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Panel on Development

Meeting on 23 November 2010

Updated background brief on heritage conservation

Purpose

This paper sets out background information on the Government's heritage conservation policy and relevant initiatives, and provides a summary of Members' concerns and views on relevant issues.

Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy launched in 2004

2. In February 2004, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) published a consultation document and launched a three-month public consultation exercise on the Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy. Over 500 responses were received at the conclusion of the public consultation exercise. In reporting the results of the public consultation to the Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel)¹ in November 2004, HAB advised that it would start to study the implementation issues, including the following --

- (a) setting up of a heritage trust fund;
- (b) introduction of appropriate planning tools and economic incentives;
- (c) innovative and sustainable adaptive re-use of conserved built heritage;

¹ The Panel on Development has taken up the monitoring and examination of Government policies and issues relating to development-related heritage conservation from the Panel on Home Affairs since the 2008-2009 legislative session.

- (d) better co-ordination of heritage conservation work;
- (e) formulation of a holistic approach, assessment criteria, different methods of conservation and a strategy on enhancing community participation; and
- (f) strengthening of heritage education and publicity.

3. In response to growing public concern over built heritage conservation, as manifested in the old Star Ferry Pier incident, HAB held a series of public forums in January and February 2007 to inform the community of Government's policy and measures on built heritage conservation, and to seek public views on what and how Hong Kong's built heritage should be preserved. Over 600 participants attended the forums. The Administration also made use of other channels (e.g. radio and television programmes, website forum and e-mail) to disseminate information and collect public views.

4. The Administration provided a summary of the public views and suggestions gathered on the review of built heritage conservation policy from 2004 to early 2007 to the HA Panel vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1599/06-07(01) issued in April 2007.

Heritage conservation policy statement and initiatives announced by the Administration in October 2007

5. The Development Bureau (DEVB), which took over the policy responsibility on heritage conservation from HAB on 1 July 2007, issued the Legislative Council (LegCo) Brief on Heritage Conservation Policy [File Ref: DEVB(CR)(W) 1-55/68/01] on 10 October 2007. The brief outlines the Administration's policy as follows --

Policy statement

"To protect, conserve and revitalize as appropriate historical and heritage sites and buildings through relevant and sustainable approaches for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. In implementing this policy, due regard should be given to development needs in the public interest, respect for private property rights, budgetary considerations, cross-sector collaboration and active engagement of stakeholders and the general public."

6. The brief also outlines a package of measures endorsed by the Chief Executive in Council, including the following --

- (a) in the Government domain, the Administration will require all new capital works projects to undergo a Heritage Impact Assessment, and will launch a scheme for adaptive re-use of Government-owned historic buildings by non-profit making organizations for running social enterprises;
- (b) in the private sector domain, the Administration will --
 - (i) engage relevant stakeholders in devising appropriate measures such as land exchange and transfer of development rights to facilitate the conservation of privately-owned historic buildings; and
 - (ii) extend current financial assistance schemes to enhance the maintenance of privately-owned historic buildings from declared monuments to graded buildings;
- (c) set up the Commissioner for Heritage's Office in the Development Bureau as a focal point for Government's heritage conservation efforts and cultivating local and overseas networks;
- (d) in the longer run, examine whether a heritage trust should be created in Hong Kong to take over heritage conservation work and rally community support; and
- (e) engage the public proactively to ensure that stakeholders and concern groups' views are taken into account in finalizing the above initiatives.

The Administration will focus on administrative, rather than legislative means to implement these measures.

7. The discussions made by the HA Panel on the new policy statement and initiatives and by the Subcommittee on Heritage Conservation on specific projects are in **Appendix I**.

Progress reports by the Administration

8. The Administration has provided periodic reports on its heritage conservation initiatives to the Panel on Development (DEV Panel), and the DEV Panel held meetings on 19 December 2008, 24 February 2009, 28 April 2009, 28 July 2009, 21 October 2009 and 30 March 2010 to receive briefings from and discuss with the Administration on its heritage conservation work.

9. On 19 December 2008, the Administration briefed the DEV Panel on the progress of the implementation of various heritage conservation initiatives and the Administration's work plan for 2009 [LC Paper No. CB(1)396/08-09(03)]. The following major issues were discussed at the meeting --

- (a) the adoption of the district-based approach for planning the preservation and revitalization of other districts such as the Kowloon City district and various areas in the New Territories, apart from the old Wan Chai area and the vicinity of Hollywood Road;
- (b) the availability of executive agents for conservation initiatives, other than the Urban Renewal Authority;
- (c) protection of privately-owned heritage buildings from damage, demolition and alteration;
- (d) economic incentives for conservation of privately-owned historic buildings;
- (e) conservation arrangements for particular buildings or sites;
- (f) collaboration with District Councils in promoting heritage buildings and sites; and
- (g) accessibility and affordability of revitalized historic buildings to the general public.

