

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)1920/09-10  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/DEV/1

**Panel on Development**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 30 March 2010, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP (Chairman)  
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS  
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH  
Hon LEE Wing-tat  
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP  
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH  
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

**Member attending** : Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

**Members absent** : Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP

**Public officers attending** : **Agenda item IV**

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP  
Secretary for Development

Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Development  
(Planning and Lands)

Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 2

**Agenda item V**

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP  
Secretary for Development

Mrs Jessie TING YIP Yin-mei, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 1

Mr Jack CHAN Jick-chi  
Commissioner for Heritage  
Development Bureau

Mr Tom MING  
Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments)  
Antiquities and Monuments Office

**Agenda item VI**

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP  
Secretary for Development

Mr Laurie LO Chi-hong  
Head / Development Opportunities Office  
Development Bureau

**Attendance by invitation : Agenda item V**

Professor LEE Cheuk-fan  
Chairman  
Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture

Dr K K WONG  
Vice Chairman  
Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture

Mr David CHAN  
Acting CEO and Project Director  
Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture

Mr Joel CHAN  
Lead Consultant and Authorised Person  
Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture

Mr Humphrey WONG  
Collaborating Architect  
Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture

**Clerk in attendance :** Mr WONG Siu-yee  
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

**Staff in attendance :** Mr Daniel SIN  
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Mr Simon CHEUNG  
Council Secretary (1)7

Ms Christina SHIU  
Legislative Assistant (1)7

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Action

- I Confirmation of minutes**  
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1428/09-10 -- Minutes of the joint meeting of the Panel on Development and the Panel on Environmental Affairs held on 14 December 2009)

The minutes of the joint meeting held on 14 December 2009 were confirmed.

**II Information papers issued since last meeting**

- (LC Papers No. CB(1)1264/09-10(01) and (02) -- Submissions on conversion of carpark in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre into a car sales operation from Pass CHOW dated 31 January 2010 and from Alex LEE dated 1 February 2010 respectively
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1265/09-10(01) -- Submission on the revitalization of the Central Market from Zuni Icosahedron dated 23 February 2010
- LC Papers No. CB(1)1268/09-10(01) and (02) -- Administration's paper on the 2010-2011 Application List and the relevant press release
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1316/09-10(01) -- Letter dated 26 February 2010 from The Incorporated Owners of Metro Harbour View to the Director of Lands in relation to application for waiver of public access to the public open space at Metro Harbour View
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1376/09-10(01) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Yau Tsim Mong District Council members on 26 November 2009 in relation to development of Yau Ma Tei district and policy of heritage conservation and revitalization
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1389/09-10(01) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010 in relation to revision of rural development strategy
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1389/09-10(02) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010 in

- relation to planning and development strategy for the land released from the Frontier Closed Area and the land within the Frontier Closed Area
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1389/09-10(03) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010 in relation to review of the Town Planning Ordinance
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1389/09-10(04) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010 in relation to "missing lots" causing distress to persons with interests in the land concerned
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1389/09-10(05) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010 in relation to review of section 12(c) of the Lands Resumption Ordinance and the New Territories zonal compensation system
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1446/09-10(01) -- Administration's paper on 13GB – Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and associated works)

2. Members noted that the above information papers had been issued since the meeting on 23 February 2010.

### **III Items for discussion at the next meeting**

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(02) -- List of follow-up actions
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1266/09-10(01) -- Letter dated 24 February 2010 from Hon WONG Kwok-hing on property sales practices of

the Urban Renewal Authority's joint redevelopment projects)

3. Members agreed that the following items should be discussed at the regular meeting scheduled for 27 April 2010 --

(a) CWP item no. 8004QW "Revitalization Scheme -- Conversion of Lui Seng Chun into Hong Kong Baptist University Chinese Medicine and Healthcare Centre" and CWP item no. 8007QW "Revitalization Scheme -- Conversion of Mei Ho House as City Hostel"; and

(b) Conserving Central.

