

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE
ANTIQUITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**DECLARATION OF
TWO HISTORIC BUILDINGS AS MONUMENTS**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' advice on the proposal to declare:

- (a) Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital (舊贊育醫院主樓), 36A Western Street, Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong; and
- (b) Kwong Fook Tsz (廣福祠), 40 Tai Ping Shan Street, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong;

as monuments under section 3(1) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (the "Ordinance").

JUSTIFICATIONS

Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital

2. The Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital was established by the Chinese Public Dispensaries Committee ("the CPDC") (華人公立醫局委員會) and opened in 1922. It was the first maternity hospital for Chinese women in Hong Kong with dual objectives of providing maternity services and training Chinese midwives in modern method. To cater for the rapidly increasing demand for maternity services in the post-war period, the Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital was relocated to the new premises on Hospital Road in 1955 where their services had been expanded. The Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital was therefore converted into a community centre named Tsan Yuk Social Centre (贊育服務處) from 1961 to 1971 and renamed Western District Community Centre (西區社區服務中心) in 1973. Until now, it has continued to play a significant role in serving the local community in public healthcare and well-being.

3. Being one of the few surviving buildings related to the CPDC, the Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital exemplifies the cooperation between Chinese leaders and Western medical professionals in the early development and provision of maternal health services in Hong Kong. It also bears witness to the emergence of a cluster of important medical facilities in the Central and Western District in the late 19th century.

4. The Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital is an iconic four-storey building with a basement featuring exemplary neoclassical architecture juxtaposed with Chinese elements. The red brick walls were constructed on coursed rubble plinth with quoins to accentuate the wall corners. The entrance portico was flanked by two pairs of Tuscan columns. The granite lintel and couplets bear the inscriptions by Chan Pak-to (陳伯陶) and Lai Tsi-hsi (賴際熙) respectively, who were prominent scholars and senior officials of the Qing Dynasty. The spiral staircase that surrounds a central well and forms a projecting bay at the rear elevation is the most imposing feature of the building. Though one storey to each of the two end wings of the Main Building was added as quarters in 1939, the additions are harmoniously matched with the original fabric. Many original significant architectural features illustrated above remain intact and in good condition, confirming the high level of authenticity.

Kwong Fook Tsz

5. Kwong Fook Tsz (“the Temple”), commonly known as Kwong Fook I Tsz (廣福義祠) and Pak Shing Temple (百姓廟), was built on the present site in 1895. The Temple was proposed in 1851 at the instigation of the prominent businessman Tam Choy (譚才) and 13 other members of the emerging Chinese elite, to offer a place to house soul tablets of the Chinese labourers from the Mainland who died in Hong Kong. Apart from the main deity of the Temple Ksitigarbha (地藏王), the Temple also accommodates the status of deities and relics from other temples such as Chai Kung (濟公), Shui Ching Pak (綏靖伯) and Tai Sui (太歲).

6. The Temple is of exceptional historical significance. Its additional role in providing refuge and medical services for the sick, homeless and elderly had revealed the inhumane living conditions of poor and sick Chinese and the lack of affordable medical services for local residents in the early decades. This was the direct catalyst for the establishment of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1870 which started performing charitable work for underprivileged Chinese in the

middle and late 19th century. The Temple also demonstrates the inseparable ties and cohesion among the Chinese community during the early British administration period and stands as an embodiment of traditional Chinese beliefs about death and worshipping.

7. The Temple features a three-hall-two-courtyard layout on an elevated platform, making it a prominent landmark in the area. The grey bricks and granite doorway consisting of a lintel and couplet are well preserved. The most notable architectural feature on the exterior is the Shiwan (石灣) ceramics on the ridge of the entrance hall, which was manufactured in 1895 when the Temple was built on the present site, featuring the repertoire of characters from the Chinese novel *The Investiture of the Gods* (《封神演義》).

8. The appraisals and photographs of the two historic buildings are at **Annexes A to D.**

GRADING AND DECLARATION

9. In recognition of their heritage values, the Antiquities Advisory Board (“the Board”) accorded Grade 1 status to the Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital on 18 December 2009 and to Kwong Fook Tsz on 6 June 2024.

10. 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”, are 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.

11. The two historic buildings, i.e. the Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital and Kwong Fook Tsz as set out in paragraphs 2 to 7 above, have significant heritage value. They have reached the “high threshold” to be declared as monuments for permanent protection under the Ordinance. Consent for the intended declaration has been obtained from the respective owner and management department.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. In accordance with section 3(1) of the Ordinance, “the Authority may, after consultation with the Board and with the approval of the Chief Executive, by notice in the Gazette, declare any place, building, site or structure, which the Authority considers to be of public interest by reason of its historical, archaeological or palaeontological significance, to be a monument, historical building or archaeological or palaeontological site or structure”. Members’ advice is therefore sought on whether the Main Building of Old Tsan Yuk Maternity Hospital and Kwong Fook Tsz should be declared as monuments. The intended monument boundaries of the declaration are shown in **Annexes E and F**.

NEXT STEP

13. Subject to the Board’s advice, the Antiquities and Monuments Office will take the matter forward in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

Antiquities and Monuments Office
March 2025

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