

立法會
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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 12th meeting
held in Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 15 June 2011, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Member attending:

Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP

Members absent:

Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau

Public officers attending:

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| Ms Doris HO Pui-ling | Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³ |
| Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP | Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) |
| Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP | Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) |
| Ms Anissa WONG, JP | Permanent Secretary for the Environment |
| Ms Joyce HO Kwok-shan | Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Works) |
| Mrs Laura ARON | Commissioner for Heritage Development Bureau |
| Mrs Marigold LAU LAI Siu-wan, JP | Director of Architectural Services |
| Mrs Priscilla TAM DAI Wai-ming | Project Director (1) Architectural Services Department |
| Mr Tom MING Kay-chuen | Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments) Leisure and Cultural Services Department |
| Dr Lawrence FUNG Siu-por, GBS | Chairman, Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation Limited |
| Mrs LO LEE Oi-lin | Principal Corporate Adviser (Development) Vocational Training Council |
| Dr Edmund LEE Tak-yue | Executive Director Hong Kong Design Centre |
| Mr Stephen IP Man-kwong | Executive Director PMQ Management Company Limited |

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| Miss Bella MUI Bun-ngar | Principal Assistant Secretary (B) Security Bureau |
| Miss Uson CHUNG | Project Director (2) Architectural Services Department |
| Mr LI Kin-yat | Acting Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) Fire Services Department |
| Mr YAU Wai-keung | Senior Divisional Officer (Planning Group) Fire Services Department |
| Ms Gracie FOO Siu-wai, JP | Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1 Development Bureau |
| Miss Alice AU YEUNG Yuet-wah | Principal Transport Officer (Urban) Transport Department |
| Mr MAK Ka-wai | Regional Highway Engineer (Urban) Highways Department |
| Mr Andrew TSANG Yue-tung, JP | Assistant Director (2) Home Affairs Department |
| Mr CHAN Wing-tak | Chief Technical Adviser (Subvented Projects) Architectural Services Department |
| Ms Brenda AU Kit-ying | District Planning Officer (Hong Kong) Planning Department |
| Mrs Apollonia LIU LEE Ho-kei | Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)5 Transport and Housing Bureau |
| Mr LAU Ka-keung, JP | Director of Highways |
| Mr TSANG King-man, JP | Assistant Director (Development) Highways Department |

Clerk in attendance:

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| Ms Debbie YAU | Chief Council Secretary (1)6 |
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Staff in attendance:

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| Miss Jacqueline CHUNG | Council Secretary (1)1 |
| Mr Frankie WOO | Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3 |
| Ms Christy YAU | Legislative Assistant (1)8 |

The Chairman reported that a total of 48 projects amounting to \$40,361.21 million had been endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2010-2011 session so far. Of the total amount endorsed, \$37,294.21 million was related to capital works projects.

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2011-12)26 400IO Transformation of the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road into a creative industries landmark

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 400IO to Category A at an estimated cost of \$560.1 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices for transforming the site of the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road (PMQ) into a creative industries landmark. The Panel on Development had been consulted on the proposal at its meeting on 20 April 2011. Panel members generally supported the proposal.

Selection of the project operator

3. Prof Patrick LAU considered that the future PMQ site would be a focal point of creative activities, and it would create synergy among various heritage, cultural and tourist's attractions in Lan Kwan Fong and SoHo in the proximity. Noting that proposals were invited from non-profit making organizations for the project, he enquired about the number of submissions received and the selection criteria. Miss Tanya CHAN raised similar concerns about the selection process.

4. The Commissioner for Heritage, DEVB (C for H, DEVB) responded that a total of four revitalization proposals had been received and assessed by the Advisory Committee on Revitalization of Historic Buildings which comprised Government and non-Government experts and academics from different relevant fields. Evaluations had been made according to the established selection criteria as stipulated in the Invitation for Proposal document for meeting the three objectives of the revitalization project, namely heritage conservation, promotion of creative industries and provision of local open space. The selection criteria included reflection of historical value, technical aspects, creative industries value, social value and social enterprise operation, financial viability, and

management capability. The "PMQ" proposal of the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation Limited (the Musketeers Foundation) and three co-applicants was considered to be the most capable of meeting the project objectives and scored the highest in the selection process. To address the concern of Prof Patrick LAU and Miss Tanya CHAN, C for H, DEVB undertook to provide information on the selection process including details of membership of the Advisory Committee, selection criteria, and reasons for choosing the Musketeers Foundation.