Further details of the discussion are given in **Appendix II**.

Revitalizing Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme

10. On 24 February 2009, the Administration reported to the DEV Panel on the selection results of the seven buildings included under Batch I of the Revitalizing Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalization Scheme) [LC Paper No. CB(1)816/08-09(03)]. The Administration advised that the Secretary for Development had granted approval-in-principle to the recommended projects. The selected non-profit making organizations, being proponents of the recommended projects, would proceed with pre-tender work and preparation of submissions for funding approval from the Finance Committee. On 28 April 2009, the Administration briefed the DEV Panel on the conversion of old Tai O Police Station into Tai O Heritage Hotel [LC Paper No. CB(1)1347/08-09(07)].

11. The major concerns raised by members at these meetings included --
- (a) ways of monitoring the projects, including the specification of appropriate conditions in the service agreements and/or tenancy agreements to enable the Government to re-enter the heritage buildings when the situation warrants;
 - (b) length of tenancy and financial sustainability of individual projects;
 - (c) accessibility of the revitalized buildings to the general public; and
 - (d) review of the Batch I exercise and preparation for the Batch II exercise.

12. At the DEV Panel meeting on 28 July 2009, the Administration reported that it had reviewed the Revitalization Scheme based on the experience gained in implementing Batch I projects. A sharing session with interested organizations was held on 5 May 2009. The Administration advised that projects in Batch II would be implemented generally along the terms and process of Batch I with refinements as identified from the review. To ensure that the Revitalization Scheme had the support of the relevant District Councils, and to solicit their inputs to Batch II projects, the Commissioner for Heritage had visited various District Councils to gauge their views [LC Paper No. CB(1)2342/08-09(04)].

13. The Administration advised that it was preparing to launch Batch II of the Revitalization Scheme in mid-2009 and the following five buildings would be included:

- (a) Old Tai Po Police Station (re-launched);
- (b) The Blue House Cluster;
- (c) Former Fanling Magistracy;
- (d) Old House at Wong Uk Village; and
- (e) Stone Houses.

14. The Administration also reported at the same meeting that of the six selected projects under Batch I of the Revitalization Scheme, funding at \$66.7 million and \$8.8 million had been approved for, respectively, revitalizing the old Tai O Police Station into a boutique hotel and for revitalizing the Fong Yuen Study Hall.

15. At the DEV Panel meeting on 21 October 2009, the Administration reported that funds for the restoration of Fong Yuen Study Hall, Lai Chi Kok Hospital, Lui Seng Chun and Mei Ho House would be sought between October 2009 and June 2010. Application for revitalizing the five Batch II buildings of the Revitalization Scheme started in August 2009 and would last until December 2009 [LC Paper No. CB(1)30/09-10(01)].

16. On members' concern that the Administration should avoid turning revitalized historic buildings or sites into high-end shopping centres which would otherwise defeat the original purpose of sharing the reminiscences of these buildings with the general public, the Administration advised that it subscribed to the belief that in revitalizing historic buildings/sites, public access was always a major consideration. As regards a member's enquiry on whether the Administration's conservation efforts in Central would be extended to other districts, the Administration advised that a district-based approach was adopted to revitalize the local economy, and it would actively consult District Councils and the private sector accordingly.

Grading of historic buildings

17. At the DEV Panel meeting on 28 April 2009, the Administration reported the comprehensive grading of 1 444 historic buildings [LC Paper No. CB(1)1347/08-09(08)]. The Administration advised that the Antiquities

Advisory Board had agreed at its meeting on 19 March 2009 to invite public comments by the end of July 2009 on the proposed gradings made by the Antiquities and Monuments Office on 1 444 historic buildings. Of these buildings, 212 were proposed to be Grade I; 366 Grade II; 576 Grade III and 290 with no grading. District Councils' views were also sought. Upon consideration of comments received, the Antiquities Advisory Board would finalize the gradings. Information on the 1 444 historic buildings had been uploaded to the website of the Antiquities and Monuments Office for easy reference of the public.

18. During the discussion, members expressed the following major concerns and views --

- (a) the Administration should consider designating specified uses for the historic buildings in Batch II of the Revitalization Scheme so that competition among proponents would be fairer;
- (b) there should be an effective mechanism for offering protection to graded historic buildings against damage, demolition or alteration;
- (c) what economic incentives the Administration should provide to facilitate conservation of privately-owned historic buildings and whether there should be an institutionalized mechanism; and
- (d) the progress of the proposed establishment of a heritage trust.

