



**Government
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本署檔號 Our Ref.: (35) in GPA/AD/1-10/1(3)

來函檔號 Your Ref. CB2/PL/HA

14 May 2013

Ms. Alice LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2)2
Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms LEUNG,

Panel on Home Affairs

Letter from Hon Claudia MO

Thank you for your letter of 19 April 2013 addressed to the Secretary for Home Affairs, which has been referred to us for reply.

Regarding the written enquiry raised by the Hon Claudia MO about the provision of community facilities and centralized public services on a district basis for convenience of the public, I attach our response in both English and Chinese for your follow-up action. The softcopy of the response has been separately emailed to your account accordingly.

Yours sincerely,



(CM LAM)

for Government Property Administrator

c.c. Secretary for Home Affairs (Attn.: Mr. Michael YAU) (Fax No. : 2591 6002)

In the land use planning for community use, the Government will carefully consider community development, characteristics of population and needs of local residents, including the demand for government facilities and community services with a view to striking a balance between the demands from different stakeholders and to ensuring the proper allocation of land resources. Under the current mechanism, individual government departments (e.g. the Home Affairs Department, Social Welfare Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department) will decide whether it is necessary to develop additional community facilities or to re-provision some community facilities in need of relocation according to their own operational needs and the community service facilities currently available at the district level. If such a need is identified, the departments concerned will put forth a request for land to the relevant department (e.g. the Planning Department) so that the Administration can consider the overall development of community services and land use. The proposing department will also consult departments concerned on the development plan so as to include any community facilities, if necessary, to ensure the gainful use of land resources. Moreover, Government Property Agency (GPA) will assist the departments concerned in identifying suitable properties to support their operation. For re-provisioning and relocation projects for government offices and facilities, Home Affairs Department will liaise with the departments concerned to conduct local consultation if the project has impacts on local residents.

As regards government-owned premises, they are mainly allocated to government departments as office accommodation or used for public facilities. It is Government policy to use government-owned premises as far as possible and to minimize the leasing of private premises, so as to achieve savings in rental expenditure and provide government departments with long-term and stable office accommodation and facilities for their use and delivery of public services. Under the current Government accommodation policy, if there are vacant government premises, the Government will accord priority of space allocation to suitable departments, including government offices currently accommodated in leased private premises, or government offices which need to be re-provisioned for various reasons, or for accommodating new services or facilities. If suitable government users cannot be identified, GPA will explore the feasibility of leasing out or disposal of the subject properties in a commercial manner, or using them for other gainful purposes.

Generally speaking, GPA is responsible for allocating joint-user government office buildings under its purview to various departments for use as office accommodation. District community facilities are planned and provided by

government departments concerned according to the need of the district community. When assessing department’s application for use of government accommodation for reprovisioning purposes or providing additional offices and facilities, the Government will take carefully into account various factors. These include office space requirement of individual departments, occupation timetable, proposed uses, location preference, cost-effectiveness, accessibility and impact on the delivery of public services, with a view to ensuring optimum use of government premises and provision of convenient services to the public.

If Government needs to reprovision district facilities or develop joint-user government office buildings to accommodate relocated government offices, the departments concerned will consult the respective District Councils about the proposal. Some examples are set out below for illustration and Members’ reference:

	Project item	Action Department	Remark
1.	Alteration of Kimberley Street Market	Immigration Department (ImmD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the meeting of the Community Building Committee under Yau Tsim Mong District Council held in July 2012, the ImmD put forward for discussion the proposal of altering the ex-Kimberley Street Market for reprovisioning of the ImmD's West Kowloon Office and Kowloon Births Registry which had to be relocated to make way for the development of the Central Kowloon Route. The Committee supported the proposal and considered that converting the ex-Kimberley Street Market into new ImmD offices could optimise the use of government property resources and urged the ImmD to expedite the development of the project. ● The property in question was a purpose-built market, not a venue for community activities. Therefore, its conversion into ImmD new offices would not reduce

			the existing spaces available for community activities in the district.
2.	Construction of Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices (mainly used to reprovision departments in the former Canton Road Government Offices Building)	GPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The former Canton Road Government Offices Building, which had to be demolished to facilitate a railway construction project, was mainly used to accommodate general government offices. For most of the affected departments, there was no need for them to be reprovisioned within Yau Tsim Mong District as their services were not district-bound, and they were relocated to Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices near Sham Shui Po in 2000 to continue with the provision of services to the public. In April 1996, the Sham Shui Po District Council was consulted about the arrangement and the response was positive.