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古物諮詢委員會
Antiquities Advisory Board

By Fax and Email

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4 January 2011

Dear Mr Lam,

Panel on Development
The Old Stone Wall of St. Andrew's Church Compound

Thank you for your letter dated 3 November 2010 to the Chairman of the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) on a public submission to the Panel on Development on the captioned subject.

Grading of the historic buildings in the St. Andrew's Church compound

The St. Andrew's Church compound, located at 138 Nathan Road, Kowloon, and currently accorded a Grade 2 status¹, comprises four historic

¹ Historic buildings are graded (viz. Grade 1, Grade 2 or Grade 3) based on six assessment criteria: historic interest, architectural merit, group value, social value and local interest, authenticity and rarity. The grading system is an administrative arrangement to provide an objective basis for determining the heritage value and the preservation need of a historic building as follows –.

- Grade 1 status refers to buildings of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve if possible.
- Grade 2 status refers to buildings of special merit; efforts should be made to selectively preserve.
- Grade 3 status refers to buildings of some merit; preservation in some form would be desirable and alternative means could be considered if preservation is not practicable.

Buildings that do not meet the threshold for grading are ungraded.

buildings, namely St. Andrew's Church building, the Vicarage, the Amah's Quarters and the Caretaker's Quarters.

In the assessment exercise for the gradings of 1 444 historic buildings identified in a territory-wide survey, the above-mentioned cluster of historic buildings was proposed to be given a Grade 1 status. This exercise involves assessment carried out by an independent expert panel of the heritage value and the proposed gradings of the identified historic buildings, public consultation conducted by an independent statutory board, the AAB, on the proposed gradings in 2009, and subsequent confirmation of the finalized gradings by the AAB.

The AAB, supported by the expert group, is now in the process of finalizing the gradings of the 1 444 historic buildings, including the grading for the cluster of historic buildings in the St. Andrew's Church compound. The expert panel and the AAB will take into account the views received from the landowners and the public, such as those on the rubble wall at the St. Andrew's Church, in coming to a decision.

Monument declaration is a matter for the Antiquities Authority (i.e. the Secretary for Development), after consultation with the AAB and with the approval of the Chief Executive, under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53). The Antiquities Authority will consider a place, building, site or structure for declaration as a monument if its heritage significance has reached the high threshold required and having regard to other relevant factors. The same approach will be observed in considering the merits for monument declaration for the St. Andrew's Church compound.

Proposed construction of an underground auditorium

In the course of 1994-1997, St. Andrew's Church (the Church) proposed redevelopment plans that would involve demolition of the historic buildings within the Compound. The AAB expressed their views on the need for preserving the historic buildings. The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) has conveyed the views of the AAB to the Church for consideration.

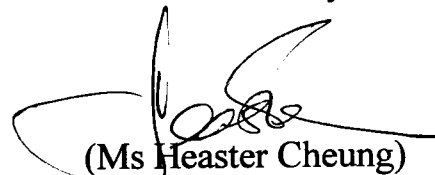
Taking account of the views received from the AAB, the Church further revised its redevelopment plan and proposed instead in June 2009 the construction of an underground auditorium at the existing slope and landscaped area abutting Nathan Road. The proposed redevelopment plan falls within the scope of permitted use under the land lease for the site. Under this revised proposal, all four historic buildings within the site boundary of the

church will be preserved while additional underground space will be made available to meet the functional needs of the Church. In this revised design, the rubble wall along Nathan Road was proposed to be removed to make way for the entrance of the new underground auditorium. The Church intended to salvage the rubbles of the existing wall for re-use in the site as decorative features. During the consultation with the AAB on the Church's revised proposal on 9 September 2009, some AAB members expressed support for the proposal as the proposed underground structure would preserve the historic buildings on the site intact while some other members considered that the existing rubble wall along Nathan Road should be retained.

The AAB requested the AMO to continue to explore possible preservation options with the Church while noting the Church's aspirations for enhanced service provision. Following these discussions, the Church agreed to further revise the proposed design of the underground auditorium whereby some stones from the existing rubble wall will be used to adorn part of the central portion of the new wall facing Nathan Road. This revised design preserves all four historic buildings on the site and seeks to keep the impact on the existing layout of the site to the minimum. When the AAB was consulted on the revised design on 31 August 2010, some AAB members expressed reservations and were in favour of retaining the existing rubble retaining wall as far as practicable. As advised by the AAB, AMO has conveyed the views of AAB members to the Church for its consideration.

The AAB values public views on this matter and will take them into account when tendering advice to the Antiquities Authority to facilitate formulation of proposals that best address the need of heritage conservation and the views of all stakeholders.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Heaster Cheung)
for Chairman of the
Antiquities Advisory Board

c.c. Antiquities and Monuments Office

(Attn.: Mr Tom Ming)