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5 January 2018

(Urgent by fax 2543 9197)

Mr. Anthony CHU
Public Account Committee
Legislative Council Complex
Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Sir,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 8 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 69
Provision of government office accommodation and
utilization of government sites

Thank you for your letter of 19 December 2017 enquiring information on Case 6 in paragraph 4.10 of the subject Audit Report. I attach our reply in English and Chinese for your reference please.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Brian W H Choi".

(Brian W H Choi)

for Director of Civil Engineering and Development

c.c. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2537 3539)
Government Property Administrator (fax no. 2583 9758)
Director of Architectural Services (fax no. 2810 7341)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

Internal
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For the Civil Engineering and Development Department

Part 4: Utilisation of government sites

- 1) According to Case 6 in paragraph 4.10, some 26 years after acquiring the godown in 1990, no decision had been taken on whether the proposed road project would be implemented. Can the Administration explain why? While GPA had put the godown into short-term uses from 1991 to 2007, it had been left vacant for some 10 years up to August 2017. What measures will the Administration take to prevent recurrence of similar problems?

Reply

The need for the proposed Kwai Chung Circumferential Road Project was initiated under a transport study for Tsuen Wan completed in 1983 having regard to the traffic situation and the projected traffic demand at that time. Although the implementation programme of the proposed road project had yet to be confirmed, the proposed road was incorporated in the pertinent Outline Zoning Plan in 1989 forming a statutory basis for preservation of the road route. In March 1991, the Administration took possession of the godown site. Since then, the Administration had conducted a number of reviews but could not formulate a definitive implementation programme for the road project. In 2014, the Administration confirmed that there was no need for the road project up to 2026. Nevertheless, the Administration will take into account the latest proposed developments including housing developments in the vicinity and review the need of this project. A decision will be made in 2018.

The Administration has reviewed the relevant guidance notes for project implementation and considers that the current guidelines in respect of timing for land acquisition are adequate to address the concern. In gist, works departments have been specifically reminded by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 4/2006 'Delivery of Capital Works Projects' issued in August 2006 to critically consider the need for clearing/resuming land before the funding approval of the Finance Committee vis-à-vis the risk of not proceeding with the projects. Works departments are also particularly required to keep the Lands Department closely informed of the funding situation, or if there is any change in circumstances in which a project (involving land resumption) might be put on hold.