

**For discussion  
on 15 June 2011**

**BOARD PAPER  
AAB/15/2011-12**

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

**REAFFIRMATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION TO DECLARE  
KING'S COLLEGE AS A MONUMENT**

**PURPOSE**

To seek Members' reaffirmation of the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB)'s recommendation to declare King's College at 63A Bonham Road, Hong Kong as a monument under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap. 53).

**HERITAGE VALUE**

2. King's College at No. 63A Bonham Road, built in 1923-1926, is one of the six surviving pre-war government school buildings in Hong Kong. The college was formerly known as Saiyingpun School (西營盤學校), which was established by the Government on Third Street in 1879 and later moved to Pokfulam Road in 1891.

3. To cope with the growing demand, Saiyingpun School decided to move to new premises on Bonham Road. The construction of the Bonham campus commenced in 1923 and was completed in 1926. In September 1926, Saiyingpun School moved to the new campus and was renamed as King's College. The *Hongkong Administrative Report* of 1926 described King's College as "one of the finest and most modern of school buildings".

4. It was not until 1928 that King's College announced its official opening because the school building was requisitioned by the Military Authorities as the quarters and hospital for the British Shanghai Defence Force in 1927. King's College was officially opened by the then Governor Sir Cecil Clementi on 5 March 1928.

5. With the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the King's College was used as a first aid station. During the Japanese Occupation (1941-45), the school was used as a military mule and horse stable for the Japanese Army. The school building was badly damaged during the Japanese Occupation. After the refurbishment, the school was re-opened in 1950 as a bi-sessional primary school and was restored as a morning secondary school in the next year.

6. The red-brick school building in Neo-classical style was originally built around the three sides of a square in 1926 and the whole building comprised a North Wing, a South Wing and an East Wing with a bell tower (now removed) above the colonnaded curved entrance porch at the junction of Bonham Road and Western Street. The notable Neo-classical style features such as arched colonnades, colonnaded verandahs, rusticated quoins, moulded cornices and classical stone surrounds to the windows are found in the King's College and make it an interesting piece of built heritage. The red-brick school building in Neo-classical style is a rare piece school architecture of its kind in Hong Kong.

7. According to the *Hongkong Administrative Report* of 1926, at the time of the establishment of King's College in 1926, there were 19 Government schools in Hong Kong providing primary and secondary education for more than 3 500 pupils in Hong Kong. Queen's College and King's College for Chinese, Belilios Public School for Chinese girls, Kowloon Junior School, Victoria School and Quarry Bay School for children of British parentage are some examples of the Government schools at that time. With the rapid development of the city, most of the premier government school buildings were either demolished or ceased to operate. At present, only six pre-war Government school buildings survive, namely the Former Kowloon British School (前九龍英童學校) (built in 1900-1902), the Former Peak School (前山頂學校) (built in 1915), the Former Quarry Bay School (前鰂魚涌學校) (built in 1926), King's College (built in 1926), Cheung Chau Government Secondary School (長洲官立中學) (built in 1928) and King George V School (英皇佐治五世學校) (built in 1936). King's College is now the oldest surviving pre-war Government school building which still serves its original usage.

8. King's College's social value lies in its contribution to the community and education as well as the historical/ famous figures associated with it. With its long history, many community leaders, such as Jin Yingxi (金應熙) (1919-1991), Lau Din-cheuk (劉殿爵) (1921-2010), Sir Harry Fang Sin-yang (方心讓) (1923–2009), Dr. Simon Li Fook-sean (李福善), the Hon Dr. Leung Chun-ying (梁振英), are alumni of the College. The school building served as a community venue due to the lack of meeting places in Hong Kong in the 1960s. It was constantly reserved for activities by various organisations, such as the Government Clerical Service, the Auxiliary Medical Services, the Police Reserve, the Civil Aid Services and St. John Ambulance Division of the Old Boys' Association.

9. Due to its prominent position and high reputation, King's College is a focal point in the area. A heritage appraisal and photographs of King's College are at **Annex A** and **Annex B**.

## **GRADING AND MONUMENT DECLARATION**

10. In recognition of the historical and architectural values of the King's College, AAB accorded a Grade 2 status to King's College in 1992. On 3 June 2004, AAB recommended declaring King's College as a monument in view of its historical and architectural merits.

11. The previous grading of King's College was reviewed by AAB as part of the recent assessment exercise of 1 444 historic buildings based on the updated assessment criteria. After review by the Expert Panel, King's College was proposed to be given a Grade 1 status, which was subsequently endorsed by AAB at its meetings on 18 December 2009.

12. At its meeting of 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 "buildings of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible", will serve as a pool of highly valuable heritage buildings and for consideration by the Antiquities Authority as to whether some of these may have reached the "high

threshold” of monuments for statutory protection under the Ordinance.

13. The Antiquities and Monuments Office considered that with its significant heritage value as explained in paragraphs 2 to 9 above, King’s College has reached the “high threshold” to be declared as a monument and protected permanently under the Ordinance.

### **ADVICE SOUGHT**

14. Members are requested to reaffirm AAB’s previous recommendation made in 2004 for declaration of King’s College as a monument under section 3(1) of the Ordinance. The proposed boundary of the declaration is at **Annex C**.

### **NEXT STEP**

15. If Members support the proposal to declare King’s College as a monument, we shall take this forward in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

Antiquities and Monuments Office  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department  
June 2011

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