



政府總部
民政事務局

香港灣仔
告士打道五號
稅務大樓
四十一樓

GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

HOME AFFAIRS BUREAU
41/F, REVENUE TOWER
5 GLOUCESTER ROAD
WAN CHAI
HONG KONG

本局檔號 OUR REF : L/M 179/2006 to HAB/C 2/12/1

來函檔號 YOUR REF:

電話 TEL. No. : 2594 6607

電郵地址 E-mail : pckkwok@hab.gov.hk

圖文傳真 FAXLINE : 2802 4893

25 May 2006

The Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Joanne MAK)

Dear Ms Mak,

**Renovation of Libraries Phase 2 –
Supplementary Information to Panel on Home Affairs**

As requested by Members at the meeting of the Panel on Home Affairs on 12 May 2006, we write to provide supplementary information on the above project in the paragraphs below.

Need for the proposed works

All the six libraries included under phase 2 of the renovation of libraries project were opened in the 1980s. Their layouts, setting and facilities were designed to meet the needs at the time. Public expectations of library services nowadays, on the other hand, are substantially different from those of the 1980s. Over the years, for instance, there has been a strong demand for a more extensive use of sophisticated information technology in the provision of public library services. In response to this

demand, the Hong Kong Public Libraries has installed different automation systems such as book detection system, self-charging machines, and provided computer terminals in libraries for users' access to the internet and use of multi-media library materials. A proper layout is required to accommodate these facilities. The proposed renovation works will improve and upgrade the layout as well as the overall setting of the libraries concerned, enabling them to meet the present-day requirements. It will also ensure the smooth functioning of library operation and proper use of resources. The renovation works is therefore considered necessary.

Reprovisioning of Yuen Long Public Library

Yuen Long Public Library (YLPL) is located at 1/F, Yuen Long Government Offices, 2 Kiu Lok Square. It would be reprovisioned under the Public Library and Indoor Recreation Centre in Area 3 in Yuen Long, which is one of the 25 priority projects announced in CE's Policy Address in January 2005. Under a fast-track programme, the project is expected to commence construction in late 2008 for completion in late 2011. The site of the new library is located adjacent to the Yuen Long Theatre. The new library would be commissioned in 2012 (six months after the completion of the project taking into account the pre-commissioning preparatory work).

The existing YLPL has been in use for over 20 years and has not undergone any major renovation. There is an urgent need for improvements to the overall environment, internal fitting and facilities to meet the present-day library requirements. In view of the anticipated commissioning of the new library in 2012, the proposed scope of renovation for the existing library has been adjusted to cover only the essential items such as expanding the existing computer room to a computer and information centre, improving the overall layout of the library and upgrading the air-conditioning system. The project cost of the renovation works is estimated at \$5.98M and will be carried out as a minor works item in 2006-07.

Reprovisioning of Yau Ma Tei Public Library


The Yau Ma Tei Public Library (YMTPL) is located at the Yau Ma Tei Multi-storey Carpark Building. The Carpark Building would be demolished to make way for the implementation of the Central Kowloon Route (CKR) and the tentative schedule for commencement of construction is set for 2011-12. The decanting of the YMTPL would be

completed by March 2011. We consider it not appropriate to undertake major renovation works for the library at this stage. Notwithstanding this, apart from regular maintenance, the YMTPL had undertaken minor improvement works in 2001-02. According to the present planning, the YMTPL will be reprovioned to the planned new Yau Ma Tei Multi-storey Carpark Building at Ferry Street. The project is expected to commence construction in 2008.

Consultation with District Councils

We consulted the concerned District Councils (DCs) between January to April 2006 on the proposed renovation of the six libraries under phase 2. At the request of the Wanchai DC, we jointly conducted with the DC two public consultation sessions in February 2006 on the renovation of the Lockhart Road Public Library. Moreover, we had gauged the views of library users on the proposed renovation works through a series of customer liaison meetings conducted in November 2005. A table setting out the details of these public consultation sessions is at the Annex.

Yours sincerely,


(Peter Kwok)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

c.c. D Arch S (Attn: Mrs Celina Kwok) Fax No. 2523 9622
DLCS (Attn: Mr Y M Lee) Fax No. 2696 9263
(Attn: Mrs Karen Yuen) Fax No. 2695 3886

Renovation of Libraries Phase 2 Works

District Public Library	Date of Customer Liaison Meeting (No. of Attendees)	Date of Consultation with the District Council	Date of the Public Views Exchange Forum	Public Views	Government Response
<u>Eastern</u> Quarry Bay Public Library	12.11.05 (8)	23.3.06		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is hoped that the works can be completed as early as possible, so as to minimise the inconvenience to the public. Works should be avoided during public examination periods. • The overall layout and environment of the Library are quite outdated and the readers are unable to use the library resources effectively. This will even affect their reading mood. • A separate spacious computer room should be provided. • The Newspaper and Periodicals Section on the 5/F is used mostly by senior citizens who need to use the internal staircase on the 4/F to get access to the section. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The works will be completed as early as possible and we will avoid carrying out the works during public examination periods. • A new layout will be worked out for the Library to meet the needs of present-day readers. Improvement will be made to the overall environment, including the walls, flooring and service counters, etc. • A multimedia library/computer and information centre will be provided. • The Newspaper and Periodicals section will be relocated to the 4/F; and the area will be partitioned off to ensure quietness.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the equipment, such as newspaper racks, is old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old equipment such as newspaper and magazine racks