19. In response, the Administration indicated that, in principle, it would not object to the suggestion of specifying a use for the historic buildings under the Revitalization Scheme. As regards protection of historic buildings, the Administration would issue letters to owners of all Grade I historic buildings explaining to them the implications of the grading. If a Grade I building was declared as a provisional monument, all relevant Government departments would be made aware of such declaration. The Administration would ask the owners of Grade I buildings if they intended to redevelop their buildings. The Administration would intervene, if necessary, by giving these buildings immediate protection. The Administration could offer different kinds of economic incentives on a case-by-case basis, such as in-situ land exchange, non-in-situ land exchange and cash compensation. Given the nature of heritage conservation work and the value of community participation, the Secretary for Development was supportive of setting up a heritage trust independent of the Government in the long run. More time should be allowed for the various heritage initiatives to produce results, and

for public education on heritage conservation in order to secure public support for the proposal to set up such a trust. This was considered necessary especially if the proposed heritage trust required the support of public funds. Meanwhile, the Administration was collecting information on overseas experience and establishing networks with overseas heritage trusts.

20. At the DEV Panel meeting on 21 October 2009, the Administration advised that the Antiquities Advisory Board would confirm the final grading before end of 2009 in the light of the public comments received. The Administration also advised that 41 pre-war waterworks structures located in six reservoirs were declared as monuments in September 2009 and a waterworks heritage trail was created.

Conservation of other Government-owned historic buildings

21. At the DEV Panel meeting on 28 July 2009, the Administration reported its plan to revitalize the Haw Par Mansion for commercial uses, such as wine-related businesses. Proposals would be invited through public tender. Some members queried why the Administration should bear the capital investment for the revitalization of the Haw Par Mansion, as the building would be used for a commercial operation. The Administration explained that the present conditions of Haw Par Mansion required large scale renovation so as to attract bidders of good calibre. The basic upgrading and renovation works were required irrespective of the adaptive re-use of the premises. As regards a member's view that the Administration should assess bidders' plans on maintaining public accessibility and the completeness of the revitalized heritage building concerned, the Administration agreed that public accessibility and completeness of the revitalized historic building should be emphasized. An element of education value might also be added, such as providing an exhibition area for displaying relics and photographs of the Haw Par Mansion and its former Tiger Balm Garden.

Conservation of privately-owned historic buildings

22. The Administration reported at the DEV Panel meeting on 21 October 2009 that following the launch of the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme in August 2008 to provide financial assistance to owners of privately-owned graded historic buildings to carry out maintenance works, it had approved five applications and was processing another six applications. The Administration also reported that to facilitate conservation of a privately-owned historic building, Jessville, in Pokfulam, the Chief Executive in Council approved in September 2009 the partial

uplifting of the relevant moratorium. On public accessibility, the Administration advised that the concerned owners would be required to provide public access to Jessville for at least one day per week, and agreement from the Commissioner for Heritage would have to be sought on the detailed arrangements.

Funding for the Revitalization Scheme and sustainability of projects

23. At the DEV Panel meeting on 30 March 2010 when the funding proposal for revitalizing the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital into Jao Tsung-I Academy/Hong Kong Cultural Heritage under the Revitalization Scheme [LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(04)] was discussed, some members expressed concern about the cost implication of the Revitalization Scheme and enquired about the funding commitment of the Administration. They also enquired about the criteria for using public funds on heritage conservation projects. The Administration advised that heritage conservation was extremely costly wherever preservation of historic buildings was involved since the revitalized buildings must meet the present building services requirements. The Administration had set aside \$1.5 billion for implementing the two batches of the Revitalization Scheme. In deciding whether public funds should be committed for a particular project, the commercial values of the buildings concerned, and the sustainability and intended purposes of the projects would be carefully considered.

24. Some members were worried about the long-term sustainability of the heritage conservation projects as past and overseas experience showed that it would be very difficult for such projects to survive and compete with others in the long run. To avoid creating a long-term financial burden on the Government, the Government expected non-governmental organizations to run their heritage conservation projects as social enterprises in a sustainable and self-financing way. Such a requirement had been laid down as one of the criteria in the selection of management agents for undertaking heritage conservation projects.

25. In order to enhance the sustainability of the heritage conservation projects, some members considered it necessary to link up these projects with the tourist spots nearby. It was worthwhile for the Administration to display models of all heritage conservation projects in an easily accessible location so that tourists could have a better understanding of Hong Kong's efforts in preserving historic sites, thereby encouraging them to visit these sites. The Administration advised that it was moving in the direction of linking heritage conservation with tourism. Exhibitions on heritage conservation projects of the 18 districts would be held.