#### **IV Budget-related initiatives of the Development Bureau**

LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(03) -- Administration's paper on Budget-related initiatives of Development Bureau

LC Paper No. FS17/09-10 -- Fact sheet on "A summary of local press reports on the budget-related initiatives of the Development Bureau as contained in the 2010-2011 Budget from 25 February to 26 March 2010" prepared by the Research and Library Services Division)

4. Secretary for Development (SDEV) highlighted the Administration's initiatives in stepping up training of construction workers and improving the work culture in the construction industry. A funding application would be submitted to the Finance Committee later in this regard. Early planning was needed to meet the sector's manpower requirement as the major infrastructure projects would come on stream in the coming years. While the present unemployment rate of 7.3% in the construction sector was higher than the overall unemployment rate, it was necessary to step up training now to cope with the anticipated labour shortage problem.

5. SDEV said that aging of workers and insufficient number of workers possessing specific trade skills were the key issues faced by the construction sector. More than 36% of the 269 000 registered construction workers were aged 50 years or above, and only about 6% were aged below 25. About 60% of the registered workers were general labour without specific trade skills. As a higher proportion of the construction activities would be civil engineering projects,

different ranges of skills such as skills in tunnel works, formwork, blasting and drainage works were required but workers with these skills were in short supply. It was necessary to attract more young people to join the construction industry, and to improve the skill levels of workers. The Administration had set aside \$100 million in the Budget for this purpose, and it was expected that the Construction Industry Council (CIC) would also step up workers' training with its own resources to supplement the initiative.

6. Mr WONG Kowk-hing noted that the Administration would be launching more than \$40 billion worth of public works projects, which would push up demand for construction workers. The Administration should play a leading role in attracting and training local workers. He said that the labour sector would object strongly to any attempt to bring in foreign workers to cope with possible labour shortage in future. Expressing a similar concern, Mr IP Wai-ming said that labour unions would not give way to this principle. Mr WONG suggested that the Administration should work with trade unions and trade organizations to launch recruitment campaigns in areas such as Tung Chung and Tin Shui Wai where the unemployment situation was more serious. Mr IP said that even if local workers did not possess the skills required for certain jobs, the Administration should import the technology rather than foreign skilled workers.

7. SDEV said that both the Administration and the construction sector agreed that local workers should be given priority in employment. It was still considered important to attract and train more workers to cope with the anticipated labour shortage problem. On the other hand, the training centre in Tin Shui Wai, which was opened in September 2009, aimed at reaching out to workers and moving training facilities to their neighbourhood. The same strategy could apply to other areas like Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung. A new training base could be set up and start operation within a short period from the granting and formation of land.

8. Mr IP Wai-ming welcomed the Administration's initiatives of providing more training and building up the image of construction workers, but he said that more efforts were required to improve industrial safety in construction sites. He suggested that the Development Bureau should collaborate with the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) to safeguard construction workers' safety, especially in regulating construction activities on high ground. The Development Bureau should also explore with CIC and the unions to tailor make a retirement scheme for construction workers.

9. SDEV said that promoting safety in the construction industry was a top priority, and she would liaise with LWB to see what further measures should be introduced. She said that industrial safety had already improved substantially. During the last ten years, the overall accident rate in the construction sector had decreased from 247.9 per 1 000 workers to 61.4 per 1 000 workers. The

improvement was particularly significant in construction sites of public works projects, through better supervision and contract terms. As a result, over the same period, the accident rate in public works construction sites decreased from 50.8 to 12.5 per 1 000 workers. CIC had developed safety guidelines for the private sector, which were modelled on public works site management practice. Legislative measures might be considered if the guidelines were not effective. As regards tailor-making a retirement scheme for construction workers, SDEV said that workers' retirement protection fell outside the purview of the Development Bureau.

10. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that most of the sites in the Application List were located in the New Territories or Islands District, and no information was given as to how many of the sites were designated for residential development purpose. He asked how many new small and medium-sized residential units would be supplied from these sites, and whether the Administration would put some of the sites on auction if no applications were triggered.

11. SDEV said that a site near Long Ping Station in Yuen Long, which was not included in the Application List, would be sold by auction or tender to increase supply of land for provision of small to medium-sized residential units. In the past, the Administration did not have a policy of designating which residential sites put up for auction or placed in the Application List should be used for small to medium-sized residential developments. Estimates were made by some parties indirectly based on the characteristics of the sites. It was therefore not appropriate for the Administration to advise members on how many small to medium-sized units would be supplied from residential sites in the Application List. However, having considered planning and other factors, SDEV said that more than 9 000 units could be provided from the 40-odd residential sites in this year's Application List. This included about 2 000 units from six sites which the Administration would put up for auction if no applications were triggered. Included in the Application List were two large residential sites in Tung Chung and Fanling which were suitable for small to medium-sized residential development. The site in Tung Chung was just triggered and it would provide around 1 700 units.

12. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that the Administration used to release a rolling forecast of housing supply, which appeared to have discontinued. He asked if the Administration had a schedule and the locations of land supply for small to medium-sized residential development in the coming few years. SDEV said that the forecast of housing supply was now released quarterly, rather than annually, by the Transport and Housing Bureau.

13. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that while on average, between 11 000 and 14 000 housing units would be available each year, the demand for housing units was between 19 000 and 20 000 units each year over the past ten years. He asked



whether the Development Bureau and the Transport and Housing Bureau should collaborate to step up land and housing supply.

14. SDEV said that there was regular discussion between the two bureaux on the supply of public housing and private housing land. Site search exercises were initiated to identify new land for residential development. Apart from the 60 sites in the Application List, new land would be provided in the New Development Areas in the long term. In the medium term, sites could be available from two quarry areas by 2015. For the short term, the Administration was reviewing whether to convert industrial land for residential development, and would explore the option of using under-utilized government land as well. The Administration had not set any quantitative objective on land supply.

15. Ms Starry LEE said that she had received feedback from the community regarding the proposed expansion of Operation Building Bright, and suggested that the Administration should brief members before it sought further funding approval. SDEV said that she was glad to note an increase in property owners' awareness in building safety and maintenance matters. She hoped that the proposed expansion of Operation Building Bright could encourage more owners' corporations to be formed in the meantime.

16. Ms Starry LEE asked if the Buildings Department (BD) would review the policy on tackling unauthorized building works (UBWs), and partitioning of private premises. SDEV said that she was leading a core group within the Government to examine building safety measures, including the issues that Ms LEE raised. The core group would examine whether and how UBWs should be controlled after the completion of the ten-year priority clearance programme by March 2011. The core group would also examine the problems of rooftop UBWs in private buildings, as well as the partitioning of private premises. In this connection, BD was investigating the impact of partitioning in private premises on the structural safety of buildings, and whether this should be brought under control. SDEV expected that a new strategy on building safety could be developed later in the year.

17. In response to Ms Starry LEE's enquiry about the progress in the planning of transport facilities in Kai Tak Development to support the operation of the Cruise Terminal, SDEV said that the Civil Engineering and Development Department was investigating the environmentally friendly transport system proposal. However, the proposed system might not necessarily be completed before the Cruise Terminal commenced operation, as most visitors would be commuting to and from Kai Tak Development by coaches and the access road network currently under construction would be sufficient.

18. Mr IP Kwok-him said that many UBWs had existed in old buildings for years. In implementing the ten-year priority clearance programme, when property

owners were ordered to clear the UBWs, they were required to restore the buildings to their original conditions, and to comply with the latest building services requirements such as fire-safety installations. From the community feedback he received, the clearance operations failed to address building safety issues, but had instead, created unnecessary hassles for owners and residents.

19. SDEV stressed that as a matter of principle, the Building Authority as the enforcement agency must act according to the law to require all UBWs to be cleared. It was decided ten years ago that given the large workload implications, only UBWs that posed imminent danger or that were newly built would be cleared as a matter of priority. The policy would be applied consistently and whether the operations would cause inconvenience to the owners or residents was not the primary consideration. The policy on UBWs would be reviewed and the community's views could be looked at in the review.

20. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that the unions of construction workers, CIC and interested individuals had, out of their own initiative, set up a relief fund which provided immediate relief to families of victims of serious accidents in construction sites. He suggested that the Administration should support the efforts of the civil society. The Administration should appeal to enterprises or developers to support such initiatives as it would help improve the image of the construction industry and help attract young people to take up a career in construction activities.

21. SDEV commended the initiative of setting up the relief fund, which represented the caring culture that the Administration had been promoting. The Administration would support the organizations in their future fundraising activities for the relief fund. The Administration also set an example by improving the cash flow of contractors and sub-contractors through such measures as interim payment and early release of the retention money. These new measure were introduced in end 2008 on a short-term basis, and was extended to the end of 2010. Consideration would be made to establishing the arrangement as an on-going practice.

