

For information

**Legislative Council
Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services**

**Proposed Construction of
the West Kowloon Law Courts Building**

PURPOSE

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services (“the Panel”) held on 26 April 2010, Members requested the Judiciary Administration to provide a supplementary information paper setting out the detailed requirements for the proposed West Kowloon Law Courts Building (“WKLCB”) project (including principles for the building design, and requirements for its location and surroundings, courtrooms/tribunals therein, as well as other court associated facilities), and how the proposed facilities in the new court building compared with the existing facilities in the law courts buildings to be reprovisioned. This paper seeks to provide the relevant information.

I. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROPOSED WKLCB PROJECT

(A) Principles for the Building Design

Court image

2. The external architectural expression, built form and interior design of the WKLCB should fully reflect the independent and dignified image of the court. The WKLCB should be located in a stand-alone building and distinguishable from the surrounding development. The design

of the building should symbolize an independent, open and transparent judicial system which upholds the rule of law and safeguards the rights and freedoms of the individual.

Overall design

3. The selected site of the WKLCB is primarily surrounded by a variety of buildings of different heights. The design of the building should aim to achieve optimal visual impact and to avoid hindering air ventilation. This may be accomplished by splitting the building mass to facilitate natural air ventilation.

4. The building should be planned to allow for integration into the surrounding city fabric. The vacant site to the southwest is designated as Local Open Space ("LOS"). The layout of the building at ground floor level should be designed to provide generous connectivity across the southwest boundary and integration with the LOS. Pedestrian passages should be provided at ground level and future connection to the neighbourhood by grade-separated crossing facilities should be looked into. A basement should also be provided for carparking spaces to reduce the building mass above the ground level.

Green building

5. The building should aim to obtain at least the second highest grade under an internationally or locally recognized building environmental assessment system. It should also aim to comply with the Building Energy Codes issued by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department. Renewable energy technologies such as photovoltaic ("PV") panels should be adopted. The building should also incorporate landscaping areas including green roofs, sky gardens and vertical greening, etc.

Energy-saving features

6. The WKLCB should incorporate environmentally friendly and energy efficient features including:

- (a) Building Energy Management System to provide flexible control for building engineering systems to suit the usage patterns;

- (b) Centralized water-cooled air-conditioning system;
- (c) Occupancy sensor control for air-conditioning supply;
- (d) Demand control of supply and fresh air with carbon dioxide sensors;
- (e) T5 energy efficient fluorescent tubes with electronic ballast and lighting control by occupancy sensors and daylight sensors;
- (f) Light emitting diode (LED) type exit signs;
- (g) Automatic on/off switching of lighting and ventilation;
- (h) Variable speed fans & motors;
- (i) High efficiency motors;
- (j) Services-on-demand escalators; and
- (k) Solar power, including PV panels and daylight suntubes.

Water-saving measures

7. The WKLCB should be designed to reduce water consumption and to maximize the use of water efficient/saving devices, e.g. sensor taps, dual flush toilet system, urinal flushing with infra-red sensor, low flow taps and rainwater collection system for landscape irrigation.

Waste management

8. Proper facilities for waste sorting and recycling at source should be provided in the building. Refuse collection system including separate hoppers should be provided in the refuse chute room(s) on each floor for different types of waste.

Building materials

9. The WKLCB should incorporate certain environmentally friendly/energy-efficient building materials including:

- (a) Double-layer ventilated facade design for heat and noise insulation;
- (b) Non-reflective, clear and tinted insulated glass unit with low-E (low emissivity) coating;
- (c) Modular system (e.g. demountable partition, raised floor);
- (d) Reusable formwork;
- (e) Timber product from sustainable forest or plantation; and
- (f) Wood materials with low emission of formaldehyde, non-PVC wall covering and building materials such as paint, carpet adhesive, etc. with low Volatile Organic Compound.

Public access/Barrier free access

10. There should be separate vehicular access points for the public and for the Police/Correctional Services Department ("CSD") vehicles. Drop-off points for taxis and private vehicles should be provided. Secured and sufficient space should be allowed for the Police/CSD vehicles to drop off and to avoid queuing or parking outside the building. Further, the building should be designed in compliance with the requirements of "Design Manual - Barrier Free Access 2008" published by the Buildings Department.

Lifts and escalators

11. The number and capacity of the lifts provided in the WKLCB should comply with the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers Guide. To enhance traffic efficiency and to meet operational needs, dedicated lift groups should be designated for the exclusive use of the Judicial Officers, staff, general public and defendants. It is also planned to provide escalators to serve the lower levels of the building, where public facilities with higher patronage (e.g. the Centralized Accounts Office) are proposed to be located. Further, there should be well-finished staircases located at prominent locations in the WKLCB to facilitate convenient circulation in the building.

