

Legislative Council Panel on Development

**Preservation of ancient wells within the works site of the To Kwa Wan
Station of the Shatin to Central Link**

With regard to the views raised by Hon Charles Peter MOK, Hon Kenneth LEUNG and Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok in their letter dated 9 December 2014, our responses are as follows.

Since 2012, we have enhanced the notification system for the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB), the public and the District Councils (DCs). On the one hand, the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) provides regular reports to the AAB on the progress of various archaeological projects and submit the sections in Environmental Impact Assessment reports on archaeological related issues to the AAB, the same information will also be uploaded onto AAB's website. On the other hand, the AMO will also closely monitor the archaeological work, including providing relevant comments to and participating in the discussions with archaeologists, conducting site visits, etc. On receipt of notification from the archaeologists on important archaeological discoveries and preliminary assessments of the heritage value of the archaeological discoveries, the AMO will examine and analyse the relevant information. When necessary, the AMO will invite other experts to give their views on the discoveries. The AMO will report to the AAB before notifying the concerned project proponent and archaeologist whether the conservation option is agreed. If such archaeological discoveries are significant or of public concern, the AMO will report the discoveries to the AAB under a specified agenda item, and arrange site visits for AAB members.

All reports compiled by the archaeologists upon completion of the archaeological works will be uploaded onto AMO's website. If discoveries of special archaeological, paleontological or historical interest are found and the archaeologist has not yet completed the compilation of the archaeological report, we will first upload the information paper for notifying the AAB onto AMO's website for public viewing, and a copy of the paper will also be submitted to the relevant DC for reference in a timely manner.

Regarding the archaeological work and discoveries at the works site of the To Kwa Wan (TKW) Station of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL), we have separately consulted the AAB, the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Development and the Kowloon City District Council (KCDC). Members of the AAB, members of the KCDC, some LegCo members, and the media have conducted site visits to the works site of the TKW Station of the SCL separately. The AMO and the Commissioner for Heritage's Office of the Development Bureau have also met with various organisations to exchange views on issues related to the handling of and the arrangements for interpreting these unearthed archaeological finds and remains, including holding two meetings with the Sacred Hill Saver and sending representatives to attend the public forum organised by the Sacred Hill Saver, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Professional Commons on the preservation of archaeological remains discovered at MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL)'s SCL works site. The preservation options proposed by these organisations have been submitted to the relevant departments and the MTRCL for further study.

Since April 2014, the AMO has submitted monthly reports on the progress of the archaeological work and discoveries at the works site of the TKW Station of the SCL to the AAB and the Secretary for Development. The AMO has also proactively reported the same at AAB meetings and arranged site visits for AAB members. The monthly progress reports have also been uploaded onto AMO's website. The AAB meetings are open to public and the public can assess the meeting minutes from AAB's website. All completed archaeological reports compiled by the archaeologists have also been uploaded onto AMO's website. Throughout the archaeological excavation, we have been maintaining a high level of transparency and kept the public abreast of the progress of the archaeological works and discoveries. The public has also expressed their views on the matter from time to time. Moreover, in relation to the archaeological finds unearthed at the works site of the TKW Station of the SCL and the handling of these archaeological finds, the AMO has, on numerous occasions, consulted the local, Mainland and overseas archaeological sectors, including obtaining views from ceramic experts and archaeologists. Therefore, the consultation for and announcement of the preservation options for the concerned remains were not carried out in a hasty manner, and the views of the AAB, concern groups and other experts have also been fully taken into consideration. In future, we would conduct further consultation

with the stakeholders and the public on the interpretation option for these important remnants.

Development Bureau

January 2015