

**For Discussion
on 17 April 2013**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/8/2013-14**

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

**DECLARATION OF FAT TAT TONG
AT HA WO HANG, SHA TAU KOK AS A MONUMENT**

PURPOSE

To seek Members' advice on the proposal to declare Fat Tat Tong (發達堂) at Nos. 1-5 Ha Wo Hang (下禾坑), Sha Tau Kok, New Territories as a monument under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap. 53).

HERITAGE VALUE

2. Fat Tat Tong, literally meaning a mansion of wealth, is not only a testimony of the history of a renowned Hakka family in the area, but also an outstanding residential building in Sha Tau Kok in terms of its historic environmental setting, scale and blending of Chinese and Western architectural elements. It is a typical example of the residences of eclectic style popular with the returned overseas Chinese in the early 20th century in the territory.

3. Fat Tat Tong was built in 1933 at Ha Wo Hang by Li To Wan Tso (李道環祖), a trustee formed by the four sons of Li To-wan (李道環). Li To-wan was a descendant of the Li clan of Wo Hang (禾坑). Like many young adults of Sha Tau Kok going abroad to make a livelihood in the late 19th century, Li went to Vietnam to earn a living at his early age. He and his family returned to Ha Wo Hang with a modest fortune.

4. It is worth mentioning that Li To-wan's eldest son, Li Kwan-lan (李鈞蘭), was the manager of Li To Wan Tso when Fat Tat Tong was built in 1933 according to the land records. Li Kwan-lan was active in local affairs of Sha Tau Kok. He was a village representative of Wo Hang in the 1920s and contributed to the formation of the Committee for the Keeping of the People's Property in the Leased Territory of Kowloon (九龍租界維持民產委員會) in 1924. The Committee was regarded as the predecessor of Heung Yee Kuk (鄉議局), which is an advisory body to the Government on New Territories affairs founded in 1926. Besides, Li was appointed one of the three "Tsz Yi" (諮議) of Sha Tau Kok District in 1936 by the Governor to give advice on matters of local affairs and disputes. The appointment of Tsz Yi was regarded as an honorary offer of the Governor which reflected Li Kwan-lan as an influential community leader of Sha Tau Kok at the time.

5. Fat Tat Tong shared the same historic fung-shui settings of Wo Hang valley with other traditional village houses in Ha Wo Hang. Ha Wo Hang village is surrounded by a range of hills. All the houses including Fat Tat Tong face towards Hung Fa Ling (紅花嶺) with a river running through the valley in front. This desirable environmental landscape still remains intact today.

6. Fat Tat Tong is a two-storey residence with a long pitched Hakka-style tiled roof and fronted by a flat-roofed verandah. It exemplifies the eclectic building style popularly adopted in the residences built by the returned overseas Chinese, in particular Hakkas, in the early 20th century. Traditional green brick and timber as well as modern reinforced concrete are used for the construction. The front of the residence is most distinctive and is composed of colonnaded verandahs at the two floor levels. An ornamental parapet wall featuring a "rolling cloud" pediment as well as ball and urn-shaped finials bound the flat roof over the upper floor verandah. Chinese-style sliding doors (趟攏門) constructed of metal at all front entrances and rows of windows with metal hoods at the ground floor level are used to enhance the security of the building.

7. Nowadays, Fat Tat Tong still serves as a residence for the descendants of Li Towan. Apart from Fat Tat Tong, there are still other old buildings and structures built by the Li clan in the area such as a declared monument namely Kang Yung Shu Uk (鏡蓉書屋), depicting the historical development of a

Hakka clan settlement in Hong Kong. A heritage appraisal and photographs of Fat Tat Tong are at **Annexes A and B** respectively.

GRADING AND DECLARATION

8. In recognition of the heritage value of Fat Tat Tong, the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) confirmed Fat Tat Tong as a Grade 1 building on 10 November 2010 in the recent assessment exercise of 1,444 historic buildings.

9. At its meeting on 26 November 2008, the 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 heritage 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 (AMO) considers that with the significant heritage values as explained in paragraphs 2 to 7 above, Fat Tat Tong has reached the “high threshold” to be declared as a monument and protected permanently under the Ordinance. Consent to the declaration proposal has been obtained from the owners of Fat Tat Tong.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. In accordance with section 3(1) of the Ordinance, the Antiquities Authority (i.e. Secretary for Development) may, after consultation with the AAB and with the approval of the Chief Executive, by notice in the Gazette, declare any historic building to be a monument. Members’ advice on whether Fat Tat Tong at Nos. 1-5 Ha Wo Hang, Sha Tau Kok, New Territories should be declared as a monument is therefore sought under section 3(1) of the Ordinance. The proposed boundary of the declaration is shown in **Annex C**.

NEXT STEP

12. If Members support the proposal to declare Fat Tat Tong as a monument, the AMO will take this forward in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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