

政府總部
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17 July 2008

Clerk to Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Joanne Mak)

Dear Ms Mak,

Thank you for your letter of 15 July 2008, enclosing a submission from Mr William Meacham expressing concern about the approach of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in handling Hong Kong's Bronze Age rock carvings for Administration's reference.

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Subcommittee on Antiquities and Monuments (Withdrawal of Declaration of Proposed Monument) (No. 128 Pok Fu Lam Road) Notice held on 12 March 2008, representatives from LCSD has already given brief response to the points raised by Mr Meacham (e.g. on the procedures of publication of reports, and the handling of rock carvings, etc.) as set out in the same submission from Mr Meacham. Nonetheless, we wish to thank you for forwarding the submission to us, and we have copied it to the Leisure and Culture Services Department (LCSD) for their reference. Meanwhile, LCSD has provided a response to the submission as set out in a short note at Annex. We shall be grateful if you could bring this letter to the attention of Hon Choy So-yuk, the Panel Chairman, as you deem appropriate, please.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edwin K. H. Tong'.

(Edwin K. H. Tong)

Commissioner for Heritage (Acting)
for Secretary for Development

Encl.

c.c.

DLCS (Attn: Mr Tom Ming) Fax No: 2721 6216

**Response to the Submission from Mr William Meacham
Conservation Measures for Rock Carvings**

This note sets out the response to the submission made by Mr William Meacham on the conservation measures for rock carvings.

Perspex covers

2. Construction of a footpath to provide physical access to the carvings and the use of Perspex covers for protecting the carvings from weathering and vandalism were in fact recommendations of an independent consultancy conducted in 1977. The Perspex covers have been improved over the years and are now made of acrylic materials which would reduce transmittance of light and UV radiation, thus diminishing the energy source for the growth of microorganism on the rock carvings. The Perspex covers, which are not meant to be air-tight in any way, neither trap moisture nor cause any unfavourable micro-climatic effects on the rock carvings as evidenced by technical data and the findings of on-site climatic monitoring.

Remedial treatment

3. Regarding the remedial treatment, the concept of minimum intervention has been employed by just using water, non-ionic detergent and soft nylon brushes to remove the microbiological growth on the rock surfaces, followed by the application of siloxane based hydrophobic protective coating to resist water, prevent biological growth, as well as avoid air pollutants and bacteria attack. The same treatment has been deployed for the rock carvings at Wong Chuk Hang and Joss House Bay (which are both exposed to weathering) in the past two years with satisfactory effect. Moreover, the siloxane coating has also been successfully applied on Kom Tom Hall, King's College and other world heritage sites such as Giant Wild Goose Pagoda in Xi'an, China and Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

4. We are therefore of the view that the conservation measures/treatments to the rock carvings adopted by the Central Conservation Section of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), which were based on universal conservation principles, recommendations of renowned experts and researches of international institutes, are effective. Notwithstanding the above, LCSD is open to views and suggestions that may further improve and enhance the conservation of rock carvings in Hong Kong.

**Leisure and Cultural Services Department
July 2008**