5. In response to Mr Abraham SHEK's enquiry about the design of the "PMQ" project, C for H, DEVB explained that after the revitalization proposal had been selected, the Architectural Services Department took up the design for the site taking into account the requirements of the successful applicant and users.

Project cost and financial arrangements

6. Ms Cyd HO declared that Ada Ying Kay WONG, who had sponsored her election campaign for the Legislative Council seat, was one of the project proponents. Ms HO noted that the Government would enter into a tenancy agreement on the PMQ site with the special purpose company set up by the Musketeers Foundation on a fixed term of ten years, and any net operating surplus would be shared between the Government and the operator every five years on a 50/50 basis. While understanding that the project was not aimed at profit-making, she expressed concern that net operating surplus would be subject to the business model of operation. She also considered the sharing of net operating surplus at every five years unduly long, which might prevent timely review of the "PMQ" operation and early sharing of the surplus to recover the project cost amounting to \$560.1 million.

7. C for H, DEVB emphasized that profit-making or recovering the project cost was not the objective of the proposed project. If there was any net operating surplus arising from the operation of the "PMQ" project, it would form a basis of sharing between the Government and the operator. The Musketeers Foundation had committed to ploughing back its share of the net operating surplus for the operation of the creative industries landmark. Noting that the tenancy agreement was yet to sign, Ms Cyd HO requested the Administration to provide information on the draft terms and conditions. Mr KAM Nai-wai enquired whether the tenancy agreement would include a termination mechanism, for example, when the operator failed to take care of the stonewall trees properly. C

for H, DEVB advised that the tenancy agreement on the PMQ site would stipulate operations and financial requirements to be fulfilled by the operator, and the criteria for assessing the operator's performance. Details of provisions for the Administration to resume the site were being worked out.

Admin

8. While expressing support for the proposal, Mr Abraham SHEK was concerned about allocating \$560.1 million from public purse to subsidize a project to be operated by the Musketeers Foundation which would contribute \$110 million towards the project. He requested the Administration to provide explanation as to how the Musketeers Foundation would operate the transformed PMQ site and enable it to become a creative industries landmark, including information on the use of the contribution of \$110 million from the Musketeer Foundation.

9. Dr Lawrence FUNG, Chairman, Musketeers Foundation advised that the Musketeers Foundation was formed with an aim to assist young and upcoming designers to establish their business by offering studio/office at a reasonable rental and the provision of mentor schemes for start-up designers. The Musketeers Foundation would attach much importance to attracting visitors to the "PMQ" making it a sustainable business. The Musketeers Foundation would contribute a total of \$110 million for the project over 10 years' time, and they committed to ploughing back its share of the net operating surplus for the future management, operation and maintenance of the project.

10. Mr IP Kwok-him said that the community welcomed the initiative to preserve the architectural remnants of the former Central School. The proposed project would also bring together the existing vibrant cluster of cultural and creative industries establishments in the areas. Noting that rental discount would be offered, he was worried that rental would gradually go up and affect the viability of the establishments. Mr Stephen IP, Executive Director, PMQ Management Company Limited advised that one of the objectives of the Musketeers Foundation was to assist local young and upcoming designers with limited financial resources to establish their business. In this regard, rental discount would be offered to young start-up designers. However, the level of discount would be much lower for those more famous and established designers. In addition, another major source of income would be from the commercial units, the rental of which would be set close to the current market levels. Dr Lawrence FUNG added that the level of rental discount for start-up designers would be gradually reduced when their businesses built up.