Building security

12. The WKLCB requires appropriate security measures commensurate with those applicable to a law courts building. Dedicated access to the building from outside should be provided for the Judicial Officers, separate from that for the staff and general public. Internal layout should provide clear and secured separation of public and restricted areas, which should be demarcated with different flooring materials. Defendants in custody should access courtrooms via secured passages direct from the cell area within the building to the courtrooms. Security arrangements (e.g. installations of closed-circuit television (“CCTV”) and access control system) will be incorporated as appropriate to ensure building security.

Assessments

13. In order to ensure that the selected design for the WKLCB would commensurate with the independent and dignified image of the court, the requirements for the WKLCB, including the requisite court image, open justice, user-friendly design of facilities and setting, etc. will be clearly and comprehensively set out in the tender specifications. The Judiciary will actively participate in the process of tender assessment and selection. The Tender Assessment Panel will give due regard to the views and comments from the Judiciary with a view to obtaining the Judiciary’s agreement to the selection and ensuring the building would fully meet the Judiciary’s requirements. Further, during the planning and construction process, the contractor, the Architectural Services Department (“ArchSD”) and the Judiciary Administration will work closely to ensure that the Judiciary’s requirements are comprehensively considered and fully incorporated in the WKLCB.

(B) Requirements for the Location and Surroundings of the New Law Courts Building

14. In planning for the new law courts building, the Judiciary aims to identify a site that could fulfill the following requirements:

- (a) The site should be of appropriate size to accommodate fully the Judiciary’s space requirement of about 18,000m² Net Operational Floor Area (“NOFA”) in a stand-alone law courts

building to reflect the independent and dignified image of the court;

- (b) The site should be strategically located at a convenient and accessible location in the West Kowloon area to facilitate listing at the new law courts building many cases in the West Kowloon and north-west region of the New Territories; and
- (c) The site should be suitably located within the cluster of areas designated for "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") use. It should be located in spacious and pleasant surroundings with sufficient open space.

15. Based on the above requirements and taking into account the considerations in paragraphs 16 to 22 below, the Judiciary has, after a number of site visits by the Chief Justice, the Chief Magistrate and the senior management of the Judiciary Administration, selected a G/IC site at the junction of Tung Chau Street and Tonkin Street West for the development of the proposed WKLCB. An aerial photo showing the proposed location of the WKLCB and the surrounding facilities/buildings is at **Annex A**.

Area of the selected site ("the Site")

16. The area of the Site is about 7,509m². With the proposed space requirements of 18,000m² NOFA of the WKLCB and the adoption of a reference plot ratio of six, the Judiciary would be able to optimize the utilization of the Site.

Accessibility of the Site

17. The Site for the proposed WKLCB is within ten minutes' walking distance from either the Nam Cheong or Cheung Sha Wan MTR station. Two minibus routes circulating the areas of Cheung Sha Wan and Mei Foo are available in the vicinity of the WKLCB (including one minibus route which runs via the Cheung Sha Wan MTR to the housing estate opposite to the Site). The Site is easily accessible via existing means of public transport along Tonkin Street West. It is served by over 20 bus routes which cover extensive areas in the territory: north to Ma On Shan in the New Territories; south to Aberdeen on Hong Kong Island; west to Tsuen

Wan in the New Territories and the Hong Kong International Airport on Lantau Island; and east to Tseung Kwan O in the East New Territories region. A site map of the proposed WKLCB and its surrounding area showing the public transport facilities that serve the area, and an information note on the relevant bus and minibus routes are at **Annex B** for Members' reference.

Strategic location of the Site

18. The Judiciary has selected a site at the West Kowloon area which is strategically located at a convenient and accessible location. It is planned that upon completion of the WKLCB when more courtrooms are available, the caseloads of the Magistrates' Courts will be re-distributed. With its strategic location, it would be practicable to list at the WKLCB many cases in the West Kowloon and north-west region of the New Territories, including the districts of Mong Kok, Cheung Sha Wan, Sham Shui Po, Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi. The proposed arrangement will bring about a more evenly distributed caseload having regard to the available judicial resources, an improved average court waiting time, and reduced social costs when cases are dealt with in the nearby Magistrates' Courts.

19. From the planning point of view as advised by the Planning Department ("PlanD"), the Site is located within the cluster of "G/IC" areas including existing schools, a proposed Government office cum clinic, the proposed Nam Cheong Government Complex (comprising a district library, an indoor recreation centre, etc.) and open space. The Site is considered suitable for the development of a law courts building.

The Site Environment

20. The Site is surrounded by a variety of buildings of different heights and also an LOS. On one side of it, there is the Fu Cheong Estate which comprises 15 blocks of 14 to 40-storey apartments. On the other side, there is an LOS which will serve as a landscape buffer between the WKLCB and the nearby schools.

