be preserved. The two Former Police Married Quarters buildings, Block A and Block B, as well as the Junior Police Call Clubhouse (JPC Building) will be retained and renovated for the new use. The major conversion works, which are essential to

provide sufficient facilities for the operation of the future creative industries landmark, includes the addition of an “I-Cube” to provide an elevated multi-function hall for creative events or events related to the creative industries and a glass canopy above the courtyard to form a large semi-covered outdoor space for holding events and public enjoyment. The top floor of Block B will be modified to accommodate a high headroom roof-top restaurant while the facade of Block B will be retained. An Underground Interpretation Area (UIA) will be constructed beneath the courtyard to display the remnants of the Former Central School. AMO considers these works agreeable and is satisfied with the recommended mitigation measures. The comments of AMO on the HIA report are provided at **Annex B**.

11. Representatives from ArchSD and their heritage consultant, Centre for Architectural Heritage Research of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, will present their works proposal to Members at the meeting. ArchSD and their consultant will further refine the works proposal, in the light of Members’ comments.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to offer their comments and advice on the HIA.

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