

For discussion on
7 June 2021

Legislative Council
Panel on Development and Panel on Home Affairs
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the
West Kowloon Cultural District Project

Update on the Development of
the Hong Kong Palace Museum

PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the progress of the hardware and software development in relation to the Hong Kong Palace Museum (HKPM).

BACKGROUND

2. HKPM is a collaborative project between West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA or the Authority) and Palace Museum (PM). The capital cost of HKPM is fully funded by a donation of HK\$3.5 billion from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. The museum is scheduled to open in mid-2022.

3. On 1 June 2020, the Authority updated the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project (Joint Subcommittee) on the development of HKPM (LC Paper No. CB(1)668/19-20(03)).

POSITIONING AND MISSION

4. HKPM aspires to become one of the world's leading cultural institutions committed to the study and appreciation of Chinese art and culture, while advancing dialogue among world civilisations through international partnerships. Embracing new curatorial approaches, the museum will offer a Hong Kong perspective and a global vision, presenting the finest objects from PM and other leading cultural institutions around the world.

5. HKPM will contribute to the development of Hong Kong as a hub for arts and cultural exchanges between Mainland China and the rest of the world, as set out in the “Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People’s Republic of China and the Long-Range Objective Through the Year 2035”. HKPM is envisioned as a prestigious international museum but also fundamentally a cultural resource for Hong Kong people. It will create a dynamic and innovative platform to inspire and engage the community, encourage dialogue and partnership, and promote creativity and cross-fertilisation. HKPM will also provide schools and teachers with access to learning resources on Chinese art and culture in support of the current school curriculum.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

6. HKPM has a site footprint of around 13 000 square metres (m²) and a gross floor area of around 30 000 m², comprising a 7-storey building and one level of basement. The building facilities include a 400-seat auditorium, exhibition galleries, activity rooms, a restaurant, three cafeterias and a museum shop. Ancillary facilities include offices, workshops, loading and unloading areas and close to 50 car parking spaces (including motorcycle parking spaces). The museum is adjacent to the Art Park and connected via a newly constructed Park Ramp to the entrance podium area. The design concept of the HKPM building is a fresh interpretation of Chinese aesthetics, drawing inspiration from traditional art and architecture, as well as Hong Kong’s urban environment.

7. Piling works commenced in April 2018 and were completed in April 2019. The main construction contract, comprising all the substructure, superstructure, architectural, building services installations and external work, commenced in March 2019.

8. The main structure of the building comprises conventional reinforced concrete frame with high strength steel-concrete composite columns. Structural steel trusses cantilevered from the cores are required at the upper floors to cater for the unusual building form, which is tapering from the top to the bottom. The double skin façade of the museum building consists of fair-faced reinforced concrete wall with metal cladding system.

9. The aluminium perforated false ceiling is the main focus and feature of the interior public space. To contrast with the golden

colour false ceiling, a dark grey colour flamed finished granite is selected for the floor for improving slip resistance and easy maintenance. White granite cladding is provided on both sides of the escalators to visually guide the way up. Glass-fibre Reinforced Gypsum fins lined along the upper part of the atria for an overall curtain effect. Behind these fins are sound-absorbing acoustic panels to create a relatively tranquil space indoors. At ground level the walls are cladded in Glass-fibre Reinforced Concrete panels to create a low-key ambience, highlighting only the crimson colour portals leading to the Galleries.

10. As at the end of April 2021, the construction of building façade and Emergency Vehicular Access has been substantially completed. Internally, Architectural Builder's Works and Finishes are progressing well for completion in the third quarter of 2021. Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing and fire services installations have been substantially completed and in the final stage of testing and commissioning. Statutory inspections have started in mid-May 2021, with the aim of obtaining the Occupation Permit (OP) in the third quarter of 2021 and Practical Completion (PC) by the end of 2021.

11. Due to social events in 2019 and the ongoing adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately six weeks of delay has been encountered during construction. However, by implementing a series of mitigation measures, approximately three weeks of the delay in the programme has been recovered. The Authority is confident that PC will be achieved as scheduled by the end of 2021, in order to meet the target opening of the museum in mid-2022.

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

Governance

12. WKCDA incorporated Hong Kong Palace Museum Limited in March 2018 as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Authority. The Board of Directors of Hong Kong Palace Museum Limited (HKPM Board) was then established to formulate the vision and mission, as well as strategies, policies, and guidelines in relation to curatorial matters, professional standards, and operation of HKPM. The HKPM Board consists of 16 members and is chaired by Mr Bernard Chan. A list of the Board members is at **Annex 1**.

