

Legislative Council Panel on Commerce and Industry

Proposed new Customs Headquarters Building

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' support for a proposal to construct a headquarters building for the Customs and Excise Department ("C&ED").

Background

2. At present, C&ED's offices and facilities are scattered throughout Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. While its main offices are located at the Harbour Building, due to lack of additional space there, C&ED has put a number of offices and facilities at different locations (Annex A) over the last decade to meet its needs for expansion.

Proposal

3. C&ED proposes to construct a headquarters building to centralise its dispersed offices in one location.

4. The proposed project involves the construction of a 35-storey building on a site of about 2 944 square metres at Tin Chiu Street, North Point.

5. The proposed building will provide the following offices and facilities for C&ED -

- (a) offices for command and control, intelligence processing, investigation, information technology support, and general administration;
- (b) general facilities including interview rooms, detention rooms, an identification parade room, strong rooms, night-duty rooms, meeting rooms, a building maintenance office and stores, a multi-function room, a customer services centre and licensing office, a resource centre and library, a display and exhibition room, a multi-purpose mess, a canteen, a recreation room, a fitness room, a printing room, a driver's waiting room and vehicle accessories store, and carpark space; and
- (c) specialised facilities including a radio command control centre, a computer room, a computer forensic laboratory, an armoury, and an indoor firing range.

A schedule of accommodation is at Annex B.

6. In addition, the project will include reprovisioning of the existing Marble Road refuse collection point (“RCP”) adjoining the site. A temporary RCP will be provided adjacent to the site during the construction period.

7. A site plan of the project is at Annex C.

Justification

Improve operational efficiency

8. As many of the operational offices are now geographically dispersed, command and control are less effective and efficient, especially during large-scale operations. Centralizing these offices under one roof will significantly improve operational efficiency.

Enhance security

9. Some operational offices are located in general office buildings that are accessible to the public and are shared with some other Government departments. The security measures adopted in those buildings do not fully meet C&ED’s security requirements. The proposed building will enable C&ED to impose access control in high security zones for maximum security. Apart from this, the conveyance of arrested persons and seized goods in lifts and passages of shared office buildings often creates inconvenience and embarrassment to other users.

Some existing offices need reprovisioning

10. Both the Kai Tak Government Building and Canton Road Government Offices Building have been scheduled for redevelopment. The operational offices accommodated at these buildings need reprovisioning as they will be vacated by the end of 2003. Similarly, the operational base of C&ED investigators presently located at Rumsey Street Multi-storey Carpark Building will need reprovisioning as the building has been identified for redevelopment.

Need additional accommodation and facilities

11. Currently, C&ED requires additional office space of about 2 500 m² to meet its operational needs.
12. C&ED also needs to improve some existing facilities or add new facilities to meet operational requirements. These include -
 - (a) upgrading and equipping 15 interview rooms with video-recording equipment to increase transparency and enhance admissibility of records of interview with suspects;
 - (b) upgrading the radio command control centre to enhance enforcement capability;
 - (c) providing night-duty rooms equipped with lockers and changing facilities for officers who perform overnight duty or standby duty during emergency situations. At present, such officers have to use their offices or the toilet for changing clothes;
 - (d) adding an indoor firing range - the outdoor firing range at Tai Lam has been used for more than 20 years. It is inadequate and is below prevailing standard. Over the years, C&ED has been relying on the firearm training facilities of other disciplined services to supplement its needs. Such ad hoc arrangement is unsatisfactory;
 - (e) adding an identification parade room - at present, C&ED has to share with other disciplined services the use of identification parade rooms. This has hampered operational efficiency and may compromise confidentiality of cases; and
 - (f) adding a multi-function room - this will be used for holding large-scale briefings, seminars and conferences as well as having ceremonies.

Financial implications

13. The total capital cost of the project is estimated to be \$1,143.3 million at September 2001 price level.
14. The construction floor area (CFA) of the proposed building is 66,314 square metres. The estimated construction unit cost (as represented by the costs of building and building services at \$ 788.2 million) is \$11,886 per square metre of CFA.