21. Having regard to the surroundings of the Site, ArchSD as the works agent for the WKLCB project considers that quality architectural and landscaping elements could be injected in the building design that would bring about the following benefits to the community:

- (a) To provide a breeze-way for the wind blowing from the north-eastern direction such that air ventilation for the district will not be hindered;
- (b) To provide a variable building height profile which would enhance the aesthetical attractiveness of the building and achieve an optimal visual impact to the surrounding areas; and
- (c) To maintain a medium-rise to low-rise profile which would echo with the neighbouring G/IC facilities in the vicinity.

22. There are a number of housing estates in the vicinity of the Site, such as Fu Cheong Estate, Lai Kok Estate, Lai On Estate and Hoi Lai Estate. A bit farther away, there are the Cheung Sha Wan Plaza and private residential developments such as the Aqua Marine, Pacifica, Liberte and Banyan Garden. Plenty of communal facilities such as post office, community halls, banks, supermarkets and dining places could be found within these premises.

Consultation

23. Relevant departments within the Administration, including the PlanD, Lands Department, Home Affairs Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Social Welfare Department, Housing Department ("HD"), Environmental Protection Department, Hong Kong Police Force, ArchSD and Government Property Agency, etc. have been consulted on the proposed use of the Site for the development of a law courts building. All the departments consulted have raised no objection to the proposed development.

24. At our consultation with the Sham Shui Po District Council on 27 October 2009, the District Council was supportive of the proposed project; and the view that the Site was easily accessible by public transportation was expressed.

25. The Criminal Court Users' Committee¹, the Civil Court Users Committee¹, the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Law Society of Hong Kong have also been consulted and have raised no objection to the selection of the Site for the development of a law courts building².

Alternative Site – Site Six in Sham Shui Po

26. At the Panel meeting held on 26 April 2010, a Member suggested that Site Six in Sham Shui Po might be considered for the development of the WKLCB. At Members' request, the Judiciary has looked into the suitability of Site Six. The findings and observations are set out in the following paragraphs.

27. Site Six with a site area of about 44,800m² is located at the junction of Sham Mong Road and Tonkin Street West. The location of Site Six is also shown at **Annex A**. PlanD has not offered Site Six to the Judiciary for the development of the WKLCB because the site is not zoned G/IC. Site Six is zoned "Comprehensive Development Area" ("CDA") on the approved South West Kowloon Outline Zoning Plan No. S/K20/24. The planning intention is for comprehensive development of the area for residential and commercial use. As advised by PlanD, the site is reserved for HD for the development of public rental estate with the provision of open space and other supporting facilities. Meanwhile, Site Six has been designated as the works area for the Express Rail Link for five years up to 2015.

28. The Judiciary has considered the suitability of Site Six for the development of the WKLCB. It is considered that Site Six is not suitable for the following reasons:

¹ The Criminal Court Users' Committee and the Civil Court Users' Committee are appointed by the Chief Justice and chaired by a High Court Judge to discuss matters of concern to users of the criminal and civil courts, including all matters of practice and procedure, and the administration of the courts. Members comprise judges, representatives of the legal profession, representatives of other court users and lay members.

² The Law Society of Hong Kong has made some observations about the WKLCB project, including public transportation links. After considering supplementary information provided by the Judiciary, including the public transport facilities available in the vicinity, the Law Society of Hong Kong has advised that it is supportive of the project.

- (a) Site Six has an area of about 44,800m². Based on the WKLCB proposed requirement of about 18,000m² NOFA, Site Six is too large for the WKLCB. (The area of Site Six is almost six times that of the Site selected for the WKLCB. The Site selected for the WKLCB has an area of about 7,509m² and the proposed space requirements of the WKLCB would achieve optimal utilization of the Site.) If the Judiciary is required to share Site Six with other users, it is not in a position to comment as to whether such shared use is acceptable or not because it is not known which the other users would be;
- (b) According to PlanD, Site Six has been designated as the works area for the Express Rail Link until 2015. Further, in accordance with the prevailing policy, any proposed development on land designated CDA would need to be approved by the Town Planning Board (“TPB”)³. Having regard to the timing of site availability and the lead time required for the preparation of the requisite technical assessments for obtaining approval from the TPB, the Judiciary considers that it is not practicable to use Site Six for the development of the WKLCB, which aims to co-locate in 2014/15 the four Courts and Tribunals that are grossly inadequate to meet the Judiciary’s operational requirements;
- (c) The walking distance between Site Six and the Nam Cheong MTR station is within ten minutes (about the same walking distance as that for the Site) whereas that between Site Six and the Cheung Sha Wan or Lai Chi Kok MTR station is over ten minutes. Site Six is served by about 12 bus routes along Sham Mong Road (including six bus routes with stops at the temporary Public Transport Interchange at Site Six) and two minibus routes circulating Hoi Lai Estate and Lai Chi Kok. As compared to the Site selected for the WKLCB, Site Six is less