Opening Exhibitions

13. HKPM has nine galleries for two types of exhibition. Seven galleries will be staging thematic exhibitions lasting one year or longer, while two galleries will be staging special exhibitions lasting three to six months. In five of the thematic exhibition galleries, visitors will explore the art treasures, culture and history of PM. These exhibitions will tell the fascinating stories about the imperial court, key historical figures, as well as PM's architecture and collection. A rich and diverse selection from PM collection, including painting, calligraphy, decorative art, and textiles will be featured. In addition, one thematic exhibition gallery is devoted to the vibrant local art collecting culture, and another will allow visitors to experience new works by Hong Kong contemporary artists in dialogue with PM objects.

14. The two special exhibition galleries will regularly present special exhibitions featuring Chinese art, as well as art and treasures from other parts of the world in dialogue with Chinese culture. Details of the galleries and the proposed exhibitions to be presented upon the opening of HKPM are at **Annex 2**.

15. HKPM has confirmed with PM the list of over 800 loaned exhibits. The list will be finalised following review and approval by relevant authorities in the Mainland.

International Cooperation

16. Taking advantage of its partnership with PM, HKPM aims to be a major global museum with international reach and impact, and will share PM's valuable cultural resources with international audience. It will develop international cooperation through strategic cultural partnership, touring exhibitions on world civilisations and professional training.

17. HKPM is developing a robust international network of partners and supporters, reaching out to over 70 museums and collections around the world. This is critical to the building of HKPM's international reputation and visibility, as well as its capacity to organise major international exhibitions and to secure scholarship and attachment opportunities. This will be beneficial to the training of staff who can learn from best practices around the globe.

Collection, Research and Publication

HKPM Collection and Acquisition Policy

18. In addition to the loaned exhibits from PM, HKPM will establish its own collection by acquiring items, particularly through gifts and donations, of works of art and antiquities, painting and calligraphy, and history and heritage. It will also collect significant works by modern and contemporary artists inspired by or in dialogue with traditional Chinese art and culture. WKCD will set the Acquisition Strategies and Acquisition Guidelines of HKPM, which will direct the development of HKPM's accessioned / permanent collection and establish selection criteria and approving procedures to ensure that only legitimate and authentic works of art and culture, of artistic excellence and historical significance, will be acquired.

Research Fellowship with PM

19. HKPM and PM are preparing to launch a multi-year fellowship programme in 2021-22 with the aim of sharing expertise and best practices and creating opportunities for professional development between the two museums. It is anticipated that three mid-career PM experts in the fields of exhibition design and curation will be in residence at HKPM for a period of three to six months, contributing fully to the ongoing exhibition and publication planning activities that lead to the successful opening of HKPM. This fellowship programme is also designed to provide training opportunities for new staff of HKPM, as well as enhance professional ties and scholarly exchanges between the staff of the two museums.

Publication Strategy

20. HKPM aspires to become a leader in museum publishing locally, regionally, and internationally by producing the best publications on Chinese art and culture for diverse audiences. It will focus both on scholarly and popular / educational contents. High-profile, high-quality, and appealing publications help build HKPM's reputation as a world-class museum, a powerhouse for original scholarship, and a cultural and educational resource for the people of Hong Kong. It will leverage and utilise PM's significant resources to develop both scholarly and popular titles of the highest quality by international standards. HKPM will also consider digital publishing. In order to widen the reach of HKPM publications, it will diversify the

distribution channels beyond the museum shop and local bookstores, by engaging stakeholders outside Hong Kong. It plans to publish four books to celebrate the 2022 opening thematic and special exhibitions.

Learning and Public Engagement

Learning Centre

21. Adopting a contextual model of museum education, the learning centre is designed to meet visitors' learning, personal and sociocultural needs prior to the visit, during the visit and after the visit. Film screenings, public lectures, exhibitions of students' works, Chinese calligraphy and painting workshops, digital artmaking stations, arts activities for community wellness, handicraft classes for family and children, short courses on arts and culture will be provided in the auditorium, foyer and four spacious activity rooms in the HKPM building. Books, learning materials and teaching kits will be available for public access in the resource centre.

School Partnership Programme

22. As a global, forward-thinking museum in the 21st century, HKPM is committed to inspiring meaningful conversations, new ways of learning, heritage innovation and a culture of inclusion through art, cultural heritage and history.

