

**Antiquities and Monuments Office's Comments
on the Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of
The Revitalisation of Former North Kowloon
Magistracy into NK Future**

The Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”) has reviewed the findings set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment (“HIA”) report in respect of the Revitalisation of Former North Kowloon Magistracy (“FNKM”) (Grade 2) into NK Future, a universal judicial education centre. AMO considers the proposal agreeable for the following reasons:

- (a) the proposal has adopted the principles of minimal intervention and reversibility, such that changes or disturbances to FNKM are kept to a minimum and, through appropriate mitigation measures, the cultural significance of the historic building could be retained;
- (b) the façades featuring key Stripped Classical style characteristics will be preserved and repaired. No major works will be carried out, and existing window openings will be utilised for conduits. The modification of windows into louvres will be restricted to the less-prominent rear façade, whereas the design of the façade lighting and the door to the new lifting platform will be discreet. These reversible modifications will utilise existing openings, and their visual impact will be minimised. This approach is agreeable;
- (c) FNKM is situated on elevated topography. The current entrance, located at the South Forecourt of the building, is inaccessible to persons with disabilities due to the steep gradient of the access road leading to it. The proposed lifting platform facing Tai Po Road will offer disabled visitors a more direct access to the historic building, with minimal visual impact and no irreversible effect on character-defining elements (“CDEs”) is anticipated. The approach is therefore agreeable;
- (d) the spatial relationship and openness of the forecourts and the open area in front of the building will be retained. No major works will be carried out except the installation of a new

sprinkler tank adjacent to the existing one at the South Forecourt. The bulk of the new sprinkler tank will be kept minimal such that the hierarchy between the historic building and its ancillary buildings, as well as the South Forecourt setting, is preserved. The approach is supported;

- (e) the new service lift (LT-2) will be located near the rear of the building away from the main façade on Tai Po Road to minimise the visual impact on the historic building. The bulk and height of the new lift overrun on the roof level will also be minimised to avoid visual impact. The lift structure shall not compromise the stability of the building, with reinforcements designed minimally and locally. The affected internal areas are primarily service spaces of low significance, whilst the inevitable impact on the G/F Controlled Corridor and 2/F travertine wall will be minimised and made reversible as far as practicable. These approaches are acceptable;
- (f) the curvy later-added skylight is proposed to be removed to better reflect the original design of the building and the Central Lightwell. To fulfill statutory requirements, a fire barrier at the Central Lightwell on 3/F is proposed. It shall adopt a subtle design retaining the existing glass block slab and exhaust fan housings, minimising irreversible damage to historic fabrics. The new design shows respect for the original building design and elements, facilitates visitors' appreciation of the natural daylight ambiance from the upper floors and therefore is considered agreeable;
- (g) the creation of a new void to provide steps and a platform between 4/F and 5/F is intended to meet operational needs by facilitating spatial and visual connectivity and communication. It is located on the original office and former classroom floors which are of lower significance. The design minimises structural strengthening works with the original beams retained. With the steps and platform positioned strategically along the central axis of the building, the new design also shows respect for the symmetry of the original architectural design, and therefore the approach is acceptable;

- (h) layout modifications are required to enable the building's new core functions, including (i) multi-function and exhibition spaces, (ii) modern educational and training facilities, (iii) leisure, lifestyle, and food and beverage spaces, and (iv) improved accessibility and building services. The layout modifications mainly take place in service spaces, mechanical rooms, and areas that have already undergone substantial alterations in different periods. The impacts are minimal and affected areas are considered of low or neutral significance, the approach is therefore acceptable;
- (i) a number of restoration and reinstatement works will be carried out for several CDEs, including four old Detention Cells, one Magistrate's Office, the original G/F to 2/F portion of the Magistrates' Staircase and the original symmetrical layout of the G/F Entrance Hall. In the meantime, the spatial configuration and qualities of Court Nos. 2, 3 and 4 will be restored, with original spatial characteristics and remaining interior features revealed. These proposed restoration works are able to recover the architectural significance of the building and are commendable;
- (j) the proposal has taken into account the conservation of CDEs of exceptional and high significance in the adaptive reuse of internal spaces. The key features preserved include the overall symmetrical spatial design, the Central Staircase and Central Halls, the Central Lightwell, the Conserved Court No. 1, the Detention Cells, the Controlled Corridor and the Defendants' Staircase. They have been proposed to be integrated into the public visit route and fitted with displays related to the cultural significance of FNKM and judicial education. These arrangements facilitate public appreciation of the internal features of the building and are commendable; and
- (k) cartographic and photographic surveys to record FNKM will be conducted before the commencement of the proposed works, and the findings will be sent to AMO for record.

2. In addition to the mitigation measures devised in the HIA report, AMO has further suggested the following enhancement measures which the project proponent has agreed to undertake:

- (a) to ensure that the mitigation measures recommended in the HIA report are properly implemented, a heritage conservation consultant should be appointed by N K Future Company Limited to monitor the implementation, record any changes and variations, prepare progress reports or other suitable means for AMO's noting and action as appropriate, and prepare the Interpretation Plan and Maintenance and Management Manual as stated;
- (b) to consult AMO on any deviation of the design from the HIA report in the future for agreement before the commencement of works; and
- (c) to follow up on the detailed design of the following works and consult AMO for agreement before the commencement of works:
 - (i) design details of the new structures, i.e. the new vertical lifting platform and lift;
 - (ii) design details of all structural strengthening works, i.e. the installation of a fire barrier at the Central Lightwell and the creation of a new void to provide the steps and platform between 4/F and 5/F, and the associated structural works;
 - (iii) design details of all restoration works and the modification works to the historic building; and
 - (iv) other enhancement works to suit modern day requirements including current regulations and new building services installations.