22. Mr WONG Kwok-hing suggested that measures should be introduced to encourage workers to further improve their skill levels, and to enhance their promotion prospects. SDEV said that CIC's Construction Industry Training Academy had planned to introduce a new training programme to improve language and management skills of experienced construction workers so as to enhance their advancement prospects to become supervisors or even contractors.

**V Progress report on heritage conservation initiatives**

(LC Paper No.  
CB(1)1447/09-10(04)

-- Administration's paper on  
progress report on heritage  
conservation initiatives and

revitalisation of the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital into the Jao Tsung-I Academy/Hong Kong Cultural Heritage under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme

LC Paper No.  
CB(1)1447/09-10(05)

-- Paper on heritage conservation prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

23. SDEV briefed members on the progress of the Administration's heritage conservation initiatives detailed in the paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(04)). She highlighted that the initiatives under Batch I of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme) had been progressing smoothly. Assessment of the applications for Batch II of the Revitalisation Scheme was underway, and the results would be promulgated in the second half of 2010. In the private domain, the Administration's efforts had led to the preservation of Jessville at 128 Pokfulam Road and a four-storey shophouse at 179 Prince Edward Road West. Nine applications totalling \$7.2 million had been approved under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme to assist owners of private historic buildings with maintenance works. The Administration would focus its publicity and public education efforts on community outreach in 2010. Free guided heritage tours for persons with disabilities and low-income families from places such as Tin Shui Wai would be organised.

#### Revitalisation of the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital

24. Prof LEE Chack-fan, Chairman of the Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture said that it was a belief of Prof JAO Tsung-I, a world-renowned scholar in Chinese culture, and other international scholars that Chinese culture was undergoing a full-scale revival. Prof JAO had a strong wish to set up a platform in Hong Kong for the promotion and development of Chinese culture. In this regard, the Hong Kong Institution for Promotion of Chinese Culture (HKIPCC) was glad that it had been selected to preserve and revitalise the former Lai Chi Kok Hospital into Hong Kong Cultural Heritage, and to name it as JAO Tsung-I Academy-Hong Kong Cultural Heritage (the Academy) in honour of Prof JAO. Quiet and verdant, the site comprised some 20 historic buildings spread out in three zones. It offered an excellent environment for the intended purposes of the Academy. HKIPCC planned to commence the renovation works of the Academy in October 2010 for completion in June 2012. In developing the Academy, HKIPCC would observe the rule of simplicity in pursuit of harmony between human and nature.

25. Mr IP Kwok-him supported the revitalisation project and enquired about the reason for the increase of the capital cost from the original estimate of \$179.0 million to the current estimate of \$240.7 million. The Commissioner for Heritage (C for H) advised that in order to honour Prof JAO Tsung-I, the Administration had decided to turn a reception room into exhibition halls and fit them out at museum standard. The necessary change in the design plan had led to an increase in the capital cost. Mr Joel CHAN, Lead Consultant and Authorised Person of HKIPCC, added that another reason contributing to the increase of capital cost was the need to carry out a series of improvement works for the aged buildings, such as installation of barrier-free access, so that those buildings could meet the present-day building services requirements.

26. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern about the occupancy rate of the 89 hostel rooms to be operated by the Academy in future. Mrs Sophie LEUNG considered that HKIPCC could leave the design, renting and management of the hostel rooms to a professional hotel group so as to generate higher revenues to support the running costs of the Academy in the long run. In response, Mr David Chan, Acting CEO & Project Director of HKIPCC, said that there would be a strong demand for accommodation at the Academy arising from international cultural exchange programmes and general education programmes on Chinese culture for local and exchange students. Besides, the setting of the hostel rate for the local students cultural camp at a competitive level of \$90 per bed per night would also help ensure good patronage in future.

27. In reply to Mr Albert HO's query about the long-term sustainability of the Academy, Dr K K WONG, Vice Chairman of HKIPCC, said that in planning for the Academy, long-term sustainability was a major concern of HKIPCC. In this connection, a detailed study on the projected recurrent income and expenditure had been carried out. The Academy should be able to balance its books from the revenues from various sources such as hostel operation, running of courses and exchange programmes, catering and venue rentals, etc. It was anticipated that except for the first three years in which HKIPCC might incur a deficit of no more than \$2 million each year, HKIPCC would set up a foundation to seek donations from all sectors of the community to support the operation of the Academy in the promotion and development of Chinese culture.

