

For discussion
on 13 June 2019

BOARD PAPER
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**MEMORANDUM FOR THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**DECLARATION OF ONE ROCK CARVING AND
TWO HISTORIC BUILDINGS AS MONUMENTS**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' advice on the proposal to declare the following three items as monuments under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (the "Ordinance"):

- (a) The rock carving at Cape Collinson (黑角頭石刻) in Eastern District;
- (b) Yuk Hui Temple (玉虛宮) on Lung On Street, Wan Chai; and
- (c) Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall (味峰侯公祠) at Kam Tsin, Sheung Shui.

HERITAGE VALUE

Rock Carving at Cape Collinson

2. The rock carving at Cape Collinson in Eastern District is a newly discovered rock carving reported to the Antiquities and Monuments Office ("AMO") in October 2018 by a member of the public. It is located on a cliff at Cape Collinson, about 11 m above sea level facing northeast to the passage of Fat Tong Mun (佛堂門).

3. The rock carving measures about 160 cm in height and 260 cm in width, a size similar to the rock carving on Tung Lung Chau (東龍洲), the largest rock carving found in Hong Kong. Its patterns, carved on a fairly flat weathered surface of a natural outcrop composing of geometric and curvy designs, closely resemble those on Bronze Age artefacts and the other eight rock carvings in Hong Kong, in particular the rock carvings at Big Wave Bay (大浪灣) and Tung

Lung Chau which are in close proximity. The other eight rock carvings had already been declared as monuments from 1970s to 1980s.

4. The rock carving at Cape Collinson is generally in good condition except for the lower left corner which has a natural crack. As the rock carving is located in a relatively inaccessible point on a cliff, suitable warning to visitors has been put up near the site.

Yuk Hui Temple

5. Yuk Hui Temple, also known as Pak Tai Temple (北帝廟), was built by local residents of Wan Chai for the worship of Pak Tai (北帝), a deity representing the stars of the north and a deity of the sea. The temple serves as an important historic landmark of the early development of Wan Chai and an icon of the identity of the local community.

6. The temple consists of the central main building and two side buildings, which are typical vernacular buildings of Qing period constructed of grey bricks, granite and timber. The main building was built in the first year of the Tongzhi (同治) reign (1862) of the Qing dynasty, and completed in 1863. The characters “玉虛宮” inscribed on the granite architrave of the main entrance were written by Zhang Yutang (張玉堂), the then Commodore of the Dapeng Brigade (大鵬協副將) stationed at Kowloon Walled City (九龍寨城). The building attached to the temple on the left was rebuilt in 1907, which was originally a communal hall (公所). The building on the right was a school (書院).

7. Outstanding architectural features are concentrated in the main building which is a two-hall-three-bay building with a courtyard covered by a pavilion between the two halls. The entrance porch is supported by granite and timber structures. Exquisite historic Shiwan (石灣) ceramic sculptures, including figurines portraying Chinese folk stories, can be found on the main ridge and gable corner walls (墀頭) of the entrance hall. A large bronze statue of Pak Tai, which bears an inscription marking the 31st year of the Wanli (萬曆) reign (1603) of the Ming dynasty, is enshrined in the covered courtyard. It is noteworthy that the completion year of the temple was inscribed on the ridge purlin of the entrance hall, which is rarely seen in the traditional Chinese buildings in Hong Kong.

Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall

8. Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall was built at around the late 18th century in Kam Tsin (金錢), Sheung Shui, to commemorate Hau Jui-fei (侯聚裴), alias Hau Mei-fung (侯味峰) (1634-1688), a student of the Imperial Academy (國學生), by his great grandson Hau Cheuk-wan (侯倬雲) who obtained the degree of *juren* (舉人) in the 53rd year of the Qianlong (乾隆) reign (1788) of the Qing dynasty. The ancestral hall represented the social and economic status of the Mei-fung branch of the Hau clan. Since its establishment, it has been mainly used as family ancestral hall (家祠) for worshipping ancestors and dealing with matters concerning the Mei-fung branch.

9. The ancestral hall is a Qing vernacular two-hall-three-bay building with an internal courtyard flanked by two side chambers with humpbacked roofs. Structurally, the stone columns and load-bearing grey brick walls with granite cornerstones support the pitched and flush gable roofs. The rear hall is fronted by a porch with humpbacked roof, which is rarely seen in the traditional Chinese buildings in Hong Kong. The decorative plastered relief and sculptures on the main ridges and wall friezes are exquisite. Ornate wood carvings of auspicious animals, flowers, geometric patterns and Chinese folk stories can be found at the timber structures and the ancestral shrine.

10. The rock carving at Cape Collinson is situated on government land whereas Yuk Hui Temple and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall are situated on private lots under the ownership of Secretary for Home Affairs Incorporated and Hau Mi Fung Tso respectively. The appraisals and photographs of the three items are at **Annexes A to F**.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Rock Carving at Cape Collinson

11. To ascertain the authenticity and assess the heritage value of the rock carving, AMO has invited archaeologists and geologists to inspect the rock carving, apart from the inspections conducted by AMO. The professionals unanimously agreed that the rock carving shares similar significant heritage value as the other eight rock carvings already declared as monuments and supported the protection of the rock carving under the Ordinance.

Yuk Hui Temple and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall

12. In recognition of the heritage value of Yuk Hui Temple in Wan Chai and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall in Sheung Shui, the Board accorded Grade 1 status to them on 17 May 2010 and 10 November 2010 respectively.

13. At the meeting on 26 November 2008, the Board endorsed the establishment of formal relationship between the statutory monument declaration system and the administrative grading system for historic buildings. Under the endorsed arrangement, Grade 1 buildings, defined as “buildings of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible”, will be included in a pool of highly valuable heritage buildings for consideration by the Antiquities Authority (i.e. the Secretary for Development) as to whether some of these may have reached the “high threshold” of monuments for statutory protection under the Ordinance.

DECLARATION

14. The three historic items, i.e. the rock carving at Cape Collinson, Yuk Hui Temple and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall, as set out in paragraphs 2 to 10 above, have significant archaeological or heritage value. They have reached the “high threshold” to be declared as monuments for permanent protection under the Ordinance. Consent for the proposed declaration has been obtained from the respective owners or management department.

ADVICE SOUGHT

15. In accordance with section 3(1) of the Ordinance, the Antiquities Authority may, after consultation with the Board and with the approval of the Chief Executive, by notice in the Gazette, declare any archaeological site or historic building which the Authority considers to be of public interest by reason of its historical, archaeological or palaeontological significance to be a monument. Members’ advice on whether the rock carving at Cape Collinson, Yuk Hui Temple and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall should be declared as monuments is, therefore, sought. The intended monument boundaries of the declaration are shown at **Annex G**.

NEXT STEP

16. Subject to Members' endorsement of the proposal to declare the rock carving at Cape Collinson, Yuk Hui Temple and Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall as monuments, AMO will take the matter forward in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

Antiquities and Monuments Office

June 2019

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