³ According to the Notes of the “CDA” zone and pursuant to section 4A(2) of the Town Planning Ordinance, an applicant for permission for development on land designated “CDA” shall prepare a Master Layout Plan for the approval of the TPB. The submission should include technical assessments, such as environmental assessment, drainage and sewerage impact assessment, traffic impact assessment, visual and landscape impact assessment and air ventilation assessment, etc.

accessible by means of public transport. A site map of Site Six and its surrounding area showing the public transport facilities that serve the area, and an information note on the relevant bus and minibus routes are at **Annex C** for Members' reference; and

- (d) Site Six is located near the waterfront of the West Kowloon reclamation area. Between Site Six and the waterfront to the south, there are the West Kowloon Highway and an extensive area designated for use as cargo working area, wholesale market and industrial office. On the opposite side of Site Six to the north, industrial buildings for the use of wharf godown are located. In view of the site environment, the Judiciary considers that Site Six is not suitable for the development of a law courts building.

(C) Proposed Courtrooms/Tribunals and Court Associated Facilities

29. For the purposes of overseeing planning and implementation of the WKLCB project and steering on the design and user's requirements for the WKLCB, the Judiciary set up in March 2009 the Project Steering Committee of the WKLCB ("the Committee") which is chaired by the Chief Magistrate. Based on the deliberations of the Committee, the proposed courtrooms/tribunals and court associated facilities in the WKLCB, and how they compare with the existing facilities in the law courts buildings to be reprovisioned are set out in paragraphs 30 to 86 below.

II. HOW THE PROPOSED FACILITIES COMPARE WITH THE EXISTING FACILITIES

(A) Courtrooms

30. At present, there are a total of 20 courtrooms in the four Courts and Tribunals to be reprovisioned to the WKLCB. The distribution of the 20 courtrooms is as follows:

- (a) Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts: nine courtrooms (with size ranging from about 50m² to 150m²);

- (b) Small Claims Tribunal: eight courtrooms (with size ranging from about 40m² to 120m²);
- (c) Coroner's Court: two courtrooms (with size of about 90m² and 120m²); and
- (d) Obscene Articles Tribunal: one courtroom (about 85m²).

31. In the WKLCB, it is proposed to increase the total number of courtrooms from 20 to about 30 having regard to the operational needs of the four Courts and Tribunals concerned and in order to meet the possible increase in demand for court services at the magistracy and tribunal level. The distribution of the some 30 courtrooms is as follows:

- (a) West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts: 13 to 16 courtrooms (with size ranging from about 70m² to 240m²);
- (b) Small Claims Tribunal: 12 courtrooms (with size ranging from about 70m² to 180m²);
- (c) Coroner's Court: three courtrooms (with size ranging from about 100² to 180m²); and
- (d) Obscene Articles Tribunal: two courtrooms (with size of about 130² and 180m²).

32. With the additional courtrooms proposed for the WKLCB and the conversion of three additional courtrooms in the Eastern Magistrates' Courts (after the relocation of the Coroner's Court and the Obscene Articles Tribunal), the increased provision would be able to cater for the operational needs at the magistracy and tribunal level for the decades ahead.

33. The setting of the courtrooms and the facilities to be provided therein would be improved in the following areas:

- (a) The sizes of most existing courtrooms in the Courts and Tribunals concerned are underprovided and inadequate for effective court operation. Therefore, it is planned to provide courtrooms of varying sizes from 70m² to 240m² in the

WKLCB to allow more operational flexibility and optimize utilization of the courtrooms;

- (b) To further enhance the flexibility in the deployment of courtroom resources, we will provide for inter-changeability in equipping the courtrooms. It is planned to equip some of the courtrooms which are designated for civil cases with facilities for hearing of criminal cases (such as defendants' docks, separate and direct access from the cell custody areas of the Police and CSD);
- (c) To better equip the new courtrooms for enhanced services, it is planned to equip them with advanced technological installations, such as CCTV, audio-visual presentation systems, and enhanced acoustic and audio systems;
- (d) To cater for the operational needs in greater use of Information Technology in enhancing court proceedings, it is proposed to set up a Mega Court (of 240m²) in the WKLCB. The Mega Court will be equipped with advanced technological facilities and equipment, such as electronic bundling, real-time transcripts, video recordings, multimedia presentation of evidence and video conferencing;
- (e) Sufficient space will be provided for the Judicial Officers, legal representatives and staff for placing bundles of documents and voluminous reference materials to facilitate court hearings; and
- (f) Sufficient seating capacity will be provided for various parties involved in a trial, including parties and their legal representatives, witnesses, defendants, the Police, Court Clerks, the press and the public.

