

NHB survey on heritage sites gets the thumbs up

BY MELODY ZACCHEUS

THE first survey of Singapore's heritage sites and structures will kick off within "the next two months".

The National Heritage Board (NHB) yesterday revealed more details of the project, which will study places of architectural, historical, cultural, social or educational significance. It will also include sites or structures completed in or before 1980.

The survey aims to do a stock-take on the current state of heritage buildings and sites here, and was first announced by Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Lawrence Wong in March.

The effort is expected to cost approximately \$1 million.

NHB said that the exercise will have two components.

The first involves "desktop research", which will tap on maps, newspaper records, archival material and other publications to consolidate data about a place.

The second involves field work, which will document and photograph the geographic coordinates, typology, and physical condition of the structure or site.

If information is limited, interviews with the community and other stakeholders will be conducted. The survey is expected to take about 16 months.

The board will use its findings to work with the Urban Redevelopment Authority at each stage of land planning. This includes the 10-year Concept Plan or the five-year Master Plan.

Significant buildings and structures identified through the survey could undergo further research for possible preservation or conservation.

NHB chief executive Rosa Daniel said the exercise is a step forward in enhancing the country's capabilities in research, documentation and commemoration.

"As Singapore's population grows, it is important to ensure

that in tandem with intensified development, there are increased efforts to preserve our heritage," she said.

NHB said that it adapted the heritage survey from similar ones done in other cities.

The board cited Hong Kong's 1996 survey, in which more than 8,800 historic buildings built before 1950 were identified. This was followed by more in-depth research and assessment to identify buildings of greater heritage value.

Singapore's version will be guided by members of a newly formed eight member Heritage Advisory Panel comprising architecture, geography, sociology, anthropology and history experts.

They include Brenda Yeoh, dean of the National University of Singapore's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; Eric Chin, director of the National Archives of Singapore; and Zahidi A. R. Arkitek's principal architect, Zahidi Abdul Rahman.

The heritage community welcomes the survey as it represents the first step towards a more long-term strategic plan for heritage issues.

Kevin Tan, president of the International Council on Monuments and Sites Singapore, said that, for the survey to be effective, the criteria for what constitutes a heritage building should be "crafted as widely as possible".

For it to be truly comprehensive, he believes that surveyors should comb every square metre of the Republic.

"Such a scan will help the authorities consider everything in an area as comprehensively as possible, to help them uncover new stories and things they didn't know about places before," he said.

Heritage enthusiast and editor Choo Lip Sin believes the survey will help the authorities make more informed decisions.

He hopes there will be space for public input to be factored into the exercise, "beyond what the authorities value as heritage".

A separate survey on the country's intangible heritage, spanning cultural activities and traditional trades or businesses, will be launched at the end of the year.

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文物局展开全国性调查 更全面认识我国历史遗址

刘丽仪

国家文物局将在今年中针对我国的文化遗产展开历来最全面的一项全国性调查，以更全面认识本地各处的历史遗址和它们的文化及历史价值。

这项调查涵盖富有建筑、历史或文化特色的建筑物、建筑结构、遗址和景观。至于非物质文化遗产 (Intangible heritage) 方面，文物局预计会在今年底才进行相关的调查。

文物局昨天发文告说，这项调查的主要目的是盘点本地的历史建筑和遗址，进一步了解本地的文化遗产现况，以作为长远规

划文物保留的依据。

文化、社区及青年部长兼通讯及新闻部第二部长黄循财今年3月在国会拨款委员会辩论文化、社区及青年部的开支预算时首次透露这项调查。

他说，有了调查与研究结果后，文物局将与市区重建局携手合作，无论是我国的10年发展概念图或5年发展蓝图，日后在规划土地用途时，每个阶段都会考虑到有关建筑或历史遗址的文化及历史价值。

文物局也说，这项调查结果所标示的重要建筑物和建筑结构，当局将会进一步展开研究，研究结果可作为是否要保存或保留的考虑因素。

以特色建筑物和遗址为主

这项调查主要针对在1980年前落成，富有建筑、历史或文化特色的建筑物或遗址，或曾进行对国家或社会发展造成影响的相关历史活动，以及富有社会、文化或教育价值的建筑物和遗址等。

调查将从两个方向着手，除了从档案中找出相关资料，如报章报道、刊物、地图、存档资料等，同时也展开田野调查，例如通过描述、摄像等记录文化遗产目前的状况，包括名字、地点、类型、用途、地理坐标 (geographical coordinates)、建筑外观等现况。

如果资料有限，当局会通过访问当地人或其他相关人士来收

集更多相关资料。

其他公共机构也可查阅这个调查所收集的资料和研究结果，作为它们日后在进行各阶段规划时，可将建筑物的文化和历史价值列入考量。

**保存古迹努力
须跟得上城市发展步伐**

国家文物局局长陈慧说，这项调查对于当局在文化价值的了解和认知上很重要。当新加坡人口增加，确保保存古迹的努力必须跟得上城市快速发展的步伐就显得更重要。

文物局也表示，这项调查仿效在其他城市如香港、澳大利亚墨尔本等所采用的做法。以香港为

例，香港曾在1996年针对历史建筑展开调查，它标示出超过8800栋在1950年之前建成的建筑物后，再通过更深入的研究来更好地保存这些建筑物的文化价值。

调查将由国大文学暨社会科学院院长杨淑爱为首的文化遗产咨询小组 (Heritage Advisory Panel) 指导，这个刚成立的小组成员包括非政府机构代表和各领域专家。

杨淑爱说，小组成员来自不同领域和背景，可为这项计划增值，也能在文化课题上提供不同看法。在制定调查的进行方式时，可结合他们的专业和经验，确保在建筑文物的记录方面做得更全面。