Admin

11. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed grave concern about the financial sustainability of the proposed project. He requested the Administration to provide information on the business plan in operating the "PMQ", including income from commercial establishments, concessionary rents, and operation costs of the site premises. Dr Lawrence FUNG acknowledged that it would be a challenge for the Musketeers Foundation to implement the project. The Foundation had pledged to contribute a total of \$110 million for the project and committed to ploughing back its share of the net operating surplus for the future management, operation, and maintenance of the project. C for H, DEVB added that the term of the tenancy agreement would be a fixed term of ten years, renewable for another five years. During this period, the operator would be required to submit progress reports (including financial reports and cash-flow statements), evaluation reports, audited account reports on a regular basis to the Government for monitoring and review of its performance.

Admin

12. Mr Albert CHAN expressed support for heritage conservation. He however considered the estimated construction unit cost of \$21,218 per square metre (m²) of construction floor area for the proposed project unacceptably high. He requested the Administration to provide a detailed breakdown on the estimated cost of \$305.6 million for building works. Mr Abraham SHEK shared similar concern. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) advised that the estimated unit cost of the proposed project was reasonable as compared with other similar revitalization works like the revitalization of Mei Ho House as City Hostel in Shek Kip Mei.

Admin

13. Prof Patrick LAU expressed support for the proposed project. He however commented that instead of investing \$560.1 million to revitalize the site, the Administration should simply make available vacant premises with basic features and leave the rest to designers and artists to bring out their creativities. He considered that resources should be reserved for the future operation of "PMQ", including offering concessionary rents to support start-up designers. He suggested the Administration to visit other similar revitalization projects in overseas places in order to better understand the development of creative industries. While recognizing the efforts of the Musketeers Foundation, Mr Abraham SHEK shared similar concern with Prof LAU. Noting that \$2 million was allowed for specialist consultants' fees, he requested the Administration to advise the works scope of the specialist consultants.

14. Noting members' comments on the proposed funding, Dr Lawrence FUNG explained that conservation of the heritage site was costly. A new "Underground Interpretation Area" would be constructed for the display and public appreciation of the remnants of the former Central School. Besides, an i-Cube would need to be built to create an indoor space for organizing events for the promotion of the creative industries in order to minimize the noise impact on the neighbourhood. C for H, DEVB added that the proposed funding would also allow for conversion of the original quarters units of Block A and B into about 130 studios etc, provision of landscaped public open space (POS), upgrading works to meet the modern-day requirements and new functional needs. It cost much to preserve the architectural remnants of the former Central School in-situ. She said that internal renovation and fitting out works for studios would be bare minimum so as to allow room for further creative expression of the designers and artists.

Fostering of creative industries

15. Mr Alan LEONG expressed appreciation to the efforts of the Musketeers Foundation. He shared his experience of a visit to Huashan 1914 Creative Park in Taipei, which he considered to be a good reference for the Musketeers Foundation. He hoped that the "PMQ" project would help create a competitive environment for development of cultural and creative industries in Hong Kong. Dr Lawrence FUNG thanked Mr LEONG for his advice. He said that in fostering the design industries which made up about 70% of the local creative industries activities, it was hoped that the start-up designers could eventually establish their business and be able to move up the social ladder.

16. Mr Albert CHAN remarked that the present approach for fostering creative industries in Hong Kong would need to be reviewed. He opined that instead of revitalizing the site by the Government at an one-off cost of \$560.1 million, the cultural and creative industries establishments selected should be allowed to develop the site over a longer time period, gradually building up the place with their own characteristics and eventually enabling the site to emerge as a well-known creative centre. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) advised that the revitalization and future operation of the site had been awarded through a competitive selection process, and the design of the entire site should be carried out in a holistic manner to meet the project objectives.

17. The Chairman said that according to overseas experience on development of cultural and creativity industry, the governments concerned would usually bear the start-up cost to transform vacant buildings into creative industries landmark for young designers and artists to establish their businesses.