(B) Court Associated Facilities

Witness protection rooms

34. At present, there is no witness protection room in the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts for vulnerable witnesses to give evidence through CCTV in a safe and sheltered environment.

35. In the WKLCB, it is planned that three witness protection rooms be provided in the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts. Each witness protection room will generally comprise two cellular areas: one with homely design and pleasant ambience for vulnerable witnesses to wait before giving evidence; and the other area will be installed with CCTV and video conferencing facilities to facilitate vulnerable witnesses to give evidence. Toilet facilities for the exclusive use of vulnerable witnesses will also be provided inside the witness protection rooms to ensure that the vulnerable witnesses have the least contact with the other court users of the building.

Witness waiting rooms

36. At present, there are two witness waiting rooms for nine courtrooms in the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts. The witness waiting rooms are grossly inadequate to cater for the needs arising from the nine courtrooms therein.

37. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide a total of 34 witness waiting rooms in the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts and the Coroner's Court in order to ensure that witnesses of both prosecuting and defending parties are provided with separate waiting rooms before giving evidence in court.

Secured waiting rooms (for Juvenile cases)

38. At present, there are two secured waiting rooms for the exclusive use of juveniles attending the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts.

39. In the WKLCB, it is proposed to provide six secured waiting rooms with exclusive access from outside and within the court premises for juvenile defendants in the WKLCB where there would be one Juvenile courtroom and one Care and Protection courtroom.

Interview rooms

40. At present, there are only eight interview rooms in the Small Claims Tribunal for the Tribunal Officers to interview parties. This level of provision is inadequate, and most interviews have to take place in the

courtrooms, thereby depriving the Tribunal of making optimal use of the courtrooms by Judicial Officers in hearing cases.

41. In the WKLCB, it is proposed to provide 16 interview rooms in the Small Claims Tribunal to facilitate the Tribunal Officers to discharge their duties more efficiently and to rationalize the use of the courtrooms in the Tribunal.

Registration rooms

42. At present, there is no registration room in the Small Claims Tribunal. Registration of attendance of parties and checking of requisite documents are currently conducted inside the courtrooms and thus hinder the optimal utilization of the courtrooms.

43. In the WKLCB, it is proposed that 10 registration rooms be provided in the Small Claims Tribunal to improve the workflow and to enable optimal use of courtrooms of the Tribunal.

Jury retiring rooms

44. At present, there are two jury retiring rooms located in the public area of the Coroner's Court.

45. In the WKLCB, it is proposed to provide three jury retiring rooms for the Coroner's Court to facilitate the jurors in performing their deliberations after conclusion of the hearings. As the jury's deliberations are confidential, the jury retiring rooms will be purpose-built with separate access to courtrooms and exclusive toilet facilities to ensure security of the jurors and confidentiality of their deliberations. Besides, a jury retiring room will also be provided for the Mega Court of the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts to cater for cases involving jurors.

Jury assembly room

46. At present, there is no proper place at the Coroner's Court for jury candidates to wait before attending the jury selection procedures inside the courtrooms.

47. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide a jury assembly room of appropriate size for jury candidates to gather for checking of particulars and to wait for the selection of jurors.

(C) Facilities for Judicial Officers

Chambers

48. At present, due to the limited space available in the buildings, some of the essential facilities, such as the Magistrates' chambers, are located in the vicinity of public-accessible court lobby areas and are not provided with separate access as in the other law courts buildings, which is a mandatory requirement in the design of a law courts building. This is most undesirable from the security point of view.

49. In the WKLCB, it is planned that all chambers of the Judicial Officers will be located within the restricted staff area with appropriate level of security.

Library

50. At present, there is no library in the four Courts and Tribunals concerned for keeping law books, judgments, legal publications and voluminous reference materials for use by the Judicial Officers.

51. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide a proper library with access restricted to library card holders.

Meeting/Retiring/Conference facilities

52. At present, there is no proper meeting and conference facility in the four Courts and Tribunals concerned for use by Judicial Officers and staff.

53. In the WKLCB, it is planned that sufficient meeting and conference facilities be provided to serve the needs of the Judicial Officers and staff. Further, a multi-purpose room is planned to be provided for use by Judicial Officers for discussion of court cases.

(D) Facilities for Litigating Parties and Legal Professionals

Consultation rooms

54. At present, there is no consultation room for holding discussions between the litigating parties and their legal representatives due to lack of space. Very often, parties have to carry out discussions at the public lobby or the corridor, which is very undesirable for the proper administration of justice.

55. In the WKLCB, a total of about 30 consultation rooms will be provided to facilitate discussions between the litigating parties and their legal representatives.

Changing facilities for legal professionals

56. At present, there is no changing facility for barristers in the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts.

