

SBCR 3/2831/94

6 June 2006

The Hon. LAU Kong-wah
Democratic Alliance for the Betterment
and Progress of Hong Kong
12/F, SUP Tower
83 King's Road, North Point
Hong Kong

Dear Mr LAU,

**Enquiries about the Expenditure on
the Redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institution**

Thank you for your letter of 2 June 2006 to the Secretary for Security. The replies to the four questions raised in your letter regarding the redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institution (LWCI) are set out below -

1. Expenditure on demolition works (in September 2005 prices)

Existing LWCI	\$3.60 million
The adjacent Lo Wu Saddle Club	\$1.90 million

Respective construction cost of the three new correctional institutions (in September 2005 prices)

	Two medium security correctional institutions each of 400 penal places (\$ million) (per institution)	One minimum security correctional institution of 600 penal places (\$ million)
Piling	35.50	56.30
Building	136.40	216.40
Building services	77.50	122.90
Furniture and equipment	35.62	36.17
Total:	285.02	431.77

Note: The construction cost of the shared facilities is allocated to the three institutions according to the ratio of their respective penal places.

The expenditures on site works, site formation & geotechnical works, external works, drainage & sewage treatment plant as well as consultant service cover the whole project. As such, the Architectural Services Department considers it difficult to break them down on an institutional basis. The total amount of these expenditures is \$187.40 million. The sum of all the expenditures above is \$1,194.71 million. Together with the contingency reserve of \$107 million, the total expenditure of the project is therefore estimated to be about \$1,300 million (in September 2005 prices).

2. Taking into account the projected shortfall and the more acute demand for female penal facilities, we plan to accommodate mainly female prisoners in the new institutions at Lo Wu to alleviate the overcrowding situation in female penal institutions. In order to provide the flexibility for accommodating prisoners of both genders in the new institutions, sitting toilets will be installed in the new institutions in place of urinals. Moreover, the workshops will be fitted out for industries suitable for both male and female prisoners (e.g. tailoring, book-binding and manufacture of sanitary masks). As to facilities such as visit rooms, dining halls, dormitories and hospitals, their design is normally non-sex-specific. Generally speaking, the flexibility to accommodate male and female prisoners can be achieved through adjustment in the design of the relevant facilities, and thus will have little implication on the construction cost as a whole.
3. The total area of the redevelopment project is about five hectares. To minimise the visual impact of the new prisons on the surrounding rural landscape, the height of prison buildings will be kept under 13 meters. Besides, taking into account the space standards of penal facilities and the operation and security needs, the Architectural Services Department considers that the proposed redevelopment project (providing 1 400 penal places) has maximised the capacity of the site, and there is little room for expansion. In fact, over 90% of the 76 940m² construction floor area to be generated by the redevelopment project will be occupied by facilities directly related to prisoners (such as dormitories, dining halls and kitchens, workshops, hospitals, and rehabilitation areas). We have also planned to place certain supporting facilities (such as the sewage treatment plant, switch rooms, and store rooms) underground so as to spare as much space above ground as possible.

4. To alleviate the problems of prison overcrowding and ageing penal facilities, we have been actively looking for feasible and cost-effective solutions. Having considered the degree of public acceptance and the pressing need to solve the problems of ageing penal facilities and to meet the demand for more penal places, we are of the view that, at this stage, in-situ redevelopment of existing institutions will be a faster and more cost-effective solution than to look for new sites for building new institutions.

In considering the redevelopment of LWCI, we have planned that the following facilities will be shared among the two medium security institutions and the minimum security institution so as to fully utilise the land, and to achieve cost-effectiveness -

- Kitchen
- General office
- Hospital
- Visitors registration room
- Rehabilitation facilities, e.g. the community education centre, libraries, classrooms, multi-media learning centres, religious activities rooms, parent-inmate centres, etc.

Such an arrangement will enable a more cost-effective provision of the various services in the new institutions. As mentioned in paragraph 9 of our paper submitted to the Public Works Sub-committee, the construction unit cost of the redevelopment of LWCI is \$9,970 per square metre. The Architectural Services Department considers it reasonable as compared to that of other government design-and-build projects.

Yours sincerely,

Signed

(Kenneth Cheng)
for Secretary for Security

c.c: Public Works Sub-committee

b.c.c.:

Commissioner of Correctional Services (Attn: Mr YING Kwok-ching)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Attn.: Mrs Elina CHAN)