15. The additional annual recurrent expenditure arising from the project is \$ 38.5 million.

16. If the existing C&ED offices in Annex A are relocated to the proposed building, about 18,000 square metres of Government-owned office accommodation and about 110 Government owned carpark spaces could be released for use by other departments or for redevelopment. In addition, about 1,360 square metres of rented office accommodation and three rented carpark spaces will no longer be needed, resulting in cost saving of about \$2.5 million per year.

Public consultation

17. C&ED and the Planning Department consulted the Eastern Provisional District Board on the proposed headquarters building in November 1998. While not objecting to the project per se, some members of the Board opined that the site concerned might be better used for the provision of welfare facilities instead. They suggested the Government to consider using the site of the North Point Vehicular Ferry Pier or some alternative site in the New Territories for the project. The Government representatives explained that there was a need to retain the Ferry Pier. The proposed location suited the operational needs of C&ED and would be convenient to the public using C&ED's services.

18. In October 2001, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department consulted the Eastern District Council's Environment and Hygiene Committee on the proposed reprovisioning of the RCP at Marble Road. Members supported the proposal.

Economic benefits

19. We estimate that the proposed project will create 810 jobs comprising 20 professional staff, 60 technical staff and 730 labourers.

Way forward

20. Subject to the support of this Panel, we plan to submit the proposed project to the Public Works Subcommittee in June and the Finance Committee in July 2002 for approval. We plan to start construction works in 2003 for completion in 2006. We will tender the project as a design-and-build contract.

**Existing Locations of C&E Offices to be Relocated to
Customs Headquarters Building**

(I) Hong Kong

Location	Premises	Major Formations/Facilities
Central	Harbour Building	<p><u>Offices</u></p> <p>Directorate's Office Office of Departmental Administration Office of Service Administration Office of Dutiable Commodities Administration Office of Management Services Office of Financial Administration Computer System Operations Division General Investigation & Systems Bureau Management Support Team Information Unit Internal Audit Division</p> <p><u>Facilities</u></p> <p>Armoury, strong room, counters for public, shroff, meeting rooms, computer room</p>
Central	Rumsey Street Multi-storey Carpark Building	<p><u>Offices</u></p> <p>Customs Drugs Investigation Bureau Customs Intelligence & Liaison Bureau Formation Inspection Team</p> <p><u>Facilities</u></p> <p>Armoury, video interview rooms, interview rooms, detention rooms, strong room, exhibit stores, radio command control centre, mess, canteen, fitness room, library, exhibition display room</p>

Location	Premises	Major Formations/Facilities
Central	*Wing Shan Building	<u>Offices</u> Supplies Section Training Consultation & Coordination Section Financial Investigation Group
Causeway Bay	*Victoria Centre	<u>Offices</u> Land Enforcement Division
North Point	North Point Government Offices Building	<u>Offices</u> Office of Information Technology Consumer Protection & Prosecution Bureau Translation Section Higher Training Division Motor Vehicle Valuation Group <u>Facilities</u> Meeting rooms, computer room, computer forensic laboratory, classrooms, counters for public, dangerous goods store

(II) Kowloon

Location	Premises	Major Formations/Facilities
Tsim Sha Tsui	Middle Road Multi-storey Carpark Building	<u>Offices</u> Complaints Investigation Group Operations Division of Special Task Force <u>Facilities</u> Detention rooms, interview rooms, exhibit stores, computer training room
Yau Ma Tei	Canton Road Government Offices Building	<u>Offices</u> Marine & Land Enforcement Command Valuation & Verification Division <u>Facilities</u> Armoury, exhibit rooms, video interview room, interview room, detention rooms, conference room, counters for public
Kowloon City	Kai Tak Government Building	<u>Offices</u> Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau Anti-illicit-Cigarette Task Force <u>Facilities</u> Video interview rooms, interview rooms, detention rooms, meeting room, exhibit stores, counters for public
Kowloon Bay	Nan Fung Commercial Centre	<u>Offices</u> Strategic Trade Investigation Division

(III) New Territories

Location	Premises	Major Formations/Facilities
Tsuen Wan	Tsuen Wan Government Offices Building	<u>Offices</u> Training Development Group
Kwai Chung	Kwai Chung Customhouse	<u>Offices</u> Administration & Support Division of Special Task Force

Remarks :

- (1) * denotes leased premises
- (2) The existing staff establishment of all offices to be relocated to the proposed Customs Headquarters Building is about 1,870.