#### Funding for revitalisation and sustainability of projects

28. Mr WONG Kwok-hing was concerned about the cost implications of the Revitalisation Scheme and enquired about the Administration's funding commitment for the Revitalisation Scheme. Mr KAM Nai-wai cited the different funding arrangements for the revitalisation of the former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters and Haw Par Mansion and enquired about the criteria for using public funds for heritage conservation projects.

29. SDEV advised that heritage conservation required substantial investment to bring the conserved historic buildings up to the present-day building services standards. For implementing the revitalisation of government-owned historic buildings, the Administration had set aside \$1.5 billion. In deciding whether public funds should be committed for a particular project, the commercial value of the buildings concerned as well as the sustainability and intended purpose of the projects would be critically examined. In order not to create a long-term financial burden on the Government, the Administration would expect non-governmental organisations to operate heritage conservation projects in the form of social enterprises in a sustainable and self-financing way. Such a requirement had been laid down as one of the criteria in the selection of management agents for the heritage conservation projects.

30. In order to enhance the sustainability of the heritage conservation projects, Mr WONG Kwok-hing considered it necessary to link up the revitalised buildings with the nearby tourist spots. By way of illustration, to attract more visitors, revitalisation of Fong Yuen Study Hall could be integrated with promotion of historic sites on Ma Wan Island, such as the old Kowloon Customs. Prof Patrick LAU suggested that it would be worthwhile for the Administration to display models of all heritage conservation projects in an easily accessible location so that tourists could have a better understanding of Hong Kong's efforts in preserving historic sites, and be encouraged to visit these sites.

31. C for H responded that the Administration was making effort to link heritage conservation with tourism. Exhibitions on heritage conservation-cum-tourism projects of the 18 districts would be held later in the year. In the case of Ma Wan, SDEV said that the Administration was collaborating with Tsuen Wan District Council and a developer in revitalising an old fishing village in the Phase 2 development of Ma Wan Park.

#### Early promulgation of heritage conservation initiatives

32. Dr Priscilla LEUNG supported heritage conservation and urged the Administration to inform the affected building owners and the general public as soon as practicable once a decision was taken to preserve certain buildings or sites, so that building owners and potential investors could make appropriate prior arrangements to suit their needs and interests. The Administration should also consult the owners concerned for their views and preferences, since compulsory conservation could meet with strong resistance from affected parties.

33. SDEV said that the Administration could further step up consultation with the local communities and parties concerned, and draw up and promulgate a blueprint specifying buildings or sites earmarked for redevelopment,

rehabilitation, preservation and revitalisation as soon as practicable, so that stakeholders and the Administration would have adequate time to plan ahead.

### Conserving Central

34. Mr IP Kwok-him asked whether the proposed initiatives under Conserving Central would overlap with that of the West Kowloon Cultural District in promoting arts and culture. Although the proposed initiatives would be spread out at different locations, he considered that these eight heritage conservation initiatives should supplement one another in producing a concerted impact on Central. Mr KAM Nai-wai emphasized that for Conserving Central, the Administration should adopt the concept of retaining a "historic city" instead of preserving just a number of isolated historic buildings in Central. The Administration should promote community participation and carry out in-depth studies to assess the impacts that these heritage conservation initiatives might have on transport, the living environment and social networks within the district.

35. SDEV advised that the eight conservation initiatives under Conserving Central would each have a distinct role to play in promoting arts and culture within the district. The Administration would further brief the Panel on the subject at the Panel meeting scheduled for 27 April 2010.

### Other issues

36. Mr LEE Wing-tat considered it necessary for the management agents of revitalised historic buildings to actively communicate with the users and tenants and involve them in the planning process as far as possible so that unnecessary bureaucracy and administrative restrictions jeopardizing arts creation could be avoided. SDEV said that the Administration was fully aware of the importance of both the hardware and the software in the running of arts and cultural facilities and would urge the management agents to involve users and tenants in the planning and daily operation of those facilities in revitalised historic buildings as far as possible.

37. Mr CHAN Kam-lam expressed concern about the role of Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in heritage conservation, and opined that in order to avoid unnecessary conflicts, the Administration should reconsider URA's role in heritage conservation. SDEV advised that after the completion of the review of Urban Renewal Strategy, there would be a clearer demarcation in terms of functions and responsibilities of the Administration and URA in preserving historic sites and buildings.