Early promulgation of heritage conservation initiatives

26. While supporting heritage conservation, some members suggested that the Administration could, once a decision was taken to preserve certain buildings or sites, inform the concerned owners and the general public as soon as practicable so that owners and potential investors could make appropriate prior arrangements. The Administration should also adequately consult the owners on their views since compulsory conservation could meet with strong resistance from affected parties. The Administration agreed that consultation with local communities and concerned parties could be stepped up to draw up and promulgate a blueprint clearly specifying buildings or sites earmarked for redevelopment, rehabilitation, preservation and revitalization, so that stakeholders and the Administration could have adequate time to plan ahead.

27. Some members opined that the responsible management agents of revitalized buildings should actively communicate with the users and tenants and involve them in the planning process as far as possible. The Administration advised that it was fully aware of the importance of both hardware and software in the running of facilities in revitalized buildings, and would involve potential users and tenants in the planning and operation of these facilities as far as possible.

Other issues

28. Some members considered that the Administration's heritage conservation initiatives should also be a means for creating employment opportunities, and enquired about the number of jobs to be created under the Revitalization Scheme. The Administration advised that the six projects under Batch I of the Revitalization Scheme would be able to create 967 jobs during the construction stage and 285 full-time and 227 part-time jobs after their completion. Heritage conservation initiatives such as the Tai O Heritage Hotel would also create jobs for those engaged in conducting local tours and workshops.

29. There were considerable concerns among members that the conservation initiatives in Central might overlap with the West Kowloon Cultural District development in promoting arts and culture. Though spreading out at different locations, the eight initiatives should supplement one another in producing a concerted impact. A member also opined that the Administration should adopt the concept of retaining a "historic city" rather than a few isolated historic buildings. The Administration should

promote community participation and carry out studies to assess the impact of these initiatives on transport, the living environment and social networks. The Administration advised that the eight initiatives would each have a distinct role to play in promoting arts and culture within the district.

30. Some members expressed concern about the role of the Urban Renewal Authority in heritage conservation, which appeared to have caused a great deal of controversies. In order to avoid unnecessary conflicts, the Administration should not involve the Urban Renewal Authority in its heritage conservation efforts. The Administration advised that upon the completion of the review of the Urban Renewal Strategy, there would be a clearer demarcation in terms of the functions and responsibilities of the Administration and the Urban Renewal Authority in preserving historic sites and buildings.

Developments concerning Lui Seng Chun, Mei Ho House and Conserving Central

31. On 27 April 2010, the Administration briefed the DEV Panel on the Lui Seng Chun, Mei Ho House and Conserving Central heritage conservation initiatives.

Lui Seng Chun

32. In February 2009, the Administration announced that it had selected the Hong Kong Baptist University to revitalize Lui Seng Chun, a Grade I Historic Building located at 119 Lai Chi Kok Road, into a Chinese Medicine and Healthcare Centre with five consultation rooms, a shop selling Chinese herbs and herb tea, an exhibition area on the history of the building (on the veranda) and a roof-top herbal garden.

Mei Ho House

33. At the same time, the Administration also announced the selection of the Hong Kong Youth Hostels Association to convert Mei Ho House (Block 41 of Shek Kip Mei Estate, one of the first eight blocks built in 1954) into a youth hostel with 124 rooms of varying sizes, a café and a convenience store, function rooms and a museum on the history of public housing in Hong Kong.

Conserving Central

34. The Chief Executive announced Conserving Central in his 2009-2010 Policy Address, which aims at preserving social, historical and architectural features in Central while adding new life and vibrancy to the area. The eight initiatives under Conserving Central are as follows --

- (a) New Central Harbourfront -- The Administration will develop Sites 1 and 2 into a distinctive civic node and mixed use precinct featuring low-rise structures for exhibition, retail, entertainment, civic and community uses, under public-private partnership for public enjoyment;
- (b) Central Market -- URA plans to revitalize it into a Central Oasis to provide some much needed space and greenery amidst the hustle and bustle of Central and a trendy hang-out for the working population in Central;
- (c) Former Police Married Quarters -- The site has been planned for the promotion of creative industries with facilities such as exhibition galleries, studios, and office or shop space for various creative industry-related industries. It will also include an exhibition centre of Central School and a display of the historical relics;
- (d) Central Police Station Compound -- The Hong Kong Jockey Club is transforming it into a hub of heritage, arts, culture and tourism for the enjoyment of the public. Facilities such as art galleries and a theatre will be provided to promote contemporary visual and performing arts in Hong Kong;
- (e) Central Government Offices Complex -- After relocation of the Central Government Offices to Tamar, the Main Wing and East Wing will be preserved for appropriate adaptive re-use. The West Wing, which is of low historical significance and architectural merit, will be demolished to make way for commercial development. Part of its present footprint will be developed as a garden to preserve the existing greenery;
- (f) Murray Building -- The building has high potential to be converted into a hotel. With appropriate conversion and

associated supporting facilities, the new hotel will be popular for visitors;

- (g) Former French Mission Building -- The Administration is awaiting ideas on the most suitable adaptive re-use of this building and it intends to adopt an open process to take the project forward; and
- (h) Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Compound -- The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui proposes to redevelop the Compound and preserve four historic buildings. A new Community Complex will be built to provide extended non-profit making community services.