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					will be replaced to meet the needs of the public.
<p><u>Yau Tsim Mong</u> Fa Yuen Street Public Library</p>	<p>19.11.05 (8)</p>	<p>9.2.06</p>	<p>-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall layout and environment of the Library are quite conventional and outdated. During the examination period, part of the Library may be used as study room; individual seats should be provided in the Students Study Room and the lighting system be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new layout will be worked out for the Library to meet the needs of present-day readers. Improvement will be made to the overall environment, including the walls, flooring, service counters, etc. Other facilities such as outdated furniture will be replaced. Due to limited space, other areas in the library will have to be reduced if the Students Study Room is to be expanded. Individual seats will be provided in the Students Study room and lighting will be designed according to the standard requirements.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is hoped that computer terminals with internet access and word-processing softwares will be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Multimedia Library/Computer and Information Centre will be provided. Computers in the latter can be used for accessing the internet and word-processing.

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Kwun Tong Shui Wo Street Public Libraries	26.11.06 (8)	24.1.06	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall layout and environment of the Library are quite outdated. The lending counter is small and is often packed with readers. It is hoped that the environment of the Library would be improved through the renovation works. • The Library does not have a computer and information centre. • The newspapers and periodicals section is too small and the furniture is old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new layout will be worked out for the Library to meet the needs of present-day readers. Improvement will be made to the overall environment, including the walls, flooring and service counters, etc. Other facilities such as outdated furniture will be replaced. • A multimedia library/computer and information centre will be provided. • The newspapers and periodicals section will be expanded and the furniture will be replaced.
Sha Tin Sha Tin Public Library	26.11.05 (14)	23.2.06 and 27.4.06	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More public toilets should be provided. • The Students Study room should be expanded and more seats should be provided. Users are easily disturbed by others when they use the existing large desks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff toilets will be opened to readers. • In order to provide more seats, the Students Study room will be expanded. Individual seats will also be considered.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have enquired about the library services during the renovation period. • They have asked for information on the differences between the existing layout and the new layout after the renovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The works will be carried out by phases. Core services will be maintained during the renovation period. The works for the Students Study room will be carried out during the summer holidays so as to minimise the disturbance to the public. • The overall environment of the library will be improved by replacing its fitting and fixtures, changing its layout and replacing its facilities so as to bring it in line with the up-to-date requirements on building and fire safety; • The existing Audio-visual Library will be upgraded to a Multimedia Library and a Multimedia Information System will be installed; • The Computer and Information Centre will be expanded and a lecture room designed for computer talks will be provided; • A thematic reading area will be

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					<p>provided in the Children's Library; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All bookshelves will be replaced and rearranged to store more books.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be a greater variety of books and IT facilities should be updated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In view of our readers' rising demand for information in digital form, we have increased our provision of on-line services and e-books, and have also digitalised old pictures, maps and books for on-line browsing.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More desks and seats should be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renovation works will improve the overall environment and settings, offering readers with more reading and writing facilities as well as more seats in the limited space.

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Wan Chai Lockhart Road Public Library	28.11.05 (17)	7.3.06	18.02.06 (21) and 25.2.06 (24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maximize the use of space and sunlight, and to create a cosy and intact feeling. • The General Office for staff originally proposed to be located at the centre of the 4/F should be relocated so as to vacate the central part of the floor for public use. It will make the area appear more spacious. • Discussion rooms should be provided for public use. • A small stage should be provided in the Children's Library. The bookshelves should be arranged in an irregular manner that gives users a lively impression. • A coffee corner for readers to take a break should be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View accepted. • Proposal adopted. • Two discussion rooms will be provided. • Proposal adopted. • Proposal adopted.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vinyl flooring in wood-like appearance should be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal adopted.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original false ceiling makes people feel cramped. To install indirect lights to achieve a comfortable setting A Computer and Information Centre should be provided in the library. The number of computer facilities should be increased. As far as possible, 3-seaters or 4-seaters booths should be set up in the Multimedia Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The false ceiling will be raised as far as possible. View accepted. A Computer and Information Centre will be provided with an increased number of computers. Suggestion accepted.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional entrances / exits on the 4/F should be provided for the convenience of readers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of more entrances / exits will require additional manpower. This cannot be arranged for the time being owing to the current stringent manpower.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Children's Library should be relocated from the 5/F to the 4/F. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4/F is not very large. If the proposal is implemented, the

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					Children's Library will become smaller. Moreover, as parents and their children will have to use the staircase between the 4/F and the 5/F, this will inevitably disturb other readers. Hence, the Children's Library will remain on the 5/F.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Steering Committee to follow up on public opinions about the renovation works should be formed. Its members should comprise District Council members, and representatives from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Architectural Services Department, and the District Office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views accepted. The Steering Committee held its first meeting on 15.5.2006.
<u>Kowloon City To Kwa Wan Public Library</u>	27.11.05 (19)	23.2.06	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design of the Library should basically give people a lively impression and the conventional dull setting of an office should be avoided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal adopted.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More public toilets should be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owing to the limited space in the

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				provided in the Students Study Room. The staff toilets should also be opened for public use.	library, more public toilets cannot be provided. The public may request the use of the staff toilets if necessary.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper and magazine lending services should be provided when the works are in progress. • The project is supported and it is understood that the works will bring about temporary inconvenience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the works are in progress, the library will maintain limited services of lending and renewal of books, newspapers and magazines as well as the provision of internet service.