Restaurants and cafes

18. Miss Tanya CHAN noted that the total gross floor area (GFA) of the PMQ site was about 15 000 m², comprising two quarters blocks and a two-storey Junior Police Call House (JPC House). She enquired about the area to be assigned to commercial venues and restaurants/cafes, and its proportion to the total GFA after conversion and construction of a new elevated i-Cube. While acknowledging that the viability of the proposed project would rely heavily on the income from the six food and beverage establishments, Ms CHAN was worried that the price of food and beverage would be set at levels unaffordable to the local residents. C for H, DEVB explained that commercial facilities were required to sustain the financial viability of the "PMQ" project. Mr Stephen IP said that there would be six food and beverage establishments in the site, i.e. one at JPC House, one in Block A, and four in Block B with the one on the first floor mainly for promotion of food culture. It was aimed to introduce to the "PMQ" restaurants with food specialties and diversities which would reflect the multi-cultural characteristics of Hong Kong. Some of these establishments would offer food at price levels affordable to less well-off start-up designers working at the site.

19. Mr KAM Nai-wai pointed out that there were already a number of pubs and bars in the area, which had been causing serious nuisance to residents nearby during night times, attracting numerous complaints. He expressed concern that the problem would aggravate should the establishments at the "PMQ" also serve alcoholic beverages, especially so if the landscaped open space at Plateau 4 outside the JPC House would be used for alfresco dining. Mr KAM asked about the opening hours of the POS within the site. C for H, DEVB highlighted that provision of POS for community use was one of the objectives of the proposed project. Mr Stephen IP added that the POS would be opened daily for not less than 16 hours rather than 24 hours so as to allow for cleaning, repair and maintenance. The sale or supply of liquor for consumption at the food and beverage establishments would be subject to liquor licence applications which he believed would be critically scrutinized by the Liquor Licensing Board before approval. In reply to Mr KAM's further enquiry about the operating hours of the food and beverage

establishments, Mr Stephen IP said that the site would be closed before 2 am.

Cultural activities

20. Ms Tanya CHAN enquired about the programmes and activities to be organized in the "PMQ" and how they were linked to the community. Sharing similar concern, Mr KAM Nai-wai sought the Administration's response to the request of the Central and Western District Council members that a certain amount of space be reserved in the "PMQ" for community uses, e.g. by the antique shops and galleries in Hollywood Road. Mr Stephen IP advised that cultural events and activities generating noise could be arranged to be held at i-Cube, an indoor multi-function hall. The covered event space on the ground floor between Block A and Block B would be used for exhibition purpose. An event calendar would be drawn up for the whole year, and interested parties from the cultural and creative industries were welcomed to submit applications for events and exhibitions which would be vetted by an independent committee.

21. Ms Cyd HO considered that the mere display and retail of creative products by designers and artists in the "PMQ" were not sufficient to promote creative industries among the general public. It was also necessary to demonstrate the processes of creating these products. Mr Stephen IP responded that simple hand craft process would be allowed while those processes involving heavy-duty machinery could not be accommodated due to loading limitations of the buildings. At Ms HO's suggestion, Mr Stephen IP agreed to consider allowing heavy-duty machines and equipments to be placed on the ground floors of the "PMQ" Blocks.

Accessibility

22. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern about the round-the-clock accessibility from Hollywood Road to Staunton Street via the "PMQ". D Arch S referred members to Enclosure 1 to PWSC(2011-12)26, which showed the five accesses to the site, including a barrier-free access at Staunton Street, and a vehicular access with drop off for the disabled at Aberdeen Street. She explained that barrier-free pedestrian access could not be provided at Shing Wong Street and Aberdeen Street due to site constraints e.g. existence of staircases. Mr Stephen IP further explained that no pedestrian access would be provided at Hollywood Road as the rubble retaining wall and stonewall trees along the road had to be

preserved. Notwithstanding this, pedestrians from Hollywood Road could access the "PMQ" at the entrance in Aberdeen Street, which was 4 metres wide suitable for wheelchair users, and leave the site at the access in Staunton Street via the lifts of Block B to the POS at the roof-top of i-Cube and then Block A.