57. In the WKLCB, two changing rooms, one each for male and female, will be provided in the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts for barristers to robe before appearing in court.

Carparking spaces

58. The wish of legal professionals for carparking spaces in the WKLCB is noted from the Judiciary's meetings with legal practitioners and consultation with the institutional court users. The Judiciary is actively liaising with the Administration on the provision of sufficient carparking spaces in the WKLCB for the legal professionals and institutional court users.

(E) Facilities for User Departments and Voluntary Agencies

Interviewing/Consultation facilities

59. At present, there are only two interview rooms in the Police's cell area in the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts to facilitate lawyers in interviewing the detainees.

60. In the WKLCB, a total of 12 interview rooms (eight located in the Police's cell custody area and four in the CSD's cell area) are planned to be provided to facilitate lawyers in interviewing the detainees. Relevant parties, including the Duty Lawyer Service, and the Criminal Court Users' Committee and the Civil Court Users' Committee (both comprising members of the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Law Society of Hong Kong), have been consulted. They have not made any comments on the proposed level of provision.

Meeting room for voluntary agencies

61. At present, there is no designated meeting room for voluntary agencies in the existing four Courts and Tribunals concerned.

62. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide a meeting room to facilitate voluntary agencies to reach out to their clients including the defendants and their family members, and to render assistance and advice to them on the spot outside the courtrooms.

(F) Facilities for Staff

Registries

63. At present, the registries in the Courts and Tribunals concerned are severely under-provided and the staff are working in a congested environment.

64. In the WKLCB, adequate space will be provided in the registries of the respective Courts and Tribunals to improve the staff's working environment. Flexibility will be built-in in the setting and design of the registries to facilitate workflow and future office re-shuffling and conversion.

Storage spaces for court case files

65. At present, due to the limited space available, there is no proper storage space in the Courts and Tribunals concerned for court case files and articles submitted for classification including magazines, comic books, video tapes and DVDs, etc.

66. In the WKLCB, appropriate storage space will be provided for proper keeping of court case files and safe custody of articles submitted for classification in the Obscene Articles Tribunal. In addition, a file depository is also planned for in the WKLCB to meet the Judiciary's requirements for keeping the case files.

(G) Facilities for the Press

67. At present, there is no press room in the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts.

68. In the WKLCB, a press room will be made available for use by reporters to better serve the needs of the media. Sufficient seating capacity in courtrooms will also be provided for the press.

(H) Facilities for the Public

Information and Enquiry Centre

69. At present, owing to lack of space in the Small Claims Tribunal, the Judiciary's plan of setting up an Information and Enquiry Centre in the Tribunal, where no legal representation is allowed, to provide procedural assistance to parties cannot be taken forward.

70. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide a dedicated Information and Enquiry Centre (of a proposed area of about 300m²) in the Small Claims Tribunal to facilitate unrepresented litigants to obtain relevant information for processing their claims.

71. The proposed Information and Enquiry Centre will include enquiry counters and interview booths to facilitate staff to provide procedural advice to the public for processing claims. The public would also be able to obtain relevant information from the information booklets, brochures and videos displayed in the Centre.

Counters

72. At present, the registry counters of the four Courts and Tribunals concerned are often over-crowded at peak hours.

73. In the WKLCB, a sufficient number of counters will be provided at the respective Courts and Tribunals to better serve the public. The counters will be installed with service counter ticket dispensers and smart queuing system to enhance the efficiency of counter services to the public.

Waiting areas

74. At present, due to the limited space available in the Courts and Tribunals concerned, there is no proper waiting area with sufficient seats for the public outside the courtrooms and registry counters.

75. In the WKLCB, ample waiting areas with sufficient seating capacity are planned to be provided in court lobbies and public counters for court users.

Waiting room for deceased's family members

76. At present, there is no waiting room for deceased's family members in the Coroner's Court due to insufficient space therein.

77. In the WKLCB, in view of the fact that the procedures and proceedings of the Coroner's Court involve grieving family members of the deceased, a purpose-built waiting room with appropriate design and soothing ambience is planned to be provided for the individuals concerned in the Coroner's Court.

Viewing/Search room for the public

78. At present, there is no dedicated room for members of the public to search for court records. Members of the public often need to search or view the court records at the counters. Such situation is very undesirable from the security and personal privacy points of view. Also, members of the public may view the submitted articles in the Obscene Articles Tribunal after obtaining prior approval. The viewing room in the existing Obscene Articles Tribunal is too small to meet the operational requirements.

79. In the WKLCB, it is planned to provide the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts, the Small Claims Tribunal and the Obscene Articles Tribunal each with a viewing/search room of appropriate size for the public in order to improve the existing unsatisfactory situation and to facilitate public access to court records.

