

**For discussion
on 12 September 2024**

**BOARD PAPER
AAB/35/2023-24**

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**PROGRESS UPDATE OF THE
CENTRAL POLICE STATION COMPOUND
REVITALISATION PROJECT**

PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the latest development of the Central Police Station Compound (“CPS Compound”) revitalisation project, and seeks Members’ views on the revitalisation scheme for the Married Inspectors’ Quarters, i.e. Block 4, of the CPS Compound proposed by The Hong Kong Jockey Club (“HKJC”).

BACKGROUND

2. In partnership with the Government, HKJC has been taking forward the revitalisation of the CPS Compound, comprising the former Central Police Station, the former Central Magistracy and the Victoria Prison, which were declared as monuments in 1995. The revitalisation project includes construction of new buildings, conservation for historic buildings, infrastructure works within the CPS Compound, and road improvement works in its vicinity.

3. The revitalised CPS Compound operates as Tai Kwun – Centre for Heritage and Arts, and commenced operation on 29 May 2018. Since its opening, Tai Kwun has received over 18 million visitors and offered the public with diverse programmes on heritage appreciation, contemporary art and performing art. In October 2019, Tai Kwun won the Award of Excellence of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

RECOVERY OF BLOCK 4

4. Of the 16 historic buildings that were to be retained in the CPS Compound, 15 buildings have been restored. Block 4 is the only historic building yet to be restored due to the partial collapse in May 2016. Since then, HKJC has devoted considerable efforts in drawing up the recovery plans for Block 4 and reported the latest development to the Board from time to time¹. Taking into consideration the views expressed by Members of the Board at its meeting on 6 September 2018, HKJC worked out an updated recovery plan², which was supported by the Board at its meeting on 12 December 2019.

5. When implementing the preparatory works for the updated recovery plan, parts of the extant building fabric were found in weak conditions, and some undue building movements were detected. Subsequently, HKJC engaged a team of local and international engineering, conservation and masonry experts to re-appraise the building's condition. The re-appraisal revealed that the Block 4's condition was worse than previously known, and there would be a risk of sudden collapse if the updated recovery plan continued. In view of public safety, HKJC terminated the updated recovery plan in July 2021 and revisited different recovery options based on the Block 4's condition.

6. According to HKJC's technical update³ provided to the Board at the meeting on 8 December 2022, given the underlying risks attached to Block 4, HKJC considered it prudent and necessary to remove the unsafe building fabric of Block 4 under a "strictly necessary" principle to make the building safe and to safeguard public safety. At the meeting, it was agreed that public safety was of utmost importance. Subsequently, in accordance with Section 6 of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, HKJC submitted a permit application to the Antiquities and Monuments Office for undertaking more detailed investigations and removal of unsafe building fabric of Block 4. The permit

¹ Board Paper AAB/33/2015-16 Annex

<https://www.aab.gov.hk/filemanager/aab/common/175meeting/175assessment-33-a-en.pdf>

Board Paper AAB/15/2017-18 Annex

<https://www.aab.gov.hk/filemanager/aab/common/179meeting/aab-15-2017-18-annex.pdf>

Board Paper AAB/32/2017-18 Annex

https://www.aab.gov.hk/filemanager/aab/common/183meeting/aab_32_2017-18-annex-en.pdf

² Board Paper AAB/11/2019-20 Annex

https://www.aab.gov.hk/filemanager/aab/common/188meeting/aab_11_2019-20-annex-en.pdf

³ Board Paper AAB/27/2021-22 Annex A

https://www.aab.gov.hk/filemanager/aab/common/199meeting/aab_27_2021-22-a-en.pdf

was issued to HKJC in June 2023, and the investigation works and removal of unsafe parts of Block 4 on 2/F and 1/F were completed in June 2024. During the removal works, building fabric with heritage value were salvaged, and a digital archive of the whole building was created.

7. HKJC has embarked on further studies to develop a revitalisation scheme for Block 4. Details are set out in the paper prepared by HKJC at Annex.

ADVICE SOUGHT

8. Members are invited to note the latest development of the CPS Compound revitalisation project, and offer views on the revitalisation scheme for Block 4 proposed by HKJC.

Antiquities and Monuments Office

September 2024

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