38. Mr WONG Kwok-hing considered that the Administration's heritage conservation initiatives could be a means of creating employment opportunities

for local workers. He enquired about the number of jobs to be created under the Revitalisation Scheme. Deputy Secretary for Development (Works)<sup>1</sup> advised that the six projects under Batch I of the Revitalisation Scheme would be able to create 967 jobs during the construction stage, and 285 full-time and 227 part-time jobs after their completion. Furthermore, heritage conservation projects such as the boutique hotel at the old Tai O Police Station would also create jobs for those engaged in conducting local tours and workshops on environmental conservation.

## **VI Work progress of the Development Opportunities Office**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(06) -- Administration's paper on work progress of the Development Opportunities Office

LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(07) -- Paper on Development Opportunities Office prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)

39. SDEV said that the Development Opportunities Office (DOO) was established on 1 July 2009 for a period of three years to facilitate land development proposals that carried broader economic and social merits. DOO was performing its functions in an effective way in attending to service demand from the community. Apart from its co-ordinating advisory role in land development proposals, DOO had since July 2009 also been actively involved in formulating initiatives on the revitalisation of industrial buildings. Up to March 2010, DOO had received 49 land development proposals, of which 14 required further details or the land lots required were not yet ready. DOO had provided assistance to the remaining 35 proposals, of which nine had been forwarded to the Land and Development Advisory Committee (LDAC) for advice. As for the remaining 26 proposals, DOO was actively assisting the project proponents in their liaison with the relevant bureaux and departments before submitting their proposals to LDAC for consideration.

40. SDEV emphasised that DOO was not an approving authority, and the proposals that it had processed would still have to go through the necessary approving authorities or public consultation procedures. DOO was playing a one-stop co-ordination and advisory role to help steer the proposals through various government bureaux and departments. While DOO welcomed proposals from non-governmental organizations, it would not exclude eligible proposals from private developers. DOO was aware of the sensitivity of the community towards private development projects, and would exercise great care in handling them. A high degree of transparency would be maintained. DOO would promulgate the details of the proposals after they had been vetted by LDAC.

Views on specific proposals

41. Mr WONG Kwok-hing had a high regard for DOO and enquired about the details of the nine projects in Annex D to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1447/09-10(06)) which had been vetted by LDAC, and the 26 projects in Annex E which were still being looked at by DOO and the concerned government bureaux and departments. He was in particular interested in items 7, 10, 22 and 23 in Annex E concerning land development proposals on a global village in Tuen Mun, a community centre in Yuen Long and columbarium in Islands District.

42. Although the nine projects in Annex D had been examined by LDAC, SDEV advised that there was no guarantee that these projects could eventually get through as originally proposed, since some changes and adjustments and lease modification/premium might still be required. As regards item 7, a proposal of The University of Hong Kong to convert a school building into a student hostel, and item 9, a proposal from the Baroque on Lamma Limited to carry out a comprehensive development project on Lamma Island, she said that the two proposals could not proceed as proposed due to policy, legal and other considerations. For the 26 projects in Annex E, given the complexities involved, it might take some time before they could be presented to LDAC. Head/DOO supplemented that item 7 of Annex E was a proposal to develop a global village and distribution centre for relief items which was initiated by a non-governmental organization currently operating on a site under short term tenancy. DOO was helping the agency to discuss with a number of bureaux to seek policy support, and to overcome issues relating to town planning and land use. Item 10 was a development proposal from a religious organization seeking to develop a community centre in an adjacent land lot to serve its members and the local community. The project involved change of land use and town planning issues and there was a need to consult the local community. DOO had advised the proponent on the possible way forward. Items 22 and 23 were proposals from private developers with land in hand. For these two cases, DOO was playing the role as a coordinator seeking views from various government bureaux and departments. There were issues that the proponents had to address, for instance, the proposed change in land use and the impact of the proposed columbarium on local traffic.

43. Mr IP Kwok-him said that he was satisfied with the work progress of DOO. He enquired whether DOO would respond to the wish of the local community to preserve collective memories by allowing The University of Hong Kong to revitalise the school premises of the former Hon Wah College for use as a student hostel (item 7 of Annex D). Ir Dr Raymond HO also expressed concern about BD's decision not to support the application to revitalise the school by carrying out alteration works.