The Administration briefed the DEV Panel on Conserving Central conservation initiatives on 27 April 2010. To achieve a holistic conservation of the district rather than piecemeal conservation of historic buildings/sites, a member suggested that the Administration should consider designating Central and Sheung Wan as a historic town district. Further, as some of the proposed conservation projects would likely attract high pedestrian flow, the Administration should carry out an in-depth assessment on their traffic, environmental and social impacts.

35. At the DEV Panel meeting on 26 October 2010, the Administration put forth a proposal on the re-development of the West Wing of the Central Government Offices. While preserving the East and Central Wings, the Administration proposed to develop two-thirds of the West Wing site into a public open space, with the remaining one-third of the land reserved for a Grade A office/commercial building. Some members felt strongly that the Central Government Offices should be preserved as a whole, and were worried that the building of new office/commercial complex on site might generate additional burden to the aggravating environment and traffic condition of Central. After some discussion, members agreed that a special meeting should be held immediately after the DEV Panel meeting on 23 November 2010 to receive views on the proposed scheme from relevant deputations.

Latest development

36. The Administration will update members on the progress of a number of heritage conservation initiatives, including the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme, Central Police Station Compound,

Former Police Married Quarters site on Hollywood Road and Haw Par Mansion at the DEV Panel meeting on 23 November 2010.

Relevant papers

37. A list of relevant papers with hyperlinks is in **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
17 November 2010

Discussion by the Panel on Home Affairs on the new policy statement and initiatives

On 2 January 2008, the HA Panel discussed the new policy statement and the package of initiatives on heritage conservation. Members were, in general, supportive of the policy objective of enhancing heritage conservation efforts, but were dissatisfied with the slow progress and the lack of specific measures to protect privately-owned historic buildings.

Legislation and funding

2. Some members suggested the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (AMO) should be amended to define different levels of statutory protection for various grades of historic buildings. The Administration aimed to assess, by the end of 2008, some 1 400 historic buildings (including 495 already graded buildings) selected from around 8 800 buildings with over 50 years of age to ascertain how many of them were worthy of conservation but failed to meet the threshold for statutory protection under existing legislation.

3. Some members considered that more resources should be provided for heritage conservation and a fund should be set up to buy those privately-owned historic buildings which were under the threat of demolition. The Administration advised that a heritage conservation trust would be considered in the longer term, and, to this end, overseas experience on this matter would be studied.

Protection of historic buildings under private ownership

4. Some members were concerned that private owners lacked incentives to maintain their historic buildings. The Administration advised that it would engage stakeholders in devising appropriate measures such as land exchange and transfer of development rights. The Administration would also expand the present financial assistance scheme to cover repairs and regular maintenance of privately-owned declared monuments and graded historic buildings.

5. Some members were still worried that these private owners would redevelop their properties for profit unless statutory protection was built-in under AMO. However, adopting a policy which disallowed any structural

works or demolition in privately-owned historic buildings not declared a monument might reduce their property value at the expense of their owners.

Conservation approach

6. Some members criticized the lack of consistent and objective criteria of conservation approach. For example, King Yin Lei was preserved by way of land exchange, but the Administration did not propose to leave the Nga Tsin Wai Village intact despite its six hundred years of history. The Administration responded that the new heritage conservation policy statement laid down guiding principles for future heritage conservation work. In the case of the Nga Tsin Wai Village, its heritage value had been reduced by alterations and its dilapidated conditions; its conservation plan could satisfy the requirements of the Antiquities Advisory Board.

Revitalization Scheme

7. Members in general supported the Revitalization Scheme, but some were concerned about the maintenance responsibilities of the seven historic buildings included in the Revitalization Scheme. The Administration confirmed that it would continue to fund the maintenance and repair as these seven buildings were government properties. Some members urged the Administration to identify more historic buildings for revitalization. The Administration advised that it was drawing up another batch of historic buildings for the next round of the Revitalization Scheme. A member suggested that participating organizations needed not be restricted to charitable bodies under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, as long as they applied the proceeds from their operations as a social enterprise in the historic buildings for charity purpose.