Facilities for the disabled

80. At present, facilities for the disabled in the four Courts and tribunals concerned are inadequate which might bring about inconvenience to the disabled persons to access and use the facilities in the court premises.

81. In the WKLCB, adequate facilities for the disabled (e.g. toilet facilities and wheelchair spaces inside courtrooms) will be provided to facilitate public access to the court premises. In addition, tactile guide paths will be provided for the visually handicapped in accordance with the stipulated guidelines.

Baby-care facilities

82. At present, no baby-care facility is provided in the four Courts and Tribunals to be reprovioned.

83. In the WKLCB, baby-care facilities will be provided to cater for the needs of court users. The provision is in line with the prevailing practice to provide baby-care facilities in newly-built public premises to enhance communal facilities to care for children.

Convenience store

84. It is planned to provide a convenience store to sell snacks, drinks and daily commodities (such as stationeries) to cater for the needs of court users of the WKLCB.

Others

85. To better serve the needs of the public, vending machines, public phones and ATM machines are planned to be provided in the WKLCB. Further, photocopying facilities for the general public is also

planned to be provided at convenient locations in the public accessible areas of the building.

86. Details of the existing and proposed major facilities for the WKLCB are listed at **Annex D**.

ADVICE SOUGHT

87. Members are requested to note the content of this paper.

Judiciary Administration
May 2010

Aerial Photo of the Selected Site of the WKLCB



West Kowloon Law Courts Building (“WKL CB”) Location of Public Transport



Legend

-  Buses
 Minibuses

West Kowloon Law Courts Building (“WKLCB”)

Public Transport

A. MTR

Cheung Sha Wan MTR Station and Nam Cheong MTR Station are located within 10 minutes’ walking distance from WKLCB.

B. Buses and Minibuses

A number of bus/minibus routes are also available in the vicinity of the WKLCB. There are over 20 bus routes serving a wide range of areas in the territory: north to Ma On Shan in the New Territories; south to Aberdeen on the Hong Kong Island; west to Tsuen Wan in the New Territories and Hong Kong International Airport on the Lantau Island; and east to Tseung Kwan O in East New Territories. 2 minibus routes serving around the areas of Cheung Sha Wan and Mei Foo are also available. Details of some of bus / minibus routes are listed below:

Route No.	Route
<u>Buses</u> (Total: 24 routes)	
2	Star Ferry, Tsim Sha Tsui → Mong Kok → So Uk, Cheung Sha Wan
2A	Lok Wah, Kwun Tong → Kowloon City → Mong Kok → Cheung Sha Wan → Mei Foo
6F	Kowloon City Ferry → To Kwa Wan → Yau Ma Tei → Sham Shui Po → Cheung Sha Wan
12 (Circular)	Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Olympic → Tsim Sha Tsui → Nam Cheong
12A	Whampoa Garden, Hung Hom → To Kwa Wan → Prince Edward → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong

- 18 (Circular) Nam Cheong → Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok → Ho Man Tin
- 32 Shek Wai Kok, Tsuen Wan → Kwai Chung → Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok → Olympic
- 33A Tsuen Wan → Kwai Chung → Mei Foo → Cheung Sha Wan → Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok
- 36A Lei Muk Shue, Tsuen Wan → Kwai Chung → Mei Foo → Sham Shui Po
- 37 Olympic → Mong Kok → Cheung Sha Wan → Mei Foo → Kwai Shing
- 41 Tsing Yi → Mei Foo → Cheung Sha Wan → Sham Shui Po → Prince Edward → Ho Man Tin → Kowloon City
- 41A Tsing Yi → Kwai Chung → Cheung Sha Wan → Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok → Tsim Sha Tsui
- 42 Cheung Ching, Tsing Yi → Kwai Chung → Mei Foo → Sham Shui Po → Kowloon City → Choi Hung → Shun Lee, Kwun Tong
- 44 Tsing Yi → Mei Foo → Cheung Sha Wan → Sham Shui Po → Shek Kip Mei → Mong Kok
- 86C Lee On, Ma On Shan → Shatin → Tai Wai → Shek Kip Mei → Cheung Sha Wan
- 117 Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok → Cross Harbour Tunnel → Causeway Bay → Happy Valley
- 212 Whampoa Garden, Hung Hom → Mong Kok → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong
- 296C Sheung Tak, Tseung Kwan O → Kwun Tong → Kowloon City → Mong Kok → Sham Shui Po
- 701 (Circular) Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Nam Cheong → Mong Kok
- 702 (Circular) Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Nam Cheong → Sham Sui Po

- 796C Tseung Kwan O → Prince Edward → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong
- 914 Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Sham Shui Po → Western Harbour Crossing → Sheung Wan → Admiralty → Causeway Bay
- 971 Shek Pai Wan, Aberdeen → Kennedy Town → Western Harbour Crossing → Tsim Sha Tsui → Mong Kok → Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok
- A21 Hung Hom Station → Tsim Sha Tsui → Mong Kok → Sham Shui Po → Lantau Link → Hong Kong International Airport

