

For discussion
on 7 June 2011

**Legislative Council Panel on Security
Redevelopment of Tai Lam Centre for Women**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the proposal to redevelop the Tai Lam Centre for Women (TLCW).

BACKGROUND

2. To ensure public safety and help reduce crime, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) is committed to providing a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy environment for people in its custody. Suitable rehabilitative services are also provided to help offenders reintegrate into the society. To achieve these objectives, the CSD needs to refurbish, alter or redevelop the outdated correctional institutions in a planned manner so that adequate penal places and modernised facilities can be provided to meet the custodial and rehabilitative needs of prisoners.

3. Located at Tai Lam Chung Road in Tuen Mun in the New Territories, the TLCW came into operation in 1969 and is the only maximum security institution for female offenders under CSD. Currently, the TLCW provides 263 penal places for female adult offenders of all categories, including convicted prisoners of all security grading, remands, appellants and inmates of drug addiction treatment centres.

PROPOSAL

4. The Administration proposes an in-situ partial redevelopment of the TLCW to increase and enhance its facilities. The number of penal places of the institution will be increased to some 360 upon completion of the redevelopment. Most of the works will be conducted within the perimeter walls of the institution. The redevelopment project does not involve acquisition of any additional land. The TLCW will operate as usual during the redevelopment period. The project is divided into two phases as follows :

<p>Phase I</p>	<p>To construct a five to six-storey complex in the TLCW to house nursing and health service facilities, rehabilitative facilities and Category A Prisoner (i.e. prisoners sentenced to 12 years or above) facilities to enhance the related services for the prisoners; and to construct a new electric transformer room adjacent to the existing electric transformer room outside the perimeter wall to increase power supply.</p> <p>Upon completion of the new complex, the number of beds for general patients in the institution will be increased from the existing 29 to 60 while the number of bedstead of maternity and baby will be increased from the existing 4 pairs to 10 pairs. Moreover, there will be a new X-ray room and a dental treatment room. On the custodial facilities for Category A prisoners, proposed improvements include the provision of a separate dining hall, a recreation room and a duty room. On rehabilitative services, additional facilities like a multi-media training room, a religious service room and a counselling room, etc will be provided.</p>
<p>Phase II</p>	<p>To demolish the existing hospital block and a dormitory, and construct a five to six-storey building for the remands so as to increase and enhance the custodial and rehabilitative facilities. The facilities to be provided include a separate dining hall, a recreation room and a duty room, a religious service room and a library, etc.</p> <p>To demolish the existing communication room, reception office, gate lodge and visit room, which are located in different areas of the institution, and construct a three-storey multi-purpose building for reprovisioning of these facilities to improve the management efficiency of the institution.</p>

The layout plan of the redevelopment of TLCW is at **Annex**.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Overcrowding

5. Overcrowding is a long standing problem in penal institutions for women. The average occupancy rate of these institutions for the past five years was 105%. The commissioning of the redeveloped Lo Wu Correctional Institution (LWCI) in mid-2010 has alleviated the overcrowding problem in most of the female institutions. However, as LWCI is only a medium security institution, it cannot take over remands and Category A prisoners from the TLCW who require maximum security. Hence, it cannot alleviate the overcrowding problems at the remand unit and Category A unit of the TLCW.

6. For the past five years, the average daily penal population of the TLCW is 464, representing an occupancy rate of 176% as compared to the designed capacity of 263 for the institution. Overcrowding is most serious in the hospital, remand unit and Category A unit. The average daily population of the hospital is 47, representing an occupancy rate of 162% as compared to the designed number of bed spaces of 29. As for the remand unit, the average daily population is 192, representing an occupancy rate of 533% on the basis of its 36 places for remands in the original design. As for Category A unit, the average daily population is 23, representing an occupancy rate of 115% against the original design of 20. Summing up the above, there is a pressing need to increase the capacity of the hospital, remand unit and Category A unit in the TLCW in order to relieve the overcrowding problem.

Aging facilities

7. As the TLCW was converted from a former government staff quarters and has been operating for 42 years, most of its core facilities are outdated and aging. Their standard can hardly meet the current requirements of penal management, security and offenders' rehabilitation. It is therefore necessary for the CSD to redevelop or provide additional facilities.

8. Currently, it is difficult for TLCW to organise large scale activities as there are not sufficient activity rooms. It also lacks learning and rehabilitation facilities such as library, computer rooms and class rooms etc that hinder inmates' development in these areas. Furthermore,

the existing medical, nursing and health facilities can only provide basic services which do not meet the standards nowadays. To provide a better environment and services for persons in custody, we propose the partial redevelopment works as described in paragraph 4 so as to increase and upgrade the facilities in the institution.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

9. The CSD consulted the Environment, Hygiene and District Development Committee of the Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) on 18 March 2011 on the proposed redevelopment of the TLCW. A letter dated 31 March 2011 was also sent to the Tuen Mun Rural Committee (TMRC) to consult village representatives in the district. The concerned committee of TMDC supported the redevelopment project. The TWRC and relevant village representatives had no comment on the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICAITONS

10. The project is not a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499). We completed a Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) in September 2010, which concluded that the project would not have long-term adverse environmental impact. The height of the buildings of the redevelopment project, which will not be more than six storeys, will comply with the provisions of the statutory plan. The appearance of the buildings will be compatible with the surrounding environment to minimise the visual impact on the surrounding areas.

11. During construction, we will require the contractors to control noise, dust and site runoff nuisances to within established standards and guidelines through the implementation of mitigation measures in the relevant contracts. These include the use of silencers, mufflers, acoustic lining or shields and the building of barrier walls for noisy construction activities, frequent cleaning and watering of the site, and the provision of wheel-washing facilities.

12. We will consider measures in the planning and design stages to reduce construction waste generated from the works where possible. We will require the contractor to use inert construction waste on site as far as possible, so as to minimise their disposal to public fill reception facilities. We will also encourage the contractor to maximise the use of recycled or recyclable inert construction waste, and the use of non-timber formwork.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. According to the price level in September 2010, the preliminary estimated project cost is \$776 million¹ at money-of-the-day prices. We will start the related tendering procedures by the end of 2011. Basing on the cost of the tender submitted, we will seek funding approval from the Public Works Subcommittee and Finance Committee in mid 2012.

IMPLEMENTATION

14. Subject to funding approval by the Finance Committee, the project is expected to commence in phases from the second half of 2012 and be completed by the end of 2016.

Security Bureau
Correctional Services Department
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¹ This is a preliminary estimated project cost. We cannot rule out the possibility that the actual project cost will be higher. The Tender Price Index of the Architectural Services Department has risen by 12.4% between the third quarter in 2009 and the third quarter in 2010. We expect that the prices of construction materials and construction workers' wages will continue to rise between now and end 2011 when tendering will be conducted. It is difficult to assess the rate of increase in project cost at this stage.