Environmental impact

23. Mr IP Kwok-him opined that apart from limiting the opening hours of the eating establishments to minimize nuisance to local residents, the Administration should also monitor the implementation of mitigation measures by the contractor during construction. He enquired about the number of dump trucks accessing the site daily. D Arch S responded that the contractor was required to comply with the established environmental standards and guidelines through the implementation of mitigation measures in the relevant contracts. She added that construction works would only be allowed from 7am to 7pm on weekdays. Stringent control would be exercised, and enforcement actions would be taken against the contractor for non-compliance. Mr IP requested the Administration to postpone the starting hour of construction work to 8am as 7am was considered too early in residential areas. Taking note of Mr IP's view for consideration, D Arch S added that shortening of works hours might result in longer construction period.

24. Miss Tanya CHAN enquired whether an independent landscape architect specializing in stonewall trees would be engaged in the protection and management of all stonewall trees found at the site. C for H, DEVB said that a tree expert well-versed in stonewall trees had been engaged to monitor the conditions of stonewall trees during construction of works and oversee the implementation of tree preservation measures afterwards. D Arch S supplemented that out of 17 trees in the site, 15 were stonewall trees. The Administration agreed to provide information on the tree expert engaged.

Admin

25. The item was voted on and endorsed.

26. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that he had abstained from voting pending further information from the Administration.

27. Ms Cyd HO and Mr KAM Nai-wai requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

**PWSC(2011-12)27 172BF Construction of fire
station-cum-ambulance facility at
Cheung Yip Street, Kowloon Bay**

28. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 172BF to Category A at an estimated cost of \$210.0 million in MOD prices for the construction of a fire station-cum-ambulance facility at Cheung Yip Street, Kowloon Bay. The Panel on Security had been consulted on the proposal at its meeting on 17 January 2011. Panel members had not raised any queries.

29. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 703 – Buildings

Head 706 – Highways

**PWSC(2011-12)28 3194SC Community hall at the eastern part of
ex-North Point Estate site**

**6078TI Covered public transport terminus at
the eastern part of the ex-North Point
Estate site**

30. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 3194SC and 6078TI to Category A at an estimated cost of \$61.0 million and \$43.7 million in MOD prices for the construction of a community hall (CH) and a covered public transport terminus (PTT) respectively at the eastern part of the ex-North Point Estate (ex-NPE(E)) site. The Panel on Development had been consulted on the proposal at its meeting on 24 May 2011. Panel members generally supported the proposal.

Detailed design

31. Referring to the development concept plan in Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2011-12)28, Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration had not provided the detailed design for members' consideration. Mr Albert CHAN also expressed disappointment with the designs and requested the Administration to provide more multi-purpose rooms at new CHs to meet public demand.

32. The District Planning Officer (Hong Kong), Planning Department (DPO(HK), Plan D) explained that the site was zoned "Comprehensive Development Area" (CDA) for residential and commercial uses with the

provision of POS and Government, Institution and Community (GIC) facilities. The developer would be required through land sale conditions to design and construct the proposed CH and PTT facilities at the ex-NPE(E) site according to the Government's specifications. Detailed design and layout of these facilities would be provided by the developer and included in the Master Layout Plan submission which would be circulated to relevant government departments for comments before approval by the Town Planning Board (TPB).

Cantonese opera theatre

33. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed dissatisfaction that the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) had declined to provide a theatre for Cantonese opera at the site, despite strong request from the Planning, Works and Housing Committee of the Eastern District Council (EDC). He said that he had raised the request at the meeting of Panel on Development on 24 May 2011, but the Administration maintained its stance. He would appeal again to HAB to consider providing a theatre for Cantonese opera at the proposed site.

34. Expressing similar concerns, Mr KAM Nai-wai doubted whether EDC had reached consensus on the development of CH and/or cultural performance theatre under the proposed project. Noting Sunbeam Theatre was coming to closure, the general public had expressed preference for the provision of a theatre for Cantonese opera in the area, while Ko Shan Theatre, Xiqu Activity Centre in Yau Ma Tei and the performance venues under planning at West Kowloon Cultural District were not desirable alternatives. He enquired about the reasons for not providing a theatre at the site.