Minibuses (Total: 2 routes)

75 (Circular) Fu Cheong Estate, Nam Cheong → Cheung Sha Wan

81K (Circular) Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Mei Foo

Location of Public Transport around Site 6



Legend

-  Buses
-  Minibuses

Bus Routes around Site 6

Route No.	Route
Buses (Total: 12 routes)	
12 (Circular)	Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Olympic → Tsim Sha Tsui → Nam Cheong
12A	Whampoa Garden, Hung Hom → To Kwa Wan → Prince Edward → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong
18 (Circular)	Nam Cheong → Sham Shui Po → Mong Kok → Ho Man Tin
36A	Lei Muk Shue, Tsuen Wan → Kwai Chung → Mei Foo → Sham Shui Po
212	Whampoa Garden, Hung Hom → Mong Kok → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong
296C	Sheung Tak, Tseung Kwan O → Kwun Tong → Kowloon City → Mong Kok → Sham Shui Po
701 (Circular)	Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Nam Cheong → Mong Kok
702 (Circular)	Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Nam Cheong → Sham Sui Po
796C	Tseung Kwan O → Prince Edward → Sham Shui Po → Nam Cheong
914	Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Sham Shui Po → Western Harbour Crossing → Sheung Wan → Admiralty → Causeway Bay
971	Shek Pai Wan, Aberdeen → Kennedy Town → Western Harbour Crossing → Tsim Sha Tsui → Mong Kok → Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok

A21 Hung Hom Station → Tsim Sha Tsui → Mong Kok →
Sham Shui Po → Lantau Link → Hong Kong International
Airport

Minibuses (Total: 2 routes)

44A (Circular) Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Lai Chi Kok MTR Station

81K (Circular) Hoi Lai Estate, Lai Chi Kok → Mei Foo

Existing and Proposed Facilities in the West Kowloon Law Courts Building

Facilities	Existing Number	Proposed Number
(A) Tsuen Wan / West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts		
(1) Courtroom	9 (size around 50 – 150 m ²)	13 – 16 ¹ (size around 70 – 240 m ²)
(2) Jury Retiring Room	-	1
(3) Witness Protection Room	-	3
(4) Witness Waiting Room	2	32
(5) Secured Waiting Room (for Juvenile cases)	2	6
(6) Consultation Room	-	16
(7) Search Room for Public	-	1
(8) Changing Room (for lawyers)	-	2
(9) Registry	1	1

(B) Small Claims Tribunal		
(1) Courtroom	8 (size around 40 – 120 m ²)	12 (size around 70 – 180 m ²)
(2) Consultation Room	-	12
(3) Interview Room	8	16
(4) Registration Room	-	10
(5) Information and Enquiry Centre	-	1
(6) Search Room for Public	-	1
(7) Registry	1	1

(C) Coroner's Courts		
(1) Courtroom	2 (size around 90 and 120 m ²)	3 (size around 100 – 180 m ²)
(2) Jury Retiring Room	2	3
(3) Witness Waiting Room	-	2
(4) Consultation Room	-	1
(5) Jury Assembly Room	-	1
(6) Meeting Room for Research Teams	-	1
(7) Waiting Room for Deceased's Family	-	1
(8) Registry	1	1

¹ Including 1 multi-purpose mega courtroom

(D) Obscene Articles Tribunal		
(1) Courtroom	1 (size around 85 m ²)	2 (size around 130 and 180 m ²)
(2) Witness Waiting Room	-	2
(3) Consultation Room	-	1
(4) Waiting Room for Adjudicators/Jury	1	1
(5) Viewing Room for Public	1	1
(6) Registry	1	1

(E) Ancillary Facilities		
(1) Interview Room within Police area (for detainees meeting with lawyers)	2	8
(2) Interview Room within Correctional Services Department area (for detainees meeting with lawyers)	-	4
(3) Interview Room within Social Welfare Department Probation Office area	2	7
(4) Interview Room within Duty Lawyer Service area	7	13
(5) Convenience Store	-	1
(6) Centralised Accounts Office	Note 1	1
(7) Press Room	Note 2	1
(8) Library	-	1
(9) Baby-care Facility	-	2
(10) ATM Machine	-	2
(11) Vending Machine	-	1 per floor
(12) Coin Phone	-	2 per floor

Note 1: Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts and Small Claims Tribunal have their own Accounts Offices while Coroner's Courts and Obscene Articles Tribunal share the same Accounts Office with Eastern Magistrates' Courts.

Note 2: One Press Room in the Eastern Law Courts Building for share use of Coroner's Courts, Obscene Articles Tribunal and Eastern Magistrates' Courts.