44. SDEV advised that DOO could not override the statutory powers of government departments. Her understanding was that BD had examined the proposal and considered that it would be difficult for the proponent to convert the entire building concerned into a student hostel through retrofitting, because it would not be able to comply with the requirements under the Buildings Ordinance. Because of its role, DOO was not in a position to overrule the decision of BD. She clarified that a major function of DOO was to line up concerned bureaux and departments to look at land development proposals at the early planning stage so that proposals worth supporting could proceed in an expeditious and more balanced way, generating the greatest social value. DOO would not pressurize bureaux and departments to adopt its views. While the legal authority of government bureaux and departments would not be overruled, it was still possible for DOO to help develop solutions permitted under the law to facilitate the processing of proposals through enhanced co-ordination.

45. In response to Mr Albert HO's enquiry on a proposal to redevelop a business area in Eastern District (item 21 of Annex E), SDEV clarified that the focus of DOO's assistance was on facilitating early provision of more public open space within the project area. DOO would not become an approving authority which would grant exemptions or help project proponents bypass the necessary procedures. The proposal for a large-scale project involving marina, hotel and residential development on Lamma Island (item 9 of Annex D) had demonstrated this. DOO had informed the project proponent of LDAC's concerns over the planning and land administration issues identified as well as the project's environmental and ecological impacts on the proposed development area.

#### Other issues

46. Mr CHAN Kam-lam noted that it was time-consuming and procedurally cumbersome to develop land in rural areas for residential purposes. He enquired whether it was possible for DOO to play a more active role in facilitating such land development proposals as a way to ease the housing shortage in the territory. SDEV responded that DOO was set up to handle land development proposals with wider social and economic value. DOO would not process proposals of a purely residential nature. The Development Bureau would continue with its existing efforts to simplify and shorten the land development process in general. Mr CHAN Kam-lam urged the Administration to improve the coordination among various government bureaux and departments, act flexibly and enhance efficiency to facilitate land development in Hong Kong.

47. Mr Albert HO expressed worries that DOO might end up as a consultancy unit offering free advice and services to private developers so that they could steer their proposals through the various hurdles in land development. DOO might become a superior entity overshadowing all government bureaux and departments,

in particular the Planning Department, in land development. He further warned that DOO should exercise extreme care in processing proposals on development of columbarium, since projects of this nature could lead to disputes and confrontations. Though non-residential in nature, such projects could be highly profitable.

48. SDEV said that the work of DOO would be subject to public monitoring, since progress reports would be submitted to the Panel from time to time. Members would note that none of the DOO projects that LDAC had considered was proposed by a major developer. As regards the development of columbarium, she advised that the Town Planning Board required that columbarium could only be set up in specific zones. Under the highly transparent town planning process, public consultation would be required for such proposals. Operators also had to pay additional land premium before they could start their operation.

49. Prof Patrick LAU said that proponents of land development proposals had to take forward their projects according to the requirements under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131). The need to set up DOO to process a particular category of land development proposals reflected on the inadequacies of the existing town planning and land development mechanisms. He expressed doubts on having two channels for processing land development proposals, and urged the Administration to review the existing town planning and land development mechanisms with a view to improving them.

50. SDEV responded that the Administration would review the work of DOO based on the experience gained in one to two years' time. On the two channels for processing land development proposals, she explained that DOO was operating in the pre-town planning stage of land development. It would facilitate rather than obstruct the planning process thereafter. She added that DOO also dealt with proposals which might not involve town planning implications.

51. Ir Dr Raymond HO considered that DOO was still at an early stage of operation in trying to expedite the land development process. Citing the successful experience of developing promenades at different locations with the participation of private developers, he highlighted the importance for the Administration to collaborate with the private sector in certain land development projects. SDEV took note of Ir Dr HO's views and said that for development projects involving joint participation of the public and private sectors, gaining support from the relevant policy bureaux would be of great importance.

52. Dr Priscilla LEUNG enquired whether it was possible for DOO to undertake an additional responsibility by offering advice and guidance to residents from areas earmarked for redevelopment. SDEV explained that as DOO was set up to assist proponents with land in hand whose proposals had wider social and community value, it would not be appropriate for DOO to take up the responsibility

mentioned by Dr LEUNG. The Administration would consider the need to offer further advice and guidance to affected residents during the review of the Urban Renewal Strategy.

**VII Any other business**

53. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:18 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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