23. HKPM's School Partnership Programme aims to support students to explore the role that art, culture and heritage play in society, find new ways of thinking and talking about the past, and unlock their creativity. HKPM will design the programme with a deep understanding of the diverse learning capabilities, needs and interests, and then engage students, teachers and school community intellectually, experientially and inclusively through the museum's collection, programmes, outreach activities and dissemination of knowledge. As a resource centre for Chinese art, history, and culture, HKPM will provide professional development for educators and support for students with various learning needs.

Community Engagement Programme

24. The Community Engagement Programme is made up of four key components:

- (i) Volunteer programme
This will be a flagship programme engaging museum lovers and people who have a passion for Chinese culture. The participants will be invited to attend exclusive workshops, seminars and other training programmes hosted by scholars, curators, artists and professional trainers. Well-trained volunteers will assist in various learning and engagement programmes in the future.
- (ii) Inclusive initiatives
HKPM values inclusion and will spare no effort to ensure that all visitors enjoy barrier-free museum visits in our programmes and events.
- (iii) Community programmes
HKPM aims to provide opportunities for the public or community groups to collaborate with local artists to create artworks or mini performances together in order to embrace diversity in Chinese art and culture.
- (iv) Outreach exhibitions
To promote appreciation of Chinese art and culture, roving exhibitions or related programmes will be organised in different districts of Hong Kong regularly.

Digital and Arts Tech

25. Digital culture and technology are changing the way we experience and consume contents and interact with one another. As a museum with foresight, HKPM is committed to collaborate closely with artists, educators, designers and the creative and technology sectors to open up new ways of learning and experiencing art, cultural heritage and history through cultivating immersive storytelling, digitally-embedded museum environment and engaging digital contents. In the opening exhibitions, HKPM will showcase PM's art treasures with new digital technologies to make the visitor experience inspiring, educational and engaging. It is planning to have the digital wall located at the entrance of the Learning Centre displaying multimedia works created by emerging and young local artists to promote innovation and creativity of Chinese art and culture.

26. The lockdown amid the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation and presented a unique opportunity for museums and cultural organisations to tap into the enormous potential of digital

technology and social media to engage with new audience, explore collections in new light, transform online learning and ultimately, rethink the entire visitor experience. It is a key part of HKPM's learning and engagement strategy to experiment with the evolving digital culture and inspire active learning by leveraging emerging tech and digital platforms.

Cultural Enterprise

27. HKPM will have about 1 400 m² of net floor area dedicated for food and beverage services. The area will comprise of three cafés located on LG/F and one restaurant located on 4/F. It will also create a vibrant and inspiring space for people to socialise and explore Chinese art and culture.

28. HKPM will have a museum shop with approximately 500 m² of net floor area located on G/F of the museum. A wide variety of cultural and creative products will be for sale at the museum shop that will help further promote HKPM to Hong Kong, Mainland and international visitors.

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

29. From December 2020 to May 2021, HKPM conducted a series of stakeholder engagement sessions with various groups in the community to gather their views and opinions on museum operation and programmes and to update them on the latest development of the HKPM project. Roundtable meetings and on-line exchange sessions were organised to engage key opinion leaders, experts and practitioners from the arts and cultural sector, museum directors, curators, school principals and teachers, Government's advisory bodies on arts and culture as well as general public. Participants shared their views and advice on museum collections, global and regional partnership, accessibility provisions and volunteer programmes. Over 420 teachers and principals from 207 schools and institutes joined the three educator sessions held from January to March of 2021 during which they expressed their expectations on learning resources relevant to curriculum changes as well as student interests in respect of interactive arts tech elements, conservation workshops and young docent training opportunities.

Pre-opening Audience Building Events

30. HKPM is devoted to a series of pre-opening public programmes to reflect HKPM's institutional goals by offering enlightening and educational experience for the audiences. The programmes to be presented will focus on and align with the positioning of HKPM as one of the leading museums in the region that is committed to fostering understanding and appreciation of Chinese art and culture from a Hong Kong perspective and with a global vision. The programmes will help increase public awareness of the positioning of HKPM and identify the interests of target audiences, thereby benefitting the future programme planning of HKPM.

Online Palace Museum Culture Lecture Series

31. Presented by HKPM, the online Palace Museum Culture Lecture Series is held from April 2021 to June 2022, featuring leading experts from the PMs in Beijing, Taipei, and Hong Kong. Highlighting exchanges, dialogues, and sharing of academic prowess from the three museums, the lecture series introduces the distinctive expertise of PM scholars to the public, bringing PM culture to life.

