

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Special Meeting on 30 November 2004

**Written Questions concerning West Kowloon Cultural District Issues
raised by Hon LEE Wing-tat**

1. Will the Government explain the vision and master plan of its cultural policy, and how such vision and master plan co-ordinate with the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District?
2. Earlier on, the Culture and Heritage Commission appointed by the Government published a Policy Report putting forward more than 100 policy recommendations. Will the Government give an account of how the relevant recommendations are being implemented?
3. Will the Government elaborate on the implementation of its policy on arts education at present, and how such policy co-ordinates with the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District?
4. Has the Government conducted any research study in respect of the cultural consumer behaviour of the public; if so, will it inform the Panel of the relevant details; if not, the reasons for that and whether it will commence such a study expeditiously?
5. What measures does the Government have in place to instil an interest in arts and culture in those members of the public who are not interested in such fields?
6. What measures are in place to prevent the development on the West Kowloon Cultural District from becoming a property development project in essence and supplemented with cultural facilities, thereby repeating the case of the Cyberport Project?
7. Has the Government considered dividing the relevant district into several parts for auction and using the proceeds so generated to develop cultural facilities and activities, or setting up a cultural fund with such proceeds to facilitate efforts in this respect?
8. Has the Government conducted any research to compare the different modes of development of the West Kowloon Cultural District in terms of land revenue and cultural development, including making comparisons between the smaller packages approach and the single package approach, so as to examine the social and economic impacts of the different modes of development; if so, will it inform the Panel of the relevant details; if not, the reasons for that?

9. With regard to the “Concept Plan Competition for The Development of an Integrated Arts, Cultural and Entertainment District at the West Kowloon Reclamation, Hong Kong” (Concept Plan Competition) launched by the Government in 2001, it was clearly stated that the objective of the competition was to invite conceptual proposals. However, the first prize winning concept plan has now become a “Construction Plan”. Will the Government inform the Panel of the the reasons for such a development?
10. In the third paragraph under “Section I — General Conditions” of the Competition Brief issued for the Concept Plan Competition, it is stated clearly that “a team will be appointed (by the competition organizer) through the normal consultants selection process, to finalize a detailed masterplan for the Scheme Area on the basis of the winning conceptual proposals, if appropriate.” In this connection, has the Government appointed a team through the normal consultants selection process mentioned in the Competition Brief to finalize a detailed masterplan for the Scheme Area on the basis of the appropriate winning conceptual proposals? If it has, will it inform the Panel of the relevant details; if not, the reasons for that?
11. In the fourth paragraph under “Section I — General Conditions” of the Competition Brief issued for the Concept Plan Competition, it is stated clearly that “based on the detailed masterplan, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will then decide on how the Scheme Area will be developed. Packages within the Scheme Area suitable for private sector development will be decided by public tender, which will be open to all. Subsequent architectural design competitions may be conducted for selected individual buildings/facilities.” In this connection, will the Government inform the Panel:
 - (a) given that the document issued by the Government was an “Invitation for Proposals” rather than an invitation to tender, whether it has violated the above undertaking made during the competition; and
 - (b) whether the architectural design competitions for selected individual buildings/facilities it referred to will still be conducted; if so, of the relevant details; if not, the reasons for that?
12. Now that the design of the canopy has become one of the Mandatory Requirements of the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District, will the Government inform the Panel of the meetings and procedures it has gone through in specifying the provision of the canopy as one of the Mandatory Requirements? Could the minutes of such meetings, if available, be made accessible to the public?

13. While the future maintenance and servicing costs of the canopy may be shifted to members of the public participating in cultural activities, the consortium concerned may also request for a premium reduction. In this connection, will the Government inform the Panel whether it has taken such considerations into account when specifying the provision of the canopy as one of the Mandatory Requirements; if it has, of the measures put in place to prevent the above situations from arising?
14. The Government has pointed out that adopting the single package approach to develop the District could ensure the consistency and sustainability of the Project. However, professional architects and planners have also expressed their views that the objective of consistency and sustainability could still be achieved even if the single package approach was not adopted, and that taking forward the project phase by phase would not give rise to any bridging problem. As such, will the Government inform the Panel whether it is technically not viable to resolve the consistency and sustainability issue if the project is to be carried out by several developers?
15. With regard to the Cyberport Project, will the Government inform the Panel of the annual financial return it earns from that project?
16. In granting the development right of the Cyberport by way of a private project agreement, the Government has pointed out that many information technology firms would move in as tenants and develop their business there. In this connection, will the Government inform the Panel whether there is any discrepancy between the number of tenants it has then referred to and the present situation; if so, of the relevant details?
17. Given that the required core arts and cultural facilities (including theatre complex comprising three theatres, performance venue, four museums of differing themes, art exhibition centre, water amphitheatre and piazza areas) are clearly listed in the Invitation for Proposals, and that the sitting capacities of the relevant facilities, their floor areas and uses have also been specifically set out, will the Government inform the Panel of the rationale or criteria it has based on in planning for the core facilities and specifying the required facilities as above?
18. Has the Government taken any initiative to consult the public as well as organizations and individuals from the arts and cultural sector on the facilities they need before making decisions on the required core facilities? If it has, will it provide the Panel with a list of the parties consulted?
19. Will the Government inform the Panel whether any arts and cultural organizations had written to or met with the relevant government departments to request for certain performance venues/museums before it decided to provide the said core facilities; if so, of the names of such organizations and the types of facilities they requested for?

