

Antiquities Advisory Board Meeting on 13.3.2002

**Item 4 Historical Buildings and Structures to be affected by Central Reclamation Phase III and Wan Chai Development Phase II
(Board paper AAB/37/2001-02)**

Summary of the Board Paper

The purpose of the paper is to seek Members' views on the proposed Central Reclamation Phase III & Wan Chai Development Phase II.

2. The 'Central and Wan Chai Reclamation Feasibility Study' was endorsed by Land Development Policy Committee in 1989. The main objective of the proposed reclamation is to provide land for Central-Wan Chai Bypass, North Hong Kong Island Line, Island Eastern Corridor Link and to create a world class waterfront promenade. Three of the five phases of the reclamation works have been completed except the Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) and Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII). Since the remaining phases of reclamation fall within the remit of the Protection for Harbour Ordinance enacted on 30 June 1997, CRIII and WDII had to be further reviewed under the Comprehensive Feasibility Studies in 1999.

3. At the request of the Antiquities and Monuments Office, a marine archaeological investigation (MAI) and a survey on historical buildings and structures were conducted to assess the possible impact on the cultural heritage caused by the proposed reclamation and associated works. The MAI and survey were completed in mid 2001.

4. No archaeological remains have been found within the CRIII and WDII study areas under the MAI. However, according to the built heritage survey on CRIII and WDII, three historical buildings and structures, namely, City Hall Complex, Queen's Pier and Star Ferry Pier together with its clock tower would be affected by the CRIII. Three other historical buildings and structures would be affected by WDII. They are the clubhouse of Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club in Causeway Bay, Noon Day Gun and the Floating Tin Hau Temple.

5. A copy of the information paper on CRIII and WDII jointly submitted by the Territory Development Department (TDD) and Planning Department (Plan D) is at

Annex. The survey reports of historical buildings and structures within the project areas of CRIII and WDII are at Appendix I and Appendix II of the Annex. The historical value of the built heritage is summarized in paragraphs 8 and 10 of the paper while the impact and proposed mitigation measures are set out in paragraphs 9 and 11. In brief, the recommendations by TDD and Plan D are as follows:

- (a) The City Hall Complex was originally affected by the proposed Road D6. However, the proposed road layout will be realigned so that the whole City Hall Complex will be kept intact.
- (b) Queen's Pier will need to be relocated due to the reclamation works. A detailed photographic and cartographic record will be undertaken and a commemorative plaque will be erected at the existing site.
- (c) The present Star Ferry Pier together with its clock tower built in 1957 has to be demolished. A new Star Ferry Pier will be re-provisioned at Pier 7 and Pier 8, and a new clock tower will be recreated as a landmark in between the two piers. The general layout and design of the external appearance of the new piers will adopt a historical heritage approach to recreate the existing icon.
- (d) The Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (RHKYC)'s existing clubhouse building will be preserved in situ.
- (e) The Noon Day Gun will be relocated to the new waterbreak and will continue its service after relocation.
- (f) The floating temple will be relocated on shore to a new site. It will be retained in the typhoon shelter until the new site is ready.

Summary of discussion

Representatives from Planning Department (Plan D) and Territories Development Department (TDD) briefed Members on the background of the Central Reclamation and the Wan Chai Development, their impact on the historical buildings in the areas and the ways to treat the problem.

2. Views and suggestions made by Members are summarised as follows:
 - (a) As the Queen's Pier was where the former Governor of Hong Kong landed in Hong Kong, consideration be given to relocate it like that of the Noon Day Gun in view of its historical significance;
 - (b) The AMO was requested to reexamine as a whole the heritage value of the Queen's Pier and the City Hall;
 - (c) Since the reclamation would involve the relocation of historic items, some key spots should be reserved and marked to indicate the original location of these historic buildings, e.g. the Noon Day Gun, as tourists would find it interesting to trace the development of the place;
 - (d) It would be advisable to preserve individual structures and markers to give the public a sense of the shoreline after the new reclamation, and a sense of the totality of the project; for instance, it would help promote tourism to have clearer demarcations to show the gradations of the ferry piers.
 - (e) As the future infrastructure would unlikely take up all the space of the present Queen's Pier, it was suggested that the remaining open space, being part of the City Hall Complex, be developed to recapture the atmosphere of the Queen's Pier through some creative design; and
 - (f) The AMO should closely monitor the development of the City Hall Complex and have periodic meetings with Plan D and TDD

to ensure that the work was done properly

3. Plan D and TDD made the following responses to Members' comments and suggestions:

- (a) Since the future airport tunnel and some new road networks would pass through the present location of the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier, the foundations which supported these Piers had to be removed to make way for the above infrastructure. It was thus not possible to preserve the Queen's Pier in-situ. However, efforts would be made to preserve and relocate the landmark of the Pier such as the 'Queen's Pier' sign to a site nearby. Perhaps some commemorative plaque could be erected there as well;
- (b) The existing Wan Chai Pier would also be affected by the reclamation project and a new pier would be provided at the new coastline at a location similar to the present pier. The new pier would be specially designed to make it a landmark along the coastline; and
- (c) TDD would check the proposed works and consider the feasibility of developing the unaffected open space at the Queen's Pier to recapture the past atmosphere of the Pier.