Discussion by the Subcommittee on Heritage Conservation on specific projects

8. The HA Panel set up a subcommittee in June 2007 to follow up on projects which might affect buildings or sites with unique heritage value. Ten meetings were held, where seven buildings and sites of historic interest or cultural value affected by projects were discussed. These included the Queen's Pier, Nga Tsin Wai Village, Wan Chai Market Building, the open-air bazaar at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street, King Yin Lei at No. 45 Stubbs Road, the Central Police Station Compound, and the original site of the Central School at Hollywood Road. Stakeholders of some of the projects were also invited to join in the discussions. Following discussions, the Administration acceded to the Subcommittee's request to

devise a plan to preserve the entire open-air bazaar at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street, to improve the environment, and enhance the support facilities. On preserving King Yin Lei, the Administration assured the Subcommittee that the established procedures of lease modifications and charging of land premium would be strictly followed, and the same principles would be adopted in future cases involving transfer of development rights as a means to help preserve historic buildings under private ownership. The Subcommittee concluded its work in June 2008.

**Discussion by the Panel on Development
on implementation of heritage conservation initiatives
in December 2008**

Point-line-plane approach in heritage conservation

Some members suggested that the district-based approach for planning the preservation and revitalization of historic and graded buildings could also be applied in other districts such as the Kowloon City district and various areas in the New Territories. A member considered that the concept of a historic town district could be adopted for the conservation of the heritage sites in the vicinity of Hollywood Road with the provision of necessary ancillary facilities.

2. The Administration advised that creating a historic town district was difficult to realize in Hong Kong due to its economic development in the past. The Frontier Closed Area might provide an opportunity for this idea, however. Heritage trails or heritage conservation initiatives based on the plane concept could be planned in other districts like Ping Shan and Stanley. The conservation of the vicinity of Hollywood Road included heritage buildings and sites, and integration of the new and the old might be the future direction in conserving the characteristics of the district and attracting pedestrian flow.

Executive agents for conservation initiatives

3. As regards the availability of executive agents for conservation initiatives, the Administration advised that while the Urban Renewal Authority acted as the executive agent for the Administration's district-based conservation initiatives in the old Wan Chai area, the Administration had to find executive agents for conservation initiatives in other districts. As District Councils had no executive powers at present, they could not act as executive agents to implement heritage conservation, district enhancement and other initiatives.

4. In this regard, individual members made the following suggestions --

- (a) consideration could be given to establishing an authority to be responsible for planning and managing historic town districts;

- (b) the Hong Kong Housing Society could act as an executive agent for heritage conservation initiatives;
- (c) since District Councils were willing to carry out conservation initiatives, the Administration should look into and resolve the relevant structural issues; and
- (d) District Councils could appeal to interested parties to set up non-governmental organizations to carry out heritage conservation initiatives, which should be guided by approved development schemes or plans.

Protecting privately-owned heritage buildings from damage

5. Members were concerned whether the Administration would and had the necessary means to take prompt action in protecting privately-owned heritage buildings from damage. The Administration advised that it would, in future, inform private owners of Grade I buildings of the status and historic significance of their buildings, and could declare those buildings as Proposed Monuments for temporary statutory protection. The Administration would provide economic incentives to private owners for conservation of heritage buildings as appropriate. Furthermore, financial support would be provided to private owners of graded buildings which were not declared as monuments to facilitate renovation and conservation of those buildings.

6. A member commented that for some important heritage buildings such as King Yin Lee, the conservation should also cover the parts, decorations and furniture of the buildings. The Administration advised that it had to consider the relevant legal aspects.

Conservation arrangements for certain buildings/sites

7. Regarding the conservation of the Central Police Station Compound, a member commented that the project lacked transparency. Instead of informing the public at a late stage, the Administration should have provided regular progress reports. The Administration responded that it had maintained transparency in the conservation of the Central Police Station Compound, and it would provide further details to the public and the Central and Western District Council when the revised proposal was ready.

8. Regarding the Central Market, some members considered that the Administration should remove the site of the Central Market from the Application List and conserve it so as to maintain a cluster of heritage buildings in Central. The members suggested that the Central Market could be used for exhibition, catering, arts and cultural purposes. The Administration responded that the site of the Central Market had been on the Application List for many years. As the Administration had to strike the right balance between conservation and development, it had no intention to remove that site from the Application List at present.

9. For the revitalization of the Blue House Cluster, a member urged the Administration to request participating organizations to discuss their proposals with the affected residents. Members also urged the Administration to address residents' need for toilet facilities. The Administration assured members that discussion with the affected residents of the Blue House Cluster who chose to stay would continue, and the Administration was exploring the feasibility for them to participate in choosing the organization for undertaking the revitalization project. In revitalizing historic buildings, providing sanitary facilities, barrier-free access facilities, fire services, and the like, would be basic requirements. The Blue House Cluster was merely at a transitional stage pending revitalization¹.