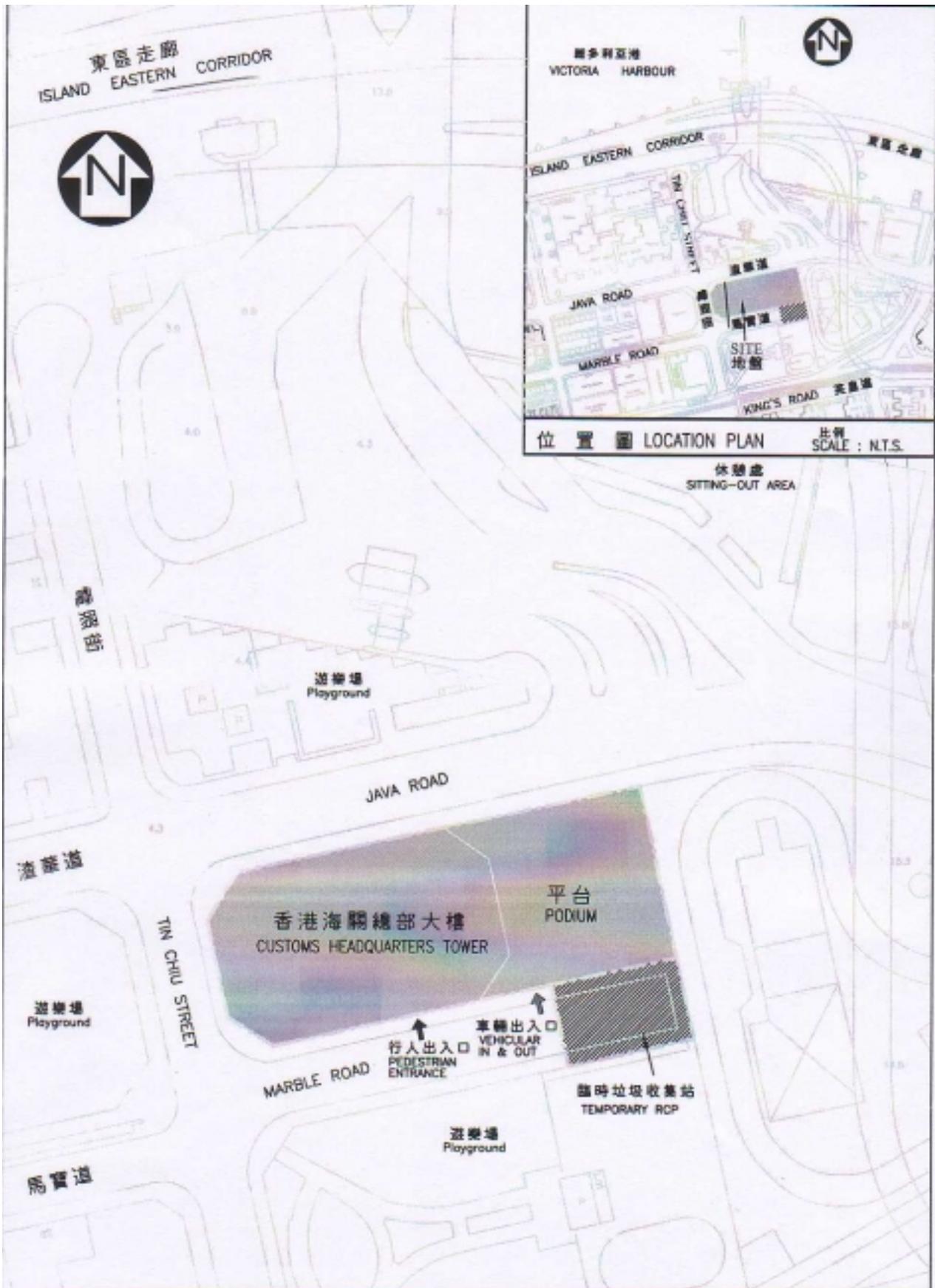
**Schedule of Accommodation
of the Proposed Customs Headquarters Building**

