

**For discussion
on 3 March 2016**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/22/2015-16**

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**UPDATING OF PRACTICE NOTE AND
PRACTICE GUIDEBOOK ON
CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the progress in implementing the Board's recommendations in relation to the alteration and addition works for the adaptive re-use of privately-owned historic buildings under the policy review on the conservation of built heritage ("Policy Review").

BACKGROUND

2. In its report released in January 2015 following the completion of the Policy Review, the Board recommends the Government to, amongst other things, review the relevant Practice Note(s) and Practice Guidebook on the conservation of historic buildings with a view to encouraging and facilitating private owners to preserve and adaptively re-use their historic buildings. These measures however should not jeopardise building safety and health standards.

3. As per the reporting to the Board in September 2015 (vide Board Paper AAB/17/2015-16), the Buildings Department ("BD") would update the "Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers on Conservation of Historic Buildings" (APP-69) (the "Practice Note") and the "Practice Guidebook for Adaptive Re-use of and Alteration and Addition Works to Heritage Buildings 2012" (the "Practice Guidebook") by phases with a view to providing clearer and more concrete guidelines and examples of successful cases to the building practitioners and private owners of historic buildings to encourage and facilitate

their adaptive re-use.

PROGRESS

The Practice Note

4. After consultation with stakeholders via the established mechanism for revising the Practice Note including the Buildings Sub-committee of the Land and Development Advisory Committee as well as the Technical Committee on Building Safety and Health Requirements for Historic Buildings under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), the Practice Note has been revised and subsequently promulgated in end January 2016 (see **Annex**).

5. The following new elements have been incorporated in the Practice Note to enhance building practitioners' understanding on the flexibility and approach to deal with cases where there are constraints in meeting the standards of prescriptive requirements, which are frequently encountered in the conservation and adaptive re-use of historic buildings:

- (a) reference to the Practice Guidebook on resolving common problems that may be encountered in complying with the prescriptive requirements; and
- (b) a new appendix which provides a checklist for Authorized Persons' reference in giving justifications and information to the Building Authority for application for some typical modifications of, or exemption from, the relevant prescriptive requirements.

The Practice Guidebook

6. The Practice Guidebook will be updated by phases to showcase to building practitioners and private owners of historic buildings the myriad practical advice to common problems that may be encountered in complying with the current building safety and health requirements while taking due care of the objective of heritage conservation. For instance, more case studies of recently completed projects under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through

Partnership Scheme and the details of their successful applications for modifications of, or exemption from, the relevant prescriptive requirements will be included in the Practice Guidebook. Subject to consultation with stakeholders under the established mechanism, BD targets to include the first batch of case references and updates in the Practice Guidebook for promulgation by mid-2016 and the second batch of case references by the end of the year.

Promulgation of the updated Practice Note and Practice Guidebook

7. Seminars will be arranged with stakeholders to promulgate the contents of the revised Practice Note and Practice Guidebook.

ADVICE SOUGHT

8. Members are invited to note the progress in reviewing and updating the Practice Note and Practice Guidebook, and offer views.

Buildings Department
March 2016