35. The Assistant Director(2), Home Affairs Department (AD, HAD) advised that a CH and a cultural performance theatre served different purposes. EDC members supported the proposed CH project when consulted on 5 May 2011. At the meeting of Panel on Development on 24 May 2011, the Administration had explained to Panel members that HAB had reservations about constructing a large performance venue at the site having considered that there were already a number of performance venues of different scales being constructed or planned over the territory, not to mention existing theatres in the cultural venues on Hong Kong Island, viz. Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre, Chai Wan Youth Square, City Hall, Queen Elizabeth Stadium and Sheung Wan Civic Centre. He added that the need for provision of large-scale performance venues should be assessed on a territorial basis.

36. Mr IP Kwok-him said that as far as he was aware, EDC members supported the CH project and called for early implementation of the project when consulted on 5 May 2011. As for the CH, he enquired whether it could be expanded to serve also as a performance venue. AD, HAD responded that the funding sought was based on the standard requirements of a CH with a total GFA of not less than 1 260 m² and the Government would reimburse the developer the cost of construction.

37. Mr Abraham SHEK considered that provision of a performance venue was required for the purpose of preserving and promoting Cantonese opera in Hong Kong. To optimize the use of land, the Administration should consider relaxing the plot ratio of the proposed facilities to accommodate a theatre thereat. In response, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) (PS(PL)) said that relaxation of the plot ratio might have an impact on the building height and bulk, which would in turn affect air ventilation and environment.

38. Prof Patrick LAU highlighted the prominent location of the ex-NPE(E) site with harbour view and expressed grave concern that flexibility should be allowed for the developer to come up with its own proposal on facilities, such as Cantonese opera theatre, to be included in the site. Mr Albert CHAN shared Prof LAU's views and said that the developer might be able to incorporate a theatre in the site.

39. The Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)¹, Development Bureau (DS(PL)) and PS(PL) explained that the site had been idling for a long time. To honour the Government's pledge to increase land supply to meet Hong Kong's development needs, DEVB had taken up the co-ordinating role and tried to resolve issues straddling more than one policy bureau and department. The result was this composite application to LegCo. Apart from the CH and PTT which would be funded through two Public Works Programme projects, the Government had also included welfare facilities and a POS, including a 20-m wide waterfront promenade, at the ex-NPE(E) site. After consultation with the EDC and the community, the provision of these GIC facilities had been included in a Planning Brief endorsed by TPB on 21 January 2011. The site had already been included in the 2011-2012 Land Sale Programme to meet the needs of the public for residential and community uses. As provision of any additional facility at the site would necessitate an overall re-planning for the site, this was not recommended.

Admin

40. Mr KAM Nai-wai sought information on the loss of GFA if a theatre was included in addition to the CH at the ex-NPE(E) site. The Chief Technical Adviser (Subvented Projects), Arch SD (CTA(SP), Arch SD) added that the GFA of the CH of not less than 1 260 m² meant that the developer could provide more than this level. Mr KAM requested the Administration to provide information on the impact on the construction cost and the loss on land sale, assuming an area of about 3 000 m² would be taken out from the non-domestic GFA of 29 995 m² at the ex-NPE(E) site for the provision of a Cantonese opera theatre. He stated that Members belonging to the Democratic Party had reservation on the funding proposal and requested further discussion of the proposal by PWSC.

41. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that he had difficulty to support the funding proposal because the Administration did not accede to the community's request for a Cantonese opera theatre raised during consultation. PS(PL) responded that any government facilities to be developed at the site should have the policy support of the relevant bureau/department and such facilities, upon completion would be handed over to the relevant bureau/department for subsequent operation, management and maintenance. As HAB had not rendered policy support for the inclusion of an Cantonese opera theatre in the project, no such facilities were included in the CDA development.

42. Mr Alan LEONG requested HAB to explain its stance at the relevant FC meeting. Ms Miriam LAU opined that provision of a performance venue for Cantonese opera was required for both the audience and the industry. The Administration should plan for a theatre at an alternative location, if reprovisioning of the Sunbeam Theatre at the site was not feasible.

