

## **NOTE FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Supplementary information on**

**340EP - A 24-classroom primary school at Inverness Road,  
Kowloon City**

**339EP – A 30-classroom primary school at Fuk Wing Street,  
Sham Shui Po**

**341EP – An 18-classroom primary school at Fuk Wing Street,  
Sham Shui Po**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC), at its meeting held on 31 October 2007, voted in support of the captioned school projects as proposed in the papers referenced **PWSC(2007-08)46** and **PWSC(2007-08)47**. Members requested the Administration to provide the following supplementary information before the PWSC's recommendations are put to the Finance Committee –

- (a) information on the cost for the project site formation, including the cost for construction of the retaining wall in project **340EP** under Capital Works Reserve Fund (CWRF) **Head 703 - Buildings**; and
- (b) the Administration's views on whether it should take the opportunity of the new primary school projects to provide additional classrooms that may be required for small class teaching, notwithstanding possible delays in the implementation schedules of the projects, and its consultation with the relevant school sponsoring bodies on this subject.

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**THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE****Cost of the project site formation for 340EP**

2. Site formation for **340EP**, the proposed primary school at Inverness Road, Kowloon City, is being pursued under another project **688CL** under CWRP Head **705 – Civil Engineering**. **688CL** was approved by the Finance Committee on 3 March 2006. The Approved Project Estimate of \$42.2 million in money-of-the-day prices is made up as follows:

	<b>\$million</b>	
(a) Site formation	11.2	
(b) Retaining walls and slope works	25.0	
(c) Drainage works	1.6	
(d) Landscaping works	0.2	
(e) Environmental mitigation measures	0.4	
(f) Contingencies	3.8	
Sub-total	42.2	(in September 2005 prices)
(g) Provision for price adjustment	0.0	
Total	42.2	(in MOD prices)

The site formation works is underway and is scheduled for completion by early 2008. The actual cost incurred is expected to be within the approved cost estimate as stated above.

**339EP, 340EP and 341EP under CWRP Head 703 - Buildings**  
**Provision of Additional Classrooms for the Implementation of Small-class Teaching**

3. As announced by the Chief Executive in the 2007-08 Policy Address, small-class teaching will be implemented in our public sector primary

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schools progressively, starting with the cohort of students entering Primary 1 in the 2009/10 school year, and eventually covering Primary 1 to Primary 6 classes in the 2014/15 school year. Under the proposed framework, all schools will be given an option whether or not they would like to operate in small classes of 25 students per class. When opting for small class, a school will be admitting fewer number of students per class under the same approved class structure. Hence, the need for additional classrooms will not arise until and unless the school net in which the school is located requires an addition of classes to meet any overall shortfall to meet demand after implementation of small class teaching. Before the Administration starts to consult stakeholders on the implementation details towards the end of this year, and before schools indicate their option having regard to these details, we will not be able to arrive at a realistic assessment of the supply and demand for classrooms in each school net. Accordingly, at this point in time, we do not know if additional classrooms would be required in the school nets in which the three new primary school projects above are located, and if yes, the extent of that demand. On present showing, we will not be able to arrive at a realistic assessment until mid-2008.

4. If we were to simply assume that additional classrooms would be required and to pursue expanding the scope of the three projects at this late stage, there will be cost and time implications. **339EP** and **340EP** are projects planned to enable one session of existing primary schools to turn whole-day, while **341EP** is planned for the reprovisioning of an existing school accommodated in sub-standard premises. We are anxious to proceed with **339EP** and **340EP** so as to facilitate the schools concerned to turn whole-day operation which is a policy commitment we have pledged to achieve. We also see an urgent case in proceeding with **341EP** so that the infrastructure conditions of an existing school could be upgraded without further delay. A change in the project scope and design would cause substantial delay to the projects taking into account the need for re-designing and re-tendering.

5. Furthermore, subject to detailed feasibility studies, there is also a limit to which the three projects could be expanded to meet any additional demand for classrooms in the school net concerned, given the site conditions. Since the number of classrooms that could feasibly be added, if any, is likely to be small, we believe it would be less disruptive to the current works schedule to pursue such modifications, if necessary, through conversion works in future.

6. We have, as suggested by members of the PWSC, consulted the relevant School Sponsoring Bodies of the captioned projects on our considerations as set out above. All three school sponsors have requested the Administration to proceed with the respective school building projects based on the present scope of work and school design without further delay.

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Education Bureau  
November 2007