

**For discussion
on 20 November 2014**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/45/2013-14**

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES DISCOVERED AT TO KWA WAN
STATION OF THE SHATIN TO CENTRAL LINK (SCL) AND
THEIR PROPOSED PRELIMINARY CONSERVATION AND
INTERPRETATION PLANS**

PURPOSE

All the fieldwork for the archaeological watching brief (AWB)¹ at the works site of the To Kwa Wan Station of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) was substantially completed at the end of September 2014. This paper serves to give Members a comprehensive account of the discoveries, with particular reference to some newly discovered archaeological findings and a discussion of their conservation options.

BACKGROUND

2. The SCL project, implemented by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), is a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Cap. 499). An archaeological survey-cum-excavation at the previous location of the Sacred Hill (North) area was recommended in the approved Environmental Impact Assessment report. Dr Liu Wensuo, the archaeologist engaged by the contractor of the project, was granted a licence to carry out the above mentioned archaeological work by the Antiquities Authority, after an assessment of the licence application by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) and with the support of the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB). Further to the archaeological survey-cum-excavation completed on 27 December 2013, the AMO initiated and the MTRCL agreed, that an AWB be arranged at the launching shaft area (LSA), having regard to the discovery of over 500 coins mainly dated to the Song dynasty at the LSA in early September 2013. The area for AWB was expanded in April 2014 as a result of the discovery of Song-Yuan archaeological findings within the LSA. Dr. Liu Wensuo is

¹ AWB refers to any archaeological work conducted within a project for non-archaeological purpose. AWB allows archaeological methods to be applied by archaeologists once any archaeological remains are identified in the course of the earth movement works of the development project. A proposal is required to specify the aim, method, and potential mitigation measures for the AWB. AWB could turn into an archaeological excavation if significant archaeological remains are discovered. Once the AWB commences, the archaeologist needs to report any archaeological remains discovered to the AMO. The AMO will then report the related discoveries to the AAB. The AMO will also regularly oversee the related archaeological work.

also responsible for the AWB, with licences issued in December 2013 and April 2014 respectively.

3. The AMO has regularly reported progress of the archaeological work to the AAB and eleven Briefs have been issued to the Members so far. In addition, Dr Liu Wensuo has presented his progress reports at the AAB meetings held on 29 May, 4 June and 16 September 2014. The reported discoveries dated to Song-Yuan period, included remnants of building foundations, remnants of tile wall, stone blocks, stone wells, drains, a wooden structure inside a pit, a footpath built with broken tiles, etc. Findings of late Qing to Republican period such as a stone well and a stone riverbank structure of the former Ma Tau Chung were also present. A summary of the key archaeological discoveries at the works site of the To Kwa Wan Station during the AWB is at Annex I for Members' information.

4. Subsequent to the substantial completion of the fieldwork for the AWB at the end of September 2014, on-site recordings were completed in October 2014. Detailed processing of the findings is now in progress. In view of large amount of ceramic sherds unearthed, it takes time for the written reports of the findings to be finalised by the archaeologist.

CONSERVATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES UNEARTHED

5. The key archaeological features unearthed from the works site of the To Kwa Wan Station have been reported in the previous Briefs to the AAB. The findings yield invaluable information about the archaeological past of Hong Kong during Song-Yuan period, which help the reconstruction of the social and economic developments of the period and in turn enhance our knowledge and understanding of the history of Hong Kong in the pre-colonial era.

6. In summary, archaeological features dated to Song-Yuan period, including Well J5 of Song-Yuan period, the building remains and well J1 in Area T1, stone building features at Zones B, C and D of Song-Yuan period will be preserved in-situ. Well J3 of late Qing to Republican period found at Zone D, will also be preserved in-situ. A modern red brick well found at Zone A will be dismantled after detailed recording. A wooden structure, also unearthed at Zone A, has been retrieved and moved off site for specialist conservation treatment. In addition, building structure F5 of the Song-Yuan period comprising stone foundations, stone pillar bases, water dispenser (made of tiles) and remnants of a tile wall found in the area will also be preserved. It is proposed to install pipe-pile wall to protect the archaeological discoveries from possible damage by subsequent station construction works. These pipe-pile wall would be installed at least 2 metres away from the southern edge of the area of the archaeological discoveries, and soil nails/tiebacks would be then installed below the cultural layer to give sufficient lateral support to the pile-pile wall. More information on the archaeological features and their conservation proposals are set out at Annex II.

7. While as many as possible of the archaeological features uncovered, including two stone wells (i.e. Wells J1 and J5) with higher heritage value, will be preserved in-situ, it is noted that the conservation options for the following two features will require further consideration:

- (a) A stone well of the Song-Yuen period (named Well J2), associated with an early 20th century stone water channel; and
- (b) A stone structure at the end of excavation section ‘Adit C’ near Sung Wong Toi Road.

Please refer to Annex II for the photographs and location of the above features.

WELL J2 AND STONE STRUCTURE AT ADIT C

8. Well J2 is located directly within the proposed station concourse while the stone structure is within a proposed pedestrian walkway connecting from Pak Tai Street to the proposed To Kwa Wan Station. In order to strike a balance between heritage conservation and station re-design, the alternative conservation options for these two special features, are as follows-

Proposed Conservation Options for Well J2 and Water Channel

Option 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dismantle the Well J2 and water channel by hand after proper records. 2. Reassemble them above To Kwa Wan Station near ground level to facilitate future interpretation after the station construction or at other suitable locations.
Option 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dismantle water channel by hand after proper records. 2. Construct steel structure for protecting Well J2. 3. Remove steel structure containing Well J2. 4. Reinststate Well J2 and reassemble water channel above To Kwa Wan Station to facilitate future interpretation after station construction or at other suitable locations.
Option 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserve both Well J2 and water channel in-situ by surrounding them by steel structure, which will be located at station concourse permanently.
Option 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dismantle water channel by hand after proper records. 2. Construct steel structure for Well J2 and preserve in-situ and steel structure will be located at station concourse permanently. 3. Reassemble water channel at its original location after station construction.

The details of these conservation options are at Annex III.

Proposed Conservation Options for the Stone Structure in Adit C

9. The stone structure dated to Song-Yuan period was unearthed in the end of Adit C near Olympic Avenue. The two conservation options are: to preserve in-situ or to remove after proper record. The details of these two options are at Annex IV.

AMO's view on the Conservation Options for Well J2 and Stone Structure at Adit C

10. The AMO has reviewed the different conservation options for Well J2 and the Stone Structure and its comments from the heritage conservation viewpoint have been included at Annexes III and IV. The AMO's comments principally take into account the historic and heritage value of Well J2 and the Stone Structure against the heritage value of the other archaeological features uncovered at the site with reference to the prevailing conservation guidelines and examples in overseas. It was noted that the upper part of Well J2 was partially damaged in the early 20th century and it is in relatively lower heritage value when compared with the other two stone wells J1 and J5, both of which will be preserved in-situ. The AMO has also considered the possible educational and interpretation benefits that could become available to the public through the ways by which these valuable historic items are conserved and interpreted.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to give comments and advice on the conservation approaches for the archaeological features as listed out in the paragraphs above, in particular Well J2 and the Stone Structure in Adit C.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
November 2014

Ref: LCSD/CS/AMO 81-5/21