Admin

43. Addressing members' concerns, PS(PL) undertook to ask HAB to provide information on the proposal for provision of a Cantonese opera theatre at the ex-NPE(E) site, including the minutes of the discussion at the EDC in relation to the development of the proposed CH and request for such a theatre at meetings of EDC and its relevant committees.

Public transport terminus and subway connection

44. Ms Miriam LAU enquired whether a taxi stand would be provided in addition to the bus bays and green minibus bays at the proposed PTT. The Principal Transport Officer (Urban), TD advised that the proposed PTT served to reprovision the existing PTT which included a taxi stand.

However, a taxi stand was not included in the proposed PTT in the present design because of low utilisation in the existing PTT. Taking note of the strong request of Ms LAU for a taxi stand in the proposed PTT, the Administration undertook to consider the request at the detailed design stage.

Admin

45. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about any subway connection between MTR Station and the site. Referring to the proposed subway shown on Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2011-12)28, DPO(HK), Plan D advised that a subway across Java Road had been planned for and would connect the Station and the site. The developer of the site would be required to provide an opening in the future development for connection to the proposed subway. Mr WONG requested the Administration to provide a plan on the proposed covered PTT and the information on subway connection between MTR Station and the ex-NPE(E) site.

46. The item was voted on and endorsed.

47. Mr WONG Kwok-hing and Mr KAM Nai-wai requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

Head 706 – Highways

PWSC(2011-12)29 166TB Provision of barrier-free access facilities at public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways

48. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade part of 166TB to Category A at an estimated cost of \$292.1 million in MOD prices for engaging consultants to undertake the design of the barrier-free access facilities at about 180 existing footbridges, elevated walkways and subways and for the retrofitting of barrier-free access facilities at six footbridges and four subways. The Panel on Transport had been consulted on the proposal at its meeting on 2 June 2011. Panel members generally supported the proposal. In response to Panel members' request, the Administration had provided supplementary information on 10 June 2011.

49. Ms Emily LAU expressed grave concern about the present position of provision of barrier-free access facilities. She said that while the Government, in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, was required to report to the United Nations in 2012 on

related issues including the provision of barrier-free access facilities in Hong Kong, the retrofitting works for these facilities would only be completed in 2017-2018. She urged the Administration to expedite the works as these facilities would benefit not only the disabled but also elderly and people carrying heavy luggage. She also enquired about the way forward for the 56 structures of which the retrofitting works of lifts/ramps were confirmed not feasible after investigation.

50. The Director of Highways (D of Hy) advised that the Administration had already expedited the processes for early provision of barrier-free access facilities. The technical feasibility for the retrofitting works of the 180 structures was underway and was expected to complete by mid 2012. Subject to funding approval of the FC, detailed design works could be commenced after technical feasibility was confirmed. To accelerate the implementation of the retrofitting works, funding would be sought from FC in several batches after the completion of the design work as soon as possible with a view to commencing construction in phases. Afterwards, the Administration would re-visit the feasibility of those structures previously found not feasible for retrofitting works.

51. Ms Emily LAU enquired about the progress of the retrofitting works of tactile guide path. She considered that such facility should be provided at other locations and not just those currently in place. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)⁵, Transport and Housing Bureau (PAS(T)) advised that since 2001, tactile guide paths had been fitted at about 60 locations to connect places frequently visited by persons with visual impairment (e.g. sheltered workshops or related associations) to major transport facilities. In response to Ms LAU's concern that these facilities should also be fitted at locations other than those mentioned above, PAS(T) said that the Transport Department had been working closely with the associations for persons with visual impairment on locations for tactile guide paths, and the retrofitting works would be carried out on a continuous basis under the minor works programme.

52. Noting that the 'Hundred Steps' between Kwong Fai Circuit and Kwai Chung Estate, which was a barrier to persons with disabilities and the elderly going uphill and downhill, had been included in the next round of works for provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems, Mr TAM Yiu-chung urged the Administration to speed up the implementation.

53. The item was voted on and endorsed.

54. Ms Emily LAU requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

55. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:54 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
7 July 2011