10. On a member's concern about the conservation of the Yau Ma Tei Police Station, which was a Grade III building, the Administration advised that the Administration would try to minimize the effect of the Central Kowloon Route on it.

Economic incentives for conservation of privately-owned historic buildings

11. Expressing support for the land exchange conservation approach adopted for King Yin Lei, a member asked whether the same approach would also be applicable to the conservation of heritage buildings and heritage villages in the New Territories. The Administration responded that it would adopt a consistent stance in providing economic incentives, such as land exchange or additional development rights, for conservation of privately-owned historic buildings. The needed economic incentives to achieve the policy objective would have to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Administration would explore with individual private owners

¹ Subsequent to the Panel meeting, the Administration provided supplementary information vide LC Paper No. CB(1)553/08-09(01) on its follow-up actions regarding the provision of toilet facilities for the residents.

of heritage buildings and consult the public if a viable arrangement could be identified.

Collaboration with District Councils in promoting heritage buildings and sites

12. A member suggested that as the Administration lacked sufficient resources for implementing a large number of conservation projects at the same time, it should engage District Councils in heritage conservation work, such as promoting local cultural tours and giving advice on the grading of and producing publications about heritage buildings and sites. Professional bodies and tertiary institutions could be engaged to conduct research studies on heritage buildings and sites. The Administration advised that it had collected and used publications on antiquities sponsored by District Councils in the past. Many of those publications were written by university scholars. Collaborating with District Councils in promoting heritage buildings and sites to the public would be the Administration's direction in heritage conservation.

Public access to revitalized historic buildings

13. With reference to the Woo Cheong Pawn Shop in Wan Chai, a member urged the Administration to strike a balance between the financial viability of revitalization projects and the affordability of the facilities in revitalized historic buildings to the general public. In response to another member's suggestion, the Administration advised that it would open up Grade II and Grade III Government buildings as far as practicable subject to resources constraints.

Heritage conservation

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Papers/Minutes of meeting
22 March 2004	Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel)	<p>Consultation document on "Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy" http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/chinese/panels/ha/papers/hacb2-rbhcp-ce.pdf</p> <p>Administration's paper on "Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1734/03-04(03)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0322cb2-1734-3e.pdf</p> <p>Summary of discussion at meetings between LegCo Members and Wong Tai Sin District Council [LC Paper No. CB(2)1734/03-04(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0322cb2-1734-4e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)2000/03-04] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha040322.pdf</p>
9 November 2004	HA Panel	<p>Administration's paper on "Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy" [LC Paper No. CB(2)155/04-05(02)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1109cb2-155-2e.pdf</p>

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		<p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)343/04-05] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha041109.pdf</p>
16 October 2006	HA Panel	<p>Administration's paper on "Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau" [LC Paper No. CB(2)29/06-07(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1016cb2-29-01-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)531/06-07] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha061016.pdf</p>
9 March 2007	HA Panel	<p>Administration's paper on "Built Heritage Conservation Policy" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1215/06-07(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0309cb2-1215-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on "Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1215/06-07(02)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0309cb2-1215-2-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1725/06-07] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha070309.pdf</p>
20 April 2007	HA Panel	<p>Administration's paper on "Views and Suggestions Received from the Public on the Review of Built Heritage Conservation Policy" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1599/06-07(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0420cb2-1599-1-e.pdf</p>

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		Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)2585/06-07] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha070420.pdf
10 October 2007	--	Legislative Council Brief on "Heritage Conservation Policy" [File Ref: DEVB(CR)(W) 1-55/68/01] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha-devbcrw1556801-e.pdf
15 October 2007	HA Panel	Administration's paper on "Driving Development, Preserving Heritage -- Initiatives of Development Bureau in the 2007-08 Policy Address and Policy Agenda" [LC Paper No. CB(2)59/07-08(02)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1015cb2-59-2-e.pdf Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)851/07-08] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha071015.pdf
2 January 2008	HA Panel	Administration's paper on heritage conservation policy [LC Paper No. CB(2)637/07-08(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1220cb2-637-1-e.pdf Administration's paper on heritage-related initiatives in old Wan Chai area [LC Paper No. CB(2)700/07-08(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha0102cb2-700-1-e.pdf Administration's paper on Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme [LC Paper No. CB(2)637/07-08(03)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1220cb2-637-3-e.pdf