20. Concerning the provision of the Museum of Ink, since valuable collections are currently kept by most national/private museums of arts as well as commercially-run art galleries, in future, the Museum of Ink may not have enough collections for exhibition, or it has to acquire collections at high prices. Will the Government inform the Panel whether it has taken into account such considerations when deciding to provide the Museum of Ink?
21. Will the Government consider revising the modes of operation of the arts and cultural facilities set out in the Invitation for Proposals to allow local arts and cultural organizations to participate in the operation and governance of the arts and cultural facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District?
22. According to the existing museums operated by the Government, the average cost per visitor trip ranges from \$60 to \$268. With regard to the future admission fees of the four museums in the West Kowloon Cultural District, will any mechanism be formulated to enable members of the public to enjoy the collections in the museums for an admission fee they can afford?
23. What measures does the Government have in place to ensure that the disadvantaged groups can also enjoy such arts and cultural facilities in future?
24. Will the Government inform the Panel of the criteria it based on in determining the ratio of arts and cultural facilities to property development components in the West Kowloon Cultural District?
25. In the Q&A Section of the Government's West Kowloon Cultural District website, the Government indicates in Q20 that proponents are expected to indicate in their Proposal their planned themes and content, including plans for developing local talent. However, according to paragraph 7.2(a)(vii) under "Section Seven: Legal Matters" of the Invitation for Proposals, it is specified that when the Provisional Agreement is under preparation, the successful proponent may still make modifications to the elements mentioned above. In this connection, will the Government inform the Panel whether the said modifications also include abandoning or reducing the plans for developing local talent?
26. Will the Government inform the Panel whether, in the event that the developer fails to complete the project as scheduled after securing the project agreement from the Government, it has in place any contingency plans to prevent the project from being left uncompleted; if so, of the relevant details?

27. According to the booklet on the “Invitation for Proposals: Development of West Kowloon Cultural District”, the purpose of the project is to “facilitate and enhance the cultural development of Hong Kong by way of good planning, as well as to create a prime tourist attraction.” As such, will the Government explain whether the objective of the project is to establish the District as the centre of international events with top facilities attracting renowned performance groups from overseas to stage performances there and thereby attracting more tourists? Will the Government also inform the Panel whether it has any plans to make use of the District to develop local arts and cultural talents; if so, of the relevant details; if not, the reasons for that?
28. Will the Government consider revising the modes of operation of the arts and cultural facilities set out in the Invitation for Proposals to allow local arts and cultural organizations to participate in the operation and governance of the arts and cultural facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District?
29. In the future, if the developer awarded with the development right of the West Kowloon Cultural District revises the original development proposal it has submitted, and no longer intends to develop a certain cultural facility, or wishes to reduce the scale of development, what measures will be put in place to tackle the situation?
30. In the event that after securing the development right from the Government, the developer concerned requests to increase the plot ratio of the commercial/residential components so as to ensure that it has enough capital to operate the arts and cultural components of the District, will the Government approve the developer’s request? Concerning the issue of making changes to the relevant plot ratio, will the Government inform the Panel of the application procedures the developer concerned has to undergo?
31. At the joint meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works and the Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council held on 23 November 2003, the Chief Secretary for Administration mentioned that the Invitation for Proposal was issued as an open invitation to the local and overseas proponents interested in the project, and that by then the government had already received written indication from eleven substantial entities expressing interests in undertaking this development. However, in the end, no proposals were received from any overseas proponents. In this connection, will the Government inform the Panel whether it knows the reasons why no proposals were received from any overseas proponents; if so, of the relevant reasons?