

Information Paper

Conversion of the Bethanie into the Second Campus of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

This paper aims to brief members on the project to convert the Bethanie at 139 Pokfulam Road into the second campus of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (APA).

Background

2. The Bethanie was built in around 1875 as a sanatorium by the Missions Étrangères de Paris. The gross floor area of the building is approximately 2370 square metres. The site was occupied by the Dairy Farm Company in 1975 and then by the University of Hong Kong in 1978. Since 1997, it has been left vacant as a Government building.

3. The APA is a government-subsidized institution providing training and education in the performing arts. The APA has grown considerably since its inception in 1985 in terms of student numbers and diversity of programmes. The available teaching facilities which were designed for 600 students are now housing up to 750, a 25% increase. For the past few years, the APA has been experiencing acute shortage of space. A second campus at the Bethanie will help alleviate the problem in short term.

Project

4. The project is based on a feasibility study on the adaptive re-use of the Bethanie conducted by the Architectural Services Department in 2000. It is considered that the proposed use by APA is compatible with the characteristics of the Bethanie.

5. In the project, the cowsheds adjacent to the Bethanie are included as an integral part. The APA will restore the Bethanie to its original architecture, including reinstating the original form of the pitch roof. Apart from the campus amenities, the design proposal

incorporates two performing spaces, an exhibition gallery, a place of worship and a museum. The museum will depict the historic origins of the Bethanie and highlight the historic links to the adjacent village and the dairy farm which formerly occupied most of the Pokfulam area.

Project Schedule

6. The proposed works will start in August 2003 for completion by end of June 2004 and occupancy by the APA at the commencement of the 2004/05 academic year.

Financial Implications

7. The project is estimated to cost \$74.76 million. Funding proposal on the project will be considered by the Public Works Subcommittee on 29 January 2003.

Home Affairs Bureau
December 2002