32. The inaugural lecture featuring Deputy Director Ren Wanping of the PM was held in April 2021. It received positive responses on social media and post-event email feedback. Reaching out to local and non-local audiences in Mainland China, Taiwan, and overseas countries, the lecture series demonstrates HKPM's vision to foster understanding and appreciation of Chinese art and culture globally. As an extended effort, HKPM will continue to collaborate and invite more speakers from the three museums to shed light on the variety, essence, and importance of Chinese art and culture, with topics ranging from the architecture of the Forbidden City to the art collections and culture of the imperial court.

Hong Kong Book Fair 2021

33. HKPM will present a 'Creative Learning' showcase at Hong Kong Book Fair 2021 to be held from 14 to 20 July 2021 to amplify the presence of HKPM and inspire the public to reimagine the future of learning in museums. Through creative storytelling, digitally-mediated presentation and interactive engagement, the showcase is curated around five core elements – architecture, art & artefact, play, community and digital – to discover what it means to 'EXPLORE.EXPERIMENT.ENGAGE'. In addition, as part of HKPM's participation in the Fair, three public seminars will be presented to

offer a glimpse into HKPM's new curatorial approach, much-anticipated exhibitions and hidden gems in Chinese art and culture.

Fine Art Asia 2021

34. A specially commissioned HKPM booth will be set up at Fine Art Asia 2021 in October 2021 to inform visitors about the progress of HKPM project, the museum's mission and forthcoming programmes. Fine Art Asia is recognised as Asia's leading international fine art fair with a rigorous jury process for the selection of exhibiting galleries and offers outstanding exposure to art sellers, collectors, and antique enthusiasts from around the globe. HKPM will showcase a contemporary interpretation of Chinese art and culture by incorporating cutting-edge multimedia technologies and offering a brand-new visit experience. Accompanying programmes will include panel discussions, public talks, workshops, and performances.

ADVICE SOUGHT

35. Members are invited to note the progress on the development of HKPM.

**West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
June 2021**

List of Board Members of HKPM

Chairman

1. The Hon Bernard Charnwut CHAN, GBM, GBS, JP

Vice Chairman

2. Professor LEE Chack-fan, GBS, JP

Members (Non-Public Officers)

3. Professor Raymond FUNG Wing-kee, JP
4. Mr Andy HEI Kao-chiang
5. Mrs Nancy Maria LEE CHANG, JP
6. Ms Nisa Bernice LEUNG Wing-yu, JP
7. Mr LOU Wei
8. Professor Harold MOK Kar-leung
9. Ms Yolanda NG Yuen-ting, MH
10. Ms Helen SO Hiu-ming
11. Professor Joseph TING Sun-pao, BBS
12. Mr TSANG Tak-sing, GBS, JP
13. The Hon Robert TANG Ching, GBM, SBS, JP

Members (Public Officers)

14. Mrs Cherry TSE LING Kit-ching, JP
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs
Alternate Member
Ms Kinnie WONG Kit-yee
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs
15. Mr Vincent LIU Ming-kwong, JP
Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
Alternate Member
Ms Elaine YEUNG Chi-lan
Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Culture)

WKCD A Representative

16. Mrs Betty FUNG CHING Suk-yee, JP
Acting Chief Executive Officer, WKCD A

Annex 2**Details of Galleries and Proposed Opening Exhibitions**

Gallery	Floor	Theme	Opening Exhibitions	Area (m²)
1	G/F	History and Culture of the Forbidden City and the Palace Museum	'Entering the Forbidden City' (Duration: 2 years)	820
2	1/F	Court Culture, Art and History: Life at the Qing Imperial Court	'A Day inside the Forbidden City' (Duration: 2 years)	1 610
3	2/F	Chinese Art (Ceramics)	'Treasures of Imperial Ceramics from the Palace Museum' (Duration: 2 years)	790
4	2/F	Chinese Art (Paintings and Calligraphy)	'Portraits of Emperors and Empresses' (Duration: 1 year)	670
5	2/F	Chinese Art (Decorative Arts)	'Traditional Craft Meets Contemporary Design' (Duration: approx. 2 years)	840
6	3/F	Collectors, Collections, and Collecting in Hong Kong	'Art Collecting in Hong Kong' (Duration: approx. 1 year)	640
7	3/F	Experiencing Chinese Art and Culture in New Ways	'Contemporary Art in Dialogue with Palace Culture' (Duration: approx. 2 years)	500

Gallery	Floor	Theme	Opening Exhibitions	Area (m²)
8	3/F	Special Exhibition	'Masterpieces of Painting and Calligraphy from the Palace Museum' (Duration: 3 months) (2022)	1 050
9	4/F	Special Exhibition	'Art and Culture of the Horse' (Duration: 6 months) (2022)	880
			Total approx.	7 800