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		<p>Paper on heritage conservation policy prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(2)637/07-08(02)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/papers/ha1220cb2-637-2-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1692/07-08] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/minutes/ha080102.pdf</p>
1 February 2008	Finance Committee	<p>Administration's paper on "Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme" [FCR(2007-08)52] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/papers/f07-52e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. FC128/07-08] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc080201.pdf</p>
21 February 2008	Establishment Subcommittee	<p>Administration's paper on "Proposed Creation of the Post of Commissioner for Heritage in Works Branch of Development Bureau" [EC(2007-08)16] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/esc/papers/e07-16e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. ESC26/07-08] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/esc/minutes/es080221.pdf</p>
25 April 2008	Finance Committee	<p>Administration's paper on "Proposed Creation of the Post of Commissioner for Heritage in Works Branch of Development Bureau" to seeks approval of the recommendations of the Establishment Subcommittee made at its meeting held on 21 February 2008 [FCR(2008-09)1]</p>

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		<p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/papers/f08-01e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. FC30/08-09] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc080425.pdf</p>
13 June 2008	HA Panel	<p>Report of the Subcommittee on Heritage Conservation [LC Paper No. CB(2)2217/07-08] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ha/ha_hec/reports/ha_heccb2-2217-e.pdf</p>
15 July 2008	--	<p>Legislative Council brief on conservation and revitalisation of the Central Police Station Compound: The Hong Kong Jockey Club's Proposal [File Ref: DEVB(CR)(W)-1-150/76] http://www.heritage.gov.hk/en/doc/LegCoBriefCPS.pdf</p>
22 October 2008	Panel on Development (DEV Panel)	<p>Administration's paper on "Initiatives of the Development Bureau in the 2008-2009 Policy Address and Policy Agenda" http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1022cb1-55-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)233/08-09] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20081022.pdf</p>
2 December 2008	--	<p>Legislative Council brief on the proposed non-in-situ land exchange for the preservation of King Yin Lei at 45 Stubbs Road, Hong Kong [File Ref: DEVB/CS/CR 4/1/56] http://www.heritage.gov.hk/en/doc/LegCoBriefKYL.pdf</p>

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19 December 2008	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on heritage conservation -- an update on key initiatives [LC Paper No. CB(1)396/08-09(03)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1219cb1-396-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Administration's paper on public toilets available for use by residents of Blue House Cluster (Follow-up paper) [LC Paper No. CB(1)553/08-09(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1219cb1-553-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(1)396/08-09(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1219cb1-396-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)1348/08-09] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20081219.pdf</p>
24 February 2009	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme [LC Paper No. CB(1)816/08-09(03)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0224cb1-816-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Administration's paper on revitalization of historic buildings through Partnership Scheme -- Batch I & Batch II (Follow-up paper) [LC Paper No. CB(1)1358/08-09(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0224cb1-1358-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on Revitalizing Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No.</p>

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		<p>CB(1)816/08-09(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0224cb1-816-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)1633/08-09] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20090224.pdf</p>
28 April 2009	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme -- conversion of old Tai O Police Station into Tai O Heritage Hotel [LC Paper No. CB(1)1347/08-09(07)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0428cb1-1347-7-e.pdf</p> <p>Administration's paper on progress report on heritage conservation initiatives [LC Paper No. CB(1)1347/08-09(08)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0428cb1-1347-8-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(1)1347/08-09(09)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0428cb1-1347-9-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)2336/08-09] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20090428.pdf</p>
28 July 2009	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on progress report on heritage conservation initiatives [LC Paper No. CB(1)2342/08-09(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0728cb1-2342-4-e.pdf</p>

Date of meeting	Committee	Papers/Minutes of meeting
		<p>Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(1)2342/08-09(05)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0728cb1-2342-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)479/09-10] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20090728.pdf</p>
21 October 2009	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on initiatives of Development Bureau in the 2009-10 Policy Address and Policy Agenda [LC Paper No. CB(1)30/09(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1021cb1-30-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)397/09-10] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20091021.pdf</p>
30 March 2010	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on progress report on heritage conservation initiatives and revitalisation of the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital into Jao Tsung-I Academy/Hong Kong Heritage under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme [LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0330cb1-1447-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No. LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(05)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0330cb1-1447-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)1920/09-10] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20100330.pdf</p>

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27 April 2010	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on Revitalisation of Mei Ho House as City Hostel and Revitalisation of Lui Seng Chun as the Hong Kong Baptist University Chinese Medicine and Healthcare Centre under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme [LC Paper No. CB(1)1666/09-10(03)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0427cb1-1666-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(1)1666/09-10(04)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0427cb1-1666-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)2248/09-10] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20100427.pdf</p>
26 October 2010	DEV Panel	<p>Administration's paper on proposed redevelopment scheme for West Wing of Central Government Offices [LC Paper No. CB(1)2867/09-10(01)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/devcb1-2867-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on conserving Central - redevelopment scheme of West Wing, Central Government Offices prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) [LC Paper No. CB(1)155/10-11(08)] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1026cb1-155-8-e.pdf</p>