Facilities	Existing Area (m ²)	Area required (m ²)
A) Office Area		
Office Area	16,982.9	19,498.1 (i.e. about 15% increase ¹)
B) Common Facilities		
<i>(i) Existing Facilities</i>		
• Video Interview Rooms	59.1	170.0 ²
• Radio Command Control Centre	43.2	287.0 ³
• Computer Room	424.0	906.3 ⁴
• Display and Exhibition Room	50.0	200.0 ⁵
• Night Duty Rooms	160.0	845.0 ⁶
• Building Maintenance Office and Stores	-	357.0 ⁷
• Computer Forensic Laboratory	63.2	250.0
• Armoury	200.6	309.9
• Detention rooms	116.3	153.0
• Strong Rooms	100.0	120.0
• Customer Services Centre and Licensing Office	709.6	886.6
• Resource Centre and Library	130.0	200.0
• Meeting Rooms	242.0	265.0
• Multi-purpose Mess	950.0	950.0
• Canteen	160.0	160.0
• Recreation Room	95.0	130.0
• Fitness Room	100.0	200.0
• Printing Room	10.0	20.0
• Driver's Waiting Room and Vehicle Accessories Store	15.0	45.0
• Carpark Space	189 nos.	201 nos.
<i>Existing Facilities Sub-total (m²):</i>	<i>3,628.0</i>	<i>6,454.8</i> <i>(i.e. about 78% increase)</i>

Facilities	Existing Area (m²)	Area required (m²)
<i>(ii) New Facilities</i>		
• Indoor Firing Range ⁸	-	1,239.0
• Identification Parade Room ⁹	-	145.0
• Multi-function room ¹⁰	-	300.0
<i>New Facilities Sub-total (m²):</i>	-	<i>1,684.0</i>
Total (m²):	20,610.9	27,636.9 (i.e. about 34% increase)

Notes :

- 1 The increase in total office area required is to cover the existing shortfall in office space for various Formations/Offices.
- 2 To increase the transparency and enhance the admissibility of records of interview with suspects, C&ED plans to provide 15 interview rooms with video interview systems in the proposed project.
- 3 A well-equipped and up-to-standard radio command control centre is required to enhance enforcement capability of the department.
- 4 Additional space is required for accommodating computer network equipment, including host machines for new computer systems. The proposed computer room will centralize the host machines of various computer systems presently located at the Airport, Central and Fanling.
- 5 The display and exhibition room will facilitate proper exhibition of items kept by C&ED which are of high historical and educational value. The area would be open for viewing by local and overseas visitors which helps to promote the public's recognition and awareness of Customs enforcement actions and legislation.
- 6 The night duty rooms with lockers and changing facilities will accommodate officers who are required to perform overnight duty and to standby during emergency situations. Due to shortfall of office space, the officers have to use their offices or toilets for changing clothes at present.
- 7 As C&ED is only one of the joint-users of the existing premises, no separate maintenance offices and stores is currently provided.
- 8 The outdoor firing range at Tai Lam has been used for more than 20 years. It is inadequate and is below prevailing standard. Over the years, C&ED has been relying on the firearm training facilities of other disciplined services to supplement its needs. Such ad hoc arrangement is unsatisfactory. The provision of an indoor firing range at the proposed project will help alleviate the shortage problem and provide training facilities to officers located in the proposed project.
- 9 Currently, C&ED shares the use of identification parade room with other disciplinary services. This has hampered operational efficiency and may compromise confidentiality of cases.
- 10 The multi-function room has a capacity for 300 people. It will be used for holding large-scale briefings, seminars and conferences as well as having ceremonies. Such a facility is considered operationally necessary for C&ED with over 5,000 disciplinary and civilian personnel. There are over 60 such events held by C&ED since January 2001.



Project Title (65KA)
北角電照街的
香港海關總部大樓

drawn by
approved

date
03/2002
date

drawing no.
AB/5990/XA001

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