

**For information
on 14 June 2012**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/40/2011-12**

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

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
ON THE FORMER CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES
(MAIN WING AND EAST WING) IN CENTRAL**

PURPOSE

This paper presents to Members the findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) on the Former Central Government Offices (CGO) (Main Wing and East Wing) in Central.

HIA MECHANISM

2. The HIA on the Former CGO (Main Wing and East Wing) was 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 emphasises that every effort should be made to avoid or minimise adverse impact by the proposed works 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 Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), stating clearly whether the project will affect any "heritage sites" and if in the 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 (AAB);
- (iv) all recorded sites of archaeological interest; and
- (v) Government historic sites identified by the AMO.

THE PROJECT

3. The Former CGO comprising the Main Wing, East Wing and West Wing is a new item suggested by the public for grading. The AMO commissioned the Purcell Miller Tritton LLP (PMT) to conduct a historic and architectural appraisal on the Former CGO in 2009. The PMT study concluded that the Main Wing and East Wing are of historical and architectural merit and should be retained. As regards the grading of the Former CGO, it will be considered by the Antiquities Advisory Board at its meeting on 14 June 2012 before AMO conducts a public consultation on the proposed grading. The project involves alteration and conversion of the Main Wing and East Wing into offices of the Department of Justice.

The HIA

4. In the light of the heritage value of the Main Wing and East Wing as revealed by the PMT study, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), which is the works agent of the project, has engaged a heritage consultant to conduct an HIA. The HIA aims to examine to what extent the proposed works would affect the historic buildings and devising mitigation measures if adverse impact is unavoidable.

5. ArchSD has submitted an HIA report to AMO for consideration. Given that all key character defining elements of the Main Wing and East Wing of the Former CGO will be preserved and new additions and alterations will be kept to the minimum and reversible to the original building fabric, AMO considers the works proposal agreeable and is satisfied with the recommended mitigation measures. Main points of the HIA report are set out at **Annex A** and AMO's comments on the report are set out at **Annex B**. Soft copy of the full HIA report is attached in CD format at **Annex C**.

6. Representatives from ArchSD and their heritage consultant will present the works proposal at the meeting and their consultant will further refine the proposal in the light of Members' comments.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to offer comments